

8 / 21 September 2017
THE NATIVITY OF OUR MOST HOLY LADY,
THE THEOTOKOS AND EVER-VIRGIN MARY

GREAT VESPERS

Deacon: Arise! O Lord, bless!

Priest: Glory to the holy, and consubstantial, and life-creating, and indivisible Trinity, always, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

Clergy: O come, let us worship God our King.

O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ our King and God.

O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and God.

O come, let us worship and fall down before Him.

Then the chanters chant the following selected verses from the 103rd Psalm:

Psalm 103
(Selected Verses)

Chanters: Bless the Lord, O my soul. Blessed art Thou, O Lord. Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, Thou hast been magnified exceedingly.

Refrain: Blessed art Thou, O Lord.

Confession and majesty hast Thou put on.

Refrain: Blessed art Thou, O Lord.

Upon the mountains shall the waters stand.

Refrain: Wondrous are Thy works, O Lord.

Between the mountains will the waters run.

Refrain: Wondrous are Thy works, O Lord.

In wisdom hast Thou made them all, hast Thou made them all.

Refrain: Glory to Thee, O Lord, Who hast made them all, Who hast made them all.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. *Thrice.*

The Great Ectenia

Deacon: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the peace from above, and the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the peace of the whole world, the good estate of the holy churches of God, and the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For this holy temple, and for them that with faith, reverence, and the fear of God enter herein, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For great lord and father, His Holiness Patriarch *N.*; for our lord the Very Most Reverend Metropolitan *N.*, First Hierarchy of the Russian Church Abroad; for our lord the Most Reverend Archbishop (*or* Bishop) *N.* for the venerable priesthood, the deaconate in Christ, for all the clergy and people, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For this land, its authorities and armed forces, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the God-preserved Russian land and its Orthodox people both in the homeland and in the diaspora, and for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That He may deliver His people from enemies both visible and invisible, and confirm in us oneness of mind, brotherly love and piety, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For this city (*or* this town, *or* this holy monastery), every city and country, and the faithful that dwell therein, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For seasonable weather, abundance of the fruits of the earth, and peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For travelers by sea, land and air, for the sick, the suffering, the imprisoned, and for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

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Deacon: That we may be delivered from all tribulation, wrath, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Calling to remembrance our most holy, most pure, most blessed, glorious Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and all our life unto Christ our God.

Chanters: To Thee, O Lord.

Priest: For unto Thee is due all glory, honour and worship; to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

READING OF THE PSALTER

Then the first stasis of the First Kathisma of the Psalter (Psalms 1-3), 'Blessed is the man...' is read in three stases, with a little litany following. In current parish practice, only selected verses from the first stasis of the first kathisma are sung:

Blessed is the Man *(Selected Verses)*

Chanters: Blessed is the man that hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, and the way of the ungodly shall perish. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Serve ye the Lord with fear, and rejoice in Him with trembling. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Blessed are all that have put their trust in Him. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Salvation is of the Lord, and Thy blessing is upon Thy people. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. *Thrice.*

The Small Ectenia

Deacon: Again and again, in peace let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Calling to remembrance our most holy, most pure, most blessed, glorious Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and all our life unto Christ our God.

Chanters: To Thee O Lord.

Priest: For Thine is the dominion, and Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory: of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

LORD I HAVE CRIED...

Canonarch: In the Sixth Tone: Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hearken unto me.

Then immediately we chant 'Lord, I have cried...' (Psalms 140, 141, 129, and 116) —

Psalm 140

Chanters: Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hearken unto me. * Hearken unto me, O Lord. * Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hearken unto me; * attend to the voice of my supplication, * when I cry unto Thee. * Hearken unto me, O Lord.

Let my prayer be set forth * as incense before Thee, * the lifting up of my hands * as an evening sacrifice. * Hearken unto me, O Lord.

And the rest of the verses are read down to the beginning of the stichoi, i.e., the point at which the stichera are inserted, unless it be a Vigil, when they are chanted.

Set, O Lord, a watch before my mouth, and a door of enclosure round about my lips.

Incline not my heart unto words of evil, to make excuse with excuses in sins.

With men that work iniquity; and I will not join with their chosen.

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The righteous man will chasten me with mercy and reprove me; as for the oil of the sinner, let it not anoint my head.

For yet more is my prayer in the presence of their pleasures; swallowed up near by the rock have their judges been.

They shall hear my words, for they be sweetened; as a clod of earth is broken upon the earth, so have their bones been scattered nigh unto hades.

For unto Thee, O Lord, O Lord, are mine eyes, in Thee have I hoped; take not my soul away.

Keep me from the snare which they have laid for me, and from the stumbling-blocks of them that work iniquity.

The sinners shall fall into their own net; I am alone until I pass by.

Psalm 141

With my voice unto the Lord have I cried, with my voice unto the Lord have I made supplication.

I will pour out before Him my supplication, mine affliction before Him will I declare.

When my spirit was fainting within me, then Thou knewest my paths.

In this way wherein I have walked they hid for me a snare.

I looked upon my right hand, and beheld, and there was none that did know me.

Flight hath failed me, and there is none that watcheth out for my soul.

I have cried unto Thee, O Lord; I said: Thou art my hope, my portion art Thou in the land of the living.

Attend unto my supplication, for I am brought very low.

Deliver me from them that persecute me, for they are stronger than I.

Bring my soul out of prison that I may confess Thy name.

The righteous shall wait patiently for me until Thou shalt reward me.

Stichera at 'Lord I have cried...'

8 stichera, *idiomela*, of the feast, in Tone VI —

Psalm 129

Stichos 8: Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord; * O Lord, hear my voice.

The composition of Sergius the Patriarch: Today God, Who resteth on the noetic thrones, hath prepared for Himself a holy throne on earth. He Who hath established the heavens by His wisdom hath in His loving-kindness created an animate heaven. For the God of wonders, the Hope of the hopeless, hath caused

His Mother to spring forth as a Life-bearing plant from a barren root. Glory to Thee, O Lord!

Stichos 7: Let Thine ears be attentive * to the voice of my supplication.

This is the day of the Lord! Rejoice, O ye people! For, lo! the bridal-chamber of the Light and the book of the Word of life hath issued forth from the womb, and the portal which faceth toward the east, having been born, awaiteth the entry of the great High Priest. She alone leadeth the one Christ into the world, for the salvation of our souls.

Stichos 6: If Thou shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, O Lord, who shall stand? * For with Thee there is forgiveness.

Even though, by the will of God, famous barren women have produced offspring, yet in divine majesty hath Mary outshone all who have been born; for, having been all-gloriously born of a barren mother, she gave birth in the flesh to the God of all in manner transcending nature, from a womb which knew not seed. She alone is the gate of the only-begotten Son of God; and He, passing through it, hath kept it closed, and, arranging all things wisely in accordance with His knowledge, hath wrought salvation for all men.

Stichos 5: For Thy name's sake have I patiently waited for Thee, O Lord; my soul hath patiently waited for Thy word, * my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

The foregoing sticheron is repeated.

Stichos 4: From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch * let Israel hope in the Lord.

The composition of Stephen of Jerusalem: Today the gateway of the barren woman is opened, and the divine Virgin portal cometh forth! Today grace beginneth to bear fruit, revealing to the world the Mother of God, through whom those on earth are united to those in heaven, for the salvation of our souls.

Stichos 3: For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption; * and He shall redeem Israel out of all his iniquities.

The foregoing sticheron is repeated.

Psalm 116

Stichos 2: O praise the Lord, all ye nations; * praise Him, all ye peoples.

Today is the pronouncement of universal joy! Today the winds have blown which herald salvation, and our nature is released from barrenness! For the barren woman is shown to be the mother of her who

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remaineth virgin even after giving birth to the Creator, from whom God taketh to Himself that which is alien to Him by nature, and Christ, the Deliverer of our souls, Who loveth mankind, doth accomplish salvation for the lost by means of flesh.

Stichos 1: For He hath made His mercy to prevail over us, * and the truth of the Lord abideth forever.

Today barren Anna giveth birth to the divine Maiden who was chosen beforehand out of all generations to be the dwelling-place of Christ our God, the King and Creator of all, in fulfillment of the divine dispensation. Thereby, O ye mortals, have we been fashioned anew and restored from corruption to life without end.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Doxasticon of the feast, in Tone VI —

Today God, Who resteth on the noetic thrones, hath prepared for Himself a holy throne on earth. He Who hath established the heavens by His wisdom hath in His loving-kindness created an animate heaven. For the God of wonders, the Hope of the hopeless, hath caused His Mother to spring forth as a Life-bearing plant from a barren root. Glory to Thee, O Lord!

The Entrance

At the concluding sticheron (at ‘Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.’) the holy doors are opened for the Entry. The priest and deacon, bow twice before the Holy Table, kiss the Gospel and the corner of the Holy Table respectively, and bow a third time. The deacon taketh up the censer and presenteth it the priest to bless it. The deacon leadeth the priest out of the altar by way of the high place and the north door.

As they approach the holy doors, the deacon saith quietly:

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

The priest saith this prayer quietly:

Priest: Evening, morning, and noonday we praise Thee, we bless Thee, we give thanks unto Thee, and we pray Thee, O Master of all: Direct our prayer as incense before Thee, and incline not our hearts unto words or thoughts of evil, but deliver us from all that hunt after our souls; for unto Thee, O Lord, O Lord, are our eyes, and in Thee have we hoped, let us not be put to shame, O our God.

For unto Thee is due all glory, honor, and worship: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

The deacon censeth the entrance, the icons of Christ and the Mother of God, and the priest. He then standeth at a right angle to the priest (facing north), transfereth the censer to his left hand, and taking his orarion in his right hand and pointing toward the holy place, saith to the priest quietly:

Deacon: Bless, master, the holy entry.

And the priest, blessing, quietly saith:

Priest: Blessed is the entry of Thy holy ones, always, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Deacon: Amen.

The deacon again censeth the priest and, turning to the east, standeth at the entrance and waiteth.

When the sticheron is ended, the deacon maketh the sign of the Cross with the censer and exclaimeth:

O Gentle Light

Deacon: Wisdom! Aright!

We chant the Vesper Hymn, the work of Sophronius, patriarch of Jerusalem:

O Gentle Light of the holy glory of the immortal, heavenly, holy, blessed Father, O Jesus Christ: * Having come to the setting of the sun, having beheld the evening light, * we praise the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: God. * Meet it is for Thee at all times to be praised with reverent voices, * O Son of God, Giver of life. * Wherefore, the world doth glorify Thee.

THE VESPERS PROKEIMENON

Wednesday Vespers Prokeimenon, Tone V

Deacon: Let us attend.

Priest: Peace be unto all.

Deacon: Wisdom! The Prokeimenon in the Fifth Tone.

O God, in Thy name save me, and in Thy strength do Thou judge me.

Chanters: O God, in Thy name save me, * and in Thy strength do Thou judge me.

Deacon: *Stichos:* O God, hearken unto my prayer, give ear unto the words of my mouth.

Chanters: O God, in Thy name save me, * and in Thy strength do Thou judge me.

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Deacon: O God, in Thy name save me:

Chanters: And in Thy strength do Thou judge me.

THE PARAMIA

Three readings for the feast:

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The Reading from the Book of Genesis.

Deacon: Let us attend.

The Reader then readeth the Paramia:

Reading from Genesis

[Genesis 28:10-17]

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

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The Reading from the Prophecy of Ezekiel.

Deacon: Let us attend.

The Reader then readeth the Paramia:

Reading from the Prophecy of Ezekiel

[Ezekiel 43:27-44:4a]

Thus saith the Lord: 'It shall come to pass from the eighth day and onward, that the priests shall offer your wholeburnt-offerings on the altar, and your peace-offerings; and I will accept you,' saith the Lord. Then He brought me back by way of the outer gate of the sanctuary that looketh eastward; and it was shut. And the Lord said to me: 'This gate shall be shut; it shall

not be opened, and no one shall pass through it; for the Lord God of Israel shall enter by it, and it shall be shut. For the Prince, He shall sit in it, to eat bread before the Lord; He shall go in by the way of the porch of the gate, and shall go forth by the way of the same.' And He brought me in by the way of the gate that looketh northward, in front of the house: and I looked, and, behold! the house was full of the glory of the Lord.

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The Reading from Proverbs.

Deacon: Let us attend.

The Reader then readeth the Paramia:

Reading from Proverbs

[Proverbs 9:1-11]

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

The Augmented Ectenia

Deacon: Let us all say with our whole soul and with our whole mind, let us say.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: O Lord Almighty, the God of our fathers, we pray Thee, hearken and have mercy.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Have mercy on us, O God, according to Thy great mercy, we pray Thee, hearken and have mercy.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

Deacon: Again we pray for our great lord and father, His Holiness Patriarch *N.*; for our lord the Very Most Reverend Metropolitan *N.*, First Hierarch of the

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Russian Church Abroad; for our lord the Most Reverend (Archbishop *or* Bishop) *N.*; and all our brethren in Christ.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

Deacon: Again we pray for this land, its authorities and armed forces.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

Deacon: Again we pray for the God-preserved Russian land and its Orthodox people both in the homeland and in the diaspora and for their salvation.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

Deacon: Again we pray to the Lord our God that He may deliver His people from enemies visible and invisible, and confirm in us oneness of mind, brotherly love and piety.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

Deacon: Again we pray for the blessed and ever-memorable founders of this holy temple (*if it be a monastery*: this holy monastery): and for all our fathers and brethren gone to their rest before us, and the Orthodox here and everywhere laid to rest.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

Deacon: Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, visitation, pardon and remission of sins of the servants of God, the brethren of this holy temple (*if it be a monastery*: this holy monastery).

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

Deacon: Again we pray for them that bring offerings and do good works in this holy and all-venerable temple; for them that minister and them that chant, and for all the people here present, that await of Thee great and abundant mercy.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

Priest: For a merciful God art Thou, and the Lover of mankind, and unto Thee do we send up glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

Vouchsafe, O Lord

Reader: Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this evening without sin. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy name unto the ages. Amen.

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we have hoped in Thee. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Master, give me understanding of Thy statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Holy One, enlighten me by Thy statutes.

O Lord, Thy mercy endureth forever; disdain not the work of Thy hands. To Thee is due praise, to Thee is due a song, to Thee glory is due, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

The Litany of Supplication

Deacon: Let us complete our evening prayer unto the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That the whole evening may be perfect, holy, peaceful and sinless, let us ask of the Lord.

Chanters: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: An angel of peace, a faithful guide, a guardian of our souls and bodies, let us ask of the Lord.

Chanters: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: Pardon and remission of our sins and offences, let us ask of the Lord.

Chanters: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: Things good and profitable for our souls, and peace for the world, let us ask of the Lord.

Chanters: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: That we may complete the remaining time of our life in peace and repentance, let us ask of the Lord.

Chanters: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: A Christian ending to our life, painless, blameless, peaceful, and a good defense before the dread judgement seat of Christ, let us ask.

Chanters: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: Calling to remembrance our most holy, most pure, most blessed, glorious Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and all our life unto Christ our God.

Chanters: To Thee, O Lord.

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Priest: For a good God art Thou, and the Lover of Mankind, and unto Thee do we send up glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

Prayer at the Bowing of the Heads

Priest: Peace be unto all.

Chanters: And to thy spirit.

Deacon: Let us bow our heads unto the Lord.

Chanters: To Thee, O Lord.

The priest saith this prayer secretly:

O Lord our God, Who didst bow the heavens and come down for the salvation of the race of man, look upon Thy servants and upon Thine inheritance. For unto Thee the terrible judge and Lover of mankind have Thy servants bowed their heads, and submitted their necks, not expecting help from man, but awaiting Thy mercy and looking for Thy salvation; keep them at all times, during both the present evening and the coming night, from every enemy, from every opposing work of the devil, and from vain thoughts and evil memories.

Then the priest exclaimeth:

Priest: Blessed and most glorified be the dominion of Thy kingdom: of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

THE LITIA

After the exclamation, the clergy go forth in procession to the narthex of the church as the Litia stichera are chanted by the chanters.

Stichera at the Litia

We do not chant the sticheron of the temple, and these stichera of the feast:

Canonarch: In the First Tone: 'Today is the beginning of our salvation, O ye people ...'

We sing immediately these stichera idiomela —

Chanters: *The composition of Stephen of Jerusalem, Tone I:* Today is the beginning of our salvation, O ye people! For, lo! the Virgin Mother, who was foretold from generations of old as the receptacle of God,

cometh forth to be born of a barren woman. The flower of Jesse and the rod of his root have sprung forth. Let Adam our forefather rejoice, and let Eve revel in jubilation! For, behold! she who was fashioned of the rib of Adam manifestly blesseth her daughter and descendant, saying: 'Deliverance hath been born in me, for which cause I am freed of the bonds of hades!' Let David rejoice, striking his harp, and let him bless God: For, lo! the Virgin issueth forth from the womb of the barren woman, unto the salvation of our souls!

Tone II: Come, all ye who love virginity, ye zealots of purity! Come, and with love take up the praise of the Virgin: the well-spring of Life which floweth from a hard rock, the bush which grew from barren ground, unconsumed by the immaterial Fire, which doth purify and illumine our souls.

The composition of Anatolius the Patriarch: What is this noise of revelers? Joachim and Anna keep festival mystically, saying: 'Rejoice with us today, O Adam and Eve!' For by their transgression was paradise shut, but a right glorious fruit is now given unto us: Mary, the divine Maiden, who throweth open its gates unto all.

The Queen of all, the dwelling place of God foretold of old, the divine habitation of the ever-existent Being, hath come forth today from the barren womb of the glorious Anna. Because of her hath hades been trampled underfoot, and Eve, the mother of us all, is led into steadfast life. Let us cry out to her as is meet: Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the Fruit of thy womb!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Doxasticon for the Feast, the composition of Sergius the Patriarch, in Tone VIII —

On the right excellent day of our feast let us strike the spiritual harp; for the Mother of Life is born today of the seed of David, dispelling the darkness: the renewal of Adam, the restoration of Eve, the Well-spring of incorruption, our release from corruption. Because of her we have been deified and delivered from death. And we the faithful cry out to her with Gabriel: Rejoice, thou who art full of grace, the Lord is with thee, granting us great mercy for thy sake!

Litia Petitions

After the Stichera are completed, the Deacon (or Priest in the absence of a Deacon) says:

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Deacon: Save, O God, Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance; visit Thy world with mercy and compassions; exalt the horn of Orthodox Christians, and send down upon us Thine abundant mercies: through the intercessions of our immaculate Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary; through the power of the precious and life-giving Cross; through the mediations of the honourable, heavenly bodiless Hosts; of the honourable, glorious Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist John; of the Holy glorious, and all-praised apostles [*if there is a commemoration of an Apostle*: of the holy Apostle (and Evangelist) *N.* and all the other holy, glorious, and all-praised apostles]; of the holy glorious, and right-victorious martyrs; of the holy Royal Passion-bearers and all the new martyrs and confessors of the Russian Church; of our holy and God-bearing fathers; and *N.(N)*, (*whose Temple it is and whose day it is*); of the holy and Righteous Ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; and of all the saints; we pray Thee, O Lord plenteous in mercy, hearken unto us sinners that pray unto Thee, and have mercy on us

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *Forty Times.*

Deacon: Again we pray for our great lord and father, His Holiness Patriarch *N.*; for our lord the Very Most Reverend Metropolitan *N.*, First Hierarchy of the Russian Church Abroad; for our lord the Most Reverend (Archbishop *or* Bishop *N.*, *whose diocese it is*)(*if it be a monastery*: and for Archimandrite *N.* *or* our Abbot *N.*), and for all our brotherhood in Christ, and for every Christian soul that is afflicted and tormented, in need of the mercy and help of God; for the protection of this city (*or* town, *or* holy monastery) and them that dwell therein; for the peace and welfare of the whole world; for the good estate of the holy churches of God; for the salvation and help of our fathers and brethren that labour with zeal and the fear of God; for them that are absent and abroad; for the health of them who are bedridden in infirmities; for the repose, refreshment, blessed memory, and remission of sins of all our fathers and brethren that have departed before us, and the Orthodox here and everywhere laid to rest; for the deliverance of the imprisoned; and for our brethren that are serving, and for all that serve and have served in this holy temple (*or* monastery), let us say:

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *Thirty Times.*

Deacon: Again we pray; for this land, its authorities and armed forces, for the God-preserved Russian land and its Orthodox people both in the homeland and in

the diaspora and for their salvation, and every Christian land, let us say:

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *Fifty Times.*

Deacon: Again we pray that this city (*or* town), and this holy temple (*or* monastery), and every city and country may be preserved from famine, pestilence, earthquake, flood, fire, the sword, the invasion of aliens, and civil war; that our good and man-loving God may be gracious and favourable, that He may take away all the wrath stirred up against us, and deliver us from His righteous threatening which hangeth over us, and have mercy on us.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

Deacon: Again we pray also that the Lord God may hearken unto the voice of the supplication of us sinners and have mercy on us.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

Priest: Harken unto us, O God our Saviour, Thou hope of all the ends of the earth and of them that be far off at sea; and be merciful, be merciful, O Master, regarding our sins, and have mercy on us; for a merciful God art Thou, and the Lover of mankind, and unto Thee do we send up glory; to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

Priest: Peace be unto all.

Chanters: And to thy spirit.

Deacon: Let us bow our heads unto the Lord.

Chanters: To Thee, O Lord.

And as all bow their heads the priest (or the bishop, if he is present) prayeth in a loud voice:

Priest: O Master plenteous in mercy, O Lord Jesus Christ our God: through the intercessions of our immaculate Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary; through the power of the precious and life-giving Cross; through the mediations of the honourable, heavenly bodiless Hosts; of the honourable, glorious Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist John; of the Holy glorious, and all-praised apostles [*if there is a commemoration of an Apostle*: of the holy Apostle (and Evangelist) *N.* and all the other holy, glorious, and all-praised apostles]; our fathers among the saints and great ecumenical teachers and hierarchs: Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, and John Chrysostom; of our father among the saints, Nicholas the

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Wonderworker, archbishop of Myra in Lycia; of the holy Equal-of-the-Apostles Methodius and Cyril, Teachers of the Slavs; of the holy Right-Believing and Equal-of-the-Apostles Grand Prince Vladimir, and the Blessed Grand Princess of Russia, Olga; of our fathers among the saints, the Wonder-workers of all Russia: Michael, Peter, Alexis, Jonah, Macarius, Philip, Job, and Hermogenes; of the holy glorious, and right-victorious martyrs; of the holy Hieromartyrs and Confessors: Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow; Vladimir of Kiev, Benjamin and Joseph of Petrograd, Peter of Krutitsa, Cyril of Kazan; of the holy Right-believing Passion-bearers: Tsar-Martyr Nicholas, Tsaritsa Alexandra, the Crowned-Prince Alexis, and the Royal Princesses Olga, Tatiana, Maria, and Anastasia; and the holy nun-martyrs: Grand Duchess Elizabeth and Nun Barbara, and all the New Martyrs and Confessors of the Russia Church; the holy glorious Great-martyr, Trophy-bearer and Wonder-worker George; the holy Great-martyr and Healer Panteleimon; the holy Great-martyr Barbara; and the holy Right-believing Russian Princes and Passion-bearers Boris and Gleb, and Igor; of our holy and God-bearing fathers: Anthony and Theodosius of the Kiev Caves; Sergius of Radonezh, and Seraphim of Sarov; Job of Pochaev; Herman of Alaska; of the holy righteous John of Kronstadt, the wonderworker; of the holy Blessed Xenia of St. Petersburg; and our holy father John, archbishop of Shanghai and San Francisco, the wonderworker; and *N.(N)*, (*whose Temple it is and whose day it is*); of the holy Righteous Ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; and of all the saints; make our prayer acceptable; grant us the remission of our sins; shelter us with the shelter of Thy wings; drive away from us every enemy and adversary; make our life peaceful, O Lord; have mercy on us and on Thy world, and save our souls, for Thou art good and the Lover of mankind.

Chanters: Amen.

Then we chant the Aposticha of the feast as we re-enter the temple.

THE APOSTICHA

Canonarch: In the Fourth Tone: ‘The joy of the whole world hath shone forth upon us...’

And we chant these stichera idiomela of the feast, the composition of Germanus the Patriarch, in Tone IV —

Chanters: The joy of the whole world hath shone forth upon us from the righteous Joachim and Anna: the most laudable Virgin who, because of her

surpassing purity, becometh the animate temple of God and is known as the one true Theotokos. Through her prayers, O Christ God, send down peace upon the world and great mercy upon our souls.

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

In accordance with the angel's prophecy, thou didst issue forth from the righteous Joachim and Anna, as an all-pure fruit, heaven and the throne of God, a receptacle of purity, heralding forth joy to all the world, O Virgin, mediatrix of our life, removal of the curse, bestowal of blessing. Wherefore, on the feast of thy nativity, O divinely called Virgin, ask peace for the world and great mercy for our souls.

Stichos: The rich among the people * shall entreat thy countenance.

Today let the barren and childless Anna clap her hands with splendour. Let those on earth bear lamps, let kings leap for joy, let hierarchs be glad in blessing, and let all the world keep festival; for, behold, the Queen, the immaculate Bride of the Father, hath sprung forth from the root of Jesse. No longer will women bear children in grief, for Joy hath blossomed forth and Life shall live in the world for all men. No longer will the offerings of Joachim be rejected, for the lamentation of Anna hath been changed to joy, and she saith: ‘Rejoice with me, all ye chosen Israel. For, lo! the Lord hath given me the animate palace of His divine glory, for our common gladness and joy, and the salvation of our souls!’

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Doxasticon for the feast, the composition of Sergius the Patriarch, in Tone VIII —

Come, all ye faithful, let us make haste to the Virgin! For, lo! she is born who was foreseen before the womb as the Mother of our God, the vessel of virginity, the rod of Aaron which sprang forth from the root of Jesse, the proclamation of the prophets, the offspring of the righteous Joachim and Anna! She is born, and with her the world is restored! She is born, and the Church adorneth herself in her majesty! She is the holy temple and receptacle of the Godhead, the vessel of virginity, the bridal-chamber of the King, wherein was wrought the all-glorious and perfect mystery of the ineffable union of the natures which have come together in Christ! And worshipping Him, we hymn the nativity of the most immaculate Virgin.

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The Prayer of St Symeon

Reader or Canonarch: Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, O Master, according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples; a light of revelation for the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.

Trisagion Prayers

Reader: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. *Thrice.*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Lord, blot out our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy name's sake.

Lord have mercy. *Thrice.*

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, Who art in the Heavens, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Priest: For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory; of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

Dismissal Troparion

Troparion of Nativity of the Theotokos, in Tone IV —

Thy nativity, O Virgin Theotokos, * hath proclaimed joy to all the world; * for from thee hath shown forth Christ our God, the Sun of righteousness, * Who, having annulled the curse, hath given His blessing, * and having abolished death, hath granted us life everlasting. *Thrice.*

The Blessing of the Loaves

If there hath been a Litia, the blessing of the loaves:

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: O Lord Jesus Christ our God, Who didst bless the five loaves and didst satisfy the five thousand: Do Thou Thyself bless also these loaves, wheat, wine, and oil, and multiply them in this city (or town, or holy monastery) and in all Thy world, and sanctify the faithful that partake of them. For it is Thou that dost bless and sanctify all things, O Christ our God, and unto Thee do we send up glory together with Thine unoriginate Father, and Thine All-holy and good and life creating Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

Chanters: Blessed be the name of the Lord from henceforth and for evermore. *Thrice.*

And the first ten verses of the 33rd Psalm are chanted:

Psalm 33:1-10

Chanters: I will bless the Lord at all times, * His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

In the Lord shall my soul be praised; * let the meek hear and be glad.

O magnify the Lord with me, * and let us exalt His name together.

I sought the Lord, and He heard me, * and delivered me from all my tribulations.

Come unto Him, and be enlightened, * and your faces shall not be ashamed.

This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, * and saved him out of all his tribulations.

The angel of the Lord will encamp round about them that fear Him, * and will deliver them.

O taste and see that the Lord is good; * blessed is the man that hopeth in Him.

O fear the Lord, all ye His saints; * for there is no want to them that fear Him.

Rich men have turned poor and gone hungry; * but they that seek the Lord shall not be deprived of any good thing.

Priest: The blessing of the Lord be upon you, through His grace and love for mankind, always, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

Here endeth Great Vespers

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MATINS

THE SIX PSALMS

We begin the Six Psalms, with each one listening in silence and compunction (standing, with no moving about). And the reader, with reverence and fear of God, saith:

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among men. *Thrice.*

O Lord, Thou shalt open my lips, and my mouth shall declare Thy praise. *Twice.*

Psalm 3

O Lord, why are they multiplied that afflict me? Many rise up against me.

Many say unto my soul: There is no salvation for him in his God.

But Thou, O Lord, art my helper, my glory, and the lifter up of my head.

I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and He heard me out of His holy mountain.

I laid me down and slept; I awoke, for the Lord will help me.

I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people that set themselves against me round about.

Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God, for Thou hast smitten all who without cause are mine enemies; the teeth of sinners hast Thou broken.

Salvation is of the Lord, and Thy blessing is upon Thy people.

And again: I laid me down and slept; I awoke, for the Lord will help me.

Psalm 37

O Lord, rebuke me not in Thine anger, nor chasten me in Thy wrath.

For Thine arrows are fastened in me, and Thou hast laid Thy hand heavily upon me.

There is no healing in my flesh in the face of Thy wrath; and there is no peace in my bones in the face of my sins.

For mine iniquities are risen higher than my head; as a heavy burden have they pressed heavily upon me.

My bruises are become noisome and corrupt in the face of my folly.

I have been wretched and utterly bowed down until the end; all the day long I went with downcast face.

For my loins are filled with mockings, and there is no healing in my flesh.

I am afflicted and humbled exceedingly, I have roared from the groaning of my heart.

O Lord, before Thee is all my desire, and my groaning is not hid from Thee.

My heart is troubled, my strength hath failed me; and the light of mine eyes, even this is not with me.

My friends and my neighbors drew nigh over against me and stood, and my nearest of kin stood afar off.

And they that sought after my soul used violence; and they that sought evils for me spake vain things, and craftinesses all the day long did they meditate.

But as for me, like a deaf man I heard them not, and was as a speechless man that openeth not his mouth.

And I became as a man that heareth not, and that hath in his mouth no reproofs.

For in Thee have I hoped, O Lord; Thou wilt hearken unto me, O Lord my God.

For I said: Let never mine enemies rejoice over me; yea, when my feet were shaken, those men spake boastful words against me.

For I am ready for scourges, and my sorrow is continually before me.

For I will declare mine iniquity, and I will take heed concerning my sin.

But mine enemies live and are made stronger than I, and they that hated me unjustly are multiplied.

They that render me evil for good slandered me, because I pursued goodness.

Forsake me not, O Lord my God, depart not from me. Be attentive unto my help, O Lord of my salvation.

And again: Forsake me not, O Lord my God, depart not from me. Be attentive unto my help, O Lord of my salvation.

Psalm 62

O God, my God, unto Thee I rise early at dawn. My soul hath thirsted for Thee; how often hath my flesh longed after Thee in a land barren and untrodden and unwatered.

So in the sanctuary have I appeared before Thee to see Thy power and Thy glory.

For Thy mercy is better than lives; my lips shall praise Thee.

So shall I bless Thee in my life, and in Thy name will I lift up my hands.

As with marrow and fatness let my soul be filled, and with lips of rejoicing shall my mouth praise Thee.

If I remembered Thee on my bed, at the dawn I meditated on Thee.

For Thou art become my helper; in the shelter of Thy wings will I rejoice.

My soul hath cleaved after Thee, Thy right hand hath been quick to help me.

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But as for these, in vain have they sought after my soul; they shall go into the nethermost parts of the earth, they shall be surrendered unto the edge of the sword; portions for foxes shall they be.

But the king shall be glad in God, everyone shall be praised that sweareth by Him; for the mouth of them is stopped that speak unjust things.

And again: At the dawn I meditated on Thee. For Thou art become my helper; in the shelter of Thy wings will I rejoice. My soul hath cleaved after Thee, Thy right hand hath been quick to help me.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. *Thrice.*

Lord. have mercy. *Thrice*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

And the priest cometh out of the altar, and saith the morning prayers secretly, i.e. silently, while standing with uncovered head before the holy doors.

Psalm 87

O Lord God of my salvation, by day have I cried and by night before Thee.

Let my prayer come before Thee, bow down Thine ear unto my supplication.

For filled with evils is my soul, and my life unto hades hath drawn nigh.

I am counted with them that go down into the pit; I am become as a man without help, free among the dead.

Like the bodies of the slain that sleep in the grave, whom Thou rememberest no more, and they are cut off from Thy hand.

They laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness and in the shadow of death.

Against me is Thine anger made strong, and all Thy billows hast Thou brought upon me.

Thou hast removed my friends afar from me; they have made me an abomination unto themselves.

I have been delivered up, and have not come forth; mine eyes are grown weak from poverty.

I have cried unto Thee, O Lord, the whole day long; I have stretched out my hands unto Thee.

Nay, for the dead wilt Thou work wonders? Or shall physicians raise them up that they may give thanks unto Thee?

Nay, shall any in the grave tell of Thy mercy, and of Thy truth in that destruction?

Nay, shall Thy wonders be known in that darkness, and Thy righteousness in that land that is forgotten?

But as for me, unto Thee, O Lord, have I cried; and in the morning shall my prayer come before Thee.

Wherefore, O Lord, dost Thou cast off my soul and turnest Thy face away from me?

A poor man am I, and in troubles from my youth; yea, having been exalted, I was humbled and brought to distress.

Thy furies have passed upon me, and Thy terrors have sorely troubled me.

They came round about me like water, all the day long they compassed me about together.

Thou hast removed afar from me friend and neighbor, and mine acquaintances because of my misery.

And again: O Lord God of my salvation, by day have I cried and by night before Thee. Let my prayer come before Thee, bow down Thine ear unto my supplication.

Psalm 102

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all that He hath done for thee,

Who is gracious unto all thine iniquities, Who healeth all thine infirmities,

Who redeemeth thy life from corruption, Who crowneth thee with mercy and compassion,

Who fulfilleth thy desire with good things; thy youth shall be renewed as the eagle's.

The Lord performeth deeds of mercy, and executeth judgement for all them that are wronged.

He hath made His ways known unto Moses, unto the sons of Israel the things that He hath willed.

Compassionate and merciful is the Lord, longsuffering and plenteous in mercy; not unto the end will He be angered, neither unto eternity will He be wroth.

Not according to our iniquities hath He dealt with us, neither according to our sins hath He rewarded us.

For according to the height of heaven from the earth, the Lord hath made His mercy to prevail over them that fear Him.

As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our iniquities from us.

Like as a father hath compassion upon his sons, so hath the Lord had compassion upon them that fear Him; for He knoweth whereof we are made, He hath remembered that we are dust.

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As for man, his days are as the grass; as a flower of the field, so shall he blossom forth.

For when the wind is passed over it, then it shall be gone, and no longer will it know the place thereof.

But the mercy of the Lord is from eternity, even unto eternity, upon them that fear Him.

And His righteousness is upon sons of sons, upon them that keep His testament and remember His commandments to do them.

The Lord in heaven hath prepared His throne, and His kingdom ruleth over all.

Bless the Lord, all ye His angels, mighty in strength, that perform His word, to hear the voice of His words.

Bless the Lord, all ye His hosts, His ministers that do His will.

Bless the Lord, all ye His works, in every place of His dominion. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

And again: In every place of His dominion, bless the Lord, O my soul.

Psalm 142

O Lord, hear my prayer, give ear unto my supplication in Thy truth; hearken unto me in Thy righteousness.

And enter not into judgement with Thy servant, for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified.

For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath humbled my life down to the earth.

He hath sat me in darkness as those that have been long dead, and my spirit within me is become despondent; within me my heart is troubled.

I remembered days of old, I meditated on all Thy works, I pondered on the creations of Thy hands.

I stretched forth my hands unto Thee; my soul thirsteth after thee like a waterless land.

Quickly hear me, O Lord; my spirit hath fainted away.

Turn not Thy face away from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit.

Cause me to hear Thy mercy in the morning; for in Thee have I put my hope.

Cause me to know, O Lord, the way wherein I should walk; for unto Thee have I lifted up my soul.

Rescue me from mine enemies, O Lord; unto Thee have I fled for refuge. Teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God.

Thy good Spirit shall lead me in the land of uprightness; for Thy name's sake, O Lord, shalt Thou quicken me.

In Thy righteousness shalt Thou bring my soul out of affliction, and in Thy mercy shalt Thou utterly destroy mine enemies.

And Thou shalt cut off all them that afflict my soul, for I am Thy servant.

And again: Harken unto me, O Lord, in Thy righteousness, and enter not into judgement with Thy servant. *Twice.*

Thy good Spirit shall lead me in the land of uprightness.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. *Thrice.*

The Great Ectenia

Deacon: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the peace from above, and the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the peace of the whole world, the good estate of the holy churches of God, and the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For this holy temple, and for them that with faith, reverence, and the fear of God enter herein, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For great lord and father, His Holiness Patriarch *N.*; for our lord the Very Most Reverend Metropolitan *N.*, First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad; for our lord the Most Reverend Archbishop (*or* Bishop) *N.* for the venerable priesthood, the deaconate in Christ, for all the clergy and people, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For this land, its authorities and armed forces, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the God-preserved Russian land and its Orthodox people both in the homeland and in the diaspora, and for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

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Deacon: That He may deliver His people from enemies both visible and invisible, and confirm in us oneness of mind, brotherly love and piety, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For this city (*or* this town, *or* this holy monastery), every city and country, and the faithful that dwell therein, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For seasonable weather, abundance of the fruits of the earth, and peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For travelers by sea, land and air, for the sick, the suffering, the imprisoned, and for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That we may be delivered from all tribulation, wrath, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Calling to remembrance our most holy, most pure, most blessed, glorious Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and all our life unto Christ our God.

Chanters: To Thee, O Lord.

Priest: For unto Thee is due all glory, honour and worship; to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

GOD IS THE LORD

Deacon: In the Fourth Tone: God is the Lord and hath appeared unto us. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Stichos 1: O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth forever.

Chanters: God is the Lord and hath appeared unto us. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Deacon: *Stichos 2:* Surrounding me they compassed me, and by the name of the Lord I warded them off.

Chanters: God is the Lord and hath appeared unto us. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Deacon: *Stichos 3:* I shall not die, but live, and I shall tell of the works of the Lord.

Chanters: God is the Lord and hath appeared unto us. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Deacon: *Stichos 4:* The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.

Chanters: God is the Lord and hath appeared unto us. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Troparia at 'God is the Lord...'

Troparion of the feast, twice; Glory... Both now... Troparion of the feast, once again.

Troparion of the Nativity of the Theotokos, in Tone IV—

Thy nativity, O Virgin Theotokos, * hath proclaimed joy to all the world; * for from thee hath shown forth Christ our God, the Sun of righteousness, * Who, having annulled the curse, hath given His blessing, * and having abolished death, hath granted us life everlasting. *Twice.*

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

And the troparion of the feast is repeated once more.

Then two readings from the Psalter are appointed, each being followed by its little litany and its sessional hymns.

READINGS OF THE PSALTER

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Reader: Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

And he readeth the first stasis of the Kathisma of the Psalter.

Reader: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

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Chanters: Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. *Thrice.*

Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Reader: Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

And he readeth the second stasis of the Kathisma of the Psalter.

Reader: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Chanters: Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. *Thrice.*

Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Reader: Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

And he readeth the third stasis of the Kathisma of the Psalter.

Reader: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. *Thrice.*

The Small Ectenia

Deacon: Again and again, in peace let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Calling to remembrance our most holy, most pure, most blessed, glorious Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and all our life unto Christ our God.

Chanters: To Thee O Lord.

After the First Reading of the Psalter:

Priest: For Thine is the dominion, and Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory: of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

After the Second Reading of the Psalter:

Priest: For a good God art Thou, and the Lover of mankind, and unto Thee do we send up glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

Sessional Hymns

After the first reading of the psalter, this sessional hymn of the feast, in Tone IV: Special Melody: 'Joseph marvelled...' —

Cry aloud, O David! What hath God sworn unto thee? 'That which He hath sworn unto me,' saith he, 'hath already been fulfilled! Of the fruit of my loins He hath given me the Virgin, from whom Christ the Creator hath been born: the new Adam, the King Who sitteth on my throne! And He Whose kingdom is invisible reigneth today! A barren woman giveth birth to the Theotokos, the nurturer of our Life!'

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

The foregoing sessional hymn is repeated.

After the second reading from the Psalter, this sessional hymn of the feast, in Tone IV: Special Melody: 'Joseph marvelled...' —x

Mary, the divine Maiden, born unto us today from the root of Jesse and the loins of David; and all things rejoice and are made new through joy. Rejoice together, O heaven and earth! Praise her, ye lands of the nations! Joachim maketh glad, and Anna holdeth festival, crying aloud: A barren woman giveth birth to the Theotokos, the nourisher of our Life!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

The foregoing sessional hymn is repeated.

THE POLYELEOS

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Psalms 134 & 135

(Selected Verses)

Chanters: Praise ye the name of the Lord; O ye servants, praise the Lord. Alleluia.

Ye that stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God. Alleluia.

Praise ye the Lord, for the Lord is good; chant unto His name, for it is good. Alleluia.

Blessed is the Lord out of Sion, who dwelleth in Jerusalem. Alleluia.

O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good. Alleluia, alleluia. For His mercy endureth forever. Alleluia.

O give thanks unto the God of gods. Alleluia, alleluia. For His mercy endureth forever. Alleluia.

O give thanks unto the Lord of lords. Alleluia, alleluia. For His mercy endureth forever. Alleluia.

O give thanks unto the God of heaven. Alleluia, alleluia. For His mercy endureth forever. Alleluia.

Magnification

After the Polyeleos, this magnification of the feast —

Clergy: We magnify thee, * O Most-holy Virgin, * and we honour thy holy parents * and we glorify * thine all-glorious nativity.

The chanters sing the following selected Psalm Verses with the above magnification after each verse, using as many verses as necessary while the priest censens the church —

1st Choir: Remember, O Lord, David and all his meekness. (Psalm 131:1)

We magnify thee, * O Most-holy Virgin, * and we honour thy holy parents * and we glorify * thine all-glorious nativity.

2nd Choir: How he made an oath unto the Lord, and vowed unto the God of Jacob. (Psalm 131:2)

We magnify thee, * O Most-holy Virgin, * and we honour thy holy parents * and we glorify * thine all-glorious nativity.

1st Choir: Lo, we have heard of it in Ephratha, we have found it in the plains of the wood. (Psalm 131:3)

We magnify thee, * O Most-holy Virgin, * and we honour thy holy parents * and we glorify * thine all-glorious nativity.

2nd Choir: Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. (Psalm 86:3)

We magnify thee, * O Most-holy Virgin, * and we honour thy holy parents * and we glorify * thine all-glorious nativity.

After singing the final verse and magnification —

Chanters: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! Glory to Thee, O God!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! Glory to Thee, O God!

Clergy: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! Glory to Thee, O God!

We magnify thee, * O Most-holy Virgin, * and we honour thy holy parents * and we glorify * thine all-glorious nativity.

The Small Ectenia

Deacon: Again and again, in peace let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Calling to remembrance our most holy, most pure, most blessed, glorious Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and all our life unto Christ our God.

Chanters: To Thee O Lord.

Priest: For blessed is Thy name, and glorified is Thy kingdom: of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages

Chanters: Amen.

Sessional Hymns

After the Polyeleos, this sessional hymn of the feast, in Tone VIII Special Melody: ‘That which was mystically commanded...’ —

Let heaven rejoice and let the earth be glad! For the heaven of God is born on earth: this divine Bride born of the promise. A barren woman nourisheth the babe Mary, and Joachim rejoiceth in her nativity, saying: ‘The rod is born to me, whence Christ, the Flower, springeth forth from the root of David! Truly this is a most glorious wonder!’

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Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Another sessional hymn of the feast, in the same tone
—

Be thou renewed, O Adam! Rejoice, O Eve! Make merry, O David! Be of good cheer, O Anna, for the Mother of thy Creator is born most gloriously! The whole earth, renewed, joineth chorus and rejoiceth, clad in vesture of gladness. Let every tongue now cry out to thee, O Mary, in chorus: Blessed is the house of David, for it nurtureth her who nourisheth our Life!

THE HYMNS OF ASCENT

Fourth Tone

Antiphon I

Chanters: From my youth have the many passions warred against me. But do Thou help and save me, O my Saviour.

O ye who hate Sion, ye shall be put to shame by the Lord; for ye shall be withered up like grass by the fire.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

By the Holy Spirit, is every soul given life, exalted by purity, and made radiant by the unity of the Trinity in a sacred and mystical manner.

THE MATINS PROKEIMENON

Festal Matins Prokeimenon, Tone IV

Deacon: Let us attend. Wisdom. Let us attend. The Prokeimenon in the Fourth Tone:

I shall commemorate thy name in every generation and generation.

Chanters: I shall commemorate thy name * in every generation and generation.

Deacon: *Stichos:* My heart hath poured forth a good word; I speak of my works to the king.

Chanters: I shall commemorate thy name * in every generation and generation.

Deacon: I shall commemorate thy name:

Chanters: In every generation and generation.

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For holy art Thou, our God, and Thou restest in the saints, and unto Thee do we send up glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

Let Every Breath Praise the Lord

Deacon: Let every breath praise the Lord.

Chanters: Let every breath praise the Lord.

Deacon: Praise ye God in His saints, praise Him in the firmament of His power.

Chanters: Let every breath praise the Lord.

Deacon: Let every breath.

Chanters: Praise the Lord.

THE MATINS GOSPEL

Deacon: And that He will vouchsafe unto us the hearing of the Holy Gospel, let us pray unto the Lord God.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

Deacon: Wisdom, Aright! Let us hear the Holy Gospel.

Priest: Peace be unto all.

Chanters: And to thy spirit.

Priest: The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke.

Chanters: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

The priest reads the Festal Matins Gospel.

THE FESTAL MATINS GOSPEL

Holy Gospel according to Luke, § 4 [1:39-49, 56]

In those days Mary arose and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Judah, and entered into the house of Zacharias and saluted Elisabeth. And it came to pass, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb, and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost. And she spake out with a loud voice and said, 'Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And why is it granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for

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joy. And blessed is she that believed; for there shall be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord.' And Mary said, 'My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden; for behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For He that is mighty hath done to me great things, and holy is His name.' [...] And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

Chanters: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

Psalm 50

Reader: Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy; and according to the multitude of Thy compassions blot out my transgression.

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I know mine iniquity, and my sin is ever before me.

Against Thee only have I sinned and done this evil before Thee, that Thou mightest be justified in Thy words, and prevail when Thou art judged.

For behold, I was conceived in iniquities, and in sins did my mother bear me.

For behold, Thou hast loved truth; the hidden and secret things of Thy wisdom hast Thou made manifest unto me.

Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be made clean; Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow.

Thou shalt make me to hear joy and gladness; the bones that be humbled, they shall rejoice.

Turn Thy face away from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.

Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and with Thy governing Spirit establish me.

I shall teach transgressors Thy ways, and the ungodly shall turn back unto Thee.

Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, Thou God of my salvation; my tongue shall rejoice in Thy righteousness.

O Lord, Thou shalt open my lips, and my mouth shall declare Thy praise.

For if Thou hadst desired sacrifice, I had given it; with whole-burnt offerings Thou shalt not be pleased.

A sacrifice unto God is a broken spirit; a heart that is broken and humbled God will not despise.

Do good, O Lord, in Thy good pleasure unto Sion, and let the walls of Jerusalem be builded.

Then shalt Thou be pleased with a sacrifice of righteousness, with oblation and whole-burnt offerings.

Then shall they offer bullocks upon Thine altar.

Troparia after Psalm 50

After Psalm 50, we chant in Tone VI—

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Merciful One, blot out the multitude of our transgressions.

Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Merciful One, blot out the multitude of our transgressions.

Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy; and according to the multitude of Thy compassions, blot out my transgressions.

Then this sticheron of the feast, in Tone VI—

This is the day of the Lord! Rejoice, O ye people! For, lo! the bridal-chamber of the Light and the book of the Word of life hath issued forth from the womb, and the portal which faceth toward the east, having been born, awaiteth the entry of the great High Priest. She alone leadeth the one Christ into the world, for the salvation of our souls.

Save, O God, Thy People

Deacon: Save, O God, Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance; visit Thy world with mercy and compassions; exalt the horn of Orthodox Christians, and send down upon us Thine abundant mercies: through the intercessions of our immaculate Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary; through the power of the precious and life-giving Cross; through the mediations of the honourable, heavenly bodiless Hosts; of the honourable, glorious Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist John; of the Holy glorious, and all-praised apostles; (*if there be commemorated one of the twelve apostles or evangelists, there is said: of the holy Apostles (and Evangelists) N., and the other holy, glorious, and all-praised apostles*); of our fathers among the saints and great ecumenical teachers and hierarchs: Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, and John Chrysostom; of our father among the saints, Nicholas the Wonderworker, archbishop of Myra in

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Lycia; of the holy Equals-of-the-Apostles Methodius and Cyril, Teachers of the Slavs; of the holy Right-Believing and Equal-of-the-Apostles Great Prince Vladimir, and the Blessed Great Princess of Russia, Olga; of our fathers among the saints, the Wonder-workers of all Russia: Michael, Peter, Alexis, Jonah, Philip, Macarius, Demetrius, Metrophanes, Tikhon, Theodosius, Joasaph, Hermogenes, Pitrim, Innocent, and John; of the holy Hieromartyrs and Confessors: Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow; Vladimir of Kiev, Benjamin and Joseph of Petrograd, Peter of Krutitsa, Cyril of Kazan, Agathangel of Yaroslavl, Andronicus of Perm, Hermogenes of Tobolsk, the priests John, John, Peter, and Philosoph, and all the new hieromartyrs and confessors of the Russian Church; of the holy glorious, and victorious martyrs: the holy glorious Great-martyr, Trophy-bearer and Wonder-worker George; the holy Great-martyr and Healer Panteleimon; the holy Great-martyr Barbara; and the holy Right-believing Russian Princes and Passion-bearers Boris and Gleb, and Igor; and the holy Right-believing Passion-bearers: Tsar-Martyr Nicholas, Tsaritsa-Martyr Alexandra, the Martyred Crown Prince Alexis, and the Royal Martyrs Olga, Tatiana, Maria, and Anastasia; and the holy nun-martyrs: Grand Duchess Elizabeth and Nun Barbara, and all the New Martyrs of Russia; of our holy and God-bearing fathers: Anthony and Theodosius of the Kiev Caves; Sergius, the Abbot of Radonezh, and Seraphim of Sarov; Job, Abbot and Wonderworker of Pochaev; of the holy Righteous John of Kronstadt; of the holy Blessed Xenia; of our holy and God-bearing fathers: Herman of Alaska; Paisius Velichkovsky; Leo, Macarius, Ambrose, and the other Elders of Optina; the hierarchs Innocent of Moscow, Nicholas of Japan, John of Shanghai and San Francisco; and *N.(N)*, (*whose Temple it is and whose day it is*); of the holy Righteous Ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; and of all the saints; we pray Thee, O Lord plenteous in mercy, hearken unto us sinners that pray unto Thee, and have mercy on us.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *Twelve times.*

Priest: Through the mercy and compassions and love for mankind of Thine Only-begotten Son, with Whom Thou art blessed, together with Thy Most-holy, and Good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

Two Canons: both of the feast, with a total of 12 troparia, each irmos being chanted twice. Katavasiae of the Exaltation of the Cross.

THE CANONS

Ode I

First Canon of the Feast, in Tone II

Irmos: Come, ye people, let us chant a hymn to Christ God, Who divided the sea and guided the people whom He had led forth from the bondage of Egypt, for He hath been glorified.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

Come, ye faithful, and, rejoicing with divine spirit, let us honour with hymns the Ever-virgin Maiden who today hath issued forth from a barren woman for the salvation of men.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

Rejoice, O pure one, Mother and handmaid of Christ God, mediatrix of our primal blessedness! All of us, the human race, glorify thee with hymns, as is meet.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

Today is the bridge of life born, whereby men have attained restoration after their fall into hades, glorifying Christ, the Bestower of life, with hymns.

Second Canon of the Feast, in Tone VIII

Irmos: To Him Who crushed battles with His arm and led Israel across the Red Sea, let us chant, as to God our Deliverer, for gloriously hath He been glorified.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

Let all creation join chorus, and let David be glad, for from his tribe and seed hath come forth as a flower the rod which beareth the Lord, the Creator of all.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

The Holy of holies is placed in the holy sanctuary as a babe, to be fed by the hands of angels. Let us all, therefore, faithfully keep festival together on her nativity.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

Anna was barren and unable to give birth, yet she was not childless in God's eyes; For, lo! she hath become known by all generations as the mother of the pure Virgin, from whom the Creator of nature hath sprung forth in the guise of a servant.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

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With hymns we all honour thee, the innocent ewe-lamb born of Anna and who through thy womb didst bring the Lamb Christ into our nature.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Triadicon: I glorify the three Unoriginate Ones, I hymn the three Holy Ones, I proclaim the three equally Eternal Ones to be of a single Essence; for the one God is glorified in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Theotokion: Who hath seen a babe fed with milk Whom a father hath now sown? Or where hath there been seen a Mother who is a virgin? Truly past understanding are both of these things, O pure Theotokos.

Katavasia, Tone 8: Tracing an upright line with his staff, Moses divided the Red Sea for Israel which was travelling on foot; and striking it a transverse blow, he brought the waters together over the chariots of Pharaoh, thereby inscribing the invincible weapon of the Cross. Wherefore, let hymn Christ our God, for He hath been glorified!

Ode III

First Canon of the Feast, in Tone II

Irmos: Establish us in thee, O Lord Who hast slain sin by the Tree, and plant the fear of Thee in the hearts of us who hymn Thee.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

Having lived blamelessly for God, ye gave birth unto the salvation of all, O divinely wise parents of her who gave birth to our Creator and God.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

From a barren woman did the Lord, Who poureth forth life upon all, cause the Virgin to come forth, in whom He was pleased to make His abode, preserving her incorrupt even after giving birth.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

Let us hymn Mary today as the Theotokos, the fruit of Anna, the intercessor and helper of all, who gave birth to the life-bearing Cluster.

Second Canon of the Feast, in Tone VIII

Irmos: My heart is established in the Lord; my horn is exalted in my God; my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies. I am glad in Thy salvation.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

O all-pure Virgin Theotokos, thou hast been shown to be higher than all creation, having given birth in the flesh to the Creator.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

Blessed is thy womb, O chaste Anna, for thou didst pour forth the fruit of virginity who gave birth without seed to Jesus the Deliverer, the Nurturer of creation.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

O Ever-virgin, all creation calleth thee blessed who hast been born today of Anna as the rod sprung forth from the root of Jesse, who put forth Christ as an all-pure Bloom.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

Showing thee to be more exalted than all creation, O pure Theotokos, thy Son magnifieth thy birth from Anna and gladdeneth all today.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Triadicon: We worship Thee, O Father unoriginate in essence, we hymn Thy timeless Son, and we honour Thy Spirit Who is equally eternal: as God three in Hypostases but one in Essence.

Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Theotokion: O pure Theotokos, who gavest birth unto the Bestower of light, the Author of man's life, thou hast been shown to be the treasure of our life and the portal of Light unapproachable.

Katavasia, Tone 8: The rod of Aaron is taken to be an image of the mystery, for by its budding forth it chose one priest over others; and for the Church, which before was barren, the Tree of the Cross hath now budded forth, for her might and confirmation.

The Small Ectenia

Deacon: Again and again, in peace let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Calling to remembrance our most holy, most pure, most blessed, glorious Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and all our life unto Christ our God.

Chanters: To Thee O Lord.

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Priest: For Thou art our God, and unto Thee do we send up glory; to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

Sessional Hymn

Sessional hymn of the feast, in Tone IV: Special Melody: 'Joseph marvelled...' —

Like a cloud of light hath the Virgin Mary, the Theotokos, truly shone forth upon us today, and she cometh forth from the righteous ones for our glory. Adam is no longer condemned, and Eve is freed from her bonds. Wherefore, we exclaim, crying aloud with boldness to her who alone is pure: Thy nativity announceth joy to the whole world!

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

The foregoing sessional hymn is repeated.

Ode IV

First Canon of the Feast, in Tone II

Irmos: I have heard report of Thy dispensation, O Lord, and have glorified Thee Who alone lovest mankind.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

We hymn Thee, O Lord, Who hast given unto all, as a haven of salvation, her who gaveth birth to Thee.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

Christ hath revealed thee, O Bride of God, to all who with faith hymn thy mystery as their boast and might.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

Delivered from transgressions by thy supplications, O Mistress who knewest not wedlock, we all bless thee with a good understanding.

Second Canon of the Feast, in Tone VIII

Irmos: With noetic eyes the Prophet Habbakuk foresaw Thy coming, O Lord; wherefore he cried aloud: 'God shall come out of Thæman!' Glory to Thy power! Glory to Thy condescension!

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

The Patriarch Jacob, clearly foreseeing the mighty works of Thy dispensation, O Saviour, cried out in the Spirit, saying mystically to Judah: 'From the tender

plant thou art gone up, O my Son!' referring to Thee, O God, Who wast born of the Virgin.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

Now the pure Virgin, the rod of Aaron which sprung forth from the root of David, cometh forth from Anna, and heaven and earth and all the nations of the gentiles mystically join chorus together with Anna and Joachim.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

Let heaven now be glad; let the earth rejoice! And let Joachim and David join chorus: the one as the father of thee who truly gavest birth to God, and the other as thine ancestor who proclaimed thy mighty deeds, O pure one.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

The whole world rejoiceth with thee today, O divinely wise Anna; for thou hast budded forth the Mother of its Deliverer, she who from the root of David put forth for us the rod of strength which beareth Christ as a flower.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Triadicon: I glorify God, the unoriginate Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the consubstantial, uncreated Trinity, before Whom the seraphim stand with reverence, crying aloud: Holy, Holy, Holy art Thou, O God!

Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Theotokion: The all-unoriginate Origin receiveth a beginning from thee in the flesh and in time, O Theotokos, and He remaineth equally the beginningless and incarnate Word of the Father, equally eternal with the Spirit, maintaining His divine dignity.

Katavasia, Tone 8: I have heard, O Lord, the mystery of Thy dispensation: I have considered Thy works, and have glorified Thy divinity.

Ode V

First Canon of the Feast, in Tone II

Irmos: Having destroyed the shadowy darkness of indistinct images and illumined the hearts of the faithful by the coming of the Truth through the divine Maiden, O Christ, guide us by Thy light.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

O ye people, let us hymn the cause of the Cause of all, Who became like unto us. For the prophets, counted worthy to behold her image, rejoiced, bringing forth the fruit of manifest salvation through her.

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Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

The budding forth of the dry rod of the priest showed forth the destiny of Israel; and now the most glorious offspring of the barren woman most gloriously shineth forth the splendour of those who gave rise to her.

Second Canon of the Feast, in Tone VIII

Irmos: Grant us peace, O Lord our God. O Lord our God, take us for Thy possession. O Lord, we know none other than Thee; we call upon Thy name.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

Thy nativity is all-pure, O immaculate Virgin, thy conception is ineffable, and thy birthgiving unutterable, O Bride unwedded; for God hath clad Himself in all of me.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

Let the angelic ranks be glad; let the descendants of Adam join chorus; for the rod hath been born which alone put forth as flower Christ our Deliverer.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

Today the condemnation of Eve is lifted in thy nativity, the barrenness of Anna is loosed, and Adam is freed from the ancient curse; for by thee have we been delivered from corruption.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

Glory to Thee Who hast glorified the barren woman today! For, according to the promise, she gave birth unto the flowering rod whence Christ, the Flower of our life, hath budded forth.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Triadicon: Glory to Thee, O holy Father, unbegotten God! Glory to Thee, O timeless and only-begotten Son! Glory to Thee, O Spirit divine and equally enthroned, Who proceedest from the Father and restest in the Son!

Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Theotokion: Thy womb becometh the chariot of the Sun; thy purity remained intact as before, O Virgin; for Christ the Sun appeared from thee like a Bridegroom from a bridal chamber.

Katavasia, Tone 8: O the thrice-blessed Tree, whereon Christ, our King and Lord, was crucified; and whereby he who deceived mankind by the tree did fall, deceived by thee, when God was nailed in the flesh, Who granteth peace unto our souls!

Ode VI

First Canon of the Feast, in Tone II

Irmos: From the belly of the sea monster, Jonah cried out: Lead me up from the abyss of hell, I pray, that with a spirit of truth and in a voice of praise I may sacrifice to Thee, as to my Deliverer!

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

The divinely wise parents of the Mother of God cried out to the Lord in grief over their barrenness; and they gave birth to her, our common boast and salvation for generations of generations.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

The divinely wise parents of the Mother of God received from God a gift worthy of heaven, for she is a chariot more highly exalted than the cherubim, the Mother of the Word and Creator.

Second Canon of the Feast, in Tone VIII

Irmos: Like the waters of the sea am I tossed about by the waves of life, O Thou Who lovest mankind. Wherefore, like Jonah I cry to Thee: Lead up my life from corruption, O compassionate Lord!

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

Thy chaste parents placed thee, who art the Holy of holies, in the temple of the Lord, O pure one, to be raised with honour and prepared to become His Mother.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

Join chorus, ye barren women and mothers! Be of good cheer and leap up, O ye childless! For a childless and barren woman buddeth forth the Theotokos who delivereth Eve from her birth pangs and Adam from the curse.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

I hearken to David who singeth to thee: 'The virgins that follow after thee shall be brought into the temple of the King.' And with him I also hymn thee, the daughter of the King.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

We hymn thy holy nativity and honour thine spotless conception, O divinely chosen Bride and Virgin. And with us the ranks of angels and the souls of the saints glorify thee.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Triadicon: In thee, O pure one, is the mystery of the Trinity hymned and glorified; for the Father was well

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pleased, and the Word made His abode within thee, and the divine Spirit overshadowed thee.

Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Theotokion: Thou wast a golden candlestick, O pure Theotokos, for in thy womb the Fire made His abode: the Word from the Holy Spirit; and He in thee became visible in human form.

Katavasia, Tone 8: Stretching forth his arms in the form of a cross in the belly of the sea monster, Jonah clearly prefigured the saving Passion. And, issuing forth after three days, he foreshadowed the heavenly resurrection of Christ God Who was nailed in the flesh and enlightened the world with His rising on the third day.

The Small Ectenia

Deacon: Again and again, in peace let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Calling to remembrance our most holy, most pure, most blessed, glorious Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and all our life unto Christ our God.

Chanters: To Thee O Lord.

Priest: For Thou art the King of peace, and the Saviour of our souls, and unto Thee do we send up glory; to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

Kontakion

Kontakion of the Nativity of the Theotokos, in Tone IV—

In thy holy nativity, O all-pure one, * Joachim and Anna are freed from the reproach of childlessness, * and Adam and Eve from mortal corruption. * And, delivered from the affliction of sin, * thy people celebrate it, crying out to thee: * A barren woman giveth birth to the Theotokos, * the nourisher of our Life!

Ikos: The supplication of Joachim over his childlessness, together with the sighing of Anna over her barrenness, were right acceptable to God: they entered the ears of the Lord and brought forth life-bearing fruit for the world. For the one made supplication on the mountain, and the other bore her reproach in the garden; and with joy the barren woman giveth birth to the Theotokos, the nourisher of our life.

Ode VII

First Canon of the Feast, in Tone II

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

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

Once, the transmitter of the law was prevented from understanding thy great mystery in material manifestations, O all-pure one, though instructed through images not to think earthly thoughts. Wherefore, marvelling at the wonder, he said: Blessed is the God of our fathers!

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

In godly manner the divine choir called thee beforehand the mountain and portal of heaven and the noetic ladder; for from thee was the Stone cut without the aid of man's hands, and thou art the door through which the Lord of wonders passed, the God of our fathers.

Second Canon of the Feast, in Tone VIII

Irmos: The Chaldean furnace, burning with fire, was bedewed by the Spirit through the presence of God; and the children chanted: Blessed art Thou, O God of our fathers!

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

We celebrate and bow down with faith before thy holy nativity, O pure one, honouring thy Son, by Whom we have now been delivered from the ancient condemnation of Adam.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

Now Anna maketh merry and, rendering praise, crieth out: Though barren, I have given birth unto the Mother of God, for whose sake hath been loosed the condemnation of Eve, to give birth in pain and grief.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

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Adam hath been freed and Eve danceth; and they cry out to thee in spirit, O Theotokos: Through thee have we been delivered from the primeval curse with the appearance of Christ!

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

O the womb which contained the dwelling-place of God! O the womb which bore her who is more spacious than the heavens, the holy throne, the noetic ark of sanctification!

Glorify to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Triadicon: We glorify the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in the unity of the Godhead, the all-holy Trinity, indivisible, uncreated, equally eternal and consubstantial.

Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Theotokion: Most gloriously didst thou alone give birth unto God, O Virgin. By thy nativity thou hast renewed nature, O Mary. Thou hast released Eve from the primeval curse, O pure Theotokos.

Katavasia, Tone 8: The mad command of the impious tyrant, breathing forth threats and blasphemy hateful to God, cast the people into confusion. Yet the three children feared not the fury of the wild beasts, nor the roaring blaze; but, in the midst of the fire, when the dew-bearing wind blew upon it, they sang: O all-hymned God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Ode VIII

First Canon of the Feast, in Tone II

Irmos: Thou didst once prefigure Thy Mother in the furnace of the children, O Lord; for her image drew from the fire those who entered it, without being consumed. We hymn and exalt her supremely for all ages, who through Thee hath been made manifest today to the ends of the earth.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

Now the foreordained tabernacle of our reconciliation to God, who is to give birth to the Word Who hath manifested Himself to us in the coarseness of our flesh, beginneth her existence. Him do we, who have been brought into existence by Him out of nonexistence, hymn and exalt supremely for all ages.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

The reversal of Anna's barrenness hath loosed the world's lack of good things, and hath plainly shown forth a miracle: Christ, Who hath come to mortal men. Him do we, who have been brought into existence by

Him out of nonexistence, hymn and exalt supremely for all ages.

Second Canon of the Feast, in Tone VIII

Irmos: O Thou Who coverest Thy chambers with waters and settest the sands as a bound for the sea: Thee doth the sun hymn; Thee doth the moon glorify; and unto Thee doth all creation offer a hymn forever, as to the Creator of all.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

Thou, O holy God, Who wrought most glorious things through the barren womb, Who didst open the childless womb of Anna and gave her fruit, Thou, O Son of the Virgin, hast received flesh from her, the ever-flourishing Virgin and Theotokos.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

Thou, O Lord, Who closest the abyss and openest it, Who raisest water to the clouds and givest the rain, hast made the holy Anna to bud forth and give birth unto the all-pure fruit, the Theotokos, out of a barren root.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

O Cultivator of our thoughts, Planter of our souls, Who hast shown forth barren earth as right fruitful, Thou hast made the holy Anna, a field which before was dry, to burgeon forth, right fertile and fruitful, producing the Theotokos, the all-pure fruit.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos save us.

Come ye all, let us gaze upon the city of God born as from a little chamber, which issueth forth from the gate of Anna's womb, yet hath no knowledge of the entry, for the one God and Creator issued forth by this strange path.

Let us bless the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the Lord.

Triadicon: O transcendent Trinity, unoriginate Unity, the multitude of angels hymneth and trembleth before Thee; heaven and earth are in awe of Thee; men bless Thee, and fire serveth Thee as a slave. Everything in creation submitteth to Thee with fear, O holy Trinity.

Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Theotokion: O most novel report! God becometh the Son of a woman! O seedless birthgiving! A Mother without a husband, a begotten God! O awesome sight! O, the strange conception of the Virgin! O ineffable nativity, truly past all understanding and contemplation!

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We praise, we bless, we worship the Lord, praising and supremely exalting Him unto all ages.

Katavasia, Tone 8: O children, equal in number to the Trinity: bless ye God, the Father of the Creator; hymn ye the Word Who came down and transformed the fire into dew; and the all-holy Spirit, who giveth life to all, exalt ye supremely forever!

We do not chant the Magnificat before Ode IX, but sing instead the refrain of the feast —

Deacon: Magnify, O my soul, the all-glorious nativity of the Mother of God!

Ode IX

First Canon of the Feast, in Tone II

Irmos: Thee do we magnify, O blessed and most pure Theotokos, who through thy virginal womb ineffably didst make God incarnate, the Luminary Who shone forth before the sun and hath come to us in the flesh.

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, the all-glorious nativity of the Mother of God!

He Who poured forth water from the stone for the rebellious people, through the womb of a barren woman giveth to us, the right submissive nations, the fruit of gladness: thee, O all-pure Mother of God, whom we magnify as is meet.

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, the all-glorious nativity of the Mother of God!

Thee, O Theotokos, do we magnify, who hast removed the ancient and immediate condemnation: the restoration of our first mother, the cause of the reconciliation of our race to God, the bridge to the Creator.

Second Canon of the Feast, in Tone VIII

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, the Virgin Mary who hath been born of the barren woman!

Irmos: Foreign to mothers is virginity, and strange is childbirth to virgins; yet both were accomplished in thee, O Theotokos. Wherefore, all of us, the peoples of the world, magnify thee unceasingly.

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, the Virgin Mary who hath been born of the barren woman!

Thou hast received a nativity worthy of thy purity, O Mother of God; for, according to the promise, thou wast given to the barren one as a fruit springing forth divinely. Wherefore, all of us, the peoples of the earth, unceasingly magnify thee.

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, the Virgin Mary who hath been born of the barren woman!

Fulfilled is the prophecy of him whom crieth, for he saith: I shall raise up the tabernacle of sacred David which is fallen, which was a foretype of thee, O pure one, through whom the dust of all men hath been fashioned into a body for God.

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, the Virgin Mary who hath been born of the barren woman!

We venerate thy swaddling clothes, O Theotokos. We glorify Him Who gave fruit to her who before was barren, and Who most gloriously opened the womb of her who was unable to give birth. For as God with utmost authority, He doeth all things soever He desireth.

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, the Virgin Mary who hath been born of the barren woman!

To thee, O Theotokos who wast born of Anna, do we faithfully offer up hymnody as a gift, mothers and virgins glorifying thee as the only Mother and Virgin; and we bow down before thee and hymn and glorify thee.

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, the dominion of the indivisible Godhead in three Hypostases.

Triadicon: Strange is it for the iniquitous to glorify the unoriginate Trinity: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the uncreated omnipotent Principle, by Whom the whole world is sustained by the hand of His might.

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, the all-pure Theotokos, who is more honourable and more glorious than the armies on high.

Theotokion: Within thy womb, O Mother, thou didst contain One of the Trinity: Christ the King, Whom all creation doth hymn and before Whom the ranks of heaven tremble. Him do thou entreat, O most pure one, that our souls be saved.

As katavasia, we chant here both irmoi of Ode IX of the canon of the Exaltation of the Cross —

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, the all-glorious nativity of the Mother of God!

Katavasia of the Exaltation Tone 8: O Theotokos, thou art a mystical paradise, which, untilled, put forth Christ. by Whom the life-bearing Tree of the Cross was planted; wherefore, worshipping it as it is now raised aloft, we magnify thee, O Theotokos.

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, the Virgin Mary who hath been born of the barren woman!

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Second Katavasia, Tone 8: Death, which came upon our race through the eating of the tree, hath been abolished by the Cross today; for the curse of our first mother, which fell upon us all, hath been annulled through the Offspring of the pure Mother of God, whom all the hosts of heaven magnify.

The Small Ectenia

Deacon: Again and again, in peace let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Calling to remembrance our most holy, most pure, most blessed, glorious Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and all our life unto Christ our God.

Chanters: To Thee O Lord.

Priest: For all the Hosts of Heaven praise Thee, and unto Thee do we send up glory; to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

Exapostilaria

Exapostilarion of the feast —

Today the Theotokos * doth issue forth like a flower from barren Anna, * instilling all the ends of the world with divine fragrance, * filling all creation with joy. * Hymning her, we praise her as is meet, * as the one who is more exalted than all mortals. *Twice.*

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Another exapostilarion of the feast —

Be thou renewed, O Adam! * Be thou magnified, O Eve! * Ye prophets, join chorus with the apostles and the righteous! * For the common joy of angels and men hath shone forth today * from the righteous Joachim and Anna: * Mary the Theotokos.

THE LAUDS (THE PRAISES)

Reader: In the First Tone, Let every breath praise the Lord.

And immediately we chant the Lauds (Psalms 148, 149, and 150) —

Psalm 148

Chanters: Let every breath praise the Lord. * Praise the Lord from the heavens, * praise Him in the highest. * To Thee is due praise, O God.

Praise Him, all ye His angels; * praise Him, all ye His hosts. * To Thee is due praise, O God.

And the rest of the verses are read down to the beginning of the stichoi, i.e., the point at which the stichera are inserted.

Praise Him, O sun and moon; praise Him all ye stars and light.

Praise Him, ye heavens of heavens, and thou water that art above the heavens.

Let them praise the name of the Lord; for He spake, and they came to be; He commanded, and they were created.

He established them for ever, yea, for ever and ever; He hath set an ordinance, and it shall not pass away.

Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all ye abysses.

Fire, hail, snow, ice, blast of tempest, which perform His word.

The mountains and all the hills, fruitful trees, and all cedars.

The beasts and all the cattle, creeping things and wingéd birds.

Kings of the earth, and all peoples, princes and all the judges of the earth.

Young men and virgins, elders with the younger; let them praise the name of the Lord, for exalted is the name of Him alone.

His praise is above the earth and heaven, and He shall exalt the horn of His people.

This is the hymn for all His saints, for the sons of Israel, and for the people that draw nigh unto Him.

Psalm 149

Sing unto the Lord a new song; His praise is in the church of the saints.

Let Israel be glad in Him that made him, let the sons of Sion rejoice in their King.

Let them praise His name in the dance; with the timbrel and the psaltery let them chant unto Him.

For the Lord taketh pleasure in His people, and He shall exalt the meek with salvation.

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The saints shall boast in glory, and they shall rejoice upon their beds.

The high praise of God shall be in their throat, and two-edged swords shall be in their hands.

To do vengeance among the heathen, punishments among the peoples.

To bind their kings with fetters, and their nobles with manacles of iron.

To do among them the judgement that is written. This glory shall be to all His saints.

Psalm 150

Praise ye God in His saints, praise Him in the firmament of His power.

Stichera at the Praises

4 stichera of the feast, in Tone I, Special Melody: 'O wondrous miracle ...' —

Stichos: Praise Him for His mighty acts, * praise Him according to the multitude of His greatness.

O wondrous miracle! The wellspring of Life is born of the barren woman, and grace beginneth to produce splendid fruit. Be glad, O Joachim, as thou art the father of the Theotokos! There is none to compare with thee among mortal parents, O God-pleaser! For by thee hath the Maiden who contained God, the divine dwelling-place, the all-holy mountain, been given to us!

Stichos: Praise Him with the sound of trumpet, * praise Him with the psaltery and harp.

The foregoing sticheron is repeated.

Stichos: Praise Him with timbrel and dance, * praise Him with strings and flute.

O wondrous miracle! Fruit hath shone forth from the barren woman at the behest of the Almighty Creator of all. She hath boldly loosed the barrenness of the world. Ye mothers, join chorus with the mother of the Theotokos, crying: O joyous one, rejoice! The Lord is with thee, Who through thee granteth the world great mercy!

Stichos: Praise Him with tuneful cymbals; praise Him with cymbals of jubilation. * Let every breath praise the Lord.

The right glorious Anna, who is shown forth as an animate pillar of chastity, a splendid receptacle shining with grace, hath truly given birth to the bulwark of virginity, the divine flower who manifestly imparteth the beauty of virginity to all the virginal who desire the gift of virginity, and bestoweth great mercy upon all the faithful.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Doxasticon for the feast, idiomelon, in Tone VI —

This is the day of the Lord! Rejoice, O ye people! For, lo! the bridal-chamber of the Light and the book of the Word of life hath issued forth from the womb, and the portal which faceth toward the east, having been born, awaiteth the entry of the great High Priest. She alone leadeth the one Christ into the world, for the salvation of our souls.

The Great Doxology

Priest: Glory to Thee Who hast showed us the light.

And we chant the Great Doxology:

Chanters: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory. O Lord, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty; O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ; and O Holy Spirit.

O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sin of the world; have mercy on us; Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; Thou that sittest at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord, Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Every day will I bless Thee, and I will praise Thy Name forever, yea, forever and ever.

Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy name unto the ages. Amen.

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we have hoped in Thee.

Blessed are Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes. *Thrice.*

Lord, thou hast been our refuge in generation and generation. I said: O Lord, have mercy on me, heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee.

O Lord, unto Thee have I fled for refuge, teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God. For in Thee is the fountain of life, in Thy light shall we see light. O continue Thy mercy unto them that know Thee.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. *Thrice.*

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Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

Dismissal Troparion

After the Great Doxology, the troparion of the Nativity of the Theotokos, in Tone IV —

Thy nativity, O Virgin Theotokos, * hath proclaimed joy to all the world; * for from thee hath shown forth Christ our God, the Sun of righteousness, * Who, having annulled the curse, hath given His blessing, * and having abolished death, hath granted us life everlasting. *Once.*

The Augmented Ectenia

Deacon: Have mercy on us, O God, according to Thy great mercy, we pray Thee, hearken and have mercy.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

Deacon: Again we pray for our great lord and father, His Holiness Patriarch *N.*; for our lord the Very Most Reverend Metropolitan *N.*, First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad; for our lord the Most Reverend (Archbishop *or* Bishop) *N.*; and all our brethren in Christ.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

Deacon: Again we pray for this land, its authorities and armed forces.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

Deacon: Again we pray for the God-preserved Russian land and its Orthodox people both in the homeland and in the diaspora and for their salvation.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

Deacon: Again we pray to the Lord our God that He may deliver His people from enemies visible and invisible, and confirm in us oneness of mind, brotherly love and piety.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

Deacon: Again we pray for the blessed and ever-memorable founders of this holy temple (*if it be a monastery: this holy monastery*): and for all our fathers and brethren gone to their rest before us, and the Orthodox here and everywhere laid to rest.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

Deacon: Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, visitation, pardon and remission of sins of the servants of God, the brethren of this holy temple (*if it be a monastery: this holy monastery*).

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

Deacon: Again we pray for them that bring offerings and do good works in this holy and all-venerable temple; for them that minister and them that chant, and for all the people here present, that await of Thee great and abundant mercy.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

Priest: For a merciful God art Thou, and the Lover of mankind, and unto Thee do we send up glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

The Litany of Supplication

Deacon: Let us complete our morning prayer unto the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That the whole day may be perfect, holy, peaceful and sinless, let us ask of the Lord.

Chanters: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: An angel of peace, a faithful guide, a guardian of our souls and bodies, let us ask of the Lord.

Chanters: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: Pardon and remission of our sins and offences, let us ask of the Lord.

Chanters: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: Things good and profitable for our souls, and peace for the world, let us ask of the Lord.

Chanters: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: That we may complete the remaining time of our life in peace and repentance, let us ask of the Lord.

Chanters: Grant this, O Lord.

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Deacon: A Christian ending to our life, painless, blameless, peaceful, and a good defense before the dread judgement seat of Christ, let us ask.

Chanters: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: Calling to remembrance our most holy, most pure, most blessed, glorious Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and all our life unto Christ our God.

Chanters: To Thee, O Lord.

Priest: For Thou art a God of mercy, compassion, and love for mankind, and unto Thee do we send up glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

Prayer at the Bowing of the Heads

Priest: Peace be unto all.

Chanters: And to thy spirit.

Deacon: Let us bow our heads unto the Lord.

Chanters: To Thee, O Lord.

The priest saith this prayer secretly:

O holy Lord, Who dwellest on high and lookest down on things that are lowly, and with Thine all-seeing eye lookest down on all creation: unto Thee have we bowed the neck of our heart and body, and we pray Thee: Stretch forth Thine invisible hand from Thy holy dwelling-place and bless us all. And if in aught we have sinned, either voluntarily or involuntarily, do Thou as a good God and the Lover of mankind pardon us, granting us Thine earthly and spiritual good things

He exclaimeth:

Priest: For Thine it is to show mercy and to save us, O our God, and unto Thee do we send up glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

The Dismissal

Deacon: Wisdom!

Chanters: Father bless!

Priest: He that is is blessed, Christ our God, always, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen. Establish, O God, the holy Orthodox Faith of Orthodox Christians unto the ages of ages.

Priest: O most holy Theotokos, save us.

Chanters: More honourable than the Cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim; who without corruption gavest birth to God the Word, the very Theotokos, thee do we magnify.

Priest: Glory to Thee, O Christ God, our hope, glory to Thee.

Chanters: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Lord have mercy. *Thrice.*

Father, bless.

Priest: May Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His most pure Mother; of the holy and glorious apostles; and Saint(s) N.(N.) (*to whom the church is dedicated*); and Saint(s) N.(N.) (*of the day*); of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; and of all the saints: have mercy on us and save us, for He is good and loveth mankind.

Chanters: Amen.

The Polychronion

Our great lord and father, His Holiness N. * the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia; * our lord the Very Most Reverend N.; * Metropolitan of Eastern America and New York, First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad, * and our lord the Most Reverend Archbishop (*or* Bishop) N.; * the brotherhood of this holy temple, and all Orthodox Christians: * preserve, O Lord, for many years.

Here endeth Matins

Then the reader immediately begins the first hour

THE FIRST HOUR

Reader: O come, let us worship God our King.

O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ our King and God.

O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and God.

Psalm 5

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Unto my words give ear, O Lord, hear my cry. Attend unto the voice of my supplication, O my King and my God; for unto Thee will I pray, O Lord.

In the morning shalt Thou hear my voice. In the morning shall I stand before Thee, and Thou shalt look upon me; for not a God that wildest iniquity art Thou.

He that worketh evil shall not dwell near Thee nor shall transgressors abide before Thine eyes.

Thou hast hated all them that work iniquity; Thou shalt destroy all them that speak a lie.

A man that is bloody and deceitful shall the Lord abhor.

But as for me, in the multitude of Thy mercy shall I go into Thy house; I shall worship toward Thy holy temple in fear of Thee.

O Lord, guide me in the way of Thy righteousness; because of mine enemies, make straight my way before Thee,

For in their mouth there is no truth; their heart is vain.

Their throat is an open sepulchre, with their tongues have they spoken deceitfully; judge them, O God.

Let them fall down on account of their own devisings; according to the multitude of their ungodliness, cast them out, for they have embittered Thee, O Lord.

And let all them be glad that hope in Thee; they shall rejoice, and Thou shalt dwell among them.

And all shall glory in Thee that love Thy name, for Thou shalt bless the righteous.

O Lord, as with a shield of Thy good pleasure hast Thou crowned us.

Psalm 89

Lord, Thou hast been our refuge in generation and generation.

Before the mountains came to be and the earth was formed and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting Thou art.

Turn not man away unto lowliness; yea, Thou hast said: Turn back ye sons of men.

For a thousand years in Thine eyes, O Lord, are but as yesterday that is past, and as a watch in the night.

Things of no account shall their years be; in the morning like grass shall man pass away.

In the morning shall he bloom and pass away. In the evening shall he fall and grow withered and dry.

For we have fainted away in Thy wrath, and in Thine anger have we been troubled.

Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee; our lifespan is in the light of Thy countenance.

For all our days are faded away, and in Thy wrath are we fainted away; our years have, like a spider, spun out their tale.

As for the days of our years, in their span, they be threescore years and ten.

And if we be in strength, mayhap fourscore years; and what is more than these is toil and travail.

For mildness is come upon us, and we shall be chastened.

Who knoweth the might of Thy wrath? And out of fear of Thee, who can recount Thine anger?

So make Thy right hand known to me, and to them that in their heart are instructed in wisdom.

Return, O Lord; how long? And be Thou entreated concerning Thy servants.

We were filled in the morning with Thy mercy, O Lord, and we rejoiced and were glad.

In all our days, let us be glad for the days wherein Thou didst humble us, for the years wherein we saw evils.

And look upon Thy servants, and upon Thy works, and do Thou guide their sons.

And let the brightness of the Lord our God be upon us, and the works of our hands do Thou guide aright upon us, yea, the works of our hands do Thou guide aright.

Psalm 100

Of mercy and judgement will I sing to Thee, O Lord; I will chant and have understanding in a blameless path. When wilt Thou come unto me?

I have walked in the innocence of my heart in the midst of my house.

I have no unlawful thing before mine eyes; the workers of transgressions I have hated.

A crooked heart hath not cleaved unto me; as for the wicked man who turned from me, I knew him not.

Him that privily talked against his neighbor did I drive away from me.

With him whose eye was proud and his heart insatiate, I did not eat.

Mine eyes were upon the faithful of the land, that they might sit with me; the man that walked in the blameless path, he ministered unto me.

The proud doer dwelt not in the midst of my house; the speaker of unjust things prospered not before mine eyes.

In the morning I slew all the sinners of the land, utterly to destroy out of the city of the Lord all them that work iniquity.

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Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. *Thrice*

Lord, have mercy. *Thrice*.

Troparia

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

He readeth the Troparion of the Nativity of the Theotokos —

Thy nativity, O Virgin Theotokos, hath proclaimed joy to all the world; for from thee hath shown forth Christ our God, the Sun of righteousness, Who, having annulled the curse, hath given His blessing, and having abolished death, hath granted us life everlasting.

Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Theotokion: What shall we call thee, O thou that art full of grace? Heaven: for thou hast dawned forth the Sun of Righteousness. Paradise: for thou hast blossomed forth the Flower of Immortality. Virgin: for thou hast remained incorrupt. Pure Mother: for thou hast held in thy holy embrace the Son, the God of all. Do thou entreat Him to save our souls.

My Steps Do Thou Direct

My steps do Thou direct according to thy saying, and let no iniquity have dominion over me. Deliver me from the false accusations of men, and I will keep Thy commandments. Make Thy face to shine upon Thy servant, and teach me Thy statutes. Let my mouth be filled with Thy praise, that I may hymn Thy glory and Thy majesty all the day long.

Trisagion Prayers

Reader: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. *Thrice*.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Lord, blot out our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy name's sake.

Lord have mercy. *Thrice*.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, Who art in the Heavens, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Priest: For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory; of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages

Reader: Amen.

Kontakion

He readeth the Kontakion of the Nativity of the Theotokos —

In thy holy nativity, O all-pure one, Joachim and Anna are freed from the reproach of childlessness, and Adam and Eve from mortal corruption. And, delivered from the affliction of sin, thy people celebrate it, crying out to thee: A barren woman giveth birth to the Theotokos, the nourisher of our Life!

Then:

Lord, have mercy. *Forty times*.

Prayer of the Hours

Reader: Thou Who at all times and at every hour, in heaven and on earth, art worshipped and glorified, O Christ God, Who art long-suffering, plenteous in mercy, most compassionate, Who lovest the righteous and hast mercy on sinners; Who callest all to salvation through the promise of good things to come: Receive, O Lord, our prayers at this hour, and guide our life toward Thy commandments. Sanctify our souls, make chaste our bodies, correct our thoughts, purify our intentions, and deliver us from every sorrow, evil, and pain. Compass us about with Thy holy angels, that, guarded and guided by their array, we may attain to the unity of the faith and to the knowledge of Thine unapproachable glory: For blessed art Thou unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. *Thrice*.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

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More honourable than the cherubim and beyond compare more glorious than the seraphim; who without corruption gavest birth to God the Word, the very Theotokos, thee do we magnify.

In the name of the Lord, father bless.

Priest: God be gracious unto us and bless us, and cause Thy face to shine upon us and have mercy on us.

Reader: Amen.

Prayer of the First Hour

Then the priest reads the Prayer of the First Hour in front of the holy doors:

Priest: O Christ, the True Light, Who enlightenest and sanctifiest every man that cometh into the world: Let the Light of Thy countenance be signed upon us, that in it we may see the Unapproachable Light, and guide our steps in the doing of Thy commandments, through the intercessions of Thy most pure Mother, and of all Thy saints. Amen.

To Thee, the Champion Leader

Chanters: To Thee, the Champion Leader, we Thy servants dedicate a feast of victory and of thanksgiving as ones rescued out of sufferings, O Theotokos: but as Thou art one with might which is invincible, from all dangers that can be do Thou deliver us, that we may cry to Thee: Rejoice, Thou Bride Unwedded!

The Dismissal

Priest: Glory to Thee, O Christ our God and our hope, glory to Thee.

Chanters: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

Father, bless.

Priest: May Christ our true God, {Who arose from the dead,} through the intercessions of His most pure Mother; of our holy and God-bearing fathers; and of all the saints, have mercy on us and save us, for He is good and the Lover of mankind.

Chanters: Amen.

Here endeth the First Hour

AT THE HOURS

Troparion of the Nativity of the Theotokos (Tone 4)

Thy nativity, O Virgin Theotokos, hath proclaimed joy to all the world; for from thee hath shown forth Christ our God, the Sun of righteousness, Who, having annulled the curse, hath given His blessing, and having abolished death, hath granted us life everlasting.

Kontakion of the Nativity of the Theotokos (Tone 4)

In thy holy nativity, O all-pure one, Joachim and Anna are freed from the reproach of childlessness, and Adam and Eve from mortal corruption. And, delivered from the affliction of sin, thy people celebrate it, crying out to thee: A barren woman giveth birth to the Theotokos, the nourisher of our Life!

AT THE DIVINE LITURGY

Third Antiphon (Beatitudes)

8 troparia: 4 from Ode III of Canon 1 of the Feast; 4 from Ode VI of Canon 2 after 'Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.'

1. *Irmos:* Establish us in thee, O Lord Who hast slain sin by the Tree, and plant the fear of Thee in the hearts of us who hymn Thee.

2. Having lived blamelessly for God, ye gave birth unto the salvation of all, O divinely wise parents of her who gave birth to our Creator and God.

3. From a barren woman did the Lord, Who poureth forth life upon all, cause the Virgin to come forth, in whom He was pleased to make His abode, preserving her incorrupt even after giving birth.

4. Let us hymn Mary today as the Theotokos, the fruit of Anna, the intercessor and helper of all, who gave birth to the life-bearing Cluster.

5. Join chorus, ye barren women and mothers! Be of good cheer and leap up, O ye childless! For a childless and barren woman buddeth forth the Theotokos who delivereth Eve from her birth pangs and Adam from the curse.

6. We hymn thy holy nativity and honour thine spotless conception, O divinely chosen Bride and Virgin. And with us the ranks of angels and the souls of the saints glorify thee.

7. *Triadicon:* In thee, O pure one, is the mystery of the Trinity hymned and glorified; for the Father was

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well pleased, and the Word made His abode within thee, and the divine Spirit overshadowed thee.

8. *Theotokion*: Thou wast a golden candlestick, O pure Theotokos, for in thy womb the Fire made His abode: the Word from the Holy Spirit; and He in thee became visible in human form.

In some traditions, instead of the typical psalms and the Beatitudes, the following antiphons are sung:

The First Antiphon, Psalm 131, Second Tone:

Stichos 1: Remember, O Lord, David * and all his meekness. (*Psalm 131:1*)

Refrain: Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Saviour, save us.

Stichos 2: Lo, we have heard it in Ephratha. * We have found it in the plains of the wood. (*Psalm 131:6*)

Refrain.

Stichos 3: Glorious things are spoken of thee, * O city of God. (*Psalm 86:3*) *Refrain*.

Stichos 4: God is in the midst of her, She shall not be shaken; * God shall help her right early in the morning. (*Psalm 45:6*) *Refrain*.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, * both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen. *Refrain*.

The Second Antiphon, Psalm 131, Second Tone:

Stichos 1: The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David, * and He will not annul it. (*Psalm 131:11*)

Refrain: O Son of God, wondrous in Thy saints, save us who chant unto Thee: Alleluia!

Stichos 2: Of the fruit of thy loins * will I set upon thy throne. (*Psalm 131:11*) *Refrain*.

Stichos 3: There will I make to spring forth a horn for David, * I have prepared a lamp for My Christ. (*Psalm 131:17*) *Refrain*.

Stichos 4: For the Lord hath elected Sion, * He hath chosen her to be a habitation for Himself. (*Psalm 131:13*) *Refrain*.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, * both now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O Only-begotten Son...

The Third Antiphon, Psalm 131, Fourth Tone:

Stichos 1 (Reader): Here will I dwell, for I have chosen her. (*Psalm 131:15*)

Troparion, Tone 4 (Choir): Thy nativity, O Virgin Theotokos, * hath proclaimed joy to all the world; * for

from thee hath shown forth Christ our God, the Sun of righteousness, * Who, having annulled the curse, hath given His blessing, * and having abolished death, hath granted us life everlasting.

Stichos 2: The Most High hath hallowed His tabernacle. (*Psalm 45:4*) *Troparion*.

Stichos 3: Holy is Thy temple, wonderful in righteousness. (*Psalm 64:5*) *Troparion*.

Entrance Hymn: O come let us worship and fall down before Christ; O Son of God through the prayers of the Theotokos, save us who chant unto Thee: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

In some traditions, instead of the Entrance Hymn above, the following Entrance Hymn is sung:

Entrance Hymn: O come let us worship and fall down before Christ; O Son of God Who art wondrous in the saints, save us who chant unto Thee: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

After the Small Entry, we sing the following troparion and kontakion:

Troparion of Nativity of the Theotokos (Tone 4)

Thy nativity, O Virgin Theotokos, * hath proclaimed joy to all the world; * for from thee hath shown forth Christ our God, the Sun of righteousness, * Who, having annulled the curse, hath given His blessing, * and having abolished death, hath granted us life everlasting.

Glory... Both now...

Kontakion of the Nativity of the Theotokos (Tone 4)

In thy holy nativity, O all-pure one, * Joachim and Anna are freed from the reproach of childlessness, * and Adam and Eve from mortal corruption. * And, delivered from the affliction of sin, * thy people celebrate it, crying out to thee: * A barren woman giveth birth to the Theotokos, * the nourisher of our Life!

The Prokeimenon in the Third Tone, the Song of the Theotokos:

My soul doth magnify the Lord, * and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. (*St Luke 1:46-47*)

Stichos: For He hath looked upon the lowliness of His handmaiden; for behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. (*St Luke 1:48*)

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The Reading from the Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Philippians, § 240 [2:5-11]

Brethren: Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion of a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death - even the death of the Cross. Therefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Alleluia in the Eighth Tone:

Stichos: Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thine ear. (*Psalm 44:9*)

Stichos: The rich among the people shall entreat thy countenance. (*Psalm 44:11*)

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St Luke, § 54 [10:38-42; 11:27-28]

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

Instead of 'It is truly meet...' we chant the Irmos of the 9th Ode of the second canon, Eighth Tone:

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, the most glorious nativity of the Mother of God.

Irmos: Foreign to mothers is virginity, and strange is childbirth to virgins, yet both were accomplished in thee, O Theotokos. Wherefore, all we, the tribes of the earth, unceasingly magnify thee.

Communion Verse: I will take the cup of salvation, and I will call upon the name of the Lord. (*Psalm 115:4*)

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Jordanville translation:

Troparion of the Nativity of the Theotokos (Tone 4)
Thy nativity, O Theotokos Virgin, * hath proclaimed joy to all the world; * for from thee hath dawned the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God, * annulling the curse, and bestowing the blessing, * abolishing death and granting us life eternal.

Kontakion of the Nativity of the Theotokos (Tone 4)
Joachim and Anna were freed from the reproach of childlessness * and Adam and Eve from the corruption of death, by thy holy nativity, O immaculate one, * which thy people, redeemed from the guilt of offenses, * celebrate, by crying to thee: * The barren woman giveth birth to the Theotokos, the nourisher of our life.

Instead of 'It is truly meet...' we chant the Irmos of the 9th Ode of the second canon, Eighth Tone:

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, the most glorious nativity of the Mother of God.

Irmos: Foreign to mothers is virginity, and strange is childbirth for virgins, yet both were accomplished in thee, O Theotokos. Wherefore, we and all generations of the earth without ceasing do magnify thee.

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