

MELKITE RESOURCES FOR THE DOMESTIC CHURCH SUNDAY OF THE FATHERS OF THE FIRST COUNCIL OF NICEA

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 6

The angelic powers were around Your tomb, and the guards became as dead,
and Mary stood at the tomb, seeking Your spotless body;
Then You despoiled Hades without being tried by it,
and You met the Virgin, O Bestower of life.
O Lord, who rose from the dead, glory to You!

GOSPEL: JOHN 17:1 – 13

At that time Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come! Glorify Your Son, that Your Son may glorify You, even as You have given Him power over all flesh, in order that to all You have given Him, He may give everlasting life. Now this is everlasting life, that they may know You, the only true God, and the One You have sent, Jesus Christ. I have glorified You on earth; I have accomplished the work You have given Me to do. And now do You, Father, glorify Me with Yourself, with the glory that I had with You before the world existed. I have manifested Your name to the men You have given me out of the world. They were Yours, and You have given them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have learned that whatever You have given Me is from You; because the words that You have given Me, I have given to them. And they have received them, and have known as a fact that I came forth from You, and they have believed that You did send Me. I pray for them; not for the world do I pray, but for those whom You have given Me, because they are Yours; and all things that are Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine; and I am glorified in them. And I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I am coming to You. Holy Father, keep in Your name those You have given Me, that they may be one even as We are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those You have given Me, I guarded; and not one of them perished except the son of perdition, in order that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to You and these things I speak in the world, in order that they may have My joy made full in themselves."

CATECHETICAL SUMMARY

This Sunday is the Sunday of the Fathers of the 1st Council of Nicea. Obviously, the "fathers" of the council refers to the 318 Bishops that traveled from all over the world to join together to give voice to the Orthodox Catholic Faith as it was established and received from the Apostles. Primarily, the fathers of the council focused their attention on the Arian heresy and proclaimed with one voice that Jesus is truly God and truly man, an Eternal Divine Person with two distinct natures. One of the bishops that joined the council was the great Saint Athanasios, bishop of Alexandria.

It was Saint Athanasios who, in his debates with the arch-heretic Arius, uttered the famous statement "God became man that man might become god." This truth, so central to our Christian faith, restates the foundational Christian belief that the purpose of the Incarnation, the reason why God became a man in the womb of Holy Theotokos, was so that he might reclaim his creation from the dominion of the devil and reunite us with Him. Through our baptism, we are joined to Christ in a real way so that we are able to say with Saint Paul, "it is no longer I who lives, but Christ who lives in me."

CHALLENGE QUESTIONS:

1. What is the purpose of the Incarnation according to Saint Athanasios? Explain in your own words.

2. How does Saint Athanasios' statement impact how I see my life as a Christian?
3. How does the truth of our real transformation through baptism impact those around us?