

VESPERS
SIXTH FRIDAY OF THE GREAT FAST CELEBRATED IN HOMES
Vigil of Lazarus Saturday

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

R: Amen.

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 of all stain, and save our souls, O gracious 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. 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.

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

R: Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (*12 times*)

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

Lord, have mercy. (*Twelve 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

(Tone 1) 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!

(Psalm Chant):

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.

v. If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt, Lord, who would survive?

But with you is found forgiveness: for this we revere you.

(Tone 6) O Lord, you desired to see the grave of Lazarus, for you were about to occupy a grave by your own choice. Where have you placed him, you asked, as if to learn what you already knew. You cried out to your friend: Lazarus come forth; and he who had breathed his last obeyed you who gave him breath, the Savior of our souls.

v. My soul is waiting for the Lord. I count on his word.

My soul is longing for the Lord more than watchman for daybreak.

- O Lord, you desired to see the grave of Lazarus, for you were about to occupy a grave by your own choice. Where have you placed him, you asked, as if to learn what you already knew. You cried out to your friend: Lazarus come forth; and he who had breathed his last obeyed you who gave him breath, the Savior of our souls.

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

- O Lord, on the fourth day you came to the tomb of Lazarus, and shed tears upon the grave of your friend. You raised him up although he was four days dead, O Wheat of Life. Death was bound by your voice, and the grave clothes were loosed by your hands. Then the company of your disciples was filled with joy, and with one voice they worshiped you: Blessed are you, O Savior; have mercy on us.

v. Because with the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption,

Israel indeed he will redeem from all its iniquity.

- The kingdom of Hades was demolished at the sound of your voice, O Lord; your powerful word awakened from the tomb one who had been dead four days. Lazarus becomes a saving prelude of our regeneration. Nothing is impossible for the King of the universe; O Lord, grant to your servants forgiveness and great mercy.

PSALM 116

v. Praise the Lord, all you nations;

Acclaim him, all you peoples!

- O Lord, you desired to strengthen your disciples' faith in your resurrection from the dead, and so you arrived at the tomb of Lazarus and called him forth. Hades was despoiled and set him free. Lazarus, four days dead, cried out to you: O Blessed Lord, glory to you.

v. Strong is the love of the Lord for us;

he is faithful forever.

- Taking your disciples with you, O Lord, you came to Bethany to awaken Lazarus from the dead; and, weeping over him in accordance with your human nature, as God, you raised the one who had been dead four days; and he cried out to you, O Savior: Blessed are you, O Lord, glory to you.

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

(Tone 8) O Savior, standing at the tomb, you called to the dead Lazarus; you raised him up as if from sleep. He shook off corruption in the spirit of incorruption and, at your word, came forth still bound in his shroud. You can do everything, and all obey you; everything is subject to you, O Lover of us all. O our Savior, glory to you.

v. Now and ever and forever. Amen.

- Having completed the forty days to the profit of our souls, let us exclaim: Rejoice, town of Bethany, home of Lazarus. Rejoice, Martha and Mary, his sisters. Tomorrow Christ will arrive to give life by his word to your brother who has died. Hearing his voice, bitter and insatiable Hades will tremble and, with a heavy sigh, will release Lazarus. The crowd, amazed to see him bound in his shroud, will come out to meet Christ with branches and palms. The children will see and proclaim the one their parents will denounce. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel.

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 6 [*Psalm 123(124): 8.1*]

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

Verse: "If the Lord had not been on our side," this is Israel's song.

A Reading from Genesis [*Genesis 49:33-50:26*]

When Jacob had finished giving these instructions to his sons, he drew his feet into the bed, breathed his last, and was gathered to his people. When Jacob had finished giving these instructions to his sons, he drew his feet into the bed, breathed his last, and was gathered to his people. Joseph flung himself upon his father and wept over him as he kissed him. Then Joseph ordered the physicians in his service to embalm his father. When the physicians embalmed Israel, they spent forty days at it, for that is the full period of embalming; and the Egyptians mourned him for seventy days. When the period of mourning was over, Joseph spoke to Pharaoh's household. If you please, appeal to Pharaoh, saying: My father made me swear: I am dying. Bury me in my grave that I have prepared for myself in the land of Canaan. So now let me go up to bury my father. Then I will come back. Pharaoh replied, Go and bury your father, as he made you promise on oath.

So Joseph went up to bury his father; and with him went all of Pharaoh's officials who were senior members of his household and all the other elders of the land of Egypt, as well as Joseph's whole household, his brothers, and his father's household; only their children and their flocks and

herds were left in the region of Goshen Chariots, too, and horsemen went up with him; it was a very imposing retinue.

When they arrived at Goren-ha-atad, which is beyond the Jordan, they held there a very great and solemn memorial service; and Joseph observed seven days of mourning for his father. When the Canaanites who inhabited the land saw the mourning at Goren-ha-atad, they said, This is a solemn funeral on the part of the Egyptians! That is why the place was named Abel- mizraim It is beyond the Jordan. Thus Jacobs sons did for him as he had instructed them. They carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave in the field of Machpelah facing on Mamre the field that Abraham had bought for a burial ground from Ephron the Hittite

After Joseph had buried his father he returned to Egypt, together with his brothers and all who had gone up with him for the burial of his father. Now that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers became fearful and thought, Suppose Joseph has been nursing a grudge against us and now most certainly will pay us back in full for all the wrong we did him! So they sent to Joseph and said: Before your father died, he gave us these instructions: Thus you shall say to Joseph: Please forgive the criminal wrongdoing of your brothers, who treated you harmfully. So now please forgive the crime that we, the servants of the God of your father, committed. When they said this to him, Joseph broke into tears. Then his brothers also proceeded to fling themselves down before him and said, We are your slaves! But Joseph replied to them: Do not fear. Can I take the place of God? Even though you meant harm to me, God meant it for good, to achieve this present end, the survival of many people. So now, do not fear. I will provide for you and for your children. By thus speaking kindly to them, he reassured them.

Joseph remained in Egypt, together with his fathers household. He lived a hundred and ten years. He saw Ephraim's children to the third generation, and the children of Manasseh's son Machir were also born on Joseph's knees. Joseph said to his brothers: I am about to die. God will surely take care of you and lead you up from this land to the land that he promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Then, putting the sons of Israel under oath, he continued, When God thus takes care of you, you must bring my bones up from this place. Joseph died at the age of a hundred and ten. He was embalmed and laid to rest in a coffin in Egypt

Prokeimenon, Tone 4 [Psalm 124(125): 1.3]

Those who put their trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, that cannot be shaken, that stands forever.

Verse: For the Lord will not allow the scepter of the wicked to rest over the land of the just.

A Reading from Proverbs [Proverbs 31:8-32]

Son: Open your mouth for the word of God, and judge all men fairly. Open your mouth, judge justly, defend the needy and the poor. Who can find a woman of worth? Far beyond jewels is her value. Her husband trusts her judgment; he does not lack income. She brings him profit, not loss, all the days of her life. She seeks out wool and flax and weaves with skillful hands. Like a merchant fleet, she secures her provisions from afar. She rises while it is still night, and distributes food to her household, a portion to her maidservants. She picks out a field and acquires it; from her earnings she plants a vineyard. She girds herself with strength; she exerts her arms with vigor. She enjoys the profit from her dealings; her lamp is never extinguished at night. She puts her hands to the distaff, and her fingers ply the spindle. She reaches out her hands to the poor, and extends her arms to the needy. Her husband is not anxious about those at home, when he spends a long time elsewhere.- all her charges are doubly clothed. She makes her own coverlets; fine linen and purple are her clothing. Her husband is prominent at the city gates

as he sits with the elders of the land. She makes garments and sells them, and stocks the merchants with belts. She opens her mouth in wisdom; kindly instruction is on her tongue. She is clothed with strength and dignity, and laughs at the days to come. She watches over the affairs of her household, and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband, too, praises her: many are the women of proven worth, but you have excelled them all. Charm is deceptive and beauty fleeting; the woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. Acclaim her for the work of her hands, and let her deeds praise her at the city gates.

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.

Then we sing or say:

Apostichera:

(Tone 8) Having completed the forty days to the profit of our souls, we beseech you that we may also see the holy week of your passion, O Lover of all of us during which we glorify your great deeds and with harmonious song, praise your ineffable plan for us. O Lord, glory to you.

v: *The Lord reigns, he is clothed in majesty, robed is the Lord and girt about with strength.*

- Having completed the forty days to the profit of our souls, we beseech you that we may also see the holy week of your passion, O Lover of all of us during which we glorify your great deeds and with harmonious song, praise your ineffable plan for us. O Lord, glory to you.

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

(Tone 6) O Lord, you desired to see the grave of Lazarus, for you were about to occupy a grave by your own choice. Where have you placed him, you asked, as if to learn what you already knew. You cried out to your friend: Lazarus come forth; and he who had breathed his last obeyed you who gave him breath, the Savior of our souls.

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

(Tone 8) Having completed the forty days to the profit of our souls, let us exclaim: Rejoice, town of Bethany, home of Lazarus. Rejoice, Martha and Mary, his sisters. Tomorrow Christ will arrive to give life by his word to your brother who has died. Hearing his voice, bitter and insatiable Hades will tremble and, with a heavy sigh, will release Lazarus. The crowd, amazed to see him bound in his shroud, will come out to meet Christ with branches and palms. The children will see and proclaim the one their parents will denounce. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel.

Then:

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 peoples,
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.

R. Amen.

Them the Penitential dismissal:

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos! Mary full of grace, the Lord is with you! Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. For you gave birth to Christ, the Savior and Redeemer of our souls.

Prostration

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

O Baptizer of Christ, remember us all, that we be delivered from our transgressions for you have been given grace to intercede on our behalf.

Prostration

Now and ever and forever. Amen.

Pray for us, O holy apostles and all you saints, that we be delivered from danger and affliction for we have you as our fervent intercessors before the Savior.

Prostration

Beneath your compassion, we take refuge, O Virgin Theotokos. Despise not our prayers in our need, but deliver us from dangers, for you alone are pure and blessed.

Lord, have mercy. (*40 times*)

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

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.

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

R. Amen.

PRAYER OF ST. EPHREM

Lord and Master of my life,
spare me from the spirit of indifference, despair,
lust for power, and idle chatter.
Prostration.

Instead, bestow on me, your servant,
the spirit of integrity, humility, patience and love.
Prostration.

Yes, O Lord and King,
let me see my own sins,
and not judge my brothers and sisters
for you are blessed forever and ever. Amen.
Prostration

Then, with a simple bow, the following is repeated four times:

O God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

O God, cleanse me of my sins and have mercy on me.

O Lord, forgive me for I have sinned without number.

Repeat: Lord and Master of my life,
spare me from the spirit of indifference, despair,
lust for power, and idle chatter.
Instead, bestow on me, your servant,

the spirit of integrity, humility, patience and love.
Yes, O Lord and King,
let me see my own sins,
and not judge my brothers and sisters
for you are blessed forever and ever. Amen.
Prostration

Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal, have mercy on us. (*3 times with a prostration after each*)

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.

Amen. Lord, have mercy. (*12 times*)
R. Blessed be the Name of the Lord, now and forever. (*3 times*)

PSALM 33

I will bless the Lord at all times;
His praise always on my lips.
In the Lord my soul shall make its boast.
The humble shall hear and be glad.
Glorify the Lord with me,
Together let us praise his name.
I sought the Lord and He answered me,
and from all my terrors he set me free.
Look towards him and be radiant;
let your faces not be abashed.
This poor man called; the Lord heard him
and rescued him from all his distress.
The angel of the Lord is encamped
around those who revere him, to rescue them.
Taste and see that the Lord is good.
He is happy who seeks refuge in him.
Revere the Lord, you his saints,
They lack nothing, those who revere him.
Strong lions suffer want and go hungry
but those who seek the Lord lack no blessing.

Come, children, and hear me
that I may teach you the fear of the Lord.
Who is he who longs for life
and many days, to enjoy his prosperity?
Then keep your tongue from evil
and your lips from speaking deceit.
Turn aside from evil and do good;
seek and strive after peace.
The Lord turns his face against the wicked
to destroy their remembrance from the earth.
The Lord turns his eyes to the just
and his ears to their appeal.
They call and the Lord hears
and rescues them in all their distress.
The Lord is close to the broken-hearted;
those whose spirit is crushed he will save.
Many are the trials of the just man
but from them all the Lord will rescue him.
He will keep guard over all his bones,
not one of his bones shall be broken.
Evil brings death to the wicked;
those who hate the good are doomed.
The Lord ransoms the souls of his servants.
Those who hide in him shall not be condemned.

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.

R: Amen.

Closing Hymn:

Troparion, Tone 1:

Christ our God, before your passion you confirmed our common resurrection when you raised Lazarus from the dead. Therefore, like the children, we carry the symbols of victory and cry out to you, the victor over death: Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.