Reader’s Great Vespers on Thursday July 23rd, 2020

Blessed Princess of Russia Olga (July 11th/24th)

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

Glory to Thee O God, glory to Thee!

O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, Who art everywhere present and fillest all things, Treasury of blessings and Giver of Life, come and abide in us and cleanse us from every impurity and save our souls, O Good One!

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. ***(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 4th 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.

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.

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

Thy most glorious commemoration hath dawned upon us like the sun, O divinely wise Olga, mother of the princes of Russia, youngest daughter of Christ. Thou, who wast nurtured on the teaching of the apostles, didst prevail over the graven images and over the devil, being enlightened by the power of the Holy Spirit; and from the darkness of ignorance thou didst lead to God the whole land and all the people. Him do thou entreat on behalf of those who keep thy memory.

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

In the spiritual understanding wherewith thou didst put to shame the enemy who beguiled Eve and didst break asunder his weaponry, thou didst build up the divinely planted paradise of the Church, wherein thou didst plant the Cross, the Tree of life, having as food the table of God, the inexhaustible fountain of the Blood of Christ. And, drinking thereof, thou remainest incorrupt, ever praying on behalf of us all.

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

Be ye spiritually filled with gladness, ye ends of the Russian land, honoring the memory of the divinely wise Olga; for she prayeth ever to Christ with the wonderworkers and the martyrs, having as a helper the holy Theotokos, that we who hymn her with faith and bow down before the reliquary of her incorrupt body be delivered from misfortune and grief.

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

Come, ye Christian people of Russia, and in praises let us magnify our first mother, who showed great wisdom and courage, who spurned the glory of this world and loved Christ our true God more than all others; and let us cry out thus unto her: O most glorious favorite of Christ, pray thou for the people of Russia, that they might not be turned away from the Orthodox Faith by any of the wiles of the enemy, but may remain unshaken in piety.

In the 6th Tone: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

Come, ye generations of Russia, and with hymns let us praise the all-wise Olga! Come, and, enriched in understanding, learn from her how to bring our understanding to the obedience of faith! Come, O ye people, and render honor to a most glorious woman! Come, ye women, and emulate her great manliness! Come, ye rulers, and understand an incorrupt glory which surpasseth all earthly things! Come, all ye her descendants, and celebrate with splendor on her day! For she prayeth fervently to the Lord, that our souls be enlightened.

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen:

Who doth not call thee blessed, O most holy Virgin? \* Who will not hymn thy most pure birthgiving? \* For the only-begotten Son Who hath shone forth timelessly from the Father, \* came forth, ineffably incarnate, from thee, O pure one; \* By nature he is God, by nature for our sakes, he hath become a man \* not divided into two Hypostases, \* but known in two natures without commingling. \* Him do thou beseech, O pure and most blessed one, \*\* that our souls find mercy!

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 6th Tone:

My help comes from the Lord, Who made Heaven and Earth.

Verse: I lift up my eyes to the hills, from where my help will come.

My help comes from the Lord,/ Who made Heaven and Earth.

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF JUDGES

In those days, the children of Israel continued to do evil against the Lord; and Ehud was dead. And the Lord sold the children of Israel into the hand of Jabin, King of Canaan, who ruled in Hazor. The chief of his host was Sisera, who dwelt in Harosheth of the gentiles. And the children of Israel cried to the Lord, because he had nine hundred chariots of iron; and he mightily oppressed Israel twenty years. And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, judged Israel at that time. And she sat under the palm-tree of Deborah, between Ramah and Bethel in Mount Ephraim; and the children of Israel went up to her for judgment. And Deborah sent and called Barak, the son of Abinoam, out of Kedesh Nephtali, and said to him: "Hath not the Lord God of Israel commanded thee, saying: 'Thou shalt depart to Mount Tabor; and shalt take with thyself ten thousand men of the sons of Nephtali and of the sons of Zebulon. And I will bring to thee, to the torrent of Kishon, Sisera, the captain of the host of Jabin, and his chariots, and his multitude; and I will deliver them into thy hands'?" And Barak said to her: "If thou wilt go with me, I will go; but if thou wilt not go, I will not go: for I know not the day of which the Lord prospereth His messenger with me." And she said: "I will surely go with thee; but know that thine honor shall not attend on the expedition on which thou goest, for the Lord shall sell Sisera into the hands of a woman." And Deborah arose, and went with Barak out of Kedesh. And Barak called Zebulon and Nephtali out of Kedesh, and there went up at his feet ten thousand men; and Deborah went with him. And Heber the Kenite had removed from Kena, from the sons of Hobab the father-in-law of Moses, and pitched his tent by the oak of the covetous ones, which is near Kedesh. And it was told Sisera that Barak, the son of Abinoam, was gone up to Mount Tabor. And Sisera summoned all his chariots, nine hundred chariots of iron and all the people with him, from Harosheth of the gentiles unto the brook of Kishon. And Deborah said to Barak: "Rise up, for this is the day on which the Lord hath delivered Sisera into thy hand; for the Lord shall go forth before thee." And Barak went down from Mount Tabor, and ten thousand men after him. And the Lord discomfited Sisera, and all his chariots, and all his army, with the edge of the sword before Barak; and Sisera descended from off his chariot, and fled on his feet. And Barak pursued his chariots and the army, into Harosheth of the gentiles; and the whole army of Sisera fell by the edge of the sword, and there was not one left. And Sisera fled on his feet to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, his friend; for there was peace between Jabin, King of Hazor, and the house of Heber the Kenite. And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said to him: "Turn aside, my lord, turn aside to me. Fear not." And he turned aside to her into the tent; and she covered him with a mantle. And Sisera said to her: "Give me, I pray thee, a little water to drink, for I am thirsty." And she opened a bottle of milk, and gave him to drink, and covered him. And Sisera said to her: "Stand now by the door of the tent, and it shall come to pass if any man come to thee and ask of thee, and say: 'Is there any man here?', then thou shalt say: 'There is not.'" And Jael, the wife of Heber, took a pin of the tent, and took a hammer in her hand, and went secretly to him, and fastened the pin in his temple; and it went through to the earth, and he fainted away, and darkness fell upon him, and he died. And behold, Barak was pursuing Sisera; and Jael went out to meet him, and said to him: "Come, and I will show thee the man whom thou seekest." And he went in to her; and, behold, Sisera was fallen dead, and the pin was in his temple. So God routed Jabin, King of Canaan, in that day, before the children of Israel. And the hand of the children of Israel prevailed more and more against Jabin, King of Canaan, until they utterly destroyed Jabin, King of Canaan. And Deborah and Barak, son of Abinoam, sang in that day, saying: "A revelation was made in Israel when the people were made willing: Praise ye the Lord! Hear, ye kings, and hearken, ye rulers: I will sing! It is I who will sing to the Lord; it is I, I will sing a psalm to the Lord, the God of Israel! O Lord, in Thy going forth on Seir, when Thou wentest forth out of the land of Edom, the earth quaked and the heaven dropped dew, and the clouds dropped water. The mountains were shaken before the face of the Lord Eloi, this Sinai before the face of the Lord God of Israel. In the days of Shamgar, the son of Anath, in the days of Jael, they deserted the ways, and went in by-ways; they went in crooked paths. The mighty men in Israel failed, they failed until Deborah arose, until she arose, a mother in Israel. They chose new gods. Then the cities of rulers fought; there was not a shield or a spear seen among forty thousand in Israel. My heart inclineth to the orders given in Israel. Ye that are willing among the people, bless the Lord. Ye that mount a sheass at noon-day, ye that sit on the judgment-seat, and walk by the roads of those who sit in judgment by the way: declare ye that are delivered from the noise of disturbers among the drawers of water: there shall they relate righteous acts. O Lord, increase righteous acts in Israel. Then the people of the Lord went down to the cities. Awake, awake, O Deborah! Awake, awake, utter a song! Arise, O Barak, and lead thy captivity captive, O son of Abinoam!"

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF JUDITH

Judith was left alone in the tent, and Holofernes lying alone on his bed, for he was filled with wine. Now Judith had commanded her maid to stand without her bedchamber, and to wait for her coming forth, as she did daily; for she said she would go forth to her prayers, and she spake to Bagoas according to the same purpose. So all went forth, and none was left in the bedchamber, neither little nor great. Then Judith, standing by his bed, said in her heart: "O Lord God of all power, look at this present upon the work of mine hands for the exaltation of Jerusalem. For now is the time to help Thine inheritance, and to execute mine enterprise to the destruction of the enemies which are risen against us." Then she came to the pillar of the bed, which was at Holofernes' head, and took down his sword from thence, and approached his bed, and took hold of the hair of his head, and said: "Strengthen me, O Lord God of Israel, this day!" And she smote twice upon his neck with all her might, and took away his head from him, and tumbled his body down from the bed, and pulled down the canopy from the pillars. And afterward she sent forth, and gave Holofernes' head to her maid, who put it in her bag of meat. And the twain went together, according to their custom, unto prayer; and when they passed the camp, they compassed the valley, and went up the mountain of Bethulia, and came to the gates thereof. Then said Judith afar off to the watchmen at the gate: "Open, open now the gate! God, even our God, is with us, to show His power yet in Israel, and His strength against the enemy, as He hath even done this day!" Now when the men of her city heard her voice, they made haste to go down to the gate of their city, and they called the elders of the city. And then they ran all together, both small and great, for it was strange unto those to whom she was come; so they opened the gate, and received them, and made a fire for a light, and stood round about them. Then said she to them with a loud voice: "Praise, praise God! Praise God, I say, for He hath not taken away His mercy from the house of Israel, but hath destroyed our enemies by my hands this night!" And she took the head out of the bag, and showed it, and said unto them: "Behold the head of Holofernes, the chief captain of the army of Ashur; and behold the canopy, wherein he did lie in his drunkenness! The Lord hath smitten him by the hand of a woman. And the Lord liveth, Who hath kept me in my way that I went, my countenance hath deceived him to his destruction, and yet hath he not committed sin with me, to defile and shame me." Then all the people were wonderfully astonished, and bowed themselves down, and worshipped God, and said with one accord: "Blessed be Thou, O our God, Who hast this day brought to naught the enemies of Thy people!" Then said Hosiah unto her: "O daughter, blessed art thou by the Most High God more than all the women upon the earth; and blessed be the Lord God, Who hath created the heavens and the earth, and hath directed thee to the cutting off of the head of the chief of our enemies! For this thy confidence shall not depart from the heart of men, who remember the power of God forever! May God turn these things to thee for a perpetual praise, to visit thee in good things, because thou hast not spared thy life for the affliction of our nation, but hast revenged our ruin, walking a straight way before our God." And all the people said: "So be it! So be it!"

A READING FROM PROVERBS

Who shall find a virtuous woman? for such a one is more valuable than precious stones. The heart of her husband trusteth in her; such a one shall stand in no need of fine spoils. For she employeth all her living for her husband's good. Gathering wool and flax, she maketh it serviceable with her hands.

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 8th Tone:

O most glorious wonder! Through a woman the Lord Who is the Lover of mankind most wondrously restored the human race, which had fallen through a woman, and in later times He sent a woman for the conversion of the Russian race: the most glorious Olga, whose baptism laid the foundation for the enlightenment of the Russian land, unto the salvation of our souls.

Verse: The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon Him, \* to all that call on Him in truth.

Rejoice, O divinely saved city of Kiev, who hast poured forth the light of Christ upon all the ends of our land, and showed forth therein the first saint, the most honored Olga! Rejoice, O Vyshegrad, her honored inheritance! Rejoice, O assembly of the women of Russia, who have provided our boast, unto the salvation of our souls!

Verse: The will of those who fear Him shall He do, \* and their supplication shall He hear, and He shall save them.

Be glad, O barren land of Russia! Dance, O thou who never felt the pangs of childbirth, for thou hast now given birth to thy child, the blessed Olga! And to the Lord she calleth our father Vladimir, and by her struggles moveth to emulation the choirs of God's saints, and thy cities and groves, unto the salvation of our souls. j

Glory …:

Great is thy glory, and thy memorial is celebrated with praises, O all-wise Olga, who disdained the emptiness of the idols and understood the truth of the Gospel. In thine old age thou didst bind thy mind to Christ in obedience, and hast shown the true path of life to all the generations of Russia. On our behalf entreat Him Who alone is the Lover of mankind.

Now & ever:

O unwedded Virgin! \* thou who ineffably conceived God in the flesh, \* Mother of God Most High: \* accept the supplications of thy servants, O all-immaculate one, \* granting unto all cleansing of transgressions; \* and, accepting now our supplications, \*\* pray thou that we all 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 1:

Having furnished thy mind with wings of divine knowledge, \* thou didst soar far above visible creation; \* and seeking God, the Creator of all, and finding Him, \* thou didst receive rebirth through baptism; \* and delighting in the Tree of life, O everglorious Olga, \*\* thou remainest incorrupt forever.

Glory ..., Now & ever ...,:

When Gabriel announced to thee, "Rejoice!", O Virgin, \* the Master of all became incarnate within thee, the holy tabernacle, \* at his cry, as the righteous David said. Thou wast shown to be more spacious than the heavens, \* having borne thy Creator. \* Glory to Him Who made His abode within thee! \* Glory to Him Who came forth from thee! \*\* Glory to Him Who hath set us free by thy birthgiving.

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 the Emperor Nicholas and His Family, and of all the saints, Lord, Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us. Amen.