

AUGUST 29

The Beheading of the Holy Glorious Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist, John

"Lord I Call..." Tone 6

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!*

Tone 6 *Idiomela* (by John the Monk)

During the celebration of shameless Herod's birthday,
the terms of the oath to the wanton dancer were fulfilled,
for the Baptist's head was cut off and carried like food on a platter
in the presence of those reclining at the loathsome banquet.
Truly they feasted on wickedness and murder.
But let us bless the Forerunner as is his due,//
and honor him as the greatest born of women!

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

The dance of the devil's disciple
was rewarded with your head, O Forerunner.
Oh, banquet of blood!
Would that you had never sworn, deceitful Herod!
Better that you lie than shed righteous blood!
But let us bless the Baptist as is his due, //
and honor him as the greatest born of women!

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

In demonic love and fiery passion, O Herod,
you condemned him who reproved your adultery.
For the sake of an oath to a dancing girl,
you delivered his holy head to that Jezebel.
Woe to you! How did you dare such murder?
Why was the wanton dancer not consumed by fire?
But let us bless the Baptist as is his due, //
and honor him as the greatest born of women!

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

Again Herodias raves with raging lust.
Oh, dance of deceit and feast of murder!
The Baptist is beheaded, and Herod is troubled. //
Through the prayers of Your Forerunner, O Lord, grant peace to our souls!

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

Tone 6

During the celebration of shameless Herod's birthday,
the terms of the oath to the wanton dancer were fulfilled,
for the Baptist's head was cut off and carried like food on a platter
in the presence of those reclining at the loathsome banquet.
Truly they feasted on wickedness and murder.
But let us bless the Forerunner as is his due, //
and honor him as the greatest born of women!

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 40:1-5; 41:17-18; 45:8; 48:20-21; 54:1)*

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

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

Litya

Tone 1 *Idiomela* *(by Patriarch Germanos)*

What shall we call you, O 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!

Let us 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!

Today the mother of murder,
acting with more wickedness than has ever been seen,
has roused to evil her utterly wanton daughter
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, in his madness, fulfilled his promise
and gave it to her as reward for her brazen dancing.

But the initiate of the coming of Christ
ceased not after death to rebuke them for their repulsive union,
but reproved them loudly, saying:
“It does not become you to commit adultery with the wife of your brother
Philip.”
Oh, birthday, killer of prophets!
Oh, banquet full of blood!
Let us, arrayed in white, piously celebrate the Beheading of the Forerunner,
and rejoice on this day as on a great feast!
And let us ask the Forerunner to beseech the Trinity for us, //
that we be delivered from dishonorable passions, and that our souls be saved!

Tone 4

Herod's birthday celebration was a lawless and shameful feast,
for, spellbound by feminine licentiousness
and stricken with madness by a woman's wantonness,
he cut off the head of the Forerunner;
but he did not cut out the Prophet's tongue, which had denounced his
foolishness.
Spilling innocent blood, he wished to conceal a lawless sin;
but he could not stop the voice of one who called all to repentance.
He joined in taking delight in murder,
but let us join in celebrating with love the blessed slaying of John the Baptist;
for he was in hell in anticipation
to proclaim to those who sat in darkness and in the shadow of death
the Life, the Dayspring from on high, //
Christ our God, Who alone is rich in mercy.

Come, O people,
let us praise the Prophet and Martyr and Baptist of the Savior!
For being an angel in the flesh, he thoroughly reprov'd Herod
by condemning his act of unlawful adultery;
and through the impious dance, he endured the cutting off of his precious head,
that he might proclaim to those in hell
the good news of the Resurrection from the dead; //
and he earnestly intercedes with the Lord, that our souls may be saved.

Come, O faithful,
Let us praise the Prophet, and Martyr, and Baptist of the Savior!
Living in exile, he dwelt in the wilderness,
eating wild honey and locusts;
and he reprov'd the king who transgressed the Law.
But he comforted our faintheartedness by saying://
“Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!”

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

Tone 5 *(by John the Monk)*

Herod, intending to escape reproaches for his sinful doings,
gave your head, O Forerunner, to a lawless woman.
For the wretch did not understand that by offering it on a platter he was
 condemning himself.
But as teacher of purity and guide to redeeming repentance, O Baptist,//
intercede with Christ to deliver us from the disgrace of passions!

now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 5 *(Theotokion, from the Dormition)*

Sing, O people! Sing the praises of the Mother of our God;
for today she delivers her soul, full of light,
into the hands of Him Who became incarnate of her without seed.
And she entreats Him without ceasing//
to grant the earth peace and great mercy.

Aposticha

Tone 2 *Idiomela*

O Baptist John, preacher of repentance,
when your head was cut off, you sanctified the earth;
for you made clear God's Law to the faithful
destroying lawlessness.
As you stand before the throne of the heavenly King, //
entreat Him to have mercy on our souls!

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

O most holy John,
you were beheaded for the sake of the Law of the Lord.
Filled with boldness of speech,
you rebuked the evil king for his transgression of the Law.
The host of Angels marvel at your strength;
the choir of Apostles and Martyrs praise you.
We also celebrate your yearly commemoration, //
glorifying the Holy Trinity Who crowned you, O most blessed Forerunner.

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

The Prophet from among the Prophets,
and greater than all the Prophets,
sanctified from his mother's womb to the Lord's service,
today has been beheaded by a lawless king;
and openly rebuking the woman who danced immodestly,
both before and after his beheading,
he put shame upon that sinful gathering.
Thus, we cry out: "O Baptist John, //
as you have boldness to speak, intercede on behalf of our souls!"

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

Tone 8

O Forerunner of the Savior,
you rebuked kings so that they would not work iniquity;
but the frolicking of a lawless woman persuaded Herod to cut off your head.
Therefore we bless your name from the rising to the setting of the sun.
Since you stand with boldness before the Lord, //
earnestly entreat Him to save our souls!

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

Tone 8 *(Theotokion)*

O unwedded Virgin,
who ineffably conceived God in the flesh,
O Mother of God most high,
accept the cries of your servants, O blameless One!
Grant cleansing of transgressions to all! //
Receive our prayers and pray to save our souls!

(at Great Vespers)

Tone 2 Troparion

The memory of the righteous is celebrated with hymns of praise,
but the Lord's testimony is sufficient for you, O Forerunner.
You were shown in truth to be the most honorable of the Prophets,
for you were deemed worthy to baptize in the streams of the Jordan Him Whom
they foretold.
Therefore, having suffered for the truth with joy,
you proclaimed to those in hell God Who appeared in the flesh,
Who takes away the sin of the world //
and grants us great mercy. *(thrice)*

(at the Divine Liturgy)

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but the Lord's testimony is sufficient for you, O Forerunner.
You were shown in truth to be the most honorable of the Prophets,
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Therefore, having suffered for the truth with joy,
you proclaimed to those in hell God Who appeared in the flesh,
Who takes away the sin of the world//
and grants us great mercy.

Tone 5 Kontakion

The glorious beheading of the Forerunner
became an act of divine dispensation,
for he preached to those in hell the coming of the Savior.
Let Herodias lament, for she entreated lawless murder,
loving not the Law of God, nor eternal life, //
but that which is false and temporal.

Tone 7 Prokeimenon

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

(33) Acts 13:25-33 *(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

(24) Mark 6:14-30 (*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.