

29 AUGUST
+ Beheading of John the Baptist

VESPERS

Lord I have cried

Tone 6

O Lord, I have cried to you, listen to me;
 O Lord, listen to me.
 O Lord, I have cried to you, listen to me;
 Note the voice of my plea when I cry to you.
 O Lord, listen to me.

² Let my prayer be directed before you like incense,
 the raising of my hands be an evening sacrifice.
 O Lord, listen to me.

S6: O Lord, if you mark offences, who will stand?
 But there is forgiveness with you.

S5: O Lord, I have waited for you for your name's sake;
 my soul has waited for your word,
 my soul has hoped in the Lord.

While the birthday of the brazen Herod was being celebrated, the oath which he has sworn to the vulgar dancer was being carried out. The Forerunner's head was severed by the master of the feast and offered on a plate to the guests. O loathsome banquet, filled with crime and irreverence! But let us bless the Baptist, as is right, for he is the greatest *person* born from a woman. *X2*

S4: Let Israel hope in the Lord
 from morning watch until night,
 from morning watch.

S3: For there is mercy with the Lord
 and abundant redemption with *him*.
 He will redeem Israel from all his offences.

O Forerunner, the dance of the devil's disciple was rewarded with your head. O banquet of blood! O deceitful Herod, would that you had never sworn! It would have been better for you to lie than shed just blood. But let us bless the Baptist, as is his right, for he is the greatest *person* born from a woman. *X2*

S2: Every nation, praise the Lord;
 every people, acclaim him!

O Herod, you condemned the one who rebuked your adultery because of demonic love and fiery passion. For the sake of an oath to a dancing girl, you delivered his holy head to that Jezebel. Woe to you! How did you dare do such a murder? Why was the wanton dancer not consumed by fire? But let us bless the Baptist, as is right, for he is the greatest *person* born from a woman.

S1: For his mercy is strengthened over us
 and the truth of the Lord remains for ever.
 Herodios rages with furious lust again. Dance of deceit! Feast of murder! O Lord, the Baptist is beheaded and Herod forfeits all peace, but grant us your peace through the prayers of the Forerunner.

Glory:

While the birthday of the brazen Herod was being celebrated, the oath which he has sworn to the vulgar dancer was being carried out. The Forerunner's head was severed by the master of the feast and offered on a plate to the guests. O loathsome banquet, filled with crime and irreverence! But let us bless the Baptist, as is right, for he is the greatest *person* born from a woman.

Both now:

Most holy Virgin, who will not bless you? Who will not sing about your most pure childbearing? The only-begotten Son shone timelessly from the Father, but was ineffably incarnate from you, O pure One. He was God by nature, yet became man for our sake. He

was not divided into two Persons, but known as one in two Natures. O honourable and all-blessed Lady plead with him to have mercy on our souls.

Entrance

Phos Ilarón

P/D: Wisdom! Stand upright!
 O Jesus Christ, joyful light of the holy glory
 of the immortal, heavenly, holy, blessed Father,
 when we come to the setting of the sun
 and see the light of evening,
 we praise God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

For it is right at all times to worship you
 with voices of praise,
 O Son of God *and* Giver of life.
 Therefore the world glorifies you.

Prokeímenon
Of the Day

Prophecy 1

From the Prophecy of Isaiah (40, 41, 45, 48 & 54 Composite)
 Comfort, comfort, O my people, says God. ² Speak, O priests, to the heart of Jerusalem; comfort her, for her humiliation is accomplished, her sin is put away, for she has received from the Lord's hand double the amount of her sins. ³ The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord; make straight the paths of our God. ⁹ O you who bring joyful news to Zion, go up on the high mountain; O you who bring joyful news to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with strength; lift it up, do not fear not; say to the cities of Judah: See your God! ¹⁷ The poor and the needy will rejoice, for when they seek water, and there is none, and their tongue is parched with thirst, I the Lord God, I the God of Israel will hear, and will not forsake them, ¹⁸ but I will open rivers on the mountains, and fountains in the midst of plains. I will make the desert pools of water and a thirsty land into watercourses. ⁸ Let the heaven rejoice from above and let the clouds rain justice. Let the earth produce, bloom with mercy and yield justice in the same way. I am the Lord who created you. ²⁰ Go out from Babylon, O you who flee from the Chaldeans; utter aloud a voice of joy, and let this be made known. Proclaim it to the end of the earth; say: The Lord has delivered his servant Jacob. ²¹ And if they thirst, he will lead them through the desert; he shall bring out water to them from the rock. The rock will be split, the water will flow out, and my people will drink. ¹ Rejoice, O infertile one who does not give birth; break out and cry, O you who do not travail, for the children from the desolate exceed those from the one who has a husband, for the Lord has said this.

Prophecy 2

From the Prophecy of Malachi (3:1-3, 5-7, 12, 18, 4:4-6)
 See, I send my messenger and he will survey the way before me, and the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to his temple, even the angel of the covenant, in whom you take pleasure. See, he is coming, says the Lord Almighty. ² And who will endure the day of his coming? Or who will stand at his appearing? For he is coming like the fire of a furnace and like the herb of fullers. ³ He will sit to melt and purify as though it were silver, and as though it were gold. He will purify the sons of Levi, refine them like gold and silver, and they will offer the Lord an offering in justice. ⁵ And I will draw near to you in judgment; I will be a swift witness against the witches, against the adulteresses, against those who swear falsely by my name, against those who keep back the labourer's wages, against those who oppress the widow, against those who afflict orphans, against those who pervert the judgment of the stranger, and against those who do not fear me, says the Lord Almighty. ⁶ For I am the Lord your God, and I have not changed, ⁷ but you, O sons of Jacob, have not refrained from the lawless deeds of your fathers. You have

perverted my statutes and not kept them. Return to me and I will return to you, says the Lord Almighty. But you said: How can we return? ¹² And all nations will call you blessed, for you will be a desirable land, says the Lord Almighty. ¹⁸ Then you will return and discern between the just and the wicked, and between the one who serves God, and the one who does not serve him. ⁵ And, see, I will send to you Elias the Tishbite, before the great and glorious day of the Lord comes. ⁶ He will turn again the heart of the father to the son, and the heart of a man to his neighbour, in case I come and strike the earth grievously. Remember the law of my servant Moses, in accordance with what I charged him at Horeb for all Israel, even the commandments and ordinances.

Prophecy 3

From the Wisdom of Solomon (4:7, 16-17, 19-20; 5:1-7)
Although the just may be cut short with death, yet he will be at rest. ¹⁶ Thus the just who is dead will condemn the ungodly who are living; and youth who is quickly perfected *will condemn* the many years and old age of the unjust. ¹⁷ For they will see the end of the wise, and will not understand what God in his counsel has decreed for him, and to what end the Lord has set him in safety. ¹⁹ For he will tear them, and cast them down headlong, so that they will be speechless. He will shake them from the foundation, and they will be utterly laid waste and be in sorrow; their memorial will perish. ²⁰ And when they throw up the accounts of their sins, they will come with fear, and their own lawless deeds will convince them to their face. ¹ Then the just man will stand in great boldness before the face of those who have afflicted him, and made no account of his labours. ² When they see it, they will be troubled with terrible fear, and will be amazed at the strangeness of his salvation, so far beyond all that they looked for. ³ As they repent and groan in anguish of spirit they will say within themselves: This was the one whom we held sometimes in derision, and a byword of reproach. ⁴ We fools counted his life as madness, and his end to be without honour. ⁵ How is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot among the saints! ⁶ Therefore we have strayed from the way of truth, and the light of justice has not shone over us, and the sun of justice did not rise over us. ⁷ We wearied ourselves in the way of wickedness and destruction; truly, we have gone through deserts, where there was no way, but as for the way of the Lord, we have not known it.

Ektení

Prayer

O Lord, allow us this night to be guarded from sin. Blessed are you, O Lord, God of our fathers! Praised and glorified be your name for ever. Amen. O Lord, let your mercy be on us, for we have hoped in you. Blessed are you, O Lord; teach me your statutes. Blessed are you, O Master; make me understand your statutes. Blessed are you, O Holy *One*; enlighten me with your statutes. O Lord, your mercy lasts for ever; do not overlook the work of your hands. To you belongs worship, to you belongs praise, to you belongs glory, to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and to ages of ages. Amen.

Plirotiká

Prayer

P: Peace be with you all. R: And with your spirit
D: Bow down your heads to the Lord. R: To you, O Lord.

P: For blessed and glorified is the power of your Kingdom, of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and ever and to the ages of ages. *Amen.*

Liti

Tone 5

O Forerunner, Herod intended to escape rebuke for his sinful actions and gave your head to a lawless woman. For the wretched man did not know that, when he had brought it in on a plate, he was rebuking

himself. But, O Baptist, since you are a teacher of purity and guide to redeeming repentance, plead with Christ for us to be rescued from the disgrace of the passions.

Apósticha

Tone 2

O Baptist John, preacher of repentance, your head is cut off and the whole earth is sanctified. You have made God's Law plain to the faithful and have forbade disobedience. Since you stand before the throne of the heavenly King, implore him to save our souls.

S2: The just will flourish like a palm tree
and grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Ps 91

O most holy John, you were beheaded for the sake of the Law. You were filled with the boldness of purity and rebuked the evil king for his offence. The angelic host marvels at your strength; the choir of apostles and martyrs praise you. Most blessed Forerunner, we also honour your memory every year and glorify the Holy Trinity who crowned you.

S2: The just will rejoice in the Lord and hope in him;
all the upright in heart will be praised. Ps 63

You were greater than all the prophets and sanctified from your mother's womb for the Lord's service. Today your blood is shed by the wicked king, but your death shames the sin of the wanton dancer. O Baptist John, pray that our souls may be saved.

Glory: Tone 8

O Forerunner of the Saviour, you rebuked the evil of an earthly prince, and so you were beheaded because of his lust. Therefore we bless your name from the rising to the setting of the sun. Since you stand with boldness before the Lord, implore him, together with his Mother, to save our souls.

Both now:

Unwedded Virgin, you conceived God in the flesh in a manner beyond all understanding. O pure mother of God Most High, receive your servants' prayers. Grant us cleansing from our sins and pray that our souls may be saved.

Song of Simeon

B/P: O Master, now let your servant depart in peace
according to your word,

² for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared before all peoples,

³ a light of revelation for *the* nations
and *the* glory of your people Israel.

Triságion Prayers

Apolytikia

Tone 2

The memory of the just is mentioned with praise. As for you, O Forerunner, the Lord's witness is enough. Indeed you were greater than the prophets since you were found worthy to baptize in the waters the *Lord* whom they could only announce. You have fought for the sake of truth and proclaimed to those in Hades that God who appeared in the flesh has taken away the sins of the world and bestowed his great mercy on us.

Tone 2

O Theotokos, your mysteries are beyond every thought and most glorious. You were sealed with purity and preserved in virginity. You were truly revealed as the mother who bore the true God. Plead with him to save our souls.

Dismissal

ORTHROS

God is the Lord Ps 117

R: God is the Lord and has appeared to us.

Blessed is the one who comes in the Lord's name. *Ps 117*

S1: Thank the Lord, for he is good,
for his mercy lasts for ever.

S2: All the nations surrounded me,
but I opposed them in the Lord's name.

S3: This *is* the Lord's doing
and it is wonderful in our eyes.

Apolytikia

Tone 2

The memory of the just is mentioned with praise. As for you, O Forerunner, the Lord's witness is enough. Indeed you were greater than the prophets since you were found worthy to baptize in the waters the *Lord* whom they could only announce. You have fought for the sake of truth and proclaimed to those in Hades that God who appeared in the flesh has taken away the sins of the world and bestowed his great mercy on us.

Tone 2

O Theotokos, your mysteries are beyond every thought and most glorious. You were sealed with purity and preserved in virginity. You were truly revealed as the mother who bore the true God. Plead with him to save our souls.

Small Litany

P: For yours is the might, and yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory of the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit, now and ever and to the ages of ages. *Amen*

Kathisma 1

Tone 5

O faithful, let us assemble and together praise the mediator between the Law and Grace. He preached repentance to us, and was beheaded for boldly and publicly denouncing Herod. Now he lives with the angels and implores Christ God to save our souls.

Glory: Both now:

O ever-virgin mother, the great mystery of your motherhood and the ineffable way in which you conceived has truly been revealed to us. Your glory astounds our spirits and surpasses our understanding. O Theotokos, it is spread out over us all for the salvation of our souls.

Kathisma 2

Tone 5

Let us praise John the Forerunner in hymns. He is the Baptizer of Christ, the prophet who was revealed to us in his mother's womb, the lamp who openly came from an infertile woman into the world and the victorious athlete. He prays to the Lord that we may be granted great mercy.

Glory: Both now:

O Theotokos, reveal your ready protection, help and mercy to your servants. Calm the storms of my deluded thoughts and raise my soul, for I know that you can do whatever you wish.

Polyeleos

Kathisma 3

Tone 8

You were born from an infertile woman by the will of God. You freed the restraints of your father's tongue and pointed out the Sun which enlightened you like the Morning Star. In the wilderness you announced to the people the Creator, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. O glorious Forerunner, you are truly worthy of our praise, for you zealously confronted the king and were beheaded. Plead before Christ our God to grant forgiveness of sins to those who sincerely celebrate your holy memory.

Glory: Both now:

All-holy and virgin Mother of God, I implore you to heal the cruel passions of my soul. Grant me the remission of my sins which I have committed in my foolishness, for I have stained my soul and body. I am miserable, so what can I do? What will happen to me in the hour when the angels separate my poor soul from my body? O Lady, be my support at that hour. Be my fervent protection, for you are my hope and I am your servant.

Small Litany

P: For blessed is your name, and glorified is your kingdom, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages. *Amen*

Anaváthmi Ps 128 Tone 4

1: Many passions have fought against me from my youth,
but help me and save me, O my Saviour. *X2*

2: Those who hate Zion will be shamed by the Lord;
they will be withered like grass by the fire. *X2*

Glory:

3: Every soul lives through the Holy Spirit, is exalted in purity
and illuminated by the Triune Unity in a sacred mystery.

Both now:

4: The streams of grace pour out through the Holy Spirit;
they water all creation and produce life.

Prokeímenon Ps 115 & Lk 2 Tone 4

R: The death of his saint is precious in the Lord's sight. *Ps 115*

S: What shall we give back to the Lord
for everything that he has given us?

Gospel Dialogue

P/D: Let us pray to the Lord. *Lord have mercy*

P: For you, O God, are holy *and* rest in the Holy Place. We send up glory to you, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and to the ages of ages. *Amen*.

R: Let everything with breath praise the Lord. *X3*

Praise God in his saints;

praise him in the firmament of his power. *Ps 50*

P/D: And that we may be counted worthy to listen to the Holy Gospel, let us pray to the Lord our God. *Lord have mercy X3*

P/D: Wisdom. Stand up. Let us listen to the Holy Gospel.

P: Peace be with you all. *And with your spirit*

P: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

P/D: Let us attend

R: Glory to you, O Lord, glory to you.

Gospel

From the Holy Gospel according to Matthew (14:1-13)

At that time Herod the tetrarch heard about the fame of Jesus; ² and he said to his servants, "This is John the Baptist, he has been raised from the dead; that is why these powers are at work in him." ³ For Herod had seized John and bound him and put him in prison, for the sake of Hero'di-as, his brother Philip's wife; ⁴ because John said to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her." ⁵ And though he wanted to put him to death, he feared the people, because they held him to be a prophet. ⁶ But when Herod's birthday came, the daughter of Hero'di-as danced before the company, and pleased Herod, ⁷ so that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask. ⁸ Prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me the head of John the Baptist here on a platter." ⁹ And the king was sorry; but because of his oaths and his guests he commanded it to be given; ¹⁰ he sent and had John beheaded in the prison, ¹¹ and his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother. ¹² And his disciples came and took the body and buried it; and they went and told Jesus. ¹³ Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a lonely place apart. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns.

R: Glory to you, O Lord, glory to you.

Psalm 50

O God, have mercy on me in your abundant mercy
and wipe out my offence through your great compassion.

⁴ Wash me thoroughly from my lawless act
and cleanse me from my sin.

⁵ For I know my lawlessness
and my sin is always before me.

⁶ I have sinned against you alone
and done this evil before you

^{6b} so that you might be justified in your words
and overcome when you are judged.

⁷ For see, I was conceived in lawlessness
and my mother gave birth to me in sin.

⁸ For see, you have loved truth
and revealed to me the hidden and secret *things* of your wisdom.

⁹ You will sprinkle me with hyssop and I will be clean;
you will wash me and I will become whiter than snow.

¹⁰ You will make me hear about joy and gladness;
the humbled bones will rejoice.

¹¹ Turn your face from my sins
and wipe out all my lawlessness.

¹² O God, create a pure heart within me
and renew an upright spirit within me.

¹³ Do not banish me from your presence
or remove your Holy Spirit from me.

¹⁴ Restore the joy of your salvation to me
and make me firm with your directing Spirit.

¹⁵ I will teach the lawless your ways
and the ungodly will return to you.

¹⁶ O God, set me free from the guilt of blood;
O God of my salvation, my tongue will rejoice in your justice.

¹⁷ O Lord, you will open my lips
and my mouth will proclaim your praise.

¹⁸ For if you had wanted sacrifice, I would have given it;
you will not be pleased with burnt offerings.

¹⁹ Sacrifice for God is a broken spirit;
God will not despise a broken and humbled heart.

²⁰ O Lord, be good to Zion in your pleasure
and let the walls of Jerusalem be built.

²¹ Then you will be pleased with a sacrifice of justice,
with an offering and burnt sacrifices;
then they will offer calves on your altar.

Glory: Tone 6

O merciful *Lord*, blot out the abundance of our offences through the prayers of the Forerunner.

Both now:

O merciful *Lord*, blot out the abundance of our offences through the prayers of the Theotokos.

Have mercy: Tone 2

O John the Baptist, preacher of repentance, when your head had been cut off, it made the earth holy because you made the law of God plain to the faithful and destroyed wickedness. Since you stand before the throne of the heavenly King, plead with him to save our souls.

Intercession

P/D: O God, save your people and bless your inheritance. Visit your world with mercy and compassion; exalt the horn of Orthodox Christians and send down on them your rich mercy, through the prayers of our all-pure Lady, Theotokos and Ever-virgin Mary, by the power of the honourable and life-giving cross, through the protection of the honourable bodiless powers of heaven, through the prayers of the honourable, glorious, prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John, of the holy, glorious, all-praised apostles, of the holy, all-praised and victorious martyrs, of our holy and God-bearing fathers, of the holy and just forebears of God, Ioachim and Anna,

and of all the saints. We ask you, only merciful Lord, "Listen to us sinners as we pray to you, and have mercy on us."

Lord have mercy. XI2

Through the mercy, compassion and love for the human race of your only-begotten Son, with whom you are blessed, together with the all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and ever and to the ages of ages. *Amen.*

Kontákion

Tone 5

The glorious beheading of the Forerunner is part of a firm divine dispensation, for in Hades he preached the coming of the Saviour. Then Herodias lamented, for she did not love the law of God or the present age. Unjustly she had asked for him to be put to death, for she loved what is false and temporal.

Íkos

Herod's birthday appears ungodly to everyone, for in the midst of the revelling, the head of the Faster was proposed as meat. Joy was united to sorrow and laughter turned to bitter tears, for in accordance with the command the girl entered in front of all the people when she carried the head of the Baptist on a platter. In the face of strong desire, sadness fell on all those lying there with the king, for she did not make them happy, not even Herod, yet their grief was not true sorrow, but what is false and temporal.

Synaxáριον

Today we remember the beheading of the renowned, holy, glorious prophet, forerunner and Baptist, John. He condemned Herod for marrying his brother's wife. While John lived he was a brilliant light, but he suffered for his just words. The criminal removed the head of the saint who had touched the head of the Saviour in the Jordan. The Forerunner was beheaded with a sword on the Twenty Ninth.

Together with him we remember:

King Sebba of the East Saxons C7

New Martyr Anastásios of Bulgaria and Serbia C18

O God, have mercy on us through their holy prayers. *Amen.*

Katavasías

1: Moses inscribed the invincible weapon of the cross on the waters and marked a straight line before him with his staff. He divided the Red Sea and opened a path for Israel who went over dry shod. Then he marked a second line across the waters, united them in one and overwhelmed the chariots of Pharaoh. Therefore let us sing to Christ our God, for he has been glorified.

3: The rod of Aaron is an image of this mystery; it comes into bud to show who should be priest. So the wood of the Cross has now flowered in the Church that once was infertile. It has filled her with strength and steadfastness.

4: O Lord, I have heard the mystery of your dispensation. I have considered your works and I glorified your divinity.

5: O three times blessed tree, on which Christ the King and Lord was stretched, the beguiler who tempted the human race with the tree fell because of you. He was caught in the trap set by God who was crucified on you in the flesh and grants peace to our souls.

6: Jonah stretched out his hands in the form of a cross within the belly of the whale and plainly prefigured your redeeming passion. He was cast out after three days and foreshadowed the mighty resurrection of Christ our God who was crucified in the flesh and enlightened the world by his rising on the third day.

7: The senseless decree of the wicked tyrant confused the people and breathed out threats and blasphemy hateful to God. Yet neither the fury of wild beasts nor the roaring of the fire could frighten the three children. As they stood together in the flame and were fanned by the wind that brought refreshment like the dew, they sang, "Blessed are you and praised above all, our God and the God of our fathers!"

8: Let us praise, bless and worship the Lord.
O children, equal in number to the Trinity, bless God the Father and Creator. Sing the praises of the Word who descended and changed the fire to dew and exalt above all for ever the most Holy Spirit who gives life to all.

Canticle Nine

The Magnificat is not sung.

O holy Forerunner, pray for us.
Every ear trembled with fear on hearing about the descent of God. The Most High came down of his own will and became a man of flesh within the Virgin's womb. Therefore those of us who are faithful glorify the pure Theotokos.

O holy Forerunner, pray for us.
O Prophet, the assembly of evil men and their advocate, the Devil, feared your tongue which spoke about God and proclaimed Christ. Herod submitted and beheaded you because of the wanton girl, but those of us who are faithful glorify you.

O holy Forerunner, pray for us.
The valleys of lowly nature were exalted and the hills were brought low because of the arrogance of death, for the voice which had cried in the wilderness called into light those who were living in Hades. O gates, raise yourselves, for the King of glory will enter.

O holy Forerunner, pray for us.
The passions of men tremble and demons run in fear at the overshadowing of grace which was given you by God, but, O Forerunner of the Lord, rescue the flock, which continually glorifies you, from both of those temptations.

Glory: Both now:
O Son of the Theotokos, go out, ride prosperously and reign. O Word of God, place the forces of Ishmael which fight against us beneath our feet and grant victory to Orthodox Christians over their adversaries through the prayers of the one who gave birth to you.

9: O Theotokos, you are a mystical Paradise in which Christ blossomed. Through him the life-bearing wood of the Cross was planted on earth. Now at its elevation we bow in worship before it and glorify you.

Exaposteilária

Tone 2

Let us crown with songs of praise the one who is acknowledged to be the greatest among the prophets, the first chosen of the apostles and Forerunner of grace, for his head was cut off for the sake of the Law of the Lord.

O adulterous Herod, you deceitfully cut off the head of the planter of purity, the Baptist of the Saviour, but could do nothing against the rebukes of his tongue.

O holy Virgin, you have destroyed the curse of the world through your divine childbearing. O Maiden, through your pleas, rescue from every kind of danger the flock which serves you in faith.

Praises

Tone 8

Let everything with breath praise the Lord.

Praise the Lord from the heavens;
praise him in the heights.
To you, O God, is due a song.

Praise him, all his angels;
praise him, all his powers.
To you, O God, is due a song.

S4: Praise him with cymbal and dance;
praise him with strings and flute.
Most marvellous wonder! The wanton and unbridled girl carries the holy head which is venerated by angels. She carries to her adulterous mother the tongue which had rebuked her for evil deeds. O Lover of the human race, your patience is ineffable! Therefore, O Christ, save our souls, for you alone are compassionate.

S3: Praise him with tuneful cymbals;
praise him with joyful cymbals.
Let everything with breath praise the Lord.
Most marvellous wonder! The wanton and unbridled girl carries the holy head which is venerated by angels. She carries to her adulterous mother the tongue which had rebuked her for evil deeds. O Lover of the human race, your patience is ineffable! Therefore, O Christ, save our souls, for you alone are compassionate.

S2: The just will flourish like a palm tree
and grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Ps 91
The inflexibility of Herod, who held God in dishonour, cunningly deceived by breaking the Law, yet keeping his oath. He added murder to adultery and put on a sad countenance. O Master, your mercy is ineffable! Therefore, O Christ, save our souls, for you alone are compassionate.

S1: The just will rejoice in the Lord and hope in him;
all the upright in heart will be praised. Ps 63
O wonder, beyond all understanding! The seal of the prophets, the earthly angel, is revealed as the prize of a dancing harlot. The tongue which speaks about divine things is sent to those in Hades and is the Forerunner of Christ. O Master, how ineffable is your forethought! Therefore, O Christ, save our souls, for only you are compassionate.

Glory Tone 6

Sometimes Herodias is mad with rage; sometimes she is troubled. O crafty dancing and feast full of deceit! The Baptist has his head cut off and Herod is troubled. O Lord, grant our souls peace through the prayers of the Forerunner.

Both now:

O Theotokos, you are the true vine which bloomed for us with the Fruit of life. O Lady, plead with him, we pray you, together with the apostles and all the saints, to have mercy on our souls.

Great Doxology

Glory to you who have shown us the light!

glory to God in the highest!

Peace on earth and goodwill to men!

² We praise you, we bless you, we worship you,
we glorify you, we thank you for your great glory,

³ O Lord King, heavenly God, almighty Father,
O Lord, only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ,
and you, O Holy Spirit!

⁴ O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us,

for you take away the sin of the world.

⁵ Receive our prayer,
for you sit on the right of the Father,
and have mercy on us.

⁶ For only you are holy, only you are Lord,

O Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.
⁷ I will bless you every day
 and always praise your name for ever and ever. Ps 144
⁸ O Lord, allow us this day
 to be guarded from sin.
⁹ Blessed are you, O Lord God of our fathers!
 Praised and glorified be your name for ever. Amen. Daniel 3
¹⁰ O Lord, let your mercy *be* on us,
 for we have hoped in you. Ps 32.
¹⁶ Blessed are you, O Lord!
 Teach me your statutes. X3 Ps 118
¹² O Lord, you have been our refuge
 from generation to generation. Ps 89
 I said, "O Lord, have mercy on me;
 heal my soul, for I have sinned against you." Ps 40
¹⁴ O Lord, I have fled to you;
 teach me to do your will, for you are my God. Ps 142
¹⁵ For with you is the source of life
 and in your light we will see light. Ps 35
¹⁶ Stretch out your mercy
 to those who know you. Ps 35

Triságion

Apolýtikion

Tone 2

The memory of the just is mentioned with praise. As for you, O Forerunner, the Lord's witness is enough. Indeed you were greater than the prophets since you were found worthy to baptize in the waters the *Lord* whom they could only announce. You have fought for the sake of truth and proclaimed to those in Hades that God who appeared in the flesh has taken away the sins of the world and bestowed his great mercy on us.

LITURGY

Antiphon 1 Ps 91 Tone 5

S1: It is good to thank the Lord
 and make melody to your name, O Most High.

R: At the prayers of the Theotokos, Saviour, save us!

S2: To announce your mercy in the morning
 and your truth by night,
 S3: For the Lord our God is upright
 and there is no injustice in him.
 S4: Glory: Both now:

Antiphon 2 Ps 94 Tone 2

S1: Come, let us rejoice in the Lord,
 and shout with joy to God our Saviour.

R: Save us, O Son of God. You are wonderful in your saints.
 We sing to you, "Alleluia!"

S2: Let us enter his presence with gratitude
 and shout with gladness to him in psalms.
 For the Lord is a great God
 and an exalted king over all the earth.
 S3: For the ends of the earth are in his hand
 and the summits of the mountains are his.
 For the sea is his and he made it;
 his hands have formed the dry land.

Monogenes

Antiphon 3 Ps 91 Tone 2

S2: The just will flourish like a palm tree
 and grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Ps 91

R: The memory of the just is mentioned with praise. As for you, O Forerunner, the Lord's witness is enough. Indeed you were greater than the prophets since you were found worthy to baptize in the waters the *Lord* whom they could only announce. You have fought for the sake of truth and proclaimed to those in Hades that God who appeared in the flesh has taken away the sins of the world and bestowed his great mercy on us.

S2: The just will rejoice in the Lord and hope in him;
 all the upright in heart will be praised. Ps 63

Entrance Ps 94

Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ.
 Save us, O Son of God.
 You are wonderful in your saints.
 We sing to you, "Alleluia!"

Apolýtikia

Tone 2

The memory of the just is mentioned with praise. As for you, O Forerunner, the Lord's witness is enough. Indeed you were greater than the prophets since you were found worthy to baptize in the waters the One they could only announce. You have fought for the sake of truth and proclaimed to those in Hades that God who appeared in the flesh has taken away the sins of the world and bestowed his great mercy on us.

Of the Church

Kontákion

Tone 4

O most pure Virgin, Joachim and Anna are freed from infertility through your birth. Adam and Eve *are freed* from the corruption of death and we, your people, who are freed from the guilt of sin, celebrate and sing to you, "The infertile woman gives birth to the Theotokos, the nourisher of our life."

Triságion

Prokeímenon Ps 63 Tone 7

R: The just will rejoice and hope in the Lord.
 S: O God, listen to my voice.

Apóstolos

From the Acts of the Apostles (13:25-32)
 In those days as John was fulfilling his course, he said, "What do you suppose that I am? I am not he. But see, one comes after me the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie." ²⁶ Brothers, children of the stock of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, the word of this salvation is sent out to you. ²⁷ For those who live in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they did not know him, nor the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled them by condemning him. ²⁸ Though they found no cause for death, they still asked Pilate to have him killed. ²⁹ When they had fulfilled all things that were written about him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a tomb. ³⁰ But God raised him from the dead, ³¹ and he was seen for many days by those who came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses to the people. ³² We bring you good news of the promise made to the fathers, ³³ that God has fulfilled the same to us, their children, in that he raised up Jesus.

Alleluia Ps 91 Tone 4

S1: The just *person* will flourish like a palm tree
 and grow like a cedar in Lebanon.
 S2: Those who are planted in the house of the Lord
 will blossom in the courts of our God.

Gospel

From the Holy Gospel according to Mark (6:14-30)

At that time King Herod heard about Jesus. Some said, "John the baptizer has been raised from the dead; that is why these powers are at work in him."¹⁵ But others said, "It is Ilias."¹⁶ And others said, "It is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old."¹⁶ But when Herod heard of it he said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been raised."¹⁷ For Herod had sent and seized John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Hero'di-as, his brother Philip's wife; because he had married her.¹⁸ For John said to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife."¹⁹ And Hero'di-as had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him. But she could not,²⁰ for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and kept him safe. When he heard him, he was much perplexed; and yet he heard him gladly.²¹ But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his courtiers and officers and the leading men of Galilee.²² For when Hero'di-as' daughter came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests; and the king said to the girl, "Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will grant it."²³ And he vowed to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, even half of my kingdom."²⁴ And she went out, and said to her mother, "What shall I ask?" And she said, "The head of John the Baptist."²⁵ And she came in immediately with haste to the king, and asked, saying, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter."²⁶ And the king was exceedingly sorry; but because of his oaths and his guests he did not want to break his word to her.²⁷ And immediately the king sent a soldier of the guard and gave orders to bring his head. He went and beheaded him in the prison,²⁸ and brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl; and the girl gave it to her mother.²⁹ When his disciples heard of it, they came and took his body, and laid it in a tomb.³⁰ The apostles returned to Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught.

Communion Ps 111

The just will be in everlasting remembrance. Alleluia!