

Vespers sung on Saturday 23rd March 2024 for Sunday 24th March
First Sunday of Great Lent
Sunday of Orthodoxy ♦ Forefeast of the Annunciation

“LORD, I CALL ...”

Tone 1

Lord, I call upon Thee, hear me!
Hear me, O Lord!
Lord, I call upon Thee, hear me!
Receive the voice of my prayer,
when I call upon Thee!//
Hear me, O Lord!

Let my prayer arise
in Thy sight as incense,
and let the lifting up of my hands
be an evening sacrifice!//
Hear me, O Lord!

Bring my soul out of prison, that I may give thanks to Thy Name.

Tone 1 (For the Resurrection)

Accept our evening prayers, O holy Lord!
Grant us remission of sins,//
for Thou alone hast manifested the Resurrection to the world.

The righteous will surround me, for Thou wilt deal bountifully with me.

Encircle Zion
and surround her, O people!
Give glory in her to the One Who rose from the dead!
For He is our God,//
Who has delivered us from our transgressions!

Out of the depths I cry to Thee, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice!

Come, O people,
let us hymn and fall down before Christ,
glorifying His Resurrection from the dead!
For He is our God,//
Who has delivered the world from the Enemy's deceit!

Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications!

Tone 6 (From the Lenten Triodion)

O Lord, Whom nothing can contain or grasp,
from all eternity Thou hast shone forth from the Father
before the morning star.
The Prophets, inspired by the Holy Spirit,
foretold that Thou wouldst take flesh and assume the form of a child,
from her who is ever-virgin.
Thou didst live among men;
Thou wast seen by material creation.
Through the prayers of the Prophets, O compassionate One,
make us worthy to receive Thy light,//
for we sing praises to Thy glorious Resurrection!

If Thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee.

The Prophets bore the fruit of eternal life;
they prepared the way of the Lord.
By their words they proclaimed Thee; by their deeds they honoured Thee:
they would not worship creation instead of Thee, the Creator.
As Thy Gospel commands, they renounced the world.
They foretold Thy Passion by suffering themselves.
Through their prayers, O Lord, //
enable us to pass over the battlefield of Lent without sin!

For Thy Name's sake I wait for Thee, O Lord. My soul has waited for Thy word; my soul has hoped on the Lord.

Thou art infinite in Thy divine nature, O Master;
in these latter days Thou didst accept the limitations of the flesh.
By assuming our body, Thou didst accept all its weaknesses.
Therefore we make images of Thy form;
we venerate them, having Thee in mind.
We fall down before Thee in love;
by so doing we follow the tradition of the Apostles //
and are given the grace of healing.

From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch, let Israel hope on the Lord!

Today the Church of Christ receives honourable adornment:
the holy icons of Christ our Saviour, the Theotokos, and all the Saints.
The Church exults in their grace!
We lift them up with joy and gladness!
We glorify God, the Lover of man, //
Him Who patiently suffered for our sake!

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

Tone 4 *(From the Menaion, for the Forefeast)*

The mystery hidden from all eternity,
unknown even by the Angels,
is now entrusted to the Archangel Gabriel.
He will come to thee, O precious vessel;
he will salute thee and cry in joy:
"Rejoice, pure dove! Rejoice, all-holy one! //
Make ready by thy word to conceive the Word of God!"

Praise the Lord, all nations! Praise Him, all peoples!

The palace of light is ready for Thee, O Master,
the womb of the undefiled child of God.
Come down to her; come to visit Thy fallen world,
which is held in bitter slavery to the jealous Enemy!
Many ages have passed since its beauty was destroyed.
Make haste to descend to earth, O Lord! //
Come to deliver us from the way of death!

For His mercy is confirmed on us, and the truth of the Lord endures forever.

Gabriel the Archangel comes to thee, O all-blameless one;
he will greet thee, crying with joy:
"Rejoice, deliverance from condemnation!
Rejoice, chosen vessel made perfect for God!
Rejoice, life-bearing dawn of the endless day! //
The Lord, Whom the heavens cannot contain, is pleased to dwell in thee!"

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

Tone 2 *(From the Lenten Triodion)*

Grace and truth have shone forth.
The predictions of old have been clearly fulfilled.
Behold, the Church adorns herself with the form of Christ incarnate!
The icons of the new creation transcend the adornments of the old.
As the Ark of the Covenant held the presence of God,
so now the icons reveal the presence of the One we adore.
By honouring them we will never go astray.
It is our glory to fall down and worship Christ in the flesh.
Come, O faithful, venerate His image and cry out://
O Lord, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance!

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

Tone 1 *(Theotokion – Dogmatikon)*

Let us praise the Virgin Mary!
The gate of heaven, the glory of the world!
The song of the angels, the beauty of the faithful!
She was born of man, yet gave birth to God!
She was revealed as the heaven, as the temple of the Godhead!
She destroyed the wall of enmity!
She commenced the peace; she opened the Kingdom!
Since she is our foundation of faith,
our defender is the Lord Whom she bore!
Courage! Courage! O People of God!
For Christ will destroy our enemies//
since He is all powerful.

APOSTICHA

Tone 1 *(For the Resurrection)*

We have been freed from sufferings
by Thy suffering, O Christ.
We have been delivered from corruption
by Thy Resurrection.//
O Lord, glory to Thee!

V. The Lord is King; He is robed in majesty!

Let creation rejoice!
Let the heavens be glad!
Let the nations clap their hands with gladness,
for Christ our Saviour has nailed our sins to the Cross.
Slaying death, He has given life.//
He has resurrected fallen Adam as the Lover of man.

V. For He has established the world, so that it shall never be moved.

As King of heaven and earth,
Thou wast voluntarily crucified in Thy love for man.
Hell was angered when it met Thee below.
Adam rose seeing Thee, the Creator, under the earth.
O wonder! How has the Life of all tasted death?
Thou didst enlighten the world which cries://
O Lord, Who didst rise from the dead, glory to Thee!

V. Holiness befits Thy house, O Lord, forevermore!

The myrrhbearing women came with haste to Thy tomb,
bearing myrrh and lamenting.
Not finding Thy most pure body,
they learned from the angel of the new and glorious wonder.
They told the Apostles://
“The Lord is risen, granting the world great mercy.”

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

Tone 2 (From the Lenten Triodion)

Advancing from false doctrine to true faith,
illuminated with the light of knowledge,
let us clap our hands and offer grateful praise to God in song!
With due honour let us venerate the holy icons of Christ,
of the all-pure Virgin, and of all the saints,
depicted on walls or panels or sacred vessels,
rejecting the godless teaching of the heretics!
For as Saint Basil says:
“The honour shown to the image passes to its prototype.”
By the prayers of Thy pure Mother and of all the saints,//
we beseech Thee, O Christ our God, to grant us great mercy!

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

Tone 4 (Forefeast)

The Theotokos heard a tongue that she knew not,
for the Archangel addressed to her the words of glad tidings;
therefore, accepting the salutation with faith,
she conceived Thee, the pre-eternal God.
And so, rejoicing exceedingly, we also cry aloud to Thee:
“O God, made flesh from her without change,//
grant peace to the world, and great mercy to our souls!”

TROPARIA

Troparion of the Resurrection in Tone 1

[Music on website / Green Book page 2]

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews,
while the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body,
Thou didst rise on the third day, O Saviour,
granting life to the world.
The powers of heaven therefore cried to Thee, O Giver of Life:
“Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ!
Glory to Thy Kingdom!//
Glory to Thy dispensation, O Thou who lovest mankind!”

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

Troparion of the Sunday of Orthodoxy in Tone 2

[Music on website / Green Book page 24]

We venerate Thy most pure image, O Good One;
and ask forgiveness of our transgressions, O Christ our God.
Of Thy good will Thou wast pleased to ascend the Cross in the flesh
and deliver Thy creatures from bondage to the Enemy.
Therefore with thankfulness we cry aloud to Thee:
“Thou hast filled all with joy, O our Saviour,//
for Thou didst come to save the world.”

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

Troparion of the Forefeast in Tone 4

Today is the prelude of joy for the universe!

Let us anticipate the feast and celebrate with exultation:

Gabriel is on his way to announce the glad tidings to the Virgin;

he is ready to cry out in fear and wonder://

“Rejoice, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with thee!”
