

Vespers

O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, for the sake of the prayers of Thy most pure Mother, of our holy and God-bearing fathers, and all the saints, have mercy on us and save us, for Thou art good and the Lover of mankind.

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

O Heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit of Truth, Who art everywhere present and fillest all things, Treasury of good things and Giver of life: Come and dwell in us, and cleanse us of all impurity, and save our souls, O Good One.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. *Thrice.*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Lord, blot but our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, Who art in the heavens, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Lord, have mercy. *12 times.*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O come let us worship God our King.

O come let us worship and fall down before Christ our King and God.

O come let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and God.

Psalm 103

Bless the Lord, O my soul; O Lord my God, Thou hast been magnified exceedingly. Confession and majesty hast Thou put on, Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment, Who stretchest out the heaven as it were a curtain; Who supporteth His chambers in the waters, Who appointeth the clouds for His ascent, Who walketh upon the wings of the winds, Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire, Who establisheth the earth in the sureness thereof; it shall not be turned back for ever and ever. The abyss like a garment is His mantle; upon the mountains shall the waters stand. At Thy rebuke they will flee, at the voice of Thy thunder shall they be afraid. The mountains rise up and the plains sink down, unto the place where Thou hast established them. Thou appointedst a bound that they shall not pass, neither return to cover the earth. He sendeth forth springs in the valleys; between the mountains will the

waters run. They shall give drink to all the beasts of the field; the wild asses will wait to quench their thirst. Beside them will the birds of the heaven lodge, from the midst of the rocks will they give voice. He watereth the mountains from His chambers; the earth shall be satisfied with the fruit of Thy works. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men, To bring forth bread out of the earth; and wine maketh glad the heart of man. To make his face cheerful with oil; and bread strengtheneth man's heart. The trees of the plain shall be satisfied, the cedars of Lebanon, which Thou hast planted. There will the sparrows make their nests; the house of the heron is chief among them. The high mountains are a refuge for the harts, and so is the rock for the hares. He hath made the moon for seasons; the sun knoweth his going down. Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night, wherein all the beasts of the forest will go abroad. Young lions roaring after their prey, and seeking their food from God. The sun ariseth, and they are gathered together, and they lay them down in their dens. But man shall go forth unto his work, and to his labor until the evening. How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast Thou made them all; the earth is filled with Thy creation. So is this great and spacious sea, therein are things creeping innumerable, small living creatures with the great. There go the ships; there this dragon, whom Thou hast made to play therein. All things wait on Thee, to give them their food in due season; when Thou givest it them, they will gather it. When Thou openest Thy hand, all things shall be filled with goodness; when Thou turnest away Thy face, they shall be troubled. Thou wilt take their spirit, and they shall cease; and unto their dust shall they return. Thou wilt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created; and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth. Let the glory of the Lord be unto the ages; the Lord will rejoice in His works. Who looketh on the earth and maketh it tremble, Who toucheth the mountains and they smoke. I will sing unto the Lord throughout my life, I will chant to my God for as long as I have my being. May my words be sweet unto Him, and I will rejoice in the Lord. O that sinners would cease from the earth, and they that work iniquity, that they should be no more. Bless the Lord, O my soul. The sun knoweth his going down, Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night. How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast Thou made them all. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. **Thrice.**

Lord, have mercy. *12 times.*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hearken unto me. * Hearken unto me, O Lord. * Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hearken unto me; * attend to the voice of my supplication, * when I cry unto Thee. * Hearken unto me, O Lord.

Let my prayer be set forth * as incense before Thee, * the lifting up of my hands * as an evening sacrifice. * Hearken unto me, O Lord.

Set, O Lord, a watch before my mouth, and a door of enclosure round about my lips. Incline not my heart unto words of evil, to make excuse with excuses in sins. With men that work iniquity; and I will not join with their chosen. The righteous man will chasten me with mercy and reprove me; as for the oil of the sinner, let it not anoint my head. For yet more is my prayer in the presence of their pleasures; swallowed up near by the rock have their judges been. They shall hear my words, for they be sweetened; as a clod of earth is broken upon the earth, so have their bones been scattered nigh unto hades. For unto Thee, O Lord, O Lord, are mine eyes, in Thee have I hoped; take not my soul away. Keep me from the snare which they have laid for me, and from the stumbling-blocks of them that work iniquity. The sinners shall fall into their own net; I am alone until I pass by. With my voice unto the Lord have I cried, with my voice unto the Lord have I made supplication. I will pour out before Him my supplication, mine affliction before Him will I declare. When my spirit was fainting within me, then Thou knewest my paths. In this way wherein I have walked they hid for me a snare. I looked upon my right hand, and beheld, and there was none that did know me. Flight hath failed me, and there is none that watcheth out for my soul. I have cried unto Thee, O Lord; I said: Thou art my hope, my portion art Thou in the land of the living. Attend unto my supplication, for I am brought very low. Deliver me from them that persecute me, for they are stronger than I.

Verse, Tone 1: Bring my soul out of prison: that I may confess Thy name.

Verse: The righteous shall wait patiently for me * until Thou shalt reward me.

Thou O my soul * wast clothed in the divinely-woven purple of self-restraint, * and in the fine linen of incorruption, * but having mocked thine own dignity, * thou hast made sin Thy wealth and Thy delight; * looking scornfully upon Thy brothers, * like the rich man who despised Lazarus the beggar. * So that thou not share in the punishment of the rich man * become poor in spirit * as did the Lord who for Thy sake became poor Himself * and cry out to Him saying: * Before Thy Crucifixion Thou didst clothe Thyself with the purple of mockery, * and for my sake Thou wast nailed upon the Cross naked; * do Thou O Christ clothe me in the raiment of Thy Kingdom, ** and deliver me from eternal shame.

Verse: Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord; * O Lord, hear my voice.

Tone 2:

My heart, beset by a multitude of passions, * hath been weakened by the wiles of the evil one, * shamefully laying in the tomb of slothfulness, * covered by a lack of feeling as with a tombstone, O Savior. * Do Thou by the Wood of Thy lifegiving Cross * by which Thou hast enlivened all those in Hades, * awaken me and grant me life, ** that with reverent fear I may glorify Thy Divinity.

Verse: Let Thine ears be attentive * to the voice of my supplication.

Through the machinations of the evil one, * I ever covet the riches of corrupting pleasure, * thoughtlessly delighting in vanity. * Having neglected my mind, when it

groaned like Lazarus, * I hunger for the divine food, O Word. * do Thou deliver me in Thy compassionate goodness from the future flames, ** that I may glorify Thee O Lover of mankind.

Verse: If Thou shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, O Lord, who shall stand? * For with Thee there is forgiveness.

Tone 3:

Today Lazarus hath passed away * and Bethany lamenteth for him: * whom Thou, our Savior, shall awaken from the dead. * Confirming through Thy friend, an assurance of Thine own awesome Resurrection, * and of the end of Hades and Adam's restoration to life; ** wherefore we hymn Thy praises.

Verse: For Thy name's sake have I patiently waited for Thee, O Lord; my soul hath patiently waited for Thy word, * my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

Tone 4:

During the sixth month the archangel was sent to the pure Virgin, and having pronounced a salutation to her, he announced that the Redeemer would come forth from her. Wherefore, having accepted the salutation, she conceived Thee, the pre-eternal God, Who wast well pleased to become ineffably incarnate for the salvation of our souls.

Verse: From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch * let Israel hope in the Lord.

The Theotokos heard a tongue which she did not know, for the archangel spake to her words of annunciation. And accepting his salutation with faith, she conceived Thee, the pre-eternal God. Wherefore, rejoicing, we cry out to Thee: O God Who wast immutably incarnate of her, grant peace to the world and great mercy to our souls!

Verse: For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption; * and He shall redeem Israel out of all his iniquities.

Behold, our restoration hath now been revealed to us! God uniteth Himself to men in a manner beyond all telling! Delusion is dispelled by the voice of the archangel! For the Virgin receiveth joy, an earthly woman hath become heaven! The world is released from the primal curse! Let creation rejoice and chant aloud: O Lord, our Creator and Redeemer, glory be to Thee!

Verse: O praise the Lord, all ye nations; * praise Him, all ye peoples.

Tone 1:

The great Gabriel, * the most godly, radiant and salvific intelligence, * who with the ranks on high * beholdeth the light of the threefold Sun * and chanteth divine and awesome hymnody, * prayeth that He grant unto our souls ** peace and great mercy.

Verse: For He hath made His mercy to prevail over us, * and the truth of the Lord abideth forever.

The great mystery * unknown before to the angels * and kept secret from before time began * was entrusted to thee alone, O Gabriel; * and thou didst declare it to her who alone is pure, * having arrived in Nazareth. * With her do thou pray, * that God grant unto our souls ** peace and great mercy.

Verse: He maketh His angels spirits, * and His ministers a flame of fire.

Ever full of light, * doing the will of the Almighty * and carrying out His commands, * O chief among the angels, * most excellent Gabriel, * save those who honor thee with love, * ever asking, * that God grant unto our souls ** peace and great mercy.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen. Tone 6:

The Archangel Gabriel was sent from heaven to announce the conception to the Virgin. And, arriving in Nazareth, he pondered within himself, marveling at the wonder: "How is it that He Who in the highest is unapproachable is born of the Virgin; that He Who hath heaven for His throne and the earth for His footstool is contained within the Virgin's womb; that He upon Whom the six-winged and many-eyed beings cannot gaze hath been well pleased to become incarnate of her by His word alone? This is God's word. Why, therefore, do I stand and not say to the Virgin: Rejoice, O thou who art full of grace! The Lord is with thee! Rejoice, O pure Virgin! Rejoice, O unwedded Bride! Rejoice, O Mother of Life! Blessed is the Fruit of thy womb!"

O Gladsome Light of the holy glory of the immortal, heavenly, holy, blessed Father, O Jesus Christ: Having come to the setting of the sun, having beheld the evening light, we praise the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: God. Meet it is for Thee at all times to be praised with reverent voices, O Son of God, Giver of life. Wherefore, the world doth glorify Thee.

EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS, § 306 [HEB. 2: 11-18]

Brethren: He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that

is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor those who are tempted.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE, § 3 [LK. 1: 24-38]

In those days, Elizabeth, the wife of Zachariah, conceived, and hid herself five months, saying, Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men. And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David: And He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

Remember us, O Lord, when Thou comest in Thy kingdom.
Remember us, O Master, when Thou comest in Thy kingdom.
Remember us, O Holy One, when Thou comest in Thy kingdom.

The heavenly choir praiseth Thee and saith: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord of Sabaoth; heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.

Come unto Him, and be enlightened and your faces shall not be ashamed.

The heavenly choir praiseth Thee and saith: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord of Sabaoth; heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

The choir of Holy angels and archangels, with all the heavenly hosts praiseth Thee and saith: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord of Sabaoth; heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.

Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

The Creed

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, / Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible. / And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, / the Only-begotten, begotten of the Father before all ages; / Light of Light, true God of true God; / begotten, not made; of one essence with the Father, by Whom all things were made; / Who for us men and for our salvation came down from the heavens, / and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became man; / And was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, / and suffered and was buried; / And arose again on the third day according to the Scriptures; / And ascended into the heavens, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father; / And shall come again, with glory, to judge both the living and the dead; / Whose kingdom shall have no end. / And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of life; Who proceedeth from the Father; / Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; Who spake by the prophets. / In One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. / I confess one baptism for the remission of sins. / I look for the resurrection of the dead, / And the life of the age to come. Amen.

Remit, pardon, forgive, O God, our offenses, both voluntary and involuntary, in deed and word, in knowledge and ignorance, by day and by night, in mind and thought; forgive us all things, for Thou art good and the Lover of mankind.

Our Father, Who art in the heavens, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

To Thee, the Champion Leader,/ we Thy servants dedicate a feast of victory and of thanksgiving/ as ones rescued out of sufferings, O Theotokos:/ but as Thou art one with might which is invincible,/ from all dangers that can be do Thou deliver us, /that we may cry to Thee:// Rejoice, thou Bride Unwedded!

Lord, have mercy. ***Twelve Times***

O All-Holy Trinity, the consubstantial dominion, the indivisible Kingdom, and cause of every Good: Show Thy good will even unto me a sinner; make steadfast my heart and grant it understanding, and take away mine every defilement; enlighten my mind that I may glorify, hymn, worship, and say:

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Psalm 33

I will bless the Lord at all times, * His praise shall continually be in my mouth. * In the Lord shall my soul be praised; * let the meek hear and be glad. O magnify the Lord with me, * and let us exalt His name together. * I sought the Lord, and He heard me, * and delivered me from all my tribulations. Come unto Him, and be enlightened, * and your faces shall not be ashamed. * This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, * and saved him out of all his tribulations. The angel of the Lord will encamp round about them that fear Him, * and will deliver them. * O taste and see that the Lord is good; * blessed is the man that hopeth in Him. O fear the Lord, all ye His saints; * for there is no want to them that fear Him. * Rich men have turned poor and gone hungry; * but they that seek the Lord shall not be deprived of any good thing. Come ye children, hearken unto me; * I will teach you the fear of the Lord. * What man is there that desireth life, * who loveth to see good days? Keep thy tongue from evil, * and thy lips from speaking guile. * Turn away from evil, and do good; * seek peace, and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, * and His ears are opened unto their supplication. * The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, * utterly to destroy the remembrance of them from the earth. The righteous cried, and the Lord heard them, * and He delivered them out of all their tribulations. * The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart, * and He will save the humble of spirit. * Many are the tribulations of the righteous, * and the Lord shall deliver them out of them all. * The Lord keepeth all their bones, * not one of them shall be broken. The death of sinners is evil, * and they that hate the righteous shall do wrong. * The Lord will redeem the souls of His servants, * and none of them will do wrong that hope in Him.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. ***Thrice.***

O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, for the sake of the prayers of Thy most pure Mother, of our holy and God-bearing fathers, and all the saints, have mercy on us and save us, for Thou art good and the Lover of mankind.