

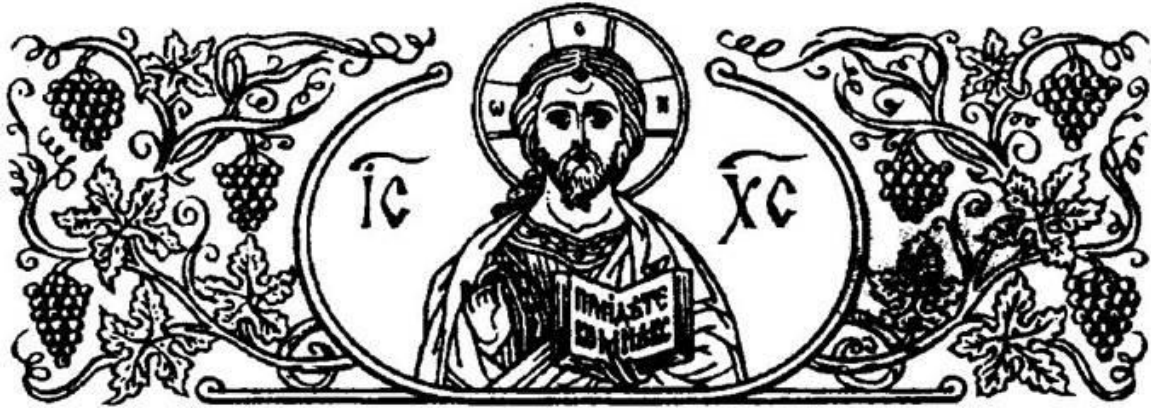


FESTAL SERVICE
TO OUR VENERABLE MOTHER
MILBURGA
ABBESS OF WENLOCK
THE WONDERWORKER

Composed

by Presbyter David Somalis in the 2022nd year of our Lord





Month of February, the twenty-third day:
Memory of our Venerable Mother Milburga,
abbess of Wenlock, the wonderworker¹
AT GREAT VESPERS

After the Introductory Psalm, we chant “Blessed is the man”, the first stasis. On “Lord, I have cried...”, we chant these stichera, in Mode II: Spec. Mel.: “Joseph took You down.”—

Come now let us chant a hymn of praise, * let us magnify with thanksgiving* Christ and with melodies keep * the delightful festival * of our protectress and guard; * let us cry out wholeheartedly: * Most blessèd Milburga, * listen to your children’s calls * and intercede with the Lord * to deliver us from all dangers * and to grant us time for repentance, * pardon of our sins, and peace unshakeable.

Whence you had received the Spirit's fire * of illumination, you hated * and scorned the riches on earth, * for you were fully in love * only with heavenly God; * and by vigils and abstinence, * and tears of compunction, * you did mortify your flesh * and lived as angel on earth. * O divinely blessèd Milburga, * you brought down the enemy's power, * and for this received the crown of victory.

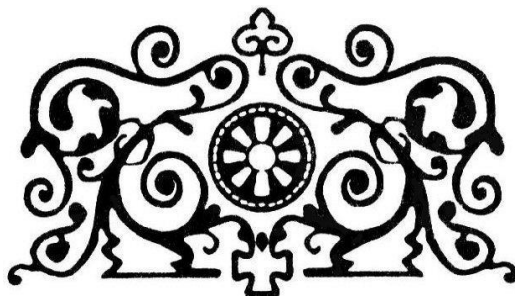
¹ The service of St Polycarp is transferred to the Compline or whenever the Superior orders. Should the feast of St Milburga fall within the Triodion, we follow the typicon from the feasts of St Charalambos (10th of February) and the Finding of the Head of St John the Baptist (24th of February).

Giving heed to Botolph the most wise * and to Owen the holy hermit * Milburga, bride of the Lord * you did found a monastery * and, in the fullness of time, * the compatriot of blessed Paul * installed you as abbess * and you ruled with love your flock * acting as mother to them; * hence you gained the power of healings * and the fowls of heaven obeyed you * and a dead child you restored to life again.

When the lustful prince did pursue you * utterly enthralled by your beauty * Jesus your Bridegroom * aided you dry-shod to cross, * Milburga, the river Corve * and its waters He caused to rise * and kept you uninjured * from the godless man's assault * as consecrated to Him. * Therefore, now beseech Christ with boldness * to deliver from shameful passions * those who celebrate your holy memory.

Moses in the desert with his staff * smote a rock and water did come out * quenching the thirstiness, * of the sons of Israel; * now when the chaste bride of Christ * needed water to wash her wounds * a water spring gushed forth * from a stone hit by the hoof * of blessed Milburga's horse! * Come, let us draw water from this well * which is after her named and gives health * to the eyes of those entreating her with faith.

Once you fell asleep in Christ the Lord * the monastics buried your body, * Milburga, Abbess most meek, * in the church which you had built; * and now in Shrewsbury * the believers with faith and love * approaching your icon * from various infirmities, pains and diseases are healed; * hence, they do proclaim all your wonders * and they praise your labours and struggles * glorifying God who has rewarded you.



Glory..., in Tone VI

The solemn memory * of the most august Abbess of Wenlock * has arrived today * gladdening the hearts of the faithful. * Come then, brethren, let us assemble * and plait hymns for her, * piously praising her and saying: * Rejoice, glorious descendant * of the royal house of Mercia * and scion of Godfearing parents! * Rejoice, imitator of the apostles * and teacher converting sinners * from the error of their ways! * Rejoice, God-given boast of Shrewsbury * and sacred diadem of all Salop! * And now, O blessed Milburga, * cease not to entreat God * on behalf of those who honour your most radiant feast * with faith and love.

Both now. Theotokion, in the same mode.

Who will not call you blessed, most holy Virgin?...

Entrance, Joyful Light, Prokeimenon of the Day, and the following readings.

A reading from the prophecy of Isaiah.

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and, as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations. For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a burning torch. The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name which the mouth of the Lord will give. You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. You shall no more be termed Forsaken, and your land shall no more be termed Desolate; but you shall be called My delight is in her, and your land Married; for the Lord delights in you, and your land shall be

married. For as a young man marries a virgin, so shall your sons marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.

A reading is from the Third Book of the Kingdoms.

In those days, again the word of the Lord came to Elijah, saying, “Arise, go to Zarephath of Sidon and dwell there. Behold, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you.” So, he arose and went to Zarephath. When he came to the gate of the city, there was a widow gathering firewood. Elijah called to her and said, “Please bring me a little water in a cup so I can drink.” She went to get it, and Elijah called after her and said, “Please bring me a morsel of bread in your hand.” But the woman said, “As the Lord your God lives, I do not have any bread, only a handful of flour in a bin, and a little oil in a jar. You see I am gathering a couple of sticks, so I can go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it and die.” But Elijah said to her, “Take courage, and do as you say, but make me a small cake from it first and bring it to me. Afterward make some for yourself and your son. For thus says the Lord, ‘The bin of flour shall not be used up, and the jar of oil shall not run dry, until the day the Lord sends rain on the earth.’” So, the woman went and did it. Thus, she and he and her children ate for many days. The bin of flour was not used up, and the jar of oil did not run dry, according to the word the Lord spoke by Elijah. Now after this, the son of the woman who owned the house became sick. His sickness was so serious there was no breath left in him. So, she said to Elijah, “What have I to do with you, O man of God? You came to me to bring my sin to remembrance and to kill my son.” But Elijah said to her, “Give me your son.” So, he took him out of her arms and carried him to the upper room where he was staying and laid him on his bed. Then Elijah cried out to the Lord and said, “Woe is me, O Lord! The witness of the widow with whom I lodge, you have embittered her by killing her son.” Then he stretched himself out on the child three times, and called on the Lord and said, “O Lord my God, let the soul of this child come back to him.” So

it happened, and the child cried out. He took the child and brought him down from the upper room of the house and gave him to his mother. Elijah said, "Behold, your son lives." Then the woman said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God, and the word of the Lord in your mouth is the truth."

A reading from the Wisdom of Solomon.

Though a righteous man may die before his time, he shall be at rest. For old age is not honoured for its length of existence, nor measured by its number of years; but discernment is grey hair for mankind, and a spotless life is the maturity of old age. There was once a man pleasing to God and loved by Him, and while living among sinners he was taken up. He was caught up lest evil change his understanding or deceit deceive his soul. For envy arising from lack of judgment obscures what is good, and a whirling of desire undermines an innocent heart. He was made perfect, for in a short time he fulfilled long years, for his soul was pleasing to the Lord; therefore, He took him early from the midst of evil. Yet peoples saw this but did not understand, nor take such a thing to heart, that the Lord's grace and mercy are with His elect and that He watches over His holy ones.

At the Liti, the Sticheron of the patron saint, and these Stichera:

Mode i:

Previously in the Abbey of Wenlock, * at the church dedicated to the Most Holy Trinity, * your ascetic and all-honoured body was buried, * close to the altar consecrated * to George the trophy bearer martyr. * Now in the town of Shrewsbury * at the church dedicated to the God-inspired Fathers * who taught that the Trinity is one, * unchanging essence and God-head, * your holy icon is enshrined, * brightly shining with grace, * as a divinely bestowed treasure; and those venerating it with faith * receive answers to their petitions * which are conducive to salvation. * O all praised Milburga, * keep this community which magnifies you * from the obstacles of the adversary * and beseech the undivided Trinity * for the salvation of our souls.

Glory..., in Mode IV

Venerable Mother Milburga, * forsaking royal rank and despising earthly glory, * you withdrew from the tumult of the world, * and dedicated yourself entirely to the Lord; your forbearance was made known to all * and your good works shined like the sun, * both on earth and in heaven; * you announced Christ to those who sat * in the region and shadow of death, * and did not cease night or day * to advise everyone by your example. * And now, we ask you to pray to your Bridegroom, to have mercy on our souls.

Both now. Theotokion. In the same mode.

Guard your servants from dangers of every kind, O blessed Theotokos, so that we may glorify you, the hope of our souls.

Aposticha.

In mode pl. IV; Spec. Mel.: "Oh, what a most glorious miracle."—

Oh, what a most glorious miracle! * The barley sown in the field * in the morning by husbandmen* ripened in the afternoon* and was reaped when the evening fell, * Abbess Milburga* having commanded it* and having blessed it* as she invoked the Lord! * Wild geese complied with her* and stopped plaguing local fields, * a flock of birds* flew away when she prayed * in faith unwavering.

Verse: I waited patiently for the Lord, and He heeded me; and He heard my supplication.

Oh, what a most glorious miracle! * The widow's son from the dead * the most holy Milburga raised * as once did Elijah * for the widow with whom he lodged! * Christ yesterday, today, and evermore * remains unchanged * and glorifies his Saints. * Oh, the ineffable * providence that You, O Lord, * have for mankind! * Therefore, save our souls, O Christ * alone compassionate.

Verse: And He established my feet on a rock and kept straight my steps.

Mother Milburga most venerable, * make supplication to Christ * with your sisters and Theodore * the most blessed hierarch * for your kinsfolk and all your land, * for the ferocious * wolves of the heresies * are still attacking * your flock relentlessly. * Save us from their assaults, * and establish peace for us, * who celebrate * now your gladsome memory* and come to you for support.

Glory ..., in Mode pl. 2:

Dour life was godly * and your end most holy, * glorious Milburga, * converser with the angels; * therefore, when the choir of the monastics * saw you lying on your deathbed, they cried aloud in tears: * “Give a final word * to comfort those whom you led and guided * like a truly merciful and loving mother”. Hence, you replied to them * “My little children, * for whom I had been in the anguish of childbirth * until Christ was formed in you, * behold, I am going the way of all flesh * and I now commend you to God * and to the word of His grace. * Love the Lord through all your life, * and one another with a true heart.” * And now, dwelling in the chamber of your immortal Bridegroom, * entreat Him on behalf of those * who joyfully honour * your sacred memory.

Both now. Theotokion, in the same mode.

Theotokos, you are the true vine that produced the fruit of life. Lady, we fervently entreat you to intercede along with the devout one, and all the saints, that our souls be treated mercifully.



Troparion in mode iv; Spec. Mel.: “Be quick to anticipate”—

Dou scorned the love of the world * and earthly riches and fame; * and you were betrothed to Christ, * whom you did serve all your life * by vigils and abstinence; * hence, you were duly honoured, * by your Heavenly Bridegroom, * who gave you the crown of glory * and the power of healing. * Do now beseech Him, Mother Milburga, * that our souls be saved.

Glory... in mode iii; Spec. Mel.: “Of the divine faith”—

Shropshire does rejoice * in you, Milburga, * and acknowledges * you as its helper, * the wondrous Abbess of Wenlock and bride of Christ. * Thus, as you once did expel the ferocious fowls, * and kept undamaged the crops from their ravaging, * now likewise protect * from every danger, threat, and constraint * those who with faith and love honour your memory.

Both now. Theotokion, in the same mode.

Unto you who mediated the salvation of our race...

Dismissal.





AT MATINS

After the first reading from the Psalter, the Sessional Hymn,
in Tone i: Spec. Melody: - “The soldiers keeping watch.”

Dou changed the princely robes * for the anchorite’s tunic,
* and you preferred a cell, * than to live in a palace; * and
having deeply loved the Lord, * you considered the world
as nought; * therefore you excelled, * Milburga, in noble struggles
* of ascetic life, * and gained the crown of rejoicing, * defeater of
demons’ hordes.

Glory...Both now. Theotokion, in the same mode.

All we who run to you * and with longing take refuge * in
your benevolence * know that you are the Mother * of
God, and after giving birth * are a virgin in very truth. *
Now we sinners have * you as our only protection. * In tempta-
tion we * rely on you for salvation, * O only all-blameless one.

After the second reading from the Psalter, the Sessional Hymn,
in Tone iv: Spec. Melody: - “Joseph was amazed”

Speak to us, O river Corve! * tell us what happened at your
banks! * Why did your streams suddenly rise? * God or-
der me promptly to flood * to save the virgin Milburga
from her assailant. * The impious prince was shamed * and re-
pented at once! * The power of the Cross * conquered the de-
mon’s attack! * for where God wills, the order found in nature *
is overcome, as it is written. * Lord, through the prayers of your
ascetic* grant to us Your great mercy.

Glory...Both now. Theotokion, in the same mode.

Pure Maiden, all the hosts * of holy angels were amazed
* at the awesome mystery * of your pregnancy and birth,
* how He whose simple command holds all things

together * is held in your embrace * as a mortal babe, * the pre-eternal Word * accepts an origin, * and He is nursed who nourishes the whole world * in His ineffable kindness. * And they extol you and glorify you * who are truly God's Mother.

After the Polyeleos, the Sessional Hymn,

in Tone iv: Spec. Melody: - "You who were lifted on the Cross"

Let us all now run with faith and contrition * and venerate blessed Milburga's icon * and drink the healing water * that springs from her well * chanting "Give heed to our cries, * and come quickly to help us * rescue us from every wrath, * tribulation, and peril, * and from contagious diseases keep us free, * by your entreaties * to God who has crowned you.

Glory...Both now. Theotokion, in the same mode.

Who can relate my many sordid impressions * and my unseemly thoughts that rage like a blizzard, * for they should not be uttered, All-blameless One? * Also, the disturbances * from my fleshless opponents, * and their awful wickedness: * who can fully describe them? * But I implore you to deliver me * from them, O Good One, * by your intercessory prayers.

Song of Ascents, the first antiphon of Tone IV.

Prokeimenon, in Tone IV:

I waited patiently for the Lord, and He heeded me; and He heard my supplication.

Verse: And He established my feet on a rock and kept straight my steps.

Let every breath praise the Lord ...

Gospel according to Matthew (25:1-13)

(See on the Saturday of the 17th week of Matthew)

Psalm 50 is read.

Glory. Mode ii.

At the intercession of Your holy Ascetic, O Lord of mercy, blot out my many offences.

Both now.

At the intercession of the Theotokos, O Lord of mercy, blot out my many offences.

Idiomelon. Mode pl. ii.

Verse: Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your great mercy; and according to the abundance of Your compassion, blot out my transgression.

Venerable Mother Milburga, * your life was according to your name, * which, if interpreted, * it means ‘gentle protection’; * you were shown forth * to be a protector of your sheepfold * from enemies both visible and invisible; * your serenity proclaimed your meekness, * and your ascetic combats * verified the steadfastness of your faith. Since you have confidence before Christ our God, * ask Him to grant peace to our souls.

Save, O God, your people etc.

Then follow the Canons:

The Supplicatory Canon to the Theotokos with 6 Troparia, including the irmos, and the following Canon of the saint, with 8 troparia, the acrostic whereof is "Praise to Milburga from me, the sinner David".

Mode pl. iv—Ode i. *On crossing the water as though dry land*

Protect me, Milburga, most wise in God, * your most worthless hymner * as I chant you a song of praise * and scatter the shadows of my passions * which have endarkened my mind and my intellect.

Remember unceasingly to beseech, * Milburga, the Saviour * since you have found boldness to Him * from every affliction to deliver * those who invoke your assistance with confidence.

A blaze with the ardour of love for Christ, * you scorned earthly glories * and the vanity of the world * and followed the Lord, blessèd Milburga, * treading decisively the path of asceticism.

In France you were trained in monastic life * at the famous convent * which the title most aptly bore * of the Ever-Virgin Theotokos * striving, Milburga, her virtues to imitate.

Theotokion.

Superior in glory to angelic hosts * you became, O Virgin, * since you bore in your holy womb * the Lord God whose glory they cannot face; * hence we shall praise you, and have recourse to your aid.

Ode iii. *You constructed the heavens.*

Emulating the Angels * throughout your life, you obeyed * the divine commandments with fervour * and crucified the flesh, * having the Cross of Christ * as an invincible weapon, * wherewith you did overcome * the demon's violence.

Tenderly and yet firmly * you led as Abbess your flock* overseeing them, Mother Milburga, * and always teaching them * all that was valuable, * gracious, honest, and lovely * for Christ's word dwelt in you * truly abundantly.

When the blessèd hermit * as an instructor you had* and the wise Botolph as teacher, * whereas the hierarch* Theodore the divine * as Abbess came to install you; * and now pray with all of them * for us who honour you.

Theotokion.

Mother of God most Holy, * blameless and pure Maid rejoice! * whom the prophets saw as a ladder, * as gate and sanctuary, * from whom the Saviour came * and saved from death and corruption * those who were enslaved to sin * and crushed the serpent's head.

Sessional Hymn. Mode iv.

Spec. Melody: - "You appeared today"

A sing your abbatial staff, * Mother Milburga, * as a most wise shepherdess, * you led your flock on level ground, * and rescued them from demonic snares; * therefore in heaven, you had an immense reward.

Glory...Both now. Theotokion, in the same mode.

Virgin Mother, open wide * your undefiled arms, * and thereby protect us all * who put our every hope in you * and who cry out to your Son and pray, * "O Christ our God, * give Your mercy to all of us."

Ode iv. *I have heard, Lord, the mystery.*

I nexplicable miracles * you performed, Milburga, having received this gift * from the Lord God who was really pleased * by your life of righteousness and abstinence.

L isten to me attentively, * said the godly Abbess to those subject to her, * and as children of obedience * do strive to abstain from all the carnal lusts.

B ravely fighting the enemy* with the Spirit's sword you did injure him; * therefore Christ the righteous judge bestowed * to you as a prize the crown of victory.

Theotokion.

A nintelligible is indeed * to the minds of humans the sacred mystery* of your giving birth to Christ our God; * therefore we extol you, Sovereign Lady.

Ode v. *Lord, enlighten us.*

R aising high its streams * river Corfe preserved you from the prince, * who enraged with detestable desires* hunted after you, Milburga, modest bride of Christ.

Godly, brave, and wise * leader of monastics having been,
* you did govern them in righteousness and truth, * and
you taught them by your life to perfect holiness.

As a star you shone * and dispelled the dark of paganism; *
now we ask you: vanquish swiftly all beliefs * that pervert
the apostolic faith appallingly!

Theotokion.

Favourably look * upon me, O Ever-Virgin Pure, * and de-
liver your suppliant at the hour* of my end from hell eter-
nal and the second death.

Ode vi. I pour out my supplication to the Lord.

Refresh us, * as we are now being sprinkled, Milburga, *
with the water from your well and give comfort * to those
who suffer from manifold ailments, * and grant to us the
petitions offered in faith, * since from the Lord you have received
* Holy Abbess, the power of miracles.

Orators * would fail to suitably praise you * and proclaim
your many wonders, Milburga, * for the dead son of a
dolorous widow * you raised to life and restored vision
to the blind * and cleansed the leprous maid who had * venerated
your relics, O glorious one.

Magnificent * was your life upon the earth * though you
sought to hide your virtues, Milburga; * hence the wild
geese did obey your commandments * as also did once
the birds damaging the maize; * and now we ask you to protect *
all the meadows of those who do honour you.

Theotokion.

Milburga * the holy Abbess of Wenlock * at her deathbed
did commend, Theotokos* to you the choir of monastics
she gathered, * and taught the precepts of God who was
born of you; * and now, Lady, pray with her * for those calling on
you unhesitatingly.

Kontakion. Mode iii. *Today the Virgin.*

Having left the royal house, * you did abhor all vainglory, * and you were betrothed to Christ, * the King immortal and holy; * you shone forth * in self-denial, prayer and fasting; * hence you earnt, * the incorruptible crown of glory, * ornament of the monastics, * Mother Milburga, * the glory of all Shropshire!

Ikos.

The kingdom of Mercia reveres your infancy, * and the Abbey of the Theotokos in Chelles * honours your beginning in monastic life; * the monastery of Winlock extols you, * having been the arena of your ascetic struggles; * Stoke Saint Milborough boasts in your well, * the water of which heals soring eyes; * Wixford in Warwickshire, * Offenham in Worcestershire, * and Llanfillo in the Welsh county of Powys, * they all hold you dear, * enclosing churches dedicated to you; *but above all, the humble Manor of Sutton, * in Shrewsbury, the first city of Salop, * rejoices in you, splendidly arraying itself, * as in the church of the three hundred and eighteen Holy Fathers, *a sacred and triumphant assembly of Orthodox believers occurs today, * and the memory of your repose is fittingly honoured * by those professing the faith you also confessed. * Therefore, we cry out wholeheartedly to you: * Be mindful of us, your little flock, * who have acquired you as a protector ever ready to receive our supplications * and who possess your Icon * as an inviolable treasure; * go before us and rescue us from every need and peril, * Mother Milburga, the glory of all Shropshire!

Synaxarion.

On the twenty-third day of February, memory of our Venerable Mother Milburga, daughter of the king of Mercia, abbess of Wenlock, the wonderworker.

Mild the wild geese became, holy Milburga,
once you commanded them and stopped to harm the corncobs.
On the twenty-third, Milburga departed to be with Christ.

And the rest of the Synaxarion for February 23rd.

Ode vii. *The Three Youths from Judea.*

Ermenburga, your mother, * and your two holy sisters * may they unite with you, * with Botolph and with Owen, * and Theodore the primate * of all England and pray to God * for the return of your kin, * Milburga, to the right faith.

The two innocent children * led the monks to discover * a treasure priceless indeed: * the relics of Milburga * emitting fragrant odour; * hence they rejoiced exceedingly * and chanted: Blessèd are you, * the God of our fathers.

Healings sprang out, Milburga, * from the shrine of your relics* to those who had prayed with faith; * those who were blind received sight, * the lame walked, and the deaf heard* and the lepers were swiftly cleansed* and chanted: Blessèd are you, * the God of our fathers.

Even the water once used * for the rinsing, Milburga* of your most sacred bones * restored to health a woman, * casting out of her stomach * a worm that was tormenting her; * hence in thanksgiving she praised, * the God of our fathers.

Theotokion.

Shelter me, I beseech you, * your most unworthy servant * beneath your holy veil; * I have no other refuge, * save you, O Theotokos, * and to you I have come for help, * the one who has given birth* to our Lord and Saviour.

Ode viii. *The King of heaven.*

Instead of riches* you wisely chose self-denial, * and austerity instead of worldly splendour; * therefore now, Milburga, you do rejoice in heaven.

Nothing debarred you * from loving God with your whole heart; * hence you bore with fortitude your illness, * being tested by fever* as silver in the furnace.

Rasty and callous * ruffians sent by a godless * king did set fire to your sacred relics; * but your name, Milburga* doubtlessly lives for ever.

Entrapped by passions * and sorely vexed by temptations, * I petition you, most holy Abbess, * guide me to the haven* of the Lord's will, Milburga!

Theotokion.

Ravaged and wounded * is my poor soul, Theotokos, * by many transgressions and offences; * heal me, Ever-Virgin, * that I may praise you.

Ode ix. *We who through you, O Virgin.*

Deliver from all sorrows * those who supplicate you, * Mother Milburga, adornment of Shrewsbury, * and as a gift of thanksgiving * accept the hymns I wrote.

As once you cleansed a leper, * do now cleanse, I pray you * my soul which is a den of iniquities, * as I am sprinkled with the water * drawn from your holy well.

Visit the congregation * which treasures your icon, * and comfort them with the gift of your miracles, * Milburga most virtuous virgin, * vessel of charity.

In you, blessèd Milburga, * we have fled for refuge, * and by your well we have gathered chanting anthems of praise; * do recompense all our labours * through your benevolence.

Theotokion.

Deign to assist me, Mary * Virgin Theotokos, * and shield me under your veil the most wretched one, * for all my hope I have placed in * your tender kindness.



Exapostilarion. Mode iii. Spec. Mel: - “The heaven in stars”

Milburga, Abbess of Wenlock, * illustrious offspring of Mercia, * protect the fields of the faithful, * and grant an abundant harvest * to those who lovingly honour * your annual commemoration.

Theotokion.

O sweetness of the Angels, * the joy of all those in distress, * the Virgin Mother of the Lord, * you are the protection of Christians, * come to my aid, deliver me * from the eternal torments.

On the Praises, 4 Stichera, in Mode iv:

Spec. Mel: “As one valiant among the martyrs ...”

On the day when we celebrate * your repose we rejoice in God, * and extol the battles * of your ascetic life; * for you detested the luxuries * of wealth and you chose to serve * Christ in poverty and spurned * earthly glory and vanity * and loved abstinence; * hence you shined as a star, Abbess Milburga, * and dispelled the clouds of darkness * and all the spectres of lawlessness.

When the most wise Theodore, * the Archbishop bestowed on you * the rank of the abbess * you did not swell with pride, * but in humility you discharged * your office and cared for all * the monastics as a true * mother, meekly exhorting them, * and instructing them * day and night shedding tears, blessèd Milburga, * to abstain from all appearance * of every evil, as Paul had taught.

On the eve of the festival * of the Baptist’s nativity * God did will your holy * relics to manifest * fragrant as lilies and radiant, * and gushing forth miracles; * hence the leprous maid was cleansed, * and the blind youth received his sight, and all glorified * the Almighty who granted you, Milburga, * such a gift; to Whom do not cease * to pray for all those who honour you.

To your well we proceed with love * drawing water there-
from with faith,*and your holy icon * we cherish ten-
derly, * and we beseech you to plead with Christ * and
ask Him to shine anew * in your land the light of faith * and up-
root wicked heresies, * and to strengthen us * to proclaim Him
through lives virtuous and blameless * to those led astray, Mil-
burga, * who have no hope in the living God.

Glory. Mode ii.

In the Psalms, King David * did prophetically say: * “the
generation of the righteous shall be blessed”. * And behold,
Milburga the all-glorious * sprang forth as some excellent
fruit * from a noble tree, * out of Merewalh and Ermenburga the
pious rulers, * together with her holy sisters * Mildred and Mild-
gyth; * she counted her royal rank as nought * and mortified the
passions of the flesh by fasting; * she gathered to her * souls
thirsting after the living God, * and governed them in godliness
and righteousness; * therefore, her memory abides for ever *
through sons of Belial * burnt her precious relics. * Through her
intercessions, O all-powerful Saviour, * preserve and save our
souls.

Both now. Theotokion.

All of my hope I place on you, * O Mother of God; * keep me under
your shelter.

Great Doxology and Dismissal.

AT LITURGY:

On the Beatitudes, 8 Troparia from the Canon of the Saint: 4
from Ode iii and 4 from Ode vi.

Apostle from the Feast of St Savva (December 5th).

Gospel from the Tuesday of the 1st week of Matthew

Communion verse: In everlasting memory...

And here will I make an end.
And if I have done well,
and as is fitting the story,
it is that which I desired:
but if slenderly and meanly,
it is that which I could attain unto.

Now unto him
that is able to do exceeding abundantly
above all that we ask or think,
according to the power that worketh in us,
Unto him be glory in the church
by Christ Jesus
throughout all ages,
world without end.
Amen.

