

Vespers of the Nativity
of Our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ
as sung on years when December 24 falls on a Sunday

Metropolitan Cantor Institute
Archeparchy of Pittsburgh

December, 2006

Vespers for the Nativity of Our Lord, God and Savior, Jesus Christ

Priest: Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever.

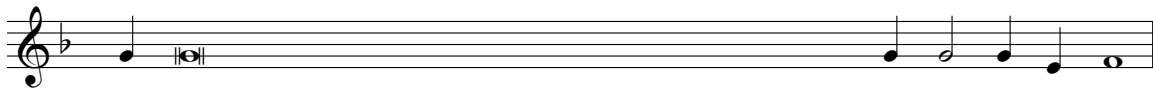
Response: 
A - - men.

Call to Worship

Each time with a reverence:



Come, let us worship our King and God. Come, let us worship Christ, our King and God.



Come, let us worship and bow before the only Lord Jesus Christ, the King and our God.

Psalm 103



1. Bless the Lord, O my soul! Lord my God, how great you are,



2. clothed in maj-es-ty and glo - - - ry, wrapped in light as in a robe.



3. You stretch out the heav-ens like a tent. A-bove the rains you build your



dwell - ing. 4. You make the clouds your char - i - ot, you walk on

the wings of the wind; 5. you make your an-gels spir - - - its

and your min - is - ters a flam - ing fire. 6. You found-ed the earth

on its base, to stand firm from age to age. 7. You make the grass grow for

the cat - - - tle and the plants to serve man's needs, 8. that he may

bring forth bread from the earth and wine to cheer man's heart;

9. oil, to make his face shine and bread to strength - en

man's heart. 10. I will sing to the Lord all my life, make mu - sic

to my God while I live. 11. You made the moon to mark the months;

the sun knows the time for its set - ting. 12. How man - y are your

works, O Lord! In wis-dom you have made them all. 13. Glo - ry to
the Fa-ther, and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Spir - it,
14. now and ev - - - er and for - ev - er. A - men.

Three times, each with a reverence

Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Glo-ry to you, O God!

Litany of Peace

Deacon: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Response: 1. Lord, have mer - cy.

Deacon: For peace from on high and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

Response: 2. Lord, have mer - cy.

Deacon: For peace in the whole world, for the stability of the holy Churches of God, and for the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, have mercy. (1)

Deacon: For this holy church and for all who enter it with faith, reverence, and fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, have mercy. (2)

Deacon: For our holy father, (*Name*), pope of Rome, let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, have mercy. (1)

Deacon: For our most reverend metropolitan, (*Name*), for our God-loving bishop, (*Name*), for the venerable presbyterate, the diaconate in Christ, and all the clergy and people, let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, have mercy. (2)

Deacon: For our government and for all in the service of our country, let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, have mercy. (1)

Deacon: For this city, [*or*: For this holy monastery], for every city, community, and for the faithful living in them, let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, have mercy. (2)

Deacon: For favorable weather, for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, have mercy. (1)

Deacon: For those who travel by sea, air, and land, for the sick, the suffering, the captive and for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, have mercy. (2)

Deacon: That we be delivered from all affliction, wrath, and need, let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, have mercy. (1)

Deacon: Protect us, save us, have mercy on us, and preserve us, O God, by your grace.

Response: Lord, have mercy. (2)

Deacon: Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

Response: 
To you, O Lord.

Priest: Evening, morning, and at noon we praise you, we bless you, we thank you, and we pray to you, Master of All, Lord and Lover of us all. Let our prayer rise like incense before you and do not let our hearts be turned to evil words or thoughts, but deliver us from all that might ensnare our souls. For to you, Lord, O Lord, our eyes are turned and in you we hope; let us not be put to shame, O our God. For to you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is due all glory, honor, and worship now and ever and forever.

Response: 
A - men.

The Lamplighting Psalms

Psalm 140 - Tone 2



O Lord, I have cried to you, hear me. Hear me, O Lord!
O Lord, I have cried to you, hear me; re-ceive the voice of my pray'r when I
call up - on you. Hear me, O Lord! Let my pray'r
as-cend to you like in - cense and the lift - ing up of my hands



O Lord, set a guard before my mouth
and set a seal on the door of *my* lips.

Let not my heart be inclined to evil,
nor make excuses for sins I *commit*.

Let me never share in sinners' feasting.
If a just man strikes or reproves me it *is* kindness

but let the oil of the wicked not anoint my head.
Let my prayer be ever against *their* malice.

The princes were thrown down by the side of the rock;
then they understood that my words *were* kind.

As a millstone is shattered to pieces on the ground,
so their bones were strewn at the mouth of *the* grave.

To you, Lord God, my eyes are turned;
in you I take refuge; spare *my* soul!

From the trap they have laid for me keep me safe;
keep me from the snares of those who *do* evil.

Let the wicked fall into the traps they have set
while I pursue my way *unharm*ed.

Psalm 141 With all my voice I cry to the Lord,
with all my voice I entreat *the* Lord.

I pour out my trouble before him;
I tell him all my distress while my spirit faints *with*in me.

But you, O Lord, know my path.
On the way where I shall walk they have hidden a snare to *entrap* me.

by which the partition has been broken and the flaming sword with-held. Now the

Cherubim shall let us all come to the Tree of Life. As for me, I

am returning to the bliss of Paradise from which I had been banished by

disobedience. Behold! The Image of the Father and his unchangeable

eternity has taken the form of a servant.

Without suffering he has come forth to us from an all-pure Virgin, and

yet he has remained unchanged. He is true God as he was before,

and he has taken on himself what he had not been, becoming man out of

his love for all. Therefore, let us raise our voices in hymns singing:

O God, born of the Vir - gin, have mer - cy on us.

Cantor: Because with the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption,
(on 3) Israel indeed he will redeem from all its iniquity.

Be-cause the Lord Je - sus was born of the ho - ly Vir - gin, all cre - a - tion is

en-light - ened. Be - hold! The shep - herds keep watch and the ma - gi are a - dor - ing;

the an - gels are sing - ing hymns of praise and Her - od is trem - bling;

for the Sav - ior of our souls has re - vealed him - self in the flesh.

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

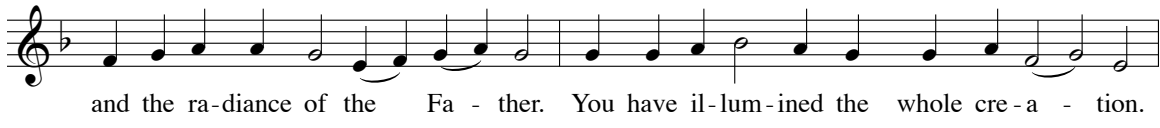
O Christ our God, your king - dom is e - ter - nal, and your reign is from

gen - eration to gen - er - a - tion. You be - came in - carnate of the Ho - ly Spir - it

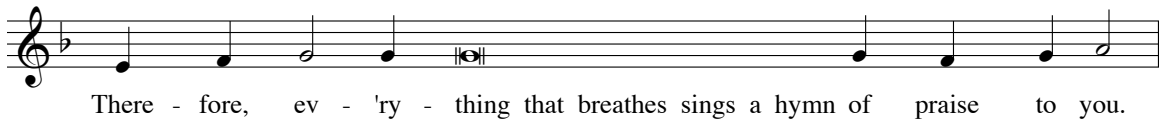
and be - came man from the ev - er - vir - gin Mar - y. Your com - ing,



O Christ, has shed a great light up - on us. You are the Light of Light



and the ra-diance of the Fa - ther. You have il-lum-ined the whole cre-a - tion.



There - fore, ev - 'ry - thing that breathes sings a hymn of praise to you.



You are the im - age of the Fa - ther's glo - ry. You are



the e - ternal God, existing be-fore all a - ges, who shone forth from the Vir-gin.

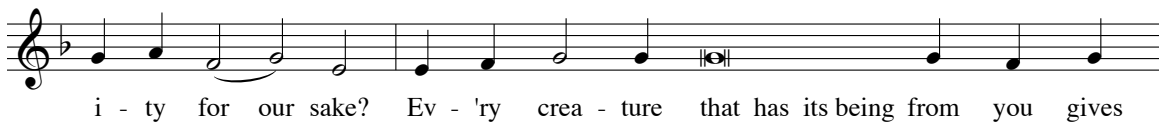


O Lord our God, have mer - cy on us.

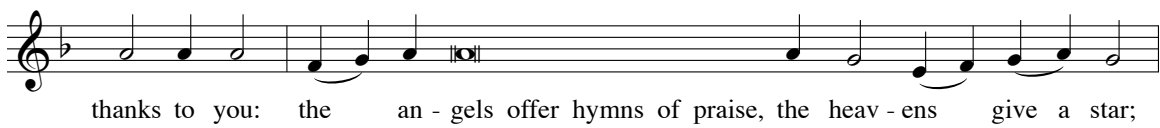
Cantor: Strong is the love of the Lord for us;
(on I) he is faithful forever.



O Christ, what shall we of-fer you for your com-ing on earth in our human-



i - ty for our sake? Ev - 'ry crea - ture that has its being from you gives



thanks to you: the an - gels offer hymns of praise, the heav - ens give a star;

the Ma - gi pre - sent their gifts and the shep - herds, their won - der; the earth
 pro - vides a cave and the des - ert a man - ger. As for us, we offer a
 Vir - gin Moth - er. O God who are from all eter - ni - ty, have
 mer - cy on us.

Cantor: Glory...now and ever...

Doxastikon

When Au - gus - tus became su - preme rul - er of the world, the man - y king - doms
 a - mong the peo - ple came to an end. Like - wise, when you be - came incarnate
 of the Im - mac - u - late One, the wor - ship of man - y gods had to cease.
 The cit - ies came under a uni - ver - sal pow - er, and the Gen - tiles believed in one
 su - preme Di - vin - i - ty. Na - tions were re - gistered in the name of Cae - sar

Au-gus - tus, and we, the faith - ful, were registered in your divine name,

O In - car - nate One. O Lord, great is your mer - cy; glo - ry to you!

The Festive Entrance

Deacon: Wisdom! Be attentive!

The Hymn of the Evening

O Joy - ful Light of the ho - ly glo - ry of the Fa - ther Im - mor - tal,

the hea - ven - ly, ho - ly, bles - sed One, O Je - sus Christ: Now that we have

reached the set - ting of the sun, and see the eve - ning light, we sing to God,

Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Spir - it. It is fit - ting at all times to raise

a song of praise in meas - ured mel - o - dy to you, O Son of God, the

Giv - er of Life. There - fore, the u - ni - verse sings your glo - ry.

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Priest: ✠ Peace be to all!

Deacon: Wisdom! Be attentive!

The Evening Prokeimenon

Sunday - Tone 8 (Psalm 133: 1, 2)

Come, bless the Lord, all you who serve the Lord; come, bless the Lord,
all you who serve the Lord.

Deacon: Who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God.

Reading 1 *For the sake of brevity, only one reading may be taken.)*

Genesis 1:1-13

Numbers 24: 2-3, 5-9, 17-18

Micah 4: 6-7, 5: 2-4

First Responsorial Troparion

All:

Tone 6

You were born in a cave, hidden from the eyes of all; but the heavens revealed
you to all by means of a star, O Savior. It brought the Magi to you;
they worshipped you in the fervor of their faith. Have mercy

up - on all of us.

Cantor:

On the ho - ly moun - tain is his city cher-ished by the Lord. The Lord

pre - fers the gates of Zion to all Ja-cob's dwell - ings.

All:

It brought the Ma-gi to you; they wor-shipped you in the fer-vor of their faith.

Have mer - cy up - on all of us.

Cantor:

Of you are told glo - rious things, O cit - y of God. Bab - y - lon and Egypt I will

count among those who know me.

All: *Repeat : "It brought the Magi to you..."*

Cantor:

Zi - on shall be called Mother, for all shall be her chil - dren. It is he,

the Lord Most High, who gives each his place.

All: *Repeat : "It brought the Magi to you..."*

Cantor:

Glo-ry to the Fa-ther and to the Son and to the Ho-ly Spir - it; now and ev-er

and for - ev - er. A - men.

All: *Repeat: "You were born in a cave..."*

Reading 2: *(For the sake of brevity, only one reading may be taken.)*

Isaiah 11:1-10

Baruch 3: 35 through 4: 4

Daniel 2:31-36, 44-45

Second Responsorial Troparion

All:

You have shone forth from the Virgin, O Christ, Sun of Jus - tice. A star

found you, whom nothing can contain, mani-fest - ed in the cave.

It led the Magi to a - dore you. With them we wor - ship you,

O Giv - er of Life; glo - ry to you!

Cantor:

The Lord is King, with majes - ty en - robed; the Lord has robed

him - self with might; he has gird - ed him - self with power.

All:

It led the Magi to a - dore you. With them we wor - ship you,

O Giv - er of Life; glo - ry to you!

Cantor:

Glo - ry to the Fa - ther and to the Son and to the Ho - ly Spir - it; now and ev - er

and for - ev - er. A - men.

All: *Repeat " You have shone forth from the Virgin..."*

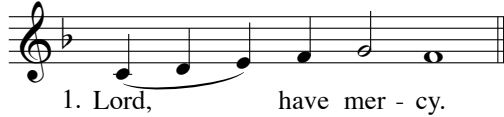
Reading 3 *(For the sake of brevity, only one reading may be taken.)*

Isaiah 9: 6-7

Isaiah 7:10-16; 8: 1-4, 9-10 *(This reading should always be taken.)*

Litany of Fervent Supplication


Deacon: Let us all say with our whole soul and with our whole mind, let us say:

Response: 

Deacon: O Lord almighty, God of our fathers, we pray you, hear and have mercy.

Response: 

Deacon: Have mercy on us, O God, according to your great mercy, we pray you, hear and have mercy.

Response: 

Deacon: Again we pray for our holy father, *(Name)*, pope of Rome, and for our most reverend metropolitan, *(Name)*, for our God-loving bishop, *(Name)*, for those who serve and have served in this holy church, for our spiritual fathers, and for all our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Response: 

Deacon: Again we pray for our government and for all in the service of our country.

Response: Lord, have mercy. *(three times, using response 4.)*

Deacon: Again we pray for the people here present who await your great and abundant mercy, for those who show us mercy, and for all Christians of the true faith.

Response: Lord, have mercy. (*three times, using response 3.*)

Priest: For you are a merciful and loving God, and we give glory to you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever.

Response: 
A - men.

Hymn of Glorification


Make us wor - thy, O Lord, to be kept sin - less this eve - ning.

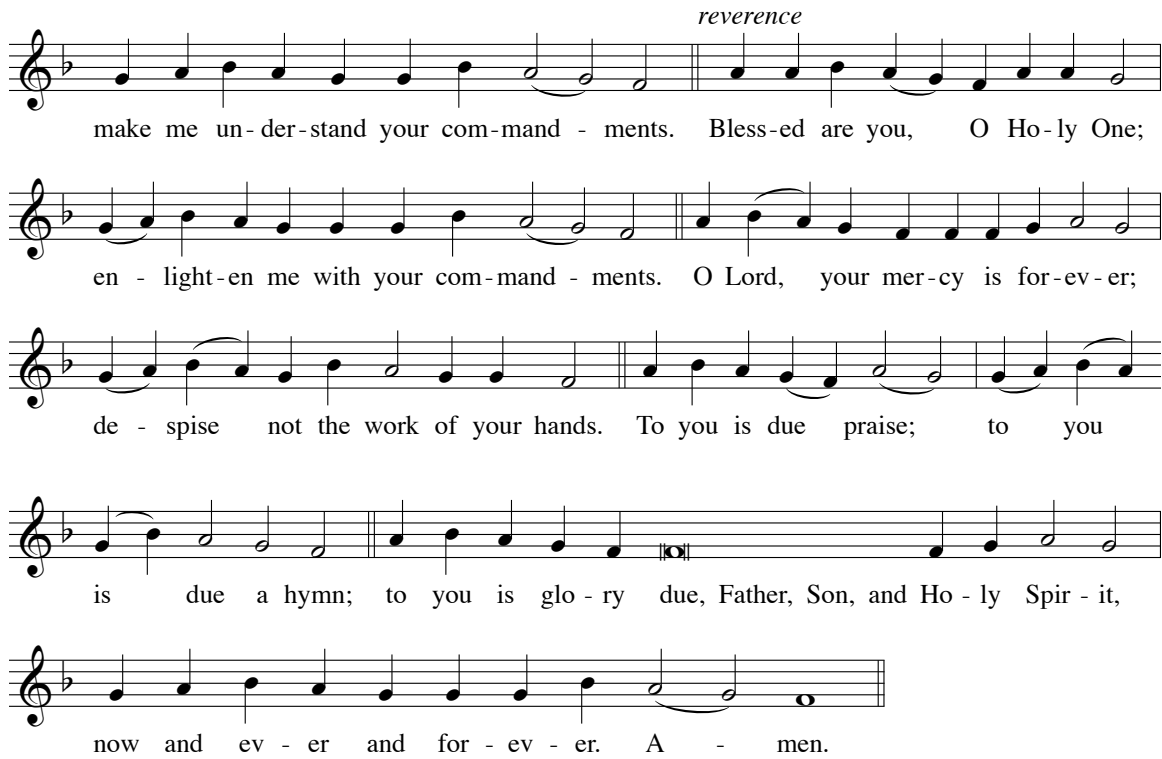

Bless-ed are you, O Lord, the God of our fa - thers, and praise-wor - thy


and glorious is your name for ev - er. A - men. May your mer - cy, O Lord,


be up-on us who have placed our hope in you. Bless-ed are you O


Lord; teach me your com-mand - ments. Bless-ed are you, O Mas - ter;


reverence



make me un-der-stand your com-mand - ments. Bless-ed are you, O Ho-ly One;
 en - light-en me with your com-mand - ments. O Lord, your mer-cy is for-ev - er;
 de - spise not the work of your hands. To you is due praise; to you
 is due a hymn; to you is glo - ry due, Father, Son, and Ho - ly Spir - it,
 now and ev - er and for - ev - er. A - men.

Litany of Supplication

Deacon: Let us complete our evening prayer to the Lord.

Response: 
 1. Lord, have mer - cy.


Deacon: Protect us, save us, have mercy on us, and preserve us, O God, by your grace.

Response: 
 2. Lord, have mer - cy.

Deacon: That this whole evening be perfect, holy, peaceful, and without sin, let us beseech the Lord.

Response: 
3. Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: For an angel of peace, a faithful guide and guardian of our souls and bodies, let us beseech the Lord.

Response: 
4. Grant this, O Lord.

Deacon: For the pardon and remission of our sins and offenses, let us beseech the Lord.

Response: Grant this, O Lord. (3)

Deacon: For what is good and beneficial to our souls and for peace in the world, let us beseech the Lord.

Response: Grant this, O Lord (4)

Deacon: That we may spend the rest of our life in peace and repentance, let us beseech the Lord.

Response: Grant this, O Lord. (3)

Deacon: For a Christian, painless, unashamed, peaceful end of our life, and for a good account before the fearsome judgment seat of Christ, let us beseech the Lord.

Response: Grant this, O Lord. (4)

Deacon: Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-Virgin Mary with all the Saints, let us commit ourselves and one another, and our whole life to Christ our God.

Response: 
To you, O Lord.

Priest: Great and most high God, you alone possess immortality and dwell in unapproachable light. You made all creation with wisdom, dividing light from darkness, establishing the sun to rule the day and the moon and stars to rule the night. You have allowed us sinners to approach your presence with thanksgiving in this present hour and to offer you evening praise. O Lord, Lover of us all, make our prayer ascend to you like incense and accept it as a sweet fragrance. Grant that we may spend the present evening and the coming night in peace; clothe us with the armor of light; deliver us from the fears of the night and from everything that lurks about in darkness. Grant that the sleep you have given us to refresh our fatigue may be free from all illusions of the devil. Yes, O Master of All, Giver of good things, let us feel contrition as we lie on our beds remembering your name throughout the night. Enlightened by meditation on your commands, may we rise with gladdened soul to give glory to your goodness, offering prayers and supplications to your compassion for our sins and those of all your people. Visit us with mercy through the intercession of the holy Theotokos.

For you, O God, are good and love us all, and we glorify you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever.

Response: 
A - men.

Priest: ❖ Peace be to all!

Response: 
And to your spir - - - it.

Deacon: Bow your heads to the Lord!

Response: 
To you, O Lord.

Priest: Lord our God, you bowed the heavens and came down for the salvation of the human race. Look upon your servants and upon your inheritance, for they have bowed their heads and bent their necks to you, the awesome Judge who love mankind. They do not expect human help, but await your mercy and long for your salvation. Protect them at all times, this evening and tonight, from every enemy, from all the devil's assaults, from vain thoughts and evil imaginings. May the might of your kingdom be blessed and glorified, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever.

Response: 
A - men.

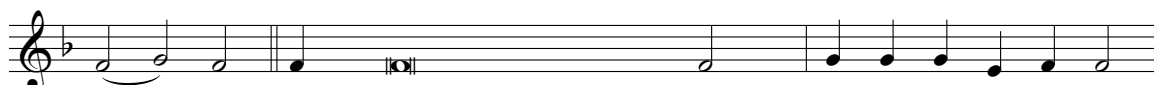
Dismissal

Deacon: Wisdom!

Response: 
Give the bles-sing.


Priest: Blessed is Christ our God, the One-Who-Is, always, now and ever and forever.

Response:


A - men. O God, strengthen the true faith, for - ev - er and ev - er.

Priest: O most holy Theotokos, save us!

Response:

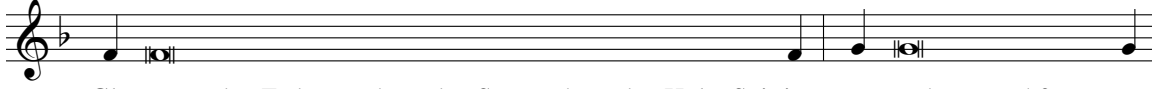

More honorable than the cheru-bim, and beyond compare more glorious than the sera-phim,



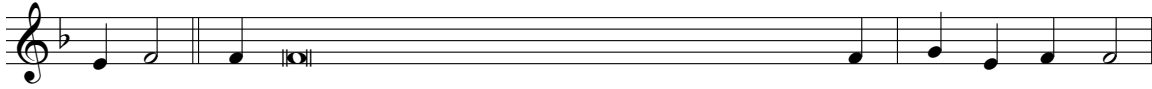
who, a virgin, gave birth to God the Word, you, truly the Theotokos, we mag-ni-fy.

Priest: Glory to you, O Christ our God, our hope; glory to you!

Response:

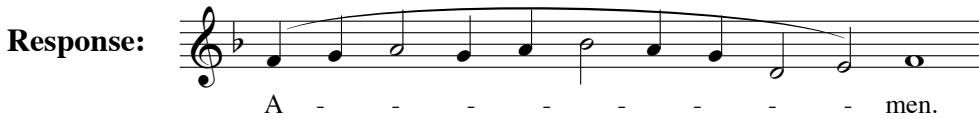


Glo-ry to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spir-it; now and ever and for ev-er.



A-men. Lord, have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord, have mer-cy. Give the bless-ing.

Priest: May Christ our true God, who for our salvation was born in cave in Bethlehem of Judea and lay in a manger, have mercy on us and save us through the prayers of his most pure Mother and through the prayers of all the saints; for Christ is good and loves us all.



A - - - - - men.

Then the deacon (or lector if there is no deacon) brings a lighted candle on a stand and places it in the midst of the church. All sing:

Troparion - Tone 4



Your birth, O Christ our God, has shed up - on the world the light of



knowl - edge; for through it, those who wor-shipped the stars have learned from

a star to worship you, the Sun of Jus - tice, and to know you, the Dawn

from on High. Glo - ry to you, O Lord!

Cantor

Glo - ry to the Fa - ther, and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Spir - it,

now and ev - er and for - ev - er. A - - - men.

Kontakion - Tone 3

To - day the Vir - gin gives birth to the Tran - scen - dent One; and the earth

of - fers a cave to the Un - ap - proach - a - - ble. The an - gels sing his glory

with the shep - herds; the wise men jour - ney with the star.

The e - ter - nal God is born for us as an in - fant child.