

THE ROYAL HOURS OF PENTECOST

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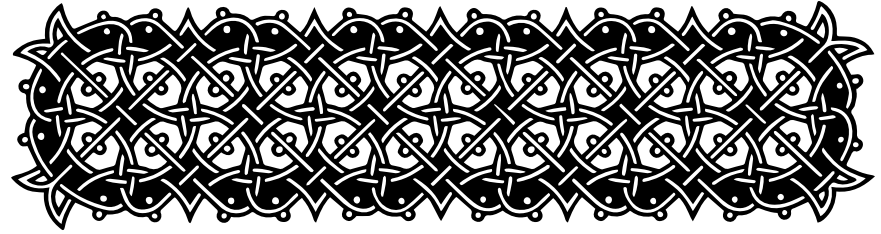
Composed by
Archpriest Nicholas Malachos of Nafplio

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New Testament scriptures from
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INTRODUCTION

THE *Pentecostarion* is the Orthodox liturgical book that contains all the service variables for the period from the Sunday of Pascha through the Sundays of Pentecost and All Saints. In 1552, an edition of the *Pentecostarion* was published in Venice that included a curious innovation: *The Royal (or Great) Hours of Pentecost*.

The liturgical tradition of the Orthodox Church knows three services of the Royal Hours: Holy Friday, the Paramon of the Nativity of Christ (Christmas Eve, December 24) and the Paramon of Theophany (Epiphany Eve, January 5). Of these, the service of Holy Friday is the oldest, and the others were composed later to elevate the celebrations of the Nativity and Theophany.

None of the other Great Feasts have a Royal Hours service associated with them. Apparently seeing this as a deficiency, the Archpriest Nicholas Malachos of Nafplio composed a service of the Royal Hours for Pentecost, which we have published below, to our knowledge, for the first time in English. It was published in the 1552 edition of the *Pentecostarion*, and it was included in the 1579 reprint. After this, it disappeared.

The Royal Hours services are based on the ordinary Hours of the daily office, but with two of the three Psalms at each Hour replaced by other Psalms which contain themes related to the Feast. A series of hymns (*idiomela*) gives a poetic narration, followed by an Old Testament prophecy, an Apostolic passage, and a Gospel passage.

The service was meant to be chanted on the Friday before Pentecost: “The service is chanted on the Friday before the Feast, in the same manner as on the Paramoni of the Nativity of Christ and of Holy Epiphany [when these feasts fall on a Sunday], but there is no Divine Liturgy, nor fasting.” Today we observe this seventh Friday of Pascha as the Leavetaking of the Ascension, with a festive Divine

Liturgy; but Malachos evidently felt it was improper to serve the Divine Liturgy on a day of the Royal Hours, under the influence of Holy Friday, on which the Divine Liturgy is not served.

In his analysis, Professor John Fountouli observes that, in composing this service, Malachos “did not have a static conception of divine worship,” feeling at liberty to “add new elements to it.” But likewise, “its expulsion from the liturgical books shows ... how sensitive [the Church] is to any kind of innovation not rooted in the tradition handed down.”*

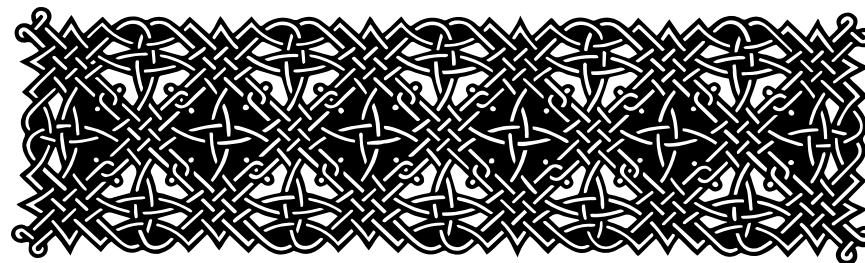
Malachos rather slavishly models his compositions after the Royal Hours of Theophany in particular, using the same tones and as the corresponding hymns in the other service, and similar narrative structures. His poetry does not quite rise to the level of the hymnody of the other three Royal Hours services that have been received by the Church, but his compositions do present a variety of ideas and images, showing that creativity and appreciation for Church hymnody continued during the darkness of the early Ottoman captivity. In summary, Fountouli calls the hymns “likeable products of this period of decline.”

Malachos’ selection of readings is less creative, however, with most of them being taken directly from the existing Pentecost services. Fountouli forgives him for this, though, admitting that there are not many clear references to the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament outside of those already in use elsewhere. Malachos could have expanded on the themes of the Mosaic Pentecost and drawn from typology there, as well as from the themes of Pascha. “But he either did not think of it, or did not want to do it.”

In conclusion, we hope that this booklet gives the reader some insight into the Orthodox Church of the 16th century and a fragment of forgotten liturgy composed by a pious priest living in troubled times. It is certainly interesting food for thought and meditation on what the service’s Kontakion calls “the last and greatest Feast.”



* *Scientific Yearbook, Vol. 10.* Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. 1971.



THE USUAL BEGINNING

Priest, if present: Blessed is our God, always, now and forever, and to the ages of ages.

Reader: Amen. But if there is no priest, say: Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

Glory to you, our God, glory to you.

Heavenly King, Paraclete, Spirit of Truth, present everywhere, filling all things, Treasury of blessings and Giver of life, come and dwell in us, cleanse us from every stain, and, O Good One, save our souls.

Holy God, Holy Strong, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (3 times)

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

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, forgive our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for your Name’s sake.

Lord, have mercy. (3 times)

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

OUR Father in heaven, may your Name be hallowed, your Kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Priest: For yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory, of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever, and to the ages of ages.

Reader: Amen. But if there is no priest, say: Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (12)

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

THE FIRST HOUR

Come, let us worship and fall down before the King, our God.

Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, the King, our God.

Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ himself, the King, our God.

Psalm 5

GIVE ear to my words, O Lord, understand my cry.

Attend to the voice of my supplication, my King and my God; for to you I shall pray, O Lord.

In the morning you will hear my voice. In the morning I shall stand before you, and you will watch over me; because you are not a God who wants iniquity.

The evildoer will not dwell with you, nor will the lawless remain before your eyes.

You have hated all those who work iniquity; you will destroy all those who speak lies.

The Lord abhors a man of bloodshed and deceit.

But I, in the abundance of your mercy, will enter your house, I will worship towards your holy temple in fear of you.

Guide me, Lord, in your righteousness because of my enemies, direct my way before you.

Because there is no truth in their mouths; their heart is vain.

Their throat is an open tomb, they deceive with their tongues. Judge them, O God.

Let them fall through their counsels; according to the multitude of their impieties cast them out, for they have embittered you, O Lord.

And may all those who hope in you be glad; they will rejoice forever, and you will dwell among them, and all those who love your Name will boast in you.

Because you will bless the righteous; you have crowned him, O Lord, with your good pleasure.

Psalm 18

THE heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims the work of his hands.

Day to day pours out speech, and night to night proclaims knowledge.

There are no tongues nor words in which their voices are not heard.

Their sound has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.

In the sun he pitched his tent, and he comes like a bridegroom out of his chamber; he will rejoice like a giant to run his course.

He goes out from the furthest limit of heaven, and his goal is the other end of heaven, and no one will be hidden from his heat.

The law of the Lord is perfect, converting souls; the testimony of the Lord is faithful, making infants wise.

The statutes of the Lord are upright, gladdening the heart; the commandment of the Lord is radiant, enlightening the eyes.

The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever and ever; the judgments of the Lord are true, altogether justified.

More desirable than gold and precious stones, and sweeter than honey and the honeycomb.

For your servant obeys them, and in obedience there is great reward.

Who will understand his transgressions? Purge me from my secret sins, and spare your servant from those of others.

If they do not conquer me, then I will be blameless and cleansed of great sin.

Then the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart will always be pleasing before you, Lord, my helper and redeemer.

Psalm 100

I WILL sing to you of mercy and judgment, O Lord; I will chant and think on a blameless way; when will you come to me?

I have walked in the midst of my house in the innocence of my heart.

I have set no lawless deed before my eyes; I have hated those who commit transgressions.

No twisted heart has been attached to me; the evil man who

avoids me, I have not acknowledged.

The man who secretly slanders his neighbor, him I have driven out.

With a man of proud looks and insatiate heart, I have not eaten.

My eyes are upon the faithful in the land, for them to dwell with me; the man who walks on a blameless way, he has ministered to me.

The man who acts proudly has not dwelt in my house; the man who speaks calumnies has not prospered before me.

Morning by morning, I slew all the sinners in the land, to purge from the Lord's city all workers of iniquity.

Glory, both now. Alleluia.

Glory.

IN the division of the tongues, the Spirit has come upon the earth, dispensing the graces according to the promise of Christ, the Giver of light and God. O people, let us come in advance to meet him, crying out in fear: Come and dwell in us, O Paraclete,[†] and enlighten our souls!

Both now.

WHAT shall we call you, O Full of grace? Heaven, for you made the Sun of Justice to dawn. Paradise, for you made the Flower of incorruption blossom. Virgin, for you remained incorrupt. Pure Mother, for you held in your holy embrace a Son who is the God of all. Implore him that our souls may be saved.

Idiomela. Plagal of Tone 4

Now the Spirit of the Lord is coming to dwell on the dwellers of Zion. Come, receive, all of you, the Spirit of wisdom, the Spirit of understanding, the Spirit of the fear of God, who eternally proceeds from the Father. (*twice*)

Verse: Create a clean heart in me, O God, and renew a right Spirit within me.

TODAY human nature is sanctified; it[‡] is beginning to be ordained, admitting ranks of divine Hierarchs, having received strength from on high.

[†] A transliteration of the Greek; often translated "Comforter." [‡] I.e. human nature

Verse: Do not cast me out from your presence, and do not take your Holy Spirit from me.

JUST as fire descended on the earth, O Paraclete King, and on the heads of the Apostles, O Good One, it was living interactively. Blow, too, O Flute of God, to make us holy, O Lover of mankind!

Glory. *Same tone.*

SUDDENLY toward Zion, with an echo of rushing wind, you came to reside on the wise Apostles, O Paraclete, in the form of fiery tongues. You were distributing graces, O Treasury of graces, but mortals heard, and together became hostile; all the people were astonished and cried out to one another, "Behold, are not these Galileans? How, then, are they now speaking in foreign tongues?" But illumine us in our bodies and our souls, so that we may ceaselessly hymn your majestic works!

Both now. *Repeat:* Suddenly toward Zion.

Prokeimenon. Tone 4

Create a clean heart in me, O God, and renew a right Spirit within me. *Verse:* Do not cast me out from your presence, and do not take your Holy Spirit from me.

The Reading from the Book of Numbers (11:16-17, 24-29)

THE Lord said to Moses, "Gather to me seventy men from the elders of the people, whom you know to be elders of the people, and their scribes. Bring them to the tabernacle of witness and have them stand there with you. Then I will come down and speak with you there, and I will take of the spirit that is on you and put it on them. They will share with you the burden of the people so you will not bear them alone."

So Moses gathered seventy men from the elders of the people and he set them around the tabernacle. Then the Lord came down in a cloud and spoke to Moses, and took of the spirit that was on him, and put it on the seventy elders. When the spirit rested on them, they prophesied and then fell silent.

There were two men left behind in the camp, named Eldad and Modad, and the spirit also rested on them. (These two men had

been listed, but did not come to the tabernacle.) They also prophesied in the camp. A young man ran to Moses and said, “Eldad and Modad are prophesying in the camp!”

Joshua the son of Nun, who was Moses’ chosen assistant, said, “My lord Moses, stop them!”

But Moses said to him, “Are you jealous of me? If only all the Lord’s people were prophets whenever the Lord puts his spirit on them.”

The Reading from the Acts of the Holy Apostles (1:12-17, 21-26)

IN those days, the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the mountain called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day’s journey away.

After entering the city, they went up into the upper room where they were staying; that is, Peter, James, John, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas the brother of James. With one accord, all these were continuing steadfastly in prayer and supplication, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus and his brothers.

In those days, Peter stood up among the disciples (and the number of names was about one hundred twenty) and said, “Brethren, it was necessary that this Scripture should be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit had spoken beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. For he was numbered with us and received his portion in this ministry. Therefore, of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John and to the day that he was taken up from us, of these men, one must become a witness with us of his resurrection.”

So, they put forward two candidates: Joseph called Barsabbas who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. Then they prayed and said, “You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two you have chosen to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas fell away to go to his own place.”

And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was added to the eleven apostles.

Priest: And that he would count us worthy to listen to the holy Gospel, let us pray to the Lord God.

Reader: Lord, have mercy. (3 times)

Priest: Wisdom. Stand upright. Let us listen to the holy Gospel. Peace to all.

Reader: And to your spirit.

Priest: The reading is from the holy Gospel according to John.

Reader: Glory to you, O Lord, glory to you!

(15:17-16:15)

THE Lord said to his disciples, “These things I command you, so that you may love one another. If the world hates you, you know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own! But you are not of the world, since I chose you out of the world, and so the world hates you. Remember what I told you: ‘A bondservant is not greater than his lord.’ If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours. But they will do all these things to you on account of my Name, because they do not know the one who sent me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have had sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin! Whoever hates me also hates my Father. If I had not accomplished among them the works which no one else had done before, they would not have had sin. But now, they have seen those things and yet they have hated both me and my Father. But this has happened so that the word which was written in their law may be fulfilled: ‘They hated me without reason.’ But when the Paraclete [Counselor] has come, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness to me. You also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning. I have told you these things, so that you would not be made to stumble. They will expel you from the synagogues! Yes, the time is coming when whoever kills you will think that he is offering service to God! They will do these things because they have not known the Father or me. But I have told you these things, so that when the time arrives, you may remember that I told you about them. I did not tell you these things from the beginning because I was with you. But now, I am going to him who sent me, and none of you is asking me, ‘Where

are you going?’ But because I have told you these things, sorrow has filled your heart. Yet, I tell you the truth; it is to your advantage that I go away, because if I do not go away, the Paraclete [Counselor] will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. When he has come, he will convict the world about sin, about righteousness, and about judgment; about sin, because they do not believe in me; about righteousness, because I am going to my Father and you will not see me any more; about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged. I still have many things to tell you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when he, the Spirit of truth, has come, he will guide you into all truth because he will not speak from himself, but whatever he hears, he will speak. He will tell you of things that are yet to come. He will glorify me by taking from what is mine, and he will declare it to you. Everything the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take of what is mine and will declare it to you.”

Reader: Glory to you, O Lord, glory to you!

Direct my steps according to your word, and do not let iniquity lord it over me.

Deliver me from the slander of men, and I shall keep your commandments.

Make your face shine on your servant and teach me your statutes.

Let my mouth be filled with your praise, O Lord, that I may hymn your glory, all day long your splendor.

Holy God. All-holy Trinity. Our Father.

Priest: For yours is the kingdom.

Reader: Amen. *But if there is no priest, say:* Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

Kontakion. Tone 4. The Original Melody (Επιφανής σήμερα)†

ON this day we celebrate * the last and greatest feast, * as the light of Pentecost * has now begun to dawn for us, * illuminating the mystery. * Let us prepare now * to welcome the sacred light.

† This hymn is translated more freely to maintain the original meter.

Lord, have mercy. (40 times)

AT every time and at every hour, in heaven and on earth worshiped and glorified, Christ God, long-suffering, great in mercy, great in compassion, loving the just and merciful to sinners, calling all to salvation by the promise of the blessings to come; do you, Lord, yourself accept our entreaties at this hour, and direct our lives to your commandments. Sanctify our souls, purify our bodies, correct our thoughts, cleanse our ideas and deliver us from every distress, evil, and pain. Wall us about with your holy Angels, that protected and guided by their host, we may reach the unity of the Faith and the knowledge of your unapproachable glory; for you are blessed to the ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (3 times) Glory, both now.

Greater in honor than the Cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim, without corruption you gave birth to God the Word, truly the Mother of God, we magnify you.

If there is a priest, add: In the Name of the Lord, bless, Father.

Priest: May God take pity on us and bless us, and make his face shine on us and have mercy on us.

Reader: Amen. *But if there is no priest, say:* Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

The Prayer of the First Hour. Read by the priest, if he is present

CHRIST, the true Light, who enlightens and hallows everyone who comes into the world, may the light of your countenance be signed upon us, that in it, we may see your unapproachable light; and direct our steps to the doing of your commandments; at the intercessions of your most pure Mother and of all your Saints. Amen.

Reader: To you, my Champion and Commander, I, your city, saved from disasters, dedicate, O Mother of God, hymns of victory and thanksgiving; but as you have unassailable might, from every kind of danger now deliver me, that I may cry to you: Hail, Bride without bridegroom!