

The 14th Day of September

⊕ The Universal Exaltation of the Precious and Life-creating Cross.

Small Vespers

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

Lifted high upon the Cross, O Master, /
With Thyself Thou hast raised up Adam and the whole of fallen nature. /
Therefore, exalting Thine undefiled Cross, O Thou who lovest mankind, /
We ask Thee for Thy strength from above, /
Crying: O God Most High, in Thy great mercy ///
Save those who honor the sacred, light-giving and divine Exaltation of Thy Cross!
(Twice)

With the psalmist, O Master, /
Do we now behold /
The footstool on which Thine undefiled feet rested — /
Thy precious Cross, exalted this day with love. /
And with devotion lifting it on high, we beseech Thee crying: /
O Thou who hast sanctified mankind by Thy divine Cross, ///
Make us sharers in Thine ineffable compassion and grace.

As an unconquerable token of victory /
An invincible shield and a divine scepter, /
We worship Thy most holy Cross, O Christ, /
Whereby the world has been saved and Adam filled with joy. /
With the whole assembly of those born on earth we honor it, singing its praises, ///
And as we celebrate its divine Exaltation, we entreat Thee for forgiveness.

Glory..., now and ever..., in Tone 2:

O three-branched Cross of Christ, /
Thou art my strong protection. /
Sanctify me by thy power ///
That I may venerate and glorify thee in faith and love.

The Prokeimenon of the Day.

¹ The Slav and Greek texts of this service differ in many places.

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

Like a bride the Church is splendidly adorned /
With Thy blood and the water of grace ///
And it proclaims the glory of Thy Cross!

Verse: **E**xtol the Lord; worship at His footstool for it is holy.

Raising up the spear and the Cross, /
The nails, and all the rest /
With which the body of Christ was pierced, ///
Let us venerate them!

Verse: **G**od is our King before the ages: He hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth.

When Moses defeated Amalek /
Stretching out his arms in the form of a cross, ///
He prefigured the most pure sufferings of Christ.

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

Today hast the Tree appeared; /
Today the rebellious people perished! /
Today hast the Faith been revealed by the faithful hierarchs. /
Adam of old fell because of a tree, /
But today the demons are made to tremble by the Tree of the Cross ///
O almighty Lord, glory to Thee.

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

The Troparion of the Feast, 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: After the dismissal of Small Vespers, the clergy and altar servers put on their vestments. The deacon censens the precious Cross as it rests on the Table of Oblation, and says: **Bless, master!** Priest: **Blessed is our**

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God... Then: **Then the Trisagion through Our Father ..., Troparion of the Cross; Glory ..., now and ever ..., Kontakion of the Cross.**

The priest places the tray with the Cross on his head, and bears it into the sanctuary, preceded by lighted candles. And he sets the Cross on the altar table, in the place usually occupied by the Gospel book, the Gospel being removed to the High Place. And a lamp is lit before it and left burning throughout the night.

Note also: If this feast fall on a Sunday, its hymns completely replace and supersede those of the Octoechos, with the sole exception of **“Having beheld the resurrection of Christ ...”**

Great Vespers

On **Saturday and Sunday evening**, after the Introductory Psalm, **“Blessèd is the man...,”** the entire first Kathisma is sung. On any **other day**, **“Blessèd is the man...,”** is not sung, and immediately after the Introductory Psalm we sing: **“Lord, I call...,” 8 stichera,**

Tone 6: *To the melody, “Having set all aside....”*

The Cross is raised on high, /
And urges all creation to sing the praises of the undefiled Passion /
Of Him Who was lifted high upon it. /
For there it was that He destroyed our slayer, /
And brought the dead to life again: /
And in His exceeding goodness and compassion made us beautiful, /
Counting us worthy to be citizens of heaven. /
So with rejoicing let us exalt His name ///
And magnify His surpassing condescension. *(Thrice)*

Moses prefigured thee, O precious Cross, /
When he stretched out his hands on high /
And put Amalek, the tyrant, to flight. /
Thou art the boast the faithful and the help of the suffering, /
Glory of the apostles, champion of the righteous, /
And preserver of all the saints. /
Beholding thee raised on high, /
Creation rejoices and keeps festival, /
Glorifying Christ, Who in His surpassing goodness, ///
Has through thee joined together that which had been divided. *(Thrice)*

O most precious Cross, /
 Attended by ranks of rejoicing angels, /
 Thou art exalted today, /
 And by divine command thou dost lift up again /
 All those who, through the stealing of the fruit, had been made outcasts /
 And were sunk in death. /
 Now we, embracing thee in faith with heart and lips, /
 From thee we draw sanctification and cry aloud: /
 Exalt Christ, the God most good, ///
 And venerate His divine footstool. *(Twice)*

Glory..., now and ever, in Tone 2:

Come, all ye people /
 Let us venerate the blessed wood /
 Through which eternal justice hath come to pass, /
 For he who deceived Adam our forefather by a tree /
 Is himself deceived by the Cross; /
 And he who gained possession of the creature endowed by God with royal dignity /
 Is overthrown in an amazing fall. /
 By the blood of our God the poison of the serpent is washed away /
 For it was fitting that wood should be healed by wood, /
 And that through the Passion of One Who know not passion /
 All the sufferings of Adam condemned because of wood should be remitted. /
Glory to Thee, O Christ our King, for Thy dispensation towards us /
 Whereby Thou hast saved us all, ///
 For Thou art good and lovest mankind.

The Entrance and the Prokeimenon of the day.

If the Feast falls on a Saturday, then on Friday Evening we sing:

The Great Prokeimenon, in Tone 7:

Our God is in heaven and on earth; / He does whatever He pleases.

Verse: When Israel went forth from Egypt, the house of Jacob from a barbarian people, Judah became his sanctuary.

Verse: The sea looked and fled; Jordan turned back.

Verse: What ails thee, O sea, that thou hast fled; and thee, O Jordan, that thou hast turned back?

Three Readings of the Feast:

The Reading from Exodus (15:22-16:1)

^{15:22}So Moses brought up the children of Israel from the Red Sea and brought them into the wilderness of Shur, and they went three days in the wilderness and found no water to drink. ²³And they came to Marah and could not drink of the water of Marah, for it was bitter; therefore named he the name of that place Marah. ²⁴And the people murmured against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?" ²⁵And Moses cried unto the Lord, and the Lord showed him wood, and he cast it into the water, and the water was made sweet. There He established to him ordinances and judgments, and there He proved him. ²⁶And He said, "If thou wilt indeed hearken to

the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do things that are pleasing before Him, and wilt give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will bring no disease upon thee which I have brought upon the Egyptians, for I am the Lord that healeth thee." ²⁷And they came to Elim, and there were there twelve fountains of water and threescore and ten date palm trees, and they encamped there by the waters. ^{16:1} And they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came unto the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai.

The Reading from Proverbs (3:11-18)

¹¹My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, neither be weary when thou art rebuked of Him. ¹²For whom the Lord loveth He correcteth and chastiseth every son that He receiveth. ¹³Blessèd is the man that hath found wisdom, and the man that knoweth discernment. ¹⁴For it is better to traffick in her than in treasures of gold and silver. ¹⁵She is more precious than precious stones; nothing that is evil shall withstand her. She is well known to all

them that draw nigh unto her, and nothing that is precious is equal to her worth. ¹⁶For length of days and years of life are in her right hand, and in her left hand are riches and glory; out of her mouth proceedeth righteousness, and on her tongue she carrieth law and mercy. ¹⁷Her ways are good ways, and all her paths are peaceful. ¹⁸She is a tree of life unto all them that lay hold upon her, and she is secure to them that stay themselves upon her as upon the Lord.

The Reading from Isaiah (60:28-36):

Thus saith the Lord Almighty:
¹¹Therefore thy gates shall be open continually [O Jerusalem]; they shall not be shut day nor night to bring

unto thee the power of the Gentiles and their kings leading them. ¹²For the nations and the kings that will not serve thee shall perish; yea,

those nations shall be utterly wasted.
¹³And the glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee with the cypress and pine and cedar together, to glorify My holy place, and I will make the place of My feet glorious. ¹⁴The sons also of them that afflicted thee and of them that provoked thee shall come unto thee in fear, and thou shalt be called the city of the Lord, Sion, the holy One of Israel.

¹⁵Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, and there was no helper, therefore I will make thee a perpetual joy, a gladness from generation to generation. ¹⁶Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles and shalt eat the riches of kings, and thou shalt know that I, the Lord, am thy Savior and thy Redeemer, the God of Israel.

At the Litia, these stichera of the Feast,²

Tone 1: *The composition of Andrew of Jerusalem*

Today the holy words of David have truly received their fulfillment /
 For, behold! In the sight of all the world /
 We venerate the footstool of Thine undefiled feet /
 And putting our hope in the shadow of Thy wings /
 We cry aloud to Thee, O all-compassionate Lord : /
 May the light of Thy countenance be marked as a sign upon us! /
 And exalt the horn of Thine Orthodox people /
 By the exaltation of Thy precious Cross ///
 O Christ of many mercies.

Glory..., now and ever..., of the Feast, in Tone 4:

Moses prefigured the power of the precious Cross, O Christ /
 When he put to flight Amalek, his adversary, in the wilderness of Sinai, /
 For when he stretched out his arms in the form of a Cross /
 The people became strong again. /
 Now the fulfillment of these images hath come to pass for us. /
 Today the Cross is exalted and the devils are put to flight! /
 Today all creation is set free from corruption! /
 For through the Cross every gift of grace hath shone on us. /
 So we all fall before Thee rejoicing and saying: ///
 How marvelous are Thy works, O Lord, glory to Thee!

The Aposticha of the Feast, in Tone 5: *To the melody "Rejoice, life-bearing Cross..."*

² Only the first of eight stichera of the Litia are presented here.

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Rejoice, life-bearing Cross! /
Unconquerable trophy of godliness, /
Door of paradise, sustenance of the faithful /
Rampart set about the Church. /
Through thee corruption is utterly destroyed, /
The power of death is swallowed up, /
And we are raised from earth to heaven: /
Invincible weapon, adversary of devils, /
Glory of martyrs, true ornament of saints, haven of salvation ///
Bestowing on the world great mercy.

Verse: Extol the Lord; worship at His footstool for it is holy.

Rejoice, Cross of the Lord! /
Through thee mankind has been delivered from the curse. /
Shattering the enemy by thine Exaltation, /
O Cross all-venerable, thou art a sign of true joy. /
Thou art our help, thou art the strength of kings, /
The power of righteous men, the majesty of priests. /
All who sign themselves with thee are freed from peril. /
Thou rod of strength under which we like sheep are tended, /
Thou art a weapon of peace round which the angels stand in fear. /
Thou art the divine glory of Christ, ///
Who grants the world great mercy.

Verse: God is our King before the ages: He hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth.

Rejoice, guide of the blind, physician of the sick /
And resurrection of all the dead. /
O precious Cross, thou hast lifted us up when we were fallen into mortality. /
Through thee corruption has been destroyed, /
And incorruption has flowered forth; /
We mortal men are made divine and the devil is utterly cast down. /
Seeing thee exalted by the hands of bishops on this day, /
We exalt Him Who was lifted high upon thee, ///
And we venerate thee, plenteously drawing from thee great mercy.

Glory..., now and ever..., of the Feast, in Tone 8:

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!

At the Blessing of the Loaves, the Troparion of the Feast, 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. (*thrice*)

And the Dismissal.

Matins

At “God is the Lord...” the Troparion of the Feast, in Tone 1 “ O Lord, save Thy people ...” (*thrice*)

After the 1st Kathisma, the Sessional Hymn, in Tone 1: *To the melody: “O Lord, save Thy people...”*

No sooner had the tree of Thy Cross been planted, O Christ our Lord /
Than the foundations of death were shaken. /
That which Hades had swallowed greedily /
It spewed forth, trembling. /
Thou hast revealed to us Thy salvation, O holy One, ///
And we glorify Thee. O Son of God, have mercy on us!

Glory..., now and ever..., in Tone 1: *To the same melody.*

We venerate the tree of Thy Cross, O Life of all, /
For Thou wast nailed upon it, O Lover of mankind, /
Thou didst open the gates of paradise O Savior, /
To the thief who turned Thee with faith, /
And he was counted worthy of blessedness when he confessed Thee crying: /
“Remember me, O Lord, when Thou comest in Thy kingdom!” /
Accept us, for like him we cry aloud: ///
We have sinned! In Thy merciful kindness despise us not!

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After the 2nd Kathisma, the Sessional Hymn, in Tone 6:

Today the words of the prophet have been fulfilled /
For behold, we bow down before the place where Thy had feet had stood, /
And, venerating the Tree of salvation, O Lord, /
We are freed from sinful passions through the prayers of the Theotokos, ///
O only Lover of mankind.

Glory..., now and ever..., in Tone 8: To the melody "That which was commanded...."

In days of old, Joshua, the son of Nun, /
Mystically prefigured the image of the Cross /
When he stretched out his arms, O my Savior; /
And the sun stood still 'til he cast down the enemy /
Who had opposed Thee, O my God. /
And now, Thou hast raised the whole world with Thee, ///
Which beheld Thee hanging upon the Cross, destroying the power of death.

Polyeley and Magnification:

We magnify thee // O Christ the Giver of Life, / and we honor Thy holy Cross / by
which Thou hast saved us from the bondage of the enemy.

Selected Psalm verses:

Judge them, O Lord, who judge me; fight against those who fight against me.
Take hold of thy weapon and shield, and rise to help me.

After the Polyeley, the Sessional Hymn, in Tone 8: To the melody, "That which was commanded ..."

In paradise, in the days of old, /
I was stripped naked by a tree, /
For by giving its fruit to eat, the enemy brought death to the world. /
But now the Tree of the Cross that clothes mankind with the garment of life /
Has been set up in the midst of the earth, /
And the whole world is filled with boundless joy. /
Beholding it raised up, O ye people /
Let us all cry out together, in faith: ///
Fill Thy house with glory, O Lord!

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

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

Prokeimenon, in Tone 4:

All the ends of the earth / have seen the salvation of our God. *Verse:* Sing to the Lord a new song, for the Lord hath done marvelous things

Let every breath...

Gospel: (42-ctr) John 12:28-36

Then, as on a Sunday:³ Having beheld the Resurrection of Christ...

Psalm 50

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

O Cross of Christ, /
Thou hope of all Christians; /
Guide of those who have gone astray; /
Haven of the storm-tossed, victory in battles; /
Firm foundation of the inhabited earth; /
Physician of the sick and the resurrection of the dead: /
Have mercy on us!

The Canon

The Canon of the Feast, with each Irmos repeated twice and 12 Troparia.

Ode 1

The Canon of the Feast, in Tone 8,

the composition of Cosmos of Maiuma

Irmos: *Moses 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. (twice)*⁴

Refrain: Glory to Thy precious Cross, O Lord.

Of old, Moses, standing between the two men of God, prefigured in his person the undefiled Passion. Forming a cross with his outstretched hands, he raised a standard

³ Regardless of the day of the week.

⁴ In contemporary times sung only once, not counting the Katavasia.

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of victory and overthrew the power of all-destroying Amalek. Therefore let us sing to Christ our God, for He has been glorified.

Glory...

Moses set the cure upon a staff of wood against the deadly and venomous bite of the serpents: for crosswise upon the wood, a symbol of the Cross, he placed a serpent that creeps upon the ground, and thereby he triumphed over calamity. Therefore let us sing to Christ our God, for He hath been glorified.

Now and ever...

The heavens revealed the Cross as sign of victory to Constantine, the holy king and upholder of the faith. Through it the proud insolence of his enemies was cast down, deceit was overthrown, and the divine faith was spread to the ends of the earth. Therefore let us sing to Christ our God, for He has been glorified

Katavasia: repeat the Irmos of the Feast⁵

Ode 3

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. (twice)

The rock that was struck and gushed forth water for a hard-hearted and disobedient people, made manifest the mystery of the Church, chosen by God: for the Cross is her strength and confirmation.

Glory..., now and ever...

When the spear pierced Thine immaculate side, O Lord, water flowed forth with blood, thereby establishing Thy New Covenant, and washing sin away. For the Cross is the glory of the faithful, the strength and confirmation of kings.

Katavasia: The rod of Aaron...

The Sessional Hymn of the Feast, in Tone 4: o the melody, "Quickly go before..."

Rejoicing in thee, O thrice bless't and life-giving Cross, /
People celebrate together with the assemblies of angels, /
And the choirs of hierarchs reverently sing praises to thee. /
Multitudes of monastics and ascetics bow down before thee in adoration, ///
And we all glorify Christ who was crucified upon thee.

⁵ In contemporary times, only after the third, sixth, eighth, and ninth Odes.

Glory..., now and ever..., Repeat one of the above.

Ode 4

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

In days of old, Moses transformed the bitter springs in the wilderness with a staff of wood, prefiguring the conversion of the Gentiles to the true faith through the Cross.

Jordan once received in its bosom a sharp axe-head and was forced by a stick of wood to give it back again, signifying the cutting off error by baptism and the Cross.

Glory...

The people of Israel drawn up in four divisions marched in the formation of a cross before the ark of the testimony, thus giving glory by their formation in the sign of the Cross.

Now and ever...

Wondrously stretched out, the Cross emitted rays like the sun, and the heavens declared the glory of our God.

Ode 5

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

O far-famed Wood of the Cross upon which Christ was outstretched, the whirling sword that guarded Eden stood was afraid of thee, O Cross, and the dread cherubim withdrew when Christ was nailed to thee, granting peace unto our souls.

Glory...

The powers beneath the earth, our adversaries, tremble when they see the sign of the Cross traced in the air in which they dwell, and the multitudes of the inhabitants of heaven and of those born on earth bend the knee to Christ, who grants peace unto our souls.

Now and ever...

Shining with pure rays, the holy Cross sheds divine light upon the people darkened by the beguilement of error, and it reconciles them to Christ who was crucified upon it, granting peace unto our souls.

Ode 6

Irmos: When Jonah crossed his hands in the belly of the whale, he clearly prefigured

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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.

Bent with age and wasted by sickness, Jacob was strengthened when he crossed his arms, thus showing the power of the life-giving Cross; for God who was crucified upon it in the flesh hath set aright the old law written in shadows, and drove away the soul-destroying disease of error.

Glory..., now and ever...

Jacob, Israel the holy, laid his hands crosswise on the heads of the youths, thus signifying that the people serving under the law should for a time enjoy the honor of the firstborn. When he suspected the error of this doing, he did not change this life-giving image; For, he cried, this newly-planted people of Christ our God, being fortified by the Cross, shall take a higher place of honor.

Katavasia: When Jonah crossed his hands...

The Kontakion of the Feast, 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: He who was caught up to the third heaven to paradise and heard unspeakable and divine words which the human tongue may not utter, wrote to the Galatians, who loved the Scriptures: “ye have both and understand. But God forbid, that I should glory, save only in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, on which He killed our passions by His Passion.” Let us all then, firmly hold to the Cross of the Lord; for this Wood is our salvation, the invincible trophy, and the weapon of peace.

Ode 7

Irmos: The 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.

Adam, the first man, through eating of the tree, went to dwell in corruption; condemned to a shameful banishment from life, and he fell prey to bodily corruption,

which he transmitted to the whole human race. But we, the mortal habitants of the earth, finding restoration in the wood of the Cross, cry aloud: Blessèd art Thou, and praised above all, O our God and the God of our fathers.

Glory...

The breaking the law of God came through disobedience, and the untimely partaking of the fruit of the tree brought death to mankind. Then the precious tree of life was kept under guard until the confession of the good thief opened the path of access to it once again as he cried aloud in his agony: Blessèd art Thou, and praised above all, O our God and the God of our fathers.

Now and ever...

Jacob, holy Israel, foreseeing the future, revered the tip of Joseph's staff, revealing how, in a time to come, the most glorious Cross would be the safeguard of royal power of the kingdom, for it is the victorious boast of kings and a light for those who cry aloud with faith: Blessèd art Thou, and praised above all, O our God and the God of our fathers.

Ode 8

***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.*

Praise, O ye hosts of heaven, the exalted Tree which was drenched in the blood of the incarnate Word of God, and celebrate the restoration of those born on earth. And ye, O people, venerate the Cross of Christ, by which the world hath been granted the resurrection throughout all ages.

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

O ye mortal stewards of grace, reverently raise up on high the Cross on which Christ God the Word was hung pierced with a spear. Let all the nations see the salvation of God, and glorify Him throughout all ages.

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Rejoice, ye faithful Christian kings, forechosen by divine decree! And having received from God the precious Cross, rejoice in it, the weapon of victory, for by it the armies of the enemy that seek to make war are scattered throughout all ages.

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

***Katavasia:** 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,*

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and exalt above all the Spirit who gives life to all throughout all ages.

Ode 9

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

Refrain I: Magnify, O my soul, the all-honored Cross of the Lord!

Irmos: Thou 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.

Ref.: Magnify, O my soul, the all-honored ...

Let all the trees of the forests rejoice, for their nature hath been sanctified by Christ who planted them in the beginning and was outstretched upon the Tree. Now, at its Exaltation on this day, we worshiping Christ as we magnify thee, O Theotokos.

Ref.: Magnify, O my soul, the all-honored ...

The Cross is lifted up as a sacred horn of strength to all the people of God, upon whose foreheads it is marked; for all the horns of the spiritual powers of wickedness are crushed. Wherefore, now at its Exaltation on this day, we worshiping Christ as we magnify thee, O Theotokos.

Ref.: Magnify, O my soul, the all-honored ...

Thou didst form the glorious image of the Cross in the skies, radiant with boundless light, that it may be revealed to the world as the invincible weapon, to the world, O adored Lord and King, in the sight of all. Therefore, all the powers of heaven magnify Thee.

Refrain II: Magnify, O my soul, the exaltation of the life-giving Cross of the Lord.

The Second Canon of the Feast

Irmos: Today the death that came to man through eating of the tree, is made of no effect through the Cross. For the curse of our Mother Eve that fell on all mankind is destroyed by the fruit of the pure Mother of God, whom all the powers of heaven magnify.

Refrain II: Magnify, O my soul, the exaltation...

Thou didst not permit the deadly bitterness of the tree to remain, O Lord, for thou didst utterly destroy it by the Cross; for by a tree, Thou didst once sweeten the bitterness of the waters of Marah, prefiguring the strength of the Cross, which all the hosts of heaven magnify.

Refrain II: Magnify, O my soul, the exaltation...

Today Thou hast raised up by the Cross, those who were continually mired in the darkness of our forefather, O Lord; for though our nature was humbled through deceit and a lack of restraint, the light of Thy Cross hath again guided us all aright, which we, the faithful, magnify.

Ref. II: Magnify, O my soul, the exaltation...

Thou didst trace in the heavens the image of the Cross, to reveal to the world that it is the most glorious, radiant, and invincible weapon of Constantine, the emperor. Therefore, all the hosts of heaven do magnify the holy Cross.

As Katavasia, both Irmosi of Ode 9 of the Canon of the Exaltation of the Cross:

Katavasia I:

Irmos: Thou 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.

Katavasia II:

Irmos: Today the death that came to man through eating of the tree, is made of no effect through the Cross. For the curse of our Mother Eve that fell on all mankind is destroyed by the fruit of the pure Mother of God, whom all the powers of heaven magnify.

Exapostilarion of the Feast: To the special melody: “The

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 wondrous of demons! (Twice)

Glory..., Repeat the above.

Now and ever...

Today is the Cross is exalted and the world is sanctified; for Thou who art enthroned with the Father and the Holy Spirit hast spread Thine arms upon it and drawn the world to the knowledge of Thee, O Christ. Make worthy of divine glory those that have put their trust in Thee.

At the Praises, 4 stichera, in Tone 8: To the melody, “O most glorious wonder ...”

Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord...

EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

READER:

(on 4)

∇ Praise Him in His mighty acts.

Praise Him according to His excellent greatness!

O glorious wonder! /

The most holy Cross, the life-giving Tree /
Is lifted up on high today and shown to all the world. /
All the ends of the earth give glory, /
All the devils are frightened. /
How great a gift is here bestowed on mortal men! /
Through Thy Cross save our souls, O Christ, /
Thou who alone are full of compassion.

∇ Praise Him with trumpet sound;

Praise Him with lute and harp!

O glorious wonder! /... Repeat above.

∇ Praise Him in with timbrel and dance;

Praise Him with strings and pipe!

O glorious wonder! /

The Cross which carried the Most High as a cluster of grapes full of life /
Is seen today exalted high above the earth. /
Through the Cross we all are drawn to God, /
And death has been forever swallowed up. /
O undefiled Wood, through thee we enjoy the immortal fruit of Eden, /
As we glorify Christ.

∇ Praise Him with well-tuned cymbals!

Praise Him with loud joyful cymbals!

Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!

O glorious wonder! /

The length and breadth of the Cross is equal to the heavens, /
For by divine grace it sanctifies the whole world. /
By the Cross barbarian nations are conquered, /
By the Cross the scepters of kings are confirmed. /
O divine ladder! By thee we go up to heaven, ///
Exalting Christ the Lord in song.

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

Today the Cross of the Lord goes forth, /
And the faithful welcome it with love; /
And they receive healing of soul and body and every weakness. /
Let us kiss it with joy and fear: /
With fear, for we are unworthy because of sin; /
With joy, for upon it Christ the Lord was crucified in His great mercy ///
Granting the world salvation.

The Great Doxology.

Note: *During the Doxology the priest puts on all his vestments, and stands with the censer before the Holy Table, on which lies the precious Cross, upon a tray with branches of basil or flowers. When the choir begins to sing “Holy God,” he goes round the Holy Table, censuring the Cross from the four sides. Then, while the choir sings the concluding Holy God to a slow and solemn melody, he takes the Cross with the tray and, placing it upon his head, he proceeds round the Holy Table and out of the sanctuary through the north door. The Cross is preceded by processional candles, and by the deacon with the incense. The priest stops in front of the Royal Doors, facing to the east, and when the final “Holy God” has ended, he says:*

Wisdom, let us attend!

The choir then sings the troparion of the feast, “O Lord, save Thy people...” three times.

The priest proceeds to the center of the church, and places the Cross on a table or analogion specially prepared for it: and he censures the Cross from the four sides of the table.⁶

The priest makes a prostration, whatever day it may be, and he softly sings:

Before Thy Cross we bow down in worship, O Master, and Thy holy resurrection, we glorify.

The choir then sings it aloud three times.

Then all the clergy present and the people come and venerate the Holy Cross as the choir sings the following stichera:

⁶ *At this point in certain cathedrals and monasteries, the hierarch makes a prostration and says: Have mercy upon us, O God, according to Thy great mercy; we pray Thee, hearken and have mercy, and the choir responds with the singing of Lord, have mercy, one hundred times.*

EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

Tone 2:⁷ *The composition of the Emperor Leo*

Come ye faithful, /
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 exiles far from God. /
Come, ye faithful, let us venerate the Wood, /
Through which we have been made worthy to crush the heads of our invisible
enemies. /
Come, all you kindred of the nations, /
Let us honor in hymns of praise the Cross of the Lord. /
Rejoice, O Cross, compete 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 was crucified on the Cross, have mercy on us, ///
For Thou art good and the Lover of mankind.

Glory..., now and ever..., in Tone 8:

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!

Troparion. Litanies and the Dismissal. Then the First Hour.

⁷ Only one of the eight stichera is presented here.

Liturgy

Antiphon I:

Psalm 21 (22)

- 1. O** God, my God, attend to me; why hast Thou forsaken me? *Refrain:* Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us.
 - 2. Far** from my salvation are the words of my sins. *Ref.:*
 - 3. O** my God, I will cry by day, but Thou wilt not hear me; and by night, and still it is not foolish of me. *Ref.:*
 - 4. Yet** Thou dwellest in thy holy place, O praise of Israel. *Ref.:*
- Glory ...**, now and ever... *Ref.:*

Antiphon II:

Psalm 73 (74)

- 1. Why** hast Thou rejected us, O God forever? Why is Thy wrath kindled up against the sheep of Thy pasture? *Refrain:* O Son of God crucified in the flesh, save us who sing to Thee: Alleluia.
 - 2. Remember** Thy congregation which Thou hast purchased of old. *Ref.:*
 - 3. Remember** Mount Sion, wherein Thou dost dwell. *Ref.:*
 - 4. God** is our King before the ages; He hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth. *Ref.:*
- Glory ...**, now and ever... **O**nly begotten Son...

Antiphon III:

Psalm 98 (99)

- 1. The** Lord reigns; let the people tremble!

The Troparion of the Feast, 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.

- 2. The** Lord reigns; let the people tremble; He sitteth on the cherubīm, let the earth be moved! *Troparion of the Feast.*
- 3. The** Lord is great in Sion; He is exalted over all the nations! *Troparion of the Feast.*

EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

4. Bow down in worship before the Lord in His holy Court. *Troparion of the Feast*

ENTRANCE VERSE: Extol the Lord our God, worship at His footstool, for it is holy!
Troparion of the Feast.

Glory ..., now and ever... The Kontakion of the Feast, 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.

In place of the Trisagion we sing:

Before Thy Cross we bow down in worship, O Master, and Thy holy resurrection we glorify.

The Prokeimenon of the Feast, in Tone X:

Extol the Lord; worship at His footstool for it is holy. *Verse:* The Lord reigns, let the people tremble.

The Epistle: (125) 1 Corinthians 1:18-24

The Alleluia of the Feast, 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.

The Gospel: (60) John 19:6-11, 13-20, 25-28, 30-50

Instead of “It is truly meet...,” **we sing:** “Magnify, ,” **and the Irmos of Ode 9 of the First Canon of the Feast:** “Thou art a mystical paradise...”

Communion Hymn: The light of Thy countenance is signed upon us, O Lord.