

MELKITE RESOURCES FOR THE DOMESTIC CHURCH FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE HOLY CROSS

THE TRISAGION PRAYERS

Parents: Blessed ✠ is our God at all times, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Response: Amen.

Parents: Glory to You, our God, glory to You. Heavenly King, Consoler, Spirit of Truth, present in all places and filling all things, the Treasury of blessings and the Giver of life, come and dwell in us, cleanse us of all stain, and save our souls, O Good One.

Children: Holy ✠ God! Holy Mighty One! Holy Immortal One! Have mercy on us!
(Three times w/ metany)

Glory be to the Father ✠ and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

All-Holy Trinity, have mercy on us! Lord, forgive us our sins! Master, pardon our transgressions! Holy One, look upon us and heal our infirmities for Your name's sake.

Lord, have mercy! *(Three times)*

Glory be to the Father ✠ and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

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. Amen.

RESURRECTIONAL TROPARION – TONE 1

After the stone was sealed by the Jews
and the while the soldiers were watching Your spotless body,
You rose, O Savior, on the third day, giving life to the world.
Wherefore, the heavenly powers cried out to you, O Giver of life:
"Glory to Your resurrection, O Christ! Glory to Your kingdom!
Glory to Your economy, O You who alone are the lover of mankind!"

EPISTLE: 1 JOHN 4:12 - 19

No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because he first loved us.¹

GOSPEL: LUKE 5:1 - 11

At that time Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret. And he saw two boats moored by the lake, but the fishermen had left them and were washing their nets. And getting into one of the boats, the one that was Simon's, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And sitting down, he began to teach the crowds from the boat. But when he had stopped speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep, and lower your nets for a catch."

And Simon answered and said to him, "Master, the whole night through we have toiled and have taken nothing; but at your word I will lower the net." And when they had done so, they caught a great number of fishes, but their net was breaking. And they called to their comrades in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw this, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord," For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish they had made; and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon.

And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you shall catch men." And when they had brought their boats to land, they left all and followed him.²

CATECHETICAL SUMMARY

¹ Epistle Book, English (Apostolos): Bishop Joseph Raya, Alleluia Press, 1980

² Gospel Book, English: Bishop Joseph Raya, Alleluia Press, 1978

The place on the "Lake of Gennesaret" (i.e. the Sea of Galilee) where the calling of the first disciples took place is well known to the local Christians of the area even to today and pilgrims can visit this holy site and wade in the waters where Jesus stood. There, near the shore, there is a large spring that waterfalls into the sea. The water of that spring is a little warmer than the waters of the sea and the local fish (tilapia and catfish) come to the spot in massive schools seeking the warm fresh water of the spring. The experience of the place is quite extraordinary and allows us to meditate more deeply upon Jesus' invitation to Simon in the Gospel which is proclaimed in the Church today.

"Do not be afraid; from now on you shall catch men," Jesus told Simon Peter that day and today he speaks these words to us. Do not be afraid! In the anti-Christian climate in which we live today we are told over and over again that religion is not welcome in public. "Do not speak about your faith" they tell us. And yet, commanded by Christ to "teach all nations," and to become "fishers of men," we cannot remain silent about our relationship with the Lord. We cannot remain silent about the gift of Divine Life which we have experienced.

The consolation that knowing the geographical context of today's Gospel grants us is two-fold. First, the "fish" which we are invited to catch *desire* the Good News. Carved into every heart created by God is a deep desire for Truth and for a relationship with our Creator. The second consolation is that of knowing that we are not the originators or source of the gift which men desire. It is the Lord himself who is the attraction. It is the Lord himself who is the warm water of the spring which falls into the sea of this world. We are called simply to lend our hands, to lend our mouths, to lend our lives to become the net by which the great Fisherman will catch his fish through us.

Practical Questions:

1. In what ways do we tend to shy away from sharing our faith with others?
2. What opportunities / small practical ways do we have on a daily basis to share our faith with those around us?
3. Why did Jesus choose simple fishermen for his mission of salvation? What does this teach us about our calling to be evangelizers?
4. What would you have done if you were Simon, Andrew, James or John and Jesus had asked you to "put out your net" after you had not caught anything all night and you had already cleaned your nets?