THE BEHEADING OF THE HOLY PROPHET, FORERUNNER, AND BAPTIST JOHN
Because John had denounced Herod Antipas for putting away his own wife and marrying the wife of his brother Philip, Herod imprisoned John. At a feast in honor of Herod’s birthday, his stepdaughter Salome danced for him. Herod promised her anything; her mother Herodias told her to ask for the head of John on a platter. This martyrdom is commemorated on this day because a church was dedicated on this day to the Forerunner’s beheading by the emperor.

Hymn

1. Today in Your forerunner’s praise Your church will raise its voice;
2. While in the midst of natal feast, King Herod—at the sight
3. Caught ’twixt two evils, Herod chose To keep his craven vow;

And once again we tell the tale Of awesome, loving choice:
Of dancing, scheming Salome—Gave promise to delight.
He had the Baptist murder’d then; And John, though voiceless now,

How John the Baptist, speaking truth, To Herod gave offense;
And she, in answer to his oath, Spurred on by mother’s spite,
Still calls us each to penance from His place in heaven’s rest,

And thus was shut in prison cell Without a sure defense.
 Asked for the severed head of John As soon that fateful night.
Where he sings songs of glory to The Trinity most blest.
The memory of the righteous is celebrated with praise, but for you,

O Forerunner, the Lord's testimony is enough. You were shown to be more

honorable than the prophets since you were deemed worthy to baptize in

the waters the Lord you had proclaimed. Therefore, you fought for the truth

and with joy proclaimed the good news to those in Hades, that God

has appeared in the flesh to take away the sins of the world and to

grant us great mercy.

Cantor

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,

now and ever and forever. Amen.
The glorious beheading of the Forerunner was part of God's saving plan that the coming of the Savior might be announced even to those in Hades.

Let Herodias mourn for she sought a lawless murder because she loved neither the Law of God nor eternal life, but only this false and fleeting life.

The just man will rejoice in the Lord, rejoice in the Lord and will put his trust in him.

Verse: Hear my voice, O God, when I pray to you.

Alleluia - Tone 4 (Psalm 91:13,14):

Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!

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

Verse: Planted in the house of the Lord, he will flourish in the courts of our God.
Communion Hymn (Psalm 111:6,7):

The just man will be remembered forever; evil news he will not fear, evil news he will not fear. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Alleluia!