

**FESTAL ORTHROS ON AUGUST 29**  
**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.

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. (Choir continues.)

O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance, granting to Thy people victory over all their enemies, and by the power of Thy Cross preserving Thy commonwealth.

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

Do Thou, Who of Thine own good will wast lifted up upon the Cross, O Christ our God, bestow Thy bounties upon the new Nation which is called by Thy Name; make glad in Thy might those who lawfully govern, that with them we may be led to victory over our adversaries, having in Thine aid a weapon of peace and a trophy invincible.

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

O Champion dread, who cannot be put to confusion, despise not our petitions, O Good and All-praised Theotokos; establish the way of the Orthodox; save those who have been called upon to govern us, leading us to that victory which is from heaven, for thou art she who gavest birth to God, and alone art blessed.

LITANY

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

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)

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

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)

Priest: Again we pray for our father and Metropolitan N., (for our Archbishop N. or Bishop N.), and for all our Brotherhood in Christ.

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. Bless, Father, in the Name of the Lord.

Priest: Glory to the Holy, Consubstantial, Life-giving and Undivided Trinity, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good will toward men. (THRICE)

O Lord, open Thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Thy praise. (TWICE)

### PSALM 3

O Lord, why are they multiplied that afflict me? Many rise up against me. Many say unto my soul: There is no salvation for him in his God. But Thou, O Lord, art my helper, my glory, and the lifter up of my head. I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and He heard me out of His holy mountain. I laid me down and slept; I awoke, for the Lord will help me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people that set themselves against me round about. Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God, for Thou hast smitten all who without cause are mine enemies; the teeth of sinners hast Thou broken. Salvation is of the Lord, and Thy blessing is upon Thy people.

I laid me down and slept; I awoke, for the Lord will help me.

### PSALM 37

O Lord, rebuke me not in Thine anger, nor chasten me in Thy wrath. For Thine arrows are fastened in me, and Thou hast laid Thy hand heavily upon me. There is no healing in my flesh in the face of Thy wrath; and there is no peace in my bones in the face of my sins. For mine iniquities are risen higher than my head; as a heavy burden have they pressed heavily upon me. My bruises are become noisome and corrupt in the face of my folly. I have been wretched and utterly bowed down until the end; all the day long I went with downcast face. For my loins are filled with mocking, and there is no healing in my flesh. I am afflicted and humbled exceedingly, I have roared from the groaning of my heart. O Lord, before Thee is all my desire, and my groaning is not hid from Thee. My heart is troubled, my strength hath failed me; and the light of mine eyes, even this is not with me. My friends and my neighbors drew nigh over against me and stood, and my nearest of kin stood afar off. And they that sought after my soul used violence; and they that sought evils for me spake vain things, and craftiness all the day long did they meditate. But as for me, like a deaf man I heard them not, and was as a speechless man that openeth not his mouth. And I became as a man that heareth not, and that hath in his mouth no reproofs. For in Thee have I hoped, O Lord; Thou wilt hearken unto me, O Lord my God. For I said: Let never mine enemies rejoice over me; yea, when my feet were shaken, those men spake boastful words against me. For I am ready for scourges, and my sorrow is continually before me. For I will declare mine iniquity, and I will take heed concerning my sin. But mine enemies live and are made stronger than I, and they that hated me unjustly are multiplied. They that render me evil for good slandered me, because I pursued goodness. Forsake me not, O Lord my God, depart not from me. Be attentive unto my help, O Lord of my salvation.

Forsake me not, O Lord my God, depart not from me. Be attentive unto my help, O Lord of my salvation.

PSALM 62

O God, my God, unto Thee I rise early at dawn. My soul hath thirsted for Thee; how often hath my flesh longed after Thee in a land barren and untrodden and unwatered. So in the sanctuary have I appeared before Thee to see Thy power and Thy glory. For Thy mercy is better than lives; my lips shall praise Thee. So shall I bless Thee in my life, and in Thy name will I lift up my hands. As with marrow and fatness let my soul be filled, and with lips rejoicing shall my mouth praise Thee. If I remembered Thee on my bed, at the dawn I meditated on Thee. For Thou art become my helper; in the shelter of Thy wings will I rejoice. My soul hath cleaved after Thee; Thy right hand hath been quick to help me. But as for these, in vain have they sought after my soul; they shall go into the nethermost parts of the earth, they shall be surrendered unto the edge of the sword; portions for foxes shall they be. But the king shall be glad in God, everyone shall be praised that sweareth by Him; for the mouth of them is stopped that speak unjust things.

At the dawn I meditated on Thee. For Thou art become my helper; in the shelter of Thy wings will I rejoice. My soul hath cleaved after Thee; Thy right hand hath been quick to help me.

*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)  
Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)

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

PSALM 87

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

O Lord God of my salvation, by day have I cried and by night before Thee. Let my prayer come before Thee, bow down Thine ear unto my supplication, for filled with evils is my soul, and my life unto Hades hath drawn nigh. I am counted with them that go down into the pit; I am become as a man without help, free among the dead, like the bodies of the slain that sleep in the grave, whom Thou rememberest no more, and they are cut off from Thy hand. They laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness and in the shadow of death. Against me is Thine anger made strong, and all Thy billows hast Thou brought upon me. Thou hast removed my friends afar from me; they have made me an abomination unto themselves. I have been delivered up, and have not come forth; mine eyes are grown weak from poverty. I have cried unto Thee, O Lord, the whole day long; I have stretched out my hands unto Thee. Nay, for the dead wilt Thou work wonders? Or shall physicians raise them up that they may give thanks unto Thee? Nay, shall any in the grave tell of Thy mercy, and of Thy truth in that destruction? Nay, shall Thy wonders be known in that darkness, and Thy righteousness in that land that is forgotten? But as for me, unto Thee, O Lord, have I cried; and in the morning shall my prayer come before Thee. Wherefore, O Lord, dost Thou cast off my soul and turnest Thy face away from me? A poor man am I, and in troubles from my youth; yea, having been exalted, I was humbled and brought to distress. Thy furies have passed upon me, and Thy terrors have sorely troubled me. They came round about me like water, all the day long they compassed me about together. Thou hast removed afar from me friend and neighbor, and mine acquaintances because of my misery.

O Lord God of my salvation, by day have I cried and by night before Thee. Let my prayer come before Thee, bow down Thine ear unto my supplication.

PSALM 102

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all that He hath done for thee, Who is gracious unto all thine iniquities, Who healeth all thine infirmities, Who redeemeth thy life from corruption, Who crowneth thee with mercy and compassion, Who fulfilleth thy desire with good things; thy youth shall be renewed as the eagle's. The Lord performeth deeds of mercy, and executeth judgment for all them that are wronged. He hath made His ways known unto Moses, unto the sons of Israel the things that He hath willed. Compassionate and merciful is the Lord, long-suffering and plenteous in mercy; not unto the end will He be angered; neither unto eternity will He be wroth. Not according to our iniquities hath He dealt with us, neither according to our sins hath He rewarded us. For according to the height of heaven from the earth, the Lord hath made His mercy to prevail over them that fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our iniquities from us. Like as a father hath compassion upon his sons, so hath the Lord had compassion upon them that fear Him; for He knoweth whereof we are made, He hath remembered that we are dust. As for man, his days are as the grass; as a flower of the field, so shall he blossom forth. For when the wind is passed over it, then it shall be gone, and no longer will it know the place thereof. But the mercy of the Lord is from eternity, even unto eternity, upon them that fear Him. And His righteousness is upon sons of sons, upon them that keep His testament and remember His commandments to do them. The Lord in heaven hath prepared His throne, and His kingdom ruleth over all. Bless the Lord, all ye His angels, mighty in strength, that perform His word, to hear the voice of His words. Bless the Lord, all ye His hosts, His ministers that do His will. Bless the Lord, all ye His works, in every place of His dominion. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

*In every place of His dominion, bless the Lord, O my soul.*

PSALM 142

O Lord, hear my prayer, give ear unto my supplication in Thy truth; hearken unto me in Thy righteousness. And enter not into judgment with Thy servant, for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified. For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath humbled my life down to the earth. He hath sat me in darkness as those that have been long dead, and my spirit within me is become despondent; within me my heart is troubled. I remembered days of old, I meditated on all Thy works, I pondered on the creations of Thy hands. I stretched forth my hands unto Thee; my soul thirsteth after Thee like a waterless land. Quickly hear me, O Lord; my spirit hath fainted away. Turn not Thy face away from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit. Cause me to hear Thy mercy in the morning; for in Thee have I put my hope. Cause me to know, O Lord, the way wherein I should walk; for unto Thee have I lifted up my soul. Rescue me from mine enemies, O Lord; unto Thee have I fled for refuge. Teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God. Thy good Spirit shall lead me in the land of uprightness; for Thy name's sake, O Lord, shalt Thou quicken me. In Thy righteousness shalt Thou bring my soul out of affliction, and in Thy mercy shalt Thou utterly destroy mine enemies. And Thou shalt cut off all them that afflict my soul, for I am Thy servant.

O Lord, give ear unto my supplication and enter not into judgment with Thy servant. (TWICE)  
Thy good Spirit shall lead me in the land of uprightness.

*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 other, 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.

“GOD IS THE LORD” IN TONE TWO

Choir: God is the Lord and hath appeared unto us. Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord.  
*Verse 1.* O give thanks unto the Lord and call upon His Holy Name. (*Refrain*)  
*Verse 2.* All nations compassed me about: but in the Name of the Lord will I destroy them. (*Refrain*)  
*Verse 3.* This is the Lord’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. (*Refrain*)

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.

APOLYTKION OF THE BAPTIST’S BEHEADING IN TONE TWO

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.*  
The memory of the righteous is celebrated with songs of praise ... (*repeat above*)

THEOTOKION IN TONE TWO

*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 LITTLE LITANY

Deacon: Again and again, in peace, 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 other, and all our life unto Christ our God.

Choir: To Thee, O Lord.

Priest: For Thine is the majesty, and 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.

### KATHISMATA OF THE BAPTIST'S BEHEADING (Plain Reading)

#### First Kathisma

Let us gather together, O believers, and praise in unison John the Baptist, the mediator between law and grace; for he did come before and preach to us repentance, and having boldly and openly exposed Herod, his head was cut off. And now, being among the angels, he intercedeth with Christ for our salvation.

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

Ever-virgin, pure Lady, in thee there was revealed the most astonishing marvel of how thy womb did conceive and how thou wast found ineffably to be with child; and hence my mind is sore amazed and my thought is stunned with awe at thy glory, which is shed forth, O Theotokos, on all men for the salvation of our fallen souls.

#### Second Kathisma

Let us praise with songs John the Forerunner and baptizer of Christ, who did appear to us as a Prophet from the womb, of a barren woman, a star brightening the universe and a contender clad in victory; for that he intercedeth with the Lord to have mercy on our souls.

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

Do thou show thy protection and speedy help to us, and thy mercy upon all thy faithful servants, O Maid. And becalm, O most pure one, every stormy wave of all vain and futile thoughts, and do thou resurrect my fallen soul, O blest Theotokos. For I know, yea, I know O blest Virgin, that thou canst do whatsoever thou dost will.

#### Third Kathisma

O thou of everlasting memory, thou didst rise from the barren pair chosen of God, loosening the ties of thy father's tongue, and didst show forth the splendor-bearing sun shining forth, preaching the Creator to the people in the wilderness, the Lamb of God Who taketh away the sins of the world. And then, when thou didst rebuke the king in zeal, thy glorious head was cut off. Wherefore, O all-praised John, implore Christ God to grant forgiveness of sins to those who eagerly celebrate thy holy memory.

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

O thou all-holy Virgin Mother of God, heal the passions that grievously vex my soul; and grant me, I pray of thee, the forgiveness of all the sins I have senselessly wrought in transgression and foolishness, thus defiling my body and soul, wretched as I am. Woe is me! Alas! What shall I do in that hour wherein the dread Angels come to wrest forth my most hapless soul from my miserable body, O Maid? O Lady, be a help to me then, my protection and most zealous advocate. For I, thy servant, possess thee as my hope, O spotless one.

### FESTAL ANABATHMOI IN TONE FOUR

- + From my youth up many passions have warred against me. But do Thou help and save me, O my Savior. (REPEAT)
- + Ye who hate Zion shall be put to confusion of the Lord; like grass in the fire shall ye be withered up. (REPEAT)
- + *Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.*
- + Through the Holy Spirit is every soul quickened and exalted in purity, and made resplendent by the Triune Unity in mystic holiness.
- + *Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.*
- + Through the Holy Spirit the channels and streams of grace overflow showering all creation with invigorating Life.

### PROKEIMENON FOR THE BAPTIST'S BEHEADING IN TONE FOUR

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints. (TWICE)

*Stichos: What shall I render unto the Lord for all that He hath rendered unto me?*

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For Holy art Thou, O our God, Who retest in the Holy Place, 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.

Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. (TWICE)

*Praise ye God in His saints; praise Him in the firm foundation of His power.*

Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.

### THE FESTAL ORTHROS GOSPEL

Deacon: And that we may be accounted worthy to hear the Holy Gospel, let us pray to the Lord God.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)

Deacon: Wisdom! Attend! Let us hear the Holy Gospel.

Priest: Peace be to all.

Choir: And to thy spirit.

Priest: The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew (14:1-13).

Choir: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

Deacon: Let us attend!

### \*\*TO BE READ FROM THE BEAUTIFUL GATE\*\*

Priest: At that time, Herod the tetrarch heard the report about Jesus and said to his servants, "This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead, and therefore these powers are at work in him." For Herod had laid hold of John and bound him, and put him in prison for the sake of

Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because John had said to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her." And although he wanted to put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet. But when Herod's birthday was celebrated, the daughter of Herodias danced before them and pleased Herod. Therefore, he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask. So she, having been prompted by her mother, said, "Give me John the Baptist's head here on a platter." And the king was sorry; nevertheless, because of the oaths and because of those who sat with him, he commanded it to be given to her. So he sent and had John beheaded in prison. And his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother. Then his disciples came and took away the body and buried it, and went and told Jesus. When Jesus heard it, He departed from there by boat to a deserted place by Himself.

Choir: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee. (NO VENERATION OF GOSPEL BOOK.)

#### PSALM 50

Reader: Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy Great Mercy; and according to the multitude of Thy compassions blot out my transgression. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know mine iniquity, and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee only have I sinned and done this evil before Thee, that Thou mightest be justified in Thy words, and prevail when Thou art judged. For behold, I was conceived in iniquities, and in sins did my mother bear me. For behold, Thou hast loved truth; the hidden and secret things of Thy wisdom hast Thou made manifest unto me. Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be made clean; Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow. Thou shalt make me to hear joy and gladness; the bones that be humbled, they shall rejoice. Turn Thy face away from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and with Thy governing Spirit establish me. I shall teach transgressors Thy ways, and the ungodly shall turn back unto Thee. Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, Thou God of my salvation; my tongue shall rejoice in Thy righteousness. O Lord, Thou shalt open my lips, and my mouth shall declare Thy praise. For if Thou hadst desired sacrifice, I had given it; with whole-burnt offerings Thou shalt not be pleased. A sacrifice unto God is a broken spirit; a heart that is broken and humbled God will not despise. Do good, O Lord, in Thy good pleasure unto Zion, and let the walls of Jerusalem be built up. Then shalt Thou be pleased with a sacrifice of righteousness, with oblation and whole-burnt offerings. Then shall they offer bullocks upon Thine altar.

#### FESTAL TROPARIA AFTER PSALM 50 IN TONE TWO

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

Through the intercessions of the Forerunner, O Thou Who art merciful, blot out all the multitudes of our transgressions.

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

Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Thou Who art merciful, blot out all the multitudes of our transgressions.

(FOR THE FEAST) *Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy loving-kindness: according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.*

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.

### THE INTERCESSION<sup>1</sup>

Deacon: O God, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance. Visit Thy world with mercies and bounties. Exalt the horn of Orthodox Christians, and send down upon us Thy rich mercies. Through the intercessions of our all-immaculate Lady Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary; by the might of the precious and life-giving Cross; by the protection of the honorable Bodiless Powers of Heaven; at the supplications of the honorable, glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John—whose beheading we commemorate today—of the holy, glorious, all-laudable apostles Peter and Paul, and of all the holy apostles; of our fathers among the saints, great hierarchs and ecumenical teachers Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom; Athanasius, Cyril and John the Merciful, patriarchs of Alexandria; Nicholas of Myra, Spyridon of Trimythous and Nektarios of Pentapolis, the Wonderworkers; of our fathers among the saints Tikhon, patriarch of Moscow and Raphael, bishop of Brooklyn; of the holy, glorious, great-martyrs, George the Trophy-bearer, Demetrios the Myrrh-streamer, Theodore the Soldier, Theodore the General, and Menas the Wonderworker; of the hieromartyrs Ignatius the God-bearer of Antioch, Charalampos and Eleutherios; of the holy, glorious great women martyrs, Thekla, Barbara, Anastasia, Katherine, Kyriaki, Photeini, Marina, Paraskeva and Irene; of the holy, glorious, right-victorious martyrs; of our venerable and God-bearing fathers who shone in the ascetic life; (*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 Thy saints:

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (*Twelve times*)

Priest: Through the mercies and compassions and love for mankind of Thine Only-begotten Son, with Whom Thou art blessed, together with Thine all-holy, and good, and life-giving Spirit: now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

### KONTAKION AND OIKOS FOR THE BEHEADING (Plain Reading)

The beheading of the glorious Forerunner was by divine providence, that the coming of the Savior might be preached to those in Hades. Let Herodias, therefore, mourn, she who wrought the unlawful murder; for she hath not affected the law of God, nor hath she sought eternal life, but one false and fleeting.

The birthday of Herod seemeth impious to all, for in the midst of the revelers the head of the faster was set forth as food. Unto joy was united sorrow, and with laughter was mingled bitter wailing. For the damsel entered before all, bearing in a charger the head of the Baptist according to her request; and because of a mad desire, lamentation fell upon all that dined then with the king. For she delighted neither them, it saith, nor even Herod himself; and they sorrowed not with a true sorrow, but one false and fleeting.

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<sup>1</sup> Saints of particular local veneration may be included among the Saints of their same classification at the discretion of the pastor.

### THE SYNAXARION (Plain Reading)

On August 29 in the Holy Orthodox Church we commemorate the beheading of the holy, honorable, glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John.

#### *Verses*

A defiled and blood-stained hand now cutteth off with the sword  
The head of him who placed his hand on the head of the Lord.  
On the twenty-ninth a bronze edge cut the neck of the Forerunner.

Herod Antipas, son of the Herod who slew the young children in Bethlehem at the time of the Savior's birth, ruled of Galilee when John the Baptist preached. The evil Herod put away his lawful wife, the daughter of Prince Aretas, and took Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, to live with him while Philip was still alive. John the Baptist stood up against this lawlessness and strongly denounced Herod, at which Herod threw him into prison and ordered him beheaded. The event is recalled in today's Orthros and Liturgy Gospel lections. John's disciples took the body of their teacher by night and buried it, but Herod tore out John's tongue with a needle and then buried his head in an unclean place. God quickly punished the evildoers. Prince Aretas, to avenge his daughter's honor, attacked Herod with his army and brought him to his knees. As exiles, Herod and Herodias lived in need and debasement until the earth opened and swallowed them up. Salome, Herodias' daughter, came to a bad end in the river Sikaris. The Church commemorates the beheading today because a church that had been built over his grave in Sebastia by Emperor Constantine and Empress Helena was consecrated on this day.

On this day, we also commemorate the Venerable Theodora of Thessalonica; and Theopistis and Joseph the Sanctified of Samaka. By their intercessions, O Christ God, have mercy upon us. Amen.

### THE KATAVASIAS OF THE HOLY CROSS CANON IN TONE EIGHT

**Ode 1.** Verily, Moses having struck horizontally with his rod, cleaving the Red Sea and causing Israel to cross on foot, then having struck it transversely bringing it together over Pharaoh and his chariots, did trace the Cross, thus symbolizing that invincible weapon. Wherefore, do we praise Christ our God, for that He hath been glorified.

**Ode 3.** The rod is taken as a symbol of the mystery; for by its budding, it designateth the Priest. But now the tree of the Cross hath blossomed forth with might and steadfastness to the hitherto barren Church.

**Ode 4.** I have heard, O Lord, of the mystery of Thy dispensation, and have contemplated Thy works. Wherefore, have I glorified Thy Godhead.

**Ode 5.** O thou thrice-blessed Tree, on which the Lord Christ the King was stretched, and through which he who beguiled by the tree fell, having been beguiled by God Who was nailed upon thee in the flesh, Who granteth peace unto our souls.

**Ode 6.** When Jonah in the belly of the whale did stretch forth his hands in the form of a cross, he did foreshadow clearly the Passion of salvation; and when he came out on the third day, he did symbolize the world-transcending Resurrection of Christ, Who was crucified in the flesh, and illuminating the world by His third-day Resurrection.

**Ode 7.** The mad command of the infidel tyrant hath shaken the nations, breathing forth threats and blasphemies loathed of God. But the three youths were not terrified by the bestial terror, nor the consuming fire; for being together amidst the fire blown forth by a dewy breeze, they were singing: O Thou exceedingly praised, blessed art Thou, God of our Fathers.

*We praise, we bless, and we worship the Lord.*

**Ode 8.** O ye youths, equal in number to the Trinity, bless ye God the Father and Creator; praise the Word which did condescend and turn the fire to a dewy breeze; and exalt more and more the all-holy Spirit, Who giveth life to all forevermore.

Deacon: The Theotokos and Mother of the Light let us honor and magnify in song.

#### MAGNIFICATIONS IN TONE EIGHT

Choir: My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.

*Refrain:* More honorable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, thou who without corruption barest God the Word, and art truly Theotokos, we magnify thee. (*Repeat after each Verse.*)

+ For He hath regarded the lowliness of His handmaiden; for behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. (*Refrain*)

+ For He that is mighty hath magnified me, and holy is His Name; and His mercy is on them that fear Him, throughout all generations. (*Refrain*)

+ He hath showed strength with His arm; He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. (*Refrain*)

+ He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble and meek. He hath filled the empty with good things, and the rich hath He sent empty away. (*Refrain*)

+ He remembering His mercy hath helped His servant Israel, as He promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed forever. (*Refrain*)

**Ode 9.** Thou art the mystical paradise, O Theotokos; for that thou, being untilled, didst bud forth Christ, by Whom was planted on earth the life-giving tree of the Cross. Wherefore, as we adore it being elevated, we magnify thee.

#### THE LITTLE LITANY

Deacon: Again and again, in peace, 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 other, and all our life unto Christ our God.

Choir: To Thee, O Lord.

Priest: For all the powers of Heaven praise Thee, and unto Thee they 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 EXAPOSTELARION OF THE BEHEADING IN TONE TWO

*(\*\*While Thy disciples looked on Thee\*\*)*

To him that is the greatest among the Prophets, \* to him that is preferred above all Apostles, \* unto the Forerunner of grace let us sing, \* crowning him with our hymns of praise; \* for he was seized and beheaded \* for the just Law of the Lord God.

## ANOTHER EXAPOSTELARION & THEOTOKION OF BEHEADING IN TONE THREE

*(\*\*Thou Who as God adornest\*\*)*

Though lewd and wanton Herod \* in treachery beheaded thee, \* the Savior's ven'erable Baptist, \* who cultivated purity, \* he had no power to cut off \* thy tongue's rebukes and reproaches.

As thou, O modest Maiden, \* hast freed the whole world from the curse \* by thy divinely wrought childbirth, \* so by thy prayers do thou preserve \* from every danger thine own flock \* which faithfully doth entreat thee.

## AINOI (PRAISES) IN TONE EIGHT

Choir: Let everything that hath breath, praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord from the heavens: praise Him in the heights. To Thee, O God, is due our song.

Choir: Praise ye Him, all His angels: praise ye Him, all His hosts. To Thee, O God, is due our song.

For the Beheading in Tone Eight (*\*\*O strange wonder\*\**)

**Verse 1.** *Praise God in His sanctuary: praise Him in the firmament of His power. Praise Him for His mighty acts: praise Him according to His excellent greatness.*

O strange wonder great and terrible! \* Behold, that most sacred head, \* which the Angels themselves revere, \* shamelessly was borne about \* by a damsel profane and lewd; \* the tongue that blamed the transgressor did she bring \* to the adult'ress, her mother all-defiled. \* O how unspeakable \* is Thy great forbearance, O my Savior Christ! \* Whereby save our souls, since Thou alone art merciful.

**Verse 2.** *Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet. Praise Him with the psaltery and harp.*

O strange wonder great and terrible ... (*repeat above*)

**Verse 3.** *Praise Him with the timbrel and dance; praise Him with stringed instruments and organs.*

How Herod hardened his reckless heart! \* For having broken the Law, \* he that greatly dishonored God \* pleadeth in hypocrisy \* that he keepeth the oath he made; \* and while dissembling a mournful countenance, \* he addeth murder unto adultery. \* O how unspeakable \* is Thy great compassion, O our Master Christ! \* Whereby save our souls, since Thou alone art merciful.

**Verse 4.** *Praise Him upon the loud cymbals: praise Him upon the high-sounding cymbals. Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.*

O terror more than the mind can bear! \* That Angel dwelling on earth \* and the seal of the Prophets' choir \* is presented as the prize \* of a harlot's unseemly dance; \* sent on before is that tongue which spake of God, \* to herald Christ to the dead in Hades' depths. \* How inexpressible \* is Thy providence toward all, O Master Christ! \* Whereby save our souls, since Thou alone art merciful.

## THE DOXASTICON OF THE BEHEADING IN TONE SIX

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

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 intercessions of thy Forerunner, grant peace to our souls.

### THEOTOKION IN TONE SIX

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

Thou art the true vine, O Theotokos, bearing the Fruit of life. Thee do we implore. Wherefore, O Lady, intercede with the Apostles and saints for the salvation of our souls.

### THE GREAT DOXOLOGY IN TONE SIX

- + Glory to Thee, Who hast shown us the Light; Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among men.
- + We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee; we give thanks unto Thee for Thy great glory.
- + O Lord, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty; O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ; and the Holy Spirit.
- + O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, Who takest away the sin of the world, have mercy on us; O Thou Who takest away the sins of the world.
- + Receive our prayer, O Thou Who sittest at the right hand of the Father, and have mercy on us.
- + For Thou only art holy, Thou only art the Lord, O Jesus Christ, to the Glory of God the Father. Amen.
- + Every day will I bless Thee, and I will praise Thy Name forever; yea, forever and ever.
- + Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin.
- + Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our Fathers, and praised and glorified be Thy Name forever. Amen.
- + Let Thy mercy, O Lord: be upon us, as we do put our hope in Thee.
- + Blessed art Thou, O Lord: teach me Thy statutes. (THRICE)
- + Lord, Thou hast been our refuge in all generations. I said: Be merciful unto me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee.
- + Lord, I have fled unto Thee: teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God.
- + For with Thee is the fountain of life: in Thy light shall we see light.
- + O continue Thy loving-kindness unto them that know Thee.
- + 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.
- + Holy Immortal: have mercy on us.
- + Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us.

### 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.

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