The Feast of the Nativity

of Our Lord, God and Savior, Jesus Christ

Educational Services
Diocese of Newton
The Feast of the Nativity

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Introduction

Modern duplication systems have made in-house printing easier and less costly. In line with this development, Educational Services published two sets of duplication masters in 1990: *The Small Paraclisis to the Most Holy Theotokos* and *The Services of Holy Pascha*. The present volume conforms to these earlier models.

The music in each of these publications is the work of the late Archimandrite Cyril Haddad, who prepared them for the diocese during his retirement. They have been edited and in some cases completed by Archimandrite Victor Samaha. As in the previous volumes, the text is arranged as a duplication master, from which 5½ x 8½" pew booklets can be prepared.

The Divine Services appointed for Christmas may be celebrated in one of several different ways, depending on the day of the week on which the Feast occurs. Ordinarily the Paramony, December 24, is a strict fast day, leading up to the celebration of the Vesper-Liturgy of St. Basil, which is the first service of the Feast. When the Paramony falls on a Saturday or Sunday, however, the order changes because we do not fast on these days. This accounts for the three different orders of celebration listed below.

*First Occurrence* — If December 25 falls on any day of the week except Sunday or Monday, the order of the Services is:

a. December 24, the Paramony, is a day of solemn fasting. There is no morning Liturgy. The Royal Hours and Typica are served during the day.

b. Vespers is combined with the Liturgy of St. Basil. The vigil consists of Great Compline, incorporating the Liti and Aposticha, followed by Orthros.

c. On December 25, the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom is served.

*Second Occurrence* — If December 25 falls on Sunday, the order of the Services is:

a. Friday, December 23 is kept as a fast day. The Royal Hours and Typica are said during the day.

b. On Friday evening and Saturday morning, the office of the Paramony (December 24) are said. Since there is no fasting on Saturday, we serve the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom in the morning. The readings are those of the Saturday before Christmas.

c. On Saturday evening, the Vigil begins with Great Vespers, followed by Orthros. Great Compline is not used.

d. On Sunday, December 25, the Liturgy of St. Basil is served. The normal Sunday texts of the Resurrection are omitted.

*Third Occurrence* — If December 25 falls on Monday, the order of the Services is:

a. Friday, December 22 is kept as a fast day. The Royal Hours and Typica are said during the day.

b. On Saturday evening and Sunday morning, the office of the Sunday before Christmas is used, together with the office of the Paramony for December 24. On Sunday morning, the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom is served. The readings are those of the Sunday before Christmas.

c. On Sunday evening the Vigil begins with Great Vespers, followed by Orthros. Great Compline is not used.

d. On Monday, December 25, the Liturgy of Saint Basil is served.
Great Vespers

Priest: Blessed is our God at all times, now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Priest: Glory to You, O our God, glory to You!
   O Heavenly King, Consoler, Spirit of Truth, present in all places and filling all things, the Treasury of blessings and the Giver of life: come, O Good One, and dwell in us. Cleanse us of all stain and save our souls.

All: Holy God! Holy mighty One! Holy Immortal One! Have mercy on us (3 times).
   Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever. Amen.
   All-Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, forgive our sins.
   Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, look upon us and heal our infirmities for Your name’s sake.
   Lord, have mercy (3 times).
   Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever. 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 always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Reader: Lord, have mercy (12 times).
Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever. Amen.
Come, let us worship God our King and bow down before Him.
Come, let us worship Christ God our King and bow down before Him.
Come, let us worship Christ, our King and our God, and bow down before Him.

Psalm 103

Bless the Lord, O my soul!
You are very great, O Lord my God.
Clothed in pomp and brilliance,
arrayed with light as with a cloak.
Stretching out the sky as a tent cloth,
covering Your lofty halls with water.
You make the clouds Your conveyance,
You surge on the wings of the wind.
You make spirits Your messengers
and flaming fires Your attendants.
You settle the earth on its firm foundations;
it shall stand unmoved from age to age.
The abyss covers it like a garment;
waters stand over the mountains.
At Your rebuke they will take to flight,
at the peal of Your thunder they will fear.
They hurdle the hills and run down the dales
to the place You have chosen for them.
You have set up a boundary not to be passed:
they shall never return to cover the earth.
Down in the gullies You make springs to rise:
waters shall go down between the mountains.
They shall give drink to the beasts of the field;
wild asses will seek them to quench their thirst.
The birds of the sky will abide by them:
from among the rocks they will raise their song.
From Your lofty halls You refresh the mountains;
the earth shall be fed with the fruit of Your works.
You make green pastures for the cattle
and food plants for the service of man,
So that bread may be brought forth from the earth
and wine that gladdens the heart of man.
So that oil may put a gleam upon his face
and that bread may strengthen the heart of man.
The trees of the plain will be satisfied,
the cedars of Lebanon that He planted.
The sparrows will build their nests in them
and the herons will call them their home.
To the deer belong high mountains
to rodents, the shelter of the rocks.
You have made the moon to mark the seasons;
the sun knows the time of its setting.
You establish darkness and it is night
wherein the forest creatures prowl around.
Young lions roar for their prey
and call out to God for their meat.
As the sun rises, they will come together
and lay themselves down in their dens.
Man will go out to his labor
and work until eventide.
How great are Your works, O Lord.
In wisdom You have wrought them all:
the earth is filled with your creatures.
Even the wide and open sea itself:
within it there are countless creeping things,
living beings small and large.
Upon it there are ships a-sailing
and that great beast You made to have fun.
All of them look up to You
to give them their food in due time.
You provide and they gather up;
You open Your hand and they are full.
You hide Your face and they cringe,
You suspend their breath and they die and return to
their dust.
You send forth their breath and they live;
You renew the face of the earth.
May the Lord's glory endure forever,
may the Lord rejoice in His works.
He looks upon the earth and makes it quake,
He touches the mountains and they smoke.
I will sing to the Lord as long as I live,
I will praise my God as long as I last.
Would that my thoughts be pleasing to Him
and I will rejoice in the Lord.
May the sinners vanish from the earth
and may the wicked be no more.
Bless the Lord, O my soul.
The sun knows the time of its setting,
You establish darkness and it is night
How great are Your works, O Lord!
In wisdom You have wrought them all.
Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
now and always and forever and ever, amen.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia: glory to You, O God. (3 times)
O our Hope, glory to You!

The Great Litany

_Deacon:_ In peace let us pray to the Lord.

_All:_ Lord, have mercy (after each petition).

_Deacon:_ For peace from on high and the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

For peace in the whole world, the well-being of the holy Churches of God and the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.

For this holy place and for those who enter it with faith, reverence and fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.
For our (Arch)Bishop N., the reverend priests, the deacons in Christ, and for all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

For our civil authorities and the armed forces, [that they may be upheld and strengthened in every good deed,] let us pray to the Lord.

For this city, for every city and country place and the faithful dwelling in them, let us pray to the Lord.

For favorable weather, an abundance of the fruits of the earth and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

For the travelers by sea, air and land, for the sick, the suffering, for the captive, and for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and need, let us pray to the Lord.

Help us, save us, have mercy on us and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

Remembering our all-holy, spotless, most highly blessed and glorious Lady the Theotokos, and ever-virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ God.

All: To You, O Lord.

Priest: For all glory, honor and worship are Your due, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.
The Lamplighting Psalms (Tone 2)

Psalm 140

O Lord, I have cried out to You: Hear me, O Lord. O Lord, I have cried out to You: Hear me; Listen to the voice of my supplication, when I cry out to You. Hear me, O Lord.

Let my prayer rise like incense before You and the lifting of my hands like an evening
Chanters: Set a guard, O Lord, before my mouth
and a portal around my lips
Incline my heart away from evil dealings,
from finding excuses for sinful deeds.
In company with men who work iniquity
let me not partake of what they choose.
May a just man chasten me with justice and reprove me;
may the oil of the wicked never touch my head.
Yet even then shall I pray for their welfare.
Their rulers were swallowed near the rock.
My words will be heard for they were sweet:
As a lump of clay broken on the ground
so their bones were strewn near the grave.
To You, Lord, O Lord, my eyes are lifted up;
in You have I hoped: let not my soul be lost.
Keep me from the snare that was set up for me
and from the stumbling blocks of wicked men.
The wicked shall fall into their own nets
while I remain alone until I can escape.

Psalm 141

With my voice I cried out to the Lord,
with my voice I implored the Lord.
Before Him I pour out my supplication,
before Him I declare my distress.
When my breath was escaping me,
then You knew my paths.
On the road upon which I was walking
they set up snares for me.
I looked to my right and observed:
    there was no one friendly to me.
Even flight was denied me:
    there was no one to take care of my life.
I cried out to You, O Lord, and said
    "You are my hope, my share in the land of the living."
Listen to my supplication,
    for I am laid very low.
Deliver me from my oppressors
    for they have overwhelmed me.
Release my soul from its prison
    That I may praise Your name.
The just shall gather around me
    Until You give me my reward.

Psalm 129

Out of the depths I cried out to You, Lord:
    O Lord, listen to me voice.
Let Your ears be attentive
    To the voice of my supplication.
If You retain sins, Lord, O Lord, who will be left?
    With You there is forgiveness.
For Your name's sake, O Lord, I have waited for You;
    My soul has waited for Your word,
    My soul has hoped in the Lord.

From the watch of dawn until the night, from the watch

of dawn, let Is-ra-el long for the Lord.
Come, Let us re-joice in the Lord as we proclaim the present Mystery. The dividing wall of hostility is broken down; the flaming sword turns back; the Cherubim withdraws from the tree of life, and I enjoy again the delight of Paradise from which I had been cast out for my disobedience.

For the immutable Image of the Father, the exact likeness of His eternity takes the form of a servant, coming forth from a virgin Mo-
ther without undergoing change. What He was He continues to be: a true God, and what He was not He assumed, becoming man for his love of mankind. Let us cry out to Him: O God born of the Virgin, have mercy on us.

For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him abundant redemption, and it is He who will redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

When the Lord Jesus was born of the holy Virgin,
all the world was enlightened. The shepherds keep watch in the fields, the Magi adore, the angels sing hymns of praise, while Herod trembles. For God has appeared in the flesh, the Saviour of our souls. Praise the Lord, all you nations, exalt Him all peoples. Your kingdom, O Christ God, is the kingdom of all ages, and your dominion for generation
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ses You, the Image of the Fa-
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ry. O God who are and have e-
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What shall we offer You, O Christ, for You appeared on earth as a man for our sake? Every creature made by You offers You thanks: The angels their hymns, the heaven a star, the magi their gifts, the shepherds their wonder, the earth the cave, and the desert the manger. As for us, we offer mercy on us.

For mighty is His love for us, and the truth of the Lord endures forever.
You a Virgin Mother! O pre-ternal God, have mercy on us.

Glory to the Father and to the Son,

and to the Holy Spirit.

Now and always and for ever and ever,

A-men.

When Augustus reigned alone upon earth,

the many kingdoms of man-kind came to an end; and when You became man of the
pure Virgin, the many gods of idolatry were destroyed. The cities of the world passed under one single rule, and the nations came to believe in one sovereign Godhead. The peoples were enrolled by the decree of Caesar, and we, the faithful were enrolled in the name of your Divinity, O our God who became man. Great is your mercy, O Lord, glory to You.
Deacon: Wisdom! Let us stand!

The Evening Hymn (Tone 2)

All: O Joyful Light of the holy glory of the Father immortal:
    Heavenly, holy, blessed Jesus Christ!
    Since we have come to the setting of the sun
    and have seen the evening light,
    We praise God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
    It is proper for You to be praised at all times with fitting
    melodies,
    O Son of God, Giver of life.
    Therefore the world glorifies You.

There is no prokimenon, but immediately the following readings:

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: A reading from the Book of Genesis (1:1–13)

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Reader: In the beginning God created heaven and earth. The
    earth was formless and desolate and darkness covered the deep,
    and the spirit of God hovered over the waters. Then God said, “Let
    there be light,” and there was light. God saw that the light was
    good. God then separated the light from the darkness. God called
    the light “day”; the darkness He called “night.” There was evening
    and there was morning, the first day. Then God said, “Let there be
    a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it be a divider
    between water and water.” And so it was. God made the firmament
    and separated the water above the firmament from the water under
    it. God called the firmament heaven. God saw that it was good.
    There was evening and there was morning, the second day. Then
    God said, “Let the waters under the heaven come together in one
    place and let the dry land appear.” And so it was. The waters under
    heaven gathered in their places and the dry land appeared. God
called the dry land “earth”; the gatherings of waters He called
“seas.” God saw that it was good. Then God said: “Let the earth sprout vegetation, seed for sowing according to its kind and likeness, and fruit trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to its kind on earth.” And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

_Troparion (Tone 6)_

You were born hidden in a cave, but heaven spoke through a star and proclaimed You to all, O Saviour.

It brought to You the Magi to worship You in faith: with them have mercy on us.

(After each of the following verses, we sing: “It brought to You...”)

**Chanter:** Her foundations are in the holy mountains. The Lord loves the city of Zion more than all the towns of Jacob.

**Chanter:** Glorious things have been said of you, City of God. I will add Egypt and Babylon to the nations that acknowledge you.

**Chanter:** Of Philistia, Tyre and Ethiopia men say “Here so and so was born;” but all call Zion “Mother” since all were born in her and the Most High Himself has founded her.
Chanter: The Lord shall recount it in the register of the nations and the rulers born in her. Happy is the stay of those who dwell in you!

Chanter: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever. Amen.

And the entire Troparion (You were born, hidden in a cave...) is repeated.

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: A reading from the Book of Numbers (24:5–9, 17,18).

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Reader: The spirit of God came upon Balaam and he uttered this oracle: “How goodly your houses, Jacob, your tents, Israel! Like shady groves, like gardens by rivers, like tents which the Lord has pitched, like cedar along waters. One will come from his seed and will rule over many nations; his rule will be exalted and will increase. God will guide him out of Egypt like his glorious unicorn. He will consume the nations of his enemies, drain their marrow and shoot down his enemies with his arrows. He lay down and rested like a lion, and like a lion’s cub; who will rouse him?

“Those who bless you are blessed; those who curse you are cursed. A star will shine forth from Jacob; a man will rise from Israel and cut down the rulers of Moab. All the sons of Seth he will take captive. Edom will be his inheritance; Esau, his enemy, will be his inheritance. Israel acted mightily.”
Troparion (Tone 6)

You rose from the Virgin, O Christ, spiritual Sun of justice. A star pointed to You held in a cave, O uncontainable God.

You led the Magi to adore You: with them we magnify You, O Giver of life, glory to You.

(After each of the following verses, we sing: "You led the Magi...")

Chanter: The Lord is King, He is clothed in majesty; the Lord clothes Himself with might and fastens on His belt.

Chanter: He has made the world firm; it cannot be moved. Your throne was prepared of old; You are from eternity.

Chanter: The rivers have lifted up, O Lord, the rivers have lifted up their voices; the rivers lift up their tumult more powerful than the roar of oceans.

Chanter: Wondrous is the swirling of the sea, more wondrous the Lord on high. Your testimonies are exceedingly trustworthy.
Chanter: Holiness befits Your house, O Lord, for length of days.

Chanter: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever, Amen

And the entire Troparion (You rose from the Virgin...) is repeated.

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: A reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah (7:10-15; 8:1-4, 9, 10).

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Reader: Once again the Lord spoke to Ahaz and said: "Ask the Lord your God for a sign for yourself, whether in the depths below or the heights above." But Ahaz said: "I will not ask. I will not put the Lord to a test!" Then the answer came: "Listen now, House of David. Are you not content to wear out men's patience? Must you also wear out the patience of the Lord? Therefore, the Lord Himself will give you a sign: behold, a virgin will conceive in her womb and bear a son. They will name him Emmanuel. He will eat butter and honey, before he knows how to choose evil or select good. For before the child knows good or bad, he will refuse the evil to choose the good." The Lord said to me: "Pick up a great new scroll and write in it with a man's pen: 'speed spoil hasten plunder,' for it is near at hand. Then find me reliable witnesses: Uriah the priest, and Zekariah son of Barachiah." Then I went to the prophetess. She conceived and bore a son. The Lord said to me: "Call him 'speed spoil hasten plunder,' for before the child can say 'father' or 'mother,' the wealth of Damascus and the spoils of Samaria will be carried off before the king of Assyria."

"God is with us! Take note, you nations, and be defeated. Listen, you, even to the distant parts of the earth. The stronger you are, the more you will defeated. Even if you succeed you will again be defeated; Make your plans, but they will be foiled; propose what you please, but it shall not stand, for God is with us!"
Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Reader: The Lord said to me: “You are my Son; today have I begotten You.”
-Ask me and I shall give you nations as your lot, and the ends of the earth as your domain.”

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: A reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews.

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Reader: Brethren: God, who in many places and at many times in the past spoke to the fathers through the prophets; has last of all spoken to us in these days through His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the world. He—being the brightness of His glory and the image of His substance, and holding up all things by the word of His power—has brought about our cleansing from sin and been enthroned at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become so much superior to the angels as He has inherited a more excellent name than they. For to which of the angels has He ever said: “You are my son; I this day have begotten you?” And again: “I will be to him a father and he shall be to me a son.” And again, when He brings the Firstborn into the world, He says: “And let all the angels of God adore him.” And of the angels indeed He says: “He makes spirits His messengers and flaming fires His attendants.” But of the Son He says: “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of equity is the scepter of Your kingdom. You have loved holiness and hated iniquity. Therefore God, your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness above your fellow men.” He also says: “You in the beginning, O Lord, did found the earth, and the heavens are the works of your hands. They shall perish but You shall continue; and they shall all grow old as does a garment; and as clothing You shall change them, and they shall be changed; but You are the same and Your years shall not fail.” (1:1–12; 2:1–3)
Priest: Peace to you, Reader!

All: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. (repeated after each of the following verses)

Reader: The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.”
- The scepter of your power the Lord will stretch forth from Sion: “Rule in the midst of your enemies.”

Deacon: Wisdom! Let us stand and listen to the Holy Gospel.

Priest: Peace to all!

All: And to your spirit.

Deacon: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to the Evangelist Luke (2:1–20)

All: Glory to You, O Lord, glory to You! (repeated after the reading).

Insistent Litany

Deacon: Let us all say with our whole soul and our whole mind, let us all say:

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Lord Almighty, God of our Fathers, we pray to You, hear and have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Have mercy on us, O God, in Your great mercy; we pray to You: hear us and have mercy.
All: Lord, have mercy (*three times, after each petition*).

**Deacon:** Again we pray for our (Arch)bishop N... and for his venerable clergy.

Again we pray for our brothers the priests, the deacons, the monastics and for all our brethren in Christ.

Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, protection, forgiveness and remission of sins for the servants of God who live in this city.

Again we pray for the blessed and ever to be remembered founders of this holy church and for all our Orthodox fathers and brethren who have gone before us and who, here or elsewhere, have been laid to pious rest.

Again we pray for those who bring offerings, those who do good works in this holy and most venerable church, those who toil, those who sing and all the people here present who await from You great and abundant mercy.

**Priest:** For You are merciful, O God, and You love mankind and to You we render glory—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.

**Evening Prayer**

**Presider:** Deign, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin. Blessed are You, O Lord, God of our Fathers; praised and glorified is Your name forever. Amen. O Lord, let Your mercy rest upon us, for we have placed our trust in You. Blessed are You, O Lord; teach me Your statutes. Blessed are You, O Master; grant that I may understand Your statutes. Blessed are You, O Holy One; enlighten me with Your statutes. Everlasting is Your love, O
Lord; do not turn away from the work of Your hands. Indeed, praise, adoration and glory are Your due—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Aitisis

Deacon: Let us complete our evening prayer to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That this whole evening may be perfect, holy, peaceful and without sin, let us ask the Lord.

All: Grant this, O Lord (after each petition).

Deacon: For an angel of peace, a faithful guide and guardian of our souls and bodies, let us ask the Lord.

For the forgiveness and remission of our sins and offenses, let us ask the Lord.

For what is good and profitable to our souls and for peace in the world, let us ask the Lord.

That the rest of our life may be spent in peace and repentance, let us ask the Lord.

That the end of our life may be Christian, painless, unashamed and peaceful, and for a good defense before the awesome judgement seat of Christ, let us ask.
Remembering our all holy, spotless, most highly blessed and glorious Lady the Theotokos, and ever-virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ God.

All: To You, O Lord.

Priest: For You are merciful, O God, and You love mankind, and to You we render glory—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Priest: Peace to all.

All: And to your spirit.

Deacon: Let us bow our heads to the Lord.

All: To You, O Lord.

Priest: O Lord our God, who bowed the heavens and came down for the salvation of the human race, look down on Your servants and on Your inheritance; for Your servants have bowed their heads and bent their necks to You, the Judge both awesome and loving. They do not await the help that is from man, but look for Your mercy and are ready to receive Your salvation. Guard them at all times—this evening and tonight—against all enemies, against the devil’s assaults, against vain thoughts and evil dreams. (Aloud) May the might of Your kingdom be blessed and exalted—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.
Let heaven and earth today make glad prophetically. Angels and men, let us keep spiritual feast. For God, born of a woman, has appeared in the flesh to those who sit in darkness and shadow. A cave and manger have received Him. Shepherds announce the wonder; Magi from the East offer gifts in Bethlehem. Let us, then, from our unworthy lips offer Him praise like the angels: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace. For the Expectation of the nations has come; He has come and saved us from bondage to the Enemy.

Heaven and earth are united today, for Christ is born. Today God has come upon earth and man has gone up to heaven. Today, for man’s sake, is seen in the flesh He who by nature is invisible. Therefore, let us give glory and cry aloud to Him: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, which Your coming has bestowed upon us, O Savior. Glory to You!

“Glory to God in the highest,” I hear today in Bethlehem from the angels; glory to Him whose good pleasure it was that there be peace on earth. The Virgin is now more spacious than the heavens. From her, light has shone upon those in darkness, and has exalted the lowly who sing like the angels: “Glory to God in the highest!”

Beholding him who was in God’s image and likeness fallen through the transgression, Jesus bowed the heavens and came down; and without undergoing change, He took up His dwelling in a virgin’s womb: that thereby He might fashion corrupt Adam anew, who cried out to Him: “Glory to Your Theophany, O my Deliverer and my God.”

Glory (Tone 5)

The Lete (Idiomela, Tone 1, by John the Monk)

Let heaven and earth today make glad prophetically. Angels and men, let us keep spiritual feast. For God, born of a woman, has appeared in the flesh to those who sit in darkness and shadow. A cave and manger have received Him. Shepherds announce the wonder; Magi from the East offer gifts in Bethlehem. Let us, then, from our unworthy lips offer Him praise like the angels: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace. For the Expectation of the nations has come; He has come and saved us from bondage to the Enemy.

Heaven and earth are united today, for Christ is born. Today God has come upon earth and man has gone up to heaven. Today, for man’s sake, is seen in the flesh He who by nature is invisible. Therefore, let us give glory and cry aloud to Him: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, which Your coming has bestowed upon us, O Savior. Glory to You!

“Glory to God in the highest,” I hear today in Bethlehem from the angels; glory to Him whose good pleasure it was that there be peace on earth. The Virgin is now more spacious than the heavens. From her, light has shone upon those in darkness, and has exalted the lowly who sing like the angels: “Glory to God in the highest!”

Beholding him who was in God’s image and likeness fallen through the transgression, Jesus bowed the heavens and came down; and without undergoing change, He took up His dwelling in a virgin’s womb: that thereby He might fashion corrupt Adam anew, who cried out to Him: “Glory to Your Theophany, O my Deliverer and my God.”

Glory (Tone 5)
When the Magi, the kings of Persia, knew with assurance that the infant born on earth was a Heavenly King, they followed the brilliant star and hastened to Bethlehem. They offered Him chosen gifts: Gold and frankincense and myrrh. Falling before Him, they worshipped Him. For in the infant lying in a
cave, they had seen God who is beyond time.

Now and always and for ever and ever. Amen.

Now and always, by Germanos (Tone 6)

All the angels in heaven are of good cheer and greatly rejoice today. The whole creation leaps with joy, for the Savior and Lord is born in Bethlehem. Every error of idolatry has ceased, and Christ reigns forever.

Deacon: O God, save Your people and bless Your inheritance. Look upon Your world with mercy and compassion. Raise to glory the Orthodox Christians and shower upon us Your abundant mercies, through the intercession of our all-pure lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, through the power of the precious and life-giving cross, through the prayers of the honorable and bodiless powers of heaven, of the honorable and illustrious prophet and forerunner, John the Baptist, of the holy and glorious apostles worthy of all praise, of our Fathers among the saints, the great ecumenical teachers and hierarchs Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom, of our
Father among the Saints Nicholas the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia, of the holy, glorious and victorious martyrs, of our holy and God-bearing Fathers, of the holy and just ancestors of God, Joachim and Anne, of N., patron of this holy church and of all the saints: we beseech You, O most merciful Lord, listen to the prayers that we sinners offer You, and have mercy on us.

All: Lord, have mercy (3 times).

Deacon: Again we pray to You for our God-loving (Arch-)bishop N. and all our brethren in Christ, for every Christian soul in tribulation and affliction and in need of the mercy and help of God, for the protection of this holy place and all those who dwell in it, for the peace and the tranquility of the world, for the good estate of the holy Churches of God, for salvation and help to our fathers and brethren who labor and serve with zeal and with fear of God, for the forsaken, the exiled and the travelers, and for the healing of those afflicted by sickness; for the repose of the departed souls of blessed memory and for the forgiveness of the sins of our fathers and brethren, the Orthodox in faith, who have gone before us and are resting here and in every other place; for the captives and their release and for those who are in the armed forces; and for all those who now serve and all those who have ever served in this holy place: let us say for them all:

All: Lord, have mercy (3 times).

Deacon: Again we pray to You for our civil authorities, for their strength, success, long life, health and salvation; that the Lord God, working always closely with them, may prosper them in all their endeavors for the good of all.

All: Lord, have mercy (3 times).
Deacon: *(if there is an artoklasia)* Again we pray You for mercy, life, peace, health, for the forgiveness of sins and the salvation of the servants of God NN. Who are offering these oblations and celebrating this feast, for the well-being of their sick ones and for the repose of the souls of all the members of their family.

All: Lord, have mercy *(3 times).*

Deacon: Again we pray that this holy place and every city and country may be spared from famine and pestilence, earthquake and flood, fire and sword, foreign invasion and civil war; that our loving and good God may be gentle, merciful and placable and that He may avert from us all threatening danger and save us from His just anger that hangs over us, and that He may have mercy on us.

All: Lord, have mercy *(3 times).*

Deacon: Again we pray that the Lord God may listen to the voice of the supplication of us sinners and that He may have mercy on us.

All: Lord, have mercy *(3 times).*

Priest: Hear us, O God our Savior, hope of all those who live at the far ends of the world and of those far out at sea. Be kind to us, O Master, forgive us our sins and have mercy on us; for You are the gracious One and the Lover of mankind and we render glory to You—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Priest: Peace to all.
All: And to your spirit.

Deacon: Let us bow our heads to the Lord.

All: To You, O Lord.

Priest: O Master most merciful, Lord Jesus Christ our God, through the intercession of our all-pure lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, through the power of the precious and life-giving cross, through the prayers of the honorable and bodiless powers of heaven, of the honorable and illustrious prophet and forerunner, John the Baptist, of the holy and glorious apostles worthy of all praise, of our Fathers among the saints, the great ecumenical teachers and hierarchs Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom, of our Father among the Saints Nicholas the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia, of the holy, glorious and victorious martyrs, of our holy and God-bearing Fathers, of the holy and just ancestors of God, Joachim and Anne, of N., patron of this holy church and of all the saints: we beseech You, O most merciful Lord: make our supplications acceptable to You, grant the remission of our sins, protect us beneath the shelter of Your wings, drive away from us all enemies and foes, preserve our lives in peace. O Lord, have mercy on us and upon Your world and save our souls, for You are merciful, O God, and You love mankind.

All: Amen.
Aposticha (Tone 3)

A great and marvelous wonder has come to pass today. A virgin bears a child and her womb suffers no corruption. The Word is made flesh, yet ceases not to dwell with the Father. Angels sing hymns of glory together with the shepherds, and we the faithful join our voices to theirs, singing out: “Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace and good will towards men.”

The Lord said to my Lord: sit at my right hand.

Today the Virgin gives birth to the Creator. Eden offers a cave. A star proclaims Christ, the Sun, to those who are in darkness. The Magi, enlightened by faith, adore Him and offer gifts to Him. The shepherds witness the marvel, and the angels glorify Him, saying: “Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace and good will towards men.”

From the womb before the morning star I have beheld You.

When the Lord Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judah, the Magi came from the East. They adored Him as the incarnate God, opened their treasures with eagerness and offered Him precious gifts: pure gold—as to the King of the ages, frankincense—as to the God of all, myrrh to the Immortal One, as if He were mortal: He who was to remain three days in the tomb. All you nations, come, let us adore Him who was born to save our souls.
Rejoice, rejoice, Jerusalem! Make merry, all you who love Zion. Today Adam's bonds are loosed and Paradise is opened to us. Behold, the Serpent is brought to naught, seeing that the woman he deceived has now become the Mother of the Creator. Oh, the depths, the riches, the wisdom and the knowledge of God! That very instrument of sin that had brought death to all flesh now becomes today the first fruits of salvation to the world, through the Mother of God: by her the all-perfect God has become a Babe, being born without breaking her virginity's seal. By means of His swaddling clothes He looses the bonds of our sins and, becoming a child, He heals the labor pains of Eve. Wherefore, let the whole creation exchange glad tidings and rejoice, for Christ has come to renew it and to save our souls.

O Christ Our God, You dwelt in a cave, and a manger contains You! Magi and shepherds worshiped You, fulfilling the prophet's forecasts. Angels marveled and cried out: "Glory to Your condescension, O You, the only Lover of mankind!"
Hymn of Simeon the Just

Priest: Now You shall dismiss Your servant, O Lord, according to Your word in peace; because my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared before the face of all peoples: a light of revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of Your people, Israel.

Trisagion Prayers

Reader: Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us. (3 times).
Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever. Amen.
All-Holy Trinity, have mercy on us.
Lord, forgive our sins.
Master, pardon our transgressions.
Holy One, look upon us and heal our infirmities for Your name’s sake.
Lord, have mercy (3 times).
Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever. 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 always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.
Apolytikion (tone 4)

Your nativity, O Christ our God, has shed the light of knowledge upon the world through it those who had been star worshipers learned through a star to worship You, O Sun of justice, and recognize in You the one who rises from on high, O Lord. glory to You.

Reader: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
Reader: Now and always and forever and ever, amen.

Your nativi-ty, O Christ our God, has shed the light of knowledge upon the world through it those who had been starwor-ship-pers learned through a
star to worship You, O Sun of justice, and
re-cognize in You the one who rises from on high,
O Lord. glory to You.

CHRIST IS BORN!
GLORIFY HIM!
Artoklasia

Priest: O Lord Jesus Christ our God, who blessed the five loaves in the wilderness and thus sustained five thousand men, bless these loaves, this wheat, this wine and this oil. Multiply them in this holy city and for Your whole world, and sanctify the faithful who partake of them; for You are the One who bless and sanctify all things, O Christ our God, and we render glory to You and to Your eternal Father and to Your all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Blessed be the name of the Lord, now and forever (twice).
The rich have become poor and hungry, but those who seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: May the blessing of the Lord and His mercy be upon you through His grace and love for mankind at all times, now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.
Deacon: Bless, Father!

Priest: Blessed is He-Who-Is, Christ our God, at all times, now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Presider: Make firm, O Christ God, the holy Orthodox faith in this holy church forever and ever. Amen.

Priest: O most holy Theotokos, save us.

Second in rank: Higher in honor than the Cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, you gave birth to God the Word in virginity. You are truly Theotokos: you do we exalt.

Priest: Glory to You, O Christ our God and our hope, glory to You!

Reader: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit now and always and forever and ever, Amen. Lord, have mercy (3 times). In the name of the Lord, Father, give the blessing.

Priest: May Christ our true God, who was born of the Virgin for our salvation, have mercy on us and save us through the prayers of His all-pure Mother, of His glorious Apostles worthy of all praise, through the intercession of N., patron of this holy church, of the holy and just Ancestors of Christ God, Joachim and Anne, and of all the saints, for He is gracious and the Lover of mankind.

Deacon: Through the prayers of our holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us!

All: Amen.
NOTES

1. Pages 3–20: Incorporate the same numbered pages from the service of Great Vespers.

2. Page 25: If you use the aitisis after the great entrance, you should use the text page 25 and the remove the alternate page 25 (illustration of the entrance). If you do not use the aitisis after the great entrance, you should remove the text page 25 and use the alternate page 25 (illustration of the entrance).

3. Page 37: If you use the aitisis after the anaphora, you should use the text page 37 and remove the alternate page 37 (illustration of the priest with hands extended). If you do not use the aitisis after the anaphora, you should remove the text page 37 and use the alternate page 37 (illustration of the priest with hands extended).
The Vesper-Liturgy of St. Basil

_Priest:_ Blessed is the kingdom of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever.

_All:_ Amen.

_Priest:_ Glory to You, O our God, glory to You!
O Heavenly King, Consoler, Spirit of Truth, present in all places and filling all things, the Treasury of blessings and the Giver of life: come, O Good One, and dwell in us. Cleanse us of all stain and save our souls.

_All:_ Holy God! Holy mighty One! Holy Immortal One! Have mercy on us (3 times).
Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever. Amen.
All-Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, forgive our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, look upon us and heal our infirmities for Your name’s sake.
Lord, have mercy (3 times).
Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever. 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 always and forever and ever.

_All:_ Amen.

_Reader:_ Lord, have mercy (12 times).
Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever. Amen.  
Come, let us worship God our King and bow down before Him.  
Come, let us worship Christ God our King and bow down before Him.  
Come, let us worship Christ, our King and our God, and bow down before Him.

_Psalm 103_

Bless the Lord, O my soul!  
You are very great, O Lord my God.  
Clothed in pomp and brilliance,  
arrayed with light as with a cloak.  
Stretching out the sky as a tent cloth,  
covering Your lofty halls with water.  
You make the clouds Your conveyance,  
You surge on the wings of the wind.  
You make spirits Your messengers  
and flaming fires Your attendants.  
You settle the earth on its firm foundations;  
it shall stand unmoved from age to age.  
The abyss covers it like a garment;  
waters stand over the mountains.  
At Your rebuke they will take to flight,  
at the peal of Your thunder they will fear.  
They hurdle the hills and run down the dales  
to the place You have chosen for them.  
You have set up a boundary not to be passed:  
they shall never return to cover the earth.  
Down in the gullies You make springs to rise:  
waters shall go down between the mountains.  
They shall give drink to the beasts of the field;  
wild asses will seek them to quench their thirst.  
The birds of the sky will abide by them:  
from among the rocks they will raise their song.  
From Your lofty halls You refresh the mountains;
Priest: ... For You are holy, O our God, and we render glory to You—to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit—now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Holy God, holy Mighty One, holy Immortal One, have mercy on us (3 times).
Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever. Amen.
Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us.
Holy God, holy Mighty One, holy Immortal One, have mercy on us.

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Reader: The Lord said to me: “You are my Son; today have I begotten You.”
—Ask me and I shall give you nations as your lot, and the ends of the earth as your domain.”

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: A reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews.

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Reader: Brethren: God, who in many places and at many times in the past spoke to the fathers through the prophets; has last of all spoken to us in these days through His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the world. He—being the brightness of His glory and the image of His substance, and holding up all things by the word of His power—has brought about our cleansing from sin and been enthroned at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become so much superior to the angels as He has inherited a more excellent
name than they. For to which of the angels has He ever said: “You are my son; I this day have begotten you?” And again: “I will be to him a father and he shall be to me a son.” And again, when He brings the Firstborn into the world, He says: “And let all the angels of God adore him.” And of the angels indeed He says: “He makes spirits His messengers and flaming fires His attendants.” But of the Son He says: “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of equity is the scepter of Your kingdom. You have loved holiness and hated iniquity. Therefore God, your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness above your fellow men.” He also says: “You in the beginning, O Lord, did found the earth, and the heavens are the works of your hands. They shall perish but You shall continue; and they shall all grow old as does a garment; and as clothing You shall change them, and they shall be changed; but You are the same and Your years shall not fail.” (1:1–12; 2:1–3)

**Priest:** Peace to you, Reader!

**All:** Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. (*repeated after each of the following verses*)

**Reader:** The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.”
   – The scepter of your power the Lord will stretch forth from Sion: “Rule in the midst of your enemies.”

**Deacon:** Wisdom! Let us stand and listen to the Holy Gospel.

**Priest:** Peace to all!

**All:** And to your spirit.

**Deacon:** A reading from the Holy Gospel according to the Evangelist Luke (2:1–20)

**All:** Glory to You, O Lord, glory to You! (*repeated after the reading)*.
**Insistent Litany**

*Deacon:* Let us all say with our whole soul and our whole mind, let us all say:

*All:* Lord, have mercy.

*Deacon:* Lord Almighty, God of our Fathers, we pray to You, hear and have mercy.

*All:* Lord, have mercy.

*Deacon:* Have mercy on us, O God, in Your great mercy; we pray to You: hear us and have mercy.

*All:* Lord, have mercy *(three times, after each petition).*

*Deacon:* Again we pray for our (Arch)bishop N... and for his venerable clergy.

Again we pray for our brothers the priests, the deacons, the monastics and for all our brethren in Christ.

Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, protection, forgiveness and remission of sins for the servants of God who live in this city.

Again we pray for the blessed and ever to be remembered founders of this holy church and for all our Orthodox fathers and brethren who have gone before us and who, here or elsewhere, have been laid to pious rest.

Again we pray for those who bring offerings, those who do good works in this holy and most venerable church, those who toil, those who sing and all the people here present who await from You great and abundant mercy.

*Priest:* That being ever protected by Your power, we may render glory to You: to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy
Spirit now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.

*The Great Entrance*

All: We who mystically represent the cherubim and sing to the life-giving Trinity the thrice-holy hymn, let us lay aside all early cares.

Deacon: May the Lord God remember us all in His heavenly Kingdom at all times, now and always and forever and ever

All: Amen.

Priest: May the Lord God remember NN. in His heavenly Kingdom at all times, now and always and forever and ever

All: Amen.

That we may welcome the King of all, invisibly escorted by angel hosts. Alleluia.

*Litany*

Deacon: Let us complete our prayer to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy (after each petition).

Deacon: For the precious gifts here offered, let us pray to the Lord.
We preach not only one coming of Christ, but a second as well, much more glorious than the first. The first coming was marked by patience; the second will bring the crown of a divine kingdom. His first coming was to fulfill His plan of love, to teach by gentle persuasion. This time, willingly or unwillingly, we will be subjects of His kingdom. Our Lord Jesus Christ will come from heaven. He will come at the end of the age, in glory on the last day. For there will be an end to this world, and all creation will be renewed.

St. Cyril of Jerusalem
Deacon: For this holy Church and those who enter it with faith, reverence and fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.

For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger and need, let us pray to the Lord.

Help us, save us, have mercy on us and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

Deacon: That this whole day may be perfect, holy, peaceful and without sin, let us ask the Lord.

All: Grant this, O Lord! (after each petition)

Deacon: For an angel of peace, a faithful guide and guardian of our souls and bodies, let us ask the Lord.

For the forgiveness and remission of our sins and offences, let us ask the Lord.

For what is good and profitable to our souls and for peace in the world, let us ask the Lord.

That the rest of our life may be spent in peace and repentance, let us ask the Lord.

That the end of our life may be Christian, painless, unashamed and peaceful, and for a good defense before the awesome judgement seat of Christ, let us ask.

Remembering our all-holy, spotless, most highly blessed and glorious Lady the Theotokos, and ever-virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ God.

All: To You, O Lord.
Priest: Lord our God who created us and brought us into this present life, who showed us the ways of salvation, who granted us the revelation of the heavenly mysteries, who established us for this office in the power of Your Holy Spirit: deign, O Lord, to accept us as the servants of Your new covenant and the ministers of Your holy mysteries. Receive us according to Your great love when we come to Your holy altar, so that we may be worthy to offer You this spiritual and bloodless sacrifice for our sins and for the unawareness of the people; so that, receiving it upon Your holy, heavenly and spiritual altar as a perfume of agreeable fragrance, You may send down to us in return the grace of Your Holy Spirit. Look upon us, O God consider our sacrifice, and accept it as you accepted the gifts of Abel, the offerings of Noe, the holocausts of Abraham, the sacrifices of Moses and Aaron, the peaceful presents of Samuel. As You accepted this worship from Your holy apostles, likewise, in Your goodness, O Lord, receive these gifts from our sinful hands, so that, having been deemed worthy to serve without blame at Your holy altar, we may obtain the reward of the faithful stewards on the fearful day of just judgment. (Aloud) Through the mercies of Your only-begotten Son, with whom You are blessed, together with Your all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

The Peace

Priest: Peace to all.

All: And to your spirit.

Deacon: Let us love one another that with one mind we may confess:
All: The Father the Son and the Holy Spirit, Trinity one in substance and undivided.

Christ is born! Glorify Him!

The Creed

Deacon: (The doors, the doors!) In wisdom let us be attentive.

All: I believe in one God, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages: Light of light, true God of true God, begotten, not made, of one substance 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 was made man; who was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried; who rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and is enthroned at the right hand of the Father; who will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead; and of whose kingdom there shall be no end. And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who together with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who spoke through the prophets. In one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I profess one baptism for the remission of sins. I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Anaphora

Deacon: Let us stand well, let us stand in awe. Let us be attentive to offer the holy oblation in peace.

All: A mercy of peace, a sacrifice of praise.
Priest: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Love of God the Father and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: And with your spirit.

Priest: Let us lift up our hearts.

All: We lift them up to the Lord.

Priest: Let us give thanks to the Lord.

All: It is fitting and right (to worship the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, Trinity one in substance and undivided.)

Priest: You who are Being, Master and Lord, God, almighty and adorable Father: it is truly fitting and right and worthy of the immensity of Your holiness that we praise You, sing to You, bless You, adore You, give thanks to You, glorify You who alone are truly God; that we offer You a spiritual worship with a repentant heart and a humble spirit, for it is You who granted us the favor of knowing Your truth. How could anyone tell Your might and sing the praises You deserve, or describe all Your marvels in all places and times, O Master of All, Lord of heaven and earth and of all creatures visible and invisible, who are enthroned upon a seat of glory, who plumb the depths, who are eternal, invisible, beyond comprehension and description and change, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ the great God and Savior, the object of our hope! For He is the Image of Your goodness, the Seal bearing Your perfect likeness, revealing You, His Father, through Himself; He is the living Word, the true God, the Wisdom from before all ages, the Life, the Sanctification, the Power, the True Light. By Him the Holy Spirit was made manifest, the Spirit of truth, the Gift of adoption, the Foretaste of the future inheritance, the First-fruits of eternal good, the life-giving Power, the Fountain of sanctification. Empowered by Him,
every rational and intelligent creature sings eternally to Your glory, for all are your servants. It is You the angels, archangels, thrones and dominations, the principalities and the virtues, the powers and the cherubim of many eyes adore; it is You the seraphim surround, one with six wings and the other with six wings; and with two wings they cover their faces, and with two their feet, and with two they fly, and they cry one to the other with tireless voice and perpetual praise (Aloud :) Singing, proclaiming, shouting the hymn of victory and saying:

All: Holy, holy, holy, Lord of Sabbaoth; Heaven and earth are filled with your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Priest: With these blessed powers, O Master and Lover of Mankind, we sinners also cry and say: Verily holy are You, and all-holy, and there is no limit to the majesty of Your holiness. Holy are You in all Your deeds, for in righteousness and true judgment You have brought all things to pass for us: for having taken clay from the earth and having formed man, and honored him, O God, with Your likeness, You placed him in a paradise of delight, and promised him immortality of life and the enjoyment of eternal goods in the keeping of Your commandments. But when he disobeyed You, the true God and his Creator, and was deceived through the serpent's guile, and was subjected to death through his own transgression, in Your just judgment, O God, You cast him forth from paradise into this world and turned him again to the earth whence he had been taken, and devised for him the salvation of regeneration which is in Your Christ.

For You did not turn away forever from Your work, O gracious God, nor did You forget the work of Your hands. You watched over man in many ways through the depth of Your love. You sent forth prophets; You worked mighty signs through Your saints who were pleasing to You in every age. You spoke through the mouths of Your servants
the prophets, promising the salvation to come; You gave man the Law to aid him; You set angels over him as his guardians. And when the fullness of time had come, You spoke to us by Your Son through whom also You made the universe, who being the brightness of Your glory and the express likeness of Your person, upholds everything by the power of His Word, and thought it no robbery to be equal to You, His God and Father: but although He was God before creation, He was seen on earth and had His conversation among men; and being incarnate of the holy Virgin, emptied Himself and assumed the nature of a servant, and was found in the likeness of the body of our humiliation, that He might raise us to the likeness of His glory. For since it was by man that sin had entered the world, and death through sin, Your only-begotten Son, He who was in Your bosom, O You His God and Father, condescended to be born of a woman, the holy Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary — to be born under the Law in order to condemn sin in His flesh, that those who die in Adam might be quickened in Your Christ: and having lived in this world and offered precepts of salvation and turned us away from the errors of idolatry, He brought us to the knowledge of You, the true God and Father, after purchasing us to Himself as a favored people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation. And after He had cleansed us with water and sanctified us with the Holy Spirit, He gave Himself up as a ransom to death by which we had been held for having been sold under sin; and through the cross, He went down into Hades that He might fulfil all things in Himself, and loosed the fangs of death. And He rose again the third day, preparing a way for the resurrection of all flesh from the dead because it was impossible that the Principle of life be held by corruption, and became the First-fruits of those who sleep, the Firstborn from among the dead so that in all things He might have primacy. And He ascended into heaven and was enthroned at the right hand of Your majesty on high, whence He shall come to render to every man his due. And He left us memorials of His
salutary passion, these which we have brought about by His command. For being about to go forth to His willful and eternally memorable and life-giving death, on the night wherein He surrendered Himself for the life of the world, He took bread in his holy and spotless hands, presented it to You, His God and Father, gave thanks and blessed and sanctified and broke it, (aloud) and gave it to His holy disciples and apostles, saying: "Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you for the remission of sins."

All: Amen.

Priest: In the same way He took a cup of the fruit of the vine, mingled it, gave thanks, blessed and sanctified it (aloud) and gave it to His holy disciples and apostles, saying: Drink of this, all of you, this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins.

All: Amen.

Priest: Do this in remembrance of Me, for as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you show forth my death and confess my resurrection.

Remembering, therefore, this precept of salvation and everything that was done for our sake: the cross, the tomb, the resurrection on the third day, the ascension into heaven, the enthronement at the right hand, the second and glorious coming again (Aloud) We offer You Your own, from what is Your own, in all and for the sake of all.

All: We praise You, we bless You, we give thanks to You, O Lord, and we pray to You, O our God.

Priest: Therefore, most holy Lord, we also sinners and Your unworthy servants called by You to serve at Your holy altar, not by reason of our righteousness for we have done nothing good upon the earth, but by reason of Your love and mercy
which You have richly poured out upon us, we take courage
and approach Your holy table offering to You the anti-types
of the holy body and blood of Your Christ, we beg You and
implore You, in the good pleasure of Your bounty, to make
Your Holy Spirit come down upon us and upon these
present gifts offered to You, and to bless and sanctify them
and offer them.

Reveal this bread to be the precious body of our Lord, God
and Savior, Jesus Christ. (Amen.) And this chalice to be
truly the precious blood of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus
Christ. (Amen.) Poured out for the life of the world. (Amen,
amen, amen.)

Unite all of us who share the one Bread and the one Cup to
one another in the communion of the Holy Spirit. Grant that
none of us share in that holy body and blood of Your Christ
to judgement or condemnation; but that we may find mercy
and grace together with all the saints who, in every
generation, have been pleasing to You: our ancestors and
fathers the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, preachers,
evangelists, martyrs, confessors and teachers —with every
just soul who has died in the faith, (Aloud) Especially for
our all-holy, spotless, most highly blessed and glorious
Lady the Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary.

All: In you, O full of grace, all creation rejoices, the orders of
angels and the human race as well. O sanctified Temple,
spiritual Paradise and Glory of virgins from whom our
God, who exists before all eternity, took flesh and became a
little child!
He has taken your womb as His throne, making it more
spacious than the heavens. Therefore, O full of grace, in
you all creation rejoices: glory to you!

Priest: For the holy prophet and forerunner John the Baptist, for
the holy glorious and illustrious apostles, for holy N. whose
whose memory we honor today and for all Your saints at whose supplication do You visit us, O God.

And remember all those who have fallen asleep before in the hope of resurrection to eternal life (And the priest remembers by name those of the dead whom he will.) and give them rest where the light of Your face keeps watch.

Again, we pray You: remember, Lord, all the Orthodox bishops rightly dispensing the word of Your truth, all the priests, the deacons in Christ and all the ranks of the clergy.

Again, we pray You: remember, Lord, Your holy, catholic and apostolic Church which is from one end of the earth to the other, and give it peace, for You purchased it to Yourself through the precious blood of Your beloved Son. Make firm this holy house until the consummation of all things.

Remember, Lord, those who have offered You these holy gifts, and those for whom and through whom and on account of whom they offered them.

Remember, Lord, those who bring forth fruit and do good work in Your holy Churches, and who care for the poor. Reward them with your rich and heavenly blessings; bestow upon them heavenly gifts in exchange for the gifts of the earth, eternal gifts for those of time, incorruptible gifts for the corruptible. Remember, Lord, those who are in deserts and mountains and in the dens and caves of the earth. Remember, Lord, those who remain in virginity and continence and asceticism, and those who lead saintly lives in the world.

Remember, Lord, our most faithful and pious public authorities whom You have counted worthy to be appointed over this land: crown them with the armor of truth, with the armor of glory; cover their heads on the day of battle, strengthen their arm, exalt their right hand, establish their power. Subdue to them barbarous nations that delight in war; grant them deep peace that cannot be taken away; speak good things to their hearts for Your
Church and all your people, that within their peace we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

Remember, Lord, all lawmakers and magistrates and our brethren in public office and in all the armed forces: preserve the good in their goodness, and in Your kindness, make the wicked become good.

Remember, Lord the people present here, and those who are absent for reasonable causes. Replenish our storehouses with all manner of goods; preserve our marriages in peace and harmony; nourish the babes, instruct the youths, console the elderly; comfort the feeble-minded, collect the scattered, bring back the wandering and unite them to Your holy, catholic and apostolic Church. Free those who are bothered by unclean spirits; sail with those at sea, travel with the travelers, defend the widows, shield the orphans, preserve the prisoners, heal the sick.

Remember, O God, those who stand before tribunals, and those in exile and in all kinds of tribulations and accidents, and all who need Your great mercy: those who love us and those who hate us, and those who have begged us, unworthy though we be, to remember them in our prayers.

Remember all Your people, O Lord our God, and upon all pour forth Your rich mercies, granting them everything they need for salvation. And those we have omitted through ignorance or forgetfulness or because of the multitude of their names, You Yourself remember, O God who know the name and age of each, who have known each one from his mother's womb. For You, O Lord, are the Helper of the helpless, the Hope of the desperate, the Savior of the tempest-tossed, the Harbor of voyagers, the Physician of the sick: become all things to all men, O You who know each man and his need, each house and its necessity.

Preserve, O Lord, this city and every city and country place from plague, famine, earthquake, flood, fire, war,
battle, invasion and riot.

(Aloud) First, Lord, remember N., Preserve him/them to Your holy Churches in peace, safety, honor, health, long life, rightly dispensing the word of Your truth.

Deacon: And for the reverend priest, N. who offers these holy gifts; for the salvation and help of the people here present, for those whom each of us has in mind and for all men and women.

All: Remember all men and women.

Priest: Remember, O Lord, all the Orthodox bishops who rightly dispense the word of Your truth. Remember also, Lord, my unworthiness, according to the multitude of Your mercies; forgive my every transgression, deliberate and indeliberate, and do not withhold on account of my sins the grace of the Holy Spirit from the gifts offered here. Remember, O Lord, all the priests and the deacons in Christ, and let none of us who surround Your holy table be put to shame. Look down upon us in Your goodness, O Lord. Manifest Yourself to us in Your rich mercies. Grant us a healthful and agreeable climate. Give showers to the earth that it may bring forth its fruits. Bless with Your goodness the crowning of the year. Stay the schisms of Churches. Restrain the raging of nations. By the might of Your Holy Spirit, cast down rapidly the attempts of heresies. Receive us all in Your kingdom, making us children of light and sons of the day. Give us Your peace and Your love, O Lord our God, who have given us everything. (Aloud:) And grant that with one mouth and one heart we may glorify and extol Your most noble and magnificent name, of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.
Priest: And may the mercies of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ be with you all.

All: And with your spirit.

Deacon: Now that we have remembered all the saints, again and again in peace let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy (after each petition).

Deacon: For the precious gifts here offered and sanctified, let us pray to the Lord.

That our God, who loves mankind, having received them on His mystical altar in heaven as a sweet spiritual fragrance, may send upon us in return His divine grace and the gift of the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord.
God promised that He would come, but did not say when He would come. And so all generations and ages await Him eagerly. Though the Lord has established the signs of His coming, the time of their fulfillment has not been plainly revealed. These signs have come and gone with a multiplicity of changes; more than that, they are still present. In this, His final coming is like His first. Then holy men and prophets waited for Him, thinking that He would reveal Himself in their own day. Today each of the faithful longs to welcome Him during his own age, because Christ has not made plain the day of His coming.

St. Ephrem the Syrian
Deacon: Let us pray for unity of faith and the communion of the Holy Spirit, and let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ God.

All: To You, O Lord!

Priest: O God, the God of salvation, teach us to give worthy thanks to You for the benefits You have granted us, and are still granting us now. O God, who have received these gifts, cleanse us of every pollution, both of flesh and spirit, and teach us to attain perfect holiness through reverence for You; that with the pure witness of our conscience, receiving a portion of Your blessed gift, we may be united to the holy body and blood of Your Christ and that, receiving them worthily, we may have Christ dwelling in our hearts and may become a temple of Your Holy Spirit. Yes, O God! And make none of us guilty of these, Your tremendous arid heavenly mysteries, nor let us be wounded in spirit or body from an unworthy participation in them. But grant that, until our last breath, we may receive worthily our share of Your blessed gifts for a viaticum of eternal life, for an acceptable defense at the dread judgment-seat of Your Christ; that together with all Your saints who have pleased You since time began, we may become partakers of the eternal blessing You have promised to those who love You, O Lord! (Aloud) And make us worthy, Master, to dare with confidence and without condemnation to call You Father, O God of heaven, and to say:

All: 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 the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

Priest: Peace to all.

All: And to your spirit.

Deacon: Let us bow our heads to the Lord.

All: To You, O Lord!

Priest: Lord God, Father of Mercies and God of all consolation: bless those who have bowed their heads to You. Sanctify them, strengthen them, confirm them, keep them from every evil work, incline them towards every good work, and make them worthy to partake without condemnation of these, Your spotless and life-giving mysteries, for the forgiveness of sins and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. (Aloud) Through the grace and mercies and love for mankind of Your only-begotten Son, with whom You are blessed, together with Your all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Priest: Holy Things for the Holy.

All: One is holy! One is Lord: Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.
Koinonikon

Praise the Lord from the heavens! Praise Him in the highest! Alleluia.

All: I believe, Lord, and profess that You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God, come to this world to save sinners, of whom I am the greatest. I believe also that this is really Your spotless body and that this is really Your precious blood. Wherefore I pray to You: have mercy on me and pardon my offenses, the deliberate and the indeliberate, those committed in word and in deed, whether knowingly or inadvertently; and count me worthy to share without condemnation Your spotless mysteries, for the remission of sins and for eternal life. Amen.

Receive me now, O Son of God, as a participant in Your mystical supper: for I will not betray Your mystery to Your enemies, nor give You a kiss like Judas, but like the thief, I confess You: remember me, O Lord, in Your kingdom.

May the reception of Your holy mysteries, Lord, be for me not to judgment or condemnation, but to the healing of my soul and body. Amen.

Communion of the People

Deacon: Approach with fear of God, with faith and with love!

All: Amen, Amen. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. The Lord is God and He has appeared to us.

Priest: O God, save Your people and bless Your inheritance.
All: We have seen the true Light; we have received the heavenly Spirit. We have found the true faith, worshipping the undivided Trinity who has saved us.

Priest: Blessed is our God at all times, now and always and for ever and ever.

All: Amen. Let our mouth be filled with Your praise, O Lord, for You have counted us worthy to share Your holy, immortal and spotless mysteries; keep us in sanctification that we may sing Your glory, meditating on Your holiness all the day. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Deacon: Let us stand! Now that we have received the divine, holy, spotless, immortal, heavenly, life-giving awesome mysteries of Christ, let us give worthy thanks to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Now that we have asked that this whole day may be perfect, holy, peaceful and without sin, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ God.

All: To You, O Lord.

Priest: We thank You, O Lord our God, for having partaken of Your holy, spotless, immortal and heavenly mysteries, which You have given us for the well-being, sanctification and cleansing of our souls and bodies. O Lord of All, grant that the communion of the holy body
and blood of Your Christ may be for us the occasion of faith unashamed, of love unfeigned, of fullness of wisdom, of the cleansing of our souls and bodies, of the defeat of every enemy, of the fulfillment of Your commandments, of an acceptable defense before the dread judgment-seat of Your Christ. (Aloud) For You are our sanctification, and we render glory to You, to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

Priest: Let us go forth in peace.

All: In the name of the Lord.

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: O Lord, who bless those who bless You and sanctify those who trust in You; save Your people and bless Your inheritance. Safeguard the fullness of Your Church. Sanctify those who love the beauty of Your house; in return, raise them to glory by Your divine power and do not forsake us who put our hope in You. Give peace to Your world, to Your Churches, to Your priests, to our public servants, to the government, to the armed forces (all who protect us), and to all Your people; for every good gift and every perfect grace is from above, coming down from You, the Father of lights; and to You we render glory and thanksgiving and worship, to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

Blessed be the name of the Lord, now and forever (3 times).
The Dismissal

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: May the blessing of the Lord and His mercy be upon you through His grace and love for mankind, at all times, now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.

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


Lord, have mercy. (3 times)

Give the blessing, Father (in the name of the Lord).

Priest: May Christ our true God, who was born in a cave and laid in a manger for our salvation, have mercy on us and save us through the prayers of His all-pure Mother, of our Father among the saints, Basil the Great, Archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, (of Saint N., patron of this holy church,) of the holy and just Ancestors of God, Joachim and Anne and of all the saints, may this same Lord Jesus Christ have mercy on us and save us, for He is good and love mankind.

Deacon: Through the prayers of our holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us.

All: Amen.
In some churches the icon of the feast and a lighted candle are brought out at this point and set up in the middle of the church while we sing:

**Troparion (Tone 4)**

Your na-ti-vi-ty, O Christ our God, has shed the light of knowledge upon the world through it those who had been star worship-pers learned through a star to worship You, O Sun of jus-tice, and re-cog-nize in You the one who ri-ses from on high,

O Lord, glo-ry to You.

**Reader:** Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit now and always and forever and ever, amen.
Kondakion (Tone 3)

Today the Virgin gives birth to the Transcendent in Essence, and the earth presents a cave to the Inaccessible. The angels with the shepherds sing his glory, and the Wise Men with the Star travel on their way, for to us is born a New Child, who is God from all eternity.
Alternative Ambo Prayers

1. Of the Paramony

Glory to You, O Christ our God, “without father, without mother or ancestry, without beginning of days or end of life”? For in Your pure birth the woman remained a virgin, and You became flesh in these last days without the union of man and woman. Keeping the freedom of Your spiritual divinity, You took the form of a slave and clothed Yourself as a man, though Master and Lord of all. A cave and a manger hide You who sit at the right hand of the Father. The magi honor You with three gifts. The armies of angels glorify You in song, the shepherds dance in joy, the angels praise You with a loud voice. With them we sinners, Your unworthy servants, as we come to this brilliant and glorious feast of Your birth, offer You these hymns and spiritual songs: “Glory to God in the highest! Peace on earth and good will toward men!”

O Lover of mankind, receive our lowly praise and send down upon us in return the riches of Your mercy. Give us a peaceful life subject to Your will. Grant peace on earth to our country and to all nations, and make all of us heirs of Your heavenly kingdom, through the prayers of our most pure Lady the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary.

For You are the King of peace and we give glory to You, to Your Father who is without beginning and to Your all-holy, good and life-creating Spirit, now and always and forever and ever.
O Christ our God, who accept this spiritual and unbloody sacrifice from those who call upon You with their whole heart as a sacrifice of praise and a well pleasing worship, You are the Lamb and Son of God who take away the sin of the world, the innocent calf which was voluntarily sacrificed for us although not bound by sin. Broken but not divided, eaten but never consumed and sanctifying all who partake, You have made us sharers of Your ineffable, heavenly and awesome mysteries—Your holy Body and Your precious Blood—in remembrance of Your voluntary passion and life-giving resurrection on the third day. Keep in Your sanctification us, Your servants and ministers, all our civil authorities, our armed forces, and all the people here present. Grant that at all times and seasons we may meditate on Your righteousness so that, led according to Your will and doing what is pleasing to You, we may become worthy of a place at Your right hand when You shall come to judge the living and the dead. Rescue those of our brethren in captivity, visit those who are sick, guide the travelers, give rest where the light of Your face shines to the souls of those who have gone before us in the hope of resurrection to eternal life and hear all those who seek Your aid. For You are the Giver of all good gifts and we render glory to You with Your eternal Father and Your all-holy, good and life-creating Spirit, now and always and forever and ever.
Festal Orthros

*Priest:* Blessed is our God at all times, now and always and forever and ever.

*All:* Amen.

*Priest:* Glory to You, O our God, glory to You!
    O Heavenly King, Consoler, Spirit of Truth, present in all places and filling all things, the Treasury of blessings and the Giver of life: come, O Good One, and dwell in us. Cleanse us of all stain and save our souls.

*All:* Holy God! Holy mighty One! Holy Immortal One! Have mercy on us (3 times).
    Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever. Amen.
    All-Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, forgive us our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, look upon us and heal our infirmities for Your name’s sake.
    Lord, have mercy (3 times).
    Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever. 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 always and forever and ever.

*All:* Amen.

*Reader:* Give the blessing, Father, in the name of the Lord.
Priest: Glory to the holy and life-giving Trinity, one in essence and undivided, at all times, now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Reader: Glory to God in the highest! On earth peace and good will to men (3 times).
O Lord, You shall open my lips and my mouth will declare Your praise (twice).

PSALM 3

Reader: LORD, why do so many taunt me?
   Many are those who rise up against me;
   Many are those who say of my soul:
   “There is no salvation for him in his God!”
But You, O Lord, are a shield around me, my glory: You raised my head.
Loudly did I cry out to the Lord and from His holy mountain He listened to me.
You have stricken all who fought me without cause, You have shattered the sinners’ teeth.
This deliverance is the Lord’s.
   Upon Your people be your blessing!

And again:

As for me, I lay down and slept.
I rose again for the Lord will be my help.

PSALM 37

O LORD, in Your anger rebuke me not; chastise me not in Your wrath!
Your arrows have bored into me and upon me You have firmly laid Your hand.
There is no soundness in my flesh because of Your wrath,
there is no peace in my bones because of my sins.  
Because my iniquities have overwhelmed me,  
they have weighed upon me like a weighty load.  
My sores have become stench and festering  
because of my folly;  
A stooping and exhausted wreck,  
I stumbled mourning all the day.  
My loins were burning with fever  
and there was no soundness in my flesh.  
I was crushed and deeply afflicted,  
I roared with the groaning of my heart.  
O Lord, all my longing stood before You,  
and my groaning was not hushed away from You.  
My heart came to grief, my strength deserted me,  
and even the light of my eyes failed me.  
My friends and companions came and fought me,  
while my closest kinsmen stood afar from my presence;  
And those who sought my life used violence  
while those who wished my loss spoke lies,  
plotting deception all the day.  
But I remained as a deaf man and heard them not,  
as a dumb man and opened not my mouth,  
As a man who has not heard a thing  
and thus has no retort upon his lips.  
In You, O Lord I have placed my trust  
You will give heed, O Lord my God!  
I said “Oh, that my foes cease to gloat over me  
They boasted mightily when my feet stumbled.”  
As for me, I am ready for scourging  
and my pain is before me always.  
Indeed, I myself will confess my guilt  
and I will live in anguish because of my sin.  
But my enemies survive and overpower me,  
and those unduly hating me are multiplied.  
Those who, rendering evil for good,  
opposed me when I sought but righteousness.  
O Lord my God, forsake me not!  
Stay not afar from me!
Come close to help me, O Lord of my salvation!

And again:

O Lord my God, forsake me not!
Stay not afar from me!
Come close to help me, O Lord of my salvation!

PSALM 62

O God, my God, at dawn I rise to You!
My soul has thirsted for You,
and oh, how my flesh has hungered for You.
Like a trackless, parched land that has no water,
so did I come before You in Your holy place
to see the power and the glory that are Yours.
Since Your love is more delightful than life itself,
my mouth will declare Your praise.
So shall I bless You as long as I live
and lift up my hands in Your name.
My soul shall be filled as with marrow and fat,
and with joyful lips my mouth shall sing praise.
While lying on my couch I remembered You,
I thought of You throughout the early watches.
You became for me the Helping One:
in the shelter of Your wings I will rejoice.
My soul followed You close by
and your right hand held me up.
But as for those who sought my life in vain,
may they sink into the abyss of the earth
And be delivered to the trenchant sword:
the portion of jackals they shall be!
But the king shall rejoice in God
and all who swear by Him shall glory,
for the liars’ mouth is stopped.

And again:

I thought of You throughout the early watches.
You became for me the Helping One:  
in the shelter of Your wings I will rejoice.  
My soul followed You close by  
and your right hand held me up.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,  
now and always and for ever and ever. Amen.  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to You, O God! (Three times)

Lord, have mercy (Three times).
Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,  
now and always and for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM 87 (88)

O LORD, God of my salvation,  
day and night I cried out before You.  
Let my prayer reach up to You,  
lend Your ear to my request  
For my soul was flooded with troubles  
and my life came close to Hades.  
I was reckoned with those who sink in the abyss,  
I was like a man beyond help, left for dead,  
Like the slain that lie in the tomb,  
those You remember no more:  
they are cut away from Your hand.  
They have cast me down to the bottom of the pit  
into darkness and the shadow of death,  
Your anger was a burden upon me,  
You poured Your billows over me,  
You took my friends away from me,  
You made me distasteful to them.  
I was closed in and could not escape,  
my eyes were dim with distress.  
I cried out to You, O Lord, all the day,  
I stretched out my hands to You.  
But do You work wonders for the dead?  
Do the dead ever rise to sing Your praise?
Does anyone sing Your love in the grave
or Your faithfulness in the midst of perdition?
Are Your marvels ever known in the darkness
or your justice in the land of oblivion?
Yet I, O Lord, cried out to You,
and to You my prayer rose at dawn.
Why, O Lord, do You reject my soul?
Why do You hide Your face from me?
I am wretched and troubled since my youth,
I was raised high, then humbled and distressed.
Your plagues have swept over me
and Your terrors left me shaken:
They surround me like waters all the day,
they close in upon me all together.
You have taken from me friend and companion
and my acquaintances, so wretched am I.

And again:

O Lord, God of my salvation, day and night I cried out
before You.
Let my prayer reach up to You, lend your ear to my
request.

PSALM 102 (103)

BLESS THE LORD, O my soul!
May all that is in me bless his holy name!
Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and forget not all the gifts from Him.
Who pardons all your sins
and heals all your diseases,
Who ransoms your life from corruption
and crowns you with love and mercies,
Who fills your longing with what is good—
and your youth is renewed like the eagle’s!
The Lord brings about deeds of kindness
and vindication for all the oppressed.
He has made known His ways to Moses
and His will to Israel's children.
The Lord is the One of compassion and pity,
long-sufferance and manifold love:
His contention is not for ever
nor shall his anger always last.
He deals not with us as our sins demand
nor does He repay our evil deeds,
For as high as the heavens stand over the earth,
so high has the Lord extended his love for those who
fear Him.
As far as the East stands away from the West,
so far has lie put our sins from us.
As kind as a father is towards his children,
so kind is the Lord for those who fear Him.
For He Himself knows well how we were formed:
remember, we are only dust!
A man! his days resemble grass:
as a flower of the field, so shall he bloom,
But let a breath pass over him and he is gone,
and never shall he know his place again.
But the love of the Lord is from all eternity
and to all eternity for those who fear Him,
And his justice is upon the children of children
of those who keep His covenant
and remember His laws to obey them.
The Lord has established His throne in heaven:
over all things His kingship is supreme.
Bless the Lord, all you His angels,
you strong and mighty ones who obey His word
on hearing the sound of His decrees!
Bless the Lord, all you His powers,
His attendants who obey His will!
Bless the Lord, all you His works
in every place of His dominion!
Bless the Lord, O my soul!

And again:

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

PSALM 142 (143)

LORD, listen to my prayer;
   in Your truth give heed to my request
   and in your justice hear me,
And enter not into judgment with Your servant
   since of all the living none is just before You.
The enemy has pursued my soul,
   he has crushed my life into the ground;
   He has forced me to dwell in darkness like those
   long dead.
My spirit was overwhelmed with grief
   and within me my heart was troubled.
Remembering the days of old,
   I meditated on all your deeds,
I thought of the works of your hands.
   I stretched out my hands to You;
   like a parched land my soul longed for You.
Listen to me without delay, O Lord:
   my spirit has failed me;
Turn not Your face away from me.
   nor let me sink in the pit like the others.
Grant that I may hear Your love at dawn
   for I have placed my hope in You.
O Lord, let me know which way I shall go
   for I have lifted up my soul to You.
Deliver me, O Lord, from my enemies:
   it is to You that I have fled.
Teach me to do Your will,
   for You are my God;
may Your good Spirit lead me over level ground.
For the sake of your name, O Lord,
You will keep me alive;
In Your saving bounty,
You will deliver my soul from oppression,
And in Your loving kindness,
You will destroy my enemies
And bring to naught all those who grieve my soul,
for I am Your servant.

And again:

O Lord, in Your justice hear me and enter not into judgment with Your servant (Twice)
May Your good Spirit lead me over level ground (Once).

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
now and always and forever and ever. Amen.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia: glory to You, O God (3 times).
O our hope, glory to You!

The Great Litany

Deacon: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy (after each petition).

Deacon: For peace from on high and the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

For peace in the whole world, the well-being of the holy Churches of God and the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.

For this holy place and for those who enter it with faith, reverence and fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.
For our (Arch)Bishop N., the reverend priests, the deacons in Christ, and for all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

For our civil authorities and the armed forces, [that they may be upheld and strengthened in every good deed,] let us pray to the Lord.

For this city, for every city and country place and the faithful dwelling in them, let us pray to the Lord.

For favorable weather, an abundance of the fruits of the earth and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

For the travelers by sea, air and land, for the sick, the suffering, for the captive, and for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and need, let us pray to the Lord.

Help us, save us, have mercy on us and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

Remembering our all holy, spotless, most highly blessed and glorious Lady the Theotokos, and ever-virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ God.

All: To You, O Lord.

Priest: For all glory, honor and worship are Your due, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.
The Lord is God (tone 4)

Reader: Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name.

Reader: All the nations encompassed me, in the name of the Lord I crushed them.

Reader: This was done by the Lord: it is wonderful in our eyes.

And we repeat one of the above refrains.
**Troparion (tone 4, 3 times)**

Your nativity, O Christ our God, has shed
the light of knowledge upon the world through it

those who had been star-worshippers learned through a

star to worship You, O sun of justice and re-
cognize in You the one who rises from on high, O

Lord, glory to You

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_In Arabic_

Mi-ladou-ka Ay-youhal Ma-see-hou I-
lahou-na Cad ash-ra-ca nou-ral ma'-ri-

tee lil-'a lam, li-an-nas-sa-ji-dee-na

lil-ka-wa-keb fee-hee ta'al-la-mou me-
Little Litany

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

All:    Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

All:    Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Remembering our all holy, spotless, most highly blessed and glorious Lady the Theotokos, and ever-virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ God.

All:    To You, O Lord.

Priest: For Yours is the dominion and Yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever.

All:    Amen.
First Kathisma (Air: Kateplaghi Iosiph)

Come O faithful let us see the place where Christ is born; and let us join the wise Magi, the Kings who came from the East. Let us then follow the guiding Star in its travel. there angels sing praises without interruption, and shepherd, watching in the fields, offer a fitting hymn: Glory to God in the highest, who in the cave has been born today, of the pure Virgin and Mother of
God, in Beth-le-hem of Ju-de-a.

Choir: Glory ... Now .. (Repeat)

Second Kathisma (same tone)

Why are you rapt in won-der, Ma-ry? Why are you star-tled in your in-ner self? For I have gi-ven birth in time to a Son who is beyond time, I do not e-ven un-der-stand how I con-ceived Him. I have not known a man: How then shall I bear a child? Who e-ver saw a birth without a hu-man seed? But when God wills, nature's laws are o-ver-come, as it is writ-
Little Litany

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

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Remembering our all holy, spotless, most highly blessed and glorious Lady the Theotokos, and ever-virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ God.

All: To You, O Lord.

Priest: For You are a gracious God and the Lover of mankind and we render glory to You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.
Polyeleos (Psalms 134 & 135)
In the fifth and third tones

1. Give thanks to the Lord for He is good. For his mercy endures for ever, Alleluia.

2. Give thanks to the God of gods. For His mercy endures for ever, Alleluia.

3. Give thanks to the Lord of Lords. For his mercy endures for ever, Alleluia.

4. He alone works great wonders. For his mercy endures for ever, Alleluia.
5. Who made the heavens in wisdom. For his mercy endures for ever, Alleluia.

6. Who spread out the earth upon the waters. For his mercy endures for ever, Alleluia.

7. Who made the great light. For his mercy endures for ever. Alleluia.

8. The sun to rule over the day. For his mercy endures for ever. Alleluia.

9. The moon and the stars to rule over
the night. For his mercy endures for ever, Alle-
lu-ia.

10 Who remembered us in our abjec-tion. For his mercy endures for ever, Alle-
lu-ia.

11 Who freed us from our foes. For his mercy endures for ever. Alle-
lu-ia.

12 Who gives food to all flesh. For his mercy endures for ever. Alle-
lu-ia.
Give thanks to the God of heaven. For his mercy endures for ever. Alleluia.

Third Kathisma

How is He contained in a womb Whom nothing can contain? How is He at the Father's brest and held in His Mother's arms? This is according to His knowledge and will and good pleasure.

For, being without flesh, He chose to be made flesh, and 'He Who is' became for us what He was
not, without depar-ting from His own Na-ture,

He has shared in our es-sence. Christ has been

born to-day, two-fold in na-ture, to

per-fect the heav-en-ly world.

Choir:  Glory... Now... (Repeat)

Little Litany

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

All:  Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

All:  Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Remembering our all holy, spotless, most highly blessed and glorious Lady the Theotokos, and ever-virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ God.

All:  To You, O Lord.

Priest:  For blessed is Your name and glorified is Your kingdom,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.

**Gradual Antiphons (tone 4)**

From my youth many passions fight against me, but You, O my Savior, help me and save me.

You, the enemies of Zion, flee in your shame before the Lord. As grass in the fire you shall be withered up.

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

By the Holy Spirit is every soul filled with life, and through purification it is
raised and made bright by the three-fold Unity
in a Holy Mystery.

Now and always and forever and ever, Amen.

Through the Holy Spirit streams of grace overflow to water the whole creation and bring it to the fullness of life.

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

**Prokimenon (tone 4)**

Cantor

Before the morning star I have begotten you. The Lord has sworn and he will not repent (Twice)

Cantor: The Lord said to my Lord: Sit at my right hand (Repeat the Prokimenon)
Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For You are holy, O our God, and You rest among the saints and we give glory to You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen, Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.

V. Praise the Lord in His saints; praise Him in the firm foundations of His might.

Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.

Holy Gospel

Deacon: Let us ask the Lord our God to make us worthy of hearing the holy Gospel.

People: Lord, have mercy (3 times).

Deacon: Wisdom, let us stand to hear the holy Gospel.

Priest: Peace to all.

People: And to your spirit.

Priest: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to the evangelist Matthew.
Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Priest (Mt 1:14–25) Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When His mother 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 your 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.

People: Glory to You, O Lord, glory to You.

The reader chants Psalm 50 while the people come forward to venerate the Gospel.

O GOD, have mercy on me in the greatness of Your love; In the abundance of Your tender mercies, wipe out my offense. Wash me thoroughly from my malice and cleanse me from my sin, For I am well aware of my malice, and my sin is before me always.
It is You alone I have offended, I have done what is evil in Your sight,
Wherefore You are just in your deeds and triumphant in your judgment.
Behold, I was born in iniquities and in sins my mother conceived me,
But You are the Lover of Truth, You have shown me the depths and secrets of your wisdom.
Wash me with hyssop and I shall be pure, cleanse me and I shall be whiter than snow;
Let me hear sounds of joy and feasting: the bones that were afflicted shall rejoice.
Turn Your face away from my offenses and wipe off all my sins.
A spotless heart create in me, O God; renew a steadfast spirit in my breast.
Cast me not afar from your face, take not Your blessed Spirit out of me.
Restore to me the joy of Your salvation and let Your guiding Spirit dwell in me.
I will teach Your ways to the sinners and the wicked shall return to You.
Deliver me from blood-guilt, O God, my saving God, and my tongue will joyfully sing Your justice.
O Lord, You shall open my lips, and my mouth will declare Your praise.
Had You desired a sacrifice, I would have offered it; but You will not be satisfied with whole-burnt offerings.
Sacrifice to God is a contrite spirit; a crushed and humbled heart God will not spurn.
In your kindness, O Lord, be bountiful to Sion; may the walls of Jerusalem be restored.
Then will You delight in just oblation, in sacrifices and whole-burnt offerings.
Then shall they offer calves upon your altar.
Cantor:

Glo-ry be to the Fa-ther and to the Son and to
the Ho-ly Spir-it.
All things are filled with joy to-day, for Christ is born
from the Vir-gin.
Now and al-ways and for ev-er and ev-er,
A-men.

Repeat: "All things are filled with joy today..."
Priest: O God, save Your people and bless Your inheritance. Look upon Your world with mercy and compassion. Raise the Orthodox Christians to glory and shower upon us Your abundant mercies, through the intercessions of our all-pure Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, through the power of the precious and life-giving cross, through the prayers of the honorable and bodiless powers of heaven, of the honorable and illustrious prophet, the forerunner John the Baptist, of the holy and glorious apostles worthy of all praise, of our fathers among the saints, the great ecumenical teachers and hierarchs, Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom, of our father among the saints, Nicholas the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia, of the holy, glorious and
victorious martyrs, of our holy and God-bearing fathers, of the holy and just ancestors of Christ Joachim and Ann, of NN, and of all the saints: we beseech You, O most merciful Lord, listen to the prayers that we sinners offer You and have mercy on us.

Reader: Lord, have mercy (12 times).

Priest: Through the mercy and compassion and love for mankind of Your only-begotten Son, with whom You are blessed, together with Your all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and always and forever and ever.

All: Amen.

THE CANONS

Two Canons are used: the first by St. Cosmas and the second by St. John of Damascus. The two hirmoi are repeated at the end of each Ode, as Katavasias. Before the troparia, we say: Glory to You, O our God, glory to You. For the two last troparia of the second Canon, we say: Glory be to the Father... Now and always...

First Ode – First Canon (tone 1)

Christ is born: give Him glory! Christ has come down

from heaven: receive Him! Christ is now on earth: exalt Him! All you earth sing to the Lord, and...
Man fell from the divine and better life: though made in the image of God, through transgression he became entirely subject to corruption and decay. But now, the wise Creator fashions him anew, for He has been glorified.

People: Glory to You, O our God, glory to You!

When the Creator saw the man He had made with His own hands perishing, He bound the heavens and came down, and took the whole human nature from the holy and pure Virgin, being made truly man, for He has been glorified.

People: Glory to You, O our God, glory to You!

Being the Son and radiance of the Father, Christ our God is also His Wisdom and Word and Power. Hidden from the heavenly and earthly powers, He was made man and won us back again, for He has been glorified.

First Ode – Second Canon (tone 1)
His own will, He makes our path accessible to heaven. Since He is equal in essence to the Father and to mortal men, we glorify Him.

People: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Plainly prefigured by the unconsumed Bush, the sanctified womb has borne the Word, God united with the form of mortal men. And so, He looses the unhappy womb of Eve from the bitter curse of old. And so we mortal men glorify Him.

People: Now and always and forever and ever. Amen.

A star has shown to the Magi the Word who is before the Sun, coming to do away with sin. They plainly saw You, O Compassionate One, within a poor and lowly cave, wrapped in swaddling clothes. They joyfully gazed at You who are at once both man and Lord.

Katavasias: Christ is born, give Him glory...

The Master who works wonders...
Third Ode – First Canon (tone I)

O Lord.

People:
Glory to You, O our God, glory to You!

Adam, though formed from dust, shared in the higher breath of life. Yet, he slipped and fell into decay by the deception of a woman. But now, seeing Christ born of a woman, he cries aloud:
You who for me became like me, holy are You, O Lord.

People:
Glory to You, O our God, glory to You!

O Christ, You took the form of our earthly and lowly nature and, sharing in our vile flesh, You made us partakers in the divine Nature. You became mortal man, yet still remain God. You who raised our standard, holy are You, O Lord.

People: Glory to You, O our God, glory to You!

Rejoice, O Bethlehem, queen among the princes of Judah, for
Christ, the Shepherd of Israel, who is seated upon the Cherubim, came openly from you Raising our standard, He reigns over all.

*Third Ode – Second Canon (tone 1)*

Accept, O benefactor, the praise of your servants, and bring down the haughty looks of the Enemy. Raise us far above sin, O blessed Lord, who see all, and establish those who sing to You firmly up on the foundation of faith.

*People:* Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The shepherds camping in the fields were overwhelmed by the strange sight they were privileged to see: the Blessed Offspring of an all-pure Bride, and the choirs of the bodiless angels singing to Christ the King born of a Virgin.

*People:* Now and always and forever and ever. Amen.

The King and Ruler of heaven became such as we are in His compassion, born of a Virgin. The Word, who before was immaterial, assumed in these last times a material body, in order to
draw to Himself the fallen Adam, the first-created man.

Katavasias: To the Son born...
Accept, O Benefactor...

Little Litany

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

People: Lord, have mercy

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

People: Lord, have mercy

Deacon: Remembering our all-holy, spotless, most highly blessed and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-Virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another, and our whole life to Christ God.

People: To You, O Lord.

Priest: For You are our God and we render glory to You, Father, Son and. Holy Spirit now and always and for ever and ever.

People: Amen.

Hypakoe (Tone 8)

Reader: Calling the Magi by a star, heaven brought the first fruits of the Gentiles to You, O Little Child lying in the manger. They were amazed to see neither scepter nor throne, but extreme poverty. For what is meaner than a cave? What is humbler than swaddling clothes? Yet therein shone forth the wealth of Your divinity. O Lord, glory to You!
Fourth Ode – First Canon (tone 1)

People: Glory to You, O our God, glory to You!

O Christ whom Jacob once called the expectation of the nations, You have shone forth from the tribe of Judah, and come to plunder the strength of Damascus and the spoils of Samaria, turning their error into God-pleasing faith. Glory to Your power, O Lord!

People: Glory to You, O our God, glory to You!

O Master, who have risen as a star from Jacob, You have filled with joy the wise Watchers of the stars, who were informed about the words of the divine Balaam. They were brought to You as the first-fruits of the Gentiles, and You have openly received them as they offered You acceptable gifts. Glory to Your power, O Lord!
People: Glory to You, O our God, glory to You!

As dew upon the fleece, You descended into the womb of the Virgin, O Christ, as drops of rain that fall upon the earth. Ethiopia and Tarshish and the isles of Arabia, of the Medes and all the earth, fell down before You, O Savior. Glory to Your power, O Lord!

*Fourth Ode – Second Canon (tone 1)*

The Prophet Ha-ba-kuk for-told in song in ages past the res-to-ra-tion of mankind. For he was counted worthy to see the figure of Christ birth in an in-e-fa-ble manner, for the world as a new Babe came forth from the Ho-ly Mountain, that is the Vir-gin, for the res-to-ra-tion of all na-tions.

People: Glory to You, O our God, glory to You!

Of your own will, O Most High, You have come forth equal to mortal men, taking flesh from the Virgin, to purge the poison of the Serpent’s head. God by nature, You lead all
from the dark kingdom to the life-giving light.

*People:* Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

You peoples who before sunk in corruption, but now are freed from the deadly Enemy, lift up and clap your hands with songs of praise, and worship Christ alone, our Benefactor, who in His compassion, appeared in our human likeness.

*People:* Now and always and forever and ever. Amen.

O Virgin, who sprung from the root of Jesse, you have passed beyond the boundaries of human nature; for you have borne the pre-eternal Word of the Father, when it pleased Him to empty Himself in a strange way, passing through your womb and keeping it sealed.

Katavasias: A rod from the root...

The prophet Habakkuk...

### Fifth Ode – First Canon (tone 1)

Since You are the God of peace and the Father of mercy, You sent us the Messenger of your great Counsel to grant us peace. Led to the light of your divine knowledge, we come early to sing your praise,

O lover of mankind.
Obedient to the decree of Caesar, You were registered among his servants, O Christ, and You have set us free who were servants of the Enemy and of sin. Sharing completely in our poverty, You made our earthly nature divine by Your union and participation in it.

People: Glory to You, O our God, glory to You!

Behold, the Virgin, as it was said long ago, has conceived in her womb and brought forth God made man, remaining still a virgin. Reconciled to God through her, let us sinners sing her praise, for she is truly the Mother of God.

Fifth Ode – Second Canon (tone 1)

In the night we watch vigilantly and sing to You, O Christ, as to our benefactor. Come and grant

us forgiveness of the deeds of the dark error. Make

our path easy that we may ascend and attain

to the glory.
By His coming in the flesh, the Master has cut clean through the harsh hostility raised against Him, and has destroyed the power of the murderer of our souls. Uniting the world to the immaterial Essence, He has made the Father accessible to His creatures.

**People:** Now and always and forever and ever. Amen.

The people who were sitting in darkness have seen a light today from the Beacon on high. The Son offers the nations to God, as His inheritance, bestowing ineffable grace where sin once flourished more abundantly.

**Katavasias:** Since you are...
In the night we watch....

**Sixth Ode – First Canon (tone 1)**

The whale re-ceived Jo-nas: in its bel-ly and safe-ly re-jec-ted him like a babe from the womb. So the Word of God dwelt in the Vir-gin, took flesh and came forth from her, lea-ving her vir-gi-ni-ty in-tact. Hav-ing Himself undergone no change, He kept His Mother
People: Glory to You, O our God, glory to You!

Christ our God, Whom the Father begot from the womb before the morning, has come, made flesh. And He who holds the reins of the most pure Powers is in a manger of dumb beasts. He is wrapped in swaddling bands, yet He looses the tangled cords of our sins.

People: Glory to You, O our God, glory to You!

From the substance of Adam a little Child, a Son, is born and given to the faithful. He is the Father and Prince of the Age to come, and He is called the Messenger of the Great Counsel. He is the Mighty God and holds creation in His dominion.

\textit{Sixth Ode – Second Canon (tone 1)}

\begin{verbatim}
Surrounded by the depth of the sea, Jonas entreated You to come and still the storm. As for me, pierced by the arrow of the Tyrant, I call on You, O Christ, the Slayer of Evil. Come quickly and deliver me from my laziness.
\end{verbatim}
God the Word, who was in the beginning with God, seeing our nature powerless to guard unharmed its ancient fellowship with Him, now grants it new strength. Abasing Himself in a second act of fellowship, He makes it once again free from passions.

People: Now and always and forever and ever. Amen.

He came forth for our sake from the loins of Abraham to raise up as His sons those who were sadly fallen into the darkness of sin that bowed them down to the earth. And He who dwells in light has now been pleased, despite His high dignity, to dwell in a manger for the salvation of mankind.

Katavasias: The whale received Jonas...
Surrounded by the depths...

**Little Litany**

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

People: Lord, have mercy

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

People: Lord, have mercy

Deacon: Remembering our all-holy, spotless, most highly blessed and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-Virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another, and our whole life to Christ God.

People: To You, O Lord.
From all eternity,

For lo! us is born a New Child, who is God

Wise Men with the Star led on their way,

With the shepherds sing this glory:

Came to the Infant Jesus, the Word made Man,

Born in a stable and the earth presents a

To-day the Virgin gives birth to the Transcend

Kondukon (Tone 3)

Amen.

Holy Spirit—now and always and for ever and ever.

soul, and we render glory to You—Father, Son and

Priest: For You are the King of Peace and the Saviour of our
Oikos

Bethlehem has opened Eden: come, let us see! We have found luxury in a secret place. Come, let us enjoy the delight of Paradise within the cave. There appeared the un-watered Root from which forgiveness sprouted forth. There has been found the Well from which David longed to drink. There the Virgin, giving birth to a Babe, put an end at once to the thirst of Adam and David. Therefore, let us hurry to this place, where is born a Little Child who is God from all eternity.

Seventh Ode – First Canon (tone 1)

The three Young men reared in the true faith, spurned the impious decree, and were not terrified by the threat of fire; standing in the midst of the flame, they sang: Blessed are You, O God of our fathers.

People: Glory to You, O our God, glory to You!

The shepherds abiding in the fields were amazed at the vision of light. For the glory of the Lord shone around them and an angel cried out: “Sing praises, for Christ is born!” Blessed are You, O God of our fathers!
People: Glory to You, O our God, glory to You!

Suddenly, at the word of the angel, the heavenly Hosts cried aloud: "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace and good will among men! Christ has shone forth!" Blessed are You, O God of our fathers!

People: Glory to You, O our God, glory to You!

"What are these tidings?" said the shepherds. "Let us go over and see this event; let us see Christ God!" And coming to Bethlehem, together with His Mother they worshipped Him, singing Blessed are You, O God of our fathers!

**Seventh Ode – Second Canon (tone 1)**

Caught by the love of the Universal King, the Young Men despised the blasphemous babble of the tyrant in this extreme fury. As the terrible fire withdrew before them, they said to the Master: Blessed are You for ever and ever.
The seething and roaring furnace heated sevenfold, furiously burnt up the servants of the king, but spared the young men. As the flames encircled them, the Lord shed upon them abundant dew in reward for their godliness.

People: Glory to You, O our God, glory to You!

The seething and roaring furnace heated sevenfold, furiously burnt up the servants of the king, but spared the young men. As the flames encircled them, the Lord shed upon them abundant dew in reward for their godliness.

People: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

O Christ, our Defender, You have put to shame the Enemy of mankind, using as a shield Your ineffable incarnation. Taking man’s form, You bestowed upon him the bliss of deification. Longing for it in the beginning, we had fallen down into the dark Nether World.

People: Now and always and forever and ever. Amen.

By Your almighty power, You destroyed the fierce sin that raised its head in wanton pride and raged with blasphemy throughout a world gone mad. Today You delivered from its snares those it dragged down in times past, O Benefactor who have taken flesh of Your own will.

Katavasias: The three Young Men...
Caught by the love...

Eighth Ode – First Canon (tone 1)

The dewy furnace was a symbol of a supernal wonder: As it has not burnt the youths thrown
in-to it, so the fire of Di-vi-ni-ty has not con-
sumed the womb of the Vir-gin in-to which it has
descend-ed. Therefore, let us sing a hymn of praise:
Let the whole cre-a-tion bless the Lord and ex-alt
Him for ev-er.

People: Glory to You, O our God, glory to You!

The daughter of Babylon once led captive from Zion the
children of David; but now she sends her own children, the
Magi, bearing gifts to pay homage to the Daughter of David
who received God in her womb. Therefore, let us sing a hymn
of praise: Let the whole creation bless the Lord and exalt Him
forever!

People: Glory to You, O our God, glory to You!

Sorrow silenced the harps of the children of Zion, for they did
not sing among strangers; while Christ, shining forth in
Bethlehem, destroys all the error of Babylon and the harmony of
their musicians. Therefore, let us sing a hymn of praise: Let the
whole creation bless the Lord and exalt Him forever!

People: Glory to You, O our God, glory to You!

46
Babylon despoiled Zion the Queen and took her wealth as a trophy of war. But Christ, by a guiding Star, drew to Zion the treasures of Babylon, with her kings who gazed upon the stars. Therefore, let us sing a hymn of praise: Let the whole creation bless the Lord and exalt Him forever!

_Eighth Ode – Second Canon (tone 1)_

The youth of the Old Covenant who walked in the fire without being burnt prefigured the womb of the Virgin that remained sealed when she gave birth in fashion beyond nature. Acting in both cases in the same wondrous manner, the grace of God arouses the peoples to sing in praise.

_People:_ Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Shunning the shame of being deified by the idolaters, all creation joins the holy Young Men to sing in fear and trembling to the Word who emptied Himself. Being subject to decay, the creatures were afraid to accept that infamous worship, and received it unwillingly.
You have come, O Resurrection of the nations, to bring back wandering humanity, leading it from the hills of wilderness to a pasture rich in flowers. Destroy the violent strength of the Murderer of man, O You who in Your providence have appeared as man and God.

Katavasias: The dewy furnace...
The Youths of the Old Covenant...

Deacon: Let us magnify with hymns the Theotokos and Mother of Light!

**Ninth Ode – First Canon (tone 1)**

Magnify, O my soul, the Virgin more glorious

than the heavenly Powers. Behold a strange and

wonderful Mystery: The cave is heaven, the Virgin

a Throne of the Cherubim, the manger a noble place where repose Christ, the uncontainable
God. Let us praise and magnify Him.

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

When the Magi beheld the strange course of an unknown and newly shining star, that exceeded the brightness of all heavenly light. They learnt thereby that Christ the King was born on earth in Bethlehem for our salvation.

Magnify, O my soul, the God adored by the Magi.
whose star we have seen? For we have come to worship Him. But Herod the enemy of God, was mad and enraged, and roaring, he plotted to murder Christ.

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

He - rod inquired about the time when the star appeared, and brought the Magi to Beth - le - hem to worship Christ with gifts. But led by the star, they re - turned to their own land, de - ri - ding Herod the wicked slayer of chil - dren.
Ninth Ode - Second Canon (tone I)

To-day the Virgin bears the Master within a cave. It would be easier for us to keep silent in fear, for silence is harmless, while it is hard to devise fitting hymns as fervent as our love for you, O Virgin. But you, O mother, grant us strength to match the greatness of our desire.

To-day the Master is born as a Babe of the Virgin Mother.

We have seen, O pure Mother, the dim figure of the Word and the shadows that have already passed; and
now that He has newly appeared from you, O sealed Door,
we who are counted worthy to see the light of truth,
bless your womb as is right and becoming.

Glory be... Now and always...

Today all creation greatly rejoices for Christ
is born of the Virgin. The people who rejoice in
Christ have attained their desire, being counted worthy of the coming of God. And now they pray for the
life-giving regeneration. Grant them, O Most Pure
Virgin the grace to worship Christ in His radi-
Katavasias: Behold a strange...
Today the Virgin...

Little Litany

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

People: Lord, have mercy

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

People: Lord, have mercy

Deacon: Remembering our all-holy, spotless, most highly blessed and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-Virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another, and our whole life to Christ God.

People: To You, O Lord.

Priest: For all the powers of heaven praise You and we render glory to You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit now and always and for ever and ever.

People: Amen.
Exapostilarion (tone 3)

From on high our Saviour came, the rising Sun who shone from the East, to visit us in His mercy, we who sat in darkness and gloom. But now we see the Light of truth for the Lord Jesus is born of the pure Vir- gin Moth- er.

(three times)

Ainos (tone 4)

Let evey thing that has breath praise the Lord. Give praise to the Lord from the heav- ens, give
praise to Him in the highest. To You belongs

praise O, God.

Give praise to the Lord, all you His angels, give praise to Him, all you His Powers. To You belongs

praise, O God.

Praise Him for His mighty deeds, praise Him for His sovereign majesty.

Rejoice O you righteous, be glad, O you heavens; and you mountains dance with joy, for the Christ is born. The Virgin is seated like the
Che-rubim, holding in her bo-
som God the Word
made man. The Shepherds glo-
ri-fy the new-born child;
the Ma-gi oфф-er gifts to the Master; the an-
gels sing
a hymn of praise say-
ing: In-com-pre-hen-si-
ble Lord,
glo-ry to You.
Praise Him with the blast of the trumpet, praise Him with
lyre and harp.
It was the good plea-
sure of the Fa-
ther: the word
became flesh, and the Vir-gin gave birth to God
made man. A star sprads abroad the ti-
dings; the
creation is filled with joy.

Praise Him with drums and dance, praise Him with strings and pipes.

O Virgin Mother of God, who gave birth to the Word, you have overthrown the ancient curse of Eve, for you have become the mother of the One in whom the Father was well pleased, and carried in your bosom God the Word incarnate. We cannot fathom the Mystery, but by faith alone we all glorify...
fy it, crying out with you and saying: Incom-

prehen-sible Lord, glory to you.

Praise Him with sounding cymbals, praise Him with

clanging cymbals. Let every-thing that has breath

praise the Lord.

O come, let us sing prai-ses to the Mo-ther of our

Sa-viour, who af-ter gi-ving birth still remained a vir-
gin. Re-joice, O li-ving ci-ty of God the King,

in which Christ has dwelt to work out our salva-
tion.

With Gab-ri-el we sing your prai-ses; with the shep-

herds
Jubilate, for salvation is found in the name of our God. He has been the Lord, and he is also to come, and he will dwell among us. You were about to register the names of all who believe in your birth. For this cause Cain was held, and then the first census of the world was held, and then when it was time for your coming upon earth, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Give glory to the Father and to the Son. For he is your city, O Mother of God, in heaven, we glorify your city, O Mother of God.
Kingdom was newly made manifest.

Therefore we offer You what is better than a tribute of money: The wealth of our true faith! O God and Saviour of our souls.

Now and always and for ever and ever, Amen.

Today Christ is born of the Virgin in Beth-le-hem.
hem. To-day He who knows no beginning now begins

to be, and the Word is made flesh. The powers of
heavens greatly re-joice, and the earth with man-
kind is glad. The Ma-gi of-fer gifts and the shepherds
proc-lain the mar-vel. As for us, we cry a-loud with-
out cea-sing: Glo-ry to God in the high-est,

Glo-ry to God in the high-est! On earth peace

and good will amon-g men.

We conclude with the Great Doxology, followed by the Troparion (once).
Then we begin the Divine Liturgy.
The Divine Liturgy

The First Antiphon

V. 1 — I will confess You with my whole heart; I will tell all Your marvels.
Refrain — Through the prayers of the Mother of God... 
(after each verse)
V. 2 — In the counsels of rightful men and in the assemblies, great are the works of the Lord.
V. 3 — They are sought in order to accomplish His will.
V. 4 — Glory... Now...

The Second Antiphon

V. 1 — Blessed is the man who fears the Lord; he will establish himself firmly within His commandments.
Refrain — O Son of God, who were born of the Virgin, save us...
(after each verse)
V. 2 — Powerful on earth shall be his race; the descendants of the righteous ones shall be blessed.
V. 3 — Glory and wealth shall abide in his house; and his justice shall stand from age to age.
V. 4 — Glory... Now... Only-begotten Son and Word of God...

The Third Antiphon

V. 1 — The Lord has said to my lord, “Sit at my right hand until I make of your enemies a footstool.”.
Refrain — The Troparion of the Feast: Your nativity, O Christ our God... 
(after each verse)
V. 2 — The Lord shall send you from Sion a scepter of power; be the master in the midst of your enemies.
V. 3 — With you was the beginning on the day of your might, in the splendor of the holy ones...
V. 4 — Glory... Now...

**Little Entrance**

v. — From the womb before the morning star have I begotten you. The Lord has sworn and He will not repent: you are a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech.

*Refrain* — O Son of God, who were born of the Virgin, save us...

Troparion of the Feast: Your nativity, O Christ our God... *(three times)*
Hypakoe: Calling the Magi by a star...
Kondakion of the Feast: Today the Virgin gives birth...

**Instead of the Trisagion**

All of you who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Alleluia.

**Hirmos**

Magnify, O my soul...
Behold a strange and wonderful mystery...

**Kikonikon**

The Lord has sent redemption to His people: He has established His covenant forever. Alleluia.

**Instead of “We Have Seen the True Light”**

Troparion of the Feast *(once)*
Alternate Ambo Prayer (from the Greek Liturgikon)

O Christ our God, You shone forth from the eternal Father from before all ages, and were not liable to suffering. Yet in these last days You took flesh and were born of the holy Virgin. You became poor for our sakes, that in Your poverty we might become rich. As a newborn child, You were wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger, although as God You encompass all things.

Master, receive this, our worthless praise, as You received the praise of the shepherds and the worship and gifts of the magi. Grant that we may be worthy to join Your heavenly host and be shown to be heirs of the joy of heaven, which You prepared for those who rightly celebrate Your birth.

For You are the Lover of mankind and we gender glory to You, together with Your eternal Father and Your all-holy, good and life-creating Spirit now and always and forever and ever.

Dismissal

May Christ our true God, who was born in a cave and placed in a manger for our salvation…
Troparion of the Feast (Arabic, transliterated)

Mi - la - dou - ka Ay - you - hal Ma - see - hou I - 
la - hou - na Cad ash - ra - ca nou - ral ma’ri - fa -
tee lil 'a lam, li - an - nas - sa - ji - de - na 
lil - ka - wa - keb fee - hec ta - 'al - la - mou me -
na la - thee mi - nal 'a - la', ya rab - boul maj -
doul - lak.