Reader’s Vespers on Friday September 11th, 2020

Postfeast of the Beheading; Our Fathers among theSaints, Alexander, John, and Paul the New, Patriarchs of Constantinople (August 30th/September 12th)

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.

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.

You are the divine mediator between the old and new testaments,

the prophet and fòrerunner,

an angel in the flesh, the denouncer of lawlessness,

offspring of the womb of a barren woman,

a mouth breathing fire:

You upbraided Herod who committed iniquity.

Unable to endure your denunciation,

he commanded that your head be cut off!

It was brought in on a platter;

but like food of abstinence and divine delight, //

it continued to denounce the adulterer!

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.

Incited by her evil mother,

the depraved daughter asked for your all-glorious head,

the head that is cherished by the angels!

For she was unable to endure your denunciation.

Therefore, bearing it on a platter and dancing as she carried it,

she turned the joy of those at the banquet into lamentation.

Yet you continued to denounce the evil of adultery, O blessèd one. //

Entreat Christ that our souls may be saved!

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

Made foolish by drunkenness,

Herod was carried away by adultery and voices caroling in song!

In fulfillment of his unrighteous oath,

he caused your murder, O righteous and glorious prophet.

But your death openly announced immortality to those who had died

before,

for you became a preacher and herald for those in hell,

proclaiming the saving coming of Christ our God! //

Entreat him that he may save and enlighten our souls!

In the 1st Tone: For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption; and He shall redeem Israel out of all his iniquities.

You were a shepherd of the Church, O most blessèd Alexander,

a champion of orthodoxy wisely casting down the Arian heresy!

You prayed with supplications, O all-wise and glorious one,

that his wickedness be cast out of the Church! //

Therefore, together we honor you!

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

You disdained the corruption of the flesh, O hon’rable John,

and in your abstinence and faith, vigilance and confession,

you were found to be an earthly angel and heavenly man! //

Entreat Christ that he may grant our souls great mercy!

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

You truly submitted to the divine teachings of your namesake!

You hastened to the heights of the virtues, as to the third heaven,

O glorious one!

You heard the ineffable and divine words of the Spirit!

As an unshakable foundation of the Orthodox, //

by your prayers may the Savior be merciful to us!

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

Again Herodius raves with raging lust.

A dance of deceit and feast of murder!

The Baptist is beheaded, and Herod forfeits all peace, //

but through the prayers of the forerunner grant us your peace, O Lord!

In the 4th Tone: Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen:

The prophet David was a father of the Lord through you, O Virgin!

He foretold in songs the one who worked wonders in you:

“At your right hand stood the queen, your mother, the mediatrix of life,

since God was freely born of her without a father!”

He wanted to renew his fallen image, made corrupt in passion;

so he took the lost sheep upon his shoulder,

and brought it to his Father,

joining it to the heavenly powers. //

Christ, who has great and rich mercy, has saved the world, O Theotokos.

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 7th Tone:

Thou, O God, art my Helper, and Thy mercy shall go before me.

Verse: Rescue me from my enemies, O God, and redeem me from them that rise up against me.

Thou, O God, art my Helper,/ and Thy mercy shall go before me.

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:

You are glorified, O Christ our God,

in the remembrance of your saints: //

through their intercessions, send down on us your great mercy.

Verse: Blessed are they whom Thou hast chosen and taken, O Lord!

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.

Verse: Their memory is from generation to generation!

With the souls of the righteous departed *//*

give rest also to the souls of your servants, O Savior, //

Preserving them in the blessèd life which is with you, O Lover of man.

Glory …:

Herod celebrated an unfitting birthday

and an utterly shameless feast,

for captivated by lust for a woman

and excited by a woman’s wantonness,

he had the head of the forerunner cut off!

But he did not cut out the tongue of the prophet

who denounced his foolishness!

Shedding innocent blood, he wished to conceal his iniquitous sin,

but he could not stop the voice which calls all to repentance!

And though he made merry in the midst of murder,

we lovingly celebrate the blessèd slaying of John the Baptist,

for he preceded the Life into hell,

proclaiming Christ our God, the Orient from on high,

the only greatly merciful One, //

to those who sat in darkness and the shadow of death!

Now & ever ...:

O candle whose light is never quenched,

O throne of righteousness, //

O most pure Lady, pray 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.

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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 2:

The memory of the righteous is celebrated with hymns of praise,

but the Lord’s testimony is sufficient for you, O Fòrerunner.

You were shown in truth to be the most honorable of the prophets,

for you were deemed worthy to baptize in the streams of the Jordan

him whom you foretold.

Therefore, having suffered for the truth with joy,

you proclaimed to those in hell God who appeared in the flesh,

who takes away the sin of the world, //

and grants us great mercy.

In the 4th Tone: Glory… Now and Ever…:

O God of our fathers,

do not take away your mercy from us,

but ever act toward us according to your kindness,

and by the prayers of your saints, //

guide our lives in peace!

Lord have mercy. ***Forty times***

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

More honorable than the Cherubim, and 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 Holy Glorious Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist John, of our Father among the Saints Alexander, John, and Paul the New, Patriarchs of Constantinople, and of all the saints, Lord, Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us. Amen.