Vespers propers, August 15

THE DORMITION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD AND EVER-VIRGIN MARY.
Tradition relates that the Mother of God died in Jerusalem, after a visit with all of Christ’s apostles. They carried her coffin to the Garden of Gethsemane where it was placed into a tomb. The apostle Thomas came late, and asked that the tomb might be opened so that he could reverence her body. When opened, the tomb was found empty except for the winding sheet.

Supplement for The Order of Vespers for Sundays after Pentecost, 2005

Psalm 140, Tone 1 (begins on page 24)

Bring my soul out of this prison
and then I shall praise your name.

Around me the just will assemble
because of your goodness to me.

Cantor: Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord;
(on 8) Lord, hear my voice!

Tone 1 samohlasen

O what a wonder! The Source of Life itself is placed in a tomb; the grave
becomes a ladder to heaven. Rejoice, Gethsemane, holy chamber of the
Theotokos. As for us, O faithful, let us cry out with Gabriel, the
prince of angels: Rejoice, O woman full of grace, the Lord is with you!
the Lord, who because of you bestows great mercy on our souls.
Cantor: Let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my pleading. (Repeat "O what a wonder...")

(on 7) If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt, Lord, who would survive?
But with you is found forgiveness: for this we revere you. (Repeat "O what a wonder...")

(on 5) My soul is waiting for the Lord. I count on his word.
My soul is longing for the Lord more than watchman for daybreak.

O Lady, marvelous are your mysteries. You have become the throne of the
Most High, and today are taken from earth to heaven.

Your glory shines forth with the radiance of divine grace and surpasses
every other splendor. Rise up to the heavens, all you virgins,
together with the Mother of the King, and cry out: Rejoice, O woman
full of grace, the Lord is with you! the Lord, who because of you
bestows great mercy on our souls.

Cantor: Let the watchman count on daybreak,
and Israel on the Lord. (Repeat "O Lady, marvelous are your mysteries...")

(on 4) Because with the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption,
Israel indeed he will redeem from all its iniquity. (Repeat "O Lady...")
Cantor: Praise the Lord all the nations; acclaim him all you people.

Cantor: Strong is the love of the Lord for us; he is faithful forever. (Repeat "Behold, all the heav'nly hosts...")

Cantor: Glory...now and ever...

Theotokion - Tone 1 samohlasen

The holy apostles were taken up from ev'ry cor-ner of the world and car-ried
up - on clouds by the com- mand of God. They gath - ered around your pure bod - y,

O Source of Life, and kissed it with rev - 'rence. As for the most sub - lime
pow - ers of heav - en, they came with their own lead - er to es - cort
and to pay their last respects to the most honor - a - ble bod - y that had con - tained
Life it - self. Filled with awe, they marched together with the apostles in si - lent
maj - es - ty, pro - fess - ing to the princes of heaven in a hushed voice: Lift up
your gates and receive with be - com - ing maj - es - ty, the Moth - er of the Light
that nev - er fades, be - cause, through her, sal - vation was made possible for our
hu - man race. She is the One up - on whom no one may gaze, and to whom
no one is able to render sufficient glory, for the special honor that made
her sublime is beyond understanding. Therefore, O most pure
Theotokos, forever alive with your Son, the Source of Life,
do not cease to intercede with him that he may guard and save your people
from every trouble; for you are our intercessor. To you we
sing a hymn of glory with loud and joyful voices
now and forever.

Hymn of the Evening, p. 12
Prokeimenon for the day of the week, pp 114-115

Readings:  Genesis 28: 10 - 17  (EOT 304-305)
Ezekiel 43: 27 through 44: 4
Proverbs 9: 1 - 11

The service continues with the Litany of Fervent Supplication, p.13
Because the disciples had been both the eye-witnesses and servants of the Word, it was also fitting that they should witness the final mystery, the Dormition of his mother according to the flesh. They not only saw the Ascension of the Savior from earth to heaven, but they also were witnesses of the translation of the Mother who bore him. They came to Zion to escort the Virgin, who surpasses the Cherubim, as she hastened in her journey to heaven. With them let us also bow low before the One who intercedes for our souls.
She is higher than the heavens, more glorious than the
Cherubim, and more honourable than all creation.

Her outstanding purity became the dwelling
place of the eternal God. Today she places her all-pure soul into the
hands of her Son. With her, the universe is filled with joy,
and the grace of salvation is given to us.

The service continues with the Litany of the Litija, p 116.

Aposticha

All you peoples of the earth sing together a hymn of glory to the
pure and most holy Virgin from whom the Word of God came to us,
receiving flesh from her in a manner beyond understanding. Let us cry out: Blessed are you among women, and blessed is your womb that contained Christ, into whose hands you committed your soul.

O pure Virgin, intercede with Christ God, that he may save our souls.

Cantor

Go up, Lord, to your rest, you and your holy ark.

O pure and most holy Virgin, the choirs of angels in heaven and the assembly of people on earth sing the praises of your glorious Dormition;

for you have become the Mother of the Creator of All, Christ our God. We beg you to intercede constantly for us; for, next to God, we have placed our
hope in you, O most glorious and ever Virgin Theotokos.

Cantor

The Lord swore a true oath to Da-vid; he will not go back on his word.

With all the people of the earth, let us sing to Christ the hymn of praise that David had sung of old. Together with her escort of vir-gins, with happiness and rejoicing, she will be led to the King; for the fruit of Da-vid's seed, the One through whom we have been led to God, has been lifted up to glory by her Son and Mas-ter in a way that de-fies de-scrip-tion.

Since she is the The-o-to-kos, we sing to her a hymn of glory and cry out:

De-liv-er us from all harm and guard our souls from trib-u-la-tions.
We confess and proclaim that you are the The-o-to-kos.

Cantor:  Glory...now and ever...

Theotokion

O virgin The-o-to-kos, at the time you were carried up to the One born of you, in a manner beyond un-der-standing, James and Pe-ter were pres-ent;

James, the broth-er of the Lord and first bish-op, and Peter, the honorable head of the a-pos-tles and prince of the-o-lo-gians.

The whole col-lege of the apos-tles was al-so there, all in one accord pro-claim-ing things di-vine, and prais-ing the astound-ing mys-t'ry of Christ,

and with joy, O most glorious one, prepar-ing your bod- - -y,

source of life and the tem-ple of God. The most ho-ly an-gel-ic pow'rs
were rapt in wonder at the sight of this miracle, and they said to one another: Lift up your gates to receive the Mother of the Creator of heaven and earth. Come, let us sing hymns to her noble and holy body that has contained the invisible Lord. Therefore, we also celebrate your feast; and, O woman worthy of all praise, we cry out: O glorious Lady, exalt the Christian peoples and intercede with Christ God that he may save our souls.

The service continues with the Prayer of the Holy Prophet Simeon, p. 19.
Troparia

Troparion of the Dormition - Tone 1

Sung once by the priest and twice by the faithful

O Theotokos, in giving birth you preserved virginity; and in your falling asleep you did not forsake the world. You are the Mother of Life and have been transferred to life, and through your prayers you deliver our souls from death.

The service continues with the Blessing of Bread, p. 119