

HOLY AND GREAT SATURDAY AT MATINS

About the seventh hour of the night (one o'clock in the morning) we begin Matins in the usual way. After the six Psalms and the great Litany, we chant God is the Lord ..., in Tone II, with the following Troparia:

In Tone II:

Noble Joseph, * taking down Thy most pure body from the Tree, * wrapped it in clean linen with sweet spices, ** and he laid it in a new tomb.

Glory ..., **W**hen Thou didst descend unto death, O Life Immortal, * then didst Thou slay Hades with the radiant brilliance of Thy Divinity. * And when Thou didst also raise the dead out of the nethermost depths, * all the Hosts of the heavens cried out: * “O Life-giver, Christ our God, glory be to Thee.”

Both now ..., **T**he Angel stood by the tomb, * and to the women bearing spices he cried aloud: * “Myrrh is fitting for the dead, * but Christ hath shown Himself * a stranger to corruption.”

Note: During the singing of these Troparia the clergy come out from the sanctuary and stand in front of the Plashanitsa. The senior priest, accompanied by the deacon, or else the priest alone, censeth the Plashanitsa from the four sides and then the sanctuary and whole church. Then the following Troparia, known as “The Praises”, are chanted between the verses of Psalm 118. The Praises are divided into three Stasis: The Choir singeth the verses, and the Priest readeth the Stichera.

FIRST STASIS

All verses in Tone V:

Choir: Blessed art Thou, O Lord: ** teach me Thy statutes.

1. **Verse, Choir:** Blessed are the blameless in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord.

Priest: Thou who art Life wast laid in a tomb, O Christ; and the hosts of angels were amazed and glorified Thy condescension.

2. **Verse:** Blessed are they that search out His testimonies; with their whole heart shall they seek after Him.

O Life, how canst Thou die? How canst Thou dwell in a tomb? Yet Thou dost destroy death's kingdom and raise the dead from Hades.

3. Verse: For they that work iniquity have not walked in His ways.

We magnify Thee, Jesus our King: we honor Thy burial and Thy sufferings, whereby Thou hast saved us from corruption.

4. Verse: Thou hast enjoined Thy commandments, that we should keep them most diligently

Thou who hast bound the earth, dost go this day to dwell in a small tomb, raising up the dead from their tombs.

5. Verse: Would that my ways were directed to keep Thy statutes.

O Jesus, my Christ and King of all, why hast Thou come to those in Hades? Is it to set free the race of mortal man?

6. Verse: Then shall I not be ashamed, when I look on all Thy commandments.

The Master of all is seen lying dead, and laid in a new tomb, He who hath emptied the tombs of the reposed.

7. Verse: I will confess Thee with uprightness of heart, when I have learned the judgments of Thy righteousness.

Thou who art Life wast laid in a tomb, O Christ: by Thy death Thou didst destroy death, and become a fount of life for the world.

8. Verse: I will keep Thy statutes; do not utterly forsake me.

Numbered with the transgressors, O Christ, Thou hast redeemed us all from the guilt brought upon us of old by the deceiver.

9. Verse: Wherewithal shall a young man correct his way? By keeping Thy words.

Fairer in His beauty than all mortal men, He hath appeared now as a corpse without form or comeliness, He who hath rendered the nature of all things comely.

10. Verse: With my whole heart have I sought after Thee, cast me not away from Thy commandments.

How could Hades endure Thy coming, O Savior? Was it not shattered and struck blind by the brilliant radiance of Thy light?

11. Verse: In my heart have I hid Thy sayings that I might not sin against Thee.

O Jesus, my sweetness and light of salvation, how art Thou hidden in a dark tomb? O patience ineffable, transcending speech!

12. Verse: Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes

The spiritual powers and the angelic hosts are amazed, O Christ, at the ineffable mystery of Thy burial, beyond speech.

13. Verse: With my lips have I declared all the judgments of Thy mouth.

O strange and new wonder! He who hath granted me the breath of life is carried lifeless in Joseph's arms to burial.

14. Verse: In the way of Thy testimonies have I found delight, as much as in all riches.

Thou hast descended into the tomb, O Christ, yet wast never parted from Thy Father's side. O strange and wondrous marvel!

15. Verse: On Thy commandments will I ponder, and I will understand Thy ways.

Though Thou wast shut within the smallest of sepulchers, O Jesus, all creation knew Thee as the true King of heaven and earth.

16. Verse: On Thy statutes will I meditate; I will not forget Thy words.

When Thou wast laid in a tomb, O Christ the Creator, the foundations of Hades were shaken and the graves of mortal men were opened.

17. Verse: Give reward unto Thy servant, quicken me and I will keep Thy words.

He who holds the earth in the palm of His hand is held fast by the earth; put to death according to the flesh, delivering the dead from the grasping hand of Hades.

18. Verse: Unveil mine eyes, and I shall perceive wondrous things out of Thy law.

Having died O Savior, Thou didst leave this life, and Coming to those who have reposed, Thou didst shatter the gates of Hades.

19. Verse: I am a sojourner on the earth, hide not from me Thy commandments.

The flesh of God is hidden now beneath the earth, like a candle underneath a bushel, driving away the darkness in Hades.

20. Verse: My soul hath longed to desire Thy judgments at all times.

The multitude of heavenly hosts make haste with Joseph and Nicodemus to bury Thee, whom nothing can contain, in a small tomb.

21. Verse: Thou hast rebuked the proud; cursed are they that decline from Thy commandments.

Of Thine own will Thou wast slain and laid beneath the earth, O my Jesus. Thou Fount of Life, Who hath brought me, who was dead through bitter sin, back to life.

22. Verse: Remove from me reproach and contempt, for after Thy testimonies have I sought.

The whole of creation was transformed by Thy Passion: for all things suffered with Thee, knowing O Word, that Thou art the Fashioner of all that is.

23. Verse: For princes sat and they spake against me, but Thy servant pondered on Thy statutes.

All-devouring Hades received within itself the Rock of Life, and spewed forth all the dead that it had swallowed from the beginning of the ages.

24. Verse: For Thy testimonies are my meditation, and Thy statutes are my counselors.

Thou wast laid in a new tomb, O Christ, and thereby renewed the nature of mortal man, wondrously arising from the dead.

25. Verse: My soul hath cleaved unto the earth; quicken me according to Thy word.

Thou didst descend to the earth, to save Adam: not leaving him on earth, O Master, but even descending into Hades to seek him.

26. Verse: My ways have I declared, and Thou hast heard me; teach me Thy statutes.

The whole earth quaked with fear, O Word, and the daystar hid its rays, when Thy Light was hidden in the earth.

27. Verse: Make me to understand the way of Thy statutes, and I will ponder on Thy wondrous works.

Willingly didst Thou die as a mortal man, O Savior, but as God Thou hast raised from the dead, those who were sunk in the depths of sin.

28. Verse: My soul hath slumbered from despondency, strengthen me with Thy words.

The pure Virgin shed tears of lamentation over Thee, Jesus, and with a mother's grief she cried: "How shall I bury Thee, my Son?"

29. Verse: Remove from me the way of unrighteousness, and with Thy law have mercy on me.

Buried in the earth like a grain of wheat, Thou hast yielded a rich harvest, raising to life the mortal sons of Adam.

30. Verse: I have chosen the way of truth, and Thy judgments have I not forgotten.

Now art Thou hidden beneath the earth like the setting sun and covered by the night of death: but do Thou dawn most brightly O Savior.

31. Verse: I have cleaved to Thy testimonies, O Lord; put me not to shame.

As the moon hideth the disk of the sun, O Savior, so now hath the grave hidden Thee, bodily eclipsed in death.

32. Verse: The way of Thy commandments have I run, when Thou didst enlarge my heart.

Christ the Life, by tasting death, hath delivered mortal mankind from death, giving life to all.

33. Verse: Set before me for a law, O Lord, the way of Thy statutes, and I will seek after it continually.

Adam was slain of old through envy, but by Thy repose Thou hast brought him back to life, O Savior, Who hath been revealed in the flesh as the new Adam.

34. Verse: Give me understanding, and I will search out Thy law, and I will keep it with my whole heart.

The ranks of noetic powers saw Thee, O Savior, laid out dead for our sake, and were filled with wonder, covering themselves with their noetic wings.

35. Verse: Guide me in the path of Thy commandments, for I have desired it.

Taking Thee down dead from the Tree, O Word, Joseph laid Thee in a tomb: but do Thou rise up now as God and save us all.

36. Verse: Incline my heart unto Thy testimonies and not unto covetousness.

Thou art the Joy of the angels, O Savior, but now Thou art become the cause of their grief, as they see Thee in the flesh a breathless corpse.

37. Verse: Turn away mine eyes that I may not see vanity, quicken Thou me in Thy way.

Lifted up upon the Cross, Thou hast lifted up with Thyself all mankind; and descending beneath the earth, Thou hast raised all that lay therein.

38. Verse: Establish for Thy servant Thine oracle unto fear of Thee.

As a lion Thou didst fall asleep in the flesh, O Savior, and as a lion cub Thou didst arise from the dead, putting off the oldness of the flesh.

39. Verse: Remove my reproach which I have feared, for Thy judgments are good.

Thou Who didst fashion Eve from Adam's side, had Thy side pierced and from it ever floweth streams of cleansing.

40. Verse: Behold, I have longed after Thy commandments: in Thy righteousness quicken me.

In secret the lamb of old was sacrificed; but Thou, O Savior, wast sacrificed openly and thereby cleansed the whole of creation.

41. Verse: Let mercy come also upon me, O Lord, even Thy salvation according to Thy word.

Who can describe this strange and new manifestation? The Lord of Creation hath accepted the Passion today and hath died for our sake.

42. Verse: So shall I give an answer to them that reproach me, for I have hoped in Thy words.

“How is it that we see the Giver of Life breathless?” Thus did the angels cry out in amazement. “How is it that God is enclosed within a tomb?”

43. Verse: And take not utterly out of my mouth the word of truth, for in Thy judgments have I hoped.

Pierced by a spear, O Savior, the life of the living issued forth from Thy side saving me who hath been banished from life, and quickening me with it.

44. Verse: So shall I keep Thy law continually, for ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Stretched out upon the Tree, Thou hast drawn mortal mankind to unity; pierced in Thy life-giving side, O Jesus, Thou hast become a fount of forgiveness for all.

45. Verse: And I walked in spaciousness, for after Thy commandments have I sought.

With fear and reverence didst the noble one prepare thy body for burial, O Savior, and with wonder beheld Thy fearful form.

46. Verse: And I spake of Thy testimonies before kings, and I was not ashamed.

Desiring to descend as one dead beneath the earth, O Jesus, Thou didst lead up the fallen from earth to heaven.

47. Verse: And I meditated on Thy commandments which I have greatly loved.

Seen as one Dead, yet alive as God, O Jesus, Thou didst lead up the fallen from earth to heaven.

48. Verse: And I lifted up my hands to Thy commandments which I have loved.

Seen as one Dead, yet alive as God, O Jesus, Thou hast restored dead mortals to life and slain him who slew me.

49. Verse: And I pondered on Thy statutes.

How great the joy, how full the gladness, that Thou hast brought to those in Hades, flashing forth like lightning in its gloomy depths.

50. Verse: Remember Thy words to Thy servant, wherein Thou hast made me to hope.

I venerate Thy Passion, I hymn Thy burial, and I magnify Thy power, O Lover of mankind: by which I have been set free from corrupting passions.

51. Verse: This hath comforted me in my humiliation, for Thine oracle hath quickened me.

A sword was sharpened against Thee, O Christ: but the sword of the strong hath been blunted, and the sword that guardeth Eden hath been turned back.

52. Verse: The proud have transgressed exceedingly, but from Thy law have I not declined.

The Ewe-lamb, seeing her Lamb slaughtered, was pierced with anguish: and she cried aloud in grief, calling the flock to lament with her.

53. Verse: I remembered Thy judgments of old, O Lord, and was comforted.

Even though Thou art buried in a grave, and hast descended into Hades, O Christ, Thou didst empty the graves therein and strip Hades naked.

54. Verse: Despondency took hold upon me because of the sinners who forsake Thy law.

Willingly, O Savior, hast Thou descended beneath the earth, restoring the dead to life, and leading them back to the glory of the Father.

55. Verse: Thy statutes were my songs in the place of my sojourning.

One of the Trinity endureth a shameful death in the flesh for our sake; the sun trembleth and the earth doth quake.

56. Verse: I remembered Thy name in the night, O Lord, and I kept Thy law.

Offspring from a bitter source, the children of the tribe of Judah have cast into a pit Him who fed them with manna, Jesus.

57. Verse: This hath happened unto me because I sought after Thy statutes

The Judge stood as one accused before the judgment-seat of Pilate, and He was condemned to an unjust death upon the Wood of the Cross.

58. Verse: Thou art my portion, O Lord; I said that I would keep Thy law.

Prideful Israel, O murderous people, why have ye set free Barabbas but delivered the Savior to be crucified?

59. Verse: I entreated Thy countenance with my whole heart: Have mercy on me according to Thy word.

With Thine hand Thou didst fashion Adam from the earth; and for his sake Thou hast assumed the nature of man, and of Thine own will been crucified.

60. Verse: I have thought on Thy ways, and I have turned my feet back to Thy testimonies.

Thou wast obedient to Thine own Father, O Word, even unto descending to evil Hades and raising up the race of mankind.

61. Verse: I made ready, and I was not troubled, that I might keep Thy commandments.

“Woe is me, O Light of the world! Woe is me, O my Light! O Jesus, my heart’s desire” cried the Virgin in her bitter grief.

62. Verse: The cords of sinners have entangled me, but Thy law have I not forgotten.

O jealous, bloodthirsty and proud people! May the very grave-clothes and the napkin put you to shame upon the Resurrection of Christ.

63. Verse: At midnight I arose to give thanks unto Thee for the judgments of Thy righteousness.

Come, evil murderous disciple of thy Lord, and show me the manner of thy wickedness, how thou hast become Christ's betrayer.

64. Verse: I am a partaker with all them that fear Thee, and with them that keep Thy commandments.

None have believed thy pretense of loving mankind, O blind, utterly merciless, and faithless one, for thou didst sell for a price the sweet Myrrh.

65. Verse: The earth, O Lord, is full of Thy mercy; teach me Thy statutes.

What price hast thou received for the heavenly Myrrh? What wast thou given in exchange for Him who is exceedingly precious? Thou hast procured for thyself madness, O accursed Satan.

66. Verse: Thou hast dealt graciously with Thy servant, O Lord, according to Thy word.

If thou lovest the poor and dost grieve over the ointment emptied out for the cleansing of a soul, how is it that thou hast sold the Giver of Light for gold?

67. Verse: Goodness and discipline and knowledge teach Thou me, for in Thy commandments have I believed.

"O my God and Word, my Joy, how shall I endure Thy three days in the tomb? For my heart is torn in pieces by a mother's grief."

68. Verse: Before I was humbled, I transgressed; therefore Thy saying have I kept.

"Who giveth me water and springs of tears," cried the Virgin Bride of God, "that I may weep for my sweet Jesus?"

69. Verse: Thou art good, O Lord, and in Thy goodness teach me Thy statutes.

"O mountains and valleys, and ye multitudes of mankind, and all creation, weep and lament with me, the Mother of your God."

70. Verse: Multiplied against me hath been the unrighteousness of the proud; but as for me, with my whole heart will I search out Thy commandments.

“When shall I see Thee, O Savior, eternal light, the joy and gladness of my heart?” cried the Virgin in her bitter grief.

71. Verse: Curdled like milk is their heart; but as for me, in Thy law have I meditated.

Thy side was pierced, O Savior, like the rock in the wilderness; but from Thee hath poured forth a stream of living water, for Thou art the Fount of Life.

72. Verse: It is good for me that Thou hast humbled me, that I might learn Thy statutes.

Out of Thy side, as from a single source, there floweth a double stream; and drinking from it we gain immortal life for ourselves.

73. Verse: The law of Thy mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver.

Note: If a priest serves without a deacon, he censeth the Plashanitsa from the four sides, the iconostasis and the people at this point. The following is sung slowly to allow the censuring to be completed and the priest to return to the Plashanitsa for the small litany; If a deacon is serving, the deacon performeth the censuring after the small litany.

In Tone V:

Of Thine own will, O Word, * Thou hast appeared in the tomb as one dead: * yet Thou dost live and, * as Thou didst foretell, ** raised up mankind by Thy Resurrection.

Glory ..., **W**e praise Thee, O Word and God of all, * with the Father and Thy most holy Spirit, ** and with hymns we glorify Thy divine burial.

Both now ..., **Theotokion:** **W**e bless thee, O pure Theotokos, * and with faith we honor the three-day burial ** of thy Son and our God.

And we repeat the first Troparion:

Thou who art Life wast laid in a tomb, O Christ; * and the hosts of angels were amazed ** and glorified Thine exceeding condescension.

Small Litany with the exclamation:

Priest: For blessed is Thy Name and glorified is Thy Kingdom; of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

SECOND STASIS

In Tone V:

Choir: **R**ight it is to magnify Thee, * the Giver of Life, * who hath stretched out Thine arms upon the Cross * and thereby destroyed the power of the enemy.

74. Verse: Thy hands have made me and fashioned me: give me understanding and I will learn Thy commandments.

Priest: Right it is to magnify Thee, the Creator of all, For through Thy Passion we have been granted passionlessness and freedom from corruption.

75. Verse: They that fear Thee shall see me and be glad, for on Thy words have I set my hope.

The earth trembled with fear, O Savior, and the sun hid itself, beholding Thee O Christ, the never-setting Light, being lowered bodily into the tomb.

76. Verse: I have known, O Lord, that Thy judgments are righteousness, and with truth hast Thou humbled me.

Thou hast slept, O Christ, a life-giving sleep in the tomb, and thereby raised the race of mankind from the slumber of sin.

77. Verse: Let now Thy mercy be my comfort, according to Thy saying unto Thy servant.

“Alone among women, only without pain, I gave birth to Thee, my Child”, said the pure one. “But now at Thy Passion I suffer unbearable pain.”

78. Verse: Let Thy compassions come upon me and I shall live, for Thy law is my meditation.

Beholding Thee on high O Savior, united inseparably with the Father, yet seeing Thee below laying in the tomb as one dead; the seraphim trembled with fear.

79. Verse: Let the proud be put to shame, for unjustly have they transgressed against me; but as for me, I will ponder on Thy commandments.

The veil of the temple was rent in twain at Thy Crucifixion, O Word, and the celestial lights hid their radiance, when Thou, the Sun, wast hidden beneath the earth.

80. Verse: Let those that fear Thee return unto me, and those that know Thy testimonies.

He Who in the beginning by His will alone put the earth in circular motion, doth now descend breathless beneath the earth. O heaven tremble, at this sight.

81. Verse: Let my heart be blameless in Thy statutes, that I may not be put to shame.

He who fashioned Adam with His own hand, hath descended beneath the earth, to raise up the fallen race of mankind by His almighty power.

82. Verse: My soul fainteth for Thy salvation; on Thy words have I set my hope.

Come, as did the women bearing myrrh, and let us hymn a holy lament to the reposed Christ, that like them we too may hear Him say Rejoice!

83. Verse: Mine eyes are grown dim with waiting for Thine oracle; they say: When wilt Thou comfort me?

Truly art Thou, O Word, the never-failing myrrh: yet the women brought unto Thee, the living God, myrrh, to anoint Thee as one dead.

84. Verse: For I am become like a wine-skin in the frost; yet Thy statutes have I not forgotten.

Thou didst destroy the kingdom of Hades by Thy burial, O Christ: and by Thy death Thou hast slain death, delivering from corruption the race of mankind.

85. Verse: How many are the days of Thy servant? When wilt Thou execute judgment for me on them that persecute me?

The source of the river of life, the Wisdom of God, descendeth into the tomb granting life to all those in the depths of Hades.

86. Verse: Transgressors have told me fables, but they are not like Thy law, O Lord.”

“To renew the broken nature of mortal man, I have been willingly wounded in the flesh by death. O Mother, strike not thy breast in grief.”

87. Verse: All Thy commandments are truth. Without a cause have men persecuted me; do Thou help me.

O light-bearer of righteousness, Thou hast descended beneath the earth and raised up the dead as if from sleep, dispersing all the darkness of Hades.

88. Verse: They well nigh made an end of me on the earth; but as for me, I forsook not Thy commandments.

The life-giving Seed, twofold in nature, is today sown with tears in the furrows of the earth; but springing forth He shall bring joy to the world.

89. Verse: According to Thy mercy quicken me, and I will keep the testimonies of Thy mouth.

Adam feared when God walked in Paradise, but now he rejoiceth that God hath descended into Hades. Of old he fell, but now he hath been raised up.

90. Verse: For ever, O Lord, Thy word abideth in heaven.

Gazing upon Thy body laid in the tomb, O Christ, Thy Mother brought Thee her tears as an offering, and said: “Arise, O Child, as Thou didst foretell.”

91. Verse: Unto generation and generation is Thy truth; Thou hast laid the foundation of the earth, and it abideth.

The noble Joseph hid Thee reverently in a new tomb, and sang to Thee a fitting hymn, mixing it with his lamentations, O Savior,

92. Verse: By Thine ordinance doth the day abide, for all things are Thy servants.

Seeing Thee, O Word, pierced with nails upon the Cross, Thy Mother was pierced with the nails of bitter grief, and stricken with arrows in the depths of her soul.

93. Verse: If Thy law had not been my meditation, then should I have perished in my humiliation.

Thy Mother saw Thee, the Sweetness of the world, drink bitter vinegar, whereupon her cheeks became wetted with bitter tears.

94. Verse: I will never forget Thy statutes, for in them hast Thou quickened me.

“I am grievously wounded and my inward being is rent apart, O Word, beholding Thee slain unjustly”, said the most pure One weeping.

95. Verse: I am Thine, save me; for after Thy statutes have I sought.

“How shall I close Thy sweet eyes and lips, O Word? And how shall I bury Thee as one dead?” cried Joseph trembling.

96. Verse: Sinners have waited for me to destroy me; but Thy testimonies have I understood.

Joseph and Nicodemus now sing burial hymns before the reposed Christ; and with them, the seraphim.

97. Verse: Of all perfection have I seen the outcome; exceeding spacious is Thy commandment.

The Savior, the Sun of Righteousness, hast set beneath the earth: wherefore the Moon, Thy Mother, hath been engulfed in grief, deprived of beholding Thee any longer.

98. Verse: O how I have loved Thy law, O Lord! the whole day long it is my meditation.

Hades trembled, O Savior, upon seeing Thee, the Giver of Life, despoiling him of his wealth and raising up the dead from all the ages.

99. Verse: Above mine enemies hast Thou made me wise in Thy commandment, for it is mine for ever.

After night the sun doth brightly shine forth again; and after Thy death, O Word, arise and shine forth in Thy glory, as a bridegroom coming forth from his chamber.

100. Verse: Above all that teach me have I gained understanding, for Thy testimonies are my meditation.

When the earth received Thee in her bosom, O Creator, it shook in fear, O Savior, and quaking, it awoke the dead.

101. Verse: Above mine elders have I received understanding, for after Thy commandments have I sought.

In a new and wondrous manner Nicodemus and noble Joseph have anointed Thee with spices, crying aloud: "Tremble, O ye earth!"

102. Verse: From every way that is evil have I restrained my feet that I might keep Thy words.

Thou hast descended, O Creator of light, and with Thee the sun's light hath also set; and creation hath been seized with trembling and proclaiming Thee to be the Fashioner of all.

103. Verse: From Thy judgments have I not declined, for Thou hast set a law for me.

A stone hewn from rock hath covered the Cornerstone; and a mortal man doth now bury God in a grave as one dead; Tremble, O ye earth.

104. Verse: How sweet to my palate are Thy sayings! more sweet than honey to my mouth!

"Behold the disciple whom Thou hast loved and Thine own Mother, speak to us, O sweetest Child", lamented the pure one weeping.

105. Verse: From Thy commandments have I gained understanding; therefore have I hated every way of unrighteousness.

Thou art the Giver of Life, O Word, wherefore Thou didst not slay the Jews when stretched out upon the Cross, but rather Thou didst raise their forefathers from the dead.

106. Verse: Thy law is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my paths.

At Thy Passion, O Word, there was neither form nor comeliness to be found in Thee: but Thou didst arise in glory, gifting Thy divine effulgence to mankind.

107. Verse: I have sworn and resolved that I will keep the judgments of Thy righteousness.

Thou didst descend beneath the earth in the flesh, O never-setting light-bearer, and unable to bear the sight of Thee dead, the sun grew dark at the height of noon-day.

108. Verse: I was humbled exceedingly; O Lord, quicken me according to Thy word.

The sun and moon darkened themselves, O Savior, like faithful servants clothed in the black robes of mourning.

109. Verse: The free-will offerings of my mouth be Thou now pleased to receive, O Lord, and teach me Thy judgments.

The centurion saw Thee as God, even though Thou didst die, and Joseph cried aloud, “How shall I touch Thee with my hands O my God? I am in fear.”

110. Verse: My soul is in Thy hands continually, and Thy law have I not forgotten.

Adam slept, but from his side there came forth death; now Thou dost sleep, O Word of God, and from Thy side floweth life into the world.

111. Verse: Sinners have set a snare for me, yet from Thy commandment have I not strayed.

Thou didst sleep but a little, and brought the dead to life; Thou didst arise, O Good One, and raise up those who from ages past had fallen asleep.

112. Verse: I have inherited Thy testimonies for ever, for they are the rejoicing of my heart.

Taken up from the earth, Thou didst pour forth the wine of salvation, O life-giving Vine, wherefore I glorify Thy Passion and Thy Cross.

113. Verse: I have inclined my heart to perform Thy statutes for ever for a recompense.

When the commanders of the noetic hosts on high saw Thee, O Savior, naked, bloodstained and condemned, how could they bear the boldness of Thy crucifiers?

114. Verse: Transgressors have I hated, but Thy law have I loved.

O ye perverse and crooked Hebrews, ye knew that the temple would be raised again: why then did ye condemn Christ?

115. Verse: My helper and my protector art Thou; on Thy words have I set my hope.

In a robe of mockery ye have clothed Him who hath ordered all things, He who hath established the heavens, and wondrously adorned the earth.

116. Verse: Depart from me, ye evil-doers, and I will search out the commandments of my God.

Like the pelican Thou wast wounded in Thy side, O Word, restoring Thy dead children to life through the life-giving drops of Thy blood.

117. Verse: Uphold me according to Thy saying and quicken me, and turn me not away in shame from mine expectation.

Of old Joshua made the sun stand still, as he smote the heathen tribes; and Thou didst blot out its light, while casting down the prince of darkness.

118. Verse: Help me, and I shall be saved; and I will meditate on Thy statutes continually.

Without leaving Thy Father's side, O Compassionate One, it was Thy good pleasure, O Christ, to become a man, and descend into Hades.

119. Verse: Thou hast set at nought all that depart from Thy statutes, for unrighteous is their inward thought.

He who suspended the earth upon the waters is hung upon the Cross. As a breathless corpse He is laid in the earth, and it quaketh in terror, unable to endure His presence.

120. Verse: I have reckoned as transgressors all the sinners of the earth, therefore have I loved Thy testimonies.

“Woe is me, my Son!” lamented the Unwedded one saying. “I see now condemned upon the Cross, He whom I had hoped to see enthroned as King.”

121. Verse: Nail down my flesh with the fear of Thee, for of Thy judgments am I afraid.

“such were the tidings Gabriel brought me when he flew down from heaven: for he said that the Kingdom of my Son Jesus would be eternal.”

122. Verse: I have wrought judgment and righteousness; O give me not up to them that wrong me.

“Alas! the prophecy of Simeon hath been Fulfilled: for Thy sword hath pierced my heart, Emmanuel.

123. Verse: Receive Thy servant unto good, let not the proud falsely accuse me.

Be ashamed, O ye Jews, for the Life-giver hath raised your dead, yet ye slew Him out of envy.

124. Verse: Mine eyes have failed with waiting for Thy salvation, and for the word of Thy righteousness.

Seeing Thee, O my Christ, the invisible Light, hidden breathless in the tomb, the sun trembled and darkened its light.

125. Verse: Deal with Thy servant according to Thy mercy, and teach me Thy statutes.

Thy most immaculate Mother wept bitterly, O Word, when she beheld Thee, the ineffable and beginningless God, lying in the grave.

126. Verse: I am Thy servant; give me understanding, and I shall know Thy testimonies.

Seeing Thine undefiled death, O Christ, Thy mother cried to Thee in bitter sorrow: “Tarry not, O Life, among the dead.”

127. Verse: It is time for the Lord to act; for they have dispersed Thy law.

Wicked Hades trembled when it saw Thee, O immortal Sun of glory, and hastily yielded up its prisoners.

128. Verse: Therefore have I loved Thy commandments more than gold and topaz.

Great and fearful is the sight placed before our eyes: for the Cause of life hath submitted to death, that He may give light and life to all.

129. Verse: Therefore I directed myself according to all Thy commandments; every way that is unrighteous have I hated.

Thy side hath been pierced, O Master, and Thy hands have been transfixed with nails; healing by Thy wounded side the unbridled lust of our forefathers.

130. Verse: Wonderful are Thy testimonies; therefore hath my soul searched them out.

Of old they wept in every house for Rachel’s children; and now the company of disciples with His Mother lament for the Virgin’s Son.

131. Verse: The unfolding of Thy words will give light and understanding unto babes.

With their hands they struck the face of Christ, though it was He who formed man with His hand, and crushed the teeth of the beast.

132. Verse: I opened my mouth and drew in my breath, for I longed for Thy commandments.

If a priest serves without a deacon, he censeth the Plashanitsa from the four sides, the iconostasis and the people at this point. The following is sung slowly to allow the censuring to be completed and the priest to return to the Plashanitsa for the small litany; If a deacon is serving, the deacon performeth the censuring after the small litany.

With our hymns, O Christ, * we the faithful now worship Thy Crucifixion and Thy Burial, ** by which we are set free from death.

Glory ..., O beginningless God, * coeternal Word, and Holy Spirit, * strengthen the faith of Orthodox Christians * against their enemies ** for Thou art exceedingly Good.

Both now ..., Theotokion: O pure and most immaculate Virgin, * who hath given birth to our Life, * bring an end to the scandals of the Church ** and grant her peace O good one.

And we repeat the first Troparion of the second stasis:

Meet it is to magnify Thee, * the Giver of Life, * who hath stretch out Thine arms upon the Cross ** and thereby destroyed the power of the enemy.

Small Litany with the exclamation:

Priest: For holy art Thou, our God, who restand upon the glorious throne of the cherubim, and unto Thee do we send up glory, together with Thine unoriginate Father and Thy most holy, good and life-creating Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

THIRD STASIS

In Tone III:

Choir: Every generation, O my Christ, * doth offers praises at Thy burial.

133. Verse: Look upon me and have mercy on me, according to the judgment of them that love Thy name.

Priest: Taking Thee down from the Tree, the Arimathaeon lays Thee in a sepulcher.

134. Verse: My steps do Thou direct according to Thy saying, and let no iniquity have dominion over me.

The Myrrh-bearers drew near, O my Christ, wisely bringing Thee sweet spices.

135. Verse: Deliver me from the false accusation of men, and I will keep Thy commandments.

Come ye, and with the whole of creation let us offer a funeral hymn to the Creator.

136. Verse: Make Thy face to shine upon Thy servant, and teach me Thy statutes.

With the Myrrhbearers let us all consciously anoint the Living One as one dead.

137. Verse: Mine eyes have poured forth streams of waters, because I kept not Thy law.

O thrice-blessed Joseph, bury the body of Christ, the Life-Giver.

138. Verse: Righteous art Thou, O Lord, and upright are Thy judgments.

Those whom He fed with manna have lifted up their heel against their Benefactor.

139. Verse: Thou hast ordained as Thy testimonies exceeding righteousness and truth.

Those whom He fed with manna, offer to the Savior vinegar and gall.

140. Verse: My zeal for Thee hath made me to pine away, because mine enemies have forgotten Thy words.

O the madness of those who killed the prophets and slew Christ!

141. Verse: Thine oracle is tried with fire to the uttermost, and Thy servant hath loved it.

Like a mindless servant, the disciple hath betrayed the abyss of wisdom.

142. Verse: I am young and accounted as nothing, yet Thy statutes have I not forgotten.

Judas the traitor hath sold his Redeemer and made himself a captive.

143. Verse: Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Thy law is truth.

According to Solomon, the mouth of the transgressing Hebrews is likened to a deep pit.

144. Verse: Tribulations and necessities have found me, Thy commandments are my meditation.

In the crooked paths of the transgressing Hebrews there are thorns and snares.

145. Verse: Thy testimonies are righteousness for ever; give me understanding and I shall live.

Joseph with Nicodemus bury the Creator with honors befitting the reposed.

146. Verse: I have cried with my whole heart; hear me, O Lord, and I will seek after Thy statutes.

O Life-giver and Savior, to Thy power be glory, for Thou hast destroyed Hades!

147. Verse: I have cried unto Thee; save me, and I will keep Thy testimonies.

Upon seeing Thee lying dead, O Word, the most pure One wept with a mother's grief.

148. Verse: I arose in the dead of night and I cried; on Thy words have I set my hope.

“O my sweet springtime, my sweetest Child, where hath all Thy comeliness gone?”

149. Verse: Mine eyes woke before the morning that I might meditate on Thy sayings.

Thine all-pure Mother lamented deeply upon seeing Thou, O Word, as one dead.

150. Verse: Hear my voice, O Lord, according to Thy mercy; according to Thy judgment, quicken me.

The women came with myrrh to anoint Christ, the Divine Myrrh.

151. Verse: They have drawn nigh that lawlessly persecute me, but from Thy law are they far removed.

By dying, O my God, Thou didst put death to death by Thy divine power.

152. Verse: Near art Thou, O Lord, and all Thy ways are truth.

The deceiver is deceived, and those whom he misled are set free by Thy Wisdom, O my God.

153. Verse: From the beginning I have known from Thy testimonies that Thou hast founded them for ever.

The traitor was cast down to the deepest depths of Hades, and into the pit of corruption.

154. Verse: Behold my humiliation and rescue me, for Thy law have I not forgotten.

Thorns and snares are the path of the thrice-wretched foolish Judas.

155. Verse: Judge my cause and redeem me; for Thy word's sake quicken me.

All who crucified Thee shall be destroyed together, O Word, Thou Son of God and King of all.

156. Verse: Far from sinners is salvation, for they have not sought after Thy statutes.

In the pit of corruption shall all the men of blood be destroyed together.

157. Verse: Thy compassions are many, O Lord; according to Thy judgment quicken me.

O Son of God and King of all, my God and my Creator, how hast Thou accepted suffering?

158. Verse: Many are they that persecute me and afflict me; from Thy testimonies have I not declined.

As the mother of a foal, she gazed on Thee hanging upon the Tree.

159. Verse: I beheld men acting foolishly and I pined away, because they kept not Thy sayings.

Joseph with Nicodemus bury a body that is the Source of life.

160. Verse: Behold, how I have loved Thy commandments; O Lord, in Thy mercy, quicken me.

Pierced to the heart, the Virgin shed warm tears and bewailed her child.

161. Verse: The beginning of Thy words is truth, and all the judgments of Thy righteousness endure for ever.

“O Light of mine eyes, my sweetest Child, how art Thou hidden now in the tomb?”

162. Verse: Princes have persecuted me without a cause, and because of Thy words my heart hath been afraid.

“Weep not, O Mother, for I suffer this to free Adam and Eve.”

163. Verse: I will rejoice in Thy sayings as one that findeth great spoil.

“O my Son, I glorify Thine extreme compassion, for which cause Thou hast suffered.”

164. Verse: Unrighteousness have I hated and abhorred, but Thy law have I loved.

Thou hast drunk vinegar and gall, O Compassionate One, to redeem us from the forbidden fruit of old.

165. Verse: Seven times a day have I praised Thee for the judgments of Thy righteousness.

Thou art nailed upon the Cross, who of old didst shelter Thy people with a pillar of cloud.

166. Verse: Much peace have they that love Thy law, and for them there is no stumbling-block.

The Myrrh-bearers came to Thy tomb O Savior, bringing Thee Myrrh.

167. Verse: I awaited Thy salvation, O Lord, and Thy commandments have I loved.

Rise up, O Compassionate One, and raise us from the depths of Hades.

168. Verse: My soul hath kept Thy testimonies and hath loved them exceedingly.

“Arise, O Giver of Life”, the Mother who bore Thee said with flowing tears.

169. Verse I have kept Thy commandments and Thy testimonies, for all my ways are before Thee, O Lord.

Make haste to arise, O Word, and take away the sorrow of the pure one who bore Thee.

170. Verse: Let my supplication draw nigh before Thee, O Lord; according to Thine oracle give me understanding.

All the powers of heaven have been filled with fear and awe upon seeing Thee dead.

171. Verse: Let my petition come before Thee, O Lord; according to Thine oracle deliver me.

With love and fear we honor Thy Passion: grant us the remission of our sins.

172. Verse: My lips shall pour forth a hymn when Thou hast taught me Thy statutes.

Strange and dreadful is the vision! O Word of God, how art Thou now hidden by the earth?

173. Verse: My tongue shall speak of Thy sayings, for all Thy commandments are righteousness.

Joseph once fled with Thee, O Savior, and now another Joseph doth bury Thee.

174. Verse: Let Thy hand be for saving me, for I have chosen Thy commandments.

Thy most-holy Mother weepeth for Thee lamenting, O my Savior, as One dead.

175. Verse: I have longed for Thy salvation, O Lord, and Thy law is my meditation.

The noetical powers tremble at Thy strange and fearful burial, O Fashioner of all that is.

176. Verse: My soul shall live and shall praise Thee, and Thy judgments will help me.

Early in the morning the myrrh-bearers came to Thee and poured myrrh upon Thy tomb.

177. Verse: I have gone astray like a sheep that is lost; O seek Thy servant, for I have not forgotten Thy commandments.

By Thy Resurrection grant peace to the Church and salvation to Thy people.

Glory ..., O my God in Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Spirit, have mercy upon the world.

Both now ..., Theotokion: Grant unto us thy servants O Virgin, that we be deemed worthy to behold the Resurrection of thy Son.

This is immediately followed by the Evlogitaria of the Resurrection, during which the priest with the deacon censes the Plashanitsa, the sanctuary and the whole church.

THE EVLOGITARIA, in Tone V:

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, * teach me Thy statutes.

The assembly of angels were amazed, * beholding Thee numbered among the dead; * yet, O Savior, * destroying the stronghold of death, * and with Thyself raising up Adam, * and freeing all from Hades.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, * teach me Thy statutes.

“Why mingle ye myrrh with tears of pity, * O ye women disciples?” * Thus did the radiant angel * address the myrrh-bearing women within the tomb; * “behold the tomb and understand, * for the Savior hath arisen from the tomb.”

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, * teach me Thy statutes.

Very early * the myrrh-bearing women hastened * unto Thy tomb, lamenting, * but the angel stood before them and said: * the time for lamentation is passed, weep not, * but tell of the Resurrection to the apostles.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, * teach me Thy statutes.

The myrrh-bearing women, * with myrrh came to Thy tomb, O Savior, bewailing, * but the angel addressed them, saying: * Why number ye the living among the dead, * for as God * He is risen from the tomb.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Let us worship the Father, * and His Son, and the Holy Spirit, * the Holy Trinity, * one in essence, * crying with the Seraphim: * Holy, Holy, Holy art Thou, O Lord.

Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages, Amen.

In bringing forth the Giver of life, * thou hast delivered Adam from sin, O Virgin, * and hast brought joy to Eve * instead of sorrow; * and those fallen from life * have thereunto been restored, * by Him Who of thee was incarnate, God and man.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. (Thrice).

Small Litany with the exclamation:

Priest: For Thou art the King of peace, O Christ our God, and unto Thee we send up glory, together with Thine unoriginate Father, and Thy most holy, good and life-creating Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Then we chant the following Sessional Hymns, in Tone I:

Joseph begged Pilate to release Thy holy body, * and anointing it with fragrant spices, * he wrapped it in clean linen shroud * and laid it in a new tomb; * and early, in the morning the myrrh-bearing women cried aloud: * “As Thou hast foretold, O Christ, ** reveal to us the Resurrection. “

Glory ...,

As Thou hast foretold, O Christ, ** reveal to us the Resurrection.

Both now ..., Another Sessional Hymn, in Tone I:

The angelic choirs are filled with wonder, * beholding Him who resteth in the bosom of the Father * laid in the tomb as one dead, * though He is immortal. * The ranks of angels surround Him, * and with the dead in Hades ** they glorify Him as the Lord and Creator.

The Canon

We do not sing: We have seen the Resurrection of Christ ..., but at once we read Psalm 50 and then begin the Canon. In each ODE the Irmos is sung twice, and then the Troparia are repeated four times. The Irmos is sung at the end as Katavasia. Before the Troparia we say: Glory to Thee our God, glory to Thee. The first, third, fourth, and ODES of this canon are the work of Mark the Monk, Bishop of Hydrous, and the last four ODES are by Kosmas of the Holy City. The Irmoi are the work of the nun Kassiani.

ODE I; in Tone VI:

Irmos: He Who in ancient times * hid the pursuing tyrant beneath the waves of the sea, * hath drawn together and covered the streams of the Jordan, * cleansing now my humanity with purity, * for gloriously hath He been glorified.

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

O Lord my God, I will sing to Thee a funeral hymn, a song at Thy burial: for by Thy burial Thou hast opened for me the gates of life, and by Thy death Thou hast slain death and Hades.

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

All things above and all beneath the earth quaked with fear at Thy death, as they beheld Thee, O my Savior, upon Thy throne on high and in the tomb below. For seeing Thee as mortal transcends understanding, O Author of life.

Glory ..., Both now ..., **T**o fill all things with Thy glory, Thou hast gone down into the nethermost parts of the earth: for my nature hidden in Adam is not hidden from Thee, but when buried, Thou didst restore it from corruption, O Lover of mankind.

Katavasia: **H**e Who in ancient times * hid the pursuing tyrant beneath the waves of the sea, * hath drawn together and covered the streams of the Jordan, * cleansing now my humanity with purity, * for gloriously hath He been glorified.

ODE III

Irmos: **W**hen creation beheld Thee, * Who founded the whole earth upon the waters, * hanging on Golgotha, * it was seized with awe and cried aloud: * None is holy save Thee, O Lord!

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

Images of Thy burial hast Thou disclosed in a multitude of visions; and now, as the God-Man, Thou hast revealed Thy secrets unto those in Hades, O Master, who cry aloud: “None is holy save Thee, O Lord.”

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

Thou hast stretched out Thine arms and united all that of old was separated; clothed in a winding sheet, O Savior, and buried in a tomb, Thou hast loosed the captives, who cry aloud: “None is holy save Thee, O Lord.”

Glory ..., Both now ..., **B**y a tomb and its seals, O Uncontainable One, Thou wast willingly contained; but through Thine energies Thou hast showed Thy divine power through their action to those who sing: “None is holy save Thee, O Lord, Lover of mankind.

Katavasia: **W**hen creation beheld Thee, * Who founded the whole earth upon the waters, * hanging on Golgotha, * it was seized with awe and cried aloud: * None is holy save Thee, O Lord!

Small Litany.

Sessional Hymn, in Tone I:

The soldiers keeping watch over Thy tomb, O Savior, * became as dead men * from the bright effulgence of the appearing of the angel, * who proclaimed to the women the Resurrection. * We glorify Thee as the Destroyer of corruption; * we fall down before Thee, ** risen from the tomb, our only God.

ODE IV

Irmos: Foreseeing Thy divine self-emptying upon the Cross, * Habakkuk, in amazement, cried out: * “Thou hast cut asunder the strength of the mighty, * O Good One, * and preached to those in Hades, * as the Almighty One.

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

Today Thou hast sanctified the seventh day, which of old Thou didst bless by resting from Thy works. Thou bringest all things into being and renewest all things, observing the Sabbath, O my Savior, and restoring all.

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

By Thy greater power, Thou hast conquered; from the flesh Thy soul was parted, yet Thou hast burst asunder both bonds, death and Hades, O Word, by Thy might.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Hades was embittered when it met Thee, O Word, for it saw a mortal deified, striped with wounds, yet all-powerful; and it shrank back in terror at this sight.

Katavasia: Foreseeing Thy divine self-emptying upon the Cross, * Habakkuk, in amazement, cried out: * “Thou hast cut asunder the strength of the mighty, * O Good One, * and preached to those in Hades, * as the Almighty One.

ODE V

Irmos: Thy Theophany, O Christ, the Unwaning Light, * that mercifully came to pass for us, * Isaiah, keeping watch, beheld out of the night, * and he cried aloud: * “The dead shall arise, and those in the tombs * shall be raised up, * and all that are born of earth shall rejoice.”

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

Thou dost renew those of earth, O Creator, having been formed from dust, and the winding-sheet and tomb reveal, O Word, the mystery that lieth within Thee; for the noble counselor typified the counsel of Him that begat Thee, Who hath wondrously refashioned me in Thee.

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

By Thy death dost Thou transform mortality and by Thy burial, corruption, for Thou hast rendered the nature Thou didst assume incorruptible, by Thy divine majesty, making it immortal; for Thy flesh hath not seen corruption, O Master, nor was Thy soul left in Hades as a stranger.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Coming forth from an unwedded Mother, and wounded in Thy side with a spear, O my Maker, Thou hast brought to pass the renewal of Eve. Becoming Adam, Thou hast in ways surpassing nature slept a nature-regenerating sleep, raising life from sleep and from corruption, for Thou art the Almighty One.

Katavasia: Thy Theophany, O Christ, the Unwaning Light, * that mercifully came to pass for us, * Isaiah, keeping watch, beheld out of the night, * and he cried aloud: * “The dead shall arise, and those in the tombs * shall be raised up, * and all that are born of earth shall rejoice.”

ODE VI

Irmos: Jonah was caught but not held * in the belly of the whale; * for, bearing the image of Thee, * Who hast suffered and wast given to burial, * he came forth from the sea-monster as from a bridal chamber, * and he called out to the watch: * “O ye who keep guard falsely and in vain, * ye have forsaken your own mercy.”

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

Thou wast torn, but not separated, O Word, from the flesh of which Thou hadst partaken; for though Thy temple was destroyed at the time of Thy Passion, yet the Substance of Thy Godhead and of Thy flesh have been united. For in both Thou art the only Son, the Word of God, both God and man.

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

Fatal to man, but not to God, was the sin of Adam; for though the earthly substance of Thy flesh suffered, yet the Godhead remained impassable; that which in Thy nature was corruptible hast Thou transformed to incorruption, and a fountain of incorruptible life hast Thou revealed by Thy Resurrection.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Hades doth reign over the race of mankind, but not forever; for Thou, having been laid in a tomb, O Sovereign Lord, hast burst asunder the bars of death with Thy life-giving hand, proclaiming to those who slept from ages past, true redemption, O Savior, Who art the Firstborn from the dead.

Katavasia: Jonah was caught but not held * in the belly of the whale; * for, bearing the image of Thee, * Who hast suffered and wast given to burial, * he came forth from the sea-monster as from a bridal chamber, * and he called out to the watch: * “O ye who keep guard falsely and in vain, * ye have forsaken your own mercy.”

Small Litany.
Kontakion, in Tone VI:

He Who closed the abyss is beheld as dead, * and as a corpse the Immortal One hath been wrapped in linen with sweet spices and laid in a tomb. * The women come to anoint Him with myrrh, weeping bitterly and crying: * “This is the most blessed Sabbath on which Christ sleepeth, ** but on the third day He shall rise again.”

Ikos: **H**e Who sustaineth all things was lifted up upon the Cross, and all creation wept, seeing Him hanging naked on the Tree. The sun hid its rays, and the stars cast aside their light; the earth shook in great fear, and the sea fled, the rocks were rent asunder, and the graves of many were opened, and the bodies of the saints arose. Hades groaned below, and the Jews conspired to spread slander against Christ’s Resurrection. But the women cried aloud: “This is the most blessed Sabbath on which Christ sleepeth, but on the third day He shall rise again.”

ODE VII

Irmos: **O** ineffable wonder! * **H**e Who delivered the holy Children from the fiery furnace * is laid a corpse without breath in the tomb, * for the salvation of us who sing: * “O God our Redeemer, blessed art Thou.”

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

Hades was wounded in its heart when it received Him Who was wounded in the side by a spear, and consumed by divine fire it groaned aloud at the salvation of us who sing: O God our Redeemer, blessed art Thou.

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

O wealthy tomb! For it hath received within itself the Creator, as one asleep, and was shown to be a divine treasury of life, for the salvation of us who sing: O God our Redeemer, blessed art Thou.

Glory ..., **I**n accordance with the law of the dead, the Life of all hath submitted to be laid in the tomb, showing it to be a source of awakening, for the salvation of us who sing: O God our Redeemer, blessed art Thou.

Both now ..., **W**hether in Hades or in the tomb or in Eden, the Godhead of Christ was indivisibly one with the Father and the Spirit, for the salvation of us who sing: O God our Redeemer, blessed art Thou.

Katavasia: **O** ineffable wonder! * **H**e Who delivered the holy Children from the fiery furnace * is laid a corpse without breath in the tomb, * for the salvation of us who sing: * “O God our Redeemer, blessed art Thou.”

ODE VIII

Irmos: **Be** ye astonished and afraid, O heaven, * and let the foundations of the earth be shaken; * for lo, He Who dwelleth on high is numbered with the dead * and lodgeth as a stranger in a narrow tomb. * Him do ye children bless, * ye priests praise, and ye people supremely exalt throughout all ages.

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

The most pure Temple hath been destroyed, but hath raised up the fallen tabernacle. For the second Adam, Who dwelleth on high, hath come down to the first Adam, even into the chambers of Hades. Him do ye children bless, ye priests praise, and ye people supremely exalt throughout all ages.

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

The disciples' courage failed, but Joseph of Arimathaea was bolder; for, seeing the God of all a corpse and naked, he begged for the body and buried Him, crying: Him do ye children bless, ye priests praise, and ye people supremely exalt throughout all ages.

Refrain: We bless the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Lord, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages, Amen.

O new wonders! O what goodness! O ineffable forbearance! For of His own will He Who dwelleth on high hath been sealed beneath the earth, and God hath been falsely accused as a deceiver. Him do ye children bless, ye priests praise, and ye people supremely exalt throughout all ages.

Katavasia: **Be** ye astonished and afraid, O heaven, * and let the foundations of the earth be shaken; * for lo, He Who dwelleth on high is numbered with the dead * and lodgeth as a stranger in a narrow tomb. * Him do ye children bless, * ye priests praise, and ye people supremely exalt throughout all ages.

ODE IX

Irmos: **Weep** not for Me, O Mother, * beholding in the tomb the Son Whom thou hast conceived * without seed in the womb; * for I shall arise and shall be glorified, * and as God I shall exalt with glory unceasing * those that with faith and love magnify thee.

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

At Thy strange birth, O beginningless Son, I was blessed in ways transcending nature, for I was spared the travail of birth. But now, beholding Thee, my God, a lifeless corpse, I am pierced with the sword of bitter grief. But arise, that I may be magnified.

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

The earth doth cover Me as I have willed, O Mother, but the gatekeepers of Hades tremble upon seeing Me, clothed in the bloodstained garment of vengeance; for on the Cross as God have I struck down Mine enemies, and I shall rise again and magnify thee.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Let creation rejoice, let all that are born of earth be glad, for the enemy, Hades, hath been despoiled; let the women come with myrrh to meet Me, for I have redeemed Adam and Eve with all their offspring, and on the third day I shall rise again.

Katavasia: Weep not for Me, O Mother, * beholding in the tomb the Son Whom thou hast conceived * without seed in the womb; * for I shall arise and shall be glorified, * and as God I shall exalt with glory unceasing * those that with faith and love magnify thee.

Small Litany.

Holy is the Lord our God. (**Thrice**)

Exapostilarion, in Tone II:

The myrrh-bearing women rejoiced when they beheld the great stone rolled away from the tomb, * and a young man seated therein on the right side, addressing them and saying: * “Lo, Christ hath arisen from the dead. * Go and tell His disciples and Peter, that He goeth before you into Galilee unto the mountain, ** for there He shall appear unto you His friends, as He foretold you.

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

Prior to thy conception an Angel conveyed unto the Virgin the salutation, “Rejoice”, * and now, O Christ, an Angel hath rolled away the stone from Thy tomb. * The one, instead of sorrow, brought tokens of ineffable joy; * the other instead of death, heralded Thee the Giver of life ** magnifying Thee and telling of the resurrection unto the women and unto Thine apostles.

On the Praises. Four Stichera, in Tone II:

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

Today a tomb doth hold Him who holdeth creation in the palm of His hand; * a stone doth cover Him who hath covered the heavens with glory. * Life sleepeth and Hades doth tremble, * and Adam hath been released from his bonds. * Glory to Thy dispensation, whereby Thou hast accomplished all things, * granting us an eternal Sabbath, ** Thine all-holy Resurrection from the dead.

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

What is this sight we behold? * What is this present rest? * The King of the ages, having through His Passion * fulfilled the plan of salvation, * keepeth the Sabbath in a tomb, * thereby granting us a new Sabbath. * Unto Him let us cry aloud: * Arise, O Lord, judge the earth, * for measureless is Thy great mercy ** and Thou dost reign throughout all ages.

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

Come, let us behold our Life lying in the tomb, * that He may give life to those who lay dead in their tombs. * Come, let us look upon the Son of Judah today as He sleepeth, * and with the prophet let us cry aloud to Him: * Thou hast reclined, and slept as a lion; * who shall awaken Thee, O King? * But of Thine own free will Thou shalt rise up, * who willingly dost give Thyself for us. ** O Lord, glory be to Thee.

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

Tone VI: Joseph begged for the body of Jesus * and laid it in his own new tomb: * for it was fitting that the Lord should come forth from the grave * as from a bridal chamber. * O Thou who hast destroyed the power of death * and opened the gates of Paradise to mankind, ** O Lord, glory be to Thee.

Glory ..., in Tone VI:

Moses the great mystically foretold this present day, saying: * “And God blessed the seventh day.” * For this is the blessed Sabbath, * this is the day of rest, * on which the only-begotten Son of God hath rested from all His works. * Suffering death in accordance with the plan of salvation, * He hath kept the Sabbath in the flesh; * and returning to what He was through His Resurrection, * He hath granted us eternal life, ** for He alone is supremely good and the Lover of mankind.

Both now ..., Theotokion, in Tone II:

Thou art most blessed, O Virgin Theotokos, * for through Him who took flesh from thee, Hades hath been captured, * Adam recalled, the curse slain,

Eve set free, * death put to death, and we have been given life. * Therefore in praise we cry: * Blessed art thou, O Christ our God, who hast been thus well-pleased, glory be to Thee.

Great Doxology is sung.

Note: During the Stichera of the Praises, the senior priest puts on all his vestments, and as the Choir chants **T**hou art most blessed, O Virgin Theotokos ..., he comes out of the sanctuary with the rest of the clergy and stands before the Plashanitsa. During the singing of the Doxology he goes three times round the Plashanitsa, censing it from the four sides. Then, while the Choir chants the concluding “Holy God ...,” to a slow and solemn melody, as sung at the Burial Service, he takes the Book of the Gospels and the other clergy (or laity if there are no clergy) take the Plashanitsa which they hold above his head. They go in procession round the outside of the church, the choir meanwhile continuing to sing “Holy God” to the funeral melody as often as is necessary. The Cross with the processional candles is carried at the head of the procession; then comes the choir; then the deacon with the incense, the clergy with the Plashanitsa, and after them all the members of the congregation, holding lighted candles. The procession returns to the interior of the church, and stopping before the Holy Doors with the Plashanitsa above his head, the senior priest says,

Priest: **Wisdom! Aright!**

NOTE: The Troparion of the day is sung once slowly and with compunction, during this time the Plashanitsa is placed, and left in the centre of the church until the evening of Holy Saturday, when it is taken into the sanctuary and laid on the Holy Table at the end of the Midnight Office (at ODE VIII), immediately preceding the Matins of the Resurrection.

Troparion of the Day, in Tone II:

Noble Joseph, * taking down Thy most pure body from the Tree, * wrapped it in clean linen with sweet spices, ** and he laid it in a new tomb.

Then followeth the chanting of the Troparion of the prophecy

In Tone II:

Thou who holdest the ends of the earth, O Christ, * hast accepted to be held within a tomb, * to deliver mankind from his fall into Hades; * and as immortal God ** Thou hast conferred upon us immortality and life.

Glory ..., Both now ..., the foregoing is repeated.

Prokeimenon, in Tone IV:

Prokeimenon: Arise, Lord, help us: * and redeem us for Thy Name's sake.

Verse: O God, with our ears we have heard, for our fathers have told us.

READING FROM THE PROPHECY OF EZEKIEL (37: 1-14)

The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord.

Prokeimenon, in Tone VII:

Prokeimenon: Arise, O Lord my God, let Thine hand be lifted high: * forget not Thy paupers to the end.

Verse: I will confess Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart: I will tell of all Thy wonders.

1ST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS (5:6-8); GALATIANS (3: 13-14).

Brethren: Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Alleluia, in Tone V:

Verse: Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered, * and let them that hate Him flee from before His face.

Verse: As smoke vanisheth, so let them vanish: as wax melteth before the fire.

Verse: So let sinners perish at the presence of God, and let the righteous be glad.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW (27: 62-66)

The morning of the next day, that followed the day of preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulcher be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulcher sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

Note: Then the two Litanies and the conclusion of Matins, with the same Dismissal as at the end of Vespers

(Dismissal) Priest: May Christ our true God, Who for us men and for our salvation deigned to suffer the dread Passion and the life-creating Cross, and voluntary burial in the flesh ...,

After the Dismissal the faithful come up to venerate the Plashanitsa, while the Choir chants with sweet melody, slowly and with compunction:

In Tone V:

Come, let us bless the ever-memorable Joseph, * who came to Pilate by night and begged for body of the Life of all: * “Give me this stranger, who hath

no place to lay His head. * Give me this stranger, who wast delivered to death by His evil disciple. * Give me this stranger, whom His Mother saw hanging on the Cross, * and with a mother's sorrow cried weeping: * "Woe is me, my Child! * Woe is me, Light of mine eyes * and beloved fruit of my womb! * For what Simeon foretold in the temple hath come to pass today: * a sword hath pierced my soul, * but do Thou change my grief to rejoicing * by Thy Resurrection. * We venerate Thy Passion, O Christ. * We venerate Thy Passion, O Christ. * We venerate Thy Passion, O Christ, ** and Thy Holy Resurrection.

Note: The First Hour is then read as outside lent. The other Hours, the Third, the Sixth and the Ninth, and also the Typika, are likewise read at the appointed time before the Vespereal Liturgy. They are read simply and without chanting.

AT THE HOURS

The Troparia in Tone II:

Noble Joseph, * taking down Thy most pure body from the Tree, * wrapped it in clean linen with sweet spices, ** and he laid it in a new tomb.

When Thou didst descend unto death, O Life Immortal, * then didst Thou slay Hades with the radiant brilliance of Thy Divinity. * And when Thou didst also raise the dead out of the nethermost depths, * all the Hosts of the heavens cried out: * “O Life-giver, Christ our God, glory be to Thee.”

The Kontakion, in Tone VI:

He Who closed the abyss is beheld as dead, * and as a corpse the Immortal One hath been wrapped in linen with sweet spices and laid in a tomb. * The women come to anoint Him with myrrh, weeping bitterly and crying: * “This is the most blessed Sabbath on which Christ sleepeth, ** but on the third day He shall rise again.”

After the 9th hour there immediately follows the abbreviated Typica (read not chanted)

In Thy kingdom remember us, O Lord, when Thou comest in Thy kingdom.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in the heavens.

Glory ..., Both now ...,

Remember us, O Lord, when Thou comest in Thy kingdom!

Remember us, O Master, when Thou comest in Thy kingdom!

Remember us, O Holy One, when Thou comest in Thy kingdom!

The choir of angels hymneth Thee, and saith: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord of Sabaoth! Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory!

Verse: Come unto Him, and be enlightened, and your faces shall not be ashamed.

The choir of angels hymneth Thee, and saith: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord of Sabaoth! Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory!

Glory ...,

The choir of the holy angels and archangels, with all the heavenly hosts, hymneth Thee and saith: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord of Sabaoth! Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory!

Both now ...,

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-begotten, begotten of the Father before all ages; Light of Light, true God of true God; begotten, not made; of one essence with the Father, by Whom all things were made; Who for us men and for our salvation came down from the heavens, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became man; And was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried; And arose again on the third day according to the Scriptures; And ascended into the heavens, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father; And shall come again, with glory, to judge both the living and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end. And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of life; Who proceedeth from the Father; Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; Who spake by the prophets. In One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. I confess one baptism for the remission of sins. I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the age to come. Amen.

Then, the prayer:

Remit, pardon, forgive, O God, our offenses, both voluntary and involuntary, in deed and word, in knowledge and ignorance, by day and by night, in mind and thought; forgive us all things, for Thou art good and the Lover of mankind.

Then:

Our Father, Who art in the Heavens, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil-one.

Priest: For Thine is the Kingdom ...,

The Kontakion:

He Who closed the abyss is beheld as dead, * and as a corpse the Immortal One hath been wrapped in linen with sweet spices and laid in a tomb. * The women come to anoint Him with myrrh, weeping bitterly and crying: * “This is the most blessed Sabbath on which Christ sleepeth, ** but on the third day He shall rise again.”

Lord, have mercy! (40 times)

And this prayer:

O Most 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.

Blessed be the name of the Lord from henceforth and for evermore.

(Thrice)

Glory ..., Both now ...,

I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall continually be in my mouth. In the Lord shall my soul be praised; let the meek hear and be glad. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together. I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my tribulations. Come unto Him, and be enlightened, and your faces shall not be ashamed. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his tribulations. The angel of the Lord will encamp round about them that fear Him, and will deliver them. O taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that hopeth in Him. O fear the Lord, all ye His saints; for there is no want to them that fear Him. Rich men have turned poor and gone hungry; but they that seek the Lord shall not be deprived of any good thing. Come ye children, hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. What man is there that desireth life, who loveth to see good days? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Turn away from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are opened unto their supplication. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, utterly to destroy the remembrance of them from the earth. The righteous cried, and the Lord heard them, and He delivered them out of all their tribulations. The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart, and He will save the humble of spirit. Many are the

tribulations of the righteous, and the Lord shall deliver them out of them all. The Lord keepeth all their bones, not one of them shall be broken. The death of sinners is evil, and they that hate the righteous shall do wrong. The Lord will redeem the souls of His servants, and none of them will do wrong that hope in Him.

Priest: Wisdom!

Choir 1: It is truly meet to bless thee, the Theotokos, * ever-blessed and most blameless, and Mother of Our God.

Priest: Most holy Theotokos save us.

Choir 2: 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.

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

Choir 1 & 2: Glory ..., Both now ..., Amen. Lord have mercy (Thrice), father (Master), bless.

At the Dismissal the priest saith:

Priest: May Christ our true God, Who for us men and for our salvation deigned to suffer the dread Passion and the life-creating Cross, and voluntary burial in the flesh ...,