

GREAT VESPERS - December 11
Sunday of the Holy Fore-Fathers - Post-Feast of the Immaculate Conception

Priest: Glory be to the holy, consubstantial, life-creating and undivided Trinity, always, now and for ever and ever.

People: Amen.

Come, let us adore the King Our God.

Come, let us adore Christ, the King and our God.

Come, let us adore and bow down to the only Lord Jesus Christ, the King and our God.

PSALM 103

Bless the Lord, O my soul!

You are very great, O Lord my God;

Clothed in pomp and brilliance;
Arrayed with light as with a cloak.

Stretching out the sky as a tent-cloth,
Covering Your lofty halls with water,

You make the clouds Your conveyance;
You surge on the wings of the wind.

You make spirits Your messengers,
And flaming fires Your attendants.

You settle the earth on its firm foundation;
It shall stand unmoved from age to age.

May the Lord's glory endure forever:
May the Lord rejoice in His works.

He looks upon the earth and makes it quake;
He touches the mountains and they smoke.

I will sing to the Lord as long as I live:
I will praise my God as long as I last.

Would that my thoughts be pleasing to Him:
And I will rejoice in the Lord.

May sinners vanish from the earth,
And may the wicked be no more.

Bless the Lord,
O my soul!

The sun knows the time of its setting.
You establish darkness, and it is night.

How great are Your works, O Lord!
In wisdom You have wrought them all.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
Glory be to You, O God! *(3 times)*

LITANY OF PEACE

Priest: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For peace from on high and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For peace throughout the world, for the well-being of God's holy churches and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For this holy church and for all who enter it with faith, reverence and fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For our most holy Pontiff **[N]** Pope of Rome, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For our most blessed Patriarch **[N]**, our most reverend Metropolitan **[N]** the reverend priesthood, the diaconate in Christ, and all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For our nation under God, for our government, and for all the military, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For this city, for every city and country and for the faithful who live in them, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For favorable weather, for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For the seafarers and travelers, for the sick and the suffering, for those held captive, and for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: That we may be delivered from all tribulation, wrath, and misfortune, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Help and save, have mercy and protect us, O God, by your grace.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Remembering our most holy and immaculate, most blessed and glorious Lady, the Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary, together with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

People: To You, O Lord.

Priest: For all glory, honor, and worship befit You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever.

People: Amen.

(stand)

KATHISMA

Blessed is the one – Alleluia

Who has not walked in the counsel of the wicked Alleluia

For the Lord knows the way of the just,

But the way of the wicked shall be lost..... Alleluia

Serve the Lord with fear,

Exalt in Him with trembling..... Alleluia

Blessed are those

who trust in Him..... Alleluia

Arise, O Lord!

Save me my God!..... Alleluia

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and ever Amen.

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.(3X)

O Lord I Have Cried to You (Psalm 140)

(Tone 2)

O Lord, I have cried out to You, hear me.

Hear me O my Lord!

O Lord, I have cried out to You, hear me.

Give heed to the voice of my prayer

When I call upon you.

Hear me, O my Lord.

Let my prayer rise like incense before You;
And the lifting of my hands like an evening sacrifice.
Hear me, O my Lord.

Set a guard, O Lord, before my mouth
And a portal around my lips.

Incline my heart away from evil dealings,
From finding excuses for sinful deeds.

In company with those who work iniquity,
Let me not partake of what they choose.

May the just chasten me with justice and reprove me;
May the oil of the wicked never touch my head.

Yet even then shall I pray for their welfare.
Their rulers were swallowed near the rock.

My words will be heard, for they were sweet.
As a lump of clay broken on the ground,
so their bones were strewn near the grave.

To You, O Lord, my eyes are lifted up.
In You have I hoped; let not my soul be lost.

Keep me from the snare that was set for me,
And from the stumbling-blocks of the wicked.

The wicked shall fall into their own nets,
While I remain alone until I can escape.

PSALM 141

With my voice I cried to the Lord
With all my voice I implored the Lord.

Before Him I pour out my supplications;
Before Him I declare my distress.

When my breath was escaping me,
Then you knew my paths;

On the road upon which I was walking
They set up snares for me.

I looked to my right and observed.
There was no one to take care of my life.

I cried out to You, O Lord, and said
You are my hope, my share in the land of the living.

Listen to my supplication,
For I am laid very low.

Deliver me from my oppressors,
For they have overwhelmed me.

Lead my soul forth from prison
That I may give thanks to your name.

The just shall gather around me
When You have been good to me.

PSALM 129

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord;
O Lord hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive To the voice of my prayer.

Tone 2

Come, let us adore God the Word,
Who was born of the Father before all ages,
and was incarnate of the Virgin Mary;
for of His own free will He suffered the Cross
and submitted himself to burial,
and arose from the dead to save me, a sinful one.

**If You mark iniquities, O Lord, who can stand?
But with You forgiveness is that You may be revered.**

Christ our Savior cancelled the decree that was written against us,
by nailing it to the Cross;
and He abolished the dominion of Death.
Let us glorify His Resurrection on the third day.

**I have waited for You as You have commanded;
My soul patiently relies on Your promise,
for it has trusted in the Lord.**

Tone 4

The barren Anne leaped for joy
when she gave birth to Mary the Virgin
who in turn will give birth in the flesh to God the Word.
Overflowing with happiness, she cried out:* Rejoice with me, all tribes of Israel,
for I have conceived and put aside my burden of childlessness
as the Creator has deigned.
He heard my prayer and healed the pains of my yearning heart.

**From the morning watch until night
Let Israel trust in the Lord.**

O Anne, the One who made waters gush forth from a rock
bestows as a fruit of your womb, the ever-virgin Lady.
Through her, our salvation will come.
Because of this you were delivered from shame.
No longer will you be on earth as a fruitless soil,
for you have produced an earth
which will bring forth the Tree of Life.
According to his will, He delivered the human race from all shame
when He became man out of his compassionate mercy.

**For with the Lord there is mercy and with Him there is plentiful redemption; and He shall
redeem Israel from all its iniquities.**

Tone 8 Today we commemorate the ancestors of Christ.
Sing with fervour a hymn of praise to Christ the Savior
who exalted them among all nations.
He is the Lord who does wondrous deeds
because He is powerful and mighty.
From them He brought forth a royal scepter,
the immaculate maiden of God and virgin Mary.
From her, Christ our God came forth
to give life and eternal salvation for all

Praise the Lord, all the Nations; proclaim His glory, all you people.

The three holy youths were refreshed by the Holy Spirit
when they walked in the fire as though in a cool place.
In them the Trinity and the Incarnation of Christ
were prefigured in a mystical manner.
By their wisdom and faith
they overcame the power of fire.

As for the just Daniel, he stopped the mouths of lions.
Through their intercession, we beseech You:
O Savior and Lover of Mankind,
protect us from eternal fire
and make us worthy of your heavenly kingdom.

Strong is the love of the Lord for us; eternally will His truth endure.

When the three holy youths stood in the flaming furnace
as if covered with dew,
they mystically prefigured your coming from the Virgin,
giving light to us without being consumed.
And Daniel, the just and wondrous prophet,
clearly saw in a vision your second divine coming.
He said: I saw thrones set up and the Judge seated
and the river of fire flowing in his presence.
Through their intercession
deliver us from this fire, O Lord.

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

Tone 6

O believers, let us give praise today to all the Fathers who lived before the Law:
Abraham who was beloved by God,
Isaac who was born according to the promise,
Jacob and the twelve Patriarchs,
the very meek David and the favored prophet Daniel.
Let us also glorify with them the three youths
who changed the fiery furnace into a place of refreshing dew.
Let us beg forgiveness of our sins from Christ our God
who is glorified in his saints.

Now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Tone 2

At the coming of grace, O Virgin,
the shadow of the Law passed away.
For, as the bush, though burning, was not consumed,
You, though giving birth, still remained a virgin.
In place of the pillar of fire, the Sun of Righteousness shone forth.
Instead of Moses, Christ, the Salvation of Our Souls, appeared.

Priest: Wisdom! Stand aright!

HYMN OF LIGHT

O Joyful Light!
Light and Holy Glory of the Father immortal,
The heavenly, holy the Blessed One: O Jesus Christ!

Now that we have reached the setting of the sun;
And see the evening light, we sing to God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
It is fitting at all times to raise a song of praise in measured
melody to You, O Son of God, the Giver of Life.
Behold the universe sings Your glory.

Priest: Let us be attentive. Peace be with all. Wisdom let us be attentive.

Prokimen:

The Lord reigns, He is clothed in majesty

Verse: Robed is the Lord and girt about with strength.

Verse: For He has made the world firm, which shall not be moved.

Verse: Holiness befits Your house, O Lord, for length of days.

THE LITANY OF SUPPLICATION

Priest: Let us all say with our whole soul and our whole mind, let us say.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Lord Almighty, God of our Fathers, we pray You, hear us and have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Have mercy on us, O God, in the greatness of Your compassion, we pray You, hear us and have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy. *(3 times)*

Priest: We also pray for our most holy universal Pontiff **[N]**, Pope of Rome; for our most blessed Patriarch **[N]**, our most reverend Metropolitan **[N]**, for those who serve and have served in this holy church, for our spiritual fathers, and for all our brothers and sisters in Christ.

People: Lord, have mercy. *(3 times)*

Priest: We also pray for our nation under God, for our government, and for all the military.

People: Lord, have mercy. *(3 times)*

Priest: We also pray for the people here present who await Your great and bountiful mercies, for those who have been kind to us, and for all orthodox Christians.

People: Lord, have mercy. *(3 times)*

Priest: For You are a merciful and loving God, and we give glory to You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever.

People: Amen.

HYMN OF GLORIFICATION

O Lord, keep us this evening without sin.

Blessed are You, O Lord, God of our Fathers, and praised and glorified is Your name for ever.
Amen.

Let Your mercy, O Lord, be upon us because we have set our hope in You.

Blessed are You, O Lord, teach me Your commandments.

Blessed are You, O Master, make me understand Your commandments.

Blessed are You, O Holy One, enlighten me with Your laws.

O Lord, Your mercy endures forever; do not despise the work of Your hands.

It is proper to praise You, and hymns belong to You.

Glory belongs to You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

LITANY OF SUPPLICATION

Priest: Let us complete our evening prayer to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Help and save, have mercy and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: That this whole evening may be perfect, holy, peaceful, and sinless, let us ask the Lord.

People: Grant this, O Lord

Priest: For an angel of peace, a faithful guide, a guardian of our souls and bodies, let us ask the Lord.

People: Grant this, O Lord.

Priest: For the forgiveness and remission of our sins and offences, let us ask the Lord.

People: Grant this, O Lord.

Priest: For all that is good and beneficial for our souls and for peace for the world, let us ask the Lord.

People: Grant this, O Lord.

Priest: That we may spend the rest of our lives in peace and repentance, let us ask the Lord.

People: Grant this, O Lord.

Priest: For a Christian end to our lives, one that is painless, unashamed, and peaceful; and for a good defense at the awesome tribunal of Christ, let us ask the Lord.

People: Grant this, O Lord.

Priest: Remembering our most holy and immaculate, most blessed and glorious Lady, the Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary, together with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ Our God.

People: To You, O Lord.

Priest: For You, O God are good and the lover of us all and we give You glory, Father, Son and Holy Spirit now and for ever and ever.

People: Amen.

Priest: Peace be with all.

People: And with your spirit.

Priest: Bow your heads to the Lord.

People: To You, O Lord.

Priest: (silently) O Lord our God, You lowered the heavens when You came down for the salvation of the human race. Now look upon Your servants and upon Your inheritance; for they have bowed their heads before You, the Judge, both awesome and loving. They do not await human help, but look for Your mercy and are ready to receive Your salvation. Guard them at all times, this evening and tonight, against all enemies, against the devil's assaults, against vain thoughts and evil dreams.

May the might of Your kingdom be blessed and exalted, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever.

People: Amen.

APOSTICA

Tone 2

Your Resurrection, O Christ our Savior,
has enlightened the whole universe;
and, through it, You call back to yourself all creation.
Almighty God, glory to You!

The Lord reigns, He is clothed in majesty. Robed is the Lord, and girt about with strength.
By the wood of Your Cross, O Savior,
You have abolished the curse of the tree;
by Your burial You have destroyed the power of Death;
and by Your Resurrection You enlightened the human race.
We, therefore, cry out to You:
O Christ our God, Giver of Life, glory to You!

For He has made the world firm, which shall not be moved.

O Christ, when You were nailed to the Cross,
the distorted nature of creation was made manifest.
The soldiers showed their Inhumanity by piercing Your side with a lance,
and the people showed their ignorance of Your power
by asking that Your tomb be sealed.
But, in Your mercy, You accepted burial
and then arose on the third day.
O Lord, glory to You!

Holiness befits Your house, O Lord, for length of days.

O Christ, Giver of Life,
You freely endured the Passion for the sake of mortals.
In Your power You descended into Hades;
and snatching, as from a mighty monster, the souls of those who awaited Your coming,
You placed them in Paradise.
Therefore, show Your great mercy to us who glorify Your Resurrection.
and cleanse us of our sins.

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

Tone 3 Come, O lovers of the feast,
let us sing a hymn of praise to the assembly of the Forefathers:
Adam, the father of the human race,
Enoch, Noah, Melchisedek, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
Let us also honor those who came after the Law:
Moses, Aaron, Joshua, Samuel, and David;
together with Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel,
Daniel, and the twelve minor Prophets;
likewise Elijah, Elisha, and all the others;
also Zechariah and the Baptist,
and all those who preached Christ, the Life and the Resurrection of our race.

now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Tone 3 O Virgin Mother, you conceived the Son of God without seed
by the will of the Father and the power of the Holy Spirit.
He was begotten by the Father, without a mother, from all eternity.
Yet for our sake, He was born of you in the flesh without a human father,
and you nursed Him as an infant with your milk.
Therefore, never cease to entreat Him to deliver our souls from affliction.

HYMN OF SIMEON

Now You shall dismiss Your servant, O Lord,
According to Your Word in peace;
Because my eyes have seen Your salvation
Which You have prepared before the face of all people,

A light to the revelation of the Gentiles
And the glory of Your people, Israel.

Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal, have mercy on us. *(3 times)*

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Trinity most holy, have mercy on us. Cleanse us of our sins, O Lord; pardon our transgressions, O Master; look upon our weaknesses and heal them, O Holy One; for the sake of Your name.

Lord, have mercy. *(3 times)*

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Our Father, Who art in heaven, 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 evil.

Priest: For the kingdom and the power and the glory are Yours, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever.

People: Amen.

Tropar Tone 2

When You went down to death, O Life Immortal,
You struck Hades dead with the blazing light of Your divinity.
When You raised the dead from the nether world,
all the powers of heaven cried out:
“O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory be to You!”

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit:

Tone 2

Through faith, O Christ, You justified the Patriarchs,
for through them You made a commitment to a Church with Gentiles.
These saints are glorified, because from them
descends the Virgin who gave You birth.
Through their prayers, O Christ our God, have mercy on us.

Now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Tone 4

Today the bonds of childlessness are loosed,
for God has heard the prayers of Anne and Joachim.
He promised against all hope that they would give birth to a divine virgin

from whom the Indescribable would be born as a man,
the Same who ordered the angels to sing to her:
Rejoice, O woman full of grace;
the Lord is with you.

DISMISSAL

Priest: Wisdom!

People: Give the blessing!

Priest: Blessed are You, O Christ our God, now and for ever and ever.

People: Amen. O God, strengthen the true faith forever and ever.

Priest: O most holy Mother of God, save us!

People: More honorable than the Cherubim and by far more glorious than the Seraphim; ever a virgin, you gave birth to God the Word, O true Mother of God, we magnify you.

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

People: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen. Lord, have mercy. (3x) Give the blessing.

Priest: May Christ our true God, risen from the dead, through the prayers of his most holy Mother whose feast of the Immaculate Conception we celebrate, through the prayers of the holy, glorious, and praiseworthy apostles, and through the prayers of all the saints, have mercy on us and save us for He is gracious and loves all of us.

People: Amen

REJOICE, VIRGIN MARY

Rejoice Virgin Mary, full of grace.
O Theotokos, the Lord is with you.
Blessed are you among women,
And blessed is the Fruit of your womb.
For you have given birth
To the Saviour of our souls.

For you have given birth
To the Saviour of our souls