

TUESDAY 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.

By my own free choice have I incurred the guilt of Cain's murder. I have killed my conscience, bringing the flesh to life and making war upon the soul by my wicked actions.

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

O Jesus, I have not been like Abel in his righteousness. Never have I offered Thee acceptable gifts or godly actions, a pure sacrifice or an unblemished life.

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

Like Cain, O miserable soul, we too have offered, to the Creator of all, defiled actions and a polluted sacrifice and a worthless life: and so we also are condemned.

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

As the potter molds the clay, Thou hast fashioned me, giving me flesh and bones, breath and life. But accept me in repentance, O my Maker and Deliverer and Judge.

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

I confess to Thee, O Savior, the sins I have committed, the wounds of my soul and body, which murderous thoughts, like thieves, have inflicted inwardly upon me.

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

Though I have sinned, O Savior, yet I know that Thou art full of loving-kindness. Thou dost chastise with mercy and art fervent in compassion. Thou dost see me weeping and dost run to meet me, like the Father calling back the Prodigal Son.

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.

Sin has stripped me of the robe that God once wove for me, and it has sewed for me garments of skin.

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

I am clothed with the raiment of shame as with fig leaves, in condemnation of my self-willed passions.

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

I am clad in a garment that is defiled and shamefully bloodstained by a life of passion and self-indulgence.

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

I have fallen beneath the painful burden of the passions and the corruption of material things; and I am hard pressed by the enemy.

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

Instead of freedom from possessions, O Savior, I have pursued a life in love with material things, and now I wear a heavy yoke.

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

I have adorned the idol of my flesh with a many-colored coat of shameful thoughts, and I am condemned.

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

I have cared only for the outward adornment, and neglected that which is within—the tabernacle fashioned by God.

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

I have discolored with the passions the first beauty of the image, O Savior. But seek me, as once Thou hast sought the lost coin, and find me.

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

Like the Harlot I cry to Thee: I have sinned, I alone have sinned against Thee. Accept my tears also as sweet ointment, O Savior.

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

Like the Publican I cry to Thee: Be merciful, O Savior, be merciful to me. For no child of Adam has ever sinned against Thee as I have sinned.

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

O Lord, upon the rock of Thy commandments make firm my wavering heart, for Thou alone art holy and Lord.

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

For me Thou art the Fountain of life and the Destroyer of death; and from my heart I cry to Thee before the end: I have sinned, be merciful to me and save me.

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

I have sinned, O Lord, I have sinned against Thee; be merciful to me. For there is no sinner whom I have not surpassed in my offenses.

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

I have followed the example, O Savior, of those who lived in wantonness in the days of Noah; and like them I am condemned to drown in the Flood.

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

O my soul, thou hast followed Ham, who mocked his father. Thou hast not covered thy neighbor's shame, walking backwards with averted face.

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

Flee, my soul, like Lot from the burning of sin; flee from Sodom and Gomorrah; flee from the flame of every brutish desire.

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

Have mercy, O Lord, have mercy on me, I cry to Thee, when Thou comest with Thine angels to give to every man due return for his deeds.

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

O simple Unity praised in Trinity of Persons, uncreated Nature without beginning, save us who in faith worship Thy power.

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

O Mother of God, without knowing man thou hast given birth within time to the Son, who was begotten outside time from the Father; and—strange wonder!—thou givest suck while still remaining Virgin.

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.

Be watchful, O my soul, be full of courage like Jacob the great Patriarch, that thou mayest acquire action with knowledge, and be named Israel, 'the mind that sees God'; so shalt thou reach by contemplation the innermost darkness and gain great merchandise.

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

The great Patriarch had the twelve Patriarchs as children, and so he mystically established for thee, my soul, a ladder of ascent through action, in his wisdom setting his children as steps, by which thou canst mount upwards.

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

Thou hast rivaled Esau the hated, O my soul, and given the birthright of thy first beauty to the supplanter; thou hast lost thy father's blessing and in thy wretchedness been twice supplanted, in action and in knowledge. Therefore repent now.

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

Esau was called Edom because of his raging love for women; burning always with unrestrained desires and stained with sensual pleasure, he was named 'Edom', which means the red heat of a soul that loves sin.

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

Thou hast heard, O my soul, of Job justified on a dung-hill, but thou hast not imitated his fortitude. In all thine experiences and trials and temptations, thou hast not kept firmly to thy purpose but has proved inconstant.

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

Once he sat upon a throne, but now he sits upon a dung-hill, naked and covered with sores. Once he was blessed with many children and admired by all, but suddenly he is childless and homeless. Yet he counted the dung-hill as a palace and his sores as pearls.

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.

Thou hast heard, my soul, of the basket of Moses: how he was borne on the waves of the river as if in a shrine; and so he avoided the bitter execution of Pharaoh's decree.

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

Thou hast heard, wretched soul, of the midwives who once killed in its infancy the manly action of self-control: like great Moses, then, be suckled on wisdom.

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

O miserable soul, thou hast not struck and killed the Egyptian mind, as did Moses the great. Tell me, then, how wilt thou go to dwell through repentance in the wilderness empty of passions?

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

Moses the great went to dwell in the desert. Come, seek to follow his way of life, my soul, that in contemplation thou mayest attain the vision of God in the bush.

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

Picture to thyself, my soul, the rod of Moses striking the sea and making hard the deep by the sign of the Holy Cross. Through the Cross thou also canst do great things.

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

Aaron offered to God fire that was blameless and undefiled, but Hophni and Phinehas brought to Him, as thou hast done, my soul, strange fire and a polluted life.

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.

The waves of my sins, O Savior, have returned and suddenly engulfed me, as the waters of the Red Sea engulfed the Egyptians of old and their charioteers.

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

Like Israel before thee, thou hast made a foolish choice, my soul; instead of the divine manna thou hast senselessly preferred the pleasure-loving gluttony of the passions.

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

O my soul, thou hast valued the wells of Canaanite thoughts more than the veined Rock, Jesus, the Fountain of Wisdom from which flow the rivers of divine knowledge.

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

The swine's meat, the flesh-pots and the food of Egypt thou hast preferred, my soul, to the food of Heaven, as the ungrateful people did of old in the wilderness.

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

When Thy servant Moses struck the rock with his rod, he prefigured Thy life-giving side, O Savior, from which we all draw the water of life.

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

Like Joshua, the son of Nun, search and spy out, my soul, the land of thine inheritance and take up thy dwelling within it, through obedience to the Law.

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.

When the Ark was being carried in a cart and the ox stumbled, Uzzah did no more than touch it, but the wrath of God smote him. O my soul, flee from his presumption and respect with reverence the things of God.

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

Thou hast heard of Absalom, and how he rebelled against nature; thou knowest of the unholy deeds by which he defiled his father David's bed. Yet thou hast followed him in his passionate and sensual desires.

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

Thy free dignity, O my soul, thou hast subjected to thy body; for thou hast found in the enemy another Ahitophel, and hast agreed to all his counsels. But Christ Himself has brought them to nothing and saved thee from them all.

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

Solomon the wonderful, who was full of the grace of wisdom, once did evil in the sight of Heaven and turned away from God. Thou hast become like him, my soul, by thine accursed life.

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

Carried away by sensual passions, he defiled himself. Alas! The lover of wisdom became a lover of harlots and a stranger to God. And thou, my soul, in mind hast imitated him through thy shameful desires.

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

O my soul, thou hast rivaled Rehoboam, who paid no attention to his father's counselors, and Jeroboam, that evil servant and renegade of old. But flee from their example and cry to God: I have sinned, take pity on 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.

Thou hast followed Uzziah, my soul, and hast his leprosy in double form: for thy thoughts are wicked, and thine acts unlawful. Leave what thou hast, and hasten to repentance.

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

O my soul, thou hast heard how the men of Nineveh repented before God in sackcloth and ashes. Yet thou hast not followed them, but art more wicked than all who sinned before the Law and after.

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

Thou hast heard, my soul, how Jeremiah in the muddy pit cried out with lamentations for the city of Zion and asked to be given tears. Follow his life of lamentation and be saved.

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

Jonah fled to Tarshish, foreseeing the conversion of the men of Nineveh; for as a prophet he knew the loving-kindness of God, but he was jealous that his prophecy should not be proved false.

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

My soul, thou hast heard how Daniel stopped the mouths of the wild beasts in the lions' den; and thou knowest how the Children with Azarias quenched through their faith the flames of the fiery furnace.

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

All the names of the Old Testament have I set before thee, my soul, as an example. Imitate the holy acts of the righteous and flee from the sins of the wicked.

We bless the Lord, Father, Son and 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.

Christ was being tempted; the devil tempted Him, showing Him the stones that they might be made bread. He led Him up into a mountain, to see in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. O my soul, look with fear on what happened; watch and pray every hour to God.

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

The Dove Who loved the wilderness, the Lamp of Christ, the voice of one crying aloud, was heard preaching repentance; but Herod sinned with Herodias. O my soul, see that thou art not trapped in the snares of the lawless, but embrace repentance.

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

The Forerunner of Grace went to dwell in the wilderness, and Judea and all Samaria ran to hear him; they confessed their sins and were baptized eagerly. But thou, my soul, hast not imitated them.

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

Marriage is honorable, and the marriage-bed undefiled. For on both Christ has given His blessing, eating in the flesh at the wedding in Cana, turning the water into wine and revealing His first miracle, to bring thee, my soul, to a change of life.

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

Christ gave strength to the paralyzed man, and he took up his bed; He raised from the dead the young man, the son of the widow, and the centurion's servant; He appeared to the woman of Samaria and spoke to thee, my soul, of worship in spirit.

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

By the touch of the hem of His garment, the Lord healed the woman with an issue of blood; He cleansed lepers and gave sight to the blind and made the lame walk upright; He cured by His

word the deaf and the dumb and the woman bowed to the ground, to bring thee, wretched soul, to salvation.

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.

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