Reader’s Vespers on Thursday January 14th, 2021

Prefeast of Theophany –– Repose of the Venerable Seraphim of Sarov (January 2nd/15th)

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.

In the 4th 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.

Let us celebrate, O faithful,

the prefeast of Christ’s Theophany!

Let us sing hymns to honor the noble baptism of our God.

For He wills to approach the Forerunner in the flesh.

As a man He asks for the baptism of salvation:

The regeneration of all those who accept Him in faith //

and become partakers of the Spirit!

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 is made manifest! God is revealed,

as David clearly foretold of old.

He comes to his servant, seeking Baptism.

Be filled with joy, O river Jordan!

Dance, O earth and seas; hills and mountains!

Exult, O hearts of men, //

for a great Light is coming upon you!

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

You are the river of peace and valley of paradise,

O all-powerful Lord!

How can a river receive You naked, in its course,

who mantled the heavens with clouds?

Thou shalt strip the evil enemy naked, //

clothing mankind with immortality!

In the 1st Tone: For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption; and He shall redeem Israel out of all his iniquities.

O marvelous wonder!

An athlete in piety appears at Sarov:

He has become a fervent intercessor with God for us!

Rejoice, O monks of Sarov who possess the relics of the holy monk:

Rejoice, O Orthodox faithful!

You possess the most holy Seraphim as your defender in affliction!

Cry out to him: “Rejoice, O light of the Russian land!

You quenched the darkness of the enemy. //

Entreat the Lord to grant our souls peace and great mercy!”

O praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise Him, all ye peoples.

O marvelous wonder!

Behold, in the monastery of Sarov a firm pillar of goodness:

The blessèd Seraphim appears in truth to us.

Therefore the assemblies of those who are wise in God cry out,

exulting in Spirit:

“O saint, and father Seraphim, //

entreat the Lord to grant our souls peace and great mercy!”

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

Great are your mysteries, O Christ our God!

You have given us the holy monk Seraphim to be a light for us,

a strong defender against the enemy.

You intercede before God for monastics and all the Orthodox faithful,

and are the boast and strength of your monastery.

For now he intercedes with You, O Lord, //

asking for our souls peace and great mercy!

In the 8th Tone: Glory…:

Come, O assemblies of the faithful,

let us glorify our most wondrous father with songs of praise,

and let us cry out to him:

“O ven’rable father Seraphim,

you have truly been granted life divine,

and have received a crown of unfading glory from God.

Therefore the Monastery of Sarov praises you,

and the people, beholding the precious shrine of your relics

and the miracles that have taken place,

glorify the Lord who has glorified you.”

Entreat Him now, O ven’rable father, //

to grant peace and great mercy to our souls!

In the 6th Tone: Now and ever... :

Christ, the truth, comes to the Jordan,

to be baptized by John, who says to Him:

“It is I who need to be baptized by You;

why do You come to me?

I am only grass! I dare not touch the Fire!

Sanctify me, O Master, //

by Your divine Theophany!”

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.

The Prokeimenon in the 6th Tone:

My help comes from the Lord, Who made Heaven and Earth.

Verse: I lift up my eyes to the hills, from where my help will come.

My help comes from the Lord,/ Who made Heaven and Earth.

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 Aposticha: Tone 1:

The feast, which passed, is radiant,

but the one to come is brighter still!

There the angel proclaimed glad tidings,

but here the Forerunner prepares the Savior’s way!

There blood was spilled, as Bethlehem was made barren,

but here the life-giving water gives birth to many sons.

There the star revealed You to the Magi,

but here the Father proclaims You to the universe. //

O Incarnate Lord, coming to be made manifest, glory to You!

In the 2nd Tone: Verse: Therefore have I remembered You, from the land of Jordan and

Hermon.

Again my Jesus is washed in the Jordan!

Again He cleanses my many sins!

Truly He comes for baptism to wipe out Adam’s transgression.

He says to John: “Come, O Baptist; perform the awesome mystery!

Come, stretch out your hand!

Touch the head that crushes the heads of demons.

I will open the paradise that was closed of old, //

because of the deceit of the serpent!

In the 3rd Tone: Verse: The waters saw You, O God; the waters saw You and were afraid!

The feast, which passed, was radiant,

but the one to come is even more glorious!

There the Magi worshipped the Savior;

here the servant baptizes the Master!

There the shepherds saw the Child and were amazed; //

here the voice of the Father proclaims the Only-begotten Son!

In the 6th Tone: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

O holy father Seraphim,

who can worthily praise your wondrous life?

What tongue can tell of your struggles in the wilderness:

the vigils, the fasting, the isolation and silence, the ceaseless prayer?

Truly you are the pride of ascetics,

a powerful intercessor before God.

Rejoice, example of monks!

Rejoice, haven for those in torment! //

Pray to the Lord that our souls may be saved!

In the 3rd Tone: Now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Come, all you faithful!

Let us leave the land of Judea!

Instead, let us go to the wilderness of Jordan!

Let us behold the Baptism of our incarnate Enlightener!

The Baptist hesitates, crying out with fear:

“I dare not place my hand on Your head, O Savior!

If the sea fled and the Jordan turned back,

how shall I touch the Fire before which the Seraphim tremble?

The Jordan was parted when Elisha struck it with Elijah’s mantle;

shall not the waters return to their primal chaos

when they behold You naked in their courses?

How shall I not be burned by the all-consuming Fire?

The Jordan itself will forbid me, crying out:

‘Baptist, how will you baptize my Lord?’”

But the Lord commanded him, saying:

“Hinder not the cleansing of all!

I shall sanctify all creation with living water; //

for this I am made manifest!”

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.

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

Tone 4:

From your youth you loved Christ, O blessèd one!

You strove with zeal in the wilderness to win Him alone!

Constantly absorbed in prayer and labor with repentance of heart,

you were set on fire with the joy of the risen Lord.

You became the chosen favorite of the Mother of God.

Therefore we cry out to you: //

Save us by your prayers, O ven’rable father Seraphim!

Glory… now and ever…:

Prepare, O Zebulun!

Adorn yourself, O Nephtali!

Stop your flow, O river Jordan:

Receive the Master with Joy!

Rejoice with Eve, O Adam!

Do not hide as of old in Paradise,

for the one who beheld you naked

has appeared to enrobe you anew! //

Christ has come, willing to renew all of creation.

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.

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, of the Holy Seraphim, Wonderworker of Sarov, and of all the saints, O Lord, Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us. Amen.