

**Sunday, March 21, 2021**  
**First Sunday of Great Lent - Tone 8**  
**Sunday of Orthodoxy**

Troparion:

Thou didst descend from on high, O Merciful One! Thou didst accept the three-day burial to free us from our sufferings!  
O Lord, our Life and Resurrection: glory to Thee!

We venerate Thy most pure image, O Good One, and ask forgiveness of our transgressions, O Christ God. Of Thy good will Thou wast pleased to ascend the Cross in the flesh to deliver Thy creatures from bondage to the enemy. Therefore with thankfulness we cry aloud to Thee: Thou hast filled all with joy, O our Saviour, for Thou didst come to save the world.

Kontakion:

No one could describe the Word of the Father; but when He took flesh from you, O Theotokos, He accepted to be described, and restored the fallen image to its former beauty. We confess and proclaim our salvation in word and images.

Prokeimenon in the 4th Tone (Song of the Fathers):

Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our Fathers and praised and glorified is Thy name forever!  
(Vs.) For Thou art just in all that Thou hast done for us!

Epistle:

The Reading from the Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Hebrews. (Heb. 11:24-26,32-12:2)

Brethren, by faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to share ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He considered abuse suffered for the Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he looked to the reward. And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets - who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated - of whom the world was not worthy - wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect. Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Alleluia Verses:

Moses and Aaron were among His priests: Samuel also was among those who called on His name.  
(Vs.) They called to the Lord, and He answered them.

Gospel:

The Holy Gospel According to St. John. (Chapter 1:43-51)

At that time Jesus was about to leave for Galilee, and He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, "Follow me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the town of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found the one of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets wrote, Jesus the son of Joseph of Nazareth." And Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him and said of him, "Look, a true Israelite in whom there is no guile!" Nathanael said to Him, "Where do you know me from?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Nathanael answered Him and said, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God, you are King of Israel." Answering, Jesus said to him, "Because I said to you that I saw you under the fig tree, you believe. Greater things than these shall you see." And He said to him, "Amen, amen, I say to you, you shall see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."