

CANON OF ST. ANDREW OF CRETE AND GOSPEL READING

Insert for Great Compline on the First
Monday of Great Lent

Great Compline—Insert for Monday of the First Week

INTRODUCTION

The Great Canon of St Andrew, Bishop of Crete, is the longest (and perhaps the richest) canon in Church services. It is chanted in church only during Great Lent. The first reading of the canon is during the Great Compline services for the first four nights of Great Lent. One fourth of the canon is read for each night. This Insert is the first part. It is also recited in its entirety during Matins for Thursday of the fifth week of Great Lent, along with the entire life of St Mary of Egypt.

There is perhaps no other sacred hymn which compares with this monumental work, which St Andrew wrote for his personal meditations. The Odes are distinguished by a spirit of mournful humility, hope in God, and complex and beautiful Trinitarian Doxologies and hymns to the Theotokos.

The canon is a dialog between St. Andrew and his soul. The ongoing theme is an urgent exhortation to change one's life. St Andrew always mentions his own sinfulness placed in juxtaposition to God's mercy, and uses literally hundreds of references to good and bad examples from the Old and New Testament to "convince himself" to repent.

In any case, all Odes have the same basic format. An "Irmos" begins each Ode, and each Irmos has a reference to one of the nine biblical canticles, which are selections from the Old and New Testament. A variable number of "troparia" follow, which are short hymns about the subject of the canon. At the end of each Ode, another hymn, called the "Katavasia", either the Irmos previously sung, or one like it is sung.

The troparia of the Great Canon in all its Odes are usually chanted by the Priest in the center of the church, with the Choir singing the Irmos and Katavasia. After each troparion a "refrain" is chanted by the People; *"Have mercy on me O Lord, have mercy on me."* There are varying traditions about bows and prostrations. The usual Greek custom is to make a low bow and the sign of the cross after the Irmos, and after each troparion while chanting the refrain.

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The Eirmos hymns are sung twice, once at the beginning and end of each Song. After each Troparion we recite the refrain and make a bow and the sign of the Cross.

MONDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK—Part 1

Song 1. Tone 6.

Eirmos

He is my Helper and Protector, and has become my salvation. This is my God and I will glorify Him. My Father's God and I will exalt Him. For gloriously has He been glorified.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Troparia

Where shall I begin to lament the deeds of my wretched life? What first-fruit shall I offer, O Christ, for my present lamentation? But in Your compassion grant me release from my falls.

Come, wretched soul, with your flesh, confess to the Creator of all. In the future refrain from your former brutishness, and offer to God tears in repentance.

Having rivaled the first-created Adam by my transgression, realize that through my sins I am stripped naked of God and of the everlasting kingdom and bliss. (Genesis 3)

Alas, wretched soul! Why are you like the first Eve? For you have wickedly looked and been bitterly wounded, and you have touched the tree and rashly tasted the forbidden food.

The place of bodily Eve has been taken for me by the Eve of my mind in the form of a passionate thought in the flesh, showing me sweet things, yet ever making me taste and wallow bitter things.

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Adam was rightly exiled from Eden for not keeping Your one commandment, O Savior. But what shall I suffer who am always rejecting Your living words? (Hebrews 12:25; Genesis 3:23)

Glorify to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit:

To The Trinity:

Supersubstantial Trinity, adored in Unity, take from me the heavy yoke of sin, and in Your compassion grant me tears of compunction.

Now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Theotokion:

Mother of God, hope and intercessor of those who sing of you, take from me the heavy yoke of sin, and as you are our pure Lady, accept me who repent.

Eirmos

Attend, O heaven, and I will speak, and will sing of Christ who came to dwell among us in flesh which He took from the Virgin.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Troparia:

Attend, O heaven, and I will speak; O earth, give ear to a voice repenting to God and singing praises to Him.

Attend to me, O God my Savior, with Your merciful eye, and accept my fervent confession. (Proverbs 15:3; Psalm 33:15)

I have sinned above all men, I alone have sinned against You. But as God have compassion, O Savior, on Your creature.

Having deformed my passions by my pleasure-loving desires, I have marred the beauty of my mind.

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Ⲁ storm of passions besets me, O compassionate Lord. But stretch out Your hand to me too, as to Peter. (Matthew 14:31)

I have stained the coat of my flesh, and soiled what is in Your image and likeness, O Savior.

I have darkened the beauty of my soul with passionate pleasures, and I have completely reduced my whole mind to mud.

I have torn my first garment which the Creator wove for me in the beginning, and therefore I am lying naked. (Genesis 3:21)

The tears of the harlot, O merciful Lord, I too offer to You. Be merciful to me, O Savior, in Your compassion. (Lk 7:38; 18:13)

I looked at the beauty of the tree, and my mind was educated; and now I lie naked, and I am ashamed. (Genesis 3:7)

Ⲁll the demon-chiefs of the passions have plowed on my back, and their tyranny over me lasted long. (Psalm 128:3)

Ⲅlory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit:

To The Trinity:

Ⲅsing of You as one in three Persons, O God of all, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Ⲅow and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Theotokion:

Ⲅspotless Mother of God, only all-hymned Virgin, pray intensely that we may be saved.

Eirmos

Ⲅstablish Your Church on the unshakable rock of Your commandments, O Christ.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

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Troparia:

☩ The Lord rained fire from the Lord, my soul, and burnt up the former land of Sodom. (Genesis 19:24)

☩ Escape to the mountain like Lot, my soul, and make Zoar your refuge in time. (Genesis 19:22)

☩ Run from the burning, my soul! Run from the heat of Sodom! Run from the destruction of the divine flame.

I alone have sinned against You, sinned above all men. O Christ my Savior, spurn me not.

☩ You are the good Shepherd; seek me, Your lamb, and neglect not me who have gone astray. (John 10:11-14)

☩ You are my sweet Jesus, You are my Creator; in You, O Savior, I shall be justified.

I confess to You, O Savior, I have sinned, I have sinned against You, but absolve and forgive me in Your compassion.

☩ Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit:

To The Trinity:

☩ O Trinity, Unity, God, save us from delusion and temptations and distressing circumstances.

☩ Now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Theotokion:

☩ Rejoice, God-receiving womb! Rejoice, throne of the Lord! Rejoice, Mother of our Life!

Eirmos

☩ The Prophet heard of Your coming, O Lord, and was afraid that You were to be born of a Virgin and appear to men, and he said, "I have heard the report of You and am afraid." Glory to Your power, O Lord. (Habakkuk 3:2)

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Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Troparia

Despise not Your works and forsake not Your creation, O Just Judge and Lover of men, though I alone have sinned as a man more than any man. But being Lord of all, You have power to pardon sins. (Mark 2:10)

The end is drawing near, my soul, is drawing near! But you neither care nor prepare. The time is growing short. Rise! The Judge is near at the very doors. Like a dream, like a shadow, the time of this life passes. Why do we bustle about in vain? (Matthew 24:33; Psalm 38:7)

Come to your senses, my soul! Consider the deeds you have done, and bring them before your eyes, and pour out the drops of your tears. Boldly tell your thoughts and deeds to Christ, and be acquitted.

There has never been a sin or act or vice in life that I have not committed, O Savior. I have sinned in mind, word and deed, in choice, in purpose, will and action, as no one else has ever done.

Therefore I am condemned, wretch that I am, therefore I am doomed by my own conscience, than which there is nothing in the world more rigorous. O my Judge and Redeemer Who knows my heart, spare and deliver and save me, Your servant.

The ladder of old which the great Patriarch saw, my soul, is a model of mounting by action and ascent by knowledge. So, if you wish to live in activity, knowledge and contemplation, be renewed. (Genesis 28:12; Rom. 12:2; Titus 3:5)

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Because of his crying need the Patriarch endured the scorching heat of the day, and he bore the frost of the night, daily making gains, shepherding, struggling, slaving, in order to win two wives. (Genesis 29:16-30; 31-40)

By the two wives understand action and direct knowledge in contemplation: Leah as action, for she had many children, and Rachel as knowledge, which is obtained by much labor. For without labors, my soul, neither action nor contemplation will achieve success.

Glorify to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit:

To The Trinity

confess You to be undivided in essence, unconfused in persons, One Triune Divinity, co-enthroned and co-reigning. I sing You the great song thrice sung on high.

Now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Theotokion

You give birth and live a virgin life, and in both remain a virgin by nature. He Who is born of you renews the laws of nature, and a womb gives birth without travail. Where God wills, the order of nature is overruled; for He does whatever He wishes.

Eirmos

Out of the night watching early for You, enlighten me, I pray, O Lover of men, and guide even me in Your commandments, and teach me, O Savior, to do Your will.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.



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Troparia

I have passed my life ever in night, for the night of sin has been to me thick fog and darkness; but make me, O Savior, son of the day. (Ephesians 5:8)

Like Reuben, wretch that I am, I have planned an unprincipled and lawless act against God Most High, having defiled my bed as he defiled that of his father. (Genesis 5:21; 49:3-4)

I confess to You, O Christ my King: I have sinned, I have sinned, like Joseph's brothers of old, who sold the fruit of purity and chastity. (Genesis 37)

His brothers gave up righteous Joseph, that sweet soul was sold into slavery, as a type of the Lord; and you, my soul, have sold yourself completely to your vices. (Genesis 37:27-28)

Imitate, wretched and worthless soul, righteous Joseph and his pure mind, and do not be wanton with irrational desires, never transgressing. (Genesis 39:7-23)

If Joseph of old also occupied a pit, O Sovereign Lord, yet it was as a type of Your Burial and Rising. But will I ever offer You anything like it? (Genesis 37)

Glorify to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit:

To The Trinity:

You, O Trinity, we glorify, the one God: Holy, Holy, Holy are You, Father, Son and Spirit, simple Being, Unity ever adored.

Now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

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Theotokion

From you, O pure maiden Mother and Virgin, God Who created the worlds and ages was clad in my clay and united to Himself human nature.

Eirmos

I cried with my whole heart to the merciful God, and He heard me from the lowest hell and raised my life out of corruption.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Troparia:

I sincerely offer You with a pure intention, O Savior, the tears of my eyes and groans from the depths of my heart, crying: O God, I have sinned against You; be merciful to me. (Luke 18:13)

You, my soul, have revolted from the Lord like Dathan and Abiram. But with all your heart cry, "Spare!", that a yawning gulf of the earth may not swallow you. (Numbers 16)

Like a stampeding heifer stung to madness, my soul, you have resembled Ephraim. Winged with action, resolve and contemplation, save your life like a gazelle from the noose.

Let Moses' hand assure us, my soul, how God can whiten and cleanse a leprous life. So do not despair of yourself, even though you are leprous. (Exodus 4:6-8)

Glorify to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit:

To The Trinity

The Father, the Son, and the Divine Spirit say, I am the Trinity, simple and undivided, divided Personally, and I am the Unity, united in nature.

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Now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Theotokion

Your womb bore God for us Who took our form. Implore Him as the Creator of all, O Mother of God, that through your intercessions we may be justified.

Lord, have mercy (*Three times*).

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

Kontakion, tone 6:

My soul, my soul, arise! Why are you sleeping? The end is drawing near, and you will be confounded. Awake, then, and be watchful, that Christ our God may spare you, Who is everywhere present and fills all things.

Eirmos

We have sinned, transgressed, done wrong before You, we have not watched or done as You have commanded us. But do not give us up utterly, O God of our Fathers.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Troparia:

I have sinned, offended and rejected Your commandment, or I have advanced in sins and added wounds to my sores. But in Your compassion have mercy on me, O God of our Fathers.

I have confessed to You, my Judge, the secrets of my heart. See my humility, see also my distress, and attend to my judgment now. And in Your compassion have mercy on me, O God of our Fathers.

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When Saul of old lost his father's asses, besides getting Jews of them he incidentally found a kingdom. But watch, my soul, lest without noticing it, you prefer your animal ravings to the Kingdom of Christ. (1 Kings 10:2)

Of David, the father of our Divine Lord, doubly sinned of old, my soul, when he was pierced with the arrow of adultery and struck with the spear of remorse for murder, let you have a sickness graver than deeds in your will and appetites.

David once joined sin to sin, for he mixed adultery with murder, yet he immediately offered double repentance. But you my soul, have done things more wicked without repenting to God.

David of old composed a song, painting it as in a picture, by which he exposes the deed he had done, crying: Have mercy on me, for against You only have I sinned, Who are God of all. Cleanse me. (Psalm 50)

Glorify to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit:

To The Trinity

Trinity simple and undivided, of one essence and one nature, Lights and Light, three Holies and one Holy, God the Trinity is hymned. But sing, my soul, and glorify the Life and Lives, the God of all.

Now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Theotokion

We sing of you, we bless you, we worship you, O Mother of God, for you gave birth to one of the inseparable Trinity, the one Son and God, and to us on earth you have opened the heavenly realms.

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Eirmos

¶ Him Whom the heavenly hosts glorify and before Whom Cherubim and Seraphim tremble, let every breath and all creation praise, bless and exalt throughout all ages.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Troparia:

I have sinned, O Savior, have mercy! Awaken my mind to conversion, accept me who repent, have compassion on me as I cry: Against You only have I sinned and acted lawlessly; have mercy on me.

¶ Elijah the charioteer once ascended by the chariot of the virtues as to heaven and was carried above earthly things. Consider then, my soul, this ascent. (IV Kings 2:11)

¶ Elisha received double grace from the Lord when he took up Elijah's sheepskin. But you, my soul, have not shared his grace owing to incontinence. (IV Kings 2:9)

Jordan's stream of old was made to stand still on either side by Elisha by Elijah's sheepskin. But you, my soul, have not shared this grace owing to incontinence. (IV Kings 2:14)

¶ The Shunammite woman of old with right good will entertained the righteous man. But you, my soul, have taken into your house neither stranger nor traveler. Therefore you will be cast out of the bridal hall wailing. (IV Kings 4:8)

¶ You have always imitated the vile mind of Gehazi, O wretched soul. Rid yourself of his love of money, at least in old age; escape from the fire of Gehenna by leaving your evil ways.

¶ Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit:

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To The Trinity

Eternal Father, co-eternal Son, gracious Comforter, Spirit of Truth; Father of the Divine Word, Word of the Eternal Father, living and creative Spirit, Trinity Unity, have mercy on us.

Now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Theotokion

As from scarlet silk, O spotless Virgin, within your womb the spiritual purple was woven, the flesh of Emmanuel. Therefore we honor you as in truth Mother of God.

Eirmos

ineffable is the childbearing of a seedless conception, unsullied the pregnancy of a Virgin Mother, for the birth of God renews natures. So in all generations we magnify you in orthodox fashion as the Mother and Bride of God.

Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

Troparia:

The mind is wounded, the body is feeble, the spirit is sick, the word has lost its power, life is ebbing, the end is at the doors. What then will you do, wretched soul, when the Judge comes to try your case?

I have reviewed Moses' account of the creation of the world, my soul, and then all canonical Scripture which tells you the story of the righteous and the unrighteous. But you, my soul, have copied the latter and not the former, and have sinned against God.

The Law has grown weak, the Gospel is not practiced, the entire Scriptures are ignored by you; the Prophets and every word of the Just have lost their power. Your wounds, my soul, have multiplied, and there is no physician to heal you.

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I am bringing before you examples from the New Scripture, my soul, to lead you to compunction. So emulate the righteous and avoid following the sinners, and regain Christ's grace by prayers, fasts, purity and reverence.

Christ became man and called to repentance robbers and harlots. Repent, my soul! The door of the Kingdom is already open, and the transformed pharisees, publicans and adulterers are seizing it ahead of you. (Matthew 21:31; 11:12)

Christ became a babe and conversed in the flesh with me, and He voluntarily experienced all that pertains to our nature, apart from sin; and He showed you, my soul, an example and image of His own condescension. (Matthew 1:25)

Christ saved wise men, called shepherds, made crowds of infants martyrs, glorified old men and aged widows, whose deeds and life, my soul, you have not emulated. But woe into you when you are judged! (Matthew 2:12; Luke 2:9-12; Matthew 2:16)

When the Lord had fasted for forty days in the wilderness, He at last became hungry, showing His human nature. Do not be despondent, my soul, if the enemy attacks you, but let him be beaten off by prayer and fasting. (Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 9:29)

Glorify to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit:

To The Trinity

Let us glorify the Father, exalt the Son, and faithfully worship the Divine Spirit, inseparable Trinity, Unity in essence, as the Light and Lights, the Life and Lives, giving life and light to the ends of the earth.

Now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Theotokion

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Protect your city, spotless Mother of God, for in you it faithfully reigns, and in you is made strong, and through you it conquers and routs every trial and temptation, and poils its foes and rules its subjects.

Refrain: Holy father Andrew, pray for us.

To St. Andrew of Crete:

Venerable Andrew, thrice-blessed father, shepherd of Crete, cease not to pray to God for those who sing of you, that He may deliver from anger, oppression, corruption and our countless sins, all of us who faithfully honor your memory.

And again the Eirmos:

Ineffable is the childbearing of a seedless conception, unsullied the pregnancy of a Virgin Mother, for the birth of God renews natures. So in all generations we magnify you in orthodox fashion as Mother and Bride of God.

Then return to page 28 in the Great Compline booklet.
You will use this booklet again in about 10 minutes for the Gospel reading below.

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NOTE: Below is the Gospel Reading when you reach page 35 in the Great Compline booklet:

GOSPEL READING FOR MONDAY NIGHT

LUKE 21:8-26

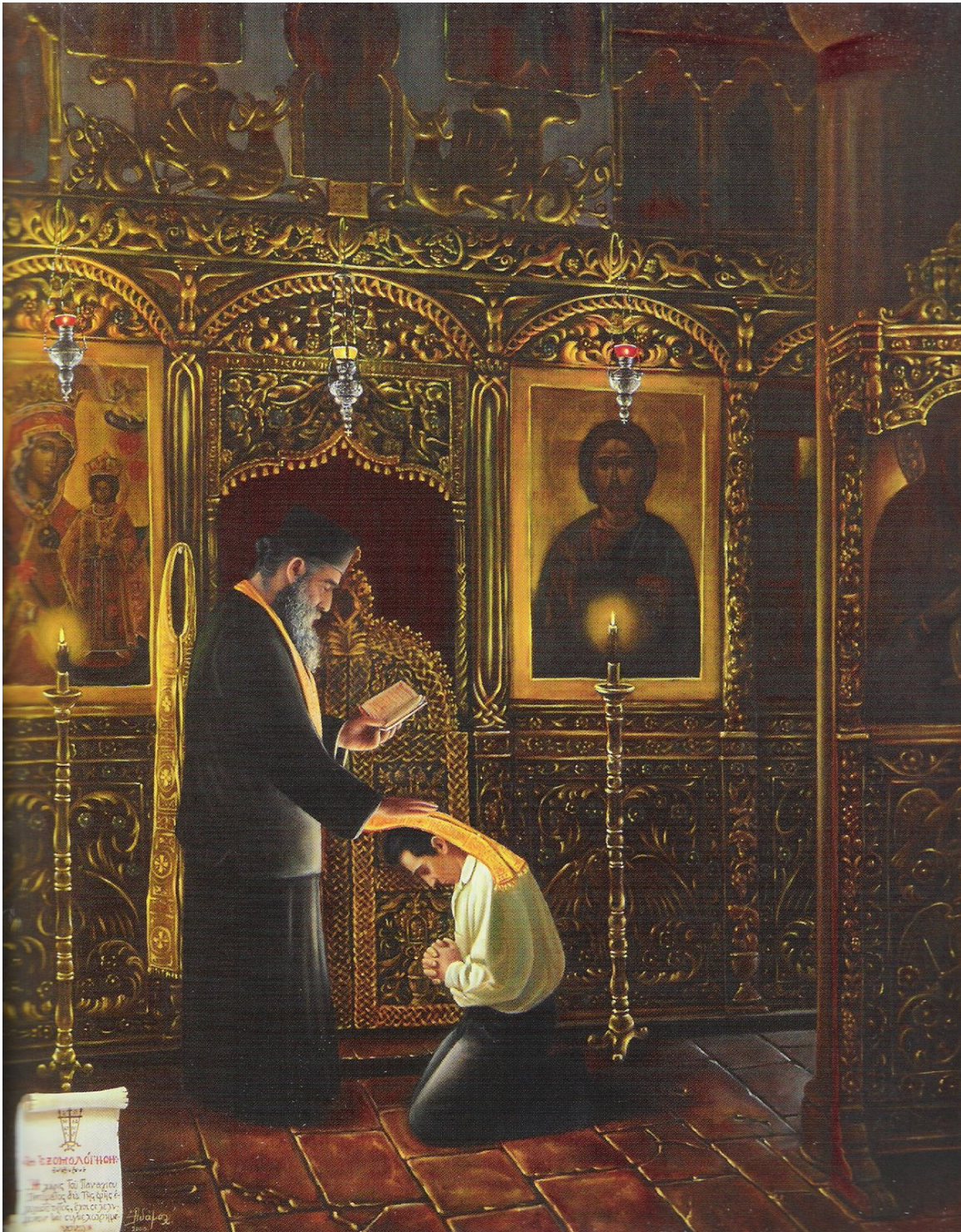


The Lord said: “Take heed that you not be deceived. For many will come in My Name, saying: ‘I am He’, and, ‘The time has drawn near.’ Therefore, do not go after them. But when you hear of wars and commotions, do not be terrified; for these things must come to pass first, but the end will not come immediately.” Then He said to them, “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from Heaven. But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My Name’s sake. But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony. Therefore, settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist. You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they


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will put some of you to death. And you will be hated by all for My Name's sake. But not a hair of your head shall be lost. By your patience possess your souls. But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies then know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken."

We return now to page 35 in the Great Compline booklet for the Dismissal.



Great Lent is the time when our sins and shortcomings will come to the surface. When they do, let us not despair but rather let us offer them to Christ through Holy Confession. He will remove them from us as far as the East is from the West.



BRINGING ONE SOUL CLOSE TO
GOD BY REPENTANCE IS MUCH
BETTER, IN THE EYES OF GOD,
THAN ALL OTHER OFFERINGS,
FOR THERE IS NOTHING IN THE
WORLD BETTER FOR GOD THAN
THE HUMAN SOUL,

FOR EVERYTHING IN THE WORLD
WILL PERISH EXCEPT THE SOUL
BECAUSE IT IS ETERNAL.

ST JOHN CLIMACUS

Copies can be purchased in our Church Bookstore

Thank you

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Rev. Fr. Joseph Chaffee

PDF available on our Church website:

ancientfaith.us