



THE SHEPHERD'S VOICE

*Daily Devotion at Zion + January 10, 2021 AD + **Epiphany Season***

This Week: The Gloria Patri

What is the “Gloria Patri?” It’s a verse often spoken in the course of worship:

**Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen**

“Gloria Patri” is a shorthand title, Latin for “Glory to the Father.” The Church uses this verse at the end of psalms, hymns, or canticles (portions of the New Testament set to music), or sometimes it just sings the verse by itself. It has graced Christian worship for over 1,700 years. It simply but powerfully summarizes our faith and draws us into the worship of the true and only God.

The season of Epiphany, which includes the celebration of Christ’s Baptism (January 10 this year), is a fitting time for learning about the Gloria Patri.

At the Baptism of Christ, all three persons of God are revealed: as Jesus, the Son, is baptized, His Father speaks (“You are my Son, the beloved”), and the Holy Spirit descends on Him as a dove (Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11, Luke 3:21-22). To this day, and at Christ’s command (Matthew 28:20-21), Christians are baptized “in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” How, then, shall our daily devotion glorify Him?

About the Cover Art

This painting of the Holy Trinity is accredited to an online art studio called “Waiting for the Word.” Influenced by the northern Renaissance artists but with contemporary use of color, it places Christ boldly at the center, thorn-crowned and His hair seeming to bleed into rivulets of blood down His body. His Father, portrayed as a ghostly older man, appears in the upper left corner, arms positioned as though He’s “giving up His Son” (John 3:16), the Holy Spirit symbolized as a dove. All of it is awash in swirls of blue, recalling both Christ’s baptism and ours, the flood of salvation that bears our sins away.

Why “Glory,” and Why the Father, Son, and Spirit?

To use the Gloria Patri best, it’s good to know what it’s saying.

Glory: *Kabōd* in Hebrew and *doxa* in Greek, glory has two uses that are closely related. First, it refers to the shining appearance of God (see Exodus 24:16-17, Isaiah 6:3). Second, it is the praise or good opinion of God held among His people. To see the connection between the two, consider when someone says something like, “Her red hair is her glory”—her hair is both beautiful and widely spoken of. Glory is therefore closely related to *confession of faith*, too: by the faith of His people, God gains glory on earth.

Father, Son, Spirit: The Holy Trinity is essential to our faith. God is three persons, which means that He is both perfect love before creating anything (the Father and Son love each other) and He is almighty and infinite love, able to share His love with all without wasting it (the Holy Spirit shares God with us). Truly, the three as one are deserving of our glory, honor, and praise.

Daily Readings for the Week of January 17 (Epiphany 2)

S Isaiah 43:14—44:5
Hebrews 6:17—7:10
John 4:27-42

Ephesians 5:15-33
Mark 4:21-34

M Isaiah 44:6-8, 21-23
Ephesians 4:1-16
Mark 3:7-19a

F Isaiah 45:18-25
Ephesians 6:1-9
Mark 4:35-41

T Isaiah 44:9-20
Ephesians 4:17-32
Mark 3:19b-35

Sa Isaiah 46:1-13
Ephesians 6:10-24
Mark 5:1-20

W Isaiah 44:24—45:7
Ephesians 5:1-14
Mark 4:1-20

Th Isaiah 45:5-17

These readings correspond to pages 248-281 in Volume I of For All the Saints. To acquire For All the Saints or other devotionals, please contact the church office.

Using the Gloria Patri

How to use the Gloria Patri in daily devotion? Simple: just use it.

A Simple Way of Praise: Memorize this simple verse and then use it throughout the day as you wish to praise God. Just as the prayer, “Lord, have mercy,” is a simple way to ask for God’s help and blessing throughout the day, this verse blesses God and turns your mind towards His praise in the turn of a moment.

Concluding the Psalms or Scripture: The Church has often concluded the reading or singing of psalms and other portions of Scripture with the Gloria Patri. It’s a way of saying, “Here is the God whom this Word proclaims; all glory to Him for this Word.” You could use this verse in a similar way to conclude your use of the psalms or reading of Scripture.

A Part of Regular Daily Prayers: In addition to or instead of using it more informally throughout the day, you might wish to make the Gloria Patri part of your regular prayers, speaking it as one of the last things before you go to bed at night or as a sort of “mini-hymn” upon waking from sleep.

Actions You May Use with the Gloria Patri

The Gloria Patri is also known as the “Lesser Doxology” (the Greater Doxology being the Gloria, or Hymn of Praise, that we sing on Sunday morning: “Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father . . .”). Traditional actions that may accompany it as a way of leading the heart towards greater devotion is to bow slightly while speaking it (if standing) or bow the head (if seated). It’s a simple way to acknowledge with your body what faith accomplishes in the heart: humility, awe, and love before the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.