

Christmas Eve Vesperal Liturgy

December 24

PRIEST: O heavenly King...Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace...

DEACON: Bless, Father.

PRIEST: Blessed is the kingdom of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

PEOPLE: Amen.

Vespers begins as usual. After "O Joyful Light," the people sit for the readings from the Old Testament.

"Come Let Us Worship..."

Psalm 104

Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord You are very great: / You are clothed with honor and majesty, / Who cover Yourself with light as with a garment, / Who stretch out the heavens like a curtain.

He lays the beams of His upper chambers in the waters, / Who makes the clouds His chariot, / Who walks on the wings of the wind, / Who makes His angels spirits, His ministers a flame of fire.

You Who laid the foundations of the earth, / so that it should not be moved forever, / You covered it with the deep as with a garment; / the waters stood above the mountains.

At Your rebuke they fled; / at the voice of Your thunder they hastened away. / They went up over the mountains; they went down into the valleys, / to the place which You founded for them.

You have set a boundary that they may not pass over, / that they may not return to cover the earth. / He sends the springs into the valleys, / which flow among the hills.

They give drink to every beast of the field; / the wild donkeys quench their thirst. / By them the birds of the heavens have their habitation; / they sing among the branches.

He waters the hills from His upper chambers; / the earth is satisfied with the fruit of Your works.

He causes the grass to grow for the cattle, / and vegetation for the service of man, / that he may bring forth food from the earth, / and wine that makes glad the heart of man,

oil to make his face shine, / and bread which strengthens man's heart.

The trees of the Lord are full of sap, / the cedars of Lebanon which He planted, / where the birds make their nests; / the stork has her home in the fir trees.

The high hills are for the wild goats; / the cliffs are a refuge for the rock badgers.
He appointed the moon for the seasons; / the sun know its going down. / You made darkness, and it is night, / in which all the beasts of the forest creep about.

The young lions roar after their prey, / and seek their food from God. / When the sun arises, they gather together / and lie down in their dens.

Man goes out to his work / and to his labor until the evening. / O Lord, how manifold are Your works! / In wisdom You have made them all.

The earth is full of Your possessions / – this great and wide sea, / in which are innumerable teeming things, / living things both small and great.

There the ships sail about and there is that Leviathan / which You have made to play there. / These all wait for You, / that You may give them their food in due season.

What You give them they gather in; / You open Your hand, they are filled with good. / You hide Your face, they are troubled; / You take away their breath, they die and return to their dust.

You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; / and You renew the face of the earth. / May the glory of the Lord endure forever; / may the Lord rejoice in His works.

He looks on the earth, and it trembles; / He touches the hills, and they smoke.

I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; / I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. / May my meditation be sweet to Him; / I will be glad in the Lord.

May sinners be consumed from the earth, / and the wicked be no more. / Bless the Lord, O my soul! / Praise the Lord!

The sun knows its going down. / You make darkness and it is night. / O Lord, how manifold are Your works! / In wisdom You have made them all.

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

PEOPLE: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to You, O God. (3x)

O our God and our hope, glory to You!

The Great Litany

DEACON: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: For the peace from above, and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: For the peace of the whole world, for the good estate of the holy churches of God, and for the union of all men, let us pray to the Lord.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: For this holy house, and for those who enter with faith, reverence, and fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: For our father, (*metropolitan, archbishop, or bishop*) N., the honorable presbytery, the diaconate in Christ, and for all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: For our president, all civil authorities, and for our armed forces, let us pray to the Lord.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: For this city, every city and countryside, and for the faithful living in them, let us pray to the Lord.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: For healthful seasons, an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

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

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: For our deliverance from all tribulation, wrath, danger, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Your grace.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

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

PEOPLE: To You, O Lord.

Exclamation of the Fourth Prayer

PRIEST: For unto You are due all glory, honor, and worship: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

PEOPLE: Amen.

“O Lord, I Cry...” – Tone 6

Opening Psalm Verses - Psalm 141:1, 2 (LXX 140)

O Lord, I cry out to You, hear me! Hear me, O Lord. O Lord, I cry out to You, hear me. Give ear, give ear to my voice when I cry out to You. Hear me, O Lord

Let my prayer be set before You as incense, as incense before You and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice. Hear me, O Lord.

Set a guard, O Lord over my mouth; keep watch o’er the door of my lips.

Do not incline my heart to any evil thing, to practice wicked works with men who work iniquity; and do not let me eat of their delicacies.

Let the righteous strike me; it shall be a kindness, and let him reprove me; it shall be as excellent oil. Let not my head refuse it, for still my prayer is against the deeds of the wicked.

Their judges are overthrown by the sides of the cliff and they hear my words for they are sweet. Our bones are scattered at the mouth of the grave, as when one plows and breaks up the earth.

But my eyes are upon You, O God the Lord; in You I take refuge; do not leave my soul destitute.

Keep me from the snares which they have laid for me, and from the traps of the workers of iniquity. Let the wicked fall into their own nets, while I escape safely.

Psalm 142 (LXX 141)

I cry out to the Lord with my voice; with my voice to the Lord I make my supplication.

I pour out my complaint before Him; I declare before Him my trouble.

When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then You knew my path. In a way in which I walk they have secretly set a snare for me.

Look on my right hand and see, for there is no one who acknowledges me; refuge has failed me; no one cares for my soul.

I cried out to You, O Lord. I said, “You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living.

Attend to my cry, for I am brought very low; deliver me from my persecutors for they are stronger than I.”

Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise Your name.

The righteous shall surround me, for You shall deal bountifully with me.

Psalm 130 (LXX 129)

Out of the depths I have cried to You, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice!

Let Your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.

If You, Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with You, that You may be feared.

(Tone 2) – Nativity

Come, let us greatly rejoice in the Lord, as we sing of this present mystery. The wall which divided God from man has been destroyed. The flaming sword withdraws from Eden's gate, and I who had been cast out through my disobedience, now feast on the delights of paradise: For today the Father's perfect Image, marked with the stamp of His eternity, has taken the form of a servant, without undergoing change, He is born from an unwedded mother; He was true God, and He remains the same, but through His love for mankind, He has become what He never was: true man! Come, O faithful, let us cry to Him: "O God, born of a virgin, have mercy on us!"

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in His word I do hope.

When the Lord Jesus was born of the holy Virgin, the whole universe was filled with light. The shepherds watched in the fields; the wise men worshipped and the angels sang; but Herod was troubled, for God had appeared in the flesh. He is the Savior of our souls.

My soul waits for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning, I say more than those who watch for the morning. O Israel, hope in the Lord;

When the Lord Jesus was born of the holy Virgin, the whole universe was filled with light. The shepherds watched in the fields; the wise men worshipped and the angels sang; but Herod was troubled, for God had appeared in the flesh. He is the Savior of our souls.

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

Your kingdom endures forever, O Christ our God. Your rule is from age to age. Made flesh by the Holy Spirit, made man of the ever-Virgin Mary, You have filled all creation with joy. The light of Your coming has shone on us! Every living creature praises You, the Image of the Father's glory. Light of Light, the Radiance of the Father, the same yesterday, today, and forever, You have shone forth from the Virgin. O God, have mercy on us!

Psalm 117 (LXX 116)

O, praise the Lord, all you Gentiles! Laud Him, all you peoples!

What shall we offer You, O Christ, Who for our sakes appeared on earth as man? Every creature made by You offers You thanks. The angels offer a hymn; the heavens, a star; the wise men gifts; the shepherds, their wonder; the earth, its cave; the wilderness, a manger; and we offer You a virgin mother. O pre-eternal God, have mercy on us! You, our God were made man. Great is Your mercy! O Lord, glory to You!

For His merciful kindness is great toward us, and the truth of the Lord endures forever.

What shall we offer You, O Christ, Who for our sakes appeared on earth as man? Every creature made by You offers You thanks. The angels offer a hymn; the heavens, a star; the wise men gifts; the shepherds, their wonder; the earth, its cave; the wilderness, a manger; and we offer You a virgin mother. O pre-eternal God,

have mercy on us! You, our God were made man. Great is Your mercy! O Lord, glory to You!

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

(Tone 6)

When Augustus reigned alone upon earth, the many kingdoms of men came to an end; and when You were made 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 the Godhead, when You, our God, were made man. Great is Your mercy: O Lord, glory to You.

The Prayer before the Entrance

DEACON: Let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mercy.

PRIEST: In the evening and in the morning and at noonday we praise You, we bless You, we give thanks to You, and we pray to You, O Master of all, Lord Who love mankind. Direct our prayer before You as incense, and incline not our hearts to words or thoughts of evil; but deliver us from all who seek after our souls. For unto You, Lord, O Lord, we lift up our eyes, and in You have we hoped. Put us not to shame, O our God.

For unto You are due all glory, honor, and worship: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

DEACON: Amen.

DEACON: Bless, father, the holy entrance.

PRIEST: Blessed is the entrance into Your holy place always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

DEACON: Amen.

DEACON: Wisdom. Let us attend.

“O Joyful Light”

PEOPLE: O joyful Light of the holy glory of the immortal, heavenly, holy, blessed Father: O Jesus Christ. Now that we have come to the setting of the sun and behold the light of evening, we praise God: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. For it is right at all times to worship You with voices of praise, O Son of God and Giver of life. Therefore all the world glorifies You.

Old Testament Readings - 1

Genesis 1:1-13

In the beginning God made heaven and earth. The earth was invisible and unfinished; and darkness was over the deep. The Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the water. Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. God saw the light; it

was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. God called the light Day; the darkness He called Night; and there was evening and morning; one day. Then God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the water, and let it divide the water from the water;" and it was so. Thus God made the firmament; and God divided the water under the firmament from the water above the firmament. So God called the firmament Heaven, and God saw that it was good; and there was evening and morning, the second day. Then God said, "Let the water under heaven be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear"; and it was so. The water under heaven was gathered into its places, and the dry land appeared. So God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas; and God saw that it was good. Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth the herb of grass, bearing seed according to its kind and likeness. Let the fruit tree bear fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind on earth." It was so. Thus the earth brought forth the herb of grass, bearing seed according to its kind and likeness. The fruit tree bore fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind on earth. God saw that it was good. So evening and morning were the third day.

Numbers 24:2-3, 5-9, 17-18

Then Balaam raised his eyes and saw Israel encamped according to their tribes; and the Spirit of God came upon him. Then he took up his parable and said: How beautiful are your dwellings, O Jacob, Your tents, O Israel. Like wooded valleys offering shade, and like gardens by the rivers, like tents the Lord pitched, like cedars beside the waters. A Man shall come forth from his seed, and He shall rule many nations; and His kingdom shall be more exalted than Gog, and His kingdom shall increase. God led Him out of Egypt, and He has the glorious appearance of a unicorn. He shall consume the nations of his enemies and deprive them of their strength. He shall shoot the enemy with His missiles. He lies down and rests like a lion, and like a lion's cub, who shall rouse Him? Those who bless You are blessed, and those who curse You are cursed." I will show Him, but not now; I bless Him, but He is not near. A Star shall rise out of Jacob; and a Man shall rise out of Israel. He shall break in pieces the rulers of Moab and plunder all the sons of Seth. Edom shall be His inheritance, and also His enemy shall be His inheritance; but Israel acts with strength.

Micah 4:6-7; 5:2-4 (LXX 4:6-7; 5:1-3)

"In that day," says the Lord, "I shall gather her who has been broken, and I will welcome her who has been exiled, even those whom I have rejected. And I shall make her who has been broken into a remnant, and her that was rejected into a strong nation. So the Lord will reign over them in Mount Zion henceforth and forever. And you, O Bethlehem, House of Ephratha, though you are fewest in number among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be ruler of Israel. His goings forth were from the beginning, even from everlasting." Therefore He shall give them up until the appointed time for her to give birth, and then the remnant of their brothers will return to the sons of Israel. And He shall stand and see, and shepherd His flock in the strength of the Lord, and they will dwell in the glory of the name of the Lord their God, for now they will be magnified unto the ends of the earth.

Old Testament Troparion -1 (Special Melody)

The image shows a musical score for a troparion. It consists of five staves of music in G major (one sharp). The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The lyrics are: 'In the se - cre - cy of a cave You were born, but the'. The second staff starts with a measure rest of 4 measures, then continues with 'heav - ens de - clared Your birth through a star, re -'. The third staff starts with a measure rest of 7 measures, then continues with 'veal - ing You to all, O Sa - vior. The star led the'. The fourth staff starts with a measure rest of 10 measures, then continues with 'wise men to wor - ship You; as on them O'. The fifth staff starts with a measure rest of 13 measures, then continues with 'Lord, have mer - cy on us.' The word 'Refrain:' is written in green above the third staff.

In the se - cre - cy of a cave You were born, but the

4 heav - ens de - clared Your birth through a star, re -

7 *Refrain:* veal - ing You to all, O Sa - vior. The star led the

10 wise men to wor - ship You; as on them O

13 Lord, have mer - cy on us.

Psalms 87 (LXX 86)

Verse: His foundations are in the holy mountains. The Lord loves the gates of Zion more than all the towns of Jacob.

Refrain: The star led the wise men to worship You; as on them O Lord, have mercy on us.

Verse: Glorious things have been said about you, O city of God. I will mention Rahab and Babylon to those who know Me. And look foreigners and people of Tyre and Ethiopia, these were born there.

Refrain: The star led the wise men to worship You; as on them O Lord, have mercy on us.

Verse: "Mother Zion," a man will say, and "this man was born in her," and "The Most High Himself founded her."

Refrain: The star led the wise men to worship You; as on them O Lord, have mercy on us.

Verse: The Lord will count in His list of people and rulers those who were born in her. How happy are all whose home is in You. Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

In the secrecy of a cave...

Old Testament Readings - 2

Isaiah 11:1-10

And the Lord said, "There shall come forth a rod from the root of Jesse, and a flower shall grow out of his root. The Spirit of God shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and godliness. The Spirit of the fear of God shall fill Him. He shall not judge by reputation nor convict by common talk. But He will judge the cause of the humble, and reprove the humble of the earth. He shall strike the earth with the word of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He shall slay the ungodly. He shall gird His loins with righteousness and cover his sides with truth. The wolf shall feed with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf, the bull, and the lion shall feed together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze together, and their young ones shall lie down together. The lion and the ox shall eat straw together. The nursing child shall play by the hole of asps, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the den of asps. They shall not hurt nor be able to destroy anyone on My holy mountain, for the whole world shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as much water covers the seas. It shall come to pass in that day that there shall be a Root of Jesse who shall arise to rule nations. The Gentiles shall hope in Him, and His resting place shall be honorable."

Jeremiah (Baruch) 3:36-4:4

This is our God; no other shall be compared to Him. He found the whole way of knowledge and gave it to Jacob His servant and to Israel His beloved. Afterwards, He was seen upon the earth and lived among men. She is the book of the commandments of God and the law that endures forever. All those who keep her will live, those forsaking her will die. Return, O Jacob, and take hold of her. Walk toward the radiance of the presence of her light. Do not give your glory to another or the things that are of advantage to you to a foreign nation. O Israel, we are blessed, for what is pleasing to our God is known to us.

Daniel 2:31-36, 44-45

Daniel said to Nebuchadnezzar, "As for you, O king, you saw and beheld one great image. That image was very large and its appearance excellent. It stood before you, and its vision was fearful. The image had a head made of fine gold, and its hands, chest, and arms were made of silver, and its stomach and thighs, of copper. Its legs were iron, and its feet were partly iron and partly clay. You saw while a stone was cut out of a mountain without hands, and it struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and ground them to powder. Then at once the clay, the iron, the copper, the silver, and the gold were like dust from the summer threshing floor, and a great force of wind blew them away; and their place was not to be found. Then the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled all the earth. "This is the dream, and we will tell its interpretation before the king. Then in the times of those kings, the God of heaven will raise up a kingdom, and it shall never be destroyed. This kingdom shall not be left to another people, but it will break in pieces and crush all these kingdoms; and it will stand forever. Whereas you saw the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, it ground to powder

the clay, the iron, the copper, the silver, and the gold. Thus, the great God has made known to the king what must come to pass after this. The dream is true, and its interpretation is trustworthy.”

Old Testament Troparion – 2 (Special Melody)

From a vir - gin You a - rose, O Christ, our
spi - ri-tual Sun of right - - eous - ness! Though
noth - ing can con - tain You, a star re -
vealed You with - in a cave. You have led the
wise men to wor-ship; with them we mag - ni -
fy You, O Lord: O Giv - er of Life,
glo - ry to You!

Refrain:

Psalm 93 (LXX 92)

Verse: The Lord reigns as King, He is clothed with beauty, the Lord is clothed and surrounded with power.

Refrain: With them we magnify You, O Lord: O Giver of Life, glory to You.

Verse: He has made the world firm and it cannot be shaken. Your throne has been prepared from of old. You are from all eternity.

Refrain: With them we magnify You, O Lord: O Giver of Life, glory to You.

Verse: The rivers have risen, O Lord, the rivers have raised their voices, the rivers will lift their waves above the roars of many waters. Wonderful are the ocean breakers, wonderful is the Lord on high! Your testimonies may be fully trusted.

Refrain: With them we magnify You, O Lord: O Giver of Life, glory to You.

Verse: Holiness adorns Your house, O Lord, forever. Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

From a virgin You arose...

Old Testament Readings - 3

Isaiah 9:6-7 (LXX 9:5-6)

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Child is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. His name will be called the Angel of Great Council, for I shall bring peace upon the rulers, peace and health by Him. Great shall be His government, and of His peace there is no end. His peace shall be upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order and establish it with righteousness and judgment, from that time forward and unto ages of ages. The zeal of the Lord of hosts shall perform this.

Isaiah 7:10-16; 8:1-4, 9-10

Moreover, the Lord added this to Ahaz, saying, "Ask a sign for yourself from the Lord your God; ask it either in the depth or in the height above." But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, nor will I tempt the Lord." Then Isaiah said, "Hear now, O house of David, is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will you weary the Lord also?" Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and you shall call His name Emmanuel. Butter and honey He shall eat before He knows to prefer evil or choose the good, for before the Child knows good or evil, He refuses the evil to choose the good; and the land you fear because of the presence of the two kings will be abandoned. Moreover the Lord said to me, "Take for yourself a large new book, and write on it with a man's pen concerning making a swift plunder of spoils, for it is near at hand. Then make witnesses for Me of faithful men: Uriah and Zachariah the son of Berechiah." Then I went to the prophetess and she conceived and bore a son, and the Lord said to me, "Call his name Quickly-Despoil, Swiftly-Plunder; for before the Child shall know how to call for his father and mother, He shall take the power of Damascus and the spoils Samaria in the presence of the king of Assyria." Know this, O Gentiles, and be defeated. Give ear, all you to the very ends of the earth. Be defeated although you are strong, for even if you should be strong again, you will be defeated again. Then too, whatever counsel you take, the Lord will scatter it abroad; and whatever word you shall speak, it will not continue among you, for the Lord God is with us.

The Liturgy continues with the “Prayer before the Trisagion Hymn.”

The Trisagion Prayers

Prokeimenon: Tone 1 (Psalm 2)

The Lord has said to Me, “You are My Son, today I have begotten You.

Verse: Ask of Me and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance and the end of the earth for Your possession.

Verse: You shall break with them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.

Verse: Blessed are those, who put their trust in Him.

The Epistle Reading – Hebrews 1:1-12

Brethren, God, Who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, Whom He has appointed heir of all things, through Whom also He made the worlds; Who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For to which of the angels did He ever say: “You are My Son, today I have begotten You”? And again: “I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son”? But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says: “Let all the angels of God worship Him.” And of the angels He says: “Who makes His angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire.” But to the Son He says: “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions.” And: “You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You remain; And they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will fold them up, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not fail.”

The Alleluia before the Gospel - Psalm 110 (LXX 109)

Verse: The Lord said to my Lord: “Sit at My right hand, ’til I make Your enemies Your footstool.”

Verse: The Lord will send You a rod of strength out of Zion.

Verse: From the womb before the morning star, have I begotten You.

The Gospel Reading – Luke 2:1-20

And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city. Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!” So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, “Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us.” And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.

After the Gospel Reading we continue with the Liturgy of St. Basil.

Magnification Hymn

All of creation rejoices in you, O full of grace, the angelic hosts and the race of men. O sanctified temple and spiritual paradise, glory of virgins, of whom God was incarnate and became a little Child, even our God Who is before all the ages, for He made your womb a throne and your body He made more spacious than the heavens. All of creation rejoices in you, O full of grace! Glory to you!

The Communion Hymn - Psalm 148

Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord from the heavens. Praise Him, O praise Him in the highest. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Christmas Candle and Icon

After "Blessed be the name..." the clergy bring a candle and the Nativity Icon to the front of the church as the people sing the Troparion and Kontakion of the Feast.

Nativity Troparion: Tone 4 (Russian-Greek)

Your Na-tiv - i - ty, O Christ our God, has dawned up - on the
6 world the light of know - ledge: for by it those who a - dored the stars
10 through a star were taught to wor-ship You, the Sun of Right-eous -
13 ness, and to know You the Day-spring from on high. O Lord, glo-ry to You!

Kontakion Nativity: Tone 3 (Bulgarian, Romanos)

To - day the Vir - gin gives birth to the One a - bove
10 all. The earth of - fers a cave to the un-ap-proach-a - ble.
17 All heav - en's an - gels join to sing with the shep-herds
25 prais-ing Him. Wise-men jour-ney with a star for God E - ter-nal
31 comes. For all man-kind's sake is born: *rit.*
39 the E - ter - nal God, a lit - tle Child.

The Dismissal

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

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

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Father, bless.

PRIEST: May Christ our true God, *Who was born in a cave and lay in a manger for our salvation*, through the intercessions of His all-pure and all-blameless, holy Mother... at the supplication of (*N., patron of the church*), of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna, and of all the saints, have mercy on us and save us, for He is good and loves mankind.

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

PEOPLE: Amen.



The Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ

Christmas Carols

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King,
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With th'angelic host proclaim,
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”

Hail the heaven born Prince of Peace!
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings
Risen with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by,
Born that man no more may die;
Born to raise the sons of earth;
Born to give them second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”

O Little Town of Bethlehem

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Immanuel!

Angels We Have Heard of High

Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains.

**GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO,
GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO,**

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
Say what may the tidings be,
Which inspire your heav'nly song?

Come to Bethlehem, and see
Him Whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.

Silent Night, Holy Night

Silent night, holy night,
All is calm, all is bright;
Round yon virgin mother and Child!
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light;
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Silent night, holy night,
Wondrous star, lend thy light;
With the angels let us sing,
“Alleluia!” to our King;
Christ the Savior is born,
Christ the Savior is born.

The First Noel

The first Noel, the angels did say,
Was to certain poor shepherds in
fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.

**NOEL, NOEL, NOEL, NOEL,
BORN IN THE KING OF ISRAEL.**

Then entered in those wise men three,
Full reverently upon their knee,
And offered there, in His presence,
Their gold and myrrh and frankincense.

O Holy Night

O holy night! The stars are brightly shining,
It is the night of the dear Savior's birth:
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
Till He appeared and the soul felt its worth
A thrill of hope the weary soul rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn;
Fall on your knees. Oh, hear the angel voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ was born!
O night, O holy night, O night divine!

Truly He taught us to love one another;
His law is love, and His gospel is peace;
Chains shall He break for the slave is our
brother,
And in His name all oppressions shall cease,
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we,
Let all within us praise His holy name;
Christ is the Lord. Oh, praise His name forever!
His pow'r and glory ever more proclaim!
His pow'r and glory ever more proclaim!

Joy to the World

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King:
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n
and nature sing.

Joy to the world, the Savior reigns!
Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills
and plains

Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sin and sorrow grow,
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make
His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world
with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders of His love.





A Ukrainian Christmas Hymn

In the Dark Night – Spii, Isuse, Spii - Sleep, Jesus, Sleep

In the dark night, above Bethlehem, / a bright star shined out, covering the Holy Land. /
The most pure Virgin, the holy Bride / in a poor cave gave birth to a Son.

Chorus: **Spii, Isuse, spii Malenky, / Spii, Ty, zirochko, moya.**
Sleep, Jesus, sleep my baby, / Sleep my little star.

Tvoyu dolye, miy mylenky, / Tobi spivayu ya.
About Your fate, my little sweet, / To You I will sing.

She gently kissed and swaddled Him, / laid Him to sleep and started to sing. / You will grow
up, my Son, You'll become a man / and You will go out into the world, my little Child.

Chorus: **Spii, Isuse, spii...**

The Love of the Lord and God's truth, / You will bring faith to the world, Your people. / The
truth will live on, chains of sin will be shattered / and on Golgatha, my Child will die.

Chorus: **Spii, Isuse, spii Malenky, / Spii, Ty, zirochko, moya.**
Sleep, Jesus, sleep my baby, / Sleep my little star.

Tvoyu dolye, miy mylenky, / Tobi spivayu ya.
About Your fate, my little sweet, / To You I will sing.

Spii, Isuse, spii Malenky, / Spii Ty, miy rozhevyy tsvit.
Sleep, Jesus, sleep my baby, / Sleep my rose blossom.

Iz nadiyeyu na Tebe / Dyvytsya uves' svit!
With hope in You / the entire world is watching.

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