

Vesper Propers, December 24, 2023  
SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY  
Sunday of the Ancestors

Supplement for *The Order of Vespers for Sundays After Pentecost, 2006*

*“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 samohlasen**

(10) (9)

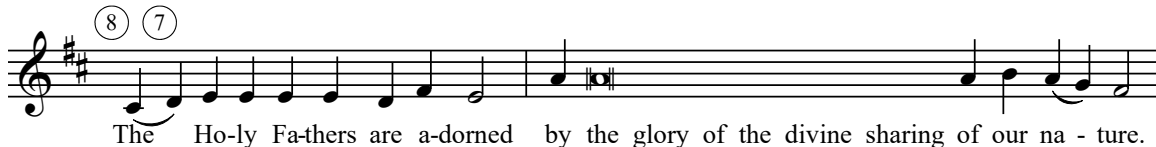
The com-mem-o - ra - tion of the Ho - ly Fa - thers is man - i - fest - ed to the  
ends of the world. It is tru - ly full of splen - dor, and it glistens with the  
rays of grace: for Christ the wondrous Sun has shone forth on high  
from a - far. He forms the assembly of stars which glis - ten with him,  
and the star reveals that the nativity of the God - man will be in  
Beth - le - hem. There - fore, we pi - ously 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!



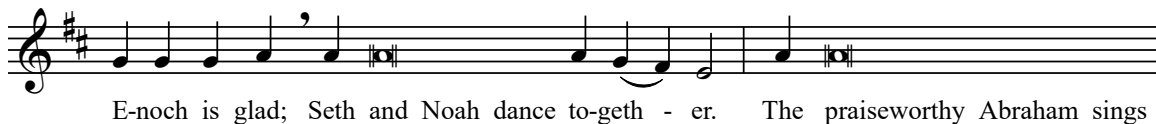
The Ho-ly Fa-thers are a-dorned by the glory of the divine sharing of our na - ture.



Ad - am re-joic - es this day, since he is the founda-tion and the strength



of the wise Fore - fa - thers; A - bel leaps for joy as well.



E-noch is glad; Seth and Noah dance to-geth - er. The praiseworthy 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.



The faith-ful and God-wise youths are radiant with joy in the fur - nace.  
They her - ald the na-tiv - i - ty of Christ on earth. As the pre - cious dew which  
the Lord sent down, he now preserves the Vir-gin with-out stain, and en-rich-es  
her with sub - lime gifts. There-fore Dan - iel, in - spired by God,  
is also 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.

Stichera of the Pre-feast - Tone 6 samohlasen

④ ③

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 prepare 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 being 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. *All repeat "The Never-setting Sun..."*

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

②

He who is car-ried by the Cher-u-bim has taken 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 splendid 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 renewal of his bound - less cre - a - tion.

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



Hav - ing con - ceived in a manner beyond un - der - stand - ing, the Virgin 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 acquired 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 only blessed 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, be-ing 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

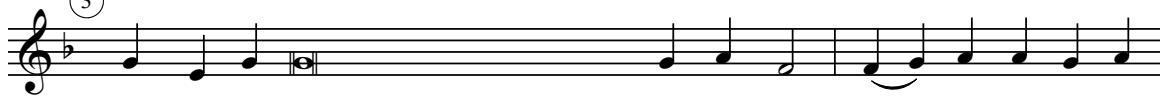


born without destroy - ing my vir - gin - i - ty, and you have kept my womb as it

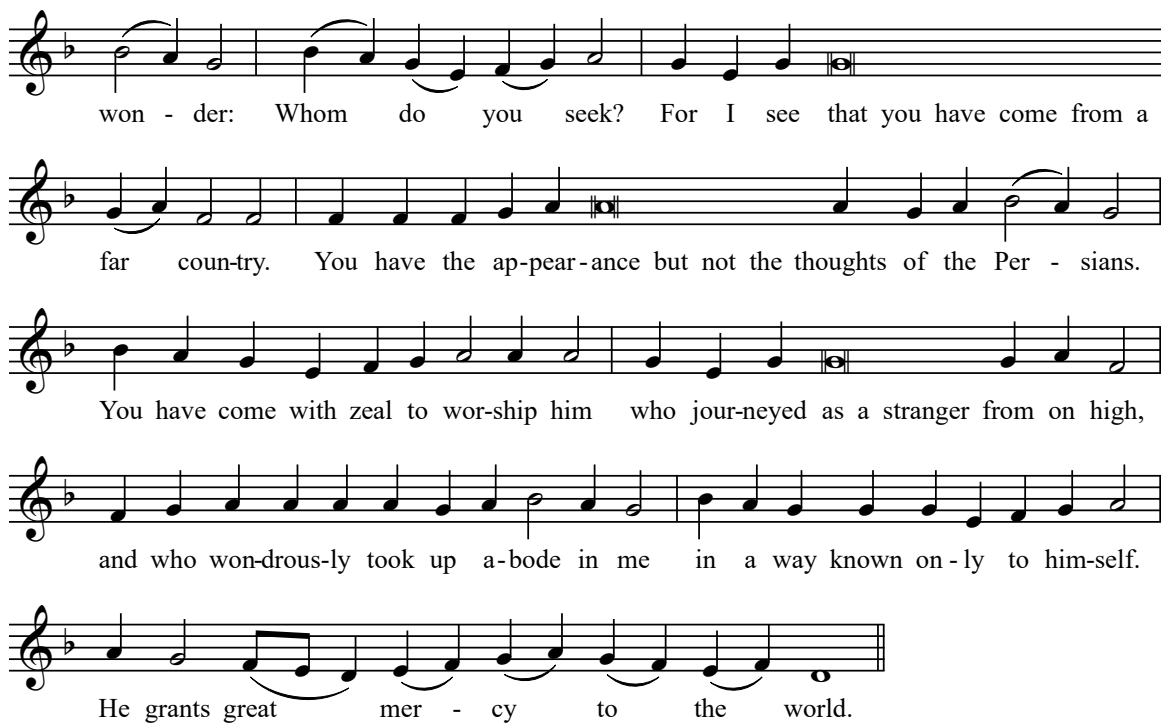


was be - fore child - birth. Now you grant great mer - cy to the world.

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 Ancestors - Tone 3 samohlasen**



Come, O lov-ers of the feast, let us sing a hymn of praise to the  
 assembly of the Fore - fa - 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, Sam-uel 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 spirit - ual hymns from those who cry out  
 with - out ceas - - - ing: O Lord, glo - ry to you!

### Aposticha

*Tone 2 samohlasen*

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 - fully celebrate 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 - tab - lished

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:*

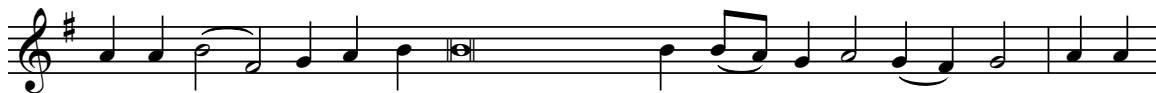
**Troparion of the Resurrection - Tone 5**



O faith - ful, let us praise and a - dore the Word e - ter - nal with the Fa - ther



and the Spir - it, and born of the Vir - gin for our sal - va - tion.



For he chose to as - cend the cross in the flesh and to suf - fer death, and to



raise the dead by his glo - ri - ous res - ur - rec - - - tion.

*(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..."*