



PRAYERS FOR THE CHURCHING OF A MOTHER AND CHILD AFTER FORTY DAYS

On the fortieth day the child is brought to the Temple to be churched, that is, to begin attending church. It is brought by the mother, who has already been cleansed and washed, accompanied by the intended sponsor at the Baptism. Standing together with the mother, child and sponsor before the doors of the nave of the church, the Priest says:

Blessed is our God always, (see pp. 32-33). The Trisagion. O All-Holy Trinity. . . Our Father ... For Yours is the Kingdom... Amen.

Then the Apolytikion of the Day or of the Saint who is commemorated is said.

Glory ... both now. . .

Through the prayers, O Lord, of all the Saints and of the Theotokos grant to us Your peace and mercy, for You alone are merciful.

Over the bowed heads of mother and child, the Priest makes the sign of the Cross. He then lays his hand upon the mother's head and says:

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord have mercy.

Priest: O Lord God Almighty, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who by Your word has made every rational and irrational creature, that brought all things out of nothingness into being: we pray to You and implore You, cleanse this Your servant (*Name*), whom by Your Will You have preserved, and who now comes into Your Holy Church, from every transgression, so that she may be accounted worthy to partake of Your holy Mysteries without condemnation.

Be it known that if the mother has come alone because the child is no longer living, the Priest ends the Prayer here with the Ekphonesis.

For You are a good and loving God, and to You we send up all glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

But if the child is alive, he touches its head and says:

Bless also this child which has been born of her; increase it sanctify it, give it understanding and a prudent and virtuous' mind; for You alone

have brought it into being, and have shown him (her) the light which bodily sense perceives, so that he (she) might be accounted worthy also of the ideal light and be numbered with Your holy Flock; through Your Only; Begotten Son, with Whom You are blessed, together with Your All; Holy, Good and Life; creating Spirit, both now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Prayer for the Mother of the Child

Priest: Peace be to all.

People: And to your spirit.

Priest: Let us bow our heads before the Lord.

People: To You, O Lord.

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Priest: O Lord God, Who ever draws near for the salvation of the human race, come also to this Your servant (*Name*), and through the prayers of Your venerable Priesthood account her worthy to find refuge in Your holy Catholic Church, to obtain entrance into the Temple of Your Glory, and worthy also to partake of the Precious Body and Blood of Your Christ. In the fulfillment of the forty days, wash away from her every transgression, voluntary and involuntary, so that accounted worthy to enter Your holy Temple, she may glorify with us Your All; Holy Name, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Another Prayer for the Child

The Priest makes again the sign of the Cross upon him (her).

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Priest: O Lord our God, Who on the fortieth day was brought as a child into the Temple of the Law by Mary, the Virgin Bride and Your holy Mother, and was carried in the arms of the righteous Symeon, do You also, Sovereign Master All-Powerful, bless this presented babe that it may appear before You, the Creator of all things. And do You increase in him (her) every good work acceptable to You, removing from him (her) every opposing might by the sign of the likeness of Your Cross; for You are He Who guards infants, O Lord. So that, accounted worthy of holy Baptism, he (she) may obtain the portion of Your Elect of the Kingdom, being protected with us by the Grace of the Holy Consubstantial and Undivided Trinity. For unto You do we send up Glory, Honor and Worship, with Your

Eternal Father and Your All; Holy, Good and Life-creating Spirit, both now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Priest: Peace be to all (+).

People: And to your spirit.

Priest: Let us bow our heads before the Lord.

People: To You, O Lord.

Priest: O God, the Father Almighty, Who by the loud; voice Prophet Isaiah has foretold to us the incarnation from a Virgin of Your Only; Begotten Son and our God; Who in the latter days, by Your good pleasure and by the cooperation of the Holy Spirit have willed, through measureless love, to become a child of her for the salvation of men; and, according to the custom of Your Holy Law, after the fulfillment of the days of purification, submitted to be brought into the Sanctuary, being Himself a true lawgiver, and willed to be carried in the arms of the righteous Symeon, of which mystery we have a prototype declared in the aforementioned Prophet by the taking of coals with tongs from the Altar, and of which we Faithful also have an imitation in Grace. Do You, Who are He that watches over babes, Yourself, O Lord, bless (+) this child, together with its parents and sponsors, and account it worthy, at the fitting time, to be born again of water and the Spirit. Number it with Your holy Flock of rational sheep, who are called by the Name of Your Christ. For You are He that dwells on high, and gives regard to the things which are lowly, and to You do we send up glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Then, taking up the child, the Priest lifts it up in the sign of the Cross before the Gates of the Temple, saying:

The servant of God (*Name*) is churched, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

And he carries the child into the Holy Temple, saying:

I will go into Your House. I will worship toward Your Holy Temple in fear of You.

Coming to the center of the church, he says:

The servant of God (*Name*) is churched, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. In the midst of the congregation I will sing praises to You.

Then he brings the child before the Doors of the Altar, saying:

The servant of God (*Name*) is churched, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

If the child is male the Priest carries him into the Altar if a female, the child is carried only as far as the Holy Doors. He then says:

Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared before the face of all people, a Light to enlighten the Gentiles, and the Glory of Your people of Israel.

Apolysis

Glory to You, O our God and our hope, glory to You.

He Who submitted to be carried in the arms of the righteous Symeon, Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His pure and spotless Mother, through the power of the precious and life-giving Cross, through the protection of the venerable and bodiless heavenly Powers, through the prayers of the venerable and glorious prophet and Forerunner John the Baptist, of the holy, glorious, all; praiseworthy Apostles, of the holy, glorious and victorious Martyrs, of our venerable Godbearing Fathers, of the holy, righteous ancestors of the Lord, Joakim and Anna, (*of the Saint of the church*), and of all the Saints, have mercy on us and save us as our Good and Loving God.

Through the prayers of the Holy Fathers Oh Jesus Christ, Our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

After the Amen, the priest makes the sign of the Cross over the forehead, mouth, and chest of the child, invoking the name of the Holy Trinity. He then returns the child to the mother.