

THE LENTEN OFFICE OF THE FIRST HOUR

The First Hour is often celebrated immediately following Matins, and it begins as shown here. If the First Hour is said separately, it begins with the Typical Beginning, as at Vespers. The present Office gives the order for a Lenten service only and should not be used outside of Great Lent.

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 5

Give ear to my words, O Lord; give heed to my groaning. Hearken to the sound of my cry, my King and my God, for to Thee do I pray. O Lord, in the morning Thou dost hear my voice; in the morning I prepare a sacrifice for Thee, and watch. For Thou art not a God Who delights in wickedness; evil may not sojourn with Thee. The boastful may not stand before Thine eyes; Thou hatest all evildoers. Thou destroyest those who speak lies; the Lord abhors bloodthirsty and deceitful men. But I through the abundance of Thy steadfast love will enter Thy house, I will worship toward Thy holy temple in the fear of Thee. Lead me, O Lord, in Thy righteousness because of mine enemies; make Thy way straight before me. For there is no truth in their mouth; their heart is destruction, their throat is an open sepulchre, they flatter with their tongue. Make them bear their guilt, O God; let them fall by their own counsels; because of their many transgressions cast them out, for they have rebelled against Thee. But let all who take refuge in Thee rejoice, let them ever sing for joy; and do Thou defend them, that those who love Thy Name may exult in Thee. For Thou dost bless the righteous, O Lord; Thou dost cover him with favor as with a shield.

PSALM 89

Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting Thou art God. Thou turnest man back to the dust, and sayest, "Turn back, O children of men!" For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, or as a watch in the night. Thou dost sweep men away; they are like a dream, like grass which is renewed in the morning: in the morning it flourishes and is renewed; in the evening it fades and withers. For we are consumed by Thine anger; by Thy wrath we are overwhelmed. Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee, our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance. For all our days pass away under Thy wrath, our years come to an end like a sigh. The years of our life are threescore and ten, or even by reason of strength fourscore; yet their span

is but toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away. Who considers the power of Thine anger, and Thy wrath according to the fear of Thee? So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom. Return, O Lord! How long? Have pity on Thy servants! Satisfy us in the morning with Thy steadfast love, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. Make us glad as many days as Thou hast afflicted us, and as many years as we have seen evil. Let Thy work be manifest to Thy servants, and Thy glorious power to their children. Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us, yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it.

PSALM 100

I will sing of loyalty and of justice; to Thee, O Lord, I will sing. I will give heed to the way that is blameless. Oh, when wilt Thou come to me? I will walk with integrity of heart within my house; I will not set before my eyes anything that is base. I hate the work of those who fall away; it shall not cleave to me. Perverseness of heart shall be far from me; I will know nothing of evil. Him who slanders his neighbor secretly I will destroy. The man of haughty looks and arrogant heart I will not endure. I will look with favor on the faithful in the land, that they may dwell with me; he who walks in the way that is blameless shall minister to me. No man who practices deceit shall dwell in my house; no man who utters lies shall continue in my presence. Morning by morning I will destroy all the wicked in the land, cutting off all the evildoers from the city of the Lord.

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 Thee, O God. (*thrice*)

Lord, have mercy. (*thrice*)

If a Kathisma is appointed, the reader continues with Glory... now and ever... *and the Kathisma, with the customary threefold Alleluia after each stasis. After ending the Kathisma in the usual manner, he continues with* Lord, have mercy (*thrice*). *Then:*

TROPARION OF THE FIRST HOUR: Tone 6¹

Priest: Hearken in the morning to my voice, my King and my God. (*prostration*)

Ⲅ Hearken in the morning to my voice, my King and my God.

¹ *On Cheesefare Wednesday and Friday, on the Thursday of the Great Canon, and on any day when the Polyeleos was sung at Matins, these troparia are simply read by the reader, without prostrations.*

Give ear to my words, O Lord; give heed to my groaning. (*prostration*)

℟ Hearken in the morning to my voice, my King and my God.

For to Thee do I pray, O Lord. (*prostration*)

℟ Hearken in the morning to my voice, my King and my God.

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

Reader: Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

What shall we call thee, O full of grace? Heaven, for from thee shone forth the Sun of Righteousness; Paradise, for thou hast budded forth the flower of immortality; Virgin, for thou hast remained undefiled; Pure Mother, for thou hast held in thine arms the Son, Who is God of all? Beseech Him to save our souls!

And immediately the choir sings the following in Tone 6 (sticheron melody):²

Order my steps in Thy word, //
and so shall no wickedness have dominion over me. (*twice*)

Deliver me from the wrongful dealings of men, //
and so shall I keep Thy commandments. (*twice*)

Show the light of Thy countenance upon Thy servant, //
and teach me Thy statutes. (*twice*)

Let my mouth be filled with Thy praise, O Lord, //
that I may sing of Thy glory and honor all the day long. (*thrice*)

Reader: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (*thrice*)

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 Thy Name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (*thrice*)

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

² *On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday of the Fourth Week, we sing* Before Thy Cross... (*thrice*) *instead of* Order my steps...

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.

Priest: For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

✠ Amen.

The choir then sings the appointed Kontakion of the Horologion:³

On Monday, Tuesday, or Thursday, in Tone 5 (troparion melody):

With our whole heart,
let us continually magnify the glorious Mother of God,
who is holier than the angels,
confessing her to be the Theotokos,
who brought forth God incarnate,//
and who unceasingly intercedes for our souls.

On Wednesday or Friday, in Tone 4 (troparion melody):

Before we are enslaved, speedily prevent the foes
who blaspheme Thee and threaten us, O Christ our God;
destroy by Thy Cross those who war against us;
may they know how strong is the faith of the Orthodox//
through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Lover of man.

Lord, have mercy. (*forty times*)

Thou Who at every season and every hour, in Heaven and on earth, art worshipped and glorified, O Christ our God, long-suffering, merciful and compassionate; Who lovest the just and showest mercy upon the sinner; Who callest all men to salvation through the promise of blessings to come: O Lord, in this hour receive our supplications and direct our lives according to Thy commandments. Sanctify our souls, hallow our bodies, correct our thoughts, cleanse our minds; deliver us from all tribulations, evil, and distress. Surround us with Thy holy Angels, that guided and guarded by their host, we may attain to the unity of the Faith, and

³ *If it is a Feast, or on the first four days of Holy Week, the appointed Kontakion of each day is sung.*

to the knowledge of Thine unapproachable glory; for Thou art blessed unto ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (*thrice*)

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

More honorable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, without corruption thou gavest birth to God the Word: true Theotokos, we magnify thee.

In the Name of the Lord, Father, bless.

Priest: God be bountiful to us, and bless us and show us the light of His countenance, and be merciful unto us.

℞ Amen.

THE PRAYER OF ST. EPHRAIM

Priest: O Lord and Master of my life, give me not a spirit of sloth, despair, lust of power, and idle talk. (*prostration*)

But give rather a spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love to thy servant. (*prostration*)

Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own transgressions, and not to judge my brother: for blessed art Thou unto ages of ages. Amen. (*prostration*)

And we make twelve bows from the waist, quietly saying O God, cleanse me a sinner each time.

And again, the whole prayer O Lord and Master... *with only one prostration at the end.*

Reader: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (*thrice*)

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 Thy Name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (*thrice*)

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.

Priest: For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

✠ Amen. Lord, have mercy. (*twelve times*)

Priest: O Christ the True Light Who enlightenest and sanctifiest every man who comes into the world, let the light of Thy countenance shine upon us, that in it we may behold the Unapproachable Light, and guide our footsteps aright to the keeping of Thy commandments, through the prayers of Thy most pure Mother, and of all Thy Saints. Amen.

Choir: O Victorious Leader of triumphant hosts, we thy servants, delivered from evil, sing our grateful thanks to thee, O Theotokos. As thou possessest invincible might, set us free from every calamity, so that we may sing: “Rejoice, O Unwedded Bride!”⁴

Priest: Glory to Thee, O Christ our God and our hope, glory to Thee.

✠ Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen. Lord, have mercy (*thrice*). Father, bless.

The priest pronounces the appropriate Dismissal, after which the choir responds:

✠ Amen.

THE END OF THE LENTEN OFFICE OF THE FIRST HOUR



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⁴ *If another service is to follow immediately, the reader begins here with* Come, let us worship... *thrice*.