SUNDAY 27 DECEMBER 2026
+ Afterfeast
Joseph the Betrothed, David the King,
James the brother of the Lord
± Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen C1
Confessor Theódoros of Palestine and Constantinople C7
6th Sunday Tone 5 & Eothinón 8

VESPERS

Lord I have cried

Tone 5
O Lord, I have cried to you, listen to me;
O Lord, listen to me.
O Lord, I have cried to you, listen to me;
Note the voice of my plea when I cry to you.
O Lord, listen to me.

[2] Let my prayer be directed before you like incense,
the raising of my hands be an evening sacrifice.
O Lord, listen to me.

S10: Lead my soul from prison that I may acknowledge your name.
O Christ, you have put the Devil to shame by your precious cross. You have blunted the sting of sin and saved us from the gates of death by your resurrection. We glorify you, only begotten *Lord*.

S9: The just will wait for me, until you reward me.
Christ was led like a sheep to the slaughter in order to grant resurrection to the human race. The princes of Hades were frightened by this, for the gates of sorrow were raised. Christ the King of glory had entered. He said to those in chains, "Go out," and to those in darkness, "Come to the light."

Tone 2
S8: O Lord, I have cried to you from the depths;
O Lord listen to my voice.
O Stephen, your soul was illuminated with the grace of the Holy Spirit *and* your face shone like an angel. Your body was made radiant by the brightness within you *and* the contemplation of God's light was your only joy. Therefore, O leader and glory of the martyrs, the heavens were marvellously opened to you.

S7: Let your ears note the voice of my plea.
When the Lord Jesus was born from the holy Virgin, all the world was enlightened. The shepherds watched in the fields, the Wise Men adored and the angels praised in song, but Herod was troubled, for God has appeared in the flesh; *he is* the Saviour of our souls.

Tone 2
S6: O Lord *our* Lord, if you mark offences, who will stand?
But there is forgiveness with you.
Come and greatly rejoice in the Lord as we speak about this present mystery. The dividing wall has been destroyed *and* the flaming sword turns back. The Cherubim withdraw from the Tree of Life and I partake of the delight of Paradise from which I was thrown out through disobedience. For the express image of the Father, the imprint of his Eternity, takes the form of a servant, and, without undergoing change, he comes from an unwedded mother. For what he was, he has remained, true God. He has taken on himself what he was not; he became man in his love for the human race. Let us cry aloud to him, "O God born from a virgin, have mercy on us."

S5: O Lord, I have waited for you for the sake of your name;
my soul has waited for your word,
my soul has hoped in the Lord.
When the Lord Jesus was born from the holy Virgin, all the world was enlightened. The shepherds watched in the fields, the Wise Men adored and the angels praised in song, but Herod was troubled, for God has appeared in the flesh; *he is* the Saviour of our souls. *X2*

S4: Let Israel hope in the Lord from the morning watch until night,
from the morning watch.
O Christ our God, your kingdom is a kingdom of all the ages and your rule is from generation to generation. You were incarnate by the Holy Spirit and made man from the ever-Virgin Mary. You have enlightened us by your coming. O Light from Light, Brightness of the Father, you have made the whole creation shine with joy. Everything with breath praises you, for you are the image of the Father's glory. O God, you are and have always been. You have shone from a virgin; have mercy on us.

Tone 1
S3: For there is mercy with the Lord
and abundant redemption with him.
He will redeem Israel
from all his offences.
Let us all praise King David the ancestor of God, for the Virgin came from him and from this stem bloomed the flower, Christ. He renews the fallen nature of Adam and Eve, for he is compassionate.

S2: Every nation, praise the Lord;
every people, acclaim him!
In his old age Joseph the betrothed clearly saw the prophecies fulfilled. He was given a mysterious command, but received enlightenment from the angels who cried, "Glory to God, for he has granted peace to the world!"

S1: For his mercy is strengthened over us
and the truth of the Lord remains for ever.
Let us all praise the brother of the Lord. He is a bishop, but also a courageous martyr. O Jesus, our God, *you were* wrapped in swaddling clothes in the manger of a cave, so save those who praise you through his prayers.

Glory:
Let us celebrate the memory of the God-fearing David and James. One was the king of the prophets. The other was an apostle and the first bishop. Because we have been saved from error through their teaching, we can glorify Christ who shone in human form from the Virgin to save our souls.

Both now: Tone 6
Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace. Today Bethlehem receives the *Lord* who always sits with the Father. Today angels glorify with holy hymns the Baby who is born. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men.

Phos Ilarón

P/D: Wisdom! Stand upright!
O Jesus Christ, joyful light of the holy glory
of the immortal, heavenly, holy, blessed Father,
when we come to the setting of the sun
and see the light of evening,
we praise God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

For it is right at all times to worship you
with voices of praise,
O Son of God *and* Giver of life.
Therefore the world glorifies you.

Prokeímenon

P/D: The Evening Prokeimenon
R: The Lord reigns *and* is clothed with majesty.
S1: The Lord has put on power and clothed himself.
S2: He founded the world, which will not be moved.

Ektení

Prayer

O Lord, allow us this night to be guarded from sin. Blessed are you, O Lord, God of our fathers! Praised and glorified be your name for ever. Amen. O Lord, let your mercy be on us, for we have hoped in you. Blessed are you, O Lord; teach me your statutes. Blessed are you, O Master; make me understand your statutes. Blessed are you, O Holy *One*; enlighten me with your statutes. O Lord, your mercy lasts for ever; do not overlook the work of your hands. To you

belongs worship, to you belongs praise, to you belongs glory, to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and to ages of ages. Amen.

Plirotiká

Prayer

P: Peace be with you all. R: And with your spirit
D: Bow down your heads to the Lord. R: To you, O Lord.

P: For blessed and glorified is the power of your Kingdom, of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and ever and to the ages of ages. *Amen.*

Apósticha

Tone 5

O Christ, incarnate Saviour, you were not parted from the heavens. We glorify you with songs of praise, for you accepted the cross and death for the sake of our race. O Lord, Lover of the human race, you overthrew the gates of Hades and rose on the third day to save our souls.

S1: The Lord reigns *and* is clothed with majesty;
the Lord has put on power and clothed himself. Ps 92
O Giver of life, you have poured out streams of forgiveness, life and salvation for everyone by being pierced in the side. You have granted us immortality by accepting death in the flesh. You have freed us by being placed in the tomb and, as God, have raised us with you in glory. Therefore we cry out, "Glory to you, O Lord, Lover of the human race!"

S2: For he founded the world which will not be moved. Ps 92
O Lover of the human race, your crucifixion and descent into Hades are awesome. You have captured it and raised the ancient prisoners with you, for you are God in glory. You have opened Paradise and commanded it to take them back. Grant us, who glorify your resurrection on the third day, purification of sins. Make us worthy to be citizens of Paradise, for you alone are merciful.

S3: O Lord, holiness is right for your house to length of days. Ps 92
O Lover of the human race, you accepted death in the flesh for our sake and rose from the dead on the third day. Heal us from our earthly passions, restore us from our evil offences and save us.

Glory: Both now:
All-honoured Virgin, you are the gate, the temple, the palace and the throne of the King. From you Christ the Lord, my Redeemer, appeared to those who sat in darkness. He is the Sun of justice who desired to enlighten those whom he had created in his image with his own hand. Therefore, all praised *Lady*, pray continually that our souls may be saved, for you possess motherly boldness before him.

Song of Simeon

B/P: O Master, now let your servant depart in peace
according to your word,
[2] for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared before all peoples,
[3] a light of revelation for *the* nations
and *the* glory of your people Israel.

Triságion Prayers

Apolytíkia

Tone 5

O faithful, let us praise and worship the Word, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit. He was born from the Virgin for our salvation; for he determined to ascend the cross in the flesh, to endure death and to raise the dead by his glorious resurrection.

O Lord, your marvellous Nativity is a memorial for priests and a source of joy for rulers. We glorify it and say, "Our Father in heaven, may your name be holy, O Lover of the human race."

Tone 4

O Stephen, holy proto-martyr and mighty warrior of Christ our God, you were victorious in battle and crowned with glory. You have shamed the council of your persecutors and seen your Saviour enthroned at the right hand of the Father. Continually intercede for the salvation of our souls.

Tone 2

O holy Joseph, proclaim to David, the ancestor of Christ our God, the amazing wonders which you have witnessed. You have seen a Virgin great with child, you gave glory with the shepherds, you worshipped with the Wise Men and an angel of the Lord revealed the wonders to you. Therefore pray to Christ God to save our souls.

Today all the angels of heaven exchange good news and rejoice. The whole creation sings for joy, for the Lord and Saviour is born in Bethlehem. The error of idolatry has disappeared and Christ reigns for all ages.

Dismissal

ORTHROS

God is the Lord Ps 117

R: God is the Lord and has appeared to us.
Blessed is the one who comes in the Lord's name. *Ps 117*
S1: Thank the Lord, for he is good,
for his mercy lasts for ever.
S2: All the nations surrounded me,
but I opposed them in the Lord's name.
S3: This *is* the Lord's doing
and it is wonderful in our eyes.

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Small Litany

P: For yours is the might, and yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory of the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit, now and ever and to the ages of ages. *Amen*

Kathísma 1

Tone 5

Let us celebrate the cross of the Lord, honour his sacred tomb with song and glorify the resurrection. For as God, he raised the dead from the tomb, stripped death of its power and the Devil of his strength; he illuminated those in Hades.

Glory:
O Lord, you were called dead, but put death to death. You were laid you in a tomb, but emptied the tomb. The soldiers guarded the sepulchre above, while below you were raising the dead from all the ages. Glory to you, almighty and incomprehensible Lord!

Both now: Tone 4
O faithful, come and see where Christ is born. Let us join the Wise Men, kings from the east, and follow the guiding star. Angels continually sing praises there and the shepherds who live in the fields offer an appropriate hymn and say, "Glory in the highest to the one who is born today from the Virgin and Theotokos in the cave in Bethlehem of Judah.

Kathísma 2

O Lord, after your resurrection on the third day when the Apostles had worshipped you, Peter called out to you, "The women boldly ventured out, while I was a coward. The Thief acknowledges God, while I denied him. Will you continue to call me a disciple? Will you not make me again a fisherman of the sea? But, O God, accept me as a penitent and save me."

Glory:
O merciful Lord, the lawless ones nailed you between those who were condemned and pierced your side with a spear. You accepted the tomb, demolished the gates of Hades and rose on the third day. The women ran to see you and announced your resurrection to the Apostles. O Lord, highly exalted Saviour, the angels sing your praises; glory to you!

Both now: Tone 4
"O Mary, why are you filled with wonder? Why are you amazed at what has come to pass in you?" "I have given birth in time to the timeless Son, yet I do not understand how I conceived him. I have not known a man; how then could I bear a child? Who has ever seen a birth without seed?" But as it is written, "When God so wills, the order of nature is overturned." Christ is born from the Virgin in Bethlehem of Judah.

Evlogitária

Blessed are you, O Lord; teach me your statutes.
The assembly of angels was amazed when it saw you among the dead. O Saviour, by destroying the power of death, you raised Adam with you and freed everyone from Hades.

Blessed are you, O Lord; teach me your statutes.
The radiant angel cried to the Myrrhbearers from the tomb, "Why do you women mingle myrrh with your tears? Look at the tomb and understand. The Saviour has risen from the tomb."

Blessed are you, O Lord; teach me your statutes.
The Myrrhbearers ran sorrowfully to your tomb very early in the morning, but an angel came to them and said, "The time for sorrow has come to an end. Do not weep, but announce the resurrection to the apostles."

Blessed are you, O Lord; teach me your statutes.
The Myrrhbearers were sorrowful as they approached your tomb, but the angel said to them: Why do you number the Living among the dead? As God he has risen rom the tomb.

Glory:
We worship the Father, his Son and the Holy Spirit, the Holy Trinity, one in Being. We cry with the Seraphim, "Holy, Holy, Holy are you, O Lord."

Both now:
O Virgin, because you gave birth to the Giver of Life, you rescued Adam from his sin. You gave Eve joy instead of sadness. The Divine Man who was born from you has restored to life those who had fallen from it.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to you, O God. (X3)
O our God and our hope, glory to you.

Small Litany

P: For blessed is your name, and glorified is your kingdom, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages. *Amen*

Ypakói

Read without note
The sight of the angel dazzled the minds of the myrrhbearing women and their spirits were enlightened by your divine Resurrection. They preached the good news to the Apostles, "Announce to the nations the Lord's Resurrection. He has worked wonders and grants us great mercy!"

Anaváthmi Tone 5

Antiphon 1 Ps 131
My Saviour, I sing to you like David in my trouble;
save my soul from crafty speech.
The life of those who live in the desert is blessed;
they are supported by divine passion.
Glory: Both now:
Everything seen and unseen is preserved by the Holy Spirit,
for he has power in himself as truly one of the Trinity.

Antiphone 2 Ps 120
My soul, let us ascend the mountains;
come to the place where help is found.
O Christ, let your right hand rush
to guard me from everything sinister.
Glory: both now:
As we speak about divine matters through the Holy Spirit,
we say, "You are God, life, desire, light and mind.
You are goodness and reign for ever.

Antiphon 3 Ps 121
I offer my prayer for those who said to me,
"Let us go to the courts of the Lord,
filled with great joy."
Fearful things will be done to the house of David,
for a fire there will consume every shameful thought.
Glory: Both now:
The government of life belongs to the Holy Spirit
and every creature is given the breath of life through him
as also in the Father and the Word.

Prokeímenon Ps 9

R: O Lord my God, rise,
for you reign for ever.
S: O Lord, I will thank you with all my heart.

Small Litany

For you are the King of Peace and Saviour of our souls, and we send up glory to you, to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, always, now and for ever, and to the ages of ages. *Amen*

Kontákion

Today holy David is filled with joy. Joseph and James offer hymns of worship. The glorious crown of their kinship with Christ fills them with great joy. They offer their hymns of praise to the *Lord who was* born ineffably on earth and cry out, "O merciful one, save those who honour you."

Íkos

The bodiless *Lord* is born in the flesh by an ineffable decision. The one whom no space can encompass is covered with a body. He has two natures, but is without change. The only Person *who is* timeless by nature enters into time. The one who surpasses all perfection allows himself to be visible as a Child. The one who supports the inhabited earth is held in human arms. Those who went before him are proud of their kinship to him. As God he crowns them in his birth. We glorify them in faith and continually cry out, "O merciful *Lord*, save those who honour you."

Synaxárion

Today we remember the holy apostle, protomartyr and archdeacon Stephen, one of the seven deacons of Acts 6. At his defence before the Jewish Council he showed that the Law and the Temple were not essential for the people of God. He rebuked them for their hardness of heart. Before his stoning he had a vision of Jesus at the right hand of God. On the Twenty Seventh the heaven was opened to him.

On the same day we commemorate our renowned father Theodoros the branded, brother of Theophánis the hymnographer, of Palestine and Constantinople, who lived in the Ninth Century.

Together with them we remember:
Martyr Mavríkios of Apamía with 70 Companions C4
Archbishop Theódoros of Constantinople C7

Ypómnima

On the Sunday after the Nativity of Christ we remember the divine ancestors, Joseph the betrothed of our holy pure virgin Theotokos, of James, the rother of the Lord and of the prophet and King David. O God, have mercy on us and save us through the prayers of your holy ones. Amen.

Katavasías

Gospel Dialogue

P/D: Let us pray to the Lord. *Lord have mercy*
P: For you, O God, are holy *and* rest in the Holy Place. We send up glory to you, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and to the ages of ages. *Amen.*
R: Let everything with breath praise the Lord. *X3*
Praise God in his saints;
praise him in his mighty firmament. Ps 50
P/D: And that we may be counted worthy to listen to the Holy Gospel, let us pray to the Lord our God. *Lord have mercy X3*
P/D: Wisdom. Stand up. Let us listen to the Holy Gospel.
P: Peace be with you all. *And with your spirit*
P: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John.
P/D: Let us attend
R: Glory to you, O Lord, glory to you.

Eothinón Gospel 8

From the Holy Gospel according to John (20:11-18)
At that time Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb; 12 and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. 13 They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." 14 Saying this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. 15 Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom do you seek?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." 16 Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher). 17 Jesus said to her, "Do not hold me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." 18 Mary Magdalene went and said to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

R: Glory to you, O Lord, glory to you.

Resurrection Ode

P/R: Now that we have seen the resurrection of Christ, let us worship the holy Lord Jesus, the only sinless one. O Christ, we venerate your cross, and praise and glorify your holy resurrection; for you are our God, and we know no one else apart from you. We address your name. All you faithful, come and venerate Christ's holy resurrection. For see, joy has come into all the world through the cross. Let us always bless the Lord and praise his resurrection. For he has destroyed death by death by enduring the cross for us.

Psalm 50

O God, have mercy on me in your abundant mercy
and wipe out my offence through your great pity.
4 Wash me thoroughly from my lawless act
and cleanse me from my sin,
5 for I know my lawlessness
and my sin is always before me.
6 I have sinned against you alone
and done what is evil before you
6b so that you might be right in your words
and overcome when you are judged,
7 for see, I was conceived in lawlessness
and my mother desired me in sin,
8 for see, you have loved truth
and shown me the mysteries and secrets of your wisdom.
9 You will sprinkle me with hyssop and I will be clean;
you will wash me and I will become whiter than snow.
10 You will make me hear about joy and gladness;
humbled bones will rejoice.
11 Turn your face from my sins
and wipe out all my lawlessness.
12 O God, make a pure heart within me
and renew an upright spirit within me.
13 Do not banish me from your presence
or remove your Holy Spirit from me.
14 Restore your saving joy to me
and strengthen me with your directing Spirit.
15 I will teach the lawless your ways
and the ungodly will return to you.
16 O God, God of my salvation, free me from bloodshed,
then my tongue will rejoice in your justice.
17 O Lord, you will open my lips
and my mouth will announce your praise,
18 for if you had wanted sacrifice, I would have given it;
you will not be pleased with burnt offerings.
19 Sacrifice for God is a broken spirit;
God will not despise a broken and humbled heart.
20 O Lord, be good to Zion in your pleasure
and let the walls of Jerusalem be built,
21 then you will be pleased with a just sacrifice,
with an offering and burnt sacrifices;
then they will offer calves on your altar.

Glory: Tone 6
O merciful *Lord*, blot out the abundance of our offences through the prayers of the apostles.

Both now:
O merciful *Lord*, blot out the abundance of our offences through the prayers of the Theotokos.

Have mercy:
Jesus has risen from the tomb as he foretold
and grants us eternal life and great mercy.

Intercession

Short form

P/D: O God, save your people and bless your inheritance.
Visit your world with mercy and compassion; exalt the horn of Orthodox Christians and send down on them your rich mercy, through the prayers of our all-pure Lady, Theotokos and Ever-virgin Mary, by the power of the honourable and life-giving cross, through the protection of the honourable bodiless powers of heaven, through the prayers of the honourable, glorious, prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John, of the holy, glorious, all-praised apostles, of the holy, all-praised and victorious martyrs, of our holy and God-bearing fathers, of the holy and just forebears of God, Ioachim and Anna, of XXX, and of all the saints. We ask you, only merciful Lord, “Listen to us sinners as we pray to you, and have mercy on us.”

Lord have mercy. X12

Through the mercy, compassion and love for the human race of your only-begotten Son, with whom you are blessed, together with the all-

holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and ever and to the ages of ages. *Amen.*

Katavasias

1: In times past the Master who accomplishes wonders saved his people and made the watery wave of the sea into dry land. Now he has been willingly born from a maiden and so establishes a path for us by which we can ascend to heaven. We glorify him the *Lord* who is equal in being with the Father and also with mortal men.

3: O Benefactor, graciously accept, the praises of your servants and bring down the spiteful, haughty looks of the enemy. O blessed Lord, you see everything, so raise us far above sin and establish your singers firm and unshaken on the foundation of the faith.

4: In past time Habakkuk the prophet was counted worthy to see ineffably the figure and symbol of Christ's birth; he foretold in song the renewal of the human race. For a young Baby, even the Word, has now come from the mountain, which is the Virgin, for the renewal of the peoples.

5: O Christ, we watch in vigil during the night of the deeds of dark error and sing to you as our Benefactor. "Come to us and grant us cleansing. Ease the path for us by which we may ascend and so attain glory."

6: Jonah was enclosed in the remotest depths of the sea; he implored you to come and still the storm. O Christ, I am pricked by the dart of the tyrant and call out to you, the Slayer of evil; I implore you to come quickly and rescue me from my slothfulness.

7: The children were captured and held fast by love for the King of all. They did not despise the ungodly threats of the tyrant in his boundless fury. As the terrible fire withdrew before them, they said to the Master, "Blessed are you throughout all the ages!"

8: Let us praise, bless and worship the Lord.
The children of the Old Covenant who walked in the fire without being burnt, prefigured the womb of the Maiden which remained sealed when she gave birth in a manner beyond nature. The same grace of God brought both these wonders to pass in a miracle and raised the nations to sing in praise.

Ode 9

My soul glorifies the Lord
and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Saviour. R:

R: *You are* more honourable than the Cherubim
and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim.
You gave birth to God the Word without defilement;
O true Theotokos, we glorify you.

[2] For he has regarded his servant's humility;
see, from now all generations will call me blessed. R:
[3] For the Almighty has accomplished great *things* for me
and his name is holy.
His mercy is from generation to generation
on those who fear him. R:
[4] He has accomplished strength with his arm
and scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. R:
[5] He has put down the mighty from *their* thrones
and exalted the humble.
He has satisfied the hungry with good *things*
and dismissed the rich with nothing. R:
[6] He has helped his servant Israel
in remembering his mercy,
as he spoke to our fathers,
to Abraham and his seed for ever. R:

9: It would be easier, as a refuge from danger, for us to keep silence in fear. O Virgin, it is hard indeed to compose songs in love which are put together in harmony. O Mother, give us strength to fulfil our good intention.

Small Litany

P: For all the powers of heaven praise you, and to you we send up glory, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and to the ages of ages. *Amen*

Holy is the Lord

Holy is the Lord our God. *X3*
Exalt the Lord our God and worship at his footstool.
for he is holy.

Exaposteilária

Tone 8

Mary was truly amazed when she saw two angels in the tomb. She did not recognise Christ, but thought he was the gardener and said to him, "Sir, where have you placed the body of Jesus?" But she knew from his voice that he was the Saviour and obeyed him when he said, "Do not touch me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father, but go and tell my brothers."

Let us praise David, the forefather of God, together with James, the Lord's noble brother, and the divine Joseph who was betrothed to the Theotokos, for they served the divine birth of Christ in Bethlehem in a manner which was right for God. They sang praises with the angels, the Wise Men and shepherds, for he is God and Lord.

Our Saviour, the Dawn from the east, has visited us from above. We who were in darkness and shadow have found the truth, for the Lord is born from the Virgin.

Praises

Tone 5

Let everything with breath
praise the Lord.
Praise the Lord from the heavens;
praise him in the heights.
To you, O God, is due a song.

Praise him, all his angels;
praise him, all his powers.
To you, O God, is due a song.

S8: This glory will be for all his holy ones.
O Lord, you came out from the grave, which had been sealed by lawless men, just as you were born from the Theotokos. Your bodiless angels did not know how you were incarnate; the soldiers did not see the moment of your resurrection. These two marvels were concealed from curious minds, but were revealed to those who worshipped with faith the mystery about which we sing. Grant us joy and great mercy as we offer you praise.

S7: Praise God in his saints;
praise him in his mighty firmament.
O Lord, you demolished the eternal bars and broke apart the chains of the grave. You rose from the tomb and left your wrappings in the grave as a witness to your three-day burial. You left the guards watching at the tomb and went before your disciples to Galilee. O incomprehensible Saviour, great is your mercy; have mercy on us!

S6: Praise him for his mighty deeds;
praise him for the abundance of his majesty.
O Lord Christ, you suffered for us and the women hurried to your tomb to see you. When they approached with fear, they saw an angel sitting on the stone which had been rolled away. He cried to them "The Lord is risen. Go and tell the disciples that the Saviour of our souls has risen from the dead."

S5: Praise him with the trumpet sound;
praise him with lute and harp.
O Lord, you came into the midst of your disciples, although the doors were shut, just as you came from the sealed tomb. O long-suffering Saviour, you revealed the sufferings of the body which you had accepted, for you endured wounds as the Seed of David, but saved the world as Son of God. O incomprehensible Saviour, your mercy is great; have mercy on us.

Tone 4

S4: Praise him with cymbal and dance;
praise him with strings and flute.

O just, celebrate! O heavens, rejoice greatly! O mountains, dance for joy, for Christ is born. The Virgin is enthroned like the Cherubim and carries on her bosom God the Word *who was* made flesh. Shepherds glorify the new-born child and Wise Men offer the Master gifts. Angels sing praises and say, "O Lord, *you are* beyond understanding, glory to you!"

S3: Praise him with tuneful cymbals;
praise him with joyful cymbals.
Let everything with breath praise the Lord.

O virgin Theotokos, you have given birth to the Saviour and have overthrown the curse of Eve. For you have become the Mother of him in whom the Father was well pleased and have carried God the incarnate Word on your bosom. We cannot fathom the mystery, but we all glorify it by faith alone. We cry out with you and say, "O Lord beyond all understanding, glory to you!"

S2: The Lord said to my lord, "Sit at my right hand
until I make your enemies a stool for your feet." Ps 109

Come and sing the praises of the Saviour's Mother. After she had given birth to the Child she still remained a virgin. Rejoice, O living City of the King in which Christ has lived and brought to pass our salvation! Together with Gabriel, we sing your praises. Together with the shepherds, we glorify you and cry, "O Theotokos, intercede for our salvation with the one who took flesh from you!"

S1: I have fathered you from the womb before the Morning Star;
the Lord has sworn and will not change his mind.

It was through the good pleasure of the Father that the Word became flesh and the Virgin gave birth to the God *who was* made man. A star spreads abroad the news *and* the Wise Men worship. The shepherds stand amazed and creation is filled with great joy.

Glory: Tone 8

The blood, fire and pillars of smoke are the earthly miracles foreseen by the prophet Joel. The blood prefigures the Incarnation; the fire is the Divinity and the pillars of smoke are the Holy Spirit who descended on the Virgin like incense for the whole world. Great is the mystery of your Incarnation! O Lord, glory to you!

Both now: Tone 2

Today Christ is born from the Virgin in Bethlehem. Today the *Lord* who knows no beginning, begins to be. Today the Word is made flesh. The powers of heaven greatly rejoice and the earth with the human race is glad. The Wise Men offer gifts, the shepherds proclaim the wonder and we continually cry aloud, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will towards men!"

Great Doxology

Glory to you who have shown us the light!
glory to God in the highest!
Peace on earth and goodwill to men!
[2] We praise you, we bless you, we worship you,
we glorify you, we thank you for your great glory,
[3] O Lord King, heavenly God, almighty Father,
O Lord, only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ,
and you, O Holy Spirit!
[4] O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us,
for you take away the sin of the world.
[5] Receive our prayer,
for you sit on the right of the Father,
and have mercy on us.
[6] For only you are holy, only you are Lord,
O Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.
[7] I will bless you every day
and always praise your name for ever and ever. Ps 144
[8] O Lord, allow us this day
to be guarded from sin.
[9] Blessed are you, O Lord God of our fathers!
Praised and glorified be your name for ever. Amen. Daniel 3
[10] O Lord, let your mercy *be* on us,
for we have hoped in you. Ps 32.
[16] Blessed are you, O Lord!
Teach me your statutes. *X3* Ps 118
[12] O Lord, you have been our refuge
from generation to generation. Ps 89
I said, "O Lord, have mercy on me;
heal my soul, for I have sinned against you." Ps 40
[14] O Lord, I have fled to you;
teach me to do your will, for you are my God. Ps 142
[15] For with you is the source of life
and in your light we will see light. Ps 35
[16] Stretch out your mercy
to those who know you. Ps 35

Triságion

Resurrection Troparion

Today salvation has come to the world. Let us sing to the one who rose from the dead, the Author of our life. When he destroyed death by death, he gave us victory and great mercy.

LITURGY

Antiphon 1 Ps 110 Tone 2

S1: O Lord, I will acknowledge you with my whole heart;
I will proclaim all your wonders.

R: Through the prayers of the Theotokos, Saviour, save us!

S2: In *the* council of the upright and in the assembly,
great are the works of the Lord!
S3: They are researched for all his purposes!
S4: His work is confession and splendour;
his justice remains from age to age.
S5: Glory: Both now:

Antiphon 2 Ps 111 Own Tone

S1: Blessed is the man who fears the Lord;
he will take great pleasure in his commandments.

R: Save us, O Son of God!
You arose from the dead,
We sing to you, "Alleluia!"

S2: His seed will be powerful on the earth;
the generation of the upright will be blessed.
S3: Glory and wealth *will be* in his house
and his justice remains from age to age.
S4: Light has risen in the darkness for the upright;
he is merciful, compassionate and just.
S5: Glory: Both now:
Monogenes

Antiphon 3 Ps 109 Tone 4

S1: The Lord said to my lord, "Sit at my right hand
until I make your enemies a stool for your feet."

R: O Christ our God, your nativity has illuminated the world with the light of wisdom. For by it, O Sun of Justice, those who worshipped the stars were taught by a star to worship you and to know you as the Dawn from above. O Lord, glory to you!

S2: The Lord will send you a sceptre of power from Zion;
rule among your enemies.
S3: Sovereignty is yours on the day of your power
and in the splendour of your saints.

Entrance Ps 94

Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ.
Save us, O Son of God.

You arose from the dead.
We sing to you, “Alleluia!”

Apolytíkia

Tone 5

O faithful, let us praise and worship the Word, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit. He was born from the Virgin for our salvation; for he determined to ascend the cross in the flesh, to endure death and to raise the dead by his glorious resurrection.

Tone 4

O Stephen, holy proto-martyr and mighty warrior of Christ our God, you were victorious in battle and crowned with glory. You have shamed the council of your persecutors and seen your Saviour enthroned at the right hand of the Father. Continually intercede for the salvation of our souls.

Of the Church

Kontákion

Tone 3

Today the Virgin gives birth to the transcendent Being and the earth offers a cave to the unapproachable *Lord*. Angels with shepherds glorify him. The wise men travel with the star, because for our sake the eternal God was born as a little Child.

Triságion

Prokeímenon Ps 18 Tone 8

R: His sound has gone out into all the earth.
S: The heavens declare God’s glory.

Apostolos

From the Acts of the Apostles (6:8-7:5, 47-60)

In those days Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. [9]Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), and of the Cyre'nians, and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cili'cia and Asia, arose and disputed with Stephen. [10]But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke. [11]Then they secretly instigated men, who said, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God." [12]And they stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes, and they came upon him and seized him and brought him before the council, [13]and set up false witnesses who said, "This man never ceases to speak words against this holy place and the law; [14]for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place, and will change the customs which Moses delivered to us." [15]And gazing at him, all who sat in the council saw that his face was like the face of an angel.
[1]And the high priest said, "Is this so?" [2]And Stephen said: "Brothers and fathers, hear me. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopota'mia, before he lived in Haran, [3]and said to him, `Depart from your land and from your kindred and go into the land which I will show you.' [4]Then he departed from the land of the Chalde'ans, and lived in Haran. And after his father died, God removed him from there into this land in which you are now living; [5]yet he gave him no inheritance in it, not even a foot's length, but promised to give it to him in possession and to his posterity after him, though he had no child. [47]But it was Solomon who built a house for him. [48]Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made with hands; as the prophet says, [49]`Heaven is my throne, and earth my footstool. What house will you build for me, says the Lord, or what is the place of my rest? [50]: Did not my hand make all these things?' [51]"You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. [52]Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered, [53]you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it." [54]Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth against him. [55]But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; [56]and he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God." [57]But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together upon him. [58]Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him; and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. [59]And as they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." [60]: And he knelt down and cried with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

Alleluia Ps 88 Tone 2

S1: O Lord, the heavens will acknowledge your wonders.
S2: God is glorified in the council of the saints.

Gospel

From the Holy Gospel according to Matthew (2:13-23)

At that time 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.” [14] And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to Egypt, [15] and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt have I called my son.” [16] 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. [17] Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: [18] “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.” [19] But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, [20] “Rise, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child’s life are dead.” [21] And he rose and took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. [22] But when he heard that Archelaus 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. [23] 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.”

Especially

Tone 1

O my soul glorify God who is born in the flesh from the Virgin. When they saw the strange course of an unknown and newly shining star which exceeded the brightness of all heavenly light, the Wise Men learnt that Christ the King had been born on earth in Bethlehem for our salvation.

Communion Ps 42

[3] Send out your light and your truth,
for they have guided me. Alleluia! X 2019

Post Communion

Tone 4

O Christ our God, your nativity has illuminated the world with the light of wisdom. For by it, O Sun of Justice, those who worshipped the stars were taught by a star to worship you and to know you as the Dawn from above. O Lord, glory to you! X 2019