

Tuesday, February 2

Encounter of Our Lord in the Temple

Tropar, tone 1: Hail, Mother of God, Virgin full of grace. * From you has shown forth the Sun of Justice, Christ our God, * shining upon those who are in darkness. * Rejoice also, you just Elder Simeon, * for you received in your arms the Redeemer of our souls * who has given us Resurrection.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen!

Kondak, tone 1: O Christ our God, through your birth You sanctified the Virgin's womb, * and blessed, as it was proper, the hands of Simeon. * Today, You have come to bring us deliverance. * Give peace to nations at war and strengthen our civil authorities, * for You alone love mankind.

Prokimen, tone 3: My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Saviour.

Verse: Because He has regarded the humility of His handmaid; for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

Epistle: Hebrews 7: 7 - 17

Brothers and Sisters! It is indisputable that a lesser person is blessed by a greater. And whereas men subject to death receive tithes, Scripture testifies that this man lives on. Levi, who receives tithes was, so to speak, tithed in the person of his father, for he was still in his father's loins when Melchizedek met Abraham. If, then, perfection had been achieved through the levitical priesthood (on the basis of which the people received the law), what need would there have been to appoint a priest according to the order of Melchizedek, instead of choosing a priest according to the order of Aaron? When there is a change of priesthood, there is necessarily a change of law. Now he of whom these things are said was of a different tribe, none of whose members ever officiated at the altar. It is clear that our Lord rose from the tribe of Judah, regarding which Moses said nothing about priests. The matter is clearer still if another priest is appointed according to the likeness of Melchizedek; one who has become a priest, not in virtue of a law expressed in a commandment concerning physical descent, but in virtue of the power of a life which cannot be destroyed. Scripture testifies: "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."

Alleluia Verses: Now, Master, you can dismiss your servant in peace; you have fulfilled your word.

A revealing light to the Gentiles, the glory of your people Israel.

Gospel: Luke 2: 22 - 40

When the day came to purify them according to the law of Moses, the couple brought him up to Jerusalem so that he could be presented to the Lord, for it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every first-born male shall be consecrated to the Lord." They came to offer in sacrifice "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons," in accord with the dictate in the law of the Lord. There lived in Jerusalem at the time a certain man named Simeon. He was just and pious, and awaited the consolation of Israel, and Holy Spirit was upon him. It was revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not experience death until he had seen the Anointed of the Lord. He came to the temple now, inspired by the Spirit, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to perform for him the customary ritual of the law, he took him in his arms and blessed God in these words: "Now, Master, you can dismiss your servant in peace; you have fulfilled your word. For my eyes have witnessed your saving deed displayed for all the peoples to see: a revealing light to the Gentiles, the glory of your people Israel." The child's father and mother were marveling at what was being said about him. Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother: "This child is destined to be the downfall and the rise of many in Israel, a sign that will be opposed -- and you yourself shall be pierced with a sword -- so that the thoughts of many heard may be laid bare." There was also a certain prophetess, Anna by name, daughter of Phanuel of the tribe of Asher. She had seen many days, having lived seven years with her husband after her marriage and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She was constantly in the temple worshipping day and night in fasting and prayer. Coming on the scene at this moment, she gave thanks to God and talked about the child to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Jerusalem. When the pair had fulfilled all the prescriptions of the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee and their own town of Nazareth. The child grew in size and strength, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.

Instead of 'It is truly right...': O Virgin Mother of God. Hope of Christians, * protect, watch, and save those who have placed their hope in you. * We, the faithful, see the figure of Christ in the shadow and the letter of the law * which says: Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord. * Therefore, we extol the firstborn of the Eternal Father * and the Virgin Mother.

Communion Hymn: I will take the chalice of salvation; and I will call upon the name of the Lord. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!