



# Great Vespers

Protection of the Virgin Mary Orthodox Church  
Merrillville, IN

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

**Reader:** Amen.

Glory to You, our God, glory to You.

O heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, Who are everywhere and fill all things, Treasury of blessings and Giver of life: come and abide in us and cleanse us from every impurity and save our souls, O Good One.

*During Paschatide:*

**Priest:** Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life! (2.5x)

**People:** and upon those in the tombs bestowing life!

**Reader:** Holy God, holy Mighty, holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (3x)

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, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Your name's sake.

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

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

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

**Priest:** For Yours is the Kingdom and the power and the glory of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

**Reader:** Amen. Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy.

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

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

*The priest comes to stand before the Royal Doors and quietly reads the Prayers of Light, while the reader continues with the Evening Psalm.*

## Psalm 103

Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, You are very great. You are clothed in praise and honor; who cover Yourself with light as with a garment, spreading out the heavens as a curtain. You cover Your chambers with the waters; You make the clouds Your chariot; You walk on the wings of the wind. You make the angels spirits and Your ministers a flaming fire. You established the earth on its sure foundation; it shall never be moved. You covered it with the deep as with a garment; the waters shall stand on the hills. At Your rebuke they shall flee; at the voice of Your thunder they shall be alarmed. They go up to the mountains and down to the plains, to the place which You founded for them. You have set a boundary which they shall not pass; neither shall they turn again to cover the earth. You send forth fountains among the valleys; the waters shall run between the mountains. They shall give drink to all the beasts of the field; the wild donkeys shall quench their thirst. By them the birds of the heavens shall have their habitation; they shall sing among the rocks.

You water the mountains from Your chambers; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of Your miracles. You make grass grow for the cattle and vegetation for the service of man, that You may bring bread out of the earth and wine that gladdens the heart of man, oil to make his face cheerful and bread, which strengthens man's heart. The trees of the plain shall be full of sap, even the cedars of Lebanon which You have planted. There birds will build their nests; the stork has her home in the fir trees. The high mountains are a refuge for stags and the rock for the rabbits. You appointed the moon for seasons; the sun knows its going down. You make darkness, and it is night; in it all the wild beasts of the forest will creep about. Young lions roar for prey and seek their food from God. The sun rises, and they gather together and lie down in their dens. Man goes forth to his work and to his labor until the evening.

O Lord, how great are Your works. In wisdom You have made them all. The earth is filled with Your creation. This great and wide sea, in which are innumerable living things both small and great—there sail the ships, and there is Leviathan which You have made to play there. All wait for You to give them their food in due season. When You give it to them, they will gather it up; when You open Your hand, they shall be filled with goodness. But when You have turned away Your face, they shall be troubled. When You take away their breath, they fail and return to their dust. You send forth Your Spirit, and they are created, and You renew the face of the earth. May the glory of the Lord endure forever; may the Lord rejoice in His works; who looks upon the earth and makes it tremble; who touches the mountains and they smoke. I will sing praises to the Lord all my life; I will sing praises to my God as long as I live. May my meditation be sweet to Him; I will rejoice in the Lord. May sinners and wicked men disappear from the earth, and may they be no more. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

The sun knows its going down. You make darkness, and it is night. O Lord, how great are Your works. In wisdom You have made them all.

Glory... Now and ever... Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! Glory to You, O God. (3x)

## THE GREAT LITANY

**Deacon:** In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord have mercy. *(after each petition)*

**Deacon:** For the peace from above and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

For the peace of the whole world, for the welfare of the holy churches of God, and for the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.

For this holy house and for those who enter it with faith, reverence, and the fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.

For his Beatitude, our Metropolitan \_\_\_\_\_ and for [our bishop]; for the honorable priesthood, the diaconate in Christ, for all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

For our country, its President, Supreme Court, and Congress, for all our civil authorities and for the armed forces everywhere, let us pray to the Lord.

For this city, for every city and countryside, and for the faithful dwelling in them, let us pray to the Lord.

For favorable weather, for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

For travelers by land, by sea, and by air, for the sick and the suffering, for captives and their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.

Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Your grace.

Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and each other and all our life unto Christ our God.

**People:** To You, O Lord.

**Priest:** *O Lord, compassionate and merciful, longsuffering and plenteous in mercy, give ear to our prayer and attend to the voice of our supplication. Work a sign upon us for good. Lead us in Your way, that we may walk in Your truth. Make*

*glad our hearts, that we may fear Your holy name. For You are great and do wonders. You alone are God, and among all the gods there is none like You, Lord: mighty in mercy, gracious in strength, to aid and to comfort and to save all those who put their trust in Your holy name. For to You are due all glory, honor, and worship: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.*

**People:** Amen.

### **THE FIRST KATHISMA (*Blessed is the Man...*)<sup>1</sup>**

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! (*after each verse*)

For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice in Him with trembling.

Blessed are all who take refuge in Him!

Arise, O Lord! Save me, O my God!

Salvation belongs to the Lord; Your blessing be upon Your people!

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

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! Glory to You, O God! (3x)

### **LITTLE LITANY**

**Deacon:** Again and again, in peace, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord have mercy.

**Deacon:** Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Your grace.

**People:** Lord have mercy.

**Deacon:** Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and each other and all our life unto Christ our God.

**People:** To You, O Lord

**Priest:** *O Lord, rebuke us not in Your anger, neither chasten us in Your wrath, but deal with us according to Your mercy, O Physician and Healer of our souls. Guide us*

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<sup>1</sup> *Blessed is the Man* is sung only on Saturday evening and for certain Feasts of the Lord. Otherwise we proceed directly to *Lord I Call*.

*to the haven of your will. Enlighten the eyes of our hearts to the knowledge of Your truth and vouchsafe that the remainder of this day and our whole life may be peaceful and without sin, through the intercessions of the holy Theotokos and of all the saints. For Yours is the majesty and Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.*

**People:** Amen.

### ***LORD, I CALL...***

*After we sing "Lord I Call" (see the handout) the **Reader** reads **Psalms 140 and 141** below, and the appointed verses are sung interspersed with the final lines.*

Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, a door of enclosure about my lips. Incline not my heart to evil words, to make excuses in sins with people who work lawlessness, and I will not join their choice ones. The righteous man shall correct me with mercy, and he shall reprove me. But let not the oil of the sinner anoint my head, for my prayer shall be intense in the presence of their pleasures. Their judges are swallowed up by the rock. They shall hear my words, for they are pleasant. As a clod of ground is dashed to pieces on the earth, so our bones were scattered beside the grave. For my eyes, O Lord, O Lord, they are toward You. In You I hope; take not my soul away. Keep me from the snares they set for me and from the stumbling blocks of those who work lawlessness. Sinners shall fall into their own net. I am alone until I escape.

I cried to the Lord with my voice. With my voice I prayed to the Lord. I shall pour out my supplication before Him. I shall declare my affliction in His presence. When my spirit fainted within me, then You knew my paths; for on the way I was going they hid a trap for me. I looked on my right and saw there was no one who knew me. Refuge failed me, and there was no one who cared for my soul. I cried to You, O Lord. I said, "You are my hope, my portion in the land of the living." Attend to my supplication, for I was humbled exceedingly. Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are stronger than I.

Bring my soul out of prison to give thanks to Your name, O Lord.

The righteous shall wait for me; until You reward me.

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

Let Your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

If You, O Lord, should mark transgression, O Lord, who would stand? But there is forgiveness with You.

Because of Your law, O Lord, I waited for You. My soul waited for Your word; my soul hopes in the Lord.

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

For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is abundant redemption, and He shall redeem Israel from all his transgressions.

Praise the Lord, all nations! Praise Him, all peoples!

For His mercy is abundant toward us, and the truth of the Lord endures forever.

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

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

### THE EVENING ENTRANCE

*We enter symbolically into the Lord's Day (or the Holy Day if Great Vespers is served on the Eve of a Feast)*

**Deacon:** *Let us pray to the Lord. Lord have mercy.*

**Priest:** *In the evening and in the morning and at noon-day we praise You, we bless You, we give thanks to You, and we pray to You, Master of all, Lord who love mankind. Direct our prayer as incense before You, and incline not our hearts unto words or thoughts of evil but deliver us from all who seek after our souls. For to You, Lord, do we lift up our eyes, and in You have we hoped. Put us not to shame, O our God. For to You are due all glory, honor, and worship: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.*

**Deacon:** *Amen. Bless, master, the holy entrance.*

**Priest:** Blessed is the evening entrance of Your saints always, now, and ever and unto ages of ages.

**Deacon:** Amen. Wisdom! Let us stand aright!

### GLADSOME LIGHT

O Gladsome light of the holy glory of the immortal Father:  
Heavenly, holy, blessed Jesus Christ!  
Having come to the setting of the sun  
and beheld the light of evening,  
we praise the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: God!  
At all times You are worthy,  
You are worthy of praise in songs  
as Son of God, Giver of Life!//  
Therefore, the world glorifies You.

## EVENING PROKEIMENON

**Deacon:** Let us be attentive.

**Priest:** Peace be unto all.

**Deacon:** Wisdom! The prokeimenon in the sixth tone:<sup>2</sup>

The Lord is King / He is robed in majesty.

v.1. The Lord is robed; He has girt Himself with strength.

v.2. For He has established the world so that it shall never be moved.

v.3. Holiness befits Your house, O Lord, forevermore.

***If there are Readings, the following formula is used for each:***

**Deacon:** Wisdom!

**Reader:** The reading is from \_\_\_\_\_.

**Deacon:** Let us be attentive.

**Reader:** [Reads the Scripture]

## AUGMENTED LITANY

**Deacon:** Let us say with all our soul and with all our mind, let us say:

**People:** Lord have mercy.

**Deacon:** O Lord almighty, the God of our fathers, we pray You hear us and have mercy.

**People:** Lord have mercy.

**Deacon:** Have mercy on us, O God, according to Your great goodness, we pray you hear us and have mercy.

**People:** Lord have mercy (3x after each petition)

**Deacon:** Again we pray for our Metropolitan \_\_\_\_\_, for our (Arch)Bishop \_\_\_\_\_, and for all our brethren in Christ.

Again we pray for this country, its President, Supreme Court, and Congress, for all our civil authorities, and for the armed forces everywhere.

Again we pray for the blessed and ever-memorable holy Orthodox Patriarchs, for the blessed and ever-memorable founders of this holy house, [for \_\_\_\_\_] and for all our fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters, the orthodox departed this life before us, who here and in all the world lie asleep in the Lord.

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<sup>2</sup> A different prokeimenon is used on a night other than Saturday.

Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, and visitation for [the servants of God \_\_\_\_\_, and for] all the faithful of this holy community, and for the pardon and remission of all their sins.

*Here special petitions may be added at the direction of the bishop.*

Again we pray for those who bring offerings and do good works in this holy and all-venerable house, for those who labor and those who sing, and for all the people here present who await Your great and rich mercy.

**Priest:** For You are a merciful God and love mankind, and to You we send up glory: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

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

### THE EVENING LITANY

**Deacon:** Let us complete our evening prayer to the Lord.

**People:** Lord have mercy

**Deacon:** Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Your grace.

**People:** Lord have mercy

**Deacon:** That the whole evening may be perfect, holy, peaceful, and sinless, let us ask of the Lord.

**People:** Grant it, O Lord (*after each petition*)

**Deacon:** An angel of peace, a faithful guide, a guardian of our souls and bodies, let us ask of the Lord.

Pardon and remission of our sins and transgressions, let us ask of the Lord.

All things that are good and profitable for our souls, and peace for the world, let us ask of the Lord.

That we may complete the remaining time of our life in peace and repentance, let us ask of the Lord.

A Christian ending to our life, painless, blameless, and peaceful, and a good defense before the dread judgment seat of Christ, let us ask of the Lord.

Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and each other and all our life unto Christ our God.

**People:** To You, O Lord.

**Priest:** *O Lord our God, remember us sinners and Your unprofitable servants when we call upon Your holy name, and put us not to shame in our expectation of Your mercy; but grant us, O Lord, all our petitions which are unto salvation, and vouchsafe that we may love and fear You with all our hearts and do Your will in all things.* For You are a good God, and You love mankind, and to You 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.

**People:** Amen.

**Priest:** Peace be unto all.

**People:** And to you spirit.

**Deacon:** Let us bow our heads to the Lord.

**People:** To You, O Lord.

**Priest:** *O Lord our God, who bowed the heavens and came down for the salvation of the human race: Look upon Your servants and Your inheritance; for to You the fearful judge, who yet love mankind, have Your servants bowed their heads and submissively bent their necks, not expecting help from men but asking for Your goodness and looking confidently for Your salvation. Guard them at all times, both during this present evening and in the coming night, from every foe, from all adverse works of the devil, from vain thoughts, and from evil imaginations.* Blessed and glorified be the majesty of Your kingdom: of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

***The APOSTICHA are now sung from the handout***

## **SONG OF SYMEON**

Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace,  
according to Your word,  
for my eyes have seen Your salvation,  
which You have prepared before the face of all people,  
a light to enlighten the Gentiles//  
and the glory of Your people Israel.

## **TRISAGION PRAYERS**

**Reader:** Holy God, holy Mighty, holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (3x)

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, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Your name's sake.

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

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

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

**Priest:** For Yours is the Kingdom and the power and the glory of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

***Then we sing the appointed TROPARIA from the handout***

## **DISMISSAL**

**Deacon:** Wisdom!

**People:** Father, bless.

**Priest:** Blessed is He who is, Christ our God, always, now, and ever and unto ages of ages.

**People:** Amen. Confirm, O God, the holy Orthodox faith and Orthodox Christians unto ages of ages.

**Priest:** Most holy Theotokos, save us.

**People:** More honorable 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.

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

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

Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy. Father, bless.

**During Paschatide we sing instead:**

Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life!

**Priest:** May [He who rose from the dead,] Christ our true God, through the prayers of His most pure mother, the Protector of this holy temple, of the holy, glorious, and all-laudable Apostles, [of \_\_\_\_\_, whose memory we celebrate this day,] of the holy and righteous ancestors of God Joachim and Anna, and of all the saints, have mercy on us and save us, for He is good and loves mankind.

**People:** Amen.

Glory to God for  
all things!