

The First Hour

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

Reader Amen. Glory to Thee, O God, glory to Thee. O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, who art everywhere and fills 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.
Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.
Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

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.

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.

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

The reader then continues with the following:

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.

PSALM 5

Give ear to my words, O Lord; give heed to my groaning. Hearken to the sound of my cry, my King and my God, for to thee do I pray. O Lord, in the morning thou dost hear my voice; in the morning I prepare a sacrifice for thee, and watch. For thou art not a God who delights in wickedness; evil may not sojourn with thee. The boastful may not stand before thy eyes; thou hatest all evildoers. Thou destroyest those who speak lies; the Lord abhors bloodthirsty and deceitful men. But I through the abundance of thy steadfast love will enter thy house, I will worship toward thy holy temple in the fear of thee. Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness because of my enemies; make thy way straight before me. For there is no truth in their mouth; their heart is destruction, their throat is an open sepulcher, they flatter with their tongue. Make them bear their guilt, O God; let them fall by their own counsels; because of their many transgressions cast them out, for they have rebelled against thee. But let all who take refuge in thee rejoice, let them ever sing for joy; and do thou defend them, that those who love thy name may exult in thee. For thou dost bless the righteous, O Lord; thou dost cover him with favor as with a shield.

PSALM 23

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want; he makes me lie down in green

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pastures. He leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies; thou anointest my head with oil, my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

PSALM 27

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When evildoers assail me, uttering slanders against me, my adversaries and foes, they shall stumble and fall. Though a host encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war arise against me, yet I will be confident. One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple. For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble; he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will set me high upon a rock. And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies round about me; and I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy; I will sing and make melody to the Lord. Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud, be gracious to me and answer me! Thou hast said, "Seek ye my face." My heart says to thee, "Thy face, Lord, do I seek." Hide not thy face from me. Turn not thy servant away in anger, thou who hast been my help. Cast me not off, forsake me not, O God of my salvation! For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the Lord will take me up. Teach me thy way, O Lord; and lead me on a level path because of my enemies. Give me not up to the will of my adversaries; for false witnesses have risen against me, and they breathe out violence. I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living! Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; yea, wait for the Lord.

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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.

Alleluia, alleluia, Alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God

Alleluia, alleluia, Alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God

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

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

THE TROPARION may be read or sung (see appendix for music)

(Tone 4) The river Jordan once turned back before the mantle of Elisha after Elijah had been taken up into heaven and the waters were divided on this side and on that the stream became a dry path before him forming a true figure of the baptism whereby we pass over the changeful course of life. Christ has appeared in the Jordan to sanctify the waters.

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

What shall we call you, O full of grace? Heaven, for from you shone forth the Son of Righteousness; Paradise, for you have budded forth the flower of immortality; Virgin, for you have remained undefiled; Pure Mother, for you have held in your arms the Son, who is God of all. Beseech Him to save our souls.

The following STICHERA may be read or sung (see appendix for music)

Reader Today the nature of the waters is sanctified, and the Jordan is parted in two: it holds back the streams of its own waters,

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seeing the Master wash Himself.

Vs. Therefore I will remember Thee from the land of Jordan and of the Hermonites. The waters saw Thee, O God, the waters saw Thee and were afraid

O Christ the King, Thou hast come to the river as a man, and in Thy goodness Thou dost make haste to receive the baptism of a servant at the hands of the Forerunner, for the sake of our sins, O Thou who lovest mankind.

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

At the voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Prepare ye the way of the lord', Thou hast come, O Lord, taking the form of a servant, and Thou who knowest not sin dost ask for baptism. The waters saw Thee and were afraid, the Forerunner was seized with trembling and cried aloud, saying: 'How shall the lamp illuminate the Light? How shall the servant set his hand upon the Master? O Savior who takest away the sin of the world, sanctify both me and the waters.

The Readings

Priest *Wisdom. Let us attend*

Reader The Prokeimenon is in the 4th Tone:

The Lord thundered upon many waters: / The voice of the thunder was in the heaven.

Vs: I will love Thee, O Lord my strength: the Lord is my support, my refuge, and my deliverer..

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Priest Wisdom

Reader The reading is from the Prophecy of Isaiah (35: 1-10)

Thus says the Lord: The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not pass over it, and fools shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Priest Wisdom

Reader The reading is from the Epistle of the Acts of the Apostles

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(13: 25-33)

In those days, as John was finishing his course, he said, 'What do you suppose that I am? I am not he. No, but after me one is coming, the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie.' "Brethren, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you that fear God, to us has been sent the message of this salvation. For those who live in Jerusalem and their rulers, because they did not recognize him nor understand the utterances of the prophets which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled these by condemning him. Though they could charge him with nothing deserving death, yet they asked Pilate to have him killed. And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a tomb. But God raised him from the dead; and for many days he appeared to those who came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are now his witnesses to the people. And we bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, this he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus; as also it is written in the second psalm, 'Thou art my Son, today I have begotten thee.'

Priest *Wisdom. Let us attend. Let us listen to the Holy Gospel.
Peace be unto all.*

Choir *And to Thy spirit*

Priest *The reading is from the Holy Gospel according to Saint
Matthew (3:1-6)*

Choir *Glory to Thee, O Lord. Glory to Thee.*

Priest *In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the
wilderness of Judea, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at
hand." For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah
when he said, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness:*

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Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. " Now John wore a garment of camel's hair, and a leather girdle around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea and the entire region about the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

Choir Glory to Thee, O Lord. Glory to Thee.

Reader Direct my steps according to Thy word, and let no iniquity have dominion over me. Deliver me from the slander of men, and I shall keep Thy commandments.

Let Thy face shine on Thy servant, and teach me Thy statutes.

Let my mouth be filled with Thy praise, O Lord, that I may hymn Thy glory and honor all day long.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.
Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.
Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

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

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

Reader Amen

THE KONTAKION can either be read or sung (see appendix for music)

(Tone 4) When the Lord descended today into the waters of the Jordan He cried aloud to John: Do not be afraid to baptize me for I am come to save Adam the first-formed man.

Reader Lord have mercy (12x)

Thou who at every season and in every hour, in heaven and on earth art worshipped and glorified, O Christ our God, who art long-suffering, merciful and compassionate: who lovest the just and showest mercy upon the sinner; who callest all to salvation through the promise of blessings to come: O Lord, in this hour receive our supplications and direct our lives according to Thy commandments. Sanctify our souls, hallow our bodies, correct our thoughts, cleanse our minds; deliver us from all tribulations, evil and distress. Surround us with Thy holy angels, that guided and guarded by them we may attain the unity of the faith and to the knowledge of

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Thine unapproachable glory, for Thou art blessed unto ages of ages. Amen.

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.

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.

Priest *God be bountiful unto us and bless us and show us the light of His countenance, and be merciful unto us.*

Reader Amen. O Christ, the True light who enlightens and sanctifies every man who comes into the world, let the light of Thy countenance shine upon us, that in it we may behold the unapproachable light; and guide our footsteps aright to the keeping of Thy commandments; through the prayers of thy most pure mother, and of all Thy Saints. Amen.