

**The Order of Matins
for Holy Saturday
As a Reader Service**

In the Russian tradition, this service is read on Friday night

Note: The translation used for the Horologion is primarily that of Fr. Lawrence of Jordanville. Texts from the Triodion are primarily taken from the Triodion, by Bishop Kallistos and Mother Mary.

Senior Reader: Through the prayers of our holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us.

Reader: Amen. Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

O Heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit of Truth, Who art everywhere present and fillest all things, Treasury of good things and Giver of life: Come and dwell in us, and cleanse us of all 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, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Lord, blot out our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. 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, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, Who art in the Heavens, 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Senior Reader: O Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us.

Reader: Amen.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. *Twelve Times.*

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

Choir: Amen.

Senior Reader: In the **2nd Tone:** God is the Lord and hath appeared unto us. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Stichos 1: O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth forever.

Choir: God is the Lord and hath appeared unto us. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. *This is sung after each stichos.*

Stichos 2: Surrounding me they compassed me, and by the name of the Lord I warded them off.

Stichos 3: I shall not die, but live, and I shall tell of the works of the Lord.

Stichos 4: The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.

Then the Choir sings the Troparia:

Tone 2: The Noble Joseph, /
taking Thy most pure body down from the Tree /
and having wrapped it in pure linen and spices, //
laid it in a new tomb.

Glory... Tone 2:

When Thou didst descend unto death, O Life Immortal, /
then didst Thou slay hell with the lightning of Thy divinity. /
And when Thou didst also raise the dead /
out of the nethermost depths, /
all the hosts of the heavens cried out: //
O Life-Giver, Christ our God, glory be to Thee.

Both now... Tone 2:

Unto the myrrh-bearing women /
did the angel cry out as he stood by the grave: /
Myrrh is meet for the dead, //
but Christ hath proved a stranger to corruption.

THE LAMENTATIONS

First Stasis

Tone V

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes. Blessed are the blameless in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord.

In a grave they laid Thee, * O my life and my Christ; * and the armies of the angels were sore amazed, * as they sang the praise of Thy submissive love.

Blessed are they that search out His testimonies; with their whole heart shall they seek after Him.

How, O Life, canst Thou die? * Or abide in a grave? * For thou dost destroy the kingdom of death, O Lord, * and Thou raisest up the dead of Hades' realm.

For they that work iniquity have not walked in His ways.

Now we magnify Thee, * O Lord Jesus, our King; * and we venerate Thy Passion and Burial, * whereby from corruption's bowels are we redeemed.

Thou hast enjoined Thy commandments, that we should keep them most diligently.

Thou Who didst establish * the earth's bounds dost now dwell * in a small grave, O my Jesus, Thou King of all, * Who dost call the dead to leave their graves and rise.

Would that my ways were directed to keep Thy statutes.

O my dear Christ Jesus, * King and Ruler of all, * why to them that dwelt in Hades didst Thou descend? * Was it not to set the race of mortals free?

Then shall I not be ashamed, when I look on all Thy commandments.

Lo, the Sov'reign Ruler * of creation is dead * and is buried in a tomb never used before, * He that emptied all the graves of all their dead.

I will confess Thee with uprightness of heart, when I have learned the judgements of Thy righteousness.

In a grave they laid Thee, * O my Life and my Christ. * Yet, behold now, by Thy death, death is stricken down, * and Thou pourest forth life's streams for all the world.

I will keep thy statutes; do not utterly forsake me.

Thou, O Christ, wast numbered * with men of evil deeds * as one evil, and didst also deliver us * from the ancient schemer's evil works and deeds.

Wherewithal shall a young man correct his way? By keeping Thy words.

Lo, how fair His beauty! * Never man was so fair! * Yet how doth He seem a dead man bereft of form, * though all nature's beauty had Him as its source.

With my whole heart have I sought after Thee, cast me not away from Thy commandments.

How could Hell, O Saviour, * bear Thy Presence divine, * and not rather be demolished in utter gloom, * blinded by the splendour of Thy dazzling light?

In my heart have I hid Thy sayings that I might not sin against Thee.

O my sweet Lord, Jesus, * my Salvation, my Light: * How art Thou now hid within a dark sepulchre? * Lo, Thy burial surpasseth human speech.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes.

Angel-kind, O Master, * and the bodiless host * cannot understand the mystery, O my Christ, * of Thy burial ineffable and strange.

With my lips have I declared all the judgements of Thy mouth.

Lo, how strange these wonders, * deeds amazing and new; * for the Giver of my life is borne lifeless forth * by the hands of weeping Joseph to His rest.

In the way of Thy testimonies have I found delight, as much as in all riches.

O Christ Jesus, Saviour, * in the grave Thou wast laid; * yet Thou didst not leave the bosom of Thy Father, Lord. * Lo, what strange and awesome wonders we behold!

On Thy commandments will I ponder, and I will understand Thy ways.

Unto all creation * wast Thou made known, O Christ, * as the true King of the firmament and the earth, * even though Thou wast enclosed in a small grave.

On Thy statutes will I meditate; I will not forget Thy words.

When, O Christ our Maker, * Thou wast laid in Thy tomb, * the foundation stones of Hades with ruin shook, * and the graves of mortal men were opened wide.

Give reward unto Thy servant, quicken me and I will keep Thy words.

He that holdeth all things * in the grasp of His hand, * in the flesh is now held dead in the depths of earth, * thereby freeing all the dead from Hades grasp.

O unveil mine eyes, and I shall perceive wondrous things out of Thy law.

Thou, my Life, O Saviour, * from corruption didst rise, * having died, and therefore dwelling among the dead, * and didst shatter the strong bolts of Hades hold.

I am a sojourner on the earth, hide not from me Thy commandments.

As a lamp of light beneath * a bushel is hid, * so now also in the earth is God's flesh concealed, * and doth drive away the gloom from Hades' realm.

My soul hath longed to desire Thy judgements at all times.

Nicodemus, Joseph * and the bodiless hosts * come together now to bear Thee, the Infinite, * in their arms into a narrow grave of stone.

Thou hast rebuked the proud; cursed are they that decline from Thy commandments.

By Thy willing death and * burial in the earth, * Fount of life, O Jesus, life didst Thou grant to me * who was dead in bitter and most grievous sins.

Remove from me reproach and contempt, for after Thy testimonies have I sought.

By Thy willing Passion, * all creation was changed; * for it knew Thee, O my Jesus and Word of God, * as its Saviour and Redeemer from all debts.

For princes sat and they spake against me, but Thy servant pondered on Thy statutes.

All-devouring Hades, * on receiving within * as a mortal Him that is the firm Rock of Life, * did spew forth the dead swallowed from ancient times.

For Thy testimonies are my meditation, and Thy statutes are my counsellors.

Thou, O Christ, wast buried * in a tomb newly made, * thus renewing the whole nature of mortal men, * by arising from the dead as God in truth.

My soul hath cleaved unto the earth; quicken me according to Thy word.

Thou, O Master, camest * down to earth, as was meet, * to save Adam; and as Thou didst not find him there, * Thou didst go down into Hades seeking him.

My ways have I declared, and Thou hast heard me; teach me Thy statutes.

All the earth was troubled * and did tremble with fear, * and the morning star, O Word, hid its brilliant rays, * when they hid Thee in the earth, O Most Great Life.

Make me to understand the way of Thy statutes, and I will ponder on Thy wondrous works.

As a mortal, Saviour, * Thou didst willingly die; * but all mortal men that slept didst Thou raise, O God, * from their tombs and from the mighty depth of sin.

My soul hath slumbered from despondency, strengthen me with Thy words.

Thy pure Mother, weeping * bitter tears over Thee, * O my Jesus, O my Saviour, she cried to Thee, * O my Son, how can I lay Thee in the grave?

Remove from me the way of unrighteousness, and with Thy law have mercy on me.

Even as the seed of * wheat is hid in the bowels * of the earth, and thereby bringeth forth ears of grain, * thus hast Thou raised Adam's mortal sons, O Word.

I have chosen the way of truth, and Thy judgements have I not forgotten.

Saviour, Thou wast hidden * 'neath the earth like the sun, * and wast covered as with shrouds by the night of death; * but more radiantly do Thou arise, O Lord.

I have cleaved to Thy testimonies, O Lord; put me not to shame.

As the moon doth cover * the whole disc of the sun, * likewise, Saviour, art Thou now hidden by the grave, * Thou Who art in mortal flesh eclipsed by death.

The way of Thy commandments have I run, when Thou didst enlarge my heart.

O my Life, Christ Saviour, * having tasted of death, * Thou hast freed all mortal men from the bonds of death. * Wherefore now, Thou grantest life unto our race.

Set before me for a law, O Lord, the way of Thy statutes, and I will seek after it continually.

By Thy death, O Saviour, * Thou hast led back to life * Adam who of old, by malice was made to die; * Thou wast seen as the new Adam in the flesh.

Give me understanding, and I will search out Thy law, and I will keep it with my whole heart.

Seeing Thee, O Saviour, * lying dead for our sakes, * the noetic hosts of Heaven were sore amazed, * and their faces did they cover with their wings.

Guide me in the path of Thy commandments, for I have desired it.

In Thy death, O Logos, * Joseph taketh Thee down * from the Tree and doth now lay Thee in a new tomb; * but as God do Thou arise and save all men.

Incline my heart unto Thy testimonies and not unto covetousness.

Thou Who art the gladness * of the angels, O Lord, * art become the cause of sorrow and grief to them, * seeing Thee, dead in the flesh, bereft of breath.

Turn away mine eyes that I may not see vanity, quicken Thou me in Thy way.

When Thou wast once lifted * on the Tree, O our God, * Thou didst lift all living mortal men with Thyself, * and didst raise all them that lie beneath the earth.

Establish for Thy servant Thine oracle unto fear of Thee.

Like a lion, Saviour, * Thou didst sleep in the flesh; * and, though dead, Thou didst arise like a lion cub, * and didst cast away the weakness of the flesh.

Remove my reproach which I have feared, for Thy judgements are good.

Thou, O Lord, Who tookest * a rib from Adam's side * and didst fashion Eve, hast been pierced in Thine own side, * and didst thereby pour forth purifying streams.

Behold, I have longed after Thy commandments; in Thy righteousness quicken me.

Secretly, O Saviour, * was the lamb slain of old; * but as One forgiving, Thou wast slain openly, * purifying all creation by Thy death.

Let Thy mercy come also upon me, O Lord, even Thy salvation according to Thy word.

Truly, who can tell of * this most awesome new deed? * He that governeth creation accepteth now * pains of suffering, and dieth for our sakes.

So shall I give an answer to them that reproach me, for I have hoped in Thy words.

All the angels cried out * in amazement and awe: * How is it that the Bestower of life is dead? * How is that God is closed up in a tomb?

And take not utterly out of my mouth the word of truth, for in Thy judgements have I hoped.

From Thy side, O Saviour, * which was pierced by the spear, * Thou didst pour forth life for me who was cast from life, * and didst thereby grant me life with Thee, O Life.

So shall I keep Thy law continually, for ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Stretched upon the blest Tree, * Thou, O Jesus, didst make * all men one, and when Thy life-giving side was pierced, * Thou didst shed forgiveness on the race of man.

And I walked in spaciousness, for after Thy commandments have I sought.

Noble Joseph, Saviour, * is now stricken with awe, * and doth nobly lay Thee in the earth as one dead; * by Thine awe-inspiring form he is amazed.

And I spake of Thy testimonies before kings, and I was not ashamed.

As one dead, O Jesus, * Thy good pleasure it was * to descend beneath the earth and to lead again * from the earth to Heaven those who fell therefrom.

And I meditated on Thy commandments which I have greatly loved.

Though, O sweetest Jesus, * Thou wast seen as one dead, * yet alive, as God, Thou didst bring again from earth * unto Heaven all of them that fell therefrom.

And I lifted up my hands to Thy commandments which I have loved.

Though we see Thee as dead, * yet Thou livest as God, * and dost give new life to mortal men who had died; * hence, my deadness hast Thou thereby put to death.

And I pondered on Thy statutes.

O, how full that joy was! * O, how great that delight! * wherewith Thou didst fill all them that were held by Hell, * when Thou shonest forth Thy light in those dark depths.

Remember Thy words to Thy servant, wherein Thou hast made me to hope.

I adore Thy Passion, * Thine entombing I praise, * and I magnify Thy might, O Thou Friend of man; * from corruptive passions have they set me free.

This hath comforted me in my humiliation, for Thine oracle hath quickened me.

A sword flashed against Thee, * O Christ, Saviour and Lord, * and the mighty one's cursed sword was then greatly dulled; * yea, and even Eden's sword was put to flight.

The proud have transgressed exceedingly, but from Thy law have I not declined.

When the Ewe that bare Him, * saw them slaying her Lamb, * overcome by grievous torment she wailed aloud, * and moved all the flock to join her bitter cries.

I remembered Thy judgements of old, O Lord, and was comforted.

Though Thou art now buried * in a tomb made of stone, * and though Thou dost now go down into Hell, O Christ, * Thou dost lay Hell bare and emptiest the tombs.

Despondency took hold upon me because of the sinners who forsake Thy law.

Thou that of Thine own will * didst descend 'neath the earth, * and didst quicken mortal men that had died of old, * in the Father's glory Thou didst lead them forth.

Thy statutes were my songs in the place of my sojourning.

For our sakes, One Person * of the Trinity came * and endured a painful death in the flesh for all; * hence, the sun doth tremble and the earth doth quake.

I remembered Thy name in the night, O Lord, and I kept Thy law.

Born of bitter water, * the descendants and sons * of the tribe of Judah laid Jesus in a pit, * though with manna He had fed and nourished them.

This hath happened unto me because I sought after Thy statutes.

Christ, the Judge, was brought to * an unjust judge for us; * and by him was He condemned to an unjust death * which He suffered on the Wood of the blest Cross.

Thou art my portion, O Lord; I said that I would keep Thy law.

O blood-guilty people, * insolent Israel, * how could ye redeem Barabbas, that lawless thief, * and deliver up the Saviour to the Cross?

I entreated Thy countenance with my whole heart: Have mercy on me according to Thy word.

Thou that madest Adam * from the earth with Thy hand, * thou becamest man by nature for his own sake, * and wast crucified for him of Thine own will.

I have thought on Thy ways, and I have turned my feet back to Thy testimonies.

Down to dreaded Hades * Thou descendedst, O Word, * in obedience to Thy Father's will, O Lord, * and didst raise up all the race of mortal men.

I made ready, and I was not troubled, that I might keep Thy commandments.

Gone the Light the world knew! * Gone the Light that was mine! * O my Jesus, my Beloved and Desired One! * So the Virgin spake lamenting in her grief.

The cords of sinners have entangled me, but Thy law have I not forgotten.

O Vindictive people, * murderous and corrupt, * come behold the linen sheet of the risen Christ * and the face-cloth which have put you all to shame.

At midnight I arose to give thanks unto Thee for the judgements of Thy righteousness.

Come, O foul disciple, * filled with murder and gall, * show thou unto me the cause of thy wickedness, * whereby thou didst prove a traitor to my Christ.

I am a partaker with all them that fear Thee, and with them that keep Thy commandments.

Feigning love for mankind, * for a price thou didst sell * Him that is the fragrant Myrrh, O remorseless one, * O most pestilent and utterly blind fool.

The earth, O Lord, is full of Thy mercy; teach me Thy statutes.

What price wast thou given * for the Heavenly Myrrh? * What didst thou gain in return for the Precious One? * O accursed Satan, frenzy is thy lot.

Thou hast dealt graciously with Thy servant, O Lord, according to Thy word.

If thou didst love poor men, * and didst truly regret * the myrrh poured out from a soul as an offering, * how, for coins, couldst thou sell Him that dawned forth light?

Goodness and discipline and knowledge teach Thou me, for in Thy commandments have I believed.

Word and God eternal, * O my Joy and Delight, * how shall I endure Thy three-day entombment, Lord? * My maternal bowels are rent with grief for Thee.

Before I was humbled, I transgressed; therefore Thy saying have I kept.

‘Who will give me water * and the wellspring of tears?’ * So the Virgin wed to God cried with loud lament, * ‘that for my sweet Jesus I may rightly mourn.’

Thou art good, O Lord, and in Thy goodness teach me Thy statutes.

O ye hills and valleys, * all ye mountains and dales, * and thou multitude of mankind, weep and lament, * crying Woe! with me, the Mother of our God.

Multiplied against me hath been the unrighteousness of the proud; but as for me, with my whole heart will I search out Thy commandments.

When shall I behold Thee, * O my Saviour and God, * the Eternal Light, my Joy and my heart’s Delight, * thus the Virgin cried out in her great distress.

Curdled like milk is their heart; but as for me, in Thy law have I meditated.

Though accepting cutting * as the Chief Cornerstone, * yet, O Saviour, as the Wellspring of endless life, * Thou dost pour forth living water for all men.

It is good for me that Thou hast humbled me, that I might learn Thy statutes.

As from one spring only * are we given to drink * of the two-fold river which gushed forth from Thy side, * and we reap the fruit of everlasting life.

The law of Thy mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver.

In the grave didst Thou will * to be seen as one dead; * but Thou livest and shalt raise up all mortal men * by Thy Resurrection, as Thou hast foretold.

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

Word of God, we hymn Thee. * God of all things art Thou, * with Thy Father and Thy Spirit Most Holy praised; * and we glorify Thy burial divine.

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

All we call thee blessed, * Theotokos most pure, * and with faithful hearts we honour the burial * suffered three days by thy Son Who is our God.

In a grave they laid Thee, * O my life and my Christ; * and the armies of the angels were sore amazed, * as they sang the praise of Thy submissive love.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

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

Choir: Amen.

Second Stasis

Tone V

Right it is indeed, * Life-bestowing Lord, to magnify Thee; * for upon the Cross were Thy most pure hands outspread, * and the strength of our dread foe hast Thou destroyed.

Thy hands have made me and fashioned me; give me understanding and I will learn Thy commandments.

Right it is indeed, * Maker of all things, to magnify Thee; * for by Thy dear Passion have we all now attained * unto blest dispassion and deliverance.

They that fear Thee shall see me and be glad, for on Thy words have I set my hope.

Earth with trembling shook, * and the sun concealed his face with darkness; * for the light unwaning that hath shone forth from Thee, * with Thy Body sank to darkness and the grave.

I have known, O Lord, that Thy judgements are righteousness, and with truth hast Thou humbled me.

Thou hast slept, O Christ, * in the grave the sleep that is life-giving, * and hast raised up with Thyself the whole race of man * from the grievous and most heavy sleep of sin.

Let now Thy mercy be my comfort, according to Thy saying unto Thy servant.

Of all womankind, * I alone gave birth to Thee without pain, * said the most pure Virgin; Lo, now I must endure * pain unbearable at Thy great suffering.

Let Thy compassions come upon me and I shall live, for Thy law is my meditation.

All the seraphim * shuddered when they saw Thee, O my Saviour, * Who above art with the Father inseparable, * though Thou liest dead within the earth below.

Let the proud be put to shame, for unjustly have they transgressed against me; but as for me, I will ponder on Thy commandments.

Lo, the temple's veil * was once rent at Thy dread crucifixion * and the stars above in heaven did hide their light, * seeing Thee, the Sun, now hidden in the earth.

Let those that fear Thee return unto me, and those that know Thy testimonies.

By a word alone, * Thou didst form the earth in the beginning; * yet now as a dead man, Thou art hid in the earth. * O ye heavens, shake with fear at this dread sight.

Let my heart be blameless in Thy statutes, that I may not be put to shame.

Thou, Who with Thy hand * didst create man, hast sunk in earth's bosom, * that by Thine almighty power and strength, O Sun, * Thou might'st raise the multitude of fallen men.

My soul fainteth for Thy salvation; on Thy words have I set my hope.

Come, let us now sing * sacred dirges to our Christ Who dieth, * as once the myrrh-bearing women did sing to Him, * that with them we all might hear the word: Rejoice!

Mine eyes are grown dim with waiting for Thine oracle; they say: When wilt Thou comfort me?

Truly, Thou, O Word, * art as myrrh most precious which is poured forth. * Wherefore, unto Thee, Who art the true Living God, * the myrrh-bearing women brought most precious myrrh.

For I am become like a wine-skin in the frost; yet Thy statutes have I not forgotten.

At Thy burial, * Thou, O Christ, didst shatter Hell's kingdom. * Wherefore, by Thy death, hast Thou thus put death to death, * to **redeem** out of corruption those of earth.

How many are the days of Thy servant? When wilt Thou execute judgement for me on them that persecute me?

God's Wisdom, Who poured * streams of life upon all mortal nature, * pierceth to the very vitals of Hades' realms, * thereby quickening all those held in the grave.

Transgressors have told me fables, but they are not like Thy law, O Lord.

That I may renew * man's corrupted and subverted nature, * gladly in my flesh do I now take death on Me. * Wherefore, Mother, be not stricken with lament.

All Thy commandments are truth. Without a cause have men persecuted me; do Thou help me.

Setting 'neath the earth, * O Thou Sun of Righteousness, my Jesus, * Thou didst raise up all the dead as it were from sleep, * and didst drive away the gloomy dark of Hell.

They well nigh made an end of me on the earth; but as for me, I forsook not Thy commandments.

The life-giving Seed * of two natures on this day is planted * in the furrows of the earth watered by our tears; * but tomorrow It shall blossom forth with life.

According to Thy mercy quicken me, and I will keep the testimonies of Thy mouth.

Adam, who did fall * and is now raised, was terrified greatly * when God did walk in the Garden of Paradise, * but rejoiced when He came down to those in Hell.

For ever, O Lord, Thy word abideth in heaven.

She that gave Thee birth * poured libations of tears for Thee, Christ God, * when Thou, in the flesh, wast laid in a tomb of stone; * and she cried: Arise, O Christ, as Thou didst say.

Unto generation and generation is Thy truth; Thou hast laid the foundation of the earth, and it abideth.

Joseph laid Thee in * a new tomb secretly, O my Saviour, * chanting God-befitting dirges most piously, * which were mingled with the voices of lament.

By Thine ordinance doth the day abide, for all things are Thy servants.

Nailed upon the Cross, * Thou wast pierced, and thus Thy Mother saw Thee, * and was smitten with the nails of most bitter grief, * and her soul itself was pierced as with a sword.

If Thy law had not been my meditation, then should I have perished in my humiliation.

When Thy Mother saw * Thee, the sweetness of all, being watered * with a bitter potion, she wept most bitterly * with a countenance besprinkled with warm tears.

I will never forget Thy statutes, for in them hast Thou quickened me.

I am rent with grief, * and my heart with woe is torn and broken, * as I see Thee slain unjustly, O Word of God. * So bewailing Him, His all-pure Mother cried.

I am Thine, save me; for after Thy statutes have I sought.

Ah, those eyes so sweet, * and Thy lips, O Word, how shall I close them? * How shall I entomb Thee as doth befit the dead? * So cried Joseph, overcome with holy fear.

Sinners have waited for me to destroy me; but Thy testimonies have I understood.

Dirges at the tomb * did blest Joseph sing with Nicodemus, * chanting unto Christ, Who hath now been put to death; * and in song with them are joined the seraphim.

Of all perfection have I seen the outcome; exceeding spacious is Thy commandment.

Sun of Righteousness, * Thou dost set beneath the earth, O Saviour. * Hence, the Moon that gave Thee birth was eclipsed by grief; * for she suffered the bereavement of Thy light.

O how I have loved Thy law, O Lord! the whole day long it is my meditation.

When Hades beheld * Thee, the Life-giver, he greatly shuddered; * for Thou didst despoil and rob him of all his wealth, * and didst raise up all the dead from ages past.

Above mine enemies hast Thou made me wise in Thy commandment, for it is mine for ever.

Radiantly the Sun * shineth forth after the night is passed by; * and Thou, Logos, on arising after Thy death, * shalt as from a bridal chamber brightly shine.

Above all that teach me have I gained understanding, for Thy testimonies are my meditation.

When the earth received * Thee, O Fashioner, into her bosom, * she was rent with fear, O Saviour, and quaked in fright, * and by these her quakings did she rouse the dead.

Above mine elders have I received understanding, for after Thy commandments have I sought.

Wrapping Thee, O Christ, * in myrrh oils in a manner unwonted, * Nicodemus and the most noble Joseph cried: * Be thou terrified and quake with fear, O earth.

From every way that is evil have I restrained my feet that I might keep Thy words.

Lo, when Thou didst set, * the sun's light set with Thee, O Light-maker; * all creation was then seized in the bonds of fear, * and proclaimed Thee as the Maker of all things.

From Thy judgements have I not declined, for Thou hast set a law for me.

Stone that man hath hewn * doth conceal the Cornerstone of Promise; * and a mortal man doth hide God within a grave, * as if God were mortal: shake with fear, O earth!

How sweet to my palate are Thy sayings! more sweet than honey to my mouth.

O my Son, behold * Thy well-loved disciple and Thy Mother; * let us, as aforetime, hear Thy sweet voice again. * So with plenteous tears His most pure Mother cried.

From Thy commandments have I gained understanding; therefore have I hated every way of unrighteousness.

Though the Jews, O Word, * nailed Thee to the Cross, Thou didst not slay them; * rather, as the blest Bestower of life, O Lord, * Thou didst even raise their dead from Hades' bonds.

Thy law is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my paths.

In Thy suffering, * neither form, O Word, was Thine, nor beauty; * but when Thou didst rise up Thou didst illuminate * and shed beauty on all men with rays divine.

I have sworn and resolved that I will keep the judgements of Thy righteousness.

In the flesh didst Thou * set beneath the earth, Thou, the Unwaning * Morning Star, and lo, the sun could not bear the sight, * and was darkened, even in the midst of day.

I was humbled exceedingly; O Lord, quicken me according to Thy word.

Both the sun and moon * were completely darkened, O my Saviour, * thus portraying servants fain and obedient, * who have clothed themselves in black from their great grief.

The free-will offerings of my mouth be Thou now pleased to receive, O Lord, and teach me Thy judgements.

The centurion * knew Thee as God even when they slew Thee. * How then, O my God, dare I touch Thee with my hands? * I do shudder. Thus the noble Joseph cried.

My soul is in Thy hands continually, and Thy law have I not forgotten.

Adam fell asleep, * and he brought forth from his side all men's death; * but by Thy repose and slumber, O Word of God, * from Thy side life hath poured forth for all the world.

Sinners have set a snare for me, yet from Thy commandment have I not strayed.

Sleeping not for long, * Thou didst quicken them that slept in death's bonds; * and when Thou wast risen, Thou madest to arise * them that slept from ages past, O Most Good One.

I have inherited Thy testimonies for ever, for they are the rejoicing of my heart.

O Life-giving Vine, * Thou wast taken from the earth, O Master, * yet the wine of our salvation hast Thou poured forth. * Yea, I glorify Thy Passion and Thy Cross.

I have inclined my heart to perform Thy statutes for ever for a recompense.

When the leaders of * all the angels saw Thee, blood-stained, naked, * and condemned to death by mortals, how could they bear * Thy vain crucifiers' daring insolence?

Transgressors have I hated, but Thy law have I loved.

O perverted race, * vagabondish Jews: The Temple's raising * was made known to you aforetime. For what cause, then, * do ye now condemn and scourge the Saviour, Christ?

My helper and my protector art Thou; on Thy words have I set my hope.

With mockery's robe * did ye clothe Him Who governeth all things * and hath filled the heavens with stars of splendrous light, * and hath wondrously adorned and made the earth.

Depart from me, ye evil-doers, and I will search out the commandments of my God.

Like a pelican * with Thy side, O Word, by wounding riven, * hast Thou made Thy children that were once dead to live, * by besprinkling them with moisture rich with Life.

Uphold me according to Thy saying and quicken me, and turn me not away in shame from mine expectation.

Jesus of Navi * made the sun stop as he smote the heathen; * as for Thee, Lord, Thou didst darken and hide its rays, * when the prince of darkness fell before Thy might.

Help me, and I shall be saved; and I will meditate on Thy statutes continually.

O merciful Christ, * Thou remainest in the Father's bosom, * and wast well-pleased to become mortal man for us, * and didst go down unto Hades, O my God.

Thou hast set at nought all that depart from Thy statutes, for unrighteous is their inward thought.

He that hung the earth * in the midst of the waters was taken * and crucified, and laid without breath in the earth * which quaked grievously, unable to endure.

I have reckoned as transgressors all the sinners of the earth, therefore have I loved Thy testimonies.

Woe is me, my Son! * wept the one who knew not wedlock, saying: * Lo, I see Thee now condemned to hang on the Cross, * Thee Whom I had hoped to see a mighty king.

Nail down my flesh with the fear of Thee, for of Thy judgements am I afraid.

Thus spake Gabriel * when, descending on wing, he brought tidings, * and of my Son Jesus he did say unto me * that His Kingdom shall endure forevermore.

I have wrought judgement and righteousness; O give me not up to them that wrong me.

Woe! The Prophecy * of the elder Symeon findeth fulfillment; * for the sword whereof he spake hath now pierced my heart, * rending me with sorrow, O Emmanuel.

Receive Thy servant unto good, let not the proud falsely accuse me.

Surely, O ye Jews, * be ye put to shame, at least, by all them * that were raised from death by Him Who doth grant us life, * Whom ye sought to slay with malice and ill will.

Mine eyes have failed with waiting for Thy salvation, and for the word of Thy righteousness.

Seeing Thee, O Christ, * the Unwaning and Unseen Light, lying * hidden in a grave, without breath or comeliness, * the sun hid his face behind a veil of gloom.

Deal with Thy servant according to Thy mercy, and teach me Thy statutes.

Wailing bitter tears, * Word of God, Thy spotless Mother mourned Thee, * when she saw that Thou wast laid in a grave of stone, * O Ineffable and Everlasting God.

I am Thy servant; give me understanding, and I shall know Thy testimonies.

Witnessing Thy death, * Thy supremely undefiled Mother * cried with bitter grief, O Christ, and she said to Thee: * Tarry not among the dead, O Life of all.

It is time for the Lord to act; for they have dispersed Thy law.

Hades, that dead foe, * shook with terror when he looked upon Thee, * O Daystar of Glory, only Immortal Lord; * and he yielded up his captives then in haste.

Therefore have I loved Thy commandments more than gold and topaz.

Now do we behold * a most great and awful sight, O Saviour: * Thou Who art the Cause of life, dost submit to death, * wishing to grant life to all mankind, O God.

Therefore I directed myself according to all Thy commandments; every way that is unrighteous have I hated.

Thou art pierced, O Lord, * in Thy side, and Thy hands are nailed also, * healing by Thy side our wound and the greediness * and insatiety of our ancestors' hands.

Wonderful are Thy testimonies; therefore hath my soul searched them out.

Over Rachel's son, * ev'ry house lamented in days gone by; * now over the Virgin's Son all the choir of * blest disciples and His Mother weep with grief.

The unfolding of Thy words will give light and understanding unto babes.

Earthen hands now smite * Thee upon the cheek, O Christ my Saviour, * Thee Who by Thy hands hast formed man and fashioned him, * and hast crushed the grinding teeth of the vile beast.

I opened my mouth and drew in my breath, for I longed for Thy commandments.

With our hymns, O Christ, * we, Thy faithful people, now acclaim Thy * holy Crucifixion and Thy blest Burial; * for Thy Burial hath ransomed us from death.

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

O Eternal God, * Word co-unoriginate, and Spirit: * Stablish Thou the faith and strength of the Orthodox * against heresy and error, O Good One.

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

Birthgiver of Life, * O most blameless and most holy Virgin: * Quell every offense within our most Holy Church, * blessing us with peace forever, O Good Maid.

Right it is indeed, * Life-bestowing Lord, to magnify Thee; * for upon the Cross were Thy most pure hands outspread, * and the strength of our dread foe hast Thou destroyed.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

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

Choir: Amen.

Third Stasis *Tone III*

Every generation * chanteth hymns of praise at * Thy burial, O Christ God.

Look upon me and have mercy on me, according to the judgement of them that love Thy name.

The Arimathaeon, * took Thee from the Cross and * did lay Thee in a new grave.

My steps do Thou direct according to Thy saying, and let no iniquity have dominion over me.

Women, bringing spices, * came with loving forethought, * Thy due of myrrh to give Thee.

Deliver me from the false accusation of men, and I will keep Thy commandments.

Come, all things created, * let us sing a dirge-hymn * to honour our Creator.

Make Thy face to shine upon Thy servant, and teach me Thy statutes.

With myrrh and true knowledge, * let us, like the women, * anoint as dead the Living.

Mine eyes have poured forth streams of waters, because I kept not Thy law.

O thrice-blessed Joseph, * bury now the Body * of Christ the Life-bestower.

Righteous art Thou, O Lord, and upright are Thy judgements.

Those He fed with manna * lifted heels of spurning * against their Benefactor.

Thou hast ordained as Thy testimonies exceeding righteousness and truth.

Those He fed with manna * bring the Saviour gall and * vinegar intermingled.

My zeal for Thee hath made me to pine away, because mine enemies have forgotten Thy words.

O, the utter folly, * brimming with Christ's murder, * of them that slew the prophets.

Thine oracle is tried with fire to the uttermost, and Thy servant hath loved it.

Taught the inner myst'ries, * he, the mindless servant, * betrayed the Depth of Wisdom.

I am young and accounted as nothing, yet Thy statutes have I not forgotten.

He that sold his Saviour * sold himself as captive, * that crafty traitor, Judas.

Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Thy law is truth.

As Solomon spake saying: * The mouth of lawless Jews is * a yawning pit and chasm.

Tribulations and necessities have found me, Thy commandments are my meditation.

In the crooked pathways * of the lawless Jews snares * and countless traps lay hidden.

Thy testimonies are righteousness for ever; give me understanding and I shall live.

Helped by Nicodemus, * Joseph doth entomb now * the Body of his Maker.

I have cried with my whole heart; hear me, O Lord, and I will seek after Thy statutes.

Life-bestowing Saviour, * to Thy might be glory; * for Thou hast vanquished Hades.

I have cried unto Thee; save me, and I will keep Thy testimonies.

When the most pure Virgin * saw Thee prone, O Logos, * a mother's dirge she sang Thee.

I arose in the dead of night and I cried; on Thy words have I set my hope.

O, my most sweet Springtime! * O, my Son beloved, * wither doth fade Thy beauty?

Mine eyes woke before the morning that I might meditate on Thy sayings.

Song of lamentation * poured from Thy pure Mother, * when Thou, O Word, wast slaughtered.

Hear my voice, O Lord, according to Thy mercy; according to Thy judgement, quicken me.

Women to anoint Him * with their myrrh, are come now * to Christ, Who is Divine Myrrh.

They have drawn nigh that lawlessly persecute me, but from Thy law are they far removed.

By Thy death, O Lord God, * death itself hast Thou slain * by Thy divine dominion.

Near art Thou, O Lord, and all Thy ways are truth.

Deceived is the deceiver; * deceived man is now ransomed, * my God, through Thy great wisdom.

From the beginning I have known from Thy testimonies that Thou hast founded them for ever.

The traitor was cast headlong * into the depths of Hades * and pit of vile corruption.

Behold my humiliation and rescue me, for Thy law have I not forgotten.

The ways of the thrice-wretched * and perverted Judas * are fraught with snares and pitfalls.

Judge my cause and redeem me; for Thy word's sake quicken me.

Son of God and Logos, * all Thy crucifiers, * O King of all, have perished.

Far from sinners is salvation, for they have not sought after Thy statutes.

In the pit of death and * corruption, all blood-guilty * men shall be cast to perish.

Thy compassions are many, O Lord; according to Thy judgement quicken me.

Son of God, Almighty, * O my God and Maker, * whence came Thy will to suffer?

Many are they that persecute me and afflict me; from Thy testimonies have I not declined.

When the Heifer saw Thee * on the Cross suspended, * she cried out: O my Youngling!

I beheld men acting foolishly and I pined away, because they kept not Thy sayings.

Joseph and the blessed * disciple Nicodemus * tend the life-giving Body.

Behold, how I have loved Thy commandments; O Lord, in Thy mercy, quicken me.

Cries of woe the Maiden * wailed with fervent weeping; * for her heart was now pierced through.

The beginning of Thy words is truth, and all the judgements of Thy righteousness endure for ever.

Light more dear than seeing, * O, my most sweet Child, * how doth a tomb now hide Thee?

Princes have persecuted me without a cause, and because of Thy words my heart hath been afraid.

Lament not, O my Mother, * I endure the Passion * to set free Eve and Adam.

I will rejoice in Thy sayings as one that findeth great spoil.

O, my Son, I praise Thee * for Thy great compassion * which moved Thee thus to suffer.

Unrighteousness have I hated and abhorred, but Thy law have I loved.

Vinegar and gall wast * Thou given, thus annulling * the tasting of the banned fruit.

Seven times a day have I praised Thee for the judgements of Thy righteousness.

Thou Who led'st Thy people * with a cloud-like pillar * art now led to a scaffold.

Much peace have they that love Thy law, and for them there is no stumbling-block.

Lo, myrrh-bearing women * to Thy tomb, O Saviour, * are come their myrrh to offer.

I awaited Thy salvation, O Lord, and Thy commandments have I loved.

Rise, O Lord of Mercy, * raising us up also * who languish deep in Hades.

My soul hath kept Thy testimonies and hath loved them exceedingly.

Rise, O Life-Bestower, * cried out she that bare Thee, * even Thy weeping Mother.

I have kept Thy commandments and Thy testimonies, for all my ways are before Thee, O Lord.

Hasten, Word, to rise now * and release from sorrow * the spotless Maid that bare Thee.

Let my supplication draw nigh before Thee, O Lord; according to Thine oracle give me understanding.

All the hosts of Heaven * stood with fear, confounded, * beholding Thy dead Body.

Let my petition come before Thee, O Lord; according to Thine oracle deliver me.

To them that laud Thy Passion * with faith and love, O Saviour, * grant them their sins' forgiveness.

My lips shall pour forth a hymn when Thou hast taught me Thy statutes.

O sight most strange and awesome! * How doth earth conceal Thee, * O Word of God and Saviour?

My tongue shall speak of Thy sayings, for all Thy commandments are righteousness.

Once a Joseph bare Thee * into exile, Saviour; * another doth inter Thee.

Let Thy hand be for saving me, for I have chosen Thy commandments.

Weeping and lamenting, * Thy most holy Mother * doth mourn Thee, my slain Saviour.

I have longed for Thy salvation, O Lord, and Thy law is my meditation.

Minds must tremble seeing, * O Maker of creation, * Thy strange and dire entombment.

My soul shall live and shall praise Thee, and Thy judgements will help me.

Myrrh the women sprinkled, * bearing stores of spices, * to grace Thy tomb ere dawning. *Thrice.*

I have gone astray like a sheep that is lost; O seek Thy servant, for I have not forgotten Thy commandments.

Grant unto Thy Church peace, * by Thy Resurrection, * and to Thy flock salvation.

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

O Thou Triune Godhead, * Father, Son, and Spirit, * upon Thy world have mercy.

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

Grant that we who serve thee * may see the Resurrection * of thy Son, O blest Virgin.

Every generation * chanteth hymns of praise at * Thy burial, O Christ God.

THE EVLOGITARIA

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, * teach me Thy statutes.

The assembly of angels was amazed, * beholding Thee numbered among the dead; * yet, O Savior, * destroying the stronghold of death, * and with Thyself raising up Adam, * and freeing all from hades.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, * teach me Thy statutes.

Why mingle ye myrrh with tears of pity, * O ye women disciples? * Thus the radiant angel within the tomb * addressed the myrrh-bearing women; * behold the tomb and understand, * for the Savior is risen from the tomb.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, * teach me Thy statutes.

Very early * the myrrh-bearing women hastened * unto Thy tomb, lamenting, * but the angel stood before them and said: * the time for lamentation is passed, weep not, * but tell of the Resurrection to the apostles.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, * teach me Thy statutes.

The myrrh-bearing women, * with myrrh came to Thy tomb, O Savior, bewailing, * but the angel addressed them, saying: * Why number ye the living among the dead, * for as God * He is risen from the tomb.

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

Let us worship the Father, * and His Son, and the Holy Spirit, * the Holy Trinity, * one in essence, * crying with the Seraphim: * Holy, Holy, Holy art Thou, O Lord.

Both now and ever, * and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

In bringing forth the Giver of life, * thou hast delivered Adam from sin, O Virgin, * and hast brought joy to Eve * instead of sorrow; * and those fallen from life * have thereunto been restored, * by Him Who of thee was incarnate, God and man.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. *Thrice.*

Choir: Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

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

Choir: Amen.

After this the Choir sings the Sessional hymn from the Triodion:

Tone 1 [Troparion Melody]:

Joseph begged Thy holy body from Pilate and, /
anointing it with sweet-smelling spices, /
he wrapped it in clean linen and laid it in a new tomb; /
and early in the morning the women bearing myrrh cried out: /
“As Thou hast foretold, O Christ, //
show to us the Resurrection.”

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

“As Thou hast foretold, O Christ, //
show to us the Resurrection.”

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

The angelic choirs are filled with wonder, /
beholding Him Who rests in the bosom of the Father /
laid in the tomb as one dead, though He is immortal. /
The ranks of the angels surround Him, /
and with the dead in hell they glorify Him //
as Creator and Lord.

Reader:

Psalm 50

Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy; and according to the multitude of Thy compassions blot out my transgression. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know mine iniquity, and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee only have I sinned and done this evil before Thee, that Thou mightest be justified in Thy words, and prevail when Thou art judged. For behold, I was conceived in iniquities, and in sins did my mother bear me. For behold, Thou hast loved truth; the hidden and secret things of Thy wisdom hast Thou made manifest unto me. Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be made clean; Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow. Thou shalt make me to hear joy and gladness; the bones that be humbled, they shall rejoice. Turn Thy face away from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in 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. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and with Thy governing Spirit establish me. I shall teach transgressors Thy ways, and the ungodly shall turn back unto Thee. Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, Thou God of my salvation; my tongue shall rejoice in Thy righteousness. O Lord, Thou shalt open my lips, and my mouth shall declare Thy praise. For if Thou hadst desired sacrifice, I had given it; with whole-burnt offerings Thou shalt not be pleased. A sacrifice unto God is a broken spirit; a heart that is broken and humbled God will not despise. Do good, O Lord, in Thy good pleasure unto Zion, and let the walls of Jerusalem be builded. Then shalt Thou be pleased with a sacrifice of righteousness, with oblation and whole-burnt offerings. Then shall they offer bullocks upon Thine altar.

The Canon

Ode I

Irmos, Tone 6: He Who in ancient times hid the pursuing tyrant beneath the waves of the sea, is hidden beneath the earth by the children of those whom once He saved. But let us, like the maidens, sing unto the Lord, for gloriously is He glorified.

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

O Lord my God, I will sing to Thee a funeral hymn, a song at Thy burial: for by Thy burial Thou hast opened for me the gates of life, and by Thy death Thou hast slain death and hades.

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

All things above and all beneath the earth quaked with fear at Thy death, as they beheld Thee, O my Savior, upon Thy throne on high and in the tomb below. For seeing Thou wert mortal is beyond understanding, O Author of life.

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

To fill all things with Thy glory, Thou hast gone down into the nethermost parts of the earth: for my substance that is in Adam is not hidden from Thee, but when buried, Thou dost restore me from corruption, O Lover of mankind.

Katavasia, Tone 6: He Who in ancient times hid the pursuing tyrant beneath the waves of the sea, is hidden beneath the earth by the children of those whom once He saved. But let us, like the maidens, sing unto the Lord, for gloriously is He glorified.

Ode III

Irmos, Tone 6: When the creation beheld Thee, Who hast hung the whole earth freely upon the waters, hanging on Golgotha, it was seized with horror and cried aloud: "There is none holy beside Thee, O Lord."

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

Images of Thy burial hast Thou disclosed in a multitude of visions; and now, as the God-Man, Thou hast revealed Thy secrets unto those in hades, O Master, who cry aloud: "There is none holy beside Thee, O Lord."

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

Thou hast stretched out Thine arms and united all that of old was separated; clothed in a winding sheet, O Savior, and buried in a tomb, Thou hast loosed the captives, who cry aloud: "There is none holy beside Thee, O Lord."

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

By a tomb and seals, O Uncontainable One, wast Thou held of Thine own will; but through Thine energies Thou hast showed Thy power by Divine action to those who sing: "There is none holy beside Thee, O Lord, Lover of mankind.

Katavasia, Tone 6: When the creation beheld Thee, Who hast hung the whole earth freely upon the waters, hanging on Golgotha, it was seized with horror and cried aloud: "There is none holy beside Thee, O Lord."

Choir: Lord, have mercy. ***Thrice.***

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

Choir: Amen.

Then the Sessional hymn:

Tone 1 [Troparion Melody]:

The soldiers keeping watch over Thy tomb, O Savior, became as dead men /
from the shining brightness at the appearing of the angel, /
who proclaimed to the women the Resurrection. /
We glorify Thee as the Destroyer of corruption; /
we fall down before Thee, //
risen from the tomb, our only God. /

Ode IV

Irmos, Tone 6: Foreseeing Thy divine self-emptying upon the Cross, Habakkuk, amazed, cried out: "Thou hast cut asunder the strength of the mighty, O Good One, and preached to those in hades, as the Almighty One.

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

Today Thou hast sanctified the seventh day, which anciently Thou didst bless by resting from Thy works. Thou bringest all things into being and renewest all things, observing the Sabbath, O my Savior, and restoring all.

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

By Thy greater power, Thou hast conquered; from the flesh Thy soul was parted, yet Thou hast burst asunder both bonds, death and hades, O Word, by Thy might.

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

Hades was embittered when it met Thee, O Word, for it saw a mortal deified, striped with wounds, yet all-powerful; and it shrank back in terror at this sight.

Katavasia, Tone 6: Foreseeing Thy divine self-emptying upon the Cross, Habakkuk, amazed, cried out: "Thou hast cut asunder the strength of the mighty, O Good One, and preached to those in hades, as the Almighty One.

Ode V

Irmos, Tone 6: Thy Theophany, O Christ, the Unwaning Light, that mercifully came to pass for us, Isaiah, keeping watch, beheld out of the night, and he cried aloud: "The dead shall arise, and those in the tombs shall be raised up, and all that are born of earth shall rejoice."

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

Thou makest new those of earth, O Creator, becoming a thing of dust, and the winding-sheet and tomb reveal, O Word, the mystery that is within Thee; for the noble counselor typifies the counsel of Him that begat Thee, Who hath majestically refashioned me in Thee.

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

By Thy death dost Thou transform mortality and by Thy burial, corruption, for Thou makest incorruptible, by divine majesty, the nature Thou hast taken, rendering it immortal; for Thy flesh saw not corruption, O Master, nor was Thy soul left in hades as that of a stranger.

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

Coming forth from an unwedded Mother, and wounded in Thy side with a spear, O my Maker, Thou hast brought to pass the re-creation of Eve. Becoming Adam, Thou hast in ways surpassing nature slept a nature-restoring sleep, raising life from sleep and from corruption, for Thou art the Almighty.

Katavasia, Tone 6: Thy Theophany, O Christ, the Unwaning Light, that mercifully came to pass for us, Isaiah, keeping watch, beheld out of the night, and he cried aloud: "The dead shall arise, and those in the tombs shall be raised up, and all that are born of earth shall rejoice."

Ode VI

Irmos, Tone 6: Caught but not held in the belly of the whale was Jonah; for, bearing the image of Thee, Who hast suffered and wast given to burial, he came forth from the monster as from a bridal chamber, and he called out to the watch: "O ye who keep guard falsely and in vain, ye have forsaken your own mercy."

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

Torn wast Thou, but not separated, O Word, from the flesh of which Thou hadst partaken; for though Thy temple was destroyed at the time of Thy Passion, yet the Substance of Thy Godhead and of Thy flesh is but one. For in both Thou art one Son, the Word of God, both God and man.

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

Fatal to man, but not to God, was the sin of Adam; for though the earthly substance of Thy flesh suffered, yet the Godhead remained impassable; that which in Thy nature was corruptible Thou hast transformed to incorruption, and a fountain of life incorruptible hast Thou revealed by Thy Resurrection.

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

Hades reigneth, but not for ever over the race of man; for Thou, laid in a tomb, O Sovereign Lord, hast burst asunder the bars of death with Thy life-giving hand, and Thou hast proclaimed to those who slept from the ages the true redemption, O Savior, Who art become the Firstborn from the dead.

Katavasia, Tone 6: Caught but not held in the belly of the whale was Jonah; for, bearing the image of Thee, Who hast suffered and wast given to burial, he came forth from the monster as from a bridal chamber, and he called out to the watch: "O ye who keep guard falsely and in vain, ye have forsaken your own mercy."

Choir: Lord, have mercy. ***Thrice.***

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

Choir: Amen.

Then Kontakion and Ikos Holy Saturday:

Tone 6:

He that shut up the abyss is seen as one dead, /
and like a mortal, the Immortal One is wrapped in linen and myrrh, /
and placed in a grave. /
And women came to anoint Him, weeping bitterly and crying out: /
This is the most blessed Sabbath day //
wherein Christ, having slept, shall arise on the third day.

Ikos: He Who sustaineth all things was lifted upon the Cross, and all creation wept, seeing Him hanging naked on the Tree. The sun hid its rays, and the stars cast aside their light; the earth shook in much fear, and the sea fled, and the rocks were rent, and many graves were opened and the bodies of the saints arose. Hades groaned below, and the Jews conspired to spread slander against Christ's Resurrection. But the women cried aloud: "This is the most blessed Sabbath day wherein Christ, having slept, shall arise on the third day."

Ode VII

Irmos, Tone 6: O ineffable wonder! He Who delivered the holy Children from the fiery furnace is laid a corpse without breath in the tomb, for the salvation of us who sing: "O God our Redeemer, blessed art Thou."

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

Wounded in the heart was hades when it received Him Who was wounded in the side by a spear, and consumed by divine fire it groaned aloud at the salvation of us who sing: "O God our Redeemer, blessed art Thou."

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

O wealthy tomb! For it received within itself the Creator, as one asleep, and it was shown to be a divine treasury of life, for the salvation of us who sing: "O God our Redeemer, blessed art Thou."

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

In accordance with the law of the dead, the Life of all submitteth to be laid in the tomb, and He showeth it to be a source of awakening, for the salvation of us who sing: "O God our Redeemer, blessed art Thou."

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

Whether in hades or in the tomb or in Eden, the Godhead of Christ was indivisibly one with the Father and the Spirit, for the salvation of us who sing: "O God our Redeemer, blessed art Thou."

Katavasia, Tone 6: O ineffable wonder! He Who delivered the holy Children from the fiery furnace is laid a corpse without breath in the tomb, for the salvation of us who sing: "O God our Redeemer, blessed art Thou."

Ode VIII

Irmos, Tone 6: Be ye astonished and afraid, O heaven, and let the foundations of the earth be shaken; for lo, He Who dwelleth on high is numbered with the dead and lodgeth as a stranger in a narrow tomb. Him do ye children bless, ye priests praise, and ye people supremely exalt unto all ages.

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

The most pure Temple is destroyed, but raiseth up the fallen tabernacle. For the second Adam, He Who dwelleth on high, hath come down to the first Adam, even into the chambers of hades. Him do ye children bless, ye priests praise, and ye people supremely exalt unto all ages.

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

The disciples' courage failed, but Joseph of Arimathea was bolder; for, seeing the God of all a corpse and naked, he asked for the body and buried Him, crying: Him do ye children bless, ye priests praise, and ye people supremely exalt unto all ages.

We bless Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the Lord; both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O new wonders! O what goodness! O ineffable forbearance! For of His own will He Who dwelleth on high is sealed beneath the earth, and God is falsely accused as a deceiver. Him do ye children bless, ye priests praise, and ye people supremely exalt unto all ages.

After the last troparion of the Canon:

Choir: We praise, we bless, we worship the Lord, // praising and supremely exalting Him unto all ages.

Katavasia, Tone 6: Be ye astonished and afraid, O heaven, and let the foundations of the earth be shaken; for lo, He Who dwelleth on high is numbered with the dead and lodgeth as a stranger in a narrow tomb. Him do ye children bless, ye priests praise, and ye people supremely exalt unto all ages.

Ode IX

The Magnificat and “More honorable than the cherubim” are not sung.

Irmos, Tone 6: Weep not for Me, O Mother, beholding in the tomb the Son Whom thou hast conceived without seed in the womb; for I shall arise and shall be glorified, and as God I shall exalt with glory unceasing those that with faith and love magnify thee.

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

At Thy strange birth, O Son without beginning, I was blessed in ways surpassing nature, for I was spared all travail. But now, beholding Thee, my God, a lifeless corpse, I am pierced with the sword of bitter grief. But arise, that I may be magnified.

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

The earth covereth Me as I desire, O Mother, but the gatekeepers of hades tremble as they see Me, clothed in the bloodstained garment of vengeance; for on the Cross as God have I struck down Mine enemies, and I shall rise again and magnify thee.

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

Let creation rejoice, let all that are born of earth be glad, for the enemy, hades, hath been despoiled; let the women come with myrrh to meet Me, for I am delivering Adam and Eve with all their offspring, and on the third day I shall rise again.

Katavasia, Tone 6: Weep not for He, O Mother, beholding in the tomb the Son Whom thou hast conceived without seed in the womb; for I shall arise and shall be glorified, and as God I shall exalt with glory unceasing those that with faith and love magnify thee.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

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

Choir: Amen.

Reader: Holy is the Lord our God.

Choir: Tone 2: Holy is the Lord our God.

Reader: For holy is the Lord our God.

Choir: Holy is the Lord our God.

Reader: Above all peoples is our God.

Choir: Holy is the Lord our God.

The Lauds (the Praises)

Reader: In the **Second Tone**, Let every breath praise the Lord.

Choir: Let every breath praise the Lord. * Praise the Lord from the heavens, * praise Him in the highest. * To Thee is due praise, O God.

Praise Him, all ye His angels; * praise Him, all ye His hosts. * To Thee is due praise, O God.

Praise Him, O sun and moon; praise Him all ye stars and light.

Praise Him, ye heavens 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 established them for ever, yea, 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 ye abysses.

Fire, hail, snow, ice, blast of tempest, which perform His word.

The mountains and all the hills, fruitful trees, and all cedars.

The beasts and all the cattle, creeping things and winged birds.

Kings of the earth, and all peoples, princes and all the judges of the earth.

Young men and virgins, elders with the younger; let them praise the name of the Lord, for exalted is the name of Him alone.

His praise is above the earth and heaven, and He shall exalt the horn of His people.

This is the hymn for all His saints, for the sons of Israel, and for the people that draw nigh unto Him.

Sing unto the Lord a new song; His praise is in the church of the saints.

Let Israel be glad in Him that made him, let the sons of Zion rejoice in their King.

Let them praise His name in the dance; with the timbrel and the psaltery let them chant unto Him.

For the Lord taketh pleasure in His people, and He shall exalt the meek with salvation.

The saints shall boast in glory, and they shall rejoice upon their beds.

The high praise of God shall be in their throat, and two-edged swords shall be in their hands.

To do vengeance among the heathen, punishments among the peoples.

To bind their kings with fetters, and their nobles with manacles of iron.

To do among them the judgment that is written, this glory shall be to all His saints.

Praise ye God in His saints, praise Him in the firmament of His power.

Praise Him for His mighty acts, *praise Him according to the multitude of His greatness.

Tone 2: Today a tomb holds Him Who holds the creation /
in the hollow of His hand; /
a stone covers Him who covered the heavens with glory. /
Life sleeps and hell trembles, /
and Adam is set free from his bonds. /
Glory to Thy dispensation, /
whereby Thou hast accomplished all things, /
granting us an eternal Sabbath, //
Thy most holy Resurrection from the dead.

Praise Him with the sound of trumpet, * praise Him with the psaltery and harp.

What is this sight that we behold? /
What is this present rest? /
The King of the ages, /
having through His Passion fulfilled the plan of salvation, /
keeps Sabbath in the tomb, granting us a new Sabbath. /
Unto Him let us cry aloud: /
Arise, O Lord, judge Thou the earth, /
for measureless is Thy great mercy //
and Thou dost reign for ever.

*Praise Him with timbrel and dance, * praise him with strings and flute.*

Come, let us see our Life lying in the tomb, /
that He may give life to those that in their tombs lie dead. /
Come, let us look today on the Son of Judah as He sleeps, /
and with the prophet let us cry aloud to Him: /
Thou hast lain down, as a lion hast Thou slept; /
who shall awaken Thee, O King? /
But of Thine own free will do Thou rise /
Who willingly dost give Thyself for us. //
O Lord, glory to Thee.

*Praise Him with tuneful cymbals, praise Him with cymbals of jubilation. **
Let every breath praise the Lord.

Tone 6: Joseph asked for the body of Jesus /
and he laid it in his own new tomb: /
for it was fitting that the Lord should come forth from the grave /
as from a bridal chamber. /
O Thou who hast broken the power of death /
and opened the gates of Paradise to men, //
glory be to Thee.

Glory... Tone 6:

Moses the great mystically prefigured this present day, saying: /
'And God blessed the seventh day.' /
For this is the blessed Sabbath, this is the day of rest, /
on which the only-begotten Son of God rested from all His works. /
Suffering death in accordance with the plan of salvation, /
He kept the Sabbath in the flesh; /
and returning once again to what He was, /
through His Resurrection He has granted us eternal life, //
for He alone is good and loves mankind.

Both now... Tone 2:

Most blessed art Thou, O Virgin Theotokos, /
for through Him Who became incarnate of Thee /
is hades led captive, Adam recalled, /
the curse annulled, Eve set free, /
death slain, and we are given life. /
Wherefore, we cry aloud in praise: //
Blessed is Christ God Who hast been so pleased, glory to Thee.

Choir: [Glory to Thee Who hast showed us the light.]¹ Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace, good will among 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 O Holy Spirit. O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that
takest away the sin 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 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 bless Thee, and I will praise Thy Name forever, yea, forever
and ever.

Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin. Blessed art Thou, O
Lord, the God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy name unto the ages.
Amen.

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we have hoped in Thee.
Blessed are Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes. Thrice

¹ "Glory to Thee Who hast showed us the light." Is not normally sung by the Choir in Russian practice, but it is in Greek practice.

Lord, thou hast been our refuge in generation and generation. I said: O Lord, have mercy on me, heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee.

O Lord, unto Thee have I fled for refuge, teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God. For in Thee is the fountain of life, in Thy light shall we see light. O continue Thy mercy unto them that know Thee.

Holy God, Holy mighty, Holy Immortal have mercy on us. Thrice
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and
ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen. Holy Immortal have mercy on us.
Holy God, Holy mighty, Holy Immortal have mercy on us.

At the conclusion of the Praises, the senior reader could pick up the Epitaphios, and process outside around the Church, if this service is done in a Church, but where this is not practical, you could simply sing the troparion "The Noble Joseph" three times:

The choir then sings the troparion:

Tone 2: The Noble Joseph, /
taking Thy most pure body down from the Tree /
and having wrapped it in pure linen and spices, //
laid it in a new tomb. /

When the singing of 'The Noble Joseph' is completed, there follows the troparion of the prophecy:

Reader: The Troparion of the Prophecy in the **2nd Tone:** O Christ, Who holdest fast the ends of the earth, Thou hast accepted to be held fast within the tomb, to deliver man from his fall into hell; and as immortal God Thou hast conferred upon us immortality and life.

Choir: Glory... Both now...

O Christ, Who holdest fast the ends of the earth, /
Thou hast accepted to be held fast within the tomb, /
to deliver man from his fall into hell; //
and as immortal God Thou hast conferred upon us immortality and life.

Reader: *The Prokimenon in the 4th Tone: Arise, O Lord, help us, and redeem us for Thy name's sake.*

Choir: Arise, O Lord, help us, and redeem us for Thy name's sake.

Reader: *O God, with our ears have we heard, for our fathers have told us.*

Choir: Arise, O Lord, help us, and redeem us for Thy name's sake.

Reader: *Arise, O Lord, help us.*

Choir: And redeem us for Thy name's sake.

Reader: The reading is from the Prophecy Ezekiel.

The hand of the Lord came upon me, and the Lord brought me forth by the Spirit, and set me in the midst of the plain, and it was full of human bones. And He led me round about them every way. And behold, there were very many on the face of the plain, very dry. And He said to me, Son of man, will these bones live? And I said, O Lord God, Thou knowest this! And He said to me, Prophecy upon these bones, and you shall say to them, Ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith Adonai the Lord to these bones: Behold, I will bring upon you the breath of life; and I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and will spread skin upon you, and I will put My Spirit into you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. So I prophesied as the Lord commanded me. And it came to pass while I was prophesying, that behold, there was an earthquake, and the bones came together, bone to bone, each one to his joint. And I looked, and behold, sinews came upon them, and flesh grew and came upon them, and skin was spread upon them above, but there was no breath in them. And He said to me, Prophecy to the wind, prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith Adonai the Lord: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these dead, and let them live. So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath entered into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, a very great assembly. And the Lord spoke to me, saying, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: and they say, Our bones have become dry, our hope hath perished, we are quite spent. Therefore prophecy, son of man, and say, Thus saith Adonai the Lord: Behold, I will open your tombs, My people, and will bring you up out of your tombs, and I will bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, that I may bring you up from your graves, My people; and I will put My Spirit within you, and ye shall live. And I will place you upon your own land; and you shall know that I am the Lord; I have spoken, and will do it, saith Adonai the Lord.

Reader: *The Prokimenon in the 7th Tone: Arise, O Lord my God, let Thy hand be lifted high; forget not Thy paupers to the end.*

Choir: Arise, O Lord my God, let Thy hand be lifted high; forget not Thy paupers to the end.

Reader: *I will confess Thee, O Lord with my whole heart, I will tell of all Thy wonders.*

Choir: Arise, O Lord my God, let Thy hand be lifted high; forget not Thy paupers to the end.

Reader: *Arise, O Lord my God, let Thy hand be lifted high.*

Choir: Forget not Thy paupers to the end.

Reader: The reading is from the Epistles of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Corinthians [1 Corinthians 5:6-8; Galatians 3:13-14].

Brethren: Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Reader: *Alleluia in the 5th Tone: Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered.*

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Reader: *As smoke vanisheth, so let them vanish; as wax melteth before the fire.*

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Reader: *So let sinners perish at the presence of God.*

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Senior Reader: The Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

On the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

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

Lord, have mercy. *Forty Times.*

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

Choir: Amen. Establish, O God, the holy Orthodox Faith of Orthodox Christians unto the ages of ages.

More honorable than the Cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim; who without corruption gavest birth to God the Word, the very Theotokos, thee do we magnify.

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

Lord have mercy. *Thrice.*

Father, bless.

Senior Reader (Facing the East, rather than facing the people): O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, for the sake of the prayers of Thy most pure Mother, of our holy and God-bearing fathers, and all the saints, have mercy on us and save us, for Thou art good and the Lover of mankind.

Choir: Amen.

After the Dismissal the faithful come up to venerate the Epitaphios, while the choir sings:

Tone 5: Come and let us bless Joseph of everlasting memory, /
who came to Pilate by night /
and begged for the Life of all: /
'Give me this stranger, /
Who has no place to lay His head. /
Give me this stranger, /
Whom His evil disciple delivered to death. /
Give me this stranger, /
Whom His Mother saw hanging on the Cross, /

and with a mother's sorrow she cried weeping: /
"Woe is me, O my Child! /
Woe is me, Light of mine eyes and beloved fruit of my womb! /
For what Symeon foretold in the temple is come to pass today: /
a sword pierces my heart, /
but do Thou change my grief to gladness by Thy Resurrection." ' /
We venerate Thy Passion, O Christ! /
We venerate Thy Passion, O Christ! /
We venerate Thy Passion, O Christ, //
and Thy Holy Resurrection!