

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. Bring my soul out of prison: that I may confess Thy name. The righteous shall wait patiently for me * until Thou shalt reward me. Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord; * O Lord, hear my voice. Let Thine ears be attentive * to the voice of my supplication. If Thou shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, O Lord, who shall stand? * For with Thee there is forgiveness.

Tone 6:

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.

O Lord, wishing to see the tomb of Lazarus, * Thou Who willed to be placed in a tomb, didst ask: * 'Where have ye laid him?' * And, learning that which was not unknown to Thee, * Thou didst cry aloud to him whom Thou didst love: * 'Lazarus, come forth.' * And he who was without breath obeyed the One who gave him breath, ** even Thee, the Savior of our souls

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

O Lord, after four days Thou didst come to the tomb of Lazarus, * and shedding tears over the tomb * Thou didst raise up him who was four days dead, * O Wheat of life, * wherefore death was bound by Thy voice, * and the grave-clothes were loosed by Thy hands. * Then the multitude of Thy disciples were filled with joy, * and with one voice cried aloud: ** 'Blessed art Thou, O Savior, have mercy on us.

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

O Lord, Thy voice hath destroyed the dominion of Hades, * and the Word of Thy power hath raised from the tomb, * him that had been four days dead; * whereby Lazarus became the first-fruit * of the saving transformation of the world. * All things are possible to Thee, O Lord and King of all. ** Bestow upon Thy servants forgiveness and great mercy.

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

O Lord, wishing to grant Thy disciples * an assurance of Thy Resurrection from the dead, * Thou didst come to the tomb of Lazarus * and having called him by name, Hades was despoiled, * and released the one that had been four days dead, * as he called out to Thee: ** 'O blessed Lord, glory be to Thee'.

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

O Lord, taking Thy disciples, * Thou didst come to Bethany to awaken Lazarus: * and Thou didst weep for him in accordance with the law of human nature, * but as God Thou didst raise up the four-day corpse, * and he cried out to Thee, O Savior: ** 'O blessed Lord, glory be to Thee'.

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 8:

Having completed the spiritually profitable forty days, * let us cry: Rejoice, town of Bethany, home of Lazarus. * Rejoice, Martha and Mary, his sisters. * Tomorrow Christ will come, to bring your dead brother to life by His word. * Hearing His voice, the bitter and un-satiated Hades * will tremble with fear and groan aloud, * and release Lazarus bound in his grave-clothes. * Amazed by this miracle, a multitude of Jews will come to meet Him * with palms and branches; * though their fathers shall look on Him with contempt, * the children shall sing in praise of Him: ** 'Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord, the King of Israel'.

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.

Prokeimenon in Tone 6: Our help is in the Name of the Lord, * who hath made heaven and the earth.

Verse: Had it not been that the Lord was with us, let Israel now say.

THE READING IS FROM THE BOOK OF GENESIS: (49: 33-50: 26).

And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people. And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him. And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father: and the physicians embalmed Israel. And forty days were fulfilled for him; for so are fulfilled the days of those which are embalmed: and the Egyptians mourned for him threescore and ten days. And when the days of his mourning were past, Joseph spake unto the house of Pharaoh, saying, If now I have found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh, saying, My father made me swear, saying, Lo, I die: in my grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me. Now therefore let me go up, I pray thee, and bury my father, and I will come again. And Pharaoh said, Go up, and bury thy father, according as he made thee swear. And they came to the threshing-floor of Atad, which is beyond Jordan, and there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation: and he made a mourning for his father seven days. And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning in the floor of Atad, they said, This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians: wherefore the name of it was called Abelmizraim, which is beyond Jordan. And his sons did unto him according as he commanded them: For his sons carried him into the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, which Abraham bought with the field for a possession of a burying-place of Ephron the Hittite, before Mamre. And Joseph returned into Egypt, he, and his brethren, and all that went up with him to bury his father, after he had buried his father. And when Joseph's brethren saw that their father was dead, they said, Joseph will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him. And they sent a messenger unto Joseph, saying, Thy father did command before he died, saying, So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for they did unto thee evil: and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph wept when they spake unto him. And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we be thy servants. And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? And Joseph went up to bury his father: and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, And all the house of Joseph, and his brethren, and his father's house: only their little ones, and their flocks, and their herds, they left in the land of Goshen. And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen: and it was a very great company. But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them. And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he, and his father's house: and Joseph lived an hundred and ten years. And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation: the children also of Machir the son of Manasseh were brought up upon Joseph's knees. And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from

hence. So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

Prokeimenon in Tone 4: They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, *
never more shall they be shaken.

Verse: For the Lord will not permit the rod of sinners to be upon the lot of the righteous.

THE READING IS FROM THE BOOK OF PROVERBS (31: 8 - 31)

Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction. Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy. Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar. She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens. She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms. She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night. She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff. She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy. She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet. She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple. Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land. She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant. Strength and honor are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come. She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness, and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.

Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this evening without sin. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our Fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy name unto the ages of ages. Amen. Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we have hoped in Thee. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Master, give me understanding of Thy statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Holy One, enlighten me by Thy statutes. O Lord, Thy mercy endureth forever; disdain not the works of Thy hands. To Thee is due praise, to Thee is due a song, to Thee glory is due, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

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.

The Aposticha. Tone 8:

Having completed the spiritually profitable forty days, * we entreat Thee O Lover of mankind: * Grant us also to behold the Holy Week of Thy Passion, * that in it we may glorify Thy mighty acts * and Thine ineffable dispensation for our sakes, * so that with one mind we may sing: ** 'O Lord, glory be to Thee.

Verse: Unto Thee have I lifted up mine eyes, unto Thee that dwellest in heaven. Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hands of their masters, as the eyes of the handmaid look unto the hands of her mistress, so do our eyes look unto the Lord our God, * until He take pity on us.

Verse: Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us, for greatly are we filled with abasement. Greatly hath our soul been filled therewith; let reproach come upon them that prosper, * and abasement on the proud.

To the Martyrs:

O ye martyrs of the Lord, * pray ye on our behalf to God, * beseech Him to grant abundant mercy to our souls ** and the forgiveness of our many transgressions.

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

Standing before the tomb of Lazarus, O our Savior, * and having called out to the dead man, * Thou didst raise him as if from sleep. * He shook off corruption through the Spirit of incorruption, * and at Thy word he came out bound with grave-clothes. * All things are possible to Thee, all things work for Thee, O Lover of mankind, * all things submit to Thee: ** O Our Savior, glory be to Thee.

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

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.

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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.

Troparion, Tone 1:

In confirming the common Resurrection, O Christ God, * Thou didst raise up Lazarus from the dead before Thy passion. * Wherefore, we also, like the children bearing the symbols of victory, * cry to Thee, the Vanquisher of death: * Hosanna in the highest; ** blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.

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.

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.