

## THE 11<sup>th</sup> DAY OF THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER

AFTERFEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS

COMMEMORATION OF OUR VENERABLE MOTHER THEODORA OF ALEXANDRIA

COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY HIEROMARTYR AUTONOMUS

(These commemorations are moved to this day due to the apodosis of the  
Nativity on the day following)

### AT VESPERS

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

Spec. Mel.: “As one valiant among the martyrs ...”:

In a woman’s body \* but in the guise of a man, \* thou didst undertake manly struggles, \* living in the midst of men, \* causing the passions to wither, \* and utterly restraining the raging of lust \* by fasting and constant supplications, O Theodora, \* and by thy divine and never-ceasing \*\* contemplation of God.

The sun, setting beneath the earth, \* never saw thee sin; \* and the Lord, Who knoweth men’s hearts and seeth hidden things, \* knew thee to be untiring \* and illumined the eyes of thy heart \* with the light of repentance. \* Wherefore, thou didst diligently strive to please Him \* through painful abstinence \*\* and the perfection of the virtues.

In nowise understanding \* the ways of the enemy’s thoughts, \* thou didst love the child \* whom thou didst not beget \* nurturing him with paternal kindness, \* O Theodora, \* enduring with true piety of mind \* the undeserved abuse and censure of men. \*\* Wherefore, we celebrate thine honored solemnity.

And 3 Stichera of the holy hieromartyr, Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: “As one valiant among the martyrs ...”:

Shining with the virtues, \* adorned with piety, \* thou wast a godly hierarch, \* and didst pass over the world like the brilliant sun, \* sowing the preaching of the Faith everywhere \* and cutting down falsehood \* with the scythe of thy tongue, \* O divinely wise hierarch Autonomus, \*\* thou great preacher.

Thou didst not hesitate to endure \* painful sufferings, manly struggles, \* wounds and sores; \* for, buried under a multitude of stones, O Autonomus, \* thou didst make them into \* a stairway and ladder, \* ascending thereby to God as one crowned; \* and thou didst join the armies of the incorporeal ones, \*\* praying for the world.

Thou didst make thy vesture bright \* through the blood of thy martyrdom \* and the grace of the divine Spirit; \* and in a sacred manner \* didst enter into the holy of holies on high, \* where Jesus, our Forerunner, entered in, \* receiving from God a crown of victory \* with all who died by shedding their blood in martyrdom, \*\* O Autonomus.

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

In accordance with the angel's prophecy, thou didst issue forth from the righteous Joachim and Anna, as a most pure fruit, heaven and the throne of God, a receptacle of purity, heralding forth joy to all the world, O Virgin, mediatrix of our life, removal of the curse, bestowal of blessing. Wherefore, on the feast of thy nativity, O divinely called Virgin, ask peace for the world and great mercy for our souls.

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

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

**T**hou didst weep tears from the depths of thy soul, \* lamenting thy childlessness, \* desiring children; \* yet thou hast given birth to a babe \*\* who is the boast of our whole race.

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

**W**ith voices of hymnody let us honor \* the honored nativity \* of the all-holy Virgin, \* because of whom \*\* the world hath been renewed.

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

**R**ejoice, O wise prophets, \* ye divinely eloquent ones; \* for the Virgin is born, \* through whom the Salvation of the world \*\* will be given birth.

**Glory ..., Both now ..., in Tone IV:**

**T**oday let the barren and childless Anna clap her hands with splendor, let those on earth bear lamps, let kings leap for joy, let hierarchs be glad in blessing, and let all the world keep festival; for, behold, the Queen, the immaculate Bride of the Father, hath sprung forth from the root of Jesse. No longer will women bear children in grief, for Joy hath blossomed forth and Life shall live amongst mortals in the world. No longer will the offerings of Joachim be rejected, for the lamentation of Anna hath been changed to joy, and she saith: "Rejoice with me, all ye chosen Israel, for, lo! the Lord hath given me the animate palace of His divine glory, for our common gladness and joy, and the salvation of our souls!"

**Troparion of the venerable one, in Tone VIII:**

**I**n thee, O mother, the image of God was preserved, \* for taking up thy cross, thou didst follow after Christ; \* by activity thou didst learn to disdain the flesh, as something transient, \* but to care for thy soul as something immortal. \*\* Wherefore, with the angels thy spirit doth rejoice, O venerable Theodora.

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

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

## AT MATINS

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

**T**hy 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 ..., the Troparion of the venerable one, in Tone VIII:

**I**n thee, O mother, the image of God was preserved, \* for taking up thy cross, thou didst follow after Christ; \* by activity thou didst learn to disdain the flesh, as something transient, \* but to care for thy soul as something immortal. \*\* Wherefore, with the angels thy spirit doth rejoice, O venerable Theodora.

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

After the 1<sup>st</sup> chanting of the Psalter, the Sessional Hymn, in Tone I:

Spec. Mel.: “When the stone had been sealed ...”:

**H**aving most gloriously been born from a barren womb, thou hast given birth from a virginal womb in a manner beyond nature; revealed to be from comely stock, thou didst bud forth the Life of the world, wherefore, the hosts of heaven cry out to thee, O Theotokos: Glory to thine issuing forth, O pure one! Glory to thy nativity! Glory to thy virginity, O Mother who knewest not wedlock!

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

After the 2<sup>nd</sup> chanting of the Psalter, the Sessional Hymn, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: “Thou hast appeared ...”:

**B**eams of the universal joy of thy nativity have shone forth upon the land, O Mary, Virgin Mother, illumining the minds of those who hymn thee with love.

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

## ODE I

1<sup>st</sup> canon of the feast, with 6 Troparia, including the Irmos;

The composition of John, in Tone II:

**Irmos:** Come, O ye people, \* let us sing a song to Christ our God, \* Who divided the sea, \* and made a way for the nation \* which He had brought up out of the bondage of Egypt; \* for He hath been glorified.

**C**ome 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.

**R**ejoice, 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 venerable one, with 4 Troparia, 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.

With Thy praise, O Lord, fill thou my mouth that I may sing of the greatly hymned glory, and honor the pangs of Theodora, who pleased thee with the splendor of her life.

Today thy sacred solemnity hath shone forth more brightly than the sun, illumining souls which are in gloominess, and ever dispelling the darkness of the demons, O right wondrous one.

Thy sin was manifestly recorded, as the Gospel hath said, O most honorable one; but, striving diligently, thou didst blot it out with the sweat of thine abstinence and the streams of thy tears.

**Theotokion:** With hymns let us honor the pure Mary as the animate bridal-chamber, the incorrupt tabernacle, the portal of heaven, the divine table, the palace and throne of the Master.

*Canon of the holy hieromartyr, the acrostic whereof is:*

*“Thou hast finished the lawful race, O divinely wise one”, in Tone VIII:*

**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.

Nourished on the laws of the Creator from childhood, thou didst grow in the law of virtue to the heights of piety; wherefore, thou didst suffer lawfully, O father.

Thou didst arm thy thoughts with the sword of patience and courage, O wise one, arraying thyself for the battle against deception and vanquishing it utterly.

Shown forth as an instructor of the laws of piety and a preacher of the dogmas of truth, O father Autonomus, thou didst catechize all creation, as did the apostles.

**Theotokion:** Acknowledging God Who revealed Himself on earth as incarnate, and having been deified by Him through grace, O Virgin, we hymn thee, delighting in spiritual gifts.

### 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 venerable one*

**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.**

Clad in the garments of a man, thou didst wisely hasten with diligence to join the assembly of monastics, O honored one, entering the fray against the princes of the wicked ruler of this world.

Thou didst manfully transform thy womanly weakness, O venerable one, truly showing thyself to be a precious gift, pleasing to God, by thy new name and guise, and by thy works.

In thy mortal body thou didst show forth a life like unto that of the incorporeal ones, O glorious Theodora, holding firmly to genuine abstinence, unceasing vigilance and constant prayer.

**Theotokion: T**he tempest of sin and the turmoil of unseemly thoughts buffet me, O all-immaculate one. Take pity and extend to me a helping hand, in that thou art merciful; that, saved, I may magnify thee.

*Canon of the holy hieromartyr*

**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.**

With the down-pouring of thy words thou didst drown the mire of the passions of ungodliness, O hierarch, giving drink to the faithful.

Thou wast a teacher and minister of Christ, O venerable one, and didst share and partake of His divine sufferings.

With the sword of thy preaching thou didst make steadfast those who heeded thee well, O venerable one, preserving those who strove to avoid perdition.

**Theotokion: A** most wondrous report hath been heard in heaven and on earth; for thou hast given birth ineffably to the Creator of all that is, O Theotokos.

*Kontakion of the venerable one, in Tone II:*

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

Laying waste to thy body through fasting, \* thou didst entreat the Creator with vigils of prayer because of thy sin, \* that, receiving full forgiveness, \* thou might also receive remission of sins, \*\* having come to know the path of repentance.

And the Kontakion of the holy hieromartyr, in the same melody:

**T**hou didst blamelessly perform the divine mysteries, \* O most wise and divinely blessed one, \* and didst become a pleasing sacrifice; \* for thou didst drain the cup of Christ, \* O most glorious one, \* beacon of the whole world, \*\* who prayest unceasingly on behalf of us all.

Sessional Hymn of the venerable one, in Tone V:

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

**H**aving manfully endured feats of abstinence, thou didst cast down him of great guile, living thy life piously with men, O Theodora. And now thou hast passed over to God, praying for all who celebrate thy holy repose in a sacred manner.

Glory ..., Sessional Hymn of the holy hieromartyr, in Tone IV:

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

**C**hrist bestowed upon thee a twofold crown of incorruption, in that thou art both martyr and honored hierarch, O all-blessed Autonomus; for thou didst offer the unbloody sacrifice to Him, and didst truly emulate His divine suffering. And thou hast found delight in His sweetness which never groweth stale, O blessed one.

Both now ..., Sessional Hymn of the feast, in Tone V:

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

**J**oachim 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.**

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

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

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

##### Canon of the venerable one

**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!**

**T**hou didst boldly subject thyself to fasting for many days, like one of the incorporeal ones, O glorious one, but Christ strengthened thy weakness with His almighty power and nourished thee with divine grace.

“Behold my lowliness and tears; behold my sorrow! And lighten the heavy burden of my sin!” Theodora cried out to Him Who alone is able to save.

Drowning with the torrents of thy tears him who had deceitfully ensnared thee in his trap, protected by divine grace in thy safe haven thou didst vanquish him who hunteth men’s souls with his net.

**Theotokion:** O most wondrous Mother of God, shine upon me a ray of repentance, dispel the darkness of my boundless evil deeds, and drive wicked thoughts away from my heart, O Virgin.

#### Canon of the holy hieromartyr

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

Having the Lord as thy mighty ally in the divine battle, O father, thou didst vanquish the ancient enemy of mortals by thy struggles.

Having descended into the depths of the hidden things of God in a vision, O father, thou didst draw forth therefrom His ineffable mysteries.

When thou didst utter the words, O wise one, the temples of the idolaters collapsed and the shrines of their deception were reduced to ashes by the fire at thy command.

The flame of thy teachings bore thee up to an exalted life, O wise one, revealing thee unto the ends of the earth as a true guide to God.

**Theotokion:** With thy supplications wash clean those who have been defiled by the passions, O Theotokos, and grant that we may hymn thy nativity with pure thoughts.

#### 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 venerable one

**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.

The ranks of the incorporeal ones were astonished, beholding thee in a body of clay, emulating their life and honorable ways, and vanquishing the enemy who before had seduced thee with delusion, O Theodora.

God tamed the savagery of the wild beasts for thee, giving thee the grace of healing. And he who by thy hand was rescued from being devoured by a wild beast, and whose wounds thou didst heal, proclaimeth this, O glorious one.

With perfect mind thou didst nurture the babe, enduring cruel slander, giving thanks to the Benefactor Who gave thee strength and made thee wondrous, O all-praised Theodora.

**Theotokion:** Thou art the might and confirmation of my feeble heart, O Virgin who knewest not wedlock, the impregnable rampart against the face of the enemy, who saveth me from all evils, vanquishing the hordes of the cruel enemy.

#### Canon of the holy hieromartyr

**Irmos:** **Illuminate us O Lord with Thy commandments, \* and with Thine arm raised on high \* grant us Thy peace, \* O Lover of mankind!**

The noetic Light shone thee forth who hast the words of life, O Autonomus, and hath revealed thee as a beacon unto all the ends of the earth.

Unsheathing the word of God like a sword, thou didst cut down the array of false wisdom, O father Autonomus.

Thou didst empty the quiver of the enemy of all its arrows, and didst show those who opposed thee to have armed themselves in vain, O blessed Autonomus.

**Theotokion:** New and most glorious things have come to pass, O most honored one; for through thee God hath appeared on earth in the flesh and mortals have been deified.

### 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 venerable one

**Irmos:** Celebrating 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.

Offering up an ever-flowing fountain of tears, afflicting thyself and groaning, with thanksgiving thou didst endure the monks' censure and shunning of thee, O divinely blessed one.

Taking thy sustenance from the sea, nurtured on wondrous plants, and dwelling with wild beasts in the wilderness, thou didst make thine abode in heaven, O right wondrous one.

Thou didst endure the burning of the day, and didst bear the frigid cold of night, warmed by the grace of the divine Spirit; wherefore, thou dost enjoy the blessedness of heaven.

**Theotokion:** In hymns let us glorify the Virgin Theotokos, the divine jar, the table which bore the Bread of life, the untilled field, the holy mountain.

### Canon of the holy hieromartyr

**Irmos:** Cleanse me, O Savior, \* for many are mine iniquities; \* lead me up from the abyss of evils I pray Thee, \* for unto Thee have I cried, \* and Thou hast hearkened unto me, \* O God of my salvation.

The power of the Comforter strengthened thee as before it had the disciples, and it provided thee with a fiery tongue, O Autonomus, to enlighten mortals and burn up ungodliness with fire.

Childlike in spiritual wisdom, O venerable father, in the weakness of thy bodily nature thou didst mightily accept struggles which were beyond nature, for the sake of thy preaching and unflagging labors.

Thou didst set the head of the enemy, which was lifted up against his Creator, under the feet of the pious, arming them against his words with faith and grace.

**Theotokion:** Our Creator and Fashioner, desiring to heal broken nature through thee, O Theotokos, gave thee as a divine cure to those who have recourse to thee in their infirmities.

### 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!

**Ikos:** The supplication of Joachim over his childlessness, together with the sighing of Anna over her barrenness, were right acceptable to God: they entered the ears of

the Lord and brought forth life-bearing fruit for the world. For the one made supplication on the mountain, and the other bore her reproach in the garden; and with joy the barren woman giveth birth to the Theotokos, the nurturer of our Life.

## ODE VII

### Canon of the feast

**Irmos:** The 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 venerable one

**Irmos:** Refusing 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.

The most crafty enemy afflicted thee with unbearable wounds, appearing to thee in illusions of thine imagination; but thou didst cast down his vain savagery, chanting: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Thou didst fill the dry cisterns with water through thy supplications, O glorious one, manifestly working miracles, and magnifying God Who glorifieth thee. To Him do we cry aloud: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

In thy great boldness be thou ever mindful of those who celebrate thy memory, entreating the most compassionate God, to Whom we cry: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

**Theotokion:** O Virgin Queen who hast given birth to Christ the King, taking pity, save me who am whirled about by the passions; make me steadfast by faith, and guide me to the path of salvation, O salvation of the faithful.

### Canon of the holy hieromartyr

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

Joining into one chorus of piety those illumined by the Faith through thy words, O father Autonomus, thou didst teach them to cry out unceasingly: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

With unflinching courage thou didst shake asunder the precepts established in the souls of the unbelieving and impious, O wise martyr, toppling them from their foundations, and establishing grace in the hearts of the faithful.

The oil of thy priestly anointing was mingled with divine suffering, O father Autonomus, for thy blood showed thee forth as a radiant hierarch for those who cry out with faith: Blessed art Thou, O Christ!

**Theotokion:** He Who, as Creator and God, fashioned mankind out of earth, now reneweth that which had become corrupt, taking it upon Himself through thee, O Mother of God; and thereby deemed us worthy of mystical adoption, O pure one.

### 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 venerable one

**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.

His mind illumined with purity, thine abbot was caught up and beheld the good things which the Lord prepared for thee, O Theodora: the radiant garden of paradise and the ineffable bridal-chamber, wherein thy Bridegroom, the Judge of the contest, hath made a dwelling for thee.

The choirs of the angels, martyrs and the venerable, preparing for thy soul, bore it up to the mansions of heaven, to the place where those who rejoice find rest, wherein is the dwelling-place of those who cry out and supremely exalt Christ throughout the ages.

**A** multitude of monastics, having assembled, faithfully buried thy blessed body; for, beholding most wondrous things, they acknowledged thine excellent qualities: for, though a woman, thou wast pleased to dwell bodily in the midst of men, protected by the hand of the Almighty, O divinely wise Theodora.

**A**chieving endurance through all-night vigils of supplication, thou didst extinguish the uprisings of the passions, and sleeping the sleep of the righteous, thou hast passed over to the never-waning Light, crying aloud: Hymn the Lord, ye works, and supremely exalt Him throughout the ages!

**Theotokion:** **W**omen followed in thy train, O most pure Bride of God, Maiden who knewest not wedlock, inhaling thy sweet-smelling Myrrh: the only-begotten Son Who shone forth from thy womb; and they truly reign with thee, hymning Christ throughout the ages.

#### Canon of the holy hieromartyr

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

**W**hen Christ strengthened thee, O divinely wise one, the might of the tyrants fell; for by thy spirit they were stricken with fear.

**S**howing forth strength in thy works of piety, O all-blessed one, with courage of mind thou didst denounce the foulness of falsehood.

**T**he rivers of thy miracles which flowed forth, O father, revealed thee as an abyss of healings which poureth forth grace in the world.

**Theotokion:** **T**hy grace, O Virgin, hath truly been glorified on earth in signs; for strange was the wonder of thy birthgiving.

#### ODE IX

#### Canon of the feast

**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.**

**H**e 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.

**T**hee, 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 venerable one

**Irmos:** Let 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.

Thou didst depart from the world like a star, O all-praised one, and hast shone forth in the life of heaven, having left us the virtues of thy life and thy corrections, like rays of light, illumining the hearts of all who celebrate thy memory with faith.

The gates of heaven were opened with splendor, admitting thee, O ever-memorable Theodora; and the Church of the first-born now hath thy sacred soul, which danceth with the elect, where the sounds are the sounds of those who keep festival in the never-waning light.

Thou hast found the reward for thy pangs, for thou didst hope for heavenly honor; thou caused desire to cease, for thou didst find its Source, and dost delight in good things, manifestly and purely beholding thy Bridegroom, O Theodora, as the angels have been deemed worthy to see Him.

As thou hast boldness in prayer, O ever-memorable honorable and right glorious Theodora, beg thou that He send down release from vexations, deliverance from the passions and correction of life upon those who praise thee and celebrate thine honored memory.

**Theotokion:** Save me, O pure one who hast given birth to the all-compassionate Savior; take pity on thy servant and guide me to the path of repentance; drive far away the wiles of the evil one, and deliver me from his pursuit, O Theotokos, helper of the faithful.

### Canon of the holy hieromartyr

**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.

Soaring up to the heights of piety, borne aloft by the virtues, O father Autonomus, thou didst hasten to Christ through suffering.

Mingling thy pangs with tears, O divinely wise one, thou didst produce fruits which cannot be taken away: the fruits of joy, glory and the sweetness which is in Christ Jesus.

Lawfully granted crowns and divine gifts, O hierarch Autonomus, thou dost make us steadfast through the laws of God by thy supplications.

**Theotokion:** O Virgin, thou hast given birth to Life and Incorruption: Him Who hath made victors over death, who magnify thee as the true Theotokos.

Exapostilarion of the feast:

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

**F**rom Anna, a barren and elderly woman, hath life and light shone forth: the all-immaculate Maiden, the portal of the East, who ineffably shone forth light upon the ends of the earth. Forming a choir, let us bless her as one exalted far above all mortals.

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

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

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

**T**oday the Theotokos hath sprung forth \* from Anna as a flower, a divinely wrought garden, \* the salvation of mankind; \* and in His beneficence the Creator of all, \* Who was born of her in a manner past understanding, \*\* washeth away all the defilement of Adam, in that He is good.

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

**W**ho is sufficiently worthy \* to hymn the Virgin \* who ineffably became a babe through Anna? \* Ye mountains and hills, therefore, let sweetness fall today; \* for the pure Theotokos, the life and cleansing of all, \*\* is nourished on milk.

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

**T**he barren woman who before was childless \* hath given birth to the only Theotokos, the life of all. \* Human nature hath been filled with gladness \* and now rejoiceth, \* glorifying the true Mother \*\* of Jesus, the one Lord and Redeemer.

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

**O**n the most excellent day of our feast let us strike the spiritual harp; for the Mother of Life is born today from the seed of David, dispelling darkness: the renewal of Adam, the restoration of Eve, the Well-spring of incorruption, our release from corruption. Because of her we have been deified and delivered from death. And we, the faithful, cry out to her with Gabriel: Rejoice, thou who art full of grace, the Lord is with thee, granting us great mercy for thy sake!

## AT LITURGY

On the Beatitudes, 8 Troparia, 4 from ODE VII, and 4 from ODE VIII of the canons of the feast.

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! (Twice)

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. (Twice)

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. (Twice)

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. (Twice)

### 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 venerable one, in Tone VIII:

In thee, O mother, the image of God was preserved, \* for taking up thy cross, thou didst follow after Christ; \* by activity thou didst learn to disdain the flesh, as something transient, \* but to care for thy soul as something immortal. \*\* Wherefore, with the angels thy spirit doth rejoice, O venerable Theodora.

### Kontakion of the venerable one, in Tone II:

Laying waste to thy body through fasting, \* thou didst entreat the Creator with vigils of prayer because of thy sin, \* that, receiving full forgiveness, \* thou might also receive remission of sins, \*\* having come to know the path of repentance.

### Kontakion of the holy hieromartyr, in Tone II:

Thou didst blamelessly perform the divine mysteries, \* O most wise and divinely blessed one, \* and didst become a pleasing sacrifice; \* for thou didst drain the cup of Christ, \* O most glorious one, \* beacon of the whole world, \*\* who prayest unceasingly on behalf of us all.

### 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 in Tone III:** My soul doth magnify the Lord, \* and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.

**Prokeimenon, 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, § 208 (3: 23-29)

**Brethren:** Before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterward be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

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

**Alleluia, in Tone I:** With patience I waited patiently for the Lord, and He was attentive unto me, and He hearkened unto my supplication.

### GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN, § 28 (8: 3-11)

**At that time,** the scribes and Pharisees brought to Jesus a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.



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

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