

August 15

The Dormition of our Most Holy and Glorious Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary

(2nd Class)

GREAT VESPERS

[*First Kathisma: Blessed the man...*]

Stichera for the Dormition (Tone 1)

- 6, 5. O marvel: the Source of Life is laid in a tomb; the grave becomes a means of ascent to Heaven! Rejoice, Gethsemane, holy chamber of the Mother of God! As for us, O faithful, let us cry out with Gabriel, Prince of the Angels: "Hail, O Woman full of grace, the Lord is with you: the Lord who, because of you, bestows great mercy upon the world!"
- 4, 3. O our Lady, marvelous are your mysteries. You have become the throne of the Most High, and today you go up from earth to Heaven. Your glory, shining forth with the radiance of divine grace, surpasses every other splendor. Go up, therefore, all you virgins, together with the Mother of our King, and cry out: "Hail, O Woman full of grace, the Lord is with you: the Lord who, because of you, bestows great mercy upon the world!"
- 2, 1. Behold, all the heavenly hierarchies the Dominations, Thrones, Principalities, Virtues, Powers, Cherubim and Seraphim sing a hymn of glory to your Dormition; all human races rejoice at your glory; and kings, together with the angels and archangels, sing out to you: "Hail, O Woman full of grace, the Lord is with you: the Lord who, because of you, bestows great mercy upon the world!"

- v. Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Theotokia (Tone 1)

The holy Apostles were taken up from every corner of the world and carried upon clouds by order of God.

(Tone 5)

And they gathered around your pure remains, O Source of Life, and kissed them with reverence.

(Tone 2)

As for the most sublime Powers of Heaven, they came with their own Leader.

(Tone 6)

To escort and pay their last respects to the most honorable body that had contained Life itself. Filled with awe, they marched together with the Apostles in silent majesty, professing to the Princes of Heaven in a hushed voice: "Behold, the Queen of All, the divine Maiden, is coming!"

(Tone 3)

Lift up your gates and receive with becoming majesty the Mother of the Light that never fades.

(Tone 7)

Because through her, salvation was made possible for our human race. She is the one upon whom no one may gaze, and to whom no one is able to render sufficient glory.

(Tone 4)

For the special honor that made her sublime is beyond our understanding.

(Tone 8)

Wherefore, O most pure Mother of God, forever alive with your Son, the Source of Life, do not cease to intercede with Him that He may guard and save your people from every trouble, for you are our intercessor.

(Tone 1)

To you we sing a hymn of glory with loud and joyful voices, now and forever.

Entrance. "O Joyful Light..." Prokimenon of the day.

READINGS

1) *Genesis 28:10-18*

Jacob departed from Beer-sheba and proceeded toward Haran. When he came upon a certain shrine, as the sun had already set, he stopped there for the night. Taking one of the stones at the shrine, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep at that spot. Then he had a dream: a stairway rested on the ground, with its top reaching to the heavens; and God's angels were going up and down on it. And there was the LORD standing beside him and saying: "I, the LORD, am the God of your forefather Abraham and the God of Isaac. Do not be afraid. The land on which you are lying I will give to you and your descendants. These shall be as plentiful as the dust of the earth, and through them you shall spread out east and west, north and south. In you and your descendants all the nations of the earth shall find blessing. Know that I am with you; I will protect you wherever you go, and bring you back to this land. I will never leave you until I have done what I promised you." When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he exclaimed, "Truly, the LORD is in this spot, although I did not know it!" In solemn wonder he cried out: "How awesome is this shrine! This is nothing else but an abode of God, and that is the gateway to Heaven!"

2) *Ezekiel 43:27 - 44:5*

Thus says the Lord: from the eighth day on, the priests shall offer your holocausts and peace offerings on the altar. Then I will accept you, says the Lord GOD. Then he brought me back to the outer gate of the sanctuary, facing the east; but it was closed. He said to me: This gate is to

remain closed; it is not to be opened for anyone to enter by it; since the LORD, the God of Israel, shall enter by it, it shall remain closed. Only the Prince may sit down in it to eat His meal in the presence of the LORD. He must enter by way of the vestibule of the gate, and leave by the same way. Then he brought me by way of the north gate to the facade of the temple, and when I looked I saw the glory of the LORD filling the LORD'S temple.

3) *Proverbs 9:1-11*

Wisdom has built her house, she has set up her seven columns. She has dressed her meat, mixed her wine, yes, she has spread her table. She has sent out her maidens; she calls from the heights out over the city: "Let whoever is simple turn in here." To him who lacks understanding, she says, "Come, eat of my food, and drink of the wine I have mixed! Forsake foolishness that you may live; advance in the way of understanding. He who corrects an arrogant man earns insult; and he who reproves a wicked man incurs opprobrium. Reprove not an arrogant man, lest he hate you; reprove a wise man, and he will love you. Instruct a wise man, and he becomes still wiser; teach a just man, and he advances in learning. The beginning of wisdom is the fear of the LORD, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. For by me your days will be multiplied and the years of your life increased."

LETE (*Tone 1*)

It was right that the eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word should see the Dormition of His Mother according to the flesh, even the final mystery concerning her. Thus they might be witnesses not only to the Ascension of the Savior, but also to the Translation of her who gave Him birth. Assembled from all parts by the power of God, they came to Sion, and sped on her way to Heaven the Virgin who is

higher than the Cherubim. We also venerate her, for she intercedes for our souls.

(Tone 2)

She who is higher than the heavens and more glorious than the cherubim, she who is held in greater honor than all creation, she who by reason of her surpassing purity became the receiver of the everlasting Essence, today commends her most pure soul into the hands of her Son. With her, all things are filled with joy, and she bestows great mercy upon us.

The spotless Bride, the Mother of Him in whom the Father was well-pleased, she who was foreordained by God to be the dwelling-place of His union without confusion, delivers today her blameless soul to her Creator and God. The spiritual powers receive her with honors due to God, and she who is truly the Mother of Life departs unto life, the lamp of the Light which no man can approach, the salvation of the faithful and the hope of our souls.

(Tone 3)

Come, all you ends of the earth, let us praise the most holy Translation of the Mother of God: for she has delivered her spotless soul into the hands of her Son. Therefore, the world, restored to life by her holy Dormition, in radiant joy celebrates this feast with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs together with the angels and the apostles.

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

(Tone 5)

Come, you feast-lovers, let us form a chorus; let us fill the Church with hymns of praise at the falling asleep of the Ark of God! For today Heaven has opened its bosom: it has received the woman who gave birth to the One whom nothing can contain: today the earth gives back to Heaven the woman who was the Source of Life. The angels join the crowd of the Apostles, and together they gaze upon the woman who gave birth to the Principle of Life, and who

now moves up from life to Life. Let us, therefore, venerate her and beseech her, saying: "O Lady, do not forget those who share your humanity and who celebrate your holy Dormition with fervor and love!"

- now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Sing, O people! Sing the praises of the Mother of our God: for today she delivers her soul, full of light, into the spotless hands of Him who was made incarnate of her without seed. And she entreats Him without ceasing to grant the whole world peace and great mercy.

APOSTICHA (*Tone 4*)

1. All you peoples of the earth, sing together a hymn of glory to the pure and most holy Virgin from whom the Word of God came to us, receiving flesh from her in a manner beyond understanding. Let us cry out: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is your womb that contained Christ, in whose hands you committed your soul. O pure Virgin, intercede with Christ God, that He may save our souls!"

All: Go up, O Lord, into Your resting place, You and the Ark of Your majesty.

2. O pure and most holy Virgin, the choirs of angels in Heaven and the race of mankind on earth sing the praises of your glorious Dormition, for you have become the Mother of the Creator of All, Christ our God. We beg you to intercede constantly for us, for we have placed our hope in you next to God, O most glorious and ever-virgin Mother of God!

All: The Lord has sworn an oath to David, and He will not repent.

3. With all the peoples of the earth, let us sing to Christ the hymn of praise that David had sung of old: "Together with her escort of virgins, she shall be led to the king with happiness and rejoicing." For the Fruit of David's

seed, the one through whom we have been led to God, has been lifted up to glory by her Son and Master in a way that defies description. Since she is the Mother of God, we sing to her a hymn of glory and cry out: "Deliver us from all harm and guard our souls from tribulations. We confess and proclaim that you are God's Mother!"

All: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Theotokion

O Virgin Mother of God, at the time you were carried up to the One born of you in a manner beyond understanding, James and Peter were present: James, the brother of the Lord and first Bishop, and Peter the honorable head of the Apostles and prince of theologians. The whole college of the Apostles was also there: all in one accord proclaiming things divine and praising Christ's astounding mystery, preparing with joy your body, O most glorious one, the Source of Life and the Temple of God. As for the most holy angelic powers, they were rapt in wonder at the sight of this miracle and said to each other: "Lift up your gates to receive the Mother of the Creator of Heaven and earth. Come, let us all sing hymns to her noble and holy body that has contained the invisible Lord." We, too, therefore, celebrate your feast, O woman worthy of all praise, and cry out: "O glorious Lady, exalt the Christian people and intercede with Christ God that He may save our souls!"

TROPARION OF THE DORMITION (*Tone 1*) [3 times]

In giving birth, you have preserved your virginity; and in falling asleep, you did not forsake the world, O Mother of God. You have passed to life, being the Mother of Life. Through your intercession, save our souls from death.