

THE 14th DAY OF THE MONTH OF JANUARY
APODOSIS OF HOLY THEOPHANY
COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY EQUAL OF THE APOSTLES NINA,
ENLIGHTENER OF IBERIA
AT GREAT VESPERS

After the Introductory Psalm, we chant “Blessed is the man ...,” the first antiphon.
On “Lord, I have cried ...,” 8 Stichera: 4 of the feast, the composition of John the
Monk, in Tone II:

The forerunner, beholding our Enlightener, Who illumineth every mortal, coming to be baptized, rejoiceth in soul and trembleth. He pointeth to Him with his hand and saith to the people: “This is He Who delivereth Israel, Who freeth us from corruption! O sinless Christ our God, glory be to Thee!”

When our Redeemer was baptized by His servant and borne witness to by the coming of the Holy Spirit, the angelic armies, looking on, were stricken with awe; and a voice was borne down from the Father in heaven: “He Whom the forerunner baptized with his hand is My beloved Son, in Whom I have been well-pleased!” O Christ our God, glory be to Thee!

The currents of the Jordan received Thee, the Well-spring, and the Comforter descended upon Thee in the form of a dove. Thou Who bowed down the heavens dost bow Thy head, and clay crieth out to the Potter: “What dost Thou command me to do, O Thou Who art greater than I? It is I who must needs be baptized of Thee! O sinless Christ our God, glory be to Thee!”

Desiring to save mankind who had strayed, Thou didst not disdain to clothe Thyself in the guise of a servant; for it was becoming to Thee, as Master and God, to assume what is ours for our sake; for when Thou wast baptized in the flesh, O Redeemer, Thou didst grant forgiveness unto us. Wherefore, we cry aloud to Thee: O Christ our God, glory be to Thee!

And 4 Stichera of the venerable one, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: “As one valiant among the martyrs ...”:

O blessed Nina, * handmaid of Christ God, the Redeemer of all, * O instructress of Iberia, mighty in faith, * who sprang forth blamelessly, * with gladness thou didst hasten after Him, * didst preach the true God to the people, * and didst instruct them * to renounce their inanimate idols, ** showing them the path of life. (Twice)

Holding in her hand * a sign of miracles, * a precious cross fashioned of vine-branches, * the blessed and holy Nina * wrought many wonders by its power * in the city of Maskheta. * Wherefore, as many as accepted her preaching * were healed of their sickness ** and rendered glory to God.

Let us glorify the holy Nina, the equal of the apostles, * who arrived in the East from the West * and enlightened with the teaching of Christ * a people who sat in darkness, * who brought all the tribes of Iberia to Christ God * and delivered by the power of God * the kings and princes * who were enslaved by the graven images, ** for she hath freed them from the delusion of idolatry.

Glory ..., in Tone II:

Come, all ye faithful, let us praise the harp of the Holy Spirit, and let us bless the instructress of piety, the healer of our souls and bodies. With wreaths of discourse let us crown the preacher and evangelist, the equal of the apostles, the radiant beacon of Iberia, the trumpet of divine sound, the godly-minded Nina, the all-famed herald of the most pure Mother of God; and let us cry out to her thus: Rejoice, unblemished turtle-dove and pure dove! Rejoice, instructress of the knowledge of God! Rejoice, fellow laborer with the Apostles Paul and Andrew! Rejoice, enlightenment of Iberia and glory of all the world!

Both now ..., Doxasticon of the feast, in the same tone:

Thou didst bow Thy head before the forerunner, and didst crush the heads of the serpents; and, arriving at the streams, Thou didst illumine all things, O Savior, that they may glorify Thee, the Enlightener of our souls.

Entrance. Prokeimenon of the day. Three Lessons:

A READING FROM THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF JOHN (I JN. 3: 21-4:6)

Beloved: if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us. Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us.

A READING FROM THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF JOHN (1 IN. 4: 11-16)

Beloved: if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected

in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

READING FROM THE FIRST EPISTLE GENERAL OF JOHN (4:20-5:5)

Beloved: If a man saith: "I love God," and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God Whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from Him, That he who loveth God love his brother also. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments. For thin is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

At Litiya, the Sticheron of the temple, and the Stichera of the feast, the composition of Cosmas the Monk, in Tone IV:

He that hath adorned Himself with light as it were with a garment hath deigned for our sake to become like as we are; and today He is covered with the streams of the Jordan, though He hath no need to be purified by them, but that, through the cleansing He receiveth, He might Himself bestow regeneration upon us. Oh, the wonder! Without fire Christ God, the Savior of our souls, casteth anew, and without shattering He hath fashioned, and He saveth those who are enlightened in Him.

Come ye, let us emulate the wise virgins! Come ye, let us greet the Master Who hath appeared unto us! For He hath come to John like a Bridegroom. The Jordan, seeing Thee, was afraid and halted. And John cried out: "I dare not touch the head of the Immortal One!" The Spirit descended in the form of a dove, to sanctify the water. And a voice was heard from heaven, saying: "This is my Son Who hath come into the world to save the human race!" O Lord, glory be to Thee!

Christ is baptized and cometh up out of the waters. He leadeth up the world with Himself, and gazeth at the heavens opening, which Adam had closed to himself and those with him. And the Spirit testifieth to His divinity, for He hasteneth to One Who is like unto Him. A voice is heard from heaven: the Savior of our souls is borne witness to from thence.

Glory ..., Both now ..., in Tone IV:

Desiring to fulfill that which Thou hast established from before time, O Lord, Thou didst accept ministers of Thy mystery from among all creatures: Gabriel from among the angels, the Virgin from among men, the star from among the heavens, and the Jordan from among the waters, wherein Thou didst destroy the iniquity of the world. O our Savior, glory be to Thee!

On the Aposticha, these Stichera of the venerable one, in Tone I:

The virgin Nina loved Christ God, Who was born of the Virgin, that with a loud voice she might proclaim His holy name to the tribes of Iberia. Wherefore, Christ the Lord, the heavenly Bridegroom, hath given her the gifts of the Holy Spirit and made her an equal of the apostles, in that she is a vessel of the grace of the Spirit; and through her He hath given us salvation, in that He is the Lover of mankind.

Verse: Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth, * and their words unto the ends of the world.

O Christ, radiant Bridegroom, where Thy feet were sweetly fragrant, there trod Thy holy and chaste bride, the blessed Nina, the pure dove, the magnificent turtle-dove, the melodious swallow; and, exhaling the fragrance of Thy myrrh, she proclaimed Thy holy name with a loud voice, and with mighty power taught all the people of Iberia and Kartalinia to believe in Thy divinity.

Verse: The heavens declare the glory of God, * and the firmament proclaimeth the work of His hands.

The dread power of darkness hath been cast down; the devil hath been vanquished! Thunder hath smitten Armazi, and the wrath of heaven hath overtaken Zaden. The cross hath been lifted up, and we have been given access to the holy font of grace-bearing baptism at the life-creating footprint. Wherefore, having received baptism through thy preaching of Christ, O all-praised Nina, we, the children of God, are gladdened spiritually, and, renewed, we hymn Christ God.

Glory ..., in Tone VIII:

In the church, O blessed Nina, thou didst richly mix the cup of grace with the outpourings of the Holy Spirit; wherefore, thy most glorious evening festival calleth all the faithful whom the grace of the Spirit of God hath regenerated in the font of holy baptism. For this cause let all who have put on Christ praise God with hymns and, celebrating today, let them magnify the divinely radiant Trinity, saying thus: O Almighty God Who hath wrought wonders, preserve us who confess Thee!

Both now ..., the composition of Theophanes, in Tone VI:

The radiant lamp who came forth from a barren woman, beholding the Sun Who shone forth from the Virgin asking for baptism in the Jordan, cried out to Him in awe and joy: “Do Thou sanctify me, O Master, by Thy divine epiphany!”

Troparion of the venerable one, in Tone IV:

O holy Nina, equal of the apostles, * minister of the word of God, * who emulated the first-called Andrew and the other apostles in apostolic preaching, * enlightener of Iberia and harp of the Holy Spirit: ** entreat Christ God, that our souls be saved.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Troparion of the feast, in Tone I:

When Thou wast baptized in the Jordan, O Lord, * the worship of the Trinity was made manifest: * for the voice of the Father bare witness unto Thee * calling Thee His beloved Son; * and the Spirit in the guise of a dove * confirmed the certainty of His words. * O Christ God, Who hast appeared ** and enlightened the world, glory be to Thee!

But if a vigil be celebrated, we chant the Troparion of the saint, twice; and the Troparion of the feast, once.

AT MATINS

On “God is the Lord ...,” the Troparion of the feast, in Tone I:

When Thou wast baptized in the Jordan, O Lord, * the worship of the Trinity was made manifest: * for the voice of the Father bare witness unto Thee * calling Thee His beloved Son; * and the Spirit in the guise of a dove * confirmed the certainty of His words. * O Christ God, Who hast appeared ** and enlightened the world, glory be to Thee! (Twice)

Glory ..., Troparion of the venerable one, in Tone IV:

O holy Nina, equal of the apostles, * minister of the word of God, * who emulated the first-called Andrew and the other apostles in apostolic preaching, * enlightener of Iberia and harp of the Holy Spirit: ** entreat Christ God, that our souls be saved.

Both now ..., that of the feast (Once).

After the 1st chanting of the Psalter, the Sessional Hymn, in Tone III:

With spiritual discourse thou didst bedew our whole land, O Nina, equal of the apostles, and thus rendered it fertile, that it might produce the seed of faith. And thou didst enlighten the ends of the world and uproot the tares of unbelief, baptizing the peoples of Iberia in the name of the beginningless Trinity.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Sessional Hymn of the feast, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: “Go Thou quickly before ...”:

Thou didst sanctify the streams of the Jordan and didst crush the might of sin, a Christ our God; Thou didst bow Thy head beneath the hand of the forerunner and hast saved the human race from deception. Wherefore, we entreat Thee: Save Thou our souls!

After the 2nd chanting of the Psalter, the Sessional Hymn, in Tone VIII:

O holy city, adornment of the Church, rejoice and be glad, for today is celebrated the splendid festival of our mother Nina, the equal of the apostles, the preacher of the Gospel who founded thee; and cry out with us: O Christ God, by her supplications establish Thy Faith.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Sessional Hymn of the feast, in Tone IV:

Wherefore didst thou marvel, O River Jordan, seeing the Invisible One naked? “I beheld and trembled,” it said, “for how could I have desired not to be filled with awe of Him and withdraw?” The angels were filled with fear, beholding Him; heaven was affrighted, and the earth quaked; the sea, and all things visible and invisible, were troubled. Christ appeared in the Jordan, to sanctify the waters.

Polyeleos, and this magnification: We magnify thee, O holy Nina, equal of the apostles, who illumined the whole land of Iberia with the light of the Gospel and led it to Christ.

Selected Psalm verse:

A: The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament proclaimeth the work of His hands.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Alleluia ..., Glory to Thee, O God! (Thrice)

After the Polyeleos, the Sessional Hymn, in Tone VIII:

Having been chosen beforehand by the Mother of God, and taken the rank of the apostles, thou didst illumine the land of Iberia with the light of the Gospel, hymning the Redeemer with the angels and praying unceasingly to Him for us, that Christ grant us grace and mercy.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Sessional Hymn of the feast, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: "Joseph was amazed ...":

Come, O ye faithful, let us see where Christ hath been baptized. Let us follow now to the River Jordan, to the voice of him who crieth in the wilderness, and let us behold there the Creator of Adam, Who in His ineffable compassion is touched by the hand of His servant, and let us cry aloud to Him: Thou hast come, Thou hast appeared in the Jordan, to sanctify the waters!

Song of Ascents, the first antiphon of Tone IV

Prokeimenon, in Tone IV: Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth * and their words unto the ends to the world.

Verse: The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth forth the work of His hands.

Let every breath praise the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW, §34, (MT 10:1,5-8)

At that time, when Jesus had called unto Him His twelve disciples, He gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them saying: "Go not into the way of the gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying: The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give."

After Psalm 50, this Sticheron, in Tone VI-

Come, let us all hymn Nina, the equal of the apostles, the divinely wise enlightener of Iberia; for she dispelled the delusion of idolatry, leading us out of the darkness into the light, and taught us to worship the consubstantial Trinity. Wherefore, all ye faithful, let us celebrate her honored memory with faith, and glorify our Savior.

Both canons of the feast, with 8 Troparia, including the irmoi; and that of the saint, with 6 Troparia.

ODE I

Canon I of the feast, the acrostic whereof is: “Baptism is the cleansing of mortals’ sins”, the composition of Cosmas the Monk, in Tone II:

Irmos: The Lord mighty in battle * uncovered the foundation of the deep * and led His servants on dry ground; * but He covered their adversaries with the waters, * for He hath been glorified.

The Lord, the King of the ages, restoreth corrupted Adam with the streams of the Jordan and crusheth the heads of the serpents who make their nest therein, for He hath been glorified.

The Lord Who became incarnate of the Virgin, clothing material flesh in the immaterial fire of the Godhead, doth wrap Himself in the water of the Jordan, for He hath been glorified.

He Who washeth away the defilement of men, cleanseth Himself for them in the Jordan desiring to make Himself like unto them, yet remaining as He was before, the Lord Who enlighteneth those in darkness, for He hath been glorified.

Canon II of the feast (originally written in iambic verse), in Tone II, the composition of St. John of Damascus:

Irmos: Israel traversed the stormy depths of the sea, * which had straightway become as dry land; * but the dark waters engulfed the chief captains of Egypt * in a watery grave, * by the mighty power of the right hand of the Master.

When the Light of the radiant Dawn shone forth upon mortal men, coming forth from the wilderness to the waters of the Jordan Thou O King of the Sun, didst bow Thy neck before him, that Thou mightest ransom our forefather from the minions of darkness and cleanse creation of all defilement.

O beginningless Word, Thou hast buried mankind with Thyself in the stream, and Thou dost lead him forth new again, that had been corrupted by deception; and the mighty voice of the Father testifieth to Thee ineffably, saying: This is My beloved Son, the Child Who is equal to Me by nature.

Canon of the venerable one, in Tone I:

Irmos: The Master saved His people by working a wonder, * making solid the watery waves of the sea of old; * and having willingly been born of the Virgin, * He hath set before us a path leading to heaven. * Let us glorify Him Who is by nature equal to both the Father and mankind.

Open Thou my lips, O Christ God, that I may praise and hymn the virgin Nina, the equal of the apostles and preacher; and enlighten my mind, that, as is meet, I may adorn with flowers of discourse her who is worthy.

Thou didst bring knowledge to tribes alien to thee, O all-famed Nina, and, made wise by the Holy Spirit, thou didst behold the Lord Himself in a vision. Wherefore, O divinely wise virgin, in a barren land thou didst bring the people of Iberia to Christ.

Like a dove who flew in from the West, by thy love thou didst turn to the Creator the hardhearted barbarians who worshipped idols, and when they were renewed by grace, O immaculate bride of Christ, thou didst betroth them to thy Bridegroom.

Theotokion: **T**he holy virgin was the vessel of thy beneficence, O most pure Virgin Theotokos, and she enlightened the land which had fallen to thee by lot. Wherefore, we beseech thee: Take her with thee to make entreaty for those who cry out to thee: Have mercy upon thy portion!

Katavasia: **The Irmos of the first festal canon, followed by that of the second festal canon.**

ODE III

Canon I of the feast

Irmos: **The Lord who granteth strength unto our kings, * and exalteth the horn of His anointed, * is born of a Virgin and cometh unto baptism. * Therefore let us, the faithful, cry aloud: * None is as holy as our God.**

O Church of Christ, who of old wast barren and grievously childless, be glad today; for by water and the Spirit children have been born unto thee, who cry out with faith: None is as holy as our God!

In the wilderness the forerunner crieth out with a loud voice: “Prepare ye the ways of Christ and make straight the paths of our God, crying out with faith: None is as holy as our God!”

Canon II of the feast

Irmos: **From the ancient snares have we all been set loose, * and the teeth of the lions have been smashed asunder. * Let us then rejoice with great joy * and open wide our mouths, * weaving with words a sweet hymn to the Word, * Who delighteth in bestowing gifts upon us.**

He who once assumed the form of a malignant serpent and planted death in the garden of creation, is now cast into darkness by Christ’s coming in the flesh; and by assailing the Master, the Dawn which hath shone forth upon us, he hath crushed his own hateful head.

The Master draweth to Himself the divinely fashioned nature of mankind, which had been overcome by the tyranny of greed; and He restoreth mortals, granting them a new birth, and accomplishing thereby a mighty work; for He is come to cleanse our nature.

Canon of the venerable one

Irmos: Look upon the hymns of Thy servants, O Benefactor, * and humble the vaunted pride of the enemy; * bearing far above sin those who hymn Thee * making them unshakably firm by the foundation of faith, * O Thou Good One Who seest all.

Mercifully mindful of us in His tender compassion, God made thee a zealous evangelist, who, though a woman, wast adorned with manly understanding; and He hath revealed thee to us as full of the Holy Spirit, and by thy preaching of Christ hath adopted us through faith in Him.

The shell hath fallen away from our insensitive hearts, our deafened ears have been opened by the sound of thy preaching, and the darkness of our mind hath been scattered by the light of the Christian doctrine proclaimed by thee, O holy Nina, equal of the apostles, valiant disciple of Christ.

Those who once worshiped graven images and abode in the darkness of ungodliness have been freed from the delusion of idolatry by thy coming, O blessed Nina. And Arman trembled when thunder rolled, and the savagery of Zaden was brought to an end.

Theotokion: Through thee, O Virgin Theotokos, were we removed from the pit of ungodliness when it pleased thee to accomplish our enlightenment by a woman. And when we emerged from the holy font, through the blessed Nina we came to know thy Son and our God.

Kontakion of the feast, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: "Thou hast appeared ...":

Thou hast appeared today to the whole world, * and Thy light, O Lord, hath been signed upon us * who with understanding hymn Thee. * Thou hast come, Thou hast appeared, ** the Light unapproachable.

Ikos: Upon Galilee of the nations, upon the land of Zebulon and the land of Naphthali, as the prophet said, a great Light hath shone, even Christ. A radiant darkness hath dawned upon those who sat in darkness, shining forth from Bethlehem. The Lord born of Mary, the Sun of righteousness, shineth forth with splendor upon the whole world. Come, therefore, all ye naked children of Adam, and let us clothe ourselves in Him, that we may be warmed; for He Who covereth the naked and enlighteneth those in darkness, hath come. He hath appeared, the Light unapproachable!

Sessional Hymn of the venerable one, in Tone II:

Today Nina, our guide, the equal of the apostles and handmaid of Christ, emitteth sweet fragrance and shineth forth in our land like a never-waning sun, the herald of Christ God, the Sun of righteousness, the luminous star, the radiant beacon of the whole world, the priceless treasure of the land of Iberia.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Sessional Hymn of the feast, in Tone V:

When Thou didst illumine all things by Thine epiphany, then did the briny sea of unbelief flee, and Jordan, which floweth down, turned back, bearing us up to the heavens. Yet by the loftiness of Thy divine commandments, O Christ God, preserve Thou and save us through the prayers of the Theotokos.

ODE IV

Canon I of the feast

Irmos: I heard, O Lord, Thy voice, * which Thou didst call the voice of one crying in the wilderness, * for Thou didst thunder over the multitude of waters, * bearing witness to Thy Son. * And, wholly filled with the Spirit which had descended, * He cried aloud: * Thou art Christ, the Wisdom and Power of God!

“Who hath ever seen the sun cleansed, which is most bright by nature?” the herald crieth out. “Am I then to wash with water Thee, the Effulgence of glory, the Image of the ever-existent Father? Am I, who am grass, to touch Thy divinity? For Thou art Christ, the Wisdom and Power of God!”

“When he happened upon Thee, Moses showed the divine reverence he felt, for he understood that it was Thee Who spake out of the bush; and he straightway averted his face. How, then, can I gaze directly at Thee? How can I touch Thee with my hand? For Thou art Christ, the Wisdom and Power of God!”

“Wisely doing what is spiritual, and being honored with speech, yet am I in awe before inanimate things. For if I baptize Thee, the mountain which smoked with fire, the sea which parted in twain and this Jordan which turned back will be mine accusers. For Thou art Christ, the Wisdom and Power of God!”

Canon II of the feast

Irmos: Purified by the fire of a mystical vision, * the prophet praiseth the restoration of mankind; * and, filled with the inspiration of the Spirit, * he lifteth up his voice to reveal the incarnation of the ineffable Word, * by Whom the dominion of the mighty hath been abolished.

O most radiant Word, Who hast been sent forth by the Father, Thou comest to repel utterly the night of evil darkness and to uproot the sins of mankind, and by Thy baptism to draw forth children of light from the streams of the Jordan, O Good One.

When he saw in very truth the Word Who had been foretold, the herald bare witness of Him to creation, and cried, plainly saying, This is He Who was before me, yet cometh after. Though like us in form, He hath shone forth with divine power to take away our hateful sin!

That He might bring His own back to the life-giving pastures of paradise, the Word of God falleth upon the lairs of the dragons, and destroying their manifold snares, he assaileth him who hath bruised all mankind, and, imprisoning him, delivereth creation.

Canon of the venerable one

Irmos: **The renewal of the human race was hymned of old * and proclaimed beforehand by the Prophet Habbakuk, * who having ineffably been deemed worthy to behold in image; * the Word coming forth from the mountain, * the Virgin, as a little Babe, * for the restoration of the people.**

As one greater than a fearless lion, thou didst mightily preach Christ God. Thou didst pursue the Parthians with the power of miracles, offering Garana and Rhipsimia to Christ as a gift through the contest of their valiant martyrdom, and He preserved thee, to enlighten the land of Iberia through thee.

Like an eagle thou didst bring the form of our land of Iberia to thine eyes, O most glorious Nina, and, burning with holy zeal for God, illumining it with the light of the Gospel.

Having authority to dispel the darkness, emulating the Emperor Constantine, the equal of the apostles, thou didst enlighten the wise king, O our instructress and sensible physician. Wherefore, we bless thy name, O virgin preacher of Christ, great Nina, equal of the apostles.

Theotokion: **The people of Iberia, whose lot fell to thee, O Theotokos, delivered by thee from the delusion of idolatry, and enlightened with the glad tidings of our venerable mother Nina, cry out to thee: Save us, O Mother of Christ God, who art our deliverance!**

ODE V

Canon I of the feast

Irmos: **Jesus, the Prince of Life, * hath come to set loose from condemnation * Adam the first-formed man; * and though as God He needeth no cleansing, * yet for the sake of fallen man He is cleansed in the Jordan. * In its streams He slew the enmity * and bestoweth the peace that passeth all understanding.**

When countless people went down to be baptized of John, Thou Thyself didst stand in their midst. And he announced to those present: “Who hath told you, O rebellious ones, to avoid the impending wrath? Bring forth fruits worthy of Christ; for He standeth before you, granting peace.”

Standing in their midst, the Creator and Fashioner alone trieth the hearts of all; and taking his winnowing-fan in His hand, He doth all-wisely separate the harvest of the whole world, letting the chaff fall away; and granting eternal life to the fruitful.

Canon II of the feast

Irmos: **Washed clean of the poison of the dark and defiled enemy * by the cleansing of the Spirit, * we have set out upon a new path * which leadeth to unapproachable joy, * to which only they whom God hath reconciled with himself * can draw near.**

The Creator, beholding him whom He had formed of dust bound by inescapable bonds in the darkness of sin, raised him up and laid him on His shoulders; and now, in the midst of abundant waters, He washeth him clean from the ancient shame of Adam's sinful inclination.

With piety let us eagerly make haste to the most pure wellsprings of the stream of salvation, and, gazing upon the Word Who hath come forth from the incorrupt Virgin, let us drink the pure water which quenched our holy thirst, gently healing the infirmity of the world.

Canon of the venerable one

Irmos: O Christ Who art our cleansing, come unto us, * who out of the night of the deeds of gloomy delusion, * valiantly hymn Thee as a Benefactor, * granting us an expeditious path, * ascending upon which we find glory.

The idols fell in the land of Iberia, and temples of the Lord were erected by thee, O our mother; and we, the children of Sion, enlightened by thee, today glorify the Godhead in three Hypostases, venerate the precious Cross of Christ, and honor His healing tunic.

The children of those who had been exiled in the days of the tower of Babylon because of their impiety, and knew not how to chant hymnody to the Lord, now issuing forth from the holy font, say: We have been clothed in Christ, having been baptized into Christ!

When Pharaoh reigned over the Egyptians, those who sat in the darkness of Egypt were not able to worship the true God; but let us, the children of Sion, delivered by Nina, joyfully chant unto the Lord today.

Theotokion: When the physician came unto me, O most holy Theotokos, I arose from my bed of sickness, and I have been delivered by the venerable Nina from the delusion of unclean idols. These things doth the generation of Iberia cry out, saying: I hymn thee, my hope, O Mother of God!

ODE VI

Canon I of the feast

Irmos: The Voice of the Word, the Candlestick of the Light, * the Morning Star and Forerunner of the Sun, * cried in the wilderness to all the peoples: * 'Repent and be cleansed beforehand. * For lo, Christ is at hand, * Who delivereth the world from corruption.

Christ, Who was begotten incorruptibly of God the Father, is incarnate of the Virgin without defilement, The forerunner teacheth that it is not possible to loose the sandals, the bond between the Word and us, of Him Who delivereth mortals from deception.

Christ shall baptize His enemies, who do not acknowledge Him as God, with the uttermost fire; but He shall restore with the water of grace those who accept His divinity, delivering them from their transgressions.

Canon II of the feast

Irmos: With a supremely blessed voice * the Father revealed His Beloved One, * Whom He had begotten from the womb. * Verily, saith He, this is the splendid Son, * of the same nature as Myself, * and He hath come forth from the human race. * He is My living Word, * Who by My providence hath become a man.

The prophet, mysteriously swallowed up for the space of three nights in the belly of the sea monster, came forth again, making manifest beforehand to all our regeneration in the last times, and our deliverance from the dragon that slayeth mankind.

When the shining vaults of heaven were opened, he who knew the Scriptures beheld the Spirit, Who proceedeth from the Father and abideth in the most pure Word, descending in an ineffable manner in the form of a dove; and he commanded the multitudes to hasten to the Master.

Canon of the venerable one

Irmos: Dwelling in the uttermost depths of the sea, * Jonah besought Thee to come and still the tempest; * and I, pierced by the arrow of the tyrant, * chant unto Thee, O Christ * Thou Destroyer of evil, * do Thou come quickly unto my slothfulness!

When the light arises from the West, desist O north, and blow thou O south; for the sun hath arisen dispelling the darkness, and a warm breeze hath drawn nigh to melt the ice. Behold, the holy Nina, the preacher of Christ, cometh!

Delivered by thee from the darkness of idolatry, O Nina equal of the apostles, all the people of Kartalinia hymn thee and cry out with compunction: Dispel wickedness and drive away the devil and our adversaries from us!

The holy font, prepared by thee by the life-creating pillar and the place where the tunic of the Lord was preserved, did not slay the children, but brought them to life, anointing them with holy oil. Wherefore, we cry out to thee: Rejoice, O virgin Nina, equal of the apostles!

Theotokion: O unashamed hope of those who trust in thee, who alone hast given birth in the flesh to Christ our God in a manner transcending nature, with the blessed Nina beseech Him, that He grant to the land of Iberia confirmation and prosperity in the Faith, and to us correction of life before the end.

Kontakion of the venerable one, in Tone II:

Come ye all, and let us hymn today the all-famed Nina, * the preacher of the Word of God, * the equal of the apostles, who was chosen by Christ, * the wise evangelist who hath led the people of Kartalinia * to the path of life and truth, * the disciple of the Mother of God, ** our fervent helper and tireless guardian.

Ikos: With spiritual harps let the all-famed Nina be praised: the wise preacher, the enlightener of Iberia, who through the chosen priests sanctified in the font of baptism the people who had fallen to her by lot, the equal of the apostles, the beloved handmaid of Christ, who received Ten Commandments of God like Moses the God-seer. Come ye, therefore, and with hymns let us bless today our fervent helper and tireless guardian.

ODE VII

Canon I of the feast

Irmos: The breath of the wind heavy with dew * and the descent of the angel of God * preserved the Holy Children from all harm, * as they walked in the fiery furnace. * Refreshed with dew in the flames, * they sang in thanksgiving: * 'Blessed and supremely praised art Thou, * O Lord God of our fathers.'

As in heaven, with trembling and wonder the angelic hosts stood before Thee in the Jordan, gazing at the extent of God's condescension; for the God of our fathers, Who holdeth the firmament of the waters above, stood, incarnate as a man, in the waters.

The cloud and the sea of old prefigured the wonder of divine baptism, for the ancient people of the law were baptized therein when they fled Egypt. The sea was an image of the water, and the cloud was an image of the Spirit, whereby we are made perfect. And we cry out: Blessed art Thou, O Lord God, throughout the ages!

O all ye faithful, in Him have we received perfection; and, theologizing continually with the angels let us glorify the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. For, lo! the consubstantial Trinity of Hypostases is the One God. To Him do we chant: Blessed art Thou, O Lord God, throughout the ages!

Canon II of the feast

Irmos: He Who burnt the heads of the dragons in the waters, * cooled the lofty flame * that encircled the pious youths in the furnace; * He it is that doth wash away all the unbearable gloom of sin * by the dew of the Spirit.

The fierce Assyrian flame that prefigured Thee hast Thou quenched, transforming it into dew. And now, O Christ, Thou hast clothed Thyself in water as in flame, and Thou burnest up the harmful malice hidden in its depths, which calleth men to fall with stumbling step.

When the Jordan was parted of old, the people of Israel passed clean over on dry ground, prefiguring Thee, O most powerful Lord, Who now bearest up creation in the waters without touching it, leading it to a better and imperishable path.

We know that in the beginning Thou didst, in Thy mercy, bring the waters of the flood upon the earth to destroy every living substance that Thou hadst made. And now, O Christ, Who workest wonders strange and most great, Thou hast drowned sin in the waters of Thy compassion, unto the salvation of mortal men.

Canon of the venerable one

Irmos: Captured by the love of the King of all, * the children reviled the uncontrollable rage and ungodly blasphemies of the tyrant, * and the great fire submitted to them as they spake unto the Master saying: * Blessed art Thou unto the ages

Thou didst spurn the chambers of the king and queen as a place of captivity and sojourning; yet by the grace of Christ thou didst lead them to Christ God out of uttermost captivity, O Nina equal of the apostles, preacher of the glad tidings of salvation.

When thou didst erect thy holy pillar and lift up thy hands, the hosts of the devil were filled with fear and trembling, and, fleeing, they groaned bitterly; but we cry aloud: Blessed art Thou, O Christ God, forever!

When thy words rang forth, the people fell prostrate as though at the sound of royal trumpets, and realms and rulers trembled, saying: O captive who art the liberation of captives, may thine arrival be blessed!

Theotokion: O Mother of God who wast manifestly foretold by the prophets, O most immaculate Virgin Mary, by thy sojourn in Egypt with Jesus Christ, the divine Infant, thou didst break asunder the graven images of Egypt down to the foundation, and through Nina hast destroyed the idols of Kartalinia. Be thou blessed, O Ever-virgin!

ODE VIII

Canon I of the feast

Irmos: The Babylonian furnace, as it poured forth dew, * foreshadowed a marvelous mystery: * how the Jordan should receive in its streams the immaterial fire, * and should encompass the Creator, * when He was baptized in the flesh. * Him do ye peoples bless and supremely exalt throughout all ages.

“Put aside all fear,” the Redeemer said to the forerunner; “Obey Me, in that I am good, and touch Me, for this have I become by nature. Submit to My commands and baptize Me Who am come down.” Him do the people bless and supremely exalt throughout all ages.

When the Baptist heard the words of the Master, he stretched forth his hand with trembling, and as he touched the head of his Creator he cried out to Him Who was being baptized: “Sanctify me, for Thou art my God, Whom the people bless and supremely exalt throughout all ages!”

The Trinity was revealed in the Jordan, for the Father, the all-divine Essence Himself, announced: “This One Who is baptized is my beloved Son!” And the Spirit came upon Him Who was like unto Him, Whom the people bless and supremely exalt throughout all ages.

Canon II of the feast

Irmos: **C**reation hath found itself set free, * and those who previously sat in darkness are now sons of light; * alone the prince of darkness moaneth, * wherefore let His inheritance * which was formerly in misery * now bless Him Who hath accomplished this.

The three godly children, sprinkled with dew in the midst of the fire, plainly prefigured how the transcendent Nature, which is resplendent with most radiant rays of threefold holiness, doth, through human nature, mercifully consume all pernicious falsehood with the fire of dew.

Let the whole of earthly creation be clothed in white for this day it is raised up from its fall to heaven; and, washed and most splendidly cleansed in the flowing waters by the Word, by Whom all things are preserved, it hath escaped its former sins.

Canon of the venerable one

Irmos: **T**he children who in the time of the Old Covenant * were cast into the fire, * prefigured the unconsumed womb of the Maiden, * which hath supernaturally given birth yet remaineth sealed; * and both working as a single miracle * moveth the people to hymn the Grace of each.

The memory of the holy Nina deserveth celebration. Come, therefore, ye who are faithful to Christ, let us glorify and thank our merciful God. Ye generations, tribes and children of Sion, hold festival with us in spiritual joy, saying: Glory to the preacher of Christ our God!

Rejoice, O land of Kartalinia, crowned by Nina with the crown of Christ! Shine thou and adorn thyself; for the holy Nina, the equal of the apostles, doth summon us, illumining all with the light of the Lord!

Thou hast commanded us to keep holy the Faith which thou didst teach to the newly converted people, O equal of the apostles. Wherefore, visit thou and establish the vines which thou hast planted amid thy spiritual flock.

Theotokion: **O** Mother of Christ God, the Creator of all things that exist, preserve thou the generation of Kartalinia, which through thee hath been vouchsafed life everlasting, through the supplications of the blessed Nina.

ODE IX

Canon I of the feast

Irmos: Every tongue is at a loss to praise thee as is due: * even a spirit from the world above is filled with dizziness, * when it seeketh to sing thy praises, O Theotokos. * But since thou art good, accept our faith: * Thou knowest well our love inspired by God, * for thou art the Protector of Christians and we magnify thee.

O David, come thou in spirit to the enlightened and chant, saying: “Approach God now with faith and be illumined! Lowly Adam cried out in his fall, and the Lord heard him, and, coming to the streams of the Jordan, He restored the corrupted one.”

Isaiah saith: “Change your ways and cleanse yourselves; leave off your wickedness in the face of the Lord! Ye who thirst, go to the living Water; for Christ sprinkleth with water those who have recourse to Him with faith, renewing them, and He baptizeth with the Spirit unto life which ageeth not.”

By grace and the seal are we preserved, O ye faithful; for as of old the blood-smeared lintels permitted the Hebrews to escape the destroyer, so shall the laver of regeneration be for us a divine exodus. And henceforth we shall see the never-waning light of the Trinity.

Canon II of the feast

Irmos: The wonders of thy birthgiving pass all understanding, * O all-pure Bride, blessed Mother! * Through thee we have received the most perfect salvation, * wherefore we praise our Benefactor as is meet and right, * bearing a hymn of thanksgiving unto Him as a gift.

That which was revealed to Moses in the bush we see here fulfilled in a wondrous manner; for as it bare fire, yet was not consumed, so hath the Virgin been preserved, who hath given birth unto the Benefactor Who bringeth us light, and the streams of the Jordan suffered no harm when they received Him.

O beginningless King, through the communion of the Spirit dost Thou anoint and make perfect the nature of mankind, and cleansing it in the pure streams of baptism, putting the arrogant might of darkness to shame, Thou dost now raise it up to eternal life.

Canon of the venerable one

Irmos: From fear it may be easier, * for us to prefer silence, * for though not fraught with danger, O Virgin, * it is difficult to fashion hymns fittingly wrought for thee. * Yet, O Mother, grant us the power to chant in such a way, * insofar as it is our will.

For us thy memory is desirable, thy working of miracles is wondrous, thy life is holy. O chaste Nina, through thee are all things become for our good.

The shrine of thy relics, which pour forth grace, is the confirmation of the land of Theria. Wherefore, it crieth unto thee: O blessed Nina, preserve us by thine aid!

O preacher and enlightener, look upon our compunctionate hymnody, and move thou the Lord to have mercy on us. Let not us, who love to sing thy praises, perish in our sins, but, standing before the throne of God, entreat Christ God, that our souls be saved.

Theotokion: **H**earken to our entreaties, O Mother of God, and with the help of the venerable Nina drive away from us all temptations. Grant thy mercy unto us, and victory over heresies to our Orthodox hierarchs.

Exapostilarion of the venerable one:

Spec. Mel.: “The Orient from on high hath visited us ...”:

O equal of the apostles, preacher and evangelist of Christ, who deliverest us from the assaults of the enemy, even though thou art hidden in the earth, away from our sight, yet thou abidest alive at the throne of Christ our God. Be thou therefore the helper of those who fervently honor thee. **(Twice)**

Glory ..., Both now ..., Exapostilarion of the feast, in the same melody:

From on high our Savior, the Dayspring of the East, hath visited us, and we who are in darkness and shadow have truly found Him; for the Lord hath been born of the Virgin.

On the Praises, 6 Stichera:

3 of the feast, in Tone I:

The composition of Germanus the Patriarch,

Christ our Savior, the Light of Light, hath shone forth upon the world, manifesting Himself as God. Let us worship Him, O ye people!

How can we who are servants honor the Master as is meet? for He hath restored us all in the waters.

Baptized in the Jordan, touched by Thy servant’s hand, O our Savior, Thou didst sanctify the waters, healing the sufferings of the world. Great is the mystery of Thine epiphany! O Lord Who lovest mankind, glory be to Thee!

And 3 Stichera of the venerable one, in Tone I:

Rejoice with thy children in the glorious assembly of the blessed Nina, O Church of God! Rejoice and form a spiritual solemnity, to hymn our preacher, the herald of the glad tidings of the kingdom of heaven, who is the equal of the apostles! **(Twice)**

The holy Cross of Christ, the spiritual sign, hath been signed upon us who have received the preaching of the blessed Nina. Wherefore, let us cry aloud, saying: O life-creating Cross of the Lord, preserve us all, for in Christ have we been baptized, and we have put on Christ! Save Thou Thy people, O Christ God!

Glory ..., in Tone II:

Today the hosts of heaven rejoice with those on earth; today the land of Kartalinia, protected by the Cross, is arrayed in power, and the horn of the Church is lifted up; today the temple of the most holy Theotokos is magnificently adorned for the memorial of the holy Nina. O ye faithful, let us hymn Christ, Who is both God and man, and let us cry aloud: Glory to God in the highest!

Both now ..., the composition of Anatolius, in Tone VI:

Today Christ hath come to be baptized in the Jordan! Today John toucheth the head of the Master! The hosts of heaven were in awe, beholding this most glorious mystery; the sea saw and fled, the Jordan, seeing it, turned back. But we, illumined, cry out: Glory to God Who hath appeared, was seen on earth and hath illumined the world!

Great Doxology. After the Trisagion, the Troparion of the saint;
Glory ..., Both now ..., Troparion of the feast. Litanies. Dismissal. First Hour.

AT LITURGY

On the Beatitudes, 8 Troparia: 4 from ODE IX of the first canon of the feast; and 4 from ODE VI of the canon of the venerable one.

O David, come thou in spirit to the enlightened and chant, saying: “Approach God now with faith and be illumined! Lowly Adam cried out in his fall, and the Lord heard him, and, coming to the streams of the Jordan, He restored the corrupted one.”
(Twice)

Isaiah saith: “Change your ways and cleanse yourselves; leave off your wickedness in the face of the Lord! Ye who thirst, go to the living Water; for Christ sprinkleth with water those who have recourse to Him with faith, renewing them, and He baptizeth with the Spirit unto life which ageeth not.”

By grace and the seal are we preserved, O ye faithful; for as of old the blood-smearred lintels permitted the Hebrews to escape the destroyer, so shall the laver of regeneration be for us a divine exodus. And henceforth we shall see the never-waning light of the Trinity.

When the light arises from the West, desist O north, and blow thou O south; for the sun hath arisen dispelling the darkness, and a warm breeze hath drawn nigh to melt the ice. Behold, the holy Nina, the preacher of Christ, cometh!

Delivered by thee from the darkness of idolatry, O Nina equal of the apostles, all the people of Kartalinia hymn thee and cry out with compunction: Dispel wickedness and drive away the devil and our adversaries from us!

The holy font, prepared by thee by the life-creating pillar and the place where the tunic of the Lord was preserved, did not slay the children, but brought them to life, anointing them with holy oil. Wherefore, we cry out to thee: Rejoice, O virgin Nina, equal of the apostles!

Theotokion: **O** unashamed hope of those who trust in thee, who alone hast given birth in the flesh to Christ our God in a manner transcending nature, with the blessed Nina beseech Him, that He grant to the land of Iberia confirmation and prosperity in the Faith, and to us correction of life before the end.

Troparion of the feast, in Tone I:

When Thou wast baptized in the Jordan, O Lord, * the worship of the Trinity was made manifest: * for the voice of the Father bare witness unto Thee * calling Thee His beloved Son; * and the Spirit in the guise of a dove * confirmed the certainty of His words. * O Christ God, Who hast appeared ** and enlightened the world, glory be to Thee!

Troparion of the venerable one, in Tone IV:

O holy Nina, equal of the apostles, * minister of the word of God, * who emulated the first-called Andrew and the other apostles in apostolic preaching, * enlightener of Iberia and harp of the Holy Spirit: ** entreat Christ God, that our souls be saved.

Glory ..., Kontakion of the venerable one, in Tone II:

Come ye all, and let us hymn today the all-famed Nina, * the preacher of the Word of God, * the equal of the apostles, who was chosen by Christ, * the wise evangelist who hath led the people of Kartalinia * to the path of life and truth, * the disciple of the Mother of God, ** our fervent helper and tireless guardian.

Both now ..., Kontakion of the feast, in Tone IV:

Thou hast appeared today to the whole world, * and Thy light, O Lord, hath been signed upon us * who with understanding hymn Thee. * Thou hast come, Thou hast appeared, ** the Light unapproachable.

Prokeimenon, in Tone IV: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. * God is the Lord and hath appeared unto us.

Prokeimenon, in Tone VIII: Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth, * and their words unto the ends to the world.

Verse: The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth forth the work of His hands.

EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS, §131 (I COR. 4:9-16)

Brethren: God. hath set forth us, the apostles, last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honorable, but we are despised. Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place; And labor, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: Being defamed, we entreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the off-scouring of all things unto this day. I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you. For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ.

Alleluia, in Tone IV: Bring unto the Lord, ye sons of God, bring unto the Lord the sons of rams.

Alleluia, in Tone I: The heavens shall confess Thy wonders, O Lord, and Thy truth in the congregation of saints.

Verse: God Who is glorified in the council of the saints.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW, § 104 (MT. 25: 1-13)

The Lord said this parable: "The kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the

bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

Instead of “It is truly meet ...,” we chant the Refrain and Irmos of ODE IX:

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, the most pure Virgin Theotokos, who is more honorable than the armies on high.

Irmos: Every tongue is at a loss to praise thee as is due: * even a spirit from the world above is filled with dizziness, * when it seeketh to sing thy praises, O Theotokos. * But since thou art good, accept our faith: * Thou knowest well our love inspired by God, * for thou art the Protector of Christians and we magnify thee.

Communion Verse: The grace of God that bringeth all men to salvation hath appeared.

Communion Verse: Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.