

February 15

First Week of Great Lent;

Commemoration of the Holy Apostle Onesimos

(5th Class)

PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY

Stichera for the Fast (Tone 8)

10. While fasting with the body, brethren, let us also fast in spirit. Let us loosen every bond of iniquity. Let us undo the knots of every contract made by violence. Let us tear up all unjust agreements. Let us give bread to the hungry and welcome to our homes the poor who have no roof to cover them, that we may receive great mercy from Christ our God!

9. While fasting with the body... *(Repeat)*

8. All praise and glory to the holy martyrs: they bowed their heads to the sword for the sake of You who bowed the heavens and came down. They emptied out their blood for the sake of You who emptied Yourself and took the form of a servant. Imitating Your poverty, they humbled themselves to death. At their prayers, O Lord, have mercy on us in Your great compassion.

(Tone 2)

7. Jesus, the true spiritually radiant Sun, has sent you into the world as shining flashes of lightning, O Apostles. By the rays of your divine teachings, O witnesses of God, the error of darkness was swept away, giving light to those who were held in the evil gloom of ignorance. Entreat Him to grant us enlightenment and great mercy.

6. Elijah, glorified by fasting, ascended in the divine chariot of his virtues; he was carried to the heights of Heaven in glory. Strive as he did, my humble soul: fast and throw off all evil, malice, envy and corrupting luxury, so that you may be delivered from the eternal pain of death and cry out to Christ: "O Lord, glory to You!"

(Tone 5)

5. O divine Apostles, fervent intercessors for the world and defenders of the faithful, you received from Christ our God the boldness to intercede for us. We beseech you that we may pass this blessed time of Lent untroubled and receive the grace of the consubstantial Trinity. O heralds of the Word, intercede for our souls!

For Onesimos (Tone 4)

4. Paul, the preacher of grace, is a stream whose runlets gladden you, the city of God, O blessed Onesimos. He did this above all else by giving you the ineffable words of the One who on earth had allowed man to drink from the fountain of delights of Paradise. You became His diligent servant, hearing from Him the heavenly words which no one may speak.
3. Paul, the preacher of grace... *(Repeat)*
2. O Onesimos, you were radiant in the freedom of your spirit and the independence of your soul in the nobility of the Faith! You were freed from slavery here below in order to become a servant of God, bowing your head under the yoke of Christ. Now you hasten to free mankind from spiritual slavery, leading them to the true freedom of grace.

1. The Lord, the true Sun of this world, made you shine like a radiant beam, in order to pour forth the light of the preaching of the Gospel all over the world. In that light, the dark shadows of error disappear; and by your many miracles, O illustrious apostle Onesimos, the souls of believers are illumined.
- v. Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Theotokion

O all-holy Bride of God, deliver my wretched soul from the condemnation which it deserves for its sins. By your prayers: keep me from death; and on the Day of Judgment, grant that I may be justified with the assembly of all the saints. Before the end, purify me by repentance and streams of tears!

Entrance with the censor. "O Joyful Light..."

PROKIMENON [Ps 11] (*Tone 5*)

You, O Lord, will safeguard us and save us from this generation forever.

- v. Save me, O Lord, for the pious man is no more.

1.) *Genesis 1:24 - 2:3*

God said, "Let the earth bring forth all kinds of living creatures: cattle, creeping things, and wild animals of all kinds." And so it happened, God made all kinds of wild animals, all kinds of cattle, and all kinds of creeping things of the earth. God saw how good it was. Then God said: "Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and the cattle, and over all the wild animals and all the

creatures that crawl on the ground." God created man in His image. In the divine image He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them, saying: "Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that move on the earth." God also said: "See, I give you every seed-bearing plant all over the earth and every tree that has seed-bearing fruit on it to be your food. And to all the animals of the land, all the birds of the air, and all the living creatures that crawl on the ground, I give all the green plants for food." And so it happened. God looked at everything He had made, and he found it very good. Evening came, and morning followed - the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth and all their array were completed. Since on the seventh day God was finished with the work He had been doing, He rested on the seventh day from all the work He had undertaken. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it He rested from all the work He had done in creation.

PROKIMENON [Ps 12] (Tone 6)

Look upon me and hear me, O Lord my God.

v. How long, O Lord, will You forget me? Until the end?
How long will You turn Your face away from me?

2.) *Proverbs 2:1-22*

My son, if you receive my words and treasure my commands, turning your ear to wisdom, inclining your heart to understanding; yes, if you call to intelligence, and to understanding raise your voice; if you seek her like silver, and like hidden treasures search her out: then will you understand the fear of the LORD. The knowledge of God

you will find. For the LORD gives wisdom, from His mouth come knowledge and understanding. He has counsel in store for the upright, He is the shield of those who walk honestly, guarding the paths of justice, protecting the way of his pious ones. Then you will understand rectitude and justice, honesty, every good path. For wisdom will enter your heart, knowledge will please your soul, discretion will watch over you, understanding will guard you, Saving you from the way of evil men, from men of perverse speech, who leave the straight paths to walk in the way of darkness, who delight in doing evil, rejoice in perversity; whose ways are crooked, and devious their paths. They will lead you away from the right path, making you a stranger to justice. My son, do not allow yourself to heed the counsels of the evil who forsake the teachings of their youth and forget the pact with their God. Their house sinks down to death, and their footsteps lead to Hades. None who enter thereon come back again, or gain the paths of life. Thus you may walk in the way of good men, and keep to the paths of the just. For the upright will dwell in the land, the honest will remain in it. But the wicked will be cut off from the land, the faithless will be rooted out of it.