Vespers with Divine Liturgy for the Theophany of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ

Metropolitan Cantor Institute
Byzantine Catholic Archeparchy of Pittsburgh
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Foreword

The combination of Vespers and the Divine Liturgy of Our Holy Father Basil the Great is sung four times in the Byzantine Church Year: the Eve of Christmas, the Eve of Theophany, Great and Holy Thursday, and Great and Holy Saturday.

On the eve of Theophany, the feast of the baptism of the Lord, the Great Blessing of Water is normally celebrated at this service, or at the morning Divine Liturgy, or both.

This booklet provides complete Vespers portion of this service, along with the proper hymns for the Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great. The hymns for the Vigil of Theophany are taken from the Festal Menaion of the Sisters of Saint Basil the Great of Uniontown, PA. These Theophany texts are set to music in strict accord with the principles used by the Inter-Eparchial Music Commission of the Byzantine Catholic Church.

The Great Blessing of Water may take place after the Ambon Prayer; because of this length, and the fact that it may be celebrated outdoors, this blessing is in a separate booklet.

The image on the cover is from the Ruthenian Časoslov (Rome, 1950).

We hope that this booklet will provide edification and help to God's faithful as they begin the celebration of the baptism of our Lord, God, and Savior, Jesus Christ.
Vespers with Divine Liturgy for the Theophany of Our Lord, God, and Savior, Jesus Christ

GREAT VESPERS

The faithful **STAND** when the preparatory rites are completed and the clergy quietly say the prayers before commencing the Divine Liturgy. The holy doors remain closed until the Little Entrance.

**Deacon:** Reverend Father, give the blessing.

**Celebrant:** Blessed is the kingdom of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever.

**Response:**

\[ \text{A - men.} \]

**Call to Worship**

*Each time with a bow*

\[ \text{Come, let us worship our King and God.} \]

\[ \text{Come, let us worship Christ, our King and God.} \]

\[ \text{Come, let us worship and bow before the only Lord Jesus Christ,} \]

\[ \text{the King and our God.} \]

*The celebrant goes before the closed holy doors and quietly recites the Prayers of Light of vespers.*
Bless the Lord, O my soul! Lord my God, how great you are, clothed in majesty and glory, wrapped in light as in a robe. You stretch out the heavens like a tent. Above the rains you build your dwelling. You make the clouds your chariot, you walk on the wings of the wind; you make your angels spirits and your ministers a flaming fire. You founded the earth on its base, to stand firm from age to age. You make the grass grow
for the cattle and the plants to serve man's needs,

that he may bring forth bread from the earth

and wine to cheer man's heart; oil, to

make his face shine

and bread to strengthen man's heart. I will sing to the Lord all my life,

make music to my God while I live.

You made the moon to mark the months; the sun

knows the time for its setting. How many are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have made them all.
Glo - ry to the Fa - ther, and to the Son,
and to the Ho - ly Spir - it, now and ev - - er

Then three times, with a bow each time:

Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al-le - lu - ia! Glo - ry to you, O God!

The faithful may SIT as the Litany of Peace begins:

Deacon:  In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Response:  Lord, have mer - cy.

Deacon:  For peace from on high and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

Response:  Lord, have mer - cy.

For peace in the whole world, for the stability of the holy Churches of God, and for the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.

For this holy church and for all who enter it with faith, reverence, and fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.
For our holy father (Name), pope of Rome, let us pray to the Lord. ①

For our most reverend metropolitan (Name), for our God-loving bishop (Name), for the venerable presbyterate, the diaconate in Christ, and all the clergy and people, let us pray to the Lord. ②

For our government and for all in the service of our country, let us pray to the Lord. ①

For this city [or: For this holy monastery], for every city, community, and for the faithful living in them, let us pray to the Lord. ②

For favorable weather, for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord. ①

For those who travel by sea, air, and land, for the sick, the suffering, the captive and for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord. ②

Special petitions may be inserted here.

That we be delivered from all affliction, wrath, and need, let us pray to the Lord. ①

Protect us, save us, have mercy on us, and preserve us, O God, by your grace. ②

Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

Response:

Celebrant:

Evening, morning, and at noon we praise you, we bless you, we thank you, and we pray to you, Master of All and loving Lord. Let our prayer rise like incense before you and do not let our hearts be turned to evil words or thoughts, but deliver us from all that might ensnare our souls. For to you Lord, O Lord, our eyes are turned and in you we hope; let us not be put to shame, O our God.

For to you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is due all glory, honor, and worship, now and ever and forever.
THE LAMP-LIGHTING PSALMS

The faithful **STAND** for the great incensation of the church. They may **SIT** when the great incensation is complete. The opening verses of Psalm 140 with refrain are sung according to the tone of the first sticheron:

Psalm 140: **Tone 2 samohlasen**

O Lord, I have cried to you, hear me. Hear me, O Lord!

O Lord, I have cried to you, hear me; receive the voice of my pray'r when I call upon you. Hear me, O Lord!

Let my pray'r ascend to you like incense and the lifting up of my hands like an evening sacrifice. Hear me, O Lord!
O Lord, set a guard before my mouth and set a seal on the door of my lips.

Let not my heart be inclined to evil, nor make excuses for sins I commit.

Let me never share in sinners' feasting. If a just man strikes or reproves me it is kindness

but let the oil of the wicked not anoint my head. Let my prayer be ever against their malice.

The princes were thrown down by the side of the rock; then they understood that my words were kind.

As a millstone is shattered to pieces on the ground, so their bones were strewn at the mouth of the grave.

To you, Lord God, my eyes are turned; in you I take refuge; spare my soul!

From the trap they have laid for me keep me safe; keep me from the snares of those who do evil.

Let the wicked fall into the traps they have set while I pursue my way unharmed.

Psalm 141 With all my voice I cry to the Lord, with all my voice I entreat the Lord.

I pour out my trouble before him; I tell him all my distress while my spirit faints within me.

But you, O Lord, know my path. On the way where I shall walk they have hidden a snare to entrap me.

Look on my right and see: there is no one who takes my part.
I have no means of escape, not one who cares for my soul.

I cry to you, O Lord. I have said: "You are my refuge, all I have in the land of the living."

Listen, then, to my cry for I am in the depths of distress.

Rescue me from those who pursue me for they are stronger than I.

Bring my soul out of this prison and then I shall praise your name.

Around me the just will assemble because of your goodness to me.

**Psalm 129:** Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my pleading.

If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt, Lord, who would survive? But with you is found forgiveness: for this we revere you.

My soul is waiting for the Lord. I count on his word. My soul is longing for the Lord more than watchman for daybreak.

_Cantor_

Let the watch-man count on daybreak and Is-ra-el on the Lord.

When the Fore-runner saw the One who is our en-light-en-ment, the One
who has brought light to all, coming to be baptized, his heart rejoiced and his hand trembled. He pointed him out to the people and said: This is the Savior of Israel who delivered us from corruption.

O Christ our God, O Sinless One, glory to you!

Because with the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption, Israel indeed he will redeem from all its iniquity.

O our Savior, the army of angels trembled when they saw you baptized by your servant, and the Holy Spirit bearing witness and descending, and when they heard the voice of the Father speaking...
from heaven: “This One upon whom the Fore-runner lays his hands is my beloved Son in whom I am well-pleased.” O Christ our God, glory to you!

Cantor

Praise the Lord, all you nations; acclaim him all you peoples!

2

When the Jordan River received you, O Fountain-head, the Comforter descended in the form of a dove. Now behold the marvel:

the One who bowed the heavens bows his head to the Fore-runner, and the one made of clay cries out to his Maker: "Why do you command me to perform what is beyond my power? It is I
who need to be baptized by you." O Christ our God, O Sin-less
One, glory to you!

Cantor

Strong is the love of the Lord for us; he is faithful for ever.

O God and Lord, when you resolved to save those who had strayed
from you, you condescended to take the form of a servant,
for it was fitting that you assumed, for us, our human nature.

And when you were baptized in the flesh, O our Redeemer,
it made us worthy of your forgiveness. Therefore, we cry out to
you: O Christ our God, our Benefactor, glory to you!
The faithful **STAND** when the holy doors are opened and the cantor sings:

Glo-*ry* to the Fa-*ther*, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spir-*it*, now and ever

and for-*ev*-er. **A-men.**

While the sticheron at “**Glory ...**” is sung, the Little Entrance with the holy gospel book and censer is made through the northern door and the holy doors.

**Doxastikon - Tone 2 samohlasen**

You have bowed your head before the Fore-*run-*ner*, and you have

crushed the heads of the de-*mons*. You have de-*scend-ed* into the

waters and giv-*en* light to all things, that they may glo-*ri-*fy* you,

**O Sav-i-or**, the En-*light-en-*ment* of our souls.

**Deacon:** Wisdom! Be attentive!

*The clergy and servers enter the sanctuary as “**O Joyful Light**” is sung. The sanctuary and the faithful are incensed.*
O Joyful Light of the holy glory of the Father Immortal,
the heavenly, holy, blessed One, O Jesus Christ: Now that we have
reached the setting of the sun, and see the evening light, we sing to God,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is fitting at all times to raise a song of praise in measured melody to you,
O Son of God, the Giver of Life. Therefore, the universe sings your glory.

THE EVENING PROKEIMENON

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Celebrant: Peace be to all!

Deacon: Wisdom! Be attentive!

The faithful sing the VESPERS PROKEIMENON of the day of the week; the deacon chants the verse. These prokeimena are on pages 118-120 of the Divine Liturgies book. But on Friday evening, we sing the Great Prokeimenon which is found on the next page:
Great Prokeimenon - Tone 7 (Psalm 113:11):

Deacon: When Israel came forth from Egypt, Jacob's sons from an alien people, Judah became the Lord's temple.

Deacon: The sea fled at the sight; the Jordan turned back on its course.

Deacon: Why was it, sea, that you fled? that you turned back, Jordan, on your course?

Readings 1-3 (For the sake of brevity, one or two readings may be chosen.)

Genesis 1:1-13
Exodus 14: 15-18, 21-23, 27-29
Exodus 15: 22 through 16: 1 (This reading should always be included)

First Responsorial Troparion

All: O Creator of the world, you appeared in the world in order to

Refrain

shine upon those who live in darkness. O Merciful

One, glory to you.
Cantor:

O God, be gracious and bless us and let your face shed its light upon us.

Refrain

Cantor:

So will your ways be known upon earth and all nations learn your saving help.

Refrain

Cantor:

Let the peoples praise you, O God, let all the peoples praise you.

The earth has yielded its fruit.

Refrain

Cantor:

For God, our God, has blessed us. May God still give us his blessing till the ends of the earth revere him.
Glo - ry to the Fa - ther, and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Spirit; now and ev - er and for-ev - er. A - - - men.

And the faithful sing the entire troparion: O Creator of the world, you appeared in the world * in order to shine upon those who live in darkness. * O Merciful One, glory to you.

Readings 4-6 For the sake of brevity, one or two readings may be chosen.)

Joshua 3:7-8, 15-17
II Kings 2: 6-14
II Kings 5: 9-14 (This reading should always be included)

Second Responsorial Troparion

All:

Refrain

Cantor:

The Lord reigns, he is clothed in ma-jes-ty; robed is the Lord
and girt a-bout with strength.

All: And now your light shines on those who live in darkness. O Lord, glory to you.

Cantor:

The rivers have lift-ed up, O Lord, the rivers have lift-ed up their voice; the rivers have lift-ed up their waves.

All: And now your light shines on those who live in darkness. O Lord, glory to you.

Cantor:

More glo-rious than the surg-ings of the sea, the Lord is glo-rious on high. Your de-crees are worth-y of trust in-deed.

All: And now your light shines on those who live in darkness. O Lord, glory to you.

Cantor:

Ho-li-ness is fit-ting to your house, O Lord, un-til the end of time.

All: And now your light shines on those who live in darkness. O Lord, glory to you.
Cantor:

And the faithful sing the entire troparion: O our Savior, through the greatness of your mercy, * you cleansed the sinners and publicans * and now your light shines on those who live in darkness. * O Lord, glory to you.

Reading 7-13  For the sake of brevity, a smaller number of readings may be chosen.)

Isaiah 1: 16-20  
Genesis 32: 1-10  
Exodus 2: 5-10  
Judges 6: 36-40  
I Kings 18: 30-39  
II Kings 2: 19-22  
Isaiah 49: 8-15  (This reading should always be included.)

Small Litany

Deacon:  Again and again, in peace, let us pray to the Lord  
 Response:  Lord, have mercy.  
Deacon:  Protect us, save us, have mercy on us, and preserve us, O God, by your grace.  
Response:  Lord, have mercy.  
Deacon:  Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.
To you, O Lord.

Amen.

The Lord is my light and my help; whom shall I fear?

Whom shall I fear?

Verse: The Lord is the stronghold of my life; before whom shall I shrink?

Alleluia - Tone 6 (Psalm 90: 1, 2)

Verse: The one who dwells in the shelter of the Most High abides in the shadow of the God of heaven.

Verse: He says to the Lord: You are my Protector, my Refuge, and my God in whom I trust.
Music for the responses at the Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great can be found on pages 96-103 of the Divine Liturgies book. "In you, O Woman Full of Grace" is sung in place of "It is truly proper to glorify you."

The Great Blessing of Water is celebrated after the Ambon Prayer. When the blessing is complete, the Divine Liturgy concludes with "Blessed be the name of the Lord", and the dismissal.

Immediately after the dismissal a candle is lit and set on a stand in the middle of the church.

Standing beside it, the cantor sings the troparion and kontakion of the feast:

Troparion of Theophany - Tone 1

At your baptism in the Jordan, O Lord, worship of the Trinity was revealed; for the Father's voice bore witness to you, calling you his beloved Son, and the Spirit in the form of a dove confirmed the truth of these words. O Christ God, you appeared and enlightened the world. Glory to you!

Cantor

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
now and ever and forever. Amen.

Kontakion of Theophany - Tone 4

You have revealed yourself to the world today; and your light, O Lord,

has set its seal on us. We recognize you and exclaim to you:

You have come and revealed yourself, O Unapproachable Light.