

Saturday, December 25

Nativity of our Lord

First Antiphon: I will confess You with all my heart, O Lord, * I will tell all your marvels.

Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us.

In the counsels of rightful men and in the assemblies, * great are the works of the Lord.

Through the prayers of the Mother of God...

They are sought * in order to accomplish his will.

Through the prayers of the Mother of God...

Glory be... now and forever...: Only Begotten Son...

Third Antiphon: The Lord said to my Lord: * Sit at my right hand till I make your enemies your footstool.

Nativity Tropar, tone 4: Your birth, O Christ our God, * has shed upon the world the light of knowledge; * for through it, those who worshipped the stars* have learned from a star to worship You, the Sun of Justice, * and to recognize You as the Orient from on high. * Glory be to You, O Lord!

The scepter of your power the Lord will stretch forth from Zion: * Rule in the midst of your enemies.

Your birth, O Christ...

Yours is princely power in the day of your birth in holy splendor.

Your birth, O Christ ...

At the 'small entrance': Before the daystar, like the dew, I have begotten you. The Lord has sworn, and he will not repent; You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek.

Your birth, O Christ ...

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

Kondak of the Nativity, tone 3: Today the Virgin gives birth to Perfect Essence, * and the earth offers a cave to the Inaccessible.* The angels sing his glory with the shepherds, * the wise men journey with the star, * for there is born for us an infant child, God Eternal.

Instead of 'Holy God...': All you, who have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Alleluia!

Prokimen, tone 8: Let all the earth worship and sing praise to You: * sing praise to Your Name. Verse: Shout joyfully to God, all you on earth, sing praise to the glory of his name; * proclaim his glorious praise.

Epistle: Galatians 4: 4-7

Brothers and Sisters! When the designated time had come, God sent forth his Son born of a woman, born under the law, to deliver from the law those who were subjected to it, so that we might receive our status as adopted sons. The proof that you are sons is the fact that God has sent forth into our hearts the spirit of his Son, which cries out "Abba!" ("Father!") You are no longer a slave but a son! And the fact that you are a son makes you an heir, by God's design.

Alleluia Verses: The heavens declare the glory of God,* and the firmament proclaims his handiwork. Day pours out the word to day,* and night to night imparts knowledge.

Gospel: Matthew 2: 1-12

After Jesus' birth in Bethlehem of Judea during the reign of King Herod, astrologers from the east arrived one day in Jerusalem inquiring, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We observed his star at its rising and have come to pay him homage." At this news King Herod became greatly disturbed and with him all Jerusalem. Summoning all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. "In Bethlehem of Judea," they informed him. "Here is what the prophet has written: 'And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least

among the princes of Judah, since from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.” Herod called the astrologers aside and found out from them the exact time of the star’s appearance. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, after having instructed them: “Go and get detailed information about the child. When you have found him, report it to me so that I may go and offer him homage too.” After their audience with the king, they set out. The star which they had observed at its rising went ahead of them until it came to a standstill over the place where the child was. They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house found the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their coffers and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. They received a message in a dream not to return to Herod, so they went back to their own country by another route.

Instead of ‘It is truly right...’: My soul, praise Christ the King born in a cave. Behold a strange and wonderful mystery: the cave has become heaven, the Virgin a throne of the Cherubim, and the manger a noble place where Christ our God reposes. Wherefore let us praise and exalt Him!

Communion Hymn: The Lord has sent salvation to his people. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Instead of “Blessed is He...”, “We have seen...”, “May our mouths...”, “Blessed be the name...”: The whole universe is today filled with joy, for Christ is born of a Virgin.