

**18 / 31 December 2017**  
**SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST:**  
**COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY FATHERS (*Tone 5*)**

**GREAT VESPERS**

**Deacon:** Arise! O Lord, bless!

**Priest:** Glory to the holy, and consubstantial, and life-creating, and indivisible Trinity, always, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

**Chanters:** Amen.

**Clergy:** O come, let us worship God our King.

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

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

O come, let us worship and fall down before Him.

*Then the chanters chant the following selected verses from the 103rd Psalm:*

**Psalm 103**  
*(Selected Verses)*

Bless the Lord, O my soul. Blessed art Thou, O Lord.  
Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, Thou hast been magnified exceedingly.

*Refrain:* Blessed art Thou, O Lord.

Confession and majesty hast Thou put on.

*Refrain:* Blessed art Thou, O Lord.

Upon the mountains shall the waters stand.

*Refrain:* Wondrous are Thy works, O Lord.

Between the mountains will the waters run.

*Refrain:* Wondrous are Thy works, O Lord.

In wisdom hast Thou made them all, hast Thou made them all.

*Refrain:* Glory to Thee, O Lord, Who hast made them all, Who hast 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.  
*Thrice.*

**The Great Ectenia**

**Deacon:** In peace let us pray to the Lord.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

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

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

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

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** For this holy temple, and for them that with faith, reverence, and the fear of God enter herein, let us pray to the Lord.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** For great lord and father, His Holiness Patriarch *N.*; for our lord the Very Most Reverend Metropolitan *N.*, First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad; for our lord the Most Reverend Archbishop (*or* Bishop) *N.* for the venerable priesthood, the diaconate in Christ, for all the clergy and people, let us pray to the Lord.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** For this land, its authorities and armed forces, let us pray to the Lord.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** For the God-preserved Russian land and its Orthodox people both in the homeland and in the diaspora, and for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** That He may deliver His people from enemies both visible and invisible, and confirm in us oneness of mind, brotherly love and piety, let us pray to the Lord.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** For this city (*or* this town, *or* this holy monastery), every city and country, and the faithful that dwell therein, let us pray to the Lord.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** For seasonable weather, abundance of the fruits of the earth, and peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

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

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

## SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: THE HOLY FATHERS (Tone 5)

**Deacon:** That we may be delivered from all tribulation, wrath, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** Calling to remembrance our most holy, most pure, most blessed, glorious Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and all our life unto Christ our God.

**Chanters:** To Thee, O Lord.

**Priest:** For unto Thee is due all glory, honour and worship; to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

**Chanters:** Amen.

### READING OF THE PSALTER

*Then the First Kathisma of the Psalter (Psalms 1-8), 'Blessed is the man...' is read in three stases, with a little litany after each stasis. In current parish practice, only selected verses from the first stasis of the first kathisma are sung:*

#### **Blessed is the Man** *(Selected Verses)*

Blessed is the man that hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, and the way of the ungodly shall perish. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Serve ye the Lord with fear, and rejoice in Him with trembling. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Blessed are all that have put their trust in Him. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Salvation is of the Lord, and Thy blessing is upon Thy people. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

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

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. *Thrice.*

### The Small Ectenia

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

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** Calling to remembrance our most holy, most pure, most blessed, glorious Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and all our life unto Christ our God.

**Chanters:** To Thee O Lord.

**Priest:** For Thine is the dominion, and 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 the ages of ages.

**Chanters:** Amen.

### LORD I HAVE CRIED...

**Canonarch:** In the Fifth Tone: Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hearken unto me.

*Then immediately we chant 'Lord, I have cried...' (Psalms 140, 141, 129, and 116).*

#### **Psalm 140**

**Chanters:** Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hearken unto me. \* Harken unto me, O Lord. \* Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hearken unto me; \* attend to the voice of my supplication, \* when I cry unto Thee. \* Harken unto me, O Lord.

Let my prayer be set forth \* as incense before Thee, \* the lifting up of my hands \* as an evening sacrifice. \* Harken unto me, O Lord.

*And the rest of the verses are read down to the beginning of the stichoi, i.e., the point at which the stichera are inserted*

Set, O Lord, a watch before my mouth, and a door of enclosure round about my lips.

Incline not my heart unto words of evil, to make excuse with excuses in sins.

With men that work iniquity; and I will not join with their chosen.

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The righteous man will chasten me with mercy and reprove me; as for the oil of the sinner, let it not anoint my head.

For yet more is my prayer in the presence of their pleasures; swallowed up near by the rock have their judges been.

They shall hear my words, for they be sweetened; as a clod of earth is broken upon the earth, so have their bones been scattered nigh unto hades.

For unto Thee, O Lord, O Lord, are mine eyes, in Thee have I hoped; take not my soul away.

Keep me from the snare which they have laid for me, and from the stumbling-blocks of them that work iniquity.

The sinners shall fall into their own net; I am alone until I pass by.

### Psalm 141

With my voice unto the Lord have I cried, with my voice unto the Lord have I made supplication.

I will pour out before Him my supplication, mine affliction before Him will I declare.

When my spirit was fainting within me, then Thou knewest my paths.

In this way wherein I have walked they hid for me a snare.

I looked upon my right hand, and beheld, and there was none that did know me.

Flight hath failed me, and there is none that watcheth out for my soul.

I have cried unto Thee, O Lord; I said: Thou art my hope, my portion art Thou in the land of the living.

Attend unto my supplication, for I am brought very low.

Deliver me from them that persecute me, for they are stronger than I.

### Stichera at 'Lord I have cried...'

*10 Stichera: 6 from the Octoechos, i.e. 3 of the Resurrection and 3 by Anatolius; and 4 to the fathers.*

*The Resurrection Stichera, in Tone V —*

*Stichos 10:* Bring my soul out of prison \* that I may confess Thy name.

By Thy precious Cross didst Thou put the devil to shame, O Christ, and by Thy resurrection didst Thou break the sting of sin, and hast saved us from the gates of death. We glorify Thee, O Only-begotten One!

*Stichos 9:* The righteous shall wait patiently for me \* until Thou shalt reward me.

He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, bestowing resurrection upon the human race; and the princes of hades were afraid of Him, and the gates of weeping were seized, for Christ, the King of glory, entered in, saying to those in bonds: 'Come forth!', and to those in darkness: 'Show yourselves!'

### Psalm 129

*Stichos 8:* Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord; \* O Lord, hear my voice.

Great is the wonder! The immortal Creator of the invisible hosts, suffering in the flesh in His love for mankind, hath risen! Come, ye kindreds of the nations, let us worship Him! For, having been delivered from deception by His compassions, we have learned to hymn the one God in three Hypostases!

*Stichos 7:* Let Thine ears be attentive \* to the voice of my supplication.

We offer evening worship unto Thee, the never-waning Light, Who in the flesh shone forth upon the world as in a mirror, Who at the culmination of the ages descended even unto hades and destroyed the darkness there, and showed the nations the light of the resurrection. O Lord, Bestower of light, glory be to Thee!

*Stichos 6:* If Thou shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, O Lord, who shall stand? \* For with Thee there is forgiveness.

Let us glorify Christ, the Author of our salvation; for when He rose from the dead, the world was saved from deception, the choir of the angels rejoiced, the beguilement of the demons was banished, fallen Adam arose, and the devil was set at nought.

*Stichos 5:* For Thy name's sake have I patiently waited for Thee, O Lord; my soul hath patiently waited for Thy word, \* my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

The guardsmen were instructed by the iniquitous: 'Keep secret the rising of Christ; take the pieces of silver, and say that while we slept the dead man was stolen from the tomb.' Who hath ever seen or heard of a corpse, and moreover one embalmed and naked, stolen, and the grave clothes left behind in the tomb? Be ye not deceived, O Jews! Learn the sayings of the prophets, and know that He is truly almighty, the Deliverer of the world!

*Stichera of the Holy Fathers, in Tone VI, the composition of Anatolius, Special Melody:* 'Having set all aside... —

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*Stichos 4:* From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch \* let Israel hope in the Lord.

Unto the ends of the earth hath the memory of the forefathers been manifest as truly full of light and shining with rays of grace; for Christ, the radiant Sun, shining from afar on high, doth lead forth an assembly of stars which shineth with Him, and in the midst of Bethlehem a nativity is shown to be that of God and man. Therefore, piously clapping our hands, with faith let us all join chorus to utter praise unto His birth before the feast.

*Stichos 3:* For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption; \* and He shall redeem Israel out of all his iniquities.

*The foregoing sticheron is repeated.*

### Psalm 116

*Stichos 2:* O praise the Lord, all ye nations; \* praise Him, all ye peoples.

Rejoicing today, Adam is adorned with the glory of divine communion, as the foundation and confirmation of the wise forefathers; and with him Abel doth leap for joy and Enoch is glad, and Seth danceth together with Noah; the all-praised Abraham doth chant with the patriarchs, and from on high Melchizedek doth behold a birth wherein a father had no part. Wherefore, celebrating the divine memory of the forefathers of Christ, we beseech Him, that our souls be saved.

*Stichos 1:* For He hath made His mercy to prevail over us, \* and the truth of the Lord abideth forever.

With gladness hath the assembly of the divinely wise children in the furnace shone forth, and it proclaimeth the nativity of Christ on earth; for the Lord, descending like a precious dew, doth preserve unconsumed her who gave Him birth, doth keep her undefiled and doth enrich her with divine gifts. Wherefore, the God-pleasing Daniel rejoiceth in gladness, for he hath clearly foreseen the Stone uncut from the mountain, and with boldness prayeth now in behalf of our souls.

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

*Doxasticon for the Fathers, in Tone VI—*

Daniel, the man of divine desires, beholding Thee, O Lord, the Stone not hewn by hands, foretold that Thou wouldest without seed be born a babe, the Word incarnate of the Virgin, the immutable God and Saviour of our souls.

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

*Dogmatic Theotokion, Tone V—*

Once, the image of the Bride who knoweth not wedlock was inscribed in the Red Sea. There Moses was the parter of the waters; and here Gabriel is the minister of a miracle. There Israel traversed the deep dryshod; and now the Virgin giveth birth unto Christ without seed. The sea remained impassible after Israel had crossed; and the immaculate one remaineth incorrupt after the birth of Emmanuel. O God Who hast appeared as a man, Who existest and hast existed from the beginning: Have mercy upon us!

### The Entrance

*At the concluding sticheron (at ‘Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.’) the holy doors are opened for the Entry. The priest and deacon, bow twice before the Holy Table, kiss the Gospel and the corner of the Holy Table respectively, and bow a third time. The deacon taketh up the censer and presenteth it the priest to bless it. The deacon leadeth the priest out of the altar by way of the high place and the north door.*

*As they approach the holy doors, the deacon saith quietly:*

**Deacon:** Let us pray to the Lord.

*The priest saith this prayer quietly:*

**Priest:** Evening, morning, and noonday we praise Thee, we bless Thee, we give thanks unto Thee, and we pray Thee, O Master of all: Direct our prayer as incense before Thee, and incline not our hearts unto words or thoughts of evil, but deliver us from all that hunt after our souls; for unto Thee, O Lord, O Lord, are our eyes, and in Thee have we hoped, let us not be put to shame, O our God.

For unto Thee is due all glory, honour, and worship: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

*The deacon censeth the entrance, the icons of Christ and the Mother of God, and the priest. He then standeth at a right angle to the priest (facing north), transfereth the censer to his left hand, and taking his orarion in his right hand and pointing toward the holy place, saith to the priest quietly:*

**Deacon:** Bless, master, the holy entry.

*And the priest, blessing, quietly saith:*

**Priest:** Blessed is the entry of Thy holy ones, always, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

**Deacon:** Amen.

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*The deacon again censeth the priest and, turning to the east, standeth at the entrance and waiteth.*

*When the sticheron is ended, the deacon maketh the sign of the Cross with the censer and exclaimeth:*

### O Gentle Light

**Deacon:** Wisdom! Aright!

*We chant the Vesper Hymn, the work of Sophronius, patriarch of Jerusalem:*

O Gentle Light of the holy glory of the immortal, heavenly, holy, blessed Father, O Jesus Christ: \* Having come to the setting of the sun, having beheld the evening light, \* we praise the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: God. \* Meet it is for Thee at all times to be praised with reverent voices, \* O Son of God, Giver of life. \* Wherefore, the world doth glorify Thee.

### THE VESPERS PROKEIMENON

#### Saturday Vespers Prokeimenon, Tone VI

**Deacon:** Let us attend.

**Priest:** Peace be unto all.

**Deacon:** Wisdom! The Prokeimenon in the Sixth Tone:

The Lord is King, He is clothed with majesty.

**Chanters:** The Lord is King, \* He is clothed with majesty.

**Deacon:** *Stichos:* The Lord is clothed with strength and He hath girt Himself.

**Chanters:** The Lord is King, \* He is clothed with majesty.

**Deacon:** *Stichos:* For He established the world which shall not be shaken.

**Chanters:** The Lord is King, \* He is clothed with majesty.

**Deacon:** *Stichos:* Holiness becometh Thy house, O Lord, unto length of days.

**Chanters:** The Lord is King, \* He is clothed with majesty.

**Deacon:** The Lord is King:

**Chanters:** He is clothed with majesty.

### THE PARAMIA

*Three readings for the feast:*

**Deacon:** Wisdom!

**Reader:** The Reading from Genesis.

**Deacon:** Let us attend.

*The Reader then readeth the Paramia:*

### Reading from Genesis

*[Genesis 14:14-20]*

Abram, having heard that Lot, his nephew, had been taken captive, numbered his own home-born servants, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued after them to Dan. And he came upon them by night, he and his servants; and he smote them and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is on the left of Damascus. And he recovered all the cavalry of Sodom, and he recovered Lot, his nephew, and all his possessions, and the women and the people. And the king of Sodom went out to meet him, after he returned from the slaughter of Chedorla-omer, and the kings with him, to the valley of Shaveh (this was the plain of the kings). And Melchizedek, King of Salem, brought forth loaves and wine, and he was the priest of the Most High God. And he blessed Abram, and said: 'Blessed be Abram of the Most High God, Who made heaven and earth, and blessed be the Most High God Who delivered thine enemies into thy power.'

**Deacon:** Wisdom!

**Reader:** The Reading from Deuteronomy.

**Deacon:** Let us attend.

*The Reader then readeth the Paramia:*

### Reading from Deuteronomy

*[Deuteronomy 1:8-11, 15-17]*

In those days, Moses said to the children of Israel: 'Behold, God hath delivered the land before you, Go in and inherit the land, which He promised to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give it to them and to their seed after them. And I spoke to you at that time, saying: I shall not be able by myself to bear you. The Lord your God hath multiplied you, and behold, ye are today as the stars of heaven in multitude. The Lord God of your fathers add to you a thousandfold more than you are, and bless you as He hath said to you. How shall I alone be able to bear your labour, and your burden, and your gainsayings? Take to yourselves wise men for your tribes, and I will set your leaders over you. And ye answered me, and said: 'The thing which thou hast told us is good to do.' So I took of you wise and understanding and prudent men, and I set them to rule over you as rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, and rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens, and officers to your judges. And I charged your judges at that time, saying: Hear causes between your

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brethren, and judge rightly between a man and his brother, and the stranger who is with him. Thou shalt not have respect to persons in judgement, thou shalt judge small and great equally; thou shalt not shrink from before the person of a man, for the judgement is God's.'

**Deacon:** Wisdom!

**Reader:** The Reading from Deuteronomy.

**Deacon:** Let us attend.

*The Reader then readeth the Paramia:*

### Reading from Deuteronomy

[Deuteronomy 110:14-21]

In those days, Moses said to the children of Israel: 'Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens belong to the Lord thy God, the earth and all things that are therein. Only the Lord chose your fathers to love them, and He chose out their seed after them, even you, beyond all nations, as at this day. Therefore ye shall circumcise the hardness of your heart, and ye shall not harden your neck. For the Lord your God, He is God of gods, the Lord of lords, the great, and strong, and terrible God, Who doth not accept persons, nor will He by any means accept a bribe, executing judgement for the stranger and orphan and widow. And as He loveth the stranger, to give him food and raiment, so shall ye love the stranger, for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve Him, and shalt cleave unto Him, and shalt swear by His name. He is thy boast, and He is thy God, Who hath wrought in the midst of thee these great and glorious things, which thine eyes have seen.'

### The Augmented Ectenia

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

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** O Lord Almighty, the God of our fathers, we pray Thee, hearken and have mercy.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** Have mercy on us, O God, according to Thy great mercy, we pray Thee, hearken and have mercy.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

**Deacon:** Again we pray for our great lord and father, His Holiness Patriarch *N.*; for our lord the Very Most Reverend Metropolitan *N.*, First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad; for our lord the Most

Reverend (Archbishop *or* Bishop) *N.*; and all our brethren in Christ.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

**Deacon:** Again we pray for this land, its authorities and armed forces.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

**Deacon:** Again we pray for the God-preserved Russian land and its Orthodox people both in the homeland and in the diaspora and for their salvation.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

**Deacon:** Again we pray to the Lord our God that He may deliver His people from enemies visible and invisible, and confirm in us oneness of mind, brotherly love and piety.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

**Deacon:** Again we pray for the blessed and ever-memorable founders of this holy temple (*if it be a monastery*: this holy monastery): and for all our fathers and brethren gone to their rest before us, and the Orthodox here and everywhere laid to rest.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

**Deacon:** Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, visitation, pardon and remission of sins of the servants of God, the brethren of this holy temple (*if it be a monastery*: this holy monastery).

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

**Deacon:** Again we pray for them that bring offerings and do good works in this holy and all-venerable temple; for them that minister and them that chant, and for all the people here present, that await of Thee great and abundant mercy.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

**Priest:** For a merciful God art Thou, and the Lover of mankind, and unto Thee do we send up glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

**Chanters:** Amen.

### 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 unto the ages. Amen.

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we have hoped in Thee. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach

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me Thy statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Master, give me understanding of Thy statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Holy One, enlighten me by Thy statutes.

O Lord, Thy mercy endureth forever; disdain not the work of Thy hands. To Thee is due praise, to Thee is due a song, to Thee glory is due, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

### The Litany of Supplication

**Deacon:** Let us complete our evening prayer unto the Lord.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** That the whole evening may be perfect, holy, peaceful and sinless, let us ask of the Lord.

**Chanters:** Grant this, O Lord.

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

**Chanters:** Grant this, O Lord.

**Deacon:** Pardon and remission of our sins and offences, let us ask of the Lord.

**Chanters:** Grant this, O Lord.

**Deacon:** Things good and profitable for our souls, and peace for the world, let us ask of the Lord.

**Chanters:** 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.

**Chanters:** Grant this, O Lord.

**Deacon:** A Christian ending to our life, painless, blameless, peaceful, and a good defense before the dread judgement seat of Christ, let us ask.

**Chanters:** Grant this, O Lord.

**Deacon:** Calling to remembrance our most holy, most pure, most blessed, glorious Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and all our life unto Christ our God.

**Chanters:** To Thee, O Lord.

**Priest:** For a good God art Thou, and the Lover of Mankind, and unto Thee do we send up glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

**Chanters:** Amen.

### Prayer at the Bowing of the Heads

**Priest:** Peace be unto all.

**Chanters:** And to thy spirit.

**Deacon:** Let us bow our heads unto the Lord.

**Chanters:** To Thee, O Lord.

*The priest saith this prayer secretly:*

O Lord our God, Who didst bow the heavens and come down for the salvation of the race of man, look upon Thy servants and upon Thine inheritance. For unto Thee the terrible judge and Lover of mankind have Thy servants bowed their heads, and submitted their necks, not expecting help from man, but awaiting Thy mercy and looking for Thy salvation; keep them at all times, during both the present evening and the coming night, from every enemy, from every opposing work of the devil, and from vain thoughts and evil memories.

*Then the priest exclaimeth:*

**Priest:** Blessed and most glorified be the dominion of Thy kingdom: of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

**Chanters:** Amen.

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## THE LITIA

*After the exclamation, the clergy go forth in procession to the narthex of the church as the Litia stichera are chanted by the chanters.*

### Stichera at the Litia

*We chant the sticheron of the temple, and then this sticheron for the fathers, in Tone I—*

**Chanters:** The prophets of great renown, splendid in the rays of divine eloquence, are ever blessed, and, putting forth the sayings of the Spirit as fruit, they preached to all the ineffable nativity of Christ God; and having lived most wondrously, they ended their lives in accordance with the law.

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

*Doxasticon of the Fathers, in Tone III, the composition of Germanus —*

Come, ye who love the feasts of the Church, and with psalms let us praise the assembly of the forefathers: Adam, the forefather of us all, Enoch, Noah, Melchizedek, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and, after the Law, Moses and Aaron, Joshua, Samuel, and David, and, with them, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and the twelve prophets, together with Elijah, Elisha, and all the rest, Zachariah and the Forerunner; who preached Christ, the Life and Resurrection of our race.

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

*Theotokion, in Tone III —*

Through the divine Spirit, by the will of the Father, without seed thou didst conceive the Son of God Who existeth without mother from before the ages, and for our sake thou gavest birth in the flesh unto Him Who issued forth from thee without father, and didst nurture Him with milk as a babe. Wherefore, do not cease to pray, that our souls be delivered from tribulations.

*After the usual prayers, we enter the church proper, chanting the Aposticha stichera.*

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### THE APOSTICHA

**Canonarch:** In the Fifth Tone: ‘With sounds of hymnody do we magnify Thee, Christ the Saviour ...’

*We chant the Resurrection stichera in Tone V —*

**Chanters:** With sounds of hymnody do we magnify Thee, Christ the Saviour, Who hast not been separated from the heavens; for Thou didst accept the Cross and death for our race, as the Lord Who loveth mankind, Who hath overthrown the gates of hades, and hath risen on the third day, saving our souls.

*Stichos:* The Lord is King \* He is clothed with majesty.

When Thy side was pierced, O Bestower of life, Thou didst pour forth torrents of remission, life and salvation upon all; and Thou didst accept death, granting us immortality. Making Thine abode in the tomb, Thou didst free us, gloriously raising us with Thyself, in that Thou art God. Wherefore, we cry out: O Lord Who lovest mankind, glory be to Thee!

*Stichos:* For He established the world \* which shall not be shaken.

Strange is Thy crucifixion and Thy descent into hades, O Thou Who lovest mankind; for, having made it captive and gloriously raised the ancient captives with Thyself, as God Thou didst open paradise and didst count them worthy to receive it. Wherefore, grant Thou remission of sins unto us who glorify Thine arising on the third day, vouchsafing us to become dwellers in paradise, in that Thou alone art compassionate.

*Stichos:* Holiness becometh Thy house, O Lord, \* unto length of days.

O Thou Who lovest mankind, Who accepted suffering for our sake, and rose from the dead on the third day: Heal Thou the sufferings of our flesh, lift us up out of grievous transgressions, and save us!

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

*Doxasticon for the Fathers, in Tone II, the composition of Cyprian —*

Rejoice, ye honourable prophets who dedicated yourselves well to the law of the Lord, and by faith revealed yourselves as unshaken and unbreakable pillars of Christ; and, having passed on to heaven, ye beseech Him to grant peace to the world and to save our souls.

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

*Aposticha Theotokion, Tone II —*

O new wonder greater than all the wonders of the past! For who hath ever known a mother to give birth without having known a man, and to bear on her arm Him Who sustaineth all creation? Yet it was the will of God to be born. O all-pure one, who bore Him in thine arms as an infant and hast maternal boldness before Him: cease not to pray in behalf of those who honour thee, that He have compassion and save our souls.

### The Prayer of St Symeon

**Reader or Canonarch:** Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, O Master, according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples; a light of revelation for the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.

### Trisagion Prayers



## SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: THE HOLY FATHERS (Tone 5)

**Reader:** Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. *Thrice.*

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

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Lord, blot out our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy name's sake.

Lord have mercy. *Thrice.*

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 the Heavens, 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

**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 the ages of ages.

**Chanters:** Amen.

### Dismissal Troparia

*The troparion 'O Theotokos and Virgin, rejoice...' in Tone IV —*

O Theotokos and Virgin, rejoice, \* O Mary, full of grace; the Lord is with thee; \* blessed art thou among women, \* and blessed is the Fruit of thy womb, \* for thou hast borne the Saviour of our souls. *Twice.*

*And we chant the Troparion of the Holy Fathers, in Tone II —*

Great are the achievements of faith! \* In the fountain of flame, as in refreshing water, \* the Three Holy Children rejoiced. \* And the prophet Daniel proved a shepherd of lions as of sheep. \* By their prayers, O Christ God, save our souls. *Once.*

*If there hath been a Litia, there follows the blessing of the loaves.*

**Chanters:** Blessed be the name of the Lord from henceforth and for evermore. *Thrice.*

*And the first ten verses of the 33rd Psalm are chanted:*

### Psalm 33:1-10

**Chanters:** I will bless the Lord at all times, \* His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

In the Lord shall my soul be praised; \* let the meek hear and be glad.

O magnify the Lord with me, \* and let us exalt His name together.

I sought the Lord, and He heard me, \* and delivered me from all my tribulations.

Come unto Him, and be enlightened, \* and your faces shall not be ashamed.

This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, \* and saved him out of all his tribulations.

The angel of the Lord will encamp round about them that fear Him, \* and will deliver them.

O taste and see that the Lord is good; \* blessed is the man that hopeth in Him.

O fear the Lord, all ye His saints; \* for there is no want to them that fear Him.

Rich men have turned poor and gone hungry; \* but they that seek the Lord shall not be deprived of any good thing.

**Priest:** The blessing of the Lord be upon you, through His grace and love for mankind, always, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

**Chanters:** Amen.

*Here endeth Great Vespers*

## MATINS

### THE SIX PSALMS

*We begin the Six Psalms, with each one listening in silence and compunction (standing, with no moving about). And the reader, with reverence and fear of God, saith:*

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among men. *Thrice.*

O Lord, Thou shalt open my lips, and my mouth shall declare Thy praise. *Twice.*

### Psalm 3

O Lord, why are they multiplied that afflict me? Many rise up against me.

Many say unto my soul: There is no salvation for him in his God.

But Thou, O Lord, art my helper, my glory, and the lifter up of my head.

## SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: THE HOLY FATHERS (Tone 5)

I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and He heard me out of His holy mountain.

I laid me down and slept; I awoke, for the Lord will help me.

I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people that set themselves against me round about.

Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God, for Thou hast smitten all who without cause are mine enemies; the teeth of sinners hast Thou broken.

Salvation is of the Lord, and Thy blessing is upon Thy people.

*And again:* I laid me down and slept; I awoke, for the Lord will help me.

### Psalm 37

O Lord, rebuke me not in Thine anger, nor chasten me in Thy wrath.

For Thine arrows are fastened in me, and Thou hast laid Thy hand heavily upon me.

There is no healing in my flesh in the face of Thy wrath; and there is no peace in my bones in the face of my sins.

For mine iniquities are risen higher than my head; as a heavy burden have they pressed heavily upon me.

My bruises are become noisome and corrupt in the face of my folly.

I have been wretched and utterly bowed down until the end; all the day long I went with downcast face.

For my loins are filled with mockings, and there is no healing in my flesh.

I am afflicted and humbled exceedingly, I have roared from the groaning of my heart.

O Lord, before Thee is all my desire, and my groaning is not hid from Thee.

My heart is troubled, my strength hath failed me; and the light of mine eyes, even this is not with me.

My friends and my neighbors drew nigh over against me and stood, and my nearest of kin stood afar off.

And they that sought after my soul used violence; and they that sought evils for me spake vain things, and craftinesses all the day long did they meditate.

But as for me, like a deaf man I heard them not, and was as a speechless man that openeth not his mouth.

And I became as a man that heareth not, and that hath in his mouth no reproofs.

For in Thee have I hoped, O Lord; Thou wilt hearken unto me, O Lord my God.

For I said: Let never mine enemies rejoice over me; yea, when my feet were shaken, those men spake boastful words against me.

For I am ready for scourges, and my sorrow is continually before me.

For I will declare mine iniquity, and I will take heed concerning my sin.

But mine enemies live and are made stronger than I, and they that hated me unjustly are multiplied.

They that render me evil for good slandered me, because I pursued goodness.

Forsake me not, O Lord my God, depart not from me. Be attentive unto my help, O Lord of my salvation.

*And again:* Forsake me not, O Lord my God, depart not from me. Be attentive unto my help, O Lord of my salvation.

### Psalm 62

O God, my God, unto Thee I rise early at dawn. My soul hath thirsted for Thee; how often hath my flesh longed after Thee in a land barren and untrodden and unwatered.

So in the sanctuary have I appeared before Thee to see Thy power and Thy glory.

For Thy mercy is better than lives; my lips shall praise Thee.

So shall I bless Thee in my life, and in Thy name will I lift up my hands.

As with marrow and fatness let my soul be filled, and with lips of rejoicing shall my mouth praise Thee.

If I remembered Thee on my bed, at the dawn I meditated on Thee.

For Thou art become my helper; in the shelter of Thy wings will I rejoice.

My soul hath cleaved after Thee, Thy right hand hath been quick to help me.

But as for these, in vain have they sought after my soul; they shall go into the nethermost parts of the earth, they shall be surrendered unto the edge of the sword; portions for foxes shall they be.

But the king shall be glad in God, everyone shall be praised that sweareth by Him; for the mouth of them is stopped that speak unjust things.

*And again:* At the dawn I meditated on Thee. For Thou art become my helper; in the shelter of Thy wings will I rejoice. My soul hath cleaved after Thee, Thy right hand hath been quick to help me.

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. *Thrice.*

Lord. have mercy. *Thrice*

## SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: THE HOLY FATHERS (Tone 5)

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

*And the priest cometh out of the altar, and saith the morning prayers secretly, i.e. silently, while standing with uncovered head before the holy doors.*

### Psalm 87

O Lord God of my salvation, by day have I cried and by night before Thee.

Let my prayer come before Thee, bow down Thine ear unto my supplication.

For filled with evils is my soul, and my life unto hades hath drawn nigh.

I am counted with them that go down into the pit; I am become as a man without help, free among the dead.

Like the bodies of the slain that sleep in the grave, whom Thou rememberest no more, and they are cut off from Thy hand.

They laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness and in the shadow of death.

Against me is Thine anger made strong, and all Thy billows hast Thou brought upon me.

Thou hast removed my friends afar from me; they have made me an abomination unto themselves.

I have been delivered up, and have not come forth; mine eyes are grown weak from poverty.

I have cried unto Thee, O Lord, the whole day long; I have stretched out my hands unto Thee.

Nay, for the dead wilt Thou work wonders? Or shall physicians raise them up that they may give thanks unto Thee?

Nay, shall any in the grave tell of Thy mercy, and of Thy truth in that destruction?

Nay, shall Thy wonders be known in that darkness, and Thy righteousness in that land that is forgotten?

But as for me, unto Thee, O Lord, have I cried; and in the morning shall my prayer come before Thee.

Wherefore, O Lord, dost Thou cast off my soul and turnest Thy face away from me?

A poor man am I, and in troubles from my youth; yea, having been exalted, I was humbled and brought to distress.

Thy furies have passed upon me, and Thy terrors have sorely troubled me.

They came round about me like water, all the day long they compassed me about together.

Thou hast removed afar from me friend and neighbor, and mine acquaintances because of my misery.

*And again:* O Lord God of my salvation, by day have I cried and by night before Thee. Let my prayer come

before Thee, bow down Thine ear unto my supplication.

### Psalm 102

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all that He hath done for thee,

Who is gracious unto all thine iniquities, Who healeth all thine infirmities,

Who redeemeth thy life from corruption, Who crowneth thee with mercy and compassion,

Who fulfilleth thy desire with good things; thy youth shall be renewed as the eagle's.

The Lord performeth deeds of mercy, and executeth judgement for all them that are wronged.

He hath made His ways known unto Moses, unto the sons of Israel the things that He hath willed.

Compassionate and merciful is the Lord, longsuffering and plenteous in mercy; not unto the end will He be angered, neither unto eternity will He be wroth.

Not according to our iniquities hath He dealt with us, neither according to our sins hath He rewarded us.

For according to the height of heaven from the earth, the Lord hath made His mercy to prevail over them that fear Him.

As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our iniquities from us.

Like as a father hath compassion upon his sons, so hath the Lord had compassion upon them that fear Him; for He knoweth whereof we are made, He hath remembered that we are dust.

As for man, his days are as the grass; as a flower of the field, so shall he blossom forth.

For when the wind is passed over it, then it shall be gone, and no longer will it know the place thereof.

But the mercy of the Lord is from eternity, even unto eternity, upon them that fear Him.

And His righteousness is upon sons of sons, upon them that keep His testament and remember His commandments to do them.

The Lord in heaven hath prepared His throne, and His kingdom ruleth over all.

Bless the Lord, all ye His angels, mighty in strength, that perform His word, to hear the voice of His words.

Bless the Lord, all ye His hosts, His ministers that do His will.

Bless the Lord, all ye His works, in every place of His dominion. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

*And again:* In every place of His dominion, bless the Lord, O my soul.

## SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: THE HOLY FATHERS (Tone 5)

### Psalm 142

O Lord, hear my prayer, give ear unto my supplication in Thy truth; hearken unto me in Thy righteousness.

And enter not into judgement with Thy servant, for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified.

For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath humbled my life down to the earth.

He hath sat me in darkness as those that have been long dead, and my spirit within me is become despondent; within me my heart is troubled.

I remembered days of old, I meditated on all Thy works, I pondered on the creations of Thy hands.

I stretched forth my hands unto Thee; my soul thirsteth after thee like a waterless land.

Quickly hear me, O Lord; my spirit hath fainted away.

Turn not Thy face away from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit.

Cause me to hear Thy mercy in the morning; for in Thee have I put my hope.

Cause me to know, O Lord, the way wherein I should walk; for unto Thee have I lifted up my soul.

Rescue me from mine enemies, O Lord; unto Thee have I fled for refuge. Teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God.

Thy good Spirit shall lead me in the land of uprightness; for Thy name's sake, O Lord, shalt Thou quicken me.

In Thy righteousness shalt Thou bring my soul out of affliction, and in Thy mercy shalt Thou utterly destroy mine enemies.

And Thou shalt cut off all them that afflict my soul, for I am Thy servant.

*And again:* Hearken unto me, O Lord, in Thy righteousness, and enter not into judgement with Thy servant. *Twice.*

Thy good Spirit shall lead me in the land of uprightness.

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. *Thrice.*

### The Great Ectenia

**Deacon:** In peace let us pray to the Lord.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

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

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

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

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** For this holy temple, and for them that with faith, reverence, and the fear of God enter herein, let us pray to the Lord.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** For great lord and father, His Holiness Patriarch *N.*; for our lord the Very Most Reverend Metropolitan *N.*, First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad; for our lord the Most Reverend Archbishop (*or* Bishop) *N.* for the venerable priesthood, the diaconate in Christ, for all the clergy and people, let us pray to the Lord.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** For this land, its authorities and armed forces, let us pray to the Lord.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** For the God-preserved Russian land and its Orthodox people both in the homeland and in the diaspora, and for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** That He may deliver His people from enemies both visible and invisible, and confirm in us oneness of mind, brotherly love and piety, let us pray to the Lord.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** For this city (*or* this town, *or* this holy monastery), every city and country, and the faithful that dwell therein, let us pray to the Lord.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** For seasonable weather, abundance of the fruits of the earth, and peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

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

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

## SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: THE HOLY FATHERS (Tone 5)

**Deacon:** That we may be delivered from all tribulation, wrath, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** Calling to remembrance our most holy, most pure, most blessed, glorious Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and all our life unto Christ our God.

**Chanters:** To Thee, O Lord.

**Priest:** For unto Thee is due all glory, honour and worship; to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

**Chanters:** Amen.

### GOD IS THE LORD

**Deacon:** In the Fifth Tone: God is the Lord and hath appeared unto us. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

*Stichos 1:* O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth forever.

**Chanters:** God is the Lord and hath appeared unto us. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

**Deacon:** *Stichos 2:* Surrounding me they compassed me, and by the name of the Lord I warded them off.

**Chanters:** God is the Lord and hath appeared unto us. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

**Deacon:** *Stichos 3:* I shall not die, but live, and I shall tell of the works of the Lord.

**Chanters:** God is the Lord and hath appeared unto us. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

**Deacon:** *Stichos 4:* The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.

**Chanters:** God is the Lord and hath appeared unto us. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

### Troparia at 'God is the Lord...'

*Troparion of the Resurrection, twice; Glory...  
Troparion of the Holy Fathers; Both now...  
Resurrectional Theotokion*

*Troparion of the Resurrection, in Tone V —*

Let us, O faithful, praise and worship the Word \* Who is co-unoriginate with the Father and the Spirit, \* and Who was born of the Virgin for our salvation; \* for He was pleased to ascend the Cross in the flesh \* and to endure death, \* and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection. *Twice.*

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

*Troparion of the Holy Fathers, in Tone II —*

Great are the achievements of faith! \* In the fountain of flame, as in refreshing water, \* the Three Holy Children rejoiced. \* And the prophet Daniel proved a shepherd of lions as of sheep. \* By their prayers, O Christ God, save our souls. *Once.*

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

*Resurrectional Dismissal Theotokion, in Tone II —*

All of thy most glorious mysteries are beyond comprehension, O Theotokos; \* for, thy purity sealed and thy virginity intact, \* thou art known to be a true Mother, \* having given birth unto God. \* Him do thou entreat, that our souls be saved.

*Then two readings from the Psalter are appointed for Sunday Matins, each being followed by its little litany and its sessional hymns.*

### Readings of the Psalter

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

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

**Reader:** Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

*And he readeth the first stasis of the Kathisma of the Psalter.*

**Reader:** Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

**Chanters:** Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. *Thrice.*

Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

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

**Reader:** Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

## SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: THE HOLY FATHERS (Tone 5)

*And he readeth the second stasis of the Kathisma of the Psalter.*

**Reader:** Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

**Chanters:** Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. *Thrice.*

Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

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

**Reader:** Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

*And he readeth the second stasis of the Kathisma of the Psalter.*

**Reader:** 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. *Thrice.*

### The Small Ectenia

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

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** Calling to remembrance our most holy, most pure, most blessed, glorious Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and all our life unto Christ our God.

**Chanters:** To Thee O Lord.

*After the First Reading of the Psalter:*

**Priest:** For Thine is the dominion, and 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 the ages of ages.

**Chanters:** Amen.

*After the Second Reading of the Psalter:*

**Priest:** For a good God art Thou, and the Lover of mankind, and unto Thee do we send up glory: to the

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

**Chanters:** Amen.

### Sessional Hymns

*After the first reading of the Psalter, these sessional hymns of the Resurrection, in Tone V —*

We praise the Cross of the Lord, we honour His holy burial with hymns, and we greatly glorify His resurrection, for as God with Himself He raised the dead up from the graves, having captured the dominion of death and the might of the devil; and He shone light upon those in hades.

*Stichos:* Arise, O Lord my God, let Thy hands be lifted on high; forget not Thy paupers to the end.

Declared to be dead, O Lord Who didst slay death, Thou wast laid in a tomb, O Thou Who emptied the graves. Above, soldiers kept guard over Thy sepulchre, while below Thou didst raise up the dead from ages past. O almighty and unapproachable Lord, glory be to Thee!

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

*Resurrectional Dismissal Theotokion, in Tone V —*

Rejoice, impassible gate of the Lord! Rejoice, rampart and protection of those who have recourse unto thee! Rejoice, haven untouched by storms, thou that knowest not wedlock, who gavest birth in the flesh to thy Creator and God! Fail not in thy supplications for those who hymn and worship thy birthgiving!

*After the second reading of the Psalter, these sessional hymns of the Resurrection, in Tone V —*

O Lord, after Thy resurrection on the third day and the worship of the apostles, Peter cried out to Thee: ‘The women showed courage, but I was afraid. The thief uttered theology, but I denied Thee. And dost Thou now call upon me to be Thine apostle still? Or wilt Thou show me again to be a fisher of the deep? Yet do Thou accept me, who repent, O God, and save me!’

*Stichos:* I will confess Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart, I will tell of all Thy wonders.

O Lord, the iniquitous nailed Thee in the midst of condemned criminals, and pierced Thy side with a spear, O Merciful One! Thou didst accept burial, Who

## SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: THE HOLY FATHERS (*Tone 5*)

broke down the gates of hades, and didst rise again on the third day. The women hastened to behold Thee, and announced Thine arising to the apostles. O supremely exalted Saviour, Whom the angels hymn, O blessed Lord, glory be to Thee!

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

*Theotokion* —

O Theotokos, unwedded Bride, who hast transformed the grief of Eve into joy, we, the faithful, hymn and bow down before thee, for thou hast led us out of the ancient curse. And now, pray thou unceasingly, O most hymned and all-holy one, that we be saved.

### THE POLYELEOS

#### Psalms 134 & 135

(*Selected Verses*)

**Chanters:** Praise ye the name of the Lord; O ye servants, praise the Lord. Alleluia.

Ye that stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God. Alleluia.

Praise ye the Lord, for the Lord is good; chant unto His name, for it is good. Alleluia.

Blessed is the Lord out of Sion, who dwelleth in Jerusalem. Alleluia.

O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good. Alleluia, alleluia. For His mercy endureth forever. Alleluia.

O give thanks unto the God of gods. Alleluia, alleluia. For His mercy endureth forever. Alleluia.

O give thanks unto the Lord of lords. Alleluia, alleluia. For His mercy endureth forever. Alleluia.

O give thanks unto the God of heaven. Alleluia, alleluia. For His mercy endureth forever. Alleluia.

### The Evlogitaria of the Resurrection

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, \* teach me Thy statutes.

The assembly of angels was amazed, \* beholding Thee numbered among the dead; \* yet, O Saviour, \* destroying the stronghold of death, \* and with Thyself raising up Adam, \* and freeing all from hades.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, \* teach me Thy statutes.

Why mingle ye myrrh with tears of pity, \* O ye women disciples? \* Thus the radiant angel within the tomb \* addressed the myrrh-bearing women; \* behold the tomb and understand, \* for the Saviour is risen from the tomb.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, \* teach me Thy statutes.

Very early the myrrh-bearing women \* hastened unto Thy tomb, lamenting, \* but the angel stood before them and said: \* the time for lamentation is passed, \* weep not, but tell of the Resurrection to the apostles.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, \* teach me Thy statutes.

The myrrh-bearing women, \* with myrrh came to Thy tomb, O Saviour, bewailing, \* but the angel addressed them, saying: \* Why number ye the living among the dead, \* for as God He is risen from the tomb.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. \*

Let us worship the Father, \* and His Son, \* and the Holy Spirit, \* the Holy Trinity, one in essence, crying with the Seraphim: \* Holy, Holy, Holy art Thou, O Lord.

Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen. \*

In bringing forth the Giver of life, \* thou hast delivered Adam from sin, O Virgin, \* and hast brought joy to Eve instead of sorrow; \* and those fallen from life \* have thereunto been restored, \* by Him Who of thee was incarnate, God and man.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. *Thrice.*

### The Small Ectenia

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

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** Calling to remembrance our most holy, most pure, most blessed, glorious Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and all our life unto Christ our God.

**Chanters:** To Thee O Lord.

**Priest:** For blessed is Thy name, and glorified is Thy kingdom: of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages

**Chanters:** Amen.

### The Hypakoë

## SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: THE HOLY FATHERS (Tone 5)

*The hypakoë of the resurrection, in Tone V —*

Troubled in mind by the appearance of the angel, yet enlightened in soul by the divine resurrection, the myrrh-bearing women announced to the apostles: ‘Tell among the nations the resurrection of the Lord Who worketh miracles and granteth us great mercy!’

### Sessional Hymns of the Menaion

*Sessional hymn of the fathers, in Tone VIII, Special Melody: ‘O the Wisdom...’ —*

With hymns let us all praise Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the meek David, Joshua, and the twelve patriarchs, together with the three youths who quenched the fiery flame with the power of the Spirit. And let us cry out to them: Rejoice, ye who bravely denounced the delusion of the insane king! Pray ye to Christ, that He grant remission of offenses unto those who celebrate your holy memory with love. *Twice.*

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

*Theotokion —*

Like the widow who gave two mites as an offering, I offer thee the praise of thanksgiving which is thy due, O Mistress, for all thy gifts; for thou art shown to be a shelter and aid, ever shielding me from perils and tribulations. Wherefore, delivered from those who afflict me, as from the midst of a burning furnace, I cry out to thee with all my heart: O Theotokos, help me entreating Christ God to grant me remission of transgressions, for I, thy servant, have thee as my hope.

### THE HYMNS OF ASCENT

*Fifth Tone*

#### Antiphon I

When I am filled with sorrow, I sing unto Thee like David, O my Saviour: Deliver my soul from a lying tongue.

Blessed is the life of those in the wilderness, who soar aloft on wings of love divine.

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

By the Holy Spirit are sustained all things, visible and invisible; for, Himself possessed of dominion, He is truly One of the Trinity.

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

*The foregoing is repeated.*

#### Antiphon II

Let us ascend to the mountains, O my soul, and go thither, from whence cometh our hope.

Let Thy right hand, which toucheth me, O Christ, preserve me from all deception.

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

Theologizing concerning the Holy Spirit, let us say: Thou art God, life, love, light, and understanding! Thou art goodness, and Thou reignest forever!

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

*The foregoing is repeated.*

#### Antiphon III

Full of great joy, I send up supplications for those who have said to me: Let us enter into the courts of the Lord.

Awesome things are wrought in the house of David; for there is found the fire which burneth up every shameful thought.

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

To the Holy Spirit, by Whom every living thing is made animate, is due the dignity of the Bestower of life, as to the Father and the Word.

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

*The foregoing is repeated.*

### THE MATINS PROKEIMENON

#### Sunday Matins Prokeimenon, Tone V

**Deacon:** Let us attend. Wisdom. Let us attend. The Prokeimenon in the Fifth Tone:

Arise, O Lord my God, let Thy hand be lifted high; for Thou shalt be King forever.

**Chanters:** Arise, O Lord my God, let Thy hand be lifted high; \* for Thou shalt be King forever.

**Deacon:** *Stichos:* I will confess Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart, I will tell of all Thy wonders.

**Chanters:** Arise, O Lord my God, let Thy hand be lifted high; \* for Thou shalt be King forever.

**Deacon:** Arise, O Lord my God, let Thy hand be lifted high:

**Chanters:** For Thou shalt be King forever.



## SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: THE HOLY FATHERS *(Tone 5)*

**Deacon:** Let us pray to the Lord.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** For holy art Thou, our God, and Thou restest in the saints, and unto Thee do we send up glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

**Chanters:** Amen.

### Let Every Breath Praise the Lord

**Deacon:** Let every breath praise the Lord.

**Chanters:** Let every breath praise the Lord.

**Deacon:** *Stichos:* Praise ye God in His saints, praise Him in the firmament of His power.

**Chanters:** Let every breath praise the Lord.

**Deacon:** Let every breath:

**Chanters:** Praise the Lord.

### THE MATINS GOSPEL

**Deacon:** And that He will vouchsafe unto us the hearing of the Holy Gospel, let us pray unto the Lord God.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

**Deacon:** Wisdom, Aright! Let us hear the Holy Gospel.

**Priest:** Peace be unto all.

**Chanters:** And to thy spirit.

**Priest:** The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke.

**Chanters:** Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

*The priest reads the Resurrectional Matins Gospel of the week.*

### EIGHTH RESURRECTIONAL GOSPEL

#### Holy Gospel according to John, § 64 [20: 11-18]

At that time, Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping; and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, and seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, 'Woman, why weepest thou?' She saith unto them, 'Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.' And when she

had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, 'Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?' She, supposing Him to be the gardener, saith unto Him, 'Sir, if thou have borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away.' Jesus saith unto her, 'Mary.' She turned herself, and saith unto Him, 'Rabboni;' which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, 'Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God.' Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things unto her.

**Chanters:** Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

### Having Beheld the Resurrection of Christ

*And we sing this resurrectional hymn, in Tone VI —*

**Chanters:** Having beheld the Resurrection of Christ, \* let us worship the holy Lord Jesus, \* the only sinless One. \* We worship Thy Cross, O Christ, \* and Thy holy Resurrection we hymn and glorify. \* For Thou art our God, \* and we know none other beside Thee; \* we call upon Thy name. \* O come, all ye faithful, \* let us worship Christ's holy Resurrection, \* for, behold, through the Cross joy hath come to all the world. \* Ever blessing the Lord, \* we hymn His Resurrection; \* for, having endured crucifixion, \* He hath destroyed death by death.

### Psalm 50

**Reader:** Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy; and according to the multitude of Thy compassions blot out my transgression.

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I know mine iniquity, and my sin is ever before me.

Against Thee only have I sinned and done this evil before Thee, that Thou mightest be justified in Thy words, and prevail when Thou art judged.

For behold, I was conceived in iniquities, and in sins did my mother bear me.

For behold, Thou hast loved truth; the hidden and secret things of Thy wisdom hast Thou made manifest unto me.

Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be made clean; Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow.

## SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: THE HOLY FATHERS (Tone 5)

Thou shalt make me to hear joy and gladness; the bones that be humbled, they shall rejoice.

Turn Thy face away from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.

Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and with Thy governing Spirit establish me.

I shall teach transgressors Thy ways, and the ungodly shall turn back unto Thee.

Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, Thou God of my salvation; my tongue shall rejoice in Thy righteousness.

O Lord, Thou shalt open my lips, and my mouth shall declare Thy praise.

For if Thou hadst desired sacrifice, I had given it; with whole-burnt offerings Thou shalt not be pleased.

A sacrifice unto God is a broken spirit; a heart that is broken and humbled God will not despise.

Do good, O Lord, in Thy good pleasure unto Sion, and let the walls of Jerusalem be builded.

Then shalt Thou be pleased with a sacrifice of righteousness, with oblation and whole-burnt offerings.

Then shall they offer bullocks upon Thine altar.

### Troparia after Psalm 50

*After Psalm 50, we chant in Tone VI—*

**Chanters:** Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Through the prayers of the Apostles, \* O Merciful One, \* blot out the multitude of our transgressions.

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

Through the prayers of the Theotokos, \* O Merciful One, \* blot out the multitude of our transgressions.

*In Tone VI:* Have mercy on me, O God, \* according to Thy great mercy; \* and according to the multitude of Thy compassions, \* blot out my transgressions.

*Then this sticheron:*

Jesus having risen from the grave \* as He foretold, hath given us life eternal, \* and great mercy.

### Save, O God, Thy People

**Deacon:** Save, O God, Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance; visit Thy world with mercy and compassions; exalt the horn of Orthodox Christians, and send down upon us Thine abundant mercies:

through the intercessions of our immaculate Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary; through the power of the precious and life-giving Cross; through the mediations of the honourable, heavenly bodiless Hosts; of the honourable, glorious Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist John; of the Holy glorious, and all-praised apostles; (*if there be commemorated one of the twelve apostles or evangelists, there is said:* of the holy Apostles (and Evangelists) *N.*, and the other holy, glorious, and all-praised apostles); of our fathers among the saints and great ecumenical teachers and hierarchs: Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, and John Chrysostom; of our father among the saints, Nicholas the Wonderworker, archbishop of Myra in Lycia; of the holy Equals-of-the-Apostles Methodius and Cyril, Teachers of the Slavs; of the holy Right-Believing and Equal-of-the-Apostles Great Prince Vladimir, and the Blessed Great Princess of Russia, Olga; of our fathers among the saints, the Wonderworkers of all Russia: Michael, Peter, Alexis, Jonah, Philip, Macarius, Demetrius, Metrophanes, Tikhon, Theodosius, Joasaph, Hermogenes, Pitrim, Innocent, and John; of the holy Hieromartyrs and Confessors: Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow; Vladimir of Kiev, Benjamin and Joseph of Petrograd, Peter of Krutitsa, Cyril of Kazan, Agathangel of Yaroslavl, Andronicus of Perm, Hermogenes of Tobolsk, the priests John, John, Peter, and Philosoph, and all the new hieromartyrs and confessors of the Russian Church; of the holy glorious, and victorious martyrs: the holy glorious Great-martyr, Trophy-bearer and Wonderworker George; the holy Great-martyr and Healer Panteleimon; the holy Great-martyr Barbara; and the holy Right-believing Russian Princes and Passion-bearers Boris and Gleb, and Igor; and the holy Right-believing Passion-bearers: Tsar-Martyr Nicholas, Tsaritsa-Martyr Alexandra, the Martyred Crown Prince Alexis, and the Royal Martyrs Olga, Tatiana, Maria, and Anastasia; and the holy nun-martyrs: Grand Duchess Elizabeth and Nun Barbara, and all the New Martyrs of Russia; of our holy and God-bearing fathers: Anthony and Theodosius of the Kiev Caves; Sergius, the Abbot of Radonezh, and Seraphim of Sarov; Job, Abbot and Wonderworker of Pochaev; of the holy Righteous John of Kronstadt; of the holy Blessed Xenia; of our holy and God-bearing fathers: Herman of Alaska; Paisius Velichkovsky; Leo, Macarius, Ambrose, and the other Elders of Optina; the hierarchs Innocent of Moscow, Nicholas of Japan, John of Shanghai and San Francisco; and *N.(N)*, (*whose Temple it is and whose day it is*); of the holy Righteous Ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; and of all the saints; we pray Thee, O Lord plenteous in mercy,

## SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: THE HOLY FATHERS (Tone 5)

hearken unto us sinners that pray unto Thee, and have mercy on us.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy. *Twelve times.*

**Priest:** Through the mercy and compassions and love for mankind of Thine Only-begotten Son, with Whom Thou art blessed, together with Thy Most-holy, and Good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

**Chanters:** Amen.

*Four Canons: that of the Resurrection from the Octoechos, with 4 troparia, including the irmos; that of the Cross and the Resurrection, with 2 troparia; that of the Theotokos, with 2 troparia; and the canon of the fathers, with 6 troparia Katavasie of the Nativity: 'Christ is born...'*

### THE CANONS

#### Ode I

*Canon of the Resurrection, in Tone V*

*Irmos:* Bringing battles to nought with His upraised arm, Christ hath overthrown horse and rider in the Red Sea, and hath saved Israel, who chanteth a hymn of victory.

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

The thorny assembly of the Jews, devoid of maternal love for Thee, their Benefactor, O Christ, crowned Thee with thorns, Who lifted the thorny sentence of our first father.

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

Bending down, O Bestower of life, Thou raised me up who had fallen into the pit; and having endured my foetid corruption without partaking thereof, O Christ, Thou hast made me fragrant with the myrrh of the divine Essence.

*Refrain:* Most Holy Theotokos save us.

*Theotokion:* The curse hath been annulled; grief hath ceased! For she who is blessed and full of grace hath shone joy forth upon the faithful, causing Christ to blossom forth as a blessing upon all the ends of the earth.

*Canon of the Cross and Resurrection, in Tone V*

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy precious Cross and Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

To Him alone Who of His own will was nailed to the Cross in the flesh and freed him who through the tree

fell under the ancient condemnation, let us chant, for He hath been glorified.

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy precious Cross and Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

To Christ alone, Who raised up the dead man from the tomb, Who resurrected the fallen one with Himself, and adorned him by sitting with the Father, let us chant, for He hath been glorified.

*Canon of the Theotokos, in Tone V*

*Refrain:* Most Holy Theotokos save us.

O all-pure one, entreat Christ, the Light Who abode within thee and illumineth the world with the rays of His divinity, that He enlighten all who hymn thee, O Virgin Mother.

*Refrain:* Most Holy Theotokos save us.

As one adorned with the beauty of the virtues, O most pure one who art full of grace, through the effulgence of the Spirit thou didst receive the majesty of Him Who adorneth all things, and which createth beauty.

*Canon of the Fathers, in Tone VI*

*Refrain:* Holy Fathers, pray to God for us.

Today the assembly of the divine fathers doth radiantly celebrate the forefeast of the nativity of Christ, and most glorious grace doth prefigure it, for Abraham and the children of the Law are an image thereof.

*Refrain:* Holy Fathers, pray to God for us.

Of old the sacred Abraham received One of the three Persons of the Godhead, and now the Word of the Father, Who is equally enthroned with Him, doth, through the divine Spirit, come to the children, He Who is gloriously praised.

*Refrain:* Holy Fathers, pray to God for us.

The children who cast down ungodliness in the furnace are in number and faith images of the divine Trinity, and they have revealed to the world the hidden mysteries of God.

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

Abraham was delivered from the hands of the unrighteous, and the godly youths and Daniel the prophet were once saved from the flame of the furnace and from the den of wild beasts. Wherefore, we now celebrate the forefeast of the nativity of Christ.

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

## SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: THE HOLY FATHERS (Tone 5)

*Theotokion:* O joyous and unwedded Mother, incorrupt Virgin, we bless thee, for thou didst blossom forth from the generation of Abraham and the tribe of David, and gavest birth unto Christ, Who of old was foretold by the prophets.

*Katavasia, Tone 1:* Christ is born, give 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 chant with gladness, ye people, for He hath been glorified!

### Ode III

#### *Canon of the Resurrection, in Tone V*

*Irmos:* O Christ Who by Thy command fixed the earth upon nought and suspended its weight unsupported: establish Thou Thy Church upon the immovable rock of Thy commandments, O Thou Who alone art good and lovest mankind.

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

They who sucked forth honey from a rock when Thou didst work a miracle in the desert, O Christ, gave Thee gall to eat; the ungrateful children of Israel gave Thee vinegar in return for manna, repaying thus Thy benefactions.

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

They who of old were covered by the cloud of light placed Christ, our Life, in the tomb; yet He hath arisen through His own power and from on high hath given to all the faithful the effulgence of the Spirit, which mystically overshadoweth them.

*Refrain:* Most Holy Theotokos save us.

*Theotokion:* Thou, O Mother of God, gavest birth without knowing union, and without the pangs of motherhood, unto Him Who shone forth from the incorrupt Father; wherefore, in Orthodox manner we proclaim thee the Theotokos, for thou gavest birth unto the incarnate Word.

#### *Canon of the Cross and Resurrection, in Tone V*

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy precious Cross and Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

Thou didst arise from the tomb, O Christ, delivering from the corruption of death those who hymn Thy voluntary crucifixion, O Bestower of life.

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy precious Cross and Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

The myrrh-bearing women strove to anoint Thy body with myrrh, O Christ; but not finding it, they turned back, hymning Thine arising.

#### *Canon of the Theotokos, in Tone V*

*Refrain:* Most Holy Theotokos save us.

O pure one, thou art now manifestly seen by all to be the ladder whereby the Most High hath descended unto us to set aright our nature, which had become corrupt; for through thee was the All-good One well pleased to enter into fellowship with the world.

*Refrain:* Most Holy Theotokos save us.

The mystery which was ordained of old and foreseen before time began by God Who knoweth all things, hath now, in the latter days been made manifest, fulfilled in thy womb, O most immaculate one.

#### *Canon of the Fathers, in Tone VI*

*Refrain:* Holy Fathers, pray to God for us.

Faithfully preserving the glory of the image and likeness of God, with the fire of the Spirit the children, as champions, extinguished the fire of the golden image, chanting: We know but one Lord!

*Refrain:* Holy Fathers, pray to God for us.

The captive children, clothed with the wisdom and power of the Spirit, put to shame the sages of Babylon and boldly cried out: None is holy save Thee, O Lord Who lovest mankind!

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

The Law doth rejoice and joineth chorus with the children and the prophets and doth exult today before the divine advent of the Lord. And Abraham doth rejoice, for from his seed hath the incarnate Lord appeared.

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

*Theotokion:* A conception without pain, acceptance of thy birthgiving hath transpired in manner beyond recounting, O Theotokos, for the Word of God, Who is God and was proclaimed by the prophets, hath shown Himself to be a mystery beyond nature.

*Katavasia, Tone 1:* To Christ God, the Son who was begotten of the Father without corruption before time began, and in latter times without seed became incarnate of the Virgin, let us cry aloud: O Lord Who hast liftest up our horn, holy art Thou!

### The Small Ectenia

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

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

## SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: THE HOLY FATHERS (Tone 5)

**Deacon:** Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** Calling to remembrance our most holy, most pure, most blessed, glorious Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and all our life unto Christ our God.

**Chanters:** To Thee O Lord.

**Priest:** For Thou art our God, and unto Thee do we send up glory; to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

**Chanters:** Amen.

### Hypakoë

*Hypakoë of the Fathers, in Tone VIII—*

An Angel bedewed the children in the furnace, and hath now put an end to the lamentation of the myrrh-bearing women, saying: Why bring ye myrrh? Whom seek ye in the tomb? Christ God is risen, for He is the life and salvation of the human race!

### Ode IV

*Canon of the Resurrection, in Tone V*

*Irmos:* Perceiving Thy divine condescension prophetically, O Christ, Habakkuk cried out to Thee with trembling: Thou art come for the salvation of Thy people, to save Thine anointed ones!

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

O Good One, with a tree Thou didst sweeten the bitter waters of Marah, prefiguring Thine all-precious Cross, which doeth away with the taste of sin.

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

O my Saviour, Thou didst receive a Cross in exchange for the tree of knowledge and gall for sweet food, and Thou didst pour forth Thy divine blood for the corruption of death.

*Refrain:* Most Holy Theotokos save us.

*Theotokion:* Without physical joining thou didst incorruptibly conceive within thy womb, and gavest birth without pain; and having given birth unto God in the flesh, thou wast preserved a virgin even after birthgiving.

*Canon of the Cross and Resurrection, in Tone V*

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy precious Cross and Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

When the Cross was planted in the ground on Golgotha, the everlasting bars were shattered; and the gatekeepers cried out: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy precious Cross and Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

When as One dead the Saviour descended unto those bound, he raised up with Himself those who had died in times past; and they cried aloud: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

*Canon of the Theotokos, in Tone V*

*Refrain:* Most Holy Theotokos save us.

With heart and mind, with soul and mouth I most piously confess thee to be the true Theotokos, O pure one; and laying hold of the fruit of salvation, I am saved by thy supplications, O Virgin.

*Refrain:* Most Holy Theotokos save us.

He Who created all things out of nothingness was well-pleased, as our Benefactor, to be formed of thee, O pure one, for the salvation of those who with faith and love hymn thee, O most immaculate one.

*Canon of the Fathers, in Tone VI*

*Refrain:* Holy Fathers, pray to God for us.

Let us honour Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as the firstfruits of the fathers, for from their seed hath Christ shone forth incarnate of the Virgin, in that He is almighty.

*Refrain:* Holy Fathers, pray to God for us.

Indicating the coming events of the descent of Christ unto all, Daniel clearly showed forth lions as sheep, for, as a prophet of God, he foresaw the future.

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

Not attracted by the poison of sin, O children, ye were delivered from the flame; for, being of wisdom more pure than gold, ye were not melted in the furnace of falsehood.

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

*Theotokion:* O honoured and all-pure one, thine Offspring, Who transcendeth nature, is proclaimed aloud to be the Expectation of the nations and the Salvation of the world. And today the multitude of the fathers doth praise Him.

*Katavasia, Tone I:* A rod from the root of Jesse, and blossom therefrom, O Christ, Thou didst sprung forth

## SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: THE HOLY FATHERS (*Tone 5*)

from the Virgin; from the mountain overshadowed and densely wooded didst Thou come, incarnate of her who knew not man, O Thou praised and immaterial God. Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

### Ode V

#### *Canon of the Resurrection, in Tone V*

*Irmos:* O Thou Who art clothed in light as with a garment: I rise at dawn unto Thee, and to Thee do I cry: enlighten Thou my gloom-enshrouded soul, O Christ, in that Thou alone art compassionate!

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

Of His own will the Lord of glory hangeth ignominiously upon the Tree in inglorious form, ineffably taking thought of divine glory for me.

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

Having tasted of the corruption of death in the flesh without suffering corruption, O Christ, Thou didst clothe me in incorruption, having shone forth from the tomb on the third day.

*Refrain:* Most Holy Theotokos save us.

*Theotokion:* Having seedlessly given birth for us to Christ, our righteousness and deliverance, O Theotokos, thou didst rid the nature of our first father of the curse.

#### *Canon of the Cross and Resurrection, in Tone V*

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy precious Cross and Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

Thou didst stretch forth Thine arms upon the Tree, O our Saviour, calling all to Thyself, in that Thou lovest mankind.

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy precious Cross and Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

By Thy burial Thou didst capture hades, O my Saviour, and by Thy resurrection Thou hast filled all with joy.

#### *Canon of the Theotokos, in Tone V*

*Refrain:* Most Holy Theotokos save us.

All the prophets manifestly proclaimed thee beforehand as the one to become the Mother of God, O pure Theotokos; for thou alone, O pure and immaculate one, wast found to be perfect.

*Refrain:* Most Holy Theotokos save us.

O pure one, we recognize thee as the radiant cloud of the Water of life, which raineth Christ, the Torrent of incorruption, upon us, the despairing.

### *Canon of the Fathers, in Tone VI*

*Refrain:* Holy Fathers, pray to God for us.

Let us honour today the divine Daniel, of the race of Abraham, the firstfruit of the fathers, as a leader of the Law and of grace; for, as a prophet of God, he foretold the advent of Christ from the Virgin and goeth forth to meet His divine nativity.

*Refrain:* Holy Fathers, pray to God for us.

Clearly prefiguring through the Angel's descent the coming of the Lord unto us, the children of Abraham extinguished the furnace; and, rendering the flame dewy by their faith, they consumed the splendour of the golden image therein.

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

Through the Spirit, Daniel closed the mouths of the wild beasts in the den; and through grace the children of Abraham quenched the strength of the fire. And, saved from corruption, they proclaim Christ Who is born of the Virgin, entreating Him as the Deliverer of our salvation.

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

*Theotokion:* Revealing through the divine Spirit Thy painless assumption of our nature, and keeping vigil in the law of grace, O Lord, Isaiah cried out: From the race of Abraham and the tribe of Judah doth a Virgin come, giving birth in the flesh without seed!

*Katavasia, Tone 1:* Thou, Who art God of peace and Father of compassion, didst send Thine Angel of Great Counsel, Who granteth us peace. Wherefore, guided to the light of knowledge divine, and waking at dawn out of the night, we glorify Thee, Who lovest mankind.

### Ode VI

#### *Canon of the Resurrection, in Tone V*

*Irmos:* O Christ Master, still Thou the sea of the passions which rageth with a soul-destroying tempest, and lead me up from corruption, in that Thou art compassionate.

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

The progenitor of our race stumbled headlong into corruption, having tasted of the forbidden food, O Christ our Master; but he hath been led up to life through Thy suffering.

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

Thou, O our Life, didst go down into hades, and having become corruption for the corrupter, O Christ

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our Master, Thou didst pour forth resurrection through corruption.

*Refrain:* Most Holy Theotokos save us.

*Theotokion:* The Virgin gave birth, and having given birth hath remained pure. The Virgin Mother hath truly borne in her arms Him Who holdeth all things.

*Canon of the Cross and Resurrection, in Tone V*

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy precious Cross and Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

Thou didst stretch forth Thine arms, gathering together through Thy Life-bearing Cross the assemblies of Thy nations scattered afar, O Christ our God, in that Thou lovest mankind.

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy precious Cross and Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

Thou madest death captive and didst break down the gates of hades; and bound Adam, released from his bonds, cried out to Thee: Thy right hand hath saved me, O Lord!

*Canon of the Theotokos, in Tone V*

*Refrain:* Most Holy Theotokos save us.

When He Who is the cause of all, and Who hath brought all into being, became incarnate, He had thee as His human cause, O most immaculate Mother of God.

*Refrain:* Most Holy Theotokos save us.

O most immaculate Mistress, we know thee to be a soul-nurturing wellspring pouring forth healings upon those who with faith have recourse unto thy right glorious protection.

*Canon of the Fathers, in Tone VI*

*Refrain:* Holy Fathers, pray to God for us.

Hospitable was the nature and exalted was the faith of Abraham the forefather. Wherefore, receiving in image the divine mystery, he rejoiced, and, running before Christ, he now maketh merry.

*Refrain:* Holy Fathers, pray to God for us.

The faith of the youths now holdeth creation in thrall by the gift of the Creator, for the all-devouring and shameless fire stood in awe of those who honour Jesus Christ, the Creator of fire.

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

Once Daniel the prophet, closing the mouths of the lions in the den, in godly manner showed that through the coming of Christ the savagery of the world is in

harmony with divine peace.

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

*Theotokion:* O Mary, Mother who knewest not man, from a virgin womb didst thou give birth unto Christ, Whom the prophets beheld in the Spirit; and the fathers who begot Him now join chorus before His nativity.

*Katavasia, Tone 1:* The sea monster spewed forth Jonah, like a babe from the womb, as it had taken him in; and the Word, Who took flesh and dwelt within the Virgin, issued forth, preserving her incorrupt. He kept unharmed her who gave Him birth, for He Himself was not subject to corruption.

### The Small Ectenia

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

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** Calling to remembrance our most holy, most pure, most blessed, glorious Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and all our life unto Christ our God.

**Chanters:** To Thee O Lord.

**Priest:** For Thou art the King of peace, and the Saviour of our souls, and unto Thee do we send up glory; to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

**Chanters:** Amen.

### Kontakion

*Kontakion of the Fathers, in Tone VI —*

A hand-wrought image ye would not worship, \* O thrice-blessed ones; \* but armed with the Indescribable Essence, \* ye were glorified in your ordeal by fire. \* Standing in the midst of the irresistible flame, \* ye called upon God: \* Speed Thou, O Compassionate One, and hasten, as Thou art Merciful, \* to come unto our aid, for Thou art able if Thou will it.

*Ikos:* Stretch forth Thy hand whereby of old the warring Egyptians and the embattled Hebrews were tested. Forsake us not, lest death, which thirsteth after us, and Satan, who hateth us, swallow us up; but draw

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nigh unto us and spare our souls, as Thou once didst spare Thy three children in Babylon, who glorified Thee unceasingly and were cast for Thy sake into a furnace, whence thy cried out to Thee: Speed Thou and make haste to our aid, O Compassionate One, in that Thou art merciful, \* for what Thou willest, Thou canst do!

### Ode VII

#### *Canon of the Resurrection, in Tone V*

*Irmos:* The supremely exalted Lord of our fathers quenched the flame and bedewed the children, who sang together: Blessed art Thou, O God!

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

Clad in flesh like bait on a hook, by Thy divine power thou didst draw the serpent down, leading up those who cry: Blessed art Thou, O God!

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

The Infinite One, Who brought the immense structure of the earth into being, in the flesh is covered in the tomb. Unto Him do we all sing: Blessed art Thou, O God!

*Refrain:* Most Holy Theotokos save us.

*Theotokion:* O most immaculate one, thou gavest birth to the incarnate God, one Hypostasis in two natures. Unto Him do we all sing: Blessed art Thou, O God!

#### *Canon of the Cross and Resurrection, in Tone V*

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy precious Cross and Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

Blessed is the God of our fathers, Who by the Tree of the Cross abolished the deception of the idols.

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy precious Cross and Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

Blessed is the God of our fathers, Who rose from the dead and with Himself raised up those in hades.

#### *Canon of the Theotokos, in Tone V*

*Refrain:* Most Holy Theotokos save us.

The Uncircumscribable One, Who alone is the blessed God of our fathers, remaining immutable, O all-holy one, within thee united flesh to His Hypostasis, in that He is full of loving-kindness.

*Refrain:* Most Holy Theotokos save us.

Together we glorify thee, the most immaculate Bride and throne of thy Creator, O Mistress Theotokos. And unto Him do we all chant: Blessed art Thou, O God!

#### *Canon of the Fathers, in Tone VI*

*Refrain:* Holy Fathers, pray to God for us.

O father Abraham, progenitor of thy race, having begotten Christ in the flesh, thou art clearly revealed by the Spirit as the father of nations, unto the salvation of us who chant: O God, our Deliverer, blessed art Thou!

*Refrain:* Holy Fathers, pray to God for us.

Thy hymn of the inspired ones hath put to shame those who utter soulless noises, for the youths, bodily trampling down unharmed the furnace which burned with fire, chant: O God, our Deliverer, blessed art Thou!

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

Of old, the prophet Daniel, gazing with spiritual vision, revealed the second coming of Christ, and he foretelleth the dreadful things which shall come to pass therein, crying out: O God, our Deliverer, blessed art Thou!

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

*Theotokion:* O strange wonder, known among the prophets and revealed of old to the fathers: a pure Virgin is come, desiring to give birth unto the salvation of us who chant: O God, our Deliverer, blessed art Thou!

*Katavasia, Tone 1:* The young men raised together in piety disdaining the impious command, feared not the threat of fire, but, standing in the midst of the flame, they chanted: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

### Ode VIII

#### *Canon of the Resurrection, in Tone V*

*Irmos:* The children, forming a universal chorus in the furnace, chanted to Thee, the Creator of all: Hymn the Lord, all ye works, and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

Thou didst pray concerning Thy voluntary and saving passion as though it were a cup which Thou didst not desire; for Thou bearest two wills, according to each of Thy two natures, O Christ, forever.

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

At Thine all-accomplishing descent, O Christ, hades, mocked, spewed forth all whom it had lured by deceit



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into death from of old, and they exalt Thee supremely for all ages.

*Refrain:* Most Holy Theotokos save us.

*Theotokion:* All of us, the works of the Lord, bless and supremely exalt thee for all ages, as her who, in manner past understanding, gave birth to the Lord as God and man at the word of the archangel, and doth remain a virgin.

*Canon of the Cross and Resurrection, in Tone V*

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy precious Cross and Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

Christ God, Who of His own will stretched forth His hands upon the Cross and destroyed the bonds of death, do ye hymn, O ye priests! Ye people, exalt Him supremely for all ages!

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy precious Cross and Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

Christ God, Who shone forth from the tomb like a bridegroom, and appeared to the myrrh-bearing women, and proclaimed joy unto them, do ye hymn, O ye priests! Ye people, exalt Him supremely for all ages!

*Canon of the Theotokos, in Tone V*

*Refrain:* Most Holy Theotokos save us.

The grief of our forefather ceased when thou didst receive joy, O Mother of God; wherefore, we unceasingly hymn thee, O Virgin, and exalt thee supremely for all ages.

*Refrain:* Most Holy Theotokos save us.

With us the assembly of the incorporeal beings, forming a single choir with love, hymneth thine unapproachable Offspring, exalting Him supremely for all ages.

*Canon of the Fathers, in Tone VI*

*Refrain:* Holy Fathers, pray to God for us.

Prefiguring Thy sacrifice, O Christ, Abraham, obedient to Thee, O Master, went forth with faith, desiring to sacrifice on the mountain the son whom he had begotten; but he returned with him, rejoicing and glorifying and exalting above all Thee, the Deliverer of the world.

*Refrain:* Holy Fathers, pray to God for us.

When Thou didst clothe Thyself in ever-blazing flame as in a divine robe, O Christ, Thou didst utterly extinguish the fire for the three holy children, and by Thy descent the dew cried out unto those who chant:

Ye priests, hymn and exalt Him supremely forever!

Let us bless the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the Lord.

The prophet Daniel is given to the lions as food by an unjust tribunal, but, through the precept of abstinence, in his piety he had the wild beasts as fellow fasters in the depths of the pit. Through his prayers and those of Abraham and the children, save those who hymn Thee in the world, O Christ!

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

*Theotokion:* The voices of the prophets faithfully proclaimed Him as Jesus Emmanuel, Who cometh in human form, God and man; and the Virgin Mary, without having known man, giveth birth in the city of Bethlehem unto a Son, the Word Who is equally without beginning, through the Holy Spirit.

We praise, we bless, we worship the Lord, praising and supremely exalting Him unto all ages.

*Katavasia, Tone 1:* The dew-bearing furnace showed forth the image of a supernatural wonder; for it burned not the youths whom it had received, just as the fire of the Godhead burned not the Virgin's womb, which it entered. Wherefore, chanting, let us sing: Let all creation bless the Lord and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

### The Song of the Most Holy Theotokos

**Deacon:** The Theotokos and Mother of the Light let us magnify in song.

*And we sing the Song of the Most Holy Theotokos (the Magnificat).*

**Chanters:** My soul doth magnify the Lord, \* and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

*Refrain:* More honourable than the Cherubim, \* and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim; \* who without corruption gavest birth to God the Word, \* the very Theotokos, thee do we magnify.

For He hath looked upon the lowliness of His handmaiden; \* for behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

*Refrain:* More honourable than the Cherubim, \* and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim; \* who without corruption gavest birth to God the Word, \* the very Theotokos, thee do we magnify.

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For the Mighty One hath done great things to me, and holy is His name; \* and His mercy is on them that fear Him unto generation and generation.

*Refrain:* More honourable than the Cherubim, \* and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim; \* who without corruption gavest birth to God the Word, \* the very Theotokos, thee do we magnify.

He hath showed strength with His arm, \* and He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their heart.

*Refrain:* More honourable than the Cherubim, \* and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim; \* who without corruption gavest birth to God the Word, \* the very Theotokos, thee do we magnify.

He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and exalted them of low degree; \* He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away.

*Refrain:* More honourable than the Cherubim, \* and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim; \* who without corruption gavest birth to God the Word, \* the very Theotokos, thee do we magnify.

He hath holpen His servant Israel in remembrance of His mercy, \* as He spake to our fathers, to Abraham and his seed forever.

*Refrain:* More honourable than the Cherubim, \* and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim; \* who without corruption gavest birth to God the Word, \* the very Theotokos, thee do we magnify.

### Ode IX

#### *Canon of the Resurrection, in Tone V*

*Irmos:* Rejoice, O Isaiah! The Virgin hath conceived in her womb and borne a Son, Immanuel, both God and man. Orient is His name; and, magnifying Him, we call the Virgin blessed.

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

Thou didst take up fallen man, O Christ, through the Virgin's womb uniting Thyself wholly unto him without partaking of the least sin; and by Thine all-pure sufferings Thou didst free him wholly from corruption.

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

By the divinely flowing blood poured forth from Thine all-pure and life-creating side, O Christ our Master, the sacrifices of the idols were brought to an end, and the whole earth offereth Thee the sacrifice of praise.

*Refrain:* Most Holy Theotokos save us.

*Theotokion:* It is not the incorporeal God nor a simple man whom the pure and undefiled Maiden brought forth, but a perfect Man and the truly perfect God. Him do we magnify with the Father and the Spirit.

#### *Canon of the Cross and Resurrection, in Tone V*

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy precious Cross and Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

In Orthodox manner we, the faithful, magnify Thee, Who didst undertake to suffer upon the Cross and broke the power of hades by Thy death.

*Refrain:* Glory to Thy precious Cross and Thy holy resurrection, O Lord.

In oneness of mind we, the faithful, magnify Thee, Who arose from the tomb on the third day, made hades captive, and hast enlightened the world.

#### *Canon of the Theotokos, in Tone V*

*Refrain:* Most Holy Theotokos save us.

By thy pure blood was flesh with mind and soul supernaturally formed for the Creator of all, the only-begotten Son of the Father, O Ever-virgin Theotokos, not by man, but seedlessly.

*Refrain:* Most Holy Theotokos save us.

In giving birth in the flesh truly unto Life eternal, in manner past understanding, thou didst cause the encircling and unrestrained siege of death to cease. And hades, striking against Him with its bitter maw, was abolished, O all-holy Virgin Mother.

#### *Canon of the Fathers, in Tone VI*

*Refrain:* Holy Fathers, pray to God for us.

Celebrating the feast of the fathers who were before the Law, let us honour Christ, Who, in godly manner, is begotten of them in the flesh; for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who, through faith, are proclaimers of the Spirit and grace, are shown to be the foundation of the prophets and the law.

*Refrain:* Holy Fathers, pray to God for us.

God, Who by the fire in the bush showed to Moses the godly mystery in manner past understanding, having descended into the fire for the children, showed the flame of the furnace to be dew through the fire of the Essence of His divinity.

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

The all-holy children, assembling with Abraham, and Daniel, the wondrous prophet of God, Isaac and Jacob,

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with Moses and Aaron, faithfully join chorus before the nativity of Christ, praying unceasingly that we be saved.

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

*Theotokion:* All creation doth rejoice in thy birthgiving, O Virgin, for Bethlehem hath opened Eden unto us. And, lo! delighting in the Tree of Life, we all earnestly cry out in faith: Thou hast fulfilled our prayers, O Mistress!

*Katavasia, Tone 1:* A strange and all-glorious mystery do I behold: the cave is heaven; the Virgin, a cherubic throne; the manger, the place wherein Christ, the uncontainable God, was laid, Whom praising we magnify.

### The Small Ectenia

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

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** Calling to remembrance our most holy, most pure, most blessed, glorious Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and all our life unto Christ our God.

**Chanters:** To Thee O Lord.

**Priest:** For all the Hosts of Heaven praise Thee, and unto Thee do we send up glory; to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

**Chanters:** Amen.

### Holy is the Lord

**Deacon:** Holy is the Lord our God.

**Chanters:** Holy is the Lord our God.

**Deacon:** *Stichos:* For holy is the Lord our God.

**Chanters:** Holy is the Lord our God.

**Deacon:** *Stichos:* Above all peoples is our God.

**Chanters:** Holy is the Lord our God.

### EXAPOSTILARIA

### *The Eighth Gospel Exapostilarion —*

Beholding two angels within the tomb, Mary was amazed; and not recognizing Christ, she questioned Him, assuming that He was the gardener, saying: ‘Sir, where have they laid the body of my Jesus?’ But recognizing Him as the Saviour Himself from the sound of His voice, she heard Him say: ‘Touch me not, for I shall depart unto the Father! Tell this to My brethren.’

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

*Exapostilarion of the fathers, Special Melody:* ‘To the disciples...’ —

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the elect of the patriarchs, \* the fathers before the Law, have shone forth like beacons, \* for all the prophets and the righteous \* shone forth from them like radiant lamps. \* With rays of honourable prophecy have they illumined all creation; \* and they earnestly pray to God in behalf of the world.

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

### *Theotokion —*

Wondrous hath this been! \* The unblemished ewe-lamb, the granddaughter of Adam and David, \* giveth birth unto the Lamb, \* the all-unoriginate Word, in the latter days, as is meet. \* The forefeast of her ineffable birthgiving \* doth the multitude of the fathers celebrate fittingly.

*NB: The theotokion of the exapostilarion of the resurrection is not recited, but rather that of the forefathers’ exapostilarion.*

### THE LAUDS (THE PRAISES)

**Canonarch:** In the Fifth Tone, Let every breath praise the Lord.

*Then immediately we chant Lauds (Psalms 148, 149, and 150) —*

### Psalm 148

**Chanters:** Let every breath praise the Lord. \* Praise the Lord from the heavens, \* praise Him in the highest. \* To Thee is due praise, O God.

Praise Him, all ye His angels; \* praise Him, all ye His hosts. \* To Thee is due praise, O God.

*And the rest of the verses are read down to the beginning of the stichoi, i.e., the point at which the stichera are inserted.*

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Praise Him, O sun and moon; praise Him all ye stars and light.

Praise Him, ye heavens of heavens, and thou water that art above the heavens.

Let them praise the name of the Lord; for He spake, and they came to be; He commanded, and they were created.

He established them for ever, yea, for ever and ever; He hath set an ordinance, and it shall not pass away.

Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all ye abysses.

Fire, hail, snow, ice, blast of tempest, which perform His word.

The mountains and all the hills, fruitful trees, and all cedars.

The beasts and all the cattle, creeping things and winged birds.

Kings of the earth, and all peoples, princes and all the judges of the earth.

Young men and virgins, elders with the younger; let them praise the name of the Lord, for exalted is the name of Him alone.

His praise is above the earth and heaven, and He shall exalt the horn of His people.

This is the hymn for all His saints, for the sons of Israel, and for the people that draw nigh unto Him.

### Psalm 149

Sing unto the Lord a new song; His praise is in the church of the saints.

Let Israel be glad in Him that made him, let the sons of Sion rejoice in their King.

Let them praise His name in the dance; with the timbrel and the psaltery let them chant unto Him.

For the Lord taketh pleasure in His people, and He shall exalt the meek with salvation.

The saints shall boast in glory, and they shall rejoice upon their beds.

The high praise of God shall be in their throat, and two-edged swords shall be in their hands.

To do vengeance among the heathen, punishments among the peoples.

To bind their kings with fetters, and their nobles with manacles of iron.

### Stichera at the Praises

8 stichera: 4 stichera of the Resurrection, and 4 of the Fathers.

*The Resurrection Stichera, in Tone V —*

*Stichos:* To do among them the judgement that is written. \* This glory shall be to all His saints.

O Lord, when the tomb had been sealed by the iniquitous, Thou didst issue forth from the grave, as Thou hadst been born of the Theotokos. Thine incorporeal angels did not understand how Thou hadst become incarnate, and the soldiers who guarded Thee did not sense when Thou didst arise. For both things were sealed for those who would examine them; but the wonders were revealed to those who worshiped the mystery with faith. Grant Thou joy and great mercy unto us who hymn it!

### Psalm 150

*Stichos:* Praise ye God in His saints, \* praise Him in the firmament of His power.

O Lord, Who broke asunder the everlasting chains and rent apart the bonds of hades, Thou didst rise from the tomb, leaving Thy grave-clothes behind as a witness to Thy true burial on the third day; and Thou didst go before Thy disciples into Galilee, O Thou Who wast guarded in the cave. Great is Thy mercy, O unapproachable Saviour! Have mercy and save us!

*Stichos:* Praise Him for His mighty acts, \* praise Him according to the multitude of His greatness.

The women, O Lord, hastened to the tomb to see Thee Who suffered for our sake, O Christ; and when they were come, they found an angel seated upon the stone, which had rolled away in fear; and he cried out to them, saying: 'The Lord is risen! Tell ye the disciples that He hath risen from the dead, saving our souls!'

*Stichos:* Praise Him with the sound of trumpet, \* praise Him with the psaltery and harp.

O Lord, as Thou didst come forth from the sealed tomb, so didst Thou enter in unto Thy disciples while the doors were fast shut, showing them the bodily sufferings which Thou didst endure, O long-suffering Saviour. Thou didst endure wounding as One from the seed of David, and didst free the world as the Son of God. Great is Thy mercy, O unapproachable Saviour! have mercy and save us!

*4 stichera of the Fathers, in Tone V, Special Melody: 'Rejoice...'* —

*Stichos:* Praise Him with timbrel and dance, \* praise Him with strings and flute.

Lift up thy voice, O Sion, Thou truly divine city, and proclaim the divine memory of the fathers, honouring Abraham, Isaac, and the ever-memorable Jacob; for, lo! we all magnify Judah and Levi, the great Moses and the wondrous Aaron, and we honour David, Joshua,

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and Samuel. And weaving divine hymns into godly praise on the forefeast of Christ's nativity, we ask that we receive grace from Him, and that He grant the world great mercy.

*Stichos:* Praise Him with tuneful cymbals; praise Him with cymbals of jubilation. \* Let every breath praise the Lord.

*The foregoing sticheron is repeated.*

*Stichos:* Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers, \* and praised and glorified is Thy name unto the ages.

O Elijah, who once rode upon a divine chariot of fire, come thou forth, and thou, O divinely wise Elisha; and together with Ezekiel and Hosea, rejoice! O ye honoured and divinely inspired twelve prophets, join chorus, and all ye righteous, chant in hymns unto the nativity of Christ; ye most blessed youths that quenched the flame of the furnace with the dew of the Spirit, entreat Christ in our behalf, that He send down upon our souls great mercy.

*Stichos:* For righteous art Thou \* in all which Thou hast done for us.

The Virgin Theotokos, she who through the ages hath been preached on earth by the prophets in their utterances, she whom the wise patriarchs and the assemblies of the righteous proclaim, with whom the comeliness of women joineth chorus — Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Hannah, together with the glorious Miriam, the sister of Moses: With them all the ends of the world rejoice and all creation rendereth honour, for the Creator and God of all cometh to be born in the flesh and to grant us great mercy.

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

*Doxasticon of the Father, in Tone VIII —*

The compilation of the teachings of the Law doth reveal the divine birth of Christ in the flesh as being from those who, before the Law, proclaimed the glad tidings of grace to those who lived beyond the Law. Wherefore, in that this birth is the means of deliverance from corruption, for the sake of the resurrection they declared to the souls held fast in hades: O Lord, glory be to Thee!

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

*Theotokion, in Tone II —*

Most blessed art Thou, O Virgin Theotokos, for through Him Who became incarnate of Thee is hades

led captive, Adam recalled, the curse annulled, Eve set free, death slain, and we are given life. Wherefore, we cry aloud in praise: Blessed art Thou, O Christ God, Who hast been thus well-pleased, glory to Thee.

### THE GREAT DOXOLOGY

**Priest:** Glory to Thee Who hast showed us the light.

*And we chant the Great Doxology:*

**Chanters:** Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory. O Lord, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty; O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ; and O Holy Spirit.

O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sin of the world; have mercy on us; Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; Thou that sittest at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord, Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Every day will I bless Thee, and I will praise Thy Name forever, yea, forever and ever.

Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy name unto the ages. Amen.

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we have hoped in Thee.

Blessed are Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes. *Thrice.*

Lord, thou hast been our refuge in generation and generation. I said: O Lord, have mercy on me, heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee.

O Lord, unto Thee have I fled for refuge, teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God. For in Thee is the fountain of life, in Thy light shall we see light. O continue Thy mercy unto them that know Thee.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. *Thrice.*

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

Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

## SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: THE HOLY FATHERS (Tone 5)

### Resurrectional Troparion

*After the Great Doxology, the Resurrectional Troparion, in Tone I —*

Today is salvation come unto the world; let us sing praises to Him that arose from the tomb, and is the Author of our life. For, having destroyed death by death, He hath given us the victory and great mercy.

### The Augmented Ectenia

**Deacon:** Have mercy on us, O God, according to Thy great mercy, we pray Thee, hearken and have mercy.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

**Deacon:** Again we pray for our great lord and father, His Holiness Patriarch *N.*; for our lord the Very Most Reverend Metropolitan *N.*, First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad; for our lord the Most Reverend (Archbishop *or* Bishop) *N.*; and all our brethren in Christ.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

**Deacon:** Again we pray for this land, its authorities and armed forces.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

**Deacon:** Again we pray for the God-preserved Russian land and its Orthodox people both in the homeland and in the diaspora and for their salvation.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

**Deacon:** Again we pray to the Lord our God that He may deliver His people from enemies visible and invisible, and confirm in us oneness of mind, brotherly love and piety.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

**Deacon:** Again we pray for the blessed and ever-memorable founders of this holy temple (*if it be a monastery*: this holy monastery): and for all our fathers and brethren gone to their rest before us, and the Orthodox here and everywhere laid to rest.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

**Deacon:** Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, visitation, pardon and remission of sins of the servants of God, the brethren of this holy temple (*if it be a monastery*: this holy monastery).

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

**Deacon:** Again we pray for them that bring offerings and do good works in this holy and all-venerable temple; for them that minister and them that chant, and for all the people here present, that await of Thee great and abundant mercy.

**Chanters:** To Thee, O Lord.

**Priest:** For a merciful God art Thou, and the Lover of mankind, and unto Thee do we send up glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

**Chanters:** Amen.

### The Litany of Supplication

**Deacon:** Let us complete our morning prayer unto the Lord.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

**Chanters:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** That the whole day may be perfect, holy, peaceful and sinless, let us ask of the Lord.

**Chanters:** Grant this, O Lord.

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

**Chanters:** Grant this, O Lord.

**Deacon:** Pardon and remission of our sins and offences, let us ask of the Lord.

**Chanters:** Grant this, O Lord.

**Deacon:** Things good and profitable for our souls, and peace for the world, let us ask of the Lord.

**Chanters:** 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.

**Chanters:** Grant this, O Lord.

**Deacon:** A Christian ending to our life, painless, blameless, peaceful, and a good defense before the dread judgement seat of Christ, let us ask.

**Chanters:** Grant this, O Lord.

**Deacon:** Calling to remembrance our most holy, most pure, most blessed, glorious Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commit

## SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: THE HOLY FATHERS (Tone 5)

ourselves and one another and all our life unto Christ our God.

**Chanters:** To Thee, O Lord.

**Priest:** For Thou art a God of mercy, compassion, and love for mankind, and unto Thee do we send up glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

**Chanters:** Amen.

### Prayer at the Bowing of the Heads

**Priest:** Peace be unto all.

**Chanters:** And to thy spirit.

**Deacon:** Let us bow our heads unto the Lord.

**Chanters:** To Thee, O Lord.

*The priest saith this prayer secretly:*

O holy Lord, Who dwellest on high and lookest down on things that are lowly, and with Thine all-seeing eye lookest down on all creation: unto Thee have we bowed the neck of our heart and body, and we pray Thee: Stretch forth Thine invisible hand from Thy holy dwelling-place and bless us all. And if in aught we have sinned, either voluntarily or involuntarily, do Thou as a good God and the Lover of mankind pardon us, granting us Thine earthly and spiritual good things

*He exclaimeth:*

**Priest:** For Thine it is to show mercy and to save us, O our God, and unto Thee do we send up glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

**Chanters:** Amen.

### The Dismissal

**Deacon:** Wisdom!

**Chanters:** Father bless!

**Priest:** He that is is blessed, Christ our God, always, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

**Chanters:** Amen. Establish, O God, the holy Orthodox Faith of Orthodox Christians unto the ages of ages.

**Priest:** O most holy Theotokos, save us.

**Chanters:** More honourable than the Cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim; who

without corruption gavest birth to God the Word, the very Theotokos, thee do we magnify.

**Priest:** Glory to Thee, O Christ God, our hope, glory to Thee.

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

Lord have mercy. *Thrice.* Father, bless.

**Priest:** May Christ our true God, Who arose from the dead, through the intercessions of His most pure Mother; of the holy and glorious apostles; and Saint(s) N.(N.) (*to whom the church is dedicated*); and Saint(s) N.(N.) (*of the day*); 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 loveth mankind.

**Chanters:** Amen.

### The Polychronion

Our great lord and father, His Holiness N. \* the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia; \* our lord the Very Most Reverend N.; \* Metropolitan of Eastern America and New York, First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad, \* and our lord the Most Reverend Archbishop (*or* Bishop) N.; \* the brotherhood of this holy temple, and all Orthodox Christians: \* preserve, O Lord, for many years.

*After the Dismissal —*

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

*Eighth Gospel Sticheron, Tone VIII —*

The tears of Mary were not shed in vain; for, behold! She was counted worthy of having angels instruct her and Jesus Himself appear to her. But, as a weak woman, she thought earthy thoughts. Wherefore, she was turned away and commanded not to touch Christ. Yet was she sent as a herald to Thy disciples, bearing glad tidings to them and announcing Thine ascension to the portion of the Father. With her count us worthy, O Lord and Master, of Thine appearance.

*Here endeth Matins*

*Then the reader immediately begins the first hour*

## THE FIRST HOUR

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

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

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

### Psalm 5

Unto my words give ear, O Lord, hear my cry. Attend unto the voice of my supplication, O my King and my God; for unto Thee will I pray, O Lord.

In the morning shalt Thou hear my voice. In the morning shall I stand before Thee, and Thou shalt look upon me; for not a God that wildest iniquity art Thou.

He that worketh evil shall not dwell near Thee nor shall transgressors abide before Thine eyes.

Thou hast hated all them that work iniquity; Thou shalt destroy all them that speak a lie.

A man that is bloody and deceitful shall the Lord abhor.

But as for me, in the multitude of Thy mercy shall I go into Thy house; I shall worship toward Thy holy temple in fear of Thee.

O Lord, guide me in the way of Thy righteousness; because of mine enemies, make straight my way before Thee,

For in their mouth there is no truth; their heart is vain.

Their throat is an open sepulchre, with their tongues have they spoken deceitfully; judge them, O God.

Let them fall down on account of their own devisings; according to the multitude of their ungodliness, cast them out, for they have embittered Thee, O Lord.

And let all them be glad that hope in Thee; they shall rejoice, and Thou shalt dwell among them.

And all shall glory in Thee that love Thy name, for Thou shalt bless the righteous.

O Lord, as with a shield of Thy good pleasure hast Thou crowned us.

### Psalm 89

Lord, Thou hast been our refuge in generation and generation.

Before the mountains came to be and the earth was formed and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting Thou art.

Turn not man away unto lowliness; yea, Thou hast said: Turn back ye sons of men.

For a thousand years in Thine eyes, O Lord, are but as yesterday that is past, and as a watch in the night.

Things of no account shall their years be; in the morning like grass shall man pass away.

In the morning shall he bloom and pass away. In the evening shall he fall and grow withered and dry.

For we have fainted away in Thy wrath, and in Thine anger have we been troubled.

Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee; our lifespan is in the light of Thy countenance.

For all our days are faded away, and in Thy wrath are we fainted away; our years have, like a spider, spun out their tale.

As for the days of our years, in their span, they be threescore years and ten.

And if we be in strength, mayhap fourscore years; and what is more than these is toil and travail.

For mildness is come upon us, and we shall be chastened.

Who knoweth the might of Thy wrath? And out of fear of Thee, who can recount Thine anger?

So make Thy right hand known to me, and to them that in their heart are instructed in wisdom.

Return, O Lord; how long? And be Thou entreated concerning Thy servants.

We were filled in the morning with Thy mercy, O Lord, and we rejoiced and were glad.

In all our days, let us be glad for the days wherein Thou didst humble us, for the years wherein we saw evils.

And look upon Thy servants, and upon Thy works, and do Thou guide their sons.

And let the brightness of the Lord our God be upon us, and the works of our hands do Thou guide aright upon us, yea, the works of our hands do Thou guide aright.

### Psalm 100

Of mercy and judgement will I sing to Thee, O Lord; I will chant and have understanding in a blameless path. When wilt Thou come unto me?

I have walked in the innocence of my heart in the midst of my house.

I have no unlawful thing before mine eyes; the workers of transgressions I have hated.

A crooked heart hath not cleaved unto me; as for the wicked man who turned from me, I knew him not.

Him that privily talked against his neighbor did I drive away from me.

With him whose eye was proud and his heart insatiate, I did not eat.

Mine eyes were upon the faithful of the land, that they might sit with me; the man that walked in the blameless path, he ministered unto me.



## SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: THE HOLY FATHERS (Tone 5)

The proud doer dwelt not in the midst of my house; the speaker of unjust things prospered not before mine eyes.

In the morning I slew all the sinners of the land, utterly to destroy out of the city of the Lord all them that work iniquity.

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. *Thrice*

Lord, have mercy. *Thrice*.

### Troparia

*He readeth the Troparion of the Resurrection —*

Let us, O faithful, praise and worship the Word Who is co-unoriginate with the Father and the Spirit, and Who was born of the Virgin for our salvation; for He was pleased to ascend the Cross in the flesh and to endure death, and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection.

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

*He readeth the Troparion of the Holy Fathers —*

Great are the achievements of faith! In the fountain of flame, as in refreshing water, the Three Holy Children rejoiced. And the prophet Daniel proved a shepherd of lions as of sheep. By their prayers, O Christ God, save our souls.

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

*Theotokion:* What shall we call thee, O thou that art full of grace? Heaven: for thou hast dawned forth the Sun of Righteousness. Paradise: for thou hast blossomed forth the Flower of Immortality. Virgin: for thou hast remained incorrupt. Pure Mother: for thou hast held in thy holy embrace the Son, the God of all. Do thou entreat Him to save our souls.

### My Steps Do Thou Direct

My steps do Thou direct according to thy saying, and let no iniquity have dominion over me. Deliver me from the false accusations of men, and I will keep Thy commandments. Make Thy face to shine upon Thy servant, and teach me Thy statutes. Let my mouth be filled with Thy praise, that I may hymn Thy glory and Thy majesty all the day long.

### Trisagion Prayers

**Reader:** Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. *Thrice*.

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

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Lord, blot out our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy name's sake.

Lord have mercy. *Thrice*.

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 the Heavens, 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

**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 the ages of ages

**Reader:** Amen.

### Kontakion

*He readeth the Kontakion of the Holy Fathers —*

A hand-wrought image ye would not worship, O thrice-blessed ones; but armed with the Indescribable Essence, ye were glorified in your ordeal by fire. Standing in the midst of the irresistible flame, ye called upon God: Speed Thou, O Compassionate One, and hasten, as Thou art Merciful, to come unto our aid, for Thou art able if Thou will it.

*Then:*

Lord, have mercy. *Forty times*.

### Prayer of the Hours

**Reader:** Thou Who at all times and at every hour, in heaven and on earth, art worshipped and glorified, O Christ God, Who art long-suffering, plenteous in mercy, most compassionate, Who lovest the righteous and hast mercy on sinners; Who callest all to salvation through the promise of good things to come: Receive, O Lord, our prayers at this hour, and guide our life toward Thy commandments. Sanctify our souls, make

## SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: THE HOLY FATHERS *(Tone 5)*

chaste our bodies, correct our thoughts, purify our intentions, and deliver us from every sorrow, evil, and pain. Compass us about with Thy holy angels, that, guarded and guided by their array, we may attain to the unity of the faith and to the knowledge of Thine unapproachable glory: For blessed art Thou unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

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

More honourable than the cherubim and beyond compare more glorious than the seraphim; who without corruption gavest birth to God the Word, the very Theotokos, thee do we magnify.

In the name of the Lord, father bless.

**Priest:** God be gracious unto us and bless us, and cause Thy face to shine upon us and have mercy on us.

**Reader:** Amen.

### Prayer of the First Hour

*Then the priest reads the Prayer of the First Hour in front of the holy doors:*

**Priest:** O Christ, the True Light, Who enlightenest and sanctifiest every man that cometh into the world: Let the Light of Thy countenance be signed upon us, that in it we may see the Unapproachable Light, and guide our steps in the doing of Thy commandments, through the intercessions of Thy most pure Mother, and of all Thy saints. Amen.

### To Thee, the Champion Leader

**Chanters:** To Thee, the Champion Leader, we Thy servants dedicate a feast of victory and of thanksgiving as ones rescued out of sufferings, O Theotokos: but as Thou art one with might which is invincible, from all dangers that can be do Thou deliver us, that we may cry to Thee: Rejoice, Thou Bride Unwedded!

### The Dismissal

**Priest:** Glory to Thee, O Christ our God and our hope, glory to Thee.

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

Lord, have mercy. *Thrice.*

Father, bless.

**Priest:** May Christ our true God, {Who arose from the dead,} through the intercessions of His most pure Mother; of our holy and God-bearing fathers; and of all the saints, have mercy on us and save us, for He is good and the Lover of mankind.

**Chanters:** Amen.

*Here endeth the First Hour*

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## AT THE HOURS

### Troparion of the Resurrection *(Tone 5)*

Let us, O faithful, praise and worship the Word Who is co-unoriginate with the Father and the Spirit, and Who was born of the Virgin for our salvation; for He was pleased to ascend the Cross in the flesh and to endure death, and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection.

### Troparion of the Holy Fathers *(Tone 2)*

Great are the achievements of faith! In the fountain of flame, as in refreshing water, the Three Holy Children rejoiced. And the prophet Daniel proved a shepherd of lions as of sheep. By their prayers, O Christ God, save our souls.

### Kontakion of the Holy Forefathers *(Tone 6)*

A hand-wrought image ye would not worship, O thrice-blessed ones; but armed with the Indescribable Essence, ye were glorified in your ordeal by fire. Standing in the midst of the irresistible flame, ye called upon God: Speed Thou, O Compassionate One, and hasten, as Thou art Merciful, to come unto our aid, for Thou art able if Thou will it.

## AT THE DIVINE LITURGY

### Third Antiphon (Beatitudes)

*10 Troparia: 6 from the Octoechos, and 4 from Ode III of the canon to the Fathers after 'Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.'*

1. Believing Thee to be God, O Christ, the thief on the cross confessed Thee in a pure manner, crying out from the depths of his heart: Remember me in Thy kingdom, O Lord!

2. Together let us hymn as Saviour and Creator Him Who on the Cross budded forth life for our race and caused the curse which originated from the tree to wither up.

## SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: THE HOLY FATHERS (Tone 5)

3. By Thy death hast Thou destroyed the power of death, O Christ, and Thou didst raise up with Thyself the dead of ages past, who now hymn Thee as our true God and Saviour.

4. Arriving at Thy tomb, O Christ, the honourable women sought to anoint Thee with myrrh, O Bestower of life; but an angel appeared to them, crying out: The Lord is risen!

5. When Thou wast crucified between two condemned thieves, O Christ, one of them blasphemed Thee and was justly damned, while the other confessed Thee and hath now come to dwell in paradise.

6. When they had come to the choir of the apostles, the honourable women cried out: Christ is risen! Let us worship Him as Master and Creator.

7. Faithfully preserving the glory of the image and likeness of God, with the fire of the Spirit the children, as champions, extinguished the fire of the golden image, chanting: We know but one Lord!

8. The captive children, clothed with the wisdom and power of the Spirit, put to shame the sages of Babylon and boldly cried out: None is holy save Thee, O Lord Who lovest mankind!

9. The Law doth rejoice and joineth chorus with the children and the prophets and doth exult today before the divine advent of the Lord. And Abraham doth rejoice, for from his seed hath the incarnate Lord appeared.

10. *Theotokion*: A conception without pain, acceptance of thy birthgiving hath transpired in manner beyond recounting, O Theotokos, for the Word of God, Who is God and was proclaimed by the prophets, hath shown Himself to be a mystery beyond nature.

*After the Small Entry, we sing the following troparia and kontakia:*

### **Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 5)**

Let us, O faithful, praise and worship the Word \* Who is co-unoriginate with the Father and the Spirit, \* and Who was born of the Virgin for our salvation; \* for He was pleased to ascend the Cross in the flesh \* and to endure death, \* and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection.

### **Troparion of the Holy Fathers (Tone 2)**

Great are the achievements of faith! \* In the fountain of flame, as in refreshing water, \* the Three Holy Children rejoiced. \* And the prophet Daniel proved a

shepherd of lions as of sheep. \* By their prayers, O Christ God, save our souls.

Glory... Both now...

### **Kontakion of the Holy Forefathers (Tone 6)**

A hand-wrought image ye would not worship, \* O thrice-blessed ones; \* but armed with the Indescribable Essence, \* ye were glorified in your ordeal by fire. \* Standing in the midst of the irresistible flame, \* ye called upon God: \* Speed Thou, O Compassionate One, and hasten, as Thou art Merciful, \* to come unto our aid, for Thou art able if Thou will it.

**The Prokeimenon in the Fourth Tone, the Song of the Fathers:** Blessed art Thou, O Lord the God of our fathers \* and praised and glorified is Thy name unto the ages! (*Daniel 3:26 LXX*)

*Stichos*: For righteous art Thou in all which Thou hast done for us. (*Daniel 3:26 LXX*)

### **The Reading from the Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Hebrews, §328 [11:9-10,17-23,32-40]**

Brethren: By faith Abraham sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. [...] By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, 'In Isaac shall thy seed be called,' accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead, from whence he also received him, in a figurative sense. By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph and worshiped, leaning upon the top of his staff. By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel, and gave commandment concerning his bones. By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a handsome child; and they were not afraid of the king's edict. [...] And what shall I say more? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and of Barak and of Samson and of Jephthah, of David also and Samuel and of the prophets, who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword. Out of weakness they were made strong, waxed valiant in battle, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their

## SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: THE HOLY FATHERS (Tone 5)

dead raised to life again, and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. And others endured the trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea moreover, of bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented (of whom the world was not worthy). They wandered in deserts and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

### **Alleluia, in the Fourth Tone:**

*Stichos:* O God, with our ears have we heard, for our fathers have told us. (*Psalms 43:1*)

*Stichos:* For Thou hast saved us from them that afflict us, and them that hate us hast Thou put to shame. (*Psalms 43:8*)

### **The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew, §1 [1:1-25]**

The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham. Abraham begot Isaac, and Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Judah and his brethren. And Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez begot Hezron, and Hezron begot Aram, and Aram begot Aminadab, and Aminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon, and Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, and Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David the king. And David the king begot Solomon by her that had been the wife of Uriah, and Solomon begot Rehoboam, and Rehoboam begot Abijah, and Abijah begot Asa, and Asa begot Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat begot Joram, and Joram begot Uzziah, and Uzziah begot Jotham, and Jotham begot Ahaz, and Ahaz begot Hezekiah, and Hezekiah begot Manasseh, and Manasseh begot Amon, and Amon begot Josiah, and Josiah begot Jechonias and his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon. And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begot Salathiel, and Salathiel begot Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel begot Abiud, and Abiud begot Eliakim, and Eliakim begot Azor, and Azor begot Zadok, and Zadok begot Achim, and Achim begot Eliud, and Eliud begot Eleazar, and Eleazar begot Matthan, and Matthan begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Joseph, the husband of Mary of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, and from

David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations, and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations. Now the birth of Jesus Christ was in this way: When His mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. And Joseph her husband, being a just man and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, 'Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name JESUS, for He shall save His people from their sins.' Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, 'Behold, a virgin shall be with child and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel' (which being interpreted is, 'God with us'). Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife, and knew her not until she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.

**Communion Verse:** Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest. (*Psalms 148:1*)

**Another:** Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous; praise is meet for the upright! (*Psalms 32:1*)  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

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### **Lambertsen translation:**

#### **Troparion of the Holy Fathers (Tone 2)**

Great are the accomplishments of faith! \* In the fountain of flame, as in refreshing water, \* the three holy youths exulted; \* and the prophet Daniel was shown to be a shepherd of lions, as of sheep. \* By their supplications, O Christ God, save our souls!

#### **Kontakion of the Holy Forefathers (Tone 6)**

O thrice-blessed ones \* who did not honour an image wrought by hands \* but were defended by the indescribable Essence, \* ye were glorified in your ordeal by fire; \* and standing in the midst of unbearable flame, \* ye called upon God, saying: \* Speed Thou and make haste to our aid, O Compassionate One, in that Thou art merciful; \* for what Thou willest, Thou canst do!

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## SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD: THE HOLY FATHERS (Tone 5)

**Note:** This Compilation is designed to give the worshipper the text of the service that is being sung in church so that he or she may attentively follow the service in church, or read it at home when it is not possible to get to church. These texts may not be further reproduced, beyond printing out a single copy for personal non-commercial use.

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This work is a compilation of four sources:

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The texts of the Octoechos are from *The Octoechos: The Hymns of the Cycle of the Eight Tones for Sundays and Weekdays*, translated from the Church Slavonic by the Reader Isaac Lambertsen, and published in 4 volumes by the St John of Kronstadt Press in 1999-2000.

The Menaion texts are from *The Menaion of the Orthodox Church*, Second Edition, translated from the Church Slavonic by the Reader Isaac Lambertsen, and published in 12 volumes by the St John of Kronstadt Press in 2003-2012.

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The translation used for Epistle and Gospel Readings is taken from *The Third Millennium Bible: New Authorized Version of the Holy Bible*, published by Third Millennium Publications, A division of Deuel Enterprises, Inc., of Gary, South Dakota. The Third Millennium Bible (TMB) is a 1998 minor update of the Authorised (King James) Version of the Bible. Unlike the New King James Version, it does not alter the language significantly from the 1611 version, retaining Jacobean grammar, but it does attempt to replace

some of the vocabulary which no longer would make sense to a modern reader.