

**VESPERS OF GOOD FRIDAY
FOR CELEBRATION AT HOME
APRIL 2 EVENING**

Opening Hymn:

Troparion, Tone 4

- You have redeemed us from the curse of the law with your precious blood; nailed to the cross and pierced with the lance, you have become a fountain of immortality for us; glory to you, our Savior.

Leader: Through the prayers of our holy fathers, O Lord, Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us.

R: Amen.

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 103

Bless the Lord, O my soul!

Lord my God, how great you are,
clothed in majesty and glory,
wrapped in light as in a robe.

You stretch out the heavens like a tent,
Above the rains you build your dwelling.

You make the clouds your chariot,
You walk on the wings of the wind.

You make your angels spirits
and your ministers a flaming fire.

You founded the earth on its base,
to stand firm from age to age.

You wrapped it with the ocean like a cloak
the waters stood higher than the mountains.

At your threat they took to flight;
at the voice of your thunder they fled.

They rose over the mountains and flowed down
to the place which you had appointed.

You set limits they might not pass
lest they return to cover the earth.

You make springs gush forth in the valleys;
they flow in between the hills.

They give drink to all the beasts of the field;
The wild asses quench their thirst.

On their banks dwell the birds of heaven;
from the branches they sing their song.

From your dwelling you water the hills;
earth drinks its fill of your gift.
You make the grass grow for the cattle,
and the plants to serve man's needs,
that he may bring forth bread from the earth,
and wine to cheer man's heart;
Oil, to make his face shine;
and bread to strengthen man's heart.
The trees of the Lord drink their fill,
the cedars he planted on Lebanon;
there the birds build their nests;
on the treetop the stork has her home.
The goats find a home on the mountains
and rabbits hide in the rocks.
You made the moon to mark the months;
the sun knows the time for its setting.
When you spread the darkness it is night,
And all the beasts of the forest creep forth.
The young lions roar for their prey,
and ask their food from God.
At the rising of the sun they steal away
and go to rest in their dens.
Man goes out to his work,
to labor till evening falls.
How many are your works, O Lord!
In wisdom you have made them all.
The earth is full of your riches.
There is the sea, vast and wide,
with its moving swarms past counting,
living things great and small.
The ships are moving there
and the monsters you made to play with.
All of these look to you,
to give them their food in due season.
You give it, they gather it up;
You open your hand, they have their fill.
You hide your face, they are dismayed;
you take back your spirit, they die,
returning to the dust from which they came.
You send forth your spirit, they are created;
and you renew the face of the earth.
May the glory of the Lord last forever:
may the Lord rejoice in his works;
He looks on the earth and it trembles;
the mountains send forth smoke at his touch.

I will sing to the Lord all my life,
make music to my God while I live.
May my thoughts be pleasing to him:
I find my joy in the Lord.
Let sinners vanish from the earth and the wicked exist no more.
Bless the Lord, O my soul!
You made the moon to mark the months;
the sun knows the time for its setting.
How many are your works, O Lord!
In wisdom you have made them all.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
Glory to you, O God! (*Three times*)

Leader: O good God, in all times and places you are worshiped and glorified both in heaven and on earth. You are long-suffering and generous in your mercy and compassion. You love the just and show mercy to the sinner, calling all to repentance through the promise of blessings to come. Deem, O Lord, at this very hour, to receive our supplications and to direct our lives in the path of your commandments. Sanctify our souls; purify our bodies; set aright our minds; cleanse our thoughts; deliver us from all affliction, trouble, and distress; surround us with your holy angels so that, guided and guarded in their camp, we may attain oneness of faith and the knowledge of your unspeakable glory. For You are blessed forever and ever.

R. Amen.

PSALM 140

O Lord, I have cried to you, hear me;
Refrain: Hear me, O Lord!
O Lord, I have cried to you, hear me;
receive the voice of my prayer when I call upon you.
Refrain: Hear me, O Lord!
Let my prayer ascend to you like incense
and the lifting up of my hands like an evening sacrifice.
Refrain: Hear me, O Lord!

O Lord, set a guard, before my mouth
and set a seal on the door of my lips.
Let not my heart be inclined to evil,
nor make excuse for the sins I commit.
Let me never share in sinners' feasting
If a just man strikes or reproves me it is kindness
but let the oil of the wicked not anoint my head.
Let my prayer be ever against their malice.
Their princes were thrown down by the side of the rock.

Then they understood that my words were kind.
As a millstone is shattered to pieces on the ground,
so their bones were strewn at the mouth of the grave.
To you, Lord God, my eyes are turned
in you I take refuge; spare my soul!
From the trap they have laid for me keep me safe;
keep me from the snares of those who do evil.
Let the wicked fall into the traps they have set
while I pursue my way unharmed.

PSALM 141

With my voice I cry to the Lord;
with all my voice I entreat the Lord.
I pour out my trouble before him;
I tell him all my distress while my spirit faints within me.
But you, O Lord, know my path.
On the way where I shall walk they have hidden a snare to entrap me.
Look on my right and see:
there is no one who takes my part.
I have no means of escape,
not one who cares for my soul.
I cry to you, O Lord,
I have said: You are my refuge, all I have in the land of the living.
Listen, then, to my cry
for I am in the depths of distress.
Rescue me from those who pursue me
for they are stronger than I.
Bring my soul out of this prison
And then I shall praise your name.
Around me the just will assemble
Because of your goodness to me.

PSALM 129

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord;
Lord, hear my voice!
Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my pleading.
*6. If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt, Lord, who would survive?
But with you is found forgiveness: for this we revere you.*
(Tone 1) The whole creation was transformed with fear, when it saw you hanging on the Cross,
O Christ. The sun grew dark and the earth's foundations were shaken. All things suffered along
with you, who made all things. O Lord, who willingly endured this for us, glory to you.
*5. My soul is waiting for the Lord. I count on his word.
My soul is longing for the Lord more than watchman for daybreak.*

(Tone 1) The whole creation was transformed with fear, when it saw you hanging on the Cross, O Christ. The sun grew dark and the earth's foundations were shaken. All things suffered along with you, who made all things. O Lord, who willingly endured this for us, glory to you.

4. *Let the watchman count on daybreak,
and Israel on the Lord.*

(Tone 2) O impious and outlaw people, why do you plot vain things? Why did you condemn to death the life of all? What a great wonder! The creator of the world is betrayed into lawless hands and the Lover of us all is lifted up on the wood, so that he might save Hades' captives who cry out: O long suffering Lord, glory to you.

3. *Because with the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption,
Israel indeed he will redeem from all its iniquity.*

- Seeing you on the Cross today, O sinless Word, the spotless Virgin wept with maternal tenderness and her heart was sorely grieved. Groaning in pain from the depths of her soul, she spent herself tearing at her cheeks and her hair. And beating her breast she cried out pitifully: Alas, divine child! Alas, light of the world! Why are you fading from my eyes, O Lamb of God? Then the ranks of angels were seized with trembling and said: O incomprehensible Lord, glory to you.

PSALM 116

2. *Praise the Lord, all you nations;
Acclaim him, all you peoples!*

- Seeing you hanging on the wood, O Christ, you, the Creator and God of all, the mother who bore you without seed cried out bitterly: My Son, how have your form and beauty vanished? I cannot bear to see you unjustly crucified. Therefore hasten and arise so that I too may see your resurrection from the dead on the third day.

1. *Strong is the love of the Lord for us;
he is faithful forever.*

(Tone 6) Today the Master of creation stands before Pilate, and the Judge of all is handed over to be crucified. Led like a lamb, by his own will, he is fastened with nails, and his side is pierced. The one who rained down manna is given drink with a sponge. The Redeemer of the world is slapped in the face. The one who fashioned everything is mocked by his own servants. O how the Master loves mankind! He beseeches his Father on behalf of those who crucify him, saying, Remit this sin from them, for the lawless do not recognize what an unjust thing they are doing.

v. *Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.*

- How can the outlaw assembly condemn the king of creation to death. They felt no shame when he recalled his good deeds which he had foreshadowed when he said to them: My people, what have I done to you? Did I not fill Judea with miracles? Did I not raise the dead with just a word? Did I not heal every disease and illness? How then do you repay me? Why have you forgotten me? In place of healings you have given me beatings? In exchange for life, you give me death, hanging your benefactor on the wood like a criminal; The giver of the law is like an outlaw; The king of all like one condemned; O long suffering Lord, glory to you.

v. *Now and ever and forever. Amen.*

- We see a fearsome and perplexing mystery acted out today. The invisible one is captured. The one who absolved Adam's curse is chained. The searcher of hearts and minds is unjustly tried. Locked in prison is the one who locks up the abyss. The one before whom heavenly powers

stand trembling stands before Pilate. The Creator is slapped by a creature's hand. Condemned to the Cross is the Judge of the living and the dead. Enclosed in a tomb is he who overthrows Hades. You bear all out of sympathy, to save all from the curse, O forebearing Lord, glory to you.

HYMN OF THE EVENING

O joyful Light of the holy glory of the Father Immortal, the heavenly, holy, blessed One, O Jesus Christ, now that we have reached the setting of the sun, and see the evening light, we sing to God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is fitting at all times to raise a song of praise in measured melody to you, O Son of God, the Giver of Life. Therefore, the universe sings your glory.

THE EVENING PROKEIMENON

Prokeimenon, Tone 4 [*Psalm 21(22): 19.2*]

They divide my clothing among them, they cast lots for my robe.

Verse: My God, my God, hear me; why have you forsaken me?

A reading from Exodus [*Exodus 33:11-23*]

In those days: The Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, as a person speaks to a friend. Moses would then return to the camp, but his young assistant, Joshua, son of Nun, never left the tent. Moses said to the Lord, See, you are telling me: Lead this people. But you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said: You are my intimate friend; You have found favor with me. Now, if I have found favor with you, please let me know your ways so that, in knowing you, I may continue to find favor with you. See, this nation is indeed your own people. The Lord answered: I myself will go along, to give you rest. Moses replied, If you are not going yourself, do not make us go up from here. For how can it be known that I and your people have found favor with you, except by your going with us? Then we, your people and I, will be singled out from every other people on the surface of the earth. The Lord said to Moses: This request, too, which you have made, I will carry out, because you have found favor with me and you are my intimate friend.

Then Moses said, Please let me see your glory! The Lord answered: I will make all my goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim my name, Lord, before you; I who show favor to whom I will, I who grant mercy to whom I will. But you cannot see my face, for no one can see me and live. Here, continued the Lord, is a place near me where you shall station yourself on the rock. When my glory passes I will set you in the cleft of the rock and will cover you with my hand until I have passed by. Then I will remove my hand, so that you may see my back; but my face may not be seen

Prokeimenon, Tone 4 [*Psalm 34(35): 1.2*]

My Lord, plead my cause against my foes; fight those who fight me.

Verse: Take up your buckler and shield, arise to help me.

A Reading from Job [*Job 42:12-17*]

The Lord blessed the later days of Job more than his earlier ones. Now he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she-donkeys. He also had seven sons and three daughters: the first daughter he called Jemimah the second Keziah and the third Keren-happuch. In all the land no other women were as beautiful as the daughters of Job; and their father gave them an inheritance among their brothers.

After this, Job lived a hundred and forty years; and he saw his children, his grandchildren, and even his great-grandchildren. Then Job died, old and full of years. It is written that he will rise with those whom the Lord resurrects.

A Reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah [Isaiah 52:13-54:1]

Thus says the Lord: See, my servant shall prosper, he shall be raised high and greatly exalted. Even as many were amazed at him - so marred were his features, beyond that of mortals, his appearance, beyond that of human beings - so shall he startle many nations, kings shall stand speechless; for those who have not been told shall see, those who have not heard shall ponder. Lord, who would believe what we have heard? To whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? He grew up like a sapling before him, like a shoot from the parched earth; he had no majestic bearing to catch our eye, no beauty to draw us to him. He was spurned and avoided by men, a man of suffering, knowing pain, like one from whom you turn your face, spurned, and we held him in no esteem. Yet it was our sins that he bore, our sufferings he endured. We thought of him as stricken, struck down by God and afflicted, but he was pierced for our sins, crushed for our iniquity. He bore the punishment that makes us whole, by his wounds we were healed. We had all gone astray like sheep, all following our own way; but the Lord laid upon him the guilt of us all.

Though harshly treated, he submitted and did not open his mouth; like a lamb led to slaughter and like a sheep without blemish, that is silent before shearers, he opened not his mouth. In his humiliation, judgment was taken against him. Who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off from the land of the living, struck for the sins of his people. He was given a grave among the wicked, a burial place with evildoers, though he had done no wrong, nor was deceit found in his mouth, but it was the Lord's will to crush him with pain. By making his life as a reparation offering, he shall see his offspring, shall lengthen his days, and the Lord's will shall be accomplished through him. Because of his anguish he shall see the light; because of his knowledge he shall be content; my servant, the just one, shall justify the many, their iniquity he shall bear. Therefore I will give him his portion among the many, and he shall divide the spoils with the mighty, because he surrendered himself to death, was counted among the transgressors, bore the sins of many and interceded for the transgressors. Raise a glad cry, you barren one who never bore a child, break forth in jubilant song, you who have never been in labor, for more numerous are the children of the deserted wife than the children of her who has a husband.

Prokeimenon, Tone 6 [Psalm 87(88): 7.2]

You have laid me in the depths of the tomb, in places that are dark, in the depths.

Verse: Lord God of my salvation, I call for help day by day, I cry at night before you.

A Reading from the First Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians [1 Corinthians 1:18-2:2]

Brothers and sisters: The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the learning of the learned I will set aside. Where is the wise one? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made the wisdom of the world foolish? For since in the wisdom of God the world did not come to know God through wisdom, it was the will of God through the foolishness of the proclamation to save those who have faith. For Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are called, Jews and Greeks alike, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.

Consider your own calling, brothers. Not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. Rather, God chose the foolish of the world to shame the wise, and God chose the weak of the world to shame the strong, and God chose the lowly and despised of the world, those who count for nothing, to reduce to nothing those who are something, so that no human being might boast before God. It is due to him that you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, as well as righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, so that, as it is written, Whoever boasts, should boast in the Lord.

When I came to you, brothers, proclaiming the mystery of God, I did not come with sublimity of words or of wisdom. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified

Alleluia, Tone 1 [Psalm 68(69): 2.22.24]

Verse: Save me, O God, for the waters have risen to my neck.

Verse: For food they gave me poison; in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

Verse: Let their eyes grow dim and blind.

Leader: Let us listen to a reading from the Gospel of the Holy Apostle Matthew. [Matthew 27:1-38; Luke 23:39-43; Matthew 27:39-54; John 19:31-37; Matthew 27:55-61]

Response: Glory to your passion, O Lord, glory to your passion.

At that time: When it was morning, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death. They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate, the governor. Then Judas, his betrayer, seeing that Jesus had been condemned, deeply regretted what he had done. He returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, "I have sinned in betraying innocent blood." They said, "What is that to us? Look to it yourself." Flinging the money into the temple, he departed and went off and hanged himself. The chief priests gathered up the money, but said, "It is not lawful to deposit this in the temple treasury, for it is the price of blood." After consultation, they used it to buy the potter's field as a burial place for foreigners. That is why that field even today is called the Field of Blood. Then was fulfilled what had been said through Jeremiah the prophet, "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the value of a man with a price on his head, a price set by some of the Israelites, and they paid it out for the potter's field just as the Lord had commanded me." Now Jesus stood before the governor,

and he questioned him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" Jesus said, "You say so." And when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he made no answer. Then Pilate said to him, "Do you not hear how many things they are testifying against you?" But he did not answer him one word, so that the governor was greatly amazed. Now on the occasion of the feast the governor was accustomed to release to the crowd one prisoner whom they wished. And at that time they had a notorious prisoner called Jesus Barabbas. So when they had assembled, Pilate said to them, "Which one do you want me to release to you, Jesus Barabbas, or Jesus called Messiah?" For he knew that it was out of envy that they had handed him over. While he was still seated on the bench, his wife sent him a message, "Have nothing to do with that righteous man. I suffered much in a dream today because of him." The chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas but to destroy Jesus. The governor said to them in reply, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?" They answered, "Barabbas!" Pilate said to them, "Then what shall I do with Jesus called Messiah?" They all said, "Let him be crucified!" But he said, "Why? What evil has he done?" They only shouted the louder, "Let him be crucified!" When Pilate saw that he was not succeeding at all, but that a riot was breaking out instead, he took water and washed his hands in the sight of the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood. Look to it yourselves." And the whole people said in reply, "His blood be upon us and upon our children." Then he released Barabbas to them, but after he had Jesus scourged, he handed him over to be crucified. Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus inside the praetorium and gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped off his clothes and threw a scarlet military cloak about him. Weaving a crown out of thorns, they placed it on his head, and a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They spat upon him and took the reed and kept striking him on the head. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the cloak, dressed him in his own clothes, and led him off to crucify him. As they were going out, they met a Cyrenian named Simon; this man they pressed into service to carry his cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha, which means Place of the Skull, they gave Jesus wine to drink mixed with gall. But when he had tasted it, he refused to drink. After they had crucified him, they divided his garments by casting lots; then they sat down and kept watch over him there. And they placed over his head the written charge against him: This is Jesus, the King of the Jews. Two revolutionaries were crucified with him, one on his right and the other on his left. Now one of the criminals hanging there reviled Jesus, saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us." The other, however, rebuking him, said in reply, "Have you no fear of God, for you are subject to the same condemnation? And indeed, we have been condemned justly, for the sentence we received corresponds to our crimes, but this man has done nothing criminal." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." He replied to him, "Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise." Those passing by reviled him, shaking their heads and saying, "You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself, if you are the Son of God, and come down from the cross!" Likewise the chief priests with the scribes and elders mocked him and said, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. So he is the king of Israel!* Let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now if he wants him. For he said, 'I am the Son of God.'" The revolutionaries who were crucified with him also kept abusing him in the same way. From noon onward, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus

cried out in a loud voice, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” Some of the bystanders who heard it said, “This one is calling for Elijah.” Immediately one of them ran to get a sponge; he soaked it in wine, and putting it on a reed, gave it to him to drink. But the rest said, “Wait, let us see if Elijah comes to save him.” But Jesus cried out again in a loud voice, and gave up his spirit. And behold, the veil of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth quaked, rocks were split, tombs were opened, and the bodies of many saints who had fallen asleep were raised. And coming forth from their tombs after his resurrection, they entered the holy city and appeared to many. The centurion and the men with him who were keeping watch over Jesus feared greatly when they saw the earthquake and all that was happening, and they said, “Truly, this was the Son of God!” Now since it was preparation day, in order that the bodies might not remain on the cross on the sabbath, for the sabbath day of that week was a solemn one, the Jews asked Pilate that their legs be broken and they be taken down. So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and then of the other one who was crucified with Jesus. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs, but one soldier thrust his lance into his side, and immediately blood and water flowed out. An eyewitness has testified, and his testimony is true; he knows that he is speaking the truth, so that you also may come to believe. For this happened so that the scripture passage might be fulfilled: “Not a bone of it will be broken.” And again another passage says: “They will look upon him whom they have pierced.” There were many women there, looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him. Among them were Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee. When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea named Joseph, who was himself a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be handed over. Taking the body, Joseph wrapped it in clean linen and laid it in his new tomb that he had hewn in the rock. Then he rolled a huge stone across the entrance to the tomb and departed. But Mary Magdalene and the other Mary remained sitting there, facing the tomb.

Response: Glory to your long-suffering, O Lord, glory to your long-suffering.

Then:

HYMN OF GLORIFICATION.

Make us worthy, O Lord, to be kept sinless this evening.

Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our Fathers, and praiseworthy and glorious is your name forever. Amen.

May your mercy, O Lord, be upon us
who have placed our hope in you.

Blessed are you, O Lord, teach me your commandments.

Blessed are you, O Master, make me understand your commandments.

Blessed are you, O Holy One, enlighten me with your commandments.

O Lord, your mercy is forever; despise not the work of your hands.

To you is due praise, to you is due a hymn; to you is glory due.

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (*Twelve times*)

Leader: Blessed are you, Master and Ruler of All, for you have lighted the day with the brilliance of the sun and the night with fiery stars. You have counted us worthy of the length of this day and to come to the beginning of night. Hear our prayer and forgive the voluntary and involuntary sins of all your people. Accept our evening prayers and upon your inheritance. send down in return your abundant mercy and kindness. Guard us by your holy angels, clothe us in righteousness as a defense, protect us in your truth and keep us in your strength. Deliver us from all enemies and from every hostile attack. Grant that this evening and the approaching night and all the days of our life be perfect, holy, peaceful, sinless, and free from violence and evil dreams. Through the prayers of the holy Theotokos and of all the saints who have been pleasing to you from all ages.

R. Amen.

Apostichera (Tone 2)

- When the Arimathean took you lifeless from the cross, O Life of All, he wrapped you with myrrh and a shroud, O Christ, and his heart was overcome with longing to enfold you with kisses. Restrained by fear, he rejoiced instead and cried aloud:
O Lover of humanity, glory to your condescension.

Verse: The Lord reigns, he is clothed in majesty.

- When for the sake of all, you were placed in a new tomb, O Redeemer of All, Hades was mocked, filled with terror when it saw you. Its bars were trampled and its gates were smashed. The tombs were opened and the dead arose.

Then Adam rejoiced and cried out to you with gratitude:
O Lover of humanity, glory to your condescension.

Verse: The world he made firm, not to be moved.

- When you allowed your body to be enclosed in the grave, you closed down Hades' storehouse, O Christ, and emptied all its palaces.

Then you honored this sabbath day with divine blessing, glory and your own radiance.

Verse: Holiness is fitting to your house, O Lord, until the end of time.

- When the heavenly hosts saw you slandered as a deceiver by lawless people, O Christ, they trembled at your indescribable patience, and seeing the stone sealed to your tomb by the hands which had pierced your immaculate side, they rejoiced nonetheless for our salvation and cried to you:
O Lover of humanity, glory to your condescension.

(Tone 5) *v. Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.*

- Together with Nicodemus, Joseph took you down from the wood -
you who are wrapped in light as with a robe
and beholding you dead, naked and unburied,
he began to mourn you with deep sympathy saying:
Woe is me, sweetest Jesus!
Just a little while ago, the sun saw you hanging on the cross
and veiled itself in somber hues.
The earth rocked with fear and the curtain of the Temple was torn in two.
Now that I see how you willingly underwent death for me,
How can I bury you, my God? How will I wrap you in a shroud?
How will I touch your spotless body with my hands?
What dirges shall I sing at your departure, O Compassionate One?
I extol your passion and I praise your burial together with your resurrection,
crying out: O Lord, glory to you.

THE CANTICLE OF SIMEON

Now you may dismiss your servant, O Lord,
in peace, according to your word;
for my eyes have seen your salvation
which you have prepared before the face of all people:
a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and the glory of your people, Israel.

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. Amen.
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. (3 times)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever. 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.
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever
and forever.
R. Amen.

*If an image of the taking down of our Lord from the Cross is available, then we bow to the image
in veneration, and sing the following Troparion three times:*

Troparion, Tone 2:

The noble Joseph took down your most pure body from the cross. He wrapped it in a clean shroud and with fragrant spices laid it in burial in a new tomb. (*Three times*)

It is truly proper to glorify you, O Theotokos, the ever-blessed, immaculate, and the mother of our God.

More honorable than the cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious than the seraphim; who, a virgin, gave birth to God the Word, you, truly the Theotokos, we magnify.

Leader: Through the prayers of our holy fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us.

Response: Amen.

Closing Hymn:

Tone 5:

Come, let us bless the ever-memorable Joseph,
who went to Pilate by night to beg for the Life of all:
Give me this Stranger, who has no place to lay his head.
Give me this Stranger, who was handed over to death by his wicked disciple.
Give me this Stranger, whose Mother wept, seeing him hanging on the cross,
mourning and crying out in a motherly lament.
Woe is me, my child!
Woe is me, my Light, my Beloved whom I bore in my womb.
What was foretold by Simeon in the temple comes to pass today:
A sword has pierced my heart,
but change my tears into the joy of your resurrection.
We bow to your passion, O Christ!
We bow to your passion, O Christ!
We bow to your passion, O Christ and to your holy Resurrection!