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The Service of Vespers

on Wednesday Evening

for Thursday, August 29, 2019

Menaion - August 29

Commemoration of the Beheading of the Holy Forerunner

Text in English

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vol Orthodox Monastery of the Veil of our Lady

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Menaion - August 29

Commemoration of the Beheading of the Holy Forerunner

VESPERS

PRIEST

Blessed is our God always, now and ever,
and to the ages of ages.

(Amen.)

READER

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

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

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

Psalm 103 (104).

Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, You are magnified exceedingly; You clothe Yourself with thanksgiving and majesty, who cover Yourself with light as with a garment, who stretch out the heavens like a curtain; You are He who covers His upper chambers with water, who makes the clouds His means of approach, who walks on the wings of the winds, who makes His angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire. He established the earth on its stable foundation; it shall not be moved unto ages of ages. The deep like a garment is His covering; the waters shall stand upon the mountains; at Your rebuke they shall flee; at the sound of Your thunder, they shall be afraid. The mountains rise up, and the plains sink down to the place You founded for them. You set a boundary they shall not pass over; neither shall they return to cover the earth. You are

He who sends springs into the valley; the waters shall pass between the mountains; they shall give drink to all the wild animals of the field; the wild asses shall quench their thirst; the birds of heaven shall dwell beside them; they shall sing from the midst of the rocks. You are He who waters the mountains from His higher places; the earth shall be satisfied with the fruit of Your works. You are He who causes grass to grow for the cattle, and the green plant for the service of man, to bring forth bread from the earth; and wine gladdens the heart of man, to brighten his face with oil; and bread strengthens man's heart. The trees of the plain shall be full of fruit, the cedars of Lebanon, which You planted; there the sparrows shall make their nests; the house of the heron takes the lead among them. The high mountains are for the deer; the cliff is a refuge for the rabbits. He made the moon for seasons; the sun knows its setting. You established darkness, and it was night, wherein all the wild animals of the forest will prowl about; the young lions roar and snatch their prey, and seek their food from God. The sun arises, and they are gathered together; and they shall be put to bed in their dens. Man shall go out to his work and to his labor until evening. O Lord, Your works shall be magnified greatly; You made all things in wisdom; the earth was filled with Your creation. There is this great and spacious sea: the creeping things are there without number; the living things are there, both small and great; there the ships pass through; there is this dragon You formed to play therein. All things wait upon You, that You may give them food in due season. When You give

it to them, they shall gather it; when You open Your hand, all things shall be filled with Your goodness. But when You turn Your face away, they shall be troubled; when You take away their breath, they shall die and return again to their dust. You shall send forth Your Spirit, and they shall be created, and You shall renew the face of the earth. Let the glory of the Lord be forever; the Lord shall be glad in His works; He looks upon the earth and makes it tremble; He touches the mountains, and they smoke. I will sing to the Lord all my life; I will sing to my God as long as I exist; may my words be pleasing to Him, and I shall be glad in the Lord. May sinners cease from the earth, and the lawless, so as to be no more. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

The sun knows its setting. You established darkness, and it was night.

O Lord, Your works shall be magnified greatly; You made all things in wisdom. [SAAS]

Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Both now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory to You, O God. (3)

Our hope, O Lord, glory to You.

While the Opening Psalm is being read the Priest, bareheaded and standing in front of the Holy Table, says quietly the following Prayers at the Lighting of the Lamps.

PRIEST (*inaudibly*)

1st Prayer

O Lord, compassionate and merciful, long-suffering and full of mercy, listen to our prayer and attend to the voice of our supplication. Make for us a sign for good. Guide us in your way, to walk in your truth. Make glad our hearts to fear your holy Name, because you are great and do wondrous things. You alone are God, and there is none like you, O Lord, among gods: powerful in mercy and loving in strength to help and to console and to save all who hope in your holy Name. [EL]

For to you belong all glory, honour and worship, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and for ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen. [EL]

2nd Prayer

Lord, do not rebuke us in your anger, nor chastise us in your wrath, but deal with us in accordance with your kindness, physician and healer of our souls. Guide us to the harbour of your will. Enlighten the eyes of our hearts to the knowledge of your truth and grant that the rest of the present day and the whole time of our life may be peaceful and without sin, at the prayers of the holy Mother of God and of all the Saints. [EL]

For yours is the might, and yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and for ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen. [EL]

3rd Prayer

Lord our God, remember us, sinners and your unprofitable servants, as we call upon your holy Name, and do not put us to shame from the expectation of your mercy, but graciously grant us, Lord, all the requests that are for salvation, and count us worthy to love and to fear you from our whole heart, and in all things to do your will. [EL]

For you, O God, are good and love mankind, and to you we give glory, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and for ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen. [EL]

4th Prayer

O Lord, who are praised by the holy Powers with never silent hymns and unceasing songs of glory, fill our mouth with your praise to give majesty to your holy Name, and give us a part and an inheritance with all who fear you in truth and who keep your commandments, at the prayers of the holy Mother of God and of all your Saints. [EL]

For to you belong all glory, honour and worship, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and for ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen. [EL]

5th Prayer

Lord, Lord, who uphold the universe by your immaculate hand, who are long-suffering towards us all and who repent of evils, remember your acts of compassion and your mercy. Visit us in your loving kindness and grant that for the rest of the present day we may escape the manifold wiles of the evil one, and, by the grace of your All-holy Spirit, keep our life free from assault. [EL]

By the mercy and love for mankind of your Only-begotten Son, with whom you are blessed, together with your all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and for ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen. [EL]

6th Prayer

O God, great and wonderful, who order the universe with inexpressible loving-kindness and rich providence; who have granted us also the blessings of this world and brought us near to the promised Kingdom through the blessings that have been bestowed on us already; who have made us turn aside from every evil during that part of the present day which is now over, grant us also to complete what remains without blame in the presence of your holy glory, as we sing your praise, who alone are our God, good and the Lover of mankind. [EL]

For you are our God and to you we give glory, to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen. [EL]

7th Prayer

Great and most high God, who alone possess immortality, who dwell in unapproachable light, who fashioned all creation with wisdom, who made the separation between the light and the darkness and who placed the sun to have authority over the day and the moon and the stars to have authority over the night, who have counted us sinners worthy even at this present hour to come into your presence with confession and thanksgiving and to offer you our evening hymn of glory; do you, O Lord who love mankind, direct our prayer like incense

before you and accept it as a savour of sweet fragrance. Grant us that the present evening and the coming night may be peaceful, clothe us with weapons of light, deliver us from every night-time fear and from every deed that walks in darkness. And give us sleep, which you have bestowed on us for our rest in our weakness, freed from every fantasy of the devil. Yes, Master of all things, giver of blessings, may we also be filled with compunction on our beds and call to mind your Name in the night, and enlightened by meditation on your commandments may we rise with gladness of soul to give glory to your loving-kindness, as we bring to your compassion supplications and entreaties on behalf of our own sins and those of all your people. At the prayers of the holy Mother of God visit them with mercy. [EL]

For you, O God, are good and love mankind, and to you we give glory, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and for ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen. [EL]

When the Opening Psalm is completed the Priest, in front of the Holy Table, or the Deacon in his usual place outside the Holy Doors, says the Litany of Peace.

DEACON

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

(Lord, have mercy.)

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

(Lord, have mercy.)

For the peace of the whole world, for the stability of the holy churches of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

(Lord, have mercy.)

For this holy house and for those who enter it with faith, reverence, and the fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.

(Lord, have mercy.)

For pious and Orthodox Christians, let us pray to the Lord.

(Lord, have mercy.)

For (episcopal rank) (name), for the honorable presbyterate, for the diaconate in Christ, and for all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

(Lord, have mercy.)

For our country, for the president, and for all in public service, let us pray to the Lord.

(Lord, have mercy.)

For this city, and for every city and land, and for the faithful who live in them, let us pray to the Lord.

(Lord, have mercy.)

For favorable weather, for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

(Lord, have mercy.)

For those who travel by land, sea, and air, for the sick, the suffering, the captives and for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

(Lord, have mercy.)

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

(Lord, have mercy.)

Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

(Lord, have mercy.)

Commemorating our most holy, pure, blessed, and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

(To You, O Lord.)

PRIEST

For to You belong all glory, honor, and worship, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

(Amen.)

The first stanza of Kathisma 1 of the Psalter may be read, followed by the short litany.

DEACON

Again and again, in peace, let us pray to the Lord.

(Lord, have mercy.)

Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

(Lord, have mercy.)

Commemorating our most holy, pure, blessed, and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

(To You, O Lord.)

PRIEST

For Yours is the dominion, and Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

(Amen.)

CHOIR

Mode pl. 2.

Lord, I have cried to You; hear me. Hear me, O Lord. Lord, I have cried to You; hear me. Give heed to the voice of my supplication when I cry to You. Hear me, O Lord. [SAAS]

Let my prayer be set forth before You as incense, the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice. Hear me, O Lord. [SAAS]

Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, a door of enclosure about my lips.

Incline not my heart to evil words, to make excuses in sins.

With men who work lawlessness; and I will not join with their choice ones.

The righteous man shall correct me with mercy, and he shall reprove me; but let not the oil of the sinner anoint my head.

For my prayer shall be intense in the presence of their pleasures. Their judges are swallowed up by the rock.

They shall hear my words, for they are pleasant. As a clod of ground is dashed to pieces on the earth, so their bones were scattered beside the grave.

For my eyes, O Lord, O Lord, are toward You; in You I hope; take not my soul away.

Keep me from the snares they set for me, and from the stumbling blocks of those who work lawlessness.

Sinners shall fall into their own net; I am alone, until I escape.

I cried to the Lord with my voice, with my voice I prayed to the Lord.

I shall pour out my supplication before Him; I shall declare my affliction in His presence.

When my spirit fainted within me, then You knew my paths.

For on the way I was going, they hid a trap for me.

I looked on my right, and saw there was no one who knew me.

Refuge failed me, and there was no one who cared for my soul.

I cried to You, O Lord; I said, "You are my hope, my portion in the land of the living."

Attend to my supplication, for I was humbled exceedingly.

Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are stronger than I.

Bring my soul out of prison to give thanks to Your name, O Lord.

The righteous shall wait for me, until You reward me.

Out of the depths I have cried to You, O Lord; O Lord, hear my voice.

Let Your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

Stichera for the Forerunner.

From Menaion - - -

Idiomelon. Mode pl. 2.

If You, O Lord, should mark transgression, O Lord, who would stand? For there is forgiveness with You. [SAAS]

As shameless Herod's birthday was being celebrated the terms of the oath to the wanton dancing girl were fulfilled; for the head of the Forerunner was struck off and brought in on a dish like a delicacy for those at table. O hateful banquet, full of impious behaviour and bloodthirsty murder! But we, as we

fittingly honour the Baptist as greatest among the offspring of women, call him blessed. [EL]

Idiomelon. Mode pl. 2.

Because of Your law, O Lord, I waited for You; my soul waited for Your word. My soul hopes in the Lord. [SAAS]

As shameless Herod's birthday was being celebrated the terms of the oath to the wanton dancing girl were fulfilled; for the head of the Forerunner was struck off and brought in on a dish like a delicacy for those at table. O hateful banquet, full of impious behaviour and bloodthirsty murder! But we, as we fittingly honour the Baptist as greatest among the offspring of women, call him blessed. [EL]

Idiomelon. Mode pl. 2.

From the morning watch until night; from the morning watch until night, let Israel hope in the Lord. [SAAS]

She danced, the disciple of the all-evil devil, and took your head, O Forerunner, as her wages. O banquet filled with blood! If only you had not sworn, lawless Herod, offspring of falsehood. But if you had sworn, if only you had not kept your oath; for it was better to have lied and attained life, than to speak truly and to cut off the head of the Forerunner. But we, as we fittingly honour the Baptist as greatest among the offspring of women, call him blessed. [EL]

Idiomelon. Mode pl. 2.

For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is abundant redemption; and He shall redeem Israel from all his transgressions. [SAAS]

She danced, the disciple of the all-evil devil, and took your head, O Forerunner, as

her wages. O banquet filled with blood! If only you had not sworn, lawless Herod, offspring of falsehood. But if you had sworn, if only you had not kept your oath; for it was better to have lied and attained life, than to speak truly and to cut off the head of the Forerunner. But we, as we fittingly honour the Baptist as greatest among the offspring of women, call him blessed. [EL]

Idiomelon. Mode pl. 2.

Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles; praise Him, all you peoples. [SAAS]

You should not, Herod, have condemned to death the one who denounced your adultery, the result of satanic love and the insane passion of lust for a woman. You should not have perilously handed over his all-honoured head to a lawless woman because of an oath made for a dance. How did you dare to accomplish such a murder? How was the wanton dancing girl not consumed by fire in the middle of the banquet as she brought this head in on a dish? But we, as we fittingly honour the Baptist as greatest among the offspring of women, call him blessed. [EL]

Idiomelon. Mode pl. 2.

For His mercy rules over us; and the truth of the Lord endures forever. [SAAS]

Once again Herodias is in a rage; once again she is troubled. Oh, dance full of treachery; oh, drinking party of deceit! The Baptist was decapitated, and Herod was agitated. At the intercession of Your Forerunner, O Lord, grant peace to our souls.

[SD]

Glory.

From Menaion - - -

Mode pl. 2.

As shameless Herod's birthday was being celebrated the terms of the oath to the wanton dancing girl were fulfilled; for the head of the Forerunner was struck off and brought in on a dish like a delicacy for those at table. O hateful banquet, full of impious behaviour and bloodthirsty murder! But we, as we fittingly honour the Baptist as greatest among the offspring of women, call him blessed. [EL]

From Octoechos - - -

Both now. **Theotokion.**

Mode pl. 2.

Who will not call you blessed, most holy Virgin? Who will not sing praises of your wondrous birth giving? For the only begotten Son, timelessly having shone forth from the Father, came forth from you who are pure. And having been ineffably made flesh, he, who by nature is God, for our sake became also by nature man: not in two divided persons, but in two natures without confusion. O honored and all blessed one, beseech him to have mercy on our souls. [HC]

DEACON (*in a low voice*)

Let us pray to the Lord.

PRIEST (*in a low voice*)

Prayer of the Entrance

At evening, at morning and at midday we praise, bless and give thanks, and we pray to you, Master of all things, Lord who love mankind: Direct our prayer before you like incense, and do not incline our hearts to words or thoughts of evil, but deliver us from all that hunt down our souls. For our eyes look to you, O Lord, our Lord, and we have hoped in you.

DEACON

Wisdom. Arise.

CLERGY AND PEOPLE

Mode 2.

Gladsome light of holy glory of the holy, blessed, heavenly, immortal Father, O Jesus Christ: arriving at the hour of sunset and having seen the evening light, we praise the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God. It is worthy for You to be praised at all times with happy voices, O Son of God and Giver of life; * and therefore the world glorifies You. [SD]

DEACON

The evening Prokeimenon.

CHOIR

Prokeimenon. Mode pl. 1.

Save me, O God, in Your name, and judge me in Your power. (2) [SAAS]

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

Save me, O God, in Your name, and judge me in Your power.

The Readings

From Menaion - - -

READER

The reading is from the Prophecy of Isaiah.

DEACON

Wisdom. Let us be attentive.

READER

40:1-5, 9; 41:17b-18; 45:8; 48:20b-21a; 54:1

Thus says the Lord: "Comfort, yes, comfort My people," says God. "O priests, speak to the heart of Jerusalem, comfort her, for her humiliation is ended, her sin is pardoned; for she received from the Lord's hand double for 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 humbled; the crooked places shall be made straight, and the rough places into plains. The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God; for the Lord has spoken." O you who bring good tidings to Zion, go into the high mountain; O you who bring good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid. Say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God." I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them. But I will open rivers in the mountain and fountains in the midst of the plains. I will make the desert into marsh-meadows, and the dry land into aqueducts. Let heaven above be glad, and let the clouds sprinkle righteousness. Let the earth bring forth mercy and righteousness together. Proclaim a voice of gladness and let it become well known. Proclaim it to the end of the earth, and say, "The Lord delivered His servant Jacob." If they shall thirst, He will lead them through the desert, and water shall flow from the rock for them. Be glad, O barren woman who does not bear; break forth and cry out, you who are not in travail, for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married woman. [SAAS]

READER

The reading is from the Prophecy of Malachi.

DEACON

Wisdom. Let us be attentive.

READER

3:1a, 2, 3a, 5a, 5c, 6a, 7b, 12a, 17, 18b, 24, 22-23

Thus says the Lord Almighty: "Behold, I send My messenger, and he will prepare

the way before Me, and the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come into His temple, but who can endure the day of His coming? And who can withstand His appearance? For He enters like a refiner's fire and as soap in one's wash. He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver and gold. And I will draw near to you in judgment, a swift witness against sorcerers, adulterers, those who swear falsely by My name, and those who do not fear Me," says the Lord Almighty. "For I am the Lord your God; I have not changed. But you, O sons of Jacob, you have turned away from My ordinances and have not kept them. Return to Me and I will return to you," says the Lord Almighty. "And all nations will call you blessed. They shall be mine," says the Lord Almighty, "in the day that I make them My possession, and I will choose them as a man chooses his own son who serves him. Then you shall return, and you will discern between the righteous and the wicked. Be in remembrance of the Law of Moses My servant as I commanded him, with its statutes and judgments, at Horeb for all Israel. Behold, I will send you Elijah before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And he will turn the heart of the father to his son, and a man's heart to his neighbor, lest I come and strike the earth completely," says the Lord Almighty, God, the Holy One of Israel. [SAAS]

READER

The reading is from the Wisdom of Solomon.

DEACON

Wisdom. Let us be attentive.

READER

4:7a, 16a, 17a, 19b-20; 5:1-7

But though a righteous man may die before his time, he shall be at rest. But a righteous man who is dead shall condemn the ungodly who are living. For they will see the end of the wise man, but will not understand what the Lord purposed for him, because He will dash them headlong and speechless to the ground and shake them from the foundations. They shall be left dry and barren to the very end; they shall be in pain, and their memory shall perish. They will come with dread in the day of reckoning for their sins, and their lawless deeds will convict them to their face. Then the righteous man will stand with confidence in the presence of those who afflict him; and those who reject his labors, when they see him, will be shaken with dreadful fear; and they shall be amazed at his unexpected salvation. They will speak among themselves with regret, and in anguish of spirit they will groan and say, "This is the man whom we fools once held in derision and made a byword of disgrace. We considered his life to be madness and his death as without honor. How has he been numbered among the sons of God? and how is his portion among the saints? Therefore we went astray from the way of truth, for the light of righteousness did not shine on us, and the sun did not rise upon us. We were satisfied with the paths of lawlessness, and we traveled through impassable deserts; but the way of the Lord we have not known. [SAAS]

DEACON

Let us all say with all our soul and with all our mind, let us all say.

(Lord, have mercy.)

Lord almighty, God of our fathers, we pray You, hear us and have mercy.

(Lord, have mercy.)

Have mercy on us, O God, according to Your great mercy, we pray You, hear us and have mercy.

(Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.)

Let us pray for pious and Orthodox Christians.

(Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.)

Again we pray for (episcopal rank) (name).

(Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.)

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

(Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.)

Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, protection, forgiveness, and remission of the sins of the servants of God, all pious Orthodox Christians residing and visiting in this city: the parishioners, the members of the parish council, the stewards, and benefactors of this holy church.

(Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.)

Again we pray for the blessed and ever-memorable founders of this holy church, and for all our fathers and brethren who have fallen asleep before us, who here have been piously laid to their rest, as well as the Orthodox everywhere.

(Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.)

Again we pray for those who bear fruit and do good works in this holy and all-venerable church, for those who labor and those who sing, and for the people here present who await Your great and rich mercy.

(Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.)

PRIEST

For You are a merciful God Who loves mankind, and to You we offer up glory, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

(Amen.)

READER

O Lord, keep us this evening without sin. Blessed are you, O Lord, God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is your name to the ages. Amen. O Lord, let your mercy be upon us for we have set our hope in you. Blessed are you, O Lord, teach me your commandments. Blessed are you, Master, grant me understanding of your commandments. Blessed are you, Holy One, enlighten me with your commandments. Lord, your mercy is forever. Do not despise the works of your hands. To you is due praise, to you is due song, to you is due glory, to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. [HC]

(Amen.)

DEACON

Let us complete our evening prayer to the Lord.

(Lord, have mercy.)

Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

(Lord, have mercy.)

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

(Grant this, O Lord.)

For an angel of peace, a faithful guide, a guardian of our souls and bodies, let us ask the Lord.

(Grant this, O Lord.)

For pardon and remission of our sins and transgressions, let us ask the Lord.

(Grant this, O Lord.)

For that which is good and beneficial for our souls, and for peace for the world, let us ask the Lord.

(Grant this, O Lord.)

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

(Grant this, O Lord.)

And let us ask for a Christian end to our life, peaceful, without shame and suffering, and for a good defense before the awesome judgment seat of Christ.

(Grant this, O Lord.)

Commemorating our most holy, pure, blessed, and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

(To You, O Lord.)

PRIEST

For You, O God, are good and love mankind, and to You we offer glory, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever, and to the ages of ages.

(Amen.)

PRIEST

Peace be with all.

(And with your spirit.)

DEACON

Let us bow our heads to the Lord.

(To You, O Lord.)

PRIEST (in a low voice)

Lord our God, who bowed the heavens and came down for the salvation of the human race, look upon your servants and upon your inheritance, for to you, the fearful Judge who love mankind, your servants have bowed their heads and inclined their necks, not waiting for any human help, but awaiting your mercy and looking for your salvation. Guard them at every moment, during both the present evening and the approaching night, from every foe, from every hostile operation of the devil and from vain thoughts and evil desires.

PRIEST

May the might of your kingdom be blessed and glorified, of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

(Amen.)

Litany and Blessing of Loaves.

CHOIR

Idiomelon 1.

From Menaion - - -

Mode 1.

What shall we call you, Prophet?/ Angel, apostle, martyr:/ Angel, for you have spent your life like those who have no body./ Apostle, for you have taught the nations,/ and martyr, for your head has been cut off for the sake of Christ.// Pray to Him then that our souls may be granted great mercy. [OCA]

Idiomelon 2.

Mode 1.

We now celebrate the memorial of the beheading of the Forerunner:/ At that time you gushed forth blood upon the platter, // and now you pour forth healing to the ends of the earth! [OCA]

Idiomelon 3.

Mode 1.

Today the mother of murder/ acting with more wickedness than has ever been seen,/ has roused her utterly wanton daughter/ to evil against the divinely-chosen and greatest of all the prophets./ For while hateful Herod was celebrating his ungodly birthday/ she contrived according to the oath he had given her for her dancing,/ to beg for the precious head of the herald of God,/ that gushed forth miracles./ And he, quite mad, fulfilled his promise/ and gave her the sworn reward of her dancing./ But the initiate of the coming of Christ/ ceased not after death to rebuke them for their abominable union,/ but reproved them loudly, saying:/ It does not become you to commit adultery with the wife of your brother Philip./ What birthday, killer of prophets and feast full of blood!/ Let us with reverent minds/ making ourselves white as snow,/ rejoice on this day and keep feast./ And let us ask the Forerunner to propitiate the Trinity for us// to be delivered from the disgrace of the passions and to save our souls!

[OCA]

Glory.

From Menaion - - -

Mode pl. 1.

Herod, intending to escape reproaches for his sinful doings,/ gave your head,

Forerunner, to a lawless woman./For the wretched man did not know /that in having it carried round on a platter he was rebuking himself./But as teacher of purity and guide to redeeming repentance,/Baptist, intercede with Christ for us//to be delivered from the disgrace of the passions! [OCA]

Both now.

Mode pl. 1.

Now we call you blessed, O Virgin Theotokos, and we glorify you, duty-bound as believers; the city unshakable, the wall indestructible, the firm and steadfast protection, and the place of refuge for our souls. [SD]

DEACON

Have mercy on us, O God, according to Your great mercy, we pray You, hear us and have mercy.

(Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.)

Let us pray for pious and Orthodox Christians.

(Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.)

Again we pray for (episcopal rank) (name).

(Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.)

Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, visitation, forgiveness and remission of the sins of all pious and Orthodox Christians living and visiting in this city, the parishioners, the members of the Parish Council and every Ministry of this Parish, and the donors and benefactors of this holy church, and the servants of God [names] who celebrate this holy feast.

(Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.)

Again we pray for the protection of this holy church, this city and every city and land, from wrath, famine, pestilence, earthquake, flood, fire, sword, foreign invasions, civil strife, and accidental death. That our good and loving God may be merciful, gracious and favorable to us by turning and keeping from us all wrath and sickness, and deliver us from His just rebuke, and have mercy on us.

(Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.)

Again we pray that the Lord our God may hear the prayer of us sinners, and have mercy on us.

(Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.)

PRIEST

Hear us, O God our Savior, the hope of all those who live everywhere on earth and those far out at sea or in the air. Be gracious toward our sins, Master, and have mercy on us.

For you are a merciful and loving God, and to you we give glory, to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

(Amen.)

Peace be with all.

(And with your spirit.)

DEACON

Let us bow our heads to the Lord.

(To You, O Lord.)

PRIEST

Most merciful Master, Lord Jesus Christ our God, through the intercessions of our most pure Lady the Theotokos and ever-Virgin Mary, the power of the precious and life giving Cross, the protection of the

honorable, bodiless Powers of heaven, the supplications of the honorable and glorious prophet, and forerunner John the Baptist, whose memory we celebrate; the holy, glorious, and praiseworthy Apostles, our Fathers among the Saints, the great hierarchs and ecumenical teachers, Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom, Athanasios, Cyril, and John the Merciful, patriarchs of Alexandria; Nicholas, bishop of Myra, Spyridon, bishop of Trimythous, Nektarios of Pentapolis, the wonder-workers; the holy, glorious great Martyrs George the Victorious, Demetrios the Myrobletes, Theodore the Teron, and Theodore the General, Menas the Wonderworker, the Hieromartyrs Haralambos and Eleftherios; the holy, glorious, and victorious martyrs; the glorious great Martyr and all-laudable Euphemia; the holy and glorious Martyrs Thecla, Barbara, Anastasia, Katherine, Kyriake, Fotene, Marina, Paraskeve and Irene; of our holy God-bearing Fathers; (**local patron saint**); the holy and righteous ancestors of God Joachim and Anna, and of all your Saints.

Accept our prayer; grant us forgiveness of our transgressions; protect us under the shelter of your wings; drive away from us every enemy and adversary; grant peace to our life; Lord have mercy on us and on your world; and save our souls as a good and loving God.

PRIEST or: CHOIR

Hymn to the Theotokos.

O Virgin Theotokos, rejoice, Mary full of grace. The Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb; for you have borne the Savior of our souls **[SD]**

DEACON

Let us pray to the Lord.

(Lord, have mercy.)

PRIEST

Blessing of the Loaves.

Lord, Jesus Christ. our God, You blessed the five loaves in the wilderness and from them five thousand men were filled. Bless now these loaves, the wheat, the wine and oil and multiply them in this holy church, this city, in the homes of those who celebrate today, and in Your whole world. And sanctify Your faithful servants who partake of them.

For You are He who blesses and sanctifies all things, Christ our God, and to You we offer up glory together with Your eternal Father and Your holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

(Amen.)

CLERGY

Rich men turned poor and went hungry; but those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing. **[SAAS]**

CHOIR

Rich men turned poor and went hungry; but those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing. **(2)** **[SAAS]**

From Menaion - -

CHOIR

Aposticha.

Idiomelon 1. Mode 2.

O Baptist John, preacher of repentance, when your head was cut off you sanctified the earth, for you spread the Law of God to the faithful, and made lawlessness disappear. As one present at the throne of Christ, the heavenly King, plead with Him to have mercy on our souls. **[SD]**

Idiomelon 2. Mode 2.

Verse: *The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree; he shall be multiplied like the cedar in Lebanon.* [SAAS]

For the law of the Lord your head was struck off, all-holy John. With blameless boldness of speech you rebuked the impious king when he transgressed the law. And so the hosts of Angels marvel at you; the choirs of Apostles and Martyrs glorify you; we too honour your yearly memorial, as we glorify the Holy Trinity, who crowned you, blessed Forerunner. [EL]

Idiomelon 3. Mode 2.

Verse: *The righteous man shall be glad in the Lord, and shall hope in Him.* [SAAS]

The Prophet from a Prophet, who became greater than the Prophets, who was sanctified from his mother's womb for the service of the Lord, had his head struck off today by a lawless king; and both before his execution and after it clearly rebuking the maiden who danced licentiously, he put the regiment of sin to shame. And so we cry out: Baptist John, as you have freedom to speak, intercede insistently for our souls. [EL]

Glory.

From Menaion - - -

Mode pl. 4.

Forerunner of the Saviour, you rebuked kings that they should not act lawlessly; and so the little darling of a lawless woman persuaded Herod to cut off your head, and therefore from the rising of the sun to its setting your name is to be praised. As you have freedom before the Lord intercede insistently for our souls. [EL]

From Octoechos - - -

Both now. **Theotokion.**

Mode pl. 4.

O Virgin who did not know man and yet ineffably conceived God in the flesh, Mother of the Most High God, accept entreaties from your supplicants, All-blameless one. To all you grant purification of their offenses. We pray you now accept our supplications, and entreat Him, to save us all. [SD]

PRIEST

Song of Simeon.

Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation which You have prepared before the face of all peoples. A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel. [NKJV]

PEOPLE

Trisagion Prayers.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (3)

Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Both now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, forgive our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for your name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Both now and ever and to the 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 forever and to the ages of ages.

(Amen.)

CHOIR

Apolytikion.

From Menaion - - -

Mode 2.

The memory of the just is observed with hymns of praise; for you suffices the testimony of the Lord, O Forerunner. You have proved to be truly more ven'erable than the Prophets, since you were granted to baptize in the river the One whom they proclaimed. Therefore, when for the truth you had contested, rejoicing, to those in Hades you preached the Gospel, that God was manifested in the flesh, and takes away the sin of the world, and grants to us the great mercy. ^[SD]

From Octoechos - - -

Glory. Both now. **Theotokion.**

Mode 2.

All surpassing every thought, all surpassing glorious, O Theotokos, are your mysteries. For while bearing the seal of purity and preserved in virginity, you were deemed a Mother in truth, for to the true God you gave birth. To Him pray fervently, entreating Him to save our souls. ^[SD]

DEACON

Let us pray to the Lord.

(Lord, have mercy.)

PRIEST

May the blessing and the mercy of the Lord come upon you by His divine grace and love for mankind, always, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

(Amen.)

Make firm, Lord our God, the holy and pure faith of the pious Orthodox Christians, together with the Holy Church and this city forever.

READER

Amen.

Optional:

PRIEST

Most-holy Theotokos, save us.

READER

Greater in honor than the Cherubim, and in glory greater beyond compare than the Seraphim; you without corruption gave birth to God the Word, and are truly Theotokos. You do we magnify.

PRIEST

Glory to You, O Christ God, our hope.
Glory to You.

READER

Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Both now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (3) Father, bless!

PRIEST

May Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His all-pure and all-immaculate holy Mother, the power of the precious and life-giving Cross, the protection of the honorable, bodiless powers of heaven, the supplications of the honorable, glorious prophet and forerunner John the Baptist,

whose memory we celebrate; of the holy,
glorious, and praiseworthy apostles, of the
holy, glorious, and triumphant martyrs,
of our righteous and God-bearing fathers,
(local patron saint); of the holy and righteous
ancestors of God Joachim and Anna, and of all
the saints, have mercy on us and save us, for
He is good and loves mankind.

Through the prayers of our holy fathers,
Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us
[and save us].

(Amen.)