

JANUARY 3

Forefeast of the Theophany

Royal Hours (sung on the morning of January 3, because Theophany falls on Monday)

(at the First Hour)

The Three Psalms: Ps. 5, Ps. 22/23, Ps. 26/27

Tone 4 Troparion of the Forefeast

The River Jordan was turned back by the mantle of Elisha, after Elijah had been taken up to heaven.

The waters were parted in two, and the stream became a dry path.

This was truly a type of baptism, by which we pass over the stream of life.//

Christ has shone forth in the Jordan to sanctify the waters.

Theotokion

What shall we call you, O full of grace?

Heaven, for from you shone forth the Sun of Righteousness;

Paradise, for you have budded forth the flower of immortality;

Virgin, for you have remained undefiled;

Pure Mother, for you have held in your arms the Son, Who is God of all?

Beseech Him to save our souls!

Stichera at the First Hour

Tone 8 *(by Sophronios, Patriarch of Jerusalem)*

Today the nature of the waters is sanctified:

The Jordan is parted in two.

It holds back the flow of its waters,//

as it beholds the washing of the Master. *(twice)*

V. Therefore will I remember You, from the land of Jordan and Hermon. (Ps. 41:7b)

You have come to the river as a man, O Christ the King, hastening to be baptized like a servant by the Forerunner// on account of our sins, O good and loving God.

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

To the voice of one crying in the wilderness,
“Prepare the way of the Lord,”
You came, O Lord, taking the form of servant.
You asked to be baptized though You have no knowledge of sin.
The waters saw You and were afraid.
The Forerunner trembled and cried aloud:
“How will the Lamp illumine the Light?
How will a servant lay his hand on the Master?
You take away the sin of the world, O Savior.//
Sanctify both me and the waters!”

Tone 4 Prokeimenon

The Lord thundered in the heavens, / the Most High gave forth His voice.
(Ps. 17:13)

V. I will love You, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my support. (Ps. 17:1)

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 35:1-10

Epistle: (33) Acts of the Apostles 13:25-33

Gospel: (5) Matthew 3:1-11

Tone 4 Kontakion *(Forefeast)*

Today the Lord enters the Jordan and cries out to John:
“Do not be afraid to baptize Me.//
For I have come to save Adam, the first-formed man.”

(at the Third Hour)

The Three Psalms: *Ps. 28/29, Ps. 41/42, Ps. 50/51*

Tone 4 Troparion of the Forefeast

The River Jordan was turned back by the mantle of Elisha,
after Elijah had been taken up to heaven.
The waters were parted in two,
and the stream became a dry path.
This was truly a type of baptism,
by which we pass over the stream of life.//
Christ has shone forth in the Jordan to sanctify the waters.

Theotokion

O Theotokos,
you are the true vine from whom the Fruit of Life blossomed.
We entreat you, O Lady:
"Intercede together with the Apostles and all the Saints, //
that mercy may be granted to our souls!"

Stichera at the Third Hour

Tone 8

The Prophet above all prophets in honor,
the Forerunner and Baptist,
saw You, the Lamb of God, Who wash away the sins of the world.
His right hand trembled;
seized with anguish he cried aloud:
"I dare not touch Your head, O Word.
Sanctify and enlighten me, O Merciful One; //
for You are the life and the light and the peace of the world!" (*twice*)

V. The waters saw You, O God; the waters saw You and were afraid. (Ps. 76:15a)

Tone 4

Today our God, the Trinity,
revealed Himself to us as one and undivided:
for the Father with a loud voice bore witness to His Son;
the Spirit came down from heaven in the form of a dove;
the Son bowed His spotless head before the Forerunner John
and was baptized in His love for us, //
delivering us from bondage.

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

Tone 5

The Father bore witness to You,
and the Divine Spirit in the form of a dove descended on You,
as You came in flesh to the Jordan, O Lord.
You desired to be baptized in human form,
that in Your compassion You might enlighten us who have gone astray, and
deliver us from all the snares and wiles of the Dragon. //
Make Thy home in our souls, O You Who love mankind.

Tone 6 Prokeimenon

The waters saw You, O God; / the waters saw You and were afraid. *(Ps. 76:15a)*

*V. I cried to the Lord with my voice, even to God with my voice, and He heard me.
(Ps. 76:1)*

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 1:16-20

Epistle: (42) Acts of the Apostles 19:1-8

Gospel: (1) Mark 1:1-8

Tone 4 Kontakion *(Forefeast)*

Today the Lord enters the Jordan and cries out to John:
“Do not be afraid to baptize Me.//
For I have come to save Adam, the first-formed man.”

(at the Sixth Hour)

The Three Psalms: *Ps. 73/74, Ps. 76/77, Ps. 90/91*

Tone 4 Troparion of the Forefeast

The River Jordan was turned back by the mantle of Elisha,
after Elijah had been taken up to heaven.
The waters were parted in two,
and the stream became a dry path.
This was truly a type of baptism,
by which we pass over the stream of life.//
Christ has shone forth in the Jordan to sanctify the waters.

Theotokion

We have no boldness because of the multitude of our sins,
but entreat Him Who was born of you, O Virgin Theotokos,
for the prayer of a mother has great power to win the favor of the Master.
Do not despise the supplications of sinners, O all-pure one,
for merciful and strong to save is He Who willed to suffer for us!

Stichera at the Sixth Hour

Tone 8

“O Prophet,” the Lord now says to John,
“come and baptize Me, thy Creator,
for I cleanse and enlighten all with grace!
Touch My divine head and do not hesitate!
O Prophet, let it be so now;
for I have come to fulfill all righteousness!
Make haste; for I hasten to destroy the Enemy,
the prince of darkness, hidden in the waters,
that I might deliver the world from his snares, //
and in My love grant eternal life!” *(twice)*

v. Therefore will I remember You, from the land of Jordan and Hermon. (Ps. 41:7b)

Tone 6

Today the prophecy of the psalm is brought swiftly to fulfillment,
for as it says the sea looked and fled;
Jordan turned back from before the face of the Lord,
from before the face of the God of Jacob,
Who came to be baptized by a servant,
so that we might be cleansed of the filth of idolatry, //
and our souls enlightened through Him.

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

Tone 5

Why do you stop the flow of your waters, O Jordan?
Why do you make your streams flow back?
Why do you not follow your natural course?
“I cannot bear the fire which consumes me,” it said.
“I am amazed and shudder at the extreme condescension.
I have not learned to wash the pure or cleanse the sinless.
I have learned only to wash the filthy garment.
Now Christ, Who is baptized in me,
teaches me to burn the thorns of sin.
And John, the voice of the Word, bears witness with me.
He cries out: ‘Behold the Lamb of God,
Who takes away the sin of the world.’”
Let us the faithful cry to Him:
“O God, Who shone forth for our salvation, glory to You!”

Tone 4 Prokeimenon

Your way was through the sea, / and Your paths through the great waters.
(Ps. 76:19)

V. The crash of Your thunder was in the whirlwind. (Ps. 76:17a)

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 12:3-6

Epistle: (91) Romans 6:3-11

Gospel: (2) Mark 1:9-15

Tone 4 Kontakion *(Forefeast)*

Today the Lord enters the Jordan and cries out to John:
“Do not be afraid to baptize Me.//
For I have come to save Adam, the first-formed man.”

(at the Ninth Hour)

The Three Psalms: *Ps. 92/93, Ps. 113/114-115, Ps. 85/86*

Tone 4 Troparion of the Forefeast

The River Jordan was turned back by the mantle of Elisha,
after Elijah had been taken up to heaven.
The waters were parted in two,
and the stream became a dry path.
This was truly a type of baptism,
by which we pass over the stream of life.//
Christ has shone forth in the Jordan to sanctify the waters.

Theotokion

O loving Lord, Who for our sakes was born of a virgin,
and has endured crucifixion, trampling down death by death,
and as God revealed the Resurrection:
despise not the works of Your hands,
but show Your love for mankind, O merciful One.
Accept the prayers made on our behalf by her who gave You birth,
and save Your despairing people, O our Savior!

Stichera at the Ninth Hour Tone 7

What wonder, to look down in the river
and see the Maker of heaven and earth standing naked.
Like a servant at the hands of a servant
He accepts to be baptized for our salvation.
The choirs of Angels are astounded,
overwhelmed with fear and joy.//
With them we worship You; save us, O Lord! (*twice*)

V. The waters saw You, O God; the waters saw You and were afraid. (Ps. 76:15a)

Tone 2

When he saw the Lord of glory draw near,
the Forerunner cried aloud:
“Behold, this is He Who redeems the world from corruption,
and Who delivers us from affliction!
Behold, the One Who grants us remission of sins!
In His mercy He has come forth on the earth from a pure Virgin.
He makes us children of God instead of servants;
through the waters of His baptism divine,
He gives light to us in place of darkness.//
Let us all glorify Him with the Father and the Holy Spirit!”

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

(Then the canonarch, standing in the center of the church, chants this verse:)

Tone 5

With your hand, O Baptist,
you touched the pure head of the Master.
With your hand and your finger you showed Him to us.
Stretch out this hand toward Him on our behalf,
since you have great boldness;
for He witnessed to you as greater than all the prophets!
And again, with your eyes, O Baptist,
you saw the Holy Spirit descend in the form of a dove.
Lift your eyes to Him and make Him gracious toward us!
Come and stand with us!
Come and stand with us!
Come and stand with us!//
Confirm our song and lead our feast!

Tone 3 Prokeimenon

The Lord is my light and my Savior; / whom shall I fear? *(Ps. 26:1a)*

V. The Lord is the defender of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? (Ps. 26:1b)

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 49:8-15

Epistle: (302) Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7

Gospel: (6) Matthew 3:13-17

Tone 4 Kontakion *(Forefeast)*

Today the Lord enters the Jordan and cries out to John:
“Do not be afraid to baptize Me.//
For I have come to save Adam, the first-formed man.”

(at the Typica)

Tone 4 Kontakion *(Forefeast)*

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“Do not be afraid to baptize Me.//
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