

**GREAT VESPERS**  
**Holy Fathers - December 24**

**Priest:** Glory be to the holy, consubstantial, life-creating and undivided Trinity, always, now and for ever and ever.

**People:** Amen.

Come, let us adore the King Our God.

Come, let us adore Christ, the King and our God.

Come, let us adore and bow down to the only Lord Jesus Christ, the King and our God.

**PSALM 103**

Bless the Lord, O my soul!

You are very great, O Lord my God;

Clothed in pomp and brilliance;  
Arrayed with light as with a cloak.

Stretching out the sky as a tent-cloth,  
Covering Your lofty halls with water,

You make the clouds Your conveyance;  
You surge on the wings of the wind.

You make spirits Your messengers,  
And flaming fires Your attendants.

You settle the earth on its firm foundation;  
It shall stand unmoved from age to age.

May the Lord's glory endure forever:  
May the Lord rejoice in His works.

He looks upon the earth and makes it quake;  
He touches the mountains and they smoke.

I will sing to the Lord as long as I live:  
I will praise my God as long as I last.

Would that my thoughts be pleasing to Him:  
And I will rejoice in the Lord.

May sinners vanish from the earth,  
And may the wicked be no more.

Bless the Lord,  
O my soul!

The sun knows the time of its setting.  
You establish darkness, and it is night.

How great are Your works, O Lord!  
In wisdom You have wrought them all.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,  
now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Glory be to You, O God! (*3 times*)

### **LITANY OF PEACE**

**Priest:** In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

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

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** For peace throughout the world, for the well-being of God's holy churches and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

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

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** For our most holy Pontiff [N] Pope of Rome, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** For our most blessed Patriarch [N], our most reverend Metropolitan [N] the reverend priesthood, the diaconate in Christ, and all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** For our nation under God, for our government, and for all the military, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** For this city, for every city and country and for the faithful who live in them, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

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

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** For the seafarers and travelers, for the sick and the suffering, for those held captive, and for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** That we may be delivered from all tribulation, wrath, and misfortune, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** Help and save, have mercy and protect us, O God, by your grace.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** Remembering our most holy and immaculate, most blessed and glorious Lady, the Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary, together with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

**People:** To You, O Lord.

**Priest:** For all glory, honor, and worship befit You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever.

**People:** Amen.

*(stand)*

**KATHISMA**

Blessed is the one – Alleluia  
Who has not walked in the counsel of the wicked.....Alleluia

For the Lord knows the way of the just,  
But the way of the wicked shall be lost .....Alleluia

Serve the Lord with fear,  
Exalt in Him with trembling .....Alleluia

Blessed are those  
who trust in Him .....Alleluia

Arise, O Lord!  
Save me my God!.....Alleluia

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,  
now and forever and ever Amen.

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory be to You, O God.(3X)

**O Lord I Have Cried to You** (Psalm 140)

**(Tone 8)**

O Lord, I have cried out to You, hear me.

Hear me O my Lord!

O Lord, I have cried out to You, hear me.

Give heed to the voice of my prayer

When I call upon you.

Hear me, O my Lord.

Let my prayer rise like incense before You;

And the lifting of my hands like an evening sacrifice.

Hear me, O my Lord.

Set a guard, O Lord, before my mouth

And a portal around my lips.

Incline my heart away from evil dealings,

From finding excuses for sinful deeds.

In company with those who work iniquity,

Let me not partake of what they choose.

May the just chasten me with justice and reprove me;

May the oil of the wicked never touch my head.

Yet even then shall I pray for their welfare.

Their rulers were swallowed near the rock.

My words will be heard, for they were sweet.

As a lump of clay broken on the ground,

so their bones were strewn near the grave.

To You, O Lord, my eyes are lifted up.

In You have I hoped; let not my soul be lost.

Keep me from the snare that was set for me,

And from the stumbling-blocks of the wicked.

The wicked shall fall into their own nets,

While I remain alone until I can escape.

**PSALM 141**

With my voice I cried to the Lord

With all my voice I implored the Lord.

Before Him I pour out my supplications;

Before Him I declare my distress.

When my breath was escaping me,  
Then you knew my paths;

On the road upon which I was walking  
They set up snares for me.

I looked to my right and observed.  
There was no one to take care of my life.

I cried out to You, O Lord, and said  
You are my hope, my share in the land of the living.

Listen to my supplication,  
For I am laid very low.

Deliver me from my oppressors,  
For they have overwhelmed me.

Lead my soul forth from prison  
That I may give thanks to your name.

The just shall gather around me  
When You have been good to me.

### **PSALM 129**

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

Let your ears be attentive  
To the voice of my prayer.

**If You mark iniquities, O Lord, who can stand?  
But with You forgiveness is that You may be revered.**

The commemoration of the Holy Fathers  
is manifested to the ends of the world.  
It is truly full of splendor,  
and it glistens with the rays of grace;  
for Christ the splendrous Sun has shone forth on high from afar.  
He forms the assembly of stars which glisten with Him,  
and the star reveals that the nativity of the God-man will be in Bethlehem.  
Therefore, we piously and faithfully clap our hands  
and leap for joy at this nativity,  
and we give praise before the feast.

**I have waited for You as You have commanded;  
My soul patiently relies on Your promise,  
for it has trusted in the Lord.**

The Holy Fathers are adorned  
by the glory of the divine sharing of our nature.  
Adam rejoices today,  
since he is the foundation and the strength of the wise Forefathers;  
Abel leaps for joy as well.  
Enoch is glad; Seth and Noah dance together.  
The praiseworthy Abraham sings with the Patriarchs.  
Melchisedek now sees from on high  
the birth without a father.

**From the morning watch until night  
Let Israel trust in the Lord.**

The faithful and God-wise youths  
are radiant with joy in the furnace.  
They herald the nativity of Christ on earth.  
As the precious dew which the Lord sent down,  
He now preserves the Virgin without stain  
and enriches her with sublime gifts.  
Therefore, Daniel, inspired by God,  
is also happy and full of joy  
because he had a clear vision of the unhewn stone from the mountain.  
He now zealously prays for our souls.

**For with the Lord there is mercy and with Him there is plentiful redemption; and  
He shall redeem Israel from all its iniquities.**

***Tone 6***

The Neversetting Sun is coming from the virginal womb  
to enlighten everyone under the sun.  
Let us meet Him with pure hearts and with good works.  
Let us prepare ourselves now through the Holy Spirit  
to greet Him who is coming to his own people  
as He himself had willed.  
He is being born in Bethlehem  
so that through his compassion  
He might bring back all of those  
who were exiled from life in Paradise.

**Praise the Lord, all the Nations; proclaim His glory, all you people.**

He who is carried by the Cherubim  
has taken human nature in the abode of the immaculate womb.  
He has come to earth to be born of the tribe of Judah.  
The holy cave has been adorned  
like a splendid palace for the King of all;  
the manger, like a ruby throne.  
The Virgin will place the Child into it

for the renewal of his boundless creation.

**Strong is the love of the Lord for us; eternally will His truth endure.**

Having conceived in a manner beyond understanding,  
the Virgin places You into the manger of the dumb animals,  
O eternal Word of God,  
because You come to pardon the ignorance  
that I acquired through the envy of the serpent.  
You come to be wrapped in swaddling clothes  
in order to break the chains and fetters of my sins.  
O only-blessed One and Lover of Mankind,  
I most joyfully glorify, extol, and adore You  
and your coming in the flesh;  
for through You I have been freed.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,**

***Tone 6***

Daniel was a beloved man.  
He saw You, O Lord, as the Rock  
which was hewn without the use of a hand.  
He foretold that You, the Incarnate Word,  
the Unchangeable God, and Savior of our souls,  
would be born without seed  
as a Child of the Virgin.

**Now and ever and forever. Amen.**

***Tone 6***

O Cave, prepare yourself to receive the Mother  
who bears Christ within her womb.  
O Manger, receive the Word who destroyed the sins of all.  
O Shepherds, keep watch and then bear witness to the awesome wonder.  
O Magi, come from Persia,  
and bring your gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh to the King.  
For the Lord has appeared from a virgin Mother;  
yet she bowed to Him as a servant  
and spoke to Him within her bosom, saying:  
How were You conceived in me?  
How did You grow in me, my God and Savior?

**Priest:** Wisdom! Stand aright!

**HYMN OF LIGHT**

O Joyful Light!  
Light and Holy Glory of the Father immortal,

The heavenly, holy the Blessed One: O Jesus Christ!  
Now that we have reached the setting of the sun;  
And see the evening light, we sing to God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.  
It is fitting at all times to raise a song of praise in measured  
melody to You, O Son of God, the Giver of Life.  
Behold the universe sings Your glory.

**Priest:** Let us be attentive. Peace be with all. Wisdom let us be attentive.

**Prokimen:**

The Lord reigns, He is clothed in majesty

**Verse:** Robed is the Lord and girt about with strength.

**Verse:** For He has made the world firm, which shall not be moved.

**Verse:** Holiness befits Your house, O Lord, for length of days.

**Priest:** Wisdom !

**Reader:** A reading from the book of Duetoronomy.

**Priest:** Let us be attentive!

**Reader:** Thus says the Lord: “I have given that land over to you. Go now and occupy the land I swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, I would give to them and to their descendants. At that time I said to you, ‘Alone, I am unable to carry you. The Lord, your God, has so multiplied you that you are now as numerous as the stars in the sky. May the Lord, the God of your fathers, increase you a thousand times over, and bless you as he promised!’ So I took outstanding men of your tribes, wise and experienced, and made them your leaders as officials over thousands, over hundreds, over fifties and over tens, and other tribal officers. In rendering judgment, do not consider who a person is; give ear to the lowly and to the great alike, fearing no man, for judgment is God’s. Refer to me any case that is too hard for you and I will hear it.”

## **THE LITANY OF SUPPLICATION**

**Priest:** Let us all say with our whole soul and our whole mind, let us say.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** Lord Almighty, God of our Fathers, we pray You, hear us and have mercy.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** Have mercy on us, O God, in the greatness of Your compassion, we pray You, hear us and have mercy.

**People:** Lord, have mercy. (*3 times*)

**Priest:** We also pray for our most holy universal Pontiff [N], Pope of Rome; for our most



blessed Patriarch [N], our most reverend Metropolitan [N], for those who serve and have served in this holy church, for our spiritual fathers, and for all our brothers and sisters in Christ.

**People:** Lord, have mercy. (*3 times*)

**Priest:** We also pray for our nation under God, for our government, and for all the military.

**People:** Lord, have mercy. (*3 times*)

**Priest:** We also pray for the people here present who await Your great and bountiful mercies, for those who have been kind to us, and for all orthodox Christians.

**People:** Lord, have mercy. (*3 times*)

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

**People:** Amen.

#### **HYMN OF GLORIFICATION**

O Lord, keep us this evening without sin.

Blessed are You, O Lord, God of our Fathers, and praised and glorified is Your name for ever. Amen.

Let Your mercy, O Lord, be upon us because we have set our hope in You.

Blessed are You, O Lord, teach me Your commandments.

Blessed are You, O Master, make me understand Your commandments.

Blessed are You, O Holy One, enlighten me with Your laws.

O Lord, Your mercy endures forever; do not despise the work of Your hands.

It is proper to praise You, and hymns belong to You.

Glory belongs to You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

#### **LITANY OF SUPPLICATION**

**Priest:** Let us complete our evening prayer to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** Help and save, have mercy and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** That this whole evening may be perfect, holy, peaceful, and sinless, let us ask the Lord.

**People:** Grant this, O Lord

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

**People:** Grant this, O Lord.

**Priest:** For the forgiveness and remission of our sins and offences, let us ask the Lord.

**People:** Grant this, O Lord.

**Priest:** For all that is good and beneficial for our souls and for peace for the world, let us ask the Lord.

**People:** Grant this, O Lord.

**Priest:** That we may spend the rest of our lives in peace and repentance, let us ask the Lord.

**People:** Grant this, O Lord.

**Priest:** For a Christian end to our lives, one that is painless, unashamed, and peaceful; and for a good defense at the awesome tribunal of Christ, let us ask the Lord.

**People:** Grant this, O Lord.

**Priest:** Remembering our most holy and immaculate, most blessed and glorious Lady, the Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary, together with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ Our God.

**People:** To You, O Lord.

**Priest:** For You, O God are good and the lover of us all and we give You glory, Father, Son and Holy Spirit now and for ever and ever.

**People:** Amen.

**Priest:** Peace be with all.

**People:** And with your spirit.

**Priest:** Bow your heads to the Lord.

**People:** To You, O Lord.

**Priest:** (silently) O Lord our God, You lowered the heavens when You came down for the salvation of the human race. Now look upon Your servants and upon Your inheritance; for they have bowed their heads before You, the Judge, both awesome and loving. They do not await human help, but look for Your mercy and are ready to receive Your salvation. Guard them at all times, this evening and tonight, against all enemies, against the devil's assaults, against vain thoughts and evil dreams.

May the might of Your kingdom be blessed and exalted, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever.

**People:** Amen.

## APOSTICHA

### *Tone 2*

O house of Ephrathah and holy city!  
O boast of the prophets!  
Adorn the house in which the Divine One is born.

**God comes from Teman; the Holy One from Mount Paran.**

O Bethlehem, O land of Judah,  
you are the bright abode of the One-Who-Is.  
Prepare the cave, for God is to be born in the flesh  
from the holy, undefiled Virgin  
to save the human race.

**O Lord, I heard your voice and I was afraid; I knew your deeds, and I was terrified.**

Come let us faithfully celebrate beforehand the birth of Christ.  
Let us sing spiritual hymns of praise.  
With the shepherds, let us cry out:  
The Savior of all has come from a Virgin,  
and He summons all the faithful.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit:**

### *Tone 2*

Rejoice, O illustrious Prophets!  
You firmly established the Law of the Lord,  
and you faithfully manifested yourselves  
to be invincible and unshakable pillars.  
You have been taken to heaven  
and have shown yourselves to be mediators of the new Law of Christ.  
Implore Him to give peace to the world  
and to save our souls

**Now and for ever and ever. Amen.**

### *Tone 2*

Behold, the time of salvation is drawing near.  
O Cave, prepare yourself,  
for the Virgin is coming to give birth.  
O Bethlehem, O land of Judah,  
adorn yourself and be happy  
since the Lord will shine forth from you.  
O mountains and hills and lands around Judah,  
hearken, for Christ is coming that He may save his creation

because He is the Lover of Mankind.

**HYMN OF SIMEON**

Now You shall dismiss Your servant, O Lord,  
According to Your Word in peace;  
Because my eyes have seen Your salvation  
Which You have prepared before the face of all people,  
A light to the revelation of the Gentiles  
And the glory of Your people, Israel.

Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal, have mercy on us. *(3 times)*

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,  
now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Trinity most holy, have mercy on us. Cleanse us of our sins, O Lord; pardon our transgressions, O Master; look upon our weaknesses and heal them, O Holy One; for the sake of Your name.

Lord, have mercy. *(3 times)*

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,  
now and for ever and ever. Amen.

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 evil.

**Priest:** For the kingdom and the power and the glory are Yours, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever.

**People:** Amen.

**Tropar Tone 4**

Bethlehem, make ready, for Eden has been opened for all.  
Ephrathah, be alert, for the Tree of Life has blossomed forth from the Virgin in the cave.  
Her womb has become a spiritual paradise  
wherein the divine Fruit was planted,  
and if we eat of it we shall live and not die like Adam.  
Christ is coming forth to bring back to life  
the likeness that had been lost in the beginning.

**DISMISSAL**

**Priest:** Wisdom!

**People:** Give the blessing!

**Priest:** Blessed are You, O Christ our God, now and for ever and ever.

**People:** Amen. O God, strengthen the true faith forever and ever.

**Priest:** O most holy Mother of God, save us!

**People:** More honorable than the Cherubim and by far more glorious than the Seraphim; ever a virgin, you gave birth to God the Word, O true Mother of God, we magnify you.

**Priest:** Glory be to You, O Christ our God, our hope, glory be to You.

**People:** Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen. Lord, have mercy. (3x) Give the blessing.

**Priest:** May Christ our true God, risen from the dead, through the prayers of his most holy Mother, through the prayers of the holy, glorious, and praiseworthy apostles, and through the prayers of all the saints, have mercy on us and save us for He is gracious and loves all of us.

**People:** Amen