

FESTAL ORTHROS ON DECEMBER 25

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST

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

Choir: Amen.

People: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. (THRICE)
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. (THRICE)

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 evil.

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.

Choir: Amen. (Choir continues.)

O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance, granting to Thy people victory over all their enemies, and by the power of Thy Cross preserving Thy commonwealth.

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

Do Thou, Who of Thine own good will wast lifted up upon the Cross, O Christ our God, bestow Thy bounties upon the new Nation which is called by Thy Name; make glad in Thy might those who lawfully govern, that with them we may be led to victory over our adversaries, having in Thine aid a weapon of peace and a trophy invincible.

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

O Champion dread, who cannot be put to confusion, despise not our petitions, O Good and All-praised Theotokos; establish the way of the Orthodox; save those who have been called upon to govern us, leading us to that victory which is from heaven, for thou art she who gavest birth to God, and alone art blessed.

EKTENIA

Priest: Have mercy on us, O God, according to Thy great goodness, we pray Thee, hearken and have mercy.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)

Priest: Again we pray for all pious and Orthodox Christians.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)

Priest: Again we pray for our father and Metropolitan PHILIP, for our Bishop JOSEPH, and for all our Brotherhood in Christ.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)

Priest: For Thou art a merciful God and lovest mankind, and unto Thee we ascribe glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen. Bless, Father, in the Name of the Lord.

Priest: Glory to the Holy, Consubstantial, Life-giving and Undivided Trinity, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good will toward men. (THRICE)

O Lord, open Thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Thy praise. (TWICE)

PSALM 3

O Lord, why are they multiplied that afflict me? Many rise up against me. Many say unto my soul: There is no salvation for him in his God. But Thou, O Lord, art my helper, my glory, and the lifter up of my head. I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and He heard me out of His holy mountain. I laid me down and slept; I awoke, for the Lord will help me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people that set themselves against me round about. Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God, for Thou hast smitten all who without cause are mine enemies; the teeth of sinners hast Thou broken. Salvation is of the Lord, and Thy blessing is upon Thy people.

I laid me down and slept; I awoke, for the Lord will help me.

PSALM 37

O Lord, rebuke me not in Thine anger, nor chasten me in Thy wrath. For Thine arrows are fastened in me, and Thou hast laid Thy hand heavily upon me. There is no healing in my flesh in the face of Thy wrath; and there is no peace in my bones in the face of my sins. For mine iniquities are risen higher than my head; as a heavy burden have they pressed heavily upon me. My bruises are become noisome and corrupt in the face of my folly. I have been wretched and utterly bowed down until the end; all the day long I went with downcast face. For my loins are filled with mocking, and there is no healing in my flesh. I am afflicted and humbled exceedingly, I have roared from the groaning of my heart. O Lord, before Thee is all my desire, and my groaning is not hid from Thee. My heart is troubled, my strength hath failed me; and the light of mine eyes, even this is not with me. My friends and my neighbors drew nigh over against me and stood, and my nearest of kin stood afar off. And they that sought after my soul used violence; and they that sought evils for me spake vain things, and craftiness all the day long did they meditate. But as for me, like a deaf man I heard them not, and was as a speechless man that openeth not his mouth. And I became as a man that heareth not, and that hath in his mouth no reproofs. For in Thee have I hoped, O Lord; Thou wilt hearken unto me, O Lord my God. For I said: Let never mine enemies rejoice over me; yea, when my feet were shaken, those men spake boastful words against me. For I am ready for scourges, and my sorrow is continually before me. For I will declare mine iniquity, and I will take heed concerning my sin. But mine enemies live and are made stronger than I, and they that hated me unjustly are multiplied. They that render me evil for good slandered me, because I pursued goodness. Forsake me not, O Lord my God, depart not from me. Be attentive unto my help, O Lord of my salvation.

Forsake me not, O Lord my God, depart not from me. Be attentive unto my help, O Lord of my salvation.

PSALM 62

O God, my God, unto Thee I rise early at dawn. My soul hath thirsted for Thee; how often hath my flesh longed after Thee in a land barren and untrodden and unwatered. So in the sanctuary have I appeared before Thee to see Thy power and Thy glory, For Thy mercy is better than lives; my lips shall praise Thee. So shall I bless Thee in my life, and in Thy name will I lift up my hands. As with marrow and fatness let my soul be filled, and with lips rejoicing shall my mouth praise Thee. If I remembered Thee on my bed, at the dawn I meditated on Thee. For Thou art become my helper; in the shelter of Thy wings will I rejoice. My soul hath cleaved after Thee; Thy right hand hath been quick to help me. But as for these, in vain have they sought after my soul; they shall go into the nethermost parts of the earth, they shall be surrendered unto the edge of the sword; portions for foxes shall they be. But the king shall be glad in God, everyone shall be praised that sweareth by Him; for the mouth of them is stopped that speak unjust things.

At the dawn I meditated on Thee. For Thou art become my helper; in the shelter of Thy wings will I rejoice. My soul hath cleaved after Thee; Thy right hand hath been quick to help 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. (THRICE)
Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)

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

PSALM 87

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

O Lord God of my salvation, by day have I cried and by night before Thee. Let my prayer come before Thee, bow down Thine ear unto my supplication, for filled with evils is my soul, and my life unto Hades hath drawn nigh. I am counted with them that go down into the pit; I am become as a man without help, free among the dead, like the bodies of the slain that sleep in the grave, whom Thou rememberest no more, and they are cut off from Thy hand. They laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness and in the shadow of death. Against me is Thine anger made strong, and all Thy billows hast Thou brought upon me. Thou hast removed my friends afar from me; they have made me an abomination unto themselves. I have been delivered up, and have not come forth; mine eyes are grown weak from poverty. I have cried unto Thee, O Lord, the whole day long; I have stretched out my hands unto Thee. Nay, for the dead wilt Thou work wonders? Or shall physicians raise them up that they may give thanks unto Thee? Nay, shall any in the grave tell of Thy mercy, and of Thy truth in that destruction? Nay, shall Thy wonders be known in that darkness, and Thy righteousness in that land that is forgotten? But as for me, unto Thee, O Lord, have I cried; and in the morning shall my prayer come before Thee. Wherefore, O Lord, dost Thou cast off my soul and turnest Thy face away from me? A poor man am I, and in troubles from my youth; yea, having been exalted, I was humbled and brought to distress. Thy furies have passed upon me, and Thy terrors have sorely troubled me. They came round about me like water, all the day long they compassed me about together. Thou hast removed afar from me friend and neighbor, and mine acquaintances because of my misery.

O Lord God of my salvation, by day have I cried and by night before Thee. Let my prayer come before Thee, bow down Thine ear unto my supplication.

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.

In every place of His dominion, bless the Lord, O my soul.

PSALM 142

O Lord, hear my prayer, give ear unto my supplication in Thy truth; hearken unto me in Thy righteousness. And enter not into judgment with Thy servant, for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified. For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath humbled my life down to the earth. He hath sat me in darkness as those that have been long dead, and my spirit within me is become despondent; within me my heart is troubled. I remembered days of old, I meditated on all Thy works, I pondered on the creations of Thy hands. I stretched forth my hands unto Thee; my soul thirsteth after Thee like a waterless land. Quickly hear me, O Lord; my spirit hath fainted away. Turn not Thy face away from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit. Cause me to hear Thy mercy in the morning; for in Thee have I put my hope. Cause me to know, O Lord, the way wherein I should walk; for unto Thee have I lifted up my soul. Rescue me from mine enemies, O Lord; unto Thee have I fled for refuge. Teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God. Thy good Spirit shall lead me in the land of uprightness; for Thy name's sake, O Lord, shalt Thou quicken me. In Thy righteousness shalt Thou bring my soul out of affliction, and in Thy mercy shalt Thou utterly destroy mine enemies. And Thou shalt cut off all them that afflict my soul, for I am Thy servant.

O Lord, give ear unto my supplication and enter not into judgment with Thy servant. (TWICE)
Thy good Spirit shall lead me in the land of uprightness.

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. (THRICE)
O our God and our Hope, glory to Thee!*

THE GREAT EKTENIA

- Deacon: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon: For the peace from above, and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon: For the peace of the whole world, for the good estate of the Holy Churches of God, and for the union of all men, let us pray to the Lord.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon: For this Holy House, and for those who with faith, reverence, and fear of God, enter therein, let us pray to the Lord.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon: For our father and Metropolitan PHILIP, for our Bishop JOSEPH, for the venerable Priesthood, the Deaconate in Christ, for all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon: (In the United States) For the President of the United States, for all civil authorities, and for our Armed Forces everywhere, let us pray to the Lord.
(In Canada) For Her Majesty, the Queen, for the Prime Minister of Canada, for all civil authorities, and for our Armed Forces everywhere, let us pray to the Lord.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon: That He will aid them and grant them victory over every enemy and adversary, let us pray to the Lord.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon: For this city, and for every city and land, and for the faithful who dwell therein, let us pray to the Lord.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon: For healthful seasons, for abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon: For travelers by sea, by land, and by air; for the sick and the suffering; for captives and their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon: For our deliverance from all tribulation, wrath, danger, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us; save us; have mercy on us; and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.
Choir: Lord, have mercy.
Deacon: Calling to remembrance our all-holy, immaculate, most blessed and glorious Lady Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the Saints: let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.
Choir: To Thee, O Lord.
Priest: For unto Thee are due all glory, honor, and worship: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; now and ever and unto ages of ages.
Choir: Amen.

“GOD IS THE LORD” IN TONE FOUR

Choir: God is the Lord Who hath shown us light. Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord.

1. O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good: for His mercy endureth forever.
God is the Lord....
2. All nations compassed me about: but in the Name of the Lord will I destroy them.
God is the Lord....
3. I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord.
God is the Lord....
4. The stone which the builders refused is become the headstone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.
God is the Lord....

APOLYTIKION OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST IN TONE FOUR

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, hath given rise to the light of knowledge in the world; for they that worshipped the stars did learn therefrom to worship Thee, O Sun of Justice, and to know that from the east of the Highest Thou didst come. O Lord, glory to Thee. (THRICE)

THE LITTLE EKTENIA

Deacon: Again and again, in peace, let us pray to the Lord.
Choir: Lord, have mercy.
Deacon: Help us; save us; have mercy on us; and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.
Choir: Lord, have mercy.
Deacon: Calling to remembrance our all-holy, immaculate, most-blessed and glorious Lady Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints: let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.
Choir: To Thee, O Lord.
Priest: For Thine is the majesty, and 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.
Choir: Amen.

KATHISMATA OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST IN TONE FOUR (To Be Chanted)

Come, ye believers, let us see where Christ was born. Let us follow the star whither it goeth with the Magi, kings of the east; for there angels praise Him ceaselessly, and shepherds raise their voices in a worthy song of praise, saying, Glory in the highest to the One born today in a cave from the virgin Theotokos in Bethlehem of Judea.

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

Why wonderest thou, O Mary; and why art thou astonished in thine inner self? And she respondeth, saying, because I have given birth in time to a Son unbound by time; nor do I comprehend the manner of conception of Him that is born. I have known no man; how then give I birth to a son? For who hath yet seen a birth without seed? But since God willeth, the order of nature is overcome, as it hath been written, Christ hath been born of the Virgin in Bethlehem of Judea.

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

He that all containeth not, how was He contained in the womb? And He that is in the bosom of the Father, how shall He be carried in the arms of his Mother? Verily, all this hath been fulfilled as He Himself knew and willed and was pleased to do; for He that is not carnal hath become incarnate by His own choice; and He that is, hath turned for our sakes to that which He was not, sharing our creation, yet inseparable from His essence. Verily, Christ hath been born with two Natures, desiring to perfect the heavenly world.

THE POLYELEOS, PART I: PSALM 134

End each verse with "Alleluia."

- 1: Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the name of the Lord; praise him, O ye servants of the Lord.
- 2: Ye that stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God.
- 3: Praise the Lord; for the Lord is good: sing praises unto His Name; for it is pleasant.
- 4: For the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto Himself, and Israel for His peculiar treasure.
- 5: For I know that the Lord is great, and that our Lord is above all gods.
- 6: Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He in Heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.
- 7: He causeth the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; He maketh lightning for the rain; He bringeth the wind out of his treasuries.
- 8: Who smote the firstborn of Egypt, both of man and beast.
- 9: Who sent tokens and wonders into the midst of thee, O Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his servants.
- 10: Who smote great nations, and slew mighty kings.
- 11: Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og king of Bashan, and all the kingdoms of Canaan.
- 12: And gave their land for a heritage, a heritage unto Israel his people.
- 13: Thy Name, O Lord, endureth forever; and Thy memorial, O Lord, throughout all generations.
- 14: For the Lord will judge His people, and He will repent himself concerning His servants.
- 15: The idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the work of men's hands.
- 16: They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not.
- 17: They have ears, but they hear not; neither is there any breath in their mouths.
- 18: They that make them are like unto them: so is everyone that trusteth in them.
- 19: Bless the Lord, O house of Israel: bless the Lord, O house of Aaron.
- 20: Bless the Lord, O house of Levi: ye that fear the Lord, bless the Lord.
- 21: Blessed be the Lord out of Zion, Who dwelleth at Jerusalem. Praise ye the Lord.

THE POLYELEOS, PART II: PSALM 135

End each verse with "Alleluia."

- 1: O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good: for His mercy endureth forever.
- 2: O give thanks unto the God of gods: for His mercy endureth forever.
- 3: O give thanks to the Lord of lords: for His mercy endureth forever.
- 4: To Him Who alone doeth great wonders: for His mercy endureth forever.
- 5: To Him that by wisdom made the heavens: for His mercy endureth forever.
- 6: To Him that stretched out the earth above the waters: for His mercy endureth forever.
- 7: To Him that made great lights: for His mercy endureth forever.
- 8: The sun to rule by day: for His mercy endureth forever.
- 9: The moon and stars to rule by night: for His mercy endureth forever.
- 10: To Him that smote Egypt in their firstborn: for His mercy endureth forever.
- 11: And brought out Israel from among them: for His mercy endureth forever.
- 12: With a strong hand, and with a stretched out arm: for His mercy endureth forever.
- 13: To Him which divided the Red sea into parts: for His mercy endureth forever.
- 14: And made Israel to pass through the midst of it: for His mercy endureth forever.
- 15: But overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea: for His mercy endureth forever.
- 16: To Him which led his people through the wilderness: for His mercy endureth forever.
- 17: To Him which smote great kings: for His mercy endureth forever.
- 18: And slew famous kings: for His mercy endureth forever.
- 19: Sihon king of the Amorites: for His mercy endureth forever.
- 20: And Og the king of Bashan: for His mercy endureth forever.
- 21: And gave their land for a heritage: for His mercy endureth forever.
- 22: Even a heritage unto Israel his servant: for His mercy endureth forever.
- 23: Who remembered us in our low estate: for His mercy endureth forever.
- 24: And hath redeemed us from our enemies: for His mercy endureth forever.
- 25: Who giveth food to all flesh: for His mercy endureth forever.
- 26: O give thanks unto the God of Heaven: for His mercy endureth forever.

THE LITTLE EKTENIA

- Deacon: Again and again, in peace, let us pray to the Lord.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon: Help us; save us; have mercy on us; and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon: Calling to remembrance our all-holy, immaculate, most-blessed and glorious Lady Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints: let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.
- Choir: To Thee, O Lord.
- Priest: For blessed is Thy Name, and glorified is Thy kingdom: of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages.
- Choir: Amen.

FESTAL ANABATHMOI IN TONE FOUR

- + From my youth up many passions have warred against me. But do Thou help and save me, O my Savior. (REPEAT)

- + Ye who hate Zion shall be put to confusion of the Lord; like grass in the fire shall ye be withered up. (REPEAT)
- + *Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.*
- + Through the Holy Spirit is every soul quickened and exalted in purity, and made resplendent by the Triune Unity in mystic holiness.
- + *Both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.*
- + Through the Holy Spirit the channels and streams of grace overflow showering all creation with invigorating Life.

PROKEIMENON OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST IN TONE FOUR

From the womb before the morning star I begot Thee. The Lord hath sworn, and He shall not repent. (REPEAT)

Stichos: Said the Lord to my Lord, Sit at My right hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.

From the womb before the morning star I begot Thee. The Lord hath sworn, and He shall not repent.

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For Holy art Thou, O our God, Who restest in the Holy Place, and unto Thee we ascribe glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. (TWICE)

Praise ye God in His saints; praise Him in the firm foundation of His power.

Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.

THE FESTAL ORTHROS GOSPEL

Deacon: And that we may be accounted worthy to hear the Holy Gospel, let us pray to the Lord God.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)

Deacon: Wisdom! Attend! Let us hear the Holy Gospel.

Priest: Peace be to all.

Choir: And to thy spirit.

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

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

Deacon: Let us attend!

TO BE READ FROM THE ROYAL DOORS.

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 had commanded him; he took his wife, but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called His Name Jesus.

Choir: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee. (NO VENERATION OF GOSPEL BOOK.)

PSALM 50

Reader: 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.

FESTAL TROPARIA AFTER PSALM 50 IN TONE TWO

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

Today all creatures shall be filled with joy; for Christ hath been born of the Virgin.

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

Today all creatures shall be filled with joy; for Christ hath been born of the Virgin.

(TONE SIX) *Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy loving-kindness: according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.*

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth be peace. Today doth Bethlehem receive Him Who sitteth with the Father forever. Today the angels glorify, as worthy of God, the babe that is born, shouting, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth be peace, and goodwill among men.

THE INTERCESSION

Deacon: O God, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance. Visit Thy world with mercies and bounties. Exalt the estate of Orthodox Christians, and send down upon us Thy rich mercies.

Through the intercessions of our all-immaculate Lady Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary; by the might of the precious and life-giving Cross; by the protection of the honorable bodiless Powers of heaven; at the supplication of the honorable, glorious prophet, forerunner and Baptist John; of the holy, glorious, all-laudable apostles Peter and Paul, and of all the holy apostles; of our fathers among the saints, great hierarchs and ecumenical teachers, Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom; of our fathers among the saints, Athanasios, Cyril and John the Merciful, patriarchs of Alexandria; Nicholas of Myra, Spyridon of Trimythous and Nektarios of Pentapolis, the Wonder-workers; Nicholai of Zicha, who labored in America, Innocent, Evangelizer of Alaska and Tikhon, patriarch of Moscow, Enlighteners of North America; John, Wonderworker of Shanghai and San Francisco, and Raphael, bishop of Brooklyn; of the holy, glorious, great-martyrs, George the Trophy-bearer, Demetrios the Myrrh-streamer, Theodore the Soldier, Theodore the General, and Menas the wonder-worker; of the hieromartyrs Ignatios the God-bearer of Antioch, Charalampos and Eleutherios, and Juvenaly of Iliamna; of the holy, glorious great women martyrs, Thekla, Barbara, Anastasia, Katherine, Kyriaki, Photeini, Marina, Paraskeva and Irene; of the holy, glorious, right-victorious martyrs, especially Peter the Aleut; of our venerable and God-bearing fathers who shone in the ascetic life, Anthony the Great, Seraphim of Sarov, and Herman of Alaska; of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna, and of all Thy Saints: we beseech Thee, O most merciful Lord, hearken unto the petitions of us sinners who make our supplications unto Thee, and have mercy upon us.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (*Twelve times*)

Priest: Through the mercies and compassions and love for mankind of Thine Only-begotten Son, with Whom Thou art blessed, together with Thine all-holy, and good, and life-giving Spirit: now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

KONTAKION AND OIKOS FOR THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST (Plain Reading)

Today the Virgin giveth birth to the Transcendent in essence; the earth offereth the cave to the unapproachable One; the angels with the shepherds glorify Him; and the Magi with the star travel on their way; for a new child hath been born for our sakes, God before the ages.

Bethlehem hath opened Eden: come, and let us see. We have found joy in secret: come, and let us take possession of the paradise that is within the cave. There, the unwatered Root hath appeared, from which forgiveness flowereth forth: there is found the undug Well, whence David longed to drink of old. There, the Virgin hath borne a Babe, and made the thirst of Adam and David to cease straightway. Therefore, let us hasten to this place where now is born a young Child, God before the ages.

THE SYNAXARION (Plain Reading)

On December 25 in the Holy Orthodox Church we celebrate the Nativity according to the flesh of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ.

Verses

The Child born is God, and the Mother, a Virgin; what greater marvel hath appeared in creation?
On the twenty-fifth Mary the Virgin gave birth to God.

On this day we commemorate the Adoration of the Magi:
Worshipping Thee, O Word, this cohort, come from the nations,
Showeth the worship that Thou shalt receive from the nations.

On this day we commemorate the Shepherds that behold the Lord:
Shepherds their own flock do now abandon, and hasten to see Christ, the Good Shepherd.

Thus entered into the world He Whose coming was foretold by the prophets, and Who was born in the same manner in which it had been prophesied: of a Most-holy Virgin, in the town of Bethlehem, of the lineage of David according to the flesh, at the time when there was no king in Jerusalem of the lineage of Judah, but rather when a foreigner named Herod, who sought to kill the infant Messiah, was reigning. After many types and prefigurings, messengers and heralds, prophets and righteous men, wise men and kings, finally He appeared, the Lord of the world and King of kings, to perform the work of the salvation of mankind.

Unto Him be glory unto ages of ages. Amen.

KATAVASIAS OF BOTH CANONS OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY IN TONE ONE

Ode 1 (1). Christ is born, glorify Him. Christ is come from heaven, receive Him. Christ is on earth, be ye elevated. Sing to the Lord, all the earth; and ye nations, praise Him with joy; for He hath been glorified.

Ode 1 (2). The Lord performed a miracle and saved the people when of old He turned the moist waves of the sea into dry land. And having been born now of a Virgin by His own choice, He hath trodden the way for us to Heaven, being equal to the Father and to men in essence; therefore, do we glorify Him.

Ode 3 (1). Let us cry unto the Son, born of the Father before the ages without transubstantiation, Christ God Who hath been incarnate in these last days of the Virgin, without seed, shouting, O Thou Who hath elevated our state, Thou art holy, O Lord.

Ode 3 (2). Incline Thine ear, O glorious benefactor, to the praise of Thy servants, abolishing the boasting of the proud adversary. And help us who sing to Thee to overcome sin, and confirm us on the unshakeable foundation of faith.

Ode 4 (1). O praised Christ, a stem hath come out of Jesse, and from it hast sprouted a Flower from a dense and shadowed mountain, O immaterial God, coming incarnate from the Virgin that hath not known man. Glory, therefore, to Thy might, O Lord.

Ode 4 (2). The Prophet Habakuk of old foretold in song the re-creation of mankind; for he was worthy to behold that sign in an ineffable manner; for the Word did come forth as a new Babe from the mountain of the Virgin, for the re-creation of the nations.

Ode 5 (1). Since Thou art the God of peace and the Father of mercies, O Lover of mankind, Thou didst send to us the great Messenger of Thy mind, granting us Thy peace. Therefore, have we been led aright to the light of divine knowledge, glorifying Thee as we come out of darkness.

Ode 5 (2). Grant forgiveness, O Christ, to us who have been in the darkness of our deeds of error since the night, who eagerly praise Thee, since Thou art our Benefactor; that Thou mayest hasten to us and prepare for us a good way, wherein if we walk we shall find glory and honor.

Ode 6 (1). The sea-monster did disgorge Jonah from its belly, as it received him safely like a fetus. As for the Word, when He dwelt in the Virgin, taking from her a body, He was born, preserving her without corruption, and without transubstantiation, preserving His Mother without harm.

Ode 6 (2). Verily, Jonah when he was in the depth of the sea, begged to ascend to Thee and to be rescued from the tempest. But as for me, having been pierced by the arrows of the tyrant, in Thee I seek refuge, O evil-destroying Christ. Hasten Thou to me and deliver me hastily from my negligence.

Ode 7 (1). The youths having grown together in true worship, despising the command of the infidel, were not dismayed by the threat of fire; but were singing as they stood in the midst of the flames, Blessed art Thou, God of our fathers.

Ode 7 (2). The youths having clung steadfastly to the love of the King of all, ridiculed the prating and blasphemy of the blaspheming usurper. And being filled with wrath, he delivered them to the terrible fire which did not harm them. Wherefore, they lifted their voices to the Master, saying, Blessed art Thou unto all ages.

Ode 8 (1). Verily, the dewy furnace did shadow the sign of the supernatural wonder; for it burned not the youths whom it received, as the fire of divinity also burned not the womb of the Virgin in which it dwelt. Wherefore, let us offer praise with song, saying, Let all creation praise the Lord, exalting Him evermore, to the end of ages.

Let us praise, bless, and worship the Lord.

Ode 8 (2). The youths who were cast of old into the fire and remained unburned, were a sign of the womb of the Maiden who gave birth supernaturally while yet sealed. These two matters grace hath accomplished through one miracle, arousing the nations to praise.

Deacon: The Theotokos and Mother of the Light let us honor and magnify in song.

NINTH ODE OF THE FIRST CANON OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY IN TONE ONE

Magnify, O my soul, her who is more honorable and more exalted in glory than the heavenly hosts.

I behold a strange and wonderful mystery: the cave a heaven, the Virgin a cherubic throne, and the manger a noble place in which hath lain Christ the uncontained God. Let us, therefore, praise and magnify Him.

Magnify, O my soul, the God born in flesh from the Virgin.

When the Magi saw a new and strange star appearing suddenly, moving in a wonderful way, and transcending the stars of heaven in brightness, they were guided by it to Christ, the King born on earth in Bethlehem, for our salvation.

Magnify, O my soul, the King born in a cave.

The Magi said, Where is the Child King, the newborn, Whose star hath appeared? For we have verily come to worship Him. And Herod, the contender against God, trembled, and began to roar in folly to kill Christ.

Magnify, O my soul, the God worshipped by the Magi.

Herod ascertained from the Magi about the time of the star by whose guidance they were led to Bethlehem to worship with presents Christ Who guided them, and so they returned to their country, disregarding Herod, the evil murderer of babes, mocking him.

NINTH ODE OF THE SECOND CANON OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY IN TONE ONE

Today the Virgin giveth birth to the Lord inside the cave.

Verily it is easier for us to endure silence since there is no dread danger therefrom for us. But because of our strong desire, O Virgin, and Mother of sameness, to indite well-balanced songs of praise, this becometh indeed onerous to us. Wherefore, grant us power to equal our natural inclination.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: Magnify, O my soul, the might of the indivisible and three-personed Godhead.

O pure one, Mother of the Word that appeareth newly from thee, O closed door, verily, as we behold the dark shadowy symbols pass away, we glorify the light of the truth and bless thy womb as is meet.

Both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen. Glorify, O my soul, her who hath delivered us from the curse.

The Christ-pleasing people, O Virgin, having deserved to be granted its desire by the coming of God, doth seek now with tears thy help to worship the glory of His enlivening appearance wherein is the renewal of birth; for it is thou who dost distribute grace, O pure one.

HEIRMOI OF BOTH CANONS OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY IN TONE ONE

Ode 9 (1). *Magnify, O my soul, her who is more honorable and more exalted in glory than the heavenly hosts.*

I behold a strange and wonderful mystery: the cave a heaven, the Virgin a cherubic throne, and the manger a noble place in which hath lain Christ the uncontained God. Let us, therefore, praise and magnify Him.

Ode 9 (2). *Magi and shepherds came to worship Christ, Who was born in the city of Bethlehem.*

Verily it is easier for us to endure silence since there is no dread danger there from for us. But because of our strong desire, O Virgin, and Mother of sameness, to begin well-balanced songs of praise, this becometh indeed onerous to us. Wherefore, grant us power to equal our natural inclination.

THE LITTLE EKTENIA

Deacon: Again and again, in peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us; save us; have mercy on us; and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Calling to remembrance our all-holy, immaculate, most-blessed and glorious Lady Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints: let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.

Choir: To Thee, O Lord.

Priest: For all the powers of Heaven praise Thee, and unto Thee do we ascribe glory; to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

THE EXAPOSTELARION OF THE NATIVITY IN TONE THREE

Our Savior hath visited us from on high, from the east of easts. Wherefore, we who are in darkness and shadows have now found the truth; for the Lord hath been born of the Virgin. (THRICE)

AINOI (PRAISES) FOR THE NATIVITY IN TONE FOUR

Choir: Let everything that hath breath, praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord from the heavens: praise Him in the heights. To Thee, O God, is due our song.
Choir: Praise ye Him, all His angels: praise ye Him, all His hosts. To Thee, O God, is due our song.

Verse 1. Praise God in His sanctuary: praise Him in the firmament of His power. Praise Him for His mighty acts: praise Him according to His excellent greatness.

Rejoice, O righteous ones, and ye heavens be glad. Sing with joy, ye mountains, for the Nativity of Christ. The Virgin sitteth like the Cherubim, holding in her bosom God the incarnate Word; the shepherds do glorify Him Who was born. The Magi offer presents to the Lord, and the angels give praise, saying, O Lord, hidden from comprehension, glory to Thee.

Verse 2. Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet. Praise Him with the psaltery and harp.

The Father hath been pleased and satisfied; the Word hath become flesh; and the Virgin hath given birth to incarnate God. The star declaimeth, the Magi worship, the shepherds wonder, and creation rejoiceth.

Verse 3. Praise Him with the timbrel and dance; praise Him with stringed instruments and organs.

O Virgin Theotokos, O thou who hast given birth to the Savior, thou hast revoked the ancient curse of Eve; for thou hast become a Mother according to the will of God, carrying in thy bosom God the incarnate Word. Verily, the mystery is inscrutable; but we all glorify it with faith only, crying with thee and saying, O incomprehensible Lord, glory to Thee.

Verse 4. Praise Him upon the loud cymbals: praise Him upon the high-sounding cymbals. Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.

Come, let us praise the Mother of the Savior, who appeared a Virgin even after birth-giving, crying, Rejoice, O living temple of God the King, in whom Christ having dwelt worked salvation. Wherefore, we with Gabriel do praise, and with the shepherds do glorify thee, crying, O Theotokos, intercede with Him incarnate of thee to save us.

THE DOXASTICA OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST

In Tone Six

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

When it was time for Thy presence on earth, the first enrollment of the world took place. Then it was that Thou didst decide to enroll the names of men who believe in Thy Nativity. Yea, that commandment did issue forth from Caesar, since the everlastingness of Thine eternal kingdom hath been renewed. Wherefore, we offer what is better than moneyed tax; namely, Orthodox theological sayings to Thee, O God, Savior of our souls.

In Tone Two

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

Today Christ is born in Bethlehem of the Virgin. Today the Beginningless doth begin, and the Word becometh incarnate. The powers of heaven rejoice, and earth is glad with mankind. The Magi do offer presents, and the shepherds with wonder declaim. As for us we shout ceaselessly, crying...

- *NOTE: The Choir continues the second Doxasticon, and without pause transitions into the first phrase of The Great Doxology, also in Tone Two.*

THE GREAT DOXOLOGY IN TONE TWO

- + Glory to Thee, Who hast shown us the Light; Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among men.
- + We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee; we give thanks unto Thee for Thy great glory.
- + O Lord, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty; O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ; and the Holy Spirit.
- + O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, Who takest away the sin of the world, have mercy on us; O Thou Who takest away the sins of the world.
- + Receive our prayer, O Thou Who sittest at the right hand of the Father, and have mercy on us.
- + For Thou only art holy, Thou only art the Lord, O Jesus Christ, to the Glory of God the Father. Amen.
- + Every day will I bless Thee, and I will praise Thy Name forever; yea, forever and ever.
- + Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin.
- + Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our Fathers, and praised and glorified be Thy Name forever. Amen.
- + Let Thy mercy, O Lord: be upon us, as we do put our hope in Thee.
- + Blessed art Thou, O Lord: teach me Thy statutes. (THRICE)
- + Lord, Thou hast been our refuge in all generations. I said: Be merciful unto me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee.
- + Lord, I have fled unto Thee: teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God.
- + For with Thee is the fountain of life: in Thy light shall we see light.
- + O continue Thy loving-kindness unto them that know Thee.
- + Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. (THRICE)
- + Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- + Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.
- + Holy Immortal: have mercy on us.
- + Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us.

APOLYTIKION OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST IN TONE FOUR

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, hath given rise to the light of knowledge in the world; for they that worshipped the stars did learn therefrom to worship Thee, O Sun of Justice, and to know that from the east of the Highest Thou didst come. O Lord, glory to Thee.