



OFFICE OF VESPERS FOR THE PRESERVATION OF CREATION

Orthodoxy and Ecology

ANNEX 1: ORTHODOX SERVICES FOR THE CREATION

The World Fellowship SYNDESMOS

of Orthodox Youth

The Orthodoxy and Ecology Resource Book is produced by SYNDESMOS, the World Fellowship of Orthodox Youth.

The Orthodox Services for the Creation is included as an annex to the Orthodoxy and Ecology Resource Book.

Printed by Orthdruk Orthodox Printing House, Bialystok, Poland, 1996

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Design, layout and production: Alexander Belopopsky.

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SYNDESMOS would like to recognize the support and partnership of the following organizations, which made this publication possible:

World Council of Churches

Unit III

Justice, Peace and Creation

Council of Europe

European Youth Foundation

The Leventis Foundation

ICOREC

International Consultancy on Religion, Education and Culture

WWf International

The World Wide Fund for Nature

The Friends of Mount Athos

Great Britain

Office of Vespers for the Preservation of Creation

Composed on the Holy Mountain by Monk Gerasimos of the Skete of Saint Anne. Hymn writer of the Great Church of Christ(+1991). Translated into English by Archimandrite Ephrem (Lash).

D = Deacon P = Priest B = Bishop C = Choir R = Reader A =All

(P) Blessed is our God, now and ever and to the ages of ages.
(C) Amen.

(A) O Heavenly King, Comforter, the Spirit of truth, present in all places and filling all things; treasury of good things and giver of life, come and dwell in us and purify us from every stain, and of your goodness save our souls.

(All) Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (3 times)
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Most Holy Trinity, have mercy upon us. O Lord, cleanse us from our sins.

O Master, pardon our iniquities.

O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for thy Name's sake. Lord have merry, Lord have merry, Lord have merry.

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

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Lord have mercy (12 times).

(R) O come let us worship and bow down to our King and God.

O come let us worship and bow down to Christ, our King and God.

O come let us worship and bow down before Christ himself, our King and our God.

(Psalm of Preparation)

Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, you are very great. You are clothed with honour and majesty, wrapped in light as with a garment. You stretch out the heavens like a tent, you set the beams of your chambers on the waters, you make the clouds your chariot, you ride on the wings of the wind, you make the winds your messengers, fire and flame your ministers. You set the earth on its foundations, so that it shall never be shaken. You cover it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains. At your rebuke they flee; at the sound of your thunder they take to flight. They rose up to the mountains, ran down to the valleys to the place that you appointed for them. You set a boundary that they may not pass, so that they might not again cover the earth. You make springs gush forth in the valleys; they flow between the hills, giving drink to every wild animal; the wild asses quench their thirst. By the streams the birds of the air have their habitation; they sing among the branches. From your lofty abode you water the mountains; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work. You cause the grass to grow for the cattle, and plants for people to use, to bring forth food from the earth, and wine to gladden the human heart, oil to make the face shine, and bread to strengthen the human heart. The trees of the Lord are watered abundantly, the cedars of Lebanon that he planted. In them the birds build their nests; the stork has its home in the fir trees. The high mountains are for the wild goats; the rocks are a refuge for the conies. You have made the moon to mark the seasons; the sun knows its time for setting. You make darkness, and it is night, when all the animals of the forest come creeping out. The young lions roar for their prey, seeking their food from God. When the sun rises, they withdraw and lie down in their dens. People go out to their work and to their labor until the evening.

O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. Yonder is the sea, great and wide, creeping things innumerable are there, living things both small and great. There go the ships, and Leviathan that you formed to sport in it. These all look to you to give them their food in due season; when you give to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are filled with good things. When you hide your face, they are dismayed; when you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust. When you send forth your spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the ground. May the glory of the Lord endure forever; may the Lord rejoice in his works -who looks on the earth and it trembles, who touches the mountains and they smoke. I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have being. May my meditation be pleasing to him, for I rejoice in the Lord. Let sinners be consumed from the earth, and let the wicked be no more. Bless the Lord, O my soul. Praise the Lord! O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom have you made them all.

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

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Glory to you, our God.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Glory to you, our God.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Glory to you, our hope, O Lord, glory to you.

(D) In peace let us pray to the Lord.

(A) Lord have merry.

(D) For the peace that is from above and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord. (A) Lord have mercy.

(D) For peace in the world, for the stability of the holy churches of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

(A) Lord have merry.

(D) For our Metropolitan / Archbishop / Bishop (N.), the honourable presbyters, the deacons in the service of Christ, and all the clergy and people, let us pray to the Lord.

(A) Lord have merry.

(D) For this city, for every city and country, and for the faithful who live in them, let us pray to the Lord.

(A) Lord have merry.

(D) For favourable weather, an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and temperate seasons, let us pray to the Lord.

(A) Lord have merry.

(D) For travellers by land, sea and air, for the sick, the suffering, the captives and for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

(A) Lord have merry.

(D) For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger and distress, let us pray to the Lord.

(A) Lord have merry.

(D) Help us, save us, have merry upon us, and protect us, O God, by Your Grace.

(A) Lord have merry.

(D) Remembering our most holy, pure blessed, and glorious Lady, the Mother of God and ever virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

(A) To you O Lord.

(P) Lord, our God, whose power is beyond compare, and glory is beyond understanding; whose mercy is boundless, and love for us is ineffable: look upon us and upon this holy house in Your compassion. Grant to us and to those who pray with us Your abundant mercy.

(D) For to You belong all glory, honour and worship to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and ever and to the ages of ages.

(C) Amen.

(Tone 1)

(C) O Lord, I have cried out to you, hear me, O Lord. Lord I have cried out to you, hear me, give heed to the voice of my prayer. When I cry out to you, hear me, O Lord.

Let my prayer rise like incense before you; and the lifting of my hands an evening sacrifice. Hear me, O Lord.

Verse: If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, Lord who could stand? For with you there is forgiveness.

O Christ, who brought all things into existence from nothing, and with ineffable wisdom gave to each one to accomplish unerringly the goal which you laid down in the beginning, O Saviour, Lover of humankind, as you are powerful, bless the whole creation which you fashioned.

Verse: For your name's sake I have waited for you, O Lord; my soul has waited for your word, my soul has hoped in the Lord.

Give peace to all the nations, Lord, and understanding in all things, so that we may lead our life in tranquillity and always keep the laws which you laid down for all creation for the unalterable maintenance and government of the universe.

Verse: From the watch of dawn until the night, from the watch of dawn, let Israel hope in the Lord. Lover of humankind, keep unharmed the environment that clothes the earth, through which, by your will, we who inhabit the earth live and move and have our being, that we, your unworthy suppliants, may be delivered from destruction and ruin.

Verse: For with the Lord there is mercy, and with him abundant redemption, and he will redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

Fence round the whole creation, O Christ Saviour, with the mighty strength of your love for humankind, and deliver the earth we inhabit from the corruption which threatens it; for we, your servants, have set our hopes on you.

Verse: Praise the Lord all nations! extol him all peoples!

Put an end, O Saviour, to the evil designs which are being devised against us by senseless intent, and turn aside from the earth every destructive action of the works of human hands which contrive corruption leading to perdition.

Verse: For great is his mercy to us, and the truth of the Lord endures for ever.

O Lord, who wraps creation in clouds, as godly David sang, watch over the environment of the earth, which you created from the beginning for the preservation of mortals, and give us the breath of the winds and the flow of waters.

(Tone 6)

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

Almighty God, who created all things with wisdom and who watches over and guides them by your all-powerful hand, grant well-being that all creation may prosper and remain unharmed by hostile elements; for you, Master, commanded that the works of your hands should remain unshaken until the ends of the age; for you spoke and they came into being and they receive from you mercy for the turning away of all harm, and for the salvation of the human race which glorifies your name which is praised above all.

Now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Who will not call you blessed, all-holy Virgin? Who will not hymn your child-birth without labour? For the only-begotten Son, who shone from the Father beyond time, came forth from you pure Maiden, ineffably incarnate. By nature he became man for our sakes, not divided in a duality of persons, but known without confusion in a duality of natures. O honoured and all-blessed, implore him to have mercy on our souls.

(D) Wisdom. Let us attend.

O Jesus Christ, the joyful Light of the holy glory, of the immortal, heavenly, holy, blessed Father! Now that we have come to the setting of the sun, and behold the evening light, we sing in praise to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. For you are worthy to be praised at every hour with

songs of worship, O Son of God, giver of life. Wherefore the world doth glorify you.

(P) Wisdom.

(R) The Reading is from Leviticus

The Lord spoke to the children of Israel saying: If you walk in my ordinances and keep my commandments and do them, I will give you rain in its season and the earth will give its produce and the trees of the plains their fruit. And your threshing time will overtake the vintage, and the vintage will overtake the sowing. And you will eat your bread to the full and dwell in safety on your land. And no one shall make you afraid; and I will destroy the evil before you. And five of you will pursue a hundred and a hundred of you will pursue tens of thousands. And I will look upon you and bless you and make you increase and multiply and I will establish my covenant with you. And you will eat what is old and very old, and bring out the old to make way for the new. And I will set my tabernacle among you and my soul shall not abhor you; and I will walk among you; and I will be your God and you shall be my people. But if you will not listen to me, nor observe these ordinances of mine, but disobey them, and if your soul loathes my judgements, so that you do not keep all my commandments, I in turn will do thus to you: I will bring distress upon you, and you will sow your seed in vain and your enemies will devour your labours. And I will set my face against you and you will fall before your foes and they will pursue you and you will flee though no one pursues you; and I will smash the arrogance of your pride. And I will make the heaven like iron for you and your earth like solid bronze. And your strength will be in vain and your land will not give its fruit, and the trees of the field will not give their fruit. And I will send the wild beasts of the earth against you, and they will consume your cattle, and the sword will come against you and make you few in number. And your land will be desert and your farms will be desert; because you have walked against me crookedly, and I will walk against you with crooked rage, says the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel.

(P) Wisdom.

(R) The Reading is from the prophecy of Isaiah

Look down, Lord, from heaven and see, from your holy house and your glory. Where is the abundance of your mercy and of your acts of pity, that you have withheld yourself from us? For you are our Father, because Abraham has not known us, nor Israel acknowledged us. But do you Lord, our Father, deliver us; from the beginning your name is upon us. Why have you made us wander from your way, Lord? Why have you hardened our hearts not to fear you? Return for the sake of your servants, for the sake of the tribes that are your heritage, that for a little while we may inherit your holy mountain. Our enemies have trampled down your sanctuary, we have become as at the beginning when you did not rule over us, nor had your name been invoked upon us. If you open the

heaven, trembling from you will seize the mountains and they will melt as wax melts before the fire, and fire will burn up your adversaries, and your name will be manifest among your adversaries; nations will be troubled at your presence. When you do glorious deeds, trembling from you will seize the mountains. From eternity we have not heard, nor have our eyes seen any God but you. And your works are true, and you will perform mercy for those who wait for you. For mercy will meet with those who do right and remember your ways. And now, Lord, you are our Father; while we are clay and you are our Fashioner; we are all the work of your hands. Do not be exceedingly angry with us, Lord, and do not remember our sins for ever. And now, look upon us, Lord, because we are all your people.

(P) Wisdom.

(R) The Reading is from the Prophecy of Jeremiah.

Thus says the Lord: I have remembered the mercy of your youth and the love of your marriage, of your following the Holy One of Israel, says the Lord, the Holy One of Israel. To the Lord was the beginning of his produce. All those who devoured him will offend and evils will come upon them, says the Lord. Hear the word of the Lord, house of Jacob, and every family of the house of Israel. Thus says the Lord: What offence did your fathers find in me, that they revolted far from me and went after vanities and became vain? And they did not say: Where is the Lord who brought us up out of the Land of Egypt, who guided us in the wilderness, in a boundless and trackless land, without water or fruit, and in the shadow of death, in a land through which no man had passed, nor had any son of man dwelt there? And I led you to Carmel to eat its fruits and its good things; and you went in and you defiled my land and made my inheritance an abomination. The priests did not say: Where is the Lord? And those who cling to the law did not know me, and the shepherds acted impiously towards me; and the prophets prophesied Baal and went after that which does not profit. Therefore I will be brought to trial before you again, says the Lord; and I will be brought to trial before your children's children. Cross to the islands of Kittim and look; and to Kedar and send and observe carefully, and see if such things have been done; if the nations will change their gods, though they are no gods. But my people have changed their glory for something from which they will gain nothing. Heaven was amazed at this and trembled exceedingly, says the Lord.

(D) Let us say with all our soul and with all our mind, let us say.

(A) Lord have mercy.

(D) O Lord almighty, the God of our fathers, we pray you, hear and have mercy.

(A) Lord have mercy.

(D) Have mercy upon us, O God, according to your great mercy, we pray you, hear and have mercy.

(A) Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy.

(D) Again we pray for our Metropolitan / Archbishop / Bishop (N), for the priests, deacons, and all other clergy; and for all our brethren in Christ.

(A) Lord have mercy, Lord have merry, Lord have mercy.

(D) Again we pray for the civil authorities, and for our armed forces everywhere.

(A) Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have merry.

(D) Again we pray for the blessed and ever-memorable holy Orthodox patriarchs; and for the blessed and ever-memorable founders of this holy house; and for all our fathers and brethren, the Orthodox departed this life before us, who here and in all the world lie asleep in the Lord.

(A) Lord have merry, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy.

(D) Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, and visitation for the servants of God that lie ill, and for the pardon and remission of their sins.

(A) Lord have mercy, Lord have merry, Lord have mercy.

(D) Again we pray for those who bring offerings and do good works in this holy and all-venerable house; for those who labour and those who sing; and for all the people here present, who await your great and rich mercy.

(A) Lord have merry, Lord have mercy, Lord have merry.

(P) For you are a merciful God, and love humankind, and to you we ascribe glory, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and to the ages of ages.

(A) Amen.

(A) Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this evening without sin. Blessed are you O Lord, God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is your name for ever.: Amen. Let your merry come upon us, O Lord, even as we have set our hope on you, Blessed are you, O Lord, teach me your statutes. Blessed are you, O Master, make me to understand your statutes. Blessed are you, O Holy one, enlighten me with your statutes. Your merry, O Lord, is for ever. Do not overlook the works of your hands. To you belong praise; to you is due song; to you is due glory; to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit now and ever, and to the ages of ages, Amen.

(D) Let us complete our evening prayer to the Lord.

(A) Lord have mercy.

(D) For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger and distress, let us pray to the Lord.

(A) Lord have mercy.

(D) Help us, save us, have mercy upon us, and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

(A) Lord have mercy.

(D) For a perfect, holy, peaceful, and sinless evening, let us ask the Lord.

(A) Grant this O Lord.

(D) For an angel of peace, a faithful guide, a guardian of our souls and bodies, let us ask the Lord.

(A) Grant this O Lord.

(D) For forgiveness and remission of our sins and transgressions, let us ask the Lord.

(A) Grant this O Lord.

(D) For all that is good and beneficial to our souls, and for peace in the world, let us ask the Lord. (A) Grant this O Lord.

(D) For the completion of our lives in peace and repentance, let us ask the Lord.

(A) Grant this O Lord.

(D) For a Christian end to our lives, peaceful, without shame and suffering, and for a good account before the awesome judgement seat of Christ, let us ask the Lord.

(A) Grant this O Lord.

(D) Remembering our most holy, pure, blessed, and glorious Lady, the Mother of God and ever virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

(A) To You O Lord.

(P) For you are a good God who loves humankind, and to you we send up glory; to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

(A) Amen.

(B) Peace be with all.

(A) And with your spirit.

(D) Let us bow our heads to the Lord.

(A) To You O Lord.

(P) May the might of your kingdom be blessed and glorified; of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

(A) Amen.

(Tone 1)

O Lord, who created the universe at the beginning and gave to each thing his own rank, do not despise the works of your hands, but with an eye of merry look from heaven upon this vine and restore it according to your will, turning aside from it every purpose that brings corruption and every destroyer; for you are our Shepherd and Deliverer and Saviour and from you we receive help in mercy and acts of compassion, as we glorify you, O Master.

(Tone 2)

O Lord and Master who fenced about the domain of the earth and made it sure with an enveloping band, deliver its whole structure from harm and disaster; for you are a treasury of strength and the source of life, and all things minister and are subject to your will as your servants, Lord. And so grant us your mercies and turn away from us every disaster, and save our souls as you love humankind.

(Tone 3)

Threats and scourges and destruction hang over us, Lord, because of the multitude of our transgressions; for we have sinned and transgressed and gone far from you, and we are affected and afflicted by dire perils; but deliver us, Lord from dangers that beset us, and keep the whole structure of the earth unharmed, granting equable breaths of wind and ever-flowing springs of water for our safe-keeping and salvation, O Lover of humankind.

(Tone 4)

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

O Lord, who holds the circle of the earth and establishes its foundations, as the Prophet says, accept our suppliant entreaties, as our guardian and protector and Saviour; for we are your people and the sheep of your pasture and by your infinite mercy we shall be delivered from expected dangers. Do not then utterly destroy us, Master, but may your goodness conquer the multitude of our offences, that we may glorify the ocean of your acts of pity.

Now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen

From dangers of every kind protect your servants, blessed Mother of God, that we may glorify you, the hope of our souls.

The Lity

(D) Have mercy upon us, O God, according to your great mercy, we pray you hear and have mercy.

(A) Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy.

(D) Again we pray for all those responsible for our churches and communities, and for all brothers and sisters in Christ, and for every Christian soul afflicted and weary, in need of God's mercies and help; for the protection of this city and those who dwell in it; for the peace of the whole world; for the well-being of the holy churches of God; for the servants of God here present; for the salvation and help of all who labour and serve; for those who travel; for the healing of the sick; for the repose, refreshment and blessed memory of and forgiveness of sins of all who have gone to rest before and lie here and everywhere; for the deliverance of captives and refugees, let us say:

(A) Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy.

Again we pray that God will keep this city and every city and country from famine, pestilence, earthquake, flood, fire, pollution, war and civil strife, and that our good God who loves humanity will be gracious and merciful and deliver us from his righteous chastisement which impends against us, and have mercy on us.

(A) Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy.

(D) Again we pray that the Lord God hear the prayer of us sinners and have mercy on us.' (A) Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy.

(B) Hear us, O God our Saviour, the hope of all the ends of the earth, and of those who are far off upon the sea; and be gracious, be gracious, O Master, unto us sinners and have mercy on us. (A) Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy.

(D) For you are a merciful God who loves humanity and all your creation, and unto you do we give glory, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

(A) Amen.

(B) Peace be to all.

(A) And with your spirit.

(D) Let us pray to the Lord.

(B) Lord, Jesus Christ our God, who blessed the five loaves in the wilderness, and from them five thousand were fed, bless also these loaves, this oil, this wine and all the fruits of the earth, and multiply them in this city and everywhere in your world; sanctify your faithful who will receive them.

For you are the One who blesses and feeds and sanctifies all creation, O Christ our God, and to you we give glory, together with your eternal Father, and your all-holy, good and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Verse: The rich have become poor and hungry; but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.

(Tone 5)

Merciful God, who loves humankind, look with an eye of compassion upon the works of your hands and set free the expanse of the atmosphere from dread destruction and death-dealing emissions and every poisonous pollution, through which death and danger threaten. Take pity then on what you have fashioned and give to all prudence not to act senselessly, the result of which is corruption, granting to all pardon and salvation and divine merry.

Verse: With my voice I cried to the Lord, and he heard me from his holy mountain.

Accept, O Saviour, the entreaties of your Mother, which she offers for all creation, and the supplications of all your Saints. Grant to all your mercies, and keep unharmed the firmament which you spread out from the beginning with wisdom, Lord, and brought into being for the benefit of mortals. Keep undamaged, O Word, the whole environment which girds the earth from harmful influences, granting to all pardon and salvation and great merry.

Verse: When I called you hearkened to me, O God of my justice, in all affliction you set me at large.

With humility of our soul we entreat you, Lord, and we fall down before you: At your command deliver the earth on which we dwell from every harm and from harsh ruin, and speedily avert from it and abolish by your will destructive emanations and pour out the fresh dew of life-sustaining air. Fence about the whole enclosure of the environment, Master and Saviour, with your mighty power, granting to all pardon and salvation and divine merry.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Through compassionate pity, O Word, you took another form, refashioned corrupted nature and brought it back to incorruption; and now we beseech you, yield to the supplications of your most pure Mother and grant stability to the inhabited world and well-being to all creation and deliverance from perils for the salvation for the salvation of our souls.

(C) Lord, now let your servant depart in peace, according to your word. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared before the face of all peoples; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel.

(A) Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have merry on us. (3 times)

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

Most Holy Trinity, have mercy upon us.

O Lord, cleanse us from our sins.

O Master, pardon our iniquities.

O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for thy Name's sake.

Lord have merry, Lord have merry, Lord have merry.

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

Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from the evil one.

(P) For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

(C) Amen.

(Tone 4)

(C) Lord and Saviour, who as God brought all things into being by a word, establishing laws and governing them unerringly to your glory, keep secure and unharmed, at the prayers of the Mother of God, all the elements which hold the earth together, and save the universe.

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

The mystery hidden from all eternity and unknown to Angels has been revealed to those on earth through you, O Mother of God: God being made flesh in a union without confusion, and willingly accepting the Cross for us, though which he raised the first-formed man and saved our souls from death.

(D) Let us pray to the Lord

(A) Lord have merry.

(B) The blessing of the Lord, through his grace and loving-kindness, be upon you always, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

(A) Amen.

(P) Wisdom.

(C) Master give the blessing.

(B) Blessed be He that Is, even Christ our God, always, now and ever and unto the ages of ages.

(C) Amen. Confirm, O God, the Holy Orthodox faith of Orthodox Christians, unto the ages of ages.

(P) Most holy Mother of God, save us.

(C) More honourable than the Cherubim, incomparably more glorious than the Seraphim, who undefiled gave birth to God the Word, true Mother of God, we magnify you.

(P) Glory to you, O Christ our God, our sure hope, glory to you.

(C) Glory 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 merry, Lord have mercy. Master, give the blessing.

(P) May Christ our true God, as a good, loving, and merciful God, have mercy upon us and save us, through the intercessions of His most pure and holy Mother; the power of the precious and life-giving cross; the protection of the honourable, bodiless powers of heaven, the supplications of the honourable, glorious prophet and forerunner John the Baptist; the holy, glorious and praiseworthy apostles; the holy, glorious and triumphant martyrs, the holy and righteous ancestors Joachim and Anna; Saint x whose memory we commemorate today, and all the saints, for he is good and loves humankind.

(A) Amen

(P) Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us.

(A) Amen.

AN AKATHIST IN PRAISE OF GODS CREATION

An Akathist in Praise of God's Creation

Metropolitan Tryphon (Turkestanov), 1934

Kontakion 1

Incorruptible Lord, your right hand controls the whole course of human life, according to the decrees of your Providence for our salvation.

We give you thanks for all your blessings, known and unknown:

for our earthly life and for the heavenly joys of your kingdom which is to come. Henceforth extend your mercies towards us as we sing:

Glory to you, O God, from age to age!

Ikos 1

I was born a weak, defenceless child, but your angel, spreading his radiant wings, guarded my cradle. From my birth, your love has illumined my paths, and has wondrously guided me towards the light of eternity. From my first day until now, the generous gifts of your providence have been wonderfully showered upon me. I give you thanks, and with all those who have come to know you, I exclaim:

Glory to you for calling me into being,

Glory to you for spreading out before me the beauty of the universe,

Glory to you for revealing to me through heaven and earth the eternal book of wisdom,

Glory to your eternity within this fleeting world,

Glory to you for your mercies, seen and unseen,

Glory to you for every sigh of my sorrow,

Glory to you for every step in my life's journey, for every moment of joy,
Glory to you, O God, from age to age.

Kontakion 2

O Lord, how lovely it is to be your guest:

Breeze full of scent; mountains reaching to the skies; Waters like a boundless mirror,

Reflecting the sun's golden rays and the scudding clouds.

All nature murmurs mysteriously, breathing depths of tenderness, Birds and beasts bear the imprint of your love,

Blessed are you, mother earth, in your fleeting loveliness, Which wakens our yearning for happiness that will last for ever In the land where, amid beauty that grows not old,

Rings out the cry: Alleluia!

Ikos 2

You brought me into this life as into an enchanted paradise. We have seen the sky, like a deep blue cup ringing with birds in the azure heights. We have listened to the soothing murmur of the forest and the sweet-sounding music of the waters. We have tasted fragrant fruit of fine flavour and sweet-scented honey. How pleasant is our stay with you on earth: it is a joy to be your guest.

Glory to you for the feast-day of life,

Glory to you for the perfume of lilies and roses,

Glory to you for each different taste of berry and fruit,

Glory to you for the sparkling silver of early morning dew,

Glory to you for each smiling, peaceful awakening,

Glory to you for eternal life in us, a messenger of heaven, Glory to you, O God, from age to age.

Kontakion 3

In the strength of the Holy Spirit each flower gives out its scent - sweet perfume, delicate colour, beauty of the whole universe revealed in the tiniest thing. Glory and honour to God the Giver of life, who covers the fields with their carpet of flowers, crowns the plains with harvest of gold and the blue of corn-flowers, and our souls with the joy of contemplating him. O be joyful and sing to him: Alleluia!

Ikos 3

How glorious you are in the triumph of spring, when every creature awakes to new life and joyfully sings your praises with a thousand tongues: you are the source of life, the conqueror of death. By the light of the moon nightingales sing: the plains and the woods put on their wedding garment, white as snow. All the earth is your promised bride awaiting her bridegroom who does not know decay. If the grass of the field is clothed like this, how gloriously shall we be transfigured in the coming age of the resurrection: how radiant our bodies, how resplendent our souls!

Glory to you, bringing from the darkness of the earth an endless variety of colours, tastes and scents,

Glory to you for the warmth and tenderness of the world of nature, Glory to you for surrounding us with thousands of your works, Glory to you for the depth of your wisdom: the whole world is a living sign of it, Glory to you: on my knees, I kiss the traces of your unseen hand,

Glory to you for setting before us the dazzling light of eternal life,

Glory to you for the hope of the unutterable, imperishable beauty of immortality,

Glory to you, O God, from age to age.

Kontakion 4

How filled with sweetness are those whose thoughts dwell on you: how life-giving your holy Word; to speak with you is more soothing than anointing with oil, sweeter than the honeycomb. Praying to you refreshes us and gives us wings: our hearts overflow with warmth; a majesty filled with wisdom permeates nature and all of life! Where you are not, there is only emptiness. Where you are, the soul is filled with abundance, and its song resounds like a torrent of life: Alleluia!

Ikos 4

When over the earth the light of the setting sun fades away, when the peace of eternal sleep and the quiet of the declining day reign over all, I see your dwelling-place like tents filled with light, reflected in the shapes of the clouds at dusk: fiery and purple, gold and blue, they speak prophet-like of the ineffable beauty of your heavenly court, and solemnly call: let us go to the Father!

Glory to you in the quiet hour of evening,

Glory to you, covering the world with deep peace,

Glory to you for the last ray of the setting sun,

Glory to you for the rest of blissful sleep,

Glory to you for your mercy in the midst of darkness, when the whole world has parted company with us,

Glory to you for the tender emotion of a soul moved to prayer,

Glory to you for the pledge of our awakening on the day which has no evening, Glory to you, O God, from age to age.

Kontakion 5

The storms of life do not frighten those whose hearts are ablaze with the light of your flame. Outside is the darkness of the whirlwind, the terror and howling of the storm. But in their souls reign quiet and light. Christ is there, and the heart sings: Alleluia!

Ikos 5

I see your heaven glowing with stars. How rich you are, how much light is yours! Eternity watches me by the rays of the distant stars: I am small, insignificant, but the Lord is with me, his loving hand protects me wherever I go.

Glory to you for the trouble you take for me at all times,

Glory for the people your Providence gave me to meet,

Glory to you for the love of my dear ones, the faithfulness of friends,

Glory to you for the gentleness of the animals which serve me,

Glory to you for the light-filled moments of life,

Glory to you for the radiant joy in my heart,

Glory to you for the joy of living, moving and seeing, Glory to you, O God, from age to age.

Kontakion 6

How great and how close you are in the powerful track of the storm; how mighty your right arm in the blinding flash of the lightning; how awesome is your greatness! The voice of the Lord is over the fields and amid the rustling forests, the voice of the Lord is in the birth of thunder and of rain, the voice of the Lord is over the many waters. Praise to you in the roar of mountains ablaze. You shake the earth like a garment. You pile up to the sky the waves of the sea. Praise to you, bringing low the pride of man, bringing from his heart the cry of repentance: Alleluia!

Ikos 6

When the lightning flash has lit up the feasting-hall, how feeble seems the light of the lamps. Likewise, amidst the strongest joys of my existence, you suddenly flashed in my soul. After your blinding light, how drab, dull and unreal seemed all those joys! Passionately, my soul would run after you.

Glory to you, the Goal in whom mankind's highest dreams come true,

Glory to you, for our unquenchable thirst for communion with God,

Glory to you, making us dissatisfied with earthly things,

Glory to you, clothing us with the finest rays of your light,

Glory to you, destroying the power of the spirits of darkness, dooming all evil to destruction, Glory to you for the joy of hearing your voice, for the happiness of your presence and of living in your love,

Glory to you, O God, from age to age.

Kontakion 7

In the wondrous blending of sounds it is your call we hear. In the harmony of many voices, stirred by the musical tones, dazzled by art's creativeness, we learn from you the splendour of melody and song, and receive a foretaste of the coming kingdom. All true beauty draws the soul towards you in powerful invocation, and makes it sing triumphantly: Alleluia!

Ikos 7

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit enlightens the thoughts of artists, poets, and scientists. Their great minds receive from you prophetic insights into your laws, and reveal to us the depth of your creative wisdom. Unwittingly, their works speak of you; how great you are in all you have created, how great you are in man!

Glory to you, showing your unfathomable might in the laws of the universe!

Glory to you, for all nature is permeated by your laws,

Glory to you for what you have revealed to us in your goodness,

Glory to you for all that remains hidden from us in your wisdom,

Glory to you for the inventiveness of the human mind,

Glory to you for the invigorating effort of work,

Glory to you for the tongues of fire which bring inspiration,

Glory to you, O God, from age to age.

Kontakion 8

How near you are in the days of sickness; you yourself visit the sick; you bend over the sufferer's bed: his heart speaks to you. With your peace you enlighten the soul burdened with affliction and pain: you send

unexpected help. You comfort, you are Love, bringing trial and salvation, and to you we sing the hymn: Alleluia!

Ikos 8

When in childhood I called upon you consciously for the first time, you heard my prayer and sacred peace came down into my soul. Then I understood that you are good; blessed are those who turn to you. Unceasingly, I started to call upon you, and now I call upon your Name:

Glory to you, satisfying my desires with good things,

Glory to you, watching over me day and night,

Glory to you, calming tribulations and bereavement with the healing flow of time,

Glory to you, no loss is irreparable when you are there, to all you give eternal life, Glory to you, making immortal all that is lofty and good, promising to welcome the dead, Glory to you, O God, from age to age.

Kontakion 9

Why is it that on a feastday the whole of nature mysteriously smiles? Why does a marvellous lightness then fill our hearts, to which nothing earthly can be compared? The very air in the altar and in God's house becomes luminous. It is the breath of grace, the reflection of the glory of Mount Tabor; heaven and earth then sing this praise: Alleluia!

Ikos 9

When you inspire me to serve my neighbour, and make humility shine in my soul, one of your deep-piercing rays of light falls into my heart: it then becomes glowing, like iron in the furnace. I have seen your Face, mysterious and elusive.

Glory to you, transfiguring our lives with deeds of love,

Glory to you, making wonderfully sweet each one of your commandments,

Glory to you, clearly present in fragrant compassion,

Glory to you, sending us failures and afflictions to make us sensitive to other people's sufferings,

Glory to you, promising high rewards for precious good deeds,
Glory to you, welcoming the impulse of our heart's love,
Glory to you, for raising love above everything on earth or in heaven,
Glory to you, O God, from age to age.

Kontakion 10

No one can put together what has crumbled into dust, but you can heal men whose conscience has become twisted; you give the soul its former beauty, which long ago it had lost without a hope of change. With you, nothing is hopeless. You are Love. You are the creator and the redeemer of all things. We praise you with this song: Alleluia!

Ikos 10

My God, you know the fall of proud Lucifer. Save me through the power of your grace; do not allow me to fall away from you, do not allow me to doubt you. Sharpen my ear, that at every minute of my life I may hear your mysterious voice; and I call upon you, who are everywhere present.

Glory to you for providential circumstances,
Glory to you for helpful forebodings,
Glory to you for the teaching of your secret voice,
Glory to you, for revelations you give us in dreams or awake,
Glory to you for scattering our vain imaginations,
Glory to you, freeing us from the fire of passions through suffering,
Glory to you, who for our salvation, brings down proudness of heart,
Glory to you, O God, from age to age.

Kontakion 11

Beyond the icy sequence of the ages, I feel the warmth of your divine Breath, I hear the throbbing of your blood. You are already near: part of time has already gone by. I see your Cross: it is there for my sake. My spirit is but dust before your Cross: here is the triumph of love and

redemption, here throughout the ages unceasingly rises the praise:
Alleluia!

Ikos 11

Blessed is he who will share your mystical supper in your kingdom; but even here on earth you have granted me this blessedness. How many times, with your divine hand, you offered me your Body and your Blood; while I, a great sinner, received these sacred Gifts and felt your ineffable and supernatural love.

Glory to you for the inconceivable and life-giving power of grace,

Glory to you who established your Church as a haven of peace for a tormented world,

Glory to you for giving us new birth in the life-giving waters of baptism,

Glory to you, restoring to those who repent purity white as the unstained lily,

Glory to you, unfathomable abyss of forgiveness,

Glory to you for the cup of life, for the bread of eternal joy,

Glory to you who raise us to heaven,

Glory to you, O God, from age to age.

Kontakion 12

More than once have I seen the reflection of your glory in the faces of the dead. What beauty, what heavenly joy shone in them! How light their features, now made spiritual! This was the triumph of happiness and peace found once again; in their silence they were calling on you. At the hour of my death, illumine also my soul which calls to you: Alleluia!

Ikos 12

How poor is my praise before you! I have not heard the song of the Cherubim, a joy reserved to the souls on high, but I know the praises nature sings to you. In winter, I see how in the moonlit silence the whole earth offers you prayer, wrapped in its white mantle of snow, sparkling like diamonds. I see the rising sun rejoice in you, and I hear the chorus of birds raise a hymn of glory. I hear the forest mysteriously rustling in your honour, the winds sing of your, the waters murmur and the processions of stars proclaim you as they move in harmony for ever in the depths of

infinite space. What is my poor worship? All nature obeys you, I do not; yet while I live, I see your love. I long to thank you, pray to you and call upon your Name.

Glory to you, who has shown us the light,

Glory to you, who loved us with a deep unfathomable and divine love,

Glory to you, who blesses us with the light, with a host of angels and saints,

Glory to you, Father most holy, revealing us your kingdom in your commandments,

Glory to you, Holy Spirit, life-giving Sun of the world to come,

Glory to you for all things, divine and most merciful Trinity,

Glory to you, O God, from age to age.

Kontakion 13

Life-giving and most merciful Trinity, receive our thanksgiving for all your kindnesses; make us worthy of your blessings, so that, when we have brought a profit from the talents you have entrusted to us, we may enter into the eternal joy of our Lord, singing the triumphal hymn: Alleluia!