

# GREAT FEAST OF THE ASCENSION

*Thursday, May 28, 2020*

VESPERAL DIVINE LITURGY

*Priest:*

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

**Amen.**

*Priest:*

**O** come, let us worship and fall down before God our King.

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

O come, let us worship and fall down before the very Christ, our King and our God.

## PSALM 103

**B**LESS THE LORD, O my soul. O Lord my God, Thou art very great; Thou art clothed with honour and majesty. Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment; Who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain; Who layeth the beams of His chambers in the waters; Who maketh the clouds His chariot; Who walketh upon the wings of the wind; Who maketh His Angels spirits; His ministers a flaming fire; Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed forever. Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains. At Thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of Thy thunder they hasted away. They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which Thou hast founded for them. Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth. He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills. They give drink to every beast of the field: the wild asses quench their thirst. By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, which sing among the branches. He watereth the

hills from His chambers; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of Thy works. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man, that he may bring forth food out of the earth, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart. The trees of the Lord are full of sap; the cedars of Lebanon, which He hath planted, where the birds make their nests; as for the stork, the fir trees are her house. The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats; and the rocks for the conies. He appointed the moon for seasons; the sun knoweth his going down. Thou makest darkness, and it is night, wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth. The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God. The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens. Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening. O Lord, how manifold are Thy works! in wisdom hast Thou made them all. The earth is full of Thy riches. So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. There go the ships; there is that leviathan, whom Thou hast made to play therein. These wait all upon Thee; that Thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That Thou givest them they gather; Thou openest Thine hand, they are filled with good. Thou hidest Thy face, they are troubled; Thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust. Thou sendest forth Thy spirit, they are created, and Thou renewest the face of the earth. The glory of the Lord shall endure forever; the Lord shall rejoice in His works. He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth, He toucheth the hills, and they smoke. I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. My meditation of Him shall be sweet; I will be glad in the Lord. Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more. Bless thou the Lord, O my soul. Praise ye the Lord.

*~ and then the Great Litany ~*

# O LORD, I HAVE CRIED OUT

*Plagal of the Second Tone*

*Psalm 140*

**O** Lord, I have cried out unto Thee, hear Thou me; hear Thou me, O Lord. O Lord, I have cried out unto Thee, hear Thou me. Give ear to the voice of my supplication when I cry out unto Thee: hear Thou me, O Lord.

Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as the incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice; hear Thou me, O Lord.

Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and a protecting door round about my lips. • Incline not my heart to evil words, to make excuses in sins. • With men that work iniquity; and I will not communicate with the choicest of them. • The just man shall correct me in mercy and shall reprove me; but let not the oil of the sinner anoint my head. • For my prayer also shall still be against the things with which they are well pleased; their judges falling upon the rock have been swallowed up. • They shall hear my words, for they are sweet; as when the thickness of the earth is broken upon the ground, their bones are scattered by the side of hell. • But to Thee, O Lord, Lord, are mine eyes; in Thee have I put my trust, take not away my soul. • Keep me from the snare which they have laid for me, and the traps of the workers of iniquity. • Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst I alone escape.

*Psalm 141*

**I** cried unto the Lord with my voice, with my voice unto the Lord, did I make my supplication. • I poured out my supplication before Him; I showed before Him my trouble. • When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then Thou knewest my path. • In the way wherein I walked have they secretly laid a snare for me. • I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me. • Refuge failed me; no one cared for my soul. • I cried unto Thee, O Lord; I said: Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living. •

Attend unto my cry, for I am brought very low. • Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are stronger than I.

*of the Ascension, from the Pentecostarion • Fourth Tone*

*Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise Thy Name.*

**T**he Lord ascended to the heavens to send the Comforter into the world. Wherefore, the heavens made ready His throne, and the clouds His mount. The Angels wonder as they see a man more exalted than they. The Father receiveth into His bosom Him Who is eternally with Him. The Holy Spirit commandeth all the Angels: Lift your heads, O princes, and all ye nations, clap your hands; for Christ hath ascended whither He was before.

*The righteous shall wait for me until Thou recompense me.*

The Lord ascended to the heavens to send the Comforter into the world. Wherefore, the heavens made ready His throne, and the clouds His mount. The Angels wonder as they see a man more exalted than they. The Father receiveth into His bosom Him Who is eternally with Him. The Holy Spirit commandeth all the Angels: Lift your heads, O princes, and all ye nations, clap your hands; for Christ hath ascended whither He was before.

*Out of the depths have I cried to Thee, O Lord, Lord hear my voice.*

The cherubim were surprised, O Lord, at Thine Ascension, when they beheld Him Who sitteth on them ascending upon the clouds. Wherefore, we praise Thee; for Thy mercy is true, glory to Thee.

*Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.*

The cherubim were surprised, O Lord, at Thine Ascension, when they beheld Him Who sitteth on them ascending upon the clouds. Wherefore, we praise Thee; for Thy mercy is true, glory to Thee.

*If Thou, O Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?  
For with Thee there is forgiveness.*

Having beheld Thine Ascension on the holy mountains, O Christ, the Splendour of the Father's glory, we praise the likeness of Thy radiant appearance. We worship Thy Passion and honour Thy Resurrection, glorifying Thy glorious Ascension. Have mercy upon us.

*Because of Thy Name have I waited for Thee, O Lord;  
my soul hath waited upon Thy word, my soul hath hoped in the Lord.*

Having beheld Thine Ascension on the holy mountains, O Christ, the Splendour of the Father's glory, we praise the likeness of Thy radiant appearance. We worship Thy Passion and honour Thy Resurrection, glorifying Thy glorious Ascension. Have mercy upon us.

*From the morning watch until night,  
from the morning watch let Israel trust in the Lord.*

When the Apostles saw Thee ascending in the clouds, O life-giving Christ, they frowned deeply, and mourned with tears, saying: Leave us not orphans, O Master, Thy servants whom Thou didst love in Thy mercy; for Thou art compassionate. But send us Thy Most-holy Spirit as Thou didst promise to illumine our souls.

*For with the Lord there is mercy and with Him is abundant redemption,  
and He will deliver Israel from all his iniquities.*

When the Apostles saw Thee ascending in the clouds, O life-giving Christ, they frowned deeply, and mourned with tears, saying: Leave us not orphans, O Master, Thy servants whom Thou didst love in Thy mercy; for Thou art compassionate. But send us Thy Most-holy Spirit as Thou didst promise to illumine our souls.

*Praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise Him, all ye people.*

When Thou didst fulfill the mystery of Thy dispensation, O Lord, Thou didst take Thy Disciples and ascend the Mount of Olives, passing through the firmament of heaven. Wherefore, O Thou Who becamest humble for my sake, and Who didst ascend to the place from which

Thou couldest not be separated, send down Thy most Holy Spirit to illumine our souls.

*For His mercy is great toward us, and the truth of the Lord endureth forever.*  
When Thou didst fulfill the mystery of Thy dispensation, O Lord, Thou didst take Thy Disciples and ascend the Mount of Olives, passing through the firmament of heaven. Wherefore, O Thou Who becamest humble for my sake, and Who didst ascend to the place from which Thou couldest not be separated, send down Thy most Holy Spirit to illumine our souls.

*Doxastikon of the Ascension, from the Pentecostarion • Plagal of the Second Tone*

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

**F**rom the Fatherly bosom Thou wast inseparable, O sweet Jesus, and on earth Thou didst live like a man. Today, Thou hast ascended in glory from the Mount of Olives; and by Thy pity Thou didst raise our fallen nature and seat it with the Father. Wherefore, the ranks of incorporeal celestials were amazed and overtaken by surprise. They trembled from wonder and magnified Thy love to mankind. With them, we terrestrials also glorify Thy condescension to us, and Thine Ascension from us, imploring and saying, O Thou Who didst fill Thy Disciples and Thy Mother the Theotokos with immeasurable joy by Thine Ascension, make us worthy by their beseechings of the joy of Thy chosen ones, for the sake of Thy Great Mercy.

### ENTRANCE AT THE LIGHTING OF THE LAMPS

**G**ladsome Light of the holy glory that shines from the immortal Father in heaven, the holy, the blessed: O Jesus Christ. Lo, now that we come to sunset, now that we see the evening light, we sing the praise of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: One God. Worthy art Thou to be praised at all times with voices meet for holy song, Son of God, Thou Giver of Life. Wherefore, the world glorifieth Thee.

## THE EVENING PROKEIMENON

**O God in Thy Name save me, • and in Thy strength  
do Thou judge me.**

*✠. O God, hearken unto my prayer; give ear to the words of my mouth!*

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### READINGS FROM THE PROPHETOLOGION

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#### *Prophecy of Isaiah 2:2-3*

THUS SAITH THE LORD: In the last days the mountain of the Lord shall be manifest, and the house of God shall be on the summits of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall come to it. And many peoples shall go and say: Come, let us ascend to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will tell us His way, and we will walk in it.

#### *Prophecy of Isaiah 62:10-63:3, 7-9*

THUS SAITH THE LORD: Go ye, pass through My gates, make ready My pathway and make a way for My people, and cast the stones out of the way; lift up a standard for the nations. For behold, the Lord hath proclaimed to the end of the earth: Say ye to the daughter of Sion: Behold, thy Saviour is come, having His reward with Him and His work before His countenance. And He shall call them a holy people, redeemed of the Lord; and thou shalt be called a city sought out, and not forsaken. Who is this that is come from Edam, with red garments from Bosor, so fair in His apparel? He crieth with mighty strength: I speak of righteousness and saving judgment. Wherefore are Thy garments red, and Thy raiment as if fresh from a trodden winepress? I am full of trodden grape, I have trodden the winepress utterly alone, and of the nations there is not a man with Me. I remembered the mercy of the Lord, I shall recall the virtues of the Lord, the praises of the Lord in all things wherein He recompenseth us. The Lord is a good judge to the house of Israel; He dealeth with us according to His mercy, and according to the multitude of His righteousness. And He said: Are ye not My people? They are My children, and they shall not set Me at nought; and He became for them salvation out of all their affliction. Not an ambassador, nor an Angel, but the Lord Himself saved them,

because He loved them and spared them; He Himself redeemed them, and took them up, and lifted them up for all the days of eternity.

*Prophecy of Zachariah 14:1, 4, 8-11*

THUS SAITH THE LORD: Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and His feet shall stand in that day on the Mount of Olives, which lieth opposite Jerusalem on the side whence is the dawning of the sun. And in that day living water shall come forth out of Jerusalem; half of it toward the former sea, and half of it toward the latter sea; and so shall it be in summer and spring. And the Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day there shall be one Lord, and His Name one, compassing all the earth, and the wilderness from Gabaah unto Remmon, to the south of Jerusalem. And He shall be exalted and shall remain in that place, from the gate of Benjamin to the place of the first gate, to the gate of Gomor, and to the tower of Anameel, and to the gate of the corners, as far as the king's winepresses. They shall dwell therein; and there shall be no more anything accursed, and Jerusalem shall dwell securely.

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APOLYTIKION OF THE ASCENSION

*Fourth Tone*

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**T**hou hast ascended in glory, O Christ our God, and gladdened Thy Disciples with the promise of the Holy Spirit, making them confident through the blessing that Thou art the Son of God, and Deliverer of the world.

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KONTAKION OF THE ASCENSION

*Plagal of the Second Tone*

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**W**hen Thou didst fulfill Thy dispensation for our sakes, uniting the terrestrials with the celestials, Thou didst ascend in glory, O Christ our God, inseparable in space, but constant without separation, and crying unto Thy beloved: I am with you, and no one shall be against you.



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## THE TRISAGION HYMN

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

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

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

Holy Immortal. Have mercy on us.

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

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## THE EPISTLE

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*O God, be exalted above the heavens; and Your glory above all the earth.*

*✠. O God, my heart is ready.*

*Acts of the Apostles 1:1-12*

IN THE FIRST BOOK, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when He was taken up, after He had given commandment through the Holy Spirit to the Apostles whom He had chosen. To them He presented Himself alive after His passion by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days, and speaking of the kingdom of God. And while staying with them He charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, He said, “You heard from Me; for John baptized with water, but before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” So when they had come together, they asked Him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.” And when He had said this, as they were looking on, He was lifted up, and a cloud took Him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as He went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, Who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw Him go into heaven.” Then they returned to Jerusalem

from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away.

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## THE HOLY GOSPEL

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### *St. Luke 24:36-53*

AT THAT TIME, after rising from the dead, Jesus Himself stood among His Disciples and said to them, "Peace be with you." But they were startled and frightened, and supposed that they saw a spirit. And He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do questionings rise in your hearts? See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; handle Me, and see; for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. And while they still disbelieved for joy, and wondered, He said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave Him a piece of broiled fish, and He took it and ate before them. Then He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you, while I was still with you, that everything written about Me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled." Then He opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you; but stay in the city, until you are clothed with power from on high." Then He led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up His hands He blessed them. While He blessed them, He parted from them, and was carried up into heaven. And they returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple blessing God.

### **Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

*✠. Clap your hands, all ye nations; shout unto God with a voice of rejoicing.*

*✠. God is gone up in jubilation, the Lord with the voice of the trumpet.*



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## THE MEGALYNARION

*Plagal of the First Tone*

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**I**n unison we believers magnify thee, because thou didst give birth in time to the Word not bound by time; and in manner transcending every mind and word, thou didst become the Theotokos.

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## KOINONIKON

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**G**od is gone up in jubilation, the Lord with the voice of the trumpet.  
Alleluia!

*✠. O chant unto our God, chant ye; chant unto our King, chant ye.*

*✠. For God is King of all the earth, O chant ye with understanding.*

*✠. God is King over the nations, God sitteth upon His holy throne.*

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## THE DISMISSAL

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*Priest:*

MAY HE WHO IN GLORY ASCENDED from us into Heaven and sat at the right hand of God the Father for our salvation, Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His all-immaculate and all-blameless holy Mother; by the might of the Precious and Life-giving Cross; by the protection of the honourable Bodiless Powers of Heaven; at the supplication of the honorable, glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John; of the holy, glorious and all-laudable apostles; of our fathers among the Saints, John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople; of the holy, glorious and right-victorious Martyrs; of our venerable and God-bearing Fathers; of Saint Ignatius the God-bearer of Antioch, the patron and protector of our holy community; of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna, and of all the saints: have mercy on us and save us, forasmuch as He is good and loveth mankind.

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us and save us. **Amen.**