

MAY 21

The Ascension of Our Lord

Holy Equals-to-the-Apostles Emperor Constantine and his mother, Helen

"Lord I Call..." Tone 6*

Lord, I call upon You, hear me!

Hear me, O Lord!

Lord, I call upon You, hear me!

Receive the voice of my prayer,
when I call upon You!//

Hear me, O Lord!

Let my prayer arise

in Your sight as incense,

and let the lifting up of my hands

be an evening sacrifice!//

Hear me, O Lord!

v. (10) Bring my soul out of prison, that I may give thanks to Your Name!

v. (9) The righteous will surround me, for You will deal bountifully with me.

v. (8) Out of the depths I cry to You, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice!

Tone 6 *Idiomela* (from the Pentecostarion)

The Lord has ascended into heaven

that He might send the Comforter into the world.

The heavens prepared His throne, and the clouds His mount.

Angels marvel to see a Man high above them.

The Father receives Him Whom He holds, co-eternal, in His bosom.

The Holy Spirit commands all His Angels:

"Lift up your gates, you princes!

All you nations, clap your hands://

for Christ has gone up to where He was before!"

v. (7) Let Your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications!

* Music for the Feast of the Ascension of Our Lord from the Department of Liturgical Music and Translations can be downloaded at www.oca.org.

The Cherubim were amazed at Your Ascension, O Lord,
beholding You, the God Who sits enthroned upon them,
ascending upon the clouds;
and we glorify You, for Your mercy is good.//
Glory to You!

v. (6) If You, O Lord, should mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with You.

Beholding Your Ascension on the holy mountain,
O Christ, the brightness of the Father's glory,
we hymn the radiant appearance of Your countenance;
we worship Your Passion,
we honor Your Resurrection,
as we glorify Your glorious Ascension.//
Have mercy on us!

v. (5) For Your Name's sake I wait for You, O Lord. My soul has waited for Your word; my soul has hoped on the Lord.

Lord, when Your Apostles saw You carried up upon the clouds,
they were filled with despondency, O Christ the Giver of Life;
with wailing and tears they lamented and said:
"Master, do not leave us, Your servants, as orphans,
whom through pity You have loved in Your compassion;
but, as You promised, send us Your All-holy Spirit//
to enlighten our souls!"

v. (4) From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch, let Israel hope on the Lord!

Lord, when You had fulfilled the mystery of Your dispensation,
You took Your Disciples with You,
up onto the Mount of Olives;
and behold! You passed through the firmament of heaven.
For my sake You became poor like me,
and ascended to the place from where You were never parted.//
Send forth Your All-holy Spirit to illumine our souls!

v. (3) For with the Lord there is mercy and with Him is plenteous redemption, and He will deliver Israel from all his iniquities.

Tone 4 *(for Sts. Constantine and Helen) (You have given a sign)*

You gave Your precious Cross to the Emperor
as a most powerful weapon.

Through it he reigned righteously on earth, shining with godliness.
By Your compassion he was counted worthy of Your heavenly Kingdom.
Therefore with him we glorify Your dispensation, O almighty Jesus, //
the Savior of our souls and the Lover of man.

v. (2) Praise the Lord, all nations! Praise Him, all peoples!

As the King of kings, the Lord Who reigns over all,
You, O Lover of man, granted Your servant the wisdom of Solomon,
the meekness of David,
and the Orthodox faith of the Apostles.
Therefore we glorify Your dispensation, O almighty Jesus, //
the Savior of our souls and the Lover of man.

v. (1) For His mercy is confirmed on us, and the truth of the Lord endures forever.

O ever-memorable Emperor,
you were the first willingly to submit the royal puurple to Christ,
recognizing Him as true God and King of all,
the great Benefactor and Source of victory.
You saw Him set above every principality and power.
Therefore Jesus made the kingdom prosper for you, O lover of virtue,
for he is the Savior of our souls and the Lover of man.

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

Tone 2 *(for Sts. Constantine and Helen, by Byzantium)*

Having received the benefits of rich gifts from God,
O most excellent King, O greatest Constantine,
you were rightly illustrious because of them.
For being illumined by the rays of the all-holy Spirit through baptism,
you were seen among kings to be invincible.
You presented your domain and the God-fearing royal city as a gift to your
Creator.

Therefore, as you have boldness,
do not cease to intercede with Christ God
that all who celebrate your memory //
may be granted forgiveness of sins and great mercy!

now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 6 *(from the Pentecostarion)*

Not parted from the Father's bosom, O sweetest Jesus,
and having lived among those on earth as man,
today You have been taken up in glory from the Mount of Olives,
and in Your compassion exalting our fallen nature,
You have seated it with the Father.
Therefore the heavenly ranks of the Bodiless Powers were amazed at the wonder,
and beside themselves with fear;
and seized with trembling, they magnified Your love for mankind.
With them, we on earth also give glory
for Your condescension to us
and Your Ascension from us;
and we supplicate You, saying:
“At Your Ascension You filled with boundless joy
the Disciples and the Theotokos who bore You;
by their prayers make us also worthy of the joy of Your elect
through Your great mercy!”

Old Testament Readings *(3 Feast and 3 Saints)*

Isaiah 2:2-3

Composite 21 *(Isaiah 62:10-63:1-3, 7-9)*

Composite 22 *(Zachariah 14:1, 4, 8-11)*

3[1] Kings 8:22-23, 27-30

Isaiah 61:10-62:5

Isaiah 60:1-16

Litya

Tone 1 *Idiomela* *(from the Pentecostarion)*

Having ascended to heaven from where You had descended,
do not leave us orphans, O Lord!
May Your Holy Spirit come, bringing peace to the world;
show the sons of men the works of Your power, //
O Lord Who love mankind!

You ascended, O Christ, to Your Father,
Who is without beginning,
though You were never parted from His uncircumscribed bosom,
and the heavenly Powers accepted no addition to the thrice-holy hymn of praise,
but recognized You, O Lord, as one Son, only-begotten of the Father
even after becoming man.//
In the abundance of Your compassion, have mercy on us!

Your Angels, O Lord, said to the Apostles:
"Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven?
This is Christ God Who has been taken from you into heaven.
He it is Who will come again
in like manner as you have seen Him going to heaven://
worship Him in holiness and righteousness!"

Tone 4

When You came, O Christ, to the Mount of Olives
to accomplish the good pleasure of the Father,
the Angels of heaven were amazed,
and the demonic powers were seized with fear;
the Disciples stood by trembling with joy as You spoke to them;
and aloft, a waiting cloud was prepared as a throne;
heaven flung wide its gates and appeared in its beauty,
and the earth reveals its hidden vaults,
so that Adam's descent was made known, and his ascent again.
But Your footsteps were raised up, as if by a hand,
while Your mouth was heard pronouncing a great blessing;
a cloud received You, and heaven welcomed You in.
This great and marvelous work You performed, O Lord,//
for the salvation of our souls.

The nature of Adam,
which had descended to the nethermost parts of the earth,
You renewed in Yourself, O God,
and today, You took it up above every Principality and Power,
for loving it, You seated it with Yourself;
and having compassion on it, You united it with Yourself;
and united with it, You suffered with it;
and You Who are passionless have glorified it with Yourself.
But the Bodiless Powers were asking:

“Who is this Man of beauty?
Not man only, but both God and man,
the two natures together made manifest.
And so exultant Angels, flying about the Disciples in shining robes
cried out: “O Men of Galilee,
He Who is gone from you,
this Jesus, both Man and God
will come again as God and Man, the Judge of the living and the dead,//
granting the faithful forgiveness of sins and His great mercy!”

When You ascended in glory, O Christ our God,
while the Disciples looked on.
The clouds received You with Your flesh;
the gates of heaven were lifted up;
the choirs of Angels rejoiced with gladness;
the higher Powers cried out, saying:
“Lift up your gates, you princes,
and the King of Glory will come in!”
But the Disciples said in amazement:
“Do not be parted from us, O good Shepherd,
but send us Your all-holy Spirit,//
to guide and illumine and sanctify our souls!”

Tone 1 *(for Sts. Constantine and Helen)*

We duly celebrate your memory, O Constantine,
Equal-to-the-Apostles, the foundation and joy of all kings.
Being enlightened by the rays of the Spirit,
you brightened the whole Church of Christ
by gathering the assemblies of the faithful from every place
to the radiant city of Nicea.
There the arrogance of the ungodly was quelled,
and the tongues of heretics were made weak and convicted of folly;
But the company of the Orthodox was exalted
when the Faith was made manifest.
For this reason you were glorified by them as most right-believing,
and were proclaimed the father of all kings,
as the first to receive the purple mantle from God.
Therefore we who faithfully celebrate your memory//
ask you to pray that forgiveness of sins be granted to our souls.

Tone 2 *(by Byzas)*

O glorious Constantine, Equal-to-the-Apostles:
you did not receive your calling from men,
but like the divinely-speaking Paul,
you obtained it from on high, from Christ God,
Having seen the sign of the Cross in the sky,
and through it having been captured like a most beautiful prey,
you were shown to be an invincible conqueror of enemies,
both visible and invisible.
Therefore, as we who are born on earth revere your memory,
we beseech you as a most fervent intercessor,//
to pray boldly that we be granted enlightenment, forgiveness, and great mercy.

Tone 2

Today the memorial of the pious Constantine
has risen up like myrrh poured out;
for desiring Christ, he despised the idols,
and raised up on earth a temple to Him Who was crucified for our sake.//
And in the heavens he received his due reward, the crown of hope.

Tone 3

While still in the years of your youth,
you received, like holy Paul, the sacred charisma from the highest places;
and with the full armor of the Cross,
you overthrew the impudence of the enemy.
O boast and glory of kings, Constantine, Equal-to-the-Apostles,//
entreat the Lord that our souls may be saved!

Tone 4

Praise to God from earthly lips is sung at your divine commemoration,
O Constantine, worthy of all praise.
For you were seen to be a pure soldier of the word of faith,
putting the idols to shame in battle.
Now you have found rest in the radiance of the Trinity,//
illuminating our thoughts by your intercessions.

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

Tone 5 *(for Sts. Constantine and Helen)*

Today the Church, adorned by your reign, O King,
mystically rejoices,
and with words of good omen
she fittingly honors your memory, crying out:
“Rejoice, O emulator of Paul and one who invoked of the Cross of Christ,
and also crushed the snares of the Enemy!
Rejoice, most excellent of kings,
and honored as Equal-to-the-Apostles!
Rejoice, support of the faithful and rampart of kings!
Cease not from interceding for us with the Lord, O blessed Constantine,//
since you have boldness to approach Him, O adornment of emperors!”

now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 4 *(from the Pentecostarion)*

Fulfilling, O Lord, in Your goodness,
the mystery hidden from ages and generations,
You came with Your Disciples to the Mount of Olives,
together with the Mother who bore You, the Maker and Creator of all;
for it was fitting that she who as a mother had been grieved beyond all at Your
Passion,
should also be filled with exceeding joy at the glory of Your flesh.
In this joy we also partake
at Your ascent into heaven, O Master,//
and we glorify Your great mercy that has come upon us.

Aposticha

Tone 2 *Idiomela* *(from the Pentecostarion)*

You were born, as You Yourself did will;
and appeared as You Yourself desired;
You suffered in the flesh, O our God;
and rose from the dead, having trampled on death.
You were taken up in glory, filling all things,
and You sent us the Divine Spirit,//
that we may praise and glorify Your Godhead.

*V. Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples. Shout to God with loud songs of joy!
(Ps. 46:1)*

As You were taken up, O Christ, from the Mount of Olives,
the Powers saw it and cried to one another: "Who is this?"
And they were told: "This is He Who is Strong and Mighty,
this is He Who is mighty in war,
this is truly the King of Glory."
"And why are His garments crimson?"
"He has come from Bosor, that is, from the flesh."
But as God You sat down at the right hand of Majesty
and have sent us the Holy Spirit, //
to guide and save our souls.

V. God has gone up with a shout; the Lord with the sound of a trumpet! (Ps. 46:5)

You ascended in glory from the Mount of Olives, O Christ our God,
in the presence of Your Disciples,
and sat down at the right hand of the Father,
You Who in Your Godhead fill the universe;
and You sent unto them the Holy Spirit, //
Who enlightens and strengthens and sanctifies our souls.

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

Tone 8 *(for Sts. Constantine and Helen)*

Brightly shining moon and star of evening,
you were turned from unbelief to faith in the true God,
and were led to sanctify the people and city.
Beholding the figure of the Cross in the sky,
you heard from above:
"Conquer with this Cross, in which lies victory over your enemies!"
Receiving wisdom from the Holy Spirit,
you were anointed as holy emperor,
establishing and supporting the Church of God.
O father of Orthodox emperors,
Constantine, Equal to the Apostles,
whose relics pour forth healings: //
ever intercede for our souls!

now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 6 *(from the Pentecostarion)*

God has gone up with a shout;
the Lord with the sound of a trumpet,
to raise up Adam's fallen image,
and send the Comforter Spirit,//
to sanctify our souls.

(at Great Vespers)

Tone 8 **Troparion** *(Sts. Constantine and Helen)*

Your servant, Constantine, O Lord and only Lover of man,
beheld the figure of the Cross in the heavens.
Like Paul, not having received his call from men,
but as an apostle among rulers set by Your hand over the royal city,//
he preserved lasting peace through the prayers of the Theotokos.

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

Tone 4 **Troparion** *(Feast)*

You ascended in glory, O Christ our God,
granting joy to Your Disciples by the promise of the Holy Spirit.
Through the blessing, they were assured
that You are the Son of God,//
the Redeemer of the world!

(at the Divine Liturgy)

The First Antiphon

Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples. Shout to God with loud songs of joy!
(Ps. 46:1)

Refrain: Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us!

For the Lord, the Most High is terrible; a great God over all the earth. *(Ps. 46:2)*
(Refrain)

He subdued peoples under us, and nations under our feet. *(Ps. 46:3) (Refrain)*

God has gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet! *(Ps. 46:5)*
(Refrain)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and
unto ages of ages. Amen. *(Refrain)*

The Second Antiphon

Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised in the city of our God. *(Ps. 47:1a)*

Refrain: O Son of God, Who ascended in glory, save us who sing to Thee:
Alleluia!

Mount Zion in the far north is the city of the Great King. *(Ps. 47:2) (Refrain)*

Within her citadels God is known when He defends her. *(Ps. 47:3) (Refrain)*

For lo, the kings assembled; they came on together. *(Ps. 47:4) (Refrain)*

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

(“Only-begotten Son and immortal Word of God...”)

The Third Antiphon

Hear this, all peoples! Give ear, all inhabitants of the world! *(Ps. 48:1)*

Tone 4 Troparion

You ascended in glory, O Christ our God,
granting joy to Your Disciples by the promise of the Holy Spirit.
Through the blessing, they were assured
that You are the Son of God, //
the Redeemer of the world!

The earth-born and the sons of men, rich and poor together. *(Ps. 48:2)*

Troparion of the Feast

My mouth shall speak wisdom; the meditation of my heart shall be
understanding. *(Ps. 48:3)*

Troparion of the Feast

I will incline my ear to a proverb; I will solve my riddle in psalmody. *(Ps. 48:4)*

Troparion of the Feast

Entrance Verse

God has gone up with a shout; the Lord with the sound of a trumpet! *(Ps. 46:5)*

Tone 4 Troparion *(Feast)*

You ascended in glory, O Christ our God,
granting joy to Your Disciples by the promise of the Holy Spirit.
Through the blessing, they were assured
that You are the Son of God, //
the Redeemer of the world!

Tone 8 Troparion *(Sts. Constantine and Helen)*

Your servant, Constantine, O Lord and only Lover of man,
beheld the figure of the Cross in the heavens.
Like Paul, not having received his call from men,
but as an apostle among rulers set by Your hand over the royal city, //
he preserved lasting peace through the prayers of the Theotokos.

Tone 3 Kontakion *(Sts. Constantine and Helen)*

Today Constantine and his mother Helen reveal the precious Cross,
the weapon of Orthodox Christians against their enemies, //
for it is manifest for us as a great and fearful sign in struggle.

Tone 6 Kontakion

When You had fulfilled the dispensation for our sake,
and united earth to heaven:

You ascended in glory, O Christ our God,
not being parted from those who love You,
but remaining with them and crying://

“I am with you, and there is no one against you!”

(The Trisagion is sung.)

Tone 7 Prokeimenon

Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; / and Your glory be over all the earth!
(Ps. 56:14)

V. My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast. I will sing and make melody. (Ps. 56:10)

Tone 8 Prokeimenon *(Sts. Constantine and Helen)*

Their proclamation has gone out into all the earth, / and their words to the ends
of the universe. *(Ps. 18:4)*

Epistle

(1) Acts 1:1-12

(49) Acts 26:1-5, 12-20 *(Sts. Constantine and Helen)*

Tone 2

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

V. God has gone up with a shout; the Lord with the sound of a trumpet! (Ps. 46:5)

*V. Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples. Shout to God with loud songs of joy!
(Ps. 46:1)*

Tone 1

V. I have exalted one chosen out of My people. (Ps. 88:18b)

Gospel

(114) Luke 24:36-53

(35-ctr) John 10:1-9 *(Sts. Constantine and Helen)*

(Instead of "It is truly meet...", we sing:)

Magnify, O my soul, Christ the Giver of Life, Who has ascended from earth to heaven!

We the faithful, with one accord, magnify you, the Mother of God, who beyond reason and understanding, gave birth in time to the Timeless One.

Communion Hymn

God has gone up with a shout; the Lord with the sound of a trumpet! *(Ps. 46:5)*
Their proclamation has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of
the universe. *(Ps. 18:4)*
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

(Instead of "We have seen the True Light...", we sing the Troparion of Ascension.)

Prepared by the Department of Liturgical Music and Translations, Orthodox Church in America.