

**Readers Vespers on Thursday, September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020**  
**LEAVETAKING OF THE NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS**

Leader: Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us and save us.

Choir: Amen.

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

**THE PSALM OF INTRODUCTION—PSALM 103**

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

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

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

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

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

He hath made the moon for seasons; the sun knoweth his going down. Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night, wherein all the beasts of the forest will go abroad; young lions roaring after their prey, and seeking their food from God. The sun ariseth, and they are gathered together, and they lay them down in their dens. Man shall go forth unto his work, and to his labor until the evening. How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast Thou made them all. The earth is filled with Thy creation. So is this great and spacious sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, small living creatures with the great. There go the ships; there this leviathan, whom Thou hast made to play therein. All things wait on Thee, to give them their food in due season; when Thou givest it them, they will gather it. When Thou openest Thy hand, all things shall be filled with goodness; when Thou turnest away Thy face, they shall be troubled. Thou wilt take their spirit, and they shall cease; and unto their dust shall they return. Thou wilt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created; and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.

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

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

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

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

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. (THRICE)

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

Leader: Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us and save us.

Choir: Amen.

**“O LORD I HAVE CRIED” IN TONE VI**

Choir: O Lord, I have cried out unto Thee, hear Thou me; hear Thou me, O Lord. O Lord, I have cried out unto Thee, hear Thou me. Give ear to the voice of my supplication when I cry out unto Thee: hear Thou me, O Lord.

Choir: Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as the incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice; hear Thou me, O Lord.

- + Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and a protecting door round about my lips.
- + Incline not my heart to evil words, to make excuses in sins.
- + With men that work iniquity; and I will not communicate with the choicest of them.
- + The just man shall correct me in mercy and shall reprove me; but let not the oil of the sinner anoint my head.
- + For my prayer also shall still be against the things with which they are well pleased; their judges falling upon the rock have been swallowed up.
- + They shall hear my words, for they are sweet; as when the thickness of the earth is broken upon the ground, their bones are scattered by the side of hell.
- + But to Thee, O Lord, Lord, are mine eyes; in Thee have I put my trust, take not away my soul.
- + Keep me from the snare which they have laid for me, and the traps of the workers of iniquity.
- + Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst I alone escape.
- + I cried unto the Lord with my voice, with my voice unto the Lord, did I make my supplication.
- + I poured out my supplication before Him; I showed before Him my trouble.
- + When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then Thou knewest my path.
- + In the way wherein I walked have they secretly laid a snare for me.
- + I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me.
- + Refuge failed me; no one cared for my soul.
- + I cried unto Thee, O Lord; I said: Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.
- + Attend unto my cry, for I am brought very low.
- + Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are stronger than I.

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

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

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

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

### **For the Nativity of the Theotokos in Tone Six**

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

Today hath God Who sitteth on noëtic thrones prepared Himself a holy throne on earth. He Who hath established the heavens in wisdom hath, by His love to mankind, made a living heaven; for from a barren stem He hath brought forth His Mother, a life-bearing branch. Thou God of wonders and Hope of the hopeless, O Lord, glory to Thee.

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

This is the day of the Lord; wherefore, rejoice ye nations; for behold the chamber of Light, the scroll of the Word of life hath come forth from the womb; the gate facing the east hath been born. Wherefore, she awaiteth the entrance of the High Priest. And she alone admitted Christ into the universe for salvation of our souls.

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

While famous barren women there were who bore fruit by the will of God, verily Mary hath surpassed, having been born in a strange manner from a barren mother, she herself gave birth in the flesh to the End of all, from a seedless womb in a transcendent manner. And she alone is the door of the only Son of God through which He passed and which He left closed, providing all with wisdom, as He Himself knew, and brought salvation to all mankind.

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

Today the barren gates are opened, and there cometh forth the divine, the virginal gate. Today hath grace begun to give fruit, showing forth to the world the Theotokos, through whom the earthly and the heavenly beings unite for the salvation of our souls.

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

Today the glad tidings go forth to the world. Today sweet fragrance is wafted forth, foretelling the glad tidings of salvation; and the barrenness of our nature hath been united: for the barren one hath become a mother to the one who remained a Virgin after giving birth to the Creator; from whom cometh God in nature, taking a foreign nature and working salvation in the flesh for the lost, Christ, the Lover of mankind, and the Deliverer of our souls.

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

Today, Anna the barren giveth birth to the Maiden of God, forechosen from all generations as a dwelling-place for Christ God, King of all and Creator of all, for the fulfillment of His divine dispensation, through which the creation of us earthly beings was renewed, and we ourselves were renewed from corruption to life immortal.

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

Today hath God Who sitteth on noëtic thrones prepared Himself a holy throne on earth. He Who hath established the heavens in wisdom hath, by His love to mankind, made a living heaven; for from a barren stem He hath brought forth His Mother, a life-bearing branch. O Thou God of wonders and Hope of the hopeless, O Lord, glory to Thee.

### **O GLADSOME LIGHT**

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

### **PROKEIMENON, IN TONE VI:**

**My help cometh from the Lord, \* Who hath made heaven and the earth.**

*Verse: I have lifted up mine eyes to the Mountains, from whence cometh my help*

**My help cometh from the Lord, \* Who hath made heaven and the earth.**

### **THE EVENING PRAYER**

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

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

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

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

Leader: Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us and save us.

Choir: Amen.

### **THE APOSTICHA**

The joy of the whole world hath shone forth to us from the two righteous ones, Joachim and Anna, the all-extolled Virgin, who because of her surpassing purity became a living temple of God, and alone is known as truly Theotokos. Wherefore, by her intercessions, O Christ God, send forth safety to the world, and to our souls the Great Mercy.

*Verse 1. Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear.*

Today, O Virgin, thou hast been born a most noble child from the righteous ones, Joachim and Anna, as angels foretold, O paradise and throne of God, O vessel of purity who went before and proclaimed joy unto all the world, O cause of our life and annihilation of the curse, and the bestowal of blessing. Wherefore, O Maiden, called forth from God, seek, through thy birth-giving, safety to our souls and Great Mercy.

*Verse 2. The rich among the people shall entreat thy countenance.*

Verily, Anna the barren, the fruitless, doth today clap her hands with joy. Let the terrestrial ones enwrap themselves with light, let the kings be happy and the priests rejoice with blessings; let the whole world celebrate; for behold, the Queen, the blameless Bride of the Father, hath sprouted from the stem of Jesse. Wherefore, thereafter, women do not bring forth children in sorrow; for joy hath blossomed forth, and life shall dwell in the world, and the offerings of Joachim shall no more be rejected; for the wailing of Anna hath been turned into joy, who saith, Rejoice with me, all ye chosen of Israel; for the Lord hath given me the living palace of His divine glory for universal joy and gladness, and for the salvation of our souls.

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

Come, all ye believers, let us hasten to the Virgin; for behold she who was forechosen a Mother to our God before she was conceived in the womb, was of the stem of Jesse. Yea, she who is the treasure of virginity, the budding rod of Aaron, the gospel of the Prophets, and branch of Joachim and Anna the righteous ones, is now given birth. Verily, the world hath been renewed by her. She is born, and the Church shall be adorned in her splendor, who is the holy temple and the vessel of the Godhead, the stay of virginity and the kingly chamber, through whom the strange mystery of the union of the two Natures of Christ hath come about, Whom we worship, praising the blameless nativity of the Virgin.

### **THE HYMN OF ST. SIMEON THE GOD-RECEIVER**

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

### **THE TRISAGION PRAYERS**

People: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. (THRICE)  
*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; 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 God, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy Name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; 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 evil one.

Leader: Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us and save us.

Choir: Amen.

**Troparion in Tone IV**

Thy nativity, O Theotokos, hath proclaimed joy to the whole universe; for from thee did shine forth the Sun of justice, Christ our God, annulling the curse, and bestowing the blessing, abolishing death and granting us life everlasting.

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

Leader: Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us and save us.

Choir: Amen.

**THE DISMISSAL FOR READERS VESPERS**

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

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

Leader: Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us and save us. Amen.