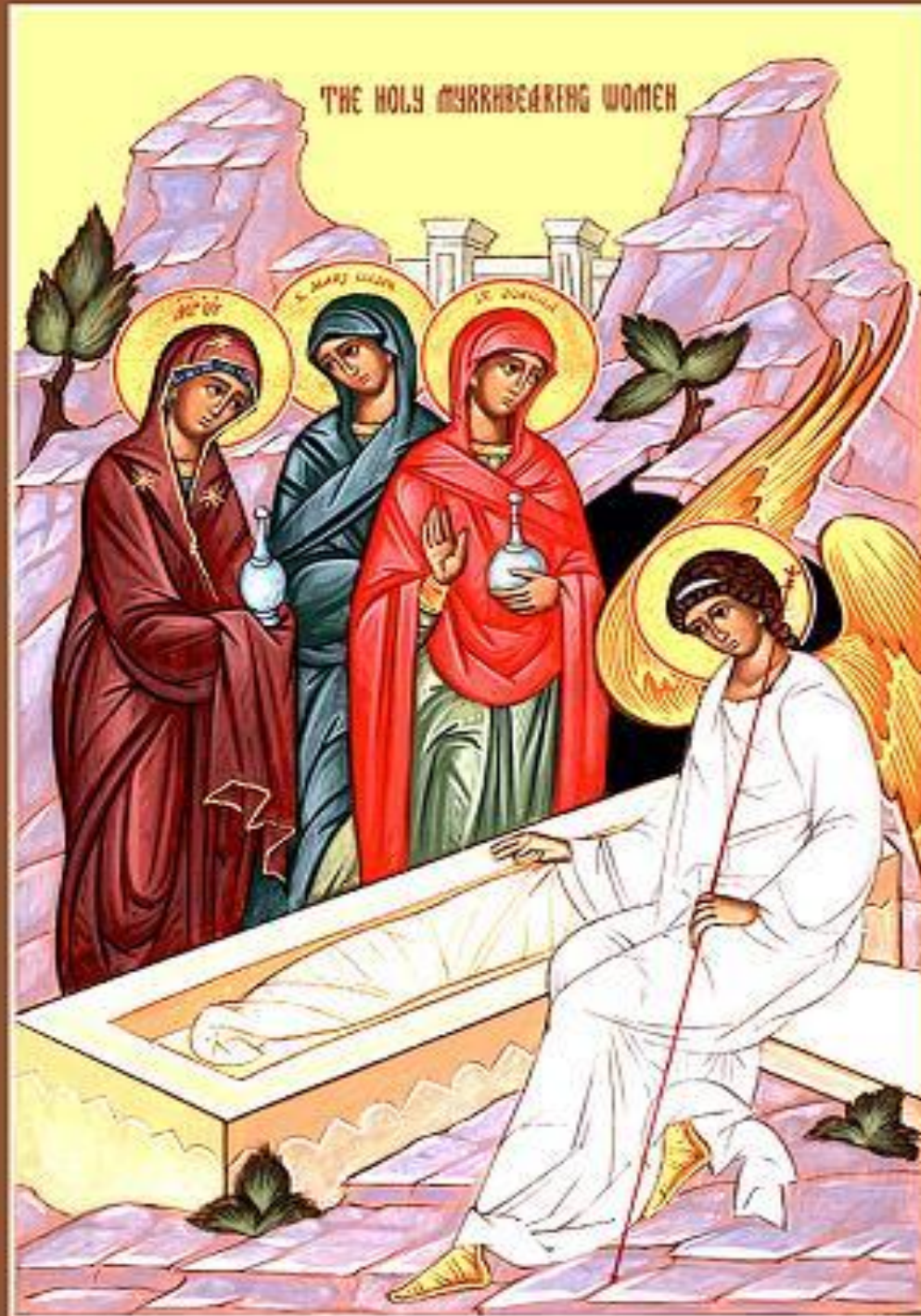


Midnight Hour



Paschal Vigil

For Use at Holy Ascension Orthodox Mission in Melbourne, Victoria.
Please Return this Book after the Service

**HOLY ASCENSION
ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN MISSION**

www.ascensionorthodox.org

07/03/2017

This project is still in draft and continues as a work-in-progress.

Instructions for Clergy & Altar Servers in Blue.

Instructions for Choir & Faithful in Red.

Midnight Hour Pascha

(Served on Holy Saturday Evening shortly before Midnight. Around 11 – 11:30pm)

Before the beginning, a table for the Epitaphios is placed in the center of the church. Room is made on the Altar to receive the Epitaphios towards the end of this service. The Epitaphios remains on the Altar until the Leave-Taking of Pascha.

The priest vested in full white vestments as at a Liturgy stands in front of the Epitaphios. Closed Holy Doors and closed curtain.

Priest: Blessed is our God always, now and ever,
and to the ages of ages.

Reader: Amen.

Glory to You, our God, glory to You.

Heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit of Truth,
present everywhere and filling all things,
Treasury of good things and Giver of life:
Come and dwell in us, and cleanse us of all
impurity, and save our souls, O Good One.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have
mercy on us. (x 3)

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

All Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, blot
out our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities.
Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for
Your name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (x 3)

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

Our Father in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name. Your Kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Priest:

For Yours is the kingdom and the power, and the glory: of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

Reader:

Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (*x 12*)

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

O come let us worship God our King.

O come let us worship and fall down before Christ our King and God.

O come let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and God.

Psalm 50

Reader: Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your great mercy; and according to the abundance of Your compassion, blot out my transgression. Wash me thoroughly from my lawlessness and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my lawlessness, and my sin is always before me. Against You only have I sinned and done evil in Your sight; that You may be justified in Your words, and overcome when You are judged. For behold, I was conceived in transgressions, and in sins my mother bore me. Behold, You love truth; You showed me the unknown and secret things of Your wisdom. You shall sprinkle me with hyssop, and I will be cleansed; You shall wash me, and I will be made whiter than snow. You shall make me hear joy and gladness; my bones that were humbled shall greatly rejoice. Turn Your face from my sins, and blot out all my transgressions. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me with Your guiding Spirit. I will teach transgressors Your ways, and the ungodly shall turn back to You. Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall greatly rejoice in Your righteousness. O Lord, You shall open my lips, and my mouth will declare Your praise. For if You desired sacrifice, I would give it; You will not be pleased with whole burnt offerings. A sacrifice to God is a broken spirit, a broken and humbled heart God will not despise. Do good, O Lord, in Your good pleasure to Zion, and let the walls of Jerusalem be built; then You will be pleased with a sacrifice of righteousness, with offerings and whole burnt offerings; then shall they offer young bulls on Your altar.

Canon
The Canon from Matins of Holy Saturday
(Epitaphios Lamentations)

Acrostic (in Greek): And today I sing a great Sabbath.
In each ode, the Irmos is sung twice (second time as the Katavasia).

Ode 1
Irmos Tone 6

People:

Of old You buried the pursuing tyrant /
beneath the waves of the sea.¹ /
Now the children of those who were saved /
bury You beneath the Earth.
But like the maidens, let us sing to the Lord; //
for gloriously has He been glorified.²

Reader:

Verse Glory to You, our God, glory to You.

Troparion O Lord, my God, I will sing a song for Your
departure, a funeral hymn for You who by
Your burial opened up for me the entrances
to life, and by Your death put Death and
Hades to death.

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

Troparion All things above the world and all below the
earth quaked with fear at Your death, as they
saw You on the throne above and below in a
tomb; for beyond understanding You
appeared as one dead, You who are the
source of life.

1 Exodus 14
2 Exodus 15: 20

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

Troparion In order to fill all things with Your glory, You went down into the lowest parts of the earth. For my nature, which is also in Adam, was not hidden from You. By being buried You make me new, who once had been corrupted, O Lover of mankind.

Katavasia

People:

Of old You buried the pursuing tyrant /
beneath the waves of the sea. /
Now the children of those who were saved /
bury You beneath the Earth.
But like the maidens, let us sing to the Lord; //
for gloriously has He been glorified.

Ode 3

Irmos

People:

You suspended the Earth immovably upon the waters. /
Now creation beholds You /
suspended on Calvary. /
It quakes with great amazement and cries, //
'None is holy but You, O Lord.'³

Reader:

Verse Glory to You, our God, glory to You.

Troparion Multiplying visions, You revealed symbols of Your burial, while now, as God and man, You have also made clear Your secrets, O Master, to those in Hades, who cry, 'None is holy but You, O Lord.'

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

Troparion You opened Your palms and united things that before were separated, while by being closed in a shroud and a grave, O Savior, You loosed those who were bound. None is holy but You, O Lord.

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

Troparion By your will, O uncontainable Lord, You were held fast by grave and seals; and by Your energies You made known Your power as God to those who sing, 'None is holy but You, O Lord, Lover of mankind.'

Katavasia

People:

You suspended the Earth immovably upon the waters. /
Now creation beholds You /
suspended on Calvary. /
It quakes with great amazement and cries, //
'None is holy but You, O Lord.'

Sessional Hymns from the Triodion ***Tone 1 Model Melody***

People:

The soldiers guarding Your tomb O Savior /
became as dead men /
at the lightning flash of the Angel /
who appeared announcing Your Resurrection to the
women. /
We glorify You, who cleanses from corruption. /
We fall down before You, who rose from the tomb, //
our only God.

Ode 4 ***Irmos***

People:

Foreseeing Your divine humiliation on the Cross, /
Habakkuk cried out trembling, /
'You have shattered the dominion of the mighty //
by joining⁴ those in Hades as the Almighty Lord.'⁵

Reader:

Verse

Glory to You, our God, glory to You.

Troparion

You sanctified the seventh day, which of old
You blessed by resting from Your works; for
You bring all things into being and make
them new, as You keep the Sabbath rest, O
Savior, and restore Your strength.

Verse

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

4 Preaching to those in Hades.

5 Habakkuk 3: 14

Troparion By Your greater strength You gained the victory; Your soul was parted from Your body, shattering the bonds of both Death and Hades, O Word, by Your might.

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

Troparion O Word, when Hades met You, it was embittered, seeing a mortal made divine, marked by wounds and all powerful, and it shrank back in terror at the sight.

Katavasia

People:

Foreseeing Your divine humiliation on the Cross, /
Habakkuk cried out trembling, /
'You have shattered the dominion of the mighty //
by joining⁶ those in Hades as the Almighty Lord.'

Ode 5 Irmos

People:

Isaiah saw the never-setting light /
of Your compassionate manifestation to us as God, O
Christ. /
Rising early from the night he cried out: /
"The dead shall arise. /
Those in the tombs shall awake. //
All those on Earth shall greatly rejoice."⁷

Reader:

Verse Glory to You, our God, glory to You.

⁶ Preaching to those in Hades.

⁷ Isaiah 26: 19

Troparion O Creator, becoming a creature formed of dust, You make new those born of Earth, and the shroud and the tomb point to the mystery within You, O Word; for the Noble Counsellor fulfils the counsel of Your Begetter, who in You gloriously makes me new.

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

Troparion Through death You transform mortality, through burial corruption; for in a manner fitting God You make incorruptible the nature You took on and make it immortal. For Your flesh did not know corruption, O Master, nor was Your soul, like a stranger, abandoned in Hades.

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

Troparion You came forth from a birth without pain and, pierced in Your side, my Creator, You worked the renewal of Eve by becoming Adam, sleeping supernaturally a life-producing sleep and raising life from sleep and corruption, as all-powerful.

Katavasia

People:

Isaiah saw the never-setting light /
of Your compassionate manifestation to us as God, O
Christ. /

Rising early from the night he cried out: /

“The dead shall arise. /

Those in the tombs shall awake. //

All those on Earth shall greatly rejoice.”

Ode 6

Irmos

People:

Jonah was caught but not held fast /
in the belly of the whale.⁸ /

He was a sign of You /

who have suffered and accepted burial. /

Coming forth from the beast as from a bridal chamber, /

He cried out to the guard, //

“By observing vanities and lies you have forsaken your
own mercy.”⁹

Reader:

Verse

Glory to You, our God, glory to You.

Troparion

O Word, You were torn, but not torn away
from the flesh You had taken. For though
Your temple was destroyed at the moment of
the Passion, You were still one person in
Your divinity and Your flesh; for in both You
are one Son, Word of God, God and man.

Verse

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

⁸ Jonah 2

⁹ Jonah 2: 9

Troparion Adam's fall slew mortals but not God, for though Your substance of dust suffered, yet Your divinity remained impassible. That which was corruptible in You, You have transformed to incorruption, and You have revealed a source of incorruptible life from Your Resurrection.

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

Troparion Hades reigns over the race of mortals, but not for ever; for You, O Mighty One, when placed in the tomb, shattered with Your palm the bars of Death, and proclaimed to those who slept there from every age no false redemption, O Savior, the origin of life, who have become the first-born of the dead.

Katavasia

People:

Jonah was caught but not held fast /
in the belly of the whale. /
He was a sign of You /
who have suffered and accepted burial. /
Coming forth from the beast as from a bridal chamber, /
He cried out to the guard, //
“By observing vanities and lies you have forsaken your
own mercy.’

Kontakion

By Romanus the Melodist

Tone 6

People:

He who shut in the depths is beheld dead, /
wrapped in fine linen and spices. /
The Immortal One is laid in a tomb as a mortal man. /
The women have come to anoint Him with myrrh, /
weeping bitterly and crying, /
'This is the most blessed Sabbath, //
on which Christ has fallen asleep, to rise on the third day.'

Ikos

Reader:

He who holds all things together was lifted up on the Cross, and all creation lamented seeing Him hanging naked on the Tree. The sun hid its rays, and the stars threw away their light. The Earth quaked with great fear, the sea fled and the rocks were broken. Many graves were opened, and bodies of holy men were raised. Hades below is groaning and the Jews are considering how to discredit Christ's resurrection. The women are crying out:

People:

'This is the most blessed Sabbath, on which Christ has fallen asleep, to rise on the third day.'

Ode 7 **Irmos**

People:

Inexpressible wonder! /

In the furnace You have saved the holy youths from the flame. /

Now You are placed in the grave as a lifeless corpse, /
for the salvation of us who sing, /

‘Blessed are You O God our Redeemer!’¹⁰

Reader:

Verse

Glory to You, our God, glory to You.

Troparion

Hades has been wounded, having received in its heart the One whose side was pierced by a lance, and consumed by divine fire groans aloud at the salvation of us who sing, ‘Blessed are You O God our Redeemer!’

Verse

Glory to You, our God, glory to You.

Troparion

O happy tomb! For having received in itself the Creator as one asleep, it has been revealed as a treasure house of life for the salvation of us who sing, ‘Blessed are You O God our Redeemer!’

Verse

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

Troparion

The life of all things accepts being laid in the tomb, according to the law of those who die, and He shows it to be a source of rising for the salvation of us who sing, ‘Blessed are You O God our Redeemer!’

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

Troparion In Hades and in the tomb and in Eden,
Christ's divinity was one and inseparable
with the Father and the Spirit for the
salvation of us who sing, 'Blessed are You O
God our Redeemer!'

Katavasia

People:

Inexpressible wonder! /

In the furnace You have saved the holy youths from the
flame. /

Now You are placed in the grave as a lifeless corpse, /
for the salvation of us who sing, /

'Blessed are You O God our Redeemer!''

Ode 8

Irmos

People:

Be amazed, O heavens!¹¹ /

Be shaken, O foundations of the Earth!¹² /

Behold, He who dwells in the highest /

is numbered among the dead and sheltered in a lowly
tomb. /

Bless Him, O Youths! Praise Him, O priests! /

O people, exalt Him above all forever.'

Reader:

Verse Glory to You, our God, glory to You.

11 Jeremiah 2: 12

12 Psalm 81: 5

Troparion The Immaculate Temple has been destroyed, but raises up the fallen tabernacle; for the second Adam, who dwells in the highest, has come down to the first as far down as the storehouses of Hades. Bless Him, O Youths! Praise Him, O priests! O people, exalt Him above all forever.'

Verse Let us bless the Lord: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Troparion The daring of the disciples has failed, but Joseph of Arimathea has proved valiant; for seeing the God over all dead and naked he asked for Him and gave Him burial, crying, Bless Him, O Youths! Praise Him, O priests! O people, exalt Him above all forever.'

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

Troparion Oh! What new wonders! Oh! What goodness! Oh! What indescribable mercy! For He who dwells in the Highest, is sealed under the Earth of His own will, and is slandered as a deceiver. Bless Him, O Youths! Praise Him, O priests! O people, exalt Him above all forever.'

People: We praise, we bless, and we worship the Lord: Praising the Lord and supremely exalting Him to all the ages.

Katavasia

People:

Be amazed, O heavens! /

Be shaken, O foundations of the Earth! /

Behold, He who dwells in the highest /

is numbered among the dead and sheltered in a lowly tomb. /

Bless Him, O Youths! Praise Him, O priests! /

O people, exalt Him above all forever.'

At the 9th Ode we do not sing the Magnification.

During Ode 9 of the Canon, the Senior Priest, already in full vestments, opens the Holy Doors, comes out with 2 other priests to the Epitaphios, and goes around it thrice, censuring it from all 4 sides. Then the Senior Priest takes the book of the Gospels and the 2 other priests hold the Epitaphios over his head, and in this way they go through the Holy Doors into the Sanctuary. They go around the Holy Table and then lay the Epitaphios upon it; and once more the Senior Priest goes around the Epitaphios thrice, censuring it from the 4 sides. The Holy Doors and curtain are closed. During this time, the Katavasia of Ode 9 is sung, **Do not lament Me, O Mother...** The Epitaphios remains on the Holy Table until the Eve of Ascension.

Ode 9 ***Irmos***

People:

Do not lament me, O Mother, /

seeing Me in the tomb, /

the Son conceived in the womb without seed, /

for I shall arise /

and be glorified with eternal glory as God. //

I shall exalt all who magnify you in faith and in love.

Reader:

Verse

Glory to You, our God, glory to You.

Troparion 'O my Son without beginning, I supernaturally escaped the pangs at Your strange birth, and I was made blessed; but now, my God, as I see You dead, I am pierced terribly by the sword of sorrow; but arise, that I may be magnified.'

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

Troparion 'O Mother, the Earth covers Me by My own will, but the gatekeepers of Hades shudder as they see Me clothed in the blood-stained robe of vengeance. For having trampled on My enemies by the Cross, I shall arise again and magnify you.'

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

Troparion 'Let creation rejoice, let all born of earth be glad; for Hades, the enemy, has been despoiled; let women come to meet Me with sweet spices; for I am rescuing Adam and Eve with all their race, and on the third day I shall rise again.'

Katavasia

People:

Do not lament me, O Mother, /
seeing Me in the tomb, /
the Son conceived in the womb without seed, /
for I shall arise /
and be glorified with eternal glory as God. //
I shall exalt all who magnify you in faith and in love.

Reader:

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal,
have mercy on us. (x 3)

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

All Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, blot
out our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities.
Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for
Your name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (x 3)

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

Our Father in the Heavens, hallowed be
Your Name. Your Kingdom come, Your will
be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us
this day our daily bread, and forgive us our
debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead
us not into temptation, but deliver us from
the evil one.

Priest:

For Yours is the kingdom and the power,
and the glory: of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to
the ages of ages.

People:

Amen.

The Troparion of Great Saturday **Tone 2**

People:

When You descended into the realm of death O Life Immortal, /
You struck Hades dead with the lightning of Your Divinity, /
and when You also raised the dead from the deepest depths, /
all the Heavenly Powers cried out: //
O Giver-of-Life, Christ our God, glory to You!

Small Augmented Litany

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

People: Lord, have mercy. (x3)

Deacon: Again we pray for our great lord and father, His Holiness, Patriarch N.; for our lord the Most Reverend Metropolitan N., First Hierarchy of the Russian Church Abroad; for our lord the Most Reverend (Archbishop or Bishop N., whose diocese it is) and all our brethren in Christ.

People: Lord, have mercy. (x3)

Deacon: Again we pray for all the brethren and for all Orthodox Christians.

People: Lord, have mercy. (x3)

Priest: For You are a merciful God and the Lover of mankind, and to You we send up glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Deacon: Wisdom!

The Deacon returns to the Sanctuary.

People: Father, bless.

Priest: Blessed is He Who is, Christ our God, always, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen. Establish, O God, the holy Orthodox Faith of Orthodox Christians, to the ages of ages.

Priest: All-Holy Theotokos save us!

People: More honorable than the cherubim and beyond compare more glorious than the seraphim; who without corruption gave birth to God the Word, the very Theotokos, we magnify you.

Priest: Glory to You, Christ God, our hope, glory to You.

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

Lord, have mercy. (x 3)

Father, bless.

The Priest makes the dismissal as on Sunday mornings:

Priest: May Christ our true God who rose from the dead, through the intercessions of His most-pure Mother, of our holy and God-bearing fathers and of all the Saints, have mercy upon us and save us, for He is good and loves mankind.

People: Amen.

After the dismissal, we begin ringing the “Blagovest,” meaning “Good News,” (a single bell rung at moderate intervals).

All lights are extinguished at this point, except for the eternal lamp in the sanctuary.

Sources

Kallistos Ware Triodion.

Scripture – Old Testament

The Orthodox Study Bible (Old Testament). St Athanasius Academy of Orthodox Theology. 2008.

Psalms and Old Testament in general are according to the Septuagint usage and numbering as contained in The Orthodox Study Bible.

Scripture – New Testament

The Eastern Orthodox Bible.