

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

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Circumcision of Our Lord

January 1

The reading from Genesis

(Composite #1 / Chps 17:1-2, 4, 5-7, 8, 9-10, 11-12, 14)

The Lord appeared to Abram and said to him: “I am your God. Be well pleasing before Me, and be blameless. And I will establish my covenant between Me and you, and I will multiply you exceedingly. And you shall be a father of many nations. And your name shall no more be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations. And I will increase you very exceedingly; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come out of you. And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your seed after you, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant; and I will be a God to them.” And Abraham fell down on his face, and worshipped the Lord.

And God said to Abraham: “As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your seed after you in their generations. And this is the covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your seed after you, in their generations: You shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you and your seed after you, in their generations. And the male *child*, who shall not be circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin on the eighth day, that soul shall be cut off from his family, for he has broken My covenant.”

The reading from Proverbs (8:22-30)

- ²² “The Lord possessed me at the beginning of His way, Before His works of old.
- ²³ I have been established from everlasting, From the beginning, before there was ever an earth.
- ²⁴ When there were no depths I was brought forth, When there were no fountains abounding with water.
- ²⁵ Before the mountains were settled, Before the hills, I was brought forth;
- ²⁶ While as yet He had not made the earth or the fields, Or the primal dust of the world.
- ²⁷ When He prepared the heavens, I was there, When He drew a circle on the face of the deep,
- ²⁸ When He established the clouds above, When He strengthened the fountains of the deep,

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- ²⁹ When He assigned to the sea its limit, So that the waters would not transgress His command, When He marked out the foundations of the earth,
³⁰ Then I was beside Him as a master craftsman; And I was daily His delight, Rejoicing always before Him,

The reading from Proverbs (10:31-11:12)

- ³¹ The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom, But the perverse tongue will be cut out.
³² The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable, But the mouth of the wicked what is perverse.
¹ Dishonest scales are an abomination to the Lord, But a just weight is His delight.
² When pride comes, then comes shame; But with the humble is wisdom.
³ The integrity of the upright will guide them, But the perversity of the unfaithful will destroy them.
⁴ Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, But righteousness delivers from death.
⁵ The righteousness of the blameless will direct his way aright, But the wicked will fall by his own wickedness.
⁶ The righteousness of the upright will deliver them, But the unfaithful will be caught by their lust.
⁷ When a wicked man dies, his expectation will perish, And the hope of the unjust perishes.
⁸ The righteous is delivered from trouble, And it comes to the wicked instead.
⁹ The hypocrite with his mouth destroys his neighbor, But through knowledge the righteous will be delivered.
¹⁰ When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices; And when the wicked perish, there is jubilation.
¹¹ By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted, But it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.
¹² He who is devoid of wisdom despises his neighbor, But a man of understanding holds his peace.

Theophany of Our Lord

January 6

The reading from Genesis (1:1-13)

(Vespers, 1st Reading)

- ¹ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
- ² The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.
- ³ Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.
- ⁴ And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness.
- ⁵ God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.
- ⁶ Then God said, “Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.”
- ⁷ Thus God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so.
- ⁸ And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.
- ⁹ Then God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear”; and it was so.
- ¹⁰ And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that it was good.
- ¹¹ Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth”; and it was so.
- ¹² And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.
- ¹³ So the evening and the morning were the third day.

The reading is from Exodus (14:15-18,21-23,27-29)

(Vespers, 2nd Reading)

- ¹⁵ And the Lord said to Moses, “Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward.
- ¹⁶ “But lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it. And the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea.

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- ¹⁷ “And I indeed will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them. So I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, his chariots, and his horsemen.
- ¹⁸ “Then the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I have gained honor for Myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen.”
- ²¹ Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided.
- ²² So the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry ground, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.
- ²³ And the Egyptians pursued and went after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.
- ²⁷ And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and when the morning appeared, the sea returned to its full depth, while the Egyptians were fleeing into it. So the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.
- ²⁸ Then the waters returned and covered the chariots, the horsemen, and all the army of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them. Not so much as one of them remained.
- ²⁹ But the children of Israel had walked on dry land in the midst of the sea, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

The reading is from Exodus (15:22-16:1)

(Vespers, 3rd Reading)

- ²² So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea; then they went out into the Wilderness of Shur. And they went three days in the wilderness and found no water.
- ²³ Now when they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. Therefore the name of it was called Marah.
- ²⁴ And the people complained against Moses, saying, “What shall we drink?”
- ²⁵ So he cried out to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a tree. When he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet. There He made a statute and an ordinance for them, and there He tested them,
- ²⁶ and said, “If you diligently heed the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the Lord who heals you.”
- ²⁷ Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees; so they camped there by the waters.

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- ¹ And they journeyed from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came to the Wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they departed from the land of Egypt.

(Then we stand and sing the following troparion. The reader reads the verses and the choir responds. Sometimes the reader also reads the first line of the choral response. The choir then sings the second line.)

Troparion: Tone 5

- People:* You, the creator of the world,
have shone forth in the world,
to give light to those who sit in darkness.
O loving God, glory to you.
- Verse:* O God, be gracious unto us and bless us; make your face to shine upon us and have mercy on us, that your way may be known upon the earth, your saving power among the nations. (*Ps.66:2-3/67:1-2*)
- Refrain:* To give light to those who sit in darkness.
- People:* O loving God, glory to you.
- Verse:* Let the peoples confess you, O God; let all the peoples confess you. Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon the earth. (*Ps. 66:4-5/67:3-4*)
- Refrain:* To give light to those who sit in darkness.
- People:* O loving God, glory to you.
- Verse:* Let the peoples confess you, O God; let all the peoples confess you: the earth has yielded its increase. May God, our God bless us. May God bless us. Let all the ends of the earth fear him. (*Ps. 66:6-8/67:5-7*)
- Refrain:* To give light to those who sit in darkness.
- People:* O loving God, glory to you.
- Verse:* Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

The Choir sings the entire Troparion once again.

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The reading from Joshua (3:7-8,15-17)

(Vespers, 4th Reading)

- ⁷ And the Lord said to Joshua, “This day I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with you.
- ⁸ You shall command the priests who bear the ark of the covenant, saying, ‘When you have come to the edge of the water of the Jordan, you shall stand in the Jordan.’ ”
- ¹⁵ and as those who bore the ark came to the Jordan, and the feet of the priests who bore the ark dipped in the edge of the water (for the Jordan overflows all its banks during the whole time of harvest),
- ¹⁶ that the waters which came down from upstream stood still, and rose in a heap very far away at Adam, the city that is beside Zaretan. So the waters that went down into the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, failed, and were cut off; and the people crossed over opposite Jericho.
- ¹⁷ Then the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan; and all Israel crossed over on dry ground, until all the people had crossed completely over the Jordan.

The reading is from 4th [2] Book of Kings (2:6-14)

(Vespers, 5th Reading)

- ⁶ Then Elijah said to him, “Stay here, please, for the Lord has sent me on to the Jordan.” But he said, “As the Lord lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you!” So the two of them went on.
- ⁷ And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went and stood facing them at a distance, while the two of them stood by the Jordan.
- ⁸ Now Elijah took his mantle, rolled it up, and struck the water; and it was divided this way and that, so that the two of them crossed over on dry ground.
- ⁹ And so it was, when they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, “Ask! What may I do for you, before I am taken away from you?” Elisha said, “Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me.”
- ¹⁰ So he said, You have asked a hard thing. Nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be so.”
- ¹¹ Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.
- ¹² And Elisha saw it, and he cried out, “My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen!” So he saw him no more. And he took hold of his own clothes and tore them into two pieces.

- ¹³ He also took up the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and went back and stood by the bank of the Jordan.
- ¹⁴ Then he took the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and struck the water, and said, “Where is the Lord God of Elijah?” And when he also had struck the water, it was divided this way and that; and Elisha crossed over.

The reading is from 4th [2] Book of Kings (5:9-14)
(Vespers, 6th Reading)

- ⁹ Then Naaman went with his horses and chariot, and he stood at the door of Elisha’s house.
- ¹⁰ And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, “Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored to you, and you shall be clean.”
- ¹¹ But Naaman became furious, and went away and said, “Indeed, I said to myself, ‘He will surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and wave his hand over the place, and heal the leprosy.’”
- ¹² Are not the Abanah and the Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?” So he turned and went away in a rage.
- ¹³ And his servants came near and spoke to him, and said, “My father, if the prophet had told you to do something great, would you not have done it? How much more then, when he says to you, ‘Wash, and be clean’?”
- ¹⁴ So he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

(Then we stand and sing the following troparion. The reader reads the verses and the choir responds. Sometimes the reader also reads the first line of the choral response. The choir then sings the second line.)

Troparion: Tone 6

- People:* You have shone forth to tax collectors and sinners
because of your abundant mercies.
Where should your light shine but on those who sit in darkness?
O our Savior, glory to you.
- Verse:* The Lord reigns, he is robed in majesty; the Lord is robed, he is girded with strength. Yea the world is established; it shall never be moved; your throne is established from of old; you are from everlasting. (Ps. 92/93:1-2)
- Refrain:* Where should your light shine but on those who sit in darkness?

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People: O our Savior, glory to you.

Verse: The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice,
the floods have lift up their roaring. (Ps 92/93:3)

Refrain: Where should your light shine but on those who sit in darkness?

People: O our Savior, glory to you.

Verse: Mightier than the thunders of many waters, mightier than the waves of
the sea, the Lord on high is mighty! Your decrees are very sure; holiness
befits your house, O Lord, for evermore. (Ps.92/93:4-5)

Refrain: Where should your light shine but on those who sit in darkness?

People: O our Savior, glory to you.

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

The Choir sings the entire Troparion once again.

The reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah (1:16-20)

(Vespers, 7th Reading)

“Thus says the Lord...”

¹⁶ “Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Put away the evil of your doings
from before My eyes. Cease to do evil,

¹⁷ Learn to do good; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless,
Plead for the widow.

¹⁸ “Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the Lord, “Though your sins are
like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson,
They shall be as wool.

¹⁹ If you are willing and obedient, You shall eat the good of the land;

²⁰ But if you refuse and rebel, You shall be devoured by the sword”; For the
mouth of the Lord has spoken.

The reading from Genesis (32:1-10)

(Vespers, 8th Reading)

¹ So Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him.

² When Jacob saw them, he said, “This is God’s camp.” And he called the name
of that place Mahanaim.

- ³ Then Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother in the land of Seir, the country of Edom.
- ⁴ And he commanded them, saying, “Speak thus to my Lord Esau, ‘Thus your servant Jacob says: ‘I have dwelt with Laban and stayed there until now.
- ⁵ ‘I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, and male and female servants; and I have sent to tell my Lord, that I may find favor in your sight.’ ’ ”
- ⁶ Then the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, “We came to your brother Esau, and he also is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him.”
- ⁷ So Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; and he divided the people that were with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two companies.
- ⁸ And he said, “If Esau comes to the one company and attacks it, then the other company which is left will escape.”
- ⁹ Then Jacob said, “O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, the Lord who said to me, ‘Return to your country and to your family, and I will deal well with you’:
- ¹⁰ “I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant; for I crossed over this Jordan with my staff, and now I have become two companies.

The reading is from Exodus (2:5-10)
(Vespers, 9th Reading)

- ⁵ Then the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river. And her maidens walked along the riverside; and when she saw the ark among the reeds, she sent her maid to get it.
- ⁶ And when she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby wept. So she had compassion on him, and said, “This is one of the Hebrews’ children.”
- ⁷ Then his sister said to Pharaoh’s daughter, “Shall I go and call a nurse for you from the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for you?”
- ⁸ And Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Go.” So the maiden went and called the child’s mother.
- ⁹ Then Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages.” So the woman took the child and nursed him.
- ¹⁰ And the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh’s daughter, and he became her son. So she called his name Moses, saying, “Because I drew him out of the water.”

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The reading from Judges (6:36-40)

(Vespers, 10th Reading)

- ³⁶ So Gideon said to God, “If You will save Israel by my hand as You have said –
³⁷ look, I shall put a fleece of wool on the threshing floor; if there is dew on the
fleece only, and it is dry on all the ground, then I shall know that You will save
Israel by my hand, as You have said.”
³⁸ And it was so. When he rose early the next morning and squeezed the fleece
together, he wrung the dew out of the fleece, a bowlful of water.
³⁹ Then Gideon said to God, “Do not be angry with me, but let me speak just once
more: Let me test, I pray, just once more with the fleece; let it now be dry only
on the fleece, but on all the ground let there be dew.”
⁴⁰ And God did so that night. It was dry on the fleece only, but there was dew on
all the ground.

The reading is from the 3rd [1] Book of Kings (18:30-39)

(Vespers, 11th Reading)

- ³⁰ Then Elijah said to all the people, “Come near to me.” So all the people came
near to him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down.
³¹ And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons
of Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord had come, saying, “Israel shall be your
name.”
³² Then with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord; and he made a
trench around the altar large enough to hold two seahs of seed.
³³ And he put the wood in order, cut the bull in pieces, and laid it on the wood,
and said, “Fill four water pots with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice and
on the wood.”
³⁴ Then he said, “Do it a second time,” and they did it a second time; and he said,
“Do it a third time,” and they did it a third time.
³⁵ So the water ran all around the altar; and he also filled the trench with water.
³⁶ And it came to pass, at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that
Elijah the prophet came near and said, “Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and
Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and I am Your
servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word.
³⁷ Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that You are the Lord
God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again.”
³⁸ Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood
and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that was in the trench.
³⁹ Now when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, “The
Lord, He is God! The Lord, He is God!”

The reading is from the 4th [2] Book of Kings (2:19-22)
(Vespers, 12th Reading)

- ¹⁹ Then the men of the city said to Elisha, “Please notice, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my Lord sees; but the water is bad, and the ground barren.”
- ²⁰ And he said, “Bring me a new bowl, and put salt in it.” So they brought it to him.
- ²¹ Then he went out to the source of the water, and cast in the salt there, and said, “Thus says the Lord: ‘I have healed this water; from it there shall be no more death or barrenness.’ ”
- ²² So the water remains healed to this day, according to the word of Elisha which he spoke.

The reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah (49:8-15)
(Vespers, 13th Reading)

- ⁸ Thus says the Lord: “In an acceptable time I have heard You, And in the day of salvation I have helped You; I will preserve You and give You As a covenant to the people, To restore the earth, To cause them to inherit the desolate heritages;
- ⁹ That You may say to the prisoners, ‘Go forth,’ To those who are in darkness, ‘Show yourselves.’ “They shall feed along the roads, And their pastures shall be on all desolate heights.
- ¹⁰ They shall neither hunger nor thirst, Neither heat nor sun shall strike them; For He who has mercy on them will lead them, Even by the springs of water He will guide them.
- ¹¹ I will make each of My mountains a road, And My highways shall be elevated.
- ¹² Surely these shall come from afar; Look! Those from the north and the west, And these from the land of Sinim.”
- ¹³ Sing, O heavens! Be joyful, O earth! And break out in singing, O mountains! For the Lord has comforted His people, And will have mercy on His afflicted. God Will Remember Zion
- ¹⁴ But Zion said, “The Lord has forsaken me, And my Lord has forgotten me.”
- ¹⁵ “Can a woman forget her nursing child, And not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, Yet I will not forget you.

Three Hierarchs

January 30

The reading from Deuteronomy (1:8-11, 15-17)

- ⁸ See, I have set the land before you; go in and possess the land which the Lord swore to your fathers--to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob--to give to them and their descendants after them.'
- ⁹ "And I spoke to you at that time, saying: 'I alone am not able to bear you.'
- ¹⁰ The Lord your God has multiplied you, and here you are today, as the stars of heaven in multitude.
- ¹¹ May the Lord God of your fathers make you a thousand times more numerous than you are, and bless you as He has promised you!
- ¹⁵ So I took the heads of your tribes, wise and knowledgeable men, and made them heads over you, leaders of thousands, leaders of hundreds, leaders of fifties, leaders of tens, and officers for your tribes.
- ¹⁶ Then I commanded your judges at that time, saying, 'Hear the cases between your brethren, and judge righteously between a man and his brother or the stranger who is with him.'
- ¹⁷ You shall not show partiality in judgment; you shall hear the small as well as the great; you shall not be afraid in any man's presence, for the judgment is God's. The case that is too hard for you, bring to me, and I will hear it.'

The reading from Deuteronomy (10:14-21)

- ¹⁴ Indeed heaven and the highest heavens belong to the Lord your God, also the earth with all that is in it.
- ¹⁵ The Lord delighted only in your fathers, to love them; and He chose their descendants after them, you above all peoples, as it is this day.
- ¹⁶ Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer.
- ¹⁷ For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of Lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality nor takes a bribe.
- ¹⁸ He administers justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing.
- ¹⁹ Therefore love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.
- ²⁰ You shall fear the Lord your God; you shall serve Him, and to Him you shall hold fast, and take oaths in His name.
- ²¹ He is your praise, and He is your God, who has done for you these great and awesome things which your eyes have seen.

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (3:1-9)

- ¹ But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them.
- ² In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be affliction,
- ³ and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace.
- ⁴ For though in the sight of men they were punished, their hope is full of immortality.
- ⁵ Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of himself;
- ⁶ like gold in the furnace he tried them, and like a sacrificial burnt offering he accepted them.
- ⁷ In the time of their visitation they will shine forth, and will run like sparks through the stubble.
- ⁸ They will govern nations and rule other peoples, and the Lord will reign over them for ever.
- ⁹ Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are upon his elect, and he watches over his holy ones.

Presentation in the Temple

February 2

The reading from Exodus

(Composite #6 / Exodus 12, 13; Numbers 8; Leviticus 12)

The Lord spoke to Moses in that very day on which He led the children of Israel out from the land of Egypt saying: “Sanctify to Me all the first-born, the first-produced opening the womb among the children of Israel.” And Moses went and gathered all the people and said: “Remember this day, in which you came out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, for with a strong hand the Lord led you out from thence; and you shall keep His law. And it shall come to pass when the Lord your God shall bring you into the land of the Canaanites, as He swore to your fathers: you shall set apart all the first-born, whatever opens the womb, the males for the Lord.

And it shall come to pass that if you son asks you, saying, “What is this?” you shall say to him: “By the strength of hand the Lord led you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. For when Pharoah hardened *his heart*, so as not to let us go, the Lord slew all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both the first-born of man and the first-born of cattle. Therefore, I bring a sacrifice to the Lord: every male that opens the womb; but all the first-born of my sons I will redeem.”

And it shall be a sign, set firmly before your eyes. For thus says the Lord God Almighty: “The first-born of your sons you shall give to Me. And it shall be that a woman who bears a male child, on the eighth day shall circumcise the flesh of his foreskin. Then for thirty-three days she shall not enter the sanctuary of God to the priest until the days of purification are fulfilled.

“And after this she shall bring to the Lord an unblemished lamb one year old, as a whole-burnt offering, and a young pigeon or a turtledove, to the doors of the tent of witness, to the priest. Or, instead of these she shall bring before the Lord two turtledoves or two young pigeons, and the priest shall from for her.

“For these are given to Me as a recompense from all the sons of Israel, and I have taken them and consecrated them for Myself, instead of the first-born of the Egyptians, in the day in which I slew all the first-born in the land of Egypt, of both man and cattle.” Thus says God Most High, the Holy One of Israel.

The reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah (6:1-12)

“Thus says the Lord...”

- ¹ In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple.
- ² Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.
- ³ And one cried to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!”
- ⁴ And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke.
- ⁵ So I said: “Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The Lord of hosts.”
- ⁶ Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal which he had taken with the tongs from the altar.
- ⁷ And he touched my mouth with it, and said: “Behold, this has touched your lips; Your iniquity is taken away, And your sin purged.”
- ⁸ Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: “Whom shall I send, And who will go for Us?” Then I said, “Here am I! Send me.”
- ⁹ And He said, “Go, and tell this people: ‘Keep on hearing, but do not understand; Keep on seeing, but do not perceive.’
- ¹⁰ “Make the heart of this people dull, And their ears heavy, And shut their eyes; Lest they see with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, And return and be healed.”
- ¹¹ Then I said, “Lord, how long?” And He answered: “Until the cities are laid waste and without inhabitant, The houses are without a man, The land is utterly desolate,
- ¹² The Lord has removed men far away, And the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land.

The reading from Exodus

(Composite #7 / Exodus 12, 13; Numbers 8; Leviticus 12)

Behold, the Lord sits on a light cloud, and shall come to Egypt; and the idols of Egypt will tremble at His presence, and their hearts shall faint within them. And their spirit shall be troubled within them, and He will frustrate their counsel. He will deliver Egypt into the hands of *cruel* Lords... Thus says the Lord, the holy Lord of Hosts! And the Egyptians shall drink the water that is by the sea, but will fail and be dried up.

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

Thus says the Lord: Where now are your wise men? Let them tell you and make known what the Lord of Hosts has purposed against Egypt. In that day the Egyptians will be in fear and trembling because of the hand of the Lord of Hosts which He shall lay upon them. And there shall be an altar to the Lord in the land of the Egyptians, and a pillar to the Lord at its border. And it shall be a sign to the Lord of Hosts forever in the land of the Egyptians; for they shall cry to the Lord and the Lord shall send to them a man who shall save them. And the Lord will make Himself known to the Egyptians, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and they shall offer sacrifices and gifts, and shall pray, and they shall pay their vows to the Lord.

St. Raphael of Brooklyn

February 27

The reading from Proverbs (Composite #2 / Chps 10, 3, 8)

The memory of the righteous is with praise and the blessing of the Lord is upon his head. Blessed is the man who has found wisdom and the mortal who has understanding. For it is better to purchase her than treasures of gold and silver. She is more precious than previous stones and all that is precious is unworthy of her. For length of days and years of life are in her right hand; and in her left hand are riches and glory. Out of her mouth proceeds righteousness and she bears law and mercy upon her tongue.

Hear me, O child, for I will speak noble things. Blessed is the man who keeps my ways, for my ways are the way of life, and in them is prepared favor from the Lord. Therefore, I pray you, and utter my voice to the sons of men: For I, wisdom, have dwelt with counsel and knowledge and I have called upon understanding. Counsel and safety are mine, understanding and strength are mine. I love those who love me and those seeking me shall find grace.

Understand craftiness, O you who are simple, and imbibe knowledge, you who are untaught. Hear me again, for I will speak noble things: I will open *my mouth* and from my lips *shall* come what is right. For my throat shall meditate truth; false lips are an abomination before me. All the words of my mouth are righteous; there is nothing in them that is twisted or perverse. They are all straight to him who understands and right to those who find knowledge.

I shall instruct you in truth, so that your hope will be in the Lord and you shall be filled with the Spirit.

The reading from Proverbs (10:31-11:12)

³¹ The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom, But the perverse tongue will be cut out.

³² The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable, But the mouth of the wicked what is perverse.

¹ Dishonest scales are an abomination to the Lord, But a just weight is His delight.

² When pride comes, then comes shame; But with the humble is wisdom.

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

- ³ The integrity of the upright will guide them, But the perversity of the unfaithful will destroy them.
- ⁴ Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, But righteousness delivers from death.
- ⁵ The righteousness of the blameless will direct his way aright, But the wicked will fall by his own wickedness.
- ⁶ The righteousness of the upright will deliver them, But the unfaithful will be caught by their lust.
- ⁷ When a wicked man dies, his expectation will perish, And the hope of the unjust perishes.
- ⁸ The righteous is delivered from trouble, And it comes to the wicked instead.
- ⁹ The hypocrite with his mouth destroys his neighbor, But through knowledge the righteous will be delivered.
- ¹⁰ When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices; And when the wicked perish, there is jubilation.
- ¹¹ By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted, But it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.
- ¹² He who is devoid of wisdom despises his neighbor, But a man of understanding holds his peace.

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (4:7-15)

- ⁷ But the righteous man, though he die early, will be at rest.
- ⁸ For old age is not honored for length of time, nor measured by number of years;
- ⁹ but understanding is gray hair for men, and a blameless life is ripe old age.
- ¹⁰ There was one who pleased God and was loved by him,
- ¹¹ He was caught up lest evil change his understanding or guile deceive his soul.
- ¹² For the fascination of wickedness obscures what is good, and roving desire perverts the innocent mind.
- ¹³ Being perfected in a short time, he fulfilled long years;
- ¹⁴ for his soul was pleasing to the Lord, therefore he took him quickly from the midst of wickedness.
- ¹⁵ Yet the peoples saw and did not understand, nor take such a thing to heart, that God's grace and mercy are his elect, and he watches over his holy ones.

Annunciation of the Most Holy Mother of God

March 25

The reading from Genesis (28:10-17)

- ¹⁰ Now Jacob went out from Beersheba and went toward Haran.
- ¹¹ So he came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of that place and put it at his head, and he lay down in that place to sleep.
- ¹² Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.
- ¹³ And behold, the Lord stood above it and said: “I am the Lord God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants.
- ¹⁴ “Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.
- ¹⁵ “Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you.”
- ¹⁶ Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, “Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it.”
- ¹⁷ And he was afraid and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!”

The Reading is from Prophecy of Ezekiel (43:27-44:4)

“Thus says the Lord...”

- ²⁷ ‘When these days are over it shall be, on the eighth day and thereafter, that the priests shall offer your burnt offerings and your peace offerings on the altar; and I will accept you,’ says the Lord God.”
- ¹ Then He brought me back to the outer gate of the sanctuary which faces toward the east, but it was shut.
- ² And the Lord said to me, “This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter by it, because the Lord God of Israel has entered by it; therefore it shall be shut.

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

- ³ “As for the prince, because he is the prince, he may sit in it to eat bread before the Lord; he shall enter by way of the vestibule of the gateway, and go out the same way.”
- ⁴ Also He brought me by way of the north gate to the front of the temple; so I looked, and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord; and I fell on my face.

The reading from Proverbs (9:1-11)

- ¹ Wisdom has built her house, She has hewn out her seven pillars;
- ² She has slaughtered her meat, She has mixed her wine, She has also furnished her table.
- ³ She has sent out her maidens, She cries out from the highest places of the city,
- ⁴ “Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!” As for him who lacks understanding, she says to him,
- ⁵ “Come, eat of my bread And drink of the wine I have mixed.
- ⁶ Forsake foolishness and live, And go in the way of understanding.
- ⁷ “He who corrects a scoffer gets shame for himself, And he who rebukes a wicked man only harms himself.
- ⁸ Do not correct a scoffer, lest he hate you;
- ⁹ Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; Teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.
- ¹⁰ “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.
- ¹¹ For by me your days will be multiplied, And years of life will be added to you.

The reading is from Exodus (3:1-8)

- ¹ Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the back of the desert, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.
- ² And the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed.
- ³ Then Moses said, “I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn.”
- ⁴ So when the Lord saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.”

- 5 Then He said, “Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground.”
- 6 Moreover He said, “I am the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God.
- 7 And the Lord said: “I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows.
- 8 “So I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and large land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

The reading from Proverbs (8:22-30)

- 22 “The Lord possessed me at the beginning of His way, Before His works of old.
- 23 I have been established from everlasting, From the beginning, before there was ever an earth.
- 24 When there were no depths I was brought forth, When there were no fountains abounding with water.
- 25 Before the mountains were settled, Before the hills, I was brought forth;
- 26 While as yet He had not made the earth or the fields, Or the primal dust of the world.
- 27 When He prepared the heavens, I was there, When He drew a circle on the face of the deep,
- 28 When He established the clouds above, When He strengthened the fountains of the deep,
- 29 When He assigned to the sea its limit, So that the waters would not transgress His command, When He marked out the foundations of the earth,
- 30 Then I was beside Him as a master craftsman; And I was daily His delight, Rejoicing always before Him.

Repose of St. Innocent, Metropolitan of Moscow, Enlightener of the Aleuts

March 31

The reading from Proverbs (*Composite #2 / Chps 10, 3, 8*)

The memory of the righteous is with praise and the blessing of the Lord is upon his head. Blessed is the man who has found wisdom and the mortal who has understanding. For it is better to purchase her than treasures of gold and silver. She is more precious than previous stones and all that is precious is unworthy of her. For length of days and years of life are in her right hand; and in her left hand are riches and glory. Out of her mouth proceeds righteousness and she bears law and mercy upon her tongue.

Hear me, O child, for I will speak noble things. Blessed is the man who keeps my ways, for my ways are the way of life, and in them is prepared favor from the Lord. Therefore, I pray you, and utter my voice to the sons of men: For I, wisdom, have dwelt with counsel and knowledge and I have called upon understanding. Counsel and safety are mine, understanding and strength are mine. I love those who love me and those seeking me shall find grace.

Understand craftiness, O you who are simple, and imbibe knowledge, you who are untaught. Hear me again, for I will speak noble things: I will open *my mouth* and from my lips *shall* come what is right. For my throat shall meditate truth; false lips are an abomination before me. All the words of my mouth are righteous; there is nothing in them that is twisted or perverse. They are all straight to him who understands and right to those who find knowledge.

I shall instruct you in truth, so that your hope will be in the Lord and you shall be filled with the Spirit.

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (*Composite #3 / Chps 4, 5*)

The righteous man, though he die early, will be at rest. The righteous man who has died will judge the ungodly who are living. For they will see the end of the righteous, and will not understand what was said about him; for the Lord will cast down the ungodly speechless to the ground and shake them from the foundations; they shall become desolate to the end; they will be in sorrows, and

their memory will perish. For they will come with fear at the thought of their sins, and their iniquities shall stand against them to convict them.

Then the righteous man will stand with great boldness before those who have afflicted him, and those who have made of no account his labors. Having seen it, they shall be troubled with much fear and they will be amazed at his most-glorious salvation. They will say within themselves in repentance, in anguish of spirit they will groan and say: "This was he whom we had sometimes in derision and a proverb of reproach - we fools! We accounted his life as madness, and his end to be without honor. How is he numbered among the sons of God? And why is his lot among the Saints?"

"Therefore, we have erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness did not illumine us, nor did the sun shine on us. We took our fill of the paths of lawlessness and destruction, and we walked impassible pathways, but the way of the Lord we have not known."

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon

(Composite #4 / *Prov. Chp 10; Wis. Chps 6,7,8,9*)

The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom; the lips of the wise man know grace. The mouth of the wise speaks wisdom, and the truth delivers them from death. If a righteous man dies, hope is not, for the son of the righteous is born to life, and in his own good things he acquires the fruit of righteousness. There is always light for the righteous and they obtain grace and glory from the Lord. The tongue of the wise is a good sister-in-law, and in their hearts rests wisdom. The Lord loves the hearts of the holy, and acceptable to Him are all the undefiled in the way.

The wisdom of the Lord illuminates the faces of the wise. For she takes hold of those desiring her by making herself first known to them. She is easily seen by those who love her. He who rises early to seek her shall have no difficulty, and those keeping vigil for the sake of her shall quickly be without sorrows. For she goes about seeking those worthy of her, and graciously reveals herself in the pathways. Against wisdom evil does not prevail.

Therefore I was a lover of her beauty; I loved her and sought her out from my youth. I desired to make her my bride, and even the Master of All loved her. For she is an initiate in the knowledge of God, and a discoverer of His works. Her labors are virtues, for she teaches temperance and prudence, justice and

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

courage; nothing in life is more necessary for men than these. And if anyone desires much knowledge, she knows the things of old, and beholds things to come; she understands turns of speech and the solution of riddles; she has foreknowledge of signs and wonders and the outcome of times and seasons. She is a mediator of good things for all, for immortality is in her, and glory in the company of her words.

Therefore I appealed to the Lord and prayed to Him, and said to Him with all my heart: “O God of *my* fathers and Lord of mercy, Who hast made all things by Thy word, and by Thy wisdom hast fashioned man that he should have dominion over the creatures made by Thee, that he should rule the world in holiness and righteousness: Give me wisdom that sits by Thy throne, and cast me not away from among Thy children, for I am Thy servant and the son of Thy handmaid. Send her forth from the heavens, from Thy holy abode, and from the throne of Thy glory, that she may be with me, in understanding, and preserve me in her glory. For the thoughts of mortals are miserable, and their intentions likely to fail.”

Repose of St. Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow, Apostle to America

April 7

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (3:1-9)

- ¹ But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them.
- ² In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be affliction,
- ³ and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace.
- ⁴ For though in the sight of men they were punished, their hope is full of immortality.
- ⁵ Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of himself;
- ⁶ like gold in the furnace he tried them, and like a sacrificial burnt offering he accepted them.
- ⁷ In the time of their visitation they will shine forth, and will run like sparks through the stubble.
- ⁸ They will govern nations and rule other peoples, and the Lord will reign over them for ever.
- ⁹ Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are upon his elect, and he watches over his holy ones.

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (5:15-6:3)

- ¹⁵ But the righteous live for ever, and their reward is with the Lord; the Most High takes care of them.
- ¹⁶ Therefore they will receive a glorious crown and a beautiful diadem from the hand of the Lord, because with his right hand he will cover them, and with his arm he will shield them.
- ¹⁷ The Lord will take his zeal as his whole armor, and will arm all creation to repel his enemies;
- ¹⁸ he will put on righteousness as a breastplate, and wear impartial justice as a helmet;
- ¹⁹ he will take holiness as an invincible shield,

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

- ²⁰ and sharpen stern wrath for a sword, and creation will join with him to fight against the madmen.
- ²¹ Shafts of lightening will fly with true aim, and will leap to the target as from a well-drawn bow of clouds,
- ²² and hailstones full of wrath will be hurled as from a catapult; the water of the sea will rage against them, and rivers will relentlessly overwhelm them;
- ²³ a mighty wind will rise against them, and like a tempest it will winnow them away. Lawlessness will lay waste the whole earth, and evil-doing will overturn the thrones of rulers.
- ¹ Listen therefore, O kings, and understand; learn, O judges of the ends of the earth.
- ² Give ear, you that rule over multitudes, and boast of many nations.
- ³ For your dominion was given you from the Lord, and your sovereignty from the Most High, who will search out your works and inquire into your plans.

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (4:7-15)

- ⁷ But the righteous man, though he die early, will be at rest.
- ⁸ For old age is not honored for length of time, nor measured by number of years;
- ⁹ but understanding is gray hair for men, and a blameless life is ripe old age.
- ¹⁰ There was one who pleased God and was loved by him,
- ¹¹ He was caught up lest evil change his understanding or guile deceive his soul.
- ¹² For the fascination of wickedness obscures what is good, and roving desire perverts the innocent mind.
- ¹³ Being perfected in a short time, he fulfilled long years;
- ¹⁴ for his soul was pleasing to the Lord, therefore he took him quickly from the midst of wickedness.
- ¹⁵ Yet the peoples saw and did not understand, nor take such a thing to heart, that God's grace and mercy are his elect, and he watches over his holy ones.

Great martyr George

April 23

The reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah (43:9-14)

“Thus says the Lord...”

- ⁹ Let all the nations be gathered together, And let the people be assembled. Who among them can declare this, And show us former things? Let them bring out their witnesses, that they may be justified; Or let them hear and say, “It is truth.”
- ¹⁰ “You are My witnesses,” says the Lord, “And My servant whom I have chosen, That you may know and believe Me, And understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, Nor shall there be after Me.
- ¹¹ I, even I, am the Lord, And besides Me there is no savior.
- ¹² I have declared and saved, I have proclaimed, And there was no foreign god among you; Therefore you are My witnesses,” Says the Lord, “that I am God.
- ¹³ Indeed before the day was, I am He; And there is no one who can deliver out of My hand; I work, and who will reverse it?”
- ¹⁴ Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, The Holy One of Israel: “For your sake I will send to Babylon, And bring them all down as fugitives— The Chaldeans, who rejoice in their ships.

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (3:1-9)

- ¹ But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them.
- ² In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be affliction,
- ³ and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace.
- ⁴ For though in the sight of men they were punished, their hope is full of immortality.
- ⁵ Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of himself;
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- ⁷ In the time of their visitation they will shine forth, and will run like sparks through the stubble.
- ⁸ They will govern nations and rule other peoples, and the Lord will reign over them for ever.

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

⁹ Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are upon his elect, and he watches over his holy ones.

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (4:7-15)

⁷ But the righteous man, though he die early, will be at rest.

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¹³ Being perfected in a short time, he fulfilled long years;

¹⁴ for his soul was pleasing to the Lord, therefore he took him quickly from the midst of wickedness.

¹⁵ Yet the peoples saw and did not understand, nor take such a thing to heart, that God's grace and mercy are his elect, and he watches over his holy ones.

St. Alexis (Toth)

May 7

The reading is from Proverbs (Composite #2 / Chps 10, 3, 8)

The memory of the righteous is with praise and the blessing of the Lord is upon his head. Blessed is the man who has found wisdom and the mortal who has understanding. For it is better to purchase her than treasures of gold and silver. She is more precious than previous stones and all that is precious is unworthy of her. For length of days and years of life are in her right hand; and in her left hand are riches and glory. Out of her mouth proceeds righteousness and she bears law and mercy upon her tongue.

Hear me, O child, for I will speak noble things. Blessed is the man who keeps my ways, for my ways are the way of life, and in them is prepared favor from the Lord. Therefore, I pray you, and utter my voice to the sons of men: For I, wisdom, have dwelt with counsel and knowledge and I have called upon understanding. Counsel and safety are mine, understanding and strength are mine. I love those who love me and those seeking me shall find grace.

Understand craftiness, O you who are simple, and imbibe knowledge, you who are untaught. Hear me again, for I will speak noble things: I will open *my mouth* and from my lips *shall* come what is right. For my throat shall meditate truth; false lips are an abomination before me. All the words of my mouth are righteous; there is nothing in them that is twisted or perverse. They are all straight to him who understands and right to those who find knowledge.

I shall instruct you in truth, so that your hope will be in the Lord and you shall be filled with the Spirit.

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon
(Composite #4 / Prov. Chp 10; Wis. Chps 6,7,8,9)

The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom; the lips of the wise man know grace. The mouth of the wise speaks wisdom, and the truth delivers them from death. If a righteous man dies, hope is not, for the son of the righteous is born to life, and in his own good things he acquires the fruit of righteousness. There is always light for the righteous and they obtain grace and glory from the Lord. The tongue of the wise is a good sister-in-law, and in their hearts rests wisdom.

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

The Lord loves the hearts of the holy, and acceptable to Him are all the undefiled in the way.

The wisdom of the Lord illuminates the faces of the wise. For she takes hold of those desiring her by making herself first known to them. She is easily seen by those who love her. He who rises early to seek her shall have no difficulty, and those keeping vigil for the sake of her shall quickly be without sorrows. For she goes about seeking those worthy of her, and graciously reveals herself in the pathways. Against wisdom evil does not prevail.

Therefore I was a lover of her beauty; I loved her and sought her out from my youth. I desired to make her my bride, and even the Master of All loved her. For she is an initiate in the knowledge of God, and a discoverer of His works. Her labors are virtues, for she teaches temperance and prudence, justice and courage; nothing in life is more necessary for men than these. And if anyone desires much knowledge, she knows the things of old, and beholds things to come; she understands turns of speech and the solution of riddles; she has foreknowledge of signs and wonders and the outcome of times and seasons. She is a mediator of good things for all, for immortality is in her, and glory in the company of her words.

Therefore I appealed to the Lord and prayed to Him, and said to Him with all my heart: “O God of *my* fathers and Lord of mercy, Who hast made all things by Thy word, and by Thy wisdom hast fashioned man that he should have dominion over the creatures made by Thee, that he should rule the world in holiness and righteousness: Give me wisdom that sits by Thy throne, and cast me not away from among Thy children, for I am Thy servant and the son of Thy handmaid. Send her forth from the heavens, from Thy holy abode, and from the throne of Thy glory, that she may be with me, in understanding, and preserve me in her glory. For the thoughts of mortals are miserable, and their intentions likely to fail.”

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon

(Composite #5 / Chps 4,6,7,2)

When the righteous is praised, the people rejoice: For his memory is immortality, since it is known both by the Lord and by men, for his soul was pleasing to the Lord. Therefore love wisdom, O men, and live. Desire her and be instructed: For her beginning is love and the keeping of her laws. Honor wisdom that you may reign forever.

I will tell you and not hide the mysteries of God from you. For He is the Guide of wisdom, the Corrector of the wise and the Artisan of all thoughts and deeds. Wisdom will teach with all understanding: For in her is a Spirit, intelligent and holy, the Radiance of the Everlasting Light and the Image of the Grace of God.

She fashions friends of God and prophets. For she is more beautiful than the sun and above all the order of the stars. Compared with the light she is found to be first. She delivered from infirmities those pleasing her and guided them on the paths of righteousness. She gave to them understanding to be holy and to preserve them from those who would ensnare them, and she granted them strength in struggles, so that all might understand that the most powerful of all is piety, and that evil might not prevail against wisdom, nor judgment pass away without convicting the wicked.

Having reasoned unrighteously, they said to themselves, “Let us oppress the righteous man and not spare his venerableness, nor let us be ashamed of the gray hairs of the old man of many years. But let our might be our law and let us seize the righteous, because he is inconvenient to us and is opposed to our deeds; he reproaches us for apostasy against the law and divulges the sins of our training.

“He declares to us to have knowledge of God and calls himself a child of the Lord. He became to us a reproof of our thoughts; the very sight of him is a burden to us, because his life is unlike that of others, and his ways are very different. We are considered by him to be an insult, and he avoids our ways as unclean; he calls the end of the righteous blessed.

“Let us see if his words are true; let us test him to see what will happen to him. Let us torment him with revilement and tortures, that we may understand his meekness and test his guilelessness. Let us condemn him to a shameful death, for, according to his own words, he shall be respected.”

Thus they reasoned, but were deceived, for their wickedness blinded them. They did not know the mysteries of God, nor did they discern that Thou alone art God, having the power of life and death: Who saves in times of affliction and delivers from every evil; Who art compassionate and merciful, granting Grace to His venerable ones, and opposing the proud with His arm.

SS. Constantine and Helen

May 21

The reading is from the 3rd Book of Kings (8:22-23, 27-30)

- ²² Then Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands toward heaven;
- ²³ and he said: "Lord God of Israel, there is no God in heaven above or on earth below like You, who keep Your covenant and mercy with Your servants who walk before You with all their hearts.
- ²⁷ But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built!
- ²⁸ Yet regard the prayer of Your servant and his supplication, O Lord my God, and listen to the cry and the prayer which Your servant is praying before You today:
- ²⁹ that Your eyes may be open toward this temple night and day, toward the place of which You said, 'My name shall be there,' that You may hear the prayer which Your servant makes toward this place.
- ³⁰ And may You hear the supplication of Your servant and of Your people Israel, when they pray toward this place. Hear in heaven Your dwelling place; and when You hear, forgive.

The reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah (61:10-62:5)

"Thus says the Lord..."

- ¹⁰ I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, My soul shall be joyful in my God; For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, And as a bride adorns herself with
- ¹¹ For as the earth brings forth its bud, As the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth, So the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.
- ¹ For Zion's sake I will not hold My peace, And for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, Until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, And her salvation as a lamp that burns.
- ² The Gentiles shall see your righteousness, And all kings your glory. You shall be called by a new name, Which the mouth of the Lord will name.
- ³ You shall also be a crown of glory In the hand of the Lord, And a royal diadem In the hand of your God.

- 4 You shall no longer be termed Forsaken, Nor shall your land any more be termed Desolate; But you shall be called Hephzibah, and your land Beulah; For the Lord delights in you, And your land shall be married.
- 5 For as a young man marries a virgin, So shall your sons marry you; And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, So shall your God rejoice over you.

The reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah (60:1-16)

“Thus says the Lord...”

- 1 Arise, shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.
- 2 For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, And deep darkness the people; But the Lord will arise over you, And His glory will be seen upon you.
- 3 The Gentiles shall come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising.
- 4 “Lift up your eyes all around, and see: They all gather together, they come to you; Your sons shall come from afar, And your daughters shall be nursed at your side.
- 5 Then you shall see and become radiant, And your heart shall swell with joy; Because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, The wealth of the Gentiles shall come to you.
- 6 The multitude of camels shall cover your land, The dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; All those from Sheba shall come; They shall bring gold and incense, And they shall proclaim the praises of the Lord.
- 7 All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together to you, The rams of Nebaioth shall minister to you; They shall ascend with acceptance on My altar, And I will glorify the house of My glory.
- 8 “Who are these who fly like a cloud, And like doves to their roosts?
- 9 Surely the coastlands shall wait for Me; And the ships of Tarshish will come first, To bring your sons from afar, Their silver and their gold with them, To the name of the Lord your God, And to the Holy One of Israel, Because He has glorified you.
- 10 “The sons of foreigners shall build up your walls, And their kings shall minister to you; For in My wrath I struck you, But in My favor I have had mercy on you.
- 11 Therefore your gates shall be open continually; They shall not be shut day or night, That men may bring to you the wealth of the Gentiles, And their kings in procession.
- 12 For the nation and kingdom which will not serve you shall perish, And those nations shall be utterly ruined.

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

- ¹³ “The glory of Lebanon shall come to you, The cypress, the pine, and the box tree together, To beautify the place of My sanctuary; And I will make the place of My feet glorious.
- ¹⁴ Also the sons of those who afflicted you Shall come bowing to you, And all those who despised you shall fall prostrate at the soles of your feet; And they shall call you The City of the Lord, Zion of the Holy One of Israel.
- ¹⁵ “Whereas you have been forsaken and hated, So that no one went through you, I will make you an eternal excellence, A joy of many generations.
- ¹⁶ You shall drink the milk of the Gentiles, And milk the breast of kings; You shall know that I, the Lord, am your Savior And your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

Entry into Jerusalem

Palm Sunday

The reading from Genesis (49:1-2, 8-12)

- ¹ And Jacob called his sons and said, “Gather together, that I may tell you what shall befall you in the last days:
- ² “Gather together and hear, you sons of Jacob, And listen to Israel your father.
- ⁸ “Judah, you are he whom your brothers shall praise; Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; Your father’s children shall bow down before you.
- ⁹ Judah is a lion’s whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He bows down, he lies down as a lion; And as a lion, who shall rouse him?
- ¹⁰ The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people.
- ¹¹ Binding his donkey to the vine, And his donkey’s colt to the choice vine, He washed his garments in wine, And his clothes in the blood of grapes.
- ¹² His eyes are darker than wine, And his teeth whiter than milk.

The reading is from Prophecy of Zephaniah (3:14-19)

“Thus says the Lord...”

- ¹⁴ Rejoice exceedingly, O daughter of Zion! Proclaim aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Rejoice and delight yourself with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem!
- ¹⁵ The Lord has taken away your unrighteousness and delivered you from the hand of your enemies. The Lord reigns in your midst, and you shall not see evil any more.
- ¹⁶ At that time the Lord shall say to Jerusalem, Take courage, O Zion; let not your hands grow weak.
- ¹⁷ The Lord your God is in you; the Mighty One shall save you. He shall bring joy upon you and shall renew you with His love; and He shall rejoice over you with delight,
- ¹⁸ as in a day of festival. And I will gather your afflicted. Alas! Who has taken up a reproach against her?
- ¹⁹ Behold, at that time I will work in you for your sake, says the Lord; and I will save her that was oppressed and accept her that was rejected; and I will make them a praise, and glorious in all the earth.

The reading from the Prophecy of Zechariah

(9:9-15)

“Thus says the Lord...”

- ⁹ Rejoice greatly O daughter of Zion! Proclaim aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you, just and saving; he is meek and riding on an ass, and a young foal.
- ¹⁰ And he shall destroy the chariots out of Ephraim, and the horse out of Jerusalem, and the bow of war shall be utterly destroyed; and there shall be abundance and peace out of the nations. And he shall rule over the waters from sea to sea, and from the rivers to the ends of the earth.
- ¹¹ And you, by the blood of your covenant, have sent forth your prisoners out of the pit that has no water.
- ¹² You shall sit in strongholds, you prisoners of the assembly; and for one day of your sojourning I will recompense you double.
- ¹³ For I have bent you for Myself like a bow, O Judah, I have filled it with Ephraim; and I will raise up your children, O Zion, against the children of the Greeks, and handle you like the sword of a warrior.
- ¹⁴ And the Lord shall be over them, and His arrow shall go forth like lightning. And the Lord God Almighty shall sound the trumpet and go forth in the noise of His threatening.
- ¹⁵ The Lord Almighty shall defend them!

Ascension of Our Lord

40 Days after Pascha

The reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah (2:2-3)

“Thus says the Lord...”

- ² Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the Lord’s house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it.
- ³ Many people shall come and say, “Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths.” For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

The reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah

(Composite #21 / 62:10-63:3, 7-9)

“Thus says the Lord...”

Go through and enter My gates; prepare My way and make a way for My people. Cast the stones out of the way; lift up an ensign for the nations. For behold, the Lord has made it to be heard even to the ends of the earth, Say to the daughter of Zion, Behold, your Savior comes, having his reward with him, and his work before him. And they shall call them, The Holy People, The Redeemed of the Lord. And you shall be called, A City Sought Out, and Not Forsaken.

Who is that comes from Edom, his garment red, from Bosrah? Beautiful in his apparel, he cried out with great strength, I speak of righteousness and a judgment of salvation! Why are your garments red, and your apparel like his that treads in the winepress? I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the nations no one was with me.

I remember the mercy of the Lord, the virtues of the Lord according to all that He has granted us. The Lord is a good judge to the House of Israel; He deals with us according to His mercies, and according to the abundance of His righteousness.

And He said, Is it not My people? Children that will not be rejected? And He became to them salvation out of all their afflictions. Not a mediator, nor an

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

angel, but the Lord Himself saved them, because He loved them and spared them; He Himself redeemed them and accepted them, and lifted them up all the days of the age.

The reading from the Third Book of Kings

(Composite #22 / 1 Kings 19:3-9, 11, 13, 15, 16)

“Thus says the Lord...”

behold, the days of the Lord shall come, and His feet shall stand in those days on the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem toward the east. And in those days living water shall come forth out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and half of them toward the western sea; and so shall it be in the harvest time and in the spring. And the Lord shall be king over all the earth; in those days there shall be one Lord. His name shall be one, encompassing all the earth, and the wilderness, from Geba to Rimmon, opposite the crest of Jerusalem. And she shall be lifted up, and abide in her place; from the gates of Benjamin to the place of the former gates, and to the gate of the corners, and from the Tower of Hananeel to the king is winepress, they shall dwell in her. And no longer shall there be a curse; but Jerusalem shall dwell securely.

Great and Holy Pentecost

50 Days after Pascha

The reading from Numbers (11:16-17, 24-29)

- ¹⁶ And the Lord said to Moses, “Gather for me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers over them; and bring them to the tent of meeting, and let them take their stand there with you.
- ¹⁷ And I will come down and talk with you there; and I will take some of the spirit which is upon you and put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, that you may not bear it yourself alone.
- ²⁴ So Moses went out and told the people the words of the Lord; and he gathered seventy men of the elders of the people, and placed them round about the tent.
- ²⁵ Then the Lord came down in the cloud and spoke to him, and took some of the spirit that was upon him and put it upon the seventy elders; and when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied. But they did so no more.
- ²⁶ Now two men remained in the camp, one named Eldad, and the other named Medad, and the spirit rested upon them; they were among those registered, but they had not gone out to the tent, and so they prophesied in the camp.
- ²⁷ And a young man ran and told Moses, “Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp.”
- ²⁸ And Joshua the son of Nun, the minister of Moses, one of his chosen men, said, “My Lord Moses, forbid them.”
- ²⁹ But Moses said to him, “Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the Lord’s people were prophets, that the Lord would put his spirit upon them!

The reading from the Prophecy of Joel (2:23-32)

“Thus says the Lord...”

- ²³ “Be glad, O sons of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord, your God; for he has given the early rain for your vindication, he has poured down for you abundant rain, the early and the latter rain, as before.
- ²⁴ “The threshing floors shall be full of grain, the vats shall overflow with wine and oil.
- ²⁵ I will restore to you the years which the swarming locust has eaten, the hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter, my great army, which I sent among you.
- ²⁶ “You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, who has dealt wondrously with you. And my people shall never again be put to shame.”

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

- ²⁷ You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I, the Lord, am your God and there is none else. And my people shall never again be put to shame.
- ²⁸ “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.
- ²⁹ Even upon the menservants and maidservants in those days, I will pour out my spirit.
- ³⁰ “And I will give portents in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke.
- ³¹ The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes.
- ³² And it shall come to pass that all who call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered; for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the Lord has said, and among the survivors shall be those who the Lord calls.

The reading from the Prophecy of Ezekiel (36:24-28)

“Thus says the Lord...”

- ²⁴ “For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land.
- ²⁵ “Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols.
- ²⁶ “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.
- ²⁷ “I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.
- ²⁸ “Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God.

Sunday of All Saints and Sunday of All Saints of North America

1st & 2nd Sundays after Pentecost

The reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah (43:9-14)

“Thus says the Lord...”

- ⁹ Let all the nations be gathered together, And let the people be assembled. Who among them can declare this, And show us former things? Let them bring out their witnesses, that they may be justified; Or let them hear and say, “It is truth.”
- ¹⁰ “You are My witnesses,” says the Lord, “And My servant whom I have chosen, That you may know and believe Me, And understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, Nor shall there be after Me.
- ¹¹ I, even I, am the Lord, And besides Me there is no savior.
- ¹² I have declared and saved, I have proclaimed, And there was no foreign god among you; Therefore you are My witnesses,” Says the Lord, “that I am God.
- ¹³ Indeed before the day was, I am He; And there is no one who can deliver out of My hand; I work, and who will reverse it?”
- ¹⁴ Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, The Holy One of Israel: “For your sake I will send to Babylon, And bring them all down as fugitives— The Chaldeans, who rejoice in their ships.

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (3:1-9)

- ¹ But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them.
- ² In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be affliction,
- ³ and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace.
- ⁴ For though in the sight of men they were punished, their hope is full of immortality.
- ⁵ Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of himself;
- ⁶ like gold in the furnace he tried them, and like a sacrificial burnt offering he accepted them.
- ⁷ In the time of their visitation they will shine forth, and will run like sparks through the stubble.

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

- ⁸ They will govern nations and rule other peoples, and the Lord will reign over them for ever.
- ⁹ Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are upon his elect, and he watches over his holy ones.

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (5:15-6:3)

- ¹⁵ But the righteous live for ever, and their reward is with the Lord; the Most High takes care of them.
 - ¹⁶ Therefore they will receive a glorious crown and a beautiful diadem from the hand of the Lord, because with his right hand he will cover them, and with his arm he will shield them.
 - ¹⁷ The Lord will take his zeal as his whole armor, and will arm all creation to repel his enemies;
 - ¹⁸ he will put on righteousness as a breastplate, and wear impartial justice as a helmet;
 - ¹⁹ he will take holiness as an invincible shield,
 - ²⁰ and sharpen stern wrath for a sword, and creation will join with him to fight against the madmen.
 - ²¹ Shafts of lightening will fly with true aim, and will leap to the target as from a well-drawn bow of clouds,
 - ²² and hailstones full of wrath will be hurled as from a catapult; the water of the sea will rage against them, and rivers will relentlessly overwhelm them;
 - ²³ a mighty wind will rise against them, and like a tempest it will winnow them away. Lawlessness will lay waste the whole earth, and evil-doing will overturn the thrones of rulers.
- ¹ Listen therefore, O kings, and understand; learn, O judges of the ends of the earth.
 - ² Give ear, you that rule over multitudes, and boast of many nations.
 - ³ For your dominion was given you from the Lord, and your sovereignty from the Most High, who will search out your works and inquire into your plans.

Nativity of John the Baptist

June 24

The reading from Genesis

(Composite #10 / Chps 17:15-17,19; 18:11-14; 21:1-8)

God said to Abraham, “As for Sar’ai your wife, her name shall not be called Sar’ai, but Sarah shall be her name. And I will bless her, and give you a child by her; and I will bless him, and he shall become nations, and kings of nations shall come from him.”

And Abraham fell on his face and said to himself, “Shall there be born a son to one who is a hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, give birth?” And God said to Abraham, “Yes. Behold, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish My covenant with him, for an everlasting covenant.”

Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in days. Sarah laughed to herself saying, “this has not as yet happened to me, even until now, and my Lord is old.” And the Lord God said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh to herself, saying, ‘Shall I then indeed bear? but I am old’? Shall anything be impossible that is spoken by God?”

And the Lord visited Sarah as He had said. And she conceived, and bore Abraham a son in old age as the Lord God had spoken to him. And Abraham circumcised him on the eighth day, as the Lord God had commanded him.

And Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. And Sarah said, “The Lord God has made laughter for me; for every one who hears shall rejoice with me.” And she said, “Who shall say to Abraham that Sarah suckles a child? Yet I have borne him a child in my old age.” And the child grew, and was weaned; and Abraham made a feast on the day that Isaac was weaned.

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

The reading from Judges

(Composite #11 / Chps 13:2-8, 13-14, 17-18, 21)

In those days, there was a certain man of the tribe of Dan, whose name was Mano'ah; and his wife was barren and bore not. And the angel of the Lord appeared to the woman and said to her, “Behold, you are barren. But you shall conceive and bear a son. And no razor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be consecrated to God from the womb.”

And the woman went and spoke to her husband, saying, “A man of God came to me, his countenance was like the countenance of an angel of God, very bright. And he said to me, ‘Behold, you shall conceive and bear a son; and now, drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean, for the boy shall be consecrated to God from the womb, even until the day of his death.’”

Then Mano'ah prayed to God and said, “O Lord, let the man of God whom Thou didst send come again to us, and teach us what we are to do with the child that will be born.” And the angel of the Lord *came* to Mano'ah, *and* said, “Of all things that I said to your wife, let her keep. Let her eat nothing that comes from the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink.”

And Mano'ah said to the angel of the Lord, “What is your name, that, when your words come to pass, we may glorify you?” And the angel of the Lord said to him, “Why do you ask concerning my name, whereas it is wonderful?” And the angel of the Lord appeared no more to Mano'ah and his wife.

The reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah (Chps 40,41,45,48,54)

“*Thus says the Lord...*”

“Comfort, comfort My people,” says God. “Speak to the heart of Jerusalem, you Priests, comfort her, for her humiliation is increased, her iniquity is pardoned; for she has received from the Lord’s hand double for her sins. The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord; make straight the paths of our God.’”

“Go up to a high mountain, you who are proclaiming glad tidings to Zion, lift up your voice with strength, O herald of good tidings to Jerusalem. Lift it up, fear not! I the Lord God, I have heard the poor of Israel and will not forsake them. I will open rivers on the mountains, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the deserts pools of water, and the thirsty landsprings of

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

water. Let the heavens rejoice from above, and let the clouds rain down righteousness; let the earth bring forth, and let it sprout forth mercy and cause righteousness to shine forth also.

“Declare this with a shout of joy, and let this be known, proclaim it to the end of the earth. Say, ‘The Lord hath redeemed His servant Jacob!’ And if they thirst, he shall lead them through the desert, He shall bring forth water for them out of the rock. Rejoice, O barren one who did not bear; break forth *into singing* and cry loud, you who have not been in travail! For more are the children of the desolate one than of her who has a husband.”

SS. Peter & Paul

June 29

The reading is from the 1st Book of Peter (1:3-9)

- ³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
- ⁴ to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,
- ⁵ who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.
- ⁶ In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials,
- ⁷ that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,
- ⁸ whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,
- ⁹ receiving the end of your faith-the salvation of your souls.

The reading is from the 1st Book of Peter (1:13-19)

- ¹³ Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;
- ¹⁴ as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance;
- ¹⁵ but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct,
- ¹⁶ because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.”
- ¹⁷ And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one’s work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear;
- ¹⁸ knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers,
- ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

The reading is from the 1st Book of Peter (2:11-24)

- 11 Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul,
- 12 having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.
- 13 Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme,
- 14 or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good.
- 15 For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men-
- 16 as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God.
- 17 Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.
- 18 Servants, be submissive to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh.
- 19 For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully.
- 20 For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God.
- 21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:
- 22 Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth”;
- 23 who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;
- 24 who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness-by whose stripes you were healed.

Uncovering of the relics of the Venerable Sergius of Radonezh

July 5

The reading from Proverbs (*Composite #2 / Chps 10, 3, 8*)

The memory of the righteous is with praise and the blessing of the Lord is upon his head. Blessed is the man who has found wisdom and the mortal who has understanding. For it is better to purchase her than treasures of gold and silver. She is more precious than previous stones and all that is precious is unworthy of her. For length of days and years of life are in her right hand; and in her left hand are riches and glory. Out of her mouth proceeds righteousness and she bears law and mercy upon her tongue.

Hear me, O child, for I will speak noble things. Blessed is the man who keeps my ways, for my ways are the way of life, and in them is prepared favor from the Lord. Therefore, I pray you, and utter my voice to the sons of men: For I, wisdom, have dwelt with counsel and knowledge and I have called upon understanding. Counsel and safety are mine, understanding and strength are mine. I love those who love me and those seeking me shall find grace.

Understand craftiness, O you who are simple, and imbibe knowledge, you who are untaught. Hear me again, for I will speak noble things: I will open *my mouth* and from my lips *shall* come what is right. For my throat shall meditate truth; false lips are an abomination before me. All the words of my mouth are righteous; there is nothing in them that is twisted or perverse. They are all straight to him who understands and right to those who find knowledge.

I shall instruct you in truth, so that your hope will be in the Lord and you shall be filled with the Spirit.

The reading from Proverbs (10:31-11:12)

- ³¹ The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom, But the perverse tongue will be cut out.
- ³² The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable, But the mouth of the wicked what is perverse.
- ¹ Honest scales are an abomination to the Lord, But a just weight is His delight.

- ² When pride comes, then comes shame; But with the humble is wisdom.
- ³ The integrity of the upright will guide them, But the perversity of the unfaithful will destroy them.
- ⁴ Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, But righteousness delivers from death.
- ⁵ The righteousness of the blameless will direct his way aright, But the wicked will fall by his own wickedness.
- ⁶ The righteousness of the upright will deliver them, But the unfaithful will be caught by their lust.
- ⁷ When a wicked man dies, his expectation will perish, And the hope of the unjust perishes.
- ⁸ The righteous is delivered from trouble, And it comes to the wicked instead.
- ⁹ The hypocrite with his mouth destroys his neighbor, But through knowledge the righteous will be delivered.
- ¹⁰ When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices; And when the wicked perish, there is jubilation.
- ¹¹ By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted, But it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.
- ¹² He who is devoid of wisdom despises his neighbor, But a man of understanding holds his peace.

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (3:1-9)

- ¹ But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them.
- ² In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be affliction,
- ³ and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace.
- ⁴ For though in the sight of men they were punished, their hope is full of immortality.
- ⁵ Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of himself;
- ⁶ like gold in the furnace he tried them, and like a sacrificial burnt offering he accepted them.
- ⁷ In the time of their visitation they will shine forth, and will run like sparks through the stubble.
- ⁸ They will govern nations and rule other peoples, and the Lord will reign over them for ever.
- ⁹ Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are upon his elect, and he watches over his holy ones.

Commemoration of the Holy Fathers Of the 1st Six Ecumenical Councils

July 12-19

The reading from Genesis (14:14-20)

- ¹⁴ Now when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his three hundred and eighteen trained servants who were born in his own house, and went in pursuit as far as Dan.
- ¹⁵ He divided his forces against them by night, and he and his servants attacked them and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus.
- ¹⁶ So he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot and his goods, as well as the women and the people.
- ¹⁷ And the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley), after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him.
- ¹⁸ Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High.
- ¹⁹ And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth;
- ²⁰ And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tithe of all.

The reading from Deuteronomy (1:8-11, 15-17)

- ⁸ Behold, I have set the land before you; go in and take possession of the land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give to them and to their descendants after them.'
- ⁹ "At that time I said to you, 'I am not able alone to bear you;
- ¹⁰ the Lord your God has multiplied you, and behold, you are this day as the stars of heaven from multitude.
- ¹¹ May the Lord, the God of your fathers, make you a thousand times as many as you are, and bless you, as he has promised you!
- ¹⁵ So I took the head of your tribes, wise and experienced men, and set them as heads over you, commanders of thousands, commanders of hundreds, commanders of fifties, commanders of tens, and officers, throughout your tribes.

- ¹⁶ And I charged your judges at that time, ‘Hear the cases between your brethren, and judge righteously between a man and his brother or the alien that is with him.
- ¹⁷ You shall not be partial in judgment; you shall hear the small and the great alike; you shall not be afraid of the face of man, for the judgment is God’s ; and the case that is too hard for you, you shall bring to me, and I will hear it.’

The reading from Deuteronomy (10:14-21)

- ¹⁴ Behold, to the Lord your God belong to heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it;
- ¹⁵ yet the Lord set his heart in love upon your fathers and chose their descendants after them, you above all peoples, as at this day.
- ¹⁶ Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no longer stubborn.
- ¹⁷ For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of Lords, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who is not partial and takes no bribe.
- ¹⁸ He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing.
- ¹⁹ Love the sojourner therefore; for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt.
- ²⁰ You shall fear the Lord your God; you shall serve him and cleave to him, and by his name you shall swear.
- ²¹ He is your praise; he is your God, who has done for these great, and terrible things which your eyes have seen.

Uncovering of the relics of St. Seraphim of Sarov

July 19

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (3:1-9)

- ¹ But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them.
- ² In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be affliction,
- ³ and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace.
- ⁴ For though in the sight of men they were punished, their hope is full of immortality.
- ⁵ Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of himself;
- ⁶ like gold in the furnace he tried them, and like a sacrificial burnt offering he accepted them.
- ⁷ In the time of their visitation they will shine forth, and will run like sparks through the stubble.
- ⁸ They will govern nations and rule other peoples, and the Lord will reign over them for ever.
- ⁹ Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are upon his elect, and he watches over his holy ones.

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (5:15-6:3)

- ¹⁵ But the righteous live for ever, and their reward is with the Lord; the Most High takes care of them.
- ¹⁶ Therefore they will receive a glorious crown and a beautiful diadem from the hand of the Lord, because with his right hand he will cover them, and with his arm he will shield them.
- ¹⁷ The Lord will take his zeal as his whole armor, and will arm all creation to repel his enemies;
- ¹⁸ he will put on righteousness as a breastplate, and wear impartial justice as a helmet;
- ¹⁹ he will take holiness as an invincible shield,
- ²⁰ and sharpen stern wrath for a sword, and creation will join with him to fight against the madmen.

- ²¹ Shafts of lightening will fly with true aim, and will leap to the target as from a well-drawn bow of clouds,
²² and hailstones full of wrath will be hurled as from a catapult; the water of the sea will rage against them, and rivers will relentlessly overwhelm them;
²³ a mighty wind will rise against them, and like a tempest it will winnow them away. Lawlessness will lay waste the whole earth, and evil-doing will overturn the thrones of rulers.
- ¹ Listen therefore, O kings, and understand; learn, O judges of the ends of the earth.
² Give ear, you that rule over multitudes, and boast of many nations.
³ For your dominion was given you from the Lord, and your sovereignty from the Most High, who will search out your works and inquire into your plans.

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (4:7-15)

- ⁷ But the righteous man, though he die early, will be at rest.
⁸ For old age is not honored for length of time, nor measured by number of years;
⁹ but understanding is gray hair for men, and a blameless life is ripe old age.
¹⁰ There was one who pleased God and was loved by him,
¹¹ He was caught up lest evil change his understanding or guile deceive his soul.
¹² For the fascination of wickedness obscures what is good, and roving desire perverts the innocent mind.
¹³ Being perfected in a short time, he fulfilled long years;
¹⁴ for his soul was pleasing to the Lord, therefore he took him quickly from the midst of wickedness.
¹⁵ Yet the peoples saw and did not understand, nor take such a thing to heart, that God's grace and mercy are his elect, and he watches over his holy ones.

Prophet Elijah

July 20

The reading from the Third Book of Kings

(Composite #12 / 3 [1] Kings 17:1-23)

“Thus says the Lord...”

The word of the Lord came to Elijah, and he said to Ahab, “As the Lord God of Hosts, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand this day, there still be neither dew nor rain these years, except by the words of my mouth.”

And the word of the Lord came to Elijah, saying, “Depart hence eastward, and hide yourself by the brook Cherith, which is before the River Jordan. And there shall be water from the brook, and you shall drink it, and I will command the ravens to feed you there.” And Elijah went and did according to the word of the Lord; and he sat besides the brook Cherith, which is before Jordan. And the ravens brought him bread in the morning, and meat in the evening, and he drank water from the brook. And it came to pass after some days, that the brook dried up, for there was no rain in the land.

And the word of the Lord came into Elijah, saying, “Arise, and go to Sarepta of the Sidonians, and dwell there. For behold, I have commanded there a widow-woman to feed you.” And he arose and went to Sarepta of the Sidonians, and came to the gate of the city; and behold, a widow-woman there was gathering sticks. And Elijah called her and said to her, “Bring to me, now, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.” And she went to fetch it. And Elijah called her and said to her, “Bring me also a morsel of bread in your hand, that I may eat.” And the woman said, “As the Lord your God lives, I have not a cake, but only a handful of meal in the pitcher, and a little oil in a cruse; and behold, I am gathering two sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my children, and we shall eat it and die.”

And Elijah said to her, “Take courage, go in and do according to your word; but make of it a little cake first and bring it to me; and afterward you shall make some for yourself and your children. For thus says the Lord God of Israel, The pitcher of meal shall not fail and the cruse of oil shall not be diminished, until the day that the Lord gives rain on the earth.” And the woman went and did according to the words of Elijah; and he ate, and she, and her children. And from that day the pitcher of meal did not fail, and the cruse of oil was not diminished, according to the word of the Lord which He spoke by the hand of

Elijah. And it came to pass after this that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick and his illness was very grievous, until there was no breath left in him. And she said to Elijah, “What have I done with you, O man of God? Have you come in to me to call to remembrance my unrighteousness, and to slay my son?” And Elijah said to the woman, “Give me your son.” And he took him from her bosom and carried him to the upper chamber where he was lodged, and laid him upon his own bed. And Elijah cried aloud to the Lord and said, “Woe is me, O Lord, the witness of the widow with whom I now abide; Thou hast wrought harm in slaying her son!”

And he blew on the child three times, and called on the Lord and said, “O Lord my God, let the soul of this child return to him.” And it was so. And the child cried out; and he brought him down from the upper chamber into the house, and gave him to his mother. And Elijah said, “See, your son lives.” And the woman said to Elijah, “Behold, I know that you are a man of God, and the word of the Lord in your mouth is true.”

The reading from the Third Book of Kings

(Composite #13 / 3 [1] Kings 18, 19)

“Thus says the Lord...”

The word of God came to Elijah the Tishbite in the third year of the reign of Ahab, saying, “Go, and show yourself to Ahab; and I will bring rain upon the face of the earth.” And it came to pass when Ahab saw Elijah, that he said to him, “Are you he that troubles Israel?” And Elijah said “I do not trouble Israel, but it is you and your father’s house, in that you forsook the Lord God, and you followed after the Ba’als. Now therefore send and gather all Israel to me at Mount Carmel, and the four hundred and fifty prophets of shame of Ba’al, and the four hundred prophets of the groves who eat at Jezebel’s table.”

And according to the word of Elijah, Ahab sent to all Israel, and gathered all the prophets on Mount Carmel, and brought Elijah before all of them. And Elijah said to them, “How long will you go limping on both feet? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Ba’al, then follow him.” And the people answered him not a word.

And Elijah said to the people, “I, even I only, am left a prophet of the Lord; and the prophets of Ba’al are four hundred and fifty men, and the prophets of the groves four hundred.” And Elijah said, “Give me two oxen, and let you choose one for yourselves, and cut it in pieces and lay it on the wood, but put no fire to

it; and I will prepare the other bullock and lay it on the wood, and put no fire to it. And you call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord, my God; and the God Who answers by fire, He is God.” And all the people answered and said, “The word that Elijah has spoken is good; let it be so.”

And Elijah said to the prophets of shame, “Choose for yourselves one bullock and prepare it first, for you are many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire to it.” And they took the bullock and prepared it; and they called on the name of Ba’al from morning until noon, and said, “Hear us, O Ba’al, hear us!” But there was no voice, nor an answer. And they ran about the altar which they had made.

And it was noon, and Elijah the Tishbite mocked them and said, “Call with a loud voice, for your god is (musing), or he has gone to another place, or perhaps is sleeping and you must awake him.” And they cried with a loud voice, and cut themselves with knives and flogged themselves many times with whips, even to the shedding of their own blood. And they prophesied until the evening; and it came to pass that it was the time of the offering of the sacrifice, but there was no voice.

And Elijah spoke to the prophets of shame, saying, “Stand by for the present, and I will offer my sacrifice.” And they stood aside and were silent. And Elijah said took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Israel, as the Lord had said to him, “Israel shall be your name.”

And he built up the stones in the name of the Lord, and repaired the altar that had been broken down; and he made a trench for water that would hold two measures of seed round about the altar. And he piled the cleft wood on the altar which he had made, and divided the whole burnt-offering, and laid on the wood and around the altar. And Elijah said, “Fetch me four jars of water and pour it on the whole-burnt-offering, and on the wood.” And they did so. And he said, “Do it a second time”; and they did it a second time. And he said, “Do it a third time”; and they did it a third time. And the water ran round about the altar, and the trench was filled with water.

And Elijah cried aloud to heaven and said, “O Lord, God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, hearken unto me, hearken unto me this day by fire, and let all this people know that Thou alone art the Lord God of Israel and that I am Thy servant and that I have done all these things for Thy sake; for Thou hast turned back the hearts of this people to follow Thee.”

Then fire fell from the Lord out of heaven and devoured the whole-burnt-offering, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and the water that was in the trench; the fire licked up everything. And all the people fell upon their faces, and said, “Truly the Lord God, he is God!” And Elijah said to the people, “Seize the prophets of Ba’al; let not one of them escape.” And they seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishkon, and slew them there.

And Elijah said to Ahab, “Behold, there is the sound of the coming of rain; prepare your chariot and go down, lest the rain overtake you.” And Elijah went up on Mount Carmel, and bowed himself down to the ground; and he put his face between his knees and prayed to the Lord. And the heavens grew black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab wept and went to Jezreel. And the hand of the Lord was upon Elijah; and he girded up his loins and ran before Ahab to Jezreel.

And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had slain the prophets with the sword. And Jezebel sent to Elijah, saying “By this time tomorrow I will make your life as the life of one of them.” And Elijah heard and was afraid; and he rose and departed for his life. And he came to Beer-sheba, in the land of Judah.

And he left his servant there and went a days journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree; and he asked, concerning his life, that he might die, and said, “Let it be enough, O Lord; now take away my life from me; for I am no better than my fathers.” And he lay down and slept under the tree. And behold, an angel of the Lord touched him and said to him, “Arise, eat and drink.” And Elijah looked, and behold, at his head there was a cake of barley and cruse of water. And he arose, and ate and drank, and lay down again and slept.

And the angel of the Lord returned a second time, and touched him, and said to him, “Arise, eat and drink, for the journey will be too much for you.” And he arose, and ate and drank. And he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Mount Horeb.

And he entered there into a cave, and lodged there. And behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and the Lord said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?” And Elijah said, “I have been very jealous for the Lord God Almighty, for the sons of Israel have forsaken Thee; they have thrown down Thine altars, and

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

slain Thy prophets with the sword; and I alone am left; and they seek my life to take it." And the angel said, "Go forth tomorrow, and stand on the mountain before the Lord."

And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountain, and broke in pieces the rock before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind; and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire the voice of a gentle breeze, and the Lord was there. And it came to pass when Elijah heard it, he covered his face with his mantle and went out and stood before the cave.

And behold, a voice came to him, and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" And Elijah said, "I have been very jealous for the Lord God Almighty, for the sons of Israel have forsaken Thy covenant, thrown down Thine altars, and slain Thy prophets with the sword; and I alone am left; and they seek my life to take it."

And the Lord said to him, "Go, return on your way, and you shall come on the way of the wilderness of Damascus; and you shall anoint Haz'ael to be king over Syria; and you shall anoint Jehu the son of Nimshi to be king over Israel; and Eli'sha the son of Shaphat you shall anoint to be prophet in your place."

The reading from the Third Book of Kings

(Composite #14 / 3 [1] Kings 19:19, 20, 21)

"Thus says the Lord..."

In those days, Elijah found Eli'sha the son of Shaphat, and he was plowing with oxen. And Elijah went to him and cast his mantle upon him. And Eli'sha left the oxen, and ran after Elijah and ministered to him.

And it came to pass, when the Lord was about to take Elijah up in a whirlwind, as it were, into heaven, Elijah and Eli'sha went out from Gilgal. And Elijah said to Eli'sha, "Tarry here, then, for the Lord has sent me as far as the Jordan." And Eli'sha said, "As the Lord lives, and your soul lives, I will not leave you." And they both went on. And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went also, and they stood opposite afar off; but Elijah and Eli'sha stood by Jordan. And Elijah took his mantle, and rolled it up, and smote the water; and the water was parted to the one side and to the other, and they both went over on dry ground.

And it came to pass when they had gone over, that Elijah said to Eli'sha, "Ask what I shall do for you before I am taken up from you." And Eli'sha said, "Let there be, then, a double portion of your spirit upon me." And Elijah said, 'You have asked a hard thing. If you shall see me when I am taken up from you, then shall it be so for you; and if you do not see me, it shall not be so."

And it came to pass as they went on and talked. And, behold, a chariot of fire, and horses of fire! And they separated the two of them. And Elijah was taken up in a whirlwind, as it were, into heaven. And Eli'sha saw it, and he cried, "Father! Father! The chariot of Israel and its horsemen!" And he saw him no more. And he took hold of his garments and rent them into two pieces.

And Eli'sha took up the mantle of Elijah that had fallen upon his head. And Eli'sha went back and stood upon the bank of the Jordan. And Eli'sha took up the mantle of Elijah that had fallen upon his head, and smote the waters, but they were not parted. And Eli'sha said, "Where now, is the God of Elijah, He also?" And Eli'sha smote the waters a second time, and the waters parted; and he went over dry land.

Transfiguration of Our Lord

August 6

The reading is from Exodus (24:12-18)

- ¹² Then the Lord said to Moses, “Come up to Me on the mountain and be there; and I will give you tablets of stone, and the law and commandments which I have written, that you may teach them.”
- ¹³ So Moses arose with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up to the mountain of God.
- ¹⁴ And he said to the elders, “Wait here for us until we come back to you. Indeed, Aaron and Hur are with you. If any man has a difficulty, let him go to them.”
- ¹⁵ Then Moses went up into the mountain, and a cloud covered the mountain.
- ¹⁶ Now the glory of the Lord rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days. And on the seventh day He called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud.
- ¹⁷ The sight of the glory of the Lord was like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the children of Israel.
- ¹⁸ So Moses went into the midst of the cloud and went up into the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

The reading from Exodus (Composite #15 / 33:11-23; 34:4-6, 8)

The Lord spoke to Moses, as if one should speak to his friend; and he returned to the camp, but his servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, departed not from the Tabernacle. And Moses said to the Lord, “Behold, Thou didst command me to lead forth this people, but Thou hast not showed me whom Thou wilt send with me; but Thou hast said to me, ‘I know you above all, and you have found favor with me. ‘If, then, I have found grace in Thy sight, reveal Thyself to me, that I may see Thee clearly, that I may find grace in Thy sight, and that I may know that this great nation is Thy people.’” And *the Lord* said to *him*, “I Myself will go before you, and I will give you rest.” And Moses said to Him, “If Thou Thyself dost not go with us, bring me not up from here.

“And how shall it be surely known that both I and Thy people have found grace with Thee, except Thou go with us? So both I and Thy people shall be glorified beyond all the nations, as many as are upon the earth.” So both I and Thy people shall be glorified beyond all the nations, as many as are upon the earth.” And the Lord said to Moses, “This word also, which you have spoken, I will do; for you have found grace before Me, and I know you above all.” And Moses said, “Show me Thy glory.”

And *the Lord* said to Moses, I will go before you with My glory, and I will call out My name, ‘*the Lord*’ before you; and I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.” And *again* He said, “You shall not be able to see My face, for man shall stand upon the rock. And when My glory shall pass by, then I will put you in a cleft on the rock; and I will cover you with My hand, until I pass by. And I will take away My hand, and then you shall see My backside; but My face shall not appear to you.”

And having risen early in the morning, Moses went up Mount Sinai, as the Lord had told him. And the Lord descended in a cloud, and Moses stood there before Him and called out in the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before his face, and called out, “The Lord God, compassionate and merciful, longsuffering, greatly-merciful, and true.” And Moses, making haste, stooped down to the earth and worshipped the Lord.

The reading from the Third Book of Kings

(Composite #23 / 1 Kings 19:3-9, 11-13, 15, 16)

In those days, Elijah went to Beer-sheba, in the land of Judah. And he left his servant there and went a days journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under the juniper tree. And he lay down and slept under the tree. And behold, someone touched him and said to him, Arise, eat and drink. And Elijah looked, and behold, at his head there was a cake of barley and a cruse of water. And he arose, and ate and drank, and lay down again and slept.

And the angel of the Lord returned a second time, and touched him, and said to him, Arise, eat and drink, for the journey will be too much for you. And he arose, and ate and drank. And he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Mount Horeb.

And he entered there into a cave, and lodged there. And behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and the Lord said to him, You shall go forth and stand on the mountain before the Lord. And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountain, and broke in pieces the rock before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a voice of a gentle breeze, and the Lord was there.

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

And it came to pass when Elijah heard it, he covered his face with his mantle and went out and stood before the cave.

And the Lord said to him, Go, return on your way, and you shall come on the way of the wilderness of Damascus; and you shall anoint Elisha the son of Shaphat to be prophet in your place.

Glorification of St. Herman of Alaska

August 9

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (3:1-9)

- ¹ But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them.
- ² In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be affliction,
- ³ and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace.
- ⁴ For though in the sight of men they were punished, their hope is full of immortality.
- ⁵ Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of himself;
- ⁶ like gold in the furnace he tried them, and like a sacrificial burnt offering he accepted them.
- ⁷ In the time of their visitation they will shine forth, and will run like sparks through the stubble.
- ⁸ They will govern nations and rule other peoples, and the Lord will reign over them for ever.
- ⁹ Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are upon his elect, and he watches over his holy ones.

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (5:15-6:3)

- ¹⁵ But the righteous live for ever, and their reward is with the Lord; the Most High takes care of them.
- ¹⁶ Therefore they will receive a glorious crown and a beautiful diadem from the hand of the Lord, because with his right hand he will cover them, and with his arm he will shield them.
- ¹⁷ The Lord will take his zeal as his whole armor, and will arm all creation to repel his enemies;
- ¹⁸ he will put on righteousness as a breastplate, and wear impartial justice as a helmet;
- ¹⁹ he will take holiness as an invincible shield,
- ²⁰ and sharpen stern wrath for a sword, and creation will join with him to fight against the madmen.

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

- ²¹ Shafts of lightening will fly with true aim, and will leap to the target as from a well-drawn bow of clouds,
²² and hailstones full of wrath will be hurled as from a catapult; the water of the sea will rage against them, and rivers will relentlessly overwhelm them;
²³ a mighty wind will rise against them, and like a tempest it will winnow them away. Lawlessness will lay waste the whole earth, and evil-doing will overturn the thrones of rulers.
- ¹ Listen therefore, O kings, and understand; learn, O judges of the ends of the earth.
² Give ear, you that rule over multitudes, and boast of many nations.
³ For your dominion was given you from the Lord, and your sovereignty from the Most High, who will search out your works and inquire into your plans.

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (4:7-15)

- ⁷ But the righteous man, though he die early, will be at rest.
⁸ For old age is not honored for length of time, nor measured by number of years;
⁹ but understanding is gray hair for men, and a blameless life is ripe old age.
¹⁰ There was one who pleased God and was loved by him,
¹¹ He was caught up lest evil change his understanding or guile deceive his soul.
¹² For the fascination of wickedness obscures what is good, and roving desire perverts the innocent mind.
¹³ Being perfected in a short time, he fulfilled long years;
¹⁴ for his soul was pleasing to the Lord, therefore he took him quickly from the midst of wickedness.
¹⁵ Yet the peoples saw and did not understand, nor take such a thing to heart, that God's grace and mercy are his elect, and he watches over his holy ones.

Dormition of the Most Holy Mother of God

August 15

The reading from Genesis (28:10-17)

- ¹⁰ Now Jacob went out from Beersheba and went toward Haran.
- ¹¹ So he came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of that place and put it at his head, and he lay down in that place to sleep.
- ¹² Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.
- ¹³ And behold, the Lord stood above it and said: “I am the Lord God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants.
- ¹⁴ “Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.
- ¹⁵ “Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you.”
- ¹⁶ Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, “Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it.”
- ¹⁷ And he was afraid and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!”

The reading from the Prophecy of Ezekiel (43:27-44:4)

“Thus says the Lord...”

- ²⁷ ‘When these days are over it shall be, on the eighth day and thereafter, that the priests shall offer your burnt offerings and your peace offerings on the altar; and I will accept you,’ says the Lord God.”
- ¹ Then He brought me back to the outer gate of the sanctuary which faces toward the east, but it was shut.
- ² And the Lord said to me, “This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter by it, because the Lord God of Israel has entered by it; therefore it shall be shut.

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

- ³ “As for the prince, because he is the prince, he may sit in it to eat bread before the Lord; he shall enter by way of the vestibule of the gateway, and go out the same way.”
- ⁴ Also He brought me by way of the north gate to the front of the temple; so I looked, and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord; and I fell on my face.

The reading from Proverbs (9:1-11)

- ¹ Wisdom has built her house, She has hewn out her seven pillars;
- ² She has slaughtered her meat, She has mixed her wine, She has also furnished her table.
- ³ She has sent out her maidens, She cries out from the highest places of the city,
- ⁴ “Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!” As for him who lacks understanding, she says to him,
- ⁵ “Come, eat of my bread And drink of the wine I have mixed.
- ⁶ Forsake foolishness and live, And go in the way of understanding.
- ⁷ “He who corrects a scoffer gets shame for himself, And he who rebukes a wicked man only harms himself.
- ⁸ Do not correct a scoffer, lest he hate you;
- ⁹ Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; Teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.
- ¹⁰ “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.
- ¹¹ For by me your days will be multiplied, And years of life will be added to you.

Beheading of St. John the Baptist

August 29

The reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah

(Composite #8 / Chps 40,41,45,48,54)

“Thus says the Lord...”

“Comfort, comfort My people,” says God. “Speak to the heart of Jerusalem, you Priests, comfort her, for her humiliation is increased, her iniquity is pardoned; for she has received from the Lord’s hand double for her sins. The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord; make straight the paths of our God.’

“Go up to a high mountain, you who are proclaiming glad tidings to Zion, lift up your voice with strength, O herald of good tidings to Jerusalem. Lift it up, fear not! I the Lord God, I have heard the poor of Israel and will not forsake them. I will open rivers on the mountains, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the deserts pools of water, and the thirsty landsprings of water. Let the heavens rejoice from above, and let the clouds rain down righteousness; let the earth bring forth, and let it sprout forth mercy and cause righteousness to shine forth also.

“Declare this with a shout of joy, and let this be known, proclaim it to the end of the earth. Say, ‘The Lord hath redeemed His servant Jacob!’ And if they thirst, he shall lead them through the desert, He shall bring forth water for them out of the rock. Rejoice, O barren one who did not bear; break forth *into singing* and cry loud, you who have not been in travail! For more are the children of the desolate one than of her who has a husband.”

The reading from the Prophecy of Malachi (Composite #9 / Chps 3, 4)

“Thus says the Lord...”

“Behold, I send My messenger before Thy face, who shall prepare Thy way before thee, and the Lord whom you seek, shall come into His temple. But who can endure the day of His coming? For he is coming like fire of a furnace and like the fuller’s herb; and he shall cleanse, refining and purifying, as it were, silver and gold. And he comes to you with judgment, and will be a swift witness against the evil ones and against adulterers, and against those who swear falsely by My name, against those who withhold the hireling’s wages, against those who oppress widows and beat orphans, against those who avoid judgment in

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

favor of strangers, and against those who do not fear him,” says the Lord Almighty.

“For I am the Lord your God, and I change not; and you, the sons of Jacob, have turned aside from the law and have not kept it. Return to Me, therefore, and I will return to you,” says the Lord Almighty. “And all nations shall call you blessed, and they shall understand that I am the Lord, who distinguishes between the righteous and between the transgressors on that day, in which I shall act to spare those who love me.

“Know, therefore, and remember the Law of Moses, My servant, as I commanded you at Horeb, the statutes and ordinances for all Israel. And behold, I will send to you Elijah the Tishbite before the great and glorious day of the Lord comes, who shall turn the heart of a father to his son, and the heart of a man to his neighbor, lest I come quickly and smite the earth,” *says the Lord Almighty, God, the One of Israel.*

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (Composite #3 / Chps 4, 5)

The righteous man, though he die early, will be at rest. The righteous man who has died will judge the ungodly who are living. For they will see the end of the righteous, and will not understand what was said about him; for the Lord will cast down the ungodly speechless to the ground and shake them from the foundations; they shall become desolate to the end; they will be in sorrows, and their memory will perish. For they will come with fear at the thought of their sins, and their iniquities shall stand against them to convict them.

Then the righteous man will stand with great boldness before those who have afflicted him, and those who have made of no account his labors. Having seen it, they shall be troubled with much fear and they will be amazed at his most-glorious salvation. They will say within themselves in repentance, in anguish of spirit they will groan and say: “This was he whom we had sometimes in derision and a proverb of reproach - we fools! We accounted his life as madness, and his end to be without honor. How is he numbered among the sons of God? And why is his lot among the Saints?

“Therefore, we have erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness did not illumine us, nor did the sun shine on us. We took our fill of the paths of lawlessness and destruction, and we walked impassible pathways, but the way of the Lord we have not known.”

Church New Year

September 1

The reading is from Prophecy of Isaiah (61:1-9)

“Thus says the Lord...”

- ¹ “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, Because the Lord has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound;
- ² To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn,
- ³ To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified.”
- ⁴ And they shall rebuild the old ruins, They shall raise up the former desolations, And they shall repair the ruined cities, The desolations of many generations.
- ⁵ Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, And the sons of the foreigner Shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers.
- ⁶ But you shall be named the priests of the Lord, They shall call you the servants of our God. You shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, And in their glory you shall boast.
- ⁷ Instead of your shame you shall have double honor, And instead of confusion they shall rejoice in their portion. Therefore in their land they shall possess double; Everlasting joy shall be theirs.
- ⁸ “For I, the Lord, love justice; I hate robbery for burnt offering; I will direct their work in truth, And will make with them an everlasting covenant.
- ⁹ Their descendants shall be known among the Gentiles, And their offspring among the people. All who see them shall acknowledge them, That they are the posterity whom the Lord has blessed.”

The reading is from Leviticus (Composite #24: Chps. 26)

The Lord spoke to the sons of Israel, saying: If you will walk in My statutes, and keep My commandments, and do them, then will I give you the rain in its season, and the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. And the time of your threshing shall reach unto the gathering of the vine, and the gathering of the vine shall reach unto the sowing; you shall eat your bread to the full, and you shall dwell securely in your land. And I will give

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

peace in your land, and you shall sleep, and none shall make you afraid; and I will destroy the cruel beasts out of your land, and war shall not go through your land. And you shall pursue your enemies, and they shall fall before you with slaughter. And five of you shall pursue a hundred, and a hundred of you shall pursue ten thousand; and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword. And I will look upon you and bless you; I will increase you and multiply you, and establish My covenant with you. You shall eat the old *stores*, and the oldest of the old; and you shall carry off the old to make way for the new. And I will establish My covenant with you, and My soul shall not be disturbed with you. And I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people.

But if you will not hearken unto Me, nor do these My commandments, nor submit yourselves to them, and your soul should abhor My judgments, so that you should not keep all My commandments, so as to break My covenant, then will I do thus to you: I will bring want upon you; you shall sow your seed vainly, and your enemies shall eat up *the fruit of* your labors. And I will set My face against you, and you shall fall before your enemies and be made subject to them that hate you; you shall flee when no one pursues you. And I will break down the haughtiness of your pride; I will make your heaven like iron and your earth like brass. And your strength shall be in vain, for your land shall not yield its seed, nor shall the tree of your field yield its fruit. And I will send upon you the wild beasts of the land, and the sword falling upon you shall destroy you. And your land shall be desolate and your gates deserted, for you walked perversely before Me; and I will walk contrary to you in fury, *says the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel.*

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (4:7-15)

- ⁷ But the righteous man, though he die early, will be at rest.
- ⁸ For old age is not honored for length of time, nor measured by number of years;
- ⁹ but understanding is gray hair for men, and a blameless life is ripe old age.
- ¹⁰ There was one who pleased God and was loved by him,
- ¹¹ He was caught up lest evil change his understanding or guile deceive his soul.
- ¹² For the fascination of wickedness obscures what is good, and roving desire perverts the innocent mind.
- ¹³ Being perfected in a short time, he fulfilled long years;
- ¹⁴ for his soul was pleasing to the Lord, therefore he took him quickly from the midst of wickedness.
- ¹⁵ Yet the peoples saw and did not understand, nor take such a thing to heart, that God's grace and mercy are his elect, and he watches over his holy ones.

Nativity of the Most Holy Mother of God

September 8

The reading from Genesis (28:10-17)

- ¹⁰ Now Jacob went out from Beersheba and went toward Haran.
- ¹¹ So he came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of that place and put it at his head, and he lay down in that place to sleep.
- ¹² Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.
- ¹³ And behold, the Lord stood above it and said: “I am the Lord God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants.
- ¹⁴ “Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.
- ¹⁵ “Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you.”
- ¹⁶ Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, “Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it.”
- ¹⁷ And he was afraid and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!”

The reading from Prophecy of Ezekiel (43:27-44:4)

“Thus says the Lord...”

- ²⁷ ‘When these days are over it shall be, on the eighth day and thereafter, that the priests shall offer your burnt offerings and your peace offerings on the altar; and I will accept you,’ says the Lord God.”
- ¹ Then He brought me back to the outer gate of the sanctuary which faces toward the east, but it was shut.
- ² And the Lord said to me, “This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter by it, because the Lord God of Israel has entered by it; therefore it shall be shut.

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

- ³ “As for the prince, because he is the prince, he may sit in it to eat bread before the Lord; he shall enter by way of the vestibule of the gateway, and go out the same way.”
- ⁴ Also He brought me by way of the north gate to the front of the temple; so I looked, and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord; and I fell on my face.

The reading from Proverbs (9:1-11)

- ¹ Wisdom has built her house, She has hewn out her seven pillars;
- ² She has slaughtered her meat, She has mixed her wine, She has also furnished her table.
- ³ She has sent out her maidens, She cries out from the highest places of the city,
- ⁴ “Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!” As for him who lacks understanding, she says to him,
- ⁵ “Come, eat of my bread And drink of the wine I have mixed.
- ⁶ Forsake foolishness and live, And go in the way of understanding.
- ⁷ “He who corrects a scoffer gets shame for himself, And he who rebukes a wicked man only harms himself.
- ⁸ Do not correct a scoffer, lest he hate you;
- ⁹ Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; Teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.
- ¹⁰ “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.
- ¹¹ For by me your days will be multiplied, And years of life will be added to you.

Exaltation of the Cross

September 14

The reading from Exodus (15:22-16:1)

- ²² So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea; then they went out into the Wilderness of Shur. And they went three days in the wilderness and found no water.
- ²³ Now when they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. Therefore the name of it was called Marah.
- ²⁴ And the people complained against Moses, saying, “What shall we drink?”
- ²⁵ So he cried out to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a tree. When he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet. There He made a statute and an ordinance for them, and there He tested them,
- ²⁶ and said, “If you diligently heed the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the Lord who heals you.”
- ²⁷ Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees; so they camped there by the waters.
- ¹ And they journeyed from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came to the Wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they departed from the land of Egypt.

The reading from Proverbs (3:11-18)

- ¹¹ My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, Nor detest His correction;
- ¹² For whom the Lord loves He corrects, Just as a father the son in whom he delights.
- ¹³ Happy is the man who finds wisdom, And the man who gains understanding;
- ¹⁴ For her proceeds are better than the profits of silver, And her gain than fine gold.
- ¹⁵ She is more precious than rubies, And all the things you may desire cannot compare with her.
- ¹⁶ Length of days is in her right hand, In her left hand riches and honor.
- ¹⁷ Her ways are ways of pleasantness, And all her paths are peace.
- ¹⁸ She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, And happy are all who retain her.

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

The reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah (60:11-16)

“Thus says the Lord...”

- ¹¹ Therefore your gates shall be open continually; They shall not be shut day or night, That men may bring to you the wealth of the Gentiles, And their kings in procession.
- ¹² For the nation and kingdom which will not serve you shall perish, And those nations shall be utterly ruined.
- ¹³ “The glory of Lebanon shall come to you, The cypress, the pine, and the box tree together, To beautify the place of My sanctuary; And I will make the place of My feet glorious.
- ¹⁴ Also the sons of those who afflicted you Shall come bowing to you, And all those who despised you shall fall prostrate at the soles of your feet; And they shall call you The City of the Lord, Zion of the Holy One of Israel.
- ¹⁵ “Whereas you have been forsaken and hated, So that no one went through you, I will make you an eternal excellence, A joy of many generations.
- ¹⁶ You shall drink the milk of the Gentiles, And milk the breast of kings; You shall know that I, the Lord, am your Savior And your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

Repose of the Venerable Sergius of Radonezh

September 25

The reading from Proverbs (*Composite #2 / Chps 10, 3, 8*)

The memory of the righteous is with praise and the blessing of the Lord is upon his head. Blessed is the man who has found wisdom and the mortal who has understanding. For it is better to purchase her than treasures of gold and silver. She is more precious than previous stones and all that is precious is unworthy of her. For length of days and years of life are in her right hand; and in her left hand are riches and glory. Out of her mouth proceeds righteousness and she bears law and mercy upon her tongue.

Hear me, O child, for I will speak noble things. Blessed is the man who keeps my ways, for my ways are the way of life, and in them is prepared favor from the Lord. Therefore, I pray you, and utter my voice to the sons of men: For I, wisdom, have dwelt with counsel and knowledge and I have called upon understanding. Counsel and safety are mine, understanding and strength are mine. I love those who love me and those seeking me shall find grace.

Understand craftiness, O you who are simple, and imbibe knowledge, you who are untaught. Hear me again, for I will speak noble things: I will open *my mouth* and from my lips *shall* come what is right. For my throat shall meditate truth; false lips are an abomination before me. All the words of my mouth are righteous; there is nothing in them that is twisted or perverse. They are all straight to him who understands and right to those who find knowledge.

I shall instruct you in truth, so that your hope will be in the Lord and you shall be filled with the Spirit.

The reading from Proverbs (10:31-11:12)

³¹ The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom, But the perverse tongue will be cut out.

³² The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable, But the mouth of the wicked what is perverse.

¹ Dishonest scales are an abomination to the Lord, But a just weight is His delight.

² When pride comes, then comes shame; But with the humble is wisdom.

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

- ³ The integrity of the upright will guide them, But the perversity of the unfaithful will destroy them.
- ⁴ Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, But righteousness delivers from death.
- ⁵ The righteousness of the blameless will direct his way aright, But the wicked will fall by his own wickedness.
- ⁶ The righteousness of the upright will deliver them, But the unfaithful will be caught by their lust.
- ⁷ When a wicked man dies, his expectation will perish, And the hope of the unjust perishes.
- ⁸ The righteous is delivered from trouble, And it comes to the wicked instead.
- ⁹ The hypocrite with his mouth destroys his neighbor, But through knowledge the righteous will be delivered.
- ¹⁰ When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices; And when the wicked perish, there is jubilation.
- ¹¹ By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted, But it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.
- ¹² He who is devoid of wisdom despises his neighbor, But a man of understanding holds his peace.

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (3:1-9)

- ¹ But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them.
- ² In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be affliction,
- ³ and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace.
- ⁴ For though in the sight of men they were punished, their hope is full of immortality.
- ⁵ Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of himself;
- ⁶ like gold in the furnace he tried them, and like a sacrificial burnt offering he accepted them.
- ⁷ In the time of their visitation they will shine forth, and will run like sparks through the stubble.
- ⁸ They will govern nations and rule other peoples, and the Lord will reign over them for ever.
- ⁹ Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are upon his elect, and he watches over his holy ones.

Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos

October 1

The reading from Genesis (28:10-17)

- ¹⁰ Now Jacob went out from Beersheba and went toward Haran.
- ¹¹ So he came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of that place and put it at his head, and he lay down in that place to sleep.
- ¹² Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.
- ¹³ And behold, the Lord stood above it and said: “I am the Lord God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants.
- ¹⁴ “Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.
- ¹⁵ “Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you.”
- ¹⁶ Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, “Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it.”
- ¹⁷ And he was afraid and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!”

The reading from the Prophecy of Ezekiel (43:27-44:4)

“Thus says the Lord...”

- ²⁷ ‘When these days are over it shall be, on the eighth day and thereafter, that the priests shall offer your burnt offerings and your peace offerings on the altar; and I will accept you,’ says the Lord God.”
- ¹ Then He brought me back to the outer gate of the sanctuary which faces toward the east, but it was shut.
- ² And the Lord said to me, “This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter by it, because the Lord God of Israel has entered by it; therefore it shall be shut.

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

- ³ “As for the prince, because he is the prince, he may sit in it to eat bread before the Lord; he shall enter by way of the vestibule of the gateway, and go out the same way.”
- ⁴ Also He brought me by way of the north gate to the front of the temple; so I looked, and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord; and I fell on my face.

The reading from Proverbs (9:1-11)

- ¹ Wisdom has built her house, She has hewn out her seven pillars;
- ² She has slaughtered her meat, She has mixed her wine, She has also furnished her table.
- ³ She has sent out her maidens, She cries out from the highest places of the city,
- ⁴ “Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!” As for him who lacks understanding, she says to him,
- ⁵ “Come, eat of my bread And drink of the wine I have mixed.
- ⁶ Forsake foolishness and live, And go in the way of understanding.
- ⁷ “He who corrects a scoffer gets shame for himself, And he who rebukes a wicked man only harms himself.
- ⁸ Do not correct a scoffer, lest he hate you;
- ⁹ Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; Teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.
- ¹⁰ “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.
- ¹¹ For by me your days will be multiplied, And years of life will be added to you.

Glorification of St. Innocent, Metropolitan of Moscow, Enlightener of the Aleuts

October 6

The reading from Proverbs (*Composite #2 / Chps 10, 3, 8*)

The memory of the righteous is with praise and the blessing of the Lord is upon his head. Blessed is the man who has found wisdom and the mortal who has understanding. For it is better to purchase her than treasures of gold and silver. She is more precious than previous stones and all that is precious is unworthy of her. For length of days and years of life are in her right hand; and in her left hand are riches and glory. Out of her mouth proceeds righteousness and she bears law and mercy upon her tongue.

Hear me, O child, for I will speak noble things. Blessed is the man who keeps my ways, for my ways are the way of life, and in them is prepared favor from the Lord. Therefore, I pray you, and utter my voice to the sons of men: For I, wisdom, have dwelt with counsel and knowledge and I have called upon understanding. Counsel and safety are mine, understanding and strength are mine. I love those who love me and those seeking me shall find grace.

Understand craftiness, O you who are simple, and imbibe knowledge, you who are untaught. Hear me again, for I will speak noble things: I will open *my mouth* and from my lips *shall* come what is right. For my throat shall meditate truth; false lips are an abomination before me. All the words of my mouth are righteous; there is nothing in them that is twisted or perverse. They are all straight to him who understands and right to those who find knowledge.

I shall instruct you in truth, so that your hope will be in the Lord and you shall be filled with the Spirit.

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (*Composite #3 / Chps 4, 5*)

The righteous man, though he die early, will be at rest. The righteous man who has died will judge the ungodly who are living. For they will see the end of the righteous, and will not understand what was said about him; for the Lord will cast down the ungodly speechless to the ground and shake them from the foundations; they shall become desolate to the end; they will be in sorrows, and

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

their memory will perish. For they will come with fear at the thought of their sins, and their iniquities shall stand against them to convict them.

Then the righteous man will stand with great boldness before those who have afflicted him, and those who have made of no account his labors. Having seen it, they shall be troubled with much fear and they will be amazed at his most-glorious salvation. They will say within themselves in repentance, in anguish of spirit they will groan and say: "This was he whom we had sometimes in derision and a proverb of reproach - we fools! We accounted his life as madness, and his end to be without honor. How is he numbered among the sons of God? And why is his lot among the Saints?"

"Therefore, we have erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness did not illumine us, nor did the sun shine on us. We took our fill of the paths of lawlessness and destruction, and we walked impassible pathways, but the way of the Lord we have not known."

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon

(Composite #4 / Prov. Chp 10; Wis. Chps 6,7,8,9)

The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom; the lips of the wise man know grace. The mouth of the wise speaks wisdom, and the truth delivers them from death. If a righteous man dies, hope is not, for the son of the righteous is born to life, and in his own good things he acquires the fruit of righteousness. There is always light for the righteous and they obtain grace and glory from the Lord. The tongue of the wise is a good sister-in-law, and in their hearts rests wisdom. The Lord loves the hearts of the holy, and acceptable to Him are all the undefiled in the way.

The wisdom of the Lord illuminates the faces of the wise. For she takes hold of those desiring her by making herself first known to them. She is easily seen by those who love her. He who rises early to seek her shall have no difficulty, and those keeping vigil for the sake of her shall quickly be without sorrows. For she goes about seeking those worthy of her, and graciously reveals herself in the pathways. Against wisdom evil does not prevail.

Therefore I was a lover of her beauty; I loved her and sought her out from my youth. I desired to make her my bride, and even the Master of All loved her. For she is an initiate in the knowledge of God, and a discoverer of His works. Her labors are virtues, for she teaches temperance and prudence, justice and

courage; nothing in life is more necessary for men than these. And if anyone desires much knowledge, she knows the things of old, and beholds things to come; she understands turns of speech and the solution of riddles; she has foreknowledge of signs and wonders and the outcome of times and seasons. She is a mediator of good things for all, for immortality is in her, and glory in the company of her words.

Therefore I appealed to the Lord and prayed to Him, and said to Him with all my heart: “O God of *my* fathers and Lord of mercy, Who hast made all things by Thy word, and by Thy wisdom hast fashioned man that he should have dominion over the creatures made by Thee, that he should rule the world in holiness and righteousness: Give me wisdom that sits by Thy throne, and cast me not away from among Thy children, for I am Thy servant and the son of Thy handmaid. Send her forth from the heavens, from Thy holy abode, and from the throne of Thy glory, that she may be with me, in understanding, and preserve me in her glory. For the thoughts of mortals are miserable, and their intentions likely to fail.”

Glorification of St. Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow, Apostle to America

October 9

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (3:1-9)

- ¹ But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them.
- ² In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be affliction,
- ³ and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace.
- ⁴ For though in the sight of men they were punished, their hope is full of immortality.
- ⁵ Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of himself;
- ⁶ like gold in the furnace he tried them, and like a sacrificial burnt offering he accepted them.
- ⁷ In the time of their visitation they will shine forth, and will run like sparks through the stubble.
- ⁸ They will govern nations and rule other peoples, and the Lord will reign over them for ever.
- ⁹ Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are upon his elect, and he watches over his holy ones.

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (5:15-6:3)

- ¹⁵ But the righteous live for ever, and their reward is with the Lord; the Most High takes care of them.
- ¹⁶ Therefore they will receive a glorious crown and a beautiful diadem from the hand of the Lord, because with his right hand he will cover them, and with his arm he will shield them.
- ¹⁷ The Lord will take his zeal as his whole armor, and will arm all creation to repel his enemies;
- ¹⁸ he will put on righteousness as a breastplate, and wear impartial justice as a helmet;
- ¹⁹ he will take holiness as an invincible shield,
- ²⁰ and sharpen stern wrath for a sword, and creation will join with him to fight against the madmen.

- ²¹ Shafts of lightening will fly with true aim, and will leap to the target as from a well-drawn bow of clouds,
²² and hailstones full of wrath will be hurled as from a catapult; the water of the sea will rage against them, and rivers will relentlessly overwhelm them;
²³ a mighty wind will rise against them, and like a tempest it will winnow them away. Lawlessness will lay waste the whole earth, and evil-doing will overturn the thrones of rulers.
- ¹ Listen therefore, O kings, and understand; learn, O judges of the ends of the earth.
² Give ear, you that rule over multitudes, and boast of many nations.
³ For your dominion was given you from the Lord, and your sovereignty from the Most High, who will search out your works and inquire into your plans.

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (4:7-15)

- ⁷ But the righteous man, though he die early, will be at rest.
⁸ For old age is not honored for length of time, nor measured by number of years;
⁹ but understanding is gray hair for men, and a blameless life is ripe old age.
¹⁰ There was one who pleased God and was loved by him,
¹¹ He was caught up lest evil change his understanding or guile deceive his soul.
¹² For the fascination of wickedness obscures what is good, and roving desire perverts the innocent mind.
¹³ Being perfected in a short time, he fulfilled long years;
¹⁴ for his soul was pleasing to the Lord, therefore he took him quickly from the midst of wickedness.
¹⁵ Yet the peoples saw and did not understand, nor take such a thing to heart, that God's grace and mercy are his elect, and he watches over his holy ones.

Commemoration of the Holy Fathers Of the 7th Ecumenical Council

October 11-17

The reading from Genesis (14:14-20)

- ¹⁴ Now when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his three hundred and eighteen trained servants who were born in his own house, and went in pursuit as far as Dan.
- ¹⁵ He divided his forces against them by night, and he and his servants attacked them and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus.
- ¹⁶ So he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot and his goods, as well as the women and the people.
- ¹⁷ And the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley), after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him.
- ¹⁸ Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High.
- ¹⁹ And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth;
- ²⁰ And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tithe of all.

The reading from Deuteronomy (1:8-11, 15-17)

- ⁸ Behold, I have set the land before you; go in and take possession of the land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give to them and to their descendants after them.'
- ⁹ "At that time I said to you, 'I am not able alone to bear you;
- ¹⁰ the Lord your God has multiplied you, and behold, you are this day as the stars of heaven from multitude.
- ¹¹ May the Lord, the God of your fathers, make you a thousand times as many as you are, and bless you, as he has promised you!
- ¹⁵ So I took the head of your tribes, wise and experienced men, and set them as heads over you, commanders of thousands, commanders of hundreds, commanders of fifties, commanders of tens, and officers, throughout your tribes.

- ¹⁶ And I charged your judges at that time, ‘Hear the cases between your brethren, and judge righteously between a man and his brother or the alien that is with him.
- ¹⁷ You shall not be partial in judgment; you shall hear the small and the great alike; you shall not be afraid of the face of man, for the judgment is God’s ; and the case that is too hard for you, you shall bring to me, and I will hear it.’

The reading from Deuteronomy (10:14-21)

- ¹⁴ Behold, to the Lord your God belong to heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it;
- ¹⁵ yet the Lord set his heart in love upon your fathers and chose their descendants after them, you above all peoples, as at this day.
- ¹⁶ Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no longer stubborn.
- ¹⁷ For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of Lords, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who is not partial and takes no bribe.
- ¹⁸ He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing.
- ¹⁹ Love the sojourner therefore; for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt.
- ²⁰ You shall fear the Lord your God; you shall serve him and cleave to him, and by his name you shall swear.
- ²¹ He is your praise; he is your God, who has done for these great, and terrible things which your eyes have seen.

Great martyr Demetrius

October 26

The reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah

(Comp #16 / 63:15-64:5, 8-9)

“Thus says the Lord...”

Turn, O Lord, from heaven, and look from Thy holy habitation and Thy glory. Where are Thy zeal and Thy strength? Where is the multitude of Thy mercies and Thy compassions that Thou hast endured for us? For Thou are our Father, because Abraham has not known us, nor has Israel known us. But do Thou, O Lord, our Father, deliver us; from the beginning Thy name has been on us. Why hast Thou turned us aside, O Lord, from Thy ways, and made hard our hearts that we should not fear Thee? Return for the sake of Thy servants, for the sake of the tribes of Thine inheritance, that, *at least*, we may inherit a small part of Thy holy mountain. Our adversaries have trodden down Thy sanctuary. We have become as at the beginning when Thou didst not rule over us, and Thy name was not called upon us.

If Thou wouldst open the heavens, trembling would take hold of the mountains from Thee, and they would melt; like wax melts before the fire. And fire shall burn up the enemies, and Thy name shall be made manifest to Thine adversaries; the nations shall be troubled at Thy presence. When Thou shalt do glorious things, trembling shall take hold of the mountains from Thee. From the ages we have not heard, nor have our eyes seen a God beside Thee, or Thy works which Thou shalt perform for them that wait for mercy. For mercy joins them that work righteousness, and they shall remember Thy ways.

And now, O Lord, Thou art our Father, and we are clay; Thou art our Fashioner and all of us are the work of Thy hands. Be not very angry with us, O Lord, and remember not our sins for ever; but now look on us, for we are all Thy people.

The reading from the Prophecy of Jeremiah (2:2-12)

“Thus says the Lord...”

- ² “Go and cry in the hearing of Jerusalem, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD: “I remember you, the kindness of your youth, the love of your betrothal, when you went after Me in the wilderness, in a land not sown.
- ³ Israel was holiness to the LORD, the first-fruits of His increase. All that devour him will offend; disaster will come upon them,” says the LORD.””

- ⁴ Hear the word of the LORD, O house of Jacob and all the families of the house of Israel.
- ⁵ Thus says the LORD: “ What injustice have your fathers found in Me, that they have gone far from Me, have followed idols, and have become idolaters?
- ⁶ Neither did they say, ‘Where is the LORD, Who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, Who led us through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and pits, through a land of drought and the shadow of death, through a land that no one crossed and where no
- ⁷ I brought you into a bountiful country, to eat its fruit and its goodness. But when you entered, you defiled My land and made My heritage an abomination.
- ⁸ The priests did not say, ‘Where is the LORD?’ And those who handle the law did not know Me; the rulers also transgressed against Me; the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things that do not profit.
- ⁹ “ Therefore I will yet bring charges against you,” says the LORD, “And against your children’s children I will bring charges.
- ¹⁰ For pass beyond the coasts of Cyprus and see, send to Kedar and consider diligently, and see if there has been such a thing.
- ¹¹ Has a nation changed its gods, which are not gods? But My people have changed their Glory for what does not profit.
- ¹² Be astonished, O heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid; be very desolate,” says the LORD.

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (4:7-15)

- ⁷ But the righteous man, though he die early, will be at rest.
- ⁸ For old age is not honored for length of time, nor measured by number of years;
- ⁹ but understanding is gray hair for men, and a blameless life is ripe old age.
- ¹⁰ There was one who pleased God and was loved by him,
- ¹¹ He was caught up lest evil change his understanding or guile deceive his soul.
- ¹² For the fascination of wickedness obscures what is good, and roving desire perverts the innocent mind.
- ¹³ Being perfected in a short time, he fulfilled long years;
- ¹⁴ for his soul was pleasing to the Lord, therefore he took him quickly from the midst of wickedness.
- ¹⁵ Yet the peoples saw and did not understand, nor take such a thing to heart, that God’s grace and mercy are his elect, and he watches over his holy ones.

Synaxis of the Archangel Michael and the Heavenly Hosts

November 8

The reading from Joshua (5:13-15)

- ¹³ And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, “Are You for us or for our adversaries?”
- ¹⁴ So He said, “No, but as Commander of the army of the Lord I have now come.” And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and said to Him, “What does my Lord say to His servant?”
- ¹⁵ Then the Commander of the Lord’s army said to Joshua, “Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand is holy.” And Joshua did so.

The reading from Judges (6:2,7,11-24)

- ² and the hand of Midian prevailed against Israel. Because of the Midianites, the children of Israel made for themselves the dens, the caves, and the strongholds which are in the mountains.
- ⁷ And it came to pass, when the children of Israel cried out to the Lord because of the Midianites,
- ¹¹ Now the Angel of the Lord came and sat under the terebinth tree which was in Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, while his son Gideon threshed wheat in the winepress, in order to hide it from the Midianites.
- ¹² And the Angel of the Lord appeared to him, and said to him, “The Lord is with you, you mighty man of valor!”
- ¹³ Gideon said to Him, “O my Lord, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all His miracles which our fathers told us about, saying, ‘Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt?’ But now the Lord has forsaken us and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.”
- ¹⁴ Then the Lord turned to him and said, “Go in this might of yours, and you shall save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Have I not sent you?”
- ¹⁵ So he said to Him, “O my Lord, how can I save Israel? Indeed my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father’s house.”
- ¹⁶ And the Lord said to him, “Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat the Midianites as one man.”

- ¹⁷ Then he said to Him, “If now I have found favor in Your sight, then show me a sign that it is You who talk with me.
- ¹⁸ Do not depart from here, I pray, until I come to You and bring out my offering and set it before You.” And He said, “I will wait until you come back.”
- ¹⁹ So Gideon went in and prepared a young goat, and unleavened bread from an ephah of flour. The meat he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot; and he brought them out to Him under the terebinth tree and presented them.
- ²⁰ The Angel of God said to him, “Take the meat and the unleavened bread and lay them on this rock, and pour out the broth.” And he did so.
- ²¹ Then the Angel of the Lord put out the end of the staff that was in His hand, and touched the meat and the unleavened bread; and fire rose out of the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened bread. And the Angel of the Lord departed out of his sight.
- ²² Now Gideon perceived that He was the Angel of the Lord. So Gideon said, “Alas, O Lord God! For I have seen the Angel of the Lord face to face.”
- ²³ Then the Lord said to him, “Peace be with you; do not fear, you shall not die.”
- ²⁴ So Gideon built an altar there to the Lord, and called it The-Lord-Is-Peace. To this day it is still in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

The reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah (14:7-20)

“Thus says the Lord...”

- ⁷ The whole earth is at rest and quiet; They break forth into singing.
- ⁸ Indeed the cypress trees rejoice over you, And the cedars of Lebanon, Saying, ‘Since you were cut down, No woodsman has come up against us.’
- ⁹ “Hell from beneath is excited about you, To meet you at your coming; It stirs up the dead for you, All the chief ones of the earth; It has raised up from their thrones All the kings of the nations.
- ¹⁰ They all shall speak and say to you: ‘Have you also become as weak as we? Have you become like us?’
- ¹¹ Your pomp is brought down to Sheol, And the sound of your stringed instruments; The maggot is spread under you, And worms cover you.’
- ¹² “How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations!
- ¹³ For you have said in your heart: ‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north;
- ¹⁴ I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.’
- ¹⁵ Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit.

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

- 16 "Those who see you will gaze at you, And consider you, saying: 'Is this the man who made the earth tremble, Who shook kingdoms,
- 17 Who made the world as a wilderness And destroyed its cities, Who did not open the house of his prisoners?"
- 18 "All the kings of the nations, All of them, sleep in glory, Everyone in his own house;
- 19 But you are cast out of your grave Like an abominable branch, Like the garment of those who are slain, Thrust through with a sword, Who go down to the stones of the pit, Like a corpse trodden underfoot.
- 20 You will not be joined with them in burial, Because you have destroyed your land And slain your people. The brood of evildoers shall never be named.

St. John Chrysostom

November 13

The reading from Proverbs (*Composite #2 / Chps 10, 3, 8*)

The memory of the righteous is with praise and the blessing of the Lord is upon his head. Blessed is the man who has found wisdom and the mortal who has understanding. For it is better to purchase her than treasures of gold and silver. She is more precious than previous stones and all that is precious is unworthy of her. For length of days and years of life are in her right hand; and in her left hand are riches and glory. Out of her mouth proceeds righteousness and she bears law and mercy upon her tongue.

Hear me, O child, for I will speak noble things. Blessed is the man who keeps my ways, for my ways are the way of life, and in them is prepared favor from the Lord. Therefore, I pray you, and utter my voice to the sons of men: For I, wisdom, have dwelt with counsel and knowledge and I have called upon understanding. Counsel and safety are mine, understanding and strength are mine. I love those who love me and those seeking me shall find grace.

Understand craftiness, O you who are simple, and imbibe knowledge, you who are untaught. Hear me again, for I will speak noble things: I will open *my mouth* and from my lips *shall* come what is right. For my throat shall meditate truth; false lips are an abomination before me. All the words of my mouth are righteous; there is nothing in them that is twisted or perverse. They are all straight to him who understands and right to those who find knowledge.

I shall instruct you in truth, so that your hope will be in the Lord and you shall be filled with the Spirit.

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon

(Composite #4 / Prov. Chp 10; Wis. Chps 6,7,8,9)

The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom; the lips of the wise man know grace. The mouth of the wise speaks wisdom, and the truth delivers them from death. If a righteous man dies, hope is not, for the son of the righteous is born to life, and in his own good things he acquires the fruit of righteousness. There is always light for the righteous and they obtain grace and glory from the Lord. The tongue of the wise is a good sister-in-law, and in their hearts rests wisdom.

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

The Lord loves the hearts of the holy, and acceptable to Him are all the undefiled in the way.

The wisdom of the Lord illuminates the faces of the wise. For she takes hold of those desiring her by making herself first known to them. She is easily seen by those who love her. He who rises early to seek her shall have no difficulty, and those keeping vigil for the sake of her shall quickly be without sorrows. For she goes about seeking those worthy of her, and graciously reveals herself in the pathways. Against wisdom evil does not prevail.

Therefore I was a lover of her beauty; I loved her and sought her out from my youth. I desired to make her my bride, and even the Master of All loved her. For she is an initiate in the knowledge of God, and a discoverer of His works. Her labors are virtues, for she teaches temperance and prudence, justice and courage; nothing in life is more necessary for men than these. And if anyone desires much knowledge, she knows the things of old, and beholds things to come; she understands turns of speech and the solution of riddles; she has foreknowledge of signs and wonders and the outcome of times and seasons. She is a mediator of good things for all, for immortality is in her, and glory in the company of her words.

Therefore I appealed to the Lord and prayed to Him, and said to Him with all my heart: “O God of *my* fathers and Lord of mercy, Who hast made all things by Thy word, and by Thy wisdom hast fashioned man that he should have dominion over the creatures made by Thee, that he should rule the world in holiness and righteousness: Give me wisdom that sits by Thy throne, and cast me not away from among Thy children, for I am Thy servant and the son of Thy handmaid. Send her forth from the heavens, from Thy holy abode, and from the throne of Thy glory, that she may be with me, in understanding, and preserve me in her glory. For the thoughts of mortals are miserable, and their intentions likely to fail.”

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon

(Composite #5 / Chps 4,6,7,2)

When the righteous is praised, the people rejoice: For his memory is immortality, since it is known both by the Lord and by men, for his soul was pleasing to the Lord. Therefore love wisdom, O men, and live. Desire her and be instructed: For her beginning is love and the keeping of her laws. Honor wisdom that you may reign forever.

I will tell you and not hide the mysteries of God from you. For He is the Guide of wisdom, the Corrector of the wise and the Artisan of all thoughts and deeds. Wisdom will teach with all understanding: For in her is a Spirit, intelligent and holy, the Radiance of the Everlasting Light and the Image of the Grace of God.

She fashions friends of God and prophets. For she is more beautiful than the sun and above all the order of the stars. Compared with the light she is found to be first. She delivered from infirmities those pleasing her and guided them on the paths of righteousness. She gave to them understanding to be holy and to preserve them from those who would ensnare them, and she granted them strength in struggles, so that all might understand that the most powerful of all is piety, and that evil might not prevail against wisdom, nor judgment pass away without convicting the wicked.

Having reasoned unrighteously, they said to themselves, “Let us oppress the righteous man and not spare his venerableness, nor let us be ashamed of the gray hairs of the old man of many years. But let our might be our law and let us seize the righteous, because he is inconvenient to us and is opposed to our deeds; he reproaches us for apostasy against the law and divulges the sins of our training.

“He declares to us to have knowledge of God and calls himself a child of the Lord. He became to us a reproof of our thoughts; the very sight of him is a burden to us, because his life is unlike that of others, and his ways are very different. We are considered by him to be an insult, and he avoids our ways as unclean; he calls the end of the righteous blessed.

“Let us see if his words are true; let us test him to see what will happen to him. Let us torment him with revilement and tortures, that we may understand his meekness and test his guilelessness. Let us condemn him to a shameful death, for, according to his own words, he shall be respected.”

Thus they reasoned, but were deceived, for their wickedness blinded them. They did not know the mysteries of God, nor did they discern that Thou alone art God, having the power of life and death: Who saves in times of affliction and delivers from every evil; Who art compassionate and merciful, granting Grace to His venerable ones, and opposing the proud with His arm.

Entrance into the Temple

November 21

The reading from Exodus (*Composite #17 / Chps 40*)

The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: “On the first day of the first month you shall set up the Tabernacle of the Testimony, and you shall put in it the Ark and cover it with the veil. You shall bring in the table and the lampstand; and you shall set *there* a golden altar to burn incense before the Ark of the Testimony. And you shall put a covering on the door of the tabernacle of the Testimony.

“Then you shall take the oil of anointing and anoint the Tabernacle and all that is in it, and consecrate it and all its vessels; and it shall be holy. And you shall consecrate the Altar of Burnt Offerings; [it] shall be most holy”

And Moses did all that the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel had commanded him. And a cloud covered the Tabernacle of the Testimony and the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle. Moses was not able to enter the Tabernacle of the Testimony, because the cloud overshadowed it, and the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle.

The reading from the Third Book of Kings

(Composite #18 / 1 Kings 7,8)

And it came to pass when Solomon had finished building the House of the Lord, he assembled all the elders of Israel in Zion, to bring the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord out of the City of David, which is Zion. And the priests took up the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, the Tabernacle of the Testimony, and all the holy vessels that were in the Tabernacle of the Testimony.

And the King and all Israel *went* before the Ark. And the priests brought the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord to its place, into the Oracle of the Temple, into the Holy of Holies, under the wings of the cherubim. For the cherubim spread out their wings over the place of the Ark so that the cherubim made a covering above the Ark and its holy things above. There was nothing in the Ark except the two tablets of the Covenant which Moses put there at Horeb, when the Lord had made a Covenant.

And when the priests came out from the holy place, a cloud filled the house.

And the priests were unable to stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord God Almighty filled the house.

The reading from the Prophecy of Ezekiel (43:27-44:4)

“Thus says the Lord...”

- ²⁷ ‘When these days are over it shall be, on the eighth day and thereafter, that the priests shall offer your burnt offerings and your peace offerings on the altar; and I will accept you,’ says the Lord God.”
- ¹ Then He brought me back to the outer gate of the sanctuary which faces toward the east, but it was shut.
- ² And the Lord said to me, “This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter by it, because the Lord God of Israel has entered by it; therefore it shall be shut.
- ³ “As for the prince, because he is the prince, he may sit in it to eat bread before the Lord; he shall enter by way of the vestibule of the gateway, and go out the same way.”
- ⁴ Also He brought me by way of the north gate to the front of the temple; so I looked, and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord; and I fell on my face.

St. Nicholas of Myra in Lycia

December 6

The reading from Proverbs (*Composite #2 / Chps 10, 3, 8*)

The memory of the righteous is with praise and the blessing of the Lord is upon his head. Blessed is the man who has found wisdom and the mortal who has understanding. For it is better to purchase her than treasures of gold and silver. She is more precious than precious stones and all that is precious is unworthy of her. For length of days and years of life are in her right hand; and in her left hand are riches and glory. Out of her mouth proceeds righteousness and she bears law and mercy upon her tongue.

Hear me, O child, for I will speak noble things. Blessed is the man who keeps my ways, for my ways are the way of life, and in them is prepared favor from the Lord. Therefore, I pray you, and utter my voice to the sons of men: For I, wisdom, have dwelt with counsel and knowledge and I have called upon understanding. Counsel and safety are mine, understanding and strength are mine. I love those who love me and those seeking me shall find grace.

Understand craftiness, O you who are simple, and imbibe knowledge, you who are untaught. Hear me again, for I will speak noble things: I will open *my mouth* and from my lips *shall* come what is right. For my throat shall meditate truth; false lips are an abomination before me. All the words of my mouth are righteous; there is nothing in them that is twisted or perverse. They are all straight to him who understands and right to those who find knowledge.

I shall instruct you in truth, so that your hope will be in the Lord and you shall be filled with the Spirit.

The reading from Proverbs (10:31-11:12)

- ³¹ The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom, But the perverse tongue will be cut out.
- ³² The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable, But the mouth of the wicked what is perverse.
- ¹ Honest scales are an abomination to the Lord, But a just weight is His delight.
- ² When pride comes, then comes shame; But with the humble is wisdom.

- ³ The integrity of the upright will guide them, But the perversity of the unfaithful will destroy them.
- ⁴ Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, But righteousness delivers from death.
- ⁵ The righteousness of the blameless will direct his way aright, But the wicked will fall by his own wickedness.
- ⁶ The righteousness of the upright will deliver them, But the unfaithful will be caught by their lust.
- ⁷ When a wicked man dies, his expectation will perish, And the hope of the unjust perishes.
- ⁸ The righteous is delivered from trouble, And it comes to the wicked instead.
- ⁹ The hypocrite with his mouth destroys his neighbor, But through knowledge the righteous will be delivered.
- ¹⁰ When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices; And when the wicked perish, there is jubilation.
- ¹¹ By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted, But it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.
- ¹² He who is devoid of wisdom despises his neighbor, But a man of understanding holds his peace.

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (4:7-15)

- ⁷ But the righteous man, though he die early, will be at rest.
- ⁸ For old age is not honored for length of time, nor measured by number of years;
- ⁹ but understanding is gray hair for men, and a blameless life is ripe old age.
- ¹⁰ There was one who pleased God and was loved by him,
- ¹¹ He was caught up lest evil change his understanding or guile deceive his soul.
- ¹² For the fascination of wickedness obscures what is good, and roving desire perverts the innocent mind.
- ¹³ Being perfected in a short time, he fulfilled long years;
- ¹⁴ for his soul was pleasing to the Lord, therefore he took him quickly from the midst of wickedness.
- ¹⁵ Yet the peoples saw and did not understand, nor take such a thing to heart, that God's grace and mercy are his elect, and he watches over his holy ones.

Repose of the Venerable Herman of Alaska

December 13

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (3:1-9)

- ¹ But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them.
- ² In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be affliction,
- ³ and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace.
- ⁴ For though in the sight of men they were punished, their hope is full of immortality.
- ⁵ Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of himself;
- ⁶ like gold in the furnace he tried them, and like a sacrificial burnt offering he accepted them.
- ⁷ In the time of their visitation they will shine forth, and will run like sparks through the stubble.
- ⁸ They will govern nations and rule other peoples, and the Lord will reign over them for ever.
- ⁹ Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are upon his elect, and he watches over his holy ones.

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (5:15-6:3)

- ¹⁵ But the righteous live for ever, and their reward is with the Lord; the Most High takes care of them.
- ¹⁶ Therefore they will receive a glorious crown and a beautiful diadem from the hand of the Lord, because with his right hand he will cover them, and with his arm he will shield them.
- ¹⁷ The Lord will take his zeal as his whole armor, and will arm all creation to repel his enemies;
- ¹⁸ he will put on righteousness as a breastplate, and wear impartial justice as a helmet;
- ¹⁹ he will take holiness as an invincible shield,
- ²⁰ and sharpen stern wrath for a sword, and creation will join with him to fight against the madmen.

- ²¹ Shafts of lightening will fly with true aim, and will leap to the target as from a well-drawn bow of clouds,
²² and hailstones full of wrath will be hurled as from a catapult; the water of the sea will rage against them, and rivers will relentlessly overwhelm them;
²³ a mighty wind will rise against them, and like a tempest it will winnow them away. Lawlessness will lay waste the whole earth, and evil-doing will overturn the thrones of rulers.
- ¹ Listen therefore, O kings, and understand; learn, O judges of the ends of the earth.
² Give ear, you that rule over multitudes, and boast of many nations.
³ For your dominion was given you from the Lord, and your sovereignty from the Most High, who will search out your works and inquire into your plans.

The reading from the Wisdom of Solomon (4:7-15)

- ⁷ But the righteous man, though he die early, will be at rest.
⁸ For old age is not honored for length of time, nor measured by number of years;
⁹ but understanding is gray hair for men, and a blameless life is ripe old age.
¹⁰ There was one who pleased God and was loved by him,
¹¹ He was caught up lest evil change his understanding or guile deceive his soul.
¹² For the fascination of wickedness obscures what is good, and roving desire perverts the innocent mind.
¹³ Being perfected in a short time, he fulfilled long years;
¹⁴ for his soul was pleasing to the Lord, therefore he took him quickly from the midst of wickedness.
¹⁵ Yet the peoples saw and did not understand, nor take such a thing to heart, that God's grace and mercy are his elect, and he watches over his holy ones.

Sunday before the Nativity of Christ

December 18-24

The reading from Genesis (14:14-20)

- ¹⁴ Now when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his three hundred and eighteen trained servants who were born in his own house, and went in pursuit as far as Dan.
- ¹⁵ He divided his forces against them by night, and he and his servants attacked them and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus.
- ¹⁶ So he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot and his goods, as well as the women and the people.
- ¹⁷ And the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley), after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him.
- ¹⁸ Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High.
- ¹⁹ And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth;
- ²⁰ And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tithe of all.

The reading from Deuteronomy (1:8-11, 15-17)

- ⁸ Behold, I have set the land before you; go in and take possession of the land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give to them and to their descendants after them.'
- ⁹ "At that time I said to you, 'I am not able alone to bear you;
- ¹⁰ the Lord your God has multiplied you, and behold, you are this day as the stars of heaven from multitude.
- ¹¹ May the Lord, the God of your fathers, make you a thousand times as many as you are, and bless you, as he has promised you!
- ¹⁵ So I took the head of your tribes, wise and experienced men, and set them as heads over you, commanders of thousands, commanders of hundreds, commanders of fifties, commanders of tens, and officers, throughout your tribes.
- ¹⁶ And I charged your judges at that time, 'Hear the cases between your brethren, and judge righteously between a man and his brother or the alien that is with him.'

¹⁷ You shall not be partial in judgment; you shall hear the small and the great alike; you shall not be afraid of the face of man, for the judgment is God's ; and the case that is too hard for you, you shall bring to me, and I will hear it.'

The reading from Deuteronomy (10:14-21)

- ¹⁴ Behold, to the Lord your God belong to heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it;
- ¹⁵ yet the Lord set his heart in love upon your fathers and chose their descendants after them, you above all peoples, as at this day.
- ¹⁶ Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no longer stubborn.
- ¹⁷ For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of Lords, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who is not partial and takes no bribe.
- ¹⁸ He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing.
- ¹⁹ Love the sojourner therefore; for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt.
- ²⁰ You shall fear the Lord your God; you shall serve him and cleave to him, and by his name you shall swear.
- ²¹ He is your praise; he is your God, who has done for these great, and terrible things which your eyes have seen.

Nativity of Our Lord

December 25

The reading from Genesis (1:1-13)

(Vespers, 1st Reading)

- ¹ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
- ² The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep.
And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.
- ³ Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.
- ⁴ And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness.
- ⁵ God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.
- ⁶ Then God said, “Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.”
- ⁷ Thus God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so.
- ⁸ And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.
- ⁹ Then God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear”; and it was so.
- ¹⁰ And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that it was good.
- ¹¹ Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth”; and it was so.
- ¹² And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.
- ¹³ So the evening and the morning were the third day.

The reading from Numbers (24:2-3,5-9,17-18)

(Vespers, 2nd Reading)

- ² And Balaam raised his eyes, and saw Israel encamped according to their tribes; and the Spirit of God came upon him.
- ³ Then he took up his oracle and said: “The utterance of Balaam the son of Beor,
The utterance of the man whose eyes are opened,
- ⁵ “How lovely are your tents, O Jacob! Your dwellings, O Israel!

- ⁶ Like valleys that stretch out, Like gardens by the riverside, Like aloes planted by the LORD, Like cedars beside the waters.
- ⁷ He shall pour water from his buckets, And his seed shall be in many waters.
“His king shall be higher than Agag, And his kingdom shall be exalted.
- ⁸ “God brings him out of Egypt; He has strength like a wild ox; He shall consume the nations, his enemies; He shall break their bones And pierce them with his arrows.
- ⁹ ‘He bows down, he lies down as a lion; And as a lion, who shall rouse him?’ “Blessed is he who blesses you, And cursed is he who curses you.”
- ¹⁷ “I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; A Star shall come out of Jacob; A Scepter shall rise out of Israel, And batter the brow of Moab, And destroy all the sons of tumult.
- ¹⁸ “And Edom shall be a possession; Seir also, his enemies, shall be a possession, While Israel does valiantly.

The reading from Prophecy of Micah (4:6-7; 5:2-4)

(Vespers, 3rd Reading)

- ⁶ In that day, declares the LORD, I will gather the lame; I will assemble the exiles and those I have brought to grief.
- ⁷ I will make the lame a remnant, those driven away a strong nation. The LORD will rule over them in Mount Zion from that day and forever.
- ² “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.”
- ³ Therefore He shall give them up, until the time that she who is in labor has given birth; then the remnant of His brethren shall return to the children of Israel.
- ⁴ And He shall stand and feed His flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD His God; and they shall abide, for now He shall be great to the ends of the earth.

(Then we stand and sing the following troparion. The reader reads the verses and the choir responds. Sometimes the reader also reads the first line of the choral response. The choir then sings the second line.)

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

Troparion: **Tone 6**

In the secrecy of a cave You were born,
But heaven spoke openly through a star,
Revealing You to all, O Savior.
The star led wise men to worship You; //
As on them, O Lord, have mercy on us!

Verse: On the holy mount stands the city he founded; the Lord loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwelling places of Jacob. (*ps 87:1-2*)

Refrain: The star led wise men to worship Thee:

People: As on them, O Lord, have mercy on us!

Verse: Glorious things are spoken of you, a city of God. Among those who know me I mention Rahab and Babylon; (*ps 87:3-4*)

Refrain: The star led wise men to worship Thee:

People: As on them, O Lord, have mercy on us!

Verse: Behold, Philistia and Tyre, with Ethiopia – “This one was born there” they say. (*ps 87:4*)

Refrain: The star led wise men to worship Thee:

People: As on them, O Lord, have mercy on us!

Verse: And of Zion it shall be said, “This one and that one were born in her”; for the Most High himself will establish her. (*ps 87:4-5*)

Refrain: The star led wise men to worship Thee:

People: As on them, O Lord, have mercy on us!

Verse: The Lord records as he registers the peoples, “This one was born there.” Singers and dancers alike say, “All my springs are in you.” (*ps 87:6-7*)

Refrain: The star led wise men to worship Thee:

People: As on them, O Lord, have mercy on us!

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

The Choir sings the entire Troparion once again.

The reading from Prophecy of Isaiah (11:1-10)

(Vespers, 4th Reading)

- ¹ There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.
- ² The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.
- ³ His delight is in the fear of the Lord, And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, Nor decide by the hearing of His ears;
- ⁴ But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, And decide with equity for the meek of the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked.
- ⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, And faithfulness the belt of His waist.
- ⁶ “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, The leopard shall lie down with the young goat, The calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little child shall lead them.
- ⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze; Their young ones shall lie down together; And the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
- ⁸ The nursing child shall play by the cobra’s hole, And the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper’s den.
- ⁹ They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord As the waters cover the sea.
- ¹⁰ “And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, Who shall stand as a banner to the people; For the Gentiles shall seek Him, And His resting place shall be glorious.”

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

The reading from Prophecy of Jeremiah (Baruch) (3:35-4:4)

(Vespers, 5th Reading)

- ³⁵ This is our God; no other can be compared to him!
³⁶ He found the whole way to knowledge, and gave her to Jacob his servant and to Israel whom He loved.
³⁷ Afterward she appeared on earth and lived among men.
¹ She is the book of the commandments of God, and the law that endures for ever. All who hold fast will live, and those who forsake her will die.
² Turn, O Jacob, and take her; walk toward the shining of her light.
³ Do not give your glory to another, or your advantage to an alien people.
⁴ Happy we are, O Israel, for we know what is pleasing to God.

The reading from the Prophecy of Daniel (2:31-36, 44-45)

(Vespers, 6th Reading)

- ³¹ “You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome.
³² This image’s head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze,
³³ its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.
³⁴ You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces.
³⁵ Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great
³⁶ “This is the dream. Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king.
⁴⁴ In the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.
⁴⁵ Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.

(Then we stand and sing the following troparion. The reader reads the verses and the choir responds. Sometimes the reader also reads the first line of the choral response. The choir then sings the second line.)

Troparion: **Tone 6**

From a virgin You rose, O Christ,
Our spiritual Sun of Righteousness!
Though nothing can contain You,
A star revealed You as contained in a cave!
You have led the wise men to worship You;
With them we magnify You: //
O Giver of Life, glory to You!

Verse: The Lord reigns; He is robed in majesty! The Lord is robe, he is girded
with strength. (*ps 93:1*)

Refrain: You have led the wise men to worship You; With them we magnify You:

People: O Giver of Life, glory to You!

Verse: Yea, the world is established; it shall never be moved; your throne is
established from of old; You are from everlasting. (*ps 93:1-2*)

Refrain: You have led the wise men to worship You; With them we magnify You:

People: O Giver of Life, glory to You!

Verse: The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice,
the floods lift up their roaring. (*ps 93:3*)

Refrain: You have led the wise men to worship You; With them we magnify You:

People: O Giver of Life, glory to You!

Verse: Mightier than the thunders of many waters, mightier than the waves of
the sea, the Lord on high is mighty! Your decrees are very sure. (*ps 93:5*)

Refrain: You have led the wise men to worship You; With them we magnify You:

People: O Giver of Life, glory to You!

Verse: Holiness befits your house, O Lord, forevermore. (*ps 93:5*)

Refrain: You have led the wise men to worship You; With them we magnify You:

People: O Giver of Life, glory to You!

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

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

The Choir sings the entire Troparion once again.

The reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah (9:6-7) *(Vespers, 7th Reading)*

- ⁶ For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- ⁷ Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

The reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah (7:10-16; 8:1-4, 9-10) *(Vespers, 8th Reading)*

- ¹⁰ Moreover the Lord spoke again to Ahaz, saying,
- ¹¹ “Ask a sign for yourself from the Lord your God; ask it either in the depth or in the height above.”
- ¹² But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, nor will I test the Lord!”
- ¹³ Then he said, “Hear now, O house of David! Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will you weary my God also?
- ¹⁴ “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.
- ¹⁵ “Curds and honey He shall eat, that He may know to refuse the evil and choose the good.
- ¹⁶ “For before the Child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that you dread will be forsaken by both her kings.
- ¹ Moreover the Lord said to me, “Take a large scroll, and write on it with a man’s pen concerning Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz.
- ² “And I will take for Myself faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah.”
- ³ Then I went to the prophetess, and she conceived and bore a son. Then the Lord said to me, “Call his name Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz;

Vesper Readings for Great and Lesser Feast days

- ⁴ “for before the child shall have knowledge to cry ‘My father’ and ‘My mother,’ the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria will be taken away before the king of Assyria.”
- ⁹ “Be shattered, O you peoples, and be broken in pieces! Give ear, all you from far countries. Gird yourselves, but be broken in pieces; Gird yourselves, but be broken in pieces.
- ¹⁰ Take counsel together, but it will come to nothing; Speak the word, but it will not stand, For God is with us.”