

Great Vespers adapted for home use

Saturday, Nov. 21, 2020: Eve of the 24th Sunday after Pentecost

Stand in a place appropriate for prayer, before the Holy Icons.

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

Reader: Amen.

Glory to you, O God. Glory to you.

O heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, who are everywhere and fill 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.

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.

O Most Holy Trinity have mercy on us; Lord, cleanse us from our sins; Master, pardon our transgressions; 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.

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 evil.

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.

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!

Psalm 103

The following psalm (or selected verses) is sung or read.

Bless the Lord, my soul! O Lord my God, you are very great. You are clothed with honor and majesty, you cover yourself with light as with a garment; you stretch out the heavens like a tent,

laying the beams of your chambers on the waters; you make the clouds your chariot, you ride on the wings of the wind; you make the winds your messengers — fire and flame your ministers. You set the earth on its foundations so that it should never be shaken, you cover it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains. At your rebuke they fled; at the sound of your thunder they took to flight. The mountains rose and the valleys sank down to the place which you appointed for them. You set a bound that they should not pass so that they may not again cover the earth. You make springs gush forth in the valleys; they flow between the hills. They give drink to every beast of the field; the wild asses quench their thirst. By them the birds of the air make their dwelling; they sing among the branches. From your lofty abode you water the mountains; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your works. You cause the grass to grow for the cattle, and plants for man to cultivate, that he may bring forth food from the earth, and wine to gladden the heart of man; oil to make his face shine, and bread to strengthen man's heart. The trees of the Lord are watered abundantly, the cedars of Lebanon which he planted. In them the birds build their nests; the stork has her home in the fir trees. The high mountains are for the wild goats; the rocks are a refuge for the badgers. You have made the moon to mark the seasons; the sun knows its time for setting. You make darkness, and it is night, when all the beasts of the forest creep forth. The young lions roar for their prey, seeking their food from God. When the sun rises, they gather together and lie down in their dens. Man goes forth to his work and to his labor until the evening. O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom have you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. There is the sea great and wide, which teems with things innumerable, living things both small and great. There go the ships; and Leviathan which you formed to sport in it. These all look to you to give them their food in due season. When you give to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are filled with good things. When you hide your face they are dismayed; when you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust. When you send forth your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth. May the glory of the Lord endure forever. May the Lord rejoice in his works, who looks upon the earth and it trembles, who touches the mountains, and they smoke. I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have being. May my meditation be pleasing to him, for I rejoice in the Lord. Let sinners be consumed from the earth, and let the wicked be no more. Bless the Lord, O my soul!

The sun knows its time for setting. You make darkness, and it is night. O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom have you made them all!

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.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia. Glory to you, O God.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia. Glory to you, O God.

Great Litany

Deacon: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy. (*After each petition.*)

Deacon: 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 welfare of the holy Churches of God, and for the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.

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

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

For this country, its president, for all civil authorities and for the armed forces everywhere, let us pray to the Lord.

For this town, for every city and countryside, and for the faithful dwelling in them, let us pray to the Lord.

For seasonable weather, for abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

For travelers by land, by sea, and by air, for the sick and the suffering, for captives and 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.

Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, with all the Saints, let us commend ourselves and each other and all our life to Christ our God.

People: To you, O Lord.

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

People: Amen.

First Kathisma

(selected verses of Psalms 1–3: “Blessed is the Man”)

Blessed is the Man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked.

Refrain: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

Refrain

Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice in him with trembling. *Refrain*

Blessed are all who take refuge in him. *Refrain*

Arise, O Lord! Save me, O my God! *Refrain*

Salvation belongs to the Lord; your blessing be upon your people. *Refrain*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. *Refrain*

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

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

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, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, with all the Saints, let us commend ourselves and each other and all our life to Christ our God.

People: To you, O Lord.

Priest: In the evening and in the morning and at noontide, we praise you, we bless you, we give thanks to you, and we pray to you, O Lord of all: Direct our prayer before you as incense, and incline not our hearts to words or thoughts of wickedness, but deliver us from all who seek our souls. For to you, Lord, O Lord, do we lift up our eyes, and in you have we trusted. Put us not to shame, O our God.

For yours is the majesty, and 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.

People: Amen.

“Lord, I Call...” Tone 7

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!

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!

Reader: Set a guard over my mouth, O Lord, keep watch over the door of my lips. Do not incline my heart to any evil, to busy myself with wicked deeds in company with those who work iniquity, and let me not unite with their chosen ones. Let a good man strike or rebuke me in mercy; but let the oil of the wicked never anoint my head. For my prayer is continually against their evil deeds. When they are given over to those who shall condemn them, my word shall be heard then.

As a rock which one cleaves and shatters on the land, so shall their bones be strewn near Hell. For my eyes look to you, O Lord; my Lord, in you I seek refuge. Do not take away my soul; keep me from the traps that they have laid for me, and from the snares of evil-doers. The wicked will fall into their own nets, while I alone pass through.

I cry with my voice to the Lord. With my voice I make supplication to the Lord. I pour out my complaint before him; I tell my trouble before him. When my spirit departs from me, you know my way. In the path where I walk they have hidden a trap for me. I look to the right and watch, but there is none who knows me. No refuge remains to me, and no man cares for my soul.

I cry to you, Lord, I say, "You are my hope; my portion in the land of the living." Give heed to my cry, for I am brought very low. Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are too strong for me.

Then the following verses are read, stopping at the corresponding number for the number of stichera (that is, stanzas), to be sung this day. Then the first sticheron (stanza) is sung, then the succeeding numbered psalm verse, until we reach "Glory ... now and ever."

10. Bring my soul out of prison, that I may give thanks to your name.

Tone 7 *(for the Resurrection)*

Come, let us rejoice in the Lord,
Who destroyed the dominion of death!
Let us sing to Him with the bodiless hosts,
for He enlightened the race of man! //
O our Maker and Savior, glory to You!

9. The righteous will await me, for you will deal bountifully with me.

You endured the Cross and burial for our sake.
By Your death, You destroyed death as God.
We fall down before Your Resurrection on the third day, //
O Savior, glory to You!

8. Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord. Lord hear my voice.

When the Apostles beheld the Resurrection of the Maker,
they were amazed and sang the angelic praise.

This is the glory of the Church.

This is the richness of the Kingdom.//

O Lord, crucified for our sake, glory to You!

7. Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

(Resurrection stichera by Anatolius)

You were held by lawless men, O Christ,
but to me, You are God, and I am not ashamed.

You were smitten on the cheek, but I do not deny You.

You were nailed to the Cross and I do not conceal it,
for I glory in Your Resurrection: Your death is my life.//

O Almighty Lord and Lover of man, glory to You!

6. If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with you.

Tone 8 *(for the Feast)* *(Oh, most glorious wonder)*

Oh, most glorious wonder!

The ineffable that is come to pass
is now this day prefigured beforehand.

That which is apprehended spiritually is seen in visible figures,
for she who will shine the divine Light to the world
is led as a bride to the Temple where God dwells.

Let us praise her as the ever-shining temple//
of the Godhead of Christ, the Giver of Light!

5. For your name's sake I have waited for you, O Lord. My soul has waited on your word.
My soul has hoped in the Lord.

The wise Joachim, together with Anna,
have brought the godly maiden, the Virgin Mary,
as a truly acceptable first fruit
to Him Who had given her to them as a divine fruit,
through Whom the debt of grief has been driven away.
Let us praise her in songs and devoutly rejoice,//
for she is become the provider of joy to all the world!

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

Come, let us now mystically gather together
and, enlightened by the lamps of faith,
begin the song of the Virgin's procession!
She enters the Temple of God in glory,
having been betrothed in advance by the Spirit.
Let us all celebrate her joyous festival in a godly manner,//
rejoicing in her entrance into the Temple!

3. 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 Apostles)* *(Joseph of Arimathea)*

As a branch of the Vine of Life, O glorious Philemon,
you have distilled a wine of perfect divine knowledge to souls in distress,
and have gladdened the hearts made sullen by the darkness of error,
and enshrouded by the gloomy madness of idolatry.//
We joyfully celebrate the feast of your divinely-radiant memory.

2. Praise the Lord, all nations. Praise him all peoples.

Gaza honors you, O blessed Apostle,
having seen the light of perfect knowledge through you,
and the city of the Colossians, having your divine body as a treasure,
harvests the healings and the grace that always pours forth abundantly.
Therefore, it keeps your commemoration,//
as it is preserved from dangers by your intercession, O glorious Philemon.

1. For his mercy is abundant towards us, and the truth of the Lord endures forever.

In faith let us praise the wise hierarch Archippus,
together with the modest Apphia!
Let us sing hymns honoring the sacred heralds of God, Philemon and Onesimus,
the venerable teachers who, by their teaching,
condemned the falsehood of polytheism and planted the knowledge of Truth!//
Let us devoutly celebrate their memory!

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

Tone 1 *(for the Feast, by George of Nicomedia)*

Today, let heaven above rejoice,
and let the clouds rain down gladness
at the mighty and exceeding marvelous works of our God.
For behold, the Gate that looks towards the east,
who was born from a barren and childless woman according to the promise
and dedicated to God as His dwelling place,
is today brought to the Temple as an offering without blemish.
Let David be glad, striking his harp.
For he says: “Virgins shall be brought to the King after her,
her companions will be brought to Him”;
that she may be raised within God’s tabernacle, His place of atonement,
to become the dwelling of Him Who was begotten of the
 Father without change before the ages//
for the salvation of our souls.
 now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 7 *(Theotokion – Dogmatikon)*

No tongue can speak of your wonderful childbearing,
for the order of nature was overruled by God.
You were revealed to be a Mother above nature,
for you remained a Virgin beyond reason and understanding.
Your conception was most glorious, O Theotokos!
The manner of your giving birth was ineffable, O Virgin!
Knowing you to be the Mother of God,
devoutly we pray to you://
“Beseech Him to save our souls!”

The Hymn of Evening

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 you with voices of praise, O
Son of God and giver of life: therefore all the world glorifies you.

The Prokeimenon

Priest: Let us attend. Peace to all. The Prokeimenon in the Sixth Tone:
 The Lord is king, * he is robed in majesty.
Verse: The Lord is robed; he is girded with strength.
Verse: For he has established the world, so that it shall never be moved.
Verse: Holiness befits your house, O Lord, forevermore.

Augmented Litany

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

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: O Lord almighty, the God of our fathers, we beseech you, hear us and have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

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

People: Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy. (*And so after each petition.*)

Deacon: Again we pray for our Metropolitan Tikhon, for priests, deacons and all other clergy, and for all our brethren in Christ.

Again we pray for the President of our country, for all civil authorities, and for the armed forces.

Again we pray for the blessed and ever-memorable holy Orthodox Patriarchs; and for all our fathers and brethren, [*for the departed servants of God N.*] and all the Orthodox departed this life before us, who here and in all the world lie asleep in the Lord.

Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, and visitation for those suffering from the coronavirus, for all physicians, nurses and all working in hospitals and public health, for the parish council, the choir, the children, their parents and teachers, the parish organizations, for all the members of this church and their families *NN.*, and for the servants of God *NN.*, and for the pardon and remission of their sins.

Again we pray for those who bring offerings and do good works, for those who labor and those who sing, and for all the people here present, who await your great and rich mercy.

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 unto ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: O God Almighty, Lord of heaven and earth, and of all creation visible and invisible, in your ineffable goodness, look down upon us, your people gathered in your Holy Name. Be our helper and defender in this day of affliction. You know our weakness. You hear our cry in repentance and contrition of heart. O Lord the lover of mankind, deliver us from the impending threat of the coronavirus. Send your angel to watch over us and protect us. Grant health and recovery to those suffering from this virus. Guide the hands of physicians and preserve those who are healthy. Enable us to

continue to serve our suffering brothers and sisters in peace, that together we may glorify your most honorable and majestic name, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Evening Prayer

Grant, Lord, to keep us this evening without sin. Blessed are you, 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, make me to understand your commandments.

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

Lord, your mercy endures for ever; do not despise the work of your hands. To you is due worship, to you is due praise, to you is due glory, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

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 day may be perfect, holy, peaceful and sinless, let us ask of the Lord.

People: Grant it, O Lord.

(And so after each of the following petitions.)

Deacon: An angel of peace, a faithful guide, a 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.

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

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

A Christian ending to our life, painless, blameless and peaceful, and a good defense before the dread judgement seat of Christ, let us ask of the Lord.

Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary with all the Saints, let us commend ourselves and each other and all our life to Christ our God.

People: To you, O Lord.

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

People: Amen.

Priest: Peace to all.

People: And to your spirit.

Deacon: Let us bow our heads to the Lord.

People: To you, O Lord.

Priest: Lord, our God, who bowed the heavens and came down for the salvation of mankind, look upon your servants and upon your inheritance; for to you the awesome Judge and lover of mankind have your servants bowed their heads and submissively inclined their necks, not awaiting any human help, but asking your mercy and looking confidently for your salvation. Guard them at all times, both during this present evening and the approaching night, from every foe, from all adverse works of the devil, from empty thoughts and 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.

Aposticha

Tone 7 *(for the Resurrection)*

As the Savior of the world You arose from the tomb.

As God You resurrected the race of man with Your flesh.//

O Lord, glory to You!

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

Come, let us worship the One Who rose from the dead,
and enlightened all creation!

By His death, He saved us from the torments of hell.//

By His Resurrection He has granted us eternal life and great mercy.

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

You descended into hell, capturing death, O Christ.

In three days You arose again,

resurrecting us who glorify Your Resurrection,//

O Lord and Lover of man.

v. Holiness befits Your house, O Lord, forevermore!

When You were placed in the tomb as one asleep,
the sight was great and awesome.
But when You rose on the third day as almighty God,
You resurrected Adam with Yourself.//
Glory to Your Resurrection, only Lover of man!

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

Tone 2 *(for the Feast)*

Today the immaculate Virgin is brought to the Temple
to be the dwelling place of God, the Lord of all,
Who sustains our whole life.
Today the most pure Sanctuary is brought into the Holy of Holies,
like a heifer three years old.
To her let us cry out like the angel://
“Rejoice, you who alone are blessed among women!”

Song of St. Symeon

Lord, 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 peoples, a light to enlighten the gentiles, and to be the glory of your people Israel.

Trisagion Prayers

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. *(three times)*

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

Most holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for your 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; now and ever, and unto 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 evil.

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 ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Troparia of the Day

Tone 7 Troparion (Resurrection)

By Your Cross You destroyed death.
To the thief You opened Paradise.
For the Myrrhbearers You changed weeping into joy.
And You commanded Your disciples, O Christ God,
to proclaim that You are risen,//
granting the world great mercy.

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

Tone 3 Troparion (Apostles)

Holy Apostles Philemon, Archipus, Apphia, and Onesimus,
entreat the merciful God//
to grant our souls forgiveness of transgressions!

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

Tone 4 Troparion (Feast)

Today is the prelude of the good will of God,
of the preaching of the salvation of mankind.
The Virgin appears in the Temple of God,
in anticipation proclaiming Christ to all.
Let us rejoice and sing to her:
“Rejoice, O Fulfillment//
of the Creator’s dispensation!”

Dismissal

Priest: Wisdom!

People: Father, bless.

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

People: Amen. Preserve, O God, the holy Orthodox Faith and Orthodox Christians, unto ages of ages.

Priest: Most Holy Theotokos, save us.

People: 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, O Christ our God and our hope, glory to you!

People: 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. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Father, bless.

Priest: May he who rose from the dead, Christ our true God; through the prayers of his most pure Mother; of the holy, glorious and all-praised Leaders of the Apostles Peter and Paul, and of all the Holy Apostles; of our venerable Father Herman of Alaska, together with all the saints who have shown forth in North America; of Apostles of the Seventy Philemon and Archippus, Martyr Apphia, wife of Philemon and Equal-to-the-Apostles, and Onesimus, disciple of St. Paul; St. Michael, Prince of Tver'; Right Believing Yaropolk, in Baptism Peter, Prince of Vladimir in Volyn'; Martyrs Cecilia, Valerian, Tiburtius, and Maximus at Rome; Martyr Procopius the Reader at Cæsarea in Palestine; Martyr Menignus at Parium; St. Agabbas of Syria; Righteous Michael the Soldier of Bulgaria; Ven. Callistus Xanthopoulos (Mt. Athos), all of whom we commemorate today; of the holy and righteous forebears of God, Joachim and Anna, and of all the saints: have mercy on us and save us, for he is good and loves mankind.

People: Amen.