

February 26, 2012
First Sunday in Lent - Sunday of Orthodoxy
Octoechos Tone 4
Our Holy Father Porphyrius, Bishop of Gaza

Great Vespers

Kathisma Reading

Blessed is the man... is sung.

At Psalm 140

In Tone 4

10.

We never cease to adore Your life-giving Cross, O Christ our God,
And we glorify Your resurrection on the third day.
For You, Almighty One, have thereby restored the corrupted nature of all
and reopened the way to heaven,
since You alone are gracious and You love mankind.

9.

O Saviour, You have absolved the penalty of disobedience,
committed through the tree of Eden,
by willingly being nailed to the tree of the Cross.
As Almighty God, You descended into Hades
and broke asunder the bonds of death.
We, therefore, venerate Your resurrection from the dead,
and joyfully cry out to You:
Almighty Lord, glory to You!

8.

O Lord, You have battered down the gates of Hades,
and by Your death You have dissolved the realm of death.
You have freed mankind from corruption,
bestowing life, incorruption, and Your great mercy upon the world.

7.

Come, all you people,
let us sing the praises of our Saviour's resurrection on the third day.
For we have, thereby, been delivered from the invincible bonds of Hades,
and we have received incorruption, together with eternal life.
Therefore, we cry out to You
after Your crucifixion, burial, and resurrection:
Save us by Your resurrection, for You love mankind.

6.

O Saviour, with the angels we sing the praises of Your resurrection on the third day.
For the very ends of the universe have, thereby, been enlightened,
and we have been saved from the deceit of the enemy.
Therefore, we cry out to You,
Almighty Saviour, Giver of Life, and Lover of Mankind:
Save us by Your resurrection.

5.

O Christ our God, You have demolished the brazen gates of Hades.
You have broken asunder the bonds of death,
and lifted up the fallen human race.
Therefore, we cry out with one accord:
O Lord, Who arose from the dead, glory to You!

In Tone 6

4.

The prophets, inspired by Your Spirit, O Lord,
foretold that You, whom nothing can contain or grasp,
and who has shone forth in eternity before the morning star
from the immaterial and bodiless womb of the Father,
was to become a child,
taking flesh from the Virgin,
being joined to men and seen by those on earth.
At the prayers of these Your prophets,
in Your compassion count us worthy of Your light,
for we sing the praises
of Your ineffable and holy Resurrection.

3.

The divinely-inspired prophets preached You in word and honoured You in works,
and they received as their reward a life without end.
For they steadfastly refused, O Master,
to worship the creation instead of You, the Creator;
They renounced the whole world for the Gospel's sake,
and in their suffering they were conformed to Your Passion which they had foretold.
At their intercessions, count us worthy to pass through the period of the Fast without offence,
for You alone are rich in mercy.

2.

You who are uncircumscribed, O Master, in Your divine nature,
were pleased in the last times to take flesh and be circumscribed;
and in assuming flesh, You have also taken on Yourself all its distinctive properties.
Therefore we depict the likeness of Your outward form,
venerating it with an honour that is relative.
So we are exalted to the love of You,

and following the holy traditions handed down by the apostles,
from Your icon we receive the grace of healing.

1.

As a precious adornment
the Church of Christ has received the venerable and holy icons of the Saviour Christ,
of God's Mother and of all the saints.
Celebrating now their triumphant restoration,
she is made bright with grace and splendour,
and drives away all heretics.
With great rejoicing
she gives glory to God who loves mankind,
and who for her sake
has endured His voluntary Passion.

In Tone 2, Glory...

The grace of truth has shone upon us;
the mysteries darkly prefigured in the times of old have now been openly fulfilled.
For behold, the Church is clothed in a beauty that surpasses all things earthly,
through the icon of the incarnate Christ
that was foreshadowed by the ark of testimony.
This is the safeguard of the orthodox faith;
for is we hold fast to the icon of the Saviour whom we worship,
we shall not go astray.
Let all who do not share this faith be covered with shame;
but we shall glory in the icon of the Word made flesh,
which we venerate but worship not as an idol.
So let us kiss it, and with all the faithful cry aloud:
O God, save Your people
and bless Your inheritance.

In Tone 4, Now...

O Mother of God, because of You David the Prophet
became an ancestor of God;
he foretold and sang a joyous hymn of praise
and cried out to Him who worked wonders in you:
"The Queen stood at your right hand."
God revealed you as a life-giving mother,
when He chose to be incarnate of you without a father.
He renewed in man His image which the passions had corrupted.
He found the lost sheep in the mountains, carried it on His shoulders,
offered it to the Father, generously numbered it among the powers of heaven,
and saved the whole world, since He is Christ of great and rich mercy.

Aposticha

In Tone 4

In being lifted upon the Cross, O Lord,
You abolished the curse which we had inherited from our ancestors.
By going down into Hades,
You freed from eternal captivity those imprisoned there,
and granted incorruption to the human race.
We, therefore, praise Your life-giving and redeeming resurrection.

The Lord reigns, He is clothed in majesty. Robed is the Lord, and girt about with strength.

By hanging on the Cross, O Almighty One,
You shook the whole creation to its foundations.
When You Yourself were laid in the grave,
You raised to life those who had been lying in the graves,
and You granted life and incorruption to mankind.
We, therefore, praise and glorify Your resurrection on the third day.

For He has made the world firm, which shall not be moved.

O Christ, the lawless people showed their ingratitude to You, their Benefactor,
by delivering You to Pilate who condemned you to be crucified.
But You willingly suffered death and burial;
and, as God, You rose by Your own power on the third day,
granting us everlasting life and great mercy.

Holiness befits Your house, O Lord, for length of days.

The women, shedding bitter tears, came to see You in Your tomb;
and not finding Your body, they lamented, saying:
O Saviour and King of All, how were You stolen?
What place holds Your life-bearing body?
An angel answered them, saying:
Do not weep, but go and proclaim that the Lord is risen,
filling our hearts with joy;
for He alone is most compassionate.

In Tone 2, Glory...

Advancing from ungodliness to the true faith,
and illumined with the light of knowledge,
let us clasp our hands and sing aloud,
offering praise and thanksgiving to God;
and with due honour
let us venerate the holy icons of Christ;
of the all-pure Virgin and the saints,

whether depicted on walls, on wooden panels or on holy vessels,
rejecting the impious teachings of the heretics.

For, as Basil says,
the honour shown the icon passes to the prototype it represents.
At the prayers of Your undefiled Mother and of all the Saints,
we beseech You, Christ our God,
to bestow upon us Your great mercy.

Now...

We now behold a new wonder,
greater than the wonders of old.
For who has ever known a mother to bear a child without the help of man?
Who has known a mother to hold in her arms the Source of all Creation?
It was God's own will to be born in this manner;
and you, O most pure Virgin, carried Him as an infant in your arms.
Because of this, you can approach God with the boldness of a mother.
Therefore, we venerate you, and ask you to always beseech Him
to have mercy on us and save our souls.

Troparia

In Tone 4

When the disciples of the Lord learned from the angel* the glorious news of the resurrection* and cast off the ancestral condemnation,* they proudly told the apostles:* "Death has been plundered!* Christ our God is risen,** granting to the world great mercy."

In Tone 2, Glory...

We bow before Your most pure image, O kind Lord,* and we beg pardon for our sins, O Christ our God.* Of Your own will You consented to ascend the Cross in the flesh* to free Your handiwork from enslavement to the enemy.* In thanksgiving we cry aloud to You:** by coming to save the world, our Saviour, You filled all things with joy.

Now...

O Mother of God, the mysteries which surround you are exceedingly glorious,* and beyond the power of understanding.* For you retained the seal of purity,* and your virginity remained inviolate;* yet you are acknowledged, without doubt,* to be the Mother who gave birth to the true God.* We beg you, therefore, to entreat Him to save our souls.