

THE 7th DAY OF THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER
FOREFEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF THE ALL-HOLY THEOTOKOS
COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY MARTYR SOZON
AT VESPERS

On "Lord, I have cried ...", 6 stichera: 3 for the Forefeast, in Tone I:

Spec. Mel. "Joy of the ranks of heaven ...":

Noetic beams of universal joy * have shone forth upon the world, * heralding Christ God, the Sun of righteousness, unto all * in thy nativity, O all-pure one. * For thou hast been shown to be * the mediatrix of true gladness and grace.

This, the glory of thy forefeast, O all-pure one, * doth proclaim unto all the people * thy benefactions which transcend description; * for thou art now for us the mediatrix of gladness * and the cause of joy to come, * O Ever-virgin Theotokos.

The Maiden who held God within her womb, * the pure Theotokos, * the glory of the prophets, the daughter of David * is born today of Joachim and the chaste Anna; * and the curse of Adam which lay upon us * is annulled by her nativity.

And 3 stichera for the martyr, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: "Thou hast given a sign ...":

When He Who of His own will * took our weakness upon Him * strengthened thine infirmity with power, O blessed one, * for His sake thou didst run the race of martyrdom, rejoicing, * and with thy most beautiful feet * didst crush the impotent enemy. * Wherefore, Jesus, Who loveth mankind, * the Savior of our souls, * hath woven wreaths of victory for thee.

When thou wast wounded, O glorious one, * thou didst wound thine enemies * and cast them down to the ground, * armed with the Cross * and manifestly arrayed in invincible armor, * made steadfast by the love * of Him Who hath translated thee to the noetic kingdoms * as an unvanquished martyr, * a heavenly man.

Manifestly emulating * the Savior and Lord * Who for thee underwent voluntary sufferings, O athlete Sozon, * thou didst of thine own will give thyself over * to wounds and stripes and unbearable torments. * Wherefore, He hath honored thee with heavenly gifts * and showed thee forth as a well-spring of healings * for those who love thee.

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., of the Forefeast, in Tone IV:

O Virgin all-holy and pure, we, the multitude of angels in heaven and the human race on earth, bless thy most honored nativity, in that thou didst become the Mother of Christ God, the Creator of all. Cease thou never to entreat Him, we pray, in behalf of us who, after God, have placed our trust in thee, O most lauded Theotokos who knewest not wedlock.

But if it be Friday evening: Glory ..., the above Doxasticon of the Forefeast; Now & ever ..., the Dogmaticon of the current tone.

On the Aposticha, these stichera, in Tone VIII:

Spec. Mel.: "O most glorious wonder ...":

O most glorious wonder! * The rod which is to bear the Flower * springeth forth today from the righteous Joachim and Anna, * from a barren mother * and a fruitless womb, O Mother of God Who knewest not wedlock. * Wherefore, the council of the prophets * and the whole festive assembly of the patriarchs * rejoice now in her nativity.

Stichos: Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thine ear.

Today David doth rejoice, * Jesse now danceth, * Levi is magnified, * and the righteous Joachim rejoiceth in spirit: * for the childlessness of Anna is loosed * by thy nativity, O all-pure Mary, divinely joyous one. * And all of us, the assembly of angels and men, * call blessed * thy divine womb.

Stichos: The rich among the people shall entreat thy countenance.

Rejoice, O assembly of men! Rejoice, O temple of the Lord! * Rejoice, holy mountain! Rejoice, divine table! * Rejoice, O lamp of the Light! * Rejoice, O honored glory of the Orthodox! * Rejoice, O Mary, Mother of Christ God! * Rejoice, O most immaculate one! * Rejoice, offering of the Bread divine! * Rejoice, O tabernacle! Rejoice, O bush unburnt! * Rejoice thou hope of all!

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., in Tone IV: the composition of Germanus:

Universal joy hath shone forth upon us from the righteous Joachim and Anna, O most lauded Virgin who, in thine exceeding purity, becamest the animate temple of God, and who alone art truly known to be the Theotokos. Through her prayers, O Christ God, send peace upon the world and great mercy upon our souls.

Troparion of the martyr, in Tone IV:

In his suffering, O Lord, Thy martyr Sozon received an imperishable crown from Thee, our God; for, possessed of Thy might, he cast down the tormenters and crushed the feeble audacity of the demons. By his prayers do Thou save our souls.

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., Troparion of the forefeast, in the same tone:

Mary, the divine Maiden, is born unto us today from the root of Jesse and the loins of David; and all things rejoice and are made new through joy. Rejoice together, O heaven and earth! Praise her, ye lands of the gentiles! Joachim maketh glad, and Anna holdeth festival, crying aloud: A barren woman giveth birth to the Theotokos, the Nourisher of our Life!

AT MATINS

On "God is the Lord ", the troparion of the forefeast, (Twice);

Mary, the divine Maiden, is born unto us today from the root of Jesse and the loins of David; and all things rejoice and are made new through joy. Rejoice together, O heaven and earth! Praise her, ye lands of the gentiles! Joachim maketh glad, and Anna holdeth festival, crying aloud: A barren woman giveth birth to the Theotokos, the Nourisher of our Life!

Glory , that of the martyr in Tone IV:

In his suffering, O Lord, Thy martyr Sozon received an imperishable crown from Thee, our God; for, possessed of Thy might, he cast down the tormenters and crushed the feeble audacity of the demons. By his prayers do Thou save our souls.

Now & ever ..., that of the forefeast, again.

After the first chanting of the Psalter, this Sedalion, in Tone VIII:

Spec. Mel.: "When the stone had been sealed ..." :

Having been born most gloriously from the womb of a barren woman, thou didst give birth from thy virginal womb in manner transcending nature; for, revealed as a beautiful stem, thou didst give rise to the Life of the world. Wherefore, the hosts of heaven cry out to thee, O Theotokos: Glory to thine advent, O pure one! Glory to thy nativity! Glory to thy virginity, O Mother who hast not known wedlock!

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., the foregoing is repeated.

After the second chanting of the Psalter, this Sedalion, in Tone V:

Spec. Mel.: "The Word Who is co-unoriginate ...":

All those of heaven now rejoice, and the human race now keepeth festival with them. The prophets mystically are glad; for she whom they foresaw in generations of old in images the bush, the jar and the staff, the cloud, the portal, the throne and the great mountain-is born today.

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., the foregoing is repeated.

ODE I

Canon of the forefeast, with 8 troparia, including its Irmos, the acrostic whereof is:

"I hymn the nativity of the divine Virgin", composition of Joseph, Tone IV:

Irmos: I shall open my mouth, and with the Spirit will it be filled; and I shall utter discourse unto the Queen and Mother, and shall appear, radiantly keeping festival; and, rejoicing, I shall hymn her wonders.

Rejoicing today, let us with gladness hymn the divine nativity of the Mother of God; for she hath given birth to the Joy of the universe which destroyeth the grief of our first mother.

From a barren woman doth the all-pure and most immaculate Mistress issue forth barren of sin, whom the law prefigured and the proclamations of the divine heralds of God announced.

The temple and palace of the King didst thou become, wherein, fashioning a habitation for Himself, the Transcendent One maketh of the faithful a dwelling-place of the Holy Trinity.

Theotokion: **T**he most comely wedding chamber, the most exalted throne of God, whereon the Transcendent One seated Himself in the flesh, issueth forth from a barren woman; and He raiseth up those who sit in the darkness of perdition to the knowledge of the Light, by His goodness.

Canon of the martyr, with 4 troparia, the composition of Theophanes, in the same tone:

Irmos: **H**aving traversed the depths of the Red Sea with dryshod feet, Israel of old conquered the might of Amalek in the wilderness through Moses' hands stretched forth in the form of the Cross.

O all-glorious one, entreat now the Lord and Benefactor, that those who honor thy memory today be saved from all manner of dangers, tribulations and sorrows; and help them.

Christ hath truly shown thee forth as a most radiant star in the firmament of the Church, O all-praised martyr, illumining the whole world with the splendors of thy sufferings.

Having roiled the sea of impiety as a steed of the Lord, O martyr, in the abyss of thy precious and holy blood thou didst drown all the power of the adversary like Pharaoh.

Theotokion: **B**y the will of the Father, through the divine Spirit, didst thou conceive the Son of God without seed and give birth in the flesh unto Him Who hath existence from the Father without mother and was born of thee without a father for our sake.

ODE III

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: **L**ike a barren woman hath the Church of the gentiles given birth, and she could scarce bear the great assembly of children come forth from her. Let us cry out to our wondrous God: Holy art Thou, O Lord!

A fertile land is born of a barren land, bearing as fruit the Husbandman of all good things, the life-bearing Grain Who nourisheth all by His divine gesture.

Today hath the rod of virginity sprouted forth, from whence our God, the Gardener, doth blossom forth as a flower, cutting down the branches of wickedness by His extreme beauty.

Lo! the mountain unquarried, which arose from a barren rock, produceth the noetically quarried Stone, Who crusheth the falsehood of all graven idols.

Canon of the Martyr

Irmos: The Church doth rejoice in Thee, O Christ, crying aloud: Thou art my strength, O Lord, my refuge and my consolation!

The streams of thy blood, flowing forth like a river for Christ's sake, have quenched the fire of the impious, O ever-hymned martyr and athlete.

The infliction of wounds didst thou patiently bear, like an impregnable tower, O glorious one, bringing down the fortress of deception.

Like David thou didst bring low the noetic Goliath, the tyrant and his army, with the stone of faith, O most glorious one.

Theotokion: O Mother of God, thou alone hast in manner transcending nature shown thyself to be the mediatrix of good things. Wherefore, we cry out to thee: Rejoice!

Kontakion of the martyr, in Tone II:

Spec. Mel.: "The steadfast ..."

Assembling today, with a loud voice let us praise Sozon, the true and divinely wise martyr, the skilled athlete of piety, the initiate of the mysteries of grace, the most generous bestower of healings: for he entreateth Christ God in behalf of us all.

Ikos: Come ye, and with hymns let us all now earnestly praise Sozon, the great athlete who hath manifestly shone forth in the honored and divine Church of Christ, offering worthy hymns unto him: for he truly laid low the savagery of the idolaters, and, bestowing salvation, ever abideth with the faithful. Wherefore, drawn by love, O mortals, let us now call him blessed, honoring the precious and glorious memory of the athlete, and crying aloud: O most blessed Sozon, entreat Christ God in behalf of us all!

Sedalion of the martyr, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: "Go thou quickly before ...":

Saved by faith, O much-suffering Sozon, thou art become a refuge for the tempest-tossed through the providence of Christ God; for thou pourest forth rivers of healings upon those who honor thee, and ever drivest out sickness and fever. Wherefore, we honor thy divine memory with faith.

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., Sedalion of the forefeast, in Tone VIII:

Spec. Mel.: "That which was mystically ordained ...":

Let heaven rejoice and let the earth be glad! For the heaven of God is born on earth: this divine Bride born of the promise. A barren woman nourisheth the babe Mary, and Joachim rejoiceth in her nativity, saying: The rod is born to me, from whence Christ, the Flower, is arisen out of the root of David! Truly this is a most glorious wonder!

ODE IV

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: Seated in glory upon the throne of the Godhead, Jesus most divine is come on a light cloud, and with His incorrupt arm He hath saved those who cry: Glory to Thy power, O Christ!

The Maiden who is more exalted than the angels is born on earth, in holiness and purity beyond compare; and she giveth birth unto Christ, the purification, sanctification and perfect deliverance of all.

Blessed was the fruit of Anna; for she bore in her womb her who would contain the blessed and infinite Word Who bestoweth regeneration upon all the faithful.

Now doth the gloom of evil begin to break, for the most immaculate one, the animate cloud of the Sun, hath shone forth from a barren womb. Her radiant nativity do we celebrate.

As a fruitful olive-tree sprung forth from the root of Jesse, O Virgin, hath Anna first given birth unto thee who will cause the merciful Word to spring forth. His mercy and truth abide forever.

Canon of the Martyr

Irmos: Beholding Thee lifted up upon the Cross, O Sun of righteousness, the Church stood in her place, czlring out as is meet: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Set afire by the love of God, O most blessed one, with thy words thou didst utterly consume all the tinder-like fuel of the ungodly; and, rejoicing, thou didst cry out: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

As a sanctified temple of the Lord, thou didst run into the temple of the ungodly and manfully break the objects of their worship, O all-lauded athlete and martyr.

Thy sacred temple hath been shown to be the healing of all manner of illness for those who have recourse to it in faith and who honor thy valiant deeds therein, O all-praised athlete Sozon.

Theotokion: **T**hou gavest birth unto the Lord without knowing wedlock, O Virgin, and after thy birthgiving wast shown to be a Virgin still. Wherefore, with unwavering faith and voices un-stilled we cry out to thee, O Mistress: Rejoice!

ODE V

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: **A**ll things are filled with awe at thy divine glory, for thou, O Virgin who hast not known wedlock, didst have within thy womb Him Who is God over all, and didst give birth to the timeless Son, granting peace unto all who hymn thee.

Now is the sealed book born, which it is impossible for mortals to read by the nature of the law, and which is kept in the dwelling-place of the Word. For by the Spirit hath she revealed the books of the divinely eloquent.

The vine of salvation is born today, which blossomed forth the divine Cluster of incorruption, which poureth forth sweetness; and everyone, drinking mystically thereof, bringeth forth divine and salvific gladness as fruit.

Leap up, O men, joining chorus with the angels! As the Virgin is born today of the barren woman, sadness cometh to an end and is transformed into joy for those who celebrate her divine nativity.

Most manifestly did the prophet describe thee as a new and divine scroll, whereon the Word is written by the finger of the Father, O Virgin, in His goodness inscribing in the Book of Life all who submit to His authority.

Canon of the Martyr

Irmos: **T**hou hast come into the world as a light, O my Lord: a holy light which turneth from the gloom of ignorance those who hymn Thee with faith.

Thou, O martyr, illumined by the light of the Trinity, didst destroy the gloom of the ungodliness of polytheism, as an ever-radiant beacon.

Shown to be a rose of comely blossom by the flow of thy blood, O blessed one, thou hast perfumed the world with the sweet fragrance of thy miracles.

As a noetic cluster of the vineyard of Christ, thou hast poured forth the right-compunctionate wine of martyrdom upon those who glorify thee with faith.

Theotokion: **W**e hold thee as an invincible weapon against the enemy, and we have thee as the foundation and hope of our salvation, O Bride of God.

ODE VI

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: **C**elebrating this divine and most honored festival of the Mother of God, come, ye divinely wise, let us clap our hands and glorify God Who was born of her.

Today is born the bridge which leadeth mankind to the Light, the ladder of heaven, the most manifest mountain of God, the Virgin Theotokos, whom we call blessed.

Anna, the shell, hath given rise to the purple which later will dye the fleece of the King's incarnation. Her do we all hymn as is meet.

A well-spring hath now issued forth from a little drop: the most immaculate one who, having given birth to the Abyss of salvation, causeth the boundless streams of polytheism to cease.

Thou didst spring forth from a barren root, O ever-blessed Virgin Theotokos, and by thy divine budding forth hast cut off the thorns of wickedness at the root.

Canon of the Martyr

Irmos: I shall sacrifice to Thee with a voice of praise, O Lord, the Church crieth out to Thee, cleansed of the blood of demons by the blood which, for mercy's sake, flowed from Thy side.

Desiring to be slain as an unblemished sacrifice, for the sake of God's love, thou didst offer thyself up on His altar. Wherefore, we piously honor thee, O all-lauded one.

Having sailed over the deep of deception without foundering, thou didst attain unto the haven of the kingdom on high, O blessed martyr, enjoying everlasting calm.

The tormenter pitilessly raked thy sides with claws of iron; but thou didst gloriously commit thy spirit in the hands of God, O ever memorable and most blessed one.

Theotokion: O wonder more recent than all wonders! The Virgin, having conceived in her womb, without knowing man, Him Who sustaineth all things, did not confine Him.

Kontakion of the forefeast, in Tone III:

Spec. Mel.: "Today the Virgin ...":

Today Mary, the Virgin and Theotokos, the boundless chamber of the heavenly Bridegroom, is born! From a barren woman, by the counsel of God, the chariot of the Word is rightly adorned; for she was foretold as the divine portal and Mother of life.

Ikos: The divine Maiden Mary, whom once the prophets of God foresaw in the Spirit, hath been given as the fruit of a barren woman. Beholding her today leaping up in the womb of Anna, with the faithful Joachim we noetically make haste to the appointed feast, and, standing afar off, cry aloud, saying: The restoration of this world hath now sprouted forth from the womb of the barren woman: the divine portal and Mother of life!

ODE VII

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: **T**he divinely wise youths worshipped not a creation rather than the Creator, but, manfully trampling the threat of the fire underfoot, they rejoiced, chanting: **Blessed art Thou, the all-hymned Lord and God of our fathers!**

Blessed are Joachim and Anna, who manifestly gave birth to the blessed and pure Mother of God who gaveth birth to the blessed Word Who maketh all the faithful blessed.

As a precious gift did thy parents acquire thee who conceived God, Who hath enriched with better gifts those who cry out: O Lord and God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

More blessed than wine are thy breasts, O divinely called Anna; for with sacred breasts thou didst nurture with milk her who gaveth suck to the all-blessed Word, the Bestower of milk, the Nourisher of all things that breathe.

O divinely inspired David, leap up, strike thy psaltery and dance! For, lo! the ark which of old thou didst proclaim cometh forth from a barren womb, reserved for the King and God of creation.

Canon of the Martyr

Irmos: **T**he children of Abraham in the Persian furnace, afire with love of piety more than with the flame, cried out: **Blessed art Thou in the temple of Thy glory, O Lord!**

Cast into the furnace of painful torments, O martyr, thou didst receive from God the dew of endurance, and didst cry out in thanksgiving: **Blessed art Thou in the temple of Thy glory, O Lord!**

Possessed of a soul more luminous than any gold, thou didst in no wise desire to sacrifice to the soulless god of beaten gold, and didst offer thyself to the Lord as a sacrifice of sweet savor.

The great Shepherd appointed thee, His unblemished lamb, as shepherd for the sheep of his true flock, O martyr, showing thee un-devoured by the noetic wolves, O most lauded one.

Theotokion: **R**ejoice, O hallowed and divine habitation of the Most High For through thee, O Theotokos, hath joy been given to those who cry out: **Blessed art thou among women, O most immaculate Mistress!**

ODE VIII

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: **The birthgiving of the Theotokos saved the pious children in the furnace: then in figure, but now in deed; and she moveth all the world to chant to Thee: Hymn the Lord, ye works, and exalt Him supremely for all ages!**

Let us give movement to our tongue in hymnody, honoring the divine nativity of her who, through the Spirit, made incarnate the all-divine Word; and let us cry aloud: Hymn the Lord, ye works, and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Leap up, ye prophets of God, honoring the nativity of the Virgin; for she hath fulfilled the prophecy of all of you, giving birth to Christ, the God of all, Who is foretold by you. Him do ye exalt supremely for all ages!

Ye mountains, resound with gladness! O apostles and martyrs, join chorus! Ye venerable and righteous, rejoice today in the nativity of the Mother of the Lord, cry out: Hymn the Lord and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

The most pure Mother of the Word hath blossomed forth as a fragrant apple; she hath appeared as a divine rose, perfumed the ends of the world today and banished the cause of our sin. Her do we exalt supremely for all ages!

Human nature, bereft of the precious gifts of the divine Spirit, was made glad on this day, seeing the divine Maiden born of a barren woman; and it cried out: Hymn the Lord, ye works, and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Canon of the Martyr

Irmos: **Stretching forth his hands, Daniel shut the lions' mouths in the pit; and the young lovers of piety, girded about with virtue, quenched the power of the fire, crying out: Bless the Lord, O ye works of the Lord!**

Removing the arm of the golden idol, O wise one, thou didst distribute it among the poor, securing for thyself the truly incalculable riches of martyrdom, O ever-memorable one who cried out: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

When the incorporeal foe wrestled with thee, thou didst cast him down with the assistance of Christ. Wherefore, He Himself hath bestowed honors upon thee: the ability to work miracles. To Him didst thou cry out, rejoicing: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Opening thy mouth, thou didst fill it with the Spirit, O most lauded Sozon, and the mouths of those who blaspheme the Creator didst thou fill with all manner of shame; and, rejoicing, thou didst cry out to Christ: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Theotokion: Among all generations, O pure Virgin, thou alone hast been shown to be the Mother of God. Thou wast the receptacle of God, O most immaculate one, who wast not consumed by the fire of the unapproachable Light. Wherefore, we all call thee blessed, O Mary, Bride of God.

ODE IX

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: Let every earth-born man leap for joy, enlightened by the Spirit; and let the nature of the incorporeal intelligences keep festival, honoring the sacred feast of the Mother of God, and let them cry aloud: Rejoice, O most blessed Theotokos, pure Ever-virgin!

Lo! the holy place of God hath been shown forth! The all-glorious city of the King hath been erected! The luminous garden of paradise hath splendidly blossomed forth her who is the mediatrix of paradise, the point of reconciliation between God and man.

Today hath the lamp of the Light appeared, in which the pre-eternal golden Light, having taken up His abode, illumineth those who languish in the night of evils, destroyeth the gloom of ungodliness, and truly causeth all to share in the day, because of their faith.

Today the earth joineth in chorus, for it hath seen the new and most comely heaven of God born. And dwelling therein in the flesh, He raiseth men up higher than the heavens and deifieth all in His goodness. Chanting, we magnify Him with faith.

Joachim and Anna, the all-comely pair, have given rise to the unblemished heifer. And the fatted Calf Who came forth from her was slain for the world, taking upon Himself the transgressions of men and destroying the sacrifices offered to the demons.

O Theotokos who gavest birth to the Light, illumine us who in the Spirit celebrate thy radiant nativity, and show us to have a share of the light which is to come; and by thy maternal supplications, O all-pure one, grant us peace and deliverance from evils.

Canon of the Martyr

Irmos: Christ, Who united the two disparate natures, the Chief Cornerstone uncut by human hands, was cut from thee, the unquarried mountain, O Virgin. Wherefore, in gladness we magnify thee, O Theotokos!

Cast down to the ground, thou wast shown to be a chosen stone of Christ the Chief Cornerstone, O martyr, destroying the fortress of deception, and making firm the hearts of the faithful.

The Church of Christ, having now acquired thee as a stream of life, is ever adorned with the majesty of thy sufferings and miracles, O martyr, having quenched its thirst with thy blood as with water.

Thou didst find the kingdom of heaven to be the reward of thy struggles and labors, O divinely wise Sozon. Joining chorus therein, O most glorious one, be thou mindful of those who with faith keep thy sacred memory.

Theotokion: **L**oose thou now the chains of mine offenses, O Virgin Theotokos who gavest birth to the Source of loving-kindness; and fill me with joy, O thou who alone art blessed of God, that I may magnify thee as is meet.

Exapostilarion of the martyr:

Spec. Mel.: "Hearken, ye women ...":

Armed with the weapon of thy precious Cross, O Word, Thine athlete soundly vanquished the hosts of the adversary and put the tyrants to shame; he suffered for Thee, O my Christ, King of all, and ever reigneth with Thee.

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., Exapostilarion of the forefeast:

Be renewed, O Adam, and be thou magnified, O Eve! Ye prophets, join chorus with the apostles and the righteous! For the common joy of angels and men hath shone forth today from the righteous Joachim and Anna: Mary the Theotokos.

At the Aposticha, these stichera, in Tone II:

Spec. Mel.: "O house of Ephratha ...":

Come, ye descendants of Adam, * let us hymn the Virgin, * the all-pure Mary, * who hath sprung forth from David * and given birth to Christ.

Stichos: **Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thine ear.**

Let us offer praise * unto our Deliverer and Lord * Who from a barren woman * hath given us the Theotokos, * the only Ever-virgin.

Stichos: **The rich among the people shall entreat thy countenance.**

The Mother of the King of all, * the joy of all the universe, * is born today * from a barren womb * most gloriously.

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., in Tone II:

The Queen of all, the dwelling-place of God foretold of old, the divine habitation of the ever-existent Essence, hath come forth today from the barren womb of the glorious Anna. Because of her Hades hath been trampled underfoot, and Eve, the mother of us all, is led into steadfast life. Let us cry out to her as is meet: Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the Fruit of thy womb!

AT LITURGY

On the Beatitudes, 8 troparia: 4 from Ode III of the canon of the forefeast, and 4 from Ode VI of the canon of the martyr.

A fertile land is born of a barren land, bearing as fruit the Husbandman of all good things, the life-bearing Grain Who nourisheth all by His divine gesture.

Today hath the rod of virginity sprouted forth, from whence our God, the Gardener, doth blossom forth as a flower, cutting down the branches of wickedness by His extreme beauty.

Lo! the mountain unquarried, which arose from a barren rock, produceth the noetically quarried Stone, Who crusheth the falsehood of all graven idols.

Desiring to be slain as an unblemished sacrifice, for the sake of God's love, thou didst offer thyself up on His altar. Wherefore, we piously honor thee, O all-lauded one.

Having sailed over the deep of deception without foundering, thou didst attain unto the haven of the kingdom on high, O blessed martyr, enjoying everlasting calm.

The tormenter pitilessly raked thy sides with claws of iron; but thou didst gloriously commit thy spirit in the hands of God, O ever memorable and most blessed one.

Theotokion: **O** wonder more recent than all wonders! The Virgin, having conceived in her womb, without knowing man, Him Who sustaineth all things, did not confine Him.

Troparion of the martyr, in Tone IV:

In his suffering, O Lord, Thy martyr Sozon received an imperishable crown from Thee, our God; for, possessed of Thy might, he cast down the tormenters and crushed the feeble audacity of the demons. By his prayers do Thou save our souls.

Troparion of the forefeast, in Tone IV:

Mary, the divine Maiden, is born unto us today from the root of Jesse and the loins of David; and all things rejoice and are made new through joy. Rejoice together, O heaven and earth! Praise her, ye lands of the gentiles! Joachim maketh glad, and Anna holdeth festival, crying aloud: A barren woman giveth birth to the Theotokos, the Nourisher of our Life!

Kontakion of the martyr, in Tone II:

Assembling today, with a loud voice let us praise Sozon, the true and divinely wise martyr, the skilled athlete of piety, the initiate of the mysteries of grace, the most generous bestower of healings: for he entreateth Christ God in behalf of us all.

Kontakion of the forefeast, in Tone III:

Today Mary, the Virgin and Theotokos, the boundless chamber of the heavenly Bridegroom, is born! From a barren woman, by the counsel of God, the chariot of the Word is rightly adorned; for she was foretold as the divine portal and Mother of life.

Prokimenon, in Tone VII: The righteous man shall be glad in the Lord, and shall hope in Him.

Stichos: Hearken, O God, unto my prayer, when I make supplication unto Thee.

EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS, § 233 [Eph. 6: 10-17]

Brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high [places]. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

Alleluia, in Tone IV: The righteous cried, and the Lord heard them, and He delivered them out of all their tribulations.

Stichos: Many are the tribulations of the righteous, and the Lord shall deliver them out of them all.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN, § 52 [JN. 15: 17-16: 2]

The Lord spake unto His Disciples saying: These things I command you, that ye love one another. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before [it hated] you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin. He that hateth me hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other

man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. But [this cometh to pass], that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause. But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, [even] the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning. These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.

Communion Verse: In everlasting remembrance shall the righteous be; he shall not be afraid of evil tidings.