

MELKITE RESOURCES FOR THE DOMESTIC CHURCH THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

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 2

When You descended to death, O immortal Life,
You destroyed Hades by the splendor of Your divinity.
And when You raised the dead from below the earth,
all the heavenly powers cried out to you:
“O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to You!”

EPISTLE: ROMANS 5:1 - 10

Brethren, now that we have been justified by faith, let us have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom we have access by faith to that grace in which we stand and exult in the hope of God's glory.

And not only this, but we exult also in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces endurance, and endurance challenge, and challenge hope, and hope does not deceive, for God's love is poured forth in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

For why did Christ die at the appointed time for the wicked while we were still weak? Hardly would someone die for a just man; perhaps someone would have the courage to die for a virtuous man. But God proves His love for us, since Christ died for us while we were still sinners. Much more now that we are made just in His blood, shall we be saved by Him from wrath. For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled with God through His death, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by His life.¹

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 6:22 - 33

The Lord said: The lamp of the body is the eye. If your eye is sound, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is evil, your whole body will be full of darkness. Therefore if the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness itself! No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will stand by the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Therefore I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, what you shall eat and drink; nor yet for your body, what you shall wear. Is not life a greater thing than food, and the body than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow, or reap, or gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are not you of much more value than they? But which of you by being anxious about it can add to his stature a single cubit? And as for clothing, why are you anxious? See how the lilies of the field grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory was adorned like one of these.

But if God so clothes the wild flower of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more you, O you of little faith! Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or, 'What shall we drink?', or, 'What are we to wear?' (For all these things the Gentiles seek); for your heavenly Father knows you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all the rest shall be given you besides."²

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

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

CATECHETICAL SUMMARY

Today's Scripture readings speak of faith, which is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). The Epistle tells us, "now that we have been justified through faith, let us have peace with God." In today's world we desperately need peace: All over the world, and especially in our country, we see civil unrest, riots, disease, injustice, and death. Yet Saint Paul says that we Christians "exult in tribulations." That's not to say that we are glad these terrible things are happening, but we rejoice because through them God works good: "tribulation produces endurance, and endurance challenge, and challenge hope, and hope does not deceive, for God's love is poured forth in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us." By suffering, God makes us stronger, better people. Through the gift of faith, we have hope, we can be *sure* of God's love for us, and that He has a plan. God is taking care of us, and St Paul explains why we can be sure of this, saying that, though we would be hesitant to give our lives even for righteous men, Jesus gave His life for us, even though we are sinners!

The Gospel reading continues this theme, comparing us to birds and the flowers. Jesus says "But if God so clothes the wild flower of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more you, O you of little faith! Therefore do not be anxious." Jesus is telling us to trust Him completely, not worrying about tomorrow. But this doesn't mean that we should do nothing. We should give ourselves over to God completely. In the last verse of today's gospel, Jesus says, "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." In other words, if we seek God in all things and at all times, and we strive to do His will and follow His commandments, then He will take care of us and make sure that we have what we need. Jesus tells us that, to do this, we must make sure our spiritual eyes are healthy. We need to pray often, and look at God, and not at the chaos and evil in the world around us, lest we forget Him. If we do this, as Saint Paul tells us, we will have peace. (But that doesn't mean we won't have trials and troubles, for trials and tribulations make us stronger!)

CHALLENGE QUESTIONS:

1. Have there been times in my life, when I didn't trust God, and I thought everything relied on me? How did that work out?
2. Have there been times where I understood that God made something good and beautiful happen out of a tragedy or other bad situation? Has suffering ever made me stronger or helped me grow?
3. Jesus says "The lamp of the body is the eye. If your eye is sound, your whole body will be full of light." In what ways can I make sure that my spiritual eyes are healthy?
4. When I am going through rough times, and I am suffering, what can I do to remind myself that God has a plan, this is somehow part of it, and this is somehow good for me?