

Reader's Vespers for the Nativity of our Most Holy Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary

Sung on Monday 7th September 2020

Reader: Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us, and save us. Amen.

Reader: O come, let us worship God our King.

O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, our King and our God.

O come, let us worship and fall down before the Very Christ, our King and our God.

PSALM 103

Reader: Bless the Lord, O my soul; O Lord my God, Thou hast been magnified exceedingly. Confession and majesty hast Thou put on, Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment, Who stretchest out the heaven as it were a curtain; Who supporteth His chambers in the waters, Who appointeth the clouds for His ascent, Who walketh upon the wings of the winds, Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire, Who establisheth the earth in the sureness thereof; it shall not be turned back for ever and ever. The abyss like a garment is His mantle; upon the mountains shall the waters stand. At Thy rebuke they will flee, at the voice of Thy thunder shall they be afraid. The mountains rise up and the plains sink down, unto the place where Thou hast established them. Thou appointedst a bound that they shall not pass, neither return to cover the earth. He sendeth forth springs in the valleys; between the mountains will the waters run. They shall give drink to all the beasts of the field; the wild asses will wait to quench their thirst. Beside them will the birds of the heaven lodge, from the midst of the rocks will they give voice. He watereth the mountains from His chambers; the earth shall be satisfied with the fruit of Thy works. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men, To bring forth bread out of the earth; and wine maketh glad the heart of man. To make his face cheerful with oil; and bread strengtheneth man's heart. The trees of the plain shall be satisfied, the cedars of Lebanon, which Thou hast planted. There will the sparrows make their nests; the house of the heron is chief among them. The high mountains are a refuge for the harts, and so is the rock for the hares. He hath made the moon for seasons; the sun knoweth his going down. Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night, wherein all the beasts of the forest will go abroad. Young lions roaring after their prey, and seeking their food from God. The sun ariseth, and they are gathered together, and they lay them down in their dens. But man shall go forth unto his work, and to his labour until the evening. How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast Thou made them all; the earth is filled with Thy creation. So is this great and spacious sea, therein are things creeping innumerable, small living creatures with the great. There go the ships; there this dragon, whom Thou hast made to play therein. All things wait on Thee, to give them their food in due season; when Thou givest it them, they will gather it. When Thou openest Thy hand, all things shall be filled with goodness; when Thou turnest away Thy face, they shall be troubled. Thou wilt take their spirit, and they shall cease; and unto their dust shall they return. Thou wilt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created; and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth. Let the glory of the Lord be unto the ages; the Lord will rejoice in His works. Who looketh on the earth and maketh it tremble, Who toucheth the mountains and they smoke. I will sing unto the Lord throughout my life, I will chant to my God for as long as I have my being. May my words be sweet unto Him, and I will rejoice in the Lord. O that sinners would cease from the earth, and they that work iniquity, that they should be no more. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

The sun knoweth his going down, Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night. How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast Thou made them all.

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

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, glory to Thee, O God. (3 times)

In place of the Great Litany:

Reader/Choir: Lord, have mercy. (12 times)

“LORD I CALL ...”

Tone 6

[Music on website]

Lord, I call upon Thee, hear me!
Hear me, O Lord!
Lord, I call upon Thee, hear me!
Receive the voice of my prayer,
when I call upon Thee!//
Hear me, O Lord!

Let my prayer arise
in Thy sight as incense,
and let the lifting up of my hands
be an evening sacrifice!//
Hear me, O Lord!

Out of the depths I cry to Thee, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice!

Tone 6

[Music on website]

Today God, Who rests upon the spiritual thrones,
has prepared for Himself a holy throne on earth.
He Who in wisdom established the heavens
has fashioned a living heaven in His love for mankind;
for, from a barren root He has made a life-bearing branch spring up for us, even His Mother.
O God of wonders and Hope of the hopeless,//
O Lord, glory to Thee!

Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications!

This is the day of the Lord!
Rejoice, O peoples,
for, behold, the bridal chamber of the Light, the book of the Word of Life,
has come forth from the womb!
The gate that faces the East is born
and awaits the entry of the Great Priest.
She alone admits Christ into the world//
for the salvation of our souls.

If Thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquity, Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee.

Although by God's will other barren women
have brought forth famous offspring,
yet, of all those children Mary shines brightest, as is fitting to God.
For she herself was born wondrously of a barren mother,
and gave birth in the flesh to the God of all,
in a manner surpassing nature, from a womb without seed.
She is the only gateway of the only-begotten Son of God,
Who passed through this gate yet kept it closed,
and, having ordered all things in His own wisdom, //
has wrought salvation for all mankind.

For Thy Name's sake I wait for Thee, O Lord. My soul has waited for Thy Word; my soul has hoped on the Lord.

Repeat: “Although by God's will...”

From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch, let Israel hope on the Lord!

Today the gates of barrenness are opened,
and the virgin gate of God comes forth.
Today grace begins to bear its first fruit,
revealing to the world the Mother of God.
Through her things on earth are joined with the heavens//
for the salvation of our souls.

For with the Lord there is mercy and with Him is plenteous redemption, and He will deliver Israel from all his iniquities.

Repeat: "Today the gates of barrenness are opened ..."

Praise the Lord, all nations! Praise Him, all peoples!

Today is the prelude of universal joy;
today breezes blow that herald salvation,
and the barrenness of our nature is dispelled;
for the barren woman is revealed as the mother
of her who remained a virgin
after giving birth to the Creator.
From her the One Who is God by nature
takes what is foreign to Him and makes it His own;
and works salvation through the flesh for those who have gone astray.//
He is Christ, the Lover of mankind and the Redeemer of our souls.

For His mercy is confirmed on us; and the truth of the Lord endureth forever.

Today the barren Anna gives birth to the handmaid of God,
who was chosen from all generations
to become the abode of the King and Creator of all, Christ our God
in fulfilment of the divine plan.
Through her we earth-born have been fashioned anew//
and restored from corruption to life eternal.

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

Tone 6

Today God, Who rests upon the spiritual thrones,
has prepared for Himself a holy throne on earth.
He Who in wisdom established the heavens
has fashioned a living heaven in His love for mankind;
for, from a barren root He has made a life-bearing branch spring up for us,
even His Mother.
O God of wonders and Hope of the hopeless,//
O Lord, glory to Thee!

O GLADSOME LIGHT

O Gladsome Light of the holy glory of the Immortal Father, heavenly, holy, blessed, Jesus Christ. Now that we have come to the setting of the sun, and behold the light of evening, we praise God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. For meet it is at all times to worship Thee with voices of praise, O Son of God, the Giver of Life; therefore all the world doth glorify Thee.

THE EVENING PROKEIMENON

Reader:The Evening Prokeimenon.

Reader:The Lord will hearken unto me when I cry unto Him.

Choir: The Lord will hearken unto me when I cry unto Him.

Reader:When I called upon Thee, O God of my righteousness, Thou didst hearken unto me.

Choir: The Lord will hearken unto me when I cry unto Him.

Reader:The Lord will hearken unto me

Choir: when I cry unto Him.

READINGS

A Reading from the First Book of Moses, the Book of Genesis [Genesis 28:10-17]

Jacob went forth from the well of the oath, and departed into Haran. And he came to a certain place, and slept there, for the sun had gone down; and he took one of the stones of the place, and put it at his head, and lay down to sleep in that place, and dreamed: and behold a ladder fixed on the earth, whose top reached to heaven, and the angels of God ascended and descended on it. And the Lord stood upon it, and said: "I am the God of thy father Abraham, and the God of Isaac. Fear not; the land on which thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed. And thy seed shall be like the sand of the earth; and it shall spread abroad to the sea, and the south, and the north, and the east; and in thee and in thy seed shall all tribes of the earth be blessed. And behold I am with thee to preserve thee continually in all the way wherein thou shalt go; and I will bring thee back to this land; for I will not desert thee, until I have done all that I have said to thee." And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and said: "The Lord is in this place, and I knew it not." And he was afraid, and said: "How fearful is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!"

A Reading from the Prophecy of Ezekiel [Ezekiel 43:27-44:4]

Thus saith the Lord: "It shall come to pass from the eighth day and onward, that the priests shall offer your whole burnt-offerings on the altar, and your peace-offerings; and I will accept you," saith the Lord. Then He brought me back by the way of the outer gate of the sanctuary that faceth eastward; and it was shut. And the Lord said to me: "This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no one shall pass through it; for the Lord God of Israel shall enter by it, and it shall be shut. For the Prince, He shall sit in it, to eat bread before the Lord; He shall go in by the way of the porch of the gate, and shall go forth by the way of the same." And He brought me in by the way of the gate that faceth northward, in front of the house: and I looked, and, behold! the house was full of the glory of the Lord.

A Reading from the Book of Proverbs [Proverbs 9:1-11]

Wisdom hath built a house for herself and set up seven pillars. She hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine in a bowl and prepared her table. She hath sent forth her servants, calling with a loud proclamation to the feast, saying: "Whoso is foolish, let him turn aside to me." And to those who want understanding, she saith: "Come, eat of my bread, and drink wine which I have mingled for you. Leave folly, that ye may reign forever; and seek wisdom, and improve understanding by knowledge." He that reproveth evil men shall get dishonour to himself; and he that rebuketh an ungodly man shall disgrace himself. Rebuke not evil men, lest they should hate thee: rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee. Give an opportunity to a wise man, and he will be wiser: instruct a just man, and he will receive more instruction. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the counsel of the law is the character of a sound mind. For in this way thou shalt live long, and years of thy life shall be added to thee.

In place of the Evening Litany:

Reader/Choir: Lord, have mercy. (12 times)

VOUCHSAFE, O LORD

Reader: Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this evening without sin. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy name forever. Amen. Let Thy mercy be upon us, O Lord, even as we have set our hope on Thee. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Master, make me to understand Thy statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Holy One, enlighten me with Thy statutes. Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth forever. O despise not the works of Thy hands. To Thee belongeth worship, to Thee belongeth praise, to Thee belongeth glory, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

In place of the Litany of Supplication:

Reader/Choir: Lord, have mercy. (12 times)

Reader: Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us, and save us. Amen.

APOSTICHA

Tone 4

[Music on website]

The joy of all the world has dawned for us from the righteous ones;
the all-praised Virgin who springs from Joachim and Anna.
Through the abundance of goodness she becomes the living temple of God,
and she alone is acknowledged as truly the Theotokos.
Through her prayers, O Christ God, //
send peace to the world and to our souls great mercy!

v. Hear, O daughter, and see, and incline thine ear!

As foretold by the Angel's prophecy,
thou hast come forth today, O Virgin,
the most sacred fruit of righteous Joachim and Anna.
Thou art the heaven and throne of God, the vessel of purity,
heralding joy to all the world, thou that bringest us our life;
the annulment of the curse, the bestowal bestowed in its stead.
Wherefore on this feast of thy birth, O Maiden called by God, //
entreat peace for the world and for our souls great mercy!

v. The rich among the people shall pray before Thy face.

Let the barren and childless Anna today clap her hands with gladness!
Let those on earth be decked in splendour; let rulers leap for joy;
let priests be glad in blessing; let the whole world keep the feast!
For behold the Queen and immaculate bride of the Father
has sprung forth from the root of Jesse.
No longer will women bear children in sorrow, for joy has blossomed forth,
and the Life of mankind now dwells in the world.
No longer are the offerings of Joachim turned away,
for the lamentation of Anna has been changed to joy.
She cries: "Rejoice with me, all you chosen of Israel,
for behold, the Lord has given me the living palace of His divine glory
for our common gladness and joy //
and for the salvation of our souls!"

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

Tone 8

Come, all you faithful, let us run to the Virgin!
For, behold, today she is born, who was foreordained before the womb, as the Mother of our God,
the treasure of virginity, the rod of Aaron that budded, springing from the root of Jesse,
the preaching of the Prophets, the offspring of righteous Joachim and Anna.
She is born and with her the world is renewed.
She comes from the womb and the Church is adorned in her majesty.
She is the holy temple, the vessel of the Godhead,
the virgin instrument and bridal chamber of the King,
in which has come to pass the strange mystery
of the union of the natures that came together in Christ. //
As we worship Him, we praise the birth of the all-pure Virgin.

THE PRAYER OF SAINT SIMEON, THE GOD-RECEIVER

Reader: Lord, now lettest thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of Thy people Israel.

Holy God, Holy Mighty Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (3 times)

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

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy One, look upon and heal our infirmities for Thy Name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto the 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 the evil one.

Reader: Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us, and save us. Amen.

TROPARION

Troparion of the Nativity of the Theotokos in Tone 4

[\[Music on website\]](#)

Thy nativity, O Virgin,
has proclaimed joy to the whole universe!
The Sun of righteousness, Christ our God,
has shone from thee, O Theotokos.
By annulling the curse,
He bestowed a blessing.//
By destroying death, He has granted us eternal life.

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

Repeat: "Thy nativity, O Virgin ..."

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

Repeat: "Thy nativity, O Virgin ..."

DISMISSAL

Reader: Establish, O God, the holy Orthodox Faith and all Orthodox Christians, unto ages of ages. Amen.

Choir: More honourable than the Cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, thou who without defilement gavest birth to God the Word, and art truly Theotokos, we magnify thee.

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

Choir: Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Bless, O Lord!

Reader: Lord Jesus Christ, through the intercessions of Thine all-immaculate and all-blameless Holy Mother, whose Nativity we celebrate; by the might of the precious and life-giving Cross; by the protection of the honourable bodiless powers of heaven; at the supplications of our Holy, Venerable and God-bearing Fathers; of our Father among the Saints, Chad, Bishop of Lichfield, Patron and Protector of this Community; of the Holy and Righteous Ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; and of all the saints, have mercy upon us and save us. Amen.

Reader: Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us, and save us. Amen.