

**GREAT VESPERS FOR THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT
ON WHICH WE CELEBRATE THE ADORATION
OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS
OCTOECHOS 6**

Before the beginning of the service, the Precious Cross is brought from the table of the Prothesis or the sacristy and placed on the Holy Table. A candle is lit and left burning in front of it.

KATHISMA READING

Blessed is the man... is sung.

AT PSALM 140

In Tone 6

10.

O Christ, You won the victory over Hades,
You ascended the Cross so that You might raise up with Yourself
all those who dwelt in the darkness of death.
Almighty Saviour, You are free from death
and bestow life by Your divine light.
We, therefore, beseech You to have mercy on us.

9.

Today Christ has conquered Death.
He has risen from the grave as He foretold,
bestowing great joy upon the world.
Therefore, let us all lift up our voices and sing:
O Fount of Life, O Light Whom no one can approach,
Almighty Saviour, have mercy on us.

8.

O Lord, where can we sinners flee from You,
for You are present in all creation?
You are present in heaven, for it is Your dwelling place.
Your power prevails in Hades where You conquered Death.
O Master, Your sustaining hand touches even the depths of the sea.
Where, then, can we take refuge except in You?
We, therefore, prostrate ourselves before You and pray:
O Lord, risen from the dead, have mercy on us.

7.

We exult in Your Cross, O Christ,
and we sing the glory of Your Resurrection.
For You are our God, and we have no other Lord but You.

6.

Glory to Your might, O Lord,
for You have conquered the power of death.
You have renewed us through Your Cross,
granting us life and incorruption.

5.

We forever bless the Lord and praise His resurrection,
for by suffering crucifixion,
He has destroyed death by His death.

In Tone 5

4.

Shine, O Cross of the Lord,
shine with the light of your grace upon the hearts of those that honour you.
With love inspired by God, we embrace you, O desire of all the world.
Through you our tears of sorrow have been wiped away;
we have been delivered from the snares of death
and have passed over to unending joy.
Show us the glory of your beauty
and grant to us your servants
the reward of our abstinence,
for we entreat with faith your rich protection and great mercy.

3.

Hail, life-giving Cross,
the fair Paradise of the Church,
Tree of incorruption that brings us the enjoyment of eternal glory:
through you the hosts of demons have been driven back;
and the hierarchies of angels rejoice with one accord,
as the congregations of the faithful keep the feast.
You are an invincible weapon, an unbroken stronghold;
you are the victory of kings and the glory of priests.
Grant us now to draw near to the Passion of Christ
and to His Resurrection.

2.

Hail, life-giving Cross,
unconquerable trophy of the true faith,
door to Paradise, succour of the faithful,
rampart set about the Church.

Through you the curse is utterly destroyed,
the power of death is swallowed up,
and we are raised from earth to heaven:
invincible weapon, adversary of demons, glory of martyrs,
true ornament of holy monks, haven of salvation
bestowing on the world great mercy.

1.

Come, Adam and Eve, our first father and mother,
who fell from the choir on high through the envy of the murderer of man,
when of old with bitter pleasure you tasted of the three in Paradise.
See, the Tree of the Cross, revered by all, draws near!
Run with haste and embrace it joyfully,
and cry out to it with faith:
O precious Cross, you are our succour;
partaking of your fruit we have gained incorruption;
we are restored once more to Eden,
and we have received great mercy.

In Tone 3

Glory...

O Christ our God, of Your own will You have accepted Crucifixion,
that all mankind might be restored to life.
Taking the quill of the Cross, out of love for man
in the red ink of royalty with bloody fingers
You signed our absolution.
We are in danger once again of being parted from You;
O forsake us not!
Take pity on Your people in distress,
for You alone are longsuffering.
Rise up and fight against our enemies in Your almighty power.

In Tone 6

Now...

Who would not call you blessed, O Virgin most holy?
Who would not sing a hymn of praise
to the glory of your giving birth without pain or travail?
The Only-begotten Son Himself,
begotten of the Father before all ages,
was made flesh out of you in a manner
that cannot be explained, O Woman most pure!
And for our sake, He Who is God by nature
assumed the nature of a man.

He is not divided into two persons;
He is understood to have two natures
without commixion or confusion.
O noble and blessed Woman,
intercede with Him that He may mercy on our souls.

APOSTICHA

In Tone 6

O Christ our Saviour,
the angels in heaven sing the praises of Your Resurrection;
make us on earth also worthy
to extol You with a pure heart.

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

Almighty God, You destroyed the brazen gates and bars of Hades,
and raised up fallen mankind.
Therefore, with one accord, we cry out:
O Lord, risen from the dead, glory to You!

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

Christ willed to renew us from our corruption of old
by being nailed to a cross and placed in a tomb.
When the women came to anoint His body they tearfully cried out:
O, what sorrow afflicts us!
O Saviour of All, how could You consent to occupy a grave?
If you truly willed this, then why did You allow Your body to be stolen?
How were You removed?
What place now conceals Your life-bearing body?
O Lord, appear to us as You promised
and put an end to our tears.
As they were lamenting, an angel appeared and cried out to them:
Do not weep, but tell the Apostles that the Lord is risen,
granting sanctification and great mercy to the world.

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

O Christ, You were crucified of Your free will,
and by Your burial You imprisoned Death.
As God, You rose in glory on the third day,
granting life and great mercy to the world.

In Tone 4

Glory... Now...

O Lord who helped gentle David in the combat
and enabled him to overcome the Philistine,
come to the aid of Your Orthodox people,
and by the weapon of the Cross cast down our enemies.
In Your compassion show us Your mercy as of old,
and make them know in truth that You are God,
and that we who put our trust in You shall conquer.
At the constant intercessions of Your most pure Mother,
grant us Your great mercy.

TROPARIA

In Tone 6

Angelic powers were upon Your tomb* and the guards became like dead men;* Mary
stood before Your tomb* seeking Your most pure body.* You captured Hades without
being overcome by it.* You met the Virgin and granted life.* O Lord, risen from the
dead,** glory to You!

In Tone 1

Glory...

Save Your people, O Lord, and bless Your inheritance.* Grant victory to Your faithful
people against enemies,** and protect Your community by Your Cross.

Now...

O Holy Tabernacle, when Gabriel called out to you:* Rejoice, O Virgin, full of grace,* the
Lord of All became incarnate of you,* as the righteous David had foretold.* In bearing
your Creator, you have shown yourself to surpass the vastness of the heavens.* We,
therefore, cry out: Glory to Him Who dwelt in you!* Glory to Him Who came forth from
you!* Glory to Him Who has set us free* through your life-giving birth!