Reader’s Vespers on Thursday March 4th, 2021

Our Venerable Father Leo, Bishop of Catania in Sicily (February 20th/March 5th)

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 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.

Let all the trees of the forest sing for joy

at the sight of your most precious Cross,

being favored by the passion of the Master.

The Cross shines forth grace like a flaming fire!

The Cross showers gifts upon all like living water!

The Cross enlightens souls and purifies minds!

The Cross washes away sickness and drives out evil passions!

The Cross chases unseen devils and is victorious over the Enemy! //

The Cross bestows upon the faithful blessings and great mercy.

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.

Let us fulfill the prophecy of the Psalmist;

Let us venerate the footstool of the Lord of Glory.

Let us glorify Christ who crucified our sins and destroyed the curse of the Tree;

For we were strangers and are now reconciled sons to the Father.

Let us venerate the nails in his hands and feet,

the reviling and the mockery,

the lance, the reed, the sponge and the crown of thorns, //

and all the rest to which he submitted,

by which we all have been saved.

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

Let us, who desire to follow in the steps of Christ our King,

crucify all our members in Christ – dying to the world,

and take his divine Cross upon our shoulders

by turning from the temptations of the flesh

and from the evil lusts that draw the world toward sin.

Remember that you stand before Him Who was nailed on the cross,

Where, with a sigh, He commended His soul into the hands of the Father //

That we might be with Him forever without separation.

In the 8th 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 revealed Your bishop in the world, O Lord,

to be a successor to the apostles in word and deed!

He was a preacher of true doctrine,

therefore You made him an instructor of hierarchs //

and a partaker of Your incorruptible glory!

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

The Church of Christ contains you as a living pillar, O Leo,

and a proclaimer of the true teachings of the Word.

She ever remains unshaken,

beholding the truth and glorifying the Lord, the Master of all, //

who has glorified you!

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

O Lord, You revealed the holy bishop

as a sharp sword against the ungodly,

fighting for Your Orthodox faith, O Word;

and cutting down false teachings! //

Thus, O Master, you increased good teaching in the world!

Glory… now and ever... :

The sun is now darkened, O my Child;

the moon has somberly changed its usual array of light

to an appearance full of gloom.

With trembling the earth quakes;

the veil of Your temple is torn, O my Child,

How then could I not be torn in heart and eyes?

I tear my cheeks for grief, O my sweetest Son, //

when I look upon You as You unjustly die, O my Savior and God.

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.

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.

At the Aposticha: Tone 5:

Moses, your prophet, stretched out his arms in the form of a cross,

and the forces of Amalek were destroyed.

Now that we have your Cross itself, we beseech you, O Lord,

Strengthen your Church and give her victory over the Enemy //

for the sake of your great mercy, O Lover of man!

Verse: Unto thee do I lift up mine eyes, O thou who dwellest in the heavens. Behold, as the eyes of servants are upon the hands of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden are upon the hands of her mistress, even so our eyes are upon the Lord our God, until he be compassionate unto us

Though your Cross appears to be only wood, O Christ,

it is arrayed with the power of your divinity,

and makes itself visibly felt in the world;

For by it you hast wrought the miracle of our salvation. //

Venerating it, we glorify you, O Savior.

Verse: Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us, for long have we been filled with contempt. Yet more is our soul filled with the reproach of the wealthy, and with the contempt of the proud.

O martyrs worthy of all praise,

you cared nothing for the things of this earth

but bravely stood up to torture.

You attained the blessèd life for which you hoped.

You were made heirs of the heavenly kingdom.

Since you have boldness before God who loves mankind,

beseech him to grant peace to the world //

and to our souls great mercy!

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

When she saw the Lamb, her son, lifted upon the Cross,

The blessèd Virgin Mother wept, crying out:

“O my Son, woe to me!

How are you dying, //

for you are the Immortal One, O God?

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

Tone 4:

You appeared to your flock as a rule of faith,

an image of humility and a teacher of abstinence.

Because of your lowliness, heaven was opened to you;

because of your poverty, riches were granted to you. //

O Holy Bishop Leo, pray to Christ God to save our souls!

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 our Venerable Father Leo of Catania, and of all the saints, O Lord, Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us. Amen.