

**RUTHENIAN RESOURCES FOR THE DOMESTIC CHURCH  
THE TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

**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 6**

Angelic powers appeared at your tomb,  
and the guards became like dead men.  
Mary stood at the tomb seeking your most pure body.  
You despoiled Hades without a challenge.  
You, the Giver of Life met the Virgin.  
O Lord, risen from the dead, glory to you!

## **EPISTLE: 2:4 - 10**

Brethren, God, who is rich in mercy, by reason of his very great love with which he has loved us even when we were dead by reason of our sins, brought us to life together with Christ, and you have been saved by grace. [God] raised us up together, and enthroned us together in heaven in Christ Jesus, so that he might show in future ages the overflowing riches of his grace, through his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith: and that, not on your own, for it is God's gift, and not the result of work which might have been a pretext for anyone to boast. For we are his workmanship, we who were created in Christ Jesus through good works which God has pre-planned so that we could walk in them. <sup>1</sup>

## **GOSPEL: LUKE 8:27 - 39**

At that time when Jesus came to the country of the Gerasenes there met Him a certain man who for a long time was possessed by a devil, and wore no clothes, and lived in the tombs, not in a house. And when he saw Jesus, he fell down before Him, and crying out with a loud voice said, "What have I to do with Thee, Jesus, Son of the most high God? I pray Thee, do not torment me." For he was charging the unclean spirit to go forth from the man. For many times it had laid hold of him; and he was bound with chains and fetters, and kept under guard, but he would break the bonds asunder, and be driven by the devil into the deserts. And Jesus asked him, saying, "What is thy name?" And he said, "Legion," because many devils had entered into him. And they entreated Him not to command them to depart into the abyss.

Now a herd of many swine was there, feeding on the mountainside. And they kept entreating Him to give them leave to enter into them. And He gave them leave. And the devils came out from the man and entered into the swine; and the herd rushed down the cliff into the lake and were drowned. And when the swineherds saw what had happened, they fled and reported it in the town and in the country; and people came out to see what had happened. They came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the devils had gone out sitting at His feet, clothed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. And those also who had seen it reported to them how he had been saved from Legion.

All the people of the Gerasene district besought Him to depart from them; for they were seized with great fear. And He got into a boat and went back. But the man from whom the devils had gone out prayed Him that he might remain with Him. But Jesus sent him away, saying, "Return

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<sup>1</sup> Epistle Book, English (Apostolos): Bishop Joseph Raya, Alleluia Press, 1980

to thy house, and tell all that God has done for thee." And he departed, proclaiming throughout the whole town all that Jesus had done for him. <sup>2</sup>

## CATECHETICAL SUMMARY

Around 2,400 years ago an elderly and respected man stood trial for his life. When he was about to be condemned to death, he said something that has remained with us even today. The man was the Greek philosopher Socrates and in that most important moment he stated before his judges, "The unexamined life is not worth living." In other words, one who goes about life without considering what he does, why he does it, where his life is headed, and how he might improve himself, is not really living.

In this we are reminded that there are two types of "life" that we can speak about—bodily life and spiritual life. It is very possible to be alive in the body and dead in the spirit. It is also possible to die in the body and be alive in the spirit.

In the Gospel text today we learn of Jesus' journeys "to the other side of the sea" where he meets one who is in every way like the "living" dead. There Jesus confronts "life" apart from God – which is described in the most horrific terms, the "life" of the demons – and drives it out of the man and into the sea.

While the story of the demoniac may seem to be an extreme example, it helps us see what life apart from God looks like in its ultimate end.

Jesus, who is God, comes to us in our sin (the demoniac), under the dominion of the devil and "living in the tombs." Notice that Jesus does not wait for us to come to him, but in the mystery of the Incarnation, he takes on our human nature, and he himself enters into our life as he entered the land of the Gerasenes – and there he comes to heal us, and to "raise us up" that we may no longer be under the dominion of death but under the dominion of life.

Just like the demoniac, we who have received this gift of new life in Christ Jesus are called to live accordingly.

Does the demoniac go back to live in the tombs? No! His life has changed! He is no longer living in death but in the light of Christ.

The Gospel concludes by telling us that "the man from whom the demons had gone **begged that he might be with Jesus**; but Jesus sent him away, saying "return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you." And he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole city everything that Jesus had done for him.

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<sup>2</sup> Gospel Book, English: Bishop Joseph Raya, Alleluia Press, 1978

The story of this healing should remind us that our heart must be centered upon Christ. He has given us newness of life and this new life must be shared with others.

When is the last time that we “proclaimed throughout the whole city how much Jesus has done for us”?

When is the last time we intentionally brought Christ into a conversation in our homes and with our friends? When is the last time we invited someone to come to church with us?

We have received a new life in baptism – but are we living it? Or are we still living in the tombs? Do we prefer the friendship of the devil over the friendship of Christ?

“The unexamined life is not worth living.”

**PRACTICAL QUESTIONS:**

1. What are some characteristics of “life” apart from God?
2. What are some things you can point to that make your life different as a Christian?
3. What are some things Jesus has “done for you?”
4. What are some ways that we can “proclaim” to the world what Jesus has done in our lives?
5. What are some good ways that we can “examine” our life?