

August 29

Beheading of the Honourable and Glorious Prophet, Forerunner & Baptist, John

Great Vespers

At Psalm 140

In Tone 6

8. While the birthday of the shameless Herod was being celebrated,
the oath made to the lustful dancer was fulfilled;
the head of the Forerunner was cut off
and offered on a platter to those at table.
What a loathsome banquet, filled with wickedness and horrible murder.
As for us, let us worthily venerate and bless the Baptizer,
for he is the greatest man born of woman.

7. While the birthday of the shameless Herod was being celebrated,
the oath made to the lustful dancer was fulfilled;
the head of the Forerunner was cut off
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What a loathsome banquet, filled with wickedness and horrible murder.
As for us, let us worthily venerate and bless the Baptizer,
for he is the greatest man born of woman.

6. After dancing, the disciple of the all-evil Satan
requested your head as her payment, O Forerunner.
What a bloody banquet!
Would that you had not made that vow,
O sinful Herod, offspring of a lie.
Since you did make it, would that you had not carried it out;
for it would have been better to have gone back on your oath and received life
than remaining true to your oath
to have cut off the head of the Forerunner.
As for us, let us worthily venerate and bless the Baptizer,
for he is the greatest man born of woman.

5. After dancing, the disciple of the all-evil Satan
requested your head as her payment, O Forerunner.
What a bloody banquet!
Would that you had not made that vow,
O sinful Herod, offspring of a lie.
Since you did make it, would that you had not carried it out;
for it would have been better to have gone back on your oath and received life
than remaining true to your oath
to have cut off the head of the Forerunner.
As for us, let us worthily venerate and bless the Baptizer,

for he is the greatest man born of woman.

4. O Herod, it was not appropriate for you,
because of a satanic passion, to condemn to death
the one who reproached you for your adultery
and the folly of your lust for women.
It was not proper for you to err
and to deliver his all-honoured head to a sinful woman
for the sake of a vow made to a dancer.
Woe to you for daring such murder!
How was it that this adulterous dancer
was not consumed by fire in the midst of the banquet,
as she carried the head on a platter?
As for us, let us worthily venerate and bless the Baptizer,
for he is the greatest man born of woman.

3. O Herod, it was not appropriate for you,
because of a satanic passion, to condemn to death
the one who reproached you for your adultery
and the folly of your lust for women.
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and to deliver his all-honoured head to a sinful woman
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Woe to you for daring such murder!
How was it that this adulterous dancer
was not consumed by fire in the midst of the banquet,
as she carried the head on a platter?
As for us, let us worthily venerate and bless the Baptizer,
for he is the greatest man born of woman.

2. Again Herodias has lost her self-control;
again she is disturbed.
What a cunning and deceiving dance,
and what mindless drunkenness!
The Forerunner's head is cut off and Herod is troubled.
Therefore, O Lord, by the intercessions of your Forerunner,
grant peace to our souls.

1. Again Herodias has lost her self-control;
again she is disturbed.
What a cunning and deceiving dance,
and what mindless drunkenness!
The Forerunner's head is cut off and Herod is troubled.
Therefore, O Lord, by the intercessions of your Forerunner,
grant peace to our souls.

Glory...

While the birthday of the shameless Herod was being celebrated,
the oath made to the lustful dancer was fulfilled;
the head of the Forerunner was cut off
and offered on a platter to those at table.
What a loathsome banquet, filled with wickedness and horrible murder.
As for us, let us worthily venerate and bless the Baptizer,
for he is the greatest man born of woman.

Now...

Who would not call you blessed, O Virgin most holy?
Who would not sing a hymn of praise
to the glory of your giving birth without pain or travail?
The Only-begotten Son Himself,
begotten of the Father before all ages,
was made flesh out of you in a manner
that cannot be explained, O Woman most pure!
And for our sake, He Who is God by nature
assumed the nature of a man.
He is not divided into two persons;
He is understood to have two natures
without commixion or confusion.
O noble and blessed Woman,
intercede with Him that He may mercy on our souls.

Readings

Isaiah 40:1-3, 9; 41:17-18

Malachi 3:1-7, 12, 22-24

Wisdom 4:7, 16-20; 5:1-7

At the Lytia

In Tone 1

What shall we call you, O Prophet?
An angel, an apostle, or martyr?
An angel, because you lived as a bodiless being.
An apostle, because you taught the nations.
A martyr, because you were beheaded for Christ.
Entreat Him to have mercy on our souls.

Let us commemorate the beheading of the Forerunner.
At that time, blood poured out on the platter;
now healings are poured out throughout the world.

Today the mother is the cause of a shameful and murderous act,

for she urges her shameless daughter who was born of an unlawful union
to plot against the one whom God called the greatest of the prophets.
When the evil Herod celebrated his birthday with a banquet,
she asked for the precious head of the divine Forerunner.
Because of his oath, Herod delivered the head
as a price for the daughter's dancing.
But the prophet of the coming of Christ
did not cease to denounce the union which was reproved by God.
He denounced it, saying:
It is not lawful for you to commit adultery with your brother Philip's wife.
O the murderous birthday and feast overflowing with blood!
On this day of the beheading of the Prophet and Forerunner,
we the faithful celebrate in joy as in festive garb,
and we pray that the Trinity may be compassionate to us,
and deliver us from the disgrace of our passions,
and that our souls may be saved.

In Tone 4

An evil birthday and a lustful banquet is celebrated by Herod today;
for having delighted in adultery and being driven by lustful desires,
he beheaded the Baptist.
But he could not stop the tongue of the Prophet
which condemned his foolishness.
He spilled innocent blood to cover up his unlawful deeds,
but he could not cover the voice who called the world to repentance.
And if he took pleasure in the murder,
we celebrate with all our heart the death of John the Baptist.
For he preceded the Life of all into Hades
to announce to those in darkness and the shadow of death
the coming of Christ our God, the Orient from on high,
whose mercy is beyond measure.

Come, O people, let us exalt the Prophet, Martyr, and Baptizer of the Saviour.
He is an angel in the flesh.
He has condemned Herod and convicted him of unlawful adultery.
Because of the unlawful dancing, his precious head is cut off.
He is in Paradise and is preaching the good news of the resurrection from the dead.
He is fittingly praying to the Lord that our souls may be saved.

Come, O faithful, let us exalt the Prophet, Martyr, and Baptizer of the Saviour.
He fled into the desert and remained there,
nourishing himself on locusts and wild honey.
He rebuked the king who violated the law.
And he comforts our faint-heartedness, saying:
Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

In Tone 5, Glory... Now...

When Herod wished to free himself from the rebuke of his sinful deeds,
he delivered your head unjustly, O Forerunner,
to a transgressing woman.
Nor did this wretched one realize that offering it on a platter
was a condemnation for him.
Therefore, since you are a practical teacher of purity
and a saving guide to repentance,
O Baptizer, implore Christ
to deliver us from the shame of our passions.

Aposticha

In Tone 2

O John the Baptizer and preacher of repentance,
you sanctified the earth when you were beheaded.
You made plain to believers the law of God,
abolishing disobedience to the law.
Therefore, since you stand by the throne of Christ the heavenly King,
beseech Him to have mercy on our souls.

The just will flourish like the palm tree and grow like a cedar of Lebanon.

O most holy John, your head was cut off for preaching the law of the Lord,
for in blameless privilege you reproached the unbelieving king
when he disobeyed the law.
Therefore, the hosts of angels wonder at you,
and the ranks of apostles and martyrs praise you.
We also honour your yearly memorial, O most noble one,
glorifying the holy Trinity
who has crowned you, O blessed Forerunner.

The just one is glad in the Lord and takes refuge in Him.

Born of the prophet Zechariah, he was the greatest of the prophets
and was sanctified from his mother's womb for the service of the Lord.
Today he was beheaded by an evil king.
Both before and after his beheading,
his head was a living reproach for the maiden who danced indecently,
thus covering one sin with another.
Therefore, we call out:
O John the Baptizer, having acquired favour with the Lord,
beseech Him unceasingly for the salvation of our souls.

In Tone 8, Glory...

You rebuked kings, O Forerunner of the Saviour,
that they might not act contrary to the law.
But the frolicking of a sinful woman
won over Herod to behead you.
Therefore, your name is praised
from the place of the rising to the place of the setting of the sun.
And since you have favour with the Lord,
beseech Him unceasingly for the salvation of our souls.

Now...

O Virgin, you have never known wedlock,
yet you conceived God in the flesh in a manner which words can never describe
You thus became the Mother of God on high.
O immaculate Lady, receive the supplication of your servants
and grant us the cleansing of our sins.
Accept now our prayers and beseech God to save all of us.

Troparia

In Tone 2

The remembrance of the just is worthy of praise,
but the Lord's testimony is sufficient for you, O Forerunner;
for it has shown that you are indeed more worthy of honour than the prophets.
You were found worthy to baptize the Lord whom you foretold.
Thereafter, you suffered for the truth
and, rejoicing, also announced the good news to those in the Abyss
that God had appeared as man,
taking away the sins of the world,
and granting to all of us the abundance of mercy. *(Twice)*

In Tone 1

Rejoice, Virgin Mary, Mother of God, full of grace!
The Lord is with you.
Blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the fruit of your womb.
For you have given birth to Christ, the Deliverer and Saviour of our souls.