Reader’s ‘Great’ Vespers on Saturday, February 27th

The Prodigal Son –– Tone 5

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord, Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

Glory to Thee O God, glory to Thee!

O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, Who art everywhere present and fillest all things, Treasury of blessings and Giver of Life, come and abide in us and cleanse us from every impurity and save our souls, O Good One!

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

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

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord, Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

Lord have mercy. ***Twelve Times***

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 come, let us worship God our King.

O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ our King and God.

O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and God.

Bless the Lord, O my soul; O Lord my God, Thou hast been magnified exceedingly. Confession and majesty hast Thou put on, Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment, Who stretchest out the heaven as it were a curtain; Who supporteth His chambers in the waters, Who appointeth the clouds for His ascent, Who walketh upon the wings of the winds, Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire, Who establisheth the earth in the sureness thereof; it shall not be turned back for ever and ever.  The abyss like a garment is His mantle; upon the mountains shall the waters stand.  At Thy rebuke they will flee, at the voice of Thy thunder shall they be afraid.  The mountains rise up and the plains sink down, unto the place where Thou hast established them.  Thou appointedst a bound that they shall not pass, neither return to cover the earth.  He sendeth forth springs in the valleys; between the mountains will the waters run.  They shall give drink to all the beasts of the field; the wild asses will wait to quench their thirst.  Beside them will the birds of the heaven lodge, from the midst of the rocks will they give voice.  He watereth the mountains from His chambers; the earth shall be satisfied with the fruit of Thy works.  He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men, To bring forth bread out of the earth; and wine maketh glad the heart of man.  To make his face cheerful with oil; and bread strengtheneth man's heart.  The trees of the plain shall be satisfied, the cedars of Lebanon, which Thou hast planted.  There will the sparrows make their nests; the house of the heron is chief among them.  The high mountains are a refuge for the harts, and so is the rock for the hares.  He hath made the moon for seasons; the sun knoweth his going down.  Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night, wherein all the beasts of the forest will go abroad.  Young lions roaring after their prey, and seeking their food from God. The sun ariseth, and they are gathered together, and they lay them down in their dens. But man shall go forth unto his work, and to his labor until the evening. How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast Thou made them all; the earth is filled with Thy creation. So is this great and spacious sea, therein are things creeping innumerable, small living creatures with the great. There go the ships; there this dragon, whom Thou hast made to play therein. All things wait on Thee, to give them their food in due season; when Thou givest it them, they will gather it. When Thou openest Thy hand, all things shall be filled with goodness; when Thou turnest away Thy face, they shall be troubled.  Thou wilt take their spirit, and they shall cease; and unto their dust shall they return.  Thou wilt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created; and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.  Let the glory of the Lord be unto the ages; the Lord will rejoice in His works.  Who looketh on the earth and maketh it tremble, Who toucheth the mountains and they smoke. I will sing unto the Lord throughout my life, I will chant to my God for as long as I have my being.  May my words be sweet unto Him, and I will rejoice in the Lord.  O that sinners would cease from the earth, and they that work iniquity, that they should be no more. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

The sun knoweth his going down, Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night.  How magnified are Thy works, O Lord!  In wisdom hast Thou made them all.

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

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

Lord, have mercy. ***Forty Times***

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

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

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

Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice in Him with trembling. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Blessed are all who take refuge in Him. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Arise O Lord, save me, O my God! Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Salvation belongs to the Lord: Thy blessing is upon Thy people. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

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.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Glory to Thee, O God. ***Three Times***

Lord, have mercy ***Three Times***

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

In the 5th Tone: Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hearken unto me.

Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hearken unto me. \* Hearken unto me, O Lord. \* Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hearken unto me; \* attend to the voice of my supplication, \* when I cry unto Thee. \* Hearken unto me, O Lord.

Let my prayer be set forth \* as incense before Thee, \* the lifting up of my hands \* as an evening sacrifice. \* Hearken unto me, O Lord.

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

Incline not my heart unto words of evil, to make excuse with excuses in sins.

With men that work iniquity; and I will not join with their chosen.

The righteous man will chasten me with mercy and reprove me; as for the oil of the sinner, let it not anoint my head.

For yet more is my prayer in the presence of their pleasures; swallowed up near by the rock have their judges been.

They shall hear my words, for they be sweetened; as a clod of earth is broken upon the earth, so have their bones been scattered nigh unto hades.

For unto Thee, O Lord, O Lord, are mine eyes, in Thee have I hoped; take not my soul away.

Keep me from the snare which they have laid for me, and from the stumbling-blocks of them that work iniquity.

The sinners shall fall into their own net; I am alone until I pass by.

With my voice unto the Lord have I cried, with my voice unto the Lord have I made supplication.

I will pour out before Him my supplication, mine affliction before Him will I declare.

When my spirit was fainting within me, then Thou knewest my paths.

In this way wherein I have walked they hid for me a snare.

I looked upon my right hand, and beheld, and there was none that did know me.

Flight hath failed me, and there is none that watcheth out for my soul.

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

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

Deliver me from them that persecute me, for they are stronger than I.

Bring my soul out of prison:  that I may confess Thy name.

The righteous shall wait patiently for me until Thou shalt reward me.

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

Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

If Thou shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, O Lord, who shall stand? For with Thee there is forgiveness.

By thy precious Cross, O Christ,

thou hast put the Devil to shame.

By thy resurrection, thou hast blunted the sting of sin

and saved us from the gates of death! //

We glorify thee, O Only-begotten One!

For Thy name’s sake have I patiently waited for Thee, O Lord; my soul hath patiently waited for Thy word, my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

Christ was led as a sheep to the slaughter

in order to grant resurrection to the human race!

The princes of Hell were frightened by this,

for the gates of sorrow were lifted!

Christ, the King of Glory, had entered,

saying to those in chains, “Go forth!” //

and to those in darkness, “Come to the Light!”

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

O great wonder!

The Creator of the invisible suffered in the flesh in his love for man,

and rose again immortal!

Come, O sons of nations, let us worship him!

Delivered from error by his compassion, //

we have learned to sing of one God in three Persons.

For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption; and He shall redeem Israel out of all his iniquities.

We offer thee our evening worship,

O Never-setting Light,

who came in these last days to the world in the flesh,

who even descended to Hell to dispel its darkness,

who hast revealed the light of resurrection to the nations. //

Glory to thee, O Lord and Giver of light!

In the 1st Tone: O praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise Him, all ye peoples.

I was entrusted with a sinless and living land,

but I sowed the ground with sin

and reaped with a sickle the ears of slothfulness;

in thick sheaves I garnered my actions,

but did not winnow them on the threshing floor of repentance.

Therefore I beg You, our God, the husbandman before the ages:

with the wind of Your love winnow the chaff of my works,

and provision my soul with forgiveness; //

shut me in Your heavenly storehouse and save me!

For He hath made His mercy to prevail over us, and the truth of the Lord abideth forever.

O brothers, let us learn the power of the mystery.

For when the Prodigal Son ran back from sin to his Father’s home,

the all-loving Father came out to meet him and kissed him

and gave him back again the tokens of his own glory,

and completed the mystical joy of those on high

by sacrificing the fatted calf,

so that we might live our lives worthy of the loving Father, who offered

the sacrifice, //

and of the glorious Victim, who is the Savior of our souls.

In the 2nd Tone: Glory…:

What great blessings have I forsaken, wretch that I am?

From what kingdom have I miserably fallen?

I have squandered the riches that were given me;

I have transgressed the commandments!

Woe to me when I shall be condemned to eternal fire!

Cry out to Christ, O my soul, before the end draws near: //

Receive me as the Prodigal, O God, and have mercy on me!

In the 5th Tone: Now and ever... :

In the Red Sea of old

a type of the Virgin Bride was prefigured.

There Moses divided the waters;

Here Gabriel assisted in the miracle.

There Israel crossed the sea without getting wet;

Here the Virgin gave birth to Christ without seed.

After Israel’s passage, the sea remained impassable;

After Emmanuel’s birth, the Virgin remained a virgin.

O Ever-existing God who appeared as man, //

O Lord, have mercy on us!

O Gladsome Light of the holy glory of the immortal, heavenly, holy, blessed Father, O Jesus Christ: Having come to the setting of the sun, having beheld the evening light, we praise the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: God.  Meet it is for Thee at all times to be praised with reverent voices, O Son of God, Giver of life.  Wherefore, the world doth glorify Thee.

Prokeimenon in the 6th Tone:The Lord is King, He is robed in majesty!

The Lord is robed with strength, and has girded Himself

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

Holiness befits Thy house, O Lord, forevermore

The Lord is King,/ He is robed in majesty!

Lord have mercy. ***Forty times***

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

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 unto the ages.  Amen.

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we have hoped in Thee.  Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes.  Blessed art Thou, O Master, give me understanding of Thy statutes.  Blessed art Thou, O Holy One, enlighten me by Thy statutes.

O Lord, Thy mercy endureth forever; disdain not the work of Thy hands.  To Thee is due praise, to Thee is due a song, to Thee glory is due, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.  Amen.

Lord, have mercy. ***Twelve Times***

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

At the Apostikha: In the 5th Tone:

We magnify thee in songs of praise,

O incarnate Christ and Savior!

By accepting the Cross and death for our sake,

as the Lord and Lover of man

thou didst overthrow the gates of Hell, //

and didst arise on the third day, saving our souls!

Verse: The Lord is King; he is robed in majesty!

By being pierced in the side, O Lover of Man,

thou hast poured out drops of life and salvation for all.

By accepting death in the flesh, thou hast granted us immortality.

Thou hast freed us by being placed in the tomb,

and hast resurrected us with thyself in glory, as God! //

Glory to thee, O Lord and Lover of man!

Verse: For he has established the world so that it shall never be moved!

Thy crucifixion and descent into Hell are awesome, O Lover of Man!

Thou hast captured it, releasing the ancient prisoners!

Thou hast opened Paradise and given it to us!

Grant us purification of sins,

who glorify thy resurrection on the third day!

Make us worthy of Paradise //

and save us, O Lover of man!

Verse: Holiness befits thy house, O Lord, forevermore!

For our sake, thou didst accept death in the flesh,

to rise form the dead on the third day!

Heal us from our earthly passions,

and restore us from our evil transgressions //

and save us, O Lover of man!

In the 6th Tone: Glory …:

I hid my face in shame, a wretchèd man!

I have squandered the riches my Father gave to me;

I went to live with senseless beasts:

I sought their food and hungered, for I had not enough to eat.

I will arise and return to my compassionate Father:

He will accept my tears as I kneel before Him and cry:

“In Your tender love for all mankind //

receive me as one of Your servants and save me!

Now and ever... :

My Maker and Redeemer, Christ the Lord,

was born of you, O most-pure Virgin!

By accepting my nature He freed Adam from his ancient curse!

Unceasingly we magnify you as the Mother of God!

Rejoice, O Celestial joy!

Rejoice, O Lady, //

the protection, intercession, and salvation of our souls!

Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, O Master, according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples; a light of revelation for the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.

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)***

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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.

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us. Amen.

In the 5th Tone:

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word,

co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit,

born for our salvation from the Virgin;

for he willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh,

to endure death

and to raise the dead //

by his glorious Resurrection!

Glory… now and ever...:

Rejoice, gate of the Lord which no one can force!

Rejoice, rampart and shelter of those who come to you!

Rejoice, undisturbed haven that never knew a man!

Since you gave birth in the flesh to your Maker and God,

never cease to intercede for those //

who sing a hymn of praise to your Son and worship him!

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, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord bless!

Through the prayers of the Theotokos, and of all the saints, O Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us. Amen.