

**September 8, 2013**

**Sunday Before the Exaltation of the Cross, Tone 7**

**Nativity of our Most Holy Lady, the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary**

## **GREAT VESPERS**

### **Kathisma Reading**

*“Blessed is the man...” is sung.*

### **At Psalm 140**

*In Tone 7*

10. Come, let us rejoice in the Lord,  
Who destroyed the power of death  
and enlightened the human race;  
and let us cry out with the angels:  
Glory to You, our Creator and Saviour!

9. O Saviour, for our sake You suffered crucifixion and burial;  
and, as God, You destroyed death by Your death.  
Therefore, we adore Your resurrection on the third day  
and we sing: Glory to You, O Lord!

8. On seeing the resurrection of the Creator,  
the Apostles were amazed,  
and they sang an angelic hymn of praise:  
This is the glory of the Church,  
this is the richness of the Kingdom!  
O Lord, Who suffered for our sake, glory to You!

7. O Christ, although You were taken captive by Your enemies,  
I still acknowledge You as my God,  
and am not ashamed of You;  
I will not hide the fact that You were nailed to the Cross.  
Your death is my life, almighty Lord,  
and I extol Your resurrection.  
O Lover of mankind, glory to You!

*In Tone 6*

6. Today God who dominates the spiritual thrones of heaven  
welcomes on earth the holy throne which He had prepared for Himself.  
In His love for mankind,

He who established the heavens in wisdom has fashioned a living heaven.  
From a barren stem He has brought forth for us His Mother  
as a branch full of life.

O God of miracles and hope of those who have no hope;  
O Lord, glory to You!

5. This is the day of the Lord:

Rejoice, therefore, O nations!

Behold, the chamber of Light and the scroll of the living Word  
has come forth from the womb.

The gate that opens to the Rising Sun

and is ready for the entrance of the High Priest, is here today.

She is the only one who introduced Christ, and Christ alone, into the world  
for the salvation of souls.

4. Indeed some famous barren women have given birth by the will of God;  
but the nativity of Mary surpasses all nativities  
in honour and splendour  
as it is worthy of the majesty of God.

For she was born in a miraculous way of a barren mother,  
and she herself gave birth in the flesh to the God of all,  
incarnate in her womb without human seed  
against the laws of nature.

She alone is the door through which the only-begotten Son of God  
has passed while leaving it sealed  
as He had planned in His eternal wisdom.  
Thus did He bring salvation to all.

3. Today the barren gates are opened,  
and the Virgin, the Gate of God, comes forth.

Today grace begins to bear fruit,  
showing forth to the world the Mother of God  
through whom earth is united to heaven  
for the salvation of our souls.

2. Today glad tidings go forth to the whole world.

Today sweet fragrance is sent forth  
by the proclamation of salvation.

Today is the end of the barrenness of our nature;  
for the barren one becomes a mother,  
the mother of the one who will not cease to be a virgin,  
even after giving birth to the One who by nature is Creator and God.  
He it is who took flesh by which He brought salvation to the lost;  
He is Christ, the Lover of Mankind,  
and the Saviour of our souls.

1. Today Anne, the barren one, gives birth to the maiden of God  
who had been chosen from all the human generations  
to become the dwelling place of the Creator,  
Christ our God and King of all.  
In her He fulfilled His divine plan  
through which our human nature was renewed,  
and by which we were to be transferred from corruption to eternal life.

Glory... Now...

Today God who dominates the spiritual thrones of heaven  
welcomes on earth the holy throne which He had prepared for Himself.  
In His love for mankind,  
He who established the heavens in wisdom has fashioned a living heaven.  
From a barren stem He has brought forth for us His Mother  
as a branch full of life.  
O God of miracles and hope of those who have no hope;  
O Lord, glory to You!

### **Readings**

Genesis 28:10-17

Ezekiel 43:27-44:4

Proverbs 9:1-11

### **Lytia**

#### *In Tone 1*

Today is the beginning of our salvation, O people;  
for behold, the Mother and Virgin who was chosen from all generations  
to be the habitation of God  
is born and comes forth from the barren one.  
She is the flower from Jesse and possesses the rod from his root.  
May our forefather Adam rejoice and be full of joy;  
for behold, she who was created from the rib of Adam  
declares that her daughter and descendant is blessed.  
She says: "My deliverance has been born to me.  
Through her, I will be freed from the bonds of Hades."  
May David rejoice, play on his harp, and bless God;  
for behold, the Virgin comes forth  
from the womb of the barren woman  
for the salvation of our souls.

#### *In Tone 2*

Come all you lovers of virginity and chastity,  
lovingly hold aloft the boast of virginity,  
the fountain of life springing up from the solid stone.  
She is the bush which grows from the barren land,  
the bush of the non-material fire,  
who cleanses and illumines our souls.

What is the festive hymn that is heard today?  
Joachim and Anne are mystically observing this day with honour, saying:  
“Adam and Eve, rejoice with us today!  
Through their transgression of old, Paradise was closed.  
Now, Mary the maiden of God is being given to us as a blessed fruit.  
She opens up the entrance of Paradise to all of us.”

The chosen one of the King of All,  
the abode of God and divine dwelling of the ever-existing One,  
comes forth today from the barren and glorious Anne.  
It is through her that the shameless Hades is crushed,  
and the first Eve is lead into a faithful life.  
Let us worthily cry out to her:  
“Blessed are you among women,  
and blessed is the fruit of your womb.”

*In Tone 8, Glory... Now...*

Let us play the spiritual flute on this noteworthy feast,  
because from the seed of David  
is born the Mother of the Life who dispels the darkness.  
She is the renewal of Adam and the answer to Eve,  
the source of incorruption and the transformation of corruption.  
Because of her, we have been divinized and delivered from death.  
We cry out to her with Gabriel:  
“Rejoice, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with you.  
Because of you, He has granted us great mercy.”

## **Aposticha**

*In Tone 7*

O Saviour of the world, You arose from the grave,  
and together with Your own flesh You raised up mankind.  
O Lord, glory to You!

*The Lord reigns, He is clothed in majesty. Robed is the Lord, and girt about with strength.*

Come, let us worship Christ Who arose from the dead  
and enlightened all creation.  
For by His resurrection on the third day,  
He set us free from the oppression of Hades,  
granting us life and His great mercy.

*For He has made the world firm, which shall not be moved.*

O Christ, Lover of mankind,  
You descended into Hades and destroyed death.  
Then You arose on the third day;  
and, together with Yourself You lifted up all of us  
who glorify Your mighty resurrection.

*Holiness befits Your house, O Lord, for length of days.*

O Lord, what a fearful sight it was to see You lying in the tomb as if asleep.  
Yet on the third day You arose in great power,  
and at the same time You raised up Adam who joyfully cried out:  
Glory to Your resurrection, O Lover of mankind!

*In Tone 8, Glory... Now...*

Come all you faithful, and let us hasten to the Virgin;  
for long before her conception in the womb,  
the one who was to be born of the root of Jesse  
was destined to be the Mother of God.  
The one who is the treasury of virginity,  
the flowering rod of Aaron, the object of prophecies,  
the child of Joachim and Anne is born today,  
and the world is renewed in her.  
Through her birth, the Church is clothed with splendour  
O holy Temple, vessel of the Godhead,  
model of virgins and strength of kings,  
in you the wondrous union of the two natures of Christ was realized.  
We worship Him and glorify your most pure birth,  
and the whole world extols you.

## **Troparion**

*In Tone 4*

Your nativity, O Virgin Mother of God,\* has made joy known to all the world,\* for from you  
dawned the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God.\* He abolished the curse and gave the  
blessing;\* and by making death of no effect He bestowed on us eternal life. (3)

## **DIVINE LITURGY**

### ***Troparia and Kontakia***

*Troparion, Tone 7:* By Your cross You destroyed death;\* You opened Paradise to the thief;\* You changed the lamentation of the myrrh-bearers to joy,\* and charged the apostles to proclaim\* that You are risen, O Christ our God,\* offering great mercy to the world.

*Troparion, Tone 4:* Your nativity, O Virgin Mother of God,\* has made joy known to all the world,\* for from you dawned the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God.\* He abolished the curse and gave the blessing;\* and by making death of no effect He bestowed on us eternal life.

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

*Kontakion, Tone 7:* No longer shall the dominion of death be able to hold humanity,\* for Christ went down shattering and destroying its powers.\* Hades is bound.\* The prophets exult with one voice.\* The Saviour has come for those with faith, saying:\* “Come forth, O faithful, to the resurrection!”

Now and for ever and ever. Amen.

*Kontakion, Tone 4:* By your birth, O immaculate one,\* Joachim and Anna were freed from the reproach of childlessness,\* and Adam and Eve\* from the corruption of death.\* And your people, redeemed from the guilt of their sins,\* celebrate as they cry out to you:\* “The barren one gives birth to the Mother of God\* and nourisher of our life.”

### **Prokeimenon, Tone 6**

Save Your people, O Lord, \* and bless Your inheritance.

*verse:* Unto You I will cry, O Lord, my God, lest You turn from me in silence. (Psalm 27:9,1)

### **Prokeimenon, Tone 3**

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Saviour. (Luke 1:46)

### **Epistle**

Galatians 6:11-18; Philippians 2:5-11

### **Alleluia, Tone 1**

*verse:* I have exalted one chosen from the people and with my holy oil anointed him.

*verse:* My hand shall always be with him and my arm shall make him strong. (Psalm 88:20-21,22)

*verse:* Hear, O daughter, and see, and incline your ear.

*verse:* The rich among the people shall entreat your countenance. (Psalm 44:11,13)

### **Gospel**

John 3:13-17; Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28

### ***Hymn to the Mother of God***

O my soul, magnify the Virgin Mary, born from a barren womb.

*And the Irmos, Tone 8:* Virginité is alien to mothers\* and childbearing is foreign to virgins;\* yet

in you, O Mother of God, both of them came together.\* Therefore we and all the nations of the earth\* without ceasing magnify you.

***Communion Hymn***

Praise the Lord from the heavens;\* praise Him in the highest (Psalm 148:1)\* I will take the cup of salvation;\* and I will call upon the name of the Lord.\* Alleluia, alleluia,\* alleluia. (Psalm 115:13)