

THE MIDNIGHT OFFICE

(Nocturn)

After the reading of the Acts of the Holy Apostles is completed, the priest, vested in the epitrachilion, intones:

Priest: Blessed is our God, always, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Reader: **Amen. Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us! (3x)**

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

O most-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Lord, cleanse us from our sins. O Master, pardon our transgressions. O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto 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 debts as we forgive our debtors, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

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 ever and unto ages of ages.

Reader: **Amen. Come, let us worship God our King. Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, our King and our God. Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and our God.**

The Reader immediately begins Psalm 50, on the following page:



PSALM L. 50

*For the End: A Psalm of David. When Nathan the Prophet
Came unto Him. When He Went in unto Bersabee, the Wife
of Urias.*

Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy; and according to the multitude of Thy compassions blot out my transgression. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know mine iniquity, and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee only have I sinned and done this evil before Thee, that Thou mightest be justified in Thy words, and prevail when Thou art judged. For behold, I was conceived in iniquities, and in sins did my mother bear me. For behold, Thou hast loved truth; the hidden and secret things of Thy wisdom hast Thou made manifest unto me. Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be made clean; Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow. Thou shalt make me to hear joy and gladness; the bones that be humbled, they shall rejoice. Turn Thy face away from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and with Thy governing Spirit establish me. I shall teach transgressors Thy ways, and the ungodly shall turn back unto Thee. Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, Thou God of my salvation; my tongue shall rejoice in Thy righteousness. O Lord, Thou shalt open my lips, and my mouth shall declare Thy praise. For if Thou hadst desired sacrifice, I had given it; with whole-burnt offerings Thou shalt not be pleased. A sacrifice unto God is a broken spirit; a heart that is broken and humbled God will not despise. Do good, O Lord, in Thy good pleasure unto Sion, and let the walls of Jerusalem be builded. Then shalt Thou be pleased with a sacrifice of righteousness, with oblation and whole-burnt offerings. Then shall they offer bullocks upon Thine altar.

The Choir immediately begins the Canon, softly and quickly, on the following page:



The Canon – Irmos 1

Lesser Znamenny Chant, Tone 6

Of old Thou didst bury the pursu-ing ty - rant be-neath the waves
of the sea. Now the child - ren of those who were saved
bu-ry Thee be - neath the earth, but like the maid - ens let us sing
to the Lord,/// for glo-rious-ly has He been glo - ri-fied.

The musical score is written in two staves (treble and bass clefs) with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of four systems of music. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first system contains the first two lines of text. The second system contains the next two lines. The third system contains the next two lines. The fourth system contains the final two lines. The music features various rhythmic values and melodic lines, with some notes grouped by slurs. The final system ends with a double bar line.

Reader:

REFRAIN: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

Unto Thee I sing a hymn for the departed and a song of burial, O Lord my God, Who by Thy burial hast opened for me the entrance to life and by Thy death hast put death and hell to death.

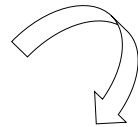
REFRAIN: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

Beholding Thee upon the throne on high and in the grave below, the things of heaven and the things beneath the earth trembled at Thy death; for in a manner past understanding wast Thou, the very Source of Life, seen dead.

REFRAIN: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Thou didst descend to the depths of the earth to fill all with Thy glory; for my person that is in Adam was not hidden from Thee, and when Thou wast buried, Thou didst renew me who am corrupt, O Lover of mankind.

The irmos is repeated as the Katavasia (on the following page).



Katavasia – Ode 1

Of old Thou didst bury the pursu-ing ty - rant be-neath the waves
of the sea. Now the child - ren of those who were saved
bu-ry Thee be - neath the earth, but like the maid - ens let us sing
to the Lord,/// for glo - rious - ly has He been glo - ri - fied.

Irmos 3 begins on the following page.



Irmos 3

Lesser Znamenny Chant – Tone 6

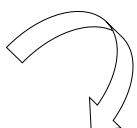
Thou didst sus-pend the earth im-movably up-on the wa-ters.

Now cre-a-tion be-holds Thee sus-pen-ded on Cal-va-ry.

It quakes with great a-maze-ment and cries,/// "None is ho-ly but

Thee, O Lord."

Reader:



REFRAIN: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

By a multitude of visions Thou didst indicate the signs of Thy burial, O Master. But now, as God and man, Thou dost make clear Thy hidden things even unto those in hell, who cry, "None is holy but Thee, O Lord."

REFRAIN: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

Thou hast stretched out Thy hands, O Savior, and united what before had been divided; and by clothing Thyself in a winding sheet Thou hast saved even those held captive by the tomb who cry, "None is holy but Thee, O Lord."

REFRAIN: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

By Thy will a sealed tomb contained Thee, Who cannot be contained; for by Thy divine accomplishments Thou hast made known Thy power unto those who sing, "None is holy but Thee, O Lord Who lovest mankind."

The irmos is repeated as the Katavasia (on the following page).



Katavasia – Ode 3

Thou didst sus-pend the earth im-movably up-on the wa - ters.

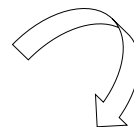
Now cre - a - tion be-holds Thee sus-pen-ded on Cal - va-ry.

It quakes with great a-maze - ment and cries,/// "None is ho-ly but

Thee, O Lord."

The musical score is written for two voices (Soprano and Bass) in G major (one sharp). It consists of four systems of staves. The first system has two measures. The second system has two measures. The third system has two measures, with a double bar line after the first measure. The fourth system has two measures. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables across notes. The final measure of the fourth system ends with a double bar line.

Then immediately the Kathisma Hymn (on the following page).



Kathisma Hymn – Tone 1

The sol-diers guard-ing Thy tomb, O Sav-ior, be-came as dead men

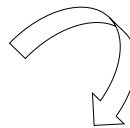
at the light-'ning flash of the an-gel who appeared announcing Thy re-

- sur-rec-tion to the wo-men. We glo-ri-fy Thee, Who cleansest from cor-

- rup-tion. We fall down before Thee, Who didst rise from the tomb,///

our on-ly God.

The Canon resumes with Irmos 4 (on the following page).



Irmos 4

Lesser Znamenny Chant – Tone 6

Fore-see-ing Thy divine humilia-tion on the cross, Hab-ak-kuk cried out
trem - bling, "Thou didst shat - ter the dominion of the migh-
- ty/// by join - ing those in hell as the al - migh - ty Lord."

Reader:

REFRAIN: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

Thou hast sanctified this, the seventh day, which of old Thou didst bless by rest from work; for Thou dost bring all things into being and renew them, O my Savior, while resting and reviving on the Sabbath.

REFRAIN: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

By the overwhelming strength of Thy divine nature Thou didst win the victory, O Word; for Thy soul was parted from the flesh, sundering by Thy might the bonds of hell and death.

REFRAIN: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

When hell encountered Thee, O Word, it was embittered. Seeing Thee as a mortal man deified, marked with wounds yet having almighty power, it cried out at Thy awesome appearance.

Katavasia – Ode 4

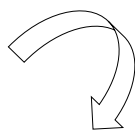
Fore-see-ing Thy divine humilia-tion on the cross, Hab-ak-kuk cried out

trem - bling, "Thou didst shat - ter the dominion of the migh-

- ty/// by join - ing those in hell as the al - migh - ty Lord."

The musical score consists of three systems of vocal staves. Each system has a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a bass clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are written below the staves. The first system covers the first two measures, the second system covers the next two measures, and the third system covers the final two measures. The lyrics are: "Fore-see-ing Thy divine humilia-tion on the cross, Hab-ak-kuk cried out trem - bling, 'Thou didst shat - ter the dominion of the migh- - ty/// by join - ing those in hell as the al - migh - ty Lord.'" The word "migh-" is split across the end of the second system and the beginning of the third system. The word "ty///" is split across the end of the third system and the beginning of the fourth system. The word "Lord." is split across the end of the fourth system and the beginning of the fifth system.

Irmos 5 begins on the following page.



Irmos 5

Lesser Znamenny Chant – Tone 6

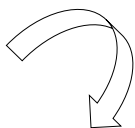
I-sa-iah saw the ne-ver-set-ting light of Thy compassionate manifes-ta-

- tion to us as God, O Christ. Ris-ing ear-ly from the night

he cried out, "The dead shall a-rise. Those in the tombs shall

a-wake./// All those on earth shall great-ly re-joice."

Reader:



REFRAIN: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

When Thou didst become earthly, O Creator, Thou didst renew those born on earth, and the winding sheet and the grave revealed the mystery concerning Thee, O Word; for Joseph the noble counsellor, fulfills the counsel of Him Who begot Thee and Who wondrously renews me in Thee.

REFRAIN: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

Through death Thou dost transform what is mortal, and through burial Thou dost transform what is corruptible; for in a manner befitting God Thou dost make incorrupt and immortal the nature which Thou hast assumed, since Thy flesh did not see corruption and in a wondrous manner Thy soul was not abandoned in hell.

REFRAIN: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Thou didst come forth from a painless birth, O my Maker, and Thy side was pierced. By this hast Thou, the new Adam, accomplished the restoration of Eve. Thou didst fall into a sleep surpassing nature and renewing nature, and, as the all-powerful One, Thou didst raise up life from sleep and corruption.

The irmos is repeated as the Katavasia (on the following page).



Katavasia – Ode 5

I-sa-iah saw the ne-ver-set-ting light of Thy compassionate manifes-ta-
- tion to us as God, O Christ. Ris-ing ear - ly from the night
he cried out, "The dead shall a-rise. Those in the tombs shall
a - wake./// All those on earth shall great - ly re - joice."

Irmos 6 begins on the following page.



Irmos 6

Lesser Znamenny Chant – Tone 6

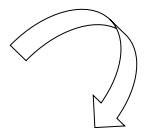
Jo-nah was caught but not held fast in the bel-ly of the whale.

He was a sign of Thee Who hast suffered and ac-cep-ted

bur - i-al. Com-ing forth from the beast as from a bri-dal

cham - ber, he called out to the guard,/// "By observing vani-ties

and lies you have...





and lies you have for-sak-en your own mer - cy."

REFRAIN: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

Thou wast killed, O Word, but not separated from the flesh which Thou dost share with us; for even though the temple of Thy body was destroyed at the time of the Passion, the person of Thy divinity and of Thy flesh was one, for in both dost Thou remain one Son, Word of God, God and man.

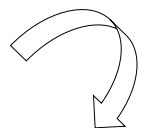
REFRAIN: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

The fall of Adam resulted in the death of man, not God; for even though the earthly substance of Thy flesh suffered, Thy divinity remained passionless. In Thyself Thou hast transformed the corruptible to incorruption, and by Thy resurrection Thou hast revealed a fountain of incorruptible life.

REFRAIN: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Hell rules the race of mortal men, but not eternally; for when Thou wast placed in the grave, O powerful One, Thou didst tear asunder the bars of death by Thy life-creating hand and didst proclaim true deliverance to those sleeping there from the ages, since Thou, O Savior, hast become the first-born of the dead.

The irmos is repeated as the Katavasia (on the following page).



Katavasia – Ode 6

Jo-nah was caught but not held fast in the bel-ly of the whale.

He was a sign of Thee Who hast suffered and ac-cep-ted

bur - i - al. Com - ing forth from the beast as from a bri - dal

cham - ber, he called out to the guard,/// "By observing vani-ties

and lies you have...





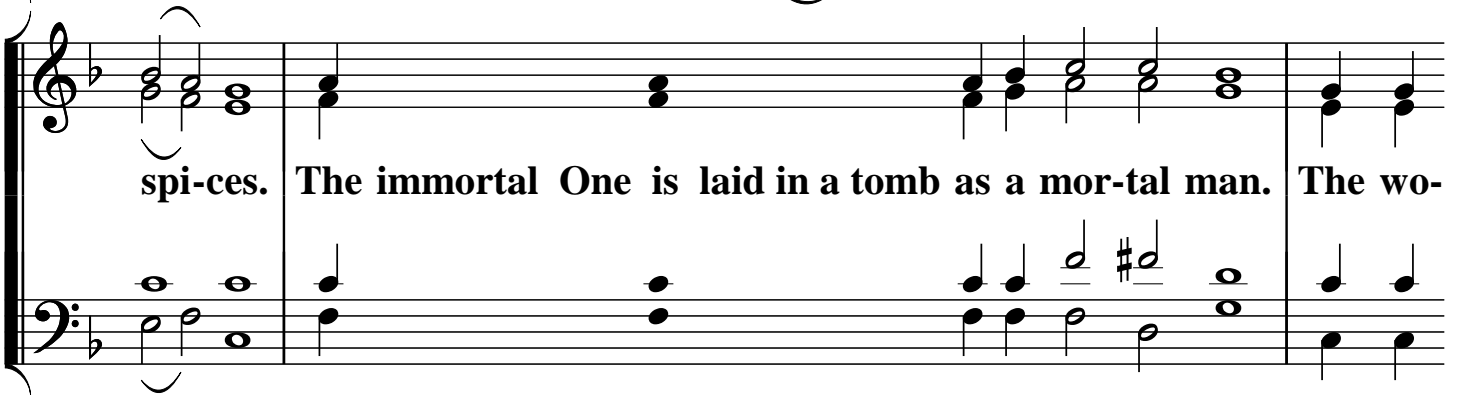
and lies you have for-sak-en your own mer - cy."

The Kontakion

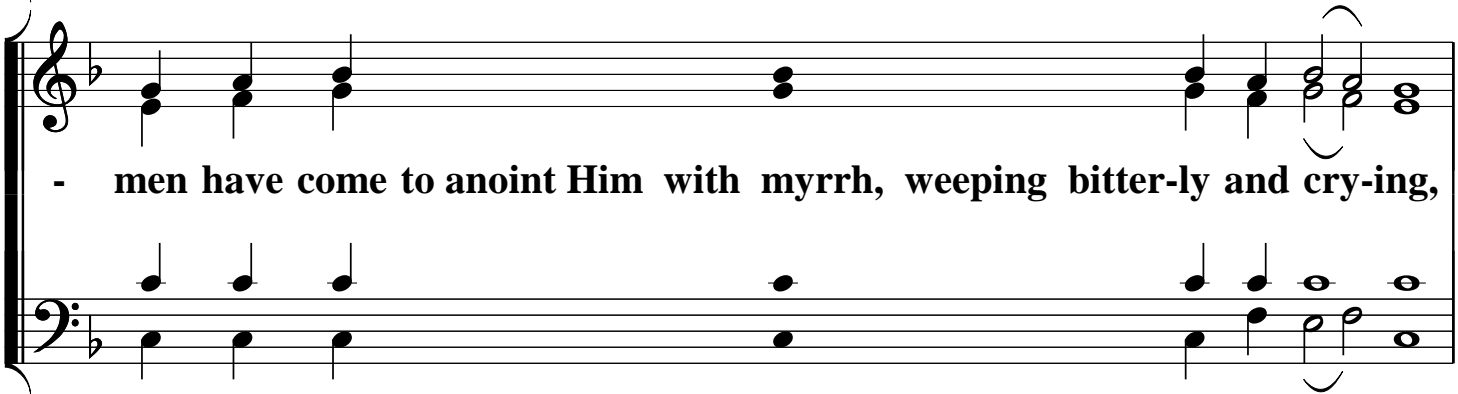
Obikhod Tone 6 – N. Bakhmetev



He Who shut in the depths is be-held dead, wrapped in fine lin-en and



spi-ces. The immortal One is laid in a tomb as a mor-tal man. The wo-



- men have come to anoint Him with myrrh, weeping bitter-ly and cry-ing,

"This is the most blessed sabbath!"



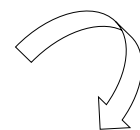
"This is the most bles-sed sab-bath/// on which Christ has fallen a-sleep

to rise on the third day."

Ikos

He Who holds all things together has been lifted up upon the Cross, and all of creation weeps at seeing Him hanging, naked, upon the Wood. The sun hid its rays and the stars cast aside their splendor. The earth shook with great fear, the sea fled, and the rocks were split asunder. Many tombs were opened, and the bodies of holy men arose. Hell groaned below and the Jews considered how to slander the resurrection of Christ, but the women cried, "This is the most blessed Sabbath on which Christ has fallen asleep to rise on the third day."

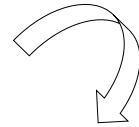
And the choir repeats the last phrase of the Ikos (on the following page):



"This is the most bles-sed sab-bath/// on which Christ has fallen a-sleep

to rise on the third day."

The Canon resumes with Irmos 7 (on the following page).



Irmos 7

Lesser Znamenny Chant – Tone 6

In-ex-press-i-ble won - der! In the furnace Thou didst save the ho-ly

youths from the flame. Now Thou art placed in the grave as a

life - less corpse, for the sal - va - tion of us who sing,///

"Bles-sed art Thou, O God, our Re - deem - er!"

Reader:

REFRAIN: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

Hell was wounded in heart when it received Him Whose side was pierced by a spear, and it groans, consumed by divine fire, unto the salvation of us who sing, "Blessed art Thou, O God, our Redeemer!"

REFRAIN: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

Happy is the tomb! For having received the Creator as one asleep, it became a divine treasury of life, for the salvation of us who sing, "Blessed art Thou, O God, our Redeemer!"

REFRAIN: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

In accordance with the law of the dead, the Life of all accepts burial in the tomb, and the tomb becomes the source of resurrection, unto the salvation of us who sing, "Blessed art Thou, O God, our Redeemer!"

REFRAIN: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

In hell, in the tomb, and in Eden, the divinity of Christ was one and undivided with the Father and the Spirit, for the salvation of us who sing, "Blessed art Thou, O God, our Redeemer!"

The irmos is repeated as the Katavasia (on the following page).



Katavasia – Ode 7

In-ex-press-i-ble won-der! In the furnace Thou didst save the ho-ly
youths from the flame. Now Thou art placed in the grave as a
life - less corpse, for the sal-va-tion of us who sing,///
"Bles-sed art Thou, O God, our Re - deem - er!"

Irmos 8 begins on the following page.



Irmos 8

Lesser Znamenny Chant – Tone 6

Be a-mazed, O heav - ens! Be sha-ken, O foun - da-tions of the earth!

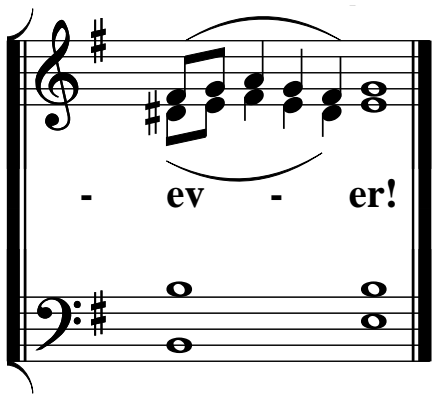
Be - hold, He that dwells in the high - est is num-bered a-mong

the dead and sheltered in a low - ly tomb. Bless Him, O youths!

Praise Him, O priests!/// O people, exalt Him a - bove all for-

-ever!





REFRAIN: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.


The pure Temple has been destroyed, yet He raises with Himself the tabernacle that had fallen; for the second Adam, Who dwells in the highest, has descended to the first Adam, even unto the lowest chambers of hell. Bless Him, O youths! Praise Him, O priests! O people, exalt Him above all forever!

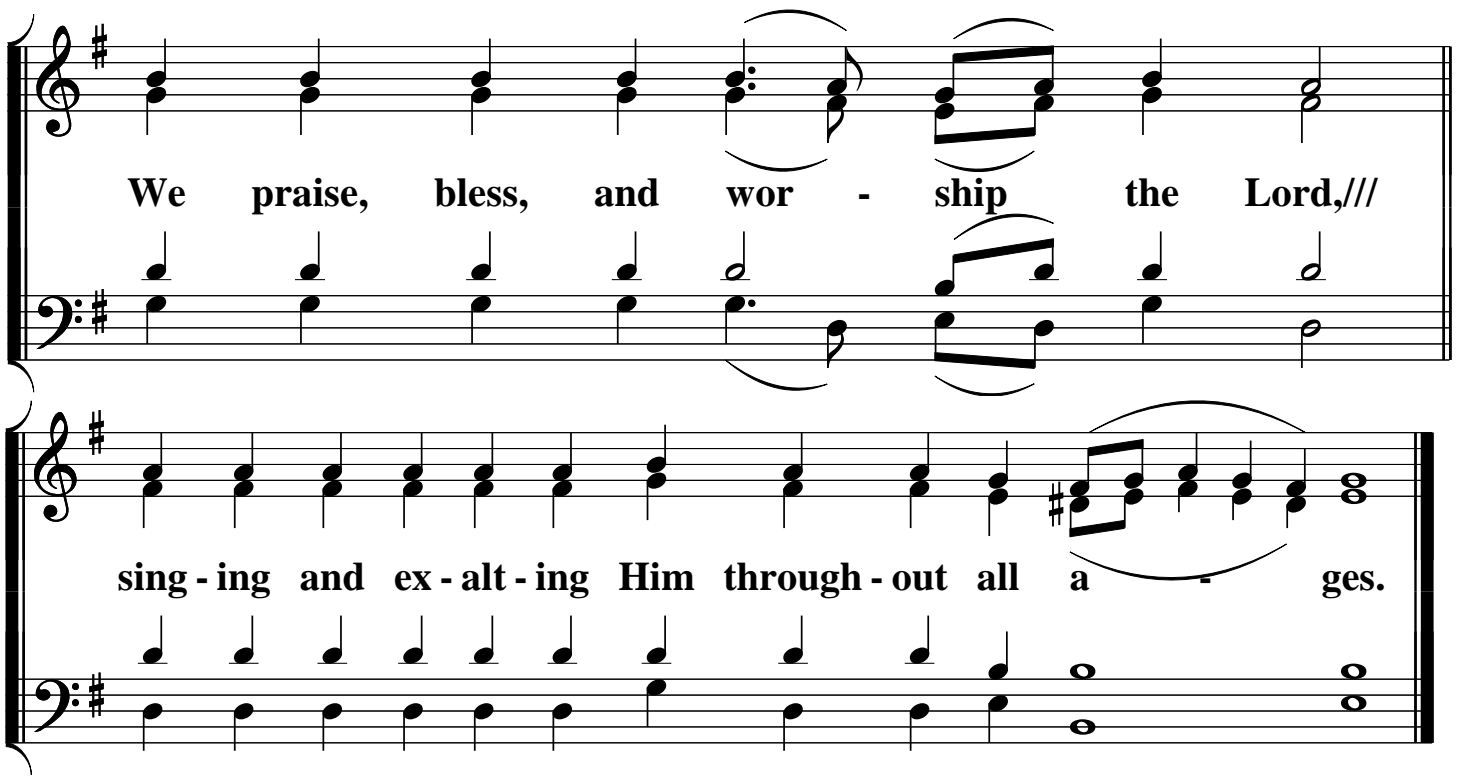
REFRAIN: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

The courage of all the disciples failed, but Joseph of Arimathea showed valor; for seeing the God of all dead and naked, he sought Him and dressed Him for burial, crying, "Bless Him, O youths! Praise Him, O priests! O people, exalt Him above all forever!"

REFRAIN: Let us bless the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the Lord, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

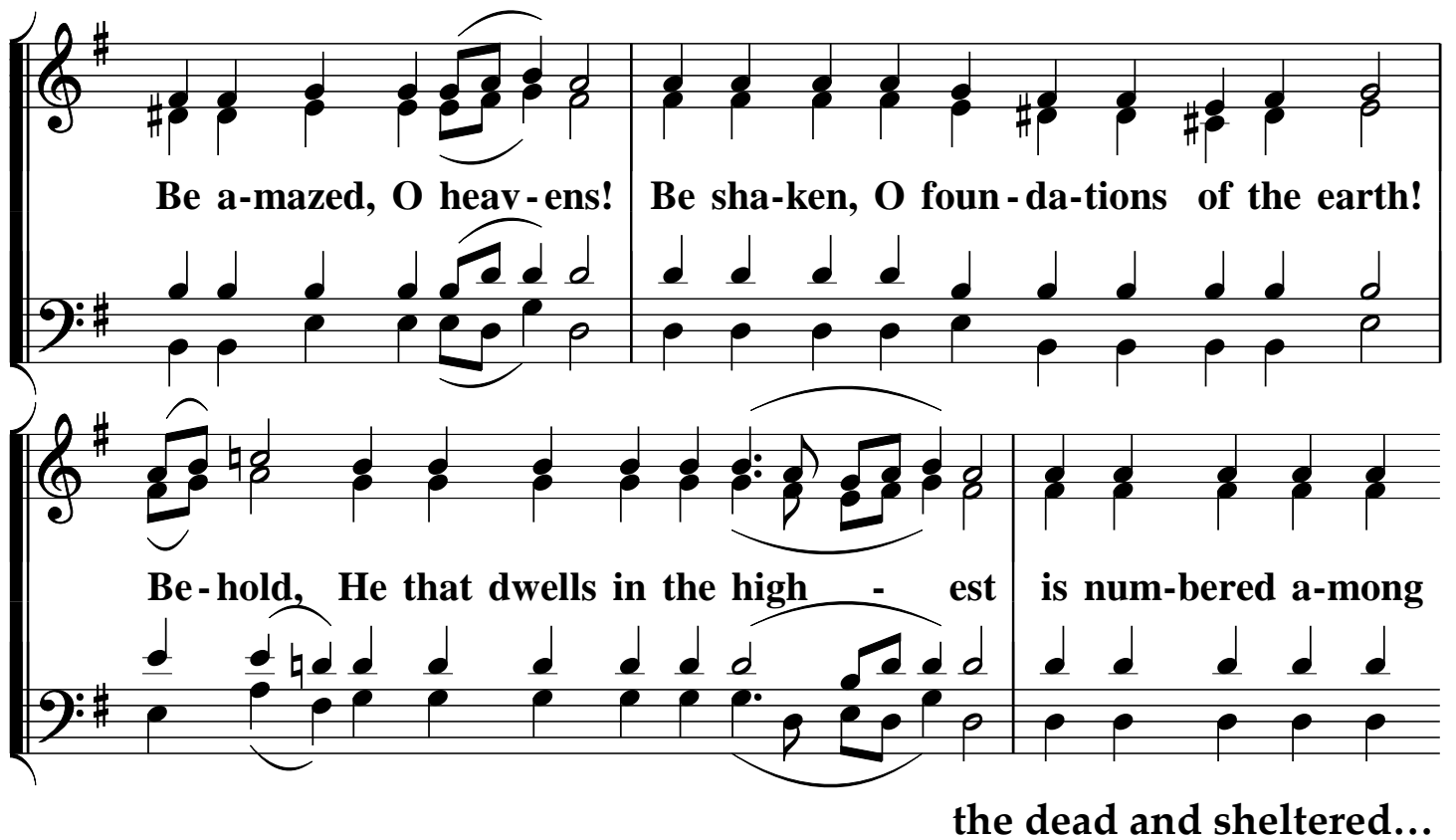
What new wonders! What great goodness! What ineffable forbearance! For He that dwells in the highest is willingly sealed beneath the earth, and God is slandered as a deceiver. Bless Him, O youths! Praise Him, O priests! O people, exalt Him above all forever!

Choir: 

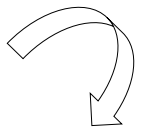


We praise, bless, and wor - ship the Lord,///
sing - ing and ex - alt - ing Him through - out all a - ges.

Katavasia – Ode 8



Be a-mazed, O heav - ens! Be sha-ken, O foun - da-tions of the earth!
Be - hold, He that dwells in the high - est is num-bered a-mong
the dead and sheltered...



the dead and sheltered in a low - ly tomb. Bless Him, O youths!

Praise Him, O priests!/// O people, exalt Him a - bove all for -

ev - er!

Irmos 9 begins on the following page.



It is customary for the priest, now fully vested in his Paschal vestments, to open the curtain and the royal doors at the beginning of the Ninth Ode. He exits the sanctuary through the royal doors and censes around the epitaphion (winding-sheet) three times. As the Katavasia of the Ninth Ode, "Do not lament Me, O Mother..." is sung, at the words, "For I shall arise," the priest lifts the epitaphion from the tomb and carries it into the sanctuary through the royal doors and places it on the altar. The epitaphion remains on the altar until the leave-taking of Pascha. The royal doors and curtain are now closed.

Irmos 9

Lesser Znamenny Chant – Tone 6

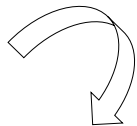
Do not lament Me, O Moth - er, see - ing Me in the tomb,

the Son con - ceived in the womb with - out seed, for I shall a - rise

and be glo - ri - fied with eter - nal glo - ry as God.///

I shall exalt all who mag - ni - fy Thee in faith and in love.

Reader:



REFRAIN: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

“I escaped sufferings and was blessed beyond nature at Thy strange birth, O Son Who art without beginning. But now, beholding Thee, My God, dead and without breath, I am sorely pierced by the sword of sorrow. But arise, that I may be magnified.”

REFRAIN: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

“By My own will, the earth covers Me, O Mother, but the gatekeepers of hell tremble at seeing Me clothed in the blood-stained garments of vengeance; for when I have vanquished My enemies on the Cross, I shall arise as God and magnify thee.”

REFRAIN: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

“Let creation rejoice! Let all born on earth be glad! For hateful hell has been despoiled. Let the women with myrrh come to meet Me; for I am redeeming Adam and Eve and all their descendants, and on the third day shall I arise!”

The irmos is repeated as the Katavasia (on the following page).



Katavasia – Ode 9

Do not lament Me, O Moth - er, see - ing Me in the tomb,

Epitaphion is lifted up.
the Son con - ceived in the womb with - out seed, for I shall a - rise

and be glo - ri - fied with eter - nal glo - ry as God.///

I shall exalt all who mag - ni - fy Thee in faith and in love.

Reader:



Reader: Amen. Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us! (3x)

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

O most-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Lord, cleanse us from our sins. O Master, pardon our transgressions. O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto 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 debts as we forgive our debtors, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

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 ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Then immediately the Resurrectional Troparion in Tone 2, on the following page:



Resurrectional Troparion

Obikhod Tone 2 – N. Bakhmetev

When Thou didst descend to death, O Life Im-mor-tal, Thou didst

slay hell with the splendor of Thy God-head! And when from the

depths Thou didst raise the dead, all the pow-ers of hea-ven cried

out:// "O Giv-er of Life, Christ our God, glo-ry to Thee!"



The priest comes to the ambo for the following Litany:

Priest: Have mercy on us, O God, according to Thy great goodness, we pray
Thee, hearken and have mercy.

Choir (Litiya Melody): Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Priest: Again we pray that He will keep this city, and this holy church, and every city and country from wrath, famine, pestilence, earthquake, flood, fire, the sword, the invasion of enemies, and from civil war, and from sudden death; that our good God, Who loves mankind, may be gracious, favorable and conciliatory, and turn away and dispel all the wrath stirred up against us, and all sickness, and may deliver us from His righteous chastisement which impends against us and have mercy on us.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Priest: (Exclamation) Hear us, O God our Savior, the Hope of all the ends of the earth, and of those who are far off upon the sea; and be gracious, be gracious, O Master, unto us sinners and have mercy on us. For Thou art a merciful God Who lovest mankind, and unto Thee do we ascribe glory, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

The lesser dismissal is pronounced from the ambo.

Priest: Glory to Thee, O Christ, our God and our hope, glory to Thee.

Choir: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Father, bless.

Priest: May Christ our true God, through the prayers of His most pure Mother, of our venerable and God-bearing fathers, and of all the saints, have mercy on us and save us, for He is good and loves mankind.

Choir: Amen. *At this point, all the lights in the church are extinguished.*

