

THE HOLY FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD IN THE FLESH

Antem of the Chancel

Text: He who was hidden from of old in God, who created all.

From of old I have begotten you a child.

This birth was hidden from the hosts who serve you on high, O Lord, and while you did not depart from the place among the cherubim, you filled the earth, O Savior of all, with your revelation in the flesh. Therefore, with the angels we cry aloud, Glory to God on high. And again, with the shepherds [to whom] they announced and said, Peace on earth, we beseech you, O Good Hope of our souls, have pity and be merciful to us.

His name was before the sun.

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Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; from everlasting, and for ever and ever. Amen.

Through your holy Cross, O our Savior, angels and men were made one flock and one holy Church. Behold, heavenly and earth creatures rejoice, and lo, all creatures cry, O Lord of all, glory be to you.

The Lections

Isaiah 7:10-15; 9:1-3,6-7

Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, "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." And he said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, a young woman shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. . . .

1But there will be no gloom for her that was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter

time he will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

The people who walked in darkness
 have seen a great light;
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,
 on them has light shined.
Thou hast multiplied the nation,
 thou hast increased its joy;
they rejoice before thee
 as with joy at the harvest,
 as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.
For to us a child is born,
 to us a son is given;
and the government will be upon his shoulder,
 and his name will be called
"Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
 Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."
Of the increase of his government and of peace
 there will be no end,
upon the throne of David, and over his kingdom,
 to establish it, and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
 from this time forth and for evermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Micah 4:1-3; 5:2-4,7-9

It shall come to pass in the latter days
 that the mountain of the house of the LORD
shall be established as the highest of the mountains,
 and shall be raised up above the hills;
and peoples shall flow to it,
 and many nations shall come, and say:
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
 to the house of the God of Jacob;
that he may teach us his ways
 and we may walk in his paths."
For out of Zion shall go forth the law,
 and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.
He shall judge between many peoples,

and shall decide for strong nations afar off;
and they shall beat their swords into plowshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more.

But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,
who are little to be among the clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to be ruler 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 travail has brought forth;
then the rest of his brethren 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 dwell secure, for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth. . .

Then the remnant of Jacob shall be
in the midst of many peoples
like dew from the LORD,
like showers upon the grass,
which tarry not for men
nor wait for the sons of men.
And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the nations,
in the midst of many peoples,
like a lion among the beasts of the forest,
like a young lion among the flocks of sheep,
which, when it goes through, treads down
and tears in pieces, and there is none to deliver.
Your hand shall be lifted up over your adversaries,
and all your enemies shall be cut off.

The Shuraya

A mighty man was born in her, and he establishes her.

Let us honor the birth of Christ with spiritual songs. Hallelujah, hallelujah, yea hallelujah!

Response: This man was born there.

Let the rulers who dwell in you rejoice.

Let us honor the birth of Christ with spiritual songs. Hallelujah, hallelujah, yea hallelujah!

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

Let us honor the birth of Christ with spiritual songs. Hallelujah, hallelujah, yea hallelujah!

From everlasting and for ever and ever. Amen.

Let us honor the birth of Christ with spiritual songs. Hallelujah, hallelujah, yea hallelujah!

The Apostle

Galatians 3:15-4:6

To give a human example, brethren: no one annuls even a man's will, or adds to it, once it has been ratified. Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many; but, referring to one, "And to your offspring," which is Christ. This is what I mean: the law, which came four hundred and thirty years afterward, does not annul a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to make the promise void. For if the inheritance is by the law, it is no longer by promise; but God gave it to Abraham by a promise.

Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made; and it was ordained by angels through an intermediary. Now an intermediary implies more than one; but God is one.

Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not; for if a law had been given which could make alive, then righteousness would indeed be by the law. But the scripture consigned all things to sin, that what was promised to faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

Now before faith came, we were confined under the law, kept under restraint until faith should be revealed. So that the law was our custodian until Christ came, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a custodian; for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ

Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no better than a slave, though he is the owner of all the estate; but he is under guardians and trustees until the date set by the father. So with us; when we were children, we were slaves to the elemental spirits of the universe. But 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!"

The Zumara

The LORD said to me, You are my son,
Today I have begotten you.
Ask of me, and I will give you
The nations for your inheritance,
And the ends of the earth for your possession.

The Gospel

Luke 2:1-20

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled. This was the first enrollment, when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be enrolled, each to his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to be delivered. And she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

And in that region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased!"

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." And they went with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they saw it they made known the saying which had been told them concerning this child; and all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary kept all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Anthem of the Mysteries

Text: And the glory of the Lord shone upon them.

Sing to the Lord a new song: the world and all its inhabitants.

All the inhabited world was utterly filled with praise and great joy at the birth of Christ the King. The hosts and companies of angels cry out together with us and say, Glory to God on high, and peace and tranquillity on earth, for the Only-begotten was revealed to us in the flesh, his power was proclaimed among the nations, and he was taken up in glory to his Father.

[There is] joy in all the earth.

All the inhabited world was utterly filled with praise and great joy at the birth of Christ the King. The hosts and companies of angels cry out together with us and say, Glory to God on high, and peace and tranquillity on earth, for the Only-begotten was revealed to us in the flesh, his power was proclaimed among the nations, and he was taken up in glory to his Father.

After "One holy Father" they draw aside the curtains of the Altar, and the choirs in the Chancel array themselves in ranks. Then they begin quietly to say:

You are terrible, O God Most High, from your Holy Place for ever and ever. Blessed is the honor of the Lord from his place.

Then they repeat it in a loud voice, and the people in the Nave respond with the same.

Verses, which are said in the Chancel:

The Lord said to me, You are my Son; I have begotten you today. *Hallelujah, hallelujah!*
You are terrible, O God Most High, from your Holy Place

Continuation:

The live coal which the prophet saw the angel held with tongs, and now priests within the Sanctuary bear it upon their hands.

Come together, O peoples. Let us approach him in holiness of our bodies and souls, for this is the Mystery which was hidden, which is given for us for the forgiveness of sins.

Hallelujah, hallelujah!

And when it is ended, the deacon who says the Litany cries out:

Give praise to the living God.

And those in the Nave make the [appropriate] response.

Anthem of the Bema

Lo, the Body and absolving Blood are offered upon the living and life-giving Altar within the Sanctuary of holy Church, and are also ready to be offered upon the holy, glorious, and spiritual Altar, the true one which is in Heaven.

Come together, O peoples. Let us approach him in holiness of our bodies and souls, for this is the Mystery which was hidden, which is given for us for the forgiveness of sins.

Hallelujah, hallelujah!

Verses:

Lo, the Virgin conceived and bore a Son, and his name was called Emmanuel.

Come together, O peoples. Let us approach him

For a Savior is born to you today in the city of David, who is Christ the Lord.

And they add:

You give us to eat of your Body and Blood, O my Lord. How much more ought our mouths to praise your name.

And they repeat the same.

Verses:

Behold, our eyes have seen and our hands have taken the Blessedness which watchers on high have given us.

This which is for us your Body is the memorial of your suffering and the recollection of your death.

At your birth, O our Lord, the world was made bright and cried glory to the Father who sent you.

There was peace on high and tranquillity in the depths, for watchers and men were reconciled by you.

Teshbokhta After Reception of the Mysteries

Strengthen, O our Lord, the hands which reach out and take the Sacrament for the pardon of debts.

Make them worthy to always bear fruit for your Godhead.

Make worthy the mouths which offer praise that they may sing glory.

May the ears which hear the sound of your praises, O my Lord, never hear the noise of trouble.

May the eyes which have beheld your great compassion behold again your blessed hope.

Make the tongues that cry out "Holy" speak the truth.

Cause the feet that walk within the churches to walk in the land of light.

Gladden with new life the bodies which consume your Body.

Increase all assistance to our company which worships your Godhead.

May your great love remain with us, and in it may we increasingly render praise.

Open the door to the petitioning of us all, and let our service enter in before you.

And they continue:

Remove from us all harm, and make tranquillity and mercy to dwell in our land,
That on the day of your appearance we may live before you and go out to meet you,
according to your will.

We will confess your name with hosannas for your goodness to our race,

For your mercies have been multiplied to our humanity, and your love has shone forth
upon our mortality.

You have canceled our debts through your atonement; glory be to your name for your
gift.

Blessed is your honor from within your place, you who forgive debts because of your
mercies.