

Ambrose, Bishop of Milan

Sunday, December 7, 2025

Tone 1

GREAT VESPERS - SATURDAY EVENING

DEACON: Bless, Father.

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

PEOPLE: Amen.

“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 5

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

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

Let my prayer be set forth before You as incense, 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.

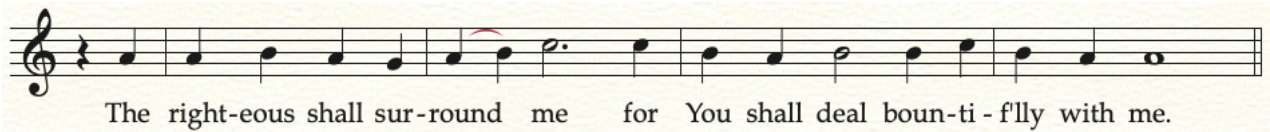
I cried out to You, O Lord. I said, "You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living.

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.

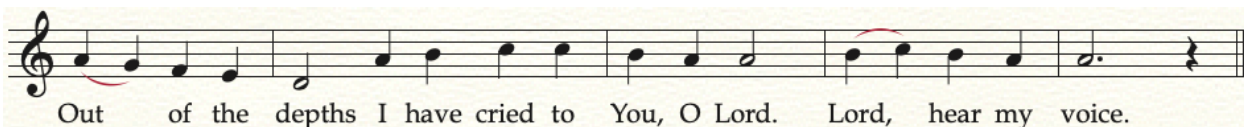
(Tone 1) – Resurrection

Accept our evening prayers, O holy Lord! Grant us remission of our sins, for You alone have manifested the Resurrection to the world.

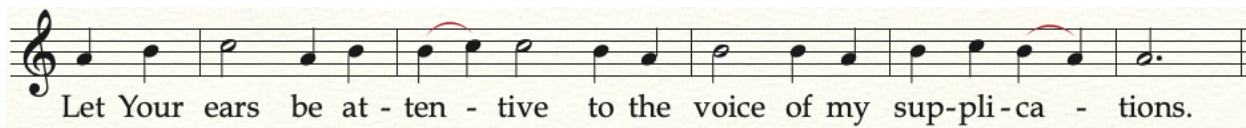


Encircle Zion and surround her, O people! Give glory in her to the One Who rose from the dead! For He is our God, Who has delivered us from our transgressions!

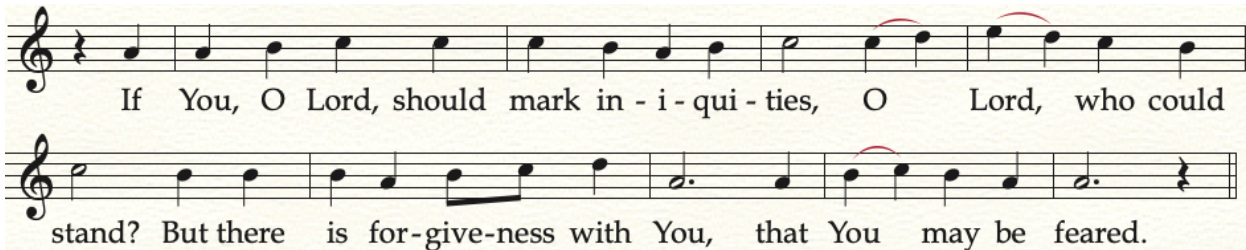
Psalm 130 (LXX 129)



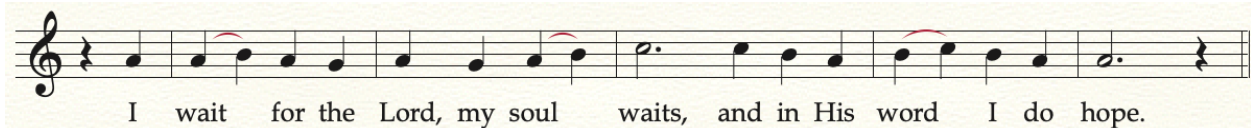
Come, O people! Let us sing and fall down before Christ, glorifying His Resurrection from the dead! For He is our God, Who has delivered the world from the enemy's deceit!



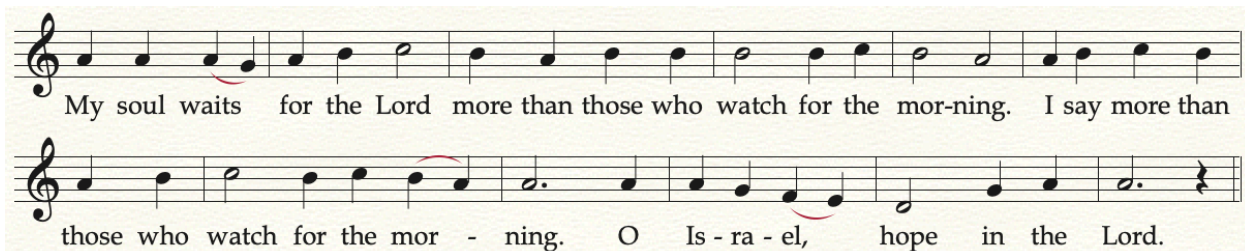
Be glad, O heavens! Sound trumpets, O foundations of the earth! Sing in gladness, O mountains! Behold Emmanuel has nailed our sins to the Cross! Granting life, He has slain death! He has resurrected Adam as the Lover of mankind.



Let us praise Him Who voluntarily was crucified in the flesh for our sake. He suffered, was buried, but rose from the dead. By Orthodoxy confirm Your Church, O Christ. Grant peace for our life as the gracious Lover of mankind.



We stand unworthily before Your life-bearing tomb, O Christ God, offering glory to Your inexpressible compassion. You have accepted the Cross and death, O sinless One to grant resurrection to the world as the Lover of mankind.



Let us praise the Word, co-eternal with the Father. He ineffably came forth from the virginal womb. He freely accepted the Cross and death for our sake. He was raised in glory. Glory to You, O life-giving Lord, the Savior of our souls.



(Tone 1) – Ambrose

The faithful of Milan, inspired by the Holy Spirit, chose you as their earthly judge and to be their shepherd, O wise Bishop Ambrose. You wisely governed both the city and the Church. Therefore, you are glorified with a twofold crown.

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

Cleansed by purity, O holy Bishop Ambrose, you were filled with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Laboring with abstinence, good works and countless vigils of prayer, you tended the flock of Christ with apostolic zeal. We rejoice in your memory, O divinely-minded man of God.

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

Psalm 117 (LXX 116)

Filled with boldness, O fearless Bishop Ambrose, you publicly rebuked the emperor's iniquity against God. Just as Nathan reproved David for his sin, so you separated the king from the Church of Christ, until he should bear the fruits of repentance.

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

(Tone 7) – Resurrection

O pure Theotokos, no tongue can speak of your wonderful childbearing, for you were revealed to be a mother above nature, and you remained a virgin beyond reason and understanding. Your conception was most glorious, and the manner of your giving birth was incomprehensible, O most pure Virgin Lady. For where God wills, He overcomes the order of all nature. Therefore, since we know you as Theotokos, we beseech you ceaselessly to intercede for us for the salvation of our souls.

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.

The Evening Prokeimenon: Tone 7

Psalm 77 (LXX 76)

DEACON: The evening prokeimenon.

The Lord is King, He is clothed with majesty.

Verse: The Lord is robed; He is girded with strength.

Verse: For He established the world so that it shall never be moved.

The Litany of Fervent Supplication / The Ektenia

DEACON: Let us say with all our soul and with all our mind, let us say.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: O Lord Almighty, the God of our fathers, hear us we pray, and have mercy.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

DEACON: Have mercy on us, O God, according to Your great mercy, hear us we pray, and have mercy.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

DEACON: Again we pray for all pious and Orthodox Christians; for our father, (*metropolitan, archbishop, or bishop*) N.; for our brethren: the priests, deacons, and monastics and for all our brotherhood in Christ.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

DEACON: Again we pray for the blessed and ever-memorable founders of this holy church (*and for the servants of God. NN.*); and for all our fathers and brethren, the Orthodox departed this life before us, who here and in all the world lie asleep in the Lord.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

DEACON: Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, and visitation, and for pardon and forgiveness of sins for (*the servants of God NN., and*) all Orthodox Christians of true worship, who live and dwell in this community.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

DEACON: Again we pray for those who bear fruit and do good works in this holy and all-venerable temple; for those who serve and those who sing; and for all the people here present, who await Your great and rich mercy.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

PRIEST: [O Lord our God, receive this fervent supplication of Your servants, and have mercy on us according to the multitude of Your mercy; and send down Your compassion on us and on all Your people, who await Your great and rich mercy.]

For You are a merciful God and love mankind, and unto You we ascribe glory: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

PEOPLE: Amen.

The Evening Prayer

PEOPLE: Grant, O Lord, to keep us this evening without sin. Blessed are You, O Lord, the God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Your name forever. Amen. Let Your mercy be upon us, O Lord, even as we have set our hope on You. Blessed are You, O Lord; teach me Your statutes. Blessed are You, O Master; make me to understand Your statutes. Blessed are You, O holy One; enlighten me with Your statutes. Your mercy, O Lord, endures forever. Despise not the works of Your hands. To You belongs worship, to You belongs praise, to You belongs glory: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

The Evening Litany

DEACON: Let us complete our evening prayer 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: That this whole evening may be perfect, holy, peaceful, and sinless, let us ask of the Lord.

PEOPLE: Grant this, O Lord.

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

PEOPLE: Grant this, O Lord.

DEACON: For pardon and forgiveness of our sins and transgressions, let us ask of the Lord.

PEOPLE: Grant this, O Lord.

DEACON: For all things good and profitable for our souls, and peace for the world, let us ask of the Lord.

PEOPLE: Grant this, O Lord.

DEACON: That we may complete the remaining time of our life in peace and repentance, let us ask of the Lord.

PEOPLE: Grant this, O Lord.

DEACON: For a Christian ending to our life, painless, blameless, and peaceful, and for a good defense before the fearful judgment seat of Christ, let us ask of the Lord.

PEOPLE: Grant this, O Lord.

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 Seventh Prayer

PRIEST: For You are a good God and love mankind, and unto You we ascribe glory: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

PEOPLE: Amen.

PRIEST: Peace be to all.

PEOPLE: And to your spirit.

The Prayer with Heads Bowed

DEACON: Let us bow our heads to the Lord.

PEOPLE: To You, O Lord.

PRIEST: O Lord, our God, Who bowed the heavens and came down for the salvation of mankind, look upon Your servants and Your inheritance; for to You, the fearful Judge, Who love mankind, have Your servants bowed their heads, and submissively inclined their necks, not awaiting help from men, but entreating Your mercy and looking confidently for Your salvation. Guard them at all times, both during this present evening and in the approaching night, from every enemy, from all adverse powers of the devil, and from vain thoughts and evil imaginations.

Blessed and glorified be the might of Your kingdom: of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

PEOPLE: Amen.

Aposticha: Tone 1

By Your suffering, O Christ,
we have been freed from sufferings.

And by Your Resurrection we have been delivered from corruption *

O Lord, glory to You!

The Lord is King, He is clothed with majesty. The Lord is clothed with strength and has girded Himself.

Let creation rejoice;

let the heavens be glad.

Let the nations clap their hands with gladness. *

For Christ our Savior has nailed our sins to the Cross.

Slaying death, He has given life. *

He has resurrected fallen Adam as the Lover of mankind.

For He established the world which shall not be shaken.

As King of heaven and earth,

You were voluntarily crucified in Your love for mankind.

Hell was angered when it met You below. *

Adam rose seeing You, the Creator, under the earth.

O wonder! How has the life of all tasted death?

You enlightened the world which cries:

“O Lord, Who rose from the dead, *

Glory to You.”

Holiness adorns Your house, O Lord, forever.

The myrrh-bearing women came with haste to Your tomb,
bearing myrrh and lamentations.

And when they did not find Your most pure body, *

they learned from the angel of the new and glorious wonder.

And so they announced to the apostles: *

“The Lord has risen, granting great mercy to the world.”

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

(Tone 1)

Behold Isaiah's prophecy is fulfilled!

For the Virgin gave birth, yet remained a Virgin,

God was born, and so nature was restored anew! *

But do not despise the entreaties of your servants, O Mother of God.

We offer them to you in your temple.

Since you carried in your arms the compassionate One,

Have compassion on your servants *

And pray that our souls may be saved.

Hymn of St. Simeon



Lord, now You are let-ting Your ser - vant de - part in peace, ac -
5 cor-ding to Your word. For my eyes have seen Your sal -
9 va - tion, which You have pre - pared be-fore the face of all
13 peo - ple, a light to light - en the Gen - tiles,
16 and the glo - ry of Your peo-ple Is - ra - el.

Trisagion Prayers

PEOPLE: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. (3x)

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

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy God, visit and heal our infirmities for Your name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

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

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

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

PEOPLE: Amen.

Resurrection Troparion: Tone 1 (Obikhod)

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews; / while the soldiers were guarding Your most pure body, / You rose on the third day, O Savior, / granting life to the world. / The pow'rs of heav'n therefore cried to You, O

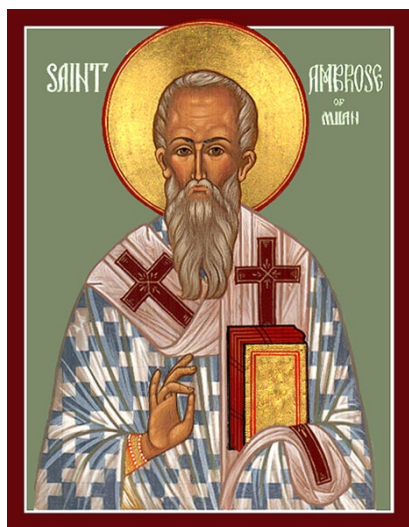
Giver of life: / Glory to Your Resurrection, O Christ! / Glory to Your kingdom! / Glory to Your eternal plan, O You Who love mankind.

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

Resurrection Theotokion: Tone 1 (Obikhod)

2 When Gabriel announced to you, O Vir - gin "Re - joice,"
with that word the Master of all was incarnate in you, O ho - ly ark, as the
5 right-eous Da-vid said, your womb became more spa-cious than the heav-ens
7 bear-ing your Cre-a - tor. Glory to Him Who took abode in you. Glo-ry to
10 Him Who came from you. Glory to Him Who freed us by being born of you.

The Dismissal



Troparion of a Hierarch: Tone 4 (Carpatho-Russian)

*In truth you were revealed to your flock
as a rule of faith, a model of meekness and a teacher
of self-control.*

*Therefore, you have won the heights of humility,
riches by poverty,*

*holy Father Bishop Ambrose,
intercede with Christ our God that our souls may be
saved.*

Advent Carols

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lowly exile here
Until the Son of God appear.

REJOICE! REJOICE! EMMANUEL SHALL COME TO THEE, O ISRAEL

O come, O come, Thou Lord of might,
Who to Thy tribes on Sinai's height
In ancient time did give the Law
In cloud, and majesty and awe.

O come, Thou Dayspring from on high
And cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadow put to flight.

O come, Desire of nations, bind
In one the hearts of all mankind;
Bid Thou our sad divisions cease,
And be Thyself our King of Peace.

O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free
Thine own from Satan's tyranny;
From depths of hell Thy people save
And give them victory o'er the grave.

O come, Thou Key of David, come
And open wide our heav'nly home;
Make safe the way that leads to Thee,
And close the path to misery.



Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Come, Thou long-expected Jesus,
Born to set Thy people free,
From our fears and sins release us;
Let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth Thou art;
Dear desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.

Born Thy people to deliver,
Born a child and yet a King.
Born to reign in us forever,
Now Thy gracious Kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit,
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all-sufficient merit,
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

Lo, How a Rose

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming
From tender stem hath sprung.
Of Jesse's lineage coming,
As men of old have sung.
It came, a flow'et bright,
Amid the cold of winter,
When half-spent was the night.

O Savior, Child of Mary,
Who felt our human woe.
O Savior, King of glory,
Who dost our weakness know.
Bring us at length we pray
To the bright courts of heaven
And to the endless day.