Reader’s Vespers on Wednesday, September 23rd, 2020

Our Venerable Mother Theodora of Alexandria (September 11th/24th)

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 8th 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.

O marvelous wonder!

today the unwedded Mother of God

springs forth as a stem bearing a flower

from a childless and barren womb,

from the righteous Joachim and Anna!

Therefore the councils of the prophets

and the whole assembly of the patriarchs, //

rejoice at her nativity!

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.

Today David rejoices and Jesse dances!

Levi is magnified and the righteous Joachim leaps in spirit!

The barrenness of Anna is openly loosed by your birth, O pure Mary!

O unwedded one, the company of angels and all mortals //

call your divine womb blessèd!

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

Rejoice, union of earth with heaven!

Rejoice, O Temple of the Lord!

Rejoice, O unwedded Mother!

### You have most gloriously loosed the barrenness of Anna

and by your birth have given remission of sins to mortals!

Rejoice, O all-immaculate one!

Rejoice, O divine Temple! //

Rejoice, O Tabernacle in which our Creator and Lord made His dwelling

place!

In the 6th 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 Theodora, in a woman’s body yet in the guise of a man,

you undertook many struggles living in the midst of men.

You caused the passions to wither through fasting and constant prayer //

and by your unceasing contemplation of God.

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

### The setting sun never saw you sin

and the Lord, who is the never-setting Sun,

who knows the hearts of men and sees the hidden things,

knew of your never-ending labors.

He illumined the eyes of your heart with the light of repentance,

wherefore you diligently served Him //

through the perfection of virtues and continual abstinence.

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

In no way did you remain ignorant of the enemy’s wiles,

but you cherished the child who was not your own,

and nurtured him with a father’s kindness, O glorious Theodora.

With piety of mind you bore the reproach of men,

and suffered unbearable rebukes in your love for the child. //

Therefore we celebrate your honored festival.

In the 4th Tone: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen:

In accordance with the prophecy of the angel,

you came forth from the righteous Joachim and Anna

as a heaven, an all-pure fruit and the throne of God,

a vessel of purity,

heralding joy for all the world, O Virgin!

You are the mediator of our Life,

the removal of the curse, the bestowal of blessing!

Therefore, on the feast of your nativity, O divinely called Virgin, //

ask peace for the world and great mercy for our souls!

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 5th Tone: Save me, O God, by Thy name, and judge me by Thy strength!

 **Verse**: O Lord, hearken unto my prayer; give ear to the words of my mouth.

Save me, O God, by Thy name,/ and judge me by Thy strength!

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.

In the 2nd Tone:

You wept tears from the depths of your soul,

lamenting your barrenness, desiring children.

### Yet you gave birth to a child //

who is the boast of all our race!

Verse: Hear, O daughter, consider and incline your ear.

With voices raised in hymns

let us honor the ven’rable birth

of the most holy Virgin //

for because of her the world has been renewed!

Verse: Even the rich among the people shall entreat your favor.

Rejoice, O wise prophets;

divinely eloquent ones!

For now the Virgin is born //

through whom the salvation of the world will be born!

In the 4th Tone: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Let barren Anna clap her hands in gladness!

Let the earth put on bright array!

Let kings now dance and priests rejoice in hymns of blessing!

Let the whole world celebrate!

For behold the Queen, the spotless Bride of the Father

today has blossomed from the root of Jesse.

No more shall woman bear in sorrow, for joy has blossomed!

The life of mankind now dwells in the world!

the gifts of Joachim are not turned away,

the lamentations of Anna have been changed to joy.

She cries: “Rejoice with me, O chosen Israel!

The Lord has granted me a living palace of His divine glory

for the joy and gladness of us all //

and the 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)***

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, have mercy on us. Amen.

Tone 8:

In you, O Mother, was carefully preserved what is according to the

image

for you took up your cross and followed Christ.

By so doing you taught us to disregard the flesh for it passes away,

but to care instead for the soul for it is immortal. //

Therefore, O blessèd Theodora, your spirit rejoices with the angels.

In the 4th Tone: Glory … now and ever…:

Your nativity, O Virgin,

has proclaimed joy to the whole universe!

The Sun of righteousness, Christ our God,

has shone from you, O Theotokos!

By annulling the curse,

He bestowed a blessing. //

By destroying death, He has granted us eternal life.

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 our Venerable Mother Theodora of Allexandria, and all the saints, Lord, Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us. Amen.