

The 24th Day of March



The Forefeast of the Annunciation of the Most Holy Theotokos.

Vespers

Note: The distribution of the stichera at “Lord, I call...,” is dependent upon which day of Lent it should fall. The stichera from the Triodion (including the sticheron for the martyrs) will be sung first and then those of the Forefeast, unless the Forefeast should fall on a Sunday. The Typicon must be consulted.

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

At “Lord, I call...,” 10 stichera, including those from the Triodion, and:

4 stichera of the Forefeast in Tone 4: *To the melody, “As one valiant among the martyrs....”*

The mystery hidden and unknown to angels /
Is confirmed by the archangel Gabriel, /
And now he comes to thee, the only-incorrupt, unblemished turtledove, /
For the deliverance of our race /
And he cries out to thee, O Most Holy Lady: ///
Rejoice, and prepare, by a word, to receive the Word of God in thy womb! *(twice)*

The womb of the most pure maiden of God, /
Has been prepared as a light-bearing palace for Thee, O Master. /
Come, and descend upon her and be bountiful to Thy creation /
Which had been abused because of the primal envy /
And through the slavery of the Deceiver, had been deprived of its former goodness ///
Yet awaiting Thy saving visitation.

The archangel Gabriel will manifest his presence to thee, /
O most-pure Lady, /
And will cry out to thee: Rejoice, O thou annulment of the curse /
Rejoice, thou the lifting up of the fallen! /
Rejoice, thou who alone art become the chosen of God! /
Rejoice, thou chariot of the Son of glory ///
Receive the Bodiless One who comes to dwell in thy womb!

Glory..., now and ever..., of the Forefeast, in Tone 2:

Today Gabriel announces to her who is full of grace /
Rejoice, O unwedded Mother who has not known wedlock! /

Do not be astonished at my strange appearance, nor be frightened, /
For I am an archangel. /
For once the serpent tempted Eve, /
But now I come to bring glad tidings to thee. ///
Thou shalt remain incorrupt and give birth to the Lord, O most-pure Maiden!

Entrance. Prokeimenon, Readings for the Day, and the rest of the Presanctified Liturgy if appointed.

However, if there is no Presanctified, then at “Lord, I call...,” we sing 3 stichera from the Triodion; 3 for the Forefeast; and the “Glory..., now and ever...” of the Forefeast: “Today Gabriel...” (*see above*)

The Apostikha is from the Triodion (*including the martyricon*), and:

Glory..., now and ever..., of the Forefeast, in Tone 2:

Today is revealed the mystery from all eternity, /
And the Son of God becomes the Son of Man, /
That, sharing in what is lower He may grant me to share in what is higher. /
In ancient times Adam was once deceived: /
He sought to become God but received not his desire. /
Now God becomes man, that He may make Adam God.
Let creation rejoice, let nature exult: /
For the archangel stands in fear before the Virgin /
And saying to her: “Rejoice,” he brings the joyful greeting /
Whereby our sorrow is comforted. ///
O Thou, who in thy merciful compassion wast made man, O our God, glory to Thee!

Matins

“Alleluia” and the usual Triadica Hymns in the Tone of the Week. But if it be a Saturday or Sunday, at “God is the Lord...,” we sing:

The Troparion of the Forefeast, in Tone 4:

Today the beginning of universal joy /
Commands all to sing pre-festive praises, /
For behold, Gabriel comes, bearing an announcement to the Virgin /
And he cries out to her: ///
Rejoice, thou who art full of grace, the Lord is with thee!

FOREFEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION

The customary Kathisma Hymns, and the rest, as usual.

The Canon

The Canon of the Forefeast, with 6 Troparia, including the Irmos,
and then, those of the Triodion, in their order.

Ode 1

The Canon of the Forefeast, in Tone 4,

the composition of Theophanes.

— incomplete as of 2/2013

After the Sixth Ode:

The Kontakion of the Forefeast, in Tone 8: *To the melody, “O victorious leader....”*

O Virgin Theotokos, thou art the beginning of salvation for us born on the earth, /
For the prince of the heavenly legions, the divine minister, Gabriel, was sent down
from heaven to present himself to thee; /
And he brought thee news of joyful gladness. ///
Therefore all cry to thee: Rejoice, O unwedded Bride!

At the Aposticha, the stichera from the Triodion, (including the sticheron of the martyrs), and:

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

Now the Theotokos has heard language she has never heard before, /
For the archangel spoke to her the words of the Annunciation. /
And accepting his salutation with faith, /
She conceived Thee the pre-eternal God /
Therefore we who are rejoicing cry aloud to thee: /
O God, Who immutably took on flesh from the Virgin ///
Grant peace to the world and great mercy to our souls.

At the First Hour, the Kathismas and prostrations, as usual.

Liturgy

The Troparion of the Forefeast, in Tone 4:

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Commands all to sing pre-festive praises, /
For behold, Gabriel comes, bearing an announcement to the Virgin /

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And he cries out to her: ///

Rejoice, thou who art full of grace, the Lord is with thee!

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RLE 12/20/2013

UPDATED 1/18/2017 SDA

3/10/2023 SDA