

**A Service for New Year's Eve  
being the Eve of the Start of the Civil New Year  
& the Eve of the Feast of the Holy Name**



**The Opening Sentences**

*All stand, and the Officiant greets the people with these words.*

Light and peace, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

*People* Thanks be to God.

Jesus said, "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one lights a lamp to put it under a bucket, but on a lamp-stand where it gives light for everyone in the house. And you, like the lamp, must shed light among your fellow men, so that they may see the deed you do, and give glory to your Father in heaven."

*Matthew 5:14-16*

Let us pray.

Almighty God, you have poured upon us the new light of your incarnate Word: Grant that this light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

**O Gracious Light**

*Phos hilaron*

O gracious light,  
pure brightness of the everliving Father in heaven,  
O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed!  
Now as we come to the setting of the sun,  
and our eyes behold the vesper light,  
we sing your praises, O God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.  
You are worthy at all times to be praised by happy voices,  
O Son of God, O Giver of Life,  
and to be glorified through all the worlds.

## **The Lessons**

### **On the Hebrew Year**

*Exodus 23:9-16, 20-21*

You shall not oppress a resident alien; you know the heart of an alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt.

For six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield; but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, so that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave the wild animals may eat. You shall do the same with your vineyard, and with your olive orchard.

For six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall rest, so that your ox and your donkey may have relief, and your home-born slave and the resident alien may be refreshed. Be attentive to all that I have said to you. Do not invoke the names of other gods; do not let them be heard on your lips.

Three times in the year you shall hold a festival for me. You shall observe the festival of unleavened bread; as I commanded you, you shall eat unleavened bread for seven days at the appointed time in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt.

No one shall appear before me empty-handed.

You shall observe the festival of harvest, of the first fruits of your labour, of what you sow in the field. You shall observe the festival of ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather in from the field the fruit of your labour.

I am going to send an angel in front of you, to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared. Be attentive to him and listen to his voice; do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgression; for my name is in him.

Here ends the reading.

*Officiant* Let us pray.

O God our Creator, you have divided our life into days and seasons, and called us to acknowledge your providence year after year: Accept your people who come to offer their praises, and, in your mercy, receive their prayers; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

## A Season for all Things

*Ecclesiastes 3:1-15*

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

a time to be born, and a time to die;  
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;  
a time to kill, and a time to heal;  
a time to break down, and a time to build up;  
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;  
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;  
a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;  
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;  
a time to seek, and a time to lose;  
a time to keep, and a time to throw away;  
a time to tear, and a time to sew;  
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;  
a time to love, and a time to hate;  
a time for war, and a time for peace.

What gain have the workers from their toil? I have seen the business that God has given to everyone to be busy with. He has made everything suitable for its time; moreover, he has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live; moreover, it is God's gift that all should eat and drink and take pleasure in all their toil. I know that whatever God does endures for ever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it; God has done this, so that all should stand in awe before him. That which is, already has been; that which is to be, already is; and God seeks out what has gone by.

Here ends the reading.

*Officiant* Let us pray.

In your wisdom, O Lord our God, you have made all things, and have allotted to each of us the days of our life: Grant that we may live in your presence, be guided by your Holy Spirit, and offer all our works to your honor and glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

## Remember your Creator

*Ecclesiastes 12:1-8*

Remember your creator in the days of your youth, before the days of trouble come, and the years draw near when you will say, 'I have no pleasure in them'; before the sun and the light and the moon and the stars are darkened and the clouds return with the rain; on the day when the guards of the house tremble, and the strong men are bent, and the women who grind cease working because they are few, and those who look through the windows see dimly; when the doors on the street are shut, and the sound of the grinding is low, and one rises up at the sound of a bird, and all the daughters of song are brought low; when one is afraid of heights, and terrors are in the road; the almond tree blossoms, the grasshopper drags itself along and desire fails; because all must go to their eternal home, and the mourners will go about the streets; before the silver cord is snapped, and the golden bowl is broken, and the pitcher is broken at the fountain, and the wheel broken at the cistern, and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the breath returns to God who gave it. Vanity of vanities, says the Teacher; all is vanity.

Here ends the reading.

*Officiant* Let us pray.

Immortal Lord God, you inhabit eternity, and have brought us your unworthy servants to the close of another year: Pardon, we entreat you, our transgressions of the past, and graciously abide with us all the days of our life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

## The Acceptable Time

*II Corinthians 5:17-6:2*

So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says,

‘At an acceptable time I have listened to you,  
and on a day of salvation I have helped you.’  
See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation!  
Here ends the reading.

*Officiant* Let us pray.

Most gracious and merciful God, you have reconciled us to yourself through Jesus Christ your Son, and called us to new life in him: Grant that we, who begin this year in his Name, may complete it to his honor and glory; who lives and reigns now and for ever. *Amen.*

### The Psalm

Psalm 8

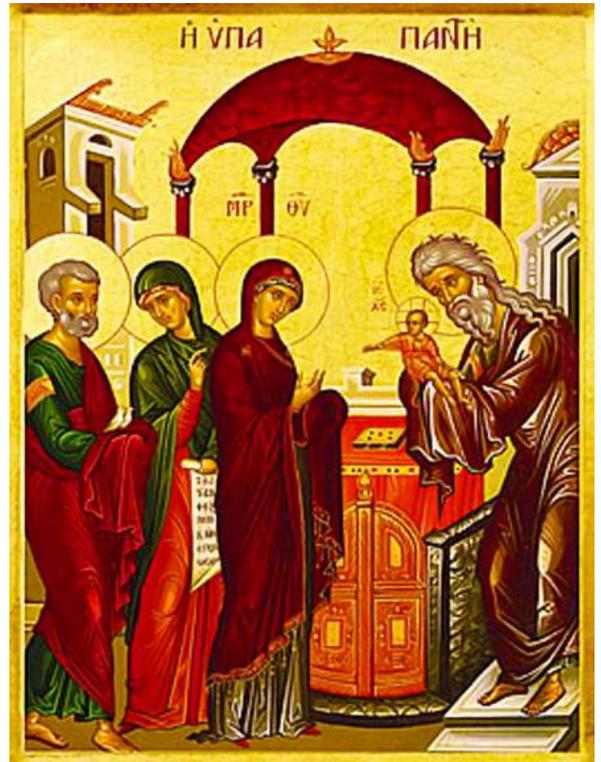
*Domine, Dominus noster*

1. O Lord our Governor,  
how exalted is your Name in all the world!
2. Out of the mouths of infants and children  
your majesty is praised above the heavens.
3. You have set up a stronghold against your adversaries,  
to quell the enemy and the avenger.
4. When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers,  
the moon and the stars you have set in their courses,
5. What is man that you should be mindful of him?  
the son of man that you should seek him out?
6. You have made him but little lower than the angels;  
you adorn him with glory and honor;
7. You give him mastery over the works of your hands;  
you put all things under his feet:
8. All sheep and oxen,  
even the wild beasts of the field,
9. The birds of the air, the fish of the sea,  
and whatsoever walks in the paths of the sea.
10. O Lord our Governor,  
how exalted is your Name in all the world!

## The Holy Name of our Lord

Luke 2:15-21

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. After eight days had passed,



it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

## The Homily

### The New Year's Litany

O Triune God, grant us your gracious, guiding presence as we prepare enter the new year. As we join Christians of every time who have awaited Jesus' return, lead us into this new time, confident that your promises will be fulfilled. Hear us, O God:

*For Your mercy is great.*

Spirit of Truth, call us to repentance at the beginning of this new year. Forgive us for past unfaithfulness, silence in the face of injustice and inaction amid suffering. Move us from the desire to hoard our wealth toward faithful stewardship. Help us to share your gifts with those who cry out for daily bread. Hear us, O God:

*For Your mercy is great.*

Prince of Peace, healer and reconciler, heal the divisions in your Church and among the peoples of the world. As you prayed that we should all be one, give us new visions to enable that unity. Be with us on our ecumenical journey, and with those sisters and brothers who surround us in the great cloud of witnesses. Hear us, O God:

*For Your mercy is great.*

God of all ages, release us from fear. Lead us forward, even as you have led your Church forward from an empty cross and tomb through 20 centuries. Be our companion as we walk unexplored paths into an unknown future. Open us to new possibilities. Renew our hope. Grant us faith to move ahead. Be our companion until Jesus comes again. In his most holy name we pray. *Amen.*

Praying now as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say:

*Our Father, who art in heaven,*

*hallowed be thy Name,*

*thy kingdom come,*

*thy will be done,*

*on earth as it is in heaven.*

*Give us this day our daily bread.*

*And forgive us our trespasses,*

*as we forgive those*

*who trespass against us.*

*And lead us not into temptation,*

*but deliver us from evil.*

*For thine is the kingdom,*

*and the power, and the glory,*

*for ever and ever. Amen.*

*The Officiant then says the Collect for the Feast of the Holy Name*

Eternal Father, you gave to your incarnate Son the holy name of Jesus to be the sign of our salvation: Plant in every heart, we pray, the love of him who is the Savior of the world, our Lord Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. *Amen.*