Reader’s ‘Great’ Vespers on Saturday, March 21st

Service for the Veneration of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross (3rd Sunday of Lent)

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord, Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

O Heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit of Truth, Who art everywhere present and fillest all things, Treasury of good things and Giver of life: Come and dwell in us, and cleanse us of all impurity, and save our souls, O Good One.

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 the ages of ages. Amen.

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Lord, blot out our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O 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 the ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, Who art in the Heavens, 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord, Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

Lord have mercy. ***Twelve Times***

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

O come, let us worship God our King.

O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ our King and God.

O 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 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 for ever 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. But 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, therein are things creeping innumerable, small living creatures with the great. There go the ships; there this dragon, 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, and 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 the ages of ages. Amen.

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

Lord, have mercy. ***Forty Times***

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

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 is 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. ***Three Times***

Lord, have mercy ***Three Times***

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

In the 7th Tone: Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hearken unto me.

Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hearken unto me. \* Hearken unto me, O Lord. \* Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hearken unto me; \* attend to the voice of my supplication, \* when I cry unto Thee. \* Hearken unto me, O Lord.

Let my prayer be set forth \* as incense before Thee, \* the lifting up of my hands \* as an evening sacrifice. \* Hearken unto me, O Lord.

Set, O Lord, a watch before my mouth, and a door of enclosure round about my lips.

Incline not my heart unto words of evil, to make excuse with excuses in sins.

With men that work iniquity; and I will not join with their chosen.

The righteous man will chasten me with mercy and reprove me; as for the oil of the sinner, let it not anoint my head.

For yet more is my prayer in the presence of their pleasures; swallowed up near by the rock have their judges been.

They shall hear my words, for they be sweetened; as a clod of earth is broken upon the earth, so have their bones been scattered nigh unto hades.

For unto Thee, O Lord, O Lord, are mine eyes, in Thee have I hoped; take not my soul away.

Keep me from the snare which they have laid for me, and from the stumbling-blocks of them that work iniquity.

The sinners shall fall into their own net; I am alone until I pass by.

With my voice unto the Lord have I cried, with my voice unto the Lord have I made supplication.

I will pour out before Him my supplication, mine affliction before Him will I declare.

When my spirit was fainting within me, then Thou knewest my paths.

In this way wherein I have walked they hid for me a snare.

I looked upon my right hand, and beheld, and there was none that did know me.

Flight hath failed me, and there is none that watcheth out for my soul.

I have cried unto Thee, O Lord; I said: Thou art my hope, my portion art Thou in the land of the living.

Attend unto my supplication, for I am brought very low.

Deliver me from them that persecute me, for they are stronger than I.

Bring my soul out of prison:  that I may confess Thy name.

The righteous shall wait patiently for me until Thou shalt reward me.

Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord; O Lord, hear my voice.

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

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

## Come, let us rejoice in the Lord/ who destroyed the dominion of death!/ Let us sing to him with the bodiless hosts,/ for he enlightened the race of man! // O our Maker and Savior, glory to thee!

For Thy name’s sake have I patiently waited for Thee, O Lord; my soul hath patiently waited for Thy word, my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

Thou didst endure the Cross and burial for our sake!/ By thy death, thou didst slay death as God!/ We fall down before thy resurrection on the third day. // O Savior, glory to thee!

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

When the apostles beheld the resurrection of the Maker,/ they were amazed and sang the angelic praise!/ This is the glory of the Church!/ This is the richness of the Kingdom! // O Lord, crucified for our sake, glory to thee!

In the 5th Tone: For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption; \* and He shall redeem Israel out of all his iniquities.

Shine, O Cross of the Lord!/ Illumine the hearts of those who honor you!/ With love inspired by God,/ we embrace you, the only hope of the world!/ Through you our tears are wiped away,/ the snares of death are sprung,/we pass over into everlasting joy./ Through the Cross, reveal your beauty to us, O Lord/ Help your servants who ask for mercy in faith! // Bestow upon us the fruits of abstinence.

O praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise Him, all ye peoples.

Rejoice, O life-bearing Cross!/ Bright paradise of the Church, the tree of incorruption!/ You have obtained for us the joy of everlasting glory./ Through you, the hosts of demons are driven out,/ the choirs of angels are amazed and rejoice./ The company of faithful gather in celebration./ O unconquerable weapon,/ triumph of Orthodox Christians and pride of priests, // by following you may we witness the Passion and Resurrection of Christ our God!

For He hath made His mercy to prevail over us, and the truth of the Lord abideth forever.

Rejoice, O Life-bearing Cross,/ the invincible banner of godliness;/ the gate of paradise, the protection of the faithful!/ The Cross is the might of the Church./ Through it corruption is abolished./ Through it the pow’r of death is crushed/ and we are raised from earth to heaven!/ The invincible weapon of peace!/ The Cross is the enemy of demons,/ the glory of the martyrs,

the haven of salvation // which grants the world great mercy!

In the 3rd Tone: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Wishing to restore all men to life,/ You accepted crucifixion, O Christ our God!/ Burning with boundless love for man,/ You took the quill of the Cross in your hand,/ dipping it in ink of royal crimson,/ You signed our release with blood stained fingers./ Though temptations assault us, may we never forsake you again./ Have mercy on your despairing people, O long-suffering Master! // In your almighty power arise and fight our enemies!

The Dogmatikon in the 7th Tone: Now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

No tongue can speak of your wonderful childbearing,/ for the order of nature was overruled by God!/ You were revealed to be a mother above nature,/ for you remained a virgin beyond reason and understanding!/ Your conceiving was most glorious, O Theotokos!/ The manner of your giving birth was ineffable, O Virgin!/ Knowing you to be the Mother of God,/ devoutly we pray to you: // “Beseech him to save our souls!”

O Gladsome Light of the holy glory of the immortal, heavenly, holy, blessed Father, O Jesus Christ: Having come to the setting of the sun, having beheld the evening light, we praise the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: God.  Meet it is for Thee at all times to be praised with reverent voices, O Son of God, Giver of life.  Wherefore, the world doth glorify Thee.

Prokeimenon in the 6th Tone:The Lord is King, He is robed in majesty!

 The Lord is robed with strength, and has girded Himself

 For He has established the world so that it should never be moved

 Holiness befits Thy house, O Lord, forevermore

 The Lord is King,/ He is robed in majesty!

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.

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 unto the ages.  Amen.

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we have hoped in Thee.  Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes.  Blessed art Thou, O Master, give me understanding of Thy statutes.  Blessed art Thou, O Holy One, enlighten me by Thy statutes.

O Lord, Thy mercy endureth forever; disdain not the work of Thy hands.  To Thee is due praise, to Thee is due a song, to Thee glory is due, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.  Amen.

Lord, have mercy. ***Twelve Times***

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

In the 7th Tone:

As the Savior of the world thou didst arise from the tomb!/ As God thou didst resurrect the race of men with thy flesh! // O Lord, glory to Thee!

The Lord is King He is robed in majesty!

#### Come, let us worship the One who rose from the dead/ and enlightened all creation!/ By his death he saved us from the torments of Hell! // By his resurrection he has granted us eternal life and great mercy!

For He has established the world so that it shall never be moved!

Into Hell didst thou descend, capturing death, O Christ!/ In three days didst thou arise again/ resurrecting us who glorify thy resurrection, // O Lord and Lover of man!

Holiness befits Thy house, O Lord, forevermore!

When thou wast placed in the tomb as one asleep,/ the sight was great and awesome!/ But when thou didst rise on the third day as almighty God,/ thou didst resurrect Adam with thyself!// Glory to thy resurrection, O only Lover of man.

In the 4th Tone: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

The humble David/ defeated his tormentors by your help, O Lord./ Now grant the power of your Cross to all Orthodox Christians,/ bestow on us your mighty mercies, O compassionate One,/ so that our adversaries might know that you are God./ We will be victorious for we hope in you!/ Through the intercession of your all-pure Mother, // grant us great mercy.

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

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 the ages of ages. Amen.

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Lord, blot out our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O 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 the ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, Who art in the Heavens, 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us. Amen.

In the 7th Tone: By Thy Cross Thou didst destroy death./ To the thief Thou didst open Paradise./ For the Myrrhbearers Thou didst change weeping into joy,/ and Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God,/ to proclaim that Thou art risen,// granting the world great mercy.

In the 1st Tone: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

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!

In the same Tone: Both now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

When Gabriel announced to thee, O Virgin, saying “Rejoice!”/ with that word the Master of all was incarnate in thee,/ the holy Ark, spoken of by the righteous David!/ Thy womb became more spacious than the heavens,/ for thou didst carry thy Creator./ Glory to Him Who took abode in thee!/ Glory to Him Who came forth from thee!// Glory to Him Who freed us by being born of thee!

More honorable than the Cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim; who without corruption gavest birth to God the Word, the very Theotokos, thee do we magnify.

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

Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord bless!

Through the prayers of the Theotokos, through the power of the Precious and Life-Creating Cross, of our holy fathers, and of all the saints, O Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us. Amen.