The Order of Great Vespers for Theophany; Blessing of Water

Stand

PR: Glory to the holy, consubstantial, life-creating and undivided Trinity, now and ever and forever.

R: Amen.

Come, let us adore the King, our God.
Come, let us adore Christ, the King and our God.
Come, let us adore and bow down to the only Lord Jesus Christ, the King and our God.

(Be Seated)

PSALM 103

Bless the Lord, O my soul!
You are very great, O Lord, my God.
Clothed in pomp and brilliance;
arrayed with light as with a cloak.
Stretching out the sky as a tent cloth,
covering Your lofty halls with water,
You make the clouds Your conveyance;
You surge on the wings of the wind.

You make spirits Your messengers, and flaming fires Your attendants. You settle the earth on its firm foundation; it shall stand unmoved from age to age.

The abyss covers it like a garment; waters stand over the mountains.

At Your rebuke they will take flight; at the peal of Your thunder they will fear.

They hurdle the hills and run down the dales, to the place You have chosen for them.

You have set up a boundary not to be passed; they shall never return to cover the earth.

Down in the gullies You make springs to rise; water shall go down between the mountains. wild asses will seek them to quench their thirst.

The birds of the sky will abide by them;

from among the rocks they will raise their song. From Your lofty halls You refresh the mountains; the earth shall be fed with the fruit of Your works.

You make green pastures for the cattle, and food plants for the service of man, So that bread may be brought forth from the earth, and wine that gladdens the heart of man.

So that oil may put a gleam upon his face; and that bread may strengthen the heart of man. The trees of the plain will be satisfied, the cedars of Lebanon that He planted.

The sparrows will build their nests in them; and the herons will call them their home. To the deer belong high mountains, to rodents, the shelter of the rocks.

You have made the moon to mark the seasons, the sun knows the time of its setting.
You establish darkness, and it is night, wherein the forest creatures prowl around.

Young lions roar for their prey, and call out to God for their meat. As the sun rises, they will come together, and lay themselves down in their dens.

Man will go out to his labor, and work until eventide. How great are your works, O Lord! In wisdom You have made them all. The earth is filled with Your creatures.

Even the wide and open sea itself,
within it there are countless creeping things,
living beings small and large.
Upon it there are ships a-sailing,
and that great beast You made to have fun.

All of them look up to You,
to give them their food in due time.
You provide and they gather up;
You open Your hand and they are full.

You hide Your face and they cringe;
You suspend their breath, and they die and return to their dust.
You send forth Your breath and they live;
You renew the face of the earth!

May the Lord's glory endure forever, may the Lord rejoice in His works; He looks upon the earth and makes it quake; He touches the mountains and they smoke.

I will sing to the Lord as long as I live'
I will praise my God as long as I last.
Would that my thoughts be pleasing to Him:
and I will rejoice in the Lord.

May sinners vanish from the earth, and may the wicked be no more. Bless the Lord,
O my soul!

The sun knows the time of its setting.
You establish darkness and it is night.
How great are Your works, O Lord!
In wisdom You have wrought them all. (Stand)

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

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Glory be to You, O God! (three times)

Sit

THE LITANY OF PEACE

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

R: Lord, have mercy. (after every petition of the priest)

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

Pr: For peace in the whole world, for the well-being of the holy Churches of God and for the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Pr: For this holy Church and for all who enter it with faith, reverence, and the fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.

Pr: For our holy ecumenical Pontiff (N.), the Pope of Rome, and for our Patriarch, His Beatitude, (N.), let us pray to the Lord.

Pr: For our most reverend Archbishop and Metropolitan (N.), for our God-loving Bishop (N.), for the venerable priesthood, the diaconate in Christ, and all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

Pr: For our civil authorities and all in the service of our country, let us pray to the Lord.

Pr: For this city, for every city and countryside, and for those living within them in faith, let us pray to the Lord.

Pr: For seasonable weather, for an abundance of the fruits of the earth and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

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

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

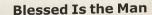
Pr: Protect us, save us, have mercy on us and preserve us O God by Your grace.

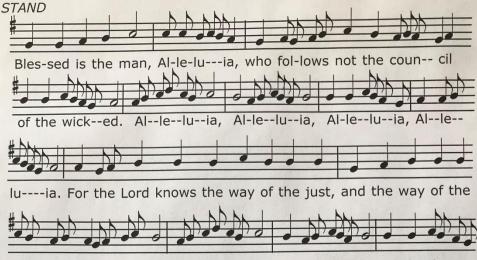
Pr: Remembering our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, the Mother of God and ever-Virgin Mary with all the Saints, let us commend ourselves and one another, and our whole life, to Christ our God.

R: To You, O Lord.

Pr: For to You is due all glory, honor, and worship, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever.

R: Amen.





wick--ed will per-ish. Al--le--lu--ia, Al--le--lu--ia,



Al--le--lu----ia.

THE LAMP-LIGHTING PSALMS

(You may be seated after the priest incenses you.)

O Lord, I have cried to You, hear me;

receive the voice of my prayer when I call upon you.

Let my prayer rise like incense before You,

the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice.

Set a guard, O Lord, before my mouth and a portal around my lips.

Incline my hear away from evil dealings,

from finding excuses for sinful deeds.

In company with those who work iniquity,

let me not partake of what they choose.

May the just man chasten me with justice and reprove me;

may the oil of the wicked never touch my head.

Yet even then shall I pray for their welfare.

Their rulers were swallowed near the rock.

My words will be heard for they were sweet.

As a lump of clay broken on the ground, so their bones were strewn near the grave.

To You, Lord, O Lord, my eyes are lifted up.

In You have I hoped; let not my soul be lost.

Keep me from the snare that was set up for me,

and from the stumbling blocks of the wicked.

The wicked will fall into their own nets,

while I remain alone until I can escape.

1. OUT OF THE DEPTHS I CRY TO YOU, O LORD; O LORD, HEAR MY VOICE.

When the Forerunner saw Him Who is our enlightenment, / Who
enlightens every man, / 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 God, O Sinless One, glory be to You!

2. FROM THE MORNING WATCH UNTIL NIGHT LET ISRAEL

TRUST IN THE LORD.

O, Our Savior, the armies of angels/

trembled when they saw You baptized by Your servant, and the Holy

Spirit bearing witness by coming down, and when they heard the

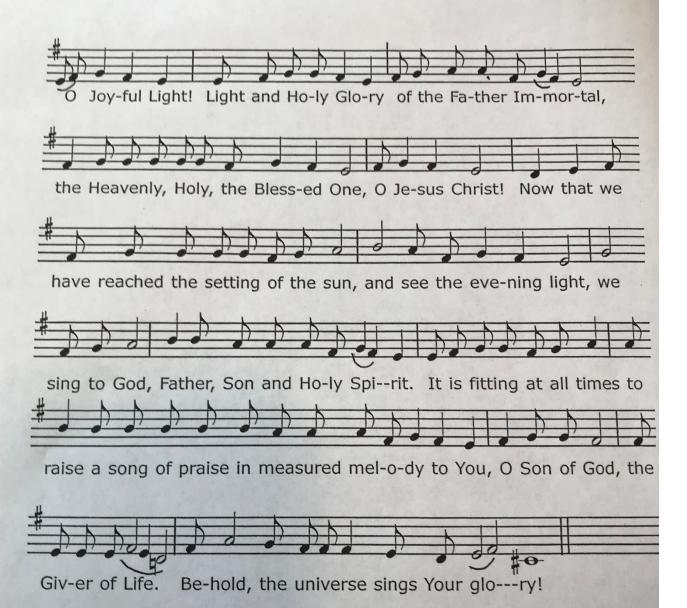
the Father's voice speaking from heaven: This one upon Whom the

Forerunner lays his hands / is my beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased. / O Christ God, glory be to You!

3. PRAISE THE LORD, ALL YOU NATIONS / PROCLAIM HIS
GLORY ALL YOU PEOPLE. / When the Jordan River received You,
O Fountainhead, / the Consoler came down in the form of a dove. /
Behold the marvel: / the One Who drew the curve of heaven bows His
head to the Forerunner, / to the one made of clay, who cries out to His

Maker: / "Why do You order me to do things beyond my worth? / It is I who need to be baptized by You!" O Christ God, O Sinless One, glory be to You! 4. STRONG IS THE LOVE OF THE LORD FOR US ETERNALLY WILL HIS TRUTH ENDURE. O, our God and Lord, when You resolved to save man who was lost, / You deigned to take the servant's form, / for it pleased You to assume for our sake, what was proper to us./ 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 be to You! (STAND) GLORY BE TO THE FATHER AND TO THE SON AND TO THE HOLY SPIRIT, NOW AND EVER AND FOREVER. AMEN. When You bowed Your head to the Forerunner / You crushed the heads of the dragons; and when You stood in the middle of the stream, You let Your light shine upon all creatures, / that they might glorify You,/ our Savior, Who enlightens our souls.

The Evening Hymn



Pr: Let us be attentive. Peace be with all. Wisdom! Be attentive!

The Lord reigns, He is clothed in majesty!

- v. Robed is the Lord and girt about with strength.
- v. For He has made the world firm, which shall not be moved.
- v. Holiness befits Your house, O Lord, for length of days.

(You may be seated during the Readings that follow.)

Theophany Old Testament Readings: VESPERS:

Pr: Wisdom!

READER: A Reading from the Book of Exodus

Pr: Let us be attentive!

READER: (Exodus 15: 22- 16:1)

At that time Moses led Israel forward from the Red Sea, and they marched out to the desert of Shur. After traveling for three days through the desert without finding water, they arrived at Marah, where they could not drink the water, because it was too bitter. Hence, this place was called Marah. As the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What are we to drink?" he appealed to the Lord, Who pointed out to him a certain piece of wood. When he threw this into the water, the water became fresh.

It was here that the Lord, in making rules and regulations for them, put them to the test. "If you really listen to the voice of the Lord, your God," he told them, "and do what is right in His eyes: if you heed His commandments and keep all his precepts, I will not afflict you with any of the diseases with which I afflicted the Egyptians; for I, the Lord, am your healer."

Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees, and they camped there near the water.

Having set out from Elim, the whole Israelite community came into the desert of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departure from the land of Egypt.

Pr: Wisdom!

READER: A reading from the Book of Kings.

Pr: Let us be attentive!

READER: (2Kings 5: 9-14)

Naaman came with his horses and chariots and stopped at the door of Elisha's house. The prophet sent him the message: "Go and wash seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will heal, and you will be clean." But Naaman went away angry, saying "I thought that he would surely come out and stand there to invoke the Lord his God, and would move his hand over the spot,

and thus cure the leprosy. Are there not the rivers of Damascus, the Abana and Pharpar, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be cleansed?" With this, he turned about in anger and left.

But his servants came up and reasoned with him. "My father," they said, "if the prophet had told you to do something extraordinary, would you not have done it? All the more now since he said to you 'Wash and be clean', should you do as he said." So Naaman went down and plunged into the Jordan seven times at the word of the man of God. His flesh again became like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

(ALL STAND FOR THE TROPAR)

Tropar Tone 6:

O our Savior through the greatness of Your mercy, * You cleansed sinners and the tax-collectors, * and now Your light shines upon those in darkness. * Glory be to you!

v. The Lord is King, He is robed in majesty; the Lord is robed, He is girded with strength.

And now Your light shines upon those in darkness. * Glory be to you!

v. Your throne is set up from of old, and You are from all eternity.

And now Your light shines upon those in darkness. * Glory be to you!

(You may be SEATED.)

Pr: Wisdom!

READER: A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

Pr: Let us be attentive!

READER: (Is. 49: 8-15)

Thus says the Lord: In a time of favor I answer you, on the day of salvation I help you, to restore the land and allot the desolate heritages,

Saying to the prisoners: Come out! To those in darkness: Show yourselves!

Along the ways they shall find pasture, on every bare height shall their pastures be.

They shall not hunger of thirst, nor shall the scorching wind or the sun strike them; For he who pities them leads them and guides them beside springs of water.

I will cut a road through all my mountains, and make my highways level.

See, some shall come from afar, others from the north and the west, and some from the land of Syrene.

Sing out, O heavens, and rejoice, O earth,

break forth into song, you mountains.

For the Lord comforts his people, and shows mercy to his afflicted.

But Zion said, "The Lord has forsaken me; my Lord has forgotten me."

Can a mother forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child of her womb? Even should she forget, I will never forget you.

Prokimenon Tone 3:

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

v. The Lord is the defender of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

EPISTLE READING:

Pr: Wisdom!

Reader: A reading from the first letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians

Pr: Let us be attentive!

Reader:

Brethren: * Although I am not bound to anyone, I have made myself the slave to all so as to win over as many as possible. I became like a Jew to the Jews in order to win the Jews. To those bound by the law I became like one who is bound— although in fact I am not bound by it—that I might win those bound by the law. To those not subject to the law I became like one not subject to it— not that I am free from the law of God, for I am subject to the law of Christ—that I might win those not subject to the law.

To the weak I became a weak person, with a view to winning the weak. I have made myself all things to all men, in order to save at least some of them. In fact, I do all that I do for the sake of the gospel, in the hope of having a share in its blessings.

You know that while all the runners in the stadium take part in the race, the award goes to one man. In that case run so as to win! Athletes deny themselves all sorts of things. They do this to win a crown of leaves that withers, but we a crown that is imperishable. I do not run like a man who loses sight of the finish line. I do not fight as if I were shadowboxing. What I do is discipline my own body and master it, for fear that after having preached to others I myself should be rejected.

STAND

Pr: Peace be with you, Reader! Wisdom! Be attentive!

Alleluia Tone 6:

- v. My heart overflows with a goodly theme, as I sing my song to the King.
- v. You are fairer in beauty than the sons of men.

(And then the Holy Gospel is read with the usual introduction and responses...Luke 3:1-18)

THE INSISTENT LITANY

Pr: Let us all say with our whole soul and with our whole mind, let us say:

R: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Pr: O Lord Almighty, God of our Fathers, we pray You, hear us and have mercy.

R: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Pr: Have mercy on us, O God, according to Your great mercy; we pray You, hear us and have mercy.

R: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Pr: We also pray for our holy ecumenical Pontiff (N.), the Pope of Rome, and for Patriarch, His Beatitude, (N.), for our most reverend Archbishop and Metropolitan (N.), and for our Godloving Bishop (N.), for those who serve and have served in this holy church, for our spiritual fathers, and for all our brethren in Christ.

R: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Pr: We also pray for our civil authorities and for all in the service of our country.

R: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Pr: We also pray for the people here present, who await Your great and abundant mercy, for those who have shown us mercy and for all Christians of the true faith.

R: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Pr: For You are a merciful and gracious God, and we render glory to You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and ever, and forever.

R: Amen.

(STAND)

O Lord, keep us this night / without sin.
Blessed are You, O Lord, God of our fathers, /
and praised and glorified is Your name forever.

Let Your mercy, O Lord, be upon us, / because we have set our hope in You.

Blessed are You, O Lord, / teach me Your commandments Blessed are You, O Master, / make me understand Your commandments. Blessed are You, O Holy One, / enlighten me with You laws.

O Lord, Your mercy endures forever; / do not despise the work of Your hands. It is proper to praise You, / and hymns belong to You. Glory belongs to You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, / now and ever, and forever. Amen.

The Service of the Great Blessing of Water

The priest goes to the place where the water is prepared and all STAND while singing:

Tone 8:

The voice of the Lord cries out over the water saying: / "Come and receive, all of you, the spirit of wisdom, / the spirit of understanding, the spirit of the fear of God, / from Christ Who is made manifest.

Today the nature of water is sanctified / and the Jordan is parted in two; / it holds back the stream of its own waters, / seeing the Master being baptized.

As a man You came unto that river, O Christ our King, / and in Your goodness You hasten to receive / the baptism of a servant at the hands of the Forerunner / because of our sins, O You Who love mankind!

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

At the voice of the one crying in the wilderness: / "Prepare you, the way of the Lord." / You have come O Lord, taking the form of a servant / and asking for baptism although you did not sin. / The waters say You and they were afraid; / the Baptist was seized with trembling and cried aloud saying: / "How shall the candle illuminate the Light? / How shall the servant set his hand upon the Master?" / O Savior, Who takes away the sins of the world, / sanctify both me and these waters!

The Litany

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

R: Lord, have mercy. (used for each petition)

- -- That these waters may be sanctified by the power, action and descent of the Holy Spirit.
- --For these waters that the cleansing action of the Trinity, Supreme in Being, may come down upon them.
- --For these waters, that they may be given the grace of redemption and the blessing of the Jordan, by the power, action and descent of the Holy Spirit.
- --That Satan may be quickly crushed under our feet, and that every evil counsel directed against us be brought to nothing.
- --That the Lord God will free us from every attack and temptation of the enemy and make worthy of the good things which He has promised.
- --That He will enlighten us with the light of understanding and piety, and with the descent of the Holy Spirit.
 - -- That the Lord God will send down the blessing of the Jordan and sanctify these waters.

- --That this water may bring sanctification for the remission of sins, for the healing of soul and body, and for every good work.
 - -- That this water may be a fountain springing up unto eternal life.
- --That this water may serve to turn aside every evil purpose of the enemy, visible and invisible.
- --That this water may bestow cleansing of soul and body to all who draw from it with faith and partake of it.
 - --For those who draw from it and take it for the sanctification of their homes.
- --That we may be made worthy to be filled with holiness by partaking of this water, through the invisible manifestation of the Holy Spirit.
 - -- That the Lord God will hear the petitions of us sinners and have mercy on us.
 - -- That we be delivered from all affliction, wrath and need.
 - -- Protect us, save us and have mercy on us, and preserve us O God, by Your grace.
- --Remembering our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, the Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves, and one another, and our whole life to Christ our God.

R: To You, O Lord.

The Prayer for the Great Blessing of Water

Pr: GREAT ARE YOU, O LORD, and marvelous are Your works, and no speech will suffice to sing the praises of Your wonders! (3)

For You, by Your own will have brought all things into being from nothingness; by Your majesty You uphold them, and by Your providence You direct the world. When You framed the universe out of the four elements You crowned the circle of the year with four seasons. All rational powers tremble before You.

The sun sings Your praises and the moon glorifies You. The stars also stand before Your presence. The light obeys You. The ocean depths shudder with awe before You; the water springs obey Your will. You have spread out the heavens like a curtain. You established the earth upon the waters. With sand You walled in the sea. You have given out air for breathing.

The Powers of Angels serve You. The Archangel hosts adore You. The many-eyed Cherubim and the six-winged Seraphim as they fly and stand about, cover their faces with awe before Your unapproachable glory. For You, O Lord cannot be contained; You are from eternity and beyond our speech; You have come upon earth, taking the form of a servant and being made in the likeness of man. For You, O Master, in Your tender compassion, could not bear to see mankind under the tyranny of the devil, but You have come and saved us.

We confess Your grace, we proclaim Your mercy, we do not hide Your goodness. You have made holy a virgin womb through Your birth. All creation sings praises to You, Who have revealed Yourself upon earth and lived among us. You also blessed the streams of Jordan, by sending down from heaven Your Holy Spirit, crushing the heads of serpents hidden within them.

THEREFORE, O KING WHO LOVES MANKIND, do also be present now, as then, through the descent of Your Holy Spirit, and sanctify this water. (3)

And confer upon it the grace of redemption, the blessing of the Jordan. Make it a source of incorruption, a gift of sanctification, a remission of sins, a protection against disease, a destruction of demons, inaccessible to the powers of the adversaries, and filled with angelic strength; that all who draw from it and partake of it may have it for the cleansing of their soul and body, for the healing of their passions, for the sanctification of their homes, and for very good purpose.

For You are our God, Who has renewed our nature grown old through sin, by water and the Spirit. You are our God Who drowned sin through water in the days of Noah. You are our God, Who through the waters of the sea, at Moses' hand, set free the Hebrew nation from the slavery of Pharoah. You are our God, Who split the rock in the wilderness; the waters gushed out, the streams overflowed, and You satisfied Your thirsty people. You are our God, Who by water and fire through Elijah, had brought back Israel from the error of Baal.

DO YOU, YOURSELF, O MASTER, now as then, sanctify this water by Your Holy Spirit. (3)

Grant that those who touch it, bless themselves with it or drink from it, sanctification, blessing, cleansing and health.

Remember, O Lord, our Patriarch (N.), our Metropolitan (N.), our Bishop (N.), all the priests, the deacons in Christ, the whole order of clergy, the people here present, and those who are absent for good reason. Have mercy on them and on us, according to Your great mercy. So may angels and people, and all things visible and invisible glorify You, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever.

R: Amen.

Pr: Peace, be with all!

R: And with your spirit.

Pr: Bow your heads to the Lord.

R: To You, O Lord.

Pr: Incline Your ear and listen to us, O Lord, Who accepted baptism in the Jordan and sanctified the waters. Bless us all who by the bowing of our heads outwardly show our humility. And count us worthy to be filled with Your sanctification through the partaking of this water, and being sprinkled by it, may it bring us, O Lord, health of soul and body. For You are the sanctification of our souls and bodies, and to You we render glory, thanksgiving and worship, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and ever, and forever.

R: Amen.

(And the Tropar of the Feast is sung three times.)

Tropar Tone 1:

At Your baptism in the Jordan O Lord * the 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, * Who appeared and enlightened the world, glory be to You!

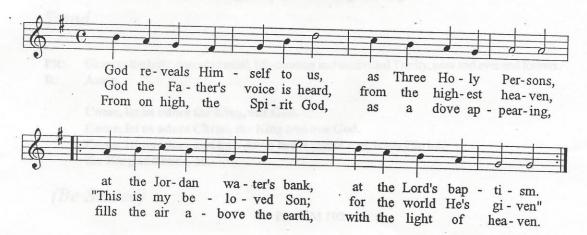
Vo Yordani kresh-chai-yu-sya Tebi Hospodi * troy-ches-koyeh yavi-sya poklonneniye; * roditelev bo hlas svid-tels-tvo-vashe Tebi, * voz-lyu-blen-naho tya Syna imen-uya, * i Dukh vo vidi holubini iz-vist-vo-vashe slovese ut-verzh-den-iye. * Yav-leiy-sya Khriste Bozhe, * I mir pro-svish-cheiy, slava Tebi.

Бо Йодані крещающуся Тебі Господи * тройческоє явися поклоненіє * родителев бо нлас свидітельствоваше Тебі * возлюбленнаго тя Сина іменуя * і Дух во виді голубині ізвіствоваше словесе утвержденіє - * яавлейся Христе Боже * і мір просвіщей слава Тебі.

Al bautizarte en el río Jordán, oh Señor, * se manifestó la adoración a la Trinidad: * porque la voz del Padre dio testamonio de Ti * llamando su Hijo muy amado, * y el Espíritu Santo, en forma de paloma, confirmo la verdad de estras palabras. * iOh, Cristo Dios! * Que Te manifestate e iluminaste al mundo, Gloria a ti Señor.

(Then the priest sprinkles the church and the people while all sing the tropar, or the hymn, "God Reveals Himself" on the next page).

God Reveals Himself to Us



Jordan River is amazed - this is such a wonder! God's own Son will be baptized, by John the Forerunner.

Waters of the seas pull back, splitting for the Savior, Not believing He is born, just of human nature.

Faithful people come with haste, to the springs and rivers; Life-filled water they will take, blessed by God the Spirit.

To the Jordan let us go, for the water blessed, Baptized once, we'll find again, our own spirits refreshed.

May the Jordan water bring, holy help from heaven, and may God be blessed and praised, today and forever.

Бог ся нам обявив, трех святих Особах, Як Христос ся хрестив, на Йорданськх водах.

Із небесних вижин, Бог Отець голосить То є мій милий Син, що нам мир приносить.

А горою Бог Дух, голубом злітає, І надземський воздух, світлом наповняє. Boh sja nam ob-ja-viw v trech svja-tych O-so-bach Jak Chris-tos sja chres-tiw Na Jor-dan-skich vo-dach

Iz ne-bes-nich vyž-in Boh O-tec ho-lo-sit To je mi my-ly Syn ščo nam myr pry-no-syt.

A ho-ro-ju Boh Duch ho-lu-bom zli-ta-jet I nad-zem-sky voz-duch svit-lom na-pov-nja-je.