



# THE SERVICE OF PREPARATION FOR HOLY COMMUNION

(Reader's Version)

This service is said on the day you are to partake of Holy Communion. Begin by making three metanias, saying each time:

O God, be gracious unto me a sinner, and have mercy on me. **(Thrice)**

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

Glory to thee, our God, glory to thee.

O Heavenly King, O Comforter, the Spirit of truth, who art in all places and fillest all things, Treasury of good things and Giver of life: Come, and dwell in us, and cleanse us from every stain, and save our souls, O gracious Lord.

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.

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy God, 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.

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

Lord, have mercy. **(Twelve times)**



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 and fall down before God our King. (Metania)

Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, our King and our God. (Metania)

Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and our God. (Metania)

### PSALM 22

The Lord is my shepherd, and I shall not want. In a place of green pasture, there hath he made me to dwell; beside the water of rest hath he nurtured me. He hath converted my soul, he hath led me on the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. For though I should walk in the midst of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they have comforted me. Thou hast prepared a table before me in the presence of them that afflict me. Thou hast anointed my head with oil, and thy cup which filleth me, how excellent it is! And thy mercy shall pursue me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord unto length of days.

### PSALM 23

The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof, the world, and all that dwell therein. He hath founded it upon the seas, and upon the rivers hath he prepared it. Who shall ascend into the mountain of the Lord? Or who shall stand in his holy place? He that is innocent in hands and pure in heart, who hath not received his soul in vain, and hath not sworn deceitfully to his neighbor. Such a one shall receive a blessing from the Lord, and mercy from God his Savior. This is the generation of them that seek the Lord, of them that seek the face of the God of Jacob. Lift up your gates, O ye princes; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting gates, and the King of Glory shall enter in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord, mighty in war. Lift up your gates, O ye princes; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting gates, and the King of Glory shall enter in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory.



## PSALM 115

I believed, wherefore I spake; I was humbled exceedingly. As for me, I said in mine ecstasy: Every man is a liar. What shall I render unto the Lord for all that he hath rendered unto me? I will take the cup of salvation, and I will call upon the name of the Lord. My vows unto the Lord will I pay in the presence of all his people. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. O Lord, I am thy servant; I am thy servant and the son of thy handmaid. Thou hast broken my bonds asunder. I will sacrifice a sacrifice of praise unto thee, and I will call upon the name of the Lord. My vows unto the Lord will I pay in the presence of all his people, in the courts of the house of the Lord, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem.

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)

## TROPARIA IN TONE EIGHT

O Lord, who wast born of the Virgin, turn away from my transgressions and purify my heart, making it a temple of thine immaculate Body and Blood, and cast me not away from thy countenance, O thou who hast great mercy without measure.

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

How shall I, the unworthy, dare immodestly to partake of thy holy things? If, with the worthy, I venture to approach thee, my garment will denounce me, for it is not a wedding garment, and I shall call forth the reproach and condemnation of my most sinful soul. Cleanse, O Lord, the defilement of my soul, and save me, for thou art the Lover of mankind.

Both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Because of the multitude of my transgressions, I flee to thee, O pure Theotokos, asking for salvation. Visit thou mine infirmed soul, and intercede with thy Son and our God that he grant forgiveness to me who hath committed terrible deeds, O thou who alone art blessed.



If it is Great and Holy Thursday, the following troparion in tone eight is said instead of the above troparia:

The glorious disciples being enlightened at the Supper during the washing of the feet, the impious Judas was stricken and darkened by the love of money. And to lawless judges he delivered Thee up, O righteous Judge. Behold, O lover of money, he who hung himself for this very love. Flee from the greedy desire which dared such a deed against the Master. O Lord, who art good toward all, glory to Thee.

Lord, have mercy. (40x)

Then make as many prostrations as prescribed by your rule of prayer.

If thou desirest, O man, to eat the Body of the Master, approach in fear, lest thou be scorched; for it is fire. And, before drinking the divine Blood unto communion, reconcile thyself to them that have wronged thee. Then dare to eat the mystical food. Before partaking of the dread sacrifice of the life-giving Body of the Master, after this manner and in fear and trembling, pray:

### 1. A Prayer of St. Basil the Great

O Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, our God, Fountain of life and immortality, Creator of all things visible and invisible; co-everlasting and co-eternal Son of the unoriginate Father, who in thine exceeding great love didst become incarnate in the latter days and wast crucified and slain for us ungrateful and wicked men and by thine own Blood didst refashion our nature corrupted by sin: Do thou thyself, O immortal King, receive the repentance of me, the sinner; incline thine ear unto me and hear my words, for I have sinned, O Lord; I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and I am not worthy to lift up my eyes to the height of thy glory, for I have affronted thy goodness, and transgressed thy commandments and disobeyed thine ordinances. But thou, O Lord who rememberest not evil but art long-suffering and of great mercy, hast not given me over to perish in my lawlessness but dost ever await my return. For, O thou who lovest mankind, thou hast said, by thy prophet, 'I desire not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should return and live,' because thou dost not wish, O Master, to destroy the work of thy hands, neither dost thou take pleasure in the destruction of the human



race but desirest that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. Wherefore I, although unworthy both of heaven and of earth and of this transitory life, even I, the wretched one, having wholly yielded myself to sin, and become a slave to pleasures and having defiled thine image within me, who am thy creation and thy work, despair not of salvation; but trusting in thine infinite compassion, I draw nigh unto thee. Receive me, O Christ, thou that lovest mankind, as thou didst receive the harlot, the thief, the publican and the prodigal son. Take away the heavy burden of my sins. O thou that takest away the sin of the world and healest the infirmities of men and callest all that are weary and heavy-laden to thyself and givest them rest; thou that camest not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance, cleanse thou me from every stain of flesh and spirit, and teach me to fulfill holiness in thy fear, that with the witness of my conscience pure, I may receive a portion of thy holy things, and be united to thy holy Body and Blood and may have thee, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, dwelling and abiding in me. Yea, O Lord Jesus Christ my God, grant that the partaking of thine immaculate and life-giving mysteries may not be to my condemnation, nor may I become infirm in soul and body by receiving unworthily thereof, but grant that, even unto my last breath, I may partake of a portion of thy holy things without condemnation, unto the communion of thy Holy Spirit, as a provision for eternal life, and for a good defense at thy fearful judgment seat; so that I, as a partner with all thine elect, may also receive those undefiled good things which thou hast prepared for them that love thee, O Lord, in whom thou art glorified forever. Amen.

## 2. Another Prayer of St. Basil the Great

O Lord, I know that I receive unworthily thine immaculate Body and precious Blood; I know that I am guilty and that I eat and drink condemnation to myself, not discerning the Body and Blood of Christ my God. But trusting in thy compassion I come unto thee who hast said, 'Whosoever eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood abideth in me and I in him.' Therefore, O Lord, have compassion on me and make not an example of me, the sinner. But do unto me according to thy mercy, and grant that these holy things may be for me unto the healing, purification, enlightenment, protection, salvation and sanctification of soul and



body, and to the expulsion of every evil imagination, wicked deed or work of the devil, which operateth within my mind and members. May they move me to boldness and love toward thee, to amend and keep firm my life, and may they ever be in me unto the increase of virtue, unto the keeping of thy commandments, unto the communion of the Holy Spirit, as a provision for eternal life and for a good defense at thy fearful judgment seat, and not unto judgment nor unto condemnation.

### 3. A Prayer of St. John Chrysostom

O Lord my God, I know that I am not worthy nor sufficient that thou shouldest enter under the roof of the house of my soul, for it is all deserted and in ruins, and thou hast not a worthy place in me to lay thy head. But as from the heights of thy glory thou didst humble thyself, so now bear me in my humility; as thou didst deign to lie in the cave in a manger of dumb animals, so deign now also to come into the manger of my dumb soul and soiled body. As thou didst not refrain from entering and eating with sinners in the house of Simon the leper, so also vouchsafe to enter the house of my humble, leprous and sinful soul. As thou didst not reject the harlot and sinner, like unto me, who approached and touched thee, so also have pity on me, the sinner, as I approach and touch thee; and as thou didst not loathe the filthy mouth of her who drew near to kiss thee, neither loathe my mouth which is more filthy, nor my unclean lips, nor my yet more unclean tongue. But grant that the fiery coal of thine all-holy Body and precious Blood be for the sanctification, enlightenment and strengthening of my wretched soul and body; for the relief from the burden of my many transgressions, for my preservation against every demonic activity, for trampling down and averting of my careless and evil habits, for the mortification of passions; for obedience to thy commandments, for growth in thy divine grace and for the inheritance of thy kingdom. For it is not with presumption that I approach thee, O Christ God, but I come trusting in thine indescribable goodness, lest that through long absence from communion with thee I may become the prey of the invisible wolf. Wherefore, I pray thee, O Master, who alone art holy, sanctify my soul and body, my mind and heart, my reins and bowels, and renew me entirely. Implant in my members the fear of thee, and make thy sanctification to be inalienable from me. Be thou my Helper and Guide, directing my



life in peace, vouchsafing me to stand at thy right hand with thy saints; through the prayers and intercessions of thine all-immaculate Mother, of thy bodiless servitors, and immaculate powers, and of all the saints who from all ages have been well-pleasing unto thee. Amen.

#### 4. Another Prayer of St. John Chrysostom

O Lord Master, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under the roof of my soul; but for that thou desirest, O Lover of mankind, to dwell in me, I make bold to draw near. Thou biddest me to open the doors which thou alone hast made, and thou dost enter with thy love for man. Thou dost enter and enlighten my darkened reasoning. I believe that thou wilt so do. For thou didst not turn from the harlot when she came to thee with tears. Neither didst thou reject the publican who repented, nor the thief when he acknowledged thy kingdom. Nor didst thou despise the persecutor when he was converted. But all who came to thee in repentance thou didst reckon among thy friends, O thou who alone art blessed, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

#### 5. Another Prayer of St. John Chrysostom

O Lord Jesus Christ, my God, absolve, remit, be gracious and forgive me, thy sinful, unprofitable and unworthy servant, my sins, offences and transgressions, by which from my youth even unto this present day and hour I have sinned against thee, in knowledge or in ignorance, whether of words or deeds, whether in thought or imagination, in my own counsels and in all my senses. And by the intercessions of her who bore thee without seed, Mary, thine all-immaculate and ever-virgin Mother, my only hope which maketh not ashamed, my protection and my salvation, vouchsafe that I may partake without condemnation of thine immaculate, immortal, life-giving and dread mysteries, for the forgiveness of sins and unto life eternal, unto the sanctification, enlightenment, strength, healing and health of both soul and body, and unto the blotting out and complete obliteration of my evil thoughts and imaginings and intents, of night fantasies and the evil spirits of darkness; for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory and the honor and the worship, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.



## 6. A Prayer of St. John of Damascus

O Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, our God, who alone hath power to forgive men their sins, for thou art good and lovest mankind: Forgive me all transgressions that I have committed in knowledge or in ignorance, and make me worthy to receive without condemnation thy divine, glorious, immaculate and life-giving mysteries, not unto punishments or unto increase of sins; but unto purification, and sanctification and a pledge of the life and kingdom to come, as a protection and a help and an averting of the adversaries, and unto the blotting out my many trespasses. For thou art a God of mercy and compassions and love toward mankind, and unto thee we ascribe glory together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

## 7. A Prayer of St. Simeon the New Theologian

From filthy lips, from a loathsome heart, from an unclean tongue, from a polluted soul, receive my prayer, O my Christ; and despise not my words, neither my manner nor mine impudence. Suffer me to speak boldly that which I desire, O my Christ. Nay, rather, teach me that which it becometh me to do and to speak. I have sinned more than the harlot who, learning where thou wast lodging, bought ointment and dared to anoint thy feet, O Christ, my Master and my God. Inasmuch as thou didst not reject her who came to thee from her heart, neither loath thou me, O Word, but grant me also to hold and kiss thy feet and to dare to anoint them with a flood of tears, as with very precious ointment. Wash me with my tears and purify me thereby, O Word. Forgive my transgressions, and grant me pardon. Thou knowest the multitude of mine evil deeds. Thou knowest too my bruises, and thou seest my wounds. But thou knowest likewise my faith and beholdest my zeal, and thou hearest my sighs. No tear is hidden from thee, O my God, my Maker, my Deliverer, nor even a part thereof. Thine eyes knew that which I had not yet done, for in thy book is written that which I will do. Behold, my lowliness. Behold, my weariness. Forgive me all my sins, O God of all, that with a pure heart and fearful mind and contrite soul, I may partake of thine immaculate and all-pure mysteries, wherewith every man who eateth and drinketh thereof with a pure heart is enlivened and made divine. For thou, O Master, didst say, 'Whosoever eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood abideth in me, and I in him.'



True in all ways is the word of my Lord and God; for he who partaketh of the divine and deifying gifts is in no way alone but is with thee, O my Christ, thou tri-radiant Sun who illumineth the world. Suffer me not to dwell apart from thee, O Giver of life, who art my Breath, my Life, my Joy, the Salvation of the world. Wherefore I draw nigh unto thee, as thou seest, with tears and a contrite soul, beseeching that I may be delivered from my transgressions and may partake without condemnation of thy life-bestowing and blameless mysteries, that, as thou hast said, thou mayest abide with me, the thrice-wretched, lest if I be found without thy grace, the tempter should craftily beguile me and entice me away from thy deifying words. For this cause I fall down before thee and earnestly cry unto thee: As thou didst accept the prodigal son and the harlot when she came to thee, so also receive me, who am as a harlot and a prodigal, O compassionate One. Turning to thee now with a contrite soul, I know, O Saviour, that no man hath so sinned against thee as I, nor done the things that I have done. Yet this also I know, that neither the magnitude of the transgressions, nor the multitude of the sins surpasseth the great long-suffering of my God and his exceeding love toward mankind. But with the oil of compassion thou dost cleanse and enlighten them that earnestly repent, bounteously making them partakers of the light and communicants of thy divinity. And strange though it be to angels and to the minds of men, thou dost oft-times converse with them as with thy true friends. These things make me bold; these things give me wing, O my Christ. And emboldened by thy rich bounty toward us, in joy and trembling I, who am as grass, do partake of fire. And lo, a strange wonder! I am inexplicably bedewed, even as of old the burning bush was not consumed. Now with thankful mind, with thankful heart, with thankfulness in all my members, my soul and my flesh, I worship, magnify and glorify thee, O my God, who art blessed both now and unto the ages.

### 8. A Prayer of St. Simeon the Translator

O Lord, Jesus Christ our God, the Wisdom, Peace and Power of God, who alone art pure and undefiled, who for the compassion of thine ineffable love for mankind didst take our entire nature from the pure and virginal blood of her who bore thee in a manner beyond nature by the descent of the divine Spirit and the good will of the unoriginate Fa-



ther, who didst accept the life-giving and saving passion, the cross, the nails, the spear and death: Mortify the soul-corrupting passions of my body, O thou who by thy burial didst lead captive the kingdom of hades. Bury under good thoughts my evil counsels and scatter abroad the evil-spirits, O thou who by thy life-giving, third-day resurrection didst raise the forefathers who had fallen, raise me up, who slip in sin, placing before me the ways of repentance. O thou who by thy glorious ascension didst vouchsafe that the flesh which thou hadst assumed should sit at the right hand of the Father, thereby ennobling it, so prepare me that, by partaking of thy holy mysteries, I may attain a portion at thy right hand with the saved. O thou who by the descent of the comforting Spirit didst make thy sacred disciples precious vessels, show me, also, to appear a vessel for his descent. O thou who art about to come and judge the world with righteousness, be well pleased, O my Maker and my Creator, that I too may welcome thee in the clouds with all thy saints, that I may ceaselessly glorify and hymn thee, with thine unoriginate Father and thine all-holy and good and life-giving Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

### 9. Another Prayer of St. John of Damascus

I stand before the doors of thy temple, and yet I refrain not from my terrible thoughts. But do thou, O Christ God, who didst justify the publican, and hadst mercy on the Canaanite woman, and didst open the gates of paradise to the thief; open unto me the compassion of thy love toward mankind, and receive me as I approach and touch thee, like the harlot and the woman with the issue of blood; for the one, by embracing thine immaculate feet, received the forgiveness of her sins, and the other, by but touching the hem of thy garment, received healing. And I, most sinful, dare to partake of thy whole Body. Let me not be consumed, but receive me as thou didst receive them, and enlighten the senses of my soul, consuming the accusations of my sins, through the intercessions of her that without seed gave thee birth, and of the heavenly powers; for thou art blessed unto ages of ages. Amen.

### 10. Another Prayer of St. John Chrysostom

I believe, O Lord, and I confess that thou art truly the Christ, the Son of the living God, who didst come into the world to save sinners, of whom



I am chief. And I believe that this is truly thine own immaculate Body, and that this is truly thine own precious Blood. Wherefore I pray thee, have mercy upon me, and forgive my transgressions both voluntary and involuntary, of word and of deed, of knowledge and of ignorance; and make me worthy to partake without condemnation of thine immaculate Mysteries, unto remission of my sins and unto life everlasting. Amen.

### Lines of St. Symeon the Translator

Behold I approach for Divine Communion.

O Creator, let me not be burnt by communicating,

For thou art fire which burns the unworthy.

But purify me from every stain.

#### Then this prayer:

Of thy Mystical Supper, O Son of God, accept me today as a communicant; for I will not speak of thy Mystery to thine enemies, neither will I give thee a kiss as did Judas; but like the thief will I confess thee: Remember me, O Lord, in thy kingdom. Not unto judgment nor unto condemnation be my partaking of thy Holy Mysteries, O Lord, but unto the healing of soul and body.

#### And again these lines:

Tremble, O man, when you see the deifying Blood,

For it is a coal that burns the unworthy.

The Body of God both deifies and nourishes;

It deifies the spirit and wondrously nourishes the mind.

#### And these troparia:

Thou hast sweetened me with thy love, O Christ, and by thy divine zeal thou hast changed me. But burn up with spiritual fire my sins and make me worthy to be filled with delight in thee, that I may leap for joy, O gracious Lord, and magnify thy two comings.



Into the splendor of thy Saints how shall I who am unworthy enter? For if I dare to enter the bridal chamber, my vesture betrays me, for it is not a wedding garment, and as a prisoner I shall be cast out by the angels. Cleanse my soul from pollution and save me, O Lord, in thy love for mankind.

**And this prayer:**

O Master, Lover of mankind, Lord Jesus Christ my God, let not these holy things be to me for judgment through my being unworthy, but for the purification and sanctification of my soul and body, and as a pledge of the life and kingdom to come. For it is good for me to cling to God and to place in the Lord my hope of salvation.

Of thy Mystical Supper, O Son of God, accept me today as a communicant; for I will not speak of thy Mystery to thine enemies, neither will I give thee a kiss as did Judas; but like the thief will I confess thee: Remember me, O Lord, in thy kingdom. Not unto judgment nor unto condemnation be my partaking of thy Holy Mysteries, O Lord, but unto the healing of soul and body.

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us and save us. Amen.