An image of the Blessed Virgin Mary has been venerated in the Ostra Brama in Vilnius since the 16th century. When the original picture had got damaged, it was replaced with a new one which soon became known for its graces and was crowned in 1927. Its copy has been revered in the Białystok Cathedral.

Common of the Blessed Virgin Mary, except:

**EVENING PRAYER I**

In the churches celebrating solemnity:

**CANTICLE OF MARY**

*Ant.* We called to you, O Mother of Mercy, and thanks to you we have received help from the Lord.

*Intercessions and Concluding Prayer as in Evening Prayer II.*

**OFFICE OF READINGS**

**HYMN**

Welcome, O Mary, Mother of Mercy,  
Mother of hope and forgiveness,  
Mother of God and Mother of grace,  
Mother joyous with the holy wedding.  
O Mary!

You are, O Lady, the pretty valley,  
Which blossoms with lilies of virtue;  
Spring of goodness is in you,  
Help then plagued people.  
O Mary!

Father made you with his wisdom,  
Son was born of your womb,  
Fiery Spirit descended on you:  
Glory be to the One God.  
O Mary! Amen.

**FIRST READING**

> From the first letter of the apostle Paul to the Galatians 3:22 – 4:7

*Through Faith We Are Children of God and Heirs*

Brothers! Scripture confined all things under the power of sin, that through faith in Jesus Christ the promise might be given to those who believe.
Before faith came, we were held in custody under law, confined for the faith that was to be revealed. Consequently, the law was our disciplinarian for Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a disciplinarian. For through faith you are all children of God in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free person, there is not male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendant, heirs according to the promise. Furthermore, I mean that as long as the heir is not of age, he is no different from a slave, although he is the owner of everything, but he is under the supervision of guardians and administrators until the date set by his father. In the same way we also, when we were not of age, were enslaved to the elemental powers of the world. But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to ransom those under the law, so that we might receive adoption. As proof that you are children, God sent the spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!” So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

RESPONSORY cf. Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 2:4; Romans 8:3

When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law,
– To ransom those under the law.

God because of the great love he had for us, sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh.
– To ransom those under the law.

SECOND READING

From a sermon by Saint Bernard, abbot
(Sermon 4, On the Assumption of the BVM)
In You We Take Refuge, Virgin Full of Grace and Mercy

O Blessed Virgin! Let the one that called you and was left without help deny your mercy, should we find anyone like this. We, your servants, however, rejoice with you because of the gifts the Lord gave you; above all – your mercy. We praise your virginity, we admire your humility, but the sweetest is your mercy. We call it more often, we mention it more often, it is more valuable to us. For it renewed our world and obtained salvation for us all. No doubt it was for us all that the one to whom it was said, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God,” the favour you desired. Who is then capable of grasping the generosity and vastness, and greatness, and depth of your mercy? You help us all generously, us who call you, and you will do so until the final day. The earth is full of your mercy and it reaches its ends, bringing the renewal of the kingdom of heavens and salvations to the ones who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death. Thanks to you the heaven is becoming more and more populated and the limbo is being emptied. The heavenly community rises from the ruins, and the life is given to the lost and the ones yearning for salvation in their woes. You come, full of love and compassion, with graceful help, merciful to both the latter and the former. Our thirsty soul approaches this fount, in this unlimited mercy we take refuge when in misery. Show the world the grace of the favour you found with God: obtain for us with your holy requests the forgiveness for the guilty, healing for the sick, strength for the weak, comfort for the oppressed, and help and rescue for the dying. Through you, O merciful Queen, may your Son and our Lord, Jesus Christ, who is above all, grant the gifts of grace to the servants calling your sweet name. God be blessed forever. Amen.¹

RESPONSORY Luke 1:48-50

All ages will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
– Holy is his name

¹ Translated by DChojnacki (2014).
His mercy is from age to age to those who fear him.
– Holy is his name.

TE DEUM You are God: we praise you.

CONCLUDING PRAYER as in Morning Prayer.

MORNING PRAYER

HYMN

Blessed among women,
O Virgin who shines in the Gate of Dawn,
You are our Mother of Mercy,
In whom the eternal Love dwells.

Your head is adorned with bright twelve stars,
The moon stretches under your holy image,
You have folded your hands in reflection,
Holding the mystery of God in your heart.

Reflect, O Mary, on your own solitude,
Your soul pierced by the sword of prophecy,
When you stood at the cross, full of pain,
For you Son was dying for the world’s salvation.

Come down, O Merciful, from your high throne,
That look upon the path of pilgrimage;
Feel for our misery and adversity,
Grant brotherly unity to both nations.

Lead us, O Lady, to your Son,
Teach us to serve him until the end;
To him and Father Spirit of comfort,
Glory be now and for ever. Amen.

CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH

Ant. Rejoice Blessed Virgin, Mother of Mercy, for through you God released us from our enemies and showed us his mercy.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

O Almighty God,
grant help to your people so that we, praising Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Mercy and through her intercession, may obtain your mercy.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
– Amen.

DAYTIME PRAYER
For solemnities complementary psalmody. For feasts, antiphons and psalms of the day.

EVENING PRAYER II

CANTICLE OF MARY

Ant. God has done great things for us through Mary, all generations call her blessed.

INTERCESSIONS

Let us praise God, the Almighty Father, who has made all the generations bless Mary, the Mother of his Son. Let us ask him humbly:

Lord, you made Mary Mother of Mercy, let all that are in danger feel her maternal love.
– Through Mary’s intercession, hear us, O Lord.

You wished that Mary were the Mother of the Family in the house of Jesus and Joseph, grant through her intercession that all mothers may protect love and sanctity of their families.
– Through Mary’s intercession, hear us, O Lord.

You gave us Mary as the Mother of our lands, grant that we were as faithful to you as she has been.
– Through Mary’s intercession, hear us, O Lord.

You gave us Mary as Mother, through her intercession, give health to the sick, comfort to the distressed and forgiveness to sinners, give all people peace and salvation.
– Through Mary’s intercession, hear us, O Lord.

You made Mary zealously listen to your Word and be your faithful servant, grant through her intercession that we were servants and disciples of your Son.
– Through Mary’s intercession, hear us, O Lord.

Your crowned Mary as Queen of Heavens, grant that the dead may rejoice eternally in your kingdom with saints.
– Through Mary’s intercession, hear us, O Lord.

Our Father.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

O Almighty God, grant help to your people so that we, praising Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Mercy and through her intercession, may obtain your mercy.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.
– Amen.