

My song is love unknown...

Christ offers salvation to those who will accept it. We are now preparing to commemorate the great events by which Jesus showed the lengths to which God was willing to go to bring about this salvation - as the celebrant says during the Divine Liturgy, "the cross, the tomb, the resurrection on the third day, the ascension into heaven..."

I offer for your reflection a 17th century hymn attributed to Samuel Crossman. In its words, you will recognize the events related to Jesus' betrayal, suffering, death, and repose in the tomb. We must not forget, however, that there is more to the story. Let us add our voices to the powerful words of Resurrection matins: "Let God arise!" In so doing, we join Adam and Eve in the Resurrection icon, letting ourselves be raised to life with and by Him.

My song is love unknown,
My Saviour's love to me;
Love to the loveless shown,
That they might lovely be.
O who am I, that for my sake
My Lord should take frail flesh and die?

He came from His blest throne
Salvation to bestow;
But men made strange, and none
The longed-for Christ would know:
But O! my Friend, my Friend indeed,
Who at my need His life did spend.

Sometimes they strew His way,
And His sweet praises sing;
Resounding all the day
Hosannas to their King:
Then "Crucify!" is all their breath,
And for His death they thirst and cry.

Why, what hath my Lord done?
What makes this rage and spite?
He made the lame to run,
He gave the blind their sight,
Sweet injuries! Yet they at these
Themselves displease, and 'gainst Him rise.

They rise and needs will have
My dear Lord made away;
A murderer they save,

The Prince of life they slay,
Yet cheerful He to suffering goes,
That He His foes from thence might free.

In life, no house, no home
My Lord on earth might have;
In death no friendly tomb
But what a stranger gave.
What may I say? Heav'n was His home;
But mine the tomb wherein He lay.

Here might I stay and sing,
No story so divine;
Never was love, dear King!
Never was grief like Thine.
This is my Friend, in Whose sweet praise
I all my days could gladly spend.

-Fr. Jim Karepin, op