

Lent for the End of a Pandemic – 2021



Aim

Lent is a time for us to grow closer to God and to prepare for the feast of the Resurrection of Christ. During the pandemic, many of the community-based activities of lent are either cancelled or severely changed. Events like lenten missions, special speakers, devotional services, and inter-parish events will not be there to strengthen us on our journey. This guide to lent is designed to help us find structure in our lenten prayer life and to help us realize the community of our fellow Christians. Of course, it is not meant to replace your usual prayers but rather to add to them during this holy season. Ideally, these prayers can be said together with the members of your household, as the family is fundamental building block of the church.

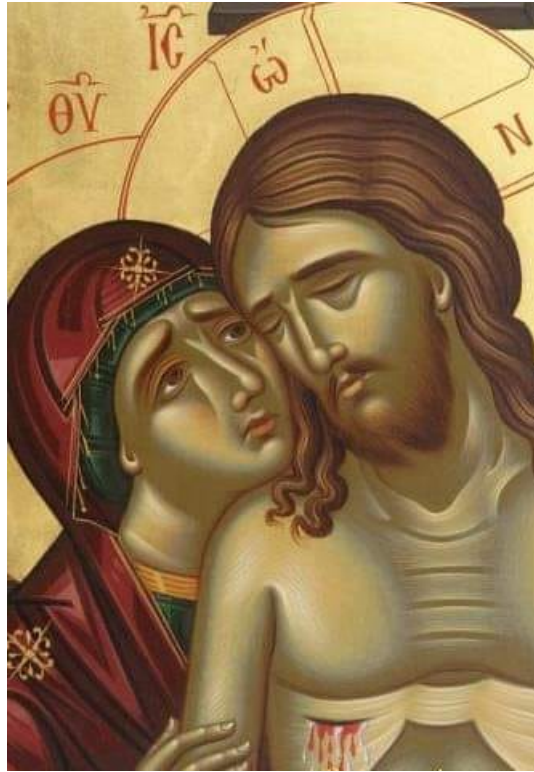
Audience

The calendar and prayers in this text all come from the rites of the Catholic church. We have included prayers from both the Byzantine Rite and the Roman Rite. This is not intended for each to find its own prayers. Rather, it is intended that participants read both so that they can learn more about the church and its rites. As Pope Saint John Paul II wrote in *Ut Unum Sint*, “the Church must breathe with her two lungs!” We invite all Christians of any tradition or rite to join us in these prayers.

Fasting

Each of us has something that separates us from God. This may be something that enters through the mouth, eyes, or ears. We may be drawn to listening to gossip or uncharitable conversations; we may be drawn to gluttony or drunkenness; we may be drawn to entertainment that harms our souls; we may be drawn to being unforgiving; or we may be drawn to despair. Whatever separates you from God, fast from it this lent. Do your best to determine what this passion is and give it up.

Do You Fast? Give me proof of it by your works. If you see a poor man, take pity on him. If you see a friend being honored, do not envy him. Do not let only your mouth fast, but also the eyes, and the ears, and the feet, and the hands and all the members of our bodies. Let the hands fast, by being free of avarice. Let the feet fast, by ceasing to run after sin. Let the eyes fast, by disciplining them not to glare at that which is sinful. Let the ear fast, by not listening to evil talk and gossip. Let the mouth fast from foul words and unjust criticism. For what good is it if we abstain from birds and fishes, but bite and devour our brothers? — St. John Chrysostom



Daily Prayers from the Byzantine Tradition

Our Father, who art in Heaven, 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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory now and forever. Amen.

Rejoice virgin Theotokos, Mary, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb, for you have born the savior of the world.

Glory to the Father, ✠ and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.

Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy.

Holy God, ✠ Holy and Mighty, Holy and immortal, have mercy on us. (3) Glory to the Father, ✠ and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen. Holy God, ✠ Holy and Mighty, Holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

We bow to your cross, ✠ O Lord, and we glorify your holy resurrection. (3) Glory to the Father, ✠ and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever, and we glorify your holy resurrection. We bow to your cross, ✠ O Lord, and we glorify your holy resurrection.

Having suffered the passion for us, Jesus Christ, son of God, have mercy on us.

Otče naš, iže jesi na nebesich, da svjatitsja Imja Tvoje. Da prijedet carstvije Tvoje, da budet vol'a Tvoja. Jako na nebesi, i na zemli. Chl'ib naš nasuščnyj dažd' nam dnes'. I ostavi nam dolhi naša, jakože i my ostavl'ajem dolžnikom našim. I ne vvedi nas vo iskušeniye, no izbavi nas ot lukavaho.

Jako Tvoje jest' carstvo i sila i Slava, Otca, ✠ i Syna, i Svjataho Ducha, i nyñi i prisno, i vo v'iki v'ikov. Amiin.

Bohorodice Djivo radujsja Blahodatnaja Marije Hospod s toboju Blahoslovenna ty vženach i blahosolven plod čreva tvojeho yako spasa rodila jesi duš našich. Amiin.

Slava Otcu, ✠ i Synu, i Svjatomu Duchu, inyñi i prisno, i vo v'iki v'ikov. Amiin.

Hospodi pomiluj. Hospodi pomiluj. Hospodi pomiluj.

Svjatyj Bože, ✠ Svjatyj Kr'ipkij, Svjatyj Bezsmertnyj, pomiluj nas. (3) Slava Otcu, ✠ i Synu, i Svjatomu Duchu, i nyñi i prisno i vo v'iki v'ikov. Amiin. Svjatyj Bezsmertnyj, pomiluj nas. Svjatyj Bože, ✠ Svjatyj Kr'ipkij, Svjatyj Bezsmertnyj, pomiluj nas.

Krestu Tvojemu ✠ poklaňajemsja Vladyko, i svjatoje voskreseniye Tvoje slavim. (3) Slava Otcu, ✠ i Synu, i Svjatomu Duchu, i nyñi i prisno i vo v'iki v'ikov. Amiin. I svjatoje voskreseniye Tvoje slavim. Krestu Tvojemu ✠ poklaňajemsja Vladyko, i svjatoje voskreseniye Tvoje slavim.

Preterpivyj za nas strasti, Isuse Christe, Syne Božij, pomiluj nas.

Lord have mercy! Hospodi pomiluj! Kyrie eleison!



Daily Prayers from the Roman Tradition

Our Father, who art in Heaven, 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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory now and forever. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with Thee. Blessed are thou among women and blessed is the fruit of Thy womb Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.

Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy.

Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy upon us and on the whole world. (3)

Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope. To you do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To you do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, your eyes of mercy toward us, and after this exile show unto us the blessed fruit of Thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

V. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise Thee. R. Because by Thy holy Cross Thou hast redeemed the world.

Pater noster qui es in coelis, sanctificetur nomen tuum; adveniat regnum tuum, fiat voluntas tua, sicut in coelo et in terra. Panem nostrum quotidianum da nobis hodie, et dimitte nobis debita nostra, sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris. Et ne nos inducas in tentationem sed libera nos a malo. Amen.

Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum. Benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Iesus. Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, ora pro nobis peccatoribus, nunc et in hora mortis nostrae. Amen.

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto. Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison.

Sanctus Deus, Sanctus Fortis, Sanctus Immortalis, miserere nobis et totius mundi. (3)

Salve Regina, Mater misericordiae. Vita, dulcedo, et spes nostra, salve. Ad te clamamus exsules filii Hevae. Ad te Suspiramus, gementes et flentes in hac lacrimarum valle. Eia ergo, Advocata nostra, illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte. Et Iesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui, nobis post hoc exsilium ostende. O clemens, o pia, o dulcis Virgo Maria.

V. Adoramus te, Christe, et benedicimus tibi. R. Quia per sanctam crucem tuam redemisti mundum.

Lord have mercy! Domine, miserere! Kyrie eleison!



Prayer

Byzantine Tradition: Prayer of Saint Ephrem

Lord and Master of my life, spare me from the spirit of indifference, despair, lust for power and idle chatter.

Instead, bestow on me, your servant, the spirit of integrity, humility, patience and love.

Yes O Lord and King, let me see my own sins and not judge my brothers and sisters; for you are blessed forever and ever.

Amen.

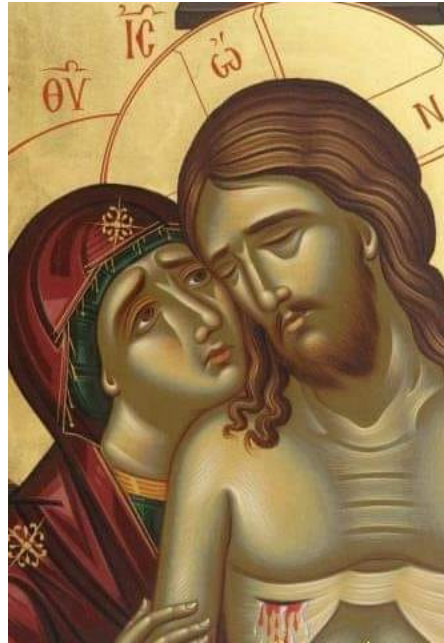
Roman Tradition: Hail Holy Queen

Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope. To you do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To you do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, your eyes of mercy toward us, and after this exile show unto us the blessed fruit of Thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

Action: Fast from meat and dairy products.

Matthew 5:1-12

When he saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he had sat down, his disciples came to him. He began to teach them, saying: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you (falsely) because of me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven. Thus they persecuted the prophets who were before you. You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned? It is no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lampstand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.”



Prayer

Byzantine Tradition (The following prayer is one of the oldest known prayers to Mary. Pope Francis has requested that it be said at the end of the liturgy.)

Beneath your compassion we take refuge, O Virgin Theotokos. Despise not our prayers in our need, but deliver us from dangers, for you alone are pure and blessed.

Roman Tradition

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to Thy protection, implored Thy help, or sought thine intercession was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto Thee, O Virgin of virgins, my mother; to Thee do I come, before Thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in Thy mercy hear and answer me.

Action: Say thank you in some way to someone who has been involved in caring for the sick during the pandemic.

Luke 5: 12:26

Now there was a man full of leprosy in one of the towns where he was; and when he saw Jesus, he fell prostrate, pleaded with him, and said, “Lord, if you wish, you can make me clean.” Jesus stretched out his hand, touched him, and said, “I do will it. Be made clean.” And the leprosy left him immediately. Then he ordered him not to tell anyone, but “Go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses prescribed; that will be proof for them.” The report about him spread all the more, and great crowds assembled to listen to him and to be cured of their ailments, but he would withdraw to deserted places to pray.

One day as Jesus was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and Jerusalem, and the power of the Lord was with him for healing. And some men brought on a stretcher a man who was paralyzed; they were trying to bring him in and set (him) in his presence. But not finding a way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on the stretcher through the tiles into the middle in front of Jesus. When he saw their faith, he said, “As for you, your sins are forgiven.” Then the scribes and Pharisees began to ask themselves, “Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who but God alone can forgive sins?” Jesus knew their Thoughts and said to them in reply, “What are you thinking in your hearts? Which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise and walk’? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins” - he said to the man who was paralyzed, “I say to you, rise, pick up your stretcher, and go home.” He stood up immediately before them, picked up what he had been lying on, and went home, glorifying God. Then astonishment seized them all and they glorified God, and, struck with awe, they said, “We have seen incredible things today.”

Roman: Ash Wednesday and the First Day of Lent in the Roman Tradition and Commemoration of the Seven Founders of the Order of Servites Byzantine: Feast of Great Martyr Theodore the Recruit



Prayer

Byzantine Tradition

Troparion: O Lord, save your people and bless your inheritance. Strengthen our public authorities in every good deed, and protect our nation with your cross.

Kontakion: O Christ our God who chose of your own free will to be raised upon the cross, grant your mercies to your new people who are called by your name. In your power, gladden the hearts of our public authorities; strengthen them in every good deed so that your alliance may be for them a weapon of peace and a standard of victory.

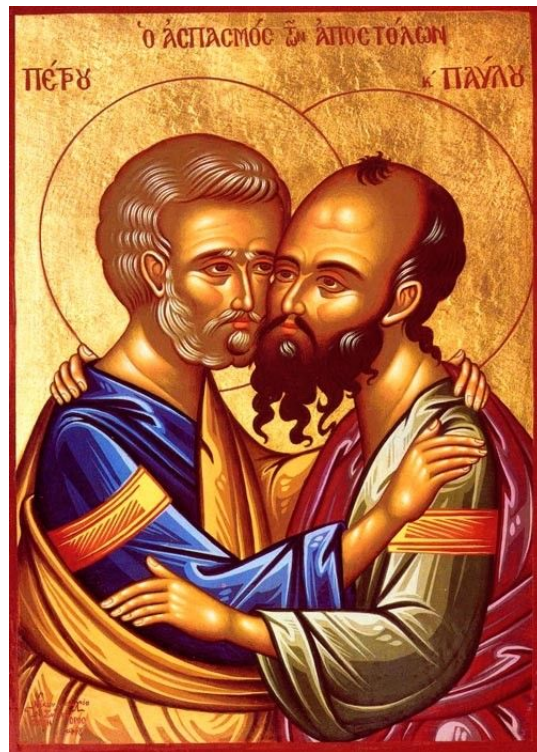
Roman Tradition

For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

Action Fast from meat and dairy products.

Matthew 5: 16-25

“When you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites. They neglect their appearance, so that they may appear to others to be fasting. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you may not appear to be fasting, except to your Father who is hidden. And your Father who sees what is hidden will repay you. “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and decay destroy, and thieves break in and steal. But store up treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor decay destroys, nor thieves break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.” “The lamp of the body is the eye. If your eye is sound, your whole body will be filled with light; but if your eye is bad, your whole body will be in darkness. And if the light in you is darkness, how great will the darkness be. “No one can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”



Prayer

Byzantine Tradition In the Byzantine tradition, Thursday is dedicated to the Apostles Peter and Paul, and to Saint Nicholas.

Troparion: O Holy Apostles, intercede with the all-merciful God that He may grant to our souls the forgiveness of sins.

Kontakion: O Lord, you have taken up to their eternal rest and to the enjoyment of your good things the two infallible preachers of divine truths and leaders of apostles, for you have accepted their struggles and their death as being better than any holocaust, O You who alone know the secrets of hearts.

Roman Tradition

O Holy Apostle, you are the Rock upon which Almighty God has built His Church. Obtain for me I pray you: lively faith, firm hope, and burning love, complete detachment from myself, contempt of the world, patience in adversity, humility in prosperity, recollection in prayer, purity of heart, a right intention in all my works, diligence in fulfilling the duties of my state of life, constancy in my resolutions, resignation to the will of God and perseverance in the grace of God even unto death; that so, by means of your intercession and your glorious merits, I may be made worthy to appear before the Chief and Eternal Shepherd of Souls, Jesus Christ, Who with the Father and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns forever. Amen.

Action

The pandemic has left many of us isolated and lonely. Make contact with someone by phone, email, or letter and share some fellowship.

Matthew 4: 18-25

As he was walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter, and his brother Andrew, casting a net into the sea; they were fishermen. He said to them, “Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men.” At once they left their nets and followed him. He walked along from there and saw two other brothers, James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They were in a boat, with their father Zebedee, mending their nets. He called them, and immediately they left their boat and their father and followed him. He went around all of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness among the people. His fame spread to all of Syria, and they brought to him all who were sick with various diseases and racked with pain, those who were possessed, lunatics, and paralytics, and he cured them. And great crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan followed him.



Prayer

Byzantine Tradition

We bow to your cross, ✠ O Lord, and we glorify your holy resurrection.(3) Glory to the Father, ✠ and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever, and we glorify your holy resurrection. We bow to your cross, ✠ O Lord, and we glorify your holy resurrection.

Roman Tradition

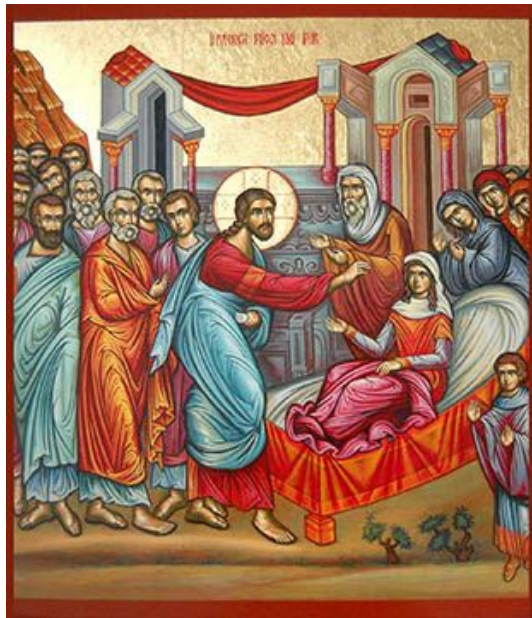
You expired, Jesus, but the source of life gushed forth for souls, and the ocean of mercy opened up for the whole world. O Fount of Life, unfathomable Divine Mercy, envelop the whole world and empty Yourself out upon us. O Blood and Water, which gushed forth from the Heart of Jesus as a fountain of Mercy for us, I trust in You!

Action Fast from meat and dairy products.

Luke 23: 27 - 43

A large crowd of people followed Jesus, including many women who mourned and lamented him. Jesus turned to them and said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep instead for yourselves and for your children, for indeed, the days are coming when people will say, ‘Blessed are the barren, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed.’ At that time people will say to the mountains, ‘Fall upon us!’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us!’ for if these things are done when the wood is green what will happen when it is dry?” Now two others, both criminals, were led away with him to be executed. When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him and the criminals there, one on his right, the other on his left. Then Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.” They divided his garments by casting lots. The people stood by and watched; the rulers, meanwhile, sneered at him and said, “He saved others, let him save himself if he is the chosen one, the Messiah of God.” Even the soldiers jeered at him. As they approached to offer him wine they called out, “If you are King of the Jews, save yourself.” Above him there was an inscription that read, “This is the King of the Jews.” Now one of the criminals hanging there reviled Jesus, saying, “Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us.” The other, however, rebuking him, said in reply, “Have you no fear of God, for you are subject to the same condemnation? And indeed, we have been condemned justly, for the sentence we received corresponds to our crimes, but this man has done nothing criminal.” Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” He replied to him, “Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.”

Traditionally, the penitent thief has been named Saint Dismas.



The healing of the daughter of Jarius.

Action

Pray for those who have died during the pandemic.

Prayer

O loving Lord Jesus Christ, you wept at the death of your friend, Lazarus, and had pity at the sorrow of his sisters Mary and Martha. In your great mercy remember all those who have died especially those I remember with love today (...). Lord, You dealt tenderly with the Widow of Naim over the death of her son, and You prayed with the family of Jarius when his daughter had died, I ask You to heal the sorrow of any family member or friend who has recently lost someone dear (...) and to strengthen in them Your gift of hope in life everlasting. Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord – and let perpetual light shine upon them. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen.

Byzantine Tradition

Eternal memory, eternal memory. Blessed repose and eternal memory.

Roman Tradition

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Luke 20: 27-39

Some Sadducees, those who deny that there is a resurrection, came forward and put this question to him, saying, “Teacher, Moses wrote for us, ‘If someone’s brother dies leaving a wife but no child, his brother must take the wife and raise up descendants for his brother.’ Now there were seven brothers; the first married a woman but died childless. Then the second and the third married her, and likewise all the seven died childless. Finally the woman also died. Now at the resurrection whose wife will that woman be? For all seven had been married to her.” Jesus said to them, “The children of this age marry and remarry; but those who are deemed worthy to attain to the coming age and to the resurrection of the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. They can no longer die, for they are like angels; and they are the children of God because they are the ones who will rise. That the dead will rise even Moses made known in the passage about the bush, when he called ‘Lord’ the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; and he is not God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive.”

Vičnaja pamjat’. Vičnaja pamjat’. Blažennyj pokoj; vičnaja (jej, jemu, jim) pamjat’.

Requiem æternam dona ei (eis), Domine. Et lux perpetua luceat ei (eis):. Requiescat (-ant) in pace. Amen.



Prayers

Byzantine Tradition

O Heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit of Truth! You are everywhere present and fill all things. Treasury of Blessings and Giver of Life, come and dwell within us, cleanse us of all stain, and save our souls, O gracious Lord.

Roman Tradition

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Thy faithful and kindle in them the fire of Thy love. V. Send forth Thy Spirit and they shall be created R. And Thou shalt renew the face of the earth. Amen. Let us pray: O God, Who taught the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant that, by the gift of the same Spirit, we may be always truly wise, and ever rejoice in His consolation. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Action

Thank a teacher who has worked hard through the pandemic.

John 1:25 - 34

They asked him, “Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah or Elijah or the Prophet?” John answered them, “I baptize with water; but there is one among you whom you do not recognize, the one who is coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie.” This happened in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing. The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. He is the one of whom I said, ‘A man is coming after me who ranks ahead of me because he existed before me.’ I did not know him, but the reason why I came baptizing with water was that he might be made known to Israel.” John testified further, saying, “I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from the sky and remain upon him. I did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘On whomever you see the Spirit come down and remain, he is the one who will baptize with the holy Spirit.’ Now I have seen and testified that he is the Son of God.”

Carju nebesnyj ut'išitel'u du še istinny, iže vezd'i syj i vsja ispolňajaj, sokrovišče blahich, i žizni podatel'u prijdi i vselisja v ny, i očistiny ot vsjakija skvernyj, i spasi, blaže dušy naša.

Veni, Sancte Spiritus, reple tuorum corda fidelium, et tui amoris in eis ignem accende. V. Emitte Spiritum tuum et creabuntur; R. Et renovabis faciem terrae. Oremus : Deus, qui corda fidelium Sancti Spiritus illustratione docuisti. Da nobis in eodem Spiritu recta sapere, et de eius semper consolatione gaudere. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.



Prayers

Byzantine Tradition (Prayer of Saint Macarius)

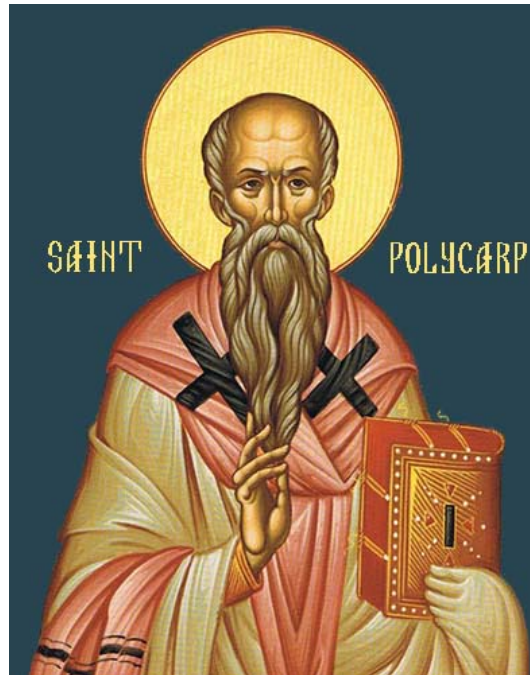
O God, cleanse me, a sinner, for I have done but little good before you. Deliver me from evil, and may your will be done in me that I may open my lips without blame and praise the holy name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Roman Tradition O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all of my sins because I dread the loss of Heaven and the pains of hell. But most of all because I offend Thee, my God, who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of Thy grace to confess my sins to do penance and to amend my life. Amen.

Action Forgive someone who has wronged you.

Luke 15: 11 - 32

Then he said, "A man had two sons, and the younger son said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of your estate that should come to me.' So the father divided the property between them. After a few days, the younger son collected all his belongings and set off to a distant country where he squandered his inheritance on a life of dissipation. When he had freely spent everything, a severe famine struck that country, and he found himself in dire need. So he hired himself out to one of the local citizens who sent him to his farm to tend the swine. And he longed to eat his fill of the pods on which the swine fed, but nobody gave him any. Coming to his senses he thought, 'How many of my father's hired workers have more than enough food to eat, but here am I, dying from hunger. I shall get up and go to my father and I shall say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as you would treat one of your hired workers."' So he got up and went back to his father. While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him, and was filled with compassion. He ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him. His son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son.' But his father ordered his servants, 'Quickly bring the finest robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Take the fattened calf and slaughter it. Then let us celebrate with a feast, because this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found.' Then the celebration began. Now the older son had been out in the field and, on his way back, as he neared the house, he heard the sound of music and dancing. He called one of the servants and asked what this might mean. The servant said to him, 'Your brother has returned and your father has slaughtered the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.' He became angry, and when he refused to enter the house, his father came out and pleaded with him. He said to his father in reply, 'Look, all these years I served you and not once did I disobey your orders; yet you never gave me even a young goat to feast on with my friends. But when your son returns who swallowed up your property with prostitutes, for him you slaughter the fattened calf.' He said to him, 'My son, you are here with me always; everything I have is yours. But now we must celebrate and rejoice, because your brother was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.'"



Prayers

Byzantine Tradition (Prayer of Saint Basil the Great)

O God and Lord of the Powers, and Maker of all creation, Who, because of Thy clemency and incomparable mercy, didst send Thine Only-Begotten Son and our Lord Jesus Christ for the salvation of mankind, and with His venerable Cross didst tear asunder the record of our sins, and thereby didst conquer the rulers and powers of darkness; receive from us sinful people, O merciful Master, these prayers of gratitude and supplication, and deliver us from every destructive and gloomy transgression, and from all visible and invisible enemies who seek to injure us. Nail down our flesh with fear of Thee, and let not our hearts be inclined to words or Thoughts of evil, but pierce our souls with Thy love, that ever contemplating Thee, being enlightened by Thee, and discerning Thee, the unapproachable and everlasting Light, we may unceasingly render confession and gratitude to Thee: The eternal Father, with Thine Only-Begotten Son, and with Thine All-Holy, Gracious, and Life-Giving Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

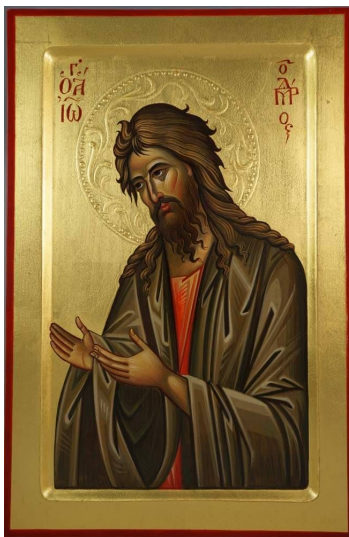
Roman Tradition (Anima Christi)

Soul of Christ, make me holy. Body of Christ, be my salvation. Blood of Christ, let me drink your wine. Water flowing from the side of Christ, wash me clean. Passion of Christ, strengthen me. Kind Jesus, hear my prayer. Hide me within your wounds. And keep me close to you. Defend me from the evil enemy. And call me at the hour of my death. To the fellowship of your saints. That I might sing your praise with them for all eternity. Amen.

Action Compliment someone today.

Matthew 18:1-10

At that time the disciples approached Jesus and said, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” He called a child over, placed it in their midst, and said, “Amen, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever receives one child such as this in my name receives me. “Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. Woe to the world because of things that cause sin! Such things must come, but woe to the one through whom they come! If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter into life maimed or crippled than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into fiery Gehenna. “See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven always look upon the face of my heavenly Father.”



Saint John the Baptist

Prayers

Byzantine Tradition

Troparion: The head of the forerunner arose from the earth like a light, sending out rays of healing and immortality. In heaven it gathers together the choirs of angels, while on earth it assembles the human race in a single voice to sing the glory of Christ God.

Kontakion: O Prophet of God and Forerunner of grace, within the earth we have discovered your head, a rose of great holiness whence healing always comes to us. As you did of old, now also do you preach repentance to the world.

Roman Tradition

O God, who hast made this day to be honorable in our eyes by the commemoration of blessed John the Baptist, grant unto Thy people the grace of spiritual joy, and direct the minds of all Thy faithful into the way of everlasting salvation. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Action

Encourage someone in their faith today. (Heb 3:13 *Every day, as long as this today lasts, keep encouraging one another.*)

Mark 6:14 -29

King Herod heard about it, for his fame had become widespread, and people were saying, “John the Baptist has been raised from the dead; that is why mighty powers are at work in him.” Others were saying, “He is Elijah”; still others, “He is a prophet like any of the prophets.” But when Herod learned of it, he said, “It is John whom I beheaded. He has been raised up.” Herod was the one who had John arrested and bound in prison on account of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, whom he had married. John had said to Herod, “It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife.” Herodias harbored a grudge against him and wanted to kill him but was unable to do so. Herod feared John, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man, and kept him in custody. When he heard him speak he was very much perplexed, yet he liked to listen to him. She had an opportunity one day when Herod, on his birthday, gave a banquet for his courtiers, his military officers, and the leading men of Galilee. Herodias’s own daughter came in and performed a dance that delighted Herod and his guests. The king said to the girl, “Ask of me whatever you wish and I will grant it to you.” He even swore (many things) to her, “I will grant you whatever you ask of me, even to half of my kingdom.” She went out and said to her mother, “What shall I ask for?” She replied, “The head of John the Baptist.” The girl hurried back to the king’s presence and made her request, “I want you to give me at once on a platter the head of John the Baptist.” The king was deeply distressed, but because of his oaths and the guests he did not wish to break his word to her. So he promptly dispatched an executioner with orders to bring back his head. He went off and beheaded him in the prison. He brought in the head on a platter and gave it to the girl. The girl in turn gave it to her mother. When his disciples heard about it, they came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.



Prayers

The prayers of today are very, very, short. Unlike many other prayers, they are not simply to be said once. They are to be said throughout the day, whenever you think you need them. Think deeply about their meaning and use them to give you strength throughout the day.

Byzantine Tradition (Jesus Prayer)

Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.

(This prayer has a great tradition in the Eastern Church. Much has been written about it and saying it has been matched to breathing in and out. This has mostly been done with the prayer being said in Church Slavonic. Therefore we give it here as well.)

Hospodi, Isuse Christe, Syne Božij, pomiluj mja hrišnahe.

Roman Tradition

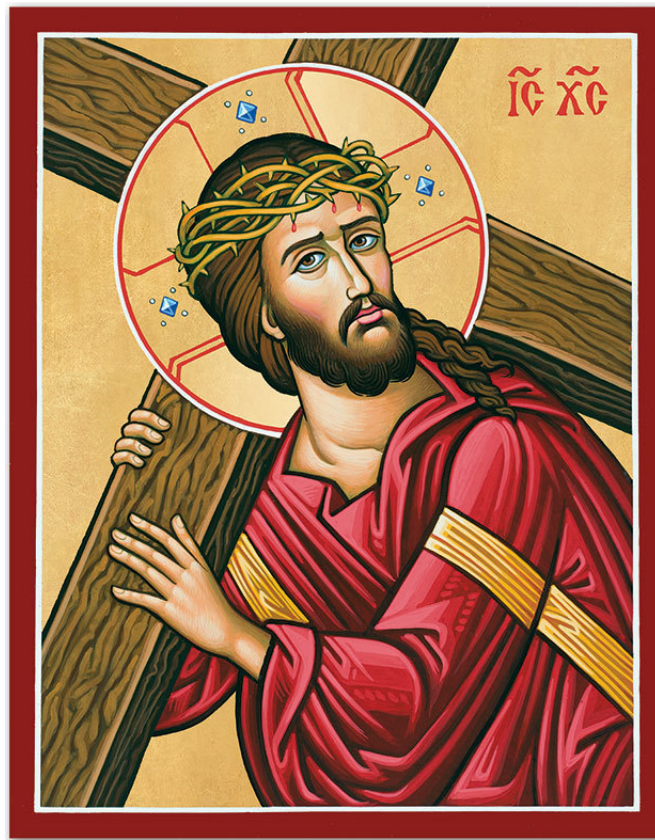
Mary, be a mother to me.

Action

Perform an act of kindness for someone.

Luke 18: 9 - 17

He then addressed this parable to those who were convinced of their own righteousness and despised everyone else. "Two people went up to the temple area to pray; one was a Pharisee and the other was a tax collector. The Pharisee took up his position and spoke this prayer to himself, 'O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity - greedy, dishonest, adulterous - or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, and I pay tithes on my whole income.' But the tax collector stood off at a distance and would not even raise his eyes to heaven but beat his breast and prayed, 'O God, be merciful to me a sinner.' I tell you, the latter went home justified, not the former; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted." People were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them, and when the disciples saw this, they rebuked them. Jesus, however, called the children to himself and said, "Let the children come to me and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it."



Prayers

Byzantine Tradition

All holy trinity, have mercy on us, Lord, cleanse us of our sins. Master pardon our iniquities. Holy God, come and heal our infirmities for Thy name's sake.

Roman Tradition

Eternal God, in whom mercy is endless and the treasury of compassion inexhaustible, look kindly upon us and increase Your mercy in us, that in difficult moments we might not despair nor become despondent, but with great confidence submit ourselves to Your holy will, which is Love and Mercy itself.

Action

Carry someone else's cross today. Find something someone is trying to do and help them with it.

Fast from meat.

Mark 15:16-28

The soldiers led him away inside the palace, that is, the praetorium, and assembled the whole cohort. They clothed him in purple and, weaving a crown of thorns, placed it on him. They began to salute him with, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and kept striking his head with a reed and spitting upon him. They knelt before him in homage.

And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak, dressed him in his own clothes, and led him out to crucify him. They pressed into service a passer-by, Simon, a Cyrenian, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross. They brought him to the place of Golgotha (which is translated Place of the Skull). They gave him wine drugged with myrrh, but he did not take it. Then they crucified him and divided his garments by casting lots for them to see what each should take. It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. The inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." With him they crucified two revolutionaries, one on his right and one on his left.



Prayers

Byzantine Tradition

With the souls of the just brought to perfection, give rest, O savior, to the souls of your servants. Keeping them for the blessed life with you, for you love us all. In your place of rest, O Lord, where all your saints repose, give rest to the souls of your servants, for you alone love us all. You are the God who descended into Hades and loosed the bonds of those imprisoned there. Now O Savior, give rest to the souls of your servants.

Roman Tradition

O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell, lead all souls to heaven, especially those who are in most need of Thy mercy.

Action

Pray for the souls of the deceased of your family.

Acts 2: 14 - 28

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice, and proclaimed to them, “You who are Jews, indeed all of you staying in Jerusalem. Let this be known to you, and listen to my words. These people are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning. No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: ‘It will come to pass in the last days,’ God says, ‘that I will pour out a portion of my spirit upon all flesh. Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. Indeed, upon my servants and my handmaids I will pour out a portion of my spirit in those days, and they shall prophesy. And I will work wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below: blood, fire, and a cloud of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the coming of the great and splendid day of the Lord, and it shall be that everyone shall be saved who calls on the name of the Lord.’ You who are Israelites, hear these words. Jesus the Nazorean was a man commended to you by God with mighty deeds, wonders, and signs, which God worked through him in your midst, as you yourselves know. This man, delivered up by the set plan and foreknowledge of God, you killed, using lawless men to crucify him. But God raised him up, releasing him from the throes of death, because it was impossible for him to be held by it. For David says of him: ‘I saw the Lord ever before me, with him at my right hand I shall not be disturbed. Therefore my heart has been glad and my tongue has exulted; my flesh, too, will dwell in hope, because you will not abandon my soul to the netherworld, nor will you suffer your holy one to see corruption. You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.’ ”



Image of the widow's mite.

Prayers

Byzantine Tradition

Desiring to save the world, the Creator of All, came down to it of his own will. Being at the same time our shepherd and our God, He appeared among us, a man like us. And so the like called upon the like, and as God He heard: Alleluia.

Roman Tradition (Te Deum) You are God: we praise you; You are the Lord: we acclaim you; You are the eternal Father: All creation worships you. To you all angels, all the powers of heaven, Cherubim and Seraphim, sing in endless praise: Holy, holy, holy, Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of your glory. The glorious company of apostles praise you. The noble fellowship of prophets praise you. The white-robed army of martyrs praise you. Throughout the world the holy Church acclaims you: Father, of majesty unbounded, Your true and only Son, worthy of all worship, And the Holy Spirit, advocate and guide. You, Christ, are the king of glory, The eternal Son of the Father. When you became man to set us free You did not spurn the Virgin's womb. You overcame the sting of death, And opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. You are seated at God's right hand in glory. We believe that you will come, and be our judge. Come then, Lord, and help your people, Bought with the price of your own blood, And bring us with your saints To glory everlasting. Save your people, Lord, and bless your inheritance. Govern and uphold them now and always. Day by day we bless you. We praise your name forever. Keep us today, Lord, from all sin. Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy. Lord, show us your love and mercy; For we put our trust in you. In you, Lord, is our hope: And we shall never hope in vain.

Action

Make an extra donation to your church.

Luke 21: 1- 4

When he looked up he saw some wealthy people putting their offerings into the treasury and he noticed a poor widow putting in two small coins. He said, "I tell you truly, this poor widow put in more than all the rest; for those others have all made offerings from their surplus wealth, but she, from her poverty, has offered her whole livelihood."



Prayers

Byzantine Tradition

It is truly proper to glorify you, O Theotokos, the ever-blessed, immaculate, and the mother of our God. More honorable than the cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious than the seraphim; who, a virgin, gave birth to God the Word, you, truly, the Theotokos, we magnify.

Roman Tradition (Angelus. It is traditionally prayed at noon and 6:00 P.M. when the bells are rung.)

The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary: And she conceived of the Holy Spirit. Hail Mary. Behold the handmaid of the Lord: Be it done unto me according to Thy word. Hail Mary. And the Word was made Flesh: And dwelt among us. Hail Mary. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ. Let us pray: Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts; that we, to whom the incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection, through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Action

Make a donation to a charitable cause.

John 1:1-18

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be. What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. A man named John was sent from God. He came for testimony, to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came to be through him, but the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, but his own people did not accept him. But to those who did accept him he gave power to become children of God, to those who believe in his name, who were born not by natural generation nor by human choice nor by a man's decision but of God. And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth. John testified to him and cried out, saying, "This was he of whom I said, 'The one who is coming after me ranks ahead of me because he existed before me.'" From his fullness we have all received, grace in place of grace, because while the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. The only Son, God, who is at the Father's side, has revealed him.



The healing of Peter's mother-in-law.

Prayers

Byzantine Tradition

Holy Father, physician of souls and bodies, You sent Your only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, to heal every infirmity and to deliver us from death. Heal your servants of the spiritual and bodily ills which afflict them and restore them by the grace of Your Christ, through the prayers of our most holy Lady, the Mother of God and ever virgin Mary, and through the prayers of all Your saints.

Roman Tradition

Lord, You invite all who are burdened to come to you. Allow Your healing Hand to heal me. Touch my soul with Your compassion for others; touch my heart with Your courage and infinite Love for all; touch my mind with Your Wisdom, and may my mouth always proclaim Your praise. Teach me to reach out to You in all my needs, and help me to lead others to You by my example. Most loving Heart of Jesus, bring me health in body and spirit that I may serve You with all my strength. Touch gently this life which you have created, now and forever. Amen.

Action

Pray for those afflicted with the coronavirus.

Luke 4:38 - 44

After he left the synagogue, he entered the house of Simon. Simon's mother-in-law was afflicted with a severe fever, and they interceded with him about her. He stood over her, rebuked the fever, and it left her. She got up immediately and waited on them. At sunset, all who had people sick with various diseases brought them to him. He laid his hands on each of them and cured them. And demons also came out from many, shouting, "You are the Son of God." But he rebuked them and did not allow them to speak because they knew that he was the Messiah. At daybreak, Jesus left and went to a deserted place. The crowds went looking for him, and when they came to him, they tried to prevent him from leaving them. But he said to them, "To the other towns also I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God, because for this purpose I have been sent." And he was preaching in the synagogues of Judea.



Ladder of Divine Ascent

Prayers

Byzantine Tradition

May our mouths be filled with your praise, O Lord, so that we may sing of your glory, for You have deemed us worthy to partake of your holy, divine, immortal, pure and life-creating mysteries. Keep us in your holiness, so that all the day long we may live according to your truth. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Roman Tradition

Loving Mother of the Redeemer, Gate of heaven, Star of the sea, assist your people who have fallen yet strive to rise again. To the wonderment of nature you bore your Creator, You remained a virgin after as before. You who received Gabriel's joyful greeting, have mercy on us sinners.

Action

Give up a distraction. It could be your phone, the television, or social media. Focus instead on coming close to God.

Luke 4: 1- 15

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the desert for forty days, to be tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and when they were over he was hungry. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'" Then he took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a single instant. The devil said to him, "I shall give to you all this power and their glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I may give it to whomever I wish. All this will be yours, if you worship me." Jesus said to him in reply, "It is written: 'You shall worship the Lord, your God, and him alone shall you serve.'" Then he led him to Jerusalem, made him stand on the parapet of the temple, and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written: 'He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you,' and: 'With their hands they will support you, lest you dash your foot against a stone.'" Jesus said to him in reply, "It also says, 'You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test.'" When the devil had finished every temptation, he departed from him for a time. Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news of him spread throughout the whole region. He taught in their synagogues and was praised by all.



Saint Casmir was son of the king of Poland. As such this is a special feast for Poles.

Prayers

Byzantine Tradition

Pray the preamble of the Acathist to Mary: As soon as the angel had received his command, he hastened to Joseph's house and said to the ever-virgin: Behold, heaven was brought down to earth when that Word Himself was fully contained in you! Now that I see Him in your womb, taking a servant's form, I cry out to you in wonder: Hail, O Bride and Maiden ever-pure!

Roman Tradition (Regina Caeli)

V. Queen of Heaven rejoice, alleluia. R. For He who you did merit to bear, alleluia. V. Has risen, as He said, alleluia. R. Pray for us to God, alleluia. V. Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluia. R. Because our Lord is truly risen, alleluia. Let us pray. O God, who gave joy to the world through the resurrection of Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, grant we beseech Thee, that through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, His Mother, we may obtain the joys of everlasting life. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Action

Spend time talking with family members.

Luke 2: 40 - 52

The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him. Each year his parents went to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, and when he was twelve years old, they went up according to festival custom. After they had completed its days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Thinking that he was in the caravan, they journeyed for a day and looked for him among their relatives and acquaintances, but not finding him, they returned to Jerusalem to look for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions, and all who heard him were astounded at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him, they were astonished, and his mother said to him, "Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been looking for you with great anxiety." And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he said to them. He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and favor before God and man.



Prayers

Byzantine Tradition

O God, cleanse me, a sinner, for I have done but little good before You. Deliver me from evil, and may your will be done in me that I may open my lips without blame and praise the holy Name of the Father, ✠ and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Roman Tradition

O my God, I love you above all things with my whole heart and soul, because you are all good and worthy of all my love. I love my neighbor as myself for the love of you. I forgive all who have injured me, and ask pardon for all whom I have injured.

Action

Fast from meat.

Mark 9: 2 -13

After six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John and led them up a high mountain apart by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no fuller on earth could bleach them. Then Elijah appeared to them along with Moses, and they were conversing with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus in reply, “Rabbi, it is good that we are here! Let us make three tents: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” He hardly knew what to say, they were so terrified. Then a cloud came, casting a shadow over them; then from the cloud came a voice, “This is my beloved Son. Listen to him.” Suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone but Jesus alone with them. As they were coming down from the mountain, he charged them not to relate what they had seen to anyone, except when the Son of Man had risen from the dead. So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what rising from the dead meant. Then they asked him, “Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?” He told them, “Elijah will indeed come first and restore all things, yet how is it written regarding the Son of Man that he must suffer greatly and be treated with contempt? But I tell you that Elijah has come and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written of him.”



Prayers

Byzantine Tradition

O God of spirits and of all flesh, you trampled death and broke the power of the devil and granted life to your world. Now grant rest, O Lord, to the souls of your departed servants, in a place of light, joy, and peace where there is no pain, sorrow, nor mourning. As a good and loving God, forgive every sin committed by them in word, deed, or thought, since there is on one who lives and does not sin. You alone are without sin; your justice is eternal justice; and your word is truth.

Roman Tradition

I am the Resurrection, I am the Life; to believe in me means life, in spite of death, and all who believe in me shall never die.

Lord, hear our prayers. By raising your Son from the dead, you have given us faith. Strengthen our hope that our brothers and sisters will share in His resurrection. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Action

Pray for the recently deceased.

Acts of the Holy Apostles 9: 36 - 42

Now in Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which translated means Dorcas). She was completely occupied with good deeds and almsgiving. Now during those days she fell sick and died, so after washing her, they laid (her) out in a room upstairs. Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men to him with the request, "Please come to us without delay." So Peter got up and went with them. When he arrived, they took him to the room upstairs where all the widows came to him weeping and showing him the tunics and cloaks that Dorcas had made while she was with them. Peter sent them all out and knelt down and prayed. Then he turned to her body and said, "Tabitha, rise up." She opened her eyes, saw Peter, and sat up. He gave her his hand and raised her up, and when he had called the holy ones and the widows, he presented her alive. This became known all over Joppa, and many came to believe in the Lord.



Prayers

Byzantine Tradition O joyful Light! Light and Holy Glory of the Father immortal, the heavenly, holy, the Blessed One; O Jesus Christ. Now that we have reached the setting of the sun, and see the evening light, we sing to God, Father ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit. It is fitting at all times to raise a song of praise in measured melody to You, O Son of God, the giver of life. Behold the universe sings your glory.

Roman Tradition

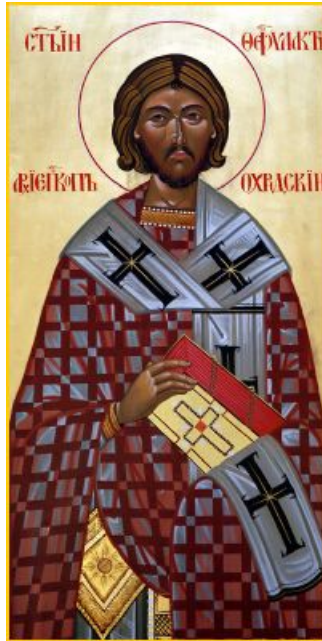
Father, your love gave the Saints Perpetua and Felicity courage to suffer a cruel martyrdom. By Their prayers, help us to grow in love of you. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Action

Thank your priest for all of his work.

Matthew 18: 21-25

Then Peter approaching asked him, “Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive him? As many as seven times?” Jesus answered, “I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times. That is why the kingdom of heaven may be likened to a king who decided to settle accounts with his servants. When he began the accounting, a debtor was brought before him who owed him a huge amount. Since he had no way of paying it back, his master ordered him to be sold, along with his wife, his children, and all his property, in payment of the debt. At that, the servant fell down, did him homage, and said, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you back in full.’ Moved with compassion the master of that servant let him go and forgave him the loan. When that servant had left, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a much smaller amount. He seized him and started to choke him, demanding, ‘Pay back what you owe.’ Falling to his knees, his fellow servant begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.’ But he refused. Instead, he had him put in prison until he paid back the debt. Now when his fellow servants saw what had happened, they were deeply disturbed, and went to their master and reported the whole affair. His master summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you your entire debt because you begged me to. Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant, as I had pity on you?’ Then in anger his master handed him over to the torturers until he should pay back the whole debt. So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives his brother from his heart.”



Saint Theophylact, defender of the veneration of icons.

Prayers

Byzantine Tradition

Troparion: Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us: since we have no defense, we sinners offer this supplication to you, our Master; have mercy on us.

Kontakion: Lord, have mercy on us, for in you we place our hope. Be not exceedingly angry with us, nor mindful of our transgressions, but look upon us even now with mercy, and deliver us from our enemies. For you are our God and we are your people: we all are the work of your hands, and we call upon your name.

Theotokion: Open unto us the doors of mercy, O blessed Theotokos. Let us not perish who place our trust in you, but rather through you be delivered from misfortune. For you are the salvation of all Christians.

Roman Tradition (Isaiah 58: 7-8)

Share your bread with the hungry and destitute, and take the poor and homeless into your own house. Then your light will break forth like the dawn; your holiness will go before you. When you see a man who is naked, clothe him, and do not scorn your brother.

Action

Spend time contemplating an icon and try to see it as a window into Heaven.

Mark 2: 1 -12

When Jesus returned to Capernaum after some days, it became known that he was at home. Many gathered together so that there was no longer room for them, not even around the door, and he preached the word to them. They came bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. Unable to get near Jesus because of the crowd, they opened up the roof above him. After they had broken through, they let down the mat on which the paralytic was lying. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Child, your sins are forgiven." Now some of the scribes were sitting there asking themselves, "Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming. Who but God alone can forgive sins?" Jesus immediately knew in his mind what they were thinking to themselves, so he said, "Why are you thinking such things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, pick up your mat and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins on earth" - he said to the paralytic, "I say to you, rise, pick up your mat, and go home." He rose, picked up his mat at once, and went away in the sight of everyone. They were all astounded and glorified God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this."

Prayers

Most blessed and glorious Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary: you are the nourisher of our lives. Your Blessed Fruit strengthens and enlivens with the Bread of Life and with the Wine of Endearment those who trust in Him. I beseech you: make me worthy to partake of this truly divine food and drink which your only Son, our God, has given us to fill us with grace and glory. Make us worthy to bless Him and you, now and ever, and forever. Amen.

Action

Perform and act of kindness today.

Matthew 25: 1- 46

Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones, when taking their lamps, brought no oil with them, but the wise brought flasks of oil with their lamps. Since the bridegroom was long delayed, they all became drowsy and fell asleep. At midnight, there was a cry, 'Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!' Then all those virgins got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise ones replied, 'No, for there may not be enough for us and you. Go instead to the merchants and buy some for yourselves.' While they went off to buy it, the bridegroom came and those who were ready went into the wedding feast with him. Then the door was locked. Afterwards the other virgins came and said, 'Lord, Lord, open the door for us!' But he said in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, I do not know you.' Therefore, stay awake, for you know neither the day nor the hour. "It will be as when a man who was going on a journey called in his servants and entrusted his possessions to them. To one he gave five talents; 8 to another, two; to a third, one - to each according to his ability. Then he went away. Immediately the one who received five talents went and traded with them, and made another five. Likewise, the one who received two made another two. But the man who received one went off and dug a hole in the ground and buried his master's money. After a long time the master of those servants came back and settled accounts with them. The one who had received five talents came forward bringing the additional five. He said, 'Master, you gave me five talents. See, I have made five more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, my good and faithful servant. Since you were faithful in small matters, I will give you great responsibilities. Come, share your master's joy.' Then the one who had received two talents also came forward and said, 'Master, you gave me two talents. See, I have made two more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, my good and faithful servant. Since you were faithful in small matters, I will give you great responsibilities. Come, share your master's joy.' Then the one who had received the one talent came forward and said, 'Master, I knew you were a demanding person, harvesting where you did not plant and gathering where you did not scatter; so out of fear I went off and buried your talent in the ground. Here it is back.' His master said to him in reply, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I did not plant and gather where I did not scatter? Should you not then have put my money in the bank so that I could have got it back with interest on my return? Now then! Take the talent from him and give it to the one with ten. For to everyone who has, more will be given and he will grow rich; but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And throw this useless servant into the darkness outside, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.' "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit upon his glorious throne, and all the nations will be assembled before him. And he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Then the king will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.' Then the righteous will answer him and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?' And the king will say to them in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.' Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, a stranger and you gave me no welcome, naked and you gave me no clothing, ill and in prison, and you did not care for me.' Then they will answer and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison, and not minister to your needs?' He will answer them, 'Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me.' And these will go off to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."



The season of Lent is our preparation for the most important feast of the Christian calendar, the Feast of the Resurrection of Christ. It is our Garden of Gethsemane; it is our Calvary; where we can forgo some of the pleasures of life to prepare ourselves completely to celebrate the joy of the feast. We prepare in many varied ways, but certainly the three main ways are by fasting, by almsgiving and by prayer.

The golden mouthed orator Saint John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, gave a sermon for this feast nearly 1700 years ago. It is read in most Eastern Christian churches at the end of the Vigil Liturgy each year. One small part reads as follows:

If any have toiled from the first hour, let them receive their due reward; If any have come after the third hour, let him with gratitude join in the Feast! And he that arrived after the sixth hour, let him not doubt; for he too shall sustain no loss. And if any delayed until the ninth hour, let him not hesitate; but let him come too. And he who arrived only at the eleventh hour, let him not be afraid by reason of his delay. For the Lord is gracious and receives the last even as the first. He gives rest to him that comes at the eleventh hour, as well as to him that toiled from the first.

We are already several weeks into our season of Lent. We may think that we have failed to fast, that we have avoided alms giving and that we have not been living a life of prayer. There is no reason to despair as Chrysostom tells us. Rather, we take the opportunity to begin now. We can now begin to fast, to feed the hungry, to clothe the poor, to educate the uneducated, and to get closer to God through prayer and in the liturgy of the Catholic Church. We can still reach our joy in the resurrection, by beginning now at the middle of the fast. We, as Christians, should not judge those who have joined late, nor should we feel superior for having begun at an earlier time, but rather we should welcome them on this path and give them all the support we can.

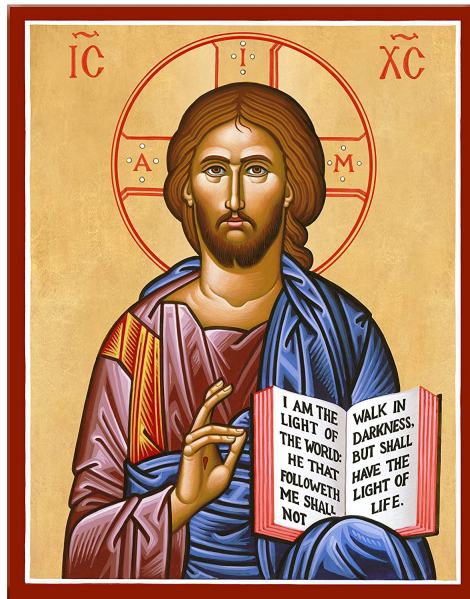
Lent is more than simply a season of preparation for a single feast. It is analogous to our life here on earth. In our life, we have sufferings and joys, times of feast and times of famine, times when we remain close to God and times when we have fallen away. But just as Chrysostom says for the Feast of the Resurrection, so it is true for our lives. If we have fallen, if we have failed to love our neighbor, to share our blessings, to avoid sin, to live a life of prayer, then God still shall give rest to those who have toiled only from the eleventh hour. Lent reminds us, no matter what hour of our life that we happen to be in, that we still have time to live the life that we want to live, to live a life that brings us closer to God. We still have time to fast, to give alms, to pray, to forgive, to seek out God. As Lent prepares us for the joy of the Resurrection, so our life prepares us for the ultimate joy when we see God face to face.

Prayer

Deign, O Lord, to keep us this evening free from sin. Blessed are You, O Lord, God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is your Name forever. Amen. Lord, let your mercy be upon us, for we have placed our trust in You. Blessed are You, O Lord: guide us by Your precepts. Blessed are You, O Master: make us understand your precepts. Blessed are You, O Holy One: enlighten us by your precepts. Lord, your mercy endures forever: despise not the work of your hands. To you is due praise; to You is due a hymn. Glory to you, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever, and forever. Amen.

Action

Take time that would be spent watching television or being on social media and listen to spiritual music instead.



Prayers

Byzantine Tradition

Spirit, most merciful Comforter: You proceed from the Father in a manner beyond our understanding. Come, I beseech You, and take up Your abode in my heart. Purify and cleanse me from all sin, and sanctify my soul. Cleanse it from every impurity, water its dryness, melt its coldness, and save it from sinful ways. Make me truly humble and resigned, that I may be pleasing to You, and that You abide with me forever. Most blessed Light, most amiable Light, enlighten me. O rapturous Joy of Paradise, Fount of purest delight, my God, give yourself to me, and kindle in my innermost soul the fire of your love. My Lord, instruct, direct, and defend me in all things. Give me strength against all immoderate fears and against despondency. Bestow upon me a true faith, a firm hope, and a sincere and perfect love. Grant that I always do your most gracious will. Amen.

Roman Tradition

All-powerful Father, as now we bring you our songs of praise, so may we sing your goodness in the company of your saints for ever. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Action

Say thank you to someone for something they have done for you.

John 3:16 -21

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him will not be condemned, but whoever does not believe has already been condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the verdict, that the light came into the world, but people preferred darkness to light, because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come toward the light, so that his works might not be exposed. But whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God.



Prayers

Byzantine Tradition O Lord, into your most merciful hands I commend my body and soul, thoughts and acts, desires and intentions. I commend the needs of my body and soul, future and past, my faith and hope, the end of my life, the day and hour of my death, the burial and resurrection of my body. O most merciful God, whose clemency the sins of the world can never transcend, take me, a sinner, under the wings of Your protection and deliver me from every evil. Cleanse my iniquities, grant me a reformation of my life, and protect me against future transgressions, that I may in no manner ever anger You. Shelter my weakness from passions and evil persons, guard me against my visible and invisible enemies, lead me on the road of salvation and to Yourself, the safe harbor and haven of my desires. Grant me a happy, peaceful, Christian death, and protect me from evil spirits. Be merciful to me, your servant, at the great judgment, and number me among the blessed flock who stand on your right, that, together with them, I may forever glorify You, my Creator. Amen.

Roman Tradition

Is there one who would not weep, whelmed in miseries so deep, Christ's dear Mother to behold?
Can the human heart refrain from partaking in her pain, in that Mother's pain untold?
For the sins of His own nation, She saw Jesus wracked with torment, All with scourges rent:
She beheld her tender Child, Saw Him hang in desolation, Till His spirit forth He sent.

Action

Fast from meat.

Luke 12: 2 -12

"There is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, nor secret that will not be known. Therefore whatever you have said in the darkness will be heard in the light, and what you have whispered behind closed doors will be proclaimed on the housetops. I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body but after that can do no more. I shall show you whom to fear. Be afraid of the one who after killing has the power to cast into Gehenna; yes, I tell you, be afraid of that one. Are not five sparrows sold for two small coins? Yet not one of them has escaped the notice of God. Even the hairs of your head have all been counted. Do not be afraid. You are worth more than many sparrows. I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before others the Son of Man will acknowledge before the angels of God. But whoever denies me before others will be denied before the angels of God. "Everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but the one who blasphemes against the holy Spirit will not be forgiven. When they take you before synagogues and before rulers and authorities, do not worry about how or what your defense will be or about what you are to say. For the holy Spirit will teach you at that moment what you should say."



Do not be afraid; just have faith.

Prayers

Byzantine Tradition (The following prayer is said during vespers. It is usually done in three languages. Of course, it can just be repeated 40 times in one language. It is often said as a verse and response when changing languages.)

Lord Have Mercy! (10 times)

Hospodi pomiluj! (10 times)

Kyrie eleison! (10 times)

Lord Have Mercy! (10 times)

Roman Tradition (Traditional Hymn)

Holy God, we praise Thy Name; Lord of all, we bow before Thee! All on earth Thy scepter claim, All in Heaven above adore Thee; Infinite Thy vast domain, Everlasting is Thy reign.

Holy Father, Holy Son, Holy Spirit, Three we name Thee; While in essence only One, Undivided God we claim Thee; And adoring bend the knee, While we own the mystery.

Action

Contemplate how to better put your trust in the Lord.

Mark 5:35 - 43

While he was still speaking, people from the synagogue official's house arrived and said, "Your daughter has died; why trouble the teacher any longer?" Disregarding the message that was reported, Jesus said to the synagogue official, "Do not be afraid; just have faith." He did not allow anyone to accompany him inside except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James. When they arrived at the house of the synagogue official, he caught sight of a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. So he went in and said to them, "Why this commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but asleep." And they ridiculed him. Then he put them all out. He took along the child's father and mother and those who were with him and entered the room where the child was. He took the child by the hand and said to her, "Talitha kum," which means, "Little girl, I say to you, arise!" The girl, a child of twelve, arose immediately and walked around. At that they were utterly astounded. He gave strict orders that no one should know this and said that she should be given something to eat.



Ladder of Divine Ascent

Prayers

Byzantine Tradition (Prayer of Saint John Chrysostom)

O Christ our God, You have deemed me worthy to be a partaker of your most pure body and precious blood. I praise, bless and adore You; I glorify You and extol your eternal salvation, now and ever, and forever. Amen.

Roman Tradition

O thou Mother! fount of love! Touch my spirit from above, make my heart with thine accord:
Make me feel as thou hast felt; make my soul to glow and melt with the love of Christ my Lord.
Holy Mother! pierce me through, in my heart each wound renew of my Savior crucified:
Let me share with thee His pain, who for all my sins was slain, who for me in torments died.

Action

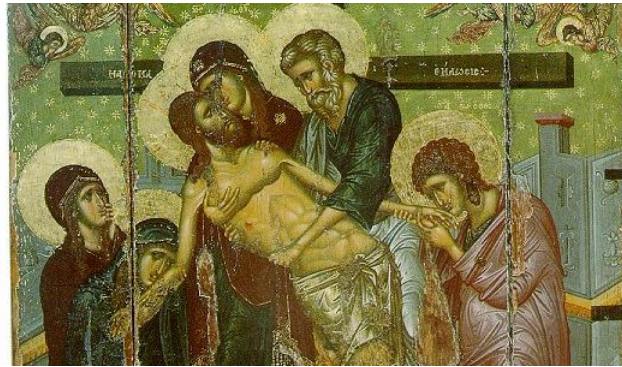
The image depicted is the ladder of ascent to Heaven. Demons are working to pull people off this ladder to drag them down. Contemplate what temptations and actions are drawing you away from climbing this ladder to God and resolve to overcome them.

Matthew 26: 40 - 41

When he returned to his disciples he found them asleep. He said to Peter, “So you could not keep watch with me for one hour? Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

James 1: 13 - 17

No one experiencing temptation should say, “I am being tempted by God”; for God is not subject to temptation to evil, and he himself tempts no one. Rather, each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire conceives and brings forth sin, and when sin reaches maturity it gives birth to death. Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers: all good giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no alteration or shadow caused by change.



Prayer

Psalm 22

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish? My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer, by night, but I find no rest. Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One; you are the one Israel praises. In you our ancestors put their trust; they trusted and you delivered them. To you they cried out and were saved; in you they trusted and were not put to shame. But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by everyone, despised by the people. All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads. “He trusts in the Lord,” they say, “let the Lord rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him. Yet you brought me out of the womb; you made me trust in you, even at my mother’s breast. From birth I was cast on you; from my mother’s womb you have been my God. Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help. Many bulls surround me; strong bulls of Bashan encircle me. Roaring lions that tear their prey open their mouths wide against me. I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart has turned to wax; it has melted within me. My mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death. Dogs surround me, a pack of villains encircles me; they pierce my hands and my feet. All my bones are on display; people stare and gloat over me. They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment. But you, Lord, do not be far from me. You are my strength; come quickly to help me. Deliver me from the sword, my precious life from the power of the dogs. Rescue me from the mouth of the lions; save me from the horns of the wild oxen. I will declare your name to my people; in the assembly I will praise you. You who fear the Lord, praise him! All you descendants of Jacob, honor him! Revere him, all you descendants of Israel! For he has not despised or scorned the suffering of the afflicted one; he has not hidden his face from him but has listened to his cry for help. From you comes the theme of my praise in the great assembly; before those who fear you[f] I will fulfill my vows. The poor will eat and be satisfied; those who seek the Lord will praise him may your hearts live forever! All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him, for dominion belongs to the Lord and he rules over the nations. All the rich of the earth will feast and worship; all who go down to the dust will kneel before him those who cannot keep themselves alive. Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord. They will proclaim his righteousness, declaring to a people yet unborn: He has done it!

Action

Meditate on the Passion of Christ.

Mark 15: 34 - 47

And at three o’clock Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” which is translated, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” Some of the bystanders who heard it said, “Look, he is calling Elijah.” One of them ran, soaked a sponge with wine, put it on a reed, and gave it to him to drink, saying, “Wait, let us see if Elijah comes to take him down.” Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. The veil of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom. When the centurion who stood facing him saw how he breathed his last he said, “Truly this man was the Son of God!” There were also women looking on from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of the younger James and of Joses, and Salome. These women had followed him when he was in Galilee and ministered to him. There were also many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem. When it was already evening, since it was the day of preparation, the day before the sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, a distinguished member of the council, who was himself awaiting the kingdom of God, came and courageously went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate was amazed that he was already dead. He summoned the centurion and asked him if Jesus had already died. And when he learned of it from the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph. Having bought a linen cloth, he took him down, wrapped him in the linen cloth and laid him in a tomb that had been hewn out of the rock. Then he rolled a stone against the entrance to the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses watched where he was laid.



Prayers

Psalm 103

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

The Lord works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed. He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel. The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us. As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him. For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust.

As for man, his days are like grass; he flourishes like a flower of the field; for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more. But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children's children, to those who keep his covenant and remember to do his commandments. The Lord has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all.

Bless the Lord, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, obeying the voice of his word! Bless the Lord, all his hosts, his ministers, who do his will! Bless the Lord, all his works, in all places of his dominion. Bless the Lord, O my soul!

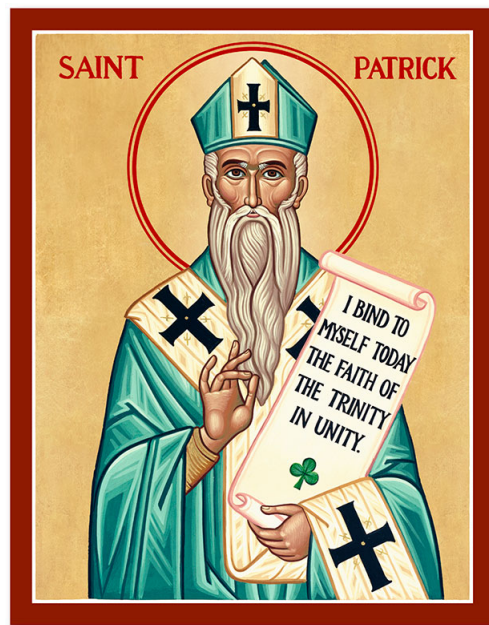
Action

Write or call someone.

John 1: 3 - 5

All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be. What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Saint Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland and brought the Gospel to the Irish people, as such this is a very important feast for the Irish.



Prayer (Prayer of Saint Patrick)

I arise today Through a mighty strength, the invocation of the Trinity, Through belief in the Threeness, Through confession of the Oneness of the Creator of creation.

I arise today Through the strength of Christ's birth with His baptism, Through the strength of His crucifixion with His burial, Through the strength of His resurrection with His ascension, Through the strength of His descent for the judgment of doom.

I arise today Through the strength of the love of cherubim, In the obedience of angels, In the service of archangels, In the hope of resurrection to meet with reward, In the prayers of patriarchs, In the predictions of prophets, In the preaching of apostles, In the faith of confessors, In the innocence of holy virgins, In the deeds of righteous men.

I arise today, through The strength of heaven, The light of the sun, The radiance of the moon, The splendor of fire, The speed of lightning, The swiftness of wind, The depth of the sea, The stability of the earth, The firmness of rock.

I arise today, through God's strength to pilot me, God's might to uphold me, God's wisdom to guide me, God's eye to look before me, God's ear to hear me, God's word to speak for me, God's hand to guard me, God's shield to protect me, God's host to save me From snares of devils, From temptation of vices, From everyone who shall wish me ill, afar and near.

I summon today All these powers between me and those evils, Against every cruel and merciless power that may oppose my body and soul, Against incantations of false prophets, Against black laws of pagandom, Against false laws of heretics, Against craft of idolatry, Against spells of witches and smiths and wizards, Against every knowledge that corrupts man's body and soul; Christ to shield me today Against poison, against burning, Against drowning, against wounding, So that there may come to me an abundance of reward.

Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ on my right, Christ on my left, Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down, Christ when I arise, Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me, Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me, Christ in every eye that sees me, Christ in every ear that hears me.

Action

Wish a blessed feast of Saint Patrick to someone.

Mark 6: 7 - 13

He summoned the Twelve and began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over unclean spirits. He instructed them to take nothing for the journey but a walking stick - no food, no sack, no money in their belts. They were, however, to wear sandals but not a second tunic. He said to them, "Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave from there. Whatever place does not welcome you or listen to you, leave there and shake the dust off your feet in testimony against them." So they went off and preached repentance. They drove out many demons, and they anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.



Saint Cyril, born in 315, wrote Catechesis, where he explained the true teachings of the faith and scripture and also the traditions of the Church.

Prayers

Byzantine Tradition

All holy trinity, have mercy on us, Lord, cleanse us of our sins. Master pardon our iniquities. Holy God and heal our infirmities for Thy name's sake.

Roman Tradition

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Thy faithful and enkindle in them the fire of Thy love. V. Send forth Thy Spirit and they shall be created R. And Thou shalt renew the face of the earth. Amen. Let us pray: O God, Who taught the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant that, by the gift of the same Spirit, we may be always truly wise, and ever rejoice in His consolation. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Action

Pray that all my grow to respect the sanctity of life.

Matthew 2: 13 - 21

When they had departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. Herod is going to search for the child to destroy him." Joseph rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed for Egypt. He stayed there until the death of Herod, that what the Lord had said through the prophet might be fulfilled, "Out of Egypt I called my son." When Herod realized that he had been deceived by the magi, he became furious. He ordered the massacre of all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had ascertained from the magi. Then was fulfilled what had been said through Jeremiah the prophet: "A voice was heard in Ramah, sobbing and loud lamentation; Rachel weeping for her children, and she would not be consoled, since they were no more." When Herod had died, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." He rose, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel.



Saint Joseph, patron saint of workers.

Prayers

Byzantine Tradition

O Joseph, announce to David, ancestor of Christ, the good news of these wonders you have seen: a Virgin giving birth to a child. With the shepherds you have glorified Him, with the wise men you have worshiped Him, and an angel appeared to you. Ask Christ our God to save our souls.

Roman Tradition

O Saint Joseph, do assist me by your powerful intercession, and obtain for me from your Divine Son all spiritual blessings, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, So that, having engaged here below your heavenly power, I may offer my thanksgiving and homage to the most Loving of Fathers.

Father, you entrusted our Savior to the care of Saint Joseph. By the help of his prayers may your Church continue to serve its Lord, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Action

Wish someone (especially if their name is Joseph) a blessed feast of Saint Joseph.

Fast from meat.

Matthew 1: 18 - 25

Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the Holy Spirit. Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly. Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: “Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means “God is with us.” When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home. He had no relations with her until she bore a son, and he named him Jesus.



Prayers

Byzantine Tradition

Troparion; When he grasped the meaning of the mystical command, the bodiless one stood instantly in Joseph's tent. He said to the woman who knew not wedlock: He who bowed the heavens when he came down is contained entirely in you without change. Seeing him in your womb taking the form of a slave, I am amazed as I exclaim: Rejoice O Unwedded Bride.

Kontakion: O Theotokos, valiant defender, your servants offer you hymns of victory in thanksgiving, for you have delivered us. But since you have invincible power, free us from all peril, that we may exclaim to you: Rejoice, O Unwedded Bride.

Roman Tradition (Pange Lingua)

Sing, my tongue, the Savior's glory, Of His Flesh, the mystery sing; Of the Blood, all price exceeding, Shed by our Immortal King, Destined, for the world's redemption, From a noble Womb to spring.

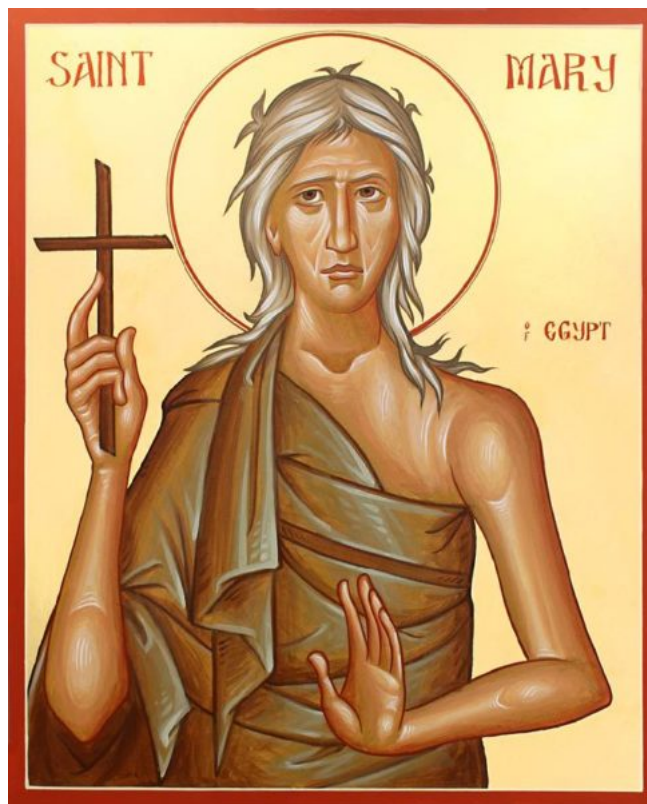
Of a pure and spotless Virgin Born for us on earth below, He, as Man, with man conversing, Stayed, the seeds of truth to sow; Then He closed in solemn order Wondrously His Life of woe.

Action

Make or buy food for someone.

Mark 8: 1 - 10

In those days when there again was a great crowd without anything to eat, he summoned the disciples and said, "My heart is moved with pity for the crowd, because they have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat. If I send them away hungry to their homes, they will collapse on the way, and some of them have come a great distance." His disciples answered him, "Where can anyone get enough bread to satisfy them here in this deserted place?" Still he asked them, "How many loaves do you have?" "Seven," they replied. He ordered the crowd to sit down on the ground. Then, taking the seven loaves he gave thanks, broke them, and gave them to his disciples to distribute, and they distributed them to the crowd. They also had a few fish. He said the blessing over them and ordered them distributed also. They ate and were satisfied. They picked up the fragments left over - seven baskets. There were about four thousand people. He dismissed them and got into the boat with his disciples and came to the region of Dalmanutha.



Saint Mary of Egypt. She repented over a dissolute life and became a desert hermit.

Prayers

Psalm 4: God is wondrous in his saints, the God of Israel.

Byzantine Tradition

Once you were filled with all kinds of harlotry; but today, through repentance, you have shown yourself to be a bride of Christ. Yearning for the angelic life, you crushed the devils with the weapons of the cross. Therefore, O glorious Mary of Egypt, you became a bride in the kingdom.

Roman Tradition

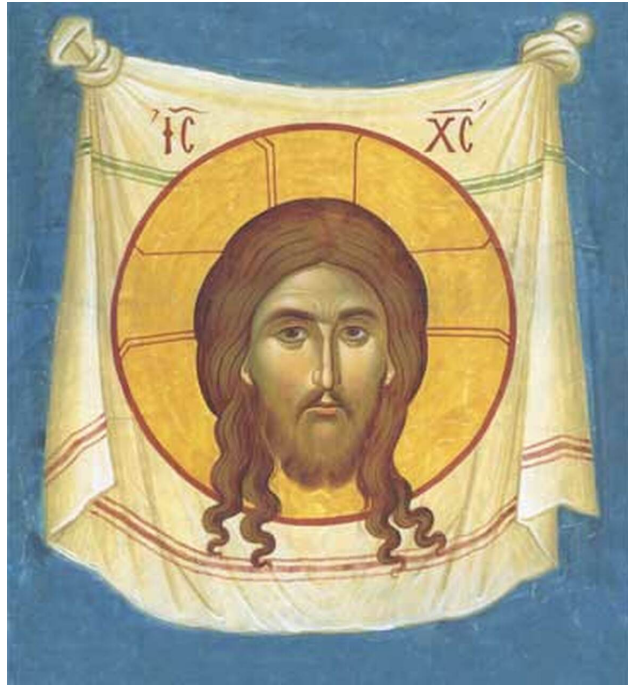
O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended thee, and I detest all of my sins because I dread the loss of Heaven and the pains of hell. But most of all because I offend thee, my God, who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of thy grace to confess my sins to do penance and to amend my life. Amen.

Action

Encourage someone in their faith today. (Heb 3:13 *Every day, as long as this today lasts, keep encouraging one another.*)

John 8: 2 - 12

But early in the morning he arrived again in the temple area, and all the people started coming to him, and he sat down and taught them. Then the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery and made her stand in the middle. They said to him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?" They said this to test him, so that they could have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and began to write on the ground with his finger. But when they continued asking him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." Again he bent down and wrote on the ground. And in response, they went away one by one, beginning with the elders. So he was left alone with the woman before him. Then Jesus straightened up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" She replied, "No one, sir." Then Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on do not sin any more." Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."



Icon made without hands.

Prayers

Psalm 115: Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name give the glory.

Byzantine Tradition

Remember me, O Lord, when you come in your kingdom. Remember me, O Master, when you come in your kingdom. Remember me, O Holy One, when you come in your kingdom.

Roman Tradition

O Sacrament most Holy, O Sacrament Divine, All praise and all thanksgiving, Be every moment Thine.

Action

Compliment someone.

Matthew 21: 42 - 46

Jesus said to them, “Did you never read in the scriptures: ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; by the Lord has this been done, and it is wonderful in our eyes’? Therefore, I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that will produce its fruit. The one who falls on this stone will be dashed to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.” When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they knew that he was speaking about them. And although they were attempting to arrest him, they feared the crowds, for they regarded him as a prophet.



Prayers (Apostles' Creed)

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into Hell. The third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into Heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Action

Do something nice for someone who lives in your house or for a family member.

Luke 5: 12 - 28

Now there was a man full of leprosy in one of the towns where he was; and when he saw Jesus, he fell prostrate, pleaded with him, and said, "Lord, if you wish, you can make me clean." Jesus stretched out his hand, touched him, and said, "I do will it. Be made clean." And the leprosy left him immediately. Then he ordered him not to tell anyone, but "Go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses prescribed; 4 that will be proof for them." The report about him spread all the more, and great crowds assembled to listen to him and to be cured of their ailments, but he would withdraw to deserted places to pray. One day as Jesus was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and Jerusalem, and the power of the Lord was with him for healing. And some men brought on a stretcher a man who was paralyzed; they were trying to bring him in and set (him) in his presence. But not finding a way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on the stretcher through the tiles into the middle in front of Jesus. When he saw their faith, he said, "As for you, your sins are forgiven." Then the scribes and Pharisees began to ask themselves, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who but God alone can forgive sins?" Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them in reply, "What are you thinking in your hearts? Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" - he said to the man who was paralyzed, "I say to you, rise, pick up your stretcher, and go home." He stood up immediately before them, picked up what he had been lying on, and went home, glorifying God. Then astonishment seized them all and they glorified God, and, struck with awe, they said, "We have seen incredible things today." After this he went out and saw a tax collector named Levi sitting at the customs post. He said to him, "Follow me." And leaving everything behind, he got up and followed him.



Our Lady of Guadalupe

Psalm 20: Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God.

Prayers

ACT OF CONSECRATION OF THE UNITED STATES TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

Most Holy Trinity: Our Father in heaven, who chose Mary as the fairest of your daughters; Holy Spirit, who chose Mary as your Spouse; God the Son, who chose Mary as your Mother; in union with Mary, we adore your majesty and acknowledge your supreme, eternal dominion and authority. Most Holy Trinity, we put the United States of America into the hands of Mary Immaculate in order that she may present the country to you. Through her we wish to thank you for the great resources of this land and for the freedom, which has been its heritage. Through the intercession of Mary, have mercy on the Catholic Church in America. Grant us peace. Have mercy on our president and all the officers of our government. Grant us a fruitful economy born of justice and charity. Have mercy on capital and industry and labor. Protect the family life of the nation. Guard the precious gift of many religious vocations. Through the intercession of our Mother, have mercy on the sick, the poor, the tempted, sinners, and on all who are in need. Mary, Immaculate Virgin, our Mother, Patroness of our land, we praise you and honor you and give our country and ourselves to our sorrowful and Immaculate Heart. O Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary, pierced by the sword of sorrow prophesied by Simeon, save us from degeneration, disaster and war. Protect us from all harm. O Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary, who bore the sufferings of your Son in the depths of your heart, be our advocate. Pray for us, that acting always according to your will and the will of your divine Son, we may live and die pleasing to God. Amen.

Action

Pray for our civil authorities and country.

Mark 12: 14 -18

They came and said to him, "Teacher, we know that you are a truthful man and that you are not concerned with anyone's opinion. You do not regard a person's status but teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. Is it lawful to pay the census tax to Caesar or not? Should we pay or should we not pay?" Knowing their hypocrisy he said to them, "Why are you testing me? Bring me a denarius to look at." They brought one to him and he said to them, "Whose image and inscription is this?" They replied to him, "Caesar's." So Jesus said to them, "Repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God." They were utterly amazed at him.



Prayer

Troparion: Today is the fountainhead of our salvation and the revelation of the mystery that was planned from all eternity: the Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin and Gabriel announces this grace. Let us join him in crying out to the Mother of God: “Hail O Woman full of grace! The Lord is with you!”

Kontakion: We are your own, O Mother of God! To you, protectress and leader, our songs of victory! To you who saved us from danger, our hymn of thanksgiving! In your invincible might, deliver us from all danger that we may sing to you: “Hail O Bride and Maiden ever pure!”

Magnificat

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for He has looked with favor on His humble servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed, the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is His Name. He has mercy on those who fear Him in every generation. He has shown the strength of his arm, He has scattered the proud in their conceit. He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty. He has come to the help of His servant Israel for He has remembered his promise of mercy, the promise He made to our fathers, to Abraham and his children for ever.

Action

Pray for your family.

Luke 1:26-25

In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin’s name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, “Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you.” But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

But Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?” And the angel said to her in reply, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God.” Mary said, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

During those days Mary set out and traveled to the hill country in haste to a town of Judah, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, “Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled.”



Archangel Gabriel

Prayers

Byzantine Tradition (Suffering Mother – Traditional Hymn)

Suffering Mother, standing by the cross, I hear you weeping at your tragic loss. O my son, my son, tell me why you suffer, innocent and holy precious life you offer on the cross.

Roman Tradition (Stabat Mater – Traditional Hymn)

At the Cross her station keeping, stood the mournful Mother weeping, close to her Son to the last.
Through her heart, His sorrow sharing, all His bitter anguish bearing, now at length the sword has passed.
O how sad and sore distressed was that Mother, highly blest, of the sole-begotten One.
Christ above in torment hangs, she beneath beholds the pangs of her dying glorious Son.

Action

Fast from meat.

Luke 1:5 - 28

In the days of Herod, King of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah of the priestly division of Abijah; his wife was from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. Both were righteous in the eyes of God, observing all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blamelessly. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren and both were advanced in years. Once when he was serving as priest in his division's turn before God, according to the practice of the priestly service, he was chosen by lot to enter the sanctuary of the Lord to burn incense. Then, when the whole assembly of the people was praying outside at the hour of the incense offering, the angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right of the altar of incense. Zechariah was troubled by what he saw, and fear came upon him. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, because your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall name him John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He will drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will be filled with the holy Spirit even from his mother's womb, and he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. He will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of fathers toward children and the disobedient to the understanding of the righteous, to prepare a people fit for the Lord." Then Zechariah said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years." And the angel said to him in reply, "I am Gabriel, who stand before God. I was sent to speak to you and to announce to you this good news. But now you will be speechless and unable to talk until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled at their proper time." Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zechariah and were amazed that he stayed so long in the sanctuary. But when he came out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He was gesturing to them but remained mute. Then, when his days of ministry were completed, he went home. After this time his wife Elizabeth conceived, and she went into seclusion for five months, saying, "So has the Lord done for me at a time when he has seen fit to take away my disgrace before others." In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, "Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you."



Raising of Lazarus

Prayers

Byzantine Tradition

Troparion: Christ our God, before your passion you confirmed our common resurrection when you raised Lazarus from the dead. Therefore, like the children, we carry the symbols of victory and cry out to you, the Victor over Death, Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Kontakion: O Christ, the Joy of All, the Truth, the Light, the Life, and the Resurrection of the world, has appeared to those on earth because of his goodness. He became the pattern of our resurrection – granting divine forgiveness to all.

Roman Tradition

You are the patron of the poor and the sick, and you have demonstrated hundreds of times the real power that Our Lord has given you to continue your work of protection, healing, and light to the needy. You, who were raised by Jesus Christ himself and knew firsthand the power of powerful healing! Today I pray to you, St. Lazarus, that with your divine protection, you may take care of all the sick people and loved ones who need your help in their home, enter our door in these difficult times. You who protect those who suffer, you who in your flesh knew the pain of the disease and were overcome by it momentarily! And then, He allowed you to come out of your grave and heal your body. Do the miracles with your hands, give the power of resurrection to the sick. Allow them to disappear from sickness, from wounds, from contagious diseases,

with strength and religiosity in the soul. I beg you, keep the evil away from my body and from my family and all my friends whom I love. It allows our health to be optimal in these difficult times; it protects us from adversities and from evil entities that want to express themselves in the form of wounds or illnesses, as well as affecting our forces and spirits. The Divine Master has given you the power to heal, and I beg you, Saint Lazarus, to use it when you are most needed. Amen!

Action

Pray for those who are suffering.

John 11: 1- 44

Now a man was ill, Lazarus from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who had anointed the Lord with perfumed oil and dried his feet with her hair; it was her brother Lazarus who was ill. So the sisters sent word to him, saying, "Master, the one you love is ill." When Jesus heard this he said, "This illness is not to end in death, but is for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it." Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So when he heard that he was ill, he remained for two days in the place where he was. Then after this he said to his disciples, "Let us go back to Judea." The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just trying to stone you, and you want to go back there?" Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in a day? If one walks during the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if one walks at night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him." He said this, and then told them, "Our friend Lazarus is asleep, but I am going to awaken him." So the disciples said to him, "Master, if he is asleep, he will be saved." But Jesus was talking about his death, while they thought that he meant ordinary sleep. So then Jesus said to them clearly, "Lazarus has died. And I am glad for you that I was not there, that you may believe. Let us go to him." So Thomas, called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go to die with him." When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, only about two miles away. And many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him; but Mary sat at home. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise." Martha said to him, "I know he will rise, in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord. I have come to believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world." When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary secretly, saying, "The teacher is here and is asking for you." As soon as she heard this, she rose quickly and went to him. For Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still where Martha had met him. So when the Jews who were with her in the house comforting her saw Mary get up quickly and go out, they followed her, presuming that she was going to the tomb to weep there. When Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." When Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who had come with her weeping, he became perturbed and deeply troubled, and said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Sir, come and see." And Jesus wept. So the Jews said, "See how he loved him." But some of them said, "Could not the one who opened the eyes of the blind man have done something so that this man would not have died?" So Jesus, perturbed again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay across it. Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the dead man's sister, said to him, "Lord, by now there will be a stench; he has been dead for four days." Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?" So they took away the stone. And Jesus raised his eyes and said, "Father, I thank you for hearing me. I know that you always hear me; but because of the crowd here I have said this, that they may believe that you sent me." And when he had said this, he cried out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, tied hand and foot with burial bands, and his face was wrapped in a cloth. So Jesus said to them, "Untie him and let him go."



Zechariah 9:9

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a colt, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Prayers

Byzantine Tradition

In heaven you are seated on a throne; but on earth upon a colt, O Christ our God. You accepted the praise of angels and the song of the children crying out to you: Blessed is he who comes to restore Adam.

Roman Tradition

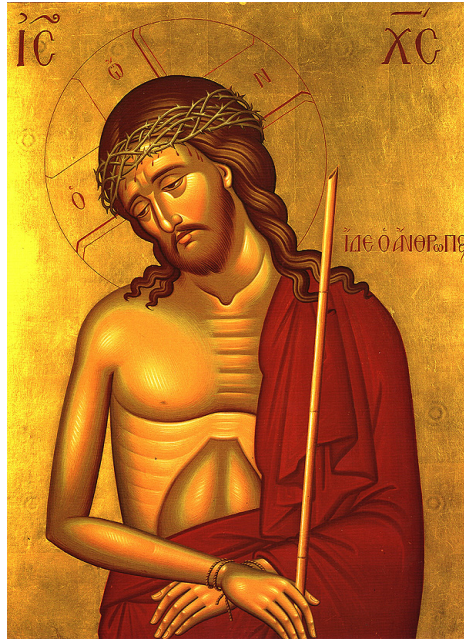
Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of Hosts, Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Action

Pray for those who are in despair.

John 12: 12 -19

On the next day, when the great crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, they took palm branches and went out to meet him, and cried out: "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, (even) the king of Israel." Jesus found an ass and sat upon it, as is written: "Fear no more, O daughter Zion; see, your king comes, seated upon an ass's colt." His disciples did not understand this at first, but when Jesus had been glorified they remembered that these things were written about him and that they had done this for him. So the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from death continued to testify. This was also why the crowd went to meet him, because they heard that he had done this sign. So the Pharisees said to one another, "You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the whole world has gone after him."



Prayers

Psalm 95

Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song.

For the Lord is the great God, the great King above all gods. In his hand are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to him. The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land.

Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker; for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care.

Today, if only you would hear his voice, “Do not harden your hearts as you did at Meribah, as you did that day at Massah in the wilderness, where your ancestors tested me; they tried me, though they had seen what I did. For forty years I was angry with that generation; I said, They are a people whose hearts go astray, and they have not known my ways.’ So I declared on oath in my anger, They shall never enter my rest.’

Byzantine Tradition

We have reached the saving passion of Christ our God. O faithful, let us glorify his long-suffering beyond description. For in compassion he has raised us up with himself, we who were dead in sin; for he is good and loves us all.

Action

Prayer for those who do not know God.

John 12: 23 - 32

Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be. The Father will honor whoever serves me. “I am troubled now. Yet what should I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But it was for this purpose that I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it and will glorify it again.” The crowd there heard it and said it was thunder; but others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” Jesus answered and said, “This voice did not come for my sake but for yours. Now is the time of judgment on this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself.”



Prayers

Byzantine Tradition

How shall I enter, unworthy as I am, into the splendor of your holy place? If I dare to go along into the bridal chamber my clothing will condemn me, for it is not wedding attire, and I will be bound and cast out by the angels. Purify my filthy soul, O Lord, and save me, for you love us all.

Roman Tradition

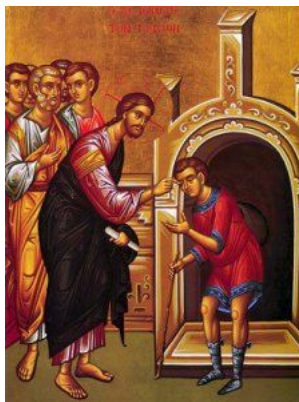
Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, he has come to his people and set them free. He has raised up for us a mighty savior, born of the house of his servant David. Through his holy prophets he promised of old, that he would save us from our enemies, from the hands of all who hate us. He promised to show mercy to our fathers and to remember his covenant. This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham to set us free from the hands of our enemies, free to worship him without fear, holy and righteous in his sight all the days of our life. You my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way, to give his people knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of sins. In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from on high shall break upon us, to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet in to the way of peace.

Action

Prayer for those who do not know Christ.

John 13: 1 - 16

Before the feast of Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to pass from this world to the Father. He loved his own in the world and he loved them to the end. The devil had already induced Judas, son of Simon the Iscariot, to hand him over. So, during supper, fully aware that the Father had put everything into his power and that he had come from God and was returning to God, he rose from supper and took off his outer garments. He took a towel and tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and dry them with the towel around his waist. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Master, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing, you do not understand now, but you will understand later." Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "Unless I wash you, you will have no inheritance with me." Simon Peter said to him, "Master, then not only my feet, but my hands and head as well." Jesus said to him, "Whoever has bathed has no need except to have his feet washed, for he is clean all over; so you are clean, but not all." For he knew who would betray him; for this reason, he said, "Not all of you are clean." So when he had washed their feet (and) put his garments back on and reclined at table again, he said to them, "Do you realize what I have done for you? You call me 'teacher' and 'master,' and rightly so, for indeed I am. If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet. I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do.



Icon of the anointing, which is done on this day in the Byzantine rite.

Prayers

Byzantine Tradition

O all-pure Lady, hear the prayers of your servants, scatter the fierce attacks made against us and give us freedom from our enemies, for we have you alone as a firm and certain support, and we have been given your protection, that all who call upon you will not be put to confusion. Quickly hear the prayer of those who cry to you, “Hail, O Lady! Hail, help of all humanity! Hail, joy and refuge and salvation of our souls!”

Roman Tradition

Father, in your plan of salvation your Son, Jesus Christ accepted the cross and freed us from the power of the enemy. May we come to share the glory of his resurrection, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Action

Do an examination of your conscience.

John 12: 34 - 50

So the crowd answered him, “We have heard from the law that the Messiah remains forever. Then how can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?”

Jesus said to them, “The light will be among you only a little while. Walk while you have the light, so that darkness may not overcome you. Whoever walks in the dark does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become children of the light.” After he had said this, Jesus left and hid from them. Although he had performed so many signs in their presence they did not believe in him, in order that the word which Isaiah the prophet spoke might be fulfilled: “Lord, who has believed our preaching, to whom has the might of the Lord been revealed?” For this reason they could not believe, because again Isaiah said: “He blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, so that they might not see with their eyes and understand with their heart and be converted, and I would heal them.” Isaiah said this because he saw his glory and spoke about him. Nevertheless, many, even among the authorities, believed in him, but because of the Pharisees they did not acknowledge it openly in order not to be expelled from the synagogue. For they preferred human praise to the glory of God. Jesus cried out and said, “Whoever believes in me believes not only in me but also in the one who sent me, and whoever sees me sees the one who sent me. I came into the world as light, so that everyone who believes in me might not remain in darkness. And if anyone hears my words and does not observe them, I do not condemn him, for I did not come to condemn the world but to save the world. Whoever rejects me and does not accept my words has something to judge him: the word that I spoke, it will condemn him on the last day, because I did not speak on my own, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and speak. And I know that his commandment is eternal life. So what I say, I say as the Father told me.”



Prayer

Let me this day, O Son of God, be a partaker of Your mystical supper, for I will not reveal Your mysteries to your enemies, nor will I betray you with a kiss as did Judas, but like the repentant thief I openly profess You, remember me O Lord, in Your kingdom.

Byzantine Tradition (Traditional Hymn)

Give me your body, O Christ, Savior and Sovereign, O Guest Divine. Come and rest in my soul, Christ, living God, now and forever. Salvation's cup I receive, filled with your body and purest blood. Lord, my poor cry now perceives that I may share your life divine.

Roman Tradition (Written by Saint Thomas Aquinas)

Down in adoration falling, Lo! the sacred Host we hail,
Lo! o'er ancient forms departing Newer rites of grace prevail;
Faith for all defects supplying, Where the feeble senses fail.

To the everlasting Father, And the Son Who reigns on high
With the Holy Spirit proceeding Forth from each eternally,
Be salvation, honor blessing, Might and endless majesty.
Amen.

Action

Forgo a distraction and spend the time in contemplation of Christ's presence in the Eucharist.

Luke 22: 7 -20

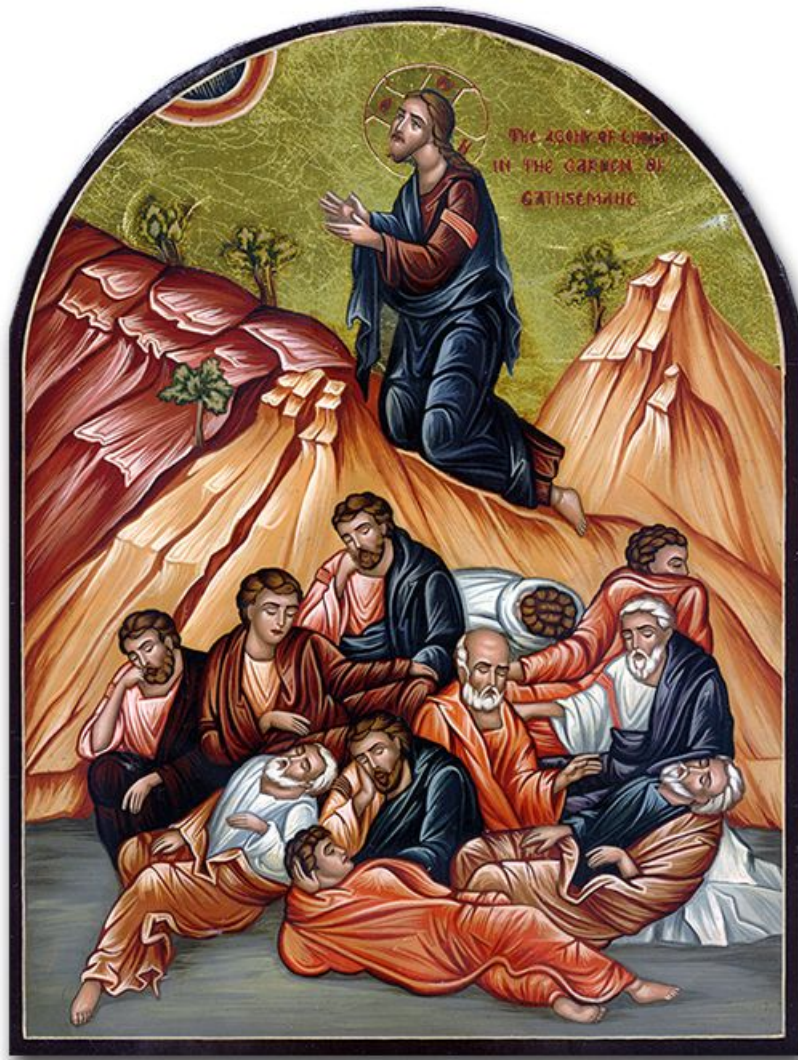
When the day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread arrived, the day for sacrificing the Passover lamb, he sent out Peter and John, instructing them, "Go and make preparations for us to eat the Passover." They asked him, "Where do you want us to make the preparations?" And he answered them, "When you go into the city, a man will meet you carrying a jar of water. Follow him into the house that he enters and say to the master of the house, 'The teacher says to you, "Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?"' He will show you a large upper room that is furnished. Make the preparations there." Then they went off and found everything exactly as he had told them, and there they prepared the

TANTUM ergo Sacramentum Veneremur cernui: Et antiquum documentum Novo cedat ritui: Praestet fides supplementum Sensuum defectui.

Genitori, Genitoque Laus et iubilatio, Salus, honor, virtus quoque Sit et benedictio: Procedenti ab utroque Compar sit laudatio. Amen

Passover. When the hour came, he took his place at table with the apostles. He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer, for, I tell you, I shall not eat it (again) until there is fulfillment in the kingdom of God." Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and said, "Take this and share it among yourselves; for I tell you (that) from this time on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." Then he took the bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which will be given for you; do this in memory of me." And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which will be shed for you."





Luke 22: 39 - 54

Then going out he went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him. When he arrived at the place he said to them, "Pray that you may not undergo the test." After withdrawing about a stone's throw from them and kneeling, he prayed, saying, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me; still, not my will but yours be done." (And to strengthen him an angel from heaven appeared to him. He was in such agony and he prayed so fervently that his sweat became like drops of blood falling on the ground.) When he rose from prayer and returned to his disciples, he found them sleeping from grief. He said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not undergo the test." While he was still speaking, a crowd approached and in front was one of the Twelve, a man named Judas. He went up to Jesus to kiss him. Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" His disciples realized what was about to happen, and they asked, "Lord, shall we strike with a sword?" And one of them struck the high priest's servant and cut off his right ear. But Jesus said in reply, "Stop, no more of this!" Then he touched the servant's ear and healed him. And Jesus said to the chief priests and temple guards and elders who had come for him, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs? Day after day I was with you in the temple area, and you did not seize me; but this is your hour, the time for the power of darkness."



Prayer

Byzantine Tradition

We bow to your cross, O Lord, and we glorify your holy resurrection. (3) Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever, and we glorify your holy resurrection. We bow to your cross, O Lord, and we glorify your holy resurrection.

The noble Joseph took down from the cross Your most pure body. Anointing it with spices he wrapped it in a pure linen, and placed it in a new tomb.

Roman Tradition

Let us pray, dear friends, for the holy Church of God throughout the world, that God the almighty Father guide it and gather it together so that we may worship him in peace and tranquility.

Almighty and eternal God, You have shown your glory to all nations in Christ, Your Son. Guide the work of your Church, help it to persevere in faith, proclaim Your name, and bring Your salvation to people everywhere. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Canticle of Simeon

Now You shall dismiss Your servant, O Lord, according to Your word, in peace; because my eyes have seen Your salvation which You prepared before the face of all peoples, a light to the revelation of the gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel.

Action Fast from meat and dairy products.

So they took Jesus, and carrying the cross himself he went out to what is called the Place of the Skull, in Hebrew, Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus in the middle. Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, “Jesus the Nazorean, the King of the Jews.” Now many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write ‘The King of the Jews,’ but that he said, ‘I am the King of the Jews.’” Pilate answered, “What I have written, I have written.” When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four shares, a share for each soldier. They also took his tunic, but the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top down. So they said to one another, “Let’s not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it will be,” in order that the passage of scripture might be fulfilled (that says): “They divided my garments among them, and for

my vesture they cast lots." This is what the soldiers did. Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his home. After this, aware that everything was now finished, in order that the scripture might be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I thirst." There was a vessel filled with common wine. So they put a sponge soaked in wine on a sprig of hyssop and put it up to his mouth. When Jesus had taken the wine, he said, "It is finished." And bowing his head, he handed over the spirit. Now since it was preparation day, in order that the bodies might not remain on the cross on the sabbath, for the sabbath day of that week was a solemn one, the Jews asked Pilate that their legs be broken and they be taken down. So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and then of the other one who was crucified with Jesus. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs, but one soldier thrust his lance into his side, and immediately blood and water flowed out. An eyewitness has testified, and his testimony is true; he knows that he is speaking the truth, so that you also may (come to) believe. For this happened so that the scripture passage might be fulfilled: "Not a bone of it will be broken." And again another passage says: "They will look upon him whom they have pierced." After this, Joseph of Arimathea, secretly a disciple of Jesus for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate if he could remove the body of Jesus. And Pilate permitted it. So he came and took his body. Nicodemus, the one who had first come to him at night, also came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes weighing about one hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and bound it with burial cloths along with the spices, according to the Jewish burial custom. Now in the place where he had been crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had yet been buried. So they laid Jesus there because of the Jewish preparation day; for the tomb was close by.



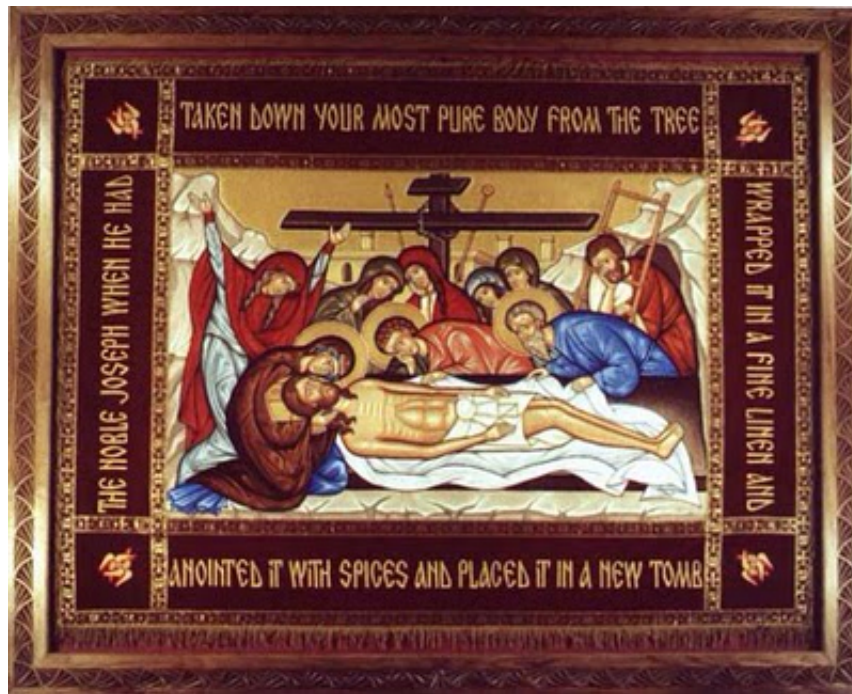




Pieta

Prayer

You, O King and Lord, have fallen asleep in the flesh as a mortal man, but on the third day You arose again. You have raised Adam from his corruption and made death powerless. You are the Pasch of incorruption. You are the salvation of the world.



Plaschanitsa

Sermon of Saint John Chrysostom

If any man be devout and love God, let him enjoy this fair and radiant triumphal feast. If any man be a wise servant, let him rejoicing enter into the joy of his Lord. If any have labored long in fasting, let him now receive his recompense. If any have wrought from the first hour, let him today receive his just reward. If any have come at the third hour, let him with thankfulness keep the feast. If any have arrived at the sixth hour, let him have no misgivings; because he shall in nowise be deprived thereof. If any have delayed until the ninth hour, let him draw near, fearing nothing. If any have tarried even until the eleventh hour, let him, also, be not alarmed at his tardiness; for the Lord, who is jealous of his honor, will accept the last even as the first; He gives rest unto him who comes at the eleventh hour, even as unto him who has wrought from the first hour.

And He shows mercy upon the last, and cares for the first; and to the one He gives, and upon the other He bestows gifts. And He both accepts the deeds, and welcomes the intention, and honors the acts and praises the offering. Wherefore, enter you all into the joy of your Lord; and receive your reward, both the first, and likewise the second. You rich and poor together, hold high festival. You sober and you heedless, honor the day. Rejoice today, both you who have fasted and you who have disregarded the fast. The table is full-laden; feast ye all sumptuously. The calf is fatted; let no one go hungry away.

Enjoy ye all the feast of faith: Receive ye all the riches of loving-kindness. let no one bewail his poverty, for the universal kingdom has been revealed. Let no one weep for his iniquities, for pardon has shown forth from the grave. Let no one fear death, for the Savior's death has set us free. He that was held prisoner of it has annihilated it. By descending into Hell, He made Hell captive. He embittered it when it tasted of His flesh. And Isaiah, foretelling this, did cry: Hell, said he, was embittered, when it encountered Thee in the lower regions. It was embittered, for it was abolished. It was embittered, for it was mocked. It was embittered, for it was slain. It was embittered, for it was overthrown. It was embittered, for it was fettered in chains. It took a body, and met God face to face. It took earth, and encountered Heaven. It took that which was seen, and fell upon the unseen.

O Death, where is your sting? O Hell, where is your victory? Christ is risen, and you are overthrown. Christ is risen, and the demons are fallen. Christ is risen, and the angels rejoice. Christ is risen, and life reigns. Christ is risen, and not one dead remains in the grave. For Christ, being risen from the dead, is become the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. To Him be glory and dominion unto ages of ages. Amen.

Luke 24: 1 - 53

But at daybreak on the first day of the week they took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb; but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were puzzling over this, behold, two men in dazzling garments appeared to them. They were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground. They said to them, "Why do you seek the living one among the dead? He is not here, but he has been raised. Remember what he said to you while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners and be crucified, and rise on the third day." And they remembered his words. Then they returned from the tomb and announced all these things to the eleven and to all the others. The women were Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James; the others who accompanied them also told this to the apostles, but their story seemed like nonsense and they did not believe them. But Peter got up and ran to the tomb, bent down, and saw the burial cloths alone; then he went home amazed at what had happened. Now that very day two of them were going to a village seven miles from Jerusalem called Emmaus, and they were conversing about all the things that had occurred. And it happened that while they were conversing and debating, Jesus himself drew near and walked with them, but their eyes were prevented from recognizing him. He asked them, "What are you discussing as you walk along?" They stopped, looking downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, said to him in reply, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know of the things that have taken place there in these days?" And he replied to them, "What sort of things?" They said to him, "The things that happened to Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, how our chief priests and rulers both handed him over to a sentence of death and crucified him. But we were hoping that he would be the one to redeem Israel; and besides all this, it is now the third day since this took place. Some women from our group, however, have astounded us: they were at the tomb early in the morning and did not find his body; they came back and reported that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who announced that he was alive. Then some of those with us went to the tomb and found things just as the women had described, but him they did not see." And he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are! How slow of heart to believe all that the prophets spoke! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them what referred to him in all the scriptures. As they approached the village to which they were going, he gave the impression that he was going on farther. But they urged him, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening and the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them. And it happened that, while he was with them at table, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning (within us) while he spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us?" So they set out at once and returned to Jerusalem where they found gathered together the eleven and those with them who were saying, "The Lord has truly been raised and has appeared to Simon!" Then the two recounted what had taken place on the way and how he was made known to them in

the breaking of the bread. While they were still speaking about this, he stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." But they were startled and terrified and thought that they were seeing a ghost. Then he said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do questions arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have." And as he said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. While they were still incredulous for joy and were amazed, he asked them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of baked fish; he took it and ate it in front of them. He said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and in the prophets and psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures. And he said to them, "Thus it is written that the Messiah would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day and that repentance, for the forgiveness of sins, would be preached in his name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And (behold) I am sending the promise of my Father upon you; but stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." Then he led them out as far as Bethany, raised his hands, and blessed them. As he blessed them he parted from them and was taken up to heaven. They did him homage and then returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and they were continually in the temple praising God.



Sorrowful Mother



Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!
Christos voskrese! Voistinnu vosrese!

Resurrection Troparion

Christ is risen from the dead, by death he trampled death, and to those in the tombs he granted life!

Christos voskrese iz mertvykh! Smertiju smert' poprav, i suščim vo horb'ich život darovav.

Your resurrection, O Christ, our Savior, the Angels in heaven praise with hymns; make us, on earth, also worthy with a pure heart to extol and give glory to you.

It is the day of Resurrection, O people let us be enlightened by it. The Passover is the Lord's passover, since Christ, our God, has brought us from death to life and from earth to heaven. Therefore, we sing the hymn of victory.

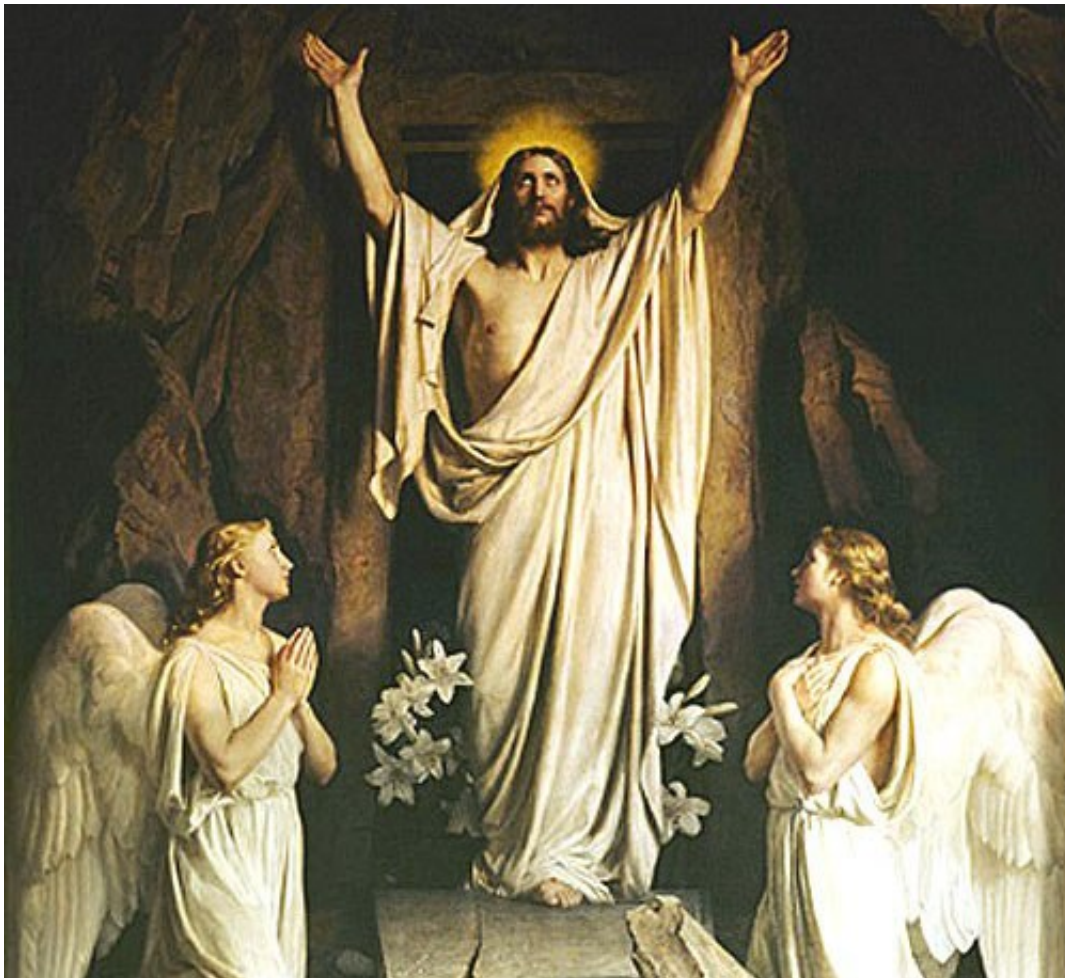
Although you descended into the grave O Immortal, You destroyed the power of Death. You arose as a victor, O Christ God. You told the women bearing ointment: "Rejoice!" You gave peace to Your apostles and resurrection to the fallen.

The women with Mary, before the dawn, found the stone rolled away from the tomb and they heard the angel say: "Why do you seek among the dead, as a mortal, the one who abides in everlasting light? Behold the linens of burial. Go in haste and proclaim to the world, that, having conquered death, the Lord is risen; for He is the Son of God, the savior of mankind."

John: Chapter 20

On the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala came to the tomb early in the morning, while it was still dark, and saw the stone removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and told them, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they put him." So Peter and the other disciple went out and came to the tomb. They both ran, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and arrived at the tomb first; he bent down and saw the burial cloths there, but did not go in. When Simon Peter arrived after him, he went into the tomb and saw the burial cloths there, and the cloth that had covered his head, not with the burial cloths but rolled up in

a separate place. Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed. For they did not yet understand the scripture that he had to rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned home. But Mary stayed outside the tomb weeping. And as she wept, she bent over into the tomb and saw two angels in white sitting there, one at the head and one at the feet where the body of Jesus had been. And they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken my Lord, and I don't know where they laid him." When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus there, but did not know it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" She thought it was the gardener and said to him, "Sir, if you carried him away, tell me where you laid him, and I will take him." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni," which means Teacher. Jesus said to her, "Stop holding on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and tell them, 'I am going to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" Mary of Magdala went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord," and what he told her. On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained." Thomas, called Didymus, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples said to him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nailmarks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe." Now a week later his disciples were again inside and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe." Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed." Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through this belief you may have life in his name.



Well done, good and faithful servant! Share your master's joy!