

A Brief Service of Intercession to the Most-Holy Theotokos

*(In the practice of Saints Cyril and Methodius Orthodox Church, Terryville, CT;
prepared for occasions when the people must pray without the clergy being present.)*

Opening Blessing

Reader: Through the prayers of our holy fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ, Our God, have mercy on us, and save us.

Invocation of the Holy Spirit (sung in Tone 6)

People: Amen. O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, who art everywhere and fillest 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.

Trisagion (Thrice Holy) Prayers

Reader: 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. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy.

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

The Lord's Prayer

People: 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.
Amen.

Call to Worship

Reader: 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 142/143

Reader: Hear my prayer, O LORD; give ear to my supplications! In your faithfulness answer me, in your righteousness! Enter not into judgment with your servant; for no man living is righteous before you. For the enemy has pursued me; he has crushed my life to the ground; he has made me sit in darkness like those long dead. Therefore my spirit faints within me; my heart within me is appalled. I remember the days of old, I meditate on all that you have done; I muse on what your hands have wrought. I stretch out my hands to you; my soul thirsts for you like a parched land. Make haste to answer me, O LORD! My spirit fails! Hide not your face from me, lest I be like those who go down to the Pit. Let me hear in the morning of your steadfast love, for in you I put my trust. Teach me the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul. Deliver me, O LORD, from my enemies! I have fled to you for refuge! Teach me to do your will, for you are my God! Let your good spirit lead me on a level path! For your name's sake, O LORD, preserve my life! In your righteousness bring me out of trouble! And in your steadfast love cut off my enemies, and destroy all my adversaries, for I am your servant.

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

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia. Glory to You, O God. (*3 times*)

Psalm 117/118 ("God is the Lord..." ["The Lord is God..."])

Reader: O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his steadfast love endures forever! Let Israel say, "His steadfast love endures forever." Let the house of Aaron say, "His steadfast love endures forever." Let those who fear the Lord say, "His steadfast love endures forever." Out of my distress I called on the Lord; the Lord answered me and set me free. With the Lord on my side I do not fear. What can man do to me? The Lord is on my side to help me; I shall look in triumph on those who hate me. It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to put confidence in man. It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to put confidence in princes. All nations surrounded me; in the name of the Lord I cut them off! They surrounded me, surrounded me on every side; in the name of the Lord I cut them off! They surrounded me like bees, they blazed like a fire of thorns; in the name of the Lord I cut them off! I was pushed hard, so that I was falling, but the Lord helped me. The Lord is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation. Hark, glad songs of victory in the tents of the righteous: "The right hand of the Lord does valiantly, the right hand of the Lord is exalted, the right hand of the Lord does valiantly!" I shall not die, but I shall live, and recount the deeds of the Lord. The Lord has chastened me sorely, but he has not given me over to death. Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the Lord. This is the gate of the Lord; the righteous shall enter through it. I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation. The stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Save us, we beseech you, O Lord! O Lord, we beseech you, give us success! Blessed be he who enters in the name of the Lord! We bless you from the house of the Lord. The Lord is God, and he has given us light. Bind the festal procession with branches, up to the horns of the altar! You are my God, and I will give thanks to you; you are my God, I will extol you. O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever!

Troparion to the Theotokos (Tone 4)

Let us, who are sinful and unworthy, /
Run fervently to the Mother of God. /
Let us fall down in repentance, /
Crying from the depths of our souls. /
Help us and have mercy on us, O Lady, /
We are perishing in our many sins. //
Do not despise your poor servants, for you are our only hope.

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

Apolytikion to the Theotokos (Tone 6)

Steadfast Protectress of Christians, /
Constant Advocate before the Creator: /
Do not despise the cry of us sinners, /
But in your goodness come speedily to help us
Who call on you in faith. /
Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us, /
O Theotokos, //
For you always protect those who honor you.

Psalm 51

Reader:

Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your steadfast love; according to Your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done that which is evil in Your sight, so that You are justified in Your sentence and blameless in Your judgment. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sins did my mother conceive me. Behold, You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Fill me with joy and gladness; let the bones which You have broken rejoice. Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Your presence, and take not Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners will return to You. Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of Your deliverance. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise. For You have no delight in sacrifice; were I to give a burnt offering, You would not be pleased. The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise. Do good to Zion in Your good pleasure; rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, then You will delight in a sacrifice of righteousness, in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings; then bulls will be offered on Your altar.

The Magnificat

People: More honorable than the cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim!
Without defilement you gave birth to God the Word. True Theotokos, we magnify you!

Reader: My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior! For He has regarded the lowliness of His handmaiden. For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed. For He who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is His name. And His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with His arm, He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He has put down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of low degree. He has filled the hungry with good things and the rich He has sent empty away. He has helped His servant Israel in remembrance of His mercy, as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his posterity forever!

People: More honorable than the cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim!
Without defilement you gave birth to God the Word. True Theotokos, we magnify you!

Commemoration of the Living

Reader: O Lord Jesus Christ our God, for the sake of Your eternal mercy and loving-kindness You became man, and suffered crucifixion and death for the salvation of all; You rose from the dead and ascended into heaven and sit at the right hand of the Father where You hear the prayers of all who call upon You humbly and with their whole heart: Incline Your ear to us, and listen to the prayer which Your unworthy servants offer as a spiritual sacrifice for all Your people.

Remember first of all Your Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, which You purchased with Your precious blood. Strengthen it, multiply it, keep it in peace and do not allow the gates of hell to stand against it. Heal the schisms of the churches, stop the raging of the heathen, root out and cleanse all heresies, destroying them by the power of Your Holy Spirit.

Have mercy, Lord, upon our President and all in civil authority and save them, together with the armed forces of our country. Give them peace and continual victory over injustice and evil in all places. May they keep Your holy Church secure, that all Your people may live calm and ordered lives in Your sight, in true faith and prayer, with godly deeds.

Have mercy, Lord, upon the Orthodox patriarchs and metropolitans, the archbishops and bishops, the priests and deacons and the whole order of Your Church's clergy. Save them whom You have established to feed Your flock and by their prayers have mercy on us sinners and save us.

Have mercy, Lord, on our spiritual fathers and save them, and by their holy prayers, forgive us our transgressions.

Have mercy, Lord, on our parents and save them, together with our brothers and sisters, our kinsmen after the flesh and our friends. Grant them Your blessing both here and in the life to come.

Have mercy, Lord, on the old and the young, the needy, the orphans and widows, and all who are in sickness and sorrow, distress and affliction, oppression and captivity, in prison and confinement. Save them, together with Your servants who are under persecution for Your sake

and for the sake of the Orthodox Faith. Remember them, visit them, strengthen and comfort them, and by Your power grant them speedy relief, freedom and deliverance.

Have mercy, Lord, on all who travel and save them: those who are sent on duty, our fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, and all Orthodox Christians.

Have mercy, Lord, on our enemies: save all those who envy us, wish us evil, or deal unjustly with us. May they not perish because of us sinners.

Enlighten, Lord, with the truth of Your holy wisdom, all who have gone astray from the Orthodox Faith, led by destructive heresies, and unite them once more to Your Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.

Commemoration of the Departed

Reader: Remember, Lord, those who have departed this life: all Orthodox patriarchs, metropolitans, archbishops, bishops, and all who served You in the priesthood and ministry of the Church and in the monastic order, and grant them rest with Your saints in Your eternal kingdom.

Remember, Lord, the souls of Your servants now fallen asleep, our parents, family and friends. Forgive them all their sins, committed knowingly or unknowingly; grant them Your kingdom, a portion in Your eternal blessing, and the enjoyment of Your unending life.

Remember, Lord, all who have fallen asleep in the hope of the resurrection and of eternal life: our fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters and Orthodox Christians throughout the world. Place them with Your saints before the light of Your countenance and have mercy on us, for You are good and the Lover of mankind.

A Prayer of Intercession to the Most-Holy Theotokos

Reader: O Mother of God, our queen and our hope, the refuge of the abandoned and the intercessor for those who have gone astray; the joy of all who sorrow and the protectress of the needy; you see our poverty, our affliction and misery. Help us who are weak; feed us who are hungry; intercede for us with your Son and our God, and may He deal with us as He pleases. For we have no other hope, no other intercessor, no other consolation except you, O Virgin Theotokos. Protect us beneath your veil, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Another Prayer of Intercession to the Most-Holy Theotokos

Reader: All-pure and incorruptible Virgin Bride of God and our Sovereign Lady: you made the Word of God one with mankind by gloriously giving birth to your Son and joining our fallen nature to His divine nature; you are the hope of the despairing and the support of those in distress, the swift defender of those who turn to you and the refuge of all Christians:

Do not turn from me, an unclean sinner, who have destroyed myself with unworthy thoughts, words and deeds, and have been enslaved by forgetfulness to the carnal passions of life; but have

compassion on me, Theotokos, and accept the prayer of a sinner and prodigal, offered from unclean lips.

Exercise your boldness as a Mother and pray to your Son, our Lord and Master, that He will make known to me also His compassionate goodness, and overlooking my countless sins, will turn me to repentance and make me fervent in doing His commandments.

Be with me always in your grace and loving mercy, for you are the fervent helper who turns away the assaults of enemies and guides men towards salvation, caring for my unworthy soul at the hour of death, and driving from it the darkness of evil spirits.

In the Day of Judgment free me from eternal torment, and show me to be an heir of the divine glory of your Son and our God.

Grant this, Lady Theotokos, by your prayers and intercessions, through the mercy and lovingkindness of your Only-begotten Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to Whom are due all glory, honor and worship, with the Father Who is eternal and His all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Dismissal

Reader: Through the prayers of our holy fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ, Our God, have mercy on us, and save us.

People: Amen.

Hymn to the Theotokos

People: Beneath your compassion we take refuge, O Theotokos. Do not despise our supplications in adversity, but deliver us from perils, O only pure and only blessed one.

(And all venerate the icon of the Theotokos and depart in peace.)

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