

SUNDAY ON OR AFTER THE 26th OF DECEMBER

SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST

COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY RIGHTEOUS ONES:

JOSEPH THE BETROTHED, DAVID THE KING, AND JAMES THE BROTHER OF
THE LORD

N.B. Be it known that if this Sunday, i.e., that following the Nativity, falleth on either the 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th, or 30th day of December, then at Little Vespers we chant the stichera to the Resurrection and to the Theotokos, as usual.

AT GREAT VESPERS

After the usual psalm, we chant the first Kathisma in its entirety. At "Lord, I have cried ...," three stichera for the Resurrection, four stichera for the Feast from those chanted on the feast itself, and three stichera for the saints, in Tone I:

Spec. Mel.: "Joy of the ranks of heaven ...":

Let us all praise King David, the ancestor of God, * for from him sprang forth the rod of the Virgin, * and from her blossomed the Flower, even Christ, * Who hath called forth Adam and Eve from corruption, * in that He is full of lovingkindness.

In old age Joseph the betrothed * beheld the things foretold by the prophets clearly fulfilled, * having received a strange betrothal * and a revelation from angels * that cry, Glory to God, * Who hath sent down peace upon the earth!

Let us all praise the brother of God, * for he is a holy hierarch * that shone forth nobly also in martyrdom, * through whose prayers do Thou save all that sing to Thee, O Jesus, our God, * Who wast wrapped in swaddling clothes in the cave.

Glory ..., in Tone VI:

Let us celebrate the memory of the pious David and James, king and prophet, apostle and first bishop; and, delivered from deception by their teachings, let us glorify Christ, Who shone forth from the Virgin and became incarnate to save our souls.

Now and ever ..., Dogmaticon in the Tone of the week.

Entrance. Prokimenon of the day.

At the Litia, the stichera chanted on the Feast itself, Glory ..., Now and ever ..., this sticheron, in Tone V, the composition of John the Monk, of Damascus:

The Magi, kings of Persia, learning most certainly that the King of heaven was born on earth, came to Bethlehem, guided by the light of a radiant star; and, presenting their chosen gifts of gold, and frankincense, and myrrh, they fell down and worshipped Him, for they beheld the Timeless One lying in the cave as a babe.

At the Aposticha, the stichera of the Resurrection.

Glory ..., in Tone VI:

Thy birth giving hath become the memorial of priests, the dominion and gladness of kings, O Lover of mankind, and, rejoicing therein, we say, Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name!

Now and ever ..., in the same tone:

Today is the invisible Nature joined to man through the Virgin. Today is the infinite Essence wrapped in swaddling clothes in Bethlehem. Today by a star doth God lead the Magi to worship, foretelling His three-day burial, as it were, in their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. To Him let us sing: O Christ God, Who didst become incarnate of the Virgin, save Thou our souls!

After the Blessing of the Loaves, the troparion, "Thy nativity, O Christ our God ...,"

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, * hath shined the light of knowledge upon the world; * for thereby, they that worshipped the stars * were instructed by a star * to worship Thee, the Sun of Righteousness, * and to know Thee, the Dayspring from on high. * O Lord, glory be to Thee. (Twice)

And that of the saints, in Tone II:

O Joseph, proclaim thou the glad tidings to David, the ancestor of God, for thou hast seen a Virgin give birth; with the shepherds didst thou give glory; with the Magi didst thou worship; by an angel wast thou instructed. Entreat Christ God, that He save our souls! (Once)

Where the all-night vigil is not served: at Compline, after the Trisagion, the Kontakion of the ancestors of God; Glory ..., Now and ever ..., the Kontakion of the feast.

AT MATINS

At "God is the Lord ...," the troparion of the Resurrection, twice;
Glory ..., that of the saints;

O Joseph, proclaim thou the glad tidings to David, the ancestor of God, for thou hast seen a Virgin give birth; with the shepherds didst thou give glory; with the Magi didst thou worship; by an angel wast thou instructed. Entreat Christ God, that He save our souls!

Now and ever ..., that of the feast:

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, * hath shined the light of knowledge upon the world; * for thereby, they that worshipped the stars * were instructed by a star * to worship Thee, the Sun of Righteousness, * and to know Thee, the Dayspring from on high. * O Lord, glory be to Thee.

After the Kathismata of the Psalter are chanted, the Sedalions of the Resurrection, with their Theotokia. Reading from the Gospel Interpreted: from Matthew, for the Sunday after the Nativity of Christ, or the discourse of Gregory of Nyssa on the Holy Trinity and on Abraham, which is divided into two parts. And we chant Psalm 118 and its troparia (the Evlogitaria). The Hypacoi of the tone. The Song of Ascents. Prokimenon of the tone. Resurrection Gospel. "Having beheld the Resurrection of Christ..." After Psalm 50, the sticheron of the Resurrection.

The canons: that of the Resurrection, with four troparia, including its Irmos; that of the Theotokos, with two troparia; that of the Feast, with four troparia; and the following canon, for the saints, with four troparia, in Tone IV, the composition of Cosmas the Monk, of Maiuma:

ODE I

Irmos: I shall sing to Thee, O Lord my God, for Thou didst lead Thy people forth from the bondage of Egypt and didst overwhelm the chariots of Pharaoh and his might.

As many as celebrate the natal festivities of Him that became incarnate for our sake, let us hymn with joy James, the brother of God, and David, the forefather of God.

The choirs of angels stood before Joseph in Bethlehem, saying: Glory to God in the highest! With them let us hymn Him Whose good pleasure it was to become incarnate.

O David, thou forefather of God, calling the righteous James, with harps hymn thou the Lord, Who is incarnate of the root of Jesse.

Theotokion: To Thee shall I sing, O Lord my God, for Thou wast born of the holy Virgin Mother and hast shown her to be the hope of our souls.

Katavasia: "Christ is born ..."

ODE III

Irmos: O Christ God, confirmation of them that hope on Thee, make us steadfast in Thine Orthodox Faith, for Thou art the Lover of mankind.

With the angels let us all hymn Christ God, Who, without seed, hath been born in the flesh of the Virgin, crying aloud: Glory to God in the highest!

O ye faithful, with David and James let us honor with hymns, as is meet, the most jubilant feast of Him that emptied Himself for our sake.

Like a bridegroom from a bridal chamber will the Lord come forth from His Mother's womb! Thus said David, whom, with James, let us now hymn.

Theotokion: Let us honor Mary, the Theotokos unwedded, for the Sun of righteousness hath shone forth upon us for her sake.

Kontakion of the Feast, in Tone III:

Today the Virgin giveth birth to Him Who is transcendent in essence; * and the earth offereth a cave to Him Who is unapproachable. * Angels with shepherds give glory; * with a star the Magi do journey; * for our sake a young Child is born, Who is pre-eternal God.

Ikos: Bethlehem hath opened Eden! We have found Joy in a secret place, come and let us receive the things of paradise within the cave. There the unwatered Root hath blossomed, bearing forgiveness as its fruit. There an unfailing Wellspring hath been found, whence of old David longed to drink. There the Virgin hath given birth to the Babe, quenching the thirst of Adam and David straightway. Wherefore, let us hasten to this place where now is born a young Child, the pre-eternal God!

Sedalion, in Tone III: Spec. Mel.: "Today the Virgin ...":

Right fittingly let us hymn the righteous Joseph, the betrothed of the Virgin, with James and David; for, having trod the righteous path, they have attained unto the mansions of heaven, and joining chorus With the angels as is meet, they beg remission of sins for us.

Glory ..., in the same tone and melody:

The Virgin hath given birth to the Creator of all things, and the Magi come to worship Him in the flesh. Men and angels render glory; the cave and the manger offer gifts, lauding Him Who hath been newly born as a babe, the pre-eternal God!

Now and ever ..., in Tone I: Spec. Mel.: "The choir of angels ...":

The choir of prophets doth divinely celebrate the wonder which took place within thee, O Virgin; for thou didst give birth to God incarnate upon earth. Wherefore, angels and shepherds chant, and the Magi and Joseph sing of the wonders to David, the forefather of God.

ODE IV

Irmos: Proclaiming the approach of Thine appearance on earth, O Christ God, the prophet cried aloud with joy: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

With the Magi let us worship Him that hath been born; and with the angels and Joseph let us join chorus, crying aloud in godly manner: Glory to Christ God in the highest!

Christ, Who reigneth over all kings and Who hath been born in the flesh of the seed of David, hath accepted James, His chosen brother, as it was His good pleasure so to do.

The Lord God, Who appeared in the flesh through the Virgin, hath glorified your memorials together, O James, chosen of the apostles, and David most blessed, ye holy ones.

Theotokion: Rejoice, O Theotokos unwedded, thou who dost surpass the ranks of the cherubim, having given birth in the flesh unto God Who is borne upon thine arm.

ODE V

Irmos: Glory to Thee! Glory to Thee, O Jesus, Son of God, Who hast shone forth the light, hast illumined the morning and made manifest the day!

Glory to Thee! Glory to Thee, a God incarnate, Whose good pleasure it was to take flesh of the pure Virgin! did Joseph cry aloud.

Glory to Thee! Glory to Thee, O Jesus, Son of God, Who wast born of the Virgin and hast rendered the memory of David and James illustrious!

Jesus, the Son of God, Whom the prophet David, by divine inspiration, called Rain upon the fleece, hath James preached.

Theotokion: Unable to keep silent, creation doth offer thee the angel's salutation, O Virgin: Rejoice, O pure Mother of Jesus, the Son of God!

ODE VI

Irmos: Prefiguring Thy three-day burial, within the whale the prophet Jonah cried out, praying: Deliver me from corruption, O Jesus, King of hosts!

Awe-struck, the heavenly hosts stood before the cave and, unable to keep silent, hymned Thy most pure nativity, chanting: Glory in the highest to the newborn God!

Upon Thy throne hast Thou sat, as Thou didst swear unto the prophet David, O Master, Who camest forth from the fruit of his loins; and unto James didst Thou commit the throne of the Church, O Christ.

David the king is shown to be a wondrous prophet and forefather of the incarnation of God; and James, the disciple of Jesus, is shown forth as the first bishop.

Theotokion: **W**e beseech thee, O Virgin Theotokos: In behalf of thy servants entreat thou Him that was incarnate of thee, for we know thee to be our sole intercessor.

Kontakion, in Tone III: Spec. Mel.: "Today the Virgin ...":

Today the divine David is filled with gladness, and Joseph doth offer praise with James. They rejoice, receiving a crown through their kinship with Christ; and they laud Him that hath ineffably been born on earth, and cry aloud: O Compassionate One, save them that honor Thee!

Ikos: **T**he Incorporeal One is, through the ineffable Counsel, born in the flesh; He that is uncontainable is now contained in a body and doth preserve both essences immutably; He that is without beginning and Who alone is beyond time doth take on a beginning; an Infant of surpassing perfection is beheld; He that beareth all things is borne in arms. Wherefore, as God, He doth crown through His birth them that are honored by their kinship with Him, and, glorifying them with faith, we cry out unceasingly: O Compassionate One, save them that honor Thee!

ODE VII

Irmos: **O**nce, in Babylon, the children of Abraham trod down the flame of the furnace, crying aloud in hymns: **O** God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Amazed beyond words by the birthgiving of Mary, the Theotokos, the angelic choirs cried out to Joseph: Glory in the highest, and on earth peace!

David, the leader of the bride, and James, who was the chamberlain of the divine Church, did say: O God, Who hath become incarnate for our sake, blessed art Thou!

O thou that wast a king among prophets and a prophet among kings, chant thou with the divinely wise James and lift thy voice in song for us: O Christ, Who wast incarnate for our sake, blessed art Thou!

Theotokion: **P**refigured in the unconsumed bush and in the bedewed furnace, O Mother most pure, thou didst bear without seed God incarnate, O ever blessed one.

ODE VIII

Irmos: **C**hrist the King did the captive children confess, proclaiming with a loud voice in the furnace: All ye works of the Lord, hymn and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Christ incarnate, Whom the hosts of heaven have glorified, doth Joseph the betrothed unceasingly hymn, chanting: All ye works of the Lord, hymn and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Christ incarnate, Whom David the forefather of God foretold, James preached to the people, crying out: All ye works of the Lord, hymn and exalt Him supremely for all ages!

Christ, Who was born of the Virgin and Who hath exalted the sacred memory of David and James, in that they are His friends, hymn, all ye works of the Lord, and exalt supremely for all ages!

Theotokion: Christ the King, to Whom Mary the Theotokos hath given birth for us, remaining a pure Virgin even after her birthgiving, hymn, all ye works of the Lord, and exalt supremely for all ages!

ODE IX

Irmos: On the mountain did Moses behold the unconsumed bush; and in the cave did Joseph hear the ineffable birth. O Theotokos, Virgin undefiled, Mother without husband, thee do we magnify in hymns!

With trembling doth all creation minister unto Him that hath been born of the Virgin: the heavens with a star; the earth with a manger; the mountain with a cave; the Magi with gifts; the shepherds with wonder; and the angels with the hymn, Glory to God in the highest!

Of old was David chosen king from amongst the shepherds; and from the royal tribe of Judah art thou, O James. Thou art shown to be a shepherd of the flock of the Incarnate One, the Lamb, the Son of God Most High.

Be glad now, O Bethlehem, having become the city of the new David! O Zion, thou citadel of the Churches, exult now, taking up the common celebration of the King of all and His favored ones.

Theotokion: The assemblies of angels glorify thee, O Theotokos, and the human race doth unceasingly honor thee with hymns, for by thy divine birthgiving hast thou united the earthly to the heavenly. Wherefore, we do thee honor.

Exapostilarion of the Resurrection; Glory ..., that of the saints:

Spec. Mel.: "With the disciples ...":

Let us hymn David, the forefather of God, and divine Joseph, the betrothed of the Theotokos, with James, the glorious brother of God, for, with the angels, the Magi and the shepherds, they ministered in godly manner at the divine nativity of Christ in the city of Bethlehem, chanting a hymn unto Him as God and Master.

Now and ever ..., that of the feast:

From on high our Savior, the Dayspring of the East hath visited us and we who are in darkness and shadow have truly found Him; for the Lord hath been born of the Virgin. Thrice

At the Praises, four stichera for the Resurrection, and four from the feast, in Tone IV, with the festal refrains.

Glory ..., in Tone VIII:

Blood and fire and clouds of smoke are the wonders which Joel foresaw on earth. The blood is the Incarnation; the fire is the Godhead; the clouds of smoke are the Holy Spirit, Who descended upon the Virgin and hath made the world fragrant. Great is the mystery of Thine Incarnation! O Lord, glory be to Thee!

Now and even., "Most blessed art Thou, O Virgin Theotokos ..."

Great Doxology. Troparion of the Resurrection. Dismissal. Evangelical sticheron.

First Hour, and final dismissal.

At the Hours, the troparion of the Resurrection; Glory ..., that of the feast; Now and ever ..., Theotokion. We alternate the troparion of the saints with that of the feast. After the "Our Father ...," the Kontakion of the feast, alternating it with that of the saints.

AT LITURGY

On the Beatitudes, twelve troparia: four from the Oktoechos, four from the canon of the feast (varies depending on the day on which the Sunday falls), and four from Ode VI of the canon of the saints:

Awe-struck, the heavenly hosts stood before the cave and, unable to keep silent, hymned Thy most pure nativity, chanting: Glory in the highest to the newborn God!

Upon Thy throne hast Thou sat, as Thou didst swear unto the prophet David, O Master, Who camest forth from the fruit of his loins; and unto James didst Thou commit the throne of the Church, O Christ.

David the king is shown to be a wondrous prophet and forefather of the incarnation of God; and James, the disciple of Jesus, is shown forth as the first bishop.

Theotokion: **W**e beseech thee, O Virgin Theotokos: In behalf of thy servants entreat thou Him that was incarnate of thee, for we know thee to be our sole intercessor.

After the Entrance, the troparia of the Resurrection, that of the feast

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, * hath shined the light of knowledge upon the world; * for thereby, they that worshipped the stars * were instructed by a star * to worship Thee, the Sun of Righteousness, * and to know Thee, the Dayspring from on high. * O Lord, glory be to Thee.

And that of the saints, in Tone II:

O Joseph, proclaim thou the glad tidings to David, the ancestor of God, for thou hast seen a Virgin give birth; with the shepherds didst thou give glory; with the Magi didst thou worship; by an angel wast thou instructed. Entreat Christ God, that He save our souls!

Glory, the Kontakion of the saints in Tone III:

Today the divine David is filled with gladness, and Joseph doth offer praise with James. They rejoice, receiving a crown through their kinship with Christ; and they laud Him that hath ineffably been born on earth, and cry aloud: O Compassionate One, save them that honor Thee!

Now and ever, that of the feast in Tone III:

Today the Virgin giveth birth to Him Who is transcendent in essence; * and the earth offereth a cave to Him Who is unapproachable. * Angels with shepherds give glory; * with a star the Magi do journey; * for our sake a young Child is born, Who is pre-eternal God.

Prokimenon of the tone, and that for the saints, in Tone IV: Wondrous is God in His saints, the God of Israel.

Stichos: In congregations bless ye God, the Lord from the wellsprings of Israel.

THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS [1:11-19]

But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: and profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.

Alleluia, in Tone IV: Remember, O Lord, David in all His meekness.

Stichos: How he made an oath unto the Lord, and vowed unto the God of Jacob.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATHEW [2:13-23]

Behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take up the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: and was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son. Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, In Ramah was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not. But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life.

And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee: and he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

Communion Verse I: Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise Him in the highest.

Communion Verse II: Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous; praise is meet for the upright.