

THE 15th DAY OF THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER
THE AFTERFEAST OF THE EXALTATION OF THE PRECIOUS CROSS OF THE LORD
THE COMMEMORATION OF
THE HOLY GREATMARTYR NICETAS

N.B.: Should the commemoration fall on the Sunday after the Exaltation of the Precious Cross, see notes at the end of the service for special directions.

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

The Stichera of the precious Cross, in Tone V:

Spec. Mel.: “Rejoice, thou Life-bearing Cross ...”:

Rejoice, thou Life-bearing Cross, invincible victory of piety, door to paradise, confirmation of the faithful, rampart of the Church, whereby corruption hath been utterly destroyed, the dominion of death trampled down, and we have been lifted up from earth to those who are in Heaven, invincible weapon, contender against the demons, glory of the martyrs, true adornment of the venerable, haven of salvation, which grantest the world great mercy.

Rejoice, thou Cross of the Lord, whereby mankind hath been loosed from the curse, all-honorable standard of joy which disperseth the enemy in thine exaltation, our helper, might of kings, Strength of the righteous, splendor of priests; which, when traced, doth deliver from misfortune, staff of power whereby we are tended, weapon of peace which the angels surround with fear, divine glory of Christ Who granteth the world great mercy.

Rejoice, thou guide of the blind, physician of the ailing, resurrection of all the dead, which hast raised us up who had fallen into corruption, O precious Cross, whereby the curse was annulled and incorruption budded forth, and the earthly have been deified, and the devil utterly cast down! Beholding thee raised on high today in the hands of the high priest, we exalt Him who was exalted in thy midst, and bow down before thee, plenteously drawing forth from thee great mercy.

And 3 Stichera of the holy great-martyr, in Tone I:

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

Arroyed in the armor of piety, * thou wast shown to be a champion of Christ, the King of all, * O passion-bearer Nicetas, * as was almighty Gideon of old, * setting at naught legions of aliens ** by thy noble boldness.

That which is alien didst thou enslave * by thine all-powerful faith in Christ, * O divinely wise martyr who didst endure suffering. * Wherefore, thou didst turn the barbarians * to the Creator and Master of all, O wise one, ** who piously glorify Him.

Thou, the first-fruits of the barbarians, O martyr, * dying for the Trinity, didst bring glory to Christ, * and wast shown to be a divinely eloquent sufferer. * Wherefore, thou hast manifestly received a crown, * and dost shine with splendor in the world like a beacon, ** O right glorious one.

Glory ..., of the holy great-martyr, the composition of Theophanes, in Tone VI:

We know thee as a lamp unto the martyrs, O Nicetas, sufferer for Christ, for, having forsaken the glory of earthly rank and despised the godlessness of thy father, thou didst shatter his gods, triumphantly putting the barbarians to shame; and undergoing martyrdom for confessing Christ, thou wast revealed to be a warrior of the God of Heaven. Entreat thou the Benefactor of all on our behalf, that He take pity and save our souls.

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

The voices of the prophets foretold the holy Tree whereby Adam was loosed from the ancient curse of death, and creation raiseth a cry to that which today is exalted, begging great mercy of God. O Master, Who alone art boundless in tender compassion: be Thou our cleansing and save our souls!

Entrance; the Great Prokeimenon

Prokeimenon, in Tone VII: Our God is in Heaven and on earth; * all things whatsoever He hath willed, He hath done.

Verse: When Israel went out of Egypt, and the house of Jacob from among a barbarous people, Judaea became His sanctuary.

Verse: The sea beheld and fled, Jordan turned back.

Verse: What aileth thee, O sea, that thou fleddest? And thou, O Jordan, that thou didst turn back?

Then, the Ektenia: “Let us all say ...,”

But if it fall on Sunday, we chant the Prokeimenon of the day: “The Lord is King ...,” and the Great Prokeimenon we chant on the eve of the feast.

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

Spec. Mel.: “Having set all aside ...”:

Raised on high, * the Cross exhorteth all creation * to hymn the most pure Passion * of Him who was lifted up thereon. * For thereon having slain him that slew us, * in that He is merciful, * He gave life unto the dead, * and in the exceeding greatness of His goodness * He hath made them beautiful and deemed them worthy to live in the heavens. * Wherefore, rejoicing, * we exalt His name, ** and magnify His extreme condescension.

Verse: Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship the footstool of His feet; * for He is holy.

Moses prefigured Thee, * stretching forth his arms on high, * and vanquished the tyrant Amalek, * O precious Cross, boast of the faithful, * confirmation of sufferers, * savior of all the venerable. * Wherefore, creation, * beholding thee lifted up, is gladdened, * and keepeth festival, * glorifying Christ, * Who through thee hath gathered the dispersed ** in His extreme goodness.

Verse: God is our King before the ages, * He hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth.

O most precious Cross, * who art today exalted, * and about whom the ranks of angels stand in gladness, * by divine command thou dost uplift all * who for the stealing of the fruit * were driven out and were sunk in death. * Wherefore, we, the faithful, * venerating thee with hearts and lips, * derive from thee sanctification, * crying aloud: Exalt ye Christ, * the supremely good God, ** and worship His divine footstool.

Glory ..., of the holy great-martyr, in Tone VIII:

Thou didst show thyself to be the namesake of victory, O most honored martyr Nicetas; proclaiming Christ our God amid thy struggle, thou didst confess Him before kings and tormentors. Wherefore, cease thou never in thy prayers to Him who alone is the Lover of mankind, on behalf of the world, for Christ-loving kings, and for all who faithfully keep thy memory, that he deliver them from all wrath.

Both now ..., of the feast, in the same tone

O God, the words of Moses Thy prophet have been fulfilled, who said: “Ye shall see your life hanging before your eyes!” Today the Cross is exalted, and the world is freed from deception. Today the resurrection of Christ is renewed, and the ends of the earth rejoice, offering music to Thee on cymbals, like David, and saying: “Thou hast wrought salvation in the midst of the earth, O God: the Cross and resurrection! For their sake Thou hast saved us, O Good One Who lovest mankind! O Almighty Lord, glory be to Thee!”

Troparion of the holy great-martyr, in Tone IV:

Fervently taking up the Cross of Christ, * as it were a sword, * thou didst make haste to do battle with the enemy, * and, suffering for Christ, * thou didst at last commit thy sacred soul to the Lord, * and hence thou hast been deemed worthy to receive from Him gifts of healing. ** O great-martyr Nicetas, Entreat Christ God that our souls be saved.

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

Save O Lord Thy people, * and bless Thyne inheritance. * Grant now unto the faithful * victory over adversaries, * and by the power of Thy Cross ** do Thou preserve Thy commonwealth.

AT MATINS

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

Save O Lord Thy people, * and bless Thine inheritance. * Grant now unto the faithful * victory over adversaries, * and by the power of Thy Cross ** do Thou preserve Thy commonwealth. (Twice)

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

Fervently taking up the Cross of Christ, * as it were a sword, * thou didst make haste to do battle with the enemy, * and, suffering for Christ, * thou didst at last commit thy sacred soul to the Lord, * and hence thou hast been deemed worthy to receive from Him gifts of healing. ** O great-martyr Nicetas, Entreat Christ God that our souls be saved.

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

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

Spec. Mel.: “Full of tender compassion ...”:

When Thou wast crucified, O Christ Master, the dominion and might of death were overthrown, and all the tyranny of the enemy was trampled down, and those who died of old through the tree of disobedience were given life by the Tree of the Cross. Wherefore, we hymn Thy sufferings.

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

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

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

Thou didst will to suffer death and the Cross, affixing it in the midst of creation; when it was Thy good pleasure that Thy body be nailed, the sun hid its rays. Beholding these things, the thief on the cross hymned thee, crying aloud: Remember me, O Lord! And, believing, he received paradise.

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

Two canons: the canon for the Elevation of the Cross, with 6 Troparia counting the Irmos, and the canon of the holy great-martyr, with 6 Troparia.

ODE I

The canon of the feast, in Tone VIII:

Irmos: Inscribing the invincible weapon of the Cross upon the waters, * Moses marked a straight line before him with his staff * and divided the Red Sea, * opening a path for Israel who went over dry-shod. * Then he marked a second line across the waters * and united them in one, * overwhelming the chariots of Pharaoh. * Therefore let us sing to Christ our God, * for He hath been glorified.

Of old, Moses, standing between the priests, prefigured in himself the image of Christ's most pure sufferings; for, forming a cross with his outstretched arms, he raised up victory, vanquishing the might of the tyrant Amalek. Wherefore, let us hymn Christ our God, for He hath been glorified.

Upon a pole Moses set the cure of the deadly and venomous sting of the serpents, and the deliverance therefrom; for to the tree, in the image of the Cross, he bound a serpent which crawleth upon the ground, triumphing over the sinister bane therein. Wherefore, let us hymn Christ God, for He hath been glorified.

The sky showed forth the victory of the Cross to the divinely wise Emperor Constantine, the pious ruler; and therein the audacity of the hostile foe was cast down, delusion was destroyed and the divine Faith spread to the ends of the earth. Wherefore let us hymn Christ our God, for He hath been glorified.

The canon of the holy great-martyr, in Tone IV, the composition of Theophanes, the Acrostic whereof is: "I hymn Nicetas, the namesake of victory."

Irmos: Through the deep of the Red Sea, * marched dry shod Israel of old, * and by Moses' outstretched hands, * raised in the form of a cross, * the power of Amalek was routed in the wilderness.

Having slain the arrogance of my flesh, illumine thou my mind with the radiance of enlightenment, that I may hymn thy victory, O Nicetas, who, as an eminent victor, dost entreat Christ.

Putting aside the poison which cometh from the passions, thou didst mightily endure wounds and in suffering clothed thyself in a precious robe, dyed with thine own blood.

Having been nailed to the Tree for us, Thou didst show the path of suffering to be new and wondrous, for Thou, O Master, wast the Source of the strength and confession of the martyrs.

Theotokion: The portal of Thy condescension towards us do we mystically call the East, the Sun and the Light, for she supra-naturally shone Thee forth in two natures, O Lover of mankind.

ODE III

Canon of the feast

Irmos: The rod of Aaron is an image of this mystery, * for when it budded it showed who should be priest. * So in the Church, that once was barren, * the wood of the Cross hath now budded forth, * filling her with strength and steadfastness.

The rough stone, struck, put forth water for a disobedient and hard-hearted people, and showed forth the mystery of the divinely elect Church, whereof the Cross is the might and confirmation.

When Christ's most pure side was pierced by the spear, blood and water flowed therefrom, renewing the covenant and washing sin away, for the Cross is the boast of the faithful, the might and confirmation of kings.

Canon of the holy great-martyr

Irmos: Thy Church, O Christ, rejoiceth in Thee crying aloud: * Thou, O Lord, art my strength, * my refuge and foundation.

With steadfastness of soul didst thou endure the threats of the tormentors, O glorious martyr of Christ, aided by divine power.

O all-praised martyr of Christ, enduring the scattering of thy flesh and the dismemberment of thy limbs, thou didst preserve thy soul.

The assembly of Christ's martyrs rejoice in thee, beholding thy memory celebrated today.

Theotokion: O Mary, pure and honored abode of virginity: heal thou the wounds of my heart.

The Kontakion of the feast, in Tone IV:

O Thou Who wast lifted up willingly upon the Cross, * bestow Thy mercies upon the new community named after Thee, * O Christ God; gladden with Thy power Orthodox Christians, * granting them victory over enemies; ** may they have as Thy help the invincible trophy, the weapon of peace.

Ikos: He that was caught up to the third heaven of paradise and heard unspeakable and divine words which the human tongue cannot utter, what writeth he to the Galatians, which, as lovers of the Scriptures, ye have both read and come to understand? God forbid, saith he, that I should glory, save only in the Cross of the Lord, whereon having suffered He slew the passions. Let us all then firmly hold this boast, the Cross of the Lord; for this Wood is our salvation, the invincible trophy, the weapon of peace.

Sessional Hymn of the saint, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: "Thou that wast lifted up ...":

Showing thyself to be an invincible warrior, thou didst overcome the cunning of the barbarians and, having suffered, O glorious one, thou didst most mightily enslave hosts of invisible foes. Wherefore, thou didst receive a crown of victory. O blessed Nicetas, cease thou never to pray for us that hymn thee with faith. **(Twice)**

Glory ..., Both now ..., of the feast, in the same tone:

Stretching forth his hands aloft to the heavens, Moses prefigured the Cross, the divine weapon of the faithful, to which Christ affixed our sins. Wherefore, the enemy wept bitterly, his senses wracked with pain, saying: The spear of the Tree hath pierced me in the midst of my heart! Christ hath released all from the bonds of Hades!

ODE IV

Canon of the feast

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

Of old, Moses transformed the bitter springs in the desert with a tree, showing forth the conversion of the gentiles to piety through the Cross.

Jordan, having hidden in its depths an axe-head, gave it forth again through the power of a stick, signifying the cutting off of deception by the Cross and baptism.

In a sacred manner the people encamped in four divisions; and preceding in this fashion the tabernacle of the witness, they were glorified in the cross-like formation of their ranks.

Wondrously stretched forth, the Cross emitted rays like the sun's, and the heavens declared the glory of our God.

Canon of the holy great-martyr

Irmos: **Beholding Thee, the Sun of righteousness, * lifted up upon the Cross, * the Church now standeth arrayed and doth worthily cry aloud: * Glory be to Thy power, O Lord!**

Redeemed by the Blood of the Master, the sufferer Nicetas offered his blood to Christ, rejoicing. Wherefore, slaughtered, he cried aloud: Glory to Thee, O my God!

Aflame with love for the Master, O martyr, thou didst trample down the flame of idolatry and all the might of the demons, crying unto the Creator: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Delighting in the sight of the Lord and reveling in the radiance thereof, the martyr knew not suffering, but, rejoicing, cried aloud: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Theotokion: **A**dorned with a most distinct radiance, the most pure Virgin, O Christ, the animate heaven of Thee, the King of kings, is now glorified as the Theotokos.

ODE V

Canon of the feast

Irmos: **O thrice-blessed Tree, on which Christ the king and Lord was stretched! * Through thee the beguiler fell, * who tempted mankind with the tree. * He was caught in the trap set by God, * who was crucified upon thee in the flesh, * granting peace unto our souls.**

O ever-hymned Tree, whereon Christ was stretched: the whirling sword which guarded Eden stood in awe of thee, O Cross, and the dread cherubim withdrew, when Christ was nailed to thee, Who granteth peace unto our souls.

The adverse powers of the nether world are stricken with fear when the sign of the Cross is traced in the air in which they live, as are the generations of the earthborn and the heavenly, who bend the knee to Christ, Who granteth peace unto our souls.

Having shone forth a divine light and revealed itself in rays of incorruption unto the darkened gentiles astray in error, the divine Cross acquireth them for Christ Who was nailed thereto, and granteth peace unto our souls.

Canon of the holy great-martyr

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

O all-praised Nicetas, who can recount thine ordeals, or the crowns which Christ gave thee who suffered for Him?

Having completed their struggles upon the earth, the martyrs have received from Thee, O Bestower of life, a heavenly reward in the highest.

Now dost thou shine forth like a beacon, O all-praised Nicetas. Thou art become a light of secondary radiance, standing gloriously before the great Light.

Theotokion: O Mother of God, thou didst give birth unto the timeless Light Who became subject to time for us who are in the darkness of this life, and thereby illumined the whole world.

ODE VI

Canon of the feast

Irmos: Jonah stretched out his hands in the form of a cross * within the belly of the sea monster, * plainly prefiguring the redeeming Passion. * Cast out from thence after three days, * he foreshadowed the marvelous Resurrection of Christ our God, * who was crucified in the flesh and enlightened the world * by His Rising on the third day.

Bent with age and weighed down with infirmity, Jacob drew himself up when he crossed his arms, showing forth the power of the life-bearing Cross; for God Who was nailed in the flesh hath set aright the obsolescence of the law of the Scripture which was written in shadows, and dispelled the soul-destroying disease of deception.

Divine Israel laid his hands cross-wise upon the heads of the youths, and insofar as those serving under the law give glory to the firstborn, he suspected he had erred in laying his hands thus, yet he did not alter the life-bearing image; wherefore, crying aloud, raising the Cross on high, the newly established people of Christ God are protected thereby.

Canon of the holy great-martyr

Irmos: The church crieth out unto Thee O Lord, * 'I will sacrifice unto Thee with a voice of praise' * having been cleansed of the blood of the demons' * by the blood that for mercy's sake flowed from Thy side.

Desiring the comeliness of the Creator, O glorious one, and receiving illumination therefrom, thou didst take wing, O martyr, and, scorning death, drew nigh unto Him.

O martyr Nicetas, preferring with chaste thought those things which are inexhaustible to those things which are transitory, thou didst gladly submit thy body to tortures.

Theotokion: **O** Mother of God, finding thee alone to be an apple amid a grove, a lily most pure and a lily of the valley, the noetic Bridegroom dwelt within thee.

Kontakion of the Saint, in Tone II:

Spec. Mel.: “Seeking the highest ...”:

Having cut down the dominion of falsehood * by thy resistance, * and having received a crown of victory for thy sufferings, * thou dost rejoice with the angels, **O** Nicetas, * namesake of victory, * unceasingly praying with them to Christ God ** on behalf of us all

Ikos: **H**aving set the knowledge of Thee in my soul, cleanse Thou my mind and show me forth as a keeper of Thy commandments, **O** Savior, that I may be able to conquer the divers rebellions of my passions, receiving the honor of the victory of dispassion, through the prayers of Thy mighty martyr and passion-bearer Nicetas, **O** Lover of mankind: For Thou Thyself hast called us to remember on the day of his commemoration him that doth unceasingly pray for us all.

ODE VII

Canon of the feast

Irmos: **The senseless decree of the wicked tyrant, * breathing forth threats and blasphemy hateful to God, * confused the people. * Yet neither the fury of the wild beast nor the roaring of the fire * could frighten the three Children: * but standing together in the flame, * fanned by the wind that brought refreshment as the dew, they sang: * ‘Blessed and supremely praised art Thou, * O our God and the God of our fathers.’**

The first man, tasting of the tree, went to dwell in corruption; for, having condemned himself to a shameful banishment from life, he imparted corruption to the whole race of mankind. But we mortals, finding restoration through the tree of the Cross, cry aloud: **O** supremely hymned God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Breaking the commandment of God came about through disobedience, and the untimely partaking of the fruit of the tree brought death to mankind, but to preserve that which is most precious, access to the tree of life was forbidden, until God opened it to the suffering thief who with a proper understanding cried aloud: **O** supremely hymned God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Israel, foreseeing things to come, laid hold of the tip of Joseph’s staff, revealing beforehand that the most glorious Cross would seize the power of the kingdom, for it is the victorious boast of kings and a light for those who cry aloud with faith: **O** supremely hymned God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Canon of the holy great-martyr

Irmos: In the Persian furnace the youths and descendants of Abraham, * burning with a love of piety * rather than by a flame of fire, * cried aloud saying: * Blessed art Thou in the temple of Thy glory, O Lord.

O martyr, who art now illumined with unapproachable radiance, do thou enlighten with thy radiance those who now chant thy festival, crying out: Blessed art Thou, O my Lord and God!

The angelic forces were astounded at thy courage, O blessed one, beholding thee patiently suffering and saying: Blessed art Thou, O Lord and God of all!

Theotokion: With the choir on high the incorporeal Gabriel cried out to thee in gladness: Rejoice, O pure Virgin! Blessed art thou among women, O all-immaculate Lady!

ODE VIII

Canon of the feast

Irmos: O ye Children, equal in number to the Trinity, * bless ye God the Father and creator; * sing ye the praises of the Word who descended and changed the fire into dew; * and supremely exalt ye throughout the ages * the most Holy Spirit, who giveth life unto all.

O hosts of heaven, chant ye to the exalted Tree which was drenched in the blood of the incarnate Word of God, and celebrate the restoration of those born on earth. O Ye people, worship the Cross of Christ, by which the world hath been granted the resurrection throughout all ages!

O ye mortal stewards of grace, with your hands reverently raise on high the Cross whereon Christ God stood and the spear which pierced the body of God the Word, that all the nations may see the salvation which is of God, glorifying Him throughout all ages!

O faithful Christian kings, forechosen by divine decree, be ye glad! And having received from God the precious Cross, rejoice in it, the weapon of victory, for thereby tribes of enemy warriors seeking to make battle have been scattered throughout all ages.

Canon of the holy great-martyr

Irmos: Having spread his hands, Daniel closed the lions' jaws * in their den; * while the zealously pious youths, * girded with virtue, * quenched the power of the fire and cried aloud: * Bless ye the Lord, all ye works of the Lord.

O invincible martyr, thou didst bring thyself as a whole and acceptable sacrifice, and as a whole-burnt offering to thy Master, Who was crucified for our sake; and with gladness cried aloud: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

As thou wast a lawful divine contender, thou didst worthily receive an imperishable crown of victory from the life-bearing right hand of God, before Whom thou now dost stand, chanting: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Boundless was thy love of Christ, and pierced by many wounds and gorings, thou didst mingle thy blood with His. And now, as an emulator of Him, thou dost reign with Him, crying out: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Theotokion: O pure and all-immaculate Theotokos, who didst give birth to Christ Who alone is most pure, thou hast clearly washed away the defilement of our nature, and art more highly exalted than the cherubim and seraphim, who cry: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

ODE IX

Canon of the feast

Irmos: O Theotokos, thou art a mystical Paradise, * who untilled brought forth Christ. * by Whom the life-giving Tree of the Cross hath been planted upon the earth: * Therefore celebrating its exaltation on this day, * Him do we worship * and thee do we magnify.

Let all the trees of the forests rejoice, for their nature hath been sanctified by Him Who planted them in the beginning - Christ Who was stretched out upon the Tree. Wherefore, worshiping it as it is now raised aloft, we magnify thee, O Theotokos.

A sacred horn hath been lifted up, the chief horn for all the divinely wise: the Cross, whereby all the horns of the sinful are noetically broken asunder. Wherefore, worshiping it as it is now raised aloft, we magnify thee, O Theotokos.

Canon of the holy great-martyr

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

My whole self do I offer thee, O divinely blessed Nicetas, that I may find thee to be an intercessor before the Master who can save me from every evil circumstance, and a mediator of divine salvation.

Thou wast truly a witness to the truth, O passion-bearer, and now standing and rejoicing before precious hypostatic Truth, thou hast boldly accepted the reward for thy struggles.

Arriving at the calm harbor, thou dost rest from thy pains, and, O crown-bearer, dost rejoice in paradise with the martyrs of Christ. Wherefore, we all now fittingly glorify thee as glorified by God.

Theotokion: In a manner beyond the laws of nature, O pure and blessed one, thou hast given birth unto the Lawgiver Who in His tender compassion immutably became flesh and is known in two natures.

**Exapostilarion of the holy great-martyr:
Spec. Mel.: “Hearken, ye women ...”:**

Defending himself with the weapon of Thy precious Cross, Thy sufferer, O Word, mightily vanquished the powers of the adversary, and put the tormentors to shame, and suffered for Thee; and with Thee, O my Christ, King of all, doth Nicetas reign.
(Twice)

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

Today is the Cross raised on high, and the world is sanctified; for He that sitteth with the Father and the Holy Spirit stretched out his arms thereon. It hath brought the whole world to the knowledge of Thee, O Christ. Therefore, to those who hope in Thee do Thou grant divine glory.

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

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

Today is exalted * the Cross of Christ, * the life-bearing Tree, * whereon He was nailed ** in the flesh.

Verse: Exalt ye the Lord our God, * and worship the footstool of His feet; for He is holy.

Rejoice, divine preservation * of the faithful, * unassailable rampart, * thou Cross of the Lord, ** whereby we are exalted above the earth.

Verse: God is our King before the ages, * He hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth.

Come ye, in gladness * let us all venerate * the life-bearing Tree * whereon was stretched ** Christ our deliverance.

Glory ..., of the holy great-martyr, in Tone VI:

Today the whole world rejoiceth in the suffering of the passion-bearer, and the Church of Christ, adorned with flowers, crieth out to thee, O martyr of Christ: O favorite of Christ and most fervent intercessor, ceaselessly pray on behalf of thy servants!

Both now ..., in the same tone:

Today, from the impenetrable bosom of the earth the shoot of life hath been put forth, and it announceth the Resurrection of Christ Who was nailed thereto; and, lifted up by priestly hands, it proclaimeth His ascension to Heaven, whereby our nature, which was bound to the earth by the fall, doth now dwell in the heavens. Wherefore, in thanksgiving we cry aloud: O Lord Who wast lifted up thereon and thereby raised us up with Thyself: grant us Thy heavenly joys, since Thou lovest mankind.

AT LITURGY

On the Beatitudes: 4 Troparia from ODE I of the canon to the Cross, and 4 Troparia from ODE VI of the canon of the holy great-martyr.

Of old, Moses, standing between the priests, prefigured in himself the image of Christ's most pure sufferings; for, forming a cross with his outstretched arms, he raised up victory, vanquishing the might of the tyrant Amalek. Wherefore, let us hymn Christ our God, for He hath been glorified. (Twice)

Upon a pole Moses set the cure of the deadly and venomous sting of the serpents, and the deliverance therefrom; for to the tree, in the image of the Cross, he bound a serpent which crawleth upon the ground, triumphing over the sinister bane therein. Wherefore, let us hymn Christ God, for He hath been glorified.

The sky showed forth the victory of the Cross to the divinely wise Emperor Constantine, the pious ruler; and therein the audacity of the hostile foe was cast down, delusion was destroyed and the divine Faith spread to the ends of the earth. Wherefore let us hymn Christ our God, for He hath been glorified.

Desiring the comeliness of the Creator, O glorious one, and receiving illumination therefrom, thou didst take wing, O martyr, and, scorning death, drew nigh unto Him. (Twice)

O martyr Nicetas, preferring with chaste thought those things which are inexhaustible to those things which are transitory, thou didst gladly submit thy body to tortures.

Theotokion: O Mother of God, finding thee alone to be an apple amid a grove, a lily most pure and a lily of the valley, the noetic Bridegroom dwelt within thee.

At the Entrance, we end the hymn "O come let us worship ..." with the words: "O Son of God Who wast crucified in the flesh, save us that chant unto Thee: Alleluia." And we sing thus until the Leave-taking.

Troparion of the feast, in Tone I:

Save O Lord Thy people, * and bless Thine inheritance. * Grant now unto the faithful * victory over adversaries, * and by the power of Thy Cross ** do Thou preserve Thy commonwealth.

Troparion of the holy great-martyr, in Tone IV:

Fervently taking up the Cross of Christ, * as it were a sword, * thou didst make haste to do battle with the enemy, * and, suffering for Christ, * thou didst at last commit thy sacred soul to the Lord, * and hence thou hast been deemed worthy to receive from Him gifts of healing. ** O great-martyr Nicetas, Entreat Christ God that our souls be saved.

Kontakion of the holy great-martyr, in Tone II:

Having cut down the dominion of falsehood * by thy resistance, * and having received a crown of victory for thy sufferings, * thou dost rejoice with the angels, O Nicetas, * namesake of victory, * unceasingly praying with them to Christ God ** on behalf of us all

The Kontakion of the feast, in Tone IV:

O Thou Who wast lifted up willingly upon the Cross, * bestow Thy mercies upon the new community named after Thee, * O Christ God; gladden with Thy power Orthodox Christians, * granting them victory over enemies; ** may they have as Thy help the invincible trophy, the weapon of peace.

Prokeimenon of the feast in Tone VII (also until the Leave-taking): Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship the footstool of His feet; * for He is holy.

And of the saint, 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 TO TIMOTHY, §292 (II 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 laboureth 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 evil doer, (even) unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

Alleluia of the feast, in Tone IV: Remember Thy congregation which Thou hast purchased from the beginning.

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 (Matt. 10:16-22)

The Lord spake unto His disciples saying: 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.

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

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, the all-honored Cross of the Lord!

Irmos: O Theotokos, thou art a mystical Paradise, * who untitled brought forth Christ. * by Whom the life-giving Tree of the Cross hath been planted upon the earth: * Therefore celebrating its exaltation on this day, * Him do we worship * and thee do we magnify.

Communion Verse of the feast: The light of Thy countenance, O Lord, hath been signed upon us.

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

NOTES CONCERNING THE ORDER OF SERVICES ON THE SUNDAY AFTER THE EXALTATION OF THE PRECIOUS CROSS

Be it known: Should the after-feast of the Exaltation of the Precious Cross fall on a Sunday and the saint of the day have four or six Troparia prescribed for his canon, the service is taken thus:

On Saturday at Little Vespers: The Stichera of the Resurrection and of the Theotokos, as usual. The Troparion of the Resurrection; Glory ..., Both now ..., its Theotokion.

At Great Vespers: After the usual Kathisma, On “Lord, I have cried ...,” we sing: 3 Stichera of the Resurrection; 1 of Anatolius; 3 of the feast (as printed under the date in question), and 3 of the saint of the day. If the saint have 6 Stichera prescribed for

his feast, or Polyeleos, we sing 3 Stichera of the Resurrection, 3 of the feast, and 4 of the saint. Glory ..., of the saint; Both now ..., the principal Theotokion (Dogmatic) of the Tone. At Litiya, we sing the Stichera of the feast printed for the Aposticha Stichera under the date in question; Glory ..., Both now ..., of the feast, printed as the Glory Sticheron at the end of the Matins Aposticha. If the saint have a Glory Sticheron of his own, then we sing Glory ..., of the saint; Both now ..., of the feast. On the Aposticha, the Stichera of the Resurrection. Glory , of the saint (if there be one), Now and ever , of the feast. If the saint does not have a Glory Sticheron, then we sing Glory ..., Both now ..., of the feast. At the Blessing of the Loaves, the Troparion: “Virgin Theotokos, rejoice ...,” (Twice); and the Troparion of the feast, (Once).

At Matins: On “God is the Lord ...,” the Troparion of the Resurrection, (Twice); Glory ..., of the saint, if there be one; Both now ..., of the feast. If the saint have no Troparion, then we sing: Glory ..., Both now ..., of the feast. After the readings of the Psalter, the Sessional Hymns of the Resurrection with their Theotokia. Then the reading from the Gospel Interpreted, as appointed for the Sunday after the Exaltation. Then the 17th Kathisma and its Troparia, and the Hypacoi of the tone. And the reading from the Gospel Interpreted for the appropriate Sunday after Pentecost. If the saint have Polyeleos, after the two Kathismata, we sing the Polyeleos for the saint, and after the Polyeleos, the Troparia: “The assembly of angels ...” Then, the Hypacoi of the tone, and then all the Sessional Hymns of the saint. And a reading. The Song of Ascent and the Prokeimenon of the tone. “Let every breath ...” The Gospel of the Resurrection, the Sticheron of the Resurrection, etc. The canon of the Resurrection, with four Troparia, including its Irmos; the canon of the Theotokos, with two Troparia; the canon of the Cross, with four Troparia; and of the saint, with four. Katavasia of the feast. If the saint’s feast be of Polyeleos rank, or of doxology rank, we sing: the canon of the Resurrection, with four Troparia, including the Irmos; of the feast, four Troparia; and of the saint, with six Troparia. After the third ode, the Kontakion of the feast, and of the saint, if there be one; and the Ikos and Sessional Hymn of the saint. Glory ..., Both now ..., of the feast. And a reading. After the sixth ode, the Kontakion of the Resurrection, and its ikos, and the reading from the Prologue. At the ninth ode, we chant the Hymn of the Theotokos; and after the ninth ode, the Exapostilarion of the Resurrection; Glory ..., of the saint, if there be one; if not, Glory ..., Both now ..., of the feast. On the Praises, 4 Stichera to the Resurrection; then 4 Stichera to the saint, if there be such: three from the end of Matins, and the Glory ...verse, and we utilize the saint’s verses. If the saint does not have Stichera on the Praises, we sing: 4 Stichera to the Resurrection, and 4 to the feast, using the Matins Aposticha Stichera under the date in question, with the verses

of the feast. Glory ..., the Evangelical Sticheron; Both now ...,”Most blessed art thou ...” The Great Doxology, and after the Trisagion, the Resurrection Troparion only. The Ektenias and dismissal. Then, the usual reading from the catecheses of St. Theodore the Studite and the departure to the vestibule.

At The Hours: **T**he First Hour is read at the end of Matins. At the First Hour, the Troparion of the Resurrection, Glory ..., of the feast, Both now ..., the Theotokion of the tone. After Our Father, the Kontakion of the feast. Likewise, in the rest of the Hours, we alternate the Kontakia of the feast, Resurrection and the saint, if the latter be of Polyeleos rank.

At Liturgy: **O**n the Beatitudes, six verses from the tone, and the appointed ODE from the canon of the feast, 4 verses. If the saint have an ODE prescribed from his canon, then: 4 to the Resurrection, 4 from the appointed ODE of the festal canon, and 4 to the saint, from ODE VI of his canon. After the Entrance, Troparia of the Resurrection and the feast, then of the temple and the saint, if there be one; Glory ..., the Kontakion of the saint; Both now ..., that of the feast. If the saint does not have a Troparion or a Kontakion, then: Glory ..., the Kontakion of the Resurrection; Both now ..., of the feast. The Prokeimenon, Epistle and Gospel of the Sunday after the Exaltation, then of the saint, if there be one prescribed; if not, that of the usual cycle. The Prokeimenon of the tone is omitted. Communion verses: Praise the Lord from the heavens ..., and that of the saint; if the saint does not have one prescribed, that of the feast.