**APRIL 7**

**Vespers served on Great and Holy Friday**

**“Lord I Call...” Tone 1**

Lord, I call upon Thee, hear me!

Hear me, O Lord!

Lord, I call upon Thee, hear me!

Receive the voice of my prayer,

when I call upon Thee!//

Hear me, O Lord!

Let my prayer arise

in Thy sight as incense,

and let the lifting up of my hands

be an evening sacrifice!//

Hear me, O Lord!

**Tone 1**

*v. (6) If Thou, O Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee.*

All creation was changed by fear

when it saw Thee hanging upon the Cross, O Christ.

The sun was darkened,

and the foundations of the earth were shaken.

All things suffered with the Creator of all.//

O Lord, Who willingly didst endure this for us, glory to Thee!

*v. (5) For Thy name’s sake have I waited for Thee, O Lord, my soul has waited for Thy word; my soul has hoped on the Lord.*

(Repeat “All creation was changed by fear, … “)

*v. (4) From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch let Israel hope on the Lord.*

**Tone 2**

An impious and transgressing people –

why do they imagine vain things?

Why do they condemn to death the Life of all?

Oh, great wonder!

The Creator of the world is betrayed into the hands of lawless men.

He Who loves mankind is lifted up upon the Wood,

that He might free those bound in Hell, who cry://

“O long-suffering Lord, glory to Thee!”

*v. (3) For with the Lord there is mercy and with Him is plenteous redemption, and He will deliver Israel from all his iniquities.*

Today the blameless Virgin

saw Thee suspended upon the Cross, O Word.

She mourned within herself and was sorely pierced in her heart.

She groaned in agony from the depth of her soul.

Exhausted from tearing her hair and cheeks and beating her breast,

She cried out, lamenting:

“Woe is me, O my divine Child!

Woe is me, O Light of the world!

Why hast Thou departed from mine eyes, O Lamb of God?”

Then the bodiless hosts were seized with trembling and cried:

“O incomprehensible Lord, glory to Thee!”

*v. (2) Praise the Lord, all nations! Praise Him, all peoples!*

When she who bore Thee without seed

saw Thee suspended upon the Tree,

O Christ, the Creator and God of all,

she cried bitterly: “Where is the beauty of Thy form, O my Son?

I cannot bear to see Thee unjustly crucified!

Hasten and arise,//

that I too may see Thy Resurrection from the dead on the third day!”

*v. (1) For His mercy is abundant towards us; and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever.*

**Tone 6**

Today the Master of creation stands before Pilate.

Today the Creator of all is condemned to die on the Cross.

Of His own will, He is led as a Lamb to the slaughter.

He Who fed His people with manna in the desert is transfixed with nails.

His side is pierced, and a sponge of vinegar touches His lips.

The Redeemer of the world is slapped on the face.

The Maker of all is mocked by His own servants.

How great is the Master’s love for mankind!

For those who crucified Him, He prayed to His Father, saying://

“Forgive them this sin, for they know not what they do!”

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

**Tone 6**

See how the lawless assembly condemns the King of creation to death!

They are not ashamed, even when He reminds them of His mighty works:

“My people, what have I done to you?

Have I not filled Judea with miracles?

Have I not raised the dead by My Word alone?

Have I not healed every sickness and disease?

How have ye repaid Me?

Why have ye abandoned Me?

In return for healing, ye give Me blows;

In return for life, ye put Me to death.

Ye hang your Benefactor on the Cross as an evildoer;

your Lawgiver, as a transgressor;

the King of all, as one condemned.”//

O long-suffering Lord, glory to Thee!

*Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

**Tone 6**

We see a strange and fearful mystery accomplished today:

He Whom none may touch is seized.

He Who looses Adam from the curse is bound.

He Who tries the hearts of men is unjustly brought to trial.

He Who closed the abyss is shut in prison.

He before Whom the Hosts of Heaven stand with trembling stands before

Pilate.

The Creator is struck by the hand of His creature.

He Who comes to judge the living and the dead is condemned to the

Cross.

The Conqueror of Hell is enclosed in a tomb.

Thou Who hast endured all these things in Thy tender love,

hast saved all mankind from the curse.//

O long-suffering Lord, glory to Thee!

**Tone 4 Prokeimenon**

They divide my garments among them, and for my raiment they cast lots. (Ps 21/22:18)

*v: My God, My God, look upon me! Why hast Thou forsaken me? (Ps 21/22:1)*

**Reading from Exodus (33:11-23)**

**Tone 4 Prokeimenon**

Judge, O Lord, those who wrong me; fight against those who fight against me! (Ps 34/35:1)

*v: They rewarded me evil for good; My soul is forlorn. (Ps 34/35:12)*

**Reading from Job (42:12-17)**

**Reading from Isaiah (52:13-54:1)**

**Tone 6 Prokeimenon**

They have laid me in the depths of the pit, in the regions dark and deep.

*(Ps 87/88:6)*

*v: O Lord God of my salvation, I call for help by day; I cry out in the night before Thee. (Ps 87/88:1)*

**Epistle**

1 Corinthians 1:18-2:2

**Tone 1**

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

*v: Save me, O God; for the waters have come up to my soul. (Ps 68/69:1)*

*v: They gave me gall for food, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink. (Ps 68/69:21)*

*v: Let their eyes be darkened, so that they cannot see! (Ps 68/69:23)*

**Gospel**

Matthew 27:1-38 Luke 23:39-43

Matthew 27:39-54 John 19:31-37

Matthew 27:55-61

**Aposticha**

**Tone 2 Automelon**

Joseph of Arimathea took Thee down from the tree,

the Life of all, cold in death.

Bathing Thee with sweet and costly myrrh,

he gently covered Thee with finest linen,

and, with sorrow and tender love in his heart,

he embraced Thy most pure body.

Trembling at this awesome sight,

he cried out to Thee, O Christ://

“Glory to Thy condescension, O Lover of man!”

*v: The Lord is King; He is robed in majesty!* *(Ps 92/93:1)*

When Thou, the Redeemer of all, wast placed in a tomb

all hell’s powers quaked in fear.

Its bars were broken, its gates were smashed.

Its mighty reign was brought to an end,

for the dead came forth alive from their tombs,

casting off the bonds of their captivity.

Adam was filled with joy!

He gratefully cried out to Thee, O Christ://

“Glory to Thy condescension, O Lover of man!”

*v: For He has established the world so that it shall never be moved.*

*(Ps 92/93:1b)*

In the flesh Thou wast willingly enclosed in the tomb,

Who art boundless and infinite in Thy divinity.

Thou didst close the chambers of death, O Christ,

and didst empty all the palaces of Hell.//

Thou didst honor this Sabbath with Thy blessing, glory, and honor.

*v: Holiness befits Thy house, O Lord, forevermore. (Ps 92/93:5)*

The Powers of Heaven shook with fear,

when they saw Thine ineffable forbearance.

They beheld Thee slandered by lawless men,

mocked as a deceiver by transgressors.

They beheld the stone that closed Thy tomb,

sealed by the same hands that pierced Thy side,

but they knew that Thy death would be our life,

and joyfully they cried out to Thee, O Christ://

“Glory to Thy condescension, O Lover of man!”

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

*now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

**Tone 5**

Joseph, together with Nicodemus,

took Thee down from the Tree,

Who clothest Thyself with light as with a garment.

He gazed on Thy body – dead, naked, and unburied,

and in grief and tender compassion he lamented:

“Woe is me, my sweetest Jesus!

A short while ago, the sun beheld Thee hanging on the Cross,

and it hid itself in darkness.

The earth quaked in fear at the sight.

The veil of the Temple was torn in two.

Lo, now I see Thee willingly submit to death for our sake.

How shall I bury Thee, O my God?

How can I wrap Thee in a shroud?

How can I touch Thy most pure body with my hands?

What songs can I sing for Thine exodus, O compassionate One?

I magnify Thy Passion.

I glorify Thy burial,

and Thy holy Resurrection,

crying, O Lord, glory to Thee!”

**Tone 2 Troparion**

The noble Joseph,

when he had taken down Thy most pure Body from the Tree,

wrapped it in fine linen and anointed it with spices,//

and placed it in a new tomb.

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

*now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

**Tone 2 Troparion**

The Angel came to the myrrhbearing women at the tomb and said:

“Myrrh is fitting for the dead;

but Christ has shown Himself a stranger to corruption.”

Liturgical texts for this service represent modified versions of translations published by the Orthodox Church in America, 1982.