

GREAT VESPERS ON MARCH 24
THE ANNUNCIATION TO THE MOST-HOLY THEOTOKOS
(SERVED WITH THE FOURTH STASIS OF THE AKATHIST HYMN)

Priest: Blessed is our God, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Come, let us worship and fall down before God our King.

Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, our King and our God.

Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and our God.

THE PSALM OF INTRODUCTION—PSALM 103

Reader: Bless the Lord, O my soul; O Lord my God, Thou hast been magnified exceedingly. Confession and majesty hast Thou put on, Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment, Who stretchest out the heaven as it were a curtain; Who supporteth His chambers in the waters, Who appointeth the clouds for His ascent, Who walketh upon the wings of the winds, Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire.

Who establisheth the earth in the sureness thereof; it shall not be turned back forever and ever. The abyss like a garment is His mantle; upon the mountains shall the waters stand. At Thy rebuke they will flee, at the voice of Thy thunder shall they be afraid.

The mountains rise up and the plains sink down, unto the place where Thou hast established them. Thou appointedst a bound that they shall not pass, neither return to cover the earth. He sendeth forth springs in the valleys; between the mountains will the waters run. They shall give drink to all the beasts of the field; the wild asses will wait to quench their thirst. Beside them will the birds of the heaven lodge, from the midst of the rocks will they give voice.

He watereth the mountains from His chambers; the earth shall be satisfied with the fruit of Thy works. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men, to bring forth bread out of the earth; and wine maketh glad the heart of man. To make his face cheerful with oil; and bread strengtheneth man's heart.

The trees of the plain shall be satisfied, the cedars of Lebanon, which Thou hast planted. There will the sparrows make their nests; the house of the heron is chief among them. The high mountains are a refuge for the harts, and so is the rock for the hares.

He hath made the moon for seasons; the sun knoweth his going down. Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night, wherein all the beasts of the forest will go abroad; young lions roaring after their prey, and seeking their food from God. The sun ariseth, and they are gathered together, and they lay them down in their dens. Man shall go forth unto his work, and to his labor until the evening. How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast Thou made them all.

The earth is filled with Thy creation. So is this great and spacious sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, small living creatures with the great. There go the ships; there this leviathan, whom Thou hast made to play therein. All things wait on Thee, to give them their food in due season; when Thou givest it them, they will gather it. When Thou openest Thy hand, all things shall be filled with goodness; when Thou turnest away Thy face, they shall be troubled. Thou wilt take

their spirit, and they shall cease; and unto their dust shall they return. Thou wilt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created; and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.

Let the glory of the Lord be unto the ages; the Lord will rejoice in His works. Who looketh on the earth and maketh it tremble, Who toucheth the mountains and they smoke. I will sing unto the Lord throughout my life, I will chant to my God for as long as I have my being.

May my words be sweet unto Him; I will rejoice in the Lord. O that sinners would cease from the earth, and they that work iniquity, that they should be no more. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

The sun knoweth his going down. Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night. How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast Thou made them all.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. (THRICE)
O our God and our Hope, glory to Thee!

THE GREAT LITANY

Deacon: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the peace from above, and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the peace of the whole world, for the good estate of the Holy Churches of God, and for the union of all men, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For this Holy House, and for those who with faith, reverence, and fear of God, enter therein, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For our father and Metropolitan N., (for our Archbishop N. or Bishop N.), for the venerable Priesthood, the Diaconate in Christ, for all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For Metropolitan Paul and Archbishop John, and for their quick release from captivity and safe return, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: (In the United States) For the President of the United States, for all civil authorities, and for our Armed Forces everywhere, let us pray to the Lord.

(In Canada) For Her Majesty, the Queen, for the Prime Minister of Canada, for all civil authorities, and for our Armed Forces everywhere, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For this city, and for every city and land, and for the faithful who dwell therein, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For healthful seasons, for abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For travelers by sea, by land, and by air; for the sick and the suffering; for captives and their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For our deliverance from all tribulation, wrath, danger, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us; save us; have mercy on us; and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Calling to remembrance our all-holy, immaculate, most blessed and glorious Lady Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the Saints: let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.

Choir: To Thee, O Lord.

Priest: For unto Thee are due all glory, honor, and worship: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

“O LORD I HAVE CRIED” IN TONE SIX

Choir: O Lord, I have cried out unto Thee, hear Thou me; hear Thou me, O Lord. O Lord, I have cried out unto Thee, hear Thou me. Give ear to the voice of my supplication when I cry out unto Thee: hear Thou me, O Lord.

Choir: Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as the incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice; hear Thou me, O Lord.

- + Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and a protecting door round about my lips.
- + Incline not my heart to evil words, to make excuses in sins.
- + With men that work iniquity; and I will not communicate with the choicest of them.
- + The just man shall correct me in mercy and shall reprove me; but let not the oil of the sinner anoint my head.
- + For my prayer also shall still be against the things with which they are well pleased; their judges falling upon the rock have been swallowed up.
- + They shall hear my words, for they are sweet; as when the thickness of the earth is broken upon the ground, their bones are scattered by the side of hell.
- + But to Thee, O Lord, Lord, are mine eyes; in Thee have I put my trust, take not away my soul.
- + Keep me from the snare which they have laid for me, and the traps of the workers of iniquity.

- + Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst I alone escape.
- + I cried unto the Lord with my voice, with my voice unto the Lord, did I make my supplication.
- + I poured out my supplication before Him; I showed before Him my trouble.
- + When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then Thou knewest my path.
- + In the way wherein I walked have they secretly laid a snare for me.
- + I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me.
- + Refuge failed me; no one cared for my soul.
- + I cried unto Thee, O Lord; I said: Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.
- + Attend unto my cry, for I am brought very low.
- + Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are stronger than I.

Verse 10. Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise Thy Name.

Verse 9. The righteous shall wait for me until Thou recompense me.

Verse 8. Out of the depths have I cried to Thee, O Lord, Lord hear my voice.

Verse 7. Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

For the Annunciation in Tone Six (Having laid up all their hope**)**

Verse 6. If Thou, O Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? For with Thee there is forgiveness.

Coming to reveal to thee * that counsel which was determined * from before eternity, * Gabriel saluted thee, * crying out: Rejoice, * holy earth never sown; * bush unburnt, rejoice thou; * O rejoice, thou ladder raised on high, * which Jacob saw of old; * rejoice, thou depth unfathomed and unexplored; * rejoice, thou bridge which leadest up * to the highest Heaven; rejoice, divine * vessel of the Manna; *rejoice, complete destruction of the curse; * recall of Adam to God, rejoice: * With thee is the Lord Most High.

Verse 5. Because of Thy Name have I waited for Thee, O Lord; my soul hath waited upon Thy word, my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

Coming to reveal to thee ... (repeat above)

Verse 4. From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch let Israel trust in the Lord.

To the Chief of Heaven's hosts, * the undefiled Maiden answered: * Thou dost seem to be a man; * how is it that thou dost speak * things beyond man's strength? * For thou hast said to me * that God shall be with me * and shall make His dwelling in my womb. * Tell me, I pray of thee, * how shall I become then the spacious land * and dwelling-place of holiness * for Him that doth ride on the Cherubim? * Do thou not beguile me * deceitfully; for pleasure I know not, * neither in wedlock have I been yoked. * How then shall I bear a child?

Verse 3. For with the Lord there is mercy and with Him is abundant redemption, and He will deliver Israel from all his iniquities.

To the Chief of Heaven's hosts ... (repeat above)

Verse 2. Praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise Him, all ye people.

Wheresoever God doth will, * there nature's order is conquered, * spake he that is bodiless; * and that which exceedeth man * then is brought to pass. * O thou all-holy Maid, * purer than all

telling, * now believe these truthful words of mine. * She cried aloud to him: * Be it unto me now as thou hast said, * and I shall bear the Fleshless One, * Who shall borrow flesh from me, so that He, * Who alone is able, * might lead man back up to his first estate * and ancient dignity once again * by His union with our race.

*Verse 1. For His mercy is great toward us, and the truth of the Lord endureth forever.
Wheresoever God doth will ... (repeat above)*

DOXASTICON FOR THE ANNUNCIATION IN TONE SIX

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

From Heaven the archangel Gabriel was sent to announce the Conception to the Virgin. He went to Nazareth thinking within himself and wondering greatly, how it is that He Who is in the highest and incomprehensible shall be born of a Virgin. He Whose throne is Heaven, and earth His footstool, how shall He be contained in a woman's womb? How was He pleased to be incarnate of her by a word only, He Whom the six-winged ones and those of many eyes cannot gaze upon? Yea, He Who cometh is the Word of God. Why then do I hesitate, and not address the Maiden, saying: Rejoice, O full of grace, the grace of the Lord is with thee? Rejoice, O spotless Virgin! Rejoice, O groomless bride! Rejoice, O Mother of life; blessed is the fruit of thy womb!

THE HOLY ENTRANCE

(While the Doxasticon is chanted, the following dialogue occurs QUIETLY as the clergy make the entrance.)

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mercy.

Priest: In the evening and in the morning and at noonday we praise Thee, we bless Thee, we give thanks unto Thee, and we pray unto Thee, O Master of all, Lord Who lovest mankind: Direct our prayer as incense before Thee, and incline not our hearts unto words or thoughts of evil, but deliver us from all who seek after our souls. For unto Thee, O Lord, Lord, are our eyes, and in Thee have we hoped. Put us not to shame, O our God. For unto Thee are due all glory, honor, and worship: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Deacon: Amen.

(When the clergy reach the center of the soleia, the first part of the great censuring begins. After the first part of the great censuring is completed, this next dialogue occurs QUIETLY.)

Deacon: Bless, father, the Holy Entrance.

Priest: Blessed is the entrance to Thy Holy Place, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

(After the choir has finished, the following is said ALOUD.)

Deacon: Wisdom! Let us attend!

O GLADSOME LIGHT (CHANT) (CHORAL)

Choir: O gladsome Light of the holy glory of the immortal, heavenly, holy and blessed Father: O Jesus Christ. Lo now that we have come to the setting of the sun, as we behold the evening light, we hymn Thee: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God. Meet it is for Thee at all times to be magnified by joyous voices, O Son of God and Giver of life. Wherefore the whole world doth glorify Thee.

Deacon: The Evening Prokeimenon!

FRIDAY PROKEIMENON IN TONE SEVEN

Choir: Thou, O God, art my helper, and Thy mercy shall go before me. (TWICE)

Verse. Deliver me from my enemies, O God, and deliver me from those who rise up against me!

Choir: Thou, O God, art my helper, and Thy mercy shall go before me.

THE OLD TESTAMENT READINGS

The First Passage

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The Reading from the Book of Genesis. (28:10-17)

Deacon: Let us attend!

Reader: Jacob went out from the well of the oath, and went towards Haran. And he came upon a certain place, and slept there, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to Heaven, and behold, the Angels of God ascending and descending on it. And behold, the Lord stood above it and said: I am the God of Abraham thy father and the God of Isaac, fear not; the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the sand of the earth, and it shall spread abroad to the sea, and to the south, and to the north, and to the east; and in thee and thy seed shall all the tribes of the earth be blessed. And behold, I am with thee, and I will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not forsake thee, until I have done all that which I have spoken to thee. And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said: The Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. And he was afraid and said: How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of Heaven.

The Second Passage

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The Reading from the Prophecy of Ezekiel. (43:27-44:4)

Deacon: Let us attend!

Reader: Upon the eighth day and so forward, the priests shall make your whole-burnt offerings upon the altar, and your peace offerings, and I will accept you, saith the Lord. Then He brought me back by the way of the outer gate of the sanctuary, which looketh toward the east; and it was shut. And the Lord said unto me: This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it; because the Lord, the God of Israel, shall enter in by it, and it shall be shut. For this Prince shall sit on it to eat bread before the Lord; He shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate, and shall come forth by the way of the same. And He brought me by the way of the north gate of the sanctuary before the house, and I looked, and behold, the house of the Lord was full of glory.

The Third Passage

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The Reading from the Book of Proverbs (9:1-11).

Deacon: Let us attend!

Reader: Wisdom hath builded herself a house, and hath established seven pillars. She hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also prepared her table. She hath sent forth her servants, making invitation as to a feast with a loud proclamation, and saying: Whoso is foolish, let him turn aside to me; as for them that want understanding, she saith: Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine which I have mingled for you. Forsake foolishness, and ye shall live, and go in search of understanding that ye may live, and achieve understanding in knowledge. He that reproveth evil men getteth to himself shame; and he that rebuketh an ungodly man shall himself be blamed, for rebukes unto the ungodly are as wounds to him. Reprove not evil men, lest they hate thee; rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee. Give occasion to a wise man, and he will become yet wiser; teach a just man, and he will receive more learning. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the counsel of Saints is understanding. For to know the Law is the property of a good mind, for in this wise thou shalt live long, and years of life shall be added to thee.

THE LITANY OF FERVENT SUPPLICATION

- Deacon: Let us say with our whole soul, and with our whole mind, let us say.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon: O Lord Almighty, the God of our Fathers, we pray Thee, hearken and have mercy.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon: Have mercy on us, O God, according to Thy great mercy, we pray Thee, hearken and have mercy.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)
- Deacon: Again we pray for all pious and Orthodox Christians.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)
- Deacon: Again we pray for our father and Metropolitan N., (and for our Archbishop N. or Bishop N.).
- Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)
- Deacon: Again we pray for our brethren: the priests, hieromonks, deacons, hierodeacons and monastics and all our brotherhood in Christ.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)
- Deacon: Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation and visitation and pardon and remission of sins for (the servants of God, [Names], and) all Orthodox Christians of true worship, who live and dwell in this community.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)
- Deacon: Again we pray for the blessed and ever-memorable founders of this holy church and for (the departed servants of God, [Names], and) all our fathers and brethren, the Orthodox departed this life before us, who here and in all the world lie asleep in the Lord.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)

Deacon: Again we pray for those who bear fruit and do good works in this holy and all-venerable temple, those who serve and those who sing, and for all the people here present, who await Thy great and rich mercy.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)

Priest: For Thou art a merciful God and lovest mankind, and unto Thee we ascribe glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

THE EVENING PRAYER

People: Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this evening without sin. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy Name forever. Amen.

Let Thy mercy be upon us, O Lord, even as we have set our hope on Thee. Blessed art Thou, O Lord; teach me Thy statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Master; make me to understand Thy statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Holy One; enlighten me with Thy statutes.

Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth forever. O despise not the works of Thy hands. To Thee belongeth worship, to Thee belongeth praise, to Thee belongeth glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

THE LITANY OF SUPPLICATION

Deacon: Let us complete our evening prayer unto the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us; save us; have mercy on us; and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That the whole evening may be perfect, holy, peaceful and sinless, let us ask of the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: An angel of peace, a faithful guide, a guardian of our souls and bodies, let us ask of the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: Pardon and remission of our sins and transgressions, let us ask of the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: All things good and profitable for our souls and peace for the world, let us ask of the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: That we may complete the remaining time of our life in peace and repentance, let us ask of the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: A Christian ending to our life, painless, blameless, peaceful, and a good defense before the fearful judgment seat of Christ, let us ask of the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: Calling to remembrance our all-holy, immaculate, most blessed and glorious Lady Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the Saints: let us commend ourselves and each another, and all our life unto Christ our God.

Choir: To Thee, O Lord.

Priest: For Thou art a good God and lovest mankind, and unto Thee we ascribe glory: to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

THE PEACE

Priest: Peace be to all.

Choir: And to thy spirit.

Deacon: Let us bow our heads unto the Lord.

Choir: To Thee, O Lord.

- *All bow their heads as the priest says the following prayer:*

Priest: O Lord our God, Who didst bow the heavens and come down for the salvation of mankind: Look upon Thy servants and Thine inheritance; for unto Thee, the fearful Judge Who yet lovest mankind, have Thy servants bowed their heads and submissively inclined their necks, awaiting not help from men but entreating Thy mercy and looking confidently for Thy salvation. Guard them at all times, both during this present evening and in the approaching night, from every foe, from all adverse powers of the devil, and from vain thoughts and from evil imaginations.

Blessed and glorified be the might of Thy kingdom: of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

- *If your parish will offer “The Service of the Litia and Artoklasia”, it is performed here.*

THE APOSTICHA FOR THE ANNUNCIATION IN TONE FOUR

In the sixth month the archangel was sent to the pure Virgin. And as he opened his mouth and said to her: Hail! And he announced to her that from her will come the Redeemer. And having accepted the greeting with faith, she conceived Thee, O God before eternity, Who wast pleased, in an inexplicable manner, to become incarnate for the salvation of our souls.

Verse 1. Proclaim from day to day the good tidings of the salvation of our God.

The Theotokos heard a language which she did not understand; for the archangel uttered to her the words of the Annunciation. And having accepted the greeting with faith, she conceived Thee, O

God before eternity. Wherefore, we lift our voice to Thee in joy, saying: O God Who wast incarnate without transubstantiation, grant the world safety and our souls the Great Mercy.

Verse 2. Sing unto the Lord a new song; sing unto the Lord, all the earth.

Behold, now is our recall made manifest; for God is united with mankind in an ineffable manner. And at the voice of the archangel error hath vanished; for the Virgin hath received joy and earthly things have become heavenly, and the world is free from the ancient curse. Wherefore, let creation rejoice; let it raise its voice with praise, O Lord, our Creator and Redeemer, glory to Thee.

DOXASTICON FOR THE ANNUNCIATION IN TONE FOUR

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Today is the Annunciation, the celebration of the Virgin; for terrestrials shall unite with celestials, Adam being renewed and Eve freed of the first sorrow. And the tabernacle who is of our own substance hath become a temple for God, by deification of the clay derived from her. What mystery, the incomprehensible quality of the condescension, and the ineffable manner of the Conception; an angel ministering the wonder, and the virgin womb receiving the Son! The Holy Spirit is sent, and on high the Father is well pleased. The reconciliation was effected by the universal will, through which and by which having been saved, let us with Gabriel sing unto the Virgin: Hail, O full of grace! The Lord is with thee, from whom Christ our Lord, God and Savior did take our nature and join it to Himself. Wherefore, implore thou Him to save our souls.

THE HYMN OF ST. SIMEON THE GOD-RECEIVER (CHANT) (CHORAL)

Choir: Lord, now lettest thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Thy people Israel.

THE FOURTH STASIS OF THE AKATHIST HYMN

- *As the choir sings the Kontakion, the clergy and altar servers gather on the center of the solea in front of an icon of the Theotokos. One altar server should bear the censer.*

KONTAKION FOR THE ANNUNCIATION IN TONE EIGHT (CHANT) (CHORAL)

To thee, the Champion Leader, do I offer thanks of victory, O Theotokos, thou who hast delivered me from terror; but as thou that hast that power invincible, O Theotokos, thou alone can set me free: from all forms of danger free me and deliver me, that I may cry unto thee: "Hail, O Bride without Bridegroom."

19. OIKOS

Priest: Thou, O Virgin Theotokos, art a protecting wall to virgins and to all who run to thee; for the Maker of Heaven and earth prepared thee, O Pure Maiden, and dwelt in thy womb, and taught all to sing out unto thee:

- + Hail, pillar of virginity; Hail, gate of salvation.
- + Hail, source of spiritual reformation; Hail, leader of divine goodness.
- + Hail, for thou didst regenerate those conceived in sin; Hail, for thou didst remind those who were mindless.

- + Hail, thou who didst annul the corruption of hearts; Hail, thou who didst bear the Sower of Chastity.
- + Hail, bridal chamber of a virgin marriage; Hail, thou who joinest the faithful to the Lord.
- + Hail, fair nursing-mother of virgins; Hail, bridesmaid of holy souls.
- + Hail, O Bride without bridegroom! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Hail, O Bride without bridegroom.

20. KONTAKION

Priest: Unworthy is every hymn that seeks to encompass the multitude of Thy many mercies; for if we should offer to Thee hymns of praise as numberless as the sands, O Holy King, we should still have done nothing worthy of that which Thou hast given to us who cry out unto Thee: Alleluia! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Alleluia.

21. OIKOS

Priest: Verily we behold the holy Virgin as a light-giving beacon, shining for those in darkness: for by kindling the supernal Light, she guides us all to divine knowledge; illumining our minds with radiance, she is honored by this our cry:

- + Hail, ray of the living Sun; Hail, flash of unfading splendor.
- + Hail, lightning-flash, shining upon our souls; Hail, thou who dost as thunder strike down our enemies.
- + Hail, for thou didst cause the many-starred light to dawn; Hail, for thou didst cause the richly-flowing river to gush forth.
- + Hail, thou who didst from life describe the type of the baptismal font; Hail, thou who didst take away the stain of sin.
- + Hail, laver that dost purify conscience; Hail, mixing bowl for the mingling of joy.
- + Hail, fragrance of the sweetness of Christ; Hail, life of mystic festival.
- + Hail, O Bride without bridegroom! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Hail, O Bride without bridegroom.

22. KONTAKION

Priest: When He Who pays the ancient debts of all men was minded to give grace, He came of His own will to dwell among those who had departed from His grace; and when He tore asunder the written charge against them. He heard from all in this wise: Alleluia! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Alleluia.

23. OIKOS

Priest: Yet while we sing to Him Whom thou didst bear, we all hymn thee, O Theotokos, as a living temple; for the Lord, Who holds all things in His hand, by dwelling within thee, hallowed and glorified thee, and taught all to cry out unto thee:

- + Hail, tabernacle of God, and of the Word; Hail, holiest of all the holy ones.
- + Hail, ark made golden by the Spirit; Hail, inexhaustible treasury of life.
- + Hail, precious diadem of pious rulers; Hail, venerable boast of reverent priests.
- + Hail, steady tower of the Church; Hail, impregnable wall of the realm.
- + Hail, thou through whom trophies are set up; Hail, thou through whom enemies are cast down.
- + Hail, healing of my body; Hail, salvation of my soul.
- + Hail, O Bride without bridegroom! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Hail, O Bride without bridegroom.

24. KONTAKION

Priest: Zealously art thou praised, O Mother who didst bear the most holy Word of all the Saints; when thou receivest this present offering, deliver us from every calamity, and deliver from all wrath to come those who cry out unto thee: Alleluia! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Alleluia.

- *The clergy and altar servers now return into the sanctuary as the choir sings the Kontakion.*

KONTAKION FOR THE ANNUNCIATION IN TONE EIGHT (CHANT) (CHORAL)

To thee, the Champion Leader, do I offer thanks of victory, O Theotokos, thou who hast delivered me from terror; but as thou that hast that power invincible, O Theotokos, thou alone can set me free: from all forms of danger free me and deliver me, that I may cry unto thee: “Hail, O Bride without Bridegroom.”

THE TRISAGION PRAYERS

People: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. (THRICE)
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.
 All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy God, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy Name’s sake.
 Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.
 Our Father, Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Priest: For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory: of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

APOLYTIKION OF THE ANNUNCIATION IN TONE FOUR (CHANT) (CHORAL)

Today is the beginning of our salvation, and the manifestation of the mystery from the ages; for the Son of God becometh the Son of the Virgin, and Gabriel proclaimeth grace. Wherefore, do we shout with him to the Theotokos: Hail, O full of grace! The Lord is with thee. (THRICE)

THE DISMISSAL

- Deacon: Wisdom!
- Choir: Father, bless!
- Priest: Christ our God, the Existing One, is blessed, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.
- Choir: Amen. Preserve, O God, the holy Orthodox faith and all Orthodox Christians, unto ages of ages. Amen.
- Priest: Most holy Theotokos, save us.
- Choir: More honorable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, thou who without corruption bearest God the Word and art truly Theotokos: we magnify thee.
- Priest: Glory to Thee, O Christ our God and our hope, glory to Thee.
- Choir: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen. Lord, have mercy (*thrice*). Father, bless.

Priest: May He Who condescended to become incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary for us men and for our salvation, Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His all-immaculate and all-blameless holy Mother, whose Annunciation we now celebrate; by the might of the Precious and Life-giving Cross; by the protection of the honorable Bodiless Powers of Heaven; at the supplication of the honorable, glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John; of the holy, glorious and all-laudable apostles; of the holy, glorious and right-victorious Martyrs; of our venerable and God-bearing Fathers; *of Saint N., the patron and protector of this holy community*; of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; and of all the saints: have mercy on us and save us, forasmuch as He is good and loveth mankind.

- Priest: Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us and save us.
- Choir: Amen.

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