

**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: EPHESIANS 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.

GOSPEL: LUKE 10:25 - 37

At that time, behold, a certain lawyer got up to test Jesus, saying, "Master, what must I do to gain eternal life?" But he said to him, "What is written in the Law? How do you read?" He answered and said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole strength, and with thy whole mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." And he said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you shall live." But he, wishing to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus answered, "A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell in with robbers, who after both stripping him and beating him went their way, leaving him half-dead.

But, as it happened, a certain priest was going down the same way, and when he saw him, he passed by. And likewise a Levite also, when he was near the place and saw him, passed by. But a certain Samaritan as he journeyed came upon him, and seeing him, was moved with compassion. And he went up to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. And setting him on his own beast, he brought him to an inn and took care of him. And as he was leaving the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you send, I, on my way back, will repay you.' Which of these three, in your opinion, proved himself neighbor to the man who fell among the robber?" And he said, "The one who took pity on him!" And Jesus said to him, "Go and do as he did."

CATECHETICAL SUMMARY

In the Gospel that is appointed for today, we hear the famous story of the "good Samaritan." While there is much to say about the meaning of this parable and its call for charity to one's neighbor, it is important to remember that this story is rooted in Jesus's original response to the lawyer who was "testing" him with the question "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" To this question, Jesus responds that to gain eternal life, to go to heaven, a person must first love God with his whole self and his neighbor as himself, quoting the book of Deuteronomy.

Why is the way of love the path to heaven? The answer to this question is simple and yet beautifully profound. In the first epistle of St. John, the Evangelist states that "God is love" (1 Jn 4:8). A simple definition of love is that it is the giving of one's life to the beloved. From all eternity God has lived a life of loving communion, the Father pouring out his life in the Son through the gift of the Holy Spirit. This beautiful understanding of God as love allows us to understand why love is the only way in which we will find eternal life. As we are made in the image and likeness of God, we have the created capacity to live as God does. The one who chooses to live this "way of love" chooses to make God's life his own life. As God's life is eternal life, the one who lives a life of love will, through the giving of his life, find his way to life eternal.

Practical Questions:

1. Is it easy to love God with our whole heart, and with all our soul, and with all of our strength and with all of our mind?
2. If someone loves God with their whole self, will he have any love left for others?
3. What are some real and practical ways that we can "love God?"
4. What is the relationship between the Divine Liturgy and the love of God?
5. How is the Divine Liturgy the first way in which we can begin to love our neighbor?