

## ***Great Vespers (tone 4), The Holy Forefathers***

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

**Choir:** Amen. O come, let us worship and fall down before God our King. O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, our King and our God. O come, let us worship and fall down before the Very Christ, our King and our God.

### **Psalm 104 (103)**

**Reader:** Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honor and majesty. Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain: Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who walketh upon the wings of the wind: Who maketh his angels spirits: his ministers a flaming fire: Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed forever. Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains. At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away. They go up by the mountains; they do down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them. Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth. He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills. They give drink to every beast of the field: the wild asses quench their thirst. By them shall the fowls of the heavens have their habitation, which sing among the branches. He watereth the hills from his chambers: the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works. he causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth: And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart. The trees of the Lord are full of sap; the cedars of Lebanon which he hath planted; Where the birds make their nests: as for the stork, the fir trees are her house. The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats; and the rocks for the conies. He appointed the moon for seasons: the sun knoweth his going down.

Thou makest darkness and it is night: wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth. The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God. The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens. Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labor until the evening. O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches. So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping, innumerable, both small and great beasts. There go the ships: there is that leviathan, who thou hast made to play therein. These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good. Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust. Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth. The glory of the Lord shall endure forever: the Lord shall rejoice in his works. He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth: he toucheth the hills, and they smoke. I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord. Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more. Bless thou the Lord, O my soul. Praise ye the Lord.

The sun knowth his going down. Thou makest darkness, and it is night. O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all.

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

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia. Glory to thee, O God. (three times)

O our God and our Hope, Glory to Thee.

### **The Great Ektenia**

**Priest:** In Peace let us pray to the Lord.

(The Choir responds Lord have mercy to each petition).

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

For the peace of the whole world, the good estate of the holy churches of God, and the union of all men, let us pray to the Lord.

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

For our (*metropolitan or archbishop or bishop*), N., the honorable presbytery, the diaconate in Christ, all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

For our president, civil authorities and armed forces, let us pray to the Lord.

For this city and every city and countryside and the faithful who dwell therein, let us pray to the Lord.

For healthful seasons, abundance of the fruits of the earth and peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

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

For our deliverance from all tribulation, wrath, danger and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.

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

Calling to remembrance our all-holy, immaculate, 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.

“O LORD, I HAVE CRIED”

TONE 4

**Choir:** O Lord, I have cried out unto Thee, hear Thou me; hear Thou me, O Lord. O Lord, I have cried out unto Thee, hear Thou me. Give ear to the voice of my supplication when I cry out unto Thee: hear Thou me, O Lord.

Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as the incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice; hear Thou me, O Lord.

Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and a protecting door round about my lips.

Incline not my heart to evil words, to make excuses in sins.

With men that work iniquity; and I will not communicate with the choicest of them.

The just man shall correct me in mercy and shall reprove me; but let not the oil of the sinner anoint my head.

For my prayer also shall still be against the things with which they are well pleased; their judges falling upon the rock have been swallowed up.

They shall hear my words, for they are sweet; as when the thickness of the earth is broken upon the ground, their bones are scattered by the side of hell.

But to Thee, O Lord, Lord, are mine eyes; in Thee have I put my trust, take not away my soul.

Keep me from the snare which they have laid for me, and the traps of the workers of iniquity.

Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst I alone escape.

I cried unto the Lord with my voice, with my voice unto the Lord, did I make my supplication.

I poured out my supplication before Him; I showed before Him my trouble.

When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then Thou knewest my path.

In the way wherein I walked have they secretly laid a snare for me.

I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me.

Refuge failed me; no one cared for my soul.

I cried unto Thee, O Lord; I said: Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.

Attend unto my cry, for I am brought very low.

Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are stronger than I.

**Bring my soul out of prison, that I may confess thy name:**

We worship untiringly thy quickening Cross, O Christ God, and glorify thy third-day Resurrection; for by it, O Almighty, thou hast renewed the corrupt nature of mankind, and made plain to us the ascent to heaven; for thou alone art good and the Lover of mankind.

**For the righteous shall await me, until thou recompense me.**

When thou wast willingly nailed upon the Cross, O Savior, thou solvedest the problem caused by the tree of sin. And when thou didst descend into hades, thou didst break the bonds of death, since thou art a mighty God. Wherefore, we worship thy Resurrection from the dead, shouting with joy, O Almighty Lord, glory to thee.

**Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord; Lord hear my voice.**

Thou didst demolish by thy Death, O Lord, the gates of hades; thou didst dissolve the realm of death; and didst free the human race from corruption, granting the world life and incorruptibility and Great Mercy.

**Let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.**

Come, ye nations, let us praise the third-day Resurrection of the Savior, by which we were delivered from the unbreakable bonds of hades, and by which we have all received life and incorruption, crying, O thou who was crucified, buried, and who didst rise, save us by thy Resurrection, O thou only Lover of mankind.

**If thou, Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? For with thee there is forgiveness.**

Verily, the angels and men, O Savior, praise thy third-day Resurrection, through which the ends of the universe have been lighted, and by which thou hast redeemed from bondage to the enemy us who cry, saying, O omnipotent Giver of life, save us by thy Resurrection, O Lover of mankind.

**Because of thy Name have I waited for thee, O Lord: my soul hath waited upon thy word, my soul hath hoped in the Lord.**

Thou hast demolished the brazen gates, o Christ God, and hast shattered the bars, and hast raised the fallen human race and made it to stand upright. Wherefore, do we shout to thee in unison, O thou rising from the dead, O Lord, glory to thee.

**Tone 8 For the Forefathers** *The Paradise of Eden*  
**From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch let Israel trust in the Lord.**

As we the faithful celebrate today \* the Forefathers' memory, \* let us praise Christ the Redeemer and our King, \* Who magnified them in the midst \* of all nations upon the earth \* and through faith accomplished strange and wondrous signs, \* performing marvels and miracles, \* since He is powerful and strong, \* and Who from them hath shown unto us \* that rod of power prophesied: \* Mary, the Child of God, \* who alone had no experience of man \* and from whom came the Flower, \* the promised Christ, Who sprouted life for all, \* inexhaustible delight, \* and our salvation to eternity.

**For with the Lord there is mercy and with Him is abundant redemption, and He will deliver Israel from all his iniquities.**

O Master, Who didst rescue from the fire \* the Children in Babylon \* and wise Daniel from the lions' gaping mouths; \* Thou Who didst bless great Abraham, \* holy Isaac, Thy servant, and \* his son Jacob, the beloved Israel; \* Thou Who wast pleased to become like us \* from their descendants and their seed, \* to save our first parents, who of old \* had slipped and fallen into death: \* Thou, Lord, wast crucified, \* and wast buried, and didst burst the bonds of death, \* with Thyself resurrecting \* all that since time began lay 'midst the dead, \* who then worshipped Thee, O Christ, \* and Thine eternal Kingdom over all.

**Praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him all ye people.**

As in a gentle shower `midst the flame, \* the Children of God rejoiced \* as they walked about amidst the Spirit's dew; \* and in the flame they mystically \* did prefigure the Trinity \* and the wondrous Incarnation of Christ God; \* since they were wise, by their faith in God \* they quenched the power of the fire; \* and righteous Daniel was also seen \* to muzzle lions in the den. \* Since Thou, O Friend of man, \* art entreated by their prayers in our behalf, \* rescue us all, O Savior, \* from the eternal fire that nought can quench, \* and vouchsafe that we attain \* unto Thy Kingdom in the Heavens, O Lord.

**For his mercy is great toward us, and the truth of the Lord endureth forever.**

When in the furnace of the blazing flame, \* Thy holy and faithful Youths \* proved to be as in a cool, refreshing dew; \* then did they mystically portray \* from before that Thou wast to come \* from a Virgin whom Thy brightness would not burn. \* As for Thy coming the second time \* in Thy dread glory as our God, \* the wondrous Prophet and righteous man, \* great Daniel, clearly hath foretold, \* when he cried out and said: \* I beheld until the thrones were set in place \* and the Judge sat for judgment; \* and then rushed forth the river of that fire, \* from the which may we be saved, \* by their entreaties, O our Master Christ.

**(tone 6) Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit:**

Let us, O believers, extol today all the fathers before the law, Abraham the friend of God, Isaac born after the promise, Jacob with the twelve heads of the tribes, David the most meek, and Daniel the Prophet of desires, honoring with them the three youths who changed the furnace to a dewy place, asking forgiveness of Christ God, glorified in his saints.

**Tone 4 Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.**

David the Prophet who became through thee, O Theotokos, the grandparent of God, before-time sang of thee in praise, and shouted to him who worked wonders through thee, saying, The queen did rise on thy right; for God hath shown thee to be a Mother bring forth life, in that he was willing to appear incarnate from thee without father, renewing the creation of his likeness, corrupt with suffering, in order to find the sheep lost in the hills, and carry it on his shoulders, and offer it to the Father, and add it, through his will, to the heavenly hosts, and to save the whole world; for he is the reigning Christ, Possessor of rich and Great Mercy.

**Priest:** Wisdom Let us Attend.

### **The Hymn of Thanksgiving at the Lighting of the Lamps**

**Choir:** O Gladsome Light of the holy glory of the immortal, heavenly, holy, blessed Father: Jesus Christ. Now that we have come to the setting of the sun and behold the light of evening, we praise God: The Father, Son and Holy Spirit. For meet it is at all times to worship thee with voices of praise, O Son of God and Give of life; therefore all the world doth glorify thee

**Priest:** The Evening Prokeimenon

### **The Vesperal Prokeimena**

**The Lord is king, and hath clothed Himself with majesty.**

The Lord is robed; He is girded with strength

**The Lord is king, and hath clothed Himself with majesty.**

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

**The Lord is king,  
He is clothed with majesty.**

### **The Ektenia**

**Priest:** Let us all say with our whole soul and with our whole mind, let us say:

*(the Choir responds Lord, have mercy to the first two petitions.)*

O Lord Almighty, the God of our Fathers, we pray thee, hearken and have mercy.

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

*(The choir responds Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy to this and the remaining petitions.)*

Again we pray for all pious and Orthodox Christians.

Again we pray for our Father and Metropolitan, N.

Again we pray for our brethren: the priests, hieromonks, deacons, hierodeacons and monastics and all our brotherhood in Christ.

Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation and visitation and pardon and forgiveness of sins for *(the servants of God, NN., and)* all Orthodox Christians of true worship, who live and dwell in this community.

Again we pray for the blessed and ever-memorable founders of this holy church *(and for the servants of God, NN.,)* and all our fathers and brethren, the Orthodox departed this life before us, who here and in all the world lie asleep in the Lord.

Again we pray for those who bear fruit and do good works in this holy and all-venerable temple, those who serve and those who sing and all the people here present, who await thy great and rich mercy.

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

**Choir:** Amen.

## The Evening Prayer

**Reader:** Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this evening without sin. Blessed art thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is thy name forever. Amen. Let thy mercy be upon us O Lord, even 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. O despise not the works of thy hands. To thee belongeth worship, to thee belongeth praise, to thee belongeth glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages Amen.

## The Litany of Supplication

**Priest:** Let us complete our prayer unto the Lord.

**Choir:** Lord, have mercy (*after the first two petitions.*)

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

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

**Choir:** Grant, this, O Lord. (*after the remaining petitions*)

An angel of peace, a faithful guide, a guardian of our souls and bodies, let us ask of the Lord.

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

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

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

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

Calling to remembrance our all-holy immaculate, 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 we ascribe 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 to all.

**Choir:** And to thy spirit.

**Priest:** Bow our heads unto the Lord.

**Choir:** To thee, O Lord.

**Priest:** O Lord our God, who didst bow the heavens and come down for the salvation of mankind: Look upon thy servants and thine inheritance; for unto thee, the fearful Judge who yet lovest mankind, have thy servants bowed their heads and submissively inclined their necks, awaiting not help from men but entreating thy mercy and looking confidently for thy 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 and from vain thoughts and from evil imaginations.

Blessed and glorified be the might of thy kingdom of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

**Choir:** Amen.

### **Aposticha**

When thou wast lifted up upon the Cross, O Lord, thou didst expunge our ancestral curse; and when thou didst descend to hades, thou didst free those who were bound from eternity, granting the human race incorruptibility. Wherefore, we offer praise, glorifying thy third-day Resurrection.

### **The Lord is King, and hath put on glorious apparel. The Lord hath put on His apparel and hath girded Himself with strength**

O thou who alone art mighty, when thou wast fastened upon a Tree, thou didst shake the whole earth; and when thou wast laid in the grave, thou didst raise those who lay in the graves, granting mankind life and incorruptibility. Wherefore, we offer praise, glorifying thy third-day Resurrection.

### **For He hath made the round world so that it shall not be moved.**

The law-transgressing people, O Christ, delivered thee to Pilate, who condemned thee to crucifixion. Thus the ingrate appeared before his Benefactor. But thou sufferedst burial willingly, and didst rise on the third day by thine own power; for thou art God, granting us endless and Great Mercy.

### **Holiness becometh Thy house forever O Lord.**

Verily, the women reached thy tomb seeking thee with tears. And when they found thee not, they shouted and wailed, saying, Woe to us, O our Savior, King of all, how wast thou stolen? And what place containeth thy live-bearing body? And an angel answered them, saying, Weep not, but go preach that the Lord hath risen, granting us joy; for he alone is compassionate.

(tone 3) **Glory to the Father and to the Son and To the Holy Spirit:**

Come ye feast-lovers, let us extol with hymns the assembly of the forefathers, Adam the first father. Enoch, Noah, and Melchizedek, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and those after the law- Moses, Aaron, Joshua, and Samuel; and with them Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and the twelve Prophets, with Elijah and Elisha, and all the rest; and Zachariah, the Baptist, and those who preached Christ, the Life and Resurrection of our race.

**(tone 3) Both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.**

Thou didst verily conceive by the Holy Spirit, without human seed, at the pleasure of the Father, the Son of God, begotten of the Father before eternity without mother. Thou didst give birth to him in the flesh coming of thee, for our sake, without father. Wherefore, cease not to intercede that he may deliver our souls from affliction.

**The Hymn of Simeon the God-receiver**

**Reader:** Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word. For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of thy people Israel.

**Reader:** Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us.  
Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us.  
Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us.

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

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy God, visit and heal our infirmities for thy Name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

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

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

**Priest:** For thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit now and ever and unto ages of ages.

**Choir:** Amen.

**Troparion**

Having learned the joyful message of the Resurrection from the angel the women disciples of the Lord cast from them their parental condemnation and proudly broke the news to the disciples saying death hath been spoiled Christ God is risen granting the world great mercy.

(tone 2) **Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.**

Thou hast justified by faith the ancient forefathers and through them thou hast gone before and betrothed unto thyself the Church of the Gentiles. Let the saints, therefore, take pride in glory; for from their seed sprouted forth a noble fruit, and she it was who gave birth to thee without seed. Wherefore, by their pleadings, O Christ God, save our souls.

**Priest:** Wisdom.

**Choir:** Father Bless.

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

**Choir:** Amen.

Preserve, O God, the holy Orthodox faith and all Orthodox Christians, unto ages of ages. Amen.

**Priest:** Most holy Theotokos, save us.

**Choir:** More honorable than the cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim, thou who without corruption bearest God the Word and art truly Theotokos: We magnify thee.

**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, both now and ever, and unto ages of ages Amen. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Father Bless.

### **The Great Dismissal**

**Priest:** May he who rose again from the dead, Christ our true God, through the intercessions of his all-immaculate and all-blameless holy Mother; 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 the Glorious Prophet Elias, patron of this Church; of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; **of The Holy Forefather**, whose memory we celebrate and of all the saints: have mercy on us, and save us, forasmuch as he is good and loveth mankind.

**Priest:** Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us.

**Choir:** Amen