




The Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco
Religious Education Ministries Presents:


The Twelve Great Feasts – as seen through Hymns and Icons– Pt II



Presented by Dr. Eve Tibbs

The Twelve Great Feasts
as seen through
Hymns and Icons








♦ "Catechesis must be an expression of worship, just as worship must be a ministry of catechesis; both of them are liturgical acts, that is, services of participation of the whole Body for the sake of the Body."
(Daniel Sahas, *Catechesis, the Maturation of the Body*)

Worship and Instruction are both liturgical acts!
or
...we are instructed by liturgical worship

The Twelve Great Feasts
as seen through
Hymns and Icons

Five Cycles of Worship

1. **Great Cycle (Personal Cycle)** – one's life from birth to death, which includes one-time actions such as baptism, burial, marriage, holy orders, etc.)
2. **Daily Cycle:** 24 hours cycle of services, 7 times a day.
3. **Weekly Cycle** of the Eight Tones
4. **Pascal Cycle** – (Moveable Feasts) from Triodion to Pentecost
5. **Annual or Ecclesiastical Cycle** –of Fixed Feasts, from September through August

The Twelve Great Feasts include the Moveable Feasts of the Pascal Cycle and the Fixed Feasts of the Annual Cycle.

Pascha is not included among the twelve, but is the "Feast of Feasts"

The Twelve Great Feasts

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Pascal Cycle – (Moveable Feasts) from Triodion to Pentecost



Movable feasts: (centered around Pascha, which is movable)

1. Palm Sunday – the Entrance of the Lord into Jerusalem (the Sunday before Pascha),(L)
2. Ascension of the Lord (40 days after Pascha) (L)
3. Pentecost (the Descent of the Holy Spirit) (50 days after Pascha); (L)

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Immovable or Fixed Feasts:

Great Feasts of the Lord (L) & Feasts of the Theotokos (T)

September 8: the Nativity of the Theotokos (8 Sept.) (T)

*September 14: the Universal Exaltation (or Elevation) of the Holy Cross (L)

November 21: the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple (T)

December 25: the Nativity of Christ (L)

*January 6: the Theophany (the Baptism of Christ) (L)

February 2: the Meeting of the Lord in the Temple (T)

March 25: the Annunciation (T)

*August 6: the Transfiguration (L)



August 15: the Dormition of the Theotokos (T)

*** Discussed in Part II**

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The Twelve Great Feasts = 12 stones set up as a memorial of God's acts

Joshua set up the twelve stones that had been in the middle of the Jordan at the spot where the priests who carried the ark of the covenant had stood. And they are there to this day. (Joshua 4.9)

Then he spoke to the people of Israel. He said, "In days to come, your children after you will ask their parents, 'What do these stones mean?' Their parents must tell them, 'Israel went across the Jordan River on dry ground.' The Lord your God dried up the Jordan for you until you had gone across it. He did to the Jordan River the same thing he had done to the Red Sea. He dried up the Red Sea ahead of us until we had gone across it. He did it so that all of the nations on earth would know that he is powerful. He did it so that you would always have respect for the Lord your God." (Joshua 4.21-24)

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Hymns and Icons

From the Salutations to the Theotokos:
Ode 1. The Heirmos. Plagal of the 4th Tone

- ♦ Crossing the waters as on dry land, In that way escaping From the evils of Egypt's land, The Israelites cried out exclaiming: Let us sing to our Redeemer and our God.

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the Kontakion was at one point a long poem dedicated to a feast or them in the liturgical year...

- usually 24 stanzas ... all ending with the same refrain.
- most ascribed to St. Romanos the Melodist.

In modern usage, **the kontakion** is a brief verse that points to one or more theological themes of the feast.

St. Romanos the Melodist

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August 6: the Transfiguration of our Lord

Apolytikion in the Grave Tone
You were transfigured on the Mount, Christ God revealing Your glory to Your disciples, insofar as they could bear. Illuminate us sinners also with Your everlasting light, through the intercessions of the Theotokos. Giver of light, glory to You.

Kontakion in the Grave Tone
You were transfigured upon the mount, O Christ our God, and Your disciples, in so far as they could bear, beheld Your glory. Thus, when they see You crucified, they may understand Your voluntary passion, and proclaim to the world that You are truly the effulgence of the Father.

Canon of Matins, 8th ode troparion
O Master of Heaven and King of the earth, you have power over hell, O Christ! The apostles beside you represented the earth, Elijah the Tishbit came from heaven and Moses from the dead in order to sing to you in one voice...



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September 14 – The Universal Exaltation of the Holy Cross

Apolytikion in the First Tone
 Save O Lord, O Lord Your people and bless Your inheritance, granting victory to our rulers against the adversaries of the Faith, and protect Your commonwealth by Your Cross.

Kontakion in the Fourth Tone
 Lifted up on the Cross by Your free will, Christ God, grant mercies to the new commonwealth that bears Your name. Gladden our faithful rulers by Your power, giving them victories over their adversaries. May Your alliance be for them a weapon for peace, an invincible standard.



Entry into Jerusalem

Palm Sunday – the Entrance of the Lord into Jerusalem (the Sunday before Pascha)

Apolytikion in the Fourth Tone

O Christ, Our God, we have been Buried with You through Baptism, and by Your Resurrection made worthy of Life immortal. Praising You, we cry out, "Hosanna in the highest, blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord."


Kontakion in the Plagal of the Second Tone

In Heaven, He is seated upon a Throne and on earth He rides upon a foal. O Christ our God, accept the praise of the Angels and the hymn of the Children who cry out to You: "Blessed are You who comes to recall Adam."

Troparion of Lazarus Saturday

By raising Lazarus from the dead before your passion, you confirmed the universal resurrection, O Christ God! Like the children with the palms of victory, we cry out to you, O vanquisher of death: Hosanna in the highest, blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord!

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ASCENSION OF OUR LORD

Ascension of the Lord (40 days after Pascha)


Apolytikion in the Fourth Tone

O Christ our God, You ascended in Glory and gladdened Your disciples by the promise of the Holy Spirit. Your blessing assured them that You are the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world.

Kontakion in the Plagal of the Second Tone

O Christ our God, upon fulfilling Your dispensation for our sake, You ascended in Glory, uniting the earthly with the heavenly. You were never separate but remained inseparable, and cried out to those who love You, "I am with you and no one is against you."

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Ascension of the Lord (40 days after Pascha)

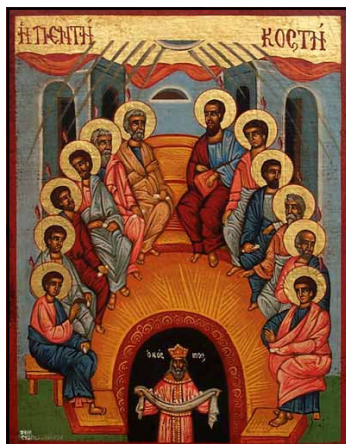
Vespers of Ascension, verse from "Lord I Call" Sixth Tone

Without leaving the bosom of the Father, you share our humanity on earth, O sweetest Jesus.

Today you ascend to heaven in glory from the Mount of Olives, in your compassion raising our fallen nature to place it with yourself at the right hand of the Father.

The bodiless powers in heaven are struck with fear and amazement, and glorify your love for humanity; with them, we on earth glorify your condescension for us and your ascension, and we say: "O Lord who fill your disciples and the mother who gave you birth with ineffable joy, by their prayers grant us also the joy of your elect and the grace of salvation."

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Pentecost (the Descent of the Holy Spirit) (50 days after Pascha)

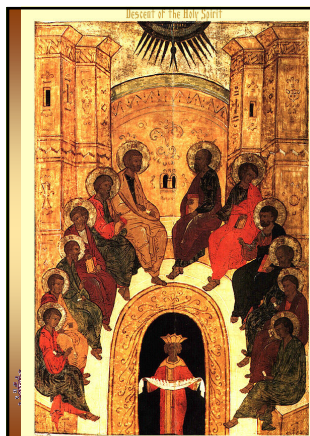
Apolytikion in the Plagal of the Fourth Tone

Blessed are You, O Christ our God, who made fishermen all-wise, sending upon them the Holy Spirit and, through them, netting the world. O Loving One, glory to You.

Kontakion in the Plagal of the Fourth Tone

When the Most High came down and confounded tongues of men (Babel), He divided the Nations. When He dispensed the Tongues of Fire, He called all to unity, and with one voice we glorify the Most Holy Spirit.

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Pentecost (the Descent of the Holy Spirit) (50 days after Pascha)

Verse from the Aposticha of Vespers, in the Plagal of the Fourth Tone

The tongues, once confused because of the audacity of the builder, are now filled with the wisdom of the glorious knowledge of God.

Once the Lord condemned the impious for their sin; today Christ illumines the sinners.

Once the tongues were divided in punishment; but now their harmony is restored for the salvation of our souls.

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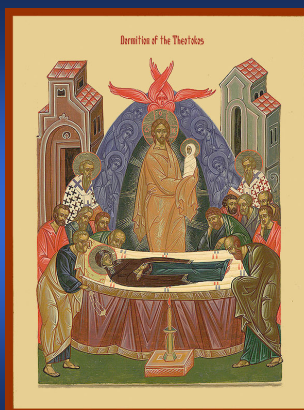
August 15 - the Dormition or "Falling Asleep" of the Theotokos

Apolytikion in the First Tone

In birth, you preserved your virginity; in death, you did not abandon the world, O Theotokos. As mother of life, you departed to the source of life, delivering our souls from death by your intercessions.

Kontakion in the Second Tone

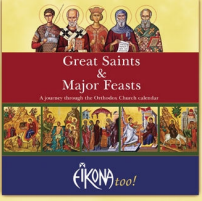
Neither the grave nor death could contain the Theotokos, the unshakable hope, ever vigilant in intercession and protection. As Mother of life, He who dwelt in the ever-virginal womb transposed her to life.



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Thank you for
your participation!



May God bless you and Keep you!

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