

## Service for use at home at Christmas

### The Nativity according to the Flesh of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ

*The 'Reader' may be the most senior person present – e.g. a parent or grandparent, according to the situation – or simply the most confident reader or singer. The parts marked for the 'Choir' can be read or sung by everyone together, or by one person alone. Music for some parts may be found on the website: [www.orthodoxcommunityrugby.com/choir/](http://www.orthodoxcommunityrugby.com/choir/) If no one present is a confident singer, the service can be chanted on one note, or simply read. You may prefer to use parts of the service in your own language. If so, please make sure that the prayers are read from an Orthodox prayer book or service book.*

#### Before the Service

*If possible, the Service should be said in front of the household icons – e.g. in the family icon corner. If practical, and if they are available, a Cross and a Book of the Gospels (or a copy of New Testament, or a Bible) should be placed on a table in front of the icons. A lamp or candle, and incense, if available, should be lit before the Service begins.*

**Reader:** Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us, and save us. Amen.

*In place of the GREAT LITANY, the choir sings:*  
Lord, have mercy. (x 12)

#### FIRST ANTIPHON [Music on website]

**Choir:** I will give thanks to Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will make all Thy wonders known.

***Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Saviour, save us!***

In the company of the upright, in the congregation, great are the works of the Lord. ***Through the prayers ...***

They are studied by all who have pleasure in them. ***Through the prayers ...***

His work is glory and beauty, and His righteousness endures forever.

***Through the prayers ...***

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

***Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Saviour, save us!***

*In place of the LITTLE LITANY, the choir sings:*  
Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

#### SECOND ANTIPHON [Music on website]

**Choir:** Blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in His commandments.

***O Son of God, born of the Virgin, save us who sing to Thee: Alleluia!***

His descendants will be mighty in the land, the generation of the upright will be blessed.

***O Son of God, born of the Virgin, save us who sing to Thee: Alleluia!***

Glory and wealth are in His house and His righteousness endures forever.

***O Son of God, born of the Virgin, save us who sing to Thee: Alleluia!***

Light rises in the darkness for the upright; the Lord is merciful, compassionate, and righteous.

***O Son of God, born of the Virgin, save us who sing to Thee: Alleluia!***

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.  
Both now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O only-begotten Son and Word of God. O Thou Who art Immortal, yet for our salvation didst deign to be incarnate of the holy Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary; and without change wast made man; Who also wast crucified for us; and by death didst overcome death: save us, O Christ, our God; one Person of the Holy Trinity, glorified together with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

*In place of the LITTLE LITANY, the choir sings:*  
Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

#### THIRD ANTIPHON

**Reader:** The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand."

#### Troparion of the Nativity in Tone 4 [Music on website]

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God,  
dawned upon the world the light of knowledge!  
For, by it, those who worshipped the stars were taught by a star  
to adore Thee, the Sun of Righteousness,  
and to know Thee, the Dayspring from on high.//  
O Lord, glory to Thee!

**Reader:** "Until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool!"

**Choir:** Thy Nativity, O Christ our God ...

**Reader:** The Lord sends forth from Zion Thy mighty sceptre; rule in the midst of Thy foes.

**Choir:** Thy Nativity, O Christ our God ...

**Reader:** Authority shall be with Thee on the day of Thy power, among the splendour of Thy holy ones!

**Choir:** Thy Nativity, O Christ our God ...

#### ENTRANCE HYMN

**Reader:** Out of the womb before the morning star have I begotten Thee. The Lord has sworn, and will not change His mind: "Thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek."

**Choir:** O Son of God, born of the Virgin, save us who sing to Thee: Alleluia!

#### TROPARION & KONTAKION

##### Troparion of the Nativity in Tone 4

[Music on website]

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God,  
dawned upon the world the light of knowledge!  
For, by it, those who worshipped the stars were taught by a star  
to adore Thee, the Sun of Righteousness,  
and to know Thee, the Dayspring from on high.//  
O Lord, glory to Thee!

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.  
Both now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

##### Kontakion of the Nativity in Tone 3

[Music on website]

Today the Virgin gives birth to the Transcendent One,  
and the earth offers a cave to the Unapproachable One.  
Angels with shepherds glorify Him;  
The wise men journey with the star,//  
since for our sake the eternal God was born as a little Child.

#### INSTEAD OF THE TRISAGION

As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Alleluia! (x 3)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now  
and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Have put on Christ. Alleluia!

As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Alleluia!

#### PROKEIMENON

**Reader:** The Prokeimenon in the Eighth Tone.

**Reader:** Let all the earth worship Thee and praise Thee; let it praise Thy Name, O Most High!

**Choir:** Let all the earth worship Thee and praise Thee; let it praise Thy Name, O Most High!

**Reader:** Make a joyful noise to God, all the earth! Sing of His Name, give glory to His praise!

**Choir:** Let all the earth worship Thee and praise Thee; let it praise Thy Name, O Most High!

**Reader:** Let all the earth worship Thee and praise Thee;

**Choir:** let it praise Thy Name, O Most High!

#### EPISTLE

**Reader:** The Reading from the Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Galatians.

Ye Brethren: When the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son then also an heir of God through Christ. [Galatians 4:4-7]

#### ALLELUIA

**Choir:** Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

**Reader:** The heavens are telling the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims His handiwork.

**Choir:** Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

**Reader:** Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge.

**Choir:** Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

#### THE GOSPEL

*All stand for the reading of the Gospel. The Gospel may be read by the most senior person present – e.g. a parent or grandparent – according to the situation.*

**Reader:** The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

**Choir:** Glory be to Thee, O Lord, glory be to Thee.

**Reader:** Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it is written by the prophet: 'And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will govern my people Israel.'" Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star appeared; and he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." When they had heard the king they went their way; and lo the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy; and going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way. [Matthew 2:1-12]

**Choir:** Glory be to Thee, O Lord, glory be to Thee.

*Instead of the AUGMENTED LITANY, the Choir sings:*  
Lord, have mercy. (x 12)

### **PRAYER TO THE LORD OF HOSTS**

**Reader:** Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Remember us, O Lord, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom. *(Reverence)*

Remember us, O Master, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom.  
*(Reverence)*

Remember us, O Holy One, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom.  
*(Reverence)*

The heavenly choir sings to Thee, and cries: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts; heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.

Come unto Him and be enlightened, and your faces shall not be ashamed. The heavenly choir sings to Thee, and cries: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts; heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

The choir of holy Angels and Archangels, with all the Powers of heaven, sing Thy praises and do cry: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts; heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.

Both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

### **THE CREED (SYMBOL OF FAITH)**

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made; of one substance with the Father, by Whom all things were made.

Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary, and was made man. And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father. And He shall come again with glory to judge the quick and the dead, Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And in the Holy Ghost, the Lord, the Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father;

Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets.

In One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.

I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins.

And I look for the Resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

### **PRAYER OF FORGIVENESS**

**Reader:** O God, remit, pardon and forgive our sins, whether voluntary or involuntary, whether by words or deeds, whether in knowledge or ignorance, whether by day or night, whether in mind or thought; forgive us all these, for Thou art good and lovest mankind.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be Thy name, Thy Kingdom come.  
Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from the evil one.

**Reader:** Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us, and save us. Amen.

**Reader:** Lord, have mercy. (x 12)

All-holy Trinity, Mighty one in essence, Kingdom undivided, origin of all good things, be graciously inclined also to me, a sinner. Establish me; give understanding to my heart, and purge away all my vileness. Enlighten my mind, that I may glorify, sing praises, and adore Thee, and say:

**Choir:** One is Holy,/ One is Lord,/ Jesus Christ,/ to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

**Choir:** Blessed be the Name of the Lord, from this time forth and for evermore. (x 3)

**Reader:** Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

## PSALM 33

**Reader:** I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul makes its boast in the Lord; let the afflicted hear and be glad. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together. I sought the Lord, and he answered me, and delivered me from all my fears. Look to Him, and be radiant; so your faces shall never be ashamed. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him, and delivers them. O taste and see that the Lord is good! Happy is the man who takes refuge in Him! O fear the Lord, you His saints, for those who fear Him have no want. The young lions suffer want and hunger; but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing. Come, O sons, listen to me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord. What man is there who

desires life, and covets many days, that he may enjoy good? Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous, and his ears toward their cry. The face of the Lord is against evildoers, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles. The Lord is near to the broken-hearted, and saves the crushed in spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivers him out of them all. He kept all his bones; not one of them is broken. Evil shall slay the wicked; and those who hate the righteous will be condemned. The Lord redeems the life of his servants; none of those who take refuge in Him will be condemned.

## THE ZADOSTOYNIK

[[Music on website](#)]

Magnify, O my soul, the most pure Virgin Theotokos,  
more honourable and more glorious than the heavenly hosts.  
I behold a strange, most glorious mystery!  
Heaven—the cave;  
the cherubic throne—the Virgin;  
the manger—the place where Christ lay:  
the uncontainable God, Whom we magnify in song.

## THE DISMISSAL

**Choir:** Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Bless, O Lord.

**Reader:** Lord Jesus Christ, Who for our sake wast born in a cave and lay in a manger, through the intercessions of Thy most pure Mother; by the might of the precious and life-giving Cross; by the protection of the honourable bodiless powers of heaven; at the supplications of our Holy, Venerable and God-bearing Fathers; of our Father among the Saints, Chad, Bishop of Lichfield, Patron and Protector of this Community; of the Holy and Righteous Ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; and of all the saints, have mercy upon us and save us. Amen.

*All kiss the Gospel Book (or New Testament, or Bible) and the Cross placed on the table. When all have done so, the reader or choir sings slowly:*

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.