

# September 11

## Fourth Day of the Feast; Commemoration of our Holy Mother Theodora of Alexandria

(5th Class)

*Today we also sing the Office of the holy hieromartyr Autonomos because of the Leave-taking of the feast on September 12.*

### VESPERS

*Stichera for Theodora (Tone 4)*

6. In a woman's body, but clothed as a man, you waged manly combats, dwelling in the midst of men, dominating the passions and rooting out completely the assaults of pleasures by your asceticism, O Theodora. You did this through your continuous prayer and the holy inclination which ceaselessly carried you toward the Lord.
5. The sun which daily sets never saw you commit a sin; and the Lord, the never-setting Sun, who knows the secrets of all hearts, knew you and illumined the eyes of your heart with the light of repentance. Thus you devoted yourself to serving Him in continual abstinence and the perfection of the virtues.
4. Aware of the traps laid by the enemy, you loved the child whose father you were falsely accused to be, O illustrious Mother. Raising him with a truly fatherly love, you piously endured the reproach and terrible slander. Thus, O Theodora, we celebrate your venerable feast.

*For Autonomos (Tone 4)*

3. Resplendent with virtues and clothed in the Faith, O holy priest, you were like a radiant sun crossing over the world as you sowed the seed of your holy preaching in all places. Using your tongue as a scythe, you cut down all falsehood and error, O Autonomos, priest and witness to our God!

2. You went forward into painful struggles, manly combats, wounds and death. Buried under a hail of stones, O holy martyr, you used them as steps of a ladder to mount up to God, wearing your crown, where you were united to the angels in Heaven. There you intercede for us all.
1. O Autonomos you made your priestly vestments resplendent with the grace of the Holy Spirit and your blood in martyrdom. You entered in spirit into the greatest sanctuary in Heaven, preceded by Jesus, the Great High Priest. You received from God the crown of victory in company with all those who poured out their blood for Him.
- v. Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

*Theotokion*

Indeed, some famous barren women have given birth by the will of God. But the nativity of Mary surpasses all nativities in honor and splendor, as it is worthy of the majesty of God, for she was born in a miraculous way of a barren mother, and she herself gave birth in the flesh to the God of all, incarnate in her womb without human seed against the laws of nature. She alone is the door through which the only-begotten Son of God has passed while leaving it sealed, as He had planned in His eternal wisdom. Thus did He bring salvation to all mankind!

*“O Joyful Light...” Prokimenon of Wednesday evening.*

**APOSTICHA** (*Tone 1*)

1. Ann and Joachim rejoice, for they have brought into the world the only Theotokos, the first fruits of our salvation. With them, we celebrate the feast today, blessing the pure Virgin from the root of Jesse.

All: Listen, daughter, and behold and lend your ear.

2. The Virgin in whom God chose to dwell, the pure Theotokos, the glory of the prophets, the daughter of David, is born today of Joachim and Ann in a chaste manner. By her birthgiving, she overthrows the curse which was transmitted to us from Adam.

All: The rich among the people shall seek your favor.

3. The formerly barren soil gives birth to a fertile ground; and the barren one nourishes with milk the fruit of her womb. O awesome wonder! She who sustains our life, who received in her body the Bread from Heaven, is now nourished at her mother's breast!

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*

On this glorious feast day, which is all ours, let us play as with a harp, for on this day is born from the stem of David the Mother of Light who dispelled all darkness. She is the source of immortality, the renewal of Adam and Eve. Through her we were made godly and delivered from death. O faithful, let us then cry out to her in the words of Gabriel: "Hail, O Woman full of grace, the Lord is with you! Through you, the Lord will bestow great mercy upon us all!"

**TROPARION OF THEODORA** (*Tone 8*)

In you, O Mother Theodora was restored the likeness of God, for you carried your cross and followed Christ; you taught by your deeds how to spurn the body, for it passes away, and how to value the soul for it is immortal. Wherefore, your soul is forever in happiness with the angels.

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

**TROPARION OF AUTONOMOS** (*Tone 4*)

The Church calls us to celebrate your memory with faith, O illustrious and glorious Autonomos, for you were pleasing to the Trinity. She rejoices as she praises you. Intercede with the Lover of Mankind that He may save our souls.

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

**TROPARION OF THE NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS** (*Tone 4*)

Your Nativity, O Mother of God, heralded joy to the whole universe; for from you rose the Sun of Justice, Christ our God. Taking away the curse, He imparted the blessings; and by abolishing death, He gave us everlasting life.