

**THE 19th DAY OF THE MONTH OF OCTOBER
AND THE 20th DAY OF THE MONTH OF DECEMBER
COMMEMORATION OF OUR HOLY AND RIGHTEOUS FATHER, JOHN OF
KRONSTADT**

[Note: The Service as here given is based on the assumption that it will be celebrated on 19 October as a Vigil of St. John of Kronstadt alone, and on the 20th December in conjunction with the services for the God-bearer, Ignatius, and the Forefeast of the Nativity. For other possible combinations (with the services to the Prophet Joel and/or St. John of Rila in October, or without that to St. Ignatius in December), or in the event that either should fall on a Sunday, the Typicon should be consulted.]

AT LITTLE VESPERS

At "Lord, I have cried ...," four stichera, in Tone II:

O Jesus, Son of God, my strength! O Light of my mind, Thou peace and joy of my heart: Glory to Thee! Glory to Thee Who dost deliver me from my invisible enemies" didst thou cry aloud, O John. Thus do thou also teach us to hymn the Lord with all our heart, O righteous John, servant of Christ. (Twice)

Incarnate, Christ called thieves and harlots to repentance, and thou, O merciful pastor, fulfilling the commandment of the Chief Shepherd, ate with publicans and conversed with sinners, calling all to repentance and teaching all to pray: O God, be merciful to me, a sinner! O merciful God, glory to Thee!

Ye are the image of God, wherefore preserve ye this great image, the image of God's beauty, the image of His boundless love, that ye may be children of our Father Who is in heaven, that ye may be holy as your Father is holy." Thus, O divinely wise pastor, didst thou instruct thy flock, and thus didst thou thyself live in a holy manner.

Glory ..., in Tone VIII:

Never hath thy love failed, O merciful father John of Kronstadt. Thou art our hope for correction of life, our pastoral protector, O generous benefactor, our hope, O righteous John.

Now and ever ..., in the same tone:

O Mistress, accept the supplication of thy servants, and deliver us from all want and grief.

Or this sticheron, of the Forefeast:

O house of Ephratha, * thou holy city, * glory of the prophets: * adorn thou the house * wherein the Divine One is born.

At the Aposticha, these stichera, in Tone IV:

Thou didst belong to the Lord from thine infancy, acquiring the sense of a grown man in thy childhood, desiring the wisdom of God; and thou wast wholly a dwelling place of God, O gracious John, our father.

Stichos: He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor, his righteousness abideth unto ages of ages.

Standing before the Holy Trinity with a mind illumined by grace, O blessed John, with heavenly rays thou hast illumined them that lie in the darkness of sin. Enlighten us also with the light of thy divine vision.

Stichos: His heart is ready to hope in the Lord.

Light unapproachable dwelt within thee, O righteous father, and the Lord set thee as a lamp amid the darkness of sin. Wherefore, instructed by thee, we hymn thy gracious memory, O John.

Glory ..., in Tone VI:

O Lord, Who didst bind Thine apostles with the bond of love, and hast appointed our father John as a new herald of Thy love: Establish even now the Church's bond of love, O our Savior, that united we may hymn Thee and Thine ineffable goodness.

Now and ever ..., Theotokion, in the same tone:

No one that hath recourse to thee departeth away ashamed, O all-pure Virgin Theotokos; but he asketh grace and receiveth a gift in response to a profitable petition.

Or this sticheron of the Forefeast, in the same tone:

Sing unto the Lord Who is born of the Virgin! Chant a hymn, ye armies of heaven! Clap your hands, ye mortal men! For God is come among men! Man hath become God by a gift. Lo! a wonder taketh place among us today: Christ, the King of Israel, is come!

Troparion, in Tone IV:

With the apostles thy sound hath gone forth into all the earth; with the confessors thou didst endure sufferings for Christ; thou didst resemble the holy hierarchs in thy preaching of the Word; and with the venerable hast thou shone forth in the grace of God. Therefore, the Lord hath exalted the depths of thy humility above the heavens, and hath given us thy name as a source of most wondrous miracles. Wherefore, O wonderworker, who livest in Christ forever, take pity in thy love upon people in misfortunes; and hearken unto thy children, who with faith call upon thee, O righteous John, our beloved pastor.

Or this Troparion, in Tone IV:

O wonderworker, who livest in Christ forever, take pity in thy love upon people in misfortunes; hearken unto thy children who with faith call upon thee, expecting compassionate aid from thee, O John of Kronstadt, our beloved pastor.

Glory ..., Now and ever ..., Theotokion:

The mystery hidden from before the ages and unknown even unto the angels hath, through thee, O Theotokos, been made manifest unto them that are on earth: God incarnate in unconfused union, Who of His own will accepted the Cross for our sake and, thereby raising Adam, hath save our souls from death.

Or this Troparion of the Forefeast, in the same tone:

Make ready, O Bethlehem! Be thou opened unto all, O Eden! Adorn thyself, O Ephratha! For in the cave the Tree of Life hath sprung forth from the Virgin. Her womb is shown to be a noetic paradise, in the midst of which is the divine Tree, whereof eating, we shall live, and not die as did Adam. Christ is born, that He might restore His image which fell of old!

Litany and Dismissal.

AT GREAT VESPERS

We chant "Blessed Is the man ...," the first antiphon.

At "Lord, I have cried ...," (1) on October 19, eight stichera to St. John of Kronstadt, with the repetitions as indicated; (2) on December 20, if the service be to St. John, St. Ignatius, and the Forefeast, ten stichera: the following three of the Forefeast, three for St. Ignatius, and four for St. John; (3) but if the service be for St. John and the Forefeast only, then eight stichera: the following three for the Forefeast, and five for the righteous one.

Stichera for the Forefeast, in Tone I, the composition of Anatolius:

Let us celebrate the Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ, O ye people, and raising our thoughts on high let us go in spirit to Bethlehem; and with the eyes of our mind let us look upon the Virgin, as she hasteneth to give birth unto our God, the Lord of all. Joseph, when he beheld the magnitude of this wonder, thought that he saw a mortal wrapped as a babe in swaddling clothes; but from all that came to pass he understood that it was the true God, who granteth the world great mercy.

Let us celebrate the Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ, O ye people, and raising our thoughts on high let us go in spirit to Bethlehem, and let us look upon a great mystery in the cave, for Eden is opened once again, when from the pure Virgin God cometh forth, as perfect in His divinity as in His humanity. Wherefore, let us cry aloud: Holy God, Thou Father without-beginning! Holy Mighty, Thou Son made flesh! Holy Immortal, Thou Spirit, the Comforter! Holy Trinity, glory be to Thee!

Hearken, O heaven, and give ear, O earth! For, lo! the Son and Word of God the Father cometh forth to be born of a Maiden who hath not known man, through the good pleasure of the Father Who begat Him dispassionately, by the activity of the Holy Spirit. Make ready, O Bethlehem! Throw open thy gates, O Eden! For He Who is becometh that which He was not, and He Who formed all creation Himself taketh form, granting the world great mercy.

Stichera for St. John, in Tone VI,

Spec. Mel.: "Having set all aside ...":

Having set aside all the things of this world, with one voice let us praise the wondrous beacon of the land of Russia and of the whole world, the good shepherd, the priest John, who hath given us a splendid model of life in Christ, who on earth was aflame with the spirit of prayer, and who received from the Lord a twofold gift of healing. Through his prayers may Christ strengthen us in piety and show us to be steadfast children of the Church, for the salvation of our souls. (Twice)

With all thy heart and mind, O blessed John, thou didst love the life in Christ; thinking and doing all things to please God, thy labors bore fruit abundantly through the grace of the priesthood, and at the Lord's Supper, as if in heaven, with enraptured spirit thou didst stand at the altar of the Lord from day to day with tears of compunction, and now, standing before the Holy Trinity in the highest, offer up prayers, that He grant peace to the world and save our souls.

By the path of spiritual vigilance, reverence, contemplation of the mysteries of God, amendment of soul, and rest in God, thou didst attain unto the heavenly bridal chamber. By acts of mercy and thy miracles the Church is adorned, by the purity of thy life impiety is put to shame, and by the words of thy writings the Faith is confirmed. Wherefore, we entreat thee, O most honored John: Be thou our guide amid all our circumstances, that guided and guarded by thee, we may be vouchsafed the Kingdom of heaven.

And these stichera, in the same tone and melody:

Travailing with all thy heart over the darkness of the nations, thou didst at first think to depart unto the lands of the East. But, beholding Kronstadt, which was far nearer, perishing, thou didst submit to the call from on high, which came once during sleep through a vision of a temple, O righteous John. "I know," thou didst say, "the loftiness of the priesthood, yet I hope in God; for I know that He is my strength." O, the divine power of love, which doth draw us to Christ and strengthen us! **(Twice)**

Making room for all in thy pastoral heart, and constrained by the wounds inflicted upon the poor by poverty, thou didst call all people by thy words and by thy writings, to build a house of industry, that the poor might find refuge therein. O teacher of good deeds worked through faith! O nurturer of the souls and bodies of the poor! O John, joy of them that before were in despair! Thy care for such here on earth was a likeness of thine intercession now in heaven.

Having acquired boldness in prayer, with a heart open to all, full of compassion, even after thy death thou dost not cease to offer it up. And growing eternally richer in love, thou dost ever pour forth healings and consolation, O John, joyful and speedy helper. O thou that didst heal through the laying on of thy hand, knowing the needs of them that asked before a word was uttered, intercede now invisibly for us that hymn thee as one that liveth in Christ, awaiting thy help and assistance.

Glory ..., in Tone VIII:

Thou didst believe in righteousness with thy whole heart, O priest of God, and with thy lips thou didst speak unto salvation: The Lord is my being; the Lord is my deliverance from everlasting death; the Lord is my eternal life; the Lord is my purification, my deliverance and sanctification; the Lord is my strength in weakness, my freedom when I am straightened, my light amid darkness, my peace amid confusion! Glory to Thee, O my Savior, almighty power! Glory to Thee, O Savior, omnipresent power! Glory to Thee, most kind-hearted Compassion! Glory to Thee, Power ever open to my prayers! Glory to Thee, brightest Eye which ever regarded me and beholdest all my hidden things! Wherefore, O holy John, following after thee we also cry out to the Lord: Glory to Thee, O our God, wondrous in Thy saints whose teachings show forth Thy wonder! Glory to Thee!

Now and ever ..., Dogmatic Theotokion, in Tone VIII:

The King of heaven, in His love for mankind, appeared on earth and dwelt among men. For, taking flesh of a pure Virgin, He came forth from her. The Son is one, twofold in nature, but not in Hypostasis. Therefore, proclaiming Him to be truly perfect God and perfect man, we confess Christ our God. Entreat Him, O unwedded Mother, that He have mercy on our souls!

Or this sticheron of the Forefeast, in the same tone:

Receive, O Bethlehem, the Mother of God, for she approacheth thee to give birth unto the unwaning Light. O ye angels, look down with wonder from heaven; O ye men, give glory on earth! O ye Magi from Persia, bring your threefold gift; ye shepherds abiding in the fields, sing ye the thrice-holy hymn: Let everything that hath breath praise the Creator!

Entrance. Prokimenon of the Day. And three Lessons:

READING FROM THE PROPHECY OF JOEL

Thus saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him; even a meat offering and a drink offering unto the Lord your God? Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth out of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage

to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God? Then will the Lord be jealous for his land, and pity his people. Yea, the Lord will answer and say unto his people, Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith: and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen: but I will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate, with his face toward the east sea, and his hinder part toward the utmost sea, and his stink shall come up, and his ill savor shall come up, because he hath done great things. Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the Lord will do great things. Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig tree and the vine do yield their strength. Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil. And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you. And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed. And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed.

READING FROM THE PROPHECY OF JOEL

Thus saith the Lord: Ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed. And it shall come to pass afterward, that I Will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.

READING FROM THE FIRST EPISTLE GENERAL OF JOHN

Beloved, if a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from Him, That he who loveth God love his brother also. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is

begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

At the Litia, these stichera, in Tone II:

"O Jesus, Son of God, my strength! O Light of my mind, Thou peace and joy of my heart: Glory to Thee! Glory to Thee Who dost deliver me from mine invisible enemies!" didst thou cry aloud, O John. Thus do thou also teach us to hymn the Lord with all our heart, O righteous John, servant of Christ.

Incarnate, Christ called thieves and harlots to repentance; and thou, O merciful pastor, fulfilling the commandment of the Chief Shepherd, ate with publicans and conversed with sinners, calling all to repentance and teaching all to pray: O God, be merciful to me, a sinner! O merciful God, glory to Thee!

"Ye are the image of God; wherefore preserve ye this great image, the image of God's beauty, the image of His boundless love, that ye may be children of our Father Who is in heaven, that ye may be holy as your Father is holy." Thus, a divinely wise pastor, didst thou instruct thy flock, and thus didst thou thyself live in a holy manner.

Glory ..., in Tone I:

"When we pray, we pray through the Holy Spirit; wherefore, all the prayers of the Church are the breathing of the Holy Spirit, and all we Christians are His offspring. Come, therefore, and abide in us, O Holy Spirit! Have mercy on us and renew us all, that we may be the one Body of Christ." Such was thine unceasing prayer, O most wondrous John our father, and God hearkened unto thee and anointed thee with the oil of eternal joy.

Now and ever ..., Theotokion, in the same tone:

We see thee as the resplendent dawn of the unwaning Light, O Virgin; for He Who dispelled the darkness of sin came forth from thee, reviving our hearts with the fervor of the Spirit. We beseech thee: Cease not to pray earnestly to Him on behalf of us that confess thee to be the true Theotokos.

Or this sticheron of the Forefeast, in the same tone:

Receive, O manger, Him Whom Moses the Law-giver foresaw in the bush on Horeb, now born of the Virgin through the divine Spirit. This is she of whom the Law speaketh. She is the seal of the prophets, who revealeth in mortal flesh God Whom we adore.

At the Aposticha: for the October feast, the stichera of the righteous one, as given below. For the December feast, the Typicon indicates: Aposticha of the holy and righteous John, Glory ..., of St. Ignatius, Now and ever ..., of the Forefeast. However complete stichera for the Forefeast are given as well, as below.

Stichera of St. John, in Tone VI:

O most blessed father John, being an emulator of all the saints, thou didst acquire the holy faith of the patriarchs, the zeal of the prophets and the apostles, the sanctity and godly-mindedness of the holy hierarchs, the boldness of the confessors, the freely-given aid of the unmercenary healers, the unceasing prayer of the venerable. Wherefore, we celebrate thy holy memory with splendor.

Stichos: He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor, his righteousness abideth unto ages of ages.

O divinely wise father John, having begun with the fear of God, in understanding thou didst reach the heights of wisdom. And being crucified with Christ by love, having become His very own, thou didst later drive out the fear by love; for fear hath torment, as the Apostle of love hath taught us. Wherefore, O father, thou didst adorn the minds of the faithful and didst teach thy flock to love God. O John, entreat Christ our God, that He grant us also this grace and great mercy.

Stichos: His heart is ready to hope in the Lord.

The Lord is the strength of my heart, the Lord is the light of my mind, the Lord is; my rest and my joy, my faith, hope and love; He is my food and drink, my vesture and protection. Teach us also, O holy father, to understand these words and to place our salvation in the Lord. Grant us of thy goodness, as Elijah granted to Elisha, that all our hope and steadfastness may be in the Lord.

Glory ..., in Tone VIII:

It was not our fathers that told us, nor our elders that informed us, but we ourselves have seen the miracles that have taken place through thee; we ourselves have experienced the grace that doth pour forth from thee. Our loved ones were healed, they that were dying rose from bed in good health, our every petition was granted through thy prayer. Wherefore, we honor thee as a favorite of God and an intercessor before the Lord.

Now and ever ..., Theotokion, in the same tone:

Thou hast been exalted above all creatures, O Virgin Theotokos, for He that dwelleth in the highest chose thee to be His habitation, that He might raise up our fallen nature. Wherefore, we fall down before thee, as the Mother of our Savior. Thou art our hope, thou art our confidence. Reject us not that seek thine aid.

Or this sticheron of the Forefeast, in the same tone:

O Lord, having come to Bethlehem, Thou didst make thine abode in a cave. Having heaven as Thy throne, Thou didst lie in a manger. Thou Whom hosts of angels surround didst come down to shepherds, that Thou mightest save our race, in that Thou art compassionate. Glory be to Thee!

Stichera for the Forefeast, in Tone II, the composition of Cyprian of the Studion:

Lo, the hour of our salvation draweth nigh! Make ready, O cave, for the Virgin approacheth to give birth! Rejoice and be glad, O Bethlehem, thou land of Judah, for from thee hath our Lord shone forth as the dawn! Hearken, ye mountains and hills, and all ye lands round about Judea: for Christ cometh in His love for mankind, to save the man whom He hath fashioned.

Stichos: God shall come from Ternan, and the Holy One from the mountain overshadowed and densely wooded.

O Bethlehem, thou land of Judah, with Splendor make ready a divine cave for human habitation, wherein God shall be born in the flesh of the holy Virgin who hath not known man, that He might save the world!

Stichos: O Lord, I have heard Thy report, and I was afraid; O Lord, I have considered Thy works, and I was amazed.

The composition of Andrew Pyrrhus: Come ye all, let us faithfully celebrate the forefeast of the nativity of Christ, and noetically let us put forth like a star the hymn of the glorification of the Magi, and with the shepherds let us cry out: The salvation of men hath come from the Virgin's womb, summoning the faithful.

Troparion, in Tone IV:

With the apostles thy sound hath gone forth into all the earth; with the confessors thou didst endure sufferings for Christ; thou didst resemble the holy hierarchs in thy preaching of the Word; and with the venerable hast thou shone forth in the grace of God. Therefore, the Lord hath exalted the depths of thy humility above the heavens; and hath given us thy name as a source of most wondrous miracles. Wherefore, O wonderworker, who livest in Christ forever, take pity in thy love upon people in misfortunes; and hearken unto thy children, who with faith call upon thee, O righteous John, our beloved pastor.

Or this Troparion, in Tone IV:

O wonderworker, who livest in Christ forever, take pity in thy love upon people in misfortunes; hearken unto thy children who with faith call upon thee, expecting compassionate aid from thee, O John of Kronstadt, our beloved pastor.

If there be a vigil, this troparion, twice, and "Virgin Theotokos, rejoice ...," once.

But if there be not a vigil, then after the troparion we say:

Glory ..., Now and ever ..., Theotokion, in Tone IV:

The mystery hidden from before the ages and unknown even unto the angels hath, through thee, O Theotokos, been made manifest unto them that are on earth: God incarnate in unconfused union, Who of His own will accepted the Cross for our sake and, thereby raising Adam, hath save our souls from death.

Or this Troparion of the Forefeast, in the same tone:

Make ready, O Bethlehem! Be thou opened unto all, O Eden! Adorn thyself, O Ephratha! For in the cave the Tree of Life hath sprung forth from the Virgin. Her womb is shown to be a noetic paradise, in the midst of which is the divine Tree, whereof eating, we shall live, and not die as did Adam. Christ is born, that He might restore His image which fell of old!

AT MATINS

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

Thou didst despise neither stranger nor sojourner, O father John, but wast kind and merciful and compassionate unto all: a father for orphans and a defender for widows, vesture for the naked and food for the hungry. Remember us also, thy poor children, and deny us not thy gracious love.

Glory ..., Now and ever ..., Theotokion, in the same tone, Spec. Melody:

Joseph marveled, beholding that which is supernatural in thy seedless conception, O Theotokos, and it brought to his mind the rain into a fleece of wool, the bush unburnt by fire, and the rod of Aaron which budded; and he, as thy betrothed and protector, bare witness, crying to the priests: A virgin giveth birth, yet even after remaineth a virgin!

Or this Sedalion, of the Forefeast, in Tone I:

He that bowed down the heavens and made His abode in the Virgin now cometh forth in the flesh to be born in the cave of Bethlehem as it was written, and He Who imparteth life to infants in the womb is seen as a babe Himself. Rejoicing now, let us all go forth to meet Him with uprightness of heart.

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

Strengthened by divine power, thou didst overcome the temptations of the invisible foe and hast passed on to the unwaning light. Heal thou the sufferings of our souls and direct us by thy counsel, for thou hast been given by God to all as a physician and comforter, O John, our father.

Glory ..., Now and ever ..., Theotokion:

O Theotokos, bride who knewest not wedlock, who hast transformed the grief of Eve into joy, we the faithful hymn and bow down before thee, for thou hast delivered us from the ancient curse, and do thou now pray for us unceasingly, O all-hymned one, that we may be saved.

Or this Sedalion, of the Forefeast, in Tone IV:

Rejoice exceedingly, O Zion! Make ready, O Bethlehem! The Sustainer of all, sending a star before Him, hath proclaimed His infinite condescension. He before Whom the hosts of heaven do tremble, is in very truth born without change of a Virgin, for He alone loveth mankind.

After the Polyelos, this Magnification: We magnify thee, O holy and righteous father John, and we honor thy holy memory, for thou dost entreat Christ God for us.

Selected Psalm:

A: Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord;

B: In his commandments shall he greatly delight.

Glory ..., Now and ever ...Alleluia..., Glory to Thee, a God. (Thrice)

After the Polyeleos, this Sedalion, in Tone VIII:

A fiery minister of the Word of God and a vessel of faith wast thou, O divinely inspired John; wherefore, the Lord appointed thee a new Abraham, O father of many. Pray thou therefore, O holy father, that we may all be children of God and that our souls may be saved.

Glory ..., Now and ever ..., Theotokion:

O Virgin, we call thee the portal of heaven, the tabernacle, the all-holy mountain, the luminous cloud, the ladder of heaven, the paradise of the Word, the deliverance of Eve and the great treasure of all the universe, for in thee hath salvation and the remission of the ancient transgression been wrought in the world. Wherefore, we cry out to thee: Beseech thy Son and God, that He grant remission of transgressions to them that piously worship thine all-holy birthgiving.

Or this Sedalion, of the Forefeast, in Tone VI,

Spec. Mel.: "The angelic hosts ...":

As the shepherds were piping songs, the angelic host called out and stopped them, saying: Cease now, ye who abide in the fields tending your flocks; and cry aloud and sing that Christ the Lord is born, Whose good pleasure it is, as God, to save the race of man!

Song of Ascent, the first antiphon of Tone IV.

Prokimenon, in Tone IV: Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness, and let thy saints sing with joyfulness.

Stichos: Lord, remember David, and all his trouble.

Let every breath praise the Lord.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE [6:17-23]

And [Jesus] came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases; and they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all. And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples and said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh. Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

After Psalm 50, this sticheron, in Tone VI:

O earthly angel, friend of men, instrument of the Spirit Comforter, bearer of the love of Christ, griever over all the world and mouth of all the faithful, consolation of the grieving and sorrowful, help of the persecuted, physician of our souls and bodies, father and intercessor, holy and righteous John: come thou and stand with us, that with thee we may offer up praise and thanksgiving unto God the Savior, performing this great solemnity.

Canon of the all-holy Theotokos [the Paraklisis], or that of the Forefeast, with six troparia, including the Irmos; and that of the Righteous One (and of other saints whose feasts may be kept concurrently), with eight troparia, the acrostic whereof is:

"My life is in Christ, to Whom I chant for all ages, " in Tone IV:

ODE I

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: Let us all chant a hymn of victory unto God, Who hath wrought marvelous wonders with His upraised arm and saved Israel, for He is glorious.

Let us begin this day to celebrate the forefeast of the Nativity of Christ, Who was born in the flesh of the Virgin Mother in the cave at Bethlehem, in His great lovingkindness.

The pre-eternal God, Who released me from the bonds of sin, is wrapped in swaddling bands, and, seen as a babe, He is laid in a manger. Glory to His dominion!

Theotokion: Eden is opened unto Thee, O Master, Who wast born in the flesh of the divine Maiden and Virgin in the city of Bethlehem. We hymn Thine awesome dispensation!

Canon of the Righteous One

Irmos: Israel of old, having traversed the depths of the Red Sea dryshod, conquered the power of Amalek in the wilderness by Moses' arms outstretched to form a Cross.

Make firm my senses and mind, O my Savior, that I may be able worthily to hymn the supplications and struggles of Thy servant John our father, who loved Thee and was beloved of Thee.

O blessed one who from thy youth wast forechosen to chant unto the first-called apostle in his holy temple, illumined with the radiance of the Cross thou didst flee the gloom of sin, unceasingly offering up prayers and hymnody to God our Savior.

On a chariot of the virtues didst thou mount to heaven, as did Elijah on a chariot of fire; hence, beseech thou the Lord that He send down upon us correction of life.

Theotokion: Through thee, O Virgin Theotokos, have we received everlasting life who once were deprived of life in paradise; for thou gavest birth unto Him Who alone is without beginning and giveth life unto all.

Katavasia (October): I shall open my mouth, and with the Spirit shall 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.

Katavasia (Forefeast): Christ is born, give ye glory! Christ cometh from heaven, meet ye Him! Christ is on earth, be ye exalted! O all the earth, sing ye unto the Lord, and chant with gladness, ye people, for He hath been glorified!

ODE III

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: The same stone which the builders refused, is become the headstone in the corner; this is the stone whereon Christ hath established the Church which He redeemed from the nations.

Let all creation chant the hymnody of the forefeast unto Him Who was begotten of the Father before the morning star, and hath now shone forth ineffably from the Virgin, and is born in Bethlehem, in His great lovingkindness.

A star hath already shone forth from the tribe of Judah; and, recognizing it, the kings are journeying from the East, and hasten to behold Christ born in the flesh in Bethlehem.

Theotokion: Isaiah, knowing of this incarnation of Christ, clearly foretelleth through the Holy Spirit: Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name 'God is with us,' and the government shall be upon his shoulder.

Canon of the Righteous One

Irmos: The Church rejoiceth in Thee, O Christ, crying aloud: Thou art my strength, O Lord, my refuge and confirmation.

One who shared in the manner of life of the apostles and an emulator of their life wast thou, O divinely inspired one, and thou didst set forth the word of truth unto the end.

The eye of thy soul beheld the kingdom of heaven, for it was pure; wherefore, thou didst splendidly set forth thy life, and, honoring it in God, we glorify thee.

Let him that doth not labor not eat! These words of the Apostle Paul didst thou proclaim to thy brethren; wherefore, thou didst raise up a house of industry for the sake of the poor, wherein the impoverished and ailing might be provided for, being sustained by the work of their own hands.

Theotokion: **T**hou art wholly light, all goodness, all wisdom; thou canst, as Mother of the Almighty, do all things; thou alone art all-perfect, in that thou art the Mother of the all-perfect King of glory.

Katavasia (October): **O** Theotokos, thou living and abundant fountain, in thy divine glory establish them that hymn thee and that spiritually form themselves into a choir; and vouchsafe unto them crowns of glory.

Katavasia (Forefeast): **T**o Christ, the Son Who was begotten of the Father incorruptibly before the ages, and in latter times without seed became incarnate of the Virgin, let us cry aloud: **O** Lord, Who liftest up our horn, holy art Thou!

After the Little Litany, this Sedalion, in Tone VIII:

O blessed John, lamp of Kronstadt, thou whose activity and preaching were continual, who offered up before the throne of the Most High lamentation over the sins of many, and who in the Spirit beheld the bowing down of the heavens at the holy liturgy: Pray thou in behalf of our souls!

Glory ..., Now and ever ..., Theotokion:

O all-pure one, thou art an immovable foundation and divine gift for our souls; wherefore, falling down before thee we cry out with the Archangel to thee: Rejoice, thou who gavest birth unto our Savior! Rejoice, helper and mediatrix for the Christian race!

Or this Sedalion, of the forefeast, in the same tone:

Having shone forth from the Father, from the womb before the ages, in unconfused manner, the Word of God cometh forth from thy womb without seed, **O** all-pure one, in the fullness of time, raising up man who of old had grievously fallen, and leading him up to his pristine beauty, in that He is full of lovingkindness. Before His birth the hosts of the incorporeal ones go forth, and they mystically send down hymns of victory upon men, crying out: Glory to God Who hath given us peace, Who hath broken down the middle wall of enmity, as is His pleasure!

If the feast be celebrated on the 20th of December, we chant the Kontakion of the Forefeast, in Tone III,

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

Today the Virgin cometh to the cave to give birth ineffably unto the pre-eternal Word. Hearing this, be of good cheer, **O** universe, and with the angels and shepherds glorify Him Who is to manifest Himself as a young Child, the pre-eternal God!

Ikos: **O** wonder truly awesome and past recounting! He that hath given existence unto all things hath, in His goodness, entered into the womb of the holy Virgin, and cometh to be born in a cave, and to be laid in a manger. From above the star heraldeth Him to the Magi who come to do Him homage with gifts, drawn from afar, following with care the prophecy of Balaam, who said: A star will announce beforehand the young Child, the pre-eternal God.

ODE IV

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: **Foreseeing in the Spirit the incarnation of the Word, O Prophet Habbakuk, thou didst proclaim, crying out: When the years draw nigh, Thou shalt be acknowledged; when the season cometh, Thou shalt be shown forth! Glory to Thy power, O Lord!**

Ye mountains, hills and trees of the forest, ye rivers and sea, and everything that hath breath: leap up in gladness! Our salvation now draweth nigh! Jesus cometh to be born of a Virgin in the city of Bethlehem!

Take up thy psaltery, O Prophet David, and sing a hymn clearly, inspired by the Holy Spirit; for Christ God, the Lord of glory, Who shone forth without confusion from the womb of the Father before the morning star, is born of the Virgin.

Theotokion: **H**ow can the least and most lowly cave receive Thee born in the flesh, O Word? How is it that Thou Who clothest heaven with clouds art wrapped in swaddling clothes? How is it that Thou Hest as a babe in a manger of dumb beasts?

Canon of the Righteous One

Irmos: **The Church, beholding Thee, the Sun of righteousness, lifted up upon the Cross, stood in place, crying out as is meet: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!**

Having a firm foundation in Christ, thou didst imitate Abraham of old in thy hospitality, receiving them that came to thee from all lands, and leading them to the Lord; and thus didst thou do what is pleasing unto God.

Desiring to make of thy heart a temple of God, it was thy wish to serve unceasingly in the house of God, adorning thy soul with the beauties of heaven.

Having quenched all the passions of the body with the dew of thy feats, thou didst kindle the light of dispassion; wherefore, thou wast shown also to be a child of the everlasting day, O blessed father.

Theotokion: **T**he divine Ezekiel, O all-pure one, called thee prophetically the gate which was closed, through which He that alone is pre-eternal hath passed without change, granting His peace.

Katavasia (October): Seated in glory upon the throne of the Godhead, Jesus most divine is come upon a light cloud, and with His incorrupt arm He hath saved them that cry: Glory to Thy power, O Christ!

Katavasia (Forefeast): A rod from the root of Jesse and blossom therefrom, O Christ, Thou didst spring forth from the Virgin; from the mountain overshadowed and densely wooded hast Thou come, incarnate of her that kneweth not man, O Thou praised and immaterial God. Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

ODE V

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: Grant us Thy peace, O Son of God, for we know none other God than Thee; we call upon Thy name, for Thou art the God of the quick and the dead.

May the clouds, rejoicing, let sweetness drop down like dew; for the Lord draweth nigh to be born as a babe of the pure Virgin in a cave.

Leap up now, O divine prophets of God; for He Who is anointed of a truth cometh to fulfill the preaching of your divine tongues, being born as a babe.

Theotokion: O Eden, which of old wast closed to me, open thyself now, beholding Christ as a babe in the flesh, born of the Virgin Maiden in the city of Bethlehem, as is His good pleasure.

Canon of the Righteous One

Irmos: Thou hast come, O my Lord, a light unto the world, a holy light which turneth from the gloom of ignorance them that hymn Thee with faith.

Unceasingly serving thy Lord and ever emulating the labors of the apostles, O father, thou wast vouchsafed heavenly gifts.

Having slain the passionate pleasures of thy corruptible flesh, thou didst enliven thine incorruptible soul with piety and didst make of it a house of the divine Spirit.

Earnestly proclaiming the Gospel of Christ unto all, thou wast a daily communicant at the banquet of the Lord, making thyself and thy flock a living offering which was holy in God's sight.

Theotokion: O all-pure one, thou gavest birth unto One of the Trinity, Who, for the sake of His lovingkindness, appeared on earth in two natures; Him do thou unceasingly entreat, that He save our souls.

Katavasia (October): All things are filled with awe at thy divine glory, for thou O Virgin that 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 that hymn thee.

Katavasia (Forefeast): As God of peace and Father of compassion, Thou didst send Thine Angel of Great Counsel, Who granteth us peace. Therefore, guided to the light of knowledge divine, and waking at dawn out of the night, we glorify Thee, O Lover of mankind.

ODE VI

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: Emulating the Prophet Jonah, I cry out: O Good One, free me from corruption! O Savior of the world, save me that cry out: Glory to Thee!

To the astrologers heaven now pointeth, through a radiant star, to the King of heaven Who is born on earth for our sake in the city of David.

The Prophet David clearly holdeth forth and crieth aloud: Thou, O house of Ephratha, a Bethlehem, wherein God manifesteth Himself through the Virgin, leap up and dance!

Theotokion: In the cave of Bethlehem the Virgin manifestly giveth birth unto the Lord and Creator of all; and, wrapping Him as a man in swaddling clothes, she layeth Him now in a manger.

Canon of the Righteous One

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

Thou wast a fruitful olive tree in the house of thy Lord, O divinely manifest John, for the Lord imparted divine knowledge unto thee and strengthened thee in thine apostolic work.

Ye are the members of the body of Christ! Thus, with the Apostle Paul didst thou preach, and didst teach thy flock to love Christ alone, that all may be one.

Thy life is holy, thy discourse, a divinely wise one, was filled with the grace of God, and thy heart became a vessel of grace-filled prayer. Wherefore, with faith and love we honor thee.

Theotokion: The angelic nature marveled at the ineffable wonder which took place within thee, O all-holy Virgin; how He Who is incorporeal and sustaineth all things took flesh of thee.

Katavasia (October): Celebrating 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.

Katavasia (Forefeast): The sea monster thrust forth, like a babe from the womb, Jonah, whom it had swallowed; and the Word, Who dwelt within the Virgin and took flesh of her, came forth, preserving her incorrupt. He kept her that gave Him birth unharmed, for He Himself was not subject to corruption.

Kontakion, in Tone IV:

O father John, namesake of grace, who wast chosen by God from childhood, who in thy youth miraculously received from Him the gift of learning, and in a dream wast most gloriously called to be a priest: Entreat Christ God, that we may all be with thee in the kingdom of heaven.

Ikos: The Holy Spirit Who spake in the prophets and enlightened the whole world through the apostles, Who gave strength to the martyrs and made clear the Orthodox Faith through the holy hierarchs, poured forth His grace abundantly upon thee, O father John; for by thy discourse, by thy works and thy whole life thou didst proclaim the faith of Christ. Wherefore, the Lord hath summoned thee to His habitations; and as thou dost now stand before the throne of His glory, do thou pray that all that honor thee may be with thee in the kingdom of God.

ODE VII

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: The fire neither touched nor vexed Thy children that were in the furnace, O Savior; for then, as with one mouth, the three hymned and blessed Thee, saying: Blessed is the God of our fathers!

Pointing to the appearance of Christ in the flesh, Jeremiah cried out: The Lord hath appeared on earth incarnate; and, born of His Mother in Bethlehem, He hath found every way of knowledge.

Let us hearken to the sacred words: The Lord is born a babe for our sake, Whose government is upon His shoulder; and He is called the Angel of the Father's great counsel, Christ the Prince of peace.

Canon of the Righteous One

Irmos: The children of Abraham in the Persian furnace, consumed with love of piety more than by the flame, cried out: Blessed art Thou in the temple of Thy glory, O Lord!

By the providence of God wast thou shown to be a light of piety amid the heavy darkness of godlessness and unbelief, O father, calling upon all to cry out: Blessed art Thou in the churches of Thy glory, O Lord!

Man is in the image of God; and thou, O father John, wast a most splendid mirror of the love of God and a dwelling place of the Holy Trinity, Whom we sinners also glorify.

From the Lord didst thou receive the grace to heal the infirmities and passions of men; visit us also therewith always, that with thee we may all chant in oneness of mind: Blessed art Thou, O Lord God, for ever!

Theotokion: O Mistress, save thy people, save them that are of the same blood as thee. Save us, O Mother of life and of the whole human race, and, even though we are unworthy to call thee our mother, sanctify, make steadfast and save us by thy supplications.

Katavasia (October): **The 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, O all-hymned Lord and God of our fathers!**

Katavasia (Forefeast): **The children, raised together in piety, scorning the impious decree, feared not the threat of the fire; but, standing in the midst of the flame, they sang: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!**

ODE VIII

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: **Him of Whom the angels and all the hosts of heaven stand in awe as their Creator and Lord, hymn, ye priests; glorify, ye children; bless, ye people, and exalt supremely for all ages!**

The Lord manifestly cometh to His own. Let us receive Him, that, born in the cave, He may make His own again them that have been denied access to the sweetness of paradise.

Behold, our summons arriveth! Let us zealously give utterance to joyous hymnody, and let us chant the hymns of the forefeast unto Him Who is born in the meanest of caves.

Theotokion: As the Lord hath sworn, so hath He already brought to pass, giving us His Virgin Mother from the seed of David, from whom He was born a babe in the city of Bethlehem, in manner past recounting.

Canon of the Righteous One

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

Cleanse our hearts and thoughts by thy supplications, and show us forth to be fertile ground, that, girded about with virtue, we may cry out: Bless the Lord all ye works of the Lord!

Thou wast crowned with a crown of gifts of grace, contemplating heavenly wisdom and ever crying out: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Trinitarian: Glory to Thee, O all-holy, life-creating Spirit, Who proceedest from the Father and ever restest in the Son! Glory to Thee, O Son of God, Who sanctifiest through the Holy Spirit, and strengthenest and makest us wise! Glory to Thee, O Father, Who art ever well pleased with us through the Holy Spirit! O indivisible Triune Unity, have mercy upon us!

Theotokion: Rejoice, thou who gavest birth to the salvation of the world! for through thee have we been taken up from earth to heaven! Rejoice, O blessed one, thou protection and dominion, rampart and foundation of them that chant: Hymn the Lord, O ye works, and exalt Him supremely for ever!

Katavasia (October): Thou, the Offspring of the Theotokos, hast saved the pious youths in the furnace: then in figure, but now in deed; and she hath moved all the world to chant to Thee: Hymn the Lord, ye works, and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Katavasia (Forefeast): The dew-bearing furnace presented an image of a supernatural wonder, for it did not consume the young men whom it had received, as the fire of the Godhead consumed not the Virgin's womb wherein It had entered. Wherefore, chanting, let us sing: Let all creation bless the Lord and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

ODE IX

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: O ye faithful, let us magnify the Theotokos, the ever-flowing, life-receiving fountain, the light-bearing lamp of grace, the animate temple, the all-pure tabernacle which is more spacious than heaven and earth.

Let us leap for joy with the patriarchs and all the righteous, and with the holy prophets, for the Lord Jesus our deliverance, enlightenment, life and salvation, is now born of the Virgin in the city of David.

Already the vestibule of the divine incarnation of the Word is manifestly opened unto all. Rejoice, ye heavens! Leap for joy, ye angels! And let the earth rejoice in spirit with men, shepherds and Magi!

Theotokion: The Virgin, a noetic phial of alabaster, beareth Christ like an inexhaustible myrrh. And He cometh openly to be poured forth through the Spirit in the cave, that He may fill our souls with His fragrance.

Canon of the Righteous One

Irmos: Christ, the chief Headstone of the corner, Who hath united two disparate natures, was cut from thee, the unquarried mountain, O Virgin. Wherefore, in gladness we magnify thee, O Theotokos.

Truly thou wast a light to the world, O holy father, for, having adorned thy soul with godly works, thou wast shown to be an eminent pastor of the Orthodox Church, being a model for the faithful in word and life; wherefore, we bless thee.

Keeping ever before thy mind the One Creator, through Whom and in Whom all things exist, with a pure heart and guileless soul thou didst labor for Him all thy life as for thy Lord; and thou wast in no wise in bondage to Mammon.

Princes praised thee and many people glorified thee; but, disdainingly earthly glory, thou didst desire to be in the eternal mansions of God, there to glorify the Lord for ever.

Theotokion: He Who is pre-eternal descended into thy womb, O all-holy Virgin, and ineffably, in manner transcending comprehension and recounting, was born of thee, that He might renew Adam of old; wherefore, we ever magnify thee as the cause of our renewal.

Katavasia (October): Let every earthborn 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!

Katavasia (Forefeast): A strange and most glorious mystery do I behold: the cave is heaven; the Virgin, the throne of the cherubim; the manger, the place wherein lay Christ God, Whom naught can contain, and Whom praising, we magnify.

Exapostilarion:

Performing thy priestly ministry in the temple of the first-called of Christ, and zealously emulating his apostolic service of faith, thou wast a good laborer of the garden of Christ, and didst bring the faithful to the Lord like a bountiful harvest, ever proclaiming throughout thy whole life: My life is in Christ!

Glory ..., Now and ever ..., Theotokion:

He that was born of thee, O all-holy Virgin, and hath poured forth His Spirit upon all flesh, sanctified, glorified and received into His mansions His faithful servant, intercessor and prophet; with him cease thou never to pray for them that honor thee.

Or this Exapostilarion of the Forefeast:

O Bethlehem, prepare ye a new dwelling: a cave and the sacred manger! Ye assemblies of shepherds and wise men from the east: Go to it, guided by the radiance of the star, for the Virgin giveth birth therein to the all-Perfect One as a Babe.

At the Praises: (1) If the feast be celebrated on October 19th, four stichera to the Righteous One, as below, with Glory ..., Now and ever ..., as indicated; (2) If the feast be celebrated on December 20th, we chant eight stichera: the following four for the Forefeast, and four for the Righteous One, with the additional stichoi as given, and Glory ..., as indicated (or for St. Ignatius, if his feast be also celebrated), and Now and ever ..., with the Theotokion of the Forefeast.

Stichera for the Forefeast, in Tone VI, alphabetical,

The composition of Romanus the Melodist:

Go before us, ye angelic hosts, * and prepare the manger in Bethlehem; * for the Word is born, * Wisdom cometh forth, * and the Church receiveth a salutation, * to the joy of the Theotokos. * O ye people, let us say: * O our God, blessed art Thou Who comest! * Glory be to Thee!

Let the mountains rain down sweetness, * for, lo! God cometh from Teman. * Submit yourselves, ye nations! * Rejoice, ye prophets! *c Leap for joy, ye patriarchs! * Clap your hands, O men! * Christ, the mighty and great Prince, is born! * The King of the heavens cometh to earth!

The Creator is come, * raising up mankind from the earth, * making His royal image new again! * Rejoice together, ye hosts on high, and chant! * The middle wall of enmity is broken down! * He is come Who accomplished this! * For God becometh man, * the King of Israel, * Christ our God!

Come, O hard-hearted Israel, * cast away the cloud * which lieth over thy soul. * Acknowledge the Creator Who is born in the cave. * He is the expectation of the nations. * He shall abolish thy festivals, * for thou shalt not deign to cry out: * Christ cometh forth, * the King of Israel!

Stichera for the Righteous One, in Tone VIII,

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

O most joyous tidings! * the child John entreateth God, * asking God's mercy, * that He enlighten his mind. * He casteth himself down before the icon, * confessing to God the sorrow of his heart. * And, lo! the bindings fall from the eyes of the child's mind, * and the boy is illumined with the light of Christ, * that he might do mighty things and teach many. (Twice)

Additional Stichos for the December feast:

Stichos: Let Thy priests be clothed with righteousness, O Lord; and let thy saints sing with joyfulness.

O abundance of wonders! * O living splendor of love! * Who will not marvel at thy beneficence * and thy lovingkindness toward the destitute? * In the countless number of thy miracles * thou wast like the glorious and holy hierarch of Myra in Lycia. * Wherefore, the cities and villages of the land of Russia, * O righteous John, * through thee beheld the light of Christ.

Additional Stichos for the December feast:

Stichos: The righteous man shall rejoice in the Lord, and shall hope in Him.

As light and warmth * cannot be separated from the sun, * so in thee sanctity and learning, * love and compassion were present, * O most sacred John, * who wast given by God to the people. * Wherefore, O pastor, * warm us and enlighten us; * be thou like the sun unto our souls.

Glory ..., in Tone VII:

"Bowing down before the holy icons, I glorify Christ, God incarnate, the image of the glory of the Father. I confess the Father, Who begat the Son without beginning. I glorify the divine likeness of men, who are temples of the Holy Spirit. And beholding the image of the Cross, I sense the power of the Cross." Behold, this is thy theology, O holy father, wherein thou didst emulate the great teachers of the Church, honoring the iconographic images to the glory of their prototypes.

Now and ever ..., Theotokion, in the same tone:

Ineffably wast Thou born of the Virgin, O Christ, and Thou hast enlightened them that are in darkness who cry out: Glory to Thee, O Lord!

Or this Theotokion of the Forefeast, in Tone II

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

Come, ye earthborn, * and together let us unceasingly * hymn the Virgin, * Mary the Theotokos, * from whom Christ is born.

Great Doxology and Dismissal.

AT LITURGY

On the Beatitudes, eight troparia: four from Ode III and four from Ode VI. If it be the Forefeast, Ode III of the Forefeast, and Ode VI of the canon for the saint.

From Ode III of the Forefeast,

Let all creation chant the hymnody of the forefeast unto Him Who was begotten of the Father before the morning star, and hath now shone forth ineffably from the Virgin, and is born in Bethlehem, in His great lovingkindness. (Twice)

A star hath already shone forth from the tribe of Judah; and, recognizing it, the kings are journeying from the East, and hasten to behold Christ born in the flesh in Bethlehem. (Twice)

From Ode III of the Righteous One,

One who shared in the manner of life of the apostles and an emulator of their life wast thou, O divinely inspired one, and thou didst set forth the word of truth unto the end. (Twice)

The eye of thy soul beheld the kingdom of heaven, for it was pure; wherefore, thou didst splendidly set forth thy life, and, honoring it in God, we glorify thee.

Let him that doth not labor not eat! These words of the Apostle Paul didst thou proclaim to thy brethren; wherefore, thou didst raise up a house of industry for the sake of the poor, wherein the impoverished and ailing might be provided for, being sustained by the work of their own hands.

From Ode VI of the Righteous One,

Thou wast a fruitful olive tree in the house of thy Lord, O divinely manifest John, for the Lord imparted divine knowledge unto thee and strengthened thee in thine apostolic work.

Ye are the members of the body of Christ! Thus, with the Apostle Paul didst thou preach, and didst teach thy flock to love Christ alone, that all may be one.

Thy life is holy, thy discourse, a divinely wise one, was filled with the grace of God, and thy heart became a vessel of grace-filled prayer. Wherefore, with faith and love we honor thee.

Theotokion: **T**he angelic nature marveled at the ineffable wonder which took place within thee, O all-holy Virgin; how He Who is incorporeal and sustaineth all things took flesh of thee.

Troparion of the Righteous One, in Tone IV:

With the apostles thy sound hath gone forth into all the earth; with the confessors thou didst endure sufferings for Christ; thou didst resemble the holy hierarchs in thy preaching of the Word; and with the venerable hast thou shone forth in the grace of God. Therefore, the Lord hath exalted the depths of thy humility above the heavens; and hath given us thy name as a source of most wondrous miracles. Wherefore, O wonderworker, who livest in Christ forever, take pity in thy love upon people in misfortunes; and hearken unto thy children, who with faith call upon thee, O righteous John, our beloved pastor.

Or this Troparion, in Tone IV:

O wonderworker, who livest in Christ forever, take pity in thy love upon people in misfortunes; hearken unto thy children who with faith call upon thee, expecting compassionate aid from thee, O John of Kronstadt, our beloved pastor.

Theotokion, in Tone IV:

The mystery hidden from before the ages and unknown even unto the angels hath, through thee, O Theotokos, been made manifest unto them that are on earth: God incarnate in unconfused union, Who of His own will accepted the Cross for our sake and, thereby raising Adam, hath save our souls from death.

Troparion of the Forefeast, in the same tone:

Make ready, O Bethlehem! Be thou opened unto all, O Eden! Adorn thyself, O Ephratha! For in the cave the Tree of Life hath sprung forth from the Virgin. Her womb is shown to be a noetic paradise, in the midst of which is the divine Tree, whereof eating, we shall live, and not die as did Adam. Christ is born, that He might restore His image which fell of old!

Kontakion of the Forefeast, in Tone III,

Today the Virgin cometh to the cave to give birth ineffably unto the pre-eternal Word. Hearing this, be of good cheer, O universe, and with the angels and shepherds glorify Him Who is to manifest Himself as a young Child, the pre-eternal God!

Kontakion of the Righteous One, in Tone IV:

O father John, namesake of grace, who wast chosen by God from childhood, who in thy youth miraculously received from Him the gift of learning, and in a dream wast most gloriously called to be a priest: Entreat Christ God, that we may all be with thee in the kingdom of heaven.

Prokimenon: The righteous man shall rejoice in the Lord, and shall hope in Him.

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

THE FIRST EPISTLE GENERAL OF JOHN [4:7-11]

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because, that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

Alleluia, in Tone IV: His heart is ready to hope in the Lord.

Stichos: A good man is he that is compassionate and lendeth.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE [6:31-36]

As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

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