

THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT
ADORATION OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS
AT VESPERS

During Small Vespers the Priest placeth the Cross on a plate decorated with basil or flowers, and then onto the table of Oblation covering it with the Aer. The Royal Doors and curtain remain closed. Before the beginning of the Vigil, the Priest, in phelonion and cuffs, standeth before the Cross and exclaimeth:

Priest. Blessed is our God...

Reader. Amen. Glory to Thee, our God... Trisagion..., Our Father ...;

Priest. For Thine is the Kingdom ...

Troparion of the Cross, in Tone I:

Save O lord Thy people * and bless thine inheritance. * Grant now unto the faithful, * victory over adversaries, * and by the power of Thy Cross * do Thou preserve Thy commonwealth.

Glory ..., Both now ..., in Tone IV:

Thou who wast of Thine own will lifted upon the Cross, * grant unto Thy new community named after Thee * Thy bounties, O Christ our God, * and by Thy power make glad all right believing Orthodox Christians, * conferring victories over enemies * upon those who have as an ally, ** Thy weapon of peace, the invincible trophy.

During the singing, the priest censeth the Cross and returneth the censer. After a prostration, he picketh the Cross up with the Aer, onto his head and carrieth it over to the Altar Table, candle-bearers preceding him, and he puteth it on the Altar, in the place of the Gospel Book; The Book of Gospels having previously been placed upright at the back of the Altar. A candle is lit and kept in front of the Table of Oblation.

After this, the Priest censeth three times around the Altar on each side and the rest of the Altar as usual before a Vigil. Then the curtain and royal doors are open and the Vigil begineth:

On “Lord I have cried ...,” 10 Stichera: 6 Resurrection Stichera.

And 4 Stichera from the Triodion, in Tone V:

Shine, O Cross of the Lord, * shine the lightning rays of thy grace, into the hearts of those who honor thee. * With god-pleasing love, we embrace thee, O desire of all the world. * Through thee our tears of sorrow have been wiped away; * we have been delivered from the snares of death and have passed over to unending joy. * Show us the glory of thy beauty * and grant us thy servants the reward of our abstinence, ** for we entreat with faith thy rich protection and great mercy.

Rejoice! O life-giving Cross, * the fair Paradise of the Church, * Tree of incorruption that hath brought unto us the enjoyment of eternal glory: * Through thee the hosts of devils have been driven back; * the hierarchies of angels rejoice, * and the congregations of the faithful keep festival. * Thou art an invincible weapon, an unshakable stronghold; * thou art the victory of the faithful and the glory of priests. ** Grant us now to reach the Passion of Christ and His great mercy.

Rejoice! O life-giving Cross, unconquerable trophy of piety, * door to Paradise, foundation of the faithful, * rampart set about the Church. * Through thee the curse hath been utterly destroyed, * the power of death hath been swallowed up, * and we have been raised from earth to heaven: * Invincible weapon, and adversary of demons, * glory of the martyrs, * true adornment of holy monks, * haven of salvation ** bestowing great mercy upon the world.

Come, O first created twain, * ye who fell from the choir on high * through the envy of the murderer of mankind, * when of old with bitter pleasure * ye tasted from the tree in Paradise. * Behold, the Tree of the Cross revered by all, * now draweth near! * Run with haste and embrace it joyfully, * and cry unto it with faith: * O precious Cross, thou art our calling; * O divinely blessed Tree, * partaking of thy fruit we have gained incorruption; * we are restored once more to Eden, ** and have received great mercy.

Glory ..., From the Triodion, in Tone III:

O Christ our God, of Thine own Will Thou didst accept Crucifixion, * for the sake of the general resurrection of the race of mankind. * Taking the quill of the Cross, with bloody fingers * Thou hast signed our absolution in the red ink of royalty. * We are in danger once again of being parted from Thee; * Forsake us not! Take pity on Thy people in distress, * for Thou alone art long-suffering. * Rise up and fight against those who fight against us, ** since Thou art all-powerful.

Both now ..., Dogmatic Theotokion, in the Tone of the week.

Then “O Joyous Light ...”:

The Prokeimenon: “The Lord is King ...,” with its verses.

At the Litiya, the Sticheron of the Temple, then:

Glory ..., Both now ..., in Tone V:

Beholdings Thee, the Fashioner and Creator of all, * hanging naked upon the Cross, * the whole of creation was transfixed by fear, and lamented; * the light of the sun darkened and the earth quaked; * the rocks were split asunder and the veil of the temple was rent in twain; * the dead arose from their tombs and the angelic powers cried out in amazement: * 'O strange wonder! The Judge is judged, and willingly suffereth, ** for the salvation and renewal of the world.'

The Resurrection Aposticha, in the Tone of the week. Then:

Glory ..., Both now ..., in Tone IV:

O Lord Thou didst enable meek David * to defeat the foreigner, * come Thou to the aid of Thy faithful people, * and by the weapon of the Cross cast down our enemies. * In Thy compassion show us Thy mercy as of old, * that they may know, that in truth Thou art God, * and that we who put our trust in Thee shall conquer. * By the constant mediations of Thy most pure Mother, ** grant us Thy great mercy.

“Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart ...,” Trisagion. Then, in Tone IV:

O Theotokos and Virgin, rejoice, * O Mary, full of grace; the Lord is with thee; * blessed art thou among women, * and blessed is the Fruit of thy womb, ** for thou hast borne the Savior of our souls. (Twice)

Troparion of the Cross, in Tone I:

Save O lord Thy people * and bless thine inheritance. * Grant now unto the faithful, * victory over adversaries, * and by the power of Thy Cross ** do Thou preserve Thy commonwealth. (Once)

Blessed be the Name of the Lord, and the rest.

AT MATINS

On “God is the Lord ...,” the Resurrection Troparion, (Twice)

Glory ... Troparion of the Cross, in Tone I:

Save O lord Thy people * and bless thine inheritance. * Grant now unto the faithful, * victory over adversaries, * and by the power of Thy Cross ** do Thou preserve Thy commonwealth.

Both now ..., in Tone I:

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.

After the 1st and 2nd readings from the Psalter, The Sessional Hymns of the Resurrection, in the Tone of the week:

Then the Resurrectional Verses: (THE EVLOGITARIA)

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, * teach me Thy statutes; and the rest.

Then the small Litany and the Sessional Hymn, in the Tone of the week. The Hymns of Ascent, and Prokeimenon, in the Tone of the week: Let every breath ..., The Sunday Resurrection Gospel.

Having beheld the Resurrection of Christ ...,

Psalm 50. Then the following Hymns of compunction, in Tone VIII:

Glory ..., **T**he gates of repentance, do Thou open unto me, O Giver of Life, * for early in the morning my spirit seeketh Thy holy temple, * bearing the temple of my body all defiled. * But as One who art compassionate * cleanse it by Thy loving-kindness and mercy.

Both now ..., **G**uide me on the paths of salvation, O Theotokos: * for I have polluted my soul with shameful deeds * and wasted all my life in slothfulness. * but by thine intercessions * do thou deliver me from all impurity.

In Tone VI:

Have mercy upon me, O God, * according to Thy great mercy: * and according to the multitude of Thy compassion * blot out my transgressions.

In Tone VIII: **A**s I the wretched one ponder the multitude of evil deeds I have done, * I tremble for fear of the dread day of judgment. * But trusting in Thy compassionate mercy, * like David do I cry unto Thee: * “Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy great mercy.”

After which: “O God, save Thy people ...,” and the canons:

ODE I

The appointed canons from the Oktoechos. Then:

The canon from the Triodion, in Tone I:

Irmos: It is the Day of Resurrection, * let us be radiant, O ye people; * Pascha, the Lord’s Pascha: * for from death to life, * and from earth to heaven, * Christ God hath brought us, ** as we sing the song of victory.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

This is a day of festivity: by the arising of Christ, death hath been shown to be impotent and the light of life hath dawned; Adam hath arisen and danceth for joy. Therefore let us cry aloud and sing a song of victory.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

This is the day of the veneration of the Precious Cross, shining with the effulgence of Christ’s Resurrection, come unto it all ye peoples, and let us kiss it with great rejoicing in our souls.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

O mighty Cross of the Lord, manifest thyself: show me the divine vision of thy beauty, and grant me to worthily venerate thee. For as One living, I speak to thee and embrace thee.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

Let heaven and earth give praise with one accord, for the all-blessed Cross hath now been set forth before all, on which Christ’s Body was affixed when sacrificed. Let us embrace it with great rejoicing in our souls.

Glory ..., O Trinity of Hypostases, O Unity of Essence, the Father, Son and Spirit, equal in power, one in purpose and will, one in dominion and rule, watch over Thy world and grant it peace.

Both now ..., O Virgin who hath not known a man, without seed thou hast given birth to a Child: In purity didst thou carry and give birth to the Maker of all, Christ our God. Entreat Him to grant peace to the world.

Katavasia in Tone I: Moses the servant of God * prefigured Thy Cross in the days of old, * when he divided the Red Sea with his rod * and led Israel across on dry land; * and he sang a song of deliverance unto Thee, O Christ our God.

ODE III

The appointed canons from the Oktoechos. Then:

The canon from the Triodion, in Tone I:

Irmos: Come, let us drink a new drink, * not one miraculously brought forth from a barren rock * but the Fountain of Incorruption, * springing forth from the tomb of Christ, * in Whom we are strengthened.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

O come, let us sing a new song, celebrating the overthrow of Hades, for Christ hath arisen from the grave; taking death captive, and saving all the world.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

O come, ye faithful, and let us drink, not from a well-spring pouring forth perishable water, but from the fountain of light, as we venerate the Cross of Christ, in which we glory.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

Of old, that which Moses prefigured with his outstretched arms, Thy Cross; we now we kiss in adoration, putting to flight the noetic Amalek, O Master Christ, and by which we gain salvation.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

O ye faithful, with pure eyes and lips let us sing a song of gladness, joyfully venerating the Cross of the Lord, lauding it with hymns.

Glory ..., I honor one beginningless God, One in three Hypostasis, undivided in Essence, the Father, the Son and the Spirit of life, in Whose Name we were baptized.

Both now ..., In days of old Moses saw thy mystery prefigured in the bush, O pure One: As it was not consumed by the flames, so did thy womb remain unconsumed by the fire of the Godhead.

Katavasia: By Thy Cross, O Christ Master, * set me firmly on the rock of the faith: * Let not my mind be shaken by the assaults * of the malicious enemy; * for Thou alone art holy.

Sessional Hymns of the precious Cross in Tone VI:

Thy Cross, O Lord, sanctifieth, and bringeth healing * to those sickened by sins. * Through it we fall down before Thee: ** have mercy upon us.

Verse: Exalt ye the Lord our God and worship at His footstool, for He is holy.

Today the word of the Prophet hath been fulfilled: * Behold! we worship at the place on which Thy feet have stood, O Lord, * and tasting from the Tree of salvation, * we have been delivered from our sinful passions * by the intercessions of the Theotokos, ** O Thou only Lover of mankind.

Glory ..., **N**o sooner, O Christ, hath the wood of the Cross been set up, * than the foundations of death hath been shaken O Lord. * Hades swallowed Thee eagerly, * but it let Thee go with trembling. * Thou hast shown us Thy salvation, O Holy One, * and we glorify Thee, O Son of God; ** have mercy upon us.

Both now ..., **O** Virgin Theotokos, entreat thy Son, * willingly nailed upon the Cross, * and risen from the dead, Christ our God, * that our souls may be saved.

ODE IV

The appointed canons from the Oktoechos. Then:

The canon from the Triodion, in Tone I:

Irmos: On divine watch let the God-inspired Habakkuk stand with us, * and show forth the light-bearing angel clearly saying: * Today salvation is come to the world, * for Christ is risen * as Almighty.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

“Behold, Christ is risen,” saith the Angel to the myrrh-bearing women. “Lament not, but go and say to the apostles: Rejoice! today is the salvation of the world; for through His death the tyranny of the enemy hath been destroyed.”

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

As we celebrate today the joyful veneration of Thy life-giving Cross, O Christ, we prepare ourselves for Thine all-holy Passion; for Thou hast brought to pass the salvation of the world, as Thou art all-powerful.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

There is joy today in heaven and on earth, for the sign of Christ hath been made manifest to the world, the thrice-blessed Cross; which hath been set before us, as a fount of ever-flowing joy to all who venerate it.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

What shall we offer Thee, O Christ? For Thou hast given us Thy Precious Cross to venerate, upon which Thine all-holy Blood was shed, to which Thy flesh was affixed by nails, and which we kiss with adoration giving thanks to Thee.

Glory ..., I sing the praises of the Three Hypostasis in one Godhead; I proclaim one simple Nature undivided: Father eternal, Son and Holy Spirit, one in throne and lordship, one single Kingdom, one everlasting Power.

Both now ..., In thee alone among women, O pure One, hath been revealed something marvelous and awesome: Thou hast renewed nature, conceiving without seed, yet remaining as before, a virgin; for the Child that thou hast borne is true God.

Katavasia: Seeing Thee, O mighty Lord, upon the Cross, * the sun was seized with fear and hid its rays, * with dread the whole creation glorified Thy longsuffering, * and the earth was filled with Thy praise.

ODE V

The appointed canons from the Oktoechos. Then:

The canon from the Triodion, in Tone I:

Irmos: Let us awake in the deep dawn, * and instead of myrrh, offer a hymn to the Master, * and we shall see Christ, * the Sun of Righteousness, * Who causeth life to dawn for all.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

From the tomb hath arisen the never-setting Effulgence, shining upon the world the light of incorruption, O compassionate One, drive out the sorrow of death from the farthest ends of the earth.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

Cleansed by abstinence let us draw near, and with fervor let us kiss in adoration the all-holy Wood upon which Christ hath been crucified, thus saving the world O Compassionate One.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

The ranks of angels dance with gladness, for today we venerate Thy Cross. by which Thou hast shattered the hosts of devils O Christ, and saved mankind.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

The Church hath been revealed as another Paradise, having within it, like the first Paradise of old, a Tree of life, Thy Cross, O Lord. By which, touching it, we partake of immortality.

Glory ..., I glorify three co-eternal Hypostases, in one Essence, the Father, Son and Spirit, a single Three-sunned Light, one Power and Kingdom, unmingled in characteristics.

Both now ..., Thou hast conceived according to the law of nature, yet above that law; for thou alone hast seedlessly borne a child. Strange and fearful it is to contemplate or speak of thy birth-giving, O all-immaculate One.

Katavasia: Rising early in the morning * we sing Thy praises, O Savior of the world, * for we have found peace through Thy Cross. * By it Thou hast renewed mankind, * and led us to the never-waning light.

ODE VI

The appointed canons from the Oktoechos. Then:

The canon from the Triodion, in Tone I:

Irmos: Thou didst descend into the nethermost parts of the earth, * and didst shatter the eternal bars that held the fettered, O Christ, * and on the third day, * like Jonah from the whale, * Thou didst arise from the tomb.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

Thou didst arise O Christ, and trample upon death as a King almighty; Thou didst recall us from the vaults of Hades to the enjoyment of the Kingdom of Heaven, in the land of immortality.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

O ye faithful, let us cry aloud with divine songs, chanting triumphantly to God, as we kiss the Cross of the Lord; for it is a fount of holiness to all those in this world.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

The words of the Psalmist have been fulfilled: for behold! we worship at the footstool of Thy most pure feet, O all-powerful One, before Thy Precious Cross, the threefold-beloved Wood.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

In the prophecies of the Lamerter we see the Tree, enclosed and bearing Thy fruit; Thy Cross O merciful One, and kissing it with adoration, we chant in praise of Thy bonds and tomb, the spear and nails.

Refrain: **Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.**

That which Thou wast pleased to bear upon Thy shoulders, the Holy Cross, and upon which Thou didst accept to be raised, and crucified in the flesh, we kiss with adoration; receiving from it strength against our invisible foes.

Glory ..., I praise the Unity in three Hypostases and the Trinity worshipped in one Nature, the Triune God, three-sunned Light, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Both now ..., O undefiled Ewe-lamb, a wonder greater than all wonders hath been revealed in thee: For thou hast borne the Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world, fervently entreat Him on behalf of those who sing thy praises.

Katavasia: **Jonah in the belly of the whale * foreshadowed with his outstretched hands * the figure of the Cross; * and he leapt out from the sea-monster, * saved by Thy power, O Word.**

Kontakion from the Triodion, in Tone VII:

The fiery sword no longer guardeth the gates of Eden, * for it hath been wondrously quenched by the wood of the Cross. * The sting of death and the victory of Hades have been vanquished, * for Thou art come, O my Savior, crying unto those in Hades: ** “Enter again into Paradise.”

Ikos of the Cross: Pilate set up three crosses in the place of the Skull, two for the thieves and one for the Giver of Life. Seeing Him, Hades cried to those below: “O my servants and my powers! Who is this that hath fixed a nail in my heart? A wooden spear hath suddenly pierced me, and I am rent asunder. Inwardly I am in pain; and anguish hath seized my senses. My spirit is troubled, and I am constrained to cast out Adam and his posterity. A tree brought them to me, but now the Tree of the Cross leadeth them back again to Paradise.”

SYNAXARION READING

Verse: **Let all the earth venerate the Cross,**

Verse: **Through which it has learned to worship Thee, the Word.**

On this third Sunday of the Great Fast we celebrate the Veneration of the precious and life-giving Cross. Since during the forty days of the Fast we are also in a way crucified, mortified to the passions, contrite, abased and despondent, the precious and life-giving Cross is offered to us as refreshment and confirmation, calling to mind the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ and

comforting us. If our God was crucified for our sake, how great should be our effort for His sake, since our afflictions have been assuaged through the Lord's tribulations, and by the commemoration and the hope of the Cross of glory. For as our Savior in ascending the Cross was glorified through dishonor and grief, so should we also endure our sorrows, in order to be glorified with Him. Also, as those who have traveled a long hard road, weighed down by the labors of their journey, in finding a shady tree, take their ease for a moment and then continue their journey rejuvenated, so now in this time of the Fast, this sorrowful and laborious journey, the Holy Fathers have planted the life-giving Cross, for our relief and refreshment, to encourage and make easier the labors that lie ahead. Or as when there is a royal procession, the king's scepter and banners precede him, and then he then himself appears, radiant and joyous in his victory, causing his subjects to rejoice with him. So then our Lord Jesus Christ, desiring to show His sure victory over death and His glory on the day of the Resurrection, sends His scepter before Himself, the sign of His kingship, the life-giving Cross, to gladden and refresh us, as it greatly fortifies and enables us to be prepared to receive the King with all possible strength, and to praise Him in His radiant victory. This week lies at the middle of the holy Forty Day Fast. The Fast is like a bitter source because of our contrition and the sadness and sorrow for sin that it brings. And as Moses plunged the branch in the bitter waters of Marah, making them sweet, so God, Who has led us through the spiritual Red Sea away from Pharaoh, through the life-giving wood of the precious and life-giving Cross, sweetens the bitterness of the Forty Day Fast, and comforts us as those who were in the wilderness, up until the time when by His Resurrection He will lead us to the spiritual Jerusalem. And since the Cross is called, and indeed is, the Tree of Life, it is the very tree that was planted in the Garden of Eden. So it is fitting that the Holy Fathers have planted the Tree of the Cross in the middle of the Forty Day Fast to commemorate both Adam's tasting of its sweet fruit and of its being taken from us in favor of the Tree of the Cross, tasting of which we shall in no way die, but will have even greater life.

Through the power of Thy Cross, O Christ our God,
preserve us also from the temptations of the Evil One.

And make us worthy to venerate

Thy divine Passion and life-bearing Resurrection,
having radiantly traversed the great length of the Fast,
and have mercy on us, as Thou art good and lovest mankind. Amen.

ODE VII

The appointed canons from the Oktoechos. Then:

The canon from the Triodion, in Tone I:

Irmos: He Who delivered the Children from the furnace, * became man, and suffered as a mortal, * and through His Passion * clothed mortality with the beauty of incorruption, * He is the only blessed and supremely glorified * God of our fathers.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

Thou didst arise from the tomb on the third day, as one awakening from sleep, O Lord, and by Thy divine power didst slay the gatekeepers of Hades; raising up all our ancestors from ages past, O Thou only blessed and supremely glorified God of our fathers.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

O ye peoples, let us with song and dance express our joy, and greatly rejoice at the veneration of the Cross, giving glory to Christ Who was nailed thereon, the only blessed and supremely glorified God of our fathers

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

Thou hast shown the instrument of death to be a source of life, wherefore it is worshiped throughout the whole world. Thy Cross, O all-merciful One, doth sanctify those who worship it, O Thou only blessed and supremely glorified God of our fathers.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

Thou alone art merciful and compassionate, O Thou only Jesus: illumine and sanctify those who venerate and with faith worship Thy Cross and Thy divine Passion, O Thou only blessed and supremely glorified God of our fathers.

Glory ..., I praise the Godhead, a Unity in three Hypostases: For the Father is Light, the Son is Light, and the Spirit is Light, but the Light remaineth undivided, shining forth in a unity of essence, but in the three rays of its Hypostases.

Both now ..., Thou wast proclaimed by all the prophets, by a multitude of names: For thou hast been revealed to be the gateway of God, the golden vessel of manna, the holy land, O Virgin Bride of God who hast conceived in the flesh Jesus Christ, the only blessed and supremely glorified God of our fathers..

Katavasia: The Lord Who delivered the Children from the flames * took flesh and came upon the earth; * nailed to the Cross, He hath granted us salvation, * He Who alone is blessed and supremely glorified, * the God of our fathers.

ODE VIII

The appointed canons from the Oktoechos. Then:

The canon from the Triodion, in Tone I:

Irmos: This chosen and holy day * is the first of the Sabbaths, * the queen and lady, * the feast of feasts, * and the festival of festivals, * wherein we bless Christ throughout the ages.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

“Why do ye hold sweet-smelling spices in your hands? Whom are ye seeking?” crieth the angel at the tomb. “Christ our God hath arisen, raising up the nature of mortal man from the vaults of Hades.”

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

Rejoice, O Cross, the Wood threefold-rich in divinity, a light unto those in darkness. Shining upon the four corners of the earth, preparing us to see the longed for Arising of Christ. Grant that all the faithful may be found worthy to reach Pascha.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

On this day, the Wood of the Cross of Christ, anointed with life, filleth the world with the fragrant myrrh of divine grace. Let us smell its God-given fragrance, venerating it with faith throughout the ages.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

Come, Elisha the prophet, and tell us plainly: What was the wood that thou didst cast into the water? Was it not the Cross of Christ, which draweth us up from the depths of corruption? and which we faithfully venerate throughout the ages.”

Refrain: Let us bless Father, Son, Holy Spirit, the Lord!

I glorify one Essence in three beings: the Father, Son and Spirit, neither commingled in Hypostases nor divided in Nature; for there is but one God in a Trinity, ruling over all throughout the ages.

Both now ..., Alone among mothers, hast thou remained a virgin, O Mary Bride of God. Without knowing a man thou didst give birth to the Savior Christ, yet kept the seal of thy virginity intact; wherefore we the faithful call thee blessed throughout the ages.

Refrain: We praise, we bless, we worship the Lord, praising and supremely exalting Him throughout all ages.

Katavasia: Daniel, great among the prophets, * was cast into the lions' den; * but, stretching out his hands in the form of the Cross, * he was delivered from their mouths and kept unharmed, * blessing Christ our God throughout the ages.

And then we chant the Hymn of the most holy Theotokos (the Magnificat)

ODE IX

The appointed canons from the Oktoechos. Then:

The canon from the Triodion, in Tone I:

Irmos: Shine, shine, O new Jerusalem, * for the glory of the Lord hath arisen upon thee; * dance now and be glad, O Zion, * and do thou exult, O pure Theotokos, ** in the arising of Him Whom thou didst bear.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

Thou didst descend into the tomb, O God the Giver of Life, and didst smash all the fetters and gates therein, raising up the dead who cry aloud: Glory to Thine Arising, O Christ, the all-powerful Savior.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

Thy tomb, O Christ, hath brought life to me: for Thou, the Lord of life, hath come and cried unto those dwelling in the grave: "O all ye who are in bonds, be ye loosed, for I the Redeemer of the world have come."

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

With songs, all ye trees of the forest dance and be glad, beholding your fellow-tree, the Cross, being adored and venerated today: for Christ hath been exalted upon it in the highest, as the divine David prophesied.

Refrain: Glory to Thy Precious Cross, O Lord.

I died through a tree, but I have found in thee a Tree of Life, O my Cross of Christ. Thou art my invincible protector, mine unshakable defense against the demons. Venerating thee this day, I cry aloud: Sanctify me by thy glory.

Glory ..., I worship Thee, as a Trinity of Hypostases in a Unity of Essence, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, one Power and Kingdom, reigning over all creation.

Both now ..., Thou art the great mountain, O Virgin, wherein Christ dwelt, as the divine David saith. By thee we are raised up to heaven, regaining sonship by adoption through the Spirit, O all-blessed One.

Katavasia: O Virgin Mother and true Theotokos, * who without seed didst bear Christ our God, * Who wast lifted in the flesh upon the Cross. * We and all the faithful, as is meet, * magnify thee with thy Son.

The small litany:

Then, “Holy is our God ...”: (Thrice)

Exapostilarion for the Resurrection Gospel of the week, then:

Glory ..., from the Triodion, in Tone III:

Seeing the Precious Cross of Christ placed before us this day, * let us in faith rejoice and kiss it with love, * and ask the Lord Who wast willingly crucified thereon, * to deem us all worthy to worship the precious Cross, ** and attain to the Resurrection uncondemned.

Both now ..., the Theotokion, from the Triodion:

Before the Tree, upon which for our sake, O all-pure One, * thy Son, stretched out His most pure hands and was nailed thereto, * we now fall down and with true devotion, worship. * Grant unto us peace, that we may come to the most precious and world-saving Passion; * and that may we worship at the radiant feast of Pascha, * the Lord’s Day which bringeth light and joy ** to all creation.

On the Aposticha, 4 Resurrection Stichera in the Tone of the week:

Then 5 Stichera of the Precious Cross from the Triodion, in Tone IV:

Verse: Praise Him with timbrel and dance, * praise him with strings and flute.

With our voices let us shout * and magnify the Precious Cross in hymns; * let us kiss it with adoration and cry aloud: * O all-honored Cross, sanctify our souls and bodies by thy power, * and keep unharmed from all malice of the enemy ** those who venerate thee with sincere reverence.

Verse: Praise Him with tuneful cymbals, praise Him with cymbals of jubilation. * Let every breath praise the Lord.

Approach and draw from the never-failing waters * pouring forth with grace from the Cross. * Behold! ye see the holy Wood set before you, the source of divine gifts, * upon which there flowed blood and water from the wounded side of the Lord of all, * and upon which He was willingly raised ** raising up mortal mankind.

Verse: Exalt ye the Lord our God: * And worship at His footstool, for He is holy.

O all-honored Cross, thou art the firm foundation of the Church, * the glory and salvation of monastics. * Venerating thee today, we are filled with light in heart and soul, * by the divine grace of the Lord, Who was nailed upon thee * overthrowing the power of the deceitful one, ** and annulling the curse.

Verse: God is our King before the ages: * He hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth.

With our voices let us shout * and magnify in songs the precious Cross; * let us kiss it with adoration and cry aloud: * O all-honored Cross, sanctify our souls and bodies by thy power, * and keep unharmed from all malice of the enemy ** those who venerate thee with sincere reverence.

Verse: Arise, O Lord my God, let Thy hands be lifted on high; * forget not Thy paupers to the end.

Tone VIII: **T**he Lord of all hath taught us in a parable * to shun the boastful thoughts of the evil Pharisees; * and instructed us all to not think more highly of ourselves than we should. * He Himself became our pattern and example, * for He emptied Himself even unto death upon the Cross. * Let us therefore render thanks with the Publican and say: * O God Who hast suffered for us and yet remained impassible, ** deliver us from the passions and save our souls.

Glory ..., Sticheron from the Triodion, in Tone VIII:

The Lord of all hath taught us in a parable * to shun the boastful thoughts of the evil Pharisees; * and He hath instructed us all to not think more highly of ourselves than we should. * He Himself became our pattern and example, * for He emptied Himself even unto death upon the Cross. * Let us therefore render thanks with the Publican and say: * O God Who hast suffered for us and yet remained impassible, ** deliver us from the passions and save our souls.

Both now ..., in Tone II:

Most Blessed art Thou, O Virgin Theotokos, * for through Him Who became incarnate of thee is Hades led captive, * Adam recalled, the curse annulled, Eve set free, death slain, * and we are given life. Wherefore, we cry aloud in praise: * Blessed art Thou, O Christ God, * Who hast been thus well-pleased, glory to Thee.

(Candles are handed out for the faithful and lit when the Cross is brought out)

During the Aposticha the officiating priest puteth on all his vestments. While the Choir chants the Great Doxology, he taketh the censor and proceedeth three times around the Holy Table, on which lieth the Precious Cross upon a tray with branches of basil or flowers; and he censeth the Cross from the four sides. Then, while the Choir chants the concluding Holy God to a slow and solemn melody, he taketh the Cross with the tray and, placing it upon his head, he proceedeth round the Holy Table and out of the sanctuary through the north door, preceded by candles and by the deacon with the censor. The priest stopeth in front of the Holy Doors, facing the east, and when the final Holy God hath ended, he saith:

Priest. *Wisdom, let us attend.*

The Clergy (or the Choir) then chant the Troparion of the Cross, in Tone I:

Clergy: *Save O lord Thy people * and bless thine inheritance. * Grant now unto the faithful, * victory over adversaries, * and by the power of Thy Cross * do Thou preserve Thy commonwealth. (Thrice)*

The priest proceedeth to the center of the Church, and placeth the Cross on a table or Analogion especially prepared for it; and he censeth it from the four sides, going around it three times. Then the priest chanteth three times: in Tone VI:

Priest: *We venerate Thy Cross, O Master, and we glorify Thy holy Resurrection. (Thrice)*

This is repeated three times by the choir and people. Meanwhile the priest maketh two prostrations in front of the Cross and kisseth it, after which he maketh another prostration. The Cross is then venerated by the other clergy in order of rank, and then by all the faithful. During the veneration of the Cross and the anointing, the choir chanteth the following (repeating as needed, such that all the congregation venerate the Cross):

In Tone II: *Come, ye faithful, and let us venerate the life-giving Tree, * upon which Christ, the King of Glory, hath willingly stretched out His hands. * To the ancient blessedness hath He raised us up, * whom the enemy despoiled of old through pleasure, making us exiles far from God. * Come, ye faithful, and let us venerate the Tree * whereby we have been deemed worthy to crush the heads of our invisible enemies. * Come, all ye kindred of the nations, * and let us honor in hymns the Cross of the Lord. * Rejoice, O Cross, perfect redemption of fallen*

Adam. * Glorifying in thee, our faithful kings by thy might laid low the people of Ishmael. * We Christians kiss thee now with awe, * and glorifying God Who was nailed on thee, we cry aloud: * O Lord, Who was crucified on the Cross, have mercy on us, ** for Thou art good and the Lover of mankind.

In Tone VIII: Today the Master of creation and the Lord of Glory * hath been nailed to the Cross, His side pierced with a lance; * and He Who is the sweetness of the Church tasteth gall and vinegar. * A crown of thorns hath been placed upon Him, * He Who covereth the heavens with clouds hath been clothed in a cloak of mockery, * and He Who formed man with His hands hath been struck by a hand of clay. * He Who doth wrap the heaven in clouds hath been smitten upon His back. * He accepteth spitting and scourging, reproach and buffeting; * and all these things my Redeemer and God endured for me who am condemned, ** that in His compassion He may save the world from delusion.

Glory ..., in Tone VIII:

Today He Who is in essence unapproachable, * hath become approachable for me * and suffereth His Passion, delivering me from the passions. * He Who granteth light unto the blind * hath been spat upon by the mouths of transgressors, * giving His back over to scourging * for the sake of those held captive. * When the pure Virgin, His Mother saw Him upon the Cross, * she cried aloud in pain: * “Woe is me, my Child! What is this that Thou hast done? * Thou Who wast in beauty fairer than all mortal men, * dost now appear without life and form, * having neither shape nor comeliness. * Woe is me, my Light! * I cannot bear to look upon Thee sleeping, * and I am wounded in the depths of my soul, * a harsh sword hath pierced my heart. * I sing the praises of Thy Passion, * I venerate Thy loving-kindness: ** O long-suffering One, glory be to Thee!

Both now ..., in Tone VI:

Today the words of the Prophet have been fulfilled: * For behold, we worship at the place upon which Thy feet have stood, O Lord; * and tasting from the Tree of salvation, * we have been delivered from our sinful passions * by the intercessions of the Theotokos, ** O Thou Who alone lovest mankind.

Before the 1st Hour: Glory ..., Both now ..., Gospel Sticheron for the week.

AT LITURGY

Typika and Beatitudes: 6 in the Tone of the week, and 4 from ODE VI of the canon of the precious Cross:

Thou didst arise O Christ, and trample upon death as a King almighty; Thou didst recall us from the vaults of Hades to the enjoyment of the Kingdom of Heaven, in the land of immortality.

O ye faithful, let us cry aloud with divine songs, chanting triumphantly to God, as we kiss the Cross of the Lord; for it is a fount of holiness to all those in this world.

Glory ..., **I** praise the Unity in three Hypostases and the Trinity worshipped in one Nature, the Triune God, three-sunned Light, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Both now ..., **O** undefiled Ewe-lamb, a wonder greater than all wonders hath been revealed in thee: For thou hast borne the Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world, fervently entreat Him on behalf of those who sing thy praises.

Order of Troparia & Kontakia for a temple dedicated to a Saint/s:

Troparion of the Resurrection

Troparion of the Cross in Tone I:

Save O lord Thy people * and bless thine inheritance. * Grant now unto the faithful, * victory over adversaries, * and by the power of Thy Cross * do Thou preserve Thy commonwealth.

Glory ..., **Both now ...**, **Kontakion of the Cross in Tone VII:**

The fiery sword no longer guardeth the gates of Eden, * for it hath been wondrously quenched by the wood of the Cross. * The sting of death and the victory of Hades have been vanquished, * for Thou art come, O my Savior, crying unto those in Hades: ** “Enter again into Paradise.”

In place of the Trisagion we chant:

In Tone VI: We venerate Thy Cross, O Master, and we glorify Thy holy Resurrection. (Thrice)

Glory ..., **Both now ...**,

And we glorify Thy holy Resurrection. ...,

We venerate Thy Cross, O Master, and we glorify Thy holy Resurrection.

Prokeimenon of the Cross in Tone VI: Save O Lord Thy people, * and bless Thine inheritance.

The Verse: Unto Thee, O Lord, will I cry; O my God, be not silent unto me.

EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS (4:15 - 5:6)

Brethren: Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity. And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

Alleluia from the Triodion, in Tone II:

Verse: Remember Thy congregation which Thou hast purchased from the beginning.

Verse: But God is our King before the ages: He hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MARK (8:34-9:1)

At that time: when Jesus had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.

Communion Hymn: The light of Thy countenance, O Lord, hath been
signed upon us.

VESPERS ON SUNDAY EVENING

(There is no chanting of the Psalter)

On “Lord I have cried ...,” 10 Stichera: 4 penitential Stichera, in the Tone of the week, and then the following 3 Stichera of the precious Cross:

By Joseph, in Tone VIII:

○ Lord, Thou didst willingly stretch out Thine hands * upon the Cross: * grant us to worthily adore it with compunctionate hearts, * fill us with Thy light through fasting and prayer, * through abstinence and good works; ** for Thou art good and the Lover of mankind.

○ Lord, blot out the multitude of my sins, * according to the multitude of Thy compassions, * O all-compassionate One, and grant me, * with a pure soul to behold and kiss Thy Cross * during the present week of abstinence, ** for Thou art the Lover of mankind.

Sticheron, in Tone III:

Spec. Mel.: “O mighty wonder ...”:

○ mighty Wonder! Before us standeth the Wood, * upon which Christ was crucified in the flesh. * The world worships it and illumined thereby, crieth aloud: * “Great is the power of the Cross! * When devils look upon it, they are scorched; * signing ourselves with it fire is seen.” * I bless thee, O most pure Wood; I honor thee and Worship thee with fear, ** and I glorify God who through thee hath bestowed upon me life without end.

Then 3 Stichera from the Menaion;

Glory ..., Both now ..., and the Theotokion from the Menaion.

Entrance with the censor, O joyous Light ...,

Great Prokeimenon, in Tone VIII:

Prokeimenon: O Lord, Thou hast given an inheritance * to them that fear Thy Name.

Verse: From the ends of the earth unto Thee have I cried.

Verse: I shall be sheltered in the shelter of Thy wings.

Verse: So will I chant unto Thy name unto the ages.

And then once more, O Lord, Thou hast given an inheritance ...,

At this point the priest (in the Altar) removeth his Phelonion and changeth his Epitrachelion to one of a dark color (black or dark purple);

The covers on the Icon-stands and the other coverings in the church are also changed.

After “Vouchsafe O Lord ...”:

Litany: Let us complete ...,

Note: from this point on, the choir chanteth the responses according to the penitential Lenten melody.

On the Aposticha, these Stichera in Tone VIII:

I, wretched as I am, dare not raise up my eyes to heaven, * because of my wicked deeds; * but like the Publican, groaning I cry to Thee: * “O God, be merciful to me a sinner, * and deliver me from the Pharisee’s hypocrisy, ** for Thou alone art lovingly compassionate.”

Verse: Unto Thee have I lifted up mine eyes, unto Thee that dwellest in heaven. Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hands of their masters, as the eyes of the handmaid look unto the hands of her mistress, so do our eyes look unto the Lord our God, * until He take pity on us.

Repeat: **I**, wretched as I am, dare not raise my eyes ...

Verse: Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us, for greatly are we filled with abasement. Greatly hath our soul been filled therewith; let reproach come upon them that prosper, * and abasement on the proud.

Of the holy martyrs, in Tone VIII:

O martyrs of the Lord, ye hallow every place * and heal all manner of infirmities; * and now we entreat you to pray on our behalf ** that our souls be delivered from the snares of the enemy.

Glory from the Menaion, if there is one, then:

Glory ..., Both now ..., in Tone IV:

The heavenly powers praise thee, * O unwedded Mother, * and We glorify thine incomprehensible childbearing. * O Theotokos, ** pray for the salvation of our souls.

“Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart ...,” Trisagion. Then:

In Tone V:

O Theotokos and Virgin, rejoice, O Mary, full of grace; the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the Fruit of thy womb, for thou hast borne the Savior of our souls. (Prostration)

Glory ...,

O Baptist of Christ, be mindful of us all, that we may be delivered from our iniquities, for unto thee is given the grace to pray on behalf of us all. (Prostration)

Both now ...,

Pray for us, holy apostles and all ye saints, that we may be delivered from perils and afflictions: for ye are our fervent supplicants before the Savior. (Prostration)

We take refuge beneath thy tender mercy O Theotokos: despise not our supplications in distress: but deliver us from perils, for thou alone art pure and blessed. (No prostration)

Lord Have Mercy (40 Times)

Glory ..., Both now ...,

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.

In the name of the Lord father (master) bless!

Priest: He that is blessed, Christ our God, always, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Reader: Amen. **O** Heavenly King, strengthen Orthodox Christians, establish the Faith, subdue the nations, give peace to the world, keep well this city (or habitation, or town); settle our departed fathers and brethren in the tabernacles of the righteous, and receive us in penitence and confession, for Thou art good and the Lover of mankind.

Then the Prayer of St Ephraim (once only)

Priest: O Lord and Master of my life, a spirit of idleness, despondency, ambition, and idle talking give me not. (Prostration)

But rather a spirit of chastity, humble-mindedness, patience, and love bestow upon me Thy servant. (Prostration)

Yea, O Lord King, grant me to see my own failings and not condemn my brother; for blessed art Thou unto the ages of ages. Amen. (Prostration)

Priest: Glory to Thee, O Christ God our hope, glory be to Thee

Choir: Glory ..., Both now ..., Amen, Lord, have mercy (Thrice), Father (Master) bless.

Priest: (The dismissal)