

VESPERS of GREAT and HOLY FRIDAY

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

Reader: Amen.

Priest: Glory to you, our God, glory to you.

Heavenly king, comforter, Spirit of the Truth, who are everywhere present and fill all things, treasury of good things and giver of life, come and tabernacle in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O Good One.

Reader: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (3)

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

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, watch over and heal our infirmities, for your name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (3)

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

Reader: Amen. Lord, have mercy. (12)

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

Reader: Amen. Come let us worship, and fall down before the king, our God.

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

Come let us worship, and fall down before Christ himself, the king and our God.

Psalm 103

To David, over the composition of the world.

Bless the Lord, O my soul. Lord my God, you magnified yourself greatly.

²You clothed yourself with confession and majesty, wrapping yourself with light as with a garment.

³Stretching out the heaven like a skin, you who cover its upper chambers with waters.

⁴The one who sets clouds as his mount, who walks on the wings of the winds.

⁵Who makes his angels spirits and his liturgizers a flame of fire.

⁶Who founds the earth on its steadfastness; it will not slant to the age of age.

⁷ The deep, like a garment, is his clothing; waters will stand above the mountains.
⁸ At your rebuke they will flee; at the voice of your thunder they will frighten.
⁹ The mountains go up and the plains go down to the place which you founded them.
¹⁰ You set a boundary which they will not pass, nor will they return to cover the earth.
¹¹ The one who sends out springs into the valleys; waters will run between the mountains.
¹² They will give drink to all the beasts of the field; the wild donkeys will receive for their thirst.
¹³ Upon them the birds of the air will make their dwelling, and in the midst of the rocks they will give sound.
¹⁴ Watering the mountains from his upper chambers, the earth will fatten from the fruit of your works.
¹⁵ The one who causes grass to spring up for the herds, and green herb for the service of mankind.
¹⁶ To bring forth food out of the earth, and wine gladdens the heart of man.
¹⁷ To make the face cheerful with oil, and bread strengthens the heart of man.
¹⁸ The trees of the plain will be fattened, the cedars of Lebanon which you planted.
¹⁹ There the sparrows will nest, the dwelling of the heron leads them.
²⁰ The high mountain – for the deer; rock – refuge for hares.
²¹ He made the moon for seasons, the sun knew its setting.
²² You set darkness and night came to be, in it all the beasts of the forest will pass through.
²³ Young lions – roaring to seize and to seek their food from God.
²⁴ The sun dawned and they gathered together, and they will lie down in their dens.
²⁵ Man will go out to his work, and to his laboring until evening.
²⁶ How your works, O Lord, have been magnified. In Wisdom you made them all, and the earth was filled with your creation.
²⁷ This sea, great and wide; there – creeping things without number, living creatures, small and great.
²⁸ There ships go through, this dragon which you fashioned to play with him.
²⁹ All look to you to give them their food in good time; when you give them, they will gather.
³⁰ When you open your hand, all will be filled with kindness. But when you turn away your Face, they will be troubled.
³¹ You will take away their spirit, and they will vanish and will return to their dust.
³² You will send forth your Spirit, and they will be created, and you will renew the face of the earth.
³³ Let the glory of the Lord endure to the ages. The Lord will rejoice at his works.
³⁴ Who looks upon the earth and makes it tremble, who touches the mountains and they smoke.
³⁵ I will sing to the Lord in my life, I will chant to my God while I live.
³⁶ May my recount be pleasing to him, and I myself will rejoice in the Lord.
³⁷ O that sinners vanish from the earth, and the lawless, so that they are not.
³⁸ Bless the Lord, O my soul.

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

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia. Glory to you, O God. (x3)

LITANY OF PEACE

Deacon: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (*and after each petition*)

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

For the peace of the whole world, for the stability of the holy Churches of God, and for the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.

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

For our Archbishop and Father _____, for the honorable priesthood, the diaconate in Christ, for all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

For the civil authorities of this country and those serving in its armed forces, let us pray to the Lord.

For this city, for every city, monastery, and countryside, and for those who in faith dwell in them, let us pray to the Lord.

For good temperance of the air, abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful seasons, let us pray to the Lord.

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

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

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

Remembering our all-holy, pure, most blessed, and glorious Lady, the Birthgiver of God and Ever-Virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us offer ourselves and one other, and our whole life to Christ God.

Choir: To you, O Lord.

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

Choir: Amen.

Psalm 140 Tone 2

Lord, I have cried to you, hear me;
hear me, O Lord.
Lord, I have cried to you, hear me.
Attend to the voice of my supplication
when I cry to you. Hear me, O Lord.

Let my prayer arise straight like incense before
you,
The lifting up of my hands be an evening
sacrifice.
Hear me, O Lord.

Reader: Set a guard, O Lord, upon my mouth and a guarding door about my lips.
Let not my heart incline to words of evilness, of contriving excuses in sins.
With the men who work lawlessness, and I will not, will not join with their elect.
A righteous one will chastise me in mercy and will reprove me, but let not the oil of a sinner anoint
my head.
For still my prayer is also in their pleasures, their judges were swallowed up near a rock.
They will hear my words, for they became pleasing; as a clod of earth is broken asunder upon the
ground, their bones were scattered near hell.
For my eyes, O Lord, Lord, are toward you. I have hoped in you, do not take away my soul.
Keep me from the snare which they put together for me, and from the traps of those who work
lawlessness.
The sinners will fall into their net. As for me, I am in solitude until I pass away.

Psalm 141

Of understanding to David, when he was in the cave praying.
With my voice I have cried to the Lord, with my voice I implored the Lord.
I will pour out my supplication before him, I will declare my affliction before him.
When my spirit vanished from within me, and you yourself knew my paths.
In this way which I walked they hid a snare for me.
I looked to the right and I saw, and there was not one who knows me.
Escape utterly perished from me, and there is not one who seeks out my soul.
I have cried to you, O Lord. I said, You yourself are my hope, my portion in the land of the living.
Attend to my supplication, for I was greatly humbled.
Deliver me from the ones who pursue me closely, for they prevailed over me.
Bring my soul out of prison, that it may confess to your name.
The righteous will await me with endurance, until you repay me.
Out of depths I have cried for you, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice. *By Monk John. Same Tone.*
Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication. *By Monk John. Same Tone.*

*v. (6) If you watch closely for iniquities, O Lord, Lord, who will endure? For forgiveness is with
you.* **Tone 1**

All creation was changed by fear / when it saw You hanging upon the Cross, O Christ./ The sun
was darkened, / and the foundations of the earth were shaken. / All things suffered with the
Creator of all./ /O Lord, Who willingly endured this for us, glory to You!

v. (5) For your name's sake I have awaited you, O Lord, with endurance; my soul has awaited your word, my soul has hoped in the Lord.

All creation was changed by fear
when it saw You hanging upon the Cross, O Christ.
The sun was darkened,
and the foundations of the earth were shaken.
All things suffered with the Creator of all.//
O Lord, Who willingly endured this for us, glory to You!

v. (4) From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch, let Israel hope in the Lord.

Tone 2 An impious and transgressing people -
why do they imagine vain things?
Why do they condemn to death the Life of all?
Oh, great wonder!
The Creator of the world is betrayed into the hands of lawless men.
He Who loves mankind is lifted up upon the Wood,
that He might free those bound in Hell, who cry://
"O long-suffering Lord, glory to You!"

v. (3) Because with the Lord there is mercy, and with him abundant redemption; and he will redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

Today the blameless Virgin
saw You suspended upon the Cross, O Word.
She mourned within herself and was sorely pierced in her heart.
She groaned in agony from the depth of her soul.
Exhausted from tearing her hair and cheeks and beating her breast,
She cried out, lamenting:
"Woe is me, O my divine Child!
Woe is me, O Light of the world!
Why have You departed from my eyes, O Lamb of God?"
Then the bodiless hosts were seized with trembling and cried://
"O incomprehensible Lord, glory to You!"

v. (2) Praise the Lord, all the nations, praise him, all the peoples.

When she who bore You without seed
saw You suspended upon the Tree,
O Christ, the Creator and God of all,
she cried bitterly: "Where is the beauty of Your form, O my Son?
I cannot bear to see You unjustly crucified!
Hasten and arise,//
that I too may see Your Resurrection from the dead on the third day!"

v. (1) For his mercy prevailed over us, and the truth of the Lord remains to the age. Tone 6

Today the Master of creation stands before Pilate.

Today the Creator of all is condemned to die on the Cross.

Of His own will, He is led as a Lamb to the slaughter.

He Who fed His people with manna in the desert is transfixed with nails.

His side is pierced, and a sponge of vinegar touches His lips.

The Redeemer of the world is slapped on the face.

The Maker of all is mocked by His own servants.

How great is the Master's love for mankind!

For those who crucified Him, He prayed to His Father, saying://

"Forgive them this sin, for they know not what they do!"

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; Tone 6

See how the lawless assembly condemns the King of creation to death!

They are not ashamed, even when He reminds them of His mighty works:

"My people, what have I done to you?

Have I not filled Judea with miracles?

Have I not raised the dead by My word alone?

Have I not healed every sickness and disease?

How have you repaid Me?

Why have you abandoned Me?

In return for healing, you give Me blows;

In return for life, you put Me to death.

You hang your Benefactor on the Cross as an evildoer;

your Lawgiver, as a transgressor;

the King of all, as One condemned." //

O long-suffering Lord, glory to You!

now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen. Tone 6

We see a strange and fearful mystery accomplished today:

He Whom none may touch is seized.

He Who looses Adam from the curse is bound.

He Who tries the hearts of men is unjustly brought to trial.

He Who closed the abyss is shut in prison.

He before Whom the Hosts of Heaven stand with trembling stands before Pilate.

The Creator is struck by the hand of His creature.

He Who comes to judge the living and the dead is condemned to the Cross.

The Conqueror of Hell is enclosed in a tomb.

You Who have endured all these things in Your tender love,

have saved all mankind from the curse.//

O long-suffering Lord, glory to You!

THE ENTRANCE

Deacon: Wisdom! Upright!

People: O Gladsome Light of the holy glory of the immortal Father, heavenly, holy, blessed - Jesus Christ. Having come to the setting of the sun and beheld the light of evening, we praise the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit God! At all times You are worthy of praise in songs as Son of God, Giver of Life, therefore the world glorifies You!

Deacon: Let us attend!

Priest: Peace to all!

Reader: And to your spirit.

Deacon: Wisdom!

Deacon: The prokeimenon in the sixth tone: They divided my clothes among themselves, / and cast lots for my raiment. (*Psalms 21:18*)

Choir: They divided my clothes among themselves, and cast lots for my raiment.

Deacon: O God, my God, attend to me. What for have you forsaken me? (*Psalms 21:1*)

Choir: They divided my clothes among themselves, and cast lots for my raiment.

Deacon: They divided my clothes among themselves,

Choir: and cast lots for my raiment.

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The reading is from Exodus (33:11-23)

Deacon: Let us attend!

Reader: Thus the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend. Then he would return to the camp; but his servant, Jesus son of Nun, would not leave the tent. Moses said to the Lord, 'See, you have said 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 favour in my sight.' Now if I have found favour in your sight, show me your ways, so that I may know you and find favour in your sight. Consider too that this nation is your people.' He said, 'My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.' And he said to him, 'If your presence will not go, do not carry us up from here. For how shall it be known that I have found favour in your sight, I and your people, unless you go with us? In this way, we shall be distinct, I and your people, from every people on the face of the earth.' The Lord said to Moses, 'I will do the very thing that you have asked; for you have found favour in my sight, and I know you by name.' Moses said, 'Show me your glory, I pray.' And he said, 'I will make all my goodness pass before you, and will proclaim before you the name, 'The Lord'; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. But,' he said, 'you cannot see my face; for no one shall see me and live.' And the Lord continued, 'See, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock; and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by; then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back; but my face shall not be seen.'

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The prokeimenon in the sixth tone: Make righteousness, O Lord, to the ones who do me unrighteousness, / war the ones who war me. (*Psalms 34:1*)

Choir: Make righteousness, O Lord, to the ones who do me unrighteousness, war the ones who war me.

Reader: Take hold of armor and shield, and be risen to my help. (*Psalm 34:2*)

Choir: Make righteousness, O Lord, to the ones who do me unrighteousness, war the ones who war me.

Reader: Make righteousness, O Lord, to the ones who do me unrighteousness

Choir: war the ones who war me.

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The reading from Job.

Deacon: Let us attend!

Reader: The Lord blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning; and he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand donkeys. He also had seven sons and three daughters. He named the first Day, the second Cassia, and the third Horn of Amaltheia. In all the land there were no women so beautiful as Job's daughters; and their father gave them an inheritance along with their brothers. After this Job lived one hundred and forty years, and saw his children, and his children's children, four generations. And Job died, old and full of days. It is written that he will rise again with those whom the Lord raises. He is described in the Syriac book as dwelling in the land of Ausis, on the borders of Idumea and Arabia. His name before was Jobab and he took an Arabian wife and begot a son named Enon. He himself was the son of his father Zare, one of the sons of Esau. His mother was Bosorra, so that was fifth in descent from Abraham

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The Reading is from the Prophecy of Isaias (52:13-54:1)

Deacon: Let us attend!

Reader: Thus says the Lord: See, my servant will understand; he shall be exalted and glorified exceedingly. Just as there many will be astonished at you, so your appearance will be without glory from men, and your glory from the sons of men. So many nations will marvel at him; kings shall shut their mouths; for that which had not been told them about him they shall see, and that which they had not heard they shall contemplate. Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? We brought a report as of a child before him, as a root out of dry ground; he had no form or glory, and we saw him, and he had neither form nor beauty. But his form was without honour and inferior to the children of men. He was a man in suffering and acquainted with bearing weakness, because his face has been away, he was dishonoured and not esteemed. He bears our sins and is in pain for us. We reckoned him to be in toil and in affliction and trouble. But he was wounded for our sins and crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment of our peace, and by his bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; every one has gone astray in their own way, and the Lord handed him over for our sins. And he, because of his affliction, does not open his mouth; like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he does not open his mouth. In his humiliation his judgement was taken away; who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken away from the earth; because of the iniquities of my people he was led to death. And I will give the evil for his burial and the rich for his death, because he practised no iniquity, nor was there guile in his mouth. And the Lord

wishes to cleanse him of his blow. If you give an offering for sin, your soul will seed a long-lived descendance. And the Lord wishes to take away from the toil of his soul, to show him light and to fashion him with understanding, to justify the just one, who serves many well, and he will bear their sins. Therefore he will inherit many and divide the spoils of the strong. Because his soul was handed over to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; and he bore the sin of many, and was handed over because of their iniquities. Rejoice, barren one who do not give birth, break out and cry, you who are not in labour, for the children of the desolate are more than those of her that has a husband.

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The prokeimenon in the sixth tone: They put me in the lowest pit, in dark places / and in shadow of death. (*Psalm 87:6*)

Choir: They put me in the lowest pit, in dark places / and in shadow of death.

Reader: Lord God of my salvation, I have cried by day and at night in front of you. (*Psalm 87:1*)

Choir: They put me in the lowest pit, in dark places / and in shadow of death.

Reader: They put me in the lowest pit, in dark places

Choir: and in shadow of death.

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The reading from the first epistle of the apostle Paul to the Corinthians (*1:18-2:2*)

Deacon: Let us attend.

Reader: Brethren, the message about 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 the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.' Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength. Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God. He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, in order that, as it is written, 'Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.' When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the mystery of God to you in lofty words or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

Priest: Peace to you.

Reader: And to your spirit. Alleluia in the 1st Tone.

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Reader: Save me, O God, for waters entered as far as my soul. (*Psalm 68:1*)

People: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Reader: My soul looked to reproach and wretchedness, and with endurance I awaited one who hurts with me, and he was not, and ones to comfort, and I did not find. (*Psalm 68:22*)

People: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Reader: Let their eyes be darkened so that they do not see, and bend their back always. (*Psalm 68:25*)

People: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Deacon: Wisdom! Upright! Let us hear the holy Gospel!

Priest: Peace to all!

Choir: And to your spirit!

Priest: The reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew. (*27:1-38, Luke 23:39-43, Matthew 27:39-54, John 19:31-37, Matthew 27:55-61*)

Choir: Glory to your passion, O Lord.

Deacon: Let us attend!

Priest: At that time all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus, so as to put him to death. They bound him and led him away and handed him over to Pontius Pilate, the governor. Then Judas, seeing that Jesus had been condemned, repented and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, 'I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.' But they said, 'What is that to us? See to it yourself.' And flinging down the pieces of silver in the temple he went away and hanged himself. But the chief priests picked up the pieces of silver and said, 'It is not permitted to put them into the treasury, because they are the price of blood.' So they conferred together and bought with them the potter's field as a burial place for foreigners. And so that field has been called 'Field of Blood' until today. Then what had been said by the prophet Jeremy was fulfilled, when he said, 'And the took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the one who was prized, whom they prized from the children of Israel, and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord had commanded me'. But Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor questioned him saying, 'Are you the king of the Jews?' Jesus said to him, 'You say so.' And when he was accused by the chief priests and elders he made no answer. Then Pilate says to him, 'Do you not hear how many things they are testifying against you?' But he did not answer him with a single word, so that the governor was greatly amazed. Now on the occasion of the feast the governor was accustomed to release to the crowd one prisoner whom they wished. They had at the time a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. So when they had assembled Pilate said to them, 'Whom do wish me to release to you? Barabbas or Jesus called Christ?' For he knew that they had handed him over through envy. But while he was seated on the tribunal, 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 had persuaded the crowds that they should ask for Barabbas. Pilate says to them, 'So what shall I do with Jesus called Christ?' They say to him, 'Let him be crucified!' The governor said, 'Why, what evil has he done?' But they shouted even louder, saying, 'Let him be crucified!' So Pilate, seeing that he was getting nowhere, but that a riot was starting instead, took water and washed his hands in full view of the crowd, saying, 'I am innocent of the blood of this just man. You look to it.' And the whole people answered and said, 'His blood be on us and on our children.' Then he released Barabbas to them, but Jesus he had scourged and handed him over to be crucified. Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the praetorium and gathered the whole cohort round him. They stripped him and dressed him in a scarlet cloak, and having woven a crown of thorns, they placed it on his head and a reed in his right hand. Then they knelt in front of him and mocked him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' They spat on him and took the reed and struck it on his head. And when they had mocked him, they took off the cloak and dressed him in his own clothes and led him away to crucify him. As they went out they found a Cyrenian named Simon; they forced him to carry his cross. And they came to a place called Golgotha, which means 'place of a skull', and they gave him vinegar to drink mixed with gall. And when he had tasted it he would not drink. When they had crucified him they divided his garments, casting lots, that saying by the prophet might be fulfilled, 'They divided my garments among themselves, and cast lots for my raiment'. Then they sat down and watched him there. And over his head they placed his charge, which ran, 'This is Jesus, the king of the Jews.' Then they crucified with him two thieves, one on the right and one on the left. One of the criminals hanging there blasphemed him, saying, 'If you are the Christ, save yourself and us.' But the other answering, rebuked him and said, 'Do you have no fear of God, for you are subject to the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; but he has done amiss.' And he said to Jesus, 'Remember me, Lord, when you come in your kingdom.' And Jesus said to him, 'Amen I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.' The passers by blasphemed him, shaking their heads and saying, 'You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days! Save yourself. If you are the son of God, come down from the cross.' Likewise the chief priests also mocked him with the scribes and elders and Pharisees, saying, 'He saved others; he cannot save himself. If he is king of Israel, let him come down from the cross and we let us believe in him. He trusted in God, let him now deliver him, if he wants him. For he said, 'I am the son of God.'" The thieves too, who had been crucified with him, reviled him in the same way. From the sixth hour there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice and said, 'Eli, Eli, lama savachthani?' That is, 'My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?' Some of those standing there when they heard said, 'This one is calling Elias.' And one of them ran quickly and taking a sponge filled it with vinegar, placed it on a reed and gave it him to drink. But the rest said, 'Wait, let us see if Elias is coming to save him.' But Jesus, having cried out again with a loud voice, gave up the spirit. And behold, the veil of the temple was rent in two, from the top to the bottom, and the earth was shaken and the rocks rent, and the graves were opened and many bodies of the saints who slept were raised, and coming out of their graves, after his rising they entered the holy city and appeared to many. But the centurion and those with him watching Jesus, when they saw the earthquake and all that was happening, were greatly afraid and said, 'Truly, this was the son of God.' So the Jews, that the bodies might not remain on the cross on the Sabbath, since it was the preparation – for that day was a great Sabbath – , asked Pilate that their

legs might be broken and that they might be removed. So the soldiers came and they broke the legs of the first and the other who was crucified with him; but when they came to Jesus, as they saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs, but one of the soldiers with a lance pierced his side, and immediately there came out blood and water. And the one who saw it has borne witness, and his witness is true, and he knows that he speaks the truth, that you also may believe. For these things took place that the scripture might be fulfilled, 'Not a bone of him will be broken'. And again another scripture says, 'They will look on him whom they pierced'. And there were many women there also watching from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, serving him. Among whom were Mary Magdalen and Mary the mother of James and Joses and the mother of the sons of Zebedee. When it grew late there came a rich man from Arimathea named Joseph, who was himself also a disciple of Jesus. He approached Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered the body to be handed over. Joseph took the body, wrapped it in clean linen and placed it in his own new grave, which he had hewn from the rock. He rolled a great stone to the door of the grave and departed. But Mary Magdalen was there and the other Mary, seated in front of the tomb.

Choir: Glory to your long-suffering, O Lord!

THE AUGMENTED LITANY

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

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Lord ruler-of-all, God of our fathers, we pray you, hear and have mercy.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Have mercy on us, O God, according to your great mercy, we pray you, hear and have mercy.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (3) *(and after each petition)*

Deacon: Again we pray for pious and right-glorifying Christians.

Deacon: Again we pray for our Archbishop and Father (name).

Deacon: Again we pray for our brethren, priests, ieromonks, deacons, ierodeacons, and monastics, and for all our brotherhood in Christ.

Deacon: Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, care, and the pardon and remission of the sins of all pious and right-glorifying Christians who dwell in or visit this town, and the members, stewards, founders, and benefactors of this holy church.

Deacon: Again we pray for the blessed and ever-remembered founders of this holy house and for all our right-glorifying fathers and brethren who are in their rest before us, who piously lie asleep here and everywhere.

Deacon: Again we pray for those who bring offerings and those who make acceptable sacrifices in this holy and all-venerable temple, for those who labor, those who sing, and all the people standing here, awaiting the great and rich mercy that is from you.

Priest: For you are a merciful God and love mankind, and to you we send up glory, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and to the ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this evening without sin.

Blessed are you, O Lord God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is your name forever. Amen.

Let your mercy, O Lord, be upon us as we have set our hope on you.

Blessed are you, O Lord, teach me your statutes.

Blessed are you, O Master, let me understand your statutes.

Blessed are you, O Holy One, enlighten me with your statutes.

Your mercy, O Lord, endures forever; Do not despise the works of your hands.

To you is due praise, to you is due a song. To you is due glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

THE LITANY OF VESPERS

Deacon: Let us complete our evening supplication to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

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

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

The whole evening, perfect, holy, peaceful, and sinless, let us ask of the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord. *(and after each petition)*

An angel of peace, faithful guide, 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.

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

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

The completions of our life to be Christian, painless, blameless, and peaceful; and a good defense before the fearful judgment seat of Christ, let us ask.

Remembering our all-holy, pure, most blessed, and glorious Lady, the Birthgiver of God and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us offer ourselves and one another, and our whole life to Christ God.

Choir: To you, O Lord.

Priest: For you are a good God and love mankind and to you we send up glory, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and to the ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Priest: Peace to all.

Choir: And to your spirit.

Deacon: Let us bow our heads unto the Lord.

Choir: To you, O Lord.

Priest: Lord our God, who bowed the heavens and came down for the salvation of the human race, look upon your servants and upon your inheritance, for to you, the fearful judge who love mankind, have your servants bowed their heads and bent their necks, not awaiting help from men, but looking for your mercy and longing for your salvation; keep them at every moment, both during this present evening and the approaching night from every enemy, from every adverse work of the devil, and from vain thoughts and evil imaginations.

Blessed and glorified be the dominion of your kingdom, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and to the ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

APOSTICHA

Tone 2 *Automelon – Model Melody*

Joseph of Arimathea took You down from the tree,
the Life of all, cold in death.

Bathing You with sweet and costly myrrh,
he gently covered You with finest linen,
and, with sorrow and tender love in his heart,
he embraced Your most pure body.

Trembling at this awesome sight,
he cried out to You, O Christ://
“Glory to Your condescension, O Lover of man!”

V. The Lord reigned, he was clothed with comeliness (Ps. 92:1a)

When You, the Redeemer of all, were placed in a tomb
all Hell’s powers quaked in fear.

Its bars were broken, its gates were smashed.

Its mighty reign was brought to an end,
for the dead came forth alive from their tombs,
casting off the bonds of their captivity.

Adam was filled with joy!

He gratefully cried out to You, O Christ://
“Glory to Your condescension, O Lover of man!”

V. For indeed he made the world firm, which will not be shaken. (Ps. 92:2)

In the flesh You were willingly enclosed in the tomb,
Who are boundless and infinite in Your divinity.
You closed the chambers of death, O Christ.
You have emptied all the palaces of Hell.//
You have honored this Sabbath with Your blessing, glory, and splendor.

V. To your house is due sanctification, O Lord, to length of days. (Ps. 92:7b)

The Powers of Heaven shook with fear,
when they saw Your ineffable forbearance.
They beheld You slandered by lawless men,
mocked as a deceiver by transgressors.
They beheld the stone that closed Your tomb,
sealed by the same hands that pierced Your side,
but they knew that Your death would be our life,
and joyfully they cried out to You, O Christ://
“Glory to Your condescension, O Lover of man!”

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

Tone 5 Joseph, together with Nicodemus,
took You down from the Tree,
Who clothe Yourself with light as with a garment.
He gazed on Your body - dead, naked, and unburied,
and in grief and tender compassion he lamented:
“Woe is me, my sweetest Jesus!
A short while ago, the sun beheld You hanging on the Cross,
and it hid itself in darkness.
The earth quaked in fear at the sight.
The veil of the Temple was torn in two.
Lo, now I see You willingly submit to death for our sake.
How shall I bury You, O my God?
How can I wrap You in a shroud?
How can I touch Your most pure Body with my hands?
What songs can I sing for Your Exodus, O compassionate One?
I magnify Your Passion.
I glorify Your burial,
and Your holy Resurrection,//
crying, ‘O Lord, glory to You!’”

PRAYER OF SAINT SIMEON

Reader: Now set free your servant, Master, according to your word in peace, for my eyes have seen your Salvation, Whom you have prepared before the face of all peoples - Light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the Glory of your people Israel.

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 ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, watch over 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 ever 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 ever and to the ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

TROPARION

Tone 2 The noble Joseph when he had taken down your most pure Body from the tree, wrapped it in fine linen, and anointed it with spices, and placed it in a new tomb.

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

The angel came to the myrrh-bearing women at the tomb and said, Myrrh is fitting for the dead, but Christ has shown himself a stranger to corruption.

APOLYSIS

Deacon: Wisdom!

Choir: Father, bless!

Priest: Blessed is He-who-is, Christ our God, always, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

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

Priest: All-holy Birthgiver of God, save us!

Choir: More honorable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim: without defilement you gave birth to God the Word: true Theotokos, we magnify you!

Priest: Glory to you, Christ God, our hope, glory to you!

Choir: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy. Father, bless!

Priest: He Who for us men and for our salvation received in the flesh the fearful passions and the life-creating Cross and the voluntary burial, Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His all-pure Mother; of the holy, glorious and all-laudable Apostles, of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; and of all the Saints, have mercy on us and save us, as one who is good and loves mankind.

Choir: Amen.

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

Choir: Amen.

As the faithful come forward to venerate the Epitaphios, the following hymn is sung:

Tone 5

Come, let us bless the ever-memorable Joseph, / who came by night to Pilate / and begged for the Giver of Life: / "Give me this Stranger, / who has no place to lay His head; / Give me this Stranger / Whom the crafty disciple has betrayed to death; / Give me this Stranger, / whose Mother, when she saw Him hanging on the Cross, / and with a mother's sorrow cried with weeping and maternal feeling exclaimed: / 'Woe is me, O my Child! / Woe is me, my Light, the Beloved of my bosom! / That which was foretold in the church by Simeon has come to pass today! / A weapon has pierced my heart; / but lamenting shall be changed by the joy of the resurrection!'" / We worship Your Passion, O Christ! / We worship Your Passion, O Christ! / We worship Your Passion, O Christ! // and Your Holy Resurrection.

*Vespers text from Ieratikon: Volume I, Scripture readings from Archimandrite Ephrem Lash.
Stichera, Aposticha and Troparion from www.oca.org*