

FEBRUARY 24

First and Second Finding of the Honorable Head of the Holy Glorious Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist of the Lord, John

"Lord I Call..." Tone 5

Lord, I call upon You, hear me!

Hear me, O Lord!

Lord, I call upon You, hear me!

Receive the voice of my prayer,
when I call upon You!//

Hear me, O Lord!

Let my prayer arise

in Your 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 Your name!

v. (9) The righteous will surround me; for You will deal bountifully with me.

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

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

v. (6) If You, O Lord, should mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with You.

v. (5) For Your Name's sake I wait for You, O Lord. My soul has waited for Your word; my soul has hoped on the Lord.

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

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

Tone 5 *(Rejoice, O Life-giving Cross)*

Rejoice, O holy and light-bearing head,

venerated by the angels!

Of old, you were cut off by the sword,

for you had cut through the shameful deeds with sharp reproaches.

Like a fountain refreshing the faithful with wonders,

you declared the saving coming of the Savior,

and perceived the coming of the Spirit,

Who took up His abode in you,

as you stood between the grace of the Old and New Covenants.//

Entreat Christ God to grant our souls great mercy!

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

The head of the Forerunner is made manifest.
Once it was concealed in an earthen vessel;
now it is openly given up from the depths of the earth,
pouring forth streams of healing.
For he washed in the waters the head of the One
Who even now covers the chambers of the firmament with waters
and rains down divine forgiveness for mankind.
Then let us bless this truly praiseworthy head
and joyfully celebrate its finding,//
entreating Christ to grant our souls great mercy!

v. (1) For His mercy is confirmed on us, and the truth of the Lord endures forever.

The head that proclaimed the Lamb of God Who appeared in the flesh
declared to all the ways of saving repentance with divine precepts,
before it had denounced the lawlessness of Herod
and therefore was severed from its body.
It was concealed for a time
and has risen to us as a shining sun,
crying out: "Repent and with compunction of soul submit to the Lord//
Who grants the world great mercy!"

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

Tone 6

O Forerunner, your head, guarded by God,
has risen from the depths of the earth,
as a treasury of divine gifts.
As we faithfully receive it and venerate it, O glorious one,
we are made rich through you, O Baptist of Christ,//
with marvelous wonders and remission of sins.

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

Tone 6 *(Theotokion – Dogmatikon)*

Who will not bless you, O most holy Virgin?
Who will not sing of your most pure childbearing?
The only-begotten Son shone timelessly from the Father,
but from you He was ineffably incarnate.
God by nature, yet Man for our sake,
not two persons, but one known in two natures.
Entreat Him, O pure and all-blessed Lady,//
to have mercy on our souls!

Old Testament Readings

Composite 8 (*Isaiah 40:1-3, 9; 41:17-18; 45:8; 48:20-21; 54:1*)

Composite 9 (*Malachi 3:1-3, 5-7, 12, 17-18; 4:4-6*)

Composite 3 (*Wisdom of Solomon 4:7, 16-17, 19-20; 5:1-7*)

Aposticha

Tone 2 *(Joseph of Arimathea)*

Come, O faithful,
let us honor today the precious head of the Forerunner,
which the raging Herod cut off when he was caught in the
web of Herodias's passion!
Let us greet it with hymns on the day of its finding,//
and honor it with love, as it pours forth graces of healing for us!

V. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints. (Ps. 115:6)

Like gold from the mines
so from the earth the head of the Forerunner shines forth,
gleaming through a jar and clearly speaking out,
rebuking the adultery and murder committed by Herod,
and enlightening our minds with its beams;
as we kiss it with faith, let us the faithful today honor it with our hymns,//
for it intercedes to God on our behalf.

V. The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree, and grow like a cedar in Lebanon. (Ps. 91:11)

Of old the head of the Baptist was concealed in the earth,
like a divine treasure;
today it is revealed like riches to the ends of the earth
as it pours out founts of healings,
curing diseases and enlightening souls;
therefore as we delight in the grace of gladness of heart, //
we devoutly sing its praise with hymns.

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

Tone 2

Your head, O all-praised John,
the all-revered shrine of divine thoughts,
has shone forth today from the secret places of the earth.
From your mother's womb it clearly foresaw the mystery of Ineffable Being
and has made the whole earth fragrant,
pouring forth the sweet oil of sanctification,
spiritually preaching the way of repentance, //
and entreating the Savior of all on behalf of our souls.

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

Tone 2 *(Theotokion)*

A new miracle surpasses all ancient miracles!
Who knows of a Mother who gave birth without a man,
who carried in her arms her Creator?
This birth is the will of God!
Since you carried Him as an infant in your arms, O most pure one,
and since you possess motherly boldness before Him,
do not cease praying for us who honor you, //
that He may be bountiful and save our souls!

(at Great Vespers)

Tone 4 Troparion *(Forerunner)*

The head of the Forerunner has shone from the earth,
sending forth rays of incorruption and healings to the faithful.
It gathers together a multitude of angels above
and summons the human race below//
to send up glory with one voice to Christ our God.

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

Tone 4 Resurrectional Dismissal Theotokion

The mystery of all eternity,
unknown even by Angels,
through you, Theotokos, is revealed to those on earth:
God incarnate by union without confusion.
He voluntarily accepted the Cross for us,
by which He resurrected the first-created man,//
saving our souls from death.

(at the Divine Liturgy)

Tone 4 Troparion *(Forerunner)*

The head of the Forerunner has shone from the earth,
sending forth rays of incorruption and healings to the faithful.
It gathers together a multitude of angels above
and summons the human race below//
to send up glory with one voice to Christ our God.

Tone 2 Kontakion *(Forerunner)*

O Prophet of God and Forerunner of Grace,
we have found your head as a sacred rose.
Therefore we always receive healings from it,//
and, as in times past, now you preach repentance to the world.

Tone 7 Prokeimenon (*Forerunner*)

The righteous shall rejoice in the Lord / and shall hope in Him. (*Ps. 63:11a*)

V. Hear my voice, O God, when I pray to You! (Ps. 63:1a)

Epistle

(68-a) 2 Peter 3:1-8

(176) 2 Corinthians 4:6-15 (*Forerunner*)

Tone 4

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

V. The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree, and grow like a cedar in Lebanon. (Ps. 91:11)

V. They that are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. (Ps. 91:12)

Gospel

(61) Mark 13:24-31

(40) Matthew 11:2-15 (*Forerunner*)

Communion Hymn

The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance! He shall not fear evil tidings! (*Ps. 111:6*)

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

In addition to translations from the Department of Liturgical Music and Translations, liturgical texts for this service represent modified versions of translations provided by Holy Myrrhbearers Monastery, Otego, New York and St. Tikhon's Monastery, South Canaan, Pa. The Department of Liturgical Music and Translations of the Orthodox Church in America expresses its gratitude to Holy Myrrhbearers Monastery and St. Tikhon's Monastery and to those translators whose work has been consulted at times in the course of reviewing and modifying these texts to their present form: Metropolitan Kallistos (Ware), Archimandrite Ephrem (Lash), Father Benedict Churchill, Isaac Lambertson, St. Vladimir's Seminary, and Holy Transfiguration Monastery, among others.