**MARCH 25**

**Annunciation of our Most Holy Lady, Theotokos and Ever-virgin Mary/Sunday evening Vespers**

***\* [Music for the stichera from the Triodion from the Department of Liturgical Music and Translations can be downloaded at*** [***www.oca.org***](http://www.oca.org)***]***

**"Lord I Call..." Tone 8**

Lord, I call upon Thee, hear me!

Hear me, O Lord!

Lord, I call upon Thee, hear me!

Receive the voice of my prayer,

when I call upon Thee!//

Hear me, O Lord!

Let my prayer arise

in Thy sight as incense,

and let the lifting up of my hands

be an evening sacrifice!//

Hear me, O Lord!

*v. (10) Bring my soul out of prison, that I may give thanks to Thy name!*

**Tone 8 \*** *(from the Lenten Triodion, by Joseph) (Immeasurable)*

I have committed countless sins against Thee,

deserving punishments beyond number:

inconsolable weeping and gnashing of teeth,

the fire of hell, the darkness of Gehenna.

Therefore, O righteous Judge, give me the grace of tears,

that I may find forgiveness of sins and deliverance from my iniquities,

and that, while I fast, I may cry to Thee:

“Have compassion on me, O Christ and Lord,//

according to Thy great and rich mercy!”

*v. (9) The righteous will surround me; for Thou wilt deal bountifully with me.*

Though I am lost in the hills of evil iniquities,

seek me, O Word, as I call out to Thee,

having wandered far from Thee in the multitude of my evil passions!

Revive me in this death,

and purify me with fasting and constant weeping,

that I may cry out to Thee:

“O Christ Lord, have compassion on me//

according to Thy great and rich mercy!”

*v. (8) Out of the depths I cry to Thee, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice!*

**Tone 8** *(from the Lenten Triodion, by Theodore) (O most glorious wonder)*

Having begun the third week of the fast, O believers,

let us praise the venerable Trinity,

passing the remaining time with gladness and joy,

starving the passions of the flesh!

Let us glean divine flowers from our souls,

weaving them into crowns for the day that is lord of days,//

that wearing our crowns, we may praise the triumphant Christ!

*v. (7) Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications!*

**Tone 6** *(from the Menaion, for the Feast) (Having placed all hope)*

Revealing to thee the pre-eternal counsel,

Gabriel came and stood before thee, O Maiden,

and greeting thee, he said:

“Rejoice, O earth that has not been sown!

Rejoice, burning bush that remains unconsumed!

Rejoice, unsearchable depth!

Rejoice, bridge that leads to Heaven!

Rejoice, ladder raised on high that Jacob saw!

Rejoice, divine jar of manna!

Rejoice, deliverance from the curse!

Rejoice, restoration of Adam;//

the Lord is with thee!”

*v. (6) If Thou, O Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee.*

(Repeat: “Revealing to thee the pre-eternal counsel …”)

*v. (5) For Thy name’s sake have I waited for Thee, O Lord, my soul has waited for Thy word; my soul has hoped on the Lord.*

(Repeat: “Revealing to thee the pre-eternal counsel …”)

*v. (4) From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch let Israel hope on the Lord!*

“Thou dost appear to me in the form of a man,”

said the undefiled Maid to the chief of the Heavenly Hosts.

“How then dost thou speak to me of things that pass man’s power?

Thou hast said that God shall be with me

and shall take up His dwelling in my womb.

How shall I become the spacious habitation

and the holy place of Him Who rides upon the Cherubim?

Do not deceive me with trickery;

for I have not known pleasure,

I have not entered into wedlock.//

How then shall I bear a Child?”

*v. (3) For with the Lord there is mercy and with Him is plenteous redemption, and He will deliver Israel from all his iniquities.*

(Repeat: “Thou dost appear to me in the form of a man …”)

*v. (2) Praise the Lord, all nations! Praise Him, all peoples!*

Then the bodiless Angel replied:

“When God so wills, the order of nature is overcome,

and what is beyond man comes to pass.

Believe that my sayings are true,

O all-holy and immaculate Lady!”

And she cried aloud:

“Let it be to me according to thy word,

and I shall bear Him Who is without flesh!

He shall borrow flesh from me,

that through this union of natures

He may lead man up to his ancient glory,//

for He alone has power so to do.”

*v. (1) For His mercy is abundant towards us; and the truth of the Lord endures for ever.*

(Repeat: “Then the bodiless Angel replied: …”)

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

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

**Tone 6**  *(for the Feast, by John the Monk)*

The Archangel Gabriel was sent from heaven,

to announce to the Virgin the good news of her conceiving.

And coming to Nazareth, he was filled with wonder at the miracle,

and reasoned within himself:

“How is it that He Who dwells on high,

and Whom none can comprehend, is to be born of a Virgin?

How is He, Whose throne is Heaven and Whose footstool is the earth,

to be contained in the womb of a woman?

He upon Whom the six-winged Seraphim and the many-eyed Cherubim

are not able to gaze

is well-pleased to be made flesh from her at a single word.

It is the Word of God Who is to come.

Why then do I hesitate, and not say to the Maiden:

‘Rejoice, O Lady, full of grace, the Lord is with thee!

Rejoice, pure Virgin!

Rejoice, Bride without Bridegroom!

Rejoice, O Mother of the Life!//

Blessed is the Fruit of thy womb!’”

**Prokeimenon of the Day**

 **Old Testament Readings (Paremia)**

**Reading from Genesis (28:10-17)** *(Annunciation)*

**Reading from Ezekiel (43:27-44:4)** *(Annunciation)*

 **Reading from Proverbs (9:1-11)** *(Annunciation)***Annunciation of our Most Holy Lady, Theotokos and Ever-virgin Mary**

**Litya**

**Tone 1** *(by Byzas)*

In the sixth month the chief of the Angelic Hosts was sent to thee, O pure

 Virgin,

to declare to thee the word of salvation,

and to greet thee saying:

“Rejoice, O full of grace, the Lord is with thee!

Thou shalt bring forth a Son, begotten before the ages from the Father,//

and He shall save His people from their sins!”

**Tone 1** *(by Anatolius)*

In the sixth month the Archangel Gabriel was sent from heaven

to the city of Nazareth in Galilee,

to bring glad tidings of joy to the Maiden.

And coming before her, he cried out saying:

“Rejoice, O full of grace, the Lord is with thee!

Rejoice, vessel containing the Uncontainable Nature;

for Him Whom the heavens cannot contain,

thy womb now contains, O blessed One.

Rejoice, O Lady, the restoration of Adam and the deliverance of Eve,//

the joy of the world and the great exultation of the human race!“

The Angel Gabriel was sent from heaven by God

to an undefiled Virgin in the city of Nazareth in Galilee,

to bring her glad tidings of the wondrous manner of her conceiving.

The bodiless servant was sent to the living city and the spiritual gate,

to proclaim the condescension of the Master’s coming.

The heavenly warrior was sent to the living palace of glory,

to prepare in advance an everlasting abode for the Creator.

And coming before her, he cried:

“Rejoice, O fiery throne, surpassing in glory the likeness of the

 four living creatures!

Rejoice, O seat of the heavenly King!

Rejoice, unhewn mountain and most precious vessel;

for in thee all the fullness of the Godhead has come to dwell bodily,

by the good pleasure of the everlasting Father,

and the cooperation of the Holy Spirit.//

Rejoice, O full of grace, the Lord is with thee!”

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

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

**Tone 2** *(by Cosmas the monk)*

Today Gabriel announces the good tidings to her who is full of grace:

“Rejoice, unwedded Maiden!

Be not amazed at my strange appearance, nor be afraid.

I am an Archangel.

The serpent once beguiled Eve,

but now I announce to thee the good tidings of joy, O most pure one.//

Thou shalt remain inviolate and shall give birth to the Lord.

**Annunciation of our Most Holy Lady, Theotokos and Ever-virgin Mary**

**Aposticha**

**Tone 4**

In the sixth month, the Archangel was sent to the pure Virgin;

and with his greeting “Rejoice,”

he announced the good news that the Deliverer was to come forth from

 her.

Therefore, having received the salutation with faith,

she conceived Thee, the pre-eternal God, //

Who wast well-pleased ineffably to become man//

for the salvation of our souls.

*v. Proclaim from day to day the glad tidings of the salvation of our God!*

The Theotokos heard a tongue that she knew not,

for the Archangel addressed to her the words of glad tidings;

therefore, accepting the salutation with faith,

she conceived Thee, the pre-eternal God.

And so, rejoicing exceedingly, we too cry aloud to Thee:

O God, made flesh from her without change,//

grant peace to the world, and great mercy to our souls!

*v. Sing to the Lord a new song, for the Lord has done wonders!*

Behold, our restoration has now been revealed to us:

in a manner beyond understanding, God is united to man;

at the voice of the Archangel, delusion is destroyed,

for the Virgin receives joy;

things of the earth have become heaven;

and the world is freed from the ancient curse.

Let creation rejoice exceedingly and sing with voices of praise://

“O Lord, our Maker and Deliverer, glory to Thee!”

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

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

 **Tone 4** *(for the Annunciation, by Andrew of Jerusalem)*

Today the good tidings of joy are proclaimed,

today is the festival of the Virgin;

things below are joined together with things on high.

Adam is made new;

Eve is freed from the primal grief;

and by the deification of the human nature that the Lord assumed,

the tabernacle of our substance has become a temple of God.

Oh, what a mystery!

The manner of His emptying cannot be known;

the manner of His conception is beyond speech.

An Angel ministers at the miracle; a virginal womb receives the Son;

the Holy Spirit is sent down; the Father on high is well pleased,

and according to their common counsel, a reconciliation is brought to pass

in which and through which we are saved.

For this reason let us unite our song with Gabriel’s,

crying aloud to the Virgin:

“Rejoice, O Lady full of grace, the Lord is with thee!

From thee is our salvation, Christ our God,

Who, by assuming our nature, has led us back to Himself.//

Humbly pray to Him for the salvation of our souls!”

**Tone 4 Troparion** *(Annunciation)*

Today is the beginning of our salvation,

the revelation of the eternal mystery!

The Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin

as Gabriel announces the coming of Grace.

Together with him let us cry to the Theotokos:

“Rejoice, O Full of Grace,//

the Lord is with thee! “*(sung once at Vespers, thrice at Vigil)*

***(Vespers is followed by Matins)***

***Liturgical music for the festal stichera and the Kanon and selected hymns at Matins can be downloaded at*** [***www.oca.org***](http://www.oca.org) ***; Liturgical Music and Translations; Music Downloads, Major Feasts, Annunciation of the Theotokos.***

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*Music for the stichera from the Lenten Triodion can be downloaded at*  http://oca.org/liturgics/music-downloads/lenten-triodion

*Music for the stichera from the Menaion – March 25 (Annunciation) can be downloaded at*

https://oca.org/liturgics/music-downloads/annunciation-of-the-theotokos

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