

THE 21ST DAY OF THE MONTH OF DECEMBER
FOREFEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST
COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY MARTYR JULIANA OF NICOMEDIA
AT VESPERS

On “Lord, I have cried ...,” 6 Stichera: 3 of the forefeast, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: “Thou hast given a sign ...”:

“**H**e is our God, * and none other shall take His place!” * the prophet exclaimed in the Spirit; * “He hath found every path of knowledge, * and thereby hath made Himself like unto mortals, * arraying Himself in flesh; * for He cometh to be born of the divine Maiden and Virgin. * He Who is unapproachable in essence ** becometh accessible to me.”

Thy womb, O all-immaculate Theotokos, * is shown to be a cluster of flour, * ineffably bearing the uncultivated Wheat * in a manner transcending understanding * and all telling. * Thou hast given birth in the cave of Bethlehem * to Him Who will nurture all creation * with divine understanding and grace, ** and deliver mankind from soul-destroying famine.

The unblemished heifer, * bearing the fatted Calf within her womb, * cometh to the holy cave * to give birth to Him in a most glorious manner, * to wrap Him as a man in swaddling bands, * and to lay Him in a manger as a babe. * Celebrate the forefeast, O creation, * joyfully magnifying ** Him Who hath wrought such glorious things on earth.

And 3 Stichera of the holy martyr, in Tone IV:

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

Having dyed for thyself * a robe of salvation * in the stain of thy blood, O all-praised one, * and illumined thyself in spirit, * thou didst betroth thyself to the immortal King * Who preserveth thee incorrupt and undefiled * unto the ages of ages, * as a virgin adorned and unsullied ** in the mansions of heaven.

Having received wounds * and been cast into the fire, * having endured the rending of thy flesh, * and valiantly borne the boiling cauldron, * thou wast not vanquished in resolve, * and didst not sacrifice to graven images; * but, bowing thy neck unto death, * thou didst ascend to the heavens as a crown-bearer ** through martyrdom by the sword.

Adorned with drops of thy blood, * thou wast manifestly resplendent, * like the sun, O all-praised martyr Juliana, * dispelling the gloom * of ungodliness by grace; * and illumining the faithful * who honor thy valiant struggles * and thy splendid and radiant memory, ** which is salvific for all.

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

Hold festival, O Sion! Be glad, O Jerusalem! O city of Christ God, receive the Creator, Who is contained by the cave and the manger! Open thy gates unto me, that, entering through them, I may see Him Who holdeth creation in His hand wrapped as a babe in swaddling-bands, Whom the angels hymn with unceasing songs: the Lord, the Bestower of life, Who saveth our race.

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

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

The predictions of all the prophets * are now fulfilled; * for Christ is born * from the pure divine Maiden ** in the city of Bethlehem.

Verse: God shall come forth out of Theman, * and the Holy One out of a mountain overshadowed and densely wooded.

O honored Bethlehem, * thou glory, joy and boast * of mortal mankind, * divine metropolis: ** receive thy Creator.

Verse: O Lord, I have heard Thy report, and I was afraid; * O Lord, I considered Thy works, and I was stricken with awe.

The Word of the Father, * by Whom all things came into being, * is seen as a single Hypostasis * in two natures, ** dispassionately and unchangeably.

Glory ..., Both now ..., the composition of Byzantium, in Tone VI:

O Virgin who knewest not wedlock, from whence hast thou come? Who gave birth to thee? Who was thy mother? How is it thou holdest the Creator in thine arms? How is it that thy womb hath not experienced corruption? O the most glorious and awesome mysteries wrought in thee, which we see performed on earth, O all-holy one! On earth we prepare for thee thy due as is meet: the cave; and from the heavens we ask that a star be given. The magi come from the lands of the East to those of the West, to behold the salvation of mankind wrapped in swaddling-bands in the manger.

Troparion of the holy martyr, in Tone IV:

Thy ewe-lamb Juliana O Jesus, crieth out with a loud voice: * “Thee do I love, O my Bridegroom, * and, seeking Thee, I endure suffering. * In Thy baptism I am crucified and buried with Thee. * I suffer for Thy sake, that I may reign with Thee; * I die for Thee, that I may live with Thee. * Accept me, who with love sacrifice myself for Thee, * as an unblemished offering!” ** By her supplications, in that Thou art merciful, save Thou our souls.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Troparion of the forefeast, in the same tone:

Make ready, O Bethlehem! * Be thou opened unto all, O Eden! * Adorn thyself, O Ephratha! * For in the cave the Tree of Life hath sprung forth from the Virgin. * Her womb is shown to be a noetic paradise, * in the midst of which is the divine Tree, * whereof eating, we shall live, and not die as did Adam. * Christ is born, that He might restore His image ** which of old fell!

AT COMPLINE

We chant a Triodion, the Irmos of each ODE of which we chant twice, the Troparia repeated to make up 6 in number. After each ODE both choirs together chant the Irmos of the ODE.

Triodion, the acrostic whereof is: "To the fourth", in Tone II:

ODE III

Irmos: **T**hou hast established me on the rock of faith, * and my mouth hath been emboldened against mine enemies. * For my spirit rejoiceth when I sing: * There is none as holy as our God * and none more righteous than Thee, O Lord.

In vain doth the vile and murderous company assemble at the command of Herod, to slay Christ our newborn Lord; unto Him do we chant: Thou art our God, and there is none more righteous than Thee, O Lord!

The cruel counsel of Herod, who in soul is opposed to God, is set at naught, for he desired to slay Christ the Master with the infants. To Him do we chant: Thou art our God, and there is none more righteous than Thee, O Lord!

Lord, have mercy! (Thrice) Glory ..., Both now ...,

Kontakion of the forefeast, in Tone II:

Beholding Him Who holdeth the whole world in His hands * wrapped in swaddling bands in Bethlehem, * let us offer up hymns of the forefeast to her who gave birth to Him; * for she rejoiceth maternally, ** holding the Son of God at her bosom.

ODE VIII

Irmos: **W**hereas the command of the tyrant prevailed, * and the furnace of old was heated sevenfold, * the flames did not burn the Children, * who having trampled underfoot the decree of the king, cried aloud: * 'O all ye Works of the Lord, * praise ye the Lord and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages.'

Shedding tears like myrrh for Christ Who is born for our sake, therewith we wash away our defilements, approaching the Most pure one in purity, and crying: Hymn the Lord, all ye works of the Lord, and exalt Him supremely throughout all ages!

With tears of compunction let us avoid tears for the coming dread torments, following the steps of Christ Who is placed in swaddling bands as a babe, and crying: Hymn the Lord, all ye works of the Lord, and exalt Him supremely throughout all ages!

Knowing that deliverance would be wrought in sanctity from within our midst, and having washed ourselves beforehand for Christ in a fountain of tears, O ye faithful, let us approach Him Who in the flesh is born in the cave, crying: Hymn the Lord, all ye works of the Lord, and exalt Him supremely throughout all ages!

ODE IX

Irmos: With pure souls and undefiled lips, * come let us magnify the undefiled and most holy Mother of Emanuel, * and through her let us bring our prayer to the Child she hath born: * Spare our souls, O Christ God, and save us.

Let there be no foolish person, no wicked model of jealousy, among those who now offer to God pleasing gifts instead of myrrh, gold and frankincense-the sweet fragrance of the virtues, and who chant unto Christ Who is born: Take pity on our souls, O Christ God, and save us!

Herod said to the wise magi when they arrived: “Go and search for the King Who is now born, and when ye have found Him, tell me,” for the cruel one harbored murder in his vile and murderous heart. Take pity on our souls, O Christ God, and save us!

O blind and vile murderer, O most audacious one, whereby thou didst earn oblivion, for no one lifteth his hands to slay God! Aflame with rage, thou dost savagely slaughter the infants, O Herod. Take pity on our souls, O Christ God, and save us!

AT MATINS

On “God is the Lord ...,” the Troparion of the forefeast, in Tone IV:

Make ready, O Bethlehem! * Be thou opened unto all, O Eden! * Adorn thyself, O Ephratha! * For in the cave the Tree of Life hath sprung forth from the Virgin. * Her womb is shown to be a noetic paradise, * in the midst of which is the divine Tree, * whereof eating, we shall live, and not die as did Adam. * Christ is born, that He might restore His image ** which of old fell! (Twice)

Glory ..., that of the holy martyr, in Tone IV:

Thy ewe-lamb Juliana O Jesus, crieth out with a loud voice: * “Thee do I love, O my Bridegroom, * and, seeking Thee, I endure suffering. * In Thy baptism I am crucified and buried with Thee. * I suffer for Thy sake, that I may reign with Thee; * I die for Thee, that I may live with Thee. * Accept me, who with love sacrifice myself for Thee, * as an unblemished offering!” ** By her supplications, in that Thou art merciful, save Thou our souls.

Both now ..., that of the forefeast.

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

Spec. Mel.: “The noble Joseph ...”:

Our unapproachable God, of His own will becoming approachable in His loving-kindness, cometh to be born as a man in the flesh from the Virgin Maiden in Bethlehem. Let us earnestly hasten to receive him, crying out with fear: Glory be to Thee, O Lord!

Glory ..., Both now ..., another Sessional Hymn, in Tone I:

Spec. Mel.: “Thy tomb, O Savior ...”:

He Who bowed down the heavens and made His abode within the Virgin cometh in the flesh, to be born in the cave of Bethlehem as was written, and He Who imparts life to babes in the womb, is to be seen as a babe. Wherefore, rejoicing, let us now greet Him with uprightness of heart.

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

Spec. Mel.: “The co-beginningless Word ...”:

O Bethlehem, prepare thyself to greet the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God; for, lo! she cometh to thee, bearing the infant Christ, Who is co-beginningless with the Father and the Spirit. She will give birth to Him in the cave, and after giving birth will be shown to remain yet a virgin.

Glory ..., Both now ..., another Sessional Hymn, in Tone III:

Spec. Mel.: “Awed by the beauty of thy virginity ...”:

A most glorious miracle is seen today! For our Savior now hasteneth to be born in the flesh from the Virgin for our sake, in the cave. The magi pay homage to Him with gifts as to a King, and the shepherds and angels glorify Him. And with them we also cry aloud: Glory be to Him Who became a man for our sake!

Canon of the forefeast, with 8 Troparia, including the Irmos; and that of the holy martyr, with 4 Troparia. Canon of the forefeast, the acrostic whereof is the (Greek) alphabet, the composition of Joseph, in Tone IV:

ODE I

Irmos: O Thou who wast born of the Virgin, * drown I implore Thee, in the depth of dispassion * the triune nature of my soul, * as Thou didst the mighty strongholds of the warriors, * that in the mortality of my flesh * as on a timbrel * I may chant a hymn of victory.

Rejoice, O heaven, and be glad, O earth! For our God, having taken on flesh, is born of the Virgin Maiden and is wrapped in swaddling bands, breaking the bonds of our transgressions, in that He is compassionate.

The pure Queen giveth birth in a manner past understanding to the King of all Who openeth the kingdom on high to the faithful and utterly removeth the sin which ever accursedly reigneth within us.

The writings of the prophets have attained their end; for, lo! Christ Whom they proclaimed beforehand is revealed, incarnate, in the city of Bethlehem. Let us now hasten today to celebrate the forefeast of His nativity with uprightness of mind.

Canon of the holy martyr, the acrostic whereof is: “May God confer me the grace to hymn thee, O martyr”, the composition of Joseph, in Tone IV:

Irmos: Through the deep of the Red Sea, * marched dry shod Israel of old, * and by Moses’ outstretched hands, * raised in the form of a cross, * the power of Amalek was routed in the wilderness.

Manifestly resplendent with the radiance of martyrdom, thou dost rejoice in God, deified in sanctity, O all-praised one, bestowing by thy supplications illumination upon those who hymn thee.

Thou wast wounded by the most sweet love of Christ, O all-praised one, and, having put away the carnal passions and thy corruptible bridegroom, thou didst betroth thyself to Him Who created thee, O immaculate and pure virgin.

God, the Creator of all, illumining thy mind with beauties of manifest brilliance, hath deemed thee worthy to join the choir of virgins in the mansions of heaven, O divinely wise martyr.

Theotokion: The Virgin cometh to give birth in the cave to the Creator of nature Who hath ineffably and supra-naturally taken flesh from her hypostatically, that He might deify mankind.

ODE III

Canon of the forefeast

Irmos: Likened to a barren woman * the Church from among the nations hath given birth, * and the assembly abundant in children, hath grown weak. * Let us cry out to our wondrous God: * Holy art Thou, O Lord!

Daniel beheld Thee, O Word, as the Stone cut from the mountain of the Virgin, which broke the temples of the idols in pieces by Thy might. Wherefore, we glorify Thee with fear.

Guided to Thee by the star, O Christ, Thou King of all, the magi from the East bring gifts; myrrh, gold and frankincense-marveling at Thy condescension.

The unploughed field beareth the life-bearing Grain; Mary cometh to give birth in the city of Bethlehem to Him Who feedeth the souls of all who cry: Holy art Thou, O Lord!

Canon of the holy martyr

Irmos: Thy Church, O Christ, rejoiceth in Thee crying aloud: * Thou, O Lord, art my strength, * my refuge and foundation.

Thou didst make thy soul the most holy temple of God, O glorious one, ever continuing in the temples of God with hymnody and supplication.

Desiring to obtain the greatest of gifts, O most honored one, thou didst endure the pangs of the flesh as if in another body.

With the drops of thy blood thou didst extinguish the fire, and water the thoughts of the faithful, O Juliana.

Theotokion: Delivering mankind, the Redeemer is born in Bethlehem from the pure one, being wrapped as a babe in swaddling-bands.

Kontakion of the holy martyr, in Tone III:

Spec. Mel.: “Today the Virgin ...”:

Rendered wholly pure by the beauties of virginity, * and having now been crowned with wreaths of martyrdom, * O virgin Juliana, thou grantest healing and salvation unto those * who are in need and affliction, and approach thy shrine; ** for Christ poureth forth divine grace and life everlasting.

Sessional Hymn of the holy martyr, in Tone IV:

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

Having come to love the Bridegroom, Creator and God, thou didst forsake thy corruptible bridegroom, O honored martyr, and, rejoicing, thou didst endure torments, laceration and fiery torture. Wherefore, thou hast entered into the divine bridal-chamber wearing a crown, asking forgiveness of sins for all.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Sessional Hymn of the forefeast, in Tone III:

Spec. Mel.: “Awed by the beauty of thy virginity ...,”:

Be ye filled with joy, O ye ends of the earth; for the Theotokos draweth nigh to give birth to the King of all. O the ineffable mystery! The Beginningless One hath a beginning! The Incorporeal One becometh incarnate! The cave receiveth Him Who holdeth all things! Rejoice, O Bethlehem, and dance, O creation, on this day of His forefeast!

ODE IV

Canon of the forefeast

Irmos: **H**e who sitteth in glory upon the throne of the Godhead, * Jesus the true God, * is come in a swift cloud * and with His sinless hands he hath saved those who cry: * Glory to Thy power, O Christ.

The holy phial of precious sanctity cometh to pour forth in the city of Bethlehem Him Who imparteth sanctity unto all of us who cry: Glory to Thy power, O Christ!

O divinely eloquent Isaiah, beholding the fulfillment of thine honored prophecies, rejoice and be glad! For without seed the Virgin hath given birth in the flesh to the Uncontainable One in the cave of Bethlehem.

Jesus is born in the flesh; the Timeless One is seen as an infant in time, and by His ineffable abasement deifieth me who, have become poor through corrupting disobedience.

Canon of the holy martyr

Irmos: **B**eholding Thee, the Sun of righteousness, * lifted up upon the Cross, * the Church now standeth arrayed and doth worthily cry aloud: * Glory be to Thy power, O Lord!

Having acquired a mind stretching out toward the Lord of all, stretched in the flesh and cruelly wounded thou didst in nowise reject Him, O goodly virgin Juliana.

The love of the Master succeeded in casting the flesh into darkness, O all-praised martyr; wherefore, thou didst despise riches, thy bridegroom and multifarious tortures.

Rending thee, the unblemished ewe-lamb, with wounds, like jackals O martyr, the torturers made thee a divine Lamb of God, a whole and unblemished sacrifice for God.

Theotokion: **B**eholding thy virginity sealed after birth giving, O Theotokos, and held fast by awe, thou didst cry aloud: “O my Child, how is it that I now wrap thee Who girdest the sea with sand, with swaddling bands?”

ODE V

Canon of the forefeast

Irmos: **T**he wicked will not behold Thy glory, O Christ, * but we who rise early to hymn Thee shall behold Thee, * the Only-Begotten effulgence of Thy Father's divinity, * O Lover of mankind.

God Emmanuel is born from the Virgin, and laid in a manger; of His own will He worketh our restoration. Wherefore, we piously celebrate the forefeast of His nativity.

O Thou Who art the beginningless Word, equal in essence with the Father, having been laid in a manger of dumb beasts thou hast released from irrationality us who piously celebrate the forefeast of Thy nativity.

Blessed was the root of Jesse which produced the pure one who beareth the divine Flower, Christ the Lord. And, rejoicing, we celebrate the forefeast of His nativity.

Canon of the holy martyr

Irmos: Thou, O Lord, who camest into the world, * art my light, * a holy light turning from the darkness of ignorance * those who sing Thy praises in faith.

With the outpourings of thy blood unjustly shed thou hast dried up the stream of wicked ungodliness, O martyr, quenching the fire of delusion.

Thou didst offer thyself wholly unto God, having dyed the purple robe of thy virginity most splendid with the dye of thy blood.

Wounded in soul by Thy beauty, O Master, the virgin passed over visible beauties, splendid in her suffering.

Theotokion: O new wonder! The most pure Virgin cometh to the cave of Bethlehem to give birth to God Who hath become a man.

ODE VI

Canon of the forefeast

Irmos: I have reached the depths of the sea * and the tempest of my many sins hath engulfed me; * but do Thou raise up my life from the abyss * O Greatly-merciful One.

Having been born for us as a little babe on earth, O Thou Who shone forth ineffably from the Father before all ages, free all from the ancient disobedience, in that Thou art compassionate.

Strange and most glorious things were heard in the city of Bethlehem when Thou wast born, O beginningless Word; for with the angels, shepherds offered up hymnody to Thee as Master.

The star of righteousness ineffably proclaimeth to the magi the Sun Who hath been born, and, rejoicing, we now celebrate the forefeast of His honored nativity.

Canon of the holy martyr

Irmos: The church crieth out unto Thee O Lord, * 'I will sacrifice unto Thee with a voice of praise * having been cleansed of the blood of the demons' * by the blood that for mercy's sake flowed from Thy side.

Wounded by divine desire, thou didst cry aloud: "I go forth to reach Christ Who is comely in beauty! Wherefore, I endure tortures, rejoicing with unwavering resolve!"

The evil tyrant commanded that the ewe-lamb of the Lord, whose mind was set on Christ, be mercilessly stretched out and broken with iron rods.

Thou didst rise early unto Christ, the never-setting Sun, O divinely wise one, and with His splendors didst illumine thy soul and heart; and hast therefore been translated to everlasting light.

Theotokion: **The** Creator Who of His own will hath wrapped the sea in mist, is born from the Virgin Maiden; He Who delivereth the world hath deigned to be wrapped in swaddling bands as an infant.

Kontakion of the forefeast, in Tone II:

Spec. Mel.: “Seeking the highest ...”:

Beholding Him Who holdeth the whole world in His hands * wrapped in swaddling bands in Bethlehem, * let us offer up hymns of the forefeast to her who gave birth to Him; * for she rejoiceth maternally, ** holding the Son of God at her bosom.

Ikos: **Holding** the Son of God in her arms, and kissing Him with maternal tenderness, the Virgin exclaimed: “I knew not seed in conceiving, and I have not undergone corruption in giving birth! I am as pure now, after giving birth, as before! Wherefore, I proclaim Thy surpassing tender compassion, O my Child, and the unapproachable majesty which Thou hast shown forth upon me! Therefore, I rejoice, holding the Son of God at my bosom!”

ODE VII

Canon of the forefeast

Irmos: **The** three youths in Babylon, * regarded the tyrant's command as foolishness, * and cried aloud in the midst of the flame: * **Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers!**

How can a cave contain Thee, the Uncontainable One, Who cometh to be born for our sake? How can the Virgin give suck to Thee, Who art the Nourisher of all, O compassionate Jesus?

Following the words of the magus Balaam, the magi hastened to pay homage to Christ with gifts, perceiving that He is the One Who reigneth over all creatures.

O human nature, barren of any of the virtues, rejoice and dance! For Christ cometh to be born in the flesh of the Virgin, that He might show thee to be right fruitful in good works.

Canon of the holy martyr

Irmos: **In** the Persian furnace the youths and descendants of Abraham, * burning with a love of piety * rather than by a flame of fire, * cried aloud saying: * **Blessed art Thou in the temple of Thy glory, O Lord.**

Pitilessly the judge mindlessly cast thee into the heated cauldron, O martyr; but by an angel the Lord preserved thee unharmed, for thou didst worship Him.

Undaunted, O all-honored martyr, with manly mind thou didst enter the fire, sensing only coolness, and crying aloud: Blessed art Thou in the temple of Thy glory, O Lord!

Thou didst offer thy Bridegroom, like a wreath, the people who had come to believe on Him, and with thy radiant miracles thou didst cut through the gloom of delusion.

Theotokion: Rejoice, O Virgin Mother, thou dwelling-place of the Uncontainable One, desiring for our sake to give birth in a cave, O most pure one, to Him Who guideth all creation by His hand as a mortal man.

ODE VIII

Canon of the forefeast

Irmos: O almighty Redeemer of all, * having descended and bedewed the children * in the midst of the flame, * Thou didst teach them to sing: * All ye works bless and hymn the Lord.

In Thine ineffable loving-kindness, to save me who through my great disobedience have become a den of thieves, O Christ, it was Thy will to be born in a cave of the pure Virgin.

Signing a writ of complete remission for me, Thou, the Author of creation, didst register Thyself with servants in accordance with the edict of Caesar. O Master, I hymn the unfathomable abyss of Thy loving-kindness!

O radiant palace of the Master, how is it that thou hast entered the least of caves to give birth to the Lord and King Who became incarnate for our sake, O all-holy Virgin Bride of God?

Canon of the holy martyr

Irmos: Having spread his hands, Daniel closed the lions' jaws * in their den; * while the zealously pious youths, * girded with virtue, * quenched the power of the fire and cried aloud: * Bless ye the Lord, all ye works of the Lord.

Having thine eyes and mind lifted up to God Who is able to save, by the grace of the divine Spirit thou didst extinguish the boiling of the cauldron, O martyr, chanting with faith the hymn of the children: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

Obeying the words of the wicked tyrant, the vain-minded ones who were worthy of fire cast thee alive into the fire, O martyr; yet, bedewed by the love of thy Bridegroom, thou wast not consumed by the fire, honoring Him, O God-bearer.

Thou didst stand before the tribunal, professing Christ to be the immortal God Who hath endured crucifixion and slain delusion, granting immortal life to the faithful who cry aloud: Hymn the Lord, all ye works!

Theotokion: Setting the clouds for His ascent, through the cloud of the Virgin the Lord cometh to be born for us, that He might dispel the dark cloud of sin from the souls of us who cry out to Him: Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord!

ODE IX

Canon of the forefeast

Irmos: **E**ve dwelt under the curse of sin * because of the infirmity of disobedience; * but thou, O Virgin Theotokos, * hast through the Offspring of thy pregnancy * blossomed forth blessing upon the world. * Wherefore, we all magnify thee.

O ye faithful, let us dance, leap up and cry aloud together: The Salvation of all cometh! The Lord draweth nigh to be born, that He might save those who with godly wisdom celebrate His nativity!

Take up thy psaltery and harp, O holy David, and chant in hymnody: O house of Ephratha, be glad! For He Whom the Father begat from within Himself is most radiantly born in thee, incarnate of the Virgin!

Like a downpour, like a mighty rainfall hath the Master descended into thy womb, O Virgin Mother and Birthgiver of God, and He hath watered lands hardened by dark ungodliness, drying up the seas of falsehood.

Canon of the holy martyr

Irmos: **A** cornerstone not cut by hand O Virgin, * was cut from thee the unhewn mountain: * even Christ, Who hath joined together the disparate natures; * therefore rejoicing we magnify thee, * O Theotokos.

The angels marveled at the struggles which the God-bearing Juliana undertook for the Faith: how in her feminine nature she put to shame him who had brought death to our first mother in paradise.

As a passion-bearer exceedingly adorned and a most excellent virgin thou hast lawfully received the crown of righteousness, having in thy flesh trampled underfoot the incorporeal foe, and emerged triumphant.

We honor thee, the noetic swallow, the incorrupt turtle-dove and dove, whose wings were gilded by thy witness, and who, soaring aloft, found rest in God.

Thou didst blossom forth like a lily in the vales of martyrdom, O passion-bearer Juliana, and in virginity thou wast as fragrant as a rose, becoming a divine perfume for thy comely Bridegroom.

Theotokion: **B**earing Him Who upholdeth all things, the Virgin cometh to Bethlehem to give birth to Him, and to lay in a manger, as a babe, Him Who doth excellently accomplish the restoration of mankind.

Exapostilarion of the forefeast:

Spec. Mel.: “He hath visited us ...”:

Come, O ye faithful, let us all offer up hymns of the forefeast of the nativity! Christ already cometh to be born in Bethlehem, that He might save the world, in that He alone is the Lover of mankind.

Glory ..., Both now ..., another Exapostilarion:

O Bethlehem, land of Judah, adorn thy gates! For the Virgin Theotokos already approacheth to give birth within thee, in a cave and a manger, to my Lord and God.

On the Praises, 4 Stichera, in Tone VI:

Spec. Mel.: “Go forth, ye angelic hosts ...”:

The creative Wisdom now cometh forth! * The clouds of prophecy are parted! * Grace doth flourish, * and Truth hath shone forth! * The shadows of indistinct images cease to be! * The gates of Eden have opened! * Dance thou, O Adam! * God our Creator ** hath of His own will taken on our form!

Fulfilling the sayings and visions of the prophets, * the Word is born in the flesh, * clothed in coarse matter * and, having been born, lieth in a manger of dumb beasts. * Lo! the extreme condescension! * Behold the awesome dispensation, * for which sake we chant: * Christ, the King of Israel, ** hath now arrived!

Behold, in a manner transcending understanding and all telling, * the pure one giveth birth to the Son of God * Whom the prophets of old proclaimed; * foreseeing through the Holy Spirit, * Who preserved her undefiled, * and released Adam from sin. * O ye people, let us say: * Christ our King ** hath now arrived in the flesh!

Without leaving the bosom of the Father, * Thou didst reveal Thyself as a man, * and held in the arms of the Virgin, * Thou didst summon the magi from Persia by a star, * who worshipped Thee as King and God. * Thou dost destroy the ungodly princes of the heathen with the spirit of Thy lips, * and dost shepherd the people ** whom Thou hast brought into existence.

Glory ..., in the same melody:

The Word Who is consubstantial with the Father, * receiving human form * from the precious blood of the Virgin, * taketh form * and groweth with the passing of time; * and He is born in the cave. * Great is the awesomeness! * The angels chant, and man clap their hands: ** Christ, the King of Israel, cometh forth!

Both now ..., in the same melody:

The prophecies of Balaam the magus * receive their fulfillment; * for those who were filled with Persian miracles, * illumined with the brilliance of the unusual star * by Christ Who was incarnate in Bethlehem, * the neversetting Sun, * indicate by their bestowal of gifts * God the King, Who of His own will ** became a mortal man.

On the Aposticha, these Stichera, in Tone II:

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

The star shineth forth, * signaling beforehand * Him Who is born in the cave. * O ye shepherds and angels, ye magi with gifts, ** make haste to come forth!

Verse: God shall come forth out of Theman, * and the Holy One out of a mountain overshadowed and densely wooded.

That He might fulfill * the predictions of the prophets, * the Lord is born * in Bethlehem, and He openeth Eden ** unto the descendents of Adam.

Verse: O Lord, I have heard Thy report, and I was afraid; * O Lord, I considered Thy works, and I was stricken with awe.

O Bethlehem, * with myrrh do thou anoint * the holy manger; * for the Master will put forth ** the rays of His divinity.

Glory ..., Both now ..., in the same melody

Come, O ye mortals, * and let us together * unceasingly hymn * Mary, the Virgin Theotokos, ** from whom Christ is born!

AT LITURGY

Troparion of the forefeast, in Tone IV:

Make ready, O Bethlehem! * Be thou opened unto all, O Eden! * Adorn thyself, O Ephratha! * For in the cave the Tree of Life hath sprung forth from the Virgin. * Her womb is shown to be a noetic paradise, * in the midst of which is the divine Tree, * whereof eating, we shall live, and not die as did Adam. * Christ is born, that He might restore His image ** which of old fell!

Troparion of the holy martyr, in Tone IV:

Thy ewe-lamb Juliana O Jesus, crieth out with a loud voice: * “Thee do I love, O my Bridegroom, * and, seeking Thee, I endure suffering. * In Thy baptism I am crucified and buried with Thee. * I suffer for Thy sake, that I may reign with Thee; * I die for Thee, that I may live with Thee. * Accept me, who with love sacrifice myself for Thee, * as an unblemished offering!” ** By her supplications, in that Thou art merciful, save Thou our souls.

Kontakion of the holy martyr, in Tone III:

Rendered wholly pure by the beauties of virginity, * and having now been crowned with wreaths of martyrdom, * O virgin Juliana, thou grantest healing and salvation unto those * who are in need and affliction, and approach thy shrine; ** for Christ poureth forth divine grace and life everlasting.

Kontakion of the forefeast, in Tone III:

Today the Virgin cometh to the cave * to ineffably give birth unto the pre-eternal Word. * Having heard this, be glad, O thou ecumene, * and with the angels and shepherds glorify the pre-eternal God, ** Who is to appear as a little babe.