

WEDNESDAY IN THE THIRD WEEK
AT MATINS

The usual beginning, with the Six psalms, the great Litany and then, in place of “God is the Lord ...,” we chant, in the Tone of the week:

Choir: Alleluia (Thrice)

Verse: Out of the night my spirit waketh at dawn unto Thee, O God, for Thy commandments are light upon the earth. (Alleluia x3)

Verse: Learn righteousness, ye that dwell upon the earth. (Alleluia x3)

Verse: Zeal shall lay hold upon an uninstructed people. (Alleluia x3)

Verse: Add more evils upon them, O Lord; add more evils upon them that are glorious upon the earth. (Alleluia x3)

Then the Choir chanteth the Triadicon (Hymns to the Trinity) in the Tone of the week, each one only once, followed by the 1st chanting of the Psalter (Kathisma XIX), the Sessional Hymns from the Oktoechos, in the Tone of the week. After the 2nd chanting of the Psalter (Kathisma XX), the Sessional Hymns:

In Tone III:

Raised upon the Cross, O Master, * Thou hast quenched the flame of transgression by its Wood; * willingly suffering death, Thou hast slain the enemy. * Wherefore I beseech Thee: * put to death the desires of my flesh * and enliven my wretched heart, * cleansing me of every defilement by the passion-killing Fast, * in so far as Thou art lovingly compassionate.

Glory ..., the foregoing is repeated.

Both now ..., in Tone III:

Stavrotheotokion: Thou didst willingly endure a violent death in crucifixion, O Compassionate One. And she who gaveth birth to Thee was wounded, beholding Thee. By her supplications, take pity and save the world, O supremely good Lord and only Lover of mankind, Who takest away the sins of the world.

After the 3rd chanting of the Psalter (Kathisma I), the Sessional Hymns:

In Tone II:

As we pass through the radiant celebration of the Fast, * we cry aloud: * Keep us all in peace, O Lord, * delivering us from every snare of the enemy, * and since Thou art supremely good, * count us worthy to venerate Thy precious Cross with love, * by which Thou hast granted Thy mercy to all the inhabited earth, ** O Thou who alone art plenteous in mercy.

Glory ..., the foregoing is repeated.

Both now ..., in Tone II:

Stavrotheotokion: Beholding Thee, O Christ, stretched dead upon the tree, * Thy virgin Mother cried out with bitter tears: * O my son, what is this fearful mystery? * How dost Thou give eternal life to all, **and yet suffer willingly a shameful death upon the Cross?

Then Psalm 50, after which we chant the canon from the Menaion, and the two three-canticle canons from the Triodion; for those ODES we chant the ODE of the second Triodion canon as Katavasia.

The Canons
ODE III

First canon, by Joseph, in Tone III:

Irmos: O Lord, the firm foundation of those who put their trust in Thee, * do Thou establish the Church, * which Thou hast purchased * with thy precious blood.

Refrain: Have mercy on me O God, have mercy on me.

Crucified with Him who was crucified for our sake, let us put to death all the members of the flesh by fasting, prayer and supplication.

Refrain: Have mercy on me O God, have mercy on me.

O Lord, who by Thy Crucifixion hast plucked out the thorn of sin, pluck from my mind all noetic thorns.

Refrain: Have mercy on me O God, have mercy on me.

Arming our mind with fasting and walled about by the power of the Cross, let us overthrow the hostile hordes of demons.

Refrain: Most holy Theotokos save us.

Theotokion: Taking flesh from thee the Word came forth incarnate, O most pure one, and by His compassionate mercy, hath set aright the fall of our first parents.

Another canon, by Theodore, in Tone II:

Irmos: O Lord, who didst slay sin upon the tree ...,

Refrain: Glory to Thy precious Cross O Lord.

Thy life-creating Cross, O Lord, is my seal of salvation: for by it I overthrow the adversary and praise Thee as God, mighty in power.

Refrain: Glory to Thy precious Cross O Lord.

The Tree of the Cross hath borne a fruit that giveth eternal life unto the world; and eating of it, O Christ, we have been delivered from death.

Glory ..., I glorify three Hypostases in one Nature, the Father, Son and Spirit, one Power of the Divinity that alone ruleth and reigneth as God.

Both now ..., **Theotokion**: Thy childbearing, O pure one, is fearful. For it is God who hath become a man, begotten outside time from the Father and in the last days born from thee without a man.

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

The grace of the Cross doth shine upon the world, O merciful Lord, preparing all for the coming celebration of Thy divine Passion. Count us worthy to venerate it with faith.

Katavasia: **O Lord, who didst slay sin upon the tree, * firmly establish us in Thee, * and in the hearts of us who hymn Thee * plant the fear of Thee.**

ODE VIII

First canon, in Tone III:

Irmos: **United together in the unbearable fire, * yet not harmed by the flame, * the children, champions of godliness, sang a divine hymn: * O all ye works of the Lord, * bless ye the Lord and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages.**

Refrain: **Have mercy on me O God, have mercy on me.**

By the Cross Thou hast triumphed over the principalities and dominions of darkness, O Giver of Light, and when Thou shalt come in power to judge the whole world, denounce not my hidden sins, O Word, that I may glorify Thy loving-kindness.

Refrain: **Have mercy on me O God, have mercy on me.**

O just and longsuffering Lord, Thou, the Judge, didst stand before the judgment seat of Pilate as a prisoner; but by Thy Cross Thou hast condemned the enmity that separated man from God. Deliver, then, from eternal condemnation those who cry to Thee in fear and glorify Thy love for mankind.

Refrain: **Have mercy on me O God, have mercy on me.**

Of old the pious Children, strengthened by the fire of fasting, in truth extinguished the raging fire with dew from God. By fasting let us also extinguish the furnace of the passions, that we may escape the flames of Gehenna.

Refrain: **Most holy Theotokos save us.**

Theotokion: In thee, O unwedded Maiden, hath the Wisdom of God built for Himself a dwelling and in His indescribable condescension, taken flesh. For thou alone out of all generations hast been chosen to be the dwelling-place of the incorrupt Word.

Second canon, in Tone II:

Irmos: Unto Him Who of old prefigured the miracle ...,

Refrain: Glory to Thy precious Cross O Lord.

O Christ, whose word upholds the universe, Thou didst endure all things for my sake; the buffeting and spitting, and crucifixion. I praise the greatness of Thy love for mankind throughout all ages.

Refrain: Glory to Thy precious Cross O Lord.

Thy side pierced by a lance O Christ, Thou didst offer Thyself in sacrifice as a lamb, enabling me, the lost sheep, to be saved from the snares of the devil, and preserving me in Thy good fold throughout all ages.

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

O Godhead, one in Trinity, undivided in Nature yet divided in Hypostases, ever existing Power, the Father, Son and Spirit, we sing Thy praises throughout all ages.

Both now ..., **Theotokion:** O pure Birthgiver of God, Gate of heaven, Door of salvation, accept the supplications of all Orthodox Christians who bless thee throughout all ages.

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

Thy Cross, O Christ, is the glory of priests, the strengthening of children, and the enlightenment of all the faithful. Count me worthy to behold and worship it, and to sing in praise of it throughout the ages.

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

Katavasia: Unto Him Who of old prefigured the miracle of the Virgin, * unto Moses in the burning-bush * on Mount Sinai, * let us sing, bless and supremely exult throughout all ages.

ODE IX

First canon, in Tone III:

Irmos: In the shadow and the letter of the Law, * let us, the faithful, discern a figure: * every male child that openeth the womb * shall be sanctified to God. * Therefore we magnify the firstborn Word * and Son of the beginningless Father, * the firstborn Child of a Mother who hath not known a man.

Refrain: Have mercy on me O God, have mercy on me.

The serpent that Moses raised upon his staff prefigured Thee, O Christ, who wast willingly raised up upon the Cross; healing us from the poison of the evil one, and in Thy love drawing all mankind to Thyself.

Refrain: Have mercy on me O God, have mercy on me.

Cleanse me by the fire of reverent fear of Thee, O Christ; kindle Thy divine love in my soul, and wall me about with Thy Cross: for the deceiver who of old caused mankind's fall hath craftily beguiled me and darkened my understanding with disordered desires.

Refrain: Have mercy on me O God, have mercy on me.

O brethren, let us fast from shameful thoughts and evil actions; let us purify our hearts and through the divine virtues let us ascend with wings to heaven, turning away from evil and earthly desires; that we may behold the great Pascha.

Refrain: Most holy Theotokos save us.

Theotokion: He who is rich by nature hath chosen to be clothed in our poverty, O Virgin; and He who is invisible, whom the choirs of angels praise on high, hath become visible, and in His compassionate goodness formed anew our sullied image.

Second canon, in Tone II:

Irmos: Thou art the noetic living ladder ...,

Refrain: Glory to Thy precious Cross O Lord.

Thou didst stretch forth Thine arms upon the Cross and thereby make Thine own the four corners of the world; by which we have access to the Father, O Son of God, wherefore we all magnify Thee.

The transgressors placed a crown of thorns upon Thine head, O Christ; they struck Thee and crucified Thee. Seeing these things, all that is under the heavens were shaken; but we, having been saved, magnify Thee.

Glory ..., Holy and threefold Light of the Godhead, ever upholding and protecting all things, the Father, the Son and the Spirit of Life, with never-silent hymns we magnify Thee.

Both now ..., **Theotokion:** Thou art the effulgent cloud of the Spirit, O Theotokos, from which hath shone upon us the unapproachable Light, Christ the great Sun of righteousness; wherefore with hymns we magnify thee.

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

O Cross of Christ, thou art our light, our holy symbol and sign of victory. Make abstinence sweet for us and count us worthy to venerate thee.

Katavasia: **The noetic living ladder, * upon which our God hath descended, * and by which we have found a way to ascend into heaven, * thee do we magnify with hymns.**

The small litany.

The Exapostilarion of the day from the Oktoechos; Glory ..., the Exapostilarion from the Menaion, if such is appointed; Both now ..., the Theotokion.

On the Aposticha, these Stichera in Tone II:

Though honored as a son by the loving Father, * in my foolishness I understood it not, * depriving myself of glory, * by wickedly wasting the wealth of grace, * and unworthily rendering honor to the divine food, * I have become the servant of an unclean citizen, * who hath sent me into his soul-destroying field, * and living like the Prodigal I supped with wild beasts; * enslaved to pleasures I could not eat my fill. * But now that I have turned back, * I shall cry to the compassionately loving and merciful Father: * I have sinned against heaven and before Thee; ** have mercy on me.

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

*Repeat: T*hough honored as a son by the loving Father ...,

*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.*

Of the holy martyrs, in Tone VIII:

The multitude of Thy saints intercede before Thee, O Christ: * Have mercy on us ** since Thou lovest mankind.

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

Stavrotheotokion: **H**aving endured many pangs during the crucifixion of thy Son and God, * O most pure one, * thou didst groan, weeping and crying aloud: * “Woe is me, O my sweet Child! * How is it that thou sufferest unjustly, * desiring to deliver the mortal descendents of Adam?” * Wherefore, O all-pure Virgin, * we entreat thee with faith: ** Render Him merciful unto us!

Then: It is good to give thanks unto the Lord ..., Trisagion through Our Father ..., then:

Reader: Amen. Standing in the temple of thy glory as though seemingly in heaven; O Theotokos thou gate of heaven, open the door of thy compassion.

Lord have mercy. (40 Times)

Glory ..., Both now ...,

More honorable than the Cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim; who without corruption gavest birth to God the Word, the very Theotokos, thee do we magnify.

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

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

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

Then the Prayer of St Ephraim:

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 beginneth the first hour. With the reading of the 2nd Kathisma. The 3rd Kathisma is read at the Third Hour, the 4th at the Sixth Hour, the 5th at the Ninth Hour.

SIXTH HOUR

Troparion of the prophecy, in Tone VIII:

There is no firm foundation of good works to be found in us O Lord, * but since Thou art merciful and the Lover of mankind. ** Despise not the creation of Thine own hands, O sinless One.

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

Prokeimenon, in Tone III:

Prokeimenon: Sacrifice unto God a sacrifice of praise, * and pay thy vows unto the Most High.

Verse: The God of gods, the Lord, has spoken and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof.

THE READING IS FROM THE PROPHECY OF ISAIAH (10: 12 - 20)

The Lord said: it shall come to pass, that when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks. For he saith, By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom; for I am prudent: and I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man: And my hand hath found as a nest the riches of the people: and as one gathereth eggs that are left, have I gathered all the earth; and there was none that moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or peeped. Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? as if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself, as if it were no wood. Therefore shall the Lord, the Lord of hosts, send among his fat ones leanness; and under his glory he shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire. And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame: and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briers in one day; And shall consume the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field, both soul and body: and they shall be as when a standard-bearer fainteth. And the rest of the trees of his forest shall be few, that a child may write them. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again stay upon him that smote them; but shall stay upon the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in truth.

Prokeimenon, in Tone VI:

Prokeimenon: Have mercy upon me, O Lord, * according to Thy great mercy.

Verse: Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

**WEDNESDAY IN THE THIRD WEEK
AT VESPERS**

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

6 Stichera from the Triodion, 3 by Joseph, in Tone IV:

Having wasted the riches which the Father hath given me * through prodigal living; * I am now a pauper and dwell in a land of wicked citizenry; * and in my thoughtlessness have become like the dumb beasts, * completely stripped of God’s grace. * But turning back I cry to Thee, * O compassionately loving and merciful Father: * “I have sinned, receive me in repentance O God, ** and have mercy on me.” (Twice)

O martyrs of the Lord, * ye living oblations, spiritual burnt-offerings, * and perfect sacrifices to God, * sheep that know God and are known by Him, * whose fold no wolf can enter within: * pray that we may be led with you ** to feed beside the waters of rest.

Two more by Joseph, in Tone VI:

O ye apostles, eye-witnesses of God, * beams of light from the noetic Sun, * pray that our souls may be enlightened, * and deliver us from the gloomy darkness of the passions, * and pray that we may see the day of salvation, * that our hearts which the evil one hath wounded * may be cleansed by prayer and fasting, * that saved then by faith, * we shall ever honor you, ** who have saved the world through your all-wise preaching of the truth.

Squandering in evil the wealth which Thou didst give me, * O compassionately loving Father. * I am starved of good deeds * and clothed in the shame of my transgressions, * having been stripped of God’s grace; * I cry unto Thee: * “I have sinned, yet I know of Thy loving-kindness; * accept me as one of Thy hired servants, * O merciful Christ, ** by the prayers of the apostles who loved Thee.

One by Theodore in Tone VI:

O apostles of the Lord, * ye are celestial beacons illumining the inhabited earth, * benefactors and saviors; * like the heavens ye declare the glory of God, * adorned with the stars of your miracles * and signs of healing; * Intercede fervently for us before the Lord, * that our prayers may be accepted * as an odor of spiritual fragrance, * that we may all be deemed worthy * to worship the lifegiving Cross * and to gaze upon it with reverent fear; * that worshipping Thy Cross O Savior, * Thy mercy may be sent down upon us ** since Thou lovest mankind.

And 4 Stichera from the Menaion (repeating the first).

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

“O joyous Light ...”:

Prokeimenon, in Tone IV:

Prokeimenon: My trust is in the tender mercy of God * for ever and ever.

Verse: Why dost thou boast in evil, O mighty man, and in iniquity all the day long?

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF GENESIS (7: 6-9)

Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth. And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood. Of clean beasts, and of beasts that are not clean, and of fowls, and of every thing that creepeth upon the earth, There went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah.

Prokeimenon, in Tone IV:

Prokeimenon: When God shall bring back His people from captivity, * Jacob shall rejoice and Israel shall be glad.

Verse: The fool has said in his heart: there is no God.

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF PROVERBS (9:12 - 18)

The Lord said: If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself: but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it. A foolish woman is clamorous: she is simple, and knoweth nothing. For she sitteth at the door of her house, on a seat in the high places of the city, To call passengers who go right on their ways: Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: and as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant. But he knoweth not that the dead are there; and that her guests are in the depths of hell.

And the rest of the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts.