

SUNDAY ON OR AFTER THE 26th OF DECEMBER

SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST

COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY RIGHTEOUS ONES:

JOSEPH THE BETROTHED, DAVID THE KING, AND JAMES THE BROTHER OF
THE LORD

N.B. Be it known that if this Sunday, i.e., that following the Nativity, falleth on either the 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th, or 30th day of December, then at Little Vespers we chant the Stichera to the Resurrection and to the Theotokos, as usual.

AT GREAT VESPERS

After the usual psalm, we chant the first Kathisma in its entirety.

On "Lord, I have cried ...," 3 Stichera of the Resurrection.

Then 4 Stichera of the Feast, in Tone II:

Come, let us rejoice in the Lord, telling of this present mystery: The middle wall of partition hath been demolished, the fiery sword is removed, the cherub doth withdraw from the gate of life, and I partake of the food of paradise, from whence I was driven away because of disobedience; for the immutable Image of the Father, the Image of His eternity, doth assume the guise of a servant, issuing forth from the Mother who knew not wedlock, without undergoing change, yet He remained what He was before - our true God; and He hath received what He was not, becoming a man in His love for mankind. To Him let us cry aloud: O God Who wast born of the Virgin, have mercy on us!

The composition of Anatolius: When the Lord Jesus was born from the holy Virgin, all things were enlightened; for when the shepherds piped, the magi offered homage and the angels sang, Herod was troubled, for God, the Savior of our souls, appeared in the flesh.

Thy kingdom, O Christ God, is a kingdom of all the ages, and thy dominion is for all generations. O Christ God Who wast incarnate by the Holy Spirit and became a man through the Ever-virgin Mary, Thou hast shone forth Thine advent upon us as light. O Light from Light, Effulgence of the Father, Thou hast illumined all creation. Every creature that hath breath praiseth Thee, the Image of the glory of the Father. O Thou Who art and ever shall be, O God Who hast shone forth from the Virgin: Have mercy upon us!

What shall we offer Thee, O Christ, in that Thou hast appeared on earth as a man for our sake? For every creature fashioned by Thee offereth Thee thanksgiving: the angels, hymnody; the heavens, a star; the magi, gifts; the shepherds, their wonder; the earth, a cave; the wilderness, a manger; and we, the Virgin Mother. O God Who hast existed from before time, have mercy upon us!

And 3 Stichera of the righteous ones, in Tone I:

Spec. Mel.: "Joy of the ranks of heaven ...":

Let us all praise King David, * the ancestor of God, * for from him sprang forth the rod of the Virgin, * and from her blossomed the Flower, even Christ, * Who hath called forth Adam and Eve from corruption, ** in that He is full of tender compassion.

In old age Joseph the betrothed * beheld things foretold by the prophets clearly being fulfilled, * having received a strange betrothal * and a revelation from angels * who cry aloud, Glory be to God, ** Who hath sent down peace upon the earth!

Let us all praise the brother of God, * for he is a holy hierarch * who also nobly shone forth in martyrdom, * through whose prayers do Thou save all who sing to Thee, O Jesus, our God, ** Who wast wrapped in swaddling-bands in the cave.

Glory ..., in Tone VI:

Let us celebrate the memory of the pious David - king and prophet, and James - apostle and first bishop; and, delivered from deception by their teachings, let us glorify Christ, Who shone forth from the Virgin and became incarnate to save our souls.

Both now ..., Dogmatic Theotokion, in the Tone of the week.

Entrance. Prokeimenon of the day.

At the Litiya, the Stichera chanted on the Feast, in Tone I:

Heaven and earth are glad today, as the prophets said, and angels and mortals keep spiritual festival, for God hath appeared in the flesh, born of the Virgin, to those who sit in darkness and shadow: the cave and the manger have received Him; the shepherds proclaim the wonder; the magi from the East bring gifts to Bethlehem; and with our unworthy lips we offer Him the praise of the angels: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace! For the expectation of the nations hath come, and coming hath saved us from slavery to the enemy.

Heaven and earth have now joined together today since Christ hath been born. Today God hath come to earth and man hath ascended to the heavens. Today He Who is invisible by nature is seen in the flesh for mankind's sake. Wherefore, exclaiming in glorification, let us cry out to Him: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace: for Thou hast given us Thine advent! O our Savior, glory be to Thee!

"Glory to God in the highest!" is heard from the incorporeal ones in Bethlehem today, addressed to Him Who was well pleased to become Peace on earth. Now the Virgin hath become more spacious than the heavens, for Light hath shone forth upon the darkened and lifted up the lowly who chant with the angels: Glory to God in the highest!

Beholding that which He had created according to His image and likeness corrupted by disobedience, Jesus descended, bowing down the heavens, and made His abode in the Virgin's womb without undergoing change, that in her He might restore Adam Who had become corrupt, yet crieth: Glory to Thine appearance, O my Redeemer and God!

Glory ..., Both now ..., this Sticheron, by John the Monk, in Tone V:

The magi, kings of Persia, manifestly recognizing the King of heaven Who was born on earth, arrived in Bethlehem, led by the radiant star, bearing choice gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh; and falling down, they offered worship, for they beheld the Timeless One lying in the cave as a babe.

On the Aposticha, the Stichera of the Resurrection.

Glory ..., in Tone VI:

Thy birth giving hath become the memorial of priests, the dominion and gladness of kings, O Lover of mankind, and, rejoicing therein, we say, Our Father, Who art in the heavens, hallowed be Thy name!

Both now ..., in the same tone:

Today the invisible Nature hath been joined to us through the Virgin. Today the infinite Essence is wrapped in swaddling clothes in Bethlehem. Today by a star doth God lead the Magi to worship, foretelling His three-day burial, as it were, in their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. To Him let us sing: O Christ God, Who didst become incarnate from the Virgin, save Thou our souls!

After the Blessing of the Loaves, the Troparion of the feast, in Tone IV:

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, * hath shined the light of knowledge upon the world; * for thereby, they that worshipped the stars * were instructed by a star * to worship Thee, the Sun of Righteousness, * and to know Thee, the Dayspring from on high. ** O Lord, glory be to Thee. *(Twice)*

And that of the righteous ones, in Tone II:

O Joseph, proclaim the glad tidings to David, * the ancestor of God, * for thou hast seen a Virgin give birth; * with the shepherds didst thou give glory; * with the Magi didst thou worship; * by an angel wast thou instructed. ** Entreat Christ God, that He save our souls! *(Once)*

Where the all-night vigil is not served: at Compline, after the Trisagion, the Kontakion of the ancestors of God; Glory ..., Both now ..., the Kontakion of the feast.

AT MATINS

On “God is the Lord ...,” the Troparion of the Resurrection, (Twice):

Glory ..., that of the righteous ones, in Tone II:

O Joseph, proclaim the glad tidings to David, * the ancestor of God, * for thou hast seen a Virgin give birth; * with the shepherds didst thou give glory; * with the Magi didst thou worship; * by an angel wast thou instructed. ** Entreat Christ God, that He save our souls!

Both now ..., that of the feast, in Tone IV:

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, * hath shined the light of knowledge upon the world; * for thereby, they that worshipped the stars * were instructed by a star * to worship Thee, the Sun of Righteousness, * and to know Thee, the Dayspring from on high. ** O Lord, glory be to Thee.

After the readings from the Psalter, the Sessional Hymns & Theotokia of the Resurrection. The Evlogitaria, The Hypacoi, The Song of Ascents, and Prokeimenon of the tone. The Resurrection Gospel, then “Having beheld the Resurrection of Christ...” After Psalm 50, the Stichera of the Resurrection.

The canons:

That of the Resurrection, with 4 Troparia, including its Irmos; that of the Theotokos, with 2 Troparia; that of the Feast, with 4 Troparia; and the following canon, of the righteous ones, with 4 Troparia, the composition of Cosmas the Monk, of Maiuma, in Tone IV:

ODE I

Canon I, the acrostic whereof is: “Having become man, Christ remaineth God as He was before”, the composition of Cosmas of Maiuma, in Tone I:

Irmos: Christ is born, render ye glory. * Christ cometh from heaven, meet ye Him. * Christ is on earth, be ye exalted. * O all the earth, sing unto the Lord, * and sing praises in gladness, O ye people, * for He hath been glorified.

That which, though fashioned in the image of God, became wholly corrupt through transgression, having fallen away from the divine life, hath the wise Creator restored, for He hath been glorified.

The Creator, seeing mankind, whom He had fashioned with His own hands, perishing, descended, bowing down the heavens, and becoming truly incarnate, taking upon Himself all the essence of man, through the pure and divine Virgin, for He hath been glorified.

Christ God, being the wisdom, Word, Power, Effulgence and Son of the Father, having made Himself unknowable to the powers of heaven, and even more so to those on earth, hath become a man and restored us, for He hath been glorified.

Canon II, in Tone IV:

Irmos: I hymn Thee, O Lord my God, * for Thou hast led Thy people out of the bondage of Egypt, * and hast drowned in the waters * the chariots and the might of Pharaoh.

As many as celebrate the Advent festivities of Him who became incarnate for our sake, let us hymn with joy James, the brother of God, and David, the forefather of God.

The choirs of angels stood before Joseph in Bethlehem, saying: Glory to God in the highest! With them let us hymn Him Whose good pleasure it was to become incarnate.

O David, thou forefather of God, calling the righteous James, with harps hymn thou the Lord, Who is incarnate from the root of Jesse.

Theotokion: To Thee shall I sing, O Lord my God, for Thou wast born of the holy Virgin Mother and hast shown her to be the hope of our souls.

Katavasia: “Christ is born ...”

ODE III

Canon I

Irmos: To the Son who was begotten of the Father * without change before all ages, * and in the last times, without seed, was made flesh of the Virgin, * to Christ our God let us cry aloud: * Thou hast raised up our horn, holy art Thou, O Lord.

Adam, fashioned of dust, partook of a higher inspiration, yet he was led to stumble into corruption through a woman's deceit, seeing Christ born from a woman, he cried aloud: O Thou Who for my sake hast become like me, holy art Thou O Lord!

O Lord Christ, mingling with clay, Thou didst conform Thyself thereto, imparting Thy divine essence to vile flesh by participating therein, becoming earthly, yet remaining God, and lifting up our horn: holy art Thou O Lord!

O Bethlehem, thou king of the princes of Judah, be glad! For Christ Who doth shepherd Israel, seated on the shoulders of the cherubim, hath manifestly come forth from thee, and, having lifted up our horn, hath established His reign over all.

Canon II

Irmos: O Christ God, Thou art confirmation of them that hope in Thee, * make us steadfast in Thine Orthodox Faith, * for Thou lovest mankind.

With the angels let us all hymn Christ God, Who, without seed, hath been born in the flesh from the Virgin, crying aloud: Glory to God in the highest!

O ye faithful, with David and James let us honor with hymns, as is meet, the most jubilant feast of Him Who emptied Himself for our sake.

Like a bridegroom from a bridal chamber the Lord shall come forth from His

Mother's womb! Thus said David, whom, with James, let us now hymn.

Theotokion: Let us honor Mary, the unwedded Theotokos, for the Sun of righteousness hath shone forth upon us for her sake.

Kontakion of the Feast, in Tone III:

Spec. Mel.: "Today the Virgin ...":

Today the Virgin giveth birth to Him Who is transcendent in essence; * and the earth offereth a cave to Him Who is unapproachable. * Angels with shepherds give glory; * the Magi journey with a star; ** for our sake a young Child is born, Who is the pre-eternal God.

Ikos: **B**ethlehem hath opened Eden! We have found Joy in a secret place: come, and let us receive the things of paradise within the cave. There the unwatered Root hath blossomed, bearing forgiveness as its fruit. There an unfailing Wellspring hath been found, from whence David of old longed to drink. There the Virgin hath given birth to the Babe, straightway quenching the thirst of Adam and David. Wherefore, let us hasten to this place where now is born a young Child, the pre-eternal God!

Sessional Hymn of the righteous ones, in Tone III:

Spec. Mel.: "Today the Virgin ...":

Right fittingly let us hymn the righteous Joseph, the betrothed of the Virgin, with James and David; for, having trod the righteous path, they have attained unto the mansions of heaven, and joining chorus With the angels as is meet, they beg remission of sins for us.

Glory ..., in the same melody:

The Virgin hath given birth to the Creator of all things, and the Magi come to worship Him in the flesh. Mankind and angels render glory; the cave and the manger offer gifts, praising Him Who hath been newly born as a babe, the pre-eternal God!

Both now ..., in Tone I:

Spec. Mel.: "The choir of angels ...":

The choir of prophets divinely celebrates the wonder which took place within thee, O Virgin; for thou didst give birth to God incarnate upon earth. Wherefore, angels and shepherds chant, and the Magi and Joseph sing of the wonders to David, the forefather of God.

ODE IV

Canon I

Irmos: **R**od of the root of Jesse, * and flower that blossomed from his stem, * O Christ, Thou hast sprung from the Virgin. * From the Mountain overshadowed by the forest * Thou hast come, made flesh from her that knew not wedlock, * O God who art not formed from matter. * Glory to Thy power, O Lord.

O Christ Thou art He Whom Jacob foretold of old, as the expectation of the

nations, and Who hath shone forth from the tribe of Judah, and come to overthrow the power of Damascus and the plunder of Samaria, transforming falsehood into godly faith. Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Shining forth, a Star out of Jacob, O Master, Thou hast filled with joy the wise observers of the stars, the followers of the words of Balaam, the soothsayer of old; manifestly receiving the first-fruits of the nations who have entered in to worship Thee. Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Like drops of rain falling upon the earth, and like the gentle rain upon the fleece, O Christ, Thou hast descended upon the womb of the Virgin. Ethiopia and Tharsis, the islands of Arabia and Saba, and they who rule all the land of the Medes, have fallen down before Thee, O Savior. Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Canon II

Irmos: Proclaiming the advent of Thine appearance on earth, O Christ God, * the prophet cried aloud with gladness: * Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

With the Magi let us worship Him Who hath been born; and with the angels and Joseph let us join chorus, crying aloud in a godly manner: Glory to Christ God in the highest!

Christ, Who reigneth over all kings and Who hath been born in the flesh of the seed of David, hath accepted James, His chosen brother, as it was His good pleasure so to do.

The Lord God, Who appeared in the flesh through the Virgin, hath glorified your memorials together, O James, chosen of the apostles, and David all-blessed, ye holy ones.

Theotokion: Rejoice, O unwedded Theotokos, thou who surpassing the ranks of the cherubim, hast given birth in the flesh unto God Who is borne upon thine arm.

ODE V

Canon I

Irmos: As Thou art the God of peace and Father of compassions, * Thou hast sent unto us Thine Angel of great counsel, * granting us peace. * Wherefore guided towards the light of the knowledge of God, * and watching by night we glorify Thee, * O Lover of mankind.

Submitting to be recorded among Thy servants at the command of Caesar, Thou hast freed us slaves from the enemy and sin, O Christ; and having abased Thyself for us, Thou hast rendered our nature divine through Thy union and sharing therein.

Behold, the Virgin hath conceived in her womb, as was foretold of old, and hath given birth to God made man, yet remaineth a virgin. O ye sinners who for her sake have been reconciled with God, faithfully hymn her as the true Theotokos.

Canon II

Irmos: **O** Thou Who hast caused the light to shine, * who hast made bright the dawn and revealed the day; * glory be to Thee, glory be to Thee, * O Jesus Thou Son of God.

Glory be to Thee! Glory be to Thee, O God incarnate, Whose good pleasure it was to take flesh from the pure Virgin! thus did Joseph cry aloud.

Glory be to Thee! Glory be to Thee, O Jesus, Son of God, Who wast born from the Virgin, rendering the memory of David and James illustrious!

Jesus, the Son of God, Whom the prophet David, by divine inspiration, called the gentle Rain upon the fleece, hath James preached.

Theotokion: **U**nable to keep silent, creation doth offer thee the angel's salutation, O Virgin: Rejoice, O pure Mother of Jesus, the Son of God!

ODE VI

Canon I

Irmos: **T**he sea monster spat forth Jonah as it had received him, * like a babe from the womb: * while the Word, having dwelt in the Virgin and taken flesh, * came forth from her yet kept her incorrupt. * For being Himself not subject to decay. * He preserved His Mother free from all harm.

Christ our God, Whom the Father begat before the morning star, hath come forth incarnate, from a womb. He Who ruleth over the most pure powers lieth in a manger of dumb beasts and is wrapped in swaddling-bands, loosing the knotted bonds of transgressions.

A young Child, a Son, is born of the clay of Adam and given to the faithful: He is the Father and Prince of the age to come, and is called the Angel of great Counsel. He is the mighty God Who exerciseth dominion over all creation.

Canon II

Irmos: **P**refiguring Thy three-day burial * Prophet Jonah praying in the belly of the sea-monster cried aloud: * Deliver me from corruption * O Jesus Thou King of hosts.

Awe-struck, the heavenly hosts stood before the cave and, unable to keep silent, hymned Thy most pure nativity, chanting: Glory in the highest to the newborn God!

Upon Thy throne hast Thou sat, as Thou didst swear unto the prophet David, O Master, Who came forth from the fruit of his loins; and unto James didst Thou commit the throne of the Church, O Christ.

David the king hath been shown to be a wondrous prophet and forefather of the incarnation of God; and James, the disciple of Jesus, hath been shown forth as the first bishop.

Theotokion: **W**e beseech thee, O Virgin Theotokos: On behalf of thy servants

entreat Him Who was incarnate from thee, for we know thee to be our only intercessor.

Kontakion of the righteous ones, in Tone III:

Spec. Mel.: “Today the Virgin ...”:

Today the divine David is filled with gladness, * and Joseph doth offer praise with James. * They rejoice, receiving a crown through their kinship with Christ; * and they praise Him Who hath ineffably been born on earth, ** and cry aloud: O Compassionate One, save those who honor Thee!

Ikos: **T**he Incorporeal One is, through the ineffable Counsel, born in the flesh; He that is uncontainable is now contained in a body and doth preserve both essences immutably; He that is without beginning and Who alone is beyond time doth take on a beginning; an Infant of surpassing perfection is beheld; He that beareth all things is borne in arms. Wherefore, as God, He doth crown through His birth those who are honored by their kinship with Him, and, glorifying them with faith, we cry out unceasingly: O Compassionate One, save those who honor Thee!

ODE VII

Canon I

Irmos: **Scorning the impious decree of the godless one, * the Children brought up together in godliness * feared not the threat of fire, * but standing in the midst of the flames, they sang: * O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou.**

The piping shepherds received an awesome vision of light; for the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and an angel cried aloud: Sing ye, for Christ, the blessed God of your fathers, is born!

Suddenly, at the voice of the angel, the armies of heaven cried out: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will among men! Christ hath shone forth: the blessed God of your fathers!”

“**W**hat words are these?” said the shepherds; “Let us go and see what hath become of the blessed Christ!” And hastening to Bethlehem, they bowed down in worship with the Theotokos, chanting: “O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!”

Canon II

Irmos: **Of old the Children of Abraham in Babylon * trampled down the flame of the furnace, * crying aloud with hymns: * O God of our Fathers, blessed art Thou.**

Amazed beyond words by the birthgiving of Mary, the Theotokos, the angelic choirs cried out to Joseph: Glory in the highest, and on earth peace!

David, the leader of the bride, and James, who was the chamberlain of the divine Church, did say: O God, Who hath become incarnate for our sake, blessed art Thou!

O thou that wast a king among prophets and a prophet among kings, chant thou

with the divinely wise James and lift thy voice in song for us: O Christ, Who wast incarnate for our sake, blessed art Thou!

Theotokion: Prefigured in the unconsumed bush and in the bedewed furnace, O most pure Mother, thou didst bear without seed God incarnate, O ever-blessed one.

ODE VIII

Canon I

Irmos: The furnace moist with dew * was an image and prefiguring of a wonder past nature, * burning not the Children whom it had received, * so the fire of the Godhead consumed not the Virgin's womb * into which it had descended. * Therefore in song let us sing: * Let the whole creation bless the Lord * and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages.

The daughter of Babylon carried off the captive children of David from Sion to herself; but now she hath sent her own children, the magi bearing gifts, to the God-pleasing daughter of David, who prayeth. Wherefore, chanting, let us sing: Let all creation bless the Lord and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

The harps refused to play their sad songs, for the children of Sion would not sing in a strange land; but Christ, shining forth in Bethlehem, hath destroyed all the delusion of Babylon and her musical instruments. Wherefore, chanting, let us sing: Let all creation bless the Lord and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

Babylon received the plunder of the kingdom of Sion and its captive riches; but Christ hath drawn its treasures to His Sion, guiding the star-observing kings by a star. Wherefore, chanting, let us sing: Let all creation bless the Lord and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

Canon II

Irmos: Those who confessed Christ the King, * the Children prisoners, in the furnace * cried with a loud voice, saying: * O all ye works of the Lord, praise ye the Lord.

Christ incarnate, Whom the hosts of heaven have glorified, doth Joseph the betrothed unceasingly hymn, chanting: All ye works of the Lord, hymn and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

Christ incarnate, Whom David the forefather of God foretold, James preached to the people, crying aloud: All ye works of the Lord, hymn and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

Christ, Who was born of the Virgin and Who hath exalted the sacred memory of David and James, in that they are His friends, hymn, all ye works of the Lord, and supremely exalt throughout all ages!

Theotokion: Christ the King, to Whom Mary the Theotokos hath given birth for our

sake, remaining a pure Virgin even after birthgiving, hymn, all ye works of the Lord, and supremely exalt throughout all ages!

ODE IX

Canon I

Irmos: **A strange and most wondrous mystery do I see: * the cave is heaven; * the Virgin the throne of the cherubim; * the manger a room, in which Christ God, * whom nothing can contain, is laid. * Whom we praise and magnify.**

The magi beheld the excellent course of the strange star which had newly appeared, illumining the heavens and marking the birth of Christ the King in Bethlehem, for our salvation.

The star revealed the newborn infant King to the magi who said: “Where is He, for we have come to worship Him?” But Herod who fought against God, enraged, was troubled, seeking to slay the Christ.

Herod inquired concerning the time of the star, following whose course the magi worshipped Christ with gifts in Bethlehem; but, guided thereby to their homeland, they left the cruel murderer of the infants behind in mockery.

Canon II

Irmos: **On the mountain Moses beheld the unconsumed bush; * and in the cave Joseph heard the ineffable birth. * O Theotokos, and undefiled Virgin, * thou Mother who knewest not a man: * thee do we magnify!**

With trembling doth all creation minister unto Him Who hath been born from the Virgin: the heavens with a star; the earth with a manger; the mountain with a cave; the Magi with gifts; the shepherds with wonder; and the angels with the hymn, Glory to God in the highest!

Of old David was chosen king from amongst the shepherds; and thou, O James art from the royal tribe of Judah, shown to be a shepherd of the flock of the Incarnate One, the Lamb and Son of God Most High.

Be glad now, O Bethlehem, having become the city of the new David! O Zion, thou citadel of the Churches, exult now, taking up the common celebration of the King of all and His favored ones.

Theotokion: The assemblies of angels glorify thee, O Birthgiver of God, and the human race doth unceasingly honor thee with hymns, for by thy divine birthgiving hast thou united the earthly to the heavenly. Wherefore, we honor thee.

Exapostilarion of the Resurrection; Glory ..., that of the righteous ones:

Spec. Mel.: “With the disciples ...”:

Let us hymn David, the forefather of God, and divine Joseph, the betrothed of the Theotokos, with James, the glorious brother of God, for, with the angels, the Magi and the shepherds, they ministered in a godly manner at the divine nativity of Christ in the city of Bethlehem, chanting a hymn unto Him as God and Master.

Both now ..., that of the feast:

From on high our Savior, the Dayspring of the East hath visited us and we who are in shadowy darkness have truly found Him; for the Lord hath been born from the Virgin. (Thrice)

On the Praises, 4 Stichera of the Resurrection, and 4 of the feast:

In Tone IV:

Be glad, O ye righteous! Rejoice, O heavens! Leap up, ye mountains for Christ hath been born! The Virgin sitteth, holding the incarnate Word of God in her bosom, like unto the cherubim. Shepherds marvel at Him Who hath been born; the magi offer gifts to the Master; and the angels say, chanting: O unapproachable Lord, glory be to Thee!

O Virgin Theotokos having given birth to the Savior, thou hast abolished the ancient curse of Eve; for thou didst become the Mother of Him in Whom the Father is well pleased bearing the incarnate Word of God in thy bosom. This mystery is not subject to testing but with faith alone we all glorify it, crying out with thee and saying: O ineffable Lord, glory be to Thee!

Verse: From the womb before the morning-star have I begotten Thee. * The Lord hath sworn and will not repent.

Come let us hymn the Mother of the Savior, who even after giving birth wast revealed to be a Virgin. Rejoice O animate city of God the King, wherein Christ making His abode, hath wrought salvation! We chant with Gabriel and offer up glory with the magi saying: O Theotokos, entreat Him Who became incarnate from thee, that we be saved!

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

The Father was well pleased; the Word became flesh; the Virgin gave birth to God incarnate; the star proclaimeth Him; the magi offer Him worship; the shepherds marvel, and creation rejoiceth.

Glory ..., in Tone VIII:

Blood and fire and clouds of smoke are the wonders which Joel foresaw on earth. The blood is the Incarnation; the fire is the Godhead; the clouds of smoke are the Holy Spirit, Who descended upon the Virgin, rendering the world fragrant. Great is the mystery of Thine Incarnation! O Lord, glory be to Thee!

Now and even., "Most blessed art Thou, O Virgin Theotokos ..."

Great Doxology. Troparion of the Resurrection. Dismissal. Evangelical Sticheron. First Hour, and final dismissal.

At the Hours, the Troparion of the Resurrection; Glory ..., that of the feast/saints; Both now ..., Theotokion. After the "Our Father ...," the Kontakion of the feast, alternating it with that of the saints.

AT LITURGY

On the Beatitudes, 12 Troparia: 4 from the Oktoechos, 4 from the canon of the feast (which varies depending on the day on which the Sunday falls), and 4 from ODE VI of the canon of the righteous ones:

Awe-struck, the heavenly hosts stood before the cave and, unable to keep silent, hymned Thy most pure nativity, chanting: Glory in the highest to the newborn God!

Upon Thy throne hast Thou sat, as Thou didst swear unto the prophet David, O Master, Who came forth from the fruit of his loins; and unto James didst Thou commit the throne of the Church, O Christ.

David the king hath been shown to be a wondrous prophet and forefather of the incarnation of God; and James, the disciple of Jesus, hath been shown forth as the first bishop.

Theotokion: We beseech thee, O Virgin Theotokos: On behalf of thy servants entreat Him Who was incarnate from thee, for we know thee to be our only intercessor.

After the Entrance, the Troparia of the Resurrection.

Troparion of the Feast, in Tone IV:

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, * hath shined the light of knowledge upon the world; * for thereby, they that worshipped the stars * were instructed by a star * to worship Thee, the Sun of Righteousness, * and to know Thee, the Dayspring from on high. ** O Lord, glory be to Thee.

And that of the righteous ones, in Tone II:

O Joseph, proclaim the glad tidings to David, * the ancestor of God, * for thou hast seen a Virgin give birth; * with the shepherds didst thou give glory; * with the Magi didst thou worship; * by an angel wast thou instructed. ** Entreat Christ God, that He save our souls!

Glory ..., the Kontakion of the righteous ones, in Tone III:

Today the divine David is filled with gladness, * and Joseph doth offer praise with James. * They rejoice, receiving a crown through their kinship with Christ; * and they praise Him Who hath ineffably been born on earth, ** and cry aloud: O Compassionate One, save those who honor Thee!

Both now ..., that of the feast, in Tone III:

Today the Virgin giveth birth to Him Who is transcendent in essence; * and the earth offereth a cave to Him Who is unapproachable. * Angels with shepherds give glory; * the Magi journey with a star; ** for our sake a young Child is born, Who is the pre-eternal God.

Prokeimenon of the tone, and that of the righteous ones, in Tone IV:
Wondrous is God in His saints, * the God of Israel.

Verse: In congregations bless ye God, the Lord from the wellsprings of Israel.

THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS (1:11-19)

Brethren, I certify you, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: and profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.

Alleluia, in the Tone of the week, with its Verse. Then:

Alleluia, in Tone IV: Remember, O Lord, David in all His meekness.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATHEW (2:13-23)

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

room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee: and he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

In place of “Meet it is” we chant the following

Refrain: Magnify, O my soul, the most pure Virgin Theotokos, who is more honorable and more glorious than the armies on high!

Katavasia I: A strange and most wondrous mystery do I see: * the cave is heaven; * the Virgin the throne of the cherubim; * the manger a room, in which Christ God, * whom nothing can contain, is laid. * Whom we praise and magnify.

Communion Verse I: Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise Him in the highest.

Communion Verse II: Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous; praise is meet for the upright.