

THE 3rd DAY OF THE MONTH OF JANUARY
FOREFEAST OF THE THEOPHANY COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY PROPHET
MALACHI & THE HOLY MARTYR GORDIUS
AT VESPERS

On “Lord, I have cried ...,” 6 Stichera: 3 of the holy prophet, in Tone VIII:

Spec. Mel.: “O Lord, even though Thou didst stand before the tribunal ...”:

Beholding the sayings * of thy divinely moved tongue * now fulfilled, O prophet, * truly marveling, I bless thee; * for with thy radiant voice * thou hast illumined the world, * proclaiming aloud ** the saving advent of the Lord.

By thine angelic life * thou didst become an angel on the earth, * and thou wast most fittingly enriched * by being called an angel, * having joined together * beauty of soul * and beauty of body, ** O all-blessed Malachi.

O Lord, * I set before Thee Thy prophet * as advocate and intercessor. * By his entreaties and prayers, * O Compassionate One, * loose Thou my wretched soul * from sins, * in that Thou art full of tender compassion, ** possessed of essential and natural goodness.

And 3 Stichera of the holy martyr, in Tone VIII:

Spec. Mel.: “O most glorious wonder ...”:

Seeing the vaunted darkness of deception, * fleeing, thou didst take thyself away, * O passion-bearer Gordius, * awaiting God; * and tested by manifold pangs, * wasted by starvation, * as a contender aware of his own power, * summoned, thou didst advance ** upon the adversary.

Great in hope, * thou didst proceed to the multitude of adversaries, * O most glorious Gordius, * holding the assembly of the iniquitous to be as naught; * and, standing in their midst as a herald of free will, * thou didst proclaim Christ aloud, * the Creator and Lord, * Who is co-beginningless, consubstantial and everlasting ** with the Father and the adored Spirit.

Beheaded by the sword, * thou didst most manifestly pass from life to life, * from death to immortality, * and from corruption to incorruption, * without awaiting the mortification of nature, * but led of thine own will to die. * O thy struggles, O passion-bearer Gordius, * whereby, O martyr, ** thou hast gladdened Christ, Who alone is compassionate!

Glory ..., Both now ..., Doxasticon of the forefeast, the composition of John the Monk, in Tone IV:

O most glorious wonder! He Who baptizeth by the Holy Spirit and fire cometh to be baptized by John in the Jordan, neither simply God nor plainly a man, but in two natures, the one only-begotten Son, seeking baptism as a man from a mortal, and as God taking away the sin of the world, and granting great mercy unto all.

On the Aposticha, these Stichera of the forefeast, in Tone VI:

Spec. Mel.: “On the third day ...”:

Behold the enlightenment of the faithful! Behold our purification desireth to enter into the streams of the river, that He might wash away the defilement of men’s evil and restore us who have been crushed.

Verse: Therefore will I remember Thee * from the land of Jordan and Hermoniem.

When he beheld thee approaching, and asking to be baptized by him, thy forerunner, O Lord, cried out with fear: “O my God, my Creator, how can I baptize Thee, Who art undefiled?”

Verse: The waters saw Thee, O God, * the waters saw Thee and were afraid.

Let us go down to the streams of the Jordan, O ye faithful, that we may clearly behold the great wonder; for the Creator of all hath manifested Himself as visible, and hath come to be baptized.

Glory ..., Both now ..., in Tone V:

Christ our God cometh to the River Jordan to be baptized, desiring to cleanse us of our iniquities by His appearance, in that He alone is good and the Lover of mankind.

Troparion of the holy martyr, in Tone IV:

In his suffering, O Lord, Thy martyr Gordius * received an imperishable crown from Thee, our God; * for, possessed of Thy might, * he set at naught the tormenters and crushed the feeble audacity of the demons. ** By his supplications save Thou our souls.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Troparion of the forefeast, in Tone IV:

Make ready, O Zebulon! * Adorn thyself, O Nephthali! * O River Jordan, leaping up, * receive thou the Master Who cometh to be baptized! * Rejoice, O Adam, with our first mother! * Hide not yourselves as ye did before in paradise; * for He who beheld you naked hath appeared, * that He may clothe you in your primal raiment. ** Christ hath appeared, desiring to make all creation new!

AT COMPLINE

Triodion I, the Irmos whereof is chanted twice, with 6 Troparia, the acrostic whereof is: "I chant the fourth", in Tone II:

ODE III

Irmos: **T**hou hast established me on the rock of faith, * and my mouth hath been emboldened against mine enemies. * For my spirit rejoiceth when I sing: * There is none as holy as our God * and none more righteous than Thee, O Lord.

Vain was the plot of Herod, who, seeking to find freedom, iniquitously slew the infants; for in being baptized Christ our Redeemer granteth life to all, which cannot be slain.

Of old the cruel edict of Herod slew the new generation of infants, filling Bethlehem with blood; but now Christ cometh to create many children of the Church through baptism

Triodion II, in Tone VI:

ODE V

Irmos: **I** seek Thee early in the morning, * Who for our sake didst mercifully empty Thyself * and willingly submit to be baptized by the hand of a servant, * O Word of God, * Grant Thy peace unto me the fallen one, * O Lover of mankind.

Having purified our minds and cleansed ourselves by partaking of the Mystery of the awesome dispensation, let us go forth to meet Christ, all ye faithful, Who cometh to cleanse us with the streams of the Jordan.

O friends, behold the voice of the Word, the luminary of the Sun, the friend of the Bridegroom, who crieth out to the people: "Repent and haste ye to purify yourselves to meet the Creator!"

ODE VIII

Triodion I

Irmos: **I**n his wrath the Chaldean Tyrant made the furnace blaze, * with heat fanned sevenfold for the servants of God; * but when he perceived that they had been saved by a greater power * he cried aloud to the Creator and Redeemer; * 'ye children bless, ye priests praise, * ye people, supremely exalt Him throughout all ages'.

Shedding streams of tears from our eyes, ye faithful, let us wash away all defilement of soul, and when Christ cometh to be baptized let us through light behold the Light within light. For the Father beareth witness to Him from heaven, and the appearance of the Holy Spirit shineth forth in the form of a dove.

Christ, Who taketh away every tear from every face, cometh forth, painlessly causing the greatly painful afflictions of our souls to cease through water, and restoring by regeneration mankind who fell prey to age, and who supremely exalteth Him throughout all ages.

Souls are rendered sacred through the fire of the Spirit and the divinely bestowed font of baptism of Him Who purifieth us from the passions, Who burneth up all the dross of vile wickedness, and giveth us the grace to cry out in compunction: Thee do we supremely exalt, O Christ, throughout all ages!

Triodion II

Irmos: All ye the faithful, who have mocked cruel Herod, * the pillar of wickedness! * let us go to the Jordan, * that we may behold Christ the Redeemer, * baptized in the flesh by the forerunner in its streams. * He Whom all creation doth bless, glorifying Him unto the ages.

Having shaken off the sleep of evil from the eyelids of our souls, let us remove wickedness from our hearts, O ye faithful, and bathe our minds with fervent tears, that we may be shown to behold Christ Who hath appeared, glorifying Him throughout the ages.

Let us not bear within us the abominable discourse of evil thoughts, but, having learned divine discourse, let us offer hymns to the Word Who for our sake hath appeared in the flesh and enlighteneth those in darkness. Him doth all creation bless, glorifying Him throughout the ages.

The depths of the hidden mystery of wisdom is now revealed to men, the abyss of the judgments of God is now disclosed to the faithful as God appeareth in the flesh on earth for the restoration of the human race. Him doth all creation bless, glorifying Him throughout the ages.

“Thou dost refuse, O John, that thou mightest accomplish it more readily, submitting to Me. Cease now, for thus it becometh us truly to fulfill all righteousness,” the Master said to the servant. Him doth all creation bless, glorifying Him throughout the ages.

Then: We praise, we bless, and we worship the Lord, hymning and supremely exalting Him throughout all ages.

Irmos: All ye the faithful, who have mocked cruel Herod, * the pillar of wickedness! * let us go to the Jordan, * that we may behold Christ the Redeemer, * baptized in the flesh by the forerunner in its streams. * He Whom all creation doth bless, glorifying Him unto the ages.

ODE IX

Triodion I

Irmos: With pure souls and undefiled lips, * come let us magnify the undefiled and most holy Mother of Emanuel, * and through her let us bring our prayer to the Child she hath born: * Spare our souls, O Christ God, and save us.

Let no one be foolish and ungrateful to Christ, despising His long-suffering patience and goodness, lest He be offended; but with fear and joy let us become His servants, chanting: Take pity on our souls, O Christ God, and save us!

The forerunner saith to the disobedient people: “Who hath shown you how to escape the coming wrath, ye spawn of vipers? Wherefore, show forth fruits worthy of repentance, crying out: Take pity on our souls, O Christ God, and save us!”

O the arrogance of blind ignorance! For people from foreign lands have done homage to Christ as the Redeemer, honoring Him with gifts; but His own people savagely sought to slay Him when He was born. Take pity on our souls, O Christ God, and save us!

Triodion II

Irmos: More honorable than the cherubim, * and beyond compare more glorious than the seraphim, * who without corruption hast given birth to God the Word: * the very Theotokos, thee do we magnify.

Fulfilling the law and the prophets and effecting righteousness, the Savior of all now boweth His head beneath the hand of His servant, rescuing mankind from slavery to the enemy.

A great light hath dawned upon the nations, a divine ray hath illumined the darkened: Christ, the Sun of righteousness, hath shone forth upon those who from of old have sat in the shadow of death.

Armies of angels surrounded the Redeemer baptized in the Jordan, and with trembling they hymned the great mystery of His ineffable condescension.

Then, the Irmos: More honorable than the cherubim, * and beyond compare more glorious than the seraphim, * who without corruption hast given birth to God the Word: * the very Theotokos, thee do we magnify.

AT MATINS

On “God is the Lord ...,” the Troparion of the forefeast, in Tone IV:

Make ready, O Zebulon! * Adorn thyself, O Nephthali! * O River Jordan, leaping up, * receive thou the Master Who cometh to be baptized! * Rejoice, O Adam, with our first mother! * Hide not yourselves as ye did before in paradise; * for He who beheld you naked hath appeared, * that He may clothe you in your primal raiment. ** Christ hath appeared, desiring to make all creation new! (Twice)

Glory ..., the Troparion of the holy martyr, in Tone IV:

In his suffering, O Lord, Thy martyr Gordius * received an imperishable crown from Thee, our God; * for, possessed of Thy might, * he set at naught the tormenters and crushed the feeble audacity of the demons. ** By his supplications save Thou our souls.

Both now ..., the Troparion of the forefeast (Once).

After the 1st chanting of the Psalter, the Sessional Hymn, in Tone III:

Spec. Mel.: “Awed by the beauty of thy virginity ...”:

He Who is infinite in His divinity, but Who hath been circumscribed by the matter of the flesh, desireth to come and be baptized in the waters of the Jordan. Let us receive Him with noetic purity, for He desireth to accomplish the restoration of all. To Him let us cry aloud with fear: glory to Thine appearance, O Christ!

Glory ..., Both now ..., Another Sessional Hymn, in the same melody:

When Thou didst appear in the Jordan, to be baptized in the flesh in its waters, O Savior, the angelic armies stood in awe, beholding the Master of creation standing before a servant and the beginningless Father proclaiming Thee from on high. Wherefore, we cry out to Thee with gladness: Glory to God Who hath been baptized!

After the 2nd chanting of the Psalter, the Sessional Hymn, in Tone V:

Spec. Mel.: “The co-beginningless Word ...”:

Beholding the Word, Who is equal in honor with the Father and the Spirit, and Who in His loving-kindness became incarnate and is baptized, the angelic choirs trembled; and the River Jordan, abashed and afraid, turned back, bearing up to the heights of salvation us who have become corrupted by the passions.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Another Sessional Hymn, in the same melody:

The Word Who is co-beginningless with the Father and the Spirit, Who in His tender compassion took on a form foreign to Him, is now come to be baptized for our sake. Let us greet Him with pure minds, crying: Blessed art Thou, O Christ, our Savior and Benefactor, Who art come to sanctify us!

Canon of the forefeast, with 6 Troparia, including the Irmos; and two canons of the saints, with 8 Troparia.

ODE I

Canon of the forefeast, the acrostic whereof is the Greek alphabet, the composition of Joseph, in Tone IV:

Irmos: I shall open my mouth, * and be filled with the Spirit, * and utter discourse to the Queen and Mother; * and be seen radiantly keeping festival, * joyfully praising her wonders.

O Lord Who lovest mankind, Who created the depths by Thy command and suspended the earth upon the waters: humbling Thyself, Thou comest forth to be baptized in the river's streams, washing me clean of the vile passions.

Thou didst willingly beggar Thyself, enriching me who of mine own will am become a pauper through evil deeds, O sinless Christ, and Thou comest forth to the waters of the Jordan, asking baptism.

Restoring the world which hath grown old through transgressions, O Lover of mankind, Thou comest to accomplish a strange regeneration for men through water and the Spirit. Wherefore, we glorify Thine appearance.

Proclaiming in prophecy through the divine Spirit, David exclaimed: "What aileth thee, O sea, that thou fleddest? And thou, Jordan, that thou didst turn back, beholding Christ standing, naked, within thee?"

Canon of the holy prophet, the acrostic whereof is: "Let the glory of Malachi be glorified by me", the composition of Theophanes, in Tone VIII:

Irmos: That which had been hewn down divided the undivided, * and land unseen was seen by the sun; * water engulfed the cruel enemy, * and Israel traversed the impassable, chanting a hymn: * Let us sing unto the Lord, * for gloriously hath He been glorified!

Rejoicing with the choir on high, and joining chorus gladly therewith, and delighting as is meet in divine enlightenment, O thou who art inspired by God, by thy supplication preserve those who celebrate thine honored memory with faith and chant unto the Lord.

Resplendent with the beauty and comeliness of thine angelic soul and thy body, O divinely eloquent son, thou didst splendidly receive the heavenly effulgence of divine radiance, and, rejoicing, didst cry aloud: Let us chant unto the Lord, for gloriously hath He been glorified!

Leading a blameless life, adorned with magnificence, and cleansing thyself with goodly traits, O most blessed one, thou didst become a prophet of true piety, crying: Let us chant unto the Lord, for gloriously hath He been glorified!

Theotokion: O pure Mother of Almighty God, O Sovereign Lady sprung forth from the root of royalty, who gavest rise to the One God Who reigneth over all, and hast given birth to Him supra-naturally in the flesh: Save me from misfortunes, who chant to thy Son: For gloriously hath He been glorified!

Canon of the holy martyr, the acrostic whereof is: “I hymn the martyr Gordius with sweet hymnody”, the composition of Theophanes, in Tone VIII:

Irmos: Let us sing unto the Lord, * who led His people through the Red Sea: * for He alone hath gloriously been glorified.

O all-blessed Gordius who art known to be a witness of the Truth, by thy supplications grant me radiant grace from heaven.

Let us chant unto the Lord Who strengthened the passion-bearer against the adversary and hath adorned him with a crown of victory.

Made strong by the power and full armor of the King of all, O most glorious one, thou didst set at naught the malice of the tyrants.

Theotokion: O Bride of God, thou wast shown to be the habitation of Him Who poureth forth upon all men life, the waters which flow unto immortality.

ODE III

Canon of the forefeast

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

Be glad, O human nature, thou arid desert; for, lo! Christ, the restoration of all, the Water of life, hath appeared, watering thee with grace newly sprung forth!

Thou comest forth to the waters to seek me out who have gone astray in mind, O Christ; and entering them, Thou drownest my transgressions, leading me up from the abyss of all evil, in that Thou art compassionate.

Having beheld Thee naked, O Word, the sun hid its rays; for Thou comest to clothe in the garment of salvation, through honored baptism, me who have been stripped naked through the deception of the serpent.

Canon of the holy prophet

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

Rejoice now, O blessed and God-pleasing Malachi, beholding the fulfillment and accomplishment of thy prophecies!

The noetic Sun of righteousness hath shone forth, Who hath healing on His wings, as Thou didst foretell, O divinely inspired one.

Theotokion: All my hope do I place in thee, O all-immaculate one, and, rejoicing, I stretch forth my soul and mind toward thee.

Canon of the holy martyr

Irmos: There is none as holy as the Lord, * and none as righteous as our God, * Whom the whole of creation hymns: * There is none more righteous than Thee, O Lord.

Mindful of the inconstancy of transitory things, and pondering the constancy of those things which are abiding, O blessed and glorious martyr, thou didst fearlessly enter the arena of suffering.

Thou didst put away fleeting vainglory, O thou who art spiritually rich, and didst cleave unto those things which are everlasting; and, fleeing from fallen mankind, O divinely wise one, thou didst earn the right to dwell with the angels.

Putting aside earthly knowledge, O martyr, thou didst find a heavenly life; for, unable to endure the sight of the arrogance of delusion, thou didst withdraw into the wilderness.

Theotokion: There is none as blameless as thee, O Sovereign Lady, and none more pure than thee, O all-immaculate one; for in thy womb thou didst contain the Creator of all, Who alone is greatly merciful.

Kontakion of the holy prophet, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: “Thou hast appeared ...”:

Enriched by the gift of prophecy, O prophet, * thou didst manifestly proclaim the advent of Christ and salvation to the world, ** by Whose radiance the world hath been illumined.

Kontakion of the holy martyr, in Tone VIII:

Spec. Mel.: “As first-fruits ...”:

The drops of thy sweat have watered the whole earth, O most glorious Gordius, * and thou hast gladdened the whole world with thy precious blood. * By thy supplications, O divinely wise one, save all who hymn and bless thee with faith, ** crying out a worthy hymn to thee, O all-praised one, as a great athlete.

Sessional Hymn of the holy prophet, in Tone VIII:

Spec. Mel.: “Of the Wisdom ...”:

Enriched by the grace of prophecy, by the Spirit thou wast divinely taught the knowledge of things to come, O divinely inspired and most noetically rich Malachi, foretelling to all the advent of Christ and the divine summoning of the nations. Wherefore, celebrating thine honored memory, we sing to thee with love and bless thee with faith, crying out to thee, O glorious one: Entreat Christ God, that He grant forgiveness of sins to those who honor thy holy memory with love.

Glory ..., Sessional Hymn of the holy martyr, in the same melody:

Aflame with the love of Jesus, O wise martyr, of thine own will thou didst zealously give thyself over to death, and stand in the midst of the tribunal, crying aloud to the tyrants: "Behold, I am come!" Wherefore, having denounced falsehood with boldness, thou wast beheaded by the sword, O glorious one, and passed over to life everlasting. O all-praised one, entreat Christ God, that He grant forgiveness of sins unto those who honor thy holy memory with love.

Both now ..., Sessional Hymn of the forefeast, in Tone VIII:

Spec. Mel.: "Of the shepherds ...":

The choir of the prophets rejoiceth, proclaiming the baptism of Christ which poureth forth life. Isaiah saith: "Draw forth the purifying water!" And the ancestor of God writeth: "Why doth the sea flee from before the face of God Who of His own will saveth the human race?"

ODE IV

Canon of the forefeast

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

Heaven and the angelic armies were stricken with awe, beholding Thee as a servant, O Christ, coming to Thy servant and asking baptism.

Leap up, O John! For The Lord Who delivereth all hath come to bow down humbly beneath thy hand, that through divine baptism He might raise me, the lowly one.

Bowing down the heavens, Thou didst descend into the Virgin, O Lover of mankind, and bowing Thy head before John, asked for baptism. Glory to Thy surpassing loving-kindness!

Loosing the countless bonds of mine sins, O Word, Thou dost hasten to come to the waters of the Jordan to be baptized. O Master, glory to Thy surpassing loving-kindness!

Canon of the holy prophet

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

As a prophet of the goodness of the Godhead, O blessed one, thou didst proclaim to all the nations the deliverance which hath taken place.

Having learned through the Spirit of the supra-natural incarnation of the Word, O blessed Malachi, thou didst proclaim the ineffable mystery.

Theotokion: On thee have I set mine every hope of salvation and the direction of my life, O joyous Virgin Mary.

Canon of the holy martyr

Irmos: From the overshadowed mountain, * from the only Theotokos, * the Prophet in divine vision * foresaw Thy coming in the flesh, O Word, * and with fear he glorified Thy power.

Having heard the words of Christ, rejoicing, thou didst leave the corrupt army and enroll in the army of the King of heaven, O blessed crown-bearer, martyr Gordius.

The mountains of the tyrants and the hills of the idols were broken, O martyr, by the patient suffering of thee who approached them with boldness, O crown-bearer.

Thou wast strengthened by the divine power of the Cross, that thou mightest cry aloud against the ungodly council: “For those who seek me not, I am found! And trusting now, I appear to those who ask not!”

Thou didst wholly incite the wrath of the tyrant against thee, O divinely wise one, and he marveled at the intention and the uprising of thy soul.

Theotokion: O Mary Theotokos, Bride of God, deliver me from cruel transgressions and misfortunes, and by thy supplications guide me toward the calm haven of salvation.

ODE V

Canon of the forefeast

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

Taking pity on human nature, which had fallen far away from God, the Word of God manifested Himself as a man and through God-given baptism doth divinely unite it to Himself, restoring it to its original dignity.

O most compassionate Bestower of life, thou comest to bring life, through the streams of the Jordan, to us who have become mortal through disobedience. Wherefore, we now faithfully glorify Thine appearance and ineffable mercy.

Every soul doth marvel, pondering Thine awesome dispensation, O Word: how, desiring to restore all, Thou Who art clothed with light comest to enter the river's streams naked.

Canon of the holy prophet

Irmos: Thou hast enlightened * with the knowledge of God * the ends of the universe * that lay in the night of ignorance, * do Thou also, O Lord, illumine me * with the dawning of Thy love for mankind.

Illumined by the divine Spirit, thou didst proclaim the awesome day of the advent of Christ, O divinely wise Malachi.

He Who removeth and washeth away the defilement of men's souls with grace, as with medicinal herbs, hath thus glorified thee, O divinely wise one.

Theotokion: **B**y thy Life-bearing birthgiving thou didst destroy the might of death, O all-holy Virgin Maiden, pouring forth life indestructible.

Canon of the holy martyr

Irmos: **T**hou hast enlightened * with the knowledge of God * the ends of the universe * that lay in the night of ignorance, * do Thou also, O Lord, illumine me * with the dawning of Thy love for mankind.

Entering the arena fearlessly and valiantly like a lion, O blessed one, thou didst regard the mindless idols as stones devoid of souls.

Instructed by the teachings of the divinely inspired Scriptures, O martyr Gordius, thou didst find them all conducive to salvation.

Perceiving thy firm opposition, O divinely wise one, the tyrant was broken by thy steadfastness, as a wave is broken upon a rock.

Theotokion: **H**e Who transcendently became incarnate from thy womb, O most pure Virgin, hath illumined the world with the radiance of divine knowledge.

ODE VI

Canon of the forefeast

Irmos: **C**elebrating the divine and solemn feast * of the Mother of God * O ye divinely wise, * let us come, clapping our hands, * and glorify God who was born of her.

O ye who from of old have sat in the darkness, beholding the Light Which is come, be ye filled with joy! Lo! the Lord hath appeared, clothed in the streams of the Jordan.

How is it that the forerunner beheld Thee coming and asking for divine baptism, O Savior? How is it that the waters of the Jordan received thee, Who art the Water of forgiveness?

In gladness let the clouds drop forth noetic joy, for lo! the Lord hath come to be baptized, removing the clouds of darkness from our hearts.

Canon of the holy prophet

Irmos: **I** will pour out my prayer unto the Lord, * and to Him will I proclaim my grief; * for my soul is filled with evils, * and my life unto Hades hath drawn nigh, * and like Jonah I pray unto Thee: * Raise me up from corruption, O my God.

Thy wise mind illumined by the very effulgence of God, thou didst set thyself apart from things here below and wast granted knowledge of things to come; for thou didst foretell the calling of the gentiles and the ending of the force of the law.

Truly the Lord, Whom we sought in joy, hath come into the temple which He Himself wisely made of the blessed Virgin, as He said, shining forth from God, O glorious Malachi.

Theotokion: **H**e Who is beginningless and consubstantial with the Father hath ineffably been born, assuming flesh as the only-begotten Child of the Virgin, and hath preserved as Virgin her who gave Him birth; for He is truly God, even though He hath assumed human nature.

Canon of the holy martyr

Irmos: **A**s Thou didst deliver the prophet from the depths * of the abyss, **O Christ God,** * so deliver me also from my sins, * **O Lover of mankind,** * and guide my life, I pray Thee.

Shedding his blood, O Master, Gordius maketh himself a sacred sacrifice and offereth himself to Thee as a pleasing oblation, emulating thy voluntary suffering.

He who is senseless in mind promised corruptible glory to thee who wast rich in incorruptible glory and had laid up a wealth of immortality, O Gordius.

Directing thy hope toward God, thou didst pass through the inconstancy of life, and, beheaded by the sword, thou didst pass over to the broad expanse of heaven.

Theotokion: **R**aise up my mind which hath been slain by the threefold waves of the passions, O thou who hast given birth to Christ, the eternal Life, Who bestoweth healings upon all.

Kontakion of the forefeast, in Tone IV: Spec. Mel.: "Thou hast appeared today ...":

In the streams of the Jordan the Lord crieth out to John today: * Fear not to baptize Me, ** for I have come to save Adam the first-formed!

Ikos: "I do not require thee to transgress the bounds of what is meet, O Baptist; I am not saying unto thee: Tell Me what thou tellest the iniquitous, and what thou teachest sinners. Only baptize Me in silence, awaiting those things which come through baptism; for it is for the sake of this that thou hast received a dignity which even the angels do not possess; for I have made thee greater than all the prophets. Thus, not one of them beheld Me plainly, but only in images, shadows and reflections; but thou beheldest Me standing before thee. For I am come to save Adam the first-formed!"

ODE VII

Canon of the forefeast

Irmos: **R**eфusing to worship created things * in place of the Creator, * the divinely wise youths bravely trampled down the threatening fire * and rejoicing they sang aloud: * **O supremely hymned Lord and God of our Fathers,** Blessed art Thou.

Having had mercy on me, who am broken by transgressions and lie in the darkness of disobedience, O Lord, thou didst take pity on me in Thy goodness, and came to be baptized in the waters of the Jordan, O Master.

“**W**hat is this awesome sight?” the ranks of the angels cried aloud. “He Who created the lakes and rivers by His command hath come to clothe Himself in the rivers of the Jordan; for thereby He restoreth Adam!”

Ineffable are the heights and unfathomable is the abyss of Thy dispensation, O Master, transcending every attainment of the mind. How is it that Thou cleanseest mortals with water and the all-holy Spirit?

Canon of the holy prophet

Irmos: **The Hebrew children in the furnace * boldly trampled upon the flames, * changing the fire into dew, they cried aloud: * ‘Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, throughout the ages’.**

O glorious Prophet Malachi, thou didst foretell the most honored advent of Him Who hath dominion over all things, crying: Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, throughout the ages!

O Compassionate One, accept Thou the glorious Prophet Malachi, who prayeth for those who piously chant and cry aloud: Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, throughout the ages!

Theotokion: **O** compassionate Word of God, Who didst clothe Thyself in me through the pure Virgin, without commingling Thou didst wholly unite Thyself hypostatically with all of me. Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, throughout the ages!

Canon of the holy martyr

Irmos: **Thou didst bedew the Children in the furnace, * and Thou didst preserve Thy Mother as a Virgin after childbirth: * Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers.**

Having attained the glory of martyrdom, O crowned one, thou hast joined chorus with the angels, crying out to Christ: Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers!

Possessed of the boldness of piety, thou didst denounce the wicked, chanting aloud: Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers!

Pray thou now, that they be delivered from transgressions who honor thy precious memory with faith and chant aloud: Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers!

Theotokion: **O** all-pure and blessed Birthgiver of God, having given birth to God without seed, thou dost cleanse the poisonous wounds inflicted by the thorns of sins by thine outpouring of healings.

ODE VIII

Canon of the forefeast

Irmos: **The offspring of the Theotokos * saved the Holy Children in the furnace. * He who was then prefigured hath now been born on earth, * and He gathereth all creation to hymn thee: * all ye works praise ye the Lord * and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages.**

The voice of the Father beareth witness from on high to Thee, the consubstantial Son, Who entereth the waters and hath thereby sent forth Thy blessing, O blessed Christ; and the Holy Spirit proclaimeth Thee to all as God incarnate.

Dance, O creation, beholding the holy epiphany of God! Chant, ye angels! Rejoice, O sea! Ye lands and well-springs, leap up! Ye rivers, mystically clap your hands in hymnody! Christ hath stood forth, illumining you with blessings!

Let us sing in laudation to the Lord Who hath appeared in the waters, thereby mending our broken state and crushing the heads of the invisible foe; and let us cry aloud: Hymn the Lord, ye works, and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

O wonder of wonders! How is it that our God, Who is above all creation, taketh on our guise and is made new through the Theotokos? How is it that of His own will the only Benefactor restoreth and reneweth us through water and the Spirit in a wondrous restoration?

Canon of the holy prophet

Irmos: **By Thy grace the children became vanquishers * of both the tyrant and the flames, * carefully observing Thy commandments, * wherefore they cried aloud: * Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!**

Having made thyself a stranger to every material manifestation, O sacred one, thou didst show thyself to be an undefiled mirror of divine radiance, chanting: Bless the Lord!, all ye works, and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

Thou wast a beholder of ineffable glory, O blessed one, and a proclaimer of the mysteries of heaven, chanting unceasingly: Bless the Lord, all ye works, and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

Theotokion: **A**cknowledging thee as the Mother of Life and Bearer of God, O Virgin Mother, we all bless thee with Orthodox faith, blessing and supremely exalting thine Offspring throughout all ages, O pure one.

Canon of the holy martyr

Irmos: **T**reading down the fiery flame in the furnace, * the divinely eloquent children sang: * ‘Bless the Lord, ye works of the Lord’.

The grace which followed thee, shining forth invisibly, O martyr, filled thee with valor, who criest: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Running thy course quickly, O athlete, thou didst reach the kingdom, thy desired end, crying out: Bless the Lord, ye works of the Lord!

The glory and the immortal praise of Thy martyrs abideth throughout all ages! O all ye works, let us bless the Lord!

Theotokion: **C**onceiving the incarnate Word, Who before was incorporeal, O virgin, thou didst abolish the ancient curse of Eve, giving birth to the Blessing of the world.

ODE IX

Canon of the forefeast

Irmos: **L**et every mortal born on earth, * radiant with light, in spirit leap for joy; * and let the host of the angelic powers * celebrate and honor the holy feast of the Mother of God, * and let them cry aloud: * Rejoice! O all-blessed Theotokos, * thou pure Ever-Virgin.

Behold, the Lamb Who taketh away the transgressions of mankind hath come and stood before His servant, asking baptism; and He standeth forth like a servant, seeking to set us free, who have been enslaved by the deceiver, having destroyed our pristine beauty.

God Who became incarnate in His goodness hath manifestly appeared! He Who hath truly clothed the heavens in clouds cometh forth to be clothed in the waters of the Jordan! Wherefore, with joy we now celebrate the honored forefeast of His epiphany.

Leap up with joy and prepare thyself to embrace the Water which floweth to life everlasting, O Jordan! Ye rivers, join chorus, beholding now the Torrent of nourishment entering the streams of the Jordan and drying up the outpourings of evil.

The day of salvation hath now dawned upon us who ever sleep in the night of evils! For Christ the Lord, Who is understood to be the Sun of righteousness, hath stood forth to bow His head before His servant and to be baptized in the flesh of His own will.

O all-immaculate one, the cherubim and all the heavenly beings are in awe of thy precious birthgiving, which surpasseth all understanding, to Him Who became like unto us in His ineffable compassion and hath been baptized in the flesh. His divine epiphany do we all now celebrate, rejoicing.

Canon of the holy prophet

Irmos: **A**ll are awestruck at hearing of God's ineffable condescension, * for the Most High voluntarily descended and assumed flesh, * becoming man in the Virgin's womb; * wherefore we the faithful magnify the most pure Theotokos.

The divinely radiant and honored feast of the prophet hath dawned, illumining with the splendors of prophecy those who come with faith and chant hymns; and it poureth forth healings upon all souls, manifestly enlightening the divinely wise.

By Thy life-creating and mighty right hand, O greatly merciful one, preserve Thy Church through the entreaties of Thy favored one, Who foretold to us that Thou wouldst become a man, thereby shining forth salvation and deliverance upon our souls.

Theotokion: I embrace mature life, unharmed by the tree of knowledge; for thou, O all-immaculate one, hast budded forth Christ, the Tree of life, Who showeth to all how to enter into life. Wherefore, O most pure one, we the faithful declare thee to be the Theotokos.

Canon of the holy martyr

Irmos: The prophetic vision of the lawgiver on the mountain, * in the fire of the burning bush, * prefigured thy birthgiving O Ever-Virgin, * the salvation of us the faithful, * wherefore with never silent hymns we magnify thee.

Entreat the Master to be merciful unto those who honor thee with faith and celebrate thy radiant and honored festival, O Gordius, adornment of the martyrs.

Delighting now in incorruptible food, in the vision of God and never-waning light, O Gordius, thou receivest the fruits of thy struggles in the eternal mansions.

Disdaining fleeting glory which is corrupt and worthy to be trampled underfoot, O divinely wise martyr, thou dost truly delight now in everlasting glory and joy, standing before the throne of the Master.

Theotokion: Saved from the ancient curse by thy divine birthgiving, O Virgin, and hymning it as is meet, we cry aloud with unceasing voices: Rejoice, O Theotokos, our hope!

Exapostilarion of the forefeast:

Spec. Mel.: “By the Spirit in the sanctuary ...”:

Leaving Bethlehem, the most glorious wonder, let us hasten with fervor of soul to the Jordan, and there let us behold an awesome mystery; for my Christ, having stripped Himself naked, standeth forth divinely, clothing me in the raiment of the heavenly kingdom.

Glory ..., Both now ..., the foregoing is repeated.

On the Praises, 4 Stichera of the forefeast, in Tone VI:

Spec. Mel.: “The angelic hosts ...”:

The Master, Who hath heaven for His throne, hath come to earth, incarnate of the Virgin; and, standing forth in the Jordan, He asketh of John the cleansing of all. O all ye lands of the earth, let us chant to Him: Blessed art Thou Who hast appeared! O our God, glory be to Thee!

Christ arriveth at the streams of the Jordan; He Who washeth sins away asketh baptism. Let all the earth leap up, and let the heavens be glad! Rejoice, O Church of the nations, having been wedded to the King, and cry out with faith: Blessed art Thou Who hast appeared! O our God, glory be to Thee!

Let the mountains exude the sweetness of gladness! Clap your hands now mystically, O ye nations! Let the desert burst into bloom! Leap up, O Jordan! Come thou, O Baptist, and, rejoicing, minister to the mystery of the Redeemer! O ye people, let us chant: Blessed art Thou Who hast appeared! O our God, glory be to Thee!

O Light Who shone forth from the Light before time began, Who hast appeared to those who sit in the night: cleanse away the darkness of sin and shine forth the light! Dance, O Adam, and be glad, O Eve! Christ our deliverance is come! Cry out, O David: Blessed art Thou Who hast appeared! O our God, glory be to Thee!

Glory ..., in the same melody:

A star hath shone forth from Jacob upon the world, and, taking the flaming sin of mankind, He burieth it in the waters of the Jordan, shining forth with the radiance of divinity and granting the enlightenment of divine knowledge to the nations. Blessed art Thou Who hast appeared! O our God, glory be to Thee!

Both now ..., in the same melody:

As the fulfillment of the law in the flesh, in that He is full of loving-kindness Christ hath come to the Jordan to bring about the first-fruits of salvation; and He boweth His head before the Baptist, who crieth out with faith: “O ye people, let us cry aloud: Blessed art Thou Who hast appeared! O our God, glory be to Thee!”

On the Aposticha, these Stichera, in Tone II:

Spec. Mel.: “O house of Ephratha ...”:

Leaving Bethlehem, * let us pass over * to the Jordan, * for there the Light beginneth to shine ** upon those in darkness.

Verse: Therefore will I remember Thee * from the land of Jordan and Hermoniem.

O lands of Zebulon, * which lie on either bank * of the Jordan, * hear yet Christ approacheth, ** our salvation, light and deliverance!

Verse: The Hermoniem waters saw Thee, O God, * the waters saw Thee and were afraid.

O River Jordan, * prepare thou thy streams, * for He Who baptizeth with fire * approacheth to restore ** His creation, which had been broken.

Glory ..., Both now ..., in the same melody:

The effulgence of the Father’s glory * hath appeared * in the streams of the Jordan, * washing away with baptism ** the defilement of our souls.

AT LITURGY

On the Beatitudes, 6 Troparia: 3 from ODE III and 3 from ODE VI of the canon of the forefeast.

Be glad, O human nature, thou arid desert; for, lo! Christ, the restoration of all, the Water of life, hath appeared, watering thee with grace newly sprung forth!

Thou comest forth to the waters to seek me out who have gone astray in mind, O Christ; and entering them, Thou drownest my transgressions, leading me up from the abyss of all evil, in that Thou art compassionate.

Having beheld Thee naked, O Word, the sun hid its rays; for Thou comest to clothe in the garment of salvation, through honored baptism, me who have been stripped naked through the deception of the serpent.

O ye who from of old have sat in the darkness, beholding the Light Which is come, be ye filled with joy! Lo! the Lord hath appeared, clothed in the streams of the Jordan.

How is it that the forerunner beheld Thee coming and asking for divine baptism, O Savior? How is it that the waters of the Jordan received thee, Who art the Water of forgiveness?

In gladness let the clouds drop forth noetic joy, for lo! the Lord hath come to be baptized, removing the clouds of darkness from our hearts.

Troparion of the forefeast, in Tone IV:

Make ready, O Zebulon! * Adorn thyself, O Nephthali! * O River Jordan, leaping up, * receive thou the Master Who cometh to be baptized! * Rejoice, O Adam, with our first mother! * Hide not yourselves as ye did before in paradise; * for He who beheld you naked hath appeared, * that He may clothe you in your primal raiment. ** Christ hath appeared, desiring to make all creation new!

Troparion of the Temple: (Theotokos or Saint)

Troparion of the holy martyr, in Tone IV:

In his suffering, O Lord, Thy martyr Gordius * received an imperishable crown from Thee, our God; * for, possessed of Thy might, * he set at naught the tormenters and crushed the feeble audacity of the demons. ** By his supplications save Thou our souls.

Kontakion of the holy prophet, in Tone IV:

Enriched by the gift of prophecy, O prophet, * thou didst manifestly proclaim the advent of Christ and salvation to the world, ** by Whose radiance the world hath been illumined.

**Kontakion of the Temple: (Theotokos or Saint)
Glory ..., Kontakion of the holy martyr, in Tone VIII:**

The drops of thy sweat have watered the whole earth, O all-glorious Gordius, * and thou hast gladdened the whole world with thy precious blood. * By thy supplications, O divinely wise one, save all who hymn and bless thee with faith, ** crying out a worthy hymn to thee, O all-praised one, as a great athlete.

Both now ..., Kontakion of the forefeast, in Tone IV:

In the streams of the Jordan the Lord crieth out to John today: * Fear not to baptize Me, ** for I have come to save Adam the first-formed!

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

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

EPISTLE OF PAUL TO TIMOTHY §292; (Tim, 2:1-10)

Timothy my child: Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully. The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits. Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things. Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead, according to my gospel: wherein I suffer trouble, as an evildoer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

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

Verse: They that are planted in the house of the Lord, in the courts of our God they shall blossom forth.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW, §36 (10:16-22)

The Lord said to His disciples: Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their

synagogues; and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

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