



Discovering Biblical Meanings in Liturgical Verses

Themes of the Feast of Christ's Nativity

Suggested Discussion Themes, Commentary,
Questions and
Activities Related to Liturgical Verses and Biblical
Texts

For Children, Teen and Adult Groups

Pages 1-58 in the Booklet: The Services of Christmas
(It is useful for teens and adults to have their own books. Order
from OCPC)

Liturgical titles are in green; *Biblical titles* are in red, as are
phrases for discussion. *Blue brackets* indicate Chapter
Numbers for additional references in *Winter Pascha*, by Fr.
Thomas Hopko.

Teachers should choose a sampling of verses to correspond
with the theme of the week (1 or more per session, related
where possible with a corresponding activity that helps
students think about and act upon the content of the text).

The Royal Hours



The First Hour (p.1-11)

[*Winter Pascha-Chap.18 & 19*]

Mary was of David's seed

So she went with Joseph to register in Bethlehem.

She bore in her womb the fruit not sown by man.

Since there was no room at the inn,

The cave became a beautiful palace for the queen.

Christ is born, raising up the image that fell of old.

(Royal Hours: Troparion, Tone 4)

Biblical Resource: Luke 1:26-38; 2:1-7

"The cave became a beautiful palace for the queen."

Sometimes we might feel that it would have been better if Christ had been born in a palace, for at least there would have been more worldly recognition of his life and work. Many people in Israel expected the Messiah to be a strong political leader. Discuss how it is significant that Jesus was not born amidst wealth and splendor. Although all of the events surrounding the birth of Christ were foretold, they do not take place only to fulfill prophecy but because through them God reveals to us His great love and humility. Compare the liturgical text with the biblical texts of this event (Luke 2). What is the significance of Jesus being born of the seed of David?

If Jesus had been born a worldly prince, how might that have changed his mission? How does life in Christ transform what is lowly into greatness. What is the "image" that fell of old (cf. Gen. 1:26-2:3), and how does this "fall" affect us? (**Adolescent-Adult**)

Prepare, O Bethlehem

For Eden has been opened to all.

Adorn yourself, O Ephratha,

For the Tree of Life blossoms forth from the virgin in the cave.

Her womb is a spiritual paradise planted with the Fruit Divine;

If we eat of it, we shall live forever and not die like Adam.

Christ is coming to restore the image which He made in the beginning.

(Royal Hours: Troparion, Tone 4, when served on Dec. 22 or 23)

Biblical Resource: Micah 5:2-4; Luke 1:26-38; 2:1-7; Genesis 1:26-2:3

Christ is coming to restore the image which He made in the beginning.

Through his Nativity, Christ restores the proper order to Creation. Read the story of the Creation/Fall narrative in Genesis (Gen. 1:26-3:24). Read Micah 5:2-4. Discuss the role of the Virgin Mary in the bringing of salvation to the world.

How is Mary's obedience and willingness to bear Christ (see Luke 1:26ff) in direct opposition to Adam and Eve's behavior in the Garden? How are we to understand what this verse is saying to us? What was (see *Genesis*) the image that was made in the beginning? (Young Adult-Adult)

Make ready, O Bethlehem

Let the manger be prepared.

Let the cave show its welcome.

The truth comes and the shadow flees.

God is born of a virgin and revealed to men.

He is clothed in our flesh, and makes it divine.

Therefore Adam is renewed and cries out with Eve,

Thy favor has appeared on earth, O Lord,

For the salvation of the human race.

(Royal Hours: Tone 8)

Biblical Resource: Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8:1-2 10:1,12-17

He is clothed in our flesh, and makes it divine.

In this hymn, who is called to "make ready" and what are they preparing for? What is meant by "The truth comes and the shadow flees, or (in another hymn) "The shadow of the law passed when Grace came." How can a shadow obscure or hide something? What (or who) is the truth? Who is "clothed in our flesh," and who or what is made divine?

Discuss how life in Christ differs from sacrifices under the Law. What is different about God's new covenant? The entire Nativity cycle is about renewal and "incarnation," when God took on human flesh and form in order to sanctify it. (Break apart the word "incarnation" to see what the different parts mean. Consult a dictionary to find similar words or parts of words.) His offering of Himself replaced the need for animal sacrifices and sin offerings prescribed by Old Testament Law. Through His sacrifice on the Cross, Adam (all people) is renewed, the whole world is sanctified and freed from the bondage of sin and death. (Young Adult-Adult)

Now the prophecy approaches its fulfillment

For it had mystically proclaimed:

"You, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,

Are by no means the least among Judah's rulers!"

Prepare your cave!

From you the Ruler of the Nations comes to me in the flesh:

Christ our God, born of a young virgin!

He will feed His flock, the new Israel.

Let us all give Him glory!

(Royal Hours: Tone 8)

Now the prophecy approaches its fulfillment

What is prophecy? (*Webster: "a divinely inspired utterance often foretelling future events".*) Who are the prophets? (Daniel, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, et al.) In the hymnography of the Nativity Cycle the fulfillment of prophecy is mentioned frequently. Review the prophecies that are read during the Royal Hours of Christmas and identify the passages that tell of the coming events related to Christ's birth and life. Begin with Micah 5:2-4, which is read during the 1st Hour of the Royal Hours celebrated before the Feast of the Nativity.

He will feed His flock, the new Israel.

With a Concordance and a Bible (or a good one-volume Dictionary of the Bible), check these words and the verses where they can be found: Who is *Bethlehem? the house of Ephratha? thousands of Judah? The new Israel?* What events are they referring to? Check the text of the verses and Old Testament readings in the services. What connections can you make between some of the Old Testament prophecies and the events surrounding the birth of Christ, e.g., Bethlehem: (*Birthplace*), David: (*Ancestor and Lineage*), Virgin: *Mother*, etc. (Middle School-Adult)

Joseph said to the Virgin:

**What has happened to you, O Mary?
I am troubled; what can I say to you?
Doubt clouds my mind; depart from me!
What has happened to you, O Mary?
Instead of honor, you bring me shame.
Instead of joy, you fill me with grief.
Men who praised me will blame me.
I cannot bear condemnation from every side.
I received you, a pure virgin in the sight of the Lord.
What is this that I now see?**

(Royal Hours: Tone 8)

What has happened to you, O Mary?

After learning that Mary was pregnant with Jesus, Joseph was troubled. Find in these verses the phrases that express his doubts and concerns. Read Matthew 1:18-25 and explain Joseph's problem. How were Joseph's questions answered and why didn't God tell him sooner? Read the following verse and compare with the one above.

Tell us, O Joseph:

**Why do you bring a maiden great with child to Bethlehem?
"I have searched the prophets," he said.
"I have been instructed by an angel.
"I am convinced that Mary will give birth to God,
"In a manner beyond understanding.
"Wise men from the East will come to worship Him,
"Offering precious gifts in adoration."
O Lord, incarnate for us, glory to Thee!**

I am convinced that Mary will give birth to God, in a manner beyond understanding.

God reveals things to us on a "need to know" basis, when we are ready. Why not just tell us everything "up front"? Discuss decisions that we make and how we might make them differently if we had more information "up front". Would we have gone to college knowing how difficult it could be? Would we have had children if we knew ahead of time about troubles that would occur? Joseph trusted in God and was always reading the Holy Scriptures. He didn't know how or why Mary was bearing a child, but God sent an angel to

him to assure him that Mary's child truly was a gift of God. So Joseph trusted the Lord and continued to care for Mary. (See the Gospel reading below.) (Young Adult-Adult)

Biblical Readings (Using the readings and the verses, find the answers to the questions.)

Reading from the Prophet Micah: **Micah 5:2-4**

How has Christ fulfilled the prophecy of Micah?

Epistle: Hebrews 1:1-12

Christ is above the angels, with the Father from the Beginning and greater than the prophets. In this Epistle (letter) we can see clearly the understanding that the New Testament Church felt itself neither subject nor inferior to the Jewish faith, but rather was clearly carrying on as God intended, through faith in Christ. Discuss how the Epistles were letters written to the early churches to clarify disputes, set forth proper doctrine and bolster the faith of the communities. What misunderstandings about Christ exist in our world that an apostle might write a letter about today? (Middle School-Adult)

Gospel: Matthew 1:18-25

The Evangelist tells of the Annunciation and Joseph's concerns and his dream. Joseph was an honorable man. Why was Joseph's dream significant for him? Why do you think that Matthew included it in the Gospel? (Young Adult-Adult)

Kontakion, Tone 3

Today the virgin comes to the cave

To give birth to the Eternal Word.

Hear the glad tidings and rejoice, O universe!

With the angels and shepherds glorify Him who reveals Himself;

The eternal God, a little child!

With the angels and shepherds glorify Him...the eternal God, a little child!

This Kontakion includes references to the Virgin, the cave, the Christ child, the angels and shepherds, etc. Using the icon of the Nativity of Christ discuss the different figures who had a part in these events. Talk about how wonderful it is that God Himself would come to us as a "little child." See Luke 2:1-20. Also, refer to the hymn: **What shall we offer...** (Young children-Adult)

The Third Hour (p.12-19)

He is our God:

There is no other to compare with Him.

Born of a virgin, He comes to live with men.

The Only-begotten Son appears as a mortal man.

He rests in a lowly manger.

The Lord of Glory is wrapped in swaddling clothes.

A star leads the wise men to worship Him,

And with them we sing:

O Holy Trinity, save our souls!

In this hymn we hear about the star, which led the Wise Men to the Christ child. The Wise Men understood the prophecies and they knew that a Savior had been born. We understand that it is God who orders the universe. He sets the stars in the sky. In many Native Alaskan villages, after the celebration of the feast of the Nativity, the people go from house to house singing Christmas hymns and carols. They call this tradition "starring" and at the front of the group a person carries a large star, mounted on a pole, which is spun throughout the singing. **Starring can be done in** (Pre-school-Adult).

Before Thy birth, O Lord

This hymn glorifies God as the creator of the universe, who willingly, and for our sakes, is laid in a manger. Discuss what it means that God *willingly* is *incarnate* (taken on bodily form). (Adult)

Tell us, O Joseph:

Why do you bring a maiden great with child to Bethlehem?

"I have searched the prophets," he said.

"I have been instructed by an angel.

"I am convinced that Mary will give birth to God,

"In a manner beyond understanding.

"Wise men from the East will come to worship Him,

"Offering precious gifts in adoration."

O Lord, incarnate for us, glory to Thee!

I am convinced that Mary will give birth to God...

We must understand that Joseph was not duped; that God is honest with us. In this hymn how does Joseph know that what he has discovered about Mary is true: that Mary will give birth *to God!* It's very important that Joseph truly understood what was happening. Underline the important words in the hymn. Discuss Joseph's role in the life of Jesus. Study and describe him in the icon of the birth of Christ. (Young Adult-Adult)

Reading from Baruch: Baruch 3:35-4:4 (pg.17)

Baruch explains that the Jews were the chosen people, into whose midst God would come. We are the New Jerusalem. How? (Adult)

Epistle: Galatians 3:23-29

The law was our custodian until Christ came, that we might be justified by faith. (vs.24) How is a life of faith different than a life of being subject to laws? (Adult)

Gospel: Luke 2:1-20

The birth of Jesus. This is also a good time to use the icon and/or a crèche to illustrate the Gospel lesson. (Pre-school-Adult)

The Sixth Hour (p. 20-30)

Come, O God-inspired faithful,

Arise and behold the descent of God from on high!

He manifests Himself to us in Bethlehem!

Let us cleanse our minds, and offer Him a life of virtue instead of myrrh.

Let us prepare with faith to celebrate His nativity,

Storing up spiritual treasure and crying:

Glory in the highest to God in Trinity!

His good pleasure is now revealed to men:

As the lover of man He sets Adam free from the ancestral curse.

Let us cleanse our minds, and offer Him a life of virtue instead of myrrh...

This hymn turns the focus from the incredible fact of Christ's birth to our response. "Let us cleanse our minds, and offer Him a life of virtue instead of myrrh. Let us prepare with faith to celebrate His nativity." How do we prepare? We pray, we fast, we give alms. How do

we conduct ourselves? The hymn tells us that we prepare with faith and store up spiritual treasures. What are spiritual treasures? How can we store them? Why would we want to store them? When would we use them? Think about the spiritual treasures of purity, self control, love, faith, etc. Make a list of as many as you can and how you might “store them up” more in your own life. (Children-Adult)

Listen, O heaven! Give ear, O earth!

Let the foundations of the earth be shaken!

Let trembling seize the regions beneath the earth,

For our God and Creator has clothed Himself in created flesh;

He fashioned all creation, yet reveals Himself in the womb of her that He formed.

O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!

How incomprehensible are His judgments;

And how unsearchable His ways!

He fashioned all creation, yet reveals Himself in the womb of her that He formed.

We continue to explore how the Creator clothes Himself in created flesh. For a time the word “awesome” was a fashionable slang word. A movie could be awesome, or a pepperoni pizza could be awesome. In the Orthodox Church we regularly refer to God as awesome. What do we mean by “awesome” and how do we show that we believe God is awesome? Think about what God has done. He who created the whole universe now takes on flesh and is born as a little baby. He who has no bounds now accepts to live within certain “limits” as He is clothed in human flesh. This is truly “awesome”. See also below, the text beginning with the words: **Today, He who holds all creation in His hand...** and find the passages that show how God’s Son accepts the limits that come with taking on flesh and becoming a human person (Pre-teen-Adult)

Come, O Christ-bearing people!

Let us behold wonders that will amaze every mind.

As we worship in faith, let us sing praises.

Today a maiden great with child goes up to Bethlehem.

There she will give birth to the Lord.

Choirs of angels go before her.

Joseph, her husband, cried out when he saw these things.

"What is this strange mystery in you, O virgin?

"How will you bear a child,

O calf who never bore the yoke of man?"

Ready to give birth to Jesus, Mary and Joseph travel to Bethlehem. Choirs of angels go before them. Draw Mary and Joseph on the dusty road, with angels accompanying them. What are angels? (messengers, servants, announcers, protectors) When do we hear about them? (Annunciation, announcing the news to the shepherds, and at the tomb) How about our own guardian angel? Recite the prayer for the guardian angel and give out copies. (Elementary school and up)

Reading from Isaiah: Isaiah 7:10-16, 8:1-4, 8-10 (pg.27)

The prophecy of the virgin birth, ending with "**God is with us...**".(See the **Service of Compline.**) Read the prophecy. What does it tell us about Jesus and the circumstances of His birth? How are these things fulfilled? Isaiah tells us “make your plans if you wish, but they will never stand, even among yourselves, for God is with us.” What does this mean? How does being a Christian change the way that you look at the world? (Pre-Teen-Adult)

Epistle: Hebrews 1:10-2:3

In Hebrews we are taught about how things of this world pass away and about Christ's superiority to the angels. It is important for us to understand that in the early centuries, and even today, there is confusion about Christ. Why is it important for us to understand that life on this earth passes away, but life in Christ is eternal? (Young Adult-Adult)

Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

The story of the Wise Men. They meet with Herod, but do not return to him to report on the birth of Jesus. The wise men followed a star and were warned in a dream not to return to Herod. Who else had a dream that helped to direct their actions concerning Jesus? (Joseph). Trace the wise men's journey—from the East (the Orient, Persia), to the palace of Herod in Jerusalem, to the village of Bethlehem. Why would they bring gold, frankincense and myrrh? How do you think that Mary felt about all these things? (Young Adult-Adult)

The Ninth Hour (p.30-40)

Herod was filled with alarm

When he saw the righteous wise men.

Overcome by fury,

He determined precisely when the child was born.

Mothers were robbed of their infants:

Their tender lives were reaped as a bitter harvest.

Milk stopped flowing and breasts dried up.

Great was the suffering!

Therefore assemble in holy fear, O faithful,

To worship the birth of Christ!

Herod was filled with alarm when he saw the righteous wise men.

Why was Herod so concerned about Jesus? How did he understand his kingship? What did he do? The Slaying of the Innocents is such a devastating event. It reminds us of how fragile life is. Discuss what Herod's mindset might have been, both personally and politically. (Adult)

When Joseph went up to Bethlehem,

His heart was filled with sadness.

But you cried out to Him, O Virgin:

Why are you so troubled?

Why are you in misery seeing me with child?

Do you not understand at all?

I bear a fearful mystery!

Cast your fears away, and learn a strange wonder:

God in His mercy descends from heaven to earth.

Within my womb He has taken flesh!

When He is pleased to be born, you will see Him.

You will rejoice, and worship Him, your Creator.

The angels ceaselessly praise Him in song,

Glorifying Him with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

The mystery of Jesus' birth is proclaimed. Why might Joseph still be concerned, even after having dreams affirming Mary's purity and the wonder of the Incarnation of the Lord? Look at the icon of the Nativity and discuss who Joseph is and what he does? How does the verse convey Mary's attitude and acceptance of this wonder? (See also Matt.1:18-25 and Luke 1:26-56; 2:15-20) **(Older Teens-Adult)**

Today He who holds the whole creation in His hand is born of a virgin.
He whose essence none can touch is bound in swaddling clothes as a mortal man.

God, who in the beginning fashioned the heavens, lies in a manger.

He who rained manna on His people in the wilderness is fed on milk from His mother's breast.

The Bridegroom of the Church summons the wise men;

The Son of the virgin accepts their gifts.

We worship Thy birth, O Christ.

We worship Thy birth, O Christ.

We worship Thy birth, O Christ.

Show us also Thy Holy Theophany!

He who rained manna...is fed on milk... Show us also Thy Holy Theophany.

Discuss the Old Testament comparisons. Find the story of the raining of the manna (Numbers 11; Exodus 16:1-31 and compare it to Jesus' concern and response for the people in Matt. 6:25-34 and 15:29-38). What is the verse and these passages saying to us?

In the Church we are always looking forward. Here we look forward to Theophany. Why? Discuss the significance of the Nativity-Theophany cycle as the *Winter Pascha*. Teens might illustrate matching panels for each Old Testament and New Testament contrasts that are given in the verse, together with panels that summarize the ending. **(Older Teens-Adult)**

Prophecy of Isaiah: Isaiah: 9:6-7

For unto us a Child is born... The prophecy of Isaiah glorifying God. This prophecy is also familiar to us because part of it is sung during one of the hymns in the Nativity Cycle. Find the hymn (during **God is with us** – in Great Compline) So much of our hymnography is taken directly from scripture. Find other examples. **(Readers on up)**

Epistle: Hebrews 1:1-5; 2:5-18; 3:1-4,12-13.

Through God's Son, Jesus Christ, man is given a high calling—not as mere pawns, but as children of God, brothers and sisters in Christ. In this passage Christ's partaking of man's nature is chronicled and His being incarnate, tempted, dying and rising again. It is very important to affirm what we believe. How do we do that? **(Teens and Adults)**

Gospel: Matthew 2:13-23

The story of Jesus, Mary and Joseph's travels from Bethlehem to Egypt and then to Nazareth after the death of Herod. Find these places on a map. Trace the journey of the family to estimate the distances they traveled. Using a Concordance and the Holy Scriptures, find the prophecies that Matthew writes about. **(Pre-teen-Adult)**

Vespers and the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

(p. 41-58)

Come, let us greatly rejoice in the Lord, as we sing of this present mystery.
The wall which divided God from man has been destroyed.
The flaming sword withdraws from Eden's gate;
The cherubim withdraw from the Tree of Life,
and I, who had been cast out through my disobedience,
now feast on the delights of paradise:
For today the father's perfect image,
marked with the stamp of His eternity,
has taken the form of a servant.
Without undergoing change He is born from an unwedded mother;
He was true God, and He remains the same,
but through His love for mankind,
He has become what He never was: true man!
Come, O faithful, let us cry to Him:
O God, born of a virgin, have mercy on us!

The wall which divided God from man has been destroyed...

Review the story in **Genesis 2:4-9,15-17; 3:1-7, 8-21 and 22-24**. Teens may role-play in contemporary language the episode in the Garden of Eden (Ch. 3), and discuss how we continue to behave in a similar fashion in our own lives. Give examples of how we are responsible for creating "walls" that separate us from both God and each other. How does Christ help us to tear down those walls? Find the words in the verse that describe Jesus as God. Then find those words that describe what he assumes when He becomes man. (Older Teens-Adult)

When the Lord Jesus was born of the holy virgin,
the whole universe was filled with light.
The shepherds watched in the fields.
The wise men worshipped and the angels sang.
But Herod was troubled,
for God had appeared in the flesh.
He is the Savior of our souls!

This verse is a short description of the birth of Christ as witnessed by those who recognized the child Jesus as the one who came to save us. Using the icon of the feast, have the children find the wise men, shepherds, angels, the light (star) and the animals that were present. (For this age, you need not focus on Herod, until the story of the flight to Egypt is presented). (Younger Children)

See also the hymn (below) that begins with the words: "What shall we offer..."

Thy Kingdom endures forever, O Christ our God.
Thy rule is from age to age.
Made flesh by the Holy Spirit, made man of the ever-virgin Mary,
Thou hast filled all creation with joy.

**The light of Thy coming has shone on us:
Every living creature praises Thee,
the image of the Father's glory.
Light of Light, the radiance of the Father,
The same yesterday, today, and forever,
Thou hast shone forth from the virgin.
O God, have mercy on us!**

The light of Thy coming has shone on us...

The revelation and the presence of God as the "light of the world" is the focus of this hymn. Highlight all the key words that express this in the verse, and then read the Gospel of St. John 1:1-14. Compare what St. John is saying with the words in the hymn. (Pre-teen-Adult)

**What shall we offer Thee, O Christ,
who for our sakes hast appeared on earth as man?
Every creature made by Thee offers Thee thanks:
The angels offer a hymn; the heavens, a star;
the wise men, gifts; the shepherds, their wonder;
the earth, its cave; the wilderness, a manger.
and we offer Thee a virgin mother!
O Pre-eternal God, have mercy on us!**

What shall we offer Thee, O Christ...

This well-known hymn is one of the best introductions to the **Icon of the Feast** of the Nativity. It is especially helpful when presenting the icon to young children. Cf. [Activities](#) for ways it may be used also in a Christmas Pageant with the youngest children, or as a review or matching game with elementary-age children.

**When Augustus ruled alone upon the earth,
the many kingdoms of men came to an end,
and when Thou wast made man of the pure virgin,
the many gods of idolatry were destroyed.
The cities of the world passed under one single rule,
and the nations came to believe in one sovereign Godhead.
The peoples were enrolled by the decree of Caesar,
and we the faithful were enrolled in the name of the Godhead,
when Thou, our God, wast made man.
Great is Thy mercy, O Lord! Glory to Thee!**

...and we the faithful were enrolled in the name of the Godhead, when Thou, our God, wast made man.

There are many people in the world who doubt the birth of God's Son as a human person, but both the Gospel of St. Luke (2:1-7), as well as this ancient hymn record the actual time in history when the birth of Jesus took place. Read the Gospel passage and compare it with the verse above and the verse below. What was the name of the ruler? Who was the governor of Syria at that time? Why was Jesus born in Bethlehem and not in the city of Nazareth in Judea where his earthly parents lived? What does the verse say to us about

how different people worshipped God and how we understand and worship "God made man". See also the verse below from p. 102 of the **Services of Christmas**:

When it was time for Thy coming on earth,
The first imperial taxation was held,
But Thou also didst take a census, O Lord,
Recording the names of all men who believed in Thy birth
Thou didst use the decree of Caesar for Thine own end:
To make manifest Thy timeless and eternal Kingdom!
Therefore we pay Thee our taxes, not with golden coins,
But with the riches of Orthodox theology,
O God and Saviour of our souls.

Verses at the conclusion of the service:

Troparion (Tone 4)

Thy nativity, O Christ our God,
Has shone to the world the light of wisdom.
For by it, those who worshipped the stars
Were taught by a star to adore Thee,
The Sun of Righteousness,
And to know Thee, the Orient from on high.
O Lord, glory to Thee!
Glory to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

When Jesus was born, many people looked to the stars and believed that their different positions in the sky at different times of the year could predict good or bad things that might happen. Their worship of the stars became their kind of religion, [though people who study the stars today (called astrologists) are more interested in the age of the planets and how the world began or evolves]. But on the night that Jesus, God's Son was born, there was a particularly bright star in the East (i.e., the Orient). The wise men who followed it most probably came from Persia and/or Arabia. The star led by them to Bethlehem, where they found the child that was to be the only object of true worship: God himself, in the person of his son. Find other words in the verse that describe the light and to whom it led. (Middle School and up.)

Kontakion (Tone 3)

Today the virgin gives birth to the transcendent one,
And the earth offers a cave to the unapproachable one.
Angels, with shepherds, glorify Him.
The wise men journey with the star,
Since for our sake the eternal God was born as a little child!

Look up the words "transcendent," "unapproachable," "eternal." What do they say about the person who was born. (Middle School and up.)

Great Compline

Cf. Great Compline verses in the full text of the services, in the Liturgical Resource Bin. See what new things you can find about the birth of Jesus and who He truly is. Focus particularly on the following hymns: (pp. 72-73 in the Services of Christmas book.) "**God is With Us...**," "**Today heaven and earth are united..**," "**Man was created in God's image and likeness...**" and (p. 73) "**When Jesus the Lord was born....**"