

**Biographical Information**

Chris grew up in Detroit, Michigan, and graduated from Wayne State University in 1979 with a BS in Biology. He attended St. Vladimir's Seminary in Crestwood, NY from 1981 to 1984, and graduated with a Master of Divinity degree. His priestly ministry included two years at St. George Cathedral, Wichita, KS (pastoral assistant), St. George, Boston (1986-1995), St. George, Toledo (1995-2001), and St. Mary, Wichita (2001-2004). He has three children, Nicholas, Juliana, & Michael, two step-grandchildren, and one grandchild on the way.

During his 18 years as a priest, he served as Spiritual Advisor for the Teens and Adults in New England, and the Adults in the Midwest. He was also the Midwest Choir Director in the early 80's, and has played the piano since he was 9 years old. He has composed music for the Divine Liturgy and has arranged other liturgical hymns for various feasts and saints. Currently he works full time as a Respiratory Therapist in Detroit, and chants, sings, and directs on occasion. He served as Chairman of the Department of Sacred Music from February, 2006 until May, 2015, and now takes care of the website and type-setting music for the department. He grew up in a musical household, who's father was a voice teacher and choir director, and wrote a book on singing, and who's mother still sings in the choir.

Music has always been a big part of his life, and he hopes to instill in many of our choir directors, choir members, chanters, and all parishioners, the desire to sing with great zeal and joy in the worship and praise of our God.

**Sacred Music Institute**  
**Antiochian Village, July 12-16, 2017**

**Orthodox Composition Class**

Christopher Holwey

- 1) Course Description: To show my perspective on how I composed the Divine Liturgy and other hymns of the Church, and what's important to me when doing so. I'd like to use some of the hymns I've written and other hymns I have not to show how it all came about, what's right and what to avoid. I hope the participant will come away with a better understanding of the process so that they too may begin offering their gift to God and the Church.
- 2) What's important?
  - a. Be involved in the life of the Church: services, seasons, fasts, sacraments
  - b. Pray for inspiration from the Holy Spirit as you think about your composition
  - c. Must have some knowledge of music, music theory, talent from above, whether writing/composing/arranging choral or chant.
    - i. With choral, to know ranges of voices, movements between parts, what to avoid (like parallel 5ths)
    - ii. With choral & chant, watch for punctuation, places to pause or stop
  - d. Music must be spiritually moving, prayerful, appropriate to the text and type of hymn being written
  - e. Know the different types of hymns in the Church, and how they are to be sung: Trisagion Hymn, Cherubic Hymn, Anaphora, Megalynarion, Vespers, Matins (Orthros), etc.
  - f. Follow the Dictionary for syllabification (breaking up words into syllables)
- 3) Choral Music
  - a. Trisagion Hymn, Holwey
  - b. Cherubic Hymn, Holwey
  - c. Megalynarion, Holwey
  - d. Apolytikion of All Saints Sunday, Holwey
  - e. Kontakion of Transfiguration-Old version, Holwey. What needs to be fixed?
- 4) Chant Music
  - a. O heavenly King, Dn. John El Massih
  - b. God is the Lord, Basil Kazan & Dn. John El Massih
  - c. The 1<sup>st</sup> Paschal Stichera, Basil Kazan and Chadi Karam
  - d. Pentecost Orthros Prokeimenon, Holwey (wrong and right way)
  - e. Dormition Troparion, Holwey (wrong and right way), choral added
  - f. Knowledge of the "formulae" for each tone. [www.stanthonysmonastery.org](http://www.stanthonysmonastery.org), Writing Byzantine Music, Byzantine Music Formulae.
  - g. Text in Tone 5

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5) More Information on Music, and the Trinitarian aspect of Music

- a. Music is simply the means by which we pray. It is the vehicle by which we offer our prayers to God, celebrate our Feasts and Lives of the Saints through the hymns that we sing.
- b. With this in mind, let us understand the Trinitarian aspect of Music
  - i. Our whole goal in life is to be one with God, to be in communion with Him, and to know Him as our Father. As Jesus said, “And this is eternal life, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent” (John 17:3). And how do we come to know God, to be one with Him? Through His Word, His Son Jesus Christ. Jesus is the Word of God incarnate, who came down from heaven to tell us about the Father so that we might come to know Him and be in communion with Him. And then, how is all this made possible? Through the grace, power and operation of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit enlivens us and fills us with God’s holy presence. He opens our minds and hearts to see God as our Father, to experience His love and to share in His eternal Life.
  - ii. So how does all this relate to music? Simple. The whole goal of what we sing and chant in church is to understand the meaning and content of what we are singing. And how do we come to know the meaning and content of the hymns? Through the words that we sing. The words make manifest to us the meaning and nature of what we are praying. And how is this all made possible? Through the music. The music is the means by which we pray. It is what enlivens our words and prayers and gives life and movement to all that we pray, so that we might understand the prayers, offer them with a contrite and humble heart, and be filled with the presence of God, honor His Saints, and glorify Him as the one who has given us this life.
- c. So, the music is very important to us, since it allows us to pray each hymn very specifically, whether it be a Trisagion Hymn, a Cherubic Hymn, an Apolytikion or Kontakion, a Canon, an Anaphora, or simply hymns and stichera from Vespers and Orthros. Each hymn is chanted or sung in a particular manner to manifest the meaning of what is being sung. For example, the Trisagion Hymn in Liturgy would not be sung very slow, and the Cherubic Hymn would not be sung very fast.
- d. Therefore, as composers, we need to understand the particular nature of each hymn we sing, what its place and purpose is in each of our services, so that the music can be written in a particular way, setting or tone, to manifest the meaning of what we are singing, and move us spiritually in our glorification of God.

# Trisagion Hymn

Christopher Holwey

$\text{♩} = 130$  *mf* *dynamic & crisp*

Lord, have mer - cy. A - men. Ho - ly God,

5

Ho - ly Might - y, Ho - ly Im - mor - tal: have

9

mer - cy on us. Ho - ly God,

13

Ho - ly Might - y, Ho - ly Im - mor - tal: have

17

mer - cy on us. Ho - ly God,

21

Ho - ly Might - y, Ho - ly Im - mor - tal: have

25

mer - cy on us. Glo - ry to the Fa - ther, and to the

29

Son, and to the Ho - ly Spir - it: both now and

33

ev - er, and un - to a - ges of a - ges. A - men.

37

Ho - ly Im - mor - tal: have mer - cy on us. With strength!

*Deacon:*  
With strength!

42

*mf* More majestic

Ho - ly God, Ho - ly Might - y,

*mf*

46

*f*

Ho - ly Im - mor - tal: have mer - cy on us.

*f*

# Cherubic Hymn

Christopher Holwey

*p*  $\text{♩} = 50$  *gentle*

A - men. We — who mys - ti - c'ly, we — who

*p*

5 *mp*

mys - ti - c'ly rep - re - sent the cher - u - bim,

*mp*

9 *mf* *p*

rep - re - sent the cher - - - u - bim,

*mf* *p*

13 *p* *mp*

and sing to the Trin - i - ty, to the life - giv - ing

*p* *mp*

# 13-H

## Cherubic Hymn C. Holwey

17 *mf*

Trin - i - ty, to the life - giv - ing Trin - i -

*mf*

21 *mp*

ty the thrice - ho - ly hymn,

*mp*

26 *p* gentle, then build *mp* *mf*

let us lay a - side, let us now lay a -

*p* *mp* *mf*

30 *f* *mf*

side all earth - ly care, lay a - side all

*f* *mf*



**Cherubic Hymn**  
C. Holwey

34 *mp*

earth - ly care, let us now lay a - side all

*mp*

38 *p* *last time*

earth - ly care... A - men. A - men.

*p*

43 *♩ = 130* *crisp, with life* *gradual crescendo*

...that we may re - ceive, ...that we may re - ceive, may re - ceive,

*mf*

46 *f* *ff*

...that we may re - ceive the King of

*f* *ff*

# 13-H

## Cherubic Hymn C. Holwey

49

all who comes in - vis - i - bly up - borne by — the An - gel - ic

54

Hosts, An - gel - ic Hosts. *mp* *mf* Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

59

*f* *rit.* Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

64

*rit.* lu - ia! Al - le - lu - - - ia!

[At the conclusion of the Cherubic Hymn (before the Litany of the Anaphora), the choir sings  
*Many years, master* (once) as the bishop blesses the congregation.  
 Sing it straight, using the same note as the "ia" of the final Alleluia.]

# Anaphora

Christopher Holwey

*♩=120 dynamic, with much life* *rit.*

Soprano  
Alto

*mf* A mer - cy of peace, a sac-ri-fice of praise.

Tenor  
Bass

6

And with thy spir - it. We lift them up un - to the

11 *f*

Lord. *f* It is meet and right, meet and right to

16

wor - ship Fa-ther, Son and Ho - ly Spir - it: the

21 *rit.*

Trin - i - ty one in Es - sence, and un - di -

26 *ff* *crisp*

vid - ed. *ff* Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly,

31 *f*

Lord of Sab - a - oth; *f* heav - en and earth are full of thy

36 *mf*

glo - ry: *mf* Ho - san - na in the high - est:

41

Bless - ed is he that com-eth in the name of the

45

*f rit.*

Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

50

*mp*  $\text{♩} = 80$  *slowly & prayerfully*

A - men. A - - - - men.

55  $\text{♩} = 60$  *p* with faith and love *mp*

We praise thee, we bless thee, we give

60 *mf*

thanks un - to thee, O Lord, we give thanks un - to

64 *mp* *rit.*

thee, O Lord, and we pray un - to thee, our

67 *pp*

God, O our God.

# Megalynarion

(Hymn to the Theotokos)

♩=100 *dynamic*

Christopher Holwey

*mf* It is tru - ly meet, it is tru - ly

5 meet to bless thee, O The - o - to - kos,

9 who art ev - er bless - ed and all - blame - less, and the

12 *mp dolce* moth - er of our God. More hon - 'ra - ble than the

16 *mf*

Cher - u - bim, and more glo - ri - ous\_\_ be - yond\_\_ com -

21 *gradual ritard to the end*

- pare than the Ser - a - phim, thou who with-out stain bear-est

26 *f* *distinctly*

God the Word, and art tru-ly The-o - to - kos: we

30 *majestic*

mag - ni - fy\_\_ thee, we mag - ni - fy thee.



# ALL SAINTS SUNDAY

## Apolytikion

Byzantine Tone 4

Christopher Holwey

Thy Church, O Christ God, hath re - galed her -

- self in the blood of thy Mar - tyrs through - out all the world,

as in por-phy-ry and pur - ple. Through them she lift - eth her

voice, cry - ing, Turn with thy com - pas-sion to thy peo - ple,

and grant\_ peace to thy cit - y, and to our

souls the Great\_ Mer - - - cy.

*Pentecostarion*  
**The Feast of Pentecost**

*Sung as the 3rd stichera of the Aposticha, after Psalm 50 (Have mercy), and the Glory at the Praises*

Byzantine Chant Tone 6/Plagal Second Mode

Dn. John El Massih

O heav - en - ly King, the Com - for - ter, the Spir - it of \_\_\_ Truth,

O heav - en - ly \_\_\_ King, the Com - for - ter, the Spir - it \_\_\_ of \_\_\_ Truth,

Who art \_\_\_ in \_\_\_ all \_\_\_ plac - es and fill - est \_\_\_

all \_\_\_ things; Treas - ur - y of \_\_\_ good \_\_\_ things,

and Giv - - - er \_\_\_ of \_\_\_ life; come, \_\_\_ and \_\_\_

dwell in \_\_\_ us, and cleanse us \_\_\_ from ev - 'ry \_\_\_ stain,

and save our souls, \_\_\_ O \_\_\_ Good \_\_\_ One.

Final ending

Good \_\_\_ One. \_\_\_

Fast

Ison God is the Lord, which hath shown us light.

Bless - ed is he that com - eth in the

name of the Lord.

*(The chanter begins first with "God is the Lord..." and repeats it after each of the verses.)*

CHANTER: God is the Lord, which hath shown us light. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

READER: O give thanks unto the Lord, and call upon his holy name.

CHANTER: God is the Lord, etc. (as above)

READER: All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the Lord will I destroy them.

CHANTER: God is the Lord, etc. (as above)

READER: This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

CHANTER: God is the Lord, etc. (as above)

*(We continue with the troparia of the day.)*

NOTE: On a normal Sunday (no Feast or major commemoration) sing:

1. Troparion of the Resurrection in the proper Tone.
2. "Glory to the Father", repeat the Troparion
3. "Both now and ever", the Theotokion of the Resurrection in the proper Tone.

When a Great Feast of Our Lord falls on a Sunday sing:

1. Troparion of the Feast
2. "Glory to the Father", repeat the Troparion
3. "Both now and ever", repeat the Troparion

When a Feast of Our Lady or a Major Saint or commemoration falls on a Sunday sing:

1. Troparion of the Resurrection in the proper Tone.
2. "Glory to the Father", Troparion of the Feast.
3. "Both now and ever", Theotokion of the Resurrection in the same Tone as the Festal Troparion.

# God is the Lord

## First Mode

Ἦχος ♯  
πα

Rassem El Massih  
April, 2015

*Ison*  
God is the Lord and hath ap - peared un - to us.  
Bless - ed is He that com - eth in the Name of the Lord.

*(The chanter begins first with "God is the Lord..." and repeats it after each of the verses.)*

CHANTER: God is the Lord and hath appeared unto us. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Verse 1: O give thanks unto the Lord, and call upon his holy name.

Verse 2: All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the Lord will I destroy them.

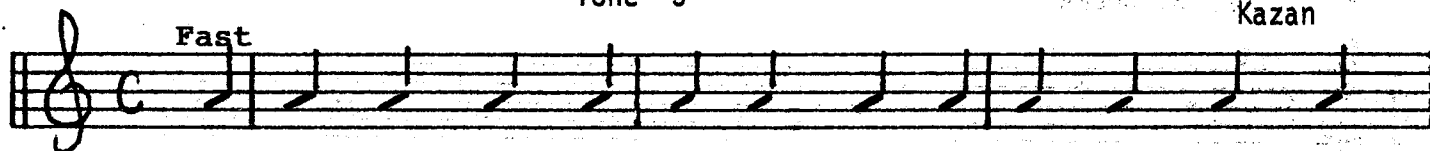
Verse 3: This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

THE PASCHAL STICHERA  
Tone 5

355

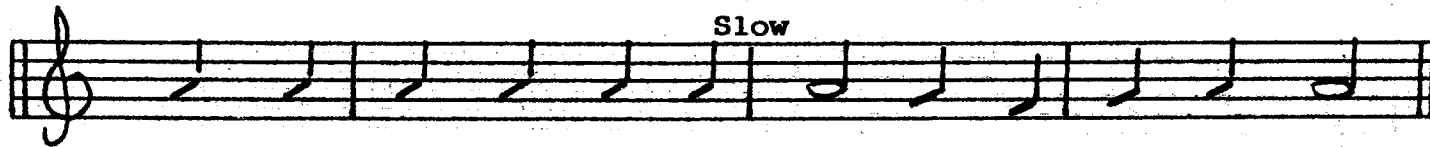
Kazan

Fast

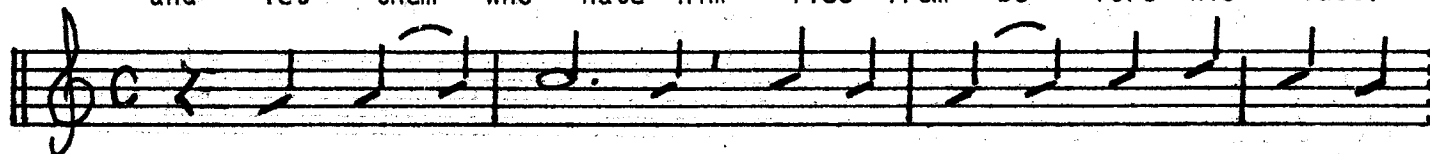


Let God a - rise and let his en - e - mies be scat - tered;

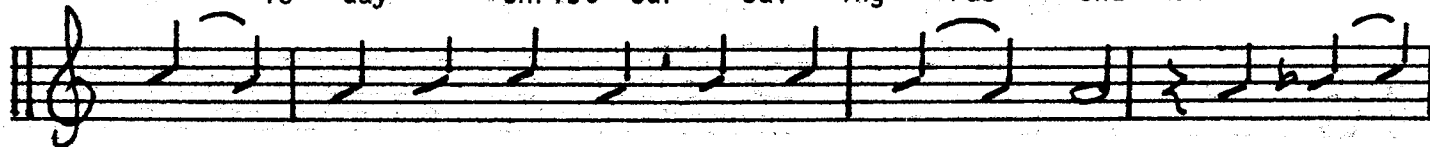
Slow



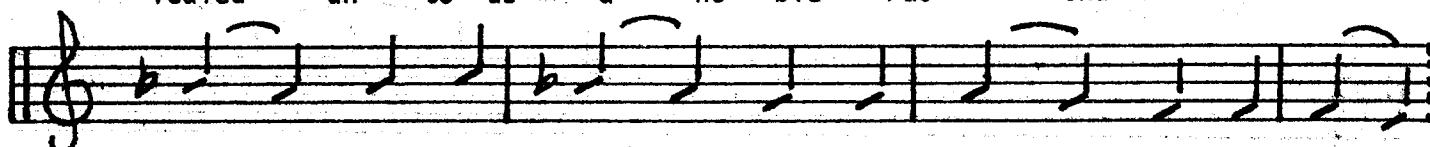
and let them who hate him flee from be - fore his face.



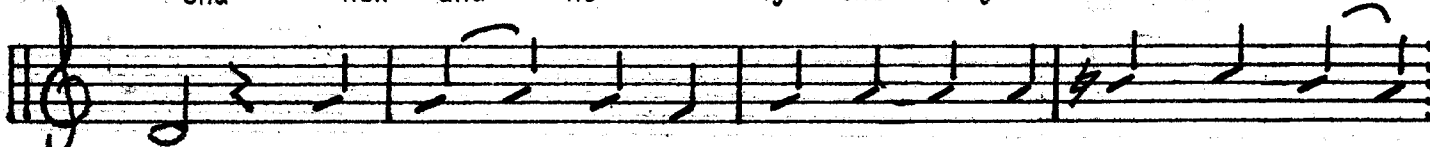
To - day Christ our sav - ing Pas - cha hath been re -



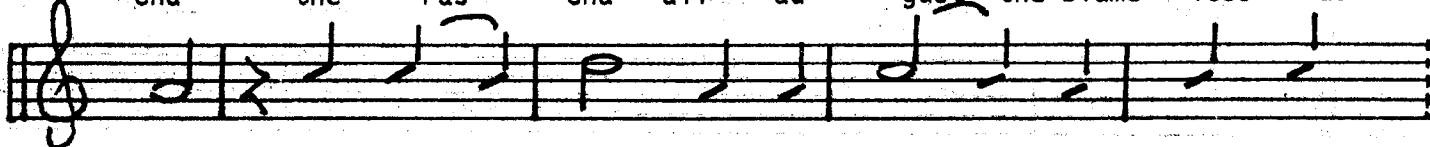
vealed un - to us a no - ble Pas - cha the Pas -



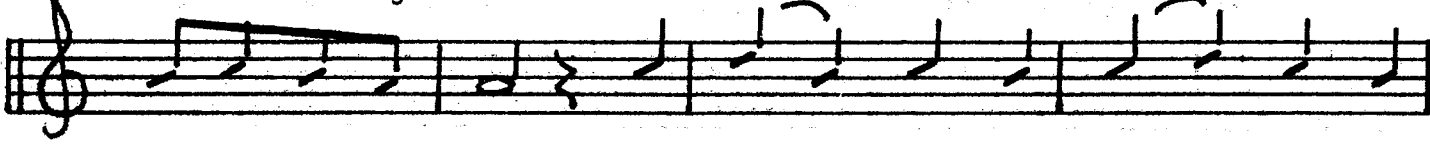
cha new and ho - ly the mys - ti - cal Pas -



cha the Pas - cha all au - gust the blame - less Pas -



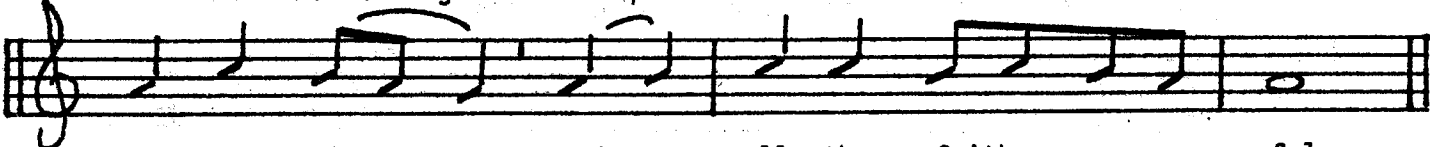
cha the great Pas - cha the Pas - cha of the



faith - ful the Pas - cha which o - pen - eth



un - to us the gates of par - a - dise the Pas - cha which



sanc - ti - fi - eth all the faith - ful.

## Pascha: The Resurrection of Christ

## Paschal Stichera

Byzantine Chant Tone 5

Arranged by Chadi Karam

Un.



Let God a - rise, and let His en - e - mies be scat-tered;



and let them who hate — Him flee — from be - fore — His face.



To-day — Christ, our sav-ing Pas - cha, hath been re - vealed un-to



us a no - ble Pas - cha; the Pas - cha new and ho - ly; the



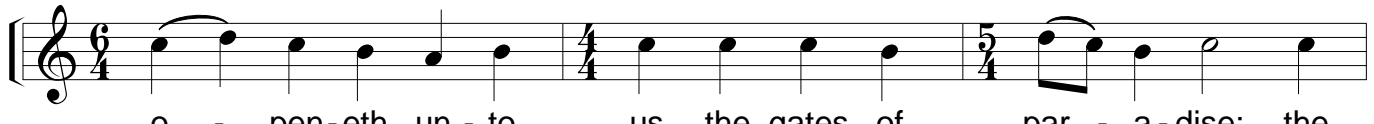
mys - ti - cal Pas - cha; the Pas - cha all au - gust; the



blame - less Pas - cha; the great Pas - cha; the



Pas - cha of the faith - ful; the Pas - cha which



o - pen-eth un - to us the gates of par - a - dise; the



Pas - cha which sanc - ti - fi - eth all the faith - ful.

Wrong version

*Pentecostarion*

**PENTECOST**

## Prokeimenon at Orthros

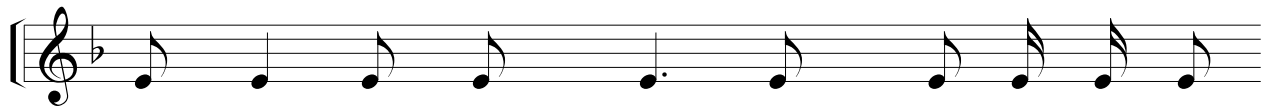
Psalm 142:12

Byzantine Tone 4  
Arranged by Christopher Holwey



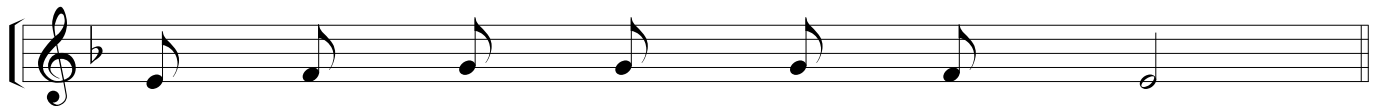
Thy good Spir - it shall\_\_ lead\_\_ me in the land\_\_ of up - right - ness.

Verse



O Lord, hear my prayer, give ear un - to my

*Ps. 142:1*

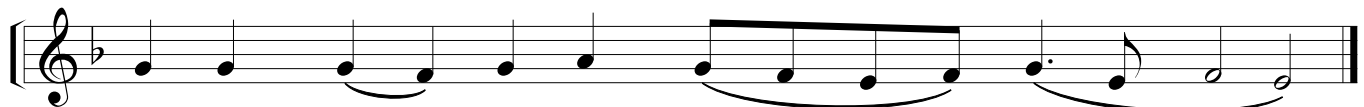


sup - pli - ca - tion in Thy truth.

Final time



Thy good Spir - it shall\_\_ lead\_\_ me



in the land\_\_ of up - right - ness.\_\_\_\_\_

Order of singing the Prokeimenon:

- 1) Prokeimenon
- 2) Prokeimenon (repeated)
- 3) Verse
- 4) Prokeimenon
- 5) Final time: 1st half of Prokeimenon, then 2nd half with final ending.



*Pentecostarion*

**PENTECOST**

**Prokeimenon at Orthros**

Psalm 142:12

Byzantine Tone 4

Christopher Holwey  
Dn. John El Massih



Thy good Spir - it shall lead me in the land of up - right - ness.

Ps. 142:1

Verse - quickly



O Lord, hear my prayer, give ear un - to my

slower



sup - pli - ca - tion in Thy truth.

Final time

Un.

G



Thy good Spir - it shall lead



in the land of up - right - ness.

Order of singing the Prokeimenon:

- 1) Prokeimenon
- 2) Prokeimenon (repeated)
- 3) Verse
- 4) Final time: 1st half of Prokeimenon, then 2nd half with final ending.

Translation taken from "THE PSALTER: According to the Seventy"

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Rev. 3, 5/25/17

# The Dormition of the Theotokos

## Troparion

August 15

Byzantine Chant, Tone 1

Christopher Holwey

Wrong version

Ison In thy birth - giv - ing, O The - o - to - kos, thou didst

6 keep and pre - serve vir - gi - ni - ty; and in thy fal - ling a -

11 sleep thou hast not for - sak - en the world; for thou wast

16 trans - lat - ed in - to life, be - ing the Mo - ther of

21 Life. Where - fore by thine in - ter - ces - sions, de - li -

26 ver our souls from death.

August 15th

# THE DORMITION OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS

## Troparion (A)

Byzantine Chant, Tone 1

Christopher Holwey  
Rassem El Massih

**D**

In thy birth - giv - ing, O The - o - to - kos, thou didst  
keep and pre-serve vir - gin - i - ty; and in thy fall - ing a -  
-sleep thou hast not for - sak - en the world; for thou wast trans -  
- lat - ed in - to life, be - ing the Moth - er of  
Life. Where - fore by thine in - ter - ces - sions, de -  
- liv - er our souls from death.

*Final Ending*

**C** **D**

souls from death.

August 15th

# THE DORMITION OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS

## Troparion (B)

Byzantine Chant - Tone 1  
C. Holwey & Rassem El Massih  
Harmony by Christopher Holwey

Soprano  
Alto

Tenor  
Bass

In thy birth - giv-ing, O The-o - to - kos, thou didst

keep — and pre - serve vir - gin - i - ty; and in thy

fall - ing a-sleep thou hast not for - sak - en the

world; for thou — wast trans - lat - ed in - to life, —

14

be - ing the Moth - er of Life. Where - fore

17

by thine in - ter - ces - sions, de - liv - er our

20

1, 2

souls from death.

22

3 rit.

souls from death.

July 27-August 13  
THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD  
Kontakion (B)

Arranged by  
Christopher Holwey

Wrong version

What needs to be fixed?

$\text{♩} = 120$

Soprano  
Alto

Tenor  
Bass

Thou wast trans - fig - ured on the mount, and thy dis - ci - ples,

S  
A

T  
B

in so far as they were a - ble, be - held thy glo - ry, O

S  
A

T  
B

Christ our God; so that, when they should see thee cru - ci - fied,

S  
A

T  
B

they would re - mem - ber that thy suf - fer - ing was vol - un - ta - ry,

Wrong version

What needs to be fixed?

S  
A

T  
B

and could de - clare to all the world that thou art tru - ly the ef -

S  
A

T  
B

ful - gent Splen - dour of the Fa - ther.