



Mary lived a long and good life.  
After Jesus ascended to Heaven,  
St. John the Beloved took care of her  
as if she were his own mother.

She loved to pray at the Mount of Olives.



One day, an angel came to her.  
He said that she would be in Paradise  
with Jesus in three days;  
he gave her a branch from Paradise.

Mary went home and gathered  
St. John and their friends;  
she told them that she would be going to  
heaven very soon.



A cloud formed around the house,  
and angels brought the Apostles to her.  
St. John told them that she would soon die.

The Apostles loved Mary so much.  
She was like a mother to all of them —  
and she loves all of us with that  
sweet and warm mother's love!



Mary said goodbye to each of them, and  
told them that she was happy to be with  
Jesus in Paradise, but that she would  
always pray for them and help them.  
She blessed each of them.

Then she lay down on her bed,  
and fell asleep in the Lord.

The Apostles formed a beautiful procession, bringing the Life-giving body of the Holy Theotokos to her tomb.



St. John carried the angel's branch from Paradise in the front of the procession, and St. Peter carried the censer, and they all sang beautiful hymns as they walked.

Three days later,  
St. Thomas was walking to Jerusalem.  
He had missed the funeral.



He saw a woman going up into heaven,  
and she looked at him,  
and threw her shawl to him.

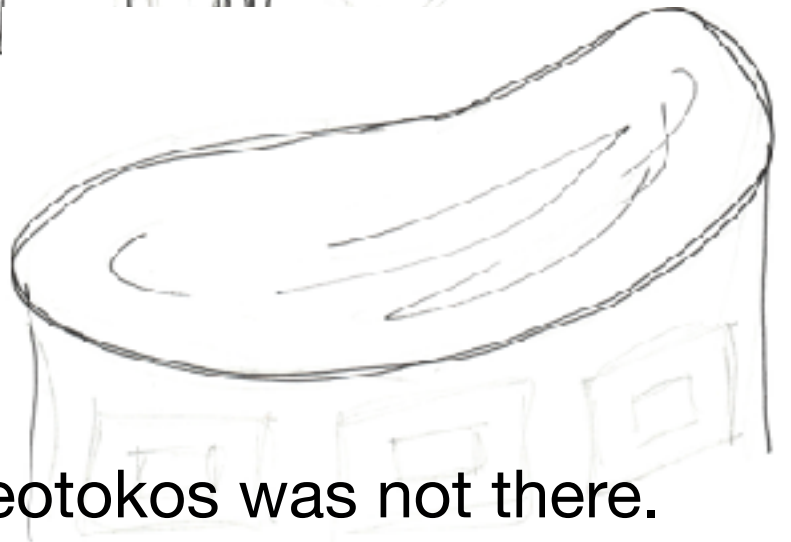
He picked it up, but did not understand.

When St. Thomas arrived at St. John's house, he learned that the Theotokos had died before he arrived.



He was so sad that he did not say goodbye to the Holy Theotokos.

On the third day, the Apostles went  
to the tomb and opened it  
so that Thomas could say goodbye.



But the Holy Theotokos was not there.  
Jesus took her to heaven,  
leaving just her clothes folded nicely.



The Apostles prayed that God would show them where their beloved Theotokos had gone. And He did:



They looked up into Heaven and saw the Holy Theotokos up in the air, surrounded by thousands of angels.

She said to them,  
“Rejoice, for I will be with you always!”

Neither the grave nor death could contain the Theotokos, the unshakable hope, ever vigilant in intercession and protection. As Mother of life, He who dwelt in the ever-virginal womb transposed her to life. — Kontakion

*More honorable  
than the Seraphim,  
and beyond compare more  
glorious than the Cherubim.  
Without corruption you gave  
birth to God the Word,  
Truly Theotokos, we magnify you!*