

When we approach the chalice, the priest pronounces these words of purification after distributing communion to the faithful:

Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin forgiven. (Is6:7)

The Incarnate God, Vol. 1, SVS Press



The Elder Simeon holds in his arms the very Author of the Law and the Master of all things! Ode 9

O Mary, you are the mystic tongs, for in your womb you carried Christ, the living Coal. Enlighten my soul with His Light! Ode 9

I fall prostrate before You, O God and Son of the Most High, who have become the little Child of the Virgin: now You shall dismiss Your servant in peace! Ode 6

St. Ignatios of Antioch Melkite Church

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Presentation of our Lord to the Temple

Tone: 3

February 2, 2011

Eothinon: festal

Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

Antiphon Prayer (Said at the end of the *Great Synapte*)

O Lord, Sun of Justice, You manifested yourself as Light for all nations, carried in the arms of Simeon the Just and inaugurating the new Era of Grace.

Shine in our hearts the Light of your Knowledge.

Open the eyes of our minds. Guide us in the straight path, so that we may behave in a way agreeable to You, willing and doing what pleases You.

For You are our Light, O Christ God, and to You we render glory and to Your Eternal Father and Your All-holy, Good and Life-giving Spirit, now and always and forever and ever.

Antiphons of the Feast:

First Antiphon, usual response: *Through the prayers of the Mother of God....*

Second Antiphon, response:

O Son of God who were carried in the arms of Simeon the Just, save us who sing to You: Alleluia

Third Antiphon, response is the Troparion of the Feast

Sunday

Orthros 9:15 AM
Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM

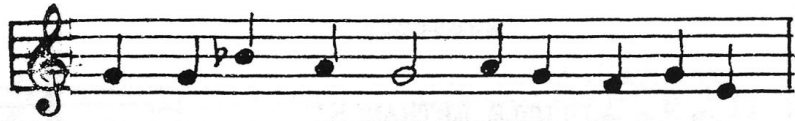
Daily

Vespers 5:30 PM
Orthros 7:30 AM

Entrance Hymn: The Lord has made his Salvation known; He has revealed his justice to all nations... O Son of God, Who were carried in the arms of Simeon the Just, save us...

Hymns:

Troparion of the Feast (3 times) , Tone 1



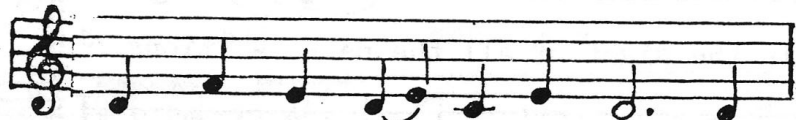
Hail, O Full of grace, Virgin and Mother



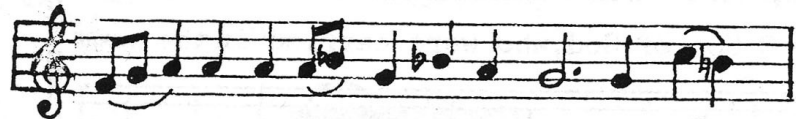
of God, from you has a-ris-en the Sun



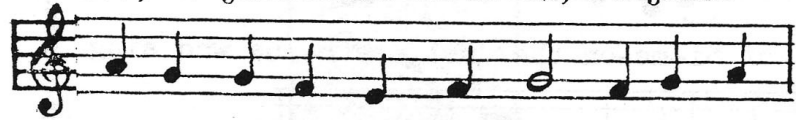
of Jus-tice, Christ our God, en-lighten-



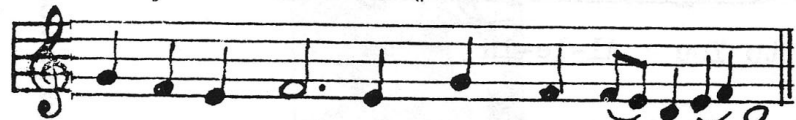
ing those who stand in dark-ness. You



too, O just Elder Si-me-on, re-joice



for you carried in your arms the Re-deem-



er of our souls, who grant, us resurrection

St. Luke cites the words from Exodus to explain the actions of the parents:

Every male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord. (Ex 13:2; Lk 2:23).

In giving Moses the regulations concerning the Passover, God demands that every first-born son born among the children of Israel be consecrated to God, in memory of the flight from Egypt. The consecrated child is offered before the altar and is ransomed as first-fruits, the first offspring of the maternal womb. This offering is an act of thanksgiving commemorating the first-born Jews spared on the night of the Egyptian massacre.

The first-born Son of Mary, who opened the virgin womb of the ever-virgin Mother of God, is offered according to the prescriptions of the Law, he who is the author of the Law. The Church is amazed at this contradiction and stresses the self-abasement of the Son of God, his *kenosis*.

At the feast of the Holy Encounter, the feast celebrating the encounter of each of us with the Son of God, the Church has us read the passage from Isaiah describing his vision in the Temple (Is 6:1-12)

Woe is me! for I am lost;
for I am a man of unclean lips...
For my eyes have seen the King,
The Lord of Hosts!
(Is 6:5)

A seraphim was then sent to him bearing a burning coal taken from the altar with tongs, in order to purify the lips of the prophet.

The hymns of the day explain the meaning of this reading. The vision of Isaiah is confirmed by the encounter of Simeon in the Temple and his purification by Christ:

Christ once appeared to the divine Isaiah as a burning coal held by tongs. Now he is given to the elder by the hands of the Mother of God.
(Aposticha, tone 2)

February 2 - Meeting of our Lord in the Temple



St. Luke is the only evangelist to show Joseph and Mary as faithful to the commandments of the Law and to the fulfillment of its precepts. Just as they had Jesus circumcised on the eighth day, so they bring him to the Temple forty days after his birth.

The icon of the feast picks up all the elements of the gospel narrative. The action takes place in Jerusalem, at the Temple. Two groups of two persons each share the stage: Joseph and Mary on one side, and the elder Simeon with the prophetess Anna on the other. These four figures face each other, their attitudes indicating encounter and dialogue. The child is the link which unites them. He passes from the arms of Mary to those of Simeon - the movement can be felt in the image. Mary extends her arms in the gesture of offering. We are assisting at the encounter between the Old and the New Testament, the encounter between Jesus and his people. This meeting occurs in the Temple, the place of divine presence.

Kondakion of the Feast, Tone 1

O Christ our God who through your birth have sanctified the virginal womb and have now blessed the arms of Simeon, today You have come to save us. O Lord, when wars prevail, keep your people in peace and strengthen our Public Authorities in every good deed, for You alone are the Lover of Mankind.

Epistle of the Feast, Hebrews 7: 7-17, p. 477

PROKIMENON Luke. 1:46-48

My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

Stichon: Because he has regarded the lowliness of his handmaid, for, behold, henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

READING from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews: 7:7-17
Brethren, certainly the lower is blessed by the higher. And in one case indeed mortal men receive tithes, while Scripture testifies that this man lives on. And even Levi, the receiver of tithes, was also, so to speak, through Abraham made subject to tithes, for he was still in his father's loins when Melchisedek met him. If then perfection was by the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the Law), what further need was there that another priest should rise, according to the order of Melchisedek, and said not to be according to the order of Aaron? For when the priesthood is changed, it is necessary that a change of law be made also.

For the one of whom these things are said is from another tribe, from which no one has ever done service at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord has sprung out of Judah (Cf. Is. 1 :2), and Moses said nothing at all about priests when referring to this tribe. And it is yet far more evident if there arises another priest, according to the likeness of Melchisedek, who has become so not according to the law of carnal commandment, but according to a life that cannot end. For it is testified of him, *Your are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchisedek.*

ALLELUIA(Tone 4) Lk.2 :29,32

Now you shall dismiss your servant, O Lord, according to your word in peace; because my eyes have seen your salvation.

Stichon: A light of revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people, Israel.

Gospel of the Feast, Luke 2:22-40

At that time the parents of Jesus took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord according to the Law of Moses, as it is written in the Law of the Lord: “Every male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord” — and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.” And behold, there was in Jerusalem a man named Simeon, and this man was just and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Christ of the Lord. And he came by inspiration of the Spirit into the temple. And when his parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, he also received him into his arms and blessed God, saying, “Now thou dost dismiss thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word, in peace; because my eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples: A light of revelation to the Gentiles, and a glory for thy people Israel.” And his father and mother were marveling at the things spoken concerning him. And Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this child is destined for the fall and for the rise of many in Israel, and for a sign that shall be contradicted. And thy own soul a sword shall pierce, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.” There was also Anna, a prophetess, daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years from her maidenhood, and by herself as a widow to eighty four years. She never left the temple, with fastings and prayers worshipping night and day And coming up at that very hour, she began to give praise to the Lord, and spoke of him to all who were awaiting the redemption of Jerusalem. And when they had fulfilled all things prescribed in the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, into their own town of Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong. He was full of wisdom and the grace of God was upon him.

Hymn to the Theotokos: Hirmos of the 9th Ode
O Mother of God, hope of all Christians, watch over those who have placed their hope in you. Let us, O faithful, glorify the First-born, the Eternal Word of God, born of a Virgin all-pure, for we have seen, beyond the shadow and letter of the Law, a sign of Christ in the words: “Every male opening the womb shall be called holy to the Lord.”

Kinonikon of the Feast: I will take the chalice of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord. Alleluia

Post-Communion Hymn: Troparion of the Feast

Blessing of the Candles

Blessed are You, Christ our God, Glory of the Father and Image of his Essence. You were incarnate of the all-holy Virgin in an ineffable way. You were presented to God the Father and carried in the arms of Simeon the Just. You were revealed as radiant Light to every human being coming into this world. You established the Catholic and Apostolic Church as a Lighthouse propagating the teachings of your Gospel.

We ask You in your Mercies to extend your all-holy and all-powerful Hand and bless these candles by the descent of your Holy Spirit. Infuse them with your abundant Grace so that they become a spiritual light for all their bearers. May the faithful lighting them live their whole day in sincere love and their whole night quietly enjoying your grace. May they get up early and come to your Encounter, Beloved Groom, with enlightened and joyful faces. May they welcome You with brightly shining lamps like the Wise Virgins. May they finally win their eternal reward in the heavenly Bridal Chambers, glorifying your magnificent name, and your Eternal Father and your All-holy, Good and Life-giving Spirit, now and always and forever and ever.

People: Amen.