



The Office of the Great Vespers of Pentecost

(THE KNEELING)

This Office, on the Vigil of the Feast of the Holy Spirit, that is, Monday after Pentecost, is usually sung immediately after the Divine Liturgy for the Sunday of Pentecost.

PRIEST: Blessed is our God, now and always and forever and ever.

READER: Amen.

Come, let us worship and bow down before God our King. Come let us worship and bow down before Christ God our King. Come, let us worship Christ, our King and our God, and bow down before Him.

PSALM 103 (104)

READER: Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord, my God, you are great indeed! Clothed in pomp and brilliance, arrayed with light as with a cloak, stretching out the sky as a tent-cloth, establishing your lofty halls on water. You make the clouds your conveyance, you surge on the wings of the wind. You make the winds your messengers, and flaming fires your attendants.

You settled the earth on its foundation: it shall stand unmoved from age to age. The abyss covered it

like a garment: the waters stood above the mountains. At your rebuke, they take to flight, at the peal of your thunder, they flee. They hurdle the hills and run down the dales to the place you have chosen for them. You have set up a boundary not to be passed: they shall never return to cover the earth.

Down in the gullies, you make springs to rise; waters shall flow between the mountains. They shall give drink to the beasts of the field; wild asses will seek them to quench their thirst. The birds of the sky shall abide by them; from among the rocks, they will raise their song. From your lofty halls you refresh the hills; the earth shall be fed with the fruit of your works.

You make green pastures for the cattle and food-plants for the service of man, so that bread may be drawn from the earth, and wine that gladdens the heart of man; so that oil may put a gleam on his face, and that bread may strengthen the heart of man. The trees of the plain shall be satisfied, the cedars of Lebanon that he planted. Sparrows shall build their nests in them, herons shall call them their home. To the deer belong the high mountains; to rodents, the shelter of the rock.

You have made the moon to mark the seasons; the sun knows the time of its setting. You establish darkness, and it is night, wherein the forest creatures prowl. Young lions roar for their prey, and call out to God for their meat. As the sun rises, they will come together, and lay themselves down in their dens. Man will go out to his labor, and work until eventide.

How great are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have wrought them all. The earth is filled with your creatures, even the wide and open sea. Within it are countless creeping things, living beings small and large. Upon it there are ships a-sailing, and the great beast you made to have fun. All of them look to you to give them their food in due season. You provide and they gather up; you open your hands, and they are full. You hide your face, and they cringe; you suspend their breath, and they die and return to their dust. You send forth your breath, and they live; you renew the face of the earth.

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 the sinners vanish from the earth, and 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 to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever. Amen.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, glory to You, O God. (2)

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, glory to You, O God. O Lord our hope, glory to You.

THE GREAT LITANY OF PEACE

DEACON: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

CANTOR: Lord, have mercy.

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

CANTOR: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: For peace in the whole world, the stability of God's Holy Churches and for the oneness of all, let us pray to the Lord.

CANTOR: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: For our Archbishop (N.), our Bishop (N.), the honorable priesthood, the deacons in Christ, for all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

CANTOR: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: For our country, the President, and all in public service, let us pray to the Lord.

CANTOR: Lord, have mercy.

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

CANTOR: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: For the people here present, awaiting the grace of the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord.

CANTOR: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: For those who incline their hearts as well as the knee before the Lord, let us pray to the Lord.

CANTOR: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: That we may be strengthened to complete works wellpleasing to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord.

CANTOR: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: That His mercies may be lavished upon us, let us pray to the Lord.

CANTOR: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: That He will accept our act of kneeling as incense before Him, let us pray to the Lord.

CANTOR: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: For all who stand in need of His help, let us pray to the Lord.

CANTOR: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: That we may be spared all affliction, wrath, violence and want, let us pray to the Lord.

CANTOR: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: Help us, save us, have mercy on us and keep us, O God in Your grace. Remembering our most holy, pure, blessed and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another, and our whole life to Christ our God.

CANTOR: To You, O Lord.

PRIEST: For to You belong all glory, honor and worship: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and forever.

CANTOR: Amen.

PSALM 140 (141)

Fourth tone

CANTOR: O Lord, I have cried out to You; hear me; Hear me O Lord. Lord, I have cried out to you, hearken to the voice of my prayer as I cry out to You.

The Deacon, or in the absence of a Deacon, the Priest comes from the Sanctuary to cense the

Church and congregants as is prescribed.

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

The Idiomela
Fourth tone

Verse: If You retain sins, O Lord, who can stand? With You there is forgiveness.

The many nations saw strange things in the city of David when the Holy Spirit descended in fiery tongues as the inspired Luke recounted. For he says: "They were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound came like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And all began to speak in other tongues, other doctrines, other teachings, of the Holy Spirit."
"

Verse: For Your name's sake, Lord, I have waited for You. My soul has waited for Your promise, my soul has hoped in the Lord.

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Verse: From the morning watch till night, let Israel hope in the Lord.

The Holy Spirit has always been, is now and ever shall be, having neither beginning nor end, but one with the Father and the Son: life and life giving; goodness itself and source of goodness, through Whom the Father is made known and the Son is glorified, and is known by all: one power, one unity, one worship, of the Holy Trinity.

Verse: For with the Lord is steadfast love and in him is full redemption; and he will redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

The Holy Spirit has always been, is now and ever shall be, having neither beginning nor end, but one with the Father and the Son: life and life giving; goodness itself and source of goodness, through Whom the Father is made known and the Son is glorified, and is known by all: one power, one unity, one worship, of the Holy Trinity.

Verse: Praise the Lord, all you nations; exalt him, all you peoples.

The Holy Spirit, light and life, and living fountain of reason. Spirit of wisdom, Spirit of understanding, of goodness and honesty, intelligence and sovereignty, expiating sins. God who deifies; fire deriving from fire, speaking, acting, meting out gifts; through Whom the prophets all and God's apostles together with the martyrs were crowned. Different sounds, a different sight: fire divided into gifts of grace.

Verse: For mighty is his love for us, and the truthfulness of the Lord endures forever.

The Holy Spirit, light and life, and living fountain of reason. Spirit of wisdom, Spirit of understanding, of goodness and honesty, intelligence and sovereignty, expiating sins. God who deifies; fire deriving from fire, speaking, acting, meting out gifts; through Whom the prophets all and God's apostles together with the martyrs were crowned. Different sounds, a different sight: fire divided into gifts of grace.

The Doxastikon
Sixth tone

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Now, and always and for ever and ever. Amen.

Heavenly King, Comforter, the Spirit of truth, everywhere present and filling all things, Treasury of blessings and Giver of Life, come and dwell in us; cleanse us of every stain and save our souls, gracious One.

THE ENTRANCE
(With Censer)

DEACON: Let us pray to the Lord.

PRIEST: At nightfall, dawn and noon, we sing to You, we bless You, we give thanks to You, and we beseech You, Master of all, Lord and lover of mankind: guide our prayers aright as an *offering* of incense before You. Let not our hearts be led to wicked thoughts or words, but deliver us all from those who pursue our souls. For it is on You, Lord, Lord, that our eyes are fixed, and in You that we have our hope; do not put us to shame, O our God. For all glory, honor and adoration are Your due, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever. Amen.

DEACON: Master, bless the Entrance.

PRIEST: Blessed is the entrance of the holy people of God, now and always and for ever and ever. Amen.

The Deacon censers the icons and the Priest and then says:

DEACON: Wisdom! Let us arise.

CLERGY: O joyful radiance of the holy glory of the immortal Father, the heavenly, holy, blessed Jesus Christ! Having come to the setting of the sun and seen the evening light, we praise God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is fitting at all times to raise a song of praise in measured melody, O Son of God, giver of life. Behold, the universe sings Your glory.

DEACON: The Evening Prokeimenon.

The Great Prokeimenon
Seventh tone

PRIEST: What god is great as our God? You are God, Who alone works wonders.

CANTOR: *Verse: You have revealed Your power among the people.*

What god is great as our God? You are God, Who alone works wonders.

CANTOR: *Verse: And I said, "Now I have begun to see. this is a change in the Most High's right hand."*

What god is great as our God? You are God, Who alone works wonders.

CANTOR: *Verse: I remembered the deeds of the Lord, for I will recall Your wonders of old.*

What god is great as our God? You are God, Who alone works wonders.

Entering the Sanctuary the Deacon says:

DEACON: Again, on bended knees, let us pray to the Lord.

CANTOR: Lord, have mercy.

As the faithful kneel, the Priest, also kneeling at the Royal Doors and facing the people, reads the

first Prayers aloud.

PRIEST: Lord, pure and undefiled, existing before all eternity, invisible, incomprehensible, unsearchable, unchanging, surpassed by none, not to be calculated, long-suffering, the only immortal One, You abide in the unapproachable light. You created heaven and earth, and all the creatures that inhabit them, supplying all their needs even before they ask. To You we pray and You we entreat, loving Master, the Father of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ, Who for us and for our salvation came down from heaven to be incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, the glorious Theotokos. At first You taught in words, but then showed us by deeds, when in enduring the saving Passion You gave to us Your humble, sinful and unworthy servants an example of how to offer our prayers in the bending of our heads and knees for our own transgressions and for the failings of the people.

All-merciful and loving Lord, hear us whenever we call upon You, but especially on this day of Pentecost, on which, after our Lord Jesus Christ had ascended into the heavens, to be seated at Your right hand, God and Father, He sent the Holy Spirit on His holy disciples and Apostles. As He came to rest upon each of them, and all were filled with His overflowing grace, they spoke in strange tongues of Your mighty works and prophesied.

As we now pray to You, hear us, and be mindful that we are lowly and deserving of judgment; recall our souls from the bondage of sin. Your own compassion interceding for us. Accept us as we kneel before You crying the familiar, "I have sinned!" We have been dependent on You from our mother's womb; You are our God. But because our days have been vainly squandered, we are stripped of Your help, without any defense. Even so, encouraged by Your mercies, we cry: Remember not our sins committed in youth and ignorance, and purge our secret thoughts. Do not spurn us in old age; when our strength fails us, do not forsake us; before we are returned to the earth, make us worthy to return to You, and treat us with Your favor and grace. Measure out Your mercies against our transgressions; contrast the depths of Your pity to the multitude of our offenses.

From Your holy dwelling place look down upon the people present here in expectation of Your rich mercy; visit us in Your goodness; free us from the oppression of the Evil One; make our lives secure within Your holy and sacred laws. Entrust Your people to a faithful guardian angel; gather us all into Your kingdom; grant forgiveness to those who hope in You; remit them and us our sins; cleanse us through the work of Your Holy Spirit; put an end to the wiles of the enemy.

This second Prayer is appended.

PRIEST: Blessed are You, Master, Almighty Lord, for You light the day with the light of the sun and brighten the night with the rays of fire. You enabled us to pass the span of the day and so come to the beginnings of the night. Hear our prayer and that of all Your people, and forgive us all our deliberate and unwitting sins; receive our evening petitions and send upon Your inheritance the abundance of Your mercy and compassion.

Encompass us with Your holy Angels; arm us with the weapons of Your righteousness; fortify us within Your truth; make Your strength our garrison, spare us all adverse circumstances and all assaults of the adversary. Finally, vouchsafe to us this evening, and the impending night, perfect, holy, peaceful, sinless, free of disturbing visions, and all the days of our lives, through the prayers of the Holy Theotokos and of all the Saints who have pleased You through the ages.

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

Remembering our most holy, pure, blessed and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever virgin Mary, with all *the* saints, let us commend ourselves and one another, and our whole life *to* Christ our God.

CANTOR: To You, O Lord.

PRIEST: For Yours it is to show mercy and to save, O Christ our God, and to You we offer up glory: to the Father and *to* the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever.

CANTOR: Amen.

DEACON: Let us say with our whole heart and our whole mind, let us say.

CANTOR: Lord, have mercy. (3)

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

CANTOR: Lord, have mercy. (3)

DEACON: Have mercy on us, O God, in Your great goodness; we pray You, hear us and have mercy.

CANTOR: Lord, have mercy. (3)

DEACON: Again we pray for our Archbishop (N.), and our Bishop (N.).

CANTOR: Lord, have mercy. (3)

DEACON: Further we pray for our brothers: the Priests, Hieromonks, Deacons, Monks and Sisters, and our whole brotherhood in Christ.

CANTOR: Lord, have mercy. (3)

DEACON: Further we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, safekeeping, protection, pardon and remission of sins of the servants of God, all the devout and Orthodox Christians who dwell or sojourn in this city, the parishioners, parish council, contributors and benefactors of this holy church.

CANTOR: Lord, have mercy. (3)

DEACON: Further we pray for the blessed and ever-to-beremembered founders of this holy church, and for our Orthodox forebears and brethren who have gone before us, and who are here or elsewhere have been laid to pious rest.

CANTOR: Lord, have mercy. (3)

DEACON: Further we pray for those who bear offerings, those who do good works in this holy and venerable church, those who toil, those who sing, and all here present who await Your great and abundant mercy.

CANTOR: Lord, have mercy. (3)

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

CANTOR: Amen.

DEACON: Again, on bended knees, let us pray to the Lord.

CANTOR: Lord, have mercy

All kneel as before while the Priest reads the Second Prayer:

PRIEST: Lord Jesus Christ our God, You have bestowed Your peace on humankind, and the gift of the Holy Spirit, to be with us even in this life as a perpetual inheritance to believers never to be taken away. On this day You have sent this grace upon Your disciples and Apostles in a way more manifest, giving utterance to their lips by means of fiery tongues, so that every human race, hearing

in our own language received the knowledge of God, and, illumined by the light of the Spirit, emerged from error as from darkness, and in the distribution of visible tongues of fire, and by extraordinary power, were taught faith in You, and were enlightened to speak of You, as of the Father and the Holy Spirit, as one Godhead, one power, one sovereignty.

As the reflection of the Father, the perfect and immutable likeness of His essence and nature, the source of salvation and grace, open the lips of this sinner and teach me how and for what I should pray. For You know the great number of my sins, yet Your compassion will overcome their enormity. For in fear I stand before You, casting my soul's despair into the sea of Your mercy. Govern my life, as You govern all creation by the unspoken word and the power of wisdom, calm haven of the storm-tossed, and make known to me the way in which I should walk.

Grant me the Spirit of wisdom in my thoughts, the Spirit of prudence in my ignorance. Let the Spirit of the awe of You, overshadow my deeds. Renew a steadfast Spirit in my breast, and let Your guiding Spirit make firm my errant mind, so that each day, led by Your good Spirit towards that which is profitable, I may be worthy to keep Your commandments, ever mindful of Your glorious and soulsearching presence. Do not allow me to be beguiled by the world's corrupting delights, but rather to desire the enjoyment of future treasures. For You, Master, have said, that whatever we ask in Your name, we shall without fail receive from Your co-eternal God and Father. Thus I, too, the sinner, at the descent of Your Holy Spirit, beseech Your goodness. All that I have asked, grant me for salvation. Yes, Lord, You are the lavish giver of everything good, giving far in excess of what we ask. You are the compassionate and merciful One Who, though sinless, became sharer in our flesh, and bending in love towards those who bend the knee to You, You became the propitiation for our sins.

Now then, Lord, grant Your people Your mercies; hear us from Your heavenly dwelling place; sanctify them by the power of Your saving right hand; shelter them in the shadow of Your wings; do not spurn the work of Your hands. It is against You alone that we sin, but it is You alone we worship; we know no alien god to adore, not to stretch out our hands to any other deity, O Master. Remit our offenses, and as You receive our petitions on bended knee, extend to us all a helping hand. Accept our common prayer as a pleasing fragrance, rising up to Your blessed kingdom.

The second Prayer is appended.

PRIEST: Lord, Lord, as You save us from every arrow that flies by day, protect us from everything that lurks in darkness. Accept the lifting up of our hands as an evening sacrifice. And enable us to pass the course of the night blamelessly, untempted by evil, and rid us of all disturbance and fear induced by the Evil One. Grant contrition to our soul, and to our thoughts due concern for our trial on the day of Your awesome and just judgment.

Transfix our bodies with awe of You, and deaden our earthly members, so that in the quiet of sleep we may be cheered by the contemplation of Your judgments. Distance from us every improper imagining and harmful desire. Instead raise us up at the hour of prayer strengthened in faith and growing in Your commandments.

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

Remembering our most holy, pure, blessed and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another, and our whole life to Christ our God.

CANTOR: To You, O Lord.

PRIEST: By the favor and grace of Your only-begotten Son, with Whom You are blessed, together with Your all-holy, good and life giving Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever.

CANTOR: Amen.

CANTOR: Lord, grant that we may be kept this night without sin. Blessed are You, O Lord, God of our fathers. Praised and glorified is Your name throughout the ages. Amen.

Let Your mercy be upon us, Lord, even as we put our hope in You. Blessed are You, O Lord, teach me Your statutes. Blessed are You, Master, let me understand Your statutes. Blessed are You, O Holy One, enlighten me with Your statutes. Lord, Your mercy endures forever; do not spurn the work of Your hands. Praise befits You, worship befits You, glory befits You, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and forevermore. Amen.

DEACON: Yet again, on bended knee, let us pray to the Lord.

CANTOR: Lord, have mercy.

All kneel as before as the Priest reads the Third Prayer.

PRIEST: The never-failing spring, bursting with life and light, creative power co-eternal with the Father, You fulfilled surpassingly the plan for the salvation of humankind, shattering the unbreakable bonds of death and the bolts of Hades and trampling the throngs of evil spirits. You presented Yourself as a blameless victim for us, offering Your pure body, chaste and untouched by sin, in sacrifice, and by that terrible and indescribable oblation granted us everlasting life. You descended into Hades and broke down its gates, and sojourning among those below, You showed them the way of ascent. As for the Prince of Evil, that dragon of the deep, You snared him in an inspired lure, binding him in circles of darkness, in Your infinite power made him fast in the nether world, in the eternal fire and the outer darkness.

The glorious wisdom of the Father, You are the great help of those in peril, giving light to those in darkness and the shadow of death. Lord of everlasting glory, beloved Son of the Most High, eternal light of eternal light, Sun of righteousness, hear our supplications and give rest to the souls of Your servants, our fathers and brothers and other kin by blood, and all of the household of faith who have since fallen asleep and whose memorial we keep this day. For in You is the strength of all and in Your hand You hold the far reaches of the earth. Almighty Master, God of our Fathers and Lord merciful Lord of the living and the dead, Creator of all mortal nature, composed and again dissolved, of life and of death, of earthly existence and of the departure hence, You measure out the years for the living and set times of death, bringing down to Hades and raising up, fettering in weakness and liberating in power; You provide aptly for the present and fittingly dispose what is to come, restoring those who are wounded by the sting of death with the hope of resurrection.

Master, Lord of all, our God and Redeemer, the hope of all, at the ends of the earth and far away at sea, on this latter great and saving day of Pentecost You disclosed to us the mystery of the holy, consubstantial, co-eternal and life-giving Trinity, indivisible yet distinct, and in the descent and presence of Your holy and life-giving Spirit poured out its grace upon Your holy Apostles in the form of fiery tongues, making them proclaimers and confessors of our holy Faith, of true knowledge of God. On this universal and salutary feast, deign to accept petitions for those imprisoned in Hades, thus giving us great hope, and relief to the departed from their grievous distress and Your comfort.

Hear us, humble and pitiable, as we pray to You, and give rest to the souls of Your Servants who have departed this life, in a place of light, a place of renewed life, a joyous place, shunned alike by pain and sorrow and sighing. And place their spirits where the Righteous dwell, counting them worthy of peace and repose; for the dead do not praise You, Lord, nor do those in Hades dare to offer You glory, but it is we the living who bless and entreat You and offer You propitiatory prayers and sacrifices for their souls.

This second Prayer is appended:

PRIEST: O God, great and eternal, holy and loving, having deemed us worthy to stand at this hour

in the presence of Your unapproachable glory, to sing in praise of Your wondrous acts, be gracious to Your unworthy servants and grant us grace to offer You in contrition of heart the thrice-holy doxology and thanksgiving for the great gifts You have bestowed on us and continue always. Lord, be mindful of our weakness, and do not let us be lost in our wrongdoing, but show mercy as we humble ourselves, so that, escaping the darkness of sin, we may walk in the day of justice, and girded with the armor of light, we may live free of the assaults of the Evil One, and so with courage glorify You the only true and loving God in all things.

Truly great is Your mystery, Master and Maker of all, of the temporary separation of Your creatures, to be united again in everlasting rest. We confess Your grace in all things, for our entrances into this world and our departures, of which our hope of resurrection and a life of bliss, according to Your certain promise, are the guarantee. May we enjoy it in Your future second coming. For You are both the pioneer of our resurrection and the just but compassionate judge of our lives and Master and Lord of our reward. In ultimate condescension You shared in our flesh and blood and in our passions, willingly assuming them in the depth of Your compassion so that having Yourself been tempted, You offered Yourself freely as helper to us who are tempted. Thus You united us all to You in Your freedom from passion.

Will You, then, Master, accept our prayers and entreaties, and give rest to everyone's fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters and children, or of the same family or people, and all the souls that have gone before to their rest in the hope of the resurrection to everlasting life. And place their spirits and their names in the book of life, the bosom of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the land of the living, in the kingdom of the heavens, in the bliss of Paradise, Your angels of light leading all into Your holy mansions. And on the day You have ordained, raise up our bodies as well according to Your unfailing promises. In departing our bodies to dwell in You our God, there is no death for Your servants Lord, but rather a change from the more sorrowful to the better and more pleasing, to rest, to joy.

And if we have in any way sinned against You, be merciful to them and to us; for no man is free of stain in Your sight though he live but a day. Only You, Who came sinless to earth, our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom we all hope to find mercy and remission of sins.

Thus as good and loving God, remit and forgive them and us our failings, whether witting or unwitting, committed in knowledge or ignorance, intentionally or unaware, in deed or in thought, in word, in all goings about. Both to those who have gone before and to us who await, give release and repose, granting us and all Your people a good and peaceful end, opening up to us Your heart of love and mercy at Your terrible and awesome Coming and judging us worthy of Your kingdom.

And this third and final Prayer is added:

PRIEST: Great and most high God, You alone are immortal, abiding in unapproachable light. In wisdom You created the world; You separated the light from the darkness, and set the sun, the greater light, to rule the day, and the lesser light, the moon, and the stars, to rule the night. You have judged us, though sinners, at this present hour to come into Your presence, giving thanks and offering You our evening praise. Loving Lord, let our prayer rise as incense before You, and accept it as a fragrant offering. Make this evening and the coming night peaceful for us. Gird us with the armor of light. Deliver us from the terror of the night and from everything that lurks about in the darkness. And let our sleep, which You have given us for rest, given our weakness, be free of all demonic images. Yes, Master of all, source of all blessings, so that, even as we slumber in our beds, we may speak Your Name in the night, and so, enlightened by the contemplation of Your statutes, we may rise, our souls rejoicing, to glorify Your goodness, offering prayers and supplications to Your compassion, for our own sins and for those of all Your people, asking that, at the intercession of the holy Theotokos, You will show them mercy.

DEACON: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, raise us up and keep us, O God, in Your grace. Remembering our most holy, pure, blessed and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another, and our whole life to Christ our God.

CANTOR: To You, O Lord.

PRIEST: For You are the King of peace and Savior of our souls, and to You we offer up glory, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever. **CANTOR:** Amen.

THE COMPLETION LITANY

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

CANTOR: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, in Your grace. That this whole evening may be perfect, holy, peaceful and without sin, let us ask of the Lord.

CANTOR: Grant this, O Lord.

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

CANTOR: Grant this, O Lord.

DEACON: Forgiveness and remission of our sins and offenses, let us ask of the Lord.

CANTOR: Grant this, O Lord.

DEACON: All that is good and profitable for our souls, and peace in the world, let us ask of the Lord.

CANTOR: Grant this, O Lord.

DEACON: That we may live out our lives in peace and repentance, let us ask of the Lord.

CANTOR: Grant this, O Lord.

DEACON: A Christian end to our life, peaceful, free of suffering or shame, and a good defense before the dread judgment seat of Christ, let us ask of the Lord.

CANTOR: Grant this, O Lord.

DEACON: Remembering our most holy, pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves, and one another, and our whole life to Christ our God.

CANTOR: To You, O Lord.

PRIEST: For You are a good and loving God and to You we give the glory: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always for ever and ever.

CANTOR: Amen.

PRIEST: Peace be to all.

CANTOR: And to your spirit.

DEACON: Let us bow our heads to the Lord.

CANTOR: To You, O Lord.

PRIEST: (*Inaudibly*) Lord our God, You inclined the heavens and descended for the salvation of humankind. Look on Your servants and Your inheritance. For they have bowed their heads and bent their necks to You the awesome yet compassionate Judge, not looking for human help but awaiting Your mercy and in expectation of Your redemption. Preserve them at all times and during this evening and the impending night, from every enemy, from all opposing demonic activity, from vain thoughts and evil dreams.

PRIEST: May the might of Your Kingdom be blessed and glorified, of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever.

CANTOR: Amen.

THE APOSTICHA IDIOMELA

Third tone

CANTOR: As a sign to all the tongues have now openly occurred. For the Jews, of whom Christ was born in the flesh suffering from faithlessness, fell from grace, while we gentiles were found worthy of the divine light, confirmed by the words of the disciples, telling of the glory of God, the benefactor of all. Together with them, inclining our hearts as well as our knees, let us worship in faith, steadfast in the Holy Spirit, Savior of our souls.

Verse: A spotless heart create in my, O God! Renew a steadfast spirit in my breast.

Now the Spirit, the Comforter, is poured out on all flesh. Starting with the circle of the Apostles, from them by participation it spread grace to the 'faithful; and it attests to its powerful presence, apportioning it to the Disciples in the form of tongues of fire, in praise of God's glory. Spiritually enlightened in heart, and confirmed in faith in the Holy Spirit, we pray that our soul may be saved.

Verse: Cast me not away from Your face; take not Your blessed Spirit out of me.

Now are Christ's Apostles girded with power from on high; for the Paraclete renews them, being renewed in them in spiritual knowledge. Proclaiming it in strange and lofty sounds, they teach us to venerate the nature of the God of all blessings, both simple and in three persons. Thus illuminated by their teachings, let us worship the Father, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, asking that our souls may be saved.

The Doxastikon

Eighth tone

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Now and always and forever and ever. Amen.

Come, all peoples, let us worship the Godhead in three persons: the Son in the Father, with the Holy Spirit. For the Father begat the Son before all ages, co-eternal and equal in majesty, and the Holy Spirit was in the Father, glorified with the Son: a single power, a single essence, one Godhead, which we all worship saying, "Holy is God, Who created all things with the Son, with the cooperation of the Holy Spirit. Holy and mighty, through Whom we have known the Father and the Holy Spirit came into the world. Holy immortal, the Paraclete Spirit, which proceeds from the Father and abides in the Son: Holy Trinity, glory to You."

PRIEST: Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples: a light to enlighten Gentiles, and glory for Israel Your people.

CANTOR: Amen. Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (3)

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

All-holy Trinity have mercy on us. Lord, be gracious to us in our sins, Master, forgive our transgressions. Holy One, consider our weaknesses and heal them, for Your name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and forever 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 Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever.

CANTOR: Amen.

The Troparion of the Feast

Eighth tone

CANTOR: Blessed are You, O Christ our God, who made fishermen all-wise, sending upon them the Holy Spirit and, through them, drawing the world. O Loving One, glory to You. (3)

THE DISMISSAL

PRIEST: May Christ our true God, Who emptied Himself, leaving the bosom of the Father to assume our mortal nature and deify it, then ascended into heaven to sit at the right hand of our God and Father; Who sent the Holy Spirit, co-eternal divine and of equal power and glory, upon His holy disciples and Apostles, thus illuminating them, and through them the whole universe, through the prayers of His all-holy and blameless holy Mother, the holy, glorious, illustrious, divine heralds and Spirit-bearing Apostles, and of all the Saints, have mercy on us and save us in His goodness.

CANTOR: Amen.



Icon: Tower of Babel

And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them throughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another' speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

(Genesis 11, 1-9)

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God. And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this? Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine. But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of

my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; morscher also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

(Acts 2, 1-40)



Icon: The Day of Pentecost