

MONDAY IN THE FIRST WEEK OF GREAT LENT
THE GREAT CANON OF REPENTANCE, BY ST. ANDREW OF CRETE
CHANTED IN TONE SIX

In the first week of Great Lent, following the Little Doxology we sing tonight's quarter of the "Great Canon of Repentance" by Saint Andrew of Crete. At the words "Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me" we make one prostration.

ODE ONE

He is my Helper and Protector, and hath become my Salvation. This is my God and I will glorify Him, the God of my fathers and I will exalt Him, for gloriously has He been glorified.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Where shall I begin to weep for the actions of my wretched life? What first-fruit shall I offer, O Christ, in this my lamentation? But in Thy compassion grant me forgiveness of sins.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Come, wretched soul, with thy flesh to the Creator of all. Make confession to Him, and abstain henceforth from thy past brutishness; and offer to God tears of repentance.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I have rivaled in transgression Adam the first-formed man, and I have found myself stripped naked of God, of the eternal Kingdom and its joy, because of my sins.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Woe to thee, miserable soul! How like thou art to the first Eve! For thou hast looked in wickedness and was grievously wounded; thou hast touched the tree and rashly tasted the deceptive food.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Instead of the visible Eve, I have the Eve of the mind: the passionate thought in my flesh, showing me what seems sweet; yet whenever I taste from it, I find it bitter.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Adam was justly banished from Eden because he disobeyed one commandment of Thine, O Savior. What then shall I suffer, for I am always rejecting Thy words of life?

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

Trinity beyond all being, worshipped in Unity, take from me the heavy yoke of sin, and in Thy compassion grant me tears of compunction.

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

O Theotokos, the hope and protection of those who sing thy praises, take from me the heavy yoke of sin and, pure Lady, accept me in repentance.

ODE TWO

Attend, O Heaven, and I shall speak and sing in praise of Christ Who took flesh from a Virgin and came to dwell among us.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Attend, O Heaven, and I shall speak; give ear, O earth, to the voice of one who repents before God and sings His praise.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Look upon me, God my Savior, with Thy merciful eye, and accept my fervent confession. More than all men I have sinned; I alone have sinned against Thee. But as God take pity on Thy creation, O Savior.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

With my lustful desires I have formed within myself the deformity of the passions and disfigured the beauty of my mind.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I am surrounded by the storm of sin, O compassionate Lord. But stretch out Thine hand to me, as once thou hast to Peter.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I have stained the garment of my flesh, O Savior, and defiled that which was made in Thine image and likeness.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

With the lusts of passion I have darkened the beauty of my soul, and turned my whole mind entirely into dust.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I have torn the first garment that the Creator wove for me in the beginning, and now I lie naked.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I have clothed myself in the torn coat that the serpent wove for me by his counsel, and I am ashamed.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I offer to Thee, O merciful Lord, the tears of the Harlot. Take pity on me, O Savior, in Thy compassion.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I looked upon the beauty of the tree and my mind was deceived, and now I lie naked and ashamed.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

All the ruling passions have ploughed upon my back, making long furrows of wickedness.

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

I sing Thy praises, One in Three Persons, God of all, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

O Theotokos, undefiled, Virgin alone worthy of all praise, intercede fervently for our salvation.

ODE THREE

Upon the unshaken rock of Thy commandments, O Christ, make firm Thy Church.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

The Lord once rained down fire from Heaven and consumed the land of Sodom.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

O my soul, flee like Lot to the mountain, and take refuge in Zoar before it is too late.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Flee from the flames, my soul, flee from the burning heat of Sodom, flee from destruction by the fire of God.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I alone have sinned against Thee, I have sinned more than all men; reject me not, O Christ my Savior.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Thou art the Good Shepherd: seek me, the lamb that has strayed, and do not forget me.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Thou art my beloved Jesus, Thou art my Creator; in Thee shall I be justified, O Savior.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I confess to Thee, O Savior: I have sinned against Thee without measure. But in Thy compassion absolve and forgive me.

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

O God, Trinity in Unity, save us from error and temptation and distress.

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Hail, Womb that held God! Hail, throne of the Lord! Hail, Mother of our Life!

ODE FOUR

The prophet heard of Thy coming, O Lord, and he was afraid: how Thou was to be born of a Virgin and revealed to men and he said: I have heard the report of Thee and I was afraid. Glory to Thy power, O Lord.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

O righteous Judge, despise not Thy works; forsake not Thy creation. I have sinned as a man, I alone, more than any other man, O Thou Who lovest mankind. But as Lord of all Thou hast the power to pardon sins.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

The end draws near, my soul, the end draws near; yet thou dost not care or make ready. The time grows short, rise up: the Judge is at the door. The days of our life pass swiftly, as a dream, as a flower. Why do we trouble ourselves in vain?

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Awake, my soul, consider the actions which thou hast done; set them before thine eyes, and let the drops of thy tears fall. With boldness tell Christ of thy deeds and thoughts, and so be justified.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

No sin has there been in life, no evil deed, no wickedness, that I have not committed, O Savior. I have sinned as no one ever before, in mind, word and intent, in disposition, thought and act.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

For this I am condemned in my misery, for this I am convicted by the verdict of my own conscience, which is more compelling than all else in the world. O my Judge and Redeemer, Who knowest my heart, spare and deliver and save me in my wretchedness.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

The ladder which the great Patriarch Jacob saw of old is an example, O my soul, of approach through action and of ascent in knowledge. If then thou dost wish to live rightly in action and knowledge and contemplation, be thou made new.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

In privation Jacob the Patriarch endured the burning heat by day and the frost by night, making daily gains of sheep and cattle, shepherding, wrestling, and serving, to win his two wives.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

By the two wives, understand action and knowledge in contemplation. Leah is action, for she had many children; and Rachel is knowledge, for she endured great toil. For without toil, O my soul, neither action nor contemplation will succeed.

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

Undivided in Essence, unconfused in Persons, I confess Thee as God: Triune Deity, one in kingship and throne; and to Thee I raise the great thrice-holy hymn that is sung on high.

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Thou givest birth and art a virgin, and in both thou remainest by nature inviolate. He Who is born makes new the laws of nature, and the womb brings forth without travail. When God so wills, the natural order is overcome; for He does whatever He wishes.

ODE FIVE

From the night I seek Thee early, O Lover of mankind; give me light, I pray Thee, and guide me in Thy commandments, and teach me, O Savior, to do Thy will.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

In night have I passed all my life: for the night of sin has covered me with darkness and thick mist. But make me, O Savior, a son of the day.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

In my misery I have followed Reuben's example, and have devised a wicked and unlawful plan against the most-high God, defiling my bed as he defiled his father's.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I confess to Thee, O Christ my King: I have sinned; I have sinned like the brethren of Joseph, who once sold the fruit of purity and chastity.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

As a figure of the Lord, O my soul, the righteous and gentle Joseph was sold into bondage by his brethren; but thou hast sold thyself entirely to thy sins.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

O miserable and wicked soul, imitate the righteous and pure mind of Joseph; and do not live in wantonness, sinfully indulging thy disordered desires.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Once Joseph was cast into a pit, O Lord and Master, as a figure of Thy Burial and Resurrection. But what offering such as this shall I ever make to Thee?

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

We glorify Thee, O Trinity, the one God. Holy, holy, holy, art Thou: Father, Son, and Spirit, simple Essence and Unity, worshipped forever.

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

O Virgin inviolate and Mother who has not known man, from thee has God, the Creator of the ages, taken human flesh, uniting to Himself the nature of men.

ODE SIX

With my whole heart I cried to the all-compassionate God: and He heard me from the lowest depths of hell, and brought my life out of corruption.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I offer to Thee in purity, O Savior, the tears of mine eyes and groanings from the depths of my heart, crying: 'I have sinned against Thee, O God; be merciful to me.'

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Like Dathan and Abiram, O my soul, thou hast become a stranger to thy Lord; but from the lowest depth of hell cry out, 'Spare me', that the earth may not open and swallow thee up.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Raging as a maddened heifer, O my soul, thou art become like Ephraim. As a hart from the nets rescue then thy life, gaining wings through action and the mind's contemplation.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

O my soul, the hand of Moses shall be our assurance, proving how God can cleanse a life full of leprosy and make it white as snow. So do not despair of thyself, though thou art leprous.

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

'I am the Trinity, simple and undivided, yet divided in Persons, and I am the Unity by Nature one', says the Father and the Son and the divine Spirit.

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Thy womb bore God for us, fashioned in our shape. O Theotokos, pray to Him as the Creator of all, that we may be justified through thine intercessions.

KONTAKION OF THE GREAT CANON IN TONE SIX

My soul, O my soul, rise up! Why art thou sleeping? The end draws near and soon thou shalt be troubled. Watch, then, that Christ thy God may spare thee, for He is everywhere present and fills all things.

ODE SEVEN

We have sinned, we have transgressed, we have done evil in Thy sight; we have not kept or followed Thy commandments. But reject us not utterly, O God of our fathers.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I have sinned, I have offended, and I have set aside Thy commandments, for in sins have I progressed, and to my sores I have added wounds. But in Thy compassion have mercy upon me, O God of our fathers.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

The secrets of my heart have I confessed to Thee, my Judge. See my abasement, see my affliction, and attend to my judgment now; and in Thy compassion have mercy upon me, O God of our fathers.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

When Saul once lost his father's asses, in searching for them he found himself proclaimed as king. But watch, my soul, lest unknown to thyself thou prefer thine animal appetites to the Kingdom of Christ.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

David, the forefather of God, once sinned doubly, pierced with the arrow of adultery and the spear of murder. But thou, my soul, art more gravely sick than he, for worse than any acts are the impulses of thy will.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

David once joined sin to sin, adding murder to fornication; yet then he showed at once a twofold repentance. But thou, my soul, hast done worse things than he, yet thou hast not repented before God.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

David once composed a hymn, setting forth, as in an icon, the action he had done; and he condemned it, crying: 'Have mercy upon me, for against Thee only have I sinned, O God of all. Do Thou cleanse me.'

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

O simple and undivided Trinity, O holy and consubstantial Unity: Thou art praised as Light and Lights, one Holy and three Holies. Sing, O my soul, and glorify Life and Lives, the God of all.

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

We praise thee, we bless thee, we venerate thee, O Mother of God: for thou hast given birth to One of the undivided Trinity, thy Son and God, and thou hast opened the heavenly places to us on earth.

ODE EIGHT

The hosts of Heaven give Him glory: before Him tremble the cherubim and seraphim; let everything that has breath and all creation praise Him, bless Him and exalt Him above all forever.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I have sinned, O Savior, have mercy on me. Awaken my mind and turn me back; accept me in repentance and take pity on me as I cry: I have sinned against Thee, save me; I have done evil, have mercy on me.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Riding in the chariot of the virtues, Elijah was lifted up to Heaven, high above earthly things. Reflect, O my soul, on his ascent.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Elisha once took up the mantle of Elijah, and received a double portion of grace from the Lord: but in this grace, my soul, thou hast no share, by reason of thy greed and uncontrolled desires.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

With the mantle of Elijah, Elisha made the stream of Jordan stand still on either side: but in this grace, my soul, thou hast no share, by reason of thy greed and uncontrolled desires.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

The Shunammite woman gladly entertained the righteous Prophet: but in thy house, my soul, thou hast not welcomed stranger or traveler; and so thou shalt be cast out weeping from the bridal chamber.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

O wretched soul, always thou hast imitated the unclean thoughts of Gehazi. Cast from thee, at least in thine old age, his love of money. Flee from the fire of hell, turning away from thy wickedness.

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

Father without beginning, coeternal Son, and loving Comforter, the Spirit of righteousness; Begetter of the Word of God, Word of the eternal Father, Spirit living and creative: O Trinity in Unity, have mercy on me.

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

As from purple silk, O undefiled Virgin, the spiritual robe of Emmanuel, His flesh, was woven in thy womb. Therefore, we honor thee as Theotokos in very truth.

ODE NINE

Conception without seed; nativity past understanding, from a Mother who never knew a man; child-bearing undefiled. For the birth of God makes both natures new. Therefore, as Bride and Mother of God, with true worship all generations magnify thee.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

My mind is wounded, my body has grown feeble, my spirit is sick, my speech has lost its power, my life is dead; the end is at the door. What shalt thou do, then, miserable soul, when the Judge comes to examine thy deeds?

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I have put before thee, my soul, Moses' account of the creation of the world, and after that all the recognized Scriptures that tell thee the story of the righteous and the wicked. But thou, my soul, hast followed the second of these, not the first, and hast sinned against God.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

The Law is powerless, the Gospel of no effect, and the whole of Scripture is ignored by thee; the prophets and all the words of the righteous are useless. Thy wounds, my soul, have been multiplied, and there is no physician to heal thee.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

I bring thee, O my soul, examples from the New Testament, to lead thee to compunction. Follow the example of the righteous, turn away from the sinful, and through prayers and fasting, through chastity and reverence, win back Christ's mercy.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Christ became man, calling to repentance thieves and harlots. Repent, my soul: the door of the Kingdom is already open, and pharisees and publicans and adulterers pass through it before thee, changing their life.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Christ became man and shared in my flesh; and willingly He performed all that belongs to my nature, only without sin. He set before thee, my soul, an example and image of His condescension.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Christ saved the Wise Men and called the Shepherds; He revealed as martyrs a multitude of young children; He glorified the Elder and the aged Widow. But thou, my soul, hast not followed their lives and actions. Woe to thee when thou art judged!

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

The Lord fasted forty days in the wilderness, and at the end of them He was hungry, thus showing that He is man. Do not be dismayed, my soul! If the enemy attacks thee, through prayer and fasting drive him away.

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

Let us glorify the Father, let us exalt the Son, and with faith let us worship the Spirit of God, undivided Trinity and Unity in essence. Let us adore Light and Lights, Life and Lives, giving light and life to the ends of the earth.

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Watch over Thy city, all-pure Mother of God. For by thee she reigns in faith, by thee she is made strong; by thee she is victorious, putting to flight every temptation, despoiling the enemy and ruling her subjects.

Holy Father Andrew, pray to God for us.

Venerable Andrew, father thrice-blessed, shepherd of Crete, cease not to offer prayer for us who sing thy praises; that we may be delivered from all danger and distress, from corruption and sin, who honor thy memory with faith.

IRMOS OF THE NINTH ODE

Conception without seed; nativity past understanding, from a Mother who never knew a man; child-bearing undefiled. For the birth of God makes both natures new. Therefore, as Bride and Mother of God, with true worship all generations magnify thee.