Reader’s Vespers on Thursday July 16th, 2020

The Royal Passionbearers Emperor Nicholas and His Family (July 4th/July 17th)

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 8th 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.

When Russia, which from of old was holy, began to apostatize from its Creator and God, the long-suffering Lord sent many righteous men and prophets, of whom the last was the righteous John, the holy pastor of Kronstadt, who called sinners to repentance and proclaimed that the wrath of God would fall upon the unrepentant; but the people would not heed them. Then God committed the Russian land, which before had been pious, to great persecutions of the Faith, that He might bring sinners to their senses and exalt and glorify the faithful through the endurance, suffering and death for Christ, revealing a multitude of holy new martyrs, among whom were the great passion-bearer, the martyred Tsar Nicholas, with his Tsaritsa, children and servants, who now pray on behalf of our souls.

In the 2nd Tone: 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.

When thou, O martyred Tsar, wast imprisoned by those who contend against God, thou didst have great joy with thy Tsaritsa and children when the minister of God visited thee to perform the divine services. Such a pious Tsar and anointed one of God did a great many of the people reject, for they were not mindful of the word of God which calleth upon all to honor the ruler; and the wrath of God came upon us all. Wherefore, in repentance we cry out: O Lord, through the intercession of the great passion-bearer, the martyred Tsar, grant Thou to the suffering Russian land deliverance from those who contend against God and the restoration of the throne of our Orthodox tsars.

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

We raise a hymn to thee, O martyred Tsar, much-suffering passion-bearer, for thou didst make a place for all in thine heart, as did the Apostle Paul: feeding the hungry, comforting the sorrowful, sympathizing with the suffering, grieving over the lost, showing clemency to condemned malefactors, meekly enduring slander and injustice, zealous for the Faith and for piety, holding the glory and wealth of this world to be but naught and, what is more, feeling them to be a burden, having concern for the peace of the whole world, aflame with love for all. Take us also into thine heart, O much suffering and great passion-bearer, and entreat the merciful God, that He take pity on us, and grant us the strength to be emulators of thee.

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.

O divinely-crowned martyr, holy Tsaritsa Alexandra, who can recount thy truly evangelical life? Thou didst come to the Orthodox Faith from another belief, and didst embrace it wholeheartedly, coming to love prayer, the Church and the holy Mysteries, and the teaching of the holy Fathers, raising thy children in piety, and preparing them for martyrdom for Christ, meekly enduring the slander of those who had forgotten God and who did not understand thy true piety. Wherefore, we beseech thee: entreat Christ God Whom thou didst love, that He save our souls.

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

Great was thy faith, O holy martyred Tsaritsa Alexandra, when thou wast imprisoned unjustly by those who contend against God; for knowing of the martyrs' death which awaited thee, thou didst speak thus: Let us prepare ourselves to meet the heavenly Bridegroom! who filleth and illumineth my soul with indescribable joy and tranquility! My soul danceth for joy, knowing that the Bridegroom draweth nigh! My soul trembleth, for God is near! Let us ask of the Lord forgiveness of sins for ourselves and the whole world! Let us pray for those who forget to pray and for all the people! O holy martyr, be thou a channel for the forgiveness of our sins and great mercy!

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

The holy martyred Tsarevich Alexis loved the power of the Cross. And this faith in the Cross helped him to bear without murmuring the cross of the suffering of an incurable affliction throughout all of his brief life, and to accept with hope and patience a martyr's death for Christ. And now in the heavens pray thou for us who with faith and love keep thy memory, that the Lord may also grant us faith, patience and love.

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

O divinely elect and venerable martyred Princess Elizabeth, when the tempest of godlessness fell upon the land of Russia, thou didst utter these things: As in a natural storm these things take place: certain ones escape, others are struck down, and the spiritual eyes of others are opened that they might behold the mighty works of God, so also do they befall amid the wind of life. For amid the misfortunes thy soul beheld the right hand of God: the cruel murder of thy husband led thee to the service of God and neighbor; thou didst minister unto the poor, the bereft and the crippled with humility and love. Moreover, thou didst embrace the monastic life, and refuse to flee from those who contend with God, fearlessly receiving a martyr's death for Christ. And we, honoring thy fragrant relics, earnestly entreat: Pray thou for us that honor thy struggles and sufferings!

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen:

In His love for mankind, the King of heaven appeared on earth \* and dwelt among men; \* for He Who received flesh from the pure Virgin \* and cameth forth from her having received human nature, \* is the only Son of God, twofold in nature \* but not Hypostasis. \* Therefore, proclaiming Him to be truly perfect God and perfect man, \* we confess Christ our God. \* Him do thou beseech, O unwedded Mother, \*\* 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.

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:

Thy concern was not for the glory of an earthly kingdom, O glorious martyred Tsar Nicholas, when thou didst receive coronation to the realm and the anointing with oil; but thou didst ponder the glory of God and the heavenly Kingdom, saying in prayer before the people: O my Master and Lord, direct and instruct me in this great ministry, that Thy divine wisdom may be with me; send it down from the heavens of Thy saints, that I may come to know what is pleasing in Thine eyes and what is right according to Thy commandments; may mine heart be directed by Thee to accomplish all things for Thy glory and for the spiritual benefit of the people Thou hast entrusted to me. And this prayer was pleasing in God's sight. And now, as a martyr, cease not to pray to God for the spiritual benefit of thy people, that He be merciful to them, granting us remission of sins, peace and great mercy.

Verse: I have raised up one chosen \* out of My people.

Like an innocent lamb was the martyred Tsar Nicholas led to the slaughter, with the Tsaritsa, their children and faithful servants. Possessed of a pure soul, entrusting himself and his household to God, never murmuring, he meekly accepted death for Christ; and now, standing with the angels and with the great company of new martyrs in the heavens, he prayeth for the salvation of the land of Russia from the cruel godless ones, that all who have fallen away from God might return to Him, that the fear of God may be established in their hearts, and that the faith of Christ may once again shine forth.

Verse: With My holy oil \* have I anointed Him.

These things did the holy royal martyrs profess before they were undeservedly put to death for Christ's sake, repeating the testament of the holy Fathers: the ancient martyrs, who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, went to death as to a feast, furnishing their mind and heart with wings of faith; and while condemned to death, they possessed a spirit of peace which never departed from them, for peacefully they went to death, trusting that they would enter into another, spiritual life which is disclosed beyond the grave. And having put these words to the test in deed, the holy royal martyrs now rejoice with Christ in the heavens, praying with boldness on behalf of our souls.

In the 6th Tone: Glory …:

Who can recount thy labors and sufferings? O great passion-bearer, martyred Tsar Nicholas, thou didst assume the grievous burden of authority, not for the sake of glory, but as a Christian Tsar and servant of Christ, as one concerned for the good of his people, enduring a multitude of tribulations. All of these things did the Lord permit because of the sins of the people, and that He might reveal thy piety, showing the world thy longsuffering, which was like that of the much suffering Job, that thou mightest receive a glorious martyr's crown in the heavens, like unto that of Abel. And now joining chorus there with the angels, thou dost intercede for us before God, praying for the salvation of our souls.

Now & ever:

Christ the Lord, my Creator and Redeemer, \* Who came forth from thy womb, O most pure one, \* and clothed Himself in my nature, \* hath freed Adam from the primal curse. \* Wherefore, like the angel we unceasingly cry out to thee, \* O most pure one, \* who art truly the Mother of God and Virgin: \* Rejoice!, O Sovereign Lady, \*\* the intercession, protection and salvation of our souls!

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 5:

Meekly didst thou endure the loss of thine earthly kingdom, \* the bonds and divers sufferings inflicted upon thee \* by those opposed to God, \* and didst bear witness for Christ even unto death, \* O great passion-bearer, \* divinely crowned Tsar Nicholas; \* wherefore, Christ God hath crowned thee in the heavens \* with a martyr's crown, \* together with thy queen, thy children and thy servants. \* Him do thou beseech, \* that He have mercy upon the Russian land \*\* and save our souls.

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

Rejoice, impassible portal of the Lord! \* Rejoice, rampart and protection of those who have recourse unto thee! \* Rejoice, haven untouched by storms, \* and who knowing not wedlock, \* didst bear in the flesh thy Creator and God. \* Cease not to intercede for those \*\* who praise and worship thine Offspring.

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