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READER'S GREAT VESPERS  
*The taking of the Holy Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ  
down from the Holy Cross*

(As served early afternoon on Holy Friday)

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

*Reader:* Amen.

Glory to Thee, our God. Glory to Thee!

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

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

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

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

PSALM 103

*Reader:* Bless the Lord, O my soul; O Lord my God, Thou hast been magnified exceedingly. Confession and majesty hast Thou put on, Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment, Who stretchest out the heaven as it were a curtain; Who supporteth His chambers in the waters, Who appointeth the clouds for His ascent, Who walketh upon the wings of the winds, Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire, Who establisheth the earth in the sureness thereof; it shall not be turned back for ever and ever. The abyss like a garment is His mantle; upon the mountains shall the waters stand. At Thy rebuke they will flee, at the voice of Thy thunder shall they be afraid. The mountains rise up and the plains sink down, unto the place where Thou hast established them. Thou appointedst a bound that they shall not pass, neither return to cover the earth. He sendeth forth springs in the valleys; between the mountains will the waters run. They shall give drink to all the beasts of the field; the wild asses will wait to quench their thirst. Beside them will the birds of the heaven lodge, from the midst of the rocks will they give voice. He watereth the mountains from His chambers; the earth shall be satisfied with the fruit of Thy works. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men, To bring forth bread out of the earth; and wine maketh glad the heart of man. To make his face cheerful with oil; and bread strengtheneth man's heart. The trees of the plain shall be satisfied, the cedars of Lebanon, which Thou hast planted. There will the sparrows make their nests; the house of the heron is chief among them. The high mountains are a refuge for the harts, and so is the rock for the hares. He hath made the moon for seasons; the sun knoweth his going down. Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night, wherein all the beasts of the forest will go abroad. Young lions roaring after their prey, and seeking their food from God. The sun ariseth, and they are gathered together, and they lay them down in their dens. But man shall go forth unto his work, and to his labour until the evening. How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast Thou made them all; the earth is filled with Thy creation. So is this great and spacious sea,

therein are things creeping innumerable, small living creatures with the great. There go the ships; there this dragon, whom Thou hast made to play therein. All things wait on Thee, to give them their food in due season; when Thou givest it them, they will gather it. When Thou openest Thy hand, all things shall be filled with goodness; when Thou turnest away Thy face, they shall be troubled. Thou wilt take their spirit, and they shall cease; and unto their dust shall they return. Thou wilt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created; and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth. Let the glory of the Lord be unto the ages; the Lord will rejoice in His works. Who looketh on the earth and maketh it tremble, Who toucheth the mountains and they smoke. I will sing unto the Lord throughout my life, I will chant to my God for as long as I have my being. May my words be sweet unto Him, and I will rejoice in the Lord. O that sinners would cease from the earth, and they that work iniquity, that they should be no more. Bless the Lord, O my soul. The sun knoweth his going down. Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night. How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast Thou made them all.

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

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

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

#### THE LITANY OF PEACE REPLACEMENT

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

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

*Choir:* Amen.

#### “O LORD, I HAVE CRIED” IN TONE ONE

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

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

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

- In the way wherein I walked have they secretly laid a snare for me.
- I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me.
- Refuge failed me; no one cared for my soul.
- I cried unto Thee, O Lord; I said: Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.
- Attend unto my cry, for I am brought very low.
- Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are stronger than I.
- Bring my soul out of prison, that I may confess thy name.
- The righteous shall wait for me, until Thou recompense me
- Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice.
- Let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

From the Triodion in Tone One

*Verse 6: If thou, Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? For with thee there is forgiveness.*

The whole creation, O Christ, hath been transfigured by fear at beholding thee suspended on the Cross. The sun was darkened, the foundations of the earth were troubled, and everything suffered with the Creator of all. Wherefore, O thou who didst endure this willingly for us, O Lord, glory to thee.

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

The whole creation, O Christ, hath been transfigured by fear at beholding thee suspended on the Cross. The sun was darkened, the foundations of the earth were troubled, and everything suffered with the Creator of all. Wherefore, O thou who didst endure this willingly for us, O Lord, glory to thee.

From the Triodion in Tone Two

*Verse 4: From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch let Israel trust in the Lord.* Why doth the law-transgressing people of false worship meditate in falsehood? Why was he condemned to death who is the life of all? What great wonder that the Creator of the world hath been delivered into the hands of the wicked, and the lover of mankind hath been elevated on a tree to deliver those who are bound in Hades, who cry, "O long-suffering Father, glory to thee."

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

Today the blameless Virgin hath seen thee, O Word, suspended on the Cross, and her heart was wounded with mourning from parental emotions. She sighed disconsolately from the depth of her soul. She pulled her hair and cheeks bitterly. She smote her breast crying with copious tears, "Woe is me, O my Divine Son! Woe is me, O Light of the world! Now hast thou disappeared before mine eyes, O Lamb of God!" Then the incorporeal hosts were engulfed with trembling, crying, "O incomprehensible Lord, glory to thee!"

*Verse 2: Praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people.*

O Christ, God of all creation and its Maker, she who without seed gave thee birth, seeing thee suspended on a tree, cried bitterly, "Whither hath the beauty of thy countenance disappeared, O my Son? I cannot endure the sight of thine unjust crucifixion. Arise soon, that I may behold thy third-day resurrection from the dead."

From the Triodion in Tone Six

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

Today the Lord of creation standeth before Pilate, and the Creator of all is delivered up to crucifixion, offered as a lamb of his own will. He is fastened with nails, pierced with a spear, and a sponge is brought near to him who rained manna. The Redeemer of the world is smitten on his cheek, and the Redeemer of all is ridiculed by his own servants. What love the Master showed to mankind! For he prayed his Father on behalf of his crucifiers, saying, "Remit them this sin, for the transgressors of the law know not what they unjustly do."

DOXASTICON FROM THE TRIODION IN TONE SIX

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

Oh, how the assembly of the law-transgressors condemned to death the King of creation, not being ashamed nor abashed by his benevolences, of which he had assured them formerly, calling them to their remembrance, saying, "My people, what have I done to thee? Have I not showered Judaism with wonders? Have I not raised the dead by only a word? Have I not healed every sickness and every weakness? With what, then, hast thou rewarded me? And why forgetest thou me? For healing, thou hast inflicted wounds upon me; and for raising the dead, thou dost cause me, the benevolent, to die suspended upon a Tree as an evil-doer; the Giver of the Law, as a law-transgressor; and the King of all, as one who is condemned." Wherefore, O long-suffering Lord, glory to thee.

THEOTOKION FROM THE TRIODION IN TONE SIX

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

Today is beheld the working of a dread and strange mystery; for he who is inapprehensible is laid hold of; and he who released Adam is chained. He who trieth the hearts and reigns is tried falsely, and he who looketh into the depths is locked in prison. He before whom the heavenly powers stand trembling standeth before Pilate. The Creator is smitten by the hand of his creatures! The Judge of the living and the dead is condemned to death on a Tree; and the Destroyer of Hades is enfolded in the grave. Wherefore, O thou who didst of thy compassion bear all these things, saving all from the curse, O long-suffering Lord, glory to thee.

THE HYMN OF THANKSGIVING AT THE LIGHTING OF THE LAMPS

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

OLD TESTAMENT LESSONS

*Prokeimenon, in tone 4*

They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture, did they cast lots. (*Ps.21:18*)

*Verse:* My God, my God, look upon me: why hast thou forsaken me? (*Ps.21:1a*)

*Reader:* The reading is from the book of Exodus (33:11-23).

Thus the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. When Moses turned again into the camp, his servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tent.

Moses said to the Lord, "See, thou sayest to me, 'Bring up this people'; but thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou hast said, 'I know you by name, and you have also found favor in my sight.' Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found favor in thy sight, show me now thy ways, that I may know thee and find favor in thy sight. Consider too that this nation is thy people." And he said, "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." And he said to him, "If thy presence will not go with me, do not carry us up from here. For how shall it be known that I have found favor in thy sight, I and thy people? Is it not in thy going with us, so that we are distinct, I and thy people, from all other people that are upon the face of the earth?"

And the Lord said to Moses, "This very thing that you have spoken I will do; for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name." Moses said, "I pray thee, show me thy glory." And he said, "I will make all my goodness pass before you, and will proclaim before you my name 'The Lord'; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. But," he said, "you cannot see my face; for man shall not see me and live." And the Lord said, "Behold, there is a place by me where you shall stand upon the rock; and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by; then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back; but my face shall not be seen."

*Prokeimenon, in tone 4*

Judge them, O Lord, that do me injustice; war against them that war against me. (*Ps.34:1*)

*Verse:* They repaid me with evil things for good. (*Ps.34:14a*)

*Reader:* The reading is from the Book of Job (42:12-17).

And the Lord blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning; and he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she-asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters. And he called the name of the first Jemi'mah; and the name of the second Kezi'ah; and the name of the third Ker'en-hap'puch. And in all the land there were no women so fair as Job's daughters; and their father gave them inheritance among their brothers. And after this Job lived a hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, four generations. And Job died, an old man, and full of days. The same dwelt in Haran, on the borders of Edom and Arabia. And he was called Yabob, and he took unto himself a wife, an Arabian woman, and she bore him a son called Hannoun. And Job's father was Zerah, the son of Esau, making him the fifth in the descent from Abraham. And it was also written that he will rise with those whom our Lord shall raise.

*Prokeimenon, in tone 4*

O Lord, our Lord, how wonderful is Thy name in all the earth! (*Ps.8:1a*)

*Verse:* Thy magnificence is lifted high above the heavens. (*Ps.8:1b*)

*Reader:* The reading is from the Prophecy of Isaiah (52:13-15; 53:1-12; 54:1).

These things the Lord doth say, "Behold, my servant shall prosper, he shall be exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high. As many were astonished at him – his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the sons of men – so shall he startle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths because of him; for that which has not been told them they shall see, and that which they have not heard they shall understand. Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or comeliness that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him.

“He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

“He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people? And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.

“Yet it was the will of the LORD to bruise him; he has put him to grief; when he makes himself an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring, he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand; he shall see the fruit of the travail of his soul and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous; and he shall bear their iniquities.

“Therefore I will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out his soul to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. ‘Sing, O barren one, who did not bear; break forth into singing and cry aloud, you who have not been in travail! For the children of the desolate one will be more than the children of her that is married,’” says the LORD.

### THE APOSTOLOS & THE GOSPEL

#### PROKEIMENON, IN TONE 6

They laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness and in the shadow of death. (*Ps. 87:6*)

*Verse:* O Lord God of my salvation, by day have I cried and by night before Thee. (*Ps. 87:1*)

#### VESPERS APOSTOLOS FOR HOLY SATURDAY:

*Reader:* The reading is from the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians §125 (1:18-2:2)

Brethren, the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the cleverness of the clever I will thwart." Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

For consider your call, brethren; not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth; but God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong, God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus,

whom God made our wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption; therefore, as it is written, "Let him who boasts, boast of the Lord."

When I came to you, brethren, I did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God in lofty words or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

#### ALLELUIA, IN TONE 5

Choir: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

*Verse 1:* Save me, O God, for the waters are come into my soul. (*Ps.68:1*)

Choir: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

*Verse 2:* And they gave me gall for my food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink. (*Ps.68:26*)

Choir: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

*Verse 3:* Let their eyes be darkened that they may not see. (*Ps.68:28a*)

Choir: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

#### VESPERS GOSPEL FOR HOLY SATURDAY:

*Reader:* The reading is from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew (*composite: Matthew §110 (27:1-38); Luke 23:39-43; Matthew 27:39-54; John 19:31-37; Matthew 27:55-61*)

*Choir:* Glory to Thee O Lord, Glory to Thee.

*Reader: Matthew (27:1-38)* At that time, when morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death; and they bound him and led him away and delivered him to Pilate the governor.

When Judas, his betrayer, saw that he was condemned, he repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders, saying, "I have sinned in betraying innocent blood." They said, "What is that to us? See to it yourself." And throwing down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed; and he went and hanged himself. But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since they are blood money." So they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken by the prophet Jeremiah, saying, "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him on whom a price had been set by some of the sons of Israel, and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord directed me."

Now Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus said, "You have said so." But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he made no answer. Then Pilate said to him, "Do you not hear how many things they testify against you?" But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge; so that the governor wondered greatly.

Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the crowd any one prisoner whom they wanted. And they had then a notorious prisoner, called Barab'bas. So when they had gathered, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you, Barab'bas or Jesus who is called Christ?" For he knew that it was out of envy that they had delivered him up. Besides, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, "Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much over him today in a dream." Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the people to ask for Barab'bas and destroy Jesus. The governor again said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barab'bas." Pilate

said to them, "Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all said, "Let him be crucified." And he said, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified."

So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves." And all the people answered, "His blood be on us and on our children!" Then he released for them Barab'bas, and having scourged Jesus, delivered him to be crucified.

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the praetorium, and they gathered the whole battalion before him. And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe upon him, and plaiting a crown of thorns they put it on his head, and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him they mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they spat upon him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe, and put his own clothes on him, and led him away to crucify him.

As they went out, they came upon a man of Cyre'ne, Simon by name; this man they compelled to carry his cross. And when they came to a place called Gol'gotha (which means the place of a skull), they offered him wine to drink, mingled with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when they had crucified him, they divided his garments among them by casting lots; then they sat down and kept watch over him there. And over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus the King of the Jews." Then two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left.

*(Luke 23:39-43)* One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us! " But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." And he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom." And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

*(Matthew 27:39-54)* And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads and saying, "You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross." So also the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked him, saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he desires him; for he said, 'I am the Son of God.'" And the robbers who were crucified with him also reviled him in the same way.

*(John 19:31-37)* Since it was the day of Preparation, in order to prevent the bodies from remaining on the cross on the sabbath (for that sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with him; but when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. He who saw it has borne witness – his testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth – that you also may believe. For these things took place that the scripture might be fulfilled, "Not a bone of him shall be broken." And again another scripture says, "They shall look on him whom they have pierced."



(*Matthew 27:55-61*) There were also many women there, looking on from afar, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him; among whom were Mary Mag'dalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zeb'edee.

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathe'a, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him.<sup>1</sup>

And Joseph took the body, and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb, and departed. Mary Mag'dalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the sepulchre.

(*Most sources omit " Glory the Thee O Lord, Glory to Thee" at the conclusion of this Gospel.*)

#### AUGMENTED EKTENIA REPLACEMENT

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

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

#### THE EVENING PRAYER

*People:* Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this evening without sin. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy Name forever. Amen. Let Thy mercy be upon us, O Lord, even as we have set our hope on Thee. Blessed art Thou, O Lord; teach me Thy statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Master; make me to understand Thy statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Holy One; enlighten me with Thy statutes. Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth forever. O despise not the works of Thy hands. To Thee belongeth worship, to Thee belongeth praise, to Thee belongeth glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

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

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

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

#### APOSTICHA FOR HOLY SATURDAY IN TONE TWO<sup>2</sup>

O Christ, Life of all, when Joseph of Ramah brought thee down dead from the Cross, he laid thee in balms and linen, hastening anxiously to kiss thy lips and bury thy pure body free of corruption. But he was reverent with fear as he cried to thee with joy, "Glory be to thy condescension, O Lover of mankind."

*Verse 1. The Lord is King, and hath clothed Himself with majesty.*

Hades, made ridiculous at seeing thee, O Deliverer of all, placed in a new tomb for the sake of all, trembled with fear. Its locks were shattered; its doors broken; the tombs were opened; and the dead awoke. Then Adam cried to thee with joy and gratitude, "Glory be to thy condescension, O Lover of mankind."

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

O Christ, who in thy divine nature art boundless and infinite, when thou wast enclosed in the grave by thine own will after the flesh, thou didst close the chambers of death and Hades, and

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<sup>1</sup> In Church setting, when a Priest is serving, he now removes the body from the cross, wraps it in the white shroud and carries it through the holy doors into the sanctuary.

<sup>2</sup> In Church setting, when a Priest is serving, a Procession with the Epitaphios takes place during the chanting of the Aposticha.

didst demolish all its kingdoms. Then thou preparedst this Sabbath for thy glory, thine illumination, and thy divine blessing.

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

The angelic hosts, O Christ, beholding those lawless ones victimize thee as a criminal, and seeing the tombstone sealed by the hands of those who pierced thy side, were frightened at thine ineffable long-suffering. But, rejoicing at our salvation, they cried unto thee, "Glory be to thy condescension, O Lover of mankind."

#### DOXASTICON FOR HOLY SATURDAY IN TONE FIVE

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

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

O thou who puttest on light like a robe, when Joseph, with Nicodemus, brought thee down from the Tree and beheld thee dead, naked, and unburied, he mourned outwardly and grievously, crying to thee with sighs, and saying, "Woe is me, O sweet Jesus, whom but a while ago, when the sun beheld suspended upon the Cross, it was shrouded in darkness, the earth quaked with fear, and the veil of the Temple was rent asunder. Albeit, I see that thou willingly enduredst death for my sake. How then shall I array thee, my God? How shall I wrap thee with linen? Or what dirges shall I chant for thy funeral? Wherefore, O compassionate Lord, I magnify thy Passion, and praise thy Burial with thy Resurrection, crying, 'Lord, glory to thee.'"

#### THE HYMN OF ST. SIMEON THE GOD-RECEIVER

*Leader:* Lord, now lettest thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Thy people Israel.

#### THE TRISAGION PRAYERS

*People:* Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. (*Thrice*)

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

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for thy Name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (*Thrice*)

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

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

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

*All:* Amen.

#### APOLYTIKIA OF HOLY SATURDAY IN TONE TWO

The pious Joseph, having brought down thy pure body from the tree, wrapped it in pure linen, embalmed it with ointment, arrayed it and laid it in a new tomb.

Verily the angel came to the tomb and said to the ointment bearing women, "Ointment is meet for the dead, but Christ hath shown himself to be free from corruption"

## THE LITTLE DISMISSAL

*Choir:* Preserve, O God, the holy Orthodox faith and all Orthodox Christians, unto ages of ages. Amen.

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

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

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

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

*Leader:* O Thou Who didst endure spitting, scourges, reviling, and death for our salvation, Christ our true 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; and of all the saints: have mercy on us, and save us, for Thou art good and lovest mankind.

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

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

*All:* Amen.

*When in Church, the people now venerate the Epitaphios, while the choir sings the Apolitykia of Holy Saturday repeating them as many times as necessary*