

THE 30th DAY OF THE MONTH OF DECEMBER
AFTERFEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST
COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY MARTYR ANYSIA & THE VENERABLE
ZOTICUS

THE COMMEMORATION OF THE VENERABLE MELANIA IS TRANSFERRED TO
THIS DAY BECAUSE OF THE APODOSIS OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST
AT VESPERS

On "Lord, I have cried ...", 6 stichera: 3 of the martyr, in Tone IV:
Spec. Mel.: "As one valiant; among the martyrs ...":

Made radiant by the splendor of virginity, * O most lauded one, * thou didst shine forth in the struggles of martyrdom; * for, refusing to worship the sun, * thou didst endure unjust slaughter, * and; dyed with thy blood, * thou hast come to stand before the Sun of glory, * illumined by the splendors * emitted by Him, O crowned one.

Showing forth heartfelt love, O glorious one, * thou didst drench the earth * with tears of compunction, * and didst wipe the footstool of Christ dry with thy hair, * contemplating and looking toward Him as transcendent, * Whom thou didst desire; * and, touching His feet in mind, * thou didst enlighten thy soul * with visions most divine.

Having distributed thy wealth * and provided for the poor, * thou didst betroth thyself to thine incorrupt Bridegroom, O most glorious one, * and as a dowry didst bring unto Him * the streams of thy blood * and the endurance of sufferings * which thou didst bear, O Anysia. * And the Most High hath caused thee to dwell in His bridal-chamber * as a passion-bearer and martyr.

And 3 stichera of the venerable Melania, in the same tone:

Spec. Mel.: "Called from on high ...":

O thou who hast enrolled in the choirs of the angels, * when divine love set thee afire * and caused thee to soar far above visible things * because of thy dispassion and purity, * then with words of trust in God * thou didst bring thy spouse to life, * putting aside the fleeting and inconstant tumult of life. * Wherefore, having found with him * everlasting life and delight, * thou prayest to the Master, * that He save our souls.

Desiring the life of the angels * when thou didst vomit up sweet food, * and having trained thyself in abstinence and the keeping of vigil, * in lying on the ground and in purity, * thou becamest the most pure vessel * of the divine Spirit, * adorned for Him with all-splendid gifts, * O most honored one. * Wherefore, thou didst draw the people toward His divine love, O Melania, * and didst lead them to the Master, * the Savior of our souls.

Adorned with the beauties of the virtues, * when thou didst fulfill the word of the Savior, * thou didst give to the poor and wretched, * distributing ten thousands of golden coins, * and didst receive heavenly riches, * being enriched forever * with righteousness, incorruption and deliverance. * Wherefore, we honor thy repose * and earnestly entreat thee: Entreat the Creator, * that He enlighten our souls.

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

"Glory to God in the highest!" is heard from the incorporeal ones in Bethlehem today, addressed to Him Who was well pleased to become Peace on earth. Now the Virgin is become more spacious than the heavens, for Light hath shone forth upon the benighted and lifted up the lowly who chant with the angels: Glory to God in the highest!

At the Aposticha, these stichera, in Tone II:

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

Christ, shining forth * as a star from Jacob, * hath enlightened the nations * with the light of divine knowledge. * Let us glorify Him!

Stichos: From the womb before the morning star have I begotten Thee. The Lord hath sworn and will not repent.

Rejoice, O Bethlehem, * thou city of David, * for He Who was begotten of the Father without mother * hath become incarnate within thee without father * of the pure Virgin, the divine Maiden.

Stichos: The Lord said unto my Lord: Sit Thou at My right hand.

The Word of the Father, * assuming flesh, hath been born, * hath been wrapped in swaddling clothes * and lain in a manger, * releasing me from irrationality.

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

Beholding that which He had created according to His image and likeness corrupted by disobedience, Jesus descended, bowing down the heavens, and made His abode in the Virgin's womb without undergoing change, that in her He might restore Adam Who had become corrupt, yet crieth: Glory to Thine appearance, O my Deliverer and God!

Troparion of the feast, in Tone IV:

Thy nativity, O Christ our God, hath shone forth the light of reason upon the world; for therein those who worship the stars have been taught by a star to worship Thee, the Sun of righteousness, and to know Thee, the Dayspring from on high. O Lord, glory be to Thee!

AT COMPLINE

Canon of Our Venerable Father Zoticus, in Tone VIII:

ODE I

Irmos: Let us chant unto the Lord Who led His people across the Red Sea, for He alone hath gloriously been glorified!

O Zoticus, entreat Christ, that He enlighten from on high my darkened thoughts, that I may hymn thee worthily.

Thou didst show thyself to be an emulator of the angels by thy life on earth, O divinely wise one, spurning the beauties of life as was fitting.

Theotokion: **T**he human race is edified because of thee, O Virgin, for, without leaving the highest, God came down to earth.

ODE III

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

Come, ye sojourners, and let us joyfully lift up our voices today, blessing Zoticus on this, his splendid festival.

Like Abraham in his day, thou didst set up a tent as thy dwelling-place, receiving all the poor and richly nurturing them.

Theotokion: **I**n thy birth giving, O most pure one, thou didst cause every tempest to cease; wherefore, rulers vanquish the enemy, reveling in peace.

ODE IV

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

This radiant solemnity of the venerable Zoticus hath now shone forth, summoning all to the celebration of the nativity of Christ.

Having been adorned with miracles, thou hast left us all-glorious miracles, thine honored corrections on earth, O all-blessed one, as a divine model.

Theotokion: **O** Theotokos, we have found thee to be a mercy-seat and impregnable refuge amid battles, and rulers bear thy dominion, O pure one.

ODE V

Irmos: **E**nlighten us with Thy precepts, O Lord, and with Thine upraised arm grant us Thy peace, O Thou Who lovest mankind.

O wondrous one, adornment of the virtues, thy precious corrections are shown to be a divine home and vesture for the naked.

Healing leprosy, O sacred father, thou didst make thine honored house into a hospital, wherein every infirmity is treated as is meet.

Theotokion: Great and worshipful is the mystery which was manifest within thee, O Ever-virgin Theotokos; for, lo! we mortals have truly become reconciled with God.

ODE VI

Irmos: The abyss of sins and the tempest of transgressions trouble me, and drag me down into the depths of violent despondency; but extend to me Thy mighty arm, as Thou didst to Peter, O Helmsman, and save me!

All of us, the faithful, know thee to be a temple of the Spirit, O all-glorious one, for thou didst make thy house, wherein every ailment is expelled by thy prayers, into a most magnificent temple.

Emulating Abraham, thou didst render hospitality to strangers on earth, most blessedly receiving the homeless, the naked, the wandering, the halt, the poor and the sojourners.

Theotokion: He Who showed forth the cave as heaven on earth, O Virgin, hath shown thee to be a heavenly temple surrounded by angelic choirs chanting with faith: Glory in the highest to thine Offspring!

Sedalion, in Tone V: Spec. Mel.: "The Word Who is equally unoriginate ...":

With the dew of abstinence, O venerable Zoticus, thou didst extinguish the furnace of the passions, having been enriched with the gift of healing by God; and thou didst receive the faithful, to heal their cruel pangs and to drive away from them hordes of the demons. Wherefore, with gladness we honor thee.

ODE VII

Irmos: The Hebrew children in the furnace boldly trampled the flame underfoot and transformed the fire into dew, crying: Blessed art Thou, O Lord God, forever!

Thou hast joined all the venerable and the choirs of the incorporeal ones, O all-blessed Zoticus, and with them criest out: Blessed art Thou, O Lord God, forever!

By power and grace, O divinely wise one, thou wast shown to be the protector of widows and the weak, and the father of orphans, crying: Blessed art Thou, O Lord God, forever!

Theotokion: O Theotokos, destroy the might of the barbarians and save thy people; and make steadfast faithful rulers, who cry: Blessed is the Fruit of thy womb, O most pure one!

ODE VIII

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

These trophies of victory, these corrections, and the tears of poor women have shown thy temple to be higher than heaven, and have opened to thee the gates of the kingdom. For thou didst cry out with faith: Ye children, bless; ye priests, hymn; ye people, exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Thou gavest neither sleep to thine eyes nor slumber to thine eyelids, O right wondrous God-pleaser, until thou didst utterly complete thy godly task as a noetic paradise of Christ, crying: Ye children, bless; ye priests, hymn and exalt the Lord supremely for all ages!

Theotokion: **B**ecoming man for our salvation, Thou didst come to us in the lovingkindness of Thy mercy, and madest Thine abode within the cave, wrapped in swaddling bands; and Thou hast raised mortals up from the passions, who chant together: Hymn the Lord, ye priests; ye people, exalt Him supremely for all ages!

ODE IX

Irmos: **H**eaven was filled with awe, and the ends of the earth were amazed, that God appeared to men in the flesh, and that thy womb hath become more spacious than the heavens. Wherefore, the ranks of angels and men magnify thee, the Theotokos.

Grace hath been given thee by God, O father, to heal the infirmities of the poor, the lame and those with withered limbs; and faithfully receiving them as ones beloved of Christ, with them thou dost ever rejoice, abiding in the bosom of Abraham.

Thou didst feed to repletion every stranger, naked person and wanderer, O father, and with the patriarchs and the righteous dost now ever splendidly rejoice where Christ is the wealth and delight, the eternal hope of the saved, the treasure of all.

Theotokion: **A**s the Mother of God, as the intercessor and haven of those who honor thee, as the refuge of all who have recourse to thee, O Virgin, as the joy of kings, their glory, confirmation and worthy crown, O Theotokos, save thou thy people.

Stichera of the venerable one, in Tone VI: Spec. Mel.: "On the third day ...":

In character thou didst show thyself to be like Abraham, O wise one, for thou didst make the abundance of thy home accessible to all, giving to those in need and presenting alms to the poor.

Christ showed thee to be a receiver of widows and the poor, the fervent helper of the afflicted, the advocate of the oppressed, the champion and deliverer of those who praise thee, O our father.

Glory ..., in the same tone:

Strengthened with power and adorned with the grace of Him Who was born in the cave, O Zoticus, with asceticism and abstinence thou didst triumph over the passions and hast received trophies of victory.

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

The Virgin who gave birth to Thee without seed, O Christ God, laid Thee in the manger as a babe, and the choirs of the incorporeal ones cried out from on high: Glory to the Creator and God of all!

AT MATINS

At "God is the Lord ...", the troparion of the feast:

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, * hath shined the light of knowledge upon the world; * for thereby, they that worshipped the stars * were instructed by a star * to worship Thee, the Sun of Righteousness, * and to know Thee, the Dayspring from on high. * O Lord, glory be to Thee. (Thrice)

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

Spec. Mel.: "When the stone had been sealed ...":

The Son Who with the Father and the Spirit is everlasting, Who is the Wisdom and Understanding from before time, desired to be born of the Virgin for our sake in latter times, that He might save the world from the tyranny of the alien foe. Glory to Thee Who wast born in the flesh! Glory to Thee Who wast thus well pleased! Glory to Thee Who hast delivered us by Thy nativity!

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

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

Spec. Mel.: "That which was commanded ...":

Let heaven rejoice and let the earth be glad, for the Lamb of God hath been born on earth, granting deliverance to the world. The Word Who is in the bosom of the Father hath issued forth from the Virgin without seed. At Him did the magi marvel, beholding God in the flesh; and the shepherds cried out: Glory to Him Who alone is truly God!

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

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

O incorrupt and divine Glory, Thou didst come forth from the Virgin's womb and didst preserve inviolate her who gave Thee birth; Thou didst rest in the manger as upon a throne, and didst show the cave to be a beautiful palace. Shepherds hymned Thee as the King of all, and the star made its transit to show the magi a divine light. Wherefore, we all cry out to Thee: O Master Christ our God, send down remission of transgressions upon those who with faith celebrate Thy divine nativity!

Canon of the feast, with 6 troparia; and two canons of the saints, with 8 troparia.

ODE I

Canon of the feast, the composition of John the monk, in Tone I:

Irmos: Working a wonder of old, the Master saved His people, making solid the watery waves of the sea; and having been born of the Virgin of His own will, He setteth for us a path leading to heaven. Let us glorify Him Who is by nature equal to the Father and to men.

Thy sacred womb, which was depicted by the bush which burned without being consumed, manifestly bore the Word and mingled God with a human image, loosing the wretched womb of Eve from the bitter curse of old. Let us glorify Him, O ye mortals!

To the magi the star manifestly showed Thee forth, the Word Who hath existed before the sun and came to bring an end to sin, and Who in Thy mercy wast wrapped in swaddling bands in the wretched cave. And, rejoicing, they beheld the Lord Himself, a man.

Canon of the martyr Anysia, the composition of Theophanes, in Tone IV:

Irmos: Israel of old, traversing the depths of the Red Sea with dryshod feet, vanquished the power of Amalek in the wilderness by Moses' arms upraised in the form of the Cross.

As thou standest in joy before the Father of lights, O most lauded one, send down light upon me who hymn thy radiant memory, driving away the storm of my passions by thine entreaties.

With abstinence, O divinely wise one, thou didst renew the meadow of thy soul, producing the grain of martyrdom for the Husbandman Who preserved thee and breathed strength into thee, O right wondrous virgin martyr.

With thy hands which bestow riches far more precious than corruptible wealth, thou didst receive the richness of life which in nowise passeth away, a treasure which cannot be taken away, and heavenly glory, O martyr.

Theotokion: For us the Creator of all is born of thee today, O thou who knewest not wedlock; and He Who hath wrapped the sea in mist is wrapped in swaddling bands, O Ever-virgin Mother.

Canon of the venerable Melania, the composition of Joseph, in Tone IV:

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 be seen keeping splendid festival; and, rejoicing, I shall hymn her wonders.

Illumining me with the radiant supplications of the venerable Melania, cleanse me who am wholly blackened by the darkness of the passions, O Thou Who lovest mankind, and breathe Thou discourse into me who honor her.

Diligently shouldering thy cross, thou didst ardently follow after Him Who endured voluntary crucifixion for thy sake, O most blessed one, and didst keep His justifications.

Thou didst turn utterly away from the violent attachment of thy parents and the pleasures of the flesh, O divinely wise one, desiring the beauty of Christ, thy Lover, alone. Him do all who partake of discourse desire.

Theotokion: He Who is rich maketh Himself poor, enriching with divinity me who before wickedly impoverished myself with intemperance. Behold, He Who is unoriginate receiveth a beginning, being born of the divine Virgin Maiden.

ODE III

Canon of the Feast

Irmos: Look upon the hymns of Thy servants, O Benefactor, bringing low the vaunted pride of the enemy; and bear far above sin those who hymn Thee and have been made unshakably firm by the foundation of faith, O Good One Who seest all.

Having been vouchsafed to behold the all-rich Offspring of the all-pure Bride, which passeth understanding, the chorus of pipers bowed down in awe-filled homage; and the ranks of incorporeal beings hymn Christ the King, Who became incarnate without seed.

In His loving-kindness, He Who reigneth over the heights of heaven becometh like us through the unwedded Maiden; the Word Who before was immaterial later took upon Himself the matter of the flesh, that He might draw to Himself the first-created man, who had fallen.

Canon of the Martyr

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

Thy Creator, desiring thy spiritual beauty, truly betrothed Himself to thee, a goodly and blameless bride, O martyr.

Loving the sufferings and death of the Dispassionate One Who died for our sake, O honored martyr, thou didst die a martyr's death.

As a spiritual holocaust, as a sacrifice pure and perfect, did she who loved Thy Cross offer herself to Thee, O God.

Theotokion: Thou wast a habitation containing the infinite Creator, O all-pure and joyous one, who contained Him in the flesh.

Canon of the Venerable One

Irmos: Not in wisdom, nor in power, nor yet in riches do we boast, but in Thee, the hypostatic Wisdom of the Father, O Christ; for there is none holier than Thee, Who lovest mankind.

O glorious one, having withdrawn from the lower desires, of thy volition thou didst piously give all thy desire over solely to the everlasting things which are to come.

Thou didst adorn thy senses with earnest supplications, and becamest wholly radiant through the effulgence of the Spirit, having emulated in thy body the life of the immaterial ones.

Whether by thy speech or thy silence thou wast an example, the confirmation of the unsure, a model for monastics, O divinely wise Melania. Wherefore, we hymn thee.

Theotokion: He Who clotheth the heavens with clouds is swaddled of His own will and desire; and He is held in the arms of the Virgin, pulling me from the hands of the adversary.

Sedalion of the martyr, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: "Having been lifted up upon the Cross ...":

Gaining dominion over the carnal passions, thou didst become a queen through life-creating sufferings, piously dyeing in thy blood a robe of purple for thyself, O honored Anysia. Wherefore, thou hast been shown to be the immaculate bride of the King of all. Deliver from misfortunes us who celebrate thy glorious memory.

Glory ..., Sedalion of the venerable one, in the same tone:

Spec. Mel.: "Go thou quickly before ...":

Keeping the divine commandments with zeal, thou didst give to the poor, distributing tens of thousands of golden coins; and taking thy cross upon thy shoulders, O Melania, with thy husband thou didst faithfully follow after Christ Who was crucified in the flesh, our only God.

Now & ever ..., Sedalion of the feast, in the same tone:

All creation now rejoiceth in godliness, for Christ the Lord, the Son of God, is born of the pure Virgin, making the whole human race immortal and lifting the curse of our first mother Eve. Wherefore, we offer hymnody unto Him as to our Benefactor.

ODE IV

Canon of the Feast

Irmos: Chanting of old, the Prophet Habbakuk proclaimed beforehand the renewal of the human race, having been ineffably vouchsafed to behold an image; for the Word hath come forth from the Virgin, the mountain, as a little babe, for the restoration of the people.

Receiving flesh from the Virgin of His own will, the Most High hath issued forth, equal to men, to purge away the venom of the serpent's head, leading all from the sunless gates of Hades to life-bearing light, in that He is God.

The nations who of old were overwhelmed by corruption, having escaped the greatest enemy, lift up their hands with hymns of praise, honoring the one Christ as Benefactor, Who hath come to us in His mercy.

Having grown forth from the root of Jesse, O Virgin, thou didst transcend the laws of human nature, giving birth to the pre-eternal Word of the Father, in that He Himself was well pleased to pass through thy sealed womb in His strange abasement.

Canon of the Martyr

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

Following Thy life-bearing footsteps, O Master Christ, Thy handmaiden, who hymneth Thee, is wounded by a spear in the side and unwaveringly passeth through the whirling blades.

Shining with the splendors of martyrdom, crowned with a wreath of incorruption, O most lauded martyr Anysia, thou standest, rejoicing, before Christ, thy Bridegroom.

Vanquishing with thy martyr's opposition him who caused our first mother Eve to trip, thou didst cast him down, showing him to be impotent, and chanting to Christ: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Theotokion: He Who created the immaterial beings is born of thee today as a man in the body, O Mother of God. To Him do we chant: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Canon of the Venerable One

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

Mortifying the carnal lusts with abstinence, O most honored one, thou didst have the Life of the living dwelling within thee. And passing on from the earth, thou madest thine abode therein, delighting in the kingdom of heaven.

Having distributed myriads of gold pieces to the hungry, truly thou didst never horde them in coffers which mould away forever; rather they have purchased for thee an everlasting sojourn.

The richness of thine almsgiving was like a river watering the heart of each pauper, O glorious one, washing away the dirt of poverty; they are riches which cannot be stolen, and which have won for thee inexhaustible treasure in the heavens.

Theotokion: Having submitted to the lusts like an irrational beast, I have joined the beasts, even though I am a being endowed with reason. O thou who gavest birth to the everlasting Word, disdain me not, who am ever perishing.

ODE V

Canon of the Feast

Irmos: O Christ our cleansing, come Thou unto us who out of the night of deeds of dark falsehood do vigilantly hymn thee as Benefactor, granting us an easy path, ascending which we find glory.

By His coming in the flesh the Master hath again cut down the cruel enmity directed against us, that He might destroy the soul-destroying ruler, uniting the world with the immaterial beings, making the Begetter accessible to creation.

The people who of old were benighted have finally seen the light of the radiance of the Most High; and the Son bringeth the nations to the Father as an inheritance, bestowing ineffable grace where since once flourished exceedingly.

Canon of the Martyr

Irmos: Thou hast come, O my Lord, as a light into the world, a holy light turning from the darkness of ignorance those who hymn Thee with faith.

Knowing Thee, O Lord, as the well-spring of salvation, Thy martyr drained the cup of salvation with a sure heart.

O passion-bearer of the Lord, heifer of Christ, God-pleasing immolation, sacrifice offered to God: pray thou that we be saved.

Having moot manifestly drawn nigh unto the great Light, thou hast become light, and illuminest those who celebrate thy radiant memory.

Theotokion: We wield thee as an invincible weapon against the enemy, O Bride of God, and have acquired thee as the confirmation and hope of our salvation.

Canon of the Venerable One

Irmos: The ungodly cannot behold Thy glory, O Christ; but, rising at dawn out of the night, we hymn Thee, the Effulgence of the divinity of the Father's glory, O only-begotten One, Who lovest mankind.

Utterly erasing the ugly forms of the passions from thy soul, O honored one, with the ink of abstinence thou didst record dispassion and unfeigned love therein.

Manifestly like unto a bright mirror, O glorious one, thou didst radiantly receive the gifts of the divine Spirit and hast illumined the faithful with the splendor of thy life.

Having quenched the burning of the passions with abstinence, thou didst set thy soul afire, shining forth in thy whole life and driving away the darkness of the demons.

Theotokion: The Virgin gave birth in the city of Bethlehem to Emmanuel, Who openeth Eden, which of old was closed to me because of the deception of the serpent and mine ancestors' failure to abstain from eating.

ODE VI

Canon of the Feast

Irmos: Dwelling in the uttermost depths of the sea, Jonah besought Thee to come and still the tempest; and I, pierced by the arrow of the tyrant, do chant unto Thee, Christ the Destroyer of evil, do Thou come quickly unto my slothfulness!

God the Word, Who from the beginning was with God, intending to preserve the nature which He Himself shareth with us, now strengtheneth it, which from of old was weak, by another fellowship with it, straightway showing it to be free from the passions.

He Who dwelleth in light, and, contrary to His dignity, hath now been well pleased to dwell in a manger, cometh forth for our sake from the loins of Abraham for us who have benightedly fallen into the darkness of transgressions, that, for the salvation of men, He might raise up His children who have fallen low.

Canon of the Martyr

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

Having received a manly intelligence in a woman's body, O martyr, thou didst go forth to do battle with the incorporeal foe, and didst slay them with the sword of patience.

With floods of blood thou didst dry up the sea of false religion, and didst water the honored Church of Christ, O passion-bearer Anysia, thou boast of virgins.

Thou didst pass over the sea of struggles without foundering or sinking; wherefore, thou hast hastened to the tranquil haven, and dost enjoy true serenity, O all-glorious one.

Theotokion: He Who created man in His own image doth in His great lovingkindness edify him, clothing Himself wholly in him through thee, O Virgin Mother of God.

Canon of the Venerable One

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

Thou didst pass through the tempest of life without foundering, steered by the hand of Him Who created all things by his word, O Melania, and thou hast reached the harbor of salvation.

All the fiery darts of sin were burned up by the sparks of thine ardent love for the Lord all, and the malice of the demons hath been utterly destroyed.

Thy mind deified by union with that which is higher, thou wast separated from love of the flesh by the hand of the Almighty; wherefore, thou didst undertake labors of asceticism.

Theotokion: The Lord Who was born of the Virgin deifieth me and, wrapped in swaddling bands, He hath wrought the unbinding of my transgressions. He Who cannot be contained by anything is contained in the cave.

Kontakion of the feast, in Tone III: Spec. Mel.:

"Today the Virgin ...":

Today the Virgin giveth birth to Him Who is transcendent in essence; * and the earth offereth a cave to Him Who is unapproachable. * Angels with shepherds give glory; * with a star the Magi do journey; * for our sake a young Child is born, Who is pre-eternal God.

Ikos: Bethlehem hath thrown Eden open! Come, let us see! We have found food in a secret place! Come, let us receive things of paradise within the cave! There the unwatered root hath appeared, putting forth remission as fruit! There is found the un-dug well from whence David of old thirsted to drink! There the Virgin, giving birth to a Babe, hath straightway caused the thirst of Adam and David to cease! Wherefore, let us go to Him where He is born, a little Babe, the pre-eternal God.

ODE VII

Canon of the Feast

Irmos: Caught by the love of the King of all, the children reviled the ungodly blasphemy of the tyrant who raged uncontrollably, and the great fire submitted to them as they said to the Master: Blessed art Thou forever!

The furnace which had been raised to a sevenfold heat savagely burneth the minions, but spareth the youths who were wholly consumed with the fear of God; and the flame crowned them when the Lord freely granted them dew for their piety's sake.

O Christ our Helper, using Thine ineffable incarnation as a bulwark of defense, having taken on form, Thou hast put to shame the adversary of men, bearing the richness of Thy deification, in hope of which we had fallen from the heights down into the darkness of the uttermost depths.

Omnipotently Thou hast cast down sin, which is exalted in evil without restraint and is incited to a vile frenzy by the perversion of the world; and those whom it formerly attracted Thou savest from its snares today, having become incarnate of Thine own will, O Benefactor.

Canon of the Martyr

Irmos: O all-hymned Lord God of our fathers, Who saved the children in the fire, slaying the Chaldeans whom righteousness justly pursued: Blessed art Thou!

The torrents of tortures which flowed forth in no wise shook the house of thy soul, which were made noetically firm by thy confession of Christ, O martyr, who criest out: Blessed art Thou!

Having come to know Christ, the Sun of righteousness, O martyr, thou didst not wish to offer sacrifice wickedly to the sun when commanded to do so by the tyrant; rather, thou didst chant: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Having dyed a purple robe for thyself in thy sacred blood, O martyr, thou didst crown thy head with a wreath of victory; and now thou standest in gladness before God, the immortal King.

Theotokion: He Who wrapped the sky in clouds and the earth in mist, having been born of thy womb, is wrapped in swaddling bands and laid in a manger, O most immaculate Mother of God, saving those who know thee to be the Theotokos.

Canon of the Venerable One

Irmos: O all-hymned Lord God of our fathers, Who saved the children in the fire, slaying the Chaldeans whom righteousness justly pursued: Blessed art Thou!

Bearing the yoke of Christ with thy husband, O God-bearer, ye renewed your souls with the plough of prayers, and, having cultivated the field of good works, ye delight forever in glory on high.

Like the olive-tree of the psalms which was planted in the house of God, thou dost mystically anoint with the oil of thy pangs the hearts and faces of those who praise thy struggles with faith, O venerable one.

Having extinguished the furnace of the passions with the dew of abstinence, with the rain of thy prayers thou hast poured forth an abyss of healings, engulfing the onslaughts of the passion of those who honor thee, O Melania.

Theotokion: David called thee a fleece, O pure one, for thou didst receive the Rain of heaven Who drieth up the torrents of iniquity and watereth the minds of the faithful, which have withered up because of sin.

ODE VIII

Canon of the Feast

Irmos: The children who in the time of the Old Covenant were cast into the fire prefigure the unconsumed womb of the Maiden which supernaturally giveth birth, yet remaineth sealed; and the grace which worketh both as a single miracle, moveth the people to hymnody.

Having escaped the destruction resulting from man's being deceived into becoming divine, like the youths all creation with trembling unceasingly hymneth the Word Who hath abased Himself, and with fear it offereth meager praise, in that it is corrupt, even though it have endured such with wisdom.

Thou comest, O Restoration of the nations, to bring lost human nature back from the hills of the wilderness to the pasture rife with flowers, that Thou mightest put down the violent power of the slayer of men, having, in Thy forethought, become God as well as man.

Canon of the Martyr

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

Loving the commands of the Almighty constantly, thou didst distribute thy wealth to the widows, orphans and paupers, and to all in need, O honored virgin, and didst seek the cup of honorable martyrdom; and having drained it, thou didst cause desire to cease.

As a dowry thou didst bring to Christ fasting and tears, the mortification of the passions, the shedding of thy blood and the piercing of thy side; wherefore, He Who ageth not Himself giveth thee a crown, an incorrupt bridal chamber and heavenly glory.

Thou dwellest in light with the angels and the ranks of virgins, celebrating with the assemblies of martyrs, gazing upon thy Bridegroom face to face, sharing in radiant glory and crying out: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Theotokion: **B**ehold, now a ruler and prince hath manifestly failed from the tribe of Judah, for thou, O most immaculate one, hast given birth to Christ, the expectation of the nations, for Whom the things were stored up of old. To Him do we chant: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Canon of the Venerable One

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 the Lord, ye works, and exalt Him supremely for all ages!**

Having made thy heart and body a temple for the all-divine Trinity, O right glorious one, thou didst erect divine temples, in which thou hast assembled ranks of virgins and choirs of monastics, who chant together and exalt Christ supremely for all ages.

Through almsgiving thou didst acquire mercy, and distributing thy wealth, thou gavest it to the poor. Thy righteousness abideth eternally, as doth the reward thou didst win through it, O venerable God-bearer Melania. Wherefore, we honor thee as truly victorious.

Shining with understanding, courage, chastity and divine righteousness, O venerable one, thou didst possess elevating humility which exalteth thee to the heights of heaven, and wherewith thou didst cast down the haughty serpent. Wherefore, we honor thee as truly victorious.

Theotokion: **W**aves of the passions beset me and the abyss of despair engulfeth me. Rescue me, O most immaculate Mother, and I shall be saved; for thou gavest birth to the Lord and Savior Who is laid in a manger as a babe, and Whom we exalt supremely for all ages.

ODE IX

Canon of the Feast

Irmos: **I**t would be easier for us to prefer silence out of fear, for it is not fraught with danger, O Virgin, for it is difficult to fashion hymns fittingly wrought for thee. Yet, O Mother, grant us the power to chant such, inasmuch as it is our will.

O pure Mother, having beheld the indistinct images and dim shadows of the Word Who hath newly appeared through the gates that were closed, but mindful now of His true radiance, we bless thy womb as is meet.

Having attained their desire and been vouchsafed to see the advent of God, the people who delight in Christ are now consoled by regeneration; for thou bestowest life-bearing grace to pay homage to glory, O pure Virgin.

Canon of the Martyr

Irmos: **C**hrist, the Chief Cornerstone uncut by human hands, Who uniteth two disparate natures, was cut from thee, the unquarried mountain, O Virgin. Wherefore, in gladness we magnify thee, O Theotokos.

Those who rendered worship to stones rather-than to the Creator, unable to bear thy commitment to God, O glorious one, cut thee asunder with a sword, betrothing divine immortality to thee through death.

The city of Thessalonica boasteth in thy grave-clothes and sufferings, O virgin martyr; and the Church of the firstborn and the righteous is glad, possessing thy divine spirit.

With faith the magi brought frankincense, gold and myrrh to Him Who was born in Bethlehem, and the passion-bearer hath brought the outpouring of the blood of her martyrdom, entreating Him in our behalf.

Theotokion: **O** all-pure Theotokos, thou hast caused a Rod to bud forth from the root of Jesse, having given birth for us today to Christ, the Flower of the Godhead, the uncontainable God Who hath now been swaddled as a babe.

Canon of the Venerable One

Irmos: **B**ecause of the sickness of disobedience Eve came to dwell under the curse; but through the Offspring of thy pregnancy, **O** Virgin Theotokos, thou hast budded forth blessing for the world. Wherefore, we all magnify thee.

Thou didst manifestly hasten up to the summit of utter perfection, **O** blessed one, and didst attain unto the ranks of the incorporeal ones; and having drawn nigh to thy true Desire, thou hast now received a well-spring of good things. Wherefore, we all call thee blessed.

Thou dost rejoice with the choirs of fasters, having labored ascetically; and having mortified the passions, thou dost gaze directly upon the beauty of God, which thou hadst first acquired through chastity, **O** most blessed Melania.

Having trodden the narrow path, thou didst reach the broad expanse of paradise, where is the joy of those who keep festival and the tree of life, ever mindful of us who honor thy repose.

Theotokion: **H**e Who is awesomely borne up on the shoulders of the cherubim sitteth now in the arms of the pure Maiden; He is wrapped in swaddling bands, loosing the bonds of our evil deeds; and He is fed milk as a babe, Who feedeth every creature.

Exapostilarion of the feast:

From on high our Savior, the Dayspring of the East, hath visited us, and we who are in darkness and shadow have' truly found Him; for the Lord hath been born of the Virgin. Thrice

At. the Aposticha, these stichera, in Tone VI:

Spec. Mel.: "Go before us, ye angelic hosts .. ,":

Behold, the Lamb of God, * Who as God taketh away the sin of the world, * lieth as a babe in a manger, * desiring to deliver the reason-endowed * from all the passions of irrationality * and from everlasting retribution. * To Him do we cry out: * Blessed art Thou Who hast been born! * Glory to Thee, **O** our God!

Stichos: **From the womb before the morning star have I begotten Thee. The Lord hath sworn and will not repent.**

O Thine ineffable mysteries * which pass understanding! * In His compassion God is born, on earth, * taking to Himself the image of a servant, * that He might rescue from the slavery of the alien * those who cry to Him with faith: * Blessed art Thou Who hast been born! * Glory to Thee, our God!

Stichos: The Lord said unto my Lord: Sit Thou at My right hand.

Let us stand reverently in the house of the Lord * and together hymn with jubilation * His loving-kindness * and His great condescension, * How hath He willed to manifest Himself as a babe * in Bethlehem of Judea? * Let us cry aloud: * Blessed is He Who hath been born! * Glory to Thee, O our God!

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

"O Christ the Sun, how is it that I cover Thee with swaddling bands? * How is it that I feed Thee with milk, * Who art the Nourisher of all creation? * How can I hold in mine arms * Thee Who holdest all things? * How can I look without fear * at Thee upon Whom the many-eyed cherubim dare not gaze?" * she who knew not wedlock exclaimed, holding Christ.

AT LITURGY

On the Beatitudes, 6 troparia, from Ode VIII of the canons of the feast.

The daughter of Babylon carrieth off the captive children of David from Sion to herself; but now she sendeth her own children, the magi bearing gifts, to the God-pleasing daughter of David, who prayeth. Wherefore, chanting, let us sing: Let all creation bless the Lord and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

The harps refused to play their sad songs, for the children of Sion would not sing in a strange land; but Christ, shining forth in Bethlehem, destroyeth all the falsehood of Babylon and her musical instruments. Wherefore, chanting, let us sing: Let all creation bless the Lord and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Babylon received the plunder of the kingdom of Sion and its captive riches; but Christ draweth its treasures to His Sion, guiding the star-watching kings by a star. Wherefore, chanting, let us sing: Let all creation bless the Lord and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Having escaped the destruction resulting from man's being deceived into becoming divine, like the youths all creation with trembling unceasingly hymneth the Word Who hath abased Himself, and with fear it offereth meager praise, in that it is corrupt, even though it hath endured such with wisdom. (Twice)

Thou comest, O Restoration of the nations, to bring lost human nature back from the hills of the wilderness to the pasture rife with flowers; that Thou mightest put down the violent power of the slayer of men, having, in Thy forethought, become God as well as man.

Troparion of the feast, in Tone IV:

Thy nativity, O Christ our God, hath shone forth the light of reason upon the world; for therein those who worship the stars have been taught by a star to worship Thee, the Sun of righteousness, and to know Thee, the Dayspring from on high. O Lord, glory be to Thee!

Kontakion of the feast, in Tone III:

Today the Virgin giveth birth to Him Who is transcendent in essence; * and the earth offereth a cave to Him Who is unapproachable. * Angels with shepherds give glory; * with a star the Magi do journey; * for our sake a young Child is born, Who is pre-eternal God.