

December 26 - Second Day of the Feast of the Nativity Synaxis of the Most Holy Theotokos

Troparion:

Your Nativity, O Christ our God, has shone to the world the Light of knowledge; 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!

Kontakion:

He Who was begotten before the morning star by the Father without a mother is incarnate of you today on earth without a father. Therefore, a star announces the glad tidings to the Magi, while Angels and shepherds sing of your undefiled child-bearing, O you who are full of grace.

Prokeimenon, Tone 3:

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

Vs. For He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden, for behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed.

Epistle:

The reading from the Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Hebrews. (Heb. 2:11-18)

For He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified have all one origin. That is why He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, "I will proclaim Thy name to my brethren, in the midst of the congregation I will praise Thee." And again, "I will put my trust in Him." And again, "Here am I, and the children God has given me." Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death He might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage. For surely it is not with angels that He is concerned but with the descendants of Abraham. Therefore He had to be made like His brethren in every respect, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people. For because He Himself has suffered and been tempted, He is able to help those who are tempted.

Alleluia Verses:

Arise, O Lord into Thy resting place, Thou and the ark of Thy holiness.

Vs. The Lord hath sworn to David a sure oath and will not change his mind.

Gospel:

The holy Gospel according to Matthew (Matt. 2:13-23)

When the Magi had left, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph, saying, "Arise, and take the child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and remain there until I tell you. For Herod will seek the child to destroy him." So he arose, and took the child and his mother by night, and withdrew into Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod, so that what the Lord said through the prophet might be fulfilled, "Out of Egypt I called my son." Then Herod, seeing he had been tricked by the Magi, was furious; and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and all its neighborhood who were two years old or under, according to the time he had carefully ascertained from the Magi. Then was fulfilled what was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet, "A voice was heard in Rama, weeping moaning and a loud complaint; Rachel weeping for her children, and she would not be comforted, because they are no more." But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Arise, and take the child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." So he arose and took the child and his mother, and went into the land of Israel. But hearing that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there; and being warned in a dream he withdrew into the region of Galilee. And he went and settled in a town called Nazareth, that there might be fulfilled what was spoken through the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarene." (Matt. 2:13-23)