

Through 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 29 (28 LXX)

Praise to God in His holiness and majesty

Bring to the Lord, you sons of God,
bring to the Lord young rams,
bring to the Lord glory and honor.
Bring to the Lord the glory due to His Name,
worship the Lord in His holy court.
The voice of the Lord is over the waters,

the God of glory thunders, the Lord is over many waters.
The voice of the Lord is powerful,
the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.
The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars,
the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon.
He breaks the cedars like the calf of Lebanon,
and His beloved is like a young unicorn.
The voice of the Lord divides the flames of fire,
the voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness,
the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.
The voice of the Lord gathers the deer,
and strips the forest bare,
and in His temple everyone speaks of His glory.
The Lord dwells over the flood,
the Lord sits enthroned as King forever.
May the Lord give strength to His people,
may the Lord bless His people with peace.

The three-ode Canon from the Matins service of Tuesday in the Fourth Week of Great Lent

Ode 2

Irmos: Behold now, and see that I am God, Who led the people of Israel in times of old through the Red Sea, and saved them and fed them, setting them free from the bitter bondage of Pharaoh.

Refrain: Glory to Your precious Cross, O Lord.

Today, in the middle of Lent, we worship with faith the Cross that You have endured in the midst of the earth, O Messiah and Word of God, asking that we also may behold Your Resurrection.

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

With the rod of power prefigured by Moses, let us divide in two the sea of the passions and so reach the promised land. And let us feast upon the spiritual Manna.

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

Who will not weep for you? Who will not mourn for you, O soul, you lover of wickedness? You have not eagerly sought that which is good, but have despised the righteous Judge, Who shows patience towards you.

Refrain: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Assuming flesh without undergoing change, O Virgin, you conceived Christ. Diligently pray to Him, that He may deliver from the passions of the flesh those who fall down and worship before the Cross which He endured in the flesh.

Refrain: Glory to Your precious Cross, O Lord.

Behold now, see that I am your God, Who has given the inhabited world My Cross as a weapon of salvation, before which we now fall down and worship. Grant that those who venerate it may overcome the scheming of the enemy.

Refrain: Glory to Your precious Cross, O Lord.

Great and abundantly merciful are You, O Lord, for You have given us for veneration Your life-giving Cross, upon which Your hands and feet were nailed. And over which Blood flowed from Your most pure side, like a fount of life for us.

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

A supremely perfect Unity in three Persons and Divinity, the Father unbegotten, the Son only-begotten, the Spirit proceeding from the Father and manifest through the Son, single in Essence and in Nature, one Lordship and one Kingdom, save us all.

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

The wonder of your conception transcends speech, O Mother and Virgin: for how have you given birth and yet remained undefiled? How do you give birth to a child without knowing a man? “All this is understood by the Word of God, Who has been born from me in a new way, transcending nature.”

Refrain: Glory to You, our God, glory to You.

The great Moses stretched out his hands and overthrew Amalek, prefiguring you for us, O Cross. And making the sign of the Cross in darkness and in the air, we turn to flight and defeat our enemy, the author

of evil, singing the praises of Christ.

Ode 8

Irmos: You cover Your chambers on high with the waters, and have set the sands to bound the sea and uphold all things: the sun sings Your praises, the moon gives glory to You, every creature offers a hymn to You, as their Creator, forever.

Refrain: Glory to Your precious Cross, O Lord.

Having created the foundations of all the earth as God, You have given to the faithful as an unshakable foundation and weapon of salvation: Your Cross, before which we fall down and worship, exalting You above all forever.

Refrain: Glory to Your precious Cross, O Lord.

Beholding the Wood of the Cross shining brighter than the sun's rays, let us now draw near, radiant with the Fast, and venerate it, drawing from it light-bearing grace that drives away darkness, supremely exalting Christ forever.

Refrain: Glory to Your precious Cross, O Lord.

O Word, You are the living water that springs up for eternal life. And You have poured forth blood and water from Your side upon the Cross, O Master, stopping the rivers of sin. Therefore, I entreat You: dry up the evil streams of my passions.

Refrain: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

O pure and holy Mother of God, you are our spiritual sanctuary, for you have borne God Who takes His rest among His holy ones. This day He makes holy all the ends of the earth by the divine veneration of the most holy Cross, upon which He was nailed in the flesh.

Refrain: Glory to Your precious Cross, O Lord.

Come, O people, and behold the life-giving Wood now set before us, and upon which Christ our God was crucified, and with fear let us chant in praise of the Cross, made from three kinds of wood as a figure of the Trinity. And in reverent fear, let us raise our cry, as we bless, praise and exalt Christ above all forever.

Refrain: We bless the Lord: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

God is one in the Trinity: the Father is not begotten like the Son, nor does the Son proceed like the Spirit, but each keeps His own distinctive properties. Therefore, I glorify the Three as Light and God forever.

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

You alone have conceived without corruption. You alone have breastfed Your Child, yet not known the pains of birth-giving. And you alone have borne Your Maker and Master, and are both His Handmaiden and Mother. Therefore, we sing your praises, O Virgin Mother, forever.

Refrain: Glory to You, our God, glory to You.

O Christ, by a word You gave sight to the man blind from birth: open once more the blinded eyes of my heart, that I may behold the light of Your commandments forever.

Ode 9

Irmos: Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, Who has exalted the power of salvation on our behalf in the house of His child David, where the Dayspring from on high has visited us, and guided us on the path of peace.

Refrain: Glory to Your precious Cross, O Lord.

Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, for He has destroyed the ancient curse by His Cross, which He has given to us as our refuge and firm foundation, and by its power we overthrow our enemies.

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

I am held fast in the bonds of my countless sins, O Christ, and deliberately I refuse to seek Your will, which leads me to salvation. Turn me back by Your Cross and free me from my blindness, in Your inexpressible mercy and compassion.

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

Sinfully I have followed the Pharisee in his arrogance, bitter and terrible has been my fall, and I lie trampled by the enemy. But have mercy on me, O Christ, and save me, for out pity You have humbled Yourself, O most high King of Glory.

Refrain: Most holy Theotokos save us.

All generations call you blessed, O pure Virgin: for Jesus has been born from your womb alone. Pray to Him that your flock and people may be

saved.

Refrain: Glory to Your precious Cross, O Lord.

Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, for He has destroyed the ancient curse by His Cross, which He has set before us for our veneration. Let us venerate the Cross in faith and hymn its praises, ever glorifying His great mercy.

Refrain: Glory to Your precious Cross, O Lord.

O precious Cross, you are the glory of the Church, the weapon of kings, fashioned by God to give peace to all the world. O Cross, joy of the Orthodox, and the guardian of the inhabited world: keep and sanctify those who fall down and venerate you.

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

Glory to You, O Holy Trinity, Unity equal in honor, divine Nature, one Great Dominion, the Father, Son and Spirit, unapproachable Light, Divinity without beginning: save those who worship You, O Creator of all.

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Standing by Your Cross, O Jesus, Your Mother looked upon You, her Lamb and Shepherd and Master. And lamenting, she wept bitterly, wounded to her heart, she cried out to You, O Christ, “What is this strange sight? O Life, how do You die?”

Refrain: Glory to You, our God, glory to You.

As You saved the repentant Manasseh, O God, save me also, Your servant, and do not reject me, for I repent bitterly with tears, for I have turned aside as Israel of old, having lived all my days like the Prodigal.

PRAYERS TO END THE PANDEMIC OF CORONAVIRUS

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

O 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.

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

O 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.

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

Genesis 9:8-17

⁸Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ⁹“As for Me, I am establishing My covenant with you and your descendants after you, ¹⁰and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. ¹¹I establish My covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.” ¹²God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between Me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: ¹³I have set My rainbow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of

the covenant between Me and the earth. ¹⁴ When I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵ I will remember My covenant that is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. ¹⁶ When the rainbow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” ¹⁷ God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between Me and all flesh that is on the earth.”

Proverbs 12:8-22

⁸ One is commended for good sense,
but a perverse mind is despised.
⁹ Better to be despised and have a servant,
than to be self-important and lack food.
¹⁰ The righteous know the needs of their animals,
but the mercy of the wicked is cruel.
¹¹ Those who till their land will have plenty of food,
but those who follow worthless pursuits have no sense.
¹² The wicked covet the proceeds of wickedness,
but the root of the righteous bears fruit.
¹³ The evil are ensnared by the transgression of their lips,
but the righteous escape from trouble.
¹⁴ From the fruit of the mouth one is filled with good things,
and manual labor has its reward.
¹⁵ Fools think their own way is right,
but the wise listen to advice.
¹⁶ Fools show their anger at once,
but the prudent ignore an insult.
¹⁷ Whoever speaks the truth gives honest evidence,
but a false witness speaks deceitfully.
¹⁸ Rash words are like sword thrusts,
but the tongue of the wise brings healing.
¹⁹ Truthful lips endure forever,

but a lying tongue lasts only a moment.

²⁰ Deceit is in the mind of those who plan evil,
but those who counsel peace have joy.

²¹ No harm happens to the righteous,
but the wicked are filled with trouble.

²² Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord,
but those who act faithfully are His delight.

SAINT OF THE DAY

Saint Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem

Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem, was born in Damascus around 560. From his youth he was distinguished for his piety and his love for classical studies. He was especially proficient in philosophy, and so he was known as Sophronius the Wise. The future hierarch, however, sought the true philosophy of monasticism, and conversations with the desert-dwellers.

He arrived in Jerusalem at the monastery of Saint Theodosius, and there he became close with the hieromonk John Moschus, becoming his spiritual son and submitting himself to him in obedience. They visited several monasteries, writing down the lives and spiritual wisdom of the ascetics they met. From these notes emerged their renowned book, the “Spiritual Meadow,” which was highly esteemed at the Seventh Ecumenical Council.

To save themselves from the devastating incursions of the Persians, Saints John and Sophronius left Palestine and went to Antioch, and from there they went to Egypt. In Egypt, Saint Sophronius became seriously ill. During this time he decided to become a monk and was tonsured by John Moschus.

After Sophronius recovered his health, they both decided to remain in Alexandria. There they were received by the holy Patriarch John the Merciful, to whom they rendered great aid in the struggle against the Monophysite heresy. At Alexandria, Sophronius had an affliction of the eyes, and he turned with prayer and faith to the holy Unmercenaries Cyrus and John, and he received healing in a church named for them. In gratitude, Sophronius then wrote the Lives of these holy Unmercenaries.

When the barbarians began to threaten Alexandria, Patriarch John,

accompanied by Sophronius and John Moschus, set out for Constantinople, but he died along the way. John Moschus and Sophronius then set out for Rome with eighteen other monks. John Moschus died at Rome. His body was taken to Jerusalem by Sophronius and buried at the monastery of Saint Theodosius.

In the year 628, Patriarch Zacharias of Jerusalem (609-633) returned from his captivity in Persia. After his death, the patriarchal throne was occupied for two years by Saint Modestus. After the death of Saint Modestus, Sophronius was chosen Patriarch. Sophronius toiled much for the welfare of the Jerusalem Church as its primate (634-644).

Toward the end of his life, Sophronius and his flock lived through a two-year siege of Jerusalem by the Moslems. Worn down by hunger, the Christians finally agreed to open the city gates, on the condition that the enemy spare the holy places. But this condition was not fulfilled, and Sophronius died in grief over the desecration of the Christian holy places.

Written works by Patriarch Sophronius have come down to us in the area of dogmatics, and likewise his “Excursus on the Liturgy,” the Life of Saint Mary of Egypt, and also about 950 troparia and sticheras from Pascha to the Ascension.

TWO PRAYERS TO SAINT SOPHRONIUS

Troparion

O Patriarch Sophronius,
you were glorious in the splendor of sobriety,
and through the radiance of your words
you revealed inexpressible enlightenment from heaven.
For by your life you attained wisdom
and now you confirm the Church
as an illustrious hierarch and intercessor for us with the Lord.

Kontakion

You were most wise among patriarchs,
O Sophronius of Jerusalem.
You struggled with divine zeal,

spreading the commandments of truth with your lips.
You set right the foundations of the Church
and firmly established the monastic order.
You brought to light wise sermons, and instructed by them,
therefore we cry out to you, “Rejoice, splendid boast of the Orthodox.”

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.

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