

# Vespers sung on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> March for Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2025

First Sunday of Great Lent

Sunday of Orthodoxy

The Holy Forty Martyrs of Sebaste

“LORD, I CALL ...”

**Tone 4** (*For the Resurrection*)

[Music on website]

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 4** (*For the Resurrection*)

We glorify Thy Resurrection on the third day, O Christ God,

by always honouring Thy life-creating Cross;

by it, Thou hast renewed the corrupted nature of man,

O almighty One.

By it, Thou hast renewed our entrance to heaven,//

for Thou art good and the Lover of man.

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

Thou didst loose the Tree's verdict of disobedience, O Saviour,

by being voluntarily nailed to the tree of the Cross.

By descending to hell, O almighty God,

Thou didst break the bonds of death.

Therefore, we adore Thy Resurrection from the dead, singing in joy://

“Glory to Thee, O all-powerful Lord!”

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

Thou didst smash the gates of hell, O Lord,

and by Thy death Thou didst demolish the kingdom of death.

Thou didst deliver the race of men from corruption,//

granting the world life, incorruption and great mercy.

*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 2 (For the Holy Forty Martyrs)**

The holy Martyrs bravely endured their present suffering;  
they rejoiced in things hoped for but not yet seen.  
They said to each other:  
"By stripping off our garments we have put off the old man.  
The winter is cold and bitter, but Paradise will be warm and sweet.  
The freezing is painful, but the reward will bring us joy.  
Let us not be defeated, O brothers!  
We suffer a little, but Christ will crown us with the laurel of victory. //  
He is our God and the Saviour of our souls."

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

The holy Martyrs threw their clothes aside;  
fearlessly they entered the lake and encouraged one another:  
"Remember that our fallen nature has been deprived of Paradise!  
Let us care nothing for our corruptible flesh today!  
The serpent once deceived us, handing over our bodies to death;  
now let us win resurrection for all!  
Let us scorn the ice and cold; let us hate our flesh,  
and Christ will crown us with the laurel of victory! //  
He is our God and the Saviour of our souls."

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

The holy Martyrs accepted their torments with joy.  
They hurried to the frozen lake as to a comforting bath.  
They said: “We will not fear the bitter cold.  
Only let us escape Gehenna's flames!  
Let a foot be burned, that it may rejoice eternally!  
Let a hand be lost, offered to the Lord in sacrifice!  
Let us not refuse death in the flesh!  
Embrace death, and Christ will crown us with the laurel of victory!//  
He is our God, and the Saviour of our souls.”

*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 4 (Theotokion – Dogmatikon)**

The Prophet David was a father of the Lord  
through thee, O Virgin.  
He foretold in songs the One Who worked wonder in thee:  
“At Thy right hand stood the Queen,”  
Thy Mother, the mediatrix of life,  
since God was freely born of her without a father.  
He wanted to renew His fallen image, made corrupt in passion,  
so He took the lost sheep upon His shoulder  
and brought it to His Father,  
joining it to the heavenly pow'rs.//  
Christ, Who has great and rich mercy, has saved the world, O Theotokos.

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**OLD TESTAMENT READINGS**

**The Reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah**

[43:9-14]

Thus saith the Lord: Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled: who among them can declare this, and show us former things? Let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear, and say, It is truth. Ye are My witnesses, saith the Lord, and My servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He: before Me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after Me. I, even I, am the Lord; and beside Me there is no Saviour. I have declared, and have saved, and I have shown, when there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are My witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God. Yea, before the day was I am He; and there is none that can deliver out of My hand: I will work, and who shall let it? Thus saith the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

**The Reading from the Wisdom of Solomon**

[3:1-9]

The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die: And their departure is taken for misery, and their going from us to be utter destruction: But they are in peace. For though they be punished in the sight of men, yet is their hope full of immortality. And having been a little chastised, they shall be greatly rewarded: For God proved them, and found them worthy for Himself. As gold in the furnace hath He tried them, and received them

as a burnt offering. And in the time of their visitation they shall shine, and run to and fro like sparks among the stubble. They shall judge the nations, and have dominion over the people, and their Lord shall reign forever. They that put their trust in Him shall understand the truth: And such as be faithful in love shall abide with Him: For grace and mercy is to His saints, and He hath care for his elect.

### **The Reading from the Wisdom of Solomon**

[5:15-6:3]

The righteous live for evermore; their reward also is with the Lord, and the care of them is with the Most High. Therefore shall they receive a glorious kingdom, and a beautiful crown from the Lord's hand: for with His right hand shall He cover them, and with His arm shall He protect them. He shall take to Him His jealousy for complete armour, and make the creature His weapon for the revenge of His enemies. He shall put on righteousness as a breastplate, and true judgment instead of a helmet. He shall take holiness for an invincible shield. His severe wrath shall He sharpen for a sword, and the world shall fight with Him against the unwise. Then shall the right aiming thunderbolts go abroad; and from the clouds, as from a well-drawn bow, shall they fly to the mark. And hailstones full of wrath shall be cast as out of a stone bow, and the water of the sea shall rage against them, and the floods shall cruelly drown them. Yea, a mighty wind shall stand up against them, and like a storm shall blow them away: thus iniquity shall lay waste the whole earth, and ill dealing shall overthrow the thrones of the mighty. Hear, therefore, O ye kings, and understand; learn, ye that be judges of the ends of the earth. Give ear, ye that rule the people, and glory in the multitude of nations. For power is given you of the Lord, and sovereignty from the Most High.

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### **APOSTICHA**

**Tone 4** (*For the Resurrection*)

[[Music on website](#)]

By ascending the Cross, O Lord,

Thou hast annulled our ancestral curse.

By descending to hell, Thou hast freed the eternal prisoners,  
granting incorruption to the human race.//

Therefore in songs we glorify Thy life-creating and saving Resurrection.

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

By hanging upon the tree, O only powerful Lord,  
Thou didst shake all of creation.

By being laid in the tomb Thou hast raised those who dwelt in the tombs,  
granting life and incorruption to the human race.//

Therefore in songs we glorify Thy rising on the third day.

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

The lawless people, O Christ,  
handed Thee over to Pilate, condemned to be crucified,  
thus proving themselves ungrateful before their Benefactor.

But voluntarily Thou didst endure burial,  
rising by Thine own power on the third day as God,//  
granting us life everlasting and great mercy.

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

With tears the women reached Thy tomb,  
searching for Thee, but not finding Thee.

They wept with wailing and lamented:

“Woe to us! Our Saviour, King of all,  
how wast Thou stolen?

What place can hold Thy life-bearing body?”

An Angel replied to them:

“Do not weep, but go and proclaim that the Lord is risen,//  
granting us joy as the only compassionate One!”

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

**Tone 6 (For the Holy Forty Martyrs)**

O faithful, let us praise the forty passion-bearing Martyrs in hymns!

Singing in harmony let us cry out to them saying:

“Rejoice, O sufferers of Christ:

Hesýchius, Mé<sup>l</sup>iton, Heráclius, Smarág<sup>d</sup>us and Domnus;

Euónicus, Vá<sup>l</sup>ens and Vivianus;

Claudius and Pris<sup>c</sup>us!

Rejoice, Theódulus, Euthýchius and John,

Xanthéas, Hiliá<sup>n</sup>us, Sisí<sup>n</sup>ius, Ký<sup>r</sup>ion, Angí<sup>u</sup>s, Aétius and Flavius!

Rejoice, Acáci<sup>u</sup>s, Ecdí<sup>k</sup>ius, Lysimá<sup>ch</sup>us, Alexan<sup>d</sup>er,

Elías and Candidus,

Theóphilus, Dométian and Gái<sup>u</sup>s

with the Godly Gorgonius!

Rejoice, Leóntius and Athanasius,

Cýril and Sacerdon,

Nicholas and Valerius,

Philóctimon, Sevéri<sup>n</sup>ian, Chudí<sup>o</sup>n and Aglaius!

You have boldness before Christ our God, most honoured Martyrs.

Beseech Him ear<sup>n</sup>estly//

that those who keep your most precious memory with fai<sup>th</sup> may be saved!

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

**Tone 2 (From the Lenten Triodion)**

Advancing from false doctrine to tru<sup>e</sup> faith,

illuminated with the light of know<sup>l</sup>edge,

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!

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**TROPARIA**

**Troparion of the Resurrection in Tone 4**

[Music on website / Green Book page 8]

When the women disciples of the Lord learned from the angel

the joyous message of Thy Resurrection,

they cast away the ancestral curse

and elatedly told the apostles:

“Death is overthrown!

Christ God is risen,//

granting the world great mercy!”

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

**Troparion of the Holy Forty Martyrs in Tone 1**

[Music on website / Sheet]

Through the sufferings which Thy holy Forty Martyrs endured for Thy sake, O Lord,

we beseech Thee, O Lover of mankind://

“Heal all of our infirmities!”

*both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

**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.”

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