

THE 30th DAY OF THE MONTH OF DECEMBER
AFTERFEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST
COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY MARTYR ANYSIA & THE VENERABLE
ZOTICUS

THE COMMEMORATION OF THE VENERABLE MELANIA IS TRANSFERRED TO
THIS DAY BECAUSE OF THE APODOSIS OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST
AT VESPERS

On “Lord, I have cried ...,” 6 Stichera: 3 of the holy martyr, in Tone IV:
Spec. Mel.: “As one valiant; among the martyrs ...”:

Made radiant by the splendor of virginity, * O all-praised one, * thou didst shine forth in the struggles of martyrdom; * for, refusing to worship the sun, * thou didst endure unjust slaughter, * and, dyed with thy blood, * thou hast come to stand before the Sun of glory, * illumined by the splendors ** emitted by Him, O crowned one.

Showing forth heartfelt love, O glorious one, * thou didst drench the earth * with tears of compunction, * and wipe the footstool of Christ dry with thy hair, * contemplating and looking toward Him as transcendent, * Whom thou didst desire; * and, touching His feet noetically, * thou didst enlighten thy soul ** with most divine visions.

Having distributed thy wealth * and provided for the poor, * thou didst betroth thyself to thine incorrupt Bridegroom, O all-glorious one, * and as a dowry didst bring unto Him * the streams of thy blood * and the endurance of sufferings * which thou didst bear, O Anysia. * Wherefore the Most High hath set thee to dwell in His bridal-chamber ** as a passion-bearer and martyr.

And 3 Stichera of the venerable Melania, in Tone IV:
Spec. Mel.: “Called from on high ...”:

O thou who hast enrolled in the choirs of the angels, * when divine love set thee aflame * and caused thee to soar far above visible things * because of thy dispassion and purity, * then with words of trust in God * thou didst bring thy spouse to life, * putting aside the fleeting and inconstant tumult of life. * Wherefore, having found with him * everlasting life and delight, * thou prayest to the Master, ** that He save our souls.

Desiring the life of the angels * when thou didst spit out sweet food, * having trained thyself in abstinence and the keeping of vigil, * in lying on the ground and in purity, * thou didst become the most pure vessel * of the divine Spirit, * adorned for Him with all-splendid gifts, * O all-honored one. * Wherefore, thou didst draw the people toward His divine love, O Melania, * and didst lead them to the Master, ** the Savior of our souls.

Adorned with the beauties of the virtues, * when thou didst fulfill the word of the Savior, * thou didst give to the poor and wretched, * distributing ten thousands of golden coins, * and didst receive heavenly riches, * being enriched forever * with righteousness, * incorruption and deliverance. * Wherefore, we honor thy repose * and earnestly entreat thee: Entreat the Creator, ** that He enlighten our souls.

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

“**G**lory to God in the highest!” is heard from the incorporeal ones in Bethlehem today, addressed to Him Who was well pleased to become Peace on earth. Now the Virgin hath become more spacious than the heavens, for Light hath shone forth upon darkened souls and lifted up the lowly who chant with the angels: Glory to God in the highest!

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

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

Christ, shining forth * as a star from Jacob, * hath enlightened the nations * with the light of divine knowledge. ** Let us glorify Him!

Verse: From the womb before the morning star have I begotten Thee. * The Lord hath sworn and will not repent.

Rejoice, O Bethlehem, * thou city of David, * for He Who was begotten of the Father * without mother, hath become incarnate within thee ** without father from the pure Virgin, the divine Maiden.

Verse: The Lord said unto my Lord: * Sit Thou at My right hand.

The Word of the Father, * assuming flesh, hath been born, * wrapped in swaddling clothes * and lain in a manger, ** releasing me from irrationality.

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

Beholding that which He had created according to His image and likeness corrupted by disobedience, Jesus descended, bowing down the heavens, and made His abode in the Virgin's womb without undergoing change, that in her He might restore Adam Who had become corrupt, yet crieth: Glory to Thine appearance, O my Redeemer and God!

Troparion of the feast, in Tone IV:

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, * hath shined the light of knowledge upon the world; * for thereby, they that worshipped the stars * were instructed by a star * to worship Thee, the Sun of Righteousness, * and to know Thee, the Dayspring from on high. ** O Lord, glory be to Thee.

AT COMPLINE

Canon of our venerable father Zoticus, in Tone VIII:

ODE I

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

O Zoticus, entreat Christ, that He enlighten from on high my darkened thoughts, that I may hymn thee worthily.

Thou didst show thyself to be an emulator of the angels by thy life on earth, O divinely wise one, spurning the beauties of life as was fitting.

Theotokion: The race of mankind is edified because of thee, O Virgin, for, without leaving the highest, God descended to earth.

ODE III

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

Come, ye sojourners, and let us joyfully lift up our voices today, blessing Zoticus on this, his splendid festival.

Like Abraham in his day, thou didst set up a tent as thy dwelling-place, receiving all the poor and richly nurturing them.

Theotokion: In thy birth giving, O all-pure one, thou didst cause every tempest to cease; wherefore, rulers vanquish the enemy, reveling in peace.

ODE IV

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

This radiant solemnity of the venerable Zoticus hath now shone forth, summoning all to the celebration of the nativity of Christ.

Having been adorned with miracles, thou hast left us most glorious miracles, thine honored corrections on earth, O all-blessed one, as a divine model.

Theotokion: O Birthgiver of God, we have found thee to be a mercy-seat and impregnable refuge amid battles, and rulers bear thy dominion, O pure one.

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!

O wondrous one, adornment of the virtues, thy precious corrections have been shown to be a divine home and vesture for the naked.

Healing leprosy, O sacred father, thou didst make thine honored house into a hospital, wherein every infirmity is treated as is meet.

Theotokion: Great and adored is the mystery which was manifest within thee, O Ever-virgin Theotokos; for, lo! we mortals have truly become reconciled with God.

ODE VI

Irmos: The abyss of my sins and the storm of my transgressions * disquieten me and thrust me down * into the depths of despondency; * but do Thou stretch forth Thy mighty arm, * unto me as Thou didst to Peter, * and save me, O my Guide.

All of us, the faithful, know thee to be a temple of the Spirit, O most glorious one, for thou didst make thy house, wherein every ailment is expelled by thy prayers, into a magnificent temple.

Emulating Abraham, thou didst render hospitality to strangers on earth, most blessedly receiving the homeless, the naked, the wandering, the halt, the poor and the sojourners.

Theotokion: He Who showed forth the cave as heaven on earth, O Virgin, hath shown thee to be a heavenly temple surrounded by angelic choirs chanting with faith: Glory in the highest to thine Offspring!

Sessional Hymn of the venerable one, in Tone V:

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

With the dew of abstinence, O venerable Zoticus, thou didst extinguish the furnace of the passions, having been enriched with the gift of healing by God; and thou didst receive the faithful, to heal their cruel pangs and to drive away from them hordes of the demons. Wherefore, with gladness we honor thee.

ODE VII

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

Thou hast joined all the venerable and the choirs of the incorporeal ones, O all-blessed Zoticus, and with them criest aloud: Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, throughout the ages!

By power and grace, O divinely wise one, thou wast shown to be the protector of widows and the weak, and the father of orphans, crying aloud: Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, throughout the ages!

Theotokion: O Theotokos, destroy the might of the barbarians and save thy people; and make steadfast faithful rulers, who cry aloud: Blessed is the Fruit of thy womb, O all-pure one!

ODE VIII

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

These trophies of victory, these corrections, and the tears of poor women have shown thy temple to be higher than heaven, and opened to thee the gates of the kingdom. For thou didst cry out with faith: Ye children bless; ye priests hymn; ye people supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

Thou gavest neither sleep to thine eyes nor slumber to thine eyelids, O right wondrous God-pleaser, until thou didst utterly complete thy godly task as a noetic paradise of Christ, crying: Ye children bless; ye priests hymn; ye people supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

Theotokion: **B**ecoming man for our salvation, Thou didst come to us in the tender compassion of Thy mercy, making Thine abode within the cave, wrapped in swaddling bands; and Thou hast raised mortals up from the passions, who chant together: Hymn the Lord ye priests; ye people supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

ODE IX

Irmos: **H**eaven was stricken with awe, * and the ends of the earth were filled with amazement, * for God hath appeared in the flesh, * and thy womb was rendered more spacious than the heavens. * Wherefore, the ranks of men and of angels * magnify thee as the Theotokos.

Grace hath been given thee by God, O father, to heal the infirmities of the poor, the lame and those with withered limbs; and faithfully receiving them as ones beloved of Christ, with them thou dost ever rejoice, abiding in the bosom of Abraham.

Thou didst feed to satiety every stranger, naked person and wanderer, O father, and with the patriarchs and the righteous thou dost now ever splendidly rejoice where Christ is the wealth and delight, the eternal hope of the saved, the treasure of all.

Theotokion: **A**s the Mother of God, as the intercessor and haven of those who honor thee, as the refuge of all who have recourse to thee, O Virgin, as the joy of kings, their glory, confirmation and worthy crown, O Theotokos, save thou thy people.

Stichera of the venerable one, in Tone VI:

Spec. Mel.: "On the third day ...":

In character thou didst show thyself to be like Abraham, O wise one, for thou didst make the abundance of thy home accessible to all, giving to those in need and presenting alms to the poor.

Christ showed thee to be a receiver of widows and the poor, the fervent helper of the afflicted, the advocate of the oppressed, the champion and deliverer of those who praise thee, O our father.

Glory ..., in Tone VI:

Strengthened with power and adorned with the grace of Him Who was born in the cave, O Zoticus, with asceticism and abstinence thou didst triumph over the passions and hast received trophies of victory.

Both now ..., in the same tone:

The Virgin who gave birth to Thee without seed, O Christ God, laid Thee in the manger as a babe, and the choirs of the incorporeal ones cried out from on high: Glory to the Creator and God of all!

AT MATINS

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

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, * hath shined the light of knowledge upon the world; * for thereby, they that worshipped the stars * were instructed by a star * to worship Thee, the Sun of Righteousness, * and to know Thee, the Dayspring from on high. ** O Lord, glory be to Thee. (Thrice)

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

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

The Son Who with the Father and the Spirit is everlasting, Who is the Wisdom and Understanding from before all ages, desired to be born of the Virgin for our sake in the latter times, that He might save the world from the tyranny of the alien foe. Glory be to Thee Who wast born in the flesh! Glory be to Thee Who wast thus well pleased! Glory be to Thee Who hast delivered us by Thy nativity!

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

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

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

Let heaven rejoice and let the earth be glad, for the Lamb of God hath been born on earth, granting deliverance to the world. The Word Who is in the bosom of the Father hath issued forth from the Virgin without seed. At Him the magi marveled, beholding God in the flesh; and the shepherds cried aloud: Glory be to Him Who alone is truly God!

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

Spec. Mel.: “Of the Wisdom ...”:

O incorrupt and divine Glory, Thou issue forth from the Virgin's womb and preserve inviolate her who gave birth to Thee; Thou didst rest in the manger as upon a throne, and didst show the cave to be a beautiful palace. Shepherds hymned Thee as the King of all, and the star made its journey showing the magi a divine light. Wherefore, we all cry out to Thee: O Master Christ our God, send down remission of sins upon those who with faith celebrate Thy divine nativity!

Canon of the feast, with 6 Troparia; and two canons, one for each of the saints, with a total of 8 Troparia.

ODE I

Canon of the feast, the composition of John the monk, in Tone I:

Irmos: The Master saved His people by working a wonder, * making solid the watery waves of the sea of old; * and having willingly been born of the Virgin, * He hath set before us a path leading to heaven. * Let us glorify Him Who is by nature equal to both the Father and mankind.

Thy sacred womb, which was clearly depicted by the bush which burned without being consumed, bore the Word, mingling God with the form of a mortal man and loosing the wretched womb of Eve from the ancient bitter curse. Let us glorify Him, O ye mortals!

The star plainly showed to the magi, Thee the merciful Word, existent before the sun, Who came to bring an end to sin, and wast wrapped in swaddling bands in a meager cave, and rejoicing, they beheld the very Lord Himself, as a man.

Canon of the holy martyr Anysia, the composition of Theophanes, in Tone IV:

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.

As thou standest in joy before the Father of lights, O all-praised one, send down light upon me who hymn thy radiant memory, driving away the storm of my passions by thy prayers.

With abstinence, O divinely wise one, thou didst renew the meadow of thy soul, producing the grain of martyrdom for the Husbandman Who preserved thee and breathed strength into thee, O right wondrous virgin martyr.

With thy hands which bestow riches far more precious than corruptible wealth, thou didst receive the richness of life which in nowise passeth away, a treasure which cannot be taken away, and heavenly glory, O martyr.

Theotokion: For us the Creator of all is born of thee today, O thou who knewest not wedlock; and He Who hath wrapped the sea in mist is wrapped in swaddling bands, O Ever-virgin Mother.

Canon of the venerable Melania, the composition of Joseph, in Tone IV:

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

Illumining me with the radiant supplications of the venerable Melania, cleanse me who am wholly blackened by the darkness of the passions, O Lover of mankind, and breathe discourse into me that I may honor her.

Diligently shouldering thy cross, thou didst ardently follow after Him Who endured voluntary crucifixion for thy sake, O all-blessed one, and didst keep His justifications.

Thou didst utterly turn away from the violent attachment of thy parents and the pleasures of the flesh, O divinely wise one, desiring the beauty of Christ, thy Lover, alone. Him do all who partake of discourse desire.

Theotokion: He Who is rich maketh Himself poor, enriching with divinity me who before wickedly impoverished myself with intemperance. Behold, He Who is beginningless receiveth a beginning, being born of the divine Virgin Maiden.

ODE III

Canon of the feast

Irmos: Look upon the hymns of Thy servants, O Benefactor, * and humble the vaunted pride of the enemy; * bearing far above sin those who hymn Thee * making them unshakably firm by the foundation of faith, * O Thou Good One Who seest all.

Having been deemed worthy to behold the supremely rich Offspring of the most pure Bride, which passeth understanding, the chorus of shepherds bowed down in awe-filled homage; and the ranks of incorporeal beings hymned Christ the King, Who became incarnate without seed.

In His tender compassion, He Who reigneth over the heights of heaven became like us through the unwedded Maiden; the Word Who before was immaterial, was later clothed in material flesh, that He might draw to Himself the first-formed man, who had fallen.

Canon of the holy martyr

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

Thy Creator, desiring thy spiritual beauty, truly betrothed Himself to thee, a goodly and blameless bride, O martyr.

Loving the sufferings and death of the Dispassionate One Who died for our sake, O honored martyr, thou didst die a martyr's death.

As a spiritual holocaust, as a sacrifice pure and perfect, did she who loved Thy Cross offer herself to Thee, O God.

Theotokion: Thou wast a habitation containing the infinite Creator, O most pure and joyous one, who contained Him in the flesh.

Canon of the venerable one

Irmos: Not in wisdom, nor in power do we glory, * but we glory in Thee O Christ, * the Hypostatic Wisdom of the Father, * for there is none more holy than Thee, O Lover of mankind.

O glorious one, having withdrawn from base desires, of thine own will thou didst piously give thy desire wholly over to the everlasting things which are to come.

Thou didst adorn thy senses with earnest supplications, and didst become wholly radiant through the effulgence of the Spirit, having emulated in thy body the life of the immaterial ones.

Whether by thy speech or by thy silence, thou wast an example, the confirmation of the unsure, a model for monastics, O divinely wise Melania. Wherefore, we hymn thee.

Theotokion: **H**e Who clothes the heavens with clouds is swaddled of His own will and desire; and held in the arms of the Virgin, pulling me from the hands of the adversary.

Sessional Hymn of the holy martyr, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: “Having been lifted up upon the Cross ...”:

Gaining dominion over the carnal passions, thou didst become a queen through life-creating sufferings, piously dyeing in thy blood a robe of purple for thyself, O honored Anysia. Wherefore, thou hast been revealed to be the immaculate bride of the King of all. Deliver from misfortunes us who celebrate thy glorious memory.

Glory ..., Sessional Hymn of the venerable one, in the same tone:

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

Keeping the divine commandments with zeal, thou didst give to the poor, distributing tens of thousands of golden coins; and taking thy cross upon thy shoulders, O Melania, with thy husband thou didst faithfully follow after Christ Who was crucified in the flesh, our only God.

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

All creation now rejoiceth in godliness, for Christ the Lord, the Son of God, is born of the pure Virgin, making the whole human race immortal and lifting the curse of our first mother Eve. Wherefore, we offer hymnody unto Him as to our Benefactor.

ODE IV

Canon of the feast

Irmos: **T**he renewal of the human race was hymned of old * and proclaimed beforehand by the Prophet Habbakuk, * who having ineffably been deemed worthy to behold in image; * the Word coming forth from the mountain, * the Virgin, as a little Babe, * for the restoration of the people.

Willingly receiving flesh from the Virgin, the Most High hath issued forth as equal to men, to cleanse us of the venom of the serpent's head, leading all from the sunless gates of Hades to life-bearing light, in that He is God.

The nations who of old were overwhelmed by corruption, having escaped the greatest enemy, lift up their hands with hymns of praise, honoring the one Christ as Benefactor, Who hath come to us in His mercy.

Having sprouted forth from the root of Jesse, O Virgin, thou didst transcend the laws of human nature, giving birth to the pre-eternal Word of the Father, in that He Himself was well pleased to pass through thy sealed womb in His strange abasement.

Canon of the holy martyr

Irmos: **B**eholding 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!

Following Thy life-bearing footsteps, O Master Christ, Thy handmaiden, who hymneth Thee, was wounded by a spear in the side and unwaveringly passed through the whirling blades.

Shining with the splendors of martyrdom, crowned with a wreath of incorruption, O all-praised martyr Anysia, thou standest, rejoicing, before Christ, thy Bridegroom.

Vanquishing with thy martyr's opposition him who caused our first mother Eve to trip, thou didst cast him down, showing him to be impotent, and chanting to Christ: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Theotokion: **H**e Who created the immaterial beings is born of thee today as a man in the body, O Mother of God. To Him do we chant: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Canon of the venerable one

Irmos: **H**e who sitteth in glory upon the throne of the Godhead, * Jesus the true God, * is come in a swift cloud * and with His sinless hands he hath saved those who cry: * Glory to Thy power, O Christ.

Mortifying the carnal lusts with abstinence, O all-honored one, thou didst have the Life of the living dwelling within thee. And passing on from the earth, thou madest thine abode therein, delighting in the kingdom of heaven.

Having distributed myriads of gold pieces to the hungry, truly thou didst never horde them in coffers which mould away forever; rather they have purchased for thee an everlasting sojourn.

The richness of thine almsgiving was like a river watering the heart of each pauper, O glorious one, washing away the dirt of poverty; they are riches which cannot be stolen, and which have won for thee inexhaustible treasure in the heavens.

Theotokion: **H**aving submitted to lust like an irrational beast, I have joined the beasts, even though I have been endowed with reason. O thou who hast given birth to the everlasting Word, disdain me not, who am ever perishing.

ODE V

Canon of the feast

Irmos: **O** Christ Who art our cleansing, come unto us, * who out of the night of the deeds of gloomy delusion, * valiantly hymn Thee as a Benefactor, * granting us an expeditious path, * ascending upon which we find glory.

By His coming in the flesh the Master hath again cut down the cruel enmity directed against us, that He might destroy the soul-destroying ruler, uniting the world with the immaterial beings, making the Begetter accessible to creation.

The people who of old were darkened have finally seen the light of the radiance of the Most High; and the Son bringeth the nations to the Father as an inheritance, bestowing ineffable grace where sin once flourished exceedingly.

Canon of the holy martyr

Irmos: **T**hou, 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.

Knowing Thee, O Lord, to be the well-spring of salvation, Thy martyr drained the cup of salvation with a sure heart.

O passion-bearer of the Lord, heifer of Christ, God-pleasing whole-burnt offering, sacrificed to God: pray thou that we be saved.

Having most clearly drawn nigh unto the great Light, thou hast become light, illumining those who celebrate thy radiant memory.

Theotokion: **W**e wield thee as an invincible weapon against the enemy, O Bride of God, having acquired thee as the confirmation and hope of our salvation.

Canon of the venerable one

Irmos: **T**he wicked will not behold Thy glory, O Christ, * but we who rise early to hymn Thee shall behold Thee, * the Only-Begotten effulgence of Thy Father's divinity, * O Lover of mankind.

Utterly erasing the ugliness of the passions from thy soul, O honored one, with the ink of abstinence thou didst record dispassion and unfeigned love therein.

Manifestly like unto a bright mirror, O glorious one, thou didst radiantly receive the gifts of the divine Spirit, illumining the faithful with the splendor of thy life.

Having quenched the burning of the passions with abstinence, thou didst set thy soul aflame, shining forth in thy whole life and driving away the darkness of the demons.

Theotokion: **T**he Virgin gave birth in the city of Bethlehem to Emmanuel, Who openeth Eden, which of old was closed to me because of the deception of the serpent and mine ancestors' failure to abstain from eating.

ODE VI

Canon of the feast

Irmos: **D**welling in the uttermost depths of the sea, * Jonah besought Thee to come and still the tempest; * and I, pierced by the arrow of the tyrant, * chant unto Thee, O Christ * Thou Destroyer of evil, * do Thou come quickly unto my slothfulness!

God the Word, Who from the beginning was with God, now strengtheneth that which of old was seen to be weakened, that he may preserve that which He Himself shares with us, straightway showing it to be free from the passions.

He Who dwelleth in light, and, contrary to His dignity, hath now been well pleased to dwell in a manger, cometh forth from the loins of Abraham for the sake of us who have fallen into the deep darkness of transgressions, that, for the salvation of mankind, He might raise up His fallen children.

Canon of the holy 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.

Having received manly intelligence in a woman's body, O martyr, thou didst go forth to do battle with the incorporeal foe, slaying them with the sword of patience.

With floods of blood thou didst dry up the sea of false religion, and didst water the honored Church of Christ, O passion-bearer Anysia, thou boast of virgins.

Thou didst pass over the sea of struggles without foundering or sinking; wherefore, thou hast hastened to the tranquil haven, and dost enjoy true serenity, O most glorious one.

Theotokion: He Who created man in His own image, in His great tender compassion hath edified him, clothing Himself wholly in him through thee, O Virgin Mother of God.

Canon of the venerable one

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.

Thou didst pass through the tempest of life without foundering, steered by the hand of Him Who created all things by his word, O Melania, thereby reaching the harbor of salvation.

All the fiery darts of sin were burned up by the sparks of thine ardent love for the Lord of all, and the malice of the demons hath been utterly destroyed.

With thy mind deified by union with that which is higher, thou wast separated from love of the flesh by the hand of the Almighty; wherefore, thou didst undertake labors of asceticism.

Theotokion: The Lord Who was born of the Virgin deifieth me and, wrapped in swaddling bands, He hath wrought the unbinding of my transgressions. He Who cannot be contained by anything hath been contained in a cave.

Kontakion of the feast, in Tone III:

Spec. Mel.: "Today the Virgin ...":

Today the Virgin giveth birth to Him Who is transcendent in essence; * and the earth offereth a cave to Him Who is unapproachable. * Angels with shepherds give glory; * the Magi journey with a star; ** for our sake a young Child is born, Who is the pre-eternal God.

Ikos: Bethlehem hath opened Eden! We have found Joy in a secret place: come, and let us receive the things of paradise within the cave. There the unwatered Root hath blossomed, bearing forgiveness as its fruit. There an unfailing Wellspring hath been found, from whence David of old longed to drink. There the Virgin hath given birth to the Babe, straightway quenching the thirst of Adam and David. Wherefore, let us hasten to this place where now is born a young Child, the pre-eternal God!

ODE VII

Canon of the feast

Irmos: Captured by the love of the King of all, * the children reviled the uncontrollable rage and ungodly blasphemies of the tyrant, * and the great fire submitted to them as they spake unto the Master saying: * Blessed art Thou throughout the ages

The furnace which had been raised to a sevenfold heat savagely burnt the minions, but spared the youths who were wholly consumed with the fear of God; for the flame crowned them when the Lord freely granted them dew for the sake of their piety.

O Christ our Helper, using Thine ineffable incarnation as a bulwark of defense, and having taken on our form, Thou hast put to shame the adversary of mankind, bearing the richness of Thy deification, which we hope for, having fallen from the heights into the darkness of the uttermost depths.

Thou hast most mightily cast down sin, which is exalted in evil without restraint, frenzied from the perversion of the world; and those whom it formerly attracted hast Thou saved from its snares today, having become incarnate of Thine own will, O Benefactor.

Canon of the holy martyr

Irmos: Thou didst save the children of Abraham in the fire * and slay the Chaldeans, * who unjustly entrapped the righteous ones. * O supremely hymned Lord, God of our fathers, * blessed art Thou.

The torrents of tortures which flowed forth in no wise shook the house of thy soul, which was made noetically firm by thy confession of Christ, O martyr, who cried aloud: Blessed art Thou O God!

Having come to know Christ, the Sun of righteousness, O martyr, thou didst not wish to offer sacrifice wickedly to the sun when commanded to do so by the tyrant; rather, thou didst chant: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Having dyed a purple robe for thyself in thy sacred blood, O martyr, thou didst crown thy head with a wreath of victory; and now thou standest in gladness before God, the immortal King.

Theotokion: He Who wrapped the sky in clouds and the earth in mist, having been born from thy womb, is wrapped in swaddling bands and laid in a manger, O all-immaculate Mother of God, saving those who know thee to be the Theotokos.

Canon of the venerable one

Irmos: Thou didst save the children of Abraham in the fire * and slay the Chaldeans, * who unjustly entrapped the righteous ones. * O supremely hymned Lord, God of our fathers, * blessed art Thou.

Bearing the yoke of Christ with thy husband, O God-bearer, ye renewed your souls with the plough of prayers, and, having cultivated the field of good works, ye delight forever in glory on high.

Like the olive-tree of the psalms which was planted in the house of God, thou dost mystically anoint with the oil of thy pangs the hearts and faces of those who praise thy struggles with faith, O venerable one.

Having extinguished the furnace of the passions with the dew of abstinence, with the rain of thy prayers thou hast poured forth an abyss of healings, engulfing the onslaughts of the passion of those who honor thee, O Melania.

Theotokion: **D**avid called thee a fleece, O pure one, for thou didst receive the Rain of heaven Who drieth up the torrents of iniquity and watereth the minds of the faithful, which have withered up because of sin.

ODE VIII

Canon of the feast

Irmos: **T**he children who in the time of the Old Covenant * were cast into the fire, * prefigured the unconsumed womb of the Maiden, * which hath supernaturally given birth yet remaineth sealed; * and both wondrously working as a single miracle * moveth the people to hymn the Grace of each.

Mankind, having fled the destructive delusion of becoming divine, unceasingly hymneth the Word Who hath abased Himself, and like the youths and all creation, with fear and trembling offereth meager praise, being corrupt, but wisely enduring.

Thou hast come, O Restoration of the nations, to bring lost human nature back from the hills of the wilderness to the flowered pastures; that Thou mightest extinguish the violent power of the manslayer, having by providence appeared as God and man.

Canon of the holy martyr

Irmos: **H**aving 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.

Loving the commands of the Almighty constantly, thou didst distribute thy wealth to the widows, orphans and paupers, and to all in need, O honored virgin, and didst seek the cup of honorable martyrdom; and having drained it, thou didst cause desire to cease.

As a dowry thou didst bring to Christ fasting and tears, the mortification of the passions, the shedding of thy blood and the piercing of thy side; wherefore, He Who ageth not Himself giveth thee a crown, an incorrupt bridal chamber and heavenly glory.

Thou dwellest in light with the angels and the ranks of virgins, celebrating with the assemblies of martyrs, gazing upon thy Bridegroom face to face, sharing in radiant glory and crying out: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Theotokion: **B**ehold, now a ruler and prince hath manifestly failed from the tribe of Judah, for thou, O all-immaculate one, hast given birth to Christ, the expectation of the nations, for Whom the things of old were stored up. To Him do we chant: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Canon of the venerable one

Irmos: **T**he 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.

Having made thy heart and body a temple for the supremely divine Trinity, O right glorious one, thou didst erect divine temples, in which thou hast assembled ranks of virgins and choirs of monastics, who chant together and supremely exalt Christ throughout all ages.

Through almsgiving thou didst acquire mercy, and distributing thy wealth, thou gavest it to the poor. Thy righteousness abideth eternally, as doth the reward thou didst win through it, O venerable God-bearer Melania. Wherefore, we honor thee as truly victorious.

Shining with understanding, courage, chastity and divine righteousness, O venerable one, thou didst possess that humility which exalted thee to the heights of heaven, and wherewith thou didst cast down the haughty serpent. Wherefore, we honor thee as truly victorious.

Theotokion: **W**aves of the passions beset me and the abyss of despair engulfs me. Rescue me, O all-immaculate Mother, and I shall be saved; for thou hast given birth to the Lord and Savior Who is laid in a manger as a babe, and Whom we supremely exalt throughout all ages.

ODE IX

Canon of the feast

Irmos: **F**rom fear it may be easier, * for us to prefer silence, * for though not fraught with danger, O Virgin, * it is difficult to fashion hymns fittingly wrought for thee. * Yet, O Mother, grant us the power to chant in such a way, * insofar as it is our will.

O pure Mother, having beheld the indistinct images and dim shadows of the Word Who hath newly appeared through the closed gates, but mindful now of His true radiance, we bless thy womb as is meet.

Having attained their desire and been deemed worthy to see the advent of God, the people who delight in Christ are now consoled by this, insofar as thou bestowest life-bearing grace to those who worship this glory, O pure Virgin.

Canon of the holy 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.

Those who rendered worship to stones rather than to the Creator, unable to bear thy commitment to God, O glorious one, cut thee asunder with a sword, betrothing divine immortality to thee through death.

The city of Thessalonica boasteth in thy grave-clothes and sufferings, O virgin martyr; and the Church of the firstborn and the righteous is gladdened, possessing thy divine spirit.

With faith the magi brought frankincense, gold and myrrh to Him Who was born in Bethlehem, and the passion-bearer hath brought the outpouring of the blood of her martyrdom, entreating Him on our behalf.

Theotokion: O all-pure Birthgiver of God, thou hast caused a Rod to bud forth from the root of Jesse, having given birth for us today to Christ, the Flower of the Godhead, the uncontainable God Who hath now been swaddled as a babe.

Canon of the venerable one

Irmos: Eve dwelt under the curse of sin * because of the infirmity of disobedience; * but thou, O Virgin Theotokos, * hast through the Offspring of thy pregnancy * blossomed forth blessing upon the world. * Wherefore, we all magnify thee.

Thou didst manifestly hasten up to the summit of utter perfection, O blessed one, and attain unto the ranks of the incorporeal ones; and having drawn nigh to thy true Desire, thou hast now received a well-spring of good things. Wherefore, we all call thee blessed.

Thou dost rejoice with the choirs of fasters, having labored ascetically; and having mortified the passions, thou dost gaze directly upon the beauty of God, which thou hadst first acquired through chastity, O all-blessed Melania.

Having trodden the narrow path, thou didst reach the broad expanse of paradise, where the joy of those who keep festival and the tree of life are, be thou ever mindful of us who honor thy repose.

Theotokion: He Who is awesomely borne upon the shoulders of the cherubim sitteth now in the arms of the pure Maiden; He is wrapped in swaddling bands, loosing the bonds of our evil deeds; and He Who feedeth every creature is fed milk as a babe.

Exapostilarion of the feast:

From on high our Savior, the Dayspring of the East hath visited us and we who are in shadowy darkness have truly found Him; for the Lord hath been born from the Virgin. (Thrice)

At. the Aposticha, these Stichera of the feast, in Tone VI:

Spec. Mel.: “Go before us, ye angelic hosts .. ,”:

Behold, the Lamb of God, * Who as God taketh away the sin of the world, * lieth as a babe in a manger, * desiring to deliver the reason-endowed * from all the passions of irrationality * and from everlasting retribution. * To Him do we cry out: * Blessed art Thou Who hast been born! ** Glory be to Thee, O our God!

Verse: From the womb before the morning star have I begotten Thee. * The Lord hath sworn and will not repent.

O Thine ineffable mysteries * which pass understanding! * In His compassion God is born, on earth, * taking to Himself the image of a servant, * that He might rescue * from the slavery of the alien * those who cry to Him with faith: * Blessed art Thou Who hast been born! ** Glory be to Thee, our God!

Verse: The Lord said unto my Lord: * Sit Thou at My right hand.

Let us stand reverently in the house of the Lord * and together hymn with jubilation * His loving-kindness * and His great condescension, * How hath He willed to manifest Himself as a babe * in Bethlehem of Judea? * Let us cry aloud: * Blessed is He Who hath been born! ** Glory be to Thee, O our God!

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

“**O** Christ the Sun, how is it that I cover Thee with swaddling bands? * How is it that I feed Thee with milk, * Who art the Nourisher of all creation? * How can I hold in mine arms * Thee Who holdest all things? * How can I look without fear * at Thee upon Whom * the many-eyed cherubim dare not gaze?” ** she who knew not wedlock exclaimed, holding Christ.

AT LITURGY

On the Beatitudes, 6 Troparia, from ODE VIII of both canons of the feast.

The daughter of Babylon carrieth off the captive children of David from Sion to herself; but now she sendeth her own children, the magi bearing gifts, to the God-pleasing daughter of David, who prayeth. Wherefore, chanting, let us sing: Let all creation bless the Lord and exalt Him supremely throughout all ages!

The harps refused to play their sad songs, for the children of Sion would not sing in a strange land; but Christ, shining forth in Bethlehem, destroyeth all the delusion of Babylon and her musical instruments. Wherefore, chanting, let us sing: Let all creation bless the Lord and exalt Him supremely throughout all ages!

Babylon received the plunder of the kingdom of Sion and its captive riches; but Christ draweth its treasures to His Sion, guiding the star-watching kings by a star. Wherefore, chanting, let us sing: Let all creation bless the Lord and exalt Him supremely throughout all ages!

Having escaped the destruction resulting from man's being deceived into becoming divine, like the youths all creation with trembling unceasingly hymneth the Word Who hath abased Himself, and with fear it offereth meager praise, in that it is corrupt, even though it hath endured such with wisdom. (Twice)

Thou comest, O Restoration of the nations, to bring lost human nature back from the hills of the wilderness to the pasture rife with flowers; that Thou mightest put down the violent power of the slayer of men, having, in Thy forethought, become God as well as man.

Troparion of the feast, in Tone IV:

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, * hath shined the light of knowledge upon the world; * for thereby, they that worshipped the stars * were instructed by a star * to worship Thee, the Sun of Righteousness, * and to know Thee, the Dayspring from on high. ** O Lord, glory be to Thee.

Kontakion of the feast, in Tone III:

Today the Virgin giveth birth to Him Who is transcendent in essence; * and the earth offereth a cave to Him Who is unapproachable. * Angels with shepherds give glory; * the Magi journey with a star; ** for our sake a young Child is born, Who is the pre-eternal God.

In place of "Meet it is" we chant the following

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, the most pure Virgin Theotokos, who is more honorable and more glorious than the armies on high!

Katavasia I: A strange and most wondrous mystery do I see: * the cave is heaven; * the Virgin the throne of the cherubim; * the manger a room, in which Christ God, * whom nothing can contain, is laid. * Whom we praise and magnify.

Communion Verse of the Feast: The Lord hath sent redemption unto His people.