

τ h e P S A L T E R

A C C O R D I N G T O

τ h e s e v e n t y

τ h a t i s,  
τ h e s e p t u a g i n t

e c c l e s i a s t i c a l t e x t  
(Third Edition)

**Translated by Vivian Maria Hartley, M. A.**

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The Psalter According To The Seventy: that is, the  
Septuagint

Ecclesiastical Text, Third Edition

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I. Title.

# THE PSALTER ACCORDING TO THE SEVENTY

THAT IS,  
THE SEPTUAGINT  
Ecclesiastical Text (Third Edition)

Published by  
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(The Orthodox Church in America)

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THE PSALTER  
ACCORDING TO  
THE SEVENTY  
THAT IS,  
THE SEPTUAGINT

Ecclesiastical Text  
(including the Canticles, and other texts)  
Third Edition

Blessed for use in the  
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*Cover: from Jessica Suchy-Pilalis, photograph of a detail from a fresco in Cyprus*

THE PSALTER  
ACCORDING TO  
THE SEVENTY  
*(The Septuagint)*

INTRODUCTION : [*third standard edition*]

The Septuagint Psalter is the Psalter in the form which the Church has received and always used from the earliest times. At the time of our Saviour and the Apostles, this was the Psalter that was in use in Judaism ; it was quoted by them in the Epistles and Gospels, and it has been the reference for all the Holy Fathers. The words of the Psalter bore connexions (references) for the mind and heart with the entire "Old Testament" and the "New Testament". The collection as a whole has always been at the heart of our worship. This is but one aspect of the unity of, and in, all the Scriptures, from the First Book of Moses to the Apocalypse, as understood by the Church, that is, by the faithful. It has been noted that at least 300 of the about 350 "Old Testament" citations in the "New Testament" are from the Septuagint. For such reasons, the Church did not accept the imposition of the Masoretic (Hebrew) text for the "Old Testament", the introduction of which was part of an attempt by the Masoretes to reduce the possible christological references seen there.

And so, we offer yet another attempt to render this Psalter for use in the English language, praying that it may be useful to the faithful. This new translation, in its third edition, with corrections, is primarily a pastoral one. It has not made direct reference to Hebrew or Syriac texts of the same textual tradition. This is for others. For this pastoral reason we follow particularly the Greek text of the Ecclesiastical Psalter. One cannot

emphasise too strongly that this Septuagint Psalter, although not well-known in the twentieth/twenty-first century west, represents a legitimate alternative textual tradition of the Holy Scriptures from ancient times, as seen in the “Dead Sea Scrolls”. Although another tradition is more readily and cheaply available in the popular press, what our Church has always used is important to keep in and for the heart. Furthermore, although this present offering, being in a traditional format, may be used in Church Services, it is our intention that it be easily usable by all believers in daily prayer, whether a monk, or lay Christian, as is our tradition ; it is truly an ancient practice.

We have used standard (not “common”), contemporary English to facilitate this connexion with the heart. The most common complaint heard about this usage is the familiarity it brings in addressing God as “You”. This is exactly the point. The older English second person singular and familiar “Thou”, which once provided the familiarity, has disappeared in modern usage ; and, when it is used, it becomes formal and remote – at least to the heart of most people. Except, perhaps, for French, all languages addressing God liturgically and scripturally use the familiar second person singular in the Orthodox Church. It is our responsibility to maintain this closeness, regardless of anyone’s natural fondness for the older forms. Ironically, in modern usage, the former plural and formal “you” has now become also the singular and familiar, and performs the work of both. Some will likely remark that this present text is not especially poetic, and even rough in its English expression. If this be so, it is because we have attempted to follow the literal translation tradition which produced the Greek text, and also the subsequent Vulgate, Slavonic, and Romanian texts. And so, we offer this translation as it stands for those who will accept it, and we leave it to the Church to decide, in time, what to do with it.

In this edition, as in the previous editions, there are prayers to be used before, during and after reading the Sessions and Canticles. This edition adds several other elements at the end of

the Psalms and Canticles, which are also customarily included in these Psalters, such as the Service of the Twelve Psalms and the Magnifications. Also provided are a Commemoration, that is, a long prayer of intercession, which assumes that the Psalter is being read on a daily basis ; and also the Creed of Saint Athanasius of Alexandria, and the *Te Deum* of Saint Ambrose of Milan. Besides these, there is also the Service of the Canon to the Theotokos at the Parting of the Soul from the Body, since after a death, the Psalter is read in the presence of the departed until the burial. Moreover, many more foot-notes, that include commentaries from the Fathers and others are provided, as are many more scriptural cross-references. This is to help the reader’s comprehension, and to help the memory catch some of the many scriptural allusions in the words of the Psalter.

The Septuagint Bible, of which this Psalter is a part, represents a parallel textual tradition to the “Masoretic” Hebrew of the “Old Testament”. In the “New Testament”, it is called “The Scriptures”. It is, therefore, an error to speak, as many often do, as though the Septuagint were simply a poor translation of the Hebrew. Even at the time of Christ – even thereafter – there was, in Hebrew, more than one tradition of the transmission of the text. The present Hebrew text serving for most English translations is one of these alternatives, and was chosen as their preferred textual tradition by rabbinic scholars after the sixth century A.D. Recent discoveries in the Hebrew texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls have confirmed what the Church kept in Greek for so many centuries, even though the Hebrew originals disappeared, or were altered.

Called the Septuagint (from the Latin word for seventy) because of its having been translated into Greek in third century B.C. Egyptian Alexandria by supposedly seventy-two scholars, this Greek version is longer than the “Masoretic” Hebrew version, with the books in a different order, and with many variations. It is longer, because many of its books survived only in Greek, and were not included in the Hebrew textual

tradition, for whatever reason. The Latin Vulgate is longer than the Masoretic, and shorter than the Greek.

This present translation of the Psalter according to the Seventy (the Septuagint, or LXX) is primarily the work of Mrs Vivian Maria Hartley, M.A., over six years (1990-1996). Most of the subsequent editing is the work of the Monk Pierre (Vachon), and of the Priest Lambros Kamperidis, Ph.D., with contributions from John Hadjinicolaou, Ph.D., and others. Proof-reading was by the Nun Sophia (Zion), Ph.D., and others. Some consultation was made with the late Professor D James Wurtele, Ph.D. Reference has been made also to *Les Psaumes: Prières de l'Église* (1979) translated by Archimandrite Placide (Deseille), to the Psalter by Archimandrite Lazarus (Moore), to the Psalter by José de Vinck and Leonidas Contos, to the Psalms in *A New English Translation of the Septuagint* (2007), and the *Orthodox Study Bible* (2008), and also to *A Psalter for Prayer: An Adaptation of the Classic Miles Coverdale Psalter, Augmented by Prayers and Instructional Material*, edited and translated by David James (Jordanville, NY, 2011). We would like to refer one also to the patristic reference work on the Psalter done by Johanna Manley in *Grace For Grace* (1992). In addition, reference to the following works may be useful: *St. John Chrysostom, Commentary on the Psalms, Volumes 1 and 2*, Robert Charles Hill, Translator (1998); *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, Volumes 7 and 8*, InterVarsity Press (2008); *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Eerdmans Publishing Company (1989). This present literal translation from Greek is trying to follow the example of the Septuagint. That text is as far as possible a literal translation from Hebrew ("which aimed at bringing the Greek reader to the Hebrew original rather than bringing the Hebrew original to the Greek reader"<sup>1</sup>). Some constructions are difficult in both Greek and English. This reflects the attempt to translate, as far as possible, the subtleties of Hebrew poetry.

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<sup>1</sup> Albert Pietersma & Benjamin G Wright (eds.), *A New English Translation of the Septuagint* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), p.xiv

This present translation uses many verbals and verb-forms such as participles and gerunds. A relative clause might be more usual in current English. However, Hebrew is a language that expresses itself characteristically in verbs and verb-forms more than nouns and adjectives. The Greek translation retains much of this character. This particular text attempts to do so as well.

Another difficulty encountered in translation is the imitation in Greek of a Hebrew idiom that uses a singular noun to represent a plural. In effect, it is treated something like an English collective noun. Sometimes, when there is a singular, such as "poor one", this expression may have both a singular and a plural application at the same time. The reader must listen to the heart about this. For example, there are singulars that can also mean a plural in 2 Mōysēs 8:2; <sup>2</sup> 2 Mōysēs 10:13-14; Psalm 21:8 (head); Psalm 17:40 (back); Psalm 106:12 (heart). This applies also to words such as "righteous", "needy", "poor", "impious", &c.

The difficulty in translating any poetry from language to language is evident here, too. However, some characteristics survive, even after passing through Greek to English. Hebrew poetry uses many devices that can produce unusual English constructions. *Chiasmus* is an ancient poetic technique, surviving to the present day, which uses inversions, parallelism and repetitions, to help the memory, and to focus on main points.<sup>3</sup> "My end is my beginning", the device of inclusion, is evident frequently, not only internally, in shorter passages, but also in the whole of a psalm. A psalm may frequently conclude with a variant of the initial material, and the main point may be found in the middle. It has been written by Father Breck and others that such a device can be found as the pattern for a whole book, such as the Gospel according to John. Our format follows the

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<sup>2</sup> "Mōysēs"=Moses. See the Notes on Scripture Names on p.xxviii. Names and place-names are spelled in accordance with the Greek spelling.

<sup>3</sup> John Breck, *The Shape of Biblical Language: Chiasmus in the Scriptures and Beyond* (Crestwood, NY: SVS Press, 1994)

traditional format (in the form of poetry, not prose), and it is intended to help one understand more easily some of these elements. Some psalms are written as “acrostics”. For example, in this case, following the Hebrew alphabet, a line or a section begins in order with consecutive letters of this alphabet. The most familiar of these is Psalm 118. In order to help the reader see this, the Hebrew letters are placed on the right margin of the pages of these acrostic psalms, and in Psalm 118 at the beginning of each section.

It is again to be remembered that there is more than one textual tradition for the Septuagint, as is noted frequently in the *Commentary on the Psalms* by Saint John Chrysostom. Essentially there is one text, but there are some variant readings. Although our foundation is on the Brenton text, with reference to the text of the A Rahlfs Edition, we are concerned to offer a translation which follows the text in actual ecclesiastical use. The variations from the Brenton and Rahlfs texts that are found in the Ecclesiastical Psalter are therefore integrated.

We offer only minimal verse indications for convenience, since of old there was no versification at all. We also offer at the beginning of each psalm the Greek and Latin “incipits”, that is, the introductory words of the text itself in these languages. And we offer, in italics, headings by Archimandrite Placide, who provides “christological prompts” ; because it is extremely important to be aware of the links between the text of the Psalter itself, and the “New Testament” writings. It is this Hebrew text, which in Greek translation came to be called the Septuagint, that was used and quoted by the Apostles and Evangelists (it was the same text also in Syriac, Aramaic, Coptic, Ethiopic). They could not, even had they wished to, follow the later Masoretic Hebrew text of the 6<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D. (which now pretends to be the “official translation”), because it did not yet exist.

Moreover, in editing this work, we have aimed at a certain conservatism in vocabulary. We limit synonyms as far as possible, trying to keep the same English word for the same

Greek word, in order to follow the Greek example of translation from Hebrew. This allows for more facile verbal links within the Psalter itself, with the rest of the “Old Testament” (the Scriptures), and with the “New Testament” which draws from and fulfils it. Nevertheless, sometimes synonyms are unavoidable. Some word-choices are motivated by a certain understanding of the links made with some words of the Psalter to modern languages and the “New Testament” by modern Greek and Slavic speakers. Other word-choices are motivated by patristic comments. In this vein it is necessary to understand that the likelihood is great that the very conservative vocabulary of the Greek Septuagint translation is a deliberate reflection of the same conservatism in the Hebrew. This itself need not be the case for any other reason than simply for ease in memorising. However, this conservatism is a central characteristic of the Septuagint, called “isomorphism” by Dr. Albert Pietersma of Toronto. Further, in previous editions, we had attempted to minimise capitalisation of words ; but we found instead that providing capitalisation often helps to give clues to some pronoun references. Such capitalisation choices could be described as helping “to know who is Who”. We apologise if anyone may find this distracting.

It is our fervent hope that this rendering will allow the heart and mind more readily and easily to make the links between these psalms, the Old and New Dispensation, and worship. One main aim has been to try to enable the English reader to perceive as many as possible of the verbal links within the Psalter, and within the whole of Scripture, as would a Greek reader in Greek.

When reading the Psalter in solitude, and following the method of reading by *kathismas*, or sessions, one may begin and end readings and sessions of readings with certain prayers. These prayers are provided in the text, with some small adjustments, from the translation by the Holy Transfiguration Monastery in Ellwood City, Pennsylvania, USA. If one read the Psalter in solitude, one ought to give at least minimal voice to

the reading, as in the ancient way ; it is good for the heart. It is important to note further that “reading” the Psalter, like other reading, has for most of human history been done aloud, orally. The poignant example is that of Acts 8:28-30, and the reading by the Ethiopian Eunuch. Silent reading as we know it now is a recent change in practice. Note, by extension, that when one begins learning the “Jesus Prayer”, one is exhorted always to do so by reciting the prayer aloud. We therefore anticipate, in our presentation of the Psalter, that the reader will read the psalms aloud, albeit even with the most minimal of voicing. We have, therefore, tried to assist the reader in recitation. To do this, we have provided a variety and quantity of punctuation rather greater than customary.

We are also providing the Service of the Twelve Psalms at the conclusion of the Psalter, as is often done. This service has come to us as indicated in its introduction. This service is included in some existing Psalters, and it is closely related to the method used in the Egyptian desert, and continued by both the abbots Saint John Cassian, and Saint Benedict of Nursia. These abbots give this format as a foundation for the daily, or weekly recitation of the Psalter, with the psalms being adjusted. This format of prayer, based on twelve psalms, is found in many monastic rules, up to this time.

The Psalter, in imitation of the Pentateuch, is divided into five portions or books, as will be seen in the body of the text, with the concluding of each portion in a brief doxology, as noted.

The term διάψαλμα, *diapsalma*, appears frequently in the text of the Psalter. It translates the Hebrew סֵלַח, *selah*. According to Genesius, the meaning is “to lift up” or “to exalt”. He says it indicated an interruption or a change in the regular rendering. Genesius also says that Saint Jerome connected it with “shalom”, and “amen”. In some cases, it could be a musical direction for an interlude on strings. Saint Gregory of Nyssa has indicated that the translating of this word as “Pause”, which we have seen in

some previous English translations, is justified. In harmony with further comments by Genesius, Saint Gregory says that his inherited understanding is that *diapsalma* means “a change in understanding, appearance or activity”. He goes on to say that the pauses serve as markers for us to perceive that the Holy Spirit inspired the prophetic author anew in the midst of the psalmody, and that we ought to pay attention to what may not be explicitly, but implicitly expressed in the text.<sup>4</sup> Saint John Chrysostom agrees about the aspect of musical direction, but says that the word means “ever”, “forever”, “continuously”, or “always”. Cassiodorus writes that *diapsalma* indicates a break in the flow, or a change of speaker or action. The Greek translator did not include *diapsalma* when it comes at the end of a psalm (3 ; 23 ; 45).

This Psalter translation uses a convention regarding the Divine Name from the *Revised Standard Version* translation of the Bible.<sup>5</sup> Following the custom of the period, the unpronounceable Divine Name, when appearing in Hebrew as יהוה, *YHWH*, was pronounced instead as “*Adonai*”, which was represented in the Greek as ὁ Κύριος, *ho Kyrios*, meaning “the Lord” ; and it is found here as “the LORD” in order to distinguish it from other usages of lord and lords. This Name, not pronounced from the time of Moses, is known to be a form of the verb “to be”. We see it sometimes written as I AM, representing the Greek ἐγώ εἰμι, *ego eimi*. The word “God” is a translation of another Hebrew word, אֱלֹהִים (*EL*).



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<sup>4</sup> Saint Gregory of Nyssa, *Commentary on the Inscriptions of the Psalms*, translated by Casimir McCambley (Brookline, MA: Hellenic College Press, 1999), Book 2, Chapter 10, pp. 94-95

<sup>5</sup> H G May & B M Metzger (eds.), *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha, Revised Standard Version* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), p.xiv

## SAINT GREGORY OF NYSSA, AND THE PSALTER

Saint Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa, as did certain other Fathers, wrote a meditative *Commentary on the Inscriptions of the Psalms*. It is a very useful supplement for the reading, praying, and studying of the Psalter. Because of the importance of this commentary, a brief summary is included in this introduction.

In this work, Saint Gregory distils for us a perception and perspective of the Fathers' understanding and approach to the Psalter, and tries to give to us our authentic inherited tradition. It is important to understand that this inherited tradition has roots not only in the Church of apostolic times, but also in the preceding rabbinic tradition. He considers that the Psalter is a pivotal aid to Christian development, enlightenment, and achievement of blessedness. And so, as he says: "Every sublime notion pertaining to God may, in my opinion, define blessedness". One should "...dutifully comply with Paul, and say that blessedness is rightly claimed as primary and takes precedence over anything else. Blessedness for men is participation in that which truly exists". Therefore "...the definition of human blessedness is likeness to God".<sup>6</sup>

The Psalter, he continues, in a systematic way shows the natural way to attain blessedness. "If the entire world order is a kind of musical harmony whose artisan and creator is God as the Apostle says (Heb 11.10), then man is a microcosm, an imitator of him who made the world".<sup>7</sup> He is at pains in another place to emphasise that the historical events described in the Psalter are not necessarily presented in an historical order, but in a theological framework which develops our relationship with God, and teaches us how to live in response to this relationship. The faithful in general have understood this, and as a result, not only have monks used the Psalter constantly (sometimes reading

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<sup>6</sup> Saint Gregory of Nyssa, *op. cit.*, bk 1, ch 1, p.23

<sup>7</sup> Saint Gregory, *op. cit.*, bk 1, ch 3, p.29

it unceasingly within the community), but laity also at home have been faithfully reading the Psalter.

Saint Gregory says that there is a reason why the Psalter is divided into five books. It is not just arbitrary. This division is part of its fundamental structure, and it is not connected to, nor reflected in, our method of reading the Psalter by *kathismas* (a more recently developed method). He is concerned that we be aware that in this five-book structure, we participate in a pilgrimage with the Prophet David. This pilgrimage takes us through the five books, or better, through the five stages, of our spiritual life in Christ. Besides the obvious indicators in this English text itself, which give the beginning of each book, each book also closes with an evident doxology. For the first four books, it consists of a doxological phrase distinct from the concluding psalm itself, and for the fifth, it is constituted by the whole of Psalm 150, which is also the doxological conclusion for the whole Psalter. Each doxology may be seen both as a link of praise and thanksgiving, and as a step towards understanding.

Saint Gregory tells us that the first book serves as a preface to the Psalter, and that it offers a contrast between persons "living in evil due to falsehood", and persons who have chosen the good way. The second book emphasises thirst and longing for God, for "living water". The third book "begins with a careful examination of how the justice of the divine judgement is maintained in life's inequalities".<sup>8</sup> The fourth book is rooted in the example of Moses, who "is no longer to be taught by the Law, but has become a teacher of the Law to others". Here, says Saint Gregory: "The prophet [David] elevates the minds of those who accompany him, for he transcended every misdirected pursuit in this life and shows that an insubstantial, deceptive spider's web in this life leads to no good for persons engaged in vain pursuits".<sup>9</sup> The fifth book brings us to the heights, to

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<sup>8</sup> Saint Gregory, *op. cit.*, bk 1, ch 6, p.36

<sup>9</sup> Saint Gregory, *op. cit.*, bk 1, ch 7 (both citations), p.39, p.45



knowing how to evade evil and to praise God purely. “Grace is not manifested by one means only, but it variously deals with the circumstances into which we have fallen due to our inclination toward evil”.<sup>10</sup>

The Bishop of Nyssa also points out to us that, in reflection of the LORD, the first psalm (the *alpha*) serves as a beginning, a gate to blessedness in order to destroy evil ; and the concluding psalm (the *omega*) indicates the achievement of this in its praise of God by all that exists. The beginning of blessedness is alienation from evil.

In the second section of his book, Saint Gregory discusses the inscriptions of the psalms. Of this, we attempt the following summary, since we perceive that this, too, is an important element in approaching the psalms.

The inscriptions are not simply antiquated directions and indicators, although they have completed some of their original service. There are some differences in the presence or absence of inscriptions, and the way they are written, between the Hebrew and the Septuagint Psalters. Saint Gregory attributes the variance to the christological interpretation which the Church has placed on the inscriptions in the Septuagint, and notes that the whole Psalter is, in fact, treated in this christological manner.

Inscriptions have two purposes : First, to provide the subject of the psalm ; second, to instruct the listener. “For the end”, found before many psalms, is connected with “For the victor”<sup>11</sup> and other similar inscriptions. Their point is the engagement in the spiritual struggle, as an athlete, with the end or goal always in view. Through such inscriptions as : “For those who have changed” ; “To look for the secrets” ; “For the beloved, a hymn” ; “To sing for the return of dawn” ; “To have the eighth before one’s eyes” ; “To regard the inheritance” ; “So that we might be of the race of Kore” ; “That great voice of David” ; and

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<sup>10</sup> Saint Gregory, *op. cit.*, bk 1, ch 8, p.47

<sup>11</sup> These are the translations of Brother Casimir McCambley, not of this Psalter.

“Do not destroy”, we are encouraged to patience, endurance, harmony and repentance.

“A psalm is a choral chant with a musical instrument ; a canticle produced by the mouth is a prayer said aloud ; a prayer is supplication to God for benefits ; a hymn is a song of praise rendered to God for graces bestowed upon us” ;<sup>12</sup> praise or acclaim contain praise for God’s wonders. Combinations of terms like these direct us towards virtue. “Concerning the secrets of the Son”, Saint Gregory continues, suggests a correct, accurate knowledge of God ; “For her who inherits” would refer to the repentant soul ; “Concerning the morning aid” refers to the putting off of the ways of darkness and putting on the light ; “For the eighth” refers to the fulness of the Kingdom, of the Last Day ; “For the wine vats” refers to the laying-up of good wine (good works) for the future in the wine-vat of the soul, that is the conscience ; “For Maeleth” includes the meaning “for a chorus” and suggests a united choir in victorious gladness ; “Alleluia”, which means “Praise the LORD”, appears frequently, and is connected with the fulfilment of our journey. He points out, too, that in all the psalms, we must take notice of the continuity between adjacent psalms and their meaning. Some psalms are introductions to what follows ; and although there may be an inverted historical order, the consecutive logic lies under the surface, to be searched out by the heart. “Your life should be a psalm not resounding with earthly utterances – thoughts are these utterances – but you should be a pure, audible sound coming from heaven above”.<sup>13</sup> Virtue must, moreover, be applied in life, so that by one’s graceful conduct, the virtue, the Grace, is visible in life. He says further that because it is fallen, human nature is subject to change ; that we can only become better or worse ; and that change ought to be towards God-like stability.

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<sup>12</sup> Saint Gregory, *op. cit.*, bk 2, ch 3, p.66

<sup>13</sup> Saint Gregory, *op. cit.*, bk 2, ch 3, p.66

To state the matter once again, these, and many other insights of Saint Gregory, are not simply the insights of one man, but his own distillation of what he has inherited. Indeed, it is just as the Apostle says, that he only transmits what he has inherited.<sup>14</sup> This inheritance is the Church's perception of the involvement of our God in a saving way in the whole of history from and even before creation. It includes the understanding that the saving acts, particularly those associated with our salvation<sup>15</sup> in the Son of God, our Saviour Jesus Christ, are effective not only for the present and future, but retroactively to the past. Time is not linear by any means, and God is not limited.

So, in reading, praying and living the Holy Psalter, it is important to read everything in context. It is important to look at the Psalter itself as a whole, cohesive unity ; it is important to see this Psalter in the context of the surrounding "Old Testament" literature, which reveals God's saving activity with us whom He created ; it is important to see this Psalter in the context of its fulfilment in the "New Testament" ; and it is important to understand and accept the Psalter in the manner the Church has received it and used it throughout history, including reading what the Fathers say about it.



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<sup>14</sup> (1 Corinthians 11:23)

<sup>15</sup> It is important to remember that "salvation" does not simply imply being rescued. Its root-word from the Latin is *salus*, meaning health. When we speak of salvation, we speak also of wholeness and health.

The following excerpts are from earlier English translations of portions of patristic writings which are usually given in the introduction to the Psalter.<sup>16, 17</sup>

"...St Jerome, writing from Bethlehem to Marcella, and describing the charms of the Holy Land, tells her that the singing of Psalms was universal. 'Wherever you turn the labourer at the plough sings Alleluia : the toiling reaper beguiles his work with Psalms : the vine-dresser as he prunes the vine with his curved pruning-hook sings something of David's. These are the songs of this province [*Palestine*] : these, to use the common phrase, are its love ditties : these the shepherd whistles ; these are the labourer's implements'".

"St Chrysostom ... thus describes the universality of the use of the Psalms in his day, 'If we keep vigil in the church, David comes first, last, and midst. If early in the morning we seek for the melody of hymns, first, last, and midst is David again. If we are occupied with the funeral solemnities of the departed, if virgins sit at home and spin, David is first, last, and midst. O marvellous wonder. Many who have made but little progress in literature, many who have scarcely mastered its first principles, have the Psalter by heart. Nor is it in cities and churches alone that at all times, through every age, David is illustrious ; in the midst of the forum, in the wilderness, and uninhabitable land, he excites the praises of God. In monasteries, amongst those holy choirs of angelic armies, David is first, midst, and last. In the convents of virgins, where are the bands of them that imitate Mary ; in the deserts, where are Men crucified to this world, and having their conversation with God, first, midst, and last is he. All other Men are at night overpowered by natural sleep : David alone is active ; and congregating the servants of God into

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<sup>16</sup> We apologise for the lack of page numbers for these citations.

<sup>17</sup> Dr A F Kirkpatrick, ed., *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, Psalms* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1903), Introduction

seraphic bands, turns earth into heaven, and converts Men into angels”.

“When men and women, forsaking their ordinary callings, dedicated their lives to devotion and prayer in monasteries and communities, the singing of Psalms formed a large part of their religious exercises. In the course of time the recitation of the Psalter became a clerical obligation as well. Various schemes or uses were drawn up. Fixed Psalms were generally assigned to certain of the canonical hours, while at the other services the remainder of the Psalms were recited ‘in course’....”

“In this way a portion of the Psalms nearly equal in amount to twice the whole Psalter was recited every week. But many instances are quoted of holy Men who recited it much more frequently. It is said that St Patrick, the Apostle to Ireland, in the fifth century, repeated it daily ; St Maurus, the disciple of St Benedict, and Alcuin, the famous instructor of Charles the Great, did the same. St Kentigern, Bishop of Glasgow, in the sixth century, went through it every night. Bede relates how Ecgbert, a young student of noble birth at an Irish monastery, when attacked by the plague, vowed that if he recovered he would recite the whole Psalter daily in addition to the ordinary canonical hours, as a memorial of praise to God....”

“St Athanasius, in his *Epistle to Marcellinus on the Interpretation of the Psalms*, the whole of which well deserves study, writes thus : ‘They seem to me to be a kind of mirror for everyone who sings them, in which he may observe the motions of the soul, and as he observes them give utterance to them in words. He who hears them read, takes them as if they were spoken specially for him. Stricken in his conscience he repents, or hearing of hope in God, and of the grace which is given to those who believe, he rejoices as if this grace were promised to him in particular, and begins to thank God.... He who genuinely studies all that is written in this book of Divine inspiration may gather, as out of a paradise, that which is serviceable for his own

need. Methinks that in the words of this book you may find an accurate survey and delineation of the whole life of Man, the dispositions of the soul, and the movements of the mind. If a man has need of penitence and confession, if affliction or temptation has overtaken him, if he has been persecuted or has been delivered from the plots of his enemies, if he is in sorrow or trouble, or if he wishes to praise and give thanks and bless the LORD, he finds instruction in the Psalms.... If you meditate on these things and study the Psalms, you shall be able, under the guidance of the Spirit, to grasp their meaning ; and you shall emulate the life of the divinely inspired Men who uttered these words”.

“...St Basil, in the introduction to his Homily on the First Psalm :<sup>18</sup>

‘All Scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable, for it was written by the Spirit to the end that as it were in a general hospital for souls, we human beings might each select the medicine for his own disease.... The prophets provide one kind of instruction, the historians another, the law yet another, and the exhortations of the Proverbs yet another. But the Book of Psalms contains that which is profitable in all of them. It prophesies of the future ; it recalls history ; it legislates for life ; it suggests rules of action ; in a word it is a common storehouse of good doctrines, providing exactly what is expedient for everyone.... A Psalm is the calm of souls, the arbiter of peace : it stills the stormy waves of thought. It softens the angry spirit, and sobers the intemperate. A Psalm cements friendship : it unites those who are at variance ; it reconciles those who are at enmity. For who can regard as an enemy the man with whom he has joined in lifting up one voice to God ? Psalmody, therefore, provides the greatest of all good things, even love, for it has invented concerted singing as a bond of unity, and fits the people together in the concord of one choir. A Psalm puts

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<sup>18</sup> In one or another form, these words of Saint Basil the Great are used in Greek Church Psalters, in the introduction, for edification.

demons to flight ; it summons the angels to our aid ; it is a weapon in the midst of alarms by night, a rest from toils of day ; it is a safeguard for babes, a decoration for adults, a comfort for the aged, a most befitting ornament for women. It makes deserts populous and market-places sane. It is an initiation to novices, growth to those who are advancing, confirmation to those who are being perfected. It is the voice of the Church ; it gladdens festivals, it creates godly sorrow. For a Psalm calls forth tears even from a stony heart. A Psalm is the employment of angels, heavenly converse, spiritual incense.... What may you not learn thence ? The heroism of courage ; the integrity of justice ; the gravity of temperance ; the perfection of prudence ; the manner of repentance ; the measure of patience ; in a word every good thing you can mention. Therein is a complete theology ; the prediction of the advent of Christ in the flesh, the threatening of judgement, the hope of resurrection, the fear of chastisement, promises of glory, revelations of mysteries : all, as in some great public storehouse, are treasured up in the Book of Psalms”.



Following are further excerpts from Saint Athanasius’ *Letter to Marcellinus on the Psalms*, in addition to the previous citation.<sup>19</sup>

“...Among all the books, the Psalter has certainly a very special grace, a choiceness of quality well worthy to be pondered ; for, besides the characteristics which it shares with others, it has this peculiar marvel of its own, that within it are represented and portrayed in all their great variety the movements of the human soul. It is like a picture, in which you

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<sup>19</sup> *St Athanasius on the Psalms* (London: Mowbray and Co., 1949)  
We apologise for the lack of page numbers.

see yourself portrayed and, seeing, may understand and consequently form yourself upon the pattern given...you learn about *yourself*. You find depicted in it all the movements of your soul, all its changes, its ups and downs, its failures and recoveries. Moreover, whatever your particular need or trouble, from this same book you can select a form of words to fit it, so that you do not merely hear and then pass on, but learn the way to remedy your ill. Prohibitions of evil-doing are plentiful in Scripture, but only the Psalter tells you how to obey these orders and refrain from sin. Repentance, for example, is enjoined repeatedly ; but to repent means to leave off sinning, and it is the Psalms that show you how to set about repenting, and with what words your penitence may be expressed....”

“...With this book, however, though one does read the prophecies about the Saviour in that way, with reverence and with awe, in the case of all the other Psalms it is as though it were one’s own words that one read ; and any one who hears them is moved at heart, as though they voiced for him his deepest thoughts.... And each one sings the Psalms as though they had been written for his special benefit, and takes them and recites them, not as though someone else were speaking or another person’s feelings being described, but as himself speaking of himself, offering the words to God as his own heart’s utterance, just as though he himself had made them up.... Briefly, then, if indeed any more is needed to drive home the point, the whole divine Scripture is the teacher of virtue and true faith, but the Psalter gives a picture of the spiritual life....”

“...When, therefore, the Psalms are chanted, it is not from any mere desire for sweet music but as the outward expression of the inward harmony obtaining in the soul, because such harmonious recitation is in itself the index of a peaceful and well-ordered heart.... For a soul rightly ordered by chanting the sacred words forgets its own afflictions and contemplates with joy the things of Christ alone. So then, my son, whoever reads this Book of Psalms take the things in it quite simply as God-inspired ; and let

each select from it, as from the fruits of a garden, those things of which he sees himself in need. For I think that in the words of this book all human life is covered, with all its states and thoughts, and that nothing further can be found in man. For no matter what you seek, whether it be repentance and confession, or help in trouble and temptation or under persecution, whether you have been set free from plots and snares or, on the contrary, are sad for any reason, or whether, seeing yourself progressing and your enemy cast down, you want to praise and thank and bless the LORD, each of these things the Divine Psalms show you how to do, and in every case the words you want are written down for you, and you can say them as your own....”

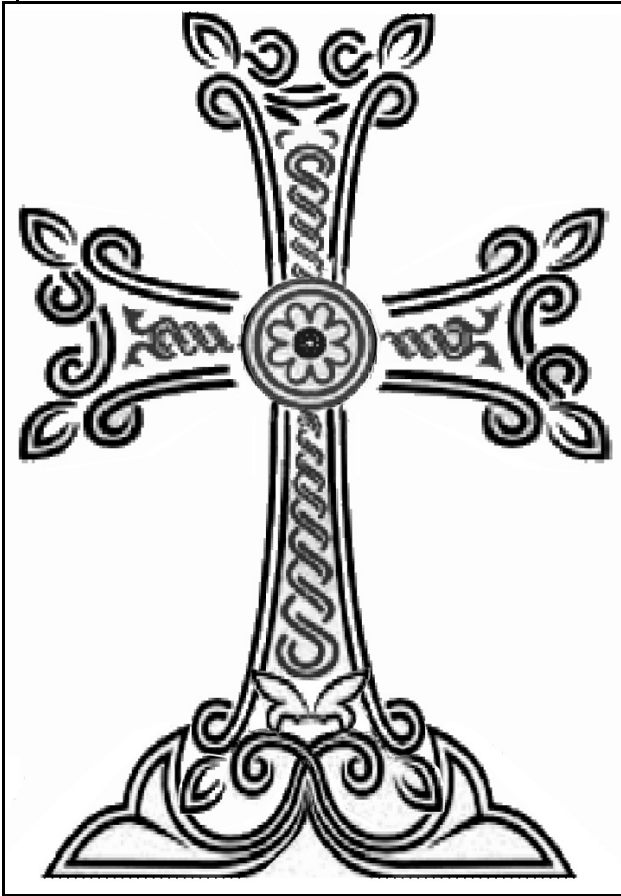
“...Let each one, therefore, who recites the Psalms have a sure hope that through them God will speedily give ear to those who are in need. For if a man be in trouble when he says them, great comfort will he find in them ; if he be tempted or persecuted, he will find himself abler to stand the test and will experience the protection of the LORD, who always defends those who say these words. By them too a man will overthrow the devil and put the fiends to flight. If he have sinned, when he uses them he will repent ; if he have not sinned, he will find himself rejoicing that he is stretching out towards the things that are before and, so wrestling, in the power of the Psalms he will prevail. Never will such a man be shaken from the truth, but those who try to trick and lead him into error he will refute ; and it is no human teacher who promises us this, but the Divine Scripture itself.... Dæmons fear the words of holy Men and cannot bear them ; for the LORD Himself is in the words of the Scripture and Him they cannot bear, as they showed when they cried out to Christ.... Well knew the holy Psalmist that, when he said in Psalm 118, ‘I will meditate upon Thy judgements ; and I will not forget Thy words’ ; and again, ‘Thy statutes were my songs in the place of my sojourning.’ For with these words they all worked out their own salvation, saying, ‘If Thy law were not my meditation, then had I perished in my humiliation.’ Paul also strengthened his

disciple with like words, saying, ‘Ponder these things, abide in them, that thy progress may be manifest.’ And so you too, Marcellinus, pondering the Psalms and reading them intelligently, with the Spirit as your guide, will be able to grasp the meaning of each one, even as you desire. And you will strive also to imitate the lives of those God-bearing saints who spoke them at first”.



### **Words about reading the Psalter**

There are many different customs in reading the Psalter. One might read the Psalter in its entirety daily, as some have done, and some do. The prayers concluding each session anticipate the private, personal recitation of the Psalter. In some monasteries, the Psalter is read continuously, in turns, non-stop. Communally, it is usually read by a reader or readers, and by sessions, once through the week, according to the accustomed usage as shown in the included table, during the daily services. It may, as was historically done, be read according to the divisions of the Five Books, which imitate the five books of the Pentateuch of Moses. It may also be read antiphonally, as has been historically done. In this form, either the reader or readers of one side read the first part of a sentence, and the reader or readers of the other side read the last part of the sentence ; or this may be done whole-sentence by whole-sentence. How it is read in any one place, at any time, is dependent upon the blessing of the local authority, competent to direct such things. Always, as in everything, one must seek the blessing from someone in authority, or a spiritual superior, or one of experience, to enter any discipline.



## THE MANNER OF READING THE SESSIONS

The Psalter is read through once per week, according to the presently prevailing method, and in Great Lent, twice weekly. Each week begins with the Vespers of Sunday, on Saturday evening. Let it be known that, should it be blessed by the Authority, the sessions (*kathismas*) might be read separately, before the beginning of Matins or Vespers. The purpose of this would be simply to preserve the visible continuity of either service; it is, nevertheless, not the general practice. There are other methods of reading, also. In the form given here, they may be read completely alone, according to one's rule.

### I. In Ordinary Time :

**A :** Thomas Sunday to 21 September ; from 20 December to 14 January ; the two weeks immediately before Great Lent :

#### MATINS

	Session
<b>Sun.</b>	2, 3, 17 — or Polyelei *
<b>Mon.</b>	4, 5
<b>Tue.</b>	7, 8
<b>Wed.</b>	10, 11
<b>Thu.</b>	13, 14
<b>Fri.</b>	19, 20
<b>Sat.</b>	16, 17

#### VESPERS

	Session
	—**
	6
	9
	12
	15
	18
	1

\* *Polyelei* : The *Polyelei* is appointed on certain Sundays after the second reading from the Psalter, and particularly at a Vigil for the feast of a saint. On other Sundays, when noted, it is Session 17 which is read.

\*\* There is no reading from the Psalter at Vespers on Sunday evening, nor on the eves of Feasts of the LORD, when there is a vigil.

**B : 22 September to 19 December ; 15 January to the Eve of the Sunday of the Prodigal Son (fifteen days before Lent) :**

*On the Holy Mountain and elsewhere, this particular prescription is not applied ; but the manner of psalm-reading remains as in Section A previous, through the year.*

**MATINS**

	Session
<b>Sun.</b>	2, 3, 17 — <i>or</i> Polyelei
<b>Mon.</b>	4, 5, 6
<b>Tue.</b>	7, 8, 9
<b>Wed.</b>	10, 11, 12
<b>Thu.</b>	13, 14, 15
<b>Fri.</b>	19, 20
<b>Sat.</b>	16, 17

**VESPERS**

	Session
	—**
	18
	18
	18
	18
	18
	1

**II. In Great Lent :**

**A : Great Lent : Weeks 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6**

<b>MATINS</b>	<b>H1*</b>	<b>H3</b>	<b>H6</b>	<b>H9</b>	<b>VESPERS</b>
Session					Session
<b>Sun.</b>	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Mon.</b>	—	7	8	9	18
<b>Tue.</b>	10, 11, 12	13	14	15	18
<b>Wed.</b>	19, 20, 1	2	3	4	18
<b>Thu.</b>	6, 7, 8	9	10	11	18
<b>Fri.</b>	13, 14, 15	—	19	20	18
<b>Sat.</b>	16, 17	—	—	—	1

\* H1, H3, H6, H9 mean First Hour, Third Hour, Sixth Hour, Ninth Hour.

**B : Great Lent : Week 5**

<b>MATINS</b>	<b>H1</b>	<b>H3</b>	<b>H6</b>	<b>H9</b>	<b>VESPERS</b>
Session					Session
<b>Sun.</b>	2, 3, 17	—	—	—	—
	— <i>or</i> Polyelei				
<b>Mon.</b>	4, 5, 6	—	7	8	9
<b>Tue.</b>	11, 12, 13	14	15	16	18 <sup>+</sup>
<b>Wed.</b>	20, 1, 2	3	4	5	6
<b>Thu.</b>	8 ( <i>Gt Canon</i> )	—	9	10	11
<b>Fri.</b>	13, 14, 15	—	19	20	—
<b>Sat.</b>	16, 17	—	—	—	1

<sup>+</sup> *The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is served with Session 18 at Vespers on Tuesday, for the Great Canon.*

**C : Holy Week :**

<b>MATINS</b>	<b>H1</b>	<b>H3</b>	<b>H6</b>	<b>H9</b>	<b>VESPERS</b>
Session					Session
<b>Palm Sun.</b>					
	2, 3, Polyelei	—	—	—	—
<b>Gt Mon.</b>					
	4, 5, 6	—	7	8	—
<b>Gt Tue.</b>					
	9, 10, 11	—	12	13	—
<b>Gt Wed.</b>					
	14, 15, 16	—	19	20	—
<b>Gt Thu.</b>					
	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Gt Fri.</b>					
	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Gt Sat.</b>					
	17	—	—	—	—

*The Psalter is read entirely, except Session 17, during the first four days of Great Holy Week. Thereafter there is no reading from the Psalter (except at Matins of Great Holy Saturday) through Vespers of Thomas Sunday on the Saturday evening.*

AN ALTERNATIVE METHOD OF READING  
THE PSALTER SESSIONS,  
OVER TWO WEEKS

WEEK ONE :

	MATINS	VESPERS
	Session	Session
Sunday	2, Polyelei	No session
Monday	3	4
Tuesday	5	6
Wednesday	7	18
Thursday	8	9
Friday	10	18
Saturday	17	1 (complete)

WEEK TWO :

	MATINS	VESPERS
	Session	Session
Sunday	2, Polyelei	No session
Monday	11	12
Tuesday	13	14
Wednesday	15	18
Thursday	16	19
Friday	20	18
Saturday	17	1 (complete)

⌘

THE PSALTER  
ACCORDING TO  
THE SEVENTY  
(*The Septuagint*)

Numbering of *kathismas* (sessions) : (Septuagint numbering)

<b>Session :</b>	1	<b>Psalms :</b>	1 - 8
( <i>Kathisma</i> )	2		9 - 16
	3		17 - 23
	4		24 - 31
	5		32 - 36
	6		37 - 45
	7		46 - 54
	8		55 - 63
	9		64 - 69
	10		70 - 76
	11		77 - 84
	12		85 - 90
	13		91 - 100
	14		101 - 104
	15		105 - 108
	16		109 - 117
	17		118
	18		119 - 133
	19		134 - 142
	20		143 - 150

<b>Book</b>	I	<b>Psalms</b>	1 - 40
<b>Book</b>	II	<b>Psalms</b>	41 - 71
<b>Book</b>	III	<b>Psalms</b>	72 - 88
<b>Book</b>	IV	<b>Psalms</b>	89 - 105
<b>Book</b>	V	<b>Psalms</b>	106 - 150



## Notes on Scripture Names

The Greek translation from Hebrew of proper names and place-names is imitated here in English. Many names and place-names and titles may appear unfamiliar to the English reader, accustomed to different, and western spellings and usages ; however, most of the Orthodox world is accustomed to these spellings and namings. Indeed, in some older English translations, one may see indications of these very spellings. Therefore, be aware that, in this text, there are Scripture (“Old Testament”) references such as the following :

Genesis = 1 Mōysēs\* (First Book of Moses).

Exodus = 2 Mōysēs (Second Book of Moses).

Leviticus = 3 Mōysēs (Third Book of Moses).

Numbers = 4 Mōysēs (Fourth Book of Moses).

Deuteronomy = 5 Mōysēs (Fifth Book of Moses).

Joshua = Jēsous = Jesus (meaning “the LORD rescues”, or “saves”).

1 & 2 Samuel = 1 & 2 Kingdoms.

1 & 2 Kings = 3 & 4 Kingdoms.

1 & 2 Chronicles = 1 & 2 Paraleipomenon (*i.e.* Supplements).

\* The English expression of these books is not yet stable, and the reader may prefer to pronounce names and place-names in the manner of custom in the west. It is nevertheless important to know what is the customary nomenclature of most of the Orthodox world.

Consult the Introduction to The Orthodox Study Bible (St Athanasius Academy of Orthodox Theology, Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2008), p.vii, for the order of the books. In this text, other spelling-differences are foot-noted when they first appear. Initial “J” is in Greek “I”. “Æ” or “æ” is usually “ai” in Greek. “Kh” or “kh” is used mostly for Greek “X” or “x”. “Y” is used for the Greek “u”, except in “David” and “Levi”, where the “v” is for the Greek “u”.

Regarding Scripture references in the Introduction and the foot-notes :  
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[ THE END OF THE INTRODUCTION ]

## PRAYERS BEFORE BEGINNING TO READ THE PSALTER

*If the person be a presbyter, he says :*

Blessed is our God, always, now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

*If not, then one says with feeling :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*,<sup>20</sup> O LORD Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

Glory be to You, our God, glory be to You.

\* O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, everywhere present, and filling all things, Treasury of good things, and Provider of Life, come, and abide in us,<sup>21</sup> and cleanse us from every stain, and save our souls, O Good One.

\* [We do not read “Heavenly King” in paschaltide. We say “Christ is risen...” (three times). From Ascension to Pentecost, we read the tropar of Ascension.]

Holy God, Holy Mighty,<sup>22</sup> Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.  
(three times) (three metanias)

<sup>20</sup> *If a bishop be present:* “Master”

This invocation usually and properly refers to those amongst the living who are assembled. One may, therefore, refer to “fathers” if one be part of a male monastic community; or one may substitute “mothers” if the community be female, or “brothers and sisters” if one be in a non-monastic community or parish or family. However, if one be in seclusion, or for some other reason, one may refer to “fathers” in the ancestral sense, meaning all those who have gone before us.

“Amen”, which concludes our prayers, is not a verbal punctuation equal to a period. “Amen” is a Hebrew word, mostly not translated into other languages, and it means “So be it”. It is a response by those present to the prayer that has been uttered either on behalf of all, or by all together. It gives affirmation to all that has been uttered. A transliteration of the Greek ἀμήν would be “Amēn”.

<sup>21</sup> “Abide” translates the Greek “pitch Your tent”, itself translating the Hebrew expression that suggests establishing a long-term residence.

<sup>22</sup> About “Holy Mighty”: “Holy Strong” is an alternative current British usage. Being a single syllable, “strong” may be heard as more forceful than a word with two syllables, especially when sung or chanted.

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

O most holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from our sins.<sup>23</sup> O Master, pardon our iniquities.<sup>24</sup> O Holy One, visit, and heal our infirmities, for Your Name's sake.

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

Our Father, who are in the Heavens,<sup>25</sup> hallowed be Your Name ; Your kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ; give us this day our daily bread ;<sup>26</sup> and forgive us our debts, as we forgive<sup>27</sup> our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test,<sup>28</sup> but rescue us from the evil one.

*And then :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.<sup>29</sup>

*And then these tropars :* Tone 6

Have mercy on us, O LORD ; have mercy on us, for laying aside

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<sup>23</sup> This is the Slavonic text. The Greek text is “be propitious to”.

<sup>24</sup> The Greek word here translated “iniquities” literally means “lawlessnesses”.

<sup>25</sup> Although we are otherwise accustomed to use “Heaven” here, it is clearly plural in the Greek Scriptures and in all of the Greek ecclesiastical service texts.

<sup>26</sup> Two other translations are possible: “bread of the morrow”, or “super-substantial bread”. There is a debate about what translation is better. The prevailing opinion is reflected in this text. “Daily bread” has a Eucharistic implication, according to the Fathers, and it also implies everything that is necessary. The use of “bread of the morrow” can suggest that we ask for tomorrow’s bread today, which further implies that we ask for the Kingdom of Heaven to come, now. This plea for the “bread of the morrow” is not so different, in some ways, from asking for “daily bread”. We are using “daily bread”, since we are convinced that “daily bread” can have more far-reaching implications, such as with the Eucharist. Others point out that “super-substantial” refers to Christ Himself, the Bread of the Kingdom.

<sup>27</sup> About “forgive”: the Greek word in the Gospel according to Matthew is in the aorist (past) tense, meaning “have forgiven”.

<sup>28</sup> “Do not bring us to the test” may also be translated: “let us not succumb to temptation”.

<sup>29</sup> A presbyter concludes as would be customary for a presbyter.

all excuse, we sinners offer to You as to our Master, this supplication : Have mercy on us.

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

The precious memorial of Your Prophet David has shown Your Church to be Heaven, O LORD, for angels exult together with Man.<sup>30</sup> By his prayers, O Christ God, guide our lives in peace, that we may sing to You : Alleluia.<sup>31</sup>

Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

In need of salvation from the great multitude of my transgressions, I flee to you, O pure Mother of God. Visit my infirm soul, and beseech your Son, our God, to grant me forgiveness of my evil deeds, O only blessed one.

LORD, have mercy. (*forty times*)

(*with prostrations, as one is able*)

*Then, this prayer to the life-creating Trinity :*

O all-holy Trinity, Creator of all the world, as I, the unworthy, now desire to pronounce these God-inspired psalms, which the Holy Spirit placed upon the lips of David, make haste and guide my heart to begin with understanding, and to end with good deeds. Aware of my ignorance, I fall down before You in prayer, begging for Your help, and calling out : O LORD, direct my mind, and strengthen my heart. May I not be taken up with words, but rather may I find joy in the meaning of these words, and be prepared to perform the good deeds they teach me. Enlightened by good deeds, may I, at the Judgement, together with all Your elect, be with those at Your right hand. And now, O Master, bless. Having sighed from my heart, may my tongue pronounce these following words :

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<sup>30</sup> About “Man”: see the foot-note on Psalm 4:3.

<sup>31</sup> This spelling of “Alleluia” is usual in English texts, including the prayers of this Psalter. However, in the Psalter itself “Allēlouia” is used, which is a transliteration of the Greek, Ἀλληλοῦια, itself a transliteration of the Hebrew הלל יה, *hallelu-iah*. This is a Hebrew two-word phrase meaning “praise the LORD”. In scriptural and liturgical contexts, it is mostly not translated into other languages, but only transliterated.

O come, let us worship God our King ; come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, our King and our God ; come, let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and our God.

*(three metanias, or prostrations<sup>32</sup>)*

*Pause briefly until all the senses are quieted, and then begin without haste, without negligence, with tender feeling and with a contrite heart, saying : “Blessed is the man ...” (Psalm 1) and all that follows, quietly, intelligently, attentively, without rushing, so that your mind grasps the meaning of what you are saying :*

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<sup>32</sup> A “metania” consists of making the sign of the Cross, and making a deep bow from the waist, while stretching down the right hand to touch, if possible, the floor.  
A “prostration” consists of making the sign of the Cross, and then bowing, to touch the knees, hands and forehead to the floor, and again standing up.

## session

### 1

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



## BOOK I

### PSALM 1

### STATION 1

*“The righteous and the impious before the Judgement of God”<sup>33</sup>*

Μακάριος ἀνὴρ      Beatus vir, qui non abiit

By David.      [Without inscription in Hebrew]

1

**B**lessed is the man<sup>34</sup>  
who has not walked in the counsel of the impious,<sup>35</sup>  
nor stood on the way of sinners,  
nor sat on the seat of the pestilent ;<sup>36</sup>  
but rather, in the law of the LORD is his delight,

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<sup>33</sup> All of the Christianised titles of the psalms are from the Psalter translated by Archimandrite Placide.

<sup>34</sup> About “man”: the Greek here is ἀνὴρ, *anēr*, meaning a man. See the foot-note on “Man” in Psalm 4:3.

Here and elsewhere, “ε̅” indicates a Greek “η̅”, that is, “eta”.

<sup>35</sup> “Walking” can imply a deliberate cooperation.

“Impious”, pronounced “**im**-pea-uhs”, means not having or showing a dutiful spirit of reverence for God. See the foot-note on Psalm 72:6.

<sup>36</sup> “Pestilent” is the English for the Greek translation of the Hebrew word for scoffer.

Saint Basil the Great notes that this “seat” refers to stubborn persistence in badness.

Saint Athanasius notes that the “seat” refers to the teaching of evil people.

and on His law shall he ruminare by day and by night.<sup>37</sup>  
 He shall be like the tree planted  
 beside the streams of waters,  
 which shall give its fruit in its time,<sup>38</sup>  
 and its leaf shall not fall.  
 In all things, whatever he may do, it shall go well.  
 Not so, the impious, not so :  
 but rather, they are just like dust,  
 which the wind flings from the face of the earth.  
 Because of this, the impious shall not arise in the fair-  
 judgement,<sup>39</sup>  
 nor shall sinners in a council of the righteous ;  
 for the LORD knows the way of the righteous,  
 but the way of the impious shall perish.<sup>40</sup>

5

<sup>37</sup> “Shall” is an expression of the simple future tense in English. The verb “will” has been used also in a future sense, but historically including the sense of the act of the will. Since it is God alone who can act reliably and stably with the will, we are confining the use of the verb “will” to references to God Himself.

“Ruminare” implies verbalised repetition, that is, repeating orally. The allusion is to the manner in which ruminants chew things over and over before final digestion (see the foot-note on Psalm 89:9).

<sup>38</sup> About “time”: see the foot-note on Psalm 20:10.

<sup>39</sup> “Fair-judgement” translates the Greek word κρίσις, *krisis*. This word implies the decision of a judge which may come near to real justice, and which therefore may imply Divine Judgement.

<sup>40</sup> About “knows”: Saint Augustine teaches that not to be known by God is to perish. With God, to know is to love, so that knowledge partakes of being; to be unknown is to cease to exist.

[Cf. the singing of “Memory Eternal” for the departed]

Saint Basil the Great comments that this psalm is to the Psalter as the keel is to a ship, the foundation is to a house, and the heart is to a body. He continues that David, in this beginning of the evangelical purposes of the whole Psalter, also revealed the end or purpose of our many labours and sufferings, so that we might be able to endure for that end the sufferings of this life.

## PSALM 2

“The advent of Christ, opposition of the leaders of the peoples,  
 and calling of the pagans”

Ἰνατί ἐφρούρασαν Quare fremuerunt gentes ?

A psalm by David.

1

**W**hy have the nations pranced,<sup>41</sup>  
 and the peoples ruminated on emptiness ?<sup>42</sup>

The kings of the earth stood by,  
 and the rulers gathered together as one  
 against the LORD, and against His christ :<sup>43</sup>

*Pause*<sup>44</sup>

<sup>41</sup> “Nation”=ἔθνος, *ethnos*=people=race=tribe. The “New Testament” understanding is “Gentiles” for this word, and it certainly would mean this also in the “Old Testament”.

The Greek verb translated as “pranced” suggests not only a horse that kicks its fore-feet and springs on its hind feet, but also one that is snorting violently.

<sup>42</sup> “People” (subjects of a prince)=λαός, *laos*=Man (the race)=inhabitants of a nation.

<sup>43</sup> (Acts 4:25-26) This, and all Scriptural citations in this text refer to *The Orthodox Study Bible*, in which the Old Covenant is translated from the Septuagint.

“Christ” (χριστός, *christos*)=anointed one=messiah. “Christ” is used by many translations of the LXX in the Slavonic, Latin, Romanian, earlier English, and other versions. It is a title in Greek, appearing also in English, and is used here to connect with its usage in the “New Testament” as referring to Jesus the Anointed One, Jesus the Messiah. This connects with the usage of the Fathers in their writings. “The anointed”, or “the christ”, is a title, not a surname. It translates the Hebrew word for “messiah”. It is attributed to those, especially David, who were harbingers of the Saviour, who is the ultimate Christ. Other christologically connected words, such as “beloved” are similarly not capitalised because although there is such a reference to Jesus the Christ, it is still a harbinger of Him.

Saint Cyril of Alexandria explains that there are many christs, who are so because they were anointed; but He who is God the Father’s Christ is One, and One only.

<sup>44</sup> “Pause” is an English translation of the Greek διάψαλμα, *diapsalma*, which is a translation of the Hebrew *selah*: a liturgical direction, the meaning of which is now unclear — so say the editors of the RSV, but see the Introduction re: *diapsalma* in Saint Gregory of Nyssa’s writing, pp. viii-ix.

“Pause” is not spoken aloud when reading the psalms.

“Let us break their bonds asunder,  
and let us cast away their yoke from us”.<sup>45</sup>  
He who is dwelling in the Heavens will laugh at them ;  
the LORD will sneer at them.

Then He will speak to them in His anger,  
and in His fury will He stir them up.<sup>46</sup>

“But I have been appointed by Him  
to be king over Siōn, His holy mountain,<sup>47</sup>  
proclaiming the ordinance of the LORD.

The LORD said to Me : ‘You are My Son,  
today have I begotten You.’<sup>48</sup>

Ask of Me, and I will give You  
the nations as Your inheritance,  
and as Your possession the ends of the earth.

You will shepherd them with an iron rod ;  
as a potter’s vessel will You shatter them’’.<sup>49</sup>

5

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<sup>45</sup> About these two lines: those in rebellion against Christ, against the Light, seek false freedom. This encounter with the realm of falsehood requires spiritual warfare. “Warfare” does not mean fighting as in wrestling. This sort of warfare is more like an aspect of oriental martial arts, in that one steps aside, turns the back, deflects the blows. We call to the LORD, and we depend upon Him to defend us. We do not engage the attacker directly, but instead we call to the LORD.

<sup>46</sup> Throughout this translation, “in” is mostly used to translate the Greek *ἐν*, *en*. “In” appears frequently with meanings beyond simple spatial placement. It can imply also agency, causality and other things.

About “fury”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

<sup>47</sup> “Siōn”=Zion. Usually, this refers to a specific mountain near/in Jerusalem (Mount Sion), on which stood a Jebusite fortress of the same name that was conquered by David and was named the City of David. The extended meanings and references include the Temple, the City of Jerusalem and even all the Holy Land. Because there is in that place more than one hill, there are some phrases in other psalms that suggest this.

<sup>48</sup> (Acts 13:33; Hebrews 1:5; 5:5)

<sup>49</sup> (Apocalypse 2:27)

And now, you kings, understand :  
be instructed, all you, judging the earth.<sup>50</sup>  
Serve the LORD in fear,  
and exult in Him in trembling.  
Grasp His instruction  
lest the LORD be angry,  
and you perish from the righteous way,  
whenever His fury be quickly kindled.  
Blessed are all those putting their trust in Him.

10



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<sup>50</sup> About “be instructed”: the source-word of *pædagogy*, *παιδεύω*, *pædeuō*, instruct, carries the meaning of “chastise”, in that instruction was always perceived to be accompanied by beating with a stick for correcting any faults. In the context of Psalm 6:2, and other uses of “instruct”, the word is often translated by others as “chasten”; but chastening, the use of the rod, was in those days a prime tool of instruction, or discipline, to reinforce some lessons, and thus it usually implies instruction. Indeed, many writers refer to this as godly discipline.

Here, and elsewhere, “ō” indicates a Greek “ω”, that is, “omega”.

### PSALM 3

*“Passion, Death, Resurrection of Christ”*

Κύριε, τί ἐπληθύνθησαν Domine, quid multiplicati ?

A psalm by David, when in the wilderness he ran away<sup>51</sup> 1  
from the face of his son Abessalōm.<sup>52</sup>

**O** LORD, why have those afflicting me multiplied ?<sup>53</sup>

Many are rising against me ;<sup>54</sup>

many are saying to my soul :

“There is no salvation for him in his God” .<sup>55</sup>

*Pause*

But You, O LORD, You are my Support,  
my Glory, and the One exalting my head.

With my voice I cried out to the LORD, 5  
and He listened to me from His holy mountain.

*Pause*

As for me, I lay down and I slept ;

I awoke, for the LORD will support me.

I shall not fear myriads of people,<sup>56</sup>

who together are setting upon me round about.

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<sup>51</sup> About “wilderness”: the Greek noun ἔρημος, *erēmos*, translated as “wilderness”, can mean also “desert”. The adjective means “desolate”, “solitary”. The concept of wilderness, throughout the Psalter, will not necessarily suggest a place in which there is nothing at all growing. “Wilderness”, or “desert” may be used in modern times to refer also to the northern forests.

<sup>52</sup> (2 Kingdoms [Samuel], chapters 15-18) “Abessalōm”=Absalom.

<sup>53</sup> About passive voice used as active voice: see the foot-note on Psalm 33:3.

<sup>54</sup> Saint Athanasius advises that if you are persecuted by your own people, and you have many rising against you, say Psalm 3.

<sup>55</sup> Didymus the Blind of Alexandria comments that, as David, those who follow the LORD’s righteousness will have enemies for no reason. It is so with the Saviour.

<sup>56</sup> One “myriad”=ten thousand.

Arise, O LORD ; save me, O my God ;

for it is You that have smitten all those who vainly are at  
enmity with me ;

You shattered the teeth of sinners.

Salvation is of the LORD,

and upon Your people is Your blessing.



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

PSALM 4

STATION 2

“The Church exhorts Jews and pagans, to conversion”.

Ἐν τῷ ἐπικαλεῖσθαί με Cum invocarem

For the end. In psalms. A canticle by David. 1

When I was calling, You heard me, O God of my righteousness.<sup>57</sup>

In affliction, You have set me at large ;

have compassion on me, and hear my prayer.

O sons of Men, how long shall you be heavy of heart ?<sup>58</sup>

Why do you love futility, and seek a lie ?<sup>59</sup>

Pause

<sup>57</sup> God, the Knower of Hearts, hears us even before we call (see Ἐσαῖας 58:9 “Ἐσαῖας”=Isaiah). The LORD is the Lover of Man, and Father of His beloved creature. As any parent, He anticipates the weaknesses and needs of the child, and is in the right place at the right time for the sake of the child.

About “my righteousness”: Saint John Chrysostom notes that David is not boasting, but rather admitting the source of his righteousness.

Saint Athanasius advises that if you are afflicted and you wish to give thanks for requested help, sing Psalms 4; 74; & 114.

<sup>58</sup> “Man” here translates ἄνθρωπος, *anthrōpos*, the word for the race of human beings. We translate this word, *anthrōpos*, as “Man” or “Men”. We use *anēr* for “a man”, or “men”. So far, English does not really use a satisfactory single word or word-form to describe the human race, apart from “Man”. Thus, one cannot, when the text is read aloud, hear the difference between a male and a human being. With regard to sensitivities about gender, it is important to understand, when reading, that the writer was using the natural idiom of his time. Our place is to understand that, whether the word used be *anthrōpos* (human being) or *anēr* (a man), the heart must understand that the words apply to all human beings, without distinction. Sometimes, in the same verse as *anthrōpos*, *anēr* also appears, referring to the same person. We nevertheless retain the distinction between them in this work.

About “heavy of heart”: Saint John Chrysostom explains that this implies being weighed down with earthly cares, instead of rising to divine contemplation (see Luke 21:34).

<sup>59</sup> “Futility” translates ματαιότης, *mateotēs*, in this Psalter. This word in Greek, in its various forms and combinations, is usually translated as “vanity”. However, emptiness and purposelessness are included in the meanings given by Liddell & Scott’s *Greek-English Lexicon*. Vanity has come to connote mere narcissism. Futility carries an understanding closer to the Greek meaning.

Saint John Chrysostom comments that *mateotēs* describes what is empty: there is something in name, but nothing in substance.

Know that the LORD made wonderful His holy one.<sup>60</sup>

The LORD will hear me when I cry out to Him.<sup>61</sup>

Be angry, but do not sin ,<sup>62</sup>

for what you say in your hearts,

on your beds be pierced with compunction.

Pause

Sacrifice a sacrifice of righteousness,<sup>63</sup>

and hope on the LORD.

Many say : “Who shall show us good things ?”

The light of Your Face, O LORD, has been signed upon us.<sup>64</sup>

You gave gladness to my heart :

because of the fruit of their wheat, wine and oil, they have multiplied.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>60</sup> “Holy one”, or “holy” translate the Greek ὅσιος, *hosios* or ἅγιος, *hagios*.

<sup>61</sup> Saint John Chrysostom explains that the LORD does not always seem to hear, because of the inappropriateness of our request. It is better, therefore, not to be heard than to be heard, as it were, because of the inappropriateness of the request. He understands when to give, and what to give. However, “be heard” in this context only means the granting of the request. God always does actually hear and listen, and He does everything for the good.

<sup>62</sup> (Ephesians 4:26) Saint John Chrysostom comments that anger can be useful for a righteous reason, expressing care. If we are imitating God, anger must not be a passion.

<sup>63</sup> “Righteousness” is living in conformity with God’s Love. This is much greater than mere justice, or conformity with the Law or laws. From Love, hope also springs.

<sup>64</sup> “Face” translates the Greek πρόσωπον, *prosōpon*, meaning, fundamentally, “face”, or “person”, or “presence”, therefore suggesting the whole person. It may even refer to the being of the person.

Saint John Chrysostom explains that with reference to the LORD, “face” or “countenance” means support, providence, solicitude, assistance.

About “has been signed”: Archimandrite Placide comments that the “sign” is the Image of God imprinted in the soul, the Sign of the Cross which is marked in baptism on the Christian, and the reflection of the Uncreated Light on the soul, perceived in contemplation.

<sup>65</sup> About passive voice used as active voice: see the foot-note on Psalm 33:3.

In peace I shall both lie down and sleep,  
for it is You alone, O LORD, who have made me settle in  
hope.<sup>66</sup>

10



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<sup>66</sup> Archimandrite Lazarus informs us that the Ethiopian version translates this line as: “For Thou, LORD, enablest me to live trustfully alone”.

## PSALM 5

*“Morning supplication of the Church”*

Τὰ ῥήματά μου Verba mea auribus

For the end. About her who receives the heritage.<sup>67</sup>

1

A psalm by David.

**G**ive ear to my utterances, O LORD ;  
understand my cry.<sup>68</sup>

Give heed to the voice of my supplication,

O my King and my God ;

for to You shall I make my prayer, O LORD.

In the morning You will hear my voice ;<sup>69</sup>

in the morning I shall stand beside You,

and You will look upon me ;

for You, indeed, are not a God delighting in lawlessness.

5

One working evil shall not sojourn near You,

nor shall transgressors of the law continue before Your

eyes :

You have hated all those working lawlessness.

You will destroy all those speaking the lie :

a deceitful man of blood, the LORD loathes.<sup>70</sup>

But as for me, in the multitude of Your mercy

I shall come into Your house :

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<sup>67</sup> Saint John Chrysostom reminds us that the Church is she “who receives the heritage”. The inheritance is the Kingdom of Heaven.

<sup>68</sup> Saint Athanasius advises that whenever you notice evil-doers setting a trap for you, and you want the LORD to hearken to your prayer, sing Psalm 5 at dawn.

<sup>69</sup> Saint John Chrysostom comments that whereas others delay coming to prayer until countless other things are first accomplished, she who inherits rises at dawn to bless the LORD. Like the sun, she rises first thing to pay homage to the LORD.

<sup>70</sup> About “loathes”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.



I shall worship towards Your holy temple in fear of You.  
 O LORD, lead me on the way in Your righteousness,  
 because of my enemies.<sup>71</sup>  
 Make straight my way before Your Face ;<sup>72</sup>  
 for there is no truth in their mouth :  
 their heart is futile ;  
 their throat is an open tomb ;  
 with their tongues have they deceived.<sup>73</sup>  
 Judge them, O God.  
 Let them fall because of their deliberations. 10  
 In accordance with the multitude of their impieties, thrust  
 them out,  
 for they have embittered You, O LORD.<sup>74</sup>  
 But may they be glad — all those hoping on You :  
 unto the age shall they exult,<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Although it may not always appear so to others, it is not necessarily so that I am an enemy to another or others, but that another or others choose(s) to be an enemy to me.

<sup>72</sup> About “make straight”: here, and elsewhere in the Psalter are words such as “straighten”, “direct” and “uprightness”, which refer to God and His Law and the making of things right, hence “straight”. There are words also such as “inclining”, “bending”, “crooked”, “twisted”, which address the result of the Fall.

About “Face”: see the foot-note on Psalm 4:7.

<sup>73</sup> (Romans 3:13) Saint John Chrysostom observes that our mouth/throat must be not a tomb but a treasury. A tomb corrupts. A treasury preserves.

<sup>74</sup> About “embittered”: the life of righteousness is always opposed spiritually by negative principalities and powers. The opponents may also be friends, family, neighbours, the envious, the jealous, and enemies. This opposition may come in the form of distraction leading to forgetfulness. This antipathy to righteousness embitters God, as we may say, although it is risky to attribute human passions to God.

<sup>75</sup> “The age” is an expression, used in several manners and in several sorts of combinations in the Psalter, in order to express indefinite future, endless time and the Kingdom of Heaven. Variants include “unto an age”, “unto an age of an age”, “unto the ages” &c. Sometimes, in liturgical and other texts, we can see “ages of ages”, or “forever”, or “forever and ever” used to express this concept.

and You will pitch Your tent amongst them.<sup>76</sup>  
 They shall boast in You — all those loving Your Name,  
 for it is You that will bless the righteous.  
 O LORD, You have crowned us as with a shield of good-  
 pleasure.




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<sup>76</sup> “Pitch Your tent” here translates a verb-form of the noun σκηνή, *skēnē*, which means “tent”. As a noun, this word might be translated as “tabernacle”, which may imply in nomadic societies a longer sojourn in one place; or it may imply the Tabernacle of the LORD, that preceded the Temple, but it is not always so. Therefore, we use “tent” or “pitch the tent” for σκηνή, *skēnē*, for σκηνωμα, *skēnōma*, and related words throughout. One can generally understand by the context when the Tabernacle itself is intended.

## PSALM 6

*“Supplication of the sinner”*

Κύριε, μὴ τῷ θυμῷ Domine, ne in furore

For the end. In hymns.

About the Ogdoad (Eighth).<sup>77</sup> A psalm by David. 1

**O** LORD, do not reprove me in Your fury,  
nor in Your anger instruct me.<sup>78</sup>

Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I am weak.

Heal me, O LORD, for my bones were stirred up,  
and my soul was greatly stirred up.

But You, O LORD, until when ?

Turn about, O LORD ; rescue my soul.<sup>79</sup> 5

Save me, for the sake of Your mercy ;  
for in death there is no-one remembering You ;<sup>80</sup>  
and in Hadēs, who shall confess You ?<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> “The Eighth” here (and most often) refers to the Eighth Day, the Last Day, the Day of the Kingdom.

<sup>78</sup> Saint Athanasius advises that when we feel the LORD’s displeasure, we ought to say Psalm 6.

About “fury” and “anger”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

<sup>79</sup> “Turn about”, used here and elsewhere, expresses a 180-degree turn, a change to the opposite direction. In this case, we ask the LORD to make a change and to rescue our souls. In the case of human beings, it is used to express the sense of repentance, which implies the turning away from darkness towards the Light.

<sup>80</sup> Saint John Chrysostom explains that these lines do not imply that our existence is only for this present life. David is aware of the Resurrection. However, it may simply mean that after our departure from this life there may be no time for repentance.

Saint Gregory Nazianzus supports this interpretation of Saint John Chrysostom.

<sup>81</sup> “Hadēs” is both Greek and English, translating the Hebrew *Sheol*, the place of the dead, where the departed retain only the faintest semblance of life. When the word “Tartary” may be encountered, it implies the lowest level of Hadēs, reserved for criminals. “Hell”, differently, implies *Gehenna*, the place of perpetual burning. The origin of the term comes from the name of a very deep lake in Mesopotamia. In some cultures, persons in anger still wish someone to the bottom of this lake. See also Psalm 87:12.

“Confess” translates ἐξομολογέομαι, *eksomologeomai*. As a noun it is “confession”. It may convey confession of faith, agreement, promise, thanksgiving.

I became weary in my groaning.

Every night I shall wash my couch :

with my tears I shall drench my bed.

My eye was disturbed because of fury.

I became old amongst all my enemies.

Stand away from me, all those working lawlessness,  
for the LORD has heard the voice of my weeping.

The LORD has heard my supplication : 10

my prayer has the LORD accepted.<sup>82</sup>

May all my enemies be put to shame and be greatly

stirred up :

swiftly may they all be turned away and be greatly put  
to shame.<sup>83</sup>



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

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It means an open declaration, hence its use in “confession of faith” and “confession of sins”.

<sup>82</sup> About these lines: God has heard the plea of the penitent. God gives victory over temptation and death. The workers of lawlessness may be humans, but the spiritual workers of lawlessness must also be taken into account.

<sup>83</sup> About “swiftly”: Saint John Chrysostom advises us that when we see a small movement of a passion, we ought not to see it as insignificant, but to consider that what develops from it could lead to the worst abuses. It is similar to how we become alarmed and panic-stricken when we see a spark make a fire at home, and we run around to quench the blaze. Because evil sets the soul afire more seriously than this fire, we must not neglect early signs of evil, to prevent its growing worse.

PSALM 7

STATION 3

“Supplication to Christ, the Righteous Judge”

Κύριε ὁ Θεός μου Domine, Deus meus

A psalm by David, which he sang to the LORD, 1  
about the words of Khousi, son of Jemeni.<sup>84</sup>

**O** LORD my God, on You have I hoped.  
Save me from all those pursuing me, and rescue me,<sup>85</sup>  
lest, as a lion, one of them snatch my soul,  
when there is no-one to redeem, nor to save.<sup>86</sup>

O LORD my God, if I did this :  
if there be unrighteousness in my hands, 5  
if I requited those who requited me with bad things,  
then may I fall, empty, from the hands of my enemies.<sup>87</sup>

Then may the enemy closely pursue my soul and lay hold  
of it,  
and trample my life to the ground,  
and make my glory pitch its tent in the dirt.

*Pause*

<sup>84</sup> (2 Kingdoms 15:32-37; 16:16-19; 17:5-16; 18:21, 31-32; 1 Paraleipomenon [Chronicles] 27:33) “Khousi”=Hushai=Chusi.

<sup>85</sup> Saint John Chrysostom, recalling the plight of the pursued David, shows that in the face of difficulties and isolation, things become easy because the LORD is present. Evil is weaker than anything; but with God present, virtue is stronger than anything.

<sup>86</sup> Saint John Chrysostom rhetorically asks why, with an army supporting him, David would say “there is no-one to redeem, nor to save”. It is, he continues, because David considered not even the whole world as help, should he not receive help from God; nor did he, being alone, consider it solitude, as long as God was with him.

<sup>87</sup> “Empty” is the first meaning in L&S of κενός, *kenos*. Saint Dorotheos of Gaza uses it adverbially, meaning “without help”.

Saint Athanasius says that when we hear of plots against us, we ought to sing Psalm 7 and to put our trust in God.

Arise, O LORD, in Your anger ;<sup>88</sup>  
be exalted in the boundaries of Your enemies.  
Awake, O LORD my God, in the ordinance which You  
commanded,

and a gathering of the peoples shall surround You ;  
and for the sake of this, turn back on high.

The LORD will judge the peoples.  
Judge me, O LORD, in accordance with my righteousness,  
and in accordance with my guilelessness in me.<sup>89</sup>

Then, let the evil of sinners be brought to an end, 10  
and You will direct the righteous,  
O God, examining the heart and the reins.<sup>90</sup>  
Righteous is my help from God,  
saving those who are upright in heart.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>88</sup> The Fathers point out that God is free from passions. Words such as “fury”, “anger”, “loathing”, “jealousy” are not to be taken literally. These words describe how a person, mired in sin, may perceive what is really the action of God’s Love, pressing and persuading the person towards repentance. In our own anger, we cease to live in harmony with God, and we deprive ourselves of His protection. This results in our wrongly blaming Him for what to our distorted vision seems to be demonstrations of passions on His part. However, God uses these consequences to help us to wake up and to turn about to Him.

<sup>89</sup> This “righteousness” and “guilelessness” can only come from God Himself, and through one’s participation in it. If we have such righteousness and guilelessness in our hearts, it is the fruit of our communion with God and His life-giving Love. Therefore, these virtues are the LORD’s own virtues. We might well be careful also in our self-assessments to give thanks to God for any virtues we find within.

<sup>90</sup> “Reins”=kidneys=heart, that is, the “unconscious mind”, the emotions. Saint John Chrysostom explains that the word “reins” refers to unspoken thoughts of the mind, the most intimate and profound thoughts; and that this is hinted at by the position of the organs mentioned.

Saint Augustine, expounding on this line, writes that although others can know our works and our words, only God, “examining the heart and reins”, knows the intentions of each one. He alone knows what causes our delight. Carefully exploring our heart, He alone can direct the righteous.

<sup>91</sup> “Upright” in this case is the preferred translation of a word meaning “straightforward”, “direct”, “frank”, “correct”.

God is a righteous judge and strong and long-suffering,  
not bringing on anger every day.<sup>92</sup>  
If you were not to turn about, He will polish up His sword.  
He strung His bow, and He made it ready ;  
and in it He prepared instruments of death.  
He wrought His arrows for those who are consumed.<sup>93</sup>  
Behold, he was in travail in unrighteousness ; 15  
he conceived distress, and gave birth to lawlessness.<sup>94</sup>  
He dug a pit and delved it up,  
and he shall fall into the hole which he has made.  
His distress shall turn back upon his head,  
and upon the crown of his head shall come down his  
unrighteousness.

---

<sup>92</sup> Saint John Chrysostom comments that the LORD is long-suffering. We sin daily, and we deserve punishment; but the LORD in His loving-kindness does not always immediately administer justice, with the intention of leading us to repentance. Anger as such is not His, because anger always eats up only the one who is angry. So we see the extent of His compassion. If we gain nothing from this remedy, there are then consequences.

About “anger”: see the foot-note on verse 7.

<sup>93</sup> “Consumed” is the word used by the Fathers to express the literal meaning of being on fire. One can discern two types of fire: the fire of passions and rebellion as partly described here; and the fire of God’s Love, which is so strong and so different from our fallen ways. God’s Love is sometimes interpreted in human fashion as anger (which is not the case), because the LORD’s Love cleans away all that is not life-giving. This cleansing may sometimes feel like the burning of cauterisation. See John 5:35 where the fire as a burning light describes the Forerunner in terms of illumination. The Forerunner’s illumination is from God, and it produces repentance.

Regarding the words of weaponry, Saint John Chrysostom comments that the LORD does not in any way use such weapons. Rather, because of our materialism, the LORD uses these images as a pædagogical device, to bring us to our senses through fear, and to stay the hand of retribution. He cites Jonah at Nineveh as an example. The more intolerable the threatening words, the more the utterances arise from gentleness and deep loving-kindness. Sometimes the LORD threatens punishment, but the threat is so as not to inflict it.

<sup>94</sup> About “he”, Saint Athanasius explains that this pronoun refers to the enemy of our life, meaning the Adversary (also known as the Accuser).

I shall confess the LORD in accordance with His  
righteousness ;  
and I shall chant to the Name of the LORD Most High.<sup>95</sup>



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<sup>95</sup> Many do ask, Why should I praise God? Why does He need it? Saint John Chrysostom, reflecting on the fact that we were created for this purpose, explains that it is his greatest joy to give thanks to and to praise the LORD. It is not that God “needs” this, but that He accepts it from us, together with sacrifices, because it is good for us; it is for our salvation; it is dear to His heart that we do and are what and who we were created to do and to be.

“Chant” translates ψάλλω, *psallō*. This meant in ancient Greek not to sing a psalm, but to play a stringed instrument with the fingers. By the time of the LXX this was less so, the meaning allowing for singing along with a plucked instrument.

## PSALM 8

*“Entry to Jerusalem, Passion, Resurrection and LORDship of Christ”*

Κύριε ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν Domine, Dominus noster

For the end. About the wine-presses. A psalm by David. 1

**O** LORD, our LORD,  
how wonderful is Your Name in all the earth,  
for Your magnificence has been lifted up above the  
Heavens.

Out of the mouth of infants and sucklings have You  
perfected praise,<sup>96</sup>  
because of Your enemies,  
to take down an enemy and an avenger ;  
for I shall see the Heavens, the works of Your fingers,<sup>97</sup>  
and the moon and the stars, whose foundations You have,  
Yourself, laid.

What is Man, that You remember him ? 5  
or a son of Man, that You visit him ?  
You made him a little less than the angels,  
and with glory and honour You crowned him.  
You appointed him over the works of Your hands ;  
You subjected all things beneath his feet :<sup>98</sup>  
sheep and all cattle and even the beasts of the field,

---

<sup>96</sup> (Matthew 21:16) The Saviour reminds us of the importance of the example of children. Because of their uncluttered minds and hearts, because of their simple trust, because of their pure love, they speak the truth openly as they perceive it. In such a spirit of pure, unpoisoned love, praise of the LORD can become perfect, as in the tale of the three simple men on an island in Russia.

<sup>97</sup> Saint John Chrysostom rhetorically asks why David did not write “hands” instead of “fingers”. His response is that we then see that visible things are a work requiring the least energy.

<sup>98</sup> (1 Corinthians 15:27; Hebrews 2:6-8)

the birds of the sky, and the fishes of the sea,  
and the things moving through the paths of the seas.  
O LORD, our LORD,  
how wonderful is Your Name in all the earth.



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
(three times)

*And then the following prayers :*

### TRISAGION PRAYERS

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.  
(three times)

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

O most holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from  
our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and  
heal our infirmities, for Your Name’s sake.

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

Our Father, who are in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name ; Your kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ; give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test, but rescue us from the evil one.

*And then :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

*And these tropars :* Tone 1

I, the prodigal, conceived in transgressions, dare not lift my eyes to the height of Heaven. However, daring to trust in Your love for Man, I cry out : O God, cleanse me, the sinner, and save me. If the righteous be scarcely saved, where shall I, the sinner, appear ? I have not borne the burden and the heat of the day ; but number me with those hired at the eleventh hour, O God, and save me.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Make haste to open Your fatherly arms to me, for I have spent my life as the prodigal. Do not despise a heart now impoverished, O Saviour, as I gaze on the inexhaustible riches of Your mercies ; for to You, O LORD, I cry out with compunction : Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and before You.

Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O all-holy Virgin, hope of Christians, who, beyond mind and speech, gave birth to God, pray unceasingly, together with the powers on high, that remission of sins and correction of life be granted to all of us, who always honour you with faith and love.

LORD, have mercy. (*forty times*)

*And then the following prayer :*

O Master Almighty, inscrutable One, Strength beyond understanding and Origin of Light, from You came forth the hypostatic Word of the Father, and Your Spirit, one in power. For the sake of Your tender-hearted and inexpressible goodness, You

did not despise human nature held fast in the darkness of sin ; but rather, You illumined the world with the divine light of Your prophets, law and teachings. You then deigned to shine forth to us in the flesh Your Only-begotten Son, and guide us to the brightness of Your light. May Your ears receive the voice of our supplication. Grant us, O God, to spend the whole night of this present life in vigilance and sobriety of heart, awaiting the coming of Your Son and our God, the Judge of all. Thus, may we not be lying down and asleep, but alert and active in the fulfilment of Your commandments, so that we might enter together into His joy, where the voice of those that feast is never silent, and where also is the unspeakable delight of those who behold the ineffable beauty of Your Face ; for You are a good God and the Lover of Man, and to You we send up glory : to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.





## session

2

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



### PSALM 9

### STATION 1

*“Appeal to Christ, Saviour and Judge”*

Ἐξομολογήσομαί σοι Confitebor tibi

For the end. About the secrets of the son.<sup>99</sup>

1 ✠

A psalm by David.

**I** shall confess You, O LORD, with my whole heart :  
I shall recount all Your wonders.

I shall be glad and I shall exult in You :

I shall chant to Your Name, O Most High.<sup>100</sup>

When my enemy turns back,

1

they shall become weak and perish away from Your Face ;<sup>101</sup>

for You have made my fair-judgement and my cause ;

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<sup>99</sup> An **acrostic psalm**: following the Hebrew alphabet, each verse, or group of verses, begins with a different letter. This is the first of many such in the Psalter. The Hebrew letters are provided at the right margin in each case.

<sup>100</sup> Chanting to the Name of the Most High is that for which we were created: to sing the Trisagion (thrice-holy hymn) in eternity.

Saint John Chrysostom explains that making melody to the LORD's Name is the characteristic of one who is in love with the LORD; and this is not different from the way we characteristically express love to one another in songs.

<sup>101</sup> Saint John Chrysostom comments that when we hear “face”, we ought not to imagine any bodily face. “Face” suggests God's power, His manifestation, the ease of His strength. One look from Him is enough to destroy His enemies. If the demons are enfeebled just by the presence of holy people, how much more so are they by God's presence.

You have sat down on a throne, You that are judging  
righteously.  
You have rebuked the nations, and the impious one has  
perished ;<sup>102</sup> 5 λ  
his name You have blotted out unto the age,<sup>103</sup>  
and unto the age of the age.  
The swords of the enemy have failed unto the end, τ  
and You have pulled down cities ;  
their remembrance has perished with a roar.  
The LORD remains unto the age ;<sup>104</sup> η  
He has prepared His throne in fair-judgement.  
He it is who will judge the world in righteousness ;  
He will judge the peoples in uprightness.  
The LORD has been the Refuge of the needy : 10 ι  
a Helper, in favourable times, in affliction.  
Let them hope on You – those knowing Your Name,  
for You did not abandon those seeking You out, O LORD.  
Chant to the LORD, to Him, dwelling in Siōn. ς  
Announce His purposes amongst the nations ;  
for He, seeking out crimes of blood, has remembered  
them :  
He has not forgotten the cry of the needy.

<sup>102</sup> “Nations” generally refers to Gentiles, to those outside the Chosen People, to those who worship other than the one LORD God, to those whose influence on the faithful is negative, because of the temptation to fall away from the Truth.  
About “nations”: see the foot-note on Psalm 2:1.

<sup>103</sup> Saint Athanasius explains that this line is about the destruction of the devil.

<sup>104</sup> Saint John Chrysostom notes that an alternative reading is “is seated” which has the meaning of “remains”, or “abides”. He refers to such a reading of Baruch 3:3.

Have mercy on me, O LORD ; η  
see my humiliation from my enemies.  
You are the One lifting me up from the gates of death,  
so that I might tell forth all Your praises 15 υ  
in the gates of the daughter of Siōn.<sup>105</sup>  
I shall exult in Your salvation.<sup>106</sup>  
The nations became stuck in the corruption which they  
made :  
in that snare which they hid has their foot been caught.  
The LORD is known in His making judgements ;<sup>107</sup> ς  
the sinner has been caught in the works of his own hands.  
*Canticle of Pause*<sup>108</sup>  
Let the sinners be turned back to Hadēs : ζ  
all the nations forgetting God ;  
for the poor shall not be forgotten unto the end :  
the endurance of the needy shall not perish unto the end.  
Arise, O LORD, let not Man become strong ; 20 λ  
let the nations be judged before Your Face.

<sup>105</sup> It ought always to be remembered that here, and elsewhere in this Psalter, “daughter of Siōn” is code-language, as it were, for Jerusalem.

<sup>106</sup> Saint John Chrysostom explains that it is his own crown and diadem that he may thus exult. He adds that we ought not to seek to be freed or saved at any price or in any manner, but only in God’s way.

<sup>107</sup> “Judgement” translates the Greek word κρίμα, *krima*, which is sometimes similar in meaning to the Greek κρίσις, *krisis*. See the note on *krisis* in Psalm 1:5. “His” is lacking in Greek.

<sup>108</sup> In the Hebrew, the direction is *higgaion selah*, the meaning of which is now unknown [RSV].

Saint Gregory of Nyssa says that this unique variation ought to be understood as “Pause of a Canticle”.

Saint John Chrysostom simply translates it as “a voice continuously”, or else “chanting continuously”.



Appoint, O LORD, a law-giver over them ;  
let the nations know that they are Men.<sup>109</sup>

*Pause*<sup>110</sup>

Why, O LORD, have You stood so far away ; Ե  
do You disregard us in favourable times, in affliction ?<sup>111</sup>

When the impious one behaves proudly, the poor one is set  
on fire ;<sup>112</sup>

they are caught in their deliberations, which they reasoned  
out ;

for the sinner praises himself in the cravings of his soul,  
and the one doing unrighteousness blesses himself.<sup>113</sup>

The sinner has provoked the LORD ; 25 Ճ  
in accordance with the multitude of his anger, he shall

not seek Him out.<sup>114</sup>

God is not before his face.

His ways are profaned at all times.

---

<sup>109</sup> Saint John Chrysostom reminds us that the request is that wilful human beings need a law-giver so that they may come out of their madness, and remember that they are humans.

<sup>110</sup> Psalm 10 in Hebrew begins here.

<sup>111</sup> Saint John Chrysostom comments that David is not accusing, but imploring on behalf of the afflicted. They, in their pain, plead before the moment of judgement, as one needing surgery might do before the incision is made.

[Those who remember pre-anæsthetic dentistry might understand this more clearly.]

<sup>112</sup> Saint Augustine explains that in affliction the minds of the poor become inflamed with hope and longing for help from God.

<sup>113</sup> Saint John Chrysostom points to the inversion of reality in such a prevalence of evil, that evil is openly and shamelessly spoken about. Thus, not only does the sinner praise and bless himself, but also others applaud him in his sinning.

<sup>114</sup> “Him” is lacking in Greek. Similarly in verse 34 “it” is lacking. There are other places also in which these pronouns are lacking in Greek, but which should be supplied in English for the sake of clarity.

Your judgements are wiped out from before his face :<sup>115</sup> Ծ  
he shall lord it over all his enemies ;

for he said in his heart : “I shall not be distressed ;  
from generation to generation, I shall be without badness” .  
It is he, whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness and  
deceit :<sup>116</sup>

beneath his tongue are trouble and distress.

He lies in ambush with the rich, Կ  
in secret places, to slay the innocent.

His eyes look intently upon the needy.

He lies in wait in secret, as a lion in his den ; 30 ը

he lies in wait to snatch up the poor one :

to snatch up the poor one and drag him into it.<sup>117</sup>

In his snare shall he humble him ;

he shall stoop down and fall, Կ

as he lords it over the needy ;

for he said in his heart : “God has forgotten ;<sup>118</sup>

He has turned His Face away so as not to see, unto the end” .

Arise, O LORD my God ;

let Your hand be lifted up ; Կ

do not forget the needy.

---

<sup>115</sup> “Wiped out” translates the Greek for “erased”, or “removed”, or “cancelled”: i.e. removal from the opposite sides of an account in a balance-sheet.

<sup>116</sup> (Romans 3:14)

<sup>117</sup> It is important that we be constantly aware that the powers of darkness are not “nice”, and they do not play fair. They invariably pounce upon us when we are forgetful or unmindful. We must always, at all times, be ready for surprise attacks.

<sup>118</sup> Saint John Chrysostom comments that God has in no way “forgotten”. The more the suffering, the more He is present. Oppressors do not oppress with impunity. God’s action may not follow closely, because in His forbearance He is giving the opportunity for repentance even to the oppressor.

Why did the impious one stir God to anger ?<sup>119</sup>  
 for he said in his heart : “He will not seek it out”.  
 You do see, for You do observe distress and fury, 35 ג  
 to give them over into Your hands.  
 The poor one has abandoned himself to You :  
 it is You that were the Helper of the orphan.  
 Shatter the arm of the sinner and of the evil one. ו  
 His sin shall be sought, and it shall not be found.<sup>120</sup>  
 The LORD will establish His Kingship unto the age,  
 and unto the age of the age ;  
 and you, O nations, you shall perish from His earth.  
 The LORD has heard the craving of the needy ; ת  
 Your ear gave heed to the readiness of their heart,  
 to judge the orphan and the humble,  
 so that Man may no longer continue to brag upon the  
 earth.



<sup>119</sup> About “anger”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

<sup>120</sup> Saint Athanasius explains that we will not be able to see the sin of the “evil one” because this evil one has been destroyed because of it.

## PSALM 10

“Confidence in Christ, the Righteous Judge”

Ἐπὶ τῷ Κυρίῳ πέποιθα In Domino confido

For the end. A psalm by David.

1

**I**n the LORD do I trust.<sup>121</sup>

How shall you say to my soul :

“Flee away to the mountains as a sparrow ?”

for behold, the sinners have strung their bow ;

they have made arrows ready for a quiver,

to shoot in the dark at the upright in heart ;<sup>122</sup>

for what You have, Yourself, perfected,

they have, themselves, brought down ;

but the righteous one — what has he done ?

The LORD is in His holy temple ;

the LORD — His throne is in Heaven.<sup>123</sup>

His eyes look intently upon the needy ;

His eyelids examine the sons of Men.

<sup>121</sup> “Trust” may be directly compared with hope. Trusting in God implies having absolute and complete confidence in Him, as one trusts a chair to hold one up. Trust in God implies a confidence born of love, which allows us to rest in Him. We well remember the warning in Psalm 145 not to put our trust in great persons or powerful persons. Human beings always fail us, willy-nilly. It is the LORD alone who never fails us.

Saint John Chrysostom encourages us saying that the power of hope, *i.e.* trust, in the LORD, is great. It is an invincible fortress, an unscalable rampart, an insurmountable reinforcement, a peaceful harbour, an invulnerable tower, an irresistible weapon, an insuperable power, which can find a refuge where none seems possible. He says that hope and trust in God transform everything. He further comments that we have nothing to fear in our hoping on the LORD. The might of the all-transforming LORD makes an opposing army as easy to wipe away as a spider’s web.

<sup>122</sup> About “dark”: the Greek word means literally “dark moon”, that is, “moonless night”.

<sup>123</sup> Saint John of Damascus explains that Heaven encompasses all created things, both the visible and the invisible. In other words, since God is omnipresent, and Heaven is where God is, Heaven embraces all things.

The LORD examines the righteous and the impious, 5  
but the one loving unrighteousness hates his own soul.<sup>124</sup>  
Upon sinners He will rain snares :  
fire and brimstone and tempestuous wind shall be the  
portion of their cup ;<sup>125</sup>  
for the LORD is righteous, and righteousness has He loved.<sup>126</sup>  
His Face has seen uprightness.



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
(three times)  
LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

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<sup>124</sup> Much to be pitied and prayed-for is the person so self-hating and so self-destructive as to be “loving unrighteousness”. This is to be the living dead, in defiant separation from God’s omnipresent Love. Often, such persons strike out at all around, spreading suffering, beginning from their own heart.

<sup>125</sup> This sort of threatening is what a caring parent would do for a child. This apparent retribution can be seen as an expression of how God’s Love can burn those who reject it. The Life-giving Love of God can cauterise.

Saint John Chrysostom explains that God sometimes applies a punishment to demonstrate His loving care for His people, using it to bring them to moderation.

<sup>126</sup> “Righteousness” is in the plural in the Greek text. “Uprightness” in the next line is in the plural in the Greek text.

## PSALM 11

## STATION 2

*“Supplication against the deceptive world, and announcing of salvation”*

Σώσον με, Κύριε      Salvum me fac

For the end. About the Ogdoad (Eighth).

1

A psalm by David.

**S**ave me, O LORD, for any holy one has come to an end ;<sup>127</sup>  
for truths have been diminished from amongst the sons  
of Men.

Each one spoke futilities to his neighbour :<sup>128</sup>

deceitful lips spoke bad things in a double heart.

May the LORD exterminate all deceitful lips

and a boastful tongue, which say :

“We shall magnify our tongues ;

our lips are our own ;<sup>129</sup>

who is lord of us ?”

“Because of the misery of the poor and the groaning of  
the needy,

5

now I will arise”, says the LORD ;

---

<sup>127</sup> About “holy one”: holiness is an expression of open, pure, loving communion with God. Pre-lapsarian humans had a single (undivided) heart, and pure speech, and there was a profound connexion between the word and its meaning and action. “Yes” was “yes”, and “no” was “no”; word was the same as deed. There was complete harmony with God’s will. Adam’s naming of the animals shows all this.

<sup>128</sup> Such words as these describe the so-called post-modern era, in which words have shifting meaning, or even no meaning. The former understanding, that word and deed are almost identical, is now lost. It is ever more difficult to be in harmony with the Apostles, and with the exhortation that our “yes” be “yes” and our “no” be “no” (see Matthew 5:37; James 5:12).

<sup>129</sup> Saint John Chrysostom comments that this prayer, that is, this whole psalm, is for, not against the double-hearted. “Exterminate” refers only to the lips. The following diabolical and insolent question, “Who is lord of us ?”, the sign of a corrupt spirit, ignores the fact that everything about one’s whole body and being, and all things visible and invisible, in themselves proclaim God’s power, strength, wisdom, care and providence. This insolent question is madness.

“I will place them in salvation, and in that I will speak openly”.<sup>130</sup>

The teachings of the LORD are pure teachings : silver tested by fire, proved in the earth, cleansed seven times.<sup>131</sup>

You, O LORD, You will watch over us, and You will preserve us from this generation, and unto the age.

In a circle do the impious walk round about ;<sup>132</sup> in accordance with Your exaltedness, with much care have You treated the sons of Men.

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<sup>130</sup> About this line: Saint John Chrysostom explains that it is the powerful and rich who had better be in fear of the consequences of their oppressing and wronging the poor and needy. The mere fact of the oppression of the poor, coupled with the might of their appeal to the LORD, calls down Grace, and stirs God to action from His compassion. This groaning can produce the overturning of anything. The LORD declares that He will be their champion; and He will show it openly, so that the opponents may come to their senses.

Saint Athanasius reminds us that the LORD says that He will make His salvation manifest, and heard, for it will be preached all over the earth.

<sup>131</sup> In citing this text, Saint Athanasius uses words that suggest that the earth is used as a crucible. Bells are cast in the earth.

<sup>132</sup> Circles are the result of the tangle of lies. The impious wander aimlessly in darkness and confusion, as the result of empty words and lies. God takes care of His faithful children, and leads them on straight paths.

Cassiodorus comments that they walk “in a circle” so that they may never reach the right path. Circuitous and winding routes are always connected with evil manners. They cannot come to the Eighth-day Rest, because they are always revolving backwards as moving wheels appear to do.

## PSALM 12

*“Appeal to Christ, the True Light”*

Ἔως πότε, Κύριε            Usque quo, Domine ?

For the end. A psalm by David.

1

**H**ow long, O LORD, will You forget me, even to the end ?

How long will You turn Your Face away from me ?<sup>133</sup>

How long shall I lay up counsels in my soul, and pains in my heart by day and by night ?

How long shall my enemy be exalted over me ?

Look attentively ; hear me, O LORD my God.

Illumine my eyes, so that I may never sleep unto death, so that my enemy may never say : “I have prevailed against him”.

5

Those afflicting me shall exult if I be shaken.

But I have hoped on Your mercy ;

my heart shall exult in Your salvation.

I shall sing to the LORD, my Benefactor,

and I shall chant to the Name of the LORD Most High.

---

<sup>133</sup> Following along with what Saint John Chrysostom writes about this psalm, it is important to understand this “forget me”. Saint John understands from the outset that we have already experienced the LORD’s love. In this context, from time to time, it feels to us as if God has forgotten us, or abandoned us. Saint John reminds us that the LORD allows us to feel this way sometimes, in order to sharpen our love for Him. The saying rightly is, “Absence makes the heart grow fonder”. Anyone experiencing the absence of a loved-one knows this. Nothing is more important to any one of us than the priority of love of the LORD. In this love is our very life. At the same time, we must always remember that the LORD is not actually forgetting us. Were He to forget us, we would cease to exist. He loves us to life.

## PSALM 13

*"Judgement of the impious, and salvation of the Church"*

Εἶπεν ἄφρων Dixit insipiens

For the end. A psalm by David.

1

**T**he fool has said in his heart :<sup>134</sup>

"There is no God".

They became corrupted and loathsome in their purposes ;  
there is no-one doing loving-kindness ; there is not even  
one.

The LORD from Heaven stooped down over the sons of Men,  
to see if there be anyone understanding, or seeking out  
God.

They all declined away : as well, they became useless ;  
there is no-one doing loving-kindness ; there is not even  
one.<sup>135</sup>

Shall they not know, all those working lawlessness ?

Those eating up my people, as if they were eating bread,  
have not called upon the LORD.

They were afraid, in fear, there, where no fear was,<sup>136</sup>  
for God is with a righteous generation.

5

You put to shame the counsel of the poor one,  
but the LORD is his Hope.

---

<sup>134</sup> "Fool" has to do with the blindness and thickness stemming from a hardened heart. Folly comes from deliberate wrong choices, those against God's will and His direction.

<sup>135</sup> (Romans 3:10-12) Saint Athanasius explains that the actions of the foolish reveal their thoughts. He says that it is axiomatic that such persons do wicked deeds.

<sup>136</sup> (Psalm 52:2-6) The one who chooses to reject God altogether becomes a slave to his own passions, most particularly of fear, and becomes a predator of the weak. A sort of paranoia binds those who have only themselves as a criterion. From this rejection of God comes the corruption mentioned in verse 2.

Who shall give from Siōn the salvation of Israēl ?<sup>137</sup>

When the LORD turns about the captivity of His people,  
Jakōb shall exult and Israēl shall be glad.



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

---

<sup>137</sup> "Israēl" is the name given to Jacob by the LORD (see 1 Mōysēs [Genesis] 32:24-32; 1 Mōysēs 35:9-13). As shall be seen in other psalms, this name becomes synonymous for all his descendants, the nation itself.

**PSALM 14****STATION 3***"Ascension of the holy mountain of the LORD"*

Κύριε, τίς παροικήσει      Domine quis habitabit ?

A psalm by David.

1

**O** LORD, who shall sojourn in Your tent ?  
 or who shall pitch his tent on Your holy mountain ?

It is the one walking blamelessly, and working  
 righteousness,

speaking truth in his heart ;

the one who has not deceived with his tongue,

nor done ill to his neighbour,

nor taken up a reproach against his kinsfolk.

The one doing evil is reckoned as nothing before his face,

but he glorifies those fearing the LORD :

the one swearing an oath to his neighbour and not  
 setting it at nought.

He has not given his money at interest,

5

nor taken bribes against the innocent.

The one doing these things shall not be shaken unto the  
 age.

✠

**PSALM 15***"Election of the Church, and Resurrection of Christ"*

Φύλαξόν με, Κύριε      Conserva me, Domine

Inscription on a stele. By David.

1

**W**atch over me, O LORD ;  
 for I have hoped on You.

I said to the LORD : "You are my LORD ;

for You have no need of my good things".<sup>138</sup>

As for the holy ones who are on His earth,

the LORD has made wonderful all His wishes in them.

Their infirmities were multiplied ;

afterwards they made haste.<sup>139</sup>

I shall not gather together their gatherings of blood,

nor shall I mention their names with my lips.

The LORD is the portion of my inheritance and of my  
 cup :

5

it is You, restoring my inheritance to me.

Lines have fallen for me in the most excellent places ;<sup>140</sup>

indeed, my inheritance is most excellent to me.

I shall bless the LORD, who is making me understand ;

even until night my reins have instructed me.

I was seeing the LORD before my face continually ;

for He is at my right-hand, so that I may not be shaken.

<sup>138</sup> (Psalm 49:13) God, who creates all, does not need anything that we have. He wants our love, our heart, because He created us to be in communion with Him.

<sup>139</sup> Saint Athanasius explains that "their infirmities were multiplied" because first they were in sin; but then, by hearing the preaching, they came to obey. Then they hastened to obey the preaching.

<sup>140</sup> "Lines"=ropes=portions=boundaries. This conveys the idea of inheriting property. In French, *cordeau* is the word used for the standard string used to measure property.

In the Greek, "places" is lacking.

Because of this, my heart was glad and my tongue  
exulted.

Moreover, on hope shall my flesh pitch its tent ;  
for You will not abandon my soul to Hadēs, 10  
nor will You give Your Holy One to see corruption.<sup>141</sup>  
You have made known to me the ways of life.  
With Your Face, You will fill me with gladness ;<sup>142</sup>  
there are delights in Your right hand unto the end.



---

<sup>141</sup> (Acts 2:27 & 31; 13:35) “Corruption” is a synonym for Hadēs. This is so also for “the pit”, and sometimes also “abyss” in other psalms. “Corruption” is the fruit of selfishness and self-centredness — of being apart from God.

<sup>142</sup> (Acts 2:25-28)

## PSALM 16

*“Confident supplication during persecution”*

Εισάκουσον, Κύριε Exaudi, Domine

A prayer of David. 1

**H**ear, O LORD, my righteousness ;<sup>143</sup>  
give heed to my supplication ;  
give ear to my prayer which is not on deceitful lips.  
May my judgement come forth from Your Face ;  
let my eyes see uprightness.  
You have proved my heart ;  
You have visited me by night ;  
You have tested me by fire,  
and unrighteousness was not found in me.  
That my mouth might not speak of the works of Men,  
because of the words of Your lips, I have kept hard ways.<sup>144</sup>  
Strengthen my foot-steps in Your paths, 5  
lest my foot-steps slip.  
I cried out, for You have listened to me, O God ;  
incline Your ear to me, and hear my utterances.  
Show the wonders of Your mercies,  
O You, saving those hoping on You  
from those standing against Your right-hand.  
Watch over me, as the apple of the eye ;<sup>145</sup>

---

<sup>143</sup> About “my righteousness”: see the foot-note on Psalm 4:1.

<sup>144</sup> “Words” here in Greek is accusative plural of λόγος, *logos*. *Logos* in the singular may refer only to a word, but it may also refer to the Word, as in the Word of God, the *Logos* of God. Throughout the text, one may in the heart sense that the Word Himself may be sometimes implied in the singular usage.

<sup>145</sup> The “apple of the eye” refers to the pupil of the eye. As a metaphor, it means a cherished person or thing, or special favour and affection. Thus, we are asking that the LORD care for us and cherish us in this way, which He already does.

in the shelter of Your wings will You shelter me,<sup>146</sup>  
away from the face of the impious, who are making me  
miserable.

My enemies encompassed my soul. 10

They shut up their fat ;  
their mouth spoke with pride.

Having thrown me out, they have now encircled me ;  
they set their eyes to be bent down to the earth.

They pounced upon me, just as a lion ready for its prey,  
and just as a lion's cub inhabiting hidden places.

Arise, O LORD ; outrun them and trip them up.

Rescue my soul from the impious,  
and Your sword from the enemies of Your hand.

O LORD, from the few of the earth,  
divide them during their life.

With Your hidden things their belly was filled.

They were sated with swine-flesh, 15  
and they left the leftovers for their infants.<sup>147</sup>

But as for me, in righteousness I shall appear before Your  
Face ;

I shall be sated when Your glory appears to me.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> The image of being sheltered under the wings of the LORD is related to the image of a hen sheltering her chicks. It is said that in the case of a fire, a hen will shelter her chicks under her wings and body, protecting them. She may die from the fire, but the chicks are likely to survive.

Saint John Chrysostom comments that these "wings" are God's help, security, shelter, defence and unconquerable help for us.

<sup>147</sup> Saint Hesychius of Jerusalem explains that this statement is not a criticism of the children's food itself. It is rather stating that the unwise leave evils for their infants as their heritage.

<sup>148</sup> Being seen before God's Face, and being more than completely satisfied beholding God's glory, are indications of life in God's Presence, that is, life in the Resurrection.



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

*And then the following prayers :*

#### **TRISAGION PRAYERS**

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

*(three times)*

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

O most holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from  
our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and  
heal our infirmities, for Your Name's sake.

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

Our Father, who are in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name ; Your  
kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ;  
give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our debts, as we  
forgive our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test, but rescue  
us from the evil one.

*And then :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus Christ, our  
God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.



*And these tropars : Tone 2*

I am, myself, the barren tree, O LORD. I have not brought forth any fruit of compunction, and in dread of being cut down, I fear the fire which is unquenchable. Therefore, I implore You, before this must be, turn me back once more, and save me. My trespasses have risen upon me like the waves of the sea. As a ship on the deep, I alone am bestormed by my transgressions. But pilot me by repentance<sup>149</sup> to the calm harbour, O LORD, and save me.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. "Have mercy on me", said David, and I cry out to You : I have sinned, O Saviour. Wash away my sins by repentance, and have mercy on me.

Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O Mother of God, fervent advocate of Christians, entreat your Son to deliver us from all misfortunes, and from fierce adversaries ; and, for the sake of His tender compassion, to grant us, by your prayers, forgiveness of sins, O Virgin Mother.

LORD, have mercy. (*forty times*)

*And then the following prayer :*

O Master Almighty, Father of our LORD Jesus Christ, Your Only-begotten Son, grant me an unsullied body, a pure heart, an alert mind, unerring understanding and the visitation of the Holy Spirit, that I may attain unto the abundance of truth in Your Christ, to whom it is fitting to send up glory, honour and worship, to You, the unoriginate Father, and to the Holy Spirit, now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



---

<sup>149</sup> "Repentance" means primarily to turn about (that is, to make a 180 degree turn), to turn away from sin, and instead to turn towards righteousness, to turn from darkness to light.

## session

3

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ; now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



### PSALM 17

### STATION 1

*"Thanksgiving for the work of salvation"*

*'Αγαπήσω σε, Κύριε Diligam te, Domine*

For the end. By the servant of the LORD, David,<sup>150</sup> 1

who spoke to the LORD the words of this canticle, in the day in which the LORD rescued him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saoul ; and he said :<sup>151</sup>

**I** shall love You, O LORD, my Strength.

The LORD is my Steadfastness, my Refuge and my Rescuer.

My God is my Helper : I shall hope on Him.

He is my Protector, the Horn of my salvation and my Support.<sup>152</sup>

While praising, I shall call upon the LORD, and from my enemies shall I be saved.

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<sup>150</sup> Psalm 17=2 Kingdoms 22 (with some adjustments). "Servant" translates the Greek παῖς, *pais* (*pæs*). This term can also imply a parent-child relationship.

<sup>151</sup> (1 Kingdoms [Samuel] chapters 19-31) "Saoul"=Saul.

<sup>152</sup> "Horn" is a symbol of power in the Scriptures. Saint Basil the Great explains that "horn" is used as a metaphor for glory, and for power.

Pangs of death encompassed me, 5  
and torrents of lawlessness greatly agitated me.<sup>153</sup>  
Pangs of Hadēs encompassed me round about :  
snares of death outran me.  
When I was being afflicted, I called upon the LORD,  
and to my God I cried out.  
From His holy temple He heard my voice,  
and my cry before His Face shall enter His ears.  
The earth was shaken and was trembling ;  
the foundations of the mountains were stirred up and  
were shaken,  
for God was angry with them.  
Smoke went up in His anger,<sup>154</sup>  
and fire blazed forth from His Face :  
coals were ignited from it.  
He bent the Heavens and He came down,  
and gloom was beneath His feet.  
He rode upon the Cheroubim and He flew : 10  
He flew on the wings of winds.<sup>155</sup>  
He made darkness His secret place :  
round about Him was His tent —  
dark water in the clouds of the air.

---

<sup>153</sup> These “pangs” and “snares” are forces in opposition to God, the Giver of Life, not simply the death of the body. It is this death, associated with the Adversary, which Christ overcomes.

<sup>154</sup> About “anger”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

<sup>155</sup> Saint Gregory of Nazianzus comments that some things in Scripture are not exactly factual, meaning that they are metaphors. Thus we read that God “sleeps”, “wakes up”, “is angered”, “walks”, or has “a throne of cherubim”. His swift motion we call “flight”; His watching over us is His “Face”; His giving and receiving is His “hand”. In this way, God’s actions are sometimes given a bodily reference.

From the brightness before His Face, the clouds came  
through —  
hailstones and coals of fire.  
The LORD thundered out of Heaven ;  
the Most High gave His voice.  
He sent out arrows and He scattered them ;  
He multiplied lightnings, and He threw them into  
confusion.  
The springs of the waters were seen, 15  
and uncovered were the foundations of the world :  
because of Your rebuke, O LORD,  
because of the blast of the breath of Your anger.  
He sent out from on high, and He took me ;  
He took me to Himself out of many waters.  
He will rescue me from my powerful enemies and from  
those hating me,  
for they became stronger than I.  
They outran me in the day of my ill-treatment,  
but the LORD became my Support.  
He led me out into a broad place ; 20  
He will rescue me, for He delighted in me.<sup>156</sup>  
The LORD will requite me in accordance with my  
righteousness ;  
and in accordance with the purity of my hands will He  
requite me,  
for I kept the ways of the LORD.

---

<sup>156</sup> A verse not included in the usual text can follow here:  
“He delivered me from my powerful enemies, from those who hate me”.

I have not turned impiously away from my God ;  
for all His judgements are before my face,  
and His statutes I have not put away from me.  
I shall be blameless with Him,  
and I shall keep myself from my lawlessness.  
The LORD will requite me in accordance with my  
righteousness, 25  
and in accordance with the purity of my hands before  
His eyes.  
With the holy, You will be holy ;  
with the innocent man, You will be innocent ;  
with the chosen, You will be chosen,  
and with the twisted, You will twist about ;<sup>157</sup>  
for You will save a humble people,  
and You will humble the eyes of the proud.  
You will illumine my lamp, O LORD my God :  
You will illumine my darkness ;  
for in You, I shall be rescued from a murderous ordeal, 30  
and in my God, I shall leap over a wall.  
My God – blameless is His way.  
The teachings of the LORD were tested by fire.  
A Protector is He of all those hoping on Him ;  
for who is God, except the LORD ?  
and who is God, except our God ?  
God, girding me around with power,  
made my way blameless :

---

<sup>157</sup> About this line: Saint Clement of Alexandria explains that this means that the LORD chastises us sinners, because in His goodness and love, He tries to restrain our impulse towards death.

He, strengthening my feet just as those of a deer,  
setting me on the high places,  
teaching my hands to war. 35  
My arms You made like a bow of bronze.  
You gave me the protection of salvation,  
and Your right hand supported me.  
Your instruction set me aright unto the end,  
and Your instruction itself shall teach me.  
You broadened my foot-steps beneath me,<sup>158</sup>  
and my foot-prints have not become weak.  
I shall closely pursue my enemies and lay hold of them,  
and not turn away, until they come to an end.  
I shall squeeze them out, and they shall not be able to  
stand ;  
they shall fall beneath my feet.  
You girded me with power for war ; 40  
You fettered beneath me all those rising up against me.  
As for my enemies, You gave me their back,  
and those hating me, You exterminated.<sup>159</sup>  
They cried out, but there was no-one to save –  
to the LORD, but He did not hear them.  
I shall grind them to be just like dust in the face of the wind ;  
as the mud of the squares shall I pound them down.

---

<sup>158</sup> About this line: Saint Athanasius elaborates that the LORD removes the snares and stumbling-blocks prepared by our enemies to clear the way for us.

<sup>159</sup> Saint Athanasius explains that these lines mean that those who hate us flee, and that our enemies, the demons, disappear when they cannot introduce passionate thoughts to our souls.

The late Elder Paisius of Mount Athos likens thoughts during prayer to aeroplanes circling an aeroport. He says that our responsibility is to keep the thoughts from landing. This is primarily accomplished by asking the LORD for help at all times.

You will rescue me from the contradiction of the people ;  
You will appoint me as the head of nations.  
A people whom I did not know served me ;  
when the ear heard, they obeyed me. 45

Foreign sons lied to me ;  
foreign sons became old :<sup>160</sup>  
they limped away from their paths.  
The LORD lives ;  
and blessed be my God,  
and let the God of my salvation be exalted.  
It is God giving me vengeance,<sup>161</sup>  
having subjected peoples under me :  
my Rescuer from my angry enemies.  
From those rising up against me, You will lift me up ;  
rescue me from an unrighteous man.  
Because of this, I shall confess You amongst the nations,  
O LORD, 50  
and to Your Name shall I chant :<sup>162</sup>  
as He magnifies the salvation of His king ;  
and as He does mercy to His christ,  
to David, and to his seed until the age.

---

<sup>160</sup> About “foreign”: Saint Irenæus comments that all human beings are by nature created as the children of God; but when we are contrary to His will, we become foreign to Him. See the foot-note on Psalm 143:7.

<sup>161</sup> In Greek, “vengeance” is in the plural. See the foot-note on Psalm 93:1.

<sup>162</sup> (Romans 15:9)



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

**PSALM 18**

**STATION 2**

*“Preaching of the Apostles, the Incarnation and Ascension of Christ, the praise of the new law”*

Οἱ οὐρανοὶ διηγούνται Cœli enarrant

For the end. A psalm by David.

1

**T**he Heavens recount the glory of God,  
and the firmament announces the work of His hands.<sup>163</sup>

Day to day brings forth speech,  
and night to night announces knowledge.<sup>164</sup>

There are no conversations, nor words,  
in which their voices are not heard.

Their sound has gone out unto all the earth,  
and their utterances unto the ends of the world.<sup>165</sup>

5

In the sun has He placed His tent ;  
and it is He, going forth as a bridegroom from his bridal  
chamber.

He will exult, as a giant, to run his way.

From the zenith of Heaven is His going-forth,<sup>166</sup>  
and His goal is as far as the zenith of Heaven :

<sup>163</sup> “The firmament” is the vault of the sky.

Saint Athanasius explains that for those whose eyes of understanding have not been wholly dimmed, it is obvious that all creation points to God who is sovereign over His creation. Would-be philosophers who turned away from Christ have become disabled.

<sup>164</sup> Saint Cyril of Jerusalem states firmly that both Scripture and nature show us that day and night do, in fact, almost shout out that God is their Creator.

<sup>165</sup> (Romans 10:18) Saint John Chrysostom elaborates on these lines that God’s Providence is brighter than the sun; and all creation proclaims God’s care, His Providence, and His incomprehensible love.

<sup>166</sup> About “Heaven”: here, and in some other places in this Psalter, as also with “God”, there is in Greek the definite article. However, in English, saying “the Heaven” or “the God” may be awkward or confusing to the hearer, and so the definite article is often omitted.

there is nothing that shall be hidden from His heat.

The law of the LORD is blameless, turning souls about ;  
the witness of the LORD is faithful, making infants wise.

The statutes of the LORD are upright, gladdening the  
heart ;

the commandment of the LORD is far-shining, illumining  
the eyes.<sup>167</sup>

The fear of the LORD is pure, continuing unto an age  
of an age.

10

The judgements of the LORD are true, and altogether made  
righteous :

more to be desired are they than gold, and stone of great  
value,

and sweeter than honey and the honeycomb.

Indeed, Your bond-servant keeps them :<sup>168</sup>

in keeping them is great recompense.

Errors – who shall understand them ?

From my hidden ones, cleanse me.

Also, from foreigners spare Your bond-servant.<sup>169</sup>

If they do not lord it over me, then I shall be blameless,  
and I shall be cleansed from great sin.

<sup>167</sup> Saint Clement of Alexandria illumines us about these words, noting that if the sun had not been created, all would have languished in darkness. Likewise, had we not known and been illumined by the Word, we would only have been as fowls kept in dark spaces, being fed and fattened for slaughter.

<sup>168</sup> In translation, the Greek δοῦλος, *doulos* is often softened to “servant”, but the word strongly implies slavery, hence “bond-servant” (see 1 Corinthians 6:20; 7:23). One could also sell oneself voluntarily into slavery for various reasons. A paid servant is mostly a recent phenomenon.

<sup>169</sup> About “foreigners”: Saint Athanasius informs us that thoughts surround us invisibly, and that hordes of demons also attack us. He rightly calls them “foreign”, because they are malevolent aliens and enemies.

The teachings of my mouth shall be to Your good-  
pleasure,  
and the rumination of my heart shall be always before  
Your Face,<sup>170</sup>  
O LORD, my Helper and my Redeemer.

15



---

<sup>170</sup> About “rumination”: see the foot-note on Psalm 1:2. In addition, “rumination” correctly implies verbal repetition of something, not silent thought.

## PSALM 19

*“Prayer for the victory of the Church”*

Ἐπακούσαι σου Κύριος Exaudiat te Dominus  
For the end. A psalm by David.

1

**M**ay the LORD listen to you in the day of affliction ;  
may the Name of the God of Jakōb protect you.  
May He send out help to you from the holy place ;<sup>171</sup>  
and from Siōn, may He support you.  
May He remember your every sacrifice,  
and let your whole-burnt-offering grow fat.<sup>172</sup>

*Pause*

May the LORD give to you in accordance with your heart, 5  
and fulfil all your counsel.

We shall exult in your salvation,  
and in the Name of the LORD our God shall we be  
magnified.

May the LORD fulfil all your requests.  
Now I know that the LORD has saved His christ ;<sup>173</sup>  
He will listen to him from His holy Heaven ;  
salvation is in the mighty deeds of His right hand.  
Some in chariots, some in horses,

---

<sup>171</sup> About “holy place”: here, the Greek gives only ἐξ ἁγίου, *ex hagiou*, and in many other places some other form of ἅγιος. It implies “holy place”/“holy one”, or “holy places”/“holy ones”, but it is not explicit. Further, there is no definite article in the Greek, but it seems to require it in English. Sometimes, “holy places” may be translated “holy ones”, depending on context and tradition.

<sup>172</sup> The LORD, the Knower of Hearts, knows everything about us, our intentions, our offerings. Not only does He remember our “every sacrifice”, but He also increases each of these sacrifices, and as is shown in this request, He even fattens them. Such is His life-giving Love.

<sup>173</sup> About “I know”: this verb of knowing is in the aorist (past tense) in Greek. Sometimes, whether or not the reference be to the LORD, the sense is in the present, as in Psalms 39:10; 40:12; 55:10; 68:6; 72:11; 102:14; 103:19; 118:75; 134:5; 138:5; 139:12; 141:3.

but as for us, it is in the Name of the LORD our God that we shall be magnified.<sup>174</sup>

As for them, they were fettered and fell,  
but we arose and stood upright.

O LORD, save the king,<sup>175</sup> 10  
and listen to us on whatever day we may call upon You.



---

<sup>174</sup> About these lines: there is a consistent historic tendency for humans to place their trust in some creature, rather than to accept the Love of God, and to put their trust there, in the Creator.

<sup>175</sup> About this line: all those in responsibility shall be tested by enemies — sometimes visible, sometimes invisible. Sin is always waiting. Striking the shepherd can scatter the sheep, hence the need for protection and support of the shepherds/leaders.

## PSALM 20

*“Kingship of Christ”*

Κύριε, ἐν τῇ δυνάμει σου Domine, in virtute tua  
For the end. A psalm by David. 1

**O** LORD, in Your power the king shall be glad,  
and in Your salvation he shall exceedingly exult.

You gave him the craving of his heart,  
and You did not deprive him of the wish of his lips ;  
*Pause*

for You have been before him with blessings of loving-kindness ;

You placed on his head a crown of precious stones.

Life did he ask of You, 5

and You gave him length of days, unto an age of an age.

Great is his glory in Your salvation :

glory and magnificence will You set upon him.

Blessing will You give to him, unto an age of an age :

with Your Face will You gladden him with joy ;<sup>176</sup>

for the king hopes on the LORD,

and because of the mercy of the Most High, he shall not be shaken.

May Your hand be found by all Your enemies :<sup>177</sup>

may Your right hand find all those hating You.

---

<sup>176</sup> About “Face”: see the foot-note on Psalm 4:7.

<sup>177</sup> About this line: Saint Augustine asks the LORD that when He comes in judgement, His power be found by all His enemies who did not discern it in His humiliation.

Cassiodorus comments that these “enemies” are called this only as long as they are captivated by the Adversary. Converted to the LORD, they are called servants, children, and friends.

It may also be said that someone makes oneself an enemy towards the LORD by rebellion and selfishness. Despite this, the LORD continues to love such a person as His creature.

You will put them into a fiery oven, at the time of Your  
Face ;<sup>178</sup> 10  
the LORD, in His anger, will throw them into confusion,<sup>179</sup>  
and the fire shall devour them.  
Their fruit You will destroy from the earth,  
and their seed from amongst the sons of Men,  
for they have bent their bad things against You.  
They reasoned about counsels, which they shall not be able  
to confirm,  
for You will make them turn their back ;<sup>180</sup>  
in those remaining, You will prepare their face.<sup>181</sup>  
Be exalted, O LORD, in Your power.  
We shall sing and we shall chant about Your mighty deeds.

---

<sup>178</sup> “Time”, in Greek, has two words to express it. Χρόνος, *chronos*, refers to time, passing time, time in general, time seen from a distance, and from the side, as it were. Καιρός, *kairos*, refers to a specific time, the right time, high time, the appropriate time, the ordained time, time seen from within, looking along its length, as it were. The definite article with time, in this text, indicates *kairos* time, “the time”, even if the Greek lacks the definite article, in order to distinguish in English between the two. One must listen closely to the words to try to determine what is *kairos*, and what is *chronos*.

<sup>179</sup> About “anger”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

<sup>180</sup> Saint Ambrose of Milan explains that “turn the back” describes the state of the sinner. Thus, Cain went out from the Face of the LORD. One who is righteous does not turn the back to the LORD, but rather runs to meet Him.

<sup>181</sup> In this case “face” may convey both “presence” and “outward appearance”.



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
(three times)  
LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



**PSALM 21**

**STATION 3**

*“Supplication of Christ in His Passion”*

Ὁ Θεός, ὁ Θεός μου      Deus, Deus meus

For the end. About the support in the morning. 1

A psalm by David.

**O** God, my God, give heed to me ; why have You abandoned me ?<sup>182</sup>

Far from my salvation are the words of my errors.<sup>183</sup>

O my God, I shall cry out by day, and You will not hear me ;

by night, and it shall not be foolishness for me.<sup>184</sup>

But You dwell in a holy place : You, the Praise of Israël.

Our fathers hoped on You ; 5

they hoped, and You rescued them.

To You they cried out, and they have been saved ;

on You they hoped, and they were not put to shame.

---

<sup>182</sup> (Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34) Saint Gregory of Nazianzus explains about these lines that Christ was not abandoned in any way by His Father. Rather, He represents us; He takes us, forsaken and despised, upon Himself.

Saint Theodoret of Cyrillus informs us that Christ speaks these words on our behalf. As the Source of righteousness, He assumed our sin. As the Sea of blessing, He accepted the curse that is on us. Despising shame, He endured the Cross (see Hebrews 12:2).

<sup>183</sup> Saint Athanasius comments that Christ is chanting this psalm, personifying all Mankind. He, who knew no sin, as the God-Man identifies with our fallenness (see Esaias 53:4).

Cassiodorus states that He who is sinless calls our transgressions His, as the Apostle says, “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us” (see 2 Corinthians 5:21).

<sup>184</sup> Although one may feel that God does not hear one’s cries, it is not “foolishness for me” to continue to appeal to Him. Our ancestors trusted God: they called to Him, and He rescued them. It is also to be remembered that most believers experience what appears to be an absence of God from time to time. This absence is not really an absence, because He is always with us, and in us. It is we who must learn to trust Him, even if we cannot sometimes sense His presence. Perhaps it is our hardness of heart that makes Him seem distant.

But as for me, I am a worm and not a Man,  
a reproach of Men and an object of scorn to the people.

All those beholding me sneered at me ;

they spoke with their lips ; they shook their head :

“He hoped on the LORD ; let Him rescue him ;

let Him save him, for He delights in him” ;

for it is You that drew me out from the womb, 10

my Hope from the breasts of my mother ;

I was cast over to You from the womb :

from the womb of my mother, You are my God.

Do not stand away from me, for affliction is near,

for there is no-one helping me.

Many young bulls encircled me :

fat bulls encompassed me.

They opened their mouth against me,

as a lion snatching and roaring.

Just as water have I been poured out, 15

and all my bones have been scattered abroad ;

my heart became just as wax, melting in the midst of my  
entrails.

Just as a potsherd has my strength been dried out,

and my tongue cleaved to my throat ;<sup>185</sup>

You led me down to the dirt of death ;

for many dogs surrounded me ;

a gathering of those doing evil encompassed me.

---

<sup>185</sup> “Cleave to” translates the Greek verb κολλάω, *kollaō*, meaning “to glue”, “to cement”. The French word *coller* is derived from this word. This psalm, anticipating the Crucifixion, gives here a vivid sense of what a crucified person, and therefore Christ, endures during this evil torture.

They pierced my hands and my feet.<sup>186</sup>  
 They numbered all my bones ;  
 they observed and looked upon me.  
 They distributed my clothes amongst themselves,  
 and upon my cloak they cast lots.<sup>187</sup>  
 But You, O LORD, do not keep my help far away from  
 me ; 20  
 give heed to my support.  
 Rescue my soul from the sword,  
 and my only-begotten one from the hand of the dog.  
 Save me from the mouth of the lion,  
 and my humility from the horns of unicorns.  
 I shall recount Your Name to my brothers ;  
 in the midst of the church shall I hymn You.<sup>188</sup>  
 O you, fearing the LORD, praise Him ;  
 all you seed of Jakōb, glorify Him.  
 Let all the seed of Israēl fear Him ;  
 for He neither reckoned as nothing, nor detested, the 25  
 supplication of the poor,  
 nor did He turn away His Face from me ;

<sup>186</sup> (Matthew 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:33; John 19:18) Saint Ambrose of Milan elaborates for us about these lines that for God, the past, present and future are all “now”. In these words, the Crucifixion of Christ is anticipated.

<sup>187</sup> (Matthew 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:34; John 19:24)

<sup>188</sup> (Hebrews 2:12) “Church” translates the Greek noun ἐκκλησία, *ekklēsia*, meaning “those called out”, “called apart”, or a particular sort of assembly. Through Germanic roots, “church” is derived from this Greek word. *Ekklēsia* is used in the Psalter and in the “New Testament”, to express those assemblies of faithful which are constitutive of the people, or the Church. In the “New Testament”, this has a eucharistic context. In the “Old Testament”, this word refers to assemblies in the Temple with representatives from the whole people.

and when I cried out to Him, He heard me.  
 From You is my praise in the great church ;  
 I shall render my vows before the face of those fearing  
 Him.  
 The needy shall eat and be filled up ;  
 they shall praise the LORD — those seeking Him out ;  
 their hearts shall live unto an age of an age.  
 All the ends of the earth shall remember, and turn about  
 towards the LORD ;  
 all the families of the nations shall worship before His Face ;  
 for the kingdom belongs to the LORD,  
 and He it is who rules the nations.  
 All the opulent on the earth have eaten, and have 30  
 worshipped ;<sup>189</sup>  
 before His Face shall fall down all who are going down  
 to the earth.  
 My soul lives for Him,  
 and my seed shall serve Him :  
 the generation to come shall be announced to the LORD ;  
 they shall announce His righteousness to a people who  
 shall be born,  
 whom the LORD has made.

<sup>189</sup> The root of the Greek word translate “opulent” is fatness. Fatness and wealth historically go together.

Saint Athanasius informs us that all the wealthy have eaten spiritual food, and that they are fat from being well-fed by the divine teaching.

## PSALM 22

*“Baptism, Chrismation and Eucharist”*

Κύριος ποιμαίνει με Dominus regit me

A psalm by David.

1

**T**he LORD shepherds me,  
and nothing shall be lacking to me.

In a place of green pasture, there He has pitched my tent.

By restful water He brought me up from childhood.

He turned my soul about ;

He led me on the way on the paths of righteousness,  
for the sake of His Name.

Even if I were to walk in the midst of the shadow of death,

I shall not fear bad things,

for it is You that are with me :

Your rod and Your staff — it is they that have consoled me.

You prepared a table before my face,

opposite those afflicting me.<sup>190</sup>

You dressed my head with oil,

and Your cup which inebriates me, how greatly excellent  
it is.<sup>191</sup>

Your mercy shall closely pursue me all the days of my life,

and my dwelling shall be in the house of the LORD for

length of days.

5

<sup>190</sup> The importance of this phrase, and particularly the word “opposite”, may be found in understanding that the LORD prepares such a table that I eat together with those who afflict me. This necessarily means that I am living in a state of forgiveness with those who are afflicting me.

<sup>191</sup> As Saint Ambrose of Milan comments, the Greek word meaning “excellent” may also mean “powerful”.

## PSALM 23

*“Descent to Hadēs, and Ascension of Christ”*

Τοῦ Κυρίου ἡ γῆ Domini est terra

A psalm by David. For the first day of the week.

1

**T**he earth belongs to the LORD, and its fulness :<sup>192</sup>  
the world, and all those dwelling in it.

He laid its foundations upon the seas,

and upon the rivers He prepared it.

Who shall go up to the mountain of the LORD,  
and who shall stand in His holy place ?<sup>193</sup>

The one who is innocent in hands and pure in heart ;  
who did not receive his soul for futility,

who did not swear deceitfully to his neighbour :

this one shall receive blessing from the LORD,

and mercy from God, his Saviour.

This is the generation of those seeking the LORD,

of those seeking the Face of the God of Jakōb.

5

*Pause*

Raise your gates, O you princes,<sup>194</sup>

and be lifted up, you eternal gates,

and the King of Glory will come in.

Who is this King of Glory ?

The LORD, strong and powerful,

the LORD, powerful in war.

<sup>192</sup> (1 Corinthians 10:26)

<sup>193</sup> Here, “holy place” is explicitly stated in the Greek, with two words.

<sup>194</sup> Saint Athanasius explains that it was not the Word Himself who needed the gates to be opened. He is LORD of all. Rather, it is we who needed it, whom He uplifted in His own Body. This is that very Body which Christ first offered to death on behalf of all, and then through it made a path to Heaven.

Raise your gates, O you princes,  
and be lifted up, you eternal gates,  
and the King of Glory will come in.  
Who is this King of Glory ?  
The LORD of Powers :<sup>195</sup>  
He is the King of Glory.



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
(three times)

---

<sup>195</sup> In Greek, this term “Powers” means “an army, or armies, ready for war”. This Greek word translates the Hebrew *sabaoth*, meaning “of powers”. Generally, the armies are considered to be the angelic forces. The term “LORD of Powers” is used as a substitute for the Divine Name.

*And then the following prayers :*

### TRISAGION PRAYERS

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.  
(three times)

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

O most holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from  
our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit,  
and heal our infirmities, for Your Name’s sake.

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

Our Father, who are in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name ; Your  
kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ;  
give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our debts, as we  
forgive our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test, but rescue  
us from the evil one.

*And then :* Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus  
Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

*And these tropars :* Tone 3

While you are yet upon earth, repent, O my soul. Dust in the  
grave does not sin, nor does it deliver from transgressions. Cry  
out to Christ God : O Knower of hearts, I have sinned. Before  
You pronounce judgement on me, have mercy on me. How  
long, O my soul, shall you remain in sin ? How long shall it be  
before you accept the transformation of repentance ? Be very  
mindful of the coming Judgement, and call out to the LORD : O  
Knower of hearts, I have sinned. Before You pronounce  
judgement upon me, have mercy on me.

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

At the dread Judgement, I shall be condemned without accusers.  
I shall be judged without witnesses ; for the books of conscience  
shall be thrown open, and the hidden things revealed. Before

You search out what I have done, at the gathering of all peoples,  
O God, cleanse me, and save me.

Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

The awesome mystery accomplished in you is truly beyond  
perception and understanding, O Lady, blessed of God ; for you  
conceived the One who cannot be circumscribed. You gave birth  
to Him who put on flesh from your pure blood. As He is your  
Son, O pure Lady, entreat Him to save all who hymn you.

LORD, have mercy. (*forty times*)

*And then the following prayer :*

O Jesus Christ, perfect God, Word of the unoriginate Father,  
Almighty LORD, You are in no way separated from Your bond-  
servants, but ever abide in them. O all-holy King, do not forsake  
me, Your bond-servant, but grant me, the unworthy one, the joy  
of Your salvation. Illumine my mind with the light of the  
understanding of Your Gospel. Fasten my soul with love to  
Your Cross. Beautify my body with Your freedom from  
passions. Appease my thoughts, and keep my feet from falling.  
Do not destroy me with my sins, O good LORD, but search me,  
O God, and know my heart. Try me, and discern my path. If  
there be in me any wicked way, turn me from it, and lead me in  
the way eternal ; for You are the Way, the Truth and the Life,  
and to You we send up glory, together with Your unoriginate  
Father, and Your all-holy, good and life-creating Spirit, now, and  
ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



## session

4

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



### PSALM 24

### STATION 1

*"Supplication of the repentant sinner"*

Προδς σε, Κύριε, ἤρα Ad te, Domine, levavi

A psalm by David.

1 ✠

**T**o You, O LORD, have I raised my soul, O my God.  
In You do I trust.

ⲁ

May I not be put to shame,  
nor let my enemies laugh at me.

Indeed, all those waiting for You shall not be put to  
shame.

Ⲃ

Let them be put to shame — those uselessly doing  
lawlessness.

Make Your ways known to me, O LORD,  
and teach me Your paths :<sup>196</sup>

ⲃ

lead me on the way to Your truth, and teach me ;  
for You are God, my Saviour,  
and for You have I waited the whole day long.

5 Ⲅ

ⲅ

<sup>196</sup> Saint Augustine asks that the LORD teach him His narrow ways known only to the few, not the broad ways leading many to destruction.

Remember Your compassions, O LORD, and Your mercies,      ָ  
for they are from the age.

The sin of my youth and my ignorance, do not remember ;      ַ  
but do remember me, in accordance with Your mercy,  
for the sake of Your loving-kindness, O LORD.

Gracious and upright is the LORD.      ֹ  
Because of this, He will give a law for those sinning in the  
way.

He will lead the meek on the way in fair-judgement ;<sup>197</sup>      ֶ  
He will teach the meek His ways.

All the ways of the LORD are mercy and truth,      10 ִ  
to those seeking out His Covenant and His testimonies.

For the sake of Your Name, O LORD,      ֵ  
be propitious to my sin, for it is great.

Who is the Man fearing the LORD ?      ִ  
He will give a law for him for the way which he has  
chosen.

His soul shall abide amongst good things,      ֶ  
and his seed shall inherit the earth.

The LORD is the Strength of those fearing Him,      ֹ  
and His Covenant shall show this to them.

My eyes are always towards the LORD ;      15 ֶ  
for He will draw my feet out of the snare.

Look attentively upon me, and have mercy on me ;      ֶ  
for I, myself, am an only-begotten one, and poor.

The afflictions of my heart have been multiplied ;      ֶ  
O lead me out of my anguish.

<sup>197</sup> “Meek”: good, cheerful, forbearing, kind, not resentful.

See my humiliation and my trouble,      ֶ  
and forgive all my sins.

See my enemies, for they have multiplied,<sup>198</sup>      ֶ  
and with an unrighteous hatred they hated me.

Watch over my soul, and rescue me.      20 ֶ  
May I not be put to shame,  
for I have hoped on You.

The guileless and the upright were cleaving to me,      ַ  
for I waited for You, O LORD.

O God, redeem Israel from all his afflictions.



<sup>198</sup> About passive voice used as active voice: see the foot-note on Psalm 33:3.

## PSALM 25

*"Supplication of the Church, purified in the Blood of Christ"*

Καὶνὸν με, Κύριε     Judica me, Domine

By David.

1

**J**udge me, O LORD, for I have walked in my  
guilelessness ;

hoping on the LORD, I shall not become weak.

Prove me, O LORD, and put me to the test ;

test by fire my reins and my heart ;

for Your mercy is before my eyes,

and I have been well-pleased in Your truth.

I have not sat down with a council of futility,

nor shall I enter with those transgressing the law.

I hated the assembly of those doing evil,<sup>199</sup>

5

and with the impious I shall not sit down.

I shall wash my hands amongst the innocent,

and I shall circle around Your altar, O LORD,

to hear the voice of Your praise,

and to recount all Your wonders.

O LORD, I loved the majesty of Your house,

and the place of the tent of Your glory.<sup>200</sup>

Do not destroy my soul together with the impious,

and my life with men of blood,

in whose hands are lawless acts :

10

---

<sup>199</sup> "Assembly", *ekklēsia*, actually represents the same word that is in the last line of this psalm translated "churches". We use "assembly" instead of "church", because of the context. See the foot-note on Psalm 21:23.

<sup>200</sup> About these lines: worship of God is our first responsibility. To nurture in our hearts love for God is of first importance.

Saint Athanasius explains that it is those in the Church who are adorned with the beauty of holiness who are the majesty of the house.

their right hand was filled with bribes.

But as for me, I have walked in my guilelessness ;

redeem me, and have mercy on me.

My foot has stood in uprightness ;

in the churches shall I bless You, O LORD.



## PSALM 26

*“Confident prayer of the Church, illumined by Christ”*

Κύριος φωτισμός μου      Dominus illuminatio

A psalm of David. Before the anointing.<sup>201</sup>

1

**T**he LORD is my Illumination and my Saviour ;  
whom shall I fear ?

The LORD is the Protector of my life ;  
of whom shall I be afraid ?

When those doing bad things drew near against me to eat  
my flesh

– those afflicting me and my enemies –  
they became weak, and they fell.

If an army were to be drawn up against me,  
my heart shall not fear.

If a war were to rise up against me,  
in this do I hope.<sup>202</sup>

One thing I asked of the LORD ; this I shall seek out :  
to dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life,  
to contemplate the delight of the LORD,  
and to visit His holy temple ;  
for He has hidden me in His tent in a day of my bad  
things ;<sup>203</sup>

5

He has sheltered me in a secret place of His tent.

---

<sup>201</sup> Cassiodorus explains that David wrote no psalm before the first anointing, and therefore this reference is to the second anointing (see 2 Kingdoms 5:3).

Saint Athanasius, whose opinion is that this Davidic anointing can point also to the Christian Anointing with Baptism (Chrismation), exhorts us to turn to this psalm when we are increasingly oppressed and harassed by enemies.

<sup>202</sup> “This” may well refer back to the first two sentences of this psalm.

<sup>203</sup> “Tent” is a metaphor for the Temple, since the Tent was its predecessor.

On a rock has He exalted me ;  
and now, behold, He has exalted my head over my  
enemies.

I surrounded His tent,  
and I sacrificed in it a sacrifice of a joyful shout ;  
I shall sing and I shall chant to the LORD.

Hear, O LORD, my voice with which I have cried out ;  
have mercy on me, and hear me.

To You my heart said :

“My face has sought You out”.<sup>204</sup>

Your Face, O LORD, shall I seek.

Do not turn Your Face away from me,  
and do not in anger incline away from Your bond-  
servant.<sup>205</sup>

Be my Helper : do not cast me off utterly,  
and do not abandon me, O God, my Saviour ;  
for my father and my mother abandoned me,  
but the LORD has taken me to Himself.

10

Give me a law, O LORD, according to Your way,  
and lead me on the way, on a straight path, because of my  
enemies.<sup>206</sup>

Do not give me over to the souls of those afflicting me ;  
for unrighteous witnesses rose up against me,  
and their unrighteousness lied to itself.

---

<sup>204</sup> About “face”: see the foot-note on Psalm 4:7.

<sup>205</sup> About “anger”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

<sup>206</sup> Saint Athanasius comments that David is praying that the evangelical law may be made clear to him, because this law is the “straight path”.



I believe that I shall see the good things of the LORD in the  
land of the living.

Wait for the LORD : take courage, and let your heart  
become strong ;  
and wait for the LORD.



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

## PSALM 27

## STATION 2

*“Supplication in times of testing”*

Πρὸς σέ, Κύριε      Ad te, Domine

By David.

1

**T**o You, O LORD, I cried out.

O my God, do not pass me by in silence ;  
lest You pass me by in silence,  
and I shall become like those going down into the pit.<sup>207</sup>

Hear the voice of my supplication when I beseech You,  
when I raise my hands towards Your holy temple.

Do not drag my soul away together with sinners ;  
together with workers of unrighteousness do not destroy  
me :

those speaking of peace with their neighbours,  
but there are bad things in their hearts.

Give to them, O LORD, in accordance with their works,  
and in accordance with the evil of their purposes.

In accordance with the works of their hands, give to them :  
render to them their recompense ;

for they have not understood about the works of the  
LORD,

5

nor about the works of His hands.

You will pull them down, and You will not rebuild them.

Blessed be the LORD,

for He has heard the voice of my supplication.

The LORD is my Helper and my Protector :  
on Him has my heart hoped ;

---

<sup>207</sup> “Pit”=Hadēs=*Sheol*=corruption=destruction=the place of the dead.

I have been helped, and my flesh has flourished ;  
and with my will shall I confess Him.  
The LORD is the Strength of His people,  
and the Protector of the salvation of His christ.  
Save Your people, and bless Your inheritance ;  
shepherd them, and lift them up until the age.



## PSALM 28

*“Hymn on Baptism”*

Ἐνέγκατε τῷ Κυρίῳ Afferte Domino

A psalm by David. Of the going-forth of the tent.<sup>208</sup>

1

**B**ring to the LORD, you sons of God ;  
bring to the LORD the offspring of rams.

Bring to the LORD glory and honour ;

bring to the LORD glory to His Name.

Worship the LORD in His holy court.<sup>209</sup>

The voice of the LORD is over the waters ;

the God of glory thundered,

the LORD, over many waters.

The voice of the LORD is in strength ;

the voice of the LORD is in magnificence ;

the voice of the LORD shatters the cedars :

5

the LORD will shatter the cedars of Lebanon ;

He will grind them up as that young bull, the Lebanon,

and the beloved shall be as an offspring of the unicorns.<sup>210</sup>

---

<sup>208</sup> About “the going-forth”: Archimandrite Placide provides a gloss, writing that this inscription concerns the Feast of Tabernacles, which commemorates “the going-forth” of the Tabernacle.

This feast commemorates the end of the wilderness wandering (see 5 Mōysēs [Deuteronomy] 16:13-15).

<sup>209</sup> Saint Basil the Great points out to us that although many assume the attitude of prayer, they are not “in His holy court” because of their wandering thoughts, and being distracted by futile cares. The one who makes a god of money, or glory, or his belly, or anything else does not worship the LORD. Although in the midst of the visible assembly, such persons are not in His holy court.

“Court” means an enclosed quadrangular area, perhaps amongst buildings, or a large hall with stair-cases and galleries, hence the place or throne-room where a monarch might judge, or the place where a legal court assembles — *OED*.

This quadrangular area, in the time of Homer, and in the times of the LXX translators, often referred to an area in a home or other building, which would be used for religious worship purposes, and which was open to the air.

<sup>210</sup> “Unicorn” is a metaphor for a very strong animal. See the foot-note on Psalm 77:69.

It is the voice of the LORD cutting through the flame of fire,<sup>211</sup>  
the voice of the LORD making the wilderness quake ;  
the LORD will make the wilderness of Kadēs quake.<sup>212</sup>  
The voice of the LORD makes perfect the deer ;  
and it shall uncover the thickets.  
In His temple everyone exclaims : “Glory” .  
The LORD will settle in the deluge ;  
the LORD will sit as king unto the ages.  
The LORD will give strength to His people ;  
the LORD will bless His people in peace.

10



<sup>211</sup> Saint Basil the Great explains about this line that “fire” has both burning and illuminating qualities. The LORD distinguishes the qualities of fire regarding the consequences of our life. The fire provides light for the enjoyment of the righteous, and painful burning for those requiring correction. In further considering fire and the Burning Bush, he sees an implied connexion with the Uncreated Light.

<sup>212</sup> (4 Mōysēs [Numbers] 20:1-24) “Kadēs”=Kadesh.

## PSALM 29

*“Thanksgiving for the Resurrection”*

Ἐψάλλω σε, Κύριε Exaltabo te, Domine

For the end.

1

A psalm of a canticle of the dedication of the house.

By David.<sup>213</sup>

**I** shall exalt You, O LORD, for You have drawn me up,<sup>214</sup>  
and You have not gladdened my enemies over me.

O LORD my God, I cried out to You, and You healed me.

O LORD, You led my soul up out of Hadēs :

You saved me from those going down into the pit.

Chant to the LORD, you His holy ones,

5

and confess the memory of His holiness ;

for anger is in His fury, and life in His will.<sup>215</sup>

In the evening shall weeping abide, but exultation in the  
morning.

But as for me, I said in my prosperity : “I shall not be  
distressed unto the age” .

O LORD, in Your will, You granted power to my beauty ;<sup>216</sup>  
but You turned away Your Face, and I was stirred up.

To You, O LORD, I shall cry out ;

to my God I shall make supplication :

<sup>213</sup> (2 Kingdoms 5:1-12) In a very few inscriptions, as here, the Greek gives only “David”. We keep the preposition, because the intention is to show authorship.

<sup>214</sup> Saint Ambrose of Milan teaches us that one who is holy exalts the LORD, whereas the sinner abases Him.

<sup>215</sup> About “anger” and “fury”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

<sup>216</sup> Saint Basil the Great affirms that this line indicates that whereas we were beautiful by nature, because of the Image of God, we were enfeebled and numbed by sin. To this original beauty at creation, God added a strength appropriate to what is clean, that we might be able to contemplate Him. As we contemplate His beauty, we come to reflect that beauty.

“What profit is there in my blood  
when I go down to corruption ? 10  
Surely the dirt shall not confess You,  
or announce Your truth ?”  
The LORD has heard, and He has had mercy on me ;  
the LORD has become my Helper.  
For me, You turned my lamentation into joy ;  
You broke asunder my sack-cloth,  
and You girded me with gladness,  
so that my glory may chant to You,<sup>217</sup>  
and I shall not be pierced with compunction.  
O LORD my God, unto the age shall I confess You.



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

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<sup>217</sup> Saint Basil the Great affirms that the “glory” of a righteous man is the Holy Spirit in him.

### PSALM 30

### STATION 3

“Prayer of Christ on the Cross”

Ἐπὶ σοί, Κύριε, ἤλπισα      In te, Domine, speravi  
For the end. A psalm by David when he was beside himself. 1  
**O**n You, O LORD, have I hoped ;  
may I not be put to shame unto the age.  
In Your righteousness rescue me, and set me free.  
Incline Your ear to me,  
and hasten to set me free.  
Be to me a protecting God,<sup>218</sup>  
and a House of Refuge to save me ;  
for You are my Strength and Refuge,  
and for the sake of Your Name You will lead me on the  
way and nourish me.  
You will lead me out of this snare which they hid for me, 5  
for You are my Protector, O LORD.  
Into Your hands shall I entrust my spirit :<sup>219</sup>  
You have redeemed me, O LORD God of truth.  
You hated those uselessly guarding their futility ;  
but as for me, I have hoped on the LORD.  
I shall exult and be glad in Your mercy ;  
for You looked upon my humility.  
You saved my soul from its anguish.  
You did not shut me up in the hands of enemies ;  
on a spacious place have You set my feet.  
Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I am afflicted. 10

---

<sup>218</sup> (Psalm 70:1-3)

<sup>219</sup> (Luke 23:46) “Spirit” here translates the Greek πνεῦμα, *pneuma*. This word, as in the Hebrew equivalent, can also mean “wind”, or “breath”. The word-choice in English depends on the context.

My eye was disturbed because of fury :<sup>220</sup>  
my soul, and my belly also ;  
for my life fainted because of pain, and my years because  
of groanings.

My strength became weak in poverty,  
and my bones were stirred up.  
In the sight of all my enemies I have become a reproach,  
and very much so to my neighbours,  
and a fear to my acquaintances.

Those beholding me outside fled from me.

I have been forgotten from the heart, just as if dead.

I have become just as a vessel destroyed,  
for I heard the blame of many sojourning round about.

When they gathered together against me,  
they took counsel to seize my soul.

But as for me, I have hoped on You, O LORD. 15

I said : “You are my God”.

In Your hands are my lots ;  
rescue me from the hand of my enemies,  
and from those closely pursuing me.

Make Your Face shine on Your bond-servant ;  
save me in Your mercy.

O LORD, may I not be put to shame,  
for I have called upon You.

---

<sup>220</sup> About “disturbed”: Saint John Cassian explains significantly that the deadly poison of anger has to be rooted out from the deepest parts of our soul. As long as the poison remains anywhere, it blinds the eye of the soul. We can therefore neither acquire right judgement and discretion, nor gain the insight that springs from an honest scrutiny or rightness of counsel, nor have the capacity for true spiritual light.

May the impious be put to shame,  
and may they be led down to Hadēs.<sup>221</sup>  
Let the deceitful lips be speechless,  
which speak lawlessness against the righteous in pride  
and contempt.

How great is the multitude of Your loving-kindness,  
O LORD, 20  
which You have hidden for those fearing You,  
and wrought for those hoping on You in the presence of  
the sons of Men.

You will conceal them in a secret place of Your Face,  
away from the stirring of Men ;

You will shelter them in Your tent,  
away from the contradiction of tongues.

Blessed be the LORD ;

for He has made wonderful His mercy in a fortified city.

But as for me, I said when I was beside myself :

“I have been cast away from the sight of Your eyes”.

Because of this, You heard the voice of my supplication,  
when I cried out to You.

Love the LORD, all you His holy ones ;

for the LORD seeks out truth,  
and those acting excessively proudly does He requite.

Take courage, and let your heart become strong, 25  
all you, hoping on the LORD.

---

<sup>221</sup> “Hadēs”=*Sheol*=the pit=corruption=destruction=the place of the dead.

**PSALM 31**

*“Prayer of a forgiven sinner”*

Μακάριοι ὄν Beati, quorum

By David. Of understanding.

1

**B**lessed are those whose lawless acts have been forgiven,  
and whose sins have been covered up.<sup>222</sup>

Blessed is the man to whom the LORD will reckon no sin,<sup>223</sup>  
nor is there any deceit in his mouth ;  
for I have been silent.

My bones became old, because of my crying out the whole  
day long ;  
for by day and by night, Your hand weighed heavily upon  
me.

I was turned into misery when a thorn was piercing me.

*Pause*

My sin I have made known,  
and my lawlessness I have not covered.<sup>224</sup>

5

I said : “I shall declare against myself my lawlessness  
to the LORD”,  
and it is You that have forgiven the impiety of my heart.<sup>225</sup>

*Pause*

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<sup>222</sup> About these lines: Saint Ambrose of Milan states that when God forgives and covers, He takes away our sins altogether, in fact. Moreover, only what He remembers exists.

<sup>223</sup> (Romans 4:7-8)

<sup>224</sup> As verse four suggests, sin that is covered and hidden festers in the heart, and the resulting pain does not leave. The way to deal with this interior poison has always been not to hide the sin, but to admit it openly to the LORD, and to say “I’m sorry, please forgive me”. It is important that we allow the LORD to heal, to wash away and to cleanse the infection.

<sup>225</sup> About “forgiven”: Saint Cyril of Jerusalem informs catechumens that the sum of our sins is not greater than the magnitude of God’s mercies. Our wounds are not beyond the skill of the Great Physician. We surrender to Him with faith, and we tell Him of our ills.

Concerning this, every holy one shall pray to You at the  
suitable time ;<sup>226</sup>  
nevertheless, in a flood of great waters, they shall not  
draw near to him.

You are my Refuge from the affliction encompassing me.  
O my Exultation, redeem me from those surrounding me.

*Pause*

“I will make you understand, and advise you on this way  
in which you might walk ;

I will fix My eyes upon you”.

Do not be like a horse and a mule,  
in which there is no understanding ;  
with bridle and bit may you hold in the jaws  
of those not drawing near to you.<sup>227</sup>

Many are the scourges of the sinner,  
but mercy shall surround the one hoping on the LORD.  
Be glad in the LORD and exult, O you righteous ;  
and boast, all you upright in heart.

10

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<sup>226</sup> Saint Athanasius explains that “concerning this” refers to the sin and lawlessness mentioned in verse five.

<sup>227</sup> About these lines: the way of the believer must be different from the world, exemplary — not rebellious and stubborn, but lovingly, freely obedient.

Saint Augustine comments that the sinner wished to be as an unbroken animal, and so had to be restrained. Such a person is better off accepting the restraint and formation, since obstinate resistance results in being left to one’s own devices. David has had in his own life his own good and personal experience of allowing the LORD to tame such an unbridled person.



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

*And then the following prayers :*

#### **TRISAGION PRAYERS**

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

*(three times)*

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

O most holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from  
our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and  
heal our infirmities, for Your Name's sake.

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

Our Father, who are in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name ; Your  
kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ;  
give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our debts, as we  
forgive our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test, but rescue  
us from the evil one.

*And then :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus Christ, our  
God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

*And these tropars : Tone 7*

I have spent my whole life in sin. Visit my lowly soul, O LORD.  
Receive me, as You did the adulterous woman, and save me. I  
think of the fathomless depth of my many offences, as I cross the  
sea of this life and, lacking a helmsman for my thoughts, I call  
out to You as did Peter : Save me, O Christ ; save me, O God, as  
You are the Lover of Man.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.  
Soon we shall go in to the Bridal Chamber of Christ. Oh, that we  
might all hear the blessed voice of Christ, our God. Come, you  
lovers of heavenly glory, whose lot is with the wise virgins, for our  
lamps have been made bright through faith.

Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Repent, O soul, before your departure, for there is an impartial  
and unbearable Judgement for sinners. Cry out to the LORD with  
tender compunction of heart : I have sinned against You, in ways  
known to me, and in ways unknown, O compassionate One. By  
the prayers of the Theotokos,<sup>228</sup> show me compassion, and save  
me.

LORD, have mercy. *(forty times)*

*And then the following prayer :*

To You, the only good One, who harbour no memory of wrong,  
I confess my sins, O LORD. I, the unworthy one, fall down before  
You, crying out : I have sinned, O LORD, and I am not worthy to  
gaze upon the height of Heaven, because of the multitude of my  
unrighteousness. But O LORD, my LORD, who alone are good,  
and merciful, grant me fervent tears of compunction, that by  
them I might beseech of You cleansing from all sin before the  
end ; for, when I am separated from this body, I shall pass  
through a horrid place, where dark, inhuman multitudes of  
demons shall confront me, and there shall be no-one at my side  
to help or deliver. Therefore, I prostrate myself before Your

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<sup>228</sup> *Theotokos* is a Greek word, meaning "God-birth-giver" or "she who gave birth to God". The theological meaning of this word is deeper than simply "Mother of God".

goodness. Give me not over to those who seek my harm, neither let my enemies exult over me, O good LORD. Let them not say : This one is now in our hands and abandoned to us. Do not recompense me in accordance with my transgressions, O LORD, nor forget Your compassions. Turn not Your Face away from me, but deal with me in accordance with Your bounteous mercy. May my enemy not rejoice over me. Bring to nought his threats ; nullify all his work, and grant that my path to You be an honourable one, O good LORD. Since, in my sins, I have not run to another physician, nor stretched out my hands to a foreign god, do not reject my supplication ; but, in Your goodness, hear me, and establish my heart in the fear of You. May Your Grace be upon me, O LORD, as a fire burning up my unclean thoughts ; for You are the Light beyond all light, O LORD, the Joy beyond all joy, the Rest beyond all rest — Life, Truth and Salvation — abiding unto the ages of ages. Amen.



## session

5

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



### PSALM 32

### STATION 1

*“Hymn on the creation, and on the redemption”*

Ἀγαλλιᾶσθε, δίκαιοι Exultate, justi

By David. [Without inscription in Hebrew]

1

**E**xult in the LORD, O you righteous ;<sup>229</sup>  
praise befits the upright.

Confess the LORD on the lyre ;  
on the ten-stringed psaltery chant to Him.<sup>230</sup>

Sing to Him a new song :  
chant beautifully to Him with a shout of joy ;  
for upright is the Word of the LORD,  
and all His works are in faithfulness.<sup>231</sup>

<sup>229</sup> Saint Basil the Great indicates that the righteous “exult in the LORD” freely, not from self-interest. This exultation is the natural expression of loving communion with the LORD, which sustains in everything those who contemplate Him.

<sup>230</sup> “Psaltery” translates ψαλτήριον, *psaltērion*, which means a stringed instrument that is plucked with the fingers. Psalmody, as in the words of this psalm itself, implies the singing of poetry to the accompaniment of this instrument, which is here and in other texts described as having ten strings. This accounts also for the use of the word “on”.

<sup>231</sup> Saint Basil the Great, expounding on this line, points out that all creation is revealing the invisible God to the eyes of faith: the wisdom of the Creator is seen in the delicate stinger-apparatus of the bee, just as in the order of the heavens. Nothing happens at random or by chance; all is done “in faithfulness”.



He loves mercy and fair-judgement ;<sup>232</sup> 5  
of the mercy of the LORD, the earth is full.  
By the Word of the LORD were the Heavens made firm,  
and by the Spirit of His mouth, all the power of them,<sup>233</sup>  
gathering together the waters of the sea just as would a  
leather-bag,<sup>234</sup>  
putting the abysses in treasuries.  
Let all the earth fear the LORD ;  
let all those dwelling in the world shudder because of Him ;  
for He spoke, and they came to be ;  
He commanded, and they were created.  
The LORD disperses the counsels of the nations ; 10  
He sets at nought the thoughts of the peoples,  
and He sets at nought the counsels of the princes.<sup>235</sup>  
But the counsel of the LORD remains unto the age,  
the thoughts of His heart unto generation and generation.  
Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD,  
the people whom He chose out as an inheritance for  
Himself.

---

<sup>232</sup> Saint Basil the Great explains that the LORD, as Judge, compassionately wishes to show mercy. If He sees erring or straying, then as a kind physician He first tries gentle remedies. If He sees prideful and obstinate resistance in us, then as a prudent physician, He takes to surgery to remove the cancerous tumour of pride, in order to save us before it can kill us.

<sup>233</sup> Saint Athanasius notes that in the words of these lines we see a glimpse of the Holy Trinity.

<sup>234</sup> The Greek word for “leather-bag” was used by Homer to mean “wine-skin”.

<sup>235</sup> These lines show the contrast between the Truth of the LORD and the fallen and deceitful ideas of humans who set themselves apart from Him.

Saint Basil the Great exhorts us to turn immediately to the LORD in the face of any threats from anyone. The LORD makes the counsels of the great to be as nothing.

From Heaven has the LORD attentively looked :  
He has seen all the sons of Men.  
From His prepared habitation has He attentively looked  
upon all those dwelling on the earth :  
having alone fashioned their hearts,<sup>236</sup> 15  
understanding all their works.  
A king is not saved through much power,  
and a giant shall not be saved in the multitude of his  
strength ;  
unreliable is a horse for salvation :  
in the multitude of its power, it shall not be saved.  
Behold, the eyes of the LORD are upon those fearing Him  
– those hoping on His mercy –  
to rescue their souls from death,  
and to nourish them in famine.  
Our soul waits for the LORD, 20  
for He is our Helper and Protector ;  
for in Him shall our heart be glad,  
and on His holy Name have we hoped.  
May Your mercy, O LORD, be upon us,  
even as we have hoped on You.

---

<sup>236</sup> The adverbial phrase translated “alone” may also suggest the sense of “specially” in a case such as this, which would also imply “each” regarding the hearts.

Saint John Chrysostom emphasises that it is the LORD alone, who alone created our hearts and perceives all our deeds, who is able to cure our hearts. He alone is able to enter our conscience, to touch our thoughts, and to strengthen our souls. Therefore, even if we are greatly disturbed and troubled by the attacks of others, we cannot be injured by them.

**PSALM 33**

*“Kindness of God for the poor, and chastisement of the impious”*

Εὐλογίσω τὸν Κύριον

Benedicam Domino

By David, when he changed his face in the presence of 1  
Abimelekh,<sup>237</sup>

and he let him go, and he went away.

I shall bless the LORD at all times :<sup>238</sup> 2

His praise shall always be in my mouth.

In the LORD shall my soul be praising ;<sup>239</sup> 3

let the meek hear, and be glad.

Magnify the LORD with me, 4

and as one, let us exalt His Name.

I sought out the LORD, and He listened to me, 5

and from all my afflictions He rescued me.

Come near to Him, and be illumined, 6

and your faces shall not be ashamed. 7

This poor one cried out, and the LORD heard him,<sup>240</sup> 8

and from all his afflictions He saved him.

<sup>237</sup> (I Kingdoms 21:11-16) “Changed his face” means that he feigned madness.

<sup>238</sup> To “bless the LORD” means, following the Latin *benedico*, to speak good to and about Him, or to speak well to or of Him.

Saint Athanasius explains that God loves thankful people, who praise Him and thank Him at all times, good and bad. They live in His love, and thus act in His love.

<sup>239</sup> This verb “praising” is in passive voice. Sometimes the boundary between passive and middle voice is not clear in Septuagint Greek. Depending upon nuance, middle voice may sometimes be translated as a reflexive. It may also be translated as having an active sense. This occurs many times in this translation.

<sup>240</sup> About “poor one”: Saint Basil the Great informs us all that poverty in itself is not always laudable. Only poverty purposefully practiced is in accordance with the evangelical aim. Many may be poor in their resources, but at the same time very greedy in their intention. Poverty is not saving to such as these. It is, then, not simply the poor one who is blessed, but the one who has considered Christ’s Way better than the world’s treasures.

An angel of the LORD shall encamp round about those  
fearing Him, 1

and He will rescue them.

O taste, and see that the LORD is gracious : 2

blessed is the man who hopes on Him.

Fear the LORD, all you His holy ones, 10

for there is no want for those fearing Him.

The rich have become poor and hungry, 3

but those seeking out the LORD shall not lack any good  
thing.

*Pause*

Come, O children, hear me : 4

I shall teach you the fear of the LORD.

Who is the Man who wishes for life, 5

who loves to see good days ?

Stop your tongue from ill, 6

and your lips from speaking deceit.

Incline away from badness, and do good ; 15

seek peace, and pursue it.

The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, 7

and His ears towards their supplication.

But the Face of the LORD is upon those doing bad things,<sup>241</sup> 8

to exterminate the remembrance of them from the earth.

The righteous cried out, and the LORD heard them ; 9

from all their afflictions He rescued them.

The LORD is near to the shattered of heart, 10

and those who are humbled in spirit will He save.

<sup>241</sup> (1 Peter 3:10-12) About “Face”: see the foot-notes on Psalm 4:7 & 9:4.

Many are the afflictions of the righteous, 20 ג  
 and from them all will the LORD rescue them.  
 The LORD watches over all their bones : ψ  
 not one of them shall be shattered.<sup>242</sup>  
 The death of sinners is evil, ת  
 and those hating the righteous shall do wrong.  
 The LORD will redeem the souls of His bond-servants,  
 and all those hoping on Him shall not do wrong.



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
 now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
 Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
 (three times)  
 LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
 Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
 now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

<sup>242</sup> (2 Mōysēs [Exodus] 12:46; 4 Mōysēs 9:12; John 19:36)

PSALM 34

STATION 2

*“Prayer of Christ in His Passion”*

Δίκασον, Κύριε Judica, Domine

By David. 1

**O** LORD, give judgement to those wronging me ;  
 make war on those making war against me.  
 Lay hold of weapon and shield, and arise to my help.  
 Unsheathe the sword, and shut away the opposing ones  
 who are closely pursuing me.  
 Say to my soul : “I AM your Salvation”.<sup>243</sup>  
 Let them be put to shame and be disgraced –  
 those seeking my soul.  
 Let them be turned back, and be put to shame –  
 those calculating bad things for me.  
 Let them become just as dust in the face of the wind, 5  
 an angel of the LORD squeezing them out.  
 Let their way become darkness and slipperiness,  
 an angel of the LORD closely pursuing them ;  
 for without cause have they hidden from me destruction  
 of their snare ;<sup>244</sup>  
 without reason have they reproached my soul.  
 Let a snare which he does not know about come upon him,  
 and let the trap which he has hidden catch him ;  
 in that very snare shall he fall.

<sup>243</sup> “I AM” translates the Greek ἐγώ εἰμι, *ego eimi*, which refers to the Name of God Himself. In Hebrew, it is forbidden to be pronounced. It is the term that God uses in addressing Moses at the Burning Bush, and it is the term the Saviour uses on some occasions to refer to Himself (see 2 Mōysēs 3:14).

<sup>244</sup> The sense here is the destroying quality of “their snare”, not that the snare would be destroyed.

But my soul shall exult in the LORD ;  
it shall delight in His salvation.  
All my bones shall say : “O LORD, who is like You ?      10  
You are rescuing the poor one from the hand of those  
stronger than he,  
and the poor and needy from those plundering him” .  
Unrighteous witnesses, in arising against me,  
were asking me about things I was not knowing.  
They were requiting me with evil for good,  
and with barrenness to my soul.  
But as for me, when they annoyed me,  
I was putting on sack-cloth,  
and humbling my soul with fasting ;  
and my prayer shall turn back to my bosom.  
As to a neighbour, as to our brother, so was I well-pleasing ;  
as one mourning, and with a sad countenance, so was I  
humbling myself.  
They were glad over me, and they gathered together :      15  
scourges were gathered together against me, and I knew  
it not.  
They were cloven apart, and they felt no compunction.  
They put me to the test ; they sneered at me with sneering ;  
they gnashed their teeth against me.  
O LORD, when will You look upon this ?  
Restore my soul from their malice :  
from the lions, my only-begotten one.  
I shall confess You in the great church ;  
amongst a numerous people shall I praise You.

May they not rejoice over me –  
those who are unjustly at enmity with me,  
those hating me without cause and winking their eyes ;<sup>245</sup>  
for they were speaking peace to me,      20  
but with anger they reasoned deceits.  
They opened their mouth wide against me,  
and said : “Well done, well done, our eyes have seen” .  
You have seen, O LORD ; do not pass by in silence ;  
O LORD, do not stand away from me.  
Awake, O LORD, and give heed to my fair-judgement :  
to my cause, O my God and my LORD.  
Judge me, O LORD, in accordance with Your righteousness,  
O LORD my God,  
and may they not rejoice over me.  
May they not say in their hearts : “Well done, well done,  
to our soul “ ;      25  
nor may they say : “We have swallowed him up” .  
May they be put to shame, and be disgraced as well –  
those rejoicing over my bad things.  
Let them put on shame and disgrace –  
those speaking boastfully against me.  
But let them exult and be glad –  
those wishing for my righteousness ;  
and let them continually say :  
“Let the LORD be magnified” –  
those wishing for the peace of His bond-servant.  
My tongue shall ruminate on Your righteousness  
and Your praise, the whole day long.

---

<sup>245</sup> (John 15:25)

**PSALM 35**

*“Malice of the impious, and goodness of the righteous”*

Φησὶν ὁ παράνομος Dixit iniustus

For the end. By the bond-servant of the LORD, David. 1

**T**he transgressor of the law asserts within himself that  
he may sin.

There is no fear of God before his eyes ;<sup>246</sup>  
for he acted deceitfully before His Face,  
in order to find out his lawlessness, and to hate.<sup>247</sup>

The utterances of his mouth are lawlessness and deceit ;  
he was unwilling to understand how to do good.

He reasoned out lawlessness on his bed ; 5  
he stood by every way not good,  
and he did not detest badness.

O LORD, in Heaven is Your mercy,  
and Your truth as far as the clouds.

Your righteousness is like the mountains of God :

Your judgements, just like a vast abyss.

Men and beasts You will save, O LORD.

---

<sup>246</sup> (Romans 3:18) About these lines: the tendency of humans from the beginning is to blame others, sometimes the devil, often even God, for some ill or fault. This psalm makes clear that humans often talk themselves into making their own troubles and their own sins, and in this case, great evil.

Saint Ambrose remarks that the transgressor speaks, and his inner conscience is twisted. Self-inflicted punishment is greater than any other, so each of his own words pierces himself through. He poisons himself, whereas a snake poisons others.

<sup>247</sup> The implication of these lines could be, however, in the negative, following from “deceit”: he acts deceitfully “lest” he (in order that he not) find out his lawlessness, because he does not want to cease from it, as Augustine indicates. He does not want to repent, and therefore lives in denial, that is in a lie. However, with the given translation, which follows the Greek word-order, it may be understood that the transgressor acts deceitfully before God so that he may discover even more of his own lawlessness and thus feel justified in hating, which is a deadly product of such rebellious perverseness.

How You have multiplied Your mercy, O God.

The sons of Men shall hope in the shelter of Your wings.

They shall be drunk from the opulence of Your house,  
and You will give them to drink of the torrent of Your  
delight ;

for by You is the spring of life ; 10  
in Your light shall we see light.

O prolong Your mercy to those knowing You,  
and Your righteousness to the upright in heart.

Do not let the foot of pride come to me,<sup>248</sup>  
nor let the hand of a sinner shake me.

There they have fallen – all those working lawlessness ;  
they have been thrust out, and shall not be able to stand.



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

---

<sup>248</sup> Saint Augustine explains that “foot” is used here because it is in pride that Man abandoned God and walked away from Him.

**PSALM 36**

**STATION 3**

*“Blessed are the meek”.*

Μὴ παραζήλου      Noli æmulari

By David.

1 𐤀

**D**o not be provoked to jealousy by those doing evil,  
and do not envy those doing lawlessness ;  
for, just as grass they shall be swiftly dried up,  
and just as green garden herbs they shall swiftly fall off.  
Hope on the LORD, and do acts of loving-kindness ;  
pitch your tent on the earth,  
and you shall be shepherded by its richness.

𐤁

Take delight in the LORD,  
and He will give you the requests of your heart.<sup>249</sup>

Disclose your way to the LORD ;  
hope on Him, and He will act.

5 𐤂

He will bring forth your righteousness as light,  
and your judgement as mid-day.

Be subject to the LORD, and entreat Him.

𐤃

Do not be provoked to jealousy by one prospering on his  
way,

by a Man committing a transgression of the law.

Cease from anger, and abandon fury ;

𐤄

do not be provoked to jealousy so as to work evil ;  
for those working evil shall be exterminated,

but those waiting for the LORD —  
they shall inherit the earth.

<sup>249</sup> About “requests of your heart”: when the heart is filled with the delight of the LORD, the likelihood is that the heart will know what to ask, already understanding what is God’s will.

Yet a little while, and the sinner shall not exist ;  
you shall seek his place, and you shall not find it.

10 𐤅

The meek shall inherit the earth,<sup>250</sup>  
and they shall take delight in a multitude of peace.

The sinner shall mark the righteous one,  
and he shall gnash his teeth at him.

𐤆

But the LORD will laugh at him,  
for He foresees that his day shall come.

The sinners have drawn their sword, and strung their  
bow,

𐤇

to cast down the poor and the needy,  
and to slaughter those who are upright in heart.

May their sword come into their own hearts,  
and may their bows be shattered.

15 𐤈

Better is the little that the righteous has,  
than the great riches of sinners ;

for the arms of sinners shall be shattered,  
but the LORD upholds the righteous.

The LORD knows the ways of the blameless,  
and their inheritance shall be unto the age.

𐤉

They shall not be put to shame in the evil time,  
and in the days of famine shall they be sated ;

for the sinners shall perish, and the enemies of the LORD,  
as soon as they are glorified and exalted.

20 𐤉

Vanishing, just as smoke they vanished.

The sinner borrows money, and he shall not repay it,  
but the righteous one has compassion, and gives ;

𐤊

<sup>250</sup> (Matthew 5:5; *Didachē* 3:7-10)

for those blessing him shall inherit the earth,  
 but those cursing him shall be exterminated.  
 By the LORD are the foot-steps of a Man directed,      ׀  
 and he shall greatly delight in His way.  
 Whenever he may fall, he shall not be broken down,  
 for the LORD steadies his hand.  
 I was young ; indeed I became old ;<sup>251</sup>      25 ׁ  
 and I did not see the righteous one abandoned,  
 nor his seed seeking bread.  
 The whole day long, the righteous one is merciful, and  
     lends,  
 and his seed shall be a blessing.  
 Incline away from badness, and do good,      ׃  
 and pitch your tent unto an age of an age ;  
 for the LORD loves fair-judgement,  
 and He will not abandon His holy ones.  
 They shall be watched over unto the age.  
 The lawless shall be chased out,      ץ  
 and the seed of the impious shall be exterminated.  
 The righteous shall inherit the earth,  
 and pitch their tents on it, unto an age of an age.  
 The mouth of the righteous one shall ruminate on      30 ן  
     wisdom,<sup>252</sup>  
 and his tongue shall speak fair-judgement.

<sup>251</sup> About “young”: the Greek word is a comparative adjective. This sort of adjective may often be translated as a positive adjective.

<sup>252</sup> Saint Ambrose of Milan comments that for the righteous, to “ruminate on wisdom” is to ruminate on Christ.

The law of his God is in his heart,  
 and his foot-steps shall not be tripped up.  
 The sinner observes the righteous one,      ם  
 and seeks to put him to death.  
 But the LORD will not abandon him to his hands,  
 nor will He condemn him, whenever He may judge him.  
 Wait for the LORD, and keep His way ;      ן  
 He will exalt you to inherit the earth,  
 and you shall see when sinners are exterminated.  
 I saw the impious one, over-exalted      35 ן  
 and lifted up as the cedars of Lebanon.  
 I passed by, and behold, he was not ;  
 I sought him, but his place was not found.  
 Keep guilelessness, and see uprightness,      ף  
 for there is a remainder for a peaceful Man.<sup>253</sup>  
 But the transgressors of the law shall be exterminated as  
     one ;  
 the remains of the impious shall be exterminated.  
 But the salvation of the righteous is from the LORD,  
 and He is their Protector in the time of affliction.  
 The LORD will help them, and rescue them ;      40 ן  
 He will set them free from sinners ;  
 and He will save them, for they have hoped on Him.

<sup>253</sup> Saint Augustine explains that “remainder” here means that when we are dead, we shall not be dead. We shall still have something remaining to us, even after this life, that is, the seed that “shall be a blessing” (verse 26). As the LORD says, “He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live” (John 11:25). This is what comes to the peaceful one.



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

*And then the following prayers :*

#### **TRISAGION PRAYERS**

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

*(three times)*

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

O most holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from  
our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and  
heal our infirmities, for Your Name's sake.

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

Our Father, who are in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name ; Your  
kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ;  
give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our debts, as we  
forgive our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test, but rescue  
us from the evil one.

*And then :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus Christ, our  
God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

*And these Tropars : Tone 5*

Your throne is awesome, and my life is evil. Who shall deliver  
me from the anguish of that hour, unless You, Yourself, have  
mercy on me, O Christ God, as the compassionate One and  
Lover of Man ?

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

The cares of life have driven me from paradise. I am reduced to  
despair. Oh, what shall I do ? I shall knock at the gates, and call  
out : O LORD, O LORD, open to me, through repentance, and save  
me.

Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O Theotokos, what shall we call your temple ? – A spiritual  
harbour ? A paradise of heavenly sweetness ? Intercession of  
unending life ? – for you possess all that is good. Ever entreat  
Christ to save our souls.

LORD, have mercy. *(forty times)*

*And then the following prayer :*

O God, righteous and praised, O God, great and mighty, O God  
before all ages, hear the prayer of the sinner in this hour. Hear  
me, You that promised to hear those who call upon You in faith.  
O Hope of all the ends of the earth, and of those who wander  
afar off, do not loathe me,<sup>254</sup> caught as I am in my sins, with my  
unclean lips. Unsheathe the sword, and shut away the opposing  
ones who are closely pursuing me. Bar the unclean spirits from  
me, who am senseless. May the spirit of hatred and  
vengefulness, the spirit of envy and deception, the spirit of fear  
and dejection, the spirit of pride and of all other evil, be put far  
from my thoughts. May every urge and fire of my flesh, due to  
devilish influence, be quenched. May my body, soul and spirit  
be illumined with the light of Your divine knowledge, that  
through the multitude of Your compassions, I may attain to the  
unity of the faith, to maturity, to fulness of stature, and with all  
the angels and Your saints, glorify Your all-honourable and

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<sup>254</sup> See the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.



majestic Name : of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



## session

6

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



### PSALM 37

### STATION 1

*“Supplication of a repentant sinner”*

Κύριε, μὴ τῷ θυμῷ Domine, ne in furore

A psalm by David. For remembrance. 1

Concerning the Sabbath.

**O** LORD, do not reprove me in Your fury,  
nor in Your anger instruct me ;<sup>255</sup>

for Your arrows have stuck fast in me,  
and You have pressed Your hand upon me.

There is no healing in my flesh, because of the face of Your  
anger ;<sup>256</sup>

there is no peace in my bones, because of the face of my sins ;  
for my lawless acts have gone over my head ; 5  
just as a heavy burden they weighed down upon me.

My wounds became foul and festered  
because of the face of my foolishness.

---

<sup>255</sup> Saint Athanasius advises us that when we feel the LORD’s displeasure, we ought to say Psalms 6 and 37.

About “fury” and “anger”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

<sup>256</sup> In these three cases “face” may connote “sight”, or give the sense of “before”.

I have been miserable and bent down until the end ;  
 I was walking the whole day long, with a sad countenance ;  
 for my loins were filled with mockings,  
 and there is no healing in my flesh.  
 I have been mistreated, and utterly humbled ;  
 I was roaring, from the groaning of my heart.  
 O LORD, in Your presence is all my craving, 10  
 and my groaning was not hidden from You.  
 My heart has been stirred up : my strength abandoned me,  
 and the light of my eyes, it also is not with me.  
 My friends and my neighbours opposite me drew near,  
 and stood,  
 and my kinsfolk stood afar off.  
 Those seeking my soul were forcing me out,  
 and those seeking bad things against me spoke futilities,  
 and on deceits they ruminated the whole day long.  
 But as for me, just as one deaf, I was not hearing,  
 just as one speechless, not opening his mouth.  
 I became just as a Man not hearing, 15  
 and not having reproofs in his mouth ;  
 for on You, O LORD, have I hoped ;  
 it is You that will hear me, O LORD my God ;  
 for I said : “Perhaps my enemies may rejoice over me”.  
 When my feet were slipping, they spoke boastfully against  
 me ;  
 for I am ready for scourges,  
 and my suffering is before my face continually ;

for I shall announce my lawlessness,  
 and I shall be anxious about my sin.  
 But my enemies live, and they have become strong, more  
 than I, 20  
 and they have multiplied —<sup>257</sup>  
 those hating me unjustly.  
 They were slandering me —  
 those requiting me with bad things for good,  
 since I was closely pursuing goodness.  
 Do not abandon me, O LORD ;  
 O my God, do not stand away from me ;  
 give heed to my help,  
 O LORD of my salvation.<sup>258</sup>



<sup>257</sup> About passive voice used as active voice: see the foot-note on Psalm 33:3.

<sup>258</sup> Saint Ambrose of Milan comments on this line, writing that it is God who saves. His hands do not lose His own, but He heals them.

**PSALM 38**

*“Christ, the only Hope of Man in his frailty”*

Εἴπα, φυλάξω

Dixi custodiam

For the end. To Idithoun.<sup>259</sup> A canticle by David.

1

**I** said : “I shall guard my ways,  
that I sin not with my tongue.

I placed a guard on my mouth,  
while the sinner took his stance against me”.

I became mute, and I was humbled ;

I kept silent from good things,  
and my suffering was renewed.

My heart became hot within me,  
and in my rumination, a fire shall be kindled.

I spoke with my tongue :

“Make me know my limit, O LORD,

5

and what is the number of my days,

so that I may know what I am, myself, lacking.

Behold, as hand-breadths have You set my days,

and my existence is just as nothing before Your Face.

Nevertheless, the whole of futility is every Man living.<sup>260</sup>

*Pause*

Truly, Man walks about as an image,<sup>261</sup>

yet in futility is he stirred up.

<sup>259</sup> (1 Paraleipomenon 25:1-8) “Idithoun”=Jeduthun, the ancestor of a group of Levites, having the responsibility of the singing during the services and of keeping the doors of the Temple secure.

<sup>260</sup> Compare this verse and the tone of this psalm with that of Ecclesiastes (Qoheleth).

<sup>261</sup> Saint Augustine comments that this “image” is the image of Him who made Man in His own image (see 1 Mōysēs 1:26).

He stores up treasures, and does not know  
for whom he shall gather them together.

And now, who is my endurance ?

Is it not the LORD ?

Even my existence is from You.

From all my lawless acts, rescue me ;

You gave me as an object of reproach to the fool.

I became mute, and I did not open my mouth,

10

for it is You that have done it.

Take Your scourges away from me,

for from the strength of Your hand have I, myself, failed.

With reproofs for lawlessness You instructed Man,

and You melted away his soul like a spider ;<sup>262</sup>

yet in futility is every Man stirred up.

*Pause*

Hear my prayer, O LORD, and my supplication :  
give ear to my tears.

Do not pass by in silence ;

for I am, myself, a sojourner with You,

and a pilgrim, even as all my fathers.

Release me, so that I may be refreshed

before I depart, and exist no more”.

<sup>262</sup> Archimandrite Placide explains that the spider is the image of a being that is deprived of all actual substance. Thus the Fathers very often see here an allusion to the liberation of Man from the weight of his fallen nature through asceticism.

**PSALM 39**

*“Offering of Christ to His Father”*

Ἐπομένων ὑπέμεινα      Expectans expectavi

For the end. A psalm by David.

1

**W**aiting, I waited for the LORD,  
and He gave heed to me.

He heard my supplication.

He led me up out of the pit of misery,  
and away from the miry clay.

He set my feet upon a rock,  
and He directed my foot-steps.

He put into my mouth a new song,  
a hymn to our God.<sup>263</sup>

Many shall see, and shall fear,  
and they shall hope on the LORD.

Blessed is the man

5

whose hope is the Name of the LORD,  
and who has not attentively looked into futilities and  
lying madness.<sup>264</sup>

Many are the wonders You have made, O LORD my God,  
and in Your reasonings there is no-one who shall be likened  
to You.

I brought tidings, and I spoke :  
they multiplied beyond number.<sup>265</sup>

In sacrifice and an offering You have not delighted,  
but a body You have perfected for me.

---

<sup>263</sup> About “song” and “hymn”: Saint Leo the Great affirms that persevering in unflagging praise to God sustains and strengthens the Christian soul.

<sup>264</sup> In Greek, “madness” is in the plural.

<sup>265</sup> About passive voice used as active voice: see the foot-note on Psalm 33:3.

Whole-burnt-offerings and an offering for sin, You have  
not sought.<sup>266</sup>

Then I said : “Behold, I have come.

On the heading of the book it is written about me :  
in order to do Your will, O my God,<sup>267</sup>

I also wanted Your law in the midst of my heart” .<sup>268</sup>

I announced the glad tidings of righteousness in the great  
church :

10

behold, I shall not restrain my lips.

Indeed, You know, O LORD.

Your righteousness I have not hidden in my heart ;  
and of Your truth and of Your salvation I have spoken.

I have not hidden Your mercy and Your truth from a great  
gathering.

But You, O LORD, do not keep Your compassions far  
from me ;

may Your mercy and Your truth continually support me ;  
for bad things encompassed me :

things of which there is no number.

My lawless acts laid hold of me,  
and I could not see.

They multiplied more than the hairs of my head,<sup>269</sup>  
and my heart abandoned me.

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<sup>266</sup> The word for “an offering” is lacking in the Greek.

<sup>267</sup> (Hebrews 10:5-7)

<sup>268</sup> Having God’s law “in the midst of my heart” can mean the same thing as having God’s Love in the midst of the heart, since the foundation of the law is God’s Love; and it is in the midst of the heart that the one seeking God finds Him (as in the practice of the Prayer of the Heart). Having this Love in the midst of the heart makes it possible to do God’s will.

<sup>269</sup> About passive voice used as active voice: see the foot-note on Psalm 33:3.

Be well-pleased, O LORD, to rescue me :  
 O LORD, give heed to my help.  
 May they be put to shame, and be disgraced as well — 15  
 those seeking my soul, to snatch it away.  
 May they be turned backwards, and be put to shame —  
 those wishing me bad things.  
 Let them immediately bear away their shame —  
 those saying to me : “Well done, well done”.  
 Let them exult and be glad in You —  
 all those seeking You, O LORD ;  
 and let them continually say : “Let the LORD be  
 magnified” —  
 those loving Your salvation.  
 But poor and needy as I am,  
 the LORD will care for me.  
 My Helper and my Protector — it is You.  
 O my God, do not tarry.



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
 now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
 Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
 (three times)  
 LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
 Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
 now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

**PSALM 40**

**STATION 2**

*“Prayer of Christ, bearing the sins of the world, betrayed and  
 abandoned”*

Μακάριος ὁ συνιῶν      Beatus qui intelligit

For the end. A psalm by David.<sup>270</sup> 1

**B**lessed is the one understanding the poor and the  
 needy ;  
 in the evil day, the LORD will rescue him.  
 May the LORD watch over him closely, and make him live,  
 and make him blessed on the earth ;  
 may He not hand him over into the hands of his enemies.  
 May the LORD help him on his couch of pain :  
 You have turned over all his bed in his sickness.  
 As for me, I said : “O LORD, have mercy on me ; 5  
 heal my soul, for I have sinned against You”.  
 My enemies spoke bad things against me :  
 “When shall he die, and his name perish ?”  
 And one was walking in to see me ; he was speaking in  
 futility.  
 His heart gathered lawlessness together to himself.  
 He was walking outside, and speaking the same thing.  
 Against me all my enemies were whispering ;  
 against me they were calculating bad things for me.  
 They laid down an unlawful word against me :  
 “Surely the sleeping one shall not arise again ?”

<sup>270</sup> Saint Ambrose of Milan affirms that the “end” to which all our hope is directed is Christ: the fulness, the consummation of the universe, the summit, the crown of all things.

Supplementing the words of Saint Ambrose is the sentence about the LORD in the Apocalypse of Saint John: “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last” (Apocalypse 22:13).

Indeed, it is the Man of my peace, on whom I hoped, 10  
who, eating my bread, magnified treachery against me.<sup>271</sup>  
But You, O LORD, have mercy on me ;  
raise me up, and I shall requite them.  
In this, I know that You have delighted in me :  
that my enemy shall not rejoice over me.  
Because of my guilelessness, You have supported me,  
and You have secured me before Your Face unto the age.  
Blessed be the LORD God of Israēl,<sup>272</sup>  
from the age, and unto the age.  
So be it. So be it.



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<sup>271</sup> (John 13:18) “Treachery” is sometimes translated “lifting the heel”, because the meaning of the Greek word comes from the unfair biting the heel or ham-string of the opponent in wrestling, which is included in the meaning and history of this word.

<sup>272</sup> These words make a closing doxology for Book I of the Psalter. At the conclusion of the following four books, there is also a doxology, unique to each. As Saint Gregory of Nyssa points out, Psalm 150 as a whole serves as a closing doxology for the whole Psalter.

## BOOK II

### PSALM 41

*“Yearning for Baptism, and longing for the Habitation of God”*

*Ὅν τρόπον ἐπιποθεῖ*

*Quemadmodum*

For the end. For understanding. By the sons of Korè.<sup>273</sup> 1

**A**s the hind yearns for springs of waters,  
so my soul yearns for You, O God.

My soul has thirsted for the living God.

When shall I come, and appear before the Face of God ?

My tears became my bread by day and by night,

while they say to me each day : “Where is your God ?”

I remembered these things, and I poured out my soul on  
me ; 5

for I shall come unto the place of the wonderful  
tent,<sup>274</sup>

as far as the house of God,

with a voice of exultation and confession,  
and a roar of festal celebration.

Why are you so very sad, O my soul,  
and why do you make me confused ?

Hope on God, for I shall confess Him,  
the Salvation of my face, and my God.<sup>275</sup>

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<sup>273</sup> (1 Paraleipomenon 9:17-27; 26:1-19) “Korè”=Korah=Kore. “Korè” is the ancestor of those who are singers and door-keepers of the Temple.

<sup>274</sup> “Tent” means the Tent of Meeting, the Tabernacle, the portable Temple of the wilderness years of wandering, and of the time before Solomon’s constructing the permanent Temple.

<sup>275</sup> About “face”: see the foot-note on Psalm 4:7.

My soul was stirred up within myself ;  
because of this, I shall remember You,  
from the land of Jordan, and from Hermōniim : from the  
small mountain.<sup>276</sup>

Abyss calls to abyss, to the voice of Your cataracts ;  
all Your swells and Your waves have come upon me.

By day, the LORD will command His mercy,  
and by night, a canticle to Him ;  
and from me, a prayer to the God of my life.

I shall say to God : “You are my Support. 10

Wherefore have You forgotten me ?

And why do I go about with a sad countenance,  
while my enemy squeezes me out ?”

While they crushed my bones, my enemies were  
reproaching me ;

while they say to me each day : “Where is your God ?”

Why are you so very sad, O my soul,  
and why do you make me confused ?

Hope on God, for I shall confess Him,  
the Salvation of my face, and my God.<sup>277</sup>

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<sup>276</sup> It is generally understood that “Hermoniim” refers to a smaller part of Mount Hermon, in the northern part of Israel. This is the main source of the Jordan.

<sup>277</sup> About “face”: see the foot-note on Psalm 4:7.

## PSALM 42

*“Yearning for the unwaning light, and longing for the sanctuary”*

Κρίνον με, ὁ Θεός      Judica me, Deus

For the end. A psalm of David. [Without inscription in Hebrew] 1

**J**udge me, O God, and defend my cause from an unholy  
nation ;

from an unrighteous and deceitful Man rescue me ;  
for You, O God, You are my Strength.

Why have You pushed me away ?  
and why do I go about with a sad countenance,  
while my enemy squeezes me out ?

O send out Your light and Your truth :  
it is they that have led me on the way, and guided me  
to Your holy mountain, and to Your tents.

And I shall come in to the altar of God,  
to God making glad my youth ;

I shall confess You with a lyre, O God, my God.

Why are you so very sad, O my soul,  
and why do you make me confused ? 5

Hope on God, for I shall confess Him,  
the Salvation of my face, and my God.<sup>278</sup>

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<sup>278</sup> About “face”: see the foot-note on Psalm 4:7.



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

### PSALM 43

### STATION 3

*"Supplication of the persecuted Church"*

Ὁ Θεός, ἐν τοῖς ὠσὶν                      Deus, auribus

For the end. For understanding. 1

A psalm by the sons of Korè.

**O** God, we have heard with our ears,  
and our fathers have announced to us,  
the work which You wrought in their days, in days of old.  
Your hand exterminated the nations,  
but them, You have planted.

You have mistreated the peoples, and cast them out ;  
for not by their sword did they inherit the earth,<sup>279</sup>  
and their arm did not save them ;

but it is Your right hand, Your arm,<sup>280</sup>  
and the illumination of Your Face,  
for You have been well-pleased with them.

You are, Yourself, my King and my God, 5  
commanding the salvations of Jakōb.<sup>281</sup>

In You shall we gore our enemies,<sup>282</sup>  
and in Your Name shall we reckon as nothing those rising up  
against us ;

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<sup>279</sup> About "inherit": Saint Ambrose of Milan explains further that this inheriting of the earth was and is accomplished by God Himself. God may use willing agents such as Moses, Joshua and others, but it is He who accomplishes everything.

<sup>280</sup> The "right hand" and "arm" are metaphors for the power of God.  
The Psalmist points out that human beings commonly tend to claim for themselves credit for what God, Himself, has actually accomplished. The LORD accomplishes our salvation, our rescue from harm, because He loves us. We betray His protection by claiming it was our effort.

<sup>281</sup> In Greek, "salvations" is in the plural. See the foot-note on Psalm 84:5.

<sup>282</sup> Although the "enemies" mentioned here refer to particular invaders, it is important that we understand them as spiritual adversaries. Confusion, such as that accompanying any invasion, is always a symptom of demonic activity.



for I shall not hope on my bow,  
and my sword shall not save me ;  
for You have saved us from those afflicting us,  
and those hating us have You brought to shame.  
In God shall we be praising the whole day long,<sup>283</sup>  
and in Your Name shall we confess unto the age.

*Pause*

But now, You have pushed us away, and have put us to  
shame, 10  
and You will not come out amongst our forces, O God.<sup>284</sup>  
You turned us back, rather than our enemies,  
and those hating us were plundering for themselves.  
You gave us as sheep for food,  
and amongst the nations You dispersed us abroad.  
Your people You gave up without a price,<sup>285</sup>  
and there was no crowd to attend their festivals.  
You made us an object of reproach to our neighbours :  
an object of sneering and derision to those round about us.  
You made us a byword to the nations,  
a shaking of the head amongst the peoples.  
The whole day long, my disgrace is before me, 15  
and the shame of my face has covered me,  
because of the voice of the one reproaching me, and  
speaking against me,

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<sup>283</sup> About passive voice used as active voice: see the foot-note on Psalm 33:3.

<sup>284</sup> About these lines: throughout the Scriptures, situations such as this are the result of a falling-away from freely-offered obedience by the people of God. In so doing, they could cut themselves off from divine protection. See the foot-note on Psalm 73:1.

<sup>285</sup> The present translation of this line follows Saint John Chrysostom and others. However, some give: binding fast without honour.

because of the face of an enemy and banisher.  
All these things have come upon us,  
and yet we did not forget You,  
and we have not done anything unrighteous against Your  
Covenant.

Our heart has not turned away to the back,  
and You declined our paths away from Your way ; 20  
for You humbled us in a place of ill-treatment,  
and the shadow of death has covered us.  
If we have forgotten the Name of our God,  
and if we have spread out our hands to a foreign god,  
will not God seek these things out ?  
for it is He who knows the secrets of the heart.  
For Your sake we are put to death the whole day long :  
we were reckoned as sheep for the slaughter.<sup>286</sup>  
Awake – why do You sleep, O LORD ?  
Arise, and do not push us away unto the end.  
Why do You turn away Your Face ? 25  
Do You forget our poverty and our affliction ?  
for our soul has been humbled to the dirt ;  
our belly has cleaved to the earth.  
Arise, O LORD ; help us,  
and redeem us for the sake of Your Name.<sup>287</sup>

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<sup>286</sup> (Romans 8:36)

<sup>287</sup> Saint John Chrysostom elaborates that it is possible to take pride in having endured so many troubles and dangers. But the people call to the LORD to help them, not because of what they had endured, but as if they, themselves, had done nothing good. They simply appeal to the mercy, the loving-kindness and the Name of God.

## PSALM 44

*"Nuptial song of Christ and His Church"*

Ἐξηρέυξατο ἡ καρδία μου      Eructavit cor meum

For the end. About those who shall be changed.<sup>288</sup> 1

By the sons of Korè. For understanding.

A canticle on the beloved.

**M**y heart has poured forth a good word :

it is I who speak of my works to the king ;

my tongue is the pen of a swift-writing scribe.

Comely are you, in beauty beyond the sons of Men ;

grace has been poured out on your lips.

Because of this, God has blessed you unto the age.

Gird your sword on your thigh, O powerful one ;

in your comeliness, and in your beauty,

stretch out, prosper and reign,<sup>289</sup> 5

for the sake of truth, meekness and righteousness ;

your right hand shall wonderfully lead you on the way.

Your arrows are sharpened, O powerful one<sup>290</sup>

– under you shall peoples fall –

in the heart of the enemies of the king.

Your throne, O God, is unto the age of the age ;

a rod of uprightness is the rod of Your kingdom.

---

<sup>288</sup> Saint John Chrysostom comments that it is Christ the Beloved who changed us, both transforming and altering the circumstances. He reminds us of the words of the Apostle, "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation" (see 2 Corinthians 5:17).

<sup>289</sup> About "stretch out": this verb is used, as by Euripides, meaning "to extend the line of an army". It may also mean "to spread out" or "deploy", again in a military, conquering manner. The Latin *extendo* conveys the same meaning.

<sup>290</sup> Saint John Chrysostom treats this whole psalm christologically. Therefore, the "powerful one" here is the Christ. This applies to many other words also.

You loved righteousness, and hated lawlessness :

because of this, God, your God, has anointed you

with oil of exultation, beyond your companions.<sup>291</sup>

Myrrh, stactē and cassia emanate from your clothes :<sup>292</sup>

from ivory palaces where they made you glad.

Daughters of kings are present in your honour.

The queen stood at your right-hand, 10

clothed in cloth-of-gold apparel, richly embroidered.

Listen, O daughter, and see, and incline your ear.

Forget your people, and the house of your father ;

and the king shall desire your beauty ;

for he is your lord, and you shall do homage to him.

And, O daughter of Tyr, you shall do homage to him with

gifts ;<sup>293</sup>

the rich of the people shall entreat your face.

All the glory of the daughter of the king is within,

clothed in apparel of golden fringes, richly embroidered.

Maidens who follow after her shall be brought to the king ; 15

those near to her shall be brought to you.

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<sup>291</sup> (Hebrews 1:8-9)

<sup>292</sup> "Stactē" is a sweet spice used by the ancient Jews in making incense. "Emanate" is lacking in the Greek.

<sup>293</sup> "Tyr"=*Tyros*=Tyre, the principal Phœnician city. "You shall do homage to him" the second time is not in the Greek, but it is repeated by implication from the previous line.

Saint John Chrysostom and Saint Augustine both write that Tyre is mentioned as a representative of all the Gentiles.

Saint Augustine says that Tyre, the daughter of the Gentiles, represents the nations that would in the future provide Christians to God.

Saint John Chrysostom also says that Tyre implies the whole from the part, and that the Gentiles also shall offer homage to the LORD.

They shall be brought in gladness and exultation ;  
they shall be led into the temple of the king.  
In place of your fathers were your sons born ;  
you shall appoint them princes over all the earth.  
I shall remember your name in every generation and  
generation ;  
because of this, the peoples shall confess you unto the age,  
and unto the age of the age.



## PSALM 45

*"Stability of the Church, the new Jerusalem"*

Ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν καταφυγὴ Deus noster refugium

For the end. About the sons of Korè.

1

About the hidden things. A psalm.

**O**ur God is Refuge and Power,  
a Helper in afflictions which exceedingly befall us.  
Because of this, we shall not fear when the earth is stirred  
up,  
and the mountains are carried away into the heart of the  
seas.<sup>294</sup>

Their waters roared, and were stirred up ;  
stirred up were the mountains by His strength.

*Pause*

The surges of the river make glad the city of God ;  
the Most High has hallowed His tent.

5

God is in her midst, and she shall not be shaken ;

God will help her at the break of dawn.

The nations were stirred up ; kingdoms declined ;

He has given His voice ; the earth was shaken.

The LORD of Powers is with us :

our Support is the God of Jakōb.

*Pause*

Come, and see the works of God,  
the portents which He set upon the earth.

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<sup>294</sup> Saint John Chrysostom comments that the LORD has limitless spiritual armies under His command, and therefore "we shall not fear" in the midst of affliction and turmoil. As with the Three Young Men, the LORD is with us in the midst of the fire and trial. Always He is with us.

Taking away wars as far as the ends of the earth, 10  
He will shatter bows, dash weapons,  
and completely burn shields with fire.  
“Be still, and know that I AM God.  
I will be exalted amongst the nations ;  
I will be exalted on the earth”.  
The LORD of Powers is with us :  
our Support is the God of Jakōb.



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
(three times)

*And then the following prayers :*

### **TRISAGION PRAYERS**

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.  
(three times)

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

O most holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from  
our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and  
heal our infirmities, for Your Name’s sake.

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, who are in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name ;  
Your kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in  
Heaven ; give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our  
debts, as we forgive our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test,  
but rescue us from the evil one.

*And then :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus Christ, our  
God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

*And these tropars : Tone 3*

O LORD, I bring You praise, and I lay bare before You all my  
sinfulness. Turn me back, O God, and have mercy on me.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.  
Save me, O my God, as once You saved the publican ; and You  
did not disdain the tears of the sinful woman. Receive my  
sighing also, O my Saviour, and save me.

Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

As a bond-servant, I now come to your protection, O all-  
immaculate one. O Mother of God, since you gave birth to the  
Source of passionlessness, deliver me from the confusion of the  
passions.

LORD, have mercy. (forty times)

*And then the following prayer :*

O LORD our God, we give You thanks for all the benefits You have bestowed upon us from infancy until this very day, unworthy though we be – for those known to us and for those beyond our awareness, for those that are evident and for those that are concealed, of word and of deed. Deem us to be worthy of Your love, You that love us and deigned to give Your Only-begotten Son for us. Grant us wisdom through Your Word, and through Your fear, infusing us with strength from Your might. If we have sinned, willingly or unwillingly, impute it not, but forgive. Preserve our souls in holiness, presenting them before Your throne with a pure conscience, granting an end worthy of Your love for Man. Remember also, O LORD, all who have called upon Your Name in truth. Remember all, whether they opposed us, or desired our good, for we are all but Men, and every Man is futility. Therefore, we beseech You, O LORD, bestow upon us Your loving-kindness and great mercy. Amen.



## session

7

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



### PSALM 46

### STATION 1

*“The Ascension of Christ and the salvation of the nations”*

Πάντα τὰ ἔθνη κροτήσατε Omnes gentes, plaudite

For the end. About the sons of Korè. A psalm.

1

**A**ll you nations, clap your hands ;  
raise a shout of joy to God with a voice of exultation ;  
for the LORD Most High is formidable :<sup>295</sup>

a great King over all the earth.

He has subjected peoples to us,  
and nations beneath our feet.<sup>296</sup>

He has chosen us out for His inheritance,  
the beauty of Jakōb, which He loved.

5

*Pause*

---

<sup>295</sup> “Formidable” expresses φόβος, *phobos*. in Greek or *terribilis* in Latin. Like redoubtable, “formidable” expresses the idea of inspiring awe and a certain sort of healthy fear, more like awe and deep respect rather than terror.

<sup>296</sup> About these lines: here, and in many places in his writings, Saint John Chrysostom emphasises that with the LORD, everything is possible. All obstacles are easily overcome because the LORD assures us that He is with us, and indeed He is with us.

God has gone up with a shout of joy,  
the LORD, with a voice of a trumpet.  
Chant to our God, chant ;  
chant to our King, chant ;  
for God is King of all the earth :  
chant with understanding.  
God established His Kingship over the nations :  
God is seated upon His holy throne.  
The princes of the peoples have gathered together with  
the God of Abraam,<sup>297</sup>  
for God's strong ones of the earth have been greatly 10  
lifted up.<sup>298</sup>



<sup>297</sup> "Abraam"=Abraham. Note that, before the LORD changed the name, it was "Abram" (see 1 Mōysēs 17:5). In Hebrew, there is an h-equivalent letter.

<sup>298</sup> Saint John Chrysostom's opinion is that these "strong ones" are, in fact, the Apostles.

## PSALM 47

*"Christ, Strength of the Church, His city"*  
Μέγας Κύριος      Magnus Dominus  
A psalm of a canticle by the sons of Korè. 1  
For the second day of the week.  
**G**reat is the LORD, and greatly to be praised,  
in the city of our God, on His holy mountain,  
well-rooted for the exultation of all the earth :  
mountains of Siōn, the flanks of the north,  
the city of the great King.  
God is known in His palaces,  
whenever He may support her ;  
for behold, the kings of the earth have gathered together :  
they have come as one.  
Having seen this, themselves, thus they have wondered. 5  
They were stirred up ;  
they were shaken up.  
Trembling seized them :  
there, there were pangs as of a woman giving birth.  
With a forceful wind will You shatter the ships of  
Tharsis.<sup>299</sup>  
Even as we have heard, so we have also seen,  
in the city of the LORD of Powers,  
in the city of our God :  
God has laid her foundations unto the age.  
*Pause*  
O God, we have received Your mercy in the midst of 10  
Your people.

<sup>299</sup> (Jōnas 1:1-3) "Tharsis"=Tarshish. This may refer to Sardinia, southern Spain, or even perhaps Sri Lanka, and some say Britain. It meant "the end of the world".

In accordance with Your Name, O God,  
 so also Your praise is to all the ends of the earth ;  
 Your right hand is full of righteousness.  
 Let Mount Siōn be glad ;  
 let the daughters of Joudæa exult,<sup>300</sup>  
 for the sake of Your judgements, O LORD.  
 Surround Siōn, and embrace her ;  
 speak out, while in her towers.  
 Set your hearts on her power,  
 and number her palaces,  
 so that you may speak out to another generation  
 that this is our God unto the age,  
 and unto the age of the age.  
 He will shepherd us unto the ages.

15



<sup>300</sup> “Joudæa”=Judea.

## PSALM 48

*“Vanity of earthly prosperity”*

Ἐκούσατε ταῦτα, πάντα      Audite hæc, omnes

For the end. A psalm by the sons of Korè.<sup>301</sup>

1

**H**ear these things, all you nations ;  
 give ear, all you dwelling in the world :

both earth-born and the sons of Men, the rich and the needy,  
 as one.<sup>302</sup>

My mouth shall speak wisdom,  
 and the rumination of my heart, understanding.

I shall incline my ear to a parable ;

5

I shall open up my riddle with the sound of the psaltery.

Why shall I fear in the evil day ?

The lawlessness of my heel shall surround me.<sup>303</sup>

Those trusting in their power, and boasting in the  
 multitude of their riches :

a brother does not redeem ; shall a Man redeem ?

He shall not give God a propitiatory offering for himself,  
 nor the price of the redemption of his soul.

He has laboured unto the age, and he shall live to the  
 end ;

10

<sup>301</sup> About “For the end”: Saint Basil the Great comments that those outside, such as the Gentiles, have many foreign ideas about the end. Christian believers look to and hasten towards only one end: the blessed life in the age to come.

Saint Ambrose of Milan explains that Christ is the end objective towards whom all our hope is directed. He is our all-consuming interest, the object of all our desires, the consummation of all the universe.

<sup>302</sup> Saint John Chrysostom rejects the idea that “earth-born” may refer to the mistaken pagan idea that human beings originally grew out of the earth. He emphasises that although we were made from the earth (see 1 Mōysēs 2:7), we were not produced by the earth on its own and by itself.

<sup>303</sup> Saint John Chrysostom comments that this expression, “the lawlessness of my heel”, refers to the lawlessness of the way and of the life, that is, the lawlessness of the foot-steps of the Psalmist.

for he shall not see ruin,  
whenever he may see wise ones dying.  
As one shall the fool and the mindless perish,  
and they shall leave behind their riches for foreigners.<sup>304</sup>  
Their tombs shall be their houses unto the age,  
their tents unto generation and generation.  
They called their lands after their own names.  
And Man, being in honour, has not understood ;  
he has been compared to mindless beasts,  
and he has become like them.<sup>305</sup>  
This, their way, is a stumbling-block to them,  
and afterwards they shall be well-pleased in the words of  
their mouth.<sup>306</sup>

*Pause*

As sheep have they been put in Hadēs ; 15  
death shall shepherd them.  
The upright in heart shall lord it over them in the  
morning ;  
their help shall become old in Hadēs ;  
from their glory they have been thrust out.  
Nevertheless, God will redeem my soul from the hand of  
Hadēs,

---

<sup>304</sup> Rebellion against God, stubborn human egotism, results in death. What one has saved and set aside will go even to strangers as a consequence of the rebellion.

<sup>305</sup> Saint Gregory of Nyssa explains that sin causes us to forget our dignity according to Grace, and that it abases us by making us empty of reasoning.

Saint John Chrysostom emphasises that such a person, who does not recognise his God-given dignity, is no different from cattle — the end of whose lives means only death.

<sup>306</sup> The phrase “the words of” is lacking in Greek.

Saint John Chrysostom notes that this means that afterwards they shall say that they are satisfied with themselves.

whenever He may receive me.

*Pause*

Do not fear whenever a Man may become rich,  
and whenever the glory of his house may have multiplied ;<sup>307</sup>  
for when he dies, he shall not take everything,  
nor shall his glory go down with him ;  
for his soul shall be blessed in his life :  
he shall be grateful to you, whenever you may do good  
to him.<sup>308</sup>  
He shall enter as far as the generation of his fathers ; 20  
he shall not see the light until the age.  
And Man, being in honour, has not understood ;  
he has been compared to mindless beasts,  
and he has become like them.<sup>309</sup>

✠

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
(*three times*)

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

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<sup>307</sup> About passive voice used as active voice: see the foot-note on Psalm 33:3.

<sup>308</sup> Saint John Chrysostom comments that this person, as it were, is grateful for those things that suit him. The giver does good hypocritically; the receiver accepts only in the context of his self-interest. Both giver and receiver are egoists.

Saint Augustine takes an opposite view, saying that God is the giver; but humans are grateful only when they receive what they consider “good” according to their own measure. If there is loss, they blaspheme God.

<sup>309</sup> See the foot-note on verse 13 regarding this same refrain.



**PSALM 49****STATION 2***“The two advents of Christ, and the sacrifice of the New Covenant”*

Θεὸς θεῶν      Deus deorum

A psalm by Asaph.<sup>310</sup>

1

**T**he God of gods, the LORD, has spoken,  
 and He has called the earth  
 from the risings of the sun unto its settings.  
 Out of Siōn is the majesty of His comeliness.  
 God will manifestly come — our God ;  
 and He will not pass by in silence.  
 Fire shall be kindled before His Face,  
 and round about Him is a violent tempest.  
 He will summon the Heaven above,  
 and the earth, to separate His people.<sup>311</sup>  
 Gather together to Him, you, His holy ones,<sup>312</sup>  
 making a covenant with Him on sacrifices.<sup>313</sup>  
 The Heavens shall announce His righteousness,  
 for God is Judge.

5

*Pause*

“Hear, O My people, and I will speak to you —  
 O Israēl, and I will testify unto you :  
 I AM God — your God.  
 Not for your sacrifices will I reprove you ;

---

<sup>310</sup> (1 Paraleipomenon 15:16-24) “Asaph” is the ancestor of Levites responsible for the singing in the Temple.

<sup>311</sup> “Separate” is the first meaning for this verb as given in L&S.

<sup>312</sup> Saint John Chrysostom explains that “holy ones” is an ironic addressing of those who consider themselves holy simply because they offer the required sacrifices. God reproaches them for their hypocrisy.

<sup>313</sup> (1 Mōysēs 15:17-21)

for your whole-burnt-offerings are before My Face  
 continually.

I will not receive from your house young bulls,  
 nor from your flocks young he-goats ;  
 for all the wild beasts of the thicket are Mine,  
 and the cattle in the mountains, and the oxen.

10

I know all the birds of the sky,  
 and the comeliness of the field is with Me.

If I were hungry, I would not tell you,  
 for Mine is the world and its fulness.

Surely I shall not eat the flesh of bulls,  
 nor drink the blood of he-goats ?

Sacrifice to God a sacrifice of praise,  
 and render your vows to the Most High.

In the day of your affliction call upon Me,  
 and I will set you free,  
 and you shall glorify Me”.<sup>314</sup>

15

*Pause*

But to the sinner God said :

“As for you, why do you recount My statutes,  
 and take up My Covenant in your mouth ?

But indeed you hated instruction,  
 and you cast out My words behind you.

If you were looking at a thief, you were running to join him,  
 and you were throwing in your lot with an adulterer.

---

<sup>314</sup> The psalm clearly indicates who God is relative to creation. This creation, led by humans, is to worship God above all, offering the first-fruits of all they have. A multitude of sacrifices is meaningless if not offered from a heart and life that have a relationship with God of ardent love.

Your mouth abounded in badness,  
 and your tongue was weaving deceit.  
 Sitting down, you were speaking against your brother,<sup>315</sup> 20  
 and against the son of your mother you were laying a  
 stumbling-block.  
 You did these things, and I was silent.  
 You supposed, lawlessly, that I will be like you.<sup>316</sup>  
 I will reprove you, and I will place your sins before your  
 face.  
 Understand these things then, you, forgetting God,  
 lest He snatch you away,  
 and there be no rescuer.  
 A sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me,  
 and a way is there, in which I will show him My salvation".<sup>317</sup>



<sup>315</sup> About the following lines: Saint John Chrysostom exhorts us that we ought not to speak ill as do slanderers, whom he compares to dung-beetles that carry dung in their mouth. They are the first to be affected by the stench. We ought rather to do as bees, which carry the nectar of flowers and make honeycombs.

<sup>316</sup> About this line: it is common for humans to reduce the understanding of God to base human behaviour, and then to blame Him.

<sup>317</sup> Saint John Chrysostom expands on these words. He says that, in the manner of a loving mother, the LORD's indescribable loving-kindness and boundless goodness exhort us who are forgetful of God to understand that what is needed is a change in the way of life in order to be pulled out of evil. This loving exhortation to repentance shows that the way leading to salvation is found in glorifying God.

**PSALM 50**

*"Supplication of the repentant sinner"*

Ἐλέησόν με, ὁ Θεός Miserere mei, Deus

For the end. 1

A psalm by David, when Nathan the Prophet came to him,  
 when he had gone in to Bērsabee, the wife of Ourias.<sup>318</sup>

**H**ave mercy on me, O God,  
 in accordance with Your great mercy,  
 and in accordance with the multitude of Your compassions,  
 blot out my transgression of the law.

Wash me thoroughly from my lawlessness,  
 and from my sin cleanse me ;

for I know my lawlessness, 5  
 and my sin is before my face continually.<sup>319</sup>

Against You alone have I sinned,  
 and evil have I done before Your Face ;  
 so that You may be shown to be righteous in Your words,  
 and to be victorious when You are judged ;<sup>320</sup>

for behold, I was conceived in lawlessness,  
 and in sins did my mother crave to conceive me ;

for behold, You have loved truth ;  
 the unseen and hidden things of Your wisdom have You  
 shown me.

You will sprinkle me with hyssop,

<sup>318</sup> (2 Kingdoms 12:1-15) "Bērsabee"=Bathsheba. "Ourias"=Uriah. The context of this psalm is the fall of King David in his arranging the death of Uriah, and in his adultery with Bathsheba.

<sup>319</sup> Saint Ambrose of Milan reminds us that it is no small thing to be able to recognise one's own sin. To do so is to be able to avoid sin, and in avoiding it, to have the ability to choose to follow the LORD.

<sup>320</sup> (Romans 3:4)

and I shall be cleansed ;  
 You will wash me,  
 and I shall be made whiter than snow.  
 You will make me hear exultation and gladness : 10  
 my humbled bones shall exult.  
 Turn Your Face away from my sins,  
 and blot out all my lawless acts.  
 Build a pure heart in me, O God,  
 and renew an upright spirit in my inward parts.<sup>321</sup>  
 Cast me not away from Your Face,  
 and take not Your Holy Spirit away from me.  
 Render to me the exultation of Your salvation,  
 and with Your guiding Spirit set me fast.  
 I shall teach the lawless Your ways, 15  
 and the impious shall turn about to You.  
 Rescue me from blood, O God,<sup>322</sup>  
 O God of my salvation.  
 My tongue shall exult in Your righteousness.  
 O LORD, You will open my lips,  
 and my mouth shall announce Your praise ;  
 for if You had wished for a sacrifice,  
 I would have given it.  
 With whole-burnt-offerings You will not be well-pleased.

<sup>321</sup> “Inward parts” (the innermost parts) means the entrails, that is, the depth of the centre of one’s being.

<sup>322</sup> In Greek, “blood” is in the plural.  
 Saint Augustine explains that this “bloods” means “rescue me from iniquities, cleanse me from all corruption”.

The sacrifice to God is a shattered spirit :  
 a shattered and humbled heart, God will not reckon as  
 nothing.<sup>323</sup> 20  
 Do good, O LORD, to Siōn in Your good-pleasure,  
 and let the walls of Jerousalēm be built.<sup>324</sup>  
 Then You will be well-pleased with a sacrifice of  
 righteousness :  
 an offering and whole-burnt-offerings ;  
 then they shall offer young bulls upon Your altar.



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
 now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
 Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
 (*three times*)  
 LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
 Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
 now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

<sup>323</sup> Saint John Chrysostom emphasises that what is broken does not rise up and strike, but is ready to be ill-treated. The contrite heart, even if it is insulted, even if it is enticed by evil, is at peace and does not seek vengeance.

<sup>324</sup> “Jerousalēm”=Jerusalem.

**PSALM 51****STATION 3**

*“The victory of Christ over evil”*

Τί ἐγκουχᾶ      Quid gloriaris ?

For the end. Of understanding. By David. 1

When Dōēk the Idoumæan came to announce to Saoul,<sup>325</sup>

and to say to him :

“David has gone to the house of Abimelekh”.

**W**hy do you pride yourself in badness,  
lawlessly the whole day long, O powerful one ?

Your tongue calculated unrighteously.

Just like a sharpened razor you wrought deceit.

You loved badness more than goodness : 5

unrighteousness, more than speaking righteousness.

*Pause*

You loved all utterances of drowning, you deceitful tongue.

Because of this, may God bring you down unto the end,

to pluck you out and to remove you from your tent,

and your root from the land of the living.

*Pause*

The righteous shall see, and fear,

and shall laugh at him, and say :

“Behold, a Man who did not set God as his Helper,

but put his hope on the multitude of his riches,

and became powerful in his futility”.

But as for me, I am just like a fruitful olive tree in the 10

house of God ;

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<sup>325</sup> “Idoumæa”=Edom (south-east of the Dead Sea). In 1 Mōysēs 36:1, it is clarified that Edom is Esau, twin brother of Jacob, son of Isaac.

(1 Kingdoms 21:8; 22:6-23) “Dōēk”=Doeg. “Doeg” is an example of a very evil and unrepentant person. He serves as a spy, and he massacres the priests of the LORD.

I have hoped on the mercy of God unto the age,  
and unto the age of the age.

I shall confess You unto the age, for what You have done,  
and I shall wait for Your Name,

for it is gracious in the presence of Your holy ones.



**PSALM 52**

*“The judgement of God in favour of His people”*

Εἶπεν ἄφρων Dixit insipiens

For the end. About Maëleth. 1

Of understanding. By David.

**T**he fool has said in his heart :

“There is no God”.

They became corrupted and loathsome in lawless acts.

There is no-one doing good.

God from Heaven stooped down to watch over the sons

of Men,

to see if there be anyone understanding, or seeking out

God.

They all declined away : as well, they became useless.

There is no-one doing good ; there is not even one.<sup>326</sup>

Shall they not know, all those working lawlessness ? 5

Those eating up my people, as if they were eating bread,

have not called upon the LORD.

They feared with fear, there, where no fear was,<sup>327</sup>

for God dispersed abroad the bones of Men-pleasers.

They have been put to shame,

for God reckoned them as nothing.

Who shall give from Siōn the salvation of Israēl ?

When God turns back the captivity of His people,

Jakōb shall exult and Israēl shall be glad.

<sup>326</sup> (Romans 3:10-12)

<sup>327</sup> (Psalm 13:1-5) See the foot-note on Psalm 13:5.

**PSALM 53**

*“Supplication in peril”*

Ο Θεός, ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου Deus, in nomine

For the end. In hymns. 1

Of understanding. By David.

When the Ziphites came and said to Saoul .<sup>328</sup>

“Behold, is not David hidden with us ?”

**O** God, in Your Name, save me,  
and in Your power, judge me.

O God, hear my prayer ;

give ear to the utterances of my mouth ;

for foreigners have risen up against me, 5

and the strong have sought my soul :

they did not set God before their face ;

*Pause*

for behold, God helps me,

and the LORD is the Support of my soul.

He will turn back bad things unto my enemies ;

in Your truth, exterminate them.

Willingly shall I sacrifice to You.

I shall confess Your Name, O LORD, for it is good ;

for out of every affliction have You rescued me,

and my eye has looked upon my enemies.

<sup>328</sup> (1 Kingdoms 23:13-23) The Ziphites are villagers of Ziph in the south of the territory of Judea. They revealed the hiding-place of David to Saul.

## PSALM 54

*"Supplication in persecution and betrayal"*

Ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ, ὁ Θεός Exaudi, Deus

For the end. In hymns.

1

Of understanding. By David.

**G**ive ear, O God, to my prayer,  
and do not disregard my supplication.

Give heed to me and hear me.

I was grieved in my idle talk,  
and stirred up from the voice of an enemy,  
and from the affliction of a sinner ;  
for they inclined their lawlessness against me,  
and in anger they were wrathful against me.

My heart was stirred up within me,  
and a dread of death has fallen upon me.

5

Fear and trembling have come upon me,  
and darkness has covered me.

And I said : "Who shall give me wings just like a dove,  
and I shall fly away and be at rest ?"

Behold, fleeing far away, I abode in the wilderness.

*Pause*

I was awaiting Him who is saving me from faint-  
heartedness, and from tempest.

Drown them, O LORD, and divide their tongues ;  
for I have seen lawlessness and contradiction in the city.

10

By day and by night they shall surround her, up to her  
walls ;

lawlessness and trouble are in her midst, and  
unrighteousness ;

and from her squares usury and deceit have not come to an  
end ;

for if an enemy had reproached me,  
I would have borne that ;  
and if one hating me had spoken boastfully against me,  
I would have hidden from him.

But it is you, O Man, of one soul with me, my leader and  
companion,

who sweetened for me the food shared as one.

15

We walked in one mind in the house of God.

Let death come to them,  
and let them go down to Hadēs alive,  
for evil is in their sojournings, in their midst.

As for me, I cried out to God,  
and the LORD heard me.

By evening, morning and mid-day, I shall recount it :

I shall bring tidings, and He will hear my voice.

He will redeem my soul in peace from those drawing near  
to me,

for they were in great numbers with me.

God will hear, and He will humble them —

20

He, existing before the ages ;

*Pause*

for them there is no changing,<sup>329</sup>  
for they did not fear God.

---

<sup>329</sup> They declined to be changed. They did not will to allow the LORD to bring a change to them.

He stretched out His hand in requital :  
they profaned His Covenant.  
They have been divided because of the anger of His Face,<sup>330</sup>  
and their hearts have drawn near.  
His words were made softer than oil,  
but they are darts.  
Cast your care upon the LORD,  
and He will nurture you.  
He will not allow the righteous to be distressed unto the  
age.  
But You, O God, You will lead them down into a well of  
corruption.  
Men of blood and deceit shall not live out half their days.  
But as for me, O LORD, I shall hope on You.



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
(three times)

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<sup>330</sup> About “anger”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

*And then the following prayers :*

### TRISAGION PRAYERS

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.  
(three times)

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

O most holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from  
our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and  
heal our infirmities, for Your Name’s sake.

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

Our Father, who are in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name ; Your  
kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ;  
give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our debts, as we  
forgive our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test, but rescue  
us from the evil one.

*And then :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus Christ, our  
God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

*And these tropars :* Tone 5

The Judge shall be seated, and the angels shall be present. The  
trumpet shall sound, and flames shall burn. What shall you do,  
O my soul, when you are led to the Judgement ? for then, all  
your wickedness shall be seen, and your secret sins shall be  
revealed. Therefore, before the end, cry out to the Judge :  
Cleanse me, O God, and save me.

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

Let us all keep watch, and go to meet Christ with much oil, with  
bright lamps, that we may be deemed worthy of entrance into  
the Bridal Chamber ; for the one who reaches the closed doors  
shall cry out aimlessly to God : Have mercy on me.

Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Lying on the bed of my sins, I have been robbed of my hope of salvation by the sleep of laziness, which has made my soul deserving of torment. But O God, born of a Virgin, raise me up to sing of You, that I might give You glory.

LORD, have mercy. (*forty times*)

*And then the following prayer :*

O LORD my God, as You are good, and the Lover of Man, You have accomplished many mercies for me, which I did not expect to behold. What shall I give in return for Your goodness, O LORD, my LORD ? I thank You for Your much-hymned Name. I thank You for Your boundless long-suffering. From this time forth, O Master, help, defend and shelter me from sinning against You, for You know my unstable nature. You know my foolishness. You know what I have done – in knowledge and ignorance, willingly and unwillingly, by night or by day, in mind and thought – for You, O God, are good, and the Lover of Man. Cleanse me with the dew of Your mercy, O greatly good LORD, and save me by judgements known to You, for the sake of Your holy Name ; for You are the Light, the Truth and the Life, and we send up glory to You : to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



## session

8

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



### PSALM 55

### STATION 1

*“Supplication of the persecuted Church”*

Ἐλέησόν με, ὁ Θεός Miserere mei, Deus

For the end. About the people far from holy things. 1

By David. For inscription on a stele.

When the Foreign Tribes mastered him in Geth.<sup>331</sup>

**H**ave mercy on me, O God, for Man has trampled me ;  
the whole day long, making war, he has afflicted  
me.

My enemies have trampled me the whole day long,  
for there are many making war against me from on high.

By day I shall not fear,

but I shall hope on You.

In God I shall praise my words ; 5

on God I have hoped.<sup>332</sup>

<sup>331</sup> “Foreign Tribes”=Philistines. “Geth”=Gath.

“Foreign Tribes” reflects that the people of the Gaza area came from elsewhere, usually supposed to be North Africa, Illyria, Mycenæa, or another place.

<sup>332</sup> Saint Athanasius comments that he believes that if our enemies war against us, we arm ourselves so as to avoid being harmed. Turning our words into hymns, we offer them to God, and we put all our hope on Him. This armour frees us from the fear of all humans.



I shall not fear what flesh shall do to me.  
 The whole day long they were loathing my words.  
 All their reasonings are against me for ill.  
 They shall be sojourning, and they shall hide away.  
 They shall watch my heel,  
 even as they waited for my soul.  
 On no account will You save them ;  
 in anger You will lead down the peoples, O God.<sup>333</sup>  
 I told forth my life to You ;  
 You put my tears before Your Face,  
 according to Your promise.  
 My enemies shall turn backwards 10  
 in whatever day I may call upon You.  
 Behold, I know that You are my God.  
 In God I shall praise the discourse ;  
 in the LORD I shall praise the word.  
 On God I have hoped :  
 I shall not fear what a Man shall do to me.  
 In me, O God, are the vows of Your praise, which I shall  
 render ;  
 for You have rescued my soul from death, and my feet  
 from slipping,  
 so that I may be well-pleasing before the Face of the LORD  
 in the light of the living.

<sup>333</sup> “Peoples”=nations, a metaphor for the enemies.  
 About “anger”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

## PSALM 56

*“Thanksgiving of the Church for the Resurrection of Christ”*

Ἐλέησόν με, ὁ Θεός Miserere mei, Deus 1  
 For the end. Do not utterly destroy.  
 By David. For inscription on a stele.  
 When he ran away from the face of Saoul into the cave.<sup>334</sup>

**H**ave mercy on me, O God ; have mercy on me,  
 for my soul trusts in You,  
 and in the shadow of Your wings I shall hope,  
 until the lawlessness pass over.  
 I shall cry out to God Most High,  
 to God who is my Benefactor.  
 He sent out from Heaven, and He saved me ;  
 He gave to reproach those trampling me.

*Pause*

God sent out His mercy and His truth,  
 and He rescued my soul out of the midst of the cubs of  
 the lion.<sup>335</sup> 5  
 I lay down, stirred up though I was.  
 The sons of Men – their teeth are weapons and arrows,  
 and their tongue a sharp knife.  
 Be exalted above the Heavens, O God,  
 and over all the earth, Your glory.  
 They have prepared a snare for my feet,  
 and they bowed down my soul.  
 They dug out a hole right before my face,  
 and they fell into it.

*Pause*

<sup>334</sup> (1 Kingdoms 22:1-2; 24:1-18)

<sup>335</sup> Saint Gregory of Nyssa clarifies for us that these “cubs” are our first sins, which keep eating at us until mercy and truth come to the rescue.

My heart is ready, O God ; my heart is ready.  
 I shall sing and I shall chant in my glory.  
 Awake, O my glory ;  
 awake, psaltery and lyre ;<sup>336</sup>  
 I shall awake at day-break.  
 I shall confess You amongst the peoples, O LORD ; 10  
 I shall chant to You amongst the nations ;  
 for Your mercy has been magnified as far as the Heavens,  
 and Your truth as far as the clouds.  
 Be exalted above the Heavens, O God,  
 and over all the earth, Your glory.<sup>337</sup>



<sup>336</sup> “Lyre” is the closest English for the Greek κιθάρα, *kithara*. Sometimes translated “harp”, this instrument would have been a harp of triangular or “u” shape, and would have had seven strings. Another instrument closely related and also having seven strings was the φόρμιγγις, *phorminks*, the oldest Greek stringed instrument (*OED*).

<sup>337</sup> (Psalm 107:2-6)

## PSALM 57

“The judgement of Christ against the adversaries of the Church”

Ei ἀληθῶς ἄρα δικαιοσύνην Si vere utique justitiam  
 For the end. Do not utterly destroy. 1  
 By David. For inscription on a stele.  
**I**f, then, you truly speak righteousness,  
 do you judge rightly, you sons of Men ?  
 Indeed, in your heart you are working lawlessness on the  
 earth ;  
 unrighteousness is what your hands are braiding together.  
 Sinners have been alienated, right from the womb ;  
 they have gone astray, right from the belly ;  
 they have spoken lies.  
 Fury is to them in accordance with the likeness of a  
 serpent, 5  
 just as a deaf asp, closing its ears,  
 which shall not hear the voice of enchanters,  
 nor be bound by a potion of a sage.  
 God shattered their teeth in their mouth :  
 the teeth of the lions the LORD crushed together.  
 They shall be reckoned as nothing, just as water moving  
 through.  
 He will string His bow until they become weak.  
 Just like melted wax shall they be taken away ;  
 fire fell on them, and they did not see the sun.  
 Before the bramble is aware of its thorns, 10  
 just as alive, just as it were in anger, He will swallow them.<sup>338</sup>

<sup>338</sup> About “anger”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

The righteous one shall be glad, whenever he may see  
vengeance ;  
he shall wash his hands in the blood of the sinner.  
And a Man shall say : “If, then, there be fruit for the  
righteous,  
then it is God judging them on the earth” .



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
(three times)  
LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

**PSALM 58**

**STATION 2**

*“Prayer for the deliverance of the Church, and for the final  
salvation of the Jews”*

Ἐξελοῦ με ἐκ τῶν ἐχθρῶν μου Eripe me de inimicis meis

For the end. Do not utterly destroy.

1

By David. For inscription on a stele.

When Saoul sent, and watched his house, to put him to  
death.<sup>339</sup>

**S**et me free from the grasp of my enemies, O God,  
and from those rising up against me, redeem me.

Rescue me from those working lawlessness,  
and from men of blood, save me ;

for behold, they have hunted after my soul ;

the strong have fallen upon me.

Neither is it my lawlessness nor my sin, O LORD :

without lawlessness, I ran, and I went straight on.

5

Awake to meet me, and see.

And You, O LORD God of Powers, O God of Israël,  
give heed to visiting all the nations.

Do not have compassion on all those working lawlessness.

*Pause*

They shall turn about at evening ;

as dogs shall they hunger, and surround the city.

Behold, they shall be speaking plainly with their mouth,  
and a sword is in their lips ;

for who has heard ?

But You, O LORD, You will laugh at them ;

You will reckon as nothing all the nations.

---

<sup>339</sup> (1 Kingdoms 19:11-17)

O my Strength, I shall keep watch before You ; 10  
for You are my Support, O God.  
My God – His mercy shall outrun me ;  
my God will show it to me amongst my enemies.  
O LORD, my Protector, do not slay them lest they forget Your  
law ;  
scatter them abroad in Your power, and lead them down :  
a sin of their mouth, a word of their lips,  
and let them be caught in their pride.  
From a curse and a lie, their last day shall be  
proclaimed ;  
in the anger of the last day, they shall surely not exist.  
They shall know that God is the ruler of Jakōb and of  
the ends of the earth.

*Pause*

They shall turn about at evening ; 15  
as dogs shall they hunger, and surround the city.  
They shall be scattered abroad, in order to eat ;  
but if they be not sated, then they shall murmur.  
But as for me, I shall sing to Your power :  
in the morning I shall exult in Your mercy ;  
for You have become my Support and my Refuge  
in the day of my affliction.  
You are my Helper : I shall chant to You ;  
for You, O God, You are my Support ;  
O my God, You are my Mercy.

## PSALM 59

*“Supplication of the persecuted Church”*

ἽΟ Θεός, ἀπόσω ἡμᾶς Deus, repulisti nos  
For the end. For those who shall yet be changed. 1  
For inscription on a stele. By David. For teaching.  
When he set on fire the Mesopotamia of Syria and the Syria  
of Soba,  
and Jōab returned, and smote 12,000 of Edōm in the Ravine  
of Salt.<sup>340</sup>  
O God, You pushed us away, and brought us down ;  
You were angry, and yet You had compassion on us.  
You made the earth quake, and You threw it into  
confusion.

Heal its fractures, for it has been shaken.  
You have shown Your people hard things : 5  
You made us drink the wine of compunction.  
You gave a sign to those fearing You,  
so that they may flee from before a bow.<sup>341</sup>

*Pause*

So that Your beloved ones may be rescued,  
save by Your right hand, and listen to me.  
God has spoken in His holy place :  
“I will exult, and I will distribute Sikima,<sup>342</sup>  
and the deep valley of the tents will I portion out.

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<sup>340</sup> (2 Kingdoms 8:2-10:19)

<sup>341</sup> About “from before”: in Greek this can be also “from the face of”.

<sup>342</sup> (1 Mōysēs 33:17-20) “Sikima”=Shechem.  
(4 Mōysēs 32:1-41) “Galaad”=Gilead. “Manassē”=Manasseh.  
“Ephraim” and “Manassē” and the others also refer to the whole tribes, and/or  
descendants of the patriarchs. These two names refer to sons of Joseph, ancestors  
of the tribes named for them.

Mine is Galaad, and Mine is Manassē,  
and Ephraim is the strength of My head.

Jouda is My king ;

Mōab is the laver of My hope.<sup>343</sup>

10

Upon Idoumæa will I stretch out My sandal :  
to Me Foreign Tribes have been subjected”.

Who shall lead me away to a fortified city ?

or who shall lead me on the way as far as Idoumæa ?

Will it not be You, O God, having pushed us away ?

Will You not, O God, come out amongst our forces ?

Give us help out of affliction ;

futile is the salvation of Man.

In God shall we do powerfully,

and He will reckon as nothing those afflicting us.<sup>344</sup>



<sup>343</sup> (1 Mōysēs 19:30-37) “Mōab”=descendants of Lot, east of the Jordan and of the Dead Sea.

<sup>344</sup> (Psalm 107:7-14)

## PSALM 60

*“Yearning for the heavenly city”*

Εισάκουσον, ὁ Θεός Exaudi, Deus

For the end. In hymns. By David.

1

**O** God, hear my supplication ;  
give heed to my prayer.

From the ends of the earth have I cried out to You,  
when my heart was in accidie.<sup>345</sup>

You lifted me up on a rock.

You led me on the way,

for You have become my hope :

a tower of strength, from the face of an enemy.

I shall sojourn in Your tent unto the ages ;

5

I shall be sheltered in the shelter of Your wings ;

*Pause*

for You, O God, You have heard my vows :

You gave an inheritance to those fearing Your Name.

You will add days to the days of the king :

his years until the days of generation and generation.

<sup>345</sup> “Accidie” (may be pronounced áksidee) is a word in English used to describe a spiritual condition, and no single other word suffices. From Greek, the main source-word means “to take care of”, “to tend”. Adding “a-” means the lack of this quality. Therefore, in English, it comes to mean negligence, or indifference, but nuances also involve sloth, spiritual torpor, sadness, restlessness, laziness, apathy, inertia, despondency. All these words together approach the meaning of the Greek word. Accidie may be compared to a serpent that bites its own tail. Such an allusion is very apt to describe the almost paralysis that sometimes grips a person who has succumbed to accidie. The words of Saint Silouan about not despairing are useful. If one can do nothing else, one can at least look at the LORD. He knows us. He knows our heart. He cares.

Saint John Cassian calls this “soul-sleep” (see Psalm 118:28). It also is a symptom of confusion in the heart, of unconfessed sin, of a desire of profit, of burdens sent by Satan, and of chronic complaining.

Archimandrite Zacharias (Zacharou), on the basis of his own heritage, points out that Saint Silouan would say in this context that a person can be extremely active on a practical level, while interiorly having no care, which means lack of caring for salvation.

He shall continue unto the age before the Face of God.  
His mercy and truth : who shall seek them out ?  
So I shall chant to Your Name unto the age of the age,  
that I may render my vows day after day.



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

**PSALM 61**

**STATION 3**

*"Confidence of the Church in Christ"*

Οὐχὶ τῷ Θεῷ Nonne Deo ?

For the end. About Idithoun. A psalm by David.

1

**S**hall not my soul be subject to God ?  
for from Him is my salvation.

Indeed, He is my God, my Saviour, and my Support :

I shall no more be distressed.

How long do you fall upon a Man ?

You all do murder,

as a wall that bends over, and as a fence pushed aside.

Regardless, they took counsel to push away my honour ;

5

they ran in thirst.<sup>346</sup>

With their mouth, they were blessing,

but with their heart, they were cursing.

*Pause*

Nevertheless, O my soul, be subject to God,

for from Him is my endurance ;

for He is my God, my Saviour, and my Support :

I shall not move away from Him.

In God is my salvation and my glory.

He is the God of my help,

and my hope is in God.

Hope on Him, every gathering of the people ;

pour out your hearts before His Face,

for God is our Helper.

*Pause*

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<sup>346</sup> Saint Basil the Great explains that these words refer to the plots of the demons, because they pursue us, and they thirst for our destruction.

Nevertheless, futile are the sons of Men, false the sons  
of Men,  
so as to do wrong with their scales, all together, out of  
futility.

10

Do not hope on unrighteousness,  
and for plunder do not yearn :  
if riches may flow,  
set not your heart on them.  
Once has God spoken –  
these two things have I heard :  
that strength belongs to God,  
and to You belongs mercy, O LORD ;  
for it is You that will render to each one in accordance with  
his works.<sup>347</sup>



<sup>347</sup> (Proverbs 24:12; Romans 2:6)

## PSALM 62

*“Yearning for God”*

Ὁ Θεὸς ὁ Θεός μου      Deus, Deus meus

A psalm by David, when he was in the wilderness of  
Joudæa.<sup>348</sup> 1

**O** God, my God, to You do I arise at day-break.  
My soul has thirsted for You ;  
and how many times has my flesh also thirsted for You,<sup>349</sup>  
in a wilderness-land both untrodden and waterless.  
So have I appeared to You in the holy place,  
to see Your power and Your glory ;  
for Your mercy is better than lives ;  
my lips shall praise You.

5

So I shall bless You in my life :  
in Your Name I shall raise my hands.  
As from fat and marrow may my soul be filled up,  
and with exultant lips my mouth shall praise You.  
If I was remembering You on my bed,  
then at day-break I was ruminating on You ;  
for You have become my Helper,  
and in the shelter of Your wings shall I exult.  
My soul has cleaved to You ;<sup>350</sup>

Your right hand has supported me.  
But as for them, in futility they sought my soul ; 10  
they shall go into the lowest parts of the earth.

<sup>348</sup> (1 Kingdoms 23:13-27)

<sup>349</sup> “Has thirsted” is lacking in Greek.

<sup>350</sup> About “cleaved to You”: these words could also be translated “has been glued to You”. The Greek further allows the sense of being glued to God’s back.  
Saint Augustine’s opinion is that this glue is love. See the foot-note on Psalm 21:17.

They shall be handed over into the hands of the sword ;  
they shall be the portion of foxes.  
But the king shall be glad in God :  
everyone swearing by Him shall be praising,<sup>351</sup>  
for the mouth speaking unrighteous things has been  
stopped up.



<sup>351</sup> About passive voice used as active voice: see the foot-note on Psalm 33:3.

### PSALM 63

*"Invisible combat"*

Εισάκουσον, ὁ Θεός Exaudi, Deus

For the end. A psalm by David.

1

**H**ear my voice, O God, when I supplicate You :  
from fear of the enemy, set free my soul.<sup>352</sup>

You sheltered me from a mob of those doing evil,  
from a multitude of those working unrighteousness,  
who sharpened their tongues like a sword.

They have strung their bow – a bitter thing –  
in hidden places to shoot the blameless one :  
suddenly they shall shoot him, and they shall not fear.

5

They strengthened an evil word in themselves ;  
they talked so as to hide snares.

They said : "Who shall see them ?"

They searched out lawlessness :  
searching, they fainted in searching.

There shall come forward a Man, one with a deep heart,  
and God will be exalted.

Their blows became like the dart of infants,  
and their tongues became weak against them.

All those contemplating them were stirred up,  
and every Man has feared.

10

They have announced the works of God,  
and His deeds have they understood.

<sup>352</sup> Saint Basil the Great comments that the fear mentioned here is a hostile fear. It produces in us weakness, and makes us cringe before the demons, and it is born of unbelief.



The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and shall hope on Him.

All the upright in heart shall be praising.<sup>353</sup>



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

*And then the following prayers :*

#### **TRISAGION PRAYERS**

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

*(three times)*

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

O most holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and heal our infirmities, for Your Name's sake.

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

Our Father, who are in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name ; Your kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ; give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test, but rescue us from the evil one.

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<sup>353</sup> About passive voice used as active voice: see the foot-note on Psalm 33:3.

*And then :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

*And these tropars :* Tone 5

Bestormed by a tempest of despair, I have slipped into the abyss of sin ; but go before me, O Christ, Guide of all, as You are all-powerful. Direct me to the calm harbour of passionlessness, for the sake of Your loving-kindness, O Saviour, and save me.

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

O soul, what is here is passing, but what is beyond is eternal. Therefore, at the prospect of the Judgement, and of the Judge upon His throne, I tremble at the words : The Judgement is unrelenting. Turn back, O soul, before it comes.

Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O Mother of God, hope of the hopeless, help of the helpless, support of those who put their trust in you, holy and sovereign Lady, send down upon us your help.

LORD, have mercy. *(forty times)*

*And then the following prayer :*

O compassionate and merciful LORD, You are long-suffering and bounteous in mercy. Hear my prayer, and attend to the voice of my supplication. Work upon me a sign for good. Guide me in Your way, that I may walk in Your truth. Rejoice my heart, that I may fear Your holy Name, for You are great, and work wonders. You alone are God, and there is none like You amongst the gods, O LORD : mighty in mercy, good in strength, helping and comforting and saving all who trust in Your Name : of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.





## session

9

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



### PSALM 64

### STATION 1

*“Thanksgiving for the springtime of the Resurrection”*

Σοὶ παρέπει ὕμνος      Te decet hymnus

For the end. A psalm by David.

1

A canticle of Jeremias and Jezekiël and of the people of<sup>354</sup>  
the sojourning,

when they were about to go forth.

**A** hymn befits You, O God, in Siōn,  
and to You shall a vow be rendered in Jerousalēm.

Hear my prayer.

To You shall all flesh come.

The words of the lawless have over-powered us,  
but You will be propitious to our impieties.

Blessed is the one whom You have chosen out, and taken  
to Yourself ;

5

he shall pitch his tent in Your courts.

We shall be filled with the good things of Your house ;  
holy is Your temple, wonderful in righteousness.

<sup>354</sup> “Jeremias”=Jeremiah. “Jezekiël”=Ezekiel.

Listen to us, O God, our Saviour,  
the Hope of all the ends of the earth,  
and of those far off on the sea :  
You, preparing the mountains in Your strength, girded  
with might,  
throwing the hollow of the sea into confusion, the roarings  
of its waves.  
The nations shall be stirred up,  
and those dwelling at the ends of the earth shall fear from  
Your signs.  
You will fill with delight the goings-forth of morning  
and evening.  
You visited the earth, and inebriated it ;  
You increased it to make it rich.<sup>355</sup>  
The river of God has been filled with water.  
You prepared their nourishment, for such is the  
preparation.  
Inebriate its furrows ; multiply its produce :  
growing, it shall be glad with its drops of water.<sup>356</sup>  
You will bless the crown of the year in Your loving-  
kindness,  
and Your plains shall be filled with opulence.  
The mountains of the wilderness shall be made fat,  
and the hills shall gird themselves with exultation.

10

---

<sup>355</sup> “You increased” is, literally, “You multiplied”.

<sup>356</sup> About “drops of water”: Saint Athanasius explains that David speaks of the smallest drop of God’s Grace, which makes anything or anyone rejoice, grow, and produce physical and spiritual fruit. See Psalm 71:6 in particular, which addresses these (rain)drops.

The rams of the flocks were clothed,  
and the deep valleys shall multiply grain.  
They shall shout : indeed, they shall sing hymns.



## PSALM 65

*"Thanksgiving for the conversion of the nations, and for the victory of the martyrs"*

Ἰαλαλάξατε τῷ Κυρίῳ      Jubilate Deo

For the end. A canticle of a psalm of the Resurrection. 1

**R**aise a shout of joy to the LORD, all the earth :  
chant, now, to His Name.

Give glory in praise of Him.

Say to God : "How formidable are Your works.

In the multitude of Your power shall Your enemies play  
false to You.

Let all the earth worship You, and chant to You ;  
let it chant to Your Name".

*Pause*

Come, and see the works of God. 5

Formidable is He in His counsels, more than the sons of  
Men :

He, turning the sea into dry land ;  
they shall go through the river on foot.

There, we shall be glad in Him,  
who in His might is ruling over the age.

His eyes look attentively upon the nations.

Let not those embittering Him be exalted in themselves.

*Pause*

Bless our God, O you nations ;  
and make to be heard the voice of His praise,  
who set my soul unto life,  
and who does not allow my feet to slip ;  
for You have proved us, O God : 10

You tested us by fire, as is silver by fire.

You led us into the snare ;

You laid afflictions on our back.

You caused Men to ride over our heads.

We have gone through fire and water,  
and You led us out into a place of refreshment.

I shall come into Your house with whole-burnt-offerings ;

I shall render my vows to You,  
which my lips have discharged,<sup>357</sup>

and which my mouth has spoken in my affliction.

Fattened whole-burnt-offerings I shall offer to You, with 15  
incense and rams ;

to You shall I offer cows with young he-goats.

*Pause*

Come and hear, all you fearing God,

and I shall recount all that He has done for my soul.

To Him I have cried out with my mouth,

and I have exalted Him with my tongue.

If I was contemplating unrighteousness in my heart,  
let the LORD not hear me.

Because of this, God heard me,

and He has heeded the voice of my supplication.

Blessed be God, 20

who has not put my prayer and His mercy away from me.

---

<sup>357</sup> Saint Athanasius makes special reference to the fact that what we offer to God is simply returning to God what is already His.

**PSALM 66**

*“Prayer for the manifestation of the light of Christ”*

Ὁ Θεὸς οἰκτεροῦσαι ἡμᾶς

Deus misereatur

For the end. In hymns. A psalm of a canticle by David. 1

**M**ay God have compassion on us, and bless us.  
May He make His Face shine upon us, and have  
mercy on us,

*Pause*

so that we may know Your way on the earth,  
and Your salvation amongst all nations.

Let the peoples confess You, O God ;

let all the peoples confess You.

Let the nations exult and be glad ;

for You will judge the peoples in uprightness,  
and the nations on the earth, You will lead on the way. 5

*Pause*

Let the peoples confess You, O God ;

let all the peoples confess You.

The earth has given its fruit ;

may God, our God, bless us.

May God bless us,

and let all the ends of the earth fear Him.

✠

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

**PSALM 67****STATION 2**

*“The Ascension of Christ, the Sending of the Holy Spirit and the preaching of the Apostles”*

Ἐναστήτω ὁ Θεός Exsurgat Deus

For the end. A psalm of a canticle by David. 1

**L**et God arise. Let His enemies be scattered abroad.

Let those hating Him flee from His Face.

As smoke vanishes, so let them vanish :

as wax melts from the face of fire,

so sinners shall perish from the Face of God.

Let the righteous be glad ;

let them exult before the Face of God ;

let them delight in gladness.

Sing to God : chant to His Name ; 5

make a road for Him who is riding upon the sunsets.

The LORD is His Name ; exult before His Face.

They shall be stirred up from His Face

– the Father of orphans, and Judge of widows –

God in His holy place.

God makes solitaries settle in a house,

in courage leading out those bound with fetters,

likewise those embittered ones, those dwelling in tombs.

O God, when You went forth before the face of Your people,

when You strode in the wilderness,

*Pause*

the earth quaked ; indeed, the Heavens distilled,

because of the Face of the God of Sina,<sup>358</sup>

because of the Face of the God of Israēl.

<sup>358</sup> “Sina”=Sinai. About “Face”: see the foot-notes on Psalm 4:7 & 9:4.

You, O God, will freely ordain rain to fall upon Your inheritance ; 10

it became weak, but You, Yourself, strengthened it :

Your living things are dwelling in it.

You prepared in Your loving-kindness for the poor, O God.

The LORD will give speech to those announcing the glad tidings with great power ;

He is the King of the powers of the beloved,<sup>359</sup>

and He will mete out the spoils for the comeliness of the house.

If you were to lie down amongst the allotments,

the wings of a dove shall be covered with silver,

and its back with green-gold.

When He who is above the Heavens establishes kings over her, 15

they shall be snow-covered in Selmōn.

The mountain of God is an opulent mountain,

a mountain of curds, an opulent mountain.

Why do you suppose, O mountains of curds,

that it is the mountain in which God was well-pleased to dwell ?

It is there, indeed, that the LORD will pitch His tent unto the end.

The chariot of God is ten-thousand-fold, thousands that are thriving :

the LORD was amongst them in Sina, in the holy place.

<sup>359</sup> Saint Athanasius explains that the Beloved of the people is the LORD, and that He is their Power.

Having gone up on high,  
You led captivity captive.  
You received Men as gifts,<sup>360</sup>  
indeed, unbelievers, to pitch Your tent amongst them.  
Blessed be the LORD God ; 20  
blessed be the LORD from day to day ;  
the God of our salvation will make it go well for us.

*Pause*

Our God is the God who saves,  
and to the LORD, to the LORD belong the ways out of death.  
Yet God will crush together the heads of His enemies,  
the hairy crown of those walking about in their faults.  
The LORD said : “From Basan I will turn back ;<sup>361</sup>  
I will turn back in the depths of the sea,  
so that your foot, and the tongue of your dogs,  
may be dipped in blood from enemies beside it” .  
Your processions have been beheld, O God, 25  
the processions of my God, the King, in the holy place.<sup>362</sup>  
Princes went in front, followed by chanters,  
in the midst of young maidens playing on tambours.

---

<sup>360</sup> This translation follows the interpretation of Saint Athanasius. The Greek, however, gives literally “You received gifts in Men”.

Saint Athanasius informs us that the LORD “received men as gifts” so that He might abide “amongst them”.

(Ephesians 4:8) “Amongst them” is lacking in the Greek text.

<sup>361</sup> “Basan”=Bashan. Bashan, being far north, may suggest that “sea” in the next line refers to the Sea of Galilee, which is to its west. This area would have been a source of pagan infection. This may also be the reference for “it” at the end of the quotation.

<sup>362</sup> The intent of “my God, the King” is that God is the real King. The earthly king is, as it were, representing God who is truly the King. Other translators use variants such as “my God, my King”. The prophets, including Samuel, resisted the monarchy because a king might try to usurp God’s true rôle in our lives.

“In the churches, bless God,  
the LORD, from the springs of Israël” .  
There is the young Benjamin in amazement ;<sup>363</sup>  
princes of Jouda are their leaders,  
princes of Zaboulon, princes of Nephthali.<sup>364</sup>  
Give command to Your power, O God ;  
give power, O God, to this that You have effected in us by  
labour.

From Your temple in Jerousalēm, 30  
kings shall bring gifts to You.  
Rebuke the wild beasts of the reeds,  
the gathering of the bulls amongst the heifers of the  
peoples,  
so that those having been proved as silver may be shut  
out.<sup>365</sup>  
Scatter abroad the nations wishing for wars.  
Ambassadors shall come from Ægypt.<sup>366</sup>  
Æthiopia shall stretch out her hand to God.  
O kingdoms of the earth, sing to God ;  
chant to the LORD.

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<sup>363</sup> About “young”: see the foot-note on Psalm 36:25.

<sup>364</sup> “Zaboulon”=Zebulun. “Nephthali”=Naphtali.

<sup>365</sup> This ecclesiastical text is used also by Saint Athanasius. Some other texts read “may not be shut out”.

<sup>366</sup> “Ægypt”=Egypt. “Æthiopia”=Ethiopia.

Chant to God, who rode upon the Heaven of Heaven,  
towards the risings of the sun.<sup>367</sup>

Behold, He will give in His voice a voice of power.

Give glory to God : 35

over Israēl is His magnificence,

and His power is in the clouds.

God is wonderful in His holy ones, the God of Israēl.<sup>368</sup>

He will give power and strength to His people.

Blessed be God.



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

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<sup>367</sup> The Resurrection of Christ may be connected with the “risings of the sun”.  
Saint John of Damascus comments that our chanting as we face ourselves  
towards the east is an indication of our longing for our true Homeland, following  
the apostolic teachings: Paradise in Eden was to the east. The Tabernacle of  
Moses looked to the east; the coming of the Son of Man, the Orient from on high,  
is to be from the east; in expectation, we worship towards the east.

<sup>368</sup> About “holy ones”: see the foot-note on Psalm 19:3.

## PSALM 68

## STATION 3

*“Supplication of Christ in His Passion”*

Σῶσόν με, ὁ Θεός          Salvum me fac

For the end. About the things that shall be changed. 1

A psalm by David.

**S**ave me, O God,  
for the waters have entered as far as my soul.

I have been stuck in the mud of the deep sea,  
and there is no foot-hold for me.

I have come into the depths of the sea,  
and a tempest has drowned me.

I became weary, crying out ;  
my throat became hoarse ;

my eyes failed, from hoping on my God.

They have multiplied more than the hairs of my head —<sup>369</sup> 5  
those hating me without cause :

my enemies, unrighteously chasing me out, became strong.

What I was not snatching up, I was then repaying.<sup>370</sup>

O God, You know my foolishness,

and my faults have not been hidden from You.

May they not be put to shame on my account —  
those waiting for You, O LORD, LORD of Powers.

May they not be disgraced on my account —  
those seeking You, O God of Israēl ;

for I have borne reproach for Your sake ;

disgrace has covered my face.

---

<sup>369</sup> About passive voice used as active voice: see the foot-note on Psalm 33:3.  
(John 15:25)

<sup>370</sup> Saint Athanasius explains here that the LORD did not die, as being Himself  
liable to death. He suffered for us; He bore our sickness (see Ēsaïas 53:3).



I became alienated from my brothers,  
and a stranger to the sons of my mother ;  
for the zeal for Your house has devoured me,<sup>371</sup> 10  
and the reproaches of those reproaching You have fallen  
on me.<sup>372</sup>

I covered my soul in fasting,  
and it became as reproaches to me.  
I made my garment sack-cloth,  
and I became a byword for them.  
Those sitting in the gates were deliberating against me,  
and those drinking wine were chanting songs against me.  
But as for me, in my prayer I was with You, O LORD.  
It is the time of Your good-pleasure, O God, in the  
multitude of Your mercy.

Listen to me in the truth of Your salvation. 15  
Save me from the mire,  
that I not be stuck in it.  
May I be rescued from those hating me,  
and from the depths of the waters.  
Let not a tempest of water drown me,  
nor the deep swallow me up,  
nor a well close its mouth over me.  
Hear me, O LORD, for gracious is Your mercy :  
in accordance with the multitude of Your compassions,  
look attentively upon me.

---

<sup>371</sup> (John 2:17)

<sup>372</sup> (Romans 15:3) When we identify ourselves with the LORD in love, those who reject the LORD reject us also, and sometimes we, like Christ, bear the insults against the LORD, which they focus on us.

Do not turn away Your Face from Your servant, for I am  
afflicted.<sup>373</sup>

Listen to me swiftly.  
Give heed to my soul, and redeem it.  
Because of my enemies, rescue me ;  
for You know my reproach 20  
and my shame and my disgrace.  
Before You are all those afflicting me.  
My soul has expected reproach and misery ;  
I waited for someone to condole with, but not one existed,  
and for consolers, but I found not one.  
For my food they gave me gall,  
and in my thirst they offered me vinegar to drink.<sup>374</sup>  
Let their table become a snare before their face,  
and a requital and a stumbling-block.  
Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see,  
and continually bend down their backs.<sup>375</sup>  
Pour out upon them Your anger,<sup>376</sup> 25  
and may the fury of Your anger lay hold of them.  
Let their camp be desolate,  
and let there be no-one dwelling in their tents ;<sup>377</sup>  
for the one whom You have smitten,

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<sup>373</sup> About “servant”: see the foot-note on Psalm 17:1.

<sup>374</sup> (Matthew 27:34; Mark 15:36; Luke 23:36; John 19:29-30)

<sup>375</sup> (Romans 11:9-10)

<sup>376</sup> About “anger” and “fury”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

<sup>377</sup> (Acts 1:20)

they have closely pursued,  
 and they added to the suffering of my wounds.  
 Add lawlessness to their lawlessness,  
 and let them not enter into Your righteousness.  
 Let them be blotted out of the book of the living,  
 and let them not be written in with the righteous.  
 As for me, I am poor and suffering ; 30  
 may Your salvation, O God, support me.  
 I shall praise the Name of my God with a canticle ;  
 I shall magnify Him with praise.  
 This shall be pleasing to God,  
 more than a young bull-calf bearing horns and hooves.  
 Let the poor see, and let them be glad.  
 Seek out God, and your soul shall live ;  
 for the LORD has heard the needy,  
 and His fettered ones He has not reckoned as nothing.  
 Let the Heavens and the earth praise Him, 35  
 the sea and all that creep in it ;  
 for God will save Siōn,  
 and the cities of Joudæa shall be built up.  
 They shall dwell there, and inherit her :  
 the seed of His bond-servants shall hold her fast.  
 Those loving Your Name shall pitch their tent in her.

**PSALM 69**

*“Request for help against adversaries”*

Ὁ Θεός, εἰς τὴν βοήθειάν μου      Deus, in adjutorium

For the end. By David. 1

For remembrance that the LORD has saved me.

**O** God, give heed to my help.  
**O** LORD, make haste to help me.<sup>378</sup>

Let them be put to shame and be disgraced –  
 those seeking my soul ;

let them be turned back and be put to shame –  
 those wishing me bad things.

Let them be turned back instantly and be shamed –  
 those saying to me : “Well done, well done”.

But let them exult and be glad in You – 5

all those seeking You, O God ;  
 and let them continually say :

“Let the LORD be magnified” –  
 those loving Your salvation.

But poor and needy as I am,  
 help me, O God.

My Helper and my Rescuer – it is You.

O LORD, do not tarry.

---

<sup>378</sup> This two-line plea is the ancestor of the “Jesus Prayer”, and it is referred to by Saint John Cassian and others, particularly by the Egyptian Fathers. It is an important fundamental prayer for us now, as well.



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

*And then the following prayers :*

### **TRISAGION PRAYERS**

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

*(three times)*

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

O most holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from  
our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and  
heal our infirmities, for Your Name's sake.

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

Our Father, who are in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name ; Your  
kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ;  
give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our debts, as we  
forgive our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test, but rescue  
us from the evil one.

*And then :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus Christ, our  
God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

*And these tropars : Tone 6*

I think of the dread Day, and weep for my evil deeds. How shall  
I answer the immortal King ? or with what boldness shall I, the  
prodigal, look at the Judge ? O deeply-merciful Father, Only-  
begotten Son, and Holy Spirit, have mercy on me.

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

In the valley of weeping, in the place You have appointed, when  
You are seated to mete out righteous Judgement, O merciful  
One, do not reveal everything concerning me that is hidden, nor  
shame me in front of the angels ; but, O God, spare me, and have  
mercy on me.

Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O Mother of God, good intercessor for the world, hope and veil  
of boldness for those who have recourse to you, with the  
bodiless powers, pray diligently to the One whom you bore,  
who is God and the Lover of Man, to deliver our souls from  
every threat, O only blessed Lady.

LORD, have mercy. *(forty times)*

*And then the following prayer :*

O our God, Master and LORD, You alone know the infirmity of  
my wretched soul. For the sake of Your many mercies and  
compassions, heal it in ways known to You, since because of my  
deeds, there is no plaster, no oil, no bandage that can be applied.  
You came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.  
Have mercy ; show Your compassion ; forgive my soul. Tear up  
the invoice of my many despicable deeds, and guide me on Your  
level path ; that, walking in Your truth, I may escape the arrows  
of the evil one, and thus stand uncondemned before Your  
awesome throne, glorifying and hymning Your most holy Name  
unto the ages of ages. Amen.





## session

10

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



### PSALM 70

### STATION 1

*"Confident supplication"*

Ἐπὶ σοί, Κύριε, ἤλπισα      In te, Domine, speravi

By David.

1

A psalm of the sons of Jōnadab, and the first taken captive.

*[Without inscription in Hebrew]*

**O**n You, O LORD, have I hoped ;  
may I not be put to shame unto the age.

In Your righteousness, rescue me, and set me free ;  
incline Your ear to me, and save me.

Be to me a protecting God,<sup>379</sup>

and a Strong Place to save me ;

for it is You that are my Steadfastness and my Refuge.

O my God, rescue me from the hand of a sinner,  
from the hand of one transgressing the law and doing  
unrighteousness ;

for You are my Endurance, O LORD.

5

O LORD, You are my Hope from my youth.

---

<sup>379</sup> (Psalm 30:1-3)

On You have I leaned from the womb :  
from the belly of my mother, it is You that are my Shelter.  
My hymn shall be about You continually.  
Just as a portent to many have I become,  
but You are a strong Helper.  
Let my mouth be filled with praise,  
that I may hymn Your glory –  
the whole day long, Your magnificence.  
Do not cast me away in the time of old age ;  
when my strength fails, do not abandon me ;  
for my enemies have spoken about me, 10  
and those watching for my soul have, as one, taken  
counsel,  
saying : “God has abandoned him ;  
pursue him closely, and lay hold of him,  
for there is no rescuer” .  
O my God, do not be far away from me ;  
O my God, give heed to my help.  
Let them be put to shame, and come to an end –  
those slandering my soul ;  
let them be wrapped about with shame and disgrace –  
those seeking bad things for me.  
But as for me, I shall continually hope on You ;  
and I shall add to all Your praise.  
My mouth shall tell forth Your righteousness : 15  
the whole day long, Your salvation ;  
for I did not know Letters.

I shall enter the realm of the LORD ;  
O LORD, I shall remember Your righteousness, Yours alone.  
O God, You have taught me from my youth,  
and up to now shall I bring tidings of Your wonders.  
Even unto my venerable old age, O God, do not abandon  
me,  
until I bring tidings of Your arm to every generation to  
come :<sup>380</sup>  
Your realm and Your righteousness.  
O God, as far as the highest are the magnificent things which  
You have done.  
O God, who is like You ?  
So many bad afflictions have You shown me ; 20  
and yet You turned about and You made me alive,  
and from the abysses of the earth You led me up again.  
You have made Your greatness abound towards me ;  
and having turned about, You consoled me,  
and from the abysses of the earth have You led me up again.  
Indeed, I shall confess You, O God,  
Your truth with an instrument of chant ;  
I shall chant to You with the lyre, O Holy One of Israēl.  
My lips shall exult whenever I may chant to You,  
as shall my soul, which You have redeemed.  
Moreover, my tongue shall ruminare on Your  
righteousness the whole day long,  
whenever they may be put to shame and disgraced –  
those seeking bad things for me.

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<sup>380</sup> “Arm” is a metaphor for the strength of God.

## PSALM 71

*“The Incarnation and the Kingship of Christ”*

Ὁ Θεός, τὸ κρίμα          Deus, iudicium

For the end. For Solomōn. A psalm by David. 1

**O** God, give Your judgement to the king,  
and Your righteousness to the son of the king ;  
that he may judge Your people in righteousness,  
and Your poor in fair-judgement.

Let the mountains take up peace for Your people,  
and the hills, righteousness.

He shall judge the poor of the people,  
and save the sons of the needy ;  
he shall humble the denouncer.<sup>381</sup>

He shall continue as long as the sun, 5  
and before the moon : generation of generations.

He shall come down as heavy rain upon a fleece,  
and just as drops of water distilling upon the earth.

In his days, righteousness shall rise up,  
and a multitude of peace, until the moon be taken away.

He shall be lord from sea to sea,  
and from the rivers as far as the ends of the world.<sup>382</sup>

Before his face shall the Æthiopians fall down,  
and his enemies shall lick the dirt.

---

<sup>381</sup> “Denouncer” translates συκοφάντης, *sukophantēs*, which in Greek does mean “inform against”. However, the meaning is actually much stronger. It understands a false-accuser, a blackmailer, an extortionist, a slanderer, a calumniator. Etymologically, the origin of this word is in the ancient Greek fig-trade.

<sup>382</sup> “Rivers”, here, or in a similar context, would likely refer to the Euphrates and the Tigris Rivers, which have a particular significance in Middle-eastern history and mentality.

Kings of Tharsis, and the isles shall offer gifts to him ; 10  
kings of the Arabs, and Saba shall bring gifts to him.<sup>383</sup>

All the kings of the earth shall do homage to him ;  
all the nations shall serve him ;  
for he has rescued the poor from the hand of the mighty,  
and the needy, for whom there existed no helper.

He shall spare the poor and the needy,  
and the souls of the needy shall he save.

From usury and unrighteousness shall he redeem their  
souls,

and his name shall be esteemed before their face.

He shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of  
Arabia, 15

and they shall offer prayer for him continually.

The whole day long shall they bless him.

He shall be sustenance on the earth, even on the peaks of  
the mountains ;

his fruit shall be raised up above Lebanon,<sup>384</sup>

and they shall flourish from the city, just as grass of the  
earth.

His name shall be blessed unto the ages ;

his name shall continue before the sun,

and all the tribes of the earth shall be blessed in him ;

all the nations shall call him blessed.

---

<sup>383</sup> “Saba” is doubtless situated in the south of Arabia, across from Ethiopia.

<sup>384</sup> “Lebanon” refers to the main mountain, and mountain range that is identified with the whole region of Lebanon, also called “the Levant”.

Blessed be the LORD God of Israēl,  
alone doing wonders,  
and blessed be the Name of His glory unto the age,  
and unto the age of the age.  
All the earth shall be filled with His glory.  
So be it. So be it.<sup>385</sup>



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
(*three times*)  
LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



The hymns of David, the son of Jessæ, have ceased.<sup>386</sup>



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<sup>385</sup> The concluding doxology of Book II of the Psalter.

<sup>386</sup> These words on this separated line are not read aloud.

## BOOK III

### PSALM 72

### STATION 2

*“Earthly prosperity of the impious, and the glorious resurrection  
of the righteous”*

Ἦς ἀγαθὸς ὁ Θεὸς τῷ Ἰσραήλ      Quam bonus Israel

A psalm by Asaph. A canticle against the Assyrian. 1

**H**ow good is God to Israēl,<sup>387</sup>  
to the upright in heart.

But as for me, my feet have almost slipped ;  
my foot-steps nearly slid ;

for I was envious of the lawless,

and contemplating the peace of sinners ;

for there is no sign of refusal in their death,

and there is steadfastness in their scourging.

They are not sharers in the troubles of Men, 5

and with Men they shall not be scourged.

Because of this, pride has taken hold of them ;

they have wrapped unrighteousness and impiety around  
themselves.<sup>388</sup>

Their unrighteousness shall come out of them as from fat :

they went about according to the disposition of their hearts.

They thought and they spoke in evil :

---

<sup>387</sup> Saint Ambrose of Milan affirms that God’s goodness can be proclaimed only by one who knows for certain that goodness does not come from one’s own effort, but from God’s unfathomable goodness. Then, in the midst of deep suffering one can say with Saint John Chrysostom: Glory be to God for all things.

<sup>388</sup> “Unrighteousness” is the product of self-love, of turning away from God’s Love and His will. “Impiety” describes the broken life of forgetfulness that is the result. Piety, correctly, suggests the mindfulness of God’s presence in everything, always, and the conforming of one’s life to this reality. Impiety, by contrary, neglects the memory of God, and it shows itself in numerous selfish ways. Secular society may be an example of such impiety.

against the highest have they spoken unrighteously ;<sup>389</sup>  
 they set their mouth against Heaven,  
 and their tongue went abroad upon the earth.  
 Because of this, my people shall turn back here, 10  
 and full days shall be found amongst them.  
 And they said : “How does God know ?  
 Is there knowledge in the Most High ?”  
 Behold, these are sinners, and yet they are thriving ;  
 they hold fast their riches unto the age.  
 And I said : “Then it is in futility that I have kept my heart  
 righteous,  
 and washed my hands amongst the innocent”.  
 I have been scourged the whole day long,  
 and my reproof lasted until the morning.  
 If I were saying : “Thus shall I recount this”, 15  
 behold, I would have broken Covenant with the  
 generation of Your sons.  
 And I undertook to know this  
 – there is labour before my face –  
 until I enter the sanctuary of God,  
 and I understand their ultimate ends.  
 Nevertheless, because of their deceit, You set bad things  
 upon them ;  
 You cast them down, when they were lifted up.  
 How they have suddenly become desolate !  
 They have come to an end.

<sup>389</sup> “Against the highest”: in Greek, literally “against the height”.

Saint Athanasius explains that this expression means the stretching of their unrighteousness. It also means that they put into spoken words against God Himself the blasphemy that is in their hearts.

They have perished through their lawlessness.  
 Just as the dream of one awakened, O LORD, 20  
 in Your city You will reckon their image as nothing ;  
 for my heart was kindled,  
 and my reins have been changed.  
 I, myself, was reckoned as nothing, and I was ignorant.  
 I became beast-like before You ;  
 and yet I am continually with You ;  
 You took hold of my right hand.  
 With Your counsel You led me on the way,  
 and with glory You took me to Yourself ;  
 for what exists for me in Heaven ? 25  
 and besides You what did I want on the earth ?<sup>390</sup>  
 My heart and my flesh fainted.  
 You, O God, are the God of my heart, and my portion unto  
 the age ;  
 for behold, those keeping themselves far from You shall  
 perish.  
 You exterminated all those who are going fornicating away  
 from You.<sup>391</sup>  
 But for me it is good to cleave to God and to put my hope  
 on the LORD,  
 that I may tell forth all Your praises in the gates of the  
 daughter of Siōn.

<sup>390</sup> Saint Augustine says that what he has in Heaven is eternal, because it is in fact God Himself. With us, he rebukes himself for desiring what ungodly men have, that is, what passes away. He and we have desired earthly things from God even though God reserves Himself for us in Heaven.

However, Saint Ambrose of Milan says that by possessing nothing we possess all things because we have Christ.

<sup>391</sup> About “fornicating” (Latin: *fornix*): the main root meaning in Greek and in Latin is to prostitute oneself. It is related to the corruption of adultery, or to any non-marital sexual activity. The Psalmist thus shows the seriousness of infidelity.



## PSALM 73

*"Supplication of the persecuted Church"*

Ἰνατί ἀπάσω, ὁ Θεός      Ut quid, Deus ?

Of understanding. By Asaph.

1

**W**hy have You pushed us away unto the end, O God ?  
Has Your fury raged upon the sheep of Your  
pasture ?<sup>392</sup>

Remember Your gathering, which You possessed from the  
beginning.

You have redeemed the rod of Your inheritance :  
this mountain of Siōn, on which You have pitched Your tent.

Lift up Your hands against their pride unto the end ;  
so many evils has the enemy done in Your holy places.

Those hating You boasted in the midst of Your festival.

In ignorance, they set up their ensigns as signs.

5

As into the upper exit,  
as in a thicket of a wood,

with axes have they, as one, chopped down her doors :  
with double-axe and stone-cutter's chisel, they broke her  
down.

With fire, they set Your sanctuary on fire ;

the tent of Your Name, they profaned to the ground.

As one, their kindred said in their heart :

"Come, let us put an end to all the feasts of God from the  
earth.

---

<sup>392</sup> This pushing-away is how we perceive the results of our own rebellion against God. He, in His patience, allows us to go away from Him, while He is always with us; yet, we blame Him.

About "fury": see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

We have not seen their signs ;

there is no longer a prophet,

and He will know us no longer".

How long, O God, shall the enemy reproach us ?

10

Shall the Adversary provoke Your Name unto the end ?

Why do You turn back Your hand,

and Your right hand from the midst of Your bosom unto  
the end ?

But God is our King before the ages ;

He wrought salvation in the midst of the earth.

It is You that strengthened the sea in Your power ;

You shattered the heads of the dragons upon the water.

You crushed together the head of the dragon ;

You gave it as food to the peoples of Æthiopia.

You broke asunder springs and torrents ;

15

You dried up the rivers of Etham.

Yours is the day, and Yours is the night ;

You established the light and the sun.

You made all the comely things of the earth :

summer and spring – You fashioned them.

Remember this : an enemy has reproached the LORD,

and a foolish people has provoked Your Name.

Do not give over to the wild beasts a soul confessing You ;

the souls of Your needy ones, do not forget unto the end.

Look attentively upon Your Covenant,

20

for the darkened places of the earth have been filled with  
houses of lawless acts.

Let not the humbled and the shamed be turned away ;  
the poor and the needy shall praise Your Name.  
Arise, O God, judge Your cause ;  
remember the reproach of the foolish against You the whole  
day long.  
Do not forget the voice of Your suppliants.  
The pride of those hating You went up always.



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
(three times)  
LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

**PSALM 74**

**STATION 3**

*"Divine Judgement"*

Ἐξομολογησόμεθά σοι Confitebimur tibi

For the end. Do not utterly destroy. 1

A psalm of a canticle by Asaph.

**W**e shall confess You, O God ;  
we shall confess You, and call upon Your Name.<sup>393</sup>

I shall recount all Your wonders.

"Whenever I may fix the time,

I will judge uprightly.

The earth melted away, and all those dwelling in it ;  
it is I who set firm the pillars of it.

*Pause*

I said to those transgressing the law :

Do not transgress the law ; 5

and to those sinning : Do not exalt your horn.

Do not lift up your horn on high ;

do not speak unrighteously against God";

for it is neither from the east, nor from the west, nor<sup>394</sup>  
from the wilderness mountains ;

for God is Judge.

He humbles this one, and that one He exalts ;

for a cup is in the hand of the LORD,

full of wine, both pure and mixed.

---

<sup>393</sup> Saint Athanasius advises that if we are afflicted and wish to give thanks for requested help, we should sing Psalms 4; 74; & 114.

<sup>394</sup> In this case, "east" in Greek is ἐξόδων, *exodōn* (a genitive plural) which means "a going out", "out of the road", "marching out", "a way out". It does not here refer to sunrise, which is often connected with "east". Rather, it likely refers to the wilderness areas, probably of the Trans-Jordan. This Trans-Jordan was also the route of the exodus from Egypt.

He tilted it from side to side,  
yet its dregs have not been emptied out ;  
all the sinners of the earth shall drink of it.  
But as for me, I shall exult unto the age ;  
I shall chant to the God of Jakōb.  
All the horns of the sinners shall I crush together,  
and exalted shall be the horns of the righteous.

10



## PSALM 75

*“Thanksgiving for the deliverance of the Church”*

Γνωστὸς ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ      Notus in Judæa  
For the end. In hymns. A psalm by Asaph.

1

A canticle against the Assyrian.

**G**od is known in Joudæa ;  
in Israēl, great is His Name ;  
in peace is His place,<sup>395</sup>  
and His dwelling-place is in Siōn.  
There He has shattered the strength of bows :  
weapon and sword and war.

*Pause*

It is You that give light wonderfully from the eternal  
mountains ;

5

all the unwise in heart were stirred up.  
They have slept their sleep,  
and all the men of riches have found nothing in their  
hands.

Because of Your rebuke, O God of Jakōb,  
those riding horses have slumbered.

You are formidable :  
who shall stand against You ?  
From that time is Your anger.<sup>396</sup>

From Heaven You have made fair-judgement heard ;  
the earth feared, and was still,  
when God arose to fair-judgement,  
in order to save all the meek of the earth ;

10

<sup>395</sup> “Peace” translates the Greek word for the Hebrew *shalom*, or *salem*. This word can therefore allude to Jerusalem.

<sup>396</sup> About “anger”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

*Pause*

for the thought of Man shall confess You,<sup>397</sup>  
and a remnant of thought shall keep a feast to You.  
Make vows, and render them to the LORD our God ;  
all those round about Him shall bring gifts :  
to Him who is formidable,  
to Him, taking away the spirits of princes,  
to Him who is formidable to the kings of the earth.



---

<sup>397</sup> Saint Athanasius reminds us that every thought will be confessed to God at the Judgement.

## PSALM 76

*“Rumination by one in affliction, on the wonders of old”*

Φωνή μου πρὸς Κύριον

Voce mea ad Dominum

For the end. About Idithoun. A psalm by Asaph.

1

**W**ith my voice, I cried out to the LORD —  
with my voice to God, and He gave heed to me.  
In the day of my affliction I sought out God :  
with my hands lifted up in His presence by night,  
and I was not deceived ;  
my soul refused to be consoled.  
I remembered God, and I was glad ;  
I deliberated, and my spirit became discouraged.

*Pause*

My eyes anticipated the night watches ;  
I was stirred up, and did not speak.  
I thought about the old days,  
and the eternal years I remembered, and I ruminated.  
By night, I was deliberating with my heart,  
and my spirit was probing.  
Surely the LORD will not push away unto the ages,  
and will no longer continue to be well-pleased ?  
or will He cut off His mercy unto the end ?  
Did He put an end to His discourse, from generation to  
generation ?  
Surely God will not forget to have compassion ?  
or will He, in His anger, withhold His compassions ?<sup>398</sup>

5

10

*Pause*

---

<sup>398</sup> About “anger”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

And I said : “Now I have begun.<sup>399</sup>  
This change is from the right hand of the Most High”.  
I remembered the works of the LORD,  
for I shall remember Your wonders from the beginning.  
I shall ruminate on all Your works,  
and on Your purposes shall I deliberate.  
O God, Your way is in the Holy One.<sup>400</sup>  
Who is so great a God as our God ?  
You are the God doing wonders ;  
You made Your power known amongst the peoples.  
With Your arm, You redeemed Your people :  
the sons of Jakōb, and Jōsēph.

15

*Pause*

The waters have seen You, O God :  
the waters have seen You, and they feared ;  
the abysses were stirred up.  
There is a multitude of roaring of waters ;  
the clouds have given voice ;  
indeed, Your arrows are moving through.  
The voice of Your thunder is in the wheel ;  
Your lightnings gave light to the world ;  
the earth shook and trembled.  
In the sea are Your ways,  
and Your paths in many waters,

20

---

<sup>399</sup> Archimandrite Placide cites Saint Athanasius’ *Life of Saint Anthony*, and he adds that one of the fundamental principles of the spiritual life is that we behave daily as if we were just beginning. We ask that the LORD increase our zeal every day.

<sup>400</sup> About “Holy One”: see the foot-note on Psalm 19:3.

and Your foot-prints shall not be known.  
You led Your people on the way, as sheep,  
by the hand of Mōysēs and Aarōn.<sup>401</sup>

✠

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*

*And then the following prayers :*

#### **TRISAGION PRAYERS**

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

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

O most holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from  
our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and  
heal our infirmities, for Your Name’s sake.

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

Our Father, who are in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name ; Your  
kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ;  
give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our debts, as we  
forgive our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test, but rescue  
us from the evil one.

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<sup>401</sup> “Mōysēs”=Moses.

*And then* : Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

*And these tropars* : Tone 6

I dread the awesome Day of Your coming, O Christ. In fear of Your impartial Judgement Seat, I am filled with dread and I tremble, for my transgressions are many. As You are the merciful God, turn me back before the end, and save me, O my Saviour of many mercies.

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

When the thrones are set for Judgement, O LORD, and Men appear before Your Judgement Seat, the king shall not be honoured more than the soldier, the master shall not be valued more highly than the bond-servant, for each shall either be glorified or shamed in accordance with his deeds.

Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

You were made worthy of great gifts, O pure Virgin Mother of God ; for you gave birth in the flesh to One of the Trinity, the Christ, the Giver of Life, for the salvation of our souls.

LORD, have mercy. (*forty times*)

*And then the following prayer* :

O LORD our God, rich in mercy and inconceivably compassionate, You alone are sinless by nature, and without sin You became Man for us. Hearken in this hour to my anguished entreaty, for I am poor and bereft of all good deeds, and my heart is smitten within me. O high King, LORD of Heaven and earth, You know how I spent all my youth in sin, pursuing the lusts of my flesh ; how I wholly followed the devil, and became the utter laughingstock of the demons, by always dragging myself through the mire of lusts. I never desired to do Your holy will, but darkened my thoughts, from childhood to this very day, completely enslaving myself to the passions assaulting me. The devils mocked and scoffed, but never did I give any thought to Your unbearable anger<sup>402</sup> threatening sinners, nor the fire in

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<sup>402</sup> About “unbearable anger”: see Psalm 7:7.

Gehenna. But now, naked and empty-handed, having deprived myself of fellowship with You, I am in despair, and unable to return to my senses. Was there any sort of sin I did not commit ? Was there a devilish deed I left undone ? Was there anything despicable and depraved that I did not carry out with arrogance and enthusiasm ? I polluted my mind with fleshly remembrances. I defiled my body in all sorts of ways. I polluted my spirit by the consent that I gave. I loved serving sin, and I made a slave of every member of my wretched body. Who shall not weep for me, the condemned ? for I, alone, have stirred up Your wrath, O Master. I, alone, have done evil in Your sight, surpassing and exceeding all sinners since time began, so incomparably and unforgivably have I transgressed. But, since You are abundantly merciful and full of loving-kindness, and You ever await the return of Man, O Lover of Man, behold, even I cast myself down before Your unbearable, dread Judgement Seat. As if clasping Your most holy feet, I cry out to You from the depths of my soul : O LORD, cleanse. You that work a change for good, forgive. Be merciful towards my infirmity. Be attentive to my quandary. Attend to my supplication. Be not silent in the face of my tears. Turn back the erring one. Embrace me as I turn back. Receive me who repent. Forgive me who pray ; for You have not appointed repentance for the righteous, nor forgiveness for those who have not sinned. However, You have appointed repentance for me, the sinner, who have thus vexed You, and stand naked and exposed, confessing my sins before You, O LORD and Seer of hearts. I cannot look up, and gaze upon the height of Heaven, bent down as I am by the weight of my sins. Therefore, enlighten the eyes of my heart. Grant me contrition leading to repentance, and brokenness of heart conducive to a changed life, that I might attain to the other world with good hope and firm faith, ever praising and blessing Your most holy Name : of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.





## session

11

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



### PSALM 77

### STATION 1

*"The departure from Egypt, sign of the wonders of Christ"*

Προσέχετε, λαός μου      Attendite, popule

Of understanding. By Asaph.

(Harmonious, hieratic, melodic songs of David.)

1

**O** my people, give heed to my law ;  
incline your ear to the utterances of my mouth.

I shall open my mouth in parables ;

I shall utter riddles, which were from the beginning.<sup>403</sup>

All things that we have heard, we have also known,  
and our fathers have recounted them to us.

They were not hidden from their children to another  
generation :

bringing tidings of the praises of the LORD, and of His  
mighty deeds,

and of His wonders which He has wrought.

He raised up a testimony in Jakōb,

5

and a law He placed in Israēl :

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<sup>403</sup> (Matthew 13:35)

all that He commanded to our fathers,  
to make these things known to their sons,  
so that another generation might know, and the sons to be  
born.

And they shall arise and bring tidings of these things to  
their sons,

so that they might put their hope on God,  
and might not forget the works of God,  
and might seek out His commandments ;  
so that they might not be like their fathers :

a crooked and embittering generation,  
a generation which did not keep its own heart straight,  
and its spirit was not faithful with God.

The sons of Ephraim, stringing and shooting their bows,  
have turned in the day of war.

They did not keep the Covenant of God, 10  
and they did not want to walk in His law.

They forgot His benefits  
and His wonders, which He had shown them in the  
presence of their fathers,

the wonders, which He wrought in the land of Ægypt, in  
the plain of Tanis :<sup>404</sup>

He broke asunder the sea, and He led them through.<sup>405</sup>

He caused the waters to stand up just as stands a leather-  
bag.<sup>406</sup>

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<sup>404</sup> (4 Mōysēs 13:22) “Tanis” is the Greek for the Hebrew *Zoan*, which is generally accepted to be the same as *Goshen*, and which can symbolise all of Egypt.

<sup>405</sup> (2 Mōysēs 14:13-31)

<sup>406</sup> In the Greek, “stands” is lacking.

He led them on the way in a cloud by day,  
and the whole night through in an illumination of fire.

He broke asunder a rock in the wilderness,<sup>407</sup> 15  
and He gave them to drink, as in a great abyss.

He led forth water from a rock,  
and He led down waters like rivers.

Yet they continued to sin against Him ;  
they embittered the Most High in a waterless place,  
and they tempted God in their hearts,  
in asking for food for their souls.

They spoke against God, and they said :  
“Surely God will not be able to prepare a table in the  
wilderness ?

Although He smote the rock,  
and waters gushed out, and torrents inundated, 20  
surely He will not be able to give bread,  
or to prepare a table for His people ?”

Therefore, the LORD heard, and threw them behind,  
and fire was ignited in Jakōb,

and His anger against Israēl rose up ;<sup>408</sup>  
for they had not believed in God,

nor had they hoped on His salvation.

And yet He commanded clouds from above,  
and He opened the doors of Heaven.

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<sup>407</sup> (2 Mōysēs 17:1-7; 4 Mōysēs 20:7-13) In order that we be able to understand these lines, and indeed this whole psalm, it is important that our hearts be nourished by the constant reading of the Scriptures. Each of these references can then leap from the heart to the front of our understanding without need of a concordance.

<sup>408</sup> About “anger”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.



He rained down manna for them to eat,  
and He gave them the bread of Heaven.<sup>409</sup> 25  
Man ate the bread of angels :  
and He sent provisions for them, unto their surfeit.  
He removed the south wind from Heaven,  
and He led on the south-west wind in His power.  
He rained upon them flesh just as dirt,<sup>410</sup>  
and winged birds just as sand of the seas.  
They fell in the midst of their camp,  
and round about their tents.  
They ate, and they were very much filled up,  
and He brought them what they craved.  
They were not deprived of what they craved ;  
and while their food was still in their mouth, 30  
and the anger of God rose up against them,  
He slew most of them,  
and the chosen of Israēl, He fettered.  
In all of these things, they still sinned,  
and they did not believe in His wonders.  
Their days came to an end in futility,  
and their years with haste.  
When He slew them, then they were seeking Him out ;  
they were turning about, and they were arising to God at  
day-break.  
They remembered that God is their Helper, 35  
and that God Most High is their Redeemer.

<sup>409</sup> (2 Mōysēs 16:1-35; 4 Mōysēs 11:6-9; John 6:31-32)

<sup>410</sup> (4 Mōysēs 11:31-34)

They loved Him with their mouth,  
but by their tongue they lied to Him ;  
for their heart was not upright with Him,  
nor were they faithful to His Covenant.  
But as for Him, He is merciful :  
He is propitious to their sins, and He will not utterly  
destroy them.  
More and more, He will turn away His fury,  
and He will not kindle all His anger.  
He remembered that they are flesh :  
a spirit going, and not turning back.<sup>411</sup>  
How often they embittered Him in the wilderness ; 40  
they stirred Him to anger in a waterless land.  
They turned about, and put God to the test,  
and they provoked the Holy One of Israēl.  
They did not remember His hand,  
and the day in which He redeemed them from the hand of  
the afflicting one :  
how He wrought His signs in Ægypt,  
and His portents in the plain of Tanis.<sup>412</sup>  
He turned to blood their rivers,  
and their rain-waters, so that they could not drink.  
He sent out upon them the dog-fly, and it devoured  
them, 45

<sup>411</sup> “Not turning back” can imply non-repentance (turning about). In our rebellious disposition and behaviour, we brought upon ourselves the consequences of our wrong and deviating choices. It may seem to us then as if God were embittered, stirred to anger, wrathful; but this is our perception of these consequences. We must not attribute these passions to God, who is passionless.

<sup>412</sup> The plagues: 2 Mōysēs 7:14-25; 7:26-8:10; 8:12-15; 8:16-28; 9:1-7; 9:8-12; 9:13-35; 10:1-20; 10:21-29; 11:1-10

and the frog, and it utterly destroyed them.  
 He gave their fruits over to mildew,  
 and their toils to the grass-hopper.  
 He slew their vines with hail,  
 and their mulberry trees with hoar-frost.  
 He gave over their cattle to hail,  
 and their property to fire.  
 He sent out upon them the anger of His fury :  
 fury and anger and affliction, a dispatch by evil angels.  
 He made a path for His anger ; 50  
 He did not spare their souls from death,  
 and for death He shut in their cattle.  
 He smote every first-born in the land of Ægypt,  
 the first-fruits of all their toil in the tents of Kham.<sup>413</sup>  
 He removed His people as sheep ;  
 and He led them up just as a flock in the wilderness.  
 He led them on their way in hope,  
 and they were not afraid,  
 and the sea covered up their enemies.  
 He led them to the mountain of His sanctity,  
 this mountain, which His right hand possessed.  
 He cast out from their face the nations, 55  
 and He distributed land as their inheritance with a  
 measuring-line ;<sup>414</sup>  
 He made the tribes of Israēl settle in their tents.

<sup>413</sup> “Kham”=Ham, who is the ancestor of the Egyptian (Copt) people, amongst others (see 1 Mōysēs 10:6-20).

<sup>414</sup> A measuring-line is the standard line used to measure land (see the foot-note on Psalm 15:6).

They put God Most High to the test, and they embittered  
 Him,  
 and they did not keep His testimonies.  
 They turned away, and broke covenant, even as their  
 fathers ;  
 they were turned into a twisted bow.  
 They stirred Him to anger with their hill-tops ;  
 and with their carving of idols, they provoked Him to  
 jealousy.  
 God heard them, and He disregarded them,  
 and He utterly reckoned Israēl as nothing.  
 He pushed away the tent of Silōm,<sup>415</sup> 60  
 the tent in which He had pitched His tent amongst Men.  
 He gave over their strength to captivity,  
 and their beauty to the hand of enemies.  
 He shut in His people with the sword,  
 and His inheritance He disregarded.  
 Fire devoured their young men ;  
 their virgins were not mourned.  
 Their priests fell by the sword,  
 and their widows were not lamented.  
 The LORD awakened, as one sleeping,  
 as a powerful one overcome with wine,  
 and He smote His enemies on the back ; 65  
 He gave to them an eternal reproach.

<sup>415</sup> “Silōm” is probably *Shiloh* (see Jēsous [Joshua] 18:1; I Kingdoms 4:4). Shiloh was the site of the tent (“in which He had pitched His tent”), which housed the Ark of the Covenant.

He pushed away the tent of Jōsēph,  
 and the tribe of Ephraim He did not choose out.  
 He chose out the tribe of Jouda,  
 and Mount Siōn, which He loved.  
 He built there His holy place like a unicorn,<sup>416</sup>  
 and laid her foundations on the earth unto the age.  
 He chose out David, His bond-servant,<sup>417</sup> 70  
 and took him up out of the flocks of the sheep :  
 from behind the lambing ewes He took him  
 to shepherd Jakōb, His bond-servant, and Israēl, His  
 inheritance.  
 He shepherded them in the guilelessness of his heart,  
 and with the understanding of his hands did he lead them  
 on the way.



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
 now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
 Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*  
 LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
 Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
 now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

<sup>416</sup> “Holy place” here translates a noun form of the verb ἀγιάζω, “hagiadzō”, which means “make holy”. Its use as a noun could imply something made holy. “Sanctity”, or “sanctification” may sometimes be used, but the English words used depend on the context, as here.

About “unicorn”: Saint Athanasius explains that the unicorn is a powerful and invincible animal, because it has on its forehead a sharp horn, with which it can kill every beast. Thus the Psalmist says that, after God’s Temple was built, all the nations submitted and yielded to the Power that dwells in this Temple.

<sup>417</sup> (1 Kingdoms 16:1-13)

PSALM 78

STATION 2

“Supplication of the Church in persecution”

Ὁ Θεός, ἠλθοσαν ἔθνη Deos, venerunt gentes

A psalm by Asaph. 1

**O** God, the nations have come into Your inheritance ;  
 they defiled Your holy temple.

They made Jerousalēm as a gardener’s hut.

They put out the corpses of Your bond-servants  
 as food for the birds of the sky :

the flesh of Your holy ones,

for the wild beasts of the earth.

They poured out their blood just as water, round about  
 Jerousalēm,

and there was no-one to bury them.

We became an object of reproach to our neighbours :  
 an object of sneering and derision to those round about us.

Until when, O LORD : will You be angry unto the end ? 5

Shall Your jealousy be kindled as a fire ?

Pour out Your anger on the nations that do not know You,<sup>418</sup>  
 and on the kingdoms which did not call upon Your Name ;

for they devoured Jakōb,

and his place they made desolate.<sup>419</sup>

Do not remember our lawless acts of old ;

let Your compassions swiftly overtake us, O LORD,

for we have become very poor.

Help us, O God, our Saviour.

<sup>418</sup> About “jealousy” and “anger”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

<sup>419</sup> “Place”=“holy place”, or Jerusalem.

For the sake of the glory of Your Name, O LORD, rescue us,  
and be propitious to our sins, for the sake of Your Name,  
so that the nations may not say : “Where is their God ?” 10  
Let the avenging of the blood of Your bond-servants that  
has been poured out  
be known amongst the nations in the sight of our eyes.  
Let the groaning of those bound in fetters come before  
Your Face ;  
in accordance with the greatness of Your arm,  
keep safe the sons of those put to death.  
Render to our neighbours sevenfold into their bosom their  
reproaching,  
with which they reproached You, O LORD.  
However, we, Your people, the sheep of Your pasture,  
shall give thanks to You unto the age ;  
and unto generation and generation shall we tell forth Your  
praise.



## PSALM 79

*“Prayer for the deliverance of the Church”*

Ὁ ποιμαίνων τὸν Ἰσραήλ Qui regis Israel  
For the end. About those who shall be changed. 1  
A testimony by Asaph. A psalm about the Assyrian.  
**O** You, shepherding Israēl, give heed :  
You, leading Jōsēph on the way, just as sheep.<sup>420</sup>  
O You, sitting upon the Cheroubim, manifest Yourself.<sup>421</sup>  
In the presence of Ephraim and Benjamin and Manassē,  
awaken Your might, and come to save us.  
O God, turn us about ;<sup>422</sup>  
make Your Face shine, and we shall be saved.  
O LORD God of Powers, 5  
how long are You angered at the prayer of Your bond-  
servants ?<sup>423</sup>  
Will You feed us the bread of tears ?  
Will You make us drink tears in full-measure ?  
You made us a contradiction to our neighbours,  
and our enemies have sneered at us.  
O LORD God of Powers, turn us about ;  
make Your Face shine, and we shall be saved.

*Pause*

You removed a vine from Ægypt ;  
You cast out the nations, and You planted it.

<sup>420</sup> “Jōsēph”=Israel.

<sup>421</sup> (1 Kingdoms 4:4; 2 Kingdoms 6:2)

<sup>422</sup> About “turn us about”: we ask God, our Shepherd, to help us to turn about, that is, to repent. We desire to change for the better, but we understand that even in this, we must have the LORD’s assistance.

<sup>423</sup> About “angered”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

You made a road before it ; 10  
You planted its roots, and it filled the earth.  
Its shadow covered the mountains,  
and its tree-covering tendrils, the cedars of God.  
It stretched out its vine-branches as far as the sea,  
and as far as the rivers, its off-shoots.  
Why did You bring down its fence,  
and why do all those going alongside the road pluck it ?  
The boar from the thicket ravaged it,  
and a lone, wild animal fed on it.  
O God of Powers, turn about, now ; 15  
look attentively from Heaven, and see :  
visit this vine, which Your right hand planted,  
and establish it.<sup>424</sup>  
Look attentively upon a son of Man,<sup>425</sup>  
whom You made strong for Yourself.  
Set afire with fire, it was rooted up ;  
because of the rebuke of Your Face, they shall perish.  
Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right-hand,  
and upon a son of Man, whom You made strong for  
Yourself.  
We shall not move away from You ;

---

<sup>424</sup> These lines are cited in the bishop's prayer of blessing during the Trisagion at a hierarchical Divine Liturgy. Although the words refer to the vine/vineyard, the prayer may be taken as the shepherd-bishop's prayer for the flock.

<sup>425</sup> Despite the lack of the definite article in Greek, Saint Athanasius rightly understands that "a son of man" must, in the end, refer to our Saviour Christ Himself.

You will give us life,  
and we shall call upon Your Name. 20  
O LORD God of Powers, turn us about ;  
make Your Face shine, and we shall be saved.



**PSALM 80**

*“Christ guides and feeds His Church”*

Ἐγαλλιάσθε τῷ Θεῷ Exultate Deo

For the end. About the wine-presses. A psalm by Asaph. 1

**E**xult in God, our Helper ;  
raise a shout of joy to the God of Jakōb.

Take a psalm, and sound the tambour,  
the delightful psaltery, with the lyre.

Sound a trumpet at the new moon,  
on the favourable day of your feast ;

for this is an ordinance for Israēl, 5  
and a judgement by the God of Jakōb.

He set it to be a testimony in Jōsēph,  
when he went out from the land of Ægypt.<sup>426</sup>

He heard a tongue which he did not know ;  
he moved his back away from burdens ;  
his hands slaved at the basket.

“In affliction you called upon Me,  
and I rescued you ;

I listened to you in a secret place of a tempest.<sup>427</sup>

I proved you at the water of contradiction.<sup>428</sup>

*Pause*

Hear, O My people, and I will testify unto you.

O Israēl, if you would hear Me,  
there shall be no novel god with you, 10

nor shall you worship a foreign god ;

<sup>426</sup> (2 Mōysēs 13:17-21)

<sup>427</sup> “Secret place of tempest”=secret place of thunder (Hebrew)=Mount Sinai.

<sup>428</sup> See the foot-note on Psalm 94:8.

for I AM the LORD your God,  
who led you up from the land of Ægypt.

Open wide your mouth, and I will fill it.

My people did not hear My voice,  
and Israēl did not heed Me.

I sent them out in accordance with the purposes of  
their hearts :

they shall walk in their purposes.

If My people had heard Me,

if Israēl had walked in My ways,

in no time I would have humbled their enemies, 15

and upon those afflicting them, I would have laid My  
hand” .

The enemies of the LORD have lied to Him,  
and their time shall be unto the age.

He fed them from the fat of the wheat,

and with honey out of a rock, He sated them.



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

**PSALM 81****STATION 3***"Negligence of Israel, and call of the nations"*

'Ο Θεός ἔστη            Deus stetit

A psalm by Asaph.

1

**G**od stood in a gathering of the gods ;<sup>429</sup>  
 and in their midst, He sets gods apart :  
 "How long are you judging unrighteously,  
 and accepting the faces of sinners ?"<sup>430</sup>

*Pause*

Judge the orphan and the poor.

Do justice to the humble and the needy.

Set free the poor and the needy,

and rescue them from the hand of a sinner".

They did not know, nor did they understand ;

5

they walk about in darkness ;

all the foundations of the earth shall be shaken.

As for me, I said : "You are gods,"<sup>431</sup>

and you are all sons of the Most High.

But as for you, as Men do you die,

and as one of the princes do you fall".

Arise, O God, judging the earth,

for You will inherit in all the nations.

---

<sup>429</sup> Saint Athanasius comments that here, "gods" are the rulers of the Jews, who are also called sons of God. God was standing amongst them when He was making present His salvation so as to judge them and convict them of their doings.

<sup>430</sup> About "accepting the faces": some other translators use "show partiality". About "faces": see the foot-note on Psalm 4:7.

<sup>431</sup> (John 10:34)

**PSALM 82***"Supplication of the persecuted Church"*

'Ο Θεός, τίς ὁμοιωθήσεται            Deus, qui similis ?

A canticle of a psalm by Asaph.

1

**O** God, who shall be likened to You ?

Do not be silent, and do not be appeased, O God ;  
 for behold, Your enemies roared,  
 and those hating You raised their head.

Against Your people they villainously devised a scheme,  
 and they took counsel against Your holy ones.

They said : "Come, let us exterminate them from being  
 a nation,

5

and the name of Israēl shall be remembered no longer";

for together they took counsel with one mind ;

against You they made a covenant –

the tents of the Idoumæans and the Ismaēlites,

Mōab and the Agarēnes,

Gebal and Ammon and Amalēk

and Foreign Tribes, with the inhabitants of Tyr ;

indeed, Assour came to assist them ;

they became a support to the sons of Lōt.

*Pause*

Do to them as You did to Madiam and to Sisara,

10

as to Jabin at the torrent of the Keisōn.<sup>432</sup>They were exterminated in Ændōr ;<sup>433</sup>

they became as dung on the earth.

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<sup>432</sup> (Judges, chapters 4 & 5) "Keisōn"=Kishon, a river flowing from the Gilboa mountains to the Mediterranean, at Haifa.

<sup>433</sup> (Jēsous 17:11) "Ændōr" is a city of Manasseh.

Make their princes like Orēb and Zēb,  
and Zebee and Salmana – all of their princes,<sup>434</sup>  
who said : “Let us inherit for ourselves the sanctuary of  
God”.

O my God, make them as a wheel,  
as stubble before the face of the wind ;  
just as a fire which shall burn through a thicket, 15  
just as a flame which shall completely burn mountains,  
so You will closely pursue them in Your tempest,  
and in Your anger You will throw them into confusion.<sup>435</sup>  
Fill their faces with dishonour,  
and they shall seek Your Name, O LORD.  
Let them be put to shame, and be stirred up unto the age  
of the age ;  
and let them be disgraced, and be destroyed.  
Let them know that Your Name is the LORD :  
You, alone, are Most High over all the earth.

---

<sup>434</sup> “Ismaēlites”=Ishmaelites=descendants of Abraham and Hagar.  
(1 Mōysēs 21:8-21; 25:12-18)  
“Mōab”, “Ammon”=descendants of Lot, east of the Jordan and the Dead Sea.  
(1 Mōysēs 19:30-38)  
“Agarēnes”=descendants of Hagar, and of her son Ishmaēl.  
“Gebal”=a people living south of the Dead Sea.  
“Amalēk”=a nomadic people of the Negev, traditional enemies of Israel.  
(2 Mōysēs 17:8-16; 5 Mōysēs 25:17-19; Judges 6:1-7 & 33-35; 1 King-  
doms 15:1-9)  
“Assour”=Assyria, a trans-Jordanian people.  
“Madiam”=Midian=the Medes, an ancient Persian people, formerly called Aryans  
(although some wish to locate them in Arabia). (Judges, chapters 6-8)  
“Sisara” and “Jabin”: (Judges 4:1-24; 5:14-15 & 19-31; 1 Kingdoms 12:9-11)  
“Orēb” and “Zēb”=Chiefs of Midian. (Judges 7:24-25)  
“Zebee” and “Salmana”=Kings of Midian. (Judges 8:4-21)

<sup>435</sup> About “anger”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

### PSALM 83

“Ascent to the Habitation of God”

Ὦς ἀγαπητὰ Quam dilecta  
For the end. About the wine-presses. 1

A psalm by the sons of Korè.

**H**ow beloved are Your tents,  
O LORD of Powers.

My soul yearns and faints for the courts of the LORD.  
My heart and my flesh have exulted in the living God.  
Indeed, the sparrow has found a home for herself,  
and the turtle-dove a nest for herself,  
where she shall put her own young :  
Your altars, O LORD of Powers,  
my King and my God.

Blessed are those dwelling in Your house : 5  
unto the ages of ages shall they praise You.

*Pause*

Blessed is the man whose support is from You ;  
in his heart he set in order ascents,  
in the deep valley of weeping, to the place which he set.  
Indeed, the Law-giver will give blessings.

They shall go from power to power ;  
the God of gods will be seen in Siōn.  
O LORD God of Powers, hear my prayer ;  
give ear, O God of Jakōb.

*Pause*

See, O God, our Protector : 10  
look attentively upon the face of Your christ ;  
for one day in Your courts is better than thousands.



I have chosen to be cast aside in the house of my God,<sup>436</sup>  
rather than to dwell in the tents of sinners ;  
for the LORD God loves mercy and truth ;  
He will give grace and glory.  
The LORD will not deprive of good things  
those walking in guilelessness.  
O LORD God of Powers,  
blessed is the Man hoping on You.



---

<sup>436</sup> The beauty of God's Love, and life in His Presence is so compelling that it is better "to be cast aside" within God's House than to be in any other place or condition.

Archimandrite Zacharias (Zacharou), Archimandrite Sophrony (Sakharov) and Saint Silouan describe being "cast aside" as "hoping beyond hope". In fact, the words given to Saint Silouan are appropriate here, "Keep your mind in Hell and do not despair".

## PSALM 84

*"The Incarnation of Christ, and the work of salvation"*

Εὐδόκησας, Κύριε

Benedixisti, Domine

For the end. A psalm by the sons of Korè.

1

**O** LORD, You have been well-pleased with Your earth ;  
You have turned back the captivity of Jakōb.  
You have forgiven Your people their lawless acts ;  
You have covered all their sins.

*Pause*

You put an end to all Your anger ;<sup>437</sup>

You turned away from the anger of Your fury.

Turn us about, O God of our salvations,<sup>438</sup>

5

and turn away Your fury from us.

Would You be angry at us unto the ages ?

or will You stretch out Your anger from generation to  
generation ?

It is You, O God, having turned about, who will give us life,  
and Your people shall be glad in You.

O LORD, show us Your mercy ;

may You give us Your salvation.

I shall hear what the LORD God will speak within me ;

for He will speak peace to His people and to His holy ones,  
and to those turning their heart about to Him.

Moreover, His salvation is near to those fearing Him,

10

so that His glory might pitch its tent on our land.

---

<sup>437</sup> About "anger" and "fury": see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

<sup>438</sup> In Greek, "salvations" is in the plural. Saint Jerome, in commenting, does not consider Christ's salvation as an isolated event. He says that His work of salvation has multiple applications, hence this plural. Because we are sinning in multiple ways, and needing salvation repeatedly, Christ rescues us repeatedly.

Mercy and truth have met each other ;  
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.  
Truth has risen from the earth,  
and righteousness has stooped down from Heaven.  
Indeed, the LORD will give loving-kindness,  
and our earth shall give its fruit.  
Righteousness shall go before Him,  
and He will place His foot-steps as a way.



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
(three times)

*And then the following prayers :*

### **TRISAGION PRAYERS**

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

*(three times)*

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

O most holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from  
our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and  
heal our infirmities, for Your Name's sake.

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

Our Father, who are in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name ; Your  
kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ;  
give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our debts, as we  
forgive our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test, but rescue  
us from the evil one.

*And then :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus Christ, our  
God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

*And these tropars : Tone 7*

Acquiring the healing remedy of repentance, O my soul, come  
weeping, sighing and crying out to the Physician of souls and  
bodies : Set me free, O Lover of Man, from my many  
transgressions. Number me with the sinful woman, the thief and  
the publican. Grant me forgiveness of sins, and save me.

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

I have not emulated the repentance of the publican, nor have I  
acquired the tears of the sinful woman ; for my blindness has  
made me ignorant of transformations such as theirs. But, in  
Your tender-hearted mercy, O Christ God, save me, as You are  
the Lover of Man.

Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Together with the heavenly powers, O undefiled Virgin Theotokos, beseech your Son to grant us forgiveness of transgressions before the end, and great mercy.

LORD, have mercy. (*forty times*)

*And then the following prayer :*

Shine in our hearts, O Master and Lover of Man, with the pure light of Your divine knowledge. Open the eyes of our mind, that we might comprehend the preachings<sup>439</sup> of Your gospel. Implant also in us the fear of Your blessed commandments, that trampling all carnal desires, we may pursue a spiritual way of life, both thinking and doing all the things that are well-pleasing to You ; for You are the Illumination of our souls and bodies, O Christ our God, and we give glory to You, together with Your unoriginate Father, and Your all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



---

<sup>439</sup> “Preachings” translates κήρυγμα, *kērygma*, which means “preaching”, “proclamation”, “message”. It is in the plural because of the evangelical contents of the Gospel, and because of the fruit of the Gospel as well.

## session

12

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



### PSALM 85

### STATION 1

*“Supplication of the Church in times of testing”*

Κλῖνον, Κύριε      Inclina, Domine

A prayer by David.

1

**O** LORD, incline Your ear, and listen to me,  
for I am poor and needy.

Watch over my soul, for I am holy.<sup>440</sup>

O my God, save Your bond-servant,  
the one hoping on You.

Have mercy on me, O LORD,

for to You shall I cry out the whole day long.

Make glad the soul of Your bond-servant,

for to You, O LORD, have I raised my soul ;

for You, O LORD, You are gracious and gentle,

5

and greatly merciful to all those calling upon You.

Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer,

and give heed to the voice of my supplication.

---

<sup>440</sup> The words of this psalm may be taken to be the supplication of Christ.  
About “I am holy”: see 3 Mōysēs (Leviticus) 11:44-45; 19:2; 20:7-8; 1 Peter 1:15-16.

In the day of my affliction I cried out to You,  
for You listened to me.

There is no-one amongst the gods like You, O LORD,  
and there is nothing to compare to Your works.

All the nations, as many as You have made,  
shall come and worship before Your Face, O LORD,  
and they shall glorify Your Name ;  
for You are great, doing wonders ;  
You alone are God.

10

Lead me on the way, O LORD, according to Your way,  
and I shall walk in Your truth.

Let my heart be glad, so as to fear Your Name.

I shall confess You, O LORD my God, with my whole heart,  
and I shall glorify Your Name unto the age ;  
for Your mercy towards me is great,  
and You rescued my soul from deepest Hadēs.

O God, transgressors of the law rose up against me,  
and a gathering of the strong sought my soul,  
and they did not set You before their faces.

But You, O LORD my God, You are compassionate  
and merciful ;

15

long-suffering, greatly merciful and true.

Look attentively upon me, and have mercy on me ;  
give Your strength to Your child,  
and save the son of Your maid-servant.<sup>441</sup>

---

<sup>441</sup> About “maid-servant”: the Greek word is a diminutive of *παις*. See the footnote on Psalm 17:1. The meanings here include “maiden”, “young female slave”, “serving-girl”. Such a person could be both very young and not in voluntary service, but in some form nevertheless a slave.

Make with me a sign for good,  
and let those hating me see, and be put to shame ;  
for You, O LORD, You have helped me and consoled me.



## PSALM 86

*“Sion, image of the Mother of God and of the Church”*

Οἱ θεμέλιοι αὐτοῦ      Fundamenta eius

A psalm of a canticle by the sons of Korè. 1

**H**is foundations are on the holy mountains.

The LORD loves the gates of Siōn

more than all the tents of Jakōb.

Glorious things have been spoken of you,

O city of God.

*Pause*

I shall mention Raab and Babylōn to those knowing me ;<sup>442</sup>

and behold : Foreign Tribes, those of Tyr, and the people

of the Æthiopians –

these were born there.

“Siōn, my mother”, a Man shall say ;

and a Man was born in her :

the Most High Himself has founded her.

The LORD will recount it in the writings of the peoples, 5

and of these princes, those having been born in her.

*Pause*

Thus are all those glad, whose dwelling is in you.<sup>443</sup>

---

<sup>442</sup> “Raab”=Rahab (see Jēsous 2:1-21).

Saint Cyril of Jerusalem points us to examples in the Scriptures of the greatness of God’s mercy and loving-kindness in His being mindful even of harlots. Repentance is open to all.

<sup>443</sup> Saint Athanasius comments about this line that when the dwelling of all those who are in the Church shall be in God, they shall be full of joy.

The psalm refers to Sion; but Saint Athanasius, as other Fathers, would have it refer to Christ.

## PSALM 87

*“Descent of Christ to Hadēs”*

Κύριε ὁ Θεὸς      Domine Deus

A canticle of a psalm by the sons of Korè. For the end. 1

About Maëleth, to sing responsively.

Of understanding. By Æman the Israëlite.<sup>444</sup>

**O**LORD God of my salvation,

in Your presence I cried out by day, and at night.

Let my prayer come before Your Face ;

incline Your ear to my supplication ;

for my soul has been filled with bad things,

and my life has drawn near to Hadēs.

I have been reckoned amongst those going down into the

pit. 5

I have become just like a helpless Man, free amongst the

dead,<sup>445</sup>

just like the wounded, lying in the tomb,

whom You no longer remembered ;

and they were pushed away from Your hand.

They placed me in the lowest pit,

in dark places, and in the shadow of death.

Upon me has Your fury been fixed,<sup>446</sup>

and You brought all Your swells down upon me.

*Pause*

You kept my acquaintances far from me ;

they made me a loathsome thing to themselves.

---

<sup>444</sup> (1 Paraleipomenon 15:16-24) “Maëleth”=Mahalath. “Æman”=Heman.

<sup>445</sup> Saint Athanasius explains that Christ descended to Hadēs, but that He is free, for He owes nothing to death, and thus He can free the dead.

<sup>446</sup> About “fury”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

I have been handed over, and I was not walking away.  
 My eyes became weak from poverty. 10  
 I cried out to You, O LORD, the whole day long ;  
 I spread out my hands to You.  
 Surely You will not do wonders amongst the dead ?  
 or shall physicians raise them up,  
 and shall they confess You ?  
 Surely no-one shall recount Your mercy in the tomb,<sup>447</sup>  
 and Your truth in Perdition ?<sup>448</sup>  
 Surely Your wonders shall not be known in the darkness,  
 and Your righteousness in a land of oblivion ?  
 As for me, I cried out to You, O LORD ;  
 and in the morning shall my prayer be before You.  
 Why, O LORD, do You push away my soul, 15  
 and turn Your Face away from me ?  
 I am poor and in labours from my youth ;  
 but although once exalted, I have been humbled,  
 and in great trouble.  
 Your angers came upon me ;  
 Your terrors greatly agitated me.  
 They surrounded me, just as water, the whole day long :  
 at once they encompassed me.  
 You have kept far from me friend and neighbour  
 and my acquaintances, because of my misery.

---

<sup>447</sup> About these lines: see Psalm 6:6.

<sup>448</sup> “Perdition” means “destruction”, and it is used to refer to Hadēs. “Oblivion”, which follows, means forgetfulness, which also suggests Hadēs, which is the land of forgetfulness.



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
 now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
 Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*  
 LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
 Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
 now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

**PSALM 88**

**STATION 2**

*“Fulfilment in Christ of the promises made to David”*

Τὰ ἐλέη σου, Κύριε

Misericordias Domini

Of understanding. By Ætham the Israélite.<sup>449</sup> 1

**Y**our mercies, O LORD, I shall sing unto the age ;  
unto generation and generation I shall bring tidings  
of Your truth by my mouth ;

for You said : “Unto the age shall mercy be built up” .

In the Heavens shall Your truth be prepared.

“I have made a Covenant with My chosen ones ;

I have made an oath to David, My bond-servant :

‘Until the age will I prepare your seed, 5

and I will build your throne unto generation and  
generation” .<sup>450</sup>

*Pause*

The Heavens shall confess Your wonders, O LORD,  
and Your truth, in the church of the holy ones ;

for who in the clouds shall be made equal to the LORD ?

and who shall be like the LORD amongst the sons of God ?

God is glorified in the council of the holy ones ;

He is great and formidable to all those encompassing Him  
round about.<sup>451</sup>

O LORD God of Powers, who is like You ?

<sup>449</sup> (1Paraleipomenon 15:16-24) “Ætham”=Ethan.

<sup>450</sup> (2 Kingdoms 7:12-13)

<sup>451</sup> Saint John Chrysostom comments on “formidable” that the unchanging LORD shows strictness towards the righteous, and also abundant forgiveness to the sinner. He shows mercy to the sinner, in benevolence raising him up, lest he despair. Instilling godly fear of His righteous judgement, He shows strictness to those who stand too self-confidently, lest they become complacent.

The LORD is the righteous Judge of all. He is also the Knower of Hearts. No earthly justice is like His. His justice, although cauterising, is full of mercy.

You are full of power, O LORD,  
and Your truth is round about You.

It is You that rule over the strength of the sea : 10

You appease the tossing of its waves.

As one wounded, You humbled the proud one ;<sup>452</sup>  
with the arm of Your power, You scattered abroad Your  
enemies.

Yours are the Heavens, and Yours is the earth.

The world and its fulness have You founded.

The north and the sea have You created ;<sup>453</sup>

Thabōr and Hermōn shall exult in Your Name.

Yours is the arm with might.

Let Your hand become strong ;

let Your right hand be exalted.

Righteousness and judgement are the foundation of Your  
throne : 15

mercy and truth shall walk before Your Face.

Blessed is the people knowing joyful shouting.<sup>454</sup>

O LORD, in the light of Your Face shall they walk,

and in Your Name shall they exult the whole day long,

and in Your righteousness shall they be exalted ;

for the boast of their power – it is You,

<sup>452</sup> Saint Augustine, in writing about this line, says that the LORD humbled Himself; and because of this, “the proud one” was humbled.

<sup>453</sup> “Sea”, in the context of other directions, as here, may mean west, as in the Mediterranean Sea, or south, as in the Red Sea, or the Gulf of Aqaba, depending on the context. In the present text, it could possibly refer to any of the seas.

<sup>454</sup> It is clear that this “joyful shouting” is in the context of our relationship with the LORD, His worship, His service. This joy proceeds from, and is a result of, the LORD and His Love.

and in Your good-pleasure shall our horn be exalted ;  
for support is of the LORD,  
even of the Holy One of Israēl, our King.  
At that time, You spoke in a vision to Your sons, 20  
and You said : “I brought help unto a powerful one ;  
I exalted the chosen one from My people.  
I found David, My bond-servant.  
With My holy oil have I anointed him ;<sup>455</sup>  
for My hand shall support him,  
and My arm shall fortify him.  
An enemy shall have no advantage over him,  
and a son of lawlessness shall not continue to mistreat him.  
I will chop up his enemies away from his face,<sup>456</sup>  
and those hating him will I put to flight.  
But My truth and My mercy are with him, 25  
and in My Name shall his horn be exalted.  
On the sea I will place his hand,  
and on the rivers his right hand.  
He shall call upon Me : ‘You are my Father,  
my God and the Support of my salvation’.  
I will make him the first-born,<sup>457</sup>  
high in the sight of the kings of the earth.  
Unto the age I will keep My mercy for him,  
and My Covenant faithful to him.

---

<sup>455</sup> (1 Kingdoms 16:1-13; Acts 13:22)

<sup>456</sup> “Chop up” is the main meaning of this word. It can also be translated as “thrash”, following Xenophon, in which case the word suggests “pound well”.

<sup>457</sup> (2 Mōysēs 4:22)

And I will establish his seed unto the age of the age, 30  
and his throne as the days of Heaven.<sup>458</sup>  
If his sons were to abandon My law,  
and not walk in My judgements ;  
if they were to profane My statutes,  
and not keep My commandments,  
I will visit their lawless acts with a rod,  
and with scourges their unrighteousness ;  
but My mercy I will not disperse from them,<sup>459</sup>  
nor will I be unrighteous in My truth,  
nor will I profane My Covenant ; 35  
and what has proceeded from My lips I will not set at  
nought.  
Once, I swore in My holy place that I will not lie to David.  
His seed shall remain unto the age,  
and his throne shall be as the sun in My presence,  
and as the moon, established unto the age,  
and a faithful witness in Heaven”.

*Pause*

But You — You pushed away and reckoned as nothing,  
and You have thrown away Your christ.  
You have overthrown the Covenant of Your bond-  
servant ; 40  
You profaned his holy place to the ground.<sup>460</sup>

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<sup>458</sup> (2 Kingdoms 7:12-17)

<sup>459</sup> Saints Ambrose of Milan and Cyprian of Carthage remind us that if we behave lawlessly, and we feel the sharp correction of the LORD, we must always hope, nevertheless, because He promised not to deprive us of His mercy.

<sup>460</sup> About “holy place”: see the foot-note on Psalm 77:69.



You brought down all his fences ;  
You made his strong-holds faint-heartedness.  
They plundered him – all those going by on the way ;  
he became an object of reproach to his neighbours.  
You exalted the right hand of those afflicting him :  
You made glad all his enemies.  
You turned away the help of his sword,  
and You did not support him in war.  
You brought him down from his purification ; 45  
his throne You broke down to the earth.  
You diminished the days of his time ; <sup>461</sup>  
You poured down shame upon him.

*Pause*

Until when, O LORD, will You turn away unto the end ?  
Shall Your anger be kindled as a fire ? <sup>462</sup>  
Remember who is my existence ;  
for surely You did not create all the sons of Men in futility ?  
Who is the Man that shall live, and not see death ?  
Who shall rescue his soul from the hand of Hadēs ? <sup>463</sup>

*Pause*

O LORD, where are Your mercies of old, 50  
which You swore to David in Your truth ?

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<sup>461</sup> “Time” translates *chronos*, which means general time, and therefore it is sometimes rendered “life”. About “time”: see the foot-note on Psalm 20:10.

<sup>462</sup> About “anger”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

<sup>463</sup> With only a very few exceptions, all human beings have had to face death since the fall. We all see death. These questions anticipate this answer: Only He who descended to Hades and rose again from it, Christ our Saviour, can rescue our souls “from the hand of Hadēs”.

Remember, O LORD, the reproach to Your bond-servants <sup>464</sup>  
from many nations,  
which I bore in my bosom :  
with which Your enemies reproached, O LORD,  
with which they reproached the exchange of Your christ. <sup>465</sup>  
Blessed be the LORD unto the age.  
So be it. So be it. <sup>466</sup>

✠

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
(*three times*)  
LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

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<sup>464</sup> About “to Your bond-servants”: although the Greek case is genitive, “to” is used for clarity of reference.

<sup>465</sup> Archimandrite Placide calls attention to the words of patristic commentators that “exchange” can refer to the fact that God became Man so that Man could become divine; that Christ gave His Blood for our salvation; that in Him the Church is established for all, in place of the synagogue. This “exchange” may be understood to be Christ’s death for our life.

<sup>466</sup> The concluding doxology of Book III of the Psalter.

## BOOK IV

### PSALM 89

### STATION 3

*“Frailty of Man called, nevertheless, to theosis”*

Κύριε, καταφυγή Domine, refugium

A prayer of Mōysēs, Man of God.<sup>467</sup>

1

**O** LORD, You have been our refuge  
in generation and generation.

Before the mountains came to be,

and the earth and the world were fashioned,  
from the age, and until the age, YOU ARE.<sup>468</sup>

Do not turn Man back to humiliation.

And You said : “Turn about, O sons of Men” ;

for a thousand years in Your sight are as a day,  
yesterday, which has passed by, and as a watch in the  
night.<sup>469</sup>

Scorned shall be their years :

5

in the morning, they may pass away just as the green herb.

In the morning, they may flourish, and may pass away ;

in the evening, they may fall down, harden and dry out ;

for we have fainted because of Your anger,<sup>470</sup>

and because of Your fury were we stirred up.

You placed our lawless acts in Your presence :

---

<sup>467</sup> See 5 Mōysēs 31:1.

<sup>468</sup> About “YOU ARE”: this is the word for “I AM” in the second person. See the foot-note on Psalm 34:3 on “I AM”.

God is eternally in the present. He is Being Itself. He is the Source of all that is.

Saint Gregory of Nyssa states that God is beyond any beginning, and beyond any ending.

<sup>469</sup> (2 Peter 3:8)

<sup>470</sup> About “anger” and “fury”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

the span of our life in the illumination of Your Face ;

for all our days have come to an end,

and because of Your anger have we fainted.

Our years were ruminating, just as a spider.<sup>471</sup>

The days of our years – in them are seventy years ; 10

but if they be in might, then eighty years,

and most of them trouble and toil ;

for meekness has come upon us, and we shall be instructed.

Who knows the strength of Your anger,

and from the fear of You, who has numbered Your fury ?

So make Your right hand known to me,

and those instructed in heart by wisdom.

Turn about, O LORD, until when ?

Let Yourself be entreated on behalf of Your bond-servants.

In the morning, we were filled up with Your mercy,

O LORD,

and we exulted and were glad in all our days.

May we be glad in return for the days when You

humbled us, 15

for the years when we saw bad things.

Look upon Your bond-servants and upon Your works,

and lead their sons on the way.

Let the splendour of the LORD our God be upon us,

and prosper the works of our hands for us ;

prosper the work of our hands.

---

<sup>471</sup> The rumination of our years is compared to the silent, contemplative attitude of a spider in its web (see the foot-note on “ruminates” in Psalm 1:2).

Saint Gregory of Nyssa comments that human existence, in its transitory endeavours, could be likened to a spider’s web which appears to have substance, but dissolves when it is touched.

[The context may suggest the futility of our labours, since in Greek the same word can mean “spider” or “cobweb”.]

**PSALM 90**

*"The temptation of Christ in the desert"*

Ὁ κατοικῶν Qui habitat

A praise of a canticle by David. [Without inscription in Hebrew] 1

**T**he one dwelling in the help of the Most High shall abide in the shelter of the God of Heaven.

He shall say to the LORD : "You are my Support and my Refuge, O my God".

I shall hope on Him ;

for He will rescue you from a snare of the hunters, and from a troubling word.

With His shoulders He will overshadow you, and beneath His wings you shall hope.

With a shield, His truth shall surround you.

You shall not be frightened by a night fear, 5

by an arrow flying by day,

by anything walking about in darkness,

by a calamity, or by a noon-day demon.<sup>472</sup>

A thousand shall fall at your side,

and a myriad at your right-hand,

but it shall not draw near you.

Yet, with your eyes shall you observe

and you shall see the requital of sinners ;

for You, O LORD, You are my Hope ;

you have made the Most High your Refuge.

Bad things shall not come towards you, 10

and a scourge shall not come near your tent ;

<sup>472</sup> Archimandrite Placide explains that this "noon-day demon" is accidie.

for He will command His angels concerning you, that they watch over you closely in all your ways.

Upon their hands they shall raise you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.<sup>473</sup>

Upon the asp and the basilisk you shall tread ; you shall trample the lion and the dragon :<sup>474</sup>

"for he has hoped on Me, and I will rescue him.

I will shelter him, for he has known My Name.

He shall cry out to Me, and I will listen to him. 15

I am with him in affliction :

I will set him free, and I will glorify him.

With length of days will I fill him up,

and I will show him My salvation".



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

<sup>473</sup> (Matthew 4:6; Luke 4:10-11)

<sup>474</sup> The Greek word translated "dragon" may refer also to a very large serpent. The four creatures may be taken as metaphors for various sorts of demons, which attack in different manners, as do these creatures.

Saint Basil the Great, recalling the experience of the Apostle and the asp in Malta, reminds us that we can walk in faith on serpents and scorpions. He adds that if we do not believe, we ought not to fear the wild beast more than our own lack of faith, because with this lack we make ourselves easy prey to every form of corruption.

*And then the following prayers :*

### TRISAGION PRAYERS

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

*(three times)*

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

O most holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and heal our infirmities, for Your Name's sake.

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

Our Father, who are in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name ; Your kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ; give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test, but rescue us from the evil one.

*And then :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

*And these tropars : Tone 7*

O LORD, You accepted the tears of Peter, and of the sinful woman. You justified the deeply-sighing publican. Be compassionate to me, also, O Saviour. I fall down before You. Have mercy on me.

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

O LORD, receive me as the publican. O Master, cleanse me as You cleansed the sinful woman ; and in accordance with Your great mercy, have mercy on me, as You had mercy on the Canaanite woman.

Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O Mother of the Light, blessed Theotokos, beseech Christ God to shine His great mercy upon our souls, at the dawning day.

LORD, have mercy. *(forty times)*

*And then the following prayer :*

O LORD my God, You alone are good, and the Lover of Man. You alone are meek and merciful. You alone are true and righteous. You alone are our compassionate and merciful God. May Your strength come upon me, Your sinful and useless bond-servant. May my temple be made a stronghold, by the Good News of Your divine teachings. O Master and Lover of Man, O Lover of good, and Lover of tender mercy, enlighten the depths of my being and all my members, by Your will. Cleanse me of all wickedness and sin. Preserve me untainted and undefiled from every attack and undertaking of the devil. Grant, in Your goodness, that I may live as You desire, with wisdom and understanding, with fear and trembling, doing what pleases You until my very last breath. In accordance with Your inexpressible mercy, may You safeguard me — body and soul, mind and thought — that my temple may be preserved from enemy snares. O LORD, my LORD, cover me with Your loving-kindness, and do not forsake me, Your unworthy, impure and sinful bond-servant ; for You are my Support, and I ever sing of You, sending up glory to You : to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.





## session

13

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



### PSALM 91

### STATION 1

*“Chastisement of the impious, and entry of the righteous into  
God’s rest”*

Ἄγαθὸν τὸ ἐξομολογεῖσθαι      Bonum est confiteri

A psalm of a canticle. For the day of the Sabbath. 1

**I**t is good to confess the LORD,  
and to chant to Your Name, O Most High ;  
to announce Your mercy in the morning,  
and Your truth at night,  
on a ten-stringed psaltery, with a canticle on the lyre ;  
for You have made me glad with Your deeds, O LORD, 5  
and in the works of Your hands shall I exult.

How magnified are Your works, O LORD.

Exceedingly profound are Your reasonings.

A foolish man shall not know,

and an unwise one shall not understand these things.

When sinners rise up just as grass

and they have stooped down to watch

— all those working lawlessness —

it is so that they might be exterminated unto the age of the age.

But, O LORD, You are Most High unto the age ;  
for behold, Your enemies, O LORD,  
behold, Your enemies shall perish, 10  
and scattered abroad shall be all those working  
lawlessness.

My horn shall be exalted like that of the unicorn,  
and my old age with rich oil.

My eye has looked upon my enemies ;  
and amongst those rising up, doing evil against me, shall  
my ear hearken.

The righteous shall flourish as a palm tree :  
just as the cedar in Lebanon shall he be multiplied.  
Planted in the house of the LORD,  
in the courts of our God they shall flourish.  
They shall still be multiplied in their rich old age ; 15  
and they shall be enjoying good things,  
to announce that the LORD our God is upright,  
and that there is no unrighteousness in Him.



## PSALM 92

*"The coming of the Kingship of God"*

Ὁ Κύριος ἐβασίλευσεν Dominus regnavit  
For the vigil of the Sabbath, when the earth was peopled.<sup>475</sup> 1  
A praise of a canticle by David.

**T**he LORD has established His Kingship ;  
He has put on majesty ;  
the LORD has put on power, and has girded Himself.  
Indeed, He has made the world firm, which shall not be  
shaken.

Your throne is prepared from thence :  
from the age, YOU ARE.<sup>476</sup>

The rivers have lifted up, O LORD ;  
the rivers have lifted up their voices ;  
the rivers shall raise their surges.

Because of the voices of many waters,  
wonderful are the swells of the sea ;  
wonderful is the LORD in the heights.

Your testimonies have been proved exceedingly  
faithful. 5

Sanctity befits Your house, O LORD, unto length of days.<sup>477</sup>

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<sup>475</sup> (1 Mōysēs 1:26-31)

<sup>476</sup> About "YOU ARE": this is the word for "I AM" in the second person. See the foot-note on Psalm 89:2.

<sup>477</sup> About "sanctity": see the foot-note on Psalm 77:69.

## PSALM 93

*“Call to the Judgement of Christ”*

Θεὸς ἐκδικήσεων      Deus ultionum

A psalm by David. For the fourth day of the week. 1

**T**he LORD is the God of vengeance ;  
the God of vengeance has spoken openly.<sup>478</sup>  
Be exalted, You that are judging the earth,  
and render requital to the proud.  
Until when shall sinners, O LORD,  
until when shall sinners boast ?  
Shall they sound forth and speak unrighteously ?  
Shall they speak, all those working lawlessness ?  
They have humbled Your people, O LORD, 5  
and Your inheritance have they mistreated.  
The widow and the orphan they have slain,  
and the resident foreigner they have murdered.  
And they said : “The LORD will not see,  
nor will the God of Jakōb understand” .  
So understand, you fools amongst the people,  
and, you dolts, think for once :  
He, planting the ear — does He not hear ?  
or He, fashioning the eye — does He not observe ?  
He, instructing the nations — will He not reprove ? 10  
He, teaching Man knowledge — the LORD — knows the  
reasonings of Men,

<sup>478</sup> In the Greek, both times, “vengeance” is in the plural.

Rather than being understood in the usual, simply retributive, manner of humans with passions, vengeance may instead be understood as the process of God’s correction of the wrongs of humans. God does correct our wrongs, but in a manner without passion, beyond our understanding.

that they are futile.<sup>479</sup>

Blessed is the Man whom You may instruct, O LORD,  
and him whom You may teach from Your law,  
to give him rest from evil days,  
until a hole be dug out for the sinner ;  
for the LORD will not push away His people,  
and His inheritance He will not abandon,  
until righteousness turn about to fair-judgement, 15  
and all the upright in heart hold it fast.

*Pause*

Who shall arise for me against those doing evil ?  
or who shall take my side against those working  
lawlessness ?  
If it were not that the LORD had helped me,  
very soon would my soul have sojourned in Hadēs.  
If I were saying : “My foot has slipped”,  
then Your mercy, O LORD, was helping me.  
O LORD, in accordance with the multitude of my pains in  
my heart,  
have Your consolations made my soul glad.  
Let him not be at Your side, that throne of lawlessness,<sup>480</sup> 20  
the one fashioning labour by an ordinance.  
They shall hunt for the soul of the righteous,  
and innocent blood shall be condemned.

<sup>479</sup> (1 Corinthians 3:20)

<sup>480</sup> Saint Athanasius comments that “throne” implies judgement. God’s judgement is righteous, and Christ’s judgement is without any lawlessness; so He opposes and excludes the “throne of lawlessness”, meaning the demon, the Adversary, “the one fashioning labour by an ordinance”.

The LORD has become for me a Refuge,  
and my God has become the Helper of my hope.  
The LORD will requite them for their lawlessness,  
and in accordance with their evil, the LORD God will  
obliterate them.



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

## PSALM 94

## STATION 2

*“Invitation to praise Christ, the Conqueror”*

Δεῦτε, ἀγαλλιασώμεθα      Venite, exultemus

A praise of a canticle by David.<sup>481</sup> [*Without inscription in Hebrew*]      1

**O** come, let us exult in the LORD ;  
let us raise a shout of joy to God, our Saviour.

Let us be first before His Face, and confess Him,<sup>482</sup>  
and with psalms, let us raise a shout of joy to Him ;

for the LORD is a great God,

and a great King over all the earth ;

for in His hand are the ends of the earth,

and the heights of the mountains are His ;

for His is the sea, and He made it ;

and His hands fashioned the dry land.

Come, let us worship and fall down before Him,

and let us weep in the presence of the LORD, who made us ;

for He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture,

and the sheep of His hand.

Today, if only you would hear His voice :

“Do not harden your hearts, as in the Provocation :<sup>483</sup>

in the day of testing in the wilderness,

where your fathers put Me to the test ;

they proved Me, and they saw My works.

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<sup>481</sup> Saint Gregory of Nyssa says that this invitation to praise includes the urging to repent of hard-heartedness.

<sup>482</sup> “Be first before” is an interpretation of the Greek προφθάσωμεν, *prophthasōmen*. It conveys in this case the sense of “let us be there first-thing”, or “anticipate” as in Psalm 118:147-148. Although the Greek can imply being before others, it can as well be understood as the desire to do this first of all.

<sup>483</sup> (2 Mōysēs 17:1-7; 4 Mōysēs 20:7-13; Hebrews 3:15; 4:7) “Provocation” translates the Greek word for the Hebrew *Meribah*. In Psalms 80 and 105, “water of contradiction” refers to this event at *Meribah*.

Saint John Chrysostom calls attention to the enormity of the ingratitude shown.



For forty years I was wroth with that generation, and I  
said :

10

'They ever stray in their heart,  
and they have not known My ways'.  
So I swore in My anger :  
'They shall not enter My Rest'''.<sup>484</sup>



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<sup>484</sup> (Hebrews 3:7-11; 4:3 & 5) Saint Ambrose of Milan explains that this Rest means the great Sabbath on which God rested from all His work of creation.  
About "anger": see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

## PSALM 95

*"Hymn to Christ, King of the universe"*

ᾠσατε τῷ Κυρίῳ Cantate Domino

A praise of a canticle by David.

1

When the House was rebuilt after the captivity.<sup>485</sup>

[Without inscription in Hebrew]

**S**ing to the LORD a new song ;  
sing to the LORD, all the earth.

Sing to the LORD ; bless His Name :

announce the glad tidings of His salvation day after day.

Announce His glory amongst the nations,

amongst all the peoples, His wonders ;

for the LORD is great, and exceedingly worthy of praise :

He is formidable, more than all the gods ;

for all the gods of the nations are demons.<sup>486</sup>

5

But the LORD made the Heavens.

Confession and comeliness are before His Face ;

holiness and magnificence are in His holy place.<sup>487</sup>

Bring to the LORD, you families of the nations,

bring to the LORD glory and honour :

bring to the LORD glory to His Name.

Raise sacrifices, and walk into His courts.

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<sup>485</sup> (1 Esdras 5:46-6:33; 2 Esdras 3:8-6:22) Saint Augustine comments on the inscription, saying that as a door leads into a house, so the title of the psalm leads into understanding. When the whole earth sings a new song, it becomes the House of God. This House is founded on believing, built by singing, raised by hoping, and completed by loving.

<sup>486</sup> This statement implies that these other "gods" are not neutral. Such "gods" are partly the product of humans' worshipping the creature instead of the Creator; but the personalities behind them, which led to this worship, are evil spirits. Fear is a major characteristic of such worship.

<sup>487</sup> About "holy place": see the foot-note on Psalm 77:69.

Worship the LORD in His holy court ;  
 let all the earth shudder because of His Face.<sup>488</sup>  
 Say amongst the nations : “The LORD established His  
 Kingship ;  
 indeed, He upheld the world, which shall not be shaken :  
 He will judge the peoples in uprightness”.  
 Let the Heavens be glad, and let the earth exult ;  
 let the sea be shaken, and the fulness of it.  
 The plains shall rejoice, and all that is in them.  
 Then all the trees of the thicket shall exult before the Face  
 of the LORD ;  
 for He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth.  
 He will judge the world in righteousness,  
 and the peoples in His truth.

10




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<sup>488</sup> About “Face”: see the foot-notes on Psalm 4:7 & 9:4.

## PSALM 96

*“Hymn to Christ, King of the universe”*

Ὁ Κύριος ἐβασίλευσεν      Dominus regnavit  
 By David. When his land is re-instated.

[Without inscription in Hebrew]

1

**T**he LORD established His Kingship :  
 let the earth exult ; let the many islands be glad.  
 Clouds and darkness are round about Him ;  
 righteousness and judgement are the upholding of His  
 throne.

In His presence, fire shall go before  
 and it shall burn up His enemies round about.

His lightnings shone in the world ;  
 the earth saw, and it shuddered.

The mountains melted away just as wax because of the Face  
 of the LORD,

because of the Face of the LORD of all the earth.<sup>489</sup>

The Heavens have announced His righteousness,  
 and all the peoples have seen His glory.

Let them be put to shame — all those worshipping carved  
 images,

those priding themselves in their idols.

Worship Him, all you His angels.<sup>490</sup>

Siōn heard, and was glad ;

and the daughters of Joudæa exulted,

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<sup>489</sup> About “Face”: see the foot-notes on Psalm 4:7 & 9:4.

<sup>490</sup> (Hebrews 1:6; Canticle 2:#1) About “angels”: some say that, in creating the angels, God, out of His Love, created an unimaginably broad spectrum of these bodiless personalities, each one being completely unique, expressing His Love.

for the sake of Your judgements, O LORD ;  
for You are the LORD Most High over all the earth :  
You have been exalted exceedingly, more than all the  
gods.

O you, loving the LORD, hate evil.

10

The LORD watches over the souls of His holy ones ;  
from the hand of sinners He will rescue them.

A light has risen for the righteous,  
and for those who are upright in heart, gladness.

Be glad in the LORD, O you righteous,  
and confess the memory of His holiness.



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

## PSALM 97

## STATION 3

*"Hymn to Christ, King of the universe"*

Ἕσατε τῷ Κυρίῳ Cantate Domino

A psalm by David.

1

**S**ing to the LORD a new song,  
for the LORD has done wonders.

His right hand has saved him,  
as did His holy arm.<sup>491</sup>

The LORD has made known His salvation :  
in the presence of the nations, He revealed His  
righteousness.

He remembered His mercy to Jakōb,  
and His truth to the house of Israēl.

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our  
God.

Raise a shout of joy to God, all the earth :  
sing and exult and chant.

Chant to the LORD with a lyre,  
with a lyre and the voice of a psalm.

5

With trumpets of metal, and with the voice of a horn-  
trumpet,

raise a shout of joy before the Face of the LORD King.

Let the sea be shaken, and the fulness of it,  
the world, and all those dwelling in it.

As one shall the rivers clap their hands ;  
the mountains shall exult,

for He is come to judge the earth :<sup>492</sup>

He will judge the world in righteousness,  
and the peoples, in uprightness.

<sup>491</sup> "Right hand" and "arm" are metaphors for the strength of God.

<sup>492</sup> The Greek verb for "is come" in this case can mean "be present", "be here".

## PSALM 98

*"Hymn to Christ, King of the universe"*

Ὁ Κύριος ἐβασίλευσεν Dominus regnavit

A psalm by David.

1

**T**he LORD established His Kingship :  
let the peoples be angry.

He is sitting upon the Cheroubim :  
let the earth be shaken.

The LORD is great in Siōn,  
and He is on high over all the peoples.

Let them confess Your great Name,  
for it is formidable and holy.

The honour of the King loves fair-judgement.

You have, Yourself, prepared uprightness ;<sup>493</sup>

You have, Yourself, wrought fair-judgement and  
righteousness in Jakōb.

5

Exalt the LORD our God,  
and worship at the foot-stool of His feet,  
for He is holy.

Mōysēs and Aarōn are amongst His priests,  
and Samouēl amongst those calling upon His Name :<sup>494</sup>

they were calling upon the LORD,

and He heard them ;

in a pillar of cloud, He was speaking to them,  
for they were keeping His testimonies and His ordinances,  
which He gave them.

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<sup>493</sup> In the Greek, "uprightness" is in the plural.

<sup>494</sup> "Samouēl"=Samuel.

O LORD our God, You listened to them ;

O God, You were propitious to them,  
but avenging all their purposes.<sup>495</sup>

Exalt the LORD our God,  
and worship towards His holy mountain,  
for holy is the LORD our God.



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<sup>495</sup> See the foot-note on Psalm 93:1.

## PSALM 99

*"Invitation to praise"*

Ἕλαλάξατε τῷ Θεῷ     Jubilate Deo

A psalm. For confession. 1

**R**aise a shout of joy to God, all the earth ;  
serve the LORD in gladness ;  
come before His Face in exultation.

Know that the LORD, He Himself, is our God.

It is He that made us, and not we ourselves ;  
we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.<sup>496</sup>

Come into His gates, confessing Him,  
into His courts, with hymns.

Confess Him : praise His Name ; 5

for the LORD is gracious :  
His mercy is unto the age,  
and His truth unto generation and generation.



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<sup>496</sup> Contrary to the usual egocentric attitude of human beings about themselves, this psalm strongly praises God, and confesses that we belong to Him, our Creator, and that He cares for us in the manner of a loving shepherd.

## PSALM 100

*"Purity of heart"*

Ἐλεος καὶ κρίσις     Misericordiam et judicium

A psalm by David. 1

**M**ercy and fair-judgement shall I sing to You, O LORD ;  
I shall chant, and I shall have understanding in a  
blameless way.

When will You come to me ?

I was walking about, in the guilelessness of my heart, in the  
midst of my house.

I did not put before my eyes any deed of transgressing  
the law.

Those doing deviations I hated.<sup>497</sup>

A crooked heart did not cleave to me.

While the evil man was inclining away from me,

I was not knowing him.

The one secretly speaking against his neighbour :  
this one I was chasing out. 5

The one with a proud eye and an insatiable heart :  
with this one I was not eating.

My eyes are upon the faithful of the earth,  
that they might sit down with me.

The one walking in a blameless way :  
this one was ministering unto me.

The one acting proudly was not dwelling in the midst of  
my house.

The one speaking unrighteous things was not prospering  
before my eyes.

---

<sup>497</sup> This "deviations", in Greek, is related to "deviator" in Psalm 118:119. The implication is "over-stepping", or "going over the bounds".

In the mornings, I was slaying all the sinners of the earth,  
that I might exterminate from the city of the LORD all those  
working lawlessness.<sup>498</sup>



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
(three times)

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<sup>498</sup> This psalm, in addition to the immediate meaning, refers to the attitude of a person who orders life in accordance with God's will, and keeps apart from and rejects all sorts of temptations and tempting situations. The believer is continually watchful, discerning the spirits, and turning always to God for protection and help.

*And then the following prayers :*

### TRISAGION PRAYERS

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.  
(three times)

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

O most holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from  
our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and  
heal our infirmities, for Your Name's sake.

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

Our Father, who are in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name ;  
Your kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in  
Heaven ; give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our  
debts, as we forgive our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test,  
but rescue us from the evil one.

*And then :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus Christ our  
God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

*And these tropars :* Tone 8

Behold my lowliness with merciful eyes, O LORD ; for my life  
soon passes away, and there is no salvation for me in my deeds.  
Therefore, I pray : Behold my lowliness with merciful eyes, O  
LORD, and save me.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.  
Pondering the dread hour, O soul, be troubled just as if you  
stood before the Judge, for there shall be Judgement without  
mercy for those who have acted unmercifully. Cry out,  
therefore, unto Christ God : O Knower of hearts, I have sinned.  
Before You bring me to Judgement, have mercy on me.  
Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Thinking of the day and hour of Your awesome, unbearable, impending Judgement, O Christ, I tremble as an evildoer – I, who alone have been so eager to behave wickedly, and to pursue what is shameful. Therefore, with fear I fall down before You, calling out in misery : By the prayers of her who bore You, save me, O greatly merciful One.

LORD, have mercy. (*forty times*)

*And then the following prayer :*

O holy LORD, You dwell in the highest, and You look upon all creation with Your all-seeing eye. To You we bow the necks of our souls and bodies ; and we pray, O Holy of Holies : Stretch forth Your unseen hand from Your holy dwelling place, and bless us all. And if we have sinned against You, willingly or unwillingly, forgive us. Grant us Your blessings, since You, O God, are good, and the Lover of Man ; for Yours it is to have mercy and to save, O our God, and to You we send up glory : to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



## session

14

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ; now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



### PSALM 101

### STATION 1

*“Supplication for the Church”*

Κύριε, εἰσάκουσον Domine, exaudi

A prayer by the poor one whenever he may be in accidie,<sup>499</sup> 1  
and pours out his supplication in the presence of the LORD.

**O** LORD, hear my prayer, and let my cry come to You.  
Do not turn away Your Face from me.

In whatever day I may be afflicted, incline Your ear to me.  
In whatever day I may call upon You, swiftly listen to me ;  
for my days have vanished just as smoke,  
and my bones have kindled just as kindling.

Just as grass have I been struck ; 5  
and my heart has dried up,  
for I forgot to eat my bread.

Because of the voice of my groaning,  
my bones cleaved to my flesh.

I was made like a solitary pelican ;  
I became just like a night-raven on a shanty.

---

<sup>499</sup> About “accidie”: see the foot-note on Psalm 60:3.

I was keeping vigil,  
and I became like a lone sparrow upon a roof.  
The whole day long, my enemies were reproaching me,  
and those praising me were swearing against me ;  
for I ate ashes just as bread, 10  
and my drink I was mixing with weeping,  
because of the face of Your anger and Your fury ;<sup>500</sup>  
for having lifted me up, You have broken me down.  
My days have declined just as a shadow,  
and just as grass have I dried up.<sup>501</sup>  
But as for You, O LORD, You remain unto the age,  
and Your remembrance unto generation and generation.  
You, having arisen, You will have compassion on Siōn,  
for it is the time to have compassion on her,  
for the time has come ;  
for Your bond-servants were well-pleased with her  
stones, 15  
and on her dirt shall they have compassion.  
The nations shall fear Your Name, O LORD,  
and all the kings of the earth, Your glory ;  
for the LORD will build up Siōn,  
and He will be seen in His glory.  
He looked attentively upon the prayer of the humble,  
and He did not reckon as nothing their supplication.

---

<sup>500</sup> About “anger” and “fury”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

<sup>501</sup> The first portion of this psalm, which concludes here, deals with the fallen, weak, changeable and corruptible characteristics of the Psalmist. The second portion of this psalm, which begins in the following line, makes a parallel comparison with God’s strength, purity, stability, timelessness and life-giving reliability.

Let this be written for another generation,  
and a people being created shall praise the LORD ;  
for from His holy height has He stooped down to watch. 20  
The LORD looked attentively from Heaven upon the earth,  
to hear the groaning of those bound in fetters,  
to loose the sons of those put to death,  
and to announce in Siōn the Name of the LORD,  
and His praise in Jerousalēm,  
when the peoples are gathered together as one,  
and the kings, to serve the LORD.  
He answered Him in the way of His strength :  
“Announce to me the small number of my days.  
Do not take me up in the midst of my days ; 25  
Your years are in a generation of generations”.  
From the beginning, O LORD,  
it is You that laid the foundations of the earth,  
and the Heavens are the works of Your hands.  
They shall perish, but You will continue.  
All shall become old as a mantle ;  
just as a covering will You wrap them up,  
and they shall be changed.  
But as for You, You are the same,  
and Your years shall not come to an end.<sup>502</sup>  
The sons of Your bond-servants shall pitch their tent,  
and their seed shall prosper unto the age.

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<sup>502</sup> (Hebrews 1:10-12)



## PSALM 102

*"Hymn to the mercy of God"*

Εὐλόγει, ἡ ψυχὴ μου      Benedic, anima mea

By David.

1

**B**less the LORD, O my soul,  
and all that is within me, bless His holy Name.

Bless the LORD, O my soul,  
and forget not all His recompense —  
the LORD, being propitious to all your lawless acts,  
healing all your diseases,  
redeeming your life from decay,

crowning you with mercy and compassion,  
fulfilling your craving with good things.

5

Your youth shall be renewed as an eagle's.<sup>503</sup>

It is the LORD, doing mercy and judgement  
towards all those being wronged.

He made known His ways to Mōysēs,  
His will to the sons of Israēl.

The LORD is compassionate and merciful,  
long-suffering and greatly merciful.<sup>504</sup>

He will not be angry unto the end,  
nor will He cherish wrath unto the age.

Not in accordance with our lawless acts has He wrought  
with us,

10

nor in accordance with our sins has He requited us ;

<sup>503</sup> Saint Ambrose of Milan points out that because humans have two legs as do birds, instead of four as other animals, there can be said to be a kinship of humans and birds, who both aim at what is high, and are near to what is celestial. The citizenship of the human is in Heaven, as writes the Apostle (see Philippians 3:20).

<sup>504</sup> (2 Mōysēs 34:6; 4 Mōysēs 14:18; Psalm 144:8)

for as high as is Heaven from the earth,  
so has the LORD made strong His mercy upon all those  
fearing Him.

As far as east is from west,  
so far has He removed our lawless acts from us.

Even as a father has compassion on his sons,  
so has the LORD had compassion on those fearing Him ;  
for He knows our fashioning :

He remembers that we are dirt.<sup>505</sup>

Man, his days are just like grass ;

15

just as a flower of the field, so shall he flourish ;<sup>506</sup>

for breath has passed through him, and he shall not exist,  
and he shall recognise his place no longer.

But the mercy of the LORD is from the age, and until the  
age, upon those fearing Him,

and His righteousness upon the sons of sons,

to those keeping His Covenant,

and remembering His commandments, to do them.

The LORD prepared His throne in Heaven,

and His kingdom rules over all.

Bless the LORD, all you His angels,

powerful in strength, doing His word,<sup>507</sup>

to hear the voice of His words.

20

<sup>505</sup> "Remembers", and "knows" in the previous line, are both aorist (past tense) in Greek. However, these refer to the LORD, so the present tense is used here.

<sup>506</sup> (Ēsaías 40:6-7)

<sup>507</sup> Saint Cyril of Jerusalem shows a connexion between the words of these lines and the words of the Our Father, particularly "Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven".

Bless the LORD, all you His powers,  
His ministers, doing His will.  
Bless the LORD, all you His works,  
in every place of His dominion.  
Bless the LORD, O my soul.



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

## PSALM 103

## STATION 2

*"Contemplation of the new creation in Christ"*

Εὐλόγει, ἡ ψυχὴ μου      Benedic, anima mea

By David. About the composing of the good order.<sup>508</sup> 1

**B**less the LORD, O my soul.  
O LORD my God, You have been greatly magnified.

You have put on confession and magnificence,  
throwing light around Yourself as a mantle,  
and stretching out Heaven just as a skin —<sup>509</sup>

the LORD, covering His upper chambers with water,  
making clouds His steps of approach :

He, walking about on the wings of the winds,  
making His angels spirits,

and His ministers a flame of fire :<sup>510</sup>

He, laying the foundations of the earth for its stability : 5  
it shall not be bent unto the age of the age.

The abyss is His covering, like a mantle ;  
the waters shall stand up above the mountains.

Because of Your rebuke, they shall flee ;  
because of the voice of Your thunder, they shall be afraid.

---

<sup>508</sup> Some translators do not include this second part of the inscription, although Archimandrite Placide's Psalter does give this: "On the creation of the world". The Greek words, however, suggest a somewhat different process (Aristotle), referring to the ordering of all things well, albeit in the already-existing creation.

<sup>509</sup> These words are describing the stretching of Heaven as if it were a skin for the roof of a nomadic habitation.

Didymus the Blind of Alexandria comments that it is important to remember that none of creation has an existence in itself; it has a beginning. This beginning is the Word of God, in whom and by whom all things that exist have their being. In Jesus Christ everything visible and invisible, celestial and terrestrial is created. Everything receives its existence from the One who is before everything.

<sup>510</sup> (Hebrews 1:7)

The mountains go up, and the plains go down,  
into the place where You founded them.  
You placed a bound which they shall not pass,  
nor shall they turn about, to cover the earth –  
the LORD, sending out the springs in the ravines : 10  
the waters shall pass between the mountains.  
They shall give drink to all the wild beasts of the field ;  
the wild asses shall accept it for their thirst.  
The birds of the sky shall make their nests by them ;  
from the midst of the rocks shall they give voice.  
He it is, watering the mountains from His upper chambers :  
from the fruit of Your works shall the earth be sated.  
He it is, making grass spring up for the cattle,  
and the green herb for the service of Men,  
so that he may bring forth bread from the earth. 15  
And wine makes glad the heart of Man,  
so that he may make his face cheerful with oil,  
and bread makes firm the heart of Man.  
The trees of the plain shall be sated,  
the cedars of Lebanon which You planted.  
There the sparrows shall make their nests ;  
the habitation of the heron is chief amongst them.  
The high mountains are for the hind ;  
the rocks are a refuge for the hare.<sup>511</sup>  
He made the moon for seasons ;  
the sun knows its setting.

<sup>511</sup> Saint John Cassian indicates that this “hare” is a hedge-hog.

You appointed darkness, and it became night ; 20  
in it shall move all the wild beasts of the thicket, the cubs  
of the lion :  
roaring to snatch, and to seek their food from God.  
The sun has risen, and they have gathered together,  
and in their dens shall they lie down.  
Man shall go forth to his work,  
and to his tasks until evening.  
How magnified are Your works, O LORD :  
in Wisdom have You made them all.<sup>512</sup>  
The earth has been filled with Your creation :  
this sea, great and broad ; 25  
there, creeping things beyond number,  
living things, the small with the great.  
There ships move through ;  
and this dragon which You fashioned to frolic in it.  
All look to You to give them their nourishment in due  
time.  
When You give to them, they shall gather :  
when You open Your hand, all things shall be filled with  
loving-kindness.<sup>513</sup>

<sup>512</sup> Saint Athanasius explains that God is the eternal Fountain of Wisdom. If the Fountain be eternal, the Wisdom must be eternal, for in Wisdom all things were made, as David says in this psalm. He adds that Solomon wrote that God made the earth by Wisdom. This Wisdom is the Word, and by Him all things were made, and without Him was not anything made that was made (see Proverbs 3:21; John 1:3; 1 Corinthians 8:6).

<sup>513</sup> Saint Ambrose of Milan comments that the LORD gives His good gifts to those who pray. What is good is from God. What is from and of God is good. Through His loving-kindness, all good things are given to us. These good things are not mixed with evil. He exhorts us to be like that Good, that we might obtain those pure good things. Goodness, as a prolific mother, embraces all the virtues.

But when You turn away Your Face,  
they shall be stirred up.  
You will take away their spirit,  
and they shall come to an end, and return to their dirt.  
You will send out Your Spirit, and they shall be created, 30  
and You will renew the face of the earth.<sup>514</sup>  
Let the glory of the LORD be unto the ages ;  
the LORD will be glad in His works —  
He, looking attentively upon the earth, and making it  
tremble ;<sup>515</sup>  
He, touching the mountains, and they smoke.  
I shall sing to the LORD in my life ;  
I shall chant to my God as long as I exist.  
May my conversation be sweet to Him,  
and I shall be glad in the LORD.  
May sinners vanish from the earth, and the lawless,  
so that they cease to exist.  
Bless the LORD, O my soul.

---

<sup>514</sup> The brothers, Saint Basil the Great and Saint Gregory of Nyssa, both write that these four lines refer to death and resurrection, with reference to the Christ.

It is God who gives life, and it is God who sets its limits. Death of the flesh is part of the natural cycle, but it is God, the Giver of Life, who establishes life and is the Source of life, who renews the earth.

<sup>515</sup> About this line: see the foot-note on Psalm 9:4.

✠

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*  
LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

**PSALM 104**

**STATION 3**

*“The wonders of God towards His people”*

Ἐξομολογήσθε τῷ Κυρίῳ

Confitemini Domino

Allēlouia.

1

**O** confess the LORD, and call upon His Name ;  
bring tidings of His works amongst the nations.<sup>516</sup>

Sing to Him, and chant to Him ;

recount all His wonders.

Be praising in His holy Name ;<sup>517</sup>

let the heart of those seeking the LORD be glad.

Seek the LORD, and become strong :

seek His Face continually.

Remember His wonders which He has wrought,

5

His portents and the judgements of His mouth,

O you seed of Abraam, His bond-servants :

you sons of Jakōb, His chosen ones.

He is the LORD our God.

His judgements are in all the earth.

He remembered His Covenant unto the age –

the word, which He commanded for a thousand

generations :

which He made with Abraam,

and His oath, with Isaak.

<sup>516</sup> This psalm introduces a series of several psalms which consider God’s acts in the history of the Chosen People, the children of Abraham. History, in this present psalm and in all Scripture, recounts various events with a view to seeing and interpreting God’s activity in the events, as affecting, teaching, leading, disciplining the people. It recounts also His Self-revelation to them in order to make them a healthy people, a people in personal communion with Him, in the manner of the Patriarchs.

<sup>517</sup> About passive voice used as active voice: see the foot-note on Psalm 33:3.

He established it for Jakōb as an ordinance,  
and for Israēl as an eternal Covenant,<sup>518</sup>

10

saying : “I will give you the land of Khanaan<sup>519</sup>  
as a portion of your inheritance”.

When they were few in number – very few –  
and sojourners in it,

they went from nation to nation,

and from a kingdom to another people.

He did not let Man wrong them,

and on their behalf He reprovved kings :

“Do not touch My christs,<sup>520</sup>

15

and amongst My prophets do not work evil”.

He called famine upon the earth,

and He shattered every sustenance of bread.

He sent a Man before them :

Jōsēph was sold to be a slave.

They humbled his feet with fetters ;

his soul passed through iron,<sup>521</sup>

until his word came to pass ;

the teaching of the LORD tested him by fire.

<sup>518</sup> (1 Mōysēs 15:17-21; 17:1-9; 22:15-18; 26:2-6 & 23-25; 28:1-4 & 10-15) Jacob and Israel are the same person. Jacob was given the name Israel by the LORD when Jacob wrestled with God (see 1 Mōysēs 32:24-32).

<sup>519</sup> “Khanaan”=Canaan.

<sup>520</sup> (1 Mōysēs 20 and 1 Mōysēs 26:1-11 & 22-33) “Christ”=anointed one=messiah. See the foot-note on Psalm 2:2.

<sup>521</sup> (1 Mōysēs 37:25-36; 39:20-23) Saint Ambrose of Milan shows us that “iron” is a metaphor for sin; the soul of Joseph did not lie open to sin, but pierced through sin, albeit the souls of others were pierced with sin.

The king sent for him, and he loosed him, 20  
the prince of the people, and he let him go.  
He appointed him to be lord of his house,  
and prince of all his possessions,  
so that he might instruct his princes as himself,  
and make his elders wise.<sup>522</sup>  
Israēl came into Ægypt,  
and Jakōb sojourned in the land of Kham.<sup>523</sup>  
He caused His people to increase exceedingly,  
and He made them strong, more than their enemies.  
He turned their heart, so as to hate His people, 25  
to use deceit with His bond-servants.  
He sent out Mōysēs, His bond-servant,  
and Aarōn, whom He chose out for Himself.<sup>524</sup>  
He set in them the words of His signs  
and of His portents in the land of Kham.<sup>525</sup>  
He sent out darkness and it became dark,  
for they embittered His words.  
He turned their waters into blood,  
and He slew their fishes.  
Their land was crawling with frogs,  
even in the store-houses of their kings. 30

---

<sup>522</sup> Saint John Chrysostom comments that the LORD does bring relief to those in tribulation, as is revealed in the experience of Joseph. In the end, it was because he was sold into slavery that his crown was prepared. His dishonour became the occasion for his honour, because the LORD gives help when none is logically expected. Such a paradox typically accompanies the action of the LORD.

<sup>523</sup> (1 Mōysēs 46:1-7)

<sup>524</sup> (2 Mōysēs 3:1-20; 4:10-17)

<sup>525</sup> The plagues: see the foot-note on Psalm 77:43.

He spoke, and there came dog-flies  
and gnats within all their bounds.  
He turned their rain into hail :  
a consuming fire in their land.  
He smote their vines and their fig-trees,  
and He shattered every tree within their bounds.  
He spoke, and there came grass-hoppers,  
and locusts beyond number ;  
and they devoured all the grass in their land, 35  
and they devoured all the fruit of their land.  
He smote every first-born in their land,  
the first-fruits of all their toil.  
He led them out with silver and gold,  
and there was not one in their tribes becoming weak.<sup>526</sup>  
Ægypt was glad because of their exodus,  
for a fear of them had fallen upon them.  
He spread out a cloud as a shelter for them,  
and fire to illumine them at night.  
They asked, and quails came,  
and He filled them up with the bread of Heaven. 40  
He broke asunder a rock, and waters gushed out,<sup>527</sup>  
and rivers made their way in waterless places ;  
for He remembered His holy word to Abraam, His bond-  
servant.  
He led out His people in exultation,  
and His chosen ones in gladness.

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<sup>526</sup> (2 Mōysēs 12:35; 13:21-22)

<sup>527</sup> (2 Mōysēs 16; 2 Mōysēs 17:1-7; John 6:31-35)

He gave them the lands of the nations,  
and the toils of the peoples they inherited,  
so that they might keep His statutes,  
and seek out His law.



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
(three times)

*And then the following prayers :*

### TRISAGION PRAYERS

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.  
(three times)

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

O most holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from  
our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and  
heal our infirmities, for Your Name's sake.

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

Our Father, who are in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name ; Your  
kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ;  
give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our debts, as we  
forgive our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test, but rescue  
us from the evil one.

*And then :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus Christ, our  
God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

*And these tropars : Tone 8*

O Christ God, as the sinful woman did, I fall down before You,  
that I might receive forgiveness, and bring to You heart-felt tears  
instead of myrrh. Oh, that You would be compassionate to me,  
as You were to her, and bestow cleansing of sins ; for I cry out to  
You, just as she did : Deliver me from the filth of my deeds.

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

Why do you not ponder death, O my soul ? Why do you not  
attend to correcting yourself before the trumpet-call at the  
Judgement ? Then there shall be no time for repentance. Call to  
mind the sinful woman, and the publican, who cried out : I have  
sinned against You. O LORD, have mercy on me.

Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O ever-virgin Mother of God, we who, through you, have been made rich in God, ceaselessly sing your praises ; for by your birth-giving you are truly exalted above the heavenly powers.

LORD, have mercy. (*forty times*)

*And then the following prayer :*

We give thanks to You, O LORD, God of our salvation, that all You do is beneficial for our lives. We thank You for the rest You granted us this past night, and for raising us up from our beds to worship Your honourable and glorious Name. Therefore, we beseech You, O LORD, give us Grace and strength, that we may be deemed worthy to hymn You with understanding, to pray unceasingly, and always to behold You, O Saviour and Benefactor of our souls, while working out our salvation with fear and trembling. Hear us, O deeply-merciful One, and take pity on us. Crush under our feet unseen enemies and adversaries. Receive our thanksgiving, which we offer You in accordance with our ability. Grant us Grace and strength to open our lips, and teach us Your commandments ; for we know not how to pray as we ought, unless You, Yourself, guide us by Your Holy Spirit. And if we have sinned at any time in word, deed or thought, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, loose, remit and forgive ; for if You would mark lawless acts, O LORD, who shall withstand ? But in You there is cleansing to be found ; in You, deliverance. You alone are holy. You alone are the mighty Helper, and the Support of our lives, and we bless You unto all ages. Amen.



## session

15

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



### PSALM 105

### STATION 1

*"Blessings of God, and ingratitude of His people"*

'Εξομολογήσθε τῷ Κυρίῳ      Confitemini Domino

Allēlouia.

1

**O** confess the LORD, for He is gracious,  
for eternal is His mercy.

Who shall speak of the mighty deeds of the LORD ?

Who shall make all His praises heard ?

Blessed are those keeping His fair-judgement,  
and doing righteousness at all times.

Remember us, O LORD, in the good-pleasure of Your  
people :

visit us in Your salvation,

that we might see it in the loving-kindness of Your chosen  
ones ;

5

that we might be glad in the gladness of Your nation,  
that we might give praise with Your inheritance.

We have sinned with our fathers :



we wrought lawlessness ;  
 we wrought unrighteousness.  
 Our fathers, in Ægypt, did not understand Your wonders,<sup>528</sup>  
 and they did not remember the multitude of Your mercy :  
 they embittered You when they went up to the Red Sea.<sup>529</sup>  
 He saved them for the sake of His Name,  
 to make known His might.  
 He rebuked the Red Sea, and it dried up ;  
 He led them on the way in the abyss, as in a wilderness.  
 He saved them from the hand of the hating one, 10  
 and He redeemed them from the hand of enemies.  
 The water covered those afflicting them ;  
 not one of them was left.  
 They believed in His words,  
 and they sang His praise.  
 They were quick to forget His works :  
 they did not wait for His counsel.  
 They craved a craving in the wilderness,  
 and they put God to the test in a waterless place.  
 He gave them their request, 15  
 and sent out surfeit to their souls.  
 They stirred Mōysēs to anger in the camp,  
 and Aarōn, the holy one of the LORD.

---

<sup>528</sup> These lines begin a recollection of the saving acts of God, and of the fickleness of His people. We see how the LORD consistently met the needs of His people, but they could scarcely be faithful. He repeatedly saved them from enemies in wondrous ways, but they were quick to forget. Only in new attacks did they remember to ask for help. In our lives several millenia later, we have not yet learnt to approach the LORD without self-interest; we have not yet learnt to be constantly and perpetually grateful to Him; we have not yet learnt true obedience.

<sup>529</sup> (2 Mōysēs 14:10-12)

The earth opened, and swallowed down Dathan,  
 and covered the gathering of Abeirōn.<sup>530</sup>  
 A fire burned unto the end in their gathering :  
 a flame consumed the sinners.  
 They made a young bull in Khōrēb,<sup>531</sup>  
 and worshipped the carved image.  
 They exchanged their glory 20  
 with the likeness of a young bull eating grass.  
 They forgot God, who saves them,  
 who did great things in Ægypt :  
 wonders in the land of Kham,  
 and formidable things by the Red Sea.  
 He spoke of exterminating them,  
 had not Mōysēs, His chosen one, stood in the breach before  
 His Face,<sup>532</sup>  
 to turn back His fury, that He not exterminate them.  
 But they reckoned as nothing the desirable land ;  
 they did not believe in His word.  
 They murmured in their tents ;<sup>533</sup> 25  
 they did not hear the voice of the LORD.  
 He lifted up His hand against them,  
 to cast them down in the wilderness ;  
 and to cast down their seed amongst the nations,

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<sup>530</sup> (4 Mōysēs 16) “Abeirōn”=Abiron.

<sup>531</sup> (2 Mōysēs 32:1-10) “Khōrēb”=Horeb. This mountain is in the Sinai Peninsula. It may be what is called Mount Sinai, but it may be a different place also.

<sup>532</sup> (2 Mōysēs 32:11-14 & 30-35; 4 Mōysēs 14:5, 11-19; 5 Mōysēs 9:18-21 & 25-29)

<sup>533</sup> (4 Mōysēs 14)

and to scatter them abroad amongst the lands.  
 They were initiated to Beelphegōr,  
 and they ate sacrifices of the dead.  
 They provoked Him in their purposes,  
 and the falling was multiplied amongst them.<sup>534</sup>  
 Phineas stood and made propitiation, 30  
 and the slaughter abated ;  
 and it was reckoned to him as righteousness,  
 unto generation and generation, until the age.<sup>535</sup>  
 They stirred Him to anger by the water of contradiction,<sup>536</sup>  
 and Mōysēs was mistreated on their account ;  
 for they embittered his spirit,  
 and he spoke dividedly with his lips.<sup>537</sup>  
 They did not exterminate the nations,  
 about which the LORD had spoken to them.  
 They mingled with the nations, 35  
 and they learned their works.  
 They served their carved images,

<sup>534</sup> About “the falling”: the Greek noun may also be translated as destruction, or calamity. This “falling” suggests a disease or a disability, not a moral failure.

<sup>535</sup> (4 Mōysēs 25:6-13)

<sup>536</sup> See the foot-note on Psalm 94:8.  
 About “anger”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

<sup>537</sup> About “spoke dividedly”: here, the verb seems to imply making a distinction between what God wants to be done, and what Moses does. Either Moses obeys and works the sign, but because of something interior, he goes too far; or there is simply something interiorly out of focus. In 4 Mōysēs 20:7, the LORD directed him to take the rod and to speak. Instead, he took the rod, and he struck the rock twice. However, in 2 Mōysēs 17:5-6, Moses does exactly what he is told to do. This indicates the second possibility. In either case he is somehow divided interiorly, likely in reaction to the behaviour of the people.

and it became to them as a stumbling-block.<sup>538</sup>  
 They sacrificed their sons and their daughters to demons,<sup>539</sup>  
 and they poured out innocent blood,  
 the blood of their sons and daughters,  
 whom they sacrificed to the carved images of Khanaan ;  
 the earth was murderously polluted in blood,  
 and it was defiled by their works ;  
 and they prostituted themselves by their purposes.<sup>540</sup>  
 The LORD was furious with anger against His people, 40  
 and He loathed His inheritance.<sup>541</sup>  
 He gave them over into the hands of enemies,  
 and those hating them lorded it over them.  
 Their enemies afflicted them,  
 and they were humbled under their hands.  
 Many times He rescued them ;  
 but as for them, they embittered Him by their counsel,  
 and they were humbled by their lawless acts.  
 The LORD saw when they were afflicted,  
 when He heard their supplication.  
 He remembered His Covenant, 45  
 and He felt regret, in accordance with the multitude of  
 His mercy.  
 He gave them as an object of compassion,  
 in the presence of all those having taken them captive.

<sup>538</sup> (Judges 2:11-19)

<sup>539</sup> (3 Mōysēs 18:21; 5 Mōysēs 32:15-21)

<sup>540</sup> About this line: see the foot-note on Psalm 72:27.

<sup>541</sup> About “furious”, “anger”, “loathed”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

Save us, O LORD our God,  
and gather us together from amongst the nations,  
that we may confess Your holy Name,  
that we may take pride in Your praise.  
Blessed be the LORD God of Israēl,  
from the age, and until the age.  
And all the people shall say : “So be it. So be it” .<sup>542</sup>



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
(three times)

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

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<sup>542</sup> The concluding doxology of Book IV of the Psalter.

## BOOK V

### PSALM 106

### STATION 2

*“Thanksgiving for salvation”*

Ἐξομολογεῖσθε τῷ Κυρίῳ      Confitemini Domino  
Allēlouia. 1

**O** confess the LORD, for He is gracious,  
for eternal is His mercy.

Let them so say : those having been redeemed by the LORD,  
those whom He redeemed from the hand of an enemy.

He gathered them together out of the lands :  
from east and west, and north and sea.<sup>543</sup>

They were going astray in the wilderness, in a waterless  
land ;

they did not find a road to a city to dwell in.

Hungering and thirsting, their soul fainted within them. 5

They cried out to the LORD when they were being  
afflicted,

and from their anguish He rescued them.

He led them on the way, into an upright way,  
that they might walk to a city to dwell in.

Let them confess the LORD for His mercies  
and His wonders towards the sons of Men ;  
for He sated the empty soul,

and filled up the hungry soul with good things :

those sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death, 10  
and those fettered in poverty and chains ;

---

<sup>543</sup> “Sea”, in this context, refers to the Red Sea or the Gulf of Aqaba, which are to the south.

for they embittered the teachings of God,  
and they provoked the counsel of the Most High.  
Their heart was humbled in labours ;  
they became weak, and there was no-one to help.  
They cried out to the LORD, when they were being  
afflicted,  
and from their anguish He saved them.  
He led them out of darkness and out of the shadow of  
death,

and their shackles He broke asunder.

Let them confess the LORD for His mercies  
and His wonders towards the sons of Men ;  
for He shattered the bronze gates,  
and crushed together the iron bars.

He supported them out of the way of their lawlessness ;  
for through their lawless acts were they humbled.

Their soul loathed any food,  
and they drew near to the gates of death.

They cried out to the LORD, when they were being  
afflicted,  
and from their anguish He saved them.

He sent His Word, and He healed them,  
and He rescued them from their corruptions.

Let them confess the LORD for His mercies  
and His wonders towards the sons of Men ;  
let them sacrifice to Him a sacrifice of praise,  
and let them tell forth His works in exultation.

Those going down to the sea in ships,  
doing their work on many waters :

it is they who saw the works of the LORD,  
and His wonders in the deep.  
He spoke, and the wind of a tempest stood forth,  
and its waves were raised up high.  
Up they go, as far as the Heavens,  
and down they go, as far as the abysses :  
their soul was melting away in bad things.  
They were stirred up ;  
they were staggering as a drunken one,  
and all their wisdom was swallowed up.  
They cried out to the LORD when they were being  
afflicted,

and from their anguish He led them.  
He commanded the tempest and made it into a breeze,  
and its waves became still.

And they were glad, for they were at rest,  
and He led them on the way to the harbour of His will.  
Let them confess the LORD for His mercies  
and His wonders towards the sons of Men ;  
let them exalt Him in the church of the people,  
and on the seats of the elders let them praise Him.

He turned rivers into a wilderness,  
and streams of waters into thirst,  
a fruitful land into a salty place,  
because of the badness of those dwelling in it.

He turned a wilderness into lakes of waters,  
and a waterless land into streams of waters.

He made the hungry settle there,  
 and they set up cities for settlement.  
 They sowed fields and planted vineyards,  
 and they made fruit of increase.  
 He blessed them, and they multiplied greatly,<sup>544</sup>  
 and He did not diminish their cattle.  
 But they were lessened and mistreated,  
 from the affliction of bad things and pain.  
 Contempt was poured out on their princes, 40  
 and He made them go astray in a trackless place, and on  
 no road.  
 He helped the needy out of poverty,  
 and He made families as sheep.  
 The upright shall see, and be glad ;  
 and all lawlessness shall stop up its mouth.  
 Who is wise, and shall guard these things,  
 and shall understand the mercies of the LORD ?



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
 now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
 Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
 (three times)  
 LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
 Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
 now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

<sup>544</sup> About passive voice used as active voice: see the foot-note on Psalm 33:3.

**PSALM 107**

**STATION 3**

*"Hymn to the universal Kingship of Christ"*

Ἐτοιμή ἡ καρδία μου Paratum cor meum

A canticle of a psalm by David. 1

**M**y heart is ready, O God ; my heart is ready.  
 I shall sing, and I shall chant in my glory.

Awake, O my glory ;  
 awake, psaltery and lyre ;  
 I shall awake at day-break.

I shall confess You amongst the peoples, O LORD ;  
 I shall chant to You amongst the nations ;  
 for great above the Heavens is Your mercy, 5  
 and as far as the clouds is Your truth.

Be exalted above the Heavens, O God,  
 and over all the earth, Your glory.<sup>545</sup>  
 So that Your beloved ones may be rescued,  
 save by Your right hand, and listen to me.

God has spoken in His holy place :  
 "I will be exalted, and I will distribute Sikima,  
 and the deep valley of the tents I will portion out.  
 Mine is Galaad, and Mine is Manassē,  
 and Ephraim is the support of My head.

Jouda is My king ;  
 Mōab is the laver of My hope ; 10  
 over Idoumæa will I throw My sandal ;  
 to Me have Foreign Tribes been subjected".  
 Who shall lead me away to a fortified city ?  
 or who shall lead me on the way as far as Idoumæa ?

<sup>545</sup> (Psalm 56:8-12)

Will it not be You, O God, having pushed us away ?  
Will You not, O God, come out amongst our forces ?  
Give us help out of affliction ;  
futile is the salvation of Man.  
In God shall we do powerfully,  
and He will reckon as nothing our enemies.<sup>546</sup>



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<sup>546</sup> (Psalm 59:7-14)

### PSALM 108

*"Supplication of the innocent, and malediction of the reprovèd"*

Ὁ Θεός, τὴν αἰνεσίᾳ μου      Deus laudem

For the end. A psalm by David.

1

**O** God, do not pass by my praise in silence ;  
for the mouth of a sinner, and the mouth of a  
deceitful one have been opened against me.

They spoke against me with a deceitful tongue.

They surrounded me with words of hatred,  
and they warred against me without cause.

Instead of loving me, they were slandering me ;  
but as for me, I was praying.

They set against me bad things for good,  
and hatred for my love :

5

"Appoint a sinner against him,<sup>547</sup>

and let a slanderer stand at his right-hand.

When he is judged, may he come away condemned,  
and let his prayer become a sin.<sup>548</sup>

Let his days be few,

and may another take over his superintendence.<sup>549</sup>

---

<sup>547</sup> Here begins a series of curses against David, the Psalmist. These curses are compared by some Fathers to the flogging of Jesus Christ. There are writings about the number of strokes of the lash, although evidence shows that those strokes were almost uncountable.

Saint Bede compares the thirty lines of curses with the thirty pieces of silver paid to Judas.

<sup>548</sup> Saint John Chrysostom explains that the accuser, not satisfied with these condemnations, does not stop with them. He then attempts to block the only haven left to the accused, prayer, lest he have recourse to the mercy of God.

<sup>549</sup> (Acts 1:20) "Superintendence" translates the Greek ἐπισκοπή, *episcopē*. This word means approximately "office of overseeing"; however the word has a larger meaning than only that.

Let his sons become orphans,  
and let his wife become a widow.  
Wandering about, let his sons move from place to place, 10  
and let them go begging ;  
let them be cast out of their shanties.  
Let a money-lender search out all that belongs to him,  
and let foreigners plunder his toils.  
Let there exist no support for him,  
nor let there be anyone to have compassion on his orphans.  
Let his children come to extermination ;  
in one generation, may his name be blotted out.  
May the lawlessness of his fathers be remembered before  
the LORD,  
and may the sin of his mother not be blotted out ;  
let them be before the LORD continually, 15  
and may their memory be exterminated from the earth ;  
since he did not remember to do mercy,  
and he closely pursued a Man who was poor and needy,<sup>550</sup>  
that he might put to death the compunctionate in heart.  
He loved cursing, and it shall come upon him ;  
he did not want blessing, so it shall be kept far away from  
him.  
He put on cursing, as a mantle,  
and it went, just as water, into his inward parts,  
and, just as oil, into his bones.

---

<sup>550</sup> Saint John Chrysostom explains that this accuser, descending to the ferocity of wild beasts, proves himself to be even worse, since he continues to destroy a person already in a condition that should incline one to mercy, pity, compassion. His opinion is that this is violent behaviour, of the utmost cruelty and inhumanity.

Let it be for him as a mantle which he wraps around  
himself,  
and just as a belt with which he is continually girded".<sup>551</sup>  
This is the work of those slandering me before the LORD,<sup>552</sup> 20  
and of those speaking evil against my soul.  
But You, O LORD, O LORD, act with me, for the sake of Your  
Name,  
for Your mercy is gracious.<sup>553</sup>  
Rescue me, for I, myself, am poor and needy,  
and my heart is stirred up within me.  
Just as a shadow when it declines have I been wiped out ;<sup>554</sup>  
I was shaken off, just as grass-hoppers.  
My knees became weak from fasting,  
and my flesh was changed, for want of oil.<sup>555</sup>  
I have, myself, become an object of reproach to them ; 25  
they saw me ; they shook their heads.  
Help me, O LORD my God ;  
save me, in accordance with Your mercy.

---

<sup>551</sup> Saint John Chrysostom comments on these two lines. He says that these words mean that evil can get such a grip on some people that it can become immovable, or unchangeable.

<sup>552</sup> Here begins the response of the one who has been thus cursed.

<sup>553</sup> Saint John Chrysostom states that we ought to understand the prudence and humility of David as he appeals to the LORD's mercy. He, as others who are abused, has good reason to appeal because of injustice, but he does not appeal on his own account. He turns only to the LORD's loving-kindness.

<sup>554</sup> About "wiped out": see the foot-note on Psalm 9:26.

<sup>555</sup> "For want of" is lacking in Greek. The text reads "because of oil", but the implication is, in fact, "for lack of". The Hebrew seems to support this. However, although it does not fit the context, some, such as Saint Augustine, prefer to interpret the "because of oil" in a sacramental, transfigurative manner.

Let them know that this is Your hand,<sup>556</sup>  
and that You, O LORD, You have done it.  
They shall curse, but You will bless.  
Let those rising up against me be put to shame ;  
but Your bond-servant shall be glad.  
Let them put on disgrace – those slandering me ;  
and let them wrap their shame around themselves as a  
double-mantle.

I shall greatly confess the LORD by my mouth, 30  
and in the midst of many shall I praise Him ;  
for He stood at the right-hand of the needy one,  
to save me from those closely pursuing my soul.<sup>557</sup>



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
(three times)

---

<sup>556</sup> Saint John Chrysostom would pray that we learn from these lines that in the end, even if “they” may hurl innumerable curses on someone, if God blesses him, then the scorn falls back on the abuser. We ought not to be upset about any hardship, because of the joy coming from the LORD. No hardship will succeed in upsetting us, since the joy coming to us from the LORD remains unalloyed.

<sup>557</sup> “Me” is lacking in Greek.

*And then the following prayers :*

### TRISAGION PRAYERS

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.  
(three times)

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

O most holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from  
our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and  
heal our infirmities, for Your Name’s sake.

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

Our Father, who are in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name ; Your  
kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ;  
give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our debts, as we  
forgive our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test, but rescue  
us from the evil one.

*And then :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus Christ, our  
God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

*And these tropars :* Tone 1

My sins are like the great deep, O Saviour, and I have been  
drowned by my transgressions. Stretch out Your hand to me, as  
You did to Peter, O God, and have mercy on me.

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

I am condemned by my evil thoughts and deeds, O Saviour.  
Give me the resolve to turn back, O God, that I may cry out :  
Save me, O good Benefactor, and have mercy on me.

Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Cleanse me, the wretched and defiled, tainted by unseemly  
deeds and unclean thoughts, O God-blessed, all-immaculate  
Maiden, O pure, untainted, all-holy Virgin Mother.

LORD, have mercy. (forty times)



*And then the following prayer :*

O Master, LORD Jesus Christ, You are my Helper, and I am in Your hands. Help me. Do not abandon me to sin against You. I have been led astray. Do not abandon me to perish, because of my sins. Do not abandon me, O LORD. Do not withdraw from me, for I have fled to You. Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God. Heal my soul, for I have sinned against You. Save me, for the sake of Your mercy, since all those who trouble me are before You, and I have no other refuge but You, O LORD. Let all who arise against me, and seek after my soul to destroy it, be put to shame ; for You alone are all-powerful, O LORD, and glory is Yours unto the ages of ages. Amen.



## session

16

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ; now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



### PSALM 109

### STATION 1

*“Eternal generation, and Paschal victory of Christ”*

Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος      Dixit Dominus

A psalm by David.

1

**T**he LORD said to my LORD : “Sit at My right-hand, until I make Your enemies a foot-stool for Your feet”.<sup>558</sup>  
The LORD will send out to You from Siōn the rod of power :<sup>559</sup>  
be LORD in the midst of Your enemies.  
With You is the command in the day of Your power, amongst the splendours of Your holy ones.<sup>560</sup>  
“Out of the womb, before the morning star, have I begotten You”.<sup>561</sup>

<sup>558</sup> (Matthew 22:44; Mark 12:36; Luke 20:42-43; Acts 2:34-35; Hebrews 1:13)

<sup>559</sup> Saint John Chrysostom comments that the rod has many uses, and represents many things. It may be a regal sceptre, and it may be a rod of instruction (see Psalms 2:9; 22:4; 44:7).

<sup>560</sup> About “holy ones”: see the foot-note on Psalm 19:3.

<sup>561</sup> Saint John Chrysostom reminds us that these words mean “before the morning star came into being”.

The LORD has sworn, and He will not feel regret :  
“You are a priest unto the age, in accordance with the  
order of Melchisedek”.<sup>562</sup>

The LORD, at Your right-hand, crushed kings together in  
the day of His anger.<sup>563</sup>

He will judge amongst the nations.

He will fill them with corpses.

He will crush together the heads of many on earth.

Out of a torrent He will drink on the way :  
because of this, He will lift up His head.

5



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<sup>562</sup> (1 Mōysēs 14:18-20; Hebrews 5:6 & 10; 7:17 & 21)

<sup>563</sup> About “anger”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

## PSALM 110

*“Thanksgiving for the work of salvation”*

Ἐξομολογήσομαί σοι Confitebor tibi

Allēlouia.

1 א

**I** shall confess You, O LORD, with my whole heart,  
in the council of the upright, and in the gathering.

ב

Great are the works of the LORD :

ג

His wishes are diligently investigated in all things.<sup>564</sup>

ד

Confession and magnificence are His work,

ה

and His righteousness remains unto the age of the age.

ו

He made a memorial of His wonders :

ז

the LORD is merciful and compassionate.<sup>565</sup>

ח

He gave nourishment to those fearing Him ;

5 ט

He will remember His Covenant unto the age.

י

He announced the strength of His works to His people,  
to give them the inheritance of the nations.

כ

ל

The works of His hands are truth and fair-judgement ;

מ

faithful are all His commandments :

נ

they are set fast unto the age of the age ;

ס

they are wrought in truth and uprightness.

ע

He sent redemption to His people.

פ

He commanded His Covenant unto the age.

צ

---

<sup>564</sup> About this line: Saint John Chrysostom comments at length about the greatness of the LORD’s works, all accomplished and continuing in accordance with His will. The perceptive human mind perceives this and studies this. The clouded or thickened human mind denies this and maligns this. This behaviour demonstrates the disability of the maligner.

<sup>565</sup> Saint John Chrysostom expands on the words of this line by saying that the LORD does absolutely everything from goodness and from love. He encourages us not to be disturbed when seeing anyone in disaster or being maligned or falsely accused, because there is an incorruptible court, and an irreproachable verdict to come.

Holy and formidable is His Name.	ק
The beginning of wisdom is fear of the LORD, <sup>566</sup>	10 ג
and a good understanding for all those doing it. <sup>567</sup>	ש
His praise remains unto the age of the age.	ת




---

<sup>566</sup> Saint Ambrose of Milan shows us that Wisdom's house can be built only if the fear of God is rooted deeply in the soul.

<sup>567</sup> About "those doing it": Saint Gregory the Theologian, along with the Apostle James, says that words must be accompanied by deeds. He indicates that splendid language and proclamation are not sufficient unto themselves (see James 2:14-26).

### PSALM 111

*"The righteous, light of the world"*

Μακάριος ἀνήρ      Beatus vir

Allēlouia. 1 א

<b>B</b> lessed is the man fearing the LORD : <sup>568</sup>	
he shall greatly delight in His commandments.	ב
His seed shall be powerful on the earth :	ג
the generation of the upright shall be blessed.	ד
Glory and riches are in his house,	ה
and his righteousness remains unto the age of the age.	ו
In darkness has light sprung up for the upright ; <sup>569</sup>	ז
he is merciful, compassionate and righteous.	ח
Gracious is the man who is compassionate and lends ;	5 ט
he shall manage his words in fair-judgement,	י
for he shall not be shaken unto the age.	כ
The righteous one shall be in eternal memory. <sup>570</sup>	ל
He shall not fear hearing evil ;	מ
his heart is ready to hope on the LORD.	נ
His heart has been set fast ;	ס
he shall not fear, until he looks upon his enemies.	ע

---

<sup>568</sup> "Fear" of the LORD is to be understood in terms of reverence, awe, respect, which are produced by true love.

<sup>569</sup> Saint John Chrysostom equates darkness with distress, hardship, trial, danger, difficulty. The light is complete security in difficulty. Expecting to be incinerated, the Three Young Men received cool protection. He refers the reader to the words cited in Canticle 7:#8, and to the words of the Apostle in 2 Corinthians 1:8-10.

<sup>570</sup> About "eternal memory": this memory is not ours, but the LORD's. What exists, including ourselves, has being because the LORD our Creator remembers us. This remembering, of course, is because of love. We remember those whom we love, whether living or departed, because we love them. How much more is this so with the LORD, whose essence is Love, towards each of His creatures. The Saviour says that the LORD is the LORD of the living, not of the dead: "He is not the God of the dead but of the living, for all live to Him" (Luke 20:38).

He has scattered : he gave to the needy. <sup>571</sup>	פ
His righteousness remains unto the age of the age ; <sup>572</sup>	צ
his horn shall be exalted in glory.	ק
A sinner shall see, and shall be angry ;	10 ג
he shall gnash his teeth, and shall melt away.	ש
The craving of a sinner shall perish.	ת



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
(three times)

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

---

<sup>571</sup> About “needy”: Saint Athanasius says that the poor ones, the nations, are those in need of the divine Word.

Saint Clement of Alexandria further says that he is not wealthy who possesses and retains his wealth. The wealthy one is he who gives. It is giving, not receiving, that reveals the blessed person. Generosity is a product of the soul; so true wealth is in the soul. See also Saint John Chrysostom’s commentary.

Scattering must be understood not only in the context of Christ’s Parable of the Sower, but also in the context of the older manner of planting crops, and also of harvesting. In accordance with the Mosaic Law, parts of the harvest had to be left for those in need so that they might glean the remnants, and so be fed in dignity (see 3 Mōysēs 19:9-10; 23:22; 5 Mōysēs 24:19-22).

<sup>572</sup> (2 Corinthians 9:9)

**PSALM 112**

**STATION 2**

*“Hymn of the Church, gathered from the nations”*

Αἰνεῖτε, παῖδες      Laudate, pueri

Allēlouia. 1

**P**raise the LORD, O servants :<sup>573</sup>  
praise the Name of the LORD.

May the Name of the LORD be blessed,<sup>574</sup>  
from now on and until the age.

From the risings of the sun, unto its settings,  
may the Name of the LORD be praised.<sup>575</sup>

The LORD is on high, over all the nations :  
above the Heavens is His glory.

Who is like the LORD our God ? 5

He, dwelling in the heights,  
and looking upon what is humble, in Heaven, and on the  
earth ;

He, raising the poor one from the earth,  
and up from the dung-heap lifting the needy one,  
in order to sit him down with princes,  
with the princes of His people ;<sup>576</sup>

and He, causing the barren woman to settle in a house,  
a mother who is glad over children.

---

<sup>573</sup> About “servants”: see the foot-note on Psalm 17:1.

About “praise”: see the foot-note on the second line of Psalm 146.

<sup>574</sup> Saint John Chrysostom reminds us that it is we who bless the LORD. He is, in Himself, blessed.

<sup>575</sup> (Malakhias 1:11; “Malakhias”=Malachi)

<sup>576</sup> About these lines: see Canticles 3: #7; and 9: lines 13 & 14.

## PSALM 113

*"Hymn for the Paschal victory of Christ"*

Ἐξόδῳ Ἰσραὴλ      In exitu Israel

Allēlouia.

1

In the exodus of Israēl from Ægypt,<sup>577</sup>  
of the house of Jakōb from a barbarian people,<sup>578</sup>  
Joudæa became His holy place,<sup>579</sup>  
and Israēl His seat of authority.

The sea saw this, and fled ;  
the Jordan turned backwards.

The mountains leapt just as rams,  
and the hills as lambs of the flocks.

What is it with you, O sea, that you fled ?<sup>580</sup>

5

and you, O Jordan, that you turned backwards ?<sup>581</sup>

and you, O mountains, that you leapt just as rams ?

and you, O hills, as lambs of the flocks ?

Because of the Face of the LORD has the earth shuddered,<sup>582</sup>

because of the Face of the God of Jakōb,

when He turned the rock into lakes of waters,<sup>583</sup>

and the flint into springs of waters.

---

<sup>577</sup> (2 Mōysēs 12:29-42)

<sup>578</sup> "Barbarian", in Greek, implies simply a non-Greek-speaker; in the Roman Empire, it meant a non-Roman, and later, by extension, a non-Christian.

<sup>579</sup> About "holy place": see the foot-note on Psalm 77:69.

<sup>580</sup> (2 Mōysēs 14:13-31)

<sup>581</sup> (Jēsous 3:11-17)

<sup>582</sup> About "Face": see the foot-notes on Psalms 4:7 & 9:4.

<sup>583</sup> (2 Mōysēs 17:1-7; 4 Mōysēs 20:7-13)

Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us,<sup>584</sup>

but rather, unto Your Name give glory,

because of Your mercy and Your truth,

lest the nations ever say : "Where is their God ?"

10

But our God is in Heaven, and on the earth :

all things that He willed, He did.

The idols of the nations are silver and gold :

they are works of the hands of Men.

A mouth they have, and they shall not speak ;

eyes they have, and they shall not see.

Ears they have, and they shall not hear ;

noses they have, and they shall not smell.

Hands they have, and they shall not touch ;

15

feet they have, and they shall not walk about,

nor shall they make any sound in their throat.

May they become like them – those making them,

and all those putting their trust in them.

The house of Israēl hoped on the LORD :

He is their Helper and Protector.

The house of Aarōn hoped on the LORD :

He is their Helper and Protector.

Those fearing the LORD hoped on the LORD :

He is their Helper and Protector.

The LORD remembered us, and He blessed us :

20

He blessed the house of Israēl ;

He blessed the house of Aarōn ;

---

<sup>584</sup> Psalm 115 begins here in the Hebrew text.

He blessed those fearing the LORD, the small with the great.  
May the LORD grant increase to you : to you and to your sons.  
May you be blessed by the LORD,  
who made Heaven and the earth.  
The Heaven of Heaven belongs to the LORD,  
but the earth He gave to the sons of Men.  
The dead shall not praise You, O LORD,  
nor all those going down into Hadēs ;  
but we, the living, shall bless the LORD,  
from now on and until the age.

25



## PSALM 114

*“Thanksgiving for the Resurrection”*

Ἠγάπησα, ὅτι εἰσακούσεται Dilexi, quoniam  
Allēlouia.

1

**I** have loved, for the LORD will hear the voice of my supplication ;  
for He inclined His ear to me,<sup>585</sup>  
and through all my days I shall call upon Him.  
Pangs of death encompassed me ;  
perils of Hadēs found me.<sup>586</sup>  
I found affliction and pain,  
and I called upon the Name of the LORD :<sup>587</sup>  
“O LORD, rescue my soul”.

---

<sup>585</sup> Saint Basil the Great informs us that not everyone can say “I have loved”. It is the one who is already perfect and beyond the fear of slavery, and who has the spirit of adoption who could say these words. The object of this love is God, to whom all things tend. He continues that this one has loved God, the highest of all to be desired. It is with joy that he has received sufferings for the sake of God. All pains are desirable because of the Love of God. Through kindness, the all-compassionate God bends down to hear the whispered cry of the one who lies incapacitated on the ground in the same way as a kind physician would. By bringing his ear close, he can understand what the ill person tries to say. God knows how to hear even the cry of the blood of the righteous (see 1 Mōysēs 4:10).

Saint Athanasius advises that if we are afflicted and wish to give thanks for requested help, we should sing Psalms 4; 74; & 114.

<sup>586</sup> Saint Ambrose of Milan comments that the Psalmist says he loves the LORD even in the “pangs of death”. He says that the “perils of Hadēs” did not find him fearing, but loving and hoping, because no distress, no persecution, no dangers, no sword shall separate him from Christ (see Romans 8:38-39).

<sup>587</sup> Saint John Chrysostom comments that when we encounter unexpected or expected “affliction and pain”, obstacles, exasperation, we often from faint-heartedness quickly become despondent and we lose whatever prayer we had. It is because the LORD loves us so deeply that He allows this difficulty as an opportunity to become stronger. Then, instead of losing hope because of forgetting, we ought instead to turn instantly to Him for help in distress, so that we might be united to Him more closely even than before.

The LORD is merciful and righteous :<sup>588</sup>

5

our God is merciful.

It is the LORD, keeping watch over the infants ;

I have been humbled, and He saved me.

Turn about to your Rest, O my soul,

for the LORD has done good for you ;

for He took my soul out of death,

my eyes from tears, and my feet from slipping.

I shall be well-pleasing before the Face of the LORD,

in the land of the living.



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;

now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

---

<sup>588</sup> Saint Basil the Great reminds us that Scripture everywhere joins righteousness (often translated “justice”) and mercy, and teaches us that neither is the mercy of God without judgement, nor is His judgement without mercy.

## PSALM 115

## STATION 3

*“Thanksgiving of the children of the Church of Christ”*

Ἐπίστευσα, διὸ ἐλάλησα      Credidi, propter quod

Allēlouia.

1

**I** believed, therefore I spoke ;<sup>589</sup>

and I was exceedingly humbled.

I said when I was beside myself :<sup>590</sup>

“Every Man is a liar”.

What shall I return to the LORD

for all that He has returned to me ?

I shall take the cup of salvation,

and call upon the Name of the LORD.

My vows I shall render to the LORD

in the presence of all His people.

5

Precious in the presence of the LORD

is the death of His holy ones.

O LORD, I am Your bond-servant :

I am Your bond-servant, and the son of Your maid-servant.<sup>591</sup>

You have broken my bonds asunder.

To You shall I sacrifice a sacrifice of praise,<sup>592</sup>

and call upon the Name of the LORD.

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<sup>589</sup> (2 Corinthians 4:13)

<sup>590</sup> Archimandrite Placide explains that this being “beside myself” indicates that the Psalmist is being overcome by the Holy Spirit, so as to be able to see the fragility of human beings.

<sup>591</sup> About “maid-servant”: see the foot-note on Psalm 85:16.

<sup>592</sup> Saint John Chrysostom emphasises that nothing is so desired by God as our gratitude towards Him, not only when things are going well, but also when things are in the opposite condition. This, most of all, is a sacrifice; this is our greatest offering.

Saint Ambrose of Milan indicates to us that this sacrifice will be completed when each of us stands before the LORD at the end of our days.

My vows I shall render to the LORD  
in the presence of all His people :  
in the courts of the house of the LORD,  
in your midst, O Jerousalēm.



### PSALM 116

*“Invitation to praise”*

Αἰνεῖτε τὸν Κύριον      Laudate Dominum  
Allēlouia.

1

**P**raise the LORD, all you nations :  
praise Him, all you peoples ;<sup>593</sup>  
for His mercy has become strong upon us,  
and the truth of the LORD remains unto the age.



---

<sup>593</sup> (Romans 15:11)

### PSALM 117

*“Thanksgiving for the Resurrection”*

Ἐξομολογείσθε τῷ Κυρίῳ      Confitemini Domino  
Allēlouia.

1

**O** confess the LORD, for He is good,  
for eternal is His mercy.

Let the house of Israēl, then, say that He is good,  
for eternal is His mercy.

Let the house of Aarōn, then, say that He is good,  
for eternal is His mercy.

Let all those fearing the LORD, then, say that He is good,  
for eternal is His mercy.

Out of affliction, I called upon the LORD ;

5

and He listened to me, putting me into a broad place.<sup>594</sup>

The LORD is my Helper,

and I shall not fear what Man shall do to me.<sup>595</sup>

The LORD is my Helper,

and I shall look upon my enemies.

It is better to trust in the LORD,<sup>596</sup>

than to trust in Man.

It is better to hope on the LORD,

than to hope on princes.

All the nations surrounded me,

10

but in the Name of the LORD, I warded them off.

---

<sup>594</sup> “Putting me” is lacking in Greek.

<sup>595</sup> (Hebrews 13:6) Saint Cyprian of Carthage comments that we should not fear the injuries and punishments of persecutions, because the LORD is greater in protecting than is the devil in attacking.

<sup>596</sup> About “better”: in Greek, this is a positive adjective, ἀγαθόν, *agathon*. In Greek, a positive adjective may have a comparative meaning, as it does here. Saint John Chrysostom elaborates that nothing is feebler than hoping in a human being. This precarious hope is feebler than a spider’s web.



Surrounding, they surrounded me,  
but in the Name of the LORD, I warded them off.  
They surrounded me just as bees surround a honey-comb,  
and they were kindled as a fire in thorn-bushes ;  
but in the Name of the LORD, I warded them off.  
Having been pushed, I was disheartened, so as to fall,  
but the LORD supported me.  
The LORD is my Strength and my Hymn,  
and He has become Salvation for me.  
There is a voice of exultation and salvation in the tents of  
the righteous. 15  
The right hand of the LORD has wrought powerfully ;  
the right hand of the LORD has exalted me ;  
the right hand of the LORD has wrought powerfully.  
I shall not die, but I shall live,<sup>597</sup>  
and I shall recount the works of the LORD.  
Instructing, the LORD has instructed me,<sup>598</sup>  
and yet He has not given me over to death.  
Open to me the gates of righteousness :  
entering them, I shall confess the LORD.  
This is the gate of the LORD : 20  
the righteous shall enter in it.  
I shall confess You, for You have listened to me,  
and You have become Salvation for me.

<sup>597</sup> About this line: Saint John Chrysostom refers us to the lifting up of Enoch and of Elias (see 1 Mōysēs 5:24; 4 Kingdoms 2:11).

<sup>598</sup> Saint Syncretica of Alexandria wrote that this “instructing” could be compared to the refining or cleansing of metals by fire.

The stone which the builders rejected —  
this has become the head of the corner.  
From the LORD has this come about,  
and it is wonderful in our eyes.<sup>599</sup>  
This is the day which the LORD has made :<sup>600</sup>  
let us exult and be glad in it.  
O LORD, then save us. 25  
O LORD, then do good to us on the way.  
Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the LORD.<sup>601</sup>  
We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.  
The LORD is God, and has appeared to us ;  
array a feast with branches,  
as far as the horns of the altar.  
You are my God, and I shall confess You ;  
You are my God, and I shall exalt You.  
I shall confess You, for You have listened to me,  
and You have become Salvation for me.  
O confess the LORD, for He is good,  
for eternal is His mercy.

<sup>599</sup> (Matthew 21:42; Mark 12:10-11; Luke 20:17; Acts 4:11; 1 Peter 2:7)  
Saint John Chrysostom comments that the rejected stone, Christ, has become the main and most important stone joining the two walls: the Jews and the Gentiles.

<sup>600</sup> Saint Cyprian of Carthage reminds us that Christ is metaphorically called “day”.  
See Saint John Chrysostom’s comments on Psalm 138:12.

<sup>601</sup> (Matthew 21:9; 23:39; Mark 11:9; Luke 13:35; 19:38; John 12:13)



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

*And then the following prayers :*

### TRISAGION PRAYERS

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

*(three times)*

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

O most holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from  
our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and  
heal our infirmities, for Your Name's sake.

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

Our Father, who are in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name ; Your  
kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ;  
give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our debts, as we  
forgive our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test, but rescue  
us from the evil one.

*And then :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus Christ, our  
God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

*And these tropars :* Tone 1

Another world awaits you, O soul, and the Judge intends to  
reveal the hidden and wicked things concerning you. Do not be  
taken up with the here-and-now, but look ahead, and cry out to  
the Judge : O God, cleanse me, and save me.

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

Covered with the countless wounds of my transgressions, I, the  
sinner, entreat Your tender mercy, O Christ-Saviour. O  
Physician of the sick, visit, heal, and save me.

Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Why are you living in negligence and laziness, O my soul ? Why  
are you not concerned with the evil you have done in your  
life ? Hasten to make amends, before the LORD shuts the door to  
you. Run to the Theotokos, fall down, and cry out : O hope of  
the hopeless, I have greatly sinned against you. Save me, O all-  
pure Lady.

LORD, have mercy. *(forty times)*

*And then the following prayer :*

O holy LORD, You dwell in the highest. You look with Your all-  
seeing eye upon the whole creation. We bow the neck of body  
and soul to You, and we beseech You, O Holy of Holies : Stretch  
forth Your unseen hand from Your holy dwelling-place. Bless us  
all, and forgive our sins, whether voluntary or involuntary, of  
word or of deed. Give us tender compunction, O LORD. Give us  
spiritual tears from deep within for the cleansing of our many  
sins. Grant Your great mercy to Your world, and to us also,  
Your unworthy bond-servants ; for blessed and highly exalted  
is Your Name : of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy  
Spirit, now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.





## session

17

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



### PSALM 118

### STATION 1

*“The Law of Christ”*

Μακάριοι οἱ ἄμωμοι

Beati immaculati

Allēlouia.<sup>602</sup>

1 [Α Aleph]

**B**lessed are the blameless in their way,  
those walking in the law of the LORD.

Blessed are those searching out His testimonies :  
with their whole heart, they shall seek Him out ;  
for those working lawlessness  
have not walked in His ways.

It is You that have commanded Your commandments  
to be kept diligently.

O, that my ways may be directed,  
in order to keep Your statutes ;  
then I shall not be ashamed,  
when I look attentively upon all Your commandments.  
I shall confess You in uprightness of heart,  
when I have learned the judgements of Your  
righteousness.

5

---

<sup>602</sup> See the foot-note on p.3 regarding “Alleluia”.

I shall keep Your statutes ;  
do not utterly abandon me.

Ἐν τίνι κατορθώσει      In quo corrigit ?      [ב Beth]

How shall a young man straighten his way ?<sup>603</sup>

By keeping Your words.<sup>604</sup>

I sought You out with my whole heart.      10

Do not push me away from Your commandments.

In my heart have I hidden Your teachings,  
that I might not sin against You.

Blessed are You, O LORD ;  
teach me Your statutes.

With my lips I told forth  
all the judgements of Your mouth.

In the way of Your testimonies I was delighted,  
as in all riches.

On Your commandments shall I deliberate,      15  
and I shall observe Your ways.

On Your statutes shall I ruminate ;

I shall not forget Your words.

Ἀνταπόδος τῷ δούλῳ      Retribue servo tuo      [ג Gimel]

Requite Your bond-servant ;

I shall live, and I shall keep Your words.

Uncover my eyes,

and I shall observe the wonders from Your law.

I am, myself, a sojourner on the earth ;

do not hide Your commandments from me.

---

<sup>603</sup> About “young”: see the foot-note on Psalm 36:25.

<sup>604</sup> Saint Ambrose of Milan cites the introduction to the Law, that is, “Hear, O Israel”, and he exhorts us to be silent, to listen, and then to do.

My soul yearned to crave      20  
Your judgements at all times.

You rebuked the proud :  
accursed are those inclining away from Your  
commandments.

Take away from around me reproach and contempt,  
for I sought out Your testimonies.

Indeed, princes sat down, and they were speaking against  
me ;

but Your bond-servant was deliberating about Your  
statutes.

Indeed, Your testimonies are my rumination,  
and my counsels are Your statutes.

Ἐκολλήθη τῷ ἐδάφει      Adhæsit pavimento      [ד Daleth]

My soul cleaved to the ground ;      25

make me live in accordance with Your Word.

I told forth my ways, and You listened to me ;  
teach me Your statutes.

Make me understand the way of Your statutes,  
and I shall deliberate on Your wonders.

My soul slumbered from accidie ;<sup>605</sup>  
secure me in Your words.

Put away from me the way of unrighteousness,  
and by Your law, have mercy on me.

I chose the way of truth,      30  
and I did not forget Your judgements.

---

<sup>605</sup> About “accidie”: see the foot-note on Psalm 60:3.

I cleaved to Your testimonies ;  
O LORD, put me not to shame.

I ran the way of Your commandments,  
when You broadened my heart.

Νομοθέτησόν με Κύριε Legem pone [η He]

O LORD, give me a law : the way of Your statutes,  
and I shall seek it out continually.

Make me understand, and I shall search out Your law,  
and I shall keep it with my whole heart.

Lead me on the way, on the path of Your  
commandments, 35

for I have wished for it.

Incline my heart to Your testimonies,  
and not to covetousness.

Turn my eyes away from seeing futility ;<sup>606</sup>  
make me live in Your way.

Set before Your bond-servant Your teaching,  
that I may fear You.

Take away from around me the reproach which I have  
dreaded,

for Your judgements are gracious.

Behold, I have craved Your commandments : 40  
in Your righteousness, make me live.

Καὶ ἔλθοι ἐπ' ἐμὲ Et veniat super me [ι Waw]

May Your mercy come upon me, O LORD :  
Your salvation, in accordance with Your Word.

---

<sup>606</sup> Saint Athanasius comments that we were given eyes to see our Creator in creatures. The physical eyes are enabled by spiritual eyes.

I shall answer a word to those reproaching me,  
for I have hoped on Your words.

Do not utterly take away from my mouth the word of truth,  
for I have placed my hope on Your judgements.

I shall keep Your law continually : unto the age,  
and unto the age of the age.

I was walking in a broad place, 45  
for I sought out Your commandments.

I was speaking of Your testimonies in the presence of  
kings,

and I was not ashamed.

I was ruminating on Your commandments,  
which I loved exceedingly.

I raised my hands towards Your commandments, which I  
loved,

and I was deliberating on Your statutes.

Μνήσθητι τῶν λόγων σου Memento sermonis [τ Zayin]

Remember Your words to Your bond-servant,  
in which You gave me hope.

This has consoled me in my humiliation, 50  
for Your teaching gave me life.

The proud were utterly transgressing the law,  
but I did not incline away from Your law.

I remembered Your eternal judgements, O LORD,  
and I was consoled.

Despondency held me fast,  
because of the sinners, abandoning Your law.

Your statutes were my chants,  
in the place of my sojourning.  
I remembered Your Name in the night, O LORD, 55  
and I kept Your law.  
This happened to me,  
for I have sought out Your statutes.

Μερίς μου εἶ Κύριε Portio mea, Domine [ἦ Heth]  
You are my portion, O LORD ;  
I said I would keep Your law.  
I besought Your Face with my whole heart ;<sup>607</sup>  
have mercy on me, in accordance with Your teaching.  
I thought about Your ways,  
and I turned my feet towards Your testimonies.

I was prepared, and I was not stirred up, 60  
in order to keep Your commandments.  
The cords of sinners were woven around me,  
but I did not forget Your law.  
In the middle of the night, I was waking to confess You,  
for the judgements of Your righteousness.

I am, myself, a companion of all those fearing You,  
and of those keeping Your commandments.  
The earth is full of Your mercy, O LORD :  
teach me Your statutes.

Χρηστότητα ἐποίησας Bonitatem fecisti [ὑ Teth]  
You have done loving-kindness with Your bond-  
servant, 65

<sup>607</sup> About "Face": see the foot-note on Psalm 4:7.

in accordance with Your Word, O LORD.  
Teach me loving-kindness and instruction and knowledge,  
for I have believed in Your commandments.  
Before I was humbled, I did wrong :  
because of this, I kept Your teaching.  
You are gracious, O LORD ;  
and in Your loving-kindness teach me Your statutes.  
The unrighteousness of the proud was multiplied against  
me ;  
but with my whole heart I shall, myself, search out Your  
commandments.

Their heart has been curdled, just as milk ; 70  
but as for me, I ruminated on Your law.  
It is good for me that You humbled me,  
that I might learn Your statutes.<sup>608</sup>  
The law of Your mouth is to me  
better than thousands of gold and silver.



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
(three times)

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

<sup>608</sup> In his comments on Psalm 122, Saint John Chrysostom refers to these two lines. He exhorts us not to panic in affliction. He says that we must accept disaster as a medicine, and bear it properly. If we allow the LORD to transfigure it, it will heal our wounds.

## STATION 2

Αἱ χεῖρές σου ἐποίησάν με Manus tuæ fecerunt me [Ϛ Yodh]

Your hands made and fashioned me ;  
make me understand, and I shall learn Your  
commandments.

Those fearing You shall see me, and be glad,  
for I have placed my hope on Your words.  
I know, O LORD, that Your judgements are righteousness, 75  
and that in truth You humbled me.

Let Your mercy be my consolation, then,  
in accordance with Your teaching to Your bond-servant.  
Let Your compassions come to me, and I shall live,  
for Your law is my rumination.

Let the proud be put to shame, for they unrighteously  
wrought lawlessness against me ;  
but as for me, I shall deliberate on Your commandments.

Let them turn towards me –  
those fearing You, and those knowing Your testimonies.  
Let my heart become blameless in Your statutes, 80  
that I may not be put to shame.

Ἐκλείπει εἰς τὸ σωτήριόν σου Defecit anima mea [Ϛ Kaph]

My soul faints because of Your salvation ;  
on Your words I have placed my hope.

My eyes failed for Your teaching,  
saying : “When will You console me ?”  
for I became like a leather-bag in the hoar-frost :<sup>609</sup>  
Your statutes I did not forget.

<sup>609</sup> Archimandrite Lazarus explains that it may be said that a wine-skin sprinkled with hoar-frost is like the greying head of an old man.

How many are the days of Your bond-servant ?  
When will You make fair-judgement for me upon those  
closely pursuing me ?

Transgressors of the law recounted idle talk to me ; 85  
but it is not like Your law, O LORD.

All Your commandments are truth.  
Unrighteously have they closely pursued me ; help me.  
In a short time they made an end of me on the earth,  
but as for me, I did not abandon Your commandments.

In accordance with Your mercy make me live,  
and I shall keep the testimonies of Your mouth.

Εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα Κύριε In æternum, Domine [Ϛ Lamedh]

Unto the age, O LORD,  
does Your Word continue in Heaven :  
unto generation and generation, Your truth ; 90  
You laid the foundations of the earth, and it continues.

By Your plan does the day continue,  
for all things are Your bond-servants.  
If it were not that Your law is my rumination,  
then I would have perished in my humiliation.

Unto the age I shall not forget Your statutes,  
for in them You have made me live.<sup>610</sup>

I am Yours : save me,  
for I have sought out Your statutes.

<sup>610</sup> At Matins, on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays of Great Lent, these two lines (one verse) are sung three times, in Tone 5.

The end of this line is the middle-point of this psalm. At certain services, Psalm 118 is read in a different manner, and this middle-point needs to be known.

Sinners waited for me, to destroy me ; 95  
 I understood Your testimonies.  
 I saw the limit of every achievement ;  
 but Your commandment is exceedingly broad.<sup>611</sup>  
 Ὡς ἠγάπησα Quomodo dilexi [M Mem]  
 How I have loved Your law, O LORD :  
 it is my rumination the whole day long.  
 You made me wise, more than my enemies, by Your  
 commandment,  
 for it is mine unto the age.  
 I have understood more than all those teaching me,  
 for Your testimonies are my rumination.  
 I have understood more than the elders, 100  
 for I sought out Your commandments.  
 I restrained my feet from every way of evil,  
 so that I might keep Your words.  
 I did not decline away from Your judgements,  
 for You gave me a law.  
 How sweet to my throat are Your teachings,  
 more than honey to my mouth.  
 Because of Your commandments, I have understood ;  
 because of this, I hated every way of unrighteousness.  
 Λύχνος τοῖς ποσὶ μου Lucerna pedibus meis [N Nun]  
 A lamp to my feet is Your law, 105  
 and a light to my paths.<sup>612</sup>

<sup>611</sup> Saint Basil the Great comments that the commandment to love God, our neighbour, and our enemy, is infinitely broad; it is all-inclusive. It sums up our perfection, and it is the crowning experience.

<sup>612</sup> Saint Hilary of Poitiers states that the sun-beams of the Word are eternally ready to shine wherever the windows of the soul are open in simple faith.

I have sworn, and I stood ready  
 to keep the judgements of Your righteousness.  
 I have been utterly humbled ;  
 O LORD, make me live in accordance with Your Word.  
 Be well-pleased, then, with the freewill-offerings of my  
 mouth, O LORD ;  
 and teach me Your judgements.  
 My soul is in Your hands continually,  
 and I have not forgotten Your law.  
 Sinners laid a snare for me ; 110  
 but I did not go astray from Your commandments.  
 I have inherited Your testimonies unto the age,  
 for they are the exultation of my heart.  
 I inclined my heart to do Your statutes,  
 unto the age, in requital.  
 Παρὰ νόμους ἐμίσησα Iniquos odio habui [D Samekh]  
 Transgressors of the law I have hated,  
 but Your law I have loved.  
 You are my Helper and my Support ;  
 I have placed my hope on Your words.  
 Decline away from me, you evil-doers, 115  
 and I shall search out the commandments of my God.  
 Support me in accordance with Your teaching, and  
 make me live,  
 and do not put me to shame from my expectation.  
 Help me, and I shall be saved,  
 and I shall ruminate on Your statutes continually.



You reckoned as nothing all those standing aloof from  
 Your statutes,  
 for unrighteous is their reasoning.  
 I reckoned as deviators all the sinners of the earth ;<sup>613</sup>  
 because of this, I loved Your testimonies.  
 Nail my flesh because of the fear of You,<sup>614</sup> 120  
 for I was fearful of Your judgements.  
 Ἐποίησα κρίμα Feci iudicium [γ Ayin]  
 I have done judgement and righteousness ;  
 do not give me over to those wronging me.  
 Be surety for Your bond-servant for the good ;  
 do not let the proud denounce me.  
 My eyes failed for Your salvation,  
 and for the teaching of Your righteousness.  
 Do with Your bond-servant in accordance with Your  
 mercy,  
 and teach me Your statutes.  
 I am Your bond-servant : make me understand, 125  
 and I shall know Your testimonies.  
 It is the time for the LORD to act ;  
 they have dispersed Your law.  
 Because of this, I loved Your commandments  
 more than gold and topaz.

<sup>613</sup> “Deviator” in English, from the Latin, suggests merely “over-stepping”, or “going over the bounds”, rather than a flagrant act. The Greek, παραβαίνω, *parabainō*, conveys this same meaning of over-stepping.

<sup>614</sup> Saint Ambrose of Milan states that he believes that the nailing is not with iron but with fear and with faith.  
 Saint John Chrysostom comments on this that the soul that is nailed down by the fear of God is thereby secure and immovable.

Because of this, I was being set straight towards all Your  
 commandments ;  
 I hated every unrighteous way.  
 Θαυμαστά τὰ μαρτύρια Mirabilia [δ Peh]  
 Wonderful are Your testimonies ;  
 because of this, my soul has searched them out.  
 The revelation of Your words shall illumine, 130  
 and shall make infants understand.  
 I opened my mouth, and I drew in the Spirit,  
 for I was yearning for Your commandments.<sup>615</sup>



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
 now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
 Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
 (three times)  
 LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
 Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
 now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

<sup>615</sup> The LORD’s direction (commandments) for our life is like breathing. We long for the LORD’s commandments, because they are life itself for us. The LORD is our life.

### STATION 3

Look attentively upon me, and have mercy on me,  
in accordance with the judgement of those loving Your  
Name.

Direct my foot-steps in accordance with Your teaching,  
and do not let any lawlessness lord it over me.

Redeem me from the denunciation of Men,  
and I shall keep Your commandments.

Make Your Face shine upon Your bond-servant, 135  
and teach me Your statutes.

My eyes have shed streams of waters,  
since I have not kept Your law.

Δίκαιος εἶ Κύριε Justus es, Domine [α Sadhe]

You are righteous, O LORD,  
and upright are Your fair-judgements.

You commanded Your testimonies  
to be righteousness and truth, exceedingly.

Your zeal has melted me away,  
for my enemies have forgotten Your words.

Your teaching has been greatly tested by fire, 140  
and Your bond-servant has loved it.

As for me, I am young, and reckoned as nothing ;<sup>616</sup>

I have not forgotten Your statutes.

Your righteousness is righteousness unto the age,  
and Your law is truth.

Afflictions and anguish have found me ;

Your commandments are my rumination.

<sup>616</sup> About “young”: see the foot-note on Psalm 36:25.

Your testimonies are righteousness unto the age ;  
make me understand, and I shall live.

Ἐκέκραξα ἐν ὅλη καρδίᾳ μου Clamavi in toto corde meo [ῥ Qoph]

I cried out with my whole heart ; listen to me, O LORD.

I shall seek out Your statutes. 145

I cried out to You ; save me,  
and I shall keep Your testimonies.

I anticipated day-break, and I cried out ;<sup>617</sup>  
on Your words have I placed my hope.

My eyes anticipated day-break,  
that I might ruminate on Your teachings.

Hear my voice, O LORD, in accordance with Your mercy ;  
in accordance with Your judgement, make me live.

They have drawn near – those closely pursuing me with  
lawlessness, 150

and they have kept far away from Your law.

You are near, O LORD,  
and all Your ways are truth.

From of old I knew of Your testimonies,  
for You laid their foundations unto the age.

Ἴδε τὴν ταπείνωσίν μου Vide humilitatem [ῥ Resh]

See my humiliation, and set me free,

for I have not forgotten Your law.

Adjudge my fair-judgement, and redeem me ;  
because of Your Word, make me live.

<sup>617</sup> “Anticipated day-break” is an interpretation of the Greek προέφθασα ἐν ἁωρίᾳ, *proepthasa en aōria*. The Greek cannot be translated literally and make sense. The sense is that the Psalmist cannot wait to arise to praise the LORD.

Far off from sinners is salvation, 155  
for they did not seek out Your statutes.  
Your compassions are many, O LORD :  
in accordance with Your judgement, make me live.  
Many are those chasing me away, and afflicting me ;  
I did not incline away from Your testimonies.  
I saw those who are without understanding, and I was  
melting away,  
for they did not keep Your teachings.  
See that I have loved Your commandments ;  
O LORD, in Your mercy, make me live.  
The beginning of Your words is truth, 160  
and unto the age are all the judgements of Your  
righteousness.  
Ἄρχοντες κατεδίωξάν με Principes persecuti sunt [Ψ Shin]  
Princes pursued me closely without a cause,  
and my heart was afraid because of Your words.<sup>618</sup>  
I shall exult in Your teachings,  
as one finding much spoils.  
Unrighteousness I have hated and loathed,  
but Your law I have loved.  
Seven times a day I have praised You<sup>619</sup>  
for the judgements of Your righteousness.

<sup>618</sup> About “afraid”: Saint Athanasius significantly shows us that the Psalmist does not fear enemies; but he dreads to be dead to the LORD’s Word.

<sup>619</sup> “Seven times a day” is the number of canonical hours offered to the LORD: Vespers, Compline, Midnight Hour, Matins-and-First Hour, Third Hour, Sixth Hour, Ninth Hour. Indeed, prayer and worship should be unceasing in our lives.

There is much peace for those loving Your law, 165  
and there is no stumbling-block for them.  
I was awaiting Your salvation, O LORD,  
and Your commandments I have loved.  
My soul kept Your testimonies,  
and loved them exceedingly.  
I kept Your commandments and Your testimonies,  
for all my ways are in Your presence, O LORD.  
Ἐγγισάτω ἡ δέησίς μου Appropinquet deprecatio [T Taw]  
Let my supplication draw near to Your Face, O LORD ;  
in accordance with Your teaching, make me understand.  
May my petition come before Your Face, O LORD ; 170  
in accordance with Your teaching, rescue me.  
May my lips pour forth a hymn,  
whenever You may teach me Your statutes.  
May my tongue sound forth Your teachings,  
for all Your commandments are righteousness.  
Let Your hand be there to save me,  
for I have chosen Your commandments.  
I yearned for Your salvation, O LORD,  
and Your law is my rumination.  
My soul shall live, and shall praise You, 175  
and Your judgements shall help me.  
I have gone astray as a lost sheep ;  
seek Your bond-servant ; for I did not forget Your  
commandments.<sup>620</sup>

<sup>620</sup> At Matins, on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays of Great Lent, these two lines (one verse) are sung three times, in Tone 5.



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

*And then the following prayers :*

### **TRISAGION PRAYERS**

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

*(three times)*

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

O most holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from  
our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and  
heal our infirmities, for Your Name's sake.

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

Our Father, who are in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name ; Your  
kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ;  
give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our debts, as we  
forgive our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test, but rescue  
us from the evil one.

*And then :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus Christ, our  
God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

*And these tropars : Tone 2*

As the prodigal son, I have sinned against You, O Saviour.  
Receive me who repent, O Father, and have mercy on me, O  
God.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.  
With the plea of the publican, I cry out to You, O Christ-  
Saviour : Cleanse me, as You cleansed him, and have mercy on  
me, O God.

Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O Theotokos, do not despise me, who am in need of your  
intercession, for my soul trusts in you. Have mercy on me.

LORD, have mercy. *(forty times)*

*And then the following prayer :*

O Master, LORD Almighty and Creator of all, Father of  
compassions and God of mercies, You fashioned Man from the  
earth, and showed him to be in Your image and likeness, that  
Your majestic Name might be glorified upon earth. And when  
he was cast out because he transgressed Your commandments,  
You recreated him anew in Your Christ, and You led him up to  
Heaven. I give You thanks, for You have multiplied Your  
wonders towards me, and You have not given me over to my  
enemies, who seek to cast me down into the pit of Hadēs ; nor  
have You forsaken me to perish in my sins. O generous LORD of  
many mercies, You desire not the death of a sinner, but rather,  
You await his conversion and You receive him. You raise up the  
fallen and You heal the crushed. Therefore, turn me to  
repentance as well. Raise me, who have fallen, and heal me, who  
am crushed. Remember Your compassions and Your  
unfathomable goodness from all ages ; and forget my endless  
sins, committed in word, deed and thought. Forgive the  
blindness of my heart, and grant me tears of tender compunction  
that shall cleanse the filth of my thoughts. Hearken, O LORD.  
Give heed, O Lover of Man. O tender-hearted One, cleanse and  
free my wretched soul from the torment of the passions that rule

over it. Let sin have no hold over me. Let not the warring demon overpower me, nor have his way with me. Rather, by Your powerful hand, snatch me from his mastery. Reign within me, O good LORD and Lover of Man. Be well-pleased to make me wholly Yours, that I may live the remainder of my life in accordance with Your will. In Your inexpressible goodness, grant me cleansing of heart, safeguarding of my lips, righteousness in my actions, humility of mind, peace in my thoughts, tranquillity in my spiritual powers, spiritual joy, unfeigned love, long-suffering, goodness, meekness, unhypocritical faith and all-embracing temperance. Fill me with every good fruit, by the gift of Your Holy Spirit. Take me not away in the midst of my days, nor snatch away my soul unamended or unprepared, but fill me with Your fulness. Thus, take me from this life, that, passing by the chiefs and powers of darkness, by Your Grace, I too might behold the ineffable beauty of Your unapproachable glory, together with all Your saints, in whom is sanctified and glorified Your all-honourable and majestic Name : of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



## session

18

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



### PSALM 119

### STATION 1

*“Supplication of the exiled”*

Πρὸς Κύριον      Ad Dominum

A canticle of the stairs.<sup>621</sup>

1

**T**o the LORD I cried out when I was being afflicted,  
and He heard me.

O LORD, rescue my soul from unrighteous lips,  
and from a deceitful tongue.

What may be given to you,  
and what may be added to you,  
against a deceitful tongue ?

---

<sup>621</sup> “Stairs” likely refers to the fifteen stairs by which one would approach the Temple in Jerusalem, *via* the fore-court. There were likely other flights of stairs closer in, and the Altar was prescribed to be raised on steps also. These fifteen psalms are canticles of approach to the Temple, approach to the Altar, and they are so used in Orthodox Christian worship today (Vespers). One usually ascends some stairs towards the Altar area, and it is customary still that the Holy Table be elevated on at least one step.

Saint John Chrysostom attributes all fifteen psalms to aspects of the return from the Babylonian captivity. Before the exile, the people took for granted and did not appreciate all the blessings given by God. Now, after much pain and suffering, the people have been brought to their senses. Now they greatly appreciate the ability to be again in Jerusalem, to worship the LORD, and to live for Him.

– the sharpened arrows of the powerful one,  
with the desolating coals.

Ah me, for my sojourning has been prolonged :

I have pitched my tent amongst the tents of Kēdar.<sup>622</sup>

My soul has much sojourned.

Amongst those hating peace, I was peaceful ;

when I was speaking to them,

they were making war against me without cause.

5



---

<sup>622</sup> “Kēdar” is a nomadic Arabian tribe of herdsmen, reckoned by the Hebrews as remote kinsmen, through Ishmaël (see 1 Mōysēs 25:13).

## PSALM 120

*“Christ is the Protection of the pilgrim”*

Ἦρα τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς Levavi oculos

A canticle of the stairs.

1

**I** have raised my eyes to the mountains,<sup>623</sup>  
whence my help shall come.

My help comes from the LORD,  
who made Heaven and the earth.

Do not allow your foot to slip,  
nor may the One watching over you slumber.

Behold, He, watching over Israēl,  
will neither slumber nor sleep.

The LORD will watch over you :

5

the LORD will be a shelter on your right-hand.

By day, the sun shall not scorch you,  
nor the moon by night.

The LORD will guard you from every ill :

the LORD will watch over your soul.

The LORD will guard your coming-in and your going-out,  
from now on and until the age.

---

<sup>623</sup> In contrast to the local pagans, who worship and sacrifice to false gods, idols (the ba’als) on the tops of mountains and hills, the Psalmist writes that he looks up to the LORD, the true God, the Creator of all. His help comes from the LORD, not from mere hills, hill-top shrines, mountains, or any creature. Many such hill-top shrines have long been replaced by Christian temples. This replacement gives witness to Him who created the mountains and all things.

Saint John Chrysostom comments that human beings are uniquely created to stand upright, with eyes up and forward, in order to teach us even from our structure that we are in our whole being created to look upwards, towards the LORD.

Cassiodorus advises us to consider these mountains spiritually, and to consider great, holy and godly persons, the angels, and the Scriptures to be veritable mountains of strength, of faith in God, through whom the LORD strengthens us.

## PSALM 121

*"Jerusalem on high, goal of the pilgrimage"*

Εὐφράνθην ἐπὶ τοῖς εἰρηκόσι      Lætatus sum

A canticle of the stairs.

1

**I** was glad of those who have said to me :  
"We shall walk to the house of the LORD".

Our feet were standing  
in your courts, O Jerousalēm.

Jerousalēm is built as a city,  
whose communion is as one ;<sup>624</sup>

for there the tribes went up,  
the tribes of the LORD,

as a testimony to Israēl,  
to confess the Name of the LORD ;

for there sat thrones for fair-judgement,  
thrones over the house of David.

5

Ask, then, for what is for the peace of Jerousalēm,  
and prosperity for those loving you.

Let peace, then, be in your power,  
and prosperity in your fortress-towers.

For the sake of my brothers and my neighbours, then,  
I was speaking of peace concerning you.

For the sake of the house of the LORD our God,  
I have sought out good things for you.

---

<sup>624</sup> "Communion" translates the Greek μετοχή, *metochē*, which can mean "participation", or "communion". It is sometimes translated also as "fellowship". Adjectivally, it implies "sharing in", "partaking of".

## PSALM 122

*"Supplication of the exiled"*

Πρὸς σὲ ἦρα τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς μου      Ad te levavi oculos

A canticle of the stairs.

1

**I** have raised my eyes to You :  
to You, dwelling in Heaven.

Behold, as the eyes of bond-servants  
are unto the hands of their masters,

as the eyes of a maid-servant<sup>625</sup>

are unto the hands of her mistress,  
so our eyes are towards the LORD our God,

until He have compassion on us.<sup>626</sup>

Have mercy on us, O LORD, have mercy on us ;  
for we have been much filled with contempt ;

too much has our soul been filled :

the reproach of the thriving,

and the contempt of the proud.



---

<sup>625</sup> About "maid-servant": see the foot-note on Psalm 85:16.

<sup>626</sup> Saint John Chrysostom tells us that since, in the deprivation of the Babylonian captivity, the people had no hope at all except in the LORD, therefore, they looked attentively and only to the Hand of the LORD for everything. We must ourselves likewise look only to the LORD.

**PSALM 123**

*"Thanksgiving for deliverance"*

Ei μὴ ὅτι Κύριος            Nisi quia Dominus

A canticle of the stairs. 1

**I**f it were not that the LORD was amongst us,  
let Israēl now say :

"If it were not that the LORD was amongst us,  
when Men rose up against us,  
then they would have swallowed us alive,  
when their fury raged against us ;  
then the water would have drowned us ;<sup>627</sup>  
our soul would have passed through a torrent ;  
then our soul would have passed through the irresistible  
water".

Blessed be the LORD, 5  
who did not give us as prey to their teeth.  
Our soul, like a sparrow, has been rescued from the snare  
of the hunters ;  
the snare has been shattered, and we have been rescued.  
Our help is in the Name of the LORD,  
who made Heaven and the earth.

---

<sup>627</sup> Turbulent waters can be a metaphor for the violence of human societies. The LORD, our Creator who loves us, is our Protector, Rescuer, Deliverer, Saviour. Regardless of the intensity of the difficulties we face, He is ever with us.



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



**PSALM 124****STATION 2***"Christ protects His Church"*

Οἱ πεποιθότες ἐπὶ Κύριον Qui confident

A canticle of the stairs.

1

**T**hose putting their trust in the LORD are like a mountain  
of Siōn :the one dwelling in Jerousalēm shall not be shaken unto  
the age.Mountains are round about her,<sup>628</sup>

and the LORD is round about His people

from now on and until the age ;

for the LORD will not allow the rod of sinners

to be on the lot of the righteous,

lest the righteous stretch out their hands in lawlessness.

Do good, O LORD, to those who are good,

and to those who are upright in heart ;

but those inclining away to twistedness,

5

the LORD will lead away with those working lawlessness.<sup>629</sup>

Peace be upon Israēl.

---

<sup>628</sup> Saint John Chrysostom comments about "mountains" that our hope in God can be likened to the stability and immovability of a mountain. The stability, invincibility and irreversibility of our trust and hope in God are all together even stronger than a mountain. Any spiritual or material weapons will not prevail against one trusting in and living in the LORD.

<sup>629</sup> Saint Basil the Great explains about these lines that the LORD is merciful, but He is at the same time righteous. He bestows mercy with judgement, and judgement with mercy. We must not dare to let His loving-kindness become an excuse for our indolence.

**PSALM 125***"The return of the exiles"*

Ἐν τῷ ἐπιστρέψαι In convertendo

A canticle of the stairs.

1

**W**hen the LORD turned about the captivity of Siōn,<sup>630</sup>  
we became just as those who are consoled.

Then our mouth was filled with joy,

and our tongue with exultation.

Then shall they say amongst the nations :

"The LORD has magnified His deeds amongst them".

The LORD has magnified His deeds amongst us :

we became full of gladness.

Turn about our captivity, O LORD,

as torrents in the south.

Those sowing in tears

5

shall reap in exultation.

Going, they were going and weeping,

broad-casting their seed ;<sup>631</sup>

but coming, they shall come in exultation,

carrying their sheaves.

---

<sup>630</sup> Saint Athanasius reminds us that this line refers to the events of the Books of Esdras.

<sup>631</sup> Saint John Chrysostom explains that the "going" is the departure to captivity. This is the sowing. The tears of tribulation acted as rain on seeds, making growth of love and life in the hearts of the people. The "coming", the return from exile, is the reaping. Because of the tears of Grace, the people are able to exult.

## PSALM 126

*"The building of the city of God"*

Ἐὰν μὴ Κύριος Nisi Dominus

A canticle of the stairs.

1

**U**nless the LORD build the house,  
in futility did they labour – those building it.<sup>632</sup>

Unless the LORD watch over the city,  
in futility did he keep vigil – the one keeping guard.

It is futile for you to arise at day-break,

to rouse yourselves after resting,

O you, eating the bread of pain,

whenever He may give sleep to His beloved ones.

Behold, sons are the inheritance of the LORD :

the reward of the fruit of the womb.

Just as arrows in the hand of a powerful one,

so are the sons of those who have been shaken out.<sup>633</sup>

Blessed is the one who shall fulfil his craving from them. 5

They shall not be put to shame,

whenever they may speak to their enemies in the gates.

---

<sup>632</sup> Saint John Chrysostom, in discussing the behaviour of the people at the building of the Tower of Babel (i.e. confusion), says that fallen humans are always pushing beyond their God-given boundaries, or limits. Thus, they built on the Plain of Shinar (Senaar) a city and a tower according to their own will and reasoning, not according to God's blessing. Because they abused unity, they reaped confusion.

<sup>633</sup> Saint John Chrysostom explains that the children of those "shaken out" (or tossed about) will be given the security of walls, and will become like fearsome sharp arrows.

Saint Augustine is of the opinion that the Apostles are the "sons" that are shot forth by the LORD "just as arrows", and which filled the whole earth.

## PSALM 127

*"The fruits of the labour of the righteous"*

Μακάριοι πάντες Beati omnes

A canticle of the stairs.

1

**B**lessed are all those fearing the LORD :  
those walking in His ways.<sup>634</sup>

You shall eat the fruits of your toil :

you are blessed, and it shall be well with you.

Your wife shall be as a vine

thriving on the sides of your house :

your sons as new shoots of olive

round about your table.

Behold, thus shall a Man be blessed,

the one fearing the LORD.

May the LORD bless you from Siōn,

5

and may you see the good things of Jerousalēm  
all the days of your life.

May you see the sons of your sons.

Peace be upon Israël.

---

<sup>634</sup> About "all": Saint John Chrysostom refers us to the sufferings and deprivation of Joseph the Comely, and also the repentant thief at the Saviour's Passion. He says that there is no-one who cannot receive blessing from the LORD. All who fear the LORD may receive blessing, no matter how horrible the circumstances otherwise may be. He also adds about "ways", that the ways are many and varied which take us through sufferings in the context of the LORD's blessing.

## PSALM 128

*"The victory of the Church over adverse powers"*

Πλεονάκις ἐπολέμησάν με      Sæpe expugnaverunt

A canticle of the stairs.

1

**M**any times have they warred against me from my  
youth,

let Israēl now say :

"Many times have they warred against me from my  
youth ;

indeed, they had no power over me.<sup>635</sup>

Behind my back were the sinners contriving :<sup>636</sup>  
their lawlessness they prolonged".

The righteous LORD has chopped up the necks of sinners.

Let them be put to shame, and be turned backwards –  
all those hating Siōn.

5

Let them become just as grass of the roof-tops,  
which dried out before it was pulled up,  
with which the one reaping has not filled his hand,  
nor his bosom, the one gathering the sheaves ;  
and those passing by have not said :  
"The blessing of the LORD be upon you ;  
we have blessed you in the Name of the LORD".

---

<sup>635</sup> Preparing the way for the Evangelist John, who writes that the darkness has not overcome nor gobbled up the Light (see John 1:5), the Psalmist expresses confidence that those living under the oppression of darkness, and who violently resist the Light and the Truth, cannot prevail.

<sup>636</sup> "Behind" is in Greek literally "upon"; "were contriving" is sometimes translated "ploughed".

✠

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

**PSALM 129**

**STATION 3**

*“Confident supplication of the penitent”*

Ἐκ βαθέων ἐκέκραξά De profundis

A canticle of the stairs.

1

**O**ut of the depths I cried out to You, O LORD ;<sup>637</sup>  
O LORD, hear my voice.

Let Your ears give heed to the voice of my supplication.

If You would mark lawless acts, O LORD,

O LORD, who shall withstand ?

for by You is propitiation.<sup>638</sup>

For the sake of Your Name I have waited for You,

O LORD :

5

my soul has waited for Your Word.

My soul has hoped on the LORD,

from the morning watch until night :

from the morning watch, let Israēl hope on the LORD ;<sup>639</sup>

for by the LORD there is mercy,<sup>640</sup>

and by Him great redemption,

and He will redeem Israēl

from all his lawless acts.

<sup>637</sup> Saint John Chrysostom comments that prayers that proceed from the depths of the heart can be likened to trees with very deep roots. The prayer, as the tree, thus is able to resist every storm, to rise to the heights, and to reach the LORD.

<sup>638</sup> “By” indicates proximity, not agency.

God knows every one of our sins, and were we called to account by Him for them all, how could we bear it? But we have confidence in His Love, His Mercy, His Righteousness, despite our rebellious ways. The LORD can be moved by our repentance; that is, He is propitious and can be propitiated.

<sup>639</sup> Saint John Chrysostom explains that at those times when attacks, death, danger, ruin, and/or the risk of ultimate disaster, drive us towards despairing, this continuous hoping on the LORD provides an impregnable wall and tower for the one hoping. We must always await His salvation. Everything is easy for Him. He finds a means where none otherwise exists.

<sup>640</sup> Saint John Chrysostom further comments that from the LORD loving-kindness springs and flows constantly. It brings redemption, a limitless ocean of loving-kindness.

**PSALM 130**

*“The life of humility”*

Κύριε, οὐκ ὑψώθη Domine, non est

A canticle of the stairs.

1

**O**LORD, my heart has not been exalted,  
nor have my eyes been raised up,

nor have I walked amongst great things

nor amongst wonders beyond me.

If I were not humble-minded

as one newly-weaned against his mother,<sup>641</sup>

but rather had exalted my soul,

such be the requital against my soul.

Let Israēl hope on the LORD,

from now on and until the age.



<sup>641</sup> “Against” has two opposite meanings.

In his comments, Saint John Chrysostom takes the place of the Psalmist. In this position, he explains that the Psalmist was not only innocent of the vice of haughtiness, but he adopted the virtue opposite to it to an extraordinary degree — humility, moderation, contrition. This was exactly like Christ’s exhortation that we be child-like. The nursing child clinging to its mother is humble, free of any haughtiness, lives in simplicity and innocence. So too was he in his relationship with God, clinging to Him ceaselessly. The Psalmist compared his own sufferings to that of the weaned child. The weaned child does not leave his mother without suffering, grieving and weeping. He clings to his mother and does not want to leave her. So the Psalmist clings to God in hardships and disasters. If he were not like this, he asks that his soul be requited.

## PSALM 131

*"The human nature of Christ, true Ark of the Covenant"*

Μνήσθητι, Κύριε      Memento, Domine

A canticle of the stairs.

1

**R**emember David, O LORD,  
and all his meekness :

how he swore an oath to the LORD.

He made a vow to the God of Jakōb :

"I shall not come into the tent of my house ;

I shall not go up to the couch of my bed ;

I shall not give sleep to my eyes,

nor to my eyelids slumber,

nor rest to my temples,

until I find a place for the LORD,<sup>642</sup>

5

a tent for the God of Jakōb".

Behold, we heard of it in Ephratha ;<sup>643</sup>

we found it in the clearings of the thicket.

We shall come into His tents ;

we shall worship at the place where His feet stood.

Arise unto Your Rest, O LORD :

You, and the Ark of Your sanctity.<sup>644</sup>

Your priests shall put on righteousness,

and Your holy ones shall exult.

---

<sup>642</sup> That David showed such primary concern for the LORD's house is an example to believers at all times and in all places: to make the first priority of one's heart to be making provision for, and caring for the place of the LORD's worship — motivated by love and respect for Him.

<sup>643</sup> Saint John Chrysostom is certain that "it" refers to the Ark of the Covenant. The "clearings of the thicket" translates the Greek word for the Hebrew abbreviation of *Kiriath-Jearim*, where the Ark of the Covenant had been kept from Samuel's time until David became king in Jerusalem (see 1 Kingdoms 7:1-2).

<sup>644</sup> About "sanctity" here and in verse 18: see the foot-note on Psalm 77:69.

For the sake of David, Your bond-servant,  
do not turn away the face of Your christ.

10

The LORD swore truth to David,  
and will not set it at nought :

"From the fruit of your loins will I set one on your throne."<sup>645</sup>

If your sons were to keep My Covenant,

and these My testimonies that I will teach them,

then also shall their sons sit upon your throne until the  
age" ;

for the LORD has chosen out Siōn ;

He has chosen her as a dwelling for Himself.

"This is My Rest unto an age of an age ;

here I will dwell, for I have chosen her.

Blessing, I will bless her hunting,<sup>646</sup>

15

and her poor I will sate with bread.

Her priests I will clothe with salvation,

and her holy ones shall exult with exultation.

There I will cause a horn to spring up for David ;

I have prepared a lamp for My christ.

His enemies I will clothe with shame,

but upon him shall My sanctity flourish".

---

<sup>645</sup> (2 Kingdoms 7:12-16; 1 Paraleipomenon 17:11-14; Acts 2:30)

<sup>646</sup> About "hunting": the Greek word in the ecclesiastical text is "door". There is another variant spelling of this Greek noun. However, since Saint John Chrysostom's commentary refers to spoils of hunting, so is this word used here.

## PSALM 132

*“Unanimity in the Spirit of Christ”*

Ἴδοὺ δὴ τί καλὸν      Ecce, quam bonum

A canticle of the stairs.

1

**B**ehold, now, what is so beautiful, or what is so  
delightful,

as for brothers to dwell as one ?

It is as sweet-oil upon the head,

running down upon the beard, the beard of Aarōn,  
running down to the fringe of his raiment.

It is as the dew of Hermōn,<sup>647</sup>

running down upon the mountains of Siōn ;<sup>648</sup>

for there the LORD has commanded the blessing :  
life until the age.



---

<sup>647</sup> “Hermōn” is also spelled “Aërmōn”, or “Haërmōn”, which in Greek is Ἑρμών.

<sup>648</sup> About these lines: such blessings are the result of the beauty of living in unity. Living in this unity under God enables God’s blessing to flow freely in us, through us, to the world. Aaron was ordained to serve the LORD as high-priest, and through him Israel received blessing from the LORD. Likewise Israel, exercising a priestly ministry in the world, living and serving in unity as a society in unity with the LORD, would bring blessings to the world.

## PSALM 133

*“Invitation to praise in the night”*

Ἴδοὺ δὴ εὐλογεῖτε      Ecce, nunc

A canticle of the stairs.

1

**B**ehold, now, bless the LORD,

all you bond-servants of the LORD :

you, standing in the house of the LORD,<sup>649</sup>

in the courts of the house of our God.

In the nights, lift up your hands to the holy places,  
and bless the LORD.

May the LORD bless you from Siōn :

He who made Heaven and the earth.



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

---

<sup>649</sup> Saint Ambrose of Milan explains about “standing” that people stand when they bless the LORD. A soldier on duty, a cautious watchman, an alert guard, they all stand to serve. One who sits is unnerved when idle, and when relaxing the tension of his mind.

It is also frequently repeated that the children of God, unlike slaves, stand in God’s presence.

*And then the following prayers:*

### TRISAGION PRAYERS

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

*(three times)*

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

O most holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and heal our infirmities, for Your Name's sake.

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

Our Father, who are in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name ; Your kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ; give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test, but rescue us from the evil one.

*And then :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

*And these tropars : Tone 2*

Before You judge me, O LORD, my LORD, grant me conversion and amendment of my many sins. Grant tender compunction to my soul, that I might cry out to You : O my deeply merciful God, O Lover of Man, save me.

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

I, the prodigal, have joined the mindless beasts, because I have made myself like them. Grant me conversion, O Christ, that I may receive from You great mercy.

Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Do not turn your face away from me, I beg you, O Lady ; but, as the deeply-merciful Mother of the compassionate God, hasten, before the end, to bestow conversion upon me ; that, saved by you, I might hymn you, O my Lady, as my unashamed hope and salvation.

LORD, have mercy. *(forty times)*

*And then the following prayer :*

O LORD, do not accuse me in Your wrath, nor punish me in Your anger.<sup>650</sup> O Master, LORD Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy on me, who am sinful, lowly, naked, lazy, negligent, argumentative, wretched, prodigal, adulterous, debauched, perverted, filthy, ungrateful, unmerciful, cruel, a drunkard, scorched in conscience, lacking any boldness, lacking any defence, unworthy of Your love for Man, and worthy of every punishment and torment, and of Gehenna. O my Deliverer, do not subject me to abundant torments because of the great abundance of my transgressions. Rather, have mercy on me, for I am infirm in body and soul, in mind and thought ; and by judgements known to You, save me, Your unworthy bond-servant, by the prayers of our all-pure Lady, the Theotokos and of all the saints, who have been well-pleasing to You throughout the ages ; for You are blessed unto the ages of ages. Amen.



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<sup>650</sup> About “wrath” and “anger”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.



## SESSION

19

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



## PSALM 134

## STATION 1

*"Hymn for the victory of Christ"*

Αἰνεῖτε τὸ ὄνομα Κυρίου      Laudate Nomen

Allélouia.

1

**P**raise the Name of the LORD ;  
praise the LORD, O bond-servants,<sup>651</sup>

standing in the house of the LORD,

in the courts of the house of our God.

Praise the LORD, for the LORD is good :

chant to His Name, for it is good ;<sup>652</sup>

for the LORD has chosen out Jakōb for Himself :

Israël, as a special possession for Himself ;

for I know that the LORD is great,

5

and that our LORD is beyond all the gods.

---

<sup>651</sup> There are two sorts of "bond-servants" indicated here. The first are the Levites, the priestly families whose life-responsibility is to serve the praise of the LORD in the Temple. The second are all the faithful people standing in the courts of the Temple of the LORD, whose lives live out the praise of the LORD. Praise of the LORD is the root of our life.

<sup>652</sup> Saint John Chrysostom comments that the LORD is worthy of such praise. But such praise benefits us also. It purifies the soul, uplifts the mind. It clarifies our understanding, brings us consolation, and it makes us holy, as we fulfil the purpose of our creation.



All things that He willed,  
the LORD did, in Heaven and on the earth,  
in the seas and in all the abysses.  
Leading up the clouds from the farthest end of the earth,  
He made lightnings into heavy rain :  
He, leading out winds from His treasuries.  
He smote the first-born of Ægypt, from Men to cattle.  
He sent out signs and portents in your midst, O Ægypt,  
on Pharaō, and on all his bond-servants.<sup>653</sup>

He it is who smote many nations, 10  
and He slew strong kings :  
Sēōn, king of the Amorrites,<sup>654</sup>  
and Ōg, king of Basan,  
and all the kingdoms of Khanaan.<sup>655</sup>  
And He gave their land as an inheritance,  
an inheritance for Israēl, His people.  
O LORD, Your Name is unto the age,  
and Your remembrance unto generation and generation ;  
for the LORD will judge His people,  
and on behalf of His bond-servants He will be entreated.

The idols of the nations are silver and gold : 15  
they are works of the hands of Men.  
A mouth they have, and they shall not speak ;  
eyes they have, and they shall not see.

<sup>653</sup> “Pharaō”=Pharaoh.

<sup>654</sup> (4 Mōysēs 21:21-35) “Amorrites”=descendants of the fourth son of Canaan.

<sup>655</sup> The “kingdoms of Khanaan” always represented the pagan poisoners of the people of God, poisoners by their distracting the faithful from true service to the True LORD, not the false lords, the ba’als.

Ears they have, and they shall not give ear ;  
for there is not even a breath in their mouth.  
May those making them become like them,  
and all those putting their trust in them.  
O house of Israēl, bless the LORD ;  
O house of Aarōn, bless the LORD ;  
O house of Levi, bless the LORD ;<sup>656</sup>

20  
you that are fearing the LORD, bless the LORD.  
Blessed be the LORD from Siōn :  
He who dwells in Jerousalēm.



<sup>656</sup> Israel includes all the people of God. Aaron and Moses were of the tribe of Levi, the third generation after the patriarch Levi. Levites are a tribe of priests who serve the Temple. The sons of Aaron are priests who may be high-priests. See 2 Mōysēs 29; 4 Mōysēs 3:5-13; 4:1-20.

Regardless of the irrational behaviours of others, the Children of the Promise, who are the participants in God’s Covenant of Love, are called to bless the LORD as they were created to do.

**PSALM 135**

*"Hymn to Christ, Creator and Redeemer"*

Ἐξομολογεῖσθε τῷ Κυρίῳ      Confitemini

Allēlouia.

1

**O** confess the LORD, for He is good,  
for eternal is His mercy.

Confess the God of gods,  
for eternal is His mercy.

Confess the LORD of lords,<sup>657</sup>

for eternal is His mercy :

who alone does great wonders,

for eternal is His mercy ;

who made the Heavens with understanding,

5

for eternal is His mercy ;

who made firm the earth upon the waters,

for eternal is His mercy ;

who alone made great lights,

for eternal is His mercy —

the sun for authority over the day,

for eternal is His mercy ;

and the moon and the stars for authority over the night,

for eternal is His mercy —

who smote Ægypt with their first-born,<sup>658</sup>

10

for eternal is His mercy ;

<sup>657</sup> About these lines: the LORD is the Creator of all. At all times and in all places, He is involved in all He created, and doing wonders. This psalm addresses the presence and involvement of the LORD in creation and in the history of the people of Israel: His personal loving-care, His personal provision for His creatures.

<sup>658</sup> (2 Mōysēs 12:29-36)

and led out Israēl from their midst,

for eternal is His mercy —

with a strong hand and upraised arm,

for eternal is His mercy —

who divided the Red Sea into parts,<sup>659</sup>

for eternal is His mercy ;

and led Israēl through the midst of it,

for eternal is His mercy ;

and shook off Pharaō and his power into the Red Sea,<sup>660</sup>

15

for eternal is His mercy ;

who led His people in the wilderness,

for eternal is His mercy ;

who smote great kings,

for eternal is His mercy ;

and slew strong kings,

for eternal is His mercy —

Sēōn, king of the Amorrithes,

for eternal is His mercy ;

and Ōg, king of Basan,

20

for eternal is His mercy —

and gave their land as an inheritance,

for eternal is His mercy —

<sup>659</sup> About “into parts”: Saint John Chrysostom informs us that some other commentators of his time understood that the waters dividing into parts indicates that, considering the multitude, there was not a single avenue opened, but one for each tribe, which enabled rapid transit.

<sup>660</sup> (2 Mōysēs 14)

an inheritance for Israēl, His bond-servant,  
for eternal is His mercy ;  
for the LORD remembered us in our humiliation,  
for eternal is His mercy ;  
and He redeemed us from our enemies,  
for eternal is His mercy —  
He who gives nourishment to all flesh,  
for eternal is His mercy.  
O confess the God of Heaven,  
for eternal is His mercy.

25



### PSALM 136

*“Longing for Jerusalem on high”*<sup>661</sup>

Ἐπὶ τῶν ποταμῶν Super flumina

By David. Of Jeremias. For the captivity.<sup>662</sup>

1

**B**y the rivers of Babylōn,<sup>663</sup>  
there we sat down ;

and we wept when we remembered Siōn.

On the willows in her midst

we hung up our instruments ;

for there, those who took us captive

asked of us words of canticles,

and those who led us away, a hymn,

saying : “Sing to us from the canticles of Siōn”.

How could we sing the canticle of the LORD

in a foreign land ?

If I should forget you, O Jerousalēm,

may my right hand be forgotten.

May my tongue cleave to my throat,

if I should not remember you ;

if I should not prefer Jerousalēm

as the source of my gladness.

Remember, O LORD, the sons of Edōm,

on the day of Jerousalēm, those saying :

5

<sup>661</sup> As this psalm addresses life in Babylon, in the place of exile of the Hebrew people, it addresses also our living in exile from Paradise, our first home, and our longing for the heavenly Jerusalem.

<sup>662</sup> (4 Kingdoms 25:1-21; 1 Esdras 1:37-55; Jezekiël 3:15)

<sup>663</sup> Saint John Chrysostom reminds us that the Israelites came to be in this exile because they had taken the LORD and His service for granted, and neglected their relationship of love with Him. The LORD allowed the exile, since they left His protection, so that they would be able to turn seriously again to Him.

“Desolate her, desolate her to her foundations”.  
O daughter of Babylōn, miserable as you are,  
blessed is the one who shall requite you  
with the recompense with which you requited us.  
Blessed is the one who shall take hold of your infants,  
and dash them against the rock.<sup>664</sup>



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
(three times)  
LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

---

<sup>664</sup> Saint Ambrose of Milan comments that this means that all corrupt and filthy thoughts should be dashed against Christ, the Rock.  
Archimandrite Placide reminds us that this opinion is commonly held by the Fathers.

**PSALM 137**

**STATION 2**

*“Thanksgiving of the Church”*

Ἐξομολογήσομαί σοι, Κύριε      Confitebor tibi  
A psalm by David. Of Haggai and Zakharias.<sup>665</sup> 1  
**I** shall confess You, O LORD, with my whole heart,<sup>666</sup>  
and in the presence of angels shall I chant to You,<sup>667</sup>  
for You have heard all the utterances of my mouth.  
I shall worship towards Your holy temple,  
and I shall confess Your Name because of Your mercy and  
Your truth,  
for You have magnified Your holy Name above everything.  
In whatever day I may call upon You, swiftly listen to me.  
You will take much care of me, in my soul, by Your power.  
Let all the kings of the earth confess You, O LORD,  
for they have heard all the utterances of Your mouth. 5  
Let them sing in the canticles of the LORD,  
for great is the glory of the LORD ;  
for the LORD is on high, and He looks upon humble things,<sup>668</sup>  
and high things He knows from afar off.

---

<sup>665</sup> “Zakharias”=Zacharias.

<sup>666</sup> “Confess” in this, and other contexts, carries the meaning of “admitting openly”. If we confess God, we are openly admitting that we love Him, that we are dependent upon Him for everything, that we praise Him in and for everything, that we acknowledge His greatness, His love for us, His mercy, His attention to us, and more. See the foot-note about “confess” on Psalm 6:6.

<sup>667</sup> Saint Bede of Jarrow states that it is known that angels are invisibly present beside the elect, to defend them from the enemy (see Hebrews 1:14). They are especially present to us when we give ourselves to the Divine Services. Following the example of the Myrrh-bearing women, we must always be aware of this angelic presence, and, along with them lovingly prostrating ourselves, we must fulfil our responsibility of service.

<sup>668</sup> Saint Augustine states that God, dwelling on high, draws near to the lowly. The only way to attain to Him is through humility, and that means also the Cross. He is found in the heart in selfless love. The proud struggle to be seen, but the LORD is not near to such persons, because their selfishness pushes Him away.

If I were to walk in the midst of affliction,  
 You will make me live.<sup>669</sup>  
 Against the anger of my enemies,  
 You stretched out Your hands,  
 and Your right hand saved me.  
 The LORD will requite them on my behalf.  
 O LORD, Your mercy is eternal ;  
 do not overlook the works of Your hands.




---

<sup>669</sup> Saint John Chrysostom comments that the LORD does not necessarily remove the affliction, but rather, He establishes in life and security the afflicted one by being present. The LORD gives life to the afflicted. The LORD is particularly concerned about the lowly, hence He sets His eyes upon them. The lowly more quickly turn to the LORD for help than do the exalted, and He responds. The exalted ones are those who have, in fact, exalted themselves, and they have therefore become remote from the LORD. They are remote because they consider themselves to be great, and therefore self-sufficient, independent of the LORD.

**PSALM 138**

*“The heavenly Father was always with Christ in Death, and in the Resurrection”*

Κύριε, ἔδοκίμασάς με Domine, probasti

For the end. By David.

1

A psalm of Zakharias in the dispersion.<sup>670</sup>

**O** LORD, You proved me, and You knew me.  
 It is You that knew my sitting-down and my  
 awakening ;

it is You that understood my reasonings from afar off.

My path and my lot You tracked out,<sup>671</sup>  
 and all my ways You saw before-hand,<sup>672</sup>  
 that there is no deceit on my tongue.

Behold, O LORD, it is You that know all :  
 the Last Things, and the things of old.<sup>673</sup>

5

It is You that fashioned me, and laid Your hand upon me.  
 Wonderful has Your knowledge become, which emanates  
 from me ;<sup>674</sup>

it has become strong, I am unable to attain to it.  
 Where could I walk away from Your Spirit ?<sup>675</sup>  
 and from Your Face, where could I flee ?

---

<sup>670</sup> (4 Kingdoms 25:1-21)

<sup>671</sup> A “lot” is land measured by a standard line. See the foot-note on Psalm 15:6.

<sup>672</sup> God is the Source of our being, and He is involved in everything we are, whether we accept or admit it, or not. Providence is not often admitted, especially nowadays; but the LORD nevertheless prepares our ways, with which we may or may not willy-nilly co-operate.

<sup>673</sup> These words are equivalent to *Omega* and *Alpha*: the last and the first.

<sup>674</sup> About this line: this is understood by Saint Basil the Great as Christ speaking.

<sup>675</sup> The Spirit of the LORD fills the universe: God’s Face, His Presence, is everywhere (see Wisdom of Solomon 1:7).

If I were to go up into Heaven, You are there ;  
 if I were to go down into Hadēs, You are present.<sup>676</sup>  
 If I may take up my wings towards day-break,  
 and pitch my tent at the farthest ends of the sea,  
 there, indeed, Your hand shall lead me on the way, 10  
 and Your right hand shall hold me fast.  
 And I said : “Then darkness shall trample me” .  
 But night is an illumination in my delight ;  
 for darkness shall not be darkened because of You,<sup>677</sup>  
 and night shall be illumined as day :  
 as is its darkness, so is its light ;  
 for it is You that have possessed my reins, O LORD.  
 You have supported me from my mother’s womb.<sup>678</sup>  
 I shall confess You, for You are wonderful and formidable ;<sup>679</sup>

<sup>676</sup> “Hadēs”=*Sheol*=the pit=corruption=destruction=the place of the dead.  
 In Heaven, one is clearly in the presence of God. Hadēs, by contrast, is a state of deceptively-perceived separation from God’s Presence, a state which might be considered to be a denial of God’s Presence. It is also considered to be a state of forgetfulness. Hell, equated with Gehenna, a state of burning, could be considered to be a state of still stronger denial. God’s loving Presence is in both of these states, regardless, since nothing, not even the state of rebellion, can have existence apart from God. But God is there, patiently waiting in His Love. The burning in Gehenna is the burning that results from denying and/or rejecting the LORD’s life-giving Love. The consequence of this is rebellious, selfish insistence upon self-reliance, trying to pretend that God is not there. I may try to flee from Him, but it is self-deception to do so.

<sup>677</sup> Saint John Chrysostom comments on these words, emphasising that night is in fact shining although it remains night. Light shines in the night. It is similar to the experience of the Three Young Men, when the dew was in the furnace, but the fire remained intensely hot. He earlier refers us to the Gospel according to John 1. Disaster, night, does not trample us, because the light shines and supports us.

<sup>678</sup> David, the Psalmist, formed by the words of Mosaic law, well understands that human life begins at conception in the womb.

<sup>679</sup> Saint John Chrysostom reminds us that the Prophet David understood that God is omnipresent, and inescapable. He did not know how this was so, but he was in awe of the limitless sea of God’s Wisdom. He gives thanks that he cannot comprehend his Master.

wonderful are Your works, and very well does my soul  
 know it.  
 My bones, which You made in secret,<sup>680</sup> 15  
 have not been hidden from You,  
 nor my existence in the lowest parts of the earth.  
 Your eyes saw my unformed being,  
 and in Your book shall all things be written,  
 days which shall be fashioned,  
 when there was not yet one amongst them.  
 By me, Your friends were greatly honoured, O God ;  
 their principalities became very strong.  
 I shall count them, and they shall be multiplied more than  
 the sand.  
 I woke up, and still I am with You.  
 If only You would slay sinners, O God.  
 O men of blood, decline away from me,  
 for you are wranglers in your reasonings. 20  
 Out of futility shall they take Your cities.  
 Have I not hated those hating You, O LORD,  
 and was I not melting away because of Your enemies ?  
 I was hating them with an absolute hatred ;  
 they became as enemies to me.<sup>681</sup>

<sup>680</sup> “Bones” in Greek is singular. It may be taken as one representing the whole. Saint Augustine considers the singular bone to be a metaphor for interior strength.

<sup>681</sup> These words may express more particularly the rejection of spiritual enemies. The hatred of such enemies could be taken as a rejection of the Tempter, and this revulsion could be in reaction to the “bitterness the Adversary has given me to drink”, as is said in the concluding prayer of this kathisma. “Melting away because of Your enemies”, in the spiritual life, can indicate the action of revulsion in the face of the distortions and the rebellions of the Adversary, and the immediate and necessary call to the LORD for rescue and for help. Melting away when attacked,

Prove me, O God, and know my heart :  
examine me, and know my paths ;  
and see whether a way of lawlessness be in me,  
and lead me on the way, in the way eternal.



---

then, allows one to remain intact, when calling to and holding on to the LORD, much as is done in oriental martial arts. The side-stepping of the attack allows it to pass by, and calling to the LORD brings His strength to bear. Melting away may also suggest the intensity of the heat of the reaction to the enemy.

### PSALM 139

*"Supplication in persecution"*

Ἐξελοῦ με, Κύριε Eripe me, Domine

For the end. A psalm by David.

1

**S**et me free from an evil Man, O LORD ;  
from an unrighteous man rescue me.

Whosoever calculated unrighteously in their heart,  
the whole day long they were drawing up their ranks for  
wars.

They sharpened their tongue just like that of a serpent ;  
poison of asps is under their lips.<sup>682</sup>

*Pause*

Guard me, O LORD, from the hand of a sinner ;

5

set me free from that of unrighteous Men,  
who reasoned out how to trip up my foot-steps.

The proud hid a snare for me,  
and they stretched out cords as a snare for my feet ;  
next to the path they laid a stumbling-block for me.<sup>683</sup>

*Pause*

I said to the LORD : "You are my God ;  
give ear, O LORD, to the voice of my supplication".  
O LORD, O LORD, the power of my salvation,  
You over-shadowed my head in the day of war.<sup>684</sup>

---

<sup>682</sup> (Romans 3:13)

<sup>683</sup> Saint Augustine comments that because Christ is Himself the Way, the traps can be laid by the enemy only by the way-side, "next to the path". The LORD uses those snares to bring us back to the Way and the Life when we stray, when we err.

<sup>684</sup> About "over-shadowed": Saint John Chrysostom draws our attention to the ease with which the LORD, in His Love, gives us protection, meaning covering, so that we have security in any danger. We have joyful confidence in the ease with which He covers, or over-shadows us always, even in His anticipating the need.

Do not give me over to a sinner because of my craving,  
O LORD.

They have reasoned against me ;  
do not abandon me, lest they be exalted.

*Pause*

The head of their encircling,<sup>685</sup> 10  
the trouble of their lips, shall cover them up.

Coals shall fall upon them ;  
in fire You will cast them down,  
in miseries which they shall not be able to withstand.  
A man who babbles shall not prosper on the earth ;  
bad things shall hunt down an unrighteous man unto  
corruption.

I know that the LORD will make the fair-judgement of the  
poor,

and the cause of the needy.

Nevertheless, the righteous shall confess Your Name ;  
the upright shall dwell with Your Face.

---

<sup>685</sup> Saint John Chrysostom interprets “head” in the sense of summit, or culmination. He further explains that the wicked schemes, the summit of their corrupt outlook, will bring them down, becoming the bane of those employing it, and will submerge them completely. This may be described also as a “boomerang effect”.

Saint Athanasius understands “head” in the sense of beginning. The beginning is the thoughts and feelings of sinners. This principle and beginning of their plots against us, through which they encircle us, is simply their toil and trouble against us, which shall fall on them. They shall be handed over to trial by fire.

✠

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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



**PSALM 140**

**STATION 3**

*“Evening prayer”*

Κύριε, ἐκέκραξα Domine, clamavi

A psalm by David.

1

**O** LORD, I cried out to You ; hear me.

Give heed to the voice of my supplication, when I  
cry out to You.

Let my prayer go straight up, as incense before Your Face :  
the lifting-up of my hands, as an evening sacrifice.<sup>686</sup>

O LORD, set a guard on my mouth,  
and a fortified door around my lips.

Do not incline my heart away to words of evil, to make  
excuses for sins,<sup>687</sup>

along with Men working lawlessness ;  
and I shall not join in with their chosen ones.

The righteous one shall instruct me with mercy, and shall  
reprove me ;

5

but let not the oil of a sinner anoint my head,  
for my prayer is still for their good-pleasure.<sup>688</sup>

Their judges have been drowned near the rock ;  
they shall hear my utterances, for they have been sweetened.

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<sup>686</sup> Saint John Chrysostom states that when both tongue and hands are cleansed of every impurity, they can indeed become as incense and an acceptable sacrifice. The tongue must produce only holiness and praise, without evil words. The hands cleansed of avarice and rapacity become spotless, pure offerers of incense.

<sup>687</sup> About “incline”: Saint John Chrysostom explains that God does not incline or turn any heart to any evil. Rather, we are asking Him not to allow this to occur.

<sup>688</sup> “For their good-pleasure” refers back to those working lawlessness. When we therefore pray for the welfare of the ones who are at enmity with us, it is “for their good-pleasure”. This is the opposite of what one generally experiences in the fallen world. Nevertheless, it is the expression of what is written in Psalm 22 on this subject in the verse about the prepared table. It is Saint Silouan’s teaching that this prayer for the good of the enemy is the hallmark of the Christian.

Just as a clod of earth has been broken upon the earth,  
so their bones have been scattered about beside Hadēs ;  
for towards You, O LORD, O LORD, are my eyes ;  
on You have I hoped ; do not wipe out my soul.<sup>689</sup>

Keep me from a snare which they set up for me,  
and from stumbling-blocks of those working  
lawlessness.

The sinners shall fall into their net ;  
as for me, I am alone until I pass over.<sup>690</sup>

10



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<sup>689</sup> About “wipe out”: see the foot-note on Psalm 9:26.

<sup>690</sup> “Pass over” translates the Greek *παρέρχομαι*, *parerkhomai*, which means, among other things, “pass over”. This prompts Saint Augustine to write that in this psalm we see the Passover, that is to say, in this verse we hear of Pascha.

## PSALM 141

*"Supplication of Christ in His Passion"*

Φωνὴ μου πρὸς Κύριον      Voce mea ad Dominum

Of understanding. By David.

1

When he was in the cave. A prayer.<sup>691</sup>

**W**ith my voice I cried out to the LORD ;  
with my voice I made supplication to the LORD.

I shall pour out before His Face my supplication ;

I shall make known before His Face my affliction.<sup>692</sup>

When my spirit faints out of me,

You know my paths ;

on this way on which I was walking,

have they hidden a snare for me.

I was observing to my right, and looking attentively,

5

and there was no-one recognising me ;

flight has been lost from me,

and there is no-one seeking out my soul.

I cried out to You, O LORD ;

I said : "You are my Hope,

my Portion in the land of the living".

Give heed to my supplication,

for I have been exceedingly humbled.

Rescue me from those closely pursuing me,

for they have become stronger than I.

---

<sup>691</sup> (1 Kingdoms 24)

<sup>692</sup> Saint John Chrysostom comments that the "affliction" that one suffers is in itself a recommendation to be heard by the LORD, much in the manner in which the Apostle writes that affliction produces perseverance, &c. (see Romans 5:3-4). Therefore, in the LORD, affliction can be profitable.

Lead my soul out of prison,  
so that I may confess Your Name.

The righteous shall wait for me  
until You requite me.



## PSALM 142

*"Supplication of Christ in His passion"*

Κύριε, εἰσάκουσον Domine, exaudi

By David, when Abessalōm, his son, pursues him 1  
closely.<sup>693</sup>

**O** LORD, hear my prayer ;  
give ear to my supplication in Your truth ;  
hear me in Your righteousness.

Do not enter into fair-judgement with Your bond-servant,  
for no-one living shall be found righteous before Your  
Face ;

for the enemy closely pursued my soul :  
he humbled my life to the earth ;  
he made me sit in dark places, like those long dead.

My spirit within me fell into accidie ;<sup>694</sup>  
within me, my heart was stirred up.

I remembered days of old. 5

I ruminated on all Your works :  
on the works of Your hands was I ruminating.

I spread out my hands towards You ;  
my soul was to You like a waterless land.<sup>695</sup>

---

<sup>693</sup> (2 Kingdoms 17)

<sup>694</sup> About "accidie": it is important to remember that, when following the Way, there are always opposing forces attempting to distract, divert, discourage. Accidie is the result of having fallen into such a subtle temptation. In this psalm, the remedy is immediately provided — remembrance of God's Love and help, and calling to Him for aid. See the foot-note on Psalm 60:3.

<sup>695</sup> David says that he truly thirsts for God as "a waterless land". However, such land, when water falls upon it, can either soak up the water eagerly, or it can reject it. The soil has to be ready to accept the rain when it comes, in God's time. Sometimes spiritual refreshment comes, but the soil cannot or will not recognise it for what it is, because it has predetermined what sort of blessing or refreshment it must receive, and it cannot absorb the refreshment. The heart must be nurtured and tilled, and kept ready to receive refreshment whenever, and in whatever form,

*Pause*

Be swift to hear me, O LORD ;  
my spirit has fainted.

Do not turn away Your Face from me,  
or I shall become like those going down into the pit.

Make me hear Your mercy in the morning,  
for on You have I hoped.

Make known to me, O LORD, the way in which I shall walk,  
for to You have I raised my soul.

Set me free from my enemies, O LORD,  
for I have fled to You for refuge.

Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God. 10

Your good Spirit will lead me on the way, in the land of  
uprightness.

For the sake of Your Name, O LORD, You will make me  
live ;

in Your righteousness You will lead my soul out of  
affliction.

In Your mercy You will exterminate my enemies,<sup>696</sup>  
and You will destroy all those afflicting my soul,  
for I am Your bond-servant.

---

it arrives.

<sup>696</sup> Although David may indicate physical enemies, adversaries, we must first understand these to be the Adversary himself, from whom the LORD rescues us. It is the LORD who accomplishes our salvation.



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

*And then the following prayers:*

### **TRISAGION PRAYERS**

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

*(three times)*

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

O most holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from  
our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and  
heal our infirmities, for Your Name's sake.

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

Our Father, who are in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name ;  
Your kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in  
Heaven ; give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our  
debts, as we forgive our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test,  
but rescue us from the evil one.

*And then :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus Christ our  
God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

*And these tropars : Tone 7*

Gratefully I glorify You, O my God, for You grant repentance to  
each one who sins. O Saviour, when You come to judge the  
whole world, do not shame me, who have committed shameful  
deeds.

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

Endlessly have I transgressed against You, and endless are the  
torments I await. Have compassion, O my God, and save me.

Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

I run for refuge to the multitude of your mercies, O Mother of  
God. Tear asunder the chains of my sins.

LORD, have mercy. *(forty times)*

*And then the following prayer :*

O Master, Christ God, You heal my passions by Your Passion,  
and cure my wounds by Your Wounds. Grant tears of tender  
compunction to me, who have greatly sinned against You. Unite  
to my body the fragrance of Your life-giving Body ; and by Your  
precious Blood, sweeten my soul from the bitterness the  
Adversary has given me to drink. Lift to Yourself my mind  
drawn ever downwards, and lead me up from the abyss of  
perdition. I have no repentance. I have no tenderheartedness.  
I have no comforting tears, which raise up children to their  
inheritance. I have darkened my mind with the passions of this  
life, and I cannot raise my eyes to You with distress. I cannot  
warm myself with tears of love for You. But, O LORD and  
Master, Jesus Christ, Treasury of blessings, grant me a thorough  
repentance and a heart diligent to seek after You. Grant me  
Your Grace, and renew in me the semblance of Your image. I  
have forsaken You. Do not forsake me. Come out in search of  
me. Lead me up to Your pastures, and number me with Your  
chosen flock, nourishing me with them upon the grass of Your  
Divine Mysteries, by the prayers of Your most holy Mother and  
all Your saints. Amen.





## SESSION

20

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



## PSALM 143

## STATION 1

*"Request for the help of God"*

Εὐλογητὸς Κύριος      Benedictus Dominus

By David. Against Goliath.<sup>697</sup>

1

**B**lessed be the LORD my God,  
who is teaching my hands to draw up battle lines, and  
my fingers to make war.<sup>698</sup>

He is my Mercy and my Refuge,  
my Support and my Rescuer,  
my Protector, and on Him have I hoped,  
on Him, subjecting my people under me.

O LORD, what is Man, that You make Yourself known to  
him ;

or a son of Man, that You take him into account ?

Man has become like futility ;

his days pass by just as a shadow.

---

<sup>697</sup> (1 Kingdoms 17:4-30)

<sup>698</sup> As David blesses God in the wake of victory, we are to understand these words now in terms of spiritual warfare. Goliath, a metaphor for the evil one, is defeated by Christ at the time of His Passion, and the fruits of this are demonstrated by Him in us as we call to the LORD for aid.

O LORD, bend the Heavens, and come down ; 5  
touch the mountains, and they shall smoke.  
Make lightning flash, and You will scatter them ;  
send out Your arrows, and You will throw them into  
confusion.

Send out Your hand from on high ;  
set me free, and rescue me from many waters,  
from the hand of the sons of foreigners,<sup>699</sup>  
whose mouth spoke futility,  
and their right hand is a right hand of unrighteousness.

O God, a new canticle shall I sing to You ;  
with the ten-stringed psaltery shall I chant to You :<sup>700</sup>  
to You, giving salvation to the kings, 10  
to You, redeeming David, Your bond-servant, from the  
evil sword.

Rescue me, and set me free from the hand of the sons of  
foreigners,  
whose mouth spoke futility,  
whose right hand is a right hand of unrighteousness,  
and whose sons are as new shoots already ripened in their  
youth ;

their daughters have been beautified,  
adorned as the likeness of a temple.

---

<sup>699</sup> These lines can suggest the prompting of the Tempter, the Adversary.  
Saint John Chrysostom explains that “foreigners” refers here to those living in  
sin, those living in injustice, those uttering folly, those speaking nothing useful.  
See the foot-note on Psalm 17:46.

<sup>700</sup> Saint John Chrysostom informs us that whereas in former times musical  
instruments were used, now we use the body. It is possible to sing with the tongue,  
the eyes, the hands, the feet and the hearing when each and all do what brings  
honour and praise to God. The body’s limbs become the instrument.

Their store-houses are full,  
pouring forth from one to another ;  
their sheep have many offspring,  
and they have been multiplying in their delivering.  
Their oxen are fat ;  
there is no falling-down of their fence nor a way out,  
nor any shouting in their squares.  
They called blessed the people for whom these things 15  
are so ;  
but blessed is the people whose God is the LORD.<sup>701</sup>



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<sup>701</sup> Saint John Chrysostom comments that we ought not to pay attention so much  
to the shadows as to the reality. Such a shadow is worldly prosperity, and often it  
is in the context of sinful selfishness that the world calls them blessed who thus  
appear to prosper. Rather, the real blessing is in knowing the LORD. The righteous  
seem to prosper, since they have apparent material wealth and apparent security.  
People call them blessed. Some believers even seem to think that material  
prosperity is a clear indication of God’s blessing. Some deceivers say that if these  
material signs are absent, it is because of a person’s sin. Material things are  
corruptible. The only real wealth, security and blessing is in having an eternal,  
loving and life-giving relationship with the LORD our God. See Psalm 144:15;  
Psalm 145:5; Luke 8:21; 11:28; John 15:14-17.

Saint John Cassian admonishes us that when we are bound by worldly riches,  
we are visited by eternal death.

## PSALM 144

*"Greatness and kindness of the LORD"*

Ἐψάλω σε, ὁ Θεός Exaltabo te, Deus

Praise. Of David.

1 א

I shall exalt You, O my God and my King,<sup>702</sup>  
and I shall bless Your Name unto the age,  
and unto the age of the age.

Every day shall I bless You,

and I shall praise Your Name unto the age,  
and unto the age of the age.

ב

Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised,  
and there is no limit to His greatness.

ג

Generation and generation shall praise Your works,  
and bring tidings of Your power.

ד

They shall speak of the magnificence of the glory of  
Your holiness,  
and recount Your wonders.

ה ה

They shall also speak of the power of Your formidable  
deeds,

ו

and recount Your greatness.

They shall pour forth the memory of the multitude  
of Your loving-kindness,<sup>703</sup>

ז

---

<sup>702</sup> God is understood as the Ruler of all things, above all earthly rulers. Christ is regarded as such.

Saint John Chrysostom says that these words indicate a close and loving relationship between David and the LORD.

<sup>703</sup> In harmony with what God created human beings to do, all generations of human beings bless the LORD, and recall His saving acts in our history, all of which are characterised by loving-kindness. In so blessing the LORD and recounting His wonders, we rightly give thanks to Him for everything, everywhere and always.

Saint John Chrysostom comments that all God's creatures, animate and so-called inanimate, give praise to the LORD for the multitude of His loving-kindness. We, on the other hand, often neglect this.

and in Your righteousness shall they exult.

The LORD is compassionate and merciful :

ח

long-suffering and greatly merciful.<sup>704</sup>

The LORD is gracious to all things,

ט

and His compassions are upon all His works.<sup>705</sup>

Let all Your works confess You, O LORD,

י 10

and let Your holy ones bless You.

They shall tell of the glory of Your kingdom,

יא

and they shall speak of Your might :

to make known to the sons of Men Your might,

יב

and the glory of the magnificence of Your kingdom.<sup>706</sup>

Your kingdom is a kingdom of all the ages,

יג

and Your dominion is in every generation and  
generation.

Faithful is the LORD in all His words,

יד

and holy is He in all His works.

The LORD upholds all those falling down,

טו

and sets upright all those broken down.

The eyes of all hope on You,

טז 15

and it is You that give them their nourishment in due  
time.

---

<sup>704</sup> (2 Mōysēs 34:6; 4 Mōysēs 14:18; Psalm 102:8)

<sup>705</sup> Saint John Chrysostom explains that the "all" means just this. The LORD is compassionate to all His creatures, from beasts to archangels: to Cain as well as to Abel, to Noah as well as to those destroyed in the Flood. In the context of the deluge, those suffering incurable spiritual and other wounds were, in effect, saved from further misery through the destruction.

<sup>706</sup> Saint John Chrysostom clarifies for us that the LORD's glory is such that in His indescribability, He needs nothing from us. This glory includes His caring, His loving-kindness, His providence, His unapproachable light, His ineffable and incomprehensible Being. Nevertheless, the LORD receives from all creation praise and thanksgiving because of the nature of His Love.

You open Your hands, ϝ  
and out of Your good-pleasure You fill up every living  
thing.  
Righteous is the LORD in all His ways, ϙ  
and holy is He in all His works.  
The LORD is near to all those calling upon Him, ϗ  
to all those calling upon Him in truth.  
He will do the will of those fearing Him, Ⲁ  
and He will hear their supplication, and save them.  
The LORD watches over all those loving Him, 20 ϣ  
but all the sinners will He exterminate.<sup>707</sup>  
My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD ; Ⲉ  
and let all flesh bless His holy Name unto the age,  
and unto the age of the age.

✠

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*  
LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

<sup>707</sup> Saint John Chrysostom reminds us that the LORD protects all who love Him. He is naming “sinners” those suffering from incurable spiritual ailments. The illnesses are incurable because the persons are unwilling to reform (as before the Flood); but if He allows even those who love Him to suffer, and to die, this also is a mark of His protection, as it was with Abel.

Read his whole commentary on this word for a better understanding. The “extermination” may be said to be self-inflicted, not imposed by God. See the foot-note on Psalm 145:9. Because of Christ we will get our bodies back, free from corruption in the Resurrection (see 1 Corinthians 15).

## PSALM 145

## STATION 2

*“Kindness of the LORD towards the poor”*

Αἶνει, ἡ ψυχὴ μου      Lauda, anima mea  
Allēlouia. Of Haggai and Zakharias. 1

**P**raise the LORD, O my soul.  
I shall praise the LORD in my life ;  
I shall chant to my God as long as I exist.  
Do not put your trust in princes,<sup>708</sup>  
and in sons of Men in whom there is no salvation.  
His spirit shall go out, and he shall turn back to his earth :  
in that day, all his reasonings shall perish.  
Blessed is the one whose Helper is the God of Jakōb ; 5  
his hope is on the LORD his God,  
on Him who made Heaven and the earth,  
the sea and all that is in them ;  
on Him, guarding truth unto the age,  
making judgement for those who have been wronged,  
giving nourishment to the hungry.  
The LORD sets loose those bound in fetters ;  
the LORD makes wise the blind ;  
the LORD sets upright those broken down ;<sup>709</sup>  
the LORD loves the righteous ;  
the LORD watches over the resident foreigners.

<sup>708</sup> About “trust”: trust is a relative of hope. See the foot-notes on Psalms 10:1 & 117:8.

<sup>709</sup> Saint John Chrysostom points out that the Psalmist shows us the extent of God’s providence, and how He reveals His loving-kindness and mercy in the face of disaster. He exhorts us to take refuge in God. Our God is strong and invincible. Our God does not ignore disasters, but rather, He remedies them.



The orphan and the widow He will take up,  
but the way of sinners He will obliterate.<sup>710</sup>  
The LORD will establish His Kingship unto the age,  
your God, O Siōn, unto generation and generation.

10



---

<sup>710</sup> Saint John Chrysostom reminds us that it is not the sinners, but “the way of sinners” that the LORD “will obliterate”. He abhors vice, but He does not turn away from His creation.

### PSALM 146

*“Greatness and kindness of the LORD”*

Αἰνεῖτε τὸν Κύριον      Laudate Dominum

Allēlouia. Of Haggai and Zakharias.

1

**P**raise the LORD, for a psalm is a good thing ;  
to our God may praise be sweet.<sup>711</sup>

It is the LORD, building Jerousalēm ;

He will gather together the dispersed of Israēl :<sup>712</sup>

He, healing the shattered of heart,

and binding up their shards ;

He, numbering multitudes of stars,

and calling to all of them by their names.

Great is our LORD, and great is His strength ;

5

of His understanding there is no measure :

the LORD, raising up the meek,

but humbling sinners to the ground.

Strike up a song of confession to the LORD :

chant to our God with a lyre —

to Him, wrapping Heaven around with clouds,

preparing heavy rain for the earth ;

to Him, making grass spring up on the mountains,<sup>713</sup>

and the green herb for the service of Men ;

to Him, giving to the cattle their nourishment,

and to the young of the ravens, which call upon Him.

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<sup>711</sup> Saint John Chrysostom states that singing (praise to our God) is insufficient in itself. It must be accompanied by a life which reflects the content of the praise (see Wisdom of Sirach 15:9-10).

<sup>712</sup> Saint John Chrysostom is of the opinion that this psalm seems to come from the return from exile in Babylon.

<sup>713</sup> Saint John Chrysostom comments here that out of the abundance of God’s providence, He prepares a table: not only in arable land, but even on mountains. If His providential care is such for the animals, how much more is His ineffable kindness towards human beings, who are hoping on His mercy.

In the might of the horse He will not delight,  
nor with the legs of a man is He well-pleased.  
The LORD is well-pleased with those fearing Him,  
and with all those hoping on His mercy.

10



### PSALM 147

*“Blessings of the LORD towards His Church”*

Ἐπαίνει, Ἱερουσαλήμ Laudate, Jerusalem  
Allélouia. Of Haggai and Zakharias.

1

**P**raise the LORD, O Jerousalēm ;  
praise your God, O Siōn,  
for He strengthened the bars of your gates.  
He blessed your sons within you :  
He, setting peace to be your borders,  
filling you up with the fat of wheat,  
sending His teaching to the earth  
– His word shall run so swiftly –<sup>714</sup>  
giving His snow just as wool,  
sprinkling fog just as ashes,  
throwing His ice just as morsels.<sup>715</sup>  
Who shall withstand in the face of His cold ?  
He will send out His word, and He will melt them away ;  
He will breathe out His Spirit, and waters shall flow.  
He, bringing tidings of His word to Jakōb : His statutes  
and judgements to Israēl,  
did not do so for every nation.<sup>716</sup>  
He did not show His judgements to them.

5

<sup>714</sup> Saint John Chrysostom notes that “word” indicates “command” in this case, the working of God’s providence.

<sup>715</sup> Saint John Chrysostom shows us here that God tries to convince the dull and insensitive to acknowledge His power. It is easy for Him to dispose of everything as He wishes, to put everything into order, to settle everything, to bring things to peace, to transform the disastrous into what is tranquil. All is done with ease and simplicity. The use of the domestic words “wool”, “ashes” and “morsels” are examples to indicate that things that bring distress can be transformed into something beneficial, and with ease and simplicity.

<sup>716</sup> About these lines: God has acted, and revealed Himself, not to any other “nation”, but to His Chosen People; and they (and Christians more particularly) have the responsibility to share this good news of His Love. This responsibility was addressed also by the Prophets, particularly Isaiah.



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

**PSALM 148**

**STATION 3**

*"Praise to Christ, LORD of the universe"*

Αἰνεῖτε τὸν Κύριον      Laudate Dominum

Allēlouia. Of Haggai and Zakharias.

1

**P**raise the LORD from the Heavens :  
praise Him in the highest.

Praise Him, all you His angels ;

praise Him, all you His powers.

Praise Him, O sun and moon ;

praise Him, all the stars and the light.

Praise Him, the Heavens of the Heavens,  
and the water above the Heavens.

Let them praise the Name of the LORD ;  
for He spoke, and they came to be :

5

He commanded, and they were created.

He established them unto the age,

and unto the age of the age ;

He set an ordinance, and it shall not pass away.

Praise the LORD from the earth :

you dragons, and all abysses,

fire, hail, snow, ice, and tempestuous wind,

which are doing His word.

Mountains and all hills,

fruit-trees and all cedars,

wild beasts and all cattle,

10

creeping things, and winged birds,

kings of the earth, and all peoples,

princes and all judges of the earth,

young men and maidens,  
elders with the young :<sup>717</sup>  
let them praise the Name of the LORD,  
for His Name alone is exalted.  
Confession of Him is over earth and Heaven.  
He will exalt a horn of His people :  
a hymn of all His holy ones,  
the sons of Israēl, a people drawing near to Him.



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<sup>717</sup> About “young”: see the foot-note on Psalm 36:25.

### PSALM 149

*“The holy ones give praise”*

Ἕσαυτε τῷ Κυρίῳ Cantate Domino

Allēlouia.

1

Sing to the LORD a new song ;<sup>718</sup>  
His praise is in the church of the holy ones.

Let Israēl be glad in Him who made him,  
and let the sons of Siōn exult in their King.

Let them praise His Name with dancing :  
with tambour and psaltery let them chant to Him ;  
for the LORD is well-pleased with His people,  
and He will exalt the meek in salvation.

5

The holy ones shall boast in glory,  
and they shall exult on their beds.

The exaltations of God are in their throat,  
and two-edged swords in their hands :  
to do vengeance amongst the nations,  
and reproofs amongst the peoples ;  
to bind their kings with fetters,  
and their glorious ones with manacles of iron ;  
to execute amongst them a written judgement.  
This glory shall be for all His holy ones.

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<sup>718</sup> Saint Augustine cautions us that there be nothing false or deceptive in our singing. He reminds us that we are, ourselves, the praise of the One whom we are praising. So we must be careful to live in harmony with, and in loving obedience to God our Creator.

## PSALM 150

*"Hymn for the completion of the work of salvation"*

Αἰνεῖτε τὸν Θεὸν      Laudate Dominum

Allēlouia.

1

**P**raise God in His holy ones ;<sup>719</sup>

praise Him in the firmament of His power.

Praise Him for His mighty deeds ;

praise Him in accordance with the multitude of His  
greatness.

Praise Him with the blare of the trumpet ;

praise Him with psaltery and lyre.

Praise Him with tambour and dance ;<sup>720</sup>

praise Him with strings and instruments.

Praise Him with loud-sounding cymbals ;

5

praise Him with cymbals of jubilation.

Let every breath praise the LORD.<sup>721</sup>

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<sup>719</sup> About "holy ones": see the foot-note on Psalm 19:3.

<sup>720</sup> Dance was made by a choir, and in a circle. Certain liturgical movements may be likened to a very stylised dance (such as at baptism and marriage). The Ethiopian Church retains a more visible, obvious form of liturgical dance. Both the Coptic and Ethiopian Churches retain certain instrumental support for praise. This use of instruments and forms of dance are characteristic of African worship throughout the continent.

<sup>721</sup> Saint Cyril of Jerusalem comments that with the Psalmist he is trying now to glorify the LORD, knowing that he falls short of glorifying Him worthily. He considers it a godly work to try, nevertheless.

Saint Gregory of Nyssa shows us that this psalm serves as the closing doxology for Book V, and for the whole Psalter. Its praise demonstrates the restoration of Paradise.

✠

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

*And then the following prayers :*

### TRISAGION PRAYERS

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

*(three times)*

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

O most holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from  
our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and  
heal our infirmities, for Your Name's sake.

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

Our Father, who are in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name ; Your  
kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ;  
give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our debts, as we  
forgive our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test, but rescue  
us from the evil one.

*And then :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus Christ, our  
God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

*And these tropars :* Tone 8

You, O my Christ, are the fulfilment of all that is good. Fill my soul with joy and gladness, as You alone abound in mercies, and save me.

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

Although I have sinned against You, O Christ, my Saviour, I know no other God but You. Therefore, I make bold to trust in Your great goodness. Receive me, who return as the prodigal son, O Father of great goodness, Only-begotten Son, and Holy Spirit, and save me.

Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

I know no other refuge or fervent advocate besides you, O Lady, who have boldness before the One born of you. Help me and save me, your bond-servant.

LORD, have mercy. (*forty times*)

*And then the following prayer :*

O LORD Jesus Christ, my God, have mercy on me, the sinner, and forgive me, Your unworthy bond-servant, who have greatly sinned against You throughout my life, to this very day. In whatever way I have transgressed as a Man, forgive me : my voluntary and involuntary sins, of word or deed, of mind or thought, due to distractedness, heedlessness, my great laziness or negligence. If I have sworn by Your Name, taken a false oath, or blasphemed in my thoughts ; if I have reproached, slighted, or saddened anyone ; if I have been angered in some way, or taken what is not mine ; if I have eaten on the sly, told an untruth, or been adulterous ; if someone approached me, and I spurned him ; if I have grieved or troubled my *brother* ;<sup>722</sup> if, when standing in prayer and psalmody, my evil mind was distracted by evil things ; if I have enjoyed endless chatter, laughed frivolously, or spoken blasphemy ; if I have been vainglorious or prideful ; if I have gazed upon vain beauty and

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<sup>722</sup> This means not only blood kin but any human being, whether of family, community, association or acquaintance.

been led astray by it, or dwelt upon it indecently ; if, at the time for prayer, I have been negligent ; if I have not heeded the bidding of my spiritual *father* ; if I have engaged in idle talk, or done some other evil thing – for I have done all this, and more, but fail to call it to mind – have mercy, O LORD, and forgive me everything, that I might lie down, and sleep in peace, hymning, blessing and glorifying You, with Your unoriginate Father, and Your all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.





## PSALM 151

*(This psalm, authentically of David, is never read in Church.)*

Μικρὸς ἦμην Parvissimus fratrum

This Psalm of David is in his own handwriting, and extra 1  
to the number of the 150 psalms.

When he fought in single combat against Goliath.<sup>723</sup>

I was smallest amongst my brothers,<sup>724</sup>  
and youngest in the house of my father ;

I was shepherding the sheep of my father.

My hands made an instrument,  
and my fingers fit the psaltery together.

Who shall announce to my LORD ?

The LORD Himself, He will hear.

He sent out His messenger,<sup>725</sup>

and He raised me from the sheep of my father,  
and He anointed me with the oil of His unction .

My brothers are handsome and tall, 5  
but the LORD was not well-pleased with them.

I went out to a meeting with the Foreign Tribesman,<sup>726</sup>

and with his idols he called down curses upon me.

But as for me, having drawn the sword from him, I  
beheaded him,

and I took away reproach from the sons of Israël.

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<sup>723</sup> (1 Kingdoms 17:4-30)

<sup>724</sup> About “smallest”: this is a positive adjective used in a superlative sense.  
About “youngest”: this is a comparative adjective used in a superlative sense.

<sup>725</sup> “Messenger” could be translated as “angel”, but this is not the first meaning.  
The messenger could also be a prophet.

<sup>726</sup> “Foreign Tribesman” here refers to the Philistine, Goliath.

# THE BIBLICAL CANTICLES

## CONCLUDING PRAYERS

**The First Canticle :**

A canticle of Mōysēs in the Exodus.<sup>727</sup> (2 Mōysēs 15:1-19)

When he had utterly drowned Pharaō in the deep,  
Mōysēs said : To the LORD let us sing, for gloriously has He  
been glorified.

**L**et us sing to the LORD, for gloriously has He been  
glorified :  
horse and rider has He thrown into the sea.

A Helper and a Shelter has He become for my salvation ;  
this is my God, and I shall glorify Him –  
God of my father, and I shall exalt Him.

The LORD shattering wars :  
the LORD is His Name.

The chariots of Pharaō and his forces has He thrown into  
the sea ;  
his chosen riders and third-ranked officers He drowned in  
the Red Sea.

With the open sea He covered them ;  
they plunged into the deep just as a stone.  
Your right hand, O LORD, has been glorified in strength ;  
Your right hand, O LORD, has broken the enemies in pieces ;  
and in the multitude of Your glory, You shattered the  
adversaries.

You sent Your anger, and it devoured them like stubble.<sup>728</sup>

By the breath of Your fury the water was parted ;<sup>729</sup>

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<sup>727</sup> This Canticle was sung by Moses after the safe crossing of the Red Sea.

<sup>728</sup> About “anger” and “fury”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

<sup>729</sup> The Greek word πνεῦμα, *pneuma*, may mean “breath”, “wind”, or “spirit” depending upon the context, as in the Hebrew equivalent. See the foot-note on Psalm 30:6.



the waters were stiffened just like a wall ;  
the waves were stiffened in the midst of the sea.  
10: The enemy said : “Pursuing, I shall lay hold ; I shall<sup>730</sup>  
apportion the spoil ; I shall fill up my soul ;  
I shall destroy with my sword, and my hand shall be lord”.  
9: You sent Your breath ; the sea covered them ;  
they sank just as lead in the violent water.  
8: Who is like You, O LORD, amongst the gods ? Who is  
like You :  
glorified amongst the holy ones, wonderful amongst  
the glorious ones, doing portents ?  
7: You stretched out Your right hand ;  
the earth swallowed them up.  
6: You led on the way by Your righteousness this, Your  
people, whom You have redeemed ;  
You summoned them by Your strength into Your holy  
abode.  
5: The nations heard, and they were angry ;  
pangs seized the inhabitants of Philistia.<sup>731</sup>  
4: Then did chiefs of Edōm hasten, and princes of Mōab.  
Trembling seized them ; all the inhabitants of Khanaan  
melted away.  
3: May fear and trembling fall upon them.  
Because of the magnitude of Your arm, let them be  
petrified, until Your people pass over, O LORD :

<sup>730</sup> These descending numbers in each canticle are suggested places where tropars from the odes of the Canon in Matins might be interpolated. Note that in the Sixth Canticle, the maximum number is 8. Usually, the odes would begin after the singing of the Canticle is completed.

<sup>731</sup> “Philistia” indicates “place of foreign tribes”. See the foot-note on Psalm 55:1.

until this, Your people pass over, whom You have  
possessed.<sup>732</sup>  
2: Leading them, plant them on the mountain of Your  
inheritance ;  
in Your prepared habitation which You effected by  
labour, O LORD :  
the holy place which Your hands prepared.<sup>733</sup>  
1: The LORD is establishing His Kingship over the ages,  
and unto the age, and beyond ;  
for the horse of Pharaō, with chariots and riders, went  
into the sea,  
and the LORD brought upon them the water of the sea ;  
but the sons of Israēl walked through dry land in the  
midst of the sea.



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

<sup>732</sup> This verse is a direct reference to the events of the Passover. See the foot-note on Psalm 140:10.

<sup>733</sup> About “holy place”: see the foot-note on Psalm 77:69.

## The Second Canticle :

A canticle of Mōysēs in the Deuteronomion.<sup>734</sup>

(5 Mōysēs 32:1-43)

After the Law had been written, again a canticle of Mōysēs.

**G**ive heed, O Heaven, and I shall speak,  
and let the earth hear the utterances of my mouth.

Let my saying be awaited as heavy rain,  
and let my utterances fall down as dew,  
as rain upon dog's-tooth grass, and just as a snow-fall upon  
grass ;

for I have called upon the Name of the LORD.

Ascribe greatness to our God.

Our God – His works are true,

and all His ways are fair-judgements.

God is faithful, and there is no unrighteousness in Him :  
righteous and holy is the LORD.

They have sinned ; they are not His, those blameworthy  
children, a generation crooked and perverse.

With these things do you requite the LORD ?

Are you people so foolish and unwise ?

Did not He Himself, your Father, possess you and make you  
and fashion you ?

Remember the days of old ; understand the years of a  
generation of generations ;

ask your father, and he shall announce to you ; your elders,  
and they shall tell you.

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<sup>734</sup> This Canticle was sung to the elders by Moses just before his repose, and after he had written the Law on a scroll which was placed in the Ark of the Covenant. In Matins, the Second Canticle is sung only in Great Lent of a Tuesday.

When the Most High distributed the nations, as He  
dispersed abroad the sons of Adam,  
He fixed the bounds of the nations, in accordance with the  
number of the angels of God.<sup>735</sup>

And His people, Jakōb, became the Portion of the LORD :  
the lot of His inheritance was Israēl.<sup>736</sup>

He fulfilled all his needs in the wilderness, in the thirst of  
solar heat, in a waterless land ;

He surrounded him, and instructed him, and watched over  
him closely, as the apple of His eye.

As an eagle that would shelter his nest and yearned for  
his young :

spreading out his wings, he received them and he took  
them up on his back.<sup>737</sup>

The LORD alone was leading them,  
and there was no foreign god amongst them.

He made them go up on the strength of the land,  
and He fed them with the produce of the fields.

They sucked honey out of a rock, and oil out of solid rock :  
butter of cows and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs and  
rams, of offspring of bulls and he-goats, with fat of  
wheat-germ –

and of the blood of the grape, they drank wine.

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<sup>735</sup> (1 Mōysēs 10)

<sup>736</sup> A “lot” is a portion of land, measured by a line; also, it is a roped-off portion. See the foot-note on Psalm 15:6.

<sup>737</sup> About these lines: of old, it was understood that the eagle took up its young upon its body in its feathers, and carried them away for protection and for teaching them flight.

Jakōb ate and was filled up :  
the beloved one kicked ; he became fat ; he became thick ;  
he became broad ;  
and he abandoned God, who made him,  
and moved away from God, his Saviour.<sup>738</sup>  
“They provoked Me with foreign things ;  
with their loathsome things they embittered Me” .  
They sacrificed to demons, and not to God : to gods that  
they had not known : to new, novel gods that had  
come, whom their fathers had not known.  
You abandoned God who begot you,  
and forgot God who is nourishing you.  
The LORD saw, and He was jealous,  
and He was provoked by the anger of His sons and  
daughters.  
And He said : “I will turn away My Face from them ; I will  
show what shall come upon them in the last days ;  
for it is a perverse generation : sons, but there is no faith in  
them.  
They have provoked Me to jealousy with what is no god ;  
they have stirred Me to anger with their idols.<sup>739</sup>  
So I will provoke them to jealousy with what is no nation ;  
I will stir them to anger with a nation without  
understanding ,<sup>740</sup>

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<sup>738</sup> Although the nation is personified as Israel (Jacob), this pattern of human behaviour is axiomatic on all levels. When humans, being rebelliously independent, push God away, they reject His protection and abandon themselves to spiritual danger. The painful results of this rebelliousness increase in proportion to the magnitude of betrayal, such as embracing creatures or demons (gods, idols) as if they were God, instead of the Creator who is God.

<sup>739</sup> About “jealousy” and “anger”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

<sup>740</sup> (Romans 10:19)

for a fire has been kindled from My fury ; it shall burn as  
far as the lowest part of Hadēs ;  
it shall devour the land and its produce ; it shall burn up the  
foundations of the mountains.  
I will gather together bad things against them :  
I will use up all My arrows against them ;  
they shall be melting away with hunger, devouring of birds and  
incurable bending of the back.<sup>741</sup>  
I will send out the teeth of wild beasts against them,  
with the fury of things crawling on the earth.  
In the open, the sword shall bereave them of children,  
and out of their inner chambers shall issue fear :  
a young man with a maiden, a sucking child with one grown  
old.  
I said : I will disperse them abroad ;  
I will make the remembrance of them cease from amongst  
Men,  
were it not for the anger of enemies :  
lest they live long, and the adversaries unite to set upon  
them,  
lest they say : ‘Our high hand, and not the LORD, did all  
these things’ ;  
for they are a nation having destroyed counsel, and there is  
no science in them ;<sup>742</sup>  
they had not the wit to understand” .

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<sup>741</sup> This “bending of the back” refers to a disease in which the spine is pulled backwards, and made stiff.

<sup>742</sup> “Science”, from Latin *scio*, means “to know something”. It implies a general acquaintance with a matter.

Let them accept all these things for a time that is to come :  
how shall one pursue thousands, and two remove ten-  
thousands,  
unless God had sold them, and the LORD had handed them  
over ?

10: for their gods are not as our God,  
and our enemies are devoid of understanding ;

9: for their vine is from the vine of Sodom, and their  
vine-branch from Gomorra ;  
their grape-cluster is a cluster of gall, a cluster of  
bitterness to them ;  
their wine is a fury of dragons, and an incurable fury of  
asps.

8: “Behold, have all these things not been gathered  
together by Me,  
and sealed up in My treasuries ?

7: In the day of vengeance I will requite, in the time  
whenever their foot may stumble ;<sup>743</sup>  
for the day of their perdition is near, and the things  
prepared for you are at hand” ;

6: for the LORD will judge His people, and He will be  
entreated on behalf of His bond-servants ;<sup>744</sup>  
for He saw that they were weakened, both having failed  
in the onslaught, and enfeebled.

5: And the LORD said : “Where are their gods in which they  
trusted :

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<sup>743</sup> (Romans 12:19; Hebrews 10:30)

<sup>744</sup> (Hebrews 10:30)

the fat of whose sacrifices you were eating, and you were  
drinking the wine of their libations ?

Let them arise, and help you ; let them be your shelterers.

4: See, see that I AM, and there is no god besides Me ;  
I will slay, and I will make alive ;  
I will smite, and I will heal ;  
and there is none that can take from My hands ;

3: for I will raise My hand to Heaven, and I will swear by  
My right hand,  
and I will say : I am living unto the age ;  
for I will whet My sword like lightning, and My hand  
shall take hold on judgement :  
I will requite the enemies with punishment, and those  
hating Me will I requite.

2: I will make My arrows drunk with blood — and My  
sword shall devour flesh —  
with the blood of the wounded and the captives, from the  
head of the princes of the nations” .

1: Be glad together with Him, O you Heavens, and let all the  
angels of God worship Him.<sup>745</sup>  
Be glad with His people, you nations, and let all the sons  
of God be strong in Him ;<sup>746</sup>  
for the blood of His sons is avenged, and He will avenge,  
and requite the enemies with vengeance.  
Those hating Him, He will requite, and the LORD will  
purify the land of His people.

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<sup>745</sup> (Psalm 96:7; Hebrews 1:6)

<sup>746</sup> (Romans 15:10)



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

### **The Third Canticle :**

A prayer of Anna, the mother of Samouël, the Prophet.<sup>747</sup>  
(I Kingdoms 2:1-10)

The barren one gives birth extraordinarily and honours God :  
Holy are You, O LORD, and my spirit hymns You.

**M**y heart is made firm in the LORD ;  
my horn is exalted in my God.

My mouth is opened wide over my enemies ;  
I am glad in Your salvation.

There is none holy as the LORD ;  
there is none righteous as our God,  
and there is none holy besides You.

Do not boast, nor speak high things excessively,  
nor let boasting talk come from your mouth ;  
for the LORD is a God of knowledge,  
and a God preparing His purposes.

The bow of the powerful has become weak,  
and the weak ones have girded themselves with power.  
Those who were full of bread were in want,  
and those who are hungering have forsaken the land.

10: The barren has borne seven,

but she who has many children has become weak.

9: The LORD puts to death, and brings to life ;

He leads down to Hadēs, and leads up again.

8: The LORD makes poor, and makes rich ;

He brings low, and He exalts.

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<sup>747</sup> This Canticle was sung by Hannah, the formerly barren woman, who gave birth to Samuel. Upon weaning him, she returned to Shiloh to offer thanksgiving, and to give the child into the care of the priest Eli. "For this child I prayed ... and I lend him to the LORD all the days which he lives ..." (see 1 Kingdoms 1:27-28). Note the similarities between this prayer and the prayer of the ninth Canticle.

- 7: He raises the needy one from the earth,  
and from the dung-heap He lifts up the poor one :  
to make him sit with the mighty of the people,  
even making him inherit their throne of glory.
- 6: Giving prayer to the one praying,  
He has also blessed the years of the righteous one,  
for not by strength is a man powerful.
- 5: The LORD will make His adversary weak.  
The LORD is holy.
- 4: Let not the wise one boast in his wisdom ;  
let not the powerful one boast in his power ;  
let not the rich one boast in his riches.
- 3: But let the boasting one boast in this :  
that he understands, and that he knows the LORD,  
and that he does judgement and righteousness in the  
midst of the earth.
- 2: The LORD has gone up to the Heavens, and He has  
thundered.  
Being righteous, it is He who will judge the extremities  
of the earth.
- 1: He will give strength to our kings,  
and He will exalt the horn of His christ<sup>748</sup>.

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<sup>748</sup> “Christ”=anointed one=messiah. See the foot-note on Psalm 2:2.



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*  
LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

### The Fourth Canticle :

A prayer of Abbakoum, the Prophet.<sup>749</sup> (Abbakoum 3:2-19)

Indicate, O Abbakoum, the kenosis of the Word.  
Glory be to Your power, O LORD.

**O** LORD, I heard Your report, and I feared ;  
O LORD, I observed Your works, and I was  
astonished.

In the midst of two living creatures You will be known.  
When the years draw near, You will be recognised ;  
when the time is come, You will be shown forth.

When my soul is stirred up,  
in anger You will remember mercy.<sup>750</sup>

God will come from Thæman,<sup>751</sup>  
and the Holy One from the mountain of forest shade.<sup>752</sup>

His virtue covered the Heavens,  
and the earth is full of His praise.

His brightness shall be as light.

Horns are in His hands.

He has laid His strength as a strong love.

Before His Face a word shall go,

and go forth for instruction down to His feet.

He stood, and the earth shuddered ;

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<sup>749</sup> “Abbakoum”=Habakkuk. Habakkuk is known also as Joshua of the Tribe of Levi. He was once angelically transported to Babylon to give food to the imprisoned Daniel before giving his own labourers food.

<sup>750</sup> About “anger”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.

<sup>751</sup> “Thæman”=Teman, a province of the kingdom of Edom, south-east of Judea.

<sup>752</sup> “Mountain of forest shade” may be Mount Paran.

He looked attentively, and the nations melted away.<sup>753</sup>

The mountains forcefully broke into pieces ;  
the eternal hills melted away.

Instead of troubles, I saw His eternal journeys.

The tents of the Æthiopians shall be terrified,  
as well as the tents of the land of Madiam.

Were You angry with the rivers, O LORD ?

Was Your fury against the rivers, or Your attack against the  
sea ?

You will ride upon Your horses, and Your horsemanship is  
salvation.

“Stringing your bow, you shall string it against sceptres”,  
says the LORD.

A land of rivers shall be rent asunder ;  
the peoples shall see You, and shall be in pangs, while You  
scatter the waters in Your journey ;  
the abyss gave its voice : the height of its appearance.

The sun was lifted up, and the moon stood still in its course ;  
at the light shall Your missiles go forth, at the lightning-  
brilliance of Your weapons.

10: With a threat You will diminish the earth,  
and in fury You will trample the nations.

9: You went forth for the salvation of Your people ;  
for the salvation of Your christ have You come.

8: You cast death on the heads of the lawless ;  
You raised shackles up to their neck unto the end.

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<sup>753</sup> About this line: see the foot-note on Psalm 9:4.

- 7: In amazement, You cut asunder the heads of the mighty ;  
they shall quake within themselves ;  
they shall break open their bridles, as a poor man  
eating in secret.
- 6: You caused Your horses to go into the sea,  
stirring up the many waters.
- 5: I kept watch, and my heart was dismayed by the voice of  
the prayer of my lips ;  
trembling went into my bones,  
and my strength within me was stirred up.
- 4: I shall rest in the day of my affliction,  
that I may go up to the people of my sojourning ;
- 3: since the fig tree shall not bear fruit, and there shall  
be no increase in the vines ;  
the work of the olive shall fail, and the flats shall yield  
no food ;  
the sheep were missing from their food, and there shall be  
no oxen at the cribs.
- 2: But as for me, I shall exult in the LORD ;  
I shall rejoice in God, my Saviour.
- 1: The LORD my God is my Power ;  
He will set my feet to reach their goal.  
He causes me to ride upon high places,  
that I might be victor with His canticle.



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*  
LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



### The Fifth Canticle :

A prayer of Ēsaias, the Prophet.<sup>754</sup>

(Ēsaias 26:9-20)

A prophecy of Ēsaias : further prayer.

O LORD our God, give us peace.

**O**ut of the night, my spirit arises to You at day-break,  
O God,

since Your ordinances are a light upon the earth.

Learn righteousness, you inhabitants upon the earth ;

for the impious has ceased ;

everyone who shall not learn righteousness upon the earth

shall not do truth ;

let the impious one be taken away,

that he may not see the glory of the LORD.

O LORD, Your arm is lifted up,

but they knew it not.

But when they know it,

let them be put to shame.

Zeal shall seize an uninstructed people ;

and now shall fire consume the adversaries.

O LORD our God, give us peace,

for You have rendered all things to us.

10: O LORD our God, take possession of us.

O LORD, we know no other besides You ;

we call You by Your Name.

9: The dead shall not see life, nor shall physicians raise them  
up.

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<sup>754</sup> Earlier words in this chapter of Ēsaias (Isaiah) indicate that this Canticle is a messianic preparation.

Because of this You have brought, and destroyed, and  
have taken away every male of them.

8: Bring bad things upon them, O LORD ;

bring bad things upon the glorious ones of the earth.

7: O LORD, in affliction we remembered You ;

in a small affliction was Your instruction with us.

6: And, as a woman in pangs draws near to her time for  
giving birth,

and because of her pangs cries out,

so have we become to Your beloved,

because of fear of You, O LORD.

5: We have conceived in the womb, and suffered pangs,

and given birth to the spirit of salvation,

which we have wrought upon the earth.

4: We shall not fall,

but all the inhabitants upon the earth shall fall.

3: The dead shall arise ;

those in the tombs shall awake ;

those on the earth shall be glad ;

2: for the dew that is from You is healing for them,

but the land of the impious shall fall.

1: Go, my people ; enter your inner chamber ;

shut your door : hide yourselves for a little while,

until the anger of the LORD pass over.<sup>755</sup>

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<sup>755</sup> About “anger”: see the foot-note on Psalm 7:7.



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

### The Sixth Canticle :

A prayer of Jōnas, the Prophet.<sup>756</sup>

(Jōnas 2:3-10)

As You saved the Prophet Jōnas, save us, O LORD.<sup>757</sup>

Out of the sea monster, Jōnas cried out, saying :

8:

**I** cried aloud to the LORD my God in my affliction, and  
He heard me :  
out of the entrails of Hadēs You heard my cry and my  
voice.

7: You cast me into the depths of the heart of the sea,  
and the rivers surrounded me :  
all Your swells and Your waves came upon me.

6: And I said : “I have been pushed away from Your eyes ;  
shall I, then, again look attentively towards Your holy  
temple ?”

5: Water encompassed me, as far as my soul ;  
the uttermost abyss surrounded me ;  
my head sank down to the clefts of the mountains.

4: I went down to the land whose bars are eternal barriers ;  
and yet, let my life come up out of decay towards You,  
O LORD my God.

3: When my soul was fainting out of me, I remembered the  
LORD ;  
may my prayer come to You, to Your holy temple.

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<sup>756</sup> (Matthew 12:39-41) “Jōnas”=Jonah.

This Canticle is a preparation for the Resurrection of Christ. In such straits as this, the Prophet’s confidence in the LORD is an important example for us in the midst of the pain of life.

<sup>757</sup> “You saved” is lacking in Greek.

2: Those keeping futile and false things have abandoned  
mercy for themselves ;  
but I, with a voice of praise and confession shall sacrifice  
to You.

1: What I have vowed,  
I shall render to You, the LORD, for my salvation.



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
(*three times*)

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

### **The Seventh Canticle :**

A prayer of the three holy children.<sup>758</sup> (Daniël 3:26-56)

The praise of the three youths quenches the flame.  
O God of our Fathers and our God, blessed are You.

**B**lessed are You, O LORD God of our Fathers,  
and praised and glorified is Your Name unto the ages ;  
for You are righteous in all that You have done for us,  
and all Your works are true, and Your ways upright,  
and all Your fair-judgements are true.

You have made judgements of truth in accordance with all  
that You have brought upon us, and upon Jerousalēm,  
the holy city of our fathers ;  
for in truth and fair-judgement have You brought all these  
things upon us because of our sins ;  
for we sinned, and we wrought lawlessness in moving away  
from You ;  
we have sinned in all things, and we have not heard Your  
commandments ;  
we have not kept nor done them, even as You have  
commanded us, that it might go well with us.  
And all that You have done for us, and all that You have  
brought upon us,  
You have done in true and fair-judgement.  
You have given us over into the hands of lawless enemies,  
most hostile rebels,

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<sup>758</sup> This first Canticle of the Three Children expresses the prayer of Azarias and the others while they were in the midst of the flames of the furnace. Regardless of the expected death, they blessed the LORD, and expressed repentance on behalf of the People Israel.

and to an unrighteous king, the most evil in all the earth.  
And now, we cannot open our mouth :  
it has become a shame and a reproach for Your bond-  
servants and for those revering You.  
For the sake of Your holy Name, do not, then, give us over  
unto the end, and do not break up Your Covenant.  
Do not move away Your mercy from us,  
for the sake of Abraam, Your beloved, and for the sake of  
Isaak, Your bond-servant, and of Israēl, Your holy one,  
to whom You said that You would multiply their seed as the  
stars of Heaven, and as the sand on the shore of the sea ;  
for we, O Master, have become the least of all the nations,  
and we are humiliated today in all the earth, because of our  
sins.  
And at this time there is no prince, nor prophet, nor leader ;  
no whole-burnt-offering, nor sacrifice, nor oblation, nor  
incense ;  
no place to bring first-fruits before Your Face, and to find  
mercy.  
But with a shattered soul and with a spirit of humility, may  
we be accepted ;  
as though it were with whole-burnt-offerings of rams and  
bulls, and with myriads of fat lambs,  
so let our sacrifice be acceptable before Your Face today, and  
let it be completed, following You,  
for there is no shame for those trusting in You.  
And now, with our whole heart, we follow You ;  
we fear You, and we seek Your Face.  
Do not put us to shame,  
but act with us in accordance with Your gentleness, and in  
accordance with the multitude of Your mercy.

Set us free, in accordance with Your wonders,  
and give glory to Your Name, O LORD.  
May they be disgraced — all those showing Your bond-  
servants bad things,  
and may they be put to shame by all might, and may their  
strength be shattered.  
Let them know that You are the LORD, the only God, glorious  
over the whole world.  
And the king's attendants, who had cast them in, did not  
cease from heating the furnace with naphtha, pitch, tow and  
wood of the vine.  
10: And the flame was pouring out forty-nine cubits above the  
furnace, and it broke through ;  
and it set on fire those of the Khaldæans it found<sup>759</sup>  
around the furnace.  
9: But the angel of the LORD came down to be together with  
Azarias and those with him in the furnace ;  
and he shook the flame of the fire out of the furnace.  
8: And he made the midst of the furnace like a whistling  
wind bearing dew,  
and the fire did not at all touch them, nor vex, nor trouble  
them.  
7: Then the three, as from one mouth, were hymning and  
blessing  
and glorifying God in the furnace, saying :  
6: Blessed are You, O LORD God of our Fathers,  
and highly-hymned and highly-exalted unto the ages ;

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<sup>759</sup> "Khaldæans"=Chaldeans.

- 5: and blessed is the holy Name of Your glory,  
which is highly-hymned and highly-exalted unto the ages.
- 4: Blessed are You in the temple of Your holy glory,  
You that are highly-hymned and highly-exalted unto the  
ages.
- 3: Blessed are You, looking at the abysses, and sitting upon  
the Cheroubim,  
You that are highly-hymned and highly-exalted unto the  
ages.
- 2: Blessed are You on the throne of the glory of Your  
kingdom,  
You that are highly-hymned and highly-exalted unto the  
ages.
- 1: Blessed are You in the firmament of Heaven,  
You that are highly-hymned and highly-exalted unto the  
ages.



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

### **The Eighth Canticle :**

A hymn of the three holy children.<sup>760</sup> (Daniël 3:57-88)

Hymn the Master, you nature of creatures.

Hymn the LORD, you works :

hymn and highly exalt Him unto all the ages.

**B**less the LORD, all you works of the LORD :  
hymn and highly exalt Him unto the ages.

Bless the LORD, you angels of the LORD, and you Heavens of  
the LORD :

hymn and highly exalt Him unto the ages.

Bless the LORD, all you waters above the Heavens, and all you  
powers of the LORD :

hymn and highly exalt Him unto the ages.

Bless the LORD, O sun and moon, and you stars of Heaven :  
hymn and highly exalt Him unto the ages.

Bless the LORD, all rain and dew, and all winds :  
hymn and highly exalt Him unto the ages.

Bless the LORD, O fire and solar heat, O winter cold and  
summer heat :

hymn and highly exalt Him unto the ages.

Bless the LORD, O dews and snow-falls, O ice and cold :  
hymn and highly exalt Him unto the ages.

Bless the LORD, O hoar-frosts and snows, O lightnings and  
clouds :

hymn and highly exalt Him unto the ages.

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<sup>760</sup> The Canticle of the Three Holy Children expresses the gratitude of these three youths for the LORD's intervention on their behalf. To bless the LORD is to speak good words to, and about, Him.

Bless the LORD, O light and darkness, O nights and days :  
hymn and highly exalt Him unto the ages.

10: Bless the LORD, O earth — mountains and hills, and all  
things springing up therein :

hymn and highly exalt Him unto the ages.

9: Bless the LORD, you springs, seas and rivers, you whales  
and all things moving in the waters :

hymn and highly exalt Him unto the ages.

8: Bless the LORD, all you birds of the sky, wild beasts and  
all you cattle :

hymn and highly exalt Him unto the ages.

7: Bless the LORD, O sons of Men ; let Israēl bless the  
LORD :

hymn and highly exalt Him unto the ages.

6: Bless the LORD, O priests of the LORD, O bond-  
servants of the LORD :

hymn and highly exalt Him unto the ages.

5: Bless the LORD, O spirits and souls of the righteous,  
O holy ones and humble in heart :

hymn and highly exalt Him unto the ages.

4: Bless the LORD, O Ananias, Azarias and Misaēl :  
hymn and highly exalt Him unto the ages.

3: Bless the LORD, O apostles, prophets and martyrs of the  
LORD :

hymn and highly exalt Him unto the ages.

2: Let us bless Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — the LORD :<sup>761</sup>  
we hymn and highly exalt Him unto the ages.

1: We praise, bless and worship the LORD :  
hymning and highly exalting Him unto the ages.

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<sup>761</sup> In the Greek, there are no definite articles for the three Persons of the Trinity.



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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

### The Ninth Canticle :

A canticle of the Theotokos.<sup>762</sup>

(Luke 1:46-55)

Μεγαλύνει ἡ ψυχὴ μου Magnificat anima mea  
The Virgin Mother hymns her Son, and God.  
With hymns, let us magnify the Theotokos.

**M**y soul magnifies the LORD,  
and my spirit has exulted in God, my Saviour ;  
for He has looked attentively upon the humility of His bond-  
maiden ;  
for behold, from now on all generations shall call me blessed ;  
for He, who is powerful, has done great things for me,  
and holy is His Name ;  
and His mercy is on those fearing Him,  
unto generation and generation.  
He has shown strength with His arm ;  
He has scattered abroad the proud in the intention of their  
heart.  
He has brought the mighty down from their thrones,  
and He has exalted the humble ;  
He has filled up the hungry with good things,  
and the rich He has sent empty away.  
He has supported Israēl, His servant,  
in remembrance of His mercy,  
even as He spoke to our fathers :  
to Abraam, and to his seed, until the age.<sup>763</sup>

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<sup>762</sup> There is a parallel between this Canticle and the Canticle of Anna (Canticle 3).

<sup>763</sup> (1 Mōysēs 17:1-19; 18:18; 22:15-18; Mikhaïas 7:20; “Mikhaïas”=Micah)  
We continue immediately singing the Canticle of Zacharias.

A prayer of Zacharias, the father of the Forerunner.<sup>764</sup>

(Luke 1:68-79)

Εὐλογητὸς Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς Benedictus Dominus Deus  
Zakharias blesses the child-birth.

**B**lessed be the LORD God of Israēl,  
for He has visited, and wrought redemption for His  
people ;  
and He has raised up a horn of salvation for us  
in the house of David, His servant,<sup>765</sup>  
10: even as He spoke by the mouth of the holy ones,  
His prophets from the age :  
9: salvation from our enemies,  
and from the hand of all those hating us ;  
8: to do mercy with our fathers,  
and to remember His holy Covenant :  
7: the oath which He swore to Abraam, our father, to give us,  
that we, being rescued from the hand of our enemies,  
6: might serve Him without fear, in holiness and  
righteousness  
before His Face all the days of our life.  
5: And you, child, you shall be called the Prophet of the Most  
High ;  
for you shall go before the Face of the LORD, to prepare  
His ways :<sup>766</sup>

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<sup>764</sup> At Matins, this hymn is sung immediately after, and in the same melody as is the Canticle of the Theotokos. The numbers indicate possible places for interpolating tropars from the Ninth Ode of the Canon.

<sup>765</sup> About “servant”: see the foot-note on Psalm 17:1.

<sup>766</sup> (Malakhias 3:1; Ēsaïas 40:3; Matthew 3:3)

- 4: to give knowledge of salvation to His people,  
in the forgiveness of their sins,
- 3: through the tender mercy of our God,<sup>767</sup>  
in which the Orient from on high has visited us ;<sup>768</sup>
- 2: to shine upon those sitting in darkness,  
and in the shadow of death,
- 1: and to direct our feet  
into the way of peace.



Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
(three times)

[ THE END OF THE BIBLICAL ODES ]

<sup>767</sup> In Greek, σπλάγγνα ἐλέους, *splaghna eleous*, is sometimes translated in French as *des entrailles de miséricorde*, and in Latin as *viscera misericordiae*. Formerly, one could have used in English “bowels of compassion”, which expresses the inner organs, not only the intestines. These were considered by both the Hebrews and the Greeks to be the seat of the feelings, the affections. The Hebrews understood them to be tender affections, whereas the Greeks understood them to be more violent emotions. Regardless, this expression is not now comprehended correctly by most English-speakers, hence “tender mercy”.

<sup>768</sup> (4 Mōysēs 24:17; Zakharias 3:8; 6:12; Malakhias 3:20; Jeremias 23:5) These references all point ahead to the coming Christ/Messiah, and to the Resurrection of Christ. The “Orient” refers, as it were, to day-break and the rising of the sun; however, we Christians are always taking this to refer to Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, the Son of Righteousness.

## PRAYERS AFTER READING SEVERAL SESSIONS, OR, AFTER READING THE ENTIRE PSALTER



*Either :*

Tone 8

It is truly meet to bless you, O Theotokos, ever blessed and most pure, and the Mother of our God.

More honourable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, without corruption, you gave birth to God the Word. True Theotokos, we magnify you.

*Or :*

Tone 6

All of creation – the assembly of angels, and the race of Men – rejoices in you, O Full of Grace, O sanctified temple and spiritual paradise, the glory of virgins, from whom God was incarnate, and became a child – our God before the ages. He made your body into a throne, and your womb, He made more spacious than the Heavens. All of creation rejoices in you, O Full of Grace. Glory be to you.

*And then the following prayers :*

### TRISAGION PRAYERS

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

(three times)

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

O most holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and heal our infirmities, for Your Name’s sake.



LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, who are in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name ; Your  
kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ;  
give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our debts, as we  
forgive our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test, but rescue  
us from the evil one.

*And then :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus Christ, our  
God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

*And these Tropars :* Tone 6

Have mercy on us, O LORD ; have mercy on us, for laying aside  
all excuse, we sinners offer to You, as to our Master, this  
supplication : Have mercy on us.

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

The precious memorial of Your Prophet David has shown Your  
Church to be Heaven, O LORD, for angels exult together with  
Man. By his prayers, O Christ God, guide our lives in peace, that  
we may sing to You : Alleluia.

Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

In need of salvation from the great multitude of my  
transgressions, I flee to you, O pure Mother of God. Visit my  
infirm soul, and beseech your Son, our God, to grant me  
forgiveness of my evil deeds, O only blessed one.

LORD, have mercy. (*forty times*)

(*with prostrations, as one is able*)

### PRAYER OF SAINT EPHREM

O LORD and Master of my life, give me not the spirit of sloth,  
busyness,<sup>769</sup> lust for power and idle talk ; but rather, favour Your  
servant with the spirit of soberness,<sup>770</sup> lowliness, endurance and  
love. Yes, O LORD and King, grant me to see my own falls, and  
not to condemn my brother, for blessed are You, unto the ages  
of ages. Amen.

*And then this prayer, attentively :*

O most merciful LORD, plenteous in mercy, Giver of all that is  
good, Lover of Man, King of the whole universe, O Master of  
many Names, and LORD, I am wretched and lowly, yet I dare to  
call upon Your wonderful, awesome, holy Name, which makes  
the created heavenly powers tremble with fear. How amazing  
is the dispensation of Your inexpressible love for Man, by which  
You sent down to earth Your beloved Child – uttered from the  
unoriginate bosom of Your fatherly glory, without separation  
from the Godhead – that Men and angels might be joined  
together. Remember, O LORD, my abased dejection, who am  
clothed in the infirmity of the flesh – which Your merciful Word  
took, to free our souls from enemy bondage by His death, so that  
all, who fell away from Your glory by the deceit of Satan, might  
once again by faith become partakers of it, by taking up the yoke  
of bondage to You. Have mercy on me, who am darkened by  
sinful thoughts. Raise up my mind, which is choked by thorns  
of laziness, and by weeds of rebellion. Set my heart aflame for  
You ; send my eyes a fountain of tears ; guide me into heart-felt  
efforts for You ; and, before my soul departs, make me into  
someone truly well-pleasing to You. In Your mercy, remember<sup>771</sup>  
my parents, relatives, friends, neighbours, and all Orthodox  
Christians ; and save me by the prayers of all the saints. Receive  
in their honour the psalms and prayers which I have recited

<sup>769</sup> This word may also mean “meddling”, or “officiousness”. It appears in other places, from some other source, as “despondency”.

<sup>770</sup> “Soberness” can mean “whole-mindedness”, or “whole-wisdomed”.

<sup>771</sup> Names may be added as appropriate, if the following Commemoration is not used.

before You ; and may this supplication, with its sighs, not be vile in Your sight ; for You are merciful, and the Lover of Man, and we glorify You : O unoriginate Father, with Your Only-begotten Son, and Your Holy Spirit, now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

*And then :*

More honourable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, without corruption, you gave birth to God the Word. True Theotokos, we magnify you.

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

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

*A presbyter concludes as would be customary for a presbyter.*

*If not, then one prays :*

O LORD Jesus Christ, Son of God, by the prayers of Your most pure Mother, by the power of the honourable and life-giving Cross, and of the holy Bodiless Powers of Heaven, by the prayers of our holy and God-bearing Fathers, of the holy Prophet David, and of all the saints, have mercy on me, and save me, the sinner, as You are good, and the Lover of Man. Amen.

[THE END OF THE CONCLUDING PRAYERS]



## THE COMMEMORATION

## THE SERVICE OF THE TWELVE PSALMS



## THE COMMEMORATION<sup>772</sup>

### COMMEMORATION OF THE LIVING

O LORD Jesus Christ our God, for the sake of Your eternal mercy and loving-kindness, You became Man, and suffered crucifixion and death for the salvation of all. You rose from the dead, and ascended into Heaven, and You sit at the right hand of the Father, where You hear the prayers of all who call upon You humbly and with their whole heart. Incline Your ear to us, and hearken to the prayer which Your unworthy servants offer as a spiritual sacrifice for all Your people.

Remember first of all Your Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, which You have purchased with Your precious blood. Confirm her, strengthen her, multiply her, keep her in peace, and do not allow the gates of Hadēs to stand against her. Heal the schisms and calm the dissensions of the Churches, stop the raging of the pagans, root out and cleanse all heresies, destroying them by the power of Your Holy Spirit. (*metania*)

Have mercy, O LORD, upon our Queen, Governor-General, Lieutenant-Governors, Prime Ministers, Premiers, and all who answer before Your Face for their responsibility in civil authority and in the public service, and save them all. Give them peace and continual victory over unrighteousness and evil in all places. May they provide peace, so that Your Holy Church and all Your people may live calm and ordered lives in Your sight, in true faith and prayer, and with godly deeds. (*metania*)

Have mercy, O LORD, upon all the Orthodox patriarchs and the heads of Autocephalous Churches ; upon the metropolitans, archbishops and bishops, the priests and deacons, and the whole order of the clergy of Your Church. Save them, whom You have established to feed Your flock, and by their prayers have mercy upon me, the sinner, and save me. (*metania*)

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<sup>772</sup> Every person ought to pray this Commemoration each day, at the conclusion of one's private rule of prayer, with all sincerity and earnestness.

Have mercy, O LORD, upon Your bishops and clergy *nn*\_\_\_\_\_. Remember especially the parishioners of *nn*\_\_\_\_\_. Remember especially the members of the monastic community(ies) *nn*\_\_\_\_\_. Remember especially the seminaries, seminarians and seminary graduates *nn*\_\_\_\_\_. Remember especially the administrators of the charitable organisations *nn*\_\_\_\_\_. Remember especially the administrators of the cemeteries *nn*\_\_\_\_\_. (*metania*)

[*This following petition in monasteries only :*

Have mercy, O LORD, upon our father (*mother*) Igumen(ia) *nn*\_\_\_\_\_, and all our brothers (*sisters*) in Christ, and by their prayers have mercy upon me, the sinner. (*metania*)

Have mercy, O LORD, upon my spiritual father (*mother*), and upon my spiritual child(ren) *nn*\_\_\_\_\_. (*metania*)

Have mercy, O LORD, in the multitude of Your mercies, upon all who live and dwell in the monasteries of the Holy Mountain, in the Holy Land, and in monasteries everywhere. Have mercy upon all priest-monks, deacon-monks, male and female monks, and upon all living in virginity, devotion and fasting, in monasteries, in deserts, in caves, on mountains, on pillars, in trees, in hermitages, in the clefts of rocks, and in right faith in every place of Your dominion, and devoutly serving You, and praying to You. Lighten their burden, console them in their afflictions, and grant them strength, power and perseverance in their struggle ; and by their prayers have mercy upon me, the sinner, and grant me remission of sins. Remember especially *nn*\_\_\_\_\_. (*metania*)

Have mercy, O LORD, upon my parents, and save them together with my brothers and sisters, the members of my family and my friends. Grant them Your blessing both here and in the life to come. Remember especially *nn*\_\_\_\_\_. (*metania*)

Have mercy, O LORD, upon the old and the young, the needy, the orphans and widows, and all who are in any sort of sickness and sorrow, who are in distress and affliction, oppression and

captivity, prison and exile. Save them, together with Your servants who are under persecution for Your sake and for the sake of the Orthodox Faith. Remember them, visit them, heal them, strengthen and comfort them, and by Your power grant them speedy relief, freedom, and deliverance. Remember especially *nn*\_\_\_\_\_. (*metania*)

Have mercy, O LORD, upon all who travel, and save them : those who are sent on duty, our fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters, and all Orthodox Christians. Remember especially *nn*\_\_\_\_\_. (*metania*)

Have mercy, O LORD, upon those who are enemies to me : save all those who envy me, wish me evil, hate me, or deal unjustly with me. May they not perish because of me, the sinner. Remember especially *nn*\_\_\_\_\_. (*metania*)

Have mercy, O LORD, upon my benefactors, those who have mercy upon me, and those who entrust me, the unworthy, to pray for them. Give them Your Grace, and grant them all the requests which are conducive to salvation and the attainment of eternal joy. Remember especially *nn*\_\_\_\_\_. (*metania*)

Have mercy, O LORD, upon those whom I have purposely or inadvertently offended or scandalised in my madness and folly, and whom I have turned from the way of salvation, and whom I have led into evil and harmful deeds. By Your divine Providence, restore them to the way of salvation. (*metania*)

Enlighten, O LORD, with the truth of Your holy wisdom, all who have gone astray from the Orthodox Faith, led by destructive heresies and tangential philosophies, and those who have fallen into the service of the evil one, and unite them once more to Your Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Remember especially *nn*\_\_\_\_\_. (*metania*)

Enlighten, O LORD, Your universe, all peoples, and all of Your creatures. Have mercy upon us all, and save us. In Your love, unite us all to Yourself and to each other, in accordance with Your will. (*metania*)

### COMMEMORATION OF THE DEPARTED

Remember, O LORD, those who have departed this life : all Orthodox patriarchs, metropolitans, archbishops, bishops, all who served You in the priesthood and ministry of the Church, and all Orthodox government leaders. Remember especially *nn* \_\_\_\_\_. Remember also all Your male and female monks, especially *nn* \_\_\_\_\_. Remember also all those who have founded churches, monasteries and charitable institutions. Grant them rest with Your saints in Your eternal kingdom. (*metania*)

Remember, O LORD, the souls of Your servants now fallen asleep : my parents, children, brothers and sisters, spiritual father (*mother*), spiritual children, and friends. Forgive them all their sins, committed knowingly or unknowingly ; grant them Your kingdom, a portion in Your eternal blessing, and the enjoyment of Your unending life. Remember especially *nn* \_\_\_\_\_. (*metania*)

Remember, O LORD, all who have fallen asleep in the hope of the Resurrection and of eternal life : all Orthodox Christians throughout the world. Give them rest with Your saints, before the light of Your Face, and have mercy upon me, for You are good and the Lover of Man. Remember especially *nn* \_\_\_\_\_. Amen. (*metania*)

Grant, O LORD, remission of all sins unto our fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters departed in the faith and hope of the Resurrection, and grant them memory eternal. (*three times*) (*three metanias*)

*Should one wish to do so, the names of particular persons and institutions may be added in the appropriate places, even though there may not be blanks provided to prompt this insertion.*

**[THE END OF THE COMMEMORATION]**

### THE SERVICE OF THE TWELVE PSALMS

*The venerable Desert Fathers sing this service in the daytime and at night, of which service mention is made in the books of the Fathers, and in the lives and martyrologies of many saints. This order was brought from the Holy Mountain by the venerable Dositheus, archimandrite of the Kyiv Caves.*<sup>773</sup>

*If the person be a presbyter, he says :*

Blessed is our God, always, now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

*If not, then one says with feeling :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*,<sup>774</sup> O LORD Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

Glory be to You, our God, glory be to You.

\* O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, everywhere present, and filling all things, Treasury of good things, and Provider of Life, come, and abide in us, and cleanse us from every stain, and save our souls, O Good One.

\* [We do not read "Heavenly King" in paschaltide. We say "Christ is risen..." (three times). From Ascension to Pentecost, we read the tropar of Ascension.]

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

*(three times)*

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

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<sup>773</sup> This fixed service as presented in this Psalter is correctly found in the Ecclesiastical Psalter itself, not on its own, or in the Horologion, or elsewhere. This service is used in Kyiv and on the Holy Mountain at the least. It is a relative of the services followed in Egypt, and also by the early Benedictines. In those places, the psalms are not fixed, as they are here; but, following a similar outline, these psalms are replaced with other psalms, together with some different prayers, to allow for the recitation of the Psalter once in a week, or even once in a day. See, for instance, the Egyptian *agpeya*, or Book of the Hours.

<sup>774</sup> *If a bishop be present: "Master".*

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and heal our infirmities, for Your Name's sake.

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ; now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, who are in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name ; Your kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ; give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test, but rescue us from the evil one.

*And then :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.<sup>775</sup>

LORD, have mercy. (*twelve times*)

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

O come, let us worship God our King ; come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, our King and our God ; come, let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and our God. (*three metanias, or prostrations*)

#### PSALM 26

The LORD is my Illumination and my Saviour ; whom shall I fear ? The LORD is the Protector of my life ; of whom shall I be afraid ? When those doing bad things drew near against me to eat my flesh — those afflicting me, and my enemies — they became weak, and they fell. If an army were to be drawn up against me, my heart shall not fear. If a war were to rise up against me, in this do I hope. One thing I asked of the LORD ; this I shall seek out : to dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to contemplate the delight of the LORD, and to visit His holy temple ; for He has hidden me in His tent in a day of my bad things ; He has sheltered me in a secret place of His

<sup>775</sup> A presbyter concludes as would be customary for a presbyter.

tent. On a rock has He exalted me ; and now behold, He has exalted my head over my enemies. I surrounded His tent, and I sacrificed in it a sacrifice of a joyful shout ; I shall sing and I shall chant to the LORD. Hear, O LORD, my voice with which I have cried out ; have mercy on me, and hear me. To You my heart said : "My face has sought You out". Your Face, O LORD, shall I seek. Do not turn Your Face away from me, and do not in anger incline away from Your bond-servant. Be my Helper : do not cast me off utterly, and do not abandon me, O God, my Saviour ; for my father and my mother abandoned me, but the LORD has taken me to Himself. Give me a law, O LORD, according to Your way, and lead me on the way, on a straight path, because of my enemies. Do not give me over to the souls of those afflicting me ; for unrighteous witnesses rose up against me, and their unrighteousness lied to itself. I believe that I shall see the good things of the LORD in the land of the living. Wait for the LORD : take courage, and let your heart become strong ; and wait for the LORD.

#### PSALM 31

Blessed are those whose lawless acts have been forgiven, and whose sins have been covered up. Blessed is the man to whom the LORD will reckon no sin, nor is there any deceit in his mouth ; for I have been silent. My bones became old, because of my crying out the whole day long ; for by day and by night, Your hand weighed heavily upon me. I was turned into misery when a thorn was piercing me. My sin I have made known, and my lawlessness I have not covered. I said : "I shall declare against myself my lawlessness to the LORD", and it is You that have forgiven the impiety of my heart. Concerning this, every holy one shall pray to You at the suitable time ; nevertheless, in a flood of great waters, they shall not draw near to him. You are my Refuge from the affliction encompassing me. O my Exultation, redeem me from those surrounding me. "I will make you understand, and advise you on this way in which you might walk ; I will fix My eyes upon you". Do not be like a horse and

a mule, in which there is no understanding ; with bit and bridle may you hold in the jaws of those not drawing near to you. Many are the scourges of the sinner ; but mercy shall surround the one hoping on the LORD. Be glad in the LORD and exult, O you righteous ; and boast, all you upright in heart.

#### PSALM 56

Have mercy on me, O God ; have mercy on me, for my soul trusts in You, and in the shadow of Your wings I shall hope, until the lawlessness pass over. I shall cry out to God Most High, to God who is my Benefactor. He sent out from Heaven, and He saved me ; He gave to reproach those trampling me. God sent out His mercy and His truth, and He rescued my soul out of the midst of the cubs of the lion. I lay down, stirred up though I was. The sons of Men – their teeth are weapons and arrows, and their tongue a sharp knife. Be exalted above the Heavens, O God, and over all the earth Your glory. They have prepared a snare for my feet, and they bowed down my soul. They dug out a hole right before my face, and they fell into it. My heart is ready, O God ; my heart is ready. I shall sing and I shall chant in my glory. Awake, O my glory ; awake, psaltery and lyre ; I shall awake at day-break. I shall confess You amongst the peoples, O LORD ; I shall chant to You amongst the nations ; for Your mercy has been magnified as far as the Heavens, and Your truth as far as the clouds. Be exalted above the Heavens, O God, and over all the earth, Your glory.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

*(three times)*

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

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and heal our infirmities, for Your Name's sake.

LORD have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

Our Father, who are in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name ; Your kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ; give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test, but rescue us from the evil one.

*And then :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

*And these tropars in Tone 1 :*

Make haste to open Your fatherly arms to me, for I have spent my life as the prodigal. Do not despise a heart now impoverished, O Saviour, as I gaze on the inexhaustible riches of Your mercies ; for to You, O LORD, I cry out with compunction : Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and before You.

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

When You, O God, shall come to earth with glory, all things shall tremble, and the river of fire shall flow before Your Judgement Seat. The books shall be opened, and the hidden things disclosed. Then, deliver me from the unquenchable fire, and make me worthy to stand at Your right-hand, O Righteous Judge.

Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

All we, who with yearning seek refuge in your goodness, know you to be the Theotokos, who, after childbearing, remained truly virgin. Indeed, we sinners have in you an intercessor ; and in temptation, we have you as our salvation, O only immaculate one.

LORD, have mercy. *(thirty times)*

O come, let us worship God, our King ; come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, our King and our God ; come, let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and our God. *(with three metanias, or prostrations)*

### PSALM 33

I shall bless the LORD at all times : His praise shall always be in my mouth. In the LORD shall my soul be praising ; let the meek hear, and be glad. Magnify the LORD with me, and as one, let us exalt His Name. I sought out the LORD, and He listened to me, and from all my afflictions He rescued me. Come near to Him, and be illumined, and your faces shall not be ashamed. This poor one cried out, and the LORD heard him, and from all his afflictions has He saved him. An angel of the LORD shall encamp round about those fearing Him, and He will rescue them. O taste, and see that the LORD is gracious : blessed is the man who hopes on Him. Fear the LORD, all you His holy ones, for there is no want for those fearing Him. The rich have become poor and hungry, but those seeking out the LORD shall not lack any good thing. Come, O children, hear me : I shall teach you the fear of the LORD. Who is the Man who wishes for life, who loves to see good days ? Stop your tongue from ill, and your lips from speaking deceit. Incline away from badness, and do good ; seek peace, and pursue it. The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and His ears towards their supplication. But the Face of the LORD is upon those doing bad things, to exterminate the remembrance of them from the earth. The righteous cried out, and the LORD heard them ; from all their afflictions He rescued them. The LORD is near to the shattered of heart, and those who are humbled in spirit will He save. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, and from them all will the LORD rescue them. The LORD watches over all their bones : not one of them shall be shattered. The death of sinners is evil, and those hating the righteous shall do wrong. The LORD will redeem the souls of His bond-servants, and all those hoping on Him shall not do wrong.

### PSALM 38

I said : "I shall guard my ways, that I sin not with my tongue. I placed a guard on my mouth, while the sinner took his stance against me". I became mute, and I was humbled ; I kept silent from good things, and my suffering was renewed. My heart

became hot within me, and in my rumination, a fire shall be kindled. I spoke with my tongue : "Make me know my limit, O LORD, and what is the number of my days, so that I may know what I am, myself, lacking. Behold, as hand-breadths have You set my days, and my existence is just as nothing before Your Face. Nevertheless, the whole of futility is every Man living. Truly, Man walks about as an image, yet in futility is he stirred up. He stores up treasures, and does not know for whom he shall gather them together. And now, who is my endurance ? Is it not the LORD ? Even my existence is from You. From all my lawless acts, rescue me ; You gave me as an object of reproach to the fool. I became mute, and I did not open my mouth, for it is You that have done it. Take Your scourges away from me, for from the strength of Your hand have I, myself, failed. With reproofs for lawlessness You instructed Man, and You melted away his soul like a spider ; yet in futility is every Man stirred up. Hear my prayer, O LORD, and my supplication : give ear to my tears. Do not pass by in silence ; for I am, myself, a sojourner with You, and a pilgrim, even as all my fathers. Release me, so that I may be refreshed before I depart, and exist no more".

### PSALM 40

Blessed is the one understanding the poor and the needy ; in the evil day, the LORD will rescue him. May the LORD watch over him closely, and make him live, and make him blessed on the earth ; may He not hand him over into the hands of his enemies. May the LORD help him on his couch of pain : You have turned over all his bed in his sickness. As for me, I said : "O LORD, have mercy on me ; heal my soul, for I have sinned against You". My enemies spoke bad things against me : "When shall he die, and his name perish ?" And one was walking in to see me ; he was speaking in futility. His heart gathered lawlessness together to himself. He was walking outside, and speaking the same thing. Against me all my enemies were whispering ; against me they were calculating bad things for me. They laid down an unlawful word against me : "Surely the sleeping one shall not arise again ?" Indeed, it is the Man of my peace, on whom I hoped,



who, eating of my bread, magnified treachery against me. But You, O LORD, have mercy on me ; raise me up, and I shall requite them. In this, I know that You have delighted in me : that my enemy shall not rejoice over me. Because of my guilelessness, You have supported me, and You have secured me before Your Face unto the age. Blessed be the LORD God of Israēl, from the age, and unto the age. So be it. So be it.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

*(three times)*

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

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and heal our infirmities, for Your Name's sake.

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

Our Father, who are in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name ; Your kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ; give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test, but rescue us from the evil one.

*And then :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

*And these tropars in Tone 4 :*

O LORD, visit my humble soul. I have squandered all my life in sins, as the Prodigal. Accept me also, and save me.

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

I have wasted my whole life as the Prodigal, O LORD, and I cry out to You in tearful compunction : O Father in Heaven, I have sinned. Cleanse me, and save me, and do not turn away from me, who have withdrawn myself from You, and who now am destitute because of my fruitless deeds.

Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Let us, who are sinful and unworthy, flee fervently to the Theotokos. Let us fall down in repentance, crying out from the depths of our souls : Help us, and have mercy on us, O Lady. Help us, for we are perishing from our many sins. Do not turn away your poor bond-servants, for you are our only hope.

LORD have mercy. *(thirty times)*

O come, let us worship God, our King ; come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, our King and our God ; come, let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and our God. *(with three metanias, or prostrations)*

### PSALM 69

O God, give heed to my help. O LORD, make haste to help me. Let them be put to shame and be disgraced – those seeking my soul ; let them be turned back, and be put to shame – those wishing me bad things. Let them be turned back instantly, and be shamed – those saying to me : “Well done, well done”. But let them exult and be glad in You – all those seeking You, O God ; and let them continually say : “Let the LORD be magnified” – those loving Your salvation. But poor and needy as I am, help me, O God. My Helper and my Rescuer – it is You. O LORD, do not tarry.

### PSALM 70

On You, O LORD, have I hoped ; may I not be put to shame unto the age. In Your righteousness, rescue me, and set me free ; incline Your ear to me, and save me. Be to me a protecting God, and a Strong Place to save me ; for it is You that are my Steadfastness and my Refuge. O my God, rescue me from the hand of a sinner, from the hand of one transgressing the law, and doing unrighteousness ; for You are my Endurance, O LORD. O LORD, You are my Hope from my youth. On You have I leaned from the womb : from the belly of my mother, it is You that are my Shelter. My hymn shall be about You continually. Just as a portent to many have I become, but You are a strong Helper. Let my mouth be filled with praise, that I may hymn Your glory –

the whole day long, Your magnificence. Do not cast me away in the time of old age ; when my strength fails, do not abandon me ; for my enemies have spoken about me, and those watching for my soul have, as one, taken counsel, saying : “God has abandoned him ; pursue him closely, and lay hold of him, for there is no rescuer” . O my God, do not be far away from me ; O my God, give heed to my help. Let them be put to shame, and come to an end – those slandering my soul ; let them be wrapped about with shame and disgrace – those seeking bad things for me. But as for me, I shall continually hope on You ; and I shall add to all Your praise. My mouth shall tell forth Your righteousness : the whole day long, Your salvation ; for I did not know Letters. I shall enter the realm of the LORD ; O LORD, I shall remember Your righteousness, Yours alone. O God, You have taught me from my youth, and up to now shall I bring tidings of Your wonders. Even unto my venerable old age, O God, do not abandon me, until I bring tidings of Your arm to every generation to come : Your realm and Your righteousness. O God, as far as the highest are the magnificent things which You have done. O God, who is like You ? So many bad afflictions have You shown me ; and yet You turned about, and You made me alive, and from the abysses of the earth You led me up again. You have made Your greatness abound towards me ; and having turned about, You consoled me, and from the abysses of the earth You led me up again. Indeed, I shall confess You, O God, Your truth with an instrument of chant ; I shall chant to You with the lyre, O Holy One of Israēl. My lips shall exult whenever I may chant to You, as shall my soul, which You have redeemed. Moreover, my tongue shall ruminate on Your righteousness the whole day long, whenever they may be put to shame and be disgraced – those seeking bad things for me.

#### PSALM 76

With my voice, I cried out to the LORD – with my voice to God, and He gave heed to me. In the day of my affliction, I sought out God : with my hands lifted up in His presence by night, and I was not deceived ; my soul refused to be consoled. I remembered

God, and I was glad ; I deliberated, and my spirit became discouraged. My eyes anticipated the night watches ; I was stirred up, and did not speak. I thought about the old days, and the eternal years I remembered, and I ruminated. By night, I was deliberating with my heart, and my spirit was probing. Surely the LORD will not push away unto the ages, and will no longer continue to be well-pleased ? or will He cut off His mercy unto the end ? Did He put an end to His discourse, from generation to generation ? Surely God will not forget to have compassion ? or will He, in His anger, withhold His compassions ? And I said : “Now I have begun. This change is from the right hand of the Most High” . I remembered the works of the LORD, for I shall remember Your wonders from the beginning. I shall ruminate on all Your works, and on Your purposes shall I deliberate. O God, Your way is in the Holy One. Who is so great a God as our God ? You are the God doing wonders ; You made Your power known amongst the peoples. With Your arm You have redeemed Your people : the sons of Jakōb, and Jōsēph. The waters have seen You, O God : the waters have seen You, and they feared ; the abysses were stirred up. There is a multitude of roaring of waters ; the clouds have given voice ; indeed, Your arrows are moving through. The voice of Your thunder is in the wheel ; Your lightnings gave light to the world ; the earth shook and trembled. In the sea are Your ways, and Your paths in many waters, and Your foot-prints shall not be known. You led Your people on the way, as sheep, by the hand of Mōysēs and Aarōn. Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

*(three times)*

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

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and heal our infirmities, for Your Name’s sake.

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

Our Father, who are in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name ; Your kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ; give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test, but rescue us from the evil one.

*And then :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

*And these tropars in Tone 6 :*

I think upon the fearful day, and I lament my evil works. How shall I answer the immortal King ? and with what boldness shall I, who am a prodigal, gaze at the Creator ? O compassionate Father, Only-begotten Son, and Holy Spirit, have mercy on me. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

In the place that You have established, when You, O merciful One, will sit to execute righteous Judgement, in the depths of lamentation, disclose not my secrets. Put me not to shame before the angels, but spare me, O LORD, and have mercy on me.

Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Open the door of your compassion, O blessed Theotokos, that we, who put our hope on you may not perish. Through you, may we be delivered from adversities, for you are the salvation of the Christian people.

LORD, have mercy. (*thirty times*)

O come, let us worship God, our King ; come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, our King and our God ; come, let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and our God. (*with three metanias, or prostrations*)

### PSALM 101

O LORD, hear my prayer, and let my cry come to You. Do not turn away Your Face from me. In whatever day I may be afflicted, incline Your ear to me. In whatever day I may call upon You, swiftly listen to me ; for my days have vanished just as smoke, and my bones have kindled just as kindling. Just as

grass have I been struck, and my heart has dried up, for I forgot to eat my bread. Because of the voice of my groaning, my bones cleaved to my flesh. I was made like a solitary pelican ; I became just like a night-raven on a shanty. I was keeping vigil, and I became like a lone sparrow upon a roof. The whole day long, my enemies were reproaching me, and those praising me were swearing against me ; for I ate ashes just as bread, and my drink I was mixing with weeping, because of the face of Your anger and Your fury ; for having lifted me up, You have broken me down. My days have declined just as a shadow ; and just as grass, have I dried up. But as for You, O LORD, You remain unto the age, and Your remembrance unto generation and generation. You, having arisen, You will have compassion on Siōn ; for it has the time to have compassion on her, for the time has come ; for Your bond-servants were well-pleased with her stones, and on her dirt shall they have compassion. The nations shall fear Your Name, O LORD, and all the kings of the earth, Your glory ; for the LORD will build up Siōn, and He will be seen in His glory. He looked attentively upon the prayer of the humble, and He did not reckon as nothing their supplication. Let this be written for another generation, and a people being created shall praise the LORD ; for from His holy height has He stooped down to watch. The LORD looked attentively from Heaven upon the earth, to hear the groaning of those bound in fetters, to loose the sons of those put to death, and to announce in Siōn the Name of the LORD, and His praise in Jerusalem, when the peoples are gathered together as one, and the kings, to serve the LORD. He answered Him in the way of His strength : “Announce to me the small number of my days. Do not take me up in the midst of my days ; Your years are in a generation of generations”. From the beginning, O LORD, it is You that laid the foundations of the earth, and the Heavens are the works of Your hands. They shall perish, but You will continue. All shall become old as a mantle, and just as a covering will You wrap them up, and they shall be changed. But as for You, You are the same, and Your years shall not come to an end.

The sons of Your bond-servants shall pitch their tent, and their seed shall prosper unto the age.

**PRAYER OF MANASSĒS, KING OF JOUDÆA<sup>776</sup>**

O LORD Almighty, God of our Fathers, of Abraam, and Isaak, and Jakōb, and of their righteous seed, it is You that have made Heaven and the earth, with all their good order. You have shackled the sea by the word of Your ordinance. You have closed the abyss, and sealed it with Your formidable and glorious Name. All things shudder and tremble because of the Face of Your power, for the magnificence of Your glory cannot be borne, and the anger of Your threat towards sinners cannot be withstood. Immeasurable and unsearchable is the mercy of Your promise ; for You are the LORD Most High : of great compassion, long-suffering and greatly merciful, repenting over the bad things of Men. It is You, O LORD, in accordance with the multitude of Your loving-kindness, who have promised repentance and forgiveness to those who have sinned against You ; and, in the multitude of Your compassions, You have established repentance for sinners unto salvation. Therefore, it is You, O LORD God of Powers, who have not established repentance for the righteous, for Abraam and Isaak and Jakōb, who have not sinned against You, but You have established repentance for me, the sinner, since I have sinned more than the number of the sand of the sea. My lawless acts multiplied, O LORD ; my lawless acts multiplied. I am not worthy to gaze and to see the height of Heaven, because of the multitude of my unrighteous acts. I am so bent down with many an iron fetter that I cannot shake my head in refusal. There is no relief for me, since I have stirred to anger Your fury, and I have done what is evil before Your Face,<sup>777</sup> setting up loathsome things, and multiplying offences. I have not done Your will, nor have I kept Your ordinances. And now, I bend the knee of my heart, beseeching You for Your loving-kindness. I have sinned,

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<sup>776</sup> (2 Paraleipomenon 33:10-13)

<sup>777</sup> The remainder of this sentence is not in the ecclesiastical text, although it is here included.

O LORD ; I have sinned, and I do know my lawless acts ; but supplicating, I beseech You : Forgive me, O LORD ; forgive me. Do not destroy me together with my acts of lawlessness. Do not cherish wrath unto the age, or lay up bad things for me. Do not condemn me to the lowest parts of the earth, since You are God, the God of those who repent, and in me You will show all Your goodness ; for, unworthy as I am, You will save me in accordance with Your great mercy, and I shall praise You always, through all the days of my life ; for all the power of the Heavens hymns You, and Yours is the glory unto the ages of ages. Amen.

**LESSER DOXOLOGY**

Glory be to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will amongst Men. We hymn You ; we bless You ; we worship You ; we glorify You ; we give thanks to You for Your great glory, O LORD, Heavenly King, God the Father Almighty ; O LORD, the Only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ ; and You, O Holy Spirit.

O LORD God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, You that take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us, You that take away the sins of the world. Receive our supplication, You that sit at the right-hand of the Father, and have mercy on us ; for You alone are holy ; You alone are the LORD, You, O Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Every day shall I bless You and praise Your Name unto the age, and unto the age of the age.

O LORD, You have been our refuge from generation to generation. I said : O LORD, have mercy on me ; heal my soul, for I have sinned against You. O LORD, I have fled to You for refuge. Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God ; for by You is the spring of life, and in Your light shall we see light. Prolong Your mercy to those who know You.

Deem us worthy, O LORD, to keep us this day without sin. Blessed are You, O LORD God of our Fathers, and praised and glorified is Your Name unto the ages. Amen.

May Your mercy, O LORD, be upon us, even as we have hoped on You. Blessed are You, O LORD, teach me Your statutes. Blessed are You, O Master, let me understand Your statutes. Blessed are You, O Holy One, enlighten me with Your statutes. O LORD, Your mercy is unto the age. Do not overlook the works of Your hands. Praise befits You ; a hymn befits You ; glory befits You : the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

**PRAYER OF SAINT EUSTRATIUS<sup>778</sup>**

Most highly do I magnify You, O LORD ; for You have looked upon my lowliness, and have not enclosed me in the hands of enemies, but You have saved my soul from anguish. And now, O Master, let Your hand shelter me, and may Your mercy come upon me ; for my soul is troubled and greatly pained in its departure from this, my wretched and filthy body, lest the wicked design of the Adversary overtake it, and make it stumble for the sins done by me in this life – in ignorance, and in knowledge. Be merciful to me, O Master, and let not my soul see the gloomy and dark vision of the evil demons ; but may Your bright and shining angels receive my soul. Give glory to Your holy Name, and by Your might, lead me to Your divine Judgement Seat. When I am judged, let not the hand of the prince of this world seize me to cast me, the sinner, into the depth of Hadēs ; but stand by me, and be my Saviour and Support. O LORD, have mercy on my soul, fouled by the passions of life, and accept it, cleansed by repentance and confession ; for You are blessed unto the ages of ages. Amen.

*And then, immediately :*

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

*(three times)*

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

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<sup>778</sup> This prayer is found also in the Midnight Hour of Saturdays.

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and heal our infirmities, for Your Name's sake.

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

Our Father, who are in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name ; Your kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ; give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test, but rescue us from the evil one.

*And then :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O LORD Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

*And these tropars in Tone 8 :*

With Your compassionate eye, O LORD, look upon my lowliness ; for little by little my life is consumed ; and from works, there is no salvation for me. Therefore I pray : With Your compassionate eye, look upon my lowliness, and save me, O LORD.

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

My time comes to an end, and Your formidable throne is ready for my life to pass before it. Judgement awaits me, banishing me to fiery torment and the unquenchable flame. Grant me clouds of tears, and quench the fires by Your might, as You desire to save all Men.

Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O good One, for our sake You were born of a Virgin ; You endured crucifixion ; You despoiled death by death ; and as God, You revealed the Resurrection. Do not overlook the works of Your hands. Show Your love for Man, O merciful One. Accept the intercession made on our behalf by the Theotokos who bore You ; and, O Saviour, save Your despairing people.

LORD, have mercy. *(thirty times)*

*If there be a presbyter, he concludes accordingly.*

*If not, then one prays :*

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

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

Through the intercessions of Your saints, O LORD, bless.

O LORD Jesus Christ, Son of God, by the prayers of Your most  
pure Mother, by the power of the honourable and life-giving  
Cross, and of the holy Bodiless Powers of Heaven, by the prayers  
of our holy and God-bearing Fathers, and of all the saints, have  
mercy on me, and save me, the sinner, as You are good, and the  
Lover of Man.

**OR**

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*,<sup>779</sup> O LORD Jesus Christ,  
have mercy on us. Amen.

[ THE END OF THE SERVICE OF THE TWELVE PSALMS ]

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<sup>779</sup> About this closing prayer: see the first foot-note on p.1, on this usage.

# THE MAGNIFICATIONS AT MATINS FOR VARIOUS FEASTS

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At Matins, although up to eight verses could be used, we only use the number  
required for the time completing the censuring. Whenever the censuring  
concludes, we immediately begin the Glory... now, and ever...



## ENTRANCE OF THE LORD INTO JERUSALEM

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O CHRIST, THE GIVER OF LIFE :  
HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST. AND WE CRY OUT UNTO  
YOU : BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE  
LORD. *(Psalm 8 et al)*

- V: O LORD, our LORD, how wonderful is Your Name in all  
the earth.
- V: Your magnificence has been lifted up above the Heavens.
- V: Out of the mouth of infants and sucklings have You  
perfected praise.
- V: Because of Your enemies, to take down an enemy and an  
avenger.
- V: The stone which the builders rejected — this has become  
the head of the corner.
- V: From the LORD has this come about, and it is wonderful  
in our eyes.
- V: The LORD is great in Siōn, and He is on high over all the  
peoples.
- V: Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the LORD.  
The LORD is God, and has appeared to us.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## NEW (THOMAS) SUNDAY

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O CHRIST, THE GIVER OF LIFE, WHO FOR OUR SAKE DESCENDED INTO HADĒS, AND RAISED ALL THINGS WITH YOURSELF. *(Psalm 92)*

- V: The LORD has established His Kingship ; He has put on majesty.  
V: The LORD has put on power, and has girded Himself.  
V: He has made the world firm, which shall not be shaken.  
V: Your throne is prepared from thence : from the age, YOU ARE.  
V: The rivers have lifted up, O LORD ; the rivers have lifted up their voices.  
V: Wonderful is the LORD in the heights.  
V: Your testimonies have been proved exceedingly faithful.  
V: Sanctity befits Your house, O LORD, unto length of days.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ; now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## ASCENSION OF CHRIST

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O CHRIST, THE GIVER OF LIFE, AND WE HONOUR YOUR DIVINE ASCENSION INTO HEAVEN WITH YOUR MOST PURE BODY. *(Psalm 46)*

- V: All you nations, clap your hands ; raise a shout of joy to God with a voice of exultation.  
V: The LORD Most High is formidable : a great King over all the earth.  
V: He has subjected peoples to us, and nations beneath our feet.  
V: He has chosen us out for His inheritance, the beauty of Jakōb, which He loved.  
V: God has gone up with a shout of joy, the LORD, with a voice of a trumpet.  
V: Chant to our God, chant ; chant to our King, chant.  
V: God is King of all the earth : chant with understanding.  
V: God established His Kingship over the nations : God is seated upon His holy throne.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ; now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*



## PENTECOST (DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT)

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O CHRIST, THE GIVER OF LIFE, AND WE HONOUR YOUR ALL-HOLY SPIRIT, WHOM YOU SENT FROM THE FATHER TO YOUR DIVINE DISCIPLES.

*(Psalm 18 et al)*

- V: The Heavens recount the glory of God, and the firmament announces the work of His hands.  
V: By the Spirit of His mouth, all the power of them.  
V: From Heaven has the LORD attentively looked : He has seen all the sons of Men.  
V: Fire shall be kindled before His Face, and round about Him is a violent tempest.  
V: The law of the LORD is blameless, turning souls about ; the witness of the LORD is faithful, making infants wise.  
V: Their sound has gone out unto all the earth, and their utterances unto the ends of the world.  
V: You will send out Your Spirit, and they shall be created, and You will renew the face of the earth.  
V: Your good Spirit will lead me on the way, in the land of uprightness.

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## SPIRIT MONDAY

*(The All-holy and Life-creating Trinity)*

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O CHRIST, THE GIVER OF LIFE, AND WE HONOUR YOUR ALL-HOLY SPIRIT, WHOM YOU SENT FROM THE FATHER, AND WHO TAUGHT US TO BELIEVE IN THE HOLY TRINITY.

*(Psalm 50)*

- V: Build a pure heart in me, O God, and renew an upright spirit in my inward parts.  
V: Cast me not away from Your Face, and take not Your Holy Spirit away from me.

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

**SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST,  
ALL SAINTS OF NORTH AMERICA**

WE MAGNIFY YOU, ALL YOU SAINTS WHO SHONE IN  
NORTH AMERICA, AND WE HONOUR YOUR HOLY  
MEMORY, FOR YOU PRAY FOR US TO CHRIST OUR GOD.

*(Psalm 48)*

- V: Hear these things, all you nations ; give ear, all you  
dwelling in the world.
- V: My mouth shall speak wisdom, and the rumination of  
my heart, understanding.
- V: Why shall I fear in the evil day ?
- V: God will redeem my soul from the hand of Hadēs,  
whenever He may receive me.
- V: Do not fear whenever a Man may become rich, and  
whenever the glory of his house may have multiplied.
- V: When he dies, he shall not take everything, nor shall his  
glory go down with him.
- V: His soul shall be blessed in his life.
- V: He shall be grateful to you, whenever you may do good  
to him.

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

**8 SEPTEMBER, NATIVITY OF THE  
THEOTOKOS**

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O MOST HOLY VIRGIN, AND WE  
HONOUR YOUR HOLY PARENTS, AND GLORIFY YOUR ALL-  
GLORIOUS NATIVITY.

*(Psalm 131)*

- V: Remember David, O LORD, and all his meekness.
- V: Remember how he swore an oath to the LORD.  
He made a vow to the God of Jakōb.
- V: Behold, we heard of it in Ephratha ; we found it in the  
clearings of the thicket.
- V: We shall come into His tents ; we shall worship at the  
place where His feet stood.
- V: Arise unto Your Rest, O LORD : You, and the Ark of  
Your sanctity.
- V: Your priests shall put on righteousness, and Your holy  
ones shall exult.
- V: The LORD swore truth to David, and will not set it at  
nought.
- V: From the fruit of your loins will I set one on your throne.

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## 14 SEPTEMBER, ELEVATION OF THE LIFE-GIVING CROSS

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O CHRIST, THE GIVER OF LIFE, AND WE HONOUR YOUR HOLY CROSS, BY WHICH YOU HAVE SAVED US FROM THE SLAVERY OF THE ENEMY. *(Psalm 34)*

- V: O LORD, give judgement to those wronging me ; make war on those making war against me.  
V: Lay hold of weapon and shield, and arise to my help.  
V: Say to my soul : "I AM your Salvation".  
V: Let them be put to shame, and be disgraced – those seeking my soul.  
V: My soul shall exult in the LORD ; it shall delight in His salvation.  
V: All my bones shall say : "O LORD, who is like You ?"  
V: You have seen, O LORD ; do not pass by in silence ; O LORD, do not stand away from me.  
V: My tongue shall ruminare on Your righteousness and Your praise, the whole day long.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ; now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## 24 SEPTEMBER, ALASKAN MARTYRS

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O HOLY NEW-MARTYRS OF ALASKA : JUVENALY AND PETER, AND WE HONOUR YOUR PRECIOUS SUFFERINGS, WHICH YOU HAVE ENDURED FOR CHRIST. *(Psalm 33)*

- V: The righteous cried out, and the LORD heard them ; from all their afflictions He rescued them.  
V: Many are the afflictions of the righteous, and from them all will the LORD rescue them.  
V: The LORD watches over all their bones : not one of them shall be shattered.  
V: The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and His ears towards their supplication.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ; now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## 25 SEPTEMBER, SAINT SERGIUS OF RADONEZH

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O VENERABLE FATHER SERGIUS, AND WE HONOUR YOUR HOLY MEMORY, O INSTRUCTOR OF MONASTICS, AND CONVERSER WITH ANGELS. (*Psalm 39*)

V: Waiting, I waited for the LORD, and He gave heed to me.

V: He heard my supplication.

V: He set my feet upon a rock, and He directed my footsteps.

V: He put into my mouth a new song, a hymn to our God.

V: Many shall see, and shall fear, and they shall hope on the LORD.

V: Blessed is the man whose hope is the Name of the LORD.

V: I have not hidden Your mercy and Your truth.

V: Let them exult and be glad in You — all those seeking You, O LORD.

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## 1 OCTOBER, PROTECTION OF THE THEOTOKOS

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O MOST HOLY VIRGIN, AND WE HONOUR YOUR PRECIOUS VEIL, FOR SAINT ANDREW BEHELD YOU UP IN THE AIR, AND PRAYING TO CHRIST FOR US. (*Psalm 131*)

V: Remember David, O LORD, and all his meekness.

V: Remember how he swore an oath to the LORD.

He made a vow to the God of Jakōb.

V: Behold, we heard of it in Ephratha ; we found it in the clearings of the thicket.

V: We shall come into His tents ; we shall worship at the place where His feet stood.

V: Arise unto Your Rest, O LORD : You, and the Ark of Your sanctity.

V: Your priests shall put on righteousness, and Your holy ones shall exult.

V: The LORD swore truth to David, and will not set it at nought.

V: From the fruit of your loins will I set one on your throne.

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## 8 NOVEMBER, ARCHANGEL MICHAEL, AND THE BODILESS POWERS

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O COMMANDER OF GOD, MICHAEL,  
AND YOU ARCHANGELS, ANGELS, PRINCIPALITIES,  
AUTHORITIES, THRONES, DOMINIONS, POWERS,  
CHERUBIM, AND FEARSOME SERAPHIM, WHO ARE  
MAGNIFYING THE LORD. *(Psalm 137)*

- V: I shall confess You, O LORD, with my whole heart.  
V: In the presence of angels shall I chant to You.  
V: I shall worship towards Your holy temple.  
V: I shall confess Your Name, because of Your mercy and  
Your truth.  
V: Great is the glory of the LORD.  
V: The LORD is on high, and He looks upon humble things.  
V: O LORD, Your mercy is eternal.  
V: Do not overlook the works of Your hands.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## 21 NOVEMBER, ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS INTO THE TEMPLE

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O MOST HOLY VIRGIN, MAIDEN  
CHOSEN BY GOD, AND WE HONOUR YOUR ENTRANCE  
INTO THE TEMPLE OF THE LORD. *(Psalm 47)*

- V: Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised, in the city  
of our God, on His holy mountain.  
V: The city of our God, well-rooted for the exultation of all  
the earth.  
V: Mountains of Siōn, the flanks of the north, the city of the  
great King.  
V: O God, we have received Your mercy in the midst of  
Your people.  
V: In accordance with Your Name, O God, so also Your  
praise is to all the ends of the earth.  
V: Surround Siōn, and embrace her ; speak out, while in her  
towers.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

**6 DECEMBER, SAINT NICHOLAS, THE WONDER-  
WORKER, ARCHBISHOP OF  
MYRA IN LYCIA**

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O HIERARCH, FATHER NICHOLAS,  
AND WE HONOUR YOUR HOLY MEMORY, FOR YOU PRAY  
TO CHRIST OUR GOD FOR US. *(Psalm 48)*

- V: Hear these things, all you nations ; give ear, all you  
dwelling in the world.  
V: My mouth shall speak wisdom, and the rumination of  
my heart, understanding.  
V: Why shall I fear in the evil day ?  
V: God will redeem my soul from the hand of Hadēs,  
whenever He may receive me.  
V: Do not fear whenever a Man may become rich, and  
whenever the glory of his house may have multiplied.  
V: When he dies, he shall not take everything, nor shall his  
glory go down with him.  
V: His soul shall be blessed in his life.  
V: He shall be grateful to you, whenever you may do good  
to him.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

**13 DECEMBER, SAINT HERMAN OF ALASKA,  
ELDER, AND WONDER-WORKER**

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O VENERABLE FATHER HERMAN, AND  
WE HONOUR YOUR HOLY MEMORY, O INSTRUCTOR OF  
MONASTICS, AND CONVERSER WITH ANGELS.

*(Psalm 39)*

- V: Waiting, I waited for the LORD, and He gave heed to me.  
V: He heard my supplication.  
V: He set my feet upon a rock, and He directed my foot-  
steps.  
V: He put into my mouth a new song, a hymn to our God.  
V: Many shall see, and shall fear, and they shall hope on the  
LORD.  
V: Blessed is the man whose hope is the Name of the LORD.  
V: I have not hidden Your mercy and Your truth.  
V: Let them exult and be glad in You – all those seeking  
You, O LORD.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## 25 DECEMBER, NATIVITY OF CHRIST

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O CHRIST, THE GIVER OF LIFE, WHO FOR OUR SAKE WERE BORN IN THE FLESH FROM THE UNWEDDED AND MOST PURE VIRGIN MARY. *(Psalm 65)*

- V: Raise a shout of joy to the LORD, all the earth.  
V: Chant, now, to His Name. Give glory in praise of Him.  
V: Say to God : How formidable are Your works. In the multitude of Your power shall Your enemies play false to You.  
V: Let all the earth worship You, and chant to You ; let it chant to Your Name.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ; now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## 1 JANUARY, SAINT BASIL THE GREAT

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O HIERARCH, FATHER BASIL, AND WE HONOUR YOUR HOLY MEMORY, FOR YOU PRAY TO CHRIST OUR GOD FOR US. *(Psalm 48)*

- V: Hear these things, all you nations ; give ear, all you dwelling in the world.  
V: My mouth shall speak wisdom, and the rumination of my heart, understanding.  
V: Why shall I fear in the evil day ?  
V: God will redeem my soul from the hand of Hadēs, whenever He may receive me.  
V: Do not fear whenever a Man may become rich, and whenever the glory of his house may have multiplied.  
V: When he dies, he shall not take everything, nor shall his glory go down with him.  
V: His soul shall be blessed in his life.  
V: He shall be grateful to you, whenever you may do good to him.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ; now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## 2 JANUARY, SAINT SERAPHIM OF SAROV

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O VENERABLE FATHER SERAPHIM,  
AND WE HONOUR YOUR HOLY MEMORY, O INSTRUCTOR  
OF MONASTICS, AND CONVERSER WITH ANGELS.

*(Psalms 115 ; 39)*

- V: Precious in the presence of the LORD is the death of His  
holy ones.  
V: O LORD, I am Your bond-servant : I am Your bond-  
servant, and the son of Your maid-servant.  
V: To You shall I shall sacrifice a sacrifice of praise, and call  
upon the Name of the LORD.  
V: Waiting, I waited for the LORD, and He gave heed to me.  
V: He set my feet upon a rock, and He directed my foot-  
steps.  
V: Blessed is the man whose hope is the Name of the LORD.

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory to You, O God.

*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## 6 JANUARY, THEOPHANY OF CHRIST

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O CHRIST, THE GIVER OF LIFE, WHO  
FOR OUR SAKE NOW ARE BAPTISED IN THE FLESH BY  
JOHN IN THE JORDAN.

*(Psalm 113)*

- V: The sea saw this, and fled ; the Jordan turned backwards.  
V: What is it with you, O sea, that you fled ? and you,  
O Jordan, that you turned backwards ?  
V: Because of the Face of the LORD has the earth shuddered.  
V: Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but rather, unto Your  
Name give glory.  
V: The house of Israël hoped on the LORD : He is their  
Helper and Protector.  
V: Those fearing the LORD hoped on the LORD : He is their  
Helper, and Protector.  
V: He blessed those fearing the LORD, the small with the  
great.  
V: We, the living, shall bless the LORD, from now on and  
until the age.

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*



## 30 JANUARY, SYNAXIS OF ECUMENICAL TEACHERS AND HIERARCHS

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O HIERARCHS OF CHRIST : BASIL THE GREAT, GREGORY THE THEOLOGIAN AND JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, AND WE HONOUR YOUR HOLY MEMORY, FOR YOU PRAY TO CHRIST OUR GOD FOR US. *(Psalm 48)*

- V: Hear these things, all you nations ; give ear, all you dwelling in the world.  
V: My mouth shall speak wisdom, and the rumination of my heart, understanding.  
V: Why shall I fear in the evil day ?  
V: God will redeem my soul from the hand of Hadēs, whenever He may receive me.  
V: Do not fear whenever a Man may become rich, and whenever the glory of his house may have multiplied.  
V: When he dies, he shall not take everything, nor shall his glory go down with him.  
V: His soul shall be blessed in his life.  
V: He shall be grateful to you, whenever you may do good to him.

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## 2 FEBRUARY, MEETING OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O CHRIST, THE GIVER OF LIFE, AND WE HONOUR YOUR MOST PURE MOTHER, WHO, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAW, BRINGS YOU INTO THE TEMPLE OF THE LORD. *(Psalm 44)*

- V: My heart has poured forth a good word.  
V: It is I who speak of my works to the king.  
V: Comely are you, in beauty beyond the sons of Men ; Grace has been poured out on your lips.  
V: Because of this, God has blessed you unto the age.  
V: Your throne, O God, is unto the age of the age.  
V: You loved righteousness, and hated lawlessness.  
V: The queen stood at your right-hand, clothed in cloth-of-gold apparel, richly embroidered.  
V: I shall remember your name in every generation and generation.

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## 9 MARCH, FORTY MARTYRS OF SEBASTE

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O HOLY FORTY MARTYRS, AND WE HONOUR THE PRECIOUS SUFFERINGS WHICH YOU HAVE ENDURED FOR CHRIST. *(Psalm 45)*

- V: Our God is Refuge and Power.
- V: A Helper in afflictions which exceedingly befall us.
- V: We shall not fear when the earth is stirred up.
- V: The mountains are carried away into the heart of the seas.
- V: Their waters roared, and were stirred up ; stirred up were the mountains by His strength.
- V: The surges of the river make glad the city of God.
- V: The Most High has hallowed His tent.
- V: The LORD of Powers is with us : our Support is the God of Jakōb.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ; now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## 25 MARCH, ANNUNCIATION TO THE THEOTOKOS

WITH THE VOICE OF THE ARCHANGEL, WE CRY ALOUD TO YOU, O PURE ONE : "REJOICE, O FULL OF GRACE. THE LORD IS WITH YOU". *(Psalm 71)*

- V: O God, give Your judgement to the king.
- V: Give Your righteousness to the son of the king.
- V: May he judge Your people in righteousness, and Your poor in fair-judgement.
- V: He shall judge the poor of the people, and save the sons of the needy.
- V: In his days, righteousness shall rise up, and a multitude of peace, until the moon be taken away.
- V: He shall be lord from sea to sea, and from the rivers as far as the ends of the world.
- V: All the kings of the earth shall do homage to him ; all the nations shall serve him.
- V: Blessed be the LORD God of Israēl, alone doing wonders.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ; now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## 31 MARCH, SAINT INNOCENT, METROPOLITAN OF MOSCOW

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O HOLY FATHER INNOCENT :  
THROUGH YOUR WISE TEACHINGS, THE ENLIGHTENER OF  
THE ALEUTS ; AND THROUGH YOUR CEASELESS TOILS,  
THE APOSTLE TO NORTH AMERICA. *(Psalm 36)*

- V: By the LORD are the foot-steps of a Man directed, and he shall greatly delight in His way.  
V: The LORD knows the ways of the blameless, and their inheritance shall be unto the age.  
V: Those blessing him shall inherit the earth.  
V: The whole day long, the righteous one is merciful, and lends, and his seed shall be a blessing.  
V: The mouth of the righteous one shall ruminate on wisdom, and his tongue shall speak fair-judgement.  
V: Wait for the LORD, and keep His way.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## 7 APRIL, SAINT TIKHON, PATRIARCH OF MOSCOW

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O HIERARCH, FATHER TIKHON, AND  
WE HONOUR YOUR HOLY MEMORY, FOR YOU PRAY TO  
CHRIST OUR GOD FOR US. *(Psalm 48)*

- V: Hear these things, all you nations ; give ear, all you dwelling in the world.  
V: My mouth shall speak wisdom, and the rumination of my heart, understanding.  
V: Why shall I fear in the evil day ?  
V: God will redeem my soul from the hand of Hadēs, whenever He may receive me.  
V: Do not fear whenever a Man may become rich, and whenever the glory of his house may have multiplied.  
V: When he dies, he shall not take everything, nor shall his glory go down with him.  
V: His soul shall be blessed in his life.  
V: He shall be grateful to you, whenever you may do good to him.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## 23 APRIL, GREAT MARTYR GEORGE

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O HOLY GREAT MARTYR AND VICTORY-BEARER GEORGE, AND WE HONOUR YOUR PRECIOUS SUFFERINGS WHICH YOU ENDURED FOR CHRIST.  
*(Psalm 45)*

- V: Our God is Refuge and Power.
- V: A Helper in afflictions which exceedingly befall us.
- V: We shall not fear when the earth is stirred up.
- V: The mountains are carried away into the heart of the seas.
- V: Their waters roared, and were stirred up ; stirred up were the mountains by His strength.
- V: The surges of the river make glad the city of God ;
- V: The Most High has hallowed His tent.
- V: The LORD of Powers is with us : our Support is the God of Jakōb.

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## 25 APRIL, APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST MARK

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O HOLY APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST OF CHRIST, MARK, AND WE HONOUR YOUR LABOURS AND SUFFERINGS WHICH YOU ENDURED IN PROCLAIMING CHRIST.  
*(Psalms 18 ; 88)*

- V: The Heavens recount the glory of God, and the firmament announces the work of His hands.
- V: The Heavens shall confess Your wonders, O LORD, and Your truth in the church of the holy ones.
- V: Who in the clouds shall be made equal to the LORD ?
- V: God is glorified in the council of the holy ones.
- V: O LORD God of Powers : who is like You ?
- V: You are full of power, O LORD, and Your truth is round about You.

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

**30 APRIL, HOLY APOSTLE JAMES, BROTHER  
OF APOSTLE JOHN**

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O JAMES, THE HOLY APOSTLE OF  
CHRIST, AND WE HONOUR YOUR LABOURS AND  
SUFFERINGS WHICH YOU ENDURED IN PROCLAIMING  
CHRIST. *(Psalms 18 ; 88)*

- V: The Heavens recount the glory of God, and the  
firmament announces the work of His hands.  
V: The Heavens shall confess Your wonders, O LORD, and  
Your truth in the church of the holy ones.  
V: Who in the clouds shall be made equal to the LORD ?  
V: God is glorified in the council of the holy ones.  
V: O LORD God of Powers, who is like You ?  
V: You are full of power, O LORD, and Your truth is round  
about You.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

**8 MAY, HOLY APOSTLE JOHN THE  
THEOLOGIAN**

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O JOHN, THE HOLY APOSTLE AND  
EVANGELIST OF CHRIST, AND WE HONOUR YOUR  
LABOURS AND SUFFERINGS WHICH YOU ENDURED IN  
PROCLAIMING CHRIST. *(Psalms 18 ; 88)*

- V: The Heavens recount the glory of God, and the  
firmament announces the work of His hands.  
V: The Heavens shall confess Your wonders, O LORD, and  
Your truth in the church of the holy ones.  
V: Who in the clouds shall be made equal to the LORD ?  
V: God is glorified in the council of the holy ones.  
V: O LORD God of Powers, who is like You ?  
V: You are full of power, O LORD, and Your truth is round  
about You.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## 11 MAY, SAINTS CYRIL AND METHODIUS

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O CYRIL AND METHODIUS, EQUAL-TO-THE-APOSTLES, WHO ENLIGHTENED ALL THE SLAVIC LANDS WITH YOUR TEACHINGS, AND LED THEM TO CHRIST.  
(Psalm 48)

- V: Hear these things, all you nations ; give ear, all you dwelling in the world.  
V: My mouth shall speak wisdom, and the rumination of my heart, understanding.  
V: Why shall I fear in the evil day ?  
V: God will redeem my soul from the hand of Hadēs, whenever He may receive me.  
V: Do not fear whenever a Man may become rich, and whenever the glory of his house may have multiplied.  
V: When he dies, he shall not take everything, nor shall his glory go down with him.  
V: His soul shall be blessed in his life.  
V: He shall be grateful to you, whenever you may do good to him.

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## 24 JUNE, NATIVITY OF THE FORERUNNER

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O FORERUNNER OF THE SAVIOUR, JOHN, AND WE HONOUR YOUR MOST GLORIOUS NATIVITY FROM BARRENNESS.  
(Luke 1)

- V: Blessed be the LORD God of Israēl, for He has visited, and wrought redemption for His people.  
V: He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of David, His servant.  
V: Even as He spoke by the mouth of the holy ones, His prophets from the age : salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all those hating us.  
V: To do mercy with our fathers, and to remember His holy Covenant.  
V: The oath which He swore to Abraam, our father, to give us, that we, being rescued from the hand of our enemies, might serve Him all the days of our life.  
V: And you, child, you shall be called the Prophet of the Most High ; for you shall go before the Face of the LORD, to prepare His ways.  
V: To give knowledge of salvation to His people, in the forgiveness of their sins.  
V: Through the tender mercy of our God, in which the Orient from on high has visited us.

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## 29 JUNE, HOLY APOSTLES PETER AND PAUL

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O APOSTLES OF CHRIST, PETER AND PAUL, WHO HAVE ENLIGHTENED THE WHOLE WORLD BY YOUR TEACHINGS, AND LED ALL THE ENDS OF THE EARTH TO CHRIST.  
*(Psalms 18 ; 88)*

- V: The Heavens recount the glory of God, and the firmament announces the work of His hands.  
V: The Heavens shall confess Your wonders, O LORD, and Your truth in the church of the holy ones.  
V: Who in the clouds shall be made equal to the LORD ?  
V: God is glorified in the council of the holy ones.  
V: O LORD God of Powers, who is like You ?  
V: You are full of power, O LORD, and Your truth is round about You.  
V: It is You that rule over the strength of the sea : You appease the tossing of its waves.  
V: As one wounded, You humbled the proud one ; with the arm of Your power, You scattered abroad Your enemies.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ; now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## 5 JULY, SAINT ATHANASIUS OF MOUNT ATHOS

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O VENERABLE FATHER ATHANASIUS, AND WE HONOUR YOUR HOLY MEMORY, O INSTRUCTOR OF MONASTICS, AND CONVERSER WITH ANGELS.  
*(Psalm 39)*

- V: Waiting, I waited for the LORD, and He gave heed to me.  
V: He heard my supplication.  
V: He set my feet upon a rock, and He directed my footsteps.  
V: He put into my mouth a new song, a hymn to our God.  
V: Many shall see, and shall fear, and they shall hope on the LORD.  
V: Blessed is the man whose hope is the Name of the LORD.  
V: I have not hidden Your mercy and Your truth.  
V: Let them exult and be glad in You — all those seeking You, O LORD.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ; now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## 15 JULY, PRINCE VLADIMIR OF KIEV

[VOLODYMYR OF KYIV]

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O HOLY PRINCE VLADIMIR, EQUAL-TO-THE-APOSTLES, AND WE HONOUR YOUR HOLY MEMORY, FOR YOU TRAMPLED IDOLS, AND WITH HOLY BAPTISM ENLIGHTENED THE WHOLE LAND OF RUS' .

*(Psalms 18 ; 88)*

- V: The Heavens recount the glory of God, and the firmament announces the work of His hands.  
V: The Heavens shall confess Your wonders, O LORD, and Your truth in the church of the holy ones.  
V: Who in the clouds shall be made equal to the LORD ?  
V: God is glorified in the council of the holy ones.  
V: O LORD God of Powers, who is like You ?  
V: You are full of power, O LORD, and Your truth is round about You.

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## 20 JULY, HOLY PROPHET ELIAS<sup>780</sup>

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O GLORIOUS PROPHET ELIAS, AND WE HONOUR YOUR FIERY ASCENT IN THE FLESH INTO HEAVEN.

*(Psalm 111)*

- V: Blessed is the man fearing the LORD.  
V: He shall greatly delight in His commandments.  
V: His seed shall be powerful on the earth.  
V: The generation of the upright shall be blessed.  
V: Glory and riches are in his house.  
V: His righteousness remains unto the age of the age.  
V: His heart has been set fast ; he shall not fear.  
V: His horn shall be exalted in glory.

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.

*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

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<sup>780</sup> "Elias"=Ēliou=Elijah.



## 6 AUGUST, TRANSFIGURATION OF CHRIST

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O CHRIST, THE GIVER OF LIFE, AND WE HONOUR THE MOST GLORIOUS TRANSFIGURATION OF YOUR MOST PURE BODY. *(Psalms 47, et al)*

- V: Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised, in the city of our God, on His holy mountain.  
V: He is raising the poor one from the earth, and up from the dung-heap lifting the needy one.  
V: Who shall go up to the mountain of the LORD, and who shall stand in His holy place ?  
V: O LORD, who shall sojourn in Your tent ? or who shall pitch his tent on Your holy mountain ?  
V: O send out Your light and Your truth.  
V: It is You that give light wonderfully from the eternal mountains.  
V: Thabōr and Hermōn shall exult in Your Name.  
V: O LORD, in the light of Your Face shall they walk, and in Your Name shall they exult the whole day long.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ; now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## 13 AUGUST, SAINT TIKHON OF VORONEZH, AND ZADONSK

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O HIERARCH, FATHER TIKHON, AND WE HONOUR YOUR HOLY MEMORY, FOR YOU PRAY TO CHRIST OUR GOD FOR US. *(Psalm 48)*

- V: Hear these things, all you nations ; give ear, all you dwelling in the world.  
V: My mouth shall speak wisdom, and the rumination of my heart, understanding.  
V: Why shall I fear in the evil day ?  
V: God will redeem my soul from the hand of Hadēs, whenever He may receive me.  
V: Do not fear whenever a Man may become rich, and whenever the glory of his house may have multiplied.  
V: When he dies, he shall not take everything, nor shall his glory go down with him.  
V: His soul shall be blessed in his life.  
V: He shall be grateful to you, whenever you may do good to him.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ; now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## 15 AUGUST, DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O MOST PURE MOTHER OF CHRIST  
OUR GOD, AND WE EXTOL YOUR ALL-GLORIOUS FALLING  
ASLEEP. *(Psalms 131, 65)*

- V: Arise unto Your Rest, O LORD : You, and the Ark of  
Your sanctity.  
V: Raise a shout of joy to the LORD, all the earth.  
V: Chant, now, to His Name. Give glory in praise of Him.  
V: Say to God : How formidable are Your works. In the  
multitude of Your power shall Your enemies play false  
to You.  
V: Let all the earth worship You, and chant to You ; let it  
chant to Your Name.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

## 29 AUGUST, BEHEADING OF THE FORERUNNER

WE MAGNIFY YOU, O JOHN, THE BAPTIST OF THE  
SAVIOUR, AND WE CELEBRATE THE MEMORY OF YOUR  
BEHEADING. *(Psalm 111)*

- V: Blessed is the man fearing the LORD.  
V: He shall greatly delight in His commandments.  
V: His seed shall be powerful on the earth.  
V: The generation of the upright shall be blessed.  
V: Glory and riches are in his house.  
V: His righteousness remains unto the age of the age.  
V: His heart has been set fast ; he shall not fear.  
V: His horn shall be exalted in glory.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.  
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.  
*(three times)*

*(Repeat Magnification)*

[END OF THE MAGNIFICATIONS]



THE CREED OF  
SAINT ATHANASIUS

SERVICE AT THE  
PARTING  
OF THE SOUL  
FROM THE BODY

THE HYMN OF  
SAINT AMBROSE



## THE CREED OF SAINT ATHANASIUS

Whoever wishes to be saved must, before all things, hold the catholic<sup>781</sup> faith. Unless a person keep this faith whole and sacrosanct, without doubt he shall perish eternally.

And the catholic faith is this : That we worship the one God in Trinity, and the Trinity in unity, neither confounding the Persons nor dividing the essence ; for there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, another of the Holy Spirit ; but of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit the Divinity is one, the glory equal, the majesty coeternal. Such as is the Father ; such is the Son ; such is the Holy Spirit. The Father is uncreated ; the Son is uncreated ; the Holy Spirit is uncreated. The Father is limitless ; the Son is limitless ; the Holy Spirit is limitless. The Father is eternal ; the Son is eternal ; the Holy Spirit is eternal ; and yet they are not three eternal but one Eternal. As there are not three uncreated nor three limitless, but one Uncreated and one Limitless, so likewise the Father is almighty ; the Son is almighty ; the Holy Spirit is almighty ; and yet they are not three almighties, but one Almighty. Thus the Father is God ; the Son is God ; the Holy Spirit is God ; and yet they are not three Gods, but one God. Thus the Father is LORD ; the Son is LORD ; the Holy Spirit is LORD ; and yet they are not three LORDS, but one LORD. Because as we are compelled by the Christian truth to confess every Person Himself to be God and LORD, so are we forbidden by the catholic faith to say that there are three Gods or LORDS.

The Father is made by no-one, neither created nor begotten. The Son is from the Father alone, not made nor created, but begotten. The Holy Spirit is from the Father and by the Son : <sup>782</sup> neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding. So there is one Father, not three Fathers ; one Son, not three Sons ; one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits. And in this Trinity no-

<sup>781</sup> In the mentality of the Orthodox, “catholic” carries the same intent as “Orthodox”. The word means “from the whole”, or “universal” or “complete”.

<sup>782</sup> (Luke 24:49; John 15:26)

one is before or after ; no-one is greater or lesser ; but all the three Persons are co-eternal, and co-equal, so that in all things, as said before, the Unity is to be worshipped in Trinity and the Trinity in unity. Therefore, the one that wishes to be saved must thus understand concerning the Trinity.

But it is necessary to everlasting salvation also to believe faithfully the Incarnation of our LORD Jesus Christ ; for the right faith is that we believe and confess that our LORD Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man. He is God, of the essence of the Father, begotten before the ages ; and Man of the substance of His mother, born in the world. He is perfect God and perfect Man, subsisting of a reasonable soul and human flesh. He is equal to the Father according to His Divinity, and inferior to the Father according to His humanity. Although He is God and Man, yet He is not two, but one Christ : one, not by conversion of the Divinity into flesh, but by taking of that humanity into God, one altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person ; for as the reasonable soul-and-flesh is one Man, so the God-and-Man is one Christ, who suffered for our salvation. He descended into Hadēs. On the third day He rose from the dead. He ascended into Heaven. He sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead, and at whose coming all Men shall rise again with their bodies ; and they shall give account of their own deeds. Those that have done good shall go into eternal life, and those that have done evil into eternal fire.

This is the catholic faith, which unless a person believe faithfully and firmly, he cannot be saved.

**[THE END OF THE CREED OF SAINT ATHANASIUS]**

## SERVICE AT THE PARTING OF THE SOUL FROM THE BODY<sup>783</sup>

*The presbyter begins :*

**Presbyter :** Blessed is our God, always, now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

**Reader :** Amen.

Glory be to You, our God, glory be to You.

\* O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, everywhere present, and filling all things, Treasury of good things, and Provider of Life, come, and abide in us, and cleanse us from every stain, and save our souls, O Good One.

\* [We do not read "Heavenly King" in paschaltide. We say "Christ is risen..." (three times). From Ascension to Pentecost, we read the tropar of Ascension.]

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

*(three times) (three metanias)*

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

O most holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O LORD, cleanse us from our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and heal our infirmities, for Your Name's sake.

LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy. LORD, have mercy.

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

Our Father, who are in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name ; Your kingdom come ; Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ; give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors ; and do not bring us to the test, but rescue us from the evil one.

**Presbyter :** For Yours are the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages.

**Reader :** Amen.

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<sup>783</sup> If possible, the one on the verge of repose should be given the opportunity to confess, to be anointed, and to receive the Holy Mysteries.

LORD, have mercy. (*twelve times*)  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ;  
now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O come, let us worship God our King ; come let us worship and  
fall down before Christ, our King and our God ; come let us  
worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and our  
God. (*three metanias*)

### PSALM 50

Have mercy on me, O God, in accordance with Your great mercy,  
and in accordance with the multitude of Your compassions, blot  
out my transgression of the law. Wash me thoroughly from my  
lawlessness, and from my sin cleanse me ; for I know my  
lawlessness, and my sin is before my face continually. Against  
You alone have I sinned, and evil have I done before Your  
Face ; so that You may be shown to be righteous in Your words,  
and to be victorious when You are judged ; for behold, I was  
conceived in lawlessness, and in sins did my mother crave to  
conceive me ; for behold, You have loved truth ; the unseen and  
hidden things of Your wisdom have You shown me. You will  
sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed ; You will wash  
me, and I shall be made whiter than snow. You will make me  
hear exultation and gladness, and my humbled bones shall exult.  
Turn Your Face away from my sins, and blot out all my lawless  
acts. Build a pure heart in me, O God, and renew an upright  
spirit in my inward parts. Cast me not away from Your Face, and  
take not Your Holy Spirit away from me. Render to me the  
exultation of Your salvation, and with Your guiding Spirit set me  
fast. I shall teach the lawless Your ways, and the impious shall  
turn about to You. Rescue me from blood, O God, O God of my  
salvation. My tongue shall exult in Your righteousness. O  
LORD, You will open my lips, and my mouth shall announce Your  
praise ; for if You had wished for a sacrifice, I would have given  
it. With whole-burnt-offerings You will not be well-pleased. The  
sacrifice to God is a shattered spirit ; a shattered and humbled  
heart, God will not reckon as nothing. Do good, O LORD, to  
Sion in Your good-pleasure, and let the walls of

Jerusalem be built. Then You will be well-pleased with a  
sacrifice of righteousness : an offering and whole-burnt-  
offerings ; then they shall offer young bulls upon Your altar.

### CANON TO THE THEOTOKOS

*Tone 6*

*For one who is departing and cannot speak.*

#### ODE I :

When Israel passed on foot through the deep, as if it were dry  
land, and beheld their pursuer, Pharaoh, drowning in the sea,  
they cried aloud to God : \*\*\* Let us sing a song of victory.

**Refrain** : Most Holy Theotokos, save us.

**Reader** : Like drops of rain dried up by the summer's heat, my  
few and evil days are already gradually coming to an end. O  
Lady, save me.

**R** :

O Lady, through your tenderness of heart and your many  
bounties, being so inclined by nature, in this dread hour intercede  
for me, O invincible helper.

**R** :

Great fear now holds my soul, sick with unutterable trembling,  
as it is about to go forth from the body. Comfort it, O all-pure  
one.

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

O renowned refuge for the sinful and contrite, make your mercy  
known to me, O pure one, and deliver me from the hands of  
demons ; for many dogs have surrounded me.

**Now**, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Behold, the time has come for help ; behold, the time has come for  
your intercession ; behold, the time has come for which night and  
day I have bowed down before you, and prayed fervently to you,  
O Lady.

*Irmos as Katavasia.*

**ODE III :**

No-one is so holy as You, O LORD my God. You have exalted the strength of Your faithful, O Good One,\*\* and on the rock of Your confession You have firmly established them.

**R :**

Foreseeing this day from afar, and meditating ever upon it as though it had arrived, with hot tears I have prayed to you, O Lady, that you would not forget me.

**R :**

Spiritually, the roaring lions have surrounded me ; they seek to carry me away, and bitterly to torment me. Crush their teeth and jaws and save me, O pure one.

**R :**

As an organ of speech I am completely crushed ; my tongue is bound ; my voice is stopped. In contrition of heart, I entreat you, O my deliverer : Save me.

**Glory** be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Incline your ear to me, O Mother of Christ, my God, from the height of your glory, O good one ; hear my last groan, and give me your hand.

**Now**, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Do not turn away from me your many bounties ; do not close off the depths of your love for Man, O pure one ; but intercede for me now, and in the hour of judgement, remember me.

*Irmos as Katavasia.*

**ODE IV :**

Christ is my power, my God and LORD. The holy Church sings a hymn worthy of God. Lifting her voice in purity of heart,\*\* she celebrates the feast in the LORD.

**R :**

O good one, appoint now a washing for sin, a stream of tears, and receive the contrition of my heart. In you have I placed my hope, O good one, that you deliver me from frightful, fiery torment, since you are the fountain of Grace, O Theotokos.

**R :**

O refuge that does not make ashamed, and infallible refuge to all who are in need, O Lady all-pure, be my defender in the hour of trial.

**R :**

O all-pure one, stretch forth your all-honourable hands, like the wings of a holy dove, and cover me under their protection and shelter, O Lady.

**Glory** be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. O conqueror and tormentor of the fierce prince of the air, as I depart from earth, help me to pass unhindered over the guardian of the dread path, and the searcher of these empty words.

**Now**, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Terror has come to meet me, O Lady, and I fear it ; behold, a great struggle awaits me. In this be my helper, O hope of my salvation.

*Irmos as Katavasia.*

**ODE V :**

With Your divine light I beg You, O Good One, illumine the souls of those who with longing keep vigil for You, so that they may know that You are truly God, O Word of God,\*\* and be recalled from the gloom of their sins.

**R :**

Do not forget me, O good one, nor turn away your face from me, your child ; but hear me, for I am in trouble. Receive my soul, and deliver it.

**R :**

You that are my kinsfolk in the flesh and in the spirit, my friends and acquaintances, weep, sigh and wail, for behold, now I am departing from you.

**R :**

No-one now delivers, and truly there is no-one to help. Help me, O Lady, or else I shall be a helpless person in the hands of my enemies.

**Glory** be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As you have entered, O you my holy angels, as you stand before the Judgement Seat of Christ, bending your knees, cry out with weeping to Him : Have mercy, O Creator of all, upon the work of Your hands, O Good One, and cast it not away.

**Now**, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen. As you, O angels, bow down before the Lady, the all-pure Mother of my God, pray that she bend her knees together with you, and incline Him to mercy – for the true Mother and nourisher shall be heard.

*Irmos as Katavasia.*

**ODE VI :**

Beholding the sea of life tossed by the waves of temptations, I race ahead to Your calm haven, and I cry out to You :\*\*\* Bring my life up from corruption, O greatly merciful One.

**R :**

My mouth is silent and my tongue does not speak, but my heart cries out ; for that fire of contrition which inwardly devours is kindled, and in inexpressible tones invokes you, O Virgin.

**R :**

Look down from on high, O Mother of God, and mercifully listen now to my supplication ; that having beheld you, I may go forth from the body rejoicing.

**R :**

The destruction of bodily ties, and the overthrow of nature's laws of union and of the whole bodily structure, cause me anguish and intolerable distress.

**Glory** be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. O Lady, transfer me to the holy and honourable arms of the holy angels, that covered with their wings I may not behold the ignominious, revolting and gloomy forms of devils.

**Now**, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen. O all-honourable abode of God, grant to me the heavenly, supersensual abode, after you have kindled my expiring and

unradiant light by the holy oil of your mercy.

*Irmos as Katavasia.*

**KONTAK (Tone 6)**

My soul, my soul, arise. Why are you sleeping ? The end draws near, and you must speak. Therefore, rise up,\*\*\* and Christ our God who is in all places and fills all things will spare you.

**IKOS**

When the devil beheld the healing of Christ made manifest, and the health flowing from this to Adam, he was deeply wounded, as it were with a calamity, and he lamented and cried out to his friends : What shall I do to the Son of Mary ?\*\*\* The Bethlehemite who is in all places and fills all things is slaying me.

**ODE VII :**

For the holy youths, an angel made the furnace wet with dew. But God's command consumed the Chaldæans, convincing the tyrant to cry out :\*\*\* Blessed are You, O God of our Fathers.

**R :**

The gloomy and moonless night of death has overtaken me, still unready, sending me forth on that long and dreadful journey unprepared ; but let your mercy accompany me, O Lady.

**R :**

Behold, all my days have truly come to an end in futility, as it is written, and my years also in futility ; and now the snares of death, which truly are bitter, have ensnared my soul, and have surrounded me completely.

**R :**

Do not let the multitude of my sins conquer your great tenderness of heart, O Lady ; but let your mercy surround me, and let it cover all my iniquities.

**Glory** be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. The ones who shall lead me from here have come and they hem me in on every side. My soul holds back and is dismayed, being



filled with much rebellion. Console it, O pure one, by your manifestation.

**Now**, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

I have not found one who grieves over my affliction, or who comforts me, O Lady ; for all my friends and acquaintances have now abandoned me. But, O my hope, never forsake me.

*Irmos as Katavasia.*

#### **ODE VIII :**

Out of the flames You sprinkled dew on the holy youths. You set aflame the sacrifice of the righteous Elias with water ; for You accomplish all things by Your will alone, O Christ.\*\*\* We exalt You throughout all ages.

**R :**

You are the Mother who loves Man, and you are the Mother of God, the Lover of Man. With calm and merciful eyes, see when my soul shall part from its body, for I will glorify you unto the ages, O holy Theotokos.

**R :**

Grant that I may escape the hordes of bodiless barbarians and rise through the abysses of air, and enter into Heaven, so that I may glorify you unto the ages, O holy Theotokos.

**R :**

O holy Theotokos, who bore the LORD Almighty, banish far from me the commander of bitter torments who rules the earth, when I come to die, so that I may glorify you unto the ages.

**Glory** be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. When the last trumpet shall sound at the frightful and dread resurrection of the Judgement, and all shall arise, then remember me, O holy Theotokos.

**Now**, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O lofty palace of Christ our Master, who have sent down Grace from on high, help me now in the day of wrath ; and I will glorify you unto the ages, O holy Theotokos.

*Irmos as Katavasia.*

#### **ODE IX :**

It is not possible for Man to see God, upon whom the ranks of angels dare not gaze. But through you, O most pure one, the Word whom we extol took flesh and was seen by mortal Men.\*\*\* With the heavenly hosts we call you blessed.

**R :**

Oh, how shall I look upon the invisible ? How shall I endure its dread sight ? How shall I dare to open my eyes ? How shall I dare to gaze upon my Master, whom since my youth, I have never ceased to grieve ?

**R :**

O holy maiden, Theotokos, look with mercy upon my lowliness. Receive this, my compunctionate and final prayer, and make haste to deliver me from the torturing eternal fire.

**R :**

I beseech you, O all-honourable temple of God, O maiden, Virgin Mother, that I who have defiled the holy temples, on leaving this base temple of the body, may escape the outer darkness and the cruel burning of Gehenna.

**Glory** be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. O all-pure activator of my soul, as I now behold the end of my life draw near, I am cruelly stung by the stings of conscience as I contemplate my unseemly thoughts and deeds. But mercifully incline to me, and be my intercessor.

**Now**, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

The Son gave Himself to us out of mercy : the Son of God and King of the Angels, the Eternal Man, who proceeded from your pure blood. Intercede with Him on behalf of my passion-tossed soul, which is cruelly wrested from my accursed body.

*Irmos as Katavasia.*

It is truly meet to bless you, O Theotokos, ever blessed and most pure and the Mother of our God.

More honourable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, without corruption, you gave birth to God the Word. \*\*\* True Theotokos, we magnify you.

**PRAYER OF FORGIVENESS AT THE DEPARTURE OF  
A SOUL :**

**Presbyter:** O LORD God Almighty, the Father of our LORD Jesus Christ, who will that all be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth ; who desire not the death of a sinner, but that he turn from his way and live, we entreat You and implore You, absolve the soul of Your servant *n* from all bonds, and free it from every curse. Pardon his (*her*) transgressions committed from youth, both knowingly and unknowingly, of word and of deed, either clearly confessed or concealed, through forgetfulness or through shame ; for You alone loose that which is bound, and guide the compunctionate. You are the hope of the despairing. You are mighty to remit the sins of every one putting trust in You. Yes, O LORD, the Lover of Man, give the command that *s/he* be released from the bonds of the flesh and of sins. Receive in peace the soul of this, Your servant *n*, and give it rest in the eternal mansions with Your saints ; through the Grace of Your Only-begotten Son, our LORD and God and Saviour Jesus Christ, with whom You are blessed, together with Your all-holy, good, and life-giving Spirit, now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

**Reader:** Amen.

**OR THIS PRAYER :**

**Presbyter:** O our Master, LORD God Almighty, You will that all be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. You desire not the death of a sinner, but that he turn from his way and live. We pray You and beseech You : Deliver the soul of Your servant *n* from every bond, and free it from every curse ; for it is You that deliver those who are bound, and guide those that are cast down, O Hope of the hopeless. Therefore, O Master, command that the soul of Your servant *n* depart in peace, and rest in Your eternal mansions with all Your saints ; through Your Only-begotten Son, with whom You are blessed, together with Your all-holy, good, and life-giving Spirit, now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

**Reader:** Amen.

**ANOTHER PRAYER FOR A PERSON WHO HAS  
SUFFERED LONG, AND IS ON THE POINT OF  
DEATH :**

**Presbyter:** O LORD our God, in Your ineffable wisdom You created Man, fashioning him out of the dust of the ground, and adorning him with comeliness and goodness as an honourable and heavenly gift, to the exaltation and magnificence of Your glory and kingdom, that You might bring him into accordance with this image and likeness. However, he sinned against the command of Your law, having accepted the image but not preserving it. Therefore, that this evil not be eternal, You have ordained remission for it through Your love towards Man, that this indestructible bond, which You, as God of our Fathers, had sanctified by Your divine will, be dissolved, and that this body be dissolved from the elements of which it was fashioned, but that the soul be translated to that place where it shall remain until the General Resurrection. Therefore, we pray to You, the unoriginate and immortal Father, and to Your Only-begotten Son, and to Your all-holy Spirit, that You will deliver *n* from the body unto repose ; and that, out of Your goodness, what is known and what is unknown be struck away. So too, we entreat forgiveness from Your ineffable goodness, if *s/he* in any manner, whether of knowledge or in ignorance, has offended Your goodness, or is under the ban of a priest, or has embittered his (*her*) parents, or has broken a vow, or has fallen into devilish imaginations and shameful sorceries, through the malice of the crafty demon. Yes, O Master, LORD our God, hear me the sinner, Your unworthy servant, in this hour, and deliver Your servant *n* from this intolerable sickness which holds him (*her*) in bitter helplessness, and give him (*her*) rest where are all the souls of the righteous ; for You are the repose of our souls and of our bodies, and unto You do we give glory : to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

**Reader:** Amen.

**PRAYER FOR A PERSON CONDEMNED TO DEATH :**

**Presbyter :** O most merciful, all-gracious and compassionate LORD Jesus Christ, Son of God, our Saviour, because of Your love towards sinful Man, You graciously deigned to accept condemnation unto death, to be crucified for the sake of our salvation, and upon the Cross to give up Your righteous Spirit into the hands of God the Father. We entreat You, most gracious Master, to look also with Your compassion upon this, Your servant n, who has been condemned to death by the judgement of Man. Forgive him (*her*) his (*her*) mortal fault ; inspire in his (*her*) heart true repentance, that *s/he* may, even in this hour before death, also confess You, his (*her*) God and Saviour, as once did the wise thief, and be granted mercy from You. Yes, O longsuffering LORD of many mercies, by Your righteous judgement, do not condemn this condemned sinner n. Pardon him (*her*) his (*her*) transgressions ; deliver him (*her*), by this penalty of death, from the eternal death prepared for unrepentant sinners, that *s/he* may glorify You with all the sinners who have repented and have been made righteous through You ; for You alone are sinless, and unto You are due all glory, honour and worship, together with Your unoriginate Father, and Your all-holy, good, and life-giving Spirit, now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

**Reader :** Amen.

**Presbyter :** Through the prayers of our holy *fathers (mothers/ brothers and sisters)*, O LORD Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us.

**Reader :** Amen.

*And the Holy Psalter is read in the presence of the body of the newly-reposed from this time until the time of the funeral.*

[THE END OF PRAYER AT THE PARTING OF THE SOUL]

**THE HYMN OF SAINT AMBROSE  
(BISHOP OF MILAN) (†397)**

*Te Deum Laudamus*

We praise You, O God. We confess You to be the LORD. All the earth worships You, the eternal Father. To You all Angels cry aloud, the Heavens, and all the Powers therein. To You the Cherubim and the Seraphim continually cry out : Holy, Holy, Holy, LORD God Sabaoth. Heaven and earth are full of the majesty of Your glory. The glorious company of the Apostles praises You. The goodly fellowship of the Prophets praises You. The noble army of Martyrs praises You. The holy Church throughout all the world confesses You, the Father of infinite majesty, Your honourable, true and only Son, and the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. You are the King of Glory, O Christ. You are the eternal Son of the Father. When You took upon Yourself to deliver Man, You did not abhor the Virgin's womb. When You had overcome the sharpness of death, You opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers. You sit at the right-hand of God, in the glory of the Father. We believe that You will come to be our Judge. Therefore we pray You, help Your servants whom You have redeemed with Your precious Blood. Make them to be numbered with Your saints in eternal glory. O LORD, save Your people, and bless Your inheritance. Govern them, and lift them up unto the ages. Day by day we magnify You, and we venerate Your Name always, unto the ages, and unto the ages of ages. Deem us worthy, O LORD, to keep us this day without sin. O LORD, have mercy on us; have mercy on us. O LORD, let Your mercy be upon us, as our trust is in You. O LORD, in You have I trusted ; let me never be confounded.

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

[THE END OF THE HYMN OF SAINT AMBROSE]

Now You are letting Your servant  
depart in peace, O Master,  
according to Your word ; for my  
eyes have seen Your salvation,  
which You have prepared before  
the face of all peoples : a light to  
bring revelation to the Gentiles,  
and the glory of Your people,  
Israel (Luke 2:29-32).

THE END OF  
THE HOLY PSALTER  
GLORY BE TO GOD

