

Daily Vespers

See Footnote ¹.

If the Ninth Hour is read, the Priest or the Reader immediately begins Daily Vespers with “Come, let us worship...” or “Christ is Risen...”.

*If the Ninth Hour is not read, the Priest uncovers the Altar Table, opens the curtain of the Holy Doors (*Katapetasma*), kisses the edge of the Altar Table, exits through the North door, makes three metanias before the Holy Doors, and says:*

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

Reader: Amen.

From Pentecost to Great and Holy Saturday:

Glory to You, our God; glory to You!

O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, You are everywhere and fulfill all things. Treasury of Blessings and Giver of Life, come and abide in us and cleanse us from every impurity and save our souls, O Good One!

The Trisagion Prayers

Holy God! Holy Mighty! Holy Immortal! Have mercy on us. (3x)

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

¹ The complete Lenten order of Daily Vespers is used Monday through Friday evenings of Great Lent (except those days when the Divine Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts is celebrated). This includes Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evenings of Holy Week, if for some reason the Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified cannot be celebrated on those days. The order of Daily Vespers begins in the non-Lenten form and concludes in the Lenten form on Tuesday and Thursday evenings of Cheesefare Week, Sunday evenings of Great Lent, and the evening of Palm Sunday. The order of Daily Vespers begins in the Lenten form and concludes in the non-Lenten form on Wednesday and Friday evenings of Cheesefare Week. When the service begins in one order and concludes in another, the dividing point comes immediately after the Prokeimenon (and Readings, if any).

O most-holy Trinity, have mercy on us!
O Lord, cleanse us from our sins!
O Master, pardon our transgressions!
O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities, for Your name's sake!

Lord, have mercy. (*3x*)

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

All: Our Father, Who are in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your 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 unto ages of ages.

Reader: Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (*12x*)

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

From Ascension to Great and Holy Saturday and, within Paschaltide, when no service precedes Daily Vespers:

Come, let us worship 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 Celebrant, standing in front of the closed Holy Doors, head uncovered, reads the Prayers of Light silently².

The Introductory Psalm

Psalm 103 (104)

Bless the Lord, O my soul!
 O Lord my God, You are very great,
 You are clothed with praise and majesty,
 wrapping Yourself in light for a garment,
 stretching out the sky like a skin³;
 Who covers His upper rooms with water,
 Who makes clouds His chariot,
 Who walks on the wings of the wind,
 Who makes spirits his angels
 and His servant a flame of fire,
 Who poises the earth on its axis;
 it will not be moved throughout the ages.
 The deep like a garment is its clothing.
 On the mountains the waters stand.
 At Your rebuke they run,
 At the crack of Your thunder they are afraid.
 Mountains rise up and plains sink down
 to the place which You have appointed for them.

² Many priests, however, remain in the sanctuary and listen to the word of God from the Psalter and pray the prayers aloud, each in what is thought to be its proper place, omitting those prayers which were written to accompany material no longer part of Vespers or not part of the Vespers of the day. The seven prayers may be found together in Appendix A.

³ a “tent-skin”.

You have set a bound the waters will not pass,
so they will never return to cover the earth.

You send torrents in the ravines,
the waters run between the mountains.

They give drink to all the beasts of the field;
wild donkeys wait to quench their thirst.

The birds of the sky perch on them;
from among the rocks they pipe their calls.

You water the mountains from above.
The earth is filled with the fruit of Your works.

You make grass spring up for the cattle
and vegetation for the service of men,

for them to produce food from the earth
and wine which cheers man's heart,
that his face may be bright with oil
and that bread may strengthen man's heart.

The trees of the plain will be drenched,
the cedars of Lebanon which You planted.

There the sparrows build their nests,
the house of the heron⁴ at the top of them.

The high mountains are for the deer,
a rock is a refuge for hares.

You made the moon to mark the months,
the sun knows his going down.

⁴ or “egret”.

You appoint darkness and it becomes night,
in which all the wild beasts of the forest prowl:

young lions roaring to seize their prey
and seeking their food from God.

The sun rises and they gather together
and lie down in their dens.

Man goes out to his work
and to his business until the evening.

How great are Your works, O Lord!
You have made all things in wisdom,
the earth is filled with Your creation.

This is the great and wide sea:
there live reptiles without number,
living creatures small and great;

There ships go to and fro;
there, too, is that sea serpent
which You have made to play in it.

All look expectantly to You
to give them their food in due season.

When You give it to them, they gather it;
when You open Your hand,
all things are filled with goodness.

But when You turn away Your face they are troubled.
You will take their spirit and they will die
and they will return to their dust.

You will send Your Spirit and they will be created,
and You will renew the face of the earth.

May the glory of the Lord be forever;
the Lord delights in His works.

He looks upon the earth and makes it tremble,
He touches the mountains and they smoke.

I will sing to the Lord all my life,
I will sing praises to my God as long as I live.

The Deacon, standing at the Southwest corner of the Altar Table, passing the High Place, exits the Sanctuary, through the North door and stands before the icon of the Theotokos until the conclusion of the Psalm.

May my conversation be pleasing to Him,
and I will rejoice in the Lord.

May sinners vanish from the earth,
and the lawless so as to be no more.
Bless the Lord, O my soul.

The sun knows his going down.
You appoint darkness and it becomes night,

How great are Your works, O Lord!
You have made all things in wisdom,

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

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Glory to You, O God. (3x)

At the conclusion of Psalm 103 or Psalm 85, the Deacon and the Priest bow to each other. The Priest returns to the Sanctuary through the South door and stands at his place before the Altar Table.

The Deacon moves to stand before the Holy Doors, lifts his Orarion and says:

The Great Litany

Deacon: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

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

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the peace of the whole world, for the welfare of the holy churches of God, and for the union of all people, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

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

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: ⁵For [his Beatitude] Metropolitan _____; for [his Grace] our Bishop _____; for the honorable priesthood, the diaconate in Christ, for all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the President⁶ and all civil authorities of this country, and for those serving in its Armed Forces, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

⁵ We pray for the bishop of the temple in which we are praying. When not in a temple, we pray for the bishop of the diocese in which we are located. If outside the territory of any Orthodox Church or mission, only then do we pray for the bishop of the celebrating priest.

⁶ We pray for the Chief of State and the civil authorities of the place in which we are praying.

Deacon: For this city, [or countryside, town, village, holy habitation,] for every city and countryside, and for the faithful dwelling in them, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For favorable weather, for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

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

People: Lord, have mercy.

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

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Your grace.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Commemorating our most holy, pure, 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.

The Deacon moves to stand before the icon of Christ.

People: To You, O Lord.

Priest: ⁷For to You belong 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.

People: Amen.

⁷ Some ancient sources suggest Prayer 7a or, if Psalm 85 (86) is used as the Introductory Psalm, Prayer 1 in Appendix A be read here.

On Monday through Friday evening, unless there was a vigil the night before⁸:

The Kathisma

The Deacon enters the Sanctuary through the South door, goes to the High Place, bows, turns, bows to the Priest, and goes to his place at the Altar Table.

Reader: [reads the first Stasis of the appointed Kathisma]

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

People: ...now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Glory to You, O God! (3x)

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

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

Reader: ...now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

[reads the second Stasis of the appointed Kathisma]

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

People: ...now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Glory to You, O God! (3x)

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

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

Reader: ...now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

⁸ If there is a Polyeleos, a vigil, or a feast of the Lord on a Monday, we sing a reduced version of the First Kathisma (Blessed is the man...) which is appointed to be read on Saturday evenings. (see Appendix B). If a feast of the Lord fall on a Tuesday through Saturday, there is no Kathisma.

[reads the third Stasis of the appointed Kathisma]

The Deacon bows to the Priest, passing the High Place, exits the Sanctuary through the North door and stands before the icon of the Theotokos.

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

People: ...now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Glory to You, O God! (3x)

The Deacon moves to stand before the Holy Doors, lifts his Orarion and says:

The Little Litany

Deacon: Again and again in peace let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Your grace.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Commemorating our most holy, pure, 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.

The Deacon moves to stand before the icon of Christ.

People: To You, O Lord.

Priest: ⁹For Yours is the majesty, and Yours are 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.

People: Amen.

The Deacon enters the Sanctuary through the South door, goes to the High Place, bows, turns

⁹ Some ancient sources suggest Prayer 2 in Appendix A be read here.

and bows to the Priest, takes up the censer and presents it to the Priest, saying:

Deacon: Bless, Master, the incense.

Priest: + We offer You incense, O Christ our God, for a perfume of spiritual fragrance. Receive it upon Your heavenly Altar, and send down upon us in return the grace of Your all-Holy Spirit.

Deacon: Amen.

The Deacon then begins the Great Censing.

If there is no Entrance:

Upon the Deacon's entering, the Priest prays:

Priest: In the evening, in the morning, and at midday, we praise You, we bless You, we give thanks to You, and we pray to You: O Master of all, O Lord, the Lover of mankind, let our prayer arise in Your sight as incense, and incline not our hearts to words or thoughts of evil, but rescue us from all who seek after our souls. For our eyes are toward You, O Lord: Lord, in You we put our hope. Put us not to shame, O our God. For to You belong 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.

Lord, I Call¹⁰

Psalm 140 (141):1-2

People: Lord, I call upon You, hear me.
Hear me, O Lord.
Lord, I call upon You, hear me.
Receive the voice of my prayer, when I call upon You.
Hear me, O Lord.

¹⁰ When a feast supersedes the Octoechos, "Lord, I Call..." is chanted in the tone of the first Sticherion appointed for the day. Otherwise, it is chanted in the tone of the week.

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

Psalm 140 (141):3-10

Reader: Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth,
and a door of enclosure and protection around my lips.

Do not incline my heart to evil words,
to make excuses for sins.
With men who practice lawlessness,
not even with their chosen ones will I be joined.

A just man will correct and rebuke me with mercy,
but may the oil of a sinner never anoint my head,
because again and again my prayer is against their pleasures.

Their judges and kings drown holding rocks:
they will hear my words, for they are sweet.

As a clod of earth is crushed on the ground,
our bones have been scattered beside the grave.

For my eyes look to You, O Lord;
O Lord, in You I trust, do not take away my life.

Keep me from the trap they have set for me
and from the snare of the evildoers.

Sinners will fall into their own net;
I am alone until I pass on.

Psalm 141 (142)

I cry to the Lord with my voice,
I pray with my voice to the Lord.

I will pour out before Him my prayer,
I will tell my trouble before Him.

When my spirit departs from me,
You know my paths.
In this way that I was going,
they hid a trap for me.

I look to the right hand and watch,
but there is no one who knows me.
Escape is cut off from me,
but there is no one seeking my life.

I cried to You, O Lord, and said,
“You are my hope,
You are my portion in the land of the living.”

Attend to my prayer,
for I have been brought very low.
Deliver me from those who are persecuting me,
because they are stronger than I am.

10.¹¹ Bring my soul out of prison
that I may confess Your name,

9. The righteous are waiting for me
until You reward me.

¹¹ From this point on, hymns (Stichera) can be inserted between Psalm verses. If there are ten Stichera, the first is inserted after the verse marked ‘10’, the second after the verse marked ‘9’, and so on. If there are six Stichera, the first is inserted after the verse marked ‘6’, the second after the verse marked ‘5’, and so on.

Psalm 129 (130)

8. Out of the depths I cry to You, O Lord;
O Lord, hear my voice.
7. Let Your ears be attentive
to the cry of my prayer.
6. If You, O Lord, should take note of our sins,
O Lord, who would survive?
But with You there is forgiveness.
5. For Your name's sake, O Lord, I wait for You,
my soul waits for Your word,
my soul hopes for the Lord,
4. from the morning watch until night.
From the morning watch
let Israel hope for the Lord.
3. For with the Lord there is mercy
and with Him there is great redemption.
And He will redeem Israel
from all his sins.

If there is an Entrance:

During the singing of the Stichera, the Priest puts on the Phelonion, and, if a Deacon is serving, he keeps it on until the conclusion of the service.

The Deacon receives the censer from the Server.

Psalm 116 (117)

2. Praise the Lord, all you nations,
praise Him, all you peoples!

1. For great is His mercy to us,¹²
and the truth of the Lord continues forever.

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

Here, on certain days, the people sing a festal Sticheron. Otherwise the Reader goes on:

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

People: [Sing the Theotokion]

On all Sunday evenings and on certain Feast days only:

As the People sing the Theotokion, the Deacon asks the Priest to bless the censer. The Holy Doors are opened, the Deacon and the Priest kiss the Altar Table, and preceded by the Acolytes, passing by the High Place, they proceed out of the Sanctuary through the North door, and go to the solea in front of the Holy Doors.

The Vespers Entrance

As they proceed:

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mercy.

Priest: In the evening, in the morning, and at midday, we praise You, we bless You, we give thanks to You, and we pray to You: O Master of all, O Lord, the Lover of mankind, let our prayer arise in Your sight as incense, and incline not our hearts to words or thoughts of evil, but rescue us from all who seek after our souls. For our eyes are toward You, O Lord: Lord, in You we put our hope. Put us not to shame, O our God. For to You belong 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.

People: Amen.

The Priest stands in the center facing the Altar Table.

¹² Lit., “For His mercy has been strengthened upon us”.

The Deacon approaches the Holy Doors to the right of the Priest and then he censes the Holy Doors, the icons of Christ and the Theotokos, the icon of the patron saint of the Temple, and the Priest. After this he transfers the censer from his right hand to his left, bows to the Priest and, pointing to the Holy Doors with his Orarion in his right hand, he says quietly:

Deacon: Bless, Master, the holy entrance.

Priest: + Blessed is the entrance into Your Sanctuary, always, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

People: Amen.

After this, the Deacon stands in the middle of the Holy Doors and, at the conclusion of the Theotokion, makes the Sign of the Cross with the censer and says:

Deacon: Wisdom! Let us attend!

The Deacon censes the Altar Table on all four sides and the High Place, and gives up the censer to the Acolyte.

The Priest(s) kisses the two small icons located on the sides or pillars of the Holy Doors area, blesses the People, kisses the Altar Table, and goes to the High Place, makes the Sign of the Cross and a small metania and stands to the right of center (Southeast corner of the Altar Table) facing the people.

The Deacon kisses the Altar Table, goes to the left side of the Sanctuary, makes the Sign of the Cross on himself facing the High Place, bows to the Priest, and stands to the left (Northeast corner) of the Altar Table at the High Place facing toward the people.

If there is no Entrance:

Priest: Wisdom! Let us attend!

While the people sing Gladsome Light, the Deacon bows to the Priest, passing the High Place, exits the Sanctuary through the North door, takes his place on the solea,...

Gladsome Light

People: O gladsome Light of the holy glory of the immortal, heavenly, Holy, blessed Father: O 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 it is right, at all times,
To worship You in voices of praise,
O Son of God and Giver of life.
Therefore all the world glorifies You.

Deacon: Let us attend.

The Prokeimenon

See Appendix C for the appropriate Prokeimenon.

Deacon: Wisdom!

The Evening Prokeimenon in the _____ tone:

[The Deacon reads the first verse of the Prokeimenon, etc.]

If there was an Entrance:

The Priest and the Deacon turn, make the Sign of the Cross (lesser metania) to the High Place, and proceed to their places - the Priest to the place in front of the Altar Table.

The Deacon closes the Holy Doors.

If there are Old Testament readings of a feast, each is introduced as follows:

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The reading from _____.

Deacon: Let us attend!

If there was a reading:

Priest: + Peace to you who read.

Grant, O Lord

Reader: Grant, O Lord, to keep us this evening without sin.

Blessed are You, O Lord, the God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Your name forever. Amen.

Let Your mercy be upon us, O Lord, even as we have set our hope on You.

Blessed are You, O Lord: teach me Your statutes.

Blessed are You, O Master: make me to understand Your commandments.

Blessed are You, O Holy One: enlighten me with Your precepts.

Your mercy, O Lord, endures forever. Do not forsake the works of Your hands.

To You belongs worship, to You belongs praise, to You belongs glory; to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

If there was an Entrance:

The Deacon bows to the Priest, passing the High Place, exits the Sanctuary through the North door, takes his place on the solea.

The Deacon lifts his Orarion and says:

The Evening Litany

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

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Your grace.

People: Lord, have mercy.

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

People: Grant it, O Lord.

Deacon: For an angel of peace, a faithful guide, a guardian of our souls and bodies, let us ask of the Lord.

People: Grant it, O Lord.

Deacon: For pardon and remission of our sins and transgressions, let us ask of the Lord.

People: Grant it, O Lord.

Deacon: For all things that are good and profitable for our souls, and peace for the world, let us ask of the Lord.

People: Grant it, O Lord.

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

People: Grant it, O Lord.

Deacon: For a Christian ending to our life: painless, blameless, and peaceful; and a good defense before the dread judgment seat of Christ, let us ask of the Lord.

People: Grant it, O Lord.

Deacon: Commemorating our most holy, pure, 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.

The Deacon moves to stand before the icon of Christ:

People: To You, O Lord.

Priest: ¹³For You are a good God, and You 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 unto ages of ages.

People: Amen

Priest: + Peace be unto all.

People: And to your spirit.

Deacon: Let us bow our heads to the Lord.

People: To You, O Lord.

The Prayer with Heads Bowed

Priest: O Lord our God, Who bowed the heavens and came down for the salvation of the human race; look upon Your servants and Your inheritance; for to You, the awesome Judge, Who yet love mankind, have Your servants bowed their heads and submissively bent their necks, not waiting for help from men, but asking for Your mercy and looking confidently for Your 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, from vain thoughts, and from evil imaginations. Blessed and glorified be the majesty of Your kingdom of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit now and ever and unto ages of ages.

People: Amen.

The Deacon enters the Sanctuary through the South door as the people sing the Aposticha and verses.

¹³ Some ancient sources suggest Prayer 7b in Appendix A be read here.

The Aposticha

People: [Sticheron]

Reader: I lift up my eyes to You, the One Who lives in heaven. Behold, as the eyes of slaves are on the hands of their lords, and as the eyes of a maid¹⁴ are on the hands of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God until He has compassion on us.

People: [Sticheron]

Reader: Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us, for we have had our fill to the full of scorn, our soul is more than filled. Let the reproach be for the prosperous and the contempt for the proud.

People: [Sticheron]

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

People: [Glory verse, if any]

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

People: [Theotokion]

The Canticle of Simeon

People: Master, now let Your servant depart in peace according to Your word. For my eyes have seen Your salvation which You have prepared before the face of all people: a light for revelation to the gentiles and for the glory of Your people Israel.

The Trisagion Prayers

Reader: Holy God! Holy Mighty! Holy Immortal! Have mercy on us. (3x)

¹⁴ or “slave girl”.

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

O most-holy Trinity, have mercy on us!
O Lord, cleanse us from our sins!
O Master, pardon our transgressions!
O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities, for Your name's sake!

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

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

All: Our Father, Who are in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your 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 unto ages of ages.

Reader: Amen.

The Troparia of the Day

People: [Troparion]

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

[Second Troparion, if any]

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

[Theotokion]

The Deacon and the Priest exit the Sanctuary through the North door and take their place on

the solea.

The Litany of Fervent Supplication¹⁵

The Deacon lifts his Orarion and prays:

Deacon: Have mercy upon us, O God, according to Your great goodness, we implore You, hear us and have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Deacon: Again we pray for [His Beatitude] Metropolitan _____, for [His Grace] our Bishop _____, for priests, deacons, and all other clergy, and for all our brethren in Christ.

People: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Deacon: Again we pray for the *President* and all civil authorities of this country and for those serving in its Armed Forces.

People: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Deacon: Again we pray for the blessed and ever-memorable holy Orthodox Patriarchs; for the blessed and ever memorable founders of this holy house; for all our fathers and brethren, the Orthodox departed this life before us, [especially _____ and all those] who here and in all the world lie asleep in the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Deacon: Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, and visitation for the servants of God [especially _____], and for the pardon and remission of their sins.

People: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

¹⁵ If there are special petitions for a specific situation in the community (flood, drought, harvest, health, war, plague, or whatever), the special petitions are added to this Litany.

Deacon: Again we pray for those who bring offerings and do good works in this holy and all-venerable house; for those who labor and those who sing; and for all the people here present, who await Your great and rich mercy.

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

Priest: ¹⁶For You are a merciful God, and You 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 unto ages of ages.

People: Amen.

The Dismissal

The Priest and the Deacon turn to face the People. The Deacon lifts his Orarion and says:

Deacon: Wisdom.

People: Father, bless.

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

People: Amen.

Confirm, O God, the holy Orthodox faith and Orthodox Christians unto ages of ages.

The Priest bows toward the icon of the Theotokos on the Iconostasis, saying:

Priest: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

¹⁶ This Litany has no obvious concluding prayer. Some say it should have the same prayer that is attached to it in the Divine Liturgy:

“O Lord our God, accept this fervent supplication of Your servants, and have mercy on us according to the multitude of Your mercy. Send down Your bounties upon us and upon all Your people, who await the rich mercy that comes from You.”

People: More honorable than the cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim, without corruption you gave birth to God, the Word. True Theotokos, we magnify you.

The Priest bows toward the icon of Christ on the Iconostasis, saying:

Priest: Glory to You, O Christ, our God and our hope, glory to You.

The Deacon goes to stand to the right of the Analog.

Standing in front of the Holy Doors, facing the people, the Priest says the Dismissal:

From Ascension to Great and Holy Saturday:

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

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Father, bless.

Priest: May Christ our true God, through the prayers of His most pure Mother;

[Monday] by the protection of the honorable Bodiless Powers of heaven; [Tuesday] of the honorable and glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John;

[Wednesday, Friday] by the power of the precious and life-creating Cross;

of the holy, glorious, and all-laudable Apostles;

[Thursday] of our Father among the Saints, Nicholas the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia;

[Saturday] of the holy, glorious and right-victorious Martyrs;

of St. (of the temple.....); of (of the day), whom we commemorate today; of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; and of all the saints: have mercy on us and save us

for He is good and loves mankind.

APPENDIX A

THE SEVEN VESPERS PRAYERS

I

O Lord, compassionate and merciful, long-suffering and of great mercy, give heed to our prayers, and attend to the voice of our supplications. Work upon us a sign for good. Guide us in Your way that we may walk in Your truth. Gladden our hearts that we may fear Your holy name, for You are great and You work wonders. You alone are God, and among the gods there is none like You, O Lord, powerful in mercy and good in might, to help and to comfort and to save all those who hope in Your holy name. For to You belong 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. Amen.

II

O Lord, in Your displeasure, rebuke us not, neither chasten us in Your wrath, but deal with us according to Your tenderness, O physician and healer of our souls. Guide us to the haven of Your will. Enlighten the eyes of our hearts to the knowledge of Your truth, and grant that the remainder of the present day and the whole time of our life may be peaceful and sinless, through the intercessions of the holy Theotokos and of all the saints. For Yours is the majesty, and Yours are 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. Amen.

III

O Lord our God, remember us, Your sinful and unprofitable servants, when we call on Your holy and venerable name, and put us not to shame in our expectation of Your mercy, but grant us, O Lord, all our petitions which are unto salvation, and make us worthy to love and fear You with all our hearts, and to do Your will in all things. For You are a good God and You 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 unto ages of ages. Amen.

IV

O You to Whom the holy powers sing with unending hymns and unceasing doxologies, fill our mouths with Your praise that we may magnify Your holy name. And grant to us part and inheritance with all those who fear You in truth and keep Your commandments, through the intercessions of the holy Theotokos and of all the saints. For to You belong 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. Amen.

V

O Lord, Lord, Who uphold all things in the most pure hollow of Your hand, Who are long-suffering toward us all, and Who turn away from our wickedness, remember Your compassion and Your mercy. Look on us with Your goodness. Grant to us also by Your grace, through the remainder of the present day, to avoid the various subtle snares of the Evil One. Keep our lives unassailed, through the grace of Your all holy Spirit. Through the mercy and love toward mankind of Your only-begotten Son, with Whom You are blessed, together with Your all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

VI

O God, great and wonderful, Who with goodness indescribable and rich providence, order all things and grant to us earthly good things; Who have given us a pledge of the promised kingdom through the good things already granted to us, and have made us to shun all harm during that part of the day which is past, grant that we may also fulfill the remainder of this day blamelessly before Your holy glory, and hymn You, our God Who alone are good and love mankind. For You are our God, and to You we send up glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

VII

a

O great and most high God, You alone have immortality, and You dwell in unapproachable light. You have fashioned all creation in wisdom. You have divided the light from the darkness, and have set the sun to rule the day and the moon and stars to rule the night. You have also permitted us sinners at this present hour to come before Your presence with confession and to offer to You our evening doxology. O Lord, Lover of Mankind, direct our prayer as incense before You, and accept it as a sweet fragrance. Grant that the present evening and coming night be peaceful. Clothe us with the armor of light. Rescue us from the fear of night, and from everything that walks in darkness. Grant that the sleep that You have given us for rest in our weakness may be free from every fantasy of the devil.

b

O Master of all, leader of the good, may we, being moved to compunction on our beds, remember Your name in the night. Enlightened by doing Your commandments, may we rise up with joyful soul to glorify Your goodness of heart for our own sins and those of all Your people. Look on them in mercy, through the intercessions of the holy Theotokos. For You are a good God and You 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 unto ages of ages. Amen.

THE VESPERS KATHISMA

The Customary {edited} Version

1. Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the godless.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
2. For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the godless will perish.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
3. Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice in Him with trembling!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
4. Blessed are all who take refuge in Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
5. Arise, O Lord! Save me, O my God!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
6. Salvation is of the Lord! Your blessing be upon Your people!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

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

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Glory to You, O God! (3x)

APPENDIX C

If it be a weekday service during the Apostles' or the Nativity Fast and the Menaion indicate "Alleluia", then, instead of the Prokeimenon of the day, we may chant (optional):

ALLELUIA

Tone 6

On Monday evening:

O Lord, rebuke me not in Your anger, nor chasten me in Your wrath.
And unto ages of ages.

On Tuesday and Thursday evening:

Extol the Lord our God; worship at His footstool, for it is holy!
And unto ages of ages.

On Wednesday evening:

Their proclamation has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the end of the universe!
And unto ages of ages.

VESPERS PROKEIMENA

in their complete form (see Appendix D for the Great Prokeimena)

Sunday Evening

Psalm 133 (134)

Deacon: The Evening Prokeimenon in the eighth tone:

Behold, now bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord.

Verse: You who stand in the temple of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God.

Verse: Lift up your hands to the Holy Place, and bless the Lord!

Verse: May the Lord bless you from Zion, He Who made heaven and earth!

Deacon: Behold, now bless the Lord...

People: ...all you servants of the Lord.

Monday Evening

Psalm 4

Deacon: The Evening Prokeimenon in the fourth tone:

The Lord hears me when I call to Him.

Verse: When I called, the God of my righteousness heard me.

Verse: You have given me room when I was in distress. Be gracious to me, and hear my prayer.

Verse: O men, how long shall my honor suffer shame? How long will you love vain words, and seek after life?

- Verse:* But know that the Lord has set apart the godly for Himself; the Lord hears when I call to Him.
- Verse:* Be angry, but sin not; commune with your own hearts on your beds, and be silent.
- Verse:* Offer right sacrifices, and put your trust in the Lord.
- Verse:* There are many who say, “O that we might see some good! Lift up the light of Your countenance upon us, O Lord!”
- Verse:* You have put more joy in my heart than they have when their grain and wine abound.
- Verse:* In peace I will both lie down and sleep; for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.

Deacon: The Lord hears me...

People: ...when I call to Him.

Tuesday Evening

Psalm 22 (23)

- Deacon:* The Evening Prokeimenon in the first tone:
Your mercy, O Lord, shall follow me all the days of my life.
- Verse:* The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want; He makes me lie down in green pastures.
- Verse:* He leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake.
- Verse:* Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

Verse: You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil, my cup overflows.

Verse: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Deacon: Your mercy, O Lord, shall follow me...

People: ...all the days of my life.

Wednesday Evening

Psalm 53 (54)

Deacon: The Evening Prokeimenon in the fifth tone:

Save me, O God, by Your name, and vindicate me by Your strength.

People: Save me, O God, by Your name, and vindicate me by Your strength.

Verse: Hear my prayer, O God, listen to the words of my mouth.

Verse: For insolent men have risen against me, ruthless men seek my life; they do not set God before them.

Verse: Behold, God is my helper; the Lord is the upholder of my life.

Verse: He will requite my enemies with evil; in Your faithfulness put an end to them.

Verse: With a freewill offering I will sacrifice to You; I will give thanks to Your name, O Lord, for it is good.

Verse: For You have delivered me from every trouble, and my eye has looked in triumph on my enemies.

Deacon: Save me, O God, by Your name...

People: ...and vindicate me by Your strength.

Thursday Evening

Psalm 120 (121)

Deacon: The Evening Prokeimenon in the sixth tone:

My help comes from the Lord, Who made heaven and earth.

Verse: I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come?

Verse: My help comes from the Lord, Who made heaven and earth. He will not let your foot be moved. He Who keeps you will not slumber.

Verse: Behold, He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

Verse: The Lord is your keeper, the Lord is your shade on your right hand.

Verse: The sun shall not smite you by day, nor the moon by night.

Verse: The Lord will keep you from all evil. He will keep your life.

Verse: The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore.

Deacon: My help comes from the Lord...

People: ...Who made heaven and earth.

Friday Evening

Psalm 58 (59)

Deacon: The Evening Prokeimenon in the seventh tone:

You, O God, are my helper and Your mercy shall go before me.

Verse: Deliver me from my enemies, O God, and protect me from those who rise up against me.

- Verse:* Deliver me from those who work evil, and save me from bloodthirsty men.
- Verse:* For lo, they lie in wait for my life; fierce men band themselves against me. For no transgression or sin of mine, O Lord, for no fault of mine, they run and make ready.
- Verse:* Rouse Yourself, come to my help, and see! You, Lord God of hosts, are the God of Israel. Awake to punish all the nations; spare none of those who treacherously plot evil.
- Verse:* Each evening they come back, howling like dogs and prowling about the city. There they are, bellowing with their mouths, snarling with their lips--for "Who," they think, "will hear us?"
- Verse:* But You, O Lord, laugh at them; You hold all the nations in derision. O my strength, I will sing praises to You; for You, O God, are my fortress. My god in His steadfast love will meet me; my God will let me look in triumph on my enemies.
- Verse:* Slay them not, lest my people forget; make them totter by Your power, and bring them down, O Lord, our shield! For the sin of their mouths, the word of their lips, let them be trapped in their pride. For the cursing and lies which they utter, consume them in wrath, consume them till they are no more, that men may know that God rules over Jacob to the ends of the earth.
- Verse:* Each evening they come back, howling like dogs and prowling about the city. They roam about for food, and growl if they do not get their fill.
- Verse:* But I will sing of Your might; I will sing aloud of Your steadfast love in the morning. For You have been to me a fortress and a refuge in the day of my distress. O my Strength, I will sing praises to You, for You, O God, are my fortress, the God Who shows me steadfast love.
- Deacon:* You, O God, are my helper...

People: ...and Your mercy shall go before me.

APPENDIX D

A Great Prokeimenon

from Psalm 76 (77)

Deacon: The Great Prokeimenon in the seventh tone:

Who is so great a God as our God?
You are the God Who does wonders.

Verse: You have made known Your power among the peoples.

Verse: And I said: now have I begun to understand: this is the change
accomplished by the right hand of the Most High.

Verse: I will remember the works of the Lord: from the beginning will I
remember Your wonders.

Verse: And I will meditate on all Your works and reflect on Your mighty acts.

Another Great Prokeimenon

from Psalm 113 (114-115)

Deacon: The Great Prokeimenon in the seventh tone:

Our God is in heaven and on earth;
He does whatever He pleases.

Verse: When Israel went forth from Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of
strange language, Judah became His sanctuary.

Verse: The sea looked and fled; Jordan turned back; the mountains skipped like
rams, and the hills like lambs.

Verse: What ails you, O sea, that you flee; O Jordan, that you turn back?