

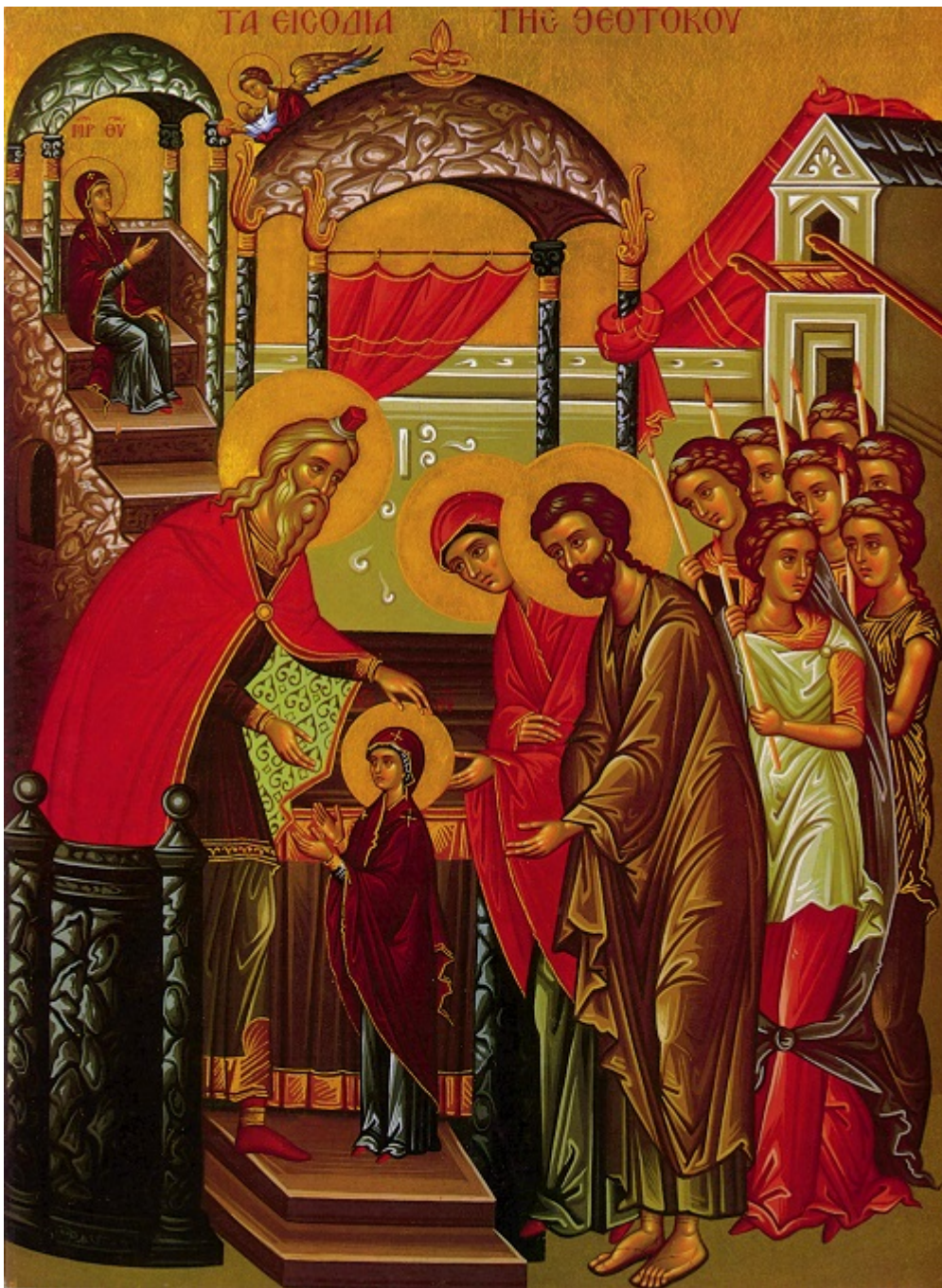
Discourse on the Entry of the Mother of God (Saint Neofytos Recluse)

[Ξένες γλώσσες / In English](#)



A brief discourse on the child of God Mary, when she was dedicated to God at the age of three years old, in the Holy of Holies, by her parents.

When it was time for God's mystery for our salvation to be accomplished, it was necessary that the workshop where this would happen should be full of holiness so that He Who is all holy and 'finds rest in the saints', should reside in this holy place and so fulfill the prophecy: 'The mercy of God and the precise verification of His promises met and united. His justice and peace performed a mutual embrace. Truth sprang from the earth and justice bent down from heaven and visited the earth'. 'For the Lord', as Father, 'will show His goodness'- God the Word- 'and our earth will give its fruit'- the dwelling-place of God the Word, that is Mary, who was called by God. 'The Lord will be preceded by His justice' which will cry aloud "prepare the way of the Lord", and will make the traces of His passing an example for the path our life should take'.



Because this most important and God-made gift that was granted to us, that is 'the image and likeness', was sullied through the deceit of the devil, we were rightly given back to the earth whence we had come. We were deprived of the image and of immortality. Instead of living in holiness, we wallowed in the pit of sin, we became enslaved to it and fell from iniquity to iniquity. The whole world was covered with every form of law-breaking, to the extent that David says: 'there is no-one today who does good. Not one'. The Lord 'bent down from the heights of the heavens and cast His eye over humankind, to see if there was one among them who was wise, who would seek God'. Instead of finding anyone, He saw that 'all had strayed from His path and become worthless'. [Cf. Septuagint Ps. 52 and Rom.

3, 10-12].

What, then, happened after that? Perhaps God was at a loss because of the overwhelming wickedness? Did He scorn us? Was He unable to find a cure for the deep-seated putrefaction? Did the rivers and springs in the seas and oceans of His mercy cease to flow? Of course not, because it would have been unseemly to allow His own creation to become food for the enemy. And besides, the proper antidote, 'justice and sanctification', had to be found for sin, and thus the spotless and pure Virgin Mary was born by divine command of Joachim and Anna, so that, with the consent of the other two Persons, One of the Holy Trinity would take flesh from her and abolish sin through this flesh.

What sort of person should this Virgin be, who would certainly be more pure than the rays of the sun if she were to transmit spotless and pure flesh? Where should this Virgin live? In an ordinary, unclean home? Absolutely not. No, in the Holy of Holies, since she was more holy than this inner sanctum and was to lend flesh to the Most Holy Word of God. At the age of three years old, she was brought to the Holy of Holies, accompanied by many young girls and bright candles. Joachim and Anna fulfilled their promises, as their forefather, David had said: 'the young girls accompanying her would bring her to the bridegroom king. With joy and gladness, they would bring the bride queen to the temple of the bridegroom king' [Cf. Septuagint Ps. 44].

And then something strange happened and it was a wonder that the Jews, who 'strained the gnat and swallow a camel', didn't resist what happened, nor did they protest. Because, according to human reason, it was natural for the High Priest to enter the Holy of Holies once a year, having purified himself completely, to offer the blood of another [i.e. animals]. How was it that you, Joachim and Anna, brought your three-year-old daughter into the Holy of Holies. Why did you, High Priest Zacharias, agree to this? But it seems that, instead of observing the law, you preferred that the Holy of Holies became the dwelling place of a kinswoman of Elizabeth, a three-year-old girl. Nothing of this was said or thought. For who can stand against what God has decided?

It's also most remarkable that a three-year-old girl was able to leave the loving care of her parents, the attention of the household servants, her family house and everything that was in the homes of the rich, something which would have been difficult even for a man or a woman of advanced years.

But whatever God thinks, is realized easily. This is why the Prophet David said: 'Hearken, daughter, and consider, and incline your ear' [Septuagint Ps. 44].

'Hearken', that is 'listen to what your parents tell you'. That you were born after many entreaties to God, from a barren womb. That they had you after a great deal of praying and weeping and that they promised to dedicate you to Him Who had given you. 'Incline your ear' and listen to them. 'Forget your own people and your father's house' and regard the beauty and wonderful disposition of the temple, which is an image of the heavens and the tabernacle that was once erected in Siloam. You'll live in this temple as a divine and pure dove and you'll forget your own people, and your father's house and the king will rejoice in your beauty. And when the heavens have been drawn down, like dew falling on a fleece, gently and soundlessly, without the awareness of the heavenly powers, the Word will dwell within you, because He is your Lord and you will venerate Him as His mother and servant. The rich of the earth will fall down before you and, as the most glorious queen and most pure mother, the King of Creation will keep you on His right hand, adorned, glorified and clad in gold, as the psalm says [Ps. 44].

(to be continued)