

## Forgiveness Sunday Vespers

**Deacon:** Bless, Master.

**Priest:** Blessed is our God, always, now and ever and unto ages of ages!

**-OR-**

**Deacon/Reader:** Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God,  
have mercy on us and save us.

**People:** Amen.

**Reader:** 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!

*Psalm 104 is read*

*The Great Litany (non-Lenten melody)<sup>1</sup>*

*"Blessed is the Man" is NOT sung.*

*"Lord, I Call"*

The "Lord, I Call" verse is sung in the Tone of the Week followed by:

- ...three stikhera in the tone of the week from the Octoechos;
- ...four stikhera from the menaion for the saint(s) of the day;
- ...then the following three stikhera from the Triodion:

*Tone 2*

Let us humble the flesh by abstinence,  
As we follow the divine path of pure fasting.  
With prayers and tears let us seek the Lord Who saves us.  
Let us put an end to anger, crying out:  
Save us who have sinned against You!  
Save us, O Christ our King,  
As You have saved the men of Nineveh, ///  
And make us partakers of Your heavenly kingdom, O Compassionate One!

When I think of my deeds, O Lord,  
I am filled with despair  
And know that I am worthy of every torment.  
I have despised Your commandments, O Saviour. (over)

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<sup>1</sup>When no priest or deacon is present, instead of the Great Litany, the following is said by the reader:

**Reader:** Lord, have mercy (x12). Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and  
unto ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

I have spent my life as a prodigal.  
I pray to You, O only merciful One:  
Cleanse me by repentance,  
Enlighten me through prayers and fasting, ///  
And despise me not, O most gracious benefactor of all!

Let us begin the fast with joy!  
Let us prepare ourselves for spiritual efforts!  
Let us cleanse our soul and cleanse our flesh!  
Let us abstain from every passion as we abstain from food!  
Let us rejoice in virtues of the spirit and fulfill them in love!  
That we all may see the passion of Christ our God, ///  
And rejoice in spirit at the holy Pascha!

➤ ...GNE in the tone of the week from the Octoechos.

*The entrance is made with the censer.*

Priest: Wisdom! Let us attend!

People: *O Gladsome light!*

## The Great Prokeimenon

(Tone 8): Turn not away Your face from Your child for I am afflicted. Hear me speedily. Draw near unto my soul and deliver it!

Priest (*reader, in the absence of a priest*):

*vs.* Your salvation, O God, has upheld me.

*vs.* Let the poor see and be glad.

*vs.* Seek God, and your soul shall live.

Reader: Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this night without sin. Blessed are You, O Lord, the God of our fathers and praised and glorified is Your name forever! Amen. Let Your mercy be upon us, O Lord, even as we have set our hope on You. Blessed are You, O Lord, teach me Your statutes! Blessed are You, O Master, make me to understand Your commandments! Blessed are You, O Holy One, enlighten me with Your precepts! Your mercy, O Lord, endures forever: O despise not the works of Your hands. To You belong worship, to You belong praise, to You belong glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

*(At this point the Great Fast begins.*

*The vestments of the clergy and servers and the altar cloths  
are changed from light to dark.*

*The Royal Doors are closed.*

*Lenten melodies are now sung.)*

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*The Evening Litany (Grant it...)*  
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## The Apostikha

*Tone 4*

Your grace has shown forth, O Lord,

The grace which illumines our soul.

This is the acceptable time!

This is the time of repentance!

Let us lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armour of light,

That passing through the fast as through a great sea

We may reach the resurrection on the third day ///

Of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of our souls.

*Reader: Unto You have I lifted up my eyes, unto You Who dwell in heaven. Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hands of their masters, as the eyes of the handmaid look unto the hands of her mistress, so do our eyes look unto the Lord our God, until He*

*take pity on us.*

Your grace has shown forth, O Lord,  
The grace which illumines our soul.  
This is the acceptable time!  
This is the time of repentance!  
Let us lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armour of light,  
That passing through the fast as through a great sea  
We may reach the resurrection on the third day ///  
Of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of our souls.

*Reader: Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us, for we are greatly filled with abasement. Our soul has been greatly filled therewith; let reproach come upon them that prosper, and abasement on the proud.*

You are glorified  
In the memory of Your saints, O Christ God. ///  
At their supplications, send down upon us Your great mercy!

*Reader: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.*

The angelic hosts glorify you, O mother of God,  
For you gave birth to God,  
Co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit,  
Who created out of nothing the angelic hosts.  
Beseech Him to deliver from corruption and to enlighten ///  
The souls of those who rightly praise you, O all-pure one!

#### **Prayer of St. Symeon (Tone 6)**

Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace,  
According to Your word  
For my eyes have seen Your salvation,  
Which You have prepared before the face of all people,  
A light to enlighten the Gentiles ///  
And to be the glory of Your people Israel.

Reader: 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.

Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Lord, cleanse us from our sins, O Master, pardon our transgressions. O 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.

All: Our Father, Who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Priest: For Yours 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.

People: Amen.

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**The Lenten Troparia - insert music**

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Reader: Lord, have mercy. (*x40*)

More honourable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim; without defilement you gave birth to God the Word; true Theotokos, we magnify you. In the name of the Lord, Master bless.

Priest: Christ, our God, the existing One, is blessed always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

*Reader (in the absence of a priest): Through the prayers of our holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us.*

Reader: Amen. O Heavenly King, establish the Orthodox Christians, confirm the Faith, quiet the heathen, give peace to the world, place our departed fathers and brethren in the tabernacles of the Righteous, and accept us sorrowers and penitents, for You are good and the Lover of mankind.

### **Prayer of St Ephrem (if Lent)**

All: O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of sloth, despair, lust of power, and idle talk. (*prostration*)

But give rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love to Your servant. (*prostration*)

Yes, O Lord and King! Grant me to see my own transgressions and not to judge my brother, for blessed are You unto ages of ages. (*prostration; 12 metaneias saying: "O God, cleanse me a sinner."*)

*Then the entire prayer is said, and a single prostration is made at the end.*

### **Dismissal**

Priest: Glory to You, O Christ, our God and our hope, glory to You!

People: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Master, bless.

Priest: (*gives the proper dismissal*)

People: Amen.