

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2020**  
**AFTERFEAST OF THE ENTRY INTO THE TEMPLE**  
**Philemon & Archippus Apostles of the Seventy, Martyr Apphia &**  
**Onesimus, Disciple of St. Paul**

*The Entry into the Temple of the Most Holy Mother of God.*

When the most holy Virgin Mary had reached the age of three, her parents, holy Joachim and Anna, took her from Nazareth to Jerusalem, to give her to the service of God in fulfillment of their promise. It was three days journey to Jerusalem, but, going as they were on God's work, they did not find the journey difficult. Many of Joachim and Anna's kinsmen gathered to take part in this celebration, in which the invisible angels of God also took part. Maidens went ahead with lighted candles in their hands, followed by the most holy Virgin, led on either side by her father and mother. The Virgin was clad in royal and beautiful garments, like those of the 'king's daughter', the Bride of God (Ps. 44:9,10). Behind them walked many of their kinsfolk and friends, all bearing lighted candles. There were fifteen steps leading to the Temple. Her parents stood the Virgin on the first step, and she ran quickly to the top on her own, where the High Priest, Zacharias, the father of St John the Forerunner, met her and, taking her by the hand, led her not only into the Temple but into the Holy of Holies, the holiest place of all, into which none could enter except the High Priest, and that once a year. St Theophylact of Ochrid says that Zacharias was 'out of himself, and moved by God' when he led the Virgin into the chief place in the Temple, beyond the second curtain - otherwise there could be no explanation of his action. Her parents then offered sacrifices to God, according to the Law, received the priest's blessing and returned home, leaving the most holy Virgin in the Temple. She dwelt in the Temple for nine whole years. While her parents were alive, they visited her often. When they departed this life, the holy Virgin was left an orphan, and longed to remain in the Temple for the rest of her days, without entering into marriage. This being contrary both to the Law and Israelite custom, she was confided at the age of twelve to St Joseph, a kinsman of hers in Nazareth, so that she might, under the protection of betrothal, live in virginity and thus fulfill both her desire and the demands of the Law, for it was unknown in Israel at that time for a girl to vow perpetual virginity. The holy Virgin Mary was the first to do this, and was later followed by thousand upon thousand of virgin men and women in the Church of Christ.

**The Holy Apostles of the Seventy Philemon and his wife Apphia** lived in the city of Colossa in Phrygia. After they were baptized by the holy Apostle Paul, they converted their house into a house of prayer, where all those who believed in Christ gathered and attended services. They devoted themselves to serving the sick and downcast.

St Philemon became bishop of the city of Gaza, and he preached the Word of God throughout Phrygia. The holy Apostle Paul continued to be his guide, and addressed to him his Epistle filled with love, and in which he sends blessings "to Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellow laborer, and to our beloved Apphia, and to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in thy house" (Phil 1:1-3).

**St Onesimus** (February 15), also mentioned in the Epistle, was St Philemon's former slave. Sts Philemon and Apphia, and also St Archippus (who also lived at Colossa), all received the crown of martyrdom during the persecution of Nero (54-68). During a pagan festival an enraged crowd rushed into the Christian church when services were going on. All fled in terror, and only Sts Philemon, Archippus and Apphia remained. They seized them and led them off to the city prefect. The crowd beat and stabbed St Archippus with knives, and he died on the way to the court. Sts Philemon and Apphia were stoned to death by order of the prefect.

## GREAT VESPERS

***LORD I CALL: Four stikhera of the Resurrection in tone 7, followed by three for the feast, and three for the Apostles***

***Resurrection, tone 7:***

Come, let us rejoice in the Lord,  
Who destroyed the dominion of death!  
Let us sing to Him with the bodiless hosts,  
for He enlightened the human race! //  
Our Maker and Savior, glory to You!

You endured the Cross and burial for our sake.  
By Your death, You destroyed death as God.  
We fall down before Your Resurrection on the third day, //  
O Savior, glory to You!

When the Apostles beheld the Resurrection of the Maker,  
they were amazed and sang the angelic praise.  
This is the glory of the Church.  
This is the richness of the Kingdom. //  
O Lord, crucified for our sake, glory to You!

You were held by lawless men, O Christ,  
but to me, You are God, and I am not ashamed.  
You were smitten on the cheek, but I do not deny You.  
You were nailed to the Cross and I do not conceal it,  
for I glory in Your Resurrection: Your death is my life. //  
Almighty Lord and Lover of mankind, glory to You!

***Feast, tone 8:***

Oh, most-glorious wonder!  
The ineffable that is come to pass  
is now this day prefigured beforehand.  
That which is apprehended spiritually is seen in visible figures,

for she who will shine the divine Light to the world  
is led as a bride to the Temple where God dwells.//  
Let us praise her as the ever-shining temple of the Godhead of Christ, the Giver of Light!  
The wise Joachim, together with Anna,  
have brought the godly maiden, the Virgin Mary,  
as a truly acceptable first fruit  
to Him Who had given her to them as a divine fruit,  
through Whom the debt of grief has been driven away.  
Let us praise her in songs and devoutly rejoice,//  
for she is become the provider of joy to all the world!

Come, let us now mystically gather together  
and, enlightened by the lamps of faith,  
begin the song of the Virgin's procession!  
She enters the Temple of God in glory,  
having been betrothed in advance by the Spirit.  
Let us all celebrate her joyous festival in a godly manner,//  
rejoicing in her entrance into the Temple!

***Apostles, tone 2:***

As a branch of the Vine of Life, O glorious Philemon,  
you distilled a wine of perfect divine knowledge to souls in distress,  
and gladdened the hearts made sullen by the darkness of error,  
and enshrouded by the gloomy madness of idolatry.//  
We joyfully celebrate the feast of your divinely-radiant memory.

Gaza honors you, O blessed Apostle,  
having seen the light of perfect knowledge through you,  
and the city of the Colossians, who have your divine body as a treasure  
harvests the healings and the grace that always pours forth abundantly.  
Therefore, it keeps your commemoration,//  
as it is preserved from dangers by your intercession, O glorious Philemon.

In faith let us praise the wise hierarch Archippus,  
together with the modest Apphia!  
Let us sing hymns honoring the sacred heralds of God, Philemon and Onesimus,  
the venerable teachers who, by their teaching,  
condemned the falsehood of polytheism and planted the knowledge of Truth!//  
Let us devoutly celebrate their memory!

***Glory... Feast, tone 1:***

Today, let heaven above rejoice,  
and let the clouds rain down gladness  
at the mighty and exceeding marvelous works of our God.

For behold, the Gate that looks t'wards the east,  
who was born from a barren and childless woman according to the promise  
and dedicated to God as His dwelling place,  
is today brought to the Temple as an offering without blemish.  
Let David be glad, striking his harp.  
For he says: “Virgins shall be brought to the King after her,  
her companions will be brought to Him”;  
that she may be raised within God’s tabernacle, His place of atonement,  
to become the dwelling of Him Who was begotten of the Father without change before the  
ages//  
for the salvation of our souls.

***Now and ever... the Dogmatikon in tone 7:***

No tongue can speak of your wonderful childbearing,  
for the order of nature was overruled by God.  
You were revealed to be a Mother above nature,  
for you remained a Virgin beyond reason and understanding.  
Your conception was most glorious, O Theotokos!  
The manner of your giving birth was ineffable, O Virgin!  
Knowing you to be the Mother of God,  
devoutly we pray to you: //  
“Beseech Him to save our souls!”

***APOSTIKHA: All stikhera of the Resurrection in tone 7:***

As the Savior of the world You arose from the tomb.  
As God You resurrected the human race with Your flesh. //  
O Lord, glory to You!

Come, let us worship the One Who rose from the dead,  
and enlightened all creation!  
By His death, He has saved us from the torments of hell. //  
By His Resurrection He has granted us eternal life and great mercy.

You descended into hell, capturing death, O Christ.  
In three days You arose again, resurrecting us who glorify Your Resurrection, //  
O Lord and Lover of mankind.

When You were placed in the tomb as one asleep,  
the sight was great and awesome.  
But when You rose on the third day as almighty God,  
You resurrected Adam with Yourself. //  
Glory to Your Resurrection, only Lover of mankind!

***GLORY...NOW AND EVER...of the Feast, tone 2:***

Today the immaculate Virgin is brought to the Temple  
to be the dwelling place of God, the Lord of all,  
Who sustains our whole life.

Today the most pure Sanctuary is brought into the Holy of Holies,  
like a heifer three years old.

To her let us cry out like the Angel::/  
Rejoice, only One, blessed among women!”

**TROPARIA**

**Resurrection, tone 7**

By Thy Cross, Thou didst destroy death!  
To the thief, Thou didst open paradise!  
For the myrrhbearers, Thou didst change weeping into joy!  
And Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God,  
To proclaim that Thou art risen,  
Granting the world great mercy.

**Apostles, tone 3**

Holy Apostles Philemon, Archipus, Apphia, and Onesimus,  
entreat the merciful God  
to grant our souls forgiveness of transgressions.

**Feast, tone 4**

Today is the prelude of the good will of God,  
Of the preaching of the salvation of mankind.  
The Virgin appears in the temple of God,  
In anticipation proclaiming Christ to all.  
Let us rejoice and sing to her:  
Rejoice, O Fulfillment of the Creator’s dispensation!

<b>DIVINE LITURGY</b>
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**KONTAKIA****Resurrection, tone 7**

The dominion of death  
Can no longer hold men captive  
For Christ descended shattering and destroying its powers  
Hell is bound, while the prophets rejoice and cry:  
The Savior has come to those in Faith,  
Enter, you faithful, into the Resurrection!

**Apostles, tone 2**

Let us praise the Apostles of Christ,  
who illumine the ends of the earth like all radiant stars:  
glorious Philemon and dedicated Archippus,  
Onesimus, together with Mark and Apollos, and the all wise Apphia.  
Let us cry to them:  
"Unceasingly pray for us all!"

**Feast, tone 4**

The most pure Temple of the Savior;  
The precious Chamber and Virgin;  
The sacred Treasure of the glory of God,  
Is presented today to the House of the Lord.  
She brings with her the grace of the Spirit,  
Therefore, the angels of God praise her:  
"Truly this woman is the abode of Heaven!"

**PROKEIMENON, tone 7:** The Lord shall give strength to His people! The Lord shall bless His people with peace!

**Vs.** Offer to the Lord, O yes sons of God! Offer young rams to the Lord!

**2<sup>nd</sup> Prok., tone 3:** My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

**EPISTLE: (221) Ephesians 2:14-22** Brethren, Christ is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of division between us, having abolished in His Flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the Cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to them that were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father... Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God through the Spirit.

**Alleluia in the seventh tone:** It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to Thy Name, O Most High!

**vs.** To declare Thy mercy in the morning and Thy truth by night.

**vs.** Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thine ear.

**GOSPEL: (66) LUKE 12:16-21** Then the Lord spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.'" But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

**COMMUNION HYMNS:** Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest. I will receive the cup of salvation and call on the Name of the Lord. Alleluia...