



**T**hrough the prayers of our holy fathers and mother, O Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, everywhere present and filling all things. Treasury of Blessings, and Giver of Life, come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O Good One!

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (3x)

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

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Lord, cleanse us from our sins. O Master, pardon our transgressions. O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities, for Your Name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (3x) Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto 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 who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

Lord, have mercy. (3x) Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Come, let us worship God our King.

Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, our King and our God.

Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and our God.

*PSALM 51 (50 LXX)  
A prayer of repentance*

Have mercy on me, O God, in Your great mercy,

and in the abundance of Your compassions  
blot out my transgressions.  
Wash me thoroughly from my lawlessness,  
and cleanse me from my sin.  
For I know my transgressions,  
and my sin is always before me.  
Against You alone have I sinned,  
and done evil before You,  
so that You are justified in Your words  
and victorious in Your judgment.  
For, behold, I was conceived in iniquity,  
and in sin my mother gave birth to me.  
For, behold, You love truth,  
You revealed to me the unknown  
and secret things of Your wisdom.  
Sprinkle me with hyssop, and I will be cleansed.  
Wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.  
Make me to hear joy and gladness,  
let the bones that You have humbled rejoice.  
Turn Your face away from my sins,  
and blot out all my transgressions.  
Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
and renew a right Spirit within me.  
Do not cast me away from Your presence,  
and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.  
Restore to me the joy of Your salvation,  
and establish me with Your guiding Spirit.  
Then I will teach transgressors Your ways,  
and sinners will return to You.  
Rescue me from bloodshed, O God, the God of my salvation,  
and my tongue will rejoice at Your righteousness.  
O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare Your praise,  
for if You had desired sacrifice, I would have given it,

You will not take pleasure in whole burnt offerings.  
The sacrifice to God is a broken spirit,  
a broken and humbled heart God will not despise.  
Do good, O Lord, to Zion, in Your good pleasure,  
and let the walls of Jerusalem be rebuilt.  
Then You will be pleased with the sacrifice of righteousness,  
with offerings and whole-burnt offerings,  
then bulls will be offered on Your altar.

Please continue praying for Irina Gozick.

PRAYERS TO END THE PANDEMIC OF CORONAVIRUS

Let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mercy.

○ God Almighty, Lord of heaven and earth, and of all creation visible and invisible: In Your inexpressible goodness, look down upon us, Your people gathered in Your Holy Name. Be our helper and defender in this day of affliction, for You know all our weaknesses and hear our cry in repentance and contrition of heart. O loving Lord, deliver us from the impending threat of the coronavirus. Send Your angel to watch over us and protect us. Grant health and recovery to those suffering from this virus. Guide the hands of the physicians and heal Your servants through them. Grant wisdom to those who are working on the vaccine for this virus. And preserve those who are healthy. Enable us to continue to serve our suffering brothers and sisters in peace that together we may glorify Your most honorable and majestic Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

○ Lord Jesus Christ, in Your loving care, You traveled through towns and villages healing every disease and sickness, and at Your command, the sick were made well: Yourself now come to our aid, in the midst of the global spread of the coronavirus, and grant us to experience the miracle Your healing love.

TUESDAY, APRIL 7  
SIXTH WEEK OF GREAT LENT

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Comfort the families of those who are sick or have died. May they regain their strength and health through quality medical care. And as they worry and grieve, defend them from illness and despair.

Heal us from our fear, which prevents nations from working together and neighbors from helping one another.

Guide the hands of the doctors and nurses and all medical professionals who seek to heal and help those affected and who put themselves at risk in the process. And impart Your wisdom on the researchers working on the vaccine for coronavirus.

Heal us from our pride, which can make us claim immunity to a disease that knows no boundaries. Instill the fear of You in the leaders of our nation and other nations of the world. Give them the foresight to act with charity and true concern for the well-being of the people they are meant to serve. Give them the wisdom to invest in long-term solutions that will help prepare for or prevent future outbreaks.

O Master and Lord, our Savior, Healer of all, stay by our side in this time of uncertainty and sorrow. Whether we are home or abroad, surrounded by many people suffering from this illness or only a few, stay with us as we patiently endure and mourn, persist and prepare.

For You are a merciful and loving God, and to You we give glory, to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

PRAYER FOR DOCTORS AND NURSES

**O** Lord Jesus Christ our God, Lover of mankind, Physician of our souls and bodies, You endured the pain of our infirmities, and by Your wounds we are healed. You gave sight to the man born blind and straightened the woman who was bent over for 18 years. You gave speech and sight to the mute man who was possessed by demons. You not only forgave the paralyzed man his sins, but healed him to walk. You restored the withered hand of a man in the synagogue and stopped the flow of blood of a woman who bled for 12 years. You raised Jairus' daughter back to life and resurrected Lazarus who was dead four days. You heal every infirmity under the sun: Yourself now, O Lord, grant Your grace to all the doctors, nurses, physicians, and researchers, who have labored and studied hour

upon hour, to go into all the world, and also to heal by the talent You have given to each of them. Strengthen them by Your strength, that they may not fear evil or disease. Enlighten them to do no evil by the works of their hands, and preserve them and those they serve in peace. For You are our God, and to You we give glory together with Your Father, Who has no beginning, and Your Most Holy, Good, and Life-giving Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS

*Exodus 3:1-8*

3<sup>1</sup> Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. <sup>2</sup> There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. <sup>3</sup> Then Moses said, "I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up." <sup>4</sup> When the Lord saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." <sup>5</sup> Then he said, "Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." <sup>6</sup> He said further, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. <sup>7</sup> Then the Lord said, "I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, <sup>8</sup> and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

*Proverbs 8:22-30*

<sup>22</sup> The Lord created me at the beginning of His work,  
the first of His acts of long ago.

<sup>23</sup> Ages ago I was set up,  
at the first, before the beginning of the earth.

<sup>24</sup> When there were no depths I was brought forth,

when there were no springs abounding with water.

<sup>25</sup> Before the mountains had been shaped,  
before the hills, I was brought forth –

<sup>26</sup> when He had not yet made earth and fields,  
or the world's first bits of soil.

<sup>27</sup> When He established the heavens, I was there,  
when He drew a circle on the face of the deep,

<sup>28</sup> when He made firm the skies above,  
when He established the fountains of the deep,

<sup>29</sup> when He assigned to the sea its limit,  
so that the waters might not transgress His command,

when He marked out the foundations of the earth,

<sup>30</sup> then I was beside Him, like a master worker;

and I was daily His delight,  
rejoicing before Him always.

#### THE GREAT FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD

The Feast of the Annunciation is one of the earliest Christian feasts, and was already being celebrated in the fourth century. There is a painting of the Annunciation in the catacomb of Priscilla in Rome dating from the second century. The Council of Toledo in 656 mentions the Feast, and the Council in Trullo in 692 says that the Annunciation was celebrated during Great Lent.

The Greek and Slavonic names for the Feast may be translated as “good tidings.” This, of course, refers to the Incarnation of the Son of God and the salvation He brings. The background of the Annunciation is found in the Gospel of Saint Luke (1:26-38). The troparion describes this as the “beginning of our salvation, and the revelation of the eternal mystery,” for on this day the Son of God became the Son of Man.

There are two main components to the Annunciation: the message itself, and the response of the Virgin. The message fulfills God's promise to send a Redeemer (*Genesis 3:15*), “I will put enmity between you (*snake, the devil*) and the woman, between your seed and her Seed; He will crush your head, and you will lie in wait for His heel.” The Fathers of the Church understand

“her Seed” to refer to Christ. The prophets hinted at His coming, which they saw dimly, but the Archangel Gabriel now proclaims that the promise is about to be fulfilled.

We see this echoed in the Liturgy of Saint Basil, as well, “When man disobeyed You, the true God, Who had created him, and was led astray by the deceit of the serpent, becoming subject to death through his own transgressions, You, O God, in Your righteous judgment sent him out from paradise into this world, returning him to the earth from which he was taken, and providing for him salvation through rebirth in Your Christ Himself.”

The Archangel Gabriel was sent by God to Nazareth in Galilee. There he spoke to the undefiled Virgin who was engaged to Saint Joseph, “Rejoice, O full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women. And, behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bring forth a son, and will call His name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever. And of His kingdom there will be no end.”

In contrast to Eve, who was readily deceived by the serpent, the Virgin did not immediately accept the Angel’s message. In her humility, she did not think she was deserving of such words, but was actually troubled by them. The fact that she asked for an explanation reveals her sobriety and prudence. She did not disbelieve the words of the angel, but could not understand how they would be fulfilled, for they spoke of something which was beyond nature.

Then Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, seeing I know not a man?” (*Luke 1:34*). “And the angel answered and said to her, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore also the One Who will be born from you will be called the Son of God. And, behold, your cousin Elisabeth has also conceived a son in her old age. And this is the sixth month of her, who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible.’ And Mary said, ‘Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Let it be to me according to your word.’ And the angel departed

from her.” (*Luke 1:35-38*)

In his Sermon 23 on the day of the Annunciation, Saint Philaret of Moscow boldly stated that “the word of the creature brought the Creator down into the world.” He explains that salvation is not merely an act of God’s will, but also involves the Virgin’s free will. She could have refused, but she accepted God’s will and chose to cooperate without complaint or further questions.

The icon of the Feast shows the Archangel with a staff in his left hand, indicating his role as a messenger. Sometimes one wing is upraised, as if to show his swift descent from heaven. His right hand is stretched toward the holy Virgin as he delivers his message.

The Virgin is depicted either standing or sitting, usually holding yarn in her left hand. Sometimes she is shown holding a scroll. Her right hand may be raised to indicate her surprise at the message she is hearing. Her head is bowed, showing her consent and obedience. The descent of the Holy Spirit upon her is depicted by a ray of light issuing from a small sphere at the top of the icon, which symbolizes heaven. In a famous icon from Sinai, a white dove is shown in the ray of light.

The Annunciation falls during Lent, but it is always celebrated with great joy. The Liturgy of Saint Basil or Saint John Chrysostom is served, even on the weekdays of Lent.

### *Troparion*

Today is the beginning of our salvation,  
the revelation of the eternal mystery.

The Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin  
as Gabriel announces the coming of grace.

Together with him let us cry to the Mother of God,  
“Rejoice, O full of grace,  
the Lord is with you.”

### *Kontakion*

O Victorious Leader of Triumphant Hosts.

We, your servants, delivered from evil,  
sing our grateful thanks to you, O Mother of God.  
As you possess invincible power,  
set us free from every calamity  
so that we may sing, Rejoice, O unwedded Bride.”

CONCLUDING PRAYERS

It is truly meet to bless you, O Theotokos, ever-blessed and most pure, and the Mother of our God. More honorable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, without corruption you gave birth to God the Word. True Theotokos we magnify you.

**T**hrough the prayers of our holy fathers and mother, O Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

