Festal Orthros on December 25
The Nativity of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ

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

Choir: Amen.

Priest: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

O heavenly King, the Comforter, Spirit of Truth, Who art in all places, and fillest all things, Treasury of good things, and Giver of life, come, and dwell in us, and cleanse us from every stain; and save our souls, O good One.

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; both 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 One, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy Name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (*thrice*)

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

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

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.

O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance, granting to Thy people victory over all their enemies, and by the power of Thy Cross preserving Thy commonwealth.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
Do Thou, Who of Thine own good will wast lifted up upon the Cross, O Christ our God, bestow Thy bounties upon the new Nation which is called by Thy Name; make glad in Thy might those who lawfully govern, that with them we may be led to victory over our adversaries, having in Thine aid a weapon of peace and a trophy invincible.

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.
O fearsome champion, who cannot be put to confusion, despise not our petitions, O good and all-praised Theotokos; establish the way of the Orthodox; save those who have been called upon to govern us, leading us all to that victory which is from heaven, for thou art she who gavest birth to God and alone art blessed.

LITANY

Priest: Have mercy on us, O God, according to thy great mercy, we pray thee, hearken and have mercy.

The choir responds "Lord, have mercy" (thrice) in this litany until noted.

Again, we pray for all pious and Orthodox Christians.

Again we pray for our father and metropolitan, N., (our bishop, N.,) and all our brotherhood in Christ.

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. Bless, father, in the name of the Lord.

Priest: Glory to the holy, consubstantial, life-giving and undivided Trinity, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Reader: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill among men. (*thrice*)

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

PSALM 3

O Lord, why are they multiplied that afflict me? Many rise up against me. Many say unto my soul: There is no salvation for him in his God. But Thou, O Lord, art my helper, my glory, and the lifter up of my head. I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and He heard me out of His holy mountain. I laid me down and slept; I awoke, for the Lord will help me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people that set themselves against me round about. Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God, for Thou hast smitten all who without cause are mine enemies; the teeth of sinners hast Thou broken. Salvation is of the Lord, and Thy blessing is upon Thy people.

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

PSALM 37

O Lord, rebuke me not in Thine anger, nor chasten me in Thy wrath. For Thine arrows are fastened in me, and Thou hast laid Thy hand heavily upon me. There is no healing in my flesh in the face of Thy wrath; and there is no peace in my bones in the face of my sins. For mine iniquities are risen higher than my head; as a heavy burden have they pressed heavily upon me. My bruises are become noisome and corrupt in the face of my folly. I have been wretched and utterly bowed down until the end; all the day long I went with downcast face. For my loins are filled with mocking, and there is no healing in my flesh. I am afflicted and humbled exceedingly, I have roared from the groaning of my heart. O Lord, before Thee is all my desire, and my groaning is not hid from Thee. My heart is troubled, my strength hath failed me; and the light of mine eyes, even this is not with me. My friends and my neighbors drew nigh over against me and stood, and my nearest of kin stood afar off. And they that sought after my soul used violence; and they that sought evils for me spake vain things, and craftinesses all the day long did they meditate. But as for me, like a deaf man I heard them not, and was as a speechless man that openeth not his mouth. And I became as a man that heareth not, and that hath in his mouth no reproofs. For in Thee have I hoped, O Lord; Thou wilt hearken unto me, O Lord my God. For I said: Let never mine enemies rejoice over me; yea, when my feet were shaken, those men spake boastful words against me. For I am ready for scourges, and my sorrow is continually before me. For I will declare mine iniquity, and I will take heed concerning my sin. But mine enemies live and are made stronger than I, and they that hated me unjustly are multiplied. They that render me evil for good slandered me, because I pursued goodness. Forsake me not, O Lord my God, depart not from me. Be attentive unto my help, O Lord of my salvation.

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

PSALM 62

O God, my God, unto Thee I rise early at dawn. My soul hath thirsted for Thee; how often hath my flesh longed after Thee in a land barren and untrodden and unwatered. So in the sanctuary have I appeared before Thee to see Thy power and Thy glory. For Thy mercy is better than lives; my lips shall praise Thee. So shall I bless Thee in my life, and in Thy name will I lift up my hands. As with marrow and fatness let my soul be filled, and with lips rejoicing shall my mouth praise Thee. If I remembered Thee on my bed, at the dawn I meditated on Thee. For Thou art become my helper; in the shelter of Thy wings will I rejoice. My soul hath cleaved after Thee; Thy right hand hath been quick to help me. But as for these, in vain have they sought after my soul; they shall go into the nethermost parts of the earth, they shall be surrendered unto the edge of the sword; portions for foxes shall they be. But the king shall be glad in God, everyone shall be praised that sweareth by Him; for the mouth of them is stopped that speak unjust things.

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

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

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. (*thrice*)

Lord, have mercy. (*thrice*)

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

PSALM 87

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.
O Lord God of my salvation, by day have I cried and by night before Thee. Let my prayer come before Thee, bow down Thine ear unto my supplication, for filled with evils is my soul, and my life unto Hades hath drawn nigh. I am counted with them that go down into the pit; I am become as a man without help, free among the dead, like the bodies of the slain that sleep in the grave, whom Thou rememberest no more, and they are cut off from Thy hand. They laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness and in the shadow of death. Against me is Thine anger made strong, and all Thy billows hast Thou brought upon me. Thou hast removed my friends afar from me; they have made me an abomination unto themselves. I have been delivered up, and have not come forth; mine eyes are grown weak from poverty. I have cried unto Thee, O Lord, the whole day long; I have stretched out my hands unto Thee. Nay, for the dead wilt Thou work wonders? Or shall physicians raise them up that they may give thanks unto Thee? Nay, shall any in the grave tell of Thy mercy, and of Thy truth in that destruction? Nay, shall Thy wonders be known in that darkness, and Thy righteousness in that land that is forgotten? But as for me, unto Thee, O Lord, have I cried; and in the morning shall my prayer come before Thee. Wherefore, O Lord, dost Thou cast off my soul and turnest Thy face away from me? A poor man am I, and in troubles from my youth; yea, having been exalted, I was humbled and brought to distress. Thy furies have passed upon me, and Thy terrors have sorely troubled me. They came round about me like water, all the day long they compassed me about together. Thou hast removed afar from me friend and neighbor, and mine acquaintances because of my misery.

O Lord God of my salvation, by day have I cried and by night before Thee. Let my prayer come before Thee, bow down Thine ear unto my supplication.

PSALM 102

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all that He hath done for thee, Who is gracious unto all thine iniquities, Who healeth all thine infirmities, Who redeemeth thy life from corruption, Who crowneth thee with mercy and compassion, Who fulfilleth thy desire with good things; thy youth shall be renewed as the eagle's. The Lord performeth deeds of mercy, and executeth judgment for all them that are wronged. He hath made His ways known unto Moses, unto the sons of Israel the things that He hath willed. Compassionate and merciful is the Lord, long-suffering and plenteous in mercy; not unto the end will He be angered; neither unto eternity will He be wroth. Not according to our iniquities hath He dealt with us, neither according to our sins hath He rewarded us. For according to the height of heaven from the earth, the Lord hath made His mercy to prevail over them that fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our iniquities from us. Like as a father hath compassion upon his sons, so hath the Lord had compassion upon them that fear Him; for He knoweth whereof we are made, He hath remembered that we are dust. As for man, his days are as the grass; as a flower of the field, so shall he blossom forth. For when the wind is passed over it, then it shall be gone, and no longer will it know the place thereof. But the mercy of the Lord is from eternity, even unto eternity, upon them that fear Him. And His righteousness is upon sons of sons, upon them that keep His testament and remember His commandments to do them. The Lord in heaven hath prepared His throne, and His kingdom ruleth over all. Bless the Lord, all ye His angels, mighty in strength, that perform His word, to hear the voice of His words. Bless the Lord, all ye His hosts, His ministers that do His will. Bless the Lord, all ye His works, in every place of His dominion. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

In every place of His dominion, bless the Lord, O my soul.

PSALM 142

O Lord, hear my prayer, give ear unto my supplication in Thy truth; hearken unto me in Thy righteousness. And enter not into judgment with Thy servant, for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified. For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath humbled my life down to the earth. He hath sat me in darkness as those that have been long dead, and my spirit within me is become despondent; within me my heart is troubled. I remembered days of old, I meditated on all Thy works, I pondered on the creations of Thy hands. I stretched forth my hands unto Thee; my soul thirsteth after Thee like a waterless land. Quickly hear me, O Lord; my spirit hath fainted away. Turn not Thy face away from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit. Cause me to hear Thy mercy in the morning; for in Thee have I put my hope. Cause me to know, O Lord, the way wherein I should walk; for unto Thee have I lifted up my soul. Rescue me from mine enemies, O Lord; unto Thee have I fled for refuge. Teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God. Thy good Spirit shall lead me in the land of uprightness; for Thy name's sake, O Lord, shalt Thou quicken me. In Thy righteousness shalt Thou bring my soul out of affliction, and in Thy mercy shalt Thou utterly destroy mine enemies. And Thou shalt cut off all them that afflict my soul, for I am Thy servant.

Hearken unto me, O Lord, in Thy righteousness and enter not into judgment with Thy servant. (*twice*)

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

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

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

The choir responds "Lord, have mercy" to each petition until noted.

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

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

For this holy house and those who with faith, reverence and fear of God enter therein, let us pray to the Lord.

For our father and metropolitan, N., (our bishop, N.,) the honorable presbytery, the diaconate in Christ, all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

For our country, its president (or appropriate head of state), civil authorities and armed forces, let us pray to the Lord.

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

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

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.

For our deliverance from all tribulation, wrath, danger and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.

Help us; save us; have mercy on us; and keep us, O God, by thy grace.

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.

"GOD IS THE LORD" IN TONE FOUR

Choir: God is the Lord and hath appeared unto us. Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord.

Verse 1. O give thanks unto the Lord and call upon His Holy Name. (*Refrain*)

Verse 2. All nations compassed me about: but in the Name of the Lord will I destroy them. (*Refrain*)

Verse 3. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. (*Refrain*)

APOLYTIKION OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST IN TONE FOUR (**CHANT**) (**CHORAL**)

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, hath given rise to the light of knowledge in the world; for they that worshipped the stars did learn therefrom to worship Thee, O Sun of Justice, and to know that from the east of the Highest Thou didst come. O Lord, glory to Thee. (*thrice*)

THE LITTLE LITANY

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

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

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

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: 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 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.

KATHISMATA HYMNS OF THE NATIVITY IN TONE FOUR (to be chanted)

(**_Joseph was amazed_—hard chromatic**)

Come, ye faithful, let us see * where Christ the Savior hath been born; * let us follow with the kings, * even the Magi from the East, * unto the place where the star doth direct their journey. * For there, the Angels' hosts * sing praises ceaselessly; * shepherds in the field * offer a fitting song, * while saying, Glory in the highest * to Him this day born within the cave * from the pure Virgin and Theotokos * in Bethlehem of Judea.

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

Why, O Mary, marv'lest thou, * amazed at that which is in thee? * Because I have given birth * in time unto the timeless Son, * yet none hath taught me concerning my Child's conception: * without a man am I, * how shall I bear a Son? * Who hath ever seen * a birth without man's seed? * But, as is written, where God willeth, * the order of nature is overcome. * Lo, Christ is born now of the pure Virgin * in Bethlehem of Judea.

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

He Whom nothing can contain, * how is He held within a womb? * And while in His Father's arms, * how in His Mother's pure embrace? * Such is His will and good pleasure, and as He knoweth. * For being without flesh, * He took flesh willingly; * for us, He Who Is * became what He was not. * Without forsaking His own nature, * He hath partaken of what we are. * For Christ is born now, twofold in nature, * to fill Heaven with mankind.

THE POLYELEOS, PART I: PSALM 134

End each verse with "Alleluia."

1: Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the name of the Lord; praise him, O ye servants of the Lord.
2: Ye that stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God.
3: Praise the Lord; for the Lord is good: sing praises unto His Name; for it is pleasant.
4: For the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto Himself, and Israel for His peculiar treasure.
5: For I know that the Lord is great, and that our Lord is above all gods.
6: Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He in Heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.

7: He causeth the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; He maketh lightning for the rain; He bringeth the wind out of his treasuries.
8: Who smote the firstborn of Egypt, both of man and beast.
9: Who sent tokens and wonders into the midst of thee, O Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his servants.
10: Who smote great nations, and slew mighty kings.
11: Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og king of Bashan, and all the kingdoms of Canaan.
12: And gave their land for a heritage, a heritage unto Israel his people.
13: Thy Name, O Lord, endureth forever; and Thy memorial, O Lord, throughout all generations.
14: For the Lord will judge His people, and He will repent himself concerning His servants.
15: The idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the work of men's hands.
16: They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not.
17: They have ears, but they hear not; neither is there any breath in their mouths.
18: They that make them are like unto them: so is everyone that trusteth in them.
19: Bless the Lord, O house of Israel: bless the Lord, O house of Aaron.
20: Bless the Lord, O house of Levi: ye that fear the Lord, bless the Lord.
21: Blessed be the Lord out of Zion, Who dwelleth at Jerusalem. Praise ye the Lord.

THE POLYELEOS, PART II: PSALM 135

End each verse with "Alleluia."

1: O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good: for His mercy endureth forever.
2: O give thanks unto the God of gods: for His mercy endureth forever.
3: O give thanks to the Lord of lords: for His mercy endureth forever.
4: To Him Who alone doeth great wonders: for His mercy endureth forever.
5: To Him that by wisdom made the heavens: for His mercy endureth forever.
6: To Him that stretched out the earth above the waters: for His mercy endureth forever.
7: To Him that made great lights: for His mercy endureth forever.
8: The sun to rule by day: for His mercy endureth forever.
9: The moon and stars to rule by night: for His mercy endureth forever.
10: To Him that smote Egypt in their firstborn: for His mercy endureth forever.
11: And brought out Israel from among them: for His mercy endureth forever.
12: With a strong hand, and with a stretched out arm: for His mercy endureth forever.
13: To Him which divided the Red sea into parts: for His mercy endureth forever.
14: And made Israel to pass through the midst of it: for His mercy endureth forever.
15: But overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea: for His mercy endureth forever.
16: To Him which led his people through the wilderness: for His mercy endureth forever.
17: To Him which smote great kings: for His mercy endureth forever.
18: And slew famous kings: for His mercy endureth forever.
19: Sihon king of the Amorites: for His mercy endureth forever.
20: And Og the king of Bashan: for His mercy endureth forever.
21: And gave their land for a heritage: for His mercy endureth forever.
22: Even a heritage unto Israel his servant: for His mercy endureth forever.
23: Who remembered us in our low estate: for His mercy endureth forever.
24: And hath redeemed us from our enemies: for His mercy endureth forever.
25: Who giveth food to all flesh: for His mercy endureth forever.
26: O give thanks unto the God of Heaven: for His mercy endureth forever.

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

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

THE LITTLE LITANY

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

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

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

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: 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 blessed is Thy Name, and glorified is Thy kingdom: of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

FESTAL ANABATHMOI IN TONE FOUR

+ From my youth up many passions have warred against me. But do Thou help and save me, O my Savior. (*twice*)
+ Ye who hate Zion shall be put to confusion of the Lord; like grass in the fire shall ye be withered up. (*twice*)
+ *Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.*
+ Through the Holy Spirit is every soul quickened and exalted in purity, and made resplendent by the Triune Unity in mystic holiness.
+ *Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.*
+ Through the Holy Spirit the channels and streams of grace overflow showering all creation with invigorating Life.

PROKEIMENON OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST IN TONE FOUR

From the womb before the morning star have I begotten Thee. The Lord hath sworn and will not repent. (*twice*)

***Stichos**: The Lord said unto my Lord: Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies the footstool of Thy feet.*

From the womb before the morning star have I begotten Thee. The Lord hath sworn and will not repent.

LET EVERYTHING THAT HATH BREATH

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For Holy art Thou, O our God, Who restest in the Holies, 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.

Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. (*twice*)

Praise ye God in His saints; praise Him in the firm foundation of His power.

Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.

THE FESTAL ORTHROS GOSPEL

Deacon: And that we may be accounted worthy to hear the Holy Gospel, let us beseech the Lord our God.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (*thrice*)

Deacon: Wisdom! Stand upright! Let us hear the Holy Gospel.

Priest: Peace be to all.

Choir: And to thy spirit.

Priest: The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew (1:18-25).

Choir: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

Deacon: Let us attend!

TO BE READ FROM THE BEAUTIFUL GATE

Priest: 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 for thy 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 had commanded him; he took his wife, but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called His Name Jesus.

Choir: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee. (*No veneration of the gospel book.*)

PSALM 50

Reader: Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy Great Mercy; and according to the multitude of Thy compassions blot out my transgression. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know mine iniquity, and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee only have I sinned and done this evil before Thee, that Thou mightest be justified in Thy words, and prevail when Thou art judged. For behold, I was conceived in iniquities, and in sins did my mother bear me. For behold, Thou hast loved truth; the hidden and secret things of Thy wisdom hast Thou made manifest unto me. Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be made clean; Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow. Thou shalt make me to hear joy and

gladness; the bones that be humbled, they shall rejoice. Turn Thy face away from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and with Thy governing Spirit establish me. I shall teach transgressors Thy ways, and the ungodly shall turn back unto Thee. Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, Thou God of my salvation; my tongue shall rejoice in Thy righteousness. O Lord, Thou shalt open my lips, and my mouth shall declare Thy praise. For if Thou hadst desired sacrifice, I had given it; with whole-burnt offerings Thou shalt not be pleased. A sacrifice unto God is a broken spirit; a heart that is broken and humbled God will not despise. Do good, O Lord, in Thy good pleasure unto Zion, and let the walls of Jerusalem be built up. Then shalt Thou be pleased with a sacrifice of righteousness, with oblation and whole-burnt offerings. Then shall they offer bullocks upon Thine altar.

FESTAL TROPARIA AFTER PSALM 50 IN TONE TWO (**KAZAN**) (**HTM**)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
All things are filled with joy today; Christ is born of the Virgin.

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.
All things are filled with joy today; Christ is born of the Virgin.

(TONE SIX) *Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy lovingkindness; according to the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.*
Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace. Today Bethlehem receiveth Him that sitteth at all times with the Father. Today Angels glorify in a manner befitting God the Babe that hath been born: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men.

THE INTERCESSION[1]

Deacon: O God, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance. Visit Thy world with mercy and compassions. Exalt the horn of Orthodox Christians and send down upon us Thy rich mercies. Through the intercessions of our all-immaculate Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary; 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, all-laudable apostles Peter and Paul, and of all the holy apostles; of our fathers among the saints, great hierarchs and ecumenical teachers, Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom; Athanasius, Cyril and John the Merciful, patriarchs of Alexandria; Nicholas of Myra, Spyridon of Trimythous and Nektarios of Pentapolis, the Wonderworkers; of our fathers among the saints Tikhon, patriarch of Moscow and Raphael, bishop of Brooklyn; of the holy, glorious, great-martyrs, George the Trophy-bearer, Demetrios the Myrrh-streamer, Theodore the Soldier, Theodore the General, and Menas the Wonderworker; of the hieromartyrs Ignatius the God-bearer of Antioch, Charalampos and Eleutherios; of the holy, glorious great women martyrs, Thekla, Barbara, Anastasia, Katherine, Kyriaki, Photeini, Marina, Paraskeva and Irene; of the holy, glorious, right-victorious martyrs; of our venerable and God-bearing fathers who shone in the ascetic life; *of Saint N., the patron and protector of this holy community*; of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna, and of all the saints: we beseech Thee, O most merciful Lord, hearken unto the petitions of us sinners who make our supplications unto Thee, and have mercy upon us.

[1] Saints of particular local veneration may be included among the Saints of their same classification at the discretion of the pastor.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (***twelve times***)

Priest: Through the mercies and compassions and love for mankind of Thine Only-begotten Son, with Whom Thou art blessed, together with Thine all-holy, and good, and life-giving Spirit: now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

KONTAKION AND OIKOS FOR THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST (**Plain Reading**)

On this day the Virgin beareth the Transcendent in Essence; to the Unapproachable, the earth doth offer a small cave; Angels join in choir with shepherds in giving glory; with a star the Magi travel upon their journey; for our sakes is born a young Child, He Who existed before the ages as God.

Bethlehem hath opened Eden: come, and let us see. We have found joy in secret: come, and let us take possession of the paradise that is within the cave. There, the unwatered Root hath appeared, from which forgiveness flowereth forth: there is found the undug Well, whence David longed to drink of old. There, the Virgin hath borne a Babe, and made the thirst of Adam and David to cease straightway. Therefore, let us hasten to this place where now is born a young Child, God before the ages.

THE SYNAXARION (**Plain Reading**)

On December 25 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we celebrate the Nativity according to the flesh of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ.

Verses

The Child born is God, and the Mother, a Virgin; what greater marvel hath appeared in creation?
On the twenty-fifth Mary the Virgin gave birth to God.
On this day we commemorate the Adoration of the Magi:
Worshipping Thee, O Word, this cohort, come from the nations,
Showeth the worship that Thou shalt receive from the nations.

On this day we commemorate the Shepherds that behold the Lord:
Shepherds their own flock do now abandon, and hasten to see Christ, the Good Shepherd.

Thus entered into the world He Whose coming was foretold by the prophets, and Who was born in the same manner in which it had been prophesied: of a Most-holy Virgin, in the town of Bethlehem, of the lineage of David according to the flesh, at the time when there was no king in Jerusalem of the lineage of Judah, but rather when a foreigner named Herod, who sought to kill the infant Messiah, was reigning. After many types and prefigurings, messengers and heralds, prophets and righteous men, wise men and kings, finally He appeared, the Lord of the world and King of kings, to perform the work of the salvation of mankind.

Unto Him be glory unto ages of ages. Amen.

KATAVASIAE OF BOTH CANONS OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY IN TONE ONE
(**KAZAN**) (**HTM**)

Ode 1 (1). Christ is born, give ye glory. Christ is come from Heaven, receive ye Him. Christ is on earth, be ye exalted. Sing unto the Lord all the earth and sing praises in gladness, O ye peoples; for He hath been glorified.

Ode 1 (2). Working a great wonder, the Master saved the people of old when He made dry the sea's swelling water. And now He is born of His own will from a Maiden, making us a path that leadeth unto Heaven: Him we glorify, equal in essence with the Father and with mortals.

Ode 3 (1). To the Son Who was begotten of the Father before the ages without change, and in these last days was without seed made flesh of the Virgin, to Christ our God let us cry aloud: Thou Who hast raised up our horn, holy art Thou, O Lord.

Ode 3 (2). To Thy servants' hymns, incline, O Benefactor; bring low the haughty pride of the adversary, O blessed One, that lookest down and seest all. Keep us above sin, who ever sing Thy praises, steadfast and unmoved on the foundation of faith.

Ode 4 (1). Rod of the root of Jesse, and flower that blossomed from his stem, O Christ, Thou hast sprung from the Virgin; from the mountain densely overshadowed hast Thou come, O Praised One, made flesh of her that knew not wedlock. O Thou Who art immateriate and God, glory to Thy power, O Lord.

Ode 4 (2). In his song of old, Prophet Habakkuk foretold of the restoration of all the race of mortals, having been vouchsafed to see its type past all telling; for as a young babe from the mountain of the Virgin did the Word come forth to refashion the peoples.

Ode 5 (1). Since Thou art the God of peace and the Father of mercies, Thou hast sent unto us Thine Angel of Great Counsel, granting us peace. Wherefore, having been guided to the light of divine knowledge, and watching by night, we glorify Thee, O Friend of man.

Ode 5 (2). As we now keep watch in the night to sing Thy praises as our Benefactor, O Christ, grant us forgiveness of what we have done in benighted delusion. Come provide a path that is easy to journey, that we may ascend upon it and find glory.

Ode 6 (1). The sea-monster spat forth Jonah as it had received him like a babe from the womb; while the Word, having dwelt in the Virgin and taken flesh, came forth from her yet kept her incorrupt. For being Himself not subject to corruption, He preserved His Mother free from harm.

Ode 6 (2). Dwelling in the deeps of the sea's lowest regions, Jonah prayed to come unto Thee and calm the tempest. But I, that am pierced by the shaft of the tyrant, call on Thee, O Christ, the Abolisher of evil: Come anticipate my slothfulness speedily.

Ode 7 (1). Scorning the impious decree, the Children brought up in godliness feared not the threat of fire, but standing in the midst of the flames, they chanted: O God of our Fathers, blessed art Thou.

Ode 7 (2). For the King of all, longing held fast the Children, Who despised as nought the base ungodly babblings of the tyrant who raged with fury insensate; and the boundless fire then gave way as they cried out to the Sovereign Lord: Blessed art Thou to the ages.

Ode 8 (1). The furnace moist with dew was the image and figure of a wonder past nature; for it burned not the Youths whom it had received, even as the fire of the Godhead consumed not the Virgin's womb into which it had descended. Wherefore in praise let us sing: Let all creation bless the Lord, and supremely exalt Him unto all the ages.

We praise, we bless, and we worship the Lord.
Ode 8 (2). Midst the flames unburnt, the Old Covenant Children figure forth the womb of the virginal Maiden, which, remaining sealed, doth conceive beyond nature. For in working both by the same wondrous power, Grace doth wisely rouse the peoples unto praises.

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

NINTH ODE OF THE FIRST CANON OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY IN TONE ONE
(**KAZAN**) (**HTM**)

Magnify, O my soul, her that is more honorable and more glorious than the hosts on high.
A strange and marvelous mystery do I behold; the cave is a heaven; the Virgin a cherubic throne; the manger a space wherein Christ God the Uncontainable One hath reclined. Him do we praise and magnify.

Magnify, O my soul, God Who was born in the flesh of a Virgin.
When the Magi beheld the strange course of a new and uncommon star, which had but now, begun to shine brighter than all the light in the heavens, they were given a sure sign that Christ the King had been born on earth in Bethlehem for our salvation.

Magnify, O my soul, the King Who was born in a cave.
When the Magi said, Where is the new-born Child and King, Whose star hath appeared in the heavens? For we are come to worship Him. Then was Herod troubled and beside himself with fury, and the enemy of God madly sought to destroy Christ.

Magnify, O my soul, God, Who was worshipped by the Magi.
Herod diligently inquired what time that star had appeared, by whose guidance the Wise Men were come to Bethlehem, to worship Christ with gifts; and led back to their country by the same star, they left the wicked slayer of children behind in mockery.

NINTH ODE OF THE SECOND CANON OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY IN TONE ONE

Today the Virgin giveth birth unto the Master in the cave.
Being well content, out of fear, to be silent would be easier, since silence hath no danger. O Virgin, it is hard to compose hymns with love framed in harmony, but we pray thee, O Mother: Do thou grant us strength as great as our volition.

Today the Master is born as an infant of a Virgin Mother.
Being well content, out of fear, to be silent would be easier, since silence hath no danger. O Virgin, it is hard to compose hymns with love framed in harmony, but we pray thee, O Mother: Do thou grant us strength as great as our volition.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Magnify, O my soul, the dominion of the Undivided Godhead of Three Hypostases.
O thou Mother pure, we have seen the dark figures of the Word of God with the shadows that vanished; for He hath shined forth newly from thee, the shut gate. Wherefore, seeing we have been thought to be worthy of the Light of Truth, we bless thy womb as is meet.

Both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen. Magnify, O my soul, her that hath delivered us from the curse.

Having been vouchsafed God's own advent, the people that delighteth Christ hath obtained what it longed for. Now it maketh prayer for that regeneration that createth life. O immaculate Virgin, grant to us the grace to worship Christ in His glory.

KATAVASIAE OF BOTH CANONS OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY IN TONE ONE

Ode 9 (1). *Magnify, O my soul, her that is more honorable and more glorious than the hosts on high.*
A strange and marvelous mystery do I behold; the cave is a heaven; the Virgin a cherubic throne; the manger a space wherein Christ God the Uncontainable One hath reclined. Him do we praise and magnify.

Ode 9 (2). *Magnify, O my soul, her that hath delivered us from the curse.*
Being well content, out of fear, to be silent would be easier, since silence hath no danger. O Virgin, it is hard to compose hymns with love framed in harmony, but we pray thee, O Mother: Do thou grant us strength as great as our volition.

THE 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 all the powers of heaven praise Thee, and unto Thee do they 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 EXAPOSTEILARION OF THE NATIVITY IN TONE THREE (**CHANT**) (**CHORAL**)
(***The original melody***)
From the heights our Savior, Christ, * the Dayspring of the East, is come * to visit us; and we, who once * were in the shadow and the dark, * behold, now we have found the truth; * for from a holy Virgin, * the Lord hath been born today. (*thrice*)

AINOI (PRAISES) IN TONE FOUR (**KAZAN**) (**KARAM**)

Choir: Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord from the heavens; praise Him in the heights. To Thee, O God, is due our song.

Choir: Praise ye Him, all His angels; praise ye Him, all His hosts. To Thee, O God, is due our song.

For the Nativity in Tone Four (**KAZAN**) (**HTM**)
Verse 1. *Praise God in His sanctuary; praise Him in the firmament of His power. Praise Him for His mighty acts; praise Him according to His excellent greatness.*
Be glad, O ye righteous; ye heavens, rejoice exceedingly; ye mountains, skip for joy, as Christ is born. Imitating the Cherubim, the Virgin becometh a throne, carrying in her bosom God the Word

incarnate. Shepherds glorify Him that is born; Magi offer gifts unto the Master; and Angels sing praises, saying: O incomprehensible Lord, glory be to Thee.

Verse 2. *Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet. Praise Him with the psaltery and harp.*
The Father was well pleased: the Word is become flesh, and the Virgin hath given birth unto God become man. A star is the herald; Magi worship; shepherds marvel; and creation doth rejoice.

Verse 3. *Praise Him with the timbrel and dance; praise Him with stringed instruments and organs.*
O Virgin Theotokos, who hast given birth unto the Savior, thou hast overturned the ancient curse of Eve. For thou art become the Mother of Him that is the Good Will of the Father, and hast carried in thy bosom God the Word incarnate. This mystery cannot be searched out; we all glorify it with faith alone, crying with thee and saying: O Lord, Who art past interpretation, glory be to Thee.

Verse 4. *Praise Him upon the loud cymbals; praise Him upon the high-sounding cymbals. Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.*
Come, let us sing hymns unto the Mother of the Savior, who after childbirth still remained a virgin. Rejoice, thou Living City of our King and God, wherein Christ hath dwelt and hath wrought salvation. Together with Gabriel we praise thee; with the shepherds we glorify thee, crying: O Theotokos, intercede with Him that was incarnate of thee, that we be saved.

THE DOXASTICA OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST (KAZAN) (KARAM) (StAM)

In Tone Six

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
When it was time for Thy coming upon earth, the world was enrolled to be taxed for the first time; then wast Thou minded to enroll the names of them that believed in Thy Birth. For this cause was such a decree pronounced by Caesar, since Thy timeless and everlasting Kingdom was inaugurated. Wherefore we also, in the stead of tribute money, Offer the wealth of our Orthodox theology unto Thee, the God and Savior of our souls.

In Tone Two

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.
Today, Christ is born of the Virgin in Bethlehem. Today the Beginningless beginneth, and the Word is made flesh. The powers of the Heavens rejoice, and the earth together with men is glad. The Magi offer their gifts, the shepherds proclaim the marvel, and we ceaselessly cry out: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among men.

THE GREAT DOXOLOGY IN TONE TWO

+ Glory to Thee, Who hast shown forth the light. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among men.
+ We hymn Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks unto Thee for Thy great glory.
+ O Lord King, heavenly God, Father almighty; O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ; and O Holy Spirit.
+ O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy on us, thou that takest away the sins of the world.
+ Receive our prayer, Thou that sittest at the right hand of the Father, and have mercy on us.
+ For Thou only art holy, Thou only art the Lord, O Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

+ Every day will I bless Thee, and I will praise Thy name forever, yea forever and ever.
+ Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin.
+ Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our Fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy name 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. (*thrice*)
+ Lord, thou hast been our refuge from generation to generation. I said: Lord, be merciful unto me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee.
+ Lord, I have fled unto Thee; teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God.
+ For with Thee is the fountain of life; in thy light shall we see light.
+ O continue Thy mercy unto them that know thee.
+ Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. (*thrice*)
+ Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
+ Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.
+ Holy Immortal: have mercy on us.
+ Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us.

APOLYTIKION OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST IN TONE FOUR (**CHANT**) (**CHORAL**)

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, hath given rise to the light of knowledge in the world; for they that worshipped the stars did learn therefrom to worship Thee, O Sun of Justice, and to know that from the east of the Highest Thou didst come. O Lord, glory to Thee.

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