

Vesperal Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom on **MARCH 25**
THE ANNUNCIATION TO THE MOST-HOLY THEOTOKOS
SYNAXIS OF THE HOLY ARCHANGEL GABRIEL

Priest: Blessed is the Kingdom: of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.
Come, let us worship and fall down before God our King.
Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, our King and our God.
Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and our God.

THE PSALM OF INTRODUCTION—PSALM 103

Reader: 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 forever 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. 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, wherein are things creeping innumerable, small living creatures with the great. There go the ships; there this leviathan, 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; 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 ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. (THRICE)
O our God and our Hope, glory to Thee!

THE GREAT LITANY

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

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

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

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the peace of the whole world, for the good estate of the Holy Churches of God, and for the union of all men, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For this Holy House, and for those who with faith, reverence, and fear of God, enter therein, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For our father and Metropolitan N., (for our Archbishop N. or Bishop N.), for the venerable Priesthood, the Diaconate in Christ, for all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For Metropolitan Paul and Archbishop John, and for their quick release from captivity and safe return, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: (In the United States) For the President of the United States, for all civil

authorities, and for our Armed Forces everywhere, let us pray to the Lord.

(In Canada) For Her Majesty, the Queen, for the Prime Minister of Canada, for all civil authorities, and for our Armed Forces everywhere, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For this city, and for every city and land, and for the faithful who dwell therein, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For healthful seasons, for abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For travelers by sea, by land, and by air; for the sick and the suffering; for captives and their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For our deliverance from all tribulation, wrath, danger, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us; save us; have mercy on us; and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Calling to remembrance our all-holy, immaculate, most blessed and glorious Lady Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the Saints: let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.

Choir: To Thee, O Lord.

Priest: For unto Thee are due all glory, honor, and worship: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

“O LORD, I HAVE CRIED” IN TONE SIX

Choir: O Lord, I have cried out unto Thee, hear Thou me; hear Thou me, O Lord. O Lord, I have cried out unto Thee, hear Thou me. Give ear to the voice of my supplication when I cry out unto Thee: hear Thou me, O Lord.

Choir: Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as the incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice; hear Thou me, O Lord.

- + Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and a protecting door round about my lips.
- + Incline not my heart to evil words, to make excuses in sins.
- + With men that work iniquity; and I will not communicate with the choicest of them.
- + The just man shall correct me in mercy and shall reprove me; but let not the oil of the sinner anoint my head.

- + For my prayer also shall still be against the things with which they are well pleased; their judges falling upon the rock have been swallowed up.
- + They shall hear my words, for they are sweet; as when the thickness of the earth is broken upon the ground, their bones are scattered by the side of hell.
- + But to Thee, O Lord, Lord, are mine eyes; in Thee have I put my trust, take not away my soul.
- + Keep me from the snare which they have laid for me, and the traps of the workers of iniquity.
- + Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst I alone escape.
- + I cried unto the Lord with my voice, with my voice unto the Lord, did I make my supplication.
- + I poured out my supplication before Him; I showed before Him my trouble.
- + When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then Thou knewest my path.
- + In the way wherein I walked have they secretly laid a snare for me.
- + I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me.
- + Refuge failed me; no one cared for my soul.
- + I cried unto Thee, O Lord; I said: Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.
- + Attend unto my cry, for I am brought very low.
- + Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are stronger than I.

Verse 10. Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise Thy Name.

Verse 9. The righteous shall wait for me until Thou recompense me.

Verse 8. Out of the depths have I cried to Thee, O Lord, Lord hear my voice.

Verse 7. Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

For the Annunciation in Tone Six (**Having laid up all their hope**)

Verse 6. If Thou, O Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? For with Thee there is forgiveness.

Coming to reveal to thee * that counsel which was determined * from before eternity, * Gabriel saluted thee, * crying out: Rejoice, * holy earth never sown; * bush unburnt, rejoice thou; * O rejoice, thou ladder raised on high, * which Jacob saw of old; * rejoice, thou depth unfathomed and unexplored; * rejoice, thou bridge which leadest up * to the highest Heaven; rejoice, divine * vessel of the Manna; *rejoice, complete destruction of the curse; * recall of Adam to God, rejoice: * With thee is the Lord Most High.

Verse 5. Because of Thy Name have I waited for Thee, O Lord; my soul hath waited upon Thy word, my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

To the Chief of Heaven's hosts, * the undefiled Maiden answered: * Thou dost seem to be a man; * how is it that thou dost speak * things beyond man's strength? * For thou hast said to me * that God shall be with me * and shall make His dwelling in my womb. * Tell me, I pray of thee, * how shall I become then the spacious land * and dwelling-place of holiness * for Him that doth ride on the Cherubim? * Do thou not beguile me * deceitfully; for pleasure I know not, * neither in wedlock have I been yoked. * How then shall I bear a child?

Verse 4. From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch let Israel trust in the Lord.

Wheresoever God doth will, * there nature's order is conquered, * spake he that is bodiless; * and that which exceedeth man * then is brought to pass. * O thou all-holy

Maid, * purer than all telling, * now believe these truthful words of mine. * She cried aloud to him: * Be it unto me now as thou hast said, * and I shall bear the Fleshless One, * Who shall borrow flesh from me, so that He, * Who alone is able, * might lead man back up to his first estate * and ancient dignity once again * by His union with our race.

For Archangel Gabriel in Tone One (***O all-lauded Martyrs***)

Verse 3. For with the Lord there is mercy and with Him is abundant redemption, and He will deliver Israel from all his iniquities.

That mind which is truly like to God, * the great Gabriel, the heavenly, who shineth with splendor, who doth look upon the light * of the Three-Sun Godhead * with the Angels' hosts on high, * came down unto the Virgin, announcing the good tidings unto her: * that divine and fearful mystery; * and he ever * prayeth in our souls' behalf.

Verse 2. Praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise Him, all ye people.

Behold, the great myst'ry that was hid * from eternity and unknown to the Angels, is now entrusted unto thee alone; * and as thou dost come down * to the town of Nazareth, * O Gabriel, thou tellest it unto the pure Maid and no one else. * Now with her, entreat the Lord of all * that He grant peace * and Great Mercy to our souls.

Verse 1. For His mercy is great toward us, and the truth of the Lord endureth forever.

O thou who art ever filled with light * and fulfillst the commands and holy will of the Sovereign and Almighty God of all, * leader of the Angels, * thou most excellent of all, * O Gabriel, preserve them that honor thee with faith and fervent love, * ever praying God in our behalf * that He grant peace * and Great Mercy to our souls.

DOXASTICON FOR THE ANNUNCIATION IN TONE SIX

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

From heaven the archangel Gabriel was sent to announce the Conception to the Virgin. He went to Nazareth thinking within himself and wondering greatly, how it is that He Who is in the highest and incomprehensible shall be born of a Virgin. He Whose throne is heaven, and earth His footstool, how shall He be contained in a woman's womb? How was He pleased to be incarnate of her by a word only, He Whom the six-winged ones and those of many eyes cannot gaze upon? Yea, He Who cometh is the Word of God. Why then do I hesitate, and not address the Maiden, saying, Rejoice, O full of grace, the grace of the Lord is with thee? Rejoice, O spotless Virgin! Rejoice, O groomless bride! Rejoice, O Mother of life; blessed is the fruit of thy womb!

THE LITTLE ENTRANCE

(While the Doxasticon is chanted, the following dialogue occurs QUIETLY as the clergy make the entrance with the GOSPEL BOOK, not the censor.)

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mercy.

Priest: O Master, Lord our God, Who hast appointed in Heaven orders and hosts of angels and archangels for the service of Thy glory: Cause that with our entrance there may be an entrance of holy angels serving with us and glorifying thy goodness. For unto Thee are due all glory, honor and worship: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Deacon: Amen.

(The clergy process to the center of the solea and recite this next dialogue QUIETLY.)

Deacon: Bless, father, the Holy Entrance.

Priest: Blessed is the entrance to Thy Holy Place, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.
(After the choir has finished, the following is said ALOUD.)

Deacon: Wisdom! Let us attend!

O GLADSOME LIGHT

Choir: O gladsome Light of the holy glory of the immortal, heavenly, holy and blessed Father: O Jesus Christ. Lo now that we have come to the setting of the sun, as we behold the evening light, we hymn Thee: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God. Meet it is for Thee at all times to be magnified by joyous voices, O Son of God and Giver of life. Wherefore the whole world doth glorify Thee.

- *No Daily Prokeimenon is sung, and the Readings are immediately begun.*

THE OLD TESTAMENT READINGS

The First Passage

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The Reading from the Book of Exodus. (3:1-8)

Deacon: Let us attend!

Reader: Moses came to the mountain of God, even Horeb. And the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said: I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, the Lord called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said: What is it, Lord? And He said: Draw not nigh hither; put off thy sandals from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover He said: I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses turned away his face; for he was afraid to look upon God. And the Lord said unto Moses: I have surely seen the affliction of My people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrow; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land and lead them into a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey.

The Second Passage

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The Reading from the Book of Proverbs. (8:22-30)

Deacon: Let us attend!

Reader: The Lord made me the beginning of His ways for His works. Before time was, He established me, in the beginning, before He made the earth, and before He made the depths, before the fountains of the waters came forth, before the mountains were made, and before all the hills, He begat me. The Lord made lands and uninhabited places, and the uttermost inhabited parts under heaven. When He prepared the heaven, I was present with Him; and when He

appointed His own throne upon the winds; when He strengthened the clouds above, and when He secured the fountains of the waters that are under heaven; when He gave the sea its bound that the waters should not go beyond His word, and He made strong the foundations of the earth, I was with Him, working in harmony with Him. I it was in whom He took delight, and daily I rejoiced in His presence continually.

THE PRAYER OF THE TRISAGION HYMN

Priest: (*QUIETLY*) O Holy God, Who restest in the Holy Place; Who art hymned by the Seraphim with thrice-Holy cry, and glorified by the Cherubim, and worshiped by every Heavenly Power; Who out of nothingness hast brought all things into being; Who hast created man according to Thine image and likeness and hast adorned him with Thine every gift; Who givest to him that askest wisdom and understanding; Who despisest not the sinner, but hast appointed repentance unto salvation; Who hast vouchsafed unto us, Thy humble and unworthy servants, even in this hour, to stand before the glory of Thy Holy Altar and to offer the worship and praise which are due unto Thee: Thyself, O Master, receive even from the mouth of us sinners the Thrice-Holy Hymn, and visit us in Thy goodness. Pardon us every transgression, both voluntary and involuntary; sanctify our souls and bodies; and grant us to serve Thee in holiness all the days of our life: through the intercessions of the Holy Theotokos and of all the Saints, who from the beginning of the world have been well-pleasing unto Thee.

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For holy art Thou, O our God, and unto Thee do we ascribe glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; now and ever...

Deacon: ...and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

THE TRISAGION HYMN

Choir: 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 ages of ages. Amen.

Holy Immortal: have mercy on us.

Deacon: With strength!

Choir: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us.

THE EPISTLE

Deacon: Let us attend!

Reader: Tell forth from day to day the glad tidings of the salvation of our God. Sing unto the Lord a new song; sing unto the Lord, all the earth.

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The reading from the Epistle of Saint Paul to the Hebrews. (2:11-18)

Deacon: Let us attend!

Reader: Brethren, 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.

Priest: Peace be to thee that readest!

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

THE GOSPEL

Deacon: Wisdom! Attend! Let us hear the Holy Gospel.

Priest: Peace be to all.

Choir: And to thy spirit.

Priest: The reading from the Holy Gospel according to Saint Luke. (1:24-38)

Choir: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

Deacon: Let us attend!

Priest: At that time, Elizabeth, the wife of Zachariah, conceived, and for five months she hid herself, saying, "Thus the Lord has done to me in the days when He looked on me, to take away my reproach among men." In the sixth month the archangel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the archangel came to her and said, "Rejoice, O favored one, the Lord is with thee! Blessed art thou among women!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be. And the archangel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for thou hast found favor with God. And behold, thou wilt conceive in thy womb and bear a son, and you shall call His Name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to Him the throne of His father David, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there will be no end." And Mary said to the archangel, "How shall this be, since I have known no man?" And the archangel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon thee, and the power of the Most High will overshadow thee; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, your kinswoman Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible." And Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And

the archangel departed from her.

Choir: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

- *The Vesperal Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom continues. The variables are listed below.*

MEGALYNARION OF THE FEAST IN TONE FOUR

Proclaim, O earth, the glad tidings of great joy, and ye heavens, praise the glory of God.

The Theotokos, being the living tabernacle of God, shall never be touched by an unclean hand. But the lips of believers shall sing unto her ceaselessly with the voice of angels, crying joyfully, Rejoice, O full of grace. The Lord is with thee.

KOINONIKON (COMMUNION HYMN) FOR THE ANNUNCIATION IN TONE EIGHT

The Lord hath chosen Zion; He hath chosen it for His dwelling. Alleluia.

- *Post-Communion Hymn: “We have seen the true light.”*

THE DISMISSAL

Priest: May He Who condescended to become incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary for us men and for our salvation, Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His all-immaculate and all-blameless holy Mother, whose Annunciation we now celebrate; by the might of the Precious and Life-giving Cross; by the protection of the honorable Bodiless Powers of Heaven—especially the archangel Gabriel, whose memory we now celebrate—at the supplication of the honorable, glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John; of the holy, glorious and all-laudable apostles; of our father among the saints, John Chrysostom, archbishop of Constantinople, whose Divine Liturgy we have now celebrated; of the holy, glorious and right-victorious Martyrs; of our venerable and God-bearing Fathers; *of Saint N., the patron and protector of this holy community*; of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; and of all the saints: have mercy on us and save us, forasmuch as He is good and loveth mankind.

Priest: Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us and save us.

Choir: Amen.

- *As the faithful come forward to receive antidoron (blessed bread) and a blessing from the priest, the choir may sing the apolytikion and kontakion of the feast, and the apolytikion of the Archangel Gabriel.*

APOLYTIKION OF THE ANNUNCIATION IN TONE FOUR

Today is the beginning of our salvation, and the manifestation of the mystery from the ages; for the Son of God becometh the Son of the Virgin, and Gabriel proclaimeth grace. Wherefore, do we shout with him to the Theotokos: Rejoice, O full of grace! The Lord is with thee.

APOLYTIKION OF THE ARCHANGELS IN TONE FOUR

*(**Thou Who wast raised up**)*

O ye foremost of the heavenly hosts, we who are unworthy, beseech you that by your petitions ye encompass us with the shadow of your immaterial glory, preserving us who kneel and cry ceaselessly: Deliver us from oppressions, since ye art the princes of the ranks of dominions on high.

KONTAKION OF THE ANNUNCIATION IN TONE EIGHT

*(**The original melody**)*

To thee, the Champion Leader, do I offer thanks of victory, O Theotokos, thou who hast delivered me from terror; but as thou that hast that power invincible, O Theotokos, thou alone can set me free: from all forms of danger free me and deliver me, that I may cry unto thee: “Hail, O Bride without Bridegroom.”

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