

Memorization

**I. “Finally, brethren, farewell. Become complete.
Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace;
and the God of love and peace will be with you.”
(2 Corinthians 13:11)**

II. First Watch of the Midnight Hour of the Agpeya The Gospel according to St. Matthew (Matthew 25:1-13)

“Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins, who took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. Those who were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them. But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, “Behold, the bridegroom is coming; arise and go out to meet him.” Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

And the foolish said unto the wise, “Give us of your oil, for our lamps are going out.” But the wise answered, saying, “No, lest there should not be enough for us and you, but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.” And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding, and the door was shut. Afterward, the other virgins came also, saying, “Lord, Lord, open to us.

But he answered and said, “Verily I say unto you, I do not know you.” Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.”

Glory be to God forever. Amen.



III. Litanies of the First Watch of the Midnight Hour of the Agpeya

1. Behold, the Bridegroom is coming at midnight, blessed is the servant whom He finds watching. But he whom He finds sleeping is unworthy of going with Him. Therefore, take heed, O my soul, that you may not fall into deep sleep, and then be cast out of the kingdom. But watch and cry out, saying, "Holy, Holy, Holy are You, O God, for the sake of the Theotokos, have mercy on us."
2. O my soul, be mindful of that awesome day, and wake up and light your lamp with the oil of joy, for you do not know when the voice will call upon you, saying, "Behold, the Bridegroom is coming." So, take heed, my soul, not to fall asleep, lest you stand outside knocking like the five foolish virgins. But watch, entreating that you may meet Christ the Lord with rich oil, and He may grant you the wedding of His true and heavenly glory.
3. You are the rampart of our salvation, O Theotokos the Virgin, the mighty and impregnable fortress. Abolish the counsel of the adversaries, and transform the sorrow of your servants into joy. Fortify our city (monastery), defend our kings (governors), and intercede for the peace of the world, for you are our hope, O Theotokos.
4. O heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, who is present in all places and fills all, the treasury of good things and the Life-Giver, graciously come, and dwell in us and purify us from all defilement, O Good One, and save our souls.
5. Just as You were with Your disciples, O Savior, and gave them peace, graciously come also and be with us, and grant us Your peace, and save us, and deliver our souls.
6. Whenever we stand in Your holy sanctuary, we are considered standing in heaven. O Theotokos, you are the gate of heaven; open for us the gate of mercy.

IV. Sayings of the Church Fathers

1. "Holy men ask for peace, not only that which dwells among men in mutual dealings, but that which belongs to ourselves. For oftentimes we wage war in our hearts and are disturbed even when no one troubles us; bad desires also frequently rise up against us." St. John Chrysostom
2. "In truth we should convey the message of peace, and that our very first entrance in any place be attended with the blessing of peace." St. Ambrose of Milan
3. "Wisdom corresponds to the peacemakers, in whom all things are now brought into order, and no passion is in a state of rebellion against reason, but all things together obey the spirit of man, while he himself also obeys God" St. Augustine
4. "To the peacemakers the likeness of God is given, as being perfectly wise, and formed after the image of God by means of the regeneration of the renewed man." St. Augustine