Reader’s Vespers on Monday, April 6th

Feast of the Annunciation (March 25th/April 7th)

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of 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, Son of 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.

In the 6th 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.

My strength is weakened by my many sins

and by the pleasures of this life,

and in my misery I lie always on the bed of laziness.

But I cry to you, O Master:

“With loving compassion come and visit me,

and grant me health and mercy.

Do not forsake me, O Savior,

lest I sleep in death,

and lest the enemy rejoice over my destruction: //

for he seeks to drag me down into the fearful depths of hell.

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.

I have rivaled the foolish rich man who showed no love for others;

overwhelmed by sensual pleasures and the passions,

I live in luxury and self-indulgence.

I see my mind lying always like Lazarus before the gates of repentance,

but with indifference I pass it by, O Lord,

thus leaving it hungry, sick, and wounded by the passions.

Therefore I deserve to be condemned to the flames of Gehenna:

### But deliver me from them, O Master, //

for you alone are rich in mercy.

In the 5th Tone: From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch let Israel hope in the Lord.

Passing by on the other side of the river Jordan,

you prophesied concerning Lazarus, O Lord,

that he was not sick unto death,

but that this had come to pass for the glory of God.

Glory to your mighty acts and powers,

for you have destroyed death //

by your many mercies, O Lover of man!

In the 6th Tone: For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption; \* and He shall redeem Israel out of all his iniquities.

Revealing to you the pre-eternal Counsel

Gabriel came and stood before you, O Maid,

and, in greeting, she said:

“Rejoice, O Earth that has not been sown;

Rejoice, O Burning Bush that remains unconsumed.

Rejoice, O Unsearchable Depth.

Rejoice, O Bridge that leads to heaven.

Rejoice, O Ladder raised on high that Jacob saw.

Rejoice, O Divine Jar of manna.

Rejoice, O Deliverance from the curse.

Rejoice, O Restoration of Adam. //

The Lord is with you!”

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

“You appeared to me in the form of a man,”

said the undefiled Maid to the chief of the heavenly hosts:

“How then do you speak to me of things that pass the power of man?

For you have said that God shall be with me,

and shall take up His dwelling in my womb.

How shall I become the spacious habitation

and the holy place of Him that rides upon the cherubim?

Do not amuse me with deceit;

for I have not known pleasure,

I have not entered into wedlock. //

How then shall I bear a child?”

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

Then the bodiless angel replied:

“When God so wishes the order of nature is overcome,

and what is beyond man comes to pass.

Believe that my sayings are true,

O All-holy Lady, entirely without spot.”

And she cried aloud:

“Let it be unto me according to your word,

and I shall bear Him that is without flesh, who shall borrow

flesh from me,

that through this mingling He may lead man up unto his

ancient glory, //

for He alone has power so to do.”

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

Gabriel the archangel was sent from heaven

to announce to the Virgin

the glad tidings of her conceiving;

and coming to Nazareth he pondered in amazement on this wonder.

“O how shall He who dwells in the heights,

whom none can comprehend, be born of a virgin?

How shall He whose throne is heaven

and whose footstool is the earth,

be held in the womb of a woman?

He upon whom the six-winged seraphim and the many-eyed

Cherubim cannot gaze

has been pleased at a single word

to be made flesh of this His creature.

It is the Word of God who dwells within her.

Why then do I stand here,

and not say to the Maiden:

‘Rejoice, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with you!

Rejoice, O Pure Virgin!

Rejoice, O Bride Unwedded!’” //

Rejoice, O Mother of Life! Blessèd is the fruit of your womb!’”

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.

The Prokeimenon in the 4th Tone: O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endures forever!

**Verse**: Let the redeemed of the Lord say so!

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; // for his mercy endures forever!

The reading from Genesis: Now it came to pass, when Isaac was old and his eyes were so dim that he could not see, that he called Esau his older son and said to him, “My son.” And he answered him, “Here I am.” Then he said, “Behold now, I am old. I do not know the day of my death. “Now therefore, please take your weapons, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt game for me. “And make me savory food, such as I love, and bring it to me that I may eat, that my soul may bless you before I die.” Now Rebekah was listening when Isaac spoke to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt game and to bring it. So Rebekah spoke to Jacob her son, saying, “Indeed I heard your father speak to Esau your brother, saying, ‘Bring me game and make savory food for me, that I may eat it and bless you in the presence of the Lord before my death.’ “Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to what I command you. “Go now to the flock and bring me from there two choice kids of the goats, and I will make savory food from them for your father, such as he loves. “Then you shall take it to your father, that he may eat it, and that he may bless you before his death.” And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, “Look, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth-skinned man. “Perhaps my father will feel me, and I shall seem to be a deceiver to him; and I shall bring a curse on myself and not a blessing.” But his mother said to him, “Let your curse be on me, my son; only obey my voice, and go, get them for me.” And he went and got them and brought them to his mother, and his mother made savory food, such as his father loved. Then Rebekah took the choice clothes of her elder son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them on Jacob her younger son. And she put the skins of the kids of the goats on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck. Then she gave the savory food and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob. So he went to his father and said, “My father.” And he said, “Here I am. Who are you, my son?” Jacob said to his father, “I am Esau your firstborn; I have done just as you told me; please arise, sit and eat of my game, that your soul may bless me.” But Isaac said to his son, “How is it that you have found it so quickly, my son?” And he said, “Because the Lord your God brought it to me.” Then Isaac said to Jacob, “Please come near, that I may feel you, my son, whether you are really my son Esau or not.” So Jacob went near to Isaac his father, and he felt him and said, “The voice is Jacob’s voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.” And he did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau’s hands; so he blessed him. Then he said, “Are you really my son Esau?” He said, “I am.” He said, “Bring it near to me, and I will eat of my son’s game, so that my soul may bless you.” So he brought it near to him, and he ate; and he brought him wine, and he drank. Then his father Isaac said to him, “Come near now and kiss me, my son.” And he came near and kissed him; and he smelled the smell of his clothing, and blessed him and said: “Surely, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field which the Lord has blessed. Therefore may God give you of the dew of heaven, of the fatness of the earth, and plenty of grain and wine. Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you. Be master over your brethren, and let your mother’s sons bow down to you. Cursed be everyone who curses you, and blessed be those who bless you!” Now it happened, as soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had scarcely gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. He also had made savory food, and brought it to his father, and said to his father, “Let my father arise and eat of his son’s game, that your soul may bless me.” And his father Isaac said to him, “Who are you?” So he said, “I am your son, your firstborn, Esau.” Then Isaac trembled exceedingly, and said, “Who? Where is the one who hunted game and brought it to me? I ate all of it before you came, and I have blessed him – and indeed he shall be blessed.” When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, “Bless me – me also, O my father!” But he said, “Your brother came with deceit and has taken away your blessing.” And Esau said, “Is he not rightly named Jacob? For he has supplanted me these two times. He took away my birthright, and now look, he has taken away my blessing!” And he said, “Have you not reserved a blessing for me?” Then Isaac answered and said to Esau, “Indeed I have made him your master, and all his brethren I have given to him as servants; with grain and wine I have sustained him. What shall I do now for you, my son?” And Esau said to his father, “Have you only one blessing, my father? Bless me – me also, O my father!” And Esau lifted up his voice and wept. Then Isaac his father answered and said to him: “Behold, your dwelling shall be of the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above. By your sword you shall live, and you shall serve your brother; and it shall come to pass, when you become restless, that you shall break his yoke from your neck.” So Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father blessed him, and Esau said in his heart, “The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then I will kill my brother Jacob.”

The Prokeimenon in the 7th Tone: Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens, and your glory over all the earth!

**Verse**: My heart is ready, O God; my heart is ready!

Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens, // and your glory over all the earth!

The reading from Proverbs: He who keeps the commandment keeps his soul, but he who is careless of his ways will die. He who has pity on the poor lends to the Lord, and He will pay back what he has given. Chasten your son while there is hope, and do not set your heart on his destruction. A man of great wrath will suffer punishment; for if you rescue him, you will have to do it again. Listen to counsel and receive instruction, that you may be wise in your latter days. There are many plans in a man’s heart, nevertheless the Lord’s counsel – that will stand. What is desired in a man is kindness, and a poor man is better than a liar. The fear of the Lord leads to life, and he who has it will abide in satisfaction; he will not be visited with evil. A lazy man buries his hand in the bowl, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again. Strike a scoffer, and the simple will become wary; rebuke one who has understanding, and he will discern knowledge.

**The reading is from the book of Genesis!**

In those days Jacob left Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran. And he came to a certain place, and stayed there that night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it!

And behold, the LORD stood above it and said, “I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your descendants; and your descendants shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and by you and your descendants shall all the families of the earth bless themselves. Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done that of which I have spoken to you.”

Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, “Surely the LORD is in this place; and I did not know it.” And he was afraid, and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.”

**The reading is from the prophecy of Ezekiel!**

Thus says the Lord: “When they have completed these days, then from the eighth day onward the priests shall offer upon the altar your burnt offerings and your peace offerings; and I will accept you, says the Lord GOD.”

Then he brought me back to the outer gate of the sanctuary, which faces east; and it was shut. And He said to me, “This gate shall remain shut; it shall not be opened, and no one shall enter by it; for the LORD, the God of Israel, has entered by it; therefore it shall remain shut. Only the prince may sit in it to eat bread before the LORD; he shall enter by way of the vestibule of the gate, and shall go out by the same way.” Then He brought me by way of the north gate to the front of the temple; and I looked, and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the temple of the LORD; and I fell upon my face.

**The reading is from the book of Proverbs!**

Wisdom has built her house, she has set up her seven pillars. She has slaughtered her beasts, she has mixed her wine, she has also set her table. She has sent out her maids to call from the highest places in the town, “Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!” To him who is without sense she says, “Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine I have mixed. Leave simpleness, and live, and walk in the way of insight.”

He who corrects a scoffer gets himself abuse, and he who reproves a wicked man incurs injury. Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you; reprove a wise man, and he will love you. Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; teach a righteous man and he will increase in learning. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight. For by me your days will be multiplied, and years will be added to your life.

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 4th Tone:

Free us from soul-destroying greed, O Savior,

and number us in the bosom of Abraham

together with poor Lazarus.

For our sake you became poor,

yet you are rich in mercies!

You lead us from corruption to incorruption, //

for you are a compassionate God, the Lover of man!

Unto Thee have I lifted up mine eyes, unto Thee that dwellest in heaven.  Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hands of their masters, as the eyes of the handmaid look unto the hands of her mistress, so do our eyes look unto the Lord our God, until He take pity on us. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us, for greatly are we filled with abasement.  Greatly hath our soul been filled therewith; let reproach come upon them that prosper, and abasement on the proud.

You accepted the patient sufferings of your holy martyrs:

Accept also this song of praise from us, O Lover of man, //

and through their intercessions, grant us your great mercy.

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

Today glad tidings of joy have come forth,

it is the feast of the Virgin.

Things above have been joined to things below.

Adam is renewed and Eve is set free from her ancient curse,

and the tabernacle of human nature which the Lord took upon Himself

is consecrated as a temple of God.

The manner of His emptying is unknown,

the fashion of His conceiving is ineffable.

An angel ministers at the wonder and a virgin womb receives the

Son.

The Holy Spirit is sent down and the Father on high gives His consent,

and so the covenant is brought to pass by common counsel.

In Him and through Him we are saved,

and together with Gabriel let us cry aloud to the Virgin:

“Rejoice, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with you!

From you has Christ our God and our Salvation taken human nature,

raising it up unto Himself: //

Pray to Him that our souls may be saved.”

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, have mercy on us. Amen.

Tone 4:

Today is the beginning of our salvation,

the revelation of the eternal mystery.

The Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin

as Gabriel announces the coming of Grace.

Together with him let us cry to the Theotokos:

“Rejoice, O Full of Grace, //

The Lord is with you!”

Lord Have Mercy (***40 times)***

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

O Lord and Master of my life, give me not a spirit of sloth, despair, lust of power, or idle talk. (***prostration***)

But give rather a spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love, to me Thy servant. (***prostration***)

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

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, and of all the saints, O Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us. Amen.