

SEPTEMBER 23 Conception of the Honorable Glorious Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist John

FIRST ANTIPHON. PSALM 91.

It is good to give thanks to the Lord; to sing praises to Your name, O most High.

Refrain: Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us.

To declare Your mercy in the morning, and Your faithfulness every night.

Refrain: Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us.

To show that the Lord is upright, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.

Refrain: Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us.

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

Refrain: Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us.

SECOND ANTIPHON. PSALM 92.

The Lord is King, He is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, He has girded Himself.

Refrain: Through the prayers of Your saints, O Savior, save us.

The world also is established, so that it cannot be moved.

Refrain: Through the prayers of Your saints, O Savior, save us.

Your decrees are very sure; holiness befits Your house, O Lord, forevermore.

Refrain: Through the prayers of Your saints, O Savior, save us.

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

THIRD ANTIPHON. PSALM 94

O come, let us sing unto the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

Refrain: O Son of God, Who are wondrous in Your saints, save us who sing to You: Alleluia!

Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, let us make a joyful noise to Him with songs of praise.

Refrain: O Son of God, Who are wondrous in Your saints, save us who sing to You: Alleluia!

For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

Refrain: O Son of God, Who are wondrous in Your saints, save us who sing to You: Alleluia!

In His hand are the deep places of the earth; the strength of the hills is His also.

Refrain: O Son of God, Who are wondrous in Your saints, save us who sing to You: Alleluia!

TROPARIA

Tone 4 Rejoice, O barren one, who formerly did not bear a child,
for you have conceived the Lamp of the Sun,
Who is to illumine the whole universe darkened by blindness!
Rejoice, O Zachariah, and cry out with boldness:
"The Prophet of the Most High desires to be born!"

Tone 4 In truth you were revealed to your flock as a rule of faith,
a model of meekness, and teacher of abstinence,
so you won the heights by humility, and riches by poverty,
O Holy Father Nicholas,
intercede with Christ God to save our souls.

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

Tone 1 Great Zachariah rejoices with his wife, the far-famed Elizabeth,
for she has fittingly conceived John the [^]Forerunner,
whom an angel announced in gladness;
and whom we rightly honor//
as an initiate of the grace of God.

The Prokeimenon in the seventh tone: The righteous shall rejoice in the Lord / and shall hope in Him. (Ps 63/64:10)

v: Hear my voice, O God, when I pray to You! (Ps 63/64:1)

THE READING IS FROM THE EPISTLE OF THE APOSTLE PAUL TO THE GALATIANS (4:22-31) Brethren: it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave and one by a free woman. But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, the son of the free woman through promise. Now this is an allegory: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar. Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother. For it is written, "Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear; break forth and shout, you who are not in travail; for the children of the desolate one are many more than the children of her that is married." Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise. But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman." So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free.

Alleluia, Tone 4

v: The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree, and grow like a cedar in Lebanon. (Ps 91/92:12)

v. They are planted in the house of the LORD, they flourish in the courts of our God. (Ps 91/92:13)

GOSPEL Luke 1:5-25 (*Forerunner*)

COMMUNION HYMN The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He shall not fear evil tidings. (Ps 111/112:6b-7a) Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!