

GREAT VESPERS ON AUGUST 28
BEHEADING OF THE FORERUNNER AND BAPTIST JOHN

VENERABLE THEODORA OF THESSALONICA; THEOPISTIS AND JOSEPH THE SANCTIFIED OF SAMAKA

Priest: Blessed is our God, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Come, let us worship and fall down before God our King.

Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, our King and our God.

Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and our God.

THE PSALM OF INTRODUCTION—PSALM 103

Reader: Bless the Lord, O my soul; O Lord my God, Thou hast been magnified exceedingly. Confession and majesty hast Thou put on, Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment, Who stretchest out the heaven as it were a curtain; Who supporteth His chambers in the waters, Who appointeth the clouds for His ascent, Who walketh upon the wings of the winds, Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire.

Who establisheth the earth in the sureness thereof; it shall not be turned back forever and ever. The abyss like a garment is His mantle; upon the mountains shall the waters stand. At Thy rebuke they will flee, at the voice of Thy thunder shall they be afraid.

The mountains rise up and the plains sink down, unto the place where Thou hast established them. Thou appointedst a bound that they shall not pass, neither return to cover the earth. He sendeth forth springs in the valleys; between the mountains will the waters run. They shall give drink to all the beasts of the field; the wild asses will wait to quench their thirst. Beside them will the birds of the heaven lodge, from the midst of the rocks will they give voice.

He watereth the mountains from His chambers; the earth shall be satisfied with the fruit of Thy works. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men, to bring forth bread out of the earth; and wine maketh glad the heart of man. To make his face cheerful with oil; and bread strengtheneth man's heart.

The trees of the plain shall be satisfied, the cedars of Lebanon, which Thou hast planted. There will the sparrows make their nests; the house of the heron is chief among them. The high mountains are a refuge for the harts, and so is the rock for the hares.

He hath made the moon for seasons; the sun knoweth his going down. Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night, wherein all the beasts of the forest will go abroad; young lions roaring after their prey, and seeking their food from God. The sun ariseth, and they are gathered together, and they lay them down in their dens. Man shall go forth unto his work, and to his labor until the evening. How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast Thou made them all.

The earth is filled with Thy creation. So is this great and spacious sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, small living creatures with the great. There go the ships; there this leviathan, whom Thou hast made to play therein. All things wait on Thee, to give them their food in due season; when Thou givest it them, they will gather it. When Thou openest Thy hand, all things shall be filled with goodness; when Thou turnest away Thy face, they shall be troubled.

Thou wilt take their spirit, and they shall cease; and unto their dust shall they return. Thou wilt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created; and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.

Let the glory of the Lord be unto the ages; the Lord will rejoice in His works. Who looketh on the earth and maketh it tremble, Who toucheth the mountains and they smoke. I will sing unto the Lord throughout my life, I will chant to my God for as long as I have my being.

May my words be sweet unto Him; I will rejoice in the Lord. O that sinners would cease from the earth, and they that work iniquity, that they should be no more. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

The sun knoweth his going down. Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night. How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast Thou made them all.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. (THRICE)
O our God and our Hope, glory to Thee!

THE GREAT LITANY

Deacon: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the peace from above, and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the peace of the whole world, for the good estate of the Holy Churches of God, and for the union of all men, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For this Holy House, and for those who with faith, reverence, and fear of God, enter therein, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For our father and Metropolitan N., (for our Archbishop N. or Bishop N.), for the venerable Priesthood, the Diaconate in Christ, for all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For Metropolitan Paul, Archbishop John, and for their quick release from captivity and safe return, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: (In the United States) For the President of the United States, for all civil authorities, and for our Armed Forces everywhere, let us pray to the Lord.

(In Canada) For Her Majesty, the Queen, for the Prime Minister of Canada, for all civil authorities, and for our Armed Forces everywhere, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For this city, and for every city and land, and for the faithful who dwell therein, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For healthful seasons, for abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For travelers by sea, by land, and by air; for the sick and the suffering; for captives and their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For our deliverance from all tribulation, wrath, danger, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us; save us; have mercy on us; and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Calling to remembrance our all-holy, immaculate, most blessed and glorious Lady Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the Saints: let us commend ourselves and each another, and all our life unto Christ our God.

Choir: To Thee, O Lord.

Priest: For unto Thee are due all glory, honor, and worship: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

“O LORD, I HAVE CRIED” IN TONE SIX

Choir: O Lord, I have cried out unto Thee, hear Thou me; hear Thou me, O Lord. O Lord, I have cried out unto Thee, hear Thou me. Give ear to the voice of my supplication when I cry out unto Thee: hear Thou me, O Lord.

Choir: Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as the incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice; hear Thou me, O Lord.

- + Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and a protecting door round about my lips.
- + Incline not my heart to evil words, to make excuses in sins.
- + With men that work iniquity; and I will not communicate with the choicest of them.
- + The just man shall correct me in mercy and shall reprove me; but let not the oil of the sinner anoint my head.
- + For my prayer also shall still be against the things with which they are well pleased; their judges falling upon the rock have been swallowed up.
- + They shall hear my words, for they are sweet; as when the thickness of the earth is broken upon the ground, their bones are scattered by the side of hell.
- + But to Thee, O Lord, Lord, are mine eyes; in Thee have I put my trust, take not away my soul.

- + Keep me from the snare which they have laid for me, and the traps of the workers of iniquity.
- + Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst I alone escape.
- + I cried unto the Lord with my voice, with my voice unto the Lord, did I make my supplication.
- + I poured out my supplication before Him; I showed before Him my trouble.
- + When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then Thou knewest my path.
- + In the way wherein I walked have they secretly laid a snare for me.
- + I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me.
- + Refuge failed me; no one cared for my soul.
- + I cried unto Thee, O Lord; I said: Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.
- + Attend unto my cry, for I am brought very low.
- + Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are stronger than I.

Verse 10. Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise Thy Name.

Verse 9. The righteous shall wait for me until Thou recompense me.

Verse 8. Out of the depths have I cried to Thee, O Lord, Lord hear my voice.

Verse 7. Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

For the Beheading in Tone Six

Verse 6. If Thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? For with Thee there is forgiveness.

As the birthday of the impudent Herod was being kept, the object of the termagant dancer's oath was achieved; for the head of the Forerunner was cut off and offered on a charger, as food for those reclining. What a loathsome banquet, replete with wickedness and horrible murder. As for us, we bless the Baptizer, honoring him as is meet; for he is the greatest born of woman.

Verse 5. Because of Thy Name have I waited for Thee, O Lord; my soul hath waited upon Thy word, my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

As the birthday of the impudent Herod ... *(repeat above)*

Verse 4. From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch let Israel trust in the Lord. Verily, the disciple of the all-evil Satan did dance and remove thy head, O Forerunner as a hire. What a bloody banquet; and would that thou hadst not made that vow, O iniquitous Herod, offspring of a lie. And since thou didst make the vow, would that thou hadst not carried it out; for it were better to have foresworn thyself and receive life, than remaining true to thine oath to have cut off the head of the Forerunner. As for us, let us bless the Baptizer, honoring him as is meet; for he is the greatest born of woman.

Verse 3. For with the Lord there is mercy and with Him is abundant redemption, and He will deliver Israel from all his iniquities.

Verily, the disciple of the all-evil Satan ... *(repeat above)*

Verse 2. Praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise Him, all ye people.

It was not worthy of thee, O Herod, to condemn to death, because of a satanic passion, him who reproached thee for thine adultery, and the folly of thy feminine propensity. Nay, it was not worthy of thee to err and deliver his all-honored head to a transgressing woman for the sake of a vow made to a dancer. Woe to thee, how didst thou dare accomplish such murder! And how was

it that this adulterous dancer was not consumed by fire in the midst of the banquet as she carried the head on a charger? As for us, let us bless the Baptizer, honoring him as is meet; for he is the greatest born of woman.

Verse 1. For His mercy is great toward us, and the truth of the Lord endureth forever.

Yea, again Herodias hath lost her self-control; again she is perturbed! What deceiving dance, and what intoxication with cunning! For the Forerunner's head was cut off, and Herod is troubled. Wherefore, O Lord, by the intercession of Thy Forerunner, grant peace to our souls.

DOXASTICON FOR THE BEHEADING IN TONE SIX

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

As the birthday of the impudent Herod was being kept, the object of the termagant dancer's oath was achieved; for the head of the Forerunner was cut off and offered on a charger, as food for those reclining. What a loathsome banquet, replete with wickedness and horrible murder. As for us, we bless the Baptizer, honoring him as is meet; for he is the greatest born of woman.

THEOTOKION IN TONE SIX

Both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Who shall not beatify thee, most holy Virgin? Who shall not praise thy birth-giving, free of travailing and pain? For the only Son rising timelessly from the Father, Himself did become incarnate from thee in an inexplicable way. He, Who while God by nature, became for our sakes Man by nature, not divided into two persons, but known by two natures without mixture or confusion. To Him, O noble and most blessed one, plead for the salvation of our souls.

THE HOLY ENTRANCE

(While the Theotokion is chanted, the following dialogue occurs QUIETLY as the clergy make the entrance.)

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mercy.

Priest: In the evening and in the morning and at noonday we praise Thee, we bless Thee, we give thanks unto Thee, and we pray unto Thee, O Master of all, Lord Who lovest mankind: Direct our prayer as incense before Thee, and incline not our hearts unto words or thoughts of evil, but deliver us from all who seek after our souls. For unto Thee, O Lord, Lord, are our eyes, and in Thee have we hoped. Put us not to shame, O our God. For unto Thee are due all glory, honor, and worship: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Deacon: Amen.

(When the clergy reach the center of the solea, the first part of the great censing begins. After the first part of the great censing is completed, this next dialogue occurs QUIETLY.)

Deacon: Bless, father, the Holy Entrance.

Priest: Blessed is the entrance to Thy Holy Place, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

(After the choir has finished, the following is said ALOUD.)

Deacon: Wisdom! Let us attend!

O GLADSOME LIGHT

Choir: O gladsome Light of the holy glory of the immortal, heavenly, holy and blessed Father: O Jesus Christ. Lo now that we have come to the setting of the sun, as we behold the evening light, we hymn Thee: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God. Meet it is for Thee at all times to be magnified by joyous voices, O Son of God and Giver of life. Wherefore the whole world doth glorify Thee.

Deacon: The Evening Prokeimenon!

- *Now sing the Prokeimenon of the day. However, if this Feast falls on a Sunday, visit <http://www.antiochian.org/online-liturgical-guide>.*

SUNDAY PROKEIMENON IN TONE EIGHT

Choir: Behold now, bless the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord. (TWICE)

Verse. *Ye who stand in the temple of the Lord, in the courts of the House of our God!*

Choir: Behold now, bless the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord.

MONDAY PROKEIMENON IN TONE FOUR

Choir: The Lord will hear me, when I cry unto Him. (TWICE)

Verse. *When I called upon Thee, O God of my righteousness, Thou didst hearken unto me!*

Choir: The Lord will hear me, when I cry unto Him.

TUESDAY PROKEIMENON IN TONE ONE

Choir: Thy mercy, O Lord, shall follow me all the days of my life. (TWICE)

Verse. *The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want; He makes me to lie down in green pastures!*

Choir: Thy mercy, O Lord, shall follow me all the days of my life.

WEDNESDAY PROKEIMENON IN TONE FIVE

Choir: Save me, O God, by Thy Name, and judge me by Thy strength. (TWICE)

Verse. *Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth!*

Choir: Save me, O God, by Thy Name, and judge me by Thy strength.

THURSDAY PROKEIMENON IN TONE SIX

Choir: My help cometh from the Lord, Who hath made heaven and earth. (TWICE)

Verse. *I lift up my eyes to the hills, from where my help will come!*

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

FRIDAY PROKEIMENON IN TONE SEVEN

Choir: Thou, O God, art my helper, and Thy mercy shall go before me. (TWICE)

Verse. *Deliver me from my enemies, O God, and deliver me from those who rise up against me!*

Choir: Thou, O God, art my helper, and Thy mercy shall go before me.

THE OLD TESTAMENT READINGS

The First Passage

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The Reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah. (40:1-5, 9; 41:17-18; 45:8; 48:20-21; 54:1)

Deacon: Let us attend!

Reader: Thus saith the Lord: Comfort, comfort My people, says God. Speak, you priests, to the heart of Jerusalem; comfort her, for her humiliation is accomplished, her sin is put away; for she has received of the Lord's hand double the amount of her sins. The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord; make straight the paths of our God. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; all the crooked ways shall become smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God. O you that bring glad tidings to Zion, go up on the high mountain; lift up thy voice with strength, you that bring glad tidings to Jerusalem; lift it up, fear not; I am the Lord God, I the God of Israel, will hear, and will not forsake them. But I will open rivers on the mountains, and fountains in the midst of plains. I will make the desert pools of water, and the thirsty land watercourses. Let the heaven rejoice from above, and let the clouds rain righteousness; let the earth bring forth, and blossom with mercy, and bring forth righteousness likewise. 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. And if they shall thirst, He shall lead them through the desert; He shall bring forth water to them out of the rock. Rejoice, you barren that bear not; break forth and cry, you that do not travail: for more are the children of the desolate than of her that has a husband.

The Second Passage

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The Reading from the Prophecy of Malachi. (3:1-3, 5-7, 12, 18; 4:4-6)

Deacon: Let us attend!

Reader: Thus saith the Lord Almighty: Behold, I send forth My messenger, and he shall survey the way before Me; and the Lord, Whom you seek, shall suddenly come into His temple. And who will abide the day of His coming? Or who will withstand at His appearing? He is coming in as the fire of a furnace, and as the herb of fullers. He shall sit to melt and purify as it were silver, and as it were gold. And He will draw near to you in judgment. And He will be a swift witness against the wicked, and against the adulterers, and against them that swear falsely by His Name, and those who fear Him not, says the Lord Almighty. For I am the Lord your God, and I am not changed. But you, the sons of Jacob: you have perverted my statutes, and have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you, says the Lord Almighty. And all nations shall call you blessed; for you shall be a desirable land. Learn that I am the Lord that will discern between the righteous and the wicked, in that day which I shall appoint for the preservation of those that love Me. Remember the law of my servant Moses—accordingly as I charged him with it in Horeb for all Israel, even the commandments and judgments. And, behold, I will send to you Elijah the Tishbite, before the great and glorious day of the Lord comes; who shall turn again the heart of the father to the son, and the heart of a man to his neighbor, lest I come and smite the earth, saith the Lord Almighty, the Holy God of Israel.

The Third Passage

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The Reading from the Wisdom of Solomon. (4:7, 16-17, 19-20; 5:1-7)

Deacon: Let us attend!

Reader: Though the righteous be overtaken with death, yet shall he be in rest. Thus the righteous that is dead shall condemn the ungodly who are living. For they shall see the end of the righteous, and shall not understand what hath been determined concerning Him. For the Lord will hurl them down speechless. He shall shake them from their foundations; and they shall be utterly laid waste, and be in sorrow; and their memorial shall perish. And when they cast up the account of their sins, they shall come with fear; and their own iniquities shall convict them to their face. Then shall the righteous man stand in great boldness before the face of such as have afflicted him, and made no account of his labors. When they see it, they shall be troubled with terrible fear, and shall be amazed at the strangeness of his salvation. And they, repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit, shall say within themselves: This was he, whom we had sometimes in derision, and a proverb of reproach. We fools accounted his life madness, and his end to be without honor. How is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot is among the saints! Therefore we have erred from the way of truth, and the Light of Righteousness has not shined unto us, and the Sun of Righteousness rose not upon us. We wearied ourselves in the way of wickedness and destruction. Yes, we have gone through deserts, where there lay no way. But as for the way of the Lord, we have not known it.

THE LITANY OF FERVENT SUPPLICATION

Deacon: Let us say with our whole soul, and with our whole mind, let us say.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: O Lord Almighty, the God of our Fathers, we pray Thee, hearken and have mercy.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Have mercy on us, O God, according to Thy great mercy, we pray Thee, hearken and have mercy.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)

Deacon: Again we pray for all pious and Orthodox Christians.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)

Deacon: Again we pray for our father and Metropolitan N., (and for our Archbishop N. or Bishop N.).

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)

Deacon: Again we pray for our brethren: the priests, hieromonks, deacons, hierodeacons and monastics and all our brotherhood in Christ.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)

Deacon: Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation and visitation and pardon and remission of sins for (the servants of God, [Names], and) all Orthodox Christians of true worship, who live and dwell in this community.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)

Deacon: Again we pray for the blessed and ever-memorable founders of this holy church and for (the departed servants of God, [Names], and) all our fathers and brethren, the Orthodox departed this life before us, who here and in all the world lie asleep in the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)

Deacon: Again we pray for those who bear fruit and do good works in this holy and all-venerable temple, those who serve and those who sing, and for all the people here present, who await Thy great and rich mercy.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)

Priest: For Thou art a merciful God and lovest mankind, and unto Thee we ascribe glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

THE EVENING PRAYER

People: Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this evening without sin. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy Name forever. Amen.

Let Thy mercy be upon us, O Lord, even as we have set our hope on Thee. Blessed art Thou, O Lord; teach me Thy statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Master; make me to understand Thy statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Holy One; enlighten me with Thy statutes.

Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth forever. O despise not the works of Thy hands. To Thee belongeth worship, to Thee belongeth praise, to Thee belongeth glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

THE LITANY OF SUPPLICATION

Deacon: Let us complete our evening prayer unto the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us; save us; have mercy on us; and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That the whole evening may be perfect, holy, peaceful and sinless, let us ask of the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: An angel of peace, a faithful guide, a guardian of our souls and bodies, let us ask of the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: Pardon and remission of our sins and transgressions, let us ask of the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: All things good and profitable for our souls and peace for the world, let us ask of the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: That we may complete the remaining time of our life in peace and repentance, let us ask of the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: A Christian ending to our life, painless, blameless, peaceful, and a good defense before the fearful judgment seat of Christ, let us ask of the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: Calling to remembrance our all-holy, immaculate, most blessed and glorious Lady Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the Saints: let us commend ourselves and each another, and all our life unto Christ our God.

Choir: To Thee, O Lord.

Priest: For Thou art a good God and lovest mankind, and unto Thee we ascribe glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

THE PEACE

Priest: Peace be to all.

Choir: And to thy spirit.

Deacon: Let us bow our heads unto the Lord.

Choir: To Thee, O Lord.

- *All bow their heads as the priest says the following prayer:*

Priest: O Lord our God, Who didst bow the heavens and come down for the salvation of mankind: Look upon Thy servants and Thine inheritance; for unto Thee, the fearful Judge Who yet lovest mankind, have Thy servants bowed their heads and submissively inclined their necks, awaiting not help from men but entreating Thy mercy and looking confidently for Thy salvation. Guard them at all times, both during this present evening and in the approaching night, from every foe, from all adverse powers of the devil, and from vain thoughts and from evil imaginations.

Blessed and glorified be the might of Thy kingdom: of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

- *If your parish will offer “The Service of the Lita and Artoklasia”, it is performed here.*

THE APOSTICHA FOR THE BEHEADING IN TONE TWO

O John the Baptizer and preacher of repentance, thou didst sanctify the earth when thy head was cut off; for thou didst make plain to believers the law of God, abolishing disobedience to the law.

Wherefore, since thou standest by the throne of Christ, the heavenly King, beseech Him to have mercy on our souls.

Verse 1. The righteous man shall flourish like a palm tree, and like a cedar in Lebanon shall he be multiplied.

O most holy John, thy head was cut off for the law of the Lord; for in blameless privilege thou didst reproach the infidel king when he disobeyed the law. Wherefore, do the hosts of angels wonder at thee, and the ranks of Apostles and Martyrs praise thee. And we, too, honor thy yearly memorial, O most noble one, glorifying the Holy Trinity which hath crowned thee, O blessed Forerunner.

Verse 2. The righteous man shall be glad in the Lord, and shall hope in Him.

Verily, the prophet of prophets, he who became greater than the prophets, sanctified from his mother's womb for the service of the Lord, today had his head cut off by an evil king. And the maiden who danced insolently, he rebuked openly before his beheading and after it, thus shaming the procession of sin. Wherefore, we shout: O John the Baptizer, having acquired favor, beseech ceaselessly for our souls.

DOXASTICON FOR THE BEHEADING IN TONE EIGHT

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Thou didst rebuke kings, O Forerunner of the Savior, that they might not act contrary to the law. But the frolicking of an iniquitous woman won over Herod to cut off thy head. Therefore, thy name is praised from the place of rising to the place of setting of the sun. And since thou hast favor with the Lord, beseech Him ceaselessly for the salvation of our souls.

THEOTOKION IN TONE EIGHT

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

O Virgin without groom, blameless one, Mother of the high God; O thou who didst conceive in the flesh in an inexplicable way, receive the petitions of thy servants, O thou who bestowest on all the purification of sins; and in receiving our petitions beseech thou Him for the salvation of us all.

THE HYMN OF ST. SIMEON THE GOD-RECEIVER

Choir: Lord, now lettest thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Thy people Israel.

THE TRISAGION PRAYERS

People: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. (THRICE)
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.
All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy God, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy Name's sake.
Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Priest: For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory: of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

APOLYTKION OF THE BAPTIST'S BEHEADING IN TONE TWO

The memory of the righteous is celebrated with songs of praise, but the Lord's testimony is sufficient for thee, O Forerunner. Thou wast shown indeed to be the most honorable of the prophets, for in the waters thou didst baptize Him Who had been proclaimed. After suffering with joy in behalf of the truth, thou didst proclaim even to those in Hades the God Who appeared in the flesh, Who takest away the sin of the world, and granteth us the Great Mercy.

THEOTOKION IN TONE TWO

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Exceeding glorious beyond the power of thought are Thy mysteries, O Theotokos. For being sealed in purity and preserved in virginity, Thou wast acknowledged to be in very truth the mother who didst bring forth the true God; wherefore entreat Him to save our souls.

THE DISMISSAL

Deacon: Wisdom!

Choir: Father, bless!

Priest: Christ our God, the Existing One, is blessed, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen. Preserve, O God, the holy Orthodox faith and all Orthodox Christians, unto ages of ages. Amen.

Priest: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Choir: More honorable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, thou who without corruption bearest God the Word and art truly Theotokos: we magnify thee.

Priest: Glory to Thee, O Christ our God and our hope, glory to Thee.

Choir: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen. Lord, have mercy (*thrice*). Father, bless.

Priest: May Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His all-immaculate and all-blameless holy Mother; by the might of the Precious and Life-giving Cross; by the protection of the honorable Bodiless Powers of Heaven; at the supplication of the honorable, glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John—whose beheading we commemorate today—of the holy, glorious and all-laudable apostles; of the holy, glorious and right-victorious Martyrs; of our venerable and

God-bearing Fathers; (*of Saint N., the patron and protector of this holy community;*) of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; of the holy and Venerable Theodora of Thessalonica; and Theopistis and Joseph the Sanctified of Samaka, whose memory we celebrate today, and of all the saints: have mercy on us and save us, forasmuch as He is good and loveth mankind.

Priest: Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us and save us.

Choir: Amen.

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