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READER'S GREAT VESPERS ON SATURDAY, MARCH 25, 2023

(Eve of 41st Sunday after Pentecost & 4th Sunday in Lent¹)

***The Leave-taking of the Annunciation to the Theotokos &
The Synaxis of the Archangel Gabriel***

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

Reader: Amen.

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.

THE TRISAGION PRAYERS

People: 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.

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

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

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

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,

¹ Except for the Doxasticon in Matins and the Scripture readings in the Liturgy, the commemoration of St. John Climacus, usually appointed for 4th Sunday on Lent, is suppressed when the leave-taking of the Annunciation (March 26).

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.

FIRST STASIS OF FIRST KATHISMA

Psalm 1

Reader: Blessed is the man that hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seat of the pestilent. But his will is rather in the law of the Lord, and in His law will he meditate day and night. And he shall be like the tree which is planted by the streams of the waters, which shall bring forth its fruit in its season; and its leaf shall not fall, and all things whatsoever he may do shall prosper. Not so are the ungodly, not so; but rather they are like the chaff which the wind doth hurl away from the face of the earth. For this reason shall the ungodly not stand up in judgement, nor sinners in the council of the righteous. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, and the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Psalm 2

Why have the heathen raged, and the peoples meditated empty things? The kings of the earth were aroused, and the rulers were assembled together, against the Lord, and against His Christ. Let us break their bonds asunder, and let us cast away their yoke from us. He that dwelleth in the heavens shall laugh them to scorn, and the Lord shall deride them. Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath, and in His anger shall He trouble them. But as for Me, I was established as king by Him, upon Sion His holy mountain, proclaiming the commandment of the Lord. The Lord said unto Me: Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession. Thou shalt herd them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt shatter them like a potter's vessels. And now, O ye kings, understand; be instructed, all ye that judge the earth. Serve ye the Lord with fear, and rejoice in Him with trembling. Lay hold of instruction, lest at any time the Lord be angry, and ye perish from the righteous way. When quickly His wrath be kindled, blessed are all that have put their trust in Him.

Psalm 3

O Lord, why are they multiplied that afflict me? Many rise up against me. Many say unto my soul: There is no salvation for him in his God. But Thou, O Lord, art my helper, my glory, and the lifter up of my head. I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and He heard me out of His holy mountain. I laid me down and slept; I awoke, for the Lord will help me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people that set themselves against me round about. Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God, for Thou hast smitten all who without cause are mine enemies; the teeth of sinners hast Thou broken. Salvation is of the Lord, and Thy blessing is upon Thy people.

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.

“O LORD, I HAVE CRIED” IN TONE EIGHT

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 round 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, Lord, are mine eyes; in Thee have I put my trust, take not away my soul.
- Keep me from the snare which they have laid for me, and the traps of the workers of iniquity.
- Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst I alone escape.
- 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 man 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.

For the Resurrection in Tone Eight

Verse 10. Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise Thy Name.

Evening praise and spoken worship do we offer Thee, O Christ; for Thou didst consent to have mercy upon us by Thy Resurrection.

Verse 9. The righteous shall wait for me until Thou recompense me.

O Lord, O Lord, cast us not from before Thy face, but consent to have mercy upon us by Thy Resurrection.

Verse 8. Out of the depths have I cried to Thee, O Lord, Lord hear my voice.

Rejoice, O holy Zion, mother of the churches, the abode of God; for thou didst first receive forgiveness of sins by His Resurrection.

Verse 7. Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

Verily, the Word, born of the Father before the ages, hath Himself been incarnate in the last times by His own will, of one who knowest not wedlock. He did suffer crucifixion and death; and by His Resurrection He hath saved man dead of old.

For the Annunciation in Tone Six (***Having laid up all their hope***)

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

Coming to reveal to thee * that counsel which was determined * from before eternity, * Gabriel saluted thee, * crying out: Rejoice, * holy earth never sown; * bush unburnt, rejoice thou; * O rejoice, thou ladder raised on high, * which Jacob saw of old; * rejoice, thou depth unfathomed and unexplored; * rejoice, thou bridge which leadest up * to the highest Heaven; rejoice, divine * vessel of the Manna; *rejoice, complete destruction of the curse; * recall of Adam to God, rejoice: * With thee is the Lord Most High.

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.

To the Chief of Heaven's hosts, * the undefiled Maiden answered: * Thou dost seem to be a man; * how is it that thou dost speak * things beyond man's strength? * For thou hast said to me * that God shall be with me * and shall make His dwelling in my womb. * Tell me, I pray of thee, * how shall I become then the spacious land * and dwelling-place of holiness * for Him that doth ride on the Cherubim? * Do thou not beguile me * deceitfully; for pleasure I know not, * neither in wedlock have I been yoked. * How then shall I bear a child?

Verse 4. From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch let Israel trust in the Lord. Wheresoever God doth will, * there nature's order is conquered, * spake he that is bodiless; * and that which exceedeth man * then is brought to pass. * O thou all-holy Maid, * purer than all telling, * now believe these truthful words of mine. * She cried aloud to him: * Be it unto me now as thou hast said, * and I shall bear the Fleshless One, * Who shall borrow flesh from me, so that He, * Who alone is able, * might lead man back up to his first estate * and ancient dignity once again * by His union with our race.

For Archangel Gabriel in Tone One (***O all-lauded Martyrs***)

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

That mind which is truly like to God, * the great Gabriel, the heavenly, who shineth with splendor, who doth look upon the light * of the Three-Sun Godhead * with the Angels' hosts on high, * came down unto the Virgin, announcing the good tidings unto her: * that divine and fearful mystery; * and he ever * prayeth in our souls' behalf.

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

Behold, the great myst'ry that was hid * from eternity and unknown to the Angels, is now entrusted unto thee alone; * and as thou dost come down * to the town of Nazareth, * O Gabriel, thou tellest it unto the pure Maid and no one else. * Now with her, entreat the Lord of all * that He grant peace * and Great Mercy to our souls.

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

O thou who art ever filled with light * and fulfilllest the commands and holy will of the Sovereign and Almighty God of all, * leader of the Angels, * thou most excellent of all, * O Gabriel, preserve them that honor thee with faith and fervent love, * ever praying God in our behalf * that He grant peace * and Great Mercy to our souls.

DOXASTICON FOR THE ANNUNCIATION IN TONE SIX

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

Gabriel the Archangel was sent from Heaven to announce to the Virgin the glad tidings of her conceiving; and coming to Nazareth, he pondered in himself, amazed at the wonder. How shall He Who dwelleth in the highest, Whom none can comprehend, be born of a Virgin? Shall He Whose throne is Heaven, and Whose footstool is the earth, be held in the womb of a woman? He upon Whom the six-winged Seraphim and the many-eyed Cherubim cannot gaze, hath been pleased with a single word to become flesh of her. It is the Word of God Who is present. Why then do I stand here and not say to the Maiden: Rejoice, O Full of Grace; the Lord is with thee? Rejoice, O pure Virgin; rejoice, thou Bride unwedded. Rejoice, O Mother of Life; blessed is the Fruit of thy womb.

THEOTOKION FOR THE RESURRECTION IN TONE EIGHT

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

Verily, the King of heaven, for His love to mankind, did appear on earth; and with men did He deal; for He took unto Himself a body from the pure Virgin. And from her did He issue in the adopted body, He being one Son, dual in Nature, not dual in Person. Wherefore, do we confess, preaching the truth that Christ our God is perfect God and perfect Man. Therefore, O Mother who hast no groom, beseech thou Him to have mercy upon our souls.

THE HYMN OF THANKSGIVING AT THE LIGHTING OF THE LAMPS

Choir: 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.

SATURDAY EVENING PROKEIMENON IN TONE SIX

Leader: The Evening Prokeimenon!

Choir: The Lord is King, and hath clothed Himself with majesty. (*twice*)

Verse: The Lord is clothed with strength and He hath girt Himself;

Choir: The Lord is King, and hath clothed Himself with majesty.

Verse: For He established the world which shall not be shaken

Choir: The Lord is King, and hath clothed Himself with majesty.

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

Choir: The Lord is King, and hath clothed Himself with majesty.

AUGMENTED EKTENIA REPLACEMENT

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.

THE EVENING PRAYER

People: 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.

APOSTICHA FOR THE RESURRECTION IN TONE EIGHT

Thou didst ascend the Cross, O Jesus, Who didst descend from heaven. Thou didst come to death, O Life that dieth not, and to those who are in darkness, O true Light, and to the fallen, O Resurrection of all. Wherefore, O our Light and Savior, glory to Thee.

Verse 1. The Lord is King, and hath clothed Himself with majesty. The Lord is clothed with strength and He hath girt Himself.

Let us glorify Christ risen from the dead; for He did take unto Himself a soul and a body; and He separated one from the other in the Passion, when His pure soul went down to Hades which He led captive; and the holy body saw no corruption in the grave, the body of the Redeemer, Savior of our souls.

Verse 2. For He established the world which shall not be shaken.

With psalms and with songs of praise, O Christ, do we glorify Thy Resurrection from the dead, by which Thou didst deliver us from the rebellion of Hades. And since Thou art God, Thou didst grant us eternal life and the Great Mercy.

Verse 3. Holiness becometh Thy house, O Lord, unto length of days.

O Lord of all, O incomprehensible One; O Maker of heaven and earth, when Thou didst suffer in Thy Passion on the Cross, Thou didst pour out for me passionlessness; and when Thou didst submit to burial and didst rise in glory, Thou didst raise Adam with Thee by a mighty hand. Wherefore, glory to Thy third-day Resurrection by which Thou didst grant us eternal life and forgiveness of sins; for Thou alone art compassionate.

DOXASTICON FOR THE ANNUNCIATION 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.*

Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad; for the co-eternal and co-beginningless Son of the Father, Who is of one throne with Him, taking pity and filled with man-befriending mercy, condescended unto the emptying of Himself according to the good pleasure and will of the Father, and He dwelt in the Virgin's womb, which was purified before by the Spirit. O wonder! God is among men, the Uncontainable is in the womb, the Timeless One is in time; and wondrous it is that the conception is without seed, and the emptying ineffable, and the mystery so great! For God emptied Himself, and becometh flesh, and is fashioned, the Angel having declared the conception unto the pure Virgin: Rejoice, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with thee, even He that hath Great Mercy.

THE HYMN OF ST. SIMEON THE GOD-RECEIVER

Leader: 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.

THE TRISAGION PRAYERS

People: 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.

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE EIGHT

From the heights Thou didst descend, O compassionate One, and Thou didst submit to the three-day burial, that Thou might deliver us from passion; Thou art our life and our Resurrection, O Lord, glory to Thee.

APOLYTIKION OF THE ANNUNCIATION IN TONE FOUR

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

Today is the beginning of our salvation, and the manifestation of the mystery from the ages; for the Son of God becometh the Son of the Virgin, and Gabriel proclaimeth grace. Wherefore, do we shout with him to the Theotokos: Rejoice, O full of grace! The Lord is with thee.

APOLYTIKION OF THE ANNUNCIATION IN TONE FOUR

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

Today is the beginning of our salvation, and the manifestation of the mystery from the ages; for the Son of God becometh the Son of the Virgin, and Gabriel proclaimeth grace. Wherefore, do we shout with him to the Theotokos: Rejoice, O full of grace! The Lord is with thee.

THE DISMISSAL

Choir: Preserve, O God, the holy Orthodox faith and all Orthodox Christians, 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.

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.

Leader: O Thou Who condescended to become incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary for us men and for our salvation, and rose again from the dead, Christ our true God, through the intercessions of his all-immaculate and all-blameless holy Mother—whose Annunciation we now celebrate; by the protection of the honorable Bodiless Powers of Heaven—especially Gabriel—whose Synaxis we now celebrate; of our venerable and God-bearing fathers; of the Holy Myrrh-Bearer and Equal to the Apostles Mary Magdalene, protector of this community; of our righteous father Stephen the Confessor, abbot of Triglia, whose memory we celebrate today, and of all the saints: have mercy on us, and save us, for Thou art good and lovest mankind.

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.

All: Amen.