

A Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Heavenly King, Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, you who are present in all places and filling all things, the treasury of blessings and Giver of life: come and abide in us. Cleanse us from all impurity, and save our souls, O Gracious Lord.

Trisagion Prayer

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. *(3 times)*
Glory to the Father... now and always... Amen.

All-holy Trinity have mercy on us. Lord, pardon our sins. Master forgive us our transgressions. Holy One visit and heal our infirmities for Your name's sake. Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy.

Glory to the Father... now and always... 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.

A Lenten Prayer

Almighty Lord, You have created all things in wisdom. In Your inexpressible providence and great goodness You have brought us to these saving days, for the cleansing of our souls and bodies, for control of our passions, in the hope of the Resurrection.

After the forty days You delivered into the hands of Your servant Moses the tablets of the law in characters divinely traced. Enable us also, O benevolent One, to fight the good fight, to complete the course of the fast, to keep the faith inviolate, to crush underfoot the heads of unseen tempters, to emerge victors over sin and to come, without reproach, to the worship of Your Holy Resurrection.

For blessed and glorified is Your most honorable and majestic name, of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forevermore. Amen.

The Prayer of Saint Ephraim the Syrian

During Great Lent, we customarily we make a prostration at the sign ❖

Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of laziness, meddling, the desire for power, and idle talk. ❖ Give me instead, a pure and humble spirit, the will to be patient with other people and to love them. ❖ Yes, O Lord and King, let me realize my own mistakes and keep me from judging others. For You are blessed now and forevermore. Amen.

The Lenten journey 2013



A Contrite and Humble Heart

When David the king sinned before God by murder and adultery, he repented with tears and was forgiven. Through the intercessions of Nathan the prophet he was reconciled with the Lord, being pardoned his transgressions. From the line of this penitent sinner comes Jesus the Messiah, whose reign on David's throne will have no end.

In his great psalm of repentance, David proclaims that God's steadfast love and mercy are greater than the iniquities of His creatures. God accepts a broken and humble heart before all sacrifices and offerings. To our contrition He replies with forgiveness.

Have mercy upon me, O God, According to Your loving-kindness; According to the multitude of Your tender mercies, Blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin. [Psalm 51:1-2]

Make me hear joy and gladness, That the bones You have broken may rejoice. Hide Your face from my sins, And blot out all my iniquities.

[Psalm 51:8-9]

For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart-These, O God, You will not despise. Do good in Your good pleasure to Zion; Build the walls of Jerusalem. Then You shall be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, With burnt offering and whole burnt offering; Then they shall offer bulls on Your altar.

[Psalm 51:16-17]

David humbled himself before God in, his sin and was forgiven. Others in the scriptures whose sins were not those of David had the same reaction of contrition and compunction before the face of God. Job was the most righteous man alive. The Lord Himself said of him that “there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil” (Job 2:3). God allowed Satan to smite him, and even in his pain, while arguing and contending with the Lord, Job kept his perfect trust in God’s righteousness. Yet even Job fell down in contrition of heart when he came to see the divine majesty with his own eyes.

I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You. Therefore, I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes. [Job 42: 5-6]

The three young men in the book of Daniel refused to worship the golden idol which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. They remain until today in the Church the very images of faith in God and righteousness before Him. In the exile in Babylon, when they alone were faithful, they confessed before the Lord that the offering of a contrite heart and a humble spirit would forever be acceptable to the Most High above all sacrificial offerings.

For we, O Lord; have become fewer than any nation, and are brought low this day in all the world because of our sins.

And at this time there is no prince, or prophet, or leader, no burnt offering, or sacrifice, or oblation, or incense, no place to make an offering before You or to find mercy.

Yet with contrite heart and a humble spirit may we be accepted, as though it were burnt offerings of rams and bulls, and with tens of thousands of fat lambs;

Such may our sacrifice be in Your sight this day, and may we wholly follow You, for there is no shame for those who trust in You.

And now with all our heart we follow You, we fear You and seek Your face. [Canticle of the Three Youths, 15-19]

The apostle Peter could hardly look at Jesus without falling on his face or jumping into the sea. Sinful women threw themselves at the Lord’s feet, kissed them and washed them with their tears. Even the demons cried out in Christ’s presence – but without contrition – begging Him to leave and not to torment them “before the time.” [Matt. 8:29]

The Lenten season is the time for direct confrontation with God. It is the time for consciously presenting oneself before the face of the Lord for judgment. There is nothing to be offered, and no sacrifice is acceptable. There is only the broken spirit and the contrite heart of repentance which God will not despise.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me!

David once showed us the image of true repentance in a psalm he wrote exposing all that he had done.

“Be merciful to me and cleanse me!” he wrote, “For against You only have I sinned, the God of our fathers.”

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me!

I have distorted Your image, O Savior, and broken Your commandments. The beauty of my soul has been spoiled, and its light extinguished by my sins. But have pity on men and, in David’s words, “Restore to me the joy of Your salvation.”

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me!

Return! Return! Uncover what is hidden! Say to God who knows all things: “You are my only Saviour and know my terrible secrets. Yet in David’s words, I cry out to You: “Be merciful to me, O God, according to Your steadfast love.”

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me!

O only Saviour, do not require of me in my weakness, fruits which will show that I have changed my ways. Grant rather the, finding contrition of heart and poverty in spirit, I may offer these to You as a pleasing sacrifice. ¹

Fr. Thomas Hopko, in [The Lenten Spring](#)

¹ Canon of St. Andrew of Crete.