

**APRIL 15**

**Great and Holy Wednesday  
Bridegroom Matins (sung on Tuesday)**

*(The Matins of the first three days of Holy Week are commonly called the "Bridegroom Service." This service is customarily served in anticipation on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday evenings. Vespers with the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts in most places is celebrated early on the following day.)*

**Tone 8      Troparion**

Behold, the Bridegroom comes at midnight,  
and blessed is the servant whom He shall find watching;  
and again, unworthy is the servant whom He shall find heedless.  
Beware, therefore, O my soul, do not be weighed down with sleep,  
lest you be given up to death,  
and lest you be shut out of the Kingdom!  
But rouse yourself, crying: "Holy, holy, holy, are You, O our God!"  
Through the Theotokos have mercy on us!

**Gospel**  
John 12:17-50

**The Three-Ode Kanon**

**Tone 2      Ode 3 - Heirmos**

You have established me on the rock of faith.  
You have opened wide my mouth against my enemies,  
for my spirit rejoices in singing:  
"None is holy but our God, and none is righteous but You, O Lord."

*Refrain: Glory to You, our God, glory to You!*

*The assembly of lawless men gathers together for empty discussion and with evil intent,  
to pronounce sentence upon You, O Christ the Deliverer.  
But we sing to You:  
"You are our God, and none is holy but You, O Lord."*

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

*The fearful council of lawless men, with souls full of hatred toward God,  
intends to kill the righteous Christ as an evildoer.  
But we sing to You:  
"You are our God, and none is holy but You, O Lord."*

#### **Tone 4      Kontakion**

Though I have transgressed more than the harlot, O Good One,  
I have not offered You a flood of tears,  
but praying in silence I fall down before You.  
With love I embrace Your most pure feet.  
As Master, grant me remission of sins,  
when I cry to You, O Savior://  
"Deliver me from the filth of my evil deeds!"

#### **Ikos**

*The woman who was once a profligate suddenly is wise.  
She hates her shameful deeds and carnal pleasures,  
remembering the magnitude of her shame and the verdict  
of condemnation which awaits profligates and harlots.  
Of these, I am indeed the first, and though in terror, I  
foolishly remain in my evil ways. But the harlot, though in  
terror, hastens to the Deliverer to cry:  
"In Your compassion and love for mankind,  
deliver me from the filth of my evil deeds!"*

#### **Tone 2      Ode 8 - Heirmos**

The command of the tyrant prevailed;  
the furnace was heated seven-fold.  
But the Youths were not burned in it.  
Trampling on the king's decree, they sang:  
"Praise the Lord, all works of the Lord!  
Sing and exalt Him throughout all ages!"

*Refrain: Glory to You, our God, glory to You!*

*The woman poured precious myrrh upon Your kingly, divine and awesome head, O Christ.  
She grasped Your most pure feet with her impure hands and cried:  
"Praise the Lord, all works of the Lord!  
Sing and exalt Him throughout all ages!"*

*Refrain: Glory to You, our God, glory to You!*

*The woman who was guilty of an abundance of sins,  
washed Your feet with the abundance of her tears and wiped them with her hair.  
Therefore she was not deprived of absolution for the many sins of her life, but cried:  
“Praise the Lord, all works of the Lord!  
Sing and exalt Him throughout all ages!”*

*Let us bless the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the Lord,  
now and ever and unto ages of ages! Amen.*

*A sacred rite of redemption, wrought of saving compassion and a flood of tears,  
is administered to the right-minded woman.  
Washed in this fountain by her confession, she is not ashamed, but cried out:  
“Praise the Lord, all works of the Lord!  
Sing and exalt Him throughout all ages!”*

*We praise, bless, and worship the Lord,  
singing and exalting Him throughout all ages.*

## **Tone 2      Ode 9 - Heirmos**

With pure souls and blameless lips,  
come, let us magnify the all pure and spotless Mother of Emmanuel!  
Through her, let us offer prayers to Him Who was born of her:  
“Spare our souls, O Christ our God, and save us!”

*Refrain: Glory to You, our God, glory to You!*

*Envious Judas proved himself both ignorant and evil.  
He sold the divine Gift through Whom our debt of sin is loosed.  
This miserable man sold the grace of God's love.  
But spare our souls, O Christ our God, and save us!*

*Refrain: Glory to You, our God, glory to You!*

*Judas went to the lawless rulers and said:  
“What will ye give me if I betray to you Christ Whom ye seek?”  
From intimate companionship with Christ, Judas is drawn away by gold.  
But spare our souls, O Christ our God, and save us!*

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

*O blind and greedy avarice! Hast thou forgotten what thou wast taught,  
that the whole world is not worth thy soul?  
Yet thou, O traitor, didst despair of thy life, and made a noose and hanged thyself.  
But spare our souls, O Christ our God, and save us!*

**(Katavasia: “With pure souls and blameless lips...”)**

## Exapostilarion

Your bridal chamber I see adorned, O my Savior,  
and I have no wedding garment that I may enter.  
O Giver of Light,  
enlighten the vesture of my soul, and save me!

### The Praises *(Psalms 148, 149, 150)*

*v. Praise Him for His mighty deeds; praise Him according to His exceeding greatness! (Ps 150:2)*

#### **Tone 1** *(from the Lenten Triodion)*

A harlot recognized You as God, O Son of the Virgin.  
With tears equal to her past deeds, she besought You, weeping:  
“Loose my debt, as I have loosed my hair!  
Love the woman who, though justly hated, loves You!  
Then with the publicans will I proclaim You, //  
O Benefactor, Who love mankind.”

*Praise Him with trumpet sound; praise Him with lute and harp! (Ps 150:3)*

The harlot mingled precious myrrh with her tears.  
She poured it on Your most pure feet and kissed them.  
At once You justified her.  
O Lord, Who suffered for our sakes, //  
forgive us also and save us!

*Praise Him with timbrel and dance; praise Him with strings and pipe! (Ps 150:4)*

As the sinful woman was bringing her offering of myrrh,  
the disciple was scheming with lawless men.  
She rejoiced in pouring out her precious gift.  
He hastened to sell the priceless One.  
She recognized the Master, but Judas parted from Him.  
She was set free, but Judas was enslaved to the Enemy.  
How terrible his slothfulness!  
How great her repentance!  
O Savior, Who suffered for our sakes, //  
grant repentance to us also and save us!

*Praise Him with sounding cymbals; praise Him with loud clashing cymbals! Let everything that breathes praise the Lord! Praise the Lord! (Ps 150:5)*

Oh, the wretchedness of Judas!  
He saw the harlot kiss the footsteps of Christ,  
but deceitfully he contemplated the kiss of betrayal.  
She loosed her hair while he bound himself with wrath.  
He offered the stench of wickedness instead of myrrh,  
for envy cannot distinguish value.  
Oh, the wretchedness of Judas!//  
Deliver our souls from it, O God!

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

### **Tone 2**

The sinful woman ran to buy the precious myrrh  
with which to anoint her Savior.  
She cried to the merchant: "Give me myrrh,//  
that I may anoint Him Who has cleansed all my sins!"

*now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

### **Tone 6**

The woman who was engulfed in sin  
found in You a haven of salvation.  
She poured out myrrh with her tears and cried to You:  
"Behold the One Who brings repentance to sinners!  
Rescue me from the tempest of sin, O Master,//  
through Your great mercy!"

### **Aposticha**

#### **Tone 6**      *(from the Lenten Triodion)*

Today Christ comes to the house of the Pharisee.  
A sinful woman crawls to His feet and cries:  
"Look at me who am engulfed in sin,  
in despair because of my evil deeds!  
But in Your goodness do not despise me!  
Grant me forgiveness of my evil deeds, O Lord,//  
and save me!"

*v: Satisfy us in the morning with Your steadfast love that we may rejoice and be glad all our days! Make us glad as many days as You have afflicted us, and as many years as we have seen evil! Let Your work be manifest to Your servants, and Your glorious power to their children! (Ps 89/90:14)*

The harlot spread out her hair to You, O Master;  
Judas spread out his hands to lawless men:  
she in order to receive forgiveness;  
he in order to receive some silver.  
We cry to You, Who were sold for us and yet set us free://  
“O Lord, glory to You!”

*v: Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us and establish the work of our hands; yea, establish the work of our hands! (Ps 90/91:17)*

The corrupt and filthy woman  
drew near to You, O Savior.  
She poured out her tears on Your feet  
and thus announced Your Passion.  
How can I gaze on You, O Master?  
Yet You came to save the harlot.  
Raise me from the depths, for I am dead in sin,  
as You raised Lazarus from the tomb after four days.  
Accept me in my misery, O Lord, //  
and save me!

*v: I will thank You, O Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all Your wondrous works. (Ps 9:1)*

Despairing for her life, and despaired of for her deeds,  
the woman came bearing myrrh to You and cried:  
“O Son of the Virgin,  
though I am a harlot, do not cast me aside!  
O Joy of the Angels,  
do not despise my tears!  
As You did not reject me as a sinner, //  
accept me now as a penitent, in Your great mercy!”

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

**Tone 8**      *(The Hymn of Cassia)*

The woman had fallen into many sins, O Lord,  
yet, when she perceived Your divinity,  
she joined the ranks of the myrrh-bearing women.  
In tears she brought You myrrh before Your burial.  
She cried: “Woe is me!  
For I live in the night of licentiousness,  
shrouded in the dark and moonless love of sin.  
But accept the fountain of my tears,  
O You, Who gathered the waters of the sea into clouds!  
Bow down Your ear to the sighing of my heart,  
O You, Who bowed the heavens in Your ineffable condescension!  
Once Eve heard Your footsteps in Paradise in the cool of the day,  
and in fear she ran and hid herself.  
But now I will tenderly embrace those pure feet  
and wipe them with the hair of my head.  
Who can measure the multitude of my sins,  
or the depth of Your judgments, O Savior of my soul?//  
Do not despise Your servant in Your immeasurable mercy!”

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In addition to translations from the Department of Liturgical Music and Translations, liturgical texts for this service represent modified versions of translations provided by Holy Myrrhbearers Monastery, Otego, New York and St. Tikhon’s Monastery, South Canaan, Pa. The Department of Liturgical Music and Translations of the Orthodox Church in America expresses its gratitude to Holy Myrrhbearers Monastery and St. Tikhon’s Monastery and to those translators whose work has been consulted at times in the course of reviewing and modifying these texts to their present form: Metropolitan Kallistos (Ware), Archimandrite Ephrem (Lash), Father Benedict Churchill, Isaac Lambertson, St. Vladimir’s Seminary, and Holy Transfiguration Monastery, among others.