

The Paschal Vespers of Love

Deacon: Bless, master.

PRIEST: Blessed is our God always: now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

PEOPLE: Amen

Christ is risen from the dead trampling down death by death and upon those in the tombs bestowing life. *(Three times)*

In that we have beheld the resurrection of Christ, let us worship the Holy Lord Jesus, the only sinless One. Thy cross do we adore, O Christ, and thy holy resurrection we praise and glorify: for thou art our God, and we know none other beside thee; we call upon thy name. O come, all you faithful, let us adore Christ's holy resurrection. For lo, through the cross is joy come into all the world. Ever blessing the Lord, let us sing his resurrection, for in that he endured the cross for us he has destroyed death by death.

The Hypakoe

Mary and her companions came before the dawn and found the stone rolled away from the sepulcher and heard from the angel: Why dost thou seek the One who dwells in eternal light as a mortal man among the dead? Behold the grave clothes. Go quickly and proclaim to the world that the Lord is risen, and has put death to death; for he is the Son of God, the Savior of mankind.

Kontakion

O Immortal One, though thou descended into the grave, thou didst destroy the power of Hades and, as Victor, thou didst rise, O Christ God, saying to the ointment-bearing women: Rejoice! giving peace to thy Disciples, O Bestower of resurrection on the fallen.

In the grave with the body, but in hades with the soul as God; in paradise with the thief, and on the throne with the Father and the Spirit wast thou, O Christ, filling all things, thyself uncircumscribed.

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

As life-bearing, as more splendid than paradise and more radiant than any royal chamber, O Christ, thy tomb is shown forth, the fountain of our resurrection.

Now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Rejoice, O holy and divine dwelling of the Most High, for through thee, O Theotokos, joy was given to those who cry aloud to thee: Blessed art thou among women, O all-pure Lady.

READER: Lord, have mercy. (*Forty times*)

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

More honorable than the Cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, thou who without corruption¹, gavest birth to God the Word and art truly Theotokos, we magnify thee.

Father, bless in the name of the Lord.

¹Or remaining virgin...etc.,

PRIEST: May Christ our true God who rose again from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life through the intercessions of his all-immaculate and all-blameless holy Mother; by the might of the precious and life-giving cross; of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; of Saint *(N)* patron Saint of this Church; of Saint(s) *N.N.*, whose memory we celebrate; and of all the saints: have mercy upon us, and save us, forasmuch as he is good and loves mankind.

Instead of “Through the prayers of our holy fathers . . .” *he says:*

PRIEST: Christ is risen from the dead trampling down death by death and upon those in the tombs

PEOPLE:bestowing life.

The priest stands before the Altar, holding in his left hand the Paschal candle and the small Paschal Gospel (or a hand Cross), and in his right hand the censer. Making the sign of the cross over the gospel book with the censor he begins:

PRIEST: Glory to the holy, consubstantial, life-giving, and undivided Trinity, always now and ever and unto ages of ages,

PEOPLE:Amen.

The priest censes the front of the holy table as he chants the Paschal troparion:

PRIEST: Christ is risen from the dead trampling down death by death and upon those in the tombs bestowing life. (*Three times*)

The Paschal Verses

Psalm 68<67>

PRIEST: Verse 1: Let God arise and let his enemies be scattered, and let those who hate him flee from before his face.

PEOPLE:Christ is risen from the dead . . .

PRIEST: Verse 2: As smoke vanishes, so let them vanish; as wax melts before the fire.

PEOPLE:Christ is risen from the dead...

PRIEST: Verse 3: So let sinners perish at the presence of God; and let the righteous be glad.

PEOPLE: Christ is risen from the dead . . .

PRIEST: Verse 4: This is the day which the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

PEOPLE: Christ is risen from the dead . . .

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

PEOPLE: Christ is risen from the dead . . .

PRIEST: Now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

PEOPLE: Christ is risen from the dead . . .

Then in a louder voice, the priest chants:

PRIEST: Christ is risen from the dead trampling down death by death and upon those in the tombs.

The people conclude the troparion:

PEOPLE: bestowing life.

The Litany of Peace

DEACON: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

CHOIR: Lord, have mercy.

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

CHOIR: Lord, have mercy.

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

CHOIR: Lord, have mercy.

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

CHOIR: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: For our Father and Metropolitan PHILIP, for the venerable priesthood, the diaconate in Christ, for all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

CHOIR: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: For the President of the United States and all civil authorities, and for our armed forces everywhere, let us pray to the Lord.

CHOIR: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: For this city, and for every city and land, and for the faithful who dwell therein, let us pray to the Lord.

CHOIR: Lord, have mercy.

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

CHOIR: Lord, have mercy.

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

CHOIR: Lord, have mercy.

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

CHOIR: Lord, have mercy.

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

CHOIR: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: Calling to remembrance our all-holy, immaculate, most blessed and glorious Lady Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the Saints, let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.

CHOIR: To thee, O Lord.

PRIEST: For unto thee are due all glory, honor, and worship: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit: now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

CHOIR: Amen.

When the people begin the singing of the second verse of Psalm 140 (141), the priest/deacon performs the great censing.

Psalm 141 (140)

In the Second Tone

CHOIR: O Lord, I have cried unto thee, hear thou me. Hear thou me, O Lord. O Lord, I have cried unto thee, hear thou me: give ear to the voice of my supplication, when I cry unto thee. Hear thou me, O Lord.

Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice. Hear thou me, O Lord.

-Set a watch, O Lord, on my mouth, and a guard on the door of my lips.

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

-With men who work iniquity; I will not associate with what they choose.

-The righteous will correct and reprove me with mercy, but let not the oil of the wicked anoint my head.

-For my prayer will be even in the midst of their pleasures. Their judges have been overthrown off the sides of the rocks.

-Then they shall hear my words for they are pleasant. Like a lump of clay shattered on the ground, so shall their bones be strewn at the mouth of Hades.

-But my eyes are turned toward thee, O God, my Lord. In thee I have hoped, take not away my soul.

-Keep me from the trap that they have laid for me, and from the snares of evildoers.

-The wicked shall fall into their own nets, while I alone escape.

Psalm 142 (141)

-With my voice, I cried to the Lord; with my voice, I made supplication to the Lord.

-I pour out my prayer before him; I declare my trouble before him.

-When my spirit is faint, thou knowest my way.

-In the path where I walk, they have hidden a trap for me.

-I looked on my right hand and watched, but there was no one who takes notice of me;

-There is no refuge for me; no one cares for me.

-I cried to thee O Lord; I said: thou art my refuge, my portion in the land of the living.

-Attend to my cry, for I am brought very low.

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

-Bring my soul out of prison, so that I may give thanks to thy name.

-The righteous will wait for me until thou recompense me.

Psalm 130 (129)

-Out of the depths I have cried to thee, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice!

- Let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

If thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, Lord, who can stand? But there is forgiveness with thee.

Come, let us worship God the Word, born of the Father before all ages and incarnate of the Virgin Mary. For enduring the Cross he submitted himself to burial, as he willed. But rising from the dead he saved me his prodigal servant.

Because of thy name, I have waited for thee, O Lord; my soul has waited for thy word; my soul has hoped in the Lord.

Christ our Savior has nailed upon the Cross the record that stood against us and wiped it out² and destroyed the power of death.³ Let us worship his Resurrection on the third day.

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

Come, let us join the Archangels and praise Christ's Resurrection, for he is the Redeemer and Savior of our

²(Col. 2:14).

³(Heb. 2:14).

souls. And he is coming once again in awesome and mighty glory, judging the world which he has formed.

For with the Lord there is mercy and with him is abundant redemption, and he will redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

O Master, when thou wast crucified and buried, the angel said to the women: Come and see the place where the Lord lay, for he has been raised as he said⁴ because he is Almighty. So we worship thee, who alone art Immortal: O Giver of Life, Have mercy on us.

Praise the Lord, all you nations! Laud him, all you peoples!

O Lord, by thy Cross, thou didst abolish the curse of the tree and by thy Burial thou didst put to death the power of death. And by thy resurrection thou didst enlighten mankind. So we cry: O Christ our God and Benefactor, glory to thee.

For great is his mercy toward us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever.

⁴(Matt. 28:6,7).

O Lord, the gates of death in fear opened before thee, and the gate-keepers of Hades, beholding thee, were filled with terror as well. Thou didst shatter the gates of brass, and thou didst crush the iron bars;⁵ thou didst bring us out from death and shadow of death and broke their bonds asunder.⁶

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the holy Spirit,

Singing the salvation hymn, come, let us open our mouths, falling down in the house of the Lord saying: O Lord, forgive us all our sins, for thou wast hung on the Cross and didst rise from the dead and art in the Father's bosom.

Now and ever and unto ages of ages, Amen.

The shadow of the Law has passed, and grace has come; for as the bush was unconsumed when it was blazing,⁷ so, thou, O Virgin, hast given birth, remaining Virgin after birth. The pillar of fire is gone, but now the Sun of Righteousness has shone forth; instead of Moses, Christ, the salvation of our souls.

⁵(Ps. 107<106>:16).

⁶(Ps. 107<106>:14).

⁷(Ex. 3:4).

The Entrance
The Prayer of the Entrance

DEACON: Let us pray to the Lord.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

PRIEST: In the evening and in the morning and at noonday we praise thee, we bless thee, we give thanks to thee, and we implore thee: O Lord, Master of all, lover of mankind, direct our prayer as incense before thee;⁸ and do not incline our hearts to words or thoughts of evil; but deliver us from all who seek after our souls.⁹ For our eyes are turned toward thee, O Lord,¹⁰ and in thee we have put our hope, O our God, for to thee belong all glory, honor and worship: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit: now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

PEOPLE: Amen.

DEACON: Father, bless the holy entrance.

⁸(Ps.141<140>:2).

⁹(Ps.59<58>:3).

¹⁰(Ps.141<140>:8).

PRIEST: Blessed is the entrance of thy holy ones,¹¹ always: now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

PEOPLE: Amen.

The priest/deacon lifts up the Gospel.

DEACON: Wisdom! Let us attend!

***The Prayer of Thanksgiving
(By the Martyr Athenogenes)***

PEOPLE: O gladsome light of the holy glory of the immortal, heavenly, holy, blessed Father, O Jesus Christ! Now that we have come to the setting of the sun and behold the light of evening, we praise God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. For meet it is that at all times thou shouldst be magnified by pleasant melody, O Son of God, who bestowest life. Therefore, the world glorifies thee.

DEACON: The evening prokeimenon.

***The Vesperal Prokeimenon
Psalms 77 <76>***

¹¹An alternative reading is “Blessed is the entrance into thy sanctuary.”

Tone Seven

READER: What God is so great as our God? Thou art the God who alone works wonders.

Verse 1: Thou hast declared thy might among the peoples. With thy arm thou redeemed thy people.

What God is so great as our God? Thou art the God who alone works wonders.

Verse 2: And I said, "This is my grief; that the right hand of the Most High has changed."

What God is so great as our God? Thou art the God who alone works wonders.

Verse 3: I will call to mind the deeds of the Lord; I will remember thy wonders of old.

What God is so great as our God? Thou art the God who alone works wonders.

The Gospel

DEACON: And that we may be accounted worthy to hear the Holy Gospel, let us pray to the Lord.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy. *(Three times)*

DEACON: Wisdom. Attend, let us hear the holy Gospel.

PRIEST: Peace be to all.

PEOPLE: And to thy spirit.

DEACON: The reading is from the holy Gospel according to Saint John.

PEOPLE: Glory to thee, O Lord, glory to thee.

DEACON: Let us attend.