

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



At the Divine Liturgy of the last Sunday of Lent – that is, Palm Sunday – the Gospel reading recounts Our Lord's going up to Jerusalem with His disciples.

Now they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed. And as they followed they were afraid. Then He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them the things that would happen to Him. "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles; and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again." [Mark 10:32-34]

Scripture tells us that the disciples were amazed and afraid, as they accompanied Jesus up to Jerusalem. They were amazed, no doubt, because what was happening was strange and stunning – what man voluntarily delivers himself over to civil authorities, judges, and execution-

ers? Certainly they were afraid because of Jesus' prediction of what was about to happen to Him. Although Jesus' words were vague on many other occasions, they understood what He meant this time – certain death awaited Him, at the hands of His enemies.

And so, as they went on their way, closing in on the Holy City, the disciples continued to ask about their own place in the Kingdom. Imagine how they must have been even more astounded and fearful when they heard the Master's response:

“You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?” They said to Him, “We are able.” So Jesus said to them, “You will indeed drink of the cup that I drink and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared... You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.” [Mark 10:38-45]

If, over the past forty days we have attempted to follow the Fast assiduously, we have done so for our own edification and spiritual awakening. And if we have not, we ourselves will recognize the difference, and this spiritual deficiency will become manifest. In either case, there is always room for improvement next year, and the year after... God willing, we will have another opportunity next year to try once again to follow the Fast.

But now, we have reached the final days before Our Lord's betrayal, judgment, humiliation, crucifixion, death, and resurrection. The Church invites us; yes, even encourages us to be with Jesus during these last days and hours of His life on earth, by attending the many beautiful Services of Holy Week. The forty days are behind us, but the glorious event to which they lead lie a short distance ahead. May we all accept our Lord's invitation, even admonishment: “What? Could you not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” [Matthew 26:40-41]

Make us worthy, O Lover of Man, to behold the week of Your Passion, for we have finished the forty days of the fast. May we glorify Your mighty acts, Your unspeakable plan of salvation for our sake. O Lord,

glory to You!

We have completed the forty days which profit our souls. Now let us beg of the Lover of man: “Enable us to see the Holy Week of Your Passion, that we may glorify Your might work, Your wonderful plan of salvation for us, singing with one heart and one voice: ‘O Lord, glory to You!’”

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Knowing God

If you would know of the Lord's love for us, hate sin and wrong thoughts, and day and night pray fervently. The Lord will then give you His grace and you will know Him through the Holy Spirit. And after death, when you enter into paradise, there too you will know the Lord through the Holy Spirit, as you knew Him on earth.

We do not need riches or learning in order to know the Lord: we must simply be obedient and sober, have a humble spirit and love our fellow-men. The Lord will love a soul that does this, and of His own accord make Himself manifest to it and instruct it in love and humility, and give it all things necessary for it to find rest in God.

We may study as much as we will but we shall still not come to know the Lord unless we live according to His commandments, for the Lord is not made known through learning but by the Holy Spirit. Many philosophers and scholars have arrived at a belief in the existence of God, but they have not come to know God.

To believe in God is one thing, to know God, another.

Elder Silouan of Mt. Athos

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With fear and reverence you should stand in church, for our Christ is invisibly present with the holy angels. He fills the attentive and reverent with grace and blessings, whereas He censures the inattentive as unworthy. Try to receive Communion as often as possible – you have my permission to do so freely – for Holy Communion is an excellent aid for those who struggle against sin.

Elder Ephraim, in Counsels from the Holy Mountain