

THE 11th DAY OF THE MONTH OF JULY
COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY & BLESSED OLGA, PRINCESS OF RUSSIA &
EQUAL OF THE APOSTLES, WHOSE NAME IN HOLY BAPTISM WAS HELEN
AT GREAT VESPERS

After the Introductory Psalm, we chant “Blessed is the man ...,” the first antiphon.

On “Lord, I have cried ...,” 6 Stichera of the righteous one, in Tone IV:

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

Thy most glorious commemoration hath dawned upon us like the sun, * O divinely wise Olga, mother of the princes of Russia, * youngest daughter of Christ. * Thou, who wast nurtured on the teaching of the apostles, * didst prevail over the graven images and over the devil, * being enlightened by the power of the Holy Spirit; * and from the darkness of ignorance thou didst lead to God * the whole land and all the people. ** Him do thou entreat on behalf of those who keep thy memory. (Twice)

In the spiritual understanding * wherewith thou didst put to shame the enemy who beguiled Eve * and didst break asunder his weaponry, * thou didst build up the divinely planted paradise of the Church, * wherein thou didst plant the Cross, the Tree of life, * having as food the table of God, * the inexhaustible fountain of the Blood of Christ. * And, drinking thereof, thou remainest incorrupt, ** ever praying on behalf of us all. (Twice)

Be ye spiritually filled with gladness, * ye ends of the Russian land, * honoring the memory of the divinely wise Olga; * for she prayeth ever to Christ * with the wonderworkers and the martyrs, * having as a helper the holy Theotokos, * that we who hymn her with faith * and bow down before the reliquary of her incorrupt body ** be delivered from misfortune and grief.

Come, ye Christian people of Russia, * and in praises let us magnify our first mother, * who showed great wisdom and courage, * who spurned the glory of this world and loved Christ our true God more than all others; * and let us cry out thus unto her: * O most glorious favorite of Christ, pray thou for the people of Russia, * that they might not be turned away from the Orthodox Faith * by any of the wiles of the enemy, ** but may remain unshaken in piety.

Glory ..., in Tone VI:

Come, ye generations of Russia, and with hymns let us praise the all-wise Olga! Come, and, enriched in understanding, learn from her how to bring our understanding to the obedience of faith! Come, O ye people, and render honor to a most glorious woman! Come, ye women, and emulate her great manliness! Come, ye rulers, and understand an incorrupt glory which surpasseth all earthly things! Come, all ye her descendants, and celebrate with splendor on her day! For she prayeth fervently to the Lord, that our souls be enlightened.

Both now ..., Dogmatic Theotokion, in Tone VI:

Who doth not call thee blessed, O most holy Virgin? * Who will not hymn thy most pure birthgiving? * For the only-begotten Son Who hath shone forth timelessly from the Father, * came forth, ineffably incarnate, from thee, O pure one; * By nature he is God, by nature for our sakes, he hath become a man * not divided into two Hypostases, * but known in two natures without commingling. * Him do thou beseech, O pure and most blessed one, ** that our souls find mercy!

Entrance. Prokeimenon of the day. Three Lessons:

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF JUDGES

In those days, the children of Israel continued to do evil against the Lord; and Ehud was dead. And the Lord sold the children of Israel into the hand of Jabin, King of Canaan, who ruled in Hazor. The chief of his host was Sisera, who dwelt in Harosheth of the gentiles. And the children of Israel cried to the Lord, because he had nine hundred chariots of iron; and he mightily oppressed Israel twenty years. And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, judged Israel at that time. And she sat under the palm-tree of Deborah, between Ramah and Bethel in Mount Ephraim; and the children of Israel went up to her for judgment. And Deborah sent and called Barak, the son of Abinoam, out of Kedesh Nephtali, and said to him: "Hath not the Lord God of Israel commanded thee, saying: 'Thou shalt depart to Mount Tabor; and shalt take with thyself ten thousand men of the sons of Nephtali and of the sons of Zebulun. And I will bring to thee, to the torrent of Kishon, Sisera, the captain of the host of Jabin, and his chariots, and his multitude; and I will deliver them into thy hands?'" And Barak said to her: "If thou wilt go with me, I will go; but if thou wilt not go, I will not go: for I know not the day of which the Lord prospereth His messenger with me." And she said: "I will surely go with thee; but know that thine honor shall not attend on the expedition on which thou goest, for the Lord shall sell Sisera into the hands of a woman." And Deborah arose, and went with Barak out of Kedesh. And Barak called Zebulun and Nephtali out of Kedesh, and there went up at his feet ten thousand men; and Deborah went with him. And Heber the Kenite had removed from Kena, from the sons of Hobab the father-in-law of Moses, and pitched his tent by the oak of the covetous ones, which is near Kedesh. And it was told Sisera that Barak, the son of Abinoam, was gone up to Mount Tabor. And Sisera summoned all his chariots, nine hundred chariots of iron and all the people with him, from Harosheth of the gentiles unto the brook of Kishon. And Deborah said to Barak: "Rise up, for this is the day on which the Lord hath delivered Sisera into thy hand; for the Lord shall go forth before thee." And Barak went down from Mount Tabor, and ten thousand men after him. And the Lord discomfited Sisera, and all his chariots, and all his army, with the edge of the sword before Barak; and Sisera descended from off his chariot, and fled on his feet. And Barak pursued his chariots and the army, into Harosheth of the gentiles; and the whole army of Sisera fell by the edge of the sword, and there was not one left. And Sisera fled on his feet to the tent

of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, his friend; for there was peace between Jabin, King of Hazor, and the house of Heber the Kenite. And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said to him: "Turn aside, my lord, turn aside to me. Fear not." And he turned aside to her into the tent; and she covered him with a mantle. And Sisera said to her: "Give me, I pray thee, a little water to drink, for I am thirsty." And she opened a bottle of milk, and gave him to drink, and covered him. And Sisera said to her: "Stand now by the door of the tent, and it shall come to pass if any man come to thee and ask of thee, and say: 'Is there any man here?', then thou shalt say: 'There is not.'" And Jael, the wife of Heber, took a pin of the tent, and took a hammer in her hand, and went secretly to him, and fastened the pin in his temple; and it went through to the earth, and he fainted away, and darkness fell upon him, and he died. And behold, Barak was pursuing Sisera; and Jael went out to meet him, and said to him: "Come, and I will show thee the man whom thou seekest." And he went in to her; and, behold, Sisera was fallen dead, and the pin was in his temple. So God routed Jabin, King of Canaan, in that day, before the children of Israel. And the hand of the children of Israel prevailed more and more against Jabin, King of Canaan, until they utterly destroyed Jabin, King of Canaan. And Deborah and Barak, son of Abinoam, sang in that day, saying: "A revelation was made in Israel when the people were made willing: Praise ye the Lord! Hear, ye kings, and hearken, ye rulers: I will sing! It is I who will sing to the Lord; it is I, I will sing a psalm to the Lord, the God of Israel! O Lord, in Thy going forth on Seir, when Thou wentest forth out of the land of Edom, the earth quaked and the heaven dropped dew, and the clouds dropped water. The mountains were shaken before the face of the Lord Eloi, this Sinai before the face of the Lord God of Israel. In the days of Shamgar, the son of Anath, in the days of Jael, they deserted the ways, and went in by-ways; they went in crooked paths. The mighty men in Israel failed, they failed until Deborah arose, until she arose, a mother in Israel. They chose new gods. Then the cities of rulers fought; there was not a shield or a spear seen among forty thousand in Israel. My heart inclineth to the orders given in Israel. Ye that are willing among the people, bless the Lord. Ye that mount a she-ass at noon-day, ye that sit on the judgment-seat, and walk by the roads of those who sit in judgment by the way: declare ye that are delivered from the noise of disturbers among the drawers of water: there shall they relate righteous acts. O Lord, increase righteous acts in Israel. Then the people of the Lord went down to the cities. Awake, awake, O Deborah! Awake, awake, utter a song! Arise, O Barak, and lead thy captivity captive, O son of Abinoam!"

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF JUDITH

Judith was left alone in the tent, and Holofernes lying alone on his bed, for he was filled with wine. Now Judith had commanded her maid to stand without her bedchamber, and to wait for her coming forth, as she did daily; for she said she would go forth to her prayers, and she spake to Bagoas according to the same purpose. So all went forth, and none was left in the bedchamber, neither little nor great. Then Judith, standing by his bed, said in her heart: "O Lord God of all power, look at this

present upon the work of mine hands for the exaltation of Jerusalem. For now is the time to help Thine inheritance, and to execute mine enterprise to the destruction of the enemies which are risen against us.” Then she came to the pillar of the bed, which was at Holofernes’ head, and took down his sword from thence, and approached his bed, and took hold of the hair of his head, and said: “Strengthen me, O Lord God of Israel, this day!” And she smote twice upon his neck with all her might, and took away his head from him, and tumbled his body down from the bed, and pulled down the canopy from the pillars. And afterward she sent forth, and gave Holofernes’ head to her maid, who put it in her bag of meat. And the twain went together, according to their custom, unto prayer; and when they passed the camp, they compassed the valley, and went up the mountain of Bethulia, and came to the gates thereof. Then said Judith afar off to the watchmen at the gate: “Open, open now the gate! God, even our God, is with us, to show His power yet in Israel, and His strength against the enemy, as He hath even done this day!” Now when the men of her city heard her voice, they made haste to go down to the gate of their city, and they called the elders of the city. And then they ran all together, both small and great, for it was strange unto those to whom she was come; so they opened the gate, and received them, and made a fire for a light, and stood round about them. Then said she to them with a loud voice: “Praise, praise God! Praise God, I say, for He hath not taken away His mercy from the house of Israel, but hath destroyed our enemies by my hands this night!” And she took the head out of the bag, and showed it, and said unto them: “Behold the head of Holofernes, the chief captain of the army of Ashur; and behold the canopy, wherein he did lie in his drunkenness! The Lord hath smitten him by the hand of a woman. And the Lord liveth, Who hath kept me in my way that I went, my countenance hath deceived him to his destruction, and yet hath he not committed sin with me, to defile and shame me.” Then all the people were wonderfully astonished, and bowed themselves down, and worshipped God, and said with one accord: “Blessed be Thou, O our God, Who hast this day brought to naught the enemies of Thy people!” Then said Hosiah unto her: “O daughter, blessed art thou by the Most High God more than all the women upon the earth; and blessed be the Lord God, Who hath created the heavens and the earth, and hath directed thee to the cutting off of the head of the chief of our enemies! For this thy confidence shall not depart from the heart of men, who remember the power of God forever! May God turn these things to thee for a perpetual praise, to visit thee in good things, because thou hast not spared thy life for the affliction of our nation, but hast revenged our ruin, walking a straight way before our God.” And all the people said: “So be it! So be it!”

A READING FROM PROVERBS

Who shall find a virtuous woman? for such a one is more valuable than precious stones. The heart of her husband trusteth in her; such a one shall stand in no need of fine spoils. For she employeth all her living for her husband’s good. Gathering wool and flax, she maketh it serviceable with her hands.

At Litiya, the Sticheron of the temple; and this of the righteous one, in Tone I:

Today all the land of Russia hath been called to rejoice; for the commemoration of our first mother hath arrived, who brought us to the light of the Christian Faith, who showed us the path to salvation, and laid the foundation for the good estate of our realm.

Glory ..., in Tone VI:

Let us hold festival today, O brethren; let us celebrate the memory of the holy Olga, glorifying our first mother not with hymns alone, but rendering glory to the Lord with Christian works. Let us purge all that is heathen from our character and reject what is ungodly in our life, lest the Lord, Who is the Lover of mankind, be utterly wroth because of our sins.

Both now ..., Theotokion, in Tone VI:

Christ the Lord, my Creator and Redeemer, * Who came forth from thy womb, O most pure one, * and clothed Himself in my nature, * hath freed Adam from the primal curse. * Wherefore, like the angel * we unceasingly cry out to thee, * O most pure one, * who art truly the Mother of God and Virgin: * Rejoice!, O Sovereign Lady, ** the intercession, protection and salvation of our souls!

On the Aposticha, these Stichera, in Tone VIII:

Spec. Mel.: "O most glorious wonder ...":

O most glorious wonder! * Through a woman hath the Lord * Who is the Lover of mankind * most wondrously restored the human race, * which had fallen through a woman, * and in later times He sent a woman for the conversion of the Russian race: * the most glorious Olga, whose baptism laid the foundation * for the enlightenment of the Russian land, ** unto the salvation of our souls.

Verse: The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon Him, * to all that call on Him in truth.

Rejoice, O divinely saved city of Kiev, * who hast poured forth the light of Christ * upon all the ends of our land, * and showed forth therein the first saint, * the most honored Olga! * Rejoice, O Vyshegrad, her honored inheritance! * Rejoice, O assembly of the women of Russia, * who have provided our boast, ** unto the salvation of our souls!

Verse: The will of those who fear Him shall He do, * and their supplication shall He hear, and He shall save them.

Be glad, O barren land of Russia! * Dance, O thou who never felt the pangs of childbirth, * for thou hast now given birth to thy child, * the blessed Olga! * And to the Lord she calleth our father Vladimir, * and by her struggles moveth to emulation * the choirs of God's saints, *and thy cities and groves, ** unto the salvation of our souls.

Glory ..., in Tone VIII:

Great is thy glory, and thy memorial is celebrated with praises, O all-wise Olga, who disdained the emptiness of the idols and understood the truth of the Gospel. In thine old age thou didst bind thy mind to Christ in obedience, and hast shown the true path of life to all the generations of Russia. On our behalf entreat Him Who alone is the Lover of mankind.

Both now ..., Theotokion, in Tone VIII:

O unwedded Virgin! * thou who ineffably conceived God in the flesh, * Mother of God Most High: * accept the supplications of thy servants, O all-immaculate one, * granting unto all cleansing of transgressions; * and, accepting now our supplications, ** pray thou that we all be saved.

After the blessing of the loaves, the Troparion of the righteous one, in Tone I:

Having furnished thy mind with wings of divine knowledge, * thou didst soar far above visible creation; * and seeking God, the Creator of all, and finding Him, * thou didst receive rebirth through baptism; * and delighting in the Tree of life, O ever-glorious Olga, ** thou remainest incorrupt forever. (Twice)

And “Virgin Theotokos, rejoice ...,” (Once).

But if a vigil is not served, then after the Troparion:

Glory ..., Both now ..., Theotokion, in the Tone I:

When Gabriel announced to thee, “Rejoice!”, O Virgin, * the Master of all became incarnate within thee, the holy tabernacle, * at his cry, as the righteous David said. Thou wast shown to be more spacious than the heavens, * having borne thy Creator. * Glory to Him Who made His abode within thee! * Glory to Him Who came forth from thee! ** Glory to Him Who hath set us free by thy birthgiving.

AT MATINS

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

Having furnished thy mind with wings of divine knowledge, * thou didst soar far above visible creation; * and seeking God, the Creator of all, and finding Him, * thou didst receive rebirth through baptism; * and delighting in the Tree of life, O ever-glorious Olga, ** thou remainest incorrupt forever. (Twice)

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

Thou hast truly been shown to be most wise among women, O glorious Olga, who rejected pagan delusion, believed in Christ, and inspired Vladimir toward Him. Wherefore, as our first mother, forget not us, thine unworthy children, but make us steadfast in Orthodoxy and piety by thy God-pleasing supplications.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Theotokion, in Tone III:

Soften our hearts which have been hardened by evil, O most pure Virgin; assuage our grief, O thou who endured many sorrows at the Cross of thy Son; and listen unto our petitions, in that thou art the good one who speedily hearkeneth unto us.

After the second chanting of the Psalter, the Sessional Hymn, in Tone IV:

The steps of a man are guided aright by the Lord; wherefore, O holy Olga, He Who trieth the hearts and reins of man guided thee to the kingdom of heaven. Through thy supplications may we also not be deprived thereof.

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

O Lady Theotokos, thou unashamed hope and unassailable bulwark of Christians, reject not the entreaties of those who have recourse unto thee, but, in that thou art good, do thou help and have mercy upon us.

Polyeleos, and this magnification: We magnify thee, O blessed Princess Olga, equal of the apostles, and we honor the holy memory of thee who trampled the idols underfoot and enlightened many of the people of Russia with holy baptism.

Selected Psalm verse:

A: Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, in His commandments shall he greatly delight.

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

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

It was fitting that thou receive the name of the empress who was the equal of the apostles, O blessed one, for thou didst emulate her who had diligently sought out the Cross of Christ, thyself seeking for Christ our true God and taking up His Cross. Him do thou entreat, that we who are weighed down by sins may also take up the easy yoke of the Cross and receive the hope of heaven.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Theotokion, in Tone VIII:

“Henceforth all generations shall call me blessed,” thou didst say, O most pure Virgin, when thou didst receive the salutation of the righteous Elizabeth. Wherefore, we also have been taught by our fathers to hymn thee as the Theotokos and Mother of the Light.

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 of the world.

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

Let every breath praise the Lord.

GOSPEL ACC. TO ST. MATTHEW, FROM §§ 53, 55 (MT. 13: 33, 44-50)

The Lord spake this parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

After Psalm 50, this Sticheron, in Tone VI:

Let us praise the all-wise Olga, the proclaimer of the Faith and divinely chosen guide to salvation, and with hymns let us honor her holy memory; for with all the saints of our land she prayeth for the salvation of our souls.

Canon of supplication to the Theotokos (the Paraclysis), with 6 Troparia, including the Irmos; and that of the righteous one, with 8 Troparia, in Tone V:

ODE I

Irmos: Let us hymn Christ, Who drowned the haughty Pharaoh * and his captains and armaments in the sea, * and Who most gloriously saved Israel * and led them across dry land, * for He hath been glorified.

Thou art our greatness and boast, O divinely wise Olga; for by thee we have been freed from the delusion of idolatry. And now do thou pray for the generations of generations which thou hast led to God, hymning Christ, for He is glorious.

Thou didst drive the arrogant devil from Russia, everywhere breaking asunder the ungodly graven images; and thou hast freed all the people from iniquity, teaching them with wisdom to hymn Christ, for He is glorious.

Thou didst utterly wash away the blackness of sin with the laver of baptism, and didst love Christ; standing before Him, pray thou for thy servants who glorify thee with faith.

Theotokion: Isaiah calleth thee the rod, O most pure one, and David called thee the throne of the Lord; Habbakuk referred to thee as the mountain overshadowed, and Moses proclaimed thee the bush unburnt. But we call thee the Mother of God.

Katavasia: I shall open my mouth, ...

ODE III

Irmos: With Thy mighty arm and powerful word * Thou didst create heaven and earth; * and Thy Church, which Thou hast redeemed by Thy blood, * is established in Thee, crying out: * There is none holy save Thee, O Lord!

With mighty arm, wise words and powerful discourse thou didst teach thy son the law of Christ, and didst forbid the people to offer sacrifice to idols, O most glorious Olga, and, assembling now in thy memory, we glorify thee.

Like a bee of goodly understanding thou didst seek the Faith of Christ which blossomed afar off, and, acquiring baptism in the Imperial City like true honey, thou didst give it to thy city and people; And all, satisfied therewith, escape the bitterness of sin.

We offer thee a cry full of praise and supplication, O Olga; for through thee have we come to know God before Whom thou now dost stand. Ask thou peace and victory over pagans for all Orthodox Christians, and remission of sins for the souls of us who hymn thee, O ever-blessed one.

Theotokion: Thou wast shown to be a habitation of the unapproachable God. Wherefore, the ranks of the angels unceasingly hymn thee, doing homage to the Master. For thou hast given birth unto the Word of the Father, Who is co-beginningless and without an earthly father. O the wonder! The Holy Spirit overshadowed thee!

Kontakion of the righteous one, in Tone IV:

Today the grace of the God of all hath appeared, * which glorified the divinely wise Olga in Russia. * Through her supplications, O Lord, * grant remission of sins ** unto Thy people.

Sessional Hymn of the righteous one, in Tone III:

We honor thy struggle, O blessed one; for wondrous was the strength of thy spirit which was manifest in the weakness of thy body. Having spurned heathen delusion, thou didst boldly preach the Christian Faith, providing us with a model of zeal for the Lord.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Theotokion in Tone III:

He Who ineffably became incarnate of thy pure blood prepared a throne within thy womb, O most pure Maiden whom all generations fittingly glorify as the Theotokos.

ODE IV

Irmos: Purified by the Spirit of God which inspired him, * the divine Prophet Habbakuk said in fear: * When the years draw nigh, Thou shalt be acknowledged, O God, * unto the salvation of mankind!

The Spirit of God rested upon thee as on the Prophetess Deborah of old; and illumined thereby, and strengthening the wise Vladimir, thou didst bring down the devil in thy snare through thy grandson's baptism, as Barak vanquished Sisera at the brook of Kishon.

O divinely wise Olga, with contrite heart thou didst stand praying to God like a torrent; and thou didst deliver the race of thy people from the oppression of graven images freeing them from the captivity of the foe, and calling upon Christ to help us.

On the renowned day of thy holy repose we joyously keep festival, sending up a hymn of supplication to Christ Who hath crowned thee with an imperishable crown, O divinely wise Olga, ask thou remission of sins for us who glorify thee with faith.

Theotokion: We praise thee as the Mother of God and pure Virgin, the rod of the Spirit of God which, as Isaiah foretold, sprung forth from the root of Jesse and budded forth Christ as a flower, bearing the Transcendent One in the flesh.

ODE V

Irmos: O almighty Word of God, * send peace upon the whole world, * enlightening and illumining * with the light of truth all who, * awakening out of the night, glorify Thee.

As a chaste dove thou didst soar to the top of the palm tree of the virtues on sacred wings of silver; and taking wing thereon thou hast made thy nest in the bounty of paradise, O glorious Olga.

Of thee did Solomon sing of old: Within the vineyard of the King an olive tree hath blossomed forth; for thou didst plant in Russia the grapes of holiness, bringing forth the fruit of repentance, wherein Christ Himself rejoiceth.

Have pity, O Master, on Thy newly enlightened people, and give us not over into the hands of the heathen because of the multitude of our iniquities. But by the prayers of our instructress Olga, deliver us from all temptations.

Theotokion: **O** all ye clouds, as it is written, let gladness fall upon mortals; for Christ, the Child of God, Who cleanseth the world of sins, became incarnate of the Virgin and hath been given unto us.

ODE VI

Irmos: **A**cccept Thou my supplication * in Thy holy and heavenly Church * That like Jonah I may cry unto Thee * from the depths of the heart of the sea: * Lead me up from my sins, I pray Thee, O Lord!

Receiving the zeal of the Holy Spirit in thy heart, thou didst hate the false religion of thy forebears; and seeking Christ, the true God, thou wast shown to be a child of light, joining chorus with the first-fruits of the saints in the heavens.

Thou wast shown to be a new teacher of Christ in Russia, going about its cities and villages, destroying graven images, and teaching the people to worship the one God. Him do thou entreat on behalf of those who hymn thee.

O divinely blessed Olga, pray to God for thy children; ask for constant peace for our hierarchy, and remission of sins for us who ever glorify thee.

Theotokion: **H**aving through thee come to know the Word of God, the almighty only begotten Son, we mortals cry out to thee: Rejoice, O blessed Theotokos, thou hope of our souls!

Kontakion of the righteous one, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel: “Thou hast appeared today ...”:

Let us hymn today God the Benefactor of all, * Who glorified the divinely wise Olga in Russia, * that through her supplications * He grant unto our souls * the remission of sins.

Ikos: **S**eeing the Christians’ way of life, and understanding the futility of the lives of the heathen, thou didst say to thyself, O divinely wise Olga: “O the depth of the wisdom and goodness of the Creator of all! How hast Thou hid Thyself from me until now? How can I worship idols henceforth? For no one, having tasted that which is sweet, desireth that which is bitter. Wherefore, even though I am old in years, call me to Thee, O Holy Trinity, and grant me remission of sins!”

ODE VII

Irmos: The pious children enslaved the fire of the furnace; * wherefore, it bedewed them from on high; * and though by nature they were subject to being consumed, * yet having transcended nature they manfully cried aloud: * **Blessed art Thou, O Lord, on the throne of the glory of Thy kingdom!**

Hymns of praise do we offer thee as a royal diadem for thy divinely wise head on the day of thy commemoration, O right wondrous Olga, whom Christ hath crowned with incorruption. Pray for thy flock, that they be delivered from all evil who cry aloud: Blessed art Thou on the throne of the glory of Thy kingdom, O Lord!

Shall we call thee the mountain of Lebanon? For upon thee the dew of heaven hath descended. Or shall we call thee the river Phison, more comely than the precious stone sapphire, having Vladimir, by whom the land of Russia was enlightened? Yet pray for us who cry aloud: Blessed art Thou on the throne of the glory of Thy kingdom, O Lord!

Theotokion: In the Spirit do we call thee the ark covered with beaten gold, who hast saved the world from the noetic flood, O Virgin. Save us, for we set our hope on thee, and to thee do we flee. From sins and temptations deliver us who lie in the pit of despair, for we cry aloud: Blessed art Thou on the throne of the glory of Thy kingdom, O Lord!

ODE VIII

Irmos: The three children girded with strength, * having been clothed in the power of the Holy Trinity, * pursued and vanquished the Chaldeans; * and nature was wondrously changed: * For the fire become dew, * and preserved them as if in swaddling-bands; * O God Who hath poured forth wisdom upon all Thy works, * Thee do we supremely exalt throughout the ages!

Invested with the power of the Holy Spirit, strong as a lioness, Olga made haste alone to destroy the idols in every place, a thing marveled at in heaven and on earth: how a woman first came to recognize God, by which gender the fall came upon our whole race in the beginning. And saved by her now, we chant: O God Who pourest forth wisdom in all Thy works, Thee do we supremely exalt forever!

The Wisdom of God wrote aforetime concerning thee: Lo! thou art My good and most comely one, and there is no blemish in thee! The radiance of thy countenance, like the odor of myrrh, marked thy baptism, O Olga, wherewith Christ perfumed thee in the midst of the delusion of idols and by His mercy hath brought us all from the stench of the demons to repentance.

Remember me thy poor servant who have been robbed by the enemy and have sinned more than other men, O Sovereign Olga; and pray to Christ, that He grant me forgiveness of all the offenses which, wretch that I am, I have senselessly committed; that I may cry aloud in repentance: O God Who pourest forth wisdom in all Thy works, Thee do we supremely exalt forever!

Theotokion: **D**isdain not the entreaties of thy servants, O Virgin, for we boast in thee, and are thy little flock. Haste thou to our assistance, and rescue us from our enemies; take pity on us who acknowledge thee to be the Mother of God and cry out to thy Son: O God Who pourest forth wisdom in all Thy works, Thee do we supremely exalt forever!

ODE IX

Irmos: **O**ur race departed from Eden * because of our first mother, Eve; * but it hath been recalled by thee * who for our sake hast given birth to Christ, the new Adam, * in two natures, O pure Virgin. * Adam, our forefather, leapt up in joy, * having escaped the ancient curse; * and we, boasting in thee, * have come to know God because of thee, * wherefore we magnify thee.

Be glad, O Eve our foremother, for he who deceived thee hath been expelled from Eden and is now trampled down by thine offspring. For, lo! Olga hath planted the Tree of life, the Cross of Christ, in Russia, whereby paradise hath been opened to all the faithful. And we, rejoicing that we have come to know God because of her, magnify Vladimir with her.

We call thee a woman by nature, yet thou didst struggle in a manner beyond the power of women. Myriads of gold pieces didst thou distribute, that thou mightest acquire the law of Christ thy teacher, wherewith thou didst enlighten the land of Russia. And we, rejoicing that we have come to know God because of thee, magnify thee with the martyrs.

O pure instructress in the law and teacher of the Faith of Christ, accept thou the praise of thine unworthy servants, and make entreaty to God concerning us who keep thy memory with honor; that we may be freed from temptations, misfortunes, grief and grievous sins. And deliver us from the torments which await us, we who magnify thee unceasingly beseech thee.

Theotokion: **B**ehold, the tabernacle! Behold, the holy mountain of God! Behold, the rod, the golden vessel! Behold, the sealed fountain! Behold, the holy paradise of the new Adam! Behold, the dread throne! Behold, the most pure Mother of God, the helper of all who hymn her!

Exapostilarion of the righteous one:

Illumined by the light of the grace of God, O divinely wise Olga, thou didst light the lamp of the true Faith in thy homeland, and provide an example for our father Vladimir, by whom we have been led out of the darkness of ignorance into the light of Christ.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Theotokion:

We who languish in the darkness of iniquities and have been defiled by the impurity of sin have thee as a guide to the never-waning Light. Wherefore, lead thou my wretched soul to the purity of heaven by thine almighty intercession, O most pure Virgin.

On the Praises, 4 Stichera of the righteous one, in Tone III:

O brethren, let us praise our Savior and Lord for His most great benefactions; for, in that He is the Lover of mankind, He placed the fire of divine love in the heart of our first mother Olga, and through her revealed the abundantly rich fruits of His sowing in our land: true leaders to the heavenly kingdom among our princes, wise guides to salvation among our hierarchs, and pillars of faith and piety among every choir of the venerable. And through their supplications He saveth our souls from death. **(Twice)**

Sing unto the Lord a new song, ye groves and dales of the land of Russia, in memory of our guide! Cry unto God with a voice of rejoicing, ye mountains and hills which of old were defiled by idolatrous sacrifices, which served for the perdition of our fathers, but have now been sprinkled with the dew of the grace of your Creator and overshadowed by the Cross of His Son, and with us worship Him Who saveth our souls.

Because of us there have multiplied in our midst mindless ones who not only say in their hearts, “There is no God”, but also preach unto us pernicious and depraved doctrines, drawing away from the Holy Church those who are of little faith. Yet through the supplications of the blessed Olga may the Lord save our souls from them.

Glory ..., in Tone VIII:

Tell us, O our beloved mother, how thou didst vanquish all the wiles of the enemy by the grace of the Most High, that, taught by thee, we also may be shown to have the skill to save our souls.

Both now ..., Theotokion, in Tone VIII:

O Theotokos, Mother unwedded, thou art our refuge and strength, thou art our hope and unassailable rampart. Turn not thy face away from us, but entreat thy Son and our God, that through thee He may save our souls.

Great Doxology. Troparion. Litanies. First Hour.

AT LITURGY

On the Beatitudes, 8 Troparia: 4 from ODE III and 4 from ODE VI of the canon of the righteous one.

With mighty arm, wise words and powerful discourse thou didst teach thy son the law of Christ, and didst forbid the people to offer sacrifice to idols, O most glorious Olga, and, assembling now in thy memory, we glorify thee. (Twice)

Like a bee of goodly understanding thou didst seek the Faith of Christ which blossomed afar off, and, acquiring baptism in the Imperial City like true honey, thou didst give it to thy city and people; And all, satisfied therewith, escape the bitterness of sin.

We offer thee a cry full of praise and supplication, O Olga; for through thee have we come to know God before Whom thou now dost stand. Ask thou peace and victory over pagans for all Orthodox Christians, and remission of sins for the souls of us who hymn thee, O ever-blessed one.

Receiving the zeal of the Holy Spirit in thy heart, thou didst hate the false religion of thy forebears; and seeking Christ, the true God, thou wast shown to be a child of light, joining chorus with the first-fruits of the saints in the heavens.

Thou wast shown to be a new teacher of Christ in Russia, going about its cities and villages, destroying graven images, and teaching the people to worship the one God. Him do thou entreat on behalf of those who hymn thee.

O divinely blessed Olga, pray to God for thy children; ask for constant peace for our hierarchy, and remission of sins for us who ever glorify thee.

Theotokion: **H**aving through thee come to know the Word of God, the almighty only begotten Son, we mortals cry out to thee: Rejoice, O blessed Theotokos, thou hope of our souls!

Troparion of the righteous one, in Tone I:

Having furnished thy mind with wings of divine knowledge, * thou didst soar far above visible creation; * and seeking God, the Creator of all, and finding Him, * thou didst receive rebirth through baptism; * and delighting in the Tree of life, O ever-glorious Olga, ** thou remainest incorrupt forever.

ODE III, Kontakion of the righteous one, in Tone IV:

Today the grace of the God of all hath appeared, * which glorified the divinely wise Olga in Russia. * Through her supplications, O Lord, * grant remission of sins ** unto Thy people.

ODE VI, Kontakion of the righteous one, in Tone IV:

Let us hymn today God the Benefactor of all, * Who glorified the divinely wise Olga in Russia, * that through her supplications * He grant unto our souls ** the remission of sins.

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

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

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, FROM §§ 37, 39 (ACTS 16: 12-15; 17: 1-4)

In those days, we journeyed to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days. And on the Sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women who resorted thither. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, who worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying: "If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there." And she constrained us. Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: and Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ. And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.

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

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

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE, § 33 (LK. 7: 36-50)

At that time, one of the Pharisees desired Jesus, that He would eat with him. And He went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat. And, behold, a woman in the city, who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at His feet behind Him weeping, and began to wash His feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed His feet, and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee who had bidden Him saw it, he spake within himself, saying: "This man, if He were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth Him: for she is a sinner." And Jesus answering said unto him: "Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee." And he saith: "Master, say on." "There was a certain creditor who had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the

other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?" Simon answered and said: "I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most." And He said unto him: "Thou hast rightly judged." And He turned to the woman, and said unto Simon: "Seest thou this woman? I entered into thy house, thou gavest me no water for My feet: but she hath washed My feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest Me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss My feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore, I say unto thee: her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." And He said unto her: "Thy sins are forgiven." And they that sat at meat with Him began to say within themselves: "Who is this that forgiveth sins also?" And He said to the woman: "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace."

Communion verse: No man can come to Me, except the Father Who hath sent Me draw him, saith the Lord.