



SHORT PRAYER BOOK
FOR ORTHODOX
CHRISTIANS

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CONTENT

A Short Book of Prayers for Orthodox Christians

A Brief Orthodox Christian Catechism	p.1
Preparation for Confession	p.10
Morning Prayers	p.15
Prayers before Sleep	p.19
Canon of Repentance to our Lord Jesus Christ	p.23
The Supplicatory Canon to the Most Holy Theotokos	p.31
Canon to the Guardian Angel	p.37
Canon of Preparation for Holy Communion	p.41
Prayers of Thanksgiving after Holy Communion	p.47
Prayers for Different Occasions	p.49
Take Vacation That is Good for Your Soul!	p.52

A Brief Orthodox Christian Catechism

What Is the Orthodox Church?

The Church is the mystical body of Christ. Jesus Christ is the head, and the members of the body are those who have accepted the Orthodox Christian faith, and participate regularly in the Holy Mysteries. A hierarchy exists in the Church: the Bishop, who represents the presence of Christ on earth; the Priest; the Deacon, and the faithful. Together they make up the Church, the mystical body of Christ. "Christ is the head of the Church, His body, and is Himself its saviour" (*Ephesians 5:23*), says St. Paul. He also says that "you are the body of Christ, and individually members of it", (*I Corinthians 12:27*) and that "we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another" (*Romans 12:5*). Jesus Christ, the Son of God born of a Virgin, founded His Holy Church (*Matthew 16:18*). Since the time of the Apostles, the Church has laboured for the salvation of man. The Apostles spread the Church with her teachings far and wide; they founded many communities all united in faith, worship, and the partaking of the *Mysteries* (known by many as the Sacraments) of the Holy Church.

There are ancient Patriarchates founded by the Apostles themselves: Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Rome. The Church at Constantinople was founded by St. Andrew, the Church at Alexandria by St. Mark, the Church at Antioch by St. Paul, the Church at Jerusalem by Ss. Peter and James, and the Church at Rome by Ss. Peter and Paul. Those founded in later years through missionary were the Churches of Sinai, Russia, Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania, and others.

Each of these churches is autocephalous (independent in administration). With the exception of the Church of Rome, which separated from the others in the year 1054, all are united in the Apostolic tradition: faith, doctrine, mysteries, and worship. Together they all constitute the Orthodox Church.

The workings of the Church are found within Holy Tradition which includes Church practices, Christian dogma and the Bible. The Scriptures are considered to be part of the Holy Tradition of the Church, and are interpreted within the whole framework and practice of the faith. As written in the Gospel of St. John, "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written" (*John 21:25*). It is important to know that much of the Orthodox Christian faith has been transmitted orally to us through Holy Tradition.

The word Orthodox literally means *right teaching* or *right worship*, and is derived from two Greek words: *orthos* (right) and *doxa* (teaching or worship). As false teachings and division occurred in early Christian times, threatening to obscure the identity of the Church, the term *Orthodox* soon came to be used. The Orthodox Church carefully preserves Christian Truth against all error and schism both to protect the faithful and to glorify Jesus Christ whose body she is. What follows are brief definitions of the main beliefs and practices of the Holy Orthodox Church.

The Holy Eucharist

Eucharist means *thanksgiving* and has become a synonym for Holy Communion. The Eucharist is the central action of worship in the Orthodox Church. Because Jesus said of the bread and wine at the Mystical (Last) Supper, "This is my body", and "This is my blood", (*Luke 22: 19,20*), His followers follow His commandment. In the Eucharist, the faithful partake mystically of Christ's Body and Blood, which grants life and healing of both soul and body. By the grace that is imparted through the Holy Eucharist the faithful are united with Christ.

The Divine Liturgy

Liturgy is a term used to describe the Church's shared worship of God. The word *liturgy* derives from a Greek word which means *the common work*. Many biblical references to worship in heaven involve *liturgy*. In the Old Testament, God ordains a *liturgy*, or a specific pattern of worship. We find it described in the books of Exodus and Leviticus. In the New Testament the Church adjusts the worship of the Old Israel as practised in the temple to witness the faith in Jesus Christ as Lord. The contemporary form of the Orthodox Christian Liturgy developed over many centuries, and maintains the ancient shape of worship. The main elements in the Liturgy are prayers, the reading of the Epistle, the proclamation of the Holy Gospel, and the Holy Eucharist itself. For Orthodox Christians, the expression *the Liturgy* refers generally to the Eucharistic rite instituted by Christ Himself at the Mystical (Last) Supper.

God the Father

The Father is maker of all things in heaven and on earth (*Genesis 1 and 2*), the Lord of all Creation. The Father spoke with Moses and gave the Ten Commandments (*Exodus 20:1-17*). He is the Lord about whom the King and Prophet David speaks in the Psalms: "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him" (*Psalms 103:13*). He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (*II Corinthians 11:31*). The Father is the fountain of the Godhead (*pygi theotitos*), the head of the Holy Trinity. This means that He is the Person in whom all divinity originates.

Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ was born as the child foretold by the Prophet Isaiah: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (*Isaiah 7:14*). Jesus Christ is the Word of God identified by Saint John: "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God" (*John 1:1-2*). Christ is born as a man but He is not mere man; He is the Son of God, (*Matthew 3:17*) and therefore divine. Jesus is identified as the Christ, the Messiah, by Peter. (*Mark 8:29*). Jesus Christ the Second Person of the Holy Trinity.

The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Holy Trinity and is, like Jesus Christ, of one essence with the Father. In the Creed, Orthodox Christians confess, "And (I believe) in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of life, Who proceeds from the Father, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spoke by the Prophets". He is called the *promise of the Father* (*Acts 1:4*), and is sent by Christ as a gift to the Church, to empower the faithful to serve God (*Acts 1:8*), to place God's love in our hearts (*Romans 5:5*), and to impart to the faithful spiritual gifts (*I Corinthians 12:7-13*) and virtues (*Galatians 5:22, 23*). The Spirit is known also as the Comforter and witnesses Christ to the faithful (*John 15:26*).

The Holy Trinity

The Holy Scriptures reveal that within the one God are Three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. From before all time they share the one divine nature. The Son is begotten of the Father before all ages and all time (*Psalms 2:7*). It is from the Father that the Holy Spirit eternally proceeds (*John 15:26*). God the Father created all things through the Son, in the Holy Spirit (*Genesis 1 and 2; John 1:3*), and we are called to worship God in the Holy Spirit (*John 4:23*). The Trinity appears to Abraham in the form of three men (*Genesis 18:1-2*). The Baptism of Christ (*Matthew 3:16; Mark 1:10; John 1:32*) is a revelation of the Holy Trinity, as is Christ's Transfiguration on Mount Tabor (*Matthew 17: 1-5; Mark 9: 1-7*).

The Creed or Symbol of Faith

The word *creed* comes from the Latin *credo* meaning *I believe*. From the earliest days of the Church, the faithful have made living confessions of what they believe and not merely formal, academic, theological pronouncements. Such confessions of faith appear in the New Testament, where, for example, St. Paul quotes a creed to remind Timothy, "God...was revealed in the flesh..." (*I Timothy 3:16*). The Nicene Creed was approved by the Church in council (325 A.D.), to give a concise statement of the Truth. This was prompted by the appearance of a heresy that threatened the Orthodox Faith.

In reciting the Nicene Creed, Orthodox Christians reaffirm the Orthodox faith about Jesus as they say, "I believe ... in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only begotten, begotten of the Father before all ages, Light of Light, true God of true God; begotten, not made; of one essence with the Father; through Whom all things were made; Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end".

The Incarnation

The Incarnation refers to our Lord Jesus Christ being born in the flesh. The eternal Son of God the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, took on full and true human nature from the Virgin Mary. He possesses from God the Father the entirety of the divine nature, and a complete human nature from the Virgin Mary. By His Incarnation, the Son forever possesses these two natures in His one Person. The Son of God, boundless in His divine nature, willingly accepted hunger, thirst, fatigue, and ultimately, death. The Incarnation is indispensable to Christianity. The Scriptures witness: "... Every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God" (*I John 4:3*). By His Incarnation, the Son of God raises human nature to Heaven, a redemption made accessible to all who are joined to Him through faith and participation in the Holy Mysteries of the Church.

Sin

The word refers to *missing the mark*. As St. Paul writes, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (*Romans 3:23*). We sin when we pervert what God has given us as good, falling short of, forgetting or ignoring His purposes for us. Our sins separate us from God (*Isaiah 59:1, 2*), leaving us spiritually dead (*Ephesians 2:1*). To save us, the Son of God assumed our human nature, and being without sin "He condemned sin in the flesh" (*Romans 8:3*). In His mercy and love, God forgives our sins when we confess them and turn from them, giving us strength to overcome sin in our lives. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (*I John 1:9*).

Salvation

Salvation is the divine gift through which we are delivered from sin and death. We become united with Christ, enter into the Heavenly Kingdom. Those who heard St. Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost asked what they must do to be saved. He answered, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (*Acts 2:38*). To a Christian, salvation demands faith in Jesus Christ. People cannot save themselves by their own good works. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (*Ephesians 2: 8-10*). Our salvation is a life-long process. It involves our putting on Christ and fulfilling the potential of our nature made in the image and likeness of God.

Baptism and Chrismation

Baptism is a Holy Mystery by which a person is united with Christ and through Him all of the faithful (*Galatians 3:26-28*). The Apostle Paul teaches: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him

by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (*Romans 6 3-4*). Through Baptism our sins are washed away we are empowered by our union with Christ to live a holy life. A new birth occurs in Baptism where we die with Christ, are buried with Him, and are raised with Him in the newness of His resurrection, being joined with Him in transfigured human nature (*Acts 2:38; Romans 6:3, 4*). "Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (*John 3:5*). From its beginning, the Church has taught that the *water* is the baptismal water and the *Spirit* is the Holy Spirit. The Orthodox Church has historically practiced baptism by full immersion.

Orthodox Christians believe that the Holy Spirit is granted through Chrismation (anointing with Chrism) at the time of Baptism. Chrismation is a Holy Mystery. It is based on the Apostolic practice of the laying on of hands. They laid hands on those who confessed faith in Christ and had been baptized, so that they would receive the Holy Spirit. At least two Scriptural passages support this practice: "Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit", and "when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them" (*Acts 8:17; 19:6*). Chrism is a special ointment prepared over many days. Unceasing prayers and Scripture readings accompany the preparation of the Chrism. Only Autocephalous Churches prepare Chrism.

The Mystery of Repentance or Confession

Confession is the open admission of our sins committed before God and man. Christ established the Mystery of Repentance after His resurrection. Speaking to His disciples, He said: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven. If you retain the sins of any, they are retained" (*John 20:22-24*). St. James the Apostle admonishes us to confess our sins, to God before the priests (*James 5:16*). We are also all exhorted to confess our sins directly to God (*I John 1:9*). The Orthodox Church has always followed the New Testament practice of confession before a priest as well as private confessions to the Lord. Confession is a necessary means of repenting, and receiving healing from the effects of our sins. It is also a most powerful aid to overcoming our sins. No sin is unforgivable except for the sin of unrepentance, which is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. The one who remains unforgiven is the one who does not believe in God's forgiveness and salvation.

The Bible

The Bible refers to the books of both the Old Testament, including the Books of Moses and the Prophets and the book of the New Testament, including the Gospels and the Epistles. It is the divinely inspired Word of God (*II Timothy 3:16*). The Old Testament begins with a description of Creation, and provides an account of God's revelation to Israel. The New Testament witnesses the life of Jesus Christ in the Gospels and includes the writings of His Apostles. Though these sacred writings were read in the Church from the time they first appeared, they were not codified in the order Christians now know them for about 300 years. The Canon of Scripture now known to the world, was first identified in the 33rd Canon of a Church council held at Carthage in 318, and in a fragment of St. Athanasius of Alexandria's Festal Letter in 367. Both sources list all of the books of the New Testament without exception. A local council, probably held at Rome in 382, set forth a complete list of the canonical books of both the Old and New Testaments. The

Scriptures are at the very heart of Orthodox worship and devotion, and are an integral part of Holy Tradition.

Mary the Theotokos

The Virgin Mary is called *Theotokos*, meaning *God-bearer* or *Mother of God*. The name *Theotokos* was recognized by the Orthodox Church at the Third Ecumenical Council held at Ephesus in 431. Mary bore the Son of God in her womb, and from her He took His humanity. St. Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, recognized this reality when she called Mary, "the Mother of my Lord" (*Luke 1:43*). Mary said of herself: "All generations shall call me blessed" (*Luke 1:48*). That Mary is called Ever-Virgin (*Aeiparthenos*) is not to elevate her to some special status or to incite us to worship the creature rather than the Creator. Rather, this is an affirmation of who Jesus Christ is. Because He has chosen her to be his mother, to conceive Him, to give flesh to Him, to give birth to Him, we understand her as an earthly dwelling place of the infinite God. Thus, because she is in this sense a new Holy of Holies, her ever-virginity is a natural characteristic of such an awesome reality.

The Councils of the Church

Chapter 15 of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles records a dispute in the Church over the keeping of Jewish laws by Christians. "And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter" (*Acts 15:6*). This council, held in Jerusalem, set the pattern for the subsequent calling of councils. Through the centuries there have been hundreds of church councils both local and Ecumenical. The rulings of the seven Ecumenical councils apply to the whole Church. The seven Ecumenical councils dealt with the rise of heresy within the Church. 1. First Council of Nicea, (325); repudiated Arianism, adopted the Nicene Creed. 2. First Council of Constantinople, (381); revised the Nicene Creed into the present form used in the Orthodox Church. 3. Council of Ephesus, (431); repudiated Nestorianism, proclaimed the Virgin Mary as the Mother of God (Greek, Θεοτόκος). 4. Council of Chalcedon, (451); repudiated Monophysitism, described and delineated the two natures of Christ, human and divine; adopted the Chalcedonian Creed. 5. Second Council of Constantinople, (553); reaffirmed decisions and doctrines explicated by previous Councils, condemned new Arian, Nestorian, and Monophysite writings. 6. Third Council of Constantinople, (680-681); repudiated Monothelitism, affirmed that Christ had both human and Divine wills. Quinisext Council or Council in Trullo, (692); mostly an administrative council that raised some local canons to ecumenical status and established principles of clerical discipline. It is not considered to be a full-fledged council in its own right because it did not determine matters of doctrine. 7. Second Council of Nicea, (787); restoration of the veneration of icons.

PREPARATION FOR CONFESSION

Before confession one should attempt to recall all the sins which one has committed voluntarily or involuntarily. One must attentively re-examine one's life in order to recall not only those sins committed since the last confession, but also those which have not been confessed through forgetfulness. Then, with compunction and a contrite heart, approach the Cross and the Gospel and begin the confession of your sins.

1. Confess your sins honestly, remembering that you open them not to a man, but to God Himself. God knows your sins already and only wants your admission of them. You should not be embarrassed before your spiritual father: he is a person just as you are. He knows human shortcomings well, man's tendency towards sin. For this reason your spiritual father cannot be your terrible judge at confession. Is the reason that you are embarrassed before your spiritual father that you are afraid to lose his good opinion of you? On the contrary, your spiritual father will have all the more love for you when he sees your open, honest confession. Furthermore, if you are afraid to reveal your sins before just one person, your spiritual father, how will you overcome your embarrassment when you appear at God's Last Judgment? There, all your sins which you have not confessed will be opened before God Himself, the Angels and all the people.

2. Be specific when you confess, listing all your sins separately. St. John Chrysostom says: "One must not only say: I have sinned, or I am sinful, but one must declare each type of sin." "The revelation of sins," says St. Basil the Great, "is subject to the same law as the Declaration of physical ills..." The sinner is spiritually ill, and the spiritual father is the physician or healer. It stands to reason that one must confess or tell about one's sins in the same way as one who is physically ill describes the symptoms of his illness to a physician from whom he expects to receive healing.

1. Do not mention anyone else during confession, i.e. do not complain about anyone - what sort of confession is this? It is not confession, but judgement and a new sin.
2. Do not attempt to justify yourself in any way during confession: blaming weakness, custom, etc. The more one justifies himself during confession, the less one is justified by God. The more one denounces, judges and accuses oneself, the more one is justified in the eyes of God.

5. When questioned by your spiritual father, do not say: "I can't remember, maybe I committed that sin." God commanded us to always remember our sins. In order not to justify ourselves with not remembering, we must confess our sins as often as possible. Those who, because of carelessness, confess and take communion infrequently, and because of this forget their sins, have no one to blame but themselves. They cannot hope for remission of the sins which they failed to confess. Thus, it is imperative that we try to recall all our sins. When someone owes us something we are sure to remember this. Yet we forget our own debts before God! Does this not reveal an utter absence of concern for our soul on our part?

6. Unless asked by your spiritual father, do not list the sins you have not committed or things you have not done. Doing this, you liken yourself to the Pharisee of the Gospel. You do not confess your sins, but boast, thereby increasing your judgment.

7. We must confess with sorrow and a contrite heart the sins by which we have grieved our Lord God. It is not good that many tell of their sins matter-of-factly, without any remorse. They speak as though they are engaged in some casual conversation. What is worse, some even allow themselves to laugh during confession. These are all signs of unrepentedness. Confessing in this manner, we do not cleanse ourselves of our sins, but rather increase them.

8. Finally, confess your sins with faith in Jesus Christ, with hope in His mercy. Only with faith in Jesus Christ and hope in Him can we receive forgiveness of our sins. Without faith, we cannot receive remission. An example of this is Judas the traitor -- who was remorseful of what he did, but did not have faith in Jesus, no hope in His mercy, and thus ended his own life.

This then, is how we must confess in order to receive remission of our sins from our Lord God. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (I John i:9)

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

1. I am the Lord your God, and you shall have no other gods before me.

Has God been the source, center and hope of my life? Have I put myself, others or things before God? Have I failed to trust in God's existence, love and mercy? Have I failed to pray to God, to worship Him and to thank Him for His blessings? Have I tried to serve God and keep His commandments faithfully? Have I murmured or complained against God in adversity? Have I praised and glorified God through my words and deeds?

2. You shall not make for yourself a graven image in order to worship it.

Have I valued anyone or anything above God? Have I given to anyone or anything the love, honor and worship that belongs to God alone? Have I made an idol of any person, idea, occupation, or thing?

3. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

Have I blasphemed God's holy name in any way? Have I sworn a false oath? Have I broken any solemn vow or promise? Have I entered into an agreement, promise or contract against God's law? Have I cursed or used foul language?

4. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

Have I worshiped regularly on Sundays and major feast days and have I helped others to do the same? Have I worked unnecessarily on Sundays or major feast days or caused others to do so? Have I spent the Lord's Day in a wholesome and edifying ways?

5. Honour your father and mother

Have I loved and respected my parents as I should? Have I neglected them or failed to help them? Have I disobeyed them, deceived them or caused them pain by my words or deeds? Have I treated all my family members with patience and love?

6. Thou shall not kill.

Have I caused the harm, injury or death of anyone? Have I wished my own or anyone's harm or death? Have I been cruel to animals or destroyed any life unnecessarily?

7. You shall not commit adultery.

Have I committed any immoral acts alone or with others? Have I caused others to commit immoral acts? Have I committed immoral acts in my heart?

8. You shall not steal.

Have I taken anything that was not mine from anyone or from anywhere? Have I cheated anyone? Have I caused others to steal or cheat? Have I tried to find the owners of lost things I have found? Have I damaged or destroyed anything that belonged to another? Have I defrauded anyone of rightful wages? Have I paid my debts? Have I given to the poor and to philanthropic causes in proportion to my means?

9. You shall not bear false witness.

Have I given false testimony against anyone? Have I spoken evil, told lies or spread rumors about anyone? Have I disclosed to anyone the sins and faults of another? Have I made careless statements or done anything else to harm the name and reputation of another? Have I engaged in idle gossip?

10. You shall not covet.

Have I looked with envy jealousy or hatred toward the possession talents or achievements of others? Have I desired the downfall or loss of others out of evil intent that I might benefit? Have I grieved that God has bestowed greater blessings on others than on me?

THE BEATITUDES

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Have I truly recognized my complete dependence on God? Have I been proud arrogant and self-righteous in my ways? Have I been selfish, possessive and self-seeking? Have I sought after status power and wealth?

2. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Have I endured difficulties and afflictions with faith and patience? Have I felt sadness for the sufferings of the poor, the hungry, and addicted; the sick, the lonely and the sinful of the world? Have I truly been sorrowful for my sins and faults?

3. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Have I tried to serve or rather to dominate others at home, school, work, office, Church and elsewhere? Have I nursed against anyone? Have I been resentful, bitter, unforgiving or insulting and abusive to others? Have I loved my enemies?

4. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

Have I truly yearned for God's will to be done in all things? Have I worked for justice in my family, society and the world in ways within my reach? Have I tried to cultivate a righteous life through prayer, fasting, worship, receiving Holy Communion and deeds of love toward others?

5. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

Have I shown compassion and help toward the poor, hungry, lonely and needy around me? Have I tried to understand and forgive others? Have I been indifferent judgmental or legalistic?

6. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Have I loved goodness, purity and holiness? Have I succumbed to evil motives and intentions? Have I given way to impure thoughts, words or deeds? Have I been guilty of bias and prejudice? Have I been hypocritical, pretentious or self-indulgent to sinful passions?

7. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

Do I have God's peace in my heart? Have I been unfairly angry, aggressive or impatient? Have I worked for peace at home, work, Church and in society? Have I been irritable, polemical, or divisive?

8. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Have I complained when persecuted for God's sake? Have I prayed for my persecutors? Have I failed to defend anyone in the truth for fear of humiliation or persecution? Have I had the courage to stand up for what is right despite criticism, ridicule or persecution?

9. Blessed are you when they revile you and persecute you on my account; rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven

Is the joy of Christ in my heart even in trying moments? Have I been pessimistic despondent or despairing? Have I truly delighted in the promise of God's treasures in heaven?

OTHER GOSPEL COMMANDMENTS

Besides the Beatitudes, there are other commandments are given in the Gospel

In the Gospel it says the following about the greatest commandment:

One man asked Jesus Christ:

MASTER, WHICH IS THE GREAT COMMANDMENT IN THE LAW?

(Matthew 22:36 KJV).

To this He answered:

THOU SHALT LOVE THE LORD THY GOD WITH ALL THY HEART,

AND WITH ALL THY SOUL, AND WITH ALL THY MIND.

THIS IS THE FIRST AND GREAT COMMANDMENT.

AND THE SECOND IS LIKE UNTO IT,

THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF.

ON THESE TWO COMMANDMENTS

HANG ALL THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS.

(Matthew 22:37-39 KJV).

2. What is the Golden Rule?

SO WHATEVER YOU WISH

THAT MEN WOULD DO TO YOU,

DO SO TO THEM;

FOR THIS IS THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS.

(Matthew 7:12 RSV).

Preparation For Confession St. John of Kronstadt

A meditation for those preparing to stand before the Creator and Church community in the awesome Mystery of Holy Confession, thereby being given the renewal of a second baptism.

I, a sinful soul, confess to our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ, all of my evil acts which I have done, said or thought from baptism even unto this present day.

I have not kept the vows of my baptism, but have made myself unwanted before the face of God.

I have sinned before the Lord by lack of faith and by doubts concerning the Orthodox Faith and the Holy Church; by ungratefulness for all of God's great and unceasing gifts; His long-suffering and His providence for me, a sinner; by lack of love for the Lord, as well as fear, through not fulfilling the Holy Commandments of God and the canons and rules of the Church.

I have not preserved a love for God and for my neighbor nor have I made enough efforts, because of laziness and lack of care, to learn the Commandments of God and the precepts of the Holy Fathers. I have sinned: by not praying in the morning and in the evening and in the course of the day; by not attending the services or by coming to Church only halfheartedly.

I have sinned by judging members of the clergy. I have sinned by not respecting the Feasts, breaking the Fasts, and by immoderation in food and drink.

I have sinned by self-importance, disobedience, willfulness, self-righteousness, and the seeking of approval and praise.

I have sinned by unbelief, lack of faith, doubts, despair, despondency, abusive thoughts, blasphemy and swearing.

I have sinned by pride, a high opinion of my self, narcissism, vanity, conceit, envy, love of praise, love of honors, and by putting on airs.

I have sinned: by judging, malicious gossip, anger, remembering of offenses done to me, hatred and returning evil for evil; by slander, reproaches, lies, slyness, deception and hypocrisy; by prejudices, arguments, stubbornness, and an unwillingness to give way to my neighbor; by gloating, spitefulness, taunting, insults and mocking; by gossip, by speaking too much and by empty speech.

I have sinned by unnecessary and excessive laughter, by reviling and dwelling upon my previous sins, by arrogant behavior, insolence and lack of respect.

I have sinned by not keeping my physical and spiritual passions in check, by my enjoyment of impure thoughts, licentiousness and unchastity in thoughts, words and deeds.

I have sinned by lack of endurance towards my illnesses and sorrows, a devotion to the comforts of life and by being too attached to my parents, children, relatives and friends.

I have sinned by hardening my heart, having a weak will and by not forcing myself to do good.

I have sinned by miserliness, a love of money, the acquisition of unnecessary things and immoderate attachment to things.

I have sinned by self-justification, a disregard for the admonitions of my conscience and failing to confess my sins through negligence or false pride.

I have sinned many times by my Confession: belittling, justifying and keeping silent about sins.

I have sinned against the Most-holy and Life-creating Mysteries of the Body and Blood of our Lord by coming to Holy Communion without humility or the fear of God.

I have sinned in deed, word and thought, knowingly and unknowingly, willingly and unwillingly, thoughtfully and thoughtlessly, and it is impossible to enumerate all of my sins because of their multitude. But I truly repent of these and all others not mentioned by me because of my forgetfulness and I ask that they be forgiven through the abundance of the Mercy of God.

{May Almighty God, by His Holy Spirit, inspire the sincere image of repentance in all our hearts so that we may learn the standards of God, truly face our sins and humbly confess them to Him, both in our private prayers and in public Confession, and so be unburdened, relieved and freed from guilt, and reunited to the Body of Christ - the Church. How great a gift is the mystery of Confession!}

Morning Prayers

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, Who art everywhere and fillest all things, Treasure of blessings and Giver of Life, come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O Good One.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us (3).

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

Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, wash away our sins; Master, pardon our iniquities; Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities, for Thy name's sake.

Lord, have mercy (3).

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

Our Father, Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Troparia

Having risen from sleep, we fall down before Thee, O Good One, and we cry aloud the angelic hymn, O Mighty One: Holy, Holy, Holy art Thou, O God; through the prayers of the Theotokos, have mercy on us.

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

Thou hast raised me up from bed and sleep, O Lord; enlighten my mind and heart, and open my lips that I may hymn Thee, O Holy Trinity: Holy, Holy, Holy art Thou, O God; through the prayers of the Theotokos, have mercy on us.

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

Suddenly the Judge shall come, and the deeds of all shall be revealed; but with fear we cry at midnight: Holy, Holy, Holy art Thou, O God; through the prayers of the Theotokos, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy (*12 times*).

First Prayer

As I rise from sleep, I thank Thee, O Holy Trinity, for through Thy great goodness and patience Thou hast not been angry with me, an idler and sinner, nor hast Thou destroyed me with my iniquities, but hast shown Thy usual love for mankind; and being laid low in despair, Thou hast raised me up to keep the morning watch and glorify Thy power. Enlighten my spiritual eyes also, and open my mouth that I may meditate on Thy words, and understand Thy commandments, and do Thy will, and hymn Thee with a thankful heart, and sing praises to Thine all-holy name: of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Second Prayer

O God, cleanse me, a sinner, for I have done nothing good in Thy sight; but deliver me from the evil one, and let Thy will be in me, that I may open my unworthy mouth without condemnation, and praise Thy holy Name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Third Prayer

Having risen from sleep, I hurry to Thee, O Master, Lover of mankind, and by Thy loving-kindness, I strive to do Thy work, and I pray to Thee: Help me at all times, in everything, and deliver me from every worldly evil thing and every impulse of the devil, and save me and lead me into Thy eternal kingdom. For Thou art my Creator, and the Giver and Provider of everything good, and all my hope is in Thee, and unto Thee do I send up glory, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Fourth Prayer

O Lord, Who in Thy abundant goodness and Thy great compassion hast granted me, Thy servant, to go through the time of the night that is past without attack from any evil of the enemy. Grant also, O Master and Creator of all things, that I might accomplish Thy will in Thy true light and with an illumined heart, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Fifth Prayer

Almighty Lord, God of the Powers and of all flesh, Who livest in the highest and carest for the humble, Who searchest our hearts and affections, and clearly foreknowest the secrets of men; eternal and ever-living Light, in Whom there is no change or shadow of change; O Immortal King, receive our prayers which at the present time we offer to Thee from unclean lips, trusting in the multitude of Thy mercies. Forgive all sins we have committed in thought, word or deed, consciously or unconsciously, and cleanse us from all defilement of flesh and spirit.

Grant us to pass the night of this present life with a watchful heart and a sober mind, awaiting the coming of the radiant day of the appearing of Thine only-begotten Son, our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ, when the Judge of all will come with glory to render each according to his deeds. May we not be found fallen and idle, but awake and alert for action, ready to accompany Him into the joy and bridal chamber of His glory, where the voice of those who feast is unending and the delight of those who behold the inexpressible beauty of Thy countenance is indescribable. For Thou art the true Light that enlightens and sanctifies all, and all creation hymns Thee unto ages of ages. Amen.

Sixth Prayer

My most merciful and all-merciful God: Lord Jesus Christ! In Thy great love Thou didst come down and become flesh in order to save all. Therefore I pray, save me by Thy grace! If Thou shouldst save me because of my deeds, it would not be a gift, but a duty. But Thou, my Christ, who art abundant in compassion and inexpressible in mercy, hast said: "He who believes in Me shall live and never see death". If faith in Thee should save the desperate: Save me also, for I believe that Thou art my God and Creator. May my faith replace my deeds, O my God, for Thou wilt find no deeds to make me righteous. May my faith be sufficient for all: may it answer for me; may it make me righteous; may it make me a partaker of Thine eternal glory. May satan not seize me, O Word, and boast that he has torn me from Thy hand and fold. Save me, O Christ, whether I want it or not, for Thou art my God from my mother's womb. Come quickly to help me, for I perish. Grant, O Lord, that I may now love Thee as once I loved sin, and that I may labour for Thee without laziness as I once laboured for satan the deceiver. Even more I will labour for Thee, my Lord and God, Jesus Christ, all the days of my life, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Prayer to the Holy Guardian Angel

O Angel of God, my Holy Guardian, given to me from heaven by God for my protection, enlighten me this day, and save me from all evil, instruct me in doing good deeds, and set me on the path of salvation. Amen.

Prayer to the Holy Theotokos

O my most holy Lady Theotokos, through your holy and all-powerful prayers banish from me, your lowly and wretched servant, despondency, forgetfulness, folly, carelessness, and all filthy, evil, and blasphemous thoughts from my wretched heart and my darkened mind. Quench the flame of my passions also, for I am poor and wretched, and deliver me from my and cruel memories and deeds, and free me from all their evil effects. For you are blessed by all generations, and your most honourable name is glorified unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Invocation of Our Patron Saint

Pray unto God for me O holy *N*, who are pleasing to God, for I fervently flee to you, the speedy helper and intercessor for my soul.

Here add some prayers for your relatives and friends, those alive and those who have died.

It is truly meet to bless you, O Theotokos, ever-blessed and most pure and 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.

A Prayer of the Optina Elders

O Lord, grant me strength to meet everything in forthcoming today with serenity. Grant me to submit completely to Thy holy will. Guide and support me in all things at every hour of this day. Whatever news may reach me in the course of this day, teach me to accept it with calmness and the conviction that all is subject to Thy holy will. Direct my thoughts and feelings in all my words and actions. In all unexpected occurrences, do not let me forget that all is sent down by Thee. Teach me to deal straightforwardly and wisely with every member of my family, neither embarrassing nor saddening anyone. O Lord, grant me strength to endure the fatigue of the coming day and all the events that take place during it. Direct my will and teach me to pray, to believe, to hope, to be patient, to forgive and to love. Amen.

Prayers before Sleep

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

O Heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit of Truth, Who art everywhere and fillest all things, Treasure of blessings and Giver of Life, come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O Good One.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us (3).

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

Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, wash away our sins; Master, pardon our iniquities; Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities, for Thy name's sake.

Lord, have mercy (3).

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

Our Father, Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Troparia

Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us; for laying aside all excuse, we sinners offer to Thee as to our Master this supplication: have mercy on us.

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

O Lord, have mercy on us, for we have put our trust in Thee. Do not be very angry with us, neither call to remembrance our iniquities; but look upon us now in Thy compassion, and deliver us from our enemies, for Thou art our God, and we are Thy people; we are all the work of Thy hands, and we call upon Thy name.

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

Open the door of compassion to us, O blessed Theotokos, that hoping in you, we may not perish; but through you may we be delivered from adversities, for you are the salvation of the Christian people.

Lord, have mercy (*12*).

First Prayer

O Eternal God and King of all creation, Who hast granted me to reach this hour: forgive the sins I have committed this day in deed, word, and thought; and cleanse, O Lord, my humble soul from all impurity of flesh and spirit, Grant me, O Lord, to pass through this night in peaceful sleep; that rising from my lowly bed, I may please Thy most holy name all the days of my life, and thwart the enemies of flesh and spirit, that war against me. Deliver me, O Lord, from vain thoughts and evil desires which defile me. 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 unto ages of ages. Amen.

Second Prayer

O Ruler of all, Word of the Father, O Jesus Christ, Thou Who are perfect: For the sake of Thy manifold mercy, never depart from me, but always remain in me, Thy servant. O Jesus, Good Shepherd of Thy sheep, do not deliver me over to the wiles of the serpent, and do not leave me to the will of satan, for the seed of corruption is in me. But O Lord, Who art worshipped, holy King Jesus Christ, guard me as I sleep by the Unwaning Light, Thy Holy Spirit, by Whom Thou didst sanctify Thy disciples. O Lord, grant me, Thy unworthy servant, Thy salvation upon my bed. Enlighten my mind with the light of understanding of Thy Holy Gospel; my soul with the love of Thy Cross; my heart with the purity of Thy word; my body with Thy passionless Passion. Keep my mind in Thy humility, and raise me up at the right time to glorify Thee. For Thou art most glorified together with Thy Father without beginning, and Thy Most Holy Spirit, unto ages of ages. Amen.

Third Prayer

O Lord our God, as Thou art good and the Lover of mankind, forgive my sins committed today in word, deed and thought. Grant me a peaceful and undisturbed sleep; send Thy guardian angel to protect and keep me from all evil. For Thou art the Guardian of our souls and bodies, and unto Thee do we send up glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Fourth Prayer

O Lord our God, in Whom we believe and Whose Name we call upon more than any other, grant us, as we go to sleep, rest of soul and body, and keep us from all fantasies and dark pleasures; stop the onslaught of the passions and quench the burnings that arise in the flesh. Grant us to live in chastity of deed and word, that we may achieve a virtuous life, and not fall away from Thy promised blessings; for Thou art blessed forever. Amen.

Fifth Prayer

O Lord, do not deprive me of Thy heavenly good things. O Lord, deliver me from everlasting torments. O Lord, if I have sinned in mind or thought, in word or deed, forgive me. O Lord, deliver me from all ignorance, forgetfulness, faint-heartedness, and stony insensibility. O Lord, deliver me from every temptation. O Lord, enlighten my heart which evil desire has darkened. O Lord, as a man I have sinned, but as the compassionate God, and seeing the infirmity of my soul, have mercy on me. O Lord, send Thy grace to help me, that I may glorify Thy holy name. O Lord Jesus Christ, inscribe me Thy servant in the Book of Life, and grant me a good end. O Lord my God, even though I have done nothing good in Thy sight, yet grant me by Thy grace to make a good beginning. O Lord, sprinkle into my heart the dew of Thy grace. O Lord of heaven and earth, remember me Thy sinful servant, shameful and unclean, in Thy kingdom. Amen.

Sixth Prayer

O Lord, accept me in repentance. O Lord, do not forsake me. O Lord, lead me not into temptation. O Lord, grant me good thoughts. O Lord, grant me tears, remembrance of death, and compunction. O Lord, grant me the thought of confessing my sins. O Lord, grant me humility, chastity, and obedience. O Lord, grant me patience, courage, and meekness. O Lord, implant in me the root of good, Thy fear in my heart. O Lord, vouchsafe me to love Thee with all my soul and mind, and to do Thy will in all things. O Lord, protect me from evil men, demons, and passions, and from every other unsuitable thing. O Lord, I know that Thou doest as Thou wilt: Thy will be done also in me a sinner; for Thou art blessed unto the ages. Amen.

Prayer to the Theotokos

O good Mother of the Good King, most pure and blessed Mary Theotokos, pour out the mercy of your Son and our God upon my passionate soul, and by your intercessions guide me to good works, that I may pass the remaining time of my life without blemish, and attain paradise through you, O Virgin Theotokos, who alone are pure and blessed.

Prayer to the Guardian Angel

O Angel of Christ, my holy guardian and protector of my soul and body, forgive me for all the sins I have committed this day. Deliver me from every evil of my militant enemy, that I may not anger my God by any sin. Pray for me, a sinful and unworthy servant that you may show me

worthy of the goodness and mercy of the All-holy Trinity, and of the Mother of my Lord Jesus Christ, and all the saints. Amen.

Rejoice O Virgin Theotokos, Mary full of grace the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb, for you have borne the Saviour of our souls.

Kissing your cross and making the sign of the Cross, say: Guard me, O Lord, by the power of Thy holy and life-giving Cross, and keep me from all evil.

Prayer to the Venerable Cross

Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered; let those who hate Him flee from before His face. As smoke vanishes, so let them vanish; as wax melts before the fire, so let the demons perish from the presence of those who love God and who sign themselves with the Sign of the Cross and say with gladness: Hail, most precious and life-giving Cross of the Lord, for you drive away the demons by the power of our Lord Jesus Christ Who was crucified on you, went down to hell and trampled on the power of the devil, and gave us His honourable Cross, for driving away all enemies. O most precious and life-giving Cross of the Lord, help me with our holy Lady, the Virgin Theotokos, and all the Saints throughout the ages. Amen.

Canon of Repentance to our Lord Jesus Christ

Ode 1

Irmos: When Israel walked on foot over the sea as if on dry land, and seeing their pursuer Pharaoh drowned, they cried: Let us sing to God a song of victory.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Troparion

Now I, a burdened sinner, approach Thee, my Lord and God. But I do not dare raise my eyes to Heaven. I only pray, saying: Give me, O Lord, the sense to weep bitterly over my deeds.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

O woe is me, a sinner! I am wretched above all men. There is no repentance in me. Give me, O Lord, tears to weep bitterly over my deeds.

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

Foolish, wretched man, you are wasting your time in idleness! Think of your life and turn to the Lord God, and weep bitterly over your deeds.

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

Theotokion: Most pure Mother of God, look upon me, a sinner, and deliver me from the snares of the devil, and guide me to the way of repentance, that I may weep bitterly over my deeds.

Ode 3

Irmos: There is none holy as Thou, O Lord my God, Who hast exalted the power of Thy faithful, O Good One, and strengthened us on the rock of Thy confession.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Troparion

When the thrones are set at the dread judgment, the deeds of all men will be exposed. Then alas for the sinners sent to torment! And knowing that, my soul, repent of your evil deeds.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

The righteous will rejoice, but the sinners will weep. Then no one will be able to help us, but our deeds will condemn us. Therefore, before the end dawns, repent of your evil deeds.

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

Woe is me, a great sinner, who have defiled myself by my deeds and thoughts. I do not have a tear-drop because of my hard-heartedness. Now raise yourself from the earth, my soul, and repent of your evil deeds.

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

Theotokion: Behold, your Son calls, O Lady, and teaches us what is good. But, sinful as I am, I always flee from the good. But O merciful one, have mercy on me, that I may repent of my evil deeds.

Lord, have mercy (3).

Sedalion: I think of the awful day and weep over my evil deeds. How shall I answer the Immortal King? How shall I, a prodigal, dare to look at the Judge? O gracious Father, Only-Begotten Son, and Holy Spirit, have mercy on me.

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

Theotokion: Bound now with many chains of sins, and weighed down by cruel passions, I have recourse to thee, my salvation, and cry: Help me, O Virgin, Mother of God.

Ode 4

Irmos: Christ is my power, my God and my Lord, the holy Church divinely sings, crying with a pure mind, keeping festival in the Lord.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Troparion

Broad is the way here and conducive to indulging in pleasures, but how bitter it will be on the last day when the soul is separated from the body! Do beware of pleasures for the sake of the Kingdom of God.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Why do you wrong the poor? Why do you withhold the wage of the hired servant? Why do you not love your brother? Why do you run after pride and lust? And so, stop these things, my soul, and repent for the sake of the Kingdom of God.

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

O thoughtless man! How long will you busy yourself like a bee, accumulating your wealth? For it will perish like dust and ashes soon. But seek rather the Kingdom of God.

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

Theotokion: O Lady, Mother of God, have mercy on me, a sinner. Strengthen me in the virtues and keep me safe, lest sudden death take me by surprise. And bring me, O Virgin, to the Kingdom of God.

Ode 5

Irmos: Illumine the souls of those who with love rise early to pray to Thee with Thy divine light I pray, O Good One, that they may know Thee, O Word of God, as the true God, Who recalls us from the darkness of sin.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Troparion

Remember, wretched man, how you are enslaved to lies, calumnies, theft, infirmities, wild beasts and fears, on account of your sins. O my sinful soul, is that what you have desired?

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

My members tremble, for with all of them I have sinned: with my eyes in looking, with my ears in hearing, with my tongue in speaking evil, and by surrendering the whole of myself to hell. O my sinful soul, is that what you have desired?

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

Thou didst receive the prodigal and the robber who repented, O Saviour, and I alone have succumbed to sinful sloth and have become enslaved to evil deeds. O my sinful soul, is this what you have desired?

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

Theotokion: Wonderful and speedy helper of all men, help me, O Mother of God, unworthy as I am, for this is what my sinful soul desires.

Ode 6

Irmos: Beholding the sea of life surging with the flood of temptations, I run to a calm haven, and cry to Thee: Raise up my life from corruption, O Most Merciful One.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Troparion

I have lived my life wantonly on earth and have delivered my soul to darkness. But now I implore Thee, O merciful Lord, free me from this work of the enemy and give me the knowledge to do Thy will.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Who does such things as I do? For just like a swine lying in the mud, so do I serve sin. But Thou, O Lord, pull me out of this vileness and give me the heart to do Thy commandments.

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

Rise, wretched man, to God and, remembering your sins, fall down before your Creator, weeping and groaning, for He is merciful and will grant you to know His will.

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

Virgin Mother of God, protect me from visible and invisible evil, O immaculate one, and accept my prayers and bring them to your Son, that He may grant me the sense to do His will.

Lord, have mercy (3).

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

Kontakion: O my soul, why do you become rich in sins? Why do you do the will of the devil? On what do you set your hope? Stop these things and turn to God with tears, and cry: O Merciful Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Ikos: Think, my soul, of the bitter hour of death and the awful judgment of your God and Creator. For terrible Angels will seize you, my soul, and will lead you into the everlasting fire. And so, before your death, repent and cry: O Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Ode 7

Irmos: An Angel made the furnace sprinkle dew on the holy youths. But the command of God consumed the Chaldeans and prevailed upon the tyrant to cry: Blessed art Thou, O God of our fathers.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Troparion

Do not hope for corruptible wealth, my soul, and for what is unjustly collected. For you do not know to whom you will leave it all. But cry: O Christ our God, have mercy on me, who am unworthy.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Do not trust in your physical health my soul, and in your quickly-passing beauty. For you see that both the strong and the young die. But say: O Christ our God, have mercy on me, who am unworthy.

Glory to the Father, and to the Sore, and to the Holy Spirit:

Remember, my soul, eternal life and the Heavenly Kingdom prepared for the saints, and the outer darkness and the wrath of God for the evil, and cry: O Christ our God, have mercy on me, who am unworthy.

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

Theotokion: Fall down, my soul, before the Mother of God, and pray to her; for she is quick to help those who repent. She prays to Christ, her Son and our God, and has mercy on me who am unworthy.

Ode 8

Irmos: Thou didst make flame sprinkle the Saints with dew, and didst burn the sacrifice of a righteous man with water. For Thou alone, O Christ, dost do all as Thou wiliest. Thee we exalt throughout all ages.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Troparion

How can I not weep when I think of death? For I have seen my brother lying in his coffin, inglorious and hideous. What, then, do I expect? And what do I hope for? Only grant me, O Lord, repentance before my end. (2)

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

I believe that Thou wilt come to judge the living and the dead, and all will stand in order, old and young, lords and princes, priests and virgins. Where shall I find myself? Therefore I cry: grant me, O Lord, repentance before my end.

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

Theotokion: Most pure Mother of God, accept my unworthy prayer and preserve me from sudden death; and grant me repentance before my end.

Ode 9

Irmos: It is impossible for men to see God, upon Whom the orders of Angels dare not gaze. But through thee, O all-pure one, did the Word incarnate appear to men, and with the Heavenly Hosts we magnify Him, and thee we call blessed.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Troparion

I now have recourse to you, holy Angels, Archangels, and all the Heavenly Hosts who stand at the throne of God: pray to your Creator that He may save my soul from eternal torment.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Now I turn to you with tears, holy patriarchs, kings and prophets, apostles and holy prelates, and all Christ's elect: help me at the judgment, that He may save my soul from the power of the enemy.

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

Now I lift my hands to you, holy martyrs, hermits, virgins, righteous and all the saints, who pray to the Lord for the whole world, that He may have mercy on me at the hour of my death.

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

Theotokion: O Mother of God, help me who have strong hope in thee; implore thy Son that He may place me on His right hand, unworthy as I am, when He sits to judge the living and the dead. Amen.

Prayer after the Canon

Lord Christ our God, Who hast healed my passions through Thy Passion, and hast cured my wounds through Thy wounds, grant me who have sinned greatly against Thee tears of compunction. Transform my body with the fragrance of Thy life-giving Body, and sweeten my soul with Thy Holy Blood from the bitterness with which the foe has fed me. Lift up my downward looking mind to Thee, and take it out of the pit of perdition, for I have no repentance, I have no compunction, I have no consoling tears, which uplift children to their heritage. My mind has been darkened through earthly passions, I cannot look up to Thee in pain. I cannot

warm myself with tears of love for Thee. But, O Lord Jesus Christ, Treasury of good gifts, give me thorough repentance and a diligent heart to seek Thee; grant me Thy grace, and renew in me the lineaments of Thy image. I have forsaken Thee - do not forsake me! Come out to seek me; lead me up to Thy pasturage and number me among the lambs of Thy chosen flock. Nourish me with them on the grass of Thy Holy Mysteries. by the prayers of Thy Most Pure Mother and all Thy saints. Amen.

The Supplicatory Canon to the Most Holy Theotokos

Troparion, Tone 4:

To the Theotokos let us run now most earnestly, we sinners all and wretched ones, and fall down in repentance calling from the depths of our souls: O Lady, come unto our aid, have compassion upon us; hasten thou for we are lost in a throng of transgressions. Turn not thy servants away with empty hands, for thee alone do we have as our only hope. *Twice.*

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

Never, O Theotokos, will we cease to speak of thy powers, unworthy as we are. For if thou didst not intercede in prayer, who would have delivered us from so many dangers? Who would have kept us free until now? Let us never forsake thee, O Lady, for thou dost ever save thy servants from all perils.

Canon, Eighth Tone

ODE I

***Irmos:* Having passed through the water as on dry land, and having escaped the malice of the Egyptians, the Israelites cried aloud: Unto our God and Redeemer let us now sing.**

Refrain: O most holy Theotokos, save us.

Distressed by many temptations, I flee to thee, seeking salvation. O Mother of the Word, and Virgin, from ordeals and afflictions deliver me.

O most holy Theotokos, save us.

Outburst of passions trouble me and fill my soul with great despondency. Calm it, O Maiden, by the peace of thy Son and God, O all-blameless one.

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

I implore thee who gavest birth to the Savior and God, O Virgin to deliver me from perils. For, fleeing now unto thee for refuge, I lift up both my soul and my reasoning.

Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Ailing am I in body and soul, do thou vouchsafe me the divine visitation, and thy care, O thou who alone art the Mother of God, for thou art good and the Mother of the Good.

ODE III

***Irmos:* Of the vault of the heavens art Thou, O Lord, the Maker and Builder of the Church; do Thou establish in me love of Thee, O Summit of desire, O Support of the faithful, O only Lover of Mankind.**

O most holy Theotokos, save us.

I have chosen thee to be the protection and intercession of my life, O Virgin, Mother of God. Pilot me to thy haven, O author of blessings, O support of the faithful, O thou only all-lauded one.

O most holy Theotokos, save us.

I pray thee, O Virgin, to dispel the tumult of my soul and the storm of my grief; for thou, O Bride of God, hast given birth to Christ, the Prince of Peace, O only immaculate one.

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

Since thou broughtest forth Him Who is the Benefactor and Cause of good, from the wealth of thy lovingkindness do thou pour forth on all; for thou canst do all things, since thou didst bear Christ, the One Who is mighty in power; for blessed of God art thou.

Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

I am tortured by grievous sicknesses and morbid passions: O Virgin, do thou help me; for I know thee to be an inexhaustible treasury of unfailing healing, O all-blameless one.

Lord have mercy. *Thrice.*

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

Sessional Hymn, Second Tone:

O fervent advocate, invincible battlement, fountain of mercy, and sheltering retreat for the world, earnestly we cry to thee: O Lady Theotokos, hasten thou, and save us from all imperilment; for thou alone art our speedy protectress.

ODE IV

***Irmos:* I have heard, O Lord, of the mystery of Thy dispensation, and I came to knowledge of Thy works, and glorify Thy Divinity.**

O most holy Theotokos, save us.

The turmoil of my passions, and the storm of my sins do thou bestill, thou who gavest birth to the Lord and Pilot, O thou Bride of God.

O most holy Theotokos, save us.

O bestow, out of the abyss of thy compassion, on me thy supplicant; for thou didst give birth to the Kindhearted One and Savior of all that hymn thee.

O most holy Theotokos, save us.

While delighting in thy gifts, O spotless one, we sing a song of thanksgiving to thee, knowing thee to be the Mother of God.

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

As I lie on the bed of my pain and infirmity, do thou help me, as thou art a lover of goodness, O Theotokos, who alone art Ever-Virgin.

Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Having thee as our staff and hope, and as our salvation's unshaken battlement, from all manner of adversity are we then redeemed, O thou all-lauded one.

ODE V

Irmos: Enlighten us by Thy commands, O Lord, and by Thy lofty arm bestow Thy peace upon us, O Lover of mankind.

O most holy Theotokos, save us.

Fill my heart with gladness, O pure one, by giving me thine incorruptible joy, O thou who didst bear the Cause of gladness.

O most holy Theotokos, save us.

Deliver us from dangers, O pure Theotokos, who didst give birth to Eternal Redemption, and the Peace that doth pass all understanding.

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

Dispel the darkness of my sins, O Bride of God, by the radiance of thy splendor, for thou didst bear the Light Divine and Pre-eternal.

Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Heal, O pure one, the infirmity of my soul, when thou hast deemed me worthy of thy visitation, and grant me health by thine intercessions.

ODE VI

***Irmos:* I will pour out my prayer unto the Lord, and to Him will I proclaim my grief; for with evils my soul is filled, and my life unto hades hath drawn nigh, and like Jonah I will pray: From corruption raise me up, O God.**

O most holy Theotokos, save us.

My nature, held by corruption and death, hath He saved from out of death and corruption; for unto death He Himself hath submitted. Wherefore, O Virgin, do thou intercede with Him Who is thy Lord and Son, to deliver me from enemies' wickedness.

O most holy Theotokos, save us.

I know thee as the protection of my life, and most safe fortification, O Virgin; disperse the horde of temptations, and drive away demonic vexation; unceasingly I pray to thee: From corruption of passions deliver me.

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

We have acquired thee as a wall of refuge, and the perfect salvation of our souls, and a relief in afflictions, O Maiden, and we ever rejoice in thy light. O Sovereign Lady, do thou also now save us from passions and dangers.

Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Bedridden, I lie supine with sickness now, and there is no healing for my flesh; but to thee, O good one who gavest birth to God and the Savior of the world and the Healer of infirmities, I pray: From corruption of illness raise me up.

Kontakion, Sixth Tone:

O protection of Christians that cannot be put to shame, O mediation unto the creator unflinching, disdain not the suppliant voices of sinners, but be thou quick, O good one, to help us who in faith cry unto thee; hasten to intercession and speed thou to make supplication, thou who dost ever protect, O Theotokos, them that honor thee.

Sticheron, same tone:

Entrust me not to human protection, O most holy Lady, but receive the supplication of thy servant; for sorrow hath fettered me, I cannot endure the demon's darts; a shelter have I not,

neither place to run, I the wretched one; always I am fleeing and no consolation have I but thee, O Sovereign Lady of creation, hope and protection of the faithful; turn not away from my supplication, do that which will profit me.

ODE VII

***Irmos:* Having gone down to Babylon from Judea, the Children of old by their faith in the Trinity trod down the flame of the furnace while chanting: O God of the fathers, blessed art Thou.**

O most holy Theotokos, save us.

Having willed to accomplish our salvation, O Savior, Thou didst dwell in the womb of the Virgin, and didst show her to the world as the mediatrix; O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou.

O most holy Theotokos, save us.

The Dispenser of mercy, Whom thou didst bear, O pure Mother, do thou implore to deliver from transgressions and defilements of the soul, those who with faith cry out: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou.

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

A treasury of salvation, and a fountain of incorruption is she who gave Thee birth; a tower of safety, and a door of repentance hast Thou proved her to them that shout: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou.

Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

For weakness of body and sickness of soul, O Theotokos, do thou vouchsafe healing to those who with love draw near to thy protection, O Virgin, who for us gavest birth to Christ the Savior.

ODE VIII

***Irmos:* The King of Heaven, Whom hosts of angels hymn, praise ye and supremely exalt unto all ages.**

O most holy Theotokos, save us.

Disdain not those who need thy help, O Virgin, and who hymn and supremely exalt thee unto the ages.

O most holy Theotokos, save us.

Thou healest the infirmity of my soul and the pains of my body, O Virgin, that I may glorify thee, O pure one, unto the ages.

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

Thou pourest forth a wealth of healing, on those who with faith hymn thee, O Virgin, and who supremely exalt thine ineffable Offspring

Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Thou drivest away the assaults of temptations, and the attacks of the passions, O Virgin; wherefore do we hymn thee unto all ages.

ODE IX

Irmos: Truly we confess thee to be the Theotokos, we who through thee have been saved, O pure Virgin; with the bodiless choirs, thee do we magnify.

O most holy Theotokos, save us.

Turn not away from the torrent of my tears, O Virgin, thou who didst give birth to Christ, Who doth wipe away all tears from every face.

O most holy Theotokos, save us.

Fill my heart with joy, O Virgin, thou who didst receive the fullness of joy, and didst banish the grief of sin.

O most holy Theotokos, save us.

Be the haven and protection, and a wall unshaken, a refuge and shelter, and the gladness, O Virgin, of those who flee unto thee.

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

Illumine with the rays of thy light, O Virgin, those who piously confess thee to be the Theotokos, and do thou banish away all darkness of ignorance.

Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

In a place of affliction and infirmity am I brought low; O Virgin, do thou heal me, transforming mine illness into healthfulness.

Prayer to the Most Holy Theotokos

O my most blessed Queen, O Theotokos my hope, guardian of orphans, intercessor for strangers, joy of the sorrowful, protectress of the wronged: thou seest my misfortune, thou seest mine affliction; help me, for I am weak; feed me, for I am a stranger. Thou knowest mine offence: absolve it as thou wilt, for I have no other help beside Thee, no other intercessor, nor good consoler, except thee, O Mother of God. Do thou preserve and protect me unto the ages of ages.

Canon to the Guardian Angel

Troparion: O Angel of God, my holy Guardian, keep my life in the fear of Christ God, strengthen my mind in the true way and wound my soul with heavenly love, so that guided by Thee, I may obtain the great mercy of Christ God.

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

Theotokion: O holy Lady, Mother of our God, thou didst amazingly bear the Creator of all: with my Guardian Angel always pray His kindness to save my soul inhibited and bound by passions, and grant me remission of sins.

Canon, tone 8.

Song 1.

Eirmos: Let us sing to the Lord Who led His people through the Red Sea, for He alone has triumphed gloriously.

Jesus, Son of God, have mercy on us.

Troparia:

Grant me, Thy servant, O Savior, worthily to sing a song and to praise the fleshless Angel, my Guide and Guardian.

Holy Angel, my Guardian, pray for me.

I lay alone in folly and idleness, O my Guide and Guardian; forsake not me who am perishing.

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

Guide my mind by thy prayer to fulfill the commandments of God, and to receive from God remission of sins, and teach me to hate all wickedness, I pray thee.

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

Theotokion: With my Guardian Angel, O Virgin, pray for me thy servant to the Bountiful One, and teach me to fulfill the commandments of thy Son and my Creator.

Song 3.

Eirmos: Thou art the strengthening of all who come to Thee, O Lord, Thou art the Light of those in darkness, and my spirit sings of Thee.

Holy Angel, my Guardian, pray for me.

Troparia:

All my thoughts and my soul I have committed to thee, O my Guardian; deliver me from all attacks of the enemy.

Holy Angel, my Guardian, pray for me.

The enemy troubles and tramples on me, and teaches me to follow my own desires; but, O my Guide, forsake not the dying.

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

Grant me to sing with thanksgiving and fervor to my Creator and God, and to thee my good Angel Guardian: O my deliverer, rescue me from foes that trouble me.

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

Theotokion: Heal, O immaculate one, the most painful wounds of my soul, and drive away the enemies ever fighting against me.

Lord, have mercy (*thrice*).

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

Sedation: From the love of my soul I cry to thee, O Guardian of my soul, my most holy Angel! Protect and guard me always from the hunting of the evil one, and guide me to the heavenly life; teach me and enlighten me and strengthen me.

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

Theotokion: Immaculate Virgin, Mother of God, who gavest birth without seed to the Lord of all, pray Him with my Guardian Angel to deliver me from all doubt, and to give to my soul feeling and light, and to cleanse me from sin, for thou alone art a quick defender.

Song 4.

Eirmos: I have heard, O Lord, the mystery of Thy plan. I contemplate Thy works, and glorify Thy divine nature.

Holy Angel, my Guardian, pray for me.

Troparia:

Pray to God the Lover of men, and leave me not, O my Guardian, but ever keep my life in peace, and grant me the invincible salvation.

Holy Angel, my Guardian, pray for me.

As the defender and guardian of my life I received thee from God, O Angel. I pray thee, O holy one, free me from all harm.

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

Cleanse my foulness by thy holiness, O my Guardian, and may I be drawn from the left side by thy prayers, and become a partaker of glory.

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

Theotokion: Perplexity confronts me through the evil surrounding me, O immaculate one, but deliver me from it speedily, for I run only to thee.

Song 5.

Eirmos: Rising early we cry to Thee, O Lord; save us, for Thou art our God, and other than Thee we know none.

Holy Angel, my Guardian, pray for me.

Troparia:

As thou hast boldness towards God, my holy Guardian, pray Him to deliver me from the evils which offend me.

Holy Angel, my Guardian, pray for me.

O radiant light, make radiant my soul, my Guide and Guardian Angel, given me by God.

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

Keep me awake who sleep from the burden of my sins, O Angel of God, and by thy prayers raise me up to glorify Him.

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

Theotokion: O Lady Mary, Virgin Mother of God, O hope of the faithful, subdue the attacks of the enemy, and to those who sing to thee give joy.

Song 6.

Eirmos: Grant me a garment of Light, O Thou Who wrappes Thyself in Light for a garment, most merciful Christ our God.

Holy Angel, my Guardian, pray for me.

Troparia:

Deliver me from every misfortune and accident and save me from sorrow, I pray, O holy Angel, given to me as my good Guardian by God.

Holy Angel, my Guardian, pray for me.

Enlighten my mind, O good one, and illumine me, I pray thee, O holy Angel, and teach me to think always positively and profitably.

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

Calm my heart from present disturbance, and strengthen me to be awake to the good, O my Guardian, and guide me miraculously in quietness of life.

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

Theotokion: The Word of God dwelt in thee, O Mother of God, and showed thee to men as the heavenly ladder. For by thee the Most High descended to us.

Lord, have mercy. (*Thrice*)

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

Kontakion: Have compassion on me, O holy Angel of the Lord, my Guardian, and leave me not, impure as I am, but irradiate me with the Divine Light, and make me worthy of the Heavenly Kingdom.

Oikos: Grant my soul, humiliated by many temptations, the ineffable Heavenly Glory, O holy intercessor and singer with the Choirs of fleshless Powers of God. Have mercy and keep me, and illumine my soul with good thoughts, that I may be enriched by thy glory, O my Angel; subdue my foes who wish me evil, and make me worthy of the Heavenly Kingdom.

Song 7.

Eirmos: Having arrived in Babylon from Judea, the children of old by their faith in the Trinity trod down the flame of the furnace singing: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou.

Holy Angel, my Guardian, pray for me.

Troparia:

Have mercy and pray for me, O Angel of the Lord, for I have thee as my defender for the whole of my life, the Guide and Guardian, given me by God forever.

Holy Angel, my Guardian, pray for me.

Let not my sinful pilgrim soul, given thee chaste by God, be murdered by robbers, O Holy Angel, but lead it to the way of repentance.

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

My whole soul is disgraced by evil thoughts and acts, but make haste, O my Guide, and grant me healing with good thoughts, that I may always follow the right way.

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

To Jesus: Fill with wisdom and divine strength all who cry with faith, through the Mother of God, to Thee, O Personal Wisdom of the Highest: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou.

Song 8.

Eirmos: The King of Heaven, Whom Hosts of Angels praise, let us praise and exalt throughout all ages.

Holy Angel, my Guardian, pray for me.

Troparia:

Strengthen the life of thy servant and never leave me, O gracious Angel, sent by God.

Holy Angel, my Guardian, pray for me.

I ever hymn thee, O Good Angel, Guide and Guardian of my soul, most blessed spirit.

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

Be my Veil and Visor in the Judgment Day of all men, when all deeds, good and evil, will be tried by fire.

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

Theotokion: Be the help and peace of thy servant, O Ever-Virgin Mother of God, and leave me not bereft of thy protection.

Song 9.

Eirmos: Saved by thee, O pure Virgin, we confess thee to be supremely the Mother of God, and with Fleshless Choir we magnify thee.

O Jesus, Son of God, have mercy on us.

Troparia:

Have mercy on me, O my only Savior, for Thou art merciful and kind-hearted, and make me a member of the Choirs of the Righteous.

Holy Angel, my Guardian, pray for me.

Grant me ever to think and do only what is useful, O Angel of the Lord, that I may be undefiled and strong in infirmity.

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

Having boldness towards the Heavenly King, pray Him, with the other Angels, to have mercy on me, wretched as I am.

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

Theotokion: O Virgin, who hast great boldness towards Him Who took flesh of thee, deliver me from attachments and grant me forgiveness and salvation by thy prayers.

Prayer to the Holy Guardian Angel

Holy Angel of Christ, I fall down and pray to thee, my holy Guardian, given me from holy Baptism for the protection of my sinful body and soul. By my laziness and bad habits, I have angered thy most pure light, and have driven thee away from me by all my shameful deeds, lies, slanders, envy, condemnation, scorn, disobedience, brotherly-hatred, grudges, love of money, adultery, anger, meanness, greed, excess, talkativeness, negative and evil thoughts, proud ways, dissolute madness, having self-will in all the desires of the flesh. O my evil will, which even the dumb animals do not follow! How canst thou look at me or approach me who am like a stinking dog? With what eyes, O Angel of Christ, wilt thou look at me so badly snared in evil deeds? How can I ask forgiveness for my bitter, evil and wicked deeds, into which I fall every day and night, and every hour? But I fall down and pray, O my holy Guardian: pity me, thy sinful and unworthy servant (*Name*). Be my helper and protector against my wicked enemy, by thy holy prayers, and make me a partaker of the Kingdom of God with all the Saints, always, now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Prayers of Preparation for Holy Communion

Heavenly King ... Most holy Trinity... Our Father... Lord have mercy (12). Come let us worship... (3). Psalm 50.

Ode 1

Irmos: Come, O you people, let us sing a song to Christ our God, Who divided the sea, and made a way for the nation which He had brought up out of the bondage of Egypt; for He has been glorified.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

Troparion

May Thy holy Body be for me the bread of eternal life, O gracious Lord, and may Thy precious Blood be a remedy for my many forms of sickness.

Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.

Defiled by misguided deeds, wretched as I am, I am unworthy, O Christ, to partake of Thy immaculate Body and divine Blood, but make me worthy of them.

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

Theotokion

O blessed Bride of God, good field that produced the unploughed Grain that saves the world, grant that I may be saved by eating it.

Ode 3

Irmos: By establishing me on the rock of faith, Thou hast given me power over my enemies, and my spirit rejoices when I sing: There is none holy as our God, and none good but Thee, O Lord.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

Troparion

Grant me, O Christ, teardrops to cleanse the filth from my heart, that, purified and with a good conscience, I may come with fear and faith, O Lord, to the communion Thy divine gifts.

Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.

May Thy spotless Body and divine Blood be for the forgiveness of my transgressions, for communion with the Holy Spirit and for everlasting life, O Lover of men, and for estrangement from passions and sorrows.

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

Theotokion

O all-holy Lady, Altar of the Bread of Life, which for mercy's sake came down from on high and gave new life to the world, make even me, who am unworthy, worthy now with fear to eat it and live.

Ode 4

Irmos: From a Virgin Thou didst come, not as an Ambassador, nor as an Angel, but the true Lord Himself incarnate, and didst save me, the whole man. Therefore I cry to Thee: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

Troparion

O most merciful One. Who wast incarnate for us, Thou didst will to be slain as a Sheep for the sins of men; therefore I implore Thee to blot out my offenses.

Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.

Heal the wounds of my soul, O Lord, and wholly sanctify me, and make me worthy, O Lord, to partake of Thy divine mystical Supper, wretched as I am.

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

Theotokion

Intercede for me also, O Lady, with Him Who came from your womb, and keep me, your slave, pure and blameless that I may be sanctified by obtaining the spiritual pearl.

Ode 5

Irmos: Giver of light and Sovereign Creator of the worlds, guide us in the light of Thy commandments, for we know no other God than Thee.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

Troparion

As Thou didst foretell, O Christ, let it be to Thy wicked servant. Abide in me as Thou didst promise; for lo, I am eating Thy divine Body and drinking Thy Blood.

Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.

O Word of God, and God, may the live coal of Thy Body be for the enlightenment of me who am darkened, and may Thy Blood be the cleansing of my sinful soul.

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

Theotkion

O Mary, Mother of God, holy tabernacle of the scent of Heaven, make me by Thy prayers, a chosen vessel, that I may partake of the Sacrament of thy Son.

Ode 6

Irmos: Whirled about in the abyss of sin, I appeal to the unfathomable abyss of Thy compassion: Raise me up from corruption, O God.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

Troparion

O Saviour, sanctify my mind, soul, heart and body, and grant me uncondemned, O Lord, to approach the fearful Mysteries.

Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.

Grant estrangement from passions, and the assistance of Thy grace, and assurance of life by the communion of Thy Holy Mysteries, O Christ.

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

O Holy Word of God and God, sanctify the whole of me as I now approach Thy divine Mysteries, by the prayers of Thy Holy Mother.

Lord, have mercy. (3).

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

Kontakion

Do not forbid me now to receive, O Christ, the Bread which is Thy Body and Thy divine Blood, and to partake, O Lord, of Thy most pure and dread Mysteries, wretched as I am, and may it not be for judgment my judgement, but for everlasting life.

Ode 7

Irmos: The wise youths did not adore the golden idol, but went themselves into the flame and defied the pagan gods. They prayed in the midst of the flame, and an Angel bedewed them: The prayer of your lips has been heard.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

Troparion

May the communion of Thine immortal Mysteries, the source of all goodness, O Christ, be to me light and life and dispassion and the means of progress and proficiency in divine virtue, O only Good One, that I may glorify Thee.

Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.

That I may be redeemed from passions, enemies, wants, and every sorrow, I now draw near with trembling, love and reverence, O Lover of men, to Thy immortal and divine Mysteries, singing to Thee: Blessed art Thou, O God of our fathers.

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

O full of Divine Grace and who gave birth incomprehensibly to the Saviour Christ, I your servant, unclean as I am, now beseech you, O pure one: Cleanse me who now wish to approach the immaculate Mysteries, from all defilement of body and spirit.

Ode 8

Irmos: Sing of the acts of God Who descended into the fiery furnace with the Hebrew children, and changed the flame into dew, and exalt Him as Lord throughout all ages.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

Troparion

Grant me, who am desperate, to be a participant now of Thy heavenly, dread and holy Mysteries, O Christ, and of Thy divine Mystical Supper, O my Saviour and God.

Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.

I fly for refuge to Thy compassion, O Good One, and I cry to Thee with fear: Abide in me, O Saviour, and I in Thee as Thou didst say; for behold, confiding in Thy mercy, I eat Thy Body and drink Thy Blood.

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

I tremble, taking fire, lest I should burn as wax and hay. O dread Mystery! O Divine Compassion! How can I who am clay partake of the divine Body and Blood and become incorruptible?

Ode 9

Irmos: The Son of the Eternal Father, God and Lord, has appeared to us incarnate of a Virgin, to enlighten those in darkness, and to gather those who are scattered; therefore we magnify the all-hymned Mother of God.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

Troparion

The Lord is good, O taste and see! For of old He became like us for us, and once offered Himself as a sacrifice to His Father and is perpetually slain, sanctifying communicants.

Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.

May I be sanctified in soul and body, O Lord; may I be enlightened and saved; may I become The dwelling by the communion of the Holy Mysteries, having Thee with the Father and the Spirit living within me, O most merciful Benefactor.

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

May Thy most precious Body and Blood, my Saviour, be to me as fire and light, consuming the fuel of sin and burning the thorns of my passions, enlightening the whole of me to adore Thy Divinity.

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

Theotokion

God took flesh of your pure blood. Therefore, all generations sing to you, O Lady, and throngs of heavenly minds glorify thee, for through thee we have clearly seen Him Who is Lord of all united essentially with mankind.

Prayers of Thanksgiving after Holy Communion

Glory to thee, O God (3).

I thank Thee, O Lord my God, that Thou hast not rejected me, a sinner, but hast accounted me worthy to become a communicant of Thy Holy Mysteries. I thank Thee that Thou hast considered me, the unworthy, worthy to partake of Thy immaculate and heavenly gifts. But, O Master who lovest mankind, who didst both die for us and rise again, and didst bestow upon us these Thy awesome and life-giving Mysteries for the benefitting and sanctification of our souls and bodies: grant that they may be also for the healing of my soul and body, for the averting of everything contrary to this; for the enlightenment of the eyes of my heart; for the peace of my spiritual powers; for an invincible faith; for unfeigned love; for the fulfilling of wisdom; for the keeping of Thy commandments; for growth in thy divine grace, and the attainment of Thy kingdom: that preserved by them in thy holiness, I may always remember Thy grace, and from this time forth live not unto myself, but unto Thee, our Master and Benefactor. And thus, when this life is ended, in the hope of everlasting life, I may attain to unending rest, where the voice of those who keep festival is unceasing, and the delight of those who behold the ineffable beauty of Thy countenance is boundless; for Thou art the true desire and ineffable joy of all those who love Thee, O Christ our God, and all creation hymns Thee forever. Amen.

A Prayer of St. Basil the Great

O Master, Christ our God, King of the ages, and maker of all things: I thank Thee for all the good things which Thou hast bestowed upon me, and for this partaking of Thy immaculate and life-giving Mysteries. Therefore I pray to Thee, who art good and lovest mankind: Keep me under Thy protection, under the shadow of Thy wings; and grant that with a pure conscience and even to my last breath, I may partake of Thy holy Mysteries, for remission of sins and for life everlasting. For thou art the Bread of Life, the Fountain of holiness, the Giver of good things,

and unto thee we ascribe Glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

A Prayer of St. Simeon Metaphrastes

O Thou who willingly dost give Thy flesh to me as food, Thou who art a Fire consuming the unworthy, do not consume me, O my Creator; but rather pass through all my members, into all my joints, my reins, my heart. Burn the thorns of all my transgressions, cleanse my soul, and hallow my thoughts. Make my knees firm, and my bones likewise; enlighten my five senses together, establish me wholly in Thy fear; always shelter me, and guard and keep me from every soul-corrupting deed and word. Chasten, purify, and guide me; adorn, teach, and enlighten me. Show me to be a Tabernacle of Thy One Spirit, and in no way the dwelling-place of sin, That becoming Thy habitation, by the entrance of Thy Communion, every evil deed and every passion may flee from me as from fire. I offer Thee all the Saints as intercessors, the Angelic Leaders of the Bodiless Powers, Thy Forerunner, and Thy wise Apostles; and besides these, Thy spotless and incorrupt Mother: accept their prayers, my Christ, Who art compassionate, and make Thy servant to be a child of light: for Thou alone, Good Lord, art the sanctification and splendour of our souls, and to Thee as God and Master, duly we all ascribe glory day by day.

Another Prayer

May Thy holy Body, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, be to me for everlasting life, and Thy precious Blood for remission of my sins. May this Eucharist be to me for joy, health, and gladness; and at thy dread Second Coming make me, a sinner, worthy to stand at the right hand of Thy glory: through the prayers of Thy all-pure Mother and of all Thy Saints. Amen.

A Prayer to the All-Holy Theotokos

O All-holy Lady Theotokos, light of my darkened soul, my hope, my shelter, my refuge, my rest and my joy: I thank you that you have considered me, the unworthy, worthy to be a partaker of the immaculate Body and precious Blood of your Son. Do enlighten the eyes of my mind, who gave birth to the true Light; Quicken me who bore the fountain of immortality, I who lie dead in sin. O compassion-loving Mother of the merciful God, have mercy upon me and grant me humility and contrition of heart, meekness in my thoughts, and deliverance from the slavery of my vain reasoning. Account me worthy, even to my last breath, to receive without condemnation the sanctification of the immaculate Mysteries, for the healing of both soul and body. And grant me tears of repentance and confession, that I may hymn and glorify you all the days of my life: for you are blessed and glorified unto all ages. Amen.

Prayers for Different Occasions

Prayer at the Beginning of the Day

(Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow, d. 1867).

O Lord, grant me to greet the coming day in peace. Help me in all things to rely upon thy holy will. In every hour of the day reveal thy will to me. Bless my dealings with all who surround me. Teach me to treat all that comes to me throughout the day with peace of soul, and with the firm conviction that thy will governs all. In all my deeds and words guide my thoughts and feelings. In unforeseen events let me not forget that all are sent by thee. Teach me to act firmly and wisely, without embittering and embarrassing others. Give me strength to bear the fatigue of the coming day with all that it shall bring. Direct my will, teach me to pray. Pray thou thyself in me. Amen.

Prayers of Thanksgiving

Troparion

We thy thankful and unworthy servants, praise and glorify thee, O Lord, for thy great benefits which we have received; we bless thee, we thank thee, we sing to thee and we magnify thy great goodness, and we hymn thee in lowliness and love: O Benefactor and Saviour, glory to thee.

Kontakion

We unworthy recipients of thy benefits and gifts, as unprofitable servants dare to turn to thee, O Master, bringing thee thanks according to our powers, and glorifying and hymning thee, the Benefactor and Creator: glory to thee, O most bountiful God.

Before beginning any act

O Lord Jesus Christ, only begotten Son of the Eternal Father, Thou hast said with Thy most pure lips: Without me you can do nothing. O Lord, my Lord, with faith I embrace the words Thou didst speak in my heart and soul; help me a sinner to accomplish the task I have begun for Thy own sake, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

After the completion of any act

Thou art the fullness of all blessings, O my Christ: fill my soul with joy and gladness, and save me for thou alone art most merciful.

Before Study

Most blessed Lord: send down the grace of thy Holy Spirit upon us, to endow and conform our spiritual powers, that giving attention to the instruction imparted to us, we may increase therein to thy glory, O our Creator, and to the comfort of our parents and the benefit of the Church and community.

After Study

We thank thee, O Creator, that thou hast vouchsafed thy grace to us in giving attention to learning. Bless our instructors, parents and teachers who bring us to a knowledge of good, and grant us the strength and firmness to persevere in this study.

Prayer for the Increase of Love

O Christ who didst bind thine Apostles in a union of love, and hast bound us, thy believing servants, to thyself with the same bond, grant us to do thy commandments without dissimulation and to love one another, through the prayers of the Theotokos, O thou who alone lovest mankind.

Prayer for the Acceptance of God's Will

(Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow, d. 1867)

O Lord, I do not know what to ask thee. Thou alone knowest what are my true needs. Thou lovest me more than I myself know how to love. Help me to see my real needs which are hidden from me. I dare not ask either a cross or consolation. I can only wait for thee. My heart is open to thee. Visit and help me, cast me down and raise me up. I worship thy holy will and thine unknowable ways in silence. I offer myself as a sacrifice to thee. I put all my trust in thee. I have no other desire than to fulfil thy will. Teach me how or pray. Pray thyself in me.

Prayers before Travel

Trparion

O Christ, Who art the way and the truth, send Thy guardian Angel to go now with Thy servants, as once Thou didst send him to Tobias, and for Thy glory keep them safe and sound from all harm and evil. Through the prayer of the Theotokos, O Thou who alone lovest mankind.

Kontakion

O Saviour, Who journeyed with Luke and Cleopas to Emmaus, journey with Thy servants who are now preparing to travel. Defend them from every evil happening, for Thou lone art Almighty who lovest mankind.

The Jesus Prayer

This prayer is said by Christians throughout the day and night, and is used as the basis for their meditation.

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me the sinner.

TAKE A VACATION THAT'S GOOD FOR YOUR SOUL!

Dear friends! The "Orthodox Faith" invites you to take a vacation in the picturesque Muskoka area near Huntsville, the site of a recent G8 meeting. Muskoka is, without doubt, one of the most beautiful places in Ontario - a region with over 1600 lakes, which ensures its popularity as a vacation spot. Muskoka is synonymous with summer vacation, with lakeshore cottages and breathtaking colours of untouched wilderness.

In October 2009, a pilgrimage center and Orthodox mission have been opened in conjunction with the Huntsville Head Office of "Orthodox Faith" newspaper.

Instead of renting an expensive cottage, come stay with us. We offer comfortable accommodations in several locations and hearty meals free of charge, something we believe is very important in these tough times. Your vacation will be good for your soul, too - newspaper staff is available for religious discussions with visitors, and there is a vast library of Orthodox texts.

Whole families come to stay with us. There is a playground, a pool, a pets' corner, a garden. You can take rides on an ATV or a boat, fish, enjoy an authentic Russian sauna, enjoy singing songs and playing guitar at a bonfire. Donations from parishioners and pilgrims allow us to create conditions suitable for a vacation that benefits your soul.

Our mission got stones from the Holy Mt. Tabor, the location of the Transfiguration of the Saviour. This summer we have had services by archpriest Oleg Kirillov, hegumen Nestor (Mykhailechko), archpriest Eric Tosi and other well-known priests.

Visitors are always welcome!

ROOM AND BOARD ARE FREE.

ALL YOU NEED TO DO IS CALL (705) 635-3857 AND TELL US YOU ARE COMING

Coordinating center:

HOLY TRANSFIGURATION ORTHODOX MISSION
1415 LIMBERLOST ROAD, HUNTSVILLE, ONTARIO, P1H 2J6

Photos and details at: www.orthodoxhuntsville.com

DIRECTIONS: Enter the address at <http://maps.google.com/>