

THE 2nd DAY OF THE MONTH OF JUNE
COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY GREAT-MARTYR JOHN THE NEW,
SLAIN IN THE CITY OF BELGOROD-DNESTROYSKY, WHOSE RELICS REPOSE IN
THE CITY OF SUCEAYA
AT LITTLE VESPER

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

Spec. Mel.: "Joy of the ranks of heaven ...":

Rejoicing, O ye faithful, let us praise John of great renown, the most wise warrior of piety, the true preacher of Christ, who danceth with the ranks of heaven and suffered with the martyrs. (Twice)

With faith let us bless the mighty bulwark of Christians, the tower unshaken by the allurements of the tyrants, the most excellent merchant, who traded corruptible things for incorruptible, and looketh down on us from on high.

In gladness let us all hymn the foremost spiritual athlete, the splendid champion, who hath now shone forth upon us with rays of true suffering, and let us bow down before his relics.

Glory ..., in Tone VI:

Come, all ye who love the martyrs! Come ye, and let us form a chorus, fashioning wreaths with praises, and crowning the honored head of John! For this great champion, having armed himself with faith in Christ, manfully entered the contest and confessed Christ to be the Son of God and God, the Creator and Judge of all; and utterly casting down the pride of the Persians and trampling the tyrant underfoot by his patience, he became the model and superscription for martyrs, and doth now pray to Christ on behalf of our souls.

Now & ever ..., from the Pentecostarion, or this Theotokion in Tone VI:

No one that fleeth unto thee, O most pure Virgin Theotokos, * departeth from thee ashamed; * for those that asketh grace of thee, ** ever receiveth a gift for their profitable petition.

At the Aposticha, these Stichera, in Tone II:

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

With rays of suffering thou didst shine forth like the sun from the eastern regions even unto the parts of the West, drawing the hearts and thoughts of all to thy wonders, O glorious one.

Verse: The righteous man shall flourish like a palm-tree, * and like a cedar in Lebanon shall he be multiplied.

O all ye tribes of the North, inasmuch as ye are pious, join chorus in spirit, and with hymns glorify John who doth love you.

Verse: Those who are planted in the house of the Lord, * in the courts of our God they shall blossom forth.

In these latter times thou hast been revealed to be the comeliness which maketh new the sufferings of the martyrs, utterly casting down soul-destroying deception, O blessed one.

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., Theotokion:

With the glorious John, the martyrs confessed thee to be the true Theotokos, O Mary Bride of God; and we also fall down, asking forgiveness of sins.

Troparion of the great-martyr, in Tone IV:

Having sustained well thy life on earth with almsgiving, * and frequent prayers and tears, * O spiritual athlete, thou didst manfully hasten to suffering, * and denounce the ungodliness of the Persians; * wherefore, thou hast become a firm foundation for the Church * and the boast of Christians, ** O ever-memorable John.

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., the Troparion from the Pentecostarion, or the Resurrectional Theotokion, in tone IV:

The mystery hidden from all ages * and unknown to the ranks of Angels, * hath been revealed to those on earth through thee, O Theotokos: * God incarnate in an uncommingled union, * Who willingly accepted the Cross for our sake, * and through it hath raised up the first-formed man, ** and thus saved our souls from death.

AT GREAT VESPERS

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

On "Lord, I have cried ...", 8 Stichera: If this day fall within the Pentecostarion, 3 Stichera from the Pentecostarion, and 5 of the great-martyr, in Tone II: repeating the first Sticheron; but if Pentecost hath already passed, then each of the 4 Stichera is repeated:

Spec. Mel.: "With what wreaths of praise ...":

With what good songs of praise shall we hymn John: the true warrior of the great King, the splendid champion, the most excellent spiritual athlete of Christ, who made the Faith steadfast, casting down deception, who was patient amid temptations and undaunted amid tortures the awesome denouncer of the ungodly and ardent helper of the pious, through whom Christ granteth us great mercy? (Twice)

With what wreaths of praise shall we crown John: the restoration of the martyrs, the skilled opponent, the champion of piety, who humbled the enemy, who sanctified the ground with his blood, who terrified the princes of the air and hath been reckoned with the angels of heaven, the pillar of gold which upholdeth all the lands of the north and by whom Christ, Who hath great mercy, doth vanquish all their enemies? (Twice)

With what right harmonious voices shall we glorify John: the eagle who soareth aloft on the wisdom of words, the pinions of whose wings are golden; the trumpet of piety, who hath thundered forth the mysteries of the Word of God, the sword honed sharp by the sayings of the prophets, by whom Christ, Who hath great mercy, hath humbled the uprisings of the Persians? (Twice)

With what hymn and beauties shall we crown the wondrous John: who gave his flesh over to flogging for the sake of Him Who for our sake gave His shoulders over to wounds, and who unsparingly shed his blood for Him Who abased Himself even to assuming the form of a servant, astonishing the tyrant by his supra-natural endurance, putting him to shame by his mighty opposition, whom Christ God, Who hath great mercy, hath crowned with wreaths of immortality? (Twice)

Glory ..., in Tone VIII:

Today, the denizens of heaven celebrate an honorable festival, calling those on earth to gladness for the memorial of John the valiant struggler, the hard diamond; for the arms of those who flogged him became exhausted, and the judge became weary even considering his tortures; but he remained above them all standing like a lion in the midst of the arena and filling the tyrant with fear by his confession of Christ, for he right boldly cried out to him: "Touch not my flesh, lest retribution overtake thee, O governor! For though thou hast inflicted many wounds, I shall be given crowns of incorruption by Christ; Whom I preach with the Father and the Holy Spirit!"

Now & ever ..., from the Pentecostarion, or the dogmatic Theotokion, in Tone VIII:

In His love for mankind, the King of heaven appeared on earth * and dwelt among men; * for He Who received flesh from the pure Virgin * and cameth forth from her having received human nature, * is the only Son of God, twofold in nature * but not Hypostasis. * Therefore, proclaiming Him to be truly perfect God and perfect man, * we confess Christ our God. * Him do thou beseech, O unwedded Mother, ** that our souls find mercy!

Entrance. Prokeimenon of the day. Three readings:

A READING FROM THE PROPHECY OF ISAIAH

Thus saith the Lord: "All the nations are gathered together, and princes shall be gathered out of them. Who will declare these things, or who will declare to you things from the beginning? Let them bring forth their witnesses, and be justified; and let them hear, and declare the truth. Be ye My witnesses, and I too am a witness," saith the Lord God, "and My servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know, and believe, and understand that I am He, before Me there was no other God, and after Me there shall be none. I am God; and beside Me there is no Savior. I have declared, and have saved; I have reproached, and there was no strange god among you. Ye are My witnesses, and I am the Lord God, even from the beginning; and there is none that can deliver out of My hands. I will work, and who shall turn it back?" Thus saith the Lord God Who redeemeth you, the Holy One of Israel.

READING FROM THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON

The righteous live for evermore; their reward also is with the Lord, and the care of them is with the most High. Therefore shall they receive a glorious kingdom, and a beautiful crown from the Lord's hand: for with his right hand shall he cover them, and with his arm shall he protect them. He shall take to him his jealousy for complete armor, and make the creature his weapon for thy revenge of his enemies. He shall put on righteousness as a breastplate, and Judgment instead of an helmet. He shall take holiness for an invincible shield. His severe wrath shall he sharpen for a sword, and the world shall fight with him against the unwise. Then shall the right aiming thunderbolts go abroad; and from the clouds, as from a well-drawn bow, shall they fly to the mark. And hailstones full of wrath shall be cast as out of a stone bow, and the water of the sea shall rage against them, and the floods shall cruelly drown them. Yea, a mighty wind shall stand up against them, and like a storm shall blow them away: thus iniquity shall lay waste the whole earth, and ill-dealing shall overthrow the thrones of the mighty. Hear therefore, O ye kings, and understand; learn, ye that be judges of the ends of the earth. Give ear, ye that rule the people, and glory in the multitude of nations. For power is given you of the Lord and sovereignty from the Highest, who shall try your works, and search out your counsels.

READING FROM THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON

Though the righteous be prevented with death yet shall he be in rest. For honorable age is not that which standeth in length of time nor that is measured by number of years. But wisdom is the gray hair unto men, and an unspotted life is old age. He pleased God, and was loved of Him: so that living among sinners he was translated, yea, speedily was he taken away, lest that wickedness should alter his understanding, or deceit beguile his soul. For the bewitching of naughtiness doth obscure things that are honest; and the wandering of concupiscence doth undermine the simple mind. He, being made perfect in a short time, fulfilled a long time: for his soul pleased the Lord: therefore hastened He to take him away from among the wicked. This the people saw, and understood it not neither laid they up this in their minds, that His grace and mercy is with His saints, and that He hath respect unto His chosen.

At Litiya, these Stichera, in Tone I:

Rejoice, all ye people of the north, and leap up in gladness, having in your midst the never-setting and greatly radiant star whose rays surpass those of the sun: John of great renown, the martyred branch of the root of piety, laden with choice fruit, who loved Christ greatly and was greatly loved of Him, and who asketh great mercy for us all!

O all ye generations of the pious, joining chorus in spirit, praise ye our common good on the designated day of this feast, having among you, like a right fragrant rose, the holy and much suffering body, now glorified with the glory of incorruption, of him who imparteth healings of the sufferings of men's souls and bodies.

O ye people of the East, join chorus with those of the North, and think not over highly of yourselves, for another sun hath been shown forth here, making not his circuit toward the lands of the West and setting beyond the western horizon, but passing into the heavens from the earth, and making his abode with the immaterial intelligences; and from thence shining down, protecting and sanctifying us, and beseeching great mercy from Christ.

Glory ..., in Tone V:

Let us blow loudly upon the flute of the Spirit on the festive memorial of John, the warrior of valiant resolve, and gathering everyone around us with exalted preaching, let us say: Behold, he who suffered on earth doth now reign in the heavens! Come, brethren, and let us emulate him, and in imitation let us follow his zeal, becoming martyrs by volition! Come, ye kings and princes, and emulate him, the all-rich treasury of alms, that ye may acquire crowns like his! Ye rich and poor, ye healthy and infirm, draw forth healings in abundance from the sacred coffer, as from a wellspring of incorruption, unto the glory of God the Savior Who hath glorified the one who hath glorified Him.

Now & ever ..., from the Pentecostarion, or this Theotokion, in Tone V:

Thou art the temple and portal, the palace and throne of the King, * O most honored Virgin, * through whom Christ the Lord, my Redeemer, * Who is the Sun of righteousness, * hath revealed Himself unto those who sleep in darkness, * deigning to enlighten those whom He hath fashioned in His image by His own hand. * Wherefore, O all-hymned one, * as thou hast acquired a mother's boldness before Him, ** entreat Him without ceasing, that our souls be saved.

At the Aposticha, these Stichera, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: "As one valiant among the martyrs ...":

Thou didst traverse the deep of the sea like a goodly sheep, offering thyself as a living and animate sacrifice unto the Lamb of God, Who was slain for our sake, O glorious one. Receiving from Him honors for thy labors, pray that those who celebrate thy most honorable memory with love may be delivered from corruption and misfortunes.

Verse: The righteous man shall flourish like a palm-tree, * and like a cedar in Lebanon shall he be multiplied.

Neither the savagery of the tyrant, nor beating with iron rods, nor the maiming of thy flesh, nor the torrents of thy blood, were able to turn thy steadfastness away from Christ; and thou didst cry out to those who tortured thee: "Try me by torments as in a crucible, that I may appear before my Creator like gold purified by fire!"

Verse: Those who are planted in the house of the Lord, * in the courts of our God they shall blossom forth.

Neither the weight of chains, nor the stench of prison, nor the inhumanity of those who flayed thee, were able to shake thy constant loyalty to thy Master, O blessed one; for Christ's sake thou didst consider thy prison cell to be a splendid bridal-chamber, thy chains to be coins of gold, and thy bitter flaying to be a robe of royal purple.

Glory ..., in Tone III:

Hastening hither, O brethren, let us delight in the rays of the passion-bearer, which have shone forth; for John, the chosen warrior of Christ, having descended invisibly to us from the heavens hath set forth a spiritual banquet for us, satisfying in abundance every want. Let us fall down with faith, embracing his relics and crying out in supplication: O thrice-blessed and much suffering one, who hast been well-pleased to place thy precious relics in the church which thou hast loved, with thy boldness before God preserve and protect our leaders, who love thee.

Now & ever ..., from the Pentecostarion, or this Theotokion, in Tone III:

By the will of the Father and without seed * thou didst conceive through the divine Spirit the Son of God * Who hath existed from the Father without a mother from before the ages, * and Who for our sake came forth from Thee in the flesh without a father, * and Him hast thou suckled as a babe. * Wherefore, cease not to beseech Him, ** that our souls be delivered from tribulations.

Troparion of the great-martyr, in Tone IV:

Having sustained well thy life on earth with almsgiving, * and frequent prayers and tears, * O spiritual athlete, thou didst manfully hasten to suffering, * and denounce the ungodliness of the Persians; * wherefore, thou hast become a firm foundation for the Church * and the boast of Christians, ** O ever-memorable John. (Twice)

And the Troparion from the Pentecostarion, once; or, if the fifty-day period after Pascha be passed, "Virgin Theotokos, rejoice ...", once.

AT MATINS

On "God is the Lord ... ", Troparion of the great-martyr, in Tone IV:

Haying sustained well thy life on earth with almsgiving, * and frequent prayers and tears, * O spiritual athlete, thou didst manfully hasten to suffering, * and denounce the ungodliness of the Persians; * wherefore, thou hast become a firm foundation for the Church * and the boast of Christians, ** O ever-memorable John. (Twice)

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., the Troparion from the Pentecostarion, or the Resurrectional Theotokion, in tone IV:

The mystery hidden from all ages * and unknown to the ranks of Angels, * hath been revealed to those on earth through thee, O Theotokos: * God incarnate in an uncommingled union, * Who willingly accepted the Cross for our sake, * and through it hath raised up the first-formed man, ** and thus saved our souls from death.

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

Spec. Mel.: "Thy tomb, O Savior ...":

Thy tomb, O holy one, hath become a new Pool of Siloam for those who approach it with faith, pouring forth healing of bodily infirmities and the passions of men's souls; wherefore, assembling today, we celebrate thy holy memory, glorifying our one God. (Twice)

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., Sessional hymn from the Pentecostarion; or this Theotokion, in Tone I:

In the midst of the tribunal, O Mother of God, the crowned John splendidly confessed thee to be the true Theotokos, who hast given birth to One of the Trinity yet didst remain a virgin; wherefore, O most hymned one, entreat thy Son and God with him, that He grant us forgiveness of sins.

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

Spec. Mel.: "Awed by the beauty of thy virginity ...":

Thou hast been given to us by God as one more beautiful than gold and topaz, O most honorable John, drawing the eyes of the minds and hearts of all to an understanding of the wonders of thy sufferings; wherefore, we cry out to thee with love: Rejoice, O our most radiant boast! (Twice)

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., Sessional hymn from the Pentecostarion; or this Theotokion, in the same tone:

Awed by the beauty of thy virginity * and the exceeding radiance of thy purity, * Gabriel called out unto thee, O Theotokos: * What worthy hymn of praise can I offer unto thee? * And what shall I name thee? * I am in doubt and stand in awe. * Wherefore as commanded, I cry to thee: ** Rejoice, O Full of Grace.

Polyeleos, and this magnification: We magnify thee, O passion-bearer and great-martyr John, and we reverence thine honored sufferings, which thou didst endure for Christ.

Selected Psalm verse:

A: Our God is refuge and strength.

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

After the Polyeleos, this Sedalion, in Tone IV: Spec. Mel.: "Joseph marveled ...":

The tyrant was amazed, beholding the supra-natural endurance which thou didst show; the angels received thee, placing crowns upon thy head; and the demons were put to shame by thy valor: for they thought to lay thee low by blandishments, but were vanquished by thee and fell headlong. And the faithful have been made steadfast by thy confession. O Thou Who strengthened the martyr then, enlighten our souls! (Twice)

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., the Sedalion from the Pentecostarion; or this Theotokion, in the same tone:

Joseph marveled, beholding that which transcendeth nature, and pondering thy seedless conception he dwelt in thought upon the dew which fell upon the fleece, the bush unconsumed by the fire, and the rod of Aaron which put forth branches. And thy guardian and betrothed cried out to the priests: "The Virgin giveth birth, and even after birthgiving remaineth virgin!"

Song of Ascents, the first antiphon of Tone IV:

Prokeimenon, in Tone IV: The righteous man shall be glad in the Lord, * and shall hope in Him.

Verse: Harken, O God, unto my prayer, when I make supplications unto Thee.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE, §106

The Lord said to His disciples: "Beware of men: they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake. And it shall turn to you for a testimony. Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for My name's sake. But there shall not an hair of your head perish. In your patience possess ye your souls."

After Psalm 50, this Sticheron, in Tone VI:

Today the Church holdeth festival, adorning herself with the struggles of the passion-bearer as with most costly vesture; crying aloud and offering praise: "Such are

mine offspring, such are my children, to whom I first gave birth through baptism, and reared in the fear of the Lord, and now behold as martyrs, truly chosen and crowned, that they may pray to the Lord on behalf of the whole world!"

Canon of the most holy Theotokos, with 6 Troparia, including the Irmos; and that of the great-martyr, with 8 Troparia.

ODE I

Canon to the Theotokos, the acrostic whereof is: "I chant praise unto the Life-bearing Maiden," in Tone II:

Irmos: Traversing dryshod the impassible, peculiar path in the sea, * Israel the chosen cried aloud: * Let us chant unto the Lord, * for He hath been glorified!

The immaterial ladder of old and the path of the sea made strangely firm revealed thy birthgiving, O pure one. Her do we all hymn, for she hath been glorified!

The power of the Most High, the perfect Hypostasis, the Wisdom of God incarnate of thee, O most pure one, hath conversed with mankind, for He hath been glorified!

The Sun of thy righteousness hath passed through the impassible door of thy locked womb, O pure one, and shone forth upon the world, for He hath been glorified!

Canon of the Great-martyr, the acrostic whereof is "I offer new praise unto the new martyr Gregory", in Tone IV:

Irmos: I shall open my mouth, * and the Spirit will inspire it, * and I shall utter the words of my song to the Queen and Mother: * I shall be seen radiantly keeping feast * and joyfully praising her wonders.

O blessed John, newly revealed martyr, thou wast made manifest to the world in the latter times; wherefore, by thy grace grant me discourse, that I may worthily hymn thy struggles.

Standing at the tribunal, with noetic eyes thou didst gaze upon the honorable company of the martyrs, who joyfully called to thee, O John, and adorned thee with fitting crowns.

By the right wondrous war-craft of thy soldiery we have obtained victories over the nature of the tyrant; for, put utterly to shame, he doth no longer dare to resume his tyrannical deeds.

Arrayed in the breastplate of the confession of the Faith, and wearing the most splendid helmet of grace, O John, with thy divinely eloquent tongue as with a sword thou didst hew down the mindless governor.

Theotokion: The most lofty mountain, which Daniel beheld, prefigured thee, from whom the Stone was quarried not by the hands of men, O Theotokos; for without the aid of a man thou hast given birth in the flesh to Emmanuel, for our sake.

ODE III

Canon of the Theotokos

Irmos: **T**he bow of the mighty hath been broken * by Thy might, O Christ, * and the enfeebled * have girded themselves with power.

Let us hymn the womb which is far more spacious than the heavens, through which Adam hath come to make his abode in the heavens, rejoicing.

Canon of the Great-martyr

Irmos: **O** Theotokos, thou living and plentiful fount, * grant strength to those united in spiritual fellowship, * who sing hymns of praise to thee: * and in thy divine glory * grant unto them crowns of glory.

Thou wast tried by torments like precious gold, O glorious spiritual athlete, offering thyself to the King of hosts as the true fruits of discourse, slaughtered by the sword instead of by the altar's fire.

The lawless Jews who slew the prophets were not content with slaying the Master and Lord so long ago, but running forth they slaughtered the martyr who was pitilessly dragged along by the servants of ungodliness.

The governor spread out his nets, seeking to lure the most wise spiritual athlete into his snares with cunning words; but he cried out to him: "Cease thy many blasphemous sayings, for I will not worship a created thing rather than the Creator!"

The shrine of thy relics hath been revealed to be a fruitful olive-tree in the midst of the church of the living God, from which we who have been enriched by thee and adorned by thy miracles, pluck the healing of divers infirmities.

Theotokion: **T**he divine Ezekiel said: "The gate shall be shut." And this hath been fulfilled in thee, O Sovereign Lady; for the Word of the Father ineffably entered into thee and from thee appeared unto the world, O Virgin, clad in flesh, preserving thee in both maternity and virginity.

Kontakion & Ikos from the Pentecostarion.

Sedalion of the great-martyr, in Tone VIII: Spec. Mel.: "Of the Wisdom ...":

Thou wast a lover of wisdom, O treasury of the virtues, from whence thou didst draw forth divine understanding; wherefore, when the time came, thou didst eagerly strip thyself naked for the contest, accepting the wounds of martyrdom, the laceration of thy flesh and the outpouring of thy blood; and dwelling now with the martyrs in ineffable light, we cry aloud to thee; entreat Christ God, that He grant remission of sins unto those who with faith venerate thy holy relics. (Twice)

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., from the Pentecostarion; or this Theotokion, in Tone VIII:

I ponder the judgment, and I am afraid; I tremble before the dread trial, and am terrified of torment, the pain of the fire, the darkness and Tartar. Alas! What shall I do? How can I endure the shame when the scrolls are unwound and my deeds laid

bare? Wherefore, I fall down before thee, O most pure Theotokos. Stand before me then, and rescue me from such violence, for thee do I have as a refuge, O Sovereign Lady!

ODE IV

Canon to the Theotokos

Irmos: I have heard, O Lord, * of Thy glorious dispensation, * and I have glorified, * Thine unapproachable power, O Lover of mankind.

Behold! the supremely manifest Mother of God, the divine mountain of the house of the Lord, is exalted far above the hosts of heaven.

O Virgin, who, outside the laws of nature, hast given birth unto the Ruler of creation; thou alone hast been deemed worthy of such a divine calling.

Canon of the Great-martyr

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

The tongue of the tyrant was a hook of deception dangled by the craftiness of the enemy, whose purpose was to capture the brave-hearted one; but its intention was annulled, and foiled when the spiritual athlete cried out in joy: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

"What is it to me, these many words and corrupt promises, mindlessly made by thee?" John cried out to the tyrant; "All these things are more bitter than gall to me, I rather cry out sweetly: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!"

"When many wounds blossom forth on my flesh, then shall I hope to be granted a most splendid crown," the spiritual athlete said to the Persian; "Touch me not again, O thou evil minded one, for I cry aloud: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!"

"In nowise shall I obey thee, seeking to draw me into perdition," John exclaimed to the worshipper of fire, "I would rather readily die for Him Who died for me, that with the martyrs I may cry out with splendor: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!"

Theotokion: **O**f old, Israel's crossing of the Red Sea prefigured thy birth giving which was without knowing a man, O Queen of all; for as it once passed over without getting wet, so did Christ seedlessly issue forth from thy most pure blood, O Virgin.

ODE V

Canon of the Theotokos

Irmos: The burning Ember was revealed to Isaiah, * and the Sun hath shone forth from the Virgin's womb, * granting the enlightenment of the knowledge of God * to those who in darkness have gone astray.

Clouds of light rain down delight upon those who are on earth, for unto us hath a Child been given, Who hath existed from before the ages: our God, Who hath assumed flesh from the Virgin.

Light hath shone forth upon my life and my flesh, and hath destroyed the gloom of sin: He is the most Exalted One, Who in the latter days was seedlessly incarnate from the Virgin.

Canon of the Great-martyr

Irmos: All creation stands in awe of thy divine glory; * for thou, O Virgin who hast not known wedlock, * didst contain within thy womb Him Who is the God of all; * and giving birth to the timeless Son, * thou grantest peace unto all who hymn thee.

They who beat thy martyric flesh grew exhausted, and the tyrant, seeking vengeance, grew weary; but the martyr endured valiantly, covered with wounds which he endured out of love for his Lord.

How awesome and glorious was thine opposition, which amazed the peoples who attended thy contest, so that they praised thy patience; but the Persians and the Jews, put to shame, were clothed in humiliation.

Multitudes stood round about, looking upon what was taking place, O glorious one, and the tyrant, taking his seat, hoped to win thee over; but the mindless one was deprived of his hope, Seeking in vain to convert the undaunted one, and beating the adamant one to no effect.

The divine John, reviling the mindless edict of the ungodly governor, denounced the error of Persian arrogance, saying: "I will not worship the sun, for it is a created thing, and worshipping it doth enslave men, since it is only one of the great works of the hands of God!"

Theotokion: God the Word, Who on high is equally co-eternal with God the Father, and as both God and man with us, hath come down to our lowliness, O Theotokos. Wherefore, I have been freed of the curse of mine ancestors, as beheld by the Patriarch Jacob, who perceived thee as the ladder of heaven.

ODE VI

Canon of the Theotokos

Irmos: O Master, hearkening unto the sound of entreaties * from a soul in pain, * do Thou deliver me from my grievous sins, * for Thou alone art the Cause of our salvation.

Human nature, enslaved to sin, hath obtained freedom through thee, O pure Lady; for thy Son hath been sacrificed like a lamb.

We all cry out to thee, the true Mother of God: Save thou thy servants, the objects of wrath, for thou alone hast boldness before thy Son.

Canon of the Great-martyr

Irmos: As we celebrate this sacred and solemn feast of the Theotokos, * let us come, clapping our hands, * O people of the Lord, * and glorify God who was born of her.

In nowise could the savagery of him who issued the command, nor the beating with staves, nor wounds, nor a most violent death, shake the pillars of thy piety.

The purity of thy mind was likened to the eyes of a cherub, for thou didst manfully endure tortures below, but on high hast come to stand before the Master, Who sent down upon thee a crown of victory,

The choirs of the martyrs leapt up in splendor when they beheld thy boldness; and, descending with the angels, they invisibly strengthened thee for the contest,

O John, thou excellent spiritual athlete, thou didst consider thine iron chains to be golden necklaces, and the stones which the Jews flung at thee to be steps leading up to heaven,

Theotokion: Gideon accepted the dewy fleece as an image prefiguring thy wonder, O Theotokos, for One of the Trinity, assuming flesh, descended into thy womb, like the dew upon the fleece.

Kontakion, in Tone IV: Spec. Mel.: "O Thou who wast lifted up ...":

Plying the deep of the sea for trade, * thou didst set out from the East for the North; * but when God called thee, as He did Matthew the tax-collector, * thou didst forsake thy trade and follow Him * by the blood of martyrdom, * exchanging transitory things for those which are eternal; ** thus receiving a crown of victory.

Ikos: The most wise Creator and Master, the Owner of the noetic vineyard, as He said in the parable of the vineyard with His own mouth, hath rendered the same payment to those who worked from the eleventh hour as He gave to those who worked from the first, And now, by His works, He hath disclosed what was hidden in the parable, showing forth John, the radiant martyr, who finally appeared after more than a thousand years, glorifying him with incorruption and the gift of healings, like unto the passion-bearers of old. For exchanging transitory things for those which are eternal, he hath received a crown of victory

ODE VII

Canon of the Theotokos

Irmos: Of old the youths revealed themselves to be rhetors * with a love for supreme wisdom, * for from the depths of their God-pleasing souls, * they theologized with their lips as they sang: * O supremely divine God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

At night Jacob beheld God as in a dream, and that He was to become incarnate of thee, manifesting Himself in splendor unto those who chant: O supremely divine God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

He Who wrestled with Jacob, prefiguring the ineffable union in thee, O pure one, willingly uniting Himself to mankind, is the supremely divine God of our fathers!

The vile one who had not proclaimed Thee, the Son of the Virgin, to be One of the all-hymned Trinity, cried out with steadfast thought and with his tongue: Most blessed is the supremely divine God of our fathers!

Canon of the Great-martyr

Irmos: **T**he holy children bravely trampled upon the threatening fire, * refusing to worship created things in place of the Creator, * and they sang in joy: * 'Blessed art Thou and praised above all, * O Lord God of our Fathers.'

O right wondrous John, thou didst consider the sufferings to which thou wast subjected to be like the darts of children, and didst chant in joy: O all-hymned Lord and God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Stretching forth his hand often toward the tyrant, John said: "Why dost thou exert thyself in vain, O shameless one? For in torturing me thou adornest my vesture, and makest death a crown of incorruption for me!"

"I am a true martyr of Christ our true God," the spiritual athlete cried; "for I consider flaying to be blossoms of sweet fragrance and the streams of my blood to be the laver of baptism."

"My life in the flesh do I hold to be as night," John reasoned wisely; "wherefore, sever this bond quickly, that I may inherit life with Christ!"

Theotokion: **E**ven the tongue of a rhetor falleth mute and silent when he seeth thee, O divinely joyous one; for he cannot comprehend the ineffable birthgiving of thine unapproachable conception.

ODE VIII

Canon of the Theotokos

Irmos: **D**isdaining the golden image, the thrice-blessed children, * beholding the immutable and living image of God, * chanted in the midst of the flame: * Let all existing creation hymn the Lord * and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

He that is incomparable in grace and might hath become visible on earth through thee and dwelt among mankind. Chanting unto Him, O all ye faithful, let us cry aloud: Let all existing creation hymn the Lord and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

Truly proclaiming thee the pure one we glorify thee, O Theotokos, for thou didst give birth to the One of the Trinity Who became incarnate. And to Him, with the Father and the Spirit, we sing: Let all existing creation hymn the Lord and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

Canon of the Great-martyr

Irmos: The Offspring of the Theotokos * saved the holy children in the furnace. * He who was then prefigured hath since been born on earth, * and he gathers all creation to sing: * O all ye works of the Lord, praise ye the Lord and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages.

Kings have called thee blessed and hierarchs have blessed thee, on hearing of thy manly endurance, acquiring thee as a mediator before Christ; and approaching thy precious relics, they bow down before them.

Once the nations and lawless people raged against Christ the Lord, imagining vain things; and now the Persians have gathered together, flaying John, while the Jews slew him.

The incorporeal serpent was seized and held fast by thee, and utterly cast down by thine endurance in the flesh; and thou didst quench his might and cruel tyranny for Christ Who clothed Himself in the flesh.

Boasting in the wounds of Christ, thou didst hasten to the eternal mansions; and clothed in a robe empurpled by thy blood, O martyr, thou standest in radiance before the King of hosts joining chorus with the martyrs.

Theotokion: **O**f old, a burning coal was sent to Isaiah, borne on tongs by a seraph, and when it touched him it remitted his sins. And thou O Virgin, art the tongs which have borne the divine Word unto the remission of the sins of mankind.

ODE IX

Canon of the Theotokos

Irmos: Thou art all desire, Thou art all sweetness, * O Word of God, Son of the Virgin, * God of gods, most holy Lord of the saints. * Wherefore, we magnify Thee * and her who hath given birth to Thee.

In thy womb, O pure one, the Word of God was given to corruptible nature as a staff of strength. And He restored what had been dragged down to Hades. Wherefore, we magnify thee, O most pure one, as the Theotokos.

O Master, mercifully accept Thy Mother as an intercessor on our behalf, as Thou hast willed, and all things shall be filled with Thy goodness, that we all may magnify Thee as our Benefactor.

Canon of the Great-martyr

Irmos: Let every mortal born on earth, * radiant with light, in spirit leap for joy; * and let the host of the angelic powers * celebrate and honor the holy feast of the Mother of God, * and let them cry: Rejoice! * Pure and blessed Ever-Virgin, * who hast given birth to God.

Thou wast a true warrior of the preaching of Christ, O John, and a destroyer of the deception of ungodliness. Wherefore, by thy supplications suppress now the uprisings of the barbarians, casting them down beneath the feet of the pious, O glorious one.

Even though thy flesh was cut away and thy blood shed, O wise one, trophies of victory were bestowed on thee; wherefore, by thy power put to shame those who rise up against us, and show forth our civil authorities as victors.

Thou didst break the bow unjustly aimed at thy heritage, which thou didst choose and love, O invincible warrior, and hast made firm the rule of our civil authorities, that we may live our lives in peace and tranquility.

Thy radiant and honorable memorial for which we have longed, have we received and embraced, rejoicing in spirit; and leaping up, O blessed one, we pray: The place and the people where thou wast pleased to be glorified, and our civil authorities, do thou maintain unharmed.

Theotokion: **T**hrough thee, O Theotokos, have we seen Him Whom all the prophets proclaimed in many ways, incarnate for our sake: the perfect God Who hath delivered mankind from the curse of our ancestors. By thy supplications may we be delivered from everlasting Gehenna.

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

Standing before the never-waning Light with the choirs of the martyrs, O blessed one, by thy supplications save from temptations those who hymn thee on thy memorial. **(Twice)**

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., Exapostilarion from the Pentecostarion, or this Theotokion:

O Ever-virgin, thou litter bearing the never-waning Light Who enlighteneth those who sit in the darkness of the deception of ignorance: Shine the light of thy Son also upon us sinners.

On the Praises, if this date fall within the fifty-day period following Pascha: 6 Stichera: 3 from the Pentecostarion, and 3 of the great-martyr, in Tone I: Spec. Mel.: "O all-praised martyrs ...". But if this date falls outside the fifty-day period after Pascha, we chant 4 Stichera of the great-martyr, chanting the first Sticheron twice:

O all-praised John, neither the savagery of the tyrant, nor his words of blandishment, nor the threat of tortures, nor bitter floggings, separated thee from Christ, Whom thou hadst loved from childhood. Unto Him do thou pray, that He grant our souls peace and great mercy. **(Twice)**

"For me naught is sweeter, nor are fleeting glory or corrupt riches to be preferred to Christ, the King of heaven!" thus didst thou say to those who tortured thee, O John. Him do thou beseech, that He grant our souls peace and great mercy.

In the latter years the most noble martyr became a model of martyrdom, setting the souls of those who love God aflame with zeal through the most noetically rich glory of his sufferings; and he entreateth Christ, that He grant our souls peace and great mercy.

Glory ..., in Tone II:

Come, ye who love the martyrs, and let us noetically delight today in the banquet of the Spirit which the martyr John hath set forth for us, and in which the angels likewise delight, as the prophet said: "I have eaten the bread of angels!" With them he abideth in spirit, begging Christ the Savior to grant remission of sins unto us who celebrate his honored memorial.

Now & ever ..., from the Pentecostarion, or this Theotokion, in the same tone:

All of my hope do I place in thee, ** O Mother of God; keep me under thy protection.

Great Doxology. Troparia. Litanies. Dismissal. First Hour.

AT LITURGY

On the Beatitudes, 8 Troparia: If this date fall within the fifty-day period following Pascha: 4 from the Pentecostarion, and 4 from Ode VI of the canon of the saint. But if this date fall after the fifty-day period following Pascha, 4 from Ode III and 4 from Ode VI of the canon of the saint, given below.

Thou wast tried by torments like precious gold, O glorious athlete, and didst offer thyself to the King of hosts as the true fruits of discourse, slaughtered by the sword instead of by the altar's fire.

The lawless Jews who slew the prophets were not content with slaying the Master and Lord so long ago, but running forth they slaughtered the martyr who was pitilessly dragged along by the servants of ungodliness.

The governor spread out his nets, seeking to lure the most wise spiritual athlete into his snares with cunning words; but he cried out to him: "Cease thy many blasphemous sayings, for I will not worship a created thing rather than 'the Creator!'"

The shrine of thy relics hath been shown to be a fruitful olive-tree in the midst of the church of the living God, and therefrom we who have been enriched by thee and adorned by thy miracles pluck the healing of divers infirmities.

In nowise did the savagery of him who issued the command, nor beating with staves, nor wounds, nor a most violent death, shake the pillars of thy piety.

The purity of thy mind was like unto the eyes of a cherub, for thou didst manfully endure tortures below, but on high hast come to stand before the Master, Who sent down upon thee a crown of victory,

The choirs of the martyrs leapt up in splendor when they beheld thy boldness; and, descending with the angels, they invisibly strengthened thee for the contest,

Theotokion: **G**ideon accepted the dewy fleece as an image prefiguring thy wonder, O Theotokos, for One of the Trinity, incarnate, descended into thy womb, like dew upon the fleece.

Troparion of the great-martyr, in Tone IV:

Haying sustained well thy life on earth with almsgiving, * and frequent prayers and tears, * O spiritual athlete, thou didst manfully hasten to suffering, * and denounce the ungodliness of the Persians; * wherefore, thou hast become a firm foundation for the Church * and the boast of Christians, ** O ever-memorable John.

Kontakion of the great-martyr, in Tone IV:

Plying the deep of the sea for trade, * thou didst set out from the East for the North; * but when God called thee, as He did Matthew the tax-collector, * thou didst forsake thy trade and follow Him * by the blood of martyrdom, * exchanging transitory things for those which are eternal; ** thus receiving a crown of victory.

Prokeimenon, in Tone VII: The righteous man shall be glad in the Lord, * and shall hope in Him.

Verse: Hearken, O God, unto my prayer, when I make supplication unto Thee.

EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS, §233

Brethren: Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Alleluia in Tone IV: The righteous cried, and the Lord heard them, and He delivered them out of all their tribulations.

Verse: Many are the tribulations of the righteous, and the Lord shall deliver them out of them all.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW, §36

The Lord said to His disciples: "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for My sake, for a testimony against them and the gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for My name's sake: but he who endureth to the end shall be saved."

Communion Verse: In everlasting remembrance shall the righteous be; he shall not be afraid of evil tidings.