

THE SERVICES
OF THE
HOURS
-
THE
GREAT
BOOK
OF THE
HOURS
-
GREAT
HOROLOGION

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THE SERVICE OF THE FIRST HOUR

which often follows Matins immediately

Presbyter : Blessed is our God, Always, now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages.¹

– or – **Reader :** Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O Lord,
Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us.

Reader : Amen.

In some places, it is the one presiding who reads Glory..., and O Heavenly King..., before the reader begins to read.

Glory be to You, our God, glory be to You.

* O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, everywhere present and fulfilling all things ; Treasury of good things, and Provider of Life, come, and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O Good One.

* [We do not read “Heavenly King” in paschaltide. We say “Christ is risen.”.. (three times). From Ascension to Pentecost, we read the tropar of Ascension,]

Holy God, Holy Strong, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

(three times) (three metanias)

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

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Lord, cleanse us from our sins.² O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and heal our infirmities, for Your Name’s sake.

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

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

Our Father, who are in the heavens, hallowed be Your Name, Your Kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ; give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors ; and bring us not to the test, but rescue us from the evil one.

Presbyter : For Yours are the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Response : Amen.

Reader : Lord, have mercy. *(twelve times)*

¹ But if the First Hour follow Matins immediately, then we begin with “O come let us worship.”..

² Slavonic text. Greek text : be propitious to our sins

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

O come,³ 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. (*with three metanias*)

PSALM 5⁴

Give ear to my utterances, O LORD ; understand my cry. Give heed to the voice of my supplication, O my King and my God ; for to You shall I make my prayer, O LORD. In the morning You will hear my voice ; in the morning I shall stand beside You, and You will look upon me ; for You, indeed, are not a God delighting in lawlessness. One working evil shall not sojourn near You, nor shall transgressors of the law continue before Your eyes ; You have hated all those working lawlessness. You will destroy all those speaking the lie ; a deceitful man of blood, the LORD loathes. But as for me, in the multitude of Your mercy I shall come into Your house ; I shall worship towards Your holy temple in fear of You. O LORD, lead me on the way in Your righteousness, because of my enemies. Make straight my way before Your Face ; for there is no truth in their mouth ; their heart is futile ; their throat is an open tomb ; with their tongues have they deceived. Judge them, O God. Let them fall because of their deliberations. In accordance with the multitude of their impieties, thrust them out, for they have embittered You, O LORD. But may they be glad – all those hoping on You ; unto the age shall they exult, and You will pitch Your tent amongst them. They shall boast in You – all those loving Your Name, for it is You that will bless the righteous. O LORD, You have crowned us as with a shield of good-pleasure.

PSALM 89

OLORD, You have been our refuge in generation and generation. Before the mountains came to be, and the earth and the world were fashioned, from the age, and until the age, YOU ARE. Do not turn Man back to humiliation. And You said, “Turn about, O sons of Men” ; for a thousand years in Your sight are as a day,

³ When one service follows another *immediately*, then we begin the second service here. But in Pascha, if a service follow another immediately, then we say “Christ is risen ...” three times instead, at the beginning of the second service.

⁴ This is the fixed psalm of the hour. On some occasions, such as Royal Hours, the other psalms may vary.

yesterday, which has passed by, and as a watch in the night. Scorned shall be their years ; in the morning, they may pass away just as the green herb. In the morning, they may flourish, and may pass away ; in the evening, they may fall down, harden and dry out ; for we have fainted because of Your anger, and because of Your fury were we stirred up. You placed our lawless acts in Your presence ; the span of our life in the illumination of Your Face ; for all our days have come to an end, and because of Your anger have we fainted. Our years were ruminating, just as a spider. The days of our years – in them are seventy years ; but if they be in might, then eighty years, and most of them trouble and toil ; for meekness has come upon us, and we shall be instructed. Who knows the strength of Your anger, and from the fear of You, who has numbered Your fury ? So make Your right hand known to me, and those instructed in heart by wisdom. Turn about, O LORD, until when ? Let Yourself be entreated on behalf of Your bond-servants. In the morning, we were filled up with Your mercy, O LORD, and we exulted and were glad in all our days. May we be glad in return for the days when You humbled us, for the years when we saw bad things. Look upon Your bond-servants and upon Your works, and lead their sons on the way. Let the splendour of the LORD our God be upon us, and prosper the works of our hands for us ; prosper the work of our hands.

PSALM 100

Mercy and fair-judgement shall I sing to You, O LORD ; I shall chant, and I shall have understanding in a blameless way. When will You come to me ? I was walking about, in the guilelessness of my heart, in the midst of my house. I did not put before my eyes any deed of transgressing the law. Those doing deviations I hated. A crooked heart did not cleave to me. While the evil man was inclining away from me, I was not knowing him. The one secretly speaking against his neighbour ; this one I was chasing out. The one with a proud eye and an insatiable heart ; with this one I was not eating. My eyes are upon the Faithful of the earth, that they might sit down with me. The one walking in a blameless way ; this one was ministering unto me. The one acting proudly was not dwelling in the midst of my house. The one speaking unrighteous things was not prospering before my eyes. In the mornings, I was slaying all the sinners of the earth, that I might exterminate from the city of the LORD all those working lawlessness.

Reader : Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy

Spirit ; now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God. *(three times)*

✠ *In Lent, on weekdays, there follows here the appointed Session of Psalms. However, on the Mondays we do not add a Kathisma of the Psalter at the First Hour. On the other days we do, and we make 3 prostrations at each Antiphon.*

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

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

✠ **APPOINTED SESSION OF PSALMS** ✠

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God. *(three times)*

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

Then, instead of the Daily Tropars, in the middle of the nave, the Canonarch or the designated Monk chants following the Tropar of the First Hour, with refrains :

Tone 6

Psalm 5

Presbyter : Hearken to my voice, my King, and my God.

Response : *(repeat refrain)*

Presbyter : Give ear to my words, O Lord ; understand my cry.

Response : *(repeat refrain)*

Presbyter : For to You, O LORD, shall I make my prayer ; in the morning, hearken to my voice.

Response : *(repeat refrain)*

Presbyter : Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Response : Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.
What shall we call you✠

Reader : Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

If there be two tropars, then the first is sung now.

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

The Tropar of the day is read or sung (except on Lenten weekdays)

If there be more than two tropars prescribed, then the others are also sung now, together.

Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Theotokos-Hymn

Reader : What shall we call you, O Full of Grace ; Heaven, for from you

shone forth the Sun of righteousness ; Paradise, for you have budded forth the Flower of Incorruptibility ; Virgin, for you have remained uncorrupted ; Pure Mother, for you have held in your arms the Son, who is God of all. Beseech Him to save our souls.

(At Royal Hours, Verses, and Readings follow here.)

✠ *Then we chant the following Verses, from Psalm 118, We double the first three, and we triple the last, chanting it loudly and slowly :*

Reader : Direct my foot-steps in accordance with Your teaching, and do not let any iniquity lord it over me. (Twice)
Redeem me from the sycophancy of Men, and I shall guard Your commandments. (Twice)
Let my mouth be filled with Your praise that I may hymn Your glory – all the day long, Your magnificence. (Thrice)

On the Monday, Wednesday and Friday of the fourth week of Lent, that is after the Sunday of the Veneration of the Cross, instead of the verses of Direct my foot-steps, we say :

Before Your Cross, we bow down in worship, O Master, and Your holy Resurrection, we glorify. ✠

Reader : Holy God, Holy Strong, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.
(three times) (three metanias)

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

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Lord, cleanse us from our sins.* O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and heal our infirmities, for Your Name's sake.

** Or, "Be propitious to our sins".*

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

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

Our Father, who are in the heavens, hallowed be Your Name, Your Kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ; give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors ; and bring us not to the test, but rescue us from the evil one.

Presbyter : For Yours are the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, now, and ever and unto the ages of ages.

Response : Amen.

The prescribed Kontak of the day is read or sung.

✠ *However, on Lenten weekdays, instead, the following appointed*

Tropars :

(Monday, Tuesday, Thursday)

With heart, and mouth, let us ever hymn aloud the most glorious Mother of God, who is holier than the angels, confessing her to be the Theotokos, who brought forth God Incarnate, and who unceasingly prays for our souls.

(Wednesday, Friday) (Tone 4 Prosimion)

O Christ our God, quickly anticipate our captivity by the enemy who blasphemes You, and threatens us. By Your Cross, overcome those who war against us, that they may know the strength of the Orthodox Faith, through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O only Lover of Man.

(Saturday) Automelon (Tone 8)

As the first-fruits of nature offered to the Planter of creation, the whole world offers You, O Lord, the God-bearing martyrs. Through their prayers, and those of the Theotokos, preserve Your Church in profound peace.

On Great Holy Monday :

Prosimion : As the first-fruits (Tone 8 or 2)

Jacob lamented his deprivation of Joseph, who was seated on a chariot, and honoured as a king ; for when he refused to be made captive by the pleasures of the Egyptian woman, he was instead glorified by Him who beholds the hearts of men, and distributes an incorruptible crown.

On Great Holy Tuesday :

Prosimion : Seeking things on high (Tone 2)

Consider, O wretched soul, the hour of the end, and fear the cutting of the fig tree. Work diligently, therefore, at the talent given to you. Keep watch, and cry out, "Let us not remain outside the bridal chamber of Christ".

On Great Holy Wednesday :

Prosimion : As You were voluntarily crucified (Tone 4)

Although my iniquities are greater than the harlot's, O Good One, I have not brought You showers of tears ; but supplicating in silence, I fall down before You. With longing, I kiss Your most pure feet. As Master, grant me remission of my debts, as I cry out to You, O Saviour, "Rescue me from the mire of my deeds". ✙

Reader : Lord, have mercy. *(forty times)*

Reader : **Prayer of the Hours**

O Christ our God, at all times, and at every hour, in heaven, and on earth, You are worshipped, and glorified. You are

longsuffering, all-merciful, and all-compassionate. You love the righteous, and have mercy upon the sinner. You call all to salvation through the promise of good things to come – Yourself, O Lord, in this hour receive also our petitions, and direct our lives towards Your commandments. Sanctify our souls, cleanse our bodies, make straight our thoughts, purify our reasonings ; rescue us from all tribulations, evils, and grief. Surround us with the wall of your holy angels, that guarded by their array, and guided by them, we may attain to the unity of the faith, and to the acknowledgement of Your unapproachable glory, for You are blessed unto the ages of ages.

Reader : Amen.

Reader : Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ; now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.
More honourable 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.
In the Name of the Lord, holy Master, bless.

– or – *if there be no presbyter :*

Through the intercessions of Your saints, O Lord, bless.

Presbyter : May God be bountiful to us, and bless us, show the light of His Countenance upon us, and have mercy on us.

– or – *if it be the custom :*

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O Lord, Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us.

Reader : Amen.

If there be no presbyter, then the senior reader says :

Reader : O Lord Jesus Christ Son of God, through the prayers of Your most pure Mother, of our venerable, and God-bearing fathers, and of all the saints, have mercy on us, and save us.

Response : Amen.

✠ **Reader :** In Lent : **Prayer of Saint Ephrem**

O Lord, and Master of my life, give me not the spirit of sloth, busyness [despondency *alt*], lust of power, and idle talk ; but rather, favour Your servant with the spirit of soberness, lowliness, endurance, and love. Yea, O Lord, and King, grant me to see my own falls, and not to condemn my *brother*, for blessed are You, unto the ages of ages.

With three prostrations during the prayer, followed by twelve bows, and a repetition of the prayer, and final prostration.

Response : Amen. ✠

Presbyter : O Christ the true Light, illumining, and sanctifying every Man who comes into the world, let the light of Your Face be signed upon us, that in it we may behold the light ineffable ; and direct our footsteps aright in the keeping of Your commandments, through the intercessions of Your all-pure mother, and of all Yours saints.

(In some places, this prayer is read by a reader.)

Response : Amen.

** and then, if the Inter-hour should not follow :*

Presbyter : Glory be to You, O Christ, our God, and our Hope, glory be to You.

Reader : Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ; now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.
Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
In the Name of the Lord, holy Master, bless.

Presbyter : *pronounces the dismissal of the day.*

Response : Amen.

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

[END OF THE FIRST HOUR]



THE FIRST INTERHOUR⁵

Reader : O come,⁶ 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. *(with three metanias)*

Reader : **PSALM 45**

O ur God is Refuge and Power, a Helper in afflictions which exceedingly befall us. Because of this, we shall not fear when the earth is stirred up, and the mountains are carried away into the heart of the seas. Their waters roared, and were stirred up ; stirred up were the mountains by His strength. The surges of the river make glad the city of God ; the Most High has hallowed His tent. God is in her midst, and she shall not be shaken ; God will help her at the break of dawn. The nations were stirred up ; kingdoms declined ; He has given His voice ; the earth was shaken. The LORD of Powers is with us ; our Support is the God of Jacob. Come, and see the works of God, the portents which He set upon the earth. Taking away wars as far as the ends of the earth, He will shatter bows, dash weapons, and completely burn shields with fire. “Be still, and know that I AM God. I will be exalted amongst the nations ; I will be exalted on the earth”. The LORD of Powers is with us ; our Support is the God of Jacob.

PSALM 91

I t is good to confess the LORD, and to chant to Your Name, O Most High ; to announce Your mercy in the morning, and Your truth at night, on a ten-stringed psaltery, with a canticle on the lyre ; for You have made me glad with Your deeds, O LORD, and in the works of Your hands shall I exult. How magnified are Your works, O LORD. Exceedingly profound are Your reasonings. A foolish man shall not know, and an unwise one shall not

⁵ It is presently the custom to use the Inter-hours only in lenten periods, and this, sometimes, is reduced even to a “token”. It is clear, however, that when the Inter-hours are served, there is no Divine Liturgy on that day.

If the Inter-hour be unusually served separately, then it would require the Usual Beginning ; but if it follow a previous Hour, then that hour omits the greater dismissal, and we begin, as usual, with ‘Come let us worship ...’.

⁶ When the Inter-hour follows immediately, then we begin the second service here. But in Pascha, if this service follow the First Hour immediately, we say “Christ is risen ...” three times instead, at the beginning of the inter-hour.

understand these things. When sinners rise up just as grass and they have stooped down to watch – all those working lawlessness – it is so that they might be exterminated unto the age of the age. But, O LORD, You are Most High unto the age ; for behold, Your enemies, O LORD, behold, Your enemies shall perish, and scattered abroad shall be all those working lawlessness. My horn shall be exalted like that of the unicorn, and my old age with rich oil. My eye has looked upon my enemies ; and amongst those rising up, doing evil against me, shall my ear hearken. The righteous shall flourish as a palm tree ; just as the cedar in Lebanon shall he be multiplied. Planted in the house of the LORD, in the courts of our God they shall flourish. They shall still be multiplied in their rich old age ; and they shall be enjoying good things, to announce that the LORD our God is upright, and that there is no unrighteousness in Him.

PSALM 92

The Lord has established His Kingship ; He has put on majesty ; the LORD has put on power, and has girded Himself. Indeed, He has made the world firm, which shall not be shaken. Your throne is prepared from thence ; from the age, YOU ARE. The rivers have lifted up, O Lord ; the rivers have lifted up their voices ; the rivers shall raise their surges. Because of the voices of many waters, wonderful are the swells of the sea ; wonderful is the LORD in the heights. Your testimonies have been proved exceedingly faithful. Sanctity befits Your house, O Lord, unto length of days.

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

Reader : Holy God, Holy Strong, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.
(three times) (three metanias)

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

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Lord, cleanse us from our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit, and heal our infirmities, for Your Name's sake.

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

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

Our Father, who are in the heavens, hallowed be Your Name, Your Kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ; give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors ; and bring us not to the test, but rescue us from the evil one.

Presbyter : For Yours are the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, of the
Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, now, and ever and unto the
ages of ages.

Response : Amen.

(And these Tropars in Tone 6 :)

Reader : Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us, for laying aside all excuse, we sinners offer to You, as to our Master, this entreaty, have mercy on us.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
Have mercy on us, O Lord, for in You have we put our trust. Do not be angry with us, nor remember our iniquities, but look down on us even now, since you are compassionate, and deliver us from our enemies ; for You are our God, and we are your people, we are all the work of Your hands, and we call on Your Name.
Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.
O blessed Theotokos, open the doors of compassion to us whose hope is in you, that we may not perish, but be rescued from all the adversity surrounding us, through you, that are the salvation of the Christian race.

Reader : Lord, have mercy. (*forty times*)
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ; now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.
More honourable 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.
In the Name of the Lord, holy Master, bless.

– or – *if there be no presbyter :*

Reader : Through the intercessions of Your saints, O Lord, bless.

Presbyter : May God be bountiful to us, and bless us, show the light of His Countenance upon us, and have mercy on us.

– or –

Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O Lord, Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us.

Reader : Amen.

If there be no presbyter, then the senior reader says :

Reader : O Lord Jesus Christ Son of God, through the prayers of Your most pure Mother, of our venerable, and God-bearing fathers, and of all the saints, have mercy on us, and save us.

Response : Amen.

✠In Lent

Prayer of Saint Ephrem

O Lord, and Master of my life, give me not the spirit of sloth, busyness [despondency *alt*], lust of power, and idle talk ; but rather, favour Your servant with the spirit of soberness, lowliness, endurance, and love ; Yea, O Lord, and King, grant me to see my own falls, and not to condemn my brother, for blessed are You, unto the ages of ages. *Once*

Response : Amen.✝

Reader : **Prayer of St Basil the Great**

O eternal God, unoriginate, and everlasting Light, creator of everything, fount of mercy, ocean of goodness, unsearchable abyss of love for Man, cause the light of Your Face to shine upon us, O Lord. Make our hearts splendid with the wise Sun of Righteousness, and fill our souls with Your gladness, and ever teach us to proclaim, and meditate on Your judgements, and to confess You continually, O our Master, and Benefactor. Guide the works of our hands in accordance with Your will, and cause us to do those works which are pleasing to You, and which You love to prosper ; so that, despite our unworthiness, we shall be able to glorify Your most holy Name, of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, to whom is due all glory, honour, and worship unto the ages.

Response : Amen.

Reader : **And likewise this prayer :**

O Lord, who send forth the light, and it proceeds, who make the sun to rise on both the righteous, and the unrighteous, on both the evil, and the good, who make the dawn, and illumine the whole world, illumine our hearts also, O Master of all. Grant that we may please You during the present day. Guard us from every sin, and from every evil deed. Rescue us from every arrow that flies by day, and from every hostile power, through the intercessions of our all-immaculate Lady, the Theotokos ; of Your immaterial servants the heavenly ministers ; and of all the saints who have always been pleasing to You. For Yours it is to show mercy, and to save us, O our God, and to You we send up glory, to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Response : Amen.

Reader : Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ; now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.
Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
In the Name of the Lord, holy Master, bless.

Presbyter : *pronounces the dismissal of the day.*

Response : Amen.

Presbyter : Through the prayers of our holy *fathers*, O Lord, Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us.

Response : Amen.

If there be no presbyter, then the senior reader says :

Reader : O Lord Jesus Christ Son of God, through the prayers of Your most pure Mother, of our venerable, and God-bearing fathers, and of all the saints, have mercy on us, and save us.

Response : Amen.

Response : Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

[END OF THE FIRST INTER-HOUR]