MOLEBEN
TO THE PRECIOUS
AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS

Metropolitan Cantor Institute
Byzantine Catholic Seminary
January, 2008

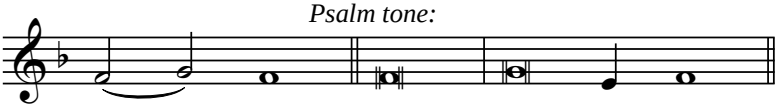
Foreword:

Devotion to the precious and life-giving Cross of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ has a great part in the spiritual life of the Byzantine Catholic Church. The "Moleben" is a prayer service drawn from the Matins (Morning Prayer) for the feast of the "Elevation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross," celebrated on September 14. In this form, we give thanks for the glorious passion, life-giving death, and glorious resurrection of Jesus. Adorned with traditional Carpatho-Rusyn *prostopinije* (i.e., plainchant), it is a brief and powerful service.

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

Psalm tone:

Response:



A - men.

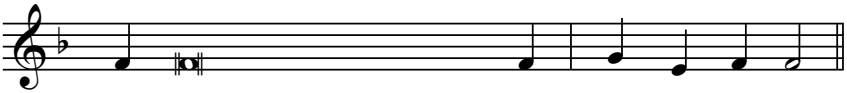
Glory to you, our God,
glory ***to*** you.

Heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit of Truth,
everywhere present and filling all things,
Treasury of Blessings and Giver of Life,
come and dwell within us,
cleanse us from all stain,
and save our souls, O gra***cious*** One.

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

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
now and ever and forever. ***A***men.

Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us;
Lord, cleanse us of our sins;
Master, forgive our transgressions;
Holy One, come to us and heal our infirmities for ***your*** name's sake.



Lord, have mercy. Lord have mer-cy. Lord have mer-cy.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
now and ever and forever. ***A***men.

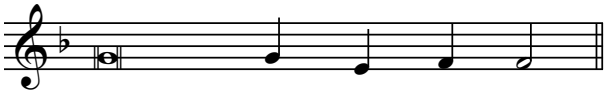
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us,
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us ***from*** evil.

Priest: For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever.

Response:

A - men.

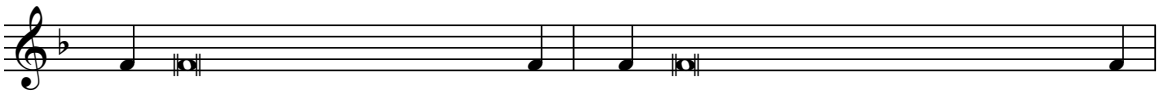
Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mercy. Lord,



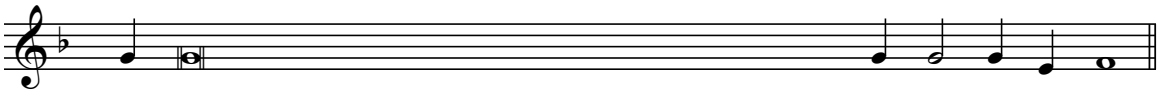
have mercy. Lord, have mer - cy.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
now and ever and forever. ***A***men.

Call to Worship



Come, let us worship our King and God. Come, let us worship Christ, our King and God.



Come, let us worship and bow before the only Lord Jesus Christ, the King and our God.

Psalm 21

The verses are alternated between cantor and congregation.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
You are far from my plea and the cry of my ***dis***tress.

O my God, I call by day and you give no reply;
I call by night and I find ***no*** peace.

Yet you, O God, are holy,
enthroned on the praises ***of*** Israel.
In you our fathers put their trust;
they trusted and you set ***them*** free.

When they cried to you, they escaped.
In you they trusted and never ***in*** vain.
But I am a worm and no man,
the butt of men, laughing-stock of ***the*** people.

All who see me deride me.
They curl their lips, they toss ***their*** heads.
"He trusted in the Lord, let him save him;
let him release him if this is ***his*** friend."

Yes, it was you who took me from the womb,
entrusted me to my moth***er's*** breast.
To you I was committed from my birth,
from my mother's womb you have been ***my*** God.

Do not leave me alone in my distress;
Come close, there is none else ***to*** help.
Many bulls have surrounded me,
fierce bulls of Bashan close ***me*** in.

Against me they open wide their jaws,
like lions, rending ***and*** roaring.
Like water I am poured out,
disjointed are all ***my*** bones.

My heart has become like wax,
it is melted within ***my*** breast.
Parched as burnt clay is my throat,
my tongue cleaves to ***my*** jaws.

Many dogs have surrounded me,
a band of the wicked ***be***set me.

They tear holes in my hands and my feet
and lay me in the dust ***of*** death.
I can count every one of my bones.
These people stare at me ***and*** gloat;

they divide my clothing among them.
They cast lots for ***my*** robe.
O Lord, do not leave me alone,
my strength, make haste ***to*** help me!

Rescue my soul from the sword,
my life from the grip of ***these*** dogs.
Save my life from the jaws of these lions,
my poor soul from the horns of ***these*** oxen.

I will tell of your name to my brethren
and praise you where they are ***as***sembled.
"You who fear the Lord give him praise;
all sons of Jacob, give him glory.
Revere him, Isra***el's*** sons.

For he has never despised
nor scorned the poverty of ***the*** poor.
From him he has not hidden his face,
but he heard the poor man when ***he*** cried."

You are my praise in the great assembly.
My vows I will pay before those ***who*** fear him.
The poor shall eat and shall have their fill.
They shall praise the Lord, those who seek him.
May their hearts live for ever ***and*** ever!

All the earth shall remember and return to the Lord,
all families of the nations worship ***be***fore him;
for the kingdom is the Lord's, he is ruler of the nations.
They shall worship him, all the mighty of ***the*** earth;

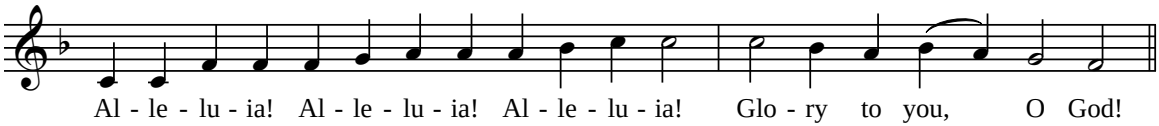
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust.
And my soul shall live for him, my chil***dren*** serve him.

They shall tell of the Lord to generations yet to come,
declare his faithfulness to peoples yet unborn:
"These things the Lord ***has*** done."

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
now and ever and forever. ***A***men.

Three times, each with a reverence:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
Glory to you, ***O*** God!

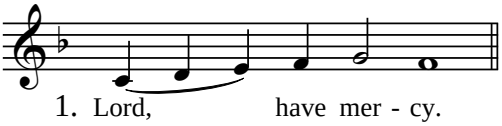
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
Glory to you, ***O*** God!



Litany of Peace

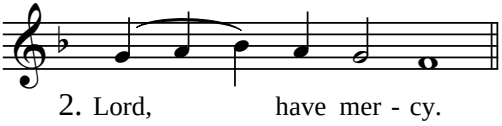
Deacon: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Response:



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

Response:



Deacon: For peace in the whole world, for the stability of the holy Churches of God, and for the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, have mercy. (1)

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

Response: Lord, have mercy. (2)

Deacon: For our holy father, *(Name)*, pope of Rome, let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, have mercy. (1)

Deacon: For our most reverend metropolitan, *(Name)*, for our God-loving bishop, *(Name)*, for the venerable presbyterate, the diaconate in Christ, and all the clergy and people, let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, have mercy. (2)

Deacon: For our government and for all in the service of our country, let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, have mercy. (1)

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

Response: Lord, have mercy. (2)

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

Response: Lord, have mercy. (1)

Deacon: For those who travel by sea, air, and land, for the sick, the suffering, the captive, and for their safety and salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, have mercy. (2)

Deacon: That we be delivered from all affliction, wrath, and need, let us pray to the Lord.

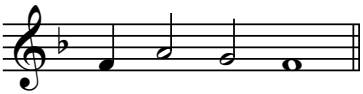
Response: Lord, have mercy. (1)

Deacon: Protect us, save us, have mercy on us, and preserve us, O God, by your grace.

Response: Lord, have mercy. (2)

Deacon: Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

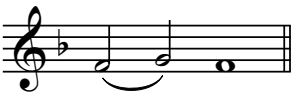
Response:



To you, O Lord.

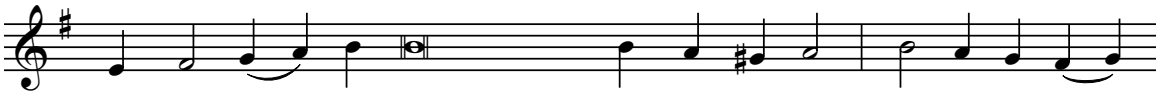
Priest: Evening, morning, and at noon we praise you, we bless you, we thank you, and we pray to you, Master of All, Lord and Lover of us all. Let our prayer rise like incense before you and do not let our hearts be turned to evil words or thoughts, but deliver us from all that might ensnare our souls. For to you, Lord, O Lord, our eyes are turned and in you we hope; let us not be put to shame, O our God. For to you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is due all glory, honor, and worship now and ever and forever.

Response:

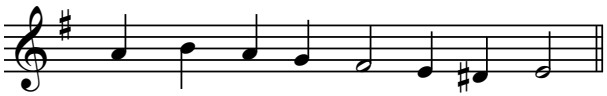


A - men.

The Lord is God - *Tone 1*



The Lord is God and has revealed him - self to us; bless - ed is he



who comes in the name of the Lord.

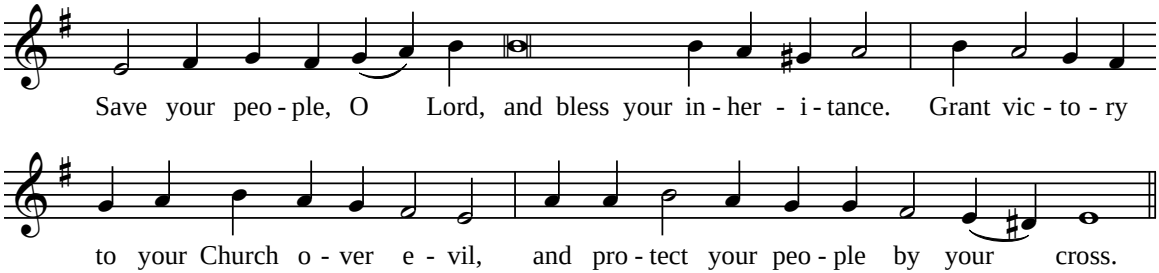
verse: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his love endures forever.

verse: They encircled me, compassed me about; in the Lord's name I crushed them.

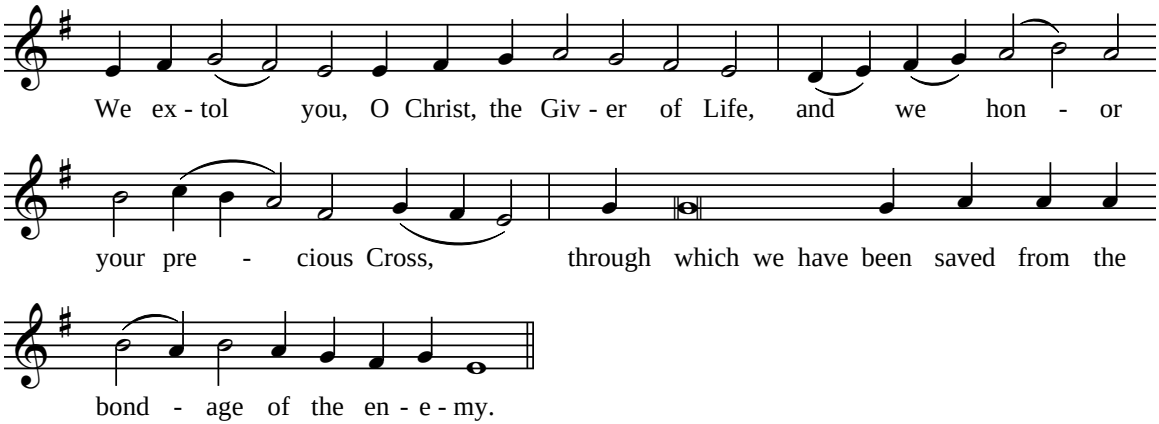
verse: I shall not die, I shall live and recount the deeds of the Lord.

verse: The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.
This is the work of the Lord, a marvel in our eyes.

Troparion of the Cross - *Tone 1*



Exaltation

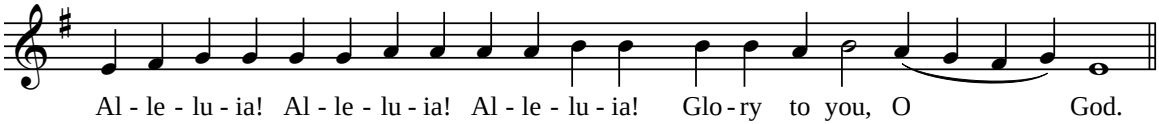


The Exaltation is repeated after each verse.

Verse: O Lord, plead my cause against my foes; fight those who fight me.
Verse: Take up your buckler and shield; arise to help me.
Verse: All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.
Verse: O Lord, let the light of your countenance shine upon us.

Verse: Glory…now and ever...

Three times:

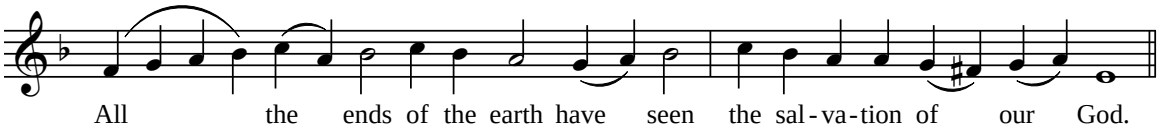


Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Priest: Peace be to all!

Deacon: Wisdom! Be attentive!

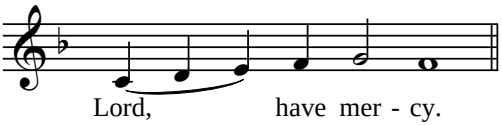
Prokeimenon - *Tone 4*



Verse: Sing a new song to the Lord, for he has worked wonders.

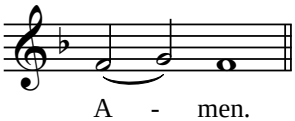
Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

Response:



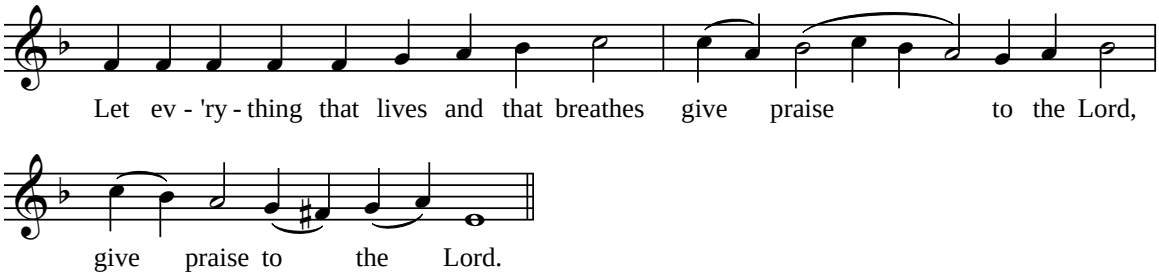
Priest: For you are holy, O our God, and you dwell in the holy place, and to you we give glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever.

Response:



Deacon: Let everything that lives and that breathes give praise to the Lord!

Response:

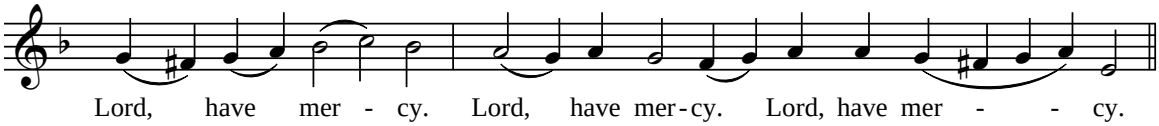


Deacon: Praise God in his holy place; praise him in his mighty heavens.

Response: *"Let everything that lives..."*

Deacon: That we may be deemed worthy of hearing the holy Gospel, let us pray to the Lord, our God.

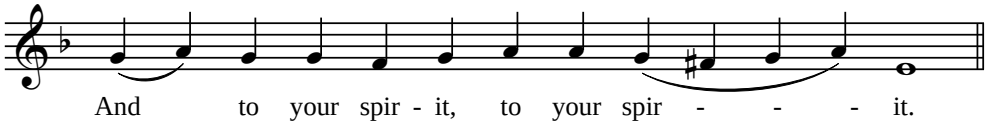
Response:



Deacon: Wisdom! Let us stand and listen to the Holy Gospel.

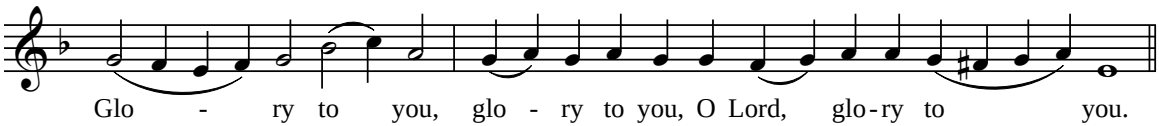
Priest: Peace be to all!

Response:



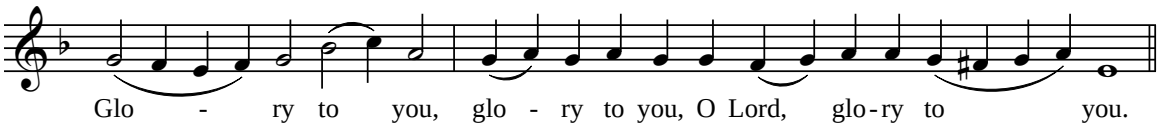
Priest: A reading of the Holy Gospel according to the holy apostle and evangelist John.

Response:



Gospel: [John 12: 28-36]

Response:



Homily *[optional]*

Psalm 50

Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.
In your compassion blot out my ***of***fense.

O wash me more and more from my guilt
and cleanse me from ***my*** sin.

My offenses truly I know them;
my sin is always ***be***fore me.

Against you, you alone, have I sinned;
what is evil in your sight I ***have*** done.

That you may be justified when you give sentence
and be without reproach when ***you*** judge,

O see, in guilt I was born,
a sinner was I ***con***ceived.

Indeed you love truth in the heart;
then in the secret of my heart teach ***me*** wisdom.

O purify me, then I shall be clean;
O wash me, I shall be whiter ***than*** snow.

Make me hear rejoicing and gladness,
that the bones you have crushed ***may*** thrill.

From my sins turn away your face
and blot out all ***my*** guilt.

A pure heart create for me, O God;
put a steadfast spirit ***with***in me.

Do not cast me away from your presence,
nor deprive me of your ho***ly*** spirit.

Give me again the joy of your help;
with a spirit of fervor ***sus***tain me,

that I may teach transgressors your ways
and sinners may return ***to*** you.

O rescue me, God, my helper,
and my tongue shall ring out ***your*** goodness.

O Lord, open my lips
and my mouth shall declare ***your*** praise.

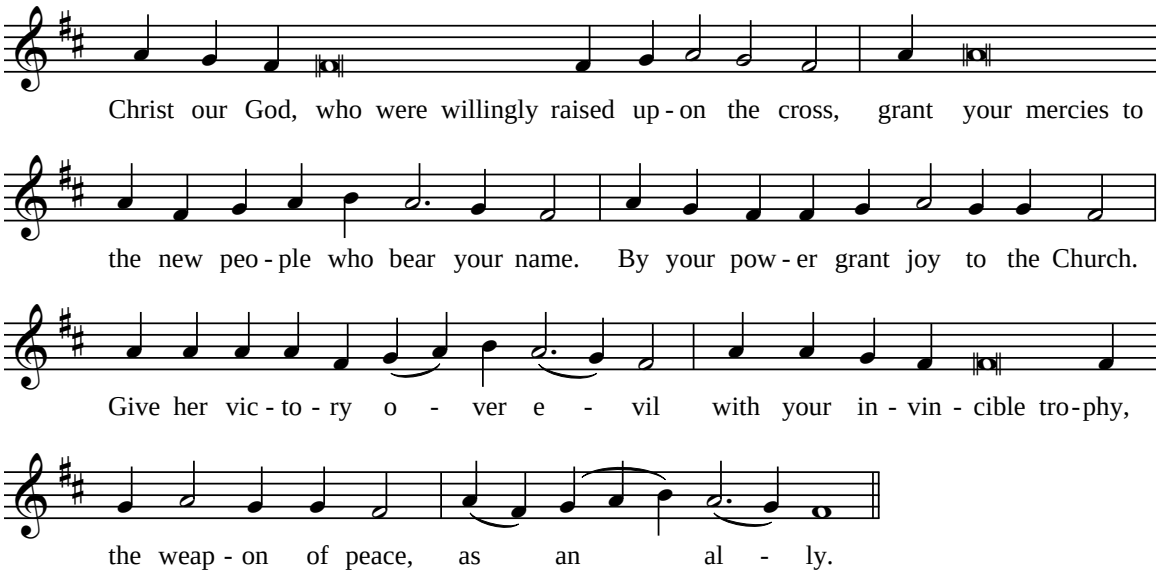
For in sacrifice you take no delight,
burnt offering from me you would ***re***fuse,

my sacrifice, a contrite spirit,
a humbled, contrite heart you will ***not*** spurn.

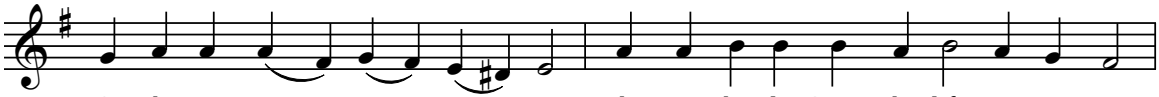
In your goodness, show favor to Zion:
rebuild the walls of ***Je***rusalem.

Then you will be pleased with lawful sacrifice,
burnt offerings wholly consumed,
then you will be offered young bulls on ***your*** altar.

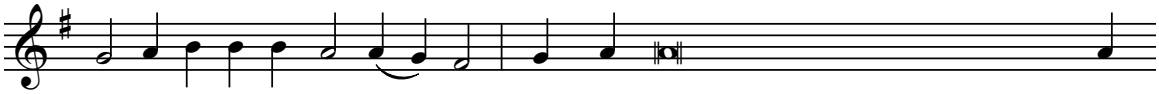
Kontakion of the Cross - *Tone 4*



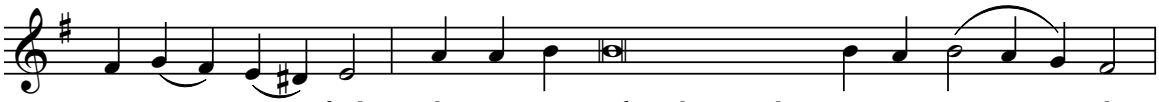
Stichera from the Praises - *Tone 8 samohlasen*



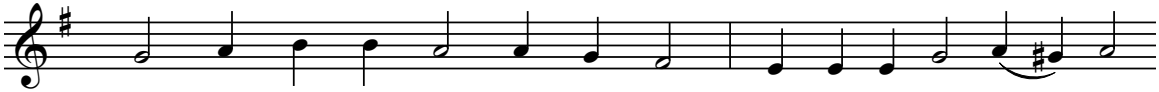
O, what a strange mys - te - ry! The most ho - ly Cross, the life - giv - ing Tree,



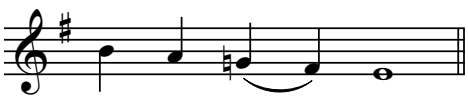
is ex - alt - ed on high to - day. The ends of the earth give glory, and the de-mons



are ter - ri - fied. What a great gift is bestowed up - on us mor - tals.



Through your Cross, O Christ, save our souls, since you a - lone are full



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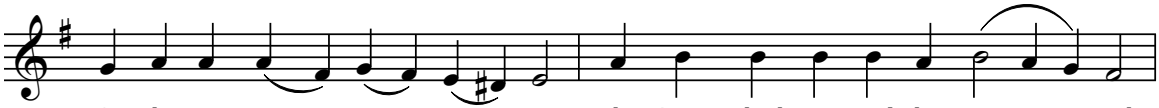
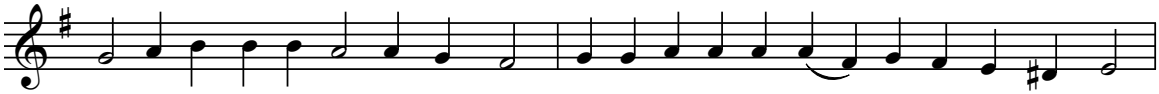
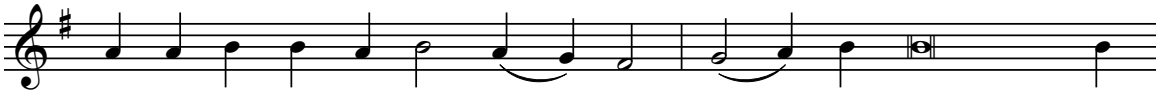


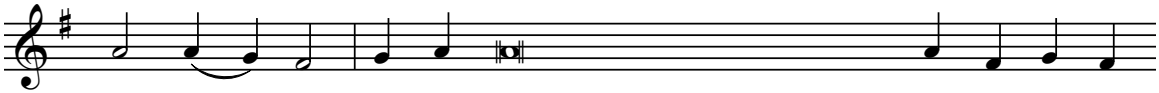
O, what a strange mys - te - ry! The Cross which car - ried the Most High



as a clus - ter of life - giv - ing grapes is ex - alt - ed to - day high a - bove the earth.



We are all drawn to God through it, and death has been forev - er



swal - lowed up. O spot - less Wood, we enjoy the immortal fruit of E - den

through you as we give glo - ry to Christ.

O, what a strange mys - te - ry! The length and breadth of the Cross is equal

to the heav - ens, for it sanc - tifies the whole world by di - vine grace.

By the Cross, savage na-tions are van - quished; by the Cross the authori-ty

of kings is con-firmed. O di - vine Ladder, we go up to heav - en by you

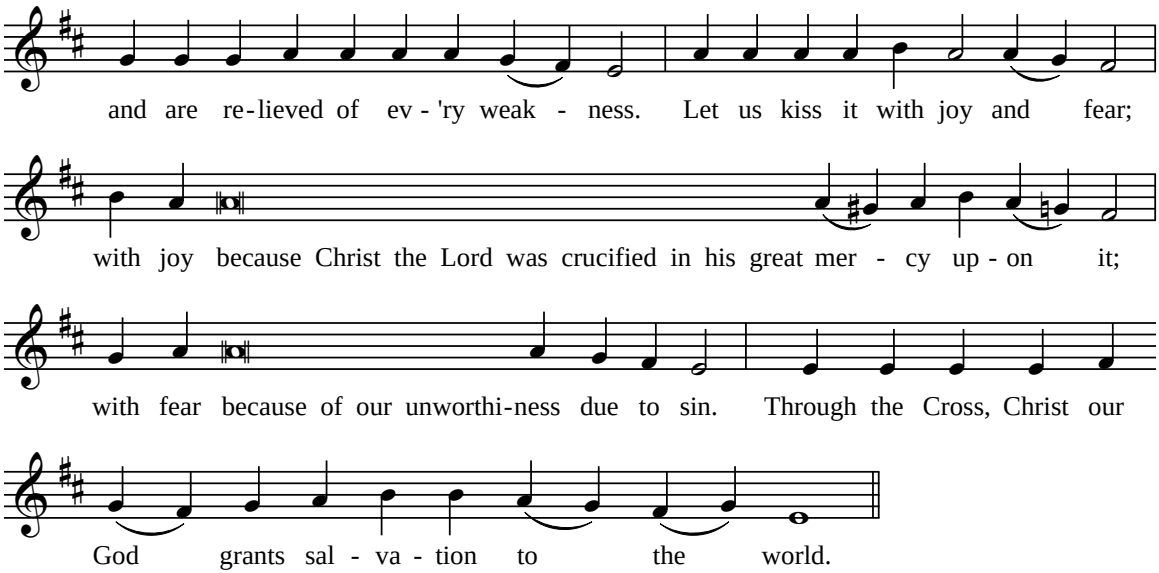
and by our hymns ex - alt Christ the Lord.

Cantor: *(Tone 6)* Glory…now and ever…

Doxastikon - *Tone 6 samohlasen*

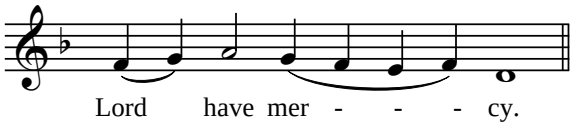
To - day the Cross of the Lord is ex - alt - ed, and the faithful wel - come

it with love. Through it they receive healing of both soul and bod - y



Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

Response:



Prayer of Repentance of our holy father Basil the Great

Priest: O Lord almighty, God of angelic hosts and of all flesh:
you dwelll in the highest and care for the humble.
You search the innermost depths of mind and heart,
and clearly discern the hidden things of all people.
You are the Light without beginning, without change or alteration.

O King immortal, receive our prayers
which we offer before you at this time from our sinful lips,
ever trusting in your great mercy.
Forgive us our sins which we have committed,
both voluntarily and involuntarily.

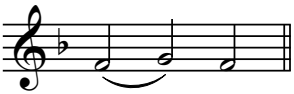
Cleanse us from every blemish of flesh and spirit.
Grant us to pass through the night of htis present life
both courageously and seriously,
aawaiting the bright and manifest day of your only-begotten Son,
our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ.

In that day, he shall come in glory to judge all,
and will give to each of us the reward due to our actions.

May we not fall into laziness,
but take courage and be inspired to action.
May we be found ready to enter into the joy
of the divine bridal-chamber of his glory,
where the voice of those who feast is ceaseless,
and the delight of those who look upon the beauty of your face
cannot be described.

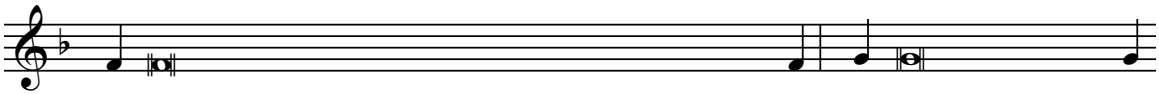
For you are the true Light
which enlightens and sanctifies everything in the world,
and all creation praises you forever,

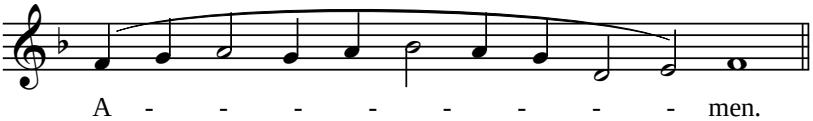
Response:



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

Response:



Priest: May Christ our true God have mercy on us and save us, through the prayers of his most pure mother, through the protection of the precious and life-giving Cross, and through the prayers of all the saints; for Christ is good and loves us all.

Response: