

THE GREAT CANON

THE WORK OF ST. ANDREW OF  
CRETE, THE JERUSALEMITE

THURSDAY  
AT GREAT COMPLINE,  
THE FIRST WEEK  
OF THE GREAT FAST:  
Μεγάλη Τεσσαρακοστή



*Sources:*

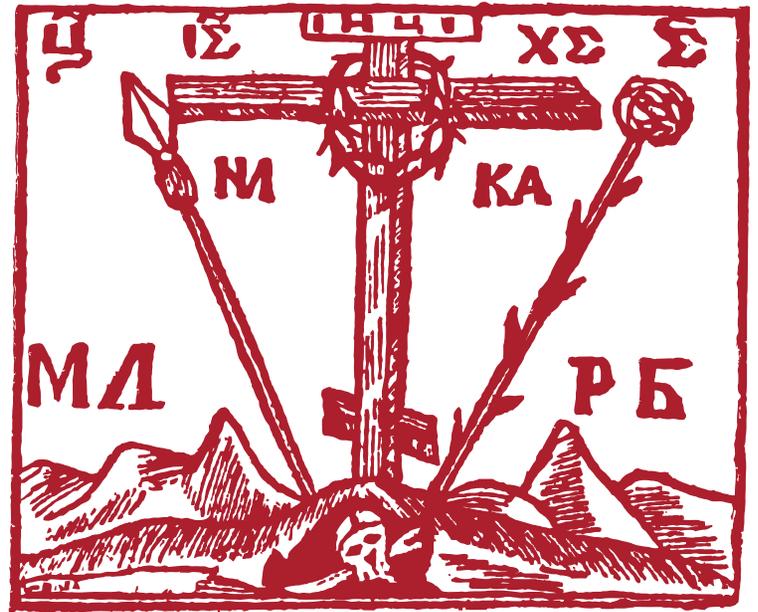
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Mother Mary; Metropolitan Kallistos Ware, *The Lenten Triodion*.  
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Prepared as part of the [pastyr.ca](http://pastyr.ca) project  
to support the preparation and dissemination of liturgical texts  
and music as practised in the Eastern Eparchy of the  
Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada.  
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Toronto, 2014



## THE GREAT CANON OF REPENTANCE

A WORK OF OUR HOLY FATHER AMONG THE SAINTS

ANDREW OF GRETE, THE JERUSALEMITE

VENERABLE ANDREW, THRICE-BLESSED FATHER,  
SHEPHERD OF GRETE, DO NOT CEASE TO OFFER  
PRAYER FOR US WHO SING YOUR PRAISES,  
SO THAT WE, WHO HONOUR YOUR MEMORY  
WITH FAITH, MAY BE DELIVERED FROM  
ALL WRATH AND AFFLICTION  
AND CORRUPTION, AND  
RELEASED FROM  
FAULTS.



## ODE 1, TN 6.

**IRMUS:** He has become Helper and Protector  
for me unto salvation.  
He is my God — and I glorify Him,  
God of my fathers — and I exalt Him,  
for He is greatly glorified.

*(Ex 15: 2, 1; Ps 117: 14)*

**REFRAIN:** Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy  
on me.

O Lamb of God,  
who take away the sins of all,  
take from me the heavy yoke of sin,  
and as You are compassionate  
give me tears of compunction.

*(Jn 1: 29)*

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

O Jesus, I fall down at Your feet.  
I have sinned against You:  
be merciful to me.  
Take from me the heavy yoke of sin,  
and as you are a compassionate God,  
accept me in repentance.

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



**KATAVASIA:**

The nativity is past understanding —  
from a conception without seed;  
the child-bearing is undefiled —  
from a Mother without a husband; for  
the birth of God makes the natures new.  
Therefore with true belief all generations  
magnify you as Bride and Mother of God.



Venerable Andrew, thrice-blessed father,  
shepherd of Crete, do not cease  
to offer prayer for us who sing  
your praises, so that we, who honour  
your memory with faith,  
may be delivered from all wrath  
and affliction and corruption,  
and released from faults.



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

TRIAΔICON:

Let us glorify the Father,  
let us exalt the Son, and with faith  
let us worship the divine Spirit:  
undivided Trinity, Unity in Essence,  
as Light and Lights, and Life and Lives,  
giving life and light to the ends  
of the earth.

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

THEOTOKION:

Preserve your city,  
all-pure Mother of God.  
For by you she reigns in faith, and by you  
she is made strong, and through you  
she is victorious; she puts to flight every  
temptation, and she despoils the enemy,  
and she administers the subjects.

Do not enter into judgement with me,  
bringing before me the things  
I should have done —  
examining my words  
and correcting my impulses.  
But in your pity overlook such things,  
and save me, O All-powerful.

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

It is time for repentance:  
I come to you, my Creator.  
Take from me the heavy yoke of sin,  
and in your compassion give me  
tears of compunction.

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

I have wasted the substance  
of my soul in sin —  
and I am barren of the virtues of piety.  
In my hunger I cry:  
Grant mercy to me, O Lord, my Saviour.

*(Lk 15: 13, 17)*



VEN. MARY:

Venerable Mother Mary, pray to God  
for us.

**R**owing before the laws of Christ,  
you have drawn near to Him,  
forsaking the ungovernable longings  
of sensual pleasure;  
and you have most reverently  
accomplished all the virtues  
as if they were one.



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

**TRIAΔICON:**

**T**rinity beyond being,  
worshipped in unity,  
take from me the heavy yoke of sin,  
and in your compassion grant me  
tears of contrition.

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

**THEOTOKION:**

**M**other of God, the help and protection  
of those who sing praise to you,  
take from me the heavy yoke of sin,  
and, pure Lady, accept me  
in repentance.



**VEN. MARY:**

Venerable Mother Mary, pray to God  
for us.

**R**y your strange way of life  
you have struck all with wonder:  
the hosts of angels and the assemblies  
of mortals; for you surpassed nature and  
lived as though no longer in the body.  
Like a bodiless being you walked on the  
Jordan with your feet and crossed over.

**VEN. MARY:**

Venerable Mother Mary, pray to God  
for us.

**V**enerable Mother, call down  
the gracious mercy of the Creator  
on those who praise you,  
that we may be set free  
from the sufferings and afflictions  
that beset us round about;  
so that without ceasing,  
delivered from temptations,  
we may magnify the Lord  
who has glorified you.



**VEN. ANDREW:**

Venerable Father Andrew, pray to God  
for us.

as once it was opened to Your Thief,  
who with faith recognized You as God.

*(Lk 23: 32-42)*

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

**T**he creation was in anguish when it saw  
You crucified; mountains and rocks  
were split from fear, and the earth  
quaked, and hell was despoiled;  
and the light grew dark in the day,  
when they beheld You, O Jesus,  
nailed in the flesh.

*(Mt 27: 51-53; Lk 23: 44-45)*

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

**D**o not demand from me  
worthy fruits of repentance,  
for my strength has failed within me.  
Give me an ever-contrite heart and  
poverty of spirit, so that I may offer  
these to You as an acceptable sacrifice,  
O only Saviour.

*(Mt 3: 8; 5: 3; Ps 50: 17)*

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

**M**y Judge, who know me, when You  
come again with the angels to judge  
the whole world, look on me then with  
Your merciful eye and spare me; take  
pity on me, O Jesus, for I have sinned  
more than the whole nature of mankind.

*(Mt 25: 31-32)*



## ODE 2.

**VERSES:** **S**ee, see, that I am God,  
who of old in the desert rained down  
manna and made springs of water flow  
from the rock for My people,  
by My right hand alone and  
by My power.

**REFRAIN:** Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy  
on me.

**I** have killed a man to my bruising and a  
young man to my hurt — said Lamech,  
as he cried aloud lamenting.  
O my soul, do you not tremble then,  
for you have defiled your flesh  
and stained your mind?

*(Gn 4: 23)*

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

**O** soul, you cleverly planned to build  
a tower, and to construct a fortress for  
your lusts; but the Creator confounded  
your plans and dashed  
your constructions to the ground.

*(Gn 11: 3-4)*

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

**O**h, how I have emulated Lamech,  
the murderer of old, slaying my body  
like the man — and my mind  
like the young man.

And with longings for sensual pleasures  
I have slain my body as a brother, like  
Cain the murderer.

*(Gn 4: 23)*

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

**R**oused to anger by their transgression,  
the Lord once rained down fire from  
the Lord and burnt up the men of Sodom.  
And you, O soul, have kindled the fire of  
Gehenna, in which you will burn with  
them.

*(Gn 19: 24)*

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

**I** am wounded, I am struck:  
see the arrows of the enemy which  
have pierced my soul and my body;  
see the wounds, the festering sores,  
and the maimings — cry the blows  
of my freely-chosen passions.



**VEN. MARY:** Venerable Mother Mary, pray to God  
for us.



## ODE 9.

**IRMUS:** **T**he nativity is past understanding —  
from a conception without seed;  
the child-bearing is undefiled —  
from a Mother without a husband; for  
the birth of God makes the natures new.  
Therefore with true belief all generations  
magnify you as Bride and Mother of God.

**REFRAIN:** Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy  
on me.

**O** Son of David, with a word You healed  
the possessed: be compassionate,  
save me and have mercy.  
Let me hear Your compassionate voice  
speak to me as to the Thief — Amen,  
I say to you, you will be with Me in  
Paradise, when I come in My glory.

*(Lk 9: 38-42; 23: 43)*

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

**A** thief accused You, a Thief  
acknowledged You as God: for both  
were hanging beside You on the Cross.  
O Greatly-compassionate, open to me  
also the door of Your glorious kingdom,

**G**odly Zosimas was struck  
with amazement, beholding in you,  
O Mother, a wonder truly strange and new.  
For he saw an angel in the body  
and was filled with astonishment,  
praising Christ to the ages.



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

ΤΡΙΑΔΙΚΟΝ:

**F**ather without beginning,  
Son also without beginning,  
good Paraclete, Spirit of truth;  
Begetter of the Word of God,  
Word of the Father without beginning,  
Spirit, living and creating:  
Trinity in Unity, have mercy on me.

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

ΤΗΕΩΤΟΚΙΟΝ:

**A**s from purple thread, O All-Pure,  
the spiritual royal robe of Emmanuel,  
His flesh, was woven within your womb.  
Therefore we honour you in truth  
as Mother of God.



**S**unk in the abyss of wickedness,  
O Mary, you lifted up your hands  
to the merciful God.  
And as to Peter, in His love for mankind,  
He stretched out His divine hand to you,  
seeking in every way your conversion.



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

ΤΡΙΑΔΙΚΟΝ:

**I**ncreated Trinity without beginning,  
undivided Unity: accept me  
in repentance, and save me, a sinner.  
I am your creation, do not reject me,  
but spare me and deliver me  
from the fire of condemnation.

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

ΤΗΕΩΤΟΚΙΟΝ:

**M**ost pure Lady, Mother of God,  
the hope of those who run to you  
and the haven of the storm-tossed,  
through your prayers grant that  
your merciful Creator and Son  
may be merciful even to me.





## ODE 3.

**IRMUS:** O Lord, establish my wavering heart  
on the rock of Your commandments,  
for You alone are holy and Lord.

**REFRAIN:** Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy  
on me.

O soul, you have become  
like Hagar the Egyptian of old:  
your free choice has been enslaved  
and you have given birth  
to a new Ismael —  
stubborn wilfulness.

*(Gn 16: 15)*

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

My soul, you know the ladder of Jacob,  
appearing from earth to heaven.  
Why do you not have a secure step  
of piety?

*(Gn 28: 12)*

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

O Saviour, spare what You have made  
Yourself, and as shepherd —  
seek the lost sheep that has gone astray.  
Snatch me from the wolf and make me  
a sheep in the pasture of Your flock.

*(Ps 118: 176; Jn 10: 11-16)*

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

When You, the compassionate Judge,  
are enthroned and reveal  
Your dread glory, O Christ,  
what fear there will be then,  
when the furnace burns with fire,  
and all shrink back in terror  
before Your Judgement-seat.

*(Mt 25: 31-46)*



**VEN. MARY:** Venerable Mother Mary, pray to God  
for us.

The Mother of the Light that never sets  
illuminated you and freed you  
from the darkness of the passions.  
O Mary, who has received  
the grace of the Spirit, give light to those  
who faithfully praise you.

**VEN. MARY:** Venerable Mother Mary, pray to God  
for us.



## ODE 8.

**IRMOS:** Him, whom the hosts of heaven glorify,  
and who terrifies the Cherubim and the  
Seraphim, let everything that has breath  
and every creature praise, bless,  
and highly exalt to all the ages.

**REFRAIN:** Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy  
on me.

O Saviour, as ointment I empty on Your  
head the alabaster box of my tears.  
Like the Harlot I cry to You,  
seeking mercy: I bring my prayer  
and ask to receive forgiveness.

*(Mt 26: 7; Lk 7: 38)*

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

No one has sinned against You as I have;  
yet accept even me,  
compassionate Saviour,  
as I repent in fear and cry with longing:  
I have sinned against You alone;  
I have transgressed, have mercy on me.

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

Follow the example of the one  
set apart as Priest of God and King,  
the symbolic representation of the life of  
Christ in the world among mankind.

*(Heb 7: 1-4; Gn 14: 18)*

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

Turn back, wretched soul, and lament,  
before the festival of life  
comes to an end —  
before the Lord shuts the door  
to the bridal chamber.

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

Do not look back, O soul,  
and become a pillar of salt.  
May the precedent of Sodom  
make you fearful, and may you go up  
to refuge in Segor.

*(Gn 19: 26)*

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

O Master, do not reject the prayer  
of those who sing praise to You,  
but, O Lover of mankind,  
be merciful and grant forgiveness  
to those who ask with faith.



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

TRIAIDICON:

**S**imple Unity,  
uncreated Nature without beginning,  
praised in a Trinity of Persons,  
save us who in faith worship Your power.

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

THEOTOKION:

**O** Mother of God, strange wonder:  
without knowing a man you have  
conceived within time the Son,  
who is from the Father outside time,  
remaining a Virgin while giving suck.



**P**ray to Him whom you loved,  
to Him whom you desired,  
for whose sake you wore out your flesh,  
O Venerable Mother; pray now to Christ  
for your servants, that He may show  
mercy on us all, and grant a peaceful  
existence to those who worship Him.



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

TRIAIDICON:

**T**rinity, simple, undivided, consubstantial,  
and one in Essence, Lights and Light,  
three Holies and one Holy,  
God the Trinity is praised in song.  
So, O soul, praise and glorify  
Life and Lives, the God of all.

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

THEOTOKION:

**G**od we praise you, we bless you,  
we venerate you, O Mother of God:  
for you have given birth to Christ God,  
one of the undivided Trinity; and you  
yourself have opened the heavenly  
places to us who dwell on earth.



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

**I** have discoloured Your image  
and broken Your commandment.  
All my beauty is darkened and my lamp  
is quenched by the passions, O Saviour.  
But take pity on me, as David sings,  
and restore to me Your joy.

*(Ps 50: 14)*

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

**T**urn back, repent,  
uncover all that you have hidden.  
Say to God, to whom all things are known:  
You alone know my secrets, O Saviour;  
have mercy on me yourself,  
as David sings, according to Your mercy.



**VEN. MARY:** Venerable Mother Mary, pray to God  
for us.

**G**rying out to the most pure Mother  
of God, of old you drove back the fury  
of the passions that violently attacked  
you, and put to shame the enemy who  
sought to make you stumble.  
But give your help in trouble also to me,  
your servant.

**VEN. MARY:** Venerable Mother Mary, pray to God  
for us.



## ODE 4.

**IRMOS:** **T**he prophet heard of Your coming,  
O Lord, and he was afraid —  
how You were to be born of a Virgin  
and revealed to mankind; and he said:  
I have heard the report of You, and I was  
afraid. Glory to Your power, O Lord.

*(Hb 3: 2)*

**REFRAIN:** Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy  
on me.

**T**he time of my life is short,  
filled with trouble and evil.  
But accept me in repentance and call me  
back to knowledge.  
Do not let me become the possession or  
the food of the enemy; but, O Saviour,  
take pity on me Yourself.

*(Gn 47: 9)*

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

**A** man of great wealth and righteous,  
of royal dignity, clothed in diadem  
and purple, abounding in riches  
and cattle, became suddenly a beggar,  
stripped of wealth, glory and kingship.

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

**I**f he who was righteous and blameless above all did not escape the snares and pits of the deceiver, what will you do, wretched and sin-loving soul, when some unexpected misfortune befalls you?

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

**N**ow I begin to speak boastfully, with rashness of heart, to no purpose and in vain. O just Judge, who alone have pity, do not condemn me with the Pharisee, but grant me the humility of the Tax Collector and number me with Him.

*(Lk 18: 9-14)*

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

**O** Merciful One, I know that I have sinned, that I have shown contempt for the vessel of my flesh. But accept me in repentance and call me back to knowledge. Do not let me become the possession or the food of the enemy; but, O Saviour, take pity on me Yourself.

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



## ODE 7.

**I**RMOSES: **W**e have sinned, we have transgressed, we have done evil before You, and neither have we followed, nor have we done, what You commanded us. But do not reject us utterly, O God of our fathers.

**R**EFRAIN: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

**M**y days have vanished like a dream of one awaking; and so, like Hezekias, I weep on my bed, so that years may be added to my life. But what Esaias will come to me, O soul, except the God of all?

*(4 Kgs 20: 3; Is. 38: 2)*

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

**I** fall before You, and as tears I offer You my words. I have sinned as the Harlot never sinned, and I have transgressed as no one else on earth. But take pity on Your creature, O Master, and call me back.

THEOTOKION:

Your womb gave birth to God for us,  
fashioned in our shape.

Pray to Him as the Creator of all,  
O Mother of God, that through  
your prayers we may be justified.



KONTAKION:

My soul, my soul, rise up.  
Why are you sleeping?

The end draws near,  
and soon you will be troubled.

Watch, then, so that Christ God may  
spare you, for He is present everywhere  
and fills all things.



I have become my own idol,  
utterly defiling my soul with  
the passions.

But accept me in repentance  
and call me back to knowledge.  
Do not let me become the possession  
or the food of the enemy;  
but, O Saviour, take pity on me Yourself.

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

I have not listened to Your voice,  
I have not heeded Your Scriptures,  
O Giver of the Law.

But accept me in repentance  
and call me back to knowledge.  
Do not let me become the possession  
or the food of the enemy;  
but, O Saviour, take pity on me Yourself.



VEN. MARY:

Venerable Mother Mary, pray to God  
for us.

You were brought down into the depth  
of great iniquities, yet not held fast;  
but with better intent you perceptibly  
ascended to the height of virtue,  
beyond all expectation;  
and the angelic nature was amazed,  
O Mary.



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

TRIAΔICON:

**I**ndivided in Essence,  
unconfused in Persons,  
I confess You as God:  
the Trinity in one Godhead,  
equal in kingship and throne;  
and I raise to You the great threefold  
song that is sung in the highest.

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

THEOTOKION:

**Y**ou give birth and are a virgin,  
and in both you remain by nature Virgin.  
He who is born makes new  
the laws of nature, and the womb  
brings forth without labour pains.  
When God so wills,  
the natural order is overcome;  
for He does whatever He wishes.



**I**n order to quench  
the burning of the passions, O Mary,  
with your soul on fire  
you have ever shed streams of tears.  
Grant the grace of these also to me,  
your servant.

VEN. MARY:

Venerable Mother Mary, pray to God  
for us.

**O** Mother, you attained  
heavenly detachment through  
the excellence of your way of life  
on earth.  
Pray that those who sing praise to you  
may be delivered from passions  
through your intercessions.



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

TRIAΔICON:

**I** am Trinity, simple and undivided,  
divided in Persons,  
and I am Unity from the beginning,  
by Nature one — says the Father  
and the Son and the divine Spirit.

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



## ODE 6.

**IRMOS:** **W**ith my whole heart I cried  
to the compassionate God, and He  
heard me from the lowest depths of hell,  
and brought my life up from corruption.

**REFRAIN:** Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy  
on me.

**O** Saviour, I am the coin marked  
with the likeness of the King  
and which You lost of old.  
But light Your lamp, Your Forerunner,  
O Word, and seek and find Your image.

*(Lk 15: 8)*

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

**R**ise up and make war on the passions  
of the flesh, like Jesus against Amalek,  
ever gaining victory over the Gavaonites,  
your deceitful thoughts.

*(Ex 17: 8; Jo 8: 21)*



**VEN. MARY:** Venerable Mother Mary, pray to God  
for us.



## ODE 5.

**IRMOS:** **F**rom the night I seek You early,  
O Lover of mankind: give me light,  
I pray You, and guide me also  
in Your commandments, and teach me,  
O Saviour, to do Your will.

**REFRAIN:** Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy  
on me.

**O** soul, imitate the woman who was  
bowed down to the ground:  
fall at the feet of Jesus,  
so that He may make you straight again,  
and you will walk uprightly  
on the paths of the Lord.

*(Lk 13: 11)*

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

**S**ince You are a deep well, O Master,  
make springs gush forth for me  
from Your pure veins —  
so that like the woman of Samaria  
I may drink and thirst no more;  
for from You flow the streams of life.

*(Jn 4: 13-15)*

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

**M**aster and Lord,  
may my tears be to me as Siloam,  
so that I also may wash clean  
the eyes of my heart, and with my mind  
behold You, the pre-eternal Light.

*(Jn 9: 7; Gn 1: 2-19)*



**VEN. MARY:**

Venerable Mother Mary, pray to God  
for us.

**A**ll-blessed one, with a love  
beyond compare you longed  
to venerate the wood of the Cross,  
and your desire was granted.  
Make me also worthy to attain  
the glory on high.



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

**TRIAΔICON:**

**W**e glorify You, O Trinity, the one God:  
Holy, holy, holy  
is the Father, the Son, and the Spirit,  
simple Essence and Unity,  
worshipped for ever.

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

**THEOTOKION:**

**I**nviolable Virgin Mother without a husband,  
from you God, the Creator of the ages,  
was clothed in my shape,  
and He took human nature to Himself.

