

Lenten Vespers

(as served on Sunday evenings)

This booklet is meant to be used as a generic template and so it may be necessary to adjust it to fit individual parish practices.

(This booklet is meant to be a template which directors and clergy may use. The changeable parts, such as the stichera for Lord I Call and the Aposticha, need to be inserted based on the rubrics for that particular day.)

The priest, vested in epitrachelion, stands in front of the altar and says:

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

Reader Amen. O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, who art everywhere 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. (3x) Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

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.

Tone 3

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God! / He is the judge of the heart's intentions and thoughts. / Let no one treat His boundless love with presumption, / but let us approach Christ in meekness and fear, / that we may receive mercy, // and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Verse: *All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God!*

Tone 7

Evil and adulterous generation, / why have you treated your Lord so faithlessly? / How can you cling to the Old Testament, / and not become heirs of its promises? / How can you glory in the Father, but reject the Son? / Why have you rejected the prophet's words which proclaim Him? / Your own children sang to your shame today: / Hosanna to the son of David!// Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord!

Glory....

Come, faithful, / let us pass from one holy feast to another! / Let us hasten from the palms and branches / to the solemn celebration of Christ's saving passion! / We shall see Him voluntarily suffer for our sake! / Let us offer Him a fitting hymn of thanksgiving: / Fountain of tender mercy and haven of salvation,// O Lord, glory to Thee!

Now and ever...

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.

Priest For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power and the glory, of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

As the reader chants "Come, let us worship" the priest makes three bows, kisses the holy table and exits the altar through the north door. He then stands before the Royal Doors and quietly reads the Prayers of Light while the reader chants the Psalm.

Note: The private prayers for the priest are in blue.

Reader

Amen. Come, let us worship God our King. Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ our King and God. 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 art very great! Thou art clothed with honor and majesty, who coverest 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 makest the clouds Thy chariot, who ridest on the wings of the wind, who makest 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

Glory... Now and ever...

Repeat: Gracious Lord, Thou ridest

Apostikha (Tone 2)

Come, faithful, / let us pass from one holy feast to another! / Let us hasten from the palms and branches / to the solemn celebration of Christ's saving passion! / We shall see Him voluntarily suffer for our sake! / Let us offer Him a fitting hymn of thanksgiving: / Fountain of tender mercy and haven of salvation, // O Lord, glory to Thee!

Verse: *Sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done marvelous things!*

Tone 3

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God! / He is the judge of the heart's intentions and thoughts. / Let no one treat His boundless love with presumption, / but let us approach Christ in meekness and fear, / that we may receive mercy, // and find grace to help us in our time of need.

The Sixth Week of Lent The Week of Palms

Lord I Call (Tone 8)

Rejoice and be glad, city of Zion! / Exult and be joyful, church of God! / The King is coming in righteousness. / He rides on a colt, the foal of an ass. / The children sing His praises: / Hosanna in the highest!// Blessed art Thou of great mercy! Have mercy on us!
(twice)

Today the Savior comes to Jerusalem, / fulfilling the scriptures. / He is greeted with palms and a carpet of clothes. / All know it is He: / The Lord, Whom the cherubim praise. / Hosanna in the highest!// Blessed art Thou of great mercy! Have mercy on us!

Gracious Lord, Thou ridest upon the cherubim, / and art praised by the seraphim, / now Thou ridest like David on the foal of an ass. / The children sing hymns worthy of God, / while the priests and scribes blaspheme against Thee. / By riding an untamed colt, Thou hast prefigured the salvation of the gentiles, / those wild beasts, who will be brought from unbelief to faith! / Glory to Thee, merciful Christ.// Our King and the Lover of mankind!

PRIEST (The Prayers of Light)

First Prayer – O Lord, compassionate and merciful, long-suffering and of great mercy, give heed to our prayer, and attend to the voice of our supplication. Work upon us a sign for good. Guide us in Thy way that we may walk in Thy truth. Gladden our hearts that we may fear Thy holy name. For Thou art great and workest wonders. Thou alone art God, and among the gods there is none like unto Thee, O Lord, powerful in mercy, and good in might, to help and to comfort and to save all those that hope in Thy holy name. 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. Amen.

Second Prayer – O Lord, in Thy displeasure, rebuke us not, neither chasten us in Thy wrath, but deal with us according to Thy tenderness O Physician and Healer of our souls. Guide us unto the haven of Thy will. Enlighten the eyes of our hearts unto the knowledge of Thy truth, and grant unto us that the remainder of the present day and the whole time of our life may be peaceful and sinless, through the intercessions of the holy Theotokos and of all the Saints. For Thine is the strength, and Thine are the kingdom and

asses quench their thirst. By them the birds of the air have their habitation; they sing 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 plants for man to cultivate, 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

Lord, by the intercessions of all the saints, / and of the Theotokos, grant us Thy peace and have mercy on us// only compassionate One!

Glory... Now and ever... (*Theotokion*)

Pure Virgin Theotokos, delight of the heavenly hosts / and precious champion of those on earth, / save us who take refuge in you, // for after God, we have placed our hope in you.

Apostikha (Tone 1)

Wonderful is the purpose of the compassionate Savior towards us: / For having knowledge of future things as present, / He made known the story of the rich man and Lazarus. / Let us contemplate the end of both. / Let us run from the cruelty and hatred of one of them; / let us emulate the endurance and long-suffering of the other, / that delighting with him in the bosom of Abraham, // we may cry out: Lord, righteous Judge, glory to Thee!

Verse: I lift up my eyes to Thee, enthroned in the heavens! Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God, till He have mercy upon us.

Repeat: Wonderful is the purpose.....

Verse: Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us, for we have had more than enough of contempt. Too long our soul has been sated with the scorn of those who are at ease, the contempt of the proud.

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

Third Prayer – O Lord our God, remember us Thy sinful and unprofitable servants when we call upon Thy holy, venerable name, and put us not to shame in our expectation of Thy mercy, but grant us, O Lord, all our petitions which are unto salvation, and make us worthy to love and fear Thee with all our hearts, and to do Thy will in all things. For Thou art a good God who lovest mankind and to Thee we send up glory, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Fourth Prayer – O Thou, to whom the holy powers sing with unending hymns and unceasing doxologies, fill our mouths with Thy praise, that we may magnify Thy holy name. And grant unto us part and inheritance with all those that fear Thee in truth and keep Thy commandments, through the intercessions of the holy Theotokos and of all Thy saints. 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. Amen.

Fifth Prayer – O Lord, Lord, who upholdest all things in the most pure hollow of Thy hand, who art long-suffering towards us all, and repentest Thee at our wickedness, remember Thy compassion and Thy

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 ground. May the glory of the Lord endure forever, 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! Praise the Lord.

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

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

The Fifth Week of Lent

Lord I Call (Tone 1)

Christ the rich, Thou hast assumed poverty, / and enriched the human race with illumination and immortality: / Enrich me with virtues, / for I am impoverished by the pleasures of life. / Establish me with Lazarus the poor; / deliver me from the punishments of the rich// and from the Hades that is prepared for me.

I have become rich with evil in a wretched way. / I have loved luxury; exploited the pleasures of life, / and have come under the condemnation of the fire of Gehenna, / I have slighted my mind, / and am famished and cast down like Lazarus / before the gates of divine deeds.// Therefore have compassion on me, Lord and Master!

Believers, let us diligently begin the sixth week of the solemn fast. / Let us sing songs to the Lord coming in glory to Jerusalem / to cause death to die by His divine power: / The offering of the Sunday of Palms. / Therefore, let us prepare the banners of victory, in true worship, / and with branches of virtue cry out// Hosanna to the Creator of all.

Tone 6

When Adam fell among the robbers of
thought, / he was robbed of his mind; / his
soul was wounded, and he was cast out na-
ked and without any aid. / The priest who
came before the law did not listen to him. /
The Levite who came after the law had no
compassion on him: / Only Thou, O God,
Who camest not from Samaria but from the
Theotokos!// Lord, glory to Thee!

*Verse: Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have
mercy upon us, for we have had more than
enough of contempt. Too long our soul has
been sated with the scorn of those who are
at ease, the contempt of the proud.*

Thy martyrs, Lord, / did not deny Thee, / nor
did they turn from Thy commandments.// By
their intercessions, have mercy on us.

Glory... Now and ever... (*Theotokion*)

Believers, let us give angelic praise / to the
heavenly chamber, the well-sealed door! /
Let us cry: Rejoice, Lady! / You brought
forth Christ our God for us, / raising up the
Life-giver and Savior of all. / Undeified hope
of Christians, destroy with your own hands//
our great enemies bound in heresy.

mercy. Look upon us with Thy goodness; grant unto
us also by Thy grace, though the remainder of the pre-
sent day, to avoid the diverse subtle snares of the Evil
One, and keep our lives unassailed, through the grace
of Thine all-holy Spirit. Through the mercy and love of
man of thine only-begotten Son, with whom Thou art
blessed together with Thine all-holy, good and life-
creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.
Amen.

Sixth Prayer – O God, great and wonderful, who
with goodness indescribable and rich providence or-
derest all things and grantest unto us earthly goods,
who hast given us a pledge of the promised kingdom
through the good things already granted unto us, and
hast made us to shun all harm during that part of the
present day which is past, grant that we may also fulfill
the remainder of this day blamelessly before Thy holy
glory, and hymn Thee, our God, who alone art good
and lovest mankind. For Thou art our God and unto
Thee do we send up glory, to the Father, and to the
Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ag-
es of ages. Amen.

Seventh Prayer – O great and most high God,
Who alone hast immortality, and dwellest in light unap-
proachable, Who hast fashioned all creation in wis-
dom, Who hast divided the light from the darkness
and hast set the sun to rule the day and the moon and
the stars to rule the night, who hast also vouchsafed
unto us sinners at the present hour to come before

At this point the deacon exits the altar and stands before the icon of the Theotokos. If the priest is serving alone he intones the Great Litany from where he is standing.

As the reader chants the Alleluia, the priest and deacon make 3 bows, then bow to each other during the last Alleluia. Then the priest returns to the altar and kisses the holy table.

If a deacon is serving he goes in front of the Royal Doors and intones the Great Litany.

Having passed half the period of this holy fast,/ let us clearly show forth the beginning of divine glory! / Let us fervently hasten to the achievement of good behavior,// that we may receive the eternal joy.

Having passed half the distance of this holy fast,/ let us strive, rejoicing with steadfastness, to its end. / Let us anoint ourselves with the oil of charity, / that we may be worthy to adore the noble passion of Christ our God,// and attain His most honored and holy Resurrection!

Apostikha (Tone 7)

The Savior Who planted the vineyard and called the laborers is near indeed! / Come, therefore, workers in the fast: / Let us receive our hire, / for the Giver is rich and merciful.// Even if we have labored little we receive great mercy!

Verse: *I lift up my eyes to Thee, enthroned in the heavens! Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God, till He have mercy upon us.*

Verse: *Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us, for we have had more than enough of contempt. Too long our soul has been sated with the scorn of those who are at ease, the contempt of the proud.*

O martyrs of the Lord, you sanctify every place and heal every ill./ Now therefore, intercede with Him, // that He may deliver our souls from every wile and snare of the enemy!

Glory... Now and ever... (*Theotokion*)

The hosts of heaven praise you, / unwedded Mother, full of grace. / We glorify your ineffable childbearing. // Therefore, Theotokos, intercede for the salvation of our souls.

The Fourth Week of Lent

Lord I Call (Tone 3)

Believers, in this season of abstinence, / let us exert every effort, / that we may attain great glory, escaping the fire of hell, // by the mercy of God, the great King.

Thy presence with confession and to present unto Thee our evening prayer, do Thy Thyself, O Lord, lover of mankind, direct our prayer as incense before Thee and accept it for an odor of sweet fragrance, and grant that our present evening and coming night be peaceful. Clothe us with the armor of light. Deliver us from the fear of night and from everything that walketh in darkness, and grant that the sleep that Thou has given for the repose of our infirmity may be free from every fantasy of the Devil. Yea, O Master of all, leader of the good, may we, being moved to compunction upon our beds, remember Thy name in the night. And, enlightened by the exercise of Thy commandments, may we rise up in joyfulness of soul to the glorification of Thy goodness and offer supplication and prayers unto Thy tenderness of heart, for our own sins and those of all Thy people, whom do Thou look upon in mercy, through the intercessions of the holy Theotokos. For Thou art a good God Who lovest mankind, and unto Thee do we send up glory, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

The Great Litany

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy

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

For the peace of the whole world, for the welfare of the holy churches of God, and for the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.

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

For His Beatitude, our Metropolitan _____ and for His (Grace, Eminence) our (Bishop, Archbishop) _____, for the honorable priesthood, the diaconate in Christ, for all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

For the President of our country, for all civil authorities, and for the armed forces, let us pray to the Lord.

For this city, for every city and country, and for the faithful dwelling in them, let us pray to the Lord.

Great wonder! I behold the tree on which Christ was crucified in the flesh. / I see the world in adoration in its enlightenment! / I cry: How great is the power of the Cross! / When the demons behold it, they are burned! / By its sign, they are consumed with flames. / Therefore, pure Tree, I bless you; / I honor and adore you with fear, // glorifying God, Who through you, granted me unending life!

Apostikha (Tone 8)

Because of my evil deeds, / I, a wretched man, dare not gaze upon heaven with my eyes. / But sighing like the publican, I cry to Thee: / O God, forgive me a sinner, / and deliver me from the Pharisee's hypocrisy, // for Thou alone art compassionate.

Verse: *I lift up my eyes to Thee, enthroned in the heavens! Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God, till He have mercy upon us.*

Repeat: Because of my evil deeds....

Martyrs of the Lord, / you sanctify every place and heal every ill. / Now therefore, intercede with Him, // that He may deliver our souls from every wile and snare of the enemy!

Glory... Now and ever... (*Theotokion*)

The hosts of heaven praise you, / unwedded Mother, full of grace. / We glorify your ineffable giving of birth. // Therefore, Theotokos, intercede for the salvation of our souls!

The Third Week of Lent (Sunday of the Cross)

Lord I Call (Tone 8)

Lord, Thou didst willingly stretched out Thy hands on the Cross: / Make us ready for its adoration with reverent hearts, / radiant with fasting, intercessions, abstinence and love; // for Thou art good and the Lover of mankind.

Most compassionate Lord, / blot out the multitude of my sins by the great number of Thy mercies. Make me worthy to behold Thy Cross, and to embrace it with a pure soul in this week of abstinence; // for Thou art the Lover of mankind.

For seasonable weather, for abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

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

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

Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God by Thy grace.

Commemorating our most holy, most pure, 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

There is no kathisma appointed on Sundays. Blessed is the Man is not sung and we immediately begin Lord I Call in the appointed tone.

Lord I Call

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.

When the choir begins "Lord I Call" the priest receives and blesses the censer as follows:

Priest: Incense we offer unto Thee, O Christ our God, as an aroma of spiritual sweetness which do Thou receive upon Thy most heavenly altar and send down upon us in return the grace of Thine all-Holy Spirit.

After the priest blesses the incense, he censers the altar on its four sides, the high place, the icons in the apse, the clergy and servers, the choir and people and the icons in the nave then returns to the altar. Then the priest puts on his phelonion.

Reader: Set a guard over my mouth, O Lord, keep watch over the door of my lips! Incline not my heart to any evil, to busy myself with wicked deeds in company with men

Apostikha (Tone 8)

Wretched man that I am, I rejected fatherly restraints, / with inconstant mind, living in the thoughts of bestial sins, / and wasting all my life in extravagance. / And when I was in need of the food that strengthens the heart, / I fed on the delight that makes fat for but a brief time. / Therefore, good One, / do not close against me the wings of Thy love for mankind, // but open them and receive me as the prodigal son, and save me.

Verse: *I lift up my eyes to Thee, enthroned in the heavens! Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God, till He have mercy upon us.*

Repeat: Wretched man.....

Verse: *Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us, for we have had more than enough of contempt. Too long our soul has been sated with the scorn of those who are at ease, the contempt of the proud.*

The Second Week of Lent

Lord I Call (Tone 8)

I have committed countless sins against Thee, / deserving punishments beyond number: / Inconsolable weeping and gnashing of teeth, / the fire of hell, the darkness of Gehenna. / Therefore, righteous Judge, give me the grace of tears, / that I may find forgiveness of sins and deliverance from my iniquities, / and that fasting, I may cry to Thee / Have compassion on me, Christ and Lord, // in Thy great and rich mercy!

Lost in the hills of evil iniquities, / seek me, Word, as I call out to Thee, / having wandered far from Thee in the multitude of my evil passions. / revive me in this death / and purify me with fasting and constant weeping, / that I may cry out to Thee: / Christ Lord, have compassion on me // in Thy great and rich mercy!

Having begun the third week of the fast, believers, / let us praise the venerable Trinity, / passing the remaining time with gladness and joy, / starving the passions of the flesh. / Let us glean divine flowers from our souls, / plaiting them into crowns for the day that is lord of days, // that in our crowns, we may praise the triumphant Christ!

who work iniquity; and let me not eat of their food! Let a good man strike or rebuke me in kindness, but let the oil of the wicked never anoint my head; for my prayer is continually against their wicked deeds. When they are given over to those who shall condemn them, then they shall learn that the word of the Lord is true. As a rock which one cleaves and shatters on the land, so shall their bones be strewn at the mouth of Sheol. But my eyes are toward Thee, O Lord God; in Thee I seek refuge; leave me not defenseless! Keep me from the trap which they have laid for me, and from the snares of evildoers! Let the wicked together fall into their own nets, while I escape. I cry with my voice to the Lord, with my voice I make supplication to the Lord, I pour out my complaint before Him, I tell 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 look to the right and watch, but there is none who takes notice of me; no refuge remains to me, no man cares for me. I cry to Thee, O Lord; I say, Thou art my refuge, my portion in the land of the living. Give heed to my cry; for I am brought very low! Deliver me from my persecutors; for they are too strong for me!

The psalm is now sung or chanted with the following verses interspersed between the appointed stichera, as needed

Bring my soul out of prison that I may give thanks to Thy name.
The righteous will surround me, if Thou wilt deal bountifully with me.
Out of the depths I cry to Thee, O Lord! Lord hear my voice.
Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.
If Thou, O Lord, should mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee.
For Thy name's sake I wait for Thee, O Lord; my soul has waited for Thy word; my soul has hoped on the Lord.
From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch, let Israel hope on the Lord.
For with the Lord there is mercy and with Him is redemption and He will deliver Israel from all his iniquities.
Praise the Lord, all nations! Praise Him all people.
For His mercy is confirmed on us, and the truth of the Lord endures forever.
Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Verse: *I lift up my eyes to Thee, enthroned in the heavens! Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God, till He have mercy upon us.*

Repeat: Come, let us purify.....

Martyrs of the Lord, you sanctify every place and heal every ill. / Now therefore, intercede with Him, // that He may deliver our souls from every wile and snare of the enemy!

Verse: *Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us, for we have had more than enough of contempt. Too long our soul has been sated with the scorn of those who are at ease, the contempt of the proud.*

When Moses the wonder-worker / was purified by fasting, / he beheld the beloved One. / Therefore, emulate him, my humble soul. / Hasten to be purified of evils on the day of abstinence, / that the Lord may bestow forgiveness on you, / and that you may behold Him, // for He is the Almighty, the good Lord, and the Lover of mankind.

Let us begin the second week of the fast, brethren, / fulfilling it with rejoicing, day by day, / making a fiery chariot for ourselves, like Elijah the Tishbite, / out of the great cardinal virtues, / elevating our minds by subduing our passions, / arming ourselves with purity, // to chase away and vanquish the enemy.

Apostikha (Tone 8)

Come, let us purify our souls with alms and mercy to the poor, / not blowing a trumpet, or publishing what we do in charity, / lest our left hand know what our right has done, / and vainglory steal from us the fruit of alms. / But let us plead in secret with the one who knows our secrets, / crying out: Father, forgive us our sins, // for Thou art the Lover of mankind!

At the Glory, the Royal Doors are opened and the priest, with the censer, goes around the right side of the altar and out the north door and stands before the Royal Doors. He then bows and quietly says the Prayer of the Entrance:

Priest: In the evening and in the morning and at noonday, we praise Thee, we bless Thee, we give thanks unto Thee and we pray Thee, O Master of all, O Lord who lovest mankind, direct our prayer before thee as incense, and incline not our hearts to words or thoughts of evil, but deliver us from all that seek after our souls. For upon Thee, Lord, O Lord, are our eyes and in Thee have we put our hope. Put us not to shame, 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. Amen.

Then the priest faces the altar and says:

Priest: Wisdom. Let us attend.

The choir now sings O Gladsome Light

O Gladsome Light of the holy glory of the immortal Father, heavenly, holy, blessed: Jesus Christ. Having come to the setting of the sun, having seen the light of evening we

praise God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. For meet it is at all times to worship Thee with voices of praise, O Son of God, Giver of life. Therefore, all the world glorifies Thee

While the choir is singing Gladsome Light, the priest censes the altar on all four sides and then hands the censer to the servers. Then he intones the Great Prokeimenon appointed for that Sunday.

Priest: Wisdom. Let us attend. The Great Prokeimenon in the 8th tone:

(Forgiveness Sunday, 2nd and 4th Sundays of Lent)

Turn not away Thy face from Thy child for I am afflicted.* Hear me speedily; draw near my soul and deliver it.

Vs. Thy salvation, O God, hath upheld me

Vs. Let the poor see and be glad

Vs. Seek ye God and your soul shall live

(Sunday of Orthodoxy, 3rd and 5th Sundays of Lent)

Thou has given an inheritance, O Lord * to them that fear Thy name

Vs. From the ends of the earth I cried unto Thee

Vs. I shall be protected under the cover of Thy wings

Vs. I will praise Thy name forever

Thou art glorified / in the memory of Thy saints, Christ God.// At their supplications, send down on us Thy great mercy!

Glory... Now and ever... (*Theotokion*)

The angelic hosts glorify you, Mother of God, / for you gave birth to God, / co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, / Who created out of nothing the angelic hosts. / Beseech Him to deliver from corruption and to enlighten //the souls of those who rightly praise you, all pure one!

The Sunday of Orthodoxy

Lord I Call (Tone 4)

Grant reverence, estrangement from evil, perfect discipline to me, / now drowned in the passions of the flesh, / estranged from Thee, in utter lack of hope, my God, the King of all! / Save me, Thy prodigal son, / by the bounty of Thy goodness, // Jesus, the Almighty, the Savior of our souls.

spirit and fulfill them in love! / that we all may see the Passion of Christ our God, // and rejoice in spirit at the holy Pascha!

Apostikha (Tone 4)

Thy grace has shown forth, Lord: / The grace which illumines our soul. / This is the acceptable time! / This is the time of repentance! / Let us lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light, / that passing through the fast as through a great sea / we may reach the resurrection on the third day // of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of our souls. (twice)

***Verse:** I lift up my eyes to Thee, enthroned in the heavens! Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God, till He have mercy upon us.*

Repeat - Thy grace has shown forth, Lord....

***Verse:** Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us, for we have had more than enough of contempt. Too long our soul has been sated with the scorn of those who are at ease, the contempt of the proud.*

In some traditions, during the singing of the prokeimenon, the liturgical cloths on the ananoi and the vestments are changed to the Lenten colors. The priest removes his phelonion and does not put another on. The reader then intones Vouchsafe, O Lord.

Reader Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this night without sin. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy name forever. Amen. Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, even as we have set our hope in Thee. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Master, let me understand Thy commandments. Blessed art Thou, O Holy One, enlighten me with Thy precepts. Thy mercy, O Lord, endures forever; despise not the work of Thy hands. To Thee belongeth worship, to Thee belongeth praise, to Thee belongeth glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

HERE WE BEGIN THE LENTEN MELODIES

Litany of Supplication

Priest: Let us complete our evening prayer to the Lord.

Choir Lord have mercy

Help us, save us, have mercy on us and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

That the whole evening may be perfect, holy, peaceful and sinless, let us ask of the Lord.

Choir: Grant it O Lord

An angel of peace, a faithful guide, a guardian of our souls and bodies, let us ask of the Lord.

Pardon and remission of our sins and transgressions, let us ask of the Lord.

All things that are good and profitable for our souls, and peace for the world, let us ask of the Lord.

That we may complete the remaining time of our life in peace and repentance, let us ask of the Lord.

A Christian ending to our life: painless, blameless and peaceful; and for a good defense before the dread judgment seat of Christ, let us ask of the Lord.

Priest Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady

Unchanging Texts for 'Lord I Call' and the 'Aposticha'

Forgiveness Sunday Vespers

Lord I Call (Tone 2)

Let us humble the flesh by abstinence, / as we follow the divine path of pure fasting. / With prayers and tears let us seek the Lord who saves us. / Let us put an end to anger, crying out: / Save us for we have sinned against Thee! / Save us, Christ our King, as Thou didst save the men of Nineveh, // and make us partakers of Thy heavenly kingdom, compassionate One!

When I think of my deeds, O Lord, / I am filled with despair, and know that I am worthy of every torment. / I have despised Thy commandments, O Savior. / I have spent my life as a prodigal. / I pray to Thee, only merciful one: / cleanse me by repentance, enlighten me through prayers and fasting, //and despise me not, most gracious Benefactor of all!

Let us begin the fast with joy! / Let us prepare ourselves for spiritual efforts! / Let us cleanse our soul and cleanse our flesh! / Let us abstain from every passion as we abstain from food! / Let us rejoice in virtues of the

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 Thou art a good God Who lovest mankind, and unto Thee we ascribe glory; to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen

The priest turns to the people and blesses saying:

Priest Peace be unto all!

Choir And to Thy spirit.

He then faces the altar and says:

Priest Bow your heads unto the Lord.

Choir To Thee O Lord.

All bow their heads and the priest says:

O Lord our God, who bowed the heavens and came down for the salvation of mankind, look upon Thy servants and Thine inheritance. For unto Thee, the awesome

Judge who yet lovest mankind, have Thy servants bowed their heads and submissively inclined their necks; not awaiting help from men, but asking Thy mercy and looking confidently for Thy salvation. Guard them at all times, both during this present evening and in the coming night, from every foe, from all adverse powers of the devil, from vain thoughts and from evil imaginations.

Blessed and most glorified be the majesty of Thy Kingdom, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen

After the Litanies we sing the Aposticha appointed for the day.

Then we sing the St. Simeon's Prayer. In some traditions during Daily Vespers this is read.

St. Simeon's Prayer

Lord, now lettest 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 peoples; a light to enlighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.

Priest May Christ our true God, through the prayers of His most pure and all-blameless Mother; through the protection of the honorable Bodiless Powers of heaven, of the holy, glorious and all-laudable Apostles, of (add saint of the day) whom we commemorate today, of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna and of all the saints: have mercy on us, and save us, forasmuch as He is good and loves mankind.

Choir: Amen

In some traditions, on Forgiveness Sunday the rite of mutual forgiveness is done here.

The Prayer of St. Ephraim

Priest: O Lord and Master of my life! Take from me the spirit of sloth, despair, lust of power and idle talk. (*Prostration*)

But give, rather, the spirit of chastity, humility, patience and love to Thy servant.
(*Prostration*)

Yea, O Lord and King! Grant me to see my own transgressions and not to judge my brother, for blessed art Thou unto ages of ages. (*Prostration*)

O God, cleanse me a sinner (12x)

Then the prayer is repeated in its entirety with one prostration at the end.

Priest Glory to Thee, O Christ God, and our Hope, glory to Thee..

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 (3x) Father (Master) bless.

Reader Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us (3x)

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

Most Holy Trinity have mercy on us, Lord cleanse us from our sins, Master pardon our iniquities, 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.

Priest: For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power and the glory, of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Now we sing the Lenten Troparia. It is customary to make one prostration after each troparion. However, it is recommended that the choir/chanter refrain from doing so and continue singing.

Amen. Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, Mary full of grace the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb, for you have born the Savior of our souls (*Prostration*)

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

O Baptizer of Christ remember us all, that we may be delivered from our iniquities, for to you is given grace to intercede for us. (*Prostration*)

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

Intercede for us, O Holy Apostles and all the saints, that we may be delivered from perils and tribulations, for we have acquired you as fervent intercessors before the Savior (*Prostration*)

Beneath your compassion we take refuge, O Theotokos. Do not despise our supplications in adversity, but deliver us from perils, O only pure and only blessed one.

Reader Lord have mercy (40x).

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: without defilement you gave birth to God the Word: true Theotokos we magnify you.

In the name of the Lord, bless Father (Master)

Priest He who is, is blessed, even Christ our God, always now and ever and unto ages of ages

Reader O Heavenly King, establish the Orthodox Christian, strengthen the Faith, calm the nations, give peace to the world. Protect this city (or village, or monastery); grant to our departed Fathers and brethren that they dwell with the righteous, and accept us in repentance and confession: for Thou art good and lovest mankind.

The prayer of St. Ephraim is now read with one prostration after each verse.