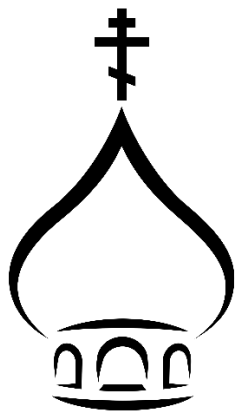


# Great Vespers

Saturday, December 19, 2020

**Forefast of the Nativity of Christ**

**Sunday before the Nativity**



**SAINT NICHOLAS**  
**RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH**



**SAINT NICHOLAS**  
RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Reverend Matthew Joyner, Rector

Cell: 570-468-2261

Email: nkyorthodox@gmail.com

Very Reverend James Mason, Attached

Reverend Timothy Hasenecz, Attached

Deacon Geoffrey LoBalbo

Mr. Bryan Distefano, Parish Council President

Reader Nicholas Lezinsky, Choir Director

Jennifer Bzik, Administrative Assistant

Email: assistant4stnicholas@outlook.com

**Note to our Guests and Friends Visiting St. Nicholas:**

We offer a most sincere and heart-felt welcome to St. Nicholas Church! Please be advised that according to the ancient traditions of the Orthodox Church, the Sacrament of Holy Communion is to be administered only to Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves to receive the Holy Sacrament.

*(Please note - Information to be included in next Sunday's bulletin must be submitted by noon on Thursday. Thank you! ~ Jennifer N. Bzik)*

980 Bridle Path Road | Bethlehem, PA 18017-3120 | T: 610-867-0402  
stnicholasoca.org

# Great Vespers

Saturday, December 19, 2020

## Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ Sunday before the Nativity

### Lord, I Call

(Tone 3) Lord I call upon Thee, hear me! Hear me, O Lord! Lord, I call upon Thee, hear me! Receive the voice of my prayer, when I call upon Thee, hear me O Lord! Let my prayer arise, in Thy sight as incense, and let the lifting up of my hands, be an evening sacrifice, hear me O Lord!

(10) *Bring my soul out of prison, that I may give thanks to Thy Name.*

### **Tone 3**      *(for the Resurrection)*

By Thy Cross, O Christ our Savior, death's dominion has been shattered; the devil's delusion destroyed. The race of man, being saved by faith, always offers Thee a song.

(9) *The righteous will surround me, for Thou wilt deal bountifully with me.*

All has been enlightened by Thy Resurrection, O Lord. Paradise has been opened again. All creation, praising Thee, always offers Thee a song.

(8) *Out of the depths I cry to Thee, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice!*

I glorify the power of the Father and the Son. I praise the authority of the Holy Spirit: the undivided, uncreated Godhead, the consubstantial Trinity which reigns forever.

(7) *Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications!*

*(Resurrection stichera by Anatolius)*

We bow down in worship before Thy precious Cross, O Christ, and we glorify and praise Thy Resurrection, for by Thy wounds we have all been healed.

*(6) If Thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee.*

**Tone 6**      *(for the Forefeast) (Having placed all their hope)*

The never-setting Sun presses forward to rise, enlightening all things under heaven. Let us hasten with clean hands and pure deeds to meet Him; let us prepare to be borne on high with Him in spirit! Let us beseech Him in His compassion, that, as He comes in His good pleasure to His own strange birth, He may lead us, who have become strangers to the path of life in Eden, into Bethlehem where He comes to be born!

*(5) For Thy Name's sake I wait for Thee, O Lord. My soul has waited for Thy word; my soul has hoped on the Lord.*

The Word of God, upborne on the shoulders of the cherubim, goes to dwell in a womb without blemish. Though without passions, He is bound fast to the flesh; He comes on earth as a man, born of the tribe of Judah. A cave becomes the palace of the King of all; the fiery throne is replaced by a manger, where the Virgin Mary lays Him as a babe, for He comes to restore the first-created man, // as He is well-pleased so to do.

*(4) From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch, let Israel hope on the Lord!*

O Word of God without beginning, the Virgin lays Thee in a manger of dumb beasts. Thou dost choose to begin Thy life in the flesh in a manner beyond understanding. Thou hast come to loose me from the fetters of evil with which the envious serpent bound me. O Lover of man, Thou art wrapped in swaddling clothes, tearing to pieces the bonds of my countless sins. Therefore I joyfully praise and worship Thy holy birth, for Thou didst come to set me free.

*(3) For with the Lord there is mercy and with Him is plenteous redemption, and He will deliver Israel from all his iniquities.*

**Tone 6**      *(for the Holy Fathers)*      *(Having placed all their hope)*

The memory of the Ancestors is revealed to the ends of the world, truly filling it with light and making known the dawning of grace. For Christ shone forth from afar, brighter than the sun, the leading rank of stars shining with Him; and the divine-human birth was revealed to take place in Bethlehem. Therefore with faith let us all gather at this birth, rejoicing in chorus and singing the pre-festal praise!

*(2) Praise the Lord, all nations! Praise Him, all peoples!*

Adorned with the glory of divine communion, Adam rejoices today, as he is the foundation and support of the wise Ancestors. With him Abel leaps with joy, and Enoch makes glad; Seth dances, and Noah with him; the all-praiseworthy Patriarch Abraham sings; Melchizedek beholds from afar the birth that is without a father. Therefore, as we celebrate the divine memory of the Forefathers of Christ, we pray for the salvation of our souls.

*(1) For His mercy is confirmed on us, and the truth of the Lord endures forever.*

The three Youths, wise in God, who shone with joy in the furnace, proclaimed the birth of Christ on earth; For just as the Lord sent down a precious dew, He preserved from the flame her who gave birth, keeping her undefiled and enriching her with divine gifts. Therefore Daniel, pleasing to God, rejoiced and was glad, for having foreseen the Stone from the unquarried mountain, he now prays with boldness in behalf of our souls.

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

**Tone 6**      *(for the Holy Fathers)*

Daniel, the man of desires, beheld Thee, O Lord, the Stone cut without human hands from the Mountain. Thus, he foretold that Thou wouldst take flesh without seed, O Word of God, born of the Virgin, the changeless God and Savior of our souls!

*now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

**Tone 6**      *(for the Forefeast, by Byzantius)*

O cave, make ready, for the Ewe Lamb comes, bearing Christ in her womb! O manger, receive Him Who by a word has released the dwellers of earth from lawlessness! You shepherds, abiding in the fields, bear witness to the fearful wonder, And you magi from Persia, offer to the King gold, myrrh, and frankincense, for the Lord has appeared from a Virgin Mother! And she, bending over Him as a handmaiden, worshipped Him as He lay in her arms, saying to Him: "How wast Thou sown as seed in me? How hast Thou grown within me, O my Deliverer and my God?"

**Aposticha**

**Tone 3**      *(for the Resurrection)*

The sun was darkened by Thy Passion, O Christ, but all creation was enlightened by the light of Thy Resurrection. Accept our evening song, O Lover of man!

*The Lord is King; He is robed in majesty!*

Thy life-bearing Resurrection, O Lord, enlightened the whole universe, recalling Thy creation. Delivered from Adam's curse, we sing: O Almighty Lord, glory to Thee!

*For He has established the world, so that it shall never be moved.*

Thou art the changeless God, Who, suffering in the flesh, wast changed. Creation could not endure seeing Thee on the Cross. It was filled with fear while praising Thy patience. By descending to hell and rising on the third day, Thou hast granted to the world life and great mercy.

*Holiness befits Thy house, O Lord, forevermore!*

Thou didst endure death, O Christ, to deliver the race of men from death. Thou didst rise from the dead on the third day, raising with thyself those who knew Thee as God and enlightening the world. Glory to Thee!

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

**Tone 2**      *(for the Holy Fathers, by Cyprian)*

Rejoice, O honored Prophets, who laid well the foundation of the Law of the Lord, and were revealed as firm and unshaken pillars of faith! You became indeed the mediators of Christ's new covenant. Since, therefore, you have been taken up into heaven, intercede with Him to grant peace to the world and salvation to our souls!

*now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

**Tone 2**      *(for the Forefeast, by Cyprian)*

The time of our salvation draws near. Make ready, O cave! The Virgin draws near to bear the Christ. Be glad and rejoice, O Bethlehem, land of Judah, for our Lord has come from thee! Hearken, O mountains and hills, you lands around Judea, for Christ, the Lover of man, is coming to save those whom He created!

**Troparia**

**Tone 3**      **Troparion**      *(Resurrection)*

Let the heavens rejoice! Let the earth be glad! For the Lord has shown strength with His arm. He has trampled down death by death. He has become the first born of the dead. He has delivered us from the depths of hell, and has granted to the world great mercy.

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

**Tone 2**      **Troparion**      *(Holy Fathers)*

Great are the accomplishments of faith, for the three Holy Youths rejoice in the fountain of flames as though in the waters of rest; and the Prophet Daniel appeared a shepherd to the lions as though they were sheep. So by their prayers, O Christ God, save our souls!

*now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

**Tone 4**      **Troparion**      *(Forefeast)*

Prepare, O Bethlehem, for Eden has been opened to all! Adorn thyself, O Ephratha, for the Tree of Life blossoms forth from the Virgin in the cave! Her womb is a spiritual paradise planted with the Divine Fruit; if we eat of it, we shall live forever and not die like Adam. Christ comes to restore the image which He made in the beginning.

Physician of our souls and bodies, Who has sent Your only-begotten Son to heal every sickness and infirmity, visit and heal us, Your Servants, from all physical and spiritual ailments, through the grace of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Grant to us patience in this sickness, strength of body, and recovery of health. Lord, You have taught us through Your Word to pray for each other that we may be healed. For You are the source of healing, and to You we give glory; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

## **Prayers at the Divine Liturgy for the Health of the Servants of God:**

**Metropolitan Herman**

**Igumen David Lewis**

**Archpriests:** Thomas Edwards, John Perich, Rodion Pfeifer, James Mason, Claude Vinyard, Dimitri Oselinsky, David Shewczyk, Dennis Swenki, James Weremedic

**Priests:** Matthew Joyner, Ian Shipley, John Nightingale

**Deacons:** Geoffrey LoBalbo

**Matushki:** Ashley Joyner, Marie Mason, Johanna Bohush, Evelyn Edwards, Paraskeva Vansuch, Myra Kovalak, Gloria Martin, Maryann Oselinsky, Priscilla Shipley, Katia Vansuch, Lisa Weremedic

**Servants:** Bethany Bruder, Mary Brzuchalski, Helen Cotirgasanu, Roberta Cusick, Val Danchenko, Christopher Felix, Olga Frimenko, Patricia G. Fu, David Gowarty, Patricia Grammes, Walter Grigoruk, Rachel Hardesty, Nicholas Hazzard, Jonathan Hontz, Sherry Hromiak, Michael H. Isbansky, Sarah Jubinski, Pauline Kasick, Mary K. Koretski, Stephanie Koretski, David Lezinsky, Judy Lezinsky, Olga Maksimova, Peter Marsh, Lanelle Mikolaitis, Catherine Miller, Nicolae & Doina Marian, Mary Orzolek, Kylie Pinho, Ryan Pinkowicz, Kiera Pheiffer, Alex Roberts, Gordon Roberts, Clara Roman, Victoria Ross, Mary Ruzila, Nancy A. Sabol, Robert Schainfeld, Cate Shea, Julia Smith, Julia G. Smolenski, Mary Strohecker, Ola Tatusko, Irene Witanek

**Child of God:** Emily Estrin

**Please remember them and all our homebound and nursing home parishioners in your daily intercessory prayers.**