

Son; Thou dost sit upon the same throne, O Spirit; Unity in Nature, Trinity in Persons, one true God.

Both now. . . .

Theotokion

O Theotokos, the hope of those that ever honour thee, cease not to pray to thy Son, that I may be delivered from danger and all manner of temptations.

Repeat the irmos, With faith let us magnify. . . .

HOLY AND GREAT WEDNESDAY

MATTINS

After the Six Psalms and the Great Litany we sing Alleluia in TONE EIGHT, slowly and solemnly, with the appointed verses, and then the troparion:

TONE EIGHT

Behold, the Bridegroom comes in the middle of the night; and blessed is the servant whom He shall find watching, but unworthy is he whom He shall find in slothfulness. Beware, then, O my soul, and be not overcome by sleep, lest thou be given over to death and shut out from the Kingdom. But return to soberness and cry aloud: Holy, holy, holy art Thou, O God: through the Theotokos have mercy upon us (*three times*).

After the first reading from the Psalter, the sessional hymn:

TONE THREE

The harlot drew near Thee, O Thou who lovest mankind, and poured out on Thy feet the oil of myrrh with her tears; and at Thy command she was delivered from the foul smell of her evil deeds. But the ungrateful disciple, though he breathed Thy grace, rejected it and defiled himself in filth, selling Thee from love of money. Glory be to Thy compassion, O Christ.

Glory be to the Father. . . . Both now. . . .

Repeat.

After the second reading from the Psalter, the sessional hymn:

TONE FOUR

Deceitful Judas, in his love for money, pondered cunningly how he might betray Thee, O Lord, the Treasure of Life. Therefore in drunken folly he hastened to the Jews, and said to the transgressors: 'What will ye give me, and I will deliver Him unto you to be crucified?'

Glory be to the Father. . . . Both now. . . .

Repeat.

After the third reading from the Psalter, the sessional hymn:

TONE ONE

*Κανόνων
για την
εβδομάδα*

→ To Thee the harlot cried lamenting, O merciful Lord; ardently she wiped Thy pure feet with the hair of her head, and from the depth of her heart she groaned; 'Cast me not from Thee, neither abhor me, O my God, but receive me in repentance and save me, for Thou alone lovest mankind.'

Glory be to the Father. . . . Both now. . . .

Repeat.

Gospel: John 12: 17-50.

Psalm 50.

The priest: O Lord, save Thy people. . . .

*2 Hymn 12
Lenten
4x3*

We use the three-canticle Canon by St. Kosmas. In each canticle the irmos is sung twice, and then the troparia are repeated four or six times, so as to make up the number twelve. The irmos is sung at the end as katavasia. Before the troparia we say Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

*Let us sing
to the Lord who by His
Divine command...*

TONE TWO

CANTICLE THREE

(Irmos) On the rock of faith Thou hast established me, and Thou hast opened wide my mouth against mine enemies, for my spirit has rejoiced to sing: None is holy as our God and none is righteous save Thee, O Lord.

In vain the Sanhedrin of the transgressors gathers together with an evil purpose, to pronounce sentence of condemnation upon Thee, O Christ our Deliverer, to whom we sing: Thou art our God and none is holy save Thee, O Lord.

The wicked assembly of the transgressors, with souls full of hatred for God, considers how to kill as a malefactor the righteous Christ, to whom we sing: Thou art our God and there is none holy save Thee, O Lord.

The Small Litany.

+ Katavasia

Kontakion

TONE FOUR

I have transgressed more than the harlot, O loving Lord, yet never have I offered Thee my flowing tears, but in silence I fall down before Thee, and with love I kiss Thy most pure feet, beseeching Thee as Master to grant me remission of sins, and I cry to Thee, O Saviour, Deliver me from the filth of my works.

Read Ikos

The woman who was once a prodigal suddenly became chaste, and hating the works of shameful sin and the pleasures of the body, she thought upon her deep disgrace and the torment to which harlots and prodigals shall be condemned. Of them I am the first and I am afraid, yet senselessly I continue in my evil ways. But the woman who was a harlot, filled with fear, made haste and came crying to the Deliverer: 'O merciful Lord who lovest mankind, deliver me from the filth of my works.'

CANTICLE EIGHT

(Irmos) The command of the tyrant prevailed, and the furnace was heated sevenfold, yet the flames did not burn the children, who had trampled underfoot the decree of the king, but they cried aloud: 'O all ye works of the Lord, praise ye the Lord and exalt Him above all for ever.'

The woman poured precious oil of myrrh upon Thine awesome and royal head, O Christ our God, and she laid hold of Thy pure feet with her polluted hands and cried aloud: 'O all ye works of the Lord, praise ye the Lord and exalt Him above all for ever.'

Guilty of sin, she washed with tears the feet of her Creator and wiped them with her hair; and so she received forgiveness for all that she had done in life, and she cried aloud: 'O all ye works of the Lord, praise ye the Lord and exalt Him above all for ever.'

Through the saving love of God and the fountain of her tears, the grateful woman was ransomed from her sins; washed clean by her confession, she was not ashamed but cried aloud: 'O all ye works of the Lord, praise ye the Lord and exalt Him above all for ever.'

We praise, bless, and worship the Lord, praising and supremely exalting Him unto all ages. Katavasia

CANTICLE NINE

We do not sing the Magnificat and Greater in honour than the cherubim. . . .

(Irmos) With pure souls and unpolluted lips, come and let us magnify the undefiled and most holy Mother of Emmanuel, and through her let us bring our prayer to the Child she bore. Spare our souls, O Christ our God, and save us.

Ungrateful and envious in his wickedness, wretched Judas calculates the value of the gift worthy of God, whereby the woman gained release from the debt of her sins, and he trafficks in the grace of divine love. Spare our souls, O Christ our God, and save us.¹ *Glory*

Judas goes to the lawless rulers and says: 'What will ye give me, if I deliver to you Christ whom ye seek?' And so in exchange for money he rejects fellowship with Christ. Spare our souls, O Christ our God, and save us. *Both*

Unrelenting in blind avarice, how hast thou forgotten what Christ taught thee, that thy soul is more in value than the whole world! For in despair, O traitor, thou hast hanged thyself. Spare our souls, O Christ our God, and save us.²

Exapostilarion:

TONE THREE

I see Thy bridal chamber adorned, O my Saviour, and I have no wedding garment that I may enter there. Make the robe of my soul to shine, O Giver of Light, and save me (three times).

Lauds. We sing four stichera:

TONE ONE

O Son of the Virgin, the harlot knew Thee to be God and she prayed to Thee lamenting, for she had committed sins worthy of tears. 'Loose me from my debt', she cried, 'as I unloose my hair. Show love to her who loves Thee, though rightly she deserves Thy hatred, and with the publicans I shall proclaim Thee. O Benefactor who lovest mankind.'

The harlot mingled precious oil of myrrh with her tears and poured it on Thy most pure feet, as she kissed them and straight-

¹ John 12: 4-5.

² Matt. 16: 26; 27: 5.

way Thou hast proclaimed her justified. To us also grant forgiveness, O Lord who hast suffered for our sake, and save us.

While the sinful woman brought oil of myrrh, the disciple came to an agreement with the transgressors. She rejoiced to pour out what was very precious, he made haste to sell the One who is above all price. She acknowledged Christ as Lord, he severed himself from the Master. She was set free, but Judas became the slave of the enemy. Grievous was his lack of love! Great was her repentance! Grant such repentance also unto me. O Saviour who hast suffered for our sake, and save us.

O misery of Judas! He saw the harlot kiss Thy feet, and deceitfully he plotted to betray Thee with a kiss. She loosed her hair and he was bound a prisoner by fury, bearing in place of myrrh the stink of evil; for envy knows not how to choose its own advantage. O misery of Judas! From this deliver our souls, O God.

T.2 Glory be to the Father. . . . T.2

TONE TWO

The sinful woman hastened to buy precious oil of myrrh with which to anoint the Benefactor, and she cried aloud to the merchant: 'Give me oil of myrrh that I may anoint Him who has cleansed me from all my sins'.

T.6 Both now. . . . T.6

TONE SIX

Drowning in sin, she found in Thee a haven of salvation, and pouring out the oil of myrrh with her tears, she cried to Thee: 'Lo, Thou art He who accepts the repentance of the sinful. O Master, save me from the waves of sin in Thy great mercy.'

Aposticha:

TONE SIX

Today Christ comes to the house of the Pharisee, and the sinful woman draws near and falls down at His feet, crying: 'Behold me sunk in sin, filled with despair by reason of my deeds, yet not rejected by Thy love. Grant me, Lord, remission of my sins and save me.'

ψ. We were filled in the morning with Thy mercy, O Lord, and we rejoiced and were glad.

The harlot spread out her hair before Thee, O Master, while Judas stretched out his hands to the transgressors: she, to receive forgiveness; and he, to receive money. Therefore we cry aloud to Thee who wast sold and hast set us free, O Lord, glory to Thee.

Ψ. In all our days, let us be glad: for the days wherein Thou hast humbled us, for the years wherein we have seen evil. And look upon Thy servants, and upon Thy works, and do Thou guide their sons.

Evil-smelling and defiled, the woman drew near to Thee, shedding tears upon Thy feet, O Saviour, and proclaiming Thy Passion. 'How can I look upon Thee, O Master? Yet Thou hast come to save the harlot. I am dead: raise me from the depths, as Thou hast raised Lazarus on the fourth day from the tomb. Accept me in my wretchedness, O Lord, and save me.'³

Ψ. And let the brightness of the Lord our God be upon us: prosper Thou the work of our hands, O prosper Thou our handy-work.

Full of despair on account of her life, her evil ways well known, she came to Thee, bearing oil of myrrh, and cried aloud: 'Harlot though I am, cast me not out, O Son of the Virgin; despise not my tears, O Joy of the angels; but receive me in repentance, O Lord, and in Thy great mercy, reject me not, a sinner.'

Glory be to the Father. . . . Both now. . . .

TONE EIGHT

(by Kassiani the Nun)

The woman who had fallen into many sins, perceiving Thy divinity, O Lord, fulfilled the part of a myrrh-bearer; and with lamentations she brought sweet-smelling oil of myrrh to Thee before Thy burial. 'Woe is me', she said, 'for night surrounds me, dark and moonless, and stings my lustful passion with the love of sin. Accept the fountain of my tears, O Thou who drawest down from the clouds the waters of the sea. Incline to the groanings of my heart, O Thou who in Thine ineffable self-emptying hast bowed down the heavens. I shall kiss Thy most pure feet and wipe them with the hairs of my head, those feet whose sound Eve heard at dusk in Paradise, and hid herself for fear. Who can search out the multitude of my sins and the

³ John 12: 7.

abyss of Thy judgements, O Saviour of my soul? Despise me not, Thine handmaiden, for Thou hast mercy without measure.'⁴

And the rest of Mattins, as yesterday.

At the Hours we read the appointed portions of the Psalter and of the Gospel.

SIXTH HOUR

Troparion of the Prophecy:

TONE TWO

Today the evil Sanhedrin has gathered together and devised vain counsel against Thee. Today Judas makes a covenant with the chief priests and receives the noose as pledge. Against his will Caiaphas confesses that one man shall undergo a voluntary passion for the sake of all. O Christ, our God and our Deliverer, glory to Thee.⁵

Glory be to the Father. . . . Both now. . . .

Repeat.

Prokimenon (Psalm 133): TONE EIGHT

The Lord that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion.

Ψ. Behold now, bless the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord.

Lesson: Ezekiel 2: 3-3: 3.

Prokimenon (Psalm 134): TONE TWO

Ye that fear the Lord, bless the Lord.

Ψ. Praise ye the Name of the Lord; O ye servants, praise the Lord.

At the end of the Typika the priest uses the dismissal prayer O Master rich in mercy. . . ., as at the end of Great Compline, and all the people kneel with their faces to the ground. Then priest and people kneel before one another and ask for each other's forgiveness.

VESPERS

To Lord I have cried, ten stichera are sung, from Lauds and the Aposticha at Mattins (see pp. 538-40):

⁴ Mark 16: 1; John 12: 7; Ps. 17: 10; Gen. 3: 8.

⁵ Ps. 2: 1; Matt. 26: 3, 15; John 11: 47-50.