

The 22nd Day of December

Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ; Commemoration of the Greatmartyr Anastasia of Rome, the Deliverer from Bonds.

Vespers

At “Lord, I call...,” 6 stichera,

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

“Beholding the condescension of God, /
All the earth rejoices, /
As the Magi bring Me gifts /
And the sky proclaims my coming with a star. /
The angels sing their praises and the shepherds, playing their pipes are amazed; /
The manger holds me like a fiery throne. ///
Seeing all these things, O Mother, rejoice!”

“O my Son, who art without beginning, /
O ineffable offspring of the Father before all ages, /
Thou hast come, O Light of revelation for the nations /
Clothed in the fiber of my nature /
To enrich the nature of mankind /
Which had become poor through the frailty in which Thou art now clad. ///
For this, I praise Thy tender compassion, O my Son and Lord.”

“Beholding Me as a babe and resting in thine arms /
Be thou glad, O Mother, /
For I have come to take away the pain of Adam /
Which he had suffered at the evil counsel of the serpent /
When he tasted of the forbidden fruit of the tree /
And found himself removed from the sweetness of paradise, ///
And was made prey to corruption.”

And 3 stichera of the Saint, in Tone 8: *To the melody, “What shall we call thee...?”*

Disdaining all the beautiful things of this world /
And their enticement of the flesh, /
Thou didst dedicate thyself to ministering to the saints: /
Patiently tending to their sores and sufferings, /
Comforting them with the wisdom of thy words, /
And strengthening their courage and their faith. ///
Pray now that our souls may be saved,

¹ Text differs from that in the Greek Menaion.

Thou didst give thy transitory wealth to those in need /
 Fervently seeking everlasting wealth, /
 And following in the divine footsteps of Christ thou didst cry aloud with faith: /
 “I have been wounded with desire for Thee, O immortal One! /
 Show me, to become a partaker /
 Of the divine glory of Thy salvific sufferings, ///
 As Thou art compassionate and lovest mankind.

Having endured thy blessed suffering, O Anastasia, /
 Thou dost truly wash away our sufferings /
 With the grace of thy healings. /
 Therefore, we rightly call thee blessed, O holy martyr, /
 And we celebrate thy memory with love /
 Bowing down before thy holy reliquary /
 And drawing upon its sanctity. ///
 Pray now that our souls may be saved.

Glory..., of the Saint, in Tone 2:

Thou didst receive the gift of resurrection, /
 Having suffered at thy trial, O all-praised martyr Anastasia, /
 And having conquered a legion of demons /
 Thou didst cast them all into the sea, ///
 O passion-bearing martyr worthy of all praise!

Now and ever..., of the Forefeast, in Tone 4:

Adorn thyself, O Bethlēm! /
 Sing aloud, O city of Sion! /
 Rejoice, O wilderness, in anticipation of the coming joy! /
 For the star approaches Bethlēm, heralding the birth of Christ, /
 The cave receives Him whom nothing can contain, /
 And the manger makes ready to accept eternal Life! /
 To Him let us all sing and cry aloud: ///
 Save our souls, O Jesus our God, who was born incarnate for our sakes.

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

Christ cometh to crush the head of the evil one; /
 And to enlighten those sitting in darkness; /
 And to loose the bonds of those in sin. ///
 Let us go forth to meet Him!

Verse: God shall come from Teman, and the Holy One from the mountain
overshadowed by the forest.

Sing for joy, O Sion, /
Adorn thyself beautifully, O cave, /
Make ready, O city of Bethlēm, ///
For behold, the Virgin cometh to give birth to Christ the Lord.

Verse: O Lord, I have heard the report of Thee and am afraid; O Lord, I have
considered Thy works and am amazed.

Sing glorious praise, O ye nations, /
Ye Magi bearing gifts, make haste, /
And ye shepherds, play glorious music on your pipes ///
As you keep vigil for the coming of the Lord.

Glory..., of the Saint, in Tone 4: (the composition of the Studite)

As thou art the namesake of the life-bearing resurrection of Christ, /
Thou didst worthily fulfill the calling of thine hon'able life, /
By strengthening the physical weakness of thy gentle nature /
And with wisdom, acquiring great power and courage, /
Thou didst weave for thyself a robe dyed in the purple of thy blood. /
And now, bearing the Cross like a royal scepter, /
Thou dost reign together with Christ God the Savior, /
O all-blessèd greatmartyr Anastasia. ///
Entreat Him now that He may illumine our souls with His divine glory.

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

Rejoice, O Isaiah, /
For having received the word from God, /
Thou didst prophesy the Virgin Mary /
Who, like the burning bush was not consumed by the fire of our God! /
Adorn thyself, O Bethlēm, open wide thy gates O Eden! /
Let the Magi come and behold Salvation wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in
the manger, /
Whose star shines brightly from above: ///
The Lord, the Giver of life, and the Salvation of mankind!

The Troparion of the Martyr, in Tone 4:

O Jesus, Thy lamb Anastasia /
Cries out to Thee with great love: /

“O my Bridegroom, I long for Thee in pain, /
 I am crucified with Thee, and in baptism buried with Thee; /
 I suffer for Thy sake in order to reign with Thee, /
 I die for Thee in order to live in Thee. /
 Accept me as a spotless victim /
 Since I am put to death because of my love for Thee.” ///
 Through her prayers, O Merciful One, save our souls.

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

Prepare thyself, O Bethlēm, /
 For Eden hath been opened to all. /
 Adorn thyself, O Ephratha, /
 For the Tree of Life hath blossomed forth in the cave from the Virgin. /
 Her womb appeared as a spiritual paradise /
 In which is planted the garden divine. /
 Eating of it we shall live and not die as did Adam: /
Christ is born, ///
 That He may raise up again the image that before was fallen.

Compline

The Canon of the Forefeast, with 6 Troparia, the Irmos being sung twice, in Tone 6
having the acrostic: “Today I sing the praise of Holy Thursday.”

Ode 1

Canon of the Forefeast, in Tone 6

***Irmos (from the Canon of Great and Holy Thursday):** The Red Sea was cut in two,
 and the deep with its boundless waves made dry; to those unarmed it
 became passable; to those in full armor it became a grave. A song well
 pleasing to God was sung: Christ our God hath been greatly glorified!*

***Refrain:** Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee!*

The all-accomplishing and omnipotent Life, the infinite Wisdom of God, hath
 made for Himself a dwelling of the pure Mother who kneweth not a man; and
 putting our human body, Christ our God hath gloriously glorified Himself.

Mystically leading forth the Magi, the Wisdom of God calleth forth the first-fruits
 from among the nations; and to mystically nurture their irrational nature, He
 prepareth a mystical banquet for them in the manger of dumb beasts; and with the
 star shining before them they make haste to greet Him, journeying with their gifts.

Let us listen to the words of the prophets which are now fulfilled by the Spirit:

“The Virgin, conceiving in her womb, cometh forth to give birth to Him who transcendeth existence.” The heavens have revealed Him to the Magi, the angels, and the shepherds as a babe borne in the Virgin’s arms.

Katavasia: The Red Sea (prostration)

Ode 3

Irmos: Thou didst make Thyself poor, O God, who art free from passions, by uniting creation to Thyself, O Lord and Creator of all, Thou hast offered Thyself in sacrifice to us, O Pascha of all, saying: Eat ye My Body and be confirmed in faith.

Foreshadowing the madness of Pilate, Herod is eager to quickly slay Christ who is come now to shed His own blood for the deliverance for the world. Therefore, in his murderous savagery he slaughtered a multitude of innocent babes.

That foolish man hath said: “There is no God.” He, who was filled with such insanity, was sick with lust for the murder of the Messiah, and having fallen so low in his audacious intent, he armed himself for the murder of innocent babes and defiled the earth with their blood.

Katavasia: Thou didst make Thyself poor.... (prostration)

Ode 4

Irmos: The prophet foretold, O Christ, Thine ineffable Mystery: Thou hast shown a strong and mighty love, O good and merciful Father, for Thou hath sent Thine Only-begotten Son into the world for its purification.

Descending like rain upon the fleece on her who gaveth birth to Thee like dew upon the ground, O Lord, Thou comest now in Thy great mercy, to be born and to dwell with us; for the Father hath sent Thee, the only-begotten Son, into the world for its purification

Thou sharest in our human flesh through the seed of Abraham, O Christ, as Thou comest to bestow grace upon grace, and to restore Thine image which had fallen, and make it incorrupt again; for the Father hath sent Thee, the Only-begotten, into the world for its purification.

The new Drink, which of old David desired to partake, cometh forth to be poured out in the cave of Bethlehem, quenching the ancient thirst of both Adam and David, from whom Christ is born in the flesh.

Ode 5

Irmos: The apostles united by the bond of love, yielding Themselves to Christ,

the Lord of all, had their beautiful feet washed clean, so as to preach the Gospel of peace to all.

The Wisdom of God, who holds the unrestrainable waters in their chambers, bridles the deep and restrains the seas, descended like rain upon a fleece, and made His abode within the Virgin's womb.

The Magi, disciples of the magus Balaam, were called to wisdom by Christ through a star; He who clothed the heavens with clouds is wrapped in swaddling bands; He before whom the cherubīm tremble now lieth in a manger; and He who filleth all things is contained within a cave.

Ode 6

Irmos: The final abyss of sin hath encompassed me; unable to bear its tumult, like Jonah I cry to Thee: Lead me out of corruption, O Master!

The heavens, know Thee to be the Lord, and now declare Thy glory with a star, O Savior, calling forth the magi to come with gifts to acknowledge Thee and worship Thee.

Let them who desire to put away defilement come forth, and being cleansed, let them draw near to Christ, the pure Infant who lieth in the manger and cleanses the depths of men's hearts.

Katavasia: The final abyss of sin.... (prostration)

Ode 7

Irmos: The children in Babylon were not afraid of the fire; when cast into the midst of the flames they were covered with dew and sang: Blessèd art Thou, O God of our fathers!

Shaken in his mind, Herod was driven mad imagining his downfall, and he sought an opportunity to slay the God of life and death, who is the Lord of all and the Master of creation.

As many of you as are friends of Christ, flee with Him as He escapes to Egypt, and, rightly worshiping Him as God, raise high your voices and glorify Him together.

“He who is not with Me worketh against Me,” saith Christ; “and he who doth not gather with Me is like unto one who flees away from Me.” Therefore, let us stand and witness to His awesome condescension and descent into the flesh.

Ode 8

Irmos: The blessèd children endangered themselves in Babylon for the sake of

their father's laws; they ignored the ignorant command of the king, and cast into the furnace they suffered no harm, but sang a song pleasing to their mighty Master: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord; exalt Him throughout all ages!

O ye divinely-wise ones who have come to the Word in Bethlēhem, let us gaze with wonder together with the angels and shepherds, and sending up glory to God in the highest, who hath bestowed His good will and peace upon all mankind, and let us exalt Him greatly throughout all ages.

Let us hold fast to the law of love, and with brotherly love, let us embrace one, so that we may establish peace and unity of mind, for Christ, the Bestower of peace, cometh, bringing peace to all and to save those who cry aloud: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord; exalt Him throughout all ages!.

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

With false words, the impious Herod paid homage to the new-born Christ, telling the Magi to worship Him on his behalf; but, ruined by his pride, he went on to persecute the coming Messiah, and took no pity on the innocent babes, for he knew not how to cry: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord; exalt Him throughout all ages!.

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

Katavasia: The blessed children *(prostration)*

Ode 9

Irmos: *Come, O faithful, let us approach the humble cave and let us enjoy the Master's hospitality, the banquet of immortality; then let us hasten to the Jordan, there to behold the strange new mystery as the glory of God descends from on high.*

“Go and seek out the babe; and when ye shall find Him, tell me quickly of Him,” said Herod, devising evil in his heart, to the chief among the Magi. But the deceiver was foiled, and he plotted his iniquity in vain.

Being the Wisdom, Word and Power of God, the Creator, begotten of the Father before all ages, is come to be born of the Virgin. Therefore, knowing Him to be the only Son, we magnify the nativity of the one God-man.

Thou didst reveal Thyself to be a man, not only in semblance, but in essence, O Savior, and, through the nature which Thou didst take upon Thyself, Thou didst show Thyself to be God. Therefore, honoring Thy divine advent through the Virgin, we magnify Thee.

Katavasia: Come, O faithful (*prostration*)

Matins

At God is the Lord, the Troparion for the Forefeast, in Tone 4

Prepare thyself, O Bethlēm, /
For Eden hath been opened to all. /
Adorn thyself, O Ephratha, /
For the Tree of Life hath blossomed forth in the cave from the Virgin. /
Her womb appeared as a spiritual paradise /
In which is planted the garden divine. /
Eating of it we shall live and not die as did Adam: /
Christ is born, ///
That He may raise up again the image that before was fallen. (*twice*)

Glory....,

The Troparion of the Martyr, in Tone 4:

O Jesus, Thy lamb Anastasia /
Cries out to Thee with great love: /
“O my Bridegroom, I long for Thee in pain, /
I am crucified with Thee, and in baptism buried with Thee; /
I suffer for Thy sake in order to reign with Thee, /
I die for Thee in order to live in Thee. /
Accept me as a spotless victim /
Since I am put to death because of my love for Thee.” ///
Through her prayers, O Merciful One, save our souls.

Now and ever....,

The Troparion of the Forefeast, in the same Tone: (*as above*)

Prepare thyself, O Bethlēm, /
For Eden hath been opened to all....

After the 1st Kathisma, the Sessional Hymn, in Tone1: *To the melody, “When the stone had been sealed...”*

Creation hath illumined itself today /
For, in His ineffable mercy, the Creator is coming to be born in a cave. /
Come together, and make haste, O ye shepherds, /
To behold this awesome wonder! /
And come, ye Magi bearing precious gifts, /

To sing “Glory to the newborn King! /
Glory to Him who hath led us on this journey! /
Glory to Him who is now come incarnate ///
Glory to Him who is King of all!

Glory..., now and ever..., another Sessional Hymn, in Tone 4: *To the melody, “Quickly go before...”*

All creation doth rejoice today /
For Christ the Lord, the Son of God /
Is born of the most pure Virgin /
Making immortal the race of mankind /
And annulling the curse of our first mother, Eve. ///
Therefore, we offer praise to our only Benefactor and Lord..

After the 2nd Kathisma, the Sessional Hymn, in Tone 6: *To the melody, “The hope of the world ...”*

The Magi of Persia, /
Once brought gold, frankincense, and Myrrh /
To the newborn King and God; /
And now, we celebrate with honor and wisdom /
The forefeast of His nativity with all our soul /
And to Him we offer our hope, faith and love, ///
As we praise His All-holy Virgin Mother.

Glory..., now and ever..., another Sessional Hymn, in Tone 3: *To the melody; “Today the Virgin”*

Praising the Virgin who hath given birth to the pre-eternal Word, /
The righteous Joseph cried aloud: /
“I perceive thee to be the true temple of the Lord, /
Who bearest Him who is come to save all mankind /
And who, in His loving-kindness, /
Shall reveal all who worship and honor Him, ///
Also to be the sacred temples of God!”

The Canon

Two Canons: that of the Forefeast, with 8 Troparia, and that of the Saint, with 6 Troparia.

Ode 1

The Canon of the Forefeast, in Tone 6

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 Thee, our God, glory to Thee!

Jesus our enlightenment, the great Sun of Righteousness, hath shone forth upon us through the cloud of the Virgin; and we who are in darkness sing His praises, brightly illumined by His splendor.

The King of peace, the expectation of the nations, hath come to slay the enemy. Let us make haste to meet Him who is born in Bethlēhem for our salvation.

The divine sayings of the prophets are now fulfilled which foretold the awesome appearance of Christ; for the ewe-lamb draweth nigh to give birth unto the Lamb, the Redeemer and Lord of all.

Refrain: Most Holy Theotokos, save us!

Theotokion: **W**ith faith we call thee most blessed, O pure dove of the Master, thou most honored, immaculate, and beautiful amongst all women, in that thou hast given birth to the God of all.

The Canon of the Saint, in Tone 8,

*having the acrostic: "I praise thee with love, O martyr Anastasia,"
the composition of Joseph.*

Irmos: *In Let us sing a song of victory, O ye people, to our wondrous God, who delivered Israel from bondage: We raise our song to Thee, who alone art Lord and Master!*

Refrain: Holy greatmartyr Anastasia, pray to God for us!

Let us send up our hymns to God, who desireth to be born in the flesh of the Virgin in the city of Bethlēhem, and to be laid in an infant's manger as a babe, that He may save the human race.

Seeking the only desirable beauties, those of Christ, O glorious martyr Anastasia, with steadfast character thou didst discard the beautiful things of this world and wast found worthy to inherit immortality.

Glory...,

Enlightened by the brilliance of the Spirit, thou didst pass through the gloomy night deception, O martyr, and hast made thine abode amidst the light and divine splendor of the uncreated Trinity.

Now and ever...,

Theotokion: **T**he invisible God hath appeared in His great loving-kindness, being born of thee in a manner beyond nature, O Virgin Mother. The Most bountiful One

hath humbled Himself, that He might enrich the race of mankind with immortality.

Katavasia: **Christ** is born, glorify Him....

Ode 3

The Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: *There 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.*

Christ, who stretched out the heavens by His word hath entered the cave to lay in a manger of dumb beasts, desiring, in His tender compassion, to deliver us from our folly and iniquity.

The prophet cried aloud and said: “This is our God, and there shall none other be accounted of in comparison with Him! Uniting Himself to mankind, He hath disclosed to us the true way of knowledge.”

The cherubīm cannot bear to gaze upon Thee, O Lord who lovest mankind. How then can the humble manger hope to hold Thee who art infinite in nature but born, in Thy great loving-kindness, for our sake from the Virgin?

Theotokion: **Daniel** the prophet once foresaw thee, O Theotokos, all-pure Bride of God, as the mountain from whence the Stone was cut which crushed and destroyed the temples of idolatry.

The Canon of the Saint

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.*

The untouchable Lord hath desired to be seen lying in the manger, as an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes. Leap up, O ye mountains, and being filled joy! Array yourselves with divine light, O ye hills!

Enriched by the Savior’s words, thou didst blunt the arrows of the persecutors’ burning words with the boldness of thy piety, O Anastasia, guiding the action of thy soul with divine love.

Thou didst cry out in faith, O martyr: “I seek only the Lord to whose love alone I have bound my soul! I only wish to be illumined by splendor of His most pure beauty.”

Theotokion: **O** Maiden who knewest not wedlock, thou didst bear within thy womb incarnate, Him who holdeth all creation in the hollow of His hand, the pre-eternal Babe, and when He is born, Thou shalt lay in a manger.

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

Today the Virgin comes to the cave /
To give birth ineffably to the pre-eternal Word. /
Hearing this, be of good cheer, O inhabited earth, /
And with the angels and the shepherds, ///
Glorify Him whose will it was to be made manifest a young Child the pre-eternal
God.

***Ikos:** O truly awesome wonder beyond all telling! He who hath given existence to all things hath, in His goodness, entered into the womb of the holy Virgin, and now cometh to be born in a cave and to be laid in a manger. The star heralds his coming from above, and the Magi from afar come to worship Him with gifts, following with care the prophecy of Balaam.*

The Sessional Hymn, of the Saint, in Tone 1: *To the melody, "Thy tomb, O Savior...."*

We praise thee as a bride of Christ, O virgin martyr, /
And like Thecla, we rightly honor thee, /
For by the power of the Holy Spirit,
Streams of healings pour forth from thy reliquary, /
On this, thy festive and holy day ///
For thou hast received grace by keeping the commandments of the Lord.

Glory..., now and ever..., the Sessional Hymn of the Forefeast, in Tone 8: *To the melody "That which was commanded...."*

Come, all ye faithful, /
And let us celebrate the days of the forefeast of the nativity of Christ /
And bearing our virtuous deeds as the Magi their gifts, /
Let us worthily go forth with the new song of the angels on our lips /
And greet God who hath been born in the city of Bethlehem /
From the divine Virgin Maiden without seed: ///
Singing "Glory to Thee, O God, who hast done these glorious things!"

Ode 4

The Canon of the Forefeast

***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.*

Behold! the star which wast proclaimed of old by Jacob, hath shone forth from afar. The infinite God, becoming a man, is seen wrapped in swaddling clothes.

The Lord, the deliverance of all, is seen as a babe, sitting in the bosom of the Virgin: He who, as the Son, doth rest in the bosom of the Father.

Open wide, O Eden, which once wast closed to me because of the fruit I had stolen in paradise! For now, He is born in Bethlēhem, who hath clad Himself in my mortal nature and hath come to let me share again in all thy delights.

Theotokion: **T**he prophet Habbákuk foresaw thee in the Spirit, O Virgin, as the mountain overshadowed with the virtues, from whence He who illumineth our souls hath now appeared

The Canon of the Saint

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

The sayings of the prophets who prophesied in the divine Spirit, are already fulfilled; for the Virgin cometh to give birth in the cave to the all-perfect One.

Seeking the glory of martyrdom with love, thou didst receive it with steadfast courage and a fearless will, O most patient Anastasia.

When thy body was stripped bare, O all-praised and victorious martyr, thou wast seen truly vested in a robe of grace woven from on high.

Theotokion: **O** most pure Lady Theotokos, the King of heaven cometh forth from thy light-bearing womb as a mortal, and will lay in a manger as though on a royal throne.

Ode 5

The Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: *With 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.*

O Bethlēhem, thou house of Ephratha, the Prince of peace shall come forth from thee unto Israel, and shall summon the rejected gentiles, as Micah, illumined by the Spirit, hath foretold.

As was proclaimed the eloquent prophet of old, the Lord Jesus alone is now born of the Virgin, to shepherd His flock with strength; and we shall praise and magnify Him to all the ends of the earth.

The Spirit of wisdom, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of strength and counsel, of knowledge and understanding, the Spirit of the fear of God hath filled the Son who is coming incarnate from thy womb, O Virgin.

Theotokion: Truly, O most pure and immaculate Lady, thou didst cause all the weapons of the enemy to utterly fail; for thou hast given birth unto the God of all, who with a spear hath brought the savagery of the enemy to an end.

The Canon of the Saint

Irmos: Rising early we cry to Thee, O Lord: Save us, for Thou art our God, and we know none other than Thee.

The star of Judah hath shone forth from the land of Chaldea, moving the Magi to come and worship the Lord, as it was written.

By the decree of the law, didst thou contend and struggle at thy trial, and didst vanquish the forces of evil by the power of the Spirit, O all-glorious martyr Anastasia.

True to the name which thou dost bear, O Anastasia, thou didst show forth the resurrection of God, while cursing the invisible foe, O all-praised martyr.

Theotokion: Christ cometh to be born of the Virgin in a cave beneath the earth, to gladden the hearts of all mankind.

Ode 6

The Canon of the Forefeast

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!

Behold, O ye faithful! Christ cometh to His own, and we, who are made His by grace and godly virtues, and are illumined in our heart and soul, receive Him with faith and love.

The root of Jesse hath sprouted forth, and our God now cometh! He is the hope of the nations, their honor and their peace, as the divinely illumined Isaiah had foretold of old.

By thine incarnation, O my Jesus, Thou didst make Thyself poor, thus enriching me who has become impoverished through evil, and loosed the bonds of my many transgressions by Thy being wrapped in swaddling clothes.

Theotokion: The winter of evil thoughts doth beset my lowly heart with the assaults of demonic spirits, O most blessed Lady, Help me tame them, by thy mediations.

The Canon of the Saint

Irmos: I will pour out my prayer before the Lord, I will make known to Him my sorrow, for my soul has been filled with afflictions, and my life has drawn near to hell, and like Jonah

I will pray: O God, raise me up from corruption.

The compassionate Lord, who doth form babes in their mothers' wombs, put on our human nature and is now seen as a babe; and wrapped in swaddling clothes, He is laid in the manger, loosening the intricate bonds of our passions by His grace.

Patiently following the struggles of the holy martyrs as they suffered for the sake of Christ, thou didst minister to their needs, and cleanse their sores and bind their wounds, O venerable martyr Anastasia, and being splendidly enriched with God's grace, thou didst illumine them with glory.

Thou didst pour forth drops of healing with showers of divine gifts, and dost hold in-check the rivers of the passions, helping those who are in cruel misfortune, O glorious martyr of Christ, Anastasia, thou namesake of the divine resurrection.

Theotokion: **A** new babe conceived without corruption is come to heal our human nature which had become corrupt through the ancient transgression. He sitteth now in thy womb, as upon a throne, O unwedded Lady, without ever leaving the throne that He shares with the Father in His divinity.

Katavasia.

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

Those who are tormented with temptations or trials /
Run to thee where they find a source of abundant grace, O Anastasia, ///
For thou dost always provide abundant healing for all the world.

Ikos: As thou art the namesake of the resurrection of Christ, O greatmartyr Anastasia, raise me up who hast now fallen, by thy holy supplications, and let the drops of thy miracles fall upon my soul, quenching the burning of sins which so sorely tempt me; for thou dost save the world from its many sins, and dost always provide abundant healing for all.

Ode 7

The Canon of the Forefeast

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!

Christ, the only perfect One, is born as a babe and is wrapped in swaddling clothes; and He who is without beginning doth receive a beginning in time from the Virgin, as He seeks to deify that which He had taken upon Himself. Let the heavens rejoice at this mystery, and let the earth be glad!

Clad in the flesh as in a robe of royal purple, the King of peace cometh forth from

thy womb, O Maiden, destroying His enemies, in that He is almighty, and bringing peace to our stormy life.

God, who is with us, is revealed to be incarnate! Understand, O ye hostile powers, and submit yourselves, and withdraw from our lives! For, behold! Our Restoration desireth to lay in the manger of Bethlēhem as a little babe!

Theotokion: **T**he King who made His abode within thy womb chose thee out of all generations to be His undefiled palace, O Maiden. To Him we now piously sing: Blessèd art Thou, O Lord, God of our fathers!

The Canon of the Saint

Irmos: Long ago in Babylon, the children of Judæa by their faith in the Trinity trod down the flames of the furnace, singing: Blessèd art Thou, O God of our fathers!

The choirs of the bodiless angels give glory on high, and we on earth, beholding Thee who hast made Thyself like unto us mortals and now liest in a manger, worship Thee, O Christ, Thou God of all.

Partaking of the flames as did the holy children, thou didst reduce the fire of deception to ashes by thy fervent love for thy Master and Bridegroom, O Anastasia.

Showers of healings pour forth from thee, O martyr, assuaging the fevers and illnesses of the faithful who sing: Blessèd art Thou, O Lord God, throughout all ages!

Theotokion: **A** wonder beyond human comprehension hath been wrought in thee, O Virgin Mother: thou shalt give birth to the infinite God and lay in a manger Him who is unapproachable even to the cherubīm.

Ode 8

The Canon of the Forefeast

Irmos: Out of the flames Thou didst drop dew on the godly ones, and with water didst kindle the sacrifice of the righteous one, for Thou doest all things as Thou wilt, O Christ; we exalt thee throughout all ages!

The sayings of the divine prophets are now fulfilled: the Virgin draweth near to give birth to the Lord. Let all the earth join chorus and be glad; let it rejoice throughout all ages!

Shining with the beams of divine grace and abolishing the shadow of the law, Christ the Bestower of light now shineth forth. O ye sitting in darkness, behold the great Light!

O Lord who wast born in the cave, show me to be a temple of the Holy Trinity: the Father, and Thee, the Son, and Thy divine Spirit, even though I have become like unto a den of thieves, that I may glorify Thee throughout all ages.

Theotokion: **T**he Lord hath shone forth from thy womb like a heavenly star; and illumined by the Spirit, the astrologers have come to gaze upon and worship Him, O most pure and ever-blessèd Virgin.

The Canon of the Saint

Irmos: *The holy children, inspired by God while treading down the flames in the fiery furnace sang: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord.*

The cave now holdeth the new-born Christ, whom thousands and myriads of angels on high worship and magnify. Bless the Lord, O ye works of the Lord. Praise Him unceasingly as Lord!

Thou wast revealed to be an abode of the Trinity when, in the temples of God, thou didst devote thyself to fasting and prayer, O Anastasia, all the while crying aloud: Bless the Lord, ye works of the Lord!

Thou didst strengthen Chrysogonus with thy fortifying words, O passion-bearing martyr, and then went on to thy valiant suffering, where destroying the feeble cruelty of the idols.

Theotokion: **O** Maiden who hast carried God within thy womb, thou hast now given birth to Him who created time, the pre-eternal Lord who, in His ineffable mercy, is born in the city of Bethlèhem.

Ode 9

The Canon of the Forefeast

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 blessèd!*

Behold! Christ, the strength, the restoration, the cleansing, and the salvation of all, is come! The priceless Treasure is now hidden within the cave! And the Magi, enriched by this mercy, now offer Him gold, as to a king.

Keepe watch, O shepherds of Christ, and come ye mystically to the city of Bethlèhem, and cry out to God in the highest: Glory and majesty to Him whose good pleasure it hath been to reveal Himself as a babe for our sake!

Born in the flesh and wrapped in swaddling clothes, Thou, who dost shroud the night in darkness and settest the borders of the seas with sand, hast broken the

bonds of sin wrought by mine evil deeds, and hast girded those who have become weak through the assaults of the enemy.

Theotokion: **O** chamber and throne of the King, mountain of God, chosen city, garden of paradise, and the most radiant cloud of the Sun: Illumine thou my soul, and blot out the record of my many transgressions, O divinely radiant Lady.

The Canon of the Saint

Irmos: *Saved through thee, O pure Virgin, we confess thee to be truly Theotokos, and with the choirs of angels we magnify thee.*

Leap up in gladness, O ye mountains, and gird yourselves with joy, O ye hills! For the Virgin now draweth nigh to give birth to the Lord of all

Today, creation rejoiceth with thee, O greatmartyr Anastasia, for it doth glorify the majesty of the Word whom thou didst glorify with thy blood.

Illumined now with the most pure light of Christ, O right noble martyr Anastasia, entreat thou Him that through thy prayers, we may all receive illumination from on high.

Theotokion: **L**et all creation now splendidly rejoice! Behold, the Theotokos cometh to give birth to God the Word who hath become a man through His own divine will as God.

The Exapostilarion of the Saint:

Thou didst minister to Chrysogonus when he was imprisoned in the dungeon, O Anastasia, and, heeding his words, thou didst finish the course of martyrdom in God; and, having received from Him the reward of healing grace, thou dost now heal the infirmities of all.

Glory..., now and ever.... that of the Forefeast:

Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad! Be enlightened, O cave! O manger, receive Him who created us with His own hand, and who is now born as a babe from the Virgin! O ye multitude of angels, cry aloud and sing: Glory to God in the highest!

At the Praises, 4 stichera of the Forefeast, in Tone 6: To the melody, "Go on before, ye angelic powers...."

Now all the ancient prophecies have been fulfilled: /

A Virgin hath conceived in her womb; /

The Stone hath been cut from the unquarried mountain; /

The rod of Jesse hath sprouted anew; /
The dew of Gideon hath descended upon the earth! /
So let us now cry aloud, O ye people: ///
Behold, now cometh forth Christ, the King of Israel!

Now we behold the wonders of His awesome coming: /
How doth He who sitteth with the Father in heaven /
Desire to be laid in a manger of dumb beasts? /
How is He whom none can touch wrapped in swaddling clothes? /
How is He who is everywhere present contained in a cave? /
Let us now cry aloud, O ye people: ///
Behold, now cometh forth Christ, the King of Israel!

He who worked great miracles of old: /
Smiting Egypt with plagues, /
And raining down manna upon His foolish people, /
Is seen incarnate as a babe and nurtured with milk. /
See how he flees the tyrant Herod /
Borne by His Virgin Mother as if on a swift cloud, /
As the Isaiah, the visionary prophet hath foretold! /

The Child who is King before all ages /
Is born of His own good will! /
A Son hath been given us, understand all ye nations! /
Hearken, O Israel! /
Submit yourselves and understand! /
For He is with us who will wipe from the earth every kingdom and principality ///
Which doth not obey Him.

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

Thou shalt be shepherded with an iron staff, O Judæa, /
For thou hast not listened nor believed the prophets' words; /
And when the Son is born, the Father will give to the gentiles their inheritance: /
The dominion of the world,
For thou didst not cry aloud: ///
Behold, now cometh forth Christ, the King of Israel!

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

Rejoice, O David, /
For Christ is raised from within thee! /

Rejoice, O Jesse, for from thy root hath He blossomed forth! /
 Rejoice, O Judæa, for from thy loins the Lord hath come /
 As Balaam hath once foretold! /
 Harken to the words of the great prophet Isaiah, who said: ///
 Behold! The all-pure Virgin giveth birth to the Babe Emmanuel!

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

Christ now draweth near; /
 The star shineth before Him, /
 And all the hosts of heaven, the ranks of the angelic powers ///
 Bend low their knees to see and understand.

Verse: God shall come from Teman, and the Holy One from the mountain
 overshadowed by the forest.

Rejoice, O Bethlēm, /
 For the Shepherd is come /
 To save Israel from bondage to the enemy! //
 Now longer shalt thou be called least among the princes of Judah!

Verse: O Lord, I have heard the report of Thee and am afraid; O Lord, I have
 considered Thy works and am amazed.

Come, all ye people, /
 And let us form a choir /
 And together with the angels, let us cry aloud to God: ///
 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace!

Glory..., of the Saint, in Tone 5: (by Byzantius)

Today the forefeast of the nativity of Christ-God, /
 And the feast of the all-praised martyr Anastasia, shine together. /
 Behold, the Virgin draws near to Bethlēm. /
 With swaddling clothes she will wrap the Infant and lay Him in a cave, ///
 Who delivers us from the ancient curse and saves our souls.

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

"Do not be ashamed at the sight of my womb," /
 Saith the Theotokos to Joseph, her betrothed husband, /
 When she discovered herself to be with child. /
 "For thou shalt see the One who will be born of me /

And thou shalt worship Him as God the King!” /
Let us all cry aloud to her and sing: /
Rejoice, O divine Lady, full of grace! /
The Lord is with thee, ///
And through thee, God Emmanuel is truly with us!

Liturgy

At the Beatitudes, 8 Troparia: 4 from the Third Ode of the Canon of the Forefeast, and 4 from Ode 6 of the Canon of the Saint.

1-2. Christ, who stretched out the heavens by His word hath entered the cave to lay in a manger of dumb beasts, desiring, in His tender compassion, to deliver us from our folly and iniquity. *(twice)*

3. The prophet cried aloud and said: “This is our God, and there shall none other be accounted of in comparison with Him! Uniting Himself to mankind, He hath disclosed to us the true way of knowledge.”

4. The cherubīm cannot bear to gaze upon Thee, O Lord who lovest mankind. How then can the humble manger hope to hold Thee who art infinite in nature but born, in Thy great loving-kindness, for our sake from the Virgin?

5. The compassionate Lord, who doth form babes in their mothers’ wombs, put on our human nature and is now seen as a babe; and wrapped in swaddling clothes, He is laid in the manger, loosening the intricate bonds of our passions by His grace.

6. Patiently following the struggles of the holy martyrs as they suffered for the sake of Christ, thou didst minister to their needs, and cleanse their sores and bind their wounds, O venerable martyr Anastasia, and being splendidly enriched with God’s grace, thou didst illumine them with glory.

7. Thou didst pour forth drops of healing with showers of divine gifts, and dost hold in-check the rivers of the passions, helping those who are in cruel misfortune, O glorious martyr of Christ, Anastasia, thou namesake of the divine resurrection.

8. Theotokion: A new babe conceived without corruption is come to heal our human nature which had become corrupt through the ancient transgression. He sitteth now in thy womb, as upon a throne, O unwedded Lady, without ever leaving the throne that He shares with the Father in His divinity.

The Troparion for the Forefeast, in Tone 4:

Prepare thyself, O Bethlēm, /
For Eden hath been opened to all. /

Adorn thyself, O Ephratha, /
 For the Tree of Life hath blossomed forth in the cave from the Virgin. /
 Her womb appeared as a spiritual paradise /
 In which is planted the garden divine. /
 Eating of it we shall live and not die as did Adam: /
Christ is born, ///
 That He may raise up again the image that before was fallen.

The Troparion of the Saint, in Tone 4:

O Jesus, Thy lamb Anastasia /
 Cries out to Thee with great love: /
 “O my Bridegroom, I long for Thee in pain, /
 I am crucified with Thee, and in baptism buried with Thee; /
 I suffer for Thy sake in order to reign with Thee, /
 I die for Thee in order to live in Thee. /
 Accept me as a spotless victim /
 Since I am put to death because of my love for Thee.” ///
 Through her prayers, O Merciful One, save our souls.

The Kontakion of the Saint, in Tone 2: *To the melody, “Seeking the highest....”*

Those who are tormented with temptations or trials /
 Run to thee where they find a source of abundant grace, O Anastasia, ///
 For thou dost always provide abundant healing to all the world.

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

Today the Virgin comes to the cave /
 To give birth ineffably to the pre-eternal Word. /
 Hearing this, be of good cheer, O inhabited earth, /
 And with the angels and the shepherds, ///
 Glorify Him whose will it was to be made manifest a young Child the pre-eternal
 God.

Prokeimenon (Saint), in Tone 4: God is wondrous in His saints, / the God of
 Israel. *Verse:* Bless God in the churches, the Lord, from the wellsprings of Israel.

The Epistle: (208) Galatians 3:23-29

The Alleluia (Saint), in Tone 1: I waited patiently for the Lord; He inclined to me
 and heard my prayer. *Verse:* And He brought me up out of the pit of misery and
 from the mire of clay.

The Gospel: (33) Luke 7:36-50

Communion Hymn: The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He shall not be afraid of evil tidings. Alleluia.

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