

Thursday, June 24, 2021
Nativity of the Holy Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist, John

Troparion:

O Prophet and Forerunner of the coming of Christ, in spite of our honor and devotion we are unable to give you worthy praise, through your glorious and noble birth your mother's childlessness was ended, your father's tongue was freed, and the incarnation of the Son of God was proclaimed to the world.

Kontakion:

Today the formerly barren woman gives birth to Christ's Forerunner, who is the fulfillment of every prophecy; for in the Jordan, when he laid his hand on the One foretold by the prophets, he was revealed as Prophet, Herald, and Forerunner of God the Word.

Prokeimenon in the 8th Tone:

Their proclamation has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the universe!
(Vs.) The heavens are telling the Glory of God, and the firmament proclaims His handiwork!

Tone 7 (Forerunner):

The righteous one shall rejoice in the Lord and shall set his hope on Him.

Epistle:

The reading from the Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Romans (Rom. 13:11-14:4)

Brethren, you know what hour it is, how it is full time now for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed; the night is far gone, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires. As for the man who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not for disputes over opinions. One believes he may eat anything, while the weak man eats only vegetables. Let not him who eats despise him who abstains, and let not him who abstains pass judgment on him who eats; for God has welcomed him. Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Master is able to make him stand. (Rom 13:11-14:4)

Alleluia Verses:

By the Word of the Lord the heavens were made; and all their host by the Spirit of His mouth.
(Vs.) The Lord looks down from Heaven and beholds the sons of men.

Tone 3 (Forerunner):

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He hath visited and redeemed His people.

Gospel:

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. (Chapter 1:1:25, 57-68, 76, 80)

Since many writers have undertaken to draw up a narrative concerning the things that have been fulfilled among us, even as they who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have handed them down to us, I also have determined, after following up all things carefully from the very first,

to write for you, most excellent Theophilus, an orderly account, that you may understand the certainty of the words in which you have been instructed. In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a certain priest named Zechariah, of the course of Abijah; and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. Both were just before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord. But they had no child, for Elizabeth was barren; and they were both advanced in years. Now it came to pass, while he was officiating in the order of his course as priest before God, according to the custom of the priest's office, that he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord to burn incense. And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense. And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right of the altar of incense. And Zechariah, seeing him, was troubled, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth shall bear you a son and you shall call his name John. And you shall have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great before the Lord; he shall drink no wine or strong drink, and shall be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel he shall bring back to the Lord their God, and he himself shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the incredulous to the wisdom of the just; to prepare for the Lord a perfect people." And Zechariah asked the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man and my wife is advanced in years." And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stand in the presence of God; and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. And behold, you shall be dumb and unable to speak until the day when these things come to pass, because you have not believed my words, which will be fulfilled in their proper time." And the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they wondered at his tarrying so long in the temple. But when he did come out he could not speak to them, and they realized he had seen a vision in the temple. And he kept making signs to them, and remained dumb. And it came to pass, when the days of his service were completed, that he went back home. Now after these days Elizabeth his wife conceived and she secluded herself five months, saying, "Thus has the Lord dealt with me in the days when He deigned to take away my reproach among men." Now her time was fulfilled that she should be delivered, and she brought forth a son. And her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown His great mercy towards her, and they rejoiced with her. And it came to pass on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to call him by his father's name, Zechariah. But his mother spoke up and said, "Not so, but he shall be called John." And they said to her, "No one in your family is called by this name." And they kept inquiring by signs of his father what he would have him called. And asking for a writing-tablet he wrote the words, "John is his name." And they all marveled. And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he began to speak, blessing God. And fear came on all their neighbors; and all these things were told abroad in all the hill country of Judea. And all who heard them kept them in their heart, saying, "What then will this child be?" For the hand of the Lord was with him. And Zechariah his father was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying, "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, because He has visited and wrought redemption for His people. And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, for you shall go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways." And the child grew and became strong in spirit, and was in the wilderness until the day of his manifestation to Israel.