

The 24th Day of March



The Forefeast of the Annunciation of the All-holy Virgin. And our venerable father Zachariah the Recluse, whom we commemorate on this day.

Evening Service

Usual kathismas.

The distribution of the stikhera at “Lord, I call...” is dependent upon which day of Lent it fall. The stikhera from the *Triodion* will be sung first and then those of the forefeast, unless the forefeast should fall on a Sunday. The *Typicon/Ustav* must be consulted.

At “Lord, I call...,” 10 stikhera, including:

4 stikhera of the Forefeast in Tone 4: *Special melody: “As one valiant among the martyrs...”*

The Mystery hidden and unknown to angels /
Is confirmed by the Archangel Gabriel, /
And now he comes to thee, the only-incorrupt, unblemished turtledove, /
For the deliverance of our race /
And he cries out to thee, O most holy one: ///
Rejoice, and prepare, by a word, to receive the Word of God in thy womb! (*Twice*)

The womb of the most pure maiden of God, /
Has been prepared as a light-bearing palace for Thee, O Master. /
Come, and descend upon her and be bountiful to Thy creation /
Which had been abused because of the primal envy /
And through the slavery of the Deceiver, had been deprived of its former goodness ///
Yet awaiting Thy saving visitation.

The Archangel Gabriel will manifest his presence to thee /
O most pure one, /
And will cry out to thee: Rejoice, thou annulment of the curse /
And the lifting up of the fallen! /
Rejoice, having alone become the chosen of God! /
Rejoice, chariot of the Son of Glory ///
Receive the Bodiless One Who *comes* to dwell in thy womb!

Glory..., now and ever..., of the Forefeast, in Tone 2:

Today Gabriel announces to her who is full of grace /
Rejoice, O unwedded Mother who has not known wedlock! /
Do not be astonished at my strange appearance, nor be frightened, /
For I am an Archangel. /
For once the serpent tempted Eve, /
But now I come to bring glad tidings to thee. ///
Thou shalt remain incorrupt and give birth to the Lord, O most *pure* Maiden!

Entrance. Prokeimenon, Readings for the Day, and the rest of the Presanctified Liturgy if appointed. If there is no Presanctified, then at “Lord, I call...,” we chant 3 stikhera from the Triodion; 3 for the forefeast; and the “Glory..., now and ever...” of the forefeast: “Today Gabriel...”

The Apostikha is from the Triodion.

Glory..., now and ever..., of the Forefeast, in Tone 2:

The Mystery from the ages is revealed today, /
And the Son of God becomes the Son of Man, /
So that He might take up on Himself what is worse in order to grant me what is better. /
Having desired to be God, Adam was deceived in ancient times and did not become God. /
But God becomes man, so that He might make Adam like a god. /
Let all creation therefore be glad and dance for joy, /
For the Archangel stands in fear before the Virgin /
And offers her these words: Rejoice, thou remedy to grief. ///
O God, Who art become man in the compassion of Thy mercy, Glory to Thee!

Morning Service

“Alleluia” and the usual triadica in the Tone of the Week. But if it be a Saturday or Sunday, at “God is the Lord...,” we sing:

The Troparion of the Forefeast, in Tone 4:

Today the beginning of universal joy /
Commands all to sing pre-festive praises, /
For behold, Gabriel comes, bearing an announcement to the Virgin /
And he cries out to her: ///
Rejoice, O blessèd one, the Lord is with thee!

[The Canon for the Forefeast... incomplete as of 2/2013]

The Kontakion of the Forefeast, in Tone 8: Special Melody: “O victorious leader...”

O Virgin Theotokos, thou art the beginning of salvation for us born on the earth, /
For the prince of the heavenly legions and the divine minister, Gabriel, was sent down
from heaven to present himself to thee; /
And he brought thee news of joyful gladness. ///
Therefore all cry to thee: Rejoice, O Bride unwedded!

At the Apostikha, the stikhera from the Triodion.

Glory..., now and ever..., in Tone 4:

Now the Theotokos has heard language she has never heard before, /
For the Archangel spoke to her the words of the Annunciation. /
And accepting his salutation with faith, /
She conceived Thee the Pre-eternal God /
Therefore we who are rejoicing cry aloud to thee: /
O God, Who immutably took on flesh from [the Virgin] ///
Grant peace to the world and great mercy to our souls.

At the First Hour, the kathismas and prostrations, as usual.