

THE 24th DAY OF THE MONTH OF DECEMBER
FOREFEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST
COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY VENERABLE-MARTYR EUGENIA
AT VESPERS

On "Lord, I have cried ...", 6 stichera: 3 of the forefeast, in Tone V:

Spec. Mel.: "Rejoice ...":

O Thou Who art most perfect, thou bearest the guide of Adam in the image of God; Thou Who hidest all things in Thy hands by Thy power dost desire to be held by human hands. The pure and most immaculate one proclaimed, saying: "How can I wrap Thee in swaddling-bands as a babe; how can I feed Thee at my breasts Who sustainest all things? How can I marvel at Thy poverty which is past understanding? How can I call Thee my Son, who am now Thy handmaid? I hymn and bless Thee, Who bestowest great mercy upon the world!"

Beholding the pre-eternal God incarnate of her as a babe, holding Him in her arms and kissing Him often, full of joy the most immaculate one exclaimed to Him: "O God Most High, Thou invisible King, how can I look upon Thee? I cannot grasp the mystery of Thy boundless impoverishment! For the least and most base of caves containeth Thee, newly born, within itself, Who didst not violate my virginity, but preserved my womb as it was before birthgiving, and grantest great mercy!"

The pure one heard the magi standing together outside the cave, and, exclaiming in awe, she spake these things to them as a servant: "Whom seek ye? For I see that ye have come from a country far distant, in that ye have the appearance and wisdom of the Persians. Ye have made a strange passage and journey, and have come with haste to worship Him Who hath made His journey from on high, made His abode strangely within me, as He knoweth how, and granteth great mercy to the world!"

And 3 stichera of the martyr, in Tone VIII:

Spec. Mel.: "O all-glorious wonder ...":

Forsaking the beauty of the world, * thou didst illumine * the nobility of thy soul * with the beauties of nobility, * O most lauded Eugenia, * preserving the grace of the image of God untroubled throughout thy life, O invincible martyr, * thou divine mirror of virginity, * most noble blossom of nature.

Having adorned thyself * with discourse, life and grace, * and with patience of soul, * thou didst lead an army of athletes * and an assembly of virgins * to Him Who hath shone forth from the Virgin * and hath manifestly disclosed to all the entrance of witness, * O most wise Eugenia. * With them entreat Him now, * that He save thy flock.

The Founder of righteousness * hath magnificently adorned thee * with a twofold crown, * as a pure virgin and glorious martyr, * giving thee a beautiful bridal-chamber * illumined with effulgence, * where, making thine abode, * thou hast now manifestly been enriched with eternal blessedness, * O bride of Christ.

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

Behold, the time of our salvation hath drawn nigh! Prepare thyself, O cave: the Virgin approacheth to give birth! O Bethlehem; thou land of Judah, adorn thyself and be glad, for our Lord hath shone forth from thee! Hearken, ye mountains and hills, and ye, lands of Judea round about: for Christ cometh, that He might save man whom He had created, in that He loveth mankind!

At the Aposticha, these stichera of the forefeast, in Tone I:

Spec. Mel.: "O most lauded martyrs ...":

"Bearing gifts of frankincense, myrrh and gold * unto Thee, O Son, * the kings of the East have arrived, * knowing that Thou wast to be born; * and, lo! they stand beyond the doors! * Give Thou the command * that they behold Thee * as an infant held in mine arms, * Who art far older than ancient Adam!"

Stichos: God shall come forth out of Theman, and the Holy One out of a mountain overshadowed and densely wooded.

"Come ye, and enter with haste," * the Virgin said to the magi of old, * "and behold the Invisible One * Who hath become visible * in becoming a babe!" * And they came in with ardor * and rendered homage * offered gifts, * fulfilling the divine prophecies.

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

"In mine arms I bear Thee as a babe, * Who holdest all things, * and I am amazed," * said she who knew not wedlock. * "How can I feed with milk * Thee Who feedest all, O my Son and Creator? * I glorify Thy boundless condescension toward men, * whereby Thou savest the world which is perishing!"

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

Hold festival, O Sion! Be glad, O Jerusalem, thou city of Christ God! Receive thy Creator, Who is contained by the cave and the manger! Open thy gates unto me, and, entering therein, I shall behold as an infant wrapped in swaddling-bands Him Who holdeth creation in the palm of His hand, Whom the angels hymn with unceasing voices: the Lord and Bestower of life, Who saveth our race!

Troparion of the forefeast, in Tone IV:

Once Mary, pregnant with a seedless pregnancy, was registered in Bethlehem with the elder Joseph, as being of the seed of David. And while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered, but there was no room for them in the inn. But the cave showed itself to be a beauteous palace for the Queen, and Christ is born to raise up the image that fell of old!

AT COMPLINE

Canon of the forefeast, with 6 troparia, each Irmos being chanted twice: the acrostic whereof is: "I hymn today the great Sabbath", in Tone VI:

ODE I

Irmos: Herod seeketh to slay Him Who of old covered the tyrannical persecutor with the waves of the sea, and is now concealed in a manger; but we sing with the magi: Let us chant unto the Lord, for gloriously hath He been glorified!

O Lord my God, I chant the hymnody of Thy nativity and hymns of the forefeast to Thee Who by Thy divine nativity bestowest regeneration upon me and leadest me up to man's primal nobility.

Perceiving Thee as on Thy throne above and in the manger below, O my Savior, those of heaven and those of earth marveled at Thy might, for in manner past understanding Thou hast appeared as God and man, twofold in nature.

Bowing down the heavens, Thou hast come to earth, that Thou mightest fill all things with Thy glory; for Thou didst descend into the Virgin's womb like rain upon the fleece, and from thence Thou now comest to be born, both God and man.

Then both choirs together chant the Irmos again.

ODE III

Irmos: Creation, beholding Thee, Who suspended the whole earth without support upon the waters, born in the cave, was seized with great awe, crying out: None is holy save Thee, O Lord!

Showing forth images of Thine ineffable incarnation, O Compassionate One, Thou didst multiply visions and didst inspire prophecies, which, having come, Thou hast now fulfilled, being born of the pure Maiden in the city of David.

The earth hath spread out its shoulders, and receiveth the Creator Who accepteth glory from the angels, the star from the heavens, praise from the shepherds, gifts from the magi, and recognition from the whole world.

The indistinct images of the magus Balaam, the counter of the stars, are now fulfilled; for a star hath shone forth out of Jacob, and to the Sun of glory hath guided the magi, the kings of Persia, bearing gifts.

ODE IV

Irmos: Foreseeing Thine advent from the Virgin, Habbakuk cried out in awe: Incarnate, Thou hast come from Theman, O Deliverer, to restore Adam who had been expelled!

The Lord now cometh and draweth nigh, the Expectation of the nations and Salvation of the world. Prepare thou the cave, O city of Bethlehem! O shepherds, haste ye with the magi!

Having mingled with men, the might of Thy divinity, by an unconfused union in the guide of the flesh, O Savior, Thou restorest and savest Adam by assuming it.

Manifesting Himself in the flesh, the Word entereth matter and dwelleth among us in His ineffable providence. Come, ye faithful! Let us behold His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of God the Father!

ODE V

Irmos: Isaiah, rising at dawn out of the night, and beholding the never-waning light of Thy Theophany, O Christ, which hath mercifully come to pass for us, cried out: Behold! a Virgin shall conceive in her womb and give birth to the incarnate Word, and all born on earth shall rejoice!

Becoming dust, Thou renewest mortals, O Creator; and the manger, the swaddling-bands and the cave were manifestations of Thy humility. And the betrothed of Thy Mother, Thy supposed father in the flesh, now followeth the counsel of the Father Who begat Thee.

Bearing gifts to Thee Who wast born in the cave of Bethlehem of a Mother who knew not man, the kings of the nations show forth Thy death with myrrh, thy royal might with gold, and Thy surpassing divinity with frankincense, offering them to Thee as first-fruits.

O Word Who art consubstantial with the Father, coming forth from the unwedded one, in a cave thou madest Thine abode in the flesh, sitting in the manger as it were a throne. And by Thine awesome dispensation Thou dost amaze the magi and shepherds, and hast filled the angels with awe. Glory to Thy might!

ODE VI

Irmos: Jonah was swallowed, but was not held fast in the belly of the monster; for, serving as an image of Thee, Who wast born, appearing in the flesh, he issued forth from the whale as from a bridal chamber. For, born now in the flesh, it hath been Thy desire to enter the tomb and death, and to rise again on the third day!

The middle-wall of ancient enmity hath now been broken down and destroyed by Thine advent in the flesh, O Christ, and the flaming sword withdraweth from all. And I partake with faith of the life-bearing tree of Eden, and am straightway shown to be a husbandman of the gardens of immortality.

Hell reigneth with sin from the time of Adam down to Thee; yet their shameless tyranny perished when Thou wast born of the tribe of David, O Deliverer, manifestly taking Thy seat upon the throne of his kingdom, and reigning forever.

The cruel Herod showed himself to be a slayer of infants but not a slayer of Christ; for even though he reaped a bitter harvest of children, as though they were grass, yet was he unable to seize and slay the Grain of life; for as the Bestower of life, Thou didst as God conceal Thyself from the persecutor by divine power.

Lord, have mercy! Thrice Glory ..., Now & ever ...,

Kontakion of the forefeast, in Tone III: Spec. Mel.: "Today the Virgin ...":

Today the Virgin cometh to give birth ineffably to the pre-eternal Word in the cave, dance, O world! And having heard this, with the angels and shepherds glorify the pre-eternal God, Who is to appear as a little babe.

ODE VII

Irmos: O ineffable wonder! He, Who in the furnace delivered the venerable children from the flame, is laid as a babe in a lowly manger, for the salvation of us who chant: O God our Deliverer, blessed art Thou!

The lying enemy was wounded, seeing God lying as a babe in the lowly manger, and he is slain by the mighty hand of God, unto the salvation of us who chant: O God our Deliverer, blessed art Thou!

Blessed is the manger, for, receiving in itself the Creator as a babe, it was shown to be like the throne of the cherubim, unto the salvation of us who chant: O God our Deliverer, blessed art Thou!

Appearing as a babe, Thou didst deign to be wrapped in swaddling-bands according to the law of men, and thereby Thou loosest the bonds of our transgressions, granting freedom to those who cry: O God our Deliverer, blessed art Thou!

ODE VIII

Irmos: Fall back in awe and fear, O heaven; and let the foundations of the earth be shaken! For, lo! He Who holdeth all things in the palm of His hand is wrapped in swaddling-bands and sojourneth as a stranger in a small manger. Ye children, bless; ye priests, hymn; ye people, exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Adam who was bound hath been released, and freedom was given to all the faithful when Thou wast wrapped in swaddling-bands, O Savior, and laid in the manger of dumb beasts in the lowly cave. Wherefore, rejoicing, with faith we offer hymnody of the forefeast to Thee for the day of Thy nativity.

The falsehood of Persia hath come to an end, for when Christ, the King of all, was born, the kings of the East, observers of the stars, brought gifts: gold, myrrh and frankincense. Ye children, bless; ye priests, hymn; ye people, exalt Him supremely for all ages!

O the new wonders! O the goodness! O the ineffable patience! For, lo! He Who dwelleth in the highest is confined as an infant; of His own will God fleeth from Herod! Ye children, bless; ye priests, hymn; ye people, exalt Him supremely for all ages!

ODE IX

Irmos: Be not now amazed, O Mother, beholding as an infant Him Whom the Father begat from within Himself before the morning-star; for I have manifestly come to restore and glorify with Me the nature of fallen men, who magnify thee with faith and love.

In Thy strange nativity she who supernaturally escaped the pangs of birthgiving was blessed, O unoriginate Son; and now, beholding Thee fleeing from Herod, she crieth aloud: "I am terrified in soul by the sword of grief! Save me who honor Thee!"

"I go to the land of Egypt, O my Mother, yet by an earthquake I will cast down the graven images of the Egyptians. The enemies who seek in vain for My life I will send down into Hades, for I alone am might. I shall exalt and save thee who honor me."

Let creation rejoice, for the Creator Who existeth from before time doth take on form and is now acknowledged to be a new God. Let the magi greet Him with gifts, let the shepherds clap their hands in faith at the wonder, and let men and angels be glad!

AT MATINS

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

Once Mary, pregnant with a seedless pregnancy, was registered in Bethlehem with the elder Joseph, being of the seed of David. And while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered, but there was no room for them in the inn. But the cave showed itself to be a beauteous palace for the Queen, and Christ is born to raise up the image that fell of old! (Thrice)

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

Spec. Mel.: "Hosts of angels ...":

The sayings of the prophets have now been fulfilled, for in the morning our God is born of the Virgin Mary in manner past description, and she remaineth as she was before birthgiving. The magi come together, bearing gifts, and the shepherds pipe, that we also may chant: O Lord Who wast born of the Virgin, glory be to Thee!

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

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

Stopping the songs of the shepherds' pipes, the angelic army lifted up their voice, saying with them: "Cease your piping, O ye who are foremost among those who tend the flocks, and cry aloud in song, for Christ the Lord hath been born, Who, as God, hath been well-pleased to save the human race!"

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

Canon of the forefeast, with 8 troparia, including the Irmos; and that of the martyr, with 4 troparia.

ODE I

Canon of the forefeast, the acrostic whereof is the [Greek] alphabet, the composition of Joseph, in Tone II:

Irmos: Once, almighty power overwhelmed Pharaoh's whole army in the deep; and the incarnate Word hath destroyed pernicious sin. All-glorious is the Lord, for gloriously hath He been glorified.

Thou wast registered according to the edict of Caesar, desiring to enter man in the book of life, O King of all; and in strange manner Thou didst come unto Thine own summoning to heaven him who had grievously been exiled from paradise.

Receive Christ, O Bethlehem, for He cometh, incarnate, to thee, opening Eden to me! Prepare thyself, O cave, for thou shalt behold the Infinite One all-gloriously contained within thee, having now abased Himself in the richness of His compassion.

Christ cometh to be born, bestowing a strange regeneration upon the descendents of Adam, in that He is God. Be glad, O human nature, thou barren desert, for the Master hath come to make thee bear many children.

Canon of the martyr, the acrostic whereof is: "In songs I eminently hymn the great glory of Eugenia", the composition of Theophanes, in the same tone:

Irmos: Once, almighty power overwhelmed Pharaoh's whole army in the deep; arid the incarnate Word hath destroyed pernicious sin. All-glorious is the Lord, for gloriously hath He been glorified.

O Eugenia, martyr of Christ, joyfully dancing now with the angelic armies, as an immaculate virgin, as a crowned martyr who art most rich, pray thou, that He bestow grace upon, those who hymn thee with love.

Hearkening to divine hymnody, O bride of Christ, through thy nobility thou didst soar aloft to the Most High; for like light the theology of hymns of the Spirit shone in thy heart, driving away all ungodliness.

Unmindful of thy womanly nature, thy mind hastened to manly feats, having found courage through grace, being directed toward the providence of God, O martyr Eugenia, namesake of divine nobility.

Illumined with noetic light, O divinely wise one, thou didst cause a great many to partake of effulgence; and delivering from sin those who hymn thee, by thine entreaties vouchsafe it.

Theotokion: Slain by the tree of knowledge, O pure one, by Christ God, the Tree of Life, Who sprang forth from thee in manner past understanding, O Theotokos, we, the faithful, have been called back to life. Entreat Him with boldness, that our souls be saved.

ODE III

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: The desert, the barren Church of the nations, blossomed like a lily at Thine advent, O Lord; and therein hath my heart been established.

Delivering me from the bonds of evil, O Lord Who lovest mankind, Thou comest to be wrapped as a babe in swaddling-bands. I worship Thy divine condescension!

The Virgin cometh forth to give birth to Thee Who, though Thou hast shone forth timelessly from the Father, hast come under time, releasing our souls from immemorial passions.

Seeking me who have become lost through disobedience, Thou hast made the cave a dwelling-place, like unto heaven; and Thou preparest mansions for me there, O Compassionate and greatly Merciful One!

Canon of the Martyr

Irmos: Establishing me upon the rock of faith, Thou hast enlarged my mouth against mine enemies, for my soul doth exult when I chant: There is none holy as our God, and none righteous save Thee, O Lord!

With most perfect resolve thou didst offer thyself to the Master as an unblemished sacrifice, and didst spurn corrupt wealth, O most wise one, crying: Thou art our God, and there is none more holy than Thee, O Lord!

O most pure one, thy purity was recognized, and the might of thy sufferings hath shone forth; for thou didst make thine activity an ascent of vision, crying: Thou art our God, and there is none more holy than Thee, O Lord!

Held fast by desire for chastity, thou didst preserve the boast of purity, and becomest pleasing in wisdom, crying out to Christ: Thou art our God, and there is none more holy than Thee, O Lord!

Theotokion: **O** ye divinely wise, let us hymn Mary, the pure Theotokos, who hath been shown to be the mediatrix of salvation, and let us cry aloud: There is none as pure as thee, O all-pure one, and none more immaculate than thee, O Mistress!

Sedalion of the martyr, in Tone VIII:

Spec. Mel.: "Of the Wisdom ...":

Confining thyself to feats of struggle, thou becomest glorious through the struggles of martyrdom, leading many of the saved to thy Creator; for, having forsaken transitory things with divine love, thou didst accomplish courageous struggles, O glorious one. Wherefore, after thine end thou hast found endless life, abiding ever with thy Bridegroom, O angelic Eugenia. Entreat Christ God, that He grant remission of transgressions unto those who honor thy most precious memory with love.

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

Today the earth hath been shown forth as heaven for me, for therein the Creator is born and laid in a manger, in Bethlehem of Judah. Shepherds chant unceasingly with the angels: "Glory in the highest, and peace on earth!" For they beheld the star which journeyed with the magi, who hastened quickly to bring gifts of gold, myrrh and frankincense to the God of all, the eternal King and Creator of all things, Who in His loving-kindness is born in a cave.

ODE IV

Canon of the Forefeast,

Irmos: **Thou didst come forth from the Virgin, neither a mediator nor an angel, but Thyself incarnate, O Lord, and hast saved me, the whole man; wherefore, I cry to thee: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!**

Now creation hath cast off all aging, beholding Thee, the Creator taking on form and newness in becoming a babe, leading it back to its pristine beauty.

Marveling at His all-glorious nativity, the magi who had been led by the divine star stood and beheld the Sun shining forth from the cloud of the Virgin, and they offered gifts unto Him.

Behold, the Virgin cometh as a heifer, bearing in her womb the fatted Calf Who taketh away the sins of the world, that creation may rejoice, holding festival.

The predictions of the prophets which proclaimed the manifestation of Christ have now received their salvific fulfillment; for He hath come in the flesh to enlighten those who languish in darkness.

Canon of the Martyr

Irmos: **Thou didst come forth from the Virgin, neither a mediator nor an angel, but Thyself incarnate, O Lord, and hast saved me, the whole man; wherefore, I cry to thee: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!**

Thou hast come, taking flesh from the Virgin, O Most High, betrothing companies of virgins to Thyself, who loved Thee alone as their virginal Bridegroom.

Thou didst shed the covering of thy fleshly birth, O most glorious martyr, and by baptism didst splendidly clothe thyself in the incorrupt garment of regeneration.

Luminous radiance shone upon thy heart, with the effulgence of grace dispelling the gloom of falsehood which had been poured forth, O Eugenia, martyr of Christ.

Thou didst illumine thy life with beauty and comeliness, having first caused the carnal passions to wither away through abstinence, and later shone forth all-radiantly in suffering, O Eugenia.

Theotokion: **Thou becamest more exalted than the angels, giving birth to the Angel of great Counsel, Who became man in His exceeding lovingkindness, and loveth mankind, O most hymned one.**

ODE V

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: **Thou art a Mediator between God and man, O Christ God; for by Thee, O Master, are we led up out of the night of ignorance to Thy Father, the Source of light.**

Let the people who once sat in darkness behold the never-waning Light which hath shone forth, Whom the star announced of old to the Persian kings who worshipped fire.

The great King maketh haste to enter the little cave, that the All-blessed One might magnify me who have become of little account, and with boundless wealth enrich me who have become poor.

Now is Christ born of Jacob, as Balaam said, and He hath dominion over the nations, and His kingdom, which abideth immutably, is exalted by grace.

Canon of the Martyr

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.**

Seeing thy journey leading to salvation, the soul-destroying serpent raised up divers temptations against thee, striving to weaken thy might, O passion-bearer; but thou didst trample him underfoot, O divinely wise and pure one.

To Christ, the Accomplisher of all good things, the Benefactor and Bridegroom of souls, thou didst appear as adorned in ascetic struggles by abstinence and resplendent with the suffering of martyrdom, O goodly virgin Eugenia, martyr of Christ.

A crown of gifts was set upon thy brow, for thou didst cherish divine wisdom, disdaining the riches and glory of thy father; and with might thou didst follow after thy beloved Bridegroom, O most honored one.

Theotokion: The Life Who shone forth from thee upon the world, O Theotokos, by communion calleth those who before were held fast by death to everlasting life, who cry aloud with faith: We know none other God than Thee!

ODE VI

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: Whirled about in the abyss of sin, I call upon the unfathomable abyss of Thy lovingkindness: Lead me up from corruption, O God!

Christ cometh to His own in strange manner. Let us estrange ourselves from sin and receive Him Who maketh His abode in the souls of the meek.

In nowise shalt thou be the least among cities, O Bethlehem; for in thee is born the King and Lord, that He might shepherd His rich people.

How doth a lowly cave receive Thee Whom the whole world cannot contain, O Immutable One? How dost thou behold as an infant the Unoriginate One Who sharest the mind of the Father?

Canon of the Martyr

Irmos: Whirled about in the abyss of sin, I call upon the unfathomable abyss of Thy lovingkindness: Lead me up from corruption, O God!

Thou gavest no slumber to thine eyelids until thou didst extinguish all passionate attachments, and thou didst make of thyself a pure dwelling-place for thy Creator.

Emulating the morals of the wife of Potiphar, she who was black in deed and name violently slandered thine honorable life, O most honored one.

Showing forth steady radiance and enriched with the grace of healings and a wealth of faith, thou becomest the teacher of a company of nuns.

Theotokion: All the prophets mystically learned of thine ineffable birthgiving, O most pure one, in the Spirit describing and foretelling to all those things which were to come.

Kontakion of the forefeast, in Tone III: Spec. Mel.: "Today the Virgin ...":

Today the Virgin cometh to give birth ineffably to the pre-eternal Word in the cave, dance, O world! And having heard this, with the angels and shepherds glorify the pre-eternal God, Who is to appear as a little babe.

Ikos: The sacred sayings of the prophets have received their fulfillment, for, lo! the Virgin giveth birth to the All-perfect One in the city of Bethlehem, within a cave! All creation hath been refashioned! Rejoice and dance! The Master of all hath come to dwell with His servants, delivering from the dominion of the alien us who were cast down by corruption, and He is seen as an infant, wrapped in swaddling-clothes, in the manger, the pre-eternal God, the little babe.

ODE VII

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: The command of the iniquitous tyrant, opposed to God, raised up a lofty flame; but Christ, Who is blessed and all-glorious, spread a spiritual dew upon the pious youths.

Let the clouds drop down water from on high! He Who doth honorably appoint the clouds for His ascent is borne by a cloud that is the Virgin, and cometh to shine never-waning light upon those who before were benighted and afflicted.

O army of divine angels, prepare yourselves well to hymn the ineffable condescension of the Lord! Come, ye magi! Make haste, ye shepherds! Christ hath come as He should, the Expectation and Deliverance of the nations.

"What is this strange wonder most great? How can I bear Thee Who bearest up all things by Thy word? Ineffable is Thy nativity, O mine unoriginate Son!" the most pure one said, holding Christ in her arms with awe.

Canon of the Martyr

Irmos: The command of the iniquitous tyrant, opposed to God, raised up a lofty flame; but Christ, Who is blessed and all-glorious, spread a spiritual dew upon the pious youths.

Thou madest clear to all the truth of the divinely inspired Scriptures, having rendered manly thy womanly nature, and didst all-gloriously astonish those whom thou didst lead in splendor to Christ when they had believed on Him, O honored one who art most rich.

By thy divine teachings thou didst manifestly denounce the insanity of idolatry, O most lauded one, by the blood of thy martyrdom betrothing an innumerable and radiant multitude of virgins to Christ Who reigneth over all.

Beholding thy radiant life, the glorious Basilla, moved by divine zeal, betrothed herself to Christ, forsaking all the passionate attachments of the flesh; and she hath now been vouchsafed the joy of the martyrs.

Theotokion: Having seedlessly given birth to hypostatic Life, O most immaculate Virgin, pure Theotokos, thou hast healed the pasturage of death. Wherefore, rejoicing, we call thee the well-spring of immortality.

ODE VIII

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: **O**nce, in Babylon, the fiery furnace divided its effect at the command of God, consuming the Chaldeans, but bedewing the youths who sang: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Beholding the height of the truly ineffable mystery which covered the heavens with wisdom, the immaculate one marveled and said: "O my Son, how can I bear Thee Who sitteth upon the flaming throne of heaven?"

"Thou bearest the likeness of the Father, O my Son. How hast Thou assumed the likeness of a servant, abasing Thyself? How can I lay Thee in a manger of dumb beasts, Who deliverest all from irrationality? I hymn Thy loving-kindness!"

Rejoice, all the earth! Lo! Christ draweth nigh to Bethlehem to be born! Be glad, O sea! Leap up, ye assembly of prophets, beholding today the fulfillment of your words, and rejoice, all ye righteous!

Canon of the Martyr

Irmos: **G**od, Who descended into the fiery furnace for the Hebrew children and transformed the flame into dew, hymn ye as Lord, O ye works, and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Thine endurance was tested in the river and the fire; and, transcending nature, thou didst pass through them mightily, crying out: Hymn Christ, ye works, and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Christ, Who appeared in strange manner unto thee who wast held in prison, richly nourished thee, and by His own nativity uniteth to the armies on high thee who glorify Him forever.

Thy Bridegroom doth magnificently adorn thee with twofold crowns, O divinely wise Eugenia, and in that He is righteous, He rightly bestoweth upon thee a splendid bridal-chamber. Him do we exalt supremely for all ages!

The grace of God, having radiantly illumined thee, now shineth in the mansions of heaven: Pray thou unceasingly, that by thy supplications those who celebrate thy memory may be filled therewith, O divinely wise one.

Theotokion: **W**e know thee to be a wellspring of the radiance of immortality, O Theotokos, for thou gavest birth to the Word of the immortal father, Who delivereth from death all who exalt Him supremely forever.

ODE IX

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: **G**od the Lord, the Son of the unoriginate Father, hath revealed Himself to us incarnate of the Virgin, to enlighten those in darkness and to gather the dispersed. Wherefore we magnify the all-hymned Theotokos.

Let all the kingdoms of the earth chant, rejoicing, and let the nations of the gentiles be glad. The mountains, valleys and hills, the rivers and the sea, and all creation, magnify the Lord Who is now born.

Thou wast seen insofar as the prophets were able to behold Thee; and, becoming a man in latter times, Thou hast revealed Thyself to all men in Bethlehem, the city of Judah, the star showing Thee forth to the astrologers, O Ineffable One.

"O my Child most sweet, how can I feed Thee who nourishest all things? How can I hold Thee Who holdest all things in Thy hand? How can I wrap in swaddling-bands Thou Who wrappest the whole world in gloom?" cried the most pure Mistress, whom we magnify unceasingly.

Canon of the Martyr

Irmos: God the Lord, the Son of the unoriginate Father, hath revealed Himself to us incarnate of the Virgin, to enlighten those in darkness and to gather the dispersed. Wherefore we magnify the all-hymned Theotokos.

Making thine abode in the mansions of heaven, O glorious one, as a martyr most true and a most immaculate virgin among martyrs, thou hast now manifestly been vouchsafed the sweetness of paradise with the virgins, O most blessed Eugenia.

Thou hast obtained a Desire which is past understanding and conceiving, standing in splendor before the Ultimate Desire, manifestly shining with the brilliant rays of the sovereign Trinity, O divinely wise and goodly virgin Eugenia.

Keeping the lamp of virginity ever-burning, thou wast adorned with the crown of martyrdom. Cease thou never in thy prayers for those who with piety and love honor thee that we may be saved by thy supplications, O most glorious Eugenia.

Thou hast now departed unto divine coolness, O most comely one, having passed through the unbearable fire of wounds and the surging water of temptations, O martyr Eugenia. Wherefore, entreat Christ, that He save our souls.

Theotokion: Having conceived in thy womb the Rain of heaven which had descended upon the fleece, O most immaculate one, thou hast given birth to Him Who granteth immortality, for us who piously hymn Him and magnify thee, the immaculate Theotokos.

Exapostilarion of the forefeast:

Spec. Mel.: "With the disciples ...":

He Who dwelleth in light unapproachable and sustaineth all things is born of the Virgin in His ineffable loving-kindness: He is wrapped in swaddling-bands as a babe, and in the cave He is laid in the manger of dumb beasts. Let us make all haste to come to Bethlehem, to render homage to Him with the magi, bearing as gifts the fruits of most excellent deeds.

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., another Exapostilarion:

O ye faithful, let us offer hymnody to the Virgin Mary: For, lo! she now draweth nigh to give birth to Christ the Savior in the city of Bethlehem. Wherefore, O ye magi, guided by the star haste ye with gifts to render homage with us! Ye shepherds, hasten to cry out with the angels to Him Who is born: Glory to Thee Who liest in the manger in the cave!

On the Praises, 4 stichera, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: "Go forth, ye angels ...":

A Star out of Jacob hath shone forth in the cave! * Let us come and, celebrating the days of the forefeast, * let us hasten with the magi, * let us go with the shepherds, * let us see God wrapped in swaddling-bands, * let us behold the Virgin feeding Him with her milk! * O awesome sight! * Christ, the King of Israel, * cometh forth!

With hymns the choir of angels now honoreth thee, * the radiant Mother who knewest not man, * and, rejoicing, it danceth at thy birthgiving, O all-pure one. * Rejoice, thou hope of the Orthodox! * Rejoice, intercession for those who hymn thee! * Wherefore, let us say: * Blessed art Thou Who hast come! * O our God, glory be to Thee!

A flower issueth forth from the root of Jesse, * foretold by the radiant prophet; * for we see the Virgin * giving birth in manner transcending nature * to the lovely Rose in the cave, * Who is equally enthroned with the Father in the highest. * O ye people, let us say: * Blessed art Thou Who hast come! * O our God, glory be to Thee!

Today Adam hath been recalled from deception * and from captivity to the dark and lying enemy; * for Christ is incarnate of the Virgin * as a man, * and He restoreth Adam, * annulling the curse through the Virgin. * O ye people, let us say: * Blessed art Thou Who hast come! * O our God, glory be to Thee!

Glory ..., in the same tone & melody:

Come, O Bethlehem, * and prepare a place of birth! * Come, O Joseph, * and register thyself with Mary! * The most precious manger, the God-bearing swaddling-bands, * wherein our Life was wrapped, * Christ our God * breaketh asunder the bonds of death, * enfolding men in incorruption.

Now & ever ..., in the same melody:

O blessed womb of the divine Maiden, * thou hast noetically been shown * to be greater than heaven! * For thou bearest, holding within thee, * Him Whom heaven cannot contain! * O the blessed breasts of the Virgin, * which Christ, Who feedeth every creature, doth suck, * creating flesh for Himself * in the womb of the Maiden who knew not man!

At the Aposticha, these stichera of the forefeast. in Tone II:

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

Thou hast been shown to be * a dwelling-place of the Almighty, O Virgin; * for, making His abode within thee, * the Lord of glory * now issueth forth to be born.

Stichos: God shall come forth out of Theman, and the Holy One out of a mountain overshadowed and densely wooded.

In Bethlehem, the pre-eternal God * is born of the Virgin * as a little babe, * in a manger of dumb beasts. * O the wonder!

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

O ye noetic ranks of the angels, * with the shepherds and the magi * lift your voices in song * unto Him Who is born: * Glory to God in the highest!

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

Glory to Thee, O Father, * O Son and Spirit, * by Whom this awesome mystery * hath been accomplished * for the regeneration of men!