

Resource and Activity Sheet 47

Vespers

Readings:

Ps. 104 (103)

Bless the Lord, O my soul!
O Lord my God, You are very great:
You are clothed with honor and majesty,
2 Who cover Yourself with light as with a garment,
Who stretch out the heavens like a curtain.
3 He lays the beams of His upper chambers in the waters,
Who makes the clouds His chariot,
Who walks on the wings of the wind,
4 Who makes His angels spirits,
His ministers a flame of fire.
5 You who laid the foundations of the earth,
So that it should not be moved forever,
6 You covered it with the deep as with a garment;
The waters stood above the mountains.
7 At Your rebuke they fled;
At the voice of Your thunder they hastened away.
8 They went up over the mountains;
They went down into the valleys,
To the place which You founded for them.
9 You have set a boundary that they may not pass over,
That they may not return to cover the earth.
10 He sends the springs into the valleys;
They flow among the hills.
11 They give drink to every beast of the field;
The wild donkeys quench their thirst.
12 By them the birds of the heavens have their home;
They sing among the branches.
13 He waters the hills from His upper chambers;
The earth is satisfied with the fruit of Your works.
14 He causes the grass to grow for the cattle,
And vegetation for the service of man,
That he may bring forth food from the earth,
15 And wine that makes glad the heart of man,
Oil to make his face shine,
And bread which strengthens man's heart.
16 The trees of the Lord are full of sap,
The cedars of Lebanon which He planted,
17 Where the birds make their nests;
The stork has her home in the fir trees.
18 The high hills are for the wild goats;
The cliffs are a refuge for the rock badgers.
19 He appointed the moon for seasons;
The sun knows its going down.
20 You make darkness, and it is night,

In which all the beasts of the forest creep about.
 21 The young lions roar after their prey,
 And seek their food from God.
 22 When the sun rises, they gather together
 And lie down in their dens.
 23 Man goes out to his work
 And to his labor until the evening.
 24 O Lord, how manifold are Your works!
 In wisdom You have made them all.
 The earth is full of Your possessions—
 25 This great and wide sea,
 In which are innumerable teeming things,
 Living things both small and great.
 26 There the ships sail about;
 There is that Leviathan
 Which You have made to play there.
 27 These all wait for You,
 That You may give them their food in due season.
 28 What You give them they gather in;
 You open Your hand, they are filled with good.
 29 You hide Your face, they are troubled;
 You take away their breath, they die and return to their dust.
 30 You send forth Your Spirit, they are created;
 And You renew the face of the earth.
 31 May the glory of the Lord endure forever;
 May the Lord rejoice in His works.
 32 He looks on the earth, and it trembles;
 He touches the hills, and they smoke.
 33 I will sing to the Lord as long as I live;
 I will sing praise to my God while I have my being.
 34 May my meditation be sweet to Him;
 I will be glad in the Lord.
 35 May sinners be consumed from the earth,
 And the wicked be no more.
 Bless the Lord, O my soul!
 Praise the Lord!

Activity:

Psalm 140 (141)

People: Lord, I have cried out to you, hear me. Hear me, O Lord. Lord, I have cried out to you, hear me.
 Receive the voice of my prayer when I cry out to you. Hear me, O Lord.

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

Psalm 141

Verse 1. Bring my soul out of prison that I may give thanks to your name.

Verse 2. The righteous will surround me; for you will deal bountifully with me.

Psalm 129 (130)

Verse 3. Out of the depths I cry to you O Lord. Lord, hear my voice.

Verse 4. Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

Verse 5. If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, Lord who could stand? But there is forgiveness with you.

Verse 6. For your name's sake I have waited for you, O Lord; my soul waits for your word. My soul has trusted in the Lord.

Verse 7. From the morning watch 'til night from the morning watch let Israel trust in the Lord.

Verse 8. For with the Lord is mercy and with him is plenteous redemption; and he shall redeem Israel from all its iniquities.

Psalm 116 (117)

Verse 9. Praise the Lord, all you nations; praise him, all you people.

Verse 10. For his mercy has been abundant toward us; and the truth of the Lord endures forever.¹

Reading:

O joyful light of the holy glory of the immortal Father, the heavenly, holy, blessed Jesus Christ. Now that we have reached the setting of the sun and behold the evening light, we sing to God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is fitting at all times to praise you with cheerful voices, O Son of God, the Giver of life. Behold, the world sings your glory.²

Reading:

“O Lord, keep us this evening without sin”

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.

Ode of Simeon

Lord, now let your servant depart in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for the glory of your people Israel.³

¹ Source: http://www.goarch.org/chapel/liturgical_texts/vespers

² Source: http://www.goarch.org/chapel/liturgical_texts/vespers

³ Source: http://www.goarch.org/chapel/liturgical_texts/vespers

Activity:

Fill in the missing words and phrases:

The service of Vespers takes us through, sin, and salvation in Christ. It leads us to the meditation of God's word and the glorification of his love for men. It instructs us and allows us to God for the particular events or persons whose memory is celebrated and made present to us in the Church. It prepares us for and the dawn of the new day to come. On the evening before the, it begins our movement into the most perfect communion with God in the sacramental mysteries.

Glossary: creation, the sleep of the night, praise, Divine Liturgy.

Key:

The service of Vespers takes us through creation, sin, and salvation in Christ. It leads us to the meditation of God's word and the glorification of his love for men. It instructs us and allows us to praise God for the particular events or persons whose memory is celebrated and made present to us in the Church. It prepares us for the sleep of the night and the dawn of the new day to come. On the evening before the Divine Liturgy, it begins our movement into the most perfect communion with God in the sacramental mysteries.⁴

⁴ Source of the text with shortenings: <https://oca.org/orthodoxy/the-orthodox-faith/worship/the-daily-cycles-of-prayer/vespers>