

RUTHENIAN RESOURCES FOR THE DOMESTIC CHURCH SUNDAY OF THE MYRRH BEARING WOMEN

THE TRISAGION PRAYERS

Parents: Through the prayers of our holy fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us.

Response: Amen.

Parents: Heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit of Truth, everywhere present and filling 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 One.

Children: Holy ✠ God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal, have mercy on us. *(Three times)*

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

Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us; Lord, cleanse us of our sins; Master, forgive our transgressions; Holy One, come to 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 forever. 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 brilliance of your divinity;
and when you raised the dead from the depths of the earth,
all the heavenly powers cried out:
O Giver of Life, Christ our God, glory to you.

EPISTLE: ACTS 6:1 - 7

In those days, as the number of disciples increased; there arose a complaint among the Greeks against the Hebrews, in that their widows were being neglected in the daily service. And so, the twelve summoned the many disciples and said, "It is not good that we give up the word of God and serve at tables. Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and of wisdom that we could put to this service, while we devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

And the plan was pleasing to the whole crowd, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip and Prochorus and Nicanor and Timon and Parmenas and Nicholas, a recent convert from Antioch. These they presented to the apostles, who then prayed and laid their hands upon them. And God's word was growing, and the number of the disciples increased considerably in Jerusalem; and many of the priests also accepted the faith.

GOSPEL: MARK 15:43 - 16:8

At that time there came Joseph, the one from Arimathea, a councillor of high rank, who was himself looking for the kingdom of God. And he went in boldly to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. But Pilate wondered whether he had expired so soon. And sending for the centurion, he asked him whether he was already dead. And when he learned from the centurion that he was, he granted the body to Joseph. And he bought a linen cloth, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen cloth, and laid him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock. Then he rolled a stone to the entrance of the tomb.

But Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jose were looking on and saw where he was laid. And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices, in order to go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb, when the sun had just risen. And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll the stone back from the entrance of the tomb for us?"

And looking up they saw that the stone had been rolled back—now, it was very large. But on entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting at the right side, clothed in a white robe, and they were amazed. He said to them, "Do not be terrified. You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen he is not here. Behold the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he goes before you into Galilee; there you shall see him, as he told you." And they left and fled from the tomb, for trembling and fear had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

CATECHETICAL SUMMARY

In today's Epistle and Gospel text we are introduced to eight new figures who will play a prominent role on the early church. In some ways, we can begin to speak of a "second generation" of Christians leaders. The first generation are, of course, the Apostles. But now the Apostles need help, and the seven "servants" (deacons) are chosen from among the "many disciples" which now followed the Way. The eighth figure is that of Joseph of Arimathea, and in many ways he reveals to us today the meaning of the services of the first deacons.

We know that through Baptism we are incorporated into Christ and made into his body. Each baptized Christian is called to be the hands and feet, the arms and legs, the eyes and ears of Christ. We are, through Holy Baptism, made into the revelation of Christ on earth. And each one of us is called to his ministry of salvation. Thus, when we serve each other, it is Christ who serves through us. And, when we serve each other, it is Christ himself whom we serve. Just as Joseph of Arimathea cared for the body of Christ as he took it down from the Cross, wrapped it in linen with spices and laid it in his own new tomb, the seven new deacons ordained in today's Epistle serve Christ himself in the persons of the widows, the hungry and the needy.

The ministry of service, however, is not reserved for the deacons alone. Each one of us who is baptized into Christ, are called to learn from the deacons and assist them in Christ's ministry. For it is Christ who told us that he has come "not to be served but to serve." All of the members of Christ's body, if we are to live his life, must begin to live this life in service to others. Through this service, we will serve Christ himself.

CHALLENGE QUESTIONS:

1. What are the ways that God may be calling me to serve others in my own life?
2. Do I recognize Christ in my fellow brothers and sisters, and in myself?