

**Sunday before the Nativity of Christ: Sunday of the Holy Fathers;
Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ**

Troparion, Tone 3: (page 29)

Let the heavens be glad, let the earth rejoice,* for the Lord has done a mighty deed with His arm.* He trampled death by death.* He became the first-born of the dead;* He saved us from the abyss of Hades* and granted great mercy to the world.

Troparion, Tone 2:

Great are the achievements of faith!* In the fountain of flames, the three holy youths rejoiced as by the water of rest,* and the prophet Daniel was revealed shepherding lions like sheep.* Through their intercession, O Christ God,* save our souls.

Troparion, Tone 4:

Bethlehem, make ready, for Eden has been opened for all. * Ephrathah, be alert, for the Tree of Life has blossomed forth from the Virgin in the cave. * Her womb has become a spiritual paradise * wherein fruit was planted, * and if we eat of it we shall live and not die like Adam. * Christ is coming forth to bring back to life ** the likeness that had been lost in the beginning.

† Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Kontakion, Tone 6:

Armed by the Being that defies description* You defied the man-made idol, O thrice blessed youth.* In the midst of the unbearable flames you stood and cried out to God:* "In Your mercy, O gracious One, hasten and come to our aid,"* for You can do whatever You will.

Now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Kontakion, Tone 3:

Today the Virgin is on her way to the cave* where she will give birth in a manner beyond understanding* to the Word Who is in all eternity.* Rejoice, therefore, universe, when you hear it heralded.* With the angels and the shepherds, glorify Him* Who chose to be seen as a newborn Babe** while remaining God in all eternity.

Prokeimenon, Tone 4: (page 33)

Blessed are You, Lord God of our fathers,* and praised and glorified is Your Name forever.

verse: For You are righteous* in everything that You have done to us.

Alleluia, Tone 4: (page 33)

verse: O God, we have heard with our ears,* and our fathers have told us the work You did in their days.

verse: You saved us from our oppressors* and put to shame those who hate us.

Communion verse: (page 67)

Praise the Lord from the heavens;* praise Him in the highest.* Rejoice in the Lord, O you just;* praise befits the righteous.* Alleluia. **(3X)**