

**SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FOREFATHERS**  
**WHICH FALLETH BETWEEN THE 11<sup>th</sup> AND 17<sup>th</sup> DAYS**  
**OF THE MONTH OF DECEMBER**  
**AT VESPERS**

At "Lord, I have cried ...," three stichera to the Resurrection, three stichera to the Resurrection, Composed by Anatolius; and, the following four stichera to the forefathers, in Tone VIII:

Celebrating the memory of the forefathers today, O ye faithful, let us hymn as mighty and powerful Christ the Deliverer, Who exalted them among all nations, the Lord Who hath faithfully wrought most glorious miracles, and Who hath, through them, shown us a staff of power, the pure Mary, the divine Maiden, who alone kneweth not man, from whom Christ came forth as a blossom, He that for all hath put forth life, the inexhaustible food and eternal salvation.

**O** Master, Who delivered the holy youths from the fire and Daniel from the lions' mouths, Who blessed Abraham, and Isaac Thy servant, and Jacob his son, Whose good will it was to become like unto us through their seed: our forefathers, that had fallen in the past, hast Thou saved by Thy Cross and Resurrection; and, having broken the bonds of death, with Thyself Thou hast raised all among them, dead of ages past, that worshipped Thee, O Christ, King of the ages.

**R**ejoicing in the dew of the Spirit, the godly youths walked in the midst of the flame as in a light rain, mystically imaging forth therein the Trinity and the incarnation of Christ, and, as they were wise, they quenched the power of the fire with faith; and the righteous Daniel was shown to be a restrainer of lions. By their prayers be Thou entreated, O Savior, Lover of mankind; deliver us from the unquenchable fire of eternity, and vouchsafe us Thy kingdom, O Lord.

**T**hy faithful and holy youths, that walked amid the fiery flame as in dew, mystically prefigured Thy coming forth from the Virgin, which hath shown upon us without consuming us; and the righteous Daniel, wondrous among the prophets, manifestly revealing Thy divine Second Coming beforehand, saith that he hath beheld the thrones set up, and the Judge seated, and the river of fire flowing. By their prayers may we be delivered therefrom, O Master Christ.

**Glory ..., in Tone VI, the composition of Anatolius:**

**O** ye faithful, let us praise today all the fathers of the old Law: Abraham, the beloved of God, and Isaac, who was born according to the promise, and Jacob and the twelve patriarchs, the most meek David, and Daniel, the prophet of desires, glorifying with them the three youths that transformed the furnace into dew, and who ask remission of Christ God, Who is glorified in His saints.

**Now and ever ..., and the Dogmaticon in the Tone of the Week.**

**At the Litia, the sticheron of the temple, and Glory ..., in Tone I:**

**T**he prophets of great renown, splendid in the rays of divine eloquence, are ever blessed, and, putting forth the sayings of the Spirit as fruit, they preached to all the ineffable nativity of Christ God; and having lived most wondrously, they ended their lives in accordance with the Law.

**Now and ever ..., Theotokion:**

**B**ehold, the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, for a Virgin hath given birth, yet after her birthgiving hath remained as she was before; for God was born, wherefore nature hath been newly wrought. Disdain not the supplications of thy servants which are offered up to thee in thy temple, O Mother of God, but as thou didst bear the Compassionate One in thine arms, take pity on thy servants and entreat Him, that our souls be saved.

**The Aposticha stichera from the Oktoechos, and Glory ..., in Tone III, the composition of Germanus:**

**C**ome, ye lovers of the feasts of the Church, and with psalms let us praise the assembly of the forefathers: Adam, the forefather of us all, Enoch, Noah, Melchizedek, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and, after the Law, Moses and Aaron, Joshua, Samuel and David, and, with them, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and the twelve prophets, together with Elijah, Elisha and all the rest, Zechariah and the Forerunner; who all preached Christ, the Life and Resurrection of our race.

**Now and ever ..., Theotokion:**

**W**ithout seed, through the divine Spirit and by the will of the Father, didst thou conceive the Son of God, Who is begotten of the Father without mother before the ages; to Him that, for our sake, was born of thee without father, didst thou give birth in the flesh, and thou didst nourish Him as a babe with thy milk. Wherefore, cease thou never to pray that our souls be delivered from misfortunes.

**Troparion of the Resurrection; Glory ..., Now and ever ..., and that of the Forefathers, in Tone II:**

**B**y faith didst Thou justify the forefathers, O Thou that, through them, didst betroth Thyself afore time to the Church which was from among the nations. The saints boast in glory, for from their seed hath come a right glorious fruit, even she that gaveth birth unto Thee. O Christ God, by their prayers have mercy upon us!

## AT MATINS

At "God is the Lord ...," the troparion of the Resurrection, twice; Glory ..., Now and ever ..., and that of the forefathers, in Tone II:

**B**y faith didst Thou justify the forefathers, O Thou that, through them, didst betroth Thyself afore time to the Church which was from among the nations. The saints boast in glory, for from their seed hath come a right glorious fruit, even she that gaveth birth unto Thee. O Christ God, by their prayers have mercy upon us!

After each of the Kathismata, the Sedalions and Theotokia of the Resurrection.

After the Polyeleos, the Hypacoi of the Tone, and this Sedalion of the forefathers, in Tone VIII: Spec. Mel.: "Of Wisdom ...":

**W**ith hymns let us all praise Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the meek David, Joshua, and the twelve patriarchs, together with the three youths that quenched the fiery flame with the power of the Spirit. And let us cry out to them: Rejoice, ye that bravely denounced the deception of the mad king! Pray ye to Christ, that He grant remission of offenses unto them that celebrate your holy memory with love. Twice

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

**L**ike the widow who gave two mites as an offering, I offer thee the praise of thanksgiving which is thy due, O Mistress, for all thy gifts; for thou art shown to be a shelter and aid, ever rescuing me from temptations and tribulations. Wherefore, delivered from that which causeth me grief, as from the midst of a burning furnace, I cry out to thee with all my heart: O Theotokos, help me by entreating Christ God to grant me remission of transgressions, for I, thy servant, have thee as my hope.

Three canons: that to the Resurrection, with four troparia; that to the Three Holy Youths and Daniel, with four troparia; and that to the Forefathers, with six troparia.

### ODE I

Canon to the Three Holy Youths and Daniel the Prophet, the acrostic whereof is: "I hymn the three youths and the great Daniel," the composition of Theophanes, in Tone VIII:

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

**L**et us glorify the unoriginate Word, Who in godly manner was born of the Father before all ages and was visible as a figure to the youths in the furnace.

**T**he right noble youths, resolutely spitting upon the words of the impious tyrant, did not wish to defile themselves with the food of the iniquitous like the Chaldeans.

**N**ourished in soul by the word of God and in body with foods which grew of themselves, they showed themselves to the king as more comely of countenance than them that were fed with coarse foods.

**Theotokion:** **T**he venom of the serpent, which was bitterly poured into the ears of Eve, dost thou heal, O Maiden, who didst spring forth from David and gavest birth unto the Deliverer.

**Canon to the Holy Forefathers, the acrostic whereof is: "I now offer up fitting praise to the fathers," the composition of Joseph, in Tone I:**

**Irmos:** **C**hrist is born, give ye glory! Christ cometh from heaven, meet ye Him! Christ is on earth, by ye exalted! O all the earth, sing ye unto the Lord, and chant with gladness, ye people, for He hath been glorified!

**L**et us offer up a hymn unto the fathers that shone forth before the Law and under the Law, that, by their upright will, were pleasing unto the Lord and Master Who shone forth from the Virgin, and that now delight in unwaning enlightenment.

**L**et us honor the first Adam who was honored by the hand of the Creator, and who is the forefather of us all and resteth with all the elect in the mansions of heaven.

**T**he Lord and God of all accepted the gifts of Abel, who offered them with a most noble soul; and when he was slain by his brother's murderous hand, He received his soul into light as that of a divine martyr.

**Theotokion:** **L**et us hearken to the divine sayings which declare the appearance of Christ; for, lo! of a Maiden that kneweth not man is He born in a cave, Whose awesome nativity the star which appeared to the astrologers doth proclaim.

**Katavasia:** **C**hrist 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, O ye people, for He hath been glorified!

### **ODE III**

#### **Canon to the Three Youths**

**Irmos:** **T**hou art the confirmation of them that have recourse to Thee, O Lord; Thou art the Light of the benighted, and my spirit doth hymn Thee.

**H**aving acquired divinely imparted understanding, the children of David kept the laws of their fathers in divinely wise fashion, O Master.

**T**he fire did not consume the most pure bodies of the pious youths, for they had been watered with a spiritually nourishing fast.

Wondrously bedewed in the midst of the furnace, the three children chanted the universal and oft chanted hymn of praise.

**Theotokion:** O Master, Thou dost show us a birthgiving from a Virgin's body and dost save the bodies of the virginal youths in the furnace.

#### Canon to the Forefathers

**Irmos:** To 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!

The zeal of Seth for his Creator is hymned throughout the world, for in his blameless life and spiritual love he was truly pleasing unto Him, and now doth cry out in the land of the living: Holy art Thou, O Lord!

The wondrous Enos trusted in the Spirit and with divine wisdom began to call upon the God and Master of all with mouth, tongue and heart; and having lived on earth in a God-pleasing manner, he received glory.

Let us bless Enoch with sacred utterances, for, having been well pleasing unto the Lord, he was translated in glory, being shown to be greater than death, as it hath been written, since he had been a most earnest servant of God.

**Theotokion:** Now doth the expectation of the nations come forth from the Virgin, and Bethlehem doth radiantly open the shut gates of Eden, receiving the incarnate Word, Who, in the flesh, is laid in a manger.

**Katavasia:** To 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!

#### Sedalion, in Tone II:

The fire was transformed into dew for the children, and the lamentation of the myrrh-bearing women was changed into joy; and an angel ministered in both wonders, transforming the furnace into a place of rest for the former, and announcing the Resurrection on the third day to the latter. O Lord, Author of our life, glory be to Thee!

### ODE IV

#### Canon to the Three Youths

**Irmos:** I have heard, O Lord, the mystery of Thy dispensation; I have considered Thy works, and have glorified Thy divinity.

The most wise Daniel, divinely enlightened of mind, interpreted the dreams of the rulers by divine grace.

The suffering of the youths in the furnace shineth forth with wonders, for they brought the tyrant to acknowledge Thee, O Almighty One.

The harmonious organs and melodious hymns of music did not distract the valorous ones, and they did not bow down before the golden image.

**Theotokion:** **O** all-hymned one, with hymns do the children in Babylon honor thy most divine Son, Whom they came to know in the furnace.

### Canon to the Forefathers

**Irmos:** **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!

**L**et us offer up praise unto God, honoring with hymns Noah, who is truly righteous; for he hath been shown to be adorned in all the divine commandments, having been well pleasing unto Christ, to Whom we, the faithful, chant: Glory to Thy power, **O** Lord!

**B**eholding thy nobility and simplicity of character, God clearly showed thee forth, **O** Noah, as perfect in all respects and the leader of the new world, who saved for it, from the deluge, the seed of every species, even as He Himself commanded.

**W**ith hymns let us piously bless Noah, who preserved the Law of God intact; who, alone among all his generation, was found to be righteous, and of old saved the species of the animals with an ark of gopher wood at the command of Him that accomplisheth all things.

**O** blessed Noah, thy memory doth pour forth upon us that honor thee the wine of compunction, which doth ever make glad the hearts and souls of them that, in a pure manner, bless thine honorable and divine life.

**Katavasia:** **R**od out of the stem of Jesse, and Branch of his roots, **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 to the Three Youths

**Irmos:** **W**herefore hast Thou thrust me from Thy countenance, **O** never-waning Light? And why hath a strange darkness covered me, wretch that I am? But turn me, and guide my steps to the light of Thy commandments, I entreat Thee!

**T**hy favored ones, the great Daniel and the three divinely wise youths, having learned thy Law, **O** Savior, were not rejected; but, having received strength of Thee, their Benefactor, they manfully vanquished the tyrants.

**D**aniel noetically learned Thy mysteries, **O** Lover of mankind, for, with purity of mind, he beheld Thee as the King and Judge of all nations, coming as the Son of man upon a cloud.

Your unity is adorned more than with sapphire, O ye children, who burned like a golden ray with zeal for piety, and joyfully walked about in the furnace, forming a universal chorus.

**Theotokion:** The divine Daniel clearly described thee as a mountain, O Virgin, and the three youths, beholding the dew-bearing flame, praised with hymns thy divine Offspring as Savior, Creator and Lord.

#### Canon to the Forefathers

**Irmos:** As the 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.

With divine praises let Shem, who received the blessing of his father, be honored; for, shown to be well pleasing before the Lord, he hath joined the choir of the forefathers and doth joyously rest in the land of the living.

As the friend of God, Abraham was vouchsafed to behold the day of his Creator and hath become full of spiritual joy; wherefore, honoring his uprightness of mind, we all bless him as a divine forefather of Christ.

Thou didst behold the Trinity, insofar as it is possible for man to do; and as a true servant thou didst offer it hospitality, O most blessed Abraham. Wherefore, for thy strange hospitality thou didst receive a reward: to be, through faith, the father of countless nations.

**Theotokion:** He that is full doth empty Himself into the flesh for our sake; the Unoriginate One receiveth a beginning; He that is rich doth beggar Himself; He that is the Word of God lieth like a babe in a manger of dumb beasts, accomplishing the restoration of all who have existed throughout the ages.

**Katavasia:** As God of peace and Father of mercies, Thou didst send Thine Angel of great counsel, granting us peace. Therefore, guided to the light of the knowledge of God, and, waking at dawn out of the night, we glorify Thee, O Lover of mankind!

### ODE VI

#### Canon to the Three Youths

**Irmos:** The abyss of my sins and the tempest of my transgressions discomfit me and thrust me down into the depths of violent despondency. But stretch forth Thy mighty arm unto me, as Thou didst to Peter, and save me, O my Guide.

Having mastered the passions of the soul by the power of the Word, ye became governors in the lands of the Chaldean peoples, for virtue knoweth to give honor unto them that have acquired her, O ye wise descendants of David.

Daniel of old, vested in life-bearing mortality, slew with food the most wicked serpent, which the Chaldeans impiously held to be a god; and wisely did he also slay the impious priests.

**Theotokion:** O Theotokos, Virgin and Mother, implore the Judge, thy Son, the Deliverer from evils, that by thy supplications He be merciful unto me on the Day of Judgment; for on thee alone do I place all my trust.

#### Canon to the Forefathers

**Irmos:** 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.

Led up by thy father's obedience to be sacrificed, thou wast plainly an image of the Passion of Christ, O most blessed Isaac. Wherefore, thou wast blessed and didst truly show thyself to be a close friend of God, rejoicing now with all the righteous.

Jacob was shown to be the most faithful of all of God's favored ones. Wherefore, he wrestled with an angel, beheld a celestial intelligence, was called a god, and, sleeping, saw a divine ladder, whereon God, Who put on our flesh in His goodness, established Himself.

Loving obedience to his father, and cast into a pit, Joseph was sold, thus becoming an image of Christ, Who was slain and placed in a tomb. And he became dispenser of the grain of Egypt, being chaste and righteous, and a most true governor of the passions.

**Theotokion:** He that is ever with the Father and the Spirit is known on earth as a little Child; and He that doth wrap the earth in darkness is wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger of dumb beasts. Rejoicing now, we celebrate the forefeast of His seedless nativity.

**Katavasia:** 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. For, being Himself not subject to corruption, he preserved her that gave Him birth unharmed.

#### Kontakion, in Tone VI:

O thrice-blessed ones, who did not honor an image wrought by hands, but were defended by the indescribable Essence, ye were glorified in your ordeal by fire; and standing in the midst of unbearable flame, ye called upon God, saying: Speed Thou and make haste to our aid, O Compassionate One, in that Thou art merciful; for what Thou willest, Thou canst do!

**Ikos:** Stretch forth Thy hand whereby of old the warring Egyptians and the embattled Hebrews were tested. Forsake us not, that death, which thirsteth after us, not swallow us up; and spare our souls, as Thou once didst spare Thy three

children in Babylon, who glorified Thee unceasingly and were cast for Thy sake into a furnace, from whence they cried out to Thee: Speed Thou and make haste to our aid, O Compassionate One, in that Thou art merciful; for what Thou willest, Thou canst do!

## ODE VII

### Canon to the Three Youths

**Irmos:** The pious children did not worship the golden image in Babylon; but, bedewed in the midst of the fiery furnace, they chanted a hymn, saying: Blessed art Thou, O supremely exalted God of our fathers!

A pious voice sounded forth unto the Almighty from the midst of the fire, for the divine Azariah, forming a choir, chanted a hymn, saying: Blessed is the God of our fathers!

The harp of the youths doth theologize concerning the Almighty, the God of all, and unto Him that appeared to them openly in the furnace they chanted a hymn, saying: Blessed is the God of our fathers!

The king, seeing the three children who had been cast into the furnace, beheld, as it were, the form of a Fourth, and he called Him the Son of God and cried out to all: Blessed is the God of our fathers!

**Theotokion:** Possessed of a mind illumined with divine radiance, O divinely blessed Daniel, thou didst clearly foresee the Offspring of the Virgin formed by divine images; and thou didst cry out: Blessed art Thou, O God of our fathers!

### Canon to the Forefathers

**Irmos:** 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!

Let Ananiah, Azariah and Misael, who quenched the fiery furnace, be hymned, together with Daniel, who stopped the mouths of the lions, for together they chanted unto Christ: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Having lawfully suffered amid temptations and unmitigated tribulations, Job was called the favorite of God, most faithful, meek, guileless, righteous, perfect, blameless, crying aloud: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

With faith let us honor Moses, Aaron and Hur, praising Joshua and the most sacred Levi, Gideon and Samuel, and let us cry out: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

**Theotokion:** Behold! as the prophet hath foretold, she that kneweth not wedlock hath conceived in her womb and doth manifestly come to Bethlehem to give birth unto God. To Him let us chant: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

**Katavasia:** 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 to the Three Youths

**Irmos:** Madly did the Chaldean tyrant heat the furnace sevenfold for the pious ones; but seeing them saved by a greater power, he cried out to the Creator and Deliverer: Ye children, bless; ye priests, hymn; ye people, exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Striving to preserve the nobility of Abraham, ye acquired the foundation of faith and hope which was his very own, O venerable ones, and his patience and endurance of temptations, crying out: Bless ye the Master, O priests! Ye people, exalt Him supremely forever!

Having shone forth like beacons and made the earth heavenly, and having been illumined with the radiance of piety, forming a universal chorus, they chant unto the Master Who saved them from temptations: Ye children, bless; ye priests, hymn; ye people, exalt Him supremely for all ages!

The descendants of David, having youthfully extinguished the fiery furnace and shut the jaws of the lions, rejoicing, now hymn Thee, the Benefactor and King of all, saying: Ye children, bless; ye priests, hymn; ye people, exalt Him supremely for all ages!

**Theotokion:** O all-pure one, the most wise Daniel doth give instruction in the mysteries, and the three divinely wise youths prefigure thy birth giving, beholding through symbols Him that hath come forth ineffably from thy womb. Him do the children bless, the priests hymn and the people exalt supremely for all ages!

#### Canon to the Forefathers

**Irmos:** 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!

Let us celebrate today the divine memory of the: honored fathers of all ages past: Adam, Abel, Seth, Noah, Enos, Enoch and Abraham, Melchizedek and Job, Isaac and the faithful Jacob, crying out: Let all creation bless the Lord and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Let us praise the divinely beauteous phalange of the divine fathers: Barak, Nathan and Eleazar, Josiah and David, Jephthah and Samuel, who honorably beheld things which were to come and cried out: Let all creation bless the Lord, and exalt Him supremely forever!

**W**ith hymnody let us offer praise unto the prophets of God, praising Hosea and Micah, Zephaniah and Habbakuk, Zechariah and Jonah, Haggai and Amos, Malachi and Obadiah, Nahum, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, together with Daniel, Elijah and Elisha.

**Trinitarian:** **W**ith threefold utterances let us hymn the all-holy Trinity: the unoriginate Father, the Son and the right holy Spirit, the Unity of three Hypostases, which every breath doth glorify, crying out: Let all creation bless the Lord, and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

**Theotokion:** **O** Christ, Thou hast appeared incarnate of the Virgin's blood by Thine ineffable word, being born in a cave as a perfect Babe in the abundance of Thy lovingkindness, O Jesus. And the star doth herald Thee from afar to the astrologers, who cry with faith: Hymn and exalt Christ supremely forever!

**Katavasia:** **The dew-bearing furnace presented an image of a supernatural wonder, for it consumed not 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 to the Three Youths**

**Irmos:** **Saved by thee, O pure Virgin, we truly confess thee to be the Theotokos, magnifying thee with the bodiless choirs.**

**Y**e have attained your desired end, O most blessed youths, and ye stand in the mansions of heaven before Him that is the greatest of all desires.

**R**ejoicing, ye have received a sheaf as the reward of the good husbandry of your tears, having brought forth the grain of incorruption.

**R**adiance hath now shone upon you as is meet, and gladness of heart hath blossomed forth, for from whence grief hath fled away have ye made your abode.

**Theotokion:** **O** Virgin, thou didst halt the spread of death, having given birth unto the Lord, the Bestower of life, Who imparteth life unto them that magnify thee with faith.

### **Canon to the Forefathers**

**Irmos:** **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, Whom praising, we magnify.**

**B**y Thy might, O Lord, Thou didst make powers of old: Thy daughters Hannah, Judith, Deborah, Huldah, Jael and Esther, Sarah, Miriam the sister of Moses, Rachel, Rebecca and Ruth the exceedingly wise.

**I**n a sacred manner let us honor the holy children that quenched the furnace, and with them, Daniel the prophet and all that were clearly righteous, who shone forth well before the Law, and under the Law were pleasing to the Lord.

**T**he most wise and divine prophets, being descendants of Abraham, proclaimed through the Spirit the Word of God, born of Abraham and Judah. By their prayers, O Jesus, have compassion on us all.

**A**ll creation is sanctified by your memory and, keeping festival, doth callout, crying aloud as befitteth a servant: Ever offer entreaty unto the Lord, O blessed ones, that they that praise you may receive eternal blessings!

**Theotokion:** **T**he Word of the Father, Who hath robed Himself in me, cometh forth from the Virgin and is born in the cave in unconfused manner. Dance thou, O creation, magnifying, with thankful voices His all-holy condescension which He hath shown forth in His lovingkindness.

**Katavasia:** **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, Whom praising, we magnify!**

**Exapostilarion of the Resurrection; Glory ..., of the Forefathers:**

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

**L**et us praise Adam, Abel, Seth and Enos, Enoch and Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses, Job and Aaron, Eleazar and Joshua, Barak, Sampson and Jephthah, David and Solomon.

**Now and ever ..., Theotokion:**

**T**he great Sun, the Creator, Who shall come forth from the Virgin who kneweth not man, doth make haste to Bethlehem to enlighten all that are descended from Adam. Wherefore, the most radiant memory of the forefathers doth proclaim the wonder.

**At the Praises, 4 stichera to the Resurrection, and 4 to the Forefathers, in Tone II:**

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

**L**et us all now celebrate \* the memory of the forefathers, \* hymning their life \* which was pleasing unto God, \* for Whose sake they have been magnified. (Twice)

**Stichos:** **Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy name unto the ages.**

**T**he children quenched \* the power of the fire, \* dancing in the midst of the furnace, \* and hymning God \* the Almighty.

**Stichos:** **For righteous art Thou in all which Thou hast done for us.**

**D**aniel the prophet, \* who, imprisoned in a pit, \* dwelt with wild beasts, \* was shown forth as one \* who did not partake of their ferocity.

Glory ..., in Tone VII, the composition of Germanus:

**C**ome ye all, let us faithfully celebrate the annual commemoration of Abraham and them that are with him, the fathers that lived before the Law. Let us honor the tribe of Judah as is meet; let us praise the youths in Babylon, who, as an image of the Trinity, quenched the flame of the furnace, together with Daniel; and holding fast to the prophecies of the prophets, let us cry aloud with Isaiah: Behold, a Virgin shall conceive in her womb, and shall bear a Son, Immanuel, God with us!

Now and ever ..., Theotokion "Most blessed art thou ..."

Great Doxology, Litanies, and Dismissal. Evangelical Sticheron.

First Hour, and the final Dismissal.

## AT LITURGY

On the Beatitudes, ten troparia: six from the Oktoechos, and four from Ode III of the canon to the Forefathers.

The zeal of Seth for his Creator is hymned throughout the world, for in his blameless life and spiritual love he was truly pleasing unto Him, and now doth cry out in the land of the living: Holy art Thou, O Lord!

The wondrous Enos trusted in the Spirit and with divine wisdom began to call upon the God and Master of all with mouth, tongue and heart; and having lived on earth in a God-pleasing manner, he received glory.

Let us bless Enoch with sacred utterances, for, having been well pleasing unto the Lord, he was translated in glory, being shown to be greater than death, as it hath been written, since he had been a most earnest servant of God.

**Theotokion:** Now doth the expectation of the nations come forth from the Virgin, and Bethlehem doth radiantly open the shut gates of Eden, receiving the incarnate Word, Who in the flesh is laid in a manger.

After the Entrance, the troparia of the Resurrection:

And of the Forefathers in Tone II:

By faith didst Thou justify the forefathers, O Thou that, through them, didst betroth Thyself aforetime to the Church which was from among the nations. The saints boast in glory, for from their seed hath come a right glorious fruit, even she that gaveth birth unto Thee. O Christ God, by their prayers have mercy upon us!

Glory ..., Now and ever ..., the Kontakion of the Forefathers, in Tone VI:

O thrice-blessed ones, who did not honor an image wrought by hands, but were defended by the indescribable Essence, ye were glorified in your ordeal by fire; and standing in the midst of unbearable flame, ye called upon God, saying: Speed Thou and make haste to our aid, O Compassionate One, in that Thou art merciful; for what Thou willest, Thou canst do!

Prokimenon, in Tone IV, the Hymn of the Fathers: Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy name unto the ages.

Stichos: For righteous art Thou in all which Thou hast done for us.

THE EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS [3:4-11]

When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: for which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: in the which ye also walked sometime,

when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

**Alleluia, in Tone IV: Moses and Aaron are among His priests, and Samuel is among them that call upon His name.**

**Stichos: They called upon the Lord, and He hearkened unto them.**

#### **THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE [14:16-24]**

**T**hen said he unto him, a certain man made a great supper, and bade many: and sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. So that servant came, and showed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the lord said unto the servant: Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

**Communion Verse: Praise the Lord in the heavens; praise Him in the highest.**

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