

**GREAT VESPERS ON SATURDAY,
SEPTEMBER 14, 2024; TONE 3
AFTER-FAST OF THE ELEVATION OF THE HOLY
CROSS**

GREAT-MARTYR NIKITAS THE GOTH AND THOSE WITH HIM

Priest: Blessed is our God, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

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

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

Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and our God.

THE PSALM OF INTRODUCTION—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 forever 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
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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. Man shall go forth unto his work, and to his labor 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, wherein are things creeping innumerable, small living creatures with the great. There go the ships; there this leviathan, 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; 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. (*thrice*)

O our God and our Hope, glory to Thee!

THE GREAT LITANY

Deacon: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

The choir responds "Lord, have mercy" to each petition until noted.

For the peace from above and the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

For the peace of the whole world, the good estate of the holy churches of God and the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.

For this holy house and those who with faith, reverence and fear of God enter therein, let us pray to the Lord.

For our father and metropolitan, N., (our bishop, N.) the honorable presbytery, the diaconate in Christ, all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

For our country, its president (or appropriate head of state), civil authorities and armed forces, let us pray to the Lord.

For this city and every city and countryside and the faithful who dwell therein, let us pray to the Lord.

For healthful seasons, abundance of the fruits of the earth and peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

For travelers by sea, by land and by air, the sick, the suffering, the captive, and for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

For our deliverance from all tribulation, wrath, danger and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.

Help us; save us; have mercy on us; and keep us, O God, by thy grace.

Calling to remembrance our all-holy, immaculate, most blessed and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and each other and all our life unto Christ our God.

Choir: To Thee, O Lord.

Priest: For unto thee are due all glory, honor and worship, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

“O LORD I HAVE CRIED” IN TONE THREE

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 hades.
- + But to Thee, O Lord, Lord, are mine eyes; in Thee have I put my trust, take not away my soul.
- + Keep me from the snare which they have laid for me, and the traps of the workers of iniquity.
- + Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst I alone escape.
- + I cried unto the Lord with my voice, with my voice unto the Lord, did I make my supplication.
- + I poured out my supplication before Him; I showed before Him my trouble.
- + When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then Thou knewest my path.
- + In the way wherein I walked have they secretly laid a snare for me.
- + I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me.
- + Refuge failed me; no one cared for my soul.
- + I cried unto Thee, O Lord; I said: Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.
- + Attend unto my cry, for I am brought very low.
- + Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are stronger than I.

For the Resurrection in Tone Three

Verse 10. *Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise Thy Name.*
 O Christ Savior, the might of death hath verily broken down under Thy Cross; and the deceit of Diabolus hath ceased; and the race of man hath by faith escaped and been saved. Wherefore, praise is offered Thee perpetually.

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

The whole creation, O Lord God, hath been lighted by Thy glorified Resurrection; and paradise hath been opened withal.

Wherefore, all creatures laud Thee and offer Thee praise perpetually.

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

I glorify the power of the Father, magnify the power of the Son, and praise the might of the Holy Spirit, one Godhead, indivisible, uncreated, consubstantial Trinity, reigning through all eternity.

Verse 7. Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication. Thy glorified Cross, O Christ, do we worship, and Thy Resurrection do we praise and glorify; for by Thy wounds we are all healed.

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

Let us praise the Savior Who was incarnate of the Virgin; for He was crucified for our sake, and arose on the third day, granting us Great Mercy.

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.

Verily, Christ did descend to Hades to bring good tidings to those therein, saying, Have faith now; for I have conquered; for I am the Resurrection, Who, unlocking the gates of death, shall set ye free.

For the After-feast in Tone Five (**Rejoice**)

Verse 4. From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch let Israel trust in the Lord.

Rejoice, life-giving Cross of the Lord, * thou never-conquered battle-trophy of piety, * support and staff of the faithful, the wall surrounding the Church, * and the door that leadeth into Paradise. * Through thee hath corruption been made to vanish and be no more; * death's mighty power hath been vanquished and swallowed up, * and we have been raised from the earth to celestial things. * O truceless foe of demons, and our weapon invincible, * thou art the glory of Martyrs and true adornment of all the Saints, * calm port of salvation, * that which granteth the Great Mercy of God unto the world.

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

Rejoice, life-giving Cross of the Lord ... (repeat above)

Verse 2. Praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise Him, all ye people.
Rejoice, O holy Cross of the Lord, * whereby the race of man was loosed from the ancient curse; * thou ensign of joy and gladness, thou who dost dash down the foes * by thine Elevation, O all-ven'erable. * Our succor and help art thou, and the might of all them that rule, * strength of the righteous, and the beauty adorning priests; * where thou art portrayed, thou dost rescue from every ill. * Scepter of power, staff of strength, wherewith we are shepherded; * weapon of peace round about which the Angels hover with fear and awe; * divine and true glory * of Christ God, Who doth bestow His Great Mercy on the world.

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

Rejoice, thou faithful guide of the blind * and skillful healer of the sick, O most precious Cross, * who, when we fell to corruption, didst lift us up once again, * O thou resurrection of all them that died. * Through thee is corruption quelled, incorruption hath blossomed forth; * we, who are mortals born of earth, have been deified; * and in utter loss hath the devil been overthrown. * Looking on thee exalted by the hands of high priests today, * with faith and love we exalt Him Who was exalted on thee for us; * and thee do we worship, * richly drawing forth divine and Great Mercy for our souls.

DOXASTICON FOR ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS IN
TONE SIX

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

The voices of the Prophets declared beforehand the holy Wood, whereby Adam was set free from the ancient curse of death. Today, as the Cross is lifted up, creation also lifteth up its voice, asking God for His rich mercy. O Master, Who alone art boundless in mercy, be gracious unto us and save our souls.

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THEOTOKION FOR THE RESURRECTION IN TONE THREE

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

O Lady of exceeding honor, how can we but wonder at thee giving birth to incarnate God? For thou, O all-blameless, not knowing a man, didst give birth in the flesh to a Son without father, who before eternity was begotten of the Father without mother, the property and essence of each substance remaining intact. Wherefore, O virgin Mother, beseech Him to save the souls of those who assent and confess, with true belief, that thou art the Theotokos.

- *When “both now” is chanted, the clergy make the entrance with the censer.*

Deacon: Wisdom! Stand upright!

O GLADSOME LIGHT

Choir: O gladsome Light of the holy glory of the immortal, heavenly, holy and blessed Father: O Jesus Christ. Lo now that we have come to the setting of the sun, as we behold the evening light, we hymn Thee: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God. Meet it is for Thee at all times to be magnified by joyous voices, O Son of God and Giver of life. Wherefore the whole world doth glorify Thee.

Deacon: The evening prokeimenon!

GREAT PROKEIMENON IN TONE SEVEN

Choir: Our God is in Heaven and on earth; He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased. (*twice*)

Verse 1. *Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language. (Refrain)*

Verse 2. *The sea saw it and fled; Jordan was driven back. (Refrain)*

Verse 3. *What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest, thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back? (Refrain)*

THE LITANY OF FERVENT SUPPLICATION

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Deacon: Let us all say with our whole soul and with our whole mind, let us say:

The choir responds "Lord, have mercy" to the first two petitions.

O Lord Almighty, the God of our fathers, we pray thee hearken and have mercy.

Have mercy on us, O God, according to thy great mercy, we pray thee, hearken and have mercy.

The choir responds "Lord, have mercy" (thrice) to this and the remaining petitions until noted.

Again we pray for all pious and Orthodox Christians.

Again we pray for our father and metropolitan, N., (and our bishop, N.).

Again we pray for our brethren: the priests, hieromonks, deacons, hierodeacons and monastics and all our brotherhood in Christ.

Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, visitation, pardon and remission of sins for (the servants of God, NN., and) all Orthodox Christians of true worship, who live and dwell in this community.

Again we pray for the blessed and ever-memorable founders of this holy church (and for the servants of God, NN.,) and all of our fathers and brethren, the Orthodox departed this life before us, who here and in all the world lie asleep in the Lord.

Again we pray for those who bear fruit and do good works in this holy and all-venerable temple, those who serve and those who sing and all the people here present, who await thy great and rich mercy.

Priest: For thou art a merciful God and lovest mankind, 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.

Choir: 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.

THE LITANY OF SUPPLICATION

Deacon: Let us complete our evening prayer unto the Lord.

The choir responds "Lord, have mercy" to the first two petitions.

Help us; save us; have mercy on us; and keep us, O God, by thy grace.

That the whole evening may be perfect, holy, peaceful and sinless, let us ask of the Lord.

The choir responds "Grant this, O Lord" to this and the remaining petitions until noted.

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

Pardon and remission of our sins and transgressions, let us ask of the Lord.

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

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

A Christian ending to our life, painless, blameless, peaceful, and a good defense before the fearful judgment seat of Christ, let us ask.

Calling to remembrance our all-holy, immaculate, most blessed and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and each other and all our life unto Christ our God.

Choir: To Thee, O Lord.

Priest: For thou art a good God and lovest mankind, 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.

Choir: Amen.

THE PEACE

Priest: Peace be to all.

Choir: And to thy spirit.

Deacon: Let us bow our heads unto the Lord.

Choir: To Thee, O Lord.

• *All bow their heads as the priest says the following prayer:*

Priest: O Lord our God, Who didst bow the heavens and come down for the salvation of mankind: Look upon Thy servants and Thine inheritance; for unto Thee, the fearful Judge Who yet lovest mankind, have Thy servants bowed their heads and submissively inclined their necks, awaiting not help from men but entreating Thy mercy and looking confidently for Thy salvation. Guard them at all times, both during this present evening and in the approaching night, from every foe, from all adverse powers of the devil, and from vain thoughts and from evil imaginations.

Blessed and glorified be the might of Thy kingdom:
of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit;
now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

APOSTICHA FOR THE RESURRECTION IN TONE THREE

O Christ, Who didst darken the sun with Thy Passion, and didst light all created things with the light of Thy Resurrection, and didst make them to rejoice, accept our evening praise, O Lover of mankind.

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

Verily, Thy life-giving Resurrection hath lighted the whole universe, renewing Thy corrupt creation. Wherefore, in that Thou hast delivered us from the curse of Adam, we shout to Thee, O Lord Almighty, glory to Thee.

Verse 2. For He has established the world so that it shall never be moved.

O changeless God, Thou didst suffer in the changing body, and when creation could not bear to behold Thee suspended on the Cross, it trembled with fear, and sighed, praising Thy long-suffering. Then, descending to Hades, Thou didst arise on the third day, granting life to the world and Great Mercy.

Verse 3. Holiness befits Thy house, O Lord, forevermore.

Thou didst suffer death, O Christ, that Thou mightest deliver our race from death. Thou didst rise from the dead on the third day, and didst arouse with Thee those who know that Thou art true God, verily illuminating the world, O Lord. Wherefore, glory to Thee.

DOXASTICON FOR ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS IN
TONE EIGHT

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

O God, fulfilled is the saying of Thy Prophet Moses, which saith: Ye shall see your Life hanging before your eyes. Today the Cross

is exalted and the world is set free from error. Today the Resurrection of Christ is inaugurated, and the ends of the earth rejoice, as with Davidic cymbals they offer Thee a hymn and say: Thou hast wrought salvation in the midst of the earth, O God, even the Cross and the Resurrection, whereby Thou hast saved us, O Thou Who art good and the Lover of mankind. O Almighty Lord, glory to Thee.

THE HYMN OF ST. SIMEON THE GOD-RECEIVER

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.

Priest: For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory: of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE THREE

Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad, for the Lord hath done a mighty act with His own arm. He hath trampled down death by death, and become the first-born from the dead. He hath delivered us from the depths of Hades, granting the world the Great Mercy.

APOLYTIKION OF THE ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS IN TONE ONE

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, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance, granting to Thy people victory over all their enemies, and by the power of Thy Cross preserving Thy commonwealth.

THE DISMISSAL

Deacon: Wisdom!

Choir: Father, bless.

Priest: Christ our God, the Existing One, is blessed, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

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

Priest: Most-holy Theotokos, save us.

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

Priest: Glory to Thee, O Christ our God and our Hope, glory to thee.

Choir: 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 (*thrice*). Father, bless.

Priest: May He Who rose from the dead, Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His all-immaculate and all-blameless holy Mother; by the might of the Precious and Life-giving Cross—as we now celebrate its Elevation—by the protection of the honorable Bodiless Powers of Heaven; at the supplication of the honorable, glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John; of the holy, glorious and all-laudable apostles; of the holy, glorious and right-victorious Martyrs; of our venerable and God-bearing Fathers; *of Saint N., the patron and protector of this holy community*; of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna, and of all the saints: have mercy on us and save us, forasmuch as He is good and loveth mankind.

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

Choir: Amen.