

Forgiveness Vespers

Sung after the Liturgy on Cheesefare Sunday, 2nd March for Monday 3rd March 2025

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

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (x 3)
Lord, have mercy. (x 3)
Lord, have mercy. (x 3)
Lord, have mercy. (x 3)

“LORD I CALL ...”

Tone 3

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.

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

Tone 3 (*Penitential stichera in the Tone of the week*)

We offer Thee our evening hymn, O Christ,
with incense and spiritual songs.//
O Savior, have mercy on us!

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

We offer Thee our evening hymn, O Christ,
with incense and spiritual songs.//
O Savior, have mercy on us!

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

Save me, O Lord my God:
Thou art the Salvation of all!
The storm of my passions troubles me;
the yoke of my sins weighs me down.
Stretch out Thy hand to help me;
lead me to the light of repentance.//
for Thou alone art the compassionate Lover of man!

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.

O Lord, gather my scattered mind,
and cleanse my barren heart!
Grant me repentance—as Thou gavest to Peter,
groans—as Thou gavest the Publican, and tears—as to the Harlot,
so that I may cry to Thee with a loud voice://
“Save me, O God, as Thou alone art tender-hearted and the Lover of man!”

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

Often, when I am singing hymns,
I find myself committing sins.
With my tongue I am singing praises,
but with my soul, I am pondering evil things.//
But correct both through repentance, O Christ God, and save me!

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

Tone 2 (From the Lenten Triodion)

Let us humble the flesh by abstinence,
as we follow the divine path of pure fasting!
With prayers and tears let us seek the Lord, Who saves us!
Let us put an end to anger, crying out:
“Save us for we have sinned against Thee!
Save us, O Christ our King, as Thou didst save the men of Nineveh,//
and make us partakers of Thy heavenly Kingdom, O compassionate One!”

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

When I think of my deeds, O Lord,
I am filled with despair,
and know that I am worthy of every torment.
I have despised Thy commandments, O Savior.
I have spent my life as a prodigal.
I pray to Thee, O only merciful One:
“Cleanse me by repentance,
enlighten me through prayers and fasting,//
and despise me not, O most gracious Benefactor of all!”

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

Tone 2 (From the Lenten Triodion)

Let us begin the fast with joy!
Let us prepare ourselves for spiritual efforts!
Let us cleanse our soul and cleanse our flesh!
Let us abstain from every passion as we abstain from food!
Let us rejoice in virtues of the Spirit and fulfill them in love,
that we all may see the Passion of Christ our God,//
and rejoice in spirit at the holy Pascha!

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

Tone 1 (Theotokion)

Rejoice, O strange and wonderful report, O chaste Virgin;
rejoice, holy tree of Paradise, planted by God;
rejoice, blotting out of evil demons;
rejoice, two-edged sword, beheading the enemy by thy strange and marvelous birth-giving!
O Maiden, all-holy and supremely blameless,//
call us back, who are in exile.

THE ENTRANCE WITH THE CENSER

Priest: Wisdom! Stand upright!

O GLADSOME LIGHT

O Gladsome Light of the holy glory of the Immortal Father, heavenly, holy, blessed, 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. For meet it is at all times to worship Thee with voices of praise, O Son of God, the Giver of Life; therefore all the world doth glorify Thee.

VOUCHSAFE, O LORD

Reader: 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.

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

THE PRAYER AT THE BOWING OF THE HEADS

Priest: Peace be to all!

Choir: And to thy spirit.

Priest: Bow your heads unto the Lord.

Choir: To Thee, O Lord.

The Priest reads the Prayer at the Bowing of the Heads:

Priest: ... now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

APOSTICHA

Tone 4 *(From the Lenten Triodion)*

Thy grace hath shone forth, O Lord:

the grace which illumines our soul.

This is the acceptable time!

This is the time of repentance!

Let us lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armour of light,

that passing through the Fast as through a great sea

we may reach the Resurrection on the third day//

of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of our souls.

v. To Thee I lift up mine eyes, O Thou Who art enthroned in the heavens! Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God, till He have mercy upon us.

Repeat: Thy grace hath shone forth, O Lord...

v. Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us, for we have had more than enough of contempt. Too long our soul has been sated with the scorn of those who are at ease, the contempt of the proud.

Tone 4 *(For the Martyrs)*

Thou art glorified

in the memory of Thy saints, O Christ God.//

At their supplications, send down on us Thy great mercy!

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

Tone 4 *(From the Lenten Triodion)*

The angelic hosts glorify thee, O Mother of God,

for thou gavest birth to God,

co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit,

Who, by His own desire, created the angelic hosts out of nothing.

Beseech Him to deliver from corruption and to enlighten//

the souls of those who rightly praise thee, O most pure one!

THE PRAYER OF SAINT SIMEON, THE GOD-RECEIVER

Priest: 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; to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of Thy people Israel.

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

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

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

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

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

THE LENTEN TROPARIA

Tone 8

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, Mary full of grace: the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the Fruit of thy womb; //
for thou hast borne the Saviour of our souls. *(All make a prostration)*

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

O Baptiser of Christ, remember us all,
that we may be delivered from our iniquities; //
for to thee is given grace to intercede for us! *(All make a prostration)*

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

Intercede for us, O holy Apostles and all the saints,
that we may be delivered from perils and sorrows; //
for we have acquired you as fervent intercessors before the Saviour! *(All make a prostration)*

Beneath thy compassion we take refuge, O Theotokos.
Do not despise our supplications in adversity, //
but deliver us from perils, O only pure and only blessed one! *(No prostration)*

THE BLESSING

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

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

More honourable than the Cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim,
thou who without defilement gavest birth to God the Word, and art truly Theotokos, we magnify thee.

Bless, father, in the Name of the Lord.

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

Reader: Amen.

Reader: O Heavenly King, support the faithful; confirm the faith; guide the nations; give peace to the world; and preserve well our holy church and this city. Grant repose to our departed fathers and brethren in the dwelling-place of the righteous. Receive us in repentance and confession, for Thou art a good and merciful God and lovest mankind

THE PRAYER OF SAINT EPHRAIM THE SYRIAN

The Priest says the Prayer of Saint Ephraim:

O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of sloth, faint-heartedness, lust of power, and idle talk. *(All make a prostration)*

But give rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love to me, Thy servant. *(All make a prostration)*

Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own faults, and not to judge my brother; for blessed art Thou, unto ages of ages. Amen. *(All make a prostration)*

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. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Father, give the blessing.

The Priest gives the blessing.

THE CEREMONY OF MUTUAL FORGIVENESS

*All venerate the icon of Christ. Each person then makes a prostration in front of each other person present, and asks his or her forgiveness, using these or similar words: **Forgive me, and pray for me, a sinner.** They then share a kiss of peace.*

Priest: Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us, and save us. Amen.