



## HYMNS OF THE NATIVITY

"What shall we present unto Thee, O Christ, For Thy coming to earth for us men? Each of Thy creatures brings Thee a thank-offering: The angels -- singing; the heavens -- a star; The Wise Men -- treasures; the shepherds devotion; The earth -- a cave; the desert -- a manger; But we offer Thee the Virgin-Mother. O Eternal God, have mercy upon us". (Stuchera from Great Vespers of the Nativity)



"Christ is born! Glorify Him! Christ descends from the heavens, welcome Him! Christ is now on earth, O be jubilant! Sing to the Lord, the whole earth, And sing praises to Him with joy, O ye people, For He has been exalted" (From the Canon of the Nativity, Irmos I)



"Today Christ is born in Bethlehem of the Virgin. Today He who is without a beginning begins, And the Word is made flesh. The powers of Heaven rejoice, The earth and her people are jubilant; The Wise Men bring gifts to the Lord, The shepherds marvel at the One who is born; And we sing without ceasing: "Glory to God in the Highest, And on earth peace, (God's) good will toward men". (Stichera before The Great Doxology)



TAYBETH

This year our parish Christmas Gift will go to the support of **St. George Greek Orthodox Church in Taybeth, West Bank, in the Palestinian territory.** This area suffers great poverty, high unemployment, restricted movement, interruption of water and electric service, and political violence. As our sister Church, St. George reaches out to Christians and others, particularly the children. Please be generous in giving to this Orthodox parish and help them to continue to minister to those in need. Make checks payable to St. George Sunday School. **Visit the St. George's website from Taybeth, at [www.saintgeorgetaybeth.org](http://www.saintgeorgetaybeth.org)**

## SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

**Sunday, December 27, 2009:** Sunday After the Nativity, Feast of the Holy Protomartyr St. Stephen Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

**Friday, January 1, 2010:** Circumcision of the Lord and the Feast of St. Basil the Great Orthros 8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.

**Sunday, January 3, 2010:** Sunday Before the Theophany Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

**Tuesday, January 5, 2010:** The Eve of the Theophany Orthros and Royal Hours 8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.

**Wednesday, January 6, 2010:** The Feast of the Theophany Orthros 8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy and Great Blessing of the Waters 9:30a.m.

**Thursday, January 7, 2010:** Feast of St. John the Forerunner Orthros 8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.

## CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!



*Fr. Dimitrios, Fr. George, Fr. Nick, and the Parish Staff wish you and your families a blessed Nativity! May He who came to heal us and make us whole again in His love bring to you and yours peace of heart and stillness in your souls. May He fill the coming year ahead with health and prosperity, and may you see the good things of Jerusalem all the days of your life!*

# THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST



*"Silent night, Holy night, all is calm, all is bright. Round yon Virgin Mother and Child, Holy infant so tender and mild. Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace."*

## CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM! DECEMBER, 2009

*(Cover by Catie George, 3rd Grade, Sharing Our Gift of Song)*

## "AND THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH AND DWELT AMONGST US."



The incomprehensible and inexplicable Nativity of Christ came to pass when Herod the Great was reigning in Judea; the latter was an Ascalonite on his father's side and an Idumean on his mother's. He was in every way foreign to the royal line of David; rather, he had received his authority from the Roman emperors, and had ruled tyrannically over the Jewish people for some thirty-three years. The tribe of Judah, which had reigned of old, was deprived of its rights and stripped of all rule and authority. Such was the condition of the Jews when the awaited Messiah was born, and truly thus was fulfilled the prophecy which the Patriarch Jacob had spoken 1,807 years before: "A ruler shall not fail from Judah, nor a prince from his loins, until there come the things stored up for him; and he is the expectation of the nations" (Gen.49:10). Thus, our Saviour was born in Bethlehem, a city of Judea, whither Joseph had come from Nazareth of Galilee, taking Mary his betrothed, who was great with child, that, according to the decree issued in those days by the Emperor Augustus, they might be registered in the census of those subject to Rome.

Therefore, when the time came for the Virgin to give birth, and since because of the great multitude there was no place in the inn, the Virgin's circumstance constrained them to enter a cave which was near Bethlehem. Having as shelter a stable of irrational beasts, she gave birth there, and swaddled the Infant and laid Him in the manger (Luke 2:1-7). From this, the tradition has come down to us that when Christ was born He lay between two animals, an ox and an ass, that the words of the Prophets might be fulfilled: "Between two living creatures shalt Thou be known" (Abbacum 3:2), and "The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib" (Esaias 1:3). But while the earth gave the new-born Saviour such a humble reception, Heaven on high celebrated majestically His world-saving coming. A wondrous star, shining with uncommon brightness and following a strange course, led Magi from the East to Bethlehem to worship the new-born King. Certain shepherds who were in the area of Bethlehem, who kept watch while tending their sheep, were suddenly surrounded by an extraordinary light, and they saw before them an Angel who proclaimed to them the good tidings of the Lord's joyous Nativity. And straightway, together with this Angel, they beheld and heard a whole host of the Heavenly Powers praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men" (Luke 2:8-14).

### **APOLYTIKION**

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, hath shined the light of knowledge upon the world; for thereby they that worshipped the stars were instructed by a star to worship Thee, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know Thee, the Dayspring from on high. O Lord, glory be to Thee.



### **KONTAKION**

Today, the Virgin bears Him who is transcendent, and the earth presents the cave to Him who is beyond reach. Angels, along with shepherds glorify Him. The Magi make their way to Him by a star. For a new child has been born for us, the God before all ages.

### **EPISTLE** **Galatians 4:4-7**

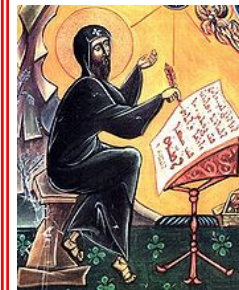
BRETHREN, when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son then also an heir of God through Christ.

### **GOSPEL** **Matthew 2:1-12**

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it is written by the prophet: 'And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will govern my people Israel.'" Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star appeared; and he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." When they had heard the king they went their way; and lo the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy; and going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.



### **FROM A CHRISTMAS HYMN BY** **ST. EPHRAIM THE SYRIAN**



Blessed be that child who gladdened Bethlehem today! Blessed be the Babe Who made manhood young again today! Blessed be the Fruit Who lowered Himself to our famished state! Blessed be the Good One Who suddenly enriched our necessities and supplied our needs! Blessed He Whose tender mercies made Him condescend to visit our infirmities!

Glory to Him, Who came to us by His First-Born! Glory to Silence that spoke His Voice. Glory to the One on high, Who was seen by His Day-spring! Glory to the Spiritual, Who was pleased to have a body, that in it His virtue might be felt, and He might by that Body show mercy on His household's bodies!

Blessed be the Physician Who came down and amputated without pain, and healed wounds with a medicine that was not harsh! His Son became a Medicine, that showed sinners mercy. Blessed be He Who dwelt in the womb, and wrought therein a perfect Temple, that He might dwell in it, a Throne that He might be in it, a Garment that He might be arrayed in it, and a Weapon that He might conquer in it.

Let us adore Him Who enlightened with His doctrine our mind and in our hearing sought a pathway for His words! Praise we Him! Thank we Him who sent His heir, that by Him He might draw us to Himself, yea and make us heirs with Him! To Him be glory unto ages of ages. Amen