

THE 21ST DAY OF THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER
THE ENTRY OF OUR MOST HOLY LADY, THE THEOTOKOS & EVER-VIRGIN
MARY, INTO THE TEMPLE
AT LITTLE VESPERS

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

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

Having received from the Lord * the fruit of the promise, * the Mother of God, * the right acceptable sacrifice, * Joachim and Anna lead her into the temple today; * and Zachariah, the great high priest, * receiveth her with his blessing. (Twice)

The holy of holies is fittingly brought * to dwell in the sanctuary * as a sacrifice pleasing to God; * and virgins, well adorned with the virtues, * bearing candles before her, * accompany her to the Lord, as a most hallowed vessel.

Let the portal of the God-receiving temple be opened! * For today the temple and throne of the King of all * is received therein with glory! * Joachim bringeth her forth, * dedicating to the Lord * her who was chosen by Him to be His Mother.

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

David foretold thee, O most pure one, foreseeing the sanctification of thine entry into the Temple. Therein do the ends of the earth, holding festival today, glorify thee, O all-hymned one, for, O Mother of the Word of life, who before giving birth wast Virgin and after giving birth remained incorrupt, today Zechariah rejoiceth with exceeding gladness in the Temple, accepting thee, O Lady; and the Holy of Holies rejoiceth, receiving thee, the wellspring of our life. Wherefore, we also cry out in psalms to thee: Beseech thy Son and our God on our behalf, that He grant us great mercy.

On the Aposticha, these Stichera, in Tone II:

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

O ye heavenly gates, * accept ye the Virgin, * the undefiled tabernacle * of God Almighty, ** into the Holy of holies.

Verse: The virgins that follow after her shall be brought unto the King, * those near her shall be brought unto Thee.

O ye choirs of virgins, * receive the pure Virgin * as the Bride of God, the King of all, * splendidly bearing candles ** unto the Holy of holies.

Verse: They shall be brought with gladness and rejoicing, * they shall be brought into the temple of the King.

The bridal-chamber of God the Word * receiveth noetic bread * from the hands of the divine angel, * while making her habitation ** in the Holy of holies.

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

The thrice-radiant Light * enkindling thee, O Theotokos, * in the temple of glory,
* sendeth thee heavenly food, ** magnifying thee.

Troparion, in Tone IV:

Today is the prelude of God's good will * and the proclamation of the salvation of
mankind. * The Virgin hath manifestly appeared in the temple of God, * proclaiming
Christ unto all. * To her let us cry aloud: * Rejoice, O thou fulfillment ** of the
Creator's dispensation!

AT GREAT VESPERS

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

On "Lord, I have cried ...", 8 Stichera; 4 in Tone I:

Spec. Mel.: "O wondrous marvel...":

Let us join chorus today, O ye faithful, chanting to the Lord in psalms and hymns, and honoring His sacred tabernacle, the animate ark, who contained the uncontainable Word; for she is brought to the Lord, having become a babe in a manner transcending nature. And Zachariah, the great high priest, receiveth her with gladness as the dwelling-place of God. (Twice)

Today the animate temple of the holy glory of Christ our God, the pure one who alone among women is blessed, is led into the temple of the law, to dwell in the Holy of holies; with her Joachim and Anna rejoice in spirit, and choirs of virgins sing to the Lord, chanting in psalms and honoring His Mother.

Thou art the proclamation of the prophets, the glory of the apostles, the boast of the martyrs, the restoration of all mortals, O Virgin Mother of God; for through thee have we been reconciled with God. Wherefore, we honor thine entrance into the temple of the Lord, and with the angel all of us who find salvation through thy supplications cry out to thee in hymns: Rejoice, O most pure one!

And 4 Stichera in Tone IV:

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

Into the Holy of holies * is the holy and immaculate one * led by the Holy Spirit; * and she is fed by a holy angel, * in that she is the most holy temple * of our holy God, * Who hath sanctified all things by her entry * and hath deified the nature of mortal men * which had fallen. Twice (Twice)

Rejoicing today * and bearing candles, * the maidens precede the noetic lamp * and escort her with sanctity * to the Holy of holies, * revealing beforehand * the Effulgence which would ineffably shine forth from her * to illumine with the Spirit * those who sit in darkness of ignorance.

The all-praised Anna cried out: * "O Zacharias, hi gladness receive her * whom the prophets of God proclaimed in the Spirit, * and escort her to the holy temple, * there to be raised in sanctity, * that she might become * the divine throne, * the palace and bower, * and the radiant abode of the Master of all!"

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

After thy nativity, O Lady, Bride of God, thou didst go to the Temple of the Lord to be raised in the Holy of Holies as a consecrated maiden. Gabriel was then sent to thee, the all-immaculate one, bringing food unto thee. All of the heavenly powers marveled, beholding the Holy Spirit abiding within thee: Wherefore, O most pure and undefiled Mother of God, who art glorified in heaven and on earth, save thou our race.

Entrance. Prokeimenon of the day. 3 Readings:

A READING FROM EXODUS

The Lord spake to Moses, saying: "On the first day of the first month, at the new moon, thou shalt set up the tabernacle of the witness, and thou shalt place therein the ark of the testimony, and shalt cover the ark with the veil. And thou shalt bring in the table and the candlestick; and thou shalt place the golden censer, to burn incense before the ark of the testimony; and thou shalt put a covering of a veil on the doors of the tabernacle of witness. And thou shalt take the anointing oil, and shalt anoint the tabernacle, and all things therein; and shalt sanctify it, and all its furniture, and it shall be holy. And thou shalt hallow the altar, and the altar shall be most holy. And Moses did all things whatsoever the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, commanded him. And a cloud covered the tabernacle of witness, and the tabernacle was filled with the glory of the Lord. And Moses was not able to enter into the tabernacle of testimony, because the cloud overshadowed it, and the tabernacle was filled with the glory of the Lord.

A READING FROM THE THIRD BOOK OF KINGS

It came to pass that Solomon finished building the house of the Lord. And he assembled all the elders of Israel in Sion, to bring the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of the city of David, which is Sion. And the priests took up the ark, and the tabernacle of testimony, and all the holy vessels which were in the tabernacle of testimony. And the king and all Israel stood before the ark. And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the Lord into its place, into the oracle of the house, even into the Holy of holies, under the wings of the cherubim. For the cherubim spread out their wings over the place of the ark; and the cherubim covered the ark and its holy things above. There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant which Moses put there in Horeb, which the Lord made. And it came to pass when the priests departed out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house. And the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord God Almighty filled the house.

A READING FROM THE PROPHECY OF EZEKIEL

Thus saith the Lord: "It shall come to pass from the eighth day and onward, that the priests shall offer your wholeburnt-offerings on the altar, and your peace-offerings; and I will accept you, saith the Lord." Then He brought me back by way of the outer gate of the sanctuary that looketh eastward; and it was shut. And the Lord said to me: "This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no one shall pass through it; for the Lord God of Israel shall enter by it, and it shall be shut. For the Prince, he shall sit in it, to eat bread before the Lord; He shall go in by the way of the porch of the gate, and shall go forth by the way of the same." And He brought me in by way of the gate that looketh northward, in front of the house: and I looked, and, behold, the house was full of the glory of the Lord.

At Litiya, these Stichera:

The composition of George of Nicomedia, in Tone I:

Let heaven rejoice today from on high, and let the clouds drop down gladness at the exceedingly glorious and mighty works of our God! For, lo! the portal which faceth east, who was born from a barren woman according to God's promise, and who became a dwelling-place sanctified for God, is brought forth as an unblemished offering. Let David rejoice, striking his harp! For he said: "The virgins that follow after her shall be brought before the King; those near her shall be brought unto the tabernacle of God, into His sanctuary, to be reared in the dwelling-place of Him Who, for the salvation of our souls, was incorruptibly begotten of the Father before time."

In Tone IV: Today the Theotokos, the temple which held God, is escorted into the temple of the Lord; and Zachariah receiveth her. Today the Holy of holies rejoiceth and the choir of angels mystically keepeth festival. And we, celebrating with them today, cry aloud with Gabriel: Rejoice, O thou who art full of grace! The Lord, Who hath great mercy, is with thee!

Come, all ye faithful, let us praise her who alone is immaculate, who was proclaimed beforehand by the prophets, and is brought into the temple, the Mother chosen before all ages, the Theotokos who hath appeared in the latter days. O Lord, through her supplications grant us Thy peace and great mercy.

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., the composition of Leo Magister, in Tone V:

The day of joy and the most honored feast hath shone forth! For today she who remained Virgin after giving birth, as she was before birthgiving, is led into the temple of the Lord, and the elder Zachariah, the father of the forerunner, rejoiceth and crieth out in gladness: "The intercessor for the sorrowful draweth nigh unto the holy temple, in that she is holy, to be hallowed in the habitation of the King of all! Let Joachim, her forebear, be glad, and let Anna rejoice! For they have offered unto God the unblemished Lady like a heifer three years of age. Rejoice, ye mothers! Leap up, O virgins! Ye barren women, join chorus! For the Queen of all, who hath been foretold, hath opened unto us the kingdom of heaven! Rejoice, ye people, and be glad!"

On the Aposticha, these Stichera, in Tone V:

Spec. Mel.: "Rejoice, ...":

Rejoice, O heaven and earth, beholding the only immaculate Virgin, the noetic heaven, coming forth to be raised in honor in the house of God! To her Zachariah cried out, marveling: "O portal of the Lord, I open unto thee the gates of the temple! Rejoice therein, joining chorus! For I have come to know and believe that the deliverance of Israel is manifestly coming, and that God the Word will be born through thee, granting the world great mercy!"

Verse: The virgins that follow after her shall be brought unto the King, * those near her shall be brought unto Thee.

O divinely manifest grace! With gladness Anna leadeth into the temple of God the pure Ever-virgin given her by grace, and she calleth maidens to go before her, bearing lamps and saying: "Go forth, my child! Be thou an offering and incense of sweet savor unto Him Who gave thee to us! Enter into the impassable precincts and learn the mysteries! And prepare thyself to be the gladsome and comely dwelling-place of Jesus, Who bestoweth upon the world great mercy!"

Verse: They shall be brought with gladness and rejoicing, * they shall be brought into the temple of the King.

The all-holy Virgin, the temple in which God dwelleth, is borne into the temple of God, and maidens bearing lamps now precede her. Joachim and Anna, the excellent couple, her parents, leap for joy, dancing, for they gave birth to her who gave birth to the Creator, who, rejoicing in the divine tabernacles is fed by the hand of an angel, and hath been revealed to be the all-immaculate Mother of Christ, Who bestoweth great mercy upon the world.

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., the composition of Sergius of Jerusalem, in Tone VI:

Assembling today, ye councils of the faithful, let us keep spiritual festival, and let us piously praise the divine Maiden, the Virgin Theotokos, who is led into the temple of the Lord, she who was chosen before out of all generations to be the habitation of Christ God, the King of all. Bearing candles, O virgins, go ye on before, doing homage to the honored entry of the Ever-virgin! Ye mothers, setting aside all grief, follow joyously her who is to become the Mother of God, the mediatrix of joy for the world! And with the angel let us all joyfully cry out to the joyous one "Rejoice!", for she ever prayeth for our souls.

At the blessing of the loaves, the Troparion, in Tone IV:

Today is the prelude of God's good will * and the proclamation of the salvation of mankind. * The Virgin hath manifestly appeared in the temple of God, * proclaiming Christ unto all. * To her let us cry aloud: * Rejoice, O thou fulfillment ** of the Creator's dispensation! (**Thrice**)

AT MATINS

On "God is the Lord ...", the Troparion, in Tone IV:

Today is the prelude of God's good will * and the proclamation of the salvation of mankind. * The Virgin hath manifestly appeared in the temple of God, * proclaiming Christ unto all. * To her let us cry aloud: * Rejoice, O thou fulfillment ** of the Creator's dispensation! (Thrice)

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

Spec. Mel.: "The choir of angels ...":

The fruit of the righteous Joachim and Anna is offered to God in the holy sanctuary, the nourisher of our Life who became a babe in the flesh, whom the sacred Zachariah blessed. With faith let us all bless her as the Mother of God.

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

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

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

Even before thy conception thou wast consecrated to God, O pure one, and, having been born on earth, thou hast now been offered to Him as a gift, fulfilling thy parents' vow; and having been presented in the divine temple, accompanied as a babe by lighted lamps in purity, thou hast been revealed to be the receptacle of the unapproachable and divine light, as the temple of God. Truly great is thy going forth, O only Ever-virgin Bride of God!

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

Polyeleos, and this magnification: We magnify thee, O most holy Virgin, divinely chosen Maiden, and we honor thine entry into the temple of the Lord.

Selected Psalm verse:

A: Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, in the city of our God, in His holy mountain.

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

After the Polyeleos, this Sedalion, in Tone VIII:

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

Let David the psalmist rejoice, and let Joachim and Anna join chorus, for the radiant Mary, the divine lamp, issued forth from them like a holy fruit, and she rejoiceth, entering the temple. Beholding her, the son of Barachiah blessed her, and, rejoicing; cried aloud: "Rejoice, O wonder of the world!" (Twice)

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

Song of Ascents, the first antiphon of Tone IV:

Prokeimenon, in Tone IV: Hearken, O daughter, and see, * and incline thine ear.

Verse: My heart hath poured forth a good word; I shall speak of my works to the king.

Let every breath praise the Lord.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE§4 [1 :39-49,56]

In those days; Mary arose and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Judah; and entered into the house of Zechariah, and saluted Elisabeth. And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: and she spake out with a loud voice, and said: Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord. And Mary said: My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior. For He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden; for, behold, from henceforth, all generations shall call me blessed. For He that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is His name. And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

After Psalm 50, instead of "Through the prayers of the Theotokos ...", we chant: Glory ..., Today the animate temple of the great King entereth the temple to prepare herself as a divine dwelling-place for Him.

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

Have mercy on me O God ...,

And then this Sticheron, in Tone IV:

Today the Theotokos, the temple who contained God, was led into the temple of the Lord, and Zachariah received her. Today the Holy of holies rejoiceth, and the choir of angels keepeth mystic festival. And with them we also, celebrating today, cry out with Gabriel: Rejoice, O thou who art full of grace, the Lord is with thee, Who hath great mercy!

Two canons of the Theotokos: the first with 8 Troparia including the Irmos, the Irmos being chanted twice, and the second like the first, with 8 Troparia, including the Irmos, the Irmos being chanted twice.

Canon I of the Theotokos:

The acrostic whereof is: "O Lady, grant me the grace of discourse", the composition of George, in Tone IV:

ODE I

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 entry.

O most pure one, we know thee to be a treasury of wisdom and an ever-flowing fountain of grace; and we pray thee rain down upon us knowledge, that we may praise thee forever.

Being a temple and palace more exalted than the heavens, O most pure one, thou wast set apart in the Temple of God to be prepared as a divine dwelling-place for His advent.

Shining with the Light of grace, the Theotokos hath illumined all and assembled us to adorn her most splendid festival. Come ye, let us draw nigh to her!

The glorious portal which surpasseth human thought, having opened the doors of the Temple of God, doth now command us who have assembled to delight in her divine wonders.

Canon II of the Theotokos, the composition of Basil, in Tone I:

Irmos: Let us all chant a triumphant hymn unto God * Who wrought wondrous miracles * with His upraised arm, * and saved Israel, * for He hath been glorified.

Let us hasten today, honoring the Theotokos with hymns, and let us celebrate a spiritual feast; for she is offered as a gift to God in the temple.

With songs let us hymn the glorious arrival of the Theotokos; for today, as the prophets foretold, she is borne as a gift of great price into the temple, though she is herself the temple of God.

Glory ..., **T**he blameless Anna rejoiced, maternally bringing a gift of great price to God in the temple; and with her Joachim keepeth splendid festival.

Now & ever ..., **O**f old, David, thine ancestor, hymned thee, O Virgin Bride of God, calling thee the daughter of Christ the King; and, having given birth to Him, as a Mother thou didst feed Him with milk as a babe.

Katavasia: Christ is born, render ye glory. * Christ cometh from heaven, meet ye Him. * Christ is on earth, be ye exalted. * O all the earth, sing unto the Lord, * and sing praises in gladness, O ye people, * for He hath been glorified.

(From this day until the 1st day of January, this Katavasia is chanted)

ODE III

Canon I

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

Receiving the pure and undefiled one, who is more splendid than all creation, the animate bridal chamber of God, the beautiful Temple and chamber doth appear today like a bride adorned for her wedding.

David, preceding the chorus, doth leap and dance with us, declaring thee, O all-pure one, to be the queen all-adorned, standing in the Temple before our King and God, O most pure one.

From her, whom transgressions issued forth among the race of mankind, hath her correction and incorruption blossomed forth, the Theotokos, who is led today into the house of God.

The angelic armies and the multitudes of all mankind leap for joy, and they advance as lamp-bearers before thy countenance, proclaiming thy majesty in the house of God.

Canon II

Irmos: **L**et my heart be established in Thy will O Christ God, * Who hath established a second heaven over the waters, * and founded the earth upon the waters, * O all-powerful One.

O ye who love the feasts of the Church, let us keep festival and rejoice today together in spirit, and in gladness, on the holy feast of the daughter of the King, the Mother of our God.

Rejoice today, O Joachim! Be thou glad in spirit, O Anna, leading to the Lord the three year old child born from thee, as though she were a pure and most immaculate heifer.

Glory ..., **M**ary, the Theotokos, the habitation of God, is led into the holy temple, being three years of age in the flesh; and, going before her, virgins bear lighted lamps.

Now & ever ..., **T**he pure ewe-lamb of God, the undefiled turtle-dove, the tabernacle containing God, the sanctuary of glory, hath chosen to dwell within the holy tabernacle.

Katavasia: **T**o the Son who was begotten of the Father * without change before all ages, * and in the last times, without seed, was made flesh of the Virgin, * to Christ our God let us cry aloud: * Thou hast raised up our horn, holy art Thou, O Lord.

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

Tell us, O David: what is this present festival? Who is she whom of old thou didst hymn in the Book of Psalms as the daughter, divine Maiden and Virgin? "The virgins that follow after her, together with those near her," said he, "shall be mystically brought unto the King." Make this a wondrous and universal feast for those who cry aloud: the Theotokos is come unto us, the mediatrix of salvation!

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

With gladness Mary, the Theotokos, is most gloriously brought into the house of God: the unblemished ewe-lamb, the undefiled bridal-chamber, whom the angels of God, escort with faith and all the faithful ever call blessed and hymn her unceasingly with a loud voice in thanksgiving: Thou art our glory and salvation, O most immaculate one!

ODE IV

Canon I

Irmos: Perceiving the profound counsel of God, * that from the Virgin, * Thee the Most High will assume flesh, * the Prophet Habbakuk cried aloud: * Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

The Temple of God, receiving today the portal through whom none may pass, hath ceased to perform any service of the Law, crying: Truly truth hath appeared to those who are on earth!

The mountain overshadowed, which Habbakuk beheld of old, prefigured her who hath made her abode in the inaccessible chambers of the Temple, flourishing with virtues, for she doth cover the ends of the earth therewith.

All the earth hath seen most glorious things, things strange and marvelous, for the Virgin, receiving food from an angel, doth receive tokens of God's dispensation.

Revealed as the temple and palace and animate heaven, O divine bride of the King, thou art brought today to the Temple of the Law to be kept for Him, O most pure one.

Canon II

Irmos: Foreseeing in the Spirit O Prophet Habbakuk, * the incarnation of the Word, * thou didst proclaim, crying aloud: * When the years draw nigh, Thou shalt be known; * when the season cometh, Thou shalt be shown forth! * Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

O Prophet Isaiah, prophesy unto us: Who is the Virgin Who will conceive in her womb, who springing forth from the root of Judah, and who shall give birth to the right glorious Fruit of the holy seed of King David?

O virgins, commence ye to chant hymns, holding candles in your hands, and praising the arrival of the pure Theotokos who now cometh to the temple of God, celebrating with us!

Glory ..., Rejoice now, O Joachim and Anna, leading into the temple of the Lord, like a heifer three years of age, the pure one born from you, who will become the Mother of God.

Now & ever ..., As the holy of holies, O pure one, thou didst love to dwell in the holy temple, remaining there and conversing most gloriously with the angels, receiving bread from heaven, O Virgin, thou nourisher of Life.

Katavasia: Rod of the root of Jesse, * and flower that blossomed from his stem,
* O Christ, Thou hast sprung from the Virgin. * From the Mountain
overshadowed by the forest * Thou hast come, made flesh from her that knew
not wedlock, * O God who art not formed from matter. * Glory to Thy power,
O Lord.

ODE V

Canon I

Irmos: All creation stands in awe of thy divine glory; * for thou, O Virgin who
hast not known wedlock, * didst enter into the temple of the Lord; * thyself
being a most pure temple, * granting peace unto all who hymn thee.

The most pure Virgin, the glorious sanctity and sacred offering which is brought
today to the Temple of God, is preserved as a habitation for our one God, the King
of all, as He Himself knoweth.

Zachariah, having of old beheld the beauty of thy soul, cried out in faith: Thou art
the deliverance, thou art the joy of all, thou art our restoration, through whom the
Uncontainable One shall appear unto me contained.

O, thy wonders which pass understanding, O all-pure one! Strange is thy
birthgiving; strange is the manner of thy maturation; strange also, most glorious and
unutterable by mortals, are all thy wonders, O Bride of God.

As a most radiant lamp, O Bride of God, hast thou shone forth today in the house
of the Lord, illumining us with the precious gifts of thy wonders, O pure and all-
hymned Theotokos.

Canon II

Irmos: Shine forth thy radiant and everlasting light * upon us who rise early at
dawn, * unto the judgments of Thy commandments, * O Master, Lover of
mankind, * Christ our God.

O all ye Orthodox, let us take up lamps, hastening to glorify the Mother of God,
for she is led to the Lord today as a right acceptable sacrifice.

Let thine ancestors be glad today, O Lady; and let her who gave birth to thee
rejoice with thy father, for their fruit is offered to the Lord.

Glory ..., Celebrating with faith, let us all hymn the unblemished heifer, most
glorious and of great renown, for she gave birth to the divine Bullock in the flesh.

Now & ever ..., The divine tokens of thy betrothal, of thy birthgiving which
passeth understanding, O pure Virgin; are recorded today by the Holy Spirit in the
house of God.

Katavasia: As Thou art the God of peace and Father of compassions, * Thou hast sent unto us Thine Angel of great counsel, * granting us peace. * Wherefore guided towards the light of the knowledge of God, * and watching by night we glorify Thee, * O Lover of mankind.

ODE VI

Canon I

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.

Thou Who hast upheld all things by Thy word hast hearkened to the prayer of the righteous ones. Wherefore, Thou hast loosed the infirmity of the barren woman, in that Thou art compassionate, and given them her who is the cause of joy.

Wishing to make His salvation known to the Gentiles, the Lord hath now taken from among mankind her who hath not known wedlock, as a sign of reconciliation and renewal.

As a house of grace, wherein treasures of the ineffable dispensation of God are laid up, O all-pure one, thou didst share in unfading delight in the Temple.

Receiving thee as a royal diadem, O Bride of God, the Temple hath been rendered splendid and been elevated to better things, beholding in thee the fulfillment of the prophecies.

Canon II

Irmos: Emulating the Prophet Jonah, I cry aloud: * Free Thou my life from corruption, O Good One; * and save me O Savior of the world, * who crieth out: Glory be to Thee!

O ye faithful, let us celebrate the spiritual feast of the Mother of God, chanting piously; for she is more holy than the heavenly intelligences.

With spiritual hymns let us praise the Mother of the Light, O ye faithful, for she hath appeared to us today, going forth into the temple of God.

Glory ..., The unblemished ewe-lamb, the pure turtle-dove, is brought to dwell in the house of God, for, as one all-immaculate, she was chosen beforehand to be the Mother of God.

Now & ever ..., The temple of God, the heavenly tabernacle, maketh entry into the temple of the law, and from her hath the Light shone forth upon us who are in darkness.

Katavasia: The sea monster spat forth Jonah as it had received him, * like a babe from the womb: * while the Word, having dwelt in the Virgin and taken flesh, * came forth from her yet kept her incorrupt. * For being Himself not subject to decay. * He preserved His Mother free from all harm.

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

The most pure temple of the Savior, * the precious bridal chamber and Virgin, * the sacred treasury of the glory of God, * hath been brought into the house of the Lord this day, * bringing with her the grace that is in the divine Spirit. * To her do the angels of God chant the hymn: ** She is the heavenly tabernacle!

Ikos: **B**eholding the grace of the ineffable and divine mysteries of God made plainly manifest in and filling the Virgin, I rejoice; yet I know not how to understand this strange and ineffable image. How hath the pure one alone been shown to be above all creation, visible and immaterial? Wherefore, wishing to praise her, I am greatly in awe in mind and word; yet, bold, I proclaim and magnify her, saying: She is the heavenly tabernacle!

ODE VII
Canon I

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.’

Lo, today a joyous spring hath dawned upon the ends of the earth, enlightening our souls, thoughts and minds with grace: the festival of the Theotokos. Let us mystically make festival this day!

Let all things - heaven and earth, the ranks of angels and the multitudes of mankind - bear gifts today unto the Queen and Mother of God; and let them cry aloud: Our joy and deliverance is brought into the Temple!

The Scriptures have come to pass, the Law hath faded like a shadow, and rays of grace have shone forth upon thee who hast entered into the Temple of God, O pure Virgin Mother wherein thou art blessed.

Heaven and earth and the netherworld are subject to thine Offspring as Creator and God, O all-pure one, and every nation of mortals doth confess that the Lord and Savior of our souls hath appeared.

Canon II

Irmos: **T**he furnace became bedewed, O Savior, * and the children dancing, chanted: * O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

O ye who love the feasts of the Church let us join chorus and hymn the pure Lady honoring Joachim and Anna as is meet.

Prophesy, O David, speaking in the Spirit: The virgins who follow after thee shall be brought to thee into the temple of the Queen and Mother.

Glory ..., The ranks of the angels rejoiced and the souls of the righteous were gladdened, for the Mother of God is led into the Holy of holies,

Now & ever ..., Receiving heavenly food, she who was to become the Mother of Christ God in the flesh, excelled in wisdom and grace.

Katavasia: Scorning the impious decree of the godless one, * the Children brought up together in godliness * feared not the threat of fire, * but standing in the midst of the flames, they sang: * O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou.

ODE VIII

Canon I

Irmos: Hearken, O pure Virgin Maiden, * that Gabriel may tell thee the ancient counsel of the Most High. * Make ready to receive the Godhead; * for through thee the Infinite One hath come to dwell among mankind. * Wherefore, rejoicing, I cry aloud: * Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Anna, once, leading the most pure temple to the house of God, faithfully said unto the priest, crying aloud: Now accept thou this child, given me by God; lead her into the Temple of the Creator; and, rejoicing, chant unto Him: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

And Zachariah then, beholding them in the Spirit, said unto Anna: Thou dost bring hither the true Mother of Life, whom the prophets of God have clearly foretold as the Theotokos! How, therefore, can the Temple hold her? Wherefore, marveling, I cry out: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

The handmaid of God have I been, answered Anna unto him, and I call upon Him with faith and prayer to accept the fruit of my birth-pangs, that, having received this child, I might bring her that was born unto Him that bestowed her. Wherefore, I cry aloud: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Truly this is a matter of the Law, the priest said to her, and strange doth this thing seem unto me, beholding her that doth most gloriously surpass the holy ones in grace led into the house of God. Wherefore, rejoicing, I cry out: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Canon II

Irmos: Him of whom the angels and all the hosts of heaven are in awe * as their Lord and Creator, * ye priests hymn, ye children praise, * ye peoples bless and supremely exalt * throughout all ages.

Joachim rejoiceth today in splendor, and the blameless Anna offereth to the Lord God a sacrifice: the holy daughter given her according to God's promise.

The holy David and Jesse render praise, and Judah offereth homage; for the pure Virgin, of whom the pre-eternal God was born, grew forth as fruit from their root.

We bless the Father, the son and the Holy Spirit, the Lord: The most pure Mary, the animate tabernacle, is brought today into the house of God; and Zachariah taketh her in his arms as the sanctified treasure of the Lord.

Now & ever ..., O ye faithful, let us truly honor the Virgin Mother of God, who is blessed by the hands of the priests, as the portal of salvation, the noetic mountain and the animate ladder.

Katavasia: The furnace moist with dew showed forth an image * of a wonder past nature, * for it burned not the youths whom it had received; * neither did the fire of the Godhead consume the Virgin * when it descended into her womb. * Wherefore, chanting, we sing: * Let all creation bless the Lord and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

At Ode IX we do not chant the Magnificat, but sing instead the refrains of the feast:

Refrain: The angels, beholding the entry of the most pure one, were amazed to see the Virgin enter into the Holy of holies.

The Irmos of Canon I is then chanted: " In nowise may the hand of the defiled ...", whereupon the second choir chanteth the same refrain and Irmos. A refrain is also chanted before each Troparion of the ode, alternating between both choirs.

ODE IX

Canon I

Irmos: In nowise may the hand of the defiled * touch the animate ark of God; * and let the lips of the faithful * never-silently cry out with joy to the Theotokos, * chanting the words of the angel: * Rejoice, O thou who art full of grace! * The Lord is with thee!

Refrain: The angels, beholding the entry of the all-pure one, were amazed to see the Virgin enter into the Holy of holies.

O pure Theotokos, as thou hast the most radiant beauty of purity of soul and art full of the grace of God from heaven, with the ever-existent light thou dost ever enlighten those who cry out with joy: Truly thou art more highly exalted than all, O pure Virgin!

Refrain: The angels, beholding the entry of the all-pure one, were amazed to see the Virgin enter into the Holy of holies.

Thy wonder doth surpass the power of words, O pure Theotokos, for in thee I perceive a body impervious to the movement of sin. Wherefore, thankfully I cry out to thee: Truly thou art more highly exalted than all, O pure Virgin!

Refrain: The angels, beholding the entry of the all-pure one, were amazed to see the Virgin enter into the Holy of holies.

Most gloriously did the Law prefigure thee, O pure one, as the tabernacle, the divine jar, the awe-some ark, the veil, the staff, the inviolable temple and portal of God. Wherefore, all these things teach us to cry to thee: Truly thou art more highly exalted than all, O pure Virgin!

Refrain: The angels, beholding the entry of the all-pure one, were amazed to see the Virgin enter into the Holy of holies.

In hymnody David cried out to thee prophetically, calling thee the daughter of the King in the comeliness of thy virtues, beholding thee standing, elaborately adorned, at the right hand of God. Wherefore, in prophecy he cried out: Truly thou art more highly exalted than all, O pure Virgin!

Refrain: The angels, beholding the entry of the all-pure one, were amazed to see the Virgin enter into the Holy of holies.

Foreseeing thee who art pleasing to God, Solomon proclaimed thee to be the bower of the King, the living and sealed fountain, from whence untroubled waters have issued forth for us who cry out with faith: Truly thou art more highly exalted than all, O pure Virgin!

Refrain: The angels, beholding the entry of the all-pure one, were amazed to see the Virgin enter into the Holy of holies.

O Theotokos, thou givest to my soul the tranquility of thy gifts, pouring forth life upon those who honor thee as is meet, defending, protecting and preserving them thyself, that they might cry to thee: Truly thou art more highly exalted than all, O pure Virgin!

Then the first choir chanteth the refrain of Canon II of the feast:

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, her who hath been led into the temple of the Lord and been blessed by the hands of the priest.

Then the Irmos is chanted: "We all magnify the pure one ..." The second choir then chanteth the same refrain and Irmos of the feast. And before each Troparion of the canon we chant the above festal refrain.

Canon II

Irmos: The light-bearing cloud upon whom * the beginningless Master of all descended from heaven, * like the dew upon the fleece, * and of whom He was incarnate, * becoming a man for our sake, * let us all magnify as the pure Mother of God. **(Twice)**

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, her who hath been led into the temple of the Lord and been blessed by the hands of the priest.

The divine maiden Mary, the fruit of the promise, issued forth from the righteous Joachim and Anna, and, a babe in the flesh, she is brought into the holy sanctuary like pleasing incense, to dwell in the Holy of holies.

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, her who hath been led into the temple of the Lord and been blessed by the hands of the priest.

With hymns let us praise her who was a babe by nature and was supernaturally revealed as the Mother of God; for she is led unto the Lord in the temple of the law, as the fragrance of sweet savor for the righteous, as the spiritual fruit of her righteous parents.

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, her who hath been led into the temple of the Lord and been blessed by the hands of the priest.

O ye faithful, with the angel let us fittingly cry out to the Theotokos "Rejoice!" Rejoice, O most comely Bride! Rejoice, O radiant cloud, from whom the Lord hath shone forth upon us who sit in the darkness of ignorance! Rejoice, thou hope of all!

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, her who hath been led into the temple of the Lord and been blessed by the hands of the priest.

O pure Mary Mother of God, thou Holy of holies, from the snares of the enemy and from all heresy and tribulation do thou free us by thy supplications, who bow down with faith before the image of thy holy countenance.

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, her who hath been led into the temple of the Lord and been blessed by the hands of the priest.

With the Angel Gabriel all creation uttereth a fitting hymn to the Theotokos, crying: Rejoice, O most immaculate Mother of God, by whom we have been delivered from the primal curse, coming to share in incorruption!

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, her who hath been led into the temple of the Lord and been blessed by the hands of the priest.

O Virgin, thou hast been shown to be greater than the cherubim, more exalted than the seraphim and more spacious than the heavens, for thou didst contain within thy womb our God Whom naught can contain, and hast given birth to Him ineffably. Him do thou earnestly beseech on our behalf.

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, her who hath been led into the temple of the Lord and been blessed by the hands of the priest.

Triadicon: Let us glorify the indivisible Trinity, the Essence in three Hypostases, the undivided glory, Who in a single Godhead, is unceasingly hymned in heaven and on earth, piously worshiping the Father, the Son and the Spirit.

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, her who hath been led into the temple of the Lord and been blessed by the hands of the priest.

O Virgin Theotokos, pray thou, that we who flee with faith beneath thy compassion and piously worship thy Son as God and Lord of the world be delivered from corruption, misfortunes and all manner of temptations.

Then both choirs, descending together, chant the refrain of Canon I, followed by the Katavasia:

Refrain: The angels, beholding the entry of the most pure one, were amazed to see the Virgin enter into the Holy of holies.

Katavasia: A strange and most wondrous mystery do I see: * the cave is heaven; * the Virgin the throne of the cherubim; * the manger a room, in which Christ God, * whom nothing can contain, is laid. * Whom we praise and magnify.

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

With faith let us praise the divine Maiden Mary, whom the company of the prophets of old proclaimed to be the jar, the staff, the tablet and the unquarried mountain; for she is led today into the Holy of holies to be raised for the Lord. (Thrice)

On the Praises, 4 Stichera, in Tone IV:

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

Virgins bearing lamps, * escorting the Ever-virgin with splendor, * truly prophesy the future in the Spirit; * for the Theotokos, as the temple of God, * is led as a child with virginal glory ** into the temple.

Truly the Theotokos hath appeared to the world * as the right glorious fruit of a holy promise, * for she surpasseth all. * Piously led into the temple of God, * she fulfilleth the supplication of her parents, ** and is preserved by the divine Spirit.

Faithfully raised on heavenly bread, O Virgin, * in the temple of the Lord, * thou hast given birth to the Word, the Bread of life, for the world, * to Whom thou wast mystically promised beforehand by the Spirit * as the chosen and all-immaculate temple, ** betrothed to God the Father.

Let the portal of the God-receiving temple be opened! * For today the temple and throne of the King of all * is received therein with glory! * Joachim bringeth her forth, * dedicating to the Lord ** her who was chosen by Him to be His Mother.

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

Today the all-immaculate Virgin is brought to the temple, to the habitation of God, the King of all, the Nourisher of our whole life. Today the most pure and holy one, is led to the Holy of holies like a heifer three years of age. Let us cry out unto her like the angel: "Rejoice, thou who alone art blessed among women!"

Great Doxology. Troparion in Tone IV:

Today is the prelude of God's good will * and the proclamation of the salvation of mankind. * The Virgin hath manifestly appeared in the temple of God, * proclaiming Christ unto all. * To her let us cry aloud: * Rejoice, O thou fulfillment ** of the Creator's dispensation!

Litanies. Dismissal. First Hour.

AT LITURGY

On the Beatitudes, 8 Troparia: 4 from Ode III of Canon I, and 4 from Ode VI of Canon II.

Receiving the pure and undefiled one, who is more splendid than all creation, the animate bridal chamber of God, the beautiful Temple and chamber doth appear today like a bride adorned for her wedding.

David, preceding the chorus, doth leap and dance with us, declaring thee, O all-pure one, to be the queen all-adorned, standing in the Temple before our King and God, O most pure one.

From her, whom transgressions issued forth among the race of mankind, hath her correction and incorruption blossomed forth, the Theotokos, who is led today into the house of God.

The angelic armies and the multitudes of all mankind leap for joy, and they advance as lamp-bearers before thy countenance, proclaiming thy majesty in the house of God.

O ye faithful, let us celebrate the spiritual feast of the Mother of God, chanting piously; for she is more holy than the heavenly intelligences.

With spiritual hymns let us praise the Mother of the Light, O ye faithful, for she hath appeared to us today, going forth into the temple of God.

Glory ..., **T**he unblemished ewe-lamb, the pure turtle-dove, is brought to dwell in the house of God, for, as one all-immaculate, she was chosen beforehand to be the Mother of God.

Now & ever ..., **T**he temple of God, the heavenly tabernacle, maketh entry into the temple of the law, and from her hath the Light shone forth upon us who are in darkness.

After the entrance, the Troparion of the feast in Tone IV:

Today is the prelude of God's good will * and the proclamation of the salvation of mankind. * The Virgin hath manifestly appeared in the temple of God, * proclaiming Christ unto all. * To her let us cry aloud: * Rejoice, O thou fulfillment ** of the Creator's dispensation!

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

The most pure temple of the Savior, * the precious bridal chamber and Virgin, * the sacred treasury of the glory of God, * hath been brought into the house of the Lord this day, * bringing with her the grace that is in the divine Spirit. * To her do the angels of God chant the hymn: ** She is the heavenly tabernacle!

Prokeimenon, in Tone III: the Song of the Theotokos: My soul doth magnify the Lord, * and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.

Verse: For He hath looked upon the lowliness of His handmaiden; for behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS, § 320 [HEB. 9: 1-7]

Brethren; the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the showbread; which is called the sanctuary. And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the holiest of all; which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; and over it the cherubim of glory shadowing the mercy seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly. Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people.

Alleluia, in Tone VIII: Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thine ear.

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

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE, § 54 [LK. 10: 38-42, 11: 27-28]

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

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

Refrain: The angels, beholding the entry of the most pure one, were amazed to see the Virgin enter into the Holy of holies.

Irmos: In nowise may the hand of the defiled * touch the animate ark of God; * and let the lips of the faithful * never-silently cry out with joy to the Theotokos, * chanting the words of the angel: * Rejoice, O thou who art full of grace! * The Lord is with thee!

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.