

Sunday of the Cross - 3rd Lent

March 15, 2026

Tone 7

GREAT VESPERS - SATURDAY EVENING

DEACON: Bless, Father.

PRIEST: Blessed is our God always now and ever and unto ages of ages.

PEOPLE: Amen.

“Come Let Us Worship...”

Psalm 104

Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord You are very great: / You are clothed with honor and majesty, / Who cover Yourself with light as with a garment, / Who stretch out the heavens like a curtain.

He lays the beams of His upper chambers in the waters, / Who makes the clouds His chariot, / Who walks on the wings of the wind, / Who makes His angels spirits, His ministers a flame of fire.

You Who laid the foundations of the earth, / so that it should not be moved forever, / You covered it with the deep as with a garment; / the waters stood above the mountains.

At Your rebuke they fled; / at the voice of Your thunder they hastened away. / They went up over the mountains; they went down into the valleys, / to the place which You founded for them.

You have set a boundary that they may not pass over, / that they may not return to cover the earth. / He sends the springs into the valleys, / which flow among the hills.

They give drink to every beast of the field; / the wild donkeys quench their thirst. / By them the birds of the heavens have their habitation; / they sing among the branches.

He waters the hills from His upper chambers; / the earth is satisfied with the fruit of Your works.

He causes the grass to grow for the cattle, / and vegetation for the service of man, / that he may bring forth food from the earth, / and wine that makes glad the heart of man,

oil to make his face shine, / and bread which strengthens man's heart.

The trees of the Lord are full of sap, / the cedars of Lebanon which He planted, / where the birds make their nests; / the stork has her home in the fir trees.

The high hills are for the wild goats; / the cliffs are a refuge for the rock badgers.

He appointed the moon for the seasons; / the sun know its going down. / You made darkness, and it is night, / in which all the beasts of the forest creep about.

The young lions roar after their prey, / and seek their food from God. / When the sun arises, they gather together / and lie down in their dens.

Man goes out to his work / and to his labor until the evening. / O Lord, how manifold are Your works! / In wisdom You have made them all.

The earth is full of Your possessions / – this great and wide sea, / in which are innumerable teeming things, / living things both small and great.

There the ships sail about and there is that Leviathan / which You have made to play there. / These all wait for You, / that You may give them their food in due season.

What You give them they gather in; / You open Your hand, they are filled with good. / You hide Your face, they are troubled; / You take away their breath, they die and return to their dust.

You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; / and You renew the face of the earth. / May the glory of the Lord endure forever; / may the Lord rejoice in His works.

He looks on the earth, and it trembles; / He touches the hills, and they smoke.

I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; / I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. / May my meditation be sweet to Him; / I will be glad in the Lord.

May sinners be consumed from the earth, / and the wicked be no more. / Bless the Lord, O my soul! / Praise the Lord!

The sun knows its going down. / You make darkness and it is night. / O Lord, how manifold are Your works! / In wisdom You have made them all.

READER: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

PEOPLE: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to You, O God. (3x)

O our God and our hope, glory to You!

The Great Litany

DEACON: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: For the peace from above, and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: For the peace of the whole world, for the good estate of the holy churches of God, and for the union of all men, let us pray to the Lord.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: For this holy house, and for those who enter with faith, reverence, and fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: For our father, (*metropolitan, archbishop, or bishop*) N., the honorable presbytery, the diaconate in Christ, and for all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: For our president, all civil authorities, and for our armed forces, let us pray to the Lord.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: For this city, every city and countryside, and for the faithful living in them, let us pray to the Lord.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: For healthful seasons, an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: For travelers by sea, by land, and by air; the sick and the suffering; for captives and their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: For our deliverance from all tribulation, wrath, danger, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Your grace.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: Calling to remembrance our most-holy, most-pure, most-blessed, and glorious Lady Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and each other and all our life unto Christ our God.

PEOPLE: To You, O Lord.

Exclamation of the Fourth Prayer

PRIEST: For unto You are due all glory, honor, and worship: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

PEOPLE: Amen.

“O Lord, I Cry...” – Tone 5

Opening Psalm Verses - Psalm 141:1, 2 (LXX 140)

O Lord, I cry out unto You, hear me! Hear me, O Lord. O Lord, I cry out to You, hear me. Give ear to my voice when I cry out, when I cry out to You. Hear me, O Lord.

Let my prayer be set forth before You as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice. Hear me, O Lord.

Set a guard, O Lord over my mouth; keep watch o'er the door of my lips.

Do not incline my heart to any evil thing, to practice wicked works with men who work iniquity; and do not let me eat of their delicacies.

Let the righteous strike me; it shall be a kindness, and let him reprove me; it shall be as excellent oil. Let not my head refuse it, for still my prayer is against the deeds of the wicked.

Their judges are overthrown by the sides of the cliff and they hear my words for they are sweet. Our bones are scattered at the mouth of the grave, as when one plows and breaks up the earth.

But my eyes are upon You, O God the Lord; in You I take refuge; do not leave my soul destitute.

Keep me from the snares which they have laid for me, and from the traps of the workers of iniquity. Let the wicked fall into their own nets, while I escape safely.

Psalm 142 (LXX 141)

I cry out to the Lord with my voice; with my voice to the Lord I make my supplication.

I pour out my complaint before Him; I declare before Him my trouble.

When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then You knew my path. In a way in which I walk they have secretly set a snare for me.

Look on my right hand and see, for there is no one who acknowledges me; refuge has failed me; no one cares for my soul.

I cried out to You, O Lord. I said, "You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living.

Attend to my cry, for I am brought very low; deliver me from my persecutors for they are stronger than I."

Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise Your name.

(Tone 7) – Resurrection

Come, let us rejoice in the Lord Who destroyed the dominion of death. Let us sing to Him with the bodiless hosts, for He enlightened the human race. O our Maker and Savior, glory to You!



The right-eous shall sur-round me for You shall deal boun-ti - ffly with me.

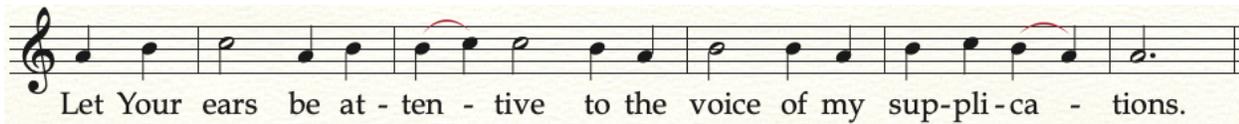
You endured the Cross and burial for our sake. By Your death, You destroyed death as God. We fall down before Your Resurrection on the third day. O Savior, glory to You!

Psalm 130 (LXX 129)

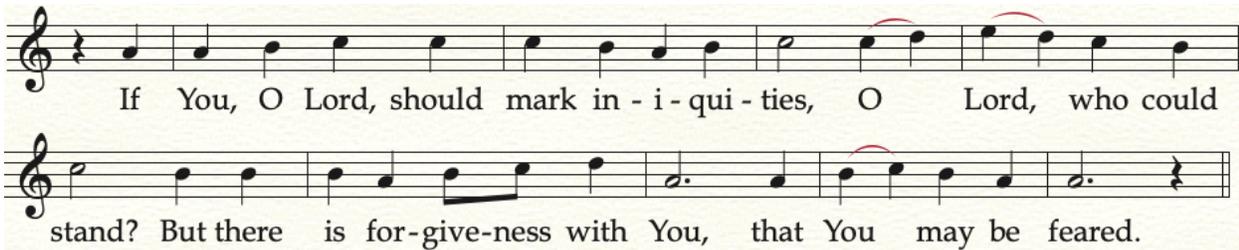


Out of the depths I have cried to You, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice.

When the apostles beheld the Resurrection of the Maker, they were amazed and sang the angelic praise: This is the glory of the Church! This is the richness of the Kingdom! O Lord, crucified for our sake, glory to You!



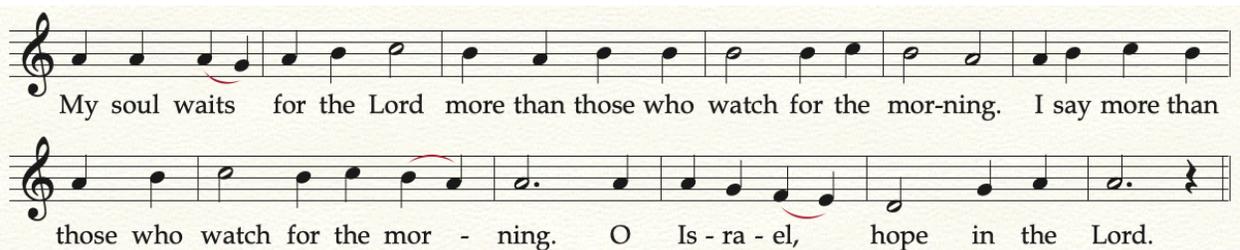
You were held by lawless men, O Christ, but to me, You are God and I am not ashamed. You were smitten on the cheek, but I do not deny You. You were nailed to the Cross and I do not conceal it. For I glory in Your Resurrection, Your death is my life. O almighty Lord and Lover of mankind, glory to You!



Fulfilling the prophecy of David, Christ manifested His greatness in Zion to the disciples. He is praised and always glorified together with the Father and the Holy Spirit. At first, as the Word He was bodiless, but then He took flesh and was slain for our sake. He rose in power as the Lover of mankind!



You descended into hell as You freely willed, O Christ, overthrowing death as God and rising on the third day as Master. With Yourself You raised Adam from the bonds of hell and from corruption. Glory to Your Resurrection, O only Lover of mankind!



(Tone 5) – Cross

Shine, O Cross of the Lord, shine with the light of your grace upon the hearts of those who honor you. With love inspired by God, we embrace you, O desire of all the world. Through you our tears of sorrow have been wiped away. We have been delivered from the snares of death and have passed over to unending joy. Show us the glory of your beauty and grant to us your servants the reward of our abstinence, for we entreat with faith your rich protection and great mercy.

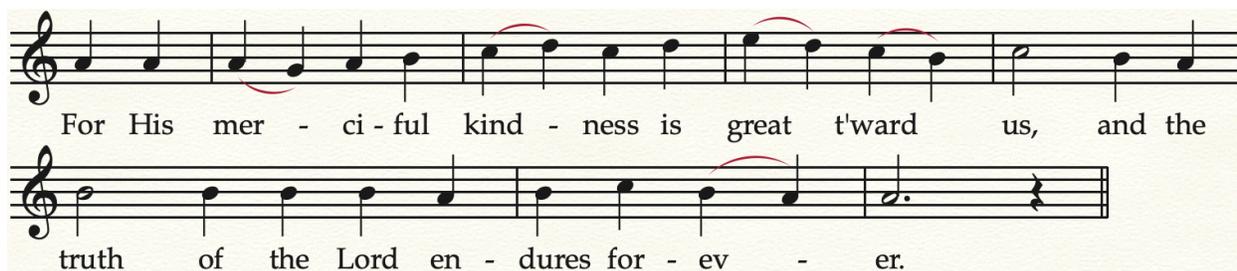


Rejoice! Life-giving Cross, the fair Paradise of the Church, Tree of incorruption that brings us the enjoyment of eternal glory: through you the hosts of demons have been driven back; and the hierarchies of angels rejoice with one accord, as the congregations of the faithful keep the feast. You are an invincible weapon, an unbroken stronghold; you are the victory of kings and the glory of priests. Grant us now to draw near to the Passion of Christ and to His Resurrection.

Psalm 117 (LXX 116)



Rejoice! Life-giving Cross, unconquerable trophy of godliness, door to paradise, help of the faithful, rampart set about the Church! Through you, corruption is utterly destroyed, the power of death is swallowed up, and we are raised from earth to heaven: Invincible weapon, adversary of devils, glory of martyrs, true ornament of saints, haven of salvation, bestowing on the world great mercy!



Come, Adam and Eve, our first father and mother, who fell from the choir on high through the envy of the murderer of man, when of old with bitter pleasure you tasted from the tree in Paradise. See, the Tree of the Cross, revered by all, draws near! Run with haste and embrace it joyfully, and cry to it with faith: O precious Cross, you are our aid; partaking of your fruit, we have gained incorruption; we are restored once more to Eden, and we have received great mercy.



(Tone 3) – Cross

O Christ our God, of Your own will You have accepted Crucifixion, that all mankind might be restored to life. Out of love for mankind, taking the quill of the Cross, You have signed our absolution in the red ink of royalty with bloody fingers. We are in danger once again of being parted from You; O forsake us not! Take pity

on Your people in distress, for You alone are longsuffering. Rise up and fight against our enemies in Your almighty power.



(Tone 5) – Resurrection

The sign of the Virgin bride who knew not wedlock was revealed in the Red Sea, for there Moses divided the waters, and here Gabriel assists in the miracle. There, Israel crossed the deep without getting wet and now the Virgin has given birth to Christ without seed. The sea remained impassable after the passing of Israel and the blameless Virgin remained virgin after giving birth to Emanuel. Therefore, O Eternal God, Who were before eternity, and Who appeared on earth as man, have mercy upon us.

The Prayer before the Entrance

DEACON: Let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mercy.

PRIEST: In the evening and in the morning and at noonday we praise You, we bless You, we give thanks to You, and we pray to You, O Master of all, Lord Who love mankind. Direct our prayer before You as incense, and incline not our hearts to words or thoughts of evil; but deliver us from all who seek after our souls. For unto You, Lord, O Lord, we lift up our eyes, and in You have we hoped. Put us not to shame, O our God.

For unto You are due all glory, honor, and worship: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

DEACON: Amen.

DEACON: Bless, father, the holy entrance.

PRIEST: Blessed is the entrance into Your holy place always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

DEACON: Amen.

DEACON: Wisdom. Let us attend.

“O Joyful Light”

PEOPLE: O joyful Light of the holy glory of the immortal, heavenly, holy, blessed Father: O Jesus Christ. Now that we have come to the setting of the sun and behold the light of evening, we praise God: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. For it is right at all times to worship You with voices of praise, O Son of God and Giver of life. Therefore all the world glorifies You.

The Evening Prokeimenon: Tone 7

Psalm 77 (LXX 76)

DEACON: The evening prokeimenon.

The Lord is King, He is clothed with majesty.

Verse: The Lord is robed; He is girded with strength.

Verse: For He established the world so that it shall never be moved.

The Litany of Fervent Supplication / The Ektenia

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

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: O Lord Almighty, the God of our fathers, hear us we pray, and have mercy.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: Have mercy on us, O God, according to Your great mercy, hear us we pray, and have mercy.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

DEACON: Again we pray for all pious and Orthodox Christians; for our father, (*metropolitan, archbishop, or bishop*) N.; for our brethren: the priests, deacons, and monastics and for all our brotherhood in Christ.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

DEACON: Again we pray for the blessed and ever-memorable founders of this holy church (*and for the servants of God. NN.*); and for all our fathers and brethren, the Orthodox departed this life before us, who here and in all the world lie asleep in the Lord.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

DEACON: Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, and visitation, and for pardon and forgiveness of sins for (*the servants of God NN., and*) all Orthodox Christians of true worship, who live and dwell in this community.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

DEACON: Again we pray for those who bear fruit and do good works in this holy and all-venerable temple; for those who serve and those who sing; and for all the people here present, who await Your great and rich mercy.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

PRIEST: [O Lord our God, receive this fervent supplication of Your servants, and have mercy on us according to the multitude of Your mercy; and send down Your compassion on us and on all Your people, who await Your great and rich mercy.]

For You are a merciful God and love mankind, and unto You we ascribe glory: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

PEOPLE: Amen.

The Evening Prayer

PEOPLE: Grant, O Lord, to keep us this evening without sin. Blessed are You, O Lord, the God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Your name forever. Amen. Let Your mercy be upon us, O Lord, even as we have set our hope on You. Blessed are You, O Lord; teach me Your statutes. Blessed are You, O Master; make me to understand Your statutes. Blessed are You, O holy One; enlighten me with Your statutes. Your mercy, O Lord, endures forever. Despise not the works of Your hands. To You belongs worship, to You belongs praise, to You belongs glory: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

The Evening Litany

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

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Your grace.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

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

PEOPLE: Grant this, O Lord.

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

PEOPLE: Grant this, O Lord.

DEACON: For pardon and forgiveness of our sins and transgressions, let us ask of the Lord.

PEOPLE: Grant this, O Lord.

DEACON: For all things good and profitable for our souls, and peace for the world, let us ask of the Lord.

PEOPLE: Grant this, O Lord.

DEACON: That we may complete the remaining time of our life in peace and repentance, let us ask of the Lord.

PEOPLE: Grant this, O Lord.

DEACON: For a Christian ending to our life, painless, blameless, and peaceful, and for a good defense before the fearful judgment seat of Christ, let us ask of the Lord.

PEOPLE: Grant this, O Lord.

DEACON: Calling to remembrance our most-holy, most-pure, most-blessed and glorious Lady Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and each other and all our life unto Christ our God.

PEOPLE: To You, O Lord.

An Excerpt from the Seventh Prayer

PRIEST: O Master, Bestower of all good things, may we, being moved to compunction on our beds, call to remembrance Your holy name in the night, that enlightened by meditation on Your commandments, we may rise in joyfulness of soul to glorify Your goodness, offering up prayers and supplications to Your tender love for our own sins and for those of all Your people, whom You visit in mercy, through the intercessions of the holy Theotokos.

For You are a good God and love mankind, and unto You we ascribe glory: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

PEOPLE: Amen.

PRIEST: Peace be to all.

PEOPLE: And to your spirit.

The Prayer with Heads Bowed

DEACON: Let us bow our heads to the Lord.

PEOPLE: To You, O Lord.

PRIEST: O Lord, our God, Who bowed the heavens and came down for the salvation of mankind, look upon Your servants and Your inheritance; for to You, the fearful Judge, Who love mankind, have Your servants bowed their heads, and submissively inclined their necks, not awaiting help from men, but entreating Your mercy and looking confidently for Your salvation. Guard them at all times, both during this present evening and in the approaching night, from every enemy, from all adverse powers of the devil, and from vain thoughts and evil imaginations.

Blessed and glorified be the might of Your kingdom: of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

PEOPLE: Amen.

Aposticha: Tone 7

As the Savior of the world You arose from the tomb!

As God You resurrected the race of men with Your flesh. *

O Lord, glory to You.

The Lord is King, He is clothed with majesty. The Lord is clothed with strength and has girded Himself.

Come, let us worship the One Who rose from the dead and enlightened all creation!

By His death He saved us from the torments of hell. *

By His Resurrection He has granted us eternal life and great mercy.

For He established the world which shall not be shaken.

You descended into hell, capturing death, O Christ.

And in three days You rose again,

resurrecting us who glorify Your Resurrection, *

O Lord and Lover of mankind.

Holiness adorns Your house, O Lord, forever.

When You were placed in the tomb as one asleep,
the sight was great and awesome.

But when You rose on the third day as Almighty God, *

You resurrected Adam with Yourself.

Glory to Your Resurrection, *

O only Lover of mankind.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

(Tone 8)

O Lord Who helped the gentle David in the combat
and enabled him to overcome the Philistine,
come to the aid of Your Orthodox people, *

and by the weapon of the Cross cast down our enemies.

In Your compassion show us Your mercy as of old,
and make them know in truth that You are God,

and that we who put our trust in You shall conquer. *

At the constant intercessions of Your most pure Mother, grant us Your
great mercy.

Hymn of St. Simeon (Byzantine)

Lord, now You are let-ting Your ser - vant de - part in peace, ac -
cor-ding to Your word. For my eyes have seen Your sal -
va - tion, which You have pre - pared be-fore the face of all
peo - ple, a light to light - en the Gen - tiles, and the glo -
ry of Your peo-ple Is - ra - el.

Trisagion Prayers

PEOPLE: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. (3x)

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy God, visit and heal our infirmities for Your name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, Who art in heaven, ...

PRIEST: For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory: of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

PEOPLE: Amen.

Resurrection Troparion: Tone 7 (Byzantine)

You have de-stroyed death by Your Cross. You have o-pened par-a-dise
to the thief. You have changed the weep-ing of the myrrh-bear-ers
in-to joy. You have com-mand-ed Your a-post-les to pro-claim: You have
ris-en, O Christ our God, and grant the world Your great mer-cy.

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

Troparion of the Cross: Tone 1 (Byzantine)

O Lord, save Your peo - ple and bless Your in - her - i - tance, grant - ing to the
6 faith - ful vic - t'ry o - ver their en - e - mies, and by the pow - er
11 of Your Cross, pre - ser - ving Your hab - i - ta - tion.

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Resurrection Theotokion: Tone 1 (Obikhod)

2 When Gabriel announced to you, O Vir - gin "Re - joice,"
5 with that word the Master of all was incarnate in you, O ho - ly ark, as the
7 right - eous Da - vid said, your womb became more spa - cious than the heav - ens
10 bear - ing your Cre - a - tor. Glory to Him Who took abode in you. Glo - ry to
Him Who came from you. Glory to Him Who freed us by being born of you.

The Blessing & Dismissal

DEACON: Wisdom!

PEOPLE: Father bless.

PRIEST: Christ our God, the Existing One, is blessed, always now and ever and unto ages of ages.

PEOPLE: Amen. Preserve, O God, the holy Orthodox Faith and all Orthodox Christians, unto ages of ages. Amen.

PRIEST: Most-holy Theotokos, save us.

PEOPLE: More honorable than the cherubim, and more glorious beyond...

PRIEST: Glory to You, O Christ, our God and our hope, glory to You.

PEOPLE: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Father, bless.

PRIEST: May Christ our true God, *Who ...* for He is good and loves mankind.

Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us.

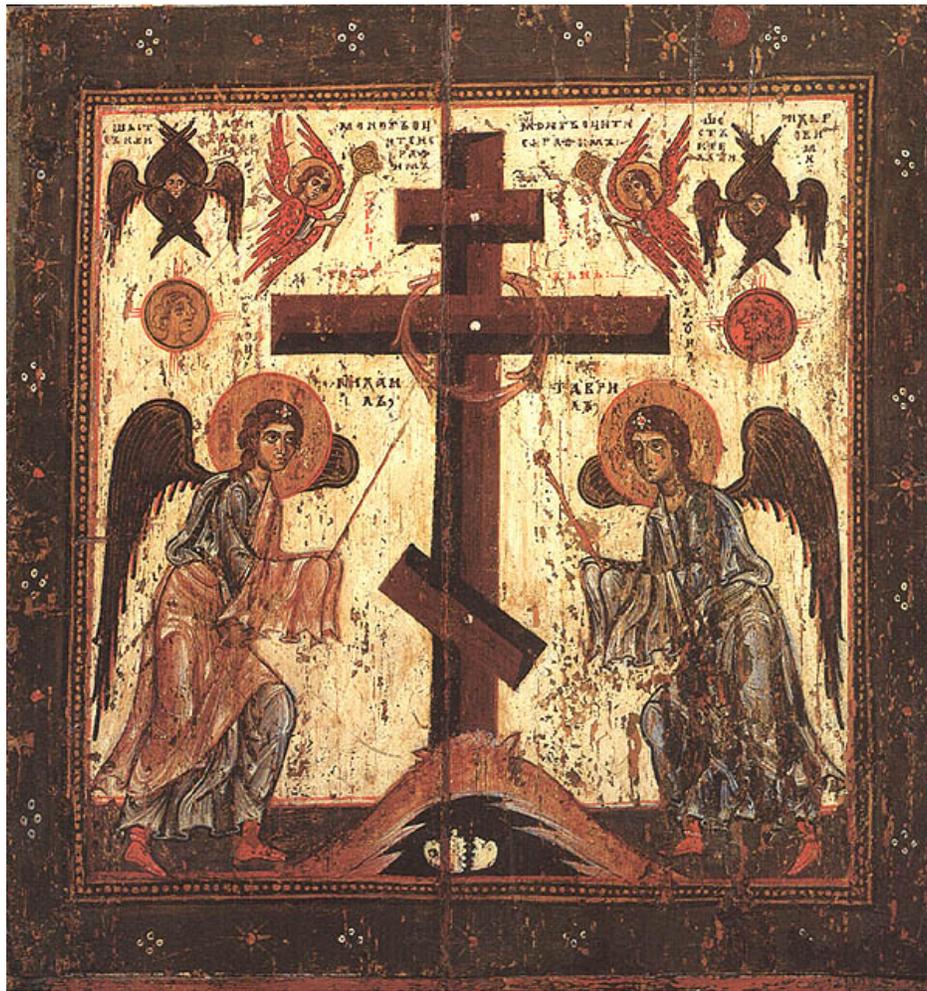
PEOPLE: Amen.

Sunday of the Cross Kontakion: Tone 7 (Byzantine)

The fier-y sword no long - er guards the gate of E - den for
in a strange and glo - ri - ous way the wood of the Cross has
quenched its flames. The sting of death and the vic - to - ry of hell
are now de - stroyed, for You have come, my Sa - - vior,
cry - ing un - to those in hell Re - turn a - gain to
Par - a - dise.

Ikos

Pilate set up three crosses in the place of the Skull, two for the thieves and one for the Giver of Life. Seeing Him, hell cried to those below: 'O my ministers and powers! Who is this that has fixed a nail in my heart? A wooden spear has pierced me suddenly, and I am torn apart. Inwardly I suffer; anguish has seized my belly and my senses. My spirit trembles, and I am constrained to cast out Adam and his posterity. A tree brought them to my realm, but now the Tree of the Cross causes them to return again to Paradise.'



“Rejoice, Life-giving Cross” Tone 5 (Byzantine)

Re - joice, life-giv-ing Cross, un-con-qu'ra-ble tro - phy of god-li-ness,
 6 door to para-dise, help of the faith - ful, ram-part set a - bout the Church.
 11 Through you cor - rup - tion is ut-ter - ly de-stroyed the pow-er of death is
 15 swal-lowed up, and we are raised from earth to heav-en: invincible weapon,
 19 glo - ry of mar - tyrs, true or-na-ment of saints, ha-ven of sal-va -
 25 tion be - stow-ing on the world great mer - cy.

rit.



PreLenten / Lenten Idiomelon: Tone 8

Glo-ry to the Fa-ther and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Spi - rit.

O - pen to me the gates of re-pen - tance, O Giv - er of Life; for my spirit rises

ear - ly to pray t'wards Your ho - ly tem - ple, bear - ing the temple of my

bod - y all de - filed; but in Your com-pas-sion pu - ri - fy me

by Your lov - ing - kind-ness and Your mer - cy. Now and ev -

er and un-to a - ges of a - ges. A - - - - men. Lead me on the

paths of sal - va - tion, O The - o - to - - - kos; for I have profaned

my soul with shame-ful sins, and have wast - ed my life in la - zi-ness.

But by your in - ter - ces - sions, de - liv - er me from all im - pu - ri - ty.

Have mer-cy on me, O God, in Your great mer - cy,
and in Your a-bun-dant com - pas - sion blot out my trans - gres - sions.
When I think of the many evil things I have done, wretch that I
am, I tremble at the fearful day of judg - - - ment. But
trusting in Your lov - ing - kind-ness, like Da - vid I cry to You: Have
mer-cy on me, O God, in Your great mer - cy."

The musical score is written on six staves in G major (one sharp). It features a melody with several triplet markings (indicated by a '3' above a bracket) and a red slur over the final phrase. The lyrics are printed below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes.