

Commemoration of the Placement of the Holy Belt
of the Most Holy Theotokos

VESPERS

Priest: Blessed is our God always, now and ever
and to the ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Stand for the reading of the Introductory Psalm.

While the Introductory Psalm is being read, the
Priest stands in front of the holy Table and
reads the so-called Lamp-lighting Prayers.

Reader: Come, let us worship and bow down
before God our King.

Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ
God our King.

Come, let us worship and bow down before Him,
Christ our King and God.

PSALM 103 (104).

Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, You
are magnified exceedingly; You clothe Yourself
with thanksgiving and majesty, who cover Yourself
with light as with a garment, who stretch out the
heavens like a curtain; You are He who covers His
upper chambers with water, who makes the clouds
His means of approach, who walks on the wings of
the winds, who makes His angels spirits and His
ministers a flame of fire. He established the earth on
its stable foundation; it shall not be moved unto ages
of ages. The deep like a garment is His covering; the
waters shall stand upon the mountains; at Your
rebuke they shall flee; at the sound of Your thunder,
they shall be afraid. The mountains rise up, and the
plains sink down to the place You founded for them.
You set a boundary they shall not pass over; neither
shall they return to cover the earth. You are He who
sends springs into the valley; the waters shall pass
between the mountains; they shall give drink to all
the wild animals of the field; the wild asses shall

quench their thirst; the birds of heaven shall dwell
beside them; they shall sing from the midst of the
rocks. You are He who waters the mountains from
His higher places; the earth shall be satisfied with the
fruit of Your works. You are He who causes grass to
grow for the cattle, and the green plant for the
service of man, to bring forth bread from the earth;
and wine gladdens the heart of man, to brighten his
face with oil; and bread strengthens man's heart. The
trees of the plain shall be full of fruit, the cedars of
Lebanon, which You planted; there the sparrows shall
make their nests; the house of the heron takes the
lead among them. The high mountains are for the
deer; the cliff is a refuge for the rabbits. He made the
moon for seasons; the sun knows its setting. You
established darkness, and it was night, wherein all
the wild animals of the forest will prowl about; the
young lions roar and snatch their prey, and seek their
food from God. The sun arises, and they are gathered
together; and they shall be put to bed in their dens.
Man shall go out to his work and to his labor until
evening. O Lord, Your works shall be magnified
greatly; You made all things in wisdom; the earth was
filled with Your creation. There is this great and
spacious sea: the creeping things are there without
number; the living things are there, both small and
great; there the ships pass through; there is this
dragon You formed to play therein. All things wait
upon You, that You may give them food in due
season. When You give it to them, they shall gather
it; when You open Your hand, all things shall be filled
with Your goodness. But when You turn Your face
away, they shall be troubled; when You take away
their breath, they shall die and return again to their
dust. You shall send forth Your Spirit, and they shall
be created, and You shall renew the face of the earth.
Let the glory of the Lord be forever; the Lord shall be
glad in His works; He looks upon the earth and
makes it tremble; He touches the mountains, and
they smoke. I will sing to the Lord all my life; I will
sing to my God as long as I exist; may my words be
pleasing to Him, and I shall be glad in the Lord. May
sinners cease from the earth, and the lawless, so as to
be no more. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

The sun knows its setting. You established darkness, and it was night.

O Lord, Your works shall be magnified greatly; You made all things in wisdom.

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

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

Our hope, O Lord, glory to You.

THE PEACE LITANY

Deacon: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the peace from above and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the peace of the whole world, for the stability of the holy churches of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For this holy house and for those who enter it with faith, reverence, and the fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For pious and Orthodox Christians, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For our Archbishop (name), for the honorable presbyterate, for the diaconate in Christ, and for all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For our country, the president, all those in public service, and for our armed forces everywhere, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the Holy and Great Church of Christ of Constantinople, for our Sacred Archdiocese, [for

this Holy Metropolis,] for this city and parish, for every city and land, and for the faithful who live in them, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For favorable weather, for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For those who travel by land, sea, and air, for the sick, the suffering, the captives and for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and distress, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Remembering our all-holy, immaculate, most blessed, and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

Choir: To You, O Lord.

Priest: For to You belong all glory, honor, and worship, to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and ever and to the ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Chanter: Your blessing, holy Master! Mode 4.

Choir:

Mode 4.

Lord, I have cried to You; hear me. Hear me, O Lord. Lord, I have cried to You; hear me. Give heed to the voice of my supplication when I cry to You. Hear me, O Lord.

Let my prayer be set forth before You as incense, the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice. Hear me, O Lord.

Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, a door of enclosure about my lips.

Incline not my heart to evil words, to make excuses in sins.

With men who work lawlessness; and I will not join with their choice ones.

The righteous man shall correct me with mercy, and he shall reprove me; but let not the oil of the sinner anoint my head.

For my prayer shall be intense in the presence of their pleasures. Their judges are swallowed up by the rock.

They shall hear my words, for they are pleasant. As a clod of ground is dashed to pieces on the earth, so their bones were scattered beside the grave.

For my eyes, O Lord, O Lord, are toward You; in You I hope; take not my soul away.

Keep me from the snares they set for me, and from the stumbling blocks of those who work lawlessness.

Sinners shall fall into their own net; I am alone, until I escape.

I cried to the Lord with my voice, with my voice I prayed to the Lord.

I shall pour out my supplication before Him; I shall declare my affliction in His presence.

When my spirit fainted within me, then You knew my paths.

For on the way I was going, they hid a trap for me.

I looked on my right, and saw there was no one who knew me.

Refuge failed me, and there was no one who cared for my soul.

I cried to You, O Lord; I said, "You are my hope, my portion in the land of the living."

Attend to my supplication, for I was humbled exceedingly.

Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are stronger than I.

Bring my soul out of prison to give thanks to Your name, O Lord.

The righteous shall wait for me, until You reward me.

Out of the depths I have cried to You, O Lord; O Lord, hear my voice.

Let Your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

STICHERA FOR THE THEOTOKOS. Mode 4. To a brave one.

If You, O Lord, should mark transgression, O Lord, who would stand? For there is forgiveness with You.

Theotokos, the sacred chest that contained your most holy Belt * was a sign of holiness like the Ark of old * for your devout servants long ago, who gloried in having it * as a rampart and defense * and a source of healings and cures. Therefore, we today * have assembled in church to celebrate it and to praise you for the ocean * of your magnificent miracles.

Because of Your law, O Lord, I waited for You; my soul waited for Your word. My soul hopes in the Lord.

Theotokos, the sacred chest that contained your most holy Belt * was a sign of holiness like the Ark of old * for your devout servants long ago, who gloried in having it * as a rampart and defense * and a source of healings and cures. Therefore, we today * have assembled in church to celebrate it and to praise you for the ocean * of your magnificent miracles.

From the morning watch until night; from the morning watch until night, let Israel hope in the Lord.

Theotokos, we hold this feast celebrating the memory * of the deposition of your most precious Belt. * For you permitted its placement in the City, which Constantine * dedicated once to you, * where her citizens treasured it as a precious gift, * as a sacred protection, as a wealth of cures and healings, as a river * filled with the gifts of the Spirit's grace.

For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is abundant redemption; and He shall redeem Israel from all his transgressions.

Theotokos, we hold this feast celebrating the memory * of the deposition of your most precious Belt. * For you permitted its placement in the City, which Constantine *

dedicated once to you, * where her citizens treasured it as a precious gift, * as a sacred protection, as a wealth of cures and healings, as a river * filled with the gifts of the Spirit's grace.

Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles; praise Him, all you peoples.

Just imagine that glorious and magnificent church, wherein * the most precious Belt of our Lady had been kept * as sacred treasure, imbued with grace; and people would go to it * and would certainly receive * mercy, grace, and enlightenment; and with grateful hearts * they would sing, "O all-holy Virgin Mary, we extol you and we bless you, * for we were saved by your Son and God."

For His mercy rules over us; and the truth of the Lord endures forever.

Just imagine that glorious and magnificent church, wherein * the most precious Belt of our Lady had been kept * as sacred treasure, imbued with grace; and people would go to it * and would certainly receive * mercy, grace, and enlightenment; and with grateful hearts * they would sing, "O all-holy Virgin Mary, we extol you and we bless you, * for we were saved by your Son and God."

Glory. Both now. Mode 2.

All-immaculate Theotokos, the Church of God dons your holy Belt as though a most splendid crown. Today she is exultant and beams with joy, as she dances mystically, crying out to you, O Lady. "Rejoice, O precious diadem and crown of divine glory. Rejoice, the only glory and eternal joy of my complement. Rejoice, O haven and protection and salvation for us who run to you."

Stand for the Entrance.

Deacon (in a low voice): Let us pray to the Lord.

ENTRANCE PRAYER

In the evening, in the morning, and at midday, we praise You, we bless You, we give thanks to You, and we pray to You, Master of all, benevolent Lord. Let our prayer be set forth before You as incense. Incline not our hearts to evil words or thoughts, but deliver us all from those who pursue our souls. For our eyes, O Lord, O Lord, are toward You, and in You we hope. Leave us not embarrassed, O our God.

Deacon (in a low voice): Master, bless the holy entrance.

Priest: Blessed be the entrance of Your holy ones always, now and ever and to the ages of ages.

Deacon: Wisdom. Arise.

Clergy and people:

Mode 2.

Gladsome light of holy glory of the holy, blessed, heavenly, immortal Father, O Jesus Christ: arriving at the hour of sunset and having seen the evening light, we praise the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God. It is worthy for You to be praised at all times with happy voices, O Son of God and Giver of life; * and therefore the world glorifies You.

Deacon: The evening Prokeimenon!

Choir:

PROKEIMENON.

Mode pl. 4.

Behold now, bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord.

Behold now, bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord.

Verse: *Who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God.*

Behold now, bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord.

LITANY OF FERVENT SUPPLICATION

Deacon: Let us all say with all our soul and with all our mind, let us all say.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Lord, Ruler of all, God of our fathers, we pray You, hear us and have mercy.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Have mercy on us, O God, according to Your great mercy, we pray You, hear us and have mercy.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (3)

Deacon: Again we pray for pious and Orthodox Christians.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (3)

Deacon: Again we pray for our Archbishop (name).

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (3)

Deacon: Again we pray for our brethren: the priests, the hieromonks, the deacons, the monastics, and all our brotherhood in Christ.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (3)

Deacon: Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, protection, forgiveness, and remission of the sins of the servants of God, all pious Orthodox Christians residing and visiting in this city: the parishioners, the members of the parish council, the stewards, and benefactors of this holy church.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (3)

Deacon: Again we pray for the blessed and ever-memorable founders of this holy church, and for all our fathers and brethren who have fallen asleep before us, who here have been piously laid to their rest, as well as the Orthodox everywhere.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (3)

Deacon: Again we pray for those who bear fruit and do good works in this holy and all-venerable church, for those who labor and those who sing, and for the people here present who await Your great and rich mercy.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (3)

Priest: For You are merciful and benevolent God, and to You we offer up glory, to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and ever and to the ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Stand for the reading of prayer.

Reader: O Lord, keep us this evening without sin. Blessed are you, O Lord, God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is your name to the ages. Amen. O Lord, let your mercy be upon us for we have set our hope in you. Blessed are you, O Lord, teach me your commandments. Blessed are you, Master, grant me understanding of your commandments. Blessed are you, Holy One, enlighten me with your commandments. Lord, your mercy is forever. Do not despise the works of your hands. To you is due

praise, to you is due song, to you is due glory, to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

LITANY OF COMPLETION

Deacon: Let us complete our evening prayer to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That the whole evening may be perfect, holy, peaceful, and sinless, let us ask the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: For an angel of peace, a faithful guide, a guardian of our souls and bodies, let us ask the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: For pardon and remission of our sins and transgressions, let us ask the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: For that which is good and beneficial for our souls, and for peace for the world, let us ask the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: That we may complete the remaining time of our life in peace and repentance, let us ask the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: And let us ask for a Christian end to our life, peaceful, without shame and suffering, and for a good defense before the awesome judgment seat of Christ.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: Remembering our all-holy, immaculate, most blessed, and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend

ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

Choir: To You, O Lord.

Priest: For You are good and benevolent God, and to You we offer up glory, to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and ever and to the ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Priest: Peace be with all.

Choir: And with your spirit.

Deacon: Let us bow our heads to the Lord.

Choir: To You, O Lord.

Priest (in a low voice): Lord our God, who inclined the heavens and came down for the salvation of humankind, look upon Your servants and Your inheritance; for they have bowed their heads and bent their necks to You, the fearsome yet compassionate Judge, not expecting human help, but awaiting Your mercy and anticipating Your salvation. Guard them at all times, this evening and the coming night, from every enemy, from all demonic activity against them, from unprofitable reflections, and from wicked thoughts.

Priest (aloud): Blessed and glorified be the majesty of Your kingdom, of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and ever and to the ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

APOSTICHA FOR THE THEOTOKOS. Mode 4. You have given.

To your City you have given a secure bond, your holy Belt, blessed Lady most glorious, * vigilantly guarding it from all kinds of danger * by its divine actions, and unassailable by foes; * and thus protected it cries to you and says: * Your Son and Lord, the only One who is humane and compassionate, * is my power and mighty strength * and majestic pride and joy.

Verse: *The Most High sanctified His tabernacle.*

Rulers who are Orthodox, who wear your Belt with the dignity of the crown, O all-blameless one, * exult as they boastfully speak about the great things * God has

done for you, Maid; * and they are seen by warring foes * to be formidable and invincible. * And praising you they cry to Him who was ineffably born of you, * “O Lord Jesus, omnipotent * and compassionate, save us all.”

Verse: *The torrents of the river gladden the city of God.*

Virgin, by your holy Belt, gird us with power, and strengthen us * in the face of our enemies; * subdue sinful passions that sorely tyrannize us * and that war against us, * and ever grant us to prevail * by us attaining dispassion with your help, * so we may purely glorify you and in earnest address your Son: * “O Lord Jesus, omnipotent * and compassionate, save us all.”

Glory. Both now. Mode 2.

Cleansed in heart and mind, let us join the Angels and festively celebrate, leading off by singing the words of David, to the virgin Bride of the King, Christ our God: “Arise, O Lord, into Your rest, You and the ark of Your holiness. You have adorned her as splendid palace, and You have bequeathed her to Your city, O Master, to care for it and protect it from foreign invasion, by Your mighty power, at her entreaties.”

Stand for the reading of prayers

Song of Simeon

Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel.

Reader: Eis polla eti, Despota!

TRISAGION PRAYERS.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (3)

Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit; both now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, forgive our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. 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 the Son and the Holy Spirit; both now and ever and to the 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 the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and ever and to ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

APOLYTIKION. Mode pl. 4.

Ever-virgin Theotokos, the shelter of mankind, you have given to your City as a protective wall the clothing and garment that you wore on your immaculate body. By your seedless childbirth, they have remained incorrupt. For in you both nature and time are made novel. Therefore we implore you, grant peace to your commonwealth, and great mercy to our souls.

Glory. Both now. REPEAT.

Deacon: Wisdom.

Reader: Master bless.

Priest: Blessed is Christ our God, the One who is, always, now and ever and to the ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Reader: The Lord God make firm the holy and pure faith of the pious Orthodox Christians, together with the Holy and Great Church of Christ of Constantinople, our Sacred Archdiocese, [this Holy Metropolis,] and this city, to the ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Priest: Glory to You, our God, glory to You.

May Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His all-pure and all-immaculate holy Mother, the Placing of whose venerable Belt we commemorate, the power of the precious and life-giving Cross, the protection of the honorable, bodiless powers of heaven, the supplications of the honorable, glorious prophet and forerunner John the Baptist, of the holy, glorious, and praiseworthy apostles, of the holy, glorious, and triumphant martyrs, of our righteous and God-bearing fathers, (local patron saint); of the holy and righteous ancestors of God Joachim and Anna, and of all the saints, have mercy on us and save us, as He is good, benevolent, and merciful God.

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

Choir: Amen.