

THE 10th DAY OF THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER
AFTERFEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR MOST HOLY LADY THE THEOTOKOS
COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY MARTYRS MENODORA, METRODORA AND
NYMPHODORA
AT VESPERS

At "Lord, I have cried ...," six Stichera; three of the afterfeast, in Tone VIII:

Spec. Mel.: "O most glorious wonder ...":

O most glorious wonder! * How the Mother of God who tasted not of wedlock * today springeth forth * as a rod bearing a Flower, * from a childless and barren womb, * from the righteous Joachim and Anna! * Wherefore, the councils of the prophets * and the whole assembly of the patriarchs rejoice ** at her nativity.

Today David rejoiceth, * Jesse danceth, * Levi is magnified, * and the righteous Joachim leapeth up in spirit; * for the barrenness of Anna is manifestly loosed * by thy nativity, O pure Mary. * O thou who tasted not of wedlock, * the company of angels and all mortals ** call thy divine womb blessed!

Rejoice, O union of the earthly! * Rejoice, temple of the Lord! * Rejoice, unwedded Mother, * who hast most gloriously loosed the barrenness of Anna * and by thy nativity * hast poured forth remission of sins upon mortals! * Rejoice, O all-immaculate one! Rejoice, divine temple! * Rejoice, O tabernacle, ** wherein our Creator and Lord made His abode!

And three Stichera of the martyrs, in Tone IV:

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

Having adorned yourselves * with vesture empurpled with your blood, * O virgin maidens, * in your beauty ye united yourselves incorporeally * unto Christ our comely God * Who hath preserved your virginity undefiled * in the immortal bridal chamber of incorruption, * in the mansions of heaven, ** in a chamber not made by hands, O martyrs.

In imperfect bodies, * yet with a perfect mind, * ye vanquished the ancient serpent, * the author of evil, * with the power of the Spirit, O glorious ones, * and showed his might to be feeble. * Wherefore, ye have received crowns of victory, * O Menodora, Metrodora and Nymphodora, ** ye champions of the Trinity.

Though your members were twisted, * and ye were fed to the fire, * lacerated with iron claws, * hung upon a tree and beheaded by the sword, * ye did not deny Christ, O all-praised spiritual athletes. * Wherefore, ye have received crowns of victory, * O Menodora, Metrodora and Nymphodora, ** ye champions of the Trinity.

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

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 hath now been given unto us: Mary, the divine Maiden, who throweth open its gates unto all.

At the Aposticha, these Stichera of the feast, in Tone I:

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

Let the gate of the God-receiving temple be opened, * taking in today with glory * the temple and throne of the King * which Joachim bringeth, consecrating her to the Lord: * her who was taken from him ** to be the Mother of God.

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

In thy nativity, O most pure one, * noetic rays of universal joy * have shone forth upon the world, * proclaiming beforehand unto all Christ God, the Sun of glory; * for thou hast been revealed to be ** the mediatrix of true gladness and grace.

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

This, thy most precious glory, O pure one, * proclaimeth beforehand to all mankind * thy kindhearted beneficence; * for thou art the mediatrix of our present joy, * for by thy supplication thou hast been revealed to us ** as the cause of joy to come, O pure one.

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

The Queen of all who hath been foretold, the habitation of God, the divine dwelling place of the eternal Essence, hath come forth today from the barren womb of the glorious Anna, and by her, shameless Hades hath been trampled down, and Eve, the mother of our race, hath been led into everlasting life. To her let us cry aloud, as is meet: Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb!

Troparion of the feast, in Tone IV:

Thy nativity, O Virgin Theotokos, * hath proclaimed joy to all the world; * for from thee hath shone 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.

AT MATINS

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

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

Be thou magnified, O Judah, and let David be glad! Be thou renewed, O Adam, and let Levi be strengthened! For Christ hath been born to me through them. Strike thy harp, O psalmist, and proclaim who this is who hath been born, whom thou callest a daughter. She is the nurturer of our life, the Mother of Christ God.

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., and the above is repeated.

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

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

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

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., and the above is repeated.

The second canon of the Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady, with eight Troparia, including its Irmos; and that of the holy martyrs, with four Troparia.

ODE I

Canon of the Feast, in Tone VIII:

Irmos: To Him who crushed the enemy with His arm * and led Israel through the Red Sea, * to our Redeemer and our God let us sing, * for He hath been glorified.

She who is holy among the saints 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.

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

Aнна 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.

With hymns we all honor thee, the innocent ewe-lamb who hast been born of Anna and who through thy womb brought Christ the Lamb into our nature.

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

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.

Canon of the holy martyrs, the acrostic whereof is: "I honor the fervent sufferings of the three sisters,"; The composition of Joseph, 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 glorious martyrs, make supplication to the uncreated Trinity Whom ye preached, on behalf of us who now honor your divine sufferings and corrections O divinely blessed ones.

Protected by the divine weaponry of faith, the maidens scorned the words of the tyrant, and for the sake of the Life of all they submitted to the threefold waves of torments and to an unjust death.

Strengthened by the omnipotent power of the Creator, the most honored ones assumed a manly character, and with their feet they trampled upon the twisted and prideful serpent and cast him down to the ground.

Theotokion: With hymns we honor the pure Mary as an animate temple, an incorrupt tabernacle, the portal of heaven, the divine table, the palace and throne of the Master.

ODE III

Canon of the Feast

Irmos: My heart is established in the Lord, * my horn is exalted in my God, * my mouth is enlarged against mine enemies, * and I rejoice in Thy salvation.

Raised in the Holy of Holies, O most pure Virgin Theotokos, thou wast shown to be more exalted than all of creation, having given birth in the flesh unto the Creator.

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

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 a most pure Bloom.

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

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

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

Canon of the Martyrs

Irmos: Not in wisdom, nor in power do we glory, * but we glory in Thee O Christ, * the Hypostatic Wisdom of the Father, * for there is none more holy than Thee, O Lover of mankind.

Wounding thee cruelly, the all-iniquitous tormentor of our life, dead of mind, sought to force thee to renounce Christ, O martyr Menodora.

The tyrant took no pity on thee who lifted thine eyes to God, O martyr, but with an iron rod mercilessly broke thy members, thus weaving for thee an everlasting crown which withereth not away.

By your torments ye acquired treasure in the heavens and everlasting glory, O thrice rich holy martyrs, clearly drawing nigh unto God.

Theotokion: O pure Virgin who hast appeared, drive the darkness from my soul, burst the bonds of sin, and save me, O thou who hast given birth unto the most Compassionate One.

Kontakion, in Tone IV: Spec. Mel.: "Having been lifted up ...":

Clad as sisters in the Spirit, * and having contended with endurance for the Trinity, * ye vanquished the greatly cunning enemy; * wherefore, ye have made your abode with the five virgins * in the heavenly bridal chamber, O passion-bearers, ** and with the angels ye stand in unceasing gladness before the King of all.

Sedalion, in Tone IV: Spec. Mel.: "Joseph marveled ...":

The heavenly choirs of the incorporeal hosts marveled at your great patience; for, stripped naked, your members broken, enduring a bitter death, ye withstood all as though it were others suffering, thus crushing the apostate serpent with your feminine bodies, O virgin brides of the Bestower of life, champions of the Faith.

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., Sedalion of the Feast of Our Lady, in the same tone:

Today is Mary, the divine Maiden, born for us from the root of Jesse and the loins of David. All things rejoice with joy and are renewed. Rejoice together, O heaven and earth! Praise her, ye people of our native land! Joachim maketh merry, and Anna keepeth festival, crying aloud: A barren woman giveth birth to the Theotokos, the nurturer of our Life!

ODE IV

Canon of the Feast

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

The Patriarch Jacob, clearly foreseeing the mighty works of Thy dispensation, O Savior, 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.

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.

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 hast given birth to God, and the other as thine ancestor who proclaimed thy mighty deeds, O pure one.

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

Triadicon: **I** glorify God, the beginningless 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!

Theotokion: **T**he beginningless 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 everlasting with the Spirit, maintaining His divine dignity.

Canon of the Martyrs

Irmos: **S**eated 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!

Resplendent in the rays of the Cross, O ever-blessed Metrodora, bound to a tree thou didst endure torture by fire, quenching the burning coal of deception with the dew of the love of Christ.

Stretching forth thy thought towards the visions manifested to thee, and beholding thy Bridegroom of unimaginable comeliness, O ever-blessed Metrodora, beaten with iron rods thou didst valiantly endure the pangs of torture.

Ye have adorned yourselves and been radiantly glorified, O virgins, wholly loving the most glorious Word: for wounded by His love, ye steadfastly endured the assaults of suffering.

Theotokion: **E**nlive me who have been slain by the malice of the deceiver, O all-immaculate one who hast given birth unto Life, for to thee have I fled; and as thou art merciful, O all-immaculate one, raise me up who have fallen into the abyss of sin.

ODE V

Canon of the Feast

Irmos: **O** Lord our God, bestow Thy peace upon us; * O Lord our God, take us for Thy possession; * O Lord, besides Thee we know none other: * and we call upon Thy Name.

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

Let the angelic ranks be glad; let the descendants of Adam join chorus; for the rod who alone budded forth the Flower Christ, our Redeemer, hath been born.

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

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

Triadicon: **G**lory to Thee, O holy Father, unbegotten God! Glory to Thee, O timeless and only-begotten Son! Glory to Thee, O Spirit divine and co-enthroned, Who proceedest from the Father and retest in the Son!

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

Canon of the Martyrs

Irmos: **T**hou, O Lord, who camest into the world, * art my light, * a holy light turning from the darkness of ignorance * those who sing Thy praises in faith.

Showing forth steadfast behavior and insurmountable intent before the tribunal, the martyrs plaited a crown of victory for themselves.

Suspended, Nymphodora, who loveth the immortal Bridegroom, mightily endured laceration with iron claws.

With hymns let the divinely wise virgins be praised, the thrice-radiant lamps, the house of three chambers, the habitations of the Trinity.

Theotokion: **A**cquiring thee alone as elect, comely and immaculate, the supremely divine Word became incarnate from thee, O divinely joyous one.

ODE VI

Canon of the Feast

Irmos: **T**he billows of life trouble me like the waters of the sea, * O Lover of Mankind. * Wherefore, like Jonah I cry unto Thee, O Word: * Raise up my life from corruption, O compassionate Lord.

Thy chaste parents placed thee, who art holy among the saints, in the temple of the Lord, O pure one, to be raised with honor in preparation to become His Mother.

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

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.

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

Triadicon: **I**n thee, O pure one, is the mystery of the Trinity hymned and glorified; for well pleased was the Father to have the Word make His abode within thee, and the divine Spirit to overshadow thee.

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

Canon of the Martyrs

Irmos: **T**he church crieth out unto Thee O Lord, * 'I will sacrifice unto Thee with a voice of praise' * having been cleansed of the blood of the demons' * by the blood that for mercy's sake flowed from Thy side.

Desiring to behold Thine inconceivable beauty, O beginningless Word, they who are wounded with Thy most sweet love valiantly endured the cruelty of tortures.

The most glorious maidens blossomed like lilies in a garden, and by the grace of the Spirit perfume the Church with the fragrance of their divers torments.

Desiring the immortal Bridegroom alone, the virgin maidens manifestly vanquished visible death, strengthened by invisible power.

Theotokion: **T**he holy Lord Who dwelt in thy womb found thee to be more holy and pure than all of creation, O Mother of God regal of name, O most pure Sovereign Lady.

Kontakion of the Feast of Our Lady, in Tone IV:

In thy holy nativity, O most pure one, * Joachim and Anna have been 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 nurturer of our Life!

Ikos: **T**he 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 nurturer of our Life.

ODE VII

Canon of the Feast

Irmos: **H**aving quenched the all-consuming power of the Chaldean furnace * with the form of the Angel, that had descended therein, * the children cried out to the Creator: * Blessed and praised art Thou, O God of our fathers!

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

Now Anna maketh merry and, rendering praise, crieth aloud: Though barren, I have given birth unto the Mother of God, for whose sake the condemnation of Eve, the travail of birthgiving, hath been loosed!

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 by the appearance of Christ!

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!

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

Theotokion: **M**ost 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.

Canon of the Martyrs

Irmos: **O**f old the Children of Abraham in Babylon * trampled down the flame of the furnace, * crying aloud with hymns: * O God of our Fathers, blessed art Thou.

Ye spat upon the impious tyrant who commanded you to offer sacrifice to deaf idols, O maidens, crying aloud: O God of our fathers, Blessed art Thou!

Illumined in mind with divine rays, O all-praised ones, ye darkened the gloom of the idols, chanting: O God of our fathers, Blessed art Thou!

Neither the severing of their limbs, nor persecution, nor tribulation were in any wise able to separate Christ from the martyrs, who cried aloud: O God of our fathers, Blessed art Thou!

Theotokion: **I**n a manner transcending nature, thou, O Virgin, wast deemed worthy to give birth through thy womb to the Creator Who fashioned mortals who chant with faith: Blessed art Thou, O God!

ODE VIII

Canon of the Feast

Irmos: **O** Thou who dost cover Thy chambers on high with the waters, * Thou Who hast set the sands to bound the sea * and Who upholdest all things: * the sun doth sing Thy praises, * the moon giveth Thee glory, * every creature offereth a hymn unto Thee, * as their Creator, throughout the ages.

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

Thou, O Lord, Who dost close the abyss and open it, Who dost raise water to the clouds and give rain, hast granted the holy Anna to bud forth and give birth unto the most pure fruit, the Theotokos, from a barren root.

O Cultivator of our thoughts, Planter of our souls, Who hast shown forth the barren earth to be right fruitful, hast made the holy Anna, a field which before was barren, to become plentiful, right fertile and fruitful, giving rise to the Theotokos, the most pure fruit.

Come ye all, let us gaze upon the city of God born as if from a little chamber, issuing forth from the gate of Anna's womb, yet lacking in any knowledge of the path of intercourse, for the one God and Creator hath issued forth via this strange path.

Triadicon: **O** transcendent Trinity, beginningless Unity, the multitude of angels hymneth and trembleth before Thee; heaven and earth are in awe of Thee; men bless Thee, and fire doth serve Thee in obedience. Everything in creation doth submit to Thee with fear, O holy Trinity.

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

Canon of the Martyrs

Irmos: **O** almighty Redeemer of all, * having descended and bedewed the children in the midst of the flame, * Thou didst teach them to sing: * All ye works bless and hymn the Lord.

Sharpened by the love of the Creator, ye dulled the stings of the serpents, having taken up manly struggles in your feminine bodies; wherefore ye have been crowned with heavenly wreaths.

Locked together in the midst of the contest, the divinely wise maidens vanquished invisible and incorporeal foes with their flesh, crying aloud: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Strengthened by God the Savior, made powerful by Christ Jesus, ye destroyed the feeble might of the enemy, chanting: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Covered with the embroidery of the wounds of your torments and adorned with comeliness, O right wondrous maidens, ye have received the kingdom on high, reigning with Christ Jesus.

Theotokion: **A**s the undefiled dwelling place of God, thou didst receive Him incarnate, known in two natures, O Maiden. To Him do we chant: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

ODE IX

Canon of the Feast

Irmos: **V**irginity is alien to motherhood, * and childbearing is a thing strange to virgins: * yet in thee, O Theotokos, both have come to pass. * Therefore we and all the nations of the earth * without ceasing ever call thee blessed.

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 divinely springing forth. Wherefore, all we, the peoples of the earth, unceasingly magnify thee.

I shall raise up the tabernacle of sacred David which hath fallen, which was a fore-type of thee, O pure one, through whom the dust of all mankind hath been fashioned into a body for God.

We venerate thy swaddling clothes, O Theotokos. We glorify Him Who gaveth 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, He doeth all things whatsoever He desireth with complete authority.

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.

Triadicon: **I**t is foreign for the iniquitous to glorify the beginningless Trinity: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the uncreated omnipotent Principle, by Whom the whole world is held fast at the behest of His might.

Theotokion: **W**ithin 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 all-pure one, that our souls be saved.

Canon of the Martyrs

Irmos: **A** cornerstone not cut by hand O Virgin, * was cut from thee the unhewn mountain: * even Christ, Who hath joined together the separated natures; * therefore rejoicing we magnify thee, * O Theotokos.

Desiring to see the beauty of the Bridegroom, O God-bearers, as the ultimate gesture to Him ye received immortality in your mortal bodies. Wherefore, ye are worthily called blessed.

O unblemished ewe-lambs, ye found yourselves among tormentors as among savage wolves; and overcoming their bestiality, ye offered yourselves to Christ as a right acceptable sacrifice.

An unfading wreath of divine glory have ye woven together, O virgins, and as martyrs ye have been deemed worthy to receive the truly unshakable kingdom with the martyrs.

O honored virgins, as ye have boldness before the Master, pray ye that those who keep your memory with love receive the glory of which ye have been deemed worthy and the exultation ye have received.

Theotokion: **T**ake pity on me, O Christ, when Thou comest to judge the world with glory. Dispel the gloom of my passions, through the prayers of her who hath given birth to Thee and of Thine honored martyrs, in that Thou art good and greatly merciful.

Exapostilarion: Spec. Mel.: "O Light immutable ...":

She, from whom the noetic Sun hath come forth in the flesh, hath illumined the world today, shining forth from the womb of a barren woman. Wherefore, leaping up, we cry aloud: Rejoice, O Mary, thou deliverance of our forefathers!

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., and the above is repeated.

At the Aposticha, these Stichera, in Tone II:

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

The only Theotokos, * the dwelling place of God, * cometh forth * from a barren and childless mother; ** and Adam, restored, rejoiceth.

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

Today is joy born * of Anna, * heralding to the world * the abolition of the curse. ** Rejoice ye all!

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

Rejoice, O Joachim * and divinely wise Anna, * for she hath given birth * to the joy and gladness of the world ** and the mediatrix of salvation.

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

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, hath become 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.

AT LITURGY

On the Beatitudes, eight Troparia, from Odes IV and V of the canons of the feast of Our Lady.

The Patriarch Jacob, clearly foreseeing the mighty works of Thy dispensation, O Savior, 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.

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.

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 hast given birth to God, and the other as thine ancestor who proclaimed thy mighty deeds, O pure one.

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

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

Let the angelic ranks be glad; let the descendants of Adam join chorus; for the rod who alone budded forth the Flower Christ, our Redeemer, hath been born.

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 co-enthroned, Who proceedest from the Father and retest in the Son!

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

Troparion of the feast, in Tone IV:

Thy nativity, O Virgin Theotokos, * hath proclaimed joy to all the world; * for from thee hath shone 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 Martyrs, in Tone IV:

Clad as sisters in the Spirit, * and having contended with endurance for the Trinity, * vanquished the greatly cunning enemy; * wherefore, ye have made your abode with the five virgins * in the heavenly bridal chamber, O passion-bearers, ** and with the angels ye stand in unceasing gladness before the King of all.

Kontakion of the Feast of Our Lady, in Tone IV:

In thy holy nativity, O most pure one, * Joachim and Anna have been 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 nurturer of our Life!

Prokeimenon of the martyrs, in Tone IV: In the saints that are in His earth hath the Lord been wondrous; * He hath wrought all His desires in them.

Verse: I beheld the Lord ever before me, for He is at my right hand, that I might not be shaken.

EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS, §233 [6: 10-17]

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 of the martyrs, 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 LUKE, §63 [12: 2-12]

The Lord said: "There is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known. Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops. And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him. Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows. Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the

Son of man also confess before the angels of God: But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God. And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Spirit it shall not be forgiven. And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: For the Holy Spirit shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.

Instead of "It is truly meet...", we chant the Irmos of ODE IX of Canon I:

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

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

This is done through to the leave-taking of the feast.

Communion Verse: I will take the cup of salvation, and I will call upon the name of the Lord.

Communion verse of the martyrs: Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous; praise is meet for the upright.