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Resurrection Matins

The central feast of the Church's Liturgical Year is the feast of the Resurrection of our Lord – Pascha. The beauty and joy of the liturgical celebration of this feast for Orthodox Christians cannot be exaggerated.

Following upon the publishing of the new “Dobryj Pastyr” prayer book in 2007, the Alberta Benevolent Cantor Association as well as others knowledgeable about Ukrainian Church music here in Canada have taken it upon themselves to put this updated translation under notes for the glory of God and the benefit of the faithful of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Having received the blessing of Metropolitan John to do so, these individuals have been working diligently with the aim of arranging all the liturgical texts in the new prayer book according to our traditional Ukrainian Church melodies.

Because the liturgical “staff” of most parishes consists only of a priest with one or two cantors, the approach taken was to use the common Galician (“samoilka”) or Kyivan (“obikhod”) chants, and arrange them in such a way that harmonies might be indicated by the inclusion of a second voice and/or chord indicators, which would permit those who understand music theory to expand these arrangements where resources permit.

This arrangement of Resurrection Matins generally follows the Galician melodies for the tropar, stykhyry, and canon, though Kyivan melodies are used in certain places. Regarding the singing of the canon, it is traditional for the clergy to sing the Irmos, with the cantor(s) and/or people singing the refrains, tropars, and katavasias. Where it is impossible due to time constraints to sing the entire service (e.g., in rural districts where one priest might serve several congregations) common abbreviations include deleting the katavasias at the end

of each ode; not singing the triple “Christ is Risen” at the end of each ode; only doing the small litanies after the 3rd, 6th and 9th odes; not repeating “Having Beheld the Resurrection” or the Exapostilarion; and omitting the Praises. Under normal parish circumstances, however, these abbreviations are usually unnecessary, as the service, if well prepared for by the clergy and singers only lasts between sixty and seventy-five minutes.

In general the melodies should be sung in a quick manner without being rushed. The singing should be characterized by a spirit of joy and brightness. The more solemn portions of the service (the processional hymn, “Having beheld the Resurrection of Christ”, the Exapostilarion and the Paschal Stychyry) should inspire a spirit of awe before the great miracle of the Resurrection.

Great thanks are expressed to Myron Faryna of Victoria, B.C., who inputted the notes into the computer and made invaluable suggestions regarding the arrangements, as well as to the members of the Alberta Benevolent Cantor Association for their help, support, and advice. Gratitude is also due to His Eminence, Metropolitan John, for his support and blessing.

May Almighty God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – bless all those who will make use of these notes to sing unto His glory, and implant true paschal joy in the hearts of all those who will hear these blessed hymns and songs.

Fr. Bohdan Hladio

19 February/3 March 2008

Ven. Martyr Philothea of Athens