Celebrant: Hear us, O God our Savior, hope of all bounds of the earth and those far away at sea. In your graciousness be merciful to us sinners, O Master. For You are a merciful God and You love us all, and we glorify You, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever.

Response:



Celebrant: Glory to you, O Christ God, our hope; glory to you!

Response: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
now and ever and forever. ***A***men.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
Give ***the*** blessing.

Celebrant: May Christ our true God, risen from the dead, have mercy on us and save us through the prayers of his most pure Mother; and of the holy glorious and praiseworthy Apostles, of our venerable and God-bearing Fathers, and of all the saints; for Christ is good and loves us al

Response:



All lights are now extinguished, except for one lamp in the sanctuary.

So the time of the Lenten Triodion comes to an end, and immediately we begin the Matins of the Resurrection.

THE MIDNIGHT OFFICE OF PASCHA

also known as Nadhrobnoje ("At the tomb")



Metropolitan Cantor Institute
Byzantine Catholic Seminary
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
April 2026

In the Slavonic use of the Byzantine Rite, the Church's liturgical book for the Great Fast and Holy Week, the Lenten Triodion, closes with an abbreviated version of the monastic Midnight Office, to be celebrated on the night of Holy and Great Saturday. This service is sometimes called "Nadhrobnoje" – "Before the tomb". At this service, the Canon of Holy and Great Saturday is again chanted in church. During the Ninth Ode of the Canon, the burial shroud which represents the body of our crucified Lord is solemnly transferred from a symbolic tomb in the midst of the church, to the holy table. The shroud remains on the holy table until the Otdanije (Leave-Taking) of Pascha.

After the transfer of the burial shroud, all of the lamps in the Church are extinguished and the Matins of the Resurrection (Paschal Matins) begins.

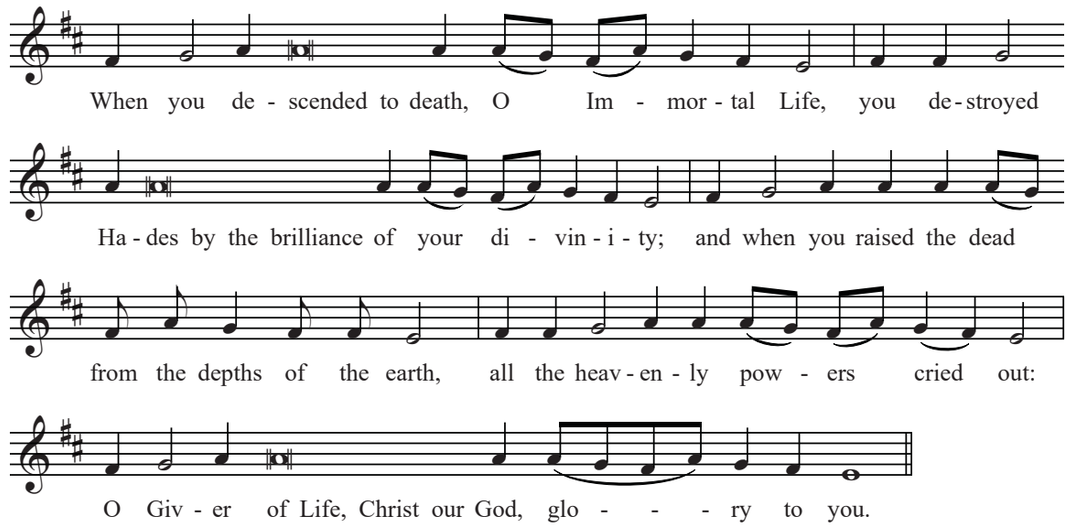
In recent times, the Midnight Office, which the Typikon says is to begin around 11:30 PM, has fallen into disuse, and the solemn transfer of the shroud takes place at the start of Paschal Matins instead. We hope that this booklet, which provides the text and music for the Midnight Office of Pascha, may aid in its rediscovery.

The text and music in the booklet are almost entirely taken from the Metropolitan Cantor Institute's book for Matins on Holy and Great Saturday. As in that publication, we provide both simple and solemn melodies for the irmos of each ode of the canon. Cantors may choose to use either set of melodies, or to sing one melody at the start of each ode and the other at the end of the ode, as katavasia.

Like the other publications of the Metropolitan Cantor Institute, this setting of the service of the Midnight Office of Pascha is UNOFFICIAL and subject to change or revision by the Cantor Institute, the Inter-Eparchial Music Commission, or the Council of Hierarchs of the Byzantine Catholic Church. We hope that it provides spiritual benefit to all who use it.

The image on the cover is from *The Sunday Gospels*, a collection from Byzantine Seminary Press.

Troparion of the Resurrection - *Tone 2*



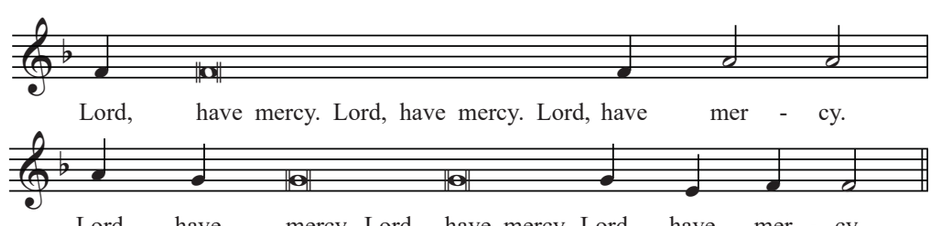
Deacon: Have mercy on us, O God, according to your great mercy, we pray You, hear us and have mercy.

Response:



Deacon: Again, we pray: O our God, clement and gracious, good Lover of us all, protect this city and this holy church, and every city, village and country, from violence, earthquake, flood, hail, fire, sword, foreign invasion and civil war. Be merciful to us, and turn away your anger justly directed at us, and deliver us from your righteous judgment, and have mercy on us.

Response:



(sing twice)

All: Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal,
have mercy ***on*** us. *(3 times)*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
now and ever and forever. ***A***men.

Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us;
Lord, cleanse us of our sins;
Master, forgive our transgressions;
Holy One, come to us and heal our infirmities for ***your*** name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
Lord, ***have*** mercy.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
now and ever and forever. ***A***men.

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.

Celebrant: For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever.

Response:



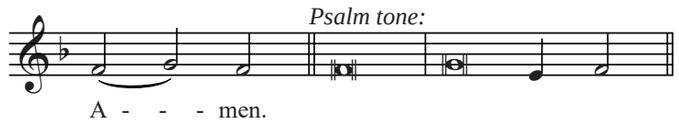
Then the following troparion is sung:

The Midnight Office of Pascha

The faithful STAND as the celebrant, vested in a dark epitrachilion, goes to stand before the burial shroud in the tomb.

Celebrant: Blessed is our God, always, now and ever and forever.

Response:



Glory to you, our God,
glory ***to*** you.

Heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit of Truth,
everywhere present and filling all things,
Treasury of Blessings and Giver of Life,
come and dwell within us,
cleanse us of all stain,
and save our souls, O gra***cious*** One.

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

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
now and ever and forever. ***A***men.

Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us;
Lord, cleanse us of our sins;
Master, forgive our transgressions;
Holy One, come to us and heal our infirmities for ***your*** name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
Lord, ***have*** mercy.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
now and ever and forever. ***A***men.

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.

Celebrant: For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever.

Response:



Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
Lord, ***have*** mercy.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
now and ever and forever. ***A***men.

Come, let us worship our King and God.
Come, let us worship Christ, our King and God.
Come, let us worship and bow down to the only Lord Jesus Christ,
the King and ***our*** God.

Psalm 50

Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.
In your compassion blot out my ***of***fense.

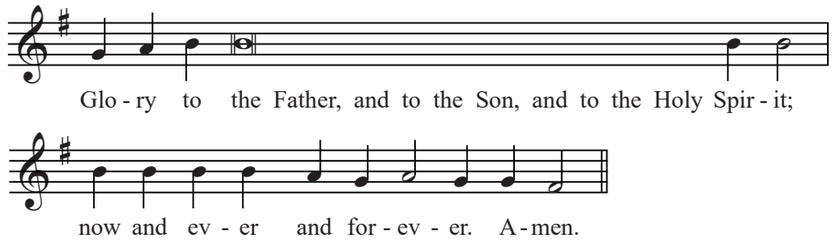
O wash me more and more from my guilt
and cleanse me from ***my*** sin.

My offenses truly I know them;
my sin is always ***be***fore me.

Against you, you alone, have I sinned;
what is evil in your sight I ***have*** done.

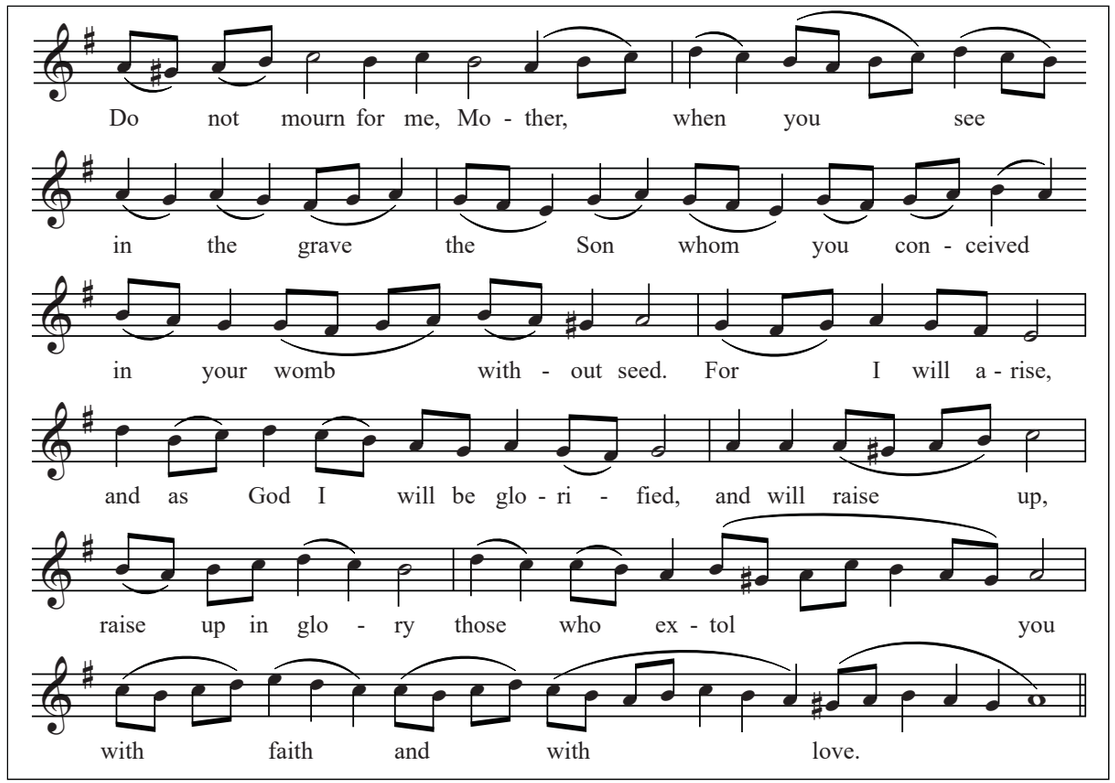
That you may be justified when you give sentence
and be without reproach when ***you*** judge,

O see, in guilt I was born,
a sinner was I ***con***ceived.



Let creation rejoice and let all mortals exult with joy! * I have despoiled the enemy Hades; * let the myrrh-bearing women come to anoint me. * I redeem Adam and Eve and all the human race; * and on the third day, I shall arise.

Katavasia - *Repeat the irmos, using either the simple melody on page 18, or the following solemn melody:*



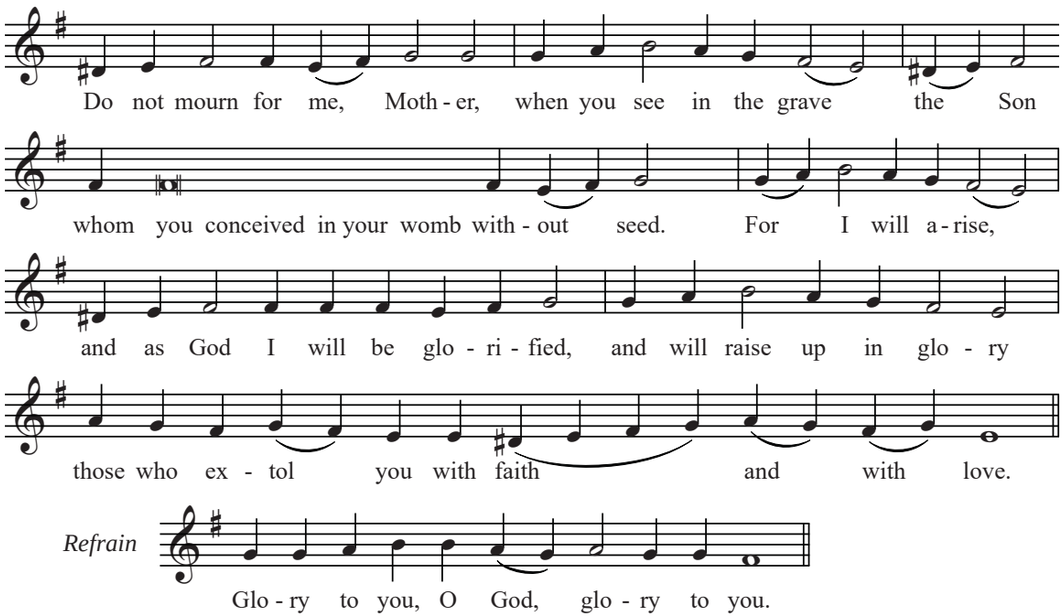
At the end of the eighth ode, the deacon (or the celebrant, if there is no deacon) comes with the censer before the icon of the Theotokos on the icon screen. Incensing her icon, he intones:

Deacon: Let us greatly extol the Theotokos and the Mother of Light in hymns!

Ode 9

During Ode 9, the celebrant vests in a dark phelonion, opens the holy doors, and censes around the tomb three times from the four sides. Then he takes the shroud and carries it through the holy doors into the sanctuary. He carries the shroud around the holy table, and then places it upon the holy table, where it will remain until the Eve of Ascension. He then censes the shroud from the four sides of the altar three times.

Irmos - *Tone 6 simple melody (or use the solemn melody on page 19)*



I conceived you in a wondrous way, O my eternal Son, * and I was happier than all women, * for I did not suffer any pain. * But today I see you lifeless, O my God, * and a sword of sadness pierces me in a most cruel manner; * but arise, O Lord, that I may extol you. *Refrain*

O Mother, the earth covers me by my own will; * but the guardians of Hades shudder to see me, * wearing the bloody garment of punishment; * for, on the Cross, I have struck down my enemies; * I shall arise as God, and you shall be exalted.

Indeed you love truth in the heart;
then in the secret of my heart teach ***me*** wisdom.

Sprinkle me with hyssop, then I shall be clean;
O wash me, I shall be whiter ***than*** snow.

Make me hear rejoicing and gladness,
that the bones you have crushed ***may*** thrill.

From my sins turn away your face
and blot out all ***my*** guilt.

A pure heart create for me, O God;
put a steadfast spirit ***with***in me.

Do not cast me away from your presence,
nor deprive me of your ho***ly*** spirit.

Give me again the joy of your help;
with a spirit of fervor ***sus***tain me,

that I may teach transgressors your ways
and sinners may return ***to*** you.

Deliver me from blood-guilt, O God, my saving God
and my tongue shall ring out ***your*** goodness.

O Lord, open my lips
and my mouth will declare ***your*** praise.

For in sacrifice you take no delight,
burnt offering from me you would ***re***fuse,

my sacrifice, a contrite spirit,
a humbled, contrite heart you will ***not*** spurn.

In your goodness, show favor to Zion:
rebuild the walls of ***Je***rusalem.

Then you will be pleased with lawful sacrifice,
burnt offerings wholly consumed,
then you will be offered young bulls on ***your*** altar.

The Canon of Holy and Great Saturday

(Tone 6)

Ode 1

Irmos - *Tone 6 simple melody (or use the solemn melody on page 5)*







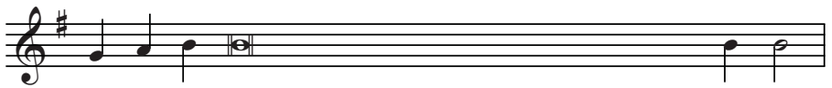


Refrain



O Lord my God, I sing a hymn of farewell to you; * for, by your burial, you open for me the gates of life, * destroying Death and Hades by your death. *Refrain*

Upon your throne in heaven and lying in the tomb here below, * by your death you terrify the powers in heaven and below, O God and Savior; * for they contemplated this sight that is beyond description: * the Creator sleeping in death.

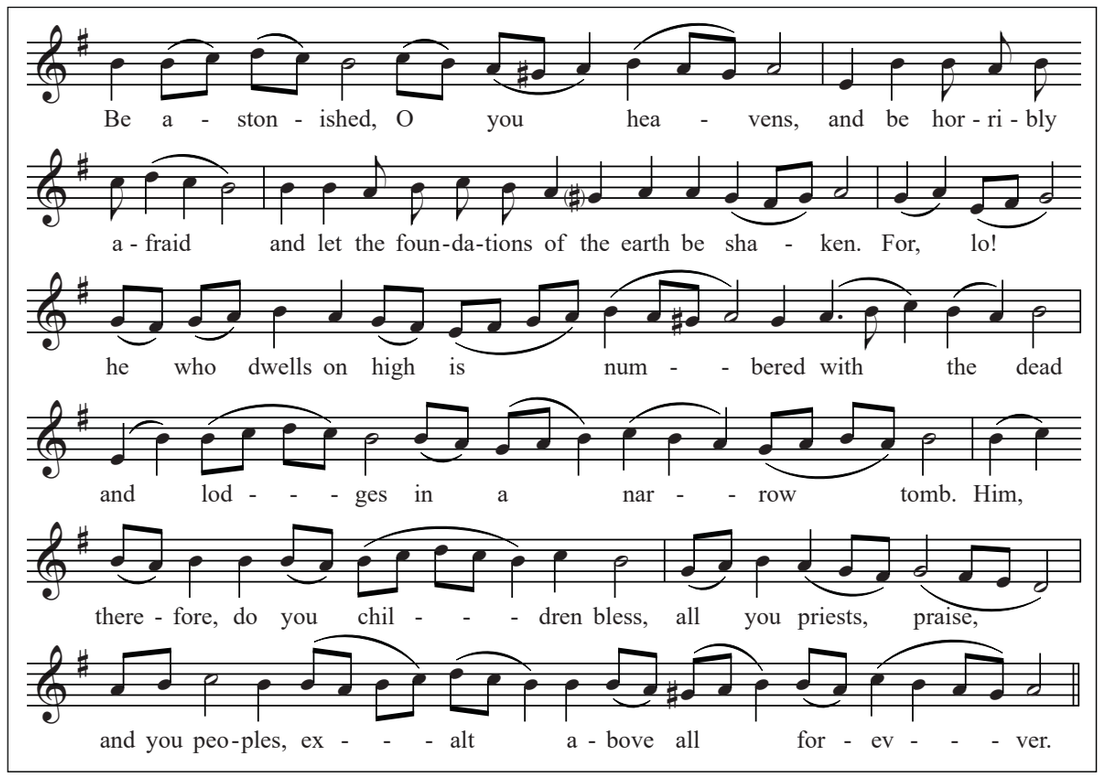








Katavasia - *Repeat the irmos, using either the simple melody on page 15, or the following solemn melody:*



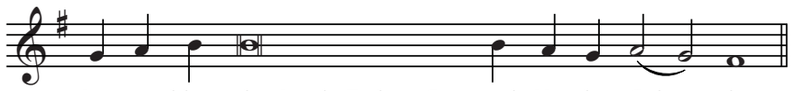
All STAND.







The most holy Temple is destroyed, * but he raises up the fallen tabernacle; * for he who dwells in the highest heaven, the New Adam, * goes down into Hades to raise up the first Adam. * O youths, bless the Lord; * praise him, you priests; * and let the whole nation exalt him forever.



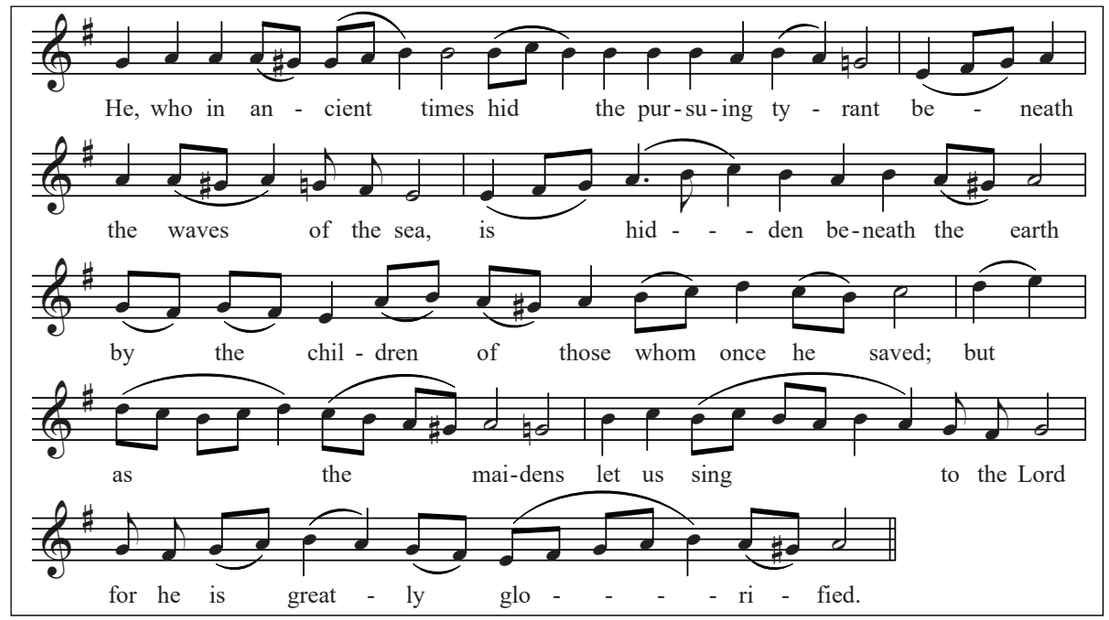
The courage of the apostles has vanished, * and seeing your naked and lifeless body, * it is Joseph of Arimathea who asks for the body of the God of all, * and he buries him, crying out: * O youths, bless the Lord; * praise him, you priests; * and let the whole nation exalt him forever.



O marvelous wonder! * O goodness and condescension beyond description! * He who dwells in the highest heavens * accepts burial beneath a sealed rock; * and God himself is treated as a deceiver! * O youths, bless the Lord; * praise him, you priests; * and let the whole nation exalt him forever.

You have gone down into the deepest recesses of the earth, * so that the entire universe may be filled with your glory; * and I was not able to hide my fallen nature from you; * but your burial renews me, O Lord and Lover of us all.

Katavasia - *Repeat the irmos, using either the simple melody on page 4, or the following solemn melody:*



Ode 3

Irmos - *Tone 6 simple melody (or use the solemn melody on page 6)*



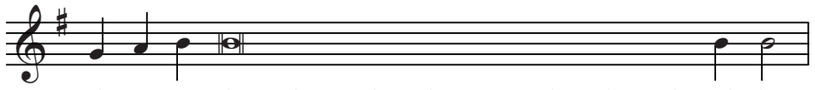




Refrain



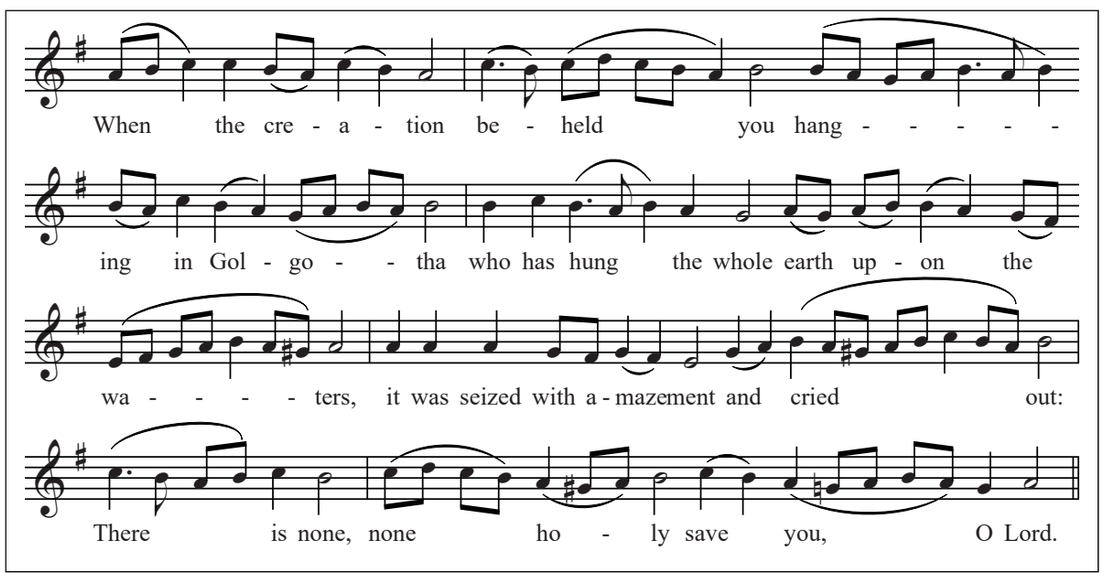
By your many wondrous works, you showed us signs of your death; * but today you reveal your mysteries to those in Hades, O Lord; * and they cry out before your divine humanity: * None is holy as you, O our God.





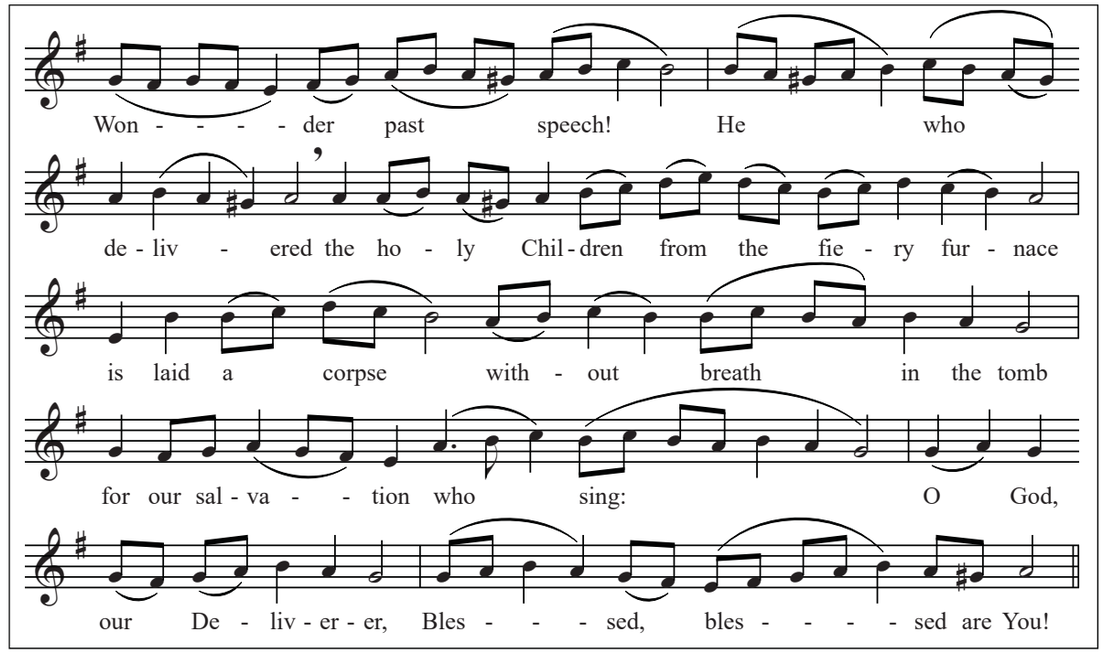
Stretching out your arms on the Cross, * you gather your scattered children; * wrapped in the linen cloth in the tomb, * you deliver the captives, O Lord, who cry out: * None is holy as you, O our God.

Katavasia - *Repeat the irmos, using either the simple melody on page 5, or the following solemn melody:*



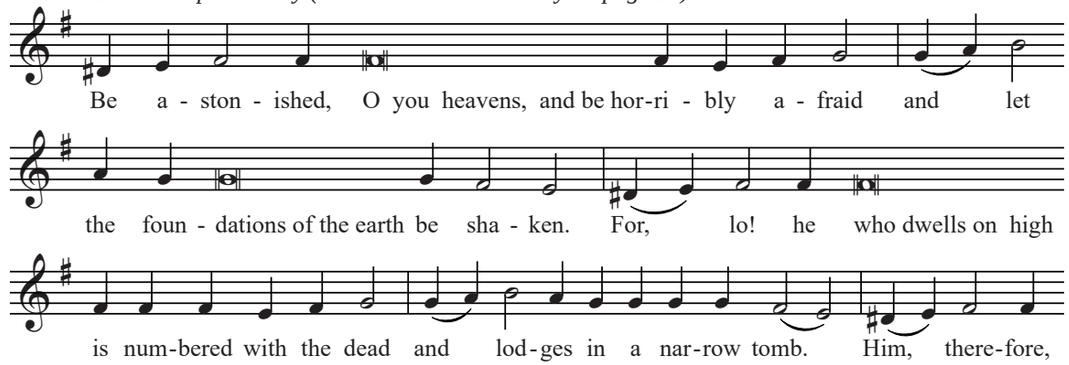
In Hades, as well as in the tomb and in Eden, * the unique divinity of Christ was inseparable from the Father and the Holy Spirit; * this was done for our salvation, and we praise Him: * Blessed are you, O Lord, for you save us.

Katavasia - *Repeat the irmos, using either the simple melody on page 14, or the following solemn melody:*



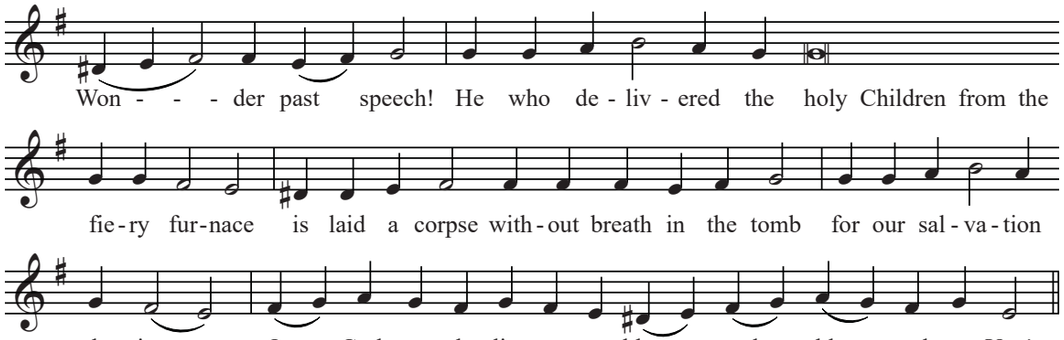
Ode 8

Irmos - *Tone 6 simple melody (or use the solemn melody on page 16)*



Ode 7

Irmos - *Tone 6 simple melody (or use the solemn melody on page 15)*



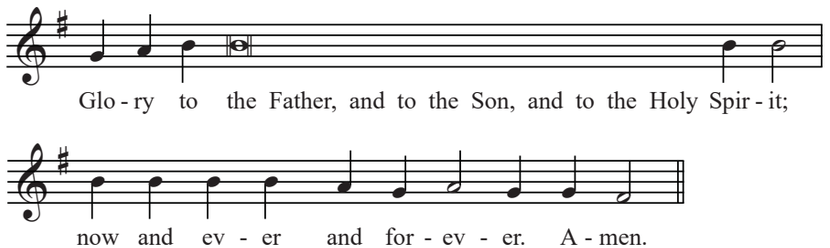
Refrain



Hades was struck in the heart * when it received the One whose side was wounded by the lance of the soldier; * it groaned aloud as it was consumed by the divine fire; * this was done for our salvation, and we praise Him: * Blessed are you, O Lord, for you save us. *Refrain*

O blessed tomb that sheltered the sleep of the Creator! * You have become the divine treasure of life; * this was done for our salvation, and we praise him: * Blessed are you, O Lord, for you save us. *Refrain*

Submitting himself to the law of death, * the Life of all accepts burial in the tomb; * and the grave becomes the fountain of the Resurrection; * this was done for our salvation, and we praise him: * Blessed are you, O Lord, for you save us.



Sessional hymns - *Tone 2 samopodoben: Hrob tvoj*

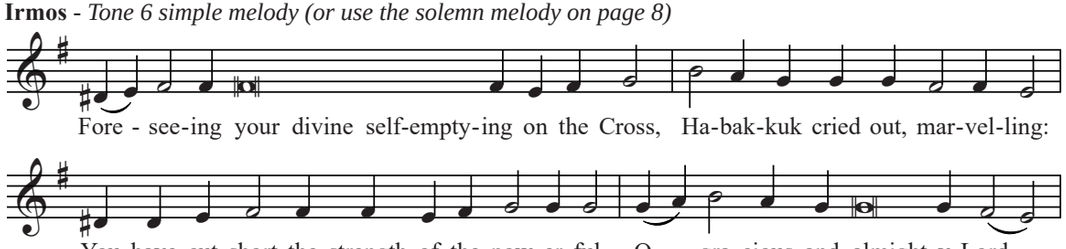


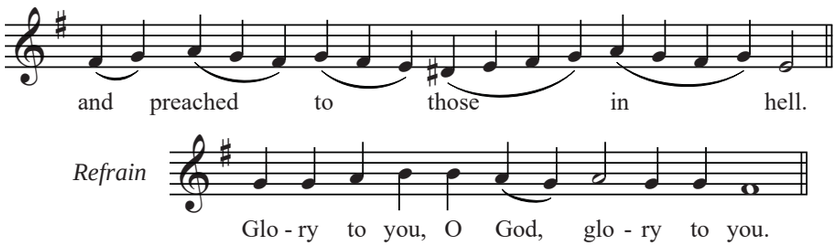
Cantor:

All repeat the sessional hymn: "The soldiers guarding your tomb, O Savior..."

Ode 4

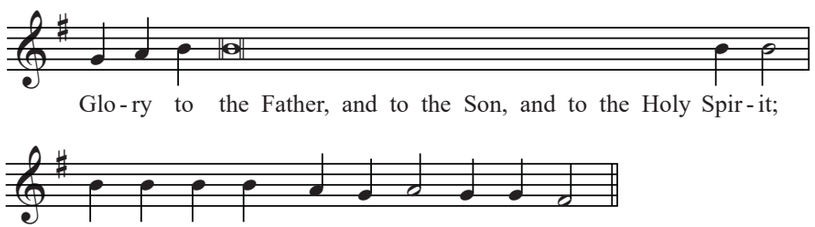
Irmos - *Tone 6 simple melody (or use the solemn melody on page 8)*





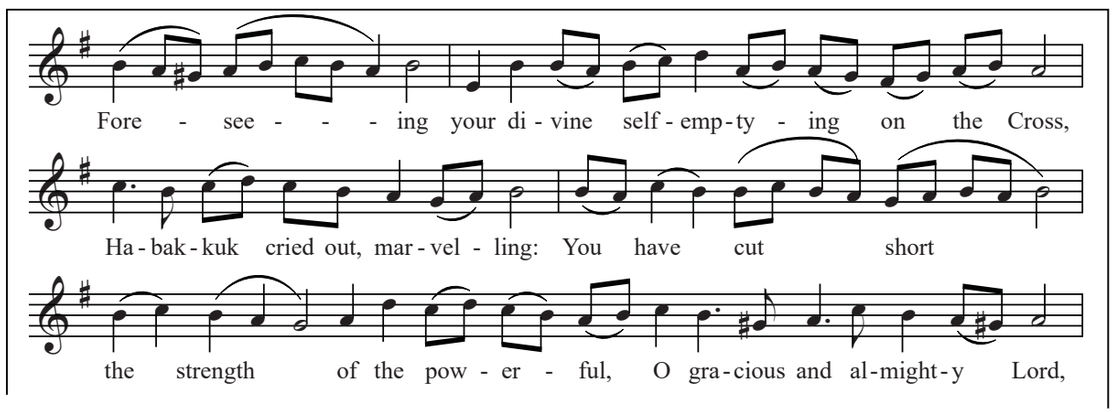
Today you sanctify the seventh day * which you formerly blessed by resting from your work; * by keeping the Sabbath, O God, our Creator and Savior, * you renew all things and recreate the universe. *Refrain*

In your victory, O almighty Lord, * your soul was separated from your body; * O Word, your strength has broken the bonds of Hades and the chains of death.

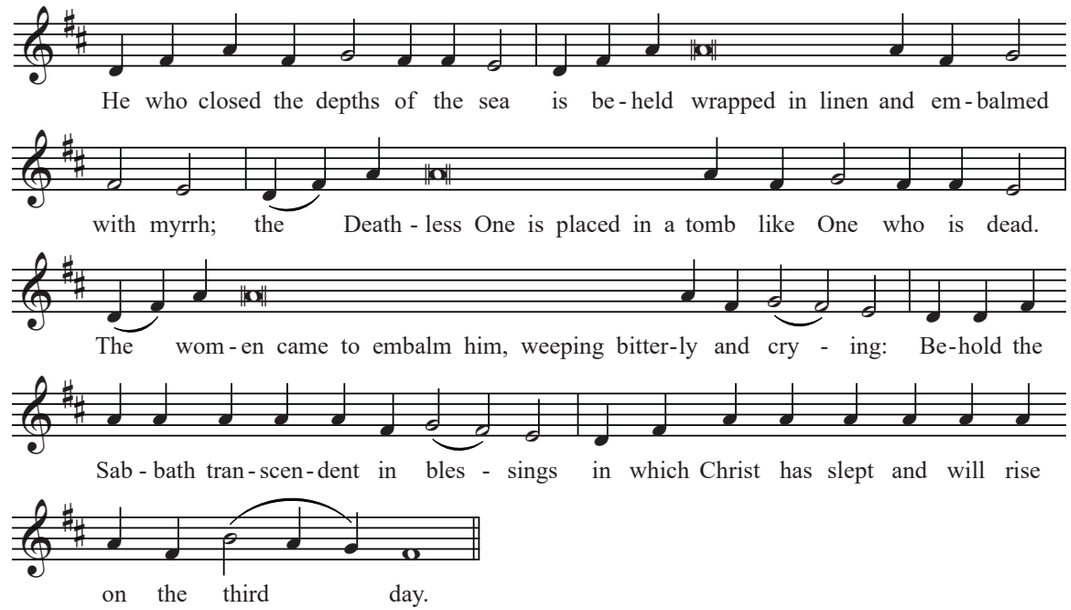


At your coming, O Word, Hades was filled with bitterness; * for it saw a mortal deified, * a man covered with wounds, * who was yet an all-powerful victor; * at this sight, Hades was gripped with terror.

Katavasia - *Repeat the irmos, using either the simple melody on page 7, or the following solemn melody:*

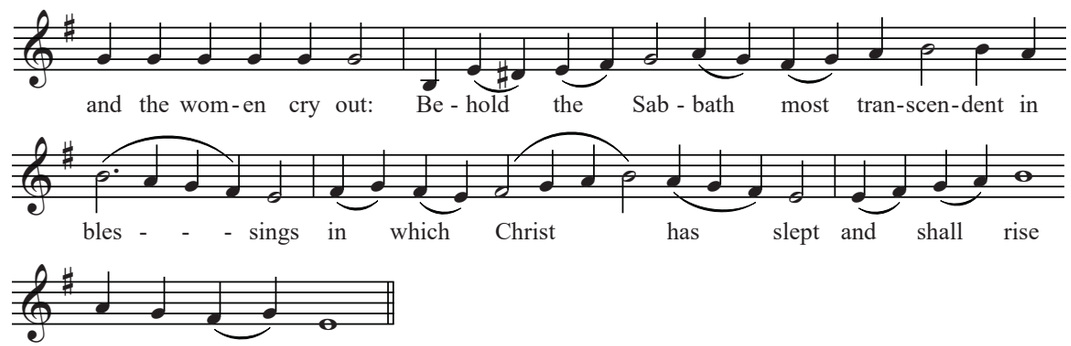


Kontakion of Holy Saturday - *Tone 6*



Ikos of Holy Saturday - *chanted, with a special conclusion (below)*

He who holds the whole universe in his hands is raised upon the Cross, * and all creation weeps as it sees him hanging on the wood: * the sun hides its rays, and the stars lose their brightness; * the earth quakes and is filled with fear; * the seas draw back and the rocks split in two; * the tombs open and the bodies of the saints rise; * Hades laments and the Sanhedrin gathers to fabricate a story to deny the Resurrection of Christ, *





Hades ruled over the human race, * but its kingdom was not eternal; * when they placed you in the tomb, O almighty God, * with your life-giving hand, you broke the chains of death; * you announce the only redemption * to those who were asleep from all ages; * and you, O our Savior, are the firstborn from the dead.

Katavasia - *Repeat the irmos, using either the simple melody on page 11, or the following solemn melody:*





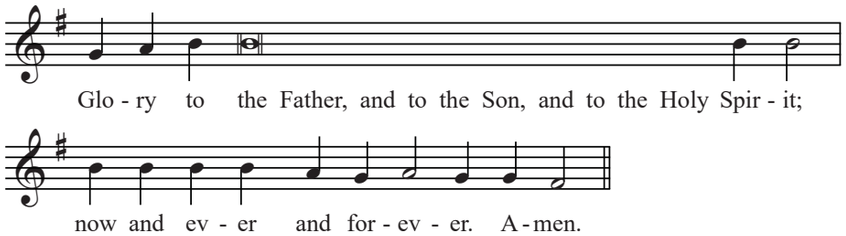
Ode 5

Irmos - *Tone 6 simple melody (or use the solemn melody on page 10)*



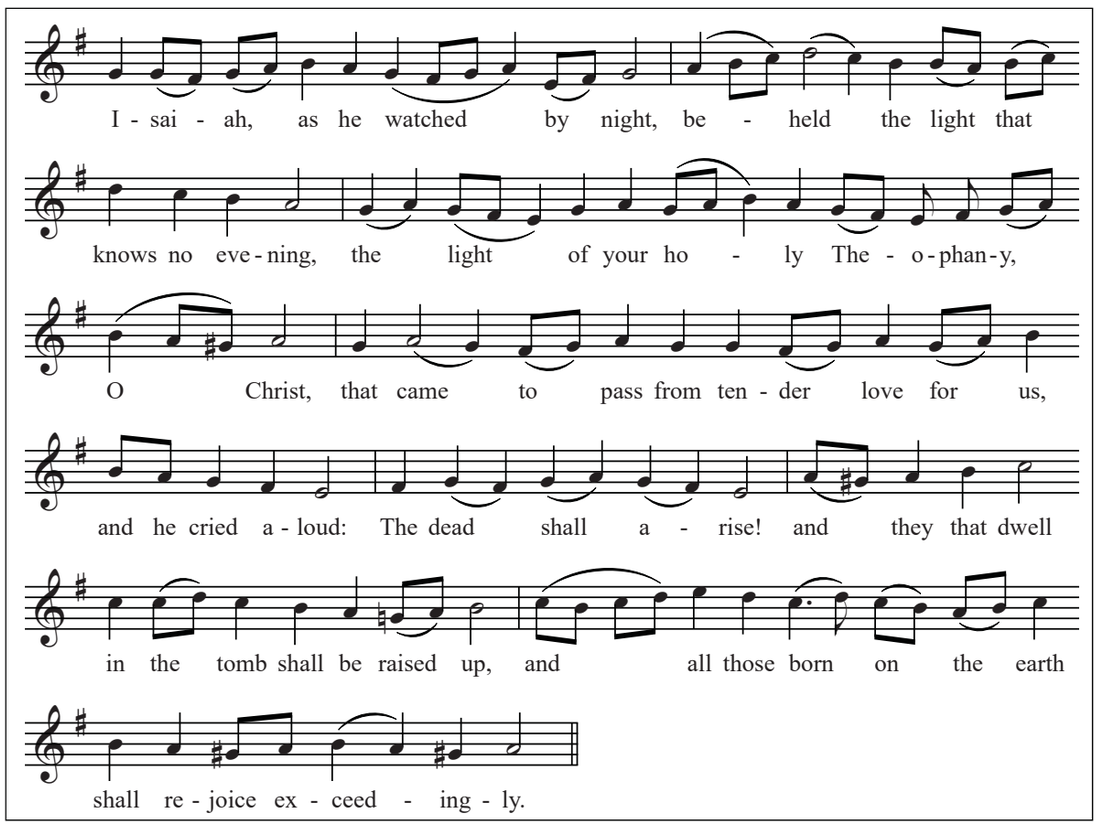
By being covered with the dust of the earth,* you renew the nature of mortals, O Creator; * the tomb and the winding-sheet reveal your deepest mystery, O Word; * the noble counsellor renders present the counsel of your eternal Father, * who renews me in this wondrous way through you. *Refrain*

By your death, you transform that which is mortal; * by your burial, you transform that which is corruptible; * by your divinity, you draw us up from the abyss. * For, that which you assume, you make immortal; * your flesh, O Master, did not undergo corruption, * and your soul did not remain in Hades where you were a stranger.



You were born of the spouseless Virgin; * and when the soldier pierced your side with his lance, * you made a new Eve come forth, O Creator. * And you, the New Adam, have slept a wondrous sleep, * a sleep that brings us life; * you have awakened our life from sleep and death, O almighty Lord.

Katavasia - *Repeat the irmos, using either the simple melody on page 9, or the following solemn melody:*



Ode 6

Irmos - *Tone 6 simple melody (or use the solemn melody on page 12)*



Refrain

The flesh that you had assumed, O Word, * was taken without being separated from you; * at the hour of your Passion, the temple of your body was destroyed; * but your divinity remained united to your flesh; * in both one and the other, you are God and man, * the Son and Word of God. *Refrain*

The fall of Adam brought mortality to the human race * and not to the divinity; * and even though your flesh suffered in your earthly condition, * you remained beyond all suffering in your divinity. * In the tomb, you brought us back to immortality, * and by your Resurrection, you reveal to us the fountain of immortal life.

