

Menaion

December 24

Christmas Eve Day. The Great Hours

**SERVICE OF THE GREAT HOURS
FIRST HOUR**

PRIEST

Blessed is our God always, now and ever,
and to the ages of ages.

READER

Amen.

PRIEST

Glory to You, our God. Glory to You.

Heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit of Truth,
present in all places and filling all things,
treasury of good things and giver of life: come;
take Your abode in us; cleanse us of every
stain, and save our souls, O Good one.

READER

Trisagion Prayers.

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

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

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us.
Lord, forgive our sins. Master, pardon our
transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal our
infirmities for your name's sake.

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

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

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

PRIEST

For Thine is the Kingdom and the power
and the glory, of the Father and of the Son and
of the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the
ages of ages.

READER

Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (12)

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

Come, let us worship and bow down
before God our King.

Come, let us worship and bow down
before Christ God our King.

Come, let us worship and bow down
before Him, Christ our King and God.

Psalm 5.

Give ear to my words, O Lord, Hear my
cry. Give heed to the voice of my supplication,
my King and my God, for to You will I pray,
O Lord. In the morning You shall hear my
voice; in the morning I will stand before
You, and I will watch. For You are not a God
who wills lawlessness, nor shall the evildoer
dwell with You. The lawless shall not stand
before Your eyes; You hate all the workers
of lawlessness; You shall destroy all who
speak falsehood; the Lord abhors the man

of violence and deceit. But as for me, in the fullness of Your mercy I will come into Your house; in fear of You I will worship toward Your holy temple. Lead me, O Lord, in Your righteousness because of my enemies; make straight Your way before me. For there is no truth in their mouth; their heart is vain; their throat is an open grave; they deal deceptively with their tongues. Judge them, O God. Let them fall by their false accusations; cast them out in the multitude of their ungodliness; for they provoked You, O Lord. But let all who hope in You be glad; they will greatly rejoice forever, for You will dwell in them; and all who love Your name will boast in You. For You will bless the righteous; O Lord, You crowned us with the shield of Your goodwill.

[SAAS]

Psalm 44 (45).

My heart overflowed with a good word; I tell my works to the King; my tongue is the pen of a swift-writing scribe. You are more beautiful than the sons of men; grace was poured out on Your lips; therefore God blessed You forever. Gird Your sword upon Your thigh, O Mighty One, in Your splendor and Your beauty. And stretch Your bow, and grant prosperity, and reign because of truth, gentleness, and righteousness, and Your right hand shall guide You wondrously. Your arrows are sharp, O Mighty One (The peoples shall fall under You), in the heart of the King's enemies. Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; Your royal scepter is a scepter of uprightness. You loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions. Myrrh and stacte and

cassia pour forth from Your garments, from the ivory palaces from which they gladdened You. There are daughters of kings in Your honor; the queen stood at Your right hand in apparel interwoven with gold, and adorned and embroidered with various colors. Listen, O daughter, behold and incline your ear, and forget your people and your father's house; for the King desired your beauty, for He is your Lord. And the daughters of Tyre shall worship Him with gifts; the rich among the people shall entreat your favor. All her glory as the King's daughter is within, adorned and embroidered with golden tassels. The virgins behind her shall be brought to the King; her neighbors shall be brought to You; they shall be brought with gladness and rejoicing; they shall be led into the temple of the King. In place of your fathers, sons shall be born to you; You shall make them rulers over all the earth. They shall remember your name from generation to generation; therefore, peoples shall give thanks to you forever and unto ages of ages. [SAAS]

Psalm 45 (46).

God is our refuge and power; a help in afflictions that severely befall us. Therefore we will not fear when the earth is troubled, and when the mountains are removed into the hearts of the seas. Their waters roared and were troubled; the mountains were troubled by His might. The torrents of the river gladden the city of God; the Most High sanctified His tabernacle. God is in her midst; she shall not be shaken; God shall help her early in the morning. The nations were troubled; kingdoms fell; He uttered His voice; the earth shook. The Lord of hosts is with

us; the God of Jacob is our protector. Come, behold the works of the Lord, the wonders He wrought on the earth. When He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth, He will break the bow and shatter the weapon; and He will burn up the shields in fire. Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted in the earth. The Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our protector. [SAAS]

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory to You, O God. (3)

Lord, have mercy. (3)

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

Troparion.

As she carried in her womb * what she conceived without seed, * Mary went to Bethlehem * with elder Joseph to enroll, * for they were of the house and the lineage of David. * The time arrived for her * to give birth to her Child; * but then there was no place * in the inn for them. * Therefore the grotto served as a luxurious * royal palace for the Queen. * And Christ the Lord is born, to raise the image * which was formerly fallen.

Both now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Theotokion.

What shall we call you, O Lady full of grace? Heaven? For you gave rise to the Sun of righteousness. Paradise? For you blossomed the flower of incorruption. Virgin? For you

remained incorrupt. Pure Mother? For you held in your holy embrace a Son who is the God of all. Entreat Him to save our souls.

CHOIR

Idiomela.

Mode pl. 4.

Prepare, O Bethlehem. Let the manger make ready and the grotto anticipate. The truth has come and the shadow has passed away. Born of a Virgin, God has appeared to men, taking our form and deifying that which He assumed. Therefore Adam and Eve are renewed, and they cry out, "The good-pleasure of God has appeared on earth for the salvation of the human race." [SD]

Twice, with no verse. Then:

Verse: *God will come from Teman, the Holy One from the mount of shaded leafy trees.* [SAAS]

Mode 3.

Now is the prophesy nearing fulfillment. It mystically foretold, "And you, O Bethlehem in the land of Judah, are by no means the least among the rulers, as you make the grotto ready; for from you shall come forth for me a ruler of the Gentiles in the flesh, born of a virgin Maiden, Christ our God, who will shepherd His people, the new Israel." Let us all give Him glory. [SD]

Verse: *Lord, I have heard Your report and was afraid; I considered Your works and was greatly astonished.* [SAAS]

Repeat the same hymn. Then:

Glory. **Mode pl. 4.**

Thus did Joseph speak to the Virgin, "Mary, what is this I see in you? I cannot

understand it, and I am amazed, and my mind is struck with dismay. Therefore get out of my sight quickly. Mary, what is this I see in you? You have brought me shame and sorrow instead of honor and joy; and instead of praise, you have brought me reproach. I cannot bear to be rebuked by the people. When I received you from the priests at the Temple, you were an innocent girl, consecrated to the Lord. So what is this that I see in you now?" [SD]

Both now. *Repeat.*

THE PROPHECY

READER

Prokeimenon. Mode 4.

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

Verse: *Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance.* [SAAS]

The reading is from the Prophecy of Micah.

PRIEST

Wisdom. Let us be attentive.

READER

5:1-3

Thus says the Lord: "And you, O Bethlehem, House of Ephrathah, though you are fewest in number among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to me the One to be ruler of Israel. His goings forth were from the beginning, even from everlasting." Therefore He shall give them up until the appointed time for her to give birth, and then the remnant of their brothers will return to the sons of Israel. And He shall stand and see, and shepherd His flock in the

strength of the Lord, and they will dwell in the glory of the name of the Lord their God, for now they will be magnified unto the ends of the earth. [SAAS]

The Epistle

The reading is from Paul's Letter to the Hebrews.

PRIEST

Let us be attentive. Wisdom. Let us be attentive.

READER

1:1-12

In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature, upholding the universe by his word of power. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has obtained is more excellent than theirs. For to what angel did God ever say, "Thou art my Son, today I have begotten thee"? Or again, "I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son"? And again, when he brings the first-born into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." Of the angels he says, "Who makes his angels winds, and his servants flames of fire." But of the Son he says, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever, the righteous scepter is the scepter of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, thy God, has anointed thee with the oil of gladness beyond thy comrades." And, "Thou, Lord,

didst found the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of thy hands; they will perish, but thou remainest; they will all grow old like a garment, like a mantle thou wilt roll them up, and they will be changed. But thou art the same, and thy years will never end." [RSV]

PRIEST

Wisdom. Arise. Let us hear the Holy Gospel.

Peace be with all.

(And with your spirit.)

The Gospel

PRIEST

The reading is from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew. Let us be attentive.

(Glory to You, O Lord, glory to You.)

PRIEST

1:18-25

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit; and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel" (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the

angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife, but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called his name Jesus. [RSV]

(Glory to You, O Lord, glory to You.)

READER

Direct my steps according to Your teaching and let no lawlessness rule over me.

Ransom me from the slander of men, and I will keep Your commandments.

Make Your face shine upon Your servant and teach me Your ordinances.

Let my mouth be filled with Your praise, O Lord, that I may sing of Your glory and of Your magnificence all the day long. [SAAS]

Trisagion Prayers.

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

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

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, forgive our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for your name's sake.

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

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

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass

against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

PRIEST

For Thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

READER

Amen.

Kontakion.

On this day the Virgin Maid * goes to the grotto to give birth * to the pre-eternal Word * in an ineffable manner. * Dance for joy, all the inhabited earth, on hearing. * Glorify along with Angels and with the shepherds * Him who willed that He appear as * a newborn Child, * the pre-eternal God.

Lord, have mercy. (40)

O Christ our God, who at all times and at every hour, both in heaven and on earth, are worshipped and glorified, long suffering and plenteous in mercy and compassion; who love the just and show mercy to the sinners; who call all men to salvation through the promise of the blessings to come: Do you, the same Lord, receive also our supplications at this present time, and direct our lives according to your commandments. Sanctify our souls; purify our bodies; set our minds right; clear up our thoughts, and deliver us from every sorrow, evil and distress. Surround us with your holy Angels so that being guarded and guided by their presence, we may arrive at the unity of the faith and the knowledge of your ineffable glory; for blessed are you unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (3)

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

Greater in honor than the Cherubim, and in glory greater beyond compare than the Seraphim; you without corruption gave birth to God the Word, and are truly Theotokos. You do we magnify.

In the name of the Lord, Father, bless!

PRIEST

May God have compassion on us and bless us; may his face shine upon us and have mercy on us.

READER

Amen.

PRIEST

O Christ, the true light that enlightens and sanctifies every man who comes into the world, let the light of Your countenance shine on us, that in it we may behold the unapproachable light. And direct our steps to keep Your commandments, by the intercessions of Your all-immaculate Mother and all the saints. (*Amen.*)

THIRD HOUR

READER

Come, let us worship and bow down before God our King.

Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ God our King.

Come, let us worship and bow down before Him, Christ our King and God.

Psalm 66 (67).

May God be gracious to us, and bless us; may He cause His face to shine upon us, that we may know His way on the earth, Your salvation among all the Gentiles. Let the peoples give thanks to You, O God; let all the peoples praise You. Let the Gentiles be glad and greatly rejoice, for You shall judge the peoples in uprightness, and lead the Gentiles on the earth. Let the peoples give thanks to You, O God; let all the peoples praise You. The earth yielded her fruit; may God, our God, bless us. May God bless us, and let all the ends of the earth be in fear of Him. [SAAS]

Psalm 86 (87).

His foundations are in the holy mountains; the Lord loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things were said concerning you, O city of God. I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to those who know Me; and behold, foreigners, and the people of Tyre and Ethiopia, these were born there. A man will say, "Mother Zion," and a man was born in her; for the Most High Himself founded it. The Lord shall describe it in a written account of the peoples and of the rulers, of those who were born in her. How glad are all who have their dwelling in you. [SAAS]

Psalm 50 (51).

Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your great mercy; and according to the abundance of Your compassion, blot out my transgression. Wash me thoroughly from my lawlessness and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my lawlessness, and my sin is always before me. Against You only have I sinned

and done evil in Your sight; that You may be justified in Your words, and overcome when You are judged. For behold, I was conceived in transgressions, and in sins my mother bore me. Behold, You love truth; You showed me the unknown and secret things of Your wisdom. You shall sprinkle me with hyssop, and I will be cleansed; You shall wash me, and I will be made whiter than snow. You shall make me hear joy and gladness; my bones that were humbled shall greatly rejoice. Turn Your face from my sins, and blot out all my transgressions. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me with Your guiding Spirit. I will teach transgressors Your ways, and the ungodly shall turn back to You. Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall greatly rejoice in Your righteousness. O Lord, You shall open my lips, and my mouth will declare Your praise. For if You desired sacrifice, I would give it; You will not be pleased with whole burnt offerings. A sacrifice to God is a broken spirit, a broken and humbled heart God will not despise. Do good, O Lord, in Your good pleasure to Zion, and let the walls of Jerusalem be built; then You will be pleased with a sacrifice of righteousness, with offerings and whole burnt offerings; then shall they offer young bulls on Your altar. [SAAS]

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory to You,
O God. (3)

Lord, have mercy. (3)

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

Troparion.

As she carried in her womb * what she
conceived without seed, * Mary went to
Bethlehem * with elder Joseph to enroll, *
for they were of the house and the lineage
of David. * The time arrived for her * to give
birth to her Child; * but then there was no
place * in the inn for them. * Therefore the
grotto served as a luxurious * royal palace for
the Queen. * And Christ the Lord is born, to
raise the image * which was formerly fallen.

Both now and ever and to the ages of ages.
Amen.

Theotokion.

Theotokos, you are the true vine that
produced the fruit of life. Lady, we fervently
entreat you to intercede along with the
Apostles and all the saints, that our souls be
treated mercifully.

CHOIR

Idiomela.

Mode pl. 2.

This is our God; no other shall be
compared to Him, who was born of a Virgin,
and who lived among men. The only-begotten
Son is seen, as a mortal, lying in a spare
manger; and He, the Lord of glory, is wrapped
in swaddling clothes. A star signals the Magi,
to come and adore Him. And we, for our part,
sing our hymns: "O Holy Trinity, save our
souls!" [SD]

Twice, with no verse. Then:

Verse: *God will come from Teman, the Holy
One from the mount of shaded leafy trees.* [SAAS]

Mode pl. 4.

Before Your Nativity, O Lord, the
heavenly hosts trembled in amazement, as
they watched the mystery unfold. For You,
who adorned the sky with the stars, became a
little baby, in Your good pleasure. You, who
hold the whole world in Your hand, lay in a
manger, a trough meant for beasts. Such was
Your plan for our salvation, and thus was
Your compassion made known. O Christ, the
great mercy, glory to You! [SD]

Verse: *Lord, I have heard Your report and
was afraid; I considered Your works and was
greatly astonished.* [SAAS]

Repeat the same hymn. Then:

Glory. **Mode 3.**

Joseph, tell us, how is it that you bring
to Bethlehem the Maiden you received from
the Temple, now great with child? And he
replies, "I have studied the prophetic books,
after receiving a revelation from an Angel;
and I am convinced that Mary shall give birth
to God, in ways passed understanding. Magi
will come from the East, with precious gifts,
to adore Him." O Lord who took flesh for our
sake, glory to You! [SD]

Both now. *Repeat.*

THE PROPHECY

READER

Prokeimenon. Mode 4.

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given.

Verse: *The government will be upon His shoulder.* [SAAS]

The reading is from the Prophecy of Jeremiah.

PRIEST

Wisdom. Let us be attentive.

READER

Baruch 3:36-4:4

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

[SAAS]

The Epistle

The reading is from Paul's Letter to the Galatians.

PRIEST

Let us be attentive. Wisdom. Let us be attentive.

READER

3:23-29; 4:1-5

Brethren, before faith came, we were confined under the law, kept under restraint until faith should be revealed. So that the law was our custodian until Christ came, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a custodian; for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise. I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no better than a slave, though he is the owner of all the estate; but he is under guardians and trustees until the date set by the father. So with us; when we were children, we were slaves to the elemental spirits of the universe. But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. [RSV]

PRIEST

Wisdom. Arise. Let us hear the Holy Gospel.

Peace be with all.

(And with your spirit.)

The Gospel

PRIEST

The reading is from the Holy Gospel according to Luke. Let us be attentive.

(Glory to You, O Lord, glory to You.)

PRIEST

2:1-20

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled. This was the first enrollment, when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be enrolled, each to his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to be delivered. And she gave birth to her first born son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. And in that region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased!" When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." And they went

with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they saw it they made known the saying which had been told them concerning this child; and all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary kept all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. [RSV]

(Glory to You, O Lord, glory to You.)

READER

Blessed is the Lord from day to day; the God of our salvation will bring prosperity upon us; our God is the God Who saves us.

[SAAS]

Trisagion Prayers.

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

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

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, forgive our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for your name's sake.

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

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Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our

trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

PRIEST

For Thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

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Amen.

Kontakion.

On this day the Virgin Maid * goes to the grotto to give birth * to the pre-eternal Word * in an ineffable manner. * Dance for joy, all the inhabited earth, on hearing. * Glorify along with Angels and with the shepherds * Him who willed that He appear as * a newborn Child, * the pre-eternal God.

Lord, have mercy. (40)

O Christ our God, who at all times and at every hour, both in heaven and on earth, are worshipped and glorified, long suffering and plenteous in mercy and compassion; who love the just and show mercy to the sinners; who call all men to salvation through the promise of the blessings to come: Do you, the same Lord, receive also our supplications at this present time, and direct our lives according to your commandments. Sanctify our souls; purify our bodies; set our minds right; clear up our thoughts, and deliver us from every sorrow, evil and distress. Surround us with your holy Angels so that being guarded and guided by their presence, we may arrive at the unity of the faith and the knowledge of your

ineffable glory; for blessed are you unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (3)

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

Greater in honor than the Cherubim, and in glory greater beyond compare than the Seraphim; you without corruption gave birth to God the Word, and are truly Theotokos. You do we magnify.

In the name of the Lord, Father, bless!

PRIEST

May God have compassion on us and bless us; may his face shine upon us and have mercy on us.

READER

Amen.

PRIEST

O Master God, Father Almighty, only begotten Son, Lord Jesus Christ, and Holy Spirit: One Godhead, One Power, have mercy on me, a sinner, and in your knowing ways save me, your unworthy servant; for you are blessed unto the ages of ages. (*Amen.*)

SIXTH HOUR

READER

Come, let us worship and bow down before God our King.

Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ God our King.

Come, let us worship and bow down before Him, Christ our King and God.

Psalm 71 (72).

O God, give Your judgments to the King, and Your righteousness to the King's Son, that He may judge Your people in righteousness and Your poor with judgment. Let the mountains raise up peace for Your people and the hills in righteousness. He shall judge the poor of the people, and shall serve the sons of the poor; He shall humble the false accuser, and He shall continue as long as the sun and before the moon from generation to generation; and He shall come down like rain on the fleece, like raindrops falling on the earth. In His days, righteousness and abundance of peace shall flourish, until the moon is removed. And He shall rule from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the inhabited earth. The Ethiopians shall bow down before Him, and His enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and their islands will come bearing gifts; the kings of Arabia and Saba will bring presents. All the kings of the earth shall worship Him; all the Gentiles shall serve Him. For He rescued the poor from the hand of a strong man, and the needy, for whom there was no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy, and He shall save the souls of the needy; He shall redeem their souls from usury and injustice, and precious shall be their name in His sight. He shall live, and there shall be given Him from the gold of Arabia; they shall pray continually because of Him, all the day long shall they bless Him. He shall be a support on the earth upon the summits of the mountains; His fruit shall be exalted more than Lebanon, and they shall flourish from the city like the grass of the earth. Let His name be blessed unto the ages;

His name shall remain before the sun, and all the tribes of the earth shall be blessed in Him; all the Gentiles shall bless Him. Blessed is the Lord God, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things. And blessed is the name of His glory forever and unto ages of ages, and all the earth shall be filled with His glory. Amen! Amen! [SAAS]

Psalm 131 (132).

Remember David, O Lord, and all his meekness, how he swore to the Lord, how he vowed to the God of Jacob, "I shall not enter my dwelling, I shall not recline on my bed, I shall not close my eyes in sleep nor my eyelids for dozing, nor give any rest to my temples, until I find a place for the Lord, a tabernacle for the God of Jacob." Behold, we heard of it in Ephrathah; we found it in the plains of the wood; let us enter into His tabernacles; let us worship at the place where His feet stood. Arise, O Lord, into Your rest, You and the ark of Your holiness; Your priests shall clothe themselves in righteousness; Your saints shall greatly rejoice. For Your servant David's sake, do not turn away from the face of Your anointed. The Lord swore to David this truth, and He shall not reject it, "I shall set upon your throne one from the fruit of your loins. If your sons keep My covenant and these testimonies I shall teach them, then their sons shall sit upon your throne forever." For the Lord has chosen Zion; He chose her for His dwelling: "This is My place of rest unto ages of ages; here I shall dwell, for I have chosen her. Blessing, I shall bless her provision; I shall satisfy her poor with bread; and I shall clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints shall rejoice exceedingly with great joy; there I shall

cause to spring up a horn for David; there I prepared a lamp for my anointed; his enemies I shall clothe with shame; upon him shall My sanctification flourish." [SAAS]

Psalm 90 (91).

He who dwells in the help of the Most High shall lodge in the shelter of the God of heaven. He shall say to the Lord, "You are my protector and my refuge, my God; I will hope in Him; for He shall free me from the snare of the hunters, and from every troubling word." He shall overshadow you with His shoulders, and under His wings you shall hope; His truth shall encircle you with a shield. You shall not be frightened by fear at night, nor from an arrow that flies by day, nor by a thing moving in darkness, nor by mishap and a demon of noonday. A thousand shall fall at your side and ten thousand at your right hand, yet it shall not come near you; but you shall observe with your eyes, and you shall see the reward of sinners. For You, O Lord, are my hope; You made the Most High your refuge. Evils shall not come to you, and a scourge shall not draw near your dwelling; for He shall command His angels concerning you, to keep you in all your ways; in their hands they shall bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone; You shall tread upon the asp and the basilisk, and you shall trample the lion and the dragon. "For he hoped in Me, and I will deliver him; I will shelter him, because he knew My name. He shall call upon Me, and I will hear him; I am with him in affliction, and I will deliver and glorify him. With length of days I will satisfy him, and show him My salvation." [SAAS]

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory to You, O God. (3)

Lord, have mercy. (3)

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

Troparion.

As she carried in her womb * what she conceived without seed, * Mary went to Bethlehem * with elder Joseph to enroll, * for they were of the house and the lineage of David. * The time arrived for her * to give birth to her Child; * but then there was no place * in the inn for them. * Therefore the grotto served as a luxurious * royal palace for the Queen. * And Christ the Lord is born, to raise the image * which was formerly fallen.

Both now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Theotokion.

Since we may not presume to speak because of our many sins, will you beseech your Son, O Virgin Theotokos. For the request of a mother can do much to pacify the Master. Do not despise the prayers of us sinners, all-noble Lady. He is merciful and able to save us; after all, He accepted to suffer for our sake.

CHOIR

Idiomela.

Mode 1.

Come, O believers, let us be divinely uplifted, and we shall see God's condescension to us from on high manifest in Bethlehem. Having purified our minds, let

us bring the gift of a virtuous life instead of frankincense, as we faithfully deck the halls of Christmas, with the treasures we have in our souls. And let us cry aloud and sing, "Glory in the highest to God in Trinity! Through You divine good pleasure was revealed among men, to release Adam from the ancestral curse, in Your love for humanity." [SD]

Twice, with no verse. Then:

Verse: *God will come from Teman, the Holy One from the mount of shaded leafy trees.* [SAAS]

Mode 4.

Hear, O heavens, and listen, O earth. Let the foundations be shaken, and let trembling seize the netherworld. For God the Creator has entered the physical world; He who created creation with His mighty hand is a fetus of His own creature. O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments, how unsearchable His ways! [SD]

Verse: *Lord, I have heard Your report and was afraid; I considered Your works and was greatly astonished.* [SAAS]

Repeat the same hymn. Then:

Glory. **Mode pl. 1.**

Come, O Christ-bearing people, let us see a miracle that amazes and perplexes every mind, and in pious adoration let us sing praises with faith. Today, a pregnant Maiden is coming to Bethlehem to give birth to the Lord; and choirs of Angels go before her. When Joseph, her betrothed, saw this, he cried out, "What is this strange mystery I see in you,

O Virgin? And how will you, the unmated heifer, give birth?" [SD]

Both now. *Repeat.*

THE PROPHECY

READER

Prokeimenon. Mode pl. 4.

I have begotten You from the womb before the morning star.

Verse: *The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand."* [SAAS]

The reading is from the Prophecy of Isaiah.

PRIEST

Wisdom. Let us be attentive.

READER

7:10-16b; 8:1-4, 8b-10

Moreover the Lord added this to Ahaz, saying, "Ask a sign for yourself from the Lord your God; ask it either in the depth or in the height above." But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, nor will I tempt the Lord." Then Isaiah said, "Hear now, O house of David, is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will you weary the Lord also? Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and you shall call His name Immanuel. Butter and honey He shall eat before He knows to prefer evil or choose the good, for before the Child knows good or evil, He refuses the evil to choose the good." Moreover the Lord said to me, "Take for yourself a large new book, and write on it with a man's pen concerning making a swift plunder of spoils, for it is near at hand. Then make witnesses for Me of faithful men: Uriah and Zechariah,

the son of Berechiah." Then I went to the prophetess, and she conceived and bore a son, and the Lord said to me, "Call his name Quickly Despoil, Swiftly Plunder; for before the child shall know how to call for his father and mother, one shall take the power of Damascus and the spoils of Samaria in the presence of the king of Assyria. O God with us. Know this, O Gentiles, and be defeated. Give ear, all you to the very ends of the earth. Be defeated although you are strong, for even if you should be strong again, you will be defeated again. Then too, whatever counsel you take, the Lord will scatter it abroad; and whatever word you shall speak, it will not continue among you, for the Lord God is with us." [SAAS]

The Epistle

The reading is from Paul's Letter to the Hebrews.

PRIEST

Let us be attentive. Wisdom. Let us be attentive.

READER

1:10-14; 2:1-3

"In the beginning, Thou, Lord, didst found the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of thy hands; they will perish, but thou remainest; they will all grow old like a garment, like a mantle thou wilt roll them up, and they will be changed. But thou art the same, and thy years will never end." But to what angel has he ever said, "Sit at my right hand, till I make thy enemies a stool for thy feet?" Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to serve, for the sake of those who are to obtain salvation? Therefore we must pay closer attention to what we have

heard, lest we drift away from it. For if the message declared by angels was valid and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard him. [RSV]

PRIEST

Wisdom. Arise. Let us hear the Holy Gospel.

Peace be with all.

(And with your spirit.)

The Gospel

PRIEST

The reading is from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew. Let us be attentive.

(Glory to You, O Lord, glory to You.)

PRIEST

2:1-12

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it is written by the prophet: 'And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will govern my people Israel.'" Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star appeared; and he

sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." When they had heard the king they went their way; and lo the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy; and going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way. ^[RSV]

(Glory to You, O Lord, glory to You.)

READER

Let Your mercies quickly overtake us, for we have become very poor. Help us, O God our savior; because of the glory of Your name, O Lord, save us, and be merciful to our sins because of Your name. ^[SAAS]

Trisagion Prayers.

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

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

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, forgive our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for your name's sake.

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

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

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

PRIEST

For Thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

READER

Amen.

Kontakion.

On this day the Virgin Maid * goes to the grotto to give birth * to the pre-eternal Word * in an ineffable manner. * Dance for joy, all the inhabited earth, on hearing. * Glorify along with Angels and with the shepherds * Him who willed that He appear as * a newborn Child, * the pre-eternal God.

Lord, have mercy. (40)

O Christ our God, who at all times and at every hour, both in heaven and on earth, are worshipped and glorified, long suffering and plenteous in mercy and compassion; who love the just and show mercy to the sinners; who call all men to salvation through the promise of the blessings to come: Do you, the same Lord, receive also our supplications at this present time, and direct our lives according to your commandments. Sanctify our souls;

purify our bodies; set our minds right; clear up our thoughts, and deliver us from every sorrow, evil and distress. Surround us with your holy Angels so that being guarded and guided by their presence, we may arrive at the unity of the faith and the knowledge of your ineffable glory; for blessed are you unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (3)

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

Greater in honor than the Cherubim, and in glory greater beyond compare than the Seraphim; you without corruption gave birth to God the Word, and are truly Theotokos. You do we magnify.

In the name of the Lord, Father, bless!

PRIEST

May God have compassion on us and bless us; may his face shine upon us and have mercy on us.

READER

Amen.

PRIEST

God and Lord of hosts and Maker of all creation, in Your unfathomable compassion and mercy You sent down Your Only-Begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, for the salvation of the human race; and by His precious Cross You tore up the record of our sins, and triumphed over the principalities and powers of darkness. O Lord and Lover of mankind, accept the thanksgiving and fervent prayers even of us sinners. Deliver us from every dark and destructive transgression and

from all the visible and invisible enemies that seek to harm us. Nail our flesh with the fear of You, and do not incline our hearts to evil words or thoughts; but rather prick our souls with love for You, so that always looking to You, and guided by Your light, and gazing on You, the eternal and ineffable Light, we may send up unceasing praise and thanksgiving to You, the Father without beginning, and Your Only-Begotten Son, and Your all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and forever and to ages of ages. (*Amen.*)

NINTH HOUR

READER

Come, let us worship and bow down before God our King.

Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ God our King.

Come, let us worship and bow down before Him, Christ our King and God.

Psalms 109 (110)

The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies the footstool of Your feet." The Lord shall send forth the rod of Your power from Zion, and rule in the midst of Your enemies. With You is the beginning in the day of Your power, in the brightness of Your saints; "I have begotten You from the womb before the morning star." The Lord swore and will not repent, "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek." The Lord at Your right hand crushed kings in the day of His wrath; He shall judge among the nations; He shall fill them with dead bodies; He shall crush the heads of many on earth. He shall drink from

the brook on the way; therefore, He shall raise His head high. [SAAS]

Psalm 110 (111).

I will give thanks to You, O Lord, with my whole heart, in the council of the upright and in the assembly. Great are the works of the Lord, sought out in all things with regard to His will; thanksgiving and majesty are His work, and His righteousness continues unto ages of ages. He made a remembrance of His wonders; the Lord is merciful and compassionate; He gave food to those who fear Him; He shall remember His covenant forever. He declared the strength of His works to His people, so as to give them the inheritance of the nations. The works of His hands are truth and judgment; faithful are all His commandments, established unto ages of ages, made in truth and uprightness. He sent redemption to His people; He commanded His covenant forever; holy and fearful is His name. The beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord; a good understanding is in all who practice it. His praise continues unto ages of ages. [SAAS]

Psalm 85 (86).

Incline Your ear, O Lord, and hear me, for I am poor and needy. Guard my soul, for I am holy; O my God, save Your servant, who hopes in You. Have mercy on me, O Lord, for all the day long I will cry to You. Gladden the soul of Your servant, O Lord, for to You, O Lord, I lift up my soul. For You, O Lord, are kind and good, and very merciful to all who call upon You. Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer and heed the voice of my supplication. In the day of my affliction I cried to You, for

You heard me. There is none like You among the gods, O Lord, and there are no works like Your works. All the Gentiles You made shall come and worship before You, O Lord, and they shall glorify Your name; for You are great, doing wonders; You alone are the great God. Lead me in Your way, O Lord, and I will walk in Your truth; gladden my heart so as to fear Your name. I will give thanks to You, O Lord my God, with my whole heart, and I shall glorify Your name forever; for great is Your mercy to me, and You rescued my soul from the lowest Hades. O God, lawless men rose up against me, and a gathering of strong men sought my soul; and they did not set You before them. But You, O Lord, are compassionate and merciful, longsuffering and very merciful and truthful. Look upon me and have mercy; give Your strength to Your servant, and save the son of Your handmaid. Work a sign in my midst for good, and let those who hate me see it and be disgraced; for You, O Lord, helped me and comforted me.

[SAAS]

Work a sign in my midst for good, and let those who hate me see it and be disgraced; for You, O Lord, helped me and comforted me.

[SAAS]

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

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory to You, O God. (3)

Lord, have mercy. (3)

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

Troparion.

As she carried in her womb * what she conceived without seed, * Mary went to Bethlehem * with elder Joseph to enroll, * for they were of the house and the lineage of David. * The time arrived for her * to give birth to her Child; * but then there was no place * in the inn for them. * Therefore the grotto served as a luxurious * royal palace for the Queen. * And Christ the Lord is born, to raise the image * which was formerly fallen.

Both now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Theotokion.

Born of a Virgin, O Good One who also endured crucifixion for our sake, who by death took the spoils of death as plunder and showed resurrection, being God, O despise not the ones that You formed with Your own hand. Demonstrate Your love for man, O Lord of mercy, and accept Your Mother, the Theotokos, who intercedes on our behalf, O Savior, and save us a despairing people.

CHOIR

Idiomela.

Grave Mode.

Amazed was Herod the king, when he saw the piety of the Magi. And overcome by anger, he calculated the number of years. Then mothers became childless; and the boys, like unripe fruit, were bitterly harvested. Breasts went dry; they ceased producing milk. Great was the calamity. So now, all we faithful, piously assembled, come let us adore the Nativity of Christ. [SD]

Twice, with no verse. Then:

Verse: *God will come from Teman, the Holy One from the mount of shaded leafy trees.* [SAAS]

Mode 2.

O Virgin Mary, when Joseph was racked with sadness, on the way to Bethlehem, you said to him, "Why are you miserable and troubled, seeing me pregnant? Are you completely ignorant of the tremendous mystery unfolding in me? Well then, put away all your fears, and understand the extraordinary wonder. God, in His mercy, has come down to earth, and He is now in my womb, and He has taken flesh. You will see Him born of me, as He wills; and you will be filled with joy; and you will worship Him, as your Creator, the One whom Angels unceasingly extol and glorify, as they do the Father and the Holy Spirit." [SD]

Verse: *Lord, I have heard Your report and was afraid; I considered Your works and was greatly astonished.* [SAAS]

Repeat the same hymn. Then:

Glory. Both now. **Mode pl. 2.**

Note that the following Idiomelon ("Today, He who holds...") is first solemnly intoned in a loud voice by the precentor in the middle of the Church. Then it sung melodically by the two Choirs.

CHANTER/READER

Today, He who holds the whole world in His hand is born from a Virgin. (3) He who is impalpable in essence is wrapped in swaddling clothes as a mortal. God, who in the beginning established the heavens of old, is lying in a manger as a newborn babe. He who rained down manna for the people in the wilderness is nursed by His mother. He who is the Bridegroom of the Church is

summoning the Magi. And He is accepting their gifts, now as the Son of the Virgin. "We adore Your Nativity, O Christ. We adore Your Nativity, O Christ. We adore Your Nativity, O Christ. Also show us Your divine Epiphany."

[SD]

CHOIR

Today, He who holds the whole world in His hand is born from a Virgin. (3) [SD]

He who is impalpable in essence is wrapped in swaddling clothes as a mortal. [SD]

God, who in the beginning established the heavens of old, is lying in a manger as a newborn babe. [SD]

He who rained down manna for the people in the wilderness is nursed by His mother. [SD]

He who is the Bridegroom of the Church is summoning the Magi. [SD]

And He is accepting their gifts, now as the Son of the Virgin. [SD]

We adore Your Nativity, O Christ. (2) [SD]

We adore Your Nativity, O Christ. Also show us Your divine Epiphany. [SD]

THE PROPHECY

READER

Prokeimenon. Mode 4.

A man will say, "Mother Zion," and a man was born in her.

Verse: *His foundations are in the holy mountains.* [SAAS]

The reading is from the Prophecy of Isaiah.

PRIEST

Wisdom. Let us be attentive.

READER

9:5-6

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

The Epistle

The reading is from Paul's Letter to the Hebrews.

PRIEST

Let us be attentive. Wisdom. Let us be attentive.

READER

2:11-18

Brethren, he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified have all one origin. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, "I will proclaim thy name to my brethren, in the midst of the congregation I will praise thee." And again, "I will put my trust in him." And again, "Here am I, and the children God has given me." Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage. For surely

it is not with angels that he is concerned but with the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people. For because he himself has suffered and been tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted. ^[RSV]

PRIEST

Wisdom. Arise. Let us hear the Holy Gospel.

Peace be with all.

(And with your spirit.)

The Gospel

PRIEST

The reading is from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew. Let us be attentive.

(Glory to You, O Lord, glory to You.)

PRIEST

2:13-23

When the wise men departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt have I called my son." Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, was in a furious rage, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time

which he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: "A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they were no more." But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." And he rose and took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaos reigned over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, "He shall be called a Nazarene." ^[RSV]

(Glory to You, O Lord, glory to You.)

READER

For Your name's sake, do not hand us over to the end, and do not reject Your covenant. Do not withdraw Your mercy from us for the sake of Abraham, who is loved by You, and for the sake of Isaac, Your servant, and of Israel, Your holy one. ^[SAAS]

Trisagion Prayers.

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

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

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, forgive our sins. Master, pardon our

transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for your name's sake.

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

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

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

PRIEST

For Thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

READER

Amen.

Kontakion.

On this day the Virgin Maid * goes to the grotto to give birth * to the pre-eternal Word * in an ineffable manner. * Dance for joy, all the inhabited earth, on hearing. * Glorify along with Angels and with the shepherds * Him who willed that He appear as * a newborn Child, * the pre-eternal God.

Lord, have mercy. (40)

O Christ our God, who at all times and at every hour, both in heaven and on earth, are worshipped and glorified, long suffering and plenteous in mercy and compassion; who love the just and show mercy to the sinners; who call all men to salvation through the promise

of the blessings to come: Do you, the same Lord, receive also our supplications at this present time, and direct our lives according to your commandments. Sanctify our souls; purify our bodies; set our minds right; clear up our thoughts, and deliver us from every sorrow, evil and distress. Surround us with your holy Angels so that being guarded and guided by their presence, we may arrive at the unity of the faith and the knowledge of your ineffable glory; for blessed are you unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (3)

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

Greater in honor than the Cherubim, and in glory greater beyond compare than the Seraphim; you without corruption gave birth to God the Word, and are truly Theotokos. You do we magnify.

In the name of the Lord, Father, bless!

PRIEST

May God have compassion on us and bless us; may his face shine upon us and have mercy on us.

READER

Amen.

PRIEST

O Master, Lord Jesus Christ our God, who are long-suffering in the face of our transgressions, and have led us to the present hour, in which, as You hung upon the life-giving tree, You made a way into Paradise for the penitent robber, and destroyed death by death: Cleans us, Your humble, sinful and

unworthy servants. For we have sinned and transgressed and are not worthy to lift up our eyes and look at the height of heaven, for we have abandoned the path of righteousness and followed the desires of our hearts. So we implore Your incomparable goodness: Spare us, O Lord, according to the abundance of Your mercy, and save us for Your holy name's sake, for our days have passed in vanity. Rescue us from the hand of the adversary and forgive our sins, and mortify our mind set on the flesh; so that we may put off the old man be clothed with the new, and live for You, our Master and Benefactor. And thus may we follow Your commandments, and arrive at the eternal rest, where the dwelling is of all those who rejoice. For You are the true joy and exultation of those who love You, Christ our God, and we send up glory to You and Your unoriginate Father and Your all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and forever and to ages of ages. (*Amen.*)

Glory. Both now. Lord, have mercy. (3) Father, bless!

PRIEST

May Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His all-pure and all-immaculate holy Mother, the power of the precious and life-giving Cross, the protection of the honorable, bodiless powers of heaven, the supplications of the honorable, glorious prophet and forerunner John the Baptist, of the holy, glorious, and praiseworthy apostles, of the holy, glorious, and triumphant martyrs, of our righteous and God-bearing fathers, (*local patron saint*); of the holy and righteous ancestors of God Joachim and Anna, and of all the saints, have mercy on us and save us, for He is good and loves mankind.

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

(Amen.)