

**ON THURSDAY EVENING: TONE VIII
AT VESPERS**

On “Lord, I have cried ...,” 3 Stichera of the precious Cross, in Tone VIII:
Spec. Mel.: “O most glorious wonder ...”:

Verse: If Thou shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, O Lord, who shall stand? * For with Thee there is forgiveness.

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.

Verse: For Thy name’s sake have I patiently waited for Thee, O Lord; my soul hath waited patiently for Thy word, * my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

O most glorious wonder! * Like a vine full of life, * bearing the Most High, * the Cross is seen today uplifted from the earth. * Thereby have we all been drawn to God, * and death hath been utterly slaughtered. * O most honored Tree, * whereby, glorifying Christ, * we have received the immortal sustenance ** which was in Eden!

Verse: From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch * let Israel hope in the Lord.

O the great goodness which Thou hast for us, * O good Jesus! * How didst Thou abase Thyself, * become a man, and will to suffer, * enduring the Cross and violent death * for Thy useless servants? * We offer the Cross to Thee as a worthy and divinely fitting gift; * and giving thanks, ** we, the faithful, glorify Thee.

Then the Stichera from the Menaion; or if there is no Menaion, these Stichera of the most holy Theotokos, in Tone VIII:

Verse: For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him there is plenteous redemption; * and He shall redeem Israel out of all his iniquities.

O the ineffable goodness of Him * Who became incarnate from thee, O all-hymned Theotokos! * For He Who is the Lover of mankind * endured the Cross and death, * that He might save what He created. * Entreat Him, that He may deliver me from torment, * the wretched one who am greatly sick, * and cause me to dwell ** where the never-waning light shines.

Verse: O praise the Lord, all ye nations; * praise Him, all ye peoples.

“**W**hat is this sight which mine eyes behold, * O Master? * Lifted up upon the Tree, * Thou Who upholdest all creation dost die, * giving life unto all!”, * said the Theotokos, weeping, * when she saw the God and man * who ineffably shone forth from her ** suspended upon the Cross.

Verse: For He hath made His mercy to prevail over us, * and the truth of the Lord abideth forever.

O most pure one, * by thine honored supplications * deliver from misfortunes the flock which thy Son and God * sprinkled with His blood. * And fending off the invisible foe-like wolves, * fill their faces with shame, * as David the psalmist * proclaimed of old, ** O pure one.

Glory ..., Both now ...,

Stavrotheotokion: Beholding Thee nailed to the Cross * and voluntarily accepting suffering, O Jesus, * Thy Virgin Mother, O Master, * cried aloud: Woe is me, my sweet Child! * How is it that Thou dost endure * unjustly inflicted wounds, * O Physician Who healeth the infirmities of mankind, * delivering all from corruption ** in Thy tender compassion?

Then, “O Joyous Light ...,” the Prokeimenon, in Tone VI:

Prokeimenon: My help cometh from the Lord, * Who hath made heaven and the earth.

Verse: I have lifted up mine eyes to the Mountains, from whence cometh my help.

Vouchsafe, O Lord ..., Litany: Let us complete ..., Then:

On the Aposticha, these Stichera of the precious Cross, in Tone VIII:

O Christ God Who wast lifted up upon the Cross, Thou didst save the race of mankind. We glorify Thy sufferings!

Verse: Unto Thee have I lifted up mine eyes, unto Thee that dwellest in heaven. Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hands of their masters, as the eyes of the handmaid look unto the hands of her Mistress, so do our eyes look unto the Lord our God, * until He take pity on us.

Thou wast nailed to the Cross, O Christ God, and didst open the gates of paradise. We glorify Thy divinity!

Verse: Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us, for greatly are we filled with abasement. Greatly hath our soul been filled therewith; let reproach come upon them that prosper, * and abasement on the proud.

To the Martyrs: Ye sanctify everyplace, O martyrs of the Lord, and heal every infirmity. Pray ye now, that our souls be delivered from the nets of the enemy, we beseech you.

Glory ..., Both now ...,

Stavrotheotokion: The unblemished heifer, beholding her Bullock * willingly nailed upon the Tree, * cried out aloud, lamenting piteously: * “Woe is me, O my most beloved Child! * How hath the ungrateful assembly of the Jews rewarded Thee, * desiring to leave me childless and bereft of Thee, ** O my most beloved Child?”

Then, “Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart ...,” Trisagion through Our Father ..., Troparia. Litany: Have mercy on us ..., and Dismissal.

ON THURSDAY NIGHT: TONE VIII

AT COMPLINE

Canon of supplication to the most holy Theotokos

ODE I

Irmos: Let us sing unto the Lord, * who led His people through the Red Sea: * for He alone hath gloriously been glorified.

O most immaculate Virgin, render Christ merciful unto me, setting me free on the day of the dread judgment.

Rain down upon me drops of compunction, O Lady, washing away my defilement, that I may glorify thee.

Glory ..., Illumine me, O Virgin who hast given birth to the never-waning Light, driving away the profound darkness of my slothfulness.

Both now ..., Save me who have perished amid many sins, O Theotokos, and deliver me from every torment and grievous condemnation.

ODE III

Irmos: O Lord, Creator of the vault of Heaven * and Builder of the Church, * do Thou strengthen me in Thy love, O Summit of desire, * O Support of the faithful, * O only Lover of mankind.

Having fallen, away from the life of sanctity, O most pure one, I have joined the dumb beasts and am wholly condemned; but do thou who hast given birth to the Judge deliver me from all damnation, and save me.

Unto thee do I flee, O Lady. Ever save me who am beset by a multitude of perils, taking pity upon me, O only all-hymned one who hast given birth to the Savior and Lord of all.

Glory ..., O Lady, thou impassable gate leading to God, open unto me the gates of repentance, I pray, cleansing me of the impurity of my sins with the showers of thy mercy, O thou who art full of the grace of God.

Both now ..., Deliver me from the assaults of the passions, O Lady, and vanquish now the foes which wage war upon me; establish me upon the rock of the will of God, and illumine my soul, O portal of the divine Light.

ODE IV

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

Heal thou the stripes of my soul, O Virgin full of the grace of God, and illumine my mind, which hath been darkened by the incursions of the passions, O pure one.

In that thou art the Mother of the Word, O most pure one, rouse me to repentance, for I sleep the sleep of despondency and am covered with sin.

Glory ..., O Lady unwedded, thou who hast given birth to the incarnate Word, enlighten my soul, and deliver me from Gehenna and torment.

Both now ..., **I**n thee have I placed all my hope, O Virgin Mother; preserve my soul, O thou who hast given birth to God my Savior.

ODE V

Irmos: O Light never-waning, * why hast Thou turned Thy face from me * and why hath the alien darkness surrounded me, * wretched though I be? * But do Thou guide my steps I implore Thee * and turn me back towards the light of Thy commandments.

Heal thou the wholly incurable sufferings of my soul, O Maiden, light my lamp, which hath gone out through slothfulness, and guide me to the paths of repentance, O Virgin, that I may glorify thee with faith and love.

I condemn myself even before the trial, O divinely joyous one. I alone among the accused bear shameful deeds. But intercede for me, in that thou art the advocate of all, and deliver me from grievous condemnation.

Glory ..., **C**ease thou never to deliver me from captivity, from the soul-corrupting turmoil which surrounds me, and from the grievous passions which slay me, O most holy Maiden, ally of sinners and our ready helper.

Both now ..., **O** most pure one who didst conceive the Life of the world, the Redeemer and King, impart life unto me who am wholly slain by the sting of death because of disobedience, and guide me to the Light.

ODE VI

Irmos: Cleanse me, O Savior, * for many are mine iniquities; * lead me up from the abyss of evils I pray Thee, * for unto Thee have I cried, * and Thou hast hearkened unto me, * O God of my salvation.

Grant life unto me who have been slain by many transgressions, O most pure Virgin Theotokos who ineffably gave birth to the Life of mankind, and teach me to do the will of the Lord.

All of us, the faithful, who are ever drowning in the abyss of evils, turmoil and griefs, have acquired thee as an intercessor and bulwark, O Theotokos, thou only refuge of the faithful.

Glory ..., **O** most immaculate and most pure one, who through thy holy Offspring hast caused the growths of ungodliness to wither away: destroy the evil of the enemy which ever groweth within me.

Both now ..., **S**anctify my mind and illumine my heart, O holy Mother of God, and deliver me from the evils which assail me, that I may glorify thee, my steadfast helper.

Lord, have mercy, (Thrice).

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

“**O** the new wonder! O the awesome mystery!” the ewe-lamb cried, beholding her Son stretched out upon the Tree; “What is this, O immortal Word of God? How art Thou seen to be dead Who dost cause the earth to quake, in that Thou art almighty? Yet I hymn Thine awesome and divine condescension.”

ODE VII

Irmos: The Hebrew children in the furnace * boldly trampled upon the flames, * changing the fire into dew, they cried aloud: * 'Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, throughout the ages'.

Be merciful unto me, O Virgin, and with the dressing of thy prayer heal me who have been wounded by the sword of sin; and forever rescue me from the unquenchable fire.

Deliver me from the cruel captivity which hath befallen me, from wicked thoughts and besetting transgressions, O Mother of the Savior, that, saved, I may ever glorify thee as is meet.

Glory ..., **I** now flee unto thee, O Mother of God, bound by the fetters of transgressions. In the tender compassion of thy mercy loose me, O Virgin, and deliver me from the torment and malice of the demons.

Both now ..., **T**ake pity and save me, O Virgin who hast given birth to the compassionate Word of God, and with the light which is within thee illumine my soul, and deliver me from the cruel wiles of the demons.

ODE VIII

Irmos: In his wrath the Chaldean Tyrant made the furnace blaze, * with heat fanned sevenfold for the servants of God; * but when he perceived that they had been saved by a greater power * he cried aloud to the Creator and Redeemer; * 'ye children bless, ye priests praise, * ye people, supremely exalt Him throughout all ages'.

He Who is perfect in every way and unapproachable in essence hath shown Himself to be accessible to me, having been clothed in the flesh through thee, O thou who knewest not wedlock. Him do thou earnestly entreat, that He lighten the burden of mine iniquities and deliver me from the judgment which is to come.

O most holy one, who in a manner past all telling hast given birth to the Judge and Lord, entreat Him as thy Son, that on the day of judgment He deliver from fire, from the darkness which is devoid of light, and from the gnashing of teeth me who ever piously hymns thee with faith.

Glory ..., **O** most pure Birthgiver of God, cleanse thou the wounds of my soul and the temptations of sin, washing them away with the streams gushing forth from fountain which emanated from the side of thine Off-spring, for to thee I cry, unto thee I flee, and thee do I entreat, who art full of the grace of God.

Both now ..., **O** most immaculate one, who alone hast manifestly given birth unto Life, grant life to my soul which hath been slain by the sting of the serpent; and hasten to do the will of Him Who was born for our sake, O Virgin, for I cry: Ye children bless; ye priests hymn; ye people supremely exalt Him throughout the ages!

ODE IX

Irmos: Heaven was stricken with awe, * and the ends of the earth were filled with amazement, * for God hath appeared in the flesh, * and thy womb was rendered more spacious than the heavens. * Wherefore, the ranks of men and of angels * magnify thee as the Theotokos.

My soul, which hath been blinded by the passions, blackened by wicked thoughts and is beset by danger, do thou enlighten, O portal of the Light; and deliver me from perils, from the oppression of the demons, from grievous testing, and the coming flame and torment.

O Savior Who wast born from the Virgin, and Who preserved her who gave birth to Thee incorrupt even after birthgiving, have pity on me when Thou shalt sit to judge my deeds. As Thou art sinless, overlook mine iniquities and sins, in that thou art a merciful God Who lovest mankind.

Glory ..., **C**arrying the heavenly Fire in thine arms, as though with tongs, O pure one who art full of the grace of God, utterly consume the passions of my soul, and free me from dread judgment and fire, and from the cruel tyranny of the demons.

Both now ..., **W**ith thy mystical effulgence enlighten our thoughts, hearts and reasoning powers, O Maiden full of the grace of God, that treading the paths of life aright, we may obtain mercy, ever singing praises unto thee.

Then, "It is truly meet ...," Trisagion through Our Father ..., Troparion, and the rest as usual. Dismissal.

ON FRIDAY MORNING: TONE VIII
AT MATINS

After the 1st chanting of the Psalter,

The Sessional Hymns of the holy and precious Cross, in Tone VIII:

Beholding the Author of life hanging upon the Cross, the thief said: "If Thou, Who art crucified with us, hadst not become God incarnate, the sun would not have lost its brightness and the earth would not have quaked with trembling. Remember me, O Lord, in Thy kingdom!"

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

Thy Cross is found to be a scale weighing the two thieves; for the one was brought down to Hades by the burden of his blasphemy, while the other was borne up out of transgressions to the knowledge of theology. O Christ God, glory be to Thee!

Glory ..., Both now ...,

Stavrotheotokion: Ever preserved by the Cross of thy Son and God, O Virgin, we confound the assaults and wiles of the demons; and hymning thee as the true Theotokos; with love all of our generations call thee blessed, as thou didst foretell. Wherefore, By thy prayers grant us remission of our offenses.

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

The tree in the midst of Eden blossomed forth death, but the Tree in the midst of the whole world hath produced life; for they who of old tasted the fruit, while incorrupt, became corrupt, but those who have obtained the latter have inherited incorruption. For by the Cross Thou hast saved the race of mankind, in that Thou art God.

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

In paradise of old the tree stripped me naked, and by my tasting the enemy brought mortality upon me; but when the tree of the Cross was planted in the ground, it brought us the raiment of everlasting life, and filled the whole world with joy. And beholding it uplifted, O ye people, with faith let us cry out together to God: Thy house is full of glory!

Verse: Wondrous is God in His saints, * the God of Israel.

To the Martyrs: Today this church is illumined with heavenly light; for therein the angelic armies rejoice, and with them the souls of the righteous are filled with gladness on the memorial of the passion-bearers. Through their prayers, O Christ, send down peace and great mercy upon Thy world.

Glory ..., Both now ...,

Stavrotheotokion: When thou didst see Him Who became incarnate of thy precious blood and was born from thee in a manner transcending understanding, hanging upon the Tree in the midst of malefactors, O pure one, thy womb was filled with pain, and thou didst cry out, weeping maternally: “Woe is me, O my Child! What is this Thy divine and ineffable dispensation, whereby Thou hast given life to Thy creation? I hymn Thy tender compassion! “

After the 3rd chanting of the Psalter, the Sessional Hymns, in Tone VIII:

Spec. Mel.: “Pondering what was mystically commanded ...”:

By Thy Cross and death was the tyranny of the enemy cast down, and death put to death. The dead of times past, whom Hades held bound as captives within itself, were suddenly released, O Good One, and they hymn Thy might and Thine awesome and divine condescension, whereby Thou hast saved us.

Deluded by a false hope of deification, our ancestor thereby brought corruption upon all; but through Thy Cross Thou pourest forth life upon all, in that Thou art supremely good; for Thou wast willingly nailed thereto, that Thou mightest release us from the primal curse. Wherefore, we hymn Thy voluntary suffering, O Christ.

Glory ..., Both now ...,

Stavrotheotokion: Upon beholding the Lamb and Shepherd suspended upon the Cross, the unblemished ewe-lamb, cried aloud: “O my Child, what is this strange and unexpected sight? How can the Life of all be condemned to death like mortals? But rise Thou from the dead on the third day, O Word, as Thou didst say, that, rejoicing, I may glorify Thee!”

ODE I

Canon of the precious and life-creating Cross.

The composition of Joseph, in Tone VIII:

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.

Stretching forth Thy divine hands on the Cross, O Jesus, Thou didst gather to Thyself the creation of Thine own hands’, freeing all from the hands of the evil one and subdueing him with Thy mighty hand, O King of all. Wherefore we the faithful hymn Thy majesty, for Thou hast been glorified.

Harmful was the bitter eating of the tree in Eden, which brought death upon us; but, dying on the Cross, Christ hath poured forth life upon all, slaying the serpent with His divine power. Wherefore, let us sing to Him, our God, for He hath been glorified!

To the Martyrs: **W**aging war, the multitude of the martyrs fought against the passions with Thy Cross and sufferings, O Jesus, and before the enemy they confessed Thee to reign over creation; and they endured tortures and boundless tribulations. Wherefore, they have received the glory of the Lord of glory.

To the Martyrs: **F**inding deliverance through the sprinkling of Thy deifying precious blood, O Lord, Thy martyrs truly shed their own blood, and, unjustly tortured, they refused to offer sacrifice to the vile soul-destroying demons. Wherefore, they brought themselves as honorable whole-burnt offerings unto Thee, the King of all.

Theotokion: **W**hen she saw Thee, Who seest all things, nailed to the Cross, the immaculate one said, lamenting: “What is this, O my Child? How have those who enjoyed Thy many gifts rewarded Thee? How can I bear the pain? Glory be to Thy compassion and awesome dispensation, O Long-suffering One!”

Another canon, of the most holy Theotokos, in Tone VIII:

Irmos: **H**aving passed through the water as upon dry land, * and having escaped the malice of the Egyptians, * the Israelites cried aloud: * Unto our God and Redeemer let us sing.

By thy visitation, O Mother of God, enlighten my soul, which hath been darkened by the pleasures of life and is constantly vexed by the griefs of the world.

The gates of heaven have been opened by thy divine birthgiving, O Mother of God. As thou art merciful, grant entry therein to my soul, and guide me to them.

O Virgin, by thy mercy heal my soul, which hath been shot by the darts loosed by the evil one and is wounded by his wiles and schemes.

As the hope of the hopeless and setting aright of the fallen, O thou who hast given birth to the divine Light, illumine my soul, which is in darkness.

ODE III

Canon of the precious Cross

Irmos: **T**he 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.

Beholding Thee unjustly suspended upon the Tree, the sun changed its bright vesture to black, the rocks split asunder, and the whole earth quaked, O only Savior, Thou deliverance of all.

Stretching out his arms, Moses prefigured the precious Cross; and we, now making the sign thereof with goodly wisdom, vanquish all the alien hordes of the demons, immune to all their harm.

To the Martyrs: **E**nduring sufferings, the passion-bearers emulated the suffering of Christ, and they underwent all manner of tortures for the sake of Him Who willingly suffered, slaying the passions and shining forth life upon the world.

To the Martyrs: **U**nwaveringly treading the path of torment, the right glorious passion-bearers cast from their hearts the stumbling-blocks of delusion, and hastened in gladness to the place of divine rest.

Theotokion: **"I** gave birth to Thee in a manner transcending the ways of men's laws, O my Child," the Theotokos declared, weeping; "How then have the iniquitous lifted Thee up upon the Tree in the midst of malefactors, O Thou Who alone set forth the law of life?"

Canon of the most holy Theotokos

Irmos: **O** Lord, Creator of the vault of Heaven * and Builder of the Church, * do Thou strengthen me in Thy love, O Summit of desire, * O Support of the faithful, * O only Lover of mankind.

Grant me loud sighs, ardent tears and a contrite heart, O Virgin, that I may weep over what I have done; and destroy my growing passions, O thou who alone art all-hymned.

Rescue my soul, which is heavy with sinful slumber and sunk in the bowels of Hades, O Lady, and grant me the thought of true repentance, O divinely blessed one.

Love of contrition and the virtues do thou grant unto my soul, which hath been sunk by my transgressions, that it might love the life of heaven and possess divine desire.

On thee do I set my hope, O Mother of God, and I am quickly delivered from despair; for I know, I know the richness of thy tender mercies and the power of thy boldness.

ODE IV

Canon of the precious Cross

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

Bearing piety like the cedar, faith like the cypress, and love like the pine, we bow down before the divine Cross.

By Thy Cross paradise hath been opened, O Savior, and man who had been condemned hath entered it again, magnifying Thy goodness.

Having died, Thou gavest life to all who had died, and didst slay the serpent who introduced sin.

To the Martyrs: Emulating the sufferings of Christ, the divine martyrs were shown to share in the radiance of heaven.

To the Martyrs: Uniting themselves to the beautiful Word, the martyrs were adorned; and, loving the Sun of righteousness, they were splendidly enlightened.

Theotokion: Unto Him Who was perfected before all ages hast thou given birth as a little babe, O all-immaculate Maiden; and He hath perfected all things by His Cross and goodness.

Canon of the most holy Theotokos

Irmos: Thou, O Lord, art my strength and Thou art my power, * Thou art my God and Thou art my joy, * Thou Who, while never leaving the bosom of Thy Father, * hast visited our poverty. * Therefore with the Prophet Habbakuk I cry unto Thee, * ‘Glory to Thy power, O Lover of mankind!’

O thou who hast ineffably given birth to God the Word, bind up the wounds of my soul with effective herbs, pouring out upon them the precious blood of thy Son, Who destroyed the soul-corrupting belly of Hades, and poured forth resurrection upon the world.

O Bride of God, send down upon my soul the cleansing of transgressions, with streams wash away mine evil thoughts, and grant that it may become pure; for I have fled to thy mediation and help, O Virgin Theotokos.

Unto thine aid do I now flee, O most pure one. Go thou before me, to deliver me from the cruel tempest of the enemy and the raging torrents of iniquity; and unerringly guide me to thy haven and thy tranquility, O Mother of God.

With darts of sin the enemy hath wounded my whole soul; he hath defiled my heart with pleasures and turned me away from the straight path. Wherefore, I cry unto thee: Turning me back, heal and save me!

ODE V

Canon of the precious Cross

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.

Desiring to clothe us with the vesture of incorruption, for we have been stripped naked, Thou wast stripped naked; and crucified upon the Cross, Thou didst lay bare the wiles of the enemy. Wherefore, we glorify Thy sufferings.

The saving blood which flowed from His side clearly cleansed the world, abolished the blood of the temples of the idols, restored those made subject to corruption by the fruit of knowledge, and poured forth incorruption upon our souls.

To the Martyrs: Resplendent in the beauty of their many wounds, and signed with the divine Blood, the glorious martyrs passed by the sword which before barred the way, and have made their abode, rejoicing, in paradise.

To the Martyrs: How wonderful art Thou, O Christ, in the saints who loved Thee with faith! For, enriched by Thee, they pour forth upon the world rivers of divine healing, drying up the effluence of our passions.

Theotokion: Thou hast healed us who have been afflicted by sin, O most pure Virgin, who hast given birth to the Savior and Physician of all, Who was nailed to the tree of the Cross, and poured forth salvation upon our souls.

Canon of the most holy Theotokos

Irmos: O Light never-waning, * why hast Thou turned Thy face from me * and why hath the alien darkness surrounded me, * wretched though I be? * But do Thou guide my steps I implore Thee * and turn me back towards the light of Thy commandments.

With all diligence I hasten to thine aid, O all-immaculate one, and I lift up the eyes of my soul. Turn not away from me, but help and deliver me, in that thou art good, and wash away the defilement of my transgressions.

Deadly poison lay in the fangs of sin, but thou didst supply an antidote thereto in the nails and divine spear of thine Offspring, Who in His tender compassion suffered in the flesh for our sake, O only all-hymned one.

Grant life to me, who am slain by mine evil ways and corrupted by my transgressions, O thou who hast given birth to eternal Life; and turn me to incorruption by renewing my soul, O divinely blessed one.

Deliver me from the evil of the demons and the malice of men, O Lady who alone hast given birth to the Healer of all flesh and offenses, the Savior and Lord, and quickly heal the pain of my soul and body.

ODE VI

Canon of the precious Cross

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.

The Cross was planted in the midst of the earth at the place of the skull, and healed the sickness caused by the tree which grew in the midst of paradise; for Jesus the Messiah, Who alone is righteous, appeared in the midst of two iniquitous thieves, and with Himself hath raised up all, and cast down into the abyss him who fell headlong from the heights.

Drawing the divine bow, Thy precious Cross O Christ, Thou didst loose Thine arrows at the slayer; with the nails of Thy hands Thou didst pierce his wrathful and most polluted heart, O Master; and Thou didst utterly slay him, granting life to those he had slain, O Compassionate One.

To the Martyrs: With the streams of blood which flowed from the bodies of the holy spiritual athletes they quenched all the flame of the madness of idolatry by the Spirit, watered the furrows of the honored Church, and caused the grain of salvation, hope and love to grow, wherewith every soul is nourished by divine grace.

To the Martyrs: The character of the glorious suffering passion-bearers was enflamed more than with fire, when the evil judges sentenced them to be consumed by material fire; but they were preserved unharmed through the activity and grace of the Holy Spirit, Who crowned them who suffered lawfully.

Theotokion: A sword pierced thy heart, O most pure Maiden, when thou didst see thy Son stretched out on the Cross, enduring sufferings, willingly pierced in His divine side by the spear, and slaying the adverse serpent of darkness; wherefore, weeping maternally, thou didst magnify Him.

Canon of the most holy Theotokos

Irmos: Cleanse me, O Savior, * for many are mine iniquities; * lead me up from the abyss of evils I pray Thee, * for unto Thee have I cried, * and Thou hast hearkened unto me, * O God of my salvation.

Living in fornication, I have fallen away from God. I have become a wretched slave to pleasures, and am stripped bare of all the divine virtues. But visit me, O most pure one.

I have shunned the commandments given me, and, having withdrawn from life, I have drawn nigh unto death. But instruct me to return, O most pure Mother of God.

My life is wicked, full of indifference, but thy mercy is great and ineffable, O most pure one. Let the tender compassion of thy goodness prevail over my weak mind.

O pure one, who hast given birth to the compassionate Savior and Redeemer, have pity on me, and save and deliver me from those who surround me and mercilessly attack my weakness.

ODE VII

Canon of the precious Cross

Irmos: **T**he 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 the dew as refreshment, they sang: * ‘Blessed and supremely praised art Thou, * O our God and the God of our fathers.’

When Thou wast stretched out upon the tree of the Cross like a grape-vine, O Word of the Father, mystically exuding the wine which doeth away with the drunkenness of disobedience gladdening all who acknowledge Thee to be God the Creator, Who willingly suffered. And it saveth those who chant: O all-hymned God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Thou didst endure the mockery of crucifixion, O Christ my God, bringing an end to the reproaches and sighing of men; Thou didst eat gall, transforming all the bitterness of evil; and Thou didst suffer Thy hands to be wounded, healing the wounds of our souls, O Compassionate One, and commanding us to chant: O all-hymned God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

To the Martyrs: **W**ith your pangs, O valiant spiritual athletes, ye gained the life which is devoid of pain; wherefore, having received from on high the grace to heal our sufferings and dispel evil spirits, ye ease our pains, O holy ones; and standing forth before the faithful, ye save those who cry: O all-hymned God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

To the Martyrs: **Y**e stood before the tribunal, confessing Christ Who for our sake assumed flesh like ours, though without corruption, O martyrs; and truly showing yourselves to be emulators of His sufferings, ye endured fire and all other tortures, crying out in gladness: O all-hymned God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Theotokion: “**I** was filled with grief, beholding Thee, my Son, suffering unjustly; and I was wounded in soul when by the spear Thou wast pierced in the side,” weeping and lamenting the Theotokos, the only Lady, cried out, whom we all call blessed as is meet, piously crying aloud: O all-hymned God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Canon of the most holy Theotokos

Irmos: **The Hebrew children in the furnace * boldly trampled upon the flames, * changing the fire into dew, they cried aloud: * 'Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, throughout the ages'.**

Having received the never-waning Light, O pure Virgin, thou art wholly radiant, and dost illumine those who cry to thee with faith: Blessed is the Fruit of thy womb, O most pure one!

That thou mightest show forth thy mercy and love for mankind, O Virgin, lead me up from the depths of evils, who cry out: Blessed is the Fruit of thy womb, O most pure one!

Wounded by soul-destroying darts, unto thee do I flee, O Virgin Mother. By thy prayer wholly protect me, who cry aloud: Blessed is the Fruit of thy womb, O most pure one!

O Mother of the Savior, deliver me, who am held fast by cruel captivity, evil thoughts and sinful guilt, that, saved, I may ever glorify thee as is meet.

ODE VIII

Canon of the precious Cross

Irmos: **O ye Children, equal in number to the Trinity, * bless ye God the Father and creator; * sing ye the praises of the Word who descended and changed the fire into dew; * and supremely exalt ye throughout the ages * the all-Holy Spirit, who giveth life unto all.**

Blessed is the Tree whereby all the curse of delusion in Eden was annulled, which resulted from the wicked eating of the tree; and Christ the exceedingly glorious One hath been exalted, for in His tender compassion He willingly desired to be lifted up thereon.

Once, the ever-glorious one, crossing his arms in a sacred manner, blessed his grandsons, revealing the form of the sacred Tree, whereby blessing hath been imparted unto all who were cursed by the malignant fruit of the tree and stumbled headlong into the abyss of evils.

All mankind was set aright when Thou, O Master, wast stretched forth on the Cross. The horde of evil demons fell, and those who were scattered came together in unity; and the might of Thine authority and Thy power are exalted throughout all ages.

To the Martyrs: O divine spiritual athletes of the Lord, ye have inherited blessed glory, incorrupt sustenance and splendid habitations, having joined the ranks of heaven, ye have now received with gladness the fulfillment of your ever-glorious hopes.

To the Martyrs: Your courage shone forth more brightly than the sun, O radiant spiritual athletes of Christ, with divine power casting into darkness all the deception of the devil, and with pious wisdom enlightening the hearts of all the faithful throughout all ages.

Theotokion: O most pure Virgin, blessed Mother of Him Who created all things, all of us, the faithful, call thee the noetic cloud, the tabernacle of sanctity, the throne of God, the portal and lampstand of the Light, and the daybreak of the Word.

Canon of the most holy Theotokos

Irmos: In his wrath the Chaldean Tyrant made the furnace blaze, * with heat fanned sevenfold for the servants of God; * but when he perceived that they had been saved by a greater power * he cried aloud to the Creator and Redeemer; * ‘ye children bless, ye priests praise, * ye people, supremely exalt Him throughout all ages’.

The Lord Almighty, Who dwelt in thy womb, showed thee to the faithful as a tower of confirmation; and fleeing to it we are delivered from perils and misfortunes, and are freed from temptation, chanting together: Ye priests hymn; ye people supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

Let the entreaty of my prayer rise unto the Lord Who issued forth from thy womb, O Lady, that He may deliver me from disobedience to His commandments, from condemnation and the curse of the law, that He may wash away the defilement of my grievous transgressions, in that He alone is merciful.

O most pure Birthgiver of God, cleanse thou the wounds of my soul and my stumblings into sin, washing me clean with the streams which flowed from the side of thy Son; for to thee do I cry, to thee do I flee, and upon thee, who art full of the grace of God, do I call.

We then chant the hymn of the Theotokos (the Magnificat), with the refrain: “More honorable than the cherubim ...,” and make prostrations.

ODE IX

Canon of the precious Cross

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.

Exalting Thee most sacredly, O compassionate Master, we bow down before Thy Cross, the spear, the sponge, the reed, and the holy nails which pierced Thy hands and feet, whereby we have found perfect remission and have been deemed worthy to live in paradise.

O how unjustly wast Thou condemned to be nailed, crucified, to the Tree, O Thou Who alone art the most just Judge of all, seeking to justify all who with faith glorify thy voluntary sufferings and dispensation, and who magnify Thee, O my Christ, with faith.

To the Martyrs: **G**iving their bodies over to tortures with all their soul, the glorious martyrs endured wounds and a violent death, the severing of their members, laceration, and burning by fire, and were aflame with love for the Lord; wherefore, crowned, they dwell in the heavens.

To the Martyrs: **O** Thou Who art the delight of the apostles and martyrs, By thy prayers fill us all with mercy, in that Thou art compassionate, granting us the remission of our sins, deliverance from all evils, and a place to dwell in Thy kingdom, O Thou Who for our sake appeared as a man.

Theotokion: **O** Virgin, thou wast shown to be a radiant bridal-chamber for Him Who made His abode within thine incorrupt womb, Who by His will endured His blessed passion, and in His ineffable mercy granted dispassion unto all. Worshipping Him with faith, we piously magnify thee.

Canon of the most holy Theotokos

Irmos: Heaven was stricken with awe, * and the ends of the earth were filled with amazement, * for God hath appeared in the flesh, * and thy womb was rendered more spacious than the heavens. * Wherefore, the ranks of men and of angels * magnify thee as the Theotokos.

O thou who art truly the divine Mother of God, never cease to entreat Him Whom thou didst bear, that He grant now to thy servants remission of sins and perfect forgiveness to them for the evils they have committed; and that He grant them everlasting bliss with all the saints.

O most holy Theotokos, gird about my lowly soul with the might and power of the Spirit, with weaponry and dominion, and arm it with the sword of the Cross. And cleanse the wounds of my sin with the dew of thy love for mankind and thy great mercy.

Be unto me a pillar of salvation, O pure one; and render the hordes of the demons impotent, dispelling the turmoil of dangers and misfortunes, driving far away the assaults of the passions, and granting all of us pure liberation.

O pure and most glorious Mother of God, save those who hymn thee with love, mercifully quelling the tumults of temptation; for as thou hast given birth unto God, O Virgin, thou art able to do whatsoever dost will, and freely grantest mercy. Wherefore, we all magnify thee.

Then, “It is truly meet to bless thee ...,” and a prostration.

Small litany, Exapostilarion, and the usual psalms.

Small Doxology (Read), Litany: Let us complete ...,

On the Aposticha, these Stichera of the precious Cross, in Tone VIII:

The staff of Moses prefigured Thy precious Cross, O our Savior; for thereby Thou hast save Thy people from the depths of the sea, O Lover of mankind.

Verse: We were filled in the morning with Thy mercy, O Lord, and we rejoiced and were glad. In all our days, let us be glad for the days wherein Thou didst humble us, for the years wherein we saw evils. And look upon Thy servants, and upon Thy works, * and do Thou guide their sons.

Of old the Garden of Eden put forth in its midst the tree whose fruit was eaten; but Thy Church, O Christ, hath caused the Cross to spring forth, pouring out life upon the world. The one brought death upon Adam, who ate of its fruit, but the other gave life to the thief who was saved by faith. O Christ God, Who by Thy suffering didst break the snares laid for us by the enemy, show us to share in his salvation, and grant us Thy kingdom, O Lord.

Verse: And let the brightness of the Lord our God be upon us, and the works of our hands do Thou guide aright upon us, * yea, the work of our hands do Thou guide aright.

To the Martyrs: What shall we call you, O saints? Cherubim, for Christ rested on you. Seraphim, for ye glorified Him without ceasing. Angels, for ye rejected your bodies. Powers, for ye work miracles. Many are your names, and great your gifts. Pray ye that our souls be saved.

Glory ..., Both now ...,

Stavrotheotokion: “**I** cannot bear to see Thee asleep upon the Tree, Who givest wakefulness to all, that Thou mightest give divine and saving watchfulness to those who have fallen into most pernicious sleep through the fruit of disobedience!”, the Virgin, whom we magnify, said, weeping.

Then, “It is good to give thanks ...,” Trisagion ..., Our Father ..., Troparia.

Litany: Have mercy on us ..., First Hour, and Dismissal.

**ON FRIDAY MORNING: TONE VIII
AT LITURGY**

On the Beatitudes, these Troparia, in Tone VIII:

Remember us, O Christ, Savior of the world, as Thou didst remember the thief on the tree; and grant unto all Thy heavenly kingdom, O only Compassionate One.

Thou didst stretch forth Thy hands upon the Tree, O Christ, and, rebuking the princes and powers of evil, hast saved from their harm those who piously glorify Thee.

Pierced by the spear as Thou didst hang upon the Tree, Thou didst pour forth torrents of immortality upon us who mindlessly brought death upon ourselves by our transgression; wherefore, we glorify Thee with fear.

To the Martyrs: Strangers to all earthly pleasures which arise, the spiritual athletes gave themselves over to strange torments, wounding the apostate spirit with their wounds.

Glory ..., Thou didst willingly endure suffering on the Cross, O Thou Who art One of the beginningless Trinity. Dry up all the torrents of my passions, and grant me salvation.

Both now ..., Seeing Emmanuel, the Lamb and Word of God, hanging bodily upon the Tree, the only unblemished Ewe-lamb and Virgin was seized by grief and shed tears.

On Friday, the Prokeimenon, in Tone VII:

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.

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.

Communion Verse: Thou hast wrought salvation in the midst of the earth, O God.