

Royal Hours of Nativity of our Lord & Savior Jesus Christ As served on the Paramon (Eve) of Nativity on December 24

If the Eve of the Nativity of Christ should fall on Saturday or Sunday, this service of the Royal Hours is chanted on Friday. When this service is thus transferred to December 22 or 23, in all the Hours the Dismissal Hymn of the Eve "As the fruit of David's seed..." is replaced by that of the Forefeast "Be thou ready, Bethlehem..."

THE FIRST HOUR

Priest: Blessed is our God always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

All: Amen.

Priest: Glory to Thee, O God. Glory to Thee. O Heavenly King, Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, Who art in all places and fillest all things, Treasury of blessings and giver of life, come and abide in us, cleanse us from every stain, and save our souls, O Good One.

All: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. (3x)
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.
All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy God, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy Name's sake. Lord, have mercy. (3x)
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Priest: For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory: of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

All: Amen.

Reader: Lord, have mercy. (12x)

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

O come, let us worship and fall down before God our King.

O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, our King and our God.

O come, let us worship and fall down before the Very Christ, our King and our God.

Psalm 5

Unto my words, give ear, O Lord; hear my cry. Attend unto the voice of my supplication, O my King and my God; for unto Thee will I pray, O Lord.

In the morning Thou shalt hear my voice. In the morning shall I stand before Thee, and Thou shalt look upon me; for not a God that willest iniquity art Thou.

He that worketh evil shall not dwell near Thee, nor shall transgressors abide before Thine eyes.

Thou hast hated all them that work iniquity; Thou shalt destroy all them that speak a lie.

A man that is bloody and deceitful shall the Lord abhor.

But as for me, in the multitude of Thy mercy shall I go into Thy house; I shall worship toward Thy holy temple in fear of Thee.

O Lord, guide me in the way of Thy righteousness; because of mine enemies, make straight my way before Thee.

For in their mouth there is no truth; their heart is vain.

Their throat is an open sepulcher, with their tongues have they spoken deceitfully; judge them, O God.

Let them fall down on account of their own devisings; according to the multitude of their ungodliness, cast them out, for they have embittered Thee, O Lord.

And let all them be glad that hope in Thee; they shall ever rejoice, and Thou shalt dwell among them.

And all shall glory in Thee that love Thy name, for Thou shalt bless the righteous.

O Lord, as with a shield of Thy good pleasure hast Thou crowned us.

Psalm 44

My heart hath poured forth a good word; I speak of my works to the king; my tongue is the pen of a swiftly writing scribe.

Comely art Thou in beauty more than the sons of men; grace hath been poured forth on Thy lips, wherefore God hath blessed Thee for ever.

Gird Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O Mighty One, in Thy comeliness and Thy beauty.

And bend Thy bow, and proceed prosperously, and be king, because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and Thy right hand shall guide Thee wondrously.

Thine arrows are sharp, O Mighty One, (under Thee shall peoples fall) sharp in the heart of the enemies of the king.

Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of uprightness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom.

Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity.

Wherefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness more than Thy fellows.

Myrrh and stacte and cassia exhale from Thy garments, from the ivory palaces, whereby they have made Thee glad, they the daughters of kings in Thine honour.

At Thy right hand stood the queen, arrayed in a vesture of inwoven gold, adorned in varied colours.

Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thine ear; and forget thine own people and thy father's house.

And the King shall greatly desire thy beauty, for He Himself is thy Lord, and thou shalt worship Him.

And Him shall the daughters of Tyre worship with gifts; the rich among the people shall entreat thy countenance.

All the glory of the daughter of the King is within, with gold-fringed garments is she arrayed, adorned in varied colours.

The virgins that follow after her shall be brought unto the King, those near her shall be brought unto Thee.

They shall be brought with gladness and rejoicing, they shall be brought into the temple of the King.

In the stead of thy fathers, sons are born to thee; thou shalt make them princes over all the earth.

I shall commemorate thy name in every generation and generation.

Therefore shall peoples give praise unto thee forever, and unto the ages of ages.

Psalm 45

Our God is refuge and strength, a helper in afflictions which mightily befall us.

Therefore shall we not fear when the earth be shaken, nor when the mountains be removed into the heart of the seas.

Their waters roared and were troubled, the mountains were troubled by His might.

The rushings of the river make glad the city of God; the Most High hath hallowed His tabernacle.

God is in the midst of her, she shall not be shaken; God shall help her right early in the morning.

The nations were troubled, kingdoms tottered, the Most High gave forth His voice, the earth was shaken.

The Lord of hosts is with us, our helper is the God of Jacob.

Come and behold the works of God, what marvels He hath wrought on the earth, making wars to cease unto the ends of the earth.

He will crush the bow and will shatter the weapon, and shields will He utterly burn with fire.

Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.

The Lord of hosts is with us, our helper is the God of Jacob.

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory to thee, O God. (3x)

Lord have mercy. (3x)

Chanted on the Eve of Nativity:

APOLYTIKION OF THE PARAMON (EVE) OF THE NATIVITY – TONE 4
(**Joseph was amazed*—short version*)

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

As the fruit of David's seed, Mary was registered of old * with the Elder Joseph in the little town of Bethlehem, * when she conceived with a seedless and pure conception. * Behold, the time was come that she should bear her Child, * but no place was found within the inn for them; * yet the cave proved a delightful palace * for the pure Lady and Queen of all. * For Christ is born now to raise the image that had fallen aforetime.

Chanted when the Hours are transferred to Dec 22 or 23:

DISMISSAL HYMN (APOLYTIKION) OF THE FOREFEAST – TONE 4
(Horologion pg. 351)

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

Be thou ready, Bethlehem, Eden hath opened unto all. * Ephratha, prepare thyself, for now, behold, the Tree of Life * hath blossomed forth in the cave from the holy Virgin. * Her womb hath proved a true spiritual Paradise, * wherein the divine and saving Tree is found, * and as we eat thereof we shall all live, * and shall not die as did Adam. * For Christ is born now to raise the image that had fallen aforetime.

THEOTOKION – TONE 4

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

What shall we call thee, O Full of Grace? Heaven? for thou hast made the Sun of Righteousness to dawn forth. Paradise? for thou hast brought forth the Flower of immortality. Virgin? for thou hast remained incorrupt. Pure Mother? for thou hast held in thy holy embrace a Son, Who is the God of all. Do thou entreat Him to save our souls.

TONE 8

Make ready, O Bethlehem; let the manger be prepared, let the cave show its welcome. The Truth is come, the shadow is passed away; God hath appeared from a Virgin unto men, formed as we are, and deifying that which He hath assumed. Wherefore, Adam is renewed with Eve, as they cry out: Thy good will hath appeared on earth to save our race.

TONE 3

Verse. God shall come out of Thaeman, and the Holy One out of the mountain overshadowed and densely wooded.

Now the prophecy doth press forward to fulfillment, which mystically saith: And thou, Bethlehem in the land of Judah, who preparest the cave, art not the least among the princes; for out of thee shall come unto Me in the flesh a Ruler of the nations, even Christ our God, from a Virgin Maiden; He shall shepherd His people, the new Israel. Let us all render majesty unto Him.

Verse. O Lord, I have heard Thy report, and I was afraid; O Lord, I considered Thy works, and I was amazed.

Now the prophecy doth press forward to fulfillment, which mystically saith: And thou, Bethlehem in the land of Judah, who preparest the cave, art not the least among the princes; for out of thee shall come unto Me in the flesh a Ruler of the nations, even Christ our God, from a Virgin Maiden; He shall shepherd His people, the new Israel. Let us all render majesty unto Him.

TONE 8

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

This saith Joseph to the Virgin: O Mary, what is this spectacle that I behold in thee? I am at a loss and sore amazed, and my mind is stricken with dismay; wherefore depart from my sight straightway. O Mary, what is this spectacle that I behold in thee? In the stead of honor, thou hast brought me shame; in the stead of gladness, sorrow; in the stead of praise, condemnation. No longer, therefore, shall I bear the reproach of men; for I received thee from the priests of the temple as one blameless before the Lord. And what is this that I now behold? (**cadence**)

THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY

Priest: Let us attend!

Reader: The Lord hath said to Me: Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the gentiles for Thine inheritance.

Priest: Wisdom!

Reader: The reading from the prophecy of Micah. (5:2-4)

Priest: Let us attend!

Reader: These things the Lord doth say: And thou, O Bethlehem Ephratha, who art little to be among the clans of Judah, from thee shall come forth for Me One Who is to be ruler in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore, He shall give them up until the time when she who is in travail has brought forth; then the rest of His brethren shall return to the people of Israel. And He shall stand and feed His flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the Name of the Lord his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now He shall be great to the ends of the earth.

THE EPISTLE

Priest: Wisdom!

Reader: The reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews. (1:1-12)

Priest: Let us attend!

Reader: Brethren, in many and various ways, God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days He has spoken to us by a Son, Whom He appointed the heir of all things, through Whom also He created the world. He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of His nature, upholding the universe by His word of power. When He had made purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name He has obtained is more excellent than theirs. For to what angel did God ever say, “Thou art My Son, today I have begotten thee”? Or again, “I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a son”? And again, when He brings the First-born into the world, He says, “Let all God’s angels worship Him.” Of the angels He says, “Who makes His angels winds, and His servants flames of fire.” But of the Son He says, “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever, the righteous scepter is the scepter of Thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, thy God, has anointed thee with the oil of gladness beyond thy comrades.” And, “Thou, Lord, didst found the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of Thy hands; they will perish, but Thou remainest; they will all grow old like a garment, like a mantle Thou wilt roll them up, and they will be changed. But Thou art the same, and Thy years will never end.”

THE GOSPEL

Priest: Wisdom! Attend! Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Peace be to all.

All: And to thy spirit.

Priest: The reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. (1:18-25)

All: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

Priest: Let us attend!

Priest: Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit; and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary for thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and His name shall be called Emmanuel" (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife, but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called His name Jesus.

All: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

Reader: My steps do Thou direct according to Thy saying, and let no iniquity have dominion over me. Deliver me from the false accusation of men, and I will keep Thy commandments. Make Thy face to shine upon Thy servant, and teach me Thy statutes. Let my mouth be filled with Thy praise, O Lord, that I may hymn Thy glory and Thy majesty all the day long.

Reader: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. (3x)
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever,
and unto ages of ages. Amen.
All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master,
pardon our iniquities. Holy God, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy Name's
sake.
Lord, have mercy. (3x)
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever,
and unto ages of ages. Amen.
Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come;
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and
lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Priest: For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory: of the Father, and of
the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Reader: Amen.

KONTAKION OF PREPARATION OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY - TONE 3



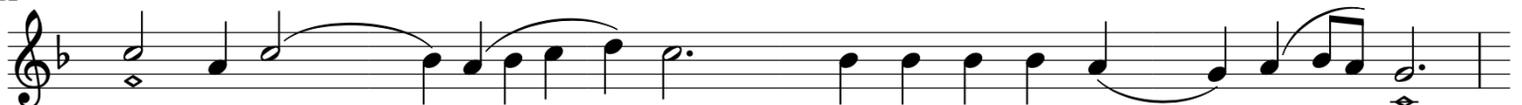
On this day the Vir - gin co - meth to the cave to give birth

6



to God the Word in - e - ffa-bly Who was be - fore all the a - ges.

12



Dance for joy, O earth, on hear - ing the glad ti - dings;

17



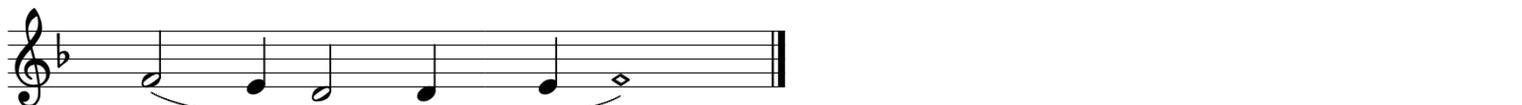
with the an - gels and the shepherds now glo - ri - fy Him, Who is will - ing

21



to be ga - zed on, as a young child, Who be - fore the a - ges is

25



God.

Reader: Lord have mercy. (40x)

Thou who, at all times and at every hour, both in heaven and on earth art worshipped and glorified, O Christ God, long-suffering, plenteous in mercy and compassion, who lovest the just and showest mercy to sinners, who callest all men to salvation through the promise of good things to come: Do Thou, the same Lord, receive also our supplications at this present hour, and direct our lives according to Thy commandments. Sanctify our souls; purify our bodies; set aright our minds; cleanse our thoughts; and deliver us from all calamity, wrath and distress. Compass us round about with Thy holy Angels; that guided and guarded by their hosts, we may attain unto the unity of the faith, and unto the comprehension of Thine ineffable glory. For blessed art thou unto ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

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

More honorable than the cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim, thou who without corruption bearest God the Word and art truly Theotokos: We magnify thee.

Bless, father in the name of the Lord.

Priest: May God have compassion upon us and bless us; may he show the light of his countenance upon us and be merciful unto us.

Reader: Amen.

Priest: O Christ, the true Light, which illumineth and sanctifieth every man who cometh into the world: Let the light of Thy countenance be signed upon us, that in it we may behold the Light unapproachable. Guide our footsteps aright, to the keeping of Thy commandments, through the intercessions of Thine all-immaculate Mother and of all Thy saints. Amen.

THE THIRD HOUR

Reader: O come, let us worship and fall down before God our King.
O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, our King and our God.
O come, let us worship and fall down before the Very Christ, our King and our God.

Psalm 66

God be gracious unto us and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us and have mercy on us, that we may know upon the earth Thy way, among all the nations Thy salvation.

Let the peoples give Thee praise, O God, let all the peoples praise Thee.

Let the nations be glad and rejoice, for Thou shalt judge peoples with uprightness; and nations shalt Thou guide upon the earth.

Let the peoples give Thee praise, O God, let all the peoples praise Thee; the earth hath yielded her fruit.

Let God, our God, bless us; let God bless us, and let all the ends of the earth fear Him.

Psalm 86

His foundations are in the holy mountains; the Lord loveth the gates of Sion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.

Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God.

I will make mention of Raab and Babylon to them that know me.

And lo, the foreigners and Tyre and the people of the Ethiopians, these were born there.

A man will say: Mother Sion; and: That man was born in her; and: The Most High Himself hath founded her.

The Lord shall tell it in the writ of the peoples and the princes, even these that were born in her.

How joyous are all they that have their habitation in Thee.

Psalm 50

Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy Great Mercy; and according to the multitude of Thy compassions blot out my transgression.

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I know mine iniquity, and my sin is ever before me.

Against Thee only have I sinned and done this evil before Thee, that Thou mightest be justified in Thy words, and prevail when Thou art judged.

For behold, I was conceived in iniquities, and in sins did my mother bear me.

For behold, Thou hast loved truth; the hidden and secret things of Thy wisdom hast Thou made manifest unto me.

Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be made clean; Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow.

Thou shalt make me to hear joy and gladness; the bones that be humbled, they shall rejoice.

Turn Thy face away from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.

Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and with Thy governing Spirit establish me.

I shall teach transgressors Thy ways, and the ungodly shall turn back unto Thee.

Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, Thou God of my salvation; my tongue shall rejoice in Thy righteousness.

O Lord, Thou shalt open my lips, and my mouth shall declare Thy praise.

For if Thou hadst desired sacrifice, I had given it; with whole-burnt offerings Thou shalt not be pleased.

A sacrifice unto God is a broken spirit; a heart that is broken and humbled God will not despise.

Do good, O Lord, in Thy good pleasure unto Zion, and let the walls of Jerusalem be built up.

Then shalt Thou be pleased with a sacrifice of righteousness, with oblation and whole-burnt offerings.

Then shall they offer bullocks upon Thine altar.

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory to thee, O God. (3x)

Lord have mercy. (3x)

Chanted on the Eve of Nativity:

APOLYTIKION OF THE PARAMON (EVE) OF THE NATIVITY – **TONE 4**
(**Joseph was amazed*—short version*)

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Chanted when the Hours are transferred to Dec 22 or 23:

DISMISSAL HYMN (APOLYTIKION) OF THE FOREFEAST – **TONE 4**
(Horologion pg. 351)

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Be thou ready, Bethlehem, Eden hath opened unto all. * Ephratha, prepare thyself, for now, behold, the Tree of Life * hath blossomed forth in the cave from the holy Virgin. * Her womb hath proved a true spiritual Paradise, * wherein the divine and saving Tree is found, * and as we eat thereof we shall all live, * and shall not die as did Adam. * For Christ is born now to raise the image that had fallen aforetime.

THEOTOKION – TONE 4

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

O Theotokos, thou art the true vine that hath blossomed forth the Fruit of Life. Thee do we supplicate: Intercede, O Lady, together with the Apostles and all the Saints that our souls find mercy.

TONE 6

This is our God; and there shall none other be accounted of in comparison of Him, even He that is born of a Virgin, and dwelleth among men. Laid in a poor manger, the Only-begotten Son is manifest as a mortal, and the Lord of Glory is wrapped in swaddling clothes. A star revealeth Him to the Magi, that they might worship Him; and we sing: O Holy Trinity, save our souls.

TONE 8

Verse. God shall come out of Thaeman, and the Holy One out of a mountain overshadowed and densely wooded.

Before Thy birth, O Lord, as the noetic hosts looked with trembling on the mystery, they were struck with awe: for Thou Who hast adorned the vault of heaven with stars, wast well pleased to be born as a little babe; and Thou wast laid in a manger of dumb beasts, Who holdest all the uttermost parts of the earth in Thy hand. For by such a dispensation hath Thy compassion been made known. O Christ, our great mercy, glory be to Thee.

Verse. O Lord, I have heard Thy report, and I was afraid; O Lord, I considered Thy works, and I was amazed.

Before Thy birth, O Lord, as the noetic hosts looked with trembling on the mystery, they were struck with awe: for Thou Who hast adorned the vault of heaven with stars, wast well pleased to be born as a little babe; and Thou wast laid in a manger of dumb beasts, Who holdest all the uttermost parts of the earth in Thy hand. For by such a dispensation hath Thy compassion been made known. O Christ, our great mercy, glory be to Thee.

TONE 3

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

Tell us, O Joseph, how is it thou bringest to Bethlehem, great with child, her whom thou hast received from the temple as a virgin? I have searched the Prophets, saith he, and have been instructed by an Angel, and I am persuaded that Mary shall give birth to God in a manner past interpretation. In homage unto Him, Magi shall come from the East, worshipping Him with precious gifts. O Thou Who wast incarnate for our sakes, Lord, glory be to Thee.

(cadence)

THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY

Priest: Let us attend!

Reader: For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given. Whose government is come upon His shoulder.

Priest: Wisdom!

Reader: The reading from the prophecy of Jeremias. (Baruch 3:35-4:4)

Priest: Let us attend!

Reader: This is our God, and there shall none other be accounted of in comparison of Him. He hath found out all the way of knowledge, and hath given it unto Jacob His child, and to Israel His beloved. Afterward, He was seen upon earth, and lived among men. This is the book of the commandments of God, and the law that endureth forever; all they that keep it shall come to life, but such as leave it shall die. Turn thee, O Jacob, and take hold of it; walk in the presence of the light thereof, that thou mayest be illuminated. Give not thy glory to another, nor the things that are profitable unto thee to a strange nation. O Israel, blessed are we: for the things that are pleasing to God are made known to us.

THE EPISTLE

Priest: Wisdom!

Reader: The reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians. (3:23-29)

Priest: Let us attend!

Reader: Brethren, before faith came, we were kept under the Law, shut up unto the faith which would afterwards be revealed. Wherefore, the Law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But with the coming of faith, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all ye that have been baptized in Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be of Christ, then ye are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

THE GOSPEL

Priest: Wisdom! Attend! Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Peace be to all.

All: And to thy spirit.

Priest: The reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. (2:1-20)

All: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

Priest: Let us attend!

Priest: And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

All: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

Reader: Blessed is the Lord God, blessed is the Lord day by day; the God of our salvation shall prosper us along the way; our God is the God of salvation.

Reader: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. (3x)
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.
All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy God, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy Name's sake.
Lord, have mercy. (3x)
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.
Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Priest: For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory: of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

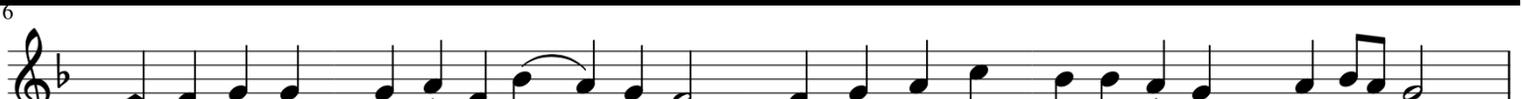
Reader: Amen.

KONTAKION OF PREPARATION OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY - TONE 3



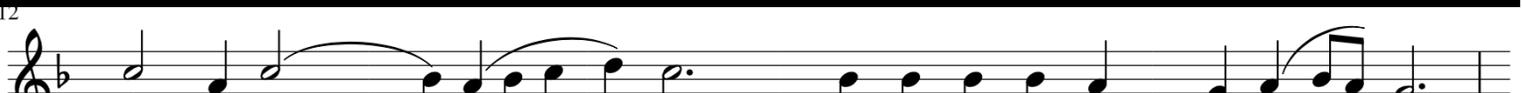
On this day the Vir - gin co - meth to the cave to give birth

6



to God the Word in - e - ffa-bly Who was be - fore all the a - ges.

12



Dance for joy, O earth, on hear - ing the glad ti - dings;

17



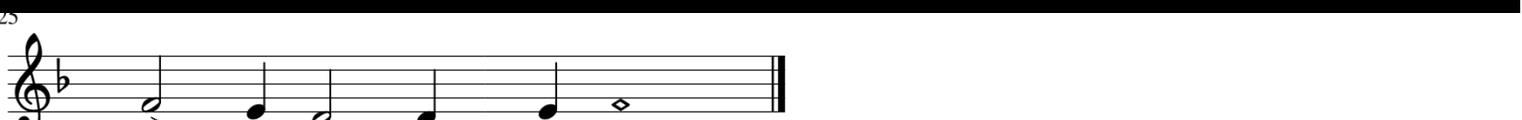
with the an - gels and the shepherds now glo - ri - fy Him, Who is will - ing

21



to be ga - zed on, as a young child, Who be - fore the a - ges is

25



God.

Reader: Lord have mercy. (40x)

Thou who, at all times and at every hour, both in heaven and on earth art worshipped and glorified, O Christ God, long-suffering, plenteous in mercy and compassion, who lovest the just and showest mercy to sinners, who callest all men to salvation through the promise of good things to come: Do Thou, the same Lord, receive also our supplications at this present hour, and direct our lives according to Thy commandments. Sanctify our souls; purify our bodies; set aright our minds; cleanse our thoughts; and deliver us from all calamity, wrath and distress. Compass us round about with Thy holy Angels; that guided and guarded by their hosts, we may attain unto the unity of the faith, and unto the comprehension of Thine ineffable glory. For blessed art thou unto ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

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

More honorable than the cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim, thou who without corruption bearest God the Word and art truly Theotokos: We magnify thee.

Bless, father in the name of the Lord.

Priest: May God have compassion upon us and bless us; may he show the light of his countenance upon us and be merciful unto us.

Reader: Amen.

Priest: O Master God, Almighty Father, O Lord, the only-begotten Son Jesus Christ, and O Holy Spirit, one Godhead and one Power: Have mercy on me a sinner; and by the judgments which Thou hast established, save me, Thine unworthy servant, for Thou art blessed unto ages of ages. Amen.

THE SIXTH HOUR

Reader: O come, let us worship and fall down before God our King.
O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, our King and our God.
O come, let us worship and fall down before the Very Christ, our King and our God.

Psalm 71

O God, give Thy judgement to the king, and Thy righteousness to the son of the king,

That he may judge Thy people with righteousness, and Thy poor with judgement.

Let the mountains receive peace for the people, and let the hills receive righteousness.

He shall judge the beggars among the people, and shall save the sons of the poor, and shall humble the false accuser.

And He shall continue as long as the sun, and before the moon from generation to generation.

He shall come down like rain upon a fleece, and like rain-drops that fall upon the earth.

In His days shall righteousness dawn forth an abundance of peace, until the moon be taken away.

And He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the rivers even unto the ends of the inhabited earth.

Before Him shall the Ethiopians fall down, and His enemies shall lick the dust.

The kings of Tharsis and the islands shall bring gifts, kings of the Arabians and of Saba shall bring presents.

And all the kings of the earth shall worship Him, all the nations shall serve Him,

For He hath delivered the beggar from the oppressor, and the poor man for whom there was no helper.

He shall spare the poor man and the pauper, and the souls of the poor shall He save.

From usury and from injustices shall He redeem their souls, and precious shall be His name before them.

And He shall live, and there shall be given unto Him of the gold of Arabia, and they shall make prayer concerning Him always; all the day long shall they bless Him.

He shall be a support in the earth on the summits of the mountains; exalted more than Lebanon shall be His fruit, and they of the city shall flourish like the grass of the earth.

His name shall be blessed unto the ages, before the sun doth His name continue.

And in Him shall be blessed all the tribes of the earth, all the nations shall call Him blessed.

Blessed is the Lord, the God of Israel, Who alone doeth wonders.

And blessed is the name of His glory for ever, and unto the ages of ages.

And all the earth shall be filled with His glory. So be it. So be it.

Psalm 131

Remember, O Lord, David and all his meekness. How he made an oath unto the Lord, and vowed unto the God of Jacob:

I shall not go into the dwelling of my house, I shall not ascend upon the bed of my couch,

I shall not give sleep to mine eyes, nor slumber to mine eyelids, nor rest to my temples,

Until I find a place for the Lord, a habitation for the God of Jacob.

Lo, we have heard of it in Ephratha, we have found it in the plains of the wood.

Let us go forth into His tabernacles, let us worship at the place where His feet have stood.

Arise, O Lord, into Thy rest, Thou and the ark of Thy holiness.

Thy priests shall be clothed with righteousness, and Thy righteous shall rejoice.

For the sake of David Thy servant, turn not Thy face away from Thine anointed one.

The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David, and He will not annul it: Of the fruit of thy loins will I set upon thy throne.

If thy sons keep My covenant and these testimonies which I will teach them,

Their sons also shall sit for ever on thy throne.

For the Lord hath elected Sion, He hath chosen her to be a habitation for Himself.

This is My rest for ever and ever; here will I dwell, for I have chosen her.

Blessing, I will bless her pursuit; her beggars will I satisfy with bread.

Her priests will I clothe with salvation, and her saints with rejoicing shall rejoice.

There will I make to spring forth a horn for David, I have prepared a lamp for My Christ.

His enemies will I clothe with shame, but upon Him shall My sanctification flourish.

Psalm 90

He that dwelleth in the help of the Most High shall abide in the shelter of the God of heaven.

He shall say unto the Lord: Thou art my helper and my refuge. He is my God, and I will hope in Him.

For He shall deliver thee from the snare of the hunters and from every troubling word.

With His shoulders will He overshadow thee, and under His wings shalt thou have hope.

With a shield will His truth encompass thee; thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day,

Nor for the thing that walketh in darkness, nor for the mishap and demon of noonday.

A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but unto thee shall it not come nigh.

Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold, and thou shalt see the reward of sinners.

For Thou, O Lord, art my hope. Thou madest the Most High thy refuge;

No evils shall come nigh thee, and no scourge shall draw nigh unto thy dwelling.

For He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.

On their hands shall they bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Upon the asp and basilisk shalt thou tread, and thou shalt trample upon the lion and dragon.

For he hath set his hope on Me, and I will deliver him; I will shelter him because he hath known My name.

He shall cry unto Me, and I will hearken unto him. I am with him in affliction, and I will rescue him and glorify him.

With length of days will I satisfy him, and I will show him My salvation.

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory to thee, O God. (3x)

Lord have mercy. (3x)

Chanted on the Eve of Nativity:

APOLYTIKION OF THE PARAMON (EVE) OF THE NATIVITY – **TONE 4**
(**Joseph was amazed*—short version*)

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

As the fruit of David's seed, Mary was registered of old * with the Elder Joseph in the little town of Bethlehem, * when she conceived with a seedless and pure conception. * Behold, the time was come that she should bear her Child, * but no place was found within the inn for them; * yet the cave proved a delightful palace * for the pure Lady and Queen of all. * For Christ is born now to raise the image that had fallen aforetime.

Chanted when the Hours are transferred to Dec 22 or 23:

DISMISSAL HYMN (APOLYTIKION) OF THE FOREFEAST – **TONE 4**
(Horologion pg. 351)

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

Be thou ready, Bethlehem, Eden hath opened unto all. * Ephratha, prepare thyself, for now, behold, the Tree of Life * hath blossomed forth in the cave from the holy Virgin. * Her womb hath proved a true spiritual Paradise, * wherein the divine and saving Tree is found, * and as we eat thereof we shall all live, * and shall not die as did Adam. * For Christ is born now to raise the image that had fallen aforetime.

THEOTOKION – TONE 4

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

Seeing that we have no boldness on account of our many sins, do thou beseech Him that was born of thee, O Virgin Theotokos; for the supplication of a Mother availeth much to win the Master's favour. Disdain not the prayers of sinners, O most august one; for merciful is He, and mighty to save, He that deigned to suffer for our sake.

TONE 1

Come, O ye faithful, let us be lifted up with divine inspiration, and let us behold the divine condescension from on high that is made manifest to us in Bethlehem. And being cleansed in mind, by our way of life let us offer virtues in the stead of myrrh, faithfully preparing our entry into the Feast of the Nativity, storing up treasure in our souls and crying: Glory in the highest to God in Trinity, through Whom His good will is revealed to men, that as the Friend of man He may deliver Adam from the ancestral curse.

TONE 4

Verse. God shall come out of Thaeman, and the Holy One out of a mountain overshadowed and densely wooded.

Hearken, O Heaven, and give ear, O earth. Let the foundations be shaken, let trembling lay hold upon the nethermost regions of the earth. For God the Creator hath clothed Himself with fleshly form; and He that with His mighty hand made the creation, is seen to be in the womb of His creature. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgements, and His ways past finding out!

Verse. O Lord, I have heard Thy report, and I was afraid; O Lord, I considered Thy works, and I was amazed.

Hearken, O Heaven, and give ear, O earth. Let the foundations be shaken, let trembling lay hold upon the nethermost regions of the earth. For God the Creator hath clothed Himself with fleshly form; and He that with His mighty hand made the creation, is seen to be in the womb of His creature. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgements, and His ways past finding out!

TONE 5

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

Come, O ye Christ-bearing people, let us behold a wonder that seizeth every mind with amazement; and as we piously worship, let us chant praises with faith. Today a Maiden great with child cometh to Bethlehem to give birth unto the Lord; and choirs of Angels hasten before her. Seeing these things, Joseph the Betrothed cried out: What is this strange mystery in thee, O Virgin? And how shalt thou bring forth a child, thou Heifer that hast not been yoked?

(cadence)

THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY

Priest: Let us attend!

Reader: From the womb before the morning star have I begotten Thee. The Lord said unto my Lord: Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies the footstool of Thy feet.

Priest: Wisdom!

Reader: The reading from the prophecy of Esaias. (7:10-16; 8:1-4, 8-10)

Priest: Let us attend!

Reader: The Lord again spake to Ahaz, saying: Ask for theyself a sign from the Lord thy God in the depth or in the height. And Ahaz said: I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord. And Esaias said: Hear ye now, O house of David; is it a little thing for you to contend with men? and how do ye contend against the Lord? Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; behold, a virgin shall conceive in the womb, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel. Butter and honey shall He eat; before He even knoweth to prefer evil, He shall choose the good. For before the Child shall know good or evil, He refuseth evil, to choose the good. And the Lord said to me: Take to thyself a volume of a great new book, and write in it with a man's pen concerning, The making a rapid plunder of spoils; for it is near at hand. And make Me witnesses of faithful men, Urias the priest, and Zacharias the son of Barachias. And I went into the Prophetess; and she conceived, and bare a son. And the Lord said to me: Call His Name, Spoil quickly, plunder speedily. For before the Child shall know how to call father or mother, He shall take the power of Damascus and the spoils of Samaria before the king of the Assyrians. God is with us. Know, ye nations, and be vanquished; give ear, even unto the utmost part of the earth: Ye that have prevailed, even ye be vanquished. For though ye should prevail again, yet again shall ye be vanquished. And whatsoever counsel ye shall take, the Lord shall bring it to nought. And whatsoever word ye speak, it shall not abide in you. For God is with us.

THE EPISTLE

Priest: Wisdom!

Reader: The reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews. (1:10-2:3)

Priest: Let us attend!

Reader: And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail. But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him?

THE GOSPEL

Priest: Wisdom! Attend! Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Peace be to all.

All: And to thy spirit.

Priest: The reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. (2:1-12)

All: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

Priest: Let us attend!

Priest: Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

All: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

Reader: Let Thy compassions quickly go before us, O Lord, for we are become exceedingly poor. Help us, O God our Savior, for the sake of the glory of Thy Name; O Lord, deliver us and be gracious unto our sins for Thy Name's sake.

Reader: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. (3x)
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever,
and unto ages of ages. Amen.
All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master,
pardon our iniquities. Holy God, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy Name's
sake.
Lord, have mercy. (3x)
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever,
and unto ages of ages. Amen.
Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come;
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and
lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Priest: For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory: of the Father, and of
the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Reader: Amen.

KONTAKION OF PREPARATION OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY - TONE 3



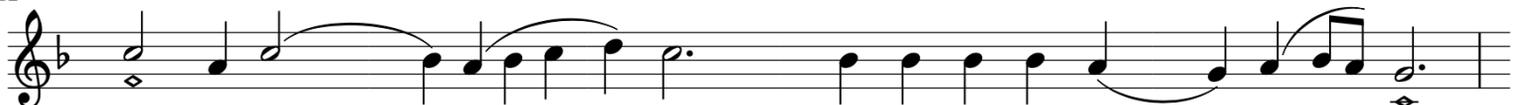
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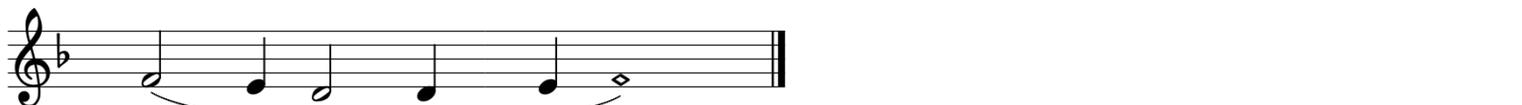
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to be ga - zed on, as a young child, Who be - fore the a - ges is

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God.

Reader: Lord have mercy. (40x)

Thou who, at all times and at every hour, both in heaven and on earth art worshipped and glorified, O Christ God, long-suffering, plenteous in mercy and compassion, who lovest the just and showest mercy to sinners, who callest all men to salvation through the promise of good things to come: Do Thou, the same Lord, receive also our supplications at this present hour, and direct our lives according to Thy commandments. Sanctify our souls; purify our bodies; set aright our minds; cleanse our thoughts; and deliver us from all calamity, wrath and distress. Compass us round about with Thy holy Angels; that guided and guarded by their hosts, we may attain unto the unity of the faith, and unto the comprehension of Thine ineffable glory. For blessed art thou unto ages of ages. Amen.

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More honorable than the cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim, thou who without corruption bearest God the Word and art truly Theotokos: We magnify thee.

Bless, father in the name of the Lord.

Priest: May God have compassion upon us and bless us; may he show the light of his countenance upon us and be merciful unto us.

Reader: Amen.

Priest: O God and Lord of hosts and Maker of all things created, who through the tender-hearted compassion of Thine incomparable mercy didst send down Thine only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, for the salvation of our race, and by His precious cross didst destroy the handwriting of our sins and didst thereby triumph over the origin and powers of darkness: Do thou, the same Lord, Who lovest mankind, receive also these thanksgivings and fervent prayers of us sinners. And deliver us from every harmful and gloomy transgression and from all enemies, both visible and invisible, who seek after us to destroy us. Nail our flesh with the fear of thee, and incline not our hearts to words or thoughts of wickedness; but wound our souls with the love of Thee, that looking ever unto Thee and guided by Thee in the light, beholding Thee, the Light ineffable and everlasting, we may ascribe unto Thee ceaseless confession and thanksgiving unto the unoriginate Father, together with thine only-begotten Son, and Thine all-holy and good and life-giving Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

THE NINTH HOUR

Reader: O come, let us worship and fall down before God our King.
O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, our King and our God.
O come, let us worship and fall down before the Very Christ, our King and our God.

Psalm 109

The Lord said unto my Lord: Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies the footstool of Thy feet.

A sceptre of power shall the Lord send unto Thee out of Sion; rule Thou in the midst of Thine enemies.

With Thee is dominion in the day of Thy power, in the splendor of Thy saints.

From the womb before the morning star have I begotten Thee. The Lord hath sworn and will not repent: Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedek.

The Lord at Thy right hand hath broken kings in the day of His wrath.

He shall judge among the nations, He shall fill them with dead bodies, He shall crush the heads of many upon the earth.

He shall drink of the brook in the way; therefore shall He lift up His head.

Psalm 110

I will confess Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart, in the council of the upright and in the congregation.

Great are the works of the Lord, sought out in all the things that He hath willed.

Confession and majesty are His work, and His righteousness abideth unto ages of ages.

He made a remembrance of His wondrous deeds; merciful and compassionate is the Lord; He hath given food to them that fear Him.

He will be mindful for ever of His covenant; the power of His works hath He declared unto His people,

That He may give them the inheritance of the nations; the works of His hands are truth and judgement.

Faithful are all His commandments, confirmed unto ages of ages, made in truth and uprightness.

He hath sent redemption unto His people, He hath enjoined His covenant for ever; holy and terrible is His name.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; and all they that foster this have a good understanding.

His praise abideth unto ages of ages.

Psalm 85

Bow down Thine ear, O Lord, and hearken unto me, for poor and needy am I.

Preserve my soul, for I am holy; save Thy servant, O my God, that hopeth in Thee.

Have mercy on me, O Lord, for unto Thee will I cry all the day long; make glad the soul of Thy servant, for unto Thee have I lifted up my soul.

For Thou, O Lord, art good and gentle, and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon Thee.

Give ear, O Lord, unto my prayer, and attend unto the voice of my supplication.

In the day of mine affliction have I cried unto Thee, for Thou hast heard me.

There is none like unto Thee among the gods, O Lord, nor are there any works like unto Thy works.

All the nations whom Thou hast made shall come and shall worship before Thee, O Lord, and shall glorify Thy name.

For Thou art great and workest wonders; Thou alone art God.

Guide me, O Lord, in Thy way, and I will walk in Thy truth; let my heart rejoice that I may fear Thy name.

I will confess Thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart, and I will glorify Thy name forever.

For great is Thy mercy upon me, and Thou hast delivered my soul from the nethermost hades.

O God, transgressors have risen up against me, and the assembly of the mighty hath sought after my soul, and they have not set Thee before them.

But Thou, O Lord my God, art compassionate and merciful, long-suffering and plenteous in mercy, and true.

Look upon me and have mercy upon me; give Thy strength unto Thy servant, and save the son of Thy handmaiden.

Work in me a sign unto good, and let them that hate me behold and be put to shame; for Thou, O Lord, hast holpen me and comforted me.

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory to thee, O God. (3x)

Lord have mercy. (3x)

Chanted on the Eve of Nativity:

APOLYTIKION OF THE PARAMON (EVE) OF THE NATIVITY – TONE 4
(**Joseph was amazed*—short version*)

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

As the fruit of David's seed, Mary was registered of old * with the Elder Joseph in the little town of Bethlehem, * when she conceived with a seedless and pure conception. * Behold, the time was come that she should bear her Child, * but no place was found within the inn for them; * yet the cave proved a delightful palace * for the pure Lady and Queen of all. * For Christ is born now to raise the image that had fallen aforetime.

Chanted when the Hours are transferred to Dec 22 or 23:

DISMISSAL HYMN (APOLYTIKION) OF THE FOREFEAST – TONE 4
(Horologion pg. 351)

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

Be thou ready, Bethlehem, Eden hath opened unto all. * Ephratha, prepare thyself, for now, behold, the Tree of Life * hath blossomed forth in the cave from the holy Virgin. * Her womb hath proved a true spiritual Paradise, * wherein the divine and saving Tree is found, * and as we eat thereof we shall all live, * and shall not die as did Adam. * For Christ is born now to raise the image that had fallen aforetime.

THEOTOKION – TONE 4

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

O Thou Who for our sakes wast born of a Virgin, and didst suffer crucifixion, O Good One, and didst despoil death by death, and as God didst reveal the Resurrection: Disdain them not which Thou hast fashioned with Thy hand; show us Thy love for mankind, O Merciful One; accept the Theotokos that gave Thee birth, who intercedeth for us; and do Thou, our Savior, save a despairing people.

TONE 7

Herod was astonished when he beheld the piety of the Magi; and being overcome with anger, he diligently inquired what time it had come to pass. Mothers were bereaved of their infants, and in a season yet unripe, the babes were bitterly harvested. Breasts grew dry and the channels of milk closed up. Great was the evil! Wherefore, let us, the faithful, piously gathering together, worship the Nativity of Christ.

TONE 2

Verse. God shall come out of Thaeman, and the Holy One out of a mountain overshadowed and densely wooded.

O Virgin, as Joseph was pierced with sorrow on the way to Bethlehem, thou didst cry unto him: Why art thou downcast and troubled, as thou seest me great with child, knowing nothing of the dread mystery that is come to pass in me? Henceforth, cast aside all fear and understand this strange wonder; for in my womb God now descendeth upon the earth because of His mercy, and He hath taken flesh. When He is born, thou shalt see Him according to His good pleasure; and being filled with joy thou shalt worship Him as thy Creator, Whom the Angels ceaselessly praise and glorify with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Verse. O Lord, I have heard Thy report, and I was afraid; O Lord, I considered Thy works, and I was amazed.

O Virgin, as Joseph was pierced with sorrow on the way to Bethlehem, thou didst cry unto him: Why art thou downcast and troubled, as thou seest me great with child, knowing nothing of the dread mystery that is come to pass in me? Henceforth, cast aside all fear and understand this strange wonder; for in my womb God now descendeth upon the earth because of His mercy, and He hath taken flesh. When He is born, thou shalt see Him according to His good pleasure; and being filled with joy thou shalt worship Him as thy Creator, Whom the Angels ceaselessly praise and glorify with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

TONE 6

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

Today / there is born / of the Virgin

He that holdeth all creation / in the palm, of His hand. (3x)

With swaddling clothes is He wrapped as a mortal, / He that is unapproachable / in essence.

God reclineth in a manger, / He that of old / established the heavens / in the beginning.

With milk at the breast, is He nourished, He that in the wilderness / rained manna / on the people.

Magi doth He call to Himself, / He that is / the Bridegroom / of the Church.

Their gifts doth He receive, He that is / the Son / of the Virgin.

We worship Thy Birth, O Christ. (3x)

Show also unto us / Thy divine Theophany.

THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY

Priest: Let us attend!

Reader: A man will say: Mother Sion; and: That man was born in her. His foundations are in the holy mountains.

Priest: Wisdom!

Reader: The reading from the prophecy of Esaias. (9:6-7)

Priest: Let us attend!

Reader: Unto us a Child is born, and unto us a Son is given, Whose government is come upon His shoulder; and His Name shall be called: The Angel of Great Counsel, wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, He that hath authority, the Prince of Peace, the Father of the age to come, for I will bring peace upon the princes, and peace and health to Him. His government shall be great, and of His peace there is no end. It shall be upon the throne of David, and upon his Kingdom, to establish it, and to support it in judgment and righteousness, from henceforth and for evermore. The zeal of the Lord of Sabaoth shall perform this.

THE EPISTLE

Priest: Wisdom!

Reader: The reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews. (2:11-18)

Priest: Let us attend!

Reader: Brethren, both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying: I will declare Thy Name unto My brethren, in the midst of the Church will I hymn Thee. And again: I will put my trust in Him. And again: Behold, I and the children which God hath given Me. Forasmuch then as the children partake of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise partook of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the dominion of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them, who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily He lay hold not of the nature of Angels, but He lay hold of the seed of Abraham. Wherefore, in all things it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren, so that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to help them that are tempted.

THE GOSPEL

Priest: Wisdom! Attend! Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Peace be to all.

All: And to thy spirit.

Priest: The reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. (2:13-23)

All: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

Priest: Let us attend!

Priest: And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son. Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not. But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life. And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee: And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

All: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

Reader: Deliver us not up utterly, for Thy holy Name's sake, neither disannul Thou Thy covenant, and cause not Thy mercy to depart from us, for Abraham's sake, Thy beloved, and for Isaac's sake, Thy servant, and for Israel's, Thy holy one.

Reader: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. (3x)
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever,
and unto ages of ages. Amen.
All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master,
pardon our iniquities. Holy God, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy Name's
sake.
Lord, have mercy. (3x)
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever,
and unto ages of ages. Amen.
Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come;
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and
lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Priest: For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory: of the Father, and of
the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Reader: Amen.

KONTAKION OF PREPARATION OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY - TONE 3



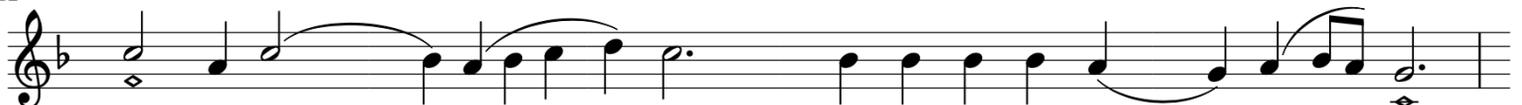
On this day the Vir - gin co - meth to the cave to give birth

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to God the Word in - e - ffa-bly Who was be - fore all the a - ges.

12



Dance for joy, O earth, on hear - ing the glad ti - dings;

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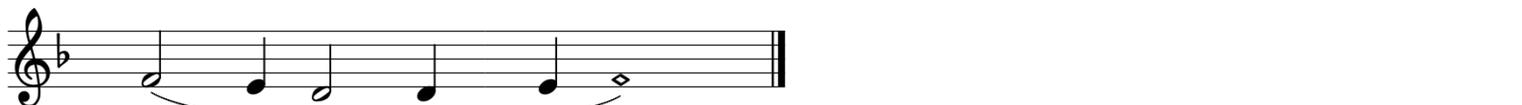
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to be ga - zed on, as a young child, Who be - fore the a - ges is

25



God.

Reader: Lord have mercy. (40x)

Thou who, at all times and at every hour, both in heaven and on earth art worshipped and glorified, O Christ God, long-suffering, plenteous in mercy and compassion, who lovest the just and showest mercy to sinners, who callest all men to salvation through the promise of good things to come: Do Thou, the same Lord, receive also our supplications at this present hour, and direct our lives according to Thy commandments. Sanctify our souls; purify our bodies; set aright our minds; cleanse our thoughts; and deliver us from all calamity, wrath and distress. Compass us round about with Thy holy Angels; that guided and guarded by their hosts, we may attain unto the unity of the faith, and unto the comprehension of Thine ineffable glory. For blessed art thou unto ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

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

More honorable than the cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim, thou who without corruption bearest God the Word and art truly Theotokos: We magnify thee.

Bless, father in the name of the Lord.

Priest: May God have compassion upon us and bless us; may he show the light of his countenance upon us and be merciful unto us.

Reader: Amen.

Priest: O Master, Lord Jesus Christ our God, who art long-suffering toward our sins and who hast led us even to the present hour, in which, as thou didst hang upon the life-giving tree thou didst make a way into paradise for the penitent thief and by death didst destroy death: Be gracious unto us sinners and thine unworthy servants; for we have sinned and dealt iniquitously, and we are not worthy to lift up our eyes and look upon the heights of heaven, inasmuch as we have departed from the path of thy righteousness and have walked after the desires of our own hearts. But we implore of thy boundless goodness: Spare us, O Lord, according to the multitude of thy mercy, and save us, for thy holy name's sake; for our days have passed away in vanity. Wrest us out of the hand of the adversary, and forgive our sins, and mortify our carnal imagination, that, putting off the old man, we may be clothed upon with the new man and may live unto thee, our Master and our Benefactor, and that, so following after thy commandments, we may attain unto rest eternal, where is the abode of all those who rejoice. For Thou art, in verity, the true Joy and Exultation of those who love thee, O Christ our God, and unto thee we ascribe glory, together with thine unoriginate Father and thine all-holy and good and life-giving Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

THE TYPICA
(Plain Reading)

Psalm 102

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all that He hath done for thee,

Who is gracious unto all thine iniquities, Who healeth all thine infirmities,

Who redeemeth thy life from corruption, Who crowneth thee with mercy and compassion,

Who fulfilleth thy desire with good things; thy youth shall be renewed as the eagle's.

The Lord performeth deeds of mercy, and executeth judgment for all them that are wronged.

He hath made His ways known unto Moses, unto the sons of Israel the things that He hath willed.

Compassionate and merciful is the Lord, long-suffering and plenteous in mercy; not unto the end will He be angered; neither unto eternity will He be wroth.

Not according to our iniquities hath He dealt with us, neither according to our sins hath He rewarded us.

For according to the height of heaven from the earth, the Lord hath made His mercy to prevail over them that fear Him.

As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our iniquities from us.

Like as a father hath compassion upon his sons, so hath the Lord had compassion upon them that fear Him; for He knoweth whereof we are made, He hath remembered that we are dust.

As for man, his days are as the grass; as a flower of the field, so shall he blossom forth.

For when the wind is passed over it, then it shall be gone, and no longer will it know the place thereof.

But the mercy of the Lord is from eternity, even unto eternity, upon them that fear Him.

And His righteousness is upon sons of sons, upon them that keep His testament and remember His commandments to do them.

The Lord in heaven hath prepared His throne, and His kingdom ruleth over all.

Bless the Lord, all ye His angels, mighty in strength, that perform His word, to hear the voice of His words.

Bless the Lord, all ye His hosts, His ministers that do His will.

Bless the Lord, all ye His works, in every place of His dominion. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

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

Psalm 145

Praise the Lord, O my soul. I will praise the Lord in my life, I will chant unto my God for as long as I have my being.

Trust ye not in princes, in the sons of men, in whom there is no salvation.

His spirit shall go forth, and he shall return unto his earth.

In that day all his thoughts shall perish.

Blessed is he of whom the God of Jacob is his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God,

Who hath made heaven and the earth, the sea and all that is therein,

Who keepeth truth unto eternity, Who executeth judgement for the wronged,
Who giveth food unto the hungry.

The Lord looseth the fettered; the Lord maketh wise the blind; the Lord setteth aright the fallen; the Lord loveth the righteous; the Lord preserveth the proselytes.

He shall adopt for His own the orphan and widow, and the way of sinners shall He destroy.

The Lord shall be king unto eternity; thy God, O Sion, unto generation and generation.

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

Only-begotten Son and Word of God, Thou Who art immortal, and didst deign for our salvation to become incarnate of the holy Theotokos and Ever-virgin Mary, without change becoming man, and Who wast crucified, O Christ God, trampling down death by death: Thou Who art One of the Holy Trinity, glorified together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, save us.

The Beatitudes

- + In Thy kingdom, remember us, O Lord, when thou comest into Thy kingdom.
- + Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- + Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.
- + Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth.
- + Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.
- + Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy.
- + Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.
- + Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God.
- + Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- + Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake.
- + Rejoice and be glad, for great is your reward in heaven.
- + *Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.*
- + Remember us, O Lord, when thou comest into Thy kingdom.
- + Remember us, O Master, when thou comest into Thy kingdom.
- + Remember us, O Holy One, when thou comest into Thy kingdom.

Typica Stichoi

The heavenly choir praiseth Thee and saith: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord of Sabaoth; heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.

Verse. Come unto Him, and be enlightened, and your faces shall not be ashamed.

The heavenly choir praiseth Thee and saith: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord of Sabaoth; heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.

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

The choir of holy Angels and Archangels, with all the heavenly hosts, praiseth Thee and saith: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord of Sabaoth; heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.

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

The Creed

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only-begotten, begotten before all worlds: Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made, of one essence with the Father by Whom all things were made. Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became man. And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried. And on the third day rose again according to the Scriptures. And ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father. And He shall come again, with glory, to judge the living and the dead, Whose kingdom shall have no end. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of life, Who procedeth from the Father, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; Who spake by the Prophets. And I believe in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the

remission of sins. I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Priest: Pardon, remit, forgive, O God, our offences, both voluntary and involuntary, in deed and word, in knowledge and ignorance, by night and by day, in mind and thought; forgive us all things, since Thou art good and the Friend of man.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Priest: For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory: of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

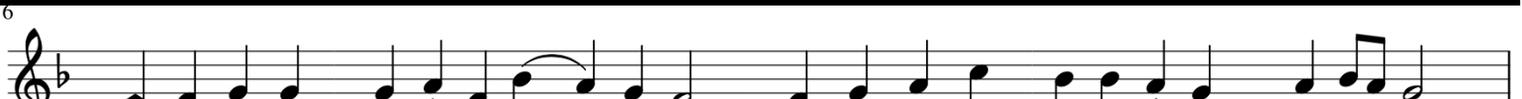
All: Amen.

KONTAKION OF PREPARATION OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY - TONE 3



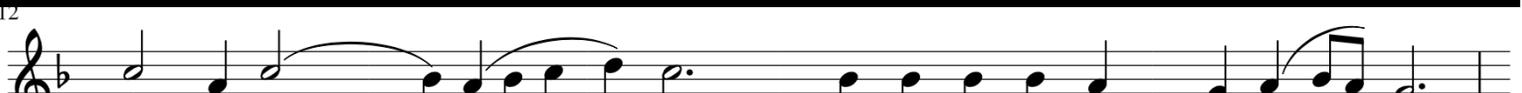
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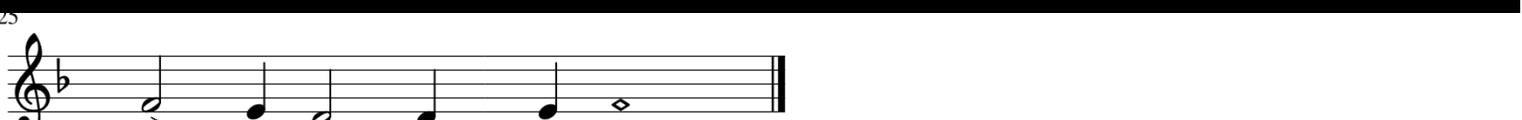
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21



to be ga - zed on, as a young child, Who be - fore the a - ges is

25



God.

Reader: Lord, have mercy. (12x)

Blessed be the Name of the Lord, henceforth and for evermore. (3x)

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

Psalm 33

I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

In the Lord shall my soul be praised; let the meek hear and be glad.

O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together.

I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my tribulations.

Come unto Him, and be enlightened, and your faces shall not be ashamed.

This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his tribulations.

The angel of the Lord will encamp round about them that fear Him, and will deliver them.

O taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that hopeth in Him.

O fear the Lord, all ye His saints; for there is no want to them that fear Him.

Rich men have turned poor and gone hungry; but they that seek the Lord shall not be deprived of any good thing.

Come ye children, hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord.

What man is there that desireth life, who loveth to see good days?

Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.

Turn away from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.

The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are opened unto their supplication.

The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, utterly to destroy the remembrance of them from the earth.

The righteous cried, and the Lord heard them, and He delivered them out of all their tribulations.

The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart, and He will save the humble of spirit.

Many are the tribulations of the righteous, and the Lord shall deliver them out of them all.

The Lord keepeth all their bones, not one of them shall be broken.

The death of sinners is evil, and they that hate the righteous shall do wrong.

The Lord will redeem the souls of His servants, and none of them will do wrong that hope in Him.

The Dismissal

Priest: Glory to Thee, O Christ our God and our hope, glory to Thee.

All: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen. Lord, have mercy (3x).
Father, bless.

Priest: May Christ our true God ... forasmuch as He is good and loveth mankind. Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us and save us.

All: Amen.