

The 1st Day of August

Ⲅ The Procession of the Wood of the Precious and Life-giving Cross; and the Commemoration of the Seven Maccabean Youths, their Mother Solomonias, and their teacher, Eleazar, Martyrs;¹ also, the Beginning of the Dormition Fast.

Vespers

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

At “Lord, I call...,” 6 stichera,

3 stichera of the Cross,² in Tone 4: *To the melody, “Called from on high....”*

The multitude of faithful believers rejoices today; /
For the heavenly Cross shines forth throughout the world /
Illumining the firmament with its ineffable light, /
Making bright the air and adorning the face of the earth. /
And the Church of Christ sings with songs divine /
As it venerates the divine and most wondrous Cross /
That preserves it from on high. /
By its power we are strengthened and we approach the Master saying: ///
Grant peace to the world and enlighten our souls.

Let all creation rejoice today /
As the Cross shines from heaven above /
Illumining all on earth and uniting those that were scattered. /
Today mankind rejoices with the choirs of angels, /
For the wall of partition between them has been destroyed by the Cross /
As it clearly unites all into one. /
And we rejoice for it illumines all creation with divine grace /
As it shines forth more brightly than the sun ///
And reveals the plan of salvation to all who honor it with faith.

Shining brighter than the dawn of the rising sun, /
The Cross, truly the scepter of Christ the King /
Showing clearly to us the coming of the End of days. /
For already it has raised the human race from the bondage of Hades /
And sent hell itself into captivity, /
It has cast down the enemy and utterly destroyed the arrogance of the demons. /
Now it proclaims the Resurrection of the Savior and saves all who cry: ///
Grant peace to the world, O Lord, and save our souls!

¹ See 2 Maccabees 8-10 (LXX).

² Greek text differs.

And 3 stichera of the Martyrs, in Tone 1: *To the melody, “O all-praised martyrs....”*

Tyranny could not shake the tenets of the law /
For they were held aloft by seven pillars /
Who courageously endured the bestial fury of the tyrant /
And gave their bodies over to death: ///
The seven young men and brethren, guardians of the Mosaic legacy.

Lifting their minds above all earthly things /
Their bodies torn and cut in pieces, /
The seven brave and pious youths,
And their mother, Solomonia, wise in God, /
Were given strength and their hopes were fulfilled , ///
And they found rest in the bosom of their forefather, Abraham.

The seven youths, their mother, and Eleazar, their holy teacher, /
Armed themselves with the strength of spiritual courage, /
And with boldness, bravely cast down the enemy /
For the sake of honor and piety, ///
Thus preserving the law of their fathers. /

Glory..., in Tone 8: *(the composition of John of Damascus)*

The holy Maccabees said to the tyrant: /
“O Antiochus, for us there is only one God the King /
Through whom we came into being, and to whom we shall return! /
Another world higher and more lasting than the one we see is awaiting us — /
Our new homeland is a strong and imperishable Jerusalem, /
And we shall triumph and shall dwell with the angels.” ///
Through their prayers, have mercy on us, O Lord, and save our souls.

Now and ever³..., in the same Tone: *(also the composition of John)*

Today, O Christ our God, /
We sinners venerate with unworthy lips Thy precious Cross, /
Which Moses once prefigured in himself, /
When he overthrew Amalek and put him to flight; /
And which David the psalmist commanded to be venerated as Thy footstool. /
We cry aloud to Thee that wast pleased to be crucified upon it: ///
O Lord, with the thief count us worthy of Thy kingdom.

³ The “Glory” verse of the Aposticha at Great Vespers on the Exaltation of the Cross.

Or Now and ever..., the Dogmatic Theotokion in the Tone of the Week if a Resurrection Service.

At the Aposticha, the stichera from the Octoechos, and

Glory..., of the Martyrs, in Tone 8: (the composition of Cosmas, the monk)

The souls of the righteous are in the hands of the Lord, /
Even as Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, the forefathers before the law, /
So are their offspring, the Maccabean martyrs, whom we now praise. /
For these sons of Abraham, strong in spirit, emulated their forefather's faith, /
And being raised in godliness, they wrestled even unto death for the sake of piety. /
And they reproved the pride of Antiochus the godless while suffering under his law; /
Having faith in eternal life, they did not value this passing life /
As they laid down their whole selves for their love for God: /
Their souls, their courage, their understanding, /
Their youthful bodies — all, in offering for being raised in purity. /
O the example of piety which the Maccabean martyrs have flowered for us! /
O holy mother, Solomonia, who gave birth to such seven sons! /
Now, we entreat you, O Maccabean martyrs, /
Together with your mother and Eleazar, your wise and righteous teacher, /
As you stand before Christ God, for whose sake ye have so valiantly labored /
And now enjoying the fruits of all your works /
To earnestly beseech Him for the sake of all mankind ///
For He does whatsoever He wills, and fulfills the wishes of those who fear Him.

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

O God, fulfilled art the words of Thy prophet Moses, who said: /
“Ye shall see your life hang before your eyes.” /
Today the Cross is exalted and the world is set free from error. /
Today the Church of Christ's Resurrection celebrates its dedication, /
And all the ends of the earth greatly rejoice; /
With cymbals like David, they offer Thee their song, saying: /
O God, Thou hast worked salvation in the midst of the earth /
Through the Cross and the Resurrection, /
Whereby Thou hast saved us, /
O Thou, who art good and lovest mankind. ///
Glory to Thee, O all-powerful Lord!

The Troparion of the Martyrs, in Tone 1:

We beseech Thee, O Lord and Lover of mankind, /

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By the sufferings Thy saints endured for Thee, /
To heal all our afflictions, ///
And deliver us from our transgressions.

The Troparion of the Cross, in Tone 1:

O Lord, save Thy people, /
And bless Thine inheritance, /
Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians /
Over their adversaries, /
And by virtue of Thy Cross ///
Preserve Thy habitation.

* * *

Note: Before the bells are rung for Vespers, the priest, with phelonion, transfers the Precious Cross from the Table of Preparation to the Holy Table in the following manner: (cf. *Third Sunday of Lent*). Priest: “Blessèd is our God...” Deacon (or reader) in the altar: “Amen.” Trisagion. After “Our Father...,” the priest censes the Cross and gives up the censer. After the Exclamation, having made a prostration, he takes up the Cross over his head. In the Altar “Amen” is sung and the Troparion, “O Lord, save Thy people...”; Glory..., now and ever..., the Kontakion of the Cross: “As Thou wast voluntarily lifted up on the Cross” At this time, the priest, preceded by two candle-bearers, bears the Cross from the Table of Preparation and places it in the place where the Gospel usually lies, after which he censes three times around the Holy Table. (The Gospel is placed upright as during the Divine Liturgy).

If Matins is served later, apart from Vespers, then the Cross is brought to the Holy Table after the Dismissal of Vespers, and a lamp is set before the precious Cross to burn throughout the night.

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Matins

At “God is the Lord...” the Troparion of the Cross, (*twice*). Glory..., the Troparion of the Martyrs, (*once*); Now and ever..., Troparion of the Cross, (*once*).

The usual Kathisma readings and Sessional Hymns from the Octoechos.

The Canon

One Canon from the Octoechos, with 4 Troparia, including the Irmos; the Canon of the Cross, with 6 Troparia; and that of the Martyrs, with 4 Troparia.

But if the Church or the Monastery be of the Lord or the Theotokos, and if it be a Saturday, then we sing the Canon of the Church or Monastery with 4 Troparia; the Canon of the Cross, with 6 Troparia; and that of the Martyrs, with 4 Troparia.

Ode 1

The Canon of the Cross,⁴ in Tone 6

having the acrostic: "I bow down before the Cross, the salvation of the faithful."

Irmos: When Israel passed on foot over the deep as if it were dry land, and beheld their pursuer Pharaoh drowning in the sea, they cried aloud: Let us sing to God a song of victory!

Refrain: Glory to Thy precious Cross, O Lord!

I bow down before the Cross, the salvation of the faithful, and I kiss it fervently, and embracing it, I cry aloud and pray: O most blessed Tree of Christ, illumine thou my soul and mind!

Today the sign of the Cross hath shown itself victorious over the passions and the demons. Therefore, O ye faithful, let us kiss and venerate it, as our souls being radiantly illumined.

The precious Cross emits brilliant rays and illumines all those who bow down and venerate it with faith today, sanctifying our souls and our bodies.

Lying here visibly before us, the Life-giving Cross send forth shining rays of grace. Offering praise unto the Lord, let us approach it and receive enlightenment, joy, salvation, and the remission of our sins.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos, save us!

Theotokion: O All-holy Virgin who gavest birth in the flesh to Christ, who of His own free will suffered for our sake on the Cross: by thine entreaties save those who bless and honor thee.

The Canon of the Martyrs, in Tone 8

Irmos: Having crossed the water as though it were dry land and escaped from the wickedness of the Egyptians, the children of Israel cried aloud: Let us sing to our Redeemer and our God.

Refrain: Holy martyrs pray to God for us!

Surrounded by evildoers, in one accord the seven brothers refused to escape death,

⁴ Greek text differs.

so that they might confirm the law of their fathers.

Disdaining earthly glory, the godly Maccabean martyrs endured great pain and suffering, for they desired only the blessed kingdom. Therefore, rightly do we honor them today.

Glory...,

The seven Maccabean brothers revealed themselves as true defenders of the Law of Moses when they trampled the godless works of Antiochus underfoot.

Now and ever..., Amen.

Theotokion: **T**he ranks of angels and the assemblies of men praise thee unceasingly, O unwedded Maiden, for thou didst bear the Creator of all as a babe in thine arms.

Katavasia, in Tone 8: (from the Exaltation of the Cross)

Irmos: **M**oses struck the Red Sea with his staff dividing it so that Israel could cross on foot. When he brought the staff down the waters covered Pharaoh and his chariots; thus did Moses prefigure the power of this invincible weapon. Let us sing to Christ our God, for He hath been glorified.

Ode 3

The Canon of the Cross

Irmos: **T**here is none as holy as Thou, O Lord my God, who hast exalted the power of Thy faithful, O Blessed One, and hast established us upon the rock of Thy confession.

After the disobedience of Adam the first-made man, in ancient times, a flaming sword was placed to guard the blessed Tree of life; but the Cross has now opened the path to it again.

Let us bow down before the All-holy and Life-giving Cross of the Lord with all our senses: our eyes, our lips, our soul, our heart, and all our mind, for it has sanctified the whole world.

Let us become, in the words of the prophets, temples of God today as we bow down before the wood of the All-holy Cross, for we have it as our inheritance, and we kiss it with reverence and awe.

We sing hymns of praise to Thee, O Christ, and with faith we entreat Thy power: Deliver us from the snares of the enemy, and direct all who praise Thee to the haven of Salvation.

Theotokion: **A**s a virgin thou gavest birth to the Son who was begotten of the

Father without a mother before the beginning of time, and who was crucified in the flesh that He might save all those who had ever sinned.

The Canon of the Martyrs

Irmos: O Lord, Creator of the vault of heaven and founder of the Church, strengthen me in Thy love, for Thou art our supreme desire and the support of the faithful, O only lover of mankind.

Following the path according to the precepts of the law of your fathers, O blessed and all-laudable martyrs of Christ, you have acquired the life that does not age with your blood.

Neither fire nor the sword were able to alter your resolve and valor in defense of the Faith, O blessed ones, for through it you destroyed the arrogance of our tormentors.

You endured torture for the sake of Christ God, O all-praised martyrs, and now you have received trophies of victory from on high, praying continually that He may save our souls.

Theotokion: As a virgin thou gavest birth, O Lady who knew no wedlock, and a virgin thou didst remain, O unwedded Mother. O Theotokos Mary, entreat Christ our God that He may save our souls.

Katavasia: (from the Exaltation of the Cross)

Irmos: The rod of Aaron is an image of this mystery, by its budding it pre-announced the priest. So, in the Church, that once was barren, the wood of the Cross has blossomed, filling her with majesty and confirmation.

Kontakion of the Martyrs, in Tone 2: To the melody, "Seeking the highest...."

O holy Maccabees, perfect in wisdom /
You have become seven pillars of the wisdom of God; /
Seven candlesticks of heaven, O great ones; /
First of martyrs and their and their companions. ///
Intercede with God that He may save those who honor you.

Ikos: Zealously pray to God, O Sion, for He has strengthened the chains of thy gates, and He hath blessed thy children, for, like an invincible army, mighty and valiant, they stood with divine wisdom against the forces of the ungodly, received together their crowns of victory in the heavenly Sion, and not they stand before the throne of God, praying ceaselessly for us all, that we who praise them may be saved.

The Sessional Hymn of the Martyrs, in Tone 8: To the melody, "Of Wisdom"

Having been raised in piety, O holy ones, /

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As martyrs, you courageously shamed the tyrant's threats, /
And as champions of the law, you were obedient to your forefathers' faith, /
And with your divinely-wise mother, you suffered patiently. /
Therefore, having purchased the life in heaven by your death, you eternally
rejoice. /
O holy Maccabees, mighty in soul, /
Entreat Christ God, that He may grant the remission of sins ///
To those who lovingly honor your holy memory.

Glory..., now and ever..., the Sessional Hymn of the Cross, in Tone 6:

Thy Cross, O Lord, is Holy, /
And brings healings to those who are in sickness through their sins. /
Venerating it, we fall down before Thee, and cry: ///
Have mercy on us.

Ode 4

The Canon of the Cross

***Irmos:** Christ is my strength, my God and my Lord, the sacred Church sings in a manner
befitting God, with a pure mind, keeping festival unto the Lord.*

Let the whole earth be glad, and let the trees of the forests rejoice, for all creation
is deified by the most precious Cross of the Lord which shines forth to all the ends
of the world.

O all-glorious Cross, thou wast intended to be an instrument of execution, but
thou didst become an invincible weapon of victory bearing life into the world: O
Cross, illumine our hearts!

O most honored Cross, thou art the divine victory! Thou art the accomplishment
of our salvation! Thou art the triumph of the faithful and the instrument of the
Divine Sacrifice! O Cross, sanctify those who praise and honor thee!

Heaven rejoices together with the earth! The passionbearers, martyrs and apostles,
and the souls of all the righteous now joyfully rejoice, for the Life-giving Tree of
the Cross, lying here before us, saves all and sanctifies the faithful with divine
grace.

Theotokion: Truly didst thou appear! Truly didst thou give birth to thy Son,
God Most High, who stretched out His hands upon the Cross and summoned the
whole world to Him, O Virgin Mother Mary.

The Canon of the Martyrs

***Irmos:** The prophet perceived Thee with divine vision, O Word, when he foretold that Thou
wast to become incarnate of the Theotokos alone, the Mountain overshadowed by the
grace of God; and with awe, he glorified Thy power.*

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Having inscribed the law on the tablets of your minds like Moses of old, O blessed ones, you struggled valiantly unto death, but never violated the Faith.

Offering unto God the sacrifices prescribed by the law, and zealously guarding the ways of Moses, the holy martyrs of Christ prevailed over the laws of the tyrant.

As stones withstand the onslaught of the waves against the shore, O ye Maccabean martyrs, you courageously endured your many tortures unto death.

Glory...,

Triadicon: **O** Trinity without beginning, and Triune Unity equally co-enthroned, by the entreaties of the holy martyrs, deliver from all misfortune and perils, those who praise and worship Thee.

Now and ever..., Amen.

Theotokion: **A**cept our cry: Rejoice! O holy Theotokos! Rejoice, O thou who gavest birth to the Joy of the world! Rejoice, O blessed and most pure Theotokos, who alone art the help of all mankind!

Katavasia: (from the Exaltation of the Cross)

Irmos: **I** have heard, O Lord, the mystery of Thy dispensation; I have understood Thy works: so I glorified Thy Godhead.

Ode 5

The Canon of the Cross

Irmos: **W**ith Thy divine light, O Good One, illumine, I ask Thee, the souls of those who in love keep vigil that they may know Thee, O Word of God as the true God who recalls them from the darkness of sin.

Let us joyfully lift up the All-blessèd Cross in all the churches in all the cities, and let us bow down in worship before it, so that we may receive the remission of all our debts.

The wicked serpent is now slain and the prince of darkness is unable to bear the radiance of the Life-bearing Cross, the precious scepter of the divine King!

Like a blazing star, a magnificent orb, and like the radiant sun doth the Cross of the Lord illumine all the ends of the earth. Lift up your voices, O ye nations, and venerate it with jubilation!

Shout with joy, all ye people, and sing to God who hath given us the indestructible weapon of the Cross which he has now set before us! Rejoice, all ye faithful, and receive God's blessings for its sake!

Theotokion: We know thee as the beginning of our salvation, O pure Lady, and all the faithful bless thee; for thou gavest birth in the flesh to Him who before all time, existed, and who was nailed to the Cross by His own will.

The Canon of the Martyrs

Irmos: O Lord who with divine wisdom hast brought the ends of the earth out of the night of darkness into the Light, enlighten Thou me with the dawn of Thy love for mankind.

In that ye never violated the law of your fathers, O holy martyrs, Christ Himself hath set crowns of righteousness upon your brows.

Standing resolutely with Eleazar your teacher, O blessed children, you offered yourselves as a spiritual burnt-offering to Christ.

O Thou, who art full of loving-kindness, and delivers us from all deception by the virtues of Thy saints, save us through their prayers, O Lord!

Theotokion: In that thou art more honorable than the cherubim, O all-praised Virgin, entreat thy Son that He may save the souls of those who praise thee.

Katavasia: (From the Exaltation of the Cross)

Irmos: O thrice-blessed Tree, on which Christ the King was stretched, through thee the one who tempted Adam by a tree has been caught by God who was crucified in the flesh upon thee, granting peace to our souls.

Ode 6

The Canon of the Cross

Irmos: Beholding the sea of life surging high with the storm of temptations, I have fled to Thy tranquil haven and cry out unto Thee: Raise up my life from corruption, O greatly Merciful One!

Beholding the Cross set before us today as a divine and radiant lamp in all the churches and temples of every city, we praise Him who has caused it to shine.

Death has been slain, corruption is put to death, and the hordes of demons flee, beholding the awesome and victorious Cross of Christ set forth today, being unable so much as to touch it.

As Thou hast given the Cross as our invincible fortress, we now venerate it with joy and thus we escape all evil, and we praise Thee, O God, our King and Lord.

Theotokion: Our first mother Eve was poisoned by the venom of the snake in Eden; but the Virgin, having given birth to the Author of Life, poured forth incorruption and resurrection upon the world.

The Canon of the Martyrs

Irmos: Grant me a robe of light, O Thou who clothes Thyself with light as with a garment, O

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greatly merciful Christ our God.

Having arrayed yourselves in the garments of martyrdom, O ye Maccabean saints, you embroidered them with the labors of your suffering.

Desiring to be with Christ, O most glorious martyrs, you have run the course of suffering with unwavering resolve.

Preserving the Law of Moses as it was handed down to you, O holy ones, you put the tyrant Antiochus to shame as you suffered under the writ of his law.

Theotokion: **O** thou who alone gavest birth to the Word in the flesh at the command of His word, deliver our souls, we pray thee, from the snares of the evil one.

Katavasia: (from the Exaltation of the Cross)

Irmos: **When** Jonah crossed his hands in the belly of the whale, he clearly prefigured the saving Passion; when he came forth from there after three days, he foreshadowed the marvelous Resurrection of Christ our God who was crucified in the flesh and enlightened the world by His Resurrection on the third day.

The Kontakion of the Cross, in Tone 4:

As Thou wast voluntarily crucified for our sake, /
Grant mercy to those who are called by Thy name; /
Make all Orthodox Christians glad by Thy power, /
Granting them victories over their adversaries, ///
By bestowing upon them the invincible trophy, Thy weapon of peace.

Ikos: **The** holy Apostle Paul, who was caught away to the third heaven of paradise⁵ and heard the divine words which the human tongue may not utter, writes to the Galatians,⁶ which you, as lovers of the Scriptures have both read and understood: “God forbid, saith he, that I should glory, save only in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,” upon which He had suffered and slew the passions. Let us all then, firmly hold this boast—the Cross of the Lord; for this Wood is our salvation, it is our invincible trophy, it is the weapon of peace!

Ode 7

The Canon of the Cross

Irmos: **An** angel made the furnace moist with dew for the godly children and the command of God consuming the Chaldeans made the tyrant cry out: Blessèd art Thou, O God of our fathers!

⁵ 2 Cor. 12:2-4

⁶ Gal. 6:14

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Come, all ye faithful, and let us bow down in worship before the saving Tree, the All-holy Cross, which all the armies of the angels serve, beholding it before us, pouring forth sanctification and life unto all.

The All-holy Cross of Christ, the Giver of Life, hath been revealed to all as victorious by driving away from on-high the multitudes of demons and the onslaughts of our enemies, and, by showing the Orthodox Faith triumphant over all heresies.

O Most Holy Cross, we pray, that all our senses: our soul and mind, our understanding and our mouths, and hearing, and our eyes, be enlightened and set onto the path leading to the kingdom of Christ.

We praise, glorify, and fall down in worship before Thy power, O Christ, for Thou hast given Thy divine Cross to us, Thy servants, as an inexhaustible and most-sweet guardian of our souls and bodies.

Theotokion: **T**he fiery furnace did not consume the three youths thus prefiguring thy birthgiving, for the divine Fire dwelling within thee did not consume thee and taught us all to sing: Blessèd art Thou, O God of our fathers!

The Canon of the Martyrs

Irmos: **O** Lord God who in the beginning founded the earth and established the heavens by Thy word, blessèd art Thou forever!

While suffering the pain of your martyrdom you were undaunted by the threats of the tyrant, and you cried out to Christ: Blessèd is the God of our fathers! *(twice)*

Enduring your pain with patience, you vanquished the cruel torture of the enemy as you cried out to Christ: Blessèd is the God of our fathers!

Theotokion: **B**lessèd art Thou O God of our fathers, who made Thine abode within the Virgin's womb and restored Adam for her sake.

Katavasia: (from the Exaltation of the Cross)

Irmos: **T**he senseless command of the godless king breathing wrath and threatening murder frightened and confused the people. Yet neither bestial fury nor the flaming fire could frighten the three youths who stood together in the flame. Fanned by the wind that brought refreshment as the dew, they sang: Blessèd art Thou, and praised above all, O our God and the God of our fathers.

Ode 8

The Canon of the Cross

Irmos: (from the Matins of Holy Saturday) **B**e amazed and afraid, O heaven, and let the foundations of the earth be shaken, for lo, He who dwells on high is numbered among

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the dead and is guest for awhile in a narrow tomb. You children, bless Him; you priests, sing praises; you people exalt Him throughout all ages.

Prefiguring the Cross, Jacob of old, laid his hands crosswise over his descendants,⁷ blessing them and teaching grace among the nations. You children, bless Him; you priests, sing praises; you people exalt Him throughout all ages.

O Thine ineffable condescension and Thine indescribable bounty, O Christ! Thou hast become incarnate, and Thou wast crucified; and accepting death, didst decide to release mankind from the curse, pouring forth incorruption while on the thrice-blessèd Tree, the eternal and all-glorious Cross.

Let us praise today the All-holy Cross of the Lord, the divine scepter, the origin of life, the destroyer of deceit, the obliteration of the demons, the victory of our enemies, and the protector and the champion of our lives.

Theotokion: **B**eholding Christ pierced with nails, His incorrupt side run through with a spear, smitten on the head with a reed, and given gall to eat, the Virgin cried aloud: “Where hast Thy beauty fled, O all-beautiful Word, more glorious than all the sons of men?”

The Canon of the Martyrs

Irmos: **T**he unoriginate King of glory, before whom the hosts of heaven tremble, Him, do ye praise, O priests; and Him, do ye people exalt throughout all ages!

As true lovers and excellent keepers of the law, O all-praised martyrs, you praise Christ forever.

Let us worthily praise and honor the seven Maccabees, the seven-branched fruit of a holy root, as true martyrs of the Lord.

Let us worthily praise and honor the seven zealots of the law, the faithful martyrs, one in spirit, the seven Maccabean martyrs and their mother.

Glory..., now and ever..., Amen.

Triadicon: **O** indivisible Trinity, One in Unity, we glorify Thee alone in divinity, and praise Thee, one Power in three Persons.

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

Theotokion: **O** ye priests, sing praises and exalt God throughout all ages, for in these latter days He became incarnate of the Virgin for our sake.

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

⁷ Genesis 48:14

ages!

Katavasia: (from the Exaltation of the Cross)

Irmos: O ye children equal in number to the Trinity, bless God the Father and Creator, sing the praises of the Word who descended and changed the flames to dew, and exalt above all the Spirit who gives life to all throughout all ages.

Ode 9

The Canon of the Cross

Irmos: It is not possible for men to see God upon whom the ranks of angels dare not gaze, but through thee, O all-pure One, was the Word incarnate revealed unto men, whom magnifying together with the heavenly hosts, we call thee blessed.

We became corrupt through disobedience by violating the commandment of God, and so death came upon the race of mankind. For this reason hath immortality blossomed for us today, the very Cross of Christ, which we venerate and praise.

Behold, the All-holy Tree hath appeared! It is the mighty hope of the faithful and the deliverance of the curse; and it sets joy before all mankind, for it has exposed and denounced the prince of darkness. Let us bow down before it with gladness, O ye faithful!

The invincible weapon, the origin of all blessings, the confirmation and joy of Christians, the steadfast defender of mankind, and the deliverance of the curse, the longed-for Cross now appears before us, illumining and sanctifying all who bow down in worship before it.

Theotokion: O temple of holiness and portal of salvation, O throne of God, O radiant cloud and brilliant candlestand, O immaculate Lady and ark of grace; protect and preserve those who venerate the precious image of thine Only-begotten Son.

The Canon of the Martyrs

Irmos: We magnify thee, the Mother of God, and we glorify thee, O Virgin Theotokos, as her who gave birth to the Savior of our souls.

O most laudable martyrs, truly have ye been revealed as treasure houses of divine gifts and riches that can never be taken away.

O valiant advocates before the Creator of all, beseech Him to grant us a peaceful life and to preserve us, who fervently celebrate your holy memory, from being devoured by the enemy.

Glory...,

Triadicon: Let us worship the Father and the Holy Spirit together with the Son,

as we cry aloud: “Glory to God in the highest!” together with the angels.

Now and ever..., Amen.

Theotokion: **R**ejoice, O holy gate which opened unto the All-wise God, O thou who wast overshadowed by the All-holy Spirit.

Katavasia: (From the Exaltation of the Cross)

Irmos: **T**hou art the mystical paradise, O Theotokos, in which Christ blossomed; through Him the Life-bearing wood of the Cross was planted on the earth. Now at its exaltation, we bow down before it and we magnify thee.

Exapostilarion from the Octoechos, and:

Glory..., the Exapostilarion of the Martyrs:

We praise the wondrous Maccabees: Eleazar, the seven youths, and Solomonia, for they cast down the prideful arrogance of the serpent, the author of evil, and have been crowned as the servants of the law.

Now and ever.... The Exapostilarion of the Cross:⁸

The Cross is the guardian of the whole earth; the Cross is the beauty of the Church. The Cross is the strength of kings; the Cross is the support of the faithful. The Cross is the glory of the angels and the wounder of demons.

At the Praises, 6 stichera:

3 stichera of the Cross, in Tone 1: *To the melody, “Joy of the ranks of heaven....”*

The precious Cross makes the paths of heaven, /
Ready for all to cross, /
Who bow down before it with steadfast faith; /
And He, who was nailed and lifted high upon it /
Joins all who praise it with love ///
To the choirs of the bodiless angels in heaven.

As we bow down in worship before the precious Cross /
We praise the Master who was crucified on it, /
Purifying our lips and our souls at His command, ///
And praising Him, we are illumined by its spiritual grace.

Moses of old, delivered Israel by sweetening the waters /

⁸ The Exapostilarion at the Universal Exaltation of the Cross on Sept. 14th.

Using the image of the Cross, ⁹ /
And we, the faithful, by tracing the image over our hearts ///
Are saved by its mighty power!

And 3 stichera of the Martyrs, in the same Tone:

The grieving mother, calling her children to their struggle /
Cried: “Follow the wisdom of Abraham /
That ye may share in the sacrifice of Isaac!” ¹⁰ /
And accepting this instruction, they went before her who had taught them /
As she watched them, one by one /
Undergoing their cruel torment and torture. ///
Through their supplications, O God, have mercy on us!

In Tone 4:

The seven heroic and chosen pillars /
Were hewn from a single noetic rock /
And were revealed to be unshakable bastions of the law. /
By whose prayers, we beseech Thee, O Lord, ///
To preserve our lives in peace and to save our souls.

In Tone 5:

The children of Solomonia, /
The brave preservers of the law, /
While suffering at the cruel tribunal of Antiochus, cried out to him: /
“O Antiochus, we are enduring all for our fathers’ law, /
And neither fire, nor sword, nor the savage beasts will separate us from it. /
We will die together and with our aged mother and our teacher, ///
We will abide and rejoice together forever and ever.

Glory..., of the Martyrs, in Tone 4:

Come, all ye faithful, /
And let us behold the valor of the holy Maccabees — /
How they bravely faced the awesome force placed against them! /
For the tyrannical king who held power over all the nations /
Was thwarted by an old man, seven children and their elderly mother! ///
Through their supplications, O God, save us and have mercy on us!

Now and ever..., of the Cross,¹¹ in the same Tone:

⁹ Exodus 15:25

¹⁰ Genesis 22

O Lord, who hast helped gentle David in the combat /
 And enabled him to overcome the Philistine, /
Come to the aid of Thine Orthodox people,¹² /
 And by the weapon of the Cross cast down our enemies. /
 In Thy compassion show us Thy mercy as of old, /
 And make them know in truth that Thou art God, /
 And that we who put our trust in Thee shall conquer. /
 At the constant intercession of Thy most pure Mother, ///
 Grant us Thy great mercy.

The Great Doxology.

Note: During the singing of the stichera of the Praises, the officiating priest puts on all his vestments. While the choir sings the Doxology, he takes incense and goes three times around the Holy Table, on which lies the Precious Cross upon a tray with branches of basil or flowers; and he censes the Cross from the four sides. Then, while the choir sings the concluding “Holy God...” to a slow and solemn melody, he makes three prostrations before the Holy Table, takes the Cross with the tray and, placing it upon his head, he proceeds around the Holy Table and out of the altar through the north door, preceded by candles and the deacon with the censer. The priest stops in front of the royal doors, facing to the East, and when the final “Holy God” has been sung, he says: “Wisdom! Stand upright!” Then we sing the Troparion of the Cross, “O Lord, save Thy people...” (*thrice*).

The priest proceeds to the center of the church and places the Cross on a table or analogion specially prepared for it; and he censes the Cross from the four sides of the table, going around it three times. Then the priest sings (Tone 6), “Before Thy Cross we bow down in worship, O Master, and Thy holy Resurrection we glorify.” This is repeated three times by the choir and people. Meanwhile, the priest makes two prostrations in front of the Cross and kisses it, after which he makes another prostration. The Cross is then venerated by the other clergy in order of rank and by all the faithful, in the same manner. During the veneration of the Cross, the choir sings the sticheron, “Come, O ye faithful...”:

During the Veneration of the Cross, in Tone 2: (*by the Emperor Leo*)¹³

Come, all ye faithful, /

¹¹ The “Glory” verse of the Aposticha at Great Vespers of the Third Sunday of Lent, the Sunday of the Cross.

¹² 1 Kgs. [1 Sam.] 17: 45-7; Ps. 131:1 (LXX)

¹³ This, and two of the following Troparion are from the Lenten Triodion for the *Sunday of the Veneration of the Cross* (the Third Sunday of Lent). Also, see *the Universal Exaltation of the Cross*, on Sept. 14th.

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Let us venerate the Life-giving Wood /
On which Christ, the King of Glory /
Stretched out His hands of His own good will. /
He has raised us up to the ancient blessedness, /
Which the enemy had before despoiled through pleasure, /
Making us exiled far from God. /
Come, all ye faithful, and let us venerate the Wood, /
Through which we have been made worthy to crush the heads of our invisible
enemies. /
Come, all ye kindred of the nations, /
And let us honor in hymns the Cross of the Lord. /
Rejoice, O Cross, complete redemption of fallen Adam. /
With thee as their boast, our faithful kings laid low the people of Ishmael. /
Now we Christians kiss thee with awe, /
Glorifying God who was nailed upon thee, we cry: /
O Lord, who wast crucified on the Cross, have mercy on us, ///
For Thou art good and the Lover of mankind.

And, in Tone 5:

Beholding Thee, the Author and Creator of all, /
Hanging naked upon the Cross, /
All creation trembled and was moved with fear. /
The sun hid its rays, the earth shook, and the rocks split asunder, /
And the splendid veil of the temple was rent in twain. /
The dead arose from their graves, and the angelic hosts were filled with awe,
saying: /
O the wonder! The Judge suffers and is condemned to death ///
Desiring to save and restore the world.

And, in Tone 8:

Today the Master of creation and Lord of glory is nailed to the Cross /
And His side is pierced with a spear; /
And He who is the sweetness of the Church, tastes gall and vinegar. /
A crown of thorns is put upon Him who covers the heavens with clouds; /
He is clothed in a cloak of mockery. /
He who formed man with His hands, is struck by a hand of clay. /
He who wrapped the heavens in clouds, is smitten upon His back. /
He accepts spitting and scourging, reproach, and buffeting; /
And all these things my Deliverer and God endures for me that am condemned, ///
That in His compassion, He may save the world from error.

Glory..., now and ever..., in the same Tone:

Today He who is unapproachable by nature, becomes approachable for me /
And suffers His Passion. /
He who grants light to the blind is spat upon by the mouths of the transgressors, /
And He gives His back to scourging for the sake of those that are held captive. /
When the pure Virgin, His Mother, beheld Him on the Cross, she cried aloud in
pain: /
Woe is me, my Child! what is this that Thou hast done? /
Thou, who wast in beauty fairer than all mortal men, /
How dost now appear without life and form, having neither shape nor comeliness. /
Woe is me, my Light! I cannot bear to look upon Thee sleeping /
I am wounded inwardly; a harsh sword has pierced my heart. /
I sing the praises of Thy Passion, and I venerated Thy merciful kindness: ///
O longsuffering Lord, glory to Thee!

The usual Litanies: “Have mercy upon us, O God...,” and “Let us complete our morning prayer....” **Deacon:** “Wisdom!” **The Dismissal, and the First Hour.**

Liturgy

At the Beatitudes, 8 Troparia: 4 from the Third Ode of the Canon of the Cross, and 4 from the Sixth Ode of the Canon of the Martyrs.

- 1.** After the disobedience of Adam the first-made man, in ancient times, a flaming sword was placed to guard the blessed Tree of life; but the Cross has now opened the path to it again.
- 2.** Let us bow down before the All-holy and Life-giving Cross of the Lord with all our senses: our eyes, our lips, our soul, our heart, and all our mind, for it has sanctified the whole world.
- 3.** Let us become, in the words of the prophets, temples of God today as we bow down before the wood of the All-holy Cross, for we have it as our inheritance, and we kiss it with reverence and awe.
- 4.** We sing hymns of praise to Thee, O Christ, and with faith we entreat Thy power: Deliver us from the snares of the enemy, and direct all who praise Thee to the haven of Salvation.
- 5.** Having arrayed yourselves in the garments of martyrdom, O ye Maccabean saints, you embroidered them with the labors of your suffering.
- 6.** Desiring to be with Christ, O most glorious martyrs, you have run the course of

suffering with unwavering resolve.

7. Preserving the Law of Moses as it was handed down to you, O holy ones, you put the tyrant Antiochus to shame as you suffered under the writ of his law.

8. Theotokion: O thou who alone gavest birth to the Word in the flesh at the command of His word, deliver our souls, we pray thee, from the snares of the evil one.

The Troparion of the Cross, in Tone 1:

O Lord, save Thy people, /
And bless Thine inheritance, /
Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians /
Over their adversaries, /
And by virtue of Thy Cross ///
Preserve Thy habitation.

The Troparion of the Martyrs, in the same Tone:

We beseech Thee, O Lord and Lover of mankind, /
By the sufferings Thy saints endured for Thee, /
To heal all our afflictions, ///
And deliver us from our transgressions.

The Kontakion of the Martyrs, in Tone 2:

O holy Maccabees, perfect in wisdom /
You have become seven pillars of the wisdom of God; /
Seven candlesticks of heaven, O great ones; /
First of martyrs and their companions. ///
Intercede with God that He may save those who honor you.

The Kontakion of the Cross, in Tone 4:

As Thou wast voluntarily crucified for our sake, /
Grant mercy to those who are called by Thy name; /
Make all Orthodox Christians glad by Thy power, /
Granting them victories over their adversaries, ///
By bestowing upon them the invincible trophy, Thy weapon of peace.

The Prokeimenon of the Cross, in Tone 6: O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance. *Verse:* To Thee, O Lord, will I call. O my God be not silent to me!

Another, of the Martyrs, in Tone 4: The Lord has shown the wonders of His will to the saints who are in His land.

The Epistles: (125) 1 Corinthians 1:18-24 (Cross) and (330) Hebrews 11:33-12:2 (Martyrs)

The Alleluia, in Tone 4: Remember Thy congregation which Thou hast purchased of old. *Verse:* God is our King before the ages: He hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth.

Another, of the Martyrs, in the same Tone: The righteous cried and the Lord heard them and He delivered them from all their troubles.

The Gospels: (60) John 19:6-11, 13-20, 25-28, 30-50 (Cross) and (38) Matt. 10:32-36; 11:1

Communion Hymns: The light of Thy countenance is signed upon us, O Lord. Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous! Praise befits the just. Alleluia....

Note: After the Divine Liturgy, we celebrate the **Lesser Blessing of the Waters**. It is also customary to bless honey on this day. (cf. *the Book of Needs (Trebnik) for both Blessings*).

Note: Should August 1st occur on a Sunday:

On Saturday Evening at the **Small Vespers**, the stichera of the Resurrection and Theotokos are sung, as usual. At **Great Vespers**, after the 1st Kathisma “Blessed is the man...,” Stichera on 10: Resurrection—4, Cross—3; Martyrs—3. Glory..., Cross; Now and ever..., Dogmatic Theotokion in the Tone of the Week. Entrance and Prokeimenon of the Day. Litya: Stichera of the church or monastery and of the Martyrs (from the Praises of Matins); Glory..., Martyrs (from the Praises of Matins); Now and ever..., Theotokion. Aposticha: All Resurrection. Glory..., Martyrs; Now and ever..., Cross. Troparia: “Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos...” (*twice*) and Cross (*once*).

If **Vespers are served separately**, then, after “Lord, now lettest Thou thy servant depart...,” Troparia: Resurrection (*twice*); Glory..., Martyrs: Now and ever..., Cross.

At **Compline**, after “It is truly meet...,” the Kontakion of the Cross.

At **Matins**, after “God is the Lord...,” the Troparia: Resurrection (*twice*); Glory..., Martyrs; Now and ever..., Cross.. Canons: Resurrection—4 including the irmos, Theotokos—2, Cross—4; Martyrs—4. Irmos: Resurrection. Katavasia: From the Elevation of the Cross: “Moses struck

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the Red Sea with his staff dividing it....” After the 3rd Ode: Kontakion and Kathisma Hymns—Martyrs; Glory..., now and ever... Cross... After the 6th Ode: Kontakion and Ikos—Cross. At the Praises, the stichera of the Resurrection—4 and Cross—4 (including “Glory” and the verses: “Extol the Lord, our God...,” and “God is our King before the ages..”). Glory..., the Gospel sticheron; Now and ever..., “Thou art most blessed, O Theotokos...” (as usual). Great Doxology. The Precious Cross is carried out for veneration as described above. While the faithful are venerating the Precious Cross, the choir sings the special stichera, “Come, O ye faithful...” and the rest. Usual Litanies and Dismissal.

At **Liturgy**, at the Beatitudes, the Troparia of the Resurrection—4; Cross, from the Third Ode—4 Martyrs, from the Sixth Ode—4. After the Entrance, Troparia: Cross and Martyrs; Kontakia: Glory..., Martyrs; Now and ever..., Cross. Prokeimenon, Alleluia: Resurrection and Martyrs. Epistle and Gospel readings of the Day and the Cross. Following the Liturgy, we celebrate the Lesser Blessing of the Waters.

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