

The 15th Day of August

⊕ The Dormition of our Most Holy, Glorious, Sovereign Lady, Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary.

Small Vespers

At “Lord, I call...,” 4 stichera¹, in Tone 1: *To the melody, “Joy of the ranks of heaven....”*

Today doth the assembly of angels rejoice /
In the immortal repose of the Mother of God; /
And she, departing for the eternal mansions, is glad /
And passeth over to the gladness of heaven, ///
To the place of divine delight and everlasting joy. *(twice)*

Desiring the blessed life on high, /
Thou didst abandon this one on earth below, /
O Birthgiver of God, thou Maiden, thou flower of virginity, /
Who hast given birth to Christ, the Life of all. /
And the assembly of the apostles stood by with rev’rence and awe ///
At thine all-honored burial, O Bride of God.

The air is sanctified by thy parting burial hymns; /
O Mother of God, the Lover of mankind, /
And in thine ascent, is itself an awesome miracle to behold. /
Therefore, we, the faithful, faithfully praise and honor thee, ///
O Theotokos who knewest not wedlock.

Glory..., now and ever..., in Tone 6:

O come, all ye faithful, /
And let us celebrate the universal dormition of the all-pure Theotokos; /
For today the angels celebrate the honored repose of the Mother of God /
And call us mortals to join them with gladness, /
That we may cry out with never-failing voices: /
Rejoice, thou who hast been translated from earth to thy habitation in the
mansions of heaven! /
Rejoice, thou who hast brought together the choir of the disciples on clouds of
light! ///
Rejoice, our hope and salvation; for we Christians ceaselessly bless thee!

¹ Greek text of Small Vespers differs.

15 AUGUST

The Prokeimenon of the Day.

At the Aposticha, these stichera, in Tone 2: To the melody, “O House of Ephratha....”

The assembly of the divine disciples and apostles /
Is gathered today ///
To bury the body of the Mother and Theotokos.

Verse: **A**rise, O Lord, into thy resting place, thou and the ark of thy holiness.

O Christ the Master, /
Who hat shone forth ineffably from her as her Son, ///
Accept in Thy hands the most holy spirit of the Theotokos.

Verse: **T**he Lord hath sworn to David a sure oath and will not change his mind.

When thou didst pass over to Him /
Who had been born of thee, O Virgin, ///
The apostles descended on clouds to bury thy body.

Glory..., now and ever..., in the same Tone: (and melody)

Be lifted up O ye gates of heaven, /
Beholding the Mother of God, the portal of the Most High, ///
Coming into heaven to her Son and God.

After the Prayer of St. Simeon, the Trisagion through the Lord’s Prayer, then:

The Troparion of the Feast, in Tone 1:

In giving birth, O Theotokos, thou didst preserve thy virginity, /
And in falling asleep thou didst not forsake the world. /
Thou wast translated into life, O Mother of Life, ///
And by thy prayers dost redeem our souls from death.

Great Vespers

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

At “Lord, I call...,” 8 stichera, in Tone 1:

O marvelous wonder! /
The source of life is laid in the tomb, /
And the tomb itself becomes a ladder to heaven. /
Be glad, O Gethsemane, thou sacred abode of the Mother of God. /
Come, O ye faithful, /

DORMITION OF OUR LADY, THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS

And with Gabriel to lead us /
Let us cry: Rejoice, thou who art full of grace! /
The Lord is with thee, ///
Granting the world through thee great mercy. (*thrice*)

Glorious are thy mysteries, /
O pure Lady. /
Thou wast made the throne of the Most High, /
And today thou art translated from earth to heaven. /
Thy glory is full of majesty, /
Shining with grace in divine brightness. /
O ye virgins, ascend on high with the Mother of the King. /
Rejoice, thou who art full of grace! The Lord is with thee, ///
Granting the world through thee great mercy. (*thrice*)

The dominions and the thrones, the rulers, /
The principalities, and the powers, /
The cherubim and the fearsome seraphim glorify thy Dormition: /
And those who dwell on earth rejoice, adorned by thy divine glory /
Kings fall down and sing with the archangels and the angels: /
Rejoice, thou who art full of grace!
The Lord is with thee, ///
Granting the world through thee great mercy. (*twice*)

Glory..., now and ever, in Tone 1: ²

By the royal command of God, /
The divinely-inspired apostles were caught up /
From over all the world /
Into the clouds on high. /
Reaching thine immaculate body, the source of life, /
They saluted it with mighty honor. /
The highest powers of heaven stood by with their own Master. /
Seized with dread, they accompanied thine inviolate body that had held God /
And they went before thee /
Crying, unseen, to the hierarchies above: /
“Lo, the Queen of all, the Maid of God is nigh.” /

² An alternate setting divides this Glory-verse into the eight tones (at the underscored line breaks) as: Tone 1, Tone 5, Tone 2, Tone 6, Tone 3, Tone 7, Tone 4, Tone 8, and Tone 1.

Open wide the gates, /
And receive above the world the Mother of the everlasting Light. /
For through her the salvation of all mankind has come. /
We have not the strength to look upon her, /
And are unable to render honors worthy of her, /
For her excellence is past all understanding. /
Therefore, O most pure Theotokos, who livest forever with thy Son, the King
who brings life, /
Pray without ceasing that thy newborn people be guarded in every side /
And saved from all adverse assaults; /
For we are under thy protection. ///
And we bless thee in beauty and light unto all ages.

The Entrance and the Prokeimenon of the day.

Three Readings of the Feast:

The Reading from Genesis (28:10-17)

^{24:12} The And Jacob went out from the Well of the Oath and went into Haran.
¹¹And he lighted upon a certain place and lay down there, because the sun was set. And he took one of the stones of the place, and put it at his head, and lay down in that place to sleep. ¹²And he dreamed, and behold, a ladder set up on the earth whose top reached to heaven, and the angels of God ascended and descended on it. ¹³And the Lord was established upon it and said, "I am the God of thy father Abraham, and the God of Isaac. Fear not; the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it and to thy seed. ¹⁴And 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 in thy seed shall all the tribes of the earth be blessed. ¹⁵And behold, I am with thee, keeping thee in every way whither thou shalt go, and will bring thee again into this land, for I will not leave thee until I have done all that which I have spoken to thee of." ¹⁶And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, "The Lord is in this place, and I knew it not." ¹⁷And he was afraid and said, "How dreadful is this place! This is none other than the House of God and this is the gate of heaven."

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

Thus saith the Lord: ^{43:27}And it shall come to pass from the eighth day and

onward that the priests shall offer your whole-burnt offerings upon the

altar and your peace offerings, and I will accept you,” saith the Lord.^{44:1} Then He brought me back by the way of the outward gate of the sanctuary that looketh toward the east, and it was shut. ²And the Lord said unto me, “This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no man shall pass through it, because the Lord, the God of Israel, shall enter in by it, and it shall be shut. ³For the prince shall

sit in it to eat bread before the Lord; he shall enter in by the way of the porch of the gate and shall go out by the way of the same.” ⁴And He brought me by the way of the gate that looketh toward the north over against the house, and I looked, and behold, the house of the Lord was filled with glory.

The Reading from Proverbs (9:1-11):

Thus saith the Lord Almighty:^{9:1} Wisdom hath built herself a house and hath set up seven pillars. ²She hath offered her sacrifices; she hath mingled her wine in a bowl and hath also furnished her table. ³She hath sent forth her servants and called with a lofty proclamation unto the feast, saying, ⁴“Whoso is foolish, let him turn aside to me.” And unto them that lack understanding she saith, ⁵“Come, eat my bread and drink wine which I have mingled for you. ⁶Leave foolishness, and thou shalt live and seek wisdom and keep thine understanding straight by knowledge.” ⁷He

that reproveth evil men shall get to himself dishonor, and he that rebuketh an ungodly man shall be blamed himself. ⁸Reprove not evil men, lest they hate thee; rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee. ⁹Give opportunity to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser; teach a just man, and he shall continue to receive. ¹⁰The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and the counsel of the holy is understanding, for to know the law is the token of a good mind. ¹¹For in this manner shalt thou live long, and years of thy life shall be added to thee.

At the Litya, these stichera of the Feast,³ in Tone 1: (To the regular melody)

It was right that the eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word /
Should see the Dormition of His Mother in the flesh, /
Even the final mystery concerning her: /
That so they might be witnesses /
Not only to the Ascension of the Savior but also to the translation of her who gave
Him birth. /

³ In contemporary parish practice, only the Glory-verse, “**Come, O gathering of those who love to keep the feasts...**” is sung (see next page).

Assembled from all parts by divine power, /
 They came to Sion, /
 And sped on her way to heaven the Virgin who is higher than the cherubīm. /
 We also venerate her, for she prays for our souls.

In Tone 2: *(The composition of Anatolius)*

She who is higher than the heavens and more glorious than the cherubīm, /
 She who is held in greater honor than all creation, /
She who by reason of her surpassing purity /
 Became the receiver of the everlasting Essence, /
 Today commends her most pure soul into the hands of her Son. /
 With her all things are filled with joy ///
 And she bestows great mercy upon us all.

In the Same Tone: *(The composition of John the Monk)*

The spotless Bride, the Mother of Him in whom the Father was well pleased, /
 She who was foreordained by God /
 To be the dwelling place of His union without confusion, /
 Delivers today her blameless soul to her Creator and her God, /
 The spiritual powers receive her with the honors due to God, /
 And she who is truly the Mother of Life departs unto life, /
 The lamp of the Light which no man can approach, ///
 The salvation of the faithful and the hope of all our souls.

In Tone 3: *(The composition of Germanus)*

Come, all ye ends of the earth, /
 Let us praise the host holy translation of the Mother of God: /
 For she has delivered her spotless soul into the hands of her Son. /
 Therefore the world, restored to life by her holy Dormition, /
 Celebrates this feast with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs ///
 Together with the angels and apostles.

Glory..., in Tone 1: *(The composition of Theophanes) To the melody: "When Joseph together with Nicodemus..."*

Come, O gathering of those who love to keep the feasts; /
 Come and let us form a choir, /
 Come, let us crown the Church with songs, /
 As the Ark of God goes to her rest. /
 For today is heaven opened wide /

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As it receives the Mother of Him who cannot be contained. /
The earth, as it yields up the Source of Life, /
Is robed in blessing and majesty. /
The hosts of angels, present with the fellowship of the apostles, /
Gaze in great fear at her who bore the Cause of life, /
Now that she is translated from life to life. /
Let us all venerated and implore her: /
Forget not, O Lady, thy ties of kinship /
With those who commemorate in faith ///
The feast of thine all-holy Dormition.

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

Sing, O ye people, /
Sing ye the praises of the Mother of our God: /
For today she delivers her soul, full of light, /
Into the hands of Him who was made incarnate of her without seed, /
And she entreats Him without ceasing to grant the inhabited earth ///
Peace and great mercy.

At the Aposticha, these stichera of the Feast in Tone 4: (To the regular melody)

Come, O ye people, /
And let us sing the praises of the pure and most holy Virgin, /
From whom the Word of the Father ineffably came forth incarnate. /
Let us cry aloud saying: /
Blessèd art thou among women and blessèd is thy womb that contained Christ. /
Having delivered thy soul into His holy hands, ///
Do thou, O most pure Lady entreat Him that our souls may be saved.

Verse: **Arise**, O Lord, into thy resting place, thou and the ark of thy holiness.

Come, O ye people, /
And let us sing today unto Christ our God a song of David: /
“The virgins, her companions,” he said, “shall be brought before the King: /
And they shall come with joy and gladness.” /
For she, through whom we have been made godlike, is of the seed of David: /
And gloriously and ineffably she commends herself in to the hands of her own Son
and Master. /
Praising her as the Mother of God, we cry aloud and say: /
Save us who confess thee, to be the Theotokos, ///
And deliver our souls from every evil and misfortune.

Verse: The Lord hath sworn to David a sure oath and will not change his mind.

O pure, most holy Virgin, /
The multitude of angels in heaven and mankind on earth /
Extol and venerate thy Dormition: /
For thou art the Mother of Christ, our God and Creator of all. /
Never cease, we entreat thee, to intercede with Him on our behalf; /
For next to God we have put our hope in thee, ///
O far-famed and unwedded Theotokos.

Glory..., now and ever..., in Tone 4:

At thy departing, O Virgin Theotokos, /
To Him who was ineffably born of thee, /
James, the first bishop and brother of the Lord was there, /
And so was Peter, the honored leader and chief of the disciples,⁴ /
And the whole sacred fellowship of the apostles, /
Praising in hymns the divine and awesome mystery of the dispensation of
Christ our God /
And they rejoiced, O far-famed Virgin, /
As they buried thy body, /
The origin of the Life and holder of God. /
And regarding one another, the most holy of the senior of the ranks of angels said: /
“Lift up your gates and receive her who bore the Creator of heaven and earth. /
And let us glorify her precious and holy body with songs of praise, /
The dwelling place of the Lord on whom we may not gaze.” /
Therefore we too, as we keep the feast, cry out to thee O Lady: ///
Raise up the Christian horn and save our souls.

At the Blessing of the Loaves, the Troparion of the Feast, in Tone 1:

In giving birth, O Theotokos, thou didst preserve thy virginity, /
And in falling asleep thou didst not forsake the world. /
Thou wast translated into life, O Mother of Life, ///
And by thy prayers dost redeem our souls from death. (*thrice*)

And the Dismissal.

Matins

At “God is the Lord...” the Troparion of the Feast, “In giving birth...” (*thrice*).

⁴ Literally, “the theologians,”

DORMITION OF OUR LADY, THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS

After the 1st Kathisma, the Sessional Hymn, in Tone 1:⁵ To the melody: “Thy tomb, O Savior...”

The honored choir of the wise apostles /
Was miraculously assembled to bury in glory thy most pure body, /
O most laudable Lady Theotokos: /
And with them the multitudes of angels sang ///
The triumphant praises of thy Translation that we celebrate in faith.

Glory..., now and ever..., Repeat above.

After the 2nd Kathisma, the Sessional Hymn, in Tone 3: To the melody “Awed by the beauty of Thy virginity)

Thy seedless conception in thy birthgiving /
And thine incorrupt mortality in thy falling asleep /
Was a twofold wonder within a wonder merged in thee, /
O Lady Theotokos. /
For how art thou who hast not known a man a pure Nourisher of an infant? /
And how dost thou, the Mother of God, perfume a mortal body with myrrh? /
Therefore with the angel we cry out to thee: ///
Rejoice, O Lady, full of grace!

Glory..., now and ever..., Repeat above.

Polyeley and Magnification:

We magnify thee // O most-pure Mother of Christ our God, / and we praise thine all-glorious Dormition.

Selected Psalm verses:

**Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth!
Sing of His name, give to Him glorious praise!**

After the Polyeley, the Sessional Hymn, in Tone 4: To the melody, “Joseph was amazed...”

**Cry aloud, O David! /
What is this present feast? /
“Christ,” he said, “ has translated into the heavenly mansions /
Her who bore Him without seed, /
Of whom I sang in the Book of Psalms, /**

⁵ The order of the Sessional Hymns differs in the Greek Menaion.

Calling her daughter, child of God, and Virgin. /
Therefore, mothers and daughters and brides of Christ, /
Rejoice and cry aloud: ///
Rejoice, O thou who art translated in the heavenly kingdom.”

Glory..., now and ever..., Repeat above.

1st Antiphon of the 4th Tone (The Song of Ascents), “From my youth...”

Prokeimenon, in Tone 4:

I shall make thy name to be remembered in all generations. *Verse:* Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thine ear.

Let every breath...

Gospel: (4) Luke 1:39-49, 56

And the Post-Gospel sticheron, of the Feast, in Tone 6:

Have mercy on me, O God /
According to Thy great mercy....

And the Festal verse, in Tone 6: (the composition of Byzas)

When the repose of thy most pure body was drawing near, /
The apostles surrounded thy bed and looked upon thee with trembling, /
And as they gazed at thy body, they were filled with awe. /
Then Peter cried aloud to thee, weeping: /
“O Virgin, I behold thee, clearly stretched out, the life of all, /
And I am amazed, /
For in thy body, the Delight of the life to come, had made His abode! ///
O most pure Lady, earnestly beseech thy Son and God to save thy flock from harm.

The Canon

Two Canons of the Feast, with 12 Troparia.

Ode 1

The First Canon of the Feast, in Tone 1,

having the acrostic “Let us wisely hold festival,” the composition of Cosmas of Maiuma

Irmos: Thy sacred and renowned memorial, O Virgin, is clothed in the embroidered raiment of divine glory. It has brought all the faithful together in joy, and led by Miriam, with dances and timbrels, they sing the praises of thine Only-begotten Son: for He has been greatly glorified.

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Refrain: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

The spiritual hosts that dwell in heaven attended thy divine body in Sion, while the multitude of the apostles, coming together of a sudden from the ends of the earth, stood beside thee, O Theotokos. With them we too glorify thine august memory, O undefiled Virgin.

O pure Virgin, thou hast won the honor of victory over nature by bringing forth God; yet like thy Son and Creator, thou hast submitted to the laws of nature in a manner above nature. Therefore, dying thou hast risen to live eternally with thy Son.

The Second Canon of the Feast, in Tone 4,

the composition of St. John of Damascus.

Irmos: I shall open my mouth, and it shall be filled with the Spirit, I shall utter the words of my song to the Queen and Mother: I shall be seen radiantly keeping festival, and joyfully praising her wonders.

O ye young virgins, raise now with Miriam the prophetess the song of departure. For the Virgin, the only Theotokos, is taken to her appointed dwelling-place in heaven.

Glory..., now and ever,

The heavenly mansions of God fittingly received thee, O most holy Lady, who art a living heaven. Joyously adorned as a Bride without spot, thou standest now beside our King and God.

Katavasia: Both irmosi of the Canon.

Ode 3

The First Canon of the Feast

Irmos: O Christ, the Wisdom and the Power of God, who dost create and uphold all, establish the Church unshaken and unwavering: for only Thou art holy, who hast Thy resting place among the saints.

The glorious apostles glorious apostles knew thee, O Virgin without spot, to be a mortal woman and at the same time, beyond and above nature, the Mother of God: therefore they touched thee with fearful hands, as they gazed upon thee shining with glory, the tabernacle that had held God.

The Lord guarded with the glory of the Godhead the honor due to the living Ark in which the Word took flesh; and in His just vengeance He intervened to cut off the sacrilegious hands of the presumptuous unbeliever.

The Second Canon of the Feast

Irmos: O Theotokos, living and abiding fountain, strengthen those united in spiritual fellowship, the

choirs assembled in thy divine glory, and give them crowns of glory..

O pure Virgin, sprung from mortal loins, thine end was conformable to nature: but because thou hast borne the true Life, thou hast departed to dwell with the divine Life Himself.

At the all-powerful command, the assembly of the apostles from the ends of the earth, and the multitude of angels from on high, made haste to Sion, there to minister in fitting manner at thy burial, O Lady.

Katavasia:

Ipakoë, in Tone 8:

All generations call thee blessed, /
O Virgin Theotokos: /
For Christ our God who cannot be contained /
Was pleased to be contained in thee. /
Blessèd also are we in having thee as our helper, /
For day and night thou dost intercede for us, /
And the scepters of kings are strengthened by thy supplications. /
Therefore, singing thy praises we cry aloud to thee: ///
Rejoice, thou who art full of grace, the Lord is with thee.

Glory..., now and ever..., Repeat above.

Ode 4

The First Canon of the Feast

Irmos: The sayings and imagery of the prophets foreshadowed Thine incarnation from the Virgin, O Christ, even the splendor of Thy glory which was to come as a light to enlighten the Gentiles; and even the deep utters its voice to Thee in joy: Glory to Thy power, O Thou who lovest mankind.

Come, O ye people, and gaze in wonder: for the holy mountain of the Lord is exalted above the mountains of heaven: the earthly heaven takes up her dwelling in the eternal heavenly mansions.

Thy death, O pure Virgin, was a passage to a better and eternal life, for it translated thee, O undefiled Lady, from this mortal life to that which is truly eternal and divine: and now thou dost gaze with joy upon thy Son and Lord.

The gates of heaven were opened wide and the angels sang, as Christ received the virgin treasure of His own Mother. Cherubīm withdrew before thee in thine exultation, while seraphīm glorified thee in thy joy.

The Second Canon of the Feast

Irmos: Perceiving the unsearchable purpose of God concerning Thine incarnation from a Virgin, O Most-High, the prophet Habákkuk cried out: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

A strange wonder it was it to see the living heaven of the King of all, descend into the hollows of the earth. How wondrous are Thy works! Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

At thy repose, O Mother of God, the angelic hosts in fear and joy with their holy wings covered thy body, that wast so spacious, that it had harbored God.

If her Fruit, whom none may comprehend, on whose account she was called to heaven, submitted of His own will to accept burial as a mortal, how should she, who gave birth to Him without knowing a man, refuse it?

Ode 5

The First Canon of the Feast

Irmos: I shall declare the divine and ineffable beauty of Thine excellencies, O Christ. For Thou hast shone forth in Thine own Person as the coeternal brightness from the eternal glory, and taking flesh from a virgin's womb, Thou hast arisen as the sun, giving light to those that were in darkness and shadow.

Carried to Sion as it were upon a cloud, the company of the apostles assembled from the ends of the earth to minister to thee, O Virgin. Thou art the swift cloud, from whom the Most High God, the Sun of Righteousness, shone forth upon those that were in darkness and shadow.

The inspired tongues of the apostles rang out louder than trumpets, as they sang in the Spirit the burial hymn to the Theotokos: “Rejoice, O incorruptible source of God’s life-giving Incarnation, that brings salvation unto all.”

The Second Canon of the Feast

Irmos: All creation was amazed at thy divine glory, for thou, O Virgin, who knewest no wedlock, didst bear in thy womb the God over all, and thou gavest birth to the eternal Son, granting peace to all who sing thy praises.

Let the trumpets of the apostles ring out today, and let the voices of men sound praises in many tongues. Let the air re-echo, shining with infinite light, and let the angels honor with hymns the Dormition of the Virgin.

Wholly beside himself, wholly transported, his whole self-consecrated to God, the chosen vessel of the Lord surpassed himself in hymns to thee, O far-famed Theotokos and Virgin: and in the sight of all he proved himself to be, in truth, inspired by God.⁶

⁶ This refers to St. Hierotheos, the friend of St. Dionysius the Aeropagite, who according to tradition was present at the burial of the Holy Virgin. See Dionysius, “*The Divine Names*,” iii.2. (with thanks to Metr. Kallistos Ware and Mother Mary.—ed.)

Ode 6

The First Canon of the Feast

Irmos: The fire within the whale, the monster dwelling in the salt waters of the sea, was a prefiguring of Thy three days' burial, and Jonah acted as interpreter. For, saved and unharmed, as though he had never been swallowed, he cried aloud: "I will sacrifice unto Thee with the voice of praise, O Lord."

God, the King The Lord and God of all gave thee as thy portion the things that are above nature. For just as He kept thee virgin in thy childbirth so did He preserve thy body incorrupt in the tomb; and He glorified thee by a divine Translation, showing thee honor as a Son to His Mother.

Thy Son, O Virgin, has truly made thee dwell in the Holy of Holies as a bright candlestick, flaming with immaterial fire, as a golden censer burning with divine coal, as the vessel of manna, the rod of Aaron, and the tablet written by God, as a holy ark and table of the bread of life.

The Second Canon of the Feast

Irmos: Come, let us clap our hands, O divinely-wise ones, celebrating this divine, all-precious Feast of the Mother of God, and let us give glory to God who was born of her.

Life arose from thee without destroying the seals of thy virginity. How then could the spotless tabernacle of thy body, the source of Life, become a partaker of death?

Having become the temple of Life, thou hast obtained the life eternal: for thou who hast borne the Life in Person, hast now passed over through death into life.

Katavasia:

The Kontakion of the Feast, in Tone 7:⁷

Neither the tomb nor death could hold the Theotokos /
Who is constant in prayer and our firm hope in her intercessions: /
For being the Mother of Life, she was translated to life ///
By the One who dwelt in her virginal womb.

Ikos: Set a rampart about my mind, O my Savior, for I make bold to sing the praises of Thy most pure Mother, the rampart of the world. Establish me firmly within the fortress of my words and make me strong within the defenses of my thoughts: for Thou dost promise to fulfil the petitions of those that entreat Thee with faith. Endue me with a tongue and ready speech, and with thoughts that are without shame: for every gift of enlightenment is sent down from Thee, O guiding Light, who dwelt within her ever-virginal womb.

⁷ In some Greek texts, Tone 6.

Ode 7

The First Canon of the Feast

Irmos: Divine Love, fighting against cruel wrath and fire, quenched the fire with dew and laughed the wrath to scorn, making the three-stringed harp of the saints inspired by God sing in the midst of the flames in answer to the instruments of music: “Blessèd art Thou, O most glorious God, our God and the God of our fathers.”

In his anger, Moses broke in pieces the tablets made by God and written by the Holy Spirit. But Moses' Master kept His own Mother unharmed in her childbirth, and now He has made her dwell in the heavenly abodes. Dancing with her in her joy, we cry aloud unto Christ: “Blessèd art Thou, O most glorious God, our God and the God of our fathers.”

To the sound of the cymbals of our pure lips, of the harmonious harps of our hearts, of the sweet-sounding trumpets of our uplifted minds, to the clapping of our active hands, let us cry on this solemn and holy day of the translation of the pure Virgin: “Blessèd art Thou, O most glorious God, our God and the God of our fathers.”

The people inspired by God has gathered together: for the tabernacle of the glory of God is translated in Sion to a heavenly abode, where the pure voices of those that keep feast are heard with a sound of ineffable joy, shouting in gladness to Christ: “Blessèd art Thou, O most glorious God, our God and the God of our fathers.”

The Second Canon of the Feast

Irmos: The holy children bravely trampled upon the threatening fire, preferring not to worship creating things rather than the Creator, and they sang with joy: Blessèd art Thou, and praised above all, O Lord God of our fathers!

O ye young men and virgins, old men and rulers, kings and judges, who honor the memory of the Virgin and Mother of God, sing ye: Blessèd art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers.

Let the high mountains ring out to the trumpet of the Spirit: let the hills now rejoice and let the apostles of God dance for joy. The Queen goes to dwell with her Son and to rule with Him forever.

The all-holy translation of Thy divine and undefiled Mother has gathered together the heavenly hosts of the powers on high, that they may rejoice with those on earth who sing to Thee: Blessèd art Thou, O God of our fathers.

Ode 8

The First Canon of the Feast

Irmos: The all-powerful angel of God revealed to the children a flame, that brought refreshment to the holy while it consumed the ungodly. And he made the Theotokos into a life-giving fount, gushing forth to the destruction of death and

to the life of those that sing: “We who have been delivered praise the one and only Creator and exalt Him above all forever.”

The whole multitude of the apostles accompanied in Sion the divine Ark of holiness, as they sang: “Whither dost thou now depart, O Tabernacle of the living God? Cease not to watch over those who sing in faith. We who have been delivered praise the one and only Creator and exalt Him above all forever.”

As she departed the Virgin without spot lifted up her hands -those hands that had held God incarnate in their embrace and with the boldness of a Mother to her Son she said: “Keep unto all ages those whom Thou hast made mine and who cry aloud unto Thee: We who have been delivered praise the one and only Creator and exalt Him above all forever.”

The Second Canon of the Feast

Irmos: The Offspring of the Theotokos saved the God-fearing children in the furnace He who was then prefigured has since been born on earth, and He raises up all creation to sing: Praise the Lord, all ye works of the Lord, highly exalt Him throughout all ages!

O most pure Virgin, the rulers, dominions, and powers, the angels, archangels and thrones, the principalities, cherubīm and dread seraphīm make thy memory glorious; and we men also sing praises and exalt thee above all forever.

He who, taking flesh, strangely made His dwelling in thy most pure womb, Himself received thine all-holy spirit, and as a Son paying His due, He gave it rest with Himself. Therefore we sing thy praises, O Virgin, and exalt thee above all forever.

Let us bless the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Lord.

Beyond and above the understanding are the wonders of the ever-Virgin and Mother of God. Going to dwell in the tomb, she made it a paradise. Standing beside this tomb today, we sing with joy: O ye works of the Lord, bless ye the Lord and exalt Him above all forever.

We praise, bless, and worship the Lord, singing and exalting Him throughout all ages.

Katavasia.

Ode 9

The Magnificat is not sung but is replaced by the following Refrain of the Feast:

Refrain I: All generations call thee blessed, O only Theotokos.

The First Canon of the Feast

Irmos: In thee, O Virgin without spot, the bounds of nature are overcome; for childbirth remains virgin and death is translated to life. O Theotokos, virgin after bearing child and alive after death, do thou ever save thine inheritance.

Ref.: All generations...

The angelic powers were amazed as they looked in Sion upon their own Master, bearing in His hands the soul of a woman: for as befitted a Son, He said to her who without spot had borne Him: "Come, honored among women, and be glorified together with thy Son and God."

Ref.: All generations...

Standing round thy body that had held God, the choir of the apostles looked upon it with awe and saluted it, saying with clear voice: "As thou departest to the heavenly mansions unto thy Son, do thou ever save thine inheritance."

Refrain II: Magnify, O my soul, the holy translation of the Mother of God from earth to heaven.

The Second Canon of the Feast

Irmos: Let the earthborn leap for joy, enlightened by the Spirit, and let the angelic powers celebrate and honor the holy feast of the Mother of God, and let them cry aloud: Rejoice, all-blessèd and all-pure, Ever-virgin Mother of God.

Ref.: Magnify, O my soul...

O come to Zion, the divine and fertile mountain of the living God, and let us rejoice as we gaze upon the Theotokos. For Christ translates her, as His own Mother, into a dwelling far better and more divine, the Holy of Holies.

Ref.: Magnify, O my soul...

Come, O ye faithful, let us approach the tomb of the Mother of God, and let us embrace it, touching it sincerely with the lips and eyes and foreheads of the heart. Let us draw abundant gifts of healing grace from this ever-flowing fount.

Ref.: Magnify, O my soul...

O Mother of the living God, accept from us this burial hymn, and cover us with the shadow of thy light-giving and divine grace. Grant victory to our rulers, peace to the people that loves Christ, and to us who sing, remission of our sins and the salvation of our souls.

Katavasia I: All generations call thee blessèd, O only Theotokos.

Irmos I: *In thee, O Virgin without spot, the bounds of nature are overcome; for childbirth remains virgin and death is translated to life. O Theotokos, virgin after bearing child and alive after death, do thou ever save thine inheritance.*

Katavasia II: Magnify, O my soul, the holy translation of the Mother of God from earth to heaven.

Irmos II: *Let the earthborn leap for joy, enlightened by the Spirit, and let the angelic powers celebrate and honor the holy feast of the Mother of God, and let them cry aloud: Rejoice, all-blessèd and all-pure, Ever-virgin Mother of God.*

Exapostilarion of the Feast: To the special melody: *“The heaven with stars...”*

O ye apostles assembled from the ends of the earth, bury my body in Gethsemane. And Thou, O my Son and God, receive my spirit!

Glory...,

O ye apostles *(repeat above)*

Now and ever...,

O ye apostles *(repeat above)*

At the Praises, 4 stichera, in Tone 4: *To the melody, “As valiant among the martyrs...”*

Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord...

READER:

✠ Praise Him in His mighty acts; *(on 4)*
Praise Him according to His excellent greatness!

At thy glorious Dormition /
The heavens rejoice and the armies of angels exult; /
The whole earth makes glad, singing a hymn of departure to thee, /
O Mother of Him who is Lord of all, /
All-holy Virgin who knewest not wedlock, ///
Thou who hast delivered mankind from the ancestral condemnation

✠ Praise Him with timbrel and dance;
Praise Him with strings and pipe!

At thy glorious Dormition... *(Repeat above)*

DORMITION OF OUR LADY, THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS

✠ Praise Him with trumpet sound;
Praise Him with lute and harp!

At a divine command /
The chief apostles hastened from the ends of the earth to bury thee, /
And when they beheld thee taken up from earth to heaven /
They shouted with joy the words of Gabriel, and cried to thee: /
“Rejoice, thou bearer of the whole divinity: ///
Rejoice, thou who alone by thy childbirth hast brought together earthly things and the
things on high.”

✠ Praise Him with well-tuned cymbals;
Praise Him with loud joyful cymbals!
Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!

By thy holy Dormition, /
O Virgin Mother and Bride of God, /
Thou who gavest birth to the Life hast been transported into immortal life, /
Attended by angels, principalities, and powers, /
By apostles, prophets, and the whole creation: ///
And thy Son received into His immaculate hands thy spotless soul.

Glory..., now and ever..., of the Feast, in Tone 6:

At thy deathless Dormition, O Theotokos, Mother of the Life, /
clouds caught the apostles up into the air: /
Though dispersed throughout the world, they were brought together /
To form a single choir before thy most pure body. /
And burying thee with reverence, /
They sang aloud the words of Gabriel:
“Rejoice,” thou who art full of grace, /
O Virgin Mother who knewest not wedlock, /
The Lord is with thee. ///
Entreat Him who is thy Son and our God to save our souls.”

The Great Doxology, Troparion. Litanies and the Dismissal. Then the First Hour.

Liturgy

At the Beatitudes, 8 Troparia: 4 from the Third Odes of the First Canon, and 4 from the Sixth Ode of the Second Canon

1-2. The glorious apostles glorious apostles knew thee, O Virgin without spot, to be a mortal woman and at the same time, beyond and above nature, the Mother of God: therefore they touched thee with fearful hands, as they gazed upon thee shining with glory, the tabernacle that had held God. *(twice)*

3-4. The Lord guarded with the glory of the Godhead the honor due to the living Ark in which the Word took flesh; and in His just vengeance He intervened to cut off the sacrilegious hands of the presumptuous unbeliever. *(twice)*

5-6. Life arose from thee without destroying the seals of thy virginity. How then could the spotless tabernacle of thy body, the source of Life, become a partaker of death? *(twice)*

7-8. Having become the temple of Life, thou hast obtained the life eternal: for thou who hast borne the Life in Person, hast now passed over through death into life. *(twice)*

The Troparion of the Feast, in Tone 1:

In giving birth, O Theotokos, thou didst preserve thy virginity, /
And in falling asleep thou didst not forsake the world. /
Thou wast translated into life, O Mother of Life, ///
And by thy prayers dost redeem our souls from death.

The Kontakion of the Feast, in Tone 2:

Neither the tomb nor death could hold the Theotokos /
Who is constant in prayer and our firm hope in her intercessions: /
For being the Mother of Life, she was translated to life ///
By the One who dwelt in her virginal womb.

The Prokeimenon of the Feast, in Tone 3: (The Song of the Theotokos):

My soul magnifies the Lord, / and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. *Verse:* For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden, for behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed.

The Epistle: (240) Phil. 2:5-11

The Alleluia of the Feast, in Tone 2: Arise, O Lord, into thy resting place, thou and the ark of thy holiness. *Verse:* The Lord hath sworn to David a sure oath and will not change his mind.

The Gospel: (54) Luke 10: 38-42; 11:27-28

Instead of “It is truly meet...,” **we sing:** “All generations...,” **and the Irmos of Ode 9**

DORMITION OF OUR LADY, THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS

of the First Canon: “In thee, O Virgin without spot, the bounds of nature are overcome....”

Communion Hymn: I will receive the cup of salvation, and call on the name of the Lord. Alleluia....

Note: It is the custom to bless herbs and flowers at the end of the Liturgy on this day. (Cf. The Book of Needs).

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