THE SERVICES OF THE HOURS - THE GREAT BOOK OF THE HOURS - GREAT HOROLOGION

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USDAOC, ed

ANOTHER PREPARATION FOR HOLY COMMUNION : THE TRIPLE CANON

(*Canon of Repentance ; Canon to the Theotokos ; Canon to the Guardian Angel*)

In some places, of a Sunday afternoon, the Triple Canon is read both in thanksgiving for, and as part of preparation for receiving Holy Communion.

The Usual Beginning is taken, including the reading of ***Psalm 50****. Then the Triple Canon is begun, sung in* ***Tone 6****. This is served in the centre of the nave of the Temple.*

Ode 1

Irmos :

Treading over the floor of the seas as over dry land, and seeing their pursuer Pharaoh drown, Israel cried out, "Let us sing to God a song of victory".

Of Repentance :

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

Sinful and burdened, I now approach You, O my Master and my God. I dare not look up towards Heaven, but I simply pray, saying, "Grant me, O Lord, the sense to weep bitterly over my deeds". **R :**

Oh, woe is me, the sinner. I am the most wretched of men. There is no repentance in me. Grant me tears, O Lord, that I may weep bitterly over my deeds. **R :**

O senseless and wretched man, you are destroying your life in laziness. Think about your life, and, weeping bitterly over your deeds, turn to the Lord God.

Refrain : O most holy Theotokos, save us.

O most pure Mother of God, look upon me, the sinner, and rescue me from the snares of the devil. Direct me onto the path of repentance, that I may weep bitterly over my deeds.

To the Theotokos :

Refrain : O most holy Theotokos, save us.

Beset by many temptations, I run to you, seeking salvation. Save me from burdens and evils, O Virgin Mother of the Word. **R :**

The increase of passions troubles me, filling my soul with great despondency. Still it, O Maiden, with the stillness of your Son and God,

O all-undefiled One. **R :**
I pray to you, O Virgin who bore our Saviour and God, rescue me from my terrors. I run to you now, laying before you my soul and my thoughts. **R :**
O only Mother of God, grant me, who am afflicted in body and soul, divine visitation and your own concern ; for you are good, and you gave birth to the Good One.

To the Guardian Angel :

Refrain : O Holy Angel of the Lord, my Guardian, pray to God for me, the sinner.

O Lord Jesus Christ, my God, have mercy on me. Grant, O Saviour, that Your servant may worthily hymn and praise the bodiless Angel who is my instructor and guardian. **R :**
I lie alone in folly and laziness, O my instructor and guardian. Do not leave me to perish. **R :**
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
Direct my mind, through your prayers, to accomplish the commandments of God, that I may receive from God the remission of my sins. Teach me to hate evil, I pray you.
Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.
With my Guardian Angel, O Virgin, pray to the Benefactor of your servant. Teach me to accomplish the commandments of your Son and my Creator.

Ode 3

Irmos :
None is holy as you, O Lord my God. You have raised the strength of Your Faithful, O Good One, and made us stand firmly on the rock of Your confession.

Of Repentance :

Refrain : Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
When the thrones will be set up for the dread Judgement, then the deeds of all men will be recalled. Alas, for the sinners who will be sent to torment. Knowing this, my soul, repent of your evil deeds. **R :**
The righteous shall rejoice, but sinners will lament. No-one will be able to help us at that moment – our sins will condemn us. Before the end comes, repent of your evil deeds. **R :**
Woe is me, the sinner. I have defiled myself in deed and thought and cannot even shed a single tear in my hardheartedness. Free yourself from the earth, O my soul, and repent of your evil deeds.
Refrain : O most holy Theotokos, save us.
Your Son calls, O Lady, and teaches us what is good. Yet I, the sinner,

always flee from good. Have mercy on me, nevertheless, O merciful one, that I may repent of my evil deeds.

To the Theotokos :

Refrain : O most holy Theotokos, save us.

I hold you as the intercessor and protection of my life, O Virgin Theotokos. Pilot me to your haven, O Cause of good things, O only-hymned Support of the Faithful. **R :**

I pray, O Virgin, dispel the storm of my sorrows and spiritual turmoil. You are the Bride of God who bore the Origin of stillness, and alone are most pure. **R :**

Pour a wealth of generosity for all, O you that bore the Benefactor, the Cause of all good. You can do anything, for God has blessed you, the Bearer of Christ, who is mighty in strength. **R :**

Help me, O Virgin, for I am cruelly tried by severe illness and painful afflictions. I know, O ever-uncorrupted One, that you are an inexhaustible and generous treasury of healings.

To the Guardian Angel :

Refrain : O holy Angel of the Lord, my guardian, pray to God for me, the sinner.

I have laid all my thoughts and my soul before you, my Guardian. Rescue me from every assault of the enemy. **R :**

The enemy humiliates and oppresses me, and teaches me always to do his will ; but you, O my instructor, do not leave me to perish.

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

Grant me to sing a hymn with fervour and thanksgiving to my Creator and God, and to you, O my Guardian Angel. Free me from my oppressive enemies, O my rescuer.

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

O most pure One, heal the most painful wounds of my soul, and drive off the enemies that are constantly warring against me.

Sessional Hymn : Tone 6

I think of the dread Day and weep over my deeds. How shall I answer the immortal King ? Or how shall a prodigal like I dare to look upon the Judge ? O compassionate Father, Only-begotten Son, and Holy Spirit, have mercy on me.

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

Tone 2

In fervent love I cry out to you, O Guardian of my soul, my all-holy Angel, "Always protect me and keep me from the entrapment of the evil one. Direct me to the heavenly life, enlightening, illumining and strengthening me".

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

Tone 6

O steadfast Protectress of Christians, constant advocate before the Creator, do not despise the cry of us sinners, but in your goodness, come speedily to help us who call on you in faith. Hasten to hear our petition, and to intercede for us, O Theotokos, for you always protect those who honour you.

Ode 4

Irmos :

Christ is my strength, my God and my Lord – the sacred Church reverently sings with a mighty voice, rejoicing in the Lord.

Of Repentance :

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

Our present path is wide and conducive to pleasures, but bitter will the Last Day be when the soul will depart from the body. O Man, beware of those pleasures, for the sake of the Kingdom of God. **R :**

Why do you mistreat the poor ? Why do you withhold the worker's pay ? Why do you not love your brother ? Why do you pursue lust and pride ? Abandon all that, O my soul, and repent for the sake of the Kingdom of God. **R :**

O foolish man, how long will you bustle like a bee, gathering your wealth ? It will soon perish like dust and ashes. Seek rather the Kingdom of God.

Refrain : O most holy Theotokos, save us.

O Lady Theotokos, have mercy on me, the sinner, and strengthen me in virtues. Protect me, so that insolent death may not seize me unprepared ; and, O Virgin, bring me to the Kingdom of God.

To the Theotokos :

Refrain : O most holy Theotokos, save us.

O Bride of God, who bore the Lord Pilot, still the tumult of my passions, and the storm of my transgressions. **R :**

Grant me the abyss of your kindness, upon which I call, O you that gave birth to the compassionate One, the Saviour of those who hymn you. **R :**

O pure One, enjoying your gifts, we sing a hymn of thanksgiving to you, whom we know to be the Mother of God. **R :**

As you love good, O Theotokos, the only Ever-virgin, help me as I lie on my bed of illness and infirmity. **R :**

We are rescued from every difficulty, O all-hymned One, for we have you as our hope, confirmation and immovable wall.

To the Guardian Angel :

Refrain : O Holy Angel of the Lord, my Guardian, pray to God for me,

the sinner.
O my Guardian, pray to God who loves Man, and do not abandon me. Keep my life in peace, and grant me invincible salvation. **R :**
O holy Angel, I received you from God as a helper and guardian of my life. Free me from harm, I pray you.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
O my Guardian, cleanse my vileness with your holiness. Through your prayers, may I be excluded from the left side, and become a partaker of glory.
Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.
O most pure One, I am bewildered by the evils that surround me. Rescue me from them quickly, for I run only to you.

Ode 5

Irmos :
I pray You, O good One, enlighten with Your divine Light the souls who look to You from early dawn, that they may know You, O Word of God, as the true God who calls them out of the darkness of sin.

Of Repentance :

Refrain : Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
O wretched man, remember how because of your sins, you have been enslaved to lies, slander, crime, infirmities and wild beasts. Is that what you wanted, O my sinful soul ? **R :**
My members tremble, for I have been guilty through all of them, my eyes by seeing ; my ears by hearing ; my tongue by speaking evil ; surrendering my whole self to Hadēs. Is this what you wanted, O my sinful soul ? **R :**
You have received the prodigal and the thief who repented, O Saviour. I alone have been weighed down by sinful laziness, and submitted to evil deeds. Is this what you wanted, O my sinful soul ?
Refrain : O most holy Theotokos, save us.
O Mother of God, the wondrous and swift helper of all Man, help me, the unworthy, for this is what my sinful soul wants.

To the Theotokos :

Refrain : O most holy Theotokos save us.
O pure One who bore the Cause of Joy, fill my hear with joy, by giving us your incorruptible joy. **R :**
Rescue us from harm, O pure Theotokos who bore the eternal Redemption and the Peace which passes all understanding. **R :**
Lessen the gloom of my transgressions with the enlightenment of your brightness, O Bride of God who bore the Divine and Eternal Light. **R :**
Heal the infirmity of my soul by granting me your visitation, O pure One,

and grant me wholeness by your prayers.

To the Guardian Angel :

Refrain : O holy Angel of the Lord, my Guardian, pray to God for me, the sinner.

O my holy Guardian, since you have boldness before God, pray to Him for my rescue from the evils that harm me. **R :**

Brightly illumine my soul, O bright Light, the Angel given to me by God, my instructor and guardian.

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

Though I sleep in the evil weight of sin, protect me as one who keeps vigil, O Angel of God, and through your prayers raise me up to praise Him.

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

O Lady Mary, the unwedded Theotokos and hope of the Faithful, cast down the arrogance of the enemy and give joy to those who hymn you.

Ode 6

Irmos :

Beholding the sea of life raging with the storm of temptations, I have fled to your calm haven and I cry out to You, "Rescue my life from corruption, O most-merciful One".

Of Repentance :

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

I have lived my life on earth prodigally, and committed my soul to darkness. Now, O merciful Master, I pray, Free me from the enemy's labour and give me the intelligence to do Your will. **R :**

Who does what I do ? As a pig wallows in mud, so do I serve sin. Pull me out of this mire, O Lord, and give me the heart to accomplish Your commandments. **R :**

Lift yourself towards God, O wretched man, recalling your transgressions. With tears and groans, fall down before the Creator. Being merciful, he will give you the mind to know His will.

Refrain : O most holy Theotokos, save us.

Keep me from both visible and invisible harm, O Virgin Theotokos. Receive my prayers, O most pure one, and bear them to your Son, that he may give me the mind to do His will.

Of the Theotokos :

Refrain : O most holy Theotokos, save us.

My nature was captive of death and corruption, O Virgin, but your Son and Lord saved it from both by surrendering Himself to death. Pray to Him for my rescue from the evil deeds of my enemies. **R :**

O Virgin, my firm Protectress, I know that you are the intercessor of my

life, healing the rebellions of temptation and dispelling the wiles of demons. I pray constantly that you will rescue me from my destructive passions. **R :**

O Maiden, we have obtained you as a wall of refuge and a most thorough salvation of souls. The multitude of human sorrows is not too great for you, and we ever rejoice in your illumination. Save us now, O Lady, from passions and misfortunes. **R :**

I am lying on a bed of infirmity and there is no cure for my flesh. But I pray to you, the good One who bore the God and Saviour of the world, Raise me from the destruction of illnesses.

To the Guardian Angel :

Refrain : O holy Angel of the Lord, my Guardian, pray to God for me, the sinner.

I pray to you, O holy Angel, whom God has given me as my good guardian, free me from every temptation. **R :**

Shine light on my mind, O good One, and enlighten me. I pray you, O holy Angel, Teach me always to have wholesome thoughts.

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

Rescue my heart from this present noise, O my Guardian, and strengthen me to keep a good vigil, wondrously instructing me towards life-giving stillness.

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

The Word of God dwelt in you, O Theotokos, and showed you to Man as a Ladder to Heaven. Through you, He Who Is on high came down to us.

Lord, have mercy. (*Three times*)

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

Kontak ***Tone 6***

O my soul, why do you enrich yourself with sins ? Whey do you do the devil's will ? In what have you put your hope ? Cease all this, and turn to God, weeping and crying out, "O compassionate Lord, have mercy on me, the sinner".

Ikos

O my soul, contemplate the bitter hour of death, and the dread judgement of your Creator and God. Threatening angels will seize you, O my soul, and lead you to eternal flames. Therefore, repent before your death, crying out, "O Lord, have mercy on me, the sinner".

Ode 7

Irmos :

The Angel made the furnace a source of dew for the pious children, and

the will of God, which burned the Chaldeans, made the persecutor call out, “Blessed are You, O God of our fathers”.

Of Repentance :

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

Put not your hope in corruptible wealth, O my soul, nor in things unjustly gathered. Yo do not know to whom you will leave it all. Instead, cry out, “O Christ our God, have mercy on me, the unworthy”. **R :**

Remember, O my soul, both the eternal life and the Heavenly Kingdom prepared for the saints, and the outer darkness and divine wrath prepared for the wicked. Then cry out, “O Christ our God, have mercy on me, the unworthy”. **R :**

Do not count on physical health, O my soul, nor on fleeting beauty. You see how both the strong and the young die. Instead, cry out, “O Christ our God, have mercy on me, the unworthy”.

Refrain : O most holy Theotokos, save us.

Fall down before the Mother of God, O my soul, and pray to her, for she is the swift helper of penitents. She will entreat her Son, Christ our God, and He will have mercy on me, the unworthy.

To the Theotokos :

Refrain : O most holy Theotokos, save us.

O Saviour, desiring to establish our salvation, You entered the Virgin’s womb, revealing her as the Intercessor for the world. Blessed are You, O God of our fathers. **R :**

Pray to Him who is mercifully disposed, and whom you bore, O pure Mother, that we may be rescued from transgressions and defilement of soul, who cry out with faith, “Blessed are You, O God of our fathers”. **R :**

You showed her that gave birth to You as a source of healing, a strong pillar, and a gate of repentance for those who cry out, “Blessed are You, O God of our fathers”. **R :**

Grant healing from physical weakness and spiritual infirmities to those who draw near to your protection with love, O Virgin Theotokos, who bore Christ the Saviour for us.

To the Guardian Angel :

Refrain : O holy Angel of the Lord, my Guardian, pray to God for me, the sinner.

Have pity on me, O Angel of the Lord, and pray to God for me, for He has given you to me forever as a helper, instructor and guardian throughout my life. **R :**

God entrusted my wretched soul to you undefiled, O holy Angel. Do not let it be killed by thieves on its journey, but rather direct it to the path of repentance.

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

I bring to you my soul, completely shamed by my evil thoughts and deeds. Hasten to me, O my Instructor, and grant me the healing of good thoughts, which lead me forever on the right path.
Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.
For the sake of the Theotokos, O personal Wisdom of the Most High, fill with wisdom and divine strength those who cry out, "Blessed are You, O God of our fathers".

Ode 8

Irmos :
You caused dew to pour from the flames over the pious children, and burned the sacrifice of a righteous man with water – for You do all things, O Christ, by Your will alone. We exalt You throughout all ages.

Of Repentance :

Refrain : Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
How can I not weep when I think of death ? I have seen my brother lying in the tomb without glory and without form. What can I expect ? What can I hope ? Only grant me, O Lord, repentance before the end. **R :** (*Twice*)
I believe that You will come to judge the living and the dead, and that everyone will stand in his rank – the old and the young, masters and princes, virgins and priests. Where will I find myself ? Therefore I cry out, "O Lord, grant me repentance before the end".
Refrain : O most holy Theotokos, save us.
Receive my prayer, O most pure Theotokos. Keep me from sudden death, and grant me repentance before the end.

To the Theotokos :

Refrain : O most holy Theotokos, save us.
O Virgin, do not disdain those who need your help, hymning and exalting you forever. **R :**
You heal the infirmities of my soul and the illnesses of my body, O Virgin, that I may glorify you, O pure One, forever. **R :**
You pour an abundance of healing, O Virgin, on those who hymn you with faith, and exalt your inexpressible birth-giving. **R :**
You chase away the wiles of temptation and the onsets of passions, O Virgin. We therefore hymn you forever.

To the Guardian Angel :

O holy Angel of God, my Guardian, pray to God for me, the sinner.
O most good Angel, sent from God, strengthen my life, and never abandon me. **R :**
I hymn you forever, O most blessed and good Angel, the Instructor and Guardian of my soul.

We bless the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the Lord.
Be my protection and rampart on the day when all Man will be tried, and all deeds will be tested, both the good and the bad.
Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.
Be the help and stillness of your servant, O Ever-virgin Theotokos, and never release me from your service.

Ode 9

Irmos :
No man can see God, upon Whom the angelic ranks dare not gaze. But through you, O pure One, the Incarnate Word was revealed to Man. Magnifying Him, with the heavenly hosts, we call you blessed.

Of Repentance :

Refrain : Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.
I now turn to you, O angels, archangels, and all the heavenly host who stand by the throne of God. Pray to your Creator that He may rescue my soul from eternal torments. **R :**
I now weep before you, O holy patriarchs, kings and prophets, apostles and hierarchs, and all the elect of Christ. Help me at the Judgement, that my soul be saved from the strength of the enemy. **R :**
I now lift up my hands to you, O holy martyrs, desert-dwellers virgins, righteous ones, and all the saints who pray to the Lord for the whole world. Pray that He may have mercy on me at the hour of my death.
Rerain : O most holy Theotokos, save us.
Help me, O Mother of God, for I have great hope in you. Pray to your Son, that when He sits to judge the living and the dead, He may place me at His right hand, even though I am unworthy.

To the Theotokos :

Refrain : O most holy Theotokos, save us.
O Virgin who bore Christ, and who wipe away every tear from every face, turn not away from my flowing tears. **R :**
O Virgin who received the fulness of joy which destroyed the sorrow of sin, fill my heart with joy. **R :**
Be a haven and intercession, and indestructible wall, a refuge protection and rejoicing for those who run to you, O Virgin. **R :**
Enlighten with the rays of your light those who I the true faith confess you to be the Theotokos, O Virgin, dispelling the darkness of ignorance. **R :**
Heal me, O Virgin, as I lie benumbed on the place of misfortune, bringing me from illness to health.

To the Guardian Angel :

Refrain : O Lord Jesus Christ, my God, have mercy on me.
Have mercy on me, O my only Saviour, since You are merciful and

compassionate, and join me to the choir of the Righteous.

Refrain : O holy Angel of the Lord, my Guardian, pray to God for me, the sinner.

Grant that I may always think and do what is good and useful, O Angel of the Lord ; and show me to be strong and spotless in weakness.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
Since you are bold before the Heavenly King, pray to Him with all the bodiless powers, that he may have mercy on me, a wretch.
Now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.
You have great boldness before the One Who took flesh from you, O Virgin. Remove me from my fetters, and grant me freedom and salvation through your prayers.

A Prayer of Repentance

O Master, Christ our God, You healed my passions through Your Passion, and cured my wounds through Your wounds. Grant me, who have greatly sinned against You, tears of compunction. Transform my body with the fragrance of your life-giving Body ; and with Your precious Blood, sweeten my soul from the bitterness with which the foe has fed me. Lift up my downcast mind to You, and take it out of the abyss of perdition ; for I have no repentance, no compunction, no consoling tears which uplift children to their heritage. My mind has been darkened through earthly passions. I cannot look up to You in pain. I cannot warm myself with tears of love for You. But, O Sovereign Lord Jesus Christ, Treasury of good things, give me thorough repentance and a diligent heart to seek You. Grant me Your Grace, and renew in me the likeness of Your image. I have forsaken You – do not forsake me. Come out to seek me ; lead me up to your pasturage, and number me amongst the sheep of Your chosen flock. Nourish me with them on the grass of Your Holy Mysteries, through the intercessions of your most pure Mother, and of all Your saints.
Amen.

A Prayer to the Holy Theotokos

O most blessed Queen, O Theotokos, my hope, guardian of orphans, intercessor for strangers, joy of the sorrowful, protectress of the wronged, you see my misfortune ; you see my affliction. Help me, for I am weak ; feed me, for I am a stranger. You know my offence. Absolve it as you will, for I have no other help besides you, no other intercessor, nor good consoler, except you, O Mother of God. Preserve and protect me unto the the ages of ages.
Amen.

A Prayer to the Holy Guardian Angel

O holy Angel, my good guardian and protector, with broken and ailing soul I stand before you. I ask, Hear me, your sinful servant __*n*__. With loud wailing and bitter weeping I cry out, "Do not remember my iniquity and unrighteousness through which I, the wretched one, have angered you every day and hour, and have made myself loathsome before our Lord the Creator". Show me loving-kindness, and do not leave me, the defiled one, even until my end. Awaken me from the sleep of sin, and enable me, through your intercessions, to pass the remaining time of my life without stain, and bring forth fruits worthy of repentance ; and above all, preserve me from deadly falls into sin, lest I perish in despair, and my enemies rejoice in my ruin. I truly know and confess with my mouth that there is no other friend and intercessor, protector and champion, such as you, O holy Angel ; for, standing before the throne of the Lord, you intercede for me, the useless and most sinful of all, lest the Most-good One take my soul in the day of despair and in the day of evil-doing. Therefore, do not cease to entreat the mercy of my most kind-hearted Lord and God, that He forgive my offences, which I have committed throughout all my life, in deed, word, and all my senses, and by judgements which he knows, that He may save me ; that He may chasten me here, in accordance with His ineffable mercy, but that He may not expose and put me to trial there in accordance with His simple justice ; that He may deem me worthy to bring repentance, and with penitence, worthily to receive Divine Communion. For this, above all, I make my supplication, and I desire such a gift with all my heart ; and in the terrible hour of death, do not be far away from me, O my Good Guardian, driving away the demons of darkness, who have the power to terrify my trembling soul. Defend me from their net when I pass from this life. Being guarded by you, may I attain the desired paradise, where the choirs of the saints and the celestial hosts unceasingly praise the all-honourable and majestic Name of God, in Trinity glorified – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, to Whom is due honour and worship, unto the the ages of ages.
Amen.

[THE END OF THE TRIPLE CANON]