

THE 9th DAY OF THE MONTH OF DECEMBER
COMMEMORATION OF THE MIRACULOUS ICON OF THE MOTHER OF GOD
KNOWN AS "UNEXPECTED JOY"
AT LITTLE VESPERS

On "Lord, I have cried ..." 4 Stichera, in Tone II:

O Mistress, thou dost intercede for all who with faith flee to thy mighty protection; for, weighed down by many sins we sinners have no other sure deliverance amid misfortunes mid tribulations. O all-pure one, Mother of God Most High, haste thou to help thy servants. *(Twice)*

When a certain iniquitous man fell down before thine all-wondrous image, offering the angelic salutation unto thee, who alone art all-pure and all-blessed, thou didst turn him away from the path of destruction and gavest him the unexpected joy of salvation, peace and great mercy.

Desiring to pour forth the abundant riches of grace upon His faithful, the Savior scattered the icons of His Mother like stars shining among the Orthodox lands, pouring forth the grace of miracles and bestowing healings, peace and great mercy.

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

Let the assembly of the faithful rejoice and be glad today, for, lo! the Mother of the Light and purity, in aiding a sinful man, through him revealeth to all the faithful that she is a most reliable ally for us who are weighed down by sins and many sorrows, and who have recourse with faith to her all-wondrous protection.

At the Aposticha, these stichera, in Tone V:

Let heaven and earth join chorus; for, lo! the Mother standeth before her Son, earnestly entreating forgiveness of sins for a great sinner. The angels rejoice over this; and with them let us also join chorus, magnifying the Theotokos with hymns.

Stichos: I shall commemorate thy name in every generation and generation.

With the priestly ranks let all of us, the generations of the faithful, rejoice, celebrating the festival of the Mother of God, who in her wonder-working image hath been revealed to us as an ever-flowing well-spring, granting unto all the abundant gifts of goodness.

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

The angels of heaven and men on earth bless thee as the one who gave birth to the God of all, for thou prayest for the faithful people, protecting by thy mercy those who celebrate thy festival.

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

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

Troparion, in Tone IV:

O ye faithful people, let us celebrate in spirit today, glorifying the fervent helper of the Christian race; and, hastening to her all-pure image, let us cry out thus: O all-merciful Mistress and Theotokos, grant unexpected joy to us who are weighed down by sins and many sorrows, and deliver us from all evil, entreating thy Son, Christ our God, that He save our souls.

AT GREAT VESPERS

After the Introductory Psalm, we chant "Blessed is the man ...", the first antiphon.

On "Lord, I have cried ..." 6 stichera, in Tone II:

Come, let us sing unto the Lord Who hath given us great joy in the miraculous icon of His Mother; and, gazing thereat, let us all sing: O all-wondrous Mistress and Theotokos, save this city and thy people, who with faith and love bow down before thy most precious icon! (Twice)

He who speaketh of Thy power, O Lord, maketh all Thy praises heard; for Thou hast given Thine all-pure Mother to the Christian race as a bold mediatrix who leadeth sinners to Thee, who granteth unexpected joy to them, and asketh peace and great mercy for us. (Twice)

O all-pure Mother of God Most High, thou art the helper of all the sorrowful and oppressed, the feeder of the starving, the comfort of travelers, the haven of the tempest-tossed, the visitation of the sick, the protection of the weak, the support of the elderly: hasten thou to help thy servants. (Twice)

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

All the noetic ranks rejoice with us beholding the Queen and Mistress of all glorified with many names by the faithful; and the souls of the righteous rejoice also, seeing the Mother of God extending her most honored hands toward her Son in behalf of the sinful people, and asking for them remission of sins, peace and great mercy.

Entrance. Prokimenon of the day. Three Readings:

A READING FROM GENESIS

Jacob went forth from the well of the oath, and departed into Haran. And came to a certain place and slept there, for the sun had gone down; and he took one of the stones of the place and put it at his head, and lay down to sleep ~ that place, and dreamed; and behold! a ladder fixed on the earth, whose top reached to heaven and the angels of God ascended and descended on it. And the Lord stood upon it, and said, "I am the God of thy father Abraham, and the God of Isaac: fear not. The land on which thou Hest to thee will I give it, and to thy seed. And thy seed shall be as the sand of the earth; and it shall spread abroad to the sea, and the south, and the north, and to the east; and in thee and in thy seed shall all the tribes of the earth be blessed. And behold, I am with thee to preserve thee in all the ways wherein thou shalt go; and I will bring thee back to this land; for I will not desert thee until I have done all that I have said to thee." And Jacob awaked out of his sleep and said: "The Lord is in this place, and I know it not. And he was afraid, and said "How fearful is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

A READING FROM THE PROPHECY OF EZEKIEL

Thus saith the Lord: It shall come to pass from the eighth day and onward, that the priests shall offer your wholeburnt-offerings on the altar, and your peace-offerings; and I will accept you, saith the Lord. Then He brought me back by the way of the outer gate of the sanctuary that looketh eastward; and it was shut. And the Lord said to me, "This gate shall be shut. It shall not be opened, and no one shall pass through it; for the Lord God of Israel shall enter by it, and it shall be shut. For the Prince, He shall sit in it, to eat bread before the Lord; He shall go in by the way of the porch of the gate, and shall go forth by the way of the same." And He brought me in by the way of the gate that looketh northward, in front of the house: and I looked, and, behold! the house was full of the glory of the Lord; and I fell upon my face.

A READING FROM PROVERBS

Wisdom hath built a house for herself, and set up seven pillars. She hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine in a bowl, and prepared her table. She hath sent forth her servants calling with a loud proclamation to the feast: saying, "Whoso is foolish, let him turn aside to me." And to them that want understanding she saith, "Come, eat of my bread, and drink wine which I have mingled for you." Leave folly, that ye may reign forever; and seek wisdom and improve understanding by knowledge. He that reproveth evil men shall get dishonor to himself; and he that rebuketh an ungodly man shall disgrace himself. Rebuke not evil men, lest they should hate thee; rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee. Give an opportunity to a wise man, and he will be wiser; instruct a just man, and he will receive more instruction. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the counsel of saints is understanding, for to know the law is the character of a sound mind. For in this way thou shalt live long, and years of thy life shall be added to thee.

At Litia, this sticheron, in Tone II:

Having cleansed our mind and understanding, we hold festival with the angels, chanting with splendor the hymn of David to the Bride and Maiden, the Mother of Christ our God the King of all, saying: Arise, O Lord, into Thy rest, Thou and the ark of Thy holiness! For Thou hast adorned her like a beautiful palace, O Master, to protect and save the faithful by Thy mighty power.

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

Come, ye faithful, let us hymn the helper of the Christian race, who bestirreth herself to make supplication unto her Son and God in behalf of an iniquitous man who had angered the Son of God by his sinful life, and thereby crucified Him anew; and let us cry out to her from the depths of our souls: O all-merciful mediatrix, forsake us not, making right acceptable supplications to thy Son in our behalf!

At the Aposticha, these stichera, in Tone IV:

Thy miraculous icon hath shone forth upon us like the all-radiant sun, O Mistress, pouring forth the rays of thy goodness in abundance: health for the sick, consolation for the sorrowful, and for our souls deliverance from misfortunes, peace and great mercy.

Stichos: I shall commemorate thy name in every generation and generation.

O ye people, let us chant the hymn of David to the Maiden Bride of God, the Mother of Christ, the King of all: The Queen stood at Thy right hand, O Master, arrayed in vesture of gold and adorned with divine majesty; for, having adorned her, the chosen of women, above all the earth, He was well-pleased to be born of her in His great mercy, and hath given her, who alone is blessed, as a helper to His people, to protect His servants.

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

Inclining thine ear to the glad tidings of the archangel, O pure one, thou didst take into thy womb Him Who bowed down the heavens and descended to earth for our salvation, Who now inclineth His ear to thy right acceptable supplications in behalf of all who honor thee with faith and love.

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

Fleeing beneath thy protection, O Mistress, all of us born on earth cry aloud to thee: O Theotokos, our hope, deliver us from boundless transgressions, and save thou our souls.

Troparion, in Tone IV:

O ye faithful people, let us celebrate in spirit today, glorifying the fervent helper of the Christian race; and, hastening to her all-pure image, let us cry out thus: O all-merciful Mistress and Theotokos, grant unexpected joy to us who are weighed down by sins and many sorrows, and deliver us from all evil, entreating thy Son, Christ our God, that He save our souls.

AT MATINS

On "God is the Lord ...", the troparion of the Theotokos, in Tone IV:

O ye faithful people, let us celebrate in spirit today, glorifying the fervent helper of the Christian race; and, hastening to her all-pure image, let us cry out thus: O all-merciful Mistress and Theotokos, grant unexpected joy to us who are weighed down by sins and many sorrows, and deliver us from all evil, entreating thy Son, Christ our God, that He save our souls. (Thrice).

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

Surrounded by the divine effulgence of the angelic armies, and graciously receiving, as the Mother of God, the ministry of the ranks of the prophets and apostles, visit us, thy servants, entreating Christ our God to grant us great mercy.

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

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

O Mother of God, thou art truly the strength of the helpless, the protection of all, and our mediatrix before God.

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

Polyeleos, and this magnification: We magnify thee, O all-holy Virgin, divinely elect Maiden, and we honor thy holy image, whereby thou pourest forth healings upon all who have recourse to it.

Selected Psalm Verses:

A: Remember, O Lord, David and all his meekness.

B: How he made an oath unto the Lord, and vowed unto the God of Jacob.

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, glory to Thee, O God. (Thrice)

After the Polyeleos, this sedation, in Tone II-

A great and all-glorious mountain art thou, greater than Mount Sinai; for then, unable to bear the descent of the glory of God in images and shadows, it burned with fire, and thunder and lightning smote it; but, having received within thee the divine Fire, the Word of God, thou didst bear without being consumed Him Who beareth all things in His hand. As thou hast maternal boldness before Him, O Mistress, help those who honor thee with faith, for thou hast received from God the gift of ordering and protecting the Christian flock, thy servants.

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

Song of Ascents, the first antiphon of Tone N.

Prokimenon, in Tone IV: I shall commemorate thy name in every generation and generation.

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

Let every breath praise the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE, § 4 [LK. 1: 39-49, 56]

In those days, Mary arose, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Judah; and entered into the house of Zechariah, and saluted Elisabeth. And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit: and she spake out with a loud voice, and said: "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For, lo! as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord." And Mary said: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior. For He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For He that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is His name." And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

After Psalm 50, this sticheron, in Tone VI:

All the noetic ranks rejoice with us, beholding the Queen and Mistress of all glorified with many names by the faithful; and the souls of the righteous rejoice also, seeing the Mother of God extending her most honored hands toward her Son in behalf of the sinful people, and asking for them remission of sins, peace and great mercy.

Two canons of the Theotokos: Canon I, with 6 troparia, including its Irmos, and Canon II, with 8 troparia.

ODE I

Canon I

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

O thou who opened the portals of God's lovingkindness when the archangel offered thee his salutation, close not off His love for mankind from us who hymn thee.

Wondrous was thy life on earth, O all-glorious Virgin Mother, yet even more wondrous is thy dwelling in heaven; for thou dost unceasingly reveal the wonders of thy maternal lovingkindness toward those who hymn thee.

The Son Who was timelessly begotten of the Father before time began didst thou in latter times conceive through the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit, giving birth to eternal joy for the world.

Rejoice, O sea which drowned the devil, the noetic pharaoh! Rejoice, O stone which gave drink to those thirsting for the life of the Spirit! For thou hast given to the human race the Deliverer of those held captive and the Guide of those who are lost.

Canon II

Irmos: Taking up the hymn of Moses, cry aloud, O my soul: My Helper and Protector hath He been for my salvation! He is my God, and I shall glorify Him!

Thou hast delivered the whole human race from slavery to the enemy, having given birth to the Savior of all the world. Him do thou beseech, that He save us from the assaults of the evil one.

O all-holy Virgin, in the midst of our perils be thou a mediatrix and intercessor for us before thy Son, that, delivered from them, we may glorify Him with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

O thou who art more exalted than the angels and archangels, and higher in honor than all creation, thou art the great intercessor of the Christian race.

Katavasia: I will open my mouth ...,

ODE III

Canon I

Irmos: O Theotokos, thou living and abundant fountain: in thy divine glory establish those who hymn thee and spiritually form themselves into a choir; and vouchsafe unto them crowns of glory.

Confirm thou in the virtuous life those who fervently hymn thee, and earnestly entreat Him Who was born of thee, that we not be deprived of crowns of glory because of our sins.

In our life we anger thy Son by our sins more than any other iniquitous man; yet be thou our mediatrix, O loving Mother.

May Jesus Who loveth mankind, Who was born of thee and hast the authority to forgive men their sins, vouchsafe unto us crowns of glory in His divine glory.

Rejoice, O virgin who contained the infinite God within thy womb, who carried Him as a babe and fed Him at thy breast!

Canon II

Irmos: Establish me, O Lord my God, that mine enemy may not boast concerning me; for Thou, O Lord, art my confirmation, my refuge and power.

Hearken unto our entreaties, O Virgin Mother, and give ear unto our sighs; and make supplication to thy Son in our behalf.

In that thou art full of lovingkindness, give ear to our supplications, and grant us deliverance from grievous and evil circumstances and sorrows.

Still thou the tempest of the threefold waves of life, and drive away our evil passions, O all-pure one, that we may glorify thee in peace and dispassion.

Come, ye people of God, let us now praise the Queen of heaven, who gazeth down upon us from her holy heaven and leadeth us up to the heavens.

Sedalion, in Tone V:

O pure Ever-virgin, thou fervent and invincible intercessor, renowned and unashamed hope, bulwark, rampart and refuge of those who have recourse unto thee: with the angels beseech thy Son and God, that He grant peace to the world, salvation and great mercy.

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

ODE IV

Canon I

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

O Mother who gavest birth to the Savior, do thou thyself save from the misfortunes and griefs of life those who confess thee to be the Theotokos.

O Mother of the Son and Deliverer Who lifted up our sins upon the Cross, heal all our grievous and almost incurable sicknesses.

God the Word, the hypostatic Wisdom, chose thee to be His dwelling-place. Him do thou earnestly entreat, that He save us by the judgments which He knoweth.

Rejoice, O all-comely, beauteous Bride! Rejoice, O pure turtledove! Rejoice, O Mother of Emmanuel, ever-virgin Theotokos!

Canon II

Irmos: I hymn Thee, O Lord, for I have report of Thee, and I was afraid; for Thou comest to me, seeking me who have strayed. Wherefore, I glorify Thy great condescension toward me, O greatly Merciful One.

Even though our tongue is at a loss how to praise thee worthily, yet, moved by love for thee, with all our heart and all our mind we glorify and praise thee, the mediatrix of all good things.

Who can plumb the depths of the sea? And who is "able to number the great mercies and compassions which thou hast for us?"

O Father and Lord of heaven and earth, what thanks shall we offer Thee? For thou hast given to the Christian race a good and powerful mediatrix.

Stretching forth thy hands toward Him Who was born of thee, O all-loving Mother, cease not to make supplication for us, that by thine entreaties we may be counted worthy of earthly and heavenly gifts.

ODE V

Canon I

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

Heaven and earth are amazed, beholding thy lovingkindness toward the Christian race, O all-glorious Virgin Mother, for thou dost condescend even to the sinners who have fallen lowest, O most good one.

Save thy servants from evils and tribulations, O Theotokos, and grant unto those who hymn thee the peace of God which transcendeth any earthly peace.

Thou gavest birth unto Him Who hath reconciled those above and those below, Who descended to earth for this purpose, yet hath not separated Himself from the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Rejoice, O Queen of heaven and earth! Rejoice, thou who dost surpass the angels and archangels! Rejoice, for through thee the Reconciler foretold to us by Jacob hath come down!

Canon II

Irmos: O Christ my Savior, enlightenment of those who lie in darkness and salvation of the despairing: rising early unto Thee, O King of the world, may I be enlightened by Thy radiance, for I know none other God than Thee.

From the spheres of the celestial lights the Archangel Gabriel brought to thee the joy of the annunciation; and obeying that ineffable counsel of God, O thou who art wondrous among women, thou thyself dost bring joy unto all who hymn thee with faith.

Thou hast truly given unexpected joy to the whole universe-the world below and the world above, for He Who issued forth from thee hath brought peace and united those above with those below. Him do thou now beseech, that we be delivered from malice and misfortunes.

The poison of sin hath penetrated the whole human race through our ancient forefather, but He Who was born of thee hath cleansed, hallowed and saved all. Him do thou now beseech, that we be delivered from sinful and unseemly passions.

Thy compassions are beyond number and are like unto the goodness of the Word thy Son. This we know, and know well. Yet what shall we render unto thee for them, O all-loving Virgin Mother?

ODE VI

Canon I

Irmos: 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.

Spiritually celebrating a sacred festival now, O ye who love the feasts of the Church, come, let us hymn the Mother of God with songs, glorifying her Son, Who hath bestowed such grace upon His Mother.

Look upon the hymnody of thy servants, O Theotokos, casting down the overweening pride of our enemies, visible and invisible, and pouring forth thine exalted mercies upon the humble.

Thou art the root from whence Christ, the Rod of Jesse, sprang forth: a Man from the house of David, and God Who is co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit.

Rejoice, O joyous Mother! Rejoice, O thou who dost surpass all the daughters of men in beauty! Rejoice, O noble scion of the divinely chosen race of David!

Canon II

Irmos: Stuck fast am I in the abyss of sin, O Savior, and tempest-tossed on the deep of life; yet lead me up from the passions and save me, as Thou didst Jonah from the sea monster.

By thy birthgiving thou hast saved the human race from hell, death and corruption; wherefore, as is meet, all the ranks of heaven and earth bless thee as the Mother of the Destroyer of hell and our Liberator from death.

Turn now away from us because of our sins, O all-holy Virgin, but by thy supplications mediate for us liberation from Hades and everlasting death.

O the slothfulness, O the indifference toward our salvation, wherein we have wasted our whole life! What torment, what flames lie before us! Yet by the grace given thee, O Mother, save us!

Thou didst bear Christ, the divine Fire, in thine arms without being consumed; wherefore, standing now before the fiery throne of His glory, pray thou, that He enflame us with the desire to do good.

Kontakion, in Tone VI:

We have none other help, we have none other hope than thee, O Mistress. Do thou help us! In thee do we trust, and in thee do we boast; for we are thy servants. Let us not be put to shame.

Ikos: Entrust me not to the intercession of men, O all-holy Mistress, but accept the entreaty of thy servant; for I am held fast by sorrow and cannot endure the arrows of the demons. I have no protection, neither have I any place to flee, wretch that I am. Ever vanquished, I have no consolation save thee, O Mistress of the world. O hope and intercession of the faithful, disdain not mine entreaty, and render it profitable.

ODE VII

Canon I

Irmos: The divinely wise youths worshiped not a creation rather than the Creator, but, manfully trampling the threat of the fire underfoot, they rejoice, chanting: Blessed art Thou, the all-hymned God of our fathers!

Thou didst spurn all the beautiful things of this world, O pure one, desiring to serve God alone; and to Him thou didst chant: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

O Mistress, to the one God do thou guide us who have failed utterly to follow the pious children, but have instead cleaved unto creation instead of the Creator; and teach us to chant: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

With noetic eyes, O Christ, Daniel foresaw Thee as the Stone uncut by human hands, destroying the vain kingdoms of men, for the salvation of those who hymn Thee, and the Father and the Spirit: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Rejoice, O mountain overshadowed by the grace of God, from whence was quarried Christ, the Stone set by God the Father as the Cornerstone of His Church, to Whom we chant: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Canon II

Irmos: **The fiery bush on the mount and the dew-bearing furnace of Chaldea manifestly prefigured thee, O Bride of God; for in thy material womb thou didst receive the divine and immaterial Fire without being consumed. Wherefore, to Him Who was born of thee do we chant: Blessed art Thou, O God of our fathers!**

God the Word, the Creator and Fashioner of all, in latter times made His abode within thy womb, O all-glorious divine Maiden, and hath taught all to chant: Blessed art Thou O God of our fathers!

Sorrows, tribulations, and sicknesses have, because of the great multitude of our sins, brought our souls down in the abyss like the waves of the sea; yet setting our hope on thine aid, O Mother of God, we do not despair, but cry aloud to thy Son: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Who in heaven can describe thy power, which He Who issued forth from thee hath given thee? And who on earth can render audible all the praises made to thy great protection and thine assistance to mortals, who chant: "O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!"?

O pure Maiden who knewest not wedlock, cleanse thou our minds of vain thoughts and our hearts of wicked lusts, that with pure souls and undefiled lips we may chant unto thy Son: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

ODE VIII

Canon I

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

Hearken, O pure Virgin Maiden, unto the words announced to thee by Gabriel: Thou shalt bear a Son Who saveth those who chant: Hymn the Lord, O ye works, and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

He Who issued forth from thee in the flesh saved from fire the children who gazed upon Him with faith. Him do thou beg, that He save us also who burn with the flame of the passions and sing to Him, the Son: Hymn the Lord, O ye works, and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

O Christ, Thou wast seen in the Babylonian furnace as a radiant Angel like in appearance unto the Son of God. Unto Thee, with the Father and the Spirit, do we chant: Hymn the Lord, O ye works, and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Rejoice, O bush seen by Moses, who in latter times sprang forth from the root of David and gavest birth ineffably to the Savior of all, to Whom we chant: Hymn the Lord, O ye works, and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Canon II

Irmos: Refusing to obey the edict of the tyrant, the three venerable children were cast into the furnace, and confessed God, chanting: Bless the Lord, O ye works of the Lord!

The fleece wet with dew, which Gideon beheld, mystically prefigured thee, the Virgin Mother, who without knowing man gavest birth to God the Word by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit. To Him do we chant: Bless the Lord, O ye works of the Lord!

The mindless rage of the tyrant cast the pious children into the furnace kindled with fire, but thy Son quenched the power of the flame with mystic dew. Him do thou entreat, O all-holy one, that He deliver us from everlasting fire and deprive us not of the dew-bearing kingdom, that we may chant there: Bless the Lord, O ye works of the Lord!

Thou didst serve the ineffable mystery of the incarnation of Christ, didst love Him with all a mother's love, and didst maternally lament Him as He hung upon the Cross. Him do thou entreat, that He not reject even the most inveterate of sinners, that they may chant: Bless the Lord, O ye works of the Lord!

We glorify and hymn thee as is meet, O all-loving Mother; for thou art the great helper of the Christian race, our all-good and speedy aid.

ODE IX

Canon I

Irmos: Let every mortal 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!

God, Who became incarnate of thee and hath come unto us, made thy womb more spacious than the heavens. O wondrous marvel! The Infinite is contained in the Virgin's womb, that we may hymn her for all ages!

Entreat Him Who was ineffably conceived by thee in latter times, O Virgin Theotokos, that He transform all our griefs into joy and vouchsafe us His never-waning light, that we may hymn thee for all ages.

Thou art the throne of the glory of God which Ezekiel mystically beheld, for thou didst receive into thine all-pure womb the Son of God Who is equally enthroned with the Father and the Spirit, and didst hold Him in thy maternal arms.

Rejoice, O animate temple wherein God dwelt in the flesh! Rejoice, O ark overshadowed by the glory of the Son of God! Rejoice, O most blessed and pure Ever-virgin Theotokos!

Canon II

Irmos: We hymn thee, O Virgin Theotokos who didst contain the uncontainable God in thy womb, and hast given birth to Joy for the world.

Thou hast given to the world the good Shepherd Who sought the lost sheep, and with Him thou now reignest. Lead unto Him all the sheep that have gone astray.

The Father, Who passeth all understanding in His love for those who have fallen in Adam, hath through thee revealed the Lamb Who taketh away the sins of the whole world. Cease thou never to make supplication before Him, that by the Blood of His Son we may be sanctified and cleansed.

O Son of God Who art equally glorified with the Father and the Spirit, by the supplications of her who gave Thee birth forsake us not who are perishing.

He Who was incarnate and became man through thee hath set thee higher than all the angelic ranks. Standing there, lead us also up to the heights of heaven, taking away our every sin.

Exapostilarion: Spec. Mel.: "Having fallen asleep in the flesh ...":

The Dayspring from on high hath visited us, O Theotokos, and amid sorrowful circumstances hath given thee to us as a beam of surpassing radiance, a Mediatrix for sinners, imparting unexpected joy unto us.

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

On the Praises, 4 stichera, in Tone IV:

Let heaven and earth join chorus; for, lo! the Mother standeth before her Son, earnestly entreating forgiveness of sins for a certain sinful man. At this the angels rejoice. With them let us also spiritually rejoice, magnifying the Theotokos with hymns. **(Twice)**

O ye people, let us chant the hymn of David to the Maiden Bride of God, the Mother of Christ, the King of all: The Queen stood at Thy right hand, a Master, arrayed in vesture of gold and adorned with divine majesty; for, having adorned her, the chosen of women, above all the earth, He was well-pleased to be born of her in His great mercy, and hath given her, who alone is blessed, as a helper to His people, to protect His servants. (Twice)

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

All the noetic ranks rejoice with us, beholding the Queen and Mistress of all glorified with many names by the faithful; and the souls of the righteous rejoice also, seeing the Mother of God extending her most honored hands toward her Son in behalf of the sinful people, and asking for them remission of sins, peace and great mercy.

Great Doxology and the Troparion, in Tone IV:

O ye faithful people, let us celebrate in spirit today, glorifying the fervent helper of the Christian race; and, hastening to her all-pure image, let us cry out thus: O all-merciful Mistress and Theotokos, grant unexpected joy to us who are weighed down by sins and many sorrows, and deliver us from all evil, entreating thy Son, Christ our God, that He save our souls.

Litanies and dismissal. First Hour.

AT LITURGY

On the Beatitudes, 8 troparia: 4 from Ode III of Canon I, and 4 from Ode VI of Canon II.

Confirm thou in the virtuous life those who fervently hymn thee, and earnestly entreat Him Who was born of thee, that we not be deprived of crowns of glory because of our sins.

In our life we anger thy Son by our sins more than any other iniquitous man; yet be thou our mediatrix, O loving Mother.

May Jesus Who loveth mankind, Who was born of thee and hast the authority to forgive men their sins, vouchsafe unto us crowns of glory in His divine glory.

Rejoice, O virgin who contained the infinite God within thy womb, who carried Him as a babe and fed Him at thy breast!

By thy birthgiving thou hast saved the human race from hell, death and corruption; wherefore, as is meet, all the ranks of heaven and earth bless thee as the Mother of the Destroyer of hell and our Liberator from death.

Turn now away from us because of our sins, O all-holy Virgin, but by thy supplications mediate for us liberation from Hades and everlasting death.

O the slothfulness, O the indifference toward our salvation, wherein we have wasted our whole life! What torment, what flames lie before us! Yet by the grace given thee, O Mother, save us!

Thou didst bear Christ, the divine Fire, in thine arms without being consumed; wherefore, standing now before the fiery throne of His glory, pray thou, that He enflame us with the desire to do good.

After the Entrance: the troparion of the Icon; in Tone IV:

O ye faithful people, let us celebrate in spirit today, glorifying the fervent helper of the Christian race; and, hastening to her all-pure image, let us cry out thus: O all-merciful Mistress and Theotokos, grant unexpected joy to us who are weighed down by sins and many sorrows, and deliver us from all evil, entreating thy Son, Christ our God, that He save our souls.

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., the Kontakion of the Icon, in Tone VI:

We have none other help, we have none other hope than thee, O Mistress. Do thou help us! In thee do we trust, and in thee do we boast; for we are thy servants. Let us not be put to shame.

Prokimenon, in Tone III: the Song of the Theotokos: My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.

Stichos: For He hath looked upon the lowliness of His handmaiden; for behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS, § 320 [HEB. 9: 1-7]

Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the showbread; which is called the sanctuary. And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the holiest of all; which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; and over it the cherubim of glory shadowing the mercy seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly. Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people.

Alleluia, in Tone II: Arise, O Lord, into Thy rest, Thou and the ark of thy holiness.

Stichos: The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David, and He will not annul it.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE, § 54 [LK. 10: 38-42,11: 27-28]

Now it came to pass, as they went, that He entered into a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard His word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to Him, and said, Lord, dost Thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her. And it came to pass, as He spoke these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto Him, Blessed is the womb that bare Thee, and the paps which Thou hast sucked. But He said, Yea, rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

Communion Verse: I will take the cup of salvation, and I will call upon the name of the Lord.