

RUTHENIAN RESOURCES FOR THE DOMESTIC CHURCH SUNDAY OF THE FOREFATHERS

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 4

The joyful message of the resurrection was heard by the women disciples from the angel, and being freed from the ancestral curse, they boasted to the apostles:

Death is despoiled;
Christ our God is risen, giving great mercy to the world.

EPISTLE: COLOSSIANS 3:4 - 11

When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming. In these you once walked, when you lived in them. But now put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth.

Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all.

GOSPEL: LUKE 14:16 - 24

The Lord told this parable, "A certain man gave a great supper, and he invited many. And he sent his servant at suppertime to tell those invited to come, for everything is now ready. And they all with one accord began to excuse themselves. The first said to him, 'I have bought a farm, and I must go out and see it; I pray you hold me excused.'

And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am on my way to try them; I pray you hold me excused.'

And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.'

And the servant returned, and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house became angry and said to his servant. 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor, and the crippled, and the lame, and the blind.'

And the servant said, 'Sir, your order has been carried out, and still there is room.'

Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and make them come in, so that my house may be filled. For I tell you that none of those who were invited shall taste of my supper.' For many are called but few are chosen."

CATECHETICAL SUMMARY

All too often when we read the Gospel we keep the words of Jesus at arm's length, never letting them sink in and really challenge our life. Why? Most of the time the reason that we would prefer to pass over our Lord's teaching in a superficial way is because his teachings are truly challenging and life changing if we allow them to have their full impact. Today's Gospel is one of those "challenging" teachings of Jesus. "Many are called but

few are chosen," Jesus tells us in the Gospel today and these words are spoken to us today just as much as they were spoken to Jesus' hearers two thousand years ago. *"Many are called but few are chosen."*

Among those who hear this Gospel passage today in the Church most will allow Jesus' words to pass over them with little or no serious consideration. A few however, hearing these words will respond to Jesus by asking how one is to be "chosen." The invitation to participate in God's life, the invitation to salvation, is offered to all, as Saint Paul says in the Epistle, "Gentile and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, Barbarian and Scythian, slave and freeman." However, not all respond to the invitation. Many then, and many today, find more important things with which to occupy their lives. The way of salvation begins with an invitation on God's part, but to that invitation we must respond in a real way. All of us are invited to the wedding banquet (heaven), but not all of us will choose to go.

Choosing to go is not simply an intellectual act – it is not a matter of mere words. To go to the wedding banquet of God we must, as any good wedding guest must do, prepare ourselves. We must make ourselves acceptable to God so that when we arrive we will be chosen to enter. Are we willing to prepare ourselves to enter into heaven or will we find something more important to do with our lives?

CHALLENGE QUESTIONS:

1. What things in our life do we spend the most time being concerned about?
2. If our first concern is not for God and our salvation, can we really expect to be among the chosen few?
3. What things can cause us not to respond to God's invitation?
4. What practical steps can I take to be sure to make God's invitation the most important thing in my life?
5. How does my life look different if I am preparing for the wedding feast of Jesus or if I am not?