

Vespers of Holy Saturday The Descent from the Cross



Served on Holy Friday Afternoon

Liturgical Calendar and Rubrics

Divine Services According to the Revised Julian Calendar [New Style]

Compiled and revised by Sergei D. Arhipov with the assistance of Paul Kappanadze and the Brotherhood of the Monastery of St. Tikhon of Zadonsk.

The Lectionary as set forth in the 2021 Liturgical Calendar and Rubrics is in accordance with the practice of The Orthodox Church in America to follow the Lectionary as established in the practice of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Approved by and printed with the blessing of
+Tikhon

Archbishop of Washington D.C., Metropolitan of All America and Canada.

Great and Holy Friday

Fast Day

Vespers of Holy Saturday on Holy Friday Afternoon

VESPERS (served on Friday Afternoon):

NOTE: The Service begins about the 10th Hour of the day (4 o'clock in the afternoon). Before its beginning, the Plashchanitsa (Epitaphios) is placed on the Holy Table, and on top of it the Book of the Gospels.

Usual Beginning. Psalm 103 (read). Great Litany. At "Lord, I call..." Stikhera on 6, Tone 1: All Triodion. Glory... Triodion; Now and ever... Triodion.

Entrance with the Gospel, Prokeimena and 3 Readings (see above). Prokeimenon, Tone 6: Thou hast laid me in the depths of the pit, in the darkness and the shadow of death. (87:7) vs. O Lord, God of my salvation, I have cried out by day and in the night before Thee. (87:1)

Epistle: (125) 1 Cor. 1:18-2:2. Alleluia, Tone 1: Save me, O God; for the waters are come in, even unto my soul. (68:2) vs. My soul hath awaited insults and passion. (68:21). vs. Let their eyes be darkened, that they should not see. (68:24)

Gospel: (110-113 – Composite) Matt. 27:1-38 (and the rest).

Augmented Litany. "Vouchsafe, O Lord" Evening Litany. Apostikha: All Triodion. Troparia: "The noble Joseph...;" Glory..., now and ever... "The Angel came..."

NOTE: During the singing of the Apostikha, the senior priest puts on all his vestments, while the other priests put on epitachelion and phelonion. When the choir begins singing, "Joseph with Nicodemus," the senior priest goes three times around the Holy Table, censing the Plashchanitsa from the four sides.

When the choir begins singing the Troparion, "The Noble Joseph," the senior priest takes the Book of the Gospels and the other clergy take the Plashchanitsa, which they hold above his head. [If there is only one priest present, the Plashchanitsa may be held by members of the laity.] They go around the Holy Table on the south side and out of the altar through the north door. The Plashchanitsa is preceded by Processional Candles and the deacon with the censer. The Procession proceeds to the center of the church where is a specially-prepared table decorated with flowers and often provided with a canopy. Here the Plashchanitsa is placed, and on top of it the Gospel Book. [The Head of the Savior is to the north.]

The senior priest goes around the Plashchanitsa three times, censing it from the four sides. [He may then sprinkle it with rose water and scatter flowers over it.] – (cf. The Lenten Triodion, p. 616): When the choir has finished the Troparion, “The angel came...,” there follows the conclusion of Vespers. Great Dismissal. At the end the priest says: May He Who endured fearful sufferings, the Life-creating Cross, and voluntary burial in the flesh, on behalf of us men, and for our salvation, Christ our True God...

NOTE: The Plashchanitsa is then venerated by the clergy and all the faithful, each making 3 Prostrations to the ground – two before kissing the Plashchanitsa and one after. While the faithful are venerating the Plashchanitsa, it is customary to sing, “Come, let us bless Joseph”



VESPERS OF HOLY AND GREAT SATURDAY ON HOLY AND GREAT FRIDAY AFTERNOON

PRIEST: Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Amen. 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.

Trisagion

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (3)

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 out our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (3)

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

PRIEST: For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory: of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Amen. Lord, have mercy. (12)

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

Come, let us worship God our King.

Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, our King and our God.

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

Proemial Psalm (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 labour 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. (3)

Great Litany

DEACON: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy. (*After each petition*)

For the peace from above and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

For the peace of the whole world, for the welfare of the holy Churches of God, and for the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.

For this holy house and for those who enter it with faith, reverence, and the fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.

For our Metropolitan Tikhon, for our Archbishop Benjamin, for the honorable priesthood, the diaconate in Christ, and for all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

For this country, its President, for all civil authorities, and for the armed forces, let us pray to the Lord.

For this city, for every city and countryside, and for the faithful dwelling in them, let us pray to the Lord.

For seasonable weather, for abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

For travelers by land, by sea, and by air; for the sick and the suffering; for captives and their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

That we may be delivered from all affliction, wrath, danger, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.

Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady Theotokos and Ever-virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.

To Thee, O Lord.

PRIEST: For unto Thee are due all glory, honor, and worship: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Amen.



Psalms 140, 141, 129, and 116

Master, I have cried to Thee, incline Thine ear and hear me: • incline Thine ear and hear me, Lord. • Master, I have cried to Thee, incline Thine ear and hear me: • hearken to the voice of my soul's entreaty; • As I lift my fervent prayer to Thee, • incline Thine ear and hear me, Lord.

Now unto Thee my prayer is ascending, • as incense arising in Thy presence; • heavenward, my hands are lifted, • a vespertime offering: • incline Thine ear and hear me, Lord.

Alternate

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.

The following verses are simply intoned down to the beginning of the stichoi.

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.

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.

Stichera, in Tone 1

Bring my soul out of prison: that I may confess Thy name.

The whole of creation was transformed by fear, • when it saw Thee, O Christ, hanging upon the Cross. • The sun was darkened and the foundations of the earth were shaken; • all things suffered with the Creator of all. • Thou didst willingly endure this for our sakes: • O Lord, glory be to Thee.

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.

REPEAT: **T**he whole of creation was transformed by fear, • when it saw Thee, O Christ, hanging upon the Cross. • The sun was darkened and the foundations of the earth were shaken; • all things suffered with the Creator of all. • Thou didst willingly endure this for our sakes: • O Lord, glory be to Thee.

From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch • let Israel hope in the Lord.

Tone 2

Why doth the wicked and transgressing people • imagine vain things? • Why have they condemned the Life of all to death? • O great wonder! • The Creator of the world hath been delivered into the hands of lawless men, • and He who is the Lover of mankind hath been raised up upon the Cross, • that He may free the prisoners in Hades, who cry aloud: • O long-suffering Lord, glory be to Thee.

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

Tone 2

Today, O Word, the immaculate Virgin • beheld Thee hanging upon the Cross; • and with a mother's love she lamented, • her heart bitterly wounded. • She groaned in anguish from the depth of her soul, • and in her grief she struck at her face and tore at her hair. • And, beating her breast, she cried aloud: • "Woe

is me, O my divine Child! • Woe is me, Thou Light of the world! • Why dost Thou vanish from my sight, O Lamb of God?" • Upon which the hosts of bodiless powers seized with trembling, said: • "O Lord transcending all understanding, glory be to Thee."

Tone 6

O praise the Lord, all ye nations; • praise Him, all ye peoples.

Seeing Thee hanging upon the Cross, • O Christ the Creator and God of all, • Thy Virgin Mother bitterly cried aloud: • "O my Son, where is the comeliness of Thy form to be found? I cannot bear to look upon Thee as one unjustly crucified. • Make haste, then, to arise, • that I also may see Thy third day Resurrection from the dead."

Tone 6

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

Today the Master of Creation standeth before Pilate; • today the Maker of all things hath been given up to the Cross, • and of His own will He hath been led as a lamb to the slaughter. • He who bedewed the wilderness with manna • hath been transfixed with nails; • His side hath been pierced, and a sponge with vinegar put to His lips. • The Redeemer of the world hath been struck upon the face, • and the Creator of all hath been mocked by His own servants. • How great is the Master's love for mankind! • For those who crucified Him, • He prayed to His Father, saying: • "Forgive them this sin, for they know not what they do."

Tone 6

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

How hath the lawless synagogue condemned to death • the King of Creation! • Showing no shame as He recalled His blessings, saying: • "O My people, what is it have I done unto you? • Have I not filled Judaea with a multitude of miracles? • Have I not raised the dead by My word alone? • Have I not healed every manner of sickness and disease? • How then have ye repaid Me? • Why have ye forgotten Me? • In return for healing, ye have given Me blows; • in return for life, ye put Me to death. • Ye hang upon the Cross your Benefactor as an evildoer, • your Lawgiver as a transgressor of the Law, • the King of all as one condemned." • O longsuffering Lord, glory be to Thee.

Tone 6

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

A strange and marvelous mystery • do we see come to pass this day. • He whom none may touch is seized; • He who hath unloosed Adam from the curse is

bound. • He who trieth the hearts and inner thoughts of man • is unjustly brought to trial. • He who hath closed the abyss is shut in prison. • He before whom the heavenly powers stand with trembling, • standeth before Pilate; • the Creator is struck by the hand of His creature. • He Who cometh to judge the living and the dead • is condemned to the Cross; • the Destroyer of Hades hath been placed in a tomb. • O Thou who dost endure all these things in Thy tender mercy, • who hast saved all mankind from the curse, • O longsuffering Lord, glory be to Thee.

Entrance with the Gospel

PRIEST: Wisdom. Stand upright.

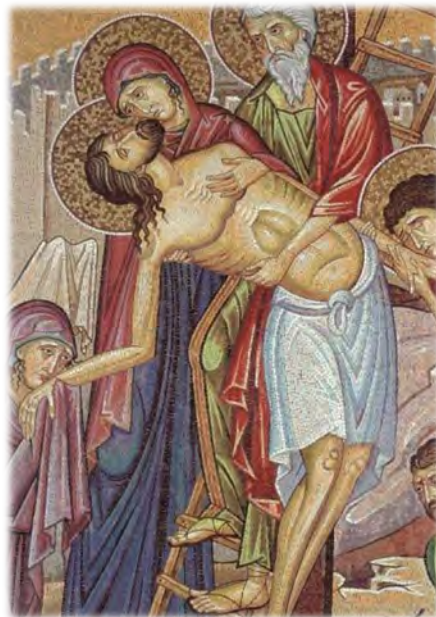
Lamplighting Hymn, by Saint Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem

Byzantine Melody, Tone 3

○ Gladsome Light • of holy glory, • the immortal Father, • heavenly • and holy, • blessed Jesus Christ, • and now that we have come • to the setting of the sun • and see the light of eventide, • we praise Thee, the Father, Son, • and Holy Spirit, one God. • It is worthy • at all times to praise Thee, • with voices of holy song, • O Son of God • the Giver of life • (of life): • the world does glorify • glorify Thee.

Slavic Melody, Tone 1

○ of the holy glory of the immortal, Father • heavenly, holy, blessed: O Jesus Christ. • Now that we have come to the setting of the sun, • and behold the light of evening, • we praise the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: God • For meet it is at all times to worship Thee • with voices of praise, O Son of God • and Giver of life; • therefore all the world doth glorify Thee.



Old Testament Readings
First Prokeimenon, Tone 4

DEACON: Let us attend.

PRIEST: Peace be unto all.

DEACON: Wisdom. The Prokeimenon in the Fourth Tone. They have parted my garments amongst themselves, • and for my vesture have they cast lots.

They have parted my garments amongst themselves, • and for my vesture have they cast lots.

DEACON: O God, My God, attend unto Me: why hast Thou Forsaken Me?

They have parted my garments amongst themselves, • and for my vesture have they cast lots.

DEACON: They have parted my garments amongst themselves...

...they have parted my garments amongst themselves, • and for my vesture have they cast lots.

They divide My garments among them

and for My rai - - - ment they cast lots.

First Reading, Exodus 33:11 - 23

DEACON: Wisdom.

The Reading is from the Book of Exodus.

DEACON: Let us attend.

The Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle. And Moses said unto the Lord, "See, Thou sayest unto me, 'Bring up this people,' and Thou hast not let me know whom

Thou wilt send with me. Yet Thou hast said, 'I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in My sight.' Now therefore, I pray Thee, if I have found grace in Thy sight, shew me now Thy way, that I may know Thee, that I may find grace in Thy sight: and consider that this nation is Thy people." And He said, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." And he said unto him, "If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known here that I and Thy people have found grace in Thy sight? Is it not in that Thou goest with us? So shall we be separated, I and Thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth." And the Lord said unto Moses, "I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in My sight, and I know thee by name." And he said, "I beseech Thee, shew me Thy glory." And he said, "I will make all My goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy." And He said, "Thou canst not see My face: for there shall no man see Me, and live." And the Lord said, "Behold, there is a place by Me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock. And it shall come to pass, while My glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with My hand while I pass by. And I will take away Mine hand, and thou shalt see My back parts: but My face shall not be seen."

Second Prokeimenon, Tone 4

DEACON: Let us attend.

PRIEST: Peace be unto all.

DEACON: Wisdom. The Prokeimenon in the Fourth Tone. Judge them, O Lord, that do Me injustice: • war against them that war against Me.

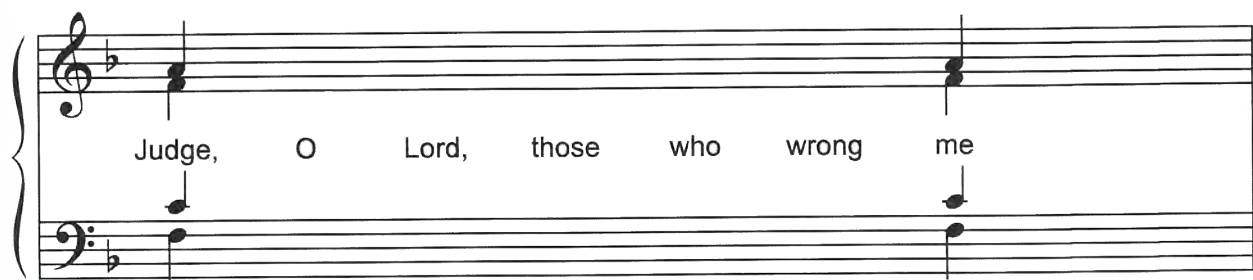
Judge them, O Lord, that do Me injustice: • war against them that war against Me.

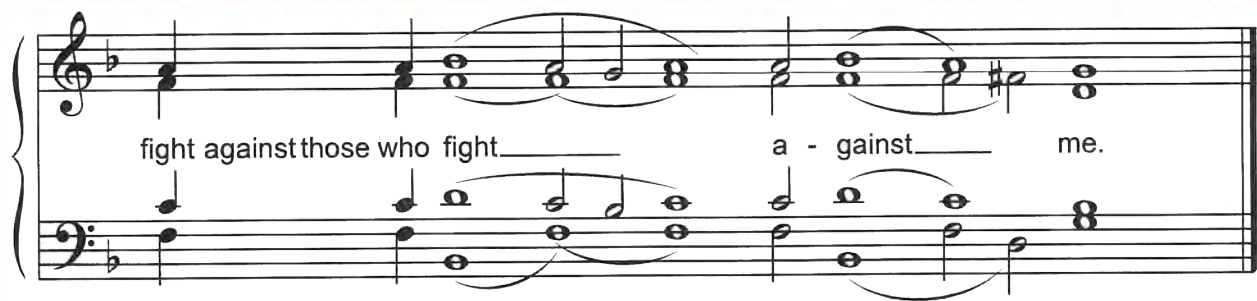
DEACON: They repaid me with evil things for good.

Judge them, O Lord, that do Me injustice: • war against them that war against Me.

DEACON: Judge them, O Lord, that do Me injustice...

...War against them that war against Me.





Second Reading, Job 42:12-17

DEACON: Wisdom.

The Reading is from the Book of Job.

DEACON: Let us attend.

The Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters. And he called the name of the first, Jemima; and the name of the second, Kezia; and the name of the third, Kerenhappuch. And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren. After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations. So Job died, being old and full of days.

Third Reading, Isaiah 52:13 - 54:1

DEACON: Wisdom.

The Reading is from the Book of Isaiah.

DEACON: Let us attend.

Thus saith the Lord: Behold, My servant shall deal prudently, He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. As many were astonished at thee; His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men. So shall He sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at Him. For that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider. Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground. He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him. He is despised and rejected of men; a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief. And we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare His generation? For He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of My people was He stricken. And He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death; because He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; he hath put Him to grief. When thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied. By His knowledge shall My righteous Servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong; because He hath poured out His soul unto death. And He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child. For more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord.

Apostolic Reading (Epistle), 1 Corinthians 1: 18 - 2:2

DEACON: Let us attend.

PRIEST: Peace be unto all.

And to thy spirit.

DEACON: Wisdom.

The Prokeimenon in the Sixth Tone. They laid Me in the lowest pit: in darkness and in the shadow of death.

They laid Me in the lowest pit: in darkness and in the shadow of death.

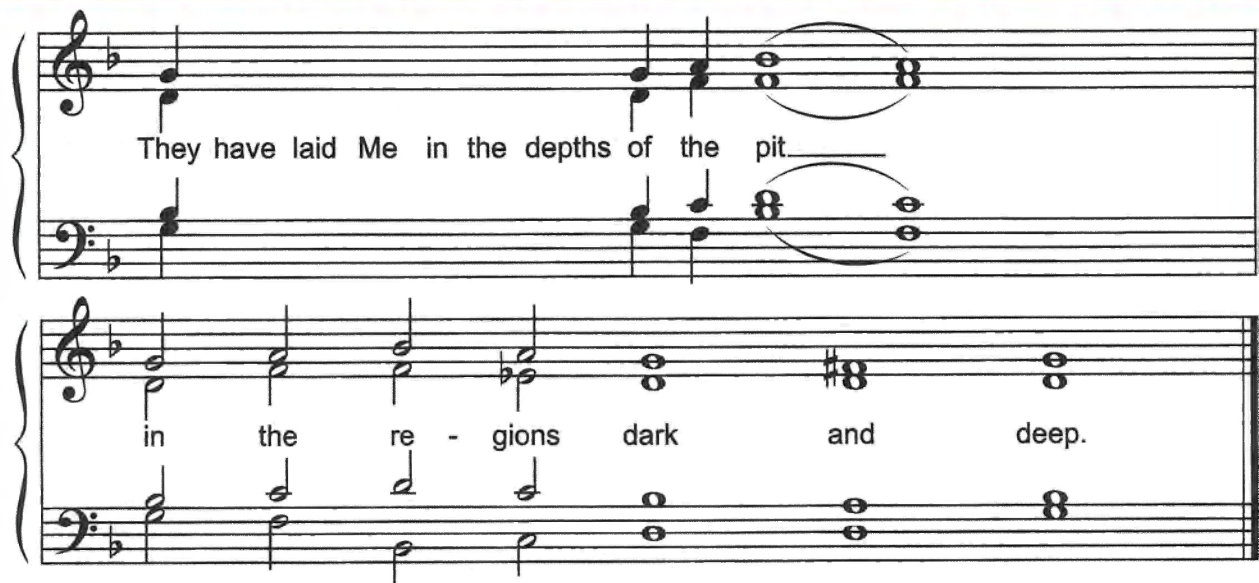
O Lord God of My salvation, by day I have cried, and by night before Thee.

They laid Me in the lowest pit: in darkness and in the shadow of death.

They laid Me in the lowest pit...

...in darkness and in the shadow of death.





DEACON: Let us attend.

Brethren: the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

PRIEST: Peace be to thee that readest.

And to thy spirit.

DEACON: Wisdom.

The Alleluia in the First Tone. Save Me, O God: for the waters are come in unto My soul.

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

They gave Me gall for my food: and for My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink.

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see.

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

A musical score for the Alleluia in the First Tone. It consists of two staves, a treble clef on top and a bass clef on the bottom. The melody is written in the treble clef and the accompaniment in the bass clef. The lyrics are: "Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia!". The music is in a minor key with a one-sharp signature (F#).

Gospel Reading, Mathew 27:1-38 ff.

DEACON: Wisdom. Stand upright. Let us hear the holy Gospel.

PRIEST: Peace be unto all.

And to thy spirit.

A musical score for the phrase "And to thy spirit." It consists of two staves, a treble clef on top and a bass clef on the bottom. The melody is written in the treble clef and the accompaniment in the bass clef. The lyrics are: "And to your spi - - - rit." The music is in a minor key with a one-sharp signature (F#).

DEACON: The reading from the Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew.

Glory to Thy passion, O Lord.

A musical score for the phrase "Glory to Thy passion, O Lord." It consists of two staves, a treble clef on top and a bass clef on the bottom. The melody is written in the treble clef and the accompaniment in the bass clef. The lyrics are: "Glo - ry to Your Pas-sion O Lord, O Lord." The music is in a minor key with a one-sharp signature (F#).

PRIEST: Let us attend.

PRIEST: AT THAT TIME: When the morning was come...

Glory to Thy Longsuffering, O Lord, glory to Thee.



Augmented Litany

DEACON: Let us all say, with all our soul, and with all our mind, let us say:

Lord, have mercy.

O Lord Almighty, the God of our fathers, we pray Thee, hearken and have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Have mercy on us, O God, according to Thy great mercy, we pray Thee, hearken and have mercy.

Lord, have mercy. (3)

Again we pray for our Metropolitan **Tikhon**, for our Archbishop **Benjamin**, for priests, deacons, and all other clergy, and for all our brethren in Christ.

Again we pray for this country, its President, for all civil authorities, and for the armed forces.

Again we pray for the blessed and ever-memorable holy Orthodox Patriarchs; and for the blessed and ever-memorable founders of this holy church; [for **NN.;**] and for all our fathers and brethren, the Orthodox departed this life before us, who here and in all the world lie asleep in the Lord.

Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, and visitation, for the servants of God, [for **NN.;** and for] the brethren of this holy temple, and for the pardon and remission of their sins.

Again we pray for those who bring offerings and do good works in this holy and all-venerable temple; for those who labor and those who sing; and for all the people here present, who await Thy great and rich mercy.

PRIEST: O Lord our God, accept this fervent supplication of Thy servants, and have mercy on us according to the multitude of Thy mercy. Send down Thy bounties upon us and upon all Thy people, who await the rich mercy that comes from Thee.

For Thou art a merciful God and lovest mankind, and to Thee do we send up glory: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Amen.

Evening Prayer

Vouchsafe, O Lord, that we may be kept this evening without sin. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy name unto the ages. Amen.

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, as we have set our hope on Thee. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy Statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Master, make me to understanding Thy Statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Holy One, enlighten me by Thy Statutes.

Thy mercy, O Lord, endures to the ages; despise not the works of Thy hands. Unto Thee is due praise. Unto Thee is due a song. Unto Thee is due glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Evening Litany

DEACON: Let us complete our evening prayer unto the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

That the whole evening may be perfect, holy, peaceful, and sinless, let us ask of the Lord.

Grant this, O Lord.

An Angel of peace, a faithful guide, a guardian of our souls and bodies, let us ask of the Lord.

Pardon and remission of our sins and transgressions, let us ask of the Lord.

All things that are good and profitable for our souls, and peace for the world, let us ask of the Lord.

That we may complete the remaining time of our life in peace and repentance, let us ask of the Lord.

A Christian ending to our life, painless, blameless, and peaceful; and a good defense before the dread judgment seat of Christ, let us ask.

Commemorating our all-holy, most-pure, most-blessed, and glorious Lady, Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.

To Thee, O Lord.

PRIEST: For Thou art a good God and lovest mankind, and to Thee do we send up glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Amen.

PRIEST: Peace be unto all.

And to thy spirit.

DEACON: Bow your heads unto the Lord.

To Thee, O Lord.

PRIEST: O Lord our God, Who didst bow the heavens, and come down for the salvation of mankind: Look upon Thy servants and Thine inheritance. For unto Thee, the fearful Judge Who yet lovest mankind, have Thy servants bowed their heads, and submissively inclined their necks, awaiting not help from men, but entreating Thy mercy, and looking confidently for Thy salvation. Guard them at all times, both during this present evening and in the approaching night, from every foe, from all adverse powers of the devil, and from vain thoughts and evil imaginations.

Blessed and most-glorified be the might of Thy Kingdom: of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Amen.



Aposticha, Tone 2 ("When from the Tree...")

When the Arimathaeon took Thy dead body down from the Tree, • O Thou who art the Life of all, • he wrapped Thee, in a fine linen cloth with spices, O Christ, • Moved by love, he kissed Thy most pure body • with his lips and with his heart; • yet, drawing back in fear, • he cried to Thee rejoicing: • "Glory be to Thy condescension, • O Thou Lover of mankind.

The Lord is King, • He is clothed in majesty.

When Thou, the Redeemer of all, wast laid in a new tomb • for the sake of all mankind, • Hades was brought to scorn, • and seeing Thee, was filled with fear. • The bars were broken and the gates shattered, • the tombs were opened and the dead arose. • Then Adam in thanksgiving rejoiced crying to Thee: • "Glory be to Thy condescension, • O Lover of mankind."

For he established the universe, • which shall not be shaken.

When Thou wast bodily enclosed within a tomb • of Thine own free will, • Thou didst remain uncircumscribed and unbounded • in Thy divine nature. • Thou didst lock up the treasury of Hades, O Christ, • having emptied all its kingdom. • Wherefore on this honored Sabbath • with Thy divine blessing, • it hath been deemed worthy of Thy glory and Thy radiance.

Holiness becometh Thy house, O Lord, • unto length of days.

When the noetic powers beheld Thee, O Christ, • falsely accused by lawless men as a deceiver, • they were filled with fear • at Thine ineffable longsuffering. • And seeing the stone before Thy tomb • sealed by the hands which had pierced Thy most pure side, • they rejoiced at our salvation, crying aloud to Thee: • "Glory be to Thy condescension, • O Lover of mankind."

Note: During the Aposticha the priest puts on all his vestments. When the choir begins to sing: "Thou who arrayest Thyself with light...", the priest goes thrice round the Holy Table, censuring the Plashchanitsa from the four sides.

Tone 5, Sung slowly as the Priest censures the Plashchanitsa 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.

Thou who arrayest Thyself with light as with a garment; • was taken down from the Tree by Joseph with Nicodemus, • and looking upon Thee dead, stripped naked, and without burial, • in his grief and tender compassion he lamented, saying: • "Woe is me, my sweetest Jesus, • when but a short while ago the sun saw Thee hanging on the Cross, • it clothed itself in darkness: • the earth quaked with fear and the veil of the temple was rent in twain. • And now I see Thee Who

for my sake hath willingly submitted to death. • How shall I bury Thee, O my God? • How shall I wrap Thee in a winding sheet? • How shall I touch Thy most pure body with my hands? • What funeral lament shall I sing to Thee, O compassionate One? • I magnify Thy sufferings; • I sing the praises of Thy burial and Thy Resurrection, • crying: O Lord, glory be to Thee.”

Hymn of Simeon the God Bearer

Master, 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 peoples; a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.

Trisagion

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal have mercy on us. (3)

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

O All-Holy Trinity: Have mercy on us. Lord: Cleanse us from our sins. Master: Pardon our transgressions. Holy One: Visit and heal our infirmities for Thy name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, 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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

PRIEST: For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Amen.

After the Lord's Prayer, when the choir begins: "Noble Joseph...", the priest takes the Book of the Gospels and the other clergy (members of the laity) take the Plashchanitsa/Epitaphion which they hold above his head.

They go round the Holy Table on the south side and out of the sanctuary through the north door. The Plashchanitsa is preceded by processional candles, and by the deacon with the censor and a candle.

The procession proceeds to the centre of the church where there stands a table decorated with flowers. Here the Plashchanitsa is placed, and on top of it the Gospel Book. The priest with the deacon goes round the Plashchanitsa thrice, censuring it from the four sides.

Troparion, Tone 2

Noble Joseph, • taking down Thy most pure body from the Tree, • wrapped it in clean linen with sweet spices, • and he laid it in a new tomb.

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 Angel stood by the tomb, • and to the women bearing spices he cried aloud: • “Myrrh is fitting for the dead, • but Christ hath shown Himself • a stranger to corruption.”

Bulgarian Chant

The No - - - ble Jo - - - -

seph when he had ta - ken down

Your most Pure Bo - dy from

the Tree wrapped it in fine

lin - en and a - noint - - - - - ned it

with spi - ces and placed it in a new tomb.

Glo - ry to the Fa - ther, and to the Son, and to the

Ho - ly Spi - rit, now and e - ver and un - to

a - ges of a - ges. A - men. The an -

gel came to the myrrh - bear-ing wo - men at the tomb

and said: "Myrrh is fit - - - - ting

for the dead. But Christ

has shown Him - self a strang -

er to cor-rup - tion.



Dismissal

When the choir hath finished chanting the Troparion: "The Angel..."

DEACON: Wisdom.

Holy father, bless.

PRIEST: Blessed is He Who is, Christ our God, always, now, and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Amen. May the Lord God strengthen the holy and pure faith of pious and Orthodox Christians, together with His holy Church and this city, to the ages of ages. Amen.

PRIEST: Most-holy Theotokos, save us.

More honorable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, without defilement Thou gavest birth to God the Word; true the Theotokos, we magnify Thee.

PRIEST: Glory to Thee, O Christ our God and hope, glory to Thee.

Glory 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. (3)

Holy father, bless.

PRIEST: May Christ our true God, Who for us men and for our salvation deigned to suffer the dread Passion and the life-creating Cross, and voluntary burial in the flesh, Christ our true God, through the prayers of His most-pure Mother; of the holy, glorious, and all-laudable Apostles; of the holy, glorious and right-victorious martyrs; of our venerable and God-bearing fathers; of Saints (*the saints of the day*) whose memory we keep this day; of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; and of all the saints: have mercy on us and save us, for He is good and loves mankind.

Through the prayers of our holy fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ our God have mercy on us.

Amen.

The Plashchanitsa is then venerated by the clergy and by all the faithful, each making three great prostrations to the ground, before kissing it one after another. The priest blesses each of the faithful after they venerate it.



