

**First Sunday in Lent - Sunday of Orthodoxy**  
**Octoechos Tone 5**  
**Holy and Great-Martyr Theodore the Recruit (286-305)**  
**Marianna, sister of the Apostle Philip**

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**GREAT VESPERS**

***Kathisma Reading***

*Blessed is the man...* is sung.

***At Psalm 140***

*In Tone 5*

10. With Your precious Cross, O Christ,  
You have put the Devil to shame.  
With Your Resurrection You have deadened the sting of Death.  
We, therefore, glorify You, O only-begotten Son of God.

9. O Christ, Who granted resurrection to mankind,  
You were led like a lamb to the slaughter.  
Then the princes of Hades were struck with terror  
as they saw the gates of their tearful domain being lifted up;  
for Christ, the King of Glory, entered therein  
and exclaimed to those in chains: Go forth from here!  
And to those in darkness: Go forth into the light!

8. What a great wonder!  
The Creator of invisible beings suffered in the flesh for mankind,  
and rose from the dead as immortal.  
Come, therefore, all you nations and adore Him;  
for through His compassion we have been freed from the snares of the Devil,  
and we have learned to praise the one God in three Persons.

7. We offer to You our evening worship,  
O Light Whom the darkness of night can never extinguish.  
For in these latter days Your radiance has appeared to the world,  
shining in Your flesh as light reflected in a mirror.  
Your brilliance has descended even to the depths of Hades and dissolved its gloom.  
O Lord, Giver of Light, glory to You;  
for You have shown the radiance of Your Resurrection to all the nations.

6. Let us glorify Christ, the Author of our Salvation;  
for by His Resurrection from the dead,  
the world has been delivered from the deception of Satan.  
The choirs of angels rejoice as the treachery of evil spirits vanishes.  
Fallen Adam arises, and the Devil is vanquished.

5. Those who guarded the tomb of Christ  
were told by the evil men who hired them:  
Take this silver and keep silent.  
Tell no one of the Resurrection of Christ;  
rather tell everyone that while you were sleeping His body was stolen.  
But who has ever heard of a body being stolen,  
a body which had already been anointed?  
Why would anyone take a body from the grave naked,  
and leave the burial shroud in the tomb?  
Do not deceive yourselves, O people of Judea.  
Study the teachings of the Prophets,  
and you will come to understand that Jesus Christ is Almighty God,  
and truly the Saviour of the world.

*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 5, Now...*

A symbol of the undefiled Virgin and bride  
was revealed in the Red Sea.  
There, Moses divided the waters;  
here, Gabriel is the messenger of the miracle.  
There, the Israelites crossed the deep and their feet were not even wet;  
here, the Virgin gives birth to Christ without human seed.  
There, the sea remained uncrossed after the passing of Israel;  
here, the immaculate remained incorrupt after giving birth to Emmanuel.  
Therefore, O immortal God, who appeared in the flesh as true Man,  
have mercy on us!

### **Aposticha**

*In Tone 5*

O Christ our Saviour,  
we lift up our voices to glorify You.  
For, in Your love for mankind,  
You became incarnate without leaving heaven;  
You accepted the Cross and death;  
You cast down the gates of Hades;  
and on the third day You arose from the dead  
for the salvation of our souls.

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

O Giver of Life,  
streams of forgiveness, life, and salvation  
poured forth from Your pierced side upon us all.  
By accepting physical death, You granted us immortality;  
by lying in the tomb, You freed us from Hades,  
and as God, by rising from the dead,  
You raised us with Yourself in glory.  
Therefore, we cry out to You:  
O Lover of mankind, glory to You!

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

O Lover of mankind,  
Your crucifixion and descent into Hades are most wondrous.  
For, as God, You thereby conquered the power of Hades,  
and raised up in glory, with Yourself, those who were long imprisoned there.  
You reopened Paradise and enabled them to enter.  
Grant forgiveness of sins to us  
who glorify Your Resurrection on the third day,  
for You alone are all-merciful.

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

O Lover of mankind,  
You accepted suffering in the flesh  
and rose from the dead on the third day.  
Therefore, heal the passions of our flesh,  
raise us from our dreadful iniquities, and save us.

*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 5*

Let us, the faithful, acclaim and worship the Word\* co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit,\* and born of the Virgin for our salvation.\* For He willed to be lifted up on the cross in the flesh,\* to suffer death and to raise the dead,\*\* by His glorious Resurrection.

*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.