

Vespers of Forgiveness

To forgive our enemies and to do good to them is true magnanimity ~ one of the greatest traits of likeness to God.



Cheesefare Sunday

Sunday Evening Lenten Vespers

Priest **B**lessed is our God, always, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

All **A**men.

Proemial Psalm (Psalm 103)

Reader **C**ome, let us + worship and bow down before our King and God.

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

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

Bless the Lord, my soul! Lord my God, You are very great! You are clothed with honor and majesty.

Who cover Yourself with light as with a garment,
Who has stretched out the heavens like a curtain.

He lays the beams of His upper chambers in the waters, Who makes the clouds His chariot, Who walks on the wings of the wind

Who makes His angels spirits, His ministers a flame of fire.

You Who laid the foundations of the earth, so that it should not be moved forever.

You covered it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains.

At Your rebuke they fled; at the voice of Your thunder they hastened away.

They went up over the mountains; they went down into the valleys, to the place which You founded for them.

You have set a boundary that they may not pass over, that they may not return to cover the earth.

He sends the springs into the valleys, which flow among the hills.

They give drink to every beast of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst.

By them the birds of the air have their habitation; they sing among the branches.

He waters the hills from His upper chambers; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of Your works.

He causes the grass to grow for the cattle, and vegetation for the service of man, that he may bring forth food from the earth,

And wine that makes glad the heart of man, oil to make his face shine, and bread which strengthens man's heart.

The trees of the Lord are full of sap, the cedars of Lebanon which He planted.

Where the birds make their nests; the stork has her home in the fir trees.

The high hills are for the wild goats; the cliffs are a refuge for the rabbits.

He appointed the moon for seasons; the sun knows its time for setting.

You make darkness, and it is night, in which all of the beasts of the forest creep about.

Priest **T**hrough the + prayers of our holy Fathers, Lord
Jesus Christ our God have mercy upon us and save
us.
All Amen.

The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their
food from God.

When the sun rises, they gather together and lie
down in their dens.

Man goes out to his work and to his labor until the
evening.

Lord, how manifold are Your works! In wisdom
You have made them all. The earth is full of Your
creation.

This great and wide sea, in which are innumerable
teeming things, living things, both small and great.

There the ships sail about, and there is the
Leviathan which You have made to play there.

These all wait for You, that You may give them
their food in due season.

What You give to them, they gather in; You open
Your hand, they are filled with good.

You hide Your face, they are troubled; You take
away their breath, they die and return to their dust.

You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; and
You renew the face of the earth.

May the glory of the Lord endure to the ages, may
the Lord rejoice in His works.

He looks on the earth and it trembles, He touches
the hills and they smoke.

I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will sing
praise to my God while I have my being.

May my meditation be pleasing to Him; I will
rejoice in the Lord.

May sinners be consumed from the earth, and the wicked be no more! Bless the Lord, my soul!

The sun knows its time for setting. You make darkness and it is night. Lord, how manifold are Your works; in wisdom You have made them all.

Glory to the + Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, + alleluia, alleluia; glory to You, O God.

Alleluia, + alleluia, alleluia; glory to You, O God.

Alleluia, + alleluia, alleluia; glory to You, O God. Our hope, Lord, glory to You.

The Great Litany

Priest **I**n peace let us pray to the Lord.

All Lord, have mercy.

Priest **F**or the peace from above and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

All Lord, have mercy.

Priest **F**or the peace in the whole world, for the stability of the holy churches of God, and for the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.

All Lord, have mercy.

Priest **F**or this holy house and for those who enter with faith, reverence, and the fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.

All Lord, have mercy.

Priest **F**or our Archbishop Isaiah, the honorable presbytery, the diaconate in Christ, and for all the clergy and the laity, let us pray to the Lord.

Priest **M**ay Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His all-pure and all-blameless holy Mother; by the power of the precious and life-giving Cross; through the protection of the heavenly bodiless powers; through the supplications of the honorable, glorious, prophet, forerunner, and baptist John; of the holy, glorious, and all-praiseworthy Apostles; of the holy, glorious and triumphant martyrs; of our venerable and God-bearing fathers; of the holy, glorious, and Chief Apostles Peter and Paul, the protectors of this Holy Church, of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; of *(the saints of the day)* whom we celebrate this day; and of all the Saints: have mercy on us and save us, for He is a good, and loving, and merciful God.

Then follows the ceremony of mutual forgiveness.

The Priest stands in the center of the Church, and the faithful come up one by one to ask forgiveness of the Priest, saying: "Forgive me, a sinner"; the Priest also saying the same words, and giving a blessing. The faithful then continue down the forming line to ask forgiveness of one another as they exchange the kiss of peace.

Troparion

Chanters All those do you shelter, O good one, those who in their faith flee unto you, with your strong hand you protect; we who sin have no one else, who intercedes for us, before God endlessly, in ills and all dangers, for us who are laden with our many sins and mistakes; Mother, of our God in the Highest therefore we fall down to you, humbly; from all misfortunes, keep your servants safe.

In the name of the Lord, father, bless.

Priest **B**lessed is Christ our God the existing One, always, now, and ever, and to the ages of ages.

All Amen.

Priest **H**eavenly King, protect our faithful rulers, strengthen the faith, calm the nations, give peace to the world, preserve this church and this city, grant repose to our departed fathers and brothers among the righteous, and accept us in repentance and confession, for You are a good God, Who loves mankind.

All Amen.

Prayer of Saint Ephraim the Syrian

Priest **L**ord and Master of my life, deliver me from the spirit of laziness and meddling, the lust for power and gossip. + (*Prostration*)

Rather, grant the spirit of wisdom, humility, patience, and love to me Your servant. + (*Prostration*)

Yes, Lord and King, grant that I may see my own faults and not judge my brother; for You are blessed to the ages of ages. Amen. + (*Prostration*)

Dismissal

Priest **G**lory to You, God our hope, glory to You.

All Glory to the + Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

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

Holy father, bless.

All Lord, have mercy.

Priest **F**or the president of our country, for all civil authorities, and for our armed forces everywhere, let us pray to the Lord.

All Lord, have mercy.

Priest **F**or this city, for every city and land, and for the faithful who dwell in them, let us pray to the Lord.

All Lord, have mercy.

Priest **F**or temperate weather, an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

All Lord, have mercy.

Priest **F**or travelers by sea, land, and air; for the sick and the suffering; for captives and their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

All Lord, have mercy.

Priest **F**or our deliverance from all tribulation, wrath, danger, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.

All Lord, have mercy.

Priest **H**elp us, save us, have mercy on us, and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

All Lord, have mercy.

Priest **C**ommemorating our all-holy, pure, most-blessed, and glorious * Lady, + the Theotokos and ever-Virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and all our life to Christ our God.

All To You, O Lord.

Priest **F**or to You belong all glory, honor, and worship to the + Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

All Amen.

Lord I Have Cried

Chanter Lord, I have cried to You, hear me: hear me, Lord; Lord, I have cried to You, hear me: attend to the voice of my supplication; when I cry to You, hear me, Lord. *(Psalm 140:1)*

Let my prayer be set forth as incense before You: the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice; hear me, Lord. *(Psalm 140:2)*

****The Following Eight Hymns Are To Be Read Together By the Entire Congregation****

Hymns of Repentance

All Bring my soul out of prison that I may confess Your name. *(Psalm 141:10)*

I want to wash away the record of my sins with tears, O Lord, and to please You through the rest of my life through repentance. But the enemy deceives me and fights for my soul. Before I utterly perish, save me, O Lord.

The righteous shall wait patiently for me until You reward me. (Psalm 141:11)

If a man takes refuge in this harbor from the tempest, will he not be saved? If he kneels before this house of healing in his agony, will he not be cured? O Maker of all and Physician of the sick, before I utterly perish, save me, O Lord.

Out of the depths I have cried to You, Lord; Lord, hear my voice. (Psalm 129:1)

Wash me with my tears, O Savior, for I am defiled by many sins. Therefore I fall down before you: I have sinned, have mercy upon me, O God.

Let Your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication. (Psalm 129:2)

forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Priest For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory: of the + Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

All Amen.

Troparia

Chanters Rejoice, Virgin Theotokos, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, for you have borne the Savior of our souls. *(Prostration)*

Baptizer of Christ, remember us all, that we may be delivered from our iniquities; for to you was given the grace to intercede for us. *(Prostration)*

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

Intercede for us, holy Apostles and all you Saints, that we may be delivered from perils and sorrows; for we have acquired you as fervent intercessors before the Savior. *(Prostration)*

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

Under your compassion we take refuge, Theotokos; turn not away from our supplications in adversity, but protect us from perils, only pure and only blessed one. *(Prostration)*

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 to the ages of ages. Amen.

More honorable than the Cherubim, and incomparably more glorious than the Seraphim, the one who incorruptibly gave birth to God the Word, truly the Theotokos, we magnify you.

illumine the souls of those who with true veneration sing your praises.

Hymn of the Righteous Symeon

Priest Master, now let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to Your people Israel. (*Luke 2:29-32*)

Trisagion Prayers

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

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

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

Glory to the + Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, forgive our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Your Name's sake.

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

Glory to the + Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, Who art in the heavens, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses, as we

I am a sheep of your spiritual flock, and I flee to You for refuge, O Good Shepherd. I have gone astray, O God, seek me and have mercy upon me.

Hymns from the Triodion

All *If You should mark iniquities, Lord, Lord, who shall stand? For with You there is forgiveness. (Psalm 129:3)*

Let us all make haste to humble the flesh by abstinence, as we set out upon the God-given course of the holy Fast; and with prayers and tears let us seek our Lord and Savior. Laying aside all memories of evil, let us cry aloud: We have sinned against You, Christ our King; save us as the men of Nineveh in days of old, and in Your compassion make us sharers in Your heavenly Kingdom.

All *For Your name's sake I have patiently waited for You, Lord; my soul has waited patiently for Your word, my soul has hoped in the Lord. (Psalm 129:4)*

When I think of my works, deserving every punishment, I despair of myself, O Lord. For see, I have despised Your precious commandments and wasted my life as he Prodigal. Therefore I entreat You: cleanse me in the waters of repentance, and through prayer and fasting make me shine with light, for You alone are merciful; do not detest me, O Benefactor of all, supreme in love.

All *From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch let Israel hope in the Lord. (Psalm 129:5).*

Let us set out with joy upon the season of the Fast, and prepare ourselves for spiritual combat. Let us purify our soul and cleanse our flesh; and as we fast from food, let us abstain also from every passion. Rejoicing in the virtues of the

Spirit may we persevere with love, and so be counted worthy to see the solemn Passion of Christ our God, and with great spiritual gladness to behold His holy Passover.

All *Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Both now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.*

All-pure bride of God, deliver my poor soul from the punishment deserved by my sins; by your prayers, snatch me from death, and grant me that on the day of judgment I may be justified with the multitude of all the saints; before the end, purify me through repentance and tears..

Entrance

Prayer of the Entrance

Priest *(In a low voice)* **I**n the evening, at dawn, and at midday, we praise You, bless You, thank You, and beseech You, Master of all, Lord Who loves mankind. Guide our prayers, as incense before You, and do not let our hearts be inclined to words or thoughts of wickedness, but save us from all who pursue our souls; for to You, Lord, Lord, are our eyes, and we have hoped in You; do not put us to shame, our God. For to You is due all glory, honor, and worship: to the + Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Priest **Wisdom! Arise!**

Lamp-Lighting Hymn of Thanksgiving (page 117 in the Hymnal)

All **O** gladsome light of holy glory, • of the immortal Father, • heavenly • and holy, • blessed Jesus Christ; • now that we have come • to the setting of the sun, • and see the light of evening: • we praise + Father,

the acceptable time; behold, now is the time of repentance. Let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light, that having sailed across the great sea of the Fast, we may reach the third-day resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of our souls.

To You I lift up my eyes, You Who dwell in the heavens! Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God, till He has mercy upon us. (Psalm 122:1)

Your grace has shone forth, O Lord, it has shone forth and given light to our souls. Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the time of repentance. Let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light, that having sailed across the great sea of the Fast, we may reach the third-day resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of our souls.

Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy on us, for we are exceedingly filled with contempt. Too long our soul has been filled with the scorn of those who are at ease, with the contempt of the proud . (Psalm 122:3)

Martyrikon

You are glorified in the commemorations of Your holy ones, O Christ our God; through their intercessions send down upon us Your great mercy.

Glory to the + Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

The ranks of Angels glorify you, O Mother of God, for you have given birth to Him Who is God, Who dwells ever with the Father and the Spirit, Who created the angelic hosts out of nothing by an act of His will. Entreat Him, all-pure Lady, to save and

Priest For You are a good God Who loves mankind, and to You we send up glory: to the + Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and to the ages of ages.

All Amen.

Prayer at the Bowing of Heads

Priest Peace be with all.

All And with your Spirit.

Priest Let us bow our heads to the Lord.

All To You, O Lord.

Priest (*Quietly*) Lord our God, Who bowed the heavens, and Who came down for the salvation of the human race, look upon Your servants and upon Your inheritance. For Your servants have bowed their heads, and bent their necks to You, the fearsome Judge Who loves mankind; they do not expect help from men, but await Your mercy, and look for Your salvation; protect them at all times, during both the approaching evening and the coming night, from every enemy, from every opposing work of the devil, and from vain thoughts and evil memories.

Priest Blessed and glorified is the might of Your kingdom: of the + Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

All Amen.

****The Following Hymns Are To Be Read Together By the Entire Congregation** Aposticha**

All Your grace has shone forth, O Lord, it has shone forth and given light to our souls. Behold, now is

Son, • and Holy Spirit, God. • It is worthy • at all times to praise You, • with voices of joy, • Son of God • and Giver of life: • therefore, the world does glorify You.

Prokeimenon

Tone Plagal 4

Priest The evening Prokeimenon!

Chanters Do not turn Your face away from Your servant, for I am in trouble; hear me speedily: hearken unto my soul, and deliver it. (*Psalms 68:18-19*)

From the ends of the earth I have called to You.

Do not turn Your face away from Your servant, for I am in trouble; hear me speedily: hearken unto my soul, and deliver it. (*Psalms 68:18-19*)

I will take refuge under the shadow of Your wings.

Do not turn Your face away from Your servant, for I am in trouble; hear me speedily: hearken unto my soul, and deliver it. (*Psalms 68:18-19*)

So I will ever sing praises to Your Name.

Do not turn Your face away from Your servant, for I am in trouble; hear me speedily: hearken unto my soul, and deliver it. (*Psalms 68:18-19*)

Litany of Fervent Supplication

Priest Let us say with all our soul, and with all our mind let us say.

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

Priest Lord almighty, God of our fathers, we pray to You: hear us and have mercy.

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

Priest **H**ave mercy on us, O God, according to Your great mercy; we pray to You, hear us and have mercy.

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

Priest **A**gain we pray for pious and Orthodox Christians.

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

Priest **A**gain we pray for our Archbishop Isaiah.

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

Priest **F**or You are a merciful God Who loves mankind, and to You we send up glory, to the + Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

All Amen.

Evening Prayer

All **M**ake us worthy, Lord, to be kept this evening without sin. Blessed are You, Lord, the God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Your name to the ages. Amen.

Let Your mercy, Lord, be upon us, as we have hoped in You. Blessed are You, Lord, teach me Your commandments. Blessed are You, Master, give me understanding of Your commandments. Blessed are You, Holy One, enlighten me by Your commandments.

Your mercy, Lord, endures to the ages; do not disregard the works of Your hands. To You belongs praise, to You belongs song, to You belongs glory: to the + Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Completion of the Litany

Priest **L**et us complete our evening prayer to the Lord.

All Lord have mercy.

Priest **H**elp us, save us, have mercy on us, and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

All Lord have mercy.

Priest **T**hat the whole evening may be perfect, holy, peaceful, and sinless, let us ask of the Lord.

All Grant this, O Lord.

Priest **A**n Angel of peace, a faithful guide, a guardian of our souls and bodies, let us ask of the Lord.

All Grant this, O Lord.

Priest **F**orgiveness and remission of our sins and transgressions, let us ask of the Lord.

All Grant this, O Lord.

Priest **A**ll that is good and beneficial to our souls, and peace in the world, let us ask of the Lord.

All Grant this, O Lord.

Priest **T**o complete the remaining time of our lives in peace and repentance, let us ask of the Lord.

All Grant this, O Lord.

Priest **A** Christian end to our lives, painless, unashamed, peaceful, and a good defense before the fearsome judgment seat of Christ, let us ask.

All Grant this, O Lord.

Priest **C**ommemorating our all-holy, pure, most-blessed, and glorious * Lady, + the Theotokos and ever-Virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and all our life to Christ our God.

All To You, O Lord.