

THE ORDER FOR READER VESPERS
WHEN WE ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND CHURCH

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 13, 2021

**EVE OF THE GREAT FEAST OF THE
UNIVERSAL EXALTATION OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS OF OUR LORD**

THE SERVICE TAKES PLACE IN FRONT OF OUR ICON CORNER

EVERYONE: O, God cleanse me a sinner and have mercy on me! (3x)

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

READER: Amen. 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. (3 times)
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

O most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities, for Thy Name's sake.

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

EVERYONE: Our Father, Who art in heaven, 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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

READER: Amen. Lord have mercy (12x)

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

Come, let us worship God, Our King! Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, Our King and our God! Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and our God! Come, Let us worship and fall down before Him!

THE PSALM OF CREATION (Psalm 104/103 LXX)

Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD my God, thou art very great! Thou art clothed with honor and majesty, who covers thyself with light as with a garment, who hast stretched out the heavens like a tent, who hast laid the beams of thy chambers on the waters, who makes the clouds thy chariot, who rides on the wings of the wind, who makes the winds thy messengers, fire and flame thy ministers. Thou didst set the earth on its foundations, so that it should never be shaken. Thou didst cover it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains. At thy rebuke they fled; at the sound of thy thunder they took to flight.

The mountains rose, the valleys sank down to the place which thou didst appoint for them. Thou didst set a bound which they should not pass, so that they might not again cover the earth. Thou makest springs gush forth in the valleys; they flow between the hills, they give drink to every beast of the field; the wild asses quench their thirst. By them the birds of the air have their habitation; they sing among the branches.

From thy lofty abode thou waterest the mountains; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy work. Thou dost cause the grass to grow for the cattle, and fodder for the animals that serve man, That he may bring forth food from the earth, and wine to gladden the heart of man, oil to make his face shine, and bread to strengthen man's heart. The trees of the LORD are watered abundantly, the cedars of Lebanon which he planted. In them the birds build their nests; the stork has her home in the fir trees. The high mountains are for the wild goats; the rocks are a refuge for the badgers.

Thou hast made the moon to mark the seasons; the sun knows its time for setting. Thou makest darkness, and it is night, when all the beasts of the forest creep forth. The young lions roar for their prey, seeking their food from God. When the sun rises, they get them away and lie down in their dens. Man goes forth to his work and to his labor until the evening.

O LORD, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy creatures. Yonder is the sea, great and wide, which teems with things innumerable, living things both small and great. There go the ships, and Leviathan which thou didst form to sport in it. These all look to thee, to give them their food in due season. When thou givest to them, they gather it up; when thou openest thy hand, they are filled with good things. When thou hidest thy face, they are dismayed; when thou takest away their breath, they die and return to their dust. When thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth.

May the glory of the LORD endure for ever, may the LORD rejoice in his works, who looks on the earth and it trembles, who touches the mountains and they smoke! I will sing to the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have being. May my meditation be pleasing to him, for I rejoice in the LORD. Let sinners be consumed from the earth, and let the wicked be no more! Bless the LORD, O my soul! The sun knows its time for setting. Thou makest darkness and it is night. O Lord how manifold are thy works, in wisdom hast thou made them all!

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, Glory to Thee, O God! (3x)

THE GREAT LITANY is not said in the absence of a Priest or Deacon.

The reader continues:

READER: Lord have mercy (12x)

Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

EVERYONE: Amen. Followed by: 'Blessed is the Man...'

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 be 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! (3x)

**THE LITTLE LITANY is not said in the
absence of a Priest or Deacon. The reader continues:**

READER: Lord have mercy (3x)
Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

CHOIR: Amen. Followed by: "Lord, I call upon Thee..." (Tone 6)

"Lord I Call..." Tone 6

Lord, I call upon Thee, hear me! Hear me, O Lord! Lord, I call upon Thee, hear me! Receive the voice
of my prayer, when I call upon Thee!// Hear me, O Lord!

Let my prayer arise in Thy sight as incense, and let the lifting up of my hands
be an evening sacrifice!// Hear me, O Lord!

Reader: (8) *Out of the depths I cry to Thee, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice!*

As the Cross is lifted on high, it urges all of creation
to praise the undefiled Passion of Christ, Who was lifted up on it.
For by the Cross He killed the one who killed us, and brought us back to life when we were dead. He
adorned us in beauty,
and in His compassion made us worthy to live in heaven.
Therefore we rejoice and exalt His name,// and magnify His infinite condescension.

Reader: (7) *Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications!*

As the Cross is lifted on high, it urges all of creation
to praise the undefiled Passion of Christ, Who was lifted up on it.
For by the Cross He killed the one who killed us, and brought us back to life when we were dead. He
adorned us in beauty,
and in His compassion made us worthy to live in heaven.
Therefore we rejoice and exalt His name,// and magnify His infinite condescension.

Reader: (6) *If Thou, O Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee.*

As the Cross is lifted on high, it urges all of creation to praise the undefiled Passion of Christ, Who was lifted up on it. For by the Cross He killed the one who killed us, and brought us back to life when we were dead. He adorned us in beauty, and in His compassion made us worthy to live in heaven. Therefore we rejoice and exalt His name, // and magnify His infinite condescension.

Reader: (5) *For Thy name's sake have I waited for Thee, O Lord, my soul has waited for Thy word; my soul has hoped on the Lord.*

Moses prefigured thee, O precious Cross, when he stretched out his hands on high, and put the tyrant Amalek to flight. Thou art the boast of the faithful, the support of those who suffer, the glory of the Apostles, the champion of the Righteous, and the preservation of all the Saints. Therefore, beholding thee raised on high, creation rejoices and celebrates, glorifying Christ Who has joined together through thee that which was divided // in His infinite goodness.

Reader: (4) *From the morning watch until night, from the morning, watch let Israel hope on the Lord!*

Moses prefigured thee, O precious Cross, when he stretched out his hands on high, and put the tyrant Amalek to flight. Thou art the boast of the faithful, the support of those who suffer, the glory of the Apostles, the champion of the Righteous, and the preservation of all the Saints. Therefore, beholding thee raised on high, creation rejoices and celebrates, glorifying Christ Who has joined together through thee that which was divided // in His infinite goodness.

Reader: (3) *For with the Lord there is mercy and with Him is plenteous redemption, and He will deliver Israel from all his iniquities.*

Moses prefigured thee, O precious Cross, when he stretched out his hands on high, and put the tyrant Amalek to flight. Thou art the boast of the faithful, the support of those who suffer, the glory of the Apostles, the champion of the Righteous, and the preservation of all the Saints. Therefore, beholding thee raised on high, creation rejoices and celebrates, glorifying Christ Who has joined together through thee that which was divided // in His infinite goodness.

Reader: (2) *Praise the Lord, all nations! Praise Him, all peoples!*

O most venerable Cross, attended by ranks of rejoicing angels, as thou art exalted today at the divine command, thou dost lift up again all those who through the stolen food had been cast out and were sunk in death. Therefore, as we venerate thee in faith with heart and lips, we draw sanctification from thee and cry aloud: "Exalt Christ, the God transcendent in goodness, // and venerate His divine footstool!"

Reader: (1) For His mercy is abundant towards us; and the truth of the Lord endures for ever.

O most venerable Cross, attended by ranks of rejoicing angels,
as thou art exalted today at the divine command,
thou dost lift up again all those who through the stolen food
had been cast out and were sunk in death. Therefore, as we venerate thee in faith with heart and lips,
we draw sanctification from thee and cry aloud: "Exalt Christ, the God transcendent in goodness,//
and venerate His divine footstool!"

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

Come, all ye nations, let us fall down in worship before the blessed Tree,
by which eternal justice has come to pass!
For he who deceived Adam by a Tree is caught by the lure of the Cross;
and he who held under his tyranny the creature endowed by God with
royal dignity is brought down in a headlong fall. The serpent's venom is washed away by the blood of
God, and the curse of just condemnation is undone when the Just One is condemned by an unjust
judgment.
For it was fitting that the Tree should be healed by a Tree, and that by the Passion of the passionless
God what was wrought on the Tree should destroy the passions of man who was condemned. But
glory to Thy dread dispensation for our sakes, O Christ the King, through which Thou hast saved us
all// since Thou art good and the Lover of man!

CHOIR: O Gladsome Light of the holy glory of the immortal, Father heavenly, holy, blessed Jesus Christ. Now that we have come to the setting of the sun, and behold the light of evening, we praise Father, Son and Holy Spirit God. For meet it is at all times to worship Thee with voices of praise, O Son of God and Giver of life; therefore all the world glorifies Thee.

THE EVENING PROKEIMENON

READER: The evening prokeimenon is in the 4th tone: The Lord will hearken unto me when I cry unto Him.

CHOIR: *The Lord will hearken unto me when I cry unto Him.*

READER: When I called upon Thee, O God of my righteousness, Thou didst hearken unto me.

CHOIR: *The Lord will hearken unto me when I cry unto Him.*

READER: The Lord will hearken unto me!

CHOIR: *When I cry unto Him.*

THE SCRIPTURE READINGS

THE OLD TESTAMENT READINGS (#1)

Reader: The Reading is from The Book of Exodus.

Reader: (*Reads Exodus 15:22-16:1*)

So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea; then they went out into the Wilderness of Shur. And they went three days in the wilderness and found no water.

Now when they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. Therefore the name of it was called Marah. And the people complained against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?"

So he cried out to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a tree. When he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet. There He made a statute and an ordinance for them, and there He tested them, and said, "If you diligently heed the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the Lord who heals you.

Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees; so they camped there by the waters.

And they journeyed from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came to the Wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they departed from the land of Egypt.

THE OLD TESTAMENT READING (#2)

Reader: The Reading is from The Book of Proverbs.

Reader: (*Reads Proverbs 3:11-18*)

My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor detest His correction;
for whom the Lord loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights.

Happy is the man who finds wisdom, and the man who gains understanding; for her proceeds are better than the profits of silver, and her gain than fine gold.

She is more precious than rubies, and all the things you may desire cannot compare with her. Length of days is in her right hand, in her left hand riches and honor.

Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.

She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, and happy are all who retain her.

THE OLD TESTAMENT READING (#3)

Reader: The Reading is from The Prophecy of Isaiah

Reader: (*Reads Prophet Isaiah 60:11-16*)

Therefore your gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day or night, that men may bring to you the wealth of the Gentiles, and their kings in procession.

For the nation and kingdom which will not serve you shall perish, and those nations shall be utterly ruined. "The glory of Lebanon shall come to you, the cypress, the pine, and the box tree together, to beautify the place of My sanctuary; and I will make the place of My feet glorious. Also the sons of those who afflicted you shall come bowing to you, and all those who despised you shall fall prostrate at the soles of your feet; and they shall call you the City of the Lord, Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

"Whereas you have been forsaken and hated, so that no one went through you, I will make you an eternal excellence, a joy of many generations.

You shall drink the milk of the Gentiles, and milk the breast of kings; you shall know that I, the Lord, am your Savior and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

**THE LITANY OF FERVENT SUPPLICATION is not said
in the absence of a Priest or Deacon. The reader continues:**

READER: Lord have mercy (12x)

Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

CHOIR: Amen.

READER: Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this night without sin.

Blessed are Thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy Name for ever.
Amen.

Let Thy mercy be upon us, O Lord, even as we have set our hope on Thee.

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

Blessed art Thou, O Master; make me to understand Thy commandments.

Blessed art Thou, O Holy One; enlighten me with Thy precepts.

Thy mercy endures forever, O Lord! Do not despise the works of Thy hands!

To Thee belongs worship, to Thee belongs praise, to Thee belongs glory: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

**THE LITANY OF SUPPLICATION is not said
in the absence of a Priest or Deacon. The reader continues:**

READER: Lord have mercy (12x)

Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

CHOIR: Amen.

Followed by the Aposticha.

Aposticha Stikhera

Rejoice, O Life-bearing Cross, the invincible trophy of godliness, door to Paradise, firm support of the faithful, a wall that encompasses the Church! Through thee corruption has been destroyed and abolished. The power of death has been swallowed up, and we are raised from earth to Heaven. Thou art a weapon that cannot be vanquished, the adversary of demons, the glory of the martyrs, the true adornment of saints, and the haven of salvation,// granting the world great mercy.

Reader: *Extol the Lord our God: and worship at His footstool for He is holy!*

Rejoice, O Cross of the Lord, through which mankind has been delivered from the curse! Thou art a sign of true joy, shattering our enemies by thine Exaltation. O Cross, worthy of all honor, thou art our help, Thou art the strength of kings. Thou art the power of the righteous. Thou art the majesty of priests. All who sign themselves with thee are freed from danger. O rod of strength, under which we like sheep are tended, thou art a weapon of peace round which the angels stand in fear. Thou art the divine glory of Christ, // Who grants the world great mercy.

Reader: *God is our King before the ages; He has worked salvation in the midst of the earth!*

Rejoice, O guide of the blind, physician of the sick and resurrection of all the dead; thou hast raised us up when we were fallen into mortality,
O precious Cross! Through thee corruption has been destroyed,
and incorruption has blossomed forth. We mortals are made divine,
and the devil is completely overthrown. Today, as we see thee exalted by the hands of bishops, we exalt Him Who was lifted up upon thee,
and we fall down in worship before thee, // drawing rich streams of great mercy.

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

Thy precious Cross, O Christ God, which Moses of old prefigured in his own person when he overthrew Amalek and put him to flight;
which David commanded to be worshipped, calling it thy footstool:
this same Cross we sinners worship today with unworthy lips. We praise Thee Who wast pleased to be nailed upon it, and we cry to Thee://
“With the thief, make us worthy of Thy Kingdom, O Lord!”

After which is sung The Prayer of St. Simeon: ‘Lord, now lettest...’

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

READER: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (3 times)

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

O most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse from our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities, for Thy Name's sake.

Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy.

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

Our Father, Who art in heaven, 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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

CHOIR: Amen.

TROPARION for the Great Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross - Tone 1 (3x)

O Lord, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance!

Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries;

and by virtue of Thy Cross,// preserve Thy habitation!

READER: More honorable than the Cherubim and more glorious beyond than the Seraphim, without defilement, You gave birth to God the Word, True Theotokos, we magnify You.

CHOIR: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen. Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy. Lord, Bless!

READER: May Christ our True God, through the Prayers of our Holy Fathers, through the Prayers of the Most Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, by the Power of the Precious and Life-Creating Cross, the Great Feast of whose Universal Exaltation we celebrate today, through the protection of the Bodiless Powers of Heaven, through the prayers of the Holy Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John, through the prayers of the holy glorious and all-laudable Apostles, through the Prayers of all the North American Saints, through the prayers of _____ the patron of this Holy Temple, of the holy and righteous Ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna, and of all the saints, have mercy on us and save us.

CHOIR: Amen. (*Continues next page with "Before Thy Cross ..."*)

CHOIR:

Before Thy Cross, we bow down in worship, O Master,
and Thy holy Resurrection, we glorify. *Prostration*

Before Thy Cross, we bow down in worship, O Master,
and Thy holy Resurrection, we glorify. *prostration*

Before Thy Cross, we bow down in worship, O Master,
and Thy holy Resurrection, we glorify. *prostration*

(The faithful now come up and venerate the Precious Cross and Icons in our Icon Corner.)

READER: Through the Prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us
and save us.

CHOIR: Amen. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy.