

The Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

First and Second Finding of the Head of the Holy Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist John

celebrated on Wednesday in the Third Week of the Great Fast
February 23, 2005

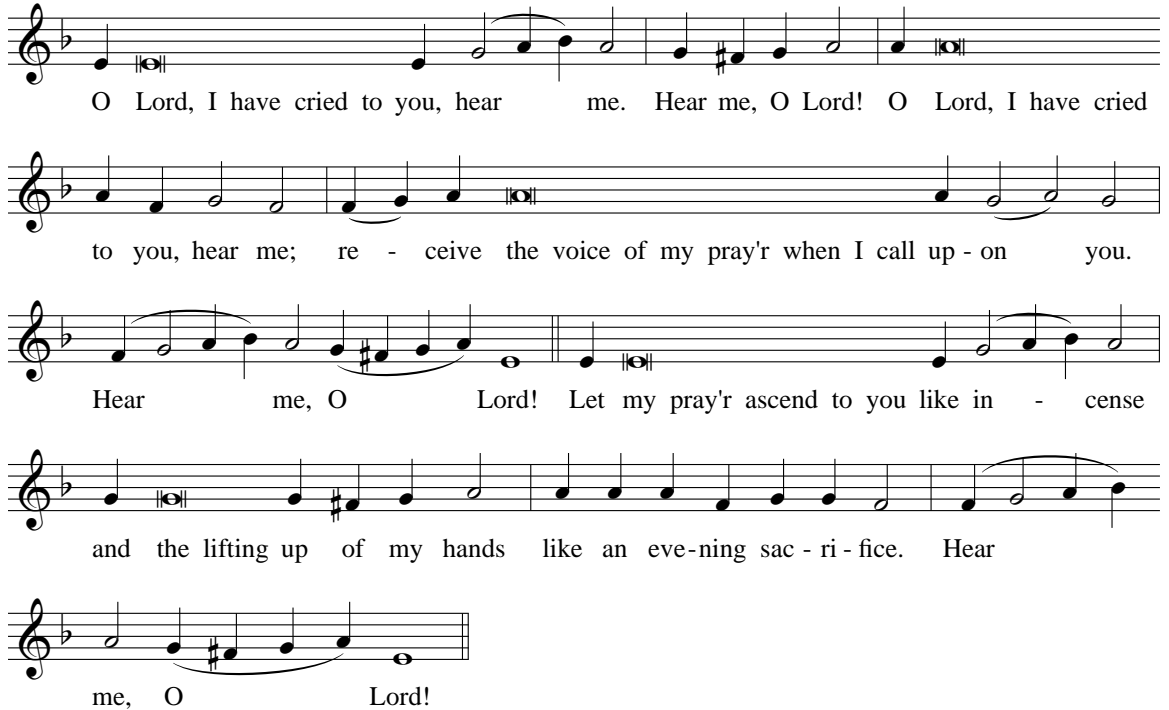
The reading from Genesis tells of the entrance of Noah and his family and the living creatures into the ark which God commanded him to build.

The reading from Proverbs tonight personifies Folly, describing her as a loose woman who tempts men from their straight path into ways of destruction.

The Lamplighting Psalms

Psalm 140

Tone 4



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 ascend to you like in - cense
and the lifting up of my hands like an eve-ning sac - ri - fice. Hear
me, O Lord!

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 *un*harméd.

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 *en*trap me.

Look on my right and see:
there is no one who takes *my* part.

I have no means of escape,
not one who cares for *my* soul.

I cry to you, O Lord.
I have said: "You are my refuge, all I have in the land of *the* living."

Listen, then, to my cry
for I am in the depths *of* distress.

Rescue me from those who pursue me
for they are stronger *than* I.

Bring my soul out of this prison
and then I shall praise *your* name.

Around me the just will assemble
because of your goodness *to* me.

Psalm 129 Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord;
Lord, hear *my* voice!

Let your ears be attentive
to the voice of *my* pleading.

If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt, Lord, who would stand?
But with you is found forgiveness: for this we *revere* you.

My soul is waiting for the Lord. I count on his word.
My soul is longing for the Lord more than watchman *for* daybreak.

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

Tone 4

④

Like the prod-i-gal son, I squand-ered my fa-ther's wealth and I grew des-o-late.
Liv-ing in the land of the wick-ed, I im-itated the irrational beasts in my
fol-ly. I have stripped off ev'ry di-vine grace; and so I return cry-ing out to you:
My com-pas-sionate and merci-ful Fa-ther, I have sinned, O God;
wel-come me as a penitent and have mer-cy on me.

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

Stichera of the Baptist

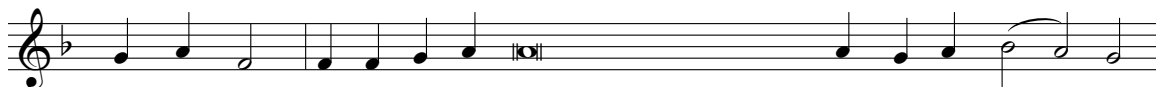
Tone 5



Re - joice, O sacred and light-bear - ing head, ven - er - a - ted by the an - gels,



Of old it was cut off by a sword, but cut down the shame of iniquity with



sharp re-proofs. It is a well - spring of miracles giving drink to the faith - ful.



It pro - claims the saving com - ing of the Sav - ior, and saw the coming of the



Spirit who dwelt in you who stand between the grace of the old and new



cov - e - nants. En - treat Christ God to grant our souls great mer - - - cy.

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



The head of the Fore-run-ner which was once concealed in an earth-en ves - sel,



has ap - peared, clearly given up from the bos - om of the earth and pour - ing forth



streams of heal - ing, for in the wa - ters he washed the head of him that e - ven



now covers the cham - bers of the fir - ma - ment with wa - ters, and rains down di - vine



forgiveness upon the hu - man race. There - fore, let us bless it as tru - ly most glo - ri - ous,

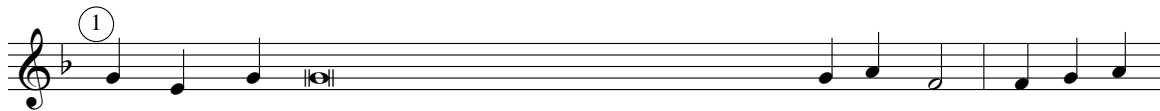


and in its discovery let us keep a feast, en - treat - ing Christ to



grant our souls great mer - - - cy.

Cantor: Strong is the love of the Lord for us;
(on 1) he is faithful forever.



The head which proclaimed the Lamb of God has appeared in the flesh. With di - vine



com - mands it declared the ways of sav - ing re - pent - ance to all. Of old it



de - nounced the sin of Her - od, and there - fore was cut off from its bod - y



and en - dured con - ceal - ment for a time. Now it shines forth upon us like a

ra-diant sun, cry - ing out: Repent and submit to Christ in compunc-tion of soul,
for he grants the world great mer - - - cy.

Cantor: Glory...

Doxastikon

Tone 6

The di - vine - ly pre-served head, a treasury of di - vine gifts,
has shone forth from the bosom of the earth, O Fore-run - ner. Glo-ri-ous
proph-et, we receive it in faith and bow be-fore it, en - riched by you with most
glo-ri-ous mir - a - cles and the for-give-ness of our sins, O Bap - tist of Christ.

Cantor: Now and ever...

Theotokion

Tone 6

Who would not extol you, most ho-ly Vir-gin? Who would not praise your giv-ing
birth with - out pain? For the on - ly - be - got - ten Son, who shines

forth from the Fa-ther time-less-ly, has himself come forth from you, O pure one.

He took flesh from you in a manner be-yond un-der-stand - ing: re - tain - ing

di-vine na - ture but assuming human na - ture for our sake; not di - vid - ed

in - to two per - sons but ex - ist ing in two natures, distinct and un - con - fused.

O honored and most blessed one, be - seech him to have mer - cy on our souls.

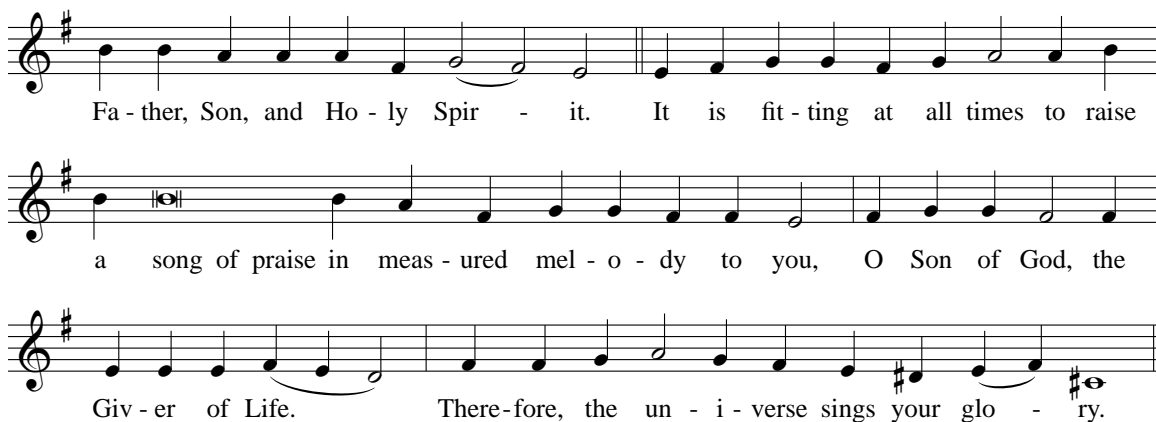
The Hymn of the Evening

Deacon: Wisdom! Be attentive!

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,



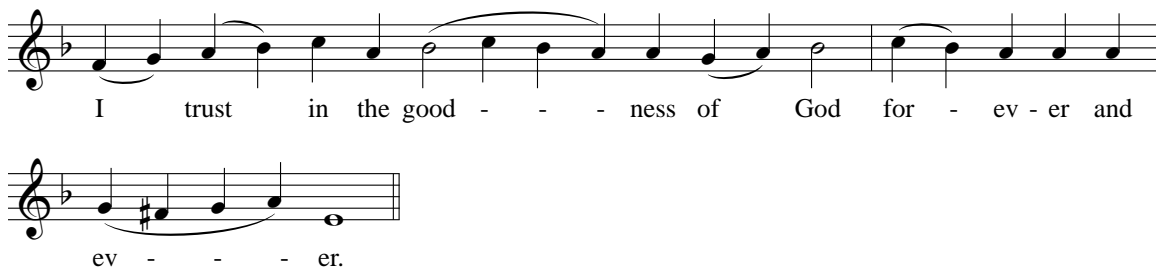
Fa-ther, Son, and Ho-ly Spir - it. It is fit - ting at all times to raise
 a song of praise in meas - ured mel - o - o - dy to you, O Son of God, the
 Giv - er of Life. There-fore, the un - i - verse sings your glo - ry.

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Celebrant: Peace ✠ be to all!

Deacon: Wisdom! Be attentive!

Prokeimenon 1 - Tone 4



I trust in the good - - - ness of God for - ev - er and
 ev - - - er.

Verse: Why do you boast of your wickedness, you champion of evil?
All repeat the Prokeimenon .

Deacon: Wisdom!

Lector: A Reading from the Book of Genesis

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Lector: [Genesis 7: 6 -9]

Deacon: Wisdom! Be attentive!

Prokeimenon 2 - Tone 4

When the Lord de - liv - ers his peo - ple from bond - age,
then Ja cob will be glad and Is - ra - el re - joice.

Verse: The fool has said in his heart: There is no God.

All repeat the Prokeimenon.

The faithful kneel.

The Blessing With Light

Deacon: Give the command!

Celebrant: Wisdom! Be attentive!

The light of Christ shines upon everyone.

The faithful give no response to these words. All make three prostrations in silence.

The faithful are seated. The lector, without introduction, begins:

Lector: A reading from the Book of Proverbs.

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Lector: [Proverbs 2: 1 - 22]

A reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Lector: [Composite Reading IX, *Festal Menaion*, p. 495]

Celebrant: Peace ✠ be to you, reader.