

**Bridegroom Matins
of Great and Holy Wednesday**

Sung on Tuesday Evening

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The Royal Office

The priest, in epitrachelion, opens the curtain; the holy doors remain closed.

Taking the censer in his right hand, he begins:

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

And the priest (not the deacon) performs a Great Censing.

Reader: Amen.

Glory to thee, our God, glory to thee.

O heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, who art everywhere and fillest 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. **(thrice)**

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 thy name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. **(thrice)**

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 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 ages of ages.

Reader: Amen.

Lord, have mercy. **(twelve times)**

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. **(with three bows)**

Psalm 19

The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble; the Name of the God of Jacob defend thee; send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion; remember all thy sacrifices, and make acceptable thy whole-burnt offering. The Lord grant thee according to thy heart, and fulfill all thy counsel. We will rejoice in thy salvation, and triumph in the name of the Lord our God; the Lord perform all thy petitions. Now know I, that the Lord hath saved his Christ; he will hear him from his holy heaven; the salvation of his right hand cometh with sovereignty. Some put their trust in char- iots, and some in horses, but we will call upon the Name of the Lord our God. They are overthrown, and fallen, but we are risen, and stand upright. O Lord, save the king, and hear us in the day when we call upon thee.

Psalm 20

O Lord, the King shall be glad in thy strength, and in thy salvation shall he greatly rejoice. Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not denied him the requests of his lips. For thou hast gone before him with the blessings of goodness; thou hast set a crown of precious

stone upon his head. He asked like of thee, and thou gavest him a long life, even for ever and ever. Great is his glory in thy salvation; glory and majesty shalt thou lay upon him. For thou shalt give him everlasting felicity; thou shalt make him glad with the joy of thy countenance, because the King putteth his trust in the Lord, and in the mercy of the Most Highest he shall not be provoked. Let all thine enemies feel thy hand; let thy right hand find out them that hate thee. For thou shalt make them like a fiery oven in time of thy presence; the Lord shall trouble them in his displeasure, and the fire shall consume them. Their fruit shalt thou root out of the earth, and their seed from among the children of men. For they intended mischief against thee, and imagined such counsels as they are not able to perform. For thou shalt make them to turn their back; among them that are thy remnant thou shalt prepare their face. Rise up, O Lord, by thy power; we will chant and sing of thy power.

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

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. **(thrice)**

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 thy name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. **(thrice)**

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 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 ages of ages.

Reader: Amen.

O Lord, save thy people, and bless thine inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries; and by virtue of thy cross, preserve thy habitation.

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

As thou wast voluntarily crucified for our sake, grant mercy to those who are called by thy name; make all Orthodox Christians glad by thy power, granting them victories over their adversaries, by bestowing on them the invincible trophy, thy weapon of peace.

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

O awesome Protectress who cannot be put to shame, despise not our prayers, O good and all-hymned Theotokos; confirm the habitation of the Orthodox; save those whom thou hast directed to rule over us and grant us victory which is from Heaven, for thou hast given birth to God and alone are blessed.

Then the priest (not the deacon), standing before the holy table, says this litany:

Priest: Have mercy on us, O God, according to thy great goodness, we pray thee, hearken and have mercy.

Choir: R. Lord, have mercy. **(thrice)** *(And so after each of the following petitions.)*

Priest: Again we pray for our Metropolitan N., and for our Bishop [or Archbishop] N.R.

Priest: Again we pray for this country, its President, for all civil authorities, and for the armed forces. R.

Priest: Again we pray for our brethren and for all Christians. R.

Priest: For thou art a merciful God and lovest mankind, and unto thee we send up glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen. In the name of the Lord, Father bless.

Priest: Glory to the holy, consubstantial, life-giving, and undivided Trinity, always, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

We read the Six Psalms with all heed and the fear of God, as if conversing with Christ our God invisibly.

After three Psalms, the priest goes out to stand before the holy doors and, with head uncovered, reads the morning prayers.

Reader: Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will towards men. **(thrice)**

O Lord, open thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth thy praise. **(twice)**

Psalm 3

Lord, why are they increased that trouble me? Many are they that rise against me. Many one there be that say of my soul, There is no salvation for him in his God. But thou, O Lord, art my helper, my glory, and the lifter up of my head. I did call upon the Lord with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. I laid me down and slept, and rose up again, for the Lord will sustain me. I will not be afraid for ten thousands of the people that have set themselves against me round about. Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God, for thou hast smitten all who without cause are mine enemy; thou hast broken the teeth of sinners. Salvation is of the Lord, and thy blessing is upon thy people.

I laid me down and slept, and rose up again, for the Lord will sustain me.

Psalm 37

O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy wrath: for thine arrows are stuck fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore. There is no health in my flesh, because of thy displeasure; neither is there any rest in my bones, by reason of my sin. For my wickednesses are gone over my head; like a sore burden have they become too heavy for me. My wounds stink, and are corrupt, because of my foolishness. I am brought into great torment and misery; I go mourning all the day long. For my loins are filled with sores, and there is no healing in my flesh. I was bitter, and utterly humbled; I roared for the very

groaning of my heart. Lord, all my desire is before thee, and my lamentation is not hid from thee. My heart is troubled; my strength hath failed me, and the light of mine eyes, even that is gone from me. My friends and my neighbors came right up to me and confronted me, while my kinsmen stood afar off, and they that sought my soul clamored for it; and they that wished me evil spake vanity, and imagined deceit all the day long. But I was like a deaf man, and heard not, and as one that is dumb, who doth not open his mouth. And I became as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs. For in thee, O Lord, have I put my trust; thou wilt hear me, O Lord my God. For I said, Let never mine enemies triumph over me; for when my foot slipped, they boasted against me. For I am ready for scourges, and my pain is ever before me. For I will confess my wickedness, and be sorry for my sin. But mine enemies live, and are stronger than I, and they are become many that hate me wrongfully. They also that reward me evil for good have slandered me, because I follow the thing that good is. Forsake me not, O Lord my God, be not far from me. Attend unto my help, O Lord of my salvation.

Forsake me not, O Lord my God, be not far from me. Attend unto my help, O Lord of my salvation.

Psalm 62

O God, my God, early will I seek thee. My soul hath thirsted for thee, and how my flesh also hath longed after thee in a barren and empty land where no water is. Thus have I looked for thee in the sanctuary, that I might behold thy power and thy glory. For thy mercy is better than life itself; my lips shall praise thee. I will bless thee in my life on this manner: I will lift up my hands in thy name. For my soul shall be satisfied, even as it were with marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips. If I remembered thee upon my bed, in the morning I would take comfort in thee, because thou hast been my helper, and in the shelter of thy wings will I rejoice. My soul hath hanged upon thee; thy right hand hath upholden me. These also that in vain seek my soul shall go under the earth. They shall be given over to the hand of the sword; they shall be a portion for foxes. But the King shall rejoice in God; every one that sweareth by him shall be commended, for the mouth of them that speak lies hath been stopped.

In the morning I would take comfort in thee, because thou hast been my helper, and in the shelter of thy wings will I rejoice. My soul hath hanged upon thee; thy right hand hath upholden me.

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 thee, O God. **(thrice)**

Lord, have mercy. **(thrice)**

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

Psalm 87

O Lord God of my salvation, by day have I cried, and by night before thee. O let my prayer come in before thee; incline thine ear unto my calling. For my soul is full of trouble, and my life hath drawn nigh unto hell. I have been counted as one of them that go down into the pit; I have become even as a man without help, free among the dead; like the wounded sleeping in the grave, whom thou rememberest no more, and which have been cast away from thy hand. They laid me in the lowest pit, in the darkness and shadow of death. Upon me hath thine anger fixed itself, and all thy waves hast thou aimed at me. Thou hast put away mine acquaintances far from me, they have made me to be an abomination unto them; I was betrayed, and did not go forth. Mine eyes are grown weak from poverty. I called upon thee, O Lord, all day; I stretched forth my hands unto thee. Shalt thou indeed work wonders with the dead? Or shall physicians revive them, and they shall praise thee? Shall any in the grave declare thy mercy and thy truth in perdition? Shall thy wondrous works be known in the dark, and thy righteousness in the Land of Oblivion? But unto thee have I cried, O Lord, and in the morning shall my prayer come before thee. Lord, why abhorrest thou my soul? Why turnest thou thy face from me? I am poor, and in hardship from my youth; having risen up, I have humbled myself and become utterly worn down. Thy wrathful displeasure goeth over me; thy terrors have undone me. They came round about me like water; all day they compassed me about together. Friend and neighbor hast thou put away from me, and mine acquaintances, because of sufferings.

O Lord God of my salvation, by day have I cried, and by night before thee. O let my prayer come in before thee; incline thine ear unto my calling.

Psalm 102

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy Name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities, and healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from corruption, and crowneth thee with mercy and compassion; who satisfieth thy desire with good things; thy youth shall be renewed like the eagle's. The Lord performeth deeds of mercy, and judgment for all them that are wronged. He made known his ways unto Moses, his will unto the children of Israel. The Lord is compassionate and merciful, long-suffering, and of great kindness. He will not always be chiding, neither keepeth he his anger for ever. He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our wickednesses. For as high as the heaven is in comparison of the earth, so great is the Lord's mercy also toward them that fear him. As wide as the east is from the west, so far hath he set our iniquity from us. Like as a father pitieth his own children, even so hath the Lord been merciful unto them that fear him. For he knoweth whereof we are made; he remembereth that we are but dust. As for man, his days are as the grass; for he flourisheth as a flower of the field. For as soon as the wind goeth over it, it is gone; and it shall no more know the place thereof. But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness upon sons of sons for such as keep his covenant, and remember his commandments to do them. The Lord hath prepared his throne in heaven, and his kingdom ruleth over all. O bless the Lord, all ye his angels, ye that excel in strength, ye that fulfill his commandment, to hearken unto the voice of his words. O bless the Lord, all ye his hosts, ye servants of his that do his will. O bless the Lord, all ye works of his, in every place of his dominion; bless the Lord, O my soul.

In every place of his dominion, bless the Lord, O my soul.

Psalm 142

O Lord, hear my prayer, consider my supplication in thy truth; hearken unto me in thy righteousness, and enter not into judgment with thy servant, for before thee shall no man living be justified. For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground; he hath laid me in the darkness, as those that have been long dead, and my spirit is despondent within me, and my heart within me is vexed. I remembered the days of old; I mused upon all thy works; I exercised myself in the works of thy hands. I stretched forth my hands unto thee; my soul gasped unto thee as a thirsty land. Hear me soon, O Lord, for my spirit faltereth; turn not thy face from me, or I shall be like unto them that go

down into the pit. O let me hear thy mercy in the morning, for in thee have I trusted; tell me, O Lord, the way that I should walk in, for I lift up my soul unto thee. Deliver me from mine enemies, O Lord, for I have fled unto thee. Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God. Thy good Spirit shall lead me into the land of righteousness. For thy name's sake, O Lord, quicken me by thy truth; thou shalt bring my soul out of trouble. And of thy mercy thou shalt slay mine enemies, and destroy all them that vex my soul, for I am thy servant.

Hearken unto me in thy righteousness, and enter not into judgment with thy servant.
(twice)

Thy good Spirit shall lead me into the land of righteousness.

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 thee, O God. **(thrice)**

When the reader has finished the Six Psalms, the deacon (or priest, if there is no deacon serving) says the Great Litany:

Great Litany

Deacon: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: R. Lord, have mercy. *(And so after each of the following petitions.)*

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

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. R.

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

For our Metropolitan N., for our Bishop [or Archbishop] N., for the honorable priesthood, the diaconate in Christ, and for all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord. R.

For this country, its President [or the title of the highest civil authority], for all civil authorities, and for the armed forces, let us pray to the Lord. R.

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

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

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. R.

That we may be delivered from all affliction, wrath, danger, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord. R.

Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by thy grace. R.

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 unto Christ our God.

Choir: To thee, O Lord.

Priest: For unto thee are due 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.

Choir: Amen.

And the deacon (or priest, if there is no deacon serving), still before the holy doors:

Deacon: In the eighth tone: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

V. In the night my soul rises early for thee, O God, for thy commandments are a light on the earth.

Choir: R. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. *(And so after each of the following verses.)*

Deacon: V. Learn righteousness, you that live on the earth. R.

V. Jealousy shall grasp an untaught people. R.

V. Bring evils upon them, O Lord; brings evils upon those who are glorious on the earth.
R.

And the deacon (or priest, if there is no deacon serving) returns to the altar by the south door.

Eighth Tone

Choir: Behold the Bridegroom comes in the middle of the night; and blessed is the servant whom he shall find watching, but unworthy is he whom he shall find in slothfulness. Beware, then, O my soul, and be not overcome by sleep, lest thou be given over to death and shut out from the Kingdom. But return to soberness and cry aloud: Holy, holy, holy art thou, O God: through the Theotokos have mercy upon us. **(twice)**

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

Choir: Behold...

Lord have mercy. **(thrice)**

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

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

*And the reader now reads the **14th Kathisma**. When finished:*

Reader: 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 Thee, O God. **(thrice)**

Lord have mercy. **(thrice)**

Kathisma Hymn, Third Tone

Choir: The harlot drew near thee, O thou who lovest mankind, and poured out on thy feet the oil of myrrh with her tears; and at thy command she was delivered from the foul smell of her evil deeds. But the ungrateful disciple, though he breathed thy grace, rejected it and defiled himself in filth, selling thee from love of money. Glory be to thy compassion, O Christ.

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

The harlot drew near...

Lord have mercy. **(thrice)**

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

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

And the reader now reads the 15th kathisma. When finished:

Reader: 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 Thee, O God. **(thrice)**

Lord have mercy. **(thrice)**

Kathisma Hymn, Fourth Tone

Choir: Deceitful Judas, in his love for money, pondered cunningly how he might betray thee, O Lord, the Treasure of Life. Therefore in drunken folly he hastened to the Jews and said to the transgressors: "What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you to be crucified?"

Glory... now and ever... Deceitful Judas...

Lord have mercy. **(thrice)**

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

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

And the reader now reads the 16th kathisma. When finished:

Reader: 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 Thee, O God. **(thrice)**

Lord have mercy. **(thrice)**

Kathisma Hymn, First Tone

Choir: To thee the harlot cried lamenting, O merciful Lord; ardently she wiped thy pure feet with the hair of her head, and from the depth of her heart she groaned: “Cast me not from thee, neither abhor me, O my God, but receive me in repentance and save me, for thou alone lovest mankind.”

Glory... now and ever... To Thee the harlot...

During the second singing of the kathisma hymn, the priest puts on the phelonion and opens the holy doors in preparation for the reading of the Gospel, which is read at the holy altar.

Deacon: And that we may be accounted worthy of hearing the holy Gospel, let us pray to the Lord God.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. **(thrice)**

Deacon: Wisdom. Stand upright. Let us hear the holy Gospel.

Priest: Peace be unto all.

Choir: And to thy spirit.

Priest: The reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Choir: Glory to thee, O Lord, glory to thee.

Deacon: Let us attend.

John 12:17–50, §41ctr-44

Priest: At that time, the crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to bear witness. The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign. So the Pharisees said to one another, “You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the world has gone after him.” Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks. So these came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” Philip went and told Andrew; Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. And Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.

“Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour?’ But for this purpose I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven: “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not mine. Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die. So the crowd answered him, “We have heard from the Law that the Christ remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?” So Jesus said to them, “The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.”

When Jesus had said these things, he departed and hid himself from them. Though he had done so many signs before them, they still did not believe in him, so that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: “Lord, who has believed what he heard from us, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?”

Therefore they could not believe. For again Isaiah said,

“He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, lest they see with their eyes, and understand with their heart, and turn, and I would heal them.”

Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory and spoke of him. Nevertheless, many even of the authorities believed in him, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God.

And Jesus cried out and said, “Whoever believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent me. And whoever sees me sees him who sent me. I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness. If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me his commandment—what to say and what to speak. And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me.”

Choir: Glory to thee, O Lord, glory to thee.

The holy doors are now closed and the phelonion is removed. The priest exits the altar by the north door and stands before the holy doors.

Psalm 50

Reader: Have mercy upon me, O God, after thy great goodness, and according to the multitude of thy mercies do away mine offences. Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my fault, and my sin is ever before me. Against thee only have I sinned, and done evil before thee, that thou mightest be justified in thy words, and prevail when thou art judged. For behold, I was conceived in wickedness, and

in sins did my mother bear me. For behold, thou hast loved truth; the hidden and secret things of thy wisdom hast thou revealed unto me. Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be made clean; thou shalt wash me, and I shall become whiter than snow. Thou shalt give joy and gladness to my hearing; the bones that have been humbled will rejoice. Turn thy face from my sins, and put out all my misdeeds. Make me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. O give me the comfort of thy salvation, and stablish me with thy governing Spirit. Then shall I teach thy ways unto the wicked, and the ungodly shall be converted unto thee. Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall rejoice in thy righteousness. O Lord, open thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth thy praise. For if thou hadst desired sacrifice, I would have given it; but thou delightest not in burnt offerings. The sacrifice unto God is a contrite spirit; a contrite and humble heart God shall not despise. O Lord, be favorable in thy good will unto Zion, and let the walls of Jerusalem be builded up. Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifice of righteousness, with oblation and whole-burnt offerings; then shall they offer young bullocks upon thine altar.

Standing before the holy doors and facing the icon of Christ, the priest reads this prayer:

Priest: O God, save thy people and bless thine inheritance. Visit thy world with mercy and compassions. Exalt the horn of Orthodox Christians, and send down upon us thy rich mercies. Through the intercessions of our all-pure Lady the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary; by the might of the precious and life-giving Cross; by the protection of the honorable bodiless powers of heaven; at the supplication of the honorable, glorious Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist John; of the holy, glorious, and all-laudable Apostles; of the holy, glorious, and right victorious martyrs; of our venerable and God-bearing fathers; of saint N. (of the temple), of the holy and righteous ancestors of God Joachim and Anna, and of all thy saints, we beseech thee, O most merciful Lord, hearken to us sinners who make our supplications unto thee, and have mercy on us.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. **(12 times)**

Priest: Through the mercies and compassions and love for mankind of thine Only-begotten Son with whom thou art blessed, together with thine all-holy, good, and life-giving Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

The priest reenters the altar by the south door.

Third Ode
Irmos, Second Tone

Choir: On the rock of faith thou hast established me, and thou hast opened wide my mouth against mine enemies. For my spirit has rejoiced to sing: None is holy as our God and none is righteous save thee, O Lord.

The following troparia may be read by one or two readers. In each ode the troparia are repeated so as to make up the number twelve. The irmos is sung also as the katavasia.

Reader: R. Glory to thee, our God, glory to thee.

In vain the Sanhedrin of the transgressors gathers together with an evil purpose, to pronounce sentence of condemnation upon thee, O Christ our Deliverer, to whom we sing: thou art our God and none is holy save thee, O Lord. R.

The wicked assembly of the transgressors, with souls full of hatred for God, considers how to kill as a malefactor the righteous Christ, to whom we sing: thou art our God and there is none holy save thee, O Lord. R.

Before the penultimate troparion, the refrain is:

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

Before the last troparion, the refrain is:

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

Then follows the katavasia, sung by the choir:

Katavasia, Second Tone

Choir: On the rock of faith thou hast established me, and thou hast opened wide my mouth against mine enemies. For my spirit has rejoiced to sing: None is holy as our God and none is righteous save thee, O Lord.

Little Litany

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

Choir: R. Lord, have mercy. *(And so after each of the following petitions.)*

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

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 unto Christ our God.

Choir: To thee, O Lord.

Priest: For thou art our God, and unto thee do we send up glory: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Kontakion, Fourth Tone

Choir: I have transgressed more than the harlot, O loving Lord, yet never have I offered thee my flowing tears. But in silence I fall down before thee and with love I kiss thy most pure feet, beseeching thee as Master to grant me remission of sins; and I cry to thee, O Saviour: Deliver me from the filth of my works.

Ikos

The woman who was once a prodigal suddenly became chaste, and hating the works of shameful sin and the pleasures of the body, she thought upon her deep disgrace and the torment to which harlots and prodigals shall be condemned. Of them I am the first and I

am afraid, yet senselessly I continue in my evil ways. But the woman who was a harlot, filled with fear, made haste and came crying to the Deliverer: “O merciful Lord who lovest mankind, deliver me from the filth of my works.”

The deacon (or priest, if no deacon is serving) now does a full censuring of the Church. The Magnificat is not appointed.

Eighth Ode *Irmos, Second Tone*

Choir: The command of the tyrant prevailed, and the furnace was heated sevenfold. Yet the flames did not burn the children, who had trampled underfoot the decree of the king, but they cried aloud: “O all ye works of the Lord, praise ye the Lord and exalt Him above all for ever.”

Reader: R. Glory to thee, our God, glory to thee.

The woman poured precious oil of myrrh upon thine awesome and royal head, O Christ our God, and she laid hold of thy pure feet with her polluted hands and cried aloud: “O all ye works of the Lord, praise ye the Lord and exalt him above all for ever.”R.

Guilty of sin, she washed with tears the feet of her Creator and wiped them with her hair; and so she received forgiveness for all that she had done in life, and she cried aloud: “O all ye works of the Lord, praise ye the Lord and exalt him above all for ever.”R.

Through the saving love of God and the fountain of her tears, the grateful woman was ransomed from her sins; washed clean by her confession, she was not ashamed but cried aloud: “O all ye works of the Lord, praise ye the Lord and exalt him above all for ever.” R.

Before the penultimate troparion, the refrain is:

Reader: Let us bless the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the Lord.

Before the last troparion, the refrain is:

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

Then follows the katavasia, sung by the choir:

Katavasia, Second Tone

Choir: We praise, bless, and worship the Word, singing and exalting him throughout all ages. The command of the tyrant prevailed, and the furnace was heated sevenfold. Yet the flames did not burn the children, who had trampled underfoot the decree of the king, but they cried aloud: “O all ye works of the Lord, praise ye the Lord and exalt him above all for ever.”

Ninth Ode

Irmos, Second Tone

Choir: With pure souls and unpolluted lips, come and let us magnify the undefiled and most holy Mother of Emmanuel, and through her let us bring our prayer to the Child she bore: Spare our souls, O Christ our God, and save us.

Reader: R. Glory to thee, our God, glory to thee.

Ungrateful and envious in his wickedness, wretched Judas calculates the value of the gift worthy of God, whereby the woman gained release from the debt of her sins, and he trafficks in the grace of divine love. Spare our souls, O Christ our God, and save us. R.

Judas goes to the lawless rulers and says: “What will ye give me, if I deliver to you Christ whom ye seek?” And so in exchange for money he rejects fellowship with Christ. Spare our souls, O Christ our God, and save us. R.

Unrelenting in blind avarice, how hast thou forgotten what Christ taught thee, that thy soul is more in value than the whole world! For in despair, O traitor, thou hast hanged thyself. Spare our souls, O Christ our God, and save us. R.

Before the penultimate troparion, the refrain is:

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

Before the last troparion, the refrain is:

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

Then follows the katavasia, sung by the choir:

Katavasia, Second Tone

Choir: With pure souls and unpolluted lips, come and let us magnify the undefiled and most holy Mother of Emmanuel, and through her let us bring our prayer to the Child she bore: Spare our souls, O Christ our God, and save us.

The deacon, standing before the holy doors, now says the Little Litany (or, if no deacon is serving, the priest, remaining before the holy table, says the Little Litany).

Little Litany

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

Choir: R. Lord, have mercy. *(And so after each of the following petitions.)*

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

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 unto Christ our God.

Choir: To thee, O Lord.

Priest: For all the powers of heaven praise thee, and unto thee do we send up glory: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Exapostilarion, Third Tone

I see thy bridal chamber adorned, O my Saviour, and I have no wedding garment that I may enter there. Make the robe of my soul to shine, O Giver of Light, and save me. **(twice)**

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

Choir: I see thy bridal chamber...

The Praises

Psalm 148

Reader: Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the highest. Praise him, all ye his angels; praise him, all ye his hosts. Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all ye stars and light. Praise him, ye heaven of heavens, and thou water that art above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the Lord; for he spake, and they came to be; he commanded, and they were created. He hath established them for ever, and for ever and ever; he hath set an ordinance, and it shall not pass away. Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps; fire and hail, snow and ice, the stormy wind, fulfilling his word; mountains and all hills, fruitful trees and all cedars; beasts and all cattle, creeping things and feathered fowls; kings of the earth and all people, princes and all judges of the world; young men and maidens, old men and children; let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name only is exalted; his praise is above heaven and earth. And he shall exalt the horn of his people; this is a song for all his saints, for the children of Israel, for the people that draw nigh unto him.

Psalm 149

O sing unto the Lord a new song; his praise is in the church of the saints. Let Israel be glad in her Maker, and let the children of Zion exult in their King. Let them praise his name in the dance; let them sing praises unto him with timbrel and psaltery. For the Lord hath pleasure in his people; and shall lift up the meek unto salvation. The saints shall boast in glory, and they will rejoice upon their beds. Let the exultations of God be in their throats, and sharp two-edged swords in their hands, to do vengeance among the heathen, and rebuke among the peoples; to bind their kings in chains, and their nobles with manacles of iron. To do among them the judgment written. This glory shall be to all his saints.

Psalm 150

O praise God in his sanctuary, praise him in the firmament of his power. Praise him for his mighty acts, praise him according to the multitude of his greatness.

First Tone

Choir: O Son of the Virgin, the harlot knew thee to be God and she prayed to thee lamenting, for she had committed sins worthy of tears. “Loose me from my debt,” she cried, “as I unloose my hair. Show love to her who loves thee, though rightly she deserves thy hatred, and with the publicans I shall proclaim thee, O Benefactor who lovest mankind.”

Reader: Praise him with the sound of the trumpet, praise him upon the psaltery and harp.

Choir: The harlot mingled precious oil of myrrh with her tears and poured it on thy most pure feet, as she kissed them; and straightway thou hast proclaimed her justified. To us also grant forgiveness, O Lord who hast suffered for our sake, and save us.

Reader: Praise him with the timbrel and dance, praise him upon the strings and pipe.

Choir: While the sinful woman brought oil of myrrh, the disciple came to an agreement with the transgressors. She rejoiced to pour out what was very precious, he made haste to sell the One who is above all price. She acknowledged Christ as Lord, he severed himself from the Master. She was set free, but Judas became the slave of the enemy. Grievous was his lack of love! Great was her repentance! Grant such repentance also unto me, O Saviour who hast suffered for our sake, and save us.

Reader: Praise him upon the well-tuned cymbals, praise him upon the cymbals of jubilation. Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord.

Choir: O misery of Judas! He saw the harlot kiss thy feet, and deceitfully he plotted to betray thee with a kiss. She loosed her hair and he was bound a prisoner by fury, bearing in place of myrrh the stink of evil: for envy knows not how to choose its own advantage. O misery of Judas! From this deliver our souls, O God.

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

Second Tone

Choir: The sinful woman hastened to buy precious oil of myrrh, with which to anoint the Benefactor, and she cried aloud to the merchant: “Give me oil of myrrh that I may anoint him who has cleansed me from all my sins.”

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

Sixth Tone

Choir: Drowning in sin, she found in thee a haven of salvation, and pouring out the oil of myrrh with her tears, she cried to Thee: “Lo, thou art he who accepts the re- pentance of the sinful. O Master, save me from the waves of sin in thy great mercy.”

Priest: To thee is due glory, O Lord our God, and unto thee do we send up glory: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Reader: Amen.

Priest: Glory to thee who hast shown us the light.

Towards the end of the Doxology, the deacon (or priest, if no deacon is serving) comes out to stand before the holy doors.

Reader: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men. We praise thee; we bless thee; we worship thee; we glorify thee; we give thanks to thee for thy great glory. O Lord, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty; O Lord, the Only- begotten Son, Jesus Christ; and the Holy Spirit. O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy on us. For thou only art holy; thou only art the Lord, O Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Every day will I give thanks to thee and praise thy name forever; yea, for ever and ever. Lord, thou hast been our refuge from generation to generation. I said, Lord, be merciful to me and heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee. Lord, I have fled unto thee; teach me

to do thy will, for thou art my God. For with thee is the fountain of life, and in thy light shall we see light. O continue thy mercy upon them that know thee.

Vouchsafe, O Lord, that we may be kept this day without sin. Blessed art thou, O Lord God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is thy name forever. Amen. Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, 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; despise not the works of thy hands. To thee is due praise; to thee is due a song; to thee is due glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

The Morning Litany

Deacon: Let us complete our morning prayer unto the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

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

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

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

Small Doxology

Choir: R. Grant this, 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. R.

Pardon and remission of our sins and transgressions, let us ask of the Lord. R.

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

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

A Christian ending to our life, painless, blameless, and peaceful, and a good defence before the dread Judgment Seat of Christ, let us ask. R.

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 unto Christ our God.

Choir: To thee, O Lord.

Priest: For thou art a good God and lovest mankind, and unto thee do we send up glory: to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Priest: Peace be unto all.

Choir: And to thy spirit.

Deacon: Let us bow our heads unto the Lord.

Choir: To thee, O Lord.

Priest: O holy Lord who dwellest on high and regardest the humble of heart, and with thine all-seeing eye dost behold all creation: unto thee have we bowed the neck of our soul and body, and we entreat thee, O Holy of holies: stretch forth thine invisible hand from thy holy dwelling-place, and bless us all. And if in any way we have sinned, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, forgive, inasmuch as thou art a good God, and lovest mankind, granting us thine earthly and heavenly good things.

For thine it is to show mercy and to save us, O our God, and unto thee do we send up glory: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

The deacon (or priest, if no deacon is serving) returns to the altar.

Aposticha
Sixth Tone

Choir: Today Christ comes to the house of the Pharisee, and the sinful woman draws near and falls down at his feet, crying: “Behold me sunk in sin, filled with despair by reason of my deeds, yet not rejected by thy love. Grant me, Lord, remission of my sins and save me.”

Reader: We were satisfied with thy mercy in the morning, O Lord, and we rejoiced and were glad.

Choir: The harlot spread out her hair before thee, O Master, while Judas stretched out his hands to the transgressors: she, to receive forgiveness; and he, to receive money. Therefore we cry aloud to thee who wast sold and hast set us free: O Lord, glory to thee.

Reader: We were glad all our days; for the days wherein thou didst humble us, the years wherein we saw adversity. And look upon thy servants, and upon thy works, and guide their children.

Choir: Evil-smelling and defiled, the woman drew near to thee, shedding tears upon thy feet, O Saviour, and proclaiming thy passion. “How can I look upon thee, O Master? Yet thou hast come to save the harlot. I am dead: raise me from the depths, as thou hast raised Lazarus on the fourth day from the tomb. Accept me in my wretchedness, O Lord, and save me.”

Reader: And let the brightness of the Lord our God be upon us, and prosper thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, prosper thou our handy-work.

Choir: Full of despair on account of her life, her evil ways well known, she came to thee, bearing oil of myrrh, and cried aloud: “Harlot though I am, cast me not out, O Son of the Virgin; despise not my tears, O Joy of the angels; but receive me in repentance, O Lord, and in thy great mercy reject me not, a sinner.”

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

Eight Tone, by Kassiani the Nun

Choir: The woman who had fallen into many sins, perceiving thy divinity, O Lord, fulfilled the part of a myrrh-bearer; and with lamentations she brought sweet-smelling oil of myrrh to thee before thy burial. “Woe is me,” she said, “for night surrounds me, dark and moonless, and stings my lustful passion with the love of sin. Accept the fountain of my tears, O thou who drawest down from the clouds the waters of the sea. Incline to the groanings of my heart, O thou who in thine ineffable self-emptying hast bowed down the heavens. I shall kiss thy most pure feet and wipe them with the hairs of my head, those feet whose sound Eve heard at dusk in Paradise, and hid herself for fear. Who can search out the multitude of my sins and the abyss of thy judgements, O Saviour of my soul? Despise me not, thine handmaiden, for thou hast mercy without measure.”

Reader: It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing unto thy name, O Most High; to tell of thy mercy in the morning, and of thy truth every night. (twice)

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. **(thrice)**

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 thy name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. **(thrice)**

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 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 ages of ages.

Reader: Amen. Standing in the temple of thy glory, we think ourselves in heaven, O Theotokos. Thou who art the gate of heaven, do thou open unto us the door of thy mercy.

Lord, have mercy. **(forty times)**

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

More honorable than the cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim, without corruption thou gavest birth to God the Word: true Theotokos, we magnify thee.

In the Name of the Lord, Father bless.

Priest: Blessed be He Who Is, Christ our God, always, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

The priest exits the altar by the north door and stands before the holy doors.

Reader: Amen. O heavenly King, uphold our rulers, strengthen the Faith, calm the nations, give peace to the world. Protect this city [or village, or holy monastery], grant to our departed fathers and brethren that they may dwell with the righteous, and accept us in repentance and confession: for thou art good and lovest mankind.

The Prayer of St. Ephrem

Priest: O Lord and Master of my life, give me not a spirit of sloth, despair, lust of power, and idle talk. **(prostration)**

But give rather a spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love to thy servant. **(prostration)**

Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own transgressions, and not to judge my brother: for blessed art thou unto ages of ages. Amen. **(prostration)**

And we make twelve bows from the waist, quietly saying O God, cleanse me a sinner each time.

Priest: O Lord and Master of my life, give me not a spirit of sloth, despair, lust of power, and idle talk. But give rather a spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love to thy servant. Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own transgressions, and not to judge my brother: for blessed art thou unto ages of ages. Amen. **(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, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. **(thrice)**

Father bless.

Priest: May the Lord who is going to his voluntary passion for our salvation, Christ our true God, through the prayers of his most pure mother, and of all the saints, have mercy on us and save us, for he is good and loves mankind.

Choir: Amen.