

GREAT VESPERS ON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2020
TONE 4; PROTO-MARTYR STEPHEN THE ARCHDEACON &
SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST

COMMEMORATION OF JOSEPH THE BETROTHED, DAVID THE PROPHET AND KING,
AND JAMES THE BROTHER OF THE LORD

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

Choir: Amen.

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

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

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

THE PSALM OF INTRODUCTION—PSALM 103

Reader: Bless the Lord, O my soul; O Lord my God, Thou hast been magnified exceedingly. Confession and majesty hast Thou put on, Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment, Who stretchest out the heaven as it were a curtain; Who supporteth His chambers in the waters, Who appointeth the clouds for His ascent, Who walketh upon the wings of the winds, Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire.

Who establisheth the earth in the sureness thereof; it shall not be turned back forever and ever. The abyss like a garment is His mantle; upon the mountains shall the waters stand. At Thy rebuke they will flee, at the voice of Thy thunder shall they be afraid.

The mountains rise up and the plains sink down, unto the place where Thou hast established them. Thou appointedst a bound that they shall not pass, neither return to cover the earth. He sendeth forth springs in the valleys; between the mountains will the waters run. They shall give drink to all the beasts of the field; the wild asses will wait to quench their thirst. Beside them will the birds of the heaven lodge, from the midst of the rocks will they give voice.

He watereth the mountains from His chambers; the earth shall be satisfied with the fruit of Thy works. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men, to bring forth bread out of the earth; and wine maketh glad the heart of man. To make his face cheerful with oil; and bread strengtheneth man's heart.

The trees of the plain shall be satisfied, the cedars of Lebanon, which Thou hast planted. There will the sparrows make their nests; the house of the heron is chief among them. The high mountains are a refuge for the harts, and so is the rock for the hares.

He hath made the moon for seasons; the sun knoweth his going down. Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night, wherein all the beasts of the forest will go abroad; young lions roaring after their prey, and seeking their food from God. The sun ariseth, and they are gathered together, and they lay them down in their dens. Man shall go forth unto his work, and to his labor until the evening. How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast Thou made them all.

The earth is filled with Thy creation. So is this great and spacious sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, small living creatures with the great. There go the ships; there this leviathan, whom Thou hast made to play therein. All things wait on Thee, to give them their food in due season; when Thou givest it them, they will gather it. When Thou openest Thy hand, all things shall be filled with goodness; when Thou turnest away Thy face, they shall be troubled. Thou wilt take their spirit, and they shall cease; and unto their dust shall they return. Thou wilt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created; and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.

Let the glory of the Lord be unto the ages; the Lord will rejoice in His works. Who looketh on the earth and maketh it tremble, Who toucheth the mountains and they smoke. I will sing unto the Lord throughout my life, I will chant to my God for as long as I have my being.

May my words be sweet unto Him; I will rejoice in the Lord. O that sinners would cease from the earth, and they that work iniquity, that they should be no more. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

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

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

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. (THRICE)
O our God and our Hope, glory to Thee!

THE GREAT LITANY

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

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

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

Choir: 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 men, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For this Holy House and those who with faith, reverence, and fear of God, enter therein, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For our father and Metropolitan N., (our Archbishop N. or Bishop N.), the honorable presbytery, the diaconate in Christ, and all the clergy and people, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For Metropolitan Paul and Archbishop John and their quick release from captivity and safe return, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the President, civil authorities, and Armed Forces, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For this city and every city and countryside and the faithful who dwell therein, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

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

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

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

Choir: Lord, have mercy.
Deacon: For our deliverance from all tribulation, wrath, danger, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.
Choir: Lord, have mercy.
Deacon: Help us; save us; have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.
Choir: Lord, have mercy.
Deacon: Calling to remembrance our all-holy, immaculate, most blessed and glorious Lady the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the Saints: let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.
Choir: To Thee, O Lord.
Priest: For unto Thee are due all glory, honor, and worship: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; now and ever and unto ages of ages.
Choir: Amen.

“Blessed is the man” and verses

Little Litany

Deacon: Again and again in peace, let us pray to the Lord.
Choir: Lord, have mercy.
Deacon: Help us; save us; have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.
Choir: Lord, have mercy.
Deacon: Calling to remembrance our all-holy, immaculate, most blessed and glorious Lady the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the Saints: let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.
Choir: To Thee, O Lord.
Priest: For Thine is the might and the kingdom and the glory of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; now and ever and unto ages of ages.
Choir: Amen.

“O LORD I HAVE CRIED” IN TONE FOUR

Choir: O Lord, I have cried out unto Thee, hear Thou me; hear Thou me, O Lord. O Lord, I have cried out unto Thee, hear Thou me. Give ear to the voice of my supplication when I cry out unto Thee: hear Thou me, O Lord.
Choir: Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as the incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice; hear Thou me, O Lord.

- + Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and a protecting door round about my lips.
- + Incline not my heart to evil words, to make excuses in sins.
- + With men that work iniquity; and I will not communicate with the choicest of them.
- + The just man shall correct me in mercy and shall reprove me; but let not the oil of the sinner anoint my head.
- + For my prayer also shall still be against the things with which they are well pleased; their judges falling upon the rock have been swallowed up.

- + They shall hear my words, for they are sweet; as when the thickness of the earth is broken upon the ground, their bones are scattered by the side of hell.
- + But to Thee, O Lord, Lord, are mine eyes; in Thee have I put my trust, take not away my soul.
- + Keep me from the snare which they have laid for me, and the traps of the workers of iniquity.
- + Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst I alone escape.
- + I cried unto the Lord with my voice, with my voice unto the Lord, did I make my supplication.
- + I poured out my supplication before Him; I showed before Him my trouble.
- + When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then Thou knewest my path.
- + In the way wherein I walked have they secretly laid a snare for me.
- + I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me.
- + Refuge failed me; no one cared for my soul.
- + I cried unto Thee, O Lord; I said: Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.
- + Attend unto my cry, for I am brought very low.
- + Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are stronger than I.

For the Resurrection in Tone Four

Verse 10. Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise Thy Name.

We worship untiringly Thy quickening Cross, O Christ God, and glorify Thy third-day Resurrection; for by it, O Almighty, Thou hast renewed the corrupt nature of mankind, and made plain to us the ascent to heaven; for Thou alone art good and the Lover of mankind.

Verse 9. The righteous shall wait for me until Thou recompense me.

When Thou was willingly nailed upon the Cross, O Savior, Thou didst solve the problem caused by the tree of sin. And when Thou didst descend into Hades, Thou didst break the bonds of death, since Thou art a mighty God. Wherefore, we worship Thy Resurrection from the dead, shouting with joy, O Almighty Lord, glory to Thee.

Verse 8. Out of the depths have I cried to Thee, O Lord, Lord hear my voice.

Thou didst demolish by Thy Death, O Lord, the gates of Hades; Thou didst dissolve the realm of death; and didst free the human race from corruption, granting the world life and incorruptibility and Great Mercy.

Verse 7. Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

Come, ye nations, let us praise the third-day Resurrection of the Savior, by which we were delivered from the unbreakable bonds of Hades, and by which we have all received life and incorruption, crying, O Thou Who wast crucified, buried, and Who didst rise, save us by Thy Resurrection, O Thou only Lover of mankind.

For the Sunday after the Nativity in Tone One (Thou art the joy**)**

Verse 6. If Thou, O Lord, should mark iniquities, Lord, who shall stand? For with Thee there is forgiveness.

Let us all honor the forefather of the Most High God, * even the great King David, for from him there is come forth * a rod, even the Virgin, and of her in truth * Christ the Flower is risen up, * Who from corruption hath rescued Adam and Eve, * in His mercy forming them anew.

Verse 5. Because of Thy Name have I waited for Thee, O Lord; my soul hath waited upon Thy word, my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

Joseph, the Virgin's betrothed, clearly saw in deep old age * the things the Prophets foretold now fulfilled manifestly, * when a strange betrothal fell unto his lot, * and when Angels instructed him, * as they cried: Glory to God, for upon the earth * He hath given peace to all mankind.

Verse 4. From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch let Israel trust in the Lord.

Let us all honor the Brother of God with songs and hymns, * who was a worthy hierarch, and with venerable courage * shone in holy martyrdom; now by his prayers, * O Lord Jesus, our only God, * Thou Who was swaddled within a manger and cave, * save all them that sing Thy praise with hymns.

For St. Stephen in Tone Four (As one valiant**)**

Verse 3. For with the Lord there is mercy and with Him is abundant redemption, and He will deliver Israel from all his iniquities.

Since thy mind had been made to shine * with the grace of the Comforter, * thou wast seen to be as an Angel outwardly; * for through thy body, O Stephen, was thine inward light shed abroad, * which made plain for all to see * that most fair brightness of thy soul, * through which thou didst find * the divine light of vision when the Heavens opened wondrously before thee, * thou boast and first-fruit of martyred Saints.

Verse 2. Praise the Lord, all nations; praise Him, all people.

The thick showers of stones became * lofty ladders and steps to thee, * for ascent to Heaven; and mounting thereupon, * thou sawest standing at God the Father's right hand the Lord of all * with His quickening right hand * holding out unto thee the crown * for which thou art named. * Now, O Stephen, thou standest in His presence as a victor in the contest * and as the athletes' most lofty peak.

Verse 1. For His mercy is great toward us, and the truth of the Lord endureth forever.

Flashing brightly with wondrous signs, * and with doctrines and miracles, * thou didst quell the council of the iniquitous; * and as they stoned thee to death, thou madest prayer for thy murderers, * that the Lord forgive their sin; * and in this, thou didst imitate * Christ the Savior's words; * then, O Stephen, didst thou commit thine honorable and truly sacred spirit * into His hands and didst fall asleep.

DOXASTICON FOR THE SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY IN TONE SIX

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

Let us celebrate the memory of David the Prophet-king of true worship, and with him James the Apostle, the first of Bishops; so that, being saved from error by their teachings, we may glorify Christ Who shone forth incarnate from the Virgin to save our souls.

THEOTOKION FOR THE RESURRECTION IN TONE FOUR

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

David the Prophet who became through thee, O Theotokos, the grandparent of God, before time sang of thee in praise, and shouted to Him who worked wonders through thee, saying, The queen did rise on Thy right; for God hath shown thee to be a Mother bringing forth life, in that He was willing to appear incarnate from thee without father, renewing the creation of His likeness, corrupt with suffering, in order to find the sheep lost in the hills, and carry it on His shoulders, and offer it to the Father, and add it, through His will, to the heavenly hosts, and to save the whole world; for He is the reigning Christ, Possessor of rich and Great Mercy.

THE HOLY ENTRANCE

(After the choir has finished, the following is said ALOUD.)

Deacon: Wisdom! Let us attend!

O GLADSOME LIGHT

Choir: O gladsome Light of the holy glory of the immortal, heavenly, holy and blessed Father: O Jesus Christ. Lo now that we have come to the setting of the sun, as we behold the evening light, we hymn Thee: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God. Meet it is for Thee at all times to be magnified by joyous voices, O Son of God and Giver of life. Wherefore the whole world doth glorify Thee.

SATURDAY PROKEIMENON IN TONE SIX

Deacon: The Evening Prokeimenon is in the sixth tone!

Choir: The Lord is King and hath clothed Himself with majesty. (ONCE)

- Verse 1.* The Lord is robed; He is girded with strength. (*Refrain*)
Verse 2. For He has established the world so that it shall never be moved. (*Refrain*)
Verse 3. Holiness befits Thy house, O Lord, forevermore. (*Refrain*)

THE NEW TESTAMENT READINGS

The First Passage

- Deacon: Wisdom!
Reader: The Reading from the Acts of the Apostles (6:1-7)
Deacon: Let us attend!

Reader: In those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Hellenists against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. Then the Twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said: It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men attested to, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this need. But we will persevere in prayer, and in the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicholas an Antiochian proselyte; whom they set before the Apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly, and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

The Second Passage

- Deacon: Wisdom!
Reader: The Reading from the Acts of the Apostles (6:8-15)
Deacon: Let us attend!

Reader: Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people. Then there arose certain of the synagogue which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen. And they were not able to withstand the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake. Then they instigated men, who said: We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and God. And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and caught him, and brought him to the council, and set up false witnesses, who said: This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the Law; for we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered unto us. And all that sat in the council, and looked steadfastly upon him, saw his face as it had been the face of an Angel.

The Third Passage

- Deacon: Wisdom!
Reader: The Reading from the Acts of the Apostles (7:1-5, 47-60)
Deacon: Let us attend!

Reader: Then said the high priest, Are these things so? And Stephen said: Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken. The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Harran, and said unto him: Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee. Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Harran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell. And He gave him no inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on. But Solomon built Him a house. Howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as the Prophet said: Heaven is My

throne, and earth is the footstool of My feet: what house will you build Me? said the Lord: or what is the place of My rest? Hath not My hand made all these things? You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, you do always resist the Holy Spirit: as your fathers did. Which of the Prophets have not your fathers persecuted? And they have slain them which foretold of the coming of the Just One; of Whom you are now become the betrayers and murderers; who have received the law by the disposition of Angels, and have not kept it. When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth. But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up steadfastly into Heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, and said: Behold, I see the Heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God. Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. And they stoned Stephen, who was calling upon God, and saying: Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he knelt down, and cried with a loud voice: Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

THE LITANY OF FERVENT SUPPLICATION

- Deacon: Let us say with our whole soul and with our whole mind, let us say.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon: O Lord Almighty, the God of our Fathers, we pray Thee, hear and have mercy.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon: Have mercy on us, O God, according to Thy great mercy, we pray Thee, hear us and have mercy.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)
- Deacon: Again we pray for all pious and Orthodox Christians.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)
- Deacon: Again we pray for our father and Metropolitan N. and our Bishop N.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)
- Deacon: Again we pray for our brethren: the priests, hieromonks, deacons, hierodeacons, and monastics, and all our brotherhood in Christ.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)
- Deacon: Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation and visitation and pardon and remission of sins for (the servants of God, [Names], and) all Orthodox Christians of true worship, who live and dwell in this community.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)
- Deacon: Again we pray for the blessed and ever-memorable founders of this holy church and (for the departed servants of God, [Names], and) all our fathers and brethren, the Orthodox departed this life before us, who here and in all the world lie asleep in the Lord.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)
- Deacon: Again we pray for those who bear fruit and do good works in this holy and all-venerable temple, those who serve and those who sing, and for all the people here present, who await Thy great and rich mercy.
- Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)

Priest: For Thou art a merciful God and lovest mankind, and unto Thee we ascribe glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

THE EVENING PRAYER

People: Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this evening without sin. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy Name forever. Amen.

Let Thy mercy be upon us, O Lord, even as we have set our hope on Thee. Blessed art Thou, O Lord; teach me Thy statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Master; make me to understand Thy statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Holy One; enlighten me with Thy statutes.

Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth forever. O despise not the works of Thy hands. To Thee belongeth worship, to Thee belongeth praise, to Thee belongeth glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

THE LITANY OF SUPPLICATION

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

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

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

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

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

Choir: 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.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: Pardon and forgiveness of our sins and transgressions, let us ask of the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

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

Choir: 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.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

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

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

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

Choir: To Thee, O Lord.

Priest: For Thou art a good God and lovest mankind, and unto Thee we ascribe glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

THE PEACE

Priest: Peace be to all.

Choir: And to thy spirit.

Deacon: Let us bow our heads unto the Lord.

Choir: To Thee, O Lord.

• *All bow their heads as the priest says the following prayer:*

Priest: O Lord our God, Who didst bow the heavens and come down for the salvation of mankind: Look upon Thy servants and Thine inheritance; for unto Thee, the fearful Judge Who yet lovest mankind, have Thy servants bowed their heads and submissively inclined their necks, awaiting not help from men but entreating Thy mercy and looking confidently for Thy salvation. Guard them at all times, both during this present evening and in the approaching night, from every foe, from all adverse powers of the devil, and from vain thoughts and from evil imaginations.

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

Choir: Amen.

APOSTICHA FOR THE RESURRECTION IN TONE FOUR

When Thou wast lifted up upon the Cross, O Lord, Thou didst expunge our ancestral curse; and when Thou didst descend to Hades, Thou didst free those who were bound from eternity, granting the human race incorruptibility. Wherefore, we offer praise, glorifying Thy third-day Resurrection.

Verse 1. The Lord is King, and hath clothed Himself with majesty. The Lord is robed; He is girded with strength.

O Thou Who alone art mighty, when Thou wast fastened upon a Tree, Thou didst shake the whole earth; and when Thou wast laid in the grave, Thou didst raise those who lay in the graves, granting mankind life and incorruptibility. Wherefore, we offer praise, glorifying Thy third-day Resurrection.

Verse 2. For He has established the world so that it shall never be moved.

The law-transgressing people, O Christ, delivered Thee to Pilate, who condemned Thee to crucifixion. Thus the ingrate appeared before his Benefactor. But Thou sufferedst burial willingly, and didst rise on the third day by Thine own power; for Thou art God, granting us endless and Great Mercy.

Verse 3. Holiness befits Thy house, O Lord, forevermore.

Verily, the women reached Thy tomb seeking Thee with tears. And when they found Thee not they shouted and wailed, saying: Woe to us, O our Savior, King of all, how wast Thou stolen? And what place containeth Thy life-bearing body? And an angel answered them, saying: Weep not, but go preach that the Lord hath risen, granting us joy; for He alone is compassionate.

DOXASTICON FOR ST. STEPHEN IN TONE SIX

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

Thou didst prove to be the first both among the Martyrs and the Deacons, O blessed Stephen, thou adornment of athletes, boast of the faithful, and glory of the righteous. As thou standest before the throne of Christ the King of all, ask that they who celebrate thy solemn memorial may receive the forgiveness of their failings and be counted worthy of the Kingdom of the Heavens.

DOXASTICON FOR THE NATIVITY IN TONE SIX

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

Today all the Angels in Heaven exchange glad tidings and rejoice; and the whole creation singeth with joy for the Lord Savior born in Bethlehem; for the error of idols hath entirely disappeared, and Christ reigneth unto all ages.

THE HYMN OF ST. SIMEON THE GOD-RECEIVER

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

THE TRISAGION PRAYERS

People: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. (THRICE)
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.
All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy God, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy Name's sake.
Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.
Our Father, Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

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

Choir: Amen.

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE FOUR

Having learned the joyful message of the Resurrection from the angel the women disciples of the Lord cast from them their parental condemnation. And proudly broke the news to the Disciples, saying: Death hath been spoiled; Christ God is risen, granting the world Great Mercy.

APOLYTIKION OF SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY IN TONE TWO

Proclaim, O Joseph, to David, the grandparent of God, the amazing wonders; for thou hast seen a Virgin great with child; for with the shepherds thou didst give glory, with the Magi thou didst worship, and by the angel it was revealed to thee. Wherefore, plead thou with Christ God to save our souls.

APOLYTIKION OF ST. STEPHEN IN TONE FOUR (Be quick to anticipate**)**

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

The crown of the Kingdom hath adorned the brow of thy head * because of the contests that thou hast endured for Christ God, thou first of the martyred Saints; * for when thou hadst censured the Jews' madness, thou sawest * Christ thy Savior standing at the right hand of the Father. * O Stephen, ever pray Him for us, that He would save our souls.

APOLYTIKION OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST IN TONE FOUR

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

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, has shone to the world the light of wisdom! For by it, those who worshipped the stars were taught by a star to adore Thee, the Sun of Righteousness. And to know Thee, the Orient from on high. O Lord, Glory to Thee!

THE DISMISSAL

Deacon: Wisdom!

Choir: Father, bless!

Priest: Christ our God, the Existing One, is blessed, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen. Preserve, O God, the holy Orthodox faith and all Orthodox Christians, unto ages of ages. Amen.

Priest: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Choir: More honorable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, thou who without corruption bearest God the Word and art truly Theotokos: we magnify thee.

Priest: Glory to Thee, O Christ our God and our hope, glory to Thee.

Choir: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen. Lord, have mercy (*thrice*). Father, bless.

Priest: May He Who was born in a cave and lay in a manger for our salvation, and rose from the dead, Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His all-immaculate and all-blameless holy Mother; by the might of the Precious and Life-giving Cross; by the protection of the honorable Bodiless Powers of Heaven; at the supplication of the honorable, glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John; of the holy, glorious and all-laudable apostles; of the holy, glorious and right-victorious Martyrs; of our venerable and God-bearing Fathers; of *Saint N., the patron and protector of this holy community*; of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; of the holy and righteous Joseph the Betrothed, David the Prophet and King, and James the Brother of the Lord; of the holy, glorious and right-victorious Protomartyr Stephen the archdeacon, whose memory we celebrate today, and of all the saints: have mercy on us and save us, forasmuch as He is good and loveth mankind.

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

Choir: Amen.

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