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READER'S LENTEN VESPERS ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22, 2023

(4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday in Lent)

*The Venerable Martyr Nikon of Sicily and His 199 Disciples Martyred with Him*

### THE OPENING

*Leader:* Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us, and save us.

*Reader:* Amen.

*If the 9<sup>th</sup> Hour has not been served prior to the Vespers:*

*Reader:* Glory to Thee, our God. Glory to Thee!

O heavenly King, Comforter, the Spirit of truth, who art everywhere present and fillest all things, the Treasury of good things and Giver of life: Come, and abide in us, and cleanse us from every stain, and save our souls, O good One.

#### *Trisagion*

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 ages of ages. Amen

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. 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 ages of ages. Amen

Our Father, who art in heaven, 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.

*Leader:* O Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us.

*All:* Amen

*Reader:* Lord, have mercy. (*12 times*)

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

*Reader:* O come, let us worship and fall down before God our King. (*Metania*)

O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, our King and our God. (*Metania*)

O come, let us worship and fall down before the Very Christ, our King and our God. (*Metania*)

### PSALM 103

*Reader:* 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 ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. (*Twice*)

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia: Glory to Thee, O God our Hope, O Lord, glory be to Thee.

#### THE LITANY OF PEACE REPLACEMENT

*Choir:* Lord, have mercy. (*12 times*)

*Senior Reader:* Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, Both now and ever and unto ages of ages.

*Choir:* Amen.

## THE EIGHTEENTH KATHISMA OF THE PSALTER

### *Psalm 119*

Unto the Lord in mine affliction have I cried, and He heard me. O Lord, deliver my soul from unrighteous lips and from a crafty tongue. What shall be given unto thee and what shall be added unto thee for thy crafty tongue? The arrows of the mighty one, sharpened with coals of the desert. Woe is me, for my sojourning is prolonged; I have tented with the tentings of Kedar, my soul hath long been a sojourner. With them that hate peace I was peaceable; when I spake unto them, they warred against me without a cause.

### *Psalm 120*

I have lifted up mine eyes to the mountains, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, Who hath made heaven and the earth. Give not thy foot unto moving, and may He not slumber that keepeth thee. Behold, He shall not slumber nor shall He sleep, He that keepeth Israel. The Lord shall keep thee; the Lord is thy shelter at thy right hand. The sun shall not burn thee by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord shall keep thee from all evil, the Lord shall guard thy soul. The Lord shall keep thy coming in and thy going out, from henceforth and for evermore.

### *Psalm 121*

I was glad because of them that said unto me: Let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet have stood in thy courts, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is builded as a city which its dwellers share in concord. For there the tribes went up, the tribes of the Lord, as a testimony for Israel, to give thanks to the name of the Lord. For there are set thrones unto judgement, thrones over the house of David. Ask now for the things which are for the peace of Jerusalem, and for the prosperity of them that love thee. Let peace be now in thy strength, and prosperity in thy palaces. For the sake of my brethren and my neighbours, I spake peace concerning thee. Because of the house of the Lord our God, I have sought good things for thee.

### *Psalm 122*

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. 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.

### *Psalm 123*

Had it not been that the Lord was with us, let Israel now say, had it not been that the Lord was with us, When men rose up against us, then had they swallowed us up alive. When their wrath raged against us, then had the water overwhelmed us. Our soul hath passed through a torrent; then had our soul passed through the water that is irresistible. Blessed be the Lord Who hath not given us to be a prey to their teeth. Our soul like a sparrow was delivered out of the snare of the hunters. The snare is broken, and we are delivered. Our help is in the name of the Lord, Who hath made heaven and the earth.

### *Stasis*

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

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia: Glory to Thee, O God. (*Thrice*)

Lord, have mercy. (*Thrice*)

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

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

*Psalm 124*

They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Sion; he that dwelleth at Jerusalem, nevermore shall he be shaken. Mountains are round about her, and the Lord is round about His people from henceforth and for evermore. For the Lord will not permit the rod of sinners to be upon the lot of the righteous, lest the righteous stretch forth their hands unto iniquities. Do good, O Lord, unto them that are good and unto the upright of heart. But them that turn aside unto crooked ways shall the Lord lead away with the workers of iniquity; peace be upon Israel.

*Psalm 125*

When the Lord turned again the captivity of Sion, we became as men that are comforted. Then was our mouth filled with joy, and our tongue with rejoicing. Then shall they say among the nations: The Lord hath done great things unto them. The Lord hath done great things among us, and we are become glad. Turn again, O Lord, our captivity, like streams in the south. They that sow with tears shall reap with rejoicing. In their going they went, and they wept as they cast their seeds. But in their coming shall they come with rejoicing, bearing their sheaves.

*Psalm 126*

Except the Lord build the house, in vain do they labour that build it. Except the Lord guard the city, in vain doth he watch that guardeth her; it is vain for you to rise at dawn. Ye that eat the bread of sorrow, rouse your-selves after resting, when He hath given sleep to His beloved. Lo, sons are the heritage of the Lord, the reward of the fruit of the womb. Like arrows in the hand of a mighty man, so are the sons of them that were outcasts. Blessed is he that shall fulfil his desires with them; they shall not be put to shame when they speak to their enemies in the gates.

*Psalm 127*

Blessed are all they that fear the Lord, that walk in His ways. Thou shalt eat the fruit of thy labours; blessed art thou, and well shall it be with thee. Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine on the sides of thy house, Thy sons like young olive trees round about thy table. Behold, so shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord. The Lord bless thee out of Sion, and mayest thou see the good things of Jerusalem all the days of thy life. And mayest thou see thy children's children; peace be upon Israel.

*Psalm 128*

Many a time have they warred against me from my youth, let Israel now say, Many a time have they warred against me from my youth, and yet they have not prevailed against me. The sinners wrought upon my back, they lengthened out their iniquity. The Lord is righteous; He hath cut asunder the necks of sinners. Let them be put to shame and turned back, all they that hate Sion. Let them be as the grass upon the housetops, which before it is plucked up is withered away. Wherefore the reaper filleth not his hand, nor he that gathereth sheaves his bosom. Nor have they that passed by said: The blessing of the Lord come upon you; we have blessed you in the name of the Lord.

*Stasis*

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

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

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia: Glory to Thee, O God. (*Thrice*)

Lord, have mercy. (*Thrice*)

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

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

*Psalm 129*

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 shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, O Lord, who shall stand? For with Thee there is forgiveness. For Thy name's sake have I patiently waited for Thee, O Lord; my soul hath waited patiently for Thy word, my soul hath hoped in the Lord. From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch let Israel hope in the Lord. For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption; and He shall redeem Israel out of all his iniquities.

*Psalm 130*

O Lord, my heart is not exalted, nor are mine eyes become lofty. Nor have I walked in things too great or too marvelous for me. If I were not humble-minded but exalted my soul, as one weaned from his mother, so wouldst Thou requite my soul. Let Israel hope in the Lord, from henceforth and for evermore.

*Psalm 131*

Remember, O Lord, David and all his meekness. How he made an oath unto the Lord, and vowed unto the God of Jacob: I shall not go into the dwelling of my house, I shall not ascend upon the bed of my couch, I shall not give sleep to mine eyes, nor slumber to mine eyelids, nor rest to my temples, Until I find a place for the Lord, a habitation for the God of Jacob. Lo, we have heard of it in Ephratha, we have found it in the plains of the wood. Let us go forth into His tabernacles, let us worship at the place where His feet have stood. Arise, O Lord, into Thy rest, Thou and the ark of Thy holiness. Thy priests shall be clothed with righteousness, and Thy righteous shall rejoice. For the sake of David Thy servant, turn not Thy face away from Thine anointed one. The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David, and He will not annul it: Of the fruit of thy loins will I set upon thy throne. If thy sons keep My covenant and these testimonies which I will teach them, Their sons also shall sit for ever on thy throne. For the Lord hath elected Sion, He hath chosen her to be a habitation for Himself. This is My rest for ever and ever; here will I dwell, for I have chosen her. Blessing, I will bless her pursuit; her beggars will I satisfy with bread. Her priests will I clothe with salvation, and her saints with rejoicing shall rejoice. There will I make to spring forth a horn for David, I have prepared a lamp for My Christ. His enemies will I clothe with shame, but upon Him shall My sanctification flourish.

*Psalm 132*

Behold now, what is so good or so joyous as for brethren to dwell together in unity? It is like the oil of myrrh upon the head, which runneth down upon the beard, upon the beard of Aaron, which runneth down to the fringe of his raiment. It is like the dew of Aermion, which cometh down upon the mountains of Sion. For there the Lord commanded the blessing, life for evermore.

*Psalm 133*

Behold now, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord. Ye that stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God, In the nights lift up your hands unto the holies, and bless the Lord. The Lord bless thee out of Sion, He that made heaven and the earth.

*Final Stasis*

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

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. (*Twice*)

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia: Glory to Thee, O God our Hope, O Lord, glory be to Thee.

**“LORD, I HAVE CRIED” IN TONE ONE**

*Psalm 140*

*Choir:* O Lord, I have cried out unto Thee, hear Thou me; hear Thou me, O Lord. O Lord, I have cried out unto Thee, hear Thou me. Give ear to the voice of my supplication when I cry out unto Thee: hear Thou me, O Lord.

*Choir:* Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as the incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice; hear Thou me, O Lord.

- Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth and a protecting door about my lips.
- Incline not my heart to evil words, to make excuses in sins.
- With men that work iniquity; and I will not communicate with the choicest of them.
- The just man shall correct me in mercy, and shall reprove me; but let not the oil of the sinner anoint my head.
- For my prayer also shall still be against the things with which they are well pleased; their judges falling upon the rock have been swallowed up.
- They shall hear my words for they are sweet; as when the thickness of the earth is broken upon the ground, their bones are scattered by the side of Hell.
- But to Thee, O Lord, are my eyes; in Thee have I put my trust; take not away my soul.
- Keep me from the snare(s) which they have laid for me, and the traps of the workers of iniquity.
- Let the wicked fall into their own nets, while I alone escape.

*Psalm 141*

- I cried unto the Lord with my voice; with my voice unto the Lord did I make my supplication.
- I poured out my supplication before Him; I showed before Him my trouble.
- When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then Thou knewest my path.
- In the way wherein I walked have they secretly laid a snare for me.
- I looked on my right hand and beheld, but there was no one that would know me.
- Refuge failed me; no one cared for my soul.
- I cried unto Thee, O Lord; I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.
- Attend unto my cry, for I am brought very low.
- Deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than I.
- Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise Thy Name.
- The righteous shall wait for me, until Thou recompense me.

*Psalm 129*

- Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice.
- Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.

For the Fourth Wednesday in Tone One

**Verse 6.** *If Thou, O Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? For with Thee there is forgiveness.*

Let us clean our souls with the water of the fast. Let us draw near to the precious and pure cross of the Lord, venerating it in faith and drawing divine enlightenment, even now obtaining eternal salvation, peace and Great Mercy.

**Verse 5.** *Because of Thy Name have I waited for Thee, O Lord; my soul hath waited upon Thy word, my soul hath hoped in the Lord.*

O Cross, boast of Apostles, surrounded by principalities, powers and archangels, save those who bow down before thee from all harm, and enable us to fulfill well the divine course of abstinence, to attain to the saving day, by which we are saved.

For the Fourth Wednesday in Tone Seven

**Verse 4.** *From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch let Israel trust in the Lord.* Today, as we bow before the Cross of the Lord, let us cry: Rejoice, O tree of life, the tormentor of hell. Rejoice, O joy of the world, the destroyer of corruption. Rejoice, O power which drives out demons. Rejoice, O confirmation of the faithful, invincible weapon. Preserve and sanctify those who kiss thee.

For St. Nikon in Tone Four (\*\*As one valiant\*\*)

**Verse 3.** *For with the Lord there is mercy and with Him is abundant redemption, and He will deliver Israel from all his iniquities.*

With the bridle of abstinence, \* thou didst tame the intractable \* pleasures of the body and balking of the flesh; \* and overcoming by grace all of the enemy's weaponry \* as a mighty champion \* with the Spirit's almighty strength, \* thou wast shown to be \* a sure guide to the monks that ever followed thy divine and all-wise preaching, \* O blessed Nikon most ven'erable.

**Verse 2.** *Praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise Him, all ye people.*

Rising up as a blazing sun \* from the East, O all-blessed one, \* thou didst shine with splendor, enlight'ning all the world \* with the bright beaming of miracles, while drawing unto thyself, \* like a choir of shining stars, \* thy disciples that followed thee; \* with whom thou didst strive \* with great firmness in contest; and beheaded with the sword, ye gave your spirits \* into the hands of the King of all.

**Verse 1.** *For His mercy is great toward us, and the truth of the Lord endureth forever.*

Neither famine nor nakedness, \* neither perils nor painful stripes, \* nor a truly violent death could separate \* you from the love of Christ Jesus; but, O prizewinners, following \* your Good Shepherd as pure lambs \* unto slaughter, ye made your way \* whence the sun doth set \* and have reached that unwaning lot, the Kingdom of the Heavens, wearing laurels, \* O Martyrs worthy of wonderment.

#### THEOTOKION FOR FOURTH WEDNESDAY OF LENT IN TONE EIGHT

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

Today the unapproachable by nature approaches me, and frees me from passions by enduring the Passion. The Light of the blind is spat upon by sinful men, and gives His back to scourgings for the sake of the captives. When the pure Virgin Mother beheld Him on the Cross, she cried out in pain: Woe to me! What is this Thou hast done, O my Child? Thou, Whose beauty was fairer than that of any man, appearest lifeless, with no form of comeliness. Woe to me, O my Light. I cannot

bear to look upon Thee sleeping. My being is wounded, for a sword has pierced my heart. But I praise Thy Passion, and I bow before Thy compassion. O long-suffering Lord, glory to Thee.

## THE HYMN OF THANKSGIVING AT THE LIGHTING OF THE LAMPS

*(Read, not sung!)*

Gladsome light of the Holy glory that shines from the immortal Father in Heaven, the Holy, the Blessed, O Jesus Christ! Lo now that we come to sunset, now that we see the evening light, we sing the praise of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, One God. Worthy art Thou to be praised at all times with voices meet for holy song. Son of God, Thou Giver of Life, wherefore the world glorifieth thee.

### THE FIRST OLD TESTAMENT READING

*Prokeimenon, in tone 4 (Ps.71)*

*Reader:* Blessed is the Lord, the God of Israel, Who alone doeth wonders.

*Verse:* O God, give Thy judgment to the king, and Thy righteousness to the son of the king.

The reading is from the book of Genesis. (9:18-10:1)

The sons of Noah who went forth from the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Ham was the father of Canaan. These three were the sons of Noah; and from these the whole earth was peopled. Noah was the first tiller of the soil. He planted a vineyard; and he drank of the wine, and became drunk, and lay uncovered in his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside. Then Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it upon both their shoulders, and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father; their faces were turned away, and they did not see their father's nakedness. When Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his youngest son had done to him, he said, "Cursed be Canaan; a slave of slaves shall he be to his brothers." He also said, "Blessed by the Lord my God be Shem; and let Canaan be his slave. God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem; and let Canaan be his slave." After the flood Noah lived 350 years. All the days of Noah were 950 years; and he died. These are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth; sons were born to them after the flood.

### THE SECOND OLD TESTAMENT READING

*Prokeimenon in tone 4 (Ps.72)*

*Reader:* It is good for me to cleave unto my God, to put my hope in the Lord.

*Verse:* How good is God to Israel, to them that are upright of heart!

The reading is from the book of Proverbs. (12:23-13:9)

A prudent man conceals his knowledge, but fools proclaim their folly. The hand of the diligent will rule, while the slothful will be put to forced labor. Anxiety in a man's heart weighs him down, but a good word makes him glad. A righteous man turns away from evil, but the way of the wicked leads them astray. A slothful man will not catch his prey, but the diligent man will get precious wealth. In the path of righteousness is life, but the way of error leads to death. A wise son hears his father's instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke. From the fruit of his mouth a good man eats good, but the desire of the treacherous is for violence. He who guards his mouth preserves his life; he who opens wide his lips comes to ruin. The soul of the sluggard craves, and gets nothing, while the soul of the diligent is richly supplied. A righteous man hates falsehood, but a wicked man acts shamefully and disgracefully. Righteousness guards him whose way is upright, but sin overthrows the wicked. One man pretends to be rich, yet has nothing;

another pretends to be poor, yet has great wealth. The ransom of a man's life is his wealth, but a poor man has no means of redemption. The light of the righteous rejoices, but the lamp of the wicked will be put out.

### THE EVENING PRAYER

*Reader:* 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 forever. Amen. Let thy mercy be upon us, O Lord, even 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 understand thy statutes. Blessed art thou, O Holy One; enlighten me with thy statutes. Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth forever. O despise not the works of thy hands. To thee belongeth worship, to thee belongeth praise, to thee belongeth glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

### LITANY OF SUPPLICATION (& THE PEACE) REPLACEMENT

*Reader:* Lord have mercy (*12 times*)

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

### THE APOSTICHA IN TONE FOUR

For the Fourth Wednesday in Tone Four

The fast, the means of receiving blessings, hath now led us halfway through its course, pleasing God with the days that are past and proposing purposeful tasks for the days ahead; for the increase of blessings produces a greater number of good deeds. Therefore, let us cry to Christ, the giver of all blessings; O Thou Who didst fast and endure the cross for our sakes, enable us to partake uncondemned of Thy divine Pascha, to lead our lives in peace, worthily glorifying Thee with the Father and the Spirit.

For the Fourth Wednesday in Tone Five

*Verse 1. Unto Thee have I lifted up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in heaven. Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hands of their masters, as the eyes of the handmaiden look unto the hands of her mistress, so do our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until He take pity upon us.*

Those who thirst for spiritual blessings perform their good deeds in secret, not noising them abroad in markets, but cherishing and keeping them in their hearts. For He who sees all that is done in secret will reward us for our abstinence. Let us fulfill the fast without sad faces, but ceaselessly praying in the depths of our hearts: Our Father, Who art in heaven, lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

*Verse 2. Have mercy upon us O Lord, have mercy upon us: for we are utterly humiliated. Let shame come on them that prosper, and abasement on the proud.*

With boundless love in your souls, O holy martyrs, ye did not forsake Christ. Enduring the various wounds of suffering, ye laid low the torturers' impudence. Preserving unbending and unshakeable faith, ye were translated into heaven. Since ye received boldness before Him, entreat Him to grant peace to the world, and for our souls Great Mercy.

### THEOTOKION FROM THE PARAKLITIKI IN TONE FIVE

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

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

Rejoice! Thou who art full of grace, Mother of Christ our God, for the King of Glory has appeared to Thee and the Most Holy Spirit has overshadowed Thee, so Thou hast boldness to beseech Him to save our souls.

## THE HYMN OF SYMEON THE GOD-RECEIVER

*Reader:* 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.

*Trisagion*

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 ages of ages. Amen

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. 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 ages of ages. Amen

Our Father, who art in heaven, 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.

*Leader:* O Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us.

*All:* Amen

## THE LENTEN APOLYTIKIA, IN TONE 5

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos Mary full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the Fruit of thy womb, for thou hast borne the Savior of our souls. (*Prostration.*)

O baptizer of Christ, remember us all that we may be delivered from our iniquities; for to thee has been given the grace to intercede for us all. (*Prostration.*)

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

Intercede for us, holy apostles and all the saints that we may be delivered from perils and sorrows; for we have acquired you as fervent intercessors before the Savior. (*Prostration.*)

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

Beneath thy compassions we take refuge, O Theotokos. Despise not our prayers in our necessity, but deliver us from harm, only pure, only blessed One. (*Simple metania*)

*Reader:* Lord, have mercy. (*40 times*)

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

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

More honorable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, thou who without corruption bearest God the Word and art truly Theotokos: we magnify thee.

*Leader:* Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us, and save us.

*Reader:* Amen. O heavenly King, support our believing kings; confirm their faith; guide the nations; give peace to the world and preserve well this holy church. Grant repose to our departed fathers and brothers, in the dwelling-places of the righteous. Receive us in repentance and confession, for Thou art good and the Lover of mankind

## THE PRAYER OF ST. EPHREM THE SYRIAN

*All:* O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of sloth, meddling, lust of power and idle talk. (*prostration*)

But give, rather, the spirit of chastity, humility, patience and love to thy servant. (*prostration*)

Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own sins and not to judge my brother, for thou art blessed unto ages of ages. Amen. (*prostration*)

*Then twelve reverences (with the sign of the Cross).*

*With each one we say: "O God, be gracious unto me a sinner."*

*Then the entire prayer without a break:*

O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of sloth, meddling, lust of power and idle talk. But give, rather, the spirit of chastity, humility, patience and love to thy servant. Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own sins and not to judge my brother, for thou art blessed unto ages of ages. Amen. (*prostration*)

### *Trisagion*

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 ages of ages. Amen

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. 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 ages of ages. Amen

Our Father, who art in heaven, 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.

*Leader:* O Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us.

*All:* Amen

*Leader:* 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: One is Holy, One is Lord, Jesus Christ, to the Glory of God the Father. Amen.

*Choir:* Blessed be the name of the Lord, henceforth and for evermore. (*3 times, with metania made each time*)

*Reader:* Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Both now and ever, and unto 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.<sup>1</sup>

*Reader:* It is truly meet to bless thee, O Theotokos, the ever blessed and all-blameless, and the mother of our God.

*Leader:* Most holy Theotokos, save us.

*Choir:* More honorable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, thou who without corruption bearest God the Word and art truly Theotokos: we magnify thee.

*The Leader bows toward the icon of Christ on the iconostasis, saying:*

*Leader:* Glory to thee, O Christ our God and our Hope, glory to thee.

*All:* Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. O Lord, bless.

## THE DISMISSAL

*Leader:* O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, through the intercessions of his all-immaculate and all-blameless holy Mother; *of the holy, glorious and all-laudable apostles; of the Holy Myrrh-Bearer and Equal to the Apostles Mary Magdalene, protector of this community; of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; of the Venerable Martyr Nikon of Sicily and with him 199 disciples; and the Venerable Martyr Luke of St. Anne Skete on Athos, whose memory we celebrate,* and of all the saints: have mercy on us, and save us, for Thou art good and lovest mankind.

*All:* Amen.

*Then, facing the icon of Christ, on the iconostasis, the Leader says:*

*Leader:* Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us, and save us.

*Reader:* Amen.

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<sup>1</sup> Some sources indicate that, after Psalm 33, we should also read Psalm 144.