

# THE ROYAL HOURS

ON THE EVE OF THE  
NATIVITY OF CHRIST



## **The Royal Hours**

At Royal Hours all of the Hours: 1st, 3rd, 6th, and 9th, as well as the Typical Psalms, are sung as one service. The service is read on the eves of the Nativity of Christ and Theophany, as well as on Holy Friday. It is characterized by special Psalms and hymns, as well as special Old Testament, Epistle and Gospel Readings, relating to the particular Feast or events of the day.

Historically, it was customary for the Byzantine emperor to be in attendance for the entire Service, hence the title Royal Hours.

Although there will be no emperor present today, an effort is being made to restore the use of services such as this that have fallen into disuse in the hopes of one day having a fuller liturgical life within our parishes.

*Text for this service is taken from the Divine Office of the  
Byzantine-Slavonic Rite. Stamford, CT., USA. 2014*

# The Royal Hours

*If the eve of the Nativity falls on a Saturday or a Sunday, then,  
the Royal Hours are taken on Friday.*

## **First Hour**

Priest: Blessed be our God, always, now and for ever and ever.

Choir: Amen.

Glory be to You, our God, glory be to You!

Heavenly King, Advocate, Spirit of Truth,\* Who are everywhere present and fill all things,\* Treasury of Blessings, Bestower of Life, come and dwell within us;\* cleanse us of all that defiles us,\* and, O Good One, save our souls.

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

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,\* now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Trinity most holy, have mercy on us.\* Cleanse us of our sins, O Lord;\* pardon our transgressions, O Master;\* look upon our weaknesses and heal them, O Holy One;\* for the sake of Your name.

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,\* now and for ever and ever. Amen.

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

Priest: For the kingdom, the power and the glory are Yours, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever.

Choir: Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (12x)

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Come, let us adore the King, our God.

Come, let us adore Christ, the King and our God.

Come, let us adore and bow down to the only Lord Jesus Christ, the King and our God.

*Psalm 43*

My heart overflows with noble words;\* to the king I must speak the song I have made.

My tongue as nimble\* as the pen of a scribe.

You are the fairest of the children of men and graciousness is poured upon Your lips;\* because God has blessed You for ever more.

O might One, gird Your sword upon Your thigh;\* in splendor and state.

Ride on in triumph for the cause of truth and goodness and right,\* take aim with Your bow in your dread right hand.

Your arrows are sharp, peoples fall beneath You.\* The foes of the king fall down and lose heart.

Your throne, O God, shall endure for ever;\* a scepter of justice is the scepter of Your kingdom.

Your love is for justice; Your hatred for evil;\* therefore God, Your God, as anointed You with the oil of gladness above other kings.

Your robes are fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia;\* from ivory palaces stringed instruments make you glad.

Daughters of kings are among your ladies of honour;\* at your right hand stands the queen is gold of Ophir.

Listen, O daughter, give ear to my words:\* forget your own people and your father's house.

So will the king desire your beauty:\* He is your lord, pay homage to him.

And the people of Tyre shall come with gifts,\* the richest of the people shall seek your favor.

The daughter of the king is clothed with splendor,\* her robes embroidered with pearls set in gold.

She is led to the king with her maiden companions;\* they are escorted amid gladness and joy;\* they pass within the palace of the king.

Sons shall be yours in place of your ancestors;\* you will make them princes over all the earth.

May this song make your name for ever remembered;\* may the peoples praise you from age to age.

### *Psalm 5*

To my words give ear, O Lord,\* give heed to my groaning,

Attend to the sound of my cries, my King and my God.\* IT is You Whom I invoke, O Lord.

In the morning You hear me;\* in the morning I offer You my prayer, watching and waiting.

You are no God Who loves evil;\* no sinner is Your guest.

The boastful shall not stand their ground before Your face.\* You hate all who do evil;

You destroy all who lie.\* Deceitful and bloodthirsty people are hateful to You, O Lord.

But I through the greatness of Your love\* have access to Your house.

I bow down before Your holy temple,\* filled with awe.

Lead me, Lord, in Your justice, because of those who lie in wait;\*  
make clear Your way before me.

No truth can be found in their mouths,\* their heart is all  
mischief,

Their throat a wide-open grace,\* all honey their speech.

Declare them guilty, O God.\* Let them fall in their designs.

Drive them out for their many offenses,\* for they have defied  
You.

All those You protect shall be glad\* and ring out their joy.

You shelter them;\* in You they rejoice, those who love Your  
name.

Lord, it is You Who bless the upright;\* You surround them with  
favour as with shield.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now  
and for ever and ever. Amen.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Glory be to You, O God! (3x)

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

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

*(Tone 4)* At that time Mary registered with the venerable Joseph  
in Bethlehem\* since she was of the house of David.\* She was the  
child, having conceived without seed.\* When the time for her  
delivery drew near,\* they could find no room in the inn,\* but the  
cave seemed a joyful palace for the Queen.\* Christ is born to re-  
new the likeness that had been lost of old.

Now and for ever and ever. Amen.

What shall we call you, O Full of Grace? A heaven, for you have  
borne the Sun of Justice? A paradise, for you have brought forth  
the Flower of immortality? A virgin, for you have remained  
undefiled? A mother, holding in her holy arms the Son Who is  
the God of all? Intercede with Him for the salvation of our souls.

## *Stichera*

*(Tone 8, Samohlasen):* O Bethlehem prepare yourself;\* O manger, adorn yourself as it behooves!\* O ave, get ready to receive, for Truth has come, and the shadow has passed,\* for God has come forth from a Virgin and appeared to mankind;\* He has taken upon Himself our likeness and has deified our human nature.\* Because of this, Adam is renewed together with Eve, and they cry out:\* The mercy of God has appeared on earth to save our human race.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Thus spoke Joseph to Mary: Mary, what was happened to you?\* I do not understand; and I tremble.\* Therefore, I shall quickly and secretly put you away.\* Mary, what is it that I behold in you?\* Instead of honour, I behold shame;\* instead of joy—grief; instead of praise, you have brought me disgrace.\* I can no longer bear the reproach of the people.\* I accepted you immaculate from the priests in the temple of the Lord;\* and now what do I behold?

*Opening the royal doors, the priest vested in the phelonion and deacon intones:*

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Priest: Peace be with all.

Deacon: Wisdom! Let us be attentive!

## *Prokimenon in Tone 4*

The Lord said to me: You are my Son.\* It is I Who have begotten You today.

*Verse:* Ask and I shall bequeath You the nations, put the ends of the earth in Your possession.

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: A reading from the Book of the Prophet Micah.

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Reader: Thus says the Lord: But you Bethlehem-Ephrathah, too small to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel; Whose origin is from old, from ancient times. Therefore the Lord will give them up, until the time when she who is to give birth has borne, and the rest of his brother shall return to the children of Israel. He shall stand firm and shepherd his flock by the strength of the Lord, in the majestic name of the Lord, his God; and they shall remain, for now his greatness shall reach to the ends of the earth.

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: A reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews.

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Reader: Brothers and sisters: In times past, God spoke in partial and various ways to our ancestors through the prophets; in these last days, he spoke to us through a son, whom he made heir of all things and through whom he created the universe, who is the refulgence of his glory, the very imprint of his being, and who sustains all things by his mighty word. When he had accomplished purification from sins, he took his seat at the right hand of the Majesty on high, as far superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. For to which of the angels did God ever say: "You are my son; this day I have begotten you?" Or again: "I will be a father to him and he shall be a son to me?" And again, when he leads the first-born into the world, he says: "Let all the angels of God worship him." Of the angels he says: "He makes his angels winds and his ministers a fiery flame;" but of the Son: "Your throne, O God, stands forever and ever; and a righteous scepter is the scepter of your kingdom. You loved justice and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, anointed you with the oil of gladness above your companions;" and "At the beginning, O Lord, you established the earth, and the heavens are the works of your hands. They will perish, but you remain; and they will all grow old like a garment. You will roll them up like a cloak, and like a garment they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will have no end."

*The deacon incenses the altar and the people, then intones:*

Deacon: Wisdom! Let us be attentive! Let us listen to the Holy Gospel.

Priest: Peace be with all.

Choir: And with your spirit.

Deacon: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Choir: Glory be to You, O Lord, glory be to You.

Priest: (Reading from Matthew 1:18-25)

Choir: Glory be to You, O Lord, glory be to You.

*The royal doors are now closed, and the choir continues:*

Choir: Let my way be straight according to Your word;\* let no sin over come me.\* Save me from the wickedness of evildoers,\* and I will keep Your commandments.\* Let Your face shine upon Your servant,\* and teach me Your laws.

Let my mouth be filled with Your praise, O Lord,\* and let me sing Your glory and magnificence all the day long.

Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal, have mercy on us. (x3)

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,\* now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Trinity most holy, have mercy on us.\* Cleanse us of our sins, O Lord;\* pardon our transgressions, O Master;\* look upon our weaknesses and heal them, O Holy One;\* for the sake of Your name.

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,\* now and for ever and ever. Amen.

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

Priest: For the kingdom, the power and the glory are Yours, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever.

Choir: Amen.

### *Kontakion*

*(Tone 3):* Today the Virgin gives birth to the eternal One, the earth offers the Uncontainable a cave, the angels with the shepherds glory, and a star guides the magi, for to us has been born a Child - the eternal God.

Lord, have mercy. (40x)

O Christ, our God, in all times and places You are worshiped and glorified both in heave and on earth. You are long-suffering and generous in Your mercy and compassion. You love the just and show mercy and compassion. You love the just and show mercy to the sinner, calling all people to repentance through the promise of blessings to come. Deem, O Lord, at this very hour, to receive our supplications and to direct our lives in the path of Your commandments. Sanctify our souls; purify our bodies; set aright our minds; cleanse our thoughts; deliver us from all affliction, trouble, and distress; surround us with Your holy angels so that, guided and guarded in their camp, we may attain oneness of faith and the knowledge of Your unspeakable glory. For You are blessed for ever and ever. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Now and for ever and ever. Amen.

More honourable than the cherubim, and by far more glorious than the seraphim; ever a virgin, you gave birth to God the Word, O true Mother of God, we magnify you.

Give the blessing, father, in the name of the Lord.

Priest: May God be merciful to us and bless us; may His countenance shine upon us, and may He have mercy on us.

Choir: Amen.

### *Prayer of the First Hour*

O Christ, the true Light who enlightens and sanctifies everyone in the world, mark us with the light of Your countenance so that we may see the unapproachable radiance. Let our life be straight along the path of Your commandments, through the prayers of Your most pure Mother and of all Your saints.

### ***Third Hour***

Come, let us adore the King, our God.

Come, let us adore Christ, the King and our God.

Come, let us adore and bow down to the only Lord Jesus Christ, the King and our God.

### *Psalm 2*

Why this tumult among nations,\* among peoples this useless murmuring?

They arise, the kings of the earth, princes plot against the Lord and His Anointed:\* “Come, let us break their fetters, come, let us cast off their yoke.”

He Who sits in the heavens laughs;\* the Lord is laughing them to scorn.

Then He will speak in His anger,\* His rage will strike wthem with terror.

“It is I Who have set up My king\* on Zion, My holy mountain.”

I will announce the decree of the Lord: The Lord said to me:\* You are my Son. It is I who have begotten You this day.

Ask and I shall bequeath You the nations,\* put the ends of the earth in your possession.

With a rod of iron you will break them,\* shatter them like a potter’s jar.

Now, O kings, understand,\* take warning, rulers of the earth.

Serve the Lord with awe\* and rejoice in trembling.

Pay Him your homage lest he be angry and you perish;\* for suddenly His anger will blaze.

Blessed are they\* who put their trust in God.

### *Psalm 50*

Have mercy on me, God, in Your kindness.\* In Your compassion blot out my offense.

O wash me more and more from my guilt\* and cleanse me from my sin.

My offenses truly I know them;\* my sin is always before me.

Against You, You alone, have I sinned;\* what is evil in Your sight I have done.

That You may be justified when You give sentence\* and be without reproach when You judge.

O see, in guilt I was born,\* a sinner was I conceived

Indeed, You love truth in the heart;\* then in the secret of my heart teach me wisdom.

O purify me, then I shall be clean;\* O wash me, I shall be whiter than snow.

Make me hear rejoicing and gladness,\* that the bones You have crushed may thrill.

From my sins turn away Your face\* and blot out all my guilt.

A pure heart create for me, O God,\* put a steadfast spirit with me.

Do not cast me away from Your presence,\* nor deprive me of Your holy spirit.

Give me again the joy of Your help;\* with a spirit of fervor sustain me,

That I may teach transgressors Your ways\* and sinners may return to You.

O rescue me, God, my helper,\* and my tongue shall ring out  
Your goodness.

O Lord, open my lips\* and my mouth shall declare Your praise.

For in sacrifice You take no delight,\* burnt offering from me You  
would refuse.

My sacrifice, a contrite spirit.\* A humbled, contrite heart You will  
not spurn.

In Your goodness, show favour to Zion:\* rebuild the walls of  
Jerusalem.

Then You will be pleased with lawful sacrifice, burnt offerings  
wholly consumed,\* Then You will be offered young bulls on Your  
altar.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now  
and for ever and ever. Amen.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Glory be to You, O God! (3x)

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

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

*(Tone 4)* At that time Mary registered with the venerable Joseph  
in Bethlehem\* since she was of the house of David.\* She was the  
child, having conceived without seed.\* When the time for her  
delivery drew near,\* they could find no room in the inn,\* but the  
cave seemed a joyful palace for the Queen.\* Christ is born to re-  
new the likeness that had been lost of old.

Now and for ever and ever. Amen.

O Mother of God, you are the true vine laden with the Fruit of  
life; wherefore, we implore you, O Lady, to intercede together  
with the apostles and all the saints that we may obtain mercy for  
our souls.

## *Stichera*

*(Tone 6, Samohlasen):* Such is our God, Who was born of a Virgin and lived among men;\* no other is to be compared to Him.\* The only-begotten Son, as man, is laid in a poor manger;\* the Master of all is wrapped in swaddling clothes;\* and a star announces to the magi to come and worship Him,\* and we sing: Holy Trinity, save our souls.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

*(Tone 3):* Joseph, tell us:\* How is it that you bring to Bethlehem a Virgin with child,\* whom you received from the holy temple?\* I - he replies - having ascertained from the prophets\* and having received a message from the angel, was assured,\* that Mary would give birth to the incomprehensible God,\* Whom the magi from the East will come to worship and honour with precious gifts.\* O Lord, Who for us appeared in the flesh, glory be to You.

*Opening the royal doors, the priest vested in the phelonion and deacon intones:*

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Priest: Peace be with all.

Deacon: Wisdom! Let us be attentive!

### *Prokimenon in tone 4*

A child is born to us,\* a son is given us.

*Verse:* Upon His shoulder dominion rests.

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: A reading from the Book of the Prophet Baruch.

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Reader: Such is our God; no other is to be compared to him: He has traced out all the way of understanding, and has given her to Jacob, his servant, to Israel, his beloved son. Since then she has appeared on earth, and moved among men. She is the book of

precepts of God, the law that endures forever; all who cling to her will live, but those will die who forsake her. Turn, O Jacob, and receive her: walk by her light toward splendor. Give not your glory to another, your privileges to an alien race. Blessed are we, O Israel; for what pleases God is known to us!

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: A reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians.

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Reader: Brothers and sisters: Before faith came, we were held in custody under law, confined for the faith that was to be revealed. Consequently, the law was our disciplinarian for Christ, that we might be justified by faith. Both now that faith has come, we are no longer under a disciplinarian. For through faith you were all children of God in Christ Jesus. For all of you who are baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free person, there is not male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendant, heirs according to the promise.

*The deacon incenses the altar and the people, then intones:*

Deacon: Wisdom! Let us be attentive! Let us listen to the Holy Gospel.

Priest: Peace be with all.

Choir: And with your spirit.

Deacon: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Choir: Glory be to You, O Lord, glory be to You.

Priest: (Reading from Luke 2:1-20)

Choir: Glory be to You, O Lord, glory be to You.

*The royal doors are now closed, and the choir continues:*

Choir: Blessed is the Lord God! Blessed is the Lord day by day! May the God of our salvation smooth our path. Our God is the God of salvation.

Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal, have mercy on us. (x3)

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,\* now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Trinity most holy, have mercy on us.\* Cleanse us of our sins, O Lord;\* pardon our transgressions, O Master;\* look upon our weaknesses and heal them, O Holy One;\* for the sake of Your name.

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,\* now and for ever and ever. Amen.

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

Priest: For the kingdom, the power and the glory are Yours, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever.

Choir: Amen.

### *Kontakion*

*(Tone 3):* Today the Virgin gives birth to the eternal One, the earth offers the Uncontainable a cave, the angels with the shepherds glory, and a star guides the magi, for to us has been born a Child - the eternal God.

Lord, have mercy. (40x)

O Christ, our God, in all times and places You are worshiped and glorified both in heave and on earth. You are long-suffering and generous in Your mercy and compassion. You love the just and show mercy and compassion. You love the just and show mercy to the sinner, calling all people to repentance through the promise of blessings to come. Deem, O Lord, at this very hour, to

receive our supplications and to direct our lives in the path of Your commandments. Sanctify our souls; purify our bodies; set aright our minds; cleanse our thoughts; deliver us from all affliction, trouble, and distress; surround us with Your holy angels so that, guided and guarded in their camp, we may attain oneness of faith and the knowledge of Your unspeakable glory. For You are blessed for ever and ever. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Now and for ever and ever. Amen.

More honourable than the cherubim, and by far more glorious than the seraphim; ever a virgin, you gave birth to God the Word, O true Mother of God, we magnify you.

Give the blessing, father, in the name of the Lord.

Priest: May God be merciful to us and bless us; may His countenance shine upon us, and may He have mercy on us.

Choir: Amen.

### *Prayer of the Third Hour*

Priest: O God our Master, almighty Father; only-begotten Son, Lord Jesus Christ; and You, O Holy Spirit, one God and one Might, have mercy on me a sinner, and save me, Your unworthy servant, according to the ways of Your wisdom. For You are blessed for ever and ever. Amen.

### ***Sixth Hour***

Come, let us adore the King, our God.

Come, let us adore Christ, the King and our God.

Come, let us adore and bow down to the only Lord Jesus Christ, the King and our God.

### *Psalm 71*

O God, give Your judgment to the king,\* to a king's son Your justice,

That He may judge Your people in justice\* and Your poor in right judgment.

May the mountains bring forth peace\* for the people and the hills, justice.

May He defend the poor of the people\* and save the children of the needy and crush the oppressor.

He shall endure like the sun\* and the moon from age to age.

He shall descend like rain on the meadow,\* like raindrops on the earth.

In His days justice shall flourish\* and peace till the moon fails.

He shall rule from sea to sea,\* from the Great River to earth's bounds.

Before Him His enemies shall fall,\* His foes lick the dust.

The kings of Tarshish and the sea coasts shall pay Him tribute.\*  
The kings of Sheba and Seba shall bring Him gifts.

Before Him all kings shall fall prostrate,\* all nations shall serve Him.

For He shall save the poor when they cry\* and the needy who are helpless.

He will have pity on the weak\* and save the lives of, the poor.

From oppression He will rescue their lives,\* to Him their blood is dear.

Long may He live, may the gold of Sheba be given Him;\* they shall pray for Him without ceasing and bless Him all the day.

May corn be abundant in the land to the peaks of the mountains;\* may its fruit rustle like Lebanon;\* in the cities may men flourish like grass on the earth.

May His name be blessed for ever and endure like the sun;\* every tribe shall be blessed in Him, all nations bless His name.

Blessed be the Lord, God of Israel,\* Who alone works wonders,  
Ever blessed His glorious name.\* Let His glory fill the earth.

*Psalm 90*

Those who dwell in the shelter of the Most High\* and abide in the shade of the Almighty.

Say to the Lord: My refuge, my stronghold,\* my God in whom I trust!

It is He who will free you from the snare of the fowler\* who seeks to destroy you;

He will conceal you with His pinions\* and under His wings you will find refuge.

You will not fear the terror of the night\* nor the arrow that flies by day,

Nor the plague that prowls in the darkness\* nor the scourge that lays waste at noon.

A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand fall at your right,\* you, it will never approach,\* His faithfulness is buckler and shield.

Your eyes have only to look to see\* how the wicked are repaid, You who have said: Lord, my refuge!\* and have made the Most High your dwelling

Upon you no evil shall fall,\* no plague approach where you dwell.

For you He has commanded His angels,\* to keep you in all your ways.

They shall bear you upon their hands\* lest you strike your foot against a stone.

On the lion and the viper you will tread\* and trample the young lion and the dragon.

You set your love on Me so I will save you,\* protect you for you know My name.

When you call I shall answer: I am with you,\* I will save you in distress and give you glory.

With length of days I will content you;\* I shall let you see my saving power.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Glory be to You, O God! (3x)

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

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

*(Tone 4)* At that time Mary registered with the venerable Joseph in Bethlehem\* since she was of the house of David.\* She was the child, having conceived without seed.\* When the time for her delivery drew near,\* they could find no room in the inn,\* but the cave seemed a joyful palace for the Queen.\* Christ is born to renew the likeness that had been lost of old.

Now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Since we have no one in whom to confide because of our many sins,\* O Virgin Mother of God, intercede for us\* with the One Who was born of you;\* for a mother's prayer is a powerful means for obtaining the Master's favor.\* You are most worthy of veneration,\* so do not turn away from the pleading of us sinners;\* for the One Who willed to suffer in the flesh for our sake is full of mercy,\* and His power is sufficient to save us.

### *Stichera*

*(Tone 1, Samohlasen):* Come, O faithful, inspired by God,\* let us arise and behold the divine condescension from on high\* that is manifested to us in Bethlehem.\* Cleansing our minds, let us offer virtues through our lives instead of myrrh,\* preparing with faith our entry into the feast of the Nativity,\* storing up treasure in our souls and singing:\* Glory in the highest to God in the Trinity,\* Whose good pleasure is now revealed to all,\* that in His love for the human race He may set Adam free from the ancestral curse.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

*(Tone 5):* Come, O faithful, bearers of Christ,\* let us behold a wonder that overtakes all minds with amazement.\* In reverent worship let us sing praises with faith.\* Today a maiden bearing a child comes to Bethlehem to give birth to the Lord,\* and choirs of angels go before her.\* Seeing these things, Joseph, her betrothed, cries out:\* What is this strange mystery in you, O Virgin?\* What is this strange mystery in you,\* how are you to bring forth a child, without knowing man?

*Opening the royal doors, the priest vested in the phelonion and deacon intones:*

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Priest: Peace be with all.

Deacon: Wisdom! Let us be attentive!

*Prokimenon in Tone 4*

From the womb, before the daystar, I have begotten You:\* the Lord has sworn and He will not repent.

*Verse:* The Lord said to my Lord Sit at My right hand till I make Your enemies Your footstool.

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Reader: Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz: Ask for a sign from the Lord, your God; let us be deep as the nether world, or high as the sky! But Ahaz answered, "I will not ask! I will not tempt the Lord! Then he said: Listen, O house of David! It is not enough for you to weary men, must you also weary my God? Therefore the Lord himself will give you this sign: the virgin shall be with child, and bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. Know, O peoples, and be appalled! Give ear, all you distant lands! Arm, but be crushed! Arm, but be crushed! Form a plan, and it shall be thwarted; make a resolve and it shall not be carried out, for "With us is God!"

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: A reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews.

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Reader: At the beginning, O Lord, you established the earth, and the heavens are the works of your hands. They will perish, but you remain; and they will all grow old like a garment. You will roll them up like a cloak, and like a garment they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will have no end. But to which of the angels has he ever said: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool?" Are they not all ministering spirits sent to serve, for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation? Therefore, we must attend all the more to what we have heard, so that we may not be carried away. For if the word announced through angels proved firm, and every transgression and disobedience received its just recompense, how shall we escape if we ignore so great a salvation? Announced originally through the Lord, it was confirmed for us by those who had heard.

*The deacon incenses the altar and the people, then intones:*

Deacon: Wisdom! Let us be attentive! Let us listen to the Holy Gospel.

Priest: Peace be with all.

Choir: And with your spirit.

Deacon: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Choir: Glory be to You, O Lord, glory be to You.

Priest: (Reading from Matthew 2:1-12)

Choir: Glory be to You, O Lord, glory be to You.

*The royal doors are now closed, and the choir continues:*

Choir: Let Your bounties, O Lord, come down upon us in haste, for our need has become great indeed. Help us O God our Saviour, for the glory of Your name. Save us, O Master, and forgive our sins for the sake of Your name.

Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal, have mercy on us. (x3)

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,\* now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Trinity most holy, have mercy on us.\* Cleanse us of our sins, O Lord;\* pardon our transgressions, O Master;\* look upon our weaknesses and heal them, O Holy One;\* for the sake of Your name.

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,\* now and for ever and ever. Amen.

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

Priest: For the kingdom, the power and the glory are Yours, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever.

Choir: Amen.

### *Kontakion*

*(Tone 3):* Today the Virgin gives birth to the eternal One, the earth offers the Uncontainable a cave, the angels with the shepherds glory, and a star guides the magi, for to us has been born a Child - the eternal God.

Lord, have mercy. (40x)

O Christ, our God, in all times and places You are worshiped and glorified both in heave and on earth. You are long-suffering and generous in Your mercy and compassion. You love the just and show mercy and compassion. You love the just and show mercy to the sinner, calling all people to repentance through the promise of blessings to come. Deem, O Lord, at this very hour, to

receive our supplications and to direct our lives in the path of Your commandments. Sanctify our souls; purify our bodies; set aright our minds; cleanse our thoughts; deliver us from all affliction, trouble, and distress; surround us with Your holy angels so that, guided and guarded in their camp, we may attain oneness of faith and the knowledge of Your unspeakable glory. For You are blessed for ever and ever. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Now and for ever and ever. Amen.

More honourable than the cherubim, and by far more glorious than the seraphim; ever a virgin, you gave birth to God the Word, O true Mother of God, we magnify you.

Give the blessing, father, in the name of the Lord.

Priest: May God be merciful to us and bless us; may His countenance shine upon us, and may He have mercy on us.

Choir: Amen.

### *Prayer of the Sixth Hour*

Priest: O God, Lord of Powers and Maker of the whole creation, through Your compassion beyond our understanding, You sent down Your only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, for the salvation of our race. Through His cross He cancelled the debt of our sins and triumphed over the powers and masters of darkness. Now accept from us sinners these prayers of thanksgiving and petition, and preserve us from any deadly fall in the darkness and against every visible and invisible enemy who may seek our harm. Pierce our bodies with fear of You, and let not our souls fall into evil words or thoughts, but, instead, wound them with longing for You so that, looking upon You at all times and guided by the light that emanates from You, we may contemplate the unapproachable eternal light. May we ever address our thanks giving and worship to You, O eternal Father, and to Your only-begotten Son, and to Your all-holy, gracious, and live-giving Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

## Ninth Hour

Come, let us adore the King, our God.

Come, let us adore Christ, the King and our God.

Come, let us adore and bow down to the only Lord Jesus Christ, the King and our God.

### *Psalm 109*

The Lord's revelation to my Master:\* "Sit on my right: Your foes I will put beneath Your feet."

The Lord will wield from Zion Your scepter of power:\* rule in the midst of all Your foes.

A prince from the day of Your birth on the holy mountains;\* from the womb before the dawn I begot You.

The Lord has sworn an oath; He will not change.\* "You are a priest forever, a priest like Melchizedek of old."

The Master standing at Your right hand\* will shatter kings in the day of His great wrath.

He shall drink from the stream by the wayside\* and therefore He shall lift up His head.

### *Psalm 85*

Turn Your ear, O Lord, and give answer\* for I am poor and needy.

Preserve my life, for I am faithful;\* save the servant who trust in You.

You are my God, have mercy on me, Lord,\* for I cry to You all the day long.

Give joy to Your servant, O Lord,\* for to You I lift up my soul.

O Lord You are good and forgiving,\* full of love to all who call.

Give heed, O Lord, to my prayer\* and attend to the sound of my voice.

In the day of distress I will call\* and surely You will reply.

Among the gods there is none like You, O Lord,\* nor work to compare with Yours.

All the nations shall come to adore You\* and glorify Your name, O Lord,

For You are great and do marvelous deeds,\* You Who alone are God.

Show me, Lord, Your way so that I may walk in Your truth.\* Guide my heart to fear Your name.

I will praise You, Lord my God, with all my heart\* and glorify Your name forever;

For Your love to me has been great\* You have saved me from the depths of the grave.

The proud have risen against me;\* ruthless enemies seek my life; to You they pay no need.

But You, God of mercy and compassion,\* slow to anger, O Lord.

Abounding in love and truth\* turn and take pity on me.

O give Your strength to Your servant\* and save Your handmaid's child.

Show me a sign of Your favour that my foes may see to their shame\* that You console me and give me Your help.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Glory be to You, O God! (3x)

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

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

*(Tone 4)* At that time Mary registered with the venerable Joseph in Bethlehem\* since she was of the house of David.\* She was the child, having conceived without seed.\* When the time for her delivery drew near,\* they could find no room in the inn,\* but the cave seemed a joyful palace for the Queen.\* Christ is born to renew the likeness that had been lost of old.

Now and for ever and ever. Amen.

O gracious Lord, for our sake You were born of the Virgin and were crucified. You crushed Death by Your death, and, being God, brought forth the resurrection. Do not turn away from those You have made with Your own hands; but reveal instead Your love to us, O Lord of mercy. Accept as intercessor the Virgin Mother of God who gave You birth. O our Saviour, save a desperate people.

*Stichera*

*(Tone 2, Samohlasen):* When Joseph, overwhelmed with worry, was on his way to Bethlehem,\* you, O Virgin, spoke to him, saying:\* Why do you, seeing me with child, look sad and troubled,\* not knowing the great mystery, which is revealed in me?\* Cast away all fear and learn glorious things.\* Out of love God comes to earth, receiving a body in my womb.\* You shall see His birth, as He ordained;\* be filled with joy and worship Him as your Creator,\* Whom the angels unceasingly praise and glorify together with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

*(Tone 6):* Today is born of the Virgin He, Who in His arms holds all creation.\* He Who is containable, as man, is wrapped up in swaddling clothes;\* He Who created the heavens with a word is laid in a manger;\* He Who, in the desert, sent down manna from heaven like rain,\* is nursed at the breasts of the Virgin.\* The Bridegroom of the Church receives the magi\* and the Son of the Virgin receives from them gifts.\* We bow before Your birth, O Christ!\* We bow before Your birth, O Christ!\* We bow before Your birth, O Christ!\* Now manifest to us Your divine Theophany.

*Opening the royal doors, the priest vested in the phelonion and deacon intones:*

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Priest: Peace be with all.

Deacon: Wisdom! Let us be attentive!

*Prokimenon in Tone 4*

They shall say Zion:\* This is your Mother; a man has been born in her.

*Verse:* On the holy mountain is His city; the Lord prefers the gates of Zion.

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Reader: For a child is born to us, a son is given us; upon his shoulder dominion rests. They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace. His dominion is vast and forever peaceful, from David's throne, and over his kingdom which he confirms and sustains. By judgement and justice, both now and for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this!

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: A reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews.

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Reader: Brothers and sisters: He who consecrates and those who are being consecrated all have one origin. Therefore, he is not ashamed to call them "brothers," saying: "I will proclaim your name to my brothers, in the midst of the assembly I will praise you:" and again: "I will put my trust in him;" and again: "Behold, I and the children of God has given me." Now since children share in blood and flesh, he likewise shared in them, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who through fear of death had been subject to slavery all their life. Surely he did not help angels but rather the descendants of Abraham; therefore, he had to become like his brothers in every way, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest before God to expiate the sins of the people. Because he himself was tested through what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

*The deacon incenses the altar and the people, then intones:*

Deacon: Wisdom! Let us be attentive! Let us listen to the Holy Gospel.

Priest: Peace be with all.

Choir: And with your spirit.

Deacon: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Choir: Glory be to You, O Lord, glory be to You.

Priest: (Reading from Matthew 2:13-23)

Choir: Glory be to You, O Lord, glory be to You.

*The royal doors are now closed, and the choir continues:*

Choir: For the sake of Your holy name, do not abandon us forever; do not forget Your covenant. For the sake of Abraham the trustful one, Isaac Your servant, and Israel Your holy one, do not take Your mercies away from us.

Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal, have mercy on us. (x3)

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,\* now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Trinity most holy, have mercy on us.\* Cleanse us of our sins, O Lord;\* pardon our transgressions, O Master;\* look upon our weaknesses and heal them, O Holy One;\* for the sake of Your name.

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

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Give the blessing, father, in the name of the Lord.

Priest: May God be merciful to us and bless us; may His countenance shine upon us, and may He have mercy on us.

Choir: Amen.

## *Prayer of the Ninth Hour*

Priest: O Master, Lord Jesus Christ, You patiently endured our sins and led us to this very hour at which You were hung upon the life-giving wood. You opened a way to paradise for the penitent thief, and cursed Death by Your death. Now forgive the trespasses that we Your servants have committed, unworthy sinners that we are. We have sinned indeed and transgressed Your law. We are unworthy even to lift up our eyes to heaven, for we have abandoned the path of Your holiness and pursued the desires of our hearts. But now we implore Your immense goodness: Spare us, O Lord, in the multitude of Your mercies; save us for the sake of Your most holy name. Our days were spent in vanity; wrest us from the hands of our enemy, and forgive our sins. Subdue in us the cravings of our flesh, so that, after putting off the old, we may put on the new and live for You, our Lord and Benefactor; and that obeying Your commandments, we may reach eternal repose in the place where all the blessed abide; for You are truly joy and delight to those who love You, O Christ our God. We send up glory to You, and to Your eternal Father, and to your all holy, gracious, and life-giving Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen.



**Property of Rossburn Ukrainian Catholic Pastoral District**

**Please do not remove from the parish.**

**Thank you!**

**December 2020**