Reader’s ‘Great’ Vespers on Saturday, May 23rd

Service for the Sunday of the Blind Man

SS Cyril and Methodius, Teachers of the Slavs (May 11th/24th)

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

Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life! ***(Thrice)***

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 5th 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.

By thy precious Cross, O Christ,

thou hast put the Devil to shame.

By thy resurrection, thou hast blunted the sting of sin

and saved us from the gates of death! //

We glorify thee, O Only-begotten One!

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.

Christ was led as a sheep to the slaughter

in order to grant resurrection to the human race!

The princes of Hell were frightened by this,

for the gates of sorrow were lifted!

Christ, the King of Glory, had entered,

saying to those in chains, “Go forth!” //

and to those in darkness, “Come to the Light!”

In the 2nd Tone: From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch let Israel hope in the Lord.

The man blind from birth asked himself:

“Was I born blind because of the sins of my parents?

Or am I a living sign of the faithlessness of the people?

I am not content to continue asking whether it is night or day.

My feet can no longer endure tripping upon the stones!

I have seen nothing:

neither the sun shining, nor the image of my Maker.

But I entreat you, O Christ God, //

look upon me and have mercy on me!

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

While passing by the temple,

Jesus met a man blind from birth.

He had compassion on him and put spittle on his eyes, saying:

“Go wash in the pool of Siloam.”

He washed himself and then gave glory to God!

His neighbors asked him:

“Who opened your eyes, which no one could heal before?”

He answerd: “A man called Jesus said to me:

‘Wash in Siloam!’ And now I see:

He is truly the Christ, the Messiah whom Moses foretold in the Law. //

He is the Savior of our souls!”

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

With what crowns of praise

shall we adorn the divinely-wise teachers,

the voices of wisdom sounding amid clouds of darkness,

enlightening those in the shadow of death with the light of the gospel!

The great preachers of the undivided Trinity

who grafted barren unbelievers as branches

into the fruitful tree of the Orthodox Church //

that they might obtain from Christ our God peace and great mercy.

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

With what songs of praise

shall we glorify the divinely-wise teachers:

The golden-mouthed Cyril

who reached the heights of wisdom through his sweet preaching,

humbling the fierce pride of Islam!

And Methodius, the lover of solitude,

who in silence received the fruits of the Spirit. //

Through their prayers, Christ our God, grant us great mercy.

In the 5th Tone: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit

While passing by the way, O Lord,

you met a man blind from birth.

Your disciples were puzzled and asked:

“Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents,

that he was born blind?”

Jesus answered: “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents,

but that the works of God might be revealed in him!

I must work the works of him who sent me,

which no one else can do.”

As he said this, he spat on the ground

making clay of the spittle.

He anointed the man’s eyes with the clay and said to him:

“Go, wash in the pool of Siloam.”

He went and washed, and was made whole,

and cried out: “O Lord, I believe!” //

He worshipped you, and now we cry: “Have mercy on us!”

In the 5th Tone: Now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

In the Red Sea of old

a type of the Virgin Bride was prefigured.

There Moses divided the waters;

Here Gabriel assisted in the miracle.

There Israel crossed the sea without getting wet;

Here the Virgin gave birth to Christ without seed.

After Israel’s passage, the sea remained impassable;

After Emmanuel’s birth, the Virgin remained a virgin.

O Ever-existing God who appeared as man, //

O Lord, have mercy on us!

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!

The Reading is from Proverbs

The memory of the righteous is with praise and the blessing of the Lord is upon his head. Blessed is the man who has found wisdom and the mortal who has understanding. For it is better to purchase her than treasuries of gold and silver. She is more precious than precious stones and all that is precious is unworthy of her. For length of days and years of life are in her right hand; and in her left hand are riches and glory. Out of her mouth proceeds righteousness and she bears law and mercy upon her tongue. Hear me, O child, for I will speak noble things. Blessed is the man who keeps my ways, for my ways are the ways of life, and in them is prepared favor from the Lord. Therefore, I pray thee, and utter my voice to the sons of men: For I, wisdom, have dwelt with counsel and knowledge and I have called upon understanding. Counsel and safety are mine, understanding and strength are mine. I love those who love me and those seeking me shall find grace. Understand craftiness, O you who are simple, and imbibe knowledge, you who are untaught. Hear me again, for I will speak noble things: I will open my mouth and from my lips shall come what is right. For my throat shall meditate truth; false lips are an abomination before me. All the words of my mouth are righteous; there is nothing in them that is twisted or perverse. They are all straight to him who understands and right to those who find knowledge.I shall instruct you in truth, so that your hope will be in the Lord and you shall be filled with the Spirit.

The Reading is from Proverbs

The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom, but the perverse tongue will be cut out. The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable, but the mouth of the wicked what is perverse. Dishonest scales are an abomination to the Lord, but a just weight is His delight. When pride comes, then comes shame; but with the humble is wisdom. The integrity of the upright will guide them, but the perversity of the unfaithful will destroy them. Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death. The righteousness of the blameless will direct his way aright, but the wicked will fall by his own wickedness. The righteousness of the upright will deliver them, but the unfaithful will be caught by their lust. When a wicked man dies, his expectation will perish, and the hope of the unjust perishes. The righteous is delivered from trouble, and it comes to the wicked instead. The hypocrite with his mouth destroys his neighbor, but through knowledge the righteous will be delivered. When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices; and when the wicked perish, there is jubilation. By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted, but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked. He who is devoid of wisdom despises his neighbor, but a man of understanding holds his peace.

The Reading is from the Wisdom of Solomon

But the righteous man, though he die early, will be at rest. For old age is not honored for length of time, nor measured by number of years; but understanding is gray hair for men, and a blameless life is ripe old age. There was one who pleased God and was loved by him, He was caught up lest evil change his understanding or guile deceive his soul. For the fascination of wickedness obscures what is good, and roving desire perverts the innocent mind. Being perfected in a short time, he fulfilled long years; for his soul was pleasing to the Lord, therefore he took him quickly from the midst of wickedness. Yet the peoples saw and did not understand, nor take such a thing to heart, that God’s grace and mercy are with his elect, and he watches over his holy ones.

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 5th Tone:

We magnify thee in songs of praise,

O incarnate Christ and Savior!

By accepting the Cross and death for our sake,

as the Lord and Lover of man

thou didst overthrow the gates of Hell, //

and didst arise on the third day, saving our souls!

In the 5th Tone:

Verse: Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered.

A Pascha sacred today hath been shown unto us; \* Pascha new and holy, \* a Pascha mystical, \* a Pascha all-venerable! \* A Pascha that is Christ the Redeemer; \* a Pascha immaculate, \* a great Pascha; \* a Pascha of the faithful; \* a Pascha that hath opened the gates of Paradise to us; \*\* a Pascha that doth sanctify all the faithful.

Verse: As smoke vanisheth, so let them vanish.

Come from the vision, O ye women, bearers of good tidings, \* and say ye unto Zion: \* Receive from us the good tidings \* of the Resurrection of Christ; \* adorn thyself, exult, \* and rejoice, O Jerusalem, \* for thou hast seen Christ the King, \*\* like a bridegroom come forth from the tomb.

Verse: So let sinners perish at the presence of God, and let the righteous be glad.

The myrrh-bearing women \* in the deep dawn \* stood before the tomb of the Giver of life; \* they found an angel sitting upon the stone, \* and he, speaking to them, said thus: \* Why seek ye the Living among the dead? \*Why mourn ye the Incorruptible amid corruption? \*\* Go, proclaim unto His disciples.

Verse: This is the day which the Lord hath made, let us rejoice and be glad therein.

Pascha the beautiful, \* Pascha, the Lord's Pascha, \* the Pascha all-venerable hath dawned upon us. \* Pascha, with joy let us embrace one another. \* O Pascha! \* Ransom from sorrow, \* for from the tomb today, \* as from a bridal chamber, \* hath Christ shone forth, \* and hath filled the women with joy, saying: \*\* Proclaim unto the apostles.

In the 8th Tone: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit

Rejoice, O blessèd fathers

who enlightened us with the knowledge of God!

Rejoice, O Cyril, living source of spiritual wisdom:

You quenched the thirst of the Slavic people!

Rejoice, O Methodius, pure dwelling of prayer:

Now you stand in the glory of Christ.

Therefore never cease to pray that we may glorify him //

as we magnify you throughout the ages!

In the 5th Tone: Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

It is the Day of Resurrection, \* let us be radiant for the feast, \* and let us embrace one another. \* Let us say, Brethren, even to them that hate us, \* let us forgive all things on the Resurrection, \* and thus let us cry out:

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 5th Tone:

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word,

co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit,

born for our salvation from the Virgin;

for he willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh,

to endure death

and to raise the dead //

by his glorious Resurrection!

In the 4th Tone: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

O Cyril and Methodius, inspired by God,

you became equals to the apostles by your life.

As you were teachers of the Slavs,

intercede with the Master of all

that he may strengthen all Orthodox peoples in the true faith;

that he may grant peace to the world //

and great mercy to our souls.

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

The mystery hidden from all eternity

unknown even by angels

through you, O Theotokos, is revealed to those on earth,

God incarnate by union without confusion.

He voluntarily accepted the Cross for us

by which he resurrected the first-created man, //

saving our souls from death.

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

Christ is risen! Indeed He is risen!