

## THE FIRST KNEELING PRAYER

**Deacon:** Again and again, having bent our knees, let us pray to the Lord!

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

*And all the people and clergy bow their knees, and the priest reads the first prayer from the Royal Doors, facing the people:*

**Priest:** O most pure, undefiled, unoriginate, invisible, incomprehensible, inscrutable, immutable, invincible, immeasurable, gentle Lord, Who alone dost possess immortality, Who dwellest in light unapproachable, Who hast created heaven, the earth, and the sea, and all things fashioned in them, Who before being asked dost grant everyone their requests: Thee do we entreat, Thee do we beseech, O Master Who lovest mankind, Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ Who, for us men and for our salvation, came down from the heavens and became incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Ever-virgin Mary, the all-glorious Theotokos; Who, having first taught with words, and afterwards showed by works, when He endured the saving Passion, gave an order unto us, Thy humble, sinful, and unworthy servants, to offer entreaties unto Thee while bending our necks and knees, for our own sins and for the ignorant acts of the people. Do Thou Thyself, O greatly Merciful One Who lovest mankind, hearken unto us on the day whereon we call upon Thee, and especially on this day of Pentecost, whereon, after the ascent of our Lord Jesus Christ into the heavens, and His sitting on the right hand of Thee, God the Father, sent down upon His holy disciples and apostles the Holy Spirit, Who rested upon each of them, so that they were filled with His inexhaustible grace, and spake in other tongues of Thy mighty works, and prophesied.

Wherefore, do Thou now hearken unto us who pray unto Thee, and remember us, the lowly and condemned, and return our souls from captivity, having Thy mercy interceding for us. Accept us who fall down before Thee and cry out: We have sinned; we have been cast down before Thee from the womb. From the belly of our mothers Thou art our God. But as our days have vanished in vanity, we have been stripped of Thine aid and are bereft of any answer; yet daring to hope in Thy compassions, we cry out: Be Thou not mindful of the sins of our youth and ignorance, but cleanse us of our secret deeds, and turn us not away in our old age, when our strength faileth. Forsake us not before we return to the earth, but vouchsafe that we may return to Thee; and hearken to us in Thy kindness and grace. Measure our iniquities by Thy compassions, and set the abyss of the multitude of our offenses the abyss of Thy compassions. Look down from Thy holy heights, O Lord, upon Thy people, who stand here and await rich mercy of Thee. Visit us with Thy goodness, deliver us from the oppression of the devil; make our life steadfast by Thy holy and sacred laws. Appoint Thou an angel, a faithful guardian, for Thy people, and gather all into Thy kingdom. Grant the petitions of those who hope on Thee; remit them their sins, and our own. Purify us through the activity of Thy Holy Spirit, and destroy the snares which the enemy hath laid for us.

*And he addeth also this prayer:*

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, Master Almighty, Who hast illumined the day with the light of the sun, and hast made the night bright with fiery rays, and hast vouchsafed us to pass through the length of the day and to draw nigh unto the onset of the night! Hearken unto our entreaties and all Thy people, forgiving us all our sins, voluntary and involuntary. Accept our evening prayers, and send the plentitude of Thy mercies and Thy compassions down upon Thine inheritance. Wall us about with Thy holy angels; arm us with the sword of Thy righteousness; protect us with Thy truth; preserve us by Thy power; deliver us from every evil circumstance, from every assault of the adversary. Grant unto us that this evening, with the coming night, and all the days of our life, may be perfect, holy, peaceful, sinless, without temptations and phantasies; through the supplications of the holy Theotokos, and of all the saints who have been well-pleasing unto Thee from ages past.

## THE SECOND KNEELING PRAYER

**Deacon:** Again and again, having bent our knees, let us pray to the Lord!

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

*And we bow our knees as before mentioned. The priest reads the second prayer in the hearing of all:*

**Priest:** O Lord Jesus Christ our God, Who hast given Thy peace to men and the gift of the all-holy Spirit, while Thou wast yet with us in this life, O Thou Who ever givest to the faithful an inheritance which cannot be taken away, O Thou Who most manifestly sent down this grace today upon Thy disciples and apostles, and Who hast made the nations steadfast by their fiery tongues, by whom the whole human race, received in their ears the knowledge of God in their own language: By the light of the Spirit have we been enlightened and have been removed from delusion as from darkness, and through the distribution of perceptible tongues of fire and supernatural activity we have learned faith in Thee and to theologize Thee with the Father and the Holy Spirit, and we have been illumined in one Godhead, power, and authority.

Wherefore do Thou, O Effulgence of the Father, immutable and immovable image of His essence and nature, Wellspring of wisdom and grace, open the lips of me, a sinner, and teach me how worthily I must needs pray and for whom; for Thou art He Who knoweth the great multitude of my sins, yet Thy compassion surpasseth the boundless number thereof: for, lo! I stand before Thee in fear, casting the despair of my soul into the abyss of Thy mercy. Guide Thou my life, O Thou Who with the ineffable power of wisdom dost direct all creation by Thy word, O calm haven of the tempest-tossed, and tell me the way wherein I should go. Impart the spirit of Thy wisdom to my thoughts, O Thou Who grantest the spirit of understanding to my mindlessness; cover Thou my works with the spirit of the fear of Thee, and renew an upright spirit within me, and by Thy governing Spirit set aright the stumbling of my thoughts, that guided every day to what is profitable by Thy Spirit, I may be vouchsafed to do Thy commandments and to be ever mindful of Thy glorious coming, which examineth the things we have done. And disdain me as one deluded by the beautiful things of this world, which are corrupt, but strengthen me to desire the acquisition of the treasures which are to come. For Thou didst say, O Master, that whatsoever one asketh in Thy name, he will freely receive from Thee, the eternal God and Father. Wherefore, I also, a sinner, entreat Thy goodness at the coming of Thy Holy Spirit: Whatsoever I have asked, grant me for my salvation.

Yea, O Lord, rich Giver and good Bestower of every benefaction, as Thou art He Who granteth them in great abundance, we pray: Thou art compassionate and merciful, O Thou Who, having come to share in our flesh, though without sin, dost with loving sympathy incline Thyself to those who bend their knees before Thee, as the cleansing of our sins. Wherefore, grant, O Lord, Thy compassions to Thy people; hearken unto us from Thy holy heaven; sanctify us with the power of Thy saving right hand; cover us with the shelter of Thy wings, and disdain not the works of Thy hands. Thee alone do we offend, yet Thee only do we serve. We know not how to worship any other god, nor stretch forth our hands to an alien God, O Master. Remit our offenses, and, accepting the entreaties we offer on our knees, extend a helping hand unto us all. Accept the prayer of all as it were pleasing incense offered up before Thine all-good kingship.

*And he addeth also this prayer:*

Lord, O Lord, Who deliverest us from every arrow that flieth by day, deliver us also from every thing that walketh in darkness. Accept our evening prayer, the lifting up of our hands. And vouchsafe that we may pass through the course of the night in a blameless manner, untried by evil. And deliver us from all the turmoil and fear caused by the devil. Grant compunction to our souls, and to our thoughts care at the dread and righteous judgement of Thy trial. Nail our flesh to the fear of Thee, and mortify our members on earth. May we be illumined by the stillness of dreams through the sight of Thy judgements. Take from us every unseemly phantasy and harmful lust. And raise us up at the hour of prayer, steadfast in faith and advancing in Thy commandments.

### THE THIRD KNEELING PRAYER

**Deacon:** Again and again, having bent our knees, let us pray to the Lord!

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

*And while we bow our knees, the priest reads the third prayer:*

**Priest:** O Christ our God, Thou ever-flowing and enlightening Source of life, creative Power Who art equally eternal with the Father, Who hast most beautifully carried out Thy full dispensation for the salvation of man, Who hast broken the indissoluble bonds of death and the bars of hades, and hast trampled the multitude of evil spirits underfoot; Who didst offer Thyself for us as an unblemished sacrifice, and didst give Thine all-pure Body as an offering, untouched and immune to all sin, and Who by this dread and indescribable sacred act hast granted us life everlasting; Who didst descend into hades and break the eternal chains, and didst show unto those sitting in darkness the way of ascent; Who didst hook the serpent of the abyss, the author of evil, with the lure of divine wisdom, didst bind him with fetters of darkness in Tartarus and unquenchable fire, and by Thine incalculable might didst confine him to the outermost darkness; O Wisdom of the Father, Thou of great renown, Who hast Thyself to be a great helper for those who are being tested, and hast enlightened those sitting in darkness and the shadow of death!

Do Thou, O Lord of eternal glory, beloved Son of the Father Most High, eternal Light of eternal Light, Sun of righteousness: Hearken unto us who pray to Thee, and grant rest to the souls of Thy servants, our fathers and brethren who have fallen asleep in times past, and our other kindred according to the flesh, and all who are Thine in the faith, whose memory we now keep, for in Thee is dominion over all, and in Thy hand Thou holdest all the ends of the earth. O Master Almighty, God of our fathers and Lord of mercy, Creator of the mortal and immortal races, and of all the human nature, of what is put together and what is again dissolved, of life and death, of existence here and passing over yonder; Who measurest years for the living and settest the time of death, Who ledest down into hades and ledest up again, Who bindest in weakness and dost release in strength, Who arrange the things of the present for our benefit and dost govern the things of the future well; Who dost gladden with the hope of the resurrection those wounded with the sting of death: Do Thou Thyself therefore, O Master of all, God our Saviour, Thou hope of all the ends of the earth and of those far out upon the sea, Who even on this last, great, and saving day of the feast of Pentecost hast shown unto us the mystery of the holy, consubstantial, equally eternal, indivisible, and uncomingled Trinity, and the visitation and coming of Thy Holy and life-creating Spirit, poured forth upon Thy holy apostles in the form of tongues of fire, Who ordained them heralds of our pious Faith, and Who showed them to be confessors and preachers of true theology; Thou Who even on this most perfect and saving feast hast deigned to accept prayers of cleansing for those confined in hades, and grantest us great hope, that for their consolation Thou wilt send release from the defilements which hold them, unto those thus confined: Hearken unto us, Thy lowly servants who are entreating Thee, and to the souls of Thy servants who have fallen asleep before us, grant rest in a place of light, a place of verdure, a place of coolness, from whence all sickness, grief, and sighing have fled away, and reckon their spirits among the habitations of the righteous, and vouchsafe them peace and ease; for the dead do not praise Thee, O Lord, neither do those in hades dare to confess Thee; but we, the living, bless Thee and pray, and offer Thee prayers and sacrifices in behalf of their souls.

*And he addeth also this prayer:*

O God, great, eternal, holy, Who lovest mankind and hast vouchsafed us at this time to stand before Thine unapproachable glory: Cleanse us, Thine unworthy servants, for the laudation and praise of Thy wonders, and grant us grace, that with a contrite we may without distraction offer Thee the thrice-holy glorification and dost ever make for us. Be Thou mindful, O Lord, of our weakness, and destroy us not with our iniquities; but work with great mercy with our lowliness, that having escaped the darkness of sin, we may walk in the daylight of righteousness, and having been armed with the weaponry of light, we may remain unassailed by any machination of the evil one, and may with boldness glorify Thee alone, the true God Who lovest mankind, for all things. For truly and verily great mystery, O Master and Creator of all, is Thy mystery, the temporary dissolution of Thy creatures, and their restoration thereafter, and their repose forever. In all do we confess Thy grace; at our coming into this world, and

our going forth; our hope of resurrection and life incorruptible bind us beforehand by Thy true promise, which we will receive in Thy future second coming. For Thou art the Cause of our resurrection, the impartial Judge of the living, Who lovest mankind, the Master and Lord, the Bestower of rewards, Who truly shared in our flesh and blood in Thine extreme condescension; and when of Thine own will Thou didst accept, in the loving-kindness of Thy compassions, to undergo our unexceptional sufferings, Thou didst Thyself suffer being tested therein, and becoming for us who are tested the Helper, as Thou Thyself didst promise; wherefore, Thou didst raise us up with Thyself to Thy dispassion. Therefore, accept, O Master, our entreaties and pleas, and grant rest unto each of our fathers, mothers, and children, the brethren and sisters of our own blood and kin, and all the souls who have gone to their rest in the past. Reckon their souls in the hope of resurrection of life everlasting, and their names in the Book of Life, in the bosom of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the paradise of bliss, leading them all into Thy holy mansions with Thy radiant angels, O Thou Who shalt also raise up our bodies on the day Thou shalt determine, according to Thy true and holy promises For there will be no death for us, Thy servants, when we leave the body and come to Thee, our God, but a passing from things most sorrowful to those which are most profitable and delightful, to rest and joy. And if we have sinned in any way against Thee, be Thou merciful unto us and them, for in Thy sight is no one clean of defilements, even if his life lasteth but a day, but only Thee, our Lord Jesus Christ, Who manifested Thyself as sinless on the earth, through Whom we all hope to receive mercy and remission of sins. For this cause, in that Thou, art the good God Who lovest mankind, absolve, remit, and pardon us and them, of our falls into sin, voluntary and involuntary, whether committed in knowledge or in ignorance, overt and forgotten, whether in deed, or thought, or word, which we have done throughout our life and movements. Grant freedom and ease unto the departed, bless us who are here, granting a good and peaceful end to all of us, Thy people; open unto us the depths of Thy mercy and love for mankind, and at Thy fearsome and dread coming make us worthy of Thy kingdom.

*And he addeth also this prayer:*

O great God, Most High, Who alone dost possess immortality, Who dwellest in light unapproachable; Who hast fashioned all creation in wisdom, Who didst divide the light from the darkness, Who didst appoint the sun to rule the day and the moon and stars to govern the night, Who hast vouchsafed us sinners even on this present day to come before Thy presence in confession and to offer unto Thee the evening sacrifice: Do Thou Thyself, O Lord Who lovest mankind, direct our prayer as incense before Thee, and accept it as an odour of sweet savour. Grant that for us this present evening and the coming night may be peaceful; array us in the armour of light; deliver us from the fear of the night and from every thing that passeth in the darkness. And grant us sleep untroubled by any phantasy of the devil, which Thou hast given us for the resting of our weakness. Yea, O Master, Bestower of all good things, that we may feel compunction upon our beds, we remember Thine all-holy name amid the night. And let us arise in joyfulness of soul, illumined by the study of Thy commandments, for the glorification of Thy goodness, offering unto Thy compassion prayers and entreaties for our own sins and for all Thy people, whom do Thou visit in Thy mercy, through the supplications of the all- holy Theotokos.