Reader’s Vespers on Monday, December 21st, 2020

The Conception of the Theotokos by St Anna –– (December 9th/22nd)

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord, Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

Glory to Thee O God, glory to Thee!

O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, Who art everywhere present and fillest all things, Treasury of blessings and Giver of Life: come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O Good One!

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. ***(Thrice)***

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

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Lord, blot out our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy name's sake.

Lord have mercy. ***(Thrice)***

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

Our Father, Who art in the Heavens, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord, Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

Lord have mercy. ***Twelve Times***

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

O come, let us worship God our King.

O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ our King and God.

O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and God.

Bless the Lord, O my soul; O Lord my God, Thou hast been magnified exceedingly. Confession and majesty hast Thou put on, Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment, Who stretchest out the heaven as it were a curtain; Who supporteth His chambers in the waters, Who appointeth the clouds for His ascent, Who walketh upon the wings of the winds, Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire, Who establisheth the earth in the sureness thereof; it shall not be turned back for ever and ever.  The abyss like a garment is His mantle; upon the mountains shall the waters stand.  At Thy rebuke they will flee, at the voice of Thy thunder shall they be afraid.  The mountains rise up and the plains sink down, unto the place where Thou hast established them.  Thou appointedst a bound that they shall not pass, neither return to cover the earth.  He sendeth forth springs in the valleys; between the mountains will the waters run.  They shall give drink to all the beasts of the field; the wild asses will wait to quench their thirst.  Beside them will the birds of the heaven lodge, from the midst of the rocks will they give voice.  He watereth the mountains from His chambers; the earth shall be satisfied with the fruit of Thy works.  He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men, To bring forth bread out of the earth; and wine maketh glad the heart of man.  To make his face cheerful with oil; and bread strengtheneth man's heart.  The trees of the plain shall be satisfied, the cedars of Lebanon, which Thou hast planted.  There will the sparrows make their nests; the house of the heron is chief among them.  The high mountains are a refuge for the harts, and so is the rock for the hares.  He hath made the moon for seasons; the sun knoweth his going down.  Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night, wherein all the beasts of the forest will go abroad.  Young lions roaring after their prey, and seeking their food from God. The sun ariseth, and they are gathered together, and they lay them down in their dens. But man shall go forth unto his work, and to his labor until the evening. How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast Thou made them all; the earth is filled with Thy creation. So is this great and spacious sea, therein are things creeping innumerable, small living creatures with the great. There go the ships; there this dragon, whom Thou hast made to play therein. All things wait on Thee, to give them their food in due season; when Thou givest it them, they will gather it. When Thou openest Thy hand, all things shall be filled with goodness; when Thou turnest away Thy face, they shall be troubled.  Thou wilt take their spirit, and they shall cease; and unto their dust shall they return.  Thou wilt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created; and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.  Let the glory of the Lord be unto the ages; the Lord will rejoice in His works.  Who looketh on the earth and maketh it tremble, Who toucheth the mountains and they smoke. I will sing unto the Lord throughout my life, I will chant to my God for as long as I have my being.  May my words be sweet unto Him, and I will rejoice in the Lord.  O that sinners would cease from the earth, and they that work iniquity, that they should be no more. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

The sun knoweth his going down, Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night.  How magnified are Thy works, O Lord!  In wisdom hast Thou made them all.

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

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.  Glory to Thee, O God. ***Thrice****.*

Lord, have mercy. ***Forty Times***

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

In the 3rd Tone: Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hearken unto me.

Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hearken unto me. \* Hearken unto me, O Lord. \* Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hearken unto me; \* attend to the voice of my supplication, \* when I cry unto Thee. \* Hearken unto me, O Lord.

Let my prayer be set forth \* as incense before Thee, \* the lifting up of my hands \* as an evening sacrifice. \* Hearken unto me, O Lord.

Set, O Lord, a watch before my mouth, and a door of enclosure round about my lips.

Incline not my heart unto words of evil, to make excuse with excuses in sins.

With men that work iniquity; and I will not join with their chosen.

The righteous man will chasten me with mercy and reprove me; as for the oil of the sinner, let it not anoint my head.

For yet more is my prayer in the presence of their pleasures; swallowed up near by the rock have their judges been.

They shall hear my words, for they be sweetened; as a clod of earth is broken upon the earth, so have their bones been scattered nigh unto hades.

For unto Thee, O Lord, O Lord, are mine eyes, in Thee have I hoped; take not my soul away.

Keep me from the snare which they have laid for me, and from the stumbling-blocks of them that work iniquity.

The sinners shall fall into their own net; I am alone until I pass by.

With my voice unto the Lord have I cried, with my voice unto the Lord have I made supplication.

I will pour out before Him my supplication, mine affliction before Him will I declare.

When my spirit was fainting within me, then Thou knewest my paths.

In this way wherein I have walked they hid for me a snare.

I looked upon my right hand, and beheld, and there was none that did know me.

Flight hath failed me, and there is none that watcheth out for my soul.

I have cried unto Thee, O Lord; I said: Thou art my hope, my portion art Thou in the land of the living.

Attend unto my supplication, for I am brought very low.

Deliver me from them that persecute me, for they are stronger than I.

Bring my soul out of prison:  that I may confess Thy name.

The righteous shall wait patiently for me until Thou shalt reward me.

Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord; O Lord, hear my voice.

Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

If Thou shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, O Lord, who shall stand? For with Thee there is forgiveness.

Beholding my profitless laziness,

the subtle serpent beckons me toward the foulest of evils.

By transforming himself as an angel of light,

he shows me the sweetness of sin.

Although his action is wicked and contrary to the divine law,

he is able to drive me in the path of evil habits.

I have made evil my good, //

for I have been beguiled and deceived.

For Thy name’s sake have I patiently waited for Thee, O Lord; my soul hath patiently waited for Thy word, my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

I have walked along ev’ry sinful and evil path,

thus forsaking the narrow way of righteousness until the end.

Oppressed, I now approach the gates of death crying out:

“O most merciful Jesus, the height of goodness,

direct the path of my earthly life to true repentance. //

Save me and grant me divine pardon before I die.”

From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch let Israel hope in the Lord.

Slain by all manner of sins,

by a multitude of transgressions and by great unrighteousness,

my spirit lies dead and helpless;

my hope in thy compassion is all that lives in me.

You, O Christ, are the Life and Breath of the dead;

you have slain passions that have destroyed us.

Search for me in the desert of this world, //

overtake and rescue me from eternal death.

In the 4th Tone: For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption; and He shall redeem Israel out of all his iniquities.

The barren Anna leaped for joy when she conceived Mary the Virgin,

who in turn will conceive in the flesh God the Word.

From the fullness of her joy, she cried out:

“Rejoice with me, all you tribes of Israel,

for I have conceived according to the will of God my Savior.

He has answered my prayer and ended my shame,

in fulfillment of His promise, He will heal the pains of my heart, //

through the pains of child-bearing.”

O praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise Him, all ye peoples.

He who made waters gush forth from the rock,

permitted your womb to carry the ever-Virgin Mary

through whom our salvation will come.

By this, you were delivered from shame;

no longer will you dwell on earth as barren,

for you will bear the earth bringing forth the Tree of Life.

According to His will, He has delivered the human race from all

shame,

by taking on our human form and becoming Man, //

for He is rich in mercy.

For He hath made His mercy to prevail over us, and the truth of the Lord abideth forever.

Behold! The promises of the prophets are fulfilled!

The holy mountain is planted in the womb.

The divine ladder is set up, the great throne of the King is ready.

The place for the Lord’s passage is prepared.

The dry bush, which the fire could not consume, is blossoming.

The treasury of grace is an abundant flow of blessing which heals the

barrenness of Anna, //

whom we glorify with faith.

In the 2nd Tone: Glory … now and ever... :

Today the great mystery announced from all eternity

whose depths angels and men cannot perceive,

appears in the barren womb of Anna.

Mary, the Maiden of God, is prepared to be the dwelling of the eternal

King,

who will renew our human nature.

Let us entreat her with a pure heart and say:

“Intercede for us with your Son and our God //

that our souls may be saved.”

O Gladsome Light of the holy glory of the immortal, heavenly, holy, blessed Father, O Jesus Christ: Having come to the setting of the sun, having beheld the evening light, we praise the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: God.  Meet it is for Thee at all times to be praised with reverent voices, O Son of God, Giver of life.  Wherefore, the world doth glorify Thee.

The Prokeimenon in the 4th Tone:

The Lord hears me when I call to Him

Verse: When I called the God of my righteousness heard me.

The Lord hears me/ when I call to Him

Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this evening without sin.  Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy name unto the ages.  Amen.

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we have hoped in Thee.  Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes.  Blessed art Thou, O Master, give me understanding of Thy statutes.  Blessed art Thou, O Holy One, enlighten me by Thy statutes.

O Lord, Thy mercy endureth forever; disdain not the work of Thy hands.  To Thee is due praise, to Thee is due a song, to Thee glory is due, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.  Amen.

Lord, have mercy. ***Twelve Times***

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

In the 5th Tone:

Anna, named for divine grace,

cried out in her prayer,

beseeching the Creator and God of all:

“O Master, You perceive the shame of barrenness;

heal the pain of my heart!

Open my womb to make it fruitful,

that we may offer You the child as a gift,

and give glory and praise with hymns and songs //

to Your love through which the world receives great mercy!”

Verse: The Lord swore to David a sure oath from which He will not turn back!

Anna besought the Lord in fervent prayer for a child.

The voice of the angel proclaimed to her:

“God has granted you the desire of your prayer.

Do not weep, for you shall be a fruitful olive tree,

bearing the wondrous branch of the Virgin,

who will bring forth in the flesh the blossom Christ //

who grants the world great mercy!”

Verse: The fruit of your body I will set upon your throne!

The hon’rable parents Joachim and Anna

have given birth to the lamb

who will give birth past understanding

to the Lamb of God who is to be sacrificed for all mankind.

They offer to God unceasing and humble praise.

Therefore let us rejoice and give them fervent glory

for the birth of the one born from them in a marvelous way, //

the Theotokos, through whom the world receives great mercy!

In the 2nd Tone: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Today a royal cloak of purple and fine linen

is woven from the loins of David,

and the mystical flower of Jesse is blossoming: //

From it will come forth Christ our God, the Savior of our souls!

Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, O Master, according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples; a light of revelation for the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. ***(Thrice)***

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

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Lord, blot out our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy name's sake.

Lord have mercy. ***(Thrice)***

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

Our Father, Who art in the Heavens, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Amen.

Tone 4:

Today the bonds of barrenness are broken,

God has heard the prayers of Joachim and Anna.

He has promised them beyond all their hopes,

to bear the Maiden of God

by whom the uncircumscribed One was born as mortal Man,

who commanded an angel to cry to her: //

“Rejoice, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with you!”

Lord have mercy. ***Forty times***

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

More honorable than the Cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim; who without corruption gavest birth to God the Word, the very Theotokos, thee do we magnify.

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

Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord bless!

Through the prayers of the Theotokos, of the Holy and Righteous Ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna, and all the saints, Lord, Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us. Amen.