

THE 9th DAY OF THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER
AFTERFEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS
COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY & RIGHTEOUS ANCESTORS OF GOD, JOACHIM
& ANNA COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY MARTYR SEVERIAN
AT VESPERS

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

Spec. Mel.: “Joy of the ranks of heaven ...”:

Joachim and Anna hold festival, * having given birth to the only Theotokos, * the beginning of our salvation; * and with them we also celebrate today, * blessing the pure Virgin ** who sprang forth from the root of Jesse.

Today the Maiden in whom God was contained, * the pure Theotokos and glory of the prophets, * the daughter of David, * is born from Joachim and the chaste Anna, * and by her nativity ** she hath annulled the curse passed on to us by Adam.

She who before was as a barren land * giveth birth to fertile ground, * and, having given forth a holy fruit from her fruitless womb, * she nurtureth her with milk. O awesome wonder! * The nurturer of our Life, who received the Bread of heaven in her womb ** is nourished with milk at her mother’s breasts!

And 3 Stichera of the righteous ones, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: “Thou hast given a sign ...”:

Come, let us now join chorus with hymnody, * O ye who love the feasts of the Church, * and with faith let us hold festival, * honoring the memory of Joachim and Anna, the honored couple; * for they gave birth to the Mother of God for us, * the pure Virgin. * Wherefore, they have passed from transitory things over to that which is incorrupt, * to the mansions of everlasting life, ** praying that we be saved.

Today all creation is adorned with gladness, * O all-hymned Theotokos, * offering up, with oneness of mind, the annual commemoration * of thy parents, * celebrating together * the wondrous Joachim and Anna; * for they have become the mediators of joy, * having past hope put thee forth, the nurturer of our Life, ** who hast caused the Light to shine forth.

Today Anna rejoiceth, leaping up in spirit, * and she is filled with joyful gladness, * having obtained her desire, * the fertility which she had long desired; * for she put forth the fruit of the promise and blessing, * the all-immaculate Mary * who gave birth to our God, * and given birth to the only Theotokos, ** the beginning of our salvation.

Glory ..., Both now ..., the composition of Ephraim of Karyes, in Tone V:

O blessed twain; ye have surpassed all parents, in that ye gave rise to her who transcendeth all creation. Truly blessed art thou, O Joachim, having become the father of such a maiden! And blessed is thy womb, O Anna, for thou hast put forth the Mother of our Life! Blessed are the breasts wherewith thou didst nourish with milk her who nurtured Him Who sustaineth every creation! Him do ye entreat, we beseech you, O all-blessed one, that our souls find mercy!

But if this service is celebrated on Friday evening: Glory ..., the foregoing Doxasticon of the saints; Both now ..., the Dogmaticon of the current tone.

On the Aposticha, these Stichera of the feast, in Tone II:

Spec. Mel.: “When from the Tree ...”:

Of a truth, the divinely wise Anna, * beholding a nest of birds in a tree, * was mindful of her own barrenness, * and cried aloud: “Woe is me, O Lord! * I alone, a sinner, am left bereft of fruitfulness * by Thee, O Lord!” * Then God, Who is the Lover of mankind, * gave her the Virgin as fruit, ** the most precious of all creation.

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

Of a truth, the divinely wise Anna, * conscious of her barren state and childlessness, * cried out to God in supplication: * “Loose Thou the grievous bond of my barrenness, * that I may give birth to a child * who will give birth to Thee, the Word!” * And Thou didst grant her this, O Master Christ, Bestower of life; * for her offspring gave birth to Thee, ** the Savior of all mankind.

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

God the Master truly hearkened to thy supplication, * as He did that of Sarah of old, * when thou didst hear the voice of the angel * announcing joyous tidings unto thee: * “Thou shalt give birth to the Mother of God!” * And thou didst cry out in gladness of soul: * “The Master and Lord, my God and Creator, * hath of a truth lifted my reproach, ** for I shall give birth to the Ever-virgin!”

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

Joachim and Anna, the holy couple and holy mates, who from a barren womb put forth the holy Theotokos as a staff, from whom Christ God shone forth salvation upon the world, having been translated to the mansions of heaven, with their most pure Virgin daughter, join chorus with the angels, making supplication for the world. And we, assembling with them, say, piously chanting: O ye who were called the ancestors of Christ by the divine Maiden and most pure Mary, pray for our souls.

Troparion of the righteous ones, in Tone II:

Celebrating the memory of Thy righteous ones, * O Lord, through them we entreat Thee: ** Save Thou our souls!

Or this Troparion, in Tone I:

Joachim and Anna, who were righteous in the law of grace, * have given birth for us unto a God-given babe. * Wherefore, the divine Church keepeth splendid festival today, * celebrating their honored memory with gladness, * glorifying God Who hath lifted up the horn of salvation for us ** in the house of David.

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

Thy nativity, O Virgin Theotokos, * hath proclaimed joy to all the world; * for from thee hath shone forth Christ our God, the Sun of righteousness, * Who, having annulled the curse, hath given His blessing, ** and having abolished death, hath granted us life everlasting.

AT COMPLINE

Canon of the holy martyr Severian, in Tone VIII:

ODE I

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

Thou didst spurn the command of the ungodly to sacrifice to inanimate and deaf idols; and Christ hath won a victory through thy mighty and valiant martyric opposition.

The tyrant freed from bonds those who rejected Christ, yet all whom he found worshipping Him as God he began to torture in every way; but when he came to thee, O divinely wise one, he was put to shame.

Valiantly hastening to the tribunal, O martyr, thou didst amaze the ungodly one; and with boldness thou didst denounce the weakness, corruption and impotence of the pagan gods.

Theotokion: Thou alone, O Maiden, didst contain within thy womb Him Whom the heavens cannot contain, Who as god made His abode within thee and through thee assumed human nature.

ODE III

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.

Pitilessly afflicted with wounds for Christ, O wise one, thou didst rejoice; for thou didst receive a most excellent reward for thy pangs.

Lacerated with cords while repeatedly flogged by the tormenters, O glorious one, thou didst not feel it, for it was as though thou wast in another's body.

Thou didst find thy reward with Christ, O wise one, receiving the crown of righteousness and never-ending joy.

Theotokion: Foreseeing thee of old, Solomon cried out in hymns: "Thou hast become my dear one, wholly beautiful and most immaculate!"

ODE IV

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

Hoping to soften thy might with kindness and vanquish thee, O martyr, the tyrant thought to shoot arrows at heaven.

"O foolish one, dost thou not sense the power of Christ which strengtheneth me against pain and labors?" didst thou cry to the tyrant, O most glorious one.

“If power were not given me from on high,” Severian cried out to the tyrant, “how would I have been able to endure the severing of my members, since I am flesh?”

Theotokion: O most holy Bride of God, grant me help by thine entreaties, that I may be delivered from the deceiver and may glorify thee, my hope.

ODE V

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

Thou wast uplifted upon a tree, O glorious one, thy body raked with iron claws, for Him Who hath dominion over all.

“O my God,” thou didst cry, “strengthen me for this struggle, that, lacerated, I may complete this martyrdom!”

As the tyrant beheld thee untiringly enduring tortures, O glorious one, the wretched one was filled with awe.

Theotokion: O Theotokos, my hope, intercession and protection, from the temptations of the serpent save me by thine entreaties.

ODE VI

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

The cruel one imprisoned thee in a dungeon and with starvation sought to compel thee to deny Christ Whom Thou hadst loved from thy youth, O blessed one.

Cast into prison, O wise one, thou didst exhort all who beheld thee to not fall away from Christ, teaching them with boldness.

The cruel and mindless tyrant commanded that thou be beheaded with the sword, O martyr, for not offering sacrifice to the idols; but thou didst pay him no heed.

Theotokion: On the day of judgment, O Lady Bride of God, cause me to be clothed in a robe of light by thy supplications, for I hymn thee.

Sessional Hymn of the holy martyr, in Tone I:

Spec. Mel.: “The choir of the angels ...”:

Armed with valor of soul, O divinely wise and most noetically rich martyr, thou didst give thyself over to divers torments, afire with love for the Master. Wherefore, thou didst denounce the savagery of the tyrants and hast received from God an imperishable crown of victory.

ODE VII

Irmos: O Thou who in the beginning founded the earth * and by Thy word made the heavens firm, * blessed art Thou throughout the ages, * O Lord God of our Fathers.

With a sharp stone the ungodly one smashed thy mouth, which preached Christ with boldness in the midst of the all-iniquitous; and having received His glory, thou hast now joined chorus there.

Suspended aloft upon a wall, O spiritual athlete, and affixed to a hard rock by the great wrath of the tyrant, thou didst not deny Christ, the supremely glorious God of our fathers.

O thy steadfast opposition, O blessed one! O thy fervent love for the Creator, for which He hath adorned thee with an imperishable crown, in that thou didst suffer well.

Theotokion: **T**hou art my light, O Virgin Theotokos, thou art my joy, my protection and refuge, O blessed one; and I glorify thee who hast given birth unto the God of our fathers.

ODE VIII

Irmos: **The King of heaven, * Who is glorified by the hosts of angels, * let us praise and supremely exalt throughout all ages.**

Thou didst endure wounding to the end, O most blessed warrior of Christ, and didst pass over, rejoicing, to the kingdom on high.

Because of Christ thou wast not put to shame, O thou of valiant mind, enduring divers torments; wherefore, thou hast been glorified throughout all ages.

As one crowned, truly dancing with the spiritual athletes around the King, remember those who celebrate thy memory with faith.

Theotokion: **O** Birthgiver of God, intercessor for Christians: rescue us from all want, that we may hymn thee throughout all ages.

ODE IX

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

Thy mangled body was buried as something holy by the hands of those who loved thee, O blessed one, and it poureth forth streams of healing, unto the glory of God.

O the wonder! How is it that a dead youth arose and greeted thy body on the way as it was borne to burial, O most wondrous martyr?

Having received the eternal kingdom, O blessed one, standing in honor before the Master, pray thou fervently on behalf of those who hymn thee.

Theotokion: **T**he ranks of the angels were amazed, beholding thee, the Ever-virgin, bearing the incarnate Creator of the ages.

Stichera of the holy martyr, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: “Thou hast given a sign ...”:

Scourged with cords * for Christ’s sake, O glorious one, * suspended upon a tree, * thy flesh pitilessly lacerated with sharp blades, * when thou wast commanded to offer sacrifice to the idols * thou didst not deny the Lord of all, O wise one; * but with thy pangs thou didst denounce * the weakness and evil of idolatry, ** and didst become a companion of the angels.

Rejoicing, thou didst set thyself apart for the contest * as a lawful spiritual athlete, O right wondrous one, * with valiant mind * paying no heed to the tortures, O martyr; * and thou didst strive to emulate Christ * by thy death, O wondrous one. * Wherefore, Jesus, Who is the Lover of mankind, * the Savior of our souls, ** hath adorned thee with the crown of His kingdom.

Glory ..., in the same melody:

Led forth as a prisoner, adorned with wounds, * thou didst admonish those who looked on * to emulate thy character, O blessed one, * looking toward the rewards of heaven * which impart great gladness and beauty, * in that they are incorrupt * and last forever, * making those who abide therein ** heirs in the Spirit.

Both now ..., of the feast, in the same melody:

Today the divine wealth * of the grace of the Master * hath been poured forth upon all the ends of the world * by the well-spring of the barren one * which truly poureth forth gifts * and proclaimeth its origin * unto those who honor her nativity with love * and cry aloud: O almighty Jesus, ** Thou art the Savior of our souls!

AT MATINS

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

Thy nativity, O Virgin Theotokos, * hath proclaimed joy to all the world; * for from thee hath shone forth Christ our God, the Sun of righteousness, * Who, having annulled the curse, hath given His blessing, ** and having abolished death, hath granted us life everlasting. (Twice)

Glory ..., Troparion of the righteous ones, in Tone II:

Joachim and Anna, who were righteous in the law of grace, * have given birth for us unto a God-given babe. * Wherefore, the divine Church keepeth splendid festival today, * celebrating their honored memory with gladness, * glorifying God Who hath lifted up the horn of salvation for us ** in the house of David.

Both now ..., that of the feast. (Once)

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

Spec. Mel.: “Today the Virgin ...”:

Today the Virgin, Mary the Theotokos, the indestructible bridal-chamber of the heavenly Bridegroom, is born of Anna, the barren woman, in accordance with God’s will, being prepared as the chariot of the Word of God; for the Maiden was commanded from of old to become the Mother of Life.

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

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

Spec. Mel.: “Go thou quickly before ...”:

O David, He Who anointed thee of old promised thee that the fruit of thy loins would be seated upon thy throne, hath given us Mary. For thou beholdest her sprung forth from Anna of the tribe of Judah, and thou dost rejoice, for Christ, the Savior of all, became incarnate of her, saving our race in His boundless goodness.

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

Canon of the feast, with 6 Troparia, including the Irmos; and that of the righteous ones, also with 6 Troparia.

ODE I

Canon of the feast, with 6 Troparia, including the Irmos, by John, in Tone II

Irmos: Come, ye people, let us chant a hymn to Christ God, Who divided the sea, and guided the people whom He had led forth from Egyptian bondage, for He hath been glorified!

Come ye faithful and rejoicing with divine spirit, let us honor with hymns the Ever-virgin Maiden who today hath issued forth from a barren woman for the salvation of mankind.

Rejoice, O pure one, Mother and handmaid of Christ God, mediatrix of our primal blessedness! All of us, the race of mankind, glorify thee with hymns, as is meet.

Today the bridge of life is born, through which mortals have attained restoration after their fall into Hades, glorifying Christ, the Bestower of life, with hymns.

Canon of the righteous ones, the acrostic whereof is:

“In chastity I hymn thy parents, O all-pure one”, in Tone II:

Irmos: In the deep of old the infinite Power overwhelmed Pharaoh’s whole army. * But the Incarnate Word annihilated pernicious sin. * Exceedingly glorious is the Lord, * for gloriously hath He been glorified.

Shining with the splendors of the virtues O divinely wise Anna and ever-blessed Joachim ye were deemed worthy to give birth to the lamp which emitted the noetic Sun, Who shone forth from her in the flesh.

Praying tirelessly and looking to God in every way, the God-pleasing Joachim and the divine Anna truly gave birth to the most pure Theotokos, who is far greater than all creation in holiness.

Possessed of a most exalted life and splendor of life, together ye surpassed all the parents of earth, giving birth to the incorrupt Virgin, and truly becoming ancestor of God because of her.

Theotokion: The exceedingly blessed Joachim and glorious Anna, the authors of all creation, gave birth to the immaculate and most pure Theotokos, receiving her as the reward for their piety.

ODE III

Canon of the feast

Irmos: O Lord, who didst slay sin upon the tree, * firmly establish us in Thee, * and in the hearts of us who hymn Thee * plant the fear of Thee.

Having lived blamelessly for God, ye gave birth unto the salvation of all, O divinely wise parents of her who hath given birth to our Creator and God.

From a barren woman did the Lord, Who poureth forth life upon all, cause the Virgin to come forth, in whom He was pleased to make His abode, preserving her incorrupt even after giving birth.

Let us hymn Mary today as the Theotokos, the fruit of Anna, the intercessor and helper of all, who gaveth birth to the life-bearing Cluster.

Canon of the righteous ones

Irmos: Thou 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.

O God-pleasing Anna, who wast barren and bereft of children, and who besought the Creator with tears, thou wast deemed worthy to give birth to the only blessed one, crying aloud: There is none as holy as Thee, O Lord!

The godly and divinely eloquent Joachim having enriched his spouse with divine grace: was deemed worthy to beget the mediatrix of mankind's salvation, to whom we cry aloud: There is none more immaculate than thee, O Lady!

We hymn the most honored couple from whom the Virgin hath shone forth upon us, who is more exalted than all creatures, in that she gave birth to God, to Whom we cry aloud: There is none more holy than Thee, O Lord!

Theotokion: **E**scaping the reproach of barrenness, Anna gave birth to the Theotokos who hath most gloriously abolished the reproach of Eve; and to her do we cry: There is none more immaculate than thee, O Lady!

Kontakion of the feast, in Tone IV:

In thy holy nativity, O most pure one, Joachim and Anna are freed from the reproach of childlessness, and Adam and Eve from mortal corruption. And, delivered from the affliction of sin, thy people celebrate it, crying out to thee: A barren woman giveth birth to the Theotokos the nurturer of our Life!

Ikos: **T**he supplication of Joachim over his childlessness, together with the sighing of Anna over her barrenness, were right acceptable to God; they entered the ears of the Lord and brought forth life-bearing fruit for the world. For the one made supplication on the mountain, and the other bore her reproach in the garden; and with joy the barren woman giveth birth to the Theotokos, the nurturer of our Life!

Sessional Hymn of the feast, in Tone V:

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

Joachim and Anna rejoice, for they found grace with God as is meet and gave birth to a God-pleasing fruit, the temple, the pure Virgin Mother of God, who alone is blessed, and prayeth unceasingly that our souls be saved.

ODE IV

Canon of the feast

Irmos: **I** have heard report of Thy dispensation, O Lord, * and have glorified Thee * Who alone lovest mankind.

We hymn Thee, O Lord, Who hast given unto all, as a haven of salvation, her who gaveth birth to Thee.

Christ hath revealed thee, O Bride of God, to all who with faith hymn thy mystery as their boast and might.

Delivered from transgressions by thy supplications, O Lady who knewest not wedlock, we all bless thee with a good and proper understanding.

Canon of the righteous ones

Irmos: From a Virgin didst Thou come forth, not as an ambassador, * nor as an Angel, * but the very Lord himself incarnate, * and didst save me, the whole man; * wherefore I cry unto Thee: * Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Rejoicing, the divinely wise and God-pleasing Joachim receiveth from the barren one the virginal Virgin for whose sake the barrenness of the world hath been abolished through birthgiving.

Joachim the most noetically rich ancestor of God, now setteth before us a spiritual banquet, for he hath begotten the Mother of God, the all-incorrupt Maiden.

Grace setteth before us her who would become the Mother of God, who hath saved mankind from mortality and corruption and received the ineffably incarnate eternal Word.

A couple hath sprung forth from the root of Jesse, from whom hath sprung forth the staff bearing the Flower which perfumeth me, the whole man, with the myrrh of divinity.

Theotokion: Direct my life, O Theotokos, guiding me with the divine precepts of the Word Who became incarnate from thee; and lead me to the Light, O Virgin Mother, Mary Bride of God.

ODE V

Canon of the feast

Irmos: Having destroyed the darkness of shadowy images * and illumined the hearts of the faithful * by the coming of Truth through the divine Maiden, O Christ, * do Thou guide us by Thy light.

O ye people, let us hymn the cause of the Cause of all that is, Who became like unto us. For the prophets, deemed worthy to behold her image, rejoiced, clearly seeing the fruit of salvation brought forth through her.

The sprouting of the dry rod of the priest showed forth the destiny of Israel; and now the all-glorious offspring of the barren woman most gloriously shineth forth the splendor of those who gave birth to her.

Canon of the righteous ones

Irmos: O Christ my Savior, the enlightenment of those lying in the darkness of sin. * I rise early to hymn Thee O King of Peace, * enlighten me with Thy radiance, * for I know no other God than Thee.

Anna and the God-pleasing Joachim, the chaste couple, shining forth a ray of purity which hath adorned barren human nature with the divine radiance of virginity, have given birth unto her for us.

The all-praised Anna and Joachim, the two honored chaste ones, the divinely wise couple, have given birth to the divinely adorned throne of the Virgin, who hath been elevated above all by the hand of God.

The divine God-seers Joachim and Anna, who lived in a divinely wise manner, have been deemed worthy to give birth to the luminous portal who revealed the Orient from on high, for the guidance of the lost.

The Almighty hath with His hand now cut from the stone of the barren woman the divinely inscribed tablet of the new law, whereon the divine Word first formed the remission of the sins of the old law.

Theotokion: Give thou the command, O Virgin Mother of God, that my mind, which is darkened by sin, may be illumined with thy radiance, destroying the darkness of ignorance and transgressions; for I know none other protector than thee.

ODE VI

Canon of the feast

Irmos: From within the sea monster Jonah cried unto the Lord: * “Lead me up from the abyss of Hades, I pray Thee; * for with a voice of praise as to my Redeemer, * in the spirit of truth * I offer myself to Thee.”

The divinely wise parents of the Mother of God cried out to the Lord in grief over their barrenness; but they have now given birth to her, our common boast and salvation for generations of generations.

The divinely wise parents of the Mother of God received a gift worthy of heaven from God, for she is a chariot more highly exalted than the cherubim, the Mother of the Word and Creator.

Canon of the righteous ones

Irmos: Whirled about in the abyss of sin, * I appeal to the unfathomable abyss of Thy compassion: * Raise me up from corruption, O God.

Anna, the barren woman of old, having received fertile seed, was deemed worthy to give birth to a Maiden of divine radiance who hath dominion over all creatures.

The barren woman, hath now given birth by God’s will to the Virgin Who would with submission give birth untainted by carnal will, as God Himself manifestly desired.

Illumined by the Spirit, Isaiah beheld the offspring of Joachim and Anna as a new scroll, whereon the incarnate Word was written.

Theotokion: Mystery followeth mystery! For she who before was barren hath given birth to grace: the mediatrix of salvation who hath been revealed to us by the birth of virginity.

Kontakion of the righteous ones, in Tone II:

Spec. Mel.: "Seeking the highest ...":

Anna now rejoiceth, * having broken the bond of barrenness; * and she nurtureth the most pure one, * calling upon all to hymn the One Who through her womb ** hath given unto mankind the only Mother who knew not a man.

Ikos: **D**elivered by prayer from her former bond of childlessness, Anna now calleth upon us to celebrate this wonder with her and to offer gifts to her who hath been born, making supplication before her with love, for once virgins ran quickly to her, dancing and crying aloud: Behold! the restoration of all hath arrived! Behold, Adam hath been set free! For Anna hath budded forth fruit: the only Mother who knew not a man!

ODE VII

Canon of the feast

Irmos: **T**he bush which burned with fire on the mountain * and the dew-bearing furnace of the Chaldeans * clearly prefigured thee, O Bride of God; * for, without being consumed, * thou didst receive the divine and immaterial Fire * within thy material womb. * Wherefore, we chant unto Him Who was born of thee: * O God of our fathers, Blessed art Thou!

Once, the transmitter of the law was prevented from understanding thy great mystery in material manifestations, O most pure one, though instructed through images to not think earthly thoughts. Wherefore, marveling at the wonder, he said: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

In a godly manner the divine choir called thee beforehand the mountain and portal of heaven and the noetic ladder; for from thee was the Stone cut without the aid of the hands of man, and thou art the door through which passed the Lord of wonders, the God of our fathers.

Canon of the righteous ones

Irmos: **T**he godless order of the lawless tyrant * fanned the roaring flame; * but Christ bedewed the God-fearing children with the Spirit, * therefore He is blessed and supremely exalted.

O holy couple who put forth from the root of the divinely wise David a most sacred staff, unto the world ye have given birth to the pure Virgin, the flower most sacred to us, who shone forth Christ without seed.

The godly Anna, bearing the most radiant lamp of the Theotokos like a lustrous lampstand, hath illumined the whole world with divine light and the radiant effulgence of virginity.

O glorious grandparents of Almighty God, Who in His ineffable mercy became incarnate of your divinely wise daughter, O ye who art most noetically rich, ask remission of offenses for me who now flee unto you.

Theotokion: In that ye are greater than all parents, ye gave birth to her who hath dominion over all creatures, the most pure Mary who gave birth to God, Who in His great compassion robed Himself in flesh and became like unto us.

ODE VIII

Canon of the feast

Irmos: Of old in the furnace of the holy children, * Thou didst prefigure Thy Mother, O Lord, * in the image of those who entered therein, * and rescued therefrom remained unconsumed. * Her who hath been revealed today do we hymn * unto the ends of the earth, * supremely exalting her throughout all ages.

Now the designated tabernacle of our reconciliation to God, who is to give birth to the Word Who hath revealed Himself to us in the coarseness of our flesh, beginneth her existence. Him do we, who have been brought into existence out of non-existence, hymn and supremely exalt throughout all ages.

The reversal of Anna's barrenness hath loosed the world's lack of good things, and hath plainly shown forth a miracle: Christ, Who hath come to mortal men. Him do we, who have been brought into existence out of non-existence, hymn and supremely exalt throughout all ages.

Canon of the righteous ones

Irmos: God Who descended into the fiery furnace * with the Hebrew children, * and transformed the flame into dew, * do ye works hymn, * and supremely exalt as Lord throughout all ages.

The honored Joachim and the chaste Anna, overflowing with riches, gave birth to the Virgin Queen, who is adorned with divine glory, and whom all creation doth hymn as the Theotokos.

By you, the friends of God, hath a staff of power been sent to us: the all-immaculate Bride, through whom we prevail over the godless foe, trampling upon their devices.

Through you, O most sacred twain, a weapon hath been given to us by the will of God, whereby we, the faithful, are now ever splendidly adorned: the pure Virgin Mother Who gave birth to God.

The power of God opened a barren womb with fertility, and the portal of virginity came forth in splendor, through whom the Word cometh to mortals, Him Who became incarnate at the ineffable words of the archangel.

Theotokion: **O** most immaculate Lady, may thine excellent and enlightened parents be for us the mediation of heavenly blessings through the splendors of Him Who for our sake became incarnate from thee.

ODE IX

Canon of the feast

Irmos: **From thy virginal womb God, the light * that was before the sun, hath appeared and assumed flesh * in a manner past understanding, * and came to dwell among us, * wherefore hymn thee O blessed and all-pure Theotokos.**

He Who poured forth water from the stone for the rebellious people, through the womb of a barren woman hath given to us, the right submissive nations, the fruit of gladness: thee, O most pure Mother of God, whom we magnify as is meet.

Thee, O Theotokos, do we magnify, who hast removed the ancient and precipitous condemnation: the restoration of our first mother, the cause of the reconciliation of our race to God, the bridge to the Creator.

Canon of the righteous ones

Irmos: **The Son of the Beginningless Father, God and Lord, * hath appeared to us incarnate of a Virgin, * to enlighten those in darkness, * and to gather the dispersed; * therefore the all-hymned Theotokos do we magnify**

O honored parents of the most pure Virgin, most sacred ones who through virtue have been united in wisdom and in soul, pray ye that those who ardently celebrate your all-praised and glorious memory may be saved.

Ye have destroyed the field of death, O glorious ones, radiantly giving birth to the Mother of Life who hath broken death's assault and mediated the hope of immortal life for the sake of faith.

Joachim, entering into conjunction with Anna, like the sun with the luminous moon, gave rise to a ray of virginity, through whom the Ray of the divine Essence hath shone forth upon us united hypostatically to the flesh.

Having lived in chastity and piety, O blessed ones, ye have now been deemed worthy of ineffable sweetness, having received the divine revelation of Him Who through you appeared to the world. Entreat Him, that our souls be saved.

Exapostilarion of the feast:

Spec. Mel.: "Thou hast visited us ...":

She who hath abolished the curse of Eve is now born of Anna and Joachim, barren and elderly. With the angels let us praise her in hymns as is meet, O ye faithful.

Glory ..., Both now ..., another Exapostilarion:

Like sun from sun and moon from moon, the all-immaculate Maiden was born of Anna and Joachim, and in her radiance she hath illumined the ends of the world. Hymning her as is meet, we call her blessed, celebrating their honored memory.

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

Spec. Mel.: “On the third day ...”:

Leap up now, O Prophet David, * for, lo! From thy loins * hath the Virgin been most gloriously born, * the divine Maiden Mary, * for whose sake mortals ** have divinely found restoration from their fall.

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

Through grace hath the mire of mortality been removed, * and Adam and Eve, our first parents, * have been granted life; * for the Theotokos, * truly born of a barren woman, ** hath loosed the barrenness of the world.

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

With the angels * we radiantly celebrate * thy most honored nativity, * O pure Virgin Mother. * O Birthgiver of God, cease thou never to defend ** the Christians who hymn thee!

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

Today the all-immaculate and pure one hath issued forth from the barren woman! Today all things rejoice in her nativity! The bonds of Adam have been broken, and Eve hath been freed from the curse! All those in heaven are glad, and peace hath been given to mankind! And we, glorifying her, cry aloud: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among men!

AT LITURGY

On the Beatitudes, 8 Troparia: 4 from ODE I of the canon of the feast, and 4 from ODE VI of the canon of the righteous ones.

Come ye faithful and rejoicing with divine spirit, let us honor with hymns the Ever-virgin Maiden who today hath issued forth from a barren woman for the salvation of mankind. (Twice)

Rejoice, O pure one, Mother and handmaid of Christ God, mediatrix of our primal blessedness! All of us, the race of mankind, glorify thee with hymns, as is meet.

Today the bridge of life is born, through which mortals have attained restoration after their fall into Hades, glorifying Christ, the Bestower of life, with hymns.

Anna, the barren woman of old, having received fertile seed, was deemed worthy to give birth to a Maiden of divine radiance who hath dominion over all creatures.

The barren woman, hath now given birth by God's will to the Virgin Who would with submission give birth untainted by carnal will, as God Himself manifestly desired.

Illumined by the Spirit, Isaiah beheld the offspring of Joachim and Anna as a new scroll, whereon the incarnate Word was written.

Theotokion: Mystery followeth mystery! For she who before was barren hath given birth to grace: the mediatrix of salvation who hath been revealed to us by the birth of virginity.

Troparion of the feast, in Tone IV:

Thy nativity, O Virgin Theotokos, * hath proclaimed joy to all the world; * for from thee hath shone forth Christ our God, the Sun of righteousness, * Who, having annulled the curse, hath given His blessing, ** and having abolished death, hath granted us life everlasting.

Troparion of the righteous ones, in Tone I:

Joachim and Anna, who were righteous in the law of grace, * have given birth for us unto a God-given babe. * Wherefore, the divine Church keepeth splendid festival today, * celebrating their honored memory with gladness, * glorifying God Who hath lifted up the horn of salvation for us ** in the house of David.

Kontakion of the righteous ones, in Tone II:

Anna now rejoiceth, * having broken the bond of barrenness; * and she nurtureth the most pure one, * calling upon all to hymn the One Who through her womb ** hath given unto mankind the only Mother who knew not a man.

Kontakion of the feast, in Tone IV:

In thy holy nativity, O most pure one, * Joachim and Anna have been freed from the reproach of childlessness, * and Adam and Eve from mortal corruption. * And, delivered from the affliction of sin, * thy people celebrate it, crying out to thee: * A barren woman giveth birth to the Theotokos, ** the nurturer of our Life!

Prokeimenon of the feast, from henceforth until the leave-taking; in Tone III:
The Song of the Theotokos: My soul doth magnify the Lord, * and my spirit
hath rejoiced in God my Savior.

That of the saints, in Tone IV: Wondrous is God in His saints, * the God of
Israel.

Verse: In congregations bless ye God, the Lord from the well-springs of Israel

EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS, § 210 (GAL. 4: 22-31)

Brethren: Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Hagar. For this Hagar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath a husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the Scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.

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

Alleluia, in Tone I: The salvation of the righteous is from the Lord, and He is their defender in a time of affliction.

Verse: The Lord shall help them and shall deliver them, and He will rescue them from sinners and will save them because they hoped in Him.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE, § 36 (LK. 8: 16-21)

The Lord said: No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light. For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known and come abroad. Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have. Then came to him His mother and His brethren, and could not come at Him for the press. And it was told Him by certain which said, Thy mother and Thy brethren stand

without, desiring to see Thee. And He answered and said unto them, My mother and My brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it.

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

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

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

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

That of the saints: Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous; praise is meet for the upright.