



■ “Bless the crown of this year with Thy goodness, O Lord”

September 1 Beginning of the New Ecclesiastical Year*

Bless for us the Indiction** of the New Year,
O Thou Who for mankind art both Ancient and New



On this day, our Holy Orthodox Church celebrates the beginning of the New Ecclesiastical Year with a special service, which can be found in the Menaion for September.

In this service, special prayers are also read, such as those by the most holy Patriarchs of Constantinople, Sts. Athanasios (1289-1293) and Philotheos (1353-1355, 1364-1376).

* * *

There are three reasons for this Feast:

a. The Beginning of the Year. Following the harvesting of the crops during summer, the year is, as it were, completed. A new agricultural period begins in September, and seeds are sown anew in the earth, so that we might be provided with future crops. Thus a new year begins.

• **During** the time of the Old Testament, on the first day of the seventh Judaic month (i.e., the beginning of September), the Jews celebrated the Feast of the New Moon or the Blowing of the Trumpets (Leviticus 23:24-25 and Numbers 29:1-6).

b. Thanksgiving and Supplication. The Church sends up thanksgiving to God for His good favor towards Creation, and

also prays to the Lord, beseeching Him for fair weather, seasonable rains, and fertility of the earth—in other words, that “God be merciful and bless the new year,” the New Year of His goodness.



c. The Entry of our Lord into the Synagogue. Today we commemorate the entry of our Lord into the synagogue in Nazareth (which synagogue exists to this day), where He was given the book of the Prophet Isaiah to read. Christ then read the passage in which the Prophet speaks in the name of the Savior: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me [the Christ, the Messiah] because He hath anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor...to preach the acceptable year of the Lord” (St. Luke 4:18).

● Hence, this Feast reminds us today, when nature is preparing itself to pass through a new cycle of seasons—a New Year—that Christ our Savior is the Creator of the world and of time: Christ, Who became incarnate in order to recapitulate and restore all things in Himself.

* * *

On this day, all Christians throughout the world glorify the All-Holy Triune God, Who created and preserves all things in life, and sends down His abundant blessings onto all of creation in every era.

Our Lord Jesus Christ opens the gates of the New Year, churchifies nature and time, and calls upon us to reexamine in greater depth the purpose of our lives, which is to become temples of the Holy Trinity, participants in the Life of God, and, consequently, eternal by Grace, in the New World and New Heaven of the Last Times.

† *Bishop (now Metropolitan) Cyprian of Oropos and Phyle*

* * *





The Indiction.

Apolytikion. Tone Two

O Maker of all creation, Who hast established the times and the seasons by Thine own power: Bless the crown of this year with Thy goodness, O Lord, and keep our rulers and Thy flock in peace, by the intercessions of the Theotokos, and save us.

Kontakion. Tone Four

Thou Who wast raised up

O Maker and Master of the ages, O God of all, Who art truly transcendent in essence, bless the coming year; and of Thy boundless mercy, O Compassionate One, save all who worship Thee, the only Master, and who cry with fear, O Redeemer: Grant unto all a fruitful year.

Megalynarion.

O Unoriginate and Three-Sunned King, Who dost oversee the revolvings of seasons and times, bless the cycle of the new year, granting thy good gifts unto all.



(*) Source: “**Edification and Consolation**,” No. 1 (September-November 2012), pp. 1-2.

(**) **Indiction, Indictio:** “Definition,” “Decree,” or “Order” issued by the Roman Emperor regarding the tax to be collected for the maintenance of the armed forces. This imperial tax was paid every year before winter for the span of fifteen years. The term Indiction refers to both the entire fifteen-year cycle and for every individual year of the period.

● The beginning of the Indiction = the beginning of each year in the fifteen-year cycle = the beginning of the New Year according to the civil calendar (in the past) = the beginning of the New Ecclesiastical Year (now).

■ It should be noted that when January 1 was ultimately designated as the beginning of the civil year, the Church did not deem it necessary to transfer the Feast in question to that day, but rather kept to the festal order handed down to us **from the fourth century**, which designates September 1 as the New Indiction. It did so, considering that it has: its own year, *viz.* **the ecclesiastical year**; its own New Year, *viz.* **September 1**; its own calendar, *viz.* the Church Calendar, which is indissolubly bound up with the **Church’s Festal Calendar**.

■ Such being the case, one is better able to understand why the adoption, in 1924, by the innovationist ecumenists of the “new,” or “revised,” or “Gregorian,” or “civil” calendar was ecclesiastically improper. It was, in any case, certainly improper, since it was introduced for the purpose of promoting ecumenism.