

WEDNESDAY, ROGATION OF THE NINEVITES

Anthem of the Chancel

Hear this, all you peoples.

Because of the preaching of the prophet Nineveh was saved through fasting, and through petition and prayer the Angel of Death held back from her. With sorrow and tears of repentance let us seek refuge in the Temple and call mercies to our aid while the light has not yet grown dim.

And he said, Repent, O children of men.

Because of the preaching of the prophet Nineveh was saved through fasting, and through petition and prayer the Angel of Death held back from her. With sorrow and tears of repentance let us seek refuge in the Temple and call mercies to our aid while the light has not yet grown dim.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; from everlasting, and for ever and ever. Amen.

Behold, in Holy Scriptures the way is trodden out to the Kingdom, but our mind is distracted by unprofitable vanities; for the riches of this passing world are of no avail for us, only fasting and prayer, by which Nineveh was delivered.

The Lections

Joel 2:1-27

Blow the trumpet in Zion;
 sound the alarm on my holy mountain!
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble,
 for the day of the LORD is coming, it is near,
a day of darkness and gloom,
 a day of clouds and thick darkness!
Like blackness there is spread upon the mountains
 a great and powerful people;
their like has never been from of old,
 nor will be again after them
 through the years of all generations.

Fire devours before them,

and behind them a flame burns.
The land is like the garden of Eden before them,
but after them a desolate wilderness,
and nothing escapes them.

Their appearance is like the appearance of horses,
and like war horses they run.
As with the rumbling of chariots,
they leap on the tops of the mountains,
like the crackling of a flame of fire
devouring the stubble,
like a powerful army
drawn up for battle.
Before them peoples are in anguish,
all faces grow pale.
Like warriors they charge,
like soldiers they scale the wall.
They march each on his way,
they do not swerve from their paths.
They do not jostle one another,
each marches in his path;
they burst through the weapons
and are not halted.
They leap upon the city,
they run upon the walls;
they climb up into the houses,
they enter through the windows like a thief.

The earth quakes before them,
the heavens tremble.
The sun and the moon are darkened,
and the stars withdraw their shining.
The LORD utters his voice
before his army,
for his host is exceedingly great;
he that executes his word is powerful.
For the day of the LORD is great and very terrible;
who can endure it?

"Yet even now," says the LORD,

"return to me with all your heart,
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;
and rend your hearts and not your garments."
Return to the LORD, your God,
for he is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love,
and repents of evil.
Who knows whether he will not turn and repent,
and leave a blessing behind him,
a cereal offering and a drink offering
for the LORD, your God?

Blow the trumpet in Zion;
sanctify a fast;
call a solemn assembly;
gather the people.
Sanctify the congregation;
assemble the elders;
gather the children,
even nursing infants.
Let the bridegroom leave his room,
and the bride her chamber.

Between the vestibule and the altar
let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep
and say, "Spare thy people, O LORD,
and make not thy heritage a reproach,
a byword among the nations.
Why should they say among the peoples,
'Where is their God?'"

Then the LORD became jealous for his land,
and had pity on his people.
The LORD answered and said to his people,
"Behold, I am sending to you
grain, wine, and oil,
and you will be satisfied;
and I will no more make you
a reproach among the nations.

"I will remove the northerner far from you,
and drive him into a parched and desolate land,
his front into the eastern sea,
and his rear into the western sea;
the stench and foul smell of him will rise,
for he has done great things.

"Fear not, O land;
be glad and rejoice,
for the LORD has done great things!
Fear not, you beasts of the field,
for the pastures of the wilderness are green;
the tree bears its fruit,
the fig tree and vine give their full yield.

"Be glad, O sons of Zion,
and rejoice in the LORD, your God;
for he has given the early rain for your vindication,
he has poured down for you abundant rain,
the early and the latter rain, as before.

"The threshing floors shall be full of grain,
the vats shall overflow with wine and oil.
I will restore to you the years
which the swarming locust has eaten,
the hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter,
my great army, which I sent among you.

"You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied,
and praise the name of the LORD your God,
who has dealt wondrously with you.
And my people shall never again be put to shame.
You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel,
and that I, the LORD, am your God and there is none else.
And my people shall never again
be put to shame.

Jonah 3

Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you." So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, three days' journey in breadth. Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's journey. And he cried, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" And the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them.

Then tidings reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, and covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he made proclamation and published through Nineveh, "By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; let them not feed, or drink water, but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and let them cry mightily to God; yea, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence which is in his hands. Who knows, God may yet repent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we perish not?"

When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God repented of the evil which he had said he would do to them; and he did not do it.

The Shuraya

Blessed be the LORD! for he has heard the voice of my supplication.
The LORD is my help and my support;
In him my heart trusts and my flesh flourishes;
With my song I give thanks to him.
The LORD is the strength of his people,
And he is the saving help of his anointed.
O save your people, and bless your heritage;
Lead them and guide them for ever.

The Apostle

Colossians 3:1-4:1

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hid with Christ in God. 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.

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, and patience, forbearing one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them. Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. Slaves, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing the Lord. Whatever your task, work heartily, as serving the Lord and not men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you are serving the Lord Christ. For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality. Masters, treat your slaves justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.

The Zumara

Blessed is the man whom you support, in whose heart are your pathways. 6They passed through the valley of Baca and have made it a dwelling-place. Also the law-giver shall be clothed with a blessing.

The Gospel

Matthew 6:1-18

"Beware of practicing your piety before men in order to be seen by them; for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. "Thus, when you give alms, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

"And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

"And in praying do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. Pray then like this:

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 debts,
As we also have forgiven our debtors;
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.

For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

"And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you."

Anthem of the Mysteries

Text: And they came to the place which is called Fair Havens.

Our God is a mighty place of refuge.

The Church of Christ is a haven and place of refuge, and she receives men who journey in sins as on the sea, delivering them through the great power of the Cross.

And for the poor man who has no helper: he leads them to the haven which they desired.

The Church of Christ is a haven and place of refuge, and she receives men who journey in sins as on the sea, delivering them through the great power of the Cross.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; from everlasting, and for ever and ever. Amen.

Blessed is he who raised you to honor, O holy priests. Blessed is he who gave you the victory, O true athletes. Worshipful is the Holy Spirit by whose strength you cast down all heresies, gathering up the rational flock of Jesus our Savior, which he purchased by his precious blood on Golgotha.

O Mar Ignatius, Polycarp, Athanasius, Eustathius, Melitius, Flavian, Gregory, Basil, Gregory, Ambrose, Diodore, John, and Theodore, a sea of wisdom, and Mar Nestorius, the persecuted Martyr, and the illustrious Alexander, master builders of holy Church, stewards of the mysteries of God, and teachers of true religion, may your prayers be a bulwark for us.

The Hallowing is that of Mar Nestorius

The Anthem of the Bema

O our Lord, receive the supplication of holy Church, which petitions you on behalf of your people, saved by your Cross, for lo, they fervently desire your deliverance. Make them worthy, O my Lord, of your Body and Blood, that they may be made habitations of your honor.

Let your Godhead be pleased with them, O my Lord, that they may praise you for your gift.

Verses:

Multiply all helps for our company, which worships your Godhead.

Let your Godhead be pleased with them, O my Lord, that they may praise you for your gift.

O Son of God, have pity upon your people, for lo, they beseech and ask for mercies.

Let your Godhead be pleased with them, O my Lord, that they may praise you for your gift.

Receive, O our Lord, the beseeching of all of us who with supplication approach you.

Let your Godhead be pleased with them, O my Lord, that they may praise you for your gift.

Teshbokhta

O our Lord Jesus, worshipful King, who conquered by your passion the tyrant death,
Son of God who promised us new life in the Kingdom on high,

Remove from us all harm, and make tranquillity and mercy to dwell in our land,

That on the day of your appearance we may live before you and go out to meet you,
according to your will.

We will confess your name with hosannas for your goodness to our race,

For your mercies have been multiplied to our humanity, and your love has shone forth
upon our mortality.

You have canceled our debts through your atonement; glory be to your name for your
gift.

Blessed is your honor from within your place, you who forgive debts because of your
mercies.

By your grace make us all worthy to confess and worship your Godhead,

And we will lift up glory to your Lordship at every hour, amen and amen.

The Sealing, which is at the Door of the Chancel

O God who hears and answers, hear the prayer of the supplicators. Make your
continual mercies rest upon lands and cities.

Bless the Church and priests, that they may satisfy you with offerings. Bless the
flocks and pastors, that they may walk according to your commandments.

Strengthen kings and judges, that they may render just judgments. May teachers
prove themselves accomplished, that they may teach the life-giving Scriptures.

Drive out the enemies of deacons, and keep them from harm. Give judgment
between us and the destroyers who are lurking wolves.

Give strength to the honest elderly, that they may bring to you alms and gifts.
Adorn the young and the children with spiritual beauties.

Remove the veil of darkness from the faithful, that they may confess you at every
hour. Gladden brides and grooms with joy-giving offspring.

Supply the needy and the poor, and multiply for them their temporal sustenance.
Sow a blessing on all grains, that the hungry may eat and be satisfied.

Gladden the gloomy with clouds dripping with rain. Have pity upon the husbandmen, O our Lord, that they may bring first-fruits to your house.

O my Lord, preserve the riches of the wealthy, that they may increase the wages of hirelings. May your folds be shelters for the rational sheep and flocks.

Give sight to the blind; in light, O my Lord, let us see light. Let your right hand heal the lame and loose the imprisoned and bound.

Rebuke those who hate and the malicious who lay in wait for us like leopards. Uphold and support the virtuous, and open the heart of the simple.

Humble the pride of the haughty, that they may not obscure the truth of the trustworthy. May seed and fruit be made to abound, that the great and the lowly may be satisfied.

Support, O my Lord, those who dwell in monasteries, that they may be watchful servants for you. Do good to the simple of mind, O my Lord, as you have done in all generations.

Return answer to all who call, according to your kind promises. May our prayer be as incense before you in the evenings and in the mornings.

Receive the petitioning of the diligent who keep vigil at night with the watchful. Lift up the voices of the cantors, that they may sing to you with psalms.

Reconcile and gather the scattered, and may the ranks in your Church stand fast. May your Kingdom come and dwell among your people and your freed servants.

To you be glory in all the land, you who bind up the loins of the mighty and loosen the crowns of kings. Amen and amen at every moment, now, always, and for ever and ever.