



## St Nicholas Orthodox Church

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A parish of the Orthodox Church in America

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**Christ is Born! Glorify Him!  
Christos Rozhdayetsya! Slavite Yeho!**

December 25, 2008

### The Nativity of our Lord, God and Savior, Jesus Christ

#### First Antiphon (Psalm 112)

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

*R. Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us.*

In the company of the upright, in the congregation, great are the works of the Lord! *R*

They are studied by all who have pleasure in them. *R*

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

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

#### Second Antiphon (Psalm 112)

Blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in His commandments!

*R. 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! *R*

Glory and wealth are in His house, and His righteousness endures forever! *R*

Light rises in the dark for the upright; the Lord is merciful, compassionate and righteous. *R*

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

#### Third Antiphon (Psalm 110)

The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool!"

*R. Troparion of the Feast*

The Lord sends forth from Zion Thy mighty scepter. Rule in the midst of Thy foes. *R*

Authority shall be with Thee on the day of Thy power, among the splendor of Thy holy ones! *R*

*Tone 4*

**Troparion of the Feast**

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God,  
has shone to the world the light of wisdom!  
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 Orient from on high.  
O Lord, glory to Thee!

*Tone 3*

**Kontakion of the Feast**

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!

**In Place of 'Holy God' (Galatians 3:27)**

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

*Tone 8*

**Prokeimenon of the Feast (Psalm 65:4)**

Let all the earth worship Thee and praise Thee; let it praise Thy name, O Most High!

**Epistle of the Feast (Galatians 4:4-7)**

But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

**Gospel of the Feast (Matthew 2:1-12)**

Now after 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 when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. So they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.'"

Then Herod, when he had secretly called the wise men, determined from them what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also."

When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way.

**Hymn to the Theotokos**

Magnify, O my soul, the most pure virgin Theotokos, more honorable 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!

**Communion Hymn (Psalm 111:9)**

The Lord hath sent redemption to His people. Alleluia!

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*While Holy Communion is reserved for practicing Orthodox Christians  
who prepare themselves by prayer and fasting,  
non-Orthodox visitors are welcome to come forward to venerate the cross  
and receive the Antidoron (blessed bread) at the conclusion of the service.*

Dearly Beloved in Christ,

*Lo, the time of our salvation draweth nigh! Make ready, O Cave!  
The Virgin approacheth to give birth! O Bethlehem, land of Judah,  
Adorn thyself and rejoice, For from thee hath our Lord shone forth!  
Hearken, ye mountains and hills, and ye parts of Judea, which lie round about,  
For Christ cometh, that He might save man whom He created, in that He loveth  
mankind!*



From of old God worked with the people of Israel, the children of the Covenant, to bring forth Christ. He made the covenants with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; with Moses; with David. He sent the Prophets to announce His will, so that the people might be called to obedience and hence, to life. Finally God sent His Son into the world as the ultimate Mystery of the relationship between Himself and man: the New Covenant, God dwelling in man, and man in God.

Jesus is the revelation of the New Covenant given by God, the revelation of the very goal of creation itself: union, synergy, cooperation, love.

Christ is born! He comes in humility, to show us the way of God.  
Christ is born! He comes to empty Himself, and reveal God in human form.  
Christ is born! He became everything that we are, that we might become all that He is.  
Christ is born! Born in the cave and laid in the manger;  
yet His glory shone from the manger as from the Mercy Seat.  
Christ is born! All the angels and the whole creation rejoice!  
Christ is born! Empty of self in the poverty of humility.  
Christ is born! Radiant in the glory of His divinity  
shining in the obscurity of human darkness.  
Christ is born! Enlightening with grace all creation.  
Christ is born! The pledge of the Age to Come:  
The radiant Coal of the deified New World.

Let us give thanks to God for the gift of salvation, which He has given us so generously by the incarnation of His Son. Let us also empty ourselves of self, so that by embracing His poverty, we might be filled with His life. Let us open our minds and hearts to Him in the persons of the poor and lonely, the destitute and afflicted, and thereby liken ourselves to Him. Let us accept the gift of grace, the deifying gift of the Holy Spirit, and thus being likened to Him by Him, our lives may be fulfilled in that radiant communion of love, which is nothing other than the Kingdom of God.

With joy and gratitude, utterly humbled by the Providence of God, and by your love, I remain faithfully in Christ,

Your servant,

A handwritten signature in black ink, starting with a cross symbol and the name 'Jonah' in a cursive script.

**+JONAH**  
Archbishop of Washington and New York,  
Metropolitan of All America and Canada