

# Vespers of Great and Holy Friday

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*The **Priest** is fully vested. Before the service begins, the Epitaphion (shroud) is placed on the Holy Altar, it is rubbed down with Rose Water, and the Gospel Book is placed on top of it.*

*The curtain is opened. The **Priest** exits through the North Door and goes before the Holy Doors.*

*Deacon:* Arise! Bless, Master!

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

*Reader:* Amen.<sup>1</sup>

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.

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.

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<sup>1</sup> If another service has immediately preceded Vespers, or if Little Vespers has been served earlier, we omit the usual introductory

*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.

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 Priest reads the Prayers of Light silently<sup>2</sup>.*

### **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,

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prayers and go to "Come, Let us Worship" below.

<sup>2</sup> The seven prayers may be found together in Appendix A.

wrapping Yourself in light for a garment,  
stretching out the sky like a skin<sup>3</sup>;

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.

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.

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<sup>3</sup> a "tent-skin".

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 heron<sup>4</sup> 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.

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.

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<sup>4</sup> or "egret".

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.

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

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, 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:* <sup>5</sup>For [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 President<sup>6</sup> 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.

*Deacon:* For this city, [*if a monastery:* For this 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.

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<sup>5</sup> 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.

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

*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:* 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 Deacon enters the Sanctuary through the South door, goes to the High Place, bows, turns 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.

## Lord, I Call

*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.



*The Deacon then begins the Great Censing.*

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.

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

The righteous are waiting for me  
until You reward me.

*Psalm 129 (130)*

Out of the depths I cry to You, O Lord;  
O Lord, hear my voice.

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.

*Tone 1*

All creation was changed by fear  
when it saw You hanging upon the Cross, O Christ.  
The sun was darkened,  
and the foundations of the earth were shaken.  
All things suffered with the Creator of all.//  
O Lord, Who willingly endured this for us, glory to You!

5. For Your name's sake, O Lord, I wait for You,  
my soul waits for Your word,  
my soul hopes for the Lord,

All creation was changed... (*repeat above*).

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

*Tone 2*

An impious and transgressing people –  
why do they imagine vain things?  
Why do they condemn to death the Life of all?  
O great wonder!  
The Creator of the world is betrayed into the hands of lawless men.  
He, Who loves mankind, is lifted up upon the Wood,  
that He might free those bound in Hades, who cry://  
“O long-suffering Lord, glory to You!”

3. For with the Lord there is mercy  
and with Him there is great redemption.  
And He will redeem Israel from all his sins.

Today, the blameless Virgin  
saw You suspended upon the Cross, O Word.  
She mourned within herself and was sorely pierced in her heart.  
She groaned in agony from the depth of her soul.  
Exhausted from tearing her hair and cheeks and beating her breast,  
She cried out, lamenting:  
“Woe is me, O my divine Child!  
Woe is me, O Light of the world!  
Why have You departed from mine eyes, O Lamb of God?”  
Then the bodiless hosts were seized with trembling and cried:  
“O incomprehensible Lord, glory to You!”

*Psalm 116 (117)*

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

When she who bore You without seed  
saw You suspended upon the Tree,  
O Christ, the Creator and God of all,  
she cried bitterly: “Where is the beauty of Your form, O my Son?”  
I cannot bear to see You unjustly crucified!  
Hasten and arise,//  
that I too may see Your Resurrection from the dead on the third day!

1. For great is His mercy to us,<sup>7</sup>  
and the truth of the Lord continues forever.

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<sup>7</sup> Lit., “For His mercy has been strengthened upon us”.

*Tone 6*

Today, the Master of creation stands before Pilate.  
 Today, the Creator of all is condemned to die on the Cross.  
 Of His own will, He is led as a Lamb to the slaughter.  
 He Who fed His people with manna in the desert is transfixed with  
 nails.

His side is pierced, and a sponge of vinegar touches His lips.  
 The Redeemer of the world is slapped on the face.  
 The Maker of all is mocked by His own servants.  
 How great is the Master's love for mankind!  
 For those who crucified Him, He prayed to His Father, saying://  
 "Forgive them this sin, for they know not what they do!"

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

See how the lawless assembly condemns the King of creation to death!  
 They are not ashamed, even when He reminds them of His mighty  
 works:

"My people, what have I done to you?  
 Have I not filled Judea with miracles?  
 Have I not raised the dead by My Word alone?  
 Have I not healed every sickness and disease?  
 How have you repaid Me?  
 Why have you abandoned Me?  
 In return for healing, you give Me blows;  
 In return for life, you put Me to death.  
 You hang your Benefactor on the Cross as an evildoer;  
 Your Lawgiver, as a transgressor;  
 the King of all, as one condemned."//  
 O long-suffering Lord, glory to You!

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

We see a strange and fearful mystery accomplished today.  
He Whom none may touch is seized.  
He Who looses Adam from the curse is bound.  
He Who tries the hearts of men is unjustly brought to trial.  
He Who closed the abyss is shut in prison.  
He before Whom the Hosts of Heaven stand with trembling stands  
before Pilate.  
The Creator is struck by the hand of His creature.  
He Who comes to judge the living and the dead is condemned to the  
Cross.  
The Conqueror of Hades is enclosed in a tomb.  
You, Who have endured all these things in Your tender love,  
have saved all mankind from the curse.//  
O long-suffering Lord, glory to You!

*As the People sing "O Gladsome Light..." the Holy Doors are opened. The Entrance is made with the Holy Gospel. The **Priest and Deacon** 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.

*Standing a little to the right before the Holy Doors and leaning the Holy Gospel against his left shoulder, the **Deacon** points with his right hand and Orarion towards the Altar Table, and says:*

*Deacon:* Amen. Bless, Master, the holy entrance.

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

*The **Deacon** presents the Holy Gospel for the Priest to kiss, himself kissing the Priest's right hand and replaces his Orarion on the Book. Then he faces the Altar Table again and exclaims as he elevates the Book:*

*Deacon:* Wisdom! Let us attend!

*The **Deacon**<sup>8</sup> enters the Sanctuary, returns the Holy Gospel to the Altar Table with the Icon of the Resurrection facing the Priest and kisses the Holy Gospel and the Altar Table.*

*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.*

### **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,

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<sup>8</sup> In some places the Deacon gives the Gospel to the Priest, kissing his hand, who then returns it to the Altar.

O Son of God and Giver of life.  
Therefore all the world glorifies You.

*Deacon:* Let us attend.

*Priest:* + Peace be unto all.

### **The First Prokeimenon**

*Deacon:* Wisdom!

*Reader:* The Prokeimenon in the fourth tone:

They divide My garments among them,  
And for My raiment they cast lots.

*People:* They divide My garments among them,  
And for My raiment they cast lots.

*Reader:* O God, my God! Attend to me! Why have You forsaken me?

*People:* They divide My garments among them,  
And for My raiment they cast lots.

*Reader:* They divide My garments among them,

*People:* ... And for My raiment they cast lots.

### **The First Old Testament Reading**

*Deacon:* Wisdom!

*Reader:* The reading from Exodus.

*Deacon:* Let us attend!

*The Priest and the Deacon turn, make the Sign of the Cross (lesser metania) to the High Place, and proceed to their places. The Holy Doors are closed for the Reading.*



*Reader:* (33:11-23) Thus the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. Then he would return to the camp, but his servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tabernacle.

Then Moses said to the Lord, “Behold, You say to me, ‘Bring up this people.’ But You have not let me know whom You will send with me. Yet You have said, ‘I know you above all, and you have also found grace in My sight.’ Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, reveal Yourself to me, that I may see You clearly and find grace in Your sight, and know this great nation is Your people.”

So He said, “I Myself will go before you and give you rest.” Then he said to Him, “If You Yourself do not go up with us, do not bring us up from here. For how then will it be known that Your people and I have found grace in Your sight, except You go with us? So both I and Your people shall be glorified beyond all the nations on the earth.” The Lord then said to Moses, “I will also do this thing you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight, and I know you above all.” Moses replied, “Reveal Yourself to me.”

Then God said, “I will pass before you in My glory, and I will proclaim My name, the Lord, before you. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.” But He said, “You cannot see My face; for no man shall see My face and live.” Moreover, the Lord said, “Here is a place by Me; you shall stand on the rock. So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen.”

*The Holy Doors are opened for the Prokeimenon.*

### **The Second Prokeimenon**

*Deacon:* Wisdom!

*Reader:* The Prokeimenon in the fourth tone:

Judge, O Lord, those who wrong me,  
fight against those who fight against me!

*People:* Judge, O Lord, those who wrong me,  
fight against those who fight against me!

*Reader:* They rewarded me evil for good; my soul is forlorn.

*People:* Judge, O Lord, those who wrong me,  
fight against those who fight against me!

*Reader:* Judge, O Lord, those who wrong me,

*People:* ...fight against those who fight against me!

### **The Second Old Testament Reading**

*Deacon:* Wisdom!

*Reader:* The reading from Job.

*Deacon:* Let us attend!

*The Holy Doors are closed for the Reading.*

*Reader:* (42:12-17) Now the Lord blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning. He had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen, and one thousand donkeys. He also had seven sons and three daughters. And he named the first, Day, the second, Cassia, and the third, Amaltheia's Horn. In all the land, there were found no women so beautiful as the daughters of Job, and their father gave them an inheritance among their brothers. After this affliction, Job lived one hundred and seventy years, and all the years he lived were two hundred and forty-eight; and Job saw his children and grandchildren for four generations. So Job died, old and full of days. It is written that he will rise with those whom the Lord resurrects.

This man is described in the Syriac Book as living in the land of Ausitis, on the borders of Edom and Arabia. Previously his name was Jobab. He took an Arabian wife and begot a son named Ennon. But he himself was the son of his father Zare, one of the sons of Esau, and of his mother Bosorra. Thus, he was the fifth son from Abraham.

### **The Third Old Testament Reading**

*Deacon:* Wisdom!

*Reader:* The reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah.

*Deacon:* Let us attend!

*Reader:* (52:13-54:1) Behold, My Servant shall have wisdom, and He shall be exalted and glorified exceedingly. Just as many shall be astonished at You, so Your form and glory shall be dishonored by men. Thus many nations shall marvel at Him, and kings shall shut their mouth, because they to whom no report was brought concerning Him shall see; and they who did not hear shall understand.

O Lord, who has believed our report, and to whom was the arm of the Lord revealed? We proclaimed His presence as a Child, as a Root in a thirsty land. He had no form or glory, and we saw Him; and He had no form or beauty. But in comparison to all men, His form was lacking in honor. He was a man in suffering and knew how to bear sickness. His face was turned away, and He was dishonored and not esteemed. He bears our sins and suffers for us, yet we considered Him to be in pain, suffering, and ill-treatment. But He was wounded because of our lawlessness, and became sick because of our sins. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His bruise we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray. Man has gone astray in his way, and the Lord delivered Him over for our sins. Although He was ill-treated, He opened not His mouth. He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb is silent before his shearers, so He opens not His mouth. In His

humiliation His judgment was taken away, and who will declare His generation? For His life is taken from the earth, and because of the lawlessness of My people He was led to death. I will appoint evil men for His burial and rich men for His death, because He committed no lawlessness, nor was deceit found in His mouth. The Lord wishes to cleanse Him of His wound, and if You give an offering for sin, Your soul shall see a long-lived seed. The Lord wishes to take away the pain of His soul, to show Him light, to form Him with understanding, and to pronounce righteous the Righteous One who serves many well; and He shall bear their sins. Therefore He shall inherit many, and will divide the spoil with the strong, because His soul was delivered over to death. He was considered among the lawless, and He bore the sins of many, and was delivered over because of their sins.

“Be glad, O barren woman who does not bear; break forth and cry out, you who are not in travail, for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married woman,” says the Lord.

*The Holy Doors are opened for the Prokeimenon and Epistle Reading.*

### **The Epistle Reading**

*The Deacon turns to face the Reader, lifts his Orarion and says:*

*Deacon:* Wisdom!

*The Deacon takes up the censer and says to the Priest:*

*Deacon:* Bless, Master the incense.

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

*Deacon:* Amen.

*The Deacon does the Lesser Censing.*

*Reader:* The Prokeimenon in the sixth tone:

They have laid me in the depths of the pit,  
in the regions dark and deep.

*People:* They have laid me in the depths of the pit,  
in the regions dark and deep.

*Reader:* O Lord, God of my salvation: I call for help by day, I cry out in the  
night before You!

*People:* They have laid me in the depths of the pit,  
in the regions dark and deep.

*Reader:* They have laid me in the depths of the pit,

*People:* ...in the regions dark and deep.

*Deacon:* Wisdom!

*Reader:* The reading from the first Epistle of the holy Apostle Paul to the  
Corinthians.

*Deacon:* Let us attend!

*Reader:* (1:18-2:2) Brethren, the message of the cross is foolishness to those  
who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.  
For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to  
nothing the understanding of the prudent." Where *is* the wise? Where  
*is* the scribe? Where *is* the disputer of this age? Has not God made  
foolish the wisdom of this world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the  
world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the  
foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. For  
Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ  
crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness,  
but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of  
God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser  
than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For you see  
your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not

many mighty, not many noble, *are called*. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence. But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God - and righteousness and sanctification and redemption - that, as it is written, "He who glories, let him glory in the LORD."

And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

*Upon the completion of the Epistle, the Priest blesses the Reader.*

*Priest:*     + Peace to you who read.

*Reader:*    And to your spirit.

*Priest:*    Wisdom!

*Reader:*    The Alleluia in the first tone.

Save me, O God, for the waters have come up to my soul.

*People:*    Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

*Reader:*    They gave me gall for food, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

*People:*    Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

*Reader:*    Let their eyes be darkened, so that they cannot see.

*People:*    Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

### The Gospel

*Deacon:* Wisdom! Let us attend! Let us listen to the Holy Gospel.

*Priest:* + Peace be unto all.

*People:* And to your spirit.

*Priest:* The reading from the Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew.

*People:* Glory to Your passion, O Lord.

*Deacon:* Let us attend!

*Priest:* (Mt. 27:1-38; Lk. 23:39-43; Mt. 27:39-54; Jn. 19:31-37; Mt. 27:55-61)  
At that time, all the chief priests and elders of the people plotted against Jesus to put Him to death. And when they had bound Him, they led Him away and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the governor. Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." And they said, "What *is that* to us? You see *to it!*" Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself. But the chief priests took the silver pieces and said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, because they are the price of blood." And they consulted together and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the value of Him who was priced, whom they of the children of Israel priced, and gave them for the potter's field, as the LORD directed me."

Now Jesus stood before the governor. And the governor asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" So Jesus said to him, "*It is as you say.*" And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He answered nothing. Then Pilate said to Him, "Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?" But He answered him not one word, so that the governor marveled greatly.

Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to releasing to the multitude one prisoner whom they wished. And at that time they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. Therefore, when they had gathered together, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release to you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" For he knew that they had handed Him over because of envy. While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, "Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him." But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. The governor answered and said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?" They said, "Barabbas!" Pilate said to them, "What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" *They* all said to him, "Let Him be crucified!" Then the governor said, "Why, what evil has He done?" But they cried out all the more, saying, "Let Him be crucified!"

When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather *that* a tumult was rising, he took water and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see *to it*." And all the people answered and said, "His blood *be* on us and on our children." Then he released Barabbas to them; and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered *Him* to be crucified.

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole garrison around Him. And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put *it* on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" Then they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head. And when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His *own* clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified.

Now as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. Him they compelled to bear His cross. And when they had come to a place called Golgotha, that is to say, Place of a Skull, they gave Him sour wine mingled with gall to drink. But when He had tasted *it*, He would not drink. Then they crucified Him, and divided His garments, casting lots, that it might be



fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: “They divided My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots.” Sitting down, they kept watch over Him there. And they put up over His head the accusation written against Him: THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS. Then two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and another on the left.

Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, “If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us.” But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, “Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong.” Then he said to Jesus, “Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.” And Jesus said to him, “Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.”

And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, “You who destroy the temple and build *it* in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross.” Likewise the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders, said, “He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, ‘I am the Son of God.’” Even the robbers who were crucified with Him reviled Him with the same thing.

Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “*Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?*” that is, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” Some of those who stood there, when they heard *that*, said, “This Man is calling for Elijah!” Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, filled *it* with sour wine and put *it* on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink. The rest said, “Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to save Him.” And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.

Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many. So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

Therefore, because it was the Preparation *Day*, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe. For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, "Not *one* of His bones shall be broken." And again another Scripture says, "They shall look on Him whom they pierced."

And many women who followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to Him, were there looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

Now when evening had come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be given to him. When Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb, and departed. And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting opposite the tomb.

*People:* Glory to Your long-suffering, O Lord!

*The Priest replaces the Gospel upon the Antimension. The Holy Doors are closed.*

*The Deacon bows to the Priest, passing the High Place, exits the Sanctuary through the North door and, standing at his place on the solea with his Orarion raised, he says:*

### **The Litany of Fervent Supplication**

*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 implore You, hear us and have mercy.

*People:* Lord, have mercy.

*Deacon:* Have mercy on 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)

*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:* For 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.

### **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.

### **The Evening Litany<sup>9</sup>**

*The Deacon lifts his Orarion and says:*

*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.

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<sup>9</sup> If there is no Deacon, the Priest will remove his Phelonion and take this litany in front of the closed Holy Doors.

*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.

*People:* To You, O Lord.

*Priest:* 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.

*People:* Amen

*The Priest turns to bless the People:*

*Priest:* + Peace be unto all.

*People:* And to your spirit.

*The Priest faces the East as the Deacon says:*

*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. The Priest puts on all his vestments.*

### **The Aposticha**

*Tone 2 – (Automelon)*

*People:* Joseph of Arimathea took You down from the tree,  
the Life of all, cold in death.  
Bathing You with sweet and costly myrrh,  
he gently covered You with finest linen  
and, with sorrow and tender love in his heart,  
he embraced Your most pure body.  
Trembling at this awesome sight,  
he cried out to You, O Christ://  
“Glory to Your condescension, O Lover of mankind!”

*Reader:* The Lord is King, He is robed in majesty.



*People:* When You, the Redeemer of all, were placed in a tomb  
all Hades' powers quaked in fear.  
Its bars were broken, its gates were smashed.  
Its mighty reign was brought to an end,  
for the dead came forth alive from their tombs,  
casting off the bonds of their captivity.  
Adam was filled with joy!  
He gratefully cried out to You, O Christ://  
“Glory to Your condescension, O Lover of mankind!”

*Reader:* For He has established the world so that it shall never be moved.

*People:* In the flesh You were willingly enclosed in the tomb,  
Who are boundless and infinite in Your divinity.  
You closed the chambers of death, O Christ.  
You emptied all the palaces of Hades.//  
You honored this Sabbath with Your blessing, glory, and honor.

*Reader:* Holiness befits Your house, O Lord, forevermore.

*People:* The Powers of Heaven shook with fear,  
when they saw Your ineffable forbearance.  
They beheld You slandered by lawless men,  
mocked as a deceiver by transgressors.  
They beheld the stone that closed Your tomb,  
sealed by the same hands that pierced Your side,  
but they knew that Your death would be our life,  
and joyfully they cried out to You, O Christ://  
“Glory to Your condescension, O Lover of mankind!”

*The Holy Doors are opened.*

*The **Priest** takes up the censer and the **Deacon** takes up a candle and stands, facing the Priest, on the Eastern side of the Altar Table. Together they go around the Altar Table three times, censuring the Shroud.*

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

*Tone 5*

*People:* Joseph, together with Nicodemus,  
took You down from the Tree,  
Who clothe Yourself with light as with a garment.  
He gazed on Your body – dead, naked, and unburied,  
and, in grief and tender compassion, he lamented:  
“Woe is me, my sweetest Jesus!  
A short while ago, the sun beheld You hanging on the Cross,  
and it hid itself in darkness.  
The earth quaked in fear at the sight.  
The veil of the Temple was torn in two.  
Lo, now I see You willingly submit to death for our sake.  
How shall I bury You, O my God?  
How can I wrap You in a shroud?  
How can I touch Your most pure body with my hands?  
What songs can I sing for Your exodus, O compassionate One?  
I magnify Your Passion.  
I glorify Your burial,  
and Your holy Resurrection, //  
crying, ‘O Lord, glory to You!’”

### **The Canticle of Simeon**

*Reader:* 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**

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!

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.

*As the People sing the Troparia, all **Clergy and Servers** make three prostrations. The **Priest** takes the Holy Gospel book, while the other clergy, or members of the laity, take the Shroud, which they hold above his head. They go around the right and behind the Altar, and out of the sanctuary through the North door. The Shroud is preceded with processional candles and the **Deacon** with incense. The procession goes to the center of the Temple, where there stands a table decorated with flowers. Here the Shroud is placed, and on top of it, the Gospel book. The **Priest**, and the **Deacon** with a candle, censes around it three times.*

## **The Troparia**

### *Tone 2*

*People:* The noble Joseph,  
when he had taken down Your most pure Body from the Tree,  
wrapped it in fine linen and anointed it with spices,//  
and placed it in a new tomb.

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

The angel came to the myrrh-bearing women at the tomb and said:  
“Myrrh is fitting for the dead;//  
but Christ has shown Himself a stranger to corruption.”

*A homily may be preached here.*

*The Dismissal is done in front of the Shroud.*

## **The Dismissal**

*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.

*Priest:* Most holy Theotokos, save us.

*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.

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

*Facing the people, the Priest says the Dismissal:*

*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 He Who endured fearful suffering, the life-creating Cross, and voluntary burial in the flesh for us and for our salvation, Christ our true God, through the prayers of His most pure Mother; of the holy, glorious, and all-laudable Apostles; 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.

*Reader:* Amen.

*The Shroud is then venerated by the Priest, the Clergy, the Servers and the People, each making three prostrations, two before kissing the Shroud, and one after.*

### **Troparion**

*Tone 5*

Come, let us bless Joseph of eternal memory,  
who came by night to Pilate  
and begged for the Life of all:  
“Give me this Stranger,  
Who has no place to lay His head:  
Give me this Stranger  
Whom an evil disciple betrayed to death.

Give me this Stranger,  
Whom His Mother saw hanging upon the Cross,  
and with a mother's sorrow cried, weeping:  
'Woe is me, O my Child,  
Light of my eyes and Beloved of my bosom,  
for what Simeon foretold in the Temple now has come to pass:  
a sword has pierced my heart;  
but change my grief to gladness by Your Resurrection.'"  
We worship Your Passion, O Christ!  
We worship Your Passion, O Christ!  
We worship Your Passion, O Christ!  
and Your Holy Resurrection.

## *APPENDIX A*

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### **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.