

THE 14th DAY OF THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER
THE UNIVERSAL EXALTATION OF THE PRECIOUS & LIFE-CREATING CROSS
AT LITTLE VESPERS

On “Lord, I have cried ...,” 4 Stichera of the feast, in Tone I:
Spec. Mel.: “Joy of the ranks of heaven ...”:

The Cross is uplifted, and the demons are, driven away; * the thief openeth the gates of Eden, * death is slain and hath now been shown to be desolate; * Christ is magnified. * Wherefore, be glad, all ye earthborn, ** for the curse hath been lifted! (Twice)

Come, all ye who love God, * and beholding the precious Cross uplifted, * let us magnify it together * and give glory to the one Redeemer and God, crying aloud: * O Thou who wast crucified on the wood of the Cross, ** disdain not us that pray to Thee!

Moses of old, changing bitterness into sweetness, * delivered Israel, inscribing the image of the Cross beforehand; * and all of us, the faithful, * ever mystically making the sign thereof * in our hearts in a godly manner, ** are saved by its might.

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

Today, from the impenetrable bosom of the earth the shoot of life hath been put forth, and it announceth the Resurrection of Christ Who was nailed thereto; and, lifted up by priestly hands, it proclaimeth His ascension to Heaven, whereby our nature, which was bound to the earth by the fall, doth now dwell in the heavens. Wherefore, in thanksgiving we cry aloud: O Lord Who wast lifted up thereon and thereby raised us up with Thyself: grant us Thy heavenly joys, as Thou lovest mankind.

Prokeimenon of the day.

On the Aposticha, these Stichera of the feast, in Tone II:

Spec. Mel.: “O house of Ephratha ...”:

Like a bride * is the Church splendidly adorned * with the water of grace * and Thy Blood, O Word, ** hymning the glory of the Cross.

Verse: Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship the footstool of His feet, * for He is holy.

Raising aloft the spear and the Cross, * the nails and all else * wherewith the life-bearing * body of Christ was pierced, ** let us worship them.

Verse: God is our King before the ages; * He hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth.

When Moses * conquered Amalek, * keeping his arms raised aloft, * he prefigured the most pure suffering of Christ ** in the form of the Cross.

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

Today the Tree hath appeared! Today the Jewish race hath perished! Today the Faith hath been revealed by faithful hierarchs. Adam fell because of a tree, but the demons are made to tremble again by the Tree; O almighty Lord, glory be to Thee!

Troparion of the feast, in Tone I:

Save O Lord Thy people, * and bless Thine inheritance. * Grant now unto the faithful * victory over adversaries, * and by the power of Thy Cross ** do Thou preserve Thy commonwealth.

After the dismissal of Little Vespers, the ecclesiarch, the priest, deacon and para-ecclesiarch enter the vestry, escorted with lighted lamps, and the priest and deacon array themselves in their vestments. The deacon censeth the precious Cross, and saith: Bless, master! Priest: Blessed is our God ...Then: Trisagion through **O**ur Father ..., Troparion of the Cross; Glory ..., Both now ..., Kontakion of the Cross. The priest taketh the Cross on its tray and placeth it upon his head, and beareth it into the sanctuary, preceded by two candle-bearers bearing lighted candles. And he setteth the Cross on the altar-table, in the place usually occupied by the Gospel-book, the Gospel-book being removed to the High Place. And a lamp is set to burn before the precious Cross throughout the night.

Be It Known: If this feast fall on a Sunday, its hymns completely replace and supersede those of the Oktoechos, with the sole exception of “Having beheld the resurrection of Christ ...,”

AT GREAT VESPERS

If it be Saturday evening, we chant “Blessed is the man ...,” the entire Kathisma; but if it be Sunday evening, we chant only the first antiphon thereof. On any other day we do not chant “Blessed is the man ...,” but immediately chant “Lord, I have cried ...” after the Introductory Psalm and Great Ektenia.

On “Lord, I have cried ...,” 8 Stichera of the feast, in Tone VI:

Spec. Mel.: “Having set aside ...”:

Raised on high, * the Cross exhorteth all creation * to hymn the most pure Passion * of Him who was lifted up thereon. * For thereon having slain him that slew us, * in that He is merciful, * He gave life unto the dead, * and in the exceeding greatness of His goodness * He hath made them beautiful and deemed them worthy to live in the heavens. * Wherefore, rejoicing, * we exalt His name, ** and magnify His extreme condescension. (Thrice)

Moses prefigured Thee, * stretching forth his arms on high, * and vanquished the tyrant Amalek, * O precious Cross, boast of the faithful, * confirmation of sufferers, * savior of all the venerable. * Wherefore, creation, * beholding thee lifted up, is gladdened, * and keepeth festival, * glorifying Christ, * Who through thee hath gathered the dispersed ** in His extreme goodness. (Thrice)

O most precious Cross, * who art today exalted, * and about whom the ranks of angels stand in gladness, * by divine command thou dost uplift all * who for the stealing of the fruit * were driven out and were sunk in death. * Wherefore, we, the faithful, * venerating thee with hearts and lips, * derive from thee sanctification, * crying aloud: Exalt ye Christ, * the supremely good God, ** and worship His divine footstool. (Twice)

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

Come, all ye nations, let us worship the blessed Tree whereby everlasting righteousness hath come to be; for he who by the tree deceived our forefather Adam, is himself deceived by the Cross, and he who by tyranny held fast the royal house, falleth, cast down by a strange fall. By the Blood of God the venom of the serpent is washed away, and the curse of the just condemnation was lifted by the Righteous One when He was condemned by an unjust sentence; for it was fitting that the tree be healed by a Tree, and that, by the sufferings of the Dispassionate One on the Tree, the sufferings of the condemned be loosed. Glory, O Christ our King, to Thy wise dispensation toward us, whereby Thou hast saved all, in that Thou art good and the Lover of mankind.

Entrance. Prokeimenon of the day.

N.B.: If this feast fall on Saturday, on Friday evening, instead of the Prokeimenon of the day, we chant the Great Prokeimenon:

Great Prokeimenon, in Tone VII: Our God is in heaven and on earth; all things whatsoever He hath willed, He hath done.

Verse: When Israel went out of Egypt, and the house of Jacob from among a barbarous people.

Verse: The sea beheld and fled, Jordan turned back.

Verse: What aileth thee, O sea, that thou fleddest? And thou Jordan, that thou didst turn back?

Three Lessons:

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF EXODUS

Moses brought up the children of Israel from the Red Sea, and brought them into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water to drink. And they came to Marah, and could not drink of Marah, for it was bitter; therefore he named the name of that place, Bitterness. And the people murmured against Moses, saying: "What shall we drink?" And Moses cried to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a tree, and he cast it into the water, and the water was sweetened. There He established to him ordinances and judgments, and there He proved him, and said: "If thou wilt indeed hear the voice of the Lord thy God, and do things pleasing before Him, and wilt hearken to His commands, and keep all His ordinances, no disease which I have brought upon the Egyptians will I bring upon thee, for I am the Lord thy God, Who healeth thee." And they came to Elim, and there were there twelve fountains of water, and seventy stems of palm trees; and they encamped there by the waters. And they departed from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sin.

A READING FROM PROVERBS

My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him: for whom the Lord loveth, He rebuketh, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. Blessed is the man who hath found wisdom, and the mortal who knoweth prudence. For it is better to traffic for her, than for treasures of gold and silver. And she is more valuable than precious stones: no evil thing shall resist her; she is well known to all who approach her, and no precious thing is equal to her in value. For length of existence and years of life are in her right hand; and in her left hand are wealth and glory: out of her mouth proceedeth righteousness, and she carrieth law and mercy upon her tongue. Her ways are good ways, and all her paths are peaceful. She is a tree of life to all who lay hold upon her; and she is a secure help to all who stay themselves on her, as on the Lord.

A READING FROM THE PROPHECY OF ISAIAH

Thus saith the Lord: Thy gates shall be opened continually, O Jerusalem; they shall not be shut day nor night; to bring in to thee the power of the gentiles, and their

kings as captives. For the nations and the kings which will not serve thee shall perish; and those nations shall be made utterly desolate. And the glory of Lebanon shall come to thee, with the cypress, and pine, and cedar together, to glorify My holy place. And the sons of those who afflicted thee, and of those who provoked thee, shall come to thee in fear; and thou shalt be called Sion, the city of the Holy One of Israel. Because thou hast become desolate and hated, and there was no helper, therefore I will make thee a perpetual gladness, a joy of many generations. And thou shalt suck the milk of the gentiles, and shalt eat the wealth of kings; and shalt know that I am the Lord Who saveth thee and delivereth thee, the God of Israel.

At Litiya, these Stichera:

The composition of Andrew of Jerusalem, in Tone I: Today the holy words of David have received their fulfillment; for, lo! we manifestly worship the footstool of Thy most pure feet, O most Compassionate One, and cry out to Thee, placing our trust in the shelter of Thy wings: Let the light of Thy countenance be shined upon us! Exalt Thou the horn of Thine Orthodox people through the elevation of Thy Cross, O greatly merciful Christ!

Elevated today, the Tree of life, which was planted in the place of the skull, whereon the pre-eternal King wrought salvation in the midst of the earth, sanctifying the ends of the earth; and the temple of the Resurrection is renewed. The angels rejoice in heaven, and mortals make merry on earth, crying like David and saying: Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship the footstool of His feet, for He is holy, granting great mercy to the world!

Prefiguring Thy Cross, O Christ, in giving his blessing to his grandsons, the Patriarch Jacob crossed his hands over their heads. And raising it aloft today, O Savior, we cry aloud: Grant victory over adversaries to all Orthodox Christians, as Thou didst grant victory to Constantine.

The composition of Theophanes, in Tone II: The divine treasure which is hidden in the ground, the Cross of the Bestower of life, was shown in the heavens to the pious emperor and noetically displayed an inscription of victory over his enemies. And rejoicing therein with faith and love, in a godly manner he hastened to ascend to a visible height and with zeal drew it forth from the bosom of the earth, for the deliverance of the world and the salvation of our souls.

The composition of Cyprian: When the hands of the Patriarch Jacob were crossed at the blessing of Joseph's children, the sign of Thy Cross was revealed beforehand, and we, holding it as our steadfast protector, do mightily drive away the hordes of the demons and cast down the pride of Belial in that which hath vanquished the most pernicious power of the most malicious Amalek. With right and honorable minds, O ye faithful, let us bear it forth to His goodness, uplifted now for the cleansing of sins, and cry out with a loud voice: Have mercy, O Lord! O Good One Who wast incarnate of the Virgin, have pity on the wise creation of Thy hands!

The composition of the Emperor Leo: Thou art my mighty protection, O tripartite Cross of Christ! Sanctify me by thy power, that I may bow down with faith and love, and glorify thee.

In Tone IV: Let us clap our hands today for the victory which is praised with hymns, and with a radiant countenance and tongue let us openly cry: O Christ, Who for our sake didst deign to be tried, to be spat upon and scourged and arrayed in a purple robe, and Who ascended the Cross; Whom beholding, the sun and the moon hid their light, and the earth trembled with fear, and the veil of the temple was rent in twain: Do Thou now grant unto us Thine honored Cross as a preserver and protector, and a dispeller of demons; that, kissing it, we may all cry aloud to it: Save us by thy power, O Cross! Sanctify us by Thy radiance, O precious Cross! And fortify us by thine exaltation, for thou hast been given to us as the light and salvation of our souls.

The composition of Anatolius: O Cross, thou didst show forth thine image beforehand, radiant with the light of the stars, to the great and pious emperor as a token of victory. And his mother Helena, finding thee, revealed thee to the world. Today we, the choirs of the faithful, elevating thee, cry aloud: “illumine us with thy splendor, O life-bearing Cross! Sanctify us with thy might, O most precious Cross! And establish us in thine elevation, O thou who art lifted up against the array of the enemy!”

Glory ..., Both now ..., the composition of Anatolius, in Tone IV:

Moses, prefiguring the activity of the precious Cross, O Christ, vanquished Amalek his adversary in the wilderness of Sinai; for when he stretched out his arms, forming the image of the Cross, he strengthened the people. And now these events have found their fulfillment in us: today the Cross is elevated and the demons flee; today all creation is freed from corruption, for gifts have shone forth upon us because of the Cross. Wherefore, rejoicing, we all fall down before it, saying: Glory to Thee, O Lord, for Thy works are magnified!

On the Aposticha, these Stichera, in Tone V:

Spec. Mel.: “Rejoice ...”:

Rejoice, thou Life-bearing Cross, invincible victory of piety, door to paradise, confirmation of the faithful, rampart of the Church, whereby corruption hath been utterly destroyed, the dominion of death trampled down, and we have been lifted up from earth to those who are in Heaven, invincible weapon, contender against the demons, glory of the martyrs, true adornment of the venerable, haven of salvation, which grantest the world great mercy.

Verse: Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship the footstool of His feet, * for He is holy.

Rejoice, thou Cross of the Lord, whereby mankind hath been loosed from the curse, all-honorable standard of joy which disperseth the enemy in thine exaltation, our helper, might of kings, Strength of the righteous, splendor of priests; which, when traced, doth deliver from misfortune, staff of power whereby we are tended, weapon of peace which the angels surround with fear, divine glory of Christ Who granteth the world great mercy.

Verse: God is our King before the ages; * He hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth.

Rejoice, thou guide of the blind, physician of the ailing, resurrection of all the dead, which hast raised us up who had fallen into corruption, O precious Cross, whereby the curse was annulled and incorruption budded forth, and the earthly have been deified, and the devil utterly cast down! Beholding thee raised on high today in the hands of the high priest, we exalt Him who was exalted in thy midst, and bow down before thee, plenteously drawing forth from thee great mercy.

Glory ..., Both now ..., the composition of John the Monk, in Tone VIII:

That which Moses prefigured with his body of old cast down and vanquished Amalek; and David the psalmist, crying out, hath commanded us to bow down before Thy footstool, Thy precious Cross, O Christ God. Today we sinners also do homage with our unworthy lips to Thee Whose will it was to be nailed thereto; and, chanting, we pray: O Lord, grant that with the thief we may receive Thy kingdom!

At the blessing of the loaves, the Troparion of the feast, in Tone I:

Save O Lord Thy people, * and bless Thine inheritance. * Grant now unto the faithful * victory over adversaries, * and by the power of Thy Cross ** do Thou preserve Thy commonwealth. **(Thrice)**

AT MATINS

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

Save O Lord Thy people, * and bless Thine inheritance. * Grant now unto the faithful * victory over adversaries, * and by the power of Thy Cross ** do Thou preserve Thy commonwealth. (Thrice)

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

No sooner was the tree of Thy Cross planted, O Christ our Lord, than the foundations of death were shaken. That which Hades swallowed greedily it spewed forth, trembling. Thou hast revealed to us Thy salvation, O Holy One, and we glorify Thee. O Son of God, have mercy upon us!

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

Spec. Mel.: “When the stone had been sealed ...”:

We bow down before the tree of Thy Cross, O Lover of mankind, for Thou wast nailed thereto, O Life of all. Thou didst Open paradise to the thief who approached Thee with faith, O Savior, and he was deemed worthy of sweetness for confessing Thee: “Remember me, O Lord!” Accept us like him, for we cry: We have all sinned! Disdain us not, for Thou art compassionate!

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

Today the words of the prophet have been fulfilled! For, behold! we bow down before the place where Thy feet stood, O Lord, and, receiving the Tree of salvation, we have achieved liberation from sinful passions through the supplications of the Theotokos, O Thou only Lover of mankind.

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

Spec. Mel.: “That which was mystically commanded ...”:

Of old, Joshua, the son of Nun, mystically prefigured the image of the Cross when he stretched forth his arms in the form of the Cross, O my Savior; and the sun stood still until he had cast down all the enemy which was opposed to Thee, O God. And now Thou hast raised with Thee the whole world, which saw Thee set upon the Cross, destroying the might of death.

Polyeleos, and this magnification: We magnify Thee, O Christ, Bestower of life, and we honor Thy holy Cross, whereby Thou hast saved us from slavery to the enemy.

Selected Psalm verse:

A: Judge them, O God, that do me injustice; war against them that war against me.

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

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

Spec. Mel.: “That which was mystically commanded ...”:

Of old, in paradise, a tree stripped me naked, the enemy bringing about mortality through eating; but the tree of the Cross, bearing on behalf of mankind the vesture of life, hath been planted in the ground, and the whole world hath been filled with all manner of joy. Beholding it uplifted, O ye people, let us cry aloud to God together: Fill Thou Thy house with glory!

Glory ..., Both now ..., the foregoing is repeated.

Song of Ascents, the first antiphon of Tone IV

Prokeimenon, in Tone IV: All the ends of the earth * have seen the salvation of our God.

Verse: O sing unto the Lord a new song, for the Lord hath wrought wondrous things.

Let every breath praise the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN, §42 (JN 12:28-36)

The Lord said: Father, glorify Thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said an angel spake to him. Jesus answered and said, this voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. This He said, signifying what death He should die. The people answered Him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest Thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of man? Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light.

Then, “Having beheld the resurrection of Christ ...”

And after Psalm 50, this Sticheron, in Tone VI:

O Cross of Christ, hope of Christians, guide of the lost, haven of the tempest-tossed, victory amid battles, confirmation of the whole world, physician of the ill, resurrection of the dead: Have mercy upon us!

Canon of the Cross, the Irmos chanted twice, the Troparia repeated to make up 12 in number.

Canon of the Cross, the acrostic whereof is: “Having arrayed myself in the Cross, I give utterance to hymnody”; The composition of Cosmas of Maiuma, in Tone VIII:

ODE I

Irmos: Inscribing the invincible weapon of the Cross upon the waters, * Moses marked a straight line before him with his staff * and divided the Red Sea, * opening a path for Israel who went over dry-shod. * Then he marked a second line across the waters * and united them in one, * overwhelming the chariots of Pharaoh. * Therefore let us sing to Christ our God, * for He hath been glorified.

Of old, Moses, standing between the priests, prefigured in himself the image of Christ's most pure sufferings; for, forming a cross with his outstretched arms, he raised up victory, vanquishing the might of the tyrant Amalek. Wherefore, let us hymn Christ our God, for He hath been glorified.

Upon a pole Moses set the cure of the deadly and venomous sting of the serpents, and the deliverance therefrom; for to the tree, in the image of the Cross, he bound a serpent which crawleth upon the ground, triumphing over the sinister bane therein. Wherefore, let us hymn Christ God, for He hath been glorified.

The sky showed forth the victory of the Cross to the divinely wise Emperor Constantine, the pious ruler; and therein the audacity of the hostile foe was cast down, delusion was destroyed and the divine Faith spread to the ends of the earth. Wherefore let us hymn Christ our God, for He hath been glorified.

Katavasia: Inscribing the invincible weapon ...,

ODE III

Irmos: The rod of Aaron is an image of this mystery, * for when it budded it showed who should be priest. * So in the Church, that once was barren, * the wood of the Cross hath now budded forth, * filling her with strength and steadfastness.

The rough stone, struck, put forth water for a disobedient and hard-hearted people, and showed forth the mystery of the divinely elect Church, whereof the Cross is the might and confirmation.

When Christ's most pure side was pierced by the spear, blood and water flowed therefrom, renewing the covenant and washing sin away, for the Cross is the boast of the faithful, the might and confirmation of kings.

Katavasia: The rod of Aaron ...,

Sessional Hymn of the feast, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: "Go thou quickly before ...":

Rejoicing in thee, O thrice blessed and life-bestowing Cross, the people celebrate together with the immaterial choirs, the ranks of hierarchs reverently hymn thee, multitudes of monastics and fasters bow down before thee in adoration, and we all glorify Christ Who was crucified on thee.

ODE IV

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

Of old, Moses transformed the bitter springs in the desert with a tree, showing forth the conversion of the gentiles to piety through the Cross.

Jordan, having hidden in its depths an axe-head, gave it forth again through the power of a stick, signifying the cutting off of deception by the Cross and baptism.

In a sacred manner the people encamped in four divisions; and preceding in this fashion the tabernacle of the witness, they were glorified in the cross-like formation of their ranks.

Wondrously stretched forth, the Cross emitted rays like the sun's, and the heavens declared the glory of our God.

Katavasia: O Lord, I have heard the mystery ...,

ODE V

Irmos: O thrice-blessed Tree, on which Christ the king and Lord was stretched! * Through thee the beguiler fell, * who tempted mankind with the tree. * He was caught in the trap set by God, * who was crucified upon thee in the flesh, * granting peace unto our souls.

O ever-hymned Tree, whereon Christ was stretched: the whirling sword which guarded Eden stood in awe of thee, O Cross, and the dread cherubim withdrew, when Christ was nailed to thee, Who granteth peace unto our souls.

The adverse powers of the nether world are stricken with fear when the sign of the Cross is traced in the air in which they live, as are the generations of the earthborn and the heavenly, who bend the knee to Christ, Who granteth peace unto our souls.

Having shone forth a divine light and revealed itself in rays of incorruption unto the darkened gentiles astray in error, the divine Cross acquireth them for Christ Who was nailed thereto, and granteth peace unto our souls.

Katavasia: O thrice-blessed Tree ...,

ODE VI

Irmos: Jonah stretched out his hands in the form of a cross * within the belly of the sea monster, * plainly prefiguring the redeeming Passion. * Cast out from thence after three days, * he foreshadowed the marvelous Resurrection of Christ our God, * who was crucified in the flesh and enlightened the world * by His Rising on the third day.

Bent with age and weighed down with infirmity, Jacob drew himself up when he crossed his arms, showing forth the power of the life-bearing Cross; for God Who was nailed in the flesh hath set aright the obsolescence of the law of the Scripture which was written in shadows, and dispelled the soul-destroying disease of deception.

Divine Israel laid his hands cross-wise upon the heads of the youths, and insofar as those serving under the law give glory to the firstborn, he suspected he had erred in laying his hands thus, yet he did not alter the life-bearing image; wherefore, crying aloud, raising the Cross on high, the newly established people of Christ God are protected thereby.

Katavasia: Jonah stretched out his hands ...,

Kontakion of the feast, in Tone IV:

O Thou Who wast lifted up willingly upon the Cross, * bestow Thy mercies upon the new community named after Thee, * O Christ God; gladden with Thy power Orthodox Christians, * granting them victory over enemies; ** may they have as Thy help the invincible trophy, the weapon of peace.

Ikos: He who was caught up to the third heaven of paradise and heard unspeakable and divine words which the human tongue cannot utter, what writeth he to the Galatians, which, as lovers of the Scriptures, ye have both read and come to understand? God forbid, saith he, that I should glory, save only in the Cross of the Lord, whereon having suffered He slew the passions. Let us all then firmly hold this boast, the Cross of the Lord; for this Wood is our salvation, the invincible trophy, the weapon of peace.

ODE VII

Irmos: The senseless decree of the wicked tyrant, * breathing forth threats and blasphemy hateful to God, * confused the people. * Yet neither the fury of the wild beast nor the roaring of the fire * could frighten the three Children: * but standing together in the flame, * fanned by the wind that brought refreshment as the dew, they sang: * ‘Blessed and supremely praised art Thou, * O our God and the God of our fathers.’

The first man, tasting of the tree, went to dwell in corruption; for, having condemned himself to a shameful banishment from life, he imparted corruption to the whole race of mankind. But we mortals, finding restoration through the tree of the Cross, cry aloud: O supremely hymned God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Breaking the commandment of God came about through disobedience, and the untimely partaking of the fruit of the tree brought death to mankind, but to preserve that which is most precious, access to the tree of life was forbidden, until God opened it to the suffering thief who with a proper understanding cried aloud: O supremely hymned God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Israel, foreseeing things to come, laid hold of the tip of Joseph’s staff, revealing beforehand that the most glorious Cross would seize the power of the kingdom, for it is the victorious boast of kings and a light for those who cry aloud with faith: O supremely hymned God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Katavasia: The senseless decree of the wicked tyrant ...,

ODE VIII

Irmos: O children equal in number to the Trinity: * bless ye God, the Father and Creator; * hymn ye the Word Who came down * and transformed the fire into dew; * and supremely exalt ye Him Who giveth life unto all, * the most holy Spirit, * throughout the ages!

O hosts of heaven, chant ye to the exalted Tree which was drenched in the blood of the incarnate Word of God, and celebrate the restoration of those born on earth. O Ye people, worship the Cross of Christ, by which the world hath been granted the resurrection throughout all ages!

O ye mortal stewards of grace, with your hands reverently raise on high the Cross whereon Christ God stood and the spear which pierced the body of God the Word, that all the nations may see the salvation which is of God, glorifying Him throughout all ages!

O faithful Christian kings, forechosen by divine decree, be ye glad! And having received from God the precious Cross, rejoice in it, the weapon of victory, for thereby tribes of enemy warriors seeking to make battle have been scattered throughout all ages.

Katavasia: O children equal in number ...,

We do not sing the Magnificat before ODE IX, but chant instead the refrain:

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, the all-honored Cross of the Lord!

Then we chant the Irmos of Canon I: “O Theotokos, thou art a mystical paradise ...,” The second choir likewise chanteth the refrain and the Irmos. The refrain is chanted before each of the 6 Troparia of Canon I.

ODE IX

Irmos: O Theotokos, thou art a mystical Paradise, * who untitled brought forth Christ. * by Whom the life-giving Tree of the Cross hath been planted upon the earth: * Therefore celebrating its exaltation on this day, * Him do we worship * and thee do we magnify.

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, the all-honored Cross of the Lord!

Let all the trees of the forests rejoice, for their nature hath been sanctified by Him Who planted them in the beginning - Christ Who was stretched out upon the Tree. Wherefore, worshiping it as it is now raised aloft, we magnify thee, O Theotokos.

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, the all-honored Cross of the Lord!

A sacred horn hath been lifted up, the chief horn for all the divinely wise: the Cross, whereby all the horns of the sinful are noetically broken asunder. Wherefore, worshiping it as it is now raised aloft, we magnify thee, O Theotokos.

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, the all-honored Cross of the Lord!

That Thou mayest show the Cross, the invincible weapon, to the world, O adored Lord and King, in the sight of all Thou didst form its most glorious image in the skies, radiant with boundless light. Wherefore, all the powers of heaven magnify Thee.

Then the refrain of Canon II: **Magnify, O my soul, the exaltation of the life-creating Cross of the Lord!**

And the Irmos of Canon II: “Today the death that came to man ...,” The second choir likewise chanteth the refrain and the Irmos. The refrain is chanted before each of the 6 Troparia of Canon II.

Canon II

Irmos: Today the death that came to man through eating of the tree, * is made of no effect through the Cross. * For the curse of our Mother Eve * that fell on all mankind * is destroyed by the fruit of the pure Mother of God, * whom all the powers of heaven magnify.

The refrain: **Magnify, O my soul, the exaltation of the life-creating Cross of the Lord!**

Thou didst not permit the murderous bitterness of the tree to remain, O Lord, for thou didst utterly destroy it by the Cross. Wherefore, by a tree Thou didst once sweeten the bitterness of the waters of Marah, prefiguring the activity of the Cross, which all the hosts of heaven magnify.

The refrain: **Magnify, O my soul, the exaltation of the life-creating Cross of the Lord!**

Today Thou hast raised up by the Cross those who remain continually mired in the darkness of our forefather, O Lord; for though our nature was humbled through deceit and an exceeding lack of restraint, the light of Thy Cross hath again guided all of us aright, which we, the faithful magnify.

The refrain: **Magnify, O my soul, the exaltation of the life-creating Cross of the Lord!**

That Thou mightest reveal to the world the image of the Cross venerated among all, O Lord, Thou didst trace its outline in the heavens, in that it is most glorious, radiant with boundless light: the invincible weapon for the emperor. Wherefore, all the hosts of heaven magnify Thee.

Katavasia I: O Theotokos, thou art a mystical paradise ...,

Katavasia II: Today the death that came to man ...,

Exapostilarion of the feast:

Spec. Mel.: “When the disciples ...”:

The Cross is the guardian of the whole world! The Cross is the beauty of the Church! The Cross is the dominion of kings! The Cross is the confirmation of the faithful! The Cross is the glory of the angels and the wounding of the demons!
(Twice)

Glory ..., Both now ...,

Spec. Mel.: “Hearken, ye women ...”:

Today is the Cross raised on high, and the world is sanctified; for He that sitteth with the Father and the Holy Spirit stretched out his arms thereon. It hath brought

the whole world to the knowledge of Thee, O Christ. Therefore, to those who hope in Thee do Thou grant divine glory.

On the Praises, 4, in Tone VIII:

Spec. Mel.: “O most glorious wonder ...”:

O most glorious wonder! * the Life-bearing Tree, * the most holy Cross * is revealed today, lifted up on high. * All the ends of the earth glorify it, * and the hordes of the demons are affrighted. * O what a gift hath been given to mortals! * Thereby, O Christ, save Thou our souls, ** in that Thou alone art compassionate. **(Twice)**

O most glorious wonder! * The Cross which bore the Most High * like a cluster of grapes full of life * is seen today lifted up from the earth. * Thereby we have all been drawn to God, * and death hath been utterly slain. * O the most precious Tree * whereby we have received the food of immortality in Eden, ** glorifying Christ!

O most glorious wonder! * The length and height of the Cross * is equal to heaven! * For it sanctifieth all things with divine grace. * In it are the barbarian nations vanquished. * In it are the scepters of kings made firm. * O divine ladder, * whereby we ascend to the heavens, ** exalting Christ the Lord in hymns!

Glory ..., Both now ..., in the Tone VI:

Today the Cross of the Lord cometh forth; and the faithful receive it with desire, and they derive healings of soul and body, and every pang. Let us venerate it with joy and fear: with fear, for we are unworthy because of our sins; and with joy, because of the salvation which is granted to the world by Christ God, Who hath great mercy, and Who was nailed to it.

The Great Doxology is chanted quietly and melodiously. The priest, having put on full sacerdotal vestments, entereth the holy sanctuary bearing the censer, the deacon preceding him with a lamp; and the priest censeth the holy table and the precious Cross, and, lifting the precious Cross with its tray to his head, he departeth the sanctuary through the northern door, preceded by servers bearing two lamps and the censer, and cometh before the royal doors, where he standeth, awaiting the conclusion of the Trisagion.

When the Trisagion cometh to an end, the priest intoneth: “Wisdom! Stand aright!” And the singers chant the Troparion:

Save O Lord Thy people, * and bless Thine inheritance. * Grant now unto the faithful * victory over adversaries, * and by the power of Thy Cross ** do Thou preserve Thy commonwealth. **(Thrice)**

Then the priest leaveth his place before the royal doors, bearing the precious Cross on his head, and goeth to the analogion which has been placed, adorned,

in the center of the church, and setteth the precious Cross thereon. And he maketh a prostration before the precious Cross thrice, chanting softly:

We venerate Thy Cross, O Master, * and we glorify Thy holy Resurrection!
(Thrice)

And the choirs also chant this hymn aloud, thrice. Then all venerate the precious Cross, bowing down before it one by one, while the following Stichera are chanted:

In Tone II: Come, ye faithful, and let us venerate the life-giving Tree, * upon which Christ, the King of Glory, hath willingly stretched out His hands. * To the ancient blessedness hath He raised us up, * whom the enemy despoiled of old through pleasure, making us exiles far from God. * Come, ye faithful, and let us venerate the Tree whereby * we have been deemed worthy to crush the heads of our invisible enemies. * Come, all ye kindred of the nations, * and let us honor in hymns the Cross of the Lord. * Rejoice, O Cross, perfect redemption of fallen Adam. * Glorifying in thee, our faithful kings laid low by thy might the people of Ishmael. * We Christians kiss thee now with awe, * and glorifying God Who was nailed on thee, we cry aloud: * O Lord, Who was crucified on the Cross, have mercy upon us, ** for Thou art good and lovest mankind.

In Tone V: Come, ye people, and, beholding the most glorious wonder, let us worship the power of the Cross; for a tree brought about death in paradise, but this tree hath caused life to blossom forth, for the sinless Lord was nailed to it. Receiving incorruption therefrom, O all ye nations, let us cry: O Thou Who hast abolished death by the Cross and freed us, glory to Thee!

The words of Thy prophets, Isaiah and David, have been fulfilled, O God, which said: All nations will come, O Lord, and bow down before Thee. For, behold the people who have been filled with Thy grace in Thy courts in Jerusalem, O Good One. O Thou Who didst endure the Cross for us and hast imparted life through Thy resurrection, preserve and save us!

In Tone VI: The four comers of the world are sanctified today as the four parts of Thy Cross are elevated, O Christ our God; and the horn of all Orthodox hierarchs is exalted with it. Wherefore, we crush the horns of our enemies. Great art Thou, O Lord, and wondrous art Thou in Thy works! Glory be to Thee!

The voices of the prophets foretold the holy Tree whereby Adam was loosed from the ancient curse of death, and creation raiseth a cry to that which today is exalted, begging great mercy of God. O Master, Who alone art boundless in tender compassion: be Thou our cleansing and save our souls!

In Tone VIII: O God, the words of Moses Thy prophet have been fulfilled, who said: “Ye shall see your life hanging before your eyes!” Today the Cross is exalted, and the world is freed from deception. Today the resurrection of Christ is renewed, and the ends of the earth rejoice, offering music to Thee on cymbals, like David, and saying: “Thou hast wrought salvation in the midst of the earth, O God: the Cross and resurrection! For their sake Thou hast saved us, O Good One Who lovest mankind! O Almighty Lord, glory be to Thee!”

Today the Master of the creation and the Lord of Glory * hath been nailed to the Cross and His side hath been pierced; * and He Who is the sweetness of the Church tasteth gall and vinegar. * A crown of thorns hath been placed upon Him Who covereth the heavens with clouds. * He hath been clothed in a cloak of mockery, * and He Who formed man with His hands hath been struck by a hand of clay. * He Who doth wrap the heaven in clouds hath been smitten upon His back. * He accepteth spitting and scourging, reproach and buffeting; * and all these things my Redeemer and God hath endured for me who am condemned, ** that in His compassion He may save the world from delusion.

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

Today He Who is in essence unapproachable, * hath become approachable for me and suffereth His Passion, delivering me from passions. * He Who doth grant light unto the blind hath been spat upon by the mouths of transgressors, * and He hath given His back over to scourging for the sake of those that are held captive. * When the pure Virgin, His Mother saw Him on the Cross, she cried aloud in pain: * ‘Woe is me, my Child! What is this that Thou hast done? * Thou Who wast in beauty fairer than all mortal men, * dost now appear without life and form, having neither shape nor comeliness. * Woe is me, my Light! * I cannot bear to look upon Thee sleeping, and I am wounded in the depths of my soul, * a harsh sword hath pierced my heart. * I sing the praises of Thy Passion, I venerate Thy loving-kindness: ** O long-suffering One, glory be to Thee!

Then, the litanies: Have mercy upon us, O God ..., and Let us complete our morning prayer ... Deacon: Wisdom! After the priest intones the dismissal we read the First Hour.

AT LITURGY

ANTIPHON I

Verse: O God, my God, attend to me; why hast Thou forsaken me?

Refrain: Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us.

Verse: Far from my salvation are the words of my transgressions.

Refrain: Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us.

Verse: My God, I will cry by day, and wilt Thou not hearken? and by night, and it shall not be unto folly for me.

Refrain: Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us.

Verse: But as for Thee, Thou dwellest in the sanctuary, O Praise of Israel.

Refrain: Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us.

Glory ..., Both now ...,

Refrain: Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us.

ANTIPHON II

Verse: O God, why hast Thou cast us off unto the end?

Refrain: O Son of God Who wast crucified in the flesh, save us who chant unto Thee: Alleluia!

Verse: Remember Thy congregation which Thou hast purchased from the beginning.

Refrain: O Son of God Who wast crucified in the flesh, save us who chant unto Thee: Alleluia!

Verse: This Mount Sion wherein Thou hast dwelt.

Refrain: O Son of God Who wast crucified in the flesh, save us who chant unto Thee: Alleluia!

Verse: God is our King before the ages, He hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth.

Refrain: O Son of God Who wast crucified in the flesh, save us who chant unto Thee: Alleluia!

Glory ..., Both now ...,

O Only-begotten Son and Word of God, Who art immortal, Yet didst deign for our salvation To be incarnate of the holy Theotokos and Ever-virgin Mary, And without change didst become man, and wast crucified, O Christ God, trampling down death by death, Thou Who art One of the Trinity, glorified with the Father and the Holy Spirit, save us.

AND BOTH CHOIRS JOIN TOGETHER TO CHANT

ANTIPHON III

Verse: The Lord is King, let the peoples rage.

Then the Troparion, chanted in full each time

Save O Lord Thy people, * and bless Thine inheritance. * Grant now unto the faithful * victory over adversaries, * and by the power of Thy Cross ** do Thou preserve Thy commonwealth.

Verse: The Lord is King, let the peoples rage; He sitteth on the cherubim, let the earth be shaken.

Save O Lord Thy people ...,

Verse: The Lord is great in Sion, and He is high above all peoples.

Save O Lord Thy people ...,

Verse: Worship the Lord in His holy court.

Save O Lord Thy people ...,

Then, the Entrance. And the deacon saith:

Wisdom! Stand aright!

And we chant the Entrance Verse (Introit):

Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship the footstool of His feet, for He is holy.

Then, the Troparion of the feast, in Tone I:

Save O Lord Thy people, * and bless Thine inheritance. * Grant now unto the faithful * victory over adversaries, * and by the power of Thy Cross ** do Thou preserve Thy commonwealth.

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

O Thou Who wast lifted up willingly upon the Cross, * bestow Thy mercies upon the new community named after Thee, * O Christ God; gladden with Thy power Orthodox Christians, * granting them victory over enemies; ** may they have as Thy help the invincible trophy, the weapon of peace.

Instead of the Trisagion, we chant:

We venerate Thy Cross, O Master, * and we glorify Thy holy Resurrection!

Prokeimenon, in Tone VII: Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship the footstool of His feet, * for He is holy.

Verse: The Lord is King, let the peoples rage.

EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS, §125 (1 COR. 1: 18-24)

Brethren: The preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God. For it is written: I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

Alleluia, in Tone IV: Remember Thy congregation which Thou hast purchased from the beginning.

Verse: God is our King before the ages, He hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN, §60 (IN. 19: 6-11, 13-20, 25-28,30-35)

At that time, the high priests and elders took council against Jesus to put Him to death. And they delivered Him to Pilate saying: "Away with Him! away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said unto them: "Take ye Him, and crucify Him: for I find no fault in Him. The Jews answered him: "We have a law, and by our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God." When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid; and went again into the judgment hall, and said unto Jesus: "Whence art Thou?" But Jesus gave him no answer. Then said Pilate unto Him: "Speakest Thou not unto me? Knowest Thou not that I have power to crucify Thee, and have power to release Thee?" Jesus answered: "Thou couldst have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above." When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. And it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour: and he said unto the Jews: "Behold your King!" But they cried out: "Away with Him! Away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said unto them: "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered: "We have no king but Caesar." Then delivered he Him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led Him away. And He bearing His Cross went forth into a place called the place of the skull, which is called in Hebrew 'Golgotha': where they crucified Him, and two others with Him, on either side, and Jesus in the midst. And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the Cross. And the writing was: "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." This title then read many of the Jews; for the place where Jesus

was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin. Now there stood by the Cross of Jesus His Mother, and His Mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw His Mother, and the disciple standing by, whom He loved, He said unto His Mother: "Woman, behold thy son!" Then said He to the disciple: "Behold thy Mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home. After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, bowed His head, and gave up the ghost. The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath day was a high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers, and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who was crucified with Him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they broke not His legs: but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bore record, and his record is true.

Instead of "It is truly meet ...," we chant the **Irmos of ODE IX of Canon I:**

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, the all-honored Cross of the Lord!

Irmos: O Theotokos, thou art a mystical Paradise, * who untitled brought forth Christ. * by Whom the life-giving Tree of the Cross hath been planted upon the earth: * Therefore celebrating its exaltation on this day, * Him do we worship * and thee do we magnify.

Communion Verse: The light of Thy countenance, O Lord, hath been signed upon us.