

THE 14th DAY OF THE MONTH OF AUGUST
FOREFEAST OF THE DORMITION OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS
COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY PROPHET MICAH
AT VESPERS

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

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

Let us sound the cymbals, * let us cry out in hymns, * celebrating the feast of the Virgin's departure; * and let us radiantly cry aloud the funeral hymn, * for the Mother of God, the ark all of gold, * bound for splendor, * maketh ready today * to pass over from earth to the heavens, * to a new and divine life.

O choir of the apostles, * assemble today most gloriously from the ends of the earth, * for the animate city * of Him Who is Lord over all * departeth gloriously from the earth to that which is higher, * to join chorus with the King, her Son. * With the heavenly armies * chant ye the hymns of parting with oneness of mind, * for her divine burial.

Come ye now forth beforehand, * O company of priests, * ye kings and princes, * together with the ranks of the virgins! * Assemble together, all ye people, * sending up funeral hymns! * For she who is Sovereign Lady over all, * bound for the mansions of heaven, * desireth to commit her soul into the hands of her Son on the morrow.

And 3 Stichera of the prophet, in the same tone:

Spec. Mel.: "Thou hast given a sign ...":

Showing forth most exalted divine knowledge, * thou didst proclaim * the manifest and lofty mountain: * the preaching of the Savior * which would be revealed at the peak of the mountains, * to which the nations, hastening with faith, * earnestly have recourse, * and who learn the ways of the Lord, * and who are saved with eternal salvation.

With a divinely inspired tongue thou didst prophesy: * the Prince, Whose comings forth are truly from everlasting, * doth issue forth * and shepherd His people, * coming forth out of Bethlehem, * O Micah, wondrous among the prophets. * And beholding thy prophecy now fulfilled, * with divine wisdom we glorify * Him of Whom thou didst speak.

Standing before the throne of God, * O most honored prophet, * deemed worthy of joy, * beholding glory, * and delighting in divine food, * full of spiritual gladness and joy, * look down now upon those who celebrate thy memory, * delivering them from dangers * by thine unceasing supplications.

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

O most holy and pure Virgin, we, the multitude of angels in the heavens and the race of mankind on earth, call thy most honored dormition blessed, in that thou wast the Mother of Christ, the Creator and God of all. Cease not, we pray, to entreat Him on behalf of us who have set our hope on thee and God, O most hymned Theotokos who knewest not wedlock.

At the Aposticha, these Stichera, in Tone II:

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

O new wonder! * O strange sign! * O life-bearing Maiden, * how art thou taken by death ** and art now covered by the grave?

Verse: Arise, O Lord, into Thy rest, * Thou and the ark of Thy holiness.

Let all mortal nature * join in chorus! * For, behold! the Virgin, * the daughter of Adam, ** is translated to the heavens.

Verse: The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David, * and He will not annul it.

Let me envision in mind * the bier of the Virgin, * magnificently surrounded * by the choir of the apostles ** chanting funeral hymnody.

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., the composition of Anatolius, in Tone II:

She who is more exalted than the heavens, more glorious than the cherubim and more honorable than all creation, who because of her exceedingly great purity, became the receptacle of the ever-existing Essence, committeth today her all-holy soul into the hands of her Son. In her are all things filled with joy, and He granteth us great mercy.

Troparion, in Tone IV:

Leap up in anticipation, O ye people, * clapping your hands with faith, * and assemble with love, * all rejoicing today and exclaiming with splendor; * for the Mother of God, whom we ever glorify with hymns * as the Theotokos, ** will gloriously pass over from those on earth to those on high.

AT MATINS

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

Spec. Mel.: "Joseph marveled ...":

O thou who art more spacious than the heavens, who hast given birth in the flesh to the Creator of all: having appeared on earth thou art now translated from the earth to the very heavens. And the souls of the righteous and the choirs of the angels, gazing upon thee, ever offer thee praise, as is meet for a Queen. Wherefore, cease thou never to pray for those who hymn thee.

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

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

Spec. Mel.: "The Word co-beginningless ...":

Multitudes of angels glorify thee, and the human race sings hymns of the forefeast unto thee, for thou hast been translated from the earth unto Him Who was born of thee, O pure Virgin Theotokos, and dost make earnest supplication, that those who celebrate thy repose with faith be delivered from misfortunes.

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

Canon of the forefeast, with 8 Troparia, including its Irmos.

And that of the prophet, with 4 Troparia.

ODE I

Canon of the Forefeast, in Tone V:

Irmos: Christ, who with an upraised arm * bringeth wars to naught, * hath shaken horse and rider in the Red Sea; * but Israel hath He saved * as they chanted a song of victory.

Let us approach the tomb which received the Virgin, O ye faithful, hastening to receive divine fragrance; for therein hath been poured the wafting fragrance of the phial, which perfumeth the souls of all.

Sion is set apart from other mountains; and the animate Sion hath come to rest in the Garden of Gethsemane, having assented that our immortal God rest in her incorrupt womb, in that she is animate.

O ye mouths of the apostles, having sounded the trumpets of God-bearing peoples, cry ye out with a loud voice: "Ye powers, open the gates! Receive the Queen into the highest!"

How can death lay hold of the all-immaculate one who, in a manner transcending nature, hath manifestly given birth to everlasting Life? But the Master, having rejected this, hath translated thee to the haven of heaven.

Canon of the Prophet

Irmos: Having passed through the water as upon dry land, * and having escaped the malice of the Egyptians, * the Israelites cried aloud: * Unto our God and Redeemer let us sing.

As a truly clear divine mirror of divine things, O blessed one, thou standest before the Creator. Him do thou beseech, that He save from misfortunes those who hymn thee with faith.

Full of spiritual understanding and the wisdom of God, O most excellent Micah, as a pure intelligence thou didst learn the things of the future.

Piously proclaiming thy prophecy, O blessed one, thou didst say that the Lord would appear on earth from heaven, recording His appearance unto us.

Theotokion: **H**e Who was known before time began, O Mother of God, hath appeared on earth in the latter days assuming flesh, delivering those who before were made captive.

ODE III

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: By Thy command Thou didst establish the earth upon nothing * * and suspended it unsupported; * do Thou establish Thy Church on the unshakeable rock of Thy commandments, O Christ, * who alone art good * and the Lover of mankind.

Let us now send up funeral hymns to the pure one, the Theotokos who gave birth to the Creator, and, rejoicing, with the incorporeal armies let us surround her life-bearing bier as though it were a divine and holy throne.

Shedding tears with faithful hearts, come ye, let us touch her incorrupt body, the life-bestowing, divine and ever-flowing fountain, gazing upon it with our eyes as it lieth, laid out and enshrouded.

O divine and right noble habitation of God, true seat and animate city of the true King of all, through thy memorial grant forgiveness of all our sins, and save us from misfortunes.

Canon of the Saint

Irmos: O Lord, thou art the confirmation of those who flee to Thee, * Thou art the Light of those in darkness, * and my spirit hymns Thee.

Thy tongue became a pen of the divine Spirit, whereby thou hast revealed to us the fulfillment of things to come.

Thou didst indicate that the pre-eternal Prince, the Savior and Director of all, would become incarnate in Bethlehem.

Illumined with prophetic enlightenment, O glorious prophet, thou wast for us an excellent instructor in the mysteries of things which pass understanding.

Theotokion: Thou wast a most manifest mountain, O most pure one, whereon the Lord, having ascended it, revealed Himself, and to which we now have recourse.

Sedalion of the saint, in Tone I: Spec. Mel.: "Thy tomb, O Savior ...":

With thine understanding enlightened by the Holy Spirit, O wise one, thou didst openly prophesy things to come, making clear the incomprehensible, O Micah most noetically rich; for thou didst prophesy that Christ, the Prince and Leader Who doth shepherd His people, would come forth from Bethlehem.

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

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

Ye virgin maidens, sing in anticipation! Ye mothers, give praise, and chant ye all a song of parting, celebrating beforehand, in godly manner, the dormition of the Virgin, the Mother of the Lord, with hymns of divine beauty; for she is to be gloriously translated to the heavens.

ODE IV

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: Habbakuk, prophetically apprehending * Thy divine self-emptying, O Christ, * cried out to Thee with trembling: * Thou hast come for the salvation of Thy people; * to save Thine anointed Ones.

The choirs of heaven rejoice and prepare to receive the pure Mother of God, the Queen Who in piety hath dominion over all creatures.

Let the air-borne evil spirits withdraw; and let the prince of this world recoil and fall back confounded, beholding the Mother of God borne aloft.

No longer is the ark of the covenant carried by priests symbolically, in an indistinct image: the Mother of God is borne in truth by the holy apostles.

O turtle-dove of Solomon, beauteous, comely and most precious, having fallen asleep in a place of divine rest, thou hast found repose among the immutable treasures of life.

Canon of the Saint

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

Illumined from on high with the splendors of divine inspiration, O right glorious one, thou didst proclaim things to come as though thou didst behold them in the present.

The law went forth out of Sion as Thou didst foretell, O blessed of God, and hath continued to the ends of the earth, proclaiming the Word of the Lord.

The Lord of all appeared in the house of Jacob to exercise dominion, and as a shepherd He tendeth His people in the glory of His name, O all-blessed one.

Theotokion: **T**he Mother of God the Creator is believed to be the descendent of David; wherefore, she hath ineffably given birth to Him when He took flesh from her.

ODE V

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: **O** Thou Who hast clothed Thyself in light as with a garment, * I rise early unto Thee and cry out to Thee: * Enlighten my darkened soul, O Christ, * in that Thou alone art compassionate!

On Mount Sinai Thou didst animate the pure and divine habitation of the most holy Spirit, and in a manner transcending nature enlightened all creation.

Thou wast the dwelling-place of all divinity; wherefore, the Godhead hath transported thee from the earth to the heavens, utterly and wholly, O Mother and Theotokos.

Jesus, the supremely divine Lord of glory, Who, in His tender compassion, was born of thy womb, hath Himself translated thee from the earth, soul and body, O Mother of God.

Canon of the Saint

Irmos: **R**ising early we cry to Thee, O Lord; * save us, for Thou art our God, * and we know none other besides Thee.

Thou didst love to follow after the Lord, O most wise one, ever ready to tread His paths.

Thou didst understand that salvation would come to all nations from the Jews, O wondrous one.

Beholding grace, thou didst proclaim it, O divinely revealed one; and flocks of the gentiles have recourse unto it and are saved.

Theotokion: **T**hou wast the place of the Lord, O Mother of God, from whence He issued forth, delivering the world from deception.

ODE VI

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: **C**alm the raging sea of the passions, * O Master Christ, * with its soul-destroying tempest, * and lead me up from corruption * in that Thou art compassionate.

With the angels, archangels, authorities, principalities, thrones and powers, let us make haste to Sion and behold the great wonder.

How can corrupt death lay hold of her who is the Mother of Life, and who hath been untainted by any corruption? Truly beyond nature are thy mysteries, O pure Virgin!

Light ye as many lamps as possible, O people of Sion, and come, let us go forth to meet in Gethsemane her who hath been wrapped in light; and let us accompany her with hymns.

Canon of the Saint

Irmos: **O** Thou that putteth on light as a garment * grant me also a robe of light, * **O All-merciful Christ, our God.**

Obedient to the laws of God, preserving the law thou didst denounce all who violated them, O most glorious one.

O godly Micah, honored instrument of the Spirit: by thine entreaties preserve the faithful from misfortunes.

Theotokion: **T**hou hast founded the house of Judah, O Virgin, revealing Him Who shone forth from thy holy womb.

Kontakion of the forefeast, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: "Thou hast appeared today ...":

The universe, embroidered by the immaterial Spirit * for the sake of thy glorious memorial, * noetically crieth out to thee with gladness: * Rejoice, O Virgin, ** thou boast of Christians!

Ikos: **H**e Who splendidly assembled His divine apostles on clouds from the ends of the earth, to come to thy body, O pure one, revealed thee to all as the Theotokos, the awesome bridal-chamber supremely adorned; and, as thy Son and God, He took thy most pure soul in His hands and set it in paradise. For the tree of life is there, and mortals, eating thereof, have found immortality through thee. Wherefore, we also cry out to thee: Rejoice, O Virgin, thou boast of Christians!

ODE VII

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: **T**he supremely exalted Lord of our fathers * quenched the flame, * and bedewed the Youths * as they chanted in harmony: * **O God, blessed art Thou!**

O ye assemblies of priests, ye companies of the people, all ye maidens and virgins: joining chorus, hymn the divine repose of the Virgin!

O leaders of the law and grace, praise ye the dormition of the Theotokos, chanting and singing together: Blessed art Thou, O God!

Today is the most pure one, the holy of holies, the great and holy mountain, translated to Sion. To her do we cry aloud: Rejoice, O most immaculate one!

Canon of the Saint

Irmos: **The Children of Judaea, * who of old came to dwell in Babylon, * trampled underfoot the flame of the furnace * through their faith in the Trinity, * as they sang: 'O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou.'**

Thou didst show thyself to be most valiant and useful to the Master of all, denouncing the cruelty of the rulers, teaching and crying aloud, O right glorious one: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Shining with the beams of thy godly life, thou wast shown to be a most pure prophet of the manifestation of God, O blessed one, chanting: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Theotokion: **The Word, Whose power is equal to that of the Father and Who is the Father's peer, the blessed God of our fathers, by the Father's good pleasure is formed as a man in the Virgin's womb.**

ODE VIII

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: **Unto Thee the Fashioner of all, * the children in the furnace chanted a hymn: * All ye works of the Lord, * supremely exalt Him throughout all ages.**

O Virgin Queen of all women, bear thou to Christ the entreaty of those who lovingly celebrate this thy memorial and supremely exalt thee throughout all ages.

Thy sanctified countenance, made luminous by the beauty of the Godhead, shineth with the glory of thy divine virginity, which is utterly adorned throughout all ages, O most immaculate one.

I cannot speak of thy supremely great works. I tremble and am amazed, and am cast into confusion. Yet, beholding Him Who is Love, O Virgin, ever continually reward me with divine gifts.

Canon of the Saint

Irmos: **The instruments of music sounded out in harmony, * and countless multitudes worshipped the image in Dura; * but the three Children, refusing to bow in obeisance, * hymn and glorify the Lord throughout all ages.**

The Word of God, Who existeth from before time began, hath appeared, delivering the descendents of Adam, as the Prophet Micah foretold. Hymn the Lord and supremely exalt Him throughout the ages!

Noetically instructed, thou didst cry out: the Master, Who desireth to be merciful, in that such is His nature, taketh pity upon the unrighteous deeds of those who with faith hymn and supremely exalt Him throughout the ages.

Receiving the effulgence of God, thou wast shown to be like bright lightning, becoming like a clear mirror, O Micah, crying: Hymn the Lord and supremely exalt Him throughout the ages!

Theotokion: **H**aving Him Who was born of thee as our mighty consolation, O Virgin, like the apostles we cleave to the precious confession of the Faith, hymning the Lord and exalting Him supremely throughout the ages.

ODE IX

Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: **O** Isaiah, rejoice and be glad! * The Virgin hath conceived in her womb, * and hath borne a Son, Emmanuel, * who is both God and man; * and Orient is His name; * Him we magnify, and the Virgin we call blessed.

Right well hast thou been adorned as a bride, O Virgin Mother of God; for in thee the stumbling of Adam and the most destructive suasion of Eve have been set aright. Wherefore, with hymns we all unceasingly magnify thee.

Rightly doth God, as thy Master, give thee glory, O Virgin. But what shall we, who are wretched, offer to thee? Yet accept if only the zeal of those who with love honor thee as the Theotokos, and preserve us.

In that the Most High, having descended, issued forth from thy womb, O Virgin Bride of God, He hath visited us through thee. Emulating Him, from the mansions of heaven do thou visit those who hymn thee on the feast of thy memorial.

Grant victories over heresy to our Orthodox hierarchs, who hold thine honored burial as their sure confirmation and royally honor thy memory, O Mother of God, bringing the enemies of our Faith into submission.

Canon of the Saint

Irmos: **S**aved by thee, O pure Virgin, * we confess thee to be truly the Theotokos, * and together with the choirs of the bodiless hosts * thee do we magnify.

Shining with beams of piety and praying for the world, thou standest ever before the incorrupt and most pure Mind of God.

The splendid day of thy memorial hath dawned, O prophet, full of the gifts of prophecy, and pouring forth rivers of repentance.

Deified in a manner beyond understanding, O blessed one, thou dost delight in the gladness of the Savior Who came into the world in accordance with thy prophecy.

Theotokion: **A**s thou art more exalted and pure than all, in that thou didst conceive the supremely good God, wash away the defilement of my soul.

Exapostilarion of the forefeast:

Spec. Mel.: "The heaven with stars ...":

Angels and shepherds first hymned thy birthgiving, and now the ranks of the angels, the choir of the apostles and every nation hymn thy dormition, O Virgin.

Glory , Now & ever ...,

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

Celebrating the most splendid memory of thine honored dormition, O Theotokos, we chant with love: Departing to thy Son and Lord in thy glory, as thou art the most pure Mother pray for those Christians who hymn thee with faith.

At the Aposticha, these Stichera, in Tone VI:

Spec. Mel.: "On the third day ...":

Following the words of the divine Gabriel, we cry to thee: Rejoice, O pure one! And do thou, O most holy Mother of the Lord, be mindful of those who hymn thee as thou art translated unto Him.

Verse: Arise, O Lord, into Thy rest, * Thou and the ark of Thy holiness.

Through the Holy Spirit, the immeasurable wisdom of God hath of thee fashioned for Himself a temple past understanding, O Theotokos, and now hath translated thee to the immaterial mansions, O all-hymned one.

Verse: The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David, * and He will not annul it.

A slave, I now approach thee, the Mother of the God of all, praying to be delivered from all dangers. O Theotokos who reignest with thy Son, preserve thou the Christian race!

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., the composition of Germanus, in Tone III:

Come, all ye ends of the earth, let us praise the honored repose of the Mother of God; for she hath placed her immaculate soul in the hands of her Son. Wherefore, the world, with the incorporeal ones and the apostles, having found life through her holy dormition, doth celebrate it splendidly in psalms, hymns and spiritual odes.

AT LITURGY

On the beatitudes, 8 Troparia: from Odes III and VI of the canon of the forefeast.

Let us now send up funeral hymns to the pure one, the Theotokos who gave birth to the Creator, and, rejoicing, with the incorporeal armies let us surround her life-bearing bier as though it were a divine and holy throne. (Twice)

Shedding tears with faithful hearts, come ye, let us touch her incorrupt body, the life-bestowing, divine and ever-flowing fountain, gazing upon it with our eyes as it lieth, laid out and enshrouded.

O divine and right noble habitation of God, true seat and animate city of the true King of all, through thy memorial grant forgiveness of all our sins, and save us from misfortunes.

With the angels, archangels, authorities, principalities, thrones and powers, let us make haste to Sion and behold the great wonder. (Twice)

How can corrupt death lay hold of her who is the Mother of Life, and who hath been untainted by any corruption? Truly beyond nature are thy mysteries, O pure Virgin!

Light ye as many lamps as possible, O people of Sion, and come, let us go forth to meet in Gethsemane her who hath been wrapped in light; and let us accompany her with hymns.

After the Entrance: first, the Troparion of the temple, if it be dedicated to Christ; then that of the forefeast and that of the temple, if it be dedicated to a saint. Glory ..., the Kontakion of a temple of Christ; Now & ever ..., that of the forefeast.

Troparion of the forefeast, in Tone IV:

Leap up in anticipation, O ye people, * clapping your hands with faith, * and assemble with love, * all rejoicing today and exclaiming with splendor; * for the Mother of God, whom we ever glorify with hymns * as the Theotokos, ** will gloriously pass over from those on earth to those on high.

Kontakion of the forefeast, in Tone IV:

The universe, embroidered by the immaterial Spirit * for the sake of thy glorious memorial, * noetically crieth out to thee with gladness: * Rejoice, O Virgin, ** thou boast of Christians!

NOTE: If the forefeast of the dormition of the Theotokos fall on a Sunday, we chant the whole service of the forefeast together with that of the resurrection and that of the prophet, evening, morning and at liturgy, as is indicated for the forefeast of the transfiguration of Christ. Only at matins we chant the Irmoi: "All-adorned with divine

glory ..." [the Irmoi of the first canon of the feast of the Dormition]. At the entrance of liturgy, we chant: the Troparion of the resurrection, that of the forefeast, and that of the saint to whom the temple is dedicated. Then, the Kontakion of the resurrection; Glory ..., that of the saint to whom the temple is dedicated; Now & ever ..., that of the forefeast.