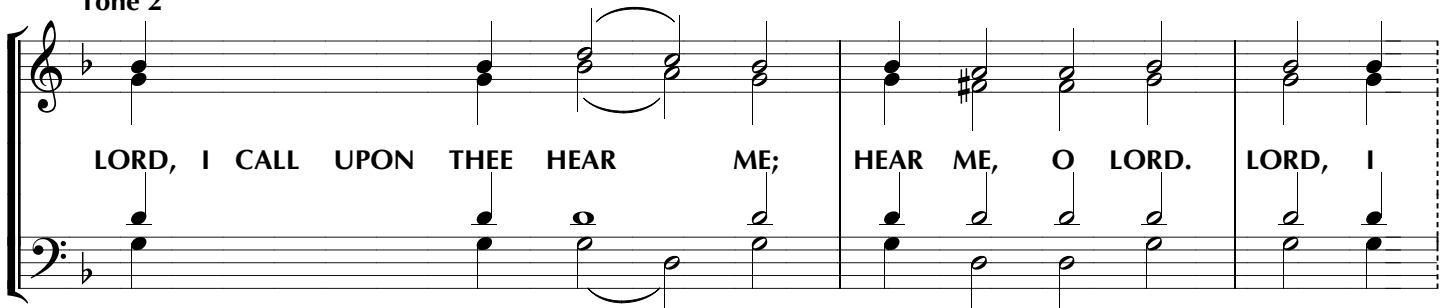


NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

Vespers

When December 25th falls on a Sunday or Monday, Vespers on the eve is served seperately. If this be a Saturday evening, the 1st Kathisma, "Blessed is the Man" is sung.

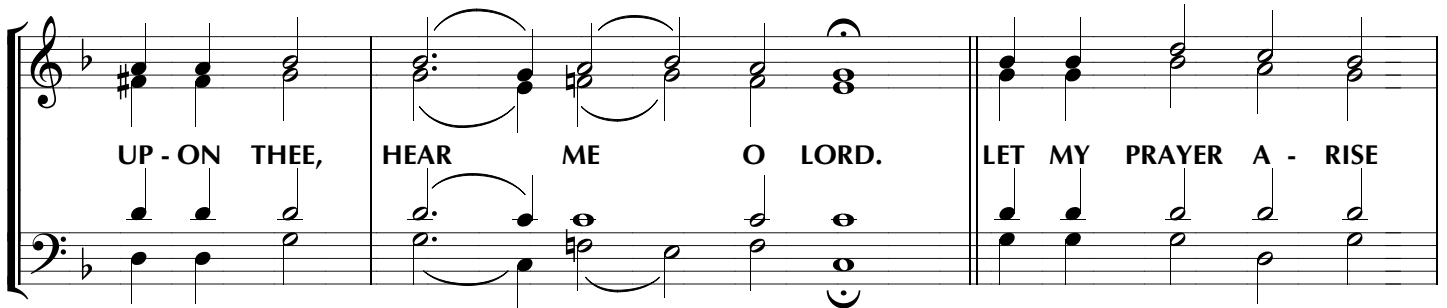
Tone 2



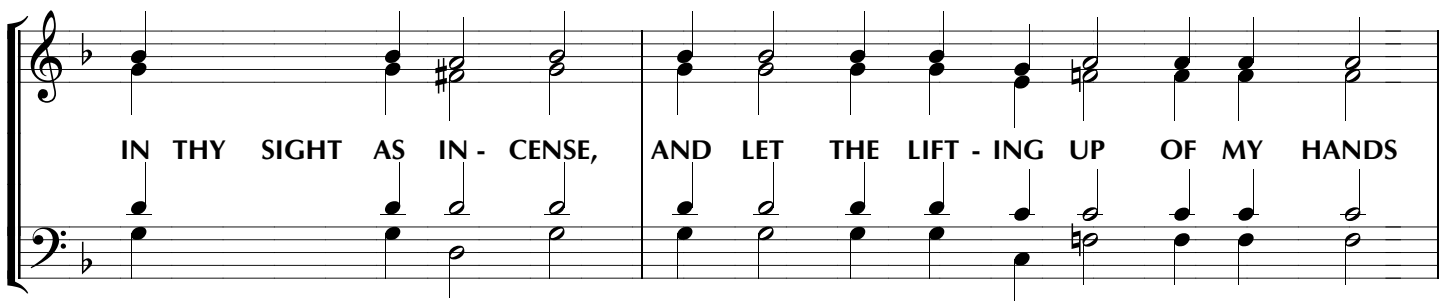
LORD, I CALL UPON THEE HEAR ME; HEAR ME, O LORD. LORD, I



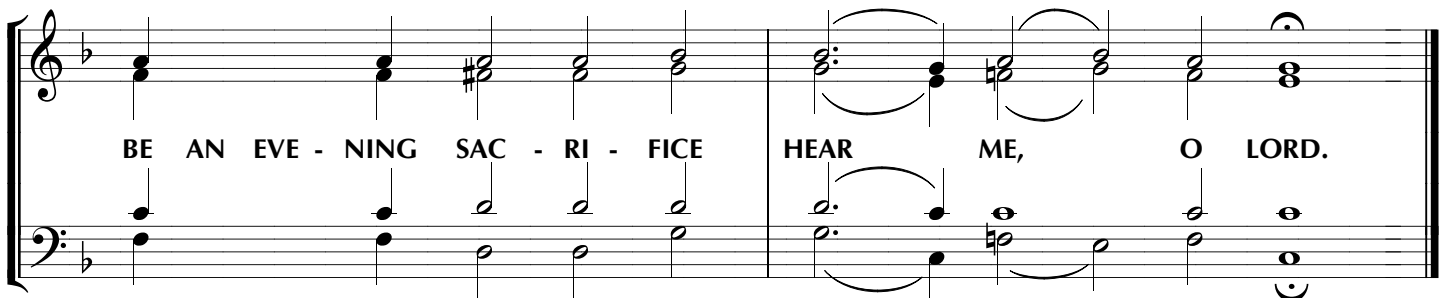
CALL UP-ON THEE, HEAR ME. RE- CEIVE THE VOICE OF MY PRAYER, WHEN I CALL



UP - ON THEE, HEAR ME O LORD. LET MY PRAYER A - RISE



IN THY SIGHT AS IN - CENSE, AND LET THE LIFT - ING UP OF MY HANDS



BE AN EVE - NING SAC - RI - FICE HEAR ME, O LORD.

8. Out of the depths I cry to Thee, O Lord. O Lord, hear my voice.
7. Let Thy ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.

Verses 8 and 7

COME, LET US GREATLY RE-JOICE IN THE LORD, AS WE SING OF THIS PRESENT

MYS-TER-Y. THE WALL WHICH DIVIDED GOD FROM MAN HAS BEEN DESTROYED.

THE FLAMING SWORD WITHDRAWS FROM E-DEN'S GATE; THE CHERUBIM WITHDRAW

FROM THE TREE OF LIFE, AND I, WHO HAD BEEN CAST OUT THROUGH MY DIS-O-

BE-DI-ENCE, NOW FEAST ON THE DELIGHTS OF PAR-A-DISE: FOR TODAY THE

FATHER'S PER - FECT IM - AGE, MARKED WITH THE STAMP OF HIS E - TER - NI - TY, HAS

TAKEN THE FORM OF A SER - VANT, WITHOUT UNDERGOING CHANGE HE IS BORN

FROM AN UNWEDDED MO - THER; HE WAS TRUE GOD, AND HE REMAINS THE SAME,

BUT THROUGH HIS LOVE FOR MAN - KIND, HE HAS BECOME WHAT HE NEVER WAS: TRUE

MAN! COME, O FAITHFUL, LET US CRY TO HIM: O GOD, BORN OF A VIRGIN, HAVE

MER - CY ON US.

TWICE

6. If Thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee.
 5. For Thy names's sake I wait for Thee, O Lord. My sould has waited for Thy word, my soul has hoped on the Lord.

Verses 6 and 5

WHEN THE LORD JESUS WAS BORN OF THE HOLY VIR - GIN, THE WHOLE

UNIVERSE WAS FILLED WITH LIGHT. THE SHEP - HERDS WATCHED IN THE FIELDS.

THE WISE MEN WORSHIPPED AND THE AN - GELS SANG. BUT HEROD WAS TROU - BLED,

FOR GOD HAD APPEARED IN THE FLESH. HE IS THE SA - VIOR OF OUR SOULS.

TWICE

4. From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch, let Israel hope on the Lord.
 3. For with the Lord there is mercy and with Him is redemption, and He will deliver Israel from all his iniquities.

Verses 4 and 3

THY KINGDOM ENDURES FOREVER, O CHRIST OUR GOD. THY RULE IS FROM AGE

TO AGE. MADE FLESH BY THE HO-LY SPIR - IT. MADE MAN OF THE EVER-VIRGIN

MA - RY, THOU HAS FILLED ALL CRE - A - TION WITH JOY. THE LIGHT OF THY

COM - ING HAS SHONE ON US. EVERY LIVING CREATURE PRAIS - ES THEE, THE IM - AGE

OF THE FATHER'S GLO - RY. LIGHT OF LIGHT, THE RADIANCE OF THE FA - THER,

THE SAME YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND FOR - E - VER, THOU HAS SHONE FORTH FROM

THE VIR - GIN, O GOD HAVE MER - CY ON US. TWICE

2. Praise the Lord, all nations. Praise Him, all peoples.
 1. For His mercy is confirmed on us, and the truth of the Lord endures forever.

Verses 2 and 1

WHAT SHALL WE OFFER THEE, O CHRIST, WHO FOR OUR SAKES HAS APPEARED

ON EARTH AS MAN? EV - ERY CREA - TURE MADE BY THEE OF - FERS THEE THANKS:

THE ANGELS OFFER A HYMN; THE HEA - VENS A STAR; THE WISE MEN, GIFTS;

THE SHEPHERDS, THEIR WON - DER; THE EARTH, ITS CAVE; THE WILDERNESS A

MAN - GER. AND WE OFFER THEE A VIR - GIN MO - THER! O PRE - ETERNAL GOD, HAVE

MER - CY ON US. TWICE

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

WHEN AUGUSTUS RULED ALONE UP - ON THE EARTH, THE MANY KINGDOMS OF MEN

CAME TO AN END, AND WHEN THOU WAS MADE MAN OF THE PURE VIR - GIN, THE

MANY GODS OF I-DOL - A- TRY WERE DE - STROYED. THE CITIES OF THE WORLD

PASSED UNDER ONE SIN - GLE RULE, AND THE NA - TIONS CAME TO BELIEVE IN

ONE SOV' - REIGN GOD - HEAD. THE PEOPLE WERE ENROLLED BY THE DECREE

OF CAE - SAR, AND WE THE FAITHFUL WERE ENROLLED IN THE NAME OF THE GOD -

HEAD, WHEN THOU, OUR GOD, WAS MADE MAN. GREAT IS THY MERCY, O LORD

Musical notation for the phrase "GLO - RY TO THEE!". The notation is written on two staves, a treble clef on top and a bass clef on the bottom. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The melody is on the treble staff, and the bass line is on the bass staff. The lyrics "GLO - RY TO THEE!" are written below the treble staff. The melody consists of four measures: G4 (quarter), A4-B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), and D5 (half). The bass line consists of four measures: G3 (quarter), F3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), and D3 (half).

O GLADSOME LIGHT

PROKIMENON OF THE DAY.

**IF IT BE A FRIDAY, THEN THE GREAT PROKIMENON:
"WHO IS SO GREAT A GOD AS OUR GOD"**

READINGS

READINGS FOR NATIVITY VESPERS

1st Reading

The Reading from Genesis (1:1-13)

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

And God said, “Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

And God said, “Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, “Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.” And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seeds of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

2nd Reading

The Reading from Numbers (24:2-3, 5-9, 17-18)

Balaam looked up and saw Israel camping tribe by tribe. Then the spirit of God came upon him, and he uttered his oracle, saying:

“The oracle of Balaam, son of Beor, the oracle of the man whose eye is clear, how fair are your tents, O Jacob, your encampments, O Israel! Like palm groves that stretch far away, like gardens beside a river, like aloes that the Lord has planted, like cedar trees beside the waters. Water shall flow from his buckets, and his seed shall have abundant water, his king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted. God who brings him out of Egypt, is like the horns of a wild ox for him; he shall devour the nations that are his foes and break their bones. He shall strike with his arrows. He crouched, he lay down like a lion, and like a lioness; who will rouse him up? Blessed is everyone who blesses you, and cursed is everyone who curses you.”

I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near – a star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel; it shall crush the borderlands of Moab, and the territory of all the Shethites. Edom will become a possession, Seir a possession of its enemies, while Israel does valiantly.

3rd Reading

The Reading from Micah (4:6-7; 5:2-4)

In that day, says the Lord, I will assemble the lame and gather those who have been driven away, and those who I have afflicted. The lame I will make the remnant, and those who were cast off, a strong nation; and the Lord will reign over them in Mount Zion now and forevermore.

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore, he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; and he shall be the one of peace.

After the 3rd reading, the Royal Doors are opened and the choirs sing the following troparion in the 6th tone:

IN THE SECRECY OF A CAVE THOU WAS BORN, BUT HEAVEN SPOKE

O - PEN - LY THROUGH A STAR, REVEALING THEE TO ALL, O SAV - IOR.

REFRAIN:

THE STAR LED WISE MEN TO WOR - SHIP THEE; AS ON THEM, O

LORD, HAVE MER - CY ON US.

Then Psalm 86 is read and the refrain: "As on them, O Lord, have mercy on us" is sung after each verse.

ALTERNATE REFRAIN

AS ON THEM, O LORD HAVE MER - CY ON US.

Then, after the final verse the FULL Troparion is repeated and the readings continue.

Psalm 86

- VERSE: His foundations are on the holy mountains. The Lord loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.
- REFRAIN: The star led the wise men to worship Thee;
As on them, O Lord, have mercy on us!
- VERSE: Glorious things are said of you, O city of God. I will mention Rahab and Babylon to those who know me.
- REFRAIN: The star led the wise men to worship Thee;
As on them, O Lord, have mercy on us!
- VERSE: Behold, Philistines and the people of Tyre and Ethiopia, these were born there.
- REFRAIN: The star led the wise men to worship Thee;
As on them, O Lord, have mercy on us!
- VERSE: A man will say, "Zion is my mother," and "Such a man was born in her," and The Most High Himself has founded her."
- REFRAIN: The star led the wise men to worship Thee;
As on them, O Lord, have mercy on us!
- VERSE: The Lord will record in His register of the peoples the princes who were born in her. How joyful are all those whose home is in you!
- REFRAIN: The star led the wise men to worship Thee;
As on them, O Lord, have mercy on us!
- VERSE: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

SECOND SET OF NATIVITY VESPERAL READINGS

4th Reading

Reading from Isaiah (11:1-10)

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

On that day, the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

5th Reading

Reading is taken from the Book of Jeremiah (Baruch 3:36-4:4)

He found the whole way to knowledge, and gave her to Jacob his servant and to Israel whom he loved. Afterward she appeared upon earth and lived among men. She is the book of the commandments of God, and the law that endures forever. All who hold her fast will live, and those who forsake her will die. Turn, O Jacob, and take her; walk toward the shining of her light. Do not give your glory to another, or your advantages to an alien people. Happy are we, O Israel, for we know what is pleasing to God.

6th Reading
Reading from the Prophet Daniel (2:31-36, 44-45)

“You were looking, O king, and lo! there was a great statue. This statue was huge, its brilliance extraordinary; it was standing before you, and its appearance was frightening. The head of that statue was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its middle and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. As you looked on, a stone was cut out, not by human hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and broke them in pieces. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, were all broken in pieces and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

“This was the dream; now we will tell the king its interpretation. And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall this kingdom be left to another people. It shall crush all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever; just as you saw that a stone was cut from the mountain not by hands, and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. The great God has informed the king what shall be hereafter. The dream is certain, and its interpretation trustworthy.”

After the 6th reading, the Royal Doors are opened and the choirs sing the following troparion in the 6th tone:

FROM A VIRGIN THOU DIDST RISE, O CHRIST, OUR SPIRITUAL SON

OF RIGHT - EOUS - NESS THOUGH NOTHING CAN CON - TAIN THEE, A STAR

REVEALED THEE AS CON - TAINED IN A CAVE! THOU HAS LED THE WISE

REFRAIN:
MEN TO WOR - SHIP THEE; WITH THEM WE MAG - NI - FY THEE: O GIV - ER OF

LIFE, GLO - RY TO THEE.

Then Psalm 92 is read and the refrain: "O Giver of Life, glory to Thee" is sung after each verse.

ALTERNATE REFRAIN

O GIV - ER OF LIFE, GLO - RY TO THEE.

Then, after the final verse the FULL Troparion is repeated and the readings continue.

Psalm 92

VERSE: The Lord reigns; He is robed in beauty! The Lord has clothed Himself with power, and has girded Himself with strength.

REFRAIN: Thou has led the wise men to worship Thee;
With them we magnify Thee:

O Giver of Life, glory to Thee!

VERSE: He has set the earth so firmly in place that it cannot be moved. Thy throne is prepared from of old; Thou art from everlasting.

REFRAIN: Thou hast led the wise men to worship Thee;
With them we magnify Thee:

O Giver of Life, glory to Thee!

VERSE: The rivers lift up, O Lord, the rivers lift up their voices; the rivers lift up their waves at the sound of many waters.

REFRAIN: Thou has led the wise men to worship Thee;
With them we magnify Thee:

O Giver of Life, glory to Thee!

VERSE: Wonderful are the waves of the sea; wonderful is the Lord on high. Thy testimonies are very sure.

REFRAIN: Thou has led the wise men to worship Thee;
With them we magnify Thee:

O Giver of Life, glory to Thee!

VERSE: Holiness is due Thy house, O Lord, forever.

REFRAIN: Thou has led the wise men to worship Thee;
With them we magnify Thee:

O Giver of Life, glory to Thee!

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

THIRD SET OF VESPERAL NATIVITY READINGS

7th Reading

Reading from Isaiah (9:6-7)

For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

8th Reading

Reading from Isaiah (7:10-16, 8:1-4, 9-10)

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. Then Isaiah said: “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.”

Then the Lord said to me, Take a large tablet and write on it in common characters, “Belonging to Maher-shalal-hash-baz,” and have it attested for me by reliable witnesses, the priests Uriah and Zechariah son of Jeberechiah. And I went to the prophetess, and she conceived and bore a son. Then the Lord said to me, Name him Maher-shalal-hash-baz; for before the child knows how to call “My father” or “My mother,” the wealth of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria will be carried away by the king of Assyria.

Band together, you peoples, and be dismayed; listen, all you far countries; gird yourselves and be dismayed; gird yourselves and be dismayed! Take counsel together, but it shall be brought to naught; speak a word, but it will not stand, for God is with us.

After the final reading, the Little Litany is taken and the Trisagion is sung. However, if December 25th falls on a Sunday or Monday this is omitted and immediately we take the following prokimenon:

Tone 1

THE LORD SAID TO ME: THOU ART MY SON, THIS DAY HAVE I BE -

GOT - TEN THEE, HAVE I BE - GOT - TEN THEE.

EPISTLE: Gal. 3:15-22
GOSPEL: Luke 2:1-20

And we continue with the Liturgy of St. Basil the Great singing "All creation rejoices in you" and the Communion Hymn "Praise the Lord from the Heavens:."

However, if the feast falls on Sunday or Monday when Vespers is served separate from the Liturgy, after the gospel, the Augmented Litany, Vouchsafe, O Lord, Litany of Supplication (Evening Litany) are taken in order. This is followed by the Festal Dismissal.

After the conclusion of the service, the Troparion and Kontakion of the feast are sung while the icon is placed in the center of the temple.

Troparion of the Feast

Tone 4

THY NATIVITY, O CHRIST OUR GOD, HAS SHONE TO THE WORLD THE LIGHT

OF WIS - DOM. FOR BY THOSE IT WHO WOR - SHIPPED THE STARS, WERE TAUGHT

BY A STAR TO A - DORE THEE, THE SUN OF RIGHT - EOUS - NESS,

AND TO KNOW THEE, THE O - RI - ENT FROM ON HIGH. O LORD, GLO -

RY TO THEE.

GLORY TO THE FATHER, AND TO THE SON, AND TO THE HOLY SPIRIT,

NOW AND EVER AND UNTO AGES OF A - GES. A - MEN.

Kontakion of the Feast

Tone 3

TO - DAY THE VIR - GIN GIVES BIRTH TO THE TRANS - CEN - DENT ONE, AND

THE EARTH OFFERS A CAVE TO THE UN - AP - PROACH - A - BLE ONE! AN - GELS

WITH SHEP - HERDS GLO - RI - FY HIM! THE WISE MEN JOUR - NEY WITH THE

STAR! SINCE FOR OUR SAKE THE ETERNAL GOD WAS BORN AS A

This system of music consists of two staves, a treble clef on top and a bass clef on the bottom. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are: STAR! SINCE FOR OUR SAKE THE ETERNAL GOD WAS BORN AS A. The melody is primarily in the treble clef, with accompaniment in the bass clef. The notes are mostly quarter and eighth notes.

LIT TLE CHILD.

This system of music consists of two staves, a treble clef on top and a bass clef on the bottom. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are: LIT TLE CHILD. The melody continues from the previous system, with a long note for 'LIT' and a short note for 'TLE'. The word 'CHILD.' is followed by a double bar line. The accompaniment in the bass clef provides a steady harmonic support.