

WEDNESDAY 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.

From my youth, O Savior, I have rejected Thy commandments. Ruled by the passions, I have passed my whole life in heedlessness and sloth. Therefore I cry to Thee, O Savior, even now at the end: Save me.

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

I lie as an outcast before Thy gate, O Savior. In my old age cast me not down empty into hell; but, before the end comes, in Thy love grant me remission of sins.

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

As the Prodigal, O Savior, I have wasted all my substance in riotous living, and I am barren of the virtues of holiness. In my hunger I cry: O compassionate Father, come quickly out to meet me and take pity on me.

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

I am the man who fell among thieves, even my own thoughts; they have covered all my body with wounds, and I lie beaten and bruised. But come to me, O Christ my Savior, and heal me.

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

The Priest saw me first, but passed by on the other side; the Levite looked on me in my distress but despised my nakedness. O Jesus, sprung from Mary, do Thou come to me and take pity on me.

Holy Mother Mary, pray to God for us.

Grant me the light of grace, from God's providence on high, so that I may flee from the darkness of the passions and sing fervently the joyful tale of thy life, O Mary.

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, PART I

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.

Like David, I have fallen into lust and I am covered with filth; but wash me clean, O Savior, by my tears.

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

I have no tears, no repentance, no compunction; but as God do Thou Thyself, O Savior, bestow them on me.

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

I have lost the beauty and glory with which I was first created; and now I lie naked and ashamed.

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

Lord, Lord, at the Last Day shut not Thy door against me; but open it to me, for I repent before Thee.

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

Give ear to the groaning of my soul, and accept the tears that fall from mine eyes; O Lord, save me.

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

O Lover of mankind, who desirest that all men shall be saved, in Thy goodness call me back and accept me in repentance.

Most Holy Theotokos, save us.

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

ODE TWO, PART II

See now, see that I am God, who rained down manna in the days of old, and made springs of water flow from the rock, for my people in the wilderness, by My right hand and by My power alone.

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

‘See now, see that I am God’: give ear, my soul, to the Lord as He cries to thee; forsake thy former sin, and fear Him as thy Judge and God.

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

To whom shall I liken thee, O soul of many sins? Alas! To Cain and to Lamech. For thou hast stoned thy body to death with thine evil deeds, and killed thy mind with thy disordered longings.

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

Call to mind, my soul, all who lived before the Law. Thou hast not been like Seth, or followed Enos or Enoch, who was translated to Heaven, or Noah; but thou art found destitute, without a share in the life of the righteous.

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

Thou alone, O my soul, hast opened the windows of the wrath of thy God, and thou hast flooded, as the earth, all thy flesh and deeds and life; and thou hast remained outside the Ark of salvation.

Holy Mother Mary, pray to God for us.

With all eagerness and love hast thou run to Christ, turning from thy former path of sin, finding thy food in the trackless wilderness, and fulfilling in purity the commandments of God.

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

O Trinity uncreated and without beginning, O undivided Unity: accept me in repentance and save me, a sinner. I am Thy creation, reject me not; but spare me and deliver me from the fire of condemnation.

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

Most pure Lady, Mother of God, the hope of those who run to thee and the haven of the storm-tossed: pray to the merciful God, thy Creator and thy Son, that He may grant His mercy even to me.

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.

O wretched soul, thou hast not inherited the blessing of Shem, nor hast thou received, like Japhet, a spacious domain in the land of forgiveness.

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

O my soul, depart from sin, from the land of Haran, and come to the land that Abraham inherited, which flows with incorruption and eternal life.

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

Thou hast heard, my soul, how Abraham in days of old left the land of his fathers and became a wanderer: follow him in his choice.

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

At the oak of Mamre the Patriarch gave hospitality to the angels, and in his old age he inherited the reward of the promise.

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

Thou knowest, O my miserable soul, how Isaac was offered mystically as a new and unwonted sacrifice to the Lord: follow him in his choice.

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

Thou hast heard—O my soul be watchful—how Ishmael was driven out as the child of a bondwoman. Take heed, lest the same thing happen to thee because of thy lust.

Holy Mother Mary, pray to God for us.

I am held fast, O Mother, by the tempest and billows of sin: but do thou keep me safe and lead me to the haven of divine repentance.

Holy Mother Mary, pray to God for us.

O holy Mary, offer thy prayer of supplication to the compassionate Theotokos, and through thine intercessions open unto me the door that leads to God.

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.

I have defiled my body, I have stained my spirit, and I am all covered with wounds: but as physician, Christ, heal both body and spirit for me through repentance. Wash, purify, and cleanse me, O my Savior, and make me whiter than snow.

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

Thy Body and Thy Blood, O Word, Thou hast offered at Thy Crucifixion for the sake of all: Thy Body to refashion me, Thy Blood to wash me clean; and Thou hast given up Thy spirit, O Christ, to bring me to Thy Father.

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

O Compassionate Lord, Thou hast worked salvation in the midst of the earth, that we might be saved. Thou wast crucified of Thine own will upon the Tree; and Eden, closed until then, was opened. Things above and things below, the creation and all the peoples have been saved and worship Thee.

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

May the Blood from Thy side be to me a cleansing fount, and may the Water that flows with it be a drink of forgiveness. May I be purified by both, O Word, anointed and refreshed, having as chrism and drink Thy words of life.

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

As a chalice, O my Savior, the Church has been granted Thy life-giving side, from which there flows down to us a twofold stream of forgiveness and knowledge, representing the two Covenants, the Old and the New.

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

I am deprived of the bridal chamber, of the wedding and the supper; for want of oil my lamp has gone out; while I slept the door was closed; the supper has been eaten; I am bound hand and foot, and cast out.

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 my soul and body, O Lord, I have become like Jannes and Jambres, the magicians of cruel Pharaoh; my will is heavy and my mind is drowned beneath the waters. But do Thou come to my aid.

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

Woe is me! I have defiled my mind with filth. But I pray to Thee, O Master: wash me clean in the waters of my tears, and make the garment of my flesh white as snow.

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

When I examine my actions, O Savior, I see that I have gone beyond all men in sin; for I knew and understood what I did; I was not sinning in ignorance.

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

Spare, O spare the work of Thine hands, O Lord. I have sinned, forgive me: for Thou alone art pure by nature, and none save Thee is free from defilement.

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

Thou who art God, O Savior, wast for my sake fashioned as I am. Thou hast performed miracles, healing lepers, giving strength to the paralyzed, stopping the issue of blood when the woman touched the hem of Thy garment.

Holy Mother Mary, pray to God for us.

Crossing the stream of the Jordan, thou hast found peace, escaping from the deadening pleasures of the flesh. Deliver us also from them, holy Mary, by thine intercessions.

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.

Rise up and make war upon the passions of the flesh, as Joshua against Amalek, ever gaining the victory over the Gibeonites, thy deceitful thoughts.

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

O my soul, pass through the flowing waters of time like the Ark of old, and take possession of the land of promise: for God commands thee.

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

As Thou hast saved Peter when he cried out, 'Save me', come quickly, O Savior, before it is too late, and save me from the beast. Stretch out Thine hand and lead me up from the deep of sin.

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

I know Thee as a calm haven, O Lord, Lord Christ: come quickly, before it is too late, and deliver me from the lowest depths of sin and despair.

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.

By deliberate choice, my soul, thou hast incurred the guilt of Manasseh, setting up the passions as idols and multiplying abominations. But with fervent heart emulate his repentance and acquire compunction.

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

Alas, my soul! Thou hast rivaled Ahab in guilt. Thou hast become a dwelling-place of fleshly defilements and a shameful vessel of the passions. But groan from the depths of thy heart, and confess thy sins to God.

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

Heaven is closed to thee, my soul, and a famine from God has seized thee: for thou hast been disobedient, as Ahab was to the words of Elijah the Tishbite. But imitate the widow of Zarephath, and feed the Prophet's soul.

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

Elijah once destroyed with fire twice fifty of Jezebel's servants, and he slew the prophets of shame, as a rebuke to Ahab. But flee from the example of both of them, my soul, and be strong.

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.

O righteous Judge and Savior, have mercy on me and deliver me from the fire that threatens me and from the punishment that I deserve to suffer at the Judgment. Before the end comes, grant me remission through virtue and repentance.

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

Like the Thief I cry to Thee: 'Remember me'; like Peter I weep bitterly; like the Publican I call out: 'Forgive me, Savior'; like the Harlot I shed tears. Accept my lamentation, as once Thou hast accepted the entreaties of the woman of Canaan.

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

O Savior, heal the putrefaction of my humbled soul, for Thou art the one Physician; apply plaster and pour in oil and wine—works of repentance and compunction with tears.

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

Like the woman of Canaan I cry to Thee, 'Have mercy on me, Son of David.' Like the woman with an issue of blood, I touch the hem of Thy garment. I weep as Martha and Mary wept for Lazarus.

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.

Healing sickness, Christ the Word preached the good tidings to the poor. He cured the crippled, ate with publicans, and conversed with sinners. With the touch of His hand, He brought back the departed soul of Jairus' daughter.

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

The Publican was saved and the Harlot turned to chastity, but the Pharisee with his boasting was condemned. For the first cried 'Be merciful', and the second, 'have mercy on me'; but the third said, boasting, 'I thank Thee, O God', and other words of madness.

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

Zacchaeus was a publican, yet he was saved; but Simon the Pharisee went astray, while the Harlot received remission and release from Him who has the power to forgive sins. Make haste, O my soul, to follow her example.

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

O wretched soul, thou hast not acted like the Harlot, who took the alabaster box of precious ointment, and anointed with tears and wiped with her hair the feet of the Lord. And He tore in pieces the record of her previous sins.

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

Thou knowest, O my soul, how the cities were cursed to which Christ preached the Gospel. Fear their example, lest thou suffer the same punishment. For the Master likened them to Sodom and condemned them to hell.

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

Be not overcome by despair, my soul; for thou hast heard of the faith of the woman of Canaan, and how through it her daughter was healed by the word of God. Cry out from the depth of thy heart, 'Save me also, Son of David', as she once cried to Christ.

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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