

# SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY

## Sunday of the Ancestors

December 24, 2006

Supplement for *The Order of Vespers for Sundays After Pentecost, 2005*

"O Lord, I have cried" is sung in Tone 6, page 82

**Cantor:** Bring my soul out of this prison  
(on 10) and then I shall praise your name.

### Stichera of the Ancestors

*Tone 6 podoben: Vsju otloživše*

(10) (9)

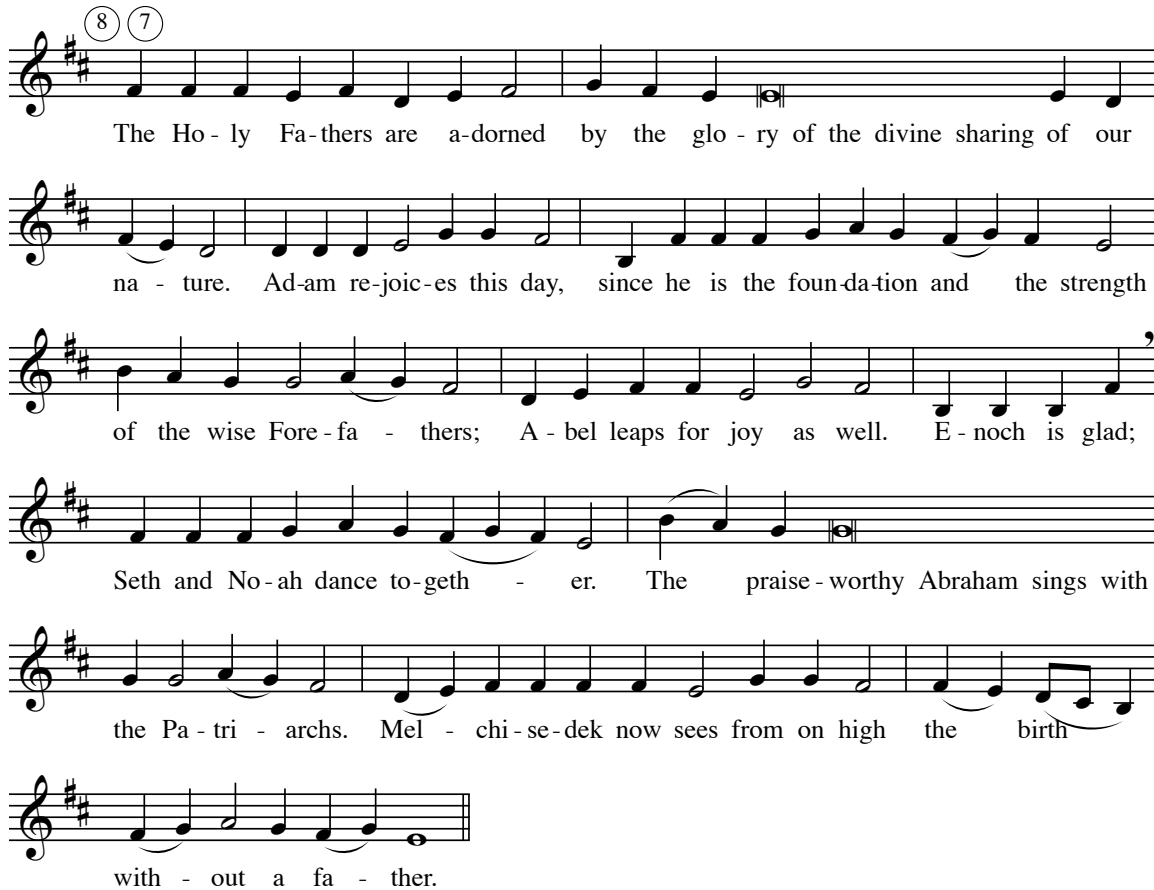


The com-mem-o - ra - tion of the Ho - ly Fa - thers is man - ifested to the  
ends of the world. It is tru - ly full of splen - dor, and it glis - tens with the  
rays of grace: for Christ the wondrous Sun has shone forth on high from a - far.  
He forms the assembly of stars which glis - ten with him, and the  
star reveals that the nativity of the God - man will be in Beth - le - hem.  
There - fore, we pi - ous - ly and faith - ful - ly clap our hands and leap with joy at this  
na - tiv - i - ty, and we give praise be - fore the feast.

**Cantor:** Around me the just will assemble  
(on 9) because of your goodness to me. *All repeat "The commemoration..."*

**Cantor:** Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord;  
(on 8) Lord, hear my voice!

8 7



The Ho-ly Fa-thers are a-dorned by the glo-ry of the divine sharing of our  
na-ture. Ad-am re-joic-es this day, since he is the foun-da-tion and the strength  
of the wise Fore-fa-thers; A-bel leaps for joy as well. E-noch is glad;  
Seth and No-ah dance to-geth-er. The praise-worthy Abraham sings with  
the Pa-tri-archs. Mel-chi-se-dek now sees from on high the birth  
with-out a fa-ther.

**Cantor:** Let your ears be attentive  
(on 7) to the voice of my pleading. *All repeat "The Holy Fathers..."*

**Cantor:** If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt, Lord who would survive?  
(on 6) But with you is found forgiveness: for this we revere you.

6 5



The faith-ful and God-wise youths are ra-diant with joy in the fur-nace.

They her - ald the nativity of Christ on earth. As the pre-cious dew which the  
 Lord sent down, he now preserves the Virgin with - out stain,  
 and en-rich-es her with sub-lime gifts. There-fore Dan - iel, in-spired by God,  
 is al - so hap-py and full of joy be-cause he had a clear vis - ion  
 of the un-hewn stone from the moun - tain. He now zeal - ous - ly  
 prays for our souls.

**Cantor:** My soul is longing for the Lord. I count on his word.  
 (on 5) My soul is longing for the Lord more than watchman for daybreak.  
 All repeat "The faithful and God-wise youths..."

**Cantor:** Let the watchman count on daybreak  
 (on 4) and Israel on the Lord.

**Prefestive Stichera**

*Tone 6 podobn: Vsju otloživše*

The Nev-er - set-ting Sun is com-ing from the vir-gin - al womb to en-light-en  
 ev-'ry-one un-der the sun. Let us meet him with pure hearts and with good works.

Let us pre-pare ourselves now through the Ho-ly Spir - it to greet him

who is coming to his own peo - ple as he him-self had willed.

He is be-ing born in Beth - le - hem so that through his com-pas - sion

he might bring back all of those who were ex - iled from

life in Par - a - dise.

**Cantor:** Because with the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption,  
(on 3) Israel indeed he will redeem from all its iniquity. (*Repeat "The Never-setting Sun..."*)

**Cantor:** Praise the Lord, all you nations, Psalm 116  
(on 2) acclaim him all you peoples!

He who is car - ried by the Cher - u - bim has tak - en human

nature in the abode of the im-mac - u - late womb. He has come to earth to be born

of the tribe of Ju - dah. The ho - ly cave has been a - dorned

like a splen-did palace for the King of all; the man-ger, like a ru - by throne.

The Vir - gin will place the Child in - to it, for the re-new - al

of his bound-less cre - a - tion.

**Cantor:** Strong is the love of the Lord for us;  
(on I) he is faithful forever.

① Hav - ing con-ceived in a man - ner beyond un - der - stand - ing,

the Vir - gin places you into the manger of the dumb an - i - mals, O e - ter - nal

Word of God, be - cause you come to pardon the ig - nor - ance

that I ac-quired through the envy of the ser - pent. You come to be wrapped in

swad - dling clothes in or - der to break the chains and fet-ters of my sins.

O on - ly bless-ed One and Lov-er of us all, I most joy - fully glorify, ex tol

and a-dore you and your com-ing in the flesh; for through you

I have been freed.

**Cantor:** (Tone 6) Glory...

**Doxastikon of the Ancestors - Tone 6 samohlasen**

Dan-iel was a be-lov-ed man. He saw you, O Lord, as the Rock which was

hewn with-out the use of a hand. He fore-told that you, the In-car-nate Word,

the Unchangeable God, and Sav-ior of our souls, would be born with-out seed

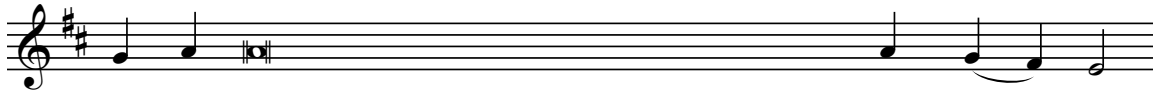
as a Child of a Vir-gin.

**Cantor:** Now and ever...

**Theotokion of the prefeast**

O cave, prepare yourself to re-ceive the Moth-er who bears Christ with-in

her womb. O man-ger, receive the Word who de-stroyed the sins of all.



O shep - herds, keep watch and then bear witness to the awe - some won - der.



O ma - gi, from Per - sia now come, and bring your gifts of gold, frank - in - cense, and



myrrh to the King. For the Lord has appeared from a Vir - gin Moth - er;



yet she bowed to him as a ser - vant and spoke to him in her bos - om,



say - ing: "How were you con - ceived in me? How did you grow in me, my



God and Sav - - - ior?"

- Readings:**
- 1) Genesis 14:14-20
  - 2) Deuteronomy 1:8-11.15-17
  - 3) Deuteronomy 10:14-21

- [Optional Readings:**
- 1) Genesis 46:8-27;
  - 2) 1Kings 9:3-7;
  - 3) Isaiah 7:14-15; 11:1-9]

# Litija

①

You bear the form of Ad-am, yet you are all-perfect, being in the form of God.

Of your own will you are held in hu-man hands, e-ven though in your own power

you up-hold all things. The pure and unde-filed Vir-gin spoke a-loud:

How shall I wrap you in swad-dling clothes like an in-fant? How shall I nurse

the One who gives nourishment to the world? How shall I not wonder in amazement

at your poverty be-yond un-der-stand-ing? How shall I, who am your handmaid-en,

call you my Son? I sing your prais-es and I bless you, for you grant great

mer-cy to the world.

②

The un - de - filed Virgin beheld the pre - eternal God as a child who had tak - en

flesh from her. She held him in her arms and with - out ceas - ing kissed him.

Filled with joy, she cried out: O most high God and un - seen King,

how is it that I look up - on you? I can - not understand the mystery of

your immeas - ur - a - ble low - li - ness. For the small - est of caves is a strange

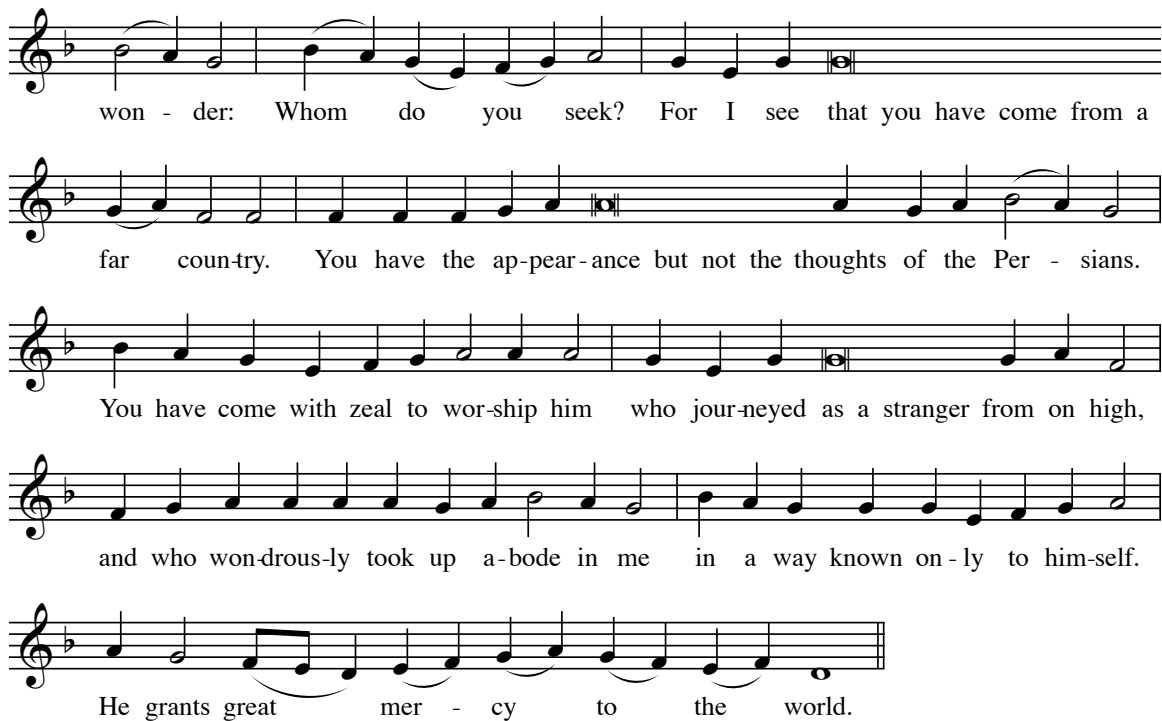
dwell - ing for you; yet it finds room for you with - in it - self. You have been

born without destroy - ing my vir - gin - i - ty, and you have kept my womb as it

was be - fore child - birth. Now you grant great mer - cy to the world.

③

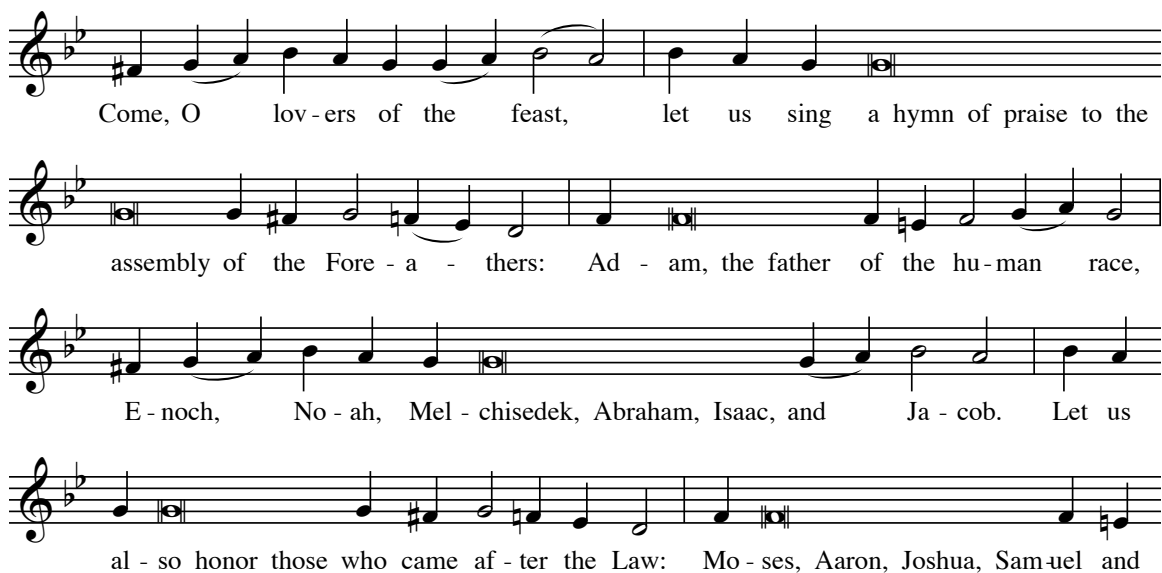
When the Vir - gin saw the Magi standing be - fore the cave, she spoke to them in



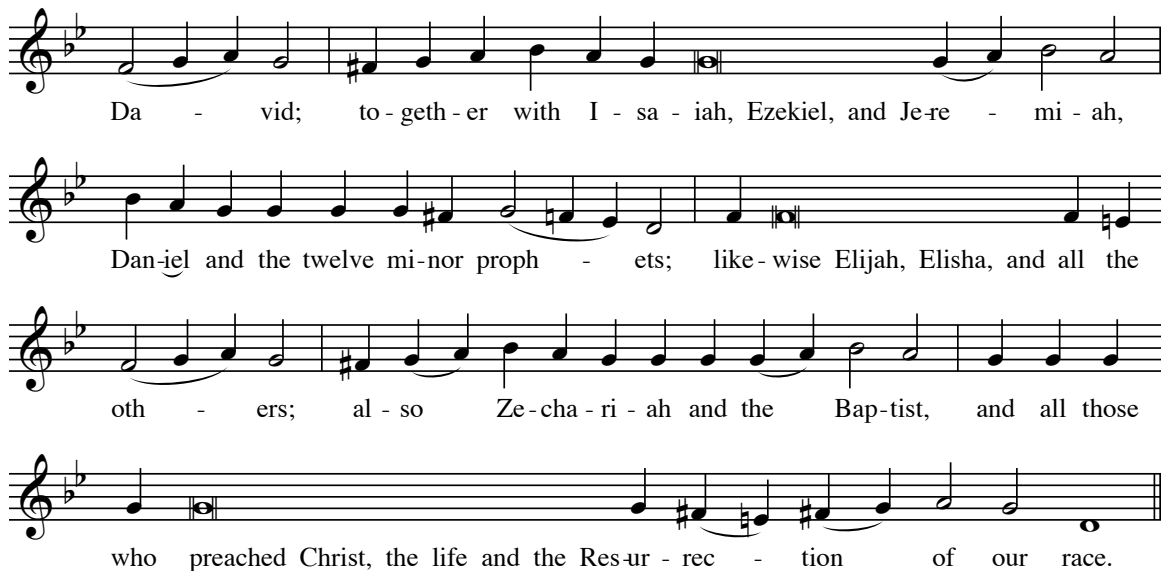
won - der: Whom do you seek? For I see that you have come from a  
 far coun-try. You have the ap-pear-ance but not the thoughts of the Per - sians.  
 You have come with zeal to wor-ship him who jour-neyed as a stranger from on high,  
 and who won-drous-ly took up a-bode in me in a way known on - ly to him-self.  
 He grants great mer - cy to the world.

**Cantor:** (Tone 3) Glory...

**Doxastikon of the Fathers - Tone 3 samohlasen**

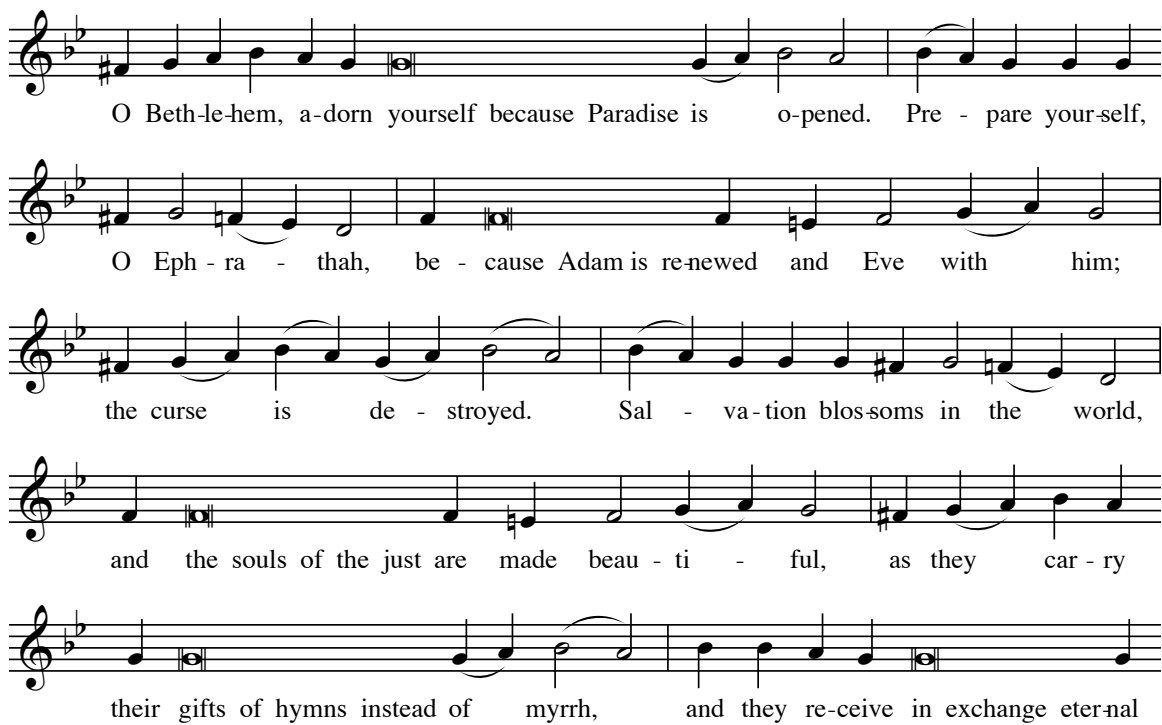


Come, O lov - ers of the feast, let us sing a hymn of praise to the  
 assembly of the Fore - a - thers: Ad - am, the father of the hu-man race,  
 E - noch, No - ah, Mel - chisedek, Abraham, Isaac, and Ja - cob. Let us  
 al - so honor those who came af - ter the Law: Mo - ses, Aaron, Joshua, Samuel and



Da - vid; to - geth - er with I - sa - iah, Ezekiel, and Je - re - mi - ah,  
 Dan - iel and the twelve mi - nor proph - ets; like - wise Elijah, Elisha, and all the  
 oth - ers; al - so Ze - cha - ri - ah and the Bap - tist, and all those  
 who preached Christ, the life and the Res - ur - rec - tion of our race.

**Cantor:** Now and ever...



O Beth - le - hem, a - dorn yourself because Paradise is o - pened. Pre - pare your - self,  
 O Eph - ra - thah, be - cause Adam is re - newed and Eve with him;  
 the curse is de - stroyed. Sal - va - tion blos - soms in the world,  
 and the souls of the just are made beau - ti - ful, as they car - ry  
 their gifts of hymns instead of myrrh, and they re - ceive in exchange eter - nal

sal - va - tion. Be - hold, while lying in the man - - - ger,  
 he in - vites the sing - ing of spiri - tual hymns from those who cry out  
 with - out ceas - ing: O Lord, glo - ry to you!

### Aposticha

*Tone 2 samopodoben: Dome Jefratov*

O house of Eph - ra - thah and  
 ho - - - ly cit - - - - y! O boast of the proph - ets!  
 A - dorn the house in which the Di - vine One is born.

*Cantor*

God comes from Te - man; the Hol - y One from Mount Pa - ran.

O Beth - - - le - hem, O land of Ju - dah,

you are the bright a - bode of the One - Who - Is.

Pre-pare the cave, for God is to be born in the flesh from the ho - ly,

un - de - filed Vir - gin to save the hu - man race.

*Cantor*

O Lord, I heard your voice and I was a-fraid; I knew your deeds,

and I was ter - ri - fied.

3  
Come let us faith - ful - ly cel - e - brate be - fore-hand the birth of Christ.

Let us sing spir - it - ual hymns of praise.

With the shep - herds, let us cry out: The Sav - ior of all

has come from a Vir - gin, and he sum - mons all the faith - ful.

**Cantor:** (Tone 2) Glory...

**Doxastikon - Tone 2 samohlasen**

Re - joice, O il - lus - tri - ous Proph - ets! You firm - ly es - tablished  
the Law of the Lord, and you faith - ful - ly mani - fest - ed your - selves to be  
in - vin - cible and un - shak - a - ble pil - lars. You have been tak - en to heav - en  
and have shown your - selves to be mediators of the new Law of Christ. Im - plore him  
to give peace to the world and to save our souls.

**Cantor:** Now and ever...

Be - hold, the time of sal - va - tion is draw - ing near. O Cave, pre - pare your - self,  
for the Vir - gin is com - ing to give birth. O Beth - le - hem, O land of Ju - dah,  
a - dorn your - self and be hap - py since the Lord will shine forth from you,

O moun-tains and hills and lands a-round Ju - dah, heark-en, for Christ is  
 com-ing that he may save his cre - a - tion be-cause he is the Lov-er of us all.

**Troparia at the Blessing of Bread**

**Troparion of the Ancestors - Tone 2 (sung twice)**

Great are the ac-com - plish - ments of faith: the three ho - ly youths rejoiced in  
 the streams of fire as if in re-fresh - ing wa - ters; and Dan-iel the prophet  
 shep-herd - ed li - ons like sheep. Through their pray'rs, O  
 Christ our God, save our souls.

**Cantor:** (Tone 4) Glory...now and ever...

**Troparion of the Vigil - Tone 4**

At that time, Mar-y regis-tered in Beth-le-hem with the el-der Joseph, who was of  
 the house of Da - vid. She had con-ceived with-out seed and was with child,

and her time to give birth had come. They found no room at the inn,  
 but the cave be - came a pleas-ant pal - ace for the Queen. Christ is born to  
 raise up the like - ness that had fall - en.

*If there is no Litija:*

**Troparion of the Resurrection - Tone 4**

The joy-ful mes-sage of the res-ur-rec - tion was heard by the women disci-ples  
 from the an - gel, and be-ing freed from the an-ces-tral curse, they boast-ed  
 to the a-pos - tles: Death is de-spoiled; Christ our God is ris - en,  
 giv - ing great mer - cy to the world.

*(Tone 2) Glory...*

*Troparion of the Ancestors: "Great are the accomplishments of faith..."*

*(Tone 4) Now and ever...*

*Troparion of the Vigil: "At that time, Mary registered..."*