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EVENING MARCH 23, 2026 (5TH MONDAY IN GREAT LENT)¹

**READER'S SMALL COMPLINE WITH THE GREAT CANON OF
ST. ANDREW OF CRETE AND THE LIFE OF OUR HOLY MOTHER MARY OF EGYPT**

An icon (of the Saint, or of the Theotokos) is placed on a stand in the middle of the solea. The candles are lit and the church is semi-illuminated. There is no censuring during this service. The curtain and Royal Doors are closed for the entire service.

The Opening

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

All: Amen.

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 Prayers

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 evil.

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. (*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 50

Have mercy on me, O God, according to thy great mercy; and according to the multitude of thy compassions blot out my transgression. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me

¹ This service is transferred from Wednesday, March 25, 2026, due to the coincidence with the Feast of Annuciation.

from my sin. For I know mine iniquity, and my sin is ever before me. Against thee only have I sinned and done this evil before thee, that thou mightest be justified in thy words, and prevail when thou art judged. For behold, I was conceived in iniquities, and in sins did my mother bear me. For behold, thou has loved truth; the hidden and secret things of thy wisdom hast thou made manifest unto me. Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be made clean; thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow. Thou shalt make me to hear joy and gladness; the bones that be humbled, they shall rejoice. Turn thy face away from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and with thy governing Spirit establish me. I shall teach transgressors thy ways, and the ungodly shall turn back unto thee. Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation; my tongue shall rejoice in thy righteousness. O Lord, thou shalt open my lips, and my mouth shall declare thy praise. For if thou hadst desired sacrifice, I had given it; with whole-burnt offerings thou shalt not be pleased. A sacrifice unto God is a broken spirit; a heart that is broken and humbled God will not despise. Do good, O Lord, in thy good pleasure unto Sion, and let the walls of Jerusalem be builded. Then shalt thou be pleased with a sacrifice of righteousness, with oblation and whole-burnt offerings. Then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

Psalm 69

O God, be attentive unto helping me; O Lord, make haste to help me. Let them be ashamed and confounded that seek after my soul. Let them be turned back and brought to shame that desire evils against me. Let them be turned back straightway in shame that say unto me: Well done! Well done! Let them be glad and rejoice in thee all that seek after thee, O God, and let them that love thy salvation say continually: The Lord be magnified. But as for me, I am poor and needy; O God, come unto mine aid. My Helper and my Deliverer art thou, O Lord; make no long tarrying.

Psalm 142

O Lord, hear my prayer, give ear unto my supplication in thy truth; hearken unto me in thy righteousness. And enter not into judgement with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified. For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath humbled my life down to the earth. He hath sat me in darkness as those that have been long dead, and my spirit within me is become despondent; within me my heart is troubled. I remembered days of old, I meditated on all thy works, I pondered on the creations of thy hands. I stretched forth my hands unto thee; my soul thirsteth after thee like a waterless land. Quickly hear me, O Lord; my spirit hath fainted away. Turn not thy face away from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit. Cause me to know, O Lord, the way wherein I should walk; for unto thee have I lifted up my soul. Rescue me from mine enemies, O Lord; unto thee have I fled for refuge. Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God. Thy good Spirit shall lead me in the land of uprightness; for thy name's sake, O Lord, shalt thou quicken me. In thy righteousness shalt thou bring my soul out of affliction, and in thy mercy shalt thou utterly destroy mine enemies. And thou shalt cut off them that afflict my soul, for I am thy servant.

Little Doxology

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among men.

We hymn thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee, we give thanks unto thee for thy great glory.

O Lord, King, heavenly God, Father Almighty; O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ; and the Holy Spirit.

O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy on us, thou that takest away the sins of the world.

Receive our prayer, thou that sittest at the right hand of the Father, and have mercy on us. For thou only art holy, thou only art the Lord, O Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Every evening will I bless thee, and I will praise thy name forever; yea, forever and ever.

Lord, thou hast been our refuge from generation to generation. I said:

Lord, be merciful unto me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee.

Lord, I have fled unto thee: teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God; for with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.

O continue thy mercy unto them that know thee.

Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this night 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. Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

The Symbol of Faith

All: I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible;

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-begotten, Begotten of the Father before all worlds, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, Begotten, not made; of one essence with the Father, by whom all things were made: Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and was made man; And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried; And the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; And ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father; And He shall come again with glory to judge the quick and the dead, Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets;

And I believe in One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins. I look for the Resurrection of the dead, And the Life of the world to come. Amen.

All: It is truly meet to bless thee, O Theotokos, the ever blessed and all-blameless, and the mother of our God. More honourable 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 GREAT CANON OF ST. ANDREW OF CRETE, IN TONE 6

A prostration is made at the words "Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me."

No prostration is made with other refrains.²

Ode 1.

Eirmos: He is my Helper and Protector, and has become my salvation. This is my God and I will glorify Him. My father's God and I will exalt Him. For gloriously has He been glorified. (*twice*)

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Where shall I begin to lament the deeds of my wretched life? What first-fruit shall I offer, O Christ, for my present lamentation? But in Thy compassion grant me release from my falls.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Come, wretched soul, with your flesh, confess to the Creator of all. In future refrain from your former brutishness, and offer to God tears in repentance.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Having rivaled the first-created Adam by my transgression, I realize that I am stripped naked of God and of the everlasting kingdom and bliss through my sins.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Alas, wretched soul! Why are you like the first Eve? For you have wickedly looked and been bitterly wounded, and you have touched the tree and rashly tasted the forbidden food.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

The place of bodily Eve has been taken for me by the Eve of my mind in the shape of a passionate thought in the flesh, showing me sweet things, yet ever making me taste and swallow bitter things.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Adam was rightly exiled from Eden for not keeping Thy one commandment, O Savior. But what shall I suffer who am always rejecting Thy living words?

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I have willfully incurred the guilt of Cain's murder, since by invigorating my flesh I am the murderer of my soul's awareness, and have warred against it by my evil deeds.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I have not resembled Abel's righteousness, O Jesus. I have never offered Thee acceptable gifts, nor divine actions, nor a pure sacrifice, nor an unblemished life.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Like Cain, we too, O wretched soul, have likewise offered to the Creator of all foul deeds, defective sacrifice and a useless life. Therefore we too are condemned.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

In molding my clay into life, O Potter, Thou didst put in me flesh and bones, breath and vitality. But, O my Creator, my Redeemer and Judge, accept me who repent.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I confess to Thee, O Savior, the sins I have committed, and the wounds of my body and soul which murderous thoughts like robbers within have inflicted upon me.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I have sinned, O Savior, yet I know that Thou art the Lover of men. Thou strikest compassionately and pitiest warmly. Thou seest me weeping and runnest towards me as the Father recalling the Prodigal.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

² Alternatively, some sources indicate that with each refrain we make the sign of the Cross and bow three times.

In old age even, O Savior, do not cast me out empty to hell as I lie prostrate before Thy gates. But before my end, in Thy love for men, grant me release from my falls.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I am the one by my thoughts who fell among robbers; and now I am all wounded by them, full of sores. But stand by me, O Christ my Savior, and heal me.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

The priest saw me first and passed by on the other side. Then the Levite took a look at my sufferings and disdained my nakedness. But stand by me, O Jesus Who didst dawn out of Mary, and have compassion on me.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

O Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of all, take from me the heavy yoke of sin, and in Thy compassion grant me tears of compunction

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

It is time for repentance. I draw near to Thee, my Creator. Take from me the heavy yoke of sin, and in Thy compassion grant me tears of compunction.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Abhor me not, O Savior, cast me not away from Thy face. Take from me the heavy yoke of sin, and in Thy compassion grant me release from my falls.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

All my sins, voluntary and involuntary, obvious and secret, known and unknown, forgive, O Savior, for Thou art God; be merciful and save me.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

From my youth, O Christ, I have rejected Thy commandments. I have passed my whole life without caring or thinking as a slave of my passions. Therefore, O Savior, I cry to Thee: At least in the end save me.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I have squandered in profligacy my substance, O Savior, and I am barren of virtues and piety; but famished I cry: O Father of mercies, forestall and have compassion on me.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I fall prostrate before Thee, O Jesus. I have sinned against Thee, be merciful to me. Take from me the heavy yoke of sin, and in Thy compassion grant me tears of compunction.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Enter not into judgment with me, by recording my deeds, demanding an account of my words, and examining my motives and desires. But in Thy compassion disregard my terrible past and save me, O God All-Powerful.

*Another Canon for Ss. Mary of Egypt & Andrew of Crete
same tone & eirmos*

Refrain: Holy Mother Mary, pray to God for us.

Grant me that illuminating grace from on high given thee by Divine Providence that I may escape the darkening of the passions and fervently sing of the thrilling achievements of thy life, O Mary.

Refrain: Holy Mother Mary, pray to God for us.

By submitting to Christ's divine laws Thou didst draw near to Him, having left the unbridled craving for pleasure, and with all discretion thou didst achieve every virtue as one.

Refrain: Holy Father Andrew, pray to God for us.

By thy prayers, O Andrew, deliver us from degrading passions, and make us who with faith and love sing of thee partakers now of the Kingdom of Christ, O renowned father, we pray.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
Superessential Trinity, adored in Unity, take from me the heavy yoke of sin, and in Thy compassion grant me tears of compunction.

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.
Mother of God, hope and intercessor of those who sing of thee, take from me the heavy yoke of sin, and as thou art our pure Lady, accept me who repent.

Ode 2.

Eirmos: Attend, O heaven, and I will speak, and will sing of Christ who came to dwell among us in flesh which He took from the Virgin. (*twice*)

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
Attend, O heaven, and I will speak; O earth, give ear to a voice repenting to God and singing praises to Him.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
Attend to me, O God my Savior, with Thy merciful eye, and accept my fervent confession.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
I have sinned above all men, I alone have sinned against Thee. But as God have compassion, O Savior, on Thy creature.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
A storm of passions besets me, O compassionate Lord. But stretch out Thy hand to me too, as to Peter.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
The tears of the harlot, O merciful Lord, I too offer to Thee. Be merciful to me, O Savior, in Thy compassion.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
I have darkened the beauty of my soul with passionate pleasures, and my whole mind I have reduced wholly to mud.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
I have torn my first garment which the Creator wove for me in the beginning, and therefore I am lying naked.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
I have put on a torn coat, which the serpent wove for me by argument, and I am ashamed.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
I looked at the beauty of the tree, and my mind was seduced; and now I lie naked, and I am ashamed.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
All the demon-chiefs of the passions have plowed on my back, and long has their tyranny over me lasted.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
I have lost my first-created beauty and comeliness; and now I lie naked, and I am ashamed.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
Sin which stripped me of my former God-woven clothing has also sewn on me coats of skin.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I am wrapped in a garment of shame as with fig leaves, in reproof of my selfish passions.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I am clad in a coat that is spotted and shamefully bloodstained by the flow of my passionate and pleasure-loving life.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I have stained the coat of my flesh, and soiled what is in Thy image and likeness, O Savior.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I fell under the burden of passions and corruption of matter, and from then until now I am oppressed by the enemy.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Having preferred a possessive and pleasure-loving life to spiritual poverty, O Savior, I am now harnessed with a heavy yoke.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I have adorned the idol of my flesh with the many-colored clothing of shameful thoughts, and I am condemned.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I have been anxiously concerned only about outward adornment, and have neglected the inner temple made in the image of God.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Having formed by my pleasure-loving desires the deformity of my passions, I have marred the beauty of my mind.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I have buried with passions the beauty of the original image, O Savior. But seek and find it, like the lost coin.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Like the harlot I cry to Thee: I have sinned, I alone have sinned against Thee. Accept my tears also, O Savior, as perfume.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I have slipped and fallen like David through lack of discipline, and I am covered with filth; but wash me too, O Savior, with my tears.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Like the publican I cry to Thee: Be merciful, O Savior, be merciful to me; for no child of Adam has sinned as I against Thee.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

No tears, no repentance have I, no compunction. But as God, O Savior, grant me these.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Close not Thy door to me then, Lord, Lord; but open it to me who repent to Thee.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

O Lover of men, Who wishest all to be saved, in Thy goodness recall me and receive me who repent.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Give ear to the sighs and groans of my soul, and accept the drops of my eyes, O Savior, and save me.

Refrain: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Spotless Mother of God, only all-hymned Virgin, pray intensely that we may be saved.

Another Eirmos: See, see that I am God, Who rained manna and made water spout from the rock of old for my people in the wilderness, by My right hand, and by My strength alone. (*twice*)

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

See, see that I am God: give ear, my soul, to the Lord Who is appealing to you, and tear yourself from your former sin, and fear Him as the Avenger, and as your Judge and God.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Whom do you resemble, O most sinful soul? Surely the first Cain and that wicked Lamech. For you have stoned your body with evil deeds, and you have murdered your mind with irrational appetites.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Running through all who lived before the Law, my soul, you have not been like Seth, nor imitated Enos, nor Enoch by translation, nor Noah. But you are seen to be bereft of the life of the righteous.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

You alone have opened the cataracts of the wrath of God, my soul, and have flooded as the earth all your flesh and actions and life, and have remained outside the Ark of Salvation.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

"I have killed a man to the wounding of myself," said Lamech, "and a young man to my own hurt," he cried out wailing. But you, my soul, do not tremble, while polluting the flesh and defiling the mind.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

O how I have emulated that old murderer Lamech! By my pleasure-loving cravings I have killed my soul as the man, my mind as the young man, and my body as my brother, like Cain the murderer.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

You would have contrived to build a tower, my soul, and erect a stronghold for your lusts, had not the Creator confounded your plans and brought your schemes crashing to earth.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I am struck and wounded! See the arrows of the enemy with which my soul and body are pierced all over! See the wounds, the sores and the mutilations that cry out and betray the blows of my self-chosen passions!

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

The Lord rained fire from the Lord of old, and burnt up the wanton wickedness of Sodom. But you, my soul, have kindled the fire of hell, in which you are about to be bitterly burnt.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Know and see that I am God, Who searches hearts, punishes thoughts, reproves actions, and burns sins, and judges the orphan, the humble and the poor.

Another Canon for Ss. Mary & Andrew

Refrain: Holy Mother Mary, pray to God for us.

Thou didst stretch out thy hands to the merciful God, O Mary, when sunk in the lowest vices. And He Who by every means was seeking thy conversion, lovingly stretched out a helping hand as to Peter.

Refrain: Holy Mother Mary, pray to God for us.

With all eagerness and love thou didst run to Christ, abandoning thy former way of sin. And being nourished in the untrodden wilderness, thou didst chastely fulfill His divine commandments.

Refrain: Holy Father Andrew, pray to God for us.

Let us see, let us see, O soul, our Lord and God's love for men. So before the end let us fall down before Him with tears and cry: By the prayers of Andrew, O Savior, have mercy on us.

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

Unoriginate, uncreated Trinity, indivisible Unity, accept me who repent, save me who have sinned. I am Thy creation, despise me not, but spare me and deliver me from the fire of condemnation.

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

Spotless lady, Mother of God, hope of those who run to thee, and haven of those in distress, obtain grace for me from the merciful One, Thy Son and Creator, by thy prayers.

Ode 3.

Eirmos: Establish Thy Church on the unshakable rock of Thy commandments, O Christ. (*twice*)

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

The Lord rained fire from the Lord, my soul, and burnt up the former land of Sodom.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Escape to the mountain like Lot, my soul, and make Zoar your refuge in time.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Run from the burning, my soul! Run from the heat of Sodom! Run from the destruction of the divine flame.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I confess to Thee, O Savior, I have sinned, I have sinned against Thee, but absolve and forgive me in Thy compassion.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I alone have sinned against Thee, sinned above all men. O Christ my Savior, spurn me not.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Thou art the good Shepherd; seek me, Thy lamb, and neglect not me who have gone astray.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Thou art my sweet Jesus, Thou art my Creator; in Thee, O Savior, I shall be justified.

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

O Trinity, Unity, God, save us from delusion and temptations and distressing circumstances.

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

Rejoice, God-receiving womb! Rejoice, throne of the Lord! Rejoice, Mother of our Life!

Another Eirmos: Establish, O Lord, my unstable heart on the rock of Thy commandments, for Thou only art Holy and Lord. (*twice*)

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

In Thee, the Conqueror of death, I have found the Source of Life, and from my heart I cry to Thee before my end: I have sinned, be merciful, save me.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I have imitated those who were licentious in Noah's time, and I have earned a share in their condemnation of drowning in the flood.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I have sinned, O Lord, I have sinned against Thee. Be merciful to me. For there is no one who has sinned among men whom I have not surpassed by my sins.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

You have imitated Ham, that spurner of his father, my soul. You have not concealed your neighbor's shame by returning to him looking backwards.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

You have not inherited Shem's blessing, wretched soul, nor have you received that vast possession like Japheth in the land of forgiveness.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Come out, my soul, from sin, from the land of Haran! Come into the land of eternal life flowing with incorruption which Abraham inherited.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

You have heard, my soul, how Abraham of old left the land of his fathers and became a nomad. Imitate his resolution.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

At the Oak of Mamre the Patriarch entertained Angels, and inherited in his old age the spoil of the promise.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Knowing, my wretched soul, how Isaac was mystically offered to the Lord as a new sacrifice and holocaust, imitate his resolution.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

You have heard of Ishmael (be watchful, my soul!) who was driven out as the son of a slave-girl. Beware lest you suffer something similar by your lusting.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

You, my soul, have become like Hagar the Egyptian of old. You have become enslaved by your own choice and have a new Ishmael - stubborn self-will.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

You know, my soul, of the Ladder shown to Jacob reaching from earth to Heaven. Why have you not clung to the sure step of piety?

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Imitate that Priest of God and solitary King who was an image of the life of Christ in the world among men.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Be converted and groan, wretched soul, before the pageant of life comes to an end, before the Lord shuts the door of the bridal hall.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Do not be a pillar of salt, my soul, by turning back; but let the example of the Sodomites frighten you, and take refuge up in Zoar.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Run, my soul, like Lot from the fire of sin; run from Sodom and Gomorrah; run from the flame of every irrational desire.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Have mercy, O Lord, have mercy on me, I implore Thee, when Thou comest with Thy Angels to requite us all as our actions deserve.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
Reject not the prayer of those who praise Thee, O Lord; but have compassion on us, O Lover of men, and to those who ask with faith grant forgiveness.

Another Canon for Ss. Mary & Andrew

Refrain: Holy Mother Mary, pray to God for us.
I am hard pressed by the waves and billows of my sins, mother. But now bring me safely through, and lead me to the haven of divine repentance.

Refrain: Holy Mother Mary, pray to God for us.
In offering a fervent prayer at this time to the compassionate Mother of God, O Saint, by thy intercession open to me the divine right of entry.

Refrain: Holy Father Andrew, pray to God for us.
By thy prayers grant me release from my debts, O Andrew, prelate of Crete, for thou art an unsurpassed guide to the mysteries of repentance.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
Simple, uncreated Unity, unoriginate Nature praised in a Trinity of Persons, save us who with faith worship Thy power.

Both now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.
O Mother of God, unwedded thou gavest birth in time to the timeless Son of the Father, And - O strange wonder! - thou remainest a Virgin while suckling Him.

And again the Eirmos:

Establish, O Lord, my unstable heart on The rock of Thy commandments, for Thou only art Holy and Lord.

THE LIFE OF OUR HOLY MOTHER MARY OF EGYPT

Reader 1: The Life of our Holy Mother Mary of Egypt.

“It is good to hide the secret of a king, but it is glorious to reveal and preach the works of God;” (Tobit 12:7) so said the Archangel Raphael to Tobit when he performed the wonderful healing of his blindness. Actually, not to keep the secret of a king is perilous and a terrible risk, but to be silent about the works of God is a great loss for the soul. And I (says St. Sophronios), in writing the Life of St. Mary of Egypt, am afraid to hide the works of God by silence. Remembering the misfortune threatened to the servant who hid his God-given talent in the earth (*Matt. 25:18-25*), I am bound to pass on the holy account that has reached me. And let no one think (continues St. Sophronios) that I have had the audacity to write untruth or doubt this great marvel—may I never lie about holy things! If there do happen to be people who, after reading this record, do not believe it, may the Lord have mercy on them because, reflecting on the weakness of human nature, they consider impossible these wonderful things accomplished by holy people. But now we must begin to tell this most amazing story, which has taken place in our generation.

There was a certain elder in one of the monasteries of Palestine, a priest of holy life and speech, who from childhood had been brought up in monastic ways and customs. This elder’s name was Zosimas. He had been through the whole course of the ascetic life and in everything he adhered to the rule once given to him by his tutors as regard spiritual labors. He had also added a good deal himself whilst laboring to subject his flesh to the will of the spirit. And he had not failed in his aim. He was so renowned for his spiritual life that many came to him from neighboring monasteries and some even from afar. While doing all this, he never ceased to study the Divine Scriptures. Whether resting, standing, working or eating food (if the scraps he nibbled could be called

food), he incessantly and constantly had a single aim: always to sing of God, and to practice the teaching of the Divine Scriptures. Zosimas used to relate how, as soon as he was taken from his mother's breast, he was handed over to the monastery where he went through his training as an ascetic until he reached the age of fifty-three.

After that, he began to be tormented with the thought that he was perfect in everything and needed no instruction from anyone, saying to himself mentally: *"Is there a monk on earth who can be of use to me and show me a kind of asceticism that I have not accomplished? Is there a man to be found in the desert who has surpassed me?"*

Thus thought the elder, but suddenly an angel appeared to him and said: *"Zosimas, valiantly have you struggled, as far as this is within the power of man; valiantly have you gone through the ascetic course. But there is no man who has attained perfection. Before you lay unknown struggles greater than those you have already accomplished. That you may know how many other ways lead to salvation, leave your native land like the renowned patriarch Abraham and go to the monastery by the River Jordan."*

Zosimas did as he was told. He left the monastery in which he had lived from childhood, and went to the River Jordan. At last he reached the community to which God had sent him. Having knocked at the door of the monastery, he identified himself to the monk who was the porter, and the porter told the abbot. On being admitted to the abbot's presence, Zosimas made the usual monastic prostration and prayer. Seeing that he was a monk the abbot asked: *"Where do you come from, brother, and why have you come to us poor old men?"*

Zosimas replied: *"There is no need to speak about from where I have come, but I have come, father, seeking spiritual profit, for I have heard great things about your skill in leading souls to God."*

"Brother," the abbot said to him, *"Only God can heal the infirmity of the soul. May He teach you and us His divine ways and guide us. But as it is the love of Christ that has moved you to visit us poor old men, then stay with us, if that is why you have come. May the Good Shepherd Who laid down His life for our salvation fill us all with the grace of the Holy Spirit."*

After this, Zosimas bowed to the abbot, asked for his prayers and blessing, and stayed in the monastery. There he saw the elders proficient both in action and the contemplation of God, aflame in spirit, working for the Lord. They sang incessantly, they stood in prayer all night; work was ever in their hands and psalms on their lips. Never an idle word was heard among them; they knew nothing about acquiring temporal goods or the cares of life. But they had one desire—to become in body like corpses. Their constant food was the Word of God, and they sustained their bodies on bread and water, as much as their love for God allowed them. Seeing this, Zosimas was greatly edified and prepared for the struggle that lay before him.

Many days passed and the time drew near when all Christians fast and prepare themselves to worship the Divine Passion and Resurrection of Christ. The monastery gates were kept always locked and only opened when one from the community was sent out on some errand. It was a desert place, not only unvisited by people of the world but even unknown to them.

There was a rule in that monastery which was the reason why God brought Zosimas there. At the beginning of the Great Fast, on Forgiveness Sunday, the priest celebrated the Divine Liturgy and all partook of the holy body and blood of Christ. After the Liturgy, they went to the refectory and would eat a little Lenten meal.

Then all gathered in church and after praying earnestly with prostrations, the elders kissed one another and asked forgiveness. And each made a prostration to the abbot and asked his blessing and prayers for the struggle that lay before them. After this, the gates of the monastery were thrown open, and, singing, "*The Lord is my light and my Savior; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the defender of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?*" (Psalm 26:1) and the rest of that psalm, all went out into the desert and crossed the River Jordan. Only one or two brothers were left in the monastery, not to guard the property (for there was nothing to rob), but so as not to leave the church without Divine Service. Each took with him as much as he could or wanted in the way of food, according to the needs of his body: one would take a little bread, another some figs, another dates or wheat soaked in water. And some took nothing but their own bodies covered with rags and fed when nature forced them to it on the plants that grew in the desert.

After crossing the River Jordan, they all scattered far and wide in different directions. And this was the rule of life they had, and which they all observed—neither to talk to one another, nor to know how each one lived and fasted. If they did happen to catch sight of one another, they went to another part of the country, living alone and always singing to God, and at a definite time eating a very small quantity of food. In this way they spent the whole of the Fast and used to return to the monastery a week before the Resurrection of Christ, on Palm Sunday. Each one returned having his own conscience as the witness of his labor, and no one asked another how he had spent his time in the desert. Such were rules of the monastery. Every one of them whilst in the desert struggled with himself before God, the Judge of the struggle, not seeking to please men and fast before the eyes of all. For what is done for the sake of men, to win praise and honor, is not only useless to the one who does it but sometimes the cause of great punishment.

Zosimas did the same as all. And he went far, far into the desert with a secret hope of finding some father who might be living there and who might be able to satisfy his thirst and longing. And he wandered on tireless, as if hurrying on to some definite place. He had already walked for twenty days and when the sixth hour came he stopped and, turning to the East, he began to sing the Sixth Hour service and recite the customary prayers. He used to break his journey thus at fixed hours of the day to rest a little, to chant psalms while standing and to pray on bent knees.

And as he sang thus without turning his eyes from the heavens, he suddenly saw to the right of the hillock on which he stood the semblance of a human body. At first he was confused thinking he beheld a vision of the devil, and even started with fear. But, having guarded himself with the sign of the Cross and banished all fear, he turned his gaze in that direction and in truth saw some form gliding southward. It was naked, the skin dark as if burned up by the heat of the sun; the hair on its head was white as a fleece, and not long, falling just below its neck.

Zosimas was so overjoyed at beholding a human form that he ran after it in pursuit, but the form fled from him. He followed. At length, when he was near enough to be heard, he shouted: "*Why do you run from an old man and a sinner? Slave of the True God, wait for me, whoever you are; in God's name I tell you, for the love of God for Whose sake you are living in the desert.*"

The woman said: "*Forgive me for God's sake, but I cannot turn towards you and show you my face, Abba Zosimas. I am a woman and naked, as you see, with the uncovered shame of my body. But if you would like to fulfill one wish of a sinful woman, throw me your cloak so that I can cover my body and can turn to you and ask for your blessing.*"

Here terror seized Zosimas, for he heard that she called him by name. But he realized that she could not have done so without knowing anything of him if she had not had the power of spiritual

insight. He at once did as he was asked. He took off his old, tattered cloak and threw it to her, turning away as he did so. She picked it up and was able to cover at least a part of her body.

Then she turned to Zosimas and said: *“Why did you wish, Abba Zosimas, to see a sinful woman? What do you wish to hear or learn from me, you who have not shrunk from such great struggles?”*

Zosimas threw himself on the ground and asked for her blessing. She likewise bowed down before him. And thus they lay on the ground prostrate, asking for each other’s blessing. And one phrase alone could be heard from both: *“Bless me!”*

After a long while the woman said to Zosimas: *“Abba Zosimas, it is you who must give blessing and pray. You are dignified by the order of priesthood and for many years you have been standing before the holy altar and offering the sacrifice of the Divine Mysteries.”*

This flung Zosimas into even greater terror. At length with tears he said to her: *“O mother, filled with the spirit, by your mode of life it is evident that you live with God and have died to the world. The Grace granted to you is apparent—for you have called me by name and recognized that I am a priest, though you have never seen me before. Grace is recognized not by one’s orders, but by gifts of the Spirit, so give me your blessing for God’s sake, for I need your prayers.”*

Then giving way before the wish of the elder, the woman said: *“Blessed is God Who cares for the salvation of men and their souls.”*

Zosimas answered: *“Amen.”*

And both rose to their feet. Then the woman asked the elder: *“Why have you come, man of God, to me who am so sinful? Why do you wish to see a woman naked and devoid of every virtue? Though I know one thing—the Grace of the Holy Spirit has brought you to render me a service in time. Tell me, father, how are the Christian peoples living? And the kings? How is the Church guided?”*

Zosimas said: *“By your prayers, mother, Christ has granted lasting peace to all. But, fulfill the unworthy petition of an old man and pray for the whole world and for me who am a sinner, so that my wanderings in the desert may not be fruitless.”*

She answered: *“You who are a priest, Abba Zosimas, it is you who must pray for me and for all, for this is your calling. But as we must all be obedient, I will gladly do what you ask.”*

And with these words she turned to the East, and raising her eyes to Heaven and stretching out her hands, she began to pray in a whisper. One could not hear separate words, so that Zosimas could not understand anything that she said in her prayers. Meanwhile he stood, according to his own word, all in a flutter, looking at the ground without saying a word. And he swore, calling God to witness, that when at length he thought that her prayer was very long, he took his eyes off the ground and saw that she was raised about a forearm’s distance from the ground and stood praying in the air. When Zosimas saw this, even greater terror seized him and he fell on the ground weeping and repeating many times, *“Lord, have mercy.”*

And whilst lying prostrate on the ground he was tempted by a thought: *Is it not a spirit, and perhaps her prayer is hypocrisy?*

But at the very same moment the woman turned around, raised the elder from the ground and said: *“Thoughts, tempting you about me, trouble you, Abba, telling you I am a spirit, and that my prayer is feigned. Know, holy father, that I am only a sinful woman, though I am guarded by Holy Baptism. And I am not a spirit but earth and ashes, and flesh alone.”*

And with these words she guarded herself with the Sign of the Cross on her forehead, eyes, mouth and breast, saying: *“May God defend us from the evil one and from his designs, for fierce is his struggle against us.”*

Hearing and seeing this, the elder fell to the ground and, embracing her feet, he said with tears: *“I beg you, by the Name of Christ our God, Who was born of a Virgin, for Whose sake you have stripped yourself, for Whose sake you have exhausted your flesh, do not hide from your slave, who you are and whence and how you came into this desert. Tell me everything so that the marvelous works of God may become known. A hidden wisdom and a secret treasure—what profit is there in them? Tell me all, I implore you, for not out of vanity or for self-display will you speak but to reveal the truth to me, an unworthy sinner. I believe in God, for Whom you live and Whom you serve. I believe that He led me into this desert so as to show me His ways in regard to you. It is not in our power to resist the plans of God. If it were not the will of God that you and your life would be known, He would not have allowed me to see you and would not have strengthened me to undertake this journey, one like me who never before dared to leave his cell.”*

Much more said Abba Zosimas. But the woman raised him and said: *“I am ashamed, Abba, to speak to you of my disgraceful life; forgive me for God’s sake! But as you have already seen my naked body I shall likewise lay bare before you my work, so that you may know with what shame and obscenity my soul is filled. I was not running away out of vanity, as you thought, for of what have I to be proud—I who was the chosen vessel of the devil? But when I start my story you will run from me, as from a snake, for your ears will not be able to bear the vileness of my actions. But I shall tell you all without hiding anything, only imploring you first of all to pray incessantly for me, so that I may find mercy on the Day of Judgment.”*

The elder wept and the woman began her story. *“My native land, holy father, was Egypt. Already during the lifetime of my parents, when I was twelve years old, I renounced their love and went to Alexandria. I am ashamed to recall how there I at first ruined my maidenhood and then unrestrainedly and insatiably gave myself up to sensuality. It is more becoming to speak of this briefly, so that you may just know my passion and my lechery. For about seventeen years, forgive me, I lived like that. I was like a fire of public debauch. And it was not for the sake of gain—here I speak the pure truth. Often when they wished to pay me, I refused the money. I acted in this way so as to make as many men as possible to try to obtain me, doing free of charge what gave me pleasure. Do not think that I was rich and that was the reason why I did not take money. I lived by begging, often by spinning flax, but I had an insatiable desire and an irrepressible passion for lying in filth. This was life to me. Every kind of abuse of nature I regarded as life.*

“That is how I lived. Then one summer I saw a large crowd of Libyans and Egyptians running towards the sea. I asked one of them, ‘Where are these men hurrying to?’ He replied, ‘They are all going to Jerusalem for the Exaltation of the Precious and Life-giving Cross, which takes place in a few days.’ I said to him, ‘Will they take me with them if I wish to go?’ ‘No one will hinder you if you have money to pay for the journey and for food.’ And I said to him, ‘To tell you the truth, I have no money, neither have I food. But I shall go with them and shall go aboard. And they shall feed me, whether they want to or not. I have a body—they shall take it instead of pay for the journey.’ I was suddenly filled with a desire to go, Abba, to have more lovers who could satisfy my passion. I told you, Abba Zosimas, not to force me to tell you of my disgrace. God is my witness, I am afraid of defiling you and the very air with my words.”

Zosimas, weeping, replied to her: *“Speak on for God’s sake, mother, speak and do not break the thread of such an edifying tale.”*

And, resuming her story, she went on: *“That youth, on hearing my shameless words, laughed and went off. While I, throwing away my spinning wheel, ran off towards the sea in the direction which everyone seemed to be taking. And, seeing some young men standing on the shore, about ten or more of them, full of vigor and alert in their movements, I decided that they would do for my purpose (it seemed that some of them were waiting for more travelers whilst others had gone ashore). Shamelessly, as usual, I mixed with the crowd, saying, ‘Take me with you to the place you are going; you will not find me superfluous.’ I also added a few more words calling forth general laughter. Seeing my readiness to be shameless, they readily took me aboard the boat. Those who were expected came also, and we set sail at once.*

“How shall I relate to you what happened after this? Whose tongue can tell, whose ears can take in all that took place on the boat during that voyage! And to all this I frequently forced those miserable youths even against their will. There is no mentionable or unmentionable depravity of which I was not their teacher. I am amazed, Abba, how the sea stood our licentiousness, how the earth did not open its jaws, and how it was that hell did not swallow me alive, when I had entangled in my net so many souls. But I think God was seeking my repentance. For, He does not desire the death of a sinner but magnanimously awaits his return to Him. At last we arrived in Jerusalem. I spent the days before the festival in the town, living the same kind of life, perhaps even worse. I was not content with the youths I had seduced at sea and who had helped me to get to Jerusalem; many others—citizens of the town and foreigners—I also seduced.

“The holy day of the Exaltation of the Cross dawned while I was still flying about, hunting for youths. At daybreak I saw that everyone was hurrying to the church, so I ran with the rest. When the hour for the holy elevation approached, I was trying to make my way in with the crowd which was struggling to get through the church doors. I at last squeezed through with great difficulty almost to the entrance of the temple, from which the life-giving Tree of the Cross was being shown to the people. But when I trod on the doorstep through which everyone passed, I was stopped by some force which prevented my entering. Meanwhile I was brushed aside by the crowd and found myself standing alone in the porch. Thinking that this had happened because of my woman’s weakness, I again began to work my way into the crowd, trying to elbow myself forward. But in vain I struggled. Again my feet trod on the doorstep over which others were entering the church without encountering any obstacle. I alone seemed to remain unaccepted by the church. It was as if there was a detachment of soldiers standing there to oppose my entrance. Once again I was excluded by the same mighty force and again I stood in the porch.

“Having repeated my attempt three or four times, at last I felt exhausted and had no more strength to push and to be pushed, so I went aside and stood in a corner of the porch. And only then with great difficulty it began to dawn on me, and I began to understand the reason why I was prevented from being admitted to see the life-giving Cross. The word of salvation gently touched the eyes of my heart and revealed to me that it was my unclean life which barred the entrance to me. I began to weep and lament and beat my breast, and to sigh from the depths of my heart.

“And so I stood weeping when I saw above me the icon of the most holy Mother of God. And turning to her my bodily and spiritual eyes I said: ‘O Lady, Mother of God, who gave birth in the flesh to God the Word, I know, O how well I know, that it is no honor or praise to thee when one

so impure and depraved as I looks up to thine icon, O Ever-Virgin, who didst keep thy body and soul in purity. Rightly do I inspire hatred and disgust before thy virginal purity. But I have heard that God Who was born of thee became man on purpose to call sinners to repentance. Then help me, for I have no other help. Order the entrance of the church to be opened to me. Allow me to see the venerable Tree on which He Who was born of thee suffered in the flesh and on which He shed His holy Blood for the redemption of sinners and for me, unworthy as I am. Be my faithful witness before thy son that I will never again defile my body by the impurity of fornication, but as soon as I have seen the Tree of the Cross I will renounce the world and its temptations and will go wherever thou wilt lead me.'

"Thus I spoke and, as if acquiring some hope in firm faith and feeling some confidence in the mercy of the Mother of God, I left the place where I stood praying. And I went again and mingled with the crowd that was pushing its way into the temple. And no one seemed to thwart me; no one hindered my entering the church. I was possessed with trembling, and was almost in delirium. Having gotten as far as the doors which I could not reach before—as if the same force which had hindered me cleared the way for me—I now entered without difficulty and found myself within the holy place. And so it was that I saw the life-giving Cross. I saw too the Mysteries of God and how the Lord accepts repentance. Throwing myself on the ground, I worshipped that holy earth and kissed it with trembling.

"Then I came out of the church and went to her who had promised to be my security, to the place where I had sealed my vow. And bending my knees before the Virgin Mother of God, I addressed to her such words as these: 'O loving Lady, thou hast shown me thy great love for all men. Glory to God Who receives the repentance of sinners through thee. What more can I recollect or say, I who am so sinful? It is time for me, O Lady, to fulfill my vow, according to thy witness. Now lead me by the hand along the path of repentance!'

"And at these words I heard a voice from on high: 'If you cross the Jordan you will find glorious rest.' Hearing this voice and having faith that it was for me, I cried to the Mother of God: 'O Lady, Lady, do not forsake me!'

"With these words I left the porch of the church and set off on my journey. As I was leaving the church a stranger glanced at me and gave me three coins, saying: 'Sister, take these.' And, taking the money, I bought three loaves and took them with me on my journey, as a blessed gift. I asked the person who sold the bread: 'Which is the way to the Jordan?' I was directed to the city gate which led that way. Running onward, I passed the gates and still weeping went on my journey.

"Those I had met I asked the way, and after walking for the rest of that day (I think it was nine o'clock when I saw the Cross) I at last reached at sunset the Church of St. John the Baptist which stood on the banks of the Jordan. After praying in the temple, I went down to the Jordan and rinsed my face and hands in its holy waters. I partook of the holy and life-giving Mysteries in the Church of the Forerunner and ate half of one of my loaves. Then, after drinking some water from the Jordan, I lay down and passed the night on the ground. In the morning I found a small boat and crossed to the opposite bank. I again prayed to Our Lady to lead me whither she wished. Then I found myself in this desert and since then up to this very day I am estranged from all, keeping away from people and running away from everyone. And I live here clinging to my God Who saves all who turn to Him from faintheartedness and storms."

THE GREAT CANON OF ST. ANDREW OF CRETE (CONTINUED), IN TONE 6

Ode 4.

Eirmos: The Prophet heard of Thy coming, O Lord, and was afraid that Thou wast to be born of a Virgin and appear to men, and he said "I have heard the report of Thee and am afraid." Glory to Thy power, O Lord. (*twice*)

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Despise not Thy works and forsake not Thy creation, O just Judge and Lover of men, though I alone have sinned as a man more than any man. But being Lord of all, Thou hast power to pardon sins.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

The end is drawing near, my soul, is drawing near! But you neither care nor prepare. The time is growing short. Rise! The Judge is near at the very doors. Like a dream, like a flower, the time of this life passes. Why do we bustle about in vain?

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Come to your senses, my soul! Consider the deeds you have done, and bring them before your eyes, and pour out the drops of your tears. Boldly tell your thoughts and deeds to Christ, and be acquitted.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

There has never been a sin or act or vice in life that I have not committed, O Savior. I have sinned in mind, word and choice, in purpose, will and action, as no one else has ever done.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Therefore I am condemned, wretch that I am, therefore I am doomed by my own conscience, than which there is nothing in the world more rigorous. O my Judge and Redeemer Who knowest my heart, spare and deliver and save me, Thy servant.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

The ladder of old which the great Patriarch saw, my soul, is a model of mounting by action and ascent by knowledge. So, if you wish to live in activity, knowledge and contemplation, be renewed.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Because of his crying need the Patriarch endured the scorching heat of the day, and he bore the frost of the night, daily making gains, shepherding, struggling, slaving, in order to win two wives.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

By the two wives understand action and direct knowledge in contemplation: Leah as action, for she had many children, and Rachel as knowledge, which is obtained by much labor. For without labors, my soul, neither action nor contemplation will achieve success.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Watch, my soul! Be courageous like the great Patriarchs, that you may acquire activity and awareness, and be a mind that sees God, and may reach in contemplation the innermost darkness, and be a great trader.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

The great Patriarch, by begetting the twelve Patriarchs, mystically set up for you, my soul, a ladder of active ascent, having wisely offered his children as rungs, and his steps as ascents.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

You have emulated the hated Esau, my soul, and have given up your birthright of pristine beauty to your supplanter, and you have lost your father's blessing, and have been tripped up twice in action and knowledge. Therefore, O wretch, repent now.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Esau was called Edom for his extreme passion of madness for women. For ever burning with incontinence and stained with pleasures, he was named Edom, which means a red-hot sin-loving soul.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Have you heard of Job who was made holy on a dunghill, O my soul? You have not emulated his courage, nor had his firmness of purpose in all you have learned or known, or in your temptations, but you have proved unpersevering.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

He who was formerly on a throne is now naked on a dunghill and covered with sores. He who had many children and was much admired is suddenly childless and homeless. Yet he regarded the dunghill as a palace and his sores as pearls.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

The opulent and righteous man, arrayed in royal dignity, crown and purple, abounding in wealth and cattle, was suddenly shorn of his riches, glory and kingdom and became a beggar.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

If he who was righteous and blameless beyond all did not escape the snares and nets of the deceiver, what will you do, my soul, who are sin-loving and wretched, if something unexpected happens to you?

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

My body is defiled, my spirit is sullied, and I am all covered with sores. But as the Physician, O Christ, heal, wash and cleanse both body and spirit with repentance, and make me, my Savior, purer than snow.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Thou didst lay down Thy body and blood for ail, O crucified Word: Thy body in order to renew me, Thy blood in order to wash me, and Thou didst surrender Thy spirit, O Christ, in order to bring me to the Father.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Thou hast wrought salvation in the midst of the earth, O merciful Creator, that we may be saved. Thou wast voluntarily crucified on the Tree: Eden that was closed is open; things on high and below, creation and all peoples are saved and worship Thee.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

May the blood and water that wells from Thy side be a font for me and a draught of forgiveness, that I may be cleansed, anointed and refreshed by both as with drink and unction by Thy living words, O Word.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I am bereft of the bridal hall, I am bereft of the marriage and supper. My lamp has gone out for want of oil, the door has been locked while I was asleep; the supper is eaten; and I, bound hand and foot, am cast outside.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

The Church has acquired Thy life-giving side as a chalice, from which gushes forth for us a twofold torrent of forgiveness and knowledge as a type of the two covenants, Old and New, O our Savior.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Brief is my lifetime and full of pain and wickedness, but accept me in penitence and recall me to awareness of Thee. May I never be the possession or food of the enemy. O Savior, have compassion on me.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Boastful I am, and hard-hearted, all in vain and for nothing. Condemn me not with the Pharisee, but rather grant me the humility of the Publican, O only merciful and just Judge, and number me with him.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I have sinned, I know, O merciful Lord, and outraged the vessel of my flesh, but accept me in penitence and recall me to awareness of Thee. May I never be the possession or food of the enemy. O Savior, have compassion on me.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I am become my own idol, and have injured my soul with passions, O merciful Lord, but accept me in penitence and recall me to awareness of Thee. May I never be the possession or food of the enemy. O Savior, have compassion on me.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I have not listened to Thy voice, I have disobeyed Thy Scripture, O Lawgiver, but accept me in penitence and recall me to awareness of Thee. May I never be the possession or food of the enemy. O Savior, have compassion on me.

Another Canon for Ss. Mary & Andrew

Refrain: Holy Mother Mary, pray to God for us.

By living a bodiless life in a body, O Saint, thou hast truly received great grace from God to intercede for those who faithfully honor thee. Therefore we implore thee: deliver us by thy prayers from trials of all kinds.

Refrain: Holy Mother Mary, pray to God for us.

Though dragged down to the depth of great offences, thou wast not held there. But with better thought thou didst return by action to consummate virtue beyond all expectation, to the amazement of angel kind, O Mary.

Refrain: Holy Father Andrew, pray to God for us.

O Andrew, glory of the Fathers, standing before the transcendently divine Trinity, by thy prayers cease not to intercede that we who invoke thee with love may be delivered from torment, O divine intercessor, adornment of Crete.

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

I confess Thee to be undivided in essence, unconfused in persons, One Triune Divinity, co-en-throned and co-reigning. I sing Thee the great song thrice sung on high.

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

Thou givest birth and livest a virgin life, and in both remainest a virgin by nature. He Who is born of thee renews the laws of nature, and a womb gives birth without travail. Where God wills, the order of nature is overruled; for He does whatever He wishes.

Ode 5.

Eirmos: Out of the night watching early for Thee, enlighten me, I pray, O Lover of men, and guide even me in Thy commandments, and teach me, O Savior, to do Thy will. (*twice*)

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I have passed my life ever in night, for the night of sin has been to me thick fog and darkness; but make me, O Savior, a Son of the day.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Like Reuben, wretch that I am, I have planned an unprincipled and lawless act against God Most High, having defiled my bed as he defiled that of his father.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I confess to Thee, O Christ my King: I have sinned, I have sinned, like Joseph's brothers of old, who sold the fruit of purity and chastity.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Righteous Joseph was given up by his brothers, that sweet soul was sold into slavery, as a type of the Lord; and you, my soul, have sold yourself completely to your vices.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Imitate, wretched and worthless soul, righteous Joseph and his pure mind, and do not be wanton with irrational desires, ever transgressing.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

If Joseph of old also occupied a pit, O Sovereign Lord, yet it was as a type of Thy Burial and Rising. But will I ever offer Thee anything like it?

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

You have heard, my soul, of Moses' ark of old, borne on the waters and waves of the river as in a shrine, which escaped the bitter tragedy of Pharaoh's edict.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

If you have heard of the midwives, wretched soul, who of old killed in infancy the manly issue and practice of chastity, then like the great Moses, suck wisdom.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

You, wretched soul, have not struck and killed your Egyptian mind, like great Moses. Say, then, how will you dwell in that desert solitude where the passions desert you through repentance?

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Great Moses dwelt in the wilds, my soul. So go and imitate his life, that you too may attain by contemplation to the vision of God in the bush.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Imagine Moses' staff striking the sea and fixing the deep as a type of the divine Cross, by which you too, my soul, can accomplish great things.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Aaron offered to God the fire pure and undefiled; but Hophni and Phinehas, like you, my soul, offered to God a foul and rebellious life.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

How heavy in character I have become, in soul and body, like Jannes and Jambres in Pharaoh's bitter service, and my mind has sunk low. But help me, O Lord.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I, wretch that I am, have rolled my mind in mud. But wash me, O Lord, in the bath of my tears, I pray Thee, and make the robe of my flesh as white as snow.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

When I examine my actions, O Savior, I see that I have gone beyond all men in sins; for I have sinned with knowledge consciously, and not in ignorance.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
Spare, spare, O Lord, Thy works. I have sinned; forgive me, for Thou alone art pure by nature, and apart from Thee there is none without defilement.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
Being God, for my sake Thou didst take my form, and didst work miracles, healing lepers and bracing paralytics; and Thou didst stop the flow of blood of the woman with hemorrhage, O Savior, through the touch of Thy hem.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
Imitate, wretched soul, the woman with hemorrhage. Run to Christ and hold His hem, that you may be healed of your maladies and hear from Him, "Your faith has saved you."

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
Imitate, my soul, the woman bent earthward; come and fall down at the feet of Jesus, that He may straighten you to walk upright in the footsteps of the Lord.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
Though Thou art a deep well, O Lord, pour on me streams from Thy immaculate wounds, that like the Samaritan woman I may drink and thirst no more; for from Thee gush rivers of life.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
May my tears be for me a Siloam, O Sovereign Lord, that I may wash the eyes of my soul and mentally see Thee Who art that light which was before creation.

Another Canon for Ss. Mary & Andrew

Refrain: Holy Mother Mary, pray to God for us.
Thou, all-blessed one, didst yearn with matchless love and longing to worship the Tree of Life, and thy desire was granted; make us also worthy to attain to the glory on high.

Refrain: Holy Mother Mary, pray to God for us.
Having crossed Jordan's stream, thou didst find rest by giving a wide berth to the deadening pleasure of the flesh, from which deliver us also by thy prayers, O saint.

Refrain: Holy Father Andrew, pray to God for us.
Eminent as the best of pastors, O wise Andrew, I pray thee with great love and veneration that by thy intercessions I may obtain salvation and eternal life.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
Thee, O Trinity, we glorify, the one God: Holy, Holy, Holy art Thou, Father, Son and Spirit, simple Being, Unity ever adored.

Both now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.
From thee, O pure maiden Mother and Virgin, God Who created the worlds and ages was clad in my clay and united to Himself human nature.

Ode 6.

Eirmos: I cried with my whole heart to the merciful God, and He heard me from the lowest hell and raised my life out of corruption. *(twice)*

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
I sincerely offer Thee with a pure intention, O Savior, the tears of my eyes and groans from the depths of my heart, crying: O God, I have sinned against Thee; be merciful to me.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
You, my soul, have revolted from the Lord like Dathan and Abiram. But with all your heart cry, "Spare!" that a yawning gulf of the earth may not swallow you.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Like a stampeding heifer stung to madness, my soul, you have resembled Ephraim. Winged with action, resolve and contemplation, save your life like a gazelle from the noose.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Let Moses' hand assure us, my soul, how God can whiten and cleanse a leprous life. So do not despair of yourself, even though you are leprous.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

The waves of my sins, O Savior, as in the Red Sea recoiled and covered me unawares, like the Egyptians of old and their charioteers.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Like Israel of old, my soul, you have had a foolish affection. For like a brute you have preferred to divine manna the pleasure-loving gluttony of the passions.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

The wells of Canaanite thoughts, my soul, you have prized above the Rock with the cleft from which the river of wisdom like a chalice pours forth streams of theology.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Swine's flesh and hotpots and Egyptian food you, my soul, have preferred to heavenly manna, as of old the senseless people in the wilderness.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

When Thy servant Moses struck the rock with his staff, he mystically typified Thy life-giving side, O Savior, from which we all draw the water of life.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Explore and spy out the Land of Promise like Joshua the Son of Nun, my soul, and see what it is like, and settle in it by observing the laws.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Rise and make war against the passions of the flesh, as Joshua did against Amalek, and ever conquer the Gibeonites' illusive thoughts.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Pass through the flowing nature of time, like the Ark of old, and take possession of the Land of Promise, my soul: It is God's command.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

As Thou savedst Peter when he cried, "Save me!" forestall and deliver me from the beast, O Savior; stretch out Thy hand and raise me from the depths of sin.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I know Thee as a calm haven, O Lord, Lord Christ; but forestall and deliver me from the innermost depths of sin and despair.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I am the coin with the royal image which was lost of old, O Savior. But light the lamp, Thy Forerunner, O Word; seek and find Thy image.

Another Canon for Ss. Mary & Andrew

Refrain: Holy Mother Mary, pray to God for us.

To extinguish the flame of the passions, O Mary, thou didst ever shed rivers of tears and fire thy soul with divine love. Grant also to me, thy servant, the grace of tears.

Refrain: Holy Mother Mary, pray to God for us.

Thou didst acquire heavenly dispassion by thy sublime life on earth, O mother. Therefore pray that those who sing of thee may be delivered from the grip of passions.

Refrain: Holy Father Andrew, pray to God for us.

Knowing thee to be the shepherd and prelate of Crete and intercessor for the world, O Andrew, I run to thee and cry: Deliver me, father, from the depths of sin.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
I am the Trinity, simple and undivided, divided Personally, and I am the Unity, united in nature, says the Father, the Son, and the Divine Spirit.

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

Thy womb bore God for us Who took our form. Implore Him as the Creator of all, O Mother of God, that through thy intercessions we may be justified.

And again the Eirmos:

I cried with my whole heart to the merciful God, and He heard me from the lowest hell and raised my life out of corruption.

THE LIFE OF OUR HOLY MOTHER MARY OF EGYPT (CONTINUED)

Reader 2: The continuation of the Life of our Holy Mother Mary of Egypt.

Zosimas asked her: *“How many years have gone by since you began to live in this desert?”*

She replied: *“Forty-seven years have already gone by, I think, since I left the holy city.”*

Zosimas asked: *“But what food do you find?”*

The woman said: *“I had two and a half loaves when I crossed the Jordan. Soon they dried up and became hard as rock. Eating a little I gradually finished them after a few years.”*

Zosimas asked: *“Can it be that without getting ill you have lived so many years thus, without suffering in any way from such a complete change?”*

The woman answered: *“You remind me, Zosimas, of what I dare not speak. For when I recall all the dangers which I overcame, and all the violent thoughts which confused me, I am again afraid that they will take possession of me.”*

Zosimas said: *“Do not hide from me anything; speak to me without concealing anything.”*

And she said to him: *“Believe me, Abba, seventeen years I passed in this desert fighting wild beasts—mad desires and passions. When I was about to partake of food, I used to begin to regret the meat and fish of which I had so much in Egypt. I regretted also not having wine which I loved so much; for I drank a lot of wine when I lived in the world, while here I had not even water. I used to burn and succumb with thirst. The mad desire for profligate songs also entered me and confused me greatly, edging me on to sing satanic songs which I had learned once. But when such desires entered me I struck myself on the breast and reminded myself of the vow which I had made when going into the desert. In my thoughts I returned to the icon of the Mother of God which had received me and to her I cried in prayer. I implored her to chase away the thoughts to which my miserable soul was succumbing. And after weeping at length and beating my breast I used to see light at last which seemed to shine on me from everywhere. And after the violent storm, lasting calm descended.*

“And how can I tell you about the thoughts which urged me on to fornication, how can I express them to you, Abba? A fire was kindled in my miserable heart which seemed to burn me up completely and to awake in me a thirst for embraces. As soon as this craving came to me, I flung myself on the earth and watered it with my tears, as if I saw before me my witness, who had appeared to me in my disobedience, and who seemed to threaten punishment for the crime. And

I did not rise from the ground (sometimes I lay thus prostrate for a day and a night) until a calm and sweet light descended and enlightened me and chased away the thoughts that possessed me. But always I turned to the eyes of my mind to my Protectress, asking her to extend help to one who was sinking fast in the waves of the desert. And I always had her as my helper and the acceptor of my repentance. And thus I lived for seventeen years amid constant dangers. And since then even until now the Mother of God helps me in everything and leads me as it were by the hand."

Zosimas asked: "Can it be that you did not need food and clothing?"

She answered: "After finishing the loaves I had, of which I spoke, for seventeen years I have fed on herbs and all that can be found in the desert. The clothes I had when I crossed the Jordan became torn and worn out. I suffered greatly from the cold and greatly from the extreme heat. At times the sun burned me up and at other times I shivered from the frost, and frequently falling to the ground I lay without breath and without motion. I struggled with many afflictions and with terrible temptations. But from that time until now the power of God in numerous ways had guarded my sinful soul and my humble body. When I only reflect on the evils from which our Lord has delivered me I have imperishable food for hope of salvation. I am fed and clothed by the all-powerful Word of God, the Lord of all. For it is not by bread alone that man lives. And those who have stripped off the rags of sin have no refuge, hiding themselves in the clefts of the rocks." (Job 24; Heb. 11:38)

Hearing that she cited words of Holy Scripture, from Moses and Job, Zosimas asked her: "And so have you read the psalms and other books?"

She smiled at this and said to the elder: "Believe me, I have not seen a human face ever since I crossed the Jordan, except yours today. I have not seen a beast or a living being ever since I came into the desert. I never learned from books. I have never even heard anyone who sang and read from them. But the word of God which is alive and active, by itself teaches man knowledge. And so this is the end of my tale. But, as I asked you in the beginning, so even now I implore you for the sake of the Incarnate word of God, to pray to the Lord for me who am such a sinner."

Thus concluding here tale she bowed down before him. And with tears the elder exclaimed: "Blessed is God Who creates the great and wondrous, the glorious and marvelous without end. Blessed is God Who has shown me how He rewards those who fear Him. Truly, O Lord, Thou dost not forsake those who seek Thee!"

And the woman, not allowing the elder to bow down before her, said: "I beg you, holy father, for the sake of Jesus Christ our God and Savior, tell no one what you have heard, until God delivers me of this earth. And now depart in peace and again next year you shall see me, and I you, if God will preserve us in His Great Mercy. But for God's sake, do as I ask you. Next year during Lent do not cross the Jordan, as is your custom in the monastery."

Zosimas was amazed to hear that she knew the rules of the monastery and could only say: "Glory to God Who bestows great gifts on those who love Him."

She continued: "Remain, Abba, in the monastery. And even if you wish to depart, you will not be to do so. And at sunset of the holy day of the Last Supper, put some of the life-giving Body and Blood of Christ into a holy vessel worthy to hold such Mysteries for me, and bring it. And wait for me on the banks of the Jordan adjoining the inhabited parts of the land, so that I can come and partake of the life-giving Gifts. For, since the time I communicated in the temple of the Fore-runner before crossing the Jordan even to this day I have not approached the Holy Mysteries.

And I thirst for them with irrepressible love and longing. Therefore, I ask and implore you to grant me my wish, bring me the life-giving Mysteries at the very hour when our Lord made His disciples partake of His Divine Supper. Tell John the Abbot of the monastery where you live. Look to yourself and to your brothers, for there is much that needs correction. Only do not say this now, but when God guides you. Pray for me!”

With these words she vanished into the depths of the desert. And Zosimas, falling down on his knees and bowing down to the ground on which she had stood, sent up glory and thanksgiving to God. And, after wandering through the desert, he returned to the monastery on the day all the brothers returned.

For the whole year he kept silent, not daring to tell anyone of what he had seen. To himself he prayed God to show him again the face that he desired. When the first Sunday of the Great Fast came, all went out into the desert with the customary prayers and the singing of psalms. Only Zosimas was held back by illness; he lay in a fever. And then he remembered what the saint had said to him: *“And even if you wish to depart, you will not be able to do so.”*

Many days passed and, at last recovering from his illness, he remained in the monastery. And when the monks returned and the day of the Last Supper dawned, he did as he had been ordered. Placing some of the most pure Body and Blood into a small chalice and putting some figs and dates and lentils soaked in water into a small basket, he departed for the desert and reached the banks of the Jordan and sat down to wait for the saint. He waited for a long while and then began to doubt.

Then raising his eyes to Heaven, he began to pray: *“Grant me O Lord, to behold that which Thou hast allowed me to behold once. Do not let me depart in vain, being the burden of my sins.”*

And then another thought struck him: *“And what if she does come? There is no boat; how will she cross the Jordan to come to me who am so unworthy?”*

And as he was pondering thus he saw the holy woman appear and stand on the other side of the river. Zosimas got up rejoicing and glorifying and thanking God. And again the thought came to him that she could not cross the Jordan. Then he saw that she made the sign of the Cross over the waters of the Jordan (and the night was a moonlight one, as he related afterwards) and then she at once stepped onto the waters and began walking across the surface towards him.

And when he wanted to prostrate himself, she cried to him while still walking on the water: *“What are you doing, Abba, you are a priest and carrying the divine Gifts!”* He obeyed her, and on reaching the shore she said to the elder: *“Bless, father, bless me!”*

He answered her trembling, for a state of confusion had overcome him at the sight of the miracle: *“Truly God did not lie when He promised that when we purify ourselves we shall be like Him. Glory to Thee, Christ our God, Who has shown me through this Thy slave how far away I stand from perfection.”*

Here the woman asked him to say The Creed and The Lord’s Prayer. He began; she finished the prayer and, according to the custom of that time, gave him the kiss of peace. Having partaken of the Holy Mysteries, she raised her hands to Heaven and sighed with tears in her eyes, exclaiming: *“Now Thou lettest Thy servant depart in peace, O Lord, according to Thy word; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation.”*

Then she said to the elder: *“Forgive me, Abba, for asking you, but fulfill another wish of mine. Go now to the monastery and let God’s grace guard you. Next year come again to the same place*

where I first met you. Come for God's sake, for you shall again see me, for such is the will of God."

He said to her: *"From this day on I would like to follow you and always see your holy face. But now fulfill the one and only wish of an old man and take a little of the food I have brought for you."*

And he showed her the basket, while she just touched the lentils with the tips of her fingers, and taking three grains she said that the Holy Spirit guards the substance of the soul unpolluted. Then she said: *"Pray, for God's sake pray for me and remember a miserable wretch."*

Touching the saint's feet and asking for her prayers for the Church, the kingdom and himself, he let her depart with tears, while he went off sighing and sorrowful, for he could not hope to vanquish the invincible. Meanwhile she again made the Sign of the Cross over the Jordan, and stepped onto the waters and crossed over as before. And the elder returned filled with joy and terror, for he had not asked the saint her name. But he decided to do so next year.

And when another year had passed, he again went into the desert. He reached the same spot but could see no sign of anyone. So, raising his eyes to Heaven as before, he prayed: *"Show me, O Lord, Thy pure treasure, which Thou hast concealed in the desert. Show me, I pray Thee, the angel in the flesh, of which the world is not worthy."*

Then on the opposite bank of the river, her face turned towards the rising sun, he saw the saint lying dead. Her hands were crossed according to custom and her face was turned to the East. Running up he shed tears over the saint's feet and kissed them, not daring to touch anything else.

For a long time he wept. Then reciting the appointed psalms, he said the burial prayers and thought to himself: *"Must I bury the body of a saint? Or will this be contrary to her wishes?"*

And then he saw words traced on the ground by her head: *"Abba Zosimas, bury on this spot the body of humble Mary. Return to dust that which is dust and pray to the Lord for me, who departed in the month of Fermoutin of Egypt, called April by the Romans, on the first day, on the very night of our Lord's Passion, after having partaken of the Divine Mysteries."* St. Mary fell asleep in the Lord in 522 A.D.

Reading this, the elder was glad to know the saint's name. He understood also that, as soon as she had partaken of the Divine Mysteries on the shore of the Jordan, she was at once transported to the place where she died. The distance which Zosimas had taken twenty days to cover, Mary had evidently traversed in an hour and had at once surrendered her soul to God. Then Zosimas thought: *"It is time to do as she wished. But how am I to dig a grave with nothing in my hands?"*

And then he saw nearby a small piece of wood left by some traveler in the desert. Picking it up he began to dig the ground. But the earth was hard and dry and did not yield to the efforts of the elder. He grew tired and was covered with sweat. He sighed from the depths of his soul and, lifting up his eyes, he saw a big lion standing close to the saint's body and licking her feet. At the sight of the lion he trembled with fear, especially when he called to mind Mary's words that she had never seen wild beasts in the desert. But guarding himself with the Sign of the Cross, the thought came to him that the power of the one lying there would protect him and keep him unharmed. Meanwhile the lion drew nearer to him, expressing affection by every movement.

Zosimas said to the lion: *"The Great One ordered that her body was to be buried. But I am old and have not the strength to dig the grave, for I have no spade and it would take too long to go and get one. So can you carry out the work with your claws? Then we can commit to the earth the mortal temple of the saint."*

While he was still speaking the lion with his front paws began to dig a hole that was deep enough to bury the body. Again the elder washed the feet of the saint with his tears and, calling on her to pray for all, covered the body with earth in the presence of the lion. It was as it had been, naked and uncovered by anything but the tattered cloak which had been given to her by Zosimas and with which Mary, turning away, had managed to cover part of her body. Then both departed. The lion went off into the depth of the desert like a lamb, while Zosimas returned to the monastery, glorifying and blessing Christ our Lord. And on reaching the monastery he told all the brothers about everything and all marveled on hearing of God's miracles. And with fear and love they kept the memory of the saint.

Abbot John, as St. Mary had previously told Abba Zosimas, found a number of things wrong in the monastery and got rid of them with God's help. And Saint Zosimas died in the same monastery, almost attaining the age of one hundred, and passed to eternal life. The monks kept this story without writing it down and passed it on by word of mouth to one another. But I (adds Sophronios) as soon as I heard it, wrote it down. Perhaps someone else, better informed, has already written the life of the Saint, but as far as I could, I have recorded everything, putting truth above all else. May God Who works amazing miracles and generously bestows gifts on those who turn to Him with faith, reward those who seek light for themselves in this story, who hear, read and are zealous to write it, and may He grant them the lot of blessed Mary together with all who at different times have pleased God by their pious thoughts and labors.

And let us also give glory to God, the eternal King, that He may grant us also His mercy in the Day of Judgment for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord, to Whom belongs all glory, honor, dominion and worship with the Eternal Father and the Most Holy and Life-giving Spirit, both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

THE GREAT CANON OF ST. ANDREW OF CRETE (CONTINUED), IN TONE 6

Kontakion of the Great Canon, tone 6 (all kneel)

My soul, my soul, arise! Why are you sleeping? The end is drawing near, and you will be confounded. Awake, then, and be watchful, that Christ our God may spare you, Who is everywhere present and fills all things.

Ode 7

Eirmos: We have sinned, transgressed, done wrong before Thee, we have not watched or done as Thou hast commanded us. But do not give us up utterly, O God of our Fathers. (*twice*)

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I have sinned, offended and rejected Thy commandment, for I have advanced in sins and added wounds to my sores. But in Thy compassion have mercy on me, O God of our Fathers.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I have confessed to Thee, my Judge, the secrets of my heart. See my humility, see also my distress, and attend to my judgment now. And in Thy compassion have mercy on me, O God of our Fathers.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

When Saul of old lost his father's asses, besides getting news of them he incidentally found a kingdom. But watch, my soul, lest without noticing it, you prefer your animal cravings to the Kingdom of Christ.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

If David, the father of our Divine Lord, doubly sinned of old, my soul, when he was pierced with the arrow of adultery and struck with the spear of remorse for murder, yet you have a sickness graver than deeds in your will and appetites.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

David once joined sin to sin, for he mixed adultery with murder, yet he immediately offered double repentance. But you, my soul, have done things more wicked without repenting to God.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

David of old composed a song, painting it as in a picture by which he exposes the deed he had done, crying: Have mercy on me, for against Thee only have I sinned, Who art God of all. Cleanse me.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

When the Ark was being carried on a wagon, and when one of the oxen slipped, Uzzah only touched it and experienced the wrath of God. But avoid, my soul, his presumption and truly reverence divine things.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

You have heard of Absalom, how he rose against nature. You know his accursed deeds and how he insulted the bed of his father David. But you have imitated his passionate and pleasure-loving cravings.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

You have enslaved your free dignity to your body, my soul, for you have found in Satan another Ahitophel and have consented to his counsels. But Christ Himself scattered them, that you may at all events be saved.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Wonderful Solomon, who was full of the grace of wisdom, at one time did evil in God's sight and fell away from Him. And you, my soul, have resembled him by your accursed life.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Carried away by the pleasure of his passions, he defiled himself. Alas, the lover of wisdom is a lover of loose women and estranged from God! And you, my soul, have in mind imitated him by your shameful pleasures.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

You, my soul, have rivaled Rehoboam who would not listen to his father's advisors, and that vicious slave Jeroboam the apostate of old. But shun such mimicry and cry to God: I have sinned, have compassion on me.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

You have rivaled Ahab in defilements, my soul. Alas, you have been a lodging-place of fleshly pollutions and a shameful vessel of passions. But groan from your depths and tell God your sins.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Elijah once burned a hundred of Jezebel's flunkies when he had destroyed her shameful prophets as a proof and rebuke for Ahab. But avoid imitating these two, my soul, and master yourself.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Heaven is closed to you, my soul, and the famine of God has reached you, for you have been disobedient as was Ahab of old to the words of Elijah the Tishbite. But be like the woman of Sarepta, and feed the Prophet's soul.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

You have piled up sins like Manasseh by deliberate choice, my soul, setting up your passions as idols and multiplying abominations. But now fervently emulate his repentance and acquire compunction.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I fall down before Thee and bring Thee as tears my words: I have sinned like the harlot, and transgressed as no other on earth. But have compassion, O Lord, on Thy work, and recall me.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I have buried Thy image and broken Thy commandment. All my beauty is darkened and my lamp is extinguished by my passions, O Savior. But have compassion and restore to me, as David sings, joy.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Return, repent, uncover what is hidden. Say to God Who knows everything: Thou knowest my secrets, O only Savior; but have mercy on me, as David sings, according to Thy mercy.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

My days have vanished like a dream on waking. Therefore I weep on my bed like Hezekiah that years may be added to my life. But what Isaiah will come to you, my soul, except the God of all?

Another Canon for Ss. Mary & Andrew

Refrain: Holy Mother Mary, pray to God for us.

By crying to the immaculate Mother of God, thou didst repel the rage of passions which once violently harassed thee, and didst put to shame the enemy tempter. But now grant me, thy servant, also help out of trouble.

Refrain: Holy Mother Mary, pray to God for us.

He Whom thou lovest, He Whom thou desirest, He on Whose track thou camest, mother, found thee and granted thee repentance, for He is God Who alone is compassionate. Implore Him unceasingly to deliver us from passions and adversities.

Refrain: Holy Father Andrew, pray to God for us.

Strengthen me on the rock of faith by thy intercessions, O father, and wall and fortify me with an awed sense of the divine indwelling, and grant me repentance, O Andrew, now. And I implore thee to deliver me from the snares of foes actively seeking my life.

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

O Trinity simple and undivided, of one essence and one nature, Lights and Light, three Holies and one Holy, God the Trinity is hymned. But sing, my soul, and glorify the Life and Lives, the God of all.

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

We sing of thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, O Mother of God, for thou gavest birth to one of the inseparable Trinity, the one Son and God, and to us on earth thou hast opened the heavenly realms.

Ode 8

Eirmos: Him Whom the heavenly hosts glorify and before Whom Cherubim and Seraphim tremble, let every breath and all creation praise, bless and exalt throughout all ages. *(twice)*

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I have sinned, O Savior, have mercy! Awaken my mind to conversion, accept me who repent, have compassion on me as I cry: Against Thee only have I sinned and acted lawlessly; have mercy on me.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
Elijah the charioteer once ascended by the chariot of the virtues as to heaven and was carried above earthly things. Consider then, my soul, this ascent.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
Jordan's stream of old was made to stand still on either side by Elisha by Elijah's sheepskin. But you, my soul, have not shared this grace owing to incontinence.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
Elisha received double grace from the Lord when he took up Elijah's sheepskin. But you, my soul, have not shared this grace owing to incontinence.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
The Shunammite woman of old with right good will entertained the righteous man. But you, my soul, have taken into your house neither stranger nor traveler. Therefore you will be cast out of the bridal hall wailing.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
You have always imitated the vile mind of Gehazi, O wretched soul. Rid yourself of his love of money, at least in old age; escape from the fire of Gehenna by leaving your evil ways.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
Having emulated Uzziah, my soul, you have his leprosy in you doubled. For you think disgusting thoughts and do outrageous things. Let go of what you are holding and run to repentance.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
Have you heard, my soul, of the Ninevites, who repented before God in sackcloth and ashes? You have not imitated them, but appear to be more crooked than all who have sinned before and after the law.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
You have heard of Jeremiah in the mud pit, my soul, how he cried out with lamentations against the City of Zion, and was seeking tears. Imitate his life of lamentation and you will be saved.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
Jonah fled to Tarshish, foreseeing the conversion of the Ninevites; for, being a Prophet, he was aware of God's compassion, and was anxious that his prophesy should not prove false.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
You have heard, my soul, of Daniel in the lion's den, and how he shut the beasts' mouths. You know how the Children who were with Azariah extinguished the flames of the burning furnace by faith.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
I have reviewed all the people of the Old Testament as examples for you, my soul. Imitate the God-loving deeds of the righteous and shun the sins of the wicked.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
Just Judge and Savior, have mercy on me and deliver me from the fire and the threat which I shall justly incur at the judgment. Forgive me before my end by virtue and repentance.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
Like the robber I cry, "Remember me!" Like Peter I weep bitterly, "Release me, O Savior!" I croak like the publican; I weep like the harlot. Accept my lamentation as once the Canaanite woman.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Heal, O Savior, the corruption of my debased soul, O only Physician. Apply the compress to me, and the oil and wine - works of repentance, compunction and tears.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Imitating the woman of Canaan, I also cry, "Have mercy on me, O Son of David!" I touch Thy hem like the woman with hemorrhage. I weep like Martha and Mary over Lazarus.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

The alabaster jar of my tears, O Savior, I pour out on Thy head as the perfume, and like the harlot I cry to Thee, seeking Thy mercy. I offer prayer and ask to receive forgiveness.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Though no one has sinned against Thee as I, yet accept even me, O compassionate Savior, repenting with fear and crying with love: Against Thee only have I sinned. I have done wrong, have mercy on me.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Spare, O Savior, Thy own creation., and seek as Shepherd Thy lost sheep; snatch the stray from the wolf, and make me a pet lamb in Thy sheep pasture.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

When Thou sittest as Judge and in Thy compassion showest Thy dread glory, O Christ, O what fear there will be then, when the furnace is burning and all shrink from Thy inexorable Tribunal!

Another Canon for Ss. Mary & Andrew

Refrain: Holy Mother Mary, pray to God for us.

The Mother of the unwaning Light enlightened thee, and freed thee from the darkness of the passions. So now thou art admitted to the grace of the Spirit, enlighten, O Mary, those who faithfully praise Thee.

Refrain: Holy Mother Mary, pray to God for us.

Beholding in thee a new wonder, O mother, divine Zosimas was truly amazed. For he saw an angel in a body and, filled with utter astonishment, he praises Christ for ever.

Refrain: Holy Father Andrew, pray to God for us.

As thou hast boldness with the Lord, O Andrew, venerable credit of Crete, intercede, I implore thee, that by thy prayers I may now find release from the chain of my sins, O teacher of repentance, glory of Saints.

Let us bless the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Lord:

Eternal Father, co-eternal Son, gracious Comforter, Spirit of Truth; Father of the Divine Word, Word of the Eternal Father, living and creative Spirit, Trinity Unity, have mercy on us.

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

As from scarlet silk, O spotless Virgin, within thy womb the spiritual purple was woven, the flesh of Emmanuel. Therefore we honor thee as in truth Mother of God.

And again the Eirmos:

Stichos: Let us praise, bless and worship the Lord, sing and exalt Him throughout all ages.

Him Whom the heavenly hosts glorify and before Whom Cherubim and Seraphim tremble, let every breath and all creation praise, bless and exalt throughout all ages.

Ode 9

Eirmos: Ineffable is the childbearing of a seedless conception, unsullied the pregnancy of a Virgin Mother, for the birth of God renews natures. So in all generations we magnify thee in orthodox fashion as the Mother and Bride of God. *(twice)*

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

The mind is wounded, the body is feeble, the spirit is sick, the word has lost its power, life is ebbing, the end is at the doors. What then will you do, wretched soul, when the Judge comes to try your case?

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I have reviewed Moses' account of the creation of the world, my soul, and then all canonical Scripture which tells you the story of the righteous and the unrighteous. But you, my soul, have copied the latter and not the former, and have sinned against God.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

The Law has grown weak, the Gospel is unpracticed, the whole of the Scripture is ignored by you; the Prophets and every word of the Just have lost their power. Your wounds, my soul, have multiplied, and there is no physician to heal you.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I am bringing before you examples from the New Scripture, my soul, to lead you to compunction. So emulate the righteous and avoid following the sinners, and regain Christ's grace by prayers, fasts, purity and reverence.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Christ became man and called to repentance robbers and harlots. Repent, my soul! The door of the Kingdom is already open, and the transformed pharisees, publicans and adulterers are seizing it ahead of you.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Christ became a babe and conversed in the flesh with me, and he voluntarily experienced all that pertains to our nature, apart from sin; and He showed you, my soul, an example and image of His own condescension.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Christ saved wise men, called shepherds, made crowds of infants martyrs, glorified old men and aged widows, whose deeds and life, my soul, you have not emulated. But woe unto you when you are judged!

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

When the Lord had fasted for forty days in the wilderness, He at last became hungry, showing His human nature. Do not be despondent, my soul, if the enemy attacks you, but let him be beaten off by prayer and fasting.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Christ was tempted, the devil was tempting Him, showing Him stones to be turned into bread; and he led Him up a mountain to see all the kingdoms of the world in a flash. Dread, my soul, the scene; watch and pray at every hour to God.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

The desert-loving dove, the lamp of Christ, the Voice crying in the wilderness sounded, preaching repentance; while Herod sinned with Herodias. See, my soul, that you are not caught in the toils of sin, but embrace repentance.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

The Forerunner of grace dwelt in the desert and all Judea and Samaria ran to hear him; and they confessed their sins, and eagerly received baptism. But you, my soul, have not imitated them.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Marriage is honorable and the bed undefiled, for Christ earlier blessed both, eating in His flesh at the marriage in Cana and changing water into wine, and showing His first miracle so that you, my soul, might be changed.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Christ braced the paralytic and he carried his bed; He raised up the dead young man, the son of the widow, and the Centurion's servant; and by revealing Himself to the Samaritan woman, He traced in advance for you, my soul, how to worship in spirit.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

The Lord healed the woman with hemorrhage by the touch of His hem, cleansed lepers, gave sight to the blind, and cured cripples; the deaf and the dumb and the woman bent earthward he healed with His word, that you, wretched soul, might be saved.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Christ the Word healed diseases, preached the Gospel to the poor, cured cripples, ate with publicans, conversed with sinners, and He brought back the departed soul of Jairus' daughter by the touch of His hand.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

The publican was saved, the harlot was made chaste, but the pharisee through boasting was condemned. For the first said, "Be merciful," the second, "Have mercy on me," but the last boasted and cried, "O God, I thank Thee," and then some foolish words.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Zacchaeus was a publican, but yet was healed, and Simon the Pharisee was disappointed, but the harlot received the release of full forgiveness from Him Who has power to forgive sins. Obtain His forgiveness yourself, my soul.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

You, my wretched soul, have not emulated the harlot who took the alabaster jar of perfumed oil and anointed with tears and wiped with her hair the feet of the Savior, Who tore up for her the handwriting of her old accusation.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

You know how the towns to which Christ offered the Gospel were cursed. Fear this example, my soul, do not be like them; for the Lord compared them to the Sodomites and condemned them to hell.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Do not let despair make you worse than the Canaanite woman, my soul, for you have heard of her faith through which her daughter was healed by the Word of God. Call to Christ like her from the depth of your heart, "Son of David, save me."

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Have compassion and save me, have mercy on me, O Son of David, Who didst heal with a word the demoniac. And let Thy voice of tender compassion speak to me as to the robber, "Truly I tell you, you will be with Me in Paradise when I rise in My glory."

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

A robber accused Thee, and a robber confessed Thee to be God, for both were hanging on a cross with Thee. But open even to me, O most compassionate Savior, the door of Thy glorious Kingdom as to Thy faithful robber who acknowledged Thee to be God.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Creation was in anguish, seeing Thee crucified; mountains and rocks were split with fear, the earth quaked, hell was emptied, and the light grew dark in the daytime, beholding Thee, Jesus, nailed to the Cross in Thy flesh.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Do not require of me fruits worthy of repentance, for my strength is spent in me. Grant me ever a contrite heart and spiritual poverty, that I may offer these gifts to Thee as an acceptable sacrifice, O only Savior.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

O my Judge and my Light Who alone knowest me and art coming again with Thine Angels to judge the whole world, regard me then with Thy merciful Eye and spare me, O Jesus. And have compassion on me who have sinned more than all mankind.

Another Canon for Ss. Mary & Andrew

Refrain: Holy Mother Mary, pray to God for us.

Thou didst astonish all by thy strange life, both the Orders of Angels and the councils of men, by living immaterially and surpassing nature. Then treading firmly the waves like an immaterial being, O Mary, thou didst cross the Jordan an.

Refrain: Holy Mother Mary, pray to God for us.

Intercede with the Creator on behalf of those who praise thee, holy mother, that we may be delivered from the sufferings and afflictions which beset us on all sides, that being delivered from our temptations, we may unceasingly magnify the Lord Who glorified thee.

Refrain: Holy Father Andrew, pray to God for us.

Venerable Andrew, thrice-blessed father, shepherd of Crete, cease not to pray to God for those who sing of thee, that He may deliver from anger, oppression, corruption and our countless sins, all of us who faithfully honor thy memory .

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

Trinity of one essence, Tri-Personal Unity, we sing Thy praise, glorifying the Father, magnifying the Son, and adoring the Spirit, Who art truly one God by nature, Life and Lives, Kingdom unending.

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

Protect thy city, spotless Mother of God, for in thee it faithfully reigns, and in thee is made strong, and through thee it conquers and routs every trial and temptation, and spoils its foes and rules its subjects.

And again the Eirmos:

Ineffable is the childbearing of a seedless conception, unsullied the pregnancy of a Virgin Mother, for the birth of God renews natures. So in all generations we magnify thee in orthodox fashion as Mother and Bride of God.

Trisagion Prayers

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 evil.

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

All: Amen.

The Kontakion of the Great Canon, tone 6 (plain reading)

My soul, my soul, arise! Why are you sleeping? The end is drawing near, and you will be confounded. Awake, then, and be watchful, that Christ our God may spare you, Who is everywhere present and fills all things.

Reader: Lord, have mercy. (40 times)

Prayer of the Hours

Thou who, at all times and at every hour, both in heaven and on earth art worshipped and glorified, O Christ God, long-suffering, plenteous in mercy and compassion, who lovest the just and showest mercy to sinners, who callest all men to salvation through the promise of good things to come: Do thou, the same Lord, receive also our supplications at this present hour, and direct our lives according to thy commandments. Sanctify our souls; purify our bodies; set aright our minds; cleanse our thoughts; and deliver us from all calamity, wrath and distress. Compass us round about with thy holy angels; that, guided and guarded by their host, we may attain unto the unity of the faith, and unto the comprehension of thine ineffable glory. For blessed art thou unto ages of ages. Amen

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

More honourable 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.

All: Amen

The Prayer of St. Ephrem the Syrian

O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of sloth, despondency, lust of power, and idle talk; (*prostration*)

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

Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own transgressions, and not to judge my brother; for blessed art Thou unto the 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, despondency, lust of power, and idle talk. But grant rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love to thy servant. Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own transgressions, and not to judge my brother; for blessed art Thou unto the ages of ages. Amen. (*prostration*)

Reader: Lord, have mercy. (12 times)

Most holy Theotokos, save us.

The Supplicatory Prayer to the Most Holy Theotokos, by Paul the Monk

O Lady, Bride of God, spotless, blameless, pure and immaculate Virgin, thou who without corruption, by thy glorious birth-giving, has united God the Word to man and joined the fallen nature of our race to heavenly things; who alone art the hope of the hopeless, the help of those who do battle; the ready help of those who flee unto thee and the refuge of all Christians: Despise me not, an accursed sinner, though I have rendered myself unworthy by my shameful thoughts, words and deeds, and through indolence have become a slave to the pleasures of life; but as the Mother of the God who lovest mankind, mercifully have compassion upon me, a sinner and a prodigal, and receive my prayer, though it be offered unto thee by unworthy lips; and using thy boldness as a mother, importune thy Son, our Lord and Master, that he may open to me also the tender compassions of his goodness so as to overlook my numberless transgressions and turn me to repentance and show me forth as a zealous doer of his commandments. And because thou art merciful, compassionate and benevolent, be thou ever near me in this present life as an ardent help and protection, defending me from the assaults of adversaries and leading me to salvation. And at the time of my departure from this life, care for my miserable soul, and drive far from it the dark visions of evil demons; and in the fearful day of judgement, deliver me from eternal punishment, and present me as an inheritor of the ineffable glory of thy Son, our God. May this be my lot, O Lady, most holy Theotokos, through thy mediation and help, through the grace and love toward mankind of thine only-begotten Son, our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom are due all glory, honour and worship, with his unoriginate Father and his all-holy and good and life-giving Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen

A Prayer to our Lord Jesus Christ, by Antiochus the Monk

And grant unto us, O Master, when we depart to sleep, repose of body and soul; and protect us from the murky sleep of sin and from all the dark pleasures of the night. Calm the impulses of passions, and quench the fiery darts of evil which are craftily thrown against us; check the turbulence of our flesh, and still all earthly and material thoughts. And grant us, O God, a watchful mind, a prudent reason, a vigilant heart, a tranquil sleep free from all the fantasies of Satan. Raise us up again at the time of prayer strengthened in thy commandments, holding steadfastly within us the remembrance of thy judgements. Grant us grace to glorify thee all through the night, that we may praise and bless and glorify thine all-honourable and majestic name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

O most glorious, ever-virgin, blessed Theotokos, present our prayer to thy Son our God, and intercede with him that through thee he may save our souls.

Prayer of Saint Ioannikios

The Father is my Hope; The Son is my Refuge; The Holy Spirit is my Protection; O Holy Trinity: Glory to thee.

In thee, O Mother of God, I place all my hope; keep me under thy protection.

Prayer to the Guardian Angel

O holy angel who accompanieth my wretched soul and lowly life, forsake me not, and depart not from me because of my extravagance and wickedness. Give not access to the evil demon to rule with his might this mortal body of mine, but hold me by my wretched, feeble hand; lead me in the path of salvation. Yea, o holy angel of God, guardian and protector of my wretched soul and

body, forgive me all wherewith I have heretofore saddened thee all the days of my life. And though this day I have sinned, be thou my shelter this night. Keep me from all the wiles of the enemy, that I may not anger God with any sin. Intercede with the Lord for me, that He may confirm me in His fear and show me forth as a worthy servant of His goodness. Amen.

Optional (not included in some texts):

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.
(Thrice)

The Dismissal

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 Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, through the intercessions of his all-immaculate and all-blameless holy Mother; of our venerable and God-bearing fathers; of *the Holy Myrrh-Bearer and Equal to the Apostles Mary Magdalene*, protector of this community; of *of our righteous Mother Mary of Egypt and our God-bearing Father Zosimas; of our Fathers among the Saints Sophronios, Patriarch of Jerusalem and Andrew, Bishop of Crete*, whom we commemorate today, and of all the saints: have mercy on us, and save us, for Thou art good and lovest mankind.

All: Amen.

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

All: Amen.

Leader: O Lord, Lover of mankind, forgive them that hate and wrong us. Do good to them that do good. Grant our brethren and kindred their saving petitions and life eternal; visit the infirm and grant them healing. Guide those at sea. Journey with them that travel. Help Orthodox Christians to struggle. To them that serve and are kind to us grant remissions of sins. On them that have charged us, the unworthy, to pray for them, have mercy according to Thy great mercy. Remember, O Lord, our fathers and brethren departed before us, and grant them rest where the light of Thy countenance shall visit them. Remember, O Lord, our brethren in captivity, and deliver them from every misfortune. Remember, O Lord, those that bear fruit and do good works in Thy holy churches, and grant them their saving petitions and life eternal. Remember also, O Lord, us Thy lowly and sinful and unworthy servants, and enlighten our minds with the light of Thy knowledge, and guide us in the way of Thy commandments; through the intercessions of our most pure Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, and of all Thy saints, for blessed art Thou unto the ages of ages. Amen.

All: Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy.

The faithful now come forward to venerate the icon, as the choir sings the following hymns

Theotokion, in tone 2

Joy of all who sorrow art thou, protectress of the wronged, and nurture of all the poor, comfort unto the estranged, a staff for the blind, visitation of all the sick, a shelter and help unto those brought down by pain, helper of orphans: Mother of God in the highest art thou, O Immaculate Maiden; hasten, we beseech thee, to redeem thy servants.

Apolytikion of St. Mary of Egypt, in tone 8

In thee the image was preserved with exactness, O Mother; for taking up thy cross, thou didst follow Christ, and by thy deeds thou didst teach us to overlook the flesh, for it passeth away, but to attend to the soul since it is immortal. Wherefore, O righteous Mary, thy spirit rejoiceth with the Angels.

Apolytikion of St. Zosimas of Palestine, in tone 8

The barren wilderness thou didst make fertile with the streams of thy tears; and by thy deep sighing thou hast given fruit through thy struggles a hundred-fold. Accordingly, thou hast become a star for the universe, sparkling with miracles. Therefore, O righteous Father Zosimas, intercede with Christ God to save our souls.

Apolytikion of St. Sophronios of Jerusalem, in tone 4

Thy works of justice did reveal thee to thy community as a canon of faith, the likeness of humility and teacher of abstinence, O Father and Patriarch Sophronios. Wherefore, by humility thou hast achieved exaltation, and by thy meekness wealth. Intercede, therefore, with Christ to save our souls.

Apolytikion of St. Andrew of Crete, in tone 8

Guide of Orthodoxy, teacher of piety and holiness, luminary of the world, God-inspired adornment of hierarchs, O wise Andrew of Crete, by thy teachings thou hast enlightened all, O harp of the Spirit. Intercede with Christ God that our souls be saved.

After all have passed, the Leader faces the icon of Christ and says:

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

All: Amen.