

The 26th Day of December

Ⲭ Second Day of the Nativity of Christ; the Synaxis of the Most Holy Theotokos;

Also, the Commemoration of the Holy Hieromartyr Euthemius, Bishop of Sardis. — *incomplete 12/2022*

Vespers

Note: The 1st Kathisma is not sung unless this day falls on a Sunday.

At “Lord, I call...,” 6 stichera of the Feast, in Tone 2:

Come, let us greatly rejoice in the Lord /
As we tell of this present mystery /
The wall of partition has been fully destroyed /
The flaming sword turns back, the cherubīm withdraw from the tree of life /
And I partake of the delight of paradise /
From which I was cast out through disobedience /
For the express image of the Father, the image of His eternity /
Takes the form of a servant /
And without change He comes forth from a Mother who knew no wedlock /
For what He was, He has remained—True God /
And what He was not, He has taken upon Himself /
Becoming man through His love for man /
To Him let us cry aloud: ///
O God, born of a Virgin, have mercy on us. *(twice)*

(by Anatolius)

When the Lord Jesus was born of the holy Virgin /
All the world was enlightened, /
The shepherds watched in their fields, the Magi adored, and the angels praised in
song; /
But Herod was troubled, ///
For God has appeared in the flesh, the Savior of our souls. *(twice)*

Thy kingdom, O Christ our God /
Is a kingdom of all the ages, /
And Thy rule is from generation to generation /
Made flesh of the Holy Spirit and made man of the Ever-virgin Mary /
Thou hast enlightened us by Thy coming. /
Light of Light, Brightness of the Father, /
Thou hast made the whole of creation shine with joy. /
Everything that has breath praises Thee, the Image of the glory of the Father, /

O God who art, and who hast ever been, ///
Who hast shown forth from a Virgin, have mercy on us. *(twice)*

What shall we offer to Thee, O Christ, /
Who for our sake hast appeared on earth as a man? /
Every creature made by Thee offers thanks to Thee /
The angels offer Thee a hymn; the heavens a star; /
The Magi, gifts; the shepherds, their wonder; /
The earth, its cave; the wilderness, the manger; /
And we offer Thee a Virgin Mother. ///
O pre-eternal God, have mercy on us. *(twice)*

Glory..., now and ever..., of the Feast, in Tone 6:

Glory to God in the highest, /
And on earth peace. /
Today Bethlĕhem receiveth Him /
Who sitteth forever with the Father. /
Today the angels glorify the Infant as is worthy of God: /
Glory to God in the highest, ///
And on earth peace, good will to men.

The Entrance and the Great Prokeimenon, in Tone 7:

Who is so great a God as our God? / Thou art the God who doest wonders!

Verse: Thou hast made Thy power known among the people!

Verse: And I said, “Now have I begun; this is the change of the right hand of the Most High!”

Verse: I remember the works of the Lord; for from the beginning will I remember Thy wonders!

And again: **W**ho is so great a God as our God?...

Note: But if it is Saturday, we sing the usual Saturday Evening Prokeimenon, in Tone 6:

The Lord is King, / He is robed in majesty.

Verse: The Lord is robed; He is girded with strength.

Verse: For He hath established the world so that it shall never be moved.

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

And again: **T**he Lord is King

SECOND DAY OF THE NATIVITY; THE SYNAXIS OF THE THEOTOKOS;
HIEROMARTYR EUTHYIUS OF SARDIS

Note: The Great Prokeimenon, “Who is so great a God...” and its verses are thus sung on the Eve of the Feast itself, while the daily Prokeimenon is omitted. The litany then follows.

At the Aposticha, these stichera of the Feast, in Tone 8: (*the composition of John, the monk of Damascus*)

An awesome mystery has come to pass this day: /
Nature is renewed and God becomes man. /
That which He was, He has remained; /
And that which He was not, He has taken upon Himself ///
While suffering neither confusion nor division.

Verse: Out of the womb before the morning star have I begotten Thee: the Lord hath sworn and will not change His mind.

Thou, O Lord, art come to Bethlĕhem, /
And hast Thy dwelling in a cave; /
Thou who hast heaven as Thy throne art laid in a manger. /
Thou whom the hosts of angels attend on every side /
Hast come down among shepherds, /
That in Thy compassion, Thou mightest save mankind. ///
O Lord, glory to Thee!

Verse: The Lord said to my Lord: “Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.”

How shall I tell of this great mystery? /
He who is without flesh hath become incarnate; /
The Word hath put on a body; /
The invisible becometh seen; /
Him whom no hand can touch is held by His Mother; /
And He who has no beginning now begins to be. /
The Son of God becometh the Son of man; ///
Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and tomorrow!

Glory..., now and ever..., in the same Tone:

The shepherds hasten to Bethlĕhem, /
Revealing the true Shepherd /
Who sitteth upon the cherubīm and lieth in the manger. /
For our sakes He hath taken upon Himself the form of a child. ///
O Lord, glory to Thee!

The Troparion of the Feast, in Tone 4:

Thy nativity, O Christ our God /
Hath risen upon the world as the light of understanding, /
For through it those who worshipped the stars were taught by a star /
To worship Thee, the Sun of Righteousness, /
And to know Thee, /
The Orient from on high; ///
O Lord, glory to Thee!

Compline

The Canon of the Hieromartyr Euthymius is served at Compline on any other day, as directed by the Superior or Rector.

—incomplete a of 12/2022

Matins

Note: Everything as on the Feast of the Nativity, except:

After the Third Ode, the Kontakion and Ikos are of the Feast, in Tone 3, To the melody, “Today the Virgin....”

Today the Virgin gives birth to the transcendent One, /
And the earth offers a cave to the unapproachable One! /
Angels with shepherds glorify Him! /
The wise men journey with the star; ///
Since for our sake the eternal God is born as a little child!

Ikos: Bethlehem has opened Eden, O come let us see! Let us receive the things of paradise within the cave; we have found nourishment in a secret place; there the unwatered root hath appeared blossoming with forgiveness; there is found the undug well from which David longed to drink; there the Virgin hath brought forth the Child, quenching both Adam’s and David’s thirst. Therefore let us go to Him where He is born a little Child, yet is God before the ages.

After the Sixth Ode, the following Kontakion and Ikos, in Tone 6: (by Romanus the Melodist)

He who before the morning star /
Wast begotten without mother of the Father, /
Is today without father made flesh upon earth of thee. /
A star announces the good tidings to the Magi, /
While the angels with shepherds sing the praises of thine undefiled childbearing, ///
O thou who art full of grace.

SECOND DAY OF THE NATIVITY; THE SYNAXIS OF THE THEOTOKOS;
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Ikos: The mystical vine put forth the bunch of grapes that was chastely borne, and with her arms, like branches, she carried Him, saying: “Thou art my fruit, Thou art my life: from Thee have I learnt that I remain as I was. Thou art my God: for seeing the seal of my virginity unbroken, I proclaim Thee to be the unchangeable Word, now made incarnate. I have known no seed, and I know that Thou art the destroyer of corruption: for I am pure, yet Thou hast gone forth from me. As Thou hast found my womb, so Thou hast left it. Therefore, all creation shares in my joy and cries to me: Rejoice, thou who art full of grace!”

At the Ninth Ode, we do not sing the Magnificat but the Megalynaria and troparia as on the Feast itself.

At the Praises, the sing the Praises of the Feast, followed by

Glory..., in Tone 6:

Today the invisible Nature is joined to mortal men /
Coming forth from the Virgin. /
Today the infinite Essence is wrapped in swaddling clothes in Bethlēm. /
Today God leads the Magi by a star to worship Him. /
They announce His three-day burial with gold, frankincense, and myrrh. /
Therefore, we praise Him and sing: ///
O Christ God, made flesh of the Virgin, save our souls!

Now and ever..., in Tone 2:

Today Christ is born of the Virgin in Bethlēm. /
Today He who knows no beginning begins to be, /
And the Word is made flesh. /
The powers of heaven greatly rejoice; /
And the earth with mankind makes glad; /
The Magi offer gifts, the shepherds proclaim the marvel, /
And we cry aloud without ceasing: ///
Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among men.

Liturgy

At the Beatitudes, 8 Troparia: 4 from the Third Odes of the First Canon of the Feast, and 4 from the Sixth Ode of the Second Canon of the Feast.

At the Entrance:

O Son of God, born of the Virgin, save us who sing to Thee: Alleluia!

The Troparion of the Feast: “Thy nativity, O Christ our God...,” **and the following Kontakion, in Tone 6:**

He who before the morning star /
Wast begotten without mother of the Father, /
Is today without father made flesh upon earth of thee. /
A star announces the good tidings to the Magi, /
While the angels with shepherds sing the praises of thine undefiled childbearing, ///
O thou who art full of grace.

Prokeimenon, Tone 3 (*The Song of the Theotokos*): My soul magnifies the Lord, / and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. *Verse:* For He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden; for behold, henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

The Epistle: (306) Heb. 2:11-18

The Alleluia in Tone 8: Arise, O Lord, into Thy resting place, Thou and the ark of Thy holiness. *Verse:* The Lord hath sworn to David a sure oath and will not change His mind.

The Gospel: (4) Matt. 2:13-23

Instead of “It is truly meet...” **we sing,** “Magnify, O my soul...,” **and the Irmos of the Ninth Ode of the Second Canon of the Feast.** “Speech is our natural gift...”

The Communion Hymn: The Lord hath sent redemption to His people. Alleluia....