

THE 1st DAY OF THE MONTH OF AUGUST
**THE PROCESSION OF THE PRECIOUS WOOD OF THE HONORABLE & LIFE-
CREATING CROSS**
**COMMEMORATION OF THE 7 HOLY MACCABEE CHILDREN, THEIR MOTHER,
SOLOMONIA, & THEIR TEACHER, ELEAZAR**
AT VESPERS

We chant the appointed Kathisma; On "Lord, I have cried ...",
6 stichera: 3 of the Cross, in Tone IV:
Spec. Mel.: "Called from on high ...":

Today the godly multitude of the faithful rejoiceth, * for the heavenly Cross appeareth to the ends of the world, * illumining the firmament with unapproachable light, * maketh the air brilliant * and adorneth the face of the earth. * And the Church of Christ hymneth it in divine songs, * worshiping it with veneration, * and the divine and all-wondrous Cross * preserveth it from on high. * By its power are we strengthened; * wherefore, let us approach the Master, saying: * Grant peace to the world and enlighten our souls!

Let creation leap up and rejoice, * for the Cross hath shone forth today from heaven, * illumining those on earth, * and hath shown those who have been scattered to be unified. * Today the angelic choirs join chorus with men, * for the rampart of resistance * hath been destroyed by the Cross, * which hath manifestly united all into one. * Wherefore, shining forth more brightly than the sun, * it illumineeth all creation with grace, * and maketh radiant and saveth * those who honor it with faith.

Behold! the divine Cross clearly shineth forth upon the ends of the earth * more brightly than the radiance of the sun, * desiring to indicate the end of all things * as the precious scepter * of Christ the King. * It hath raised the human race up from Hades, * sending hell into great captivity, * and, casting down the enemy, * it hath utterly destroyed the pride of the demons. * And now it showeth forth the resurrection of the Savior * and saveth those who cry: * Grant peace to the world * and enlighten our souls!

And 3 stichera of the saints, in Tone I:
Spec. Mel.: "O most lauded martyrs ...":

Tyranny could not shake * the summit of the law * raised aloft on seven pillars; * for the right noble youths and brethren, * the preservers of the Traditions of Moses, * manfully endured * the bestial wrath of the tyrant, * giving themselves over * to those who cut the body asunder.

Animated by the great expectations * which they have now received, * the pious and valiant children, * with their divinely wise mother Solomonia, * endured the severing of the members of their flesh, * truly elevating their mind * far above visible things, * finding rest in the bosom of Abraham their forefather.

Having armed themselves firmly * with valor of soul, * as ones who vanquished wrath * the most sacred Eleazar and the all-wise youths, * together with their divinely wise mother Solomonia, * mightily attacked the enemy * with their preservation of the law of their fathers, * for the sake of piety.

Glory ..., the composition of John the Monk, in Tone VIII:

The holy Maccabees said to the tyrant: "O Antiochus, we have but one God, through Whom we came into being, and to Whom we will return! Another world awaiteth us, more exalted and constant than that which is visible, a mighty and imperishable Jerusalem will be our homeland, and our triumph will be to dwell with the angels!" Through their supplications, O Lord, have mercy and save our souls!

Now & ever ..., the composition of John the Monk, in the same tone:

To Thy precious Cross, O Christ God, which Moses prefigured in himself of old when he cast down and vanquished Amalek, and of which David the psalmist commanded, saying: "Worship the footstool of His feet", do we sinners now offer homage today with unworthy lips; and chanting, we entreat Thee Who wast well pleased to be nailed thereto: O Lord, vouchsafe unto us a place with the thief in Thy kingdom!

At the Aposticha, the stichera from the Oktoechos, and Glory ..., the composition of Cosmas the Monk, in Tone VIII:

The souls of the righteous are in the hands of the Lord: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the forefathers before the law was given, the ancestors of the Maccabees whom we now praise. For, as descendants of Abraham, mighty in soul, zealous for the Faith of their forefather Abraham, they struggled lawfully even unto death for piety; for, having been raised in piety, in suffering lawfully they denounced the ungodliness of the prideful Antiochus, and in valuing this transitory life as nought for the sake of that which is everlasting, they offered all to God: their souls, courage, understanding, their tender bodies, and their rewards for having been raised in purity. O the pious root from whom ye sprang forth, O Maccabees! O thy holy mother, who gave birth to sons equal in number to the days of the week! Yet pray ye for us, together with your mother Solomonia and the wise priest Eleazar, O Maccabees, when ye stand before Christ God, for Whose sake ye labored to receive from Him the fruits of thy labors, and make ye earnest entreaty for mankind; for whatsoever He desireth He doth do, and fulfilleth the desires of you who fear Him.

Now & ever ..., in Tone VIII:

O God, the words of Moses Thy prophet have been fulfilled, who said: "Ye shall see your life hanging before your eyes!" Today the Cross is exalted, and the world is freed from deception. Today the resurrection of Christ is renewed, and the ends of the earth rejoice, offering to Thee a hymn on cymbals, like David, and saying: "Thou hast wrought salvation in the midst of the earth, O God: the Cross and resurrection! For their sake Thou hast saved us, O Good One Who lovest mankind! O Almighty Lord, glory be to Thee!"

Troparion of the Maccabees, in Tone I:

By the pangs of the saints, which they suffered for Thee, O Lord, be Thou entreated, and heal Thou all our infirmities, we pray Thee, O Thou Who lovest mankind.

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., Troparion of the Cross, in Tone I:

Save O Lord Thy people and bless Thine inheritance, grant now unto the faithful victory over adversaries, and by the power of Thy Cross do Thou preserve Thy commonwealth.

Be It Known: Before the bells are rung, the priest entereth the sacristy and transfereth the precious Cross to the table of oblation. After the dismissal of Vespers, the priest and deacon array themselves in their vestments. The deacon censeth the precious Cross, and saith: **Bless, master!** Priest: **Blessed is our God ...**Then:

Trisagion through Our Father Troparion of the Cross; Glory ..., Now & ever: Kontakion of the Cross. The priest taketh the Cross on its tray and placeth it upon his head, and beareth it into the sanctuary, preceded by two candle-bearers bearing lighted candles. And he setteth the Cross on the altar-table, in the place usually occupied by the Gospel-book, said Gospel-book being removed to the High Place. And a lamp is set to burn before the precious Cross throughout the night.

AT MATINS

On "God is the Lord ...": the troparion of the Cross, in Tone I:

Save O Lord Thy people and bless Thine inheritance, grant now unto the faithful victory over adversaries, and by the power of Thy Cross do Thou preserve Thy commonwealth. (Twice)

Glory ..., that of the Maccabees:

By the pangs of the saints, which they suffered for Thee, O Lord, be Thou entreated, and heal Thou all our infirmities, we pray Thee, O Thou Who lovest mankind.

Now & ever ..., that of the Cross, once.

The usual Kathismata; Sedalia from the Oktoechos.

One canon from the Oktoechos, with 4 troparia, including the Irmos; the canon of the Cross, with 6 troparia; and that of the Maccabees with 4 troparia.

But if this feast fall on a Saturday, and if the temple is dedicated to Christ or the Theotokos, we chant the canon of the temple, with 4 troparia, including the Irmos; and the canons of the Cross and Maccabees as above.

ODE I

Canon of the Cross, the acrostic whereof is: "I bow down before the Cross, the salvation of the faithful", in Tone VI:

Irmos: Traversing the deep on foot, as though it were dry land, and seeing the tyrant Pharaoh drowned, Israel cried aloud: Let us chant unto God a hymn of victory!

I bow down before the Cross, the salvation of the faithful, and I kiss it fervently, and, embrace it, crying out: O most blessed Tree of Christ, illumine my soul and mind, I pray!

Today the sign of the Cross hath shown itself to be victorious over the passions and the demons. Wherefore, O ye faithful, radiantly illumined in soul, let us all kiss it now.

The precious Cross emitteth brilliant rays and illumineth those who bow down before it with faith today, sanctifying our souls and bodies.

Lying, visible, before us, the life-giving Cross sendeth forth brilliant rays of grace. Offering praise unto the Lord, let us approach and receive enlightenment, gladness, salvation and remission.

Theotokion: O all-holy Virgin who gavest birth in the flesh unto Christ Who of His own will suffered for our sake on the Cross: by thine entreaties save those who bless thee with honor.

Canon of the Maccabees, in Tone VIII:

Irmos: **H**aving traversed the water as though it were dry land, and escaped the evil of Egypt, the Israelite cried aloud: Let us chant unto our Deliverer and God!

Appearing among the cruel ones with a single resolve, the choir of the seven athletes did not refuse to die, that they might confirm the law of their fathers.

Disdaining glory on this earth, with their desire for the divine kingdom the godly Maccabees endured every pang; wherefore, they are honored today as is meet.

The preservers of the law of Moses, the truly valiant Maccabees, showed themselves to be brethren one to another when they trampled the ungodliness of Antiochus underfoot.

Theotokion: **T**he ranks of angels and men praise thee unceasingly, O unwedded Mother; for in thine arms thou didst bear the Creator of all as a babe.

Katavasia: **T**raversing the deep on foot, as though it were dry land, and seeing the tyrant Pharaoh drowned, Israel cried aloud: Let us chant unto God a hymn of victory!

ODE III

Canon of the Cross

Irmos: **T**here is none as holy as Thee, O Lord my God, Who hast uplifted the horn of Thy faithful and established us on the rock of the confession of Thee, O Good One.

Of old, a sword was given to guard the blessed tree of life after the disobedience of Adam the first-created; but the Cross hath opened a path thereto.

With eyes, mouth and soul, with our faces and hearts, let us all bow down before the all-holy Cross of Christ, the Bestower of life, whereby the whole world is sanctified.

Becoming temples of God today, as the prophets said, bowing down before the wood of the all-holy Cross, all of us who are the heirs thereto kiss it with fear.

We chant hymns to thee, O Christ, and with faith entreat thy power: Rescue us from the snares of the enemy, and direct all of us who hymn thee to the haven of salvation.

Theotokion: **A**s a virgin thou gavest birth to the Son Who before thee was begotten of God the Father without mother before time began, and hath been crucified in the flesh, that He might save those who had sinned before.

Canon of the Maccabees

Irmos: O Lord, Fashioner of the vault of heaven and Creator of the Church: establish me in Thy love, O summit of desire, confirmation of the faithful, Who alone lovest mankind.

Walking according to the precepts of the law of your fathers, O blessed athletes of Christ, with your blood ye have acquired the life which ageeth not, O all-lauded ones.

Neither fire nor the sword were ever able to alter the valor of your resolve for the Faith, O blessed ones, and therein ye set at nought the arrogance of the tormenters.

Ye endured tortures for Christ God, O all-praised martyrs, and have received trophies of victory from on high, praying continually that He save our souls.

Theotokion: As a virgin thou gavest birth, O thou who knewest not wedlock, and a virgin didst thou remain, O unwedded Mother. O Theotokos Mary, entreat Christ our God, that we be saved!

Katavasia: There is none as holy as Thee, O Lord my God, Who hast uplifted the horn of Thy faithful and established us on the rock of the confession of Thee, O Good One.

Kontakion of the Maccabees, in Tone II: Spec. Mel.: "Seeking the highest ...":

O ye seven pillars of the wisdom of God, seven-branched lamp of the divine Light, O most wise Maccabees who before the martyrs were martyrs most great: with them entreat ye the God of all, that we who honor you may be saved!

Ikos: Praise thy God with fervor, O Sion, for He hath strengthened the chains of thy gates and blessed thy children; for, like an invincible army, a legion truly valiant and mighty of mind, they stood with divine wisdom against the wiles of the ungodly, receive together the wreaths of victory of the heavenly Sion, and stand before the throne of God, praying unceasingly for all. Ask thou that those who hymn you may be saved.

Sedalion of the Maccabees, in Tone VIII: Spec. Mel.: "Of the Wisdom ...":

Having been raised in piety, O wise children, as martyrs ye manfully put to shame the threats of the tormenters; as champions of the law, ye were obedient to your fathers, O saints, and with your divinely wise mother ye suffered patiently. Wherefore, having truly purchased the life of heaven by your death, ye rejoice eternally, O Maccabees mighty of soul. Entreat Christ God, that He grant remission of offenses unto those who honor your holy memory with love.

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., Sedalion of the Cross, in Tone VI:

Thy Cross, O Lord, is sacred, for therein have healings been wrought for those sick in sins; wherefore, we fall down before Thee, and cry: Have mercy upon us!

ODE IV

Canon of the Cross

Irmos: Christ is my power, my God and my Lord, the honored Church doth sing, crying out in godly manner with a pure mind, keeping festival in the Lord.

Let the whole earth drop forth joy, and let the trees of the forest be glad, deified today by the most precious Cross which illumineth the ends of the world.

O all-glorious Cross, who wast intended to be an instrument of execution, but becomest an invincible weapon of victory bearing life into the world: illumine our hearts!

O most honored Cross, thou art the divine conquest, thou art the accomplishment of our salvation, thou art the victory of the faithful and the divine sacrifice: Sanctify those who hymn thee!

With all the earth is heaven gladdened. The passion-bearers, martyrs and apostles, and the souls of the righteous now joyfully rejoice, and the life-imparting Tree, which lieth visibly in our midst, saveth all and sanctifieth the faithful with grace.

Theotokion: Truly hast thou appeared! Truly didst thou give birth to the Most High as thy Son, Who stretched forth His hands upon the Cross and summoned the world to Him, O Virgin Mother Mary.

Canon of the Maccabees

Irmos: O Word, with divine vision the prophet perceived Thee Who wast to become incarnate of the Theotokos alone, the mountain overshadowed; and with fear he glorified Thy power.

Having, like Moses of old, inscribed the law on the tablets of your mind, O blessed ones, ye would not violate it even unto death, but struggled steadfastly.

Offering unto God the sacrifices of the law, and being zealous for the life of Moses, the athletes of Christ prevailed over the laws of the tyrant.

As stones withstand the onslaught of the waves, O Maccabee athletes, so did ye endure many tortures with manly resolve, even unto death.

Triadicon: O unoriginate Trinity, worshipful Unity, equally enthroned, O hymned Trinity: by the entreaties of the martyrs deliver from misfortunes and perils us who hymn Thee.

Theotokion: Accept the cry, "Rejoice!" from us, O holy Theotokos! Rejoice, O thou who gavest birth to Joy for the world! Rejoice, O blessed and pure Theotokos, who alone art the help of men!

Katavasia: Christ is my power, my God and my Lord, the honored Church doth sing, crying out in godly manner with a pure mind, keeping festival in the Lord.

ODE V

Canon of the Cross

Irmos: With Thy divine light illumine the souls of those who with love rise at dawn unto Thee, O Good One, that they may know Thee, O Word of God, to be the true God Who calleth all forth from the darkness of sin.

With joy let us uplift the all-blessed Cross which is set forth in the churches and cities, and let us bow down before it, that we may receive remission of our debts.

The wicked serpent is now slain, the prince of darkness, unable to bear the radiance which the life-bearing Cross emitteth, the precious scepter of the divine King.

Like a most brilliant star, like a magnificent pearl and the all-radiant sun doth the Cross of the Lord, which we venerate, illumine all the ends of the earth. Lift up your voices in jubilation, ye nations!

Leap up, ye tribes, and chant unto God Who hath given us the indestructible confirmation of the Cross, which He now setteth before us! Rejoice, all ye faithful, receiving good things for its sake!

Theotokion: Knowing thee to be the origin of salvation, O pure one, all the faithful bless thee; for thou gavest birth in the flesh to Him Who existed from the beginning, and by His own will was nailed to the Cross.

Canon of the Maccabees

Irmos: O Lord Who by divine knowledge brought the ends of the earth into the light out of the night of ignorance, enlighten me with the dawning of Thy love for mankind.

In that ye never violated the law of your fathers, O holy martyrs, Christ Himself hath set upon you crowns of righteousness.

Standing with Eleazar as peers in resolve, O blessed children, with him ye offered yourselves unto Christ as a spiritual holocaust.

O Lord Who freest all from deception by Thy saints, save us by their supplications, in that Thou art full of loving-kindness.

Theotokion: **H**aving been shown to be more honorable than the cherubim, O most hymned Virgin, pray to thy Son, that He save the souls of those who hymn thee.

Katavasia: **W**ith Thy divine light illumine the souls of those who with love rise at dawn unto Thee, O Good One, that they may know Thee, O Word of God, to be the true God Who calleth all forth from the darkness of sin.

ODE VI

Canon of the Cross

Irmos: **B**eholding the sea of life surging with the tempest of temptations, fleeing to Thy calm haven I cry unto Thee: Lead up my life from corruption, O greatly Merciful One!

Seeing the Cross set forth today as a divine vessel, as a radiant lamp in churches, temples and cities, we hymn Him Who hath caused it to shine.

Death is slain, corruption is put to death, and the hordes of the demons flee, beholding the victorious and awesome Cross of Christ set forth today, unable to endure its touch.

Hymning Thee, God the King and Lord, in that Thou hast given us the Cross as an impregnable bulwark, we now kiss it with joy and thus escape evils.

Theotokion: **O**ur first mother in Eden was poisoned by eating of the serpent's venom; but the Virgin, having given birth to the Author of life, hath poured forth incorruption and resurrection upon the world.

Canon of the Maccabees

Irmos: **G**rant me a robe of light, O Thou Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment, O most merciful Christ our God.

Having arrayed yourselves in the vesture of martyrdom, O saints, ye embroidered it with the labors of your suffering.

Desiring to be with Christ, O most glorious martyrs, ye have run the course of suffering with unwavering resolve.

Preserving the law which Moses handed down, O holy ones, ye suffered lawfully, putting the tyrant Antiochus to shame.

Theotokion: **O** thou who alone gavest birth to the Word in the flesh at His word, deliver our souls from the snares of the enemy, we pray.

Katavasia: **B**eholding the sea of life surging with the tempest of temptations, fleeing to Thy calm haven I cry unto Thee: Lead up my life from corruption, O greatly Merciful One!

Kontakion of the Cross, in Tone IV:

O Thou Who wast lifted up willingly upon the Cross, bestow Thy compassions upon the new community called after Thee, O Christ God; gladden by Thy power Orthodox Christians, granting them victory over all adversaries. May they have as an ally the invincible trophy, the weapon of peace.

Ikos: **H**e who was caught up to the third heaven of paradise and heard unspeakable and divine words which the human tongue cannot utter, what writeth he to the Galatians, which, as lovers of the Scriptures, ye have both read and come to understand? - God forbid, saith he, that I should glory, save only in the Cross of the Lord, - whereon having suffered He slew the passions. Let us all then firmly hold this boast, the Cross of the Lord; for this Wood is our salvation, the invincible trophy, the weapon of peace!

ODE VII

Canon of the Cross

Irmos: **The Angel caused the furnace to pour forth dew upon the pious youths, and the command of God, which consumed the Chaldeans, prevailed upon the tyrant to cry out: Blessed art Thou, O God of our fathers!**

O ye faithful, let us bow down before the saving Tree, the all-holy Cross, which all the armies of the angels serve, beholding it displayed, pouring forth sanctification and life upon us.

The all-holy Cross of Christ, the Bestower of life, hath been shown to be victorious, from on high driving away a multitude of the demons and the audacity of the barbarians, and showing our Orthodox hierarchs forth as conquerors of all heresies.

We hymn, glorify, magnify and bow down before Thy might, O Christ, for Thou hast given Thy divine Cross to us, Thy servants, as inexhaustible sweetness and a guardian for our souls and bodies.

Theotokion: **T**he furnace did not consume the three youths, prefiguring thy birthgiving; for the divine Fire, dwelling within thee, did not consume thee, teaching all to chant: Blessed is the God of our fathers!

Canon of the Maccabees

Irmos: **O Lord God of our fathers, Who founded the earth in the beginning and established the heavens by Thy word: blessed art Thou forever!**

In suffering the pain of martyrdom, ye were undaunted by the threats of the tyrant, crying out to Christ: Blessed is the God of our fathers! **(Twice)**

Enduring pain with patience, ye vanquished the cruel wiles of the enemy, crying out to Christ: Blessed is the God of our fathers!

Theotokion: O God of our fathers, Who madest Thine abode within the Virgin's womb, and for her sake restored Adam, blessed art Thou!

Katavasia: The Angel caused the furnace to pour forth dew upon the pious youths, and the command of God, which consumed the Chaldeans, prevailed upon the tyrant to cry out: Blessed art Thou, O God of our fathers!

ODE VIII

Canon of the Cross

Irmos: Fall back in awe and fear, O heaven; and let the foundations of the earth be shaken! For, lo! He Who dwelleth in the highest is numbered among the dead and sojourneth as a stranger in a small tomb. Ye children, bless; ye priests, hymn; ye people, exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Prefiguring Thy Cross, Jacob once laid his arms cross-wise over his grandsons, blessing them and teaching grace among the nations. Ye children, bless; ye priests, hymn; ye people, exalt God supremely forever!

O Thine ineffable condescension and Thine indescribable good things, O Christ! Thou becamest incarnate, and, being crucified and accepting death, didst decide to release man from the curse, pouring forth incorruption upon the thrice-blessed Tree, this all-glorious Cross, forever.

Let us praise today the all-holy Cross of the Lord, the divine victory, the origin of life, the destroyer of falsehood, the annihilator of the demons, the repeller of barbarians, the protector and champion of kings.

Theotokion: Beholding Christ pierced with nails, His incorrupt side run through with a spear, beaten about the head with a reed, and given gall to eat, the Virgin cried aloud: "Whither hath Thy beauty departed, O all-comely Word, more glorious than all the children of men?"

Canon of the Maccabees

Irmos: The unoriginate King of glory, before Whom the hosts of heaven tremble, hymn, ye priests, and exalt supremely for all ages!

As true lovers and excellent keepers of the law, O all-praised martyrs, ye hymn Christ forever.

Let us truly honor, as is meet, the seven Maccabees, the seven-branched fruit of a holy root, as martyrs of the Lord.

Let us honor as is meet the zealots of the law, the faithful athletes one in soul, the seven Maccabees and their mother.

Triadicon: O indivisible Trinity and Unity, I glorify Thee alone in divinity, and hymn Thee, one Power in three Persons.

Theotokion: O ye priests, hymn and exalt God supremely forever, for He became incarnate of the Virgin for our sake in latter times.

Katavasia: Fall back in awe and fear, O heaven; and let the foundations of the earth be shaken! For, lo! He Who dwelleth in the highest is numbered among the dead and sojourneth as a stranger in a small tomb. Ye children, bless; ye priests, hymn; ye people, exalt Him supremely for all ages!

ODE IX

Canon of the Cross

Irmos: It is not possible for men to behold God, upon Whom the ranks of angels dare not gaze; but through thee, O most pure one, hath the Word appeared incarnate unto men; and magnifying Him with the armies of heaven, we call thee blessed.

Through disobedience we became corrupt, being shown to be violators of the commandment of God; wherefore, death came upon men. For this cause immortality hath blossomed forth today; the victorious Cross of Christ, which we venerate.

Lo! the all-holy Tree hath appeared; the mighty hope of the faithful, the deliverance from the curse; and it setteth joy before men, denouncing the prince of darkness. O ye faithful, let us bow down before it with gladness.

The desired Tree, the invincible weapon, the origin of blessing, the confirmation and bulwark of Christians, the steadfast aid, the deliverance from the curse, hath appeared to us; and it hath illumined and sanctified us who bow down before it.

Theotokion: O temple and portal of sanctity, O throne of God, cloud and most radiant lamp, O most immaculate one, thou ark of grace; protect and preserve those who offer veneration to the precious image of thine only-begotten Son.

Canon of the Maccabees

Irmos: We magnify thee, the Mother of God, and we glorify thee, O Virgin Theotokos, as her who gave birth to the Savior of our souls.

O most lauded martyrs, ye have truly been shown to be a treasury of divine gifts and riches which cannot be taken away.

O valiant advocates before the Creator of all, ask for our souls a tranquil life. Preserve us who with divine zeal and ardor of soul celebrate your memory, undevoured by the evil one.

Triadicon: Let us worship the Father and the Spirit with the Son, crying out with the angels: Glory to God in the highest!

Theotokion: Rejoice, O holy gate which openeth unto God Who alone is all-wise, O thou whom the all-holy Spirit overshadowed!

Katavasia: It is not possible for men to behold God, upon Whom the ranks of angels dare not gaze; but through thee, O most pure one, hath the Word appeared incarnate unto men; and magnifying Him with the armies of heaven, we call thee blessed.

Exapostilarion from the Oktoechos; and Glory ..., that of the Maccabees:

We hymn the wondrous Maccabees: Eleazar, the children and Solomonia; for they cast down the arrogance of the serpent, the author of evil, and have been crowned as servants of the law.

Now & ever ..., Exapostilarion of the Cross:

The Cross is the guardian of the whole world! The Cross is the beauty of the Church! The Cross is the dominion of kings! The Cross is the confirmation of the faithful! The Cross is the glory of the angels and the wounding of the demons!

On the Praises, 6 stichera: 3 of the Cross, in Tone I:

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

The precious Cross maketh the paths of heaven * ready for all to cross * who bow down before it with steadfast faith; * and He Who was nailed thereto * joineth those who hymn it with love * to the choirs of the immaterial hosts.

Bowing down with faith before the precious Cross, * we hymn the Master Who was crucified thereon, * purifying our lips and souls at His behest; * and, praising Him, * we are illumined with its noetic radiance.

Sweetening the bitter waters of old, * Moses delivered Israel, * using an image of the Cross; * and we, O ye faithful, * mystically and divinely tracing its image in our hearts, * are ever saved by its might.

And 3 stichera of the Maccabees:

In Tone I: The much-suffering mother, calling her children to struggle, said: "Follow after the gray hairs of Abraham, that ye may share in the sacrifice of Isaac!" And, accepting this instruction, they went before her who taught them, watching as each of them, one by one, underwent the torments of cruelty. Through their supplications, O God, have mercy upon us!

In Tone IV: The seven chosen pillars were hewn from a single noetic rock, and were shown to be an unshakable pillar of the law. Wherefore, be Thou well-pleased, O Savior, to preserve our souls in peace.

In Tone V: The children of Solomonia, the preservers of the law, suffering at the tribunal of Antiochus, cried out to him: "O Antiochus, we are enduring all for the law of our fathers; and neither fire, nor the sword, nor wild beasts, nor wounds shall separate us therefrom. We will die together, with our aged mother and our father and teacher, living and rejoicing together for endless ages!"

Glory ..., in Tone IV:

Come, O ye faithful, let us behold the force assembled against the Maccabees, and the valor of the holy children! For the tyrannical king who held sway over all nations was thwarted by an elderly man, seven children and one woman! Through their supplications, O God, have mercy upon us!

Now & ever ...in the same tone:

O Lord Who enabled the meek David to conquer the foreigner, ally Thyself also with our pious Orthodox hierarchs and enable them to bring down all proponents of heresy and schism with the weapon of the Cross. O Compassionate One, show forth upon us Thine ancient mercies, that they may truly know that Thou art God, and that we who set our hope on Thee may triumph, entreating Thine all-pure Mother, as is our wont, that we be granted great mercy.

And while the Great Doxology is chanted quietly, the priest, having put on full sacerdotal vestments, entereth the holy sanctuary bearing the censer, the deacon preceding him with a lamp; and the priest censeth the holy table and the precious Cross, and, lifting the precious Cross with its tray to his head, he departeth the sanctuary through the northern door, preceded by servers bearing two lamps and the censer, and cometh before the royal doors, where he standeth, awaiting the conclusion of the Trisagion.

When the Trisagion cometh to an end, the priest intoneth: "Wisdom! Stand aright!" And the singers chant the troparion: " Save O Lord, Thy people ...", thrice.

Then the priest leaveth his place before the royal doors, bearing the precious Cross on his head, and goeth to the analogion which has been placed, adorned, in the center of the church, and setteth the precious Cross thereon. And he maketh a prostration before the precious Cross thrice, chanting softly: "Before Thy Cross we bow down, O Master, and Thy holy resurrection do we glorify!" And the choirs also chant this hymn aloud, thrice. Then all venerate the precious Cross, bowing down before it one by one, while the following stichera are chanted:

In Tone II: Come, ye faithful, let us bow down before the life-creating Tree, whereon of His own will Christ, the King of glory, stretching forth His hands, hath raised us up to our former blessed state, of which the enemy of old deprived us through pleasure, causing us to be driven out of paradise by God! Come, ye faithful, let us bow down before that by which we have been vouchsafed to crush the heads of the invisible foe! Come, all ye peoples of our fatherland, let us honor the Cross of the Lord with hymns, crying: "Rejoice, O Cross, thou perfect deliverance of fallen Adam; for in thee do most faithful rulers boast, for through thy power are the Moslem hordes mightily subjected! And now venerating with fear thee upon whom God was nailed, we Christians render glory, saying: O Lord Who wast nailed thereto, have mercy upon us, in that Thou art good and lovest mankind!

In Tone V: Beholding Thee, the Author and Creator of all, hanging naked upon the Cross, all creation was moved with fear and lamented. The sun dimmed its light, and the earth quaked, the rocks split asunder, and the splendid veil of the temple was rent in twain. The dead arose from their graves, and the angelic hosts were filled with awe, saying: "O the wonder! The Judge is condemned and suffereth, desiring to save and restore the world!"

In Tone VIII: Today the Master of creation and Lord of glory is nailed to the Cross, and His side is pierced by a spear. Of gall and vinegar doth He partake, Who is the Sweetness of the Church. He is invested with a crown of thorns, and He Who covereth the sky with clouds is arrayed in garments of mockery. He is smitten with a hand of clay Who fashioned man with His own hands, and He is beaten about the shoulders Who arrayeth heaven with clouds. My Deliverer and God deigneth to be spit upon and wounded, mocked and buffeted, and endureth all things for the sake of me, who am condemned, that He might save the world from deception, in that He is compassionate.

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., in the same tone:

Today He Who is intangible in essence becometh tangible to me and undergoeth suffering, freeing me from the passions. He Who granteth light to the blind is spit upon by the mouths of the iniquitous, and giveth his shoulders over to stripes for those who have been made captive. And the pure Virgin Mother, seeing Him upon the Cross, cried aloud in pain: "Woe is me, O my Child! What is this that Thou hast done? Thou Who art comely in beauty beyond all men dost show Thyself to be bereft of breath and sight, lacking in appearance and beauty. Woe is me, O my Light! I cannot look upon Thee asleep. I am wounded within, and a cruel sword passeth through my heart! I hymn Thy sufferings, I worship Thy loving-kindness. O Long-suffering One, glory be to Thee!

Then, the litanies: Have mercy upon us, O God ..., and Let us complete our morning prayer ...Deacon: Wisdom! And the priest intoneth the dismissal. First Hour.

AT LITURGY

On the Beatitudes, 8 troparia: 4 from Ode III of the canon of the Cross, and 4 from Ode VI of the canon of the Maccabees:

Of old, a sword was given to guard the blessed tree of life after the disobedience of Adam the first-created; but the Cross hath opened a path thereto.

With eyes, mouth and soul, with our faces and hearts, let us all bow down before the all-holy Cross of Christ, the Bestower of life, whereby the whole world is sanctified.

Becoming temples of God today, as the prophets said, bowing down before the wood of the all-holy Cross, all of us who are the heirs thereto kiss it with fear.

We chant hymns to thee, O Christ, and with faith entreat thy power: Rescue us from the snares of the enemy, and direct all of us who hymn thee to the haven of salvation.

Having arrayed yourselves in the vesture of martyrdom, O saints, ye embroidered it with the labors of your suffering.

Desiring to be with Christ, O most glorious martyrs, ye have run the course of suffering with unwavering resolve.

Preserving the law which Moses handed down, O holy ones, ye suffered lawfully, putting the tyrant Antiochus to shame.

Theotokion: **O** thou who alone gavest birth to the Word in the flesh at His word, deliver our souls from the snares of the enemy, we pray.

After the entrance, Troparion of the Cross, in Tone I:

Save O Lord Thy people and bless Thine inheritance, grant now unto the faithful victory over adversaries, and by the power of Thy Cross do Thou preserve Thy commonwealth.

The Troparion of the Maccabees, in Tone I:

By the pangs of the saints, which they suffered for Thee, O Lord, be Thou entreated, and heal Thou all our infirmities, we pray Thee, O Thou Who lovest mankind.

Glory ..., Kontakion of the Maccabees, in Tone II:

O ye seven pillars of the wisdom of God, seven-branched lamp of the divine Light, O most wise Maccabees who before the martyrs were martyrs most great: with them entreat ye the God of all, that we who honor you may be saved!

Now & ever ..., Kontakion of the Cross, in Tone IV:

O Thou Who wast lifted up willingly upon the Cross, bestow Thy compassions upon the new community called after Thee, O Christ God; gladden by Thy power Orthodox Christians, granting them victory over all adversaries. May they have as an ally the invincible trophy, the weapon of peace.

Prokimenon of the Cross, in Tone VI: Save O Lord, Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance.

Stichos: Unto Thee, O Lord, will I cry; O my God, be not silent unto me.

Prokimenon of the Maccabees, in Tone VI: In the saints that are in His earth hath the Lord been wondrous; He hath wrought all His desires in them.

EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS, § 125 [I COR. 1: 18-24]

Brethren: The preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God. For it is written: I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS, §330 (11 :33-40)

Brethren: By faith all the saints subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

Alleluia, in Tone IV: Remember Thy congregation which Thou hast purchased from the beginning.

Stichos: God is our King before the ages, He hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth.

Stichos: The righteous cried, and the Lord heard them, and He delivered them out of all their tribulations.

GOSPEL ACC. TO ST. JOHN, §60 [JN. 19: 6-11, 13-20, 25-28, 30-35]

At that time, the high priests and elders took council against Jesus to put Him to death. And they delivered Him to Pilate saying: "Away with Him! away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said unto them: "Take ye Him, and crucify Him: for I find no fault in Him. The Jews answered him: "We have a law, and by our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God." When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid; and went again into the judgment hall, and said unto Jesus: "Whence art Thou?" But Jesus gave him no answer. Then said Pilate unto Him: "Speakest Thou not unto me? Knowest Thou not that I have power to crucify Thee, and have power to release Thee?" Jesus answered: "Thou couldst have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above." When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. And it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour: and he said unto the Jews: "Behold your King!" But they cried out: "Away with Him! Away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said unto them: "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered: "We have no king but Caesar." Then delivered he Him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led Him away. And He bearing His Cross went forth into a place called the place of the skull, which is called in Hebrew Golgotha: where they crucified Him, and two others with Him, on either side, and Jesus in the midst. And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the Cross. And the writing was: "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews". This title then read many of the Jews; for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin. Now there stood by the Cross of Jesus His Mother, and His Mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw His Mother, and the disciple standing by, whom He loved, He said unto His Mother: "Woman, behold thy son!" Then said He to the disciple: "Behold thy Mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home. After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, bowed His head, and gave up the ghost. The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath day was a high day,) besought Pilate that

their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers, and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they broke not His legs: but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bore record, and his record is true.

GOSPEL ACC. TO MATTHEW, §38 [MT.10: 32-33, 37-38; 19: 27-30]

The Lord said to His disciples: "Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father Who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father Who is in heaven. He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me." Then answered Peter and said unto Him: "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee, what shall we have therefore?" And Jesus said unto them: "Verily I say unto you, that ye who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, so also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first."

Communion Verse of the Cross: The light of Thy countenance, O Lord, hath been signed upon us.

Communion Verse of the saints: Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous; praise is meet for the upright.

Be It Known: On this day, in monasteries, cathedrals and parish churches, the Lesser Blessing of Water is performed, as set forth in the Euchologion.