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READER'S ORTHROS

Bridegroom Orthros of Holy Wednesday

(Served by anticipation in the evening of Holy Tuesday)

THE OPENING

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.

Trisagion

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

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

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

Lord, have mercy. (*Thrice*)

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

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

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

All: Amen.

The Royal Psalms

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

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

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

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

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

PSALM 19

Reader: The Lord hear thee in the day of affliction; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee. Let Him send forth unto thee help from His sanctuary, and out of Sion let Him help thee. Let Him remember every sacrifice of thine, and thy whole-burnt offering let Him fatten. The Lord grant thee according to thy heart, and fulfil all thy purposes. We will rejoice in Thy salvation, and in the name of the Lord our God shall we be magnified. The Lord fulfil all thy requests. Now have

I know that the Lord hath saved His anointed one; He will hearken unto him out of His holy heaven; in mighty deeds is the salvation of His right hand. Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we will call upon the name of the Lord our God. They have been fettered and have fallen, but we are risen and are set upright. O Lord, save the king, and hearken unto us in the day when we call upon Thee.

PSALM 20

O Lord, in Thy strength the king shall be glad, and in Thy salvation shall he rejoice exceedingly. The desire of his heart hast Thou granted unto him, and hast not denied him the requests of his lips. Thou wentest before him with the blessings of goodness, Thou hast set upon his head a crown of precious stone. He asked life of Thee, and Thou gavest him length of days unto ages of ages. Great is his glory in Thy salvation; glory and majesty shalt Thou lay upon him. For Thou shalt give him blessing for ever and ever, Thou shalt gladden him in joy with Thy countenance. For the king hopeth in the Lord, and through the mercy of the Most High shall he not be shaken. Let Thy hand be found on all Thine enemies; let Thy right hand find all that hate Thee. For Thou wilt make them as an oven of fire in the time of Thy presence; the Lord in His wrath will trouble them sorely and fire shall devour them. Their fruit wilt Thou destroy from the earth, and their seed from the sons of men. For they have intended evil against Thee, they have devised counsels which they shall not be able to establish. For Thou shalt make them turn their backs; among those that are Thy remnant, Thou shalt make ready their countenance. Be Thou exalted, O Lord, in Thy strength; we will sing and chant of Thy mighty acts.

Trisagion

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

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

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

Lord, have mercy. (*Thrice*)

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

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

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

All: Amen.

Orthros Troparia

Reader: O Lord, save thy people, and bless thine inheritance. Grant victory to Orthodox Christians over their adversaries, and by thy cross preserve thy commonwealth.

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

Do thou, who of thine own good will wast lifted up upon the cross, O Christ our God, bestow thy bounties upon the new nation which is called by thy name. Make glad in thy might those who lawfully govern, that with them we may be led to victory over our adversaries, having in thine aid a weapon of peace and a trophy invincible.

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

O fearsome champion, who cannot be put to confusion despise not our petitions, O good and all-praised Theotokos. Establish the way of the Orthodox, save those who have been called upon to govern us, leading us all to that victory which is from heaven, for thou art she who gavest birth to God and alone art blessed.

EKTENIA REPLACEMENT

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (9 times)

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

Choir: Amen.

The Six Psalms

Reader: Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace good will among men. (*thrice*)

O Lord, Thou shalt open my lips, and my mouth shall declare Thy praise. (*twice*)

PSALM 3

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

PSALM 37

O Lord, rebuke me not in Thine anger, nor chasten me in Thy wrath. For Thine arrows are fastened in me, and Thou hast laid Thy hand heavily upon me. There is no healing in my flesh in the face of Thy wrath; and there is no peace in my bones in the face of my sins. For mine iniquities are risen higher than my head; as a heavy burden have they pressed heavily upon me. My bruises are become noisome and corrupt in the face of my folly. I have been wretched and utterly bowed down until the end; all the day long I went with downcast face. For my loins are filled with mockings, and there is no healing in my flesh. I am afflicted and humbled exceedingly, I have roared from the groaning of my heart. O Lord, before Thee is all my desire, and my groaning is not hid from Thee. My heart is troubled, my strength hath failed me; and the light of mine eyes, even this is not with me. My friends and neighbors drew nigh over against me and stood, and my nearest of kin stood afar off. And they that sought after my soul used violence; and they that sought evils for me spake vain things, and craftiness all the day long did I meditate. But as for me, like a deaf man I heard them not, and was as a speechless man that openeth not his mouth. And I became as a man that heareth not, and that hath in his mouth no reproofs. For in Thee have I hoped, O Lord; Thou wilt hearken unto me, O Lord my God. For I said: Let never mine enemies rejoice over me; yea, when my feet were shaken, those men spake boastful words against me. For I am ready for scourges, and my sorrow is continually before me. For I will declare mine iniquity, and I will take heed concerning my sin. But mine enemies live and are made stronger than I, and they that hated me unjustly are multiplied. They that render me evil for good slandered me, because I pursued goodness. Forsake me not, O Lord my God, depart not from me. Be attentive unto my help, O Lord of my salvation. Forsake me not, O Lord my God, depart not from me. Be attentive unto my help, O Lord of my salvation.

PSALM 62

O God, my God, unto Thee I rise early at dawn. My soul hath thirsted for Thee; how often hath my flesh longed after Thee in a land barren and untrodden and unwatered. So in the sanctuary have I appeared before Thee to see Thy power and Thy glory, for Thy mercy is better than lives; my lips shall praise Thee. So shall I bless Thee in my life, and in Thy Name will I lift up my hands. As with marrow and fatness let my soul be filled, and with lips of rejoicing shall my mouth praise Thee, if I remembered Thee on my bed, at the dawn I meditated on Thee, for Thou art become my Helper; in the shelter of Thy wings will I rejoice. My soul hath cleaved after Thee, Thy right hand hath been quick to help me. But as for these, in vain have they sought after my soul; they shall go into the nethermost parts of the earth, they shall be surrendered unto the edge of the sword; portions for foxes shall they be. But the king shall be glad in God, everyone shall be praised that sweareth by Him; for the mouth of them is stopped that speak unjust things. At the dawn I meditated on Thee, for Thou art become my Helper; in the shelter of Thy wings will I rejoice. My soul hath cleaved after Thee, Thy right hand hath been quick to help me.

Stasis

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

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

Lord, have mercy. (*thrice*)

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

PSALM 87

O Lord God of my salvation, by day have I cried and by night before Thee, let my prayer come before Thee, bow down Thine ear unto my supplication, for filled with evils is my soul, and my life unto Hades hath drawn nigh. I am counted with them that go down into the pit; I am become as a man with-out help, free among the dead, like the bodies of the slain that sleep in the grave, whom Thou rememberest no more, and they are cut off from Thy hands. They laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness and in the shadow of death. Against me is Thine anger made strong, and all Thy billows hast Thou brought upon me. Thou hast removed my friends afar from me; they have made me an abomination unto themselves. I have been delivered up and have not come forth; mine eyes are grown weak from poverty. I have cried unto Thee, O Lord, in the whole day long; I have stretched out my hands unto Thee. Nay, for the dead wilt Thou work wonders? Or shall physicians raise them up that they may give thanks unto Thee. Nay, shall any in the grave tell of Thy mercy and of Thy truth in destruction. Nay, shall Thy wonders be known in that darkness, and Thy righteousness in that Land that is forgotten? But as for me, unto Thee, O Lord, have I cried; and in the morning shall my prayer come before Thee. Wherefore, O Lord, dost thou cast off my soul and turnest Thy face away from me? A poor man am I, and in troubles from my youth; yea, having been exalted, I was humbled and brought to distress. Thy furies have passed upon me, and Thy terrors have sorely troubled me. They came round about me like water, all the day long they compassed me about together. Thou hast removed afar from me friend and neighbor, and mine acquaintances because of my misery. O Lord God of my salvation, by day have I cried and by night before Thee, let my prayer come before Thee, bow down Thine ear unto my supplication.

PSALM 102

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy Name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all that He hath done for thee, Who is gracious unto all thine iniquities, Who healeth all thine infirmities, Who redeemeth thy life from corruption, Who crowneth thee with mercy and com-compassion, Who fulfilleth thy desire with good things; thy youth shall be renewed as the eagle's. The Lord performeth deeds of mercy and executeth judgment for all them that are wronged. He hath made His ways known unto Moses, unto the sons of Israel the things that He hath willed. Compassionate and merciful is the Lord, long suffering and plenteous in mercy; not unto the end will He be angered, neither unto eternity will He be wroth. Not according to our iniquities hath He dealt with us, neither according to our sins hath He rewarded us. For according to the height of heaven from the earth, the Lord hath made His mercy to prevail over them that fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our iniquities from us. Like a father hath compassion upon his sons, so hath the Lord had compassion upon them that fear Him; for He knoweth whereof we are made, He hath remembered that we are dust. As for man, his days are as the grass; as a flower of the field, so shall he blossom forth. For when the wind is passed over it, then it shall be gone, and no longer will it know the place thereof. But the mercy of the Lord is from eternity, even unto eternity, upon them that fear Him. And His righteousness is upon sons of sons, upon them that keep His testament and re-member His commandments to do them. The Lord in heaven hath prepared His throne, and His kingdom ruleth over all. Bless the Lord, all ye His angels, mighty in strength, that perform His words, to hear the voice of His words. Bless the Lord, all ye His hosts, His ministers that do His will. Bless the Lord, all ye His works, in every place of His dominion. Bless the Lord, O my soul. In every place of His dominion. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

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 judgment 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 out 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 hear Thy mercy in the morning; for in Thee have I put my hope. 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 all them that afflict my soul, for I am Thy servant. Hearken unto me in Thy righteousness, and enter not into judgment with Thy servant. Thy good Spirit shall lead me in the land of uprightness.

Stasis

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

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

O God our Hope, O Lord, glory 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.

ALLELUIA & TRIADIKA IN TONE 8

Choir: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Verse: Out of the night my spirit waketh at dawn unto Thee, O God, for Thy commandments are a light upon the earth.

Choir: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Verse: Learn righteousness, ye that dwell upon the earth.

Choir: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Verse: Zeal shall lay hold of an uninstructed people, and now fire shall devour the adversaries.

Choir: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Verse: Add more evils upon them, O Lord; add more evils upon them that are glorious upon the earth.

Choir: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

TROPARION OF THE BRIDEGROOM¹ IN TONE 8

Behold the Bridegroom cometh at midnight, and blessed is he, whom He shall find watching, but unworthy is he whom He shall find heedless. Beware therefore O my soul, lest thou be weighed down with sleep, and thou be given over unto death and shut out of the Kingdom. But rouse thyself, crying: Holy, Holy, Holy art Thou, O God, by the power of thy Cross, have mercy on us.

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

Behold the Bridegroom cometh at midnight, and blessed is he, whom He shall find watching, but unworthy is he whom He shall find heedless. Beware therefore O my soul, lest thou be weighed down with sleep, and thou be given over unto death and shut out of the Kingdom. But rouse thyself, crying: Holy, Holy, Holy art Thou, O God, through the intercessions of the Holy Myrrhberar and Equal-to-the-Apostles Mary Magdalene, have mercy on us.

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

Behold the Bridegroom cometh at midnight, and blessed is he, whom He shall find watching, but unworthy is he whom He shall find heedless. Beware therefore O my soul, lest thou be weighed down with sleep, and thou be given over unto death and shut out of the Kingdom. But rouse thyself, crying: Holy, Holy, Holy art Thou, O God, through the intercessions of the Theotokos, have mercy on us.

LITTLE LITANY REPLACEMENT

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (3 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.

¹ This Troparion is sung 3 times, with different endings (shown underlined).

KATHISMATA

In tone 3

The adulterous woman approaching thee, O Christ, and pouring on thy feet ointment with tears, was delivered by thy command from the rottenness of iniquity. But thine ingrate disciple, who was fully possessed of thy grace, rejected it, and wallowed in the mire, selling thee with the love of silver. Wherefore, glory be to thy compassion, O Lover of mankind.

In tone 4

The deceitful Judas, because of his lust for silver, O Lord, thou Treasury of life, plotted thy betrayal with deceit. Wherefore, he ran madly to the law transgressing Jews and said unto them: What will ye give me, and I will surrender him to you to crucify?

In tone 1

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

The adulterous woman, O Compassionate One, cried to thee moaning; and with the hair of her head wiped thy feet fervently, deeply sighing, as she said, Put me not away, O my God, and reject me not. But accept me repentant and save me; for thou alone art the Lover of mankind.

THE GOSPEL

All: Lord, have mercy. (3 times)

Reader: The reading is from the holy Gospel according to St. John (12:17-50).

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

Reader (in normal voice): At that time, the crowd that had been with him when he called Laz'arus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead bore witness. The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign. The Pharisees then said to one another, "You see that you can do nothing; look, the world has gone after him."

Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks. So these came to Philip, who was from Beth-sa'ida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." Philip went and told Andrew; Andrew went with Philip and they told Jesus. And Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of man to be glorified. Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If any one serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there shall my servant be also; if any one serves me, the Father will honor him.

"Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? `Father, save me from this hour'? No, for this purpose I have come to this hour. Father, glorify thy name." Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." The crowd standing by heard it and said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him." Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the ruler of this world be cast out; and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." He said this to show by what death he was to die. The crowd answered him, "We have heard from the law that the Christ remains for ever. How can you say that the Son of man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of man?" Jesus said to them, "The light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, lest the darkness overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light."

When Jesus had said this, he departed and hid himself from them. Though he had done so many signs before them, yet they did not believe in him; it was that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: "Lord, who has believed our report, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" Therefore they could not believe. For Isaiah again said, "He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, lest they should see with their eyes and perceive with their heart, and turn for me to heal them." Isaiah said this because he saw his glory and spoke of him. Nevertheless many even of the authorities believed in him, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

And Jesus cried out and said, "He who believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent me. And he who sees me sees him who sent me. I have come as light into the world, that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness. If any one hears my sayings and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. He who rejects me and does not receive my sayings has a judge; the word that I have spoken will be his judge on the last day. For I have not spoken on my own authority; the Father who sent me has himself given me commandment what to say and what to speak. And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has bidden me."

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

PSALM 50

Reader: Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy; according to the multitude of Thy compassions blot out my transgression. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sins. 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 hast 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. 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 Zion, 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.

The Three Canticle Canon, in tone 2

ODE 3

Heirmos: Thou hast established me upon the rock of faith, and hast enbroadened my voice against mine enemies, for my soul rejoiceth in her own singing. There is none holy as the Lord God, and there is none righteous beside thee, O Lord.

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

Verily, the law-deviating council is false, and hath met with an evil mind, to show thee guilty, O Christ the Rescuer, to whom we sing. Thou art our God, and there is none holy beside thee, O Lord.

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

Verily, the wicked, law-transgressing council, since their souls are wicked and God-contending, conspired to kill Christ the Righteous as one lacking goodness. Wherefore, to him we sing: Thou art our God, and there is none holy beside thee, O Lord.

(Katavasia)

Thou hast established me upon the rock of faith, and hast enbroadened my voice against mine enemies, for my soul rejoiceth in her own singing. There is none holy as the Lord God, and there is none righteous beside thee, O Lord.

LITTLE LITANY REPLACEMENT

Choir: Lord, have mercy. *(3 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.

KONTAKION & OIKOS

(Plain reading)

Kontakion

I have sinned against thee, O Good One, more than the adulterous woman, and have not even offered thee a flood of tears. But silently and calmly I kneel asking, kissing thy pure feet with longing, that thou mayest grant me, O Saviour, since thou art the Master, remission of my sins, who cry: Deliver me from the mire of my deeds.

Oikos

The shameless woman of old suddenly appeared chaste, despising her horrible deeds of sin and the pleasures of the body, contemplating her great shame and the condemnation of punishment which the adulterous and insolent, of whom I am first, endure. I tremble thereat; yet I who am ignorant am confirmed in my evil habits. But the adulterous woman trembled with fear, and hastened to her Rescuer, crying, O Lover of mankind, rescue me from the mire of my deeds.

THE SYNAXARION

The more accurate and exacting of the commentators on the four Gospels say that two women anointed the Lord, one long before his Passion, and one a few days before. One of these was a harlot, while the other was a chaste, virtuous woman. On this day the Church commemorates this act of piety and righteousness which proceeded from the harlot, contrasting it with the treachery of Judas and his Betrayal of Christ. Both of these acts fell on Wednesday, corresponding to the twenty-first of March, two days before the Mosaic passover, as it appears from the course of the account of Saint Matthew the Evangelist.

The above mentioned harlot anointed the head and feet of Jesus with spikenard, and wiped them with the hair of her head. The precious ointment was worth three hundred dinars, or about fifteen pieces of Venetian gold. When the disciples saw this they stumbled, especially Judas, the money-lover, and were angry because of the wasting of such an amount of ointment. Jesus rebuked them, lest the woman be embarrassed. Judas was wroth, and went to the high priests, where they were gathered in the house of Caiaphas, taking counsel against Jesus, and agreed with them to deliver the Master for thirty pieces of silver. From that time Judas sought an opportunity to deliver him.

(Matthew 26:2-16) Because of this the fast of Wednesday was instituted from the days of the apostolic age itself.

Wherefore, O Christ God, anointed with the supersensuous ointment, deliver us from suffering, and have mercy upon us.

The Continuation of the Three Canticle Canon, in tone 2

ODE 8

Heirmos: Verily, the furnace of old was heated sevenfold by the usurper's command, and in it the youths were not burned, but they walked at the command of the king, shouting: Praise the Lord, all his works; exalt him more and more unto the ages.

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.²

The adulterous woman, O Christ, poured precious ointment on thy divine, terrible, lordly head. She held thy pure feet with her defiled hands and cried: Bless the Lord, all his works, and exalt him more and more unto the ages.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;
She who was under the guilt of iniquity, washed the feet of the Creator with her tears, and wiped them with her hair. Wherefore, she was not disappointed of salvation, in spite of the sins she had committed during her life, but shouted: Praise the Lord, all his works; exalt him more and more unto the ages.

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

Thou hast accomplished redemption for her who, with pent emotions of salvation and fountains of tears, in which, confessing she had been washed, was of grateful mind, not being ashamed, but crying: Praise the Lord, all his works, and exalt him more and more unto the ages.

We praise, bless, and worship the Lord.

(Katavasia)

Verily, the furnace of old was heated sevenfold by the usurper's command, and in it the youths were not burned, but they walked at the command of the king, shouting: Praise the Lord, all his works; exalt him more and more unto the ages.

ODE 9

Leader: The Theotokos and Mother of the Light, let us honor and magnify in song.

Heirmos: Come, let us magnify with undefiled souls and pure lips that immaculate, most spotless one, the Mother of Emmanuel, whom we offer as an intercessor to him who was born of her, saying: Pity our souls, O Christ God, and save us.

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.³

The evil Judas seemed disloyal and wickedly zealous, when he consented to sell the gift worthy of God, through whom the debts of sin were undone, adulterating the God-beloved grace. Wherefore, O Christ God, have pity on our souls and save us.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;
Verily did Judas go unto the law-transgressing chiefs and said to them: What will ye give me to deliver unto you the Christ whom ye seek, exchanging his adoption for gold. Wherefore, O Christ God, have pity on our souls and save us.

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

² The Antiochian Holy Week book has this refrain missing.

³ The Antiochian Holy Week book has this refrain missing.

Ah for thy vicious love of silver, thou traitor, which made thee forget that the whole world doth not equal one soul, as thou didst learn; for burning with despair, thou didst hang thyself, O betrayer. But, O Christ God, have pity on our souls and save us.

(Katavasia)

Come, let us magnify with undefiled souls and pure lips that immaculate, most spotless one, the Mother of Emmanuel, whom we offer as an intercessor to him who was born of her, saying: Pity our souls, O Christ God, and save us.

LITTLE LITANY REPLACEMENT

Choir: Lord, have mercy. *(3 times)*

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

Choir: Amen.

THE EXAPOSTEILARION

Tone 3 (special melody)

I behold thy bridal chamber richly adorned, O my Saviour; but I have no wedding garment to worthily enter. Make radiant the garment of my soul, O Giver of Light, and save me. *(thrice)*

THE PRAISES

In tone 1

Let everything that hath breath, praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord from the heavens: praise him in the heights. To thee, O God, is due our song. Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts. To thee, O God, is due our song.

Verse: Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness.

When the adulteress did know thee as God, O Son of the Virgin, she shouted with tears, imploring thee, having committed deeds demanding tears, and said: Loose thou my debt as I have loosened my braids. Love thou her who is hated with reason, that I may make a vow to thee with the publicans, O Benefactor and Lover of mankind.

Verse: Praise him with sound of the trumpet; praise him with the psaltery and with harp.

When the adulteress mixed her tears with ointment of great price and poured it over thy pure feet, kissing them, thou didst immediately justify her. Wherefore, grant forgiveness to us and redeem us, O thou who for us did suffer.

Verse: Praise him with the timbrel and dance; praise him with stringed instruments and organs. When the sinful woman was offering her spice, the disciple was making a bargain with the transgressors of the law. The one rejoiced in pouring out the spice so great in price, while the other hastened to sell the Priceless One. The one knew the Master, the other was separated from the Lord. She was freed and Judas became a slave to the enemy. Indifference is evil, but great is repentance. The latter grant to us, O Saviour, and redeem us, who for us did suffer.

Verse: Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high-sounding cymbals. Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.

Ah for the wretchedness of Judas! For, seeing the adulteress kiss the traces of his feet, he was thinking with deceit of the kiss of betrayal. She loosed her braids, and he was bound with wrath, offering instead of spice, rotted evil; for envy knoweth not how to honor anything which is good. Woe to the wretchedness of Judas, and save from it our souls, O God.

In tone 2

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
The sinful woman hastened to the spice merchant to buy of him ointment of great price, with which to anoint the Benefactor, she cried out unto him: Give me spice with which I may anoint him who hath remitted all my transgressions.

In tone 6

Both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.
Verily, she who was immersed deep in sin, found in thee a haven of salvation. She poured on thee spice with tears, and cried out unto thee, saying: Look upon me, O thou who dost accept the repentance of transgressors, and save me, O Master, from the tempests of sin, for the sake of the richness of thy mercies.

THE LESSER DOXOLOGY

Leader: To Thee belongeth glory, O Lord our God, and unto Thee we ascribe glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

All: 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 night 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 commandments. Blessed art thou, O Holy One: enlighten me with thy precepts. 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.

LITANY OF SUPPLICATION (& THE PEACE) REPLACEMENT

Reader: Lord have mercy (*12 times*)

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

THE APOSTICHA

In tone 6

Today hath Christ come to the house of the Pharisee; and a sinful woman approached and fell at his feet, crying: Look at her who is drowned in sin, and who is despondent by reason of her deeds, and who is not rejected by thy goodness. Grant me, O Lord, forgiveness of iniquity and save me.

Verse: We were filled in the morning with thy mercy, O Lord, and we rejoiced and were glad.

O Saviour, the adulteress stretched forth her hair to thee, and Judas stretched forth his hands to the transgressors of the Law; she to gain forgiveness, and he to receive silver. Wherefore, we cry unto thee, O thou who wast sold and didst free us, O Lord, glory be to thee.

Verse: In all our days, let us be glad: for the days wherein thou hast humbled us, for the years wherein we have seen evil. And look upon thy servants, and upon thy works, and do thou guide their sons.

An unclean woman, spattered with mud, came shedding tears at thy feet, O Saviour, forewarning in this of the Passion, and crying: How shall I gaze at thee, O Master; for thou hast come to save the adulteress. Raise me from the depths, I who am dead, O thou who didst raise Lazarus from the tomb after four days, and accept me, the wretched one, and save me.

Verse: And let the brightness of the Lord our God be on us: prosper thou the work of our hands, O prosper thou our handiwork.

She who was despondent because of her misconduct, and whose character was known, did come unto thee bearing spices and crying: Cast me not away, an adulteress, O thou who wast born of the Virgin, and turn not away from my tears, O joy of the angels. But accept me, O Lord, whom thou didst not put away because of sin, for thy great mercy.

THE HYMN OF KASSIANI, IN TONE 8

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

O Lord God, the woman who had fallen into many sins having perceived thy divinity received the rank of ointment-bearer, offering thee spices before thy burial, wailing and crying: Woe is me; for the love of adultery and sin hath given me a dark and lightless night. Accept the fountains of my tears, O thou who draweth the waters of the sea by the clouds. Incline, O incline, thou to the sigh of my heart, O thou who didst bend the heavens by thine inapprehensible condescension. I will kiss thy pure feet and I will wipe them with my tresses. I will kiss thy feet whose tread, when it fell on the ears of Eve in paradise, dismayed her so that she did hide herself because of fear. Who then shall examine the multitude of my sins and the depth of thy judgment? Wherefore, O my Saviour, and the Deliverer of my soul, turn not away from thy handmaiden, O thou of countless mercy.

Reader: It is good to give praise unto the Lord, and to chant unto Thy Name, O Most High, to proclaim in the morning Thy mercy, and Thy truth by night.

Trisagion

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

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

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

Lord, have mercy. (*Thrice*)

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

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we

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

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

All: Amen.

Kontakion (Plain reading)

I have sinned against thee, O Good One, more than the adulterous woman, and have not even offered thee a flood of tears. But silently and calmly I kneel asking, kissing thy pure feet with longing, that thou mayest grant me, O Saviour, since thou art the Master, remission of my sins, who cry: Deliver me from the mire of my deeds.

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

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

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

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

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

THE PRAYER OF ST. EPHREM THE SYRIAN

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

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

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

Then⁴ twelve reverences (with the sign of the Cross). With each one we say:

O God, be gracious unto me a sinner.

Then the entire prayer without a break:

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

THE DISMISSAL

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 Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, who art going to Thy voluntary passion for the sake of our salvation, through the prayers of Thy most pure Mother; by the might of the precious and life-giving Cross; of the holy Myrrh-bearer and equal-to-the-apostles, Mary Magdalene,

⁴ The Antiochian "Holy Week and Pascha" book omits the 12 metanias and the repetition of the entire St. Ephrem's Prayer.

protector of our community; of the holy and righteous ancestors of God Joachim and Anna; and all the saints, have mercy on us and save us, for Thou art good and lovest mankind.

The faithful now venerate the icon of the Bridegroom, while the Troparion and/or the Ex-apostelarian of the Bridegroom is chanted by the choir. 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.