



GRADE 6-8

***You shall be
witnesses To Me***

His Holiness Pope Tawadros II



**118th Pope of Alexandria and
Patriarch of the See of Saint Mark**



You Shall Be Witnesses to Me

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St. Mark's Festival 2014 Anthem

God's Witness

God has called me to be His witness,
Showing love, peace and forgiveness,
In peril, famine or death,
By God's grace my heart is fearless

My Church leads me in God's way,
With live examples every day,
Surrounded by a cloud of witnesses,
Let's lift up our hearts to pray

O Lord, help me to testify,
Your Holy Name to glorify,
If you find in me a weakness,
My heart is Yours to purify

You Will Be My Witnesses

To **WITNESS** something means that you have to have seen it with your eyes, not just heard it from someone. There are 2 types of witnessing:

1. **Seeing with your physical eyes:** Like the Apostles who saw the Lord Jesus and witnessed about Him; as St. John says:

“That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us.” 1 John 1:3



Our fathers the Apostles lived at the time when our Lord Jesus Christ was on earth, and lived with Him as His disciples the whole time of His service until His sufferings, death, resurrection, appearances, His promise to send the Holy Spirit, and the fulfillment of this promise. Then they went to preach all over the world.

2. **Witnessing by faith:** which means that we believe the preaching of the Apostles trusting their honesty. This is also supported by the mind since the history, the artifacts, the manuscripts, fathers' sayings all witness to the truth in the preaching of the Apostles, and the quick spread of Christianity. It was a desire for the Jews and the Gentiles equally; the Jews were shouting with Isaiah the Prophet: “Oh, that You would rend the heavens! That You would come down!” Isaiah 64:1 and the Gentiles were shouting with the philosophers awaiting the savior of humanity to save it from its corruption and death, and bring it to eternal existence.

WHAT DOES WITNESSING FOR CHRIST MEAN?

When one shows with his actions that he is a witness for Christ, and faith fills his heart, and knows that the Lord is watching all his life; people start to see the Lord Christ in him: in his thoughts, feelings, senses, and behavior. St. Paul the Apostle teaches exhorts us saying: “That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.” Ephesians 3:17 and also says: “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” Colossians 1:27

Then Christ dwelling in us becomes a reason for salvation, and a promise of eternal glory.



WHERE CAN I WITNESS FOR CHRIST?

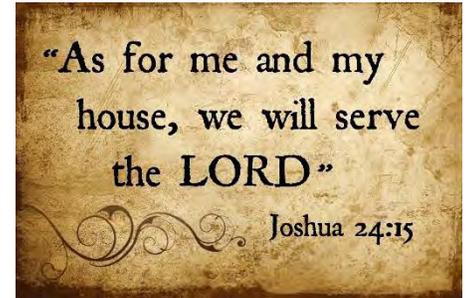
1- **Personally:** in my private life. “That they may see your good works” Matthew 5:16 “That your progress may be evident to all.” 1 Timothy 4:15

Stand against sin the way martyrs did. When you deprive yourself from the pleasure of sin with joy, when you subdue the flesh to watch and pray with joy, and when you enslave the body to kneel down and raise the hands to heaven in regret returning into the Father’s bosom. When you live all this, you are on the way of witnessing like the martyrs. St. Paul teaches us saying: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.” Romans 12:1 “For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.” 1 Corinthians 6:20

If we focus on and follow what St. Paul says: “Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.” 1 Corinthians 6:13 and live the life of true repentance and constant request for grace every day; we become temples of the Holy Spirit. Our bodies and senses get sanctified. This is possible through faithfulness, diligence and circumspection.

2- **In the family:** “But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” Joshua 24:15

A Christian house is truly Christian in behavior, love, service, and a good example in everything. The Christian family is a witness to Christ in the love between its members; the love that unites them in one being. What is required of Christian families now is to witness to Christ dwelling in them through love and unity not troubles, or differences, or hateful selfishness.



3- **Socially:** to be an ambassador for the Lord Christ in my society.

The ambassador has to be:

- ❖ A representative of his country
- ❖ Interactive with the society
- ❖ Different in his behavior to represent who sent him

Every day, we meet people with different principles. Principles were violently shaken and mixed, and the moral and religious values have fainted due to freedom and materialism.

“Therefore do not be partakers with them... Walk as children of light.” Ephesians 5:7, 8

Let us be witnesses in face of the deviations affecting the world, and not be part of the unfruitful works of darkness; but instead, we should rebuke it in love and humility.

So we witness for Christ in front of others with our holy life, meekness, love, service, and kind words.

“Let your light so shine before men.” Matthew 5:16

Necessity of Resurrection

**“And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty”
1 Corinthians 15:14**

We as witnesses to our Lord, preach His resurrection from the dead;

just like we say during the Holy Liturgy:

***“Your death O Lord we proclaim, and
Your Holy Resurrection and Ascension we confess”***

Furthermore, St. Paul, in his 1st epistle to the Corinthians is telling us that our faith would be empty and our preaching empty if Christ is not risen.



RESURRECTION IS NECESSARY FOR MAN BECAUSE:

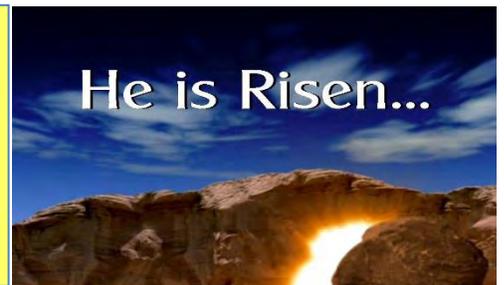
- ❖ **God has promised man an eternal life.** His promise was given to man as a whole and not to the spirit alone. If it wasn't for the resurrection of the body, the end of man would have been the same as animals.
- ❖ **Man is distinguished and chosen out from other creatures.** With the gifts given to him by God, he can rule over them, pay attention to them and take care of them all. So the dignity of the body must be distinguished from the bodies of other unwise creatures.
- ❖ **The spirit and the body are partners in everything**, so according to God's justice, they have to enjoy together the good reward or carry out the penalty and remain in torture. The body that toiled, suffered hardships is worthy of a reward for the good role which he plays and takes part in it with the spirit. It wouldn't be in agreement with God's justice for the spirit to lead the comfortable life with the body is blown to pieces. In the same manner, in the case of evil doing, it wouldn't be justice if the spirit alone has to suffer the eternal punishment if the body plunged into worldly pleasures.
- ❖ **Man is one unity.** He is indivisible. Thus the body which lived on earth and shared the spirit every action must rise.
- ❖ **It is just for the body to rise from death** in order to be compensated for what it had been deprived of during life on earth. For example, the blind, the disabled, and all those whose bodies were affected by poverty, hardship, hunger and illness on earth, need to rise in soundness which will compensate them for the misery they suffered. This agrees with God's justice.

**We rejoice with the resurrection and
perceive that it is**

NECESSARY, ESSENTIAL AND POSSIBLE.

**Christ's resurrection was the first-fruit of the
resurrection of all human beings.**

He is Risen...



WHY WAS IT NECESSARY FOR CHRIST TO RISE?

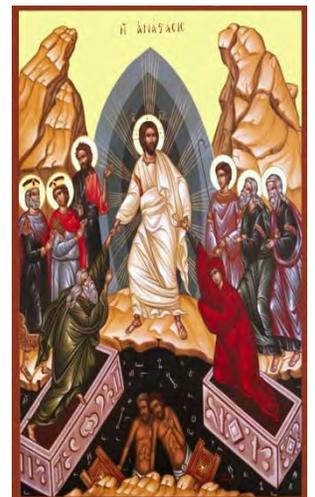


1- **In Him was life:** He who has life in Him cannot remain dead. He said to Martha “I am the resurrection and the life.” John 11:25. Also, in the book of Revelation, He says: “I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore.” Revelation 1:18. For these reasons, the angel of the resurrection rebuked the women saying “Why do you seek the living among the dead?” Luke 24:5

- 2- **He Himself raised many others from death with a mere command:** He is the raiser of dead; it was not difficult for Him to rise. “For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will.” John 5:21. He who gives life to others can for sure raise Himself
- 3- **He fulfilled the prophecies:** He told His disciples about the things that will happen to Him. After the Transfiguration, He instructed them saying “Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man is risen from the dead.” Matthew 17:9 He also said to His disciples in Galilee “The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised up.” Matthew 17:22, 23

Also, in the Old Testament, the story of the prophet Jonah is one of the indications which refer to this resurrection.

4. **His resurrection was under His own influence and authority:** He died by His own will and has power over His life, as He said “Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.” John 10:17, 18
- 4- **His death was temporary to perform a message:** He died for us to give us His life. Redemption was the main message. After His resurrection, it was necessary for Our Lord Jesus Christ to announce the good news to those who died in hope and open the gate of paradise and transfer those who slept from hell to heaven.
- 5- **His divine nature was never separated from His human nature:** Our Lord Jesus died as a human. His spirit was separated from the body, but His divine nature was never separated from the spirit or the body. In His death, the Spirit united with the divine nature went to Hades to preach the imprisoned spirits, while His body remained in the tomb united with His divine nature. Thus, it was necessary for that body united with the divine nature to rise and not remain dead.



6- **By His death, He exterminated the power of death:** to proclaim His victory over death and to announce to all peoples that death would have no sting.

“O death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?”

1 Corinthians 15:55

7- **To console and support the disciples:** to encourage them to remain firm in their faith and to hold out against the Jews’ persecution

8- **To prove that He was not a common man:** His immediate resurrection proved His divinity especially because He rose by Himself without help from anyone.



9- **To be the first-fruit of resurrection in order for all men to rise:**

"But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive." 1 Corinthians 15:20-22

10- **To lay the foundation of Christianity:** He stayed with the disciples for 40 days after His resurrection and spoke with them about the things pertaining to the kingdom of God (Acts 1:3). And to lay before them the rules of faith and give them the secrets and the rituals. He also promised them to send the Holy Spirit: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." Acts 1:8. After that, He commits to them preaching the gospel "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matthew 28:19, 20



REASONS TO BELIEVE THAT CHRIST HAS RISEN FROM THE DEAD:

1. **HIS DEATH WAS KNOWN TO EVERYONE:** The crowd demanded His death and He was crucified on a hill outside of Jerusalem between 2 thieves. Everyone could see Him. To assure His death, they put the spear in His side.
2. **THEY SEALED THE TOMB WHERE HE WAS BURIED AND SOLDIERS STOOD GUARD:** The Lord Jesus predicted His resurrection at the third day, so the religious leaders asked Pilate to seal the tomb and guard it in order to prevent the disciples from stealing the body.
3. **THE TOMB WAS FOUND EMPTY:** The big stone was rolled away and the Body of Christ was not there when the disciples went to the tomb early Sunday morning. However, the burial wrappings were there placed neatly where the body lied. Officials paid the guards to say that the disciples stole the body.
4. **THE DISCIPLES SAW HIM ALIVE:** for forty days after His resurrection, He spoke to them about things pertaining to the kingdom of heaven. "To whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." Acts 1:3
5. **THE CHANGE THAT HAPPENED TO THE APOSTLES:** When the Lord Jesus was captured, the disciples ran away and went each his own way. Peter even denied he knew Him. A few weeks after the resurrection, they began preaching and standing before the same people who crucified the Lord to defend and tell about the Lord. They were imprisoned, threatened, and forbidden to speak about Jesus, but they said "We ought to obey God rather than men." Acts 5:29 and "they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ." Acts 5:42
6. **IT WAS FITTING:** It did not make sense that death would be the end for someone who did so many miracles during His 3 years of service. He healed the sick, made the blind see, the deaf hear, and the lame walk. He walked on water, calmed the storm, and raised the dead. It wouldn't fit that death would be the end.



**The Resurrected Christ gives us life.
If we die to our old ways, we allow Him to live in us.**

"But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you."

Romans 8:11

Witnesses at the Banquet

“The **KINGDOM OF HEAVEN** is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. Again, he sent out other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, “See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding.”’ But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, and another to his business. And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.’ So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests. “But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. So he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’”

“For many are called, but few are chosen.”

Matthew 22:2-14



What is the kingdom of heaven? Who is the king? Who is the Son? Who is the bride? What is the food prepared by the king? Who are those who refused to attend the wedding? Who are the people that were invited after that? What is the wedding garment?

The Kingdom of Heaven is:

- in the **HEART** of everyone who allows our Lord Jesus Christ to come in and stay
- It is also the **CHURCH**, God’s house. God is present in the Church;
- It is also the **HEAVEN** where God’s Throne resides and where the angels and the righteous have the honor of surrounding Christ.



The King represents God the Father and the son represents Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Second Hypostasis, who was incarnated to save us.

The bride is every human soul that loves God.

The **oxen and fatlings** are the Great Sacrifice, the Human Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ which was taken from the Holy Virgin St. Mary.

Those who refused to come to the wedding are the Jews; they did not believe in Him and distracted by worldly cares.

The new guests who were gathered from various passages (that is, from all parts of the world), are us the gentiles (anyone who is not a Jew), who believed in the Incarnated Christ and were invited to the Wedding Feast.

The Wedding Feast being the Body and Blood of Christ.

This Wedding can only be attended by those who wear gowns fit for such a feast that is, the faithful who are repentant and are baptized.

We are all invited to this daily celebration, offered by our Lord Jesus Christ through the Holy Liturgy, His Holy Body and Holy Blood.



THINK ABOUT THIS: You are invited to this wedding.... How do you value this invitation? What are the wedding garments? What were the excuses of those who were invited? What were the consequences of not attending the wedding? What excuses keep you from attending the wedding?

Our Lord Jesus Christ presents us with a daily banquet, which is His Holy Body and Blood.

Preparation for the Wedding

The church helps us prepare for this daily celebration...

Raising of Incense (Vespers)

The night before the Liturgy, the Church offers its prayers and praises to prepare us for the Holy Liturgy the next day. At sunset the day before the Liturgy, the church offers Evening Vespers and Raising of Incense. The Prayers take place at sunset, symbolizing the sunset of our life, and so the Litany of the departed is said, and then the midnight praises.

Raising of Incense (Matins)

The morning incense is raised the next day (we pray the Litany of the sick and of the travelers). All this prepares our hearts for the most precious and deep moments of the Holy Liturgy.



The Banquet (consists of 2 parts)

1st part- Liturgy of the Catechumens

2nd part - Liturgy of the Believers (those who are baptized are allowed to eat the Body and Blood)

First: Liturgy of the Catechumens:

1. THE PSALMS: "Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." Ephesians 5:19

- 3rd and 6th hours: on non-fasting days, Saturdays and Sundays, and feast days.
- 3rd, 6th, and 9th hours: on fasting days (such as Wednesday and Friday except during the Holy 50 Days)
- 3rd, 6th, 9th, 11th, and 12th hours: on days of the Great Lent, the fast of Jonah, and the Paramoun of the Nativity and Epiphany.

2. OFFERING OF THE LAMB:

- The priest washes his hands 3 times praying for the purification of his mind and heart before serving this holy mystery. "I will wash my hands in innocence; so I will go about Your altar, O Lord." Psalm 26:6
- We use yeast in baking the Eucharistic Bread to signify our sins that our Lord Jesus Christ carried on the Cross. Christ resembles us as humans in everything except sin. As yeast is consumed when baked in the heat of an oven, similarly Christ by suffering on the Cross, sin has died and was buried and our Lord Jesus Christ arose without it. "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" John 1:29
- The number of holy bread has to be an odd number to choose from, representing Christ among His disciples.
- We pray "Lord have mercy" 41 times praying for the forgiveness of our sins and presenting our prayers for us and others.
- After that, the priest holds the chosen bread up and goes around the altar glorifying the Holy Trinity
- Then we pray the Thanksgiving Prayer and the priest says the absolution for all those invited to partake of the banquet (the priest, the deacons, and the congregation).

3. CHURCH READINGS:

- The educational part of the Liturgy. The church has **5** different readings in the Liturgy. A part from the:
 1. Epistles of St. Paul, called the Pauline Epistle
 2. Catholic Epistles, which include the Epistles of James, Peter I & II, John I, II & III and Jude.
 3. Book of Acts, also called the Praxis
 4. Synaxarium, the Chronicle of the Saints. *Synaxarium* means the news or biography.
 5. Psalm and Gospel
- The daily readings follow the theme of the day. This is the King's message to us, those invited to His banquet. Therefore, we have to listen carefully to what is offered to us at the banquet.
- In order to benefit from the liturgy, it is important to listen to the readings and to stand with the respect due to the King.

Second: The Liturgy of the Believers

THE ONE FAITH:

- At this point we recite the Creed. We announce our Orthodox faith. The basis on which we partake in the Holy banquet
- The priest washes his hands to absolve himself from the guilt of those who will take Communion unworthily.

1. THE PRAYER OF RECONCILIATION (THE HOLY KISS):

- Sin has separated us from God. The priest then starts praying the Prayer of Reconciliation to reconcile the heavenly with the earthly. In this prayer the church recalls our fall since the beginning; *"O God, the Great and the Eternal, who formed man in incorruption; and death which entered into the world by the envy of the devil; You have destroyed, by the life-giving manifestation of Your only Begotten Son."*

(No one can come to Holy Communion without exchanging the Holy Kiss, to show peace and purity of heart "so we do not "fall into condemnation").

- The priest says: *"Lift up your hearts"* When we lift our hearts up, we offer a sacrifice of praise and share with the heavenly their praise in front of the heavenly throne. **How do you lift up your heart?**

2. THE STORY OF SALVATION:

- The priest tells the story starting with our fall, going through leaving paradise and Christ's incarnation and becoming man, His crucifixion, and His resurrection, all the way to His second coming for judgment.

3. CONSECRATION:

- In it the Holy Spirit descends on the offering and transforms it into the Blood and Body of our Lord Jesus Christ. In it we remember how our Lord gives us His Body and Blood every day on the altar. The priest prays inaudibly and proclaims the transformation of the bread and wine to the Body and Blood of our Lord. The candles are lit around the altar during the sanctification of the bread and wine declaring that the true light has shined on the offering. He calls for the Holy Spirit while kneeling because, it is the Lord Himself who instituted this mystery and He is the one who sends His Spirit onto the offering.
- We feel like we are attending the Last Supper with Our Lord Jesus Christ and His disciples.

4. THE LITANIES AND THE COMMEMORATION OF THE SAINTS:

- The Litanies are supplications for many things, as we share one body; we offer supplication for the unity of heart. We pray for our loved ones placing their needs in the presence of the Lord. We ask for the unity of the church, the safety of our Patriarch, the priests, and servants. We pray for the widows and orphans, strangers and guests, the sick and travelers. We also pray for those who are suffering, the president, and the soldiers (Ephesians 2:1-2).
- **The priest prays the seven small litanies:** Litany of peace, the fathers, the priests, the mercy, the place, the waters or the plants or the air of heavens, and oblations.
- Through these supplications, we live in love which is full of care for others' needs. No one can stand in the presence of God alone, but we all ask for one another as we are all members of one body.
- The Commemoration reflects the unity between the struggling Church on earth and the victorious Church in heaven. In it we unite with the victorious church, we ask for their prayers and their intercessions, and we pray for them.

5. THE FRACTION:

- The prayer of the Fraction is offering thanksgiving to God for all His blessings, giving us His Holy Body and precious Blood. Then we offer praises for Him to grant us the purity of heart, the soul, and the body, so we can partake of His Holies. There are many types of Fraction Prayers. There are ones that pertain to the feasts like St. Mary, the angels, the fasts, and more that pertain to other church occasions, in addition to the annual fraction prayers.
- The priest breaks the body into 12 pieces around the *despotikon*, (The four central squares form the *despotikon* (the bread of the Lord)) representing the passions of Christ. The priest, then, smears the Body with the Blood in the shape of a cross and this represents that our Lord was immersed in the passions. It also resembles the blood that came out of His side as He was speared on the cross.



6. CONFESSION:

- We confess that this is the true Body and true Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ
- The deacon recites the confession prayer on behalf of the congregation "I believe, I believe, I believe that this is true, Amen."

7. COMMUNION:

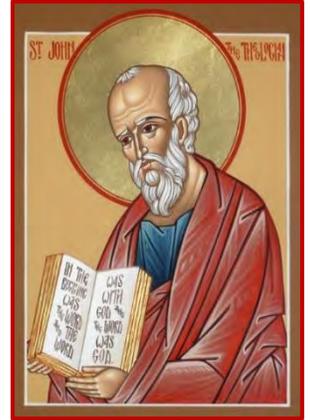
- This is the moment we have been waiting for since the beginning of the banquet.
- The moment we eat from the Holy Body and drink the Precious Blood

At the end of the Liturgy, we go out and tell our friends about how much we enjoyed being with the King at His banquet and witness to our Lord.



A Witness for Christ

THE 1ST EPISTLE OF ST. JOHN: He writes this letter as an honorable father writes to his beloved children, related in strong spiritual bond. It was written from Ephesus toward the end of the first century after the temple was destroyed and the Jewish nation ended. The Epistle along with the Gospel was written toward the end of St. John's life. He brought together all the teachings of the evangelists (Gospels) and Apostles and concentrate them all into one unique gem = **Theology of Love**.



THE PURPOSE FOR WRITING THE EPISTLE: **St. John mentions 4 goals:**

1. That our joy may be full (1 John 1:4)
2. That we do not sin (1 John 2:1)
3. To avoid the deceivers (1 John 2:26)
4. To know that we have eternal life and to have confidence in Him. (1 John 5:13, 14)

"And this is the message we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5).

Chapter 1: The Incarnate Logos- *The divine incarnation, its purpose and its effect on us as believers*

1 John 1:1-2 ~ FROM THE BEGINNING: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our own eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life. And declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested to us, that which we have seen and heard we declare to you." (1 John 1:1-2)

Our Lord Jesus Christ, "That which was from the beginning", the eternal and invisible took flesh and became Man. St. John heard our Lord Jesus Christ, he saw Him, touched Him and realized Him as "The Word of life". He wants to declare this to us. **St. John was a true eyewitness!!**

1 John 1:2-4 ~ THAT WE HAVE FELLOWSHIP, JOY, AND ENJOYMENT OF THE ETERNAL LIFE: The disciples, as **eyewitnesses**, touched, realized, and have delivered this testimony to the next generations. So every generation delivers, with joy, to the following generation the faith delivered once to the saints. Having this **apostolic faith**, the one faith across all generations for the one church, we can, through the church, enjoy the fellowship with the Father and the Son, the Bridegroom of the church, thus we achieve the perfect joy, for the sake of the fellowship, the love and the true unity and enjoyment of eternal life.

1 John 1:5-7 ~ TO FOLLOW GOD AND ABIDE IN THE LIGHT: By following God we get closer to the light. Knowing, submitting and being enlightened by Him. Alone we are full of darkness, and cannot be light unless He alone enlightens us! Since we stumble by ourselves, we should not stumble by Him. We stumble by Him when we do not realize that we are sinners. Enlightenment by Him means that we realize that we are darkened by sin and desires to be enlightened by the light so we come closer to Him. Also, anyone who walks in the darkness of sin but claims that his mind is not darkened does not have a relationship with God.

To abide in the light is having true fellowship with one another, full of love and unity, as one Orthodox faith and members of one body, and to continuously enjoy being cleansed from sin through **repentance** and **confession**, through the Blood of Christ.

Note: St. John gives us the message of fellowship before saying, "the Blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin," for one cannot enjoy being purified by the Blood of Christ outside this one church.

1 John 1:8-10 ~ TO CONFESS OUR SINS: How can we be light while living in darkness by sin and evil and be cleansed from it? St. John says, "And the Blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin." How great is that guarantee! Being in this world amidst temptations, we sin, even after our sins are forgiven in baptism; however, we have to confess our sins, so Christ may heal us with His Blood. Verses 8-10 clearly states **confession** is necessary. If one thinks he does not need repentance or confession and believes he is righteous, he is:

1. Deceiving himself. He ignores the truth of his weakness and that he is susceptible to fall in sin any time.

2. The truth is not in him. For if it was in him, the truth is light to reveal to man his reality.

3. We make God a liar. We accuse God Himself who emphasizes that there is no goodness in man, and no matter how high he attains in the life of holiness, he may fall if he is proud or becomes careless in struggle.

4. His word is not in us. For this is the word of God and His commandment to ask every day, "Forgive us our sins."

The need for repentance, confession, and forgiveness is ongoing throughout the Christian life; otherwise, the Lord would not urge believers to seek forgiveness on a continuing basis (Matt. 6:12; Luke 11:4). In biblical terms "confession" (Greek. *homologeō*) is something you do with your lips and not simply in the silence of your heart (Mk. 1:5; Rom. 10:10; James. 5:16)

Chapter 2: The Incarnate God and the Love to the Lord and our Brothers (based on the subject of Love)

1 John 2:1-2 ~ THE LOVE OF CHRIST TO US: As a loving father, St. John reveals to his children the reason of writing this epistle so that they may not sin, to live a holy life appropriate as children abiding in the light. Everyone sins!! Therefore, he adds, "If anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father." This Advocate is a just Lawyer who defends us to make us innocent in the trial. He has paid the price, without partiality "not for our sins only but also for the whole world." He is "The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." (John 1:20). Whoever comes to Him, He does not cast away.

Note: St. John did not write, "your Advocate," instead wrote "we have an Advocate." He chose to be counted with the sinners, even though he was a righteous man so Christ may also be his Advocate.

1 John 2:3-11 ~ OUR LOVE TO GOD BY KEEPING HIS COMMANDMENTS, WHICH CONCENTRATE ON BROTHERLY LOVE: The Lord Jesus said "If you love Me keep My commandments." (John 14:15). We keep His commandments by knowing and experiencing the power of God and the effect of the Holy Spirit in our lives which transforms into love. When one tastes the sweetness of the commandment, he tastes the sweetness of God's love in a perfect way. "The Love of God is perfected in him." The commandment is not strictly order, not to do that, but he looks at it as love from God toward man, for He presents to us His word so we may have fellowship with Him and see Him inside us. One way of keeping the commandments is to walk as Christ did, taking the road of the cross. The narrow road of practical **love** which sacrifices, crucifies the ego and all the lusts and the cares of the world, so that the heart **may cleave to the Lord only**. The commandment of love is not new, for it is old, man knew it by nature. When Cain killed Abel, he realized his sin right away. It is also new from the way which man understands it, "which thing is true in Him," for on the cross, we knew that love is not mere emotions or complimentary words, but sacrificial love for the salvation of men. Also, a person who claims he is in the light, but hates his brother, is really in darkness and walks in darkness and does not know where he is going because his eyes are blinded by the darkness.

"If a man hates his brother, he walks in darkness and does not know where he is going. In his ignorance he goes down to hell, and in his blindness he is thrown headlong into punishment, because he withdraws from the light of Christ."
Caesarius of Arles

1 John 2:12-27 ~ OUR LOVE TO GOD: (4 Aspects):

Through baptism, we are called children of God and are granted the forgiveness of sins for His name's sake.

1. Our capabilities as believers who love God: St. John addresses young men, children, and fathers. The Fathers are the priests; for they know the Eternal Father who has the true Fatherhood toward all humanity, receiving their fatherhood from Him. The Young men are the youth who were granted the power of victory, for the devil fights us but he cannot overcome us, because we are strong in Christ Jesus. The Children are the children of Christ.

2. Our rejection to the love of the world: Through baptism, we receive the new birth; therefore, we should not love the world lest the holies that are in us be converted to a curse instead of becoming for power and salvation. **But how do we not love the things in the world?** If a bridegroom offers his bride a ring, will she love the ring more than him? Is she going to love the ring and say that she does not want to see the face of the groom? Likewise, he who loves the creation and not the Creator; this love is considered adultery. St. John speaks of 3 points (v. 16) that are in the world that the devil used to tempt the Lord Jesus Christ after He fasted for 40 days; (lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and pride of life).

3. Rejection of Heresies: "It is the last hour." These are the last moments for the battle between God and the devil. God extends His help to His children to give them victory, and the devil, seeing that his days are coming to the end, stirs his spirit in the antichrist to defile the faith and life of God's children. St. John is encouraging his children not to be afraid of the attackers. We are anointed by the Holy Spirit (v. 20). The Holy Spirit reveals the mysteries of God in the heart, teaches us, makes us taste the sweetness of His fellowship, and opens our minds so we may learn everything. The Holy Spirit reminds us of the truth and grants us discernment to reject all foreign teachings (heresies).

4. Our Abiding in God: We should abide in what we have heard from the beginning and what we have received from the previous generations. By abiding in the Orthodox faith and life in Him, we abide in the Son and in the Father, looking for the promise which we desire which is "eternal life." The foreign teachings have reached up to approximately 600 new denominations. We should stick to what the Holy Spirit has delivered to us, the Spirit of Truth, which has no deception.

1 John 2:28-29 ~ THE LOVERS OF GOD AND THEIR ADOPTION TO HIM:

When the Lord appears at His second advent, the one who knows the Son and the Father according to the knowledge will have confidence and will not be confounded, for confusion is a great punishment.

Chapter 3: THE ADOPTION TO THE FATHER

1 John 3:1-2 ~ God's love granted us the Adoption: Since St. John ended the previous chapter by saying, "Everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him," now he explains our position toward God, discerning between belonging to God and belonging to Satan. We, as believers, were baptized in His name and became members in His Mysterious Body; therefore we were transferred to the adoption of God. St. Paul said, "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ." (Galatians 3:26, 27). Many are called Christians by name, but they are not Christians in their life, conduct, faith, hope, or in their love! As Christians, we should abide in righteousness and despise the evil in the world, and not accept to be enslaved to the desire of the flesh (alcohol, drugs, and sexual lusts).



1 John 3:3-24 ~ OUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS CHILDREN OF GOD: (4 responsibilities):

1. Resemble God in purity: St. John says, “purifies himself” emphasizing our participation in the behavior. We cannot be purified except by the Holy God, but we also will not be purified unless we accept that and respond to God’s work, struggling and persevering.

2. Resemble God our Father being sinless: “Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness and sin is lawlessness.” (v.4) Lawlessness is a disregard for rules and authority. This is not appropriate for the children, for the Lord Jesus came to abolish the dominion of sin. Following in the Lord’s footsteps and abiding in Him will lead us to become without sin.

3. God’s children practice righteousness and are loving: Love is the trait of the cross of the Lord Jesus, whereby we grow as long as we abide in the Lord. However, whoever does not love is deviated toward the road of the devil, rejecting the adoption of God and accepting the adoption of the devil. Those who are attached to the world that is the evil, have no true love and can tolerate neither God nor His children.



What are some examples today where we see that people are attached to the world (or evil), can tolerate neither God nor His children? (Ex: Avoid praying in public because we do not want to be mocked. Prayers being excluded from public schools because of people who are not believers are offended. -The debate about the Ten Commandments monument placed in front of city buildings. Creationism excluded from school curriculum.)

“It is not to be wondered at if evil people, who are here called the “world,” hate those who live godly lives according to the commands of Christ. It would be much more surprising if such people loved us instead! “St. Didymus the Blind”

If we love our brothers, in deed and in truth, that is in Christ Jesus, and not in vain glory, then we know that we are abiding in Christ “The Truth,” and our hearts are confident before God who examines the hearts.

4. Our Trust in God our Father: When we love God, we keep His commandments. He is pleased with us, and does not make us in need of anything, but trusts us with everything, since we are faithful in our love to our brothers.

Chapter 4: LOVE IN WISDOM: *St John is urging us for “Love”*

1 John 4:1-6 ~ Love and Wisdom - Love means rejecting what is against the Spirit of God:

Love grants us simplicity so that one believes everything. However, we have to discern and be wise so we are not deceived by false prophets who disguise themselves under the name of “Christ” and the word “love,” to hide their poison in enticing words and false philosophy, claiming that they are guided by the Holy Spirit. The Lord has warned us by saying; “Take heed that no one deceives you, for many will come in My name saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.” (Matthew 24:4, 5).

St. Paul was concerned about the church so he said, “For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you may well put up with it!” (2 Corinthians 11: 2-4).

As St. Augustine said that there are many heresies that do not deny that Christ came in the flesh, but they deny His divinity or the divinity of the Holy Spirit like Arianism. These people came out of the church, the one body of Christ, but had different faith and opposite thoughts, and thus they became against Christ, even if they relate themselves to Christ.

Now, there are more than 600 denominations, **so how do we know the true faith from the fake faith?** Let us return to the faith of the One Church before the schism of the council of Chalcedon in the 5th century. Through the first four centuries, in spite of the widespread of the church from east to west, and in spite of the various environments and the numerous parishes and the multitude of the clergy and the Christian writings, yet the church was characterized by the **one thought**. The writings of St. Basil, the Archbishop of Caesarea, Hilary, the Bishop of Poitiers, and St. John Chrysostom, the Archbishop of Constantinople, St. Athanasius the Apostolic, Pope of Alexandria, St. Cyril the Great etc., and thousands more of the fathers have interpreted and sent letters with the same meaning, as if they were all disciples in one school, and all had one mind. This is the Truth which the One Church has absorbed and which every generation delivers to the next generation. The apostles and the disciples delivered the pure faith to the church. Let us all return to the apostolic faith, which was delivered once to the saints, rejecting every modern philosophical thought. **This makes us witnesses to the Lord!**

1 John 4:7-11 ~ The source of true Love is the Cross: Again St. John expresses and stresses Love. It all comes back to this commandment. We find in the cross the fountain of abundant love. The more we reflect on the cross, the more we feel His unconditional and unlimited love. He loved us before we even knew Him, it is appropriate for us to love, too.

1 John 4:12-21 ~ HOW TO TASTE LOVE (2 ways):

1. Through our love to our brothers: God's love is perfect; however we do not enjoy that love unless we open our hearts to our brothers. By this love, our hearts are purified by the Holy Spirit, so we may see God. "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God."

2. Through our joyful waiting for the Lord's day: Once we taste God's love and respond to it, then all our desire is to long for the Lord's Day with confidence, because we follow His example here on earth, therefore, we have a share with Him in the life to come. It is good that we start with the fear of God, so we may fear the Lord's Day and become alert against our enemy, which is sin. The more we enjoy God's love and the love of our brothers, the more we yearn for the Lord and desire His embracement, joyfully waiting for the wedding day as a chaste virgin adorned with faith, hope and love. Therefore, fear is removed from us to be replaced by love, for the apostle St. John said: **"The perfection of a faithful man is love."**



"The more the love of God is increased, the more the fear is diminished. The less the love, the more is the fear. However, if there is no fear, there is no love. When we sew, a needle pokes the thread. If the needle does not come out, then the thread will not come out either. In the same manner, fear occupies the soul, but it does not remain but is replaced by love." **St. Augustine**

Chapter 5: THE CAPABILITIES OF OUR FAITH IN THE INCARNATE LORD *the power of faith in the Son of God*

1 John 5:1-3 ~ FAITH AND LOVE: St. John immediately joined love to faith, because without love faith is useless. Our second birth is based on our faith in the Lord Jesus that He is the Christ who has reconciled us with the Father. Thus, through baptism, we become children of the Father and love Him. Our love to the Father drives us to love the Son. By accepting the Head of the body, we accept the members of the body.

1 John 5:4-5 ~ FAITH AND THE LIFE OF VICTORY: One may ask: **Who can fulfill God's commandments and overcome the love of the world with all its enticements?** Through our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who has overcome the world and still overcoming by His work in us. When we abide in Him, the narrow road becomes easy, the heavy burden becomes light, all the enticements of the world become as nothing, and all the afflictions of the world as the subject of our joy.

1 John 5:6-10 ~ The Foundation of Faith Witnessing to Him: Our faith is based on the Blood of Christ, our dying and burial with Him in baptism. The Holy Trinity witnesses to the power of baptism in the New Testament, and this we have seen in the baptism of the Lord Jesus Christ. Baptism is the work of the Holy Spirit, who grants us the forgiveness of sins, and binds us with the Holy Trinity. Baptism is established on the work of the Holy Trinity, for it is based on the cross of Christ. Often we accept the witness of men, so how about the witness of the Father to His Son! The Father testified of His Son in His baptism, in the Transfiguration, in His death and resurrection. **Verse 10** can be explained as: **We do not need any external witness, when we believe in God, but the Spirit of God testifies in us with a practical experience, so we may trust the word of God, without any doubt. However, he who does not believe God makes Him a liar. We do not have to ask “how,” but with faith accept the Scripture.**

1 John 5:11-13 ~ FAITH AND THE GIFT OF ETERNAL LIFE: The goal of our faith is to enjoy eternal life. This life is not a mere gift from God, but the Son of God Himself is our life, “This life is in His Son.” This is the purpose of the incarnation; the Lord came as the First-born; He died, and rose. By His ascension, He carried us in Him, for the Incarnate God rose to the highest heaven, where the eternal doors were opened and the heavenly hosts were astonished in front of the glory granted to human beings in the Person of the God Incarnate. The members of the mysterious Body rise up to the First-born and live there forever.

1 John 5:14-15 ~ FAITH AND THE ANSWER OF PRAYERS: The believer, who responds to the Spirit of God, learns what to ask from God, therefore, everything which he asks is according to God’s will and the Lord will answer him.

1 John 5:16-17 ~ THE BELIEVERS AND THEIR PRAYERS FOR THEIR BROTHERS: St. Augustine said: Even though the Lord commands us to pray for our very persecutors, this passage clearly shows that there are some brothers for whom we are not **commanded** to pray. We notice that St. John did not command not to pray for those who commit sin leading to death, but did not ask them to pray, leaving the option to the believer.

1 John 5:18-20 ~ THE BELIEVERS GRANTED SPIRITUAL ENLIGHTENMENT WITH THREE CORNERS: The Three Corners are 1. Being born of God, 2. Realizing we are of God and 3. Knowing the Son of God. Being born of God, you should struggle and keep yourself from the evil of the world. Realizing you are of God and are God’s children is not just by talk, but by living with Him. Knowing the Son of God, the believer knows who the Lord Jesus is. He is the Truth, the Grantor of life. This is the inner enlightenment, in which the soul envisions that the Lord Jesus is the whole Truth so it may be satisfied with Him. He is the source of life; hence the soul abides in Him and does not forsake Him.

1 John 5:21 ~ THE FINAL WARNING: It is not appropriate to submit ourselves to other things than the Father, for the idols mean submitting the heart to others than God. He reminds us of our position as children of God, asking that our hearts become sanctified for Him. In the meantime, he encourages us to struggle and persevere. “Keep yourselves,” so we may not accept anyone to replace God’s place in our hearts.

**The blessings of our Lord, through the prayers of St. John the Beloved and all the saints keep us all,
Amen.**

Witnesses without Testimony

In a small country located in Asia Minor specifically in the city of Nicaea around in the year 325 AD, came King Constantine to his palace in the city and was showing signs of worry about a certain matter!!

King Constantine was going to be heading an important council that was to take place that year. This Ecumenical council was to be attended by 318 bishops.



The issue started around 302 - 311AD, during the papacy of Pope Peter XVII, yet it remained until 325 A.D. to be a very dangerous matter to the Christian faith and the salvation of people. It is due to the wrong teachings of Arius, a priest from Alexandria; although, he was such a strong believer and had a great influence on all his listeners. God had truly gifted him with a sweet mouth. Unfortunately, it didn't last, for the devil poisoned his thoughts with false thoughts. Such thoughts took over his heart because he didn't pay close attention to them, and they affected the safety of our faith. Arius became a tool in Satan's hands.

Ever since his fall, Satan tried to take God's children away from Him. He tried to destroy Christianity; first by stirring the idol worshipping rulers against Christians to the extent that the reign of Emperor Diocletian was called the Era of Martyrdom. However, when Satan discovered that the threat of death, torture and murder only increased the strength of the Christians, he began to change his plan. He developed his methods and started a new round in the struggle against Christianity in the form of heresies.

But the history of the Coptic Church shows how strong it stood for our Orthodox faith.

What are the trickeries of Satan which you face in today's world?

How will you protect your faith in the same manner our saintly fathers protect the faith?

Arius was teaching in the church, and emphasized that Christ was only a human like us, which means that He is less in divinity than God the Father. In other words, He is not equal to the Father in essence. He made his poisonous thoughts sound appropriate by the use of some verses which he used out of context to support his ideas.

The people of Alexandria didn't follow such false teachings, and the priests and the bishops explained to the people how false such teachings are. However, the devil took control over Arius and darkened his mind so he proudly refused the Orthodox faith. The fathers finally had to stop him and deprive him from his position in the church. **"Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall." Proverbs 16:18**

Arius went on with his heretical thoughts; he put all his evil thoughts in chants and songs, singing them to the congregation. Unfortunately, many have believed in his teachings and followed his evil beliefs by memorizing these songs.

- *Do you use the gifts which the Lord has given you to testify for His holy name or for other matters?*
- *Do you accept guidance from your elders (e.g. your father of confession, your mom and dad..., etc.)?*
- *Mention situations in your life where you have been a witness to the Lord?*

Pope Peter XVII did all he could do to protect the faith. Before his departure, he brought in his disciples, Archelaus and Alexandros, and told them about a dream he had. In the dream, the pope saw the Lord Jesus Christ as a glorious young Man but His robe was torn from top to bottom. When the pope saw this, he was greatly troubled and asked the Lord, "Who did this to you my Lord?" and the Lord answered and said, "Arius did this to Me, when he wanted to separate Me from the essence of the Father." After he finished the dream, he asked his disciples to excommunicate Arius from the unity of the holy church of God, to fight his heresies, and to enlighten the minds of the congregation with the true Orthodox Faith. Therefore, King Constantine called for the council of Nicaea to make a decision about Arius and his heresy.

The Council started and the fathers stood to pray with one heart, asking the Lord to bless them with His mercies and be present in the midst of them, with His divine power and His Holy Spirit, as the teacher, the supporter, and the comforter.

The council began with a few chapters from the Holy Bible. They finished the prayers and began the program of the holy council.

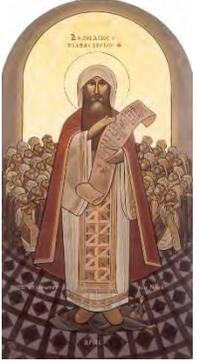
THE FIRST SECTION OF THE COUNCIL:

Arius was called to confess what he believes in front of the entire council. He claimed his wrong faith audaciously without any shame, not knowing the danger of heresies or the value of the fathers whom he is standing before.

Arius: God the Father existed before the Son. In other words, the Son is less than the Father in His divinity. Therefore, He is not of the same essence as the Father. By that He is human like us. What proves that is the Lord's saying, **"For My Father is greater than I."** (John 14:28)

"How can this be? How can the Lord Jesus Christ be less than the Father? This is not what the saintly fathers handed us!!!"

After Arius finished his statement, a loud voice, brave and full of power and faith, came out, grabbing the attention of all the members of the council. "Who might this be?" It was a young man who accompanied Pope Alexander. Even though he appeared to be in his twenties, his father the Patriarch had a look of confidence and belief in him. His name was Athanasius.



St. Athanasius: You are blaspheming Arius. "My apologies are due to all the honorable fathers for intervening even though I am the youngest among you." But I could not listen anymore to this blasphemer; this blasphemer who's denying the divinity of our God and Savior Jesus Christ. If the Lord Jesus Christ was not God incarnate, how else would He be able to save us? And what about His crucifixion, death, resurrection and His ascension into the heavens? And what about His promise of His second coming? ... Etc.

Unfortunately, Arius's heart remained stiff and would not change his mind or heart.

St. Athanasius: The Lord Jesus Christ, to who is the glory, said "My Father is greater than I." He said that as the incarnated Son who emptied Himself, took the form of a servant, and resembled us in everything except sin alone. And since we do not focus on one verse only, we see that the Lord Himself confirmed His divinity in the same chapter. **"He who has seen Me has seen the Father... I am in the Father and the Father in Me?"** (John 14:9-10) **"I and My Father are one."** (John 10:30). This verse also proves that the Lord Jesus Christ is equal to the Father. The noble deacon, Athanasius, continued to prove the validity of his very strong faith in the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. He not only used verses from the New Testament, but from the Old Testament as well.

Even though he was a young deacon, St. Athanasius was able to defend the faith in truth!! What a glorious day it was; the day where all those saintly fathers have signed the Holy Creed of the church; the creed which is left as a witness said by all the believers throughout the ages.

'Truly, we believe in one God, God the Father the Pantocrator.... We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only-Begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages....'

What a difficult situation for Arius; he resisted the sound faith and the right education with his proud heart?!!! The holy fathers had to stop him when they realized the threat caused by his poisonous thoughts and teachings. They further excommunicated Arius and all his followers. Although it is sad for this man who was called to be a witness to the Lord not to testify to the right faith, it imparts joy in our hearts to have seen the true witnesses and defenders of the Orthodox faith. Among those saints and fathers, there was the great **St. Athanasius**, who is worthy to be called **'the defender of the faith.'**

May God grant us all young men and women to be strong in our faith, and be true witnesses to our Orthodox faith in our generation and every generation. Amen.



Witness through Salvation

In the Holy Book of Jonah in the Old Testament, God wants us to know an important fact: that the prophets were not of a different nature but were people "with a nature like ours" (James 5:17), having weaknesses, shortcomings and faults, and it was possible for them to fall like us. The only thing was that the grace of God worked in them and gave them power. It was not their power but the power of the Holy Spirit working in their weakness, that the power may be of God and not of us, according to the Apostle's words (2 Cor. 4:7).

Jonah the Prophet was one of the weak persons of the world whom God chose to put to shame the mighty ones (1 Cor. 1:27). He had faults and he had virtues, and the Lord chose him despite his faults, worked through him, in him and with him to give him guidance, teaches him and designated him to be a great and saintly prophet. In doing so, God also shows us that He can work with us and use our weakness to make us stronger as He did with Jonah.

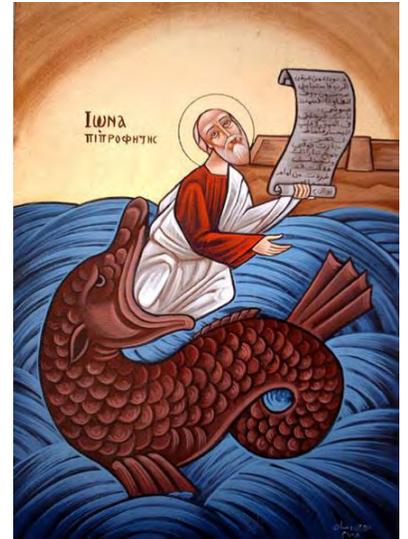
The Book of Jonah has a very important place in the Church's liturgical year. The Church sees within this book's simple story an icon of Christ symbolically represented. Unlike other prophetic books, the Book of Jonah does not contain "words of prophecy," but rather it tells a story of Jonah's personal encounter with the Lord. Reading these symbols spiritually, we behold the mystery of salvation in Christ exemplified in poetic precise images. We also see a unique instance in the Old Testament of God's love and concern not just for His own people, Israel, but for a nation of Gentiles who were actually Israel's enemies. We find an archetype of Christ's mission of salvation extending beyond Israel to embrace the whole world, all the enemies of God. He also shows us ourselves in the people of Nineveh, the ship's mariners, and even Jonah, a fleeing prophet.

Background: Jonah, according to Hebrew tradition, was the son of the widow, whom Elijah, the prophet, rose from the dead at Zarephath of Sidon (II Kings 17: 10-24). He was a prophet in the Northern Kingdom of Israel around 825-784 BC. Therefore, Jonah prophesied during the reign of Jeroboam II, the King of Samaria (II Kings 14:25). He was around at the same time as the prophet Amos.

Chapter 1: Jonah is called by the Lord, he disobeys, and the Great Fish:

The Lord uses Jonah's disobedience to save. *"In this way you will be a blessing when I send you and a blessing when you flee. You will be a blessing to the people of Nineveh when they dread you as a prophet, and a blessing to the mariners when you are cast out into the sea as a guilty person. I will carry out My purpose through you in whatever state. Even when you are in the belly of the whale, not among the Ninevites nor the mariners, but when you are on your own in the belly of the whale, I will make you a prototype of My death and resurrection so that in mentioning your story people will learn."* How great our Lord is to use Jonah, a rather weak prophet, to save the Mariners, the city of Nineveh, and even himself.

Jonah 1:1-6 ~ The story immediately begins, Jonah disobeys and rebels: Jonah was called by the Lord to go to the great city of Nineveh and cry out against it and preach a message that the city would be overthrown in forty days because of its wickedness. Instead of listening to the Lord, he fled from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa, found a ship, paid a fare, and went down into it to flee from the Lord.



What happened next? A storm at sea.... The storm scared the mariners where each one prayed to his own god. And where was Jonah? He was in the lowest part of the ship sleeping. The captain woke Jonah up and asked him to call on his God so that they may not perish.

Jonah's fleeing from the presence of the Lord carried within it other sins, namely, foolishness and lack of faith. This one who flees from the Lord, to where will he flee when the Lord is Omnipresent (present everywhere at the same time)? O great prophet, do you not believe that God is present in every place to which you flee? God is present in the ship which you will board, and in the sea which will bear the ship, and in Tarshish to which you wish to escape. So where do you wish to hide from the presence of the Lord?

Rightly did David the Prophet say to the Lord: **"Where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; if I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hands shall hold me"**(Psalm. 139:7-10).

Jonah 1:7 ~ Casting of lots: After this, the mariners agreed to cast lots so that they may know who was the cause for this severe storm. (Lots were used in the Old Testament to figure out what was the will of the Lord.)

Examples of casting lots:

1. **Aaron** was to cast lots upon the two goats to determine which one was to be slain and which one was to be sent away into the desert bearing the sins of Israel. (Leviticus 16:7-10)
2. **Achan**, the man who stole the spoils of the Battle of Jericho and brought defeat upon the Israelites in their attack upon the city of Ai, was found to be the guilty one by the casting of lots. (Joshua 7:14)
3. **Joshua** divided the land of Canaan among the twelve tribes of Israel by lot. (Joshua 18:10)
4. **The sons of Aaron** received their cities by the casting of lots. (I Chronicles 6:54)



Jonah 1:8-16 ~ The mariners learn who the One True God is and are saved: So the lot fell on Jonah and after questioning him, he told them he was Hebrew, who his God was, and his story of fleeing from the Lord. They asked him what they should do to calm the sea. He told them to throw him into the sea and it would calm. The mariners were nice and tried to row back to dry land instead of throwing him overboard, but the sea became worse. They then began to pray to Jonah's God and threw Jonah into the sea. The sea became calm and the mariners feared the Lord and offered a sacrifice to the Lord and took vows. (They received salvation in praying to the One true God).

God who is able to turn evil into good was also able to make use of Jonah's disobedience. Through Jonah's disobedience the mariners would be saved. When Jonah disobeyed the Lord he went down into a ship where there were people belonging to the Lord, whom the Lord loved and sought to save. They were **gentiles** like the people of Nineveh, and were likewise in need of salvation. Jonah was an instrument in the hand of the Lord. It was as though the Lord said to Jonah: *"Do you think, Jonah, that you have fled from Me? No, you have not. I will send you to the mariners, not as a prophet, nor as a preacher, nor as a voice crying out calling people to repentance, but as a guilty person and a sinner, and a cause of a dilemma and trouble for others. Thus I will save them through you."*

Indeed God is beneficent; He can perform good out of everything. He could make use of Pilate's cowardice and Judas' betrayal in the act of salvation. Anything that comes into the hand of God will surely yield something good. God saves by all possible means and as the apostle said: "all things work together for good to those who love God," (Romans 8:28).

Jonah 1:17 ~ The great fish; 3 days and 3 nights: Afterwards, Jonah was swallowed by a great fish and stayed in its belly for 3 days and nights. Here God's care for Jonah becomes very evident. Events do not happen without Divine Providence. God sent the great winds and waves to show His displeasure with Jonah's disobedience. Even so, the Lord also sent Jonah a place of safekeeping in his oppression. Jonah could have met death as he was tossed over the ship. But the Lord in His Goodness chose to protect Jonah.

Why did God love Jonah? God sent a fish beside the boat to swallow Jonah. Jonah, inside this fish's belly, was most probably in darkness, tossed about constantly, salty water all around him. As Jonah underwent all of these perils within the fish we are not told of anything negative he said against the Lord. Jonah surely realized the God of the sea received him and protected him. The fish was Jonah's shelter and not a punishment. It would take a very wise man to rationalize this message under these terrible circumstances. He was given a place of safekeeping not death. For 3 days and 3 nights he remained in the belly of the whale. **Perhaps God loved Jonah for his inspiring faith while captive in the fish.**



Chapter 2: Jonah in the Belly of the Fish (*Prayer and Repentance*)

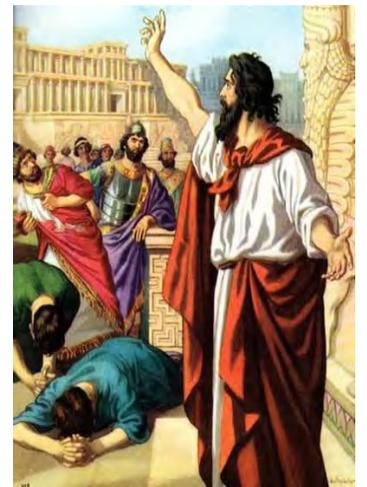
Jonah 2:1-10 ~ Jonah has a realization, prays, repents, and is vomited out: When the great fish swallowed Jonah, what did he do? He returned to his senses, knelt down and prayed in the belly of the whale, and the Lord beheld him and rejoiced: It's as if **God is saying:** "For a long time I have wanted to talk to you and reason together, but you were angry, you fled and refused to talk. But now is an appropriate opportunity to reconcile together." Jonah returned once again to his prophetic rites, to his former image as an obedient God-loving man, firmly believing in God's promises, trusting God and offering Him thanksgiving. **Jonah's prayer/psalm:** I am completely confident that I will come out of the belly of the whale and accomplish my mission, because God's word is never disproved nor does it return empty." "So long as God commanded that I should go to Nineveh, then I will go there and carry out His sacred will, undertake my preaching ministry and then return to the temple of God to worship there. I will sacrifice to the Lord and offer my vows. All this I see clearly and without doubt before my eyes. My present temporary state in the whale and the sea has no effect on this at all."

Jonah was chosen by the Lord because of his faith. Yes he sinned against God, but his essence was still good. When Jonah's faith reached that wonderful level, the Lord spoke to the fish ordering it to vomit him onto dry land.

Chapter 3: Nineveh Repents and is Saved (*An abundance of fruits*)

Jonah 3:1-4 ~ A second time Jonah is called: The Lord spoke to Jonah again and told him to go to Nineveh and preach the message because of their wickedness. Jonah obeyed, entered the city, and cried out "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"

Jonah 3:5-10 ~ How did the Ninevites react to what Jonah said: The people of Nineveh (who were not Hebrews; they were Gentiles) believed God and the message they heard, proclaimed a fast, put on sackcloth (made from goats hair...sign of affliction, abstinence and rejection of worldly pleasures), and prayed. Every single person did this (120,000) from the highest (the king) to the lowest including all the animals. The king set out a decree for all to follow and turn away from the violence in their hands and pray so that God would not turn away from their anger, so they would not perish. God saw their works that they turned from their evil way, and relented from the disaster He would bring upon them.



The word of the Lord produced an **abundance of amazing fruits**. The first fruit of the Ninevites was **faith**: "So the people of Nineveh believed God. "The second fruit was the unfeigned **contrition of heart**; humiliating themselves before the Lord. Thus they put on sackcloth "From the greatest to the least of them". The word of God also yielded **fasting** and **prayer**. *The most important fruit was **repentance***. **Their repentance was a sincere repentance in every meaning of the word: serious and from the heart**, everyone turned 'from his evil way and from the violence that was in his hands.'" By this repentance they deserved God's mercy. He pardoned and forgave them; received them. It is a great story of love from God unto the Gentiles. Repentance led them to faith because sin was an obstacle between them and God. The fruit of their repentance was their humiliation, fasting, wearing sackcloth and crying out to God.

Chapter 4: The reason behind Jonah's fleeing; God's teaching is gentle (*God is long-suffering. He does not hastily abandon or become angry with those servants who fall by the wayside*)

Why did Jonah try to flee from the Lord? -PRIDE. Pride, he was too aloft to say a word that would be disproved and not carried out. His reverence, honor and word were more important to him than the salvation of a whole city! Although Jonah knew for sure that God was merciful and compassionate, and that He would forgive the city if it repented, he didn't want to say something to the people that might be disproved. **Jonah's thinking:** I shall cry out against the city, the city will repent, and God will return and show compassion and spare the city, and my word will be disproved. Therefore, in order to safeguard my own honor, my reputation and the awesomeness of the prophecy, it is better for me not to go. Here we see God is showing us an important fact: The prophets were not of a different nature, but were people "with a nature like ours" (James 5:17). They had weaknesses and shortcomings and they fall just like us.

Jonah 4:1-3 ~ Jonah's reaction to Nineveh's salvation for 120,000 people: There was joy in heaven over Nineveh's salvation. The angels, congratulating one another, saying: "Nineveh has believed and repented, and one hundred and twenty thousand persons have 'joined the kingdom of God in one day.'" However, amidst the rejoicing of heaven there was one man who was miserable on account of this great salvation, and that was Jonah the Prophet. *"But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he became angry"* (Jonah 4:1)

A prophet's work is for the salvation of people, a lesson he received from God had no effect on him, if, after his experience, he obeyed God outwardly yet remained unchanged from within. He did not rid himself of his egocentric nature nor of his personal dignity. The matter is clarified and becomes even more amazing when he prayed to complain and to justify himself, grumbling against God's treatment and requesting death for himself because death to him was far better than losing his dignity.

Jonah 4:4-6 ~ God's attitude with Jonah; His reaction to Jonah's reaction; was it anger? God saw that Jonah was miserable and angry, Hence He wanted to do him an act of love. While Jonah was thinking of himself, God was thinking of people's salvation. God did not think of His own honor as Jonah did. He did not think of how Jonah had disobeyed Him and grumbled at His judgment, but He thought of how to comfort Jonah and save him from his misery. How wondrous God's love is! Indeed God was seeking Jonah's salvation also. *This person who preached repentance to people, needed to repent also.* He needed to rid himself of his pride and self-esteem. As is always God's way, He began the reconciliation. When He saw Jonah miserable He prepared a plant and made it come up over him, that it might be shade for his head. He wanted to rid him of his misery and his wrong attitude.





Here God is saying: I shall uproot stubbornness from his heart by the merciful deeds which I shall work with him, so that he may perceive and learn. Just as I had compassion on Nineveh I shall have compassion on him, because compassion is My nature. I had compassion on him when he was cast into the sea, in the belly of the great fish, in all his lapses and sensitivities, and I shall have compassion on him now in his misery. I have prepared for him a plant that it might be shade for his head because I know that he will greatly rejoice over it. I seek his joy no matter how much he grumbles at My judgment and no matter how much he becomes angry with My deeds. *It happened as God willed.*

"Jonah was very grateful for the plant" (Jonah 4:6)

Do you rejoice greatly, Jonah, over the plant which gave shade to your head? Jonah you hardly rejoiced, but rather became angry, at My mercy which overshadowed 120,000 people. It would have been more appropriate that you should rejoice thus over the salvation of Nineveh.

Jonah 4:7-11 ~ God speaks to Jonah and teaches him: When God's design started to bear fruit, He prepared a worm and it damaged the plant. The role of the plant ended and remained for God to use it as an element for teaching! Throughout all these spiritual designs Jonah was immersed in his materialistic thoughts; he rejoiced over the plant and became angry when he lost it, without thinking of his own salvation and without caring for reconciliation to God. Again, Jonah grumbled and was angry at the plant's withering. **A second time he asked for death.** If the Lord would have answered his prayer, Jonah would have perished and not seen the kingdom of heaven. Thankfully, God's mercy sometimes does not answer our prayers if we ignorantly pray for our hurt. The Apostle rightly says: "You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss" (James 4:3). God began to reason with Jonah and convince him. He said to him:

"You have had pity, on the plant for which you have not labored, nor made it grow which came up in a night and perished in a night. And should I not pity Nineveh, that great city, in which are more than one hundred and twenty thousand persons?" (Jonah 4:10, 11).

CONCLUSION: God's love for reasoning is clear throughout the Holy Bible: ... "Come now, and let us reason together, says the Lord" (Isaiah 1:18). The story of the burning of Sodom gives us a clear picture of how God reasoned with Abraham (Genesis 19). Also the Lord reasoned with Moses the Prophet and carried out for him his own opinion (Exodus 32). The Holy Bible gives us a marvelous picture of how God reasons with man. God does not intend every time He reasons with us to convince us with something He imposes on us, but He may condescend to our opinion and agree with us as He did when He reasoned with Moses and relented from the evil which He said He would do, and did not do it.

God reasoned with Jonah, and it was He who began. He said to Jonah, "Come Jonah! Let us reason together and do not be angry", "Is it right for you to be angry?" and Jonah replied: "It is right for me to be angry even to death!" God was not displeased from Jonah's reply, but He began to convince him practically and verbally that Nineveh should have been spared.

God does not use His mightiness in fulfilling His will. He does not use the term 'I said so, so it should be'. This manner is found with man. And man sometimes is unsure of his honor and wishes to confirm it by forcing his opinion. It is an inferiority complex in man and is not found in God who is absolute perfection, who sees that He does not decrease when He reasons with man and when it appears to us that He changed His opinion.



The blessings of our Lord, through the prayers of Jonah, keep us all, Amen.

Witnesses on the Road

“ _____
_____ ” (2 Corinthians 2:15)

This verse tells us about the way of life taken by the witness we will be talking about. He was a witness for the people of his time and even to generations after. We learn about him in order to follow his example and be witnesses for our Lord Jesus Christ like him.

A LEADER AND PIONEER



Our church is a church of **tradition**, which means that we live the present based on the history of our fathers, and with our present we prepare the future.

Our hero was born in 1876 A.D. He was born in a simple and humble family. He was very attached to the church and loved her teachings. He dreamed of seeing her at her best image possible. Therefore, he set it a goal that the church will regain her glory and her leadership in education and enlightenment. He worked to establish a generation ready at all times to answer those who ask them about the reason for

the hope that is in them. He was a witness to the Lord Jesus Christ his whole life until he departed in 1951 at the age of 75, after he spent his life in spiritual struggle and strived in the service of the church. Indeed this saint lived his life according to the **gospel of Christ**.



In your opinion, what does living according to the gospel of Christ mean?

Have you guessed who this saint is? He is indeed the Archdeacon Habib Girgis. He was:

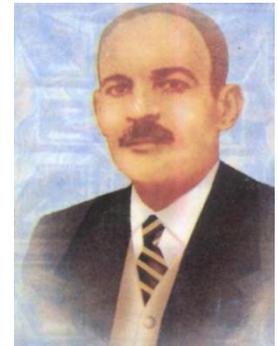
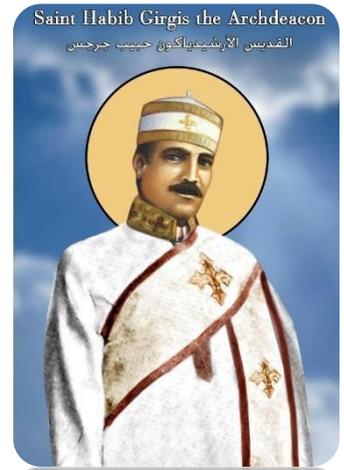
1. THE LEADER:

- He led the movement of enlightenment and education in the church during his time.
- He was amongst the most popular preachers of his time.
- He was influential to his hearers and very strong in the word of God.
- When you find yourself surrounded by defects, do you deal with them positively?

In other words, do you work on fixing them or do you stop at criticizing them and talking about them.

2. THE INNOVATOR:

- He came up with the idea of establishing the Sunday school system in all Egypt
- He Re-established the theological seminary.
- He created several charities
- He issued El Karma magazine, Sunday school magazine, and several books in various religious sciences, hymns and poetry.



What's new that you can add during YOUR life?

3. THE PATRIOT:

Habib Girgis was the patriot Archdeacon, lover of Egypt and its people. He has had strong connections with the people in the government. He used such connections to serve the church and testify the name of Christ through his moral works; his charitable deeds which did not differentiate between one human and another. His only concern was in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, which he found to be in every human in need.

What can you do to be a good citizen?

4. THE SAINT:

On June 20, 2013 A.D., the Holy Synod, headed by H.H. Pope Tawadros II, has admitted the holiness of Archdeacon Habib Girgis; and with that Habib Girgis has been added to the list of the confirmed saints in our church. He was granted this great honor due to spending his entire life witnessing to the Lord Jesus Christ.



Have you ever wondered what YOU might need to do to be a witness to the Lord on your own time?

List 4 things you might change about yourself in order to be a witness to our Lord...

1.
2.
3.
4.

**The blessings of our Lord, through the prayers of Archdeacon Habib Girgis and all the saints keep us all,
Amen.**

Memorization

1.



“For you will be His **witness** to all men of what you have seen and heard” Acts 22:15

FROM THE AGPEYA—PRAYER OF THE MIDNIGHT PRAYER- FIRST WATCH

2. Arise, you, O children of the light, to praise the Lord of Hosts, that He may grant us the salvation of our souls. When we stand in the flesh before You, take away from our minds the sleep of forgetfulness, and grant us alertness, in order that we understand how to stand up before You at the time of prayer, and send up to You the appropriate doxology, and win the forgiveness of our many sins.

Δοξα σι Φιλανθρωπε. Glory to You, the Lover of mankind.

3. GOSPEL of the Midnight Prayer-THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW (CH. 25:1-13)

Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins, who took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. Those who were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, “Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him.” Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, “Give us of your oil; for our lamps are going out.” But the wise answered, saying, “No; lest there should not be enough for us and you: but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.” And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, “Lord, Lord, open to us.” But he answered and said, “Verily I say unto you, I do not know you.” Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming. Glory to God forever. Amen.

*Τενορωτ ιμοκ ω Πιχριστος ηευ Πεκιωτ`νασταθος
ηευ Πιπνευμα εθογαβ γε ακι ακωτ ιμωη ηαι ηαν*

We worship You O Christ with Your Good Father and the Holy Spirit, for You have come and saved us.

4. Litanies of the Midnight Prayers

I. Behold, the Bridegroom is coming at midnight, blessed is the servant whom He finds watching. But he whom He finds sleeping is unworthy of going with Him. Therefore, take heed, O my soul, that you may not fall into deep sleep, and then be cast out of the Kingdom. But watch and cry out saying “Holy, Holy, Holy are You, O God; for the sake of the *Theotokos*, have mercy on us.”

Δοξα πατρι κεινω κε ασιω Πνευμα τι. Glory to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

II. O my soul, be mindful of that awesome day, and wake up and light your lamp with the oil of joy, for you do not know when the voice will call upon you saying: “Behold, the Bridegroom is coming.” So, take heed, my soul, not to fall asleep, lest you stand outside knocking like the five foolish virgins. But watch, entreating that you may meet Christ the Lord with rich oil, and He may grant you the wedding of His true and heavenly glory.

Κενην κε αι κειστορς εωνας των εωνων Αμην. Now and forever and unto the ages of all ages, Amen.

III. You are the rampart of our salvation, O *Theotokos* the Virgin, the mighty and impregnable fortress. Abolish the counsel of the adversaries, and transform the sorrow of your servants into joy. Fortify our city, defend our governors, and intercede for the peace of the world; for you are our hope, O *Theotokos*.

Κενην κε αι κειστορς εωνας των εωνων Αμην. Now and forever and unto the ages of all ages, Amen.

IV. O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, who is present in all places and fills all, the treasury of good things and the Life-Giver, graciously come, and dwell in us and purify us from all defilement, O Good One, and save our souls.

Δοξα πατρι κεινω κε ασιω Πνευμα τι. Glory to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

V. Just as You were with Your disciples, O Savior, and gave them peace, graciously come also and be with us, and grant us Your peace, and save us, and deliver our souls.

Κενην κε αι κειστορς εωνας των εωνων Αμην. Now and forever and unto the ages of all ages, Amen.

VI. Whenever we stand in Your holy sanctuary, we are considered standing in heaven. O *Theotokos*, you are the gate of heaven, open for us the gate of mercy.

Pronunciation

Pronunciation of the (**Ι**) next to another vowel

The (**Ι**) is pronounced “Y”
when it is either before or after
any other vowel

ΙΑ ya **ΑΙ** ay **ΙΕ** ye **ΕΙ** ey

ΙΟ yo **ΟΙ** oy **ΙΩ** yo- **ΩΙ** o-y

ΙΑΛ Mirror

ΑΙΑΙ Grow, Increase

ΙΕ Or

ΙΩΙ Wash

ΙΟΥ Sea

(**ΦΙΟΥ** The Sea)

ΙΩΤ Father

(**ΦΙΩΤ** The Father)

ΩΙΚ Bread

(**ΠΩΙΚ** The Bread)

Pronunciation when the (**ΟΥ**)
is followed by another vowel

ΟΥΙ (owwi) such as in **ΝΙΦΗΟΥΙ**

ΟΥΑ (owwa) such as in **ΕΘΟΥΑΒ**

ΟΥΗ (owwee) such as in **ΟΥΗΒ**

ночри

hi

ночри пенлиб

Hi Sayedna

ночри пеніот

Hi Abouna

оуџаи



Bye

оуџаи
џен п̄боис

Bye
(in the Lord)

The possessive Pronouns (1)

	For s.m. nouns e.g. Father (ԻՄԴ)	For s.f. nouns e.g. Mother (ԱՅԿ)	For plural nouns e.g. Books (ՃՕՁ)
	Ո	Դ	Ո
My	ՈԱԻՄԴ My father	ԴԱՅԿ My mother	ՈՃՕՁ My books
Our	ՈՒՆԻՄԴ Our father	ԴԵՆԱՅԿ Our mother	ՈՆԵՆՃՕՁ Our books

Practice with some words **MY OUR**

Masculine		Feminine		Plural	
ՈՐԴՅ	God	ԾՈՆԻ	Sister	ԱՅԿ	Mothers
ՈՒԿ	Bread	ՃՕՁ	Power	ԻՄԴ	Fathers
ՆՈՒՇ	Lord	ՊԵՐԻ	Daughter	ՇՆՈՐԿ	Brothers
ՃՕՁ	Book	ՅԱԿԻ	City	ԾՈՆԻ	Sisters
ԾՈՆ	Brother				

The possessive Pronouns (2)

	For s.m. nouns e.g. Father (ԻՄԴ)	For s.f. nouns e.g. Mother (ԱՅԿ)	For plural nouns e.g. Books (ՃՕՁ)
	Ո	Դ	Ո
Your (s.m.)	ՈԵԿԻՄԴ Your father	ԴԵԿԱՅԿ Your mother	ՈԵԿՃՕՁ Your books
Your (s.f.)	ՈԵԻՄԴ Your father	ԴԵԱՅԿ Your mother	ՈԵՃՕՁ Your books
Your (pl.)	ՈԵԴԵՆԻՄԴ Your father	ԴԵԴԵՆԱՅԿ Your mother	ՈԵԴԵՆՃՕՁ Your books

Practice with some words **Your (m) (f) (pl)**

Masculine		Feminine		Plural	
ՈՐԴՅ	God	ԾՈՆԻ	Sister	ԱՅԿ	Mothers
ՈՒԿ	Bread	ՃՕՁ	Power	ԻՄԴ	Fathers
ՆՈՒՇ	Lord	ՊԵՐԻ	Daughter	ՇՆՈՐԿ	Brothers
ՃՕՁ	Book	ՅԱԿԻ	City	ԾՈՆԻ	Sisters
ԾՈՆ	Brother				

The possessive Pronouns (3)

	For s.m. nouns e.g. Father (ԻՄԴ)	For s.f. nouns e.g. Mother (ԱՅԿ)	For plural nouns e.g. Books (ՃՕՁ)
	Ո	Դ	Ո
His	ՈԵՎԻՄԴ His father	ԴԵՎԱՅԿ His mother	ՈԵՎՃՕՁ His books
Her	ՈԵՇԻՄԴ Her father	ԴԵՇԱՅԿ Her mother	ՈԵՇՃՕՁ Her books
Their	ՈՐԿՄԴ Their father	ԴՐԿԱՅԿ Their mother	ՈՐԿՃՕՁ Their books

Practice with some words **His Her Their**

Masculine		Feminine		Plural	
ՈՐԴՅ	God	ԾՈՆԻ	Sister	ԱՅԿ	Mothers
ՈՒԿ	Bread	ՃՕՁ	Power	ԻՄԴ	Fathers
ՆՈՒՇ	Lord	ՊԵՐԻ	Daughter	ՇՆՈՐԿ	Brothers
ՃՕՁ	Book	ՅԱԿԻ	City	ԾՈՆԻ	Sisters
ԾՈՆ	Brother				

Present Tense

	1 st person	2 nd person	3 rd person
(s.m.)	†	κ̂(χ̂) you	ῥ̂ he
(s.f.)	ι	τε you	ς̂ she
(pl)	τεν we	τετεν you	ce they

Negative of Present Tense ἀν or ἢ...ἀν

The Verb **ψάλλω** (to pray) in the Present Tense

	1 st person	2 nd person	3 rd person
(s.m.)	†ψάλλω	κ̂ψάλλω You pray	ῥ̂ψάλλω He prays
(s.f.)	ι ψάλλω I pray	τεψάλλω You pray	ς̂ψάλλω She prays
(pl)	τενψάλλω We pray	τετενψάλλω You pray	ceψάλλω They pray

Present Tense	Negative of the present Tense
†ψάλλω I pray	†ψάλλω ἀν ἢ†ψάλλω ἀν I do not pray I do not pray
ceψάλλω They pray	ceψάλλω ἀν ἢceψάλλω ἀν They do not pray They do not pray

Practice the **present tense** and the **negative of the present tense** with these verbs

κωοῦν to know	θεῦσι to sit down
ωψ to read	θερθερ to snore
ς̂δαι to write	ορωψυτ to worship
†ωοῦ to glorify	ναῦ to look at

ἸΝ ΤΩ ΟΝΟΜΑΤΙ ΤΟΥ ΠΑΤΕΡΟΣ

In the Name of the Father

ΚΑΙ ΤΟΥ ΥΙΟΥ

and the Son

ΚΑΙ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΟΣ

and the Holy Spirit

ΕΝΘΕΟΤΗΤΙ ΑΜΗΝ

One God Amen



ΧΕ ΠΑΤΗΡ ΟΥΡΑΝΩΝ
Our Father who art in Heaven

ἄριστον ἡμῖν ποιησον ἵνα σοὺς εὐχαριστήσωμεν
Make us worthy to say thankfully

ΧΕ ΠΑΤΗΡ ΟΥΡΑΝΩΝ

Our father who art in heaven

μακαριζουται ἡ σὺ ἐκράν

Hallowed be Thy name

μαρσι ἡ σὺ τελευτησον

Thy kingdom come

πετελνακ μαρσιωπι

Thy will be done

ὡς ἐστὶν ἐν οὐρανόθεν

On earth as it is in heaven

δωσον ἡμῖν σήμερον τὸ ἄρτον ἡμῶν

Give us this day our daily bread

καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰ ἑσθρα

And forgive us our trespasses

ὡς ἡμεῖς ἀφαιμεν ἑσθρα τοῖς ἄλλοις

As we forgive

οἱ ἄλλοι ἡμῶν ὡς ἡμεῖς

those who trespass against us

καὶ μὴ ἑσθρα ἡμῶν ἐν τῇ πειρασμῶ

And lead us not into temptation

ἀλλὰ ἡμῶν ἀφαιμεν ἑσθρα τοῖς ἄλλοις

But deliver us from the evil one

ἐν Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν

In Christ Jesus our Lord

ΧΕ ΘΕΟΣ ΤΕ

For Thine is

τὸ κράτος καὶ ἡ δύναμις καὶ ἡ δόξα

the kingdom, the power and the glory,

εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα ἄμην

forever, Amen

Hymns & Rituals



1. Doxology for the Feast of the Epiphany

The word “Doxology” comes from the Greek word meaning “glorification”. There is a different doxology for every feast and for every saint. The doxologies are chanted during the raising of incense prayer. For the feast of the Epiphany, it focuses on the Lord Jesus Christ’s baptism in the Jordan River by St. John the Baptist.

Τότε ρων αψμοε ἡραψυ: οτοε πενλαε εεν
οτθεεληλ: κε Πενβοιε Ιησοτε Πιχριστοε:
αψβιωμυ ειτεν Ιωαηνηε.

Then our mouths were filled with joy, and our tongue with rejoicing, for our Lord Jesus Christ, was baptized by John.

Αληθεωε ἴφε νεμ ἡκαε: μεε εβολ εεν
πεκταιο: ωΠβοιε φα τχιε εταμαε: νεμ
πιωωβψ ἡρεψ τοτχο.

Truly heaven and earth are filled with Your honor, O Lord, with a mighty hand, and the arm of salvation.

Κε Πβοιε αψι οτοε αψβιωμυ: εεβε κεννοβι
ανον εων: αψτοτχοη αψωτ ἡμον: εεν
οτνιωτ ἡμετψενεητ.

For the Lord has come, and was baptized for our sins; He has also saved us, delivering us with great compassion.

Δαυιδ ἄμοττενητ ἡφοοτ: εερεκ
εω ἡπταιο ἡπαιψαι: κε ἡερωοτ ἡΠβοιε
ειχεη ηιωοτ: Ψνοττ ἡτεπωοτ αψερ
εαραβαι.

O David, come into our midst today, so you may speak of the honor of this feast, saying “The voice of the Lord, God of glory, thunders upon the waters.”

Ησαηαε αψμοοττ εροψ:
κε ἡερωοτ ἡπετωψ εβολ: εινιψαψερ εεν
οτοτνοψ: επιβιοε ετχηκ εβολ.

Isaiah has said, “The voice of one crying out with joy in the wilderness; make straight His paths.”

Ψιοηαψ ηατ οτοε αψφωτ: ἡΠιλορδαηηε
κοτψ εφαεοτ: οτπετψοη ψιοη κε ακφωτ:
ματαχροκ ειηα ἡτεκ βιςμοτ.

The sea beheld and fled, and the Jordan turned away. O sea, why you fled? Stand firm that you may be blessed.



<p>Ἦπε ἀτῆλατ ἴχε νιμωοτ: ἐπι δημιοτρ σοс ἱρεϋ σωντ: ἀτερβοτ οτοε αϋταεωοτ: ἴχε οτῶθοορερ νεμοττωμτ.</p>	<p>Behold, the waters have seen: the Maker and Creator: and they feared: Agitation and confusion overtook them.</p>
<p>Ραωι νιτωοτ νεμ νικλαμφοοτ: πιαεῶωηη νεμ νιϋενσιϋι: ἐβολα εα ἴτηη ἰπορο ἰποτρο: φηεταϋθαμιο ἱνιηιϋι.</p>	<p>Rejoice, O the mountains and the hills: the thickets and the cedars: before the face of the King: Who has created the souls.</p>
<p>Χοταε Πβοιс οτοε χοταε: χοταε Πβοιс Ἰησοϋс Πιχριстос: πωοτ ῥερ ψατῆαϋ νεμ Πεϋιωτ: νεμ Πιπνετμα ἰπαρκαλητον.</p>	<p>Holy is the Lord and Holy: Holy is the Lord Jesus Christ: the glory befits Him with His Father: and the Spirit, the Comforter.</p>
<p>Εθε φαι तेνοι ἱραμαδ: εен нιαεαθον ετχηκ ἐβολα: εенοτηαετ तेनेρψαλιν: ενεω ἰμοс εε Ἀλληλοτια.</p>	<p>Wherefore we are rich: in the perfect good things: and in faith, we sing: saying, "Alleluia."</p>
<p>Ἀλληλοτια Ἀλληλοτια Ἀλληλοτια Ἀλληλοτια: Ἰησοϋс Πιχριстос πωηρι ἰφνοοτ: αϋβιωμс εен Πιπορδαηηс.</p>	<p>Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Jesus Christ the Son of God was baptized in the Jordan.</p>
<p>Φαι ἐρε πῶοτ ерῖρεῖпинаϋ: νεμ Πεϋιωτ ἱαεαθοс: νεμ Πιπνετμα εθοταε: ιсεен τноτ νεμ ψα ἐνεε.</p>	<p>This is He to whom is due glory: with His Good Father: and the Holy Spirit: now and forever.</p>

2. Paralex Hymn for the Feast of the Epiphany

The Paralex hymn during the Feast of the Epiphany is chanted before the hymn of the Trisagion (Ασιοс). The first verse of the Paralex hymns of the feasts (including the Epiphany Feast) is generally taken from the Thursday Psali.

<p>Παβοιс Ἰησοϋс Πιχριстос: φηεταϋβιωμс εен πιπορδαηηс: εκετοοτβο ἱνενψτχη: ἐβολαεα ἰθωλεε ἴτε φνοβι.</p>	<p>O My Lord Jesus Christ: Who was baptized in Jordan: purify our souls: From the blemish of sin.</p>
<p>Μιχεροοτβιη νεμ νι Σεραφим: нιαεεελοс νεμ нιαρχηαεεελοс: нιстраτια νεμ ниезоуcia: нιθροнос нимετβοис нιχομ.</p>	<p>The Cherubim and the Seraphim, the angels and the archangels, the principalities and the authorities, the thrones, the dominions and the powers.</p>
<p>Ετωω ἐβολα ενεω ἰμοс: εε οτῶοτ ἰφноοτ εен нηετβοси: νεμ οτειρηηη εиεен пикаεи: νεμ οττματ εен нирωии.</p>	<p>Cry out saying, "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth and good will toward men."</p>

3. Sunday Psali for the Lord

“Psali” comes from the Greek word which means “hymn.” There is a different psali for every day of the week, for every feast, and for every saint. In the Sunday Psali, we repeat the words “My Lord Jesus, help me” as a prayer to the Lord Jesus Christ. The psali is chanted in the Vespers Praises and Midnight Praises before the Theotokia.

Δικωτ̄ ἡσωκ̄ δ̄εν ἡψωκ̄ ἡπαρ̄ητ̄: Παβοιc Ἰηcουc ἀριβοῆθ̄ιν ἔροι.	I sought after You from the depth of my heart; My Lord Jesus, help me.
Βωλ̄ ἔβολ̄ ε̄αρ̄οι: ἡνιc̄νατ̄ε ἡτεφ̄νοβ̄ι: Παβοιc Ἰηcουc Πιχ̄ριcτοc ἀριβοῆθ̄ιν ἔροι.	Loosen for me, all the bonds of sin; My Lord Jesus Christ, help me.
Ῡεντ̄η ἡβοῆθ̄οc: ε̄ορεκ̄ωτ̄ ἡμοι: Παβοιc Ἰηcουc ἀριβοῆθ̄ιν ἔροι.	Be a help to me, so that you may save me; My Lord Jesus, help me.
Δεκ̄ μετ̄ὰγαθ̄οc: μαρεcταροι ἡχωλεμ̄: Παβοιc Ἰηcουc Πιχ̄ριcτοc ἀριβοῆθ̄ιν ἔροι.	May Your goodness, come speedily to me; My Lord Jesus Christ, help me.
Ε̄κεερ̄ δ̄ηβ̄ι ἔχωι: δ̄α ἡδ̄ηβ̄ιἡτενεκ̄τεν̄ε: Παβοιc Ἰηcουc ἀριβοῆθ̄ιν ἔροι.	Overshadow me, with the shadow of Your wings; My Lord Jesus, help me.
Coοτ̄ ε̄αρ̄ ἡε̄οοτ̄: ακ̄θαμ̄ιὸ ἡτ̄κ̄τηcιc τηρ̄c: Παβοιc Ἰηcουc Πιχ̄ριcτοc ἀριβοῆθ̄ιν ε̄ροι.	In six days You have made, all the creation; My Lord Jesus Christ, help me.
Ψαψ̄ ἡcοπ̄ ἡμ̄ηηι: τ̄ηᾱcμοτ̄ ἔπεκ̄ραν: Παβοιc Ἰηcουc ἀριβοῆθ̄ιν ἔροι.	Seven times every day, I will praise Your Name; My Lord Jesus, help me.
Ηc̄ τ̄κ̄τηcιc τηρ̄c: ceτ̄ωοτ̄ ἡπεκ̄ραν: Παβοιc Ἰηcουc Πιχ̄ριcτοc ἀριβοῆθ̄ιν ἔροι.	All the creation, glorifies Your Name; My Lord Jesus Christ, help me.
Θωκ̄ τε τ̄μετοc: η̄εμ̄ τ̄εζοτ̄cῑα: Παβοιc Ἰηcουc ἀριβοῆθ̄ιν ἔροι.	Yours is the Lordship, and the Authority; My Lord Jesus, help me.
Ιωc ἡμοκ̄ Παηοτ̄τ̄: ε̄ορεκ̄ωτ̄ ἡμοι: Παβοιc Ἰηcουc Πιχ̄ριcτοc ἀριβοῆθ̄ιν ἔροι.	Make haste, O God, so that You may save me; My Lord Jesus Christ, help me.
Κε̄λι η̄ιβ̄εν ceκωλ̄α: ἡπεκ̄μ̄θο ἔβολ̄: Παβοιc Ἰηcουc ἀριβοῆθ̄ιν ἔροι.	Every knee, bows down before You; My Lord Jesus, help me.
Λαc η̄ιβ̄εν ε̄τ̄cοπ̄: cēc̄μοτ̄ ἔπεκ̄ραν: Παβοιc Ἰηcουc Πιχ̄ριcτοc ἀριβοῆθ̄ιν ἔροι.	All the diverse tongues, together bless Your Name; My Lord Jesus Christ, help me.

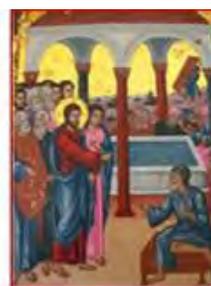
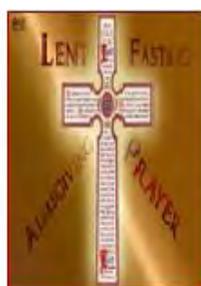
<p>Ὡς ἀποστρέψω τὸ πρόσωπόν μου ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν μου· Παβοῖς Ἰησοῦς ἀριβοῦθῆν ἔροι.</p>	<p>Turn away Your face, from all of my sins; My Lord Jesus, help me.</p>
<p>Ἐκλεῖψον τὰς ἁμαρτίας μου, ὁ Θεέ μου· Παβοῖς Ἰησοῦς Χριστός ἀριβοῦθῆν ἔροι.</p>	<p>Blot out, O God, all my iniquities; My Lord Jesus Christ, help me.</p>
<p>Ὁ Θεός μου, ἔγνωσται τὰς ἐπινοήσας μου, καὶ ἔψαυται τὰς ἐπινοήσας μου· Παβοῖς Ἰησοῦς ἀριβοῦθῆν ἔροι.</p>	<p>You know my thoughts, and You search my depths; My Lord Jesus, help me.</p>
<p>Ὁ Θεός μου, ἕστηθι ἐν ἐμοί, ἵνα καθαρίσῃς τὴν καρδίαν μου· Παβοῖς Ἰησοῦς Χριστός ἀριβοῦθῆν ἔροι.</p>	<p>Create in me, a clean heart; My Lord Jesus Christ, help me.</p>
<p>Ὁ Ἅγιος Πνεῦμά μου, μὴ ἀφαιρήσῃς ἀπὸ ἐμοῦ· Παβοῖς Ἰησοῦς ἀριβοῦθῆν ἔροι.</p>	<p>Your Holy Spirit, do not take away from me; My Lord Jesus, help me.</p>
<p>Κλίνας τὰ ὦτά σου, ἕστηθι καὶ ἀκούε μου· Παβοῖς Ἰησοῦς Χριστός ἀριβοῦθῆν ἔροι.</p>	<p>Incline Your ears, make haste and hear me; My Lord Jesus Christ, help me.</p>
<p>Ἐμπροσθέν μου, ὁ Θεός μου, ἕστηθι τὴν ἰσχύ σου· Παβοῖς Ἰησοῦς ἀριβοῦθῆν ἔροι.</p>	<p>Set before me a law, in the way of Your justice; My Lord Jesus, help me.</p>
<p>Ὁ Βασιλεὺς σου, ὁ Θεός μου, ἕστηθι τὸ βασίλειόν σου, ὁ Θεός μου· Παβοῖς Ἰησοῦς Χριστός ἀριβοῦθῆν ἔροι.</p>	<p>Your Kingdom O my God, is an eternal kingdom; My Lord Jesus Christ, help me.</p>
<p>Ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἵνα πιστεύω ἐν σοί· Παβοῖς Ἰησοῦς ἀριβοῦθῆν ἔροι.</p>	<p>You are the Son of God, I believe in You; My Lord Jesus, help me.</p>
<p>Ὁ Θεός μου, ὁ ἄνεμος τῆς καρδίας μου, ἕστηθι ἐν ἐμοί· Παβοῖς Ἰησοῦς Χριστός ἀριβοῦθῆν ἔροι.</p>	<p>You Who carries the sins of the world, have mercy upon me; My Lord Jesus Christ, help me.</p>
<p>Ἄφεσον μοι τὴν πληθειάν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν μου· Παβοῖς Ἰησοῦς ἀριβοῦθῆν ἔροι.</p>	<p>Forgive me the multitude, of my iniquities; My Lord Jesus, help me.</p>
<p>Ὁ Θεός μου, ἕστηθι ἐν ἐμοί, ἵνα ἁγιασθῶ τὸ ὄνομα σου· Παβοῖς Ἰησοῦς Χριστός ἀριβοῦθῆν ἔροι.</p>	<p>All of the souls, together bless Your name; My Lord Jesus Christ, help me.</p>
<p>Ὁ Θεός μου, ἕστηθι ἐν ἐμοί, μὴ ἵνα ἠρῶς καταστρέψῃς ἐμένα· Παβοῖς Ἰησοῦς ἀριβοῦθῆν ἔροι.</p>	<p>Have patience with me, do not hasten to destroy me; My Lord Jesus, help me.</p>
<p>Ἐν ἄρχῃ τῆς ἡμέρας, ἕστηθι καὶ ἁγιασθῶ τὸ ὄνομα σου· Παβοῖς Ἰησοῦς Χριστός ἀριβοῦθῆν ἔροι.</p>	<p>Early in the morning, I will rise and bless Your Name; My Lord Jesus Christ, help me.</p>

<p>Ψωλαχ ἠχε πεκναδ βεϋ: τεκετφω ἁσίωοτ: Παβοις Ἰησοϋς ἄριβοῆθιν ἔροι.</p>	<p>Your yoke is sweet, and Your burden is light; My Lord Jesus, help me.</p>
<p>Ἦεν οὔσνοτ εϋωηπ: εκέσωτεμ ἔροι: Παβοις Ἰησοϋς Πιχριστος ἄριβοῆθιν ἔροι.</p>	<p>In the accepted time, hear me; My Lord Jesus Christ, help me.</p>
<p>Ἔωσ οὔωοτ μενριτϋ: πεπεκραμ εσοταβ: Παβοις Ἰησοϋς ἄριβοῆθιν ἔροι.</p>	<p>Oh, how beloved, is Your Holy Name; My Lord Jesus, help me.</p>
<p>Χωρ ἔβολα θαροι: ἠδιὰβολη νιβεν: Παβοις Ἰησοϋς Πιχριστος ἄριβοῆθιν ἔροι.</p>	<p>Disperse away from me, all of the devils; My Lord Jesus Christ, help me.</p>
<p>Ἢο ἠῆρηι ἠῆητ: ἠποϋταδ ἠτε τεκμεεμηι: Παβοις Ἰησοϋς ἄριβοῆθιν ἔροι.</p>	<p>Sow within me, the seed of Your righteousness; My Lord Jesus, help me.</p>
<p>Ἰἤναι ἠτεκ θιρηνη ἠμηι: χα νεννοβι ναι ἔβολα: Παβοις Ἰησοϋς Πιχριστος ἄριβοῆθιν ἔροι.</p>	<p>Grant us Your true peace, and forgive us our sins; My Lord Jesus Christ, help me.</p>

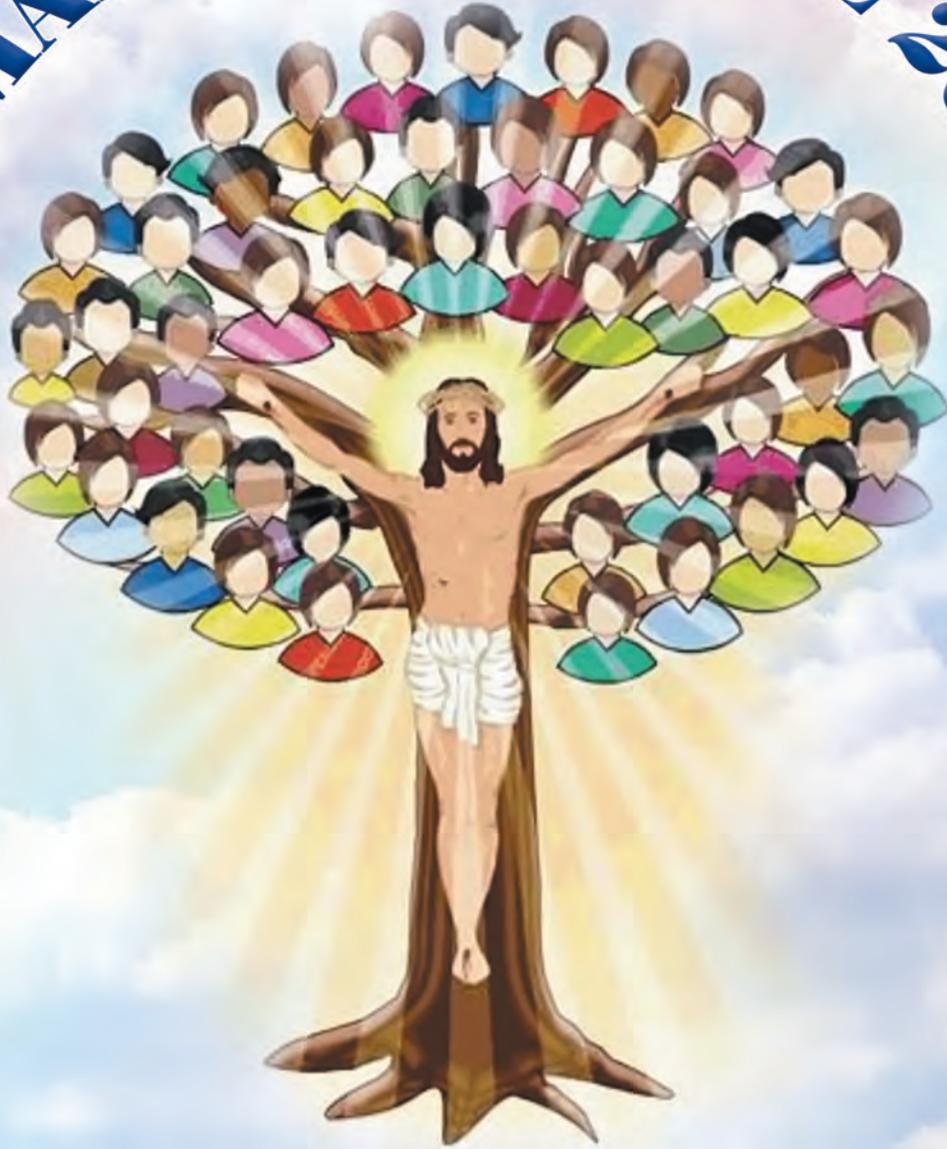
4. Praxis Response for Lent Weekdays **Ἐαρὲ Φνοϋτ** (Talented)

The response to the Praxis is a hymn chanted in every liturgy **before** the reading of the Praxis (from the book of Acts). During the Great Lent on **weekdays** only, the hymn **Ἐαρὲ Φνοϋτ** is chanted. This **excludes** the first Monday and the last Friday of Great Lent. **Ἐαρὲ Φνοϋτ** is also the Praxis response during Jonah's fast.

<p>Ἐαρὲ Φνοϋτ ὠδι: ἠμαϋ ἠνινοβι ἠτε πιλαο: ἔβολα θιτεν πιβλια: νειμ πιῆθοι ἠτε πιῆθοινοϋϋι.</p>	<p>God lifts away the sins of the people, through the burnt offering and the aroma of incense.</p>
<p>Κῆμαρωοτ ἄληθωσ: νειμ Πεκιωτ ἠἄγαθοσ: νειμ Πιῆνετμα εσοταβ: χεακι ακωϋ ἠμωη ναι ναι.</p>	<p>Blessed are You indeed, with Your Good Father and the Holy Spirit, for You have come and saved us. Have mercy on us.</p>



ST. MARK'S FESTIVAL 2014



*You shall be
witnesses To Me*