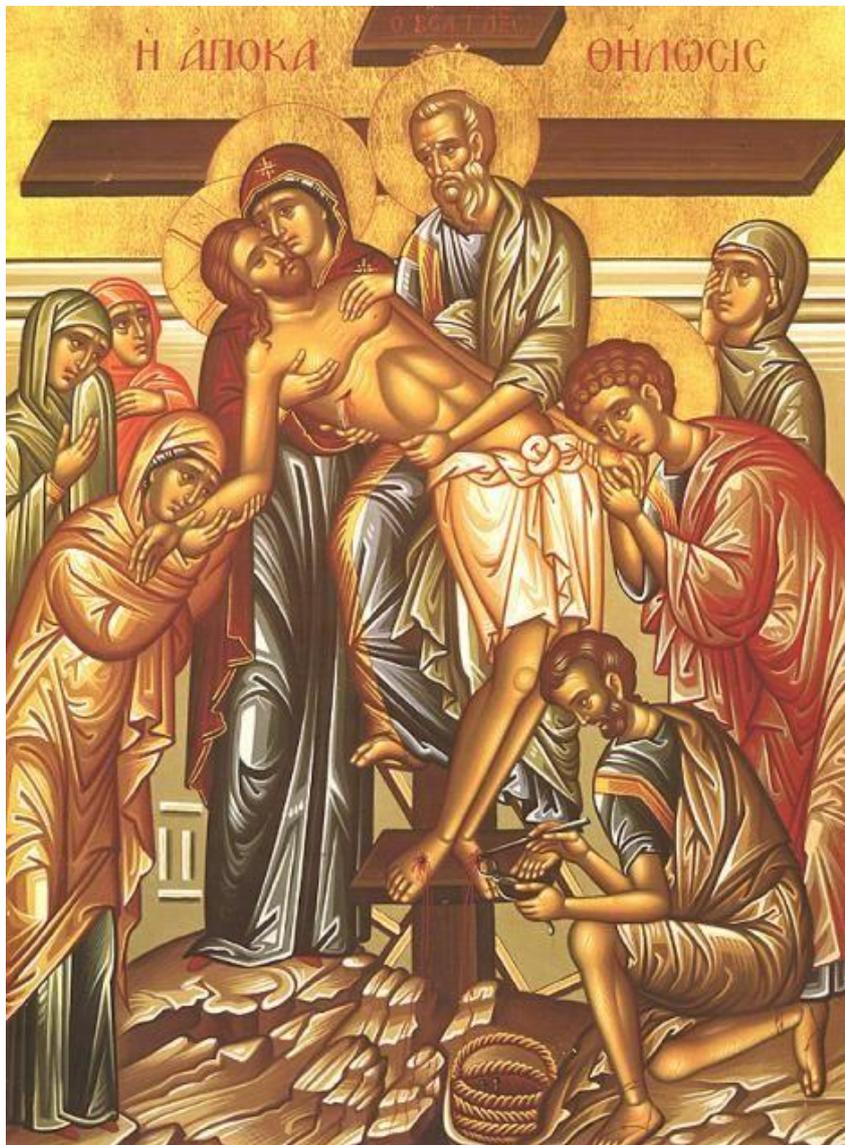


# Great Vespers

Great and Holy Friday





## **Great Vespers Service**

**Priest:** Blessed is our God, always, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

**People:** 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 Christ Himself, our King, our Lord, and our God.

### **Psalm 103**

Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord my God, You are very great: You are clothed with honour and majesty, Who cover Yourself with light as with a garment, Who stretch out the heavens like a curtain.

He lays the beams of His upper chambers in the waters, Who makes the clouds His chariot, Who walks on the wings of the wind, Who makes His angels spirits, His ministers a flame of fire.

You Who laid the foundations of the Earth, So that it should not be moved forever, You covered it with the deep as with a garment; The waters stood above the mountains. At Your rebuke they fled; At the voice of Your thunder they hastened away. They went up over the mountains; They went down into the valleys, To the place which You founded for them. You have set a boundary that they may not pass over, That they may not return to cover the earth.

He sends the springs into the valleys; They flow among the hills. They give drink to every beast of the field; The wild donkeys quench their

thirst. By them the birds of the heavens have their home; They sing among the branches. He waters the hills from His upper chambers; The Earth is satisfied with the fruit of Your works.

He causes the grass to grow for the cattle, And vegetation for the service of man, That he may bring forth food from the earth, And wine that makes glad the heart of man, Oil to make his face shine, And bread which strengthens man's heart. The trees of the Lord are full of sap, The cedars of Lebanon which He planted, Where the birds make their nests; The stork has her home in the fir trees. The high hills are for the wild goats; The cliffs are a refuge for the rock badgers.

He appointed the Moon for seasons; The Sun knows its going down. You make darkness, and it is night, In which all the beasts of the forest creep about. The young lions roar after their prey, And seek their food from God. When the Sun rises, they gather together And lie down in their dens. Man goes out to his work And to his labour until the evening.

O Lord, how manifold are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all. The Earth is full of Your possessions— This great and wide sea, In which are innumerable teeming things, Living things both small and great. There the ships sail about; There is that Leviathan Which You have made to play there.

These all wait for You, That You may give them their food in due season. What You give them they gather in; You open Your hand, they are filled with good. You hide Your face, they are troubled; You take away their breath, they die and return to their dust. You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; And You renew the face of the Earth.

May the glory of the Lord endure forever; May the Lord rejoice in His works. He looks on the Earth, and it trembles; He touches the hills, and they smoke.

I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. May my meditation be sweet to Him; I will be glad in the Lord. May sinners be consumed from the Earth, And the wicked be no more. Bless the Lord, O my soul!

The Sun knows its going down. You make darkness, and it is night. O Lord, how manifold are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all.

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.**

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God! [3 times]

O our God and our hope, glory to You.

### **The Great Litany**

**Priest:** In peace let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** For the peace, from on high, and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** For the peace of the whole world, for the welfare of the holy churches of God, and for the union of all people, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** For this holy House, and for those who enter it with faith, reverence, and the fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** For our Father Metropolitan (*Name*), for the venerable Priesthood, for the Diaconate in Christ, for all the Clergy, monks, nuns, and all the people, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** For those who govern this country, for all civil authorities and for our armed forces everywhere, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** For this blessed city, for every monastery, city, town and village, and for the faithful, who dwell in them; let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** For favourable weather, for abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times; let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** For those who travel by sea, by land, by air, for the sick and suffering; for those in captivity; and for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger and necessity; let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Your grace.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** Commemorating our all-holy, pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary, (*Most Holy Theotokos, save us*) with all the saints; let us entrust ourselves and one another, and our whole life, to Christ our God.

**People:** To You, O Lord.

**Priest:** For to You belong all glory, honour, and adoration to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

### **Psalm 140 (Tone 1)**

**Lord, I have cried unto You: hearken unto me, hearken unto me O Lord. Lord, I have cried unto You, hearken unto me; attend to**

**the voice of my supplications when I cry unto You, hearken unto me, O Lord.**

**Let my prayer be set forth as incense before You; the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice. Hearken unto me O Lord.**

Set O Lord, a watch before my mouth, and a door of enclosure round about my lips.

Incline not my heart unto words of evil, to make excuse with excuses in sins.

With men that work iniquity and I will not join with their chosen

The righteous man will chasten me with mercy and reprove me, as for the oil of the sinner let it not anoint my head.

For yet more is my prayer in the presence of their pleasures; swallowed up near by the rock have their judges been.

They shall hear my words, for they be sweetened; as a clod of earth is broken upon the earth, so have their bones been scattered nigh unto Hades.

For unto You, O Lord, O Lord, are my eyes; in You have I hoped; take not my soul away.

Keep me from the snare which they have laid for me, and from the stumbling blocks of them that work iniquity.

The sinners shall fall into their own net, I am alone until I pass by.

## **Psalm 141 (Tone 1)**

With my voice unto the Lord have I cried, with my voice unto the Lord have I made my supplication.

I will pour out before Him my supplication, my affliction before Him will I declare.

When my spirit was fainting within me, then You knew my paths:

In this way wherein I have walked they hid for me a snare.

I looked up on my right hand and beheld, and there was none that did know me.

Flight has failed me, and there is none that watches out for my soul.

I have cried unto You, O Lord; I said "You are my hope: my portion are You in the land of the living."

Attend unto my supplication, for I am brought very low.

Deliver me from them that persecute me for they are stronger than I.

### ***Tone 1***

***Bring my soul out of prison that I may praise Your Name.***

All creation was changed by fear, seeing You, O Christ, hanging on the Cross. The Sun was darkened, and the very foundations of the earth were shaken. All things suffered with the Creator of all things. O Lord, Who willingly endured for us, Glory to You.

## **Tone 2**

***The righteous shall surround me, for You shall deal bountifully with me.***

An impious and lawless people, why do they contrive in vain? Why did they condemn to death the Life of all? O wondrous marvel! That the Creator of the world is delivered into the hands of the lawless; and the Lover of mankind is lifted up on the Cross, that He might bring freedom to those, bound in Hades, who cry out: "O long-suffering Lord, glory to You."

***Out of the depths I have cried to You, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice!***

Today the All-pure Virgin seeing You, O Word of God, hanging on the Cross, was bitterly pierced in her heart, bewailing from the depths of a mother's love; and groaning from deep within her soul, she was exhausted by smiting her breast, tearing at her face and hair, and crying out mournfully: "Woe to me! my Divine Son! Woe to me! Light of the World! Why, O Lamb of God, have You faded from my eyes?" Wherefore, also, the armies of the Bodiless Hosts seized with trembling, cried out: "O incomprehensible Lord, glory to You."

***Let Your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.***

Seeing You hanging on the Cross, O Christ, the God and Creator of all, Whom as a Virgin she bore, she cried out bitterly: "O my Son, where has the beauty of Your form vanished? I cannot bear to see You unjustly crucified; hasten therefore, and arise, that I too may behold Your Resurrection from the dead, on the third day"

## **Tone 6**

***If You, Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?  
But there is forgiveness with You.***

Today the Master of creation stands before Pilate, and the Creator of all is given up to the Cross, led away as a lamb of His own volition. He is transfixed with nails, His side is pierced, and His lips are touched with the sponge, He Who had rained down manna. The Redeemer of the world is smitten on the cheek, and the Creator of all is mocked by His own servants. O, how great the Master's love! For His crucifiers He besought His own Father, saying: "Forgive them this sin, for the lawless know not what they unjustly are doing."

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

How could the lawless synagogue condemn to death the King of all creation, without shame, when He recalled the benefits, which He had secured for them, saying: "My people, what have I done to you? Have I not filled Judea with marvels? Have I not raised the dead, with but a word? Have I not healed all manner of sickness and infirmity? How then do you repay Me? How have you forgotten Me? Instead of healing, you inflict on Me wounds; instead of life, death, by hanging on the Cross the Benefactor, as a malefactor; as lawless, the Lawgiver; as a criminal, the King of all." O forbearing Lord, glory to You.

***Now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.***

An awesome and marvellous mystery today is coming to pass. The Incorporeal One is being held; the One, freeing Adam from the curse is bound; He, Who tries the inner hearts and thoughts of man, is unjustly tried; He Who sealed the abyss is shut up in prison. He stands before Pilate, before Whom the Powers of Heaven stand with

trembling. The Fashioner is smitten by the hand of the fashioned; the Judge of the living and the dead is condemned to the Cross; the Despoiler of Hades is shut up in a Tomb; O forbearing Lord, compassionately enduring all things and saving all from the curse, glory to You.

### **Gladsome Light**

**Priest:** Wisdom. Let us attend.

**People:** O Gladsome Light of the Holy Glory of the Immortal Father: Heavenly, Holy, Blessed, O Jesus Christ. Now that we have come to the setting of the Sun and behold the light of evening, we praise God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. How right it is at all times to worship You with voices of praise, O Son of God, and Giver of life. Therefore, all the world glorifies You!

### **Old Testament Readings**

**Priest:** The evening Prokeimenon.

#### **The First Reading**

**Reader:** The evening Prokeimenon in Tone 4. They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots. My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?

**Reader:** A reading from the Book of Exodus. (Chapter 33:11-23)

**Priest:** Wisdom Let us attend.

**Reader:** So, the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. And he would return to the camp, but his servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tabernacle.

Then Moses said to the Lord, "See, You say to me, 'Bring up this people.' But You have not let me know whom You will send with me. Yet You have said, 'I know you by name, and you have also found grace in My sight.' Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight. And consider that this nation is Your people." And He said, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." Then he said to Him, "If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here. For how then will it be known that Your people and I have found grace in Your sight, except You go with us? So we shall be separate, Your people and I, from all the people who are upon the face of the earth." So the Lord said to Moses, "I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name." And he said, "Please, show me Your glory." Then He said, "I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live." And the Lord said, "Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen."

### **The Second Reading**

**Reader:** Prokeimenon in Tone 4. O Lord judge those, who wrong me. Thus, they have rewarded me evil for good, And hatred for my love.

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

**Priest:** Wisdom Let us attend.

**Reader:** Now the Lord blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning; for he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen, and one thousand female donkeys. He also had seven sons and three daughters. And he called the name of the first Jemimah, the name of the second Keziah, and the name of the third Keren-Happuch. In all the land were found no women so beautiful as the daughters of Job; and their father gave them an inheritance among their brothers. After this Job lived one hundred and forty years, and saw his children and grandchildren for four generations. So Job died, old and full of days.

### **The Third Reading**

**Reader:** A reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah. (Chapter 52:13-15, 53:1-12, 54:1)

**Priest:** wisdom Let us attend.

**Reader:** Thus, says the Lord, Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently; He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high. Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men; So shall He startle many nations. Kings shall shut their mouths at Him; For what had not been told them they shall see, And what they had not heard they shall consider.

Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him. He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. 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; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by 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; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken. And they made His grave with the wicked— But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. He shall see the labour of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For 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 unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

“Sing, O barren, You who have not borne! Break forth into singing, and cry aloud, You who have not laboured with child! For more are the children of the desolate Than the children of the married woman,” says the Lord.

### **The Epistle Reading**

**Priest:** Let us attend.

**Reader:** The Prokeimenon in Tone 4. You have laid me in the lowest pit, In darkness, in the depths. O Lord, God of my salvation, I have cried out day and night before You.

**Priest:** Wisdom.

**Reader:** A reading from the First Epistle of Saint Paul to the Corinthians. (Chapter 1:18-31; 2:1-2)

**Priest:** Let us attend.

**Reader:** Brethren for the message of the cross is foolishness 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 bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For since in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that

no flesh should glory in His presence. But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, Who became for us wisdom from God - and righteousness and sanctification and redemption that, as it is written, "He who glories, let him glory in the Lord." And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

**Priest:** Peace be to you reader.

**People:** Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

### **The Gospel Lesson**

**Priest:** Wisdom. Let us attend and hear the Holy Gospel.

**Priest:** Peace be to you all.

**People:** And to your spirit.

**Priest:** A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew. (Matt. 27:1-38; Luke 23:39-43; Matt. 27:39-54; John 19:31-37; Matt. 27:55-61)

**People:** Glory be to You, O Lord, glory be to You.

**Priest:** Let us attend.

When morning came, all the chief priests and elders of the people plotted against Jesus to put Him to death. And when they had bound Him, they led Him away and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the governor. Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of

silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, "I have sinned betraying innocent blood." And they said, "What is that to us? You see to it!" Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself. But the chief priests took the silver pieces and said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, because they are the price of blood." And they consulted together 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 was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet saying, "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the value of Him Who was priced, Whom they of the children of Israel priced, and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord directed me."

Now Jesus stood before the governor. And the governor asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" Jesus said to him, "It is as you say." And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders He said nothing. Then Pilate said to Him, "Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?" But He answered him not one word, so that the governor marvelled greatly. Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to releasing to the multitude one prisoner who they wished. And at that time they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. Therefore, when they had gathered together, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release to you? Barabbas, or Jesus Who is called Christ?" For he knew that they had handed Him over because of envy. While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, "Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him." But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. The governor answered and said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?" They said "Barabbas!" Pilate said to them, "What then shall I do with Jesus Who is called Christ?"

They all said to him, "Let Him be crucified!" Then the governor said, "Why, what evil has He done?" But they cried out all the more, saying, "Let Him be crucified!" When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather that a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see to it." And all the people answered and said, "His blood be on us and on our children." Then he released Barabbas to them; and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered Him to be crucified.

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole garrison around Him. And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" Then they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head. And when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified. Now as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. Him they compelled to bear the cross. And when they had come to a place called Golgotha, that is to say, Place of the Skull, they gave Him vinegar mingled with gall to drink. But when He had tasted it, He would not drink.

Then they crucified Him, and divided His garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: "They divided My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots." Sitting down, they kept watch over Him there. And they put up over His head the accusation written against Him: "THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS." Then two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and another on the left.

Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us." But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong." Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom." And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."

And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, "You Who destroy the temple and build it in three days, save Yourself. If You are the Son of God come down from the cross." Likewise the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders, said: "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, "I am the Son of God" ".

Even the robbers who were crucified with Him reviled Him with the same thing. Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eloi Eloi, lama sabachthani?" that is "My God My God, why have You forsaken Me?" Some of those who stood there, when they heard that, said, "This Man is calling for Elijah!" Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink. The rest said, "Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to save Him." And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up His spirit.

Then behold the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went

into the holy city and appeared to many. So, when the Centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, "Truly this was the Son of God."

Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for the Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was 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 immediately blood and water came out. And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe.

For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, "Not one of His bones shall be broken." And again, another Scripture says, "They shall look on Him Whom they pierced." And many women who followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to Him, were there looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

**At this point the Priest slows the chanting's rhythm of the Gospel to give time to take down the Icon of the Body of Christ from the Cross.**

Now when evening had come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the Body to be given to him. When Joseph had taken the Body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a

large stone against the door of the tomb and departed. And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting opposite the tomb.

**People:** Glory be to You, O Lord, glory be to You.

### **The Litany of Fervent Supplication**

**Priest:** Let us say with all our soul and with all our mind, let us say. O Lord Almighty, the God of our Fathers, we pray to You, hear us and have mercy.

**People:** Lord have mercy. (x3)

**Priest:** Have mercy on us, O God, according to Your great goodness, we pray to You, hear us and have mercy.

**People:** Lord have mercy. (x3)

**Priest:** Again we pray for all pious and Orthodox Christians

**People:** Lord have mercy. (x3)

**Priest:** Again we pray for our Father Metropolitan (*Name*), for the Priests, Deacons, Monks and Nuns; and for all our brethren in Christ.

**People:** Lord have mercy. (x3)

**Priest:** Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health and salvation for the servants of God, the Orthodox Christians who dwell in this city. For those who are gathering in this Holy Church, for the Parish Council, for those who give and for their visitation, pardon and remission of their sins.

**People:** Lord, have mercy. (x3)

**Priest:** Again we pray for the blessed and ever memorable founders of this holy Temple; and for all our fathers and brethren, the Orthodox departed this life before us, who here and in all the world lie asleep in the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy. (x3)

**Priest:** Again we pray for those who bear fruit and do good works in this holy and all-venerable Temple; for those who serve and those who sing; and for all the people here present, who await Your great and rich mercy.

**People:** Lord, have mercy. (x3)

**Priest: For You are a merciful God and love mankind, and unto You we ascribe glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: now and for ever, and to the ages of ages.**

### **The Evening Prayer**

**People:** Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this evening without sin. Blessed are You, Lord God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Your Name, forever. Amen.

May your mercy, O Lord, be upon us, even as our hope is in You. Blessed are You, O Lord, teach me Your statutes. Blessed are You, O Lord, teach me Your precepts. Blessed are You, O Lord, teach me Your commandments. Your mercy, O Lord, endures forever, despise not the works of Your hands.

To You belongs worship, to You belongs praise, to You belongs glory, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

## The Litany of Supplication

**Priest:** Let us complete our prayer unto the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** Help us; save us; have mercy on us; and keep us, O God, by Your grace.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** That the whole day may be perfect, holy, peaceful, and without sin, let us ask of the Lord.

**People:** Grant this, O Lord.

**Priest:** An angel of peace, a faithful guide, a guardian of our souls and bodies, let us ask of the Lord.

**People:** Grant this, O Lord.

**Priest:** Pardon and forgiveness of our sins and transgressions, let us ask of the Lord.

**People:** Grant this, O Lord.

**Priest:** All things good and profitable for our souls, and peace for the world, let us ask of the Lord.

**People:** Grant this, O Lord.

**Priest:** That we may complete the remaining time of our life in peace and repentance, let us ask of the Lord.

**People:** Grant this, O Lord.

**Priest:** A Christian ending to our life, painless, blameless, peaceful; and a good defence before the dread Judgment Seat of Christ, let us ask of the Lord.

**People:** Grant this, O Lord.

**Priest:** Commemorating our all-holy, pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary, (*Most Holy Theotokos, save us*) with all the saints; let us entrust ourselves and one another, and our whole life, to Christ our God.

**People:** To You O Lord.

**Priest:** For You are a God of mercies and of bounties and loving toward mankind, and to you we ascribe glory; to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

**Priest:** Peace be to you all.

**People:** And to your spirit.

**Priest:** Let us bow our heads unto the Lord.

**People:** To You, O Lord.

**Priest:** Lord our God, You inclined the heavens and descended for the salvation of all humanity. Look on Your servants and Your inheritance. For they have bowed their heads and bent their necks to

You the awesome yet compassionate Judge, not looking for human help but awaiting Your mercy and in expectation of Your redemption. Preserve them at all times and during this evening and the impending night, from every enemy, from all opposing demonic activity, from vain thoughts and evil imaginations.

**Blessed and glorified be the majesty of Your kingdom of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.**

**People:** Amen.

### **Aposticha**

#### **Tone 2**

When Joseph of Arimathea took You, the Life of all, now dead, down from the Cross, he buried You in fine linen, after anointing You with myrrh. He yearned with desire, in heart and lips, to embrace Your pure Body; but, humbly contained by awe, rejoicing, he cried out to You: "Glory to Your condescension, O Merciful God!"

**The Lord reigns, He is clothed with majesty; The Lord is clothed, He has girded Himself with strength.**

When You, the Redeemer of all, were placed in a new Tomb for us all, Hades, the respecter of none, crouched when he saw You. The bars were broken, the gates were shattered, the graves were opened, and the dead arose. Then Adam, gratefully rejoicing, cried out to You: "Glory to Your condescension, O Merciful God!"

**Surely the world is established, so that it cannot be moved.**

When You, O Christ, of Your own will, submitted bodily to be closed in the tomb, being by nature of the Godhead, remaining indescribable and limitless, You closed down the chambers of death, and emptied the palaces of Hades. Then, You rendered this Sabbath worthy of blessings and glory, and of Your own splendour.

**Holiness adorns Your house, O Lord, forever.**

When the heavenly Powers saw You, O Christ, falsely slandered, by the lawless, as a deceiver, and the stone of the tomb sealed by the hands of those, who pierced Your sacred side, they shuddered at Your ineffable forbearance; yet, rejoicing for our salvation, they cried out to You: "Glory to Your condescension, O Merciful God."

### **Procession with the Epitaphion**

*(Priest takes hold of the Epitaphion and raises it over his head and forms a procession preceded by the Altar Boys carrying the Cross, Lamp, Angelic Fans and Censers. The Epitaphion is reverently carried around the Church to the Solea. There they circle around the flower bedecked Bier placed in the Solea three times and then the Epitaphion is placed in the prepared Sepulchre.)*

*(The Congregation kneels until the procession ends.)*

### **Tone 5**

***Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.***

You Who clothed Yourself with light as a garment, Joseph with Nicodemus, brought down from the Cross, and seeing You dead,

naked, and unburied, felt deeply a sympathetic lament, and in grieving said: "Woe to me, sweetest Jesus! Whom, but a short while ago, when the Sun beheld You hanging on the Cross, enshrouded itself in darkness, and the earth quaked in fear, and the veil of the Temple was rent asunder. But lo, I now see, that You willingly underwent death for my sake. How then shall I array You for burial, my God? Or how shall I wrap You in a shroud? And with what hands can I touch Your sacred Body? Or what dirges shall I chant for Your funeral, O Merciful One? I magnify Your Passion; I praise in hymn Your Burial, with Your Resurrection, crying aloud: Lord, glory to You."

### **Prayer of St. Symeon**

**People:** Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word. For my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared before the face of all people; a Light to lighten the gentiles, and to be the glory of Your people, Israel.

### **The Trisagion Prayers**

**People:** Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.  
(x3)

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.**

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

Lord, have mercy. (x3)

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

**Priest: For Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory: of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and forever, and to the ages of ages.**

**People:** Amen.

### **Troparia (Tone 2)**

The noble Joseph taking down from the Cross Your spotless Body, wrapped It in clean linen with aromas, and laid It for burial in a new Tomb.

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.*

The Angel, standing by the Tomb cried out to the Myrrh-bearing women: "The myrrh is fitting for the dead, but Christ has shown Himself a stranger to corruption."

### **The Dismissal**

**Priest:** Wisdom.

**People:** Bless.

**Priest:** Christ our God, the Existing One, is blessed at all times, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

**People:** Amen. Preserve, O God, the Holy Orthodox faith and Orthodox Christians, to the ages of ages. Amen.

**Priest:** Most holy Theotokos, save us.

**People:** More honourable than the Cherubim, and beyond compare, more glorious than the Seraphim, who without corruption gave birth to God the Word, the very Theotokos: you do we magnify.

**Priest:** Glory be to You, O God and our hope, glory be to You.

**People: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.**

Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy.

In the name of the Lord, Father give the blessing.

**Priest:** The One, Who for us men and for our salvation endured the awful Passion, the Cross, and condescended to voluntary entombment in the flesh, Christ our True God, through the prayers of His most pure, blameless and holy Mother; of Saint (*patron saint(s)*) of this Church; of Saints (*of the day*), whose memory we celebrate today; and of all the Saints; have mercy on us and save us, for He is good and loves mankind.

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

**People:** Amen.





## Saints Michael and Gabriel Antiochian Orthodox Church