

**The Sunday of Forgiveness (The Sunday Before Lent)
on Which We Commemorate the Casting Out of Adam from Paradise
Vespers on Saturday Evening**

After the Psalm of Introduction (Psalm 103) and the Great Litany, we read Blessed is the man (the first kathisma of the Psalter).

To Lord, I have cried, ten stichera are sung: six of the Resurrection in the Tone of the week from the Octoechos, and the following four from the Triodion:

Tone Six

They Lord my Creator took me as dust from the earth and formed me into a living creature, breathing into me the breath of life and giving me a soul; He honoured me, setting me as ruler upon earth over all things visible, and making me companion of the angels. But Satan the deceiver, using the serpent as his instrument, enticed me by food; he parted me from the glory of God and gave me over to the earth and to the lowest depths of death. But, Master, in compassion call me back again.

In my wretchedness I have cast off the robe woven by God, disobeying Thy divine command, O Lord, at the counsel of the enemy; and I am clothed now in fig leaves and in garments of skin. I am condemned to eat the bread of toil in the sweat of my brow, and the earth has been cursed so that it bears thorns and thistles for me. But, Lord, who in the last times wast made flesh of a Virgin, call me back again and bring me into Paradise.

O precious Paradise, unsurpassed in beauty, tabernacle built by God, unending gladness and delight, glory of the righteous, joy of the prophets, and dwelling of the saints, with the sound of thy leaves pray to the Maker of all: may He open unto me the gates which I closed by my transgression, and may He count me worthy to partake of the Tree of Life and of the joy which was mine when I dwelt in thee before.

Adam was banished from Paradise through disobedience and cast out from delight, beguiled by the words of a woman. Naked he sat outside the garden, lamenting "Woe is me!" Therefore let us all make haste to accept the season of the Fast and hearken to the teaching of the Gospel, that we may gain Christ's mercy and receive once more a dwelling-place in Paradise.

Glory to the Father...

Tone Six

Adam sat before Paradise and, lamenting his nakedness, he wept: "Woe is me! By evil deceit was I persuaded and led astray, and now I am an exile from glory. Woe is me! In my simplicity I was stripped naked, and now I am in want. O Paradise, no more shall I take pleasure in thy joy; no more shall I look upon the Lord my God and Maker, for I shall return to the earth whence I was taken. O merciful and compassionate Lord, to Thee I cry aloud: I am fallen, have mercy upon me."

Both now. .

Then the Theotokion (Dogmatikon) in the Tone of the week from the Octoechos, followed by the Entrance, O Gentle Light, and the Prokimenon of the day, The Lord is King.

*At the Litya we sing the stichera of the patron saint of the church or monastery, and then: .
Glory to the Father...*

Tone Six

The sun hid its rays, the moon and stars were turned to blood, the mountains were afraid, the hills trembled, when Paradise was shut. Adam departed, beating his hands upon his face and. saying: I am fallen: merciful Lord, have mercy on me.

Both now...

Theotokion

Mystically we sing thy praises, O Mary Theotokos. For thou hast been revealed as throne of the great King, holy tabernacle more spacious than the heavens, chariot of the cherubim, higher than the seraphim, bridal chamber of glory; for from thee the God of all came forth incarnate. Pray to Him for the salvation of our souls.

*We sing the Aposticha in the Tone of the week from the Octoechos, and then:
Glory to the Father...*

Tone Six

Adam was cast out of Paradise through eating from the tree. Seated before the gates he wept, lamenting with a pitiful voice and saying: "Woe is me, what have I suffered in my misery! I transgressed one commandment of the Master, and now I am deprived of every blessing. O most holy Paradise, planted for my sake and shut because of Eve, pray to Him that made thee and fashioned me, that once more I may take pleasure in thy flowers." Then the Saviour said to him: "I desire not the loss of the creature which I fashioned, but that he should be saved and come to knowledge of the truth; and when he comes to me I will not cast him out."

Both now....

Theotokion

Christ the Lord, my Maker and Redeemer, came forth from thy womb, all-hallowed Queen, and clothing Himself in me He delivered Adam from the curse of old. Therefore with never-silent voices we praise thee as true Mother of God and Virgin, and with the salutation of the Angel we cry unto thee: Hail, Lady, guardian and protection and salvation of our souls.

The apolytikion Hail, Theotokos Virgin, Mary full of grace (thrice), and the rest of Vespers.

Matins

After the Six Psalms and the Great Litany we sing God is the Lord, followed by the troparion (apolytikion) of the Resurrection (twice), and the Theotokion in the Tone of the week and then come the readings from the Psalter with the sessional hymns in the Tone of the week from the Octoechos.

After the usual verses of the Polyeleos, we sing Psalm 136:

By the waters of Babylon, there we sat down and we wept when we remembered Sion. Alleluia.

Upon the willows in the midst thereof did we hang our instruments. Alleluia.

For there, they that had taken us captive asked us for words of song. And they that had led us away asked us for a hymn, saying: Sing us one of the songs of Sion. Alleluia.

How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? Alleluia.

If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand be forgotten. Alleluia.

Let my tongue cleave to my throat, if I remember thee not, if I set not Jerusalem above all other, as at the head of my joy. Alleluia.

Remember, O Lord, the sons of Edom, in the day of Jerusalem, Who said: Lay waste, lay waste to her, even to the foundations thereof. Alleluia.

O daughter of Babylon, thou wretched one, blessed shall he be who shall reward thee wherewith thou hast rewarded us. Alleluia.

Blessed shall he be who shall seize and dash thine infants against the rock. Alleluia.

Then the Evlogitaria, the Ypakoe, the Hymns of Ascent and the Prokimenon in the Tone of the week, and the appointed Morning Gospel. We then sing Having Beheld the Resurrection of Christ, followed by Psalm 50, and then, as on previous Sundays:

Glory to the Father...

Tone Eight

The doors of repentance do Thou open to me, O Giver of life, / for my spirit waketh at dawn toward Thy holy temple, / bearing a temple of the body all defiled. / But in Thy compassion cleanse it / by the loving-kindness of Thy mercy.

Both now...

Same Tone

Guide me in the paths of salvation, O Theotokos, / for I have defiled my soul with shameful sins, / and have wasted all my life in slothfulness, / but by thine intercessions / deliver me from all uncleanness.

Tone Six

Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy; / and according to the multitude of Thy compassions, / blot out my transgression.

When I think of the multitude of evil things I have done, / I, a wretched one, / I tremble at the fearful day of judgment; / but trusting in the mercy of Thy loving-kindness, / like David do I cry unto Thee: / Have mercy on me, O God, / according to Thy great mercy.

The Canon

We use four troparia (including the irmos) from the Canon of the Resurrection, two troparia from the Canon of the Cross and the Resurrection, two troparia from the Canon to the Theotokos, all in the Tone of the week from the Octoechos; and then the Canon of the Triodion with six troparia, by Christopher the Chief Secretary.

Tone Six

Ode One

(Irmos) Crossing the deep on foot...

Come, my wretched soul, and weep today over thine acts, remembering how once thou wast stripped naked in Eden and cast out from delight and unending joy.

In Thine abundant compassion and mercy, O Fashioner of the creation and Maker of all, Thou hast taken me from the dust and given me life, commanding me to sing Thy praises with Thine angels.

In the wealth of Thy goodness, O Creator and Lord, Thou hast planted in Eden the sweetness of Paradise, and bidden me take my delight in fair and pleasing fruits that never pass away.

Woe to thee, my wretched soul! Thou hast received authority from God to take thy pleasure in the joys of Eden, but He commanded thee not to eat the fruit of knowledge. Why hast thou transgressed the law of God?

Theotokion

Virgin and Bearer of God, by descent thou art a daughter of Adam, but by grace Mother of Christ our God. I am an exile from Eden: call me back again.

(Katavasia) Crossing the deep on foot as if it were dry land, the people of Israel saw Pharaoh their pursuer drowning in the waves, and they cried aloud: Let us sing a song of victory to God.

Ode Three

(Irmos) O Lord my God, there is none holy as Thou...

Long ago the crafty serpent envied my honour and whispered deceit in Eve's ear. By her was I led astray and banished, woe is me! from the dance of life.

Rashly I stretched out my hand and tasted from the tree of knowledge, though God had ordered me on no account to eat from it; and I was bitterly cast out from the divine glory.

Woe to thee, my wretched soul! How hast thou not recognized the craftiness of the enemy? How hast thou not perceived his deceit and envy? But thou wast darkened in mind and hast transgressed the commandment of thy Maker.

Theotokion

O holy Virgin, thou art my hope and my protection, for thou alone hast covered fallen Adam's nakedness: by thy childbearing, pure Lady, clothe me once more with incorruption..

(Katavasia) O Lord my God, there is none holy as Thou, who in Thy love hast raised up the horn of Thy faithful and established them upon the rock of Thy true faith.

Sessional Hymn

Tone Four

Adam was cast out from the delight of Paradise: bitter was his eating, when in uncontrolled desire he broke the commandment of the Master, and he was condemned to work the

earth from which he had himself been taken, and to eat his bread in toil and sweat. Therefore let us love abstinence, that we may not weep as he did outside Paradise, but may enter through the gate.

Glory to the Father...

The season of the virtues now has come and the Judge is at the door. Let us not hold back with darkened face, but let us keep the Fast, offering tears, contrition and almsgiving; and let us cry: Our sins are more in number than the sand of the sea; but, Deliverer of all, forgive each one of us, that we may receive an incorruptible crown.

Both now...

Theotokion

Unworthy though we be, O Theotokos, may we never keep silent nor cease to praise thy power. For if we had not the protection of thy prayers, who would have delivered us from such great dangers? Who would have preserved us in freedom to this present hour? May we never forsake thee, O Lady, for thou dost always save thy servants from every kind of ill.

Ode Four

(Irmos) Christ is my strength, my God and Lord...

Thou hast counted me worthy of honour in Eden, O Master. But alas! in my wretchedness how have I been deceived by the envy of the devil and cast out from before Thy face!

O ranks of angels, O beauty of Paradise and all the glory of the garden: weep for me, for in my misery I was led astray and rebelled against God.

O blessed meadow, trees and flowers planted by God, O sweetness of Paradise: let your leaves, like eyes, shed tears on my behalf, for I am naked and a stranger to God's glory.

No longer do I see thee nor delight in thy joy and splendour, O precious Paradise. For I have angered my Creator and naked I have been driven out into the world.

Theotokion

Holy Lady, who hast opened unto all the faithful the gates of Paradise that Adam closed of old through his transgression, do thou open unto me the gates of mercy.

(Katavasia) Christ is my strength, my God and Lord, with reverence sings the Holy Church, raising her voice in purity and keeping feast in the Lord.

Ode Five

(Irmos) I entreat Thee, gracious Lord...

Of old the enemy who hates mankind envied, me the life of happiness that I had in Paradise, and taking the form of a serpent he caused me to stumble, and made me a stranger to eternal glory.

I weep and lament in soul, and with mine eyes I shed abundant tears, when I reflect upon the nakedness that is mine through the transgression.

Out O the earth was I fashioned by the hand of God, and I was told in my wretchedness that to the earth I should again return. Who would not weep for me! I am cast out from God's presence and have exchanged Eden for hell.

Theotokion

In faith we all proclaim thee as the mystical bridal chamber of glory, O undefiled Mother of God. Therefore I entreat thee: raise me up, for I am fallen, and make me dwell in the bridal chamber of Paradise.

(Katavasia) I entreat Thee, gracious Lord, with Thy divine light shine upon the souls of those who with love seek Thee early in the morning: may they know Thee, Word of God, as God in very truth, who recallest them from the gloomy darkness of transgression.

Ode Six

(Irmos) When I behold the swelling sea of life...

O Saviour, in Thy compassion Thou hast clothed me in Eden with a divinely woven garment; but, persuaded by the devil, I neglected Thy commandment and was stripped naked in my wretchedness.

O miserable soul, thou hast departed far from God through thy carelessness; thou hast been deprived of the delight of Paradise and parted from the angels; thou hast been led down into corruption. How art thou fallen!

Almighty God, have mercy and take pity on the work of Thy hands. I have cut myself off from the choir of Thine angels; but I entreat Thee, loving Lord, reject me not.

Theotokion

O Mary chosen by God, Queen of the world, thou hast borne the Lord who is King of all and Redeemer. I am a prisoner and an exile from the glory of Paradise: I entreat thee, call me back.

(Katavasia) When I behold the swelling sea of life and the tempest of temptation, I run to Thy calm haven and I cry to Thee: Bring up my life from corruption, O Most Merciful.

Kontakion

Tone Six

O Master, Guide to wisdom, Giver of prudent counsel, Instructor of the foolish and Champion of the poor, make firm my heart and grant it understanding. O Word of the Father, give me words, for see, I shall not stop my lips from, crying out to Thee: I am fallen, in Thy compassion have mercy on me.

Ikos

Banished from the joys of Paradise, Adam sat outside and wept, and beating his hands upon his face he said: I am fallen, in Thy compassion have mercy on me.

When Adam saw the angel drive him out and shut the door of the divine garden, he groaned aloud and said: "I am fallen, in Thy compassion have mercy on me."

O Paradise, share in the sorrow of thy master who is brought to poverty, and with the sound of thy leaves pray to the Creator that He may not keep thy gate closed for ever. I am fallen, in Thy compassion have mercy on me.

O Paradise, perfect, all-holy and blessed, planted for Adam's sake and shut because of Eve, pray to God for the fallen. I am fallen, in Thy compassion have mercy on me.

Ode Seven

(Irmos) An angel made the furnace moist with dew...

O Lord who rulest over all the ages, who by, will hast created me, I was beguiled of old through the envy of the crafty serpent and I angered Thee: despise me not, O God my Saviour, but call me back.

Woe is me, for in place of a robe of light I am clothed in shameful garments. I weep for my loss, O Saviour, and cry to Thee with faith: Despise me not, O God of love, but call me back.

The evil serpent in his envy wounded all my soul and caused me to be banished from the

delight of Paradise. In Thy loving compassion despise me not, O God my Saviour, but call me back.

Theotokion

O pure and blameless Lady, in thy loving compassion accept my entreaty; grant me forgiveness of my offences, for fervently I cry aloud with tears: Despise me not, O good Virgin, but call me back.

(Katavasia) An angel made the furnace moist with dew for the holy Children, but the Chaldeans were consumed in flames by God's command, so that the tyrant cried aloud: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou.

Ode Eight

(Irmos) Thou hast made dew fall from the flames...

O Lord who alone lovest mankind, at the beginning Thou hast honoured the work of Thy hands with every kind of gift: but alas! the hateful serpent deceived us with his hissing and stripped us of the blessings which we had received.

Why hast thou hearkened to bitter counsel and disobeyed the divine ordinance? Woe to thee, miserable soul, thou hast grieved God! Yet thou wast created to glorify Him with the angels for ever.

We bless the Lord, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Thou wast the appointed ruler over creeping things and wild beasts: why then hast thou conversed with a creature that crept upon the earth, destroying souls? And why hast thou taken the destroying enemy as thy counsellor? O my wretched soul, how hast thou been deceived!

Both now...

Theotokion

O Mary, full of divine grace, tabernacle of the Light and dwelling-place of God incarnate, we sing thy praises. I am darkened grievously by the passions: shine upon me with the light of mercy, O Hope of the hopeless.

We praise, bless and worship the Lord...

(Katavasia) Thou hast made dew fall from the flames upon the holy Children, and Thou hast burnt up with water the sacrifice of Thy righteous servant: for Thou, O Christ, dost accomplish all things by Thy will alone, and we exalt Thee above all for evermore.

Ode Nine

(Irmos) No man is able to see God...

Sweet seemed to me the taste of the fruit of knowledge in Eden when I took my fill of eating, but the end of it was gall. Woe to thee, O wretched soul! See how uncontrolled desire has made thee an exile from Paradise!

O God of all, Lord of mercy, look down compassionately upon my lowliness and do not send me far away from Eden; but may I perceive the glory from which I have fallen, and hasten with lamentations to regain what I have lost.

I lament, I groan, I weep as I look upon the cherubim with the sword of fire set to guard the gate of Eden against all transgressors. Woe is me! I cannot enter unless Thou, O Saviour, dost grant me free approach.

O Christ my Saviour, boldly I put my trust in the abundance of Thy mercies and in the

Blood that flowed from Thy divine side; for through Thy Blood Thou hast sanctified the nature of mortal man, O loving Lord, and hast opened unto those that worship Thee the gates of Paradise that of old were closed to Adam.

Theotokion

O Virgin Theotokos, who hast not known man, spiritual Gate of life through which none may pass, by thy prayers open unto me the gates of Paradise that were closed long ago, that I may glorify thee for after God thou art. my helper and. strong refuge.

(Katavasia) No man is able to see God, upon whom the ranks of angels dare not gaze; yet through thee, all-pine Virgin, the Word took flesh and showed Himself to men. With all the hosts of heaven we magnify Him and we call thee blessed.

The appointed exapostilarion of the Resurrection, and then:

Glory to the Father...

In my wretchedness, O Lord, I have disobeyed Thy commandment. Woe is me! I have been stripped of glory, filled with shame, and cast out from the joy of Paradise. I have been justly deprived of Thy blessings: but in Thy mercy and compassion take pity on me.

Both now...

Another exapostilarion

We were banished once, O Lord, from Paradise through eating from the tree; but Thou hast led us back again, O my God and Saviour, through Thy Cross and Passion. At the intercessions of Thy Mother, give us strength through this Thy Cross to keep the Fast in holiness and to worship Thy divine Awakening, the Passover of salvation.

Lauds. Five stichera of the Resurrection in the Tone of the week, from the Octoechos, and then the following four stichera from the Triodion:

Tone Five.

"Woe is me!" Adam cried lamenting: "for the serpent and the woman have deprived me of my boldness before God, and through eating from the tree I have become an exile from the joy of Paradise. Woe is me! No more can I endure the shame. I who was once king of all God's creatures upon earth have now become a prisoner, led astray by evil counsel. I who was once clothed in the glory of immortality must now, as one condemned to die, wrap myself miserably in the skins of mortality. Woe is me! Who will share my sorrow with me? But, O Lord who lovest mankind, who hast fashioned me from the earth and art clothed in compassion, call me back from the bondage of the enemy and save me."

I will confess Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart, I will tell of all Thy wonders (*Psalm 9: 2*).

Same Tone

The arena of the virtues has been opened. Let all who wish to struggle for the prize now enter, girding themselves for the noble contest of the Fast; for those that strive lawfully are justly crowned.

Taking up the armour of the Cross, let us make war against the enemy. Let us have as our invincible rampart the Faith, prayer as our breastplate, and as our helmet almsgiving; and as our sword let us use fasting that cuts away all evil from our heart. If we do this, we shall receive the true crown from Christ the King of all at the Day of Judgement.

I will be glad and rejoice in Thee, I will chant unto Thy name, O Most High. (*Psalm 9: 3*).

Tone Six

Adam was driven out of Paradise, because in disobedience he had eaten food; but Moses was granted the vision of God, because he had cleansed the eyes of his soul by fasting. If then we long to dwell in Paradise, let us abstain from all needless food; and if we desire to see God, let us like Moses fast for forty days. With sincerity let us persevere in prayer and intercession; let us still the passions of our soul; let us subdue the rebellious instincts of the flesh. With light step let us set out upon the path to heaven, where the choirs of angels with never-silent voice sing the praises of the undivided Trinity; and there we shall behold the surpassing beauty of the Master. O Son of God, Giver of Life, in Thee we set our hope: count us worthy of a place there with the angelic hosts, at the intercessions of the Mother who bore Thee, O Christ, of the apostles and the martyrs and of all the saints.

Arise, O Lord my God, let Thy hand be lifted high; forget not Thy paupers to the end
(*Psalm 9: 33*).

Same Tone

The time is now at hand for us to start upon the spiritual contest and to gain the victory over the demonic powers. Let us put on the armour of abstinence and clothe ourselves in the glory of the angels. With boldness Moses spoke to the Creator, and he heard the voice of the invisible God In Thy love for man, O Lord, grant us with the same boldness to venerate Thy Passion and Thy Holy Resurrection.

Glory to the Father...

Repeat The time is now at hand...

Both now...

Most blessed art thou, O Virgin Theotokos...

Great Doxology, the two Litanies, and the Dismissal.

Liturgy

The Typika (Psalms 102 and 145) and the Beatitudes. With the Beatitudes we sing four troparia in the Tone of the week from the Octoechos, and four troparia from Ode Six of the Canon in the Triodion.

Prokimenon: Tone Eight

Make your vows and pay them to the Lord our God (*Psalm 75: 12*).

In Judah is God known: His Name is great in Israel (*ibid.*, 2).

Epistle: Romans 13: 11-14: 4.

Alleluia: Tone Six

It is good to give praise unto the Lord, and chant unto Thy name, O Most High (*Palm 91: 2*).

To proclaim in the morning Thy mercy, and Thy truth by night (*ibid.*, 3).

Gospel: Matthew 6: 14-21.

Communion verse: Praise the Lord from the heavens...

Vespers on Sunday Evening

There is no reading from the Psalter.

To Lord, I have cried, ten stichera are sung: four penitential stichera in the Tone of the week, as on every Sunday evening up to the fifth week of the Fast; and then three stichera from the Triodion:

*Tone Two
(by Joseph)*

Let us all make haste to humble the flesh by abstinence, as we set out upon the God-given course of the holy Fast; and with prayers and tears let us seek our Lord and Saviour. Laying aside all memories of evil, let us cry aloud: We have sinned against Thee, Christ our King; save us as the men of Nineveh in days of old, and in Thy compassion make us sharers in Thy heavenly Kingdom.

When I think of my works, deserving every punishment, I despair of myself, O Lord. For see, I have despised Thy precious commandments and wasted my life as the Prodigal. Therefore I entreat Thee: cleanse me in the waters of repentance, and through prayer and fasting make me shine with light, for Thou alone art merciful; abhor me not, O Benefactor of all, supreme in love.

*Same Tone
(by Theodore)*

Let us set out with joy upon the: season of the Fast, and prepare ourselves for spiritual combat. Let us purify our soul and cleanse our flesh; and as we fast from food, let us abstain also from every passion. Rejoicing in the virtues of the Spirit may we persevere with love, and so be counted worthy to see the solemn Passion of Christ our God, and with great spiritual gladness to behold His holy Passover.

Then three stichera to the saint of the day from the Menaion; Glory to the Father ...Both now ...; and the Theotokion from the Menaion.

Entrance with the censer, as on all Sundays in Lent.

O Gentle Light...

Great Prokimenon (Psalm 68)

Tone Eight

Deacon: Turn not away Thy face from Thy servant, for I am in trouble; hear me speedily: hearken unto my soul, and deliver it.

This is repeated by the choir.

Deacon: Let Thy salvation, O God, succour me.

Choir: Turn not away Thy face...

Deacon: Let the poor see it and be glad.

Choir: Turn not away Thy face...

Deacon: Seek God, and your soul shall live.

Choir: Turn not away Thy face...

Deacon: Turn not away Thy face from Thy servant, for I am in trouble.

Choir: Hear me speedily: hearken unto my soul, and deliver it.

Vouchsafe, O Lord..., *and the Litany*, Let us complete our evening prayer to the Lord, *with the choir singing he responses according to the penitential Lenten melody. At this point the priest removes his phelonion and changes his epitachelion to one of dark colour; and the covers on the ikon-stands and the other hangings in the church are also changed.*

Aposticha

Tone Four

Thy grace has shone forth, O Lord, it has shone forth and given light to our souls. Behold, now is the accepted time: behold, now is the, season of repentance. Let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armour of light, that having sailed across the great sea of the Fast, we may reach the third-day Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of our souls.

Unto Thee have I lifted up mine eyes...

Repeat the sticheron Thy grace has shone forth, O Lord...

Have mercy upon us, O Lord...

To the Martyrs

Same Tone

Thou art glorified in the memorials of Thy saints, O. Christ our God: at their intercessions send down upon us Thy great mercy. Glory to the Father... Both now...

Theotokion

Same Tone

The ranks of angels glorify thee, O Mother of God, for thou hast given birth to Him that is God, who dwells ever with the Father and the Spirit, who created the angelic hosts out of nothing by an act of His will. Entreat Him, all-pure Lady, to save and illumine the souls of those who with true worship sing thy praises.

Now lettest Thou Thy servant..., Holy God..., *etc., and the Lord's Prayer. Then the troparia:*

Tone Five

O, Theotokos Virgin, Rejoice... (*Prostration*).

Glory to the Father...

O Baptist of Christ... (*Prostration*).

Both now...

Pray for us, holy apostles ... (*Prostration*).

Beneath thy tender mercy... (*No prostration*).

Kyrie eleison (*forty times*); Glory to the Father..., Both now...; More honourable than the cherubim...; In the Name of the Lord, father bless.

Priest: Blessed be He who is, Christ our God...

Then we say, O heavenly King, uphold our rulers...

The Prayer of St. Ephraim, once only, with three prostrations.

Priest: Glory to Thee, O Christ our God and our hope, glory to Thee, *and the Dismissal.*

Then follows the ceremony of mutual forgiveness. The priest stands beside the analogion, and the faithful come up one by one and venerate the ikon, after which each makes a prostration before the priest, saying: Forgive me, a sinner. The priest also makes a prostration before each, saying. the same words; and then the other receives his blessing and kisses his hand. Meanwhile the choir sings quietly the irmoi of the Canon at Easter Matins or else the Easter aposticha. After receiving the priest's blessing, the faithful may also ask forgiveness of one another. When all have asked forgiveness, the priest says At the

prayers of our holy fathers..., and so the service ends.

The same order of Vespers, with the exception of the ceremony of mutual forgiveness, is used on each Sunday evening up to the fifth week of Lent.