Reader’s Great Vespers on Thursday December 3rd, 2020

The Entrance into the Temple of the Most Holy Theotokos (November 21st/December 4th)

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord, Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

Glory to Thee O God, glory to Thee!

O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, Who art everywhere present and fillest all things, Treasury of blessings and Giver of Life, come and abide in us and cleanse us from every impurity and save our souls, O Good One!

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. ***(Thrice)***

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Lord, blot out our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy name's sake.

Lord have mercy. ***(Thrice)***

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, Who art in the Heavens, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord, Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

Lord have mercy. ***Twelve Times***

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O come, let us worship God our King.

O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ our King and God.

O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and God.

Bless the Lord, O my soul; O Lord my God, Thou hast been magnified exceedingly. Confession and majesty hast Thou put on, Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment, Who stretchest out the heaven as it were a curtain; Who supporteth His chambers in the waters, Who appointeth the clouds for His ascent, Who walketh upon the wings of the winds, Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire, Who establisheth the earth in the sureness thereof; it shall not be turned back for ever and ever.  The abyss like a garment is His mantle; upon the mountains shall the waters stand.  At Thy rebuke they will flee, at the voice of Thy thunder shall they be afraid.  The mountains rise up and the plains sink down, unto the place where Thou hast established them.  Thou appointedst a bound that they shall not pass, neither return to cover the earth.  He sendeth forth springs in the valleys; between the mountains will the waters run.  They shall give drink to all the beasts of the field; the wild asses will wait to quench their thirst.  Beside them will the birds of the heaven lodge, from the midst of the rocks will they give voice.  He watereth the mountains from His chambers; the earth shall be satisfied with the fruit of Thy works.  He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men, To bring forth bread out of the earth; and wine maketh glad the heart of man.  To make his face cheerful with oil; and bread strengtheneth man's heart.  The trees of the plain shall be satisfied, the cedars of Lebanon, which Thou hast planted.  There will the sparrows make their nests; the house of the heron is chief among them.  The high mountains are a refuge for the harts, and so is the rock for the hares.  He hath made the moon for seasons; the sun knoweth his going down.  Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night, wherein all the beasts of the forest will go abroad.  Young lions roaring after their prey, and seeking their food from God. The sun ariseth, and they are gathered together, and they lay them down in their dens. But man shall go forth unto his work, and to his labor until the evening. How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast Thou made them all; the earth is filled with Thy creation. So is this great and spacious sea, therein are things creeping innumerable, small living creatures with the great. There go the ships; there this dragon, whom Thou hast made to play therein. All things wait on Thee, to give them their food in due season; when Thou givest it them, they will gather it. When Thou openest Thy hand, all things shall be filled with goodness; when Thou turnest away Thy face, they shall be troubled.  Thou wilt take their spirit, and they shall cease; and unto their dust shall they return.  Thou wilt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created; and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.  Let the glory of the Lord be unto the ages; the Lord will rejoice in His works.  Who looketh on the earth and maketh it tremble, Who toucheth the mountains and they smoke. I will sing unto the Lord throughout my life, I will chant to my God for as long as I have my being.  May my words be sweet unto Him, and I will rejoice in the Lord.  O that sinners would cease from the earth, and they that work iniquity, that they should be no more. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

The sun knoweth his going down, Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night.  How magnified are Thy works, O Lord!  In wisdom hast Thou made them all.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.  Glory to Thee, O God. ***Thrice****.*

Lord, have mercy. ***Forty Times***

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice in Him with trembling. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Blessed are all who take refuge in Him. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Arise O Lord, save me, O my God! Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Salvation belongs to the Lord: Thy blessing is upon Thy people. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Glory to Thee, O God. ***Three Times***

Lord, have mercy ***Three Times***

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

In the 1st Tone: Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hearken unto me.

Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hearken unto me. \* Hearken unto me, O Lord. \* Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hearken unto me; \* attend to the voice of my supplication, \* when I cry unto Thee. \* Hearken unto me, O Lord.

Let my prayer be set forth \* as incense before Thee, \* the lifting up of my hands \* as an evening sacrifice. \* Hearken unto me, O Lord.

Set, O Lord, a watch before my mouth, and a door of enclosure round about my lips.

Incline not my heart unto words of evil, to make excuse with excuses in sins.

With men that work iniquity; and I will not join with their chosen.

The righteous man will chasten me with mercy and reprove me; as for the oil of the sinner, let it not anoint my head.

For yet more is my prayer in the presence of their pleasures; swallowed up near by the rock have their judges been.

They shall hear my words, for they be sweetened; as a clod of earth is broken upon the earth, so have their bones been scattered nigh unto hades.

For unto Thee, O Lord, O Lord, are mine eyes, in Thee have I hoped; take not my soul away.

Keep me from the snare which they have laid for me, and from the stumbling-blocks of them that work iniquity.

The sinners shall fall into their own net; I am alone until I pass by.

With my voice unto the Lord have I cried, with my voice unto the Lord have I made supplication.

I will pour out before Him my supplication, mine affliction before Him will I declare.

When my spirit was fainting within me, then Thou knewest my paths.

In this way wherein I have walked they hid for me a snare.

I looked upon my right hand, and beheld, and there was none that did know me.

Flight hath failed me, and there is none that watcheth out for my soul.

I have cried unto Thee, O Lord; I said: Thou art my hope, my portion art Thou in the land of the living.

Attend unto my supplication, for I am brought very low.

Deliver me from them that persecute me, for they are stronger than I.

Bring my soul out of prison:  that I may confess Thy name.

The righteous shall wait patiently for me until Thou shalt reward me.

Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord; O Lord, hear my voice.

Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

If Thou shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, O Lord, who shall stand? For with Thee there is forgiveness.

Today let us, the faithful, dance for joy,

singing to the Lord with psalms and hymns,

venerating His hallowed tabernacle, the living ark,

that contained the Word who cannot be contained.

For she, a young child in the flesh,

in wondrous manner is offered to the Lord,

and with rejoicing, Zachariah the great high priest, //

receives her as the dwelling place of God.

For Thy name’s sake have I patiently waited for Thee, O Lord; my soul hath patiently waited for Thy word, my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

Today the living Temple

of the holy glory of Christ our God

she, who alone among women is pure and blessèd

is offered in the temple of the law,

that she may make her dwelling in the Holy Place,

Joachim and Anna rejoice with her in spirit,

and choirs of virgins sing to the Lord, chanting psalms //

and honoring His Mother.

From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch let Israel hope in the Lord.

O Virgin Mother of God!

The prophets proclaimed you,

the glory of the apostles and the pride of martyrs,

the restoration of all who dwell on earth:

for through you we are reconciled to God.

Therefore we honor your entrance into the temple of the Lord,

and saved by your intercession,

with the angel we all cry to you: //

“Rejoice! O Most-Holy One!”

In the 4th Tone: For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption; and He shall redeem Israel out of all his iniquities.

Led by the Holy Spirit,

the holy maiden without spot

is taken to dwell in the Holy of Holies

by an angel she is fed,

who is in truth the most holy Temple of our holy God.

He has sanctified all things by her entry, //

and has made divine the fallen nature of mortal men.

O praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise Him, all ye peoples.

The young girls rejoice today,

and with their lamps in hand

they go in rev’rence before the spiritual lamp

as she enters the Holy of Holies.

##### They foreshadow the brightness past speech

that is to shine forth from her

and to give light by the Spirit //

to those who sit in the darkness of ignorance.

For He hath made His mercy to prevail over us, and the truth of the Lord abideth forever.

Anna, the all-blessed cried out rejoicing:

##### O Zachariah, take her

whom the prophets of God proclaimed in the Spirit,

and lead her into the holy temple,

there to be brought up in rev’rence,

that she may become the divine throne of the Master of all,

His palace, His resting place, //

and His dwelling filled with light!

In the 8th Tone: Glory… now and ever... :

After your birth, O Lady and Bride of God,

you went to the temple of the Lord

there to be brought up in the Holy of Holies,

for you yourself are holy:

then Gabriel was sent to you

to bring you food, O undefiled Virgin.

All the powers of heaven stood amazed,

seeing the Holy Spirit dwell in you!

Therefore, O Mother of God without stain or blemish, //

glorified in heaven and earth, save us!

O Gladsome Light of the holy glory of the immortal, heavenly, holy, blessed Father, O Jesus Christ: Having come to the setting of the sun, having beheld the evening light, we praise the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: God.  Meet it is for Thee at all times to be praised with reverent voices, O Son of God, Giver of life.  Wherefore, the world doth glorify Thee.

The Prokeimenon in the 6th Tone:

My help comes from the Lord, Who made Heaven and Earth.

Verse: I lift up my eyes to the hills, from where my help will come.

My help comes from the Lord,/ Who made Heaven and Earth.

**The Reading is from Exodus!**

The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: “On the first day of the first month you shall set up the Tabernacle of the Testimony, and you shall put in it the Ark and cover it with the veil. You shall bring in the table and the lampstand; and you shall set there a golden altar to burn incense before the Ark of the Testimony. And you shall put a covering on the door of the Tabernacle of the Testimony.

Then you shall take the oil of anointing and anoint the Tabernacle and all that is in it, and consecrate it and all its vessels; and it shall be holy. And you shall consecrate the Altar of Burnt Offerings; it shall be most holy.”

And Moses did all that the LORD God, the Holy One of Israel had commanded him. And a cloud covered the Tabernacle of the Testimony and the glory of the LORD filled the Tabernacle. Moses was not able to enter the Tabernacle of the Testimony, because the cloud overshadowed it, and the glory of the LORD filled the Tabernacle.

**The Reading is from the Third Book of Kings!**

And it came to pass when Solomon had finished building the house of the LORD, he assembled all the elders of Israel in Zion, to bring the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD out of the City of David, which is Zion. And the priests took up the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD, the Tabernacle of the Testimony, and all the holy vessels that were in the Tabernacle of the Testimony.

And the King and all Israel went before the Ark. And the priests brought the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD to its place, into the Oracle of the Temple - into the Holy of Holies, under the wings of the cherubim. For the cherubim spread out their wings over the place of the Ark so that the cherubim made a covering above the Ark and its holy things above. There was nothing in the Ark except the two tablets of the Covenant which Moses put there at Horeb, when the LORD had made a Covenant.

And when the priests came out from the holy place, a cloud filled the house. And the priests were unable to stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD God Almighty filled the house.

**The reading is from the prophecy of Ezekiel!**

Thus says the Lord: “And when they have completed these days, then from the eighth day onward the priests shall offer upon the altar your burnt offerings and your peace offerings; and I will accept you, says the Lord GOD.”

# Then he brought me back to the outer gate of the sanctuary, which faces east; and it was shut. And He said to me, “This gate shall remain shut; it shall not be opened, and no one shall enter by it; for the LORD, the God of Israel, has entered by it; therefore it shall remain shut. Only the prince may sit in it to eat bread before the LORD; he shall enter by way of the vestibule of the gate, and shall go out by the same way.”

# Then He brought me by way of the north gate to the front of the temple; and I looked, and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the temple of the LORD; and I fell upon my face.

Lord have mercy. ***Forty times***

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this evening without sin.  Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy name unto the ages.  Amen.

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we have hoped in Thee.  Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes.  Blessed art Thou, O Master, give me understanding of Thy statutes.  Blessed art Thou, O Holy One, enlighten me by Thy statutes.

O Lord, Thy mercy endureth forever; disdain not the work of Thy hands.  To Thee is due praise, to Thee is due a song, to Thee glory is due, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.  Amen.

Lord, have mercy. ***Twelve Times***

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

At the Litya: Tone 1:

Today let the heavens greatly rejoice.

Let the clouds pour down gladness

at the mighty and exceedingly marvelous acts of our God.

For behold, the gate that looks toward the east,

born according to the promise from a fruitless and barren womb,

and dedicated to God as His dwelling,

is led today into the temple as an offering without blemish.

Let David greatly rejoice and strike his harp:

“Virgins,” said he, “shall be brought to the King after her.

Her companions shall be brought unto Thee.

Within the tabernacle of God, within his place of propitiation,

she shall be brought up to become the dwelling place

of Him who was begotten of the Father without change before all

ages, //

# for the salvation of our souls.”

At the Aposticha: Tone5:

Heaven and earth rejoice,

beholding the spiritual heaven,

the only virgin without blemish,

as she enters the house of God,

to be raised there in honor.

To her, Zachariah in amazement cried:

“To You, O Gate of the Lord, I open the gates of the temple.

Rejoice, go ’round it in gladness.

For I know and believe that the deliverance of Israel

shall now come to dwell openly in our midst,

and that from you shall be born God the Word, //

who grants to the world great mercy.”

Verse: She is led to the King, with her Virgin companions, her escort, in her

train!

Anna, truly blessed by the grace of God,

led with gladness into the temple of the Lord,

the pure and ever virgin who is full of grace,

and she called the young girls to go before her, lamps in hand.

“Go, child,” she said, “to Him who gave thee unto me.

Be unto Him and offering and a sweet-smelling incense.

Go into the place behind the veil.

Learn there its mysteries

and prepare yourself to become the pleasing and beautiful

abode of Jesus, //

who grants to the world great mercy.”

Verse: With joy and gladness they are led along as they enter the palace of the

King!

The most-holy virgin, the temple that is to hold God,

is dedicated within the temple of the Lord,

and young girls bearing lamps now go before her.

Her noble parents, Joachim and Anna,

leap for joy and dance,

for they have borne her

that is to bear the creator,

and she, the all pure one, with rejoicing goes round the

heavenly mansions of the temple,

and is fed by the hands of an angel.

It is she that shall become the mother of Christ, //

who grants to the world great mercy.

In the 6th Tone: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Today let us, the ranks of the assembled faithful,

triumph in spirit and reverently praise the child of God,

Virgin and Theotokos,

as she is offered in the temple of the Lord:

she who was fore-chosen from all generations

to be the dwelling-place of Christ, the Master and God of all.

O virgins bearing lamps, go before her,

honoring the majestic advance of the ever-virgin one.

O mothers, set aside every sorrow.

Follow them in gladness,

singing the praises of her who became the mother of God

and the mediator of joy for the world.

And with the angel, let us all joyfully cry, “Rejoice!” //

To her that is full of grace and ever intercedes for our souls.

Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, O Master, according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples; a light of revelation for the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. ***(Thrice)***

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Lord, blot out our sins. O Master, pardon our iniquities. O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy name's sake.

Lord have mercy. ***(Thrice)***

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, Who art in the Heavens, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Amen.

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!”

More honorable than the Cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim; who without corruption gavest birth to God the Word, the very Theotokos, thee do we magnify.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord bless!

Through the prayers of the Theotokos, and of all the saints, O Lord, Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us. Amen.