



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

Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life! (3x)

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.

From Matins of Friday of the third week of Pascha

Kontakion

When You said, “Rejoice,” to the myrrh-bearers, You made the lamentation of Eve the first mother to cease by Your Resurrection, O Christ God. And You bid Your apostles to preach, “The Savior is risen from the grave.”

Ikos

As the myrrh-bearers went to Your tomb, O Savior, they were perplexed in mind and said to themselves, “Who will roll the stone away from the tomb for us?” And looking up, they saw that the stone was rolled away. They were awestruck by the form of the angel and his raiment. They were taken with trembling and thought to flee, and the angel said to them, “Do not afraid. He Whom you seek is risen. Come, behold the place where the body of Jesus lay, and go quickly, proclaim to the disciples, ‘The Savior is risen from the grave.’”

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

Acts 8:40-9:19

⁴⁰ But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea. **9**¹ Meanwhile Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest ² and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the

Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. ³ Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴ He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" ⁵ He asked, "Who are you, Lord?" The reply came, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. ⁶ But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do." ⁷ The men who were traveling with him stood speechless because they heard the voice but saw no one. ⁸ Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. ⁹ For three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank. ¹⁰ Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." He answered, "Here I am, Lord." ¹¹ The Lord said to him, "Get up and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul. At this moment he is praying, ¹² and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight." ¹³ But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints in Jerusalem; ¹⁴ and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who invoke your name." ¹⁵ But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before Gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel; ¹⁶ I myself will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name." ¹⁷ So Ananias went and entered the house. He laid his hands on Saul and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way here, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." ¹⁸ And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and his sight was restored. Then he got up and was baptized, ¹⁹ and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

John 6:48-54

⁴⁸ I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹ Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. ⁵⁰ This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. ⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down from

heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”⁵² The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?”⁵³ So Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.⁵⁴ Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day.

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.

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.

SAINT OF THE DAY

Apostle and Evangelist Mark

The Holy Apostle and Evangelist Mark, also known as John Mark (*Acts 12:12*), was one of the Seventy Apostles, and was also a nephew of Saint Barnabas. He was born at Jerusalem. The house of his mother Mary adjoined the Garden of Gethsemane. As Church Tradition relates, on the night that Christ was betrayed Mark followed after Him, wrapped only in a linen cloth. He was seized by soldiers, and fled away naked, leaving the cloth behind (*Mark 14:51-52*). After the Ascension of the Lord, the house of his mother Mary became a place where Christians gathered, and a place of lodging for some of the Apostles (*Acts 12:12*).

Saint Mark was a very close companion of the Apostles Peter and Paul and Barnabas. Saint Mark was at Seleucia with Paul and Barnabas, and from there he set off to the island of Cyprus, and he traversed the whole of it from east to west. In the city of Paphos, Saint Mark witnessed the blinding of the sorcerer Elymas by Saint Paul (*Acts 13:6-12*).

After working with the Apostle Paul, Saint Mark returned to Jerusalem, and then went to Rome with the Apostle Peter. From there, he set out for Egypt, where he established a local Church.

Saint Mark met Saint Paul in Antioch. From there he went with Saint Barnabas to Cyprus, and then he went to Egypt again, where he and Saint Peter founded many churches. Then he went to Babylon. From this city the Apostle Peter sent an Epistle to the Christians of Asia Minor, in which he calls Saint Mark his son (*1 Peter 5:13*).

When the Apostle Paul came to Rome in chains, Saint Mark was at Ephesus, where Saint Timothy was bishop. Saint Mark went with him to Rome. There he also wrote his holy Gospel (ca. 62-63).

From Rome Saint Mark traveled to Egypt. In Alexandria he started a Christian school, which later produced such famous Fathers and teachers of the Church as Clement of Alexandria, Saint Dionysius of Alexandria, Saint Gregory Thaumaturgos, and others. Zealous for Church services, Saint

Mark composed a Liturgy for the Christians of Alexandria.

Saint Mark preached the Gospel in the inner regions of Africa, and he was in Libya at Nektopolis.

During these journeys, Saint Mark was inspired by the Holy Spirit to go again to Alexandria and confront the pagans. There he visited the home of Ananias, and healed his crippled hand. The dignitary happily took him in, listened to his words, and received Baptism.

Following the example of Ananias, many of the inhabitants of that part of the city where he lived were also baptized. This roused the enmity of the pagans, and they wanted to kill Saint Mark. Having learned of this, Saint Mark made Ananias a bishop, and the three Christians Malchos, Sabinos, and Kerdinos were ordained presbyters to provide the church with leadership after his death.

The pagans seized Saint Mark when he was serving the Liturgy. They beat him, dragged him through the streets and threw him in prison. There Saint Mark was granted a vision of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who strengthened him before his sufferings. On the following day, the angry crowd again dragged the saint through the streets to the courtroom, but along the way Saint Mark died saying, "Into Your hands, O Lord, I surrender my spirit."

The pagans wanted to burn the saint's body, but when they lit the fire, everything grew dark, thunder crashed, and there was an earthquake. The pagans fled in terror, and Christians took up the body of Saint Mark and buried it in a stone crypt. This was on April 4, 63. The Church celebrates his memory on May 8.

In the year 310, a church was built over the relics of Saint Mark. In 820, when the Muslim Arabs had established their rule in Egypt and oppressed the Christian Church, the relics of Saint Mark were transferred to Venice and placed in the church named for him.

In the ancient iconographic tradition, which adopted symbols for the holy Evangelists borrowed from the vision of Saint John the Theologian (*Revelation 4:7*) and the prophecy of Ezekiel (*Ezekiel 1:10*), the holy Evangelist Mark is represented by a lion, symbolizing the might and royal dignity of Christ (*Revelation 5:5*).

Saint Mark wrote his Gospel for Gentile Christians, emphasizing the words and deeds of the Savior which reveal His divine Power. Many aspects of his account can be explained by his closeness to Saint Peter. The ancient writers say that the Gospel of Mark is a concise record of Saint Peter's preaching.

One of the central theological themes in the Gospel of Saint Mark is the power of God achieving what is humanly impossible. The Apostles performed remarkable miracles with Christ (*Mark 16:20*) and the Holy Spirit (*Mark 13:11*) working through them. Christ's disciples were told to go into the world and preach the Gospel to all creatures (*Mark 13:10, 16:15*), and that is what they did.

TROPARION AND KONTAKION OF SAINT MARK

Troparion

From your childhood the light of truth enlightened you, O Mark,
and you loved the labor of Christ the Savior.
Therefore, you followed Peter with zeal
and served Paul well as a fellow laborer,
and you enlighten the world with your holy Gospel.

Kontakion

When you received the grace of the Spirit from on high, O Apostle,
you broke the snares of the philosophers
and gathered all nations into your net,
bringing them to your Lord, O glorious Mark,
by the preaching of the divine Gospel.

CONCLUDING PRAYERS

The angel cried to the Lady full of grace,
"Rejoice, O pure Virgin. Again I say, Rejoice.
Your Son is risen from His three days in the tomb.
With Himself He has raised all the dead.
Rejoice, all people."

Shine! Shine! O new Jerusalem!
The glory of the Lord has shone on you.
Exult now and be glad, O Zion.
Be radiant, O pure Theotokos,
in the resurrection of your Son.

O Christ, great and most holy Pascha,
O Wisdom, Word, and Power of God:
Grant that we may more perfectly partake of You
in the never-ending Day of Your Kingdom.

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

Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon
those in the tombs bestowing life! (3x)

