

**The Sunday which occurs between the 11th and the 17th of December,
Commemoration of the Holy Forefathers.**

Great Vespers

After the Introductory Psalm, “Blessèd is the man...,” the first Kathisma.

At “Lord, I call...,” 10 stichera,

6 stichera of the Resurrection and the following:

4 stichera of the Forefathers, in Tone 8: *To the melody, “As once in Eden...”*

Come all ye faithful who celebrate the memory of the forefathers on this day, /
And let us sing a song of praise to Christ, our Redeemer and Lord, /
Who performed wondrous and glorious deeds through them, /
Exalting them as great and powerful among the nations; /
Raising up from their seed for us the marvelous and wonderful stem, /
The divinely pure maid and Ever-virgin Mary, ///
From whom He blossomed forth granting nourishment, eternal salvation and ever-
lasting life to all.

Through Thy Cross and Resurrection, O Lord, /
Thou hast raised our ancient forefathers who had fallen into death: /
The holy youths whom Thou once delivered from the flames, /
And Daniel whom Thou didst save from the mouths of lions, /
And Abraham the bless’t, and Isaac, Thy servant, and Jacob, his son; /
Through whom Thou didst will to be born in the flesh from their seed /
And didst destroy the bonds of death ///
Of all who ever worshipped Thee, O Christ, the King of the ages!

Walking in the coolness amidst the flames /
The godly youths rejoiced in the dew of the Spirit /
Mystically foretelling the Trinity /
And the incarnation of Christ; /
Wisely they quenched the power of the flames with their faith; /
As the righteous Daniel restrained the lions in their den. /
As Thou wast moved to save them by the power of their prayers /
Deliver us also from the fire eternal, O Lord, ///
And vouchsafe to us Thy kingdom, O Savior and Lover of mankind.

Walking in the flames of the furnace amidst the dew /
The faithful and holy youths mystically divined /
Thy blazing forth from the Virgin. /

Thou didst shine forth on us without consuming us, /
And, as the righteous Daniel, wondrous among the prophets, once said /
When he clearly foretold Thy divine and Second coming: /
“I behold the thrones set in their place /
And behold the Judge is seated /
Before the river flowing with fire.” ///
Through their prayers deliver us from its flames, O Christ.

Glory..., in Tone 6: *(the composition of Anatolius)*

Come all ye faithful, /
And let us praise today the fathers of the ancient Law: /
Abraham the beloved, and Isaac, born of the promise; /
Jacob and the twelve patriarchs; /
And David in all his meekness; /
Daniel the prophet, known as the man of desires; /
And the three holy youths glorified with them, /
Who transformed the flames of the furnace into dew; /
Who all ask the remission of their sins, ///
From Christ God Who is glorified in His saints.

Now and ever..., Dogmatic Theotokion, in the Tone of the Week.

The Entrance and the Prokeimenon of the day.

At the Litya, the stichera of the temple, and then:

Glory..., of the Forefathers, Tone 1:

The illustrious and God-pleasing prophets /
Now rest in eternal rays of Light /
Having lived wondrous lives and attained a blessèd repose, /
As their words spoken by the Spirit continue bearing fruit ///
Proclaiming the message of the ineffable Birth of Christ to all!

Now and ever..., Theotokion, same Tone: *(from the Apostikha)*

Behold, the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled; /
Virgin, hast thou given birth /
And after, as before, hast thou remained Virgin. /
For God it was who was born /
And the nature of man was thereby restored /

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O Mother of God, despise not the supplications of thy servants, /
Which are offered to thee in thy Church /
But do thou, who hast held in thine arms the compassionate Lord /
Be merciful towards us who serve thee ///
And pray that our souls may be saved.

The Aposticha from the Octoechos, and then:

Glory..., Tone 3: (*the composition of Germanus*)

Come all ye who love the feast /
And let us praise the assembly of the forefathers of old, /
Adam, the forefather of us all, /
Enoch, Noah and Melchizedek, /
Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; /
And those who came after the Law: /
Moses, Aaron and Joshua, /
Samuel and David /
Isaiah, Jeremiah and Daniel, /
And with them the twelve prophets: /
Elijah, Elisha, and the rest; /
Zachariah and the Baptist, John ///
All who preached Christ the Life and Resurrection of the human race.

Now and ever..., Theotokion, in the same Tone:

By the will of the Father /
Thou hast conceived of the Holy Spirit without seed the Son of God /
Who, begotten of the Father /
Had His being without mother before the world began. /
He was born for our sakes in the flesh of thee without a father /
And thou hast fed Him as an infant with thy milk. /
Do not cease entreating Him ///
To deliver our souls from danger.

At the blessing of the loaves, the Troparion: Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos..., (twice)
and:

The Troparion of the Forefathers, in Tone 2:

Thou hast justified the ancient forefathers by their faith; /
Through them Thou hast gone before and betrothed to Thyself the Church of the
Gentiles. /

Let the saints thus be glorified, /
For from their seed there came forth a noble fruit: /
She who gave birth to Thee without seed; /
By their prayers, O Christ God, save our souls.

Matins

At God is the Lord, the Troparion for the Resurrection (twice), Glory..., now and ever...., the Troparion of the Forefathers. The Sessional Hymns from the Octoechos. The Polieley and the rest, as usual. Ypakoe of the Resurrection.

After the Polyeley, the Sessional Hymn of the Forefathers, in Tone 8: *To the melody, "Of Wisdom...."*

Come and let us sing a song of praise /
To Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, /
The meek David and Joshua, /
And to the twelve patriarchs /
And together with them to the three holy youths /
Who quenched the flames through the power of the Spirit. /
And let us cry out to them all: /
Rejoice, all ye who bravely rebuked the wisdom of kings /
And pray to Christ that He remits the sins ///
Of them that lovingly celebrate your memory. (twice)

Glory..., now and ever.... Theotokion:

Like the widow I offer my meager offering of thanks to thee /
As is due, O Lady, /
For all thy precious gifts; /
For thou hast ever been my protection and my aide /
Rescuing me from trials and sorrows. /
Therefore from the midst of the furnace I earnestly cry to thee: /
Deliver me from all things that assail me, /
Help me, O Mother of God, by thy prayers to Christ God /
That He grant the remission of my sins ///
For I thy servant have placed my hope in thee.

The Canon

Three Canons: one of the Resurrection, with 4 Troparia including the Irmos; that of the Three Holy Youths and Daniel, with 4 Troparia, in Tone 8,

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having the acrostic: *"I praise the three youths and the great Daniel," the composition of Theophanes;
and that of the Forefathers, with 6 Troparia, in Tone 1,
having the acrostic: "Now I offer fitting praise to the fathers," the composition of Joseph.
—incomplete as of 10/2013*

The Kontakion of the Forefathers, in Tone 2: (or Tone 6, to the melody, "Steadfast Protectress....")

O thrice-blessèd ones, you did not worship the image made by man /
But armed with the invisible power of God /
You were glorified in a trial by fire; /
From the midst of unbearable flames you called on God /
Crying: Hasten, O Compassionate One! /
Speedily come to our defense ///
For Thou art merciful and able to accomplish all that Thou dost will.

The Exapostilarion of the Resurrection, and:

Glory..., to the Forefathers:

Let us praise Adam and Abel, Seth and Enoch, Enos and Noah; Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; Moses, Job and Aaron; Eleazar and Joshua; Baruch, Samson and Jephthah; David and Solomon.

Now and ever..., Theotokion:

The great Sun, the Creator who shall come forth from the Virgin who knoweth no wedlock, now hastens forth to Bethlehem to enlighten all who are descended from Adam; a wonder proclaimed by the forefathers of most radiant memory.

***Note:** The Theotokion of the Exapostilarion of the Resurrection is replaced by that of the Forefathers.*

**At the Praises, 4 stichera of the Resurrection, and 4 of the Forefathers, in Tone 2:
To the melody, "O House of Ephratha...."**

Let us celebrate /
The forefathers' memory /
Praising their God-pleasing lives ///
For Whose sake they were thus glorified. (twice)

Verse: Blessèd art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers and praised and glorified is Thy Name forever!

The holy youths quenched the power of the flames /

As they danced within the furnace ///
Singing praises to God the Almighty.

Verse: For Thou art just in all that Thou hast done for us.

The prophet Daniel was condemned to the pit /
A fellow prisoner of the lions ///
Yet he shone forth not being harmed by them.

Glory..., in Tone 7: (*the composition of Germanus*)

Come, ye faithful and let us celebrate /
The annual feast of Abraham and all those with him, /
The fathers that ever lived before the Law; /
And let us worthily honor the Tribe of Judah, /
And let us praise the three youths in Babylon /
Who quenched the flames of the furnace as an image of the Trinity, /
And let us also praise Daniel. /
So that firmly holding to all the words of the prophets, /
Let us cry out together with Isaiah: /
Behold, a Virgin shall conceive in her womb /
And shall bear a Son, Immanuel, ///
That is, God with us!

Now and ever..., as usual: “Thou art most-blessèd....”

The Great Doxology, the Troparion of the Resurrection, usual litanies and the Dismissal

Liturgy

At the Beatitudes, 10 Troparia: 6 of the Resurrection; and 4 from the Third Ode of the Canon to the Forefathers.

The Troparion of the Resurrection and:

The Troparion of the Forefathers, in Tone 2:

Thou hast justified the ancient forefathers by their faith; /
Through them Thou hast gone before and betrothed to Thyself the Church of the Gentiles. /
Let the saints thus be glorified, /
For from their seed there came forth a noble fruit: /
She who gave birth to Thee without seed; ///
By their prayers, O Christ God, save our souls.

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But armed with the invisible power of God /
You were glorified in a trial by fire; /
From the midst of unbearable flames you called on God /
Crying: Hasten, O Compassionate One! /
Speedily come to our defense ///
For Thou art merciful and able to accomplish all that Thou dost will.

The Prokeimenon, in Tone 4 (Forefathers): Blessèd art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers / and praised and glorified is Thy Name forever! *Verse:* For Thou art just in all that Thou hast done for us.

The Epistle (Forefathers): (257) Col. 3:4-11

The Alleluia in, Tone 4 (Forefathers): Moses and Aaron were among His priests; Samuel also was among those who called on His Name. *Verse:* They called to the Lord and He answered them.

The Gospel (Forefathers): (76) Luke 14:16-24

The Communion Hymn: Praise the Lord from the heavens.... Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous! Praise befits the just!

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