

THE 10th DAY OF THE MONTH OF OCTOBER
SYNAXIS OF THE FOURTEEN VENERABLE FATHERS OF OPTINA HERMITAGE
AT GREAT VESPERS

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

On “Lord, I have cried ...,” 8 Stichera of the venerable ones: 4 in Tone IV:

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

O venerable elders of Optina, * having taken up the yoke of Christ, * ye labored with fasting and prayer * and frequent vigils, * and shone forth in hope and faith, * and yet more with love, * which is the chief among the virtues, * wherewith those who approached thee ** warmed themselves. (Twice)

O ye who struggled fervently in obedience, * making your will subject * to the guidance of your fathers * who begat you spiritually, * ye received help against the adversary: * most profound humility, * wherewith ye destroyed the snares of the foe; * for the enemy can accomplish naught ** against those who are humble.

O ye guides of the Orthodox people, * like the apostle Paul ye cried out: * Nothing will separate us from the love of God! * Ye made that which is lower subject to that which is higher * and enslaved the flesh to the spirit. * Wherefore, ye have been shown to be luminaries of the Church, * set, not under a bushel, but on a lampstand, * that those who behold your works ** may glorify the heavenly Father.

And 4 Stichera, in Tone VIII:

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

O most glorious wonder! * Amid the tumult of life * the divinely wise fathers * preserved their hearts untroubled, * abode bodily with men; * but standing noetically before God, * protected by the shelter of His wings, * bearing the spirit of peace, ** thereby they drew many to Christ. (Twice)

O most noetically rich intercessors, * instruments of the Holy Spirit, * giving utterance to never-ceasing prayer * in a contrite and humble heart, * ye shone forth in angelic dispassion * and struggled for His sake. * O physicians of souls and bodies, * take pity and spare us ** who are beset by the tempest of mortal passions.

O venerable elders, * vessels of the Holy Spirit, * who have built up the Church of Christ * with gifts of grace, * ye were zealous for spiritual things, * having acquired the gift of prophecy, * telling men things profitable, * for their edification and consolation, ** emulating the prophets of old.

Glory ..., in Tone VI:

Having broken asunder the bonds of the passions, ye cleaved unto the love of the good and clothed yourselves in Christ, becoming heirs to the life on high through abstinence and humility. Wherefore, having found rest from your labors, ye rejoice with the heavenly hosts as is meet. O venerable fathers of Optina, ask remission of sins for those who celebrate your holy memory with love.

Both now ..., Dogmatic Theotokion, in Tone VI:

Who doth not call thee blessed, O most holy Virgin? * Who will not hymn thy most pure birthgiving? * For the only-begotten Son Who hath shone forth timelessly from the Father, * came forth, ineffably incarnate, from thee, O pure one; * By nature he is God, by nature for our sakes, he hath become a man * not divided into two Hypostases, * but known in two natures without commingling. * Him do thou beseech, O pure and most blessed one, ** that our souls find mercy!

Entrance. Prokeimenon of the day. Three Lessons:

A READING FROM THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON

Though the righteous be prevented with death, yet shall he be in rest. For honorable age is not that which standeth in length of time, nor that is measured by number of years. But wisdom is the gray hair unto men, and an unspotted life is old age. He pleased God, and was beloved of Him; so that, living among sinners, he was translated. Yea, speedily was he taken away, lest that wickedness should alter his understanding, or deceit beguile his soul. For the bewitching of naughtiness doth obscure things that are honest; and the wandering of lust doth undermine the simple mind. He, being made perfect in a short time, fulfilled a long time; for his soul pleased the Lord: therefore hasted He to take him away from among the wicked. This the people saw, and understood not neither laid they up this in their minds: that His grace and mercy is with His saints, and that He doth visit His chosen.

A READING FROM PROVERBS

The memory of the just is praised, and the blessing of the Lord is upon his head. Blessed is the man who hath found wisdom, and the mortal who knoweth prudence. For it is better to traffic for her, than for treasures of gold and silver. And she is more valuable than precious stones: no precious thing is equal to her in value. For length of existence and years of life are in her right hand; and in her left hand are wealth and glory: out of her mouth righteousness proceedeth, and she carrieth law and mercy upon her tongue. Harken to me O children, for I will speak solemn truths. Blessed is the man who shall keep my ways; for my outgoings are the outgoings of life and in them is prepared favor from the Lord: Ye, O men, do I exhort; and utter my voice to the sons of men. I, wisdom, have built up; upon counsel, knowledge and understanding have I called. Counsel and safety are mine; prudence is mine, and strength is mine. I love those that love me; they that seek me shall find grace. O ye simple, understand subtlety, and ye that are untaught, Imbibe knowledge. Harken unto me again for I will speak solemn truths. For my throat shall meditate truth; and false lips are an abomination before me. All the words of my mouth are in righteousness; there is nothing in them wrong or perverse. They are all evident to those that understand, and right to those that find knowledge. For I will instruct you in truth, that your hope may be in the Lord, and ye may be filled with the Spirit.

A READING FROM THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON

The mouth of the righteous droppeth wisdom: but the tongue of the unjust shall perish. The lips of just men drop grace: but the mouth of the ungodly is perverse. False balances are an abomination before the Lord: but a just weight is acceptable unto Him. Wherever pride entereth, there will also disgrace, but the mouth of the humble doth meditate wisdom. The integrity of the upright shall guide them, but the overthrow of the rebellious shall spoil them. Possessions shall not profit in the day of wrath, but righteousness will deliver from death. When a just man dieth, he leaveth regret: but the destruction of the ungodly is speedy and causeth joy. Righteousness traceth out blameless paths: but ungodliness encountereth unjust dealing. The righteousness of upright men delivereth them: but transgressors are caught in their own destruction. At the death of a just man his hope doth not perish: but the boast of the ungodly perisheth. A righteous man escapeth from a snare, and the ungodly man is delivered up in his place. In the mouth of ungodly men is a snare for citizens: but the understanding of righteous men is prosperous. In the prosperity of righteous men a city prospereth, but at the destruction of the wicked there is exultation. At the blessing of the upright a city shall be exalted, but by the mouths of ungodly men it is overthrown. A man void of understanding sneereth at his fellow citizens: but a sensible man is quiet.

At Litiya, the Sticheron of the temple, and these Stichera of the venerable fathers:

In Tone II: God, Who is wondrous in His saints, hath revealed to us new strugglers for piety, the venerable elders of Optina, who abiding in God, looked upon the beauty of Christ being mystically illumined with divine splendors:

In Tone IV: Ye gave neither sleep to your eyes, nor slumber to your eyelids, O blessed ones, until ye attained unto the love of God which was poured forth abundantly upon you: Wherefore, ye have received divine gifts, and heal soul corrupting passions: ye cure infirmities by faith, and expel unclean spirits. O venerable fathers, pray for our souls.

Glory ..., in Tone V:

Come, ye zealots of piety, let us praise our spiritual fathers: Leo, Moses and Anthony, Isaacius, Macarius and Anatolius, and with them Hilarion and Barsanuphius, Joseph and the great Ambrose, the other Anatolius and Nectarius, and the martyrs Nikon and Isaacius. With hymns let us honor the great elders and crying out to them, let us exclaim: O venerable and divinely wise fathers, never cease in your prayers for us, for ye are our helpers.

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

Thou art the temple and portal, * the palace and throne of the King, * O most honored Virgin, * through whom Christ the Lord, my Redeemer, * Who is the Sun of righteousness, * hath revealed Himself unto those who sleep in darkness, * deigning to enlighten those * whom He hath fashioned in His image by His own hand. * Wherefore, O all-hymned one, * as thou hast acquired a mother's boldness before Him, ** entreat Him without ceasing, that our souls be saved.

On the Aposticha, these Stichera, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: “Called from on high ...”:

Thou didst offer thyself to the Almighty, * O venerable father Leo, * when thy soul was set afire by divine zeal; * and furnishing thy mind with wings to soar aloft to the heavens, * thou didst forsake the world * and all that is in it, * and didst follow after Christ * with steadfast resolve, * preferring naught to His love. * Him do thou entreat, ** that He save and enlighten our souls.

Verse: Precious in the sight of the Lord * is the death of His saints.

Having loved God from thy youth, * O venerable Macarius, * thou didst follow after Him with all thy soul, * in nowise preferring that which is in the world; * but, considering all worldly things but dung, * thou didst hasten to please God, * grounding thyself in His commandments. * Wherefore, having attained thine uttermost desire, * thou standest before Christ, * Whom do thou entreat, ** that He save and enlighten our souls.

Verse: What shall I render unto the Lord * for all that He hath rendered unto me?

O venerable father Ambrose, * thou didst acquire perfect love * for God and thy neighbor, * which is the bond of perfection, * and, as the adornment of monks * and the consolation of those who live in the world, * thou didst assemble ranks of nuns, * becoming all things to all peoples, as saith the apostle. * And thou didst lead thy children to the Master, * Whom do thou entreat, ** that He save and enlighten our souls.

Glory ..., in Tone VIII:

Illumined with the light of the Trinity, O venerable fathers, ye fled the darkness of pleasures and were revealed to be beacons, illumining the hearts of the faithful. Wherefore, celebrating your radiant memorial, we cry out together: O most noetically rich God-bearers, entreat Christ God, that He grant remission of sins unto those who honor your holy memory.

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

O unwedded Virgin! * thou who ineffably conceived God in the flesh, * Mother of God Most High: * accept the supplications of thy servants, O most immaculate one, * granting unto all cleansing of transgressions; * and, accepting now our supplications, ** pray thou that we all be saved.

At the blessing of the Loaves: Troparion of the venerable fathers, in Tone I:

Abiding in unceasing prayer, * and embracing the wicked as well as the good with love, * O venerable elders of Optina, ye served God and your neighbors, * and through vigils, tears and fasting received the gift of divers miracles. * Glory to Him Who hath given us such mediators! * Glory to Him Who hath glorified you! * Glory to God Who is wondrous in His saints!

And, Rejoice O Virgin Theotokos ..., (Once)

AT MATINS

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

Abiding in unceasing prayer, * and embracing the wicked as well as the good with love, * O venerable elders of Optina, ye served God and your neighbors, * and through vigils, tears and fasting received the gift of divers miracles. * Glory to Him Who hath given us such mediators! * Glory to Him Who hath glorified you! * Glory to God Who is wondrous in His saints! (Twice)

Glory ..., Both now ..., Theotokion.

When Gabriel announced to thee, “Rejoice!”, O Virgin, * the Master of all became incarnate within thee, the holy tabernacle, * at his cry, as the righteous David said. Thou wast shown to be more spacious than the heavens, * having borne thy Creator. * Glory to Him Who made His abode within thee! * Glory to Him Who came forth from thee! ** Glory to Him Who hath set us free by thy birthgiving.

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

Spec. Mel.: “That which was commanded ...”:

Having subdued the irrational passions by the powers of your spirit, O venerable ones, ye grant benefactions to your reason-endowed flock, having been enriched by Christ God with the gift of healing. Wherefore, celebrating your sacred and luminous festival, we ask cleansing for our souls. (Twice)

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

O divinely joyous, pure and blessed one, with the venerable fathers and elders, and all the saints, unceasingly entreat Him Who, in the loving-kindness of His compassions, was born of thee, on our behalf, that, before the end, He grant us forgiveness of sins and correction of life, that we may find mercy.

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

Spec. Mel.: “That which was commanded ...”:

Having been deemed worthy of of great gifts, O venerable ones, ye lived a life of humility upon the earth, freely healing the sufferings of the infirm; and ye were shown to be conversers with the angels, O most blessed fathers of Optina. By your supplications do ye also heal our passions. (Twice)

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

O Theotokos, with the venerable ones entreat the unapproachable Word, the Son of God, Who, past understanding, was ineffably born of thee, that He grant pure peace to the whole world, and that, before the end, He bestow upon us forgiveness of sins and, in His extreme goodness, grant to thy servants the kingdom of heaven.

Polyeleos, and this magnification: We bless you, O venerable fathers of Optina, and we honor your holy memory, O instructors of monastics and conversers with the angels.

Selected Psalm verse:

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

Glory ..., Both now ..., Alleluia ..., Glory to Thee, O God. (Thrice)

After the Polyeleos, the Sessional Hymn, in Tone I:

Spec. Mel.: “Thy tomb, O Savior ...”:

Ineffable is the grace which the saints have received from Christ! Wherefore, invoked with faith, they heal incurable diseases, and with divine power their relics work miracles. Through their supplications, O Lord, free us also from passions of soul and body, in that Thou lovest mankind. (Twice)

Glory ..., Both now ..., Theotokion, in Tone I:

All of us who with love have recourse to thy goodness * know thee to be in truth the Mother of God, * who, even after giving birth, * wast shown to be a virgin. * For we have thee as an intercessor for sinners * and have acquired thee as salvation * amidst temptations, ** O only all-immaculate one:

Song of Ascents, the first antiphon of Tone IV:

Prokeimenon, in Tone IV: Precious in the sight of the Lord * is the death of His saints.

Verse: What shall I render unto the Lord for all that He hath rendered unto me?

Let every breath praise the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW, §43 (MT 11: 27-30)

The Lord said to His disciples: all things are delivered unto Me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him. Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

After Psalm 50, this Sticheron, in Tone VI:

Having rejected all the tyranny of the passions and trampled every plot of the wicked serpent underfoot through Christ, O venerable fathers of Optina, ye were shown to be radiant with light, illumining the whole world like beacons, dispelling the darkness and healing infirmities through grace, showing yourselves to be the helpers of all who celebrate your holy memory with faith.

Canon of supplication to the Theotokos (the Paraclisis), in Tone VIII, with 6 Troparia, including the Irmos; and that of the venerable fathers, with 8 Troparia, in the same tone:

ODE I

Irmos: **H**aving 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.

Ye are a rule for monastics, O healers of the infirm and sorrowful. O shepherds of the lost sheep, teach us to worthily offer hymnody unto you.

Exalting our instructors, let us say: Ye are a holy seed, O venerable fathers, ye praise of the land of Russia and confirmation of your children!

Rejoice, O honored Paisius our father, thou chief shepherd of the monastic folds, who guided ranks of monks to the heavenly pasture, instructing the ends of the Russian land!

Theodore, the monk of Svir, with many tears and a life of sorrow endured many evils; yet, being steadfast and strong of mind, he spiritually begat a son, Leo, amid his pangs.

Theotokion: **O** Virgin Mother Theotokos, entreat Christ Who was incarnate of thee, that He preserve the Russian land, and that He save our souls, in that He is merciful.

ODE III

Irmos: **O** Lord, Creator of the vault of Heaven * and Builder of the Church, * do Thou strengthen me in Thy love, O Summit of desire, * O Support of the faithful, * O only Lover of mankind.

Thou didst set Christ, the Chief Cornerstone, as the firm foundation of thy struggles, and didst become the first of the company of elders, O Leo; and thou didst receive the grace to dispel the infirmities of those who suffer cruelly.

O Leo, thou didst cry out thus to those who oppressed thee: “I shall chant unto my God for as long as I have my being! Who will separate me from His love? Therein will I remain until the end, doing His will with boldness!”

Truly blessed was the venerable Macarius, for he fed the souls of the hungry, freely nourishing all with his grace-filled discourse, doing away with their spiritual starvation, and bringing peace to souls beset by the tempest of the passions.

Theotokion: **F**rom thee, O Mother of God, a torrent of sweetness hath poured forth, watering all mankind and washing away the defilement of their souls, O Virgin Theotokos; wherefore, from all tribulations do thou save those who venerate thy precious image.

Sessional Hymn of the venerable fathers, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: “Thou hast appeared ...”:

Ye have been shown to be instruments of the Holy Spirit, O venerable fathers, and have been deemed worthy of the gifts of prophecy; for in your souls the unapproachable light shone forth. **(Twice)**

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

At a loss how to hymn thee worthily, who art more exalted than all creation, O Theotokos, we beseech thee: Freely have mercy upon us!

ODE IV

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

O most wise Macarius, thou didst glean spiritual grain from the writings of the holy fathers, and with this, fed hungry souls.

As the instructor of monks in the Monastery of the Forerunner, O Anthony, by thy life of abstinence, pray thou for those who praise thee.

As brethren in the flesh and spirit, O divinely wise pastors Moses and Anthony, ye guided your sheep to the pasture.

Theotokion: O pure Theotokos, flower and root which put forth the divine Shoot, unceasingly pray for us who hymn thee as the Theotokos.

ODE V

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

Elisha received a double measure of grace from Elijah, and upon thee, O father Ambrose, did the grace of fathers Leo and Macarius rest.

O Ambrose, thou didst acquire within thyself love, the perfection of the virtues; for thou wast all things to all peoples, and a refuge for the poor.

O Ambrose, with divine food thou didst nourish starving hearts, and feed thy sheep on the pasture of the Word.

Theotokion: O Mother of God, our fervent helper: illumine us who pray unto thee, ever interceding on behalf of us, thine unworthy servants.

ODE VI

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

Thou wast a true son, O Joseph, having acquired unfeigned obedience, the begetter of dispassion; and as one meek, pure and merciful, thou didst humbly say: "I am useless without my father."

The chaste-minded Joseph faithfully followed in the steps of his father: he humbled himself even unto death, thus emulating Christ the Master. Wherefore, we beseech him: Teach thou humility even to us sinners!

Having acquired the love of thy father, O Anatolius, with him thou didst shepherd the reason-endowed flock; and now, O father, forget us not, but be thou mindful of thy sheep and guide them, seeking thy lost children, and leading us all to salvation.

Theotokion: **I** know thee to be the helper of my life and my steadfast preserver, O Virgin, who dost drive away the tumult of temptations and fendest off the assaults of the demons; and I ever pray thus, that thou deliver me from my passions.

Kontakion of the venerable ones, in Tone VIII:

Spec. Mel.: “To thee, the champion leader ..”:

Having withdrawn from this vain work and discovered a treasure through your pure life, * ye have not abandoned your care for sinners in this world; * but, as guides for the lost, deliver us from the vanity of this world, that we may say: ** Rejoice, O divinely wise elders!

Ikos: **E**mulating the angels, ye withdrew from the world, desiring to make your abode in the wilderness; yet forget us not who are still in the world, we sinners pray, that, delivered from falsehood, we may cry unto you: Rejoice, physicians of spiritual sicknesses; rejoice, healers of bodily ailments! Rejoice, ye who transcended the understanding of the wise; rejoice, ye who guided the unwise to understanding! Rejoice, ye who offered up unceasing prayers; rejoice, mediators before God for sinners! Rejoice, O divinely wise elders!

ODE VII

Irmos: **I**n Babylon, the pious youths did not worship the golden image, * but, bedewed in the midst of the fiery furnace, * they chanted a hymn, saying: * **O supremely exalted God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!**

O father Hilarion, having withdrawn from the world, abandoning all that is therein and considering it but dung, thou didst cleave unto the elders Leo and Macarius, and hast received from Christ the authority to drive out evil spirits.

Isaacius, the compassionate monk, comforted those who came to him, helping them in every way, as parents help their children.

No prophet is without honor, save only in his own house, for they drove away all the prophets; and thou, O venerable father Barsanuphius, being driven out, wast deemed worthy of blessedness, having endured exile for righteousness' sake.

Theotokion: **O** Virgin Theotokos, pray to thy Son for us who with faith have recourse to thy mercy and worship Him, that we may be delivered from tribulations and temptations.

ODE VIII

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

Nectarius hath come to share in eternal glory, having spurned the glory of this life; for everyone who humbleth himself will be exalted.

Let the fathers Anatolius, Nectarius, Isaacius and Nikon be blessed; for, having suffered lawfully, they join chorus throughout all ages.

Driven out by apostates, the fathers were not troubled, but cried aloud: “Our life is in the heavens!”

Theotokion: Disdain not those who require thine aid, O Virgin, and who hymn and exalt thee supremely for 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.

Truly ye acquired every virtue, and every gift was given you. Yet save your flock, praying for them.

We have accepted the commandment, Give thanks for all things, that we may praise God, in that He hath given you to us, O holy guides to His kingdom.

O our intercessors, pray ye earnestly for the land of Russia, and save all who celebrate your memory with faith.

Theotokion: O holy Lady, help us sinners, and deliver our homeland from evil enemies. We beseech thee, keep us under the shelter of thy wings.

Exapostilarion of the venerable fathers

Spec. Mel.: “Heaven with stars ...”:

Let us honor the divinely wise elders, the radiant beacons, the strugglers for piety, the teachers of the virtues, the instructors of the Faith, who pray for us.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Theotokion:

O Virgin Mother of the Lord, thou sweetness of the angels, joy of the sorrowful, intercessor for Christians: help us, and deliver us from everlasting torments.

On the Praises, 4 Stichera, in Tone VI:

Spec. Mel.: “Having set aside ...”:

Having set aside * all care for earthly things, * and cast the tyranny of the passions * far away from yourselves, * O venerable and God-bearing fathers, * ye made your abode in the wilderness, * and, having cleansed your hearts, * ye were illumined with grace, * and, shining forth like lamps, * ye enlighten the whole world, * driving darkness away from those who honor ** your holy memory. *(Twice)*

The spiritual luminaries * which shone forth in the firmament of the Church * in latter times * guided to the calm haven * those tempest tossed upon the deep * and engulfed by the pleasures of life; * and even now they dispel the darkness of sin, * still the tempest of the passions, * turn supplicants away from the way of evil * which leadeth to destruction, * and pray with boldness ** for the salvation of our souls.

No longer do ye behold * the glory of the Lord in indistinct images, * but face to face, * the reflection having been broken: * that glory which eye hath not seen, * nor ear heard, which hath not entered into the heart of men, * but which God hath prepared for those who love Him. * But having been deemed worthy of these good things, * forget us not, * but pray that we be saved ** who celebrate your memory.

Glory ..., in Tone VIII:

Having lifted the cross upon your shoulders and crucified the flesh with the passions and lusts, ye crushed the head of the serpent. Show us forth as vanquishers of sin, and teach us to offer fruits worthy of repentance.

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

O Sovereign Lady, accept the supplication of thy servants, and deliver us from all want and grief.

Great Doxology. Troparion, in Tone I:

Abiding in unceasing prayer, * and embracing the wicked as well as the good with love, * O venerable elders of Optina, ye served God and your neighbors, * and through vigils, tears and fasting received the gift of divers miracles. * Glory to Him Who hath given us such mediators! * Glory to Him Who hath glorified you! * Glory to God Who is wondrous in His saints!

Glory ..., Both now ..., Theotokion, in Tone I:

When Gabriel announced to thee, “Rejoice!”, O Virgin, * the Master of all became incarnate within thee, the holy tabernacle, * at his cry, as the righteous David said. Thou wast shown to be more spacious than the heavens, * having borne thy Creator. * Glory to Him Who made His abode within thee! * Glory to Him Who came forth from thee! ** Glory to Him Who hath set us free by thy birthgiving.

Litanies. Dismissal. First Hour.

AT LITURGY

On the Beatitudes, 8 Troparia: 4 from ODE III, and 4 from ODE VI of the canon of the venerable fathers.

Thou didst set Christ, the Chief Cornerstone, as the firm foundation of thy struggles, and didst become the first of the company of elders, O Leo; and thou didst receive the grace to dispel the infirmities of those who suffer cruelly. (Twice)

O Leo, thou didst cry out thus to those who oppressed thee: “I shall chant unto my God for as long as I have my being! Who will separate me from His love? Therein will I remain until the end, doing His will with boldness!”

Truly blessed was the venerable Macarius, for he fed the souls of the hungry, freely nourishing all with his grace-filled discourse, doing away with their spiritual starvation, and bringing peace to souls beset by the tempest of the passions.

Thou wast a true son, O Joseph, having acquired unfeigned obedience, the begetter of dispassion; and as one meek, pure and merciful, thou didst humbly say: “I am useless without my father.”

The chaste-minded Joseph faithfully followed in the steps of his father: he humbled himself even unto death, thus emulating Christ the Master. Wherefore, we beseech him: Teach thou humility even to us sinners!

Having acquired the love of thy father, O Anatolius, with him thou didst shepherd the reason-endowed flock; and now, O father, forget us not, but be thou mindful of thy sheep and guide them, seeking thy lost children, and leading us all to salvation.

Theotokion: I know thee to be the helper of my life and my steadfast preserver, O Virgin, who dost drive away the tumult of temptations and fendest off the assaults of the demons; and I ever pray thus, that thou deliver me from my passions.

Troparion of the venerable fathers, in Tone I:

Abiding in unceasing prayer, * and embracing the wicked as well as the good with love, * O venerable elders of Optina, ye served God and your neighbors, * and through vigils, tears and fasting received the gift of divers miracles. * Glory to Him Who hath given us such mediators! * Glory to Him Who hath glorified you! * Glory to God Who is wondrous in His saints!

Kontakion of the venerable fathers, in Tone VIII:

Having withdrawn from this vain work and discovered a treasure through your pure life, * ye have not abandoned your care for sinners in this world; * but, as guides for the lost, deliver us from the vanity of this world, that we may say: ** Rejoice, O divinely wise elders!

Prokeimenon, in Tone VII: Precious in the sight of the Lord * is the death of His saints.

Verse: What shall I render unto the Lord for all that He hath rendered unto me?

EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS §213 (5:22-6:2)

Brethren: the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vainglory, provoking one another, envying one another. Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Alleluia, in Tone VI: Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord; in His commandments shall he greatly delight.

Verse: His seed shall be mighty upon the earth.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE, § 24 (6: 17-23)

At that time, Jesus stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases; and they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all. And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples and said: Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh. Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven.

Communion Verse: Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous; praise is meet for the upright.