

## The 7<sup>th</sup> Day of September



### Forefeast of the Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos; and the Holy Martyr Sozón.

Also, the commemoration of our father among the saints, John, Archbishop and Wonderworker of Novgorod, whose service follows this. *(The service to St. John is incomplete as of 8/2014)*

## Vespers

At “Lord, I call...,” 6 stichera

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

The world is bathed in mystical rays of gladness /  
Announcing to all the coming of Christ God, the Sun of Glory, /  
Through thy nativity, O most pure Lady, /  
For thou art revealed as the Mediatrix ///  
Of true joy and grace.

The glory of this Forefeast, O pure one, /  
Announces to all, more than words can express, /  
Thy goodwill toward all mankind /  
For thou art the future source of our gladness /  
As thou art the Mediatrix of our joy, /  
O Ever-virgin Theotokos.

The young Maiden, who held God within her womb, /  
The most pure Theotokos, /  
The glory of the prophets and the daughter of David, /  
Is born today of Joachim and Anna chaste in spirit, /  
And the curse of Adam that weighed upon us ///  
Is abolished by her nativity.

And 3 stichera of the Martyr Sozón, in Tone 4: *To the melody, “Thou hast given a sign....”*

Girding thy weakness with the strength of Christ, O blessed one /  
Thou didst voluntarily bear our weaknesses to thy martyrdom /  
And didst joyfully suffer for His sake, /  
And didst crush the impotent enemy under thy beautiful feet. /  
For this did Christ, the Lover of mankind and the Savior of our souls ///  
Wove for thee a crown of victory.

Being wounded, thou didst wound thine enemies, O glorious one, /  
And armed with the Cross, thou didst cast them down to the ground. /

Being arrayed in invincible armor and confirmed in love /  
Thou wast translated into the mystical kingdom ///  
As a victorious martyr and a heavenly man.

**E**mulating the Lord and Savior, /  
Who went to His voluntary sufferings for thy sake, /  
Thou didst go of thine own free will to suffer pain and torture /  
O passion-bearing martyr Sozón, /  
Therefore, the Lord honored thee with many heavenly gifts ///  
And revealed thee as a fountain of healing for those who love thee.

**Glory..., now and ever..., of the Forefeast in Tone 4: *In the usual melody***

**T**he hosts of angels in heaven /  
And the human race on earth /  
Bless thine honored nativity, Most Holy Virgin, /  
For thou didst become the Mother of Christ God, the Creator of all. /  
Cease not to pray for us, we implore thee, /  
Who have put our hope on God through thee, ///  
O most praised Mother of God, who knewest no wedlock.

*If it be Friday evening, then: Glory..., The hosts of angels..., Now and ever..., Dogmatic Theotokion in the Tone of the Week (or else, Dogmatic Theotokion, if a Resurrection service.*

**At the Aposticha, these stichera of the Forefeast, in Tone 8: *To the melody, “O most glorious wonder....”***

**O** most glorious wonder /  
From the childless loins and a barren womb /  
Of the righteous Joachim and Anna,  
Sprouts today the staff bearing blossom, /  
The Mother of God who knew no wedlock, ///  
And the assembly of prophets and patriarchs rejoice at her nativity.

**Verse:** Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thine ear.

**D**avid rejoices today and Jesse leaps for joy /  
Levi is exalted /  
And the righteous Jóachim rejoices in spirit. /  
The childlessness of Anna is resolved by thy nativity, /  
O most pure Mary, joyous in God, ///  
And the assembly of angels with mankind hallow thy blessed womb.

*Verse:* The rich among the people shall pray before thy face.

**R**ejoice, O unification of mankind! /  
Rejoice, O temple of the Lord! /  
Rejoice, O holy mountain! /  
Rejoice, O table divine! /  
Rejoice, O candle of the Light! /  
Rejoice, honored glory of Orthodoxy! /  
Rejoice, O Immaculate Lady! /  
Rejoice, offering of manna divine! /  
Rejoice, O tabernacle! Rejoice, O burning bush, that is unconsumed! ///  
Rejoice, O Mary, Mother of Christ God, the hope of us all!

**Glory..., now and ever..., in Tone 4: *the composition of Germanus***

**T**he joy of all the world hath shone forth upon us /  
The far-famed Virgin sprung forth from righteous Jóachim and Anna. /  
On account of her exceeding goodness /  
She is become the living temple of God, /  
And is in truth acknowledged as the only Theotokos. /  
At her prayers, O Christ our God ///  
Send down peace upon the world and great mercy on our souls.

**The Troparion of the Martyr, in Tone 4:**

**T**hy holy martyr Sozón, O Lord, /  
Through his sufferings received his incorruptible crown from Thee, our God /  
For having Thy strength he laid low his enemies /  
And shattered the powerless boldness of demons ///  
Through his intercessions, O Christ God, save our souls.

**Glory..., now and ever..., the Troparion of the Forefeast, in the same Tone:**

**F**rom the root of Jesse and from the loins of David /  
Mariam<sup>1</sup>, the child of God, is born to us today /  
And the whole creation is made new and godlike, /  
Rejoice together, O heaven and earth, /  
Praise her, O ye kindreds of the nations /  
Jóachim is glad and Anna rejoices as she cries: ///  
The barren woman bears the Theotokos, who sustains our Life.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Slv *Μαριαμ*

7 SEPTEMBER

### Matins

**At “God is the Lord...” the Troparion of the Forefeast, “From the root of Jesse...” twice; Glory..., that of the Martyr, now and ever..., that of the Forefeast.**

**After the 1<sup>st</sup> Kathisma, the Sessional Hymn, in Tone 1: *To the melody, “When the stone had been sealed....”***

**B**eing born thyself wondrously from a barren womb /  
Thou didst conceive as a virgin in a manner past all understanding /  
And gavest birth to the Life of the world. /  
Therefore, all the powers of heaven sing to thee, O Mother of God: /  
Glory to thee, O most pure one for coming to us! /  
Glory to thy nativity, O Lady! ///  
Glory to thy Virginity, O Mother who knewest no wedlock!

**Glory..., now and ever..., [Repeat]**

**After the 2<sup>nd</sup> Kathisma, the Sessional Hymn, in Tone 5: *To the melody: “The co-unoriginate Word...”***

**A**ll the powers of heaven rejoice today /  
And the race of men make glad together with them, /  
The prophets also rejoice /  
For they beheld thee of old in secret images: /  
The burning bush, the stamen, and the staff /  
The door, the divine table, the great mountain; ///  
For thou art born today.

**Glory..., now and ever..., [Repeat]**

### The Canon

Canon of the Forefeast with 8 Troparia,  
and that of the Martyr with 4 Troparia.

### Ode 1

**The Canon of the Forefeast of the Nativity of the Theotokos, in Tone 4**

*having the acrostic: “I praise the nativity of the divine Virgin Maiden,”  
the composition of Joseph.*

***Irmos:*** I shall open my mouth filled with the Spirit, overflowing with words of praise for the Queen and Mother. I will appear feasting radiantly, joyfully praising her conceiving.

## FOREFEAST NATIVITY THEOTOKOS; HOLY MARTYR SOZON

*Refrain:* Most Holy Theotokos save us!

**L**et us joyfully praise today the holy nativity of the Mother of God; for she hath given birth to the Joy of the universe which healed the grief of our first mother, Eve.

**T**he immaculate Lady is born from a barren woman as was foretold and prefigured by the words and proclamations of the divine prophets of God.

**T**hou didst become the temple and palace of the King in which the Transcendent One fashioned for Himself a fitting habitation, and for the faithful, a holy dwelling place of the Holy Trinity.

**T**hou wast born of a barren woman to become the beautiful wedding chamber and the exalted throne of God, upon which the Transcendent One seated Himself in the flesh, raising those who dwelt in the darkness of perdition up to the knowledge of the Light, by His exceeding goodness.

### **The Canon of the Holy Martyr Sozón, also in Tone 4,**

*the composition of Theophanes.*

*Irmos: In days of old, Israel crossed the depths of the Red Sea with dry-shod feet and vanquished the power of Amalek in the wilderness by Moses' arms upraised in the form of the Cross.*

*Refrain:* Holy martyr Sozón, pray to God for us!

**O** most glorious martyr, entreat the Lord and Benefactor of all, that those who honor thy memory today be saved from all danger, tribulation and sorrow.

**C**hrist truly revealed thee as a radiant star in the firmament of the Church, O all-famed martyr, illumining the whole world with the splendors of thy sufferings.

**G**lory...

**H**aving roiled the sea of impiety riding upon a steed of the Lord, O martyr, thou didst drown all the power of the adversary, as if another Pharaoh, in the flood of thy precious and holy blood.

**N**ow and ever...

*Theotokion:* **B**y the will of the Father and through the action of the divine Spirit, didst thou conceive the Son of God without seed, and gave birth in the flesh to Him, begotten of the Father before the ages from the Father without mother.

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

*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.*

### Ode 3

#### The Canon of the Forefeast

*Irmos: Like a barren woman hath the Church of the Gentiles given birth and beholding the great assembly of children born of her, we cry out to our wondrous God: Holy art Thou, O Lord!*

**A** fertile field is born from a barren land bearing as fruit, the Husbandman of all good things, the life-bearing Staff of wheat who nourisheth all by His divine providence.

**T**oday, by the act of God the Gardener, the flower of virginity sprouted forth from a barren rock to clear away the thorns of wickedness.

**B**ehold! The unquarried mountain which arose from a barren rock, noetically giveth birth to the quarried Stone which crushes the delusions of graven idols into dust.

#### The Canon of the Holy Martyr

*Irmos: The Church rejoices in Thee, O Christ, and it cries aloud: Thou art my strength, O Lord, my refuge and confirmation!*

**T**he streams of thy blood, which flowed like a river for the sake of Christ, have quenched the fires of the impious, O all-praised witness of the Lord.

**T**hou didst patiently endure thy tortures and thy wounds, and like an invincible bastion, O glorious one, didst thou defeat and bring down the forces of deception.

**L**ike David thou didst lay low the noetic Goliath — the tyrant and all his army, with the stone of faith, O Sozón, the glorious.

*Theotokion: O* Mother of God, thou alone hast transcended the powers of nature revealing thyself to be our mediatrix before the Author of all good things. Therefore, we cry out to thee: Rejoice!

*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.*

**The Kontakion of the Martyr, in Tone 2: To the melody, “The steadfast....”**

**L**et us assemble today /

And with a loud voice let us praise Sozón the martyr, /

Who wisely and faithfully suffered for piety, /

## FOREFEAST NATIVITY THEOTOKOS; HOLY MARTYR SOZON

And is an initiate of the mysteries of grace, /  
Who generously bestows healing to all ///  
And earnestly prays Christ God on behalf of us all.

**Ikos:** **O** come all ye faithful, and with hymns let us all earnestly praise Sozón offering worthy hymns to him who shone forth in the divine Church of Christ: for he truly laid low the savagery of the idolaters and led the faithful to salvation. Therefore, with love, let us all now bless and honor the precious and glorious memory of the great martyr and cry aloud: O all-blessed Sozón, entreat Christ God on behalf of us all!

**Sessional Hymn to the Holy Martyr, in Tone 4: *To the melody: “Go quickly before....”***

**S**aved by faith, O much-suffering martyr Sozón, /  
Through the providence of Christ thou art become /  
A refuge for all that are tossed by the raging storms of life; /  
And thou dost pour rivers of healings upon those who honor thee, /  
Driving away every manner of sickness and disease. ///  
Therefore, we faithfully honor thy sacred memory.

**Glory..., now and ever..., Sessional Hymn to the Forefeast, in Tone 8: *To the melody: “That which was mystically ordained...”***

**L**et heaven rejoice and let the earth be glad! /  
For the paradise of God is born on the earth: /  
The divine Maiden and Bride is born of the promise. /  
A barren woman nourisheth the babe Miriam, /  
And Joachim rejoiceth in her birth: /  
Saying: “The rod of Jesse is born to me, /  
From which Christ, the Flower, shall come forth from the root of David! ///  
Truly this is a most glorious wonder!

### Ode 4

#### The Canon of the Forefeast

**Irmos:** *He who sits in glory on the Throne of divinity, Jesus the True God is come on a swift cloud: with His pure hand He has saved those who cry: Glory to Thy power, O Christ!*

**A** Maiden more exalted than all the angels is born on earth in holiness and purity beyond compare; for it is she that giveth birth to Christ, the purification, sanctification and perfect deliverance of all.

**B**lessèd is the fruit of Anna; for she bore in her womb her who would contain the all-bless't and infinite Word who bestoweth regeneration to all the faithful.



**N**ow doth the gloom of evil begin to disperse, for the immaculate Lady, the living cloud of the Sun, hath shone forth from a barren womb; and we the faithful, joyously celebrate this, her radiant nativity.

**A**s a fruitful olive tree springing from the root of Jesse, O Virgin, hath Anna given birth to thee, from whom the merciful Word will come forth; whose mercy and truth abideth forever.

### **The Canon of the Holy Martyr**

***Irmos:** Beholding Thee, the Sun of Righteousness, lifted up upon the Cross, the Church stood rooted in place, and rightly it cried aloud: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!*

**S**et ablaze by the love of God, O all-blessed martyr, thou didst consume the dry brushwood of the ungodly, and thou didst cry aloud, rejoicing: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

**B**eing thyself a sanctified temple of the Lord, thou didst destroy the temple of the ungodly, courageously breaking to pieces the objects of their worship, O all-praised martyr Sozón.

**T**hy sacred temple is truly a shrine that heals all manner of illnesses for those who come to thee in faith and who honor thy valiant deeds, O Sozón, thou all-famed witness of the Lord.

***Theotokion:** Thou gavest birth to the Lord without knowing wedlock, O Virgin Theotokos, and after giving birth thou didst remain a virgin. Therefore, with unwavering faith and never silent voices, we cry out to thee, O Lady: Rejoice!*

### **Ode 5**

#### **The Canon of the Forefeast**

***Irmos:** All creation was awed by thy divine glory, for thou, O Virgin who knewest no wedlock, yet didst bear in thy womb the God of all; thou gavest birth to the timeless Son who grants salvation to all who exalt thee in song.*

**N**ow the book which hath been sealed by the Holy Spirit is revealed. That which is impossible for mortals to fathom, being contrary to natural law, is become the dwelling-place of the Word. Today is born the vine of salvation, which blossoms with the divine Cluster of the grapes of incorruption, pouring forth its sweet nectar that brings divine joy and salvation to all.

**D**ance for joy ye mortals and join chorus with the angels! For the Virgin is born today from the barren woman! The sadness of barrenness is come to an end being transformed into joy for all who celebrate her holy nativity.



## FOREFEAST NATIVITY THEOTOKOS; HOLY MARTYR SOZON

**T**he prophet of God truly described thee as a new and divine scroll upon which the Word is to be written by the finger of the Father, O Virgin, in His goodness inscribing in the Book of Life all who submit to His authority.

### **The Canon of the Holy Martyr**

*Irmos: Thou hast come, O Lord, as a light into the world: a holy light turning from the darkness of ignorance those who sing to Thee with faith.*

**T**hou, O martyr, being a radiant star illumined by the Light of the Trinity, didst destroy the ungodly gloom of pagan idolatry.

**R**evealed as a beautiful rose by the flow of thy blood, O blessed martyr, thou dost perfume the whole world with the sweet fragrance of thy miracles.

**T**hou, O holy martyr, reaped a fruitful harvest in the vineyard of Christ, and now thou pourest forth a sweet vintage of wine upon those who glorify thee with faith.

*Theotokion: We* have thee as an invincible defense against the enemy, and the foundation and hope of our salvation, O Bride of God.

### **Ode 6**

#### **The Canon of the Forefeast**

*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.*

**T**he bridge which leads our human race to the Light on high is born this day; She is the ladder of heaven, the most manifest beautiful mountain of God, and the true Virgin Theotokos, whom we call blessed.

**A**нна, the porphyry-bearing prophetess hath given birth to the Virgin who will dye the fleece of the incarnate King in the royal purple of her blood. Let us magnify her in song!

**A** new spring hath now appeared: the all-immaculate Lady who, having given birth to the Well-spring of salvation, caused the polluted streams of idolatry to cease.

**T**hou didst spring forth from a barren root, O ever-blessed Virgin Birthgiver of God, and by thy divine appearance, hast cut the thorns of wickedness off at their root.

### **The Canon of the Holy Martyr**

*Irmos: "I will sacrifice to Thee with a voice of praise, O Lord!" The Church cries out to Thee, having been cleansed of the blood of demons by the blood which, for mercy's sake, flowed from Thy side.*

**T**hou didst offer thyself up as an unblemished sacrifice upon God's altar for the sake of His love. Therefore, we piously honor thee, O all-famed martyr Sozón.

**H**aving sailed the deep sea of deception without foundering, thou didst attain to the calm haven of the kingdom on high, O blessed martyr, there to enjoy everlasting peace.

**T**he tormenter pitilessly raked thy sides with claws of iron and thou didst commend thy righteous spirit into the hands of God, O ever memorable and all-blessèd Sozón.

*Theotokion:* **O** greatest and most glorious new wonder! The Virgin conceived in her womb without knowing a man, the uncontainable God who doth sustain all things.

*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 Forefeast, in Tone 3: To the melody, "Today the Virgin...."**

**T**oday the Virgin Theotokos /  
Mary, the chamber of the heavenly Groom /  
Is born by the will of God of a barren woman! /  
For this she is prepared as a chariot for God the Word. /  
For this she had been fore-chosen /  
Since she is the divine gate ///  
And truly the Mother of Life.

**Ikos:** **T**he divine Maiden Mary, whom in ancient times the prophets of God foresaw by the Spirit, hath been given as fruit to a barren woman. Beholding her today leaping from the womb of Anna, we, together with the faithful Joachim make haste to the celebrate the feast, and, with joy we cry aloud: The restoration of this world hath now sprouted from the womb of the barren woman: the divine portal and Mother of life!

## Ode 7

### The Canon of the Forefeast

*Irmos: The godly youths worshipped the Creator not the creature; they trampled on the flames boldly, singing in joy: Blessèd art Thou, and praised above all, O Lord God of our fathers.*

**B**lessèd are Joachim and Anna, who gave birth to the all-pure Mother of God who hath given birth to the Word who brought salvation to mankind.

## FOREFEAST NATIVITY THEOTOKOS; HOLY MARTYR SOZON

**T**hy parents received thee as a precious gift who conceived God, enriching all with divine gifts who cry aloud: Blessèd art Thou, and praised above all, O Lord God of our fathers.

**T**he milk of thy breasts is more blessèd than wine, O divinely chosen Anna; for with them thou didst nourish her who nourished the good Word, the Bestower of milk, the Nourisher of all living things.

**R**ejoice, O divinely inspired prophet David, sing for joy, and strike the harp! For behold, the ark which once thou didst proclaim, is born from a barren womb to be the sacred dwelling place of the King and God of all creation.

### The Canon of the Holy Martyr

***Irmos:** In the Persian furnace the youths, descendants of Abraham, burned with a love of piety rather than by the flames of fire, and they cried aloud saying: Blessèd art Thou in the temple of Thy glory, O Lord!*

**C**ast into a blazing furnace, O martyr Sozón, God sent to thee the dew of endurance and in thankfulness thou didst cry aloud: Blessèd art Thou in the temple of Thy glory, O Lord!

**T**hy soul was more luminous than any gold, O Sozón, but thou didst not desire to sacrifice to the soulless gods of beaten gold but rather offered thyself as a sweet-smelling sacrifice to the Lord.

**T**he great Shepherd appointed thee, His unblemished lamb, to be the shepherd of the sheep of his true flock, O martyr, proving thee invulnerable to the predations of the noetic wolves, O all-praised martyr.

***Theotokion:** Rejoice, O hallowed and divine habitation of the Most High, for through thee, O Theotokos, hath joy been given to those who cry aloud: Blessèd art thou amongst women, O Lady most pure!*

### Ode 8

#### The Canon of the Forefeast

***Irmos:** The offspring of the Theotokos saved the godly youths in the flaming furnace. He who was then prefigured has since been born on earth, and He gathers together all creation to sing: Praise the Lord, all you works, exalt Him throughout all ages.*

**L**et us sing praises and honor the divine nativity of the Holy Virgin who through the Spirit, gave birth to the divine Word; and let us cry aloud: Praise the Lord, all you works, exalt Him throughout all ages.

**R**ejoice, O ye prophets of God, and honor the nativity of the Virgin; for she hath fulfilled all your prophecies and gave birth to Christ, the God of all, whom you did

foretell, and now you exalt Him throughout all ages.

**S**ing with gladness, O you mountains! And join chorus with them, O apostles and martyrs! Rejoice, O all you venerable and righteous saints in the nativity of the Mother of the Lord, and together, cry aloud: Praise the Lord, all you works, exalt Him throughout all ages.

**T**he pure Mother of the Word hath blossomed as a fragrant flower and appeared as a divine rose, perfuming the ends of the world today and banishing the cause of all our sins and her do we exalt throughout all ages!

**H**uman nature, bereft of the precious gifts of the divine Spirit, was made glad on this day when it beheld the divine Maiden born of a barren woman; and it cried aloud: Praise the Lord, all you works, exalt Him throughout all ages.

### **The Canon of the Holy Martyr**

***Irmos:** Stretching forth his hands, Daniel the prophet closed the mouths of the lions in the pit; and the young lovers of piety, girded with strength, quenched the power of the fire, crying out: Bless ye the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!*

**R**emoving the arm of the golden idol, O wise one, thou didst distribute its precious metal to the poor, securing for thyself the truly incalculable riches of martyrdom, O ever memorable Sozón, as thou didst cry aloud: Bless ye the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

**W**hen thou didst wrestle with the incorporeal foe, O Sozón, thou didst cast him to the ground with the assistance of Christ, who bestowed great honors upon thee and gave thee the ability to work miracles. To Him didst thou cry aloud with joy: Bless ye the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

**T**hou didst open thy mouth and it was filled with the Spirit, O all-laudable Sozón, and the mouths of those who blasphemed the Creator didst thou fill with shame. Therefore, thou didst cry out to Christ rejoicing: Bless ye the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

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

***Theotokion:*** **O** pure Virgin, thou alone among all the generations, hast been revealed as the Mother of God. Thou wast His holy receptacle, O immaculate Lady, and thou wast not consumed by the fire of the unapproachable Light. Therefore, we all bless thee, O Mary, Bride of God.

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

*Irmos: Let every earth-born exult, enlightened by the Spirit. Let the order of the angelic hosts feast in joy, honoring the sacred Feast of the Mother of God, singing: Rejoice, all-blessèd Theotokos, pure Ever-virgin.*

**B**ehold! The holy sanctuary of God hath been revealed to us! The glorious city of the great King hath been built! The luminous garden of paradise hath blossomed and she, who is our intercessor in paradise hath come forth bringing with herself reconciliation between God and man.

**T**oday the lamp of the Light hath appeared, in which the pre-eternal golden-hued Light, having taken up His abode in her, illumines all those languishing in the dark night of sin, destroys the gloom of the ungodly idols, and leads all the faithful to exalt in the day of light.

**T**oday the earth sings aloud for it hath met the new and beautiful heaven of God as she is born; and by coming to dwell there in the flesh, God Himself hath raised up mankind higher than heaven above and hath, in His goodness, deified us all. So with thankfulness we the faithful magnify Him in song!

**T**he most beautiful couple, Joachim and Anna have given birth to the unblemished Ewe-lamb, and behold, the Lamb who came forth from her hath been slain for the world, taking upon Himself the transgressions of mankind and destroying the sacrifices offered to the demons.

**O** Theotokos, who hast given birth to the Light, illumine us who in the Spirit celebrate thy radiant nativity, and show us to be participants in the light which is to come; and by thy maternal prayers, O most pure Lady, grant us peace and deliverance from every evil.

#### The Canon of the Holy Martyr

*Irmos: Christ, the chief Cornerstone not cut by human hands, who united two different natures, was cut from thee, the unquarried mountain, O Virgin. Therefore, we joyfully magnify thee, O Theotokos!*

**T**hou wast revealed to be as firm as a rock by Christ, the Chief Cornerstone, O martyr, for thou didst destroy the fortress of deception, and make firm the hearts of the faithful.

**T**he Church of Christ acquired thee as a living fountain adorned with the majesty of thy sufferings and miracles, O martyr, for thou didst the thirst of all the faithful with

thy blood as if with water.

**T**hou didst attain the kingdom of heaven as the reward for all thy struggles and labors, O divinely wise Sozón. Joining chorus with all who dwell therein, O all-glorious one, be thou ever mindful of us on earth who with faith keep thy holy memory.

*Theotokion:* **O** blessed Virgin Theotokos who gavest birth to the Source of tender compassion, loosen now the chains of mine offenses and fill me with joy, that I may ever worthily magnify thee.

*Katavasia: (from the Exaltation of the Cross)*

*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.**

### **Exapostilarion of the Holy Martyr:**

**A**rmed with the weapon of thy precious Cross, O Word, Thy martyr Sozón vanquished all the hosts of the adversary and put the tyrants to shame; he suffered for Thee, O my Christ, King of all, and now he reigns forever with Thee.

### **Glory..., now and ever..., the Exapostilarion of the Forefeast:**

**B**e thou renewed, O Adam, and be thou exalted, O Eve! O ye prophets, sing together with the apostles and all the righteous saints, for the joy of both the angels and us mortals, Mary Theotokos, hath been born today from the righteous Joachim and Anne.

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

**C**ome, all ye born of Adam, /  
And let us praise the Virgin /  
Who sprang forth from David, ///  
The most pure Mary, who gave birth to Christ.

*Verse:* Harken, O daughter, and see, and incline thine ear.

**L**et us offer our praise to our Lord and Deliverer, /  
Who from a barren woman hath given us ///  
The Theotokos, and only Ever-virgin.

*Verse:* The rich among the people shall pray before thy face.

**T**oday the Joy of all the universe , /  
The Mother of the King of all, ///  
Most gloriously is born from a barren womb.

**Glory..., now and ever..., in Tone 2: *In the usual melody***

She who was pre-ordained to be the Queen of all /  
And the habitation of God, /  
Hath come forth today from the barren womb of the joyful Anna. /  
She is the divine sanctuary of the eternal Essence; /  
Through her hath Hades been trampled underfoot, /  
Through her hath Eve and all her line been securely established in life. /  
It is truly meet that we should cry aloud to her: ///  
“Blessèd art thou amongst women, and Blessèd is the Fruit of thy womb!”

### **Liturgy**

**At the Beatitudes, 8 Troparia: 4 from the Third Ode of the Canon of the Forefeast, and 4 from the Sixth Ode of the Canon to the Martyr.**

**1-2. A** fertile field is born from a barren land to bear, as fruit, the Husbandman of all good things, the life-bearing Staff of wheat who nourisheth all by His divine providence. *(twice)*

**3. T**oday, by the act of God the Gardener, the flower of virginity sprouted forth from a barren rock to clear away the thorns of wickedness.

**4. B**ehold! The unquarried mountain which arose from a barren rock, noetically giveth birth to the quarried Stone which crushes the delusions of graven idols into dust.

**5. T**hou didst offer thyself up as an unblemished sacrifice upon God’s altar for the sake of His love. Therefore, we piously honor thee, O all-famed martyr Sozón.

**6. H**aving sailed the deep sea of deception without foundering, thou didst attain to the calm haven of the kingdom on high, O blessed martyr, there to enjoy everlasting peace.

**7. T**he tormenter pitilessly raked thy sides with claws of iron and thou didst commend thy righteous spirit into the hands of God, O ever memorable and all-blessèd Sozón.

**8. Theotokion: O** greatest and most glorious new wonder! The Virgin conceived in her womb without knowing a man, the uncontainable God who doth sustain all things.

**The Troparion of the Martyr Sozón, in same Tone:**

Thy holy martyr Sozon, O Lord, /  
Through his sufferings received his incorruptible crown from Thee, our God /  
For having Thy strength he laid low his enemies /  
And shattered the powerless boldness of demons ///  
Through his intercessions, O Christ God, save our souls.



**The Troparion of the Forefeast, in Tone 4:**

**F**rom the root of Jesse and from the loins of David /  
Mariam, the child of God, is born to us today /  
And the whole creation is made new and godlike, /  
Rejoice together, O heaven and earth, /  
Praise her, O ye kindreds of the nations /  
Joachim is glad and Anna rejoices as she cries: ///  
The barren woman bears the Theotokos, who sustains our Life.

**The Kontakion of the Martyr Sozón, in Tone 2: *To the melody, "The steadfast...."***

**L**et us assemble today /  
And with a loud voice let us praise Sozón the martyr, /  
Who wisely and faithfully suffered for piety, /  
And is an initiate of the mysteries of grace, /  
Who generously bestows healing to all ///  
And earnestly prays Christ God on behalf of us all.

**The Kontakion of the Forefeast, in Tone 3: *To the melody, "Today the Virgin...."***

**T**oday the Virgin Theotokos /  
Mary, the chamber of the heavenly Groom /  
Is born by the will of God of a barren woman! /  
For this she is prepared as a chariot for God the Word. /  
For this she had been fore-chosen /  
Since she is the divine gate ///  
And truly the Mother of Life.

**Prokeimenon (for the Saint), Tone 7:** The righteous one shall rejoice in the Lord /  
and shall set his hope on Him. *Verse:* Hear my voice, O God, when I pray unto Thee!

**The Epistle (for the Saint):** (233) Eph. 6:10-17

**The Alleluia (for the Saint), Tone 4:** The righteous cried and the Lord heard them,  
and He delivered them from all their troubles. *Verse:* Many are the afflictions of the  
righteous, and the Lord will deliver them out of them all.

**The Gospel (for the Saint):** (52) John 15:17-16:2

**The Communion Hymn (for the Saint):** The righteous shall be in everlasting  
remembrance. He shall not be afraid of evil tidings.