

CLASSES OF FEASTS (RANKS)

Feast of Feasts - The resurrection of Christ, being the center of the Christian faith, is the basis of the Church's liturgical life and the true model for all celebration. A class of its own.

I. Great Feasts - besides the Twelve Great Feasts and all the Sundays of the year, this rank includes the Circumcision of our Lord (Jan. 1), the Birth (June 24) and Beheading (Aug. 29) of St. John the Baptist and Forerunner, and Saints Peter and Paul (June 29). Denoted in the typikon by the red symbol of a cross enclosed in a circle. ⊕ There is a vigil for great feasts; a more festive service where all of the unfixed hymns are dedicated to the feast.

II. Vigil Feasts - this rank includes the feasts of a relatively small number of saints, among them: St. John the Theologian (his repose, Sept. 26), the Three Holy Hierarchs (Jan. 30), St. Nicholas the Wonderworker (Dec. 6), St. John Chrysostom (Nov. 13), St. Herman of Alaska (his glorification, Aug. 9), St. Euthymius (Jan. 20); also the patronal feast day of any temple dedicated to a saint, and the patronal feast day(s) of a Church, hence (for the Orthodox Church in America) St. Innocent, Apostle to America, and St. Tikhon, Enlightener of North America. Denoted in the typikon by the red symbol of a cross with a half-circle beneath it. ⊕ There is a "vigil" to a certain saint when All Night vigil is celebrated. The order of the service is similar to a "Polyeleos" (magnification) service, in that small vespers, great vespers and matins are combined (from this comes the vigil) and that there is the blessing of breads and the anointing with oil at the end of matins.

III. Polyeleos Feasts - this rank includes the feasts of many saints and icons. This rank exhibits two sub-types: (A) where the typicon provides the option of performing a vigil (example: St. Gregory the Theologian, Jan. 25), and (B) where it does not offer this option (example: St. John Chrysostom, return of his relics, Jan. 27). Denoted in the typikon by the red symbol of a cross. + Called "cross", "Polyeleos", "with the

Polyeleos", "Polyeleos service", that is the type of service during which the "Polyeleos" (Praise/Magnification) is sung during matins (the majestic singing of the 134 and 135 psalms with verses); in addition, during this service there is a reading from the Gospel, the prokeimenon, gradual antiphons, the canon with 8 troparions, the praises and Great Doxology are sung, and during vespers "Blessed is the man" is sung (first "Glory" of the 1st kathisma), there is an entrance, Old Testament readings (parameia) and during lityia all of the verses may be sung to the saint.

IV. Great Doxology - Denoted in the typikon by the symbol of three red dots enclosed in a red incomplete circle. ☩ Called "doxology", "with doxology" during this service to the saint it is proper to sing the Great Doxology at the end of matins (in services of a lower rank, the doxology is read), also at this service are sung several Sunday Theotokions, sedalions after the kathisma (psalter reading) to the saint, the katavasia during the canon, also at the end of matins are sung the praise verses, the Great Doxology, and the entire ending of matins follows the order of a feast.

V. Six Stikhera at Lord, I call - Denoted in the typikon by three black dots enclosed in a black incomplete circle. ☩ This service, "six verse", "up to six"; all six stikhera of "Lord, I cry" are sung to the saint, there is a stikhera for "Glory" of the Apoticha for both vespers and matins; troparion to the saint, and the canon of matins is sung to the saint in six troparions.

VI. Ordinary Day - No symbol indicated in the typikon. On these days a "lesser" saint (sometimes called a "minor" or "small" saint) is commemorated. "Lesser" of course does not mean that the saint is less important, but rather that his or her celebration is smaller. ▪ , • , no sign - "without a sign"; the most ordinary, daily service to a saint, to whom it is customary to sing only three stikhera at "Lord I cry" and the canon of matins in four troparions. There may not be a troparion to the saint.