

**HOLY AND GREAT WEDNESDAY
AT MATINS**

The usual beginning, with the Six psalms, the Great Litany and then:

Deacon (Priest): Alleluia, in the eighth Tone:

Verse: Out of the night my spirit waketh at dawn unto Thee, O God, for Thy commandments are light upon the earth.

Choir: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Verse: Learn righteousness, ye that dwell upon the earth.

Choir: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Verse: Zeal shall lay hold upon an uninstructed people.

Choir: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Verse: Add more evils upon them, O Lord; add more evils upon them that are glorious upon the earth.

Choir: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Then the Choir sings the Troparion in Tone VIII:

Behold the Bridegroom cometh in the middle of the night; * and blessed is the servant whom He shall find watching, * but unworthy is he whom He shall find in slothfulness. * Beware, then, O my soul, and be not overcome by sleep, * lest thou be given over to death and shut out from the Kingdom. * But rise up and cry aloud: Holy, holy, holy art Thou, O God: ** through the Theotokos have mercy upon us. (Thrice)

Then follows the 1st reading from the Psalter (Kathisma XIV) and:

Sessional hymn in Tone III:

The harlot drew near to Thee, and poured myrrh onto Thy feet * mingled with her tears, O Lover of mankind, * and at Thy command she was delivered from the foul stench of her wicked deeds. * But the ungrateful disciple, though he breathed Thy grace, * rejected it and clothed himself in filth, * out of love of money, selling Thee. ** Glory to Thy loving-kindness O Christ.

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., Repeat.

Then follows the 2nd reading from the Psalter (Kathisma XV) and:

Sessional hymn in Tone IV:

Deceitful Judas, consumed by his love of money, * pondered how he might betray Thee, O Lord, * the Treasury of Life. * Intoxicated by this madness he hastened to the Jews * and said to the transgressors: ** ‘What will ye give me, and I will deliver Him ** unto you to be crucified?’

Glory ..., Both ..., Repeat

Then follows the 3rd reading from the Psalter (Kathisma XVI) and:

Sessional hymn in Tone I:

To Thee the harlot lamented, O compassionate Lord; * ardently wiping Thy pure feet with the hair of her head, * and groaning from the depth of her heart saying: * ‘Cast me not from Thee, O my God, nor loathe me, * but accept me in penitence, and save me, ** for Thou alone art the Lover of mankind.’

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., Repeat.

Then follows the Gospel reading:

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN (12: 17-50)

Six days before the Passover, Jesus came unto Bethany where he had called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead. For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle. The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him. And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast: The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus. And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour. Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him. Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die. The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man? Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light,

believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them. But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him. Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me. I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

Psalm 50, Then: "Save O God thy people ... ", Lord have mercy (12 times):

Then follows the Three-canticle Canon by St. Kosmas. In each Ode the Irmos is sung twice, and then the Troparia are repeated four or six times so as to make up the number twelve. The Irmos is sung at the end of each canticle as Katavasia. Before the Troparia we say: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

The Tri-ode Canon, in Tone II:

ODE III

Irmos: On the rock of faith hast Thou established me, * and Thou hast emboldened my mouth against mine enemies. * For my spirit rejoiceth when I sing: * There is none as holy as our God * and none more righteous than Thee, O Lord.

Refrain: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee;

In vain doth the Sanhedrin of the transgressors gather together with evil intent, to sentence Thee the Redeemer to be condemned O Christ, unto Whom we sing: Thou art our God, and there is none more holy than Thee, O Lord.

Refrain: **Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee;**

The wicked assembly of the transgressors, with souls filled to overflowing with hatred for God, contemplates how to kill the righteous Christ, unto Whom we sing: Thou art our God, and there is none more holy than Thee, O Lord.

The Small Litany.

Kontakion in Tone IV:

More than the harlot have I sinned, O Good One, * yet never have I offered Thee flowing tears. * But in silence I fall down before Thee, * and beseeching Thee with love I kiss Thy most pure feet, * that as Master, Thou mayest grant me remission of sins; * Wherefore I cry to Thee, ** O Savior, from the filth of my works do Thou Deliver me.

Ikos: **T**he Woman who was once a harlot, became suddenly chaste, and hating the shameful works of sin and the pleasures of the flesh, she thought upon her deep disgrace and the judgment of torment that awaiteth harlots and those defiled, Of whom I am the first, wherefore I am afraid, yet mindlessly I continue in my evil ways. But the Woman who was a harlot, filled with fear, made haste and came crying to the Redeemer: ‘O Lord, Thou merciful Lover of mankind, from the filth of my Works deliver me.’

SYNAXARION READING

Verse: **The woman who pours Myrrh on the body of Christ**

Verse: **Anticipated the Myrrh and Aloes of Nikodemos**

On Holy and Great Wednesday, the Divine Fathers decreed that we should commemorate the harlot who anointed the Lord with myrrh, because this took place shortly before His saving Passion. As the Lord was going up to Jerusalem, He came to the house of Simon the leper, where a woman who was a harlot approached Him and poured precious myrrh upon His head. This episode is placed here, in order that, according to the word of the Savior, her act of fervent devotion might be proclaimed everywhere. What moved her to come to Simon’s house? Because she saw His compassion and the fact that He kept company with all people, and especially now, when she noticed that He had entered the house of a leper, with whom, being unclean, it was forbidden by the Law to associate. The woman reckoned that, just as He had put up with Simon’s leprosy, so also He would tolerate the disease of her soul. Thus, as

Christ was reclining at supper, she poured on His head myrrh that was worth three hundred denarii. The Disciples, and Judas in particular, rebuked her for this. But Christ came to her defense, lest they thwart her good intention. He then alluded to His entombment, deterring Judas from betraying Him and deeming the woman worthy of honor, saying that her good deed would be proclaimed throughout the world. It should be known that some are of the opinion that one and the same woman is mentioned by all of the Evangelists; but such is not the case. As the Divine Chrysostomos says, the same woman is cited by three of the Evangelists, and she is thus called a harlot. It is not she who is mentioned by Saint John, but another woman, admirable and of chaste life, Mary the sister of Lazarus, whom Christ would not have loved had she been a harlot. Of these women, Mary performed the act of pouring out myrrh six days before the Passover, at her house in Bethany, while the Lord was reclining at supper. She poured out the myrrh on His beautiful feet and wiped them with her hair, showing Him exceeding honor and offering the myrrh as to God. For she knew very well that at sacrifices olive oil was offered to God, that priests were anointed with myrrh, and that Jacob of old had anointed a pillar with oil and dedicated it to God. Thus, she offered the myrrh to Christ, honoring her teacher as God in return for the resuscitation of her brother. For this reason, she is not promised any reward. On that occasion, Judas alone, being a lover of money, murmured against her. The other woman, that is, the harlot, two days before the Passover, when Christ was still in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, likewise reclining at supper, poured very costly myrrh upon His head, as Saints Matthew and Mark recount. The Disciples were indignant at this harlot, being fully aware how earnest Christ was with regard to almsgiving. This woman was given the recompense of having her good deed proclaimed throughout the world. Some commentators, therefore, say that one woman was mentioned by the four Evangelists, whereas St. John the Golden-tongued says that there were two women. There are others who maintain that there were three women. Two of them were the aforementioned—that is, the harlot and Mary, the sister of Lazarus—when the Lord's Passion was drawing near. The third was another, who performed such a deed prior to these—or rather, being the first of them—around the middle of the Gospel narrative; she was a harlot and a sinner. She poured out myrrh only on Christ's feet and in the house not of Simon the leper, but of Simon the Pharisee. On that occasion, only the Pharisee was scandalized. Upon her the Savior bestowed the recompense of the remission of her sins. Only the Divine Luke tells about her, around the middle of his Gospel, as we have said. In fact, after the account of this harlot, he immediately adds the following: "And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad

tidings of the kingdom of God” (Luke 8:1). From this it is evident that the event in question did not occur during the time of the Passion. It seems, therefore, from the time, from those who entertained the Lord, from the location, from the persons involved, and from the houses, and also from the manner in which the myrrh was poured out, that there were three women, two of them harlots, and third Mary the sister of Lazarus, who was conspicuous for her virtuous life. As well, it seems that one house was that of Simon the Pharisee, the other that of Simon the leper, situated in Bethany, the third being that of Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus, in the same city of Bethany. Hence, it may be inferred from these considerations that two suppers were given for Christ, both of them in Bethany. One took place six days before the Passover, in the house of Lazarus, when Lazarus also ate with Christ, as the Son of Thunder relates: “Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair” (John 12:1-3). The other supper was held for Christ two days before the Passover, when He was still in Bethany, at the house of Simon the leper, at which time the harlot went up to Him and poured out the precious myrrh. This is confirmed by Saint Matthew’s narrative, in which Christ says to His Disciples: “Ye know that after two days is the feast of the Passover” (Matthew 26:2). A little further on, the same Evangelist adds: “Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, there came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at table” (Matthew 26:6-7). Saint Mark concurs with this account, for he says: “After two days was the feast of the Passover, and of unleavened bread... And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at table, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head” (Mark 14:1, 3). From this it is clear that they are incorrect who maintain and assert that one and the same woman is mentioned by the four Evangelists as having anointed the Lord with myrrh; who suppose that Simon the Pharisee and Simon the leper are one and the same person—some of them interpreting Simon the leper as being the father of Lazarus and his sisters, Mary and Martha; and who opine that one and the same supper took place in one and the same house, in Bethany, and that Simon prepared and furnished the upper room in which the Mystical Supper was held. For these two suppers were given for Christ in Bethany, outside Jerusalem, six days and two days, respectively, before the Jewish Passover, as we have said, when the women offered myrrh to Christ in different ways. The Mystical Supper and the

furnished upper room were prepared within the city of Jerusalem one day before the Jewish Passover and the Passion of Christ. Some say that this Supper was held in the house of an unknown man, others that it took place in the house of Christ's Disciple and bosom friend John, in holy Sion, where the Disciples were hiding for fear of the Jews and where the touching by Saint Thomas occurred after the Resurrection, as did the Descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, along with other ineffable and mystical events. For this reason, it seems to me that the account given by Saint John Chrysostomos is truer and more precise, that is, that there were two women about whom the Evangelists wrote. One, as we have said, was the woman mentioned by three of the Evangelists, who was a harlot and a sinner and who poured myrrh on Christ's head. The other was the woman mentioned by Saint John, Mary the sister of Lazarus, who applied myrrh solely to Christ's Divine feet by pouring it on them. There were two suppers in Bethany, the Mystical Supper being separate from these. This is evident from the fact that, after the narrative of the harlot, the Savior sends His Disciples into the city to make ready the Passover, as Saint Matthew says: "Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at thy house with my disciples" (Matthew 26:18). Again, St. Mark says: "And...there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him.... And he will shew you a large upper room furnished and prepared: there make ready for us" (Mark 14:13, 15). The Disciples went, and found it to be just as Jesus had told them, and they prepared the Passover, that is, the Jewish Passover, which was at the doors and which Christ came and celebrated with the Disciples, as the Divine Chrysostomos says. Then, after the Mystical Supper had taken place, the Divine Washing of the feet having been performed in the meantime, Christ reclined once again and instituted our Passover on the same table, as Saint John the Golden-tongued explains. The Divine John, and also Saint Mark, the Holy Evangelists, add in their accounts the type of the myrrh, calling it "spikenard, very costly." It is customary to call spikenard that which is unadulterated and trustworthy in purity. Perhaps this was also an appellation of the best and prime kind of myrrh. Saint Mark adds that the woman broke the alabaster flask in her eagerness, since its neck was narrow. This is a glass vessel, as St. Epiphanius says, made without any handle, which is called a Bikion. Myron was compounded of many other kinds of fragrances, and from the following in particular: myrrh, cassia, iris, calamus, and oil.

**Yea, O Christ God, free us from the flood of passions and have mercy on us,
for Thou alone art holy and lovest mankind. Amen**

ODE VIII

Irmos: Whereas the command of the tyrant prevailed, * and the furnace of old was heated sevenfold. * the flames did not burn the Children, * who having trampled underfoot the decree of the king, cried aloud: * ‘O all ye Works of the Lord, * praise ye the Lord and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages.’

Refrain: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee;

The woman poured precious myrrh upon Thy divine and royal head, O Christ, and laid hold of Thy pure feet with her defiled hands and cried aloud: ‘O all ye Works of the Lord, praise ye the Lord and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages.’

Refrain: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee;

She who was guilty of sin, washed the feet of her Creator with tears and wiping them with the hairs of her head, received forgiveness for all that she had done in life, and cried aloud: ‘O all ye Works of the Lord, praise ye the Lord and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages.’

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

Through the holy action of grace the grateful woman was delivered by salvific sorrow and the fountain of her tears; washed clean by her confession, she was not ashamed but cried aloud : ‘O all ye works of the Lord, praise ye the Lord and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages.’

Now & ever ..., Repeat:

Verse: We praise, bless and worship the Lord, singing and exalting him throughout all ages!

Katavasia: Whereas the command of the tyrant prevailed, * and the furnace of old was heated sevenfold. * the flames did not burn the Children, * who having trampled underfoot the decree of the king, cried aloud: * ‘O all ye Works of the Lord, * praise ye the Lord and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages.’

The Magnificat is not sung.

ODE IX:

Irmos: With pure souls and undefiled lips, * come let us magnify the undefiled and most holy Mother of Emanuel, * and through her let us bring our prayer to the Child she hath born: * Spare our souls, O Christ God, and save us.

Refrain: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee;

He who hath revealed himself to be foolish and envious in his wickedness, with a word sold the blessed gift, the gift by which the woman obtained release from the debt of her sins; thus hath Judas wickedly stolen the grace of divine love. From this spare our souls, O Christ God, and save us.

Refrain: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee;

Having gone to the lawless rulers, Judas said: ‘What will ye give me, if I deliver to you Christ whom ye seek?’ In exchange for gold he hath rejected fellowship with Christ. From this spare our souls, O Christ God, and save us.

Refrain: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee;

O the blindness and shame of the love of money! from whence didst thou forget all that hath been taught to thee, that thy soul is of more value than the world! For in despair, thou hast hanged thyself. From this spare our souls, O Christ God, and save us.

Katavasia: With pure souls and undefiled lips, * come let us magnify the undefiled and most holy Mother of Emanuel, * and through her let us bring our prayer to the Child she hath born: * Spare our souls, O Christ God, and save us.

Prostration to the ground.

The Small Litany, followed by the Svetilen sung slowly with compunction:

In Tone III:

Thy bridal chamber do I see all-adorned, * O my Savior, * yet I have no wedding garment that I may enter therein. * Make the robe of my soul radiant, O Giver of Light, ** and save me. (Thrice)

At the Praises, 4 Stichera in Tone I:

Verse: Praise Him for His mighty acts, * praise Him according to the multitude of His greatness.

O Son of the Virgin, * the harlot recognized Thee to be God, * having committed sins worthy of tears, * weeping she prayed unto Thee: * ‘Do Thou loose me from my debt * as I unloosen my hair. * Do Thou love me who loveth Thee, * though rightly I am deserving of Thy loathing, * that with the publicans I may entreat Thee, ** O Benefactor and Lover of mankind.’

Verse: Praise Him with the sound of trumpet, * praise Him with the psaltery and harp.

The harlot mingled precious myrrh * with her tears * and poured it upon Thy most pure feet, kissing them; * and straightway Thou didst justify her. * Grant also unto us forgiveness, * O Thou who hast suffered for our sake, ** and save us.

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

When the sinful woman brought myrrh, * the disciple come to an agreement with the exceedingly wicked. * She rejoiced to pour forth that which was very precious, * while he made haste to sell the One who is above all price. * She acknowledged Christ as Lord, * while he severed himself from the Master. * She was set free, but Judas became a slave of the enemy. * Grievous was his impudence! Great was her repentance! * Grant such repentance also unto me, O Savior ** who didst suffer for our sake, and save us.

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

O the wretchedness of Judas!, * He saw the harlot kiss Thy feet, and deceitfully plotted to betray Thee with a kiss. * She loosed her hair and he was bound a prisoner by his fury, * bearing in place of myrrh the stench of evil: * for envy doth not know how to prefer that which is profitable. ** O the wretchedness of Judas. ** From this deliver our souls, O God.

Glory ..., in Tone II:

The sinful woman hastened to buy precious myrrh, * with which to anoint thee O Benefactor, * and she cried out to the merchant: * ‘Give me myrrh that I may anoint Him ** who hath cleansed me from all my sins’.

Now & ever ..., in Tone VI:

Drowning from sin, * she found in Thee a haven of salvation, * and pouring out myrrh mingled with her tears, * she cried aloud to Thee: * ‘Lo, Thou art He that awaiteth the repentance of the sinful. * O Master, save me from the waves of sin ** for the sake of Thy great mercy.’

At the Aposticha, 4 Stichera in Tone VI:

Today Christ cometh to the house of the Pharisee, * and the sinful woman draweth near and falleth down before Him, crying: * ‘Behold me who am sunk in sin, * despairing on account of my deeds, * yet not rejected from Thy compassionate goodness. * Grant me, O Lord, the remission ** of my wicked deeds, and save me.

First Verse: We were filled in the morning with Thy mercy, O Lord, and we rejoiced and were glad.

The harlot stretched forth her hair before Thee, O Master, * while Judas stretched forth his hands to the lawless ones: * she did so, to receive forgiveness; * and he, to receive money. * Wherefore we cry aloud to Thee who wast sold and hast set us free: ** O Lord, glory be to Thee.

Second Verse: In all our days, let us be glad for the days wherein Thou didst humble us, for the years wherein we saw evils. And look upon Thy servants, and upon Thy works, * and do Thou guide their sons.

The woman draweth near, defiled by the stench of sin, * to shed tears upon Thy feet, O loving Savior, * proclaiming Thy Passion. * ‘How can I look upon Thee, O Master? * For Thou hast come to save the harlot. * I am dead, do Thou raise me up from the depths, * as Thou didst raised Lazarus from the tomb on the fourth day. ** Accept me in my wretchedness, O Lord, and save me.

Third Verse: And let the brightness of the Lord our God be upon us, and the works of our hand do Thou guide aright upon us, * yea, the works of our hands do Thou guide aright.

Filled with despair on account of her life, * by reason of her well known ways, * she came to Thee, bearing myrrh, and cried aloud: * ‘Harlot though I am, cast me not out, * O Thou who wast born of the Virgin; * despise not my tears, O Joy of the angels; * but receive me in penitence, O Lord, * and reject me not who have sinned against Thee, ** for the sake of Thy great mercy.’

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., by Kassiani the Nun in Tone VIII:

O Lord, the woman who had fallen into many sins, * perceiving Thy divinity, * took upon herself the part of a myrrh-bearer, * lamenting, before Thy burial she brought sweet-smelling myrrh to Thee *. ‘Woe is me’, she said, ‘for the night doth burn me * with the lust to fornicate in the dark and moonless night of sin. * Accept the fountain of my tears, O Thou who bringeth the waters * from the clouds to the sea. * Incline thine ear to the groaning of my heart, O Thou who in Thine ineffable self-emptying * hast bowed down the heavens. * I shall kiss Thy most pure feet and wipe them with the hairs of my head, * the feet whose sound Eve heard at dusk in Paradise, * and hid herself in fear. * Who can fathom the multitude of my sins and the abyss of Thy judgments, but Thee? * O Savior of my soul, despise me not, Thine handmaiden, ** O Thou who without measure art merciful.

Reader: It is good to give praise unto the Lord, and to chant unto Thy name, O Most High, to proclaim in the morning Thy mercy, and Thy truth by night.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, ..., Our Father ...,

Priest: For Thine is the Kingdom,

Reader: Amen. Standing in the temple of thy glory, we seem to stand in heaven; O Theotokos, gate of heaven, open the door of thy mercy.

Lord have mercy. (40 Times)

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

In the name of the Lord, father (master) bless.

Priest: He that is is blessed, Christ our God, always, Now & 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:

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)

O God, cleanse me a sinner. (Twelve times)

O Lord and Master of my life, a spirit of idleness, despondency, ambition, and idle talking give me not. But rather a spirit of chastity, humble-mindedness, patience, and love bestow upon me Thy servant. 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)

Then the reader immediately begins the first hour.

Note: The following is repeated for convenience:

On the first three days of Holy Week, the Psalter is read at the Third and Sixth Hours, but not at the First and the Ninth, as follows:

| Day | 3 rd Hour | 6 th Hour |
|--------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Monday | VII | VIII |

| | | |
|-----------|-----|------|
| Tuesday | XII | XIII |
| Wednesday | XIX | XX |

On these three days We read the four Gospels, as follows:

At the Third Hour, after the usual psalms and the appointed reading from the Psalter We sing the Lenten Troparion: **O** Lord, Who at the third hour ..., with three prostrations as usual. Then we say: **O** Theotokos, thou art the true vine ..., Meanwhile the priest, Wearing a dark (black) Phelonion, opens the Royal Doors and brings the Gospel Book to the centre of the church, placing it on an Analogion; and one or more processional candlesticks With lighted candles are set beside it. *The priest then censes the Book of the Gospels, and the Whole church and people;* and the Gospel is read by the Priest as shown below. At the end of the Gospel reading, We continue with the Third Hour, saying: **B**lessed be the Lord God..., and the rest, with the usual bows and prostrations. After **O**ur Father ..., we *say* the Kontakion of the day:

Kontakion:

More than the harlot have I sinned, O Good One, * yet never have I offered Thee flowing tears. * But in silence I fall down before Thee, * and beseeching Thee with love I kiss Thy most pure feet, * that as Master, Thou mayest grant me remission of sins; * Wherefore I cry to Thee, ** O Savior, from the filth of my works do Thou Deliver me.

The four Gospels are read at the hours in various ways, but the following is the most common practice:

| Day | 3 rd Hour | 6 th Hour | 9 th Hour |
|-----------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Monday | Mathew 1-14 | Mathew 15-28 | Mark 1-8 |
| Tuesday | Mark 9-16 | Luke 1-8 | Luke 9-16 |
| Wednesday | Luke 17-24 | John 1-6 | John 7-13:32 |

At the end of the chanting of the hours on each day, the Gospel Book is brought back into the Altar, preceded by processional candles, and the Royal Doors are closed, and the Typica is read.

HOLY AND GREAT WEDNESDAY

SIXTH HOUR

After the Third Hour, We at once begin the Sixth Hour, saying: **O** come, let us Worship ..., and the usual psalms, followed by the appointed reading from the Psalter and the Troparion: **O** Thou who on the sixth day and hour ..., with three prostrations; and We say the Theotokion: **W**e have no boldness on account ..., Then the Troparion of the Prophecy:

Troparion of the prophecy Tone II:

Today the evil Sanhedrin hath gathered together * and devised vain counsel against Thee. * Today Judas hath made a covenant with the chief priests * and receiveth the noose. * Against his will Caiaphas confesseth * that one man shall undergo a voluntary passion for the sake of all. * O Christ, our God and our Redeemer, glory be to Thee.

Glory ..., Now & ever Repeat.

Prokeimenon in Tone VIII:

Prokeimenon: **The Lord bless thee out of Zion, * He that made heaven and the earth.**

Verse: **Behold now, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord.**

THE READING IS FROM THE PROPHECY OF EZEKIAL (2:3 : 3-3)

The Lord said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this very day. For they are impudent children and stiffhearted. I do send thee unto them; and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD. And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house,) yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them. And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briers and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions: be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house. And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear: for they are most rebellious. But thou, son of man, hear what I say unto thee; Be not thou rebellious like that rebellious house: open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee. And when I looked, behold, an hand was sent unto me; and, lo, a roll of a book was therein; And he spread it before me; and it was written within and without: and there was written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe. Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, eat that thou findest; eat this roll, and

go speak unto the house of Israel. So I opened my mouth, and he caused me to eat that roll. And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then did I eat it; and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness.

Prokeimenon in Tone II:

Prokeimenon: Ye that fear the Lord, * bless ye the Lord.

Verse: Praise ye the Name of the Lord; O ye servants, praise the Lord.

Note: At The Sixth Hour, during the reading of the Prophecy, the priest censures the Book of the Gospels, *but not the church and people*. Then, following the second Prokeimenon, the reading of the Gospel is completed, after which We say: Let Thy tender mercies, O Lord, speedily go before us..., and the rest of the Sixth Hour With the usual bows and prostrations. After Our Father ..., we say the Kontakion of the day:

Kontakion:

More than the harlot have I sinned, O Good One, * yet never have I offered Thee flowing tears. * But in silence I fall down before Thee, * and beseeching Thee with love I kiss Thy most pure feet, * that as Master, Thou mayest grant me remission of sins; * Wherefore I cry to Thee, ** O Savior, from the filth of my works do Thou Deliver me.

HOLY AND GREAT WEDNESDAY
AT THE NINTH HOUR

Note: There is no appointed reading from the Psalter, but after the usual three Psalms We say: **O** Thou who at the ninth hour ..., with three prostrations, followed by: **O** loving Lord, who for our sakes ..., Before the Gospel reading, the priest censes the Gospel Book, the church and the people, as at the Third Hour. After this, the last Gospel is read (John 7-13:32), we say: **D**eliver us not up utterly unto the end ..., and the rest of the Hour up to: **O**ur Father ..., and then the following is *read*:

Kontakion of the day:

More than the harlot have I sinned, O Good One, yet never have I offered Thee flowing tears. But in silence I fall down before Thee, and beseeching Thee with love I kiss Thy most pure feet, that as Master, Thou mayest grant me remission of sins; Wherefore I cry to Thee, O Savior, from the filth of my works do Thou Deliver me.

Followed by the Kontakion for the temple, if it is dedicated to the Lord or a Saint, then:

Kontakion for the reposed:

Glory: **W**ith the saints Grant rest, O Christ, to the souls of Thy servants Where there is neither sickness, nor sorrow, nor sighing, but life everlasting.

Now & ever ..., (Kontakion of the Theotokos if the temple is dedicated to her) or else immediately read:

O protection of Christians that cannot be put to shame, O Constant Mediatrix before the Creator, despise not the cry of prayer of us sinners but, of thy goodness, come speedily to the help of us who in faith call upon thee. Hasten to offer swift intercession and prayer for us, O Mother of God, who ever intercedest for those who honor thee.

Lord, have mercy ..., (Forty times)

And this prayer:

O All-Holy Trinity, the consubstantial dominion, the indivisible Kingdom, and cause of every Good: Show Thy good will even unto me a sinner; make steadfast my heart and grant it understanding, and take away mine every defilement; enlighten my mind that I may glorify, hymn, worship, and say: One is holy, One is Lord, Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

It is truly meet to bless thee, the Theotokos, ever-blessed and most blameless, and Mother of Our God. 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.

Choir: **G**lory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both Now & ever ..., and unto the ages of ages. **A**men.

Instead of the usual Dismissal, we prostrate ourselves to the ground, and the Priest says following prayer:

Priest: **O** Master plenteous in mercy, O Lord Jesus Christ our God: Through the intercessions of our immaculate Lady Theotokos and Ever-virgin Mary; through the power of the precious and life-giving Cross; through the mediations of the honorable, heavenly Bodiless Hosts, of the honorable, glorious Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist John; of the holy glorious, and all-praised apostles; of the holy, glorious, and victorious martyrs; of our holy and God-bearing fathers, (the patron saint of the temple); of the holy and Righteous Ancestors of God Joachim and Anna; of (the Saints of the day) and of all the saints: make our prayer acceptable; grant us the remission of our sins; shelter us with the shelter of Thy wings; drive away from us every enemy and adversary; make our life peaceful, O Lord; have mercy on us and on Thy world, and save our souls, for Thou art good and the Lover of mankind.

Choir: **A**men.

After this prayer is read, the priest asks forgiveness from the brethren saying:

Priest: **B**less, (holy master and) holy fathers (mothers, brothers and sisters) and forgive me a sinner, all wherein I have sinned this day in deed, word, and thought, and by all my senses.

Brethren: **M**ay God forgive and have mercy on thee, holy father.

And they make a prostration, asking this forgiveness:

Brethren: **B**less me, holy father, and forgive all wherein I have sinned this day in deed, word, and thought, and by all my senses, and pray for me a sinner.

Priest: **T**hrough His grace may God forgive and have mercy on us all.

The Gospel Book is brought back into the altar, and the royal doors closed. The brethren then ask forgiveness of each other and retire to their cells, or as the rector wishes, Vespers may be chanted immediately.

HOLY AND GREAT WEDNESDAY

AT VESPERS

After the Psalm of Introduction (Psalm 103) and the Great Litany, the Kathisma XVIII is read as usual. On "Lord, I have cried ...", 10 Stichera:

Verse: Bring my soul out of prison * that I may confess Thy name.

Tone I: **O** Son of the Virgin, * the harlot recognized Thee to be God, * having committed sins worthy of tears, * weeping she prayed unto Thee: * 'Do Thou loose me from my debt * as I unloosen my hair. * Do Thou love me who loveth Thee, * though rightly I am deserving of Thy loathing, * that with the publicans I may entreat Thee, ** O Benefactor and Lover of mankind.'

Verse: The righteous shall wait patiently for me * until Thou shalt reward me.

Tone I: **T**he harlot mingled precious myrrh * with her tears * and poured it upon Thy most pure feet, kissing them; * and straightway Thou didst justify her. * Grant also unto us forgiveness, * O Thou who hast suffered for our sake, * and save us.

Verse: Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord; * O Lord, hear my voice.

Tone I: **W**hen the sinful woman brought myrrh, * the disciple come to an agreement with the exceedingly wicked. * She rejoiced to pour forth that which was very precious, * while he made haste to sell the One who is above all price. * She acknowledged Christ as Lord, * while he severed himself from the Master. * She was set free, but Judas became a slave of the enemy. * Grievous was his impudence! Great was her repentance! * Grant such repentance also unto me, O Savior ** who didst suffer for our sake, and save us.

Verse: Let Thine ears be attentive * to the voice of my supplication.

Tone I: **O** the wretchedness of Judas!, * He saw the harlot kiss Thy feet, and deceitfully plotted to betray Thee with a kiss. * She loosed her hair and he was bound a prisoner by his fury, * bearing in place of myrrh the stench of evil: * for envy doth not know how to prefer that which is profitable. ** O the wretchedness of Judas. ** From this deliver our souls, O God.

Verse: If Thou shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, O Lord, who shall stand? * For with Thee there is forgiveness.

Tone II: The sinful woman hastened to buy precious myrrh, * with which to anoint thee O Benefactor, * and she cried out to the merchant: * ‘Give me myrrh that I may anoint Him ** who hath cleansed me from all my sins’.

Verse: 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.

Tone VI: Drowning from sin, * she found in Thee a haven of salvation, * and pouring out myrrh mingled with her tears, * she cried aloud to Thee: * ‘Lo, Thou art He who awaiteth the repentance of the sinful. * O Master, save me from the waves of sin ** for the sake of Thy great mercy.’

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

Tone VI: Today Christ cometh to the house of the Pharisee, * and the sinful woman draweth near and falleth down before Him, crying: * ‘Behold me who am sunk in sin, * despairing on account of my deeds, * yet not rejected from Thy compassionate goodness. ** Grant me, O Lord, the remission ** of my wicked deeds, and save me.

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

Tone VI: The harlot stretched forth her hair before Thee, O Master, * while Judas stretched forth his hands to the lawless ones: * she did so, to receive forgiveness; * and he, to receive money. * Wherefore we cry aloud to Thee who wast sold and hast set us free: ** O Lord, glory be to Thee.

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

Tone VI: The woman draweth near, defiled by the stench of sin, * to shed tears upon Thy feet, O loving Savior, * proclaiming Thy Passion. * ‘How can I look upon Thee, O Master? * For Thou hast come to save the harlot. * I am dead, do Thou raise me up from the depths, * as Thou didst raised Lazarus * from the tomb on the fourth day. ** Accept me in my wretchedness, O Lord, and save me.

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

Tone VI: Filled with despair on account of her life, * by reason of her well known ways, * she came to Thee, bearing myrrh, and cried aloud: * ‘Harlot though I am, cast me not out, * O Thou who wast born of the Virgin; * despise not my tears, O Joy of the angels; * but receive me in penitence, O Lord, * and reject me not who have sinned against Thee, ** for the sake of Thy great mercy.’

Glory ..., Now & ever ..., in Tone VIII:

O Lord, the woman who had fallen into many sins, * perceiving Thy divinity, * took upon herself the part of a myrrh-bearer, * lamenting, before Thy burial she brought sweet-smelling myrrh to Thee *. ‘Woe is me’, she said, ‘for the night doth burn me * with the lust to fornicate in the dark and moonless night of sin. * Accept the fountain of my tears, O Thou who doth bring the waters * from the clouds to the sea. * Incline thine ear to the groaning of my heart, O Thou who in Thine ineffable self-emptying * hast bowed down the heavens. * I shall kiss Thy most pure feet and wipe them with the hairs of my head, * the feet whose sound Eve heard at dusk in Paradise, * and hid herself in fear. * Who can fathom the multitude of my sins and the abyss of Thy judgments, but Thee? * O Savior of my soul, despise me not, Thine handmaiden, ** O Thou who without measure art merciful.

Entrance with the Gospel: O joyous Light ...,

Prokeimenon in Tone IV:

Prokeimenon: O give thanks unto the God of heaven: * for His mercy endureth forever.

Verse: O give thanks unto the God of gods: for His mercy endureth forever.

THE READING IS FROM THE BOOK OF EXEDOS (2:11 - 22)

And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren. And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand. And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow? And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared, and said, Surely this thing is known. Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian: and he sat down by a well. Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters: and they came and drew water, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock. And the shepherds came and drove them away: but Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock. And when they came to Reuel their father, he said, How is it that ye are come so soon to day? And they said, An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds, and also drew

water enough for us, and watered the flock. And he said unto his daughters, And where is he? why is it that ye have left the man? call him, that he may eat bread. And Moses was content to dwell with the man: and he gave Moses Zipporah his daughter. And she bare him a son, and he called his name Gershom: for he said, I have been a stranger in a strange land.

Prokeimenon in Tone VI:

Prokeimenon: O Lord, Thy mercy endureth for ever: * disdain not the work of Thy hands.

Verse: I will confess Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart, and before angels will I chant unto Thee.

THE READING IS FROM THE BOOK OF JOB (1: 1-12)

Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD. And the LORD said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause. And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life. So went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes. Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die. But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

Choir: Let my prayer be set forth ..., **Then the Gospel reading:**

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST MATHEW (26: 6-16)

At that time, Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, and there came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat. But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste? For this

ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor. When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me. For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her. Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.

And the rest of the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

Note: After Blessed be the Name of the Lord, the Prayer of St. Ephraim is said once, with three prostrations as follows:

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 our God and our hope, glory to Thee

Choir: Glory ..., **N**ow & ever ..., **A**men., **L**ord, have mercy (**T**hrice), **F**ather (**M**aster) bless.

Priest: **M**ay Christ our true God, the Lord Who for our salvation went to His voluntary Passion,...

SMALL COMPLINE

HOLY AND GREAT WEDNESDAY EVENING

Priest: Blessed is our God, ...

Reader: Amen. **G**lory to Thee our God ..., **H**eavenly King ..., **H**oly God ..., Our Father.

Priest: For thine is the kingdom ...

Reader: Lord Have Mercy (12 times)... **G**lory ..., **N**ow & ever ..., **O** come let us worship ..., The rest of small Compline up to the Creed, After the Creed we use the following three-canticle Canon by St. Andrew of Crete. The Irmoi are sung twice. Before each of the Troparia we say: **G**lory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

ODE IV, in Tone VI:

Irmos: The prophet heard * of Thy coming, O Lord, * and he was afraid. * How wast Thou to be born of a virgin * and appear unto mankind? * and he said * "I have heard report of Thee and I am afraid"; * glory to Thy power, O Lord.

Refrain: **G**lory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

The upper room was furnished, and prepared to receive Thee the Creator and Thy companions, and there Thou didst keep the Passover, and the mystical supper, having sent Thy two disciples to prepare everything aforetime for Thee.

Refrain: **G**lory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

‘Go to such a man’, saith He, who knoweth all things beforehand, to His apostles, ‘and blessed is he who receiveth the Lord with faith, preparing his heart as an upper room, and piety as supper.

Refrain: **G**lory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

O the folly of avarice! filled with such foolish thoughts wast thou O Judas. For to thee alone was the money bag entrusted, yet thou wast not inclined to be merciful; but having closed thy hardened heart thou didst betray the Lord who alone is merciful and compassionately loving.

Refrain: **G**lory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

The goal of the Jews who sought to kill God complemented the avarice of Judas: they armed themselves for murder, and he was tempted by the money. But he killed himself rather than repent, and in misery lost his life.

Refrain: **G**lory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

O deceitful Judas, thy kiss is full of guile, thy greeting bringeth a sword; thy tongue speaketh of unity, yet in thy thoughts thou didst separate thyself. For craftily didst thou plan to betray the Benefactor to the transgressors.

Refrain: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

Thou dost kiss and yet dost sell Him, O Judas; thou dost embrace yet shamelessly lie in wait for Him. Who, O thrice wretched one, kisseth him whom he hateth? Who can love, yet sell for a price? Thy shameless kiss betrayeth the evil purpose of thy desire.

Glory ..., Undivided in Essence, uncommingled in Persons, I confess Thee as One Triune Godhead, one in Kingship and co-enthroned; and to Thee I raise the great thrice-holy hymn that is sung on high.

Now & ever ..., Theotokion: Beyond speech is thy conception, and transcendent is thy childbearing O Birthgiver of God. Thou didst seedlessly conceive from the Spirit without a man, wherefore thy childbearing was not bound by the laws of nature, since it was an incorrupt supra-natural birthgiving. For He Whom thou didst bear is God.

Sessional Hymn in Tone IV:

O Master, while eating with Thy disciples, * Thou didst mystically reveal Thine all-holy self-immolation, * wherewith we who honor Thy sacred Passion, ** have been delivered from corruption.

ODE VIII

Irmos: Him whom the hosts of heaven glorify, * and before whom tremble the Cherubim and Seraphim, * let every breath and all creation * praise, bless, and supremely exalt, * throughout all ages.

Refrain: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

He who wrote the Law on Sinai, hath Himself fulfilled the ordinances of the Law. Having eaten the Passover of old which was but a shadow, and becoming the new Passover, a mystical and life-giving Sacrifice.

Refrain: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

Revealing in a mystery the wisdom hidden from all ages, O Christ Savior, Thou didst reveal it at the Supper to all Thine apostles: and bearing God, they delivered it to the Churches.

Refrain: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

‘One of you shall betray Me by guile this night and give me over to the Jews’, sayeth Christ to His friends, filling them with dismay; upon which they turned one to another in doubt.

Refrain: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

He who is rich hath made Himself lowly for our sakes: rising from the Supper, He took a towel and girt Himself, and bowing down He washed the feet of the disciples and the traitor."

Refrain: **Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.**

Who would not be struck with wonder at the height of Thine ineffable knowledge, beyond explanation! For Thou, the Creator of all, hath drawn near to Thy creatures of clay, and having washed their feet drieth them with a towel.

Refrain: **Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.**

The disciple whom the Lord loved, lying on His breast, saith unto Him: 'Who is he that shall betray Thee?' And Christ answered: 'It is he who dipeth his hand now in the dish.'

Refrain: **Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.**

The disciple received the sop, yet was separated from the Bread; scheming how he may sell Him, he ran to the Jews and said to the transgressors: 'What will ye give me if I deliver Him to you?'

Refrain: **We bless the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Lord.**

I honor God one in Essence, I sing the praises of the three Hypostases, distinct one from another yet not differing in Nature, for there is one Godhead and one Power in the three Hypostases, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Now & ever ..., Theotokion: **D**o Thou deliver us O Jesus our Savior, from the deceit and dangers and the evil one. Accept the ceaseless intercessions of the Theotokos on our behalf: for as Thy Mother she is worthy to entreat Thee.

Verse: **We praise, bless and worship the Lord ...,**

Katavasia: **Him whom the hosts of heaven glorify, * and before whom tremble the Cherubim and Seraphim, * let every breath and all creation * praise, bless, and supremely exalt, * throughout all ages.**

ODE IX

Irmos: **Ineffable is the birthgiving * of a seedless conception, * from a mother who knew not a man; * an undefiled childbearing. * For the birth of God hath renewed nature, * wherefore all generations rightly worship and magnify thee * as the Bride and Mother of God.**

Refrain: **Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.**

The great mystery of Thine Incarnation wast revealed to Thy disciples while they sat at supper with Thee, O Lord and Lover of mankind, for Thou didst say: 'With faith eat ye the living Bread, and drink the Blood which doth issue forth from My slain divine side'.

Refrain: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

The upper room wherein Christ hath kept the Passover was revealed to be a heavenly tabernacle; the bloodless supper is the noetic liturgy; the table on which the Mysteries were celebrated there is the noetical altar.

Refrain: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

Christ is our great and honored Pascha, eaten as bread and slain as a Lamb. He hath been offered as a sacrifice for us, and with reverence we all mystically commune His Body and His Blood.

Refrain: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

Having blessed the bread, O Thou Bread of heaven, Thou didst offer thanks to Thy Father, and taking the cup Thou didst give it to Thy disciples, saying: ‘Take, eat, this is My Body, and the Blood of Life incorruptible,’

Refrain: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

Christ the true Vine spoke to His branches, the apostles, saying: ‘Amen. I will not drink henceforth from the vine until I drink it anew with you My heirs in the glory of My Father.’

Refrain: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

For thirty pieces of silver thou didst sell Him who is above all price; why didst thou not think upon, O wicked Judas, the mystery of the Supper and the holy washing of the feet? O how thou hast fallen utterly from the light, embracing the hangman’s noose.

Refrain: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

The hands into which thou didst take the Bread of incorruption, hast thou now stretched out to take the money; and with the mouth in which thou didst commune the Body and Blood of Christ, thou hast deceitfully given a kiss. But woe unto thee, as Christ hath said.

Refrain: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

Christ is the divine Bread of heaven, which giveth food to all the world. Come, then, O ye friends of Christ, and with our earthly mouths, but with pure hearts let us receive in faith the Pascha that is sacrificed and mystically offered in our midst.

Glory ..., Let us glorify the Father, let us exalt the Son, and with faith let us worship the divine Spirit, the undivided Trinity and Unity in Essence. Let us adore Light and Lights, Life and Lives, giving life and light to the ends of the earth.

Now & ever ..., Theotokion: Thou alone hast been revealed to be the heavenly bridal chamber and ever-virgin Bride. Thou didst carry God within thy womb and didst give birth to Him; He took flesh from thee yet underwent no change. Therefore, as the Bride and Mother of God, with true worship all generations magnify thee.

Katavasia: Ineffable is the birthgiving * of a seedless conception, * from a mother who knew not a man; * an undefiled childbearing. * For the birth of God hath renewed nature, * wherefore all generations rightly worship and magnify thee * as the Bride and Mother of God.

We make a full prostration, and Continue with the Trisagion ..., through ..., Our Father ..., Then the Kontakion of the day is read:

More than the harlot have I sinned, O Good One, yet never have I offered Thee flowing tears. But in silence I fall down before Thee, and beseeching Thee with love I kiss Thy most pure feet, that as Master, Thou mayest grant me remission of sins; Wherefore I cry to Thee, O Savior, from the filth of my works do Thou deliver me.

And the rest of small Compline.

Note: After Small Compline we make three bows to the ground very slowly and solemnly, and after the last prayer We all return to our cells. From this day until after the Sunday of St. Thomas, the Midnight Office is not read in church.