

**LENTEN VESPERS WITH CEREMONY OF MUTUAL FORGIVENESS  
SERVED ON SUNDAY, MARCH 02, 2025; TONE 3**

MARTYRS EUTROPIOS, KLEONIKOS, AND BASILIKOS OF AMASEA; HIEROMARTYR THEODORETOS OF ANTIOCH

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

Choir: Amen.

Come, let us worship and fall down before 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.

THE PSALM OF INTRODUCTION—PSALM 103

Reader: Bless the Lord, O my soul; O Lord my God, Thou hast been magnified exceedingly. Confession and majesty hast Thou put on, Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment, Who stretchest out the heaven as it were a curtain; Who supporteth His chambers in the waters, Who appointeth the clouds for His ascent, Who walketh upon the wings of the winds, Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire.

Who establisheth the earth in the sureness thereof; it shall not be turned back forever and ever. The abyss like a garment is His mantle; upon the mountains shall the waters stand. At Thy rebuke they will flee, at the voice of Thy thunder shall they be afraid.

The mountains rise up and the plains sink down, unto the place where Thou hast established them. Thou appointedst a bound that they shall not pass, neither return to cover the earth. He sendeth forth springs in the valleys; between the mountains will the waters run. They shall give drink to all the beasts of the field; the wild asses will wait to quench their thirst. Beside them will the birds of the heaven lodge, from the midst of the rocks will they give voice.

He watereth the mountains from His chambers; the earth shall be satisfied with the fruit of Thy works. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men, to bring forth bread out of the earth; and wine maketh glad the heart of man. To make his face cheerful with oil; and bread strengtheneth man's heart.

The trees of the plain shall be satisfied, the cedars of Lebanon, which Thou hast planted. There will the sparrows make their nests; the house of the heron is chief among them. The high mountains are a refuge for the harts, and so is the rock for the hares.

He hath made the moon for seasons; the sun knoweth his going down. Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night, wherein all the beasts of the forest will go abroad; young lions roaring after their prey, and seeking their food from God. The sun ariseth, and they are gathered together, and they lay them down in their dens. Man shall go forth unto his work, and to his labor until the evening. How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast Thou made them all.

The earth is filled with Thy creation. So is this great and spacious sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, small living creatures with the great. There go the ships; there this leviathan, whom Thou hast made to play therein. All things wait on Thee, to give them their food in due season; when Thou givest it them, they will gather it. When Thou openest Thy hand, all things shall be filled with goodness; when Thou turnest away Thy face, they shall be troubled. Thou wilt take their spirit, and they shall cease; and unto their dust shall they return. Thou wilt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created; and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.

Let the glory of the Lord be unto the ages; the Lord will rejoice in His works. Who looketh on the earth and maketh it tremble, Who toucheth the mountains and they smoke. I will sing unto the Lord throughout my life, I will chant to my God for as long as I have my being.

May my words be sweet unto Him; I will rejoice in the Lord. O that sinners would cease from the earth, and they that work iniquity, that they should be no more. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

The sun knoweth his going down. Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night. How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast Thou made them all.

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

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. (*thrice*)

O our God and our Hope, glory to Thee!

### THE GREAT LITANY

Deacon: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

*The choir responds "Lord, have mercy" to each petition until noted.*

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

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

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

For our father and metropolitan, N., (our bishop, N.,) the honorable presbytery, the diaconate in Christ, all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

For our country, its president (or appropriate head of state), civil authorities and armed forces, let us pray to the Lord.

For this city and every city and countryside and the faithful who dwell therein, let us pray to the Lord.

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

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

For our deliverance from all tribulation, 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.

Calling to remembrance our all-holy, immaculate, most blessed and glorious Lady, 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 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.

“O LORD I HAVE CRIED” IN TONE THREE (KAZAN) (KARAM)

Choir: O Lord, I have cried out unto Thee, hear Thou me; hear Thou me, O Lord. O Lord, I have cried out unto Thee, hear Thou me. Give ear to the voice of my supplication when I cry out unto Thee: hear Thou me, O Lord.

Choir: Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as the incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice; hear Thou me, O Lord.

- + Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and a protecting door round about my lips.
- + Incline not my heart to evil words, to make excuses in sins.
- + With men that work iniquity; and I will not communicate with the choicest of them.
- + The just man shall correct me in mercy and shall reprove me; but let not the oil of the sinner anoint my head.
- + For my prayer also shall still be against the things with which they are well pleased; their judges falling upon the rock have been swallowed up.
- + They shall hear my words, for they are sweet; as when the thickness of the earth is broken upon the ground, their bones are scattered by the side of hades.
- + But to Thee, O Lord, Lord, are mine eyes; in Thee have I put my trust, take not away my soul.
- + Keep me from the snare which they have laid for me, and the traps of the workers of iniquity.
- + Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst I alone escape.
- + I cried unto the Lord with my voice, with my voice unto the Lord, did I make my supplication.
- + I poured out my supplication before Him; I showed before Him my trouble.
- + When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then Thou knewest my path.
- + In the way wherein I walked have they secretly laid a snare for me.
- + I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me.
- + Refuge failed me; no one cared for my soul.
- + I cried unto Thee, O Lord; I said: Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.
- + Attend unto my cry, for I am brought very low.
- + Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are stronger than I.

The Penitential Stichera from the Triodion in Tone Three

**Verse 10.** *Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise Thy name.*

With incense and with spiritual songs, we offer unto Thee, O Christ, our evening hymn. Have mercy upon our souls, O Savior.

**Verse 9.** *The righteous shall wait for me until Thou recompense me.*

Save me, O Lord my God, for Thou art the salvation of all. The billows of my passions sorely trouble me, and the burden of my transgressions drags me down. Stretch out Thine hand in help and lead me up to the light of compunction, for Thou only art compassionate and lovest mankind.

**Verse 8.** *Out of the depths have I cried to Thee, O Lord, Lord hear my voice.*

Gather together my scattered mind, O Lord, and purify my dry and barren heart, giving to me like Peter repentance, like the Publican sighs of sorrow, and like the Harlot tears, that I may cry with a loud voice unto Thee: Save me, O God, for Thou art compassionate and lovest mankind.

*Verse 7. Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.*

Often when I offer praise to God, I am found to be committing sin; for while I sing the hymns with my tongue, in my soul I ponder evil thoughts. But through repentance, Christ my God, set right my tongue and soul, and have mercy upon me.

### **For Forgiveness Sunday in Tone Two**

*Verse 6. If Thou, O Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? For with Thee there is forgiveness.*

Let us all hasten to the subjugation of the flesh by abstinence, as we approach the divine battlefield, the battlefield of blameless fasting. Let us pray to the Lord, our Savior, in tears and prayers, turning away completely from sin, and crying, “We have sinned against Thee, O Christ, the King. Save us, therefore, as of old Thou didst save the people of Nineveh; and make us partakers of Thy heavenly kingdom, O compassionate One.”

*Verse 5. Because of Thy Name have I waited for Thee, O Lord; my soul hath waited upon Thy word, my soul hath hoped in the Lord.*

If I were to imagine all my sins deserving all punishment, I would despair of myself, O Lord Savior; for by them have I disobeyed Thy noble commandment, wasting my life in extravagance. Wherefore, I beseech Thee to purify me with Thy showers of forgiveness, and lighten me with fasting and supplication; for Thou alone art compassionate; and reject me not, O all-bountiful and of transcendent goodness.

*Verse 4. From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch let Israel trust in the Lord.*

Let us begin the season of fasting with rejoicing, giving ourselves to spiritual strife, purifying soul and body, fasting from passions, as we fast from foods, faring on the virtues of the Spirit, which, if we continue to long for, we shall all be worthy to behold the most solemn Passion of Christ, and the holy Passover, rejoicing with spiritual joy.

### **For the Martyrs of Amasea in Tone One (\*\*O all-lauded martyrs\*\*)**

*Verse 3. For with the Lord there is mercy and with Him is abundant redemption, and He will deliver Israel from all his iniquities.*

O three holy Martyrs of the Lord, \* with great fortitude ye strove against most merciless judges, and by reason of your faith, \* ye endured with patience \* every harsh and bitter pain; \* and ye have found the Kingdom of Heaven as the prize of your good fight. \* Intercede ye therefore with the Lord \* that He grant peace \* and Great Mercy to our souls.

*Verse 2. Praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise Him, all ye people.*

With spiritual songs let us extol \* wise Eutropios, Kleonikos, and staunch Basiliskos; for with fire they burned away \* atheism’s substance \* by the grace of piety; \* and now with godly torches they lighten the far reaches of the earth \* as bright sources of resplendent light \* who have darkened \* every error and deceit.

*Verse 1. For His mercy is great toward us, and the truth of the Lord endureth forever.*

In bearing the bitter blow of death, \* ye have crushed beneath your comely feet the head of the enemy, O noble Martyred Saints; \* living sacrifices, \* stars that stray not from your course, \* ye treasures of the heavenly temple, O all-famed Eutropios, \* Basiliskos, and Kleonikos, \* ever praying \* that we all be granted peace.

**THEOTOKION FROM THE MENAION IN TONE ONE (\*\*O all-lauded martyrs\*\*)**

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

Do thou, O all-hymned one, heal my soul, \* which is terribly diseased with wicked passions; for thou, O holy Virgin, hast conceived \* Christ our God, the Healer \* and the Saviour of all men, \* Who healeth every sickness and malady, but smote with mortal wounds \* all the devil's wickedness and spite \* and delivered \* us from bitter death itself.

- *When “both now” is chanted, the clergy make the entrance with the censer.*

Deacon: Wisdom! Stand upright!

**O GLADSOME LIGHT (CHANT) (CHORAL)**

Choir: O gladsome Light of the holy glory of the immortal, heavenly, holy and blessed Father: O Jesus Christ. Lo now that we have come to the setting of the sun, as we behold the evening light, we hymn Thee: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God. Meet it is for Thee at all times to be magnified by joyous voices, O Son of God and Giver of life. Wherefore the whole world doth glorify Thee.

Deacon: The evening prokeimenon!

**FIRST LENTEN GREAT PROKEIMENON IN TONE EIGHT**

Choir: Turn not away Thy face from Thy servant; for I am in trouble: hear me speedily. Attend to my soul, and deliver it. (TWICE)

*Verse 1. Let Thy salvation, O God, help me. (Refrain)*

*Verse 2. Let the poor see it and be glad. (Refrain)*

*Verse 3. Seek God, and thy soul shall live. (Refrain)*

**THE EVENING PRAYER**

People: Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this evening without sin. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy Name forever. 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 statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Holy One; enlighten me with Thy statutes.

Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth forever. O despise not the works 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.

**THE LITANY OF SUPPLICATION**

Deacon: Let us complete our evening prayer unto the Lord.

*The choir responds “Lord, have mercy” to the first two petitions.*

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.

*The choir responds "Grant this, O Lord" to this and the remaining petitions until noted.*

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 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, peaceful, and a good defense before the fearful judgment seat of Christ, let us ask.

Calling to remembrance our all-holy, immaculate, most blessed and glorious Lady, 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 and 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 PEACE

Priest: Peace be to all.

Choir: And to thy spirit.

Deacon: Let us bow our heads unto the Lord.

Choir: To Thee, O Lord.

• *All bow their heads as the priest says the following prayer:*

Priest: O Lord our God, Who didst bow the heavens and come down for the salvation of mankind: Look upon Thy servants and Thine inheritance; for unto Thee, the fearful Judge Who yet lovest mankind, have Thy servants bowed their heads and submissively inclined their necks, awaiting not help from men but entreating Thy mercy and looking confidently for Thy salvation. Guard them at all times, both during this present evening and in the approaching night, from every foe, from all adverse powers of the devil, and from vain thoughts and from evil imaginations.

Blessed and glorified be the might 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.

### THE APOSTICHA FOR FORGIVENESS SUNDAY IN TONE FOUR

Thy grace hath risen, O Lord, the illumination of our souls hath shone forth. Lo, now is the acceptable time; the season of repentance hath come. Let us cast down the works of darkness, and put on the works of light, that we may pass the great tempest of fasting and reach the summit of the third-day Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Savior of our souls.

*Verse 1. Unto Thee have I lifted up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in heaven. Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hands of their masters, as the eyes of the handmaiden look unto the hands of her mistress, so do our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until He take pity upon us.*

Thy grace hath risen, O Lord, the illumination of our souls hath shone forth. Lo, now is the acceptable time; the season of repentance hath come. Let us cast down the works of darkness, and put on the works of light, that we may pass the great tempest of fasting and reach the summit of the third-day Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Savior of our souls.

*Verse 2. Have mercy upon us O Lord, have mercy upon us; for we are utterly humiliated. Let shame come on them that prosper, and abasement on the proud.*

O Christ God, glorified in the mention of Thy saints, send us, through their beseechings, the Great Mercy.

### THEOTOKION IN TONE FOUR (\*\*As one valiant\*\*)

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

Thee do all the angelic ranks \* glorify, since thou gavest birth \* unto God, Who doth co-exist eternally \* with both the Father and the Spirit, Who from nothing hath caused to be \* the angelic companies, \* which He made by His will alone, \* Whom entreat to save \* and enlighten the souls of them that rightly sing thy praise in Orthodoxy, \* O unstained Mother of God most pure.

### THE HYMN OF ST. SIMEON THE GOD-RECEIVER

Priest: 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.

### THE TRISAGION PRAYERS

People: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. (*thrice*)

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

All-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. (*thrice*)

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; both 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 the evil one.

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.

Choir: Amen.

### LENTEN APOLYTIKIA AND THEOTOKION IN TONE FIVE

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, Mary full of grace; the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, for thou didst give birth to the Savior of our souls. *(The clergy and people prostrate.)*

O Baptizer of Christ, remember our congregation, that we may escape from our iniquities, for to thee was given grace to intercede for us. *(The clergy and people prostrate.)*

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

O pure apostles, and all ye saints, pray for our sakes, that we escape tribulations and sorrows, for we have taken ye as fervid intercessors with the Savior. *(The clergy and people prostrate.)*

*Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

We have taken refuge under the wing of thy compassion, O Theotokos. Turn not away from our beseechings in tribulation, but save us from distress, O thou who alone art pure and blessed. *(No prostration.)*

Reader: Lord, have mercy. *(forty times)*

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

More honorable than the cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, thou who without corruption didst bear God the Word and art truly Theotokos: we magnify thee.

Bless, father, in the Name of the Lord.

Priest: Christ our God, the Existing One, is blessed, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Reader: Amen. O heavenly King, support the faithful; confirm their faith; guide the nations; give peace to the world and preserve well this holy church and this city. Grant repose to our departed fathers and brethren in the dwelling-place of the righteous. Receive us in repentance and confession, for Thou art good and lovest mankind.

### THE PRAYER OF ST. EPHRAIM THE SYRIAN

Priest: O Lord and Master of my life, give me not a spirit of sloth, meddling, lust of power, and idle talk. *(The clergy and people prostrate.)*

But give rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience and love to me, Thy servant. *(The clergy and people prostrate.)*

Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own sins and not to judge my brother; for Thou art blessed unto ages of ages. Amen. *(The clergy and people prostrate.)*

### THE DISMISSAL

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

Choir: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen. Lord, have mercy (*thrice*). Father, bless.

Priest: May Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His all-immaculate and all-blameless holy Mother; by the might of the Precious and Life-giving Cross; by the protection of the honorable Bodiless Powers of Heaven; at the supplication of the honorable, glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John; of the holy, glorious and all-laudable apostles; of the holy, glorious and right-victorious Martyrs; of our venerable and God-bearing Fathers; *of Saint N., the patron and protector of this holy community*; 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 loveth mankind.

Choir: Amen.

### THE CEREMONY OF MUTUAL FORGIVENESS

*As the choir very slowly and in low voice sings the theotokion below and then the odes of the [Paschal Canon](#) (Nassar 921-929, Holy Week & Pascha book 674-690), the exchange of mutual forgiveness may now take place, beginning with the clergy. The priest stands next to the icon of the Theotokos at the iconostasis. One by one, the faithful slightly bow before the priest, who also does the same before each of the faithful, each saying to one another, "Forgive me, a sinner." The response is, "God forgives." The faithful also ask forgiveness from each other in the same manner.*

### THEOTOKION IN TONE TWO (\*\*When he took Thee\*\*) (HTM) (KAZAN)

All those who with faith flee unto thee, \* with thy mighty hand dost thou shelter, O pure one, as thou art good; \* no one else have we who sin as a perpetual \* intercessor for us with God \* in dangers and sorrows, \* we who have been burdened down with our abundant sins, \* Mother of God in the highest. \* Wherefore, we all fall down before thee; \* rescue us, thy servants, from adversities.

*When everyone has completed the exchange of mutual forgiveness, the priest, facing the icon of Christ on the iconostasis, says:*

Priest: Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us and save us.

Choir: Amen.

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