



THE STRUGGLES **OF THE PROPHET JONAH**

The cover of this morning's Church Bulletin depicts a prophet who lived some 800 years before Christ was born. The PROPHET JONAH is best remembered for his three-day "nightmare" at sea!

Saint Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

24 BURKE ROAD

FREEHOLD, NJ 07728

Fourth Sunday After Pentecost

July 2, 2017

**Father Robert E Lucas, Pastor;
Subdeacon Daniel J. Korba and Nikitas Tsokris,
Cantors**

Rectory 215-862-9227; Parish Center 732-780-3158

We Are A Stewardship Parish Of Time, Talent and Treasure

The mission of our parish faith community is to teach the Gospel message in the rich tradition of the Orthodox Church; to enable people to reflect the image of Jesus Christ in every day activities of life; to offer spiritual formation through changing times; and to celebrate community among Orthodox believers in our Freehold area.

We of St. Paul the Apostle Parish dedicate ourselves to maintaining the sanctity of worship and spiritual enlightenment in a family environment that reaches and involves all ages and unifies all people.

We believe in the spirit of ecumenism in which we share our faith by word and example and extend our spiritual insightful riches to all people.

We accept the responsibility of Christian Stewardship that through generous giving we may all experience a faith communion with Christ as the Center of our lives.

We dedicate ourselves to insuring the well-being of all people so that we may truly experience the message of Christ's salutary gospel.

We are a beacon on a hill with the eyes of many upon us; that beacon is the inspired Light of Christ which must shine brightly in our lives.

It is not ourselves we preach but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' has shone in our hearts, that we in turn might make known the glory of God shining on the face of Christ. This treasure we possess in earthen vessels to make it clear that its surpassing power comes from God and not from us. We are afflicted in every way possible, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in us 2 Corinthians 4: 5 - 8.

GLAD TIDINGS

+++ His Grace, Bishop Gregory will be visiting our parish the week - end of November 4, 5, to bless the icons on the icon screen and to impart his episcopal blessing to our faithful. We will have a service Saturday afternoon honoring our tear - shedding icon and the Sunday morning Divine Liturgy followed by

a dinner in honor of the Most Blessed Bishop. Please set aside these dates to assure your presence with the parish family for this auspicious event.

+++ Today we celebrate liturgically the feast of the prime Apostles, Peter & Paul.

+++ With regret we note many of our faithful are not offering their Diocesan Dues. Please bring them in because the parish is responsible for remitting \$65.00 per adult for support of the diocese.

+++ Please keep the intentions of these members of our parish intercession community in your daily prayers: Betty, James, Yevlogia, Nicholas, Maria, William, Cynthia, Patricia, Pani Anna Marie and Andrea.

+++ The sign-up sheet for both the Web Site and Bulletin sponsors is on the bulletin board in the kitchen. Please sign up as soon as possible. Do NOT make payment until your sign-up month has arrived. This will make it easier for Father to keep track of payments. Thanks in advance to all who support the parish in this way.

+++ We offer thanks to the Blessed Trinity for inspiring generosity in the souls of our faithful and the blessing of abundant grace in our midst with the offering received last Sunday: Tithe Offering, \$249.00; Candles, \$9.00; Holyday, \$40.00; Kitchen, \$246.00; Diocesan Dues, \$65.00, for a total of \$614.00. We express our profound gratitude to the parishioner communicants who offer one tenth of their God-given treasure and labor for the sake of the Lord and the good of our parish. God bless and reward you good and faithful souls!

+++ As faithful believers, we intercede and associate ourselves in prayer with the following who have prayed and offered seven day lights for their intentions: Father Lucas, Pani Lucas, Maria Idromenos, Anna Zacharyczuk, Marilyn Korba and Pani Buletza.

+++ We make a **PENNIES FROM HEAVEN** Canister available for our faithful to bring in pennies for our altar and its appointments. We are already in receipt of **\$1860.00** from this apostolate. Even your pennies can help and are a blessing to our parish.

+++ The Clothing Drive is a permanent on-going project in our parish. Please bring any type of clothing and fabrics along with stuffed animals and shoes for the benefit of our parish. The bags can be left in the vestibule or on the front porch of the rectory. Please invite your friends and neighbors to assist us in disposing of unwanted clothing, shoes, blankets and fabrics.

+++ We invite all pray the Lord our God grants us the grace of enrichment of our spiritual lives for his glory.

ALLELUIA

Which Crew Is Yours?

Henceforth, let no man trouble me Galatians 6: 17.

St. Paul had his many troubles, most of which were caused by a class of people who were professional trouble - makers. Some have chosen to call them the wrecker's crew or more realistically, allies of the devil. Formerly just a few years ago, just about every parish could boast a group of misguided souls who refused to submit to priestly authority and waged war on the pastor for whatever reason, and actually, for no reason at all. It was who they were. One parish is still atrociously reputed to be anti - clerical and at the time of their pastor's death, after he had been retired for some time, they even refused to provide a pair of vestments in which he might be interred. Talk about overbounding charity which must be our primary characteristic! That priest served that parish some forty years. The only loyalty he was able to arouse in some souls was an urgency and greater devotion to the devil, whose loyalty their evil souls did not want to compromise. Currently, there are still some parishes with the same glaring absence of Christian conscience. Thanks be to God, such anti - Christ behavior has in most cases left us. But we must still ask, what is it about Orthodox souls which brings about an obstinate belligerency when they should gladly and devotedly accept their priest not only as spiritual father, but as director of their souls and leader and example of their spiritual life? Why is it that some parishes do not want salvation and prefer a club - like - atmosphere?

Wherever St. Paul went to preach the truth of grace, there legalistic disturbers of the peace and contentment of soul followed him, trying to proselytize Paul's converts to their religion of devil's bondage. "There are some that trouble you" Galatians 1: 7, St. Paul asserts in his charity in describing overt acts of Satan. All people are either builders or wreckers. Are there people, who claim the title and accord to themselves that of *officer* in your parish the kind of souls who have no character and conscience? Why do our bishops allow spiritual thugs and criminals to function among us? How can someone in the Church of Jesus Christ be an *officer* without anointing or ordination? Who commissions outright criminals to perform their evil fantasy for us? No one can claim innocence if some in a parish arouse the ire of the devil in their fight against goodness and morality! Ask yourself "Am I helping or hindering in the building of the Church of Jesus Christ?" The following verses should assist you in deciding where you belong.

I stood on the streets of a busy town,
watching men tearing a building down;
With a "ho heave ho." and a lusty yell,
they swung a beam and a sidewall fell.

I asked the foreman of the crew,
"Are these men as skilled
as those you'd hire if you wanted to build?"

"Ah, no," he said, "no, indeed,
just common labor is all I need.

I can tear down as much in a day or two,
as would take skilled men a year to do."

And then, I thought as I went on my way,
Just which of these two roles am I trying to play?

Have I walked life's road with care,
measuring each deed with rule and square?

Or am I one of those who roam the town,
content with the labor of tearing down?

CLASSIFY YOURSELF!

"I fear that when I come, I may not find you to my liking nor may you find me to yours. I fear I may find discord, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambitions, slander and gossip, self-importance, disorder. I fear that when I come again my God may humiliate me before you and I may have to mourn over the many who sinned earlier and have not repented of the uncleanness, fornication and sensuality they practiced" 2 Corinthians 12: 20, 21.

Joyfully, joyfully, laying aside all that may hinder to follow our guide; faithfully, serving, glad workers are we, now in life's morning his own we should be.

Are You A Waster?

...gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.

John 6: 12.

Have you ever wondered what was done with the twelve huge basket of fragments that were left after feeding the 5000 with five barley loaves and two small fishes? God's Revelation to us does not consider it important to relate for us in detail, but the believer can suspect they were probably distributed to the poor in a near by town. We do not know, but the lesson Jesus Christ would teach us is not to waste God's good gifts. He says, "Gather the fragments, that nothing be lost." What He means is that nothing be disrespected or abused which is still good and beneficial. After you are all filled up, don't forget about others around you. Many are the lessons we may learn from our loving and inclusive Creator God.

After we are satiated with the bread of life, we should then gather some to give and share with others. It is not enough to read the Word of God and to use the Word of God in prayer and praise for our personal spiritual profit, but we should also be able to give some of it to others.

We are responsible for little things as well as bigger ones. No one would think of throwing a whole loaf of bread away, but how many crumbs do we actually waste?

We must realize that we are responsible for all that the Lord gives and provides for us. The Lord enriches us with freely proffered gifts. The Lord is the Bread of Life prepared at astounding cost. If we realized how much it cost to provide the Bread of Life we would be careful to prize it more highly. Think about the Communion of Christ's Body and Blood which is always prepared by the priestly celebrant for every communicant in the parish each Sunday and Holy Day. Are you there to piously and gratefully receive your portion? Or do you simply disregard its importance?

The cheaper a thing is, the less we prize it. The more a thing costs, seemingly we value it more and are careful to preserve it. A man who stuttered badly and had great difficulty talking, carried on a conversation on a telephone for about six minutes without ever hesitating or stuttering. When his friend expressed surprise at his absence of stuttering, he replied, "I can't afford to stutter because the telephone costs me money each minute. If we appreciated the value of our redemption, we would waste no time in laboring for it."

A Challenge

The primary privilege of the Body of Christ is to proclaim the gospel of the Son of God, a message of deep faith in the true God of creation and unconditional love of our neighbor. One of the finest means and most effective as well, for this proclamation of thoughts and penetrating feelings is the means of the written word in varied forms. There is no religious group in America without utilizing effectively and purposefully the written word for sharing Christ and his salvation.

It is an imperative challenge for every communicant of the Church of Jesus Christ, a challenge of self satisfaction, a challenge of spiritual nourishment of its believers to see an establishment of an evangelical institution for publishing educational plainly simple and inviting material about Orthodoxy. The Church must convey to its people and outsiders as well, the Gospel message which is the actual treasure of the civilized world. Orthodoxy in its past elaborated in detail and protected undefiled the salutary word of Christ by preaching among the pagans and preserving it for us today.

In the history of the Church, from century to succeeding century and through all its personalities, the Gospel was heard throughout the then known world by word of mouth, by the skilled pen of its laborers in the field as well as by the exemplary lifestyle inspired by the faithful to provide encouragement to all in whom they came in contact. The Church's golden pages of history, Christian society today, derives its inspiration to a deeper understanding of the gospel in establishing true and enduring morality in life.

The Church can improve its capability in using systematically and more effectively this instrument as an extension for the gospel message. We should be willing to explore the truths of the Gospel as the Church most seriously received it from its Founder and is impelled by the grace of the Holy Spirit to endure in sharing it with mankind in every generation. If we wish to provide a substantial alternative to mankind today, we should offer the living voice of the Saviour as its unshakable foundation. We assume responsibility to share this earth – shattering message in our own humble way. We need devoted, serious and sincere readers to accompany our encouragement in promoting and enlarging its scope. Circulate and pass on good Orthodox Christian literature to others.

He Died For Me!

*God has not destined us for wrath but for acquiring salvation through our Lord Jesus
Christ, who died for us*
I Thessalonians 5: 9.

Oliver Cromwell once ordered a soldier be shot for his crimes at the ringing of the evening curfew bell. For some reason that night the bell did not toll. The incident has been immortalized in poetry and song. It seems that the young woman whom the condemned soldier was to marry, had climbed up into the belfry and hung onto the great clapper of the bell to prevent it from striking and sounding. When she was called by Cromwell to give an account of herself, she only wept woefully and showed him her bruised and bleeding hands. Cromwell's heart was touched and he said, "Your lover shall live because of your sacrifice. Curfew shall not ring tonight."

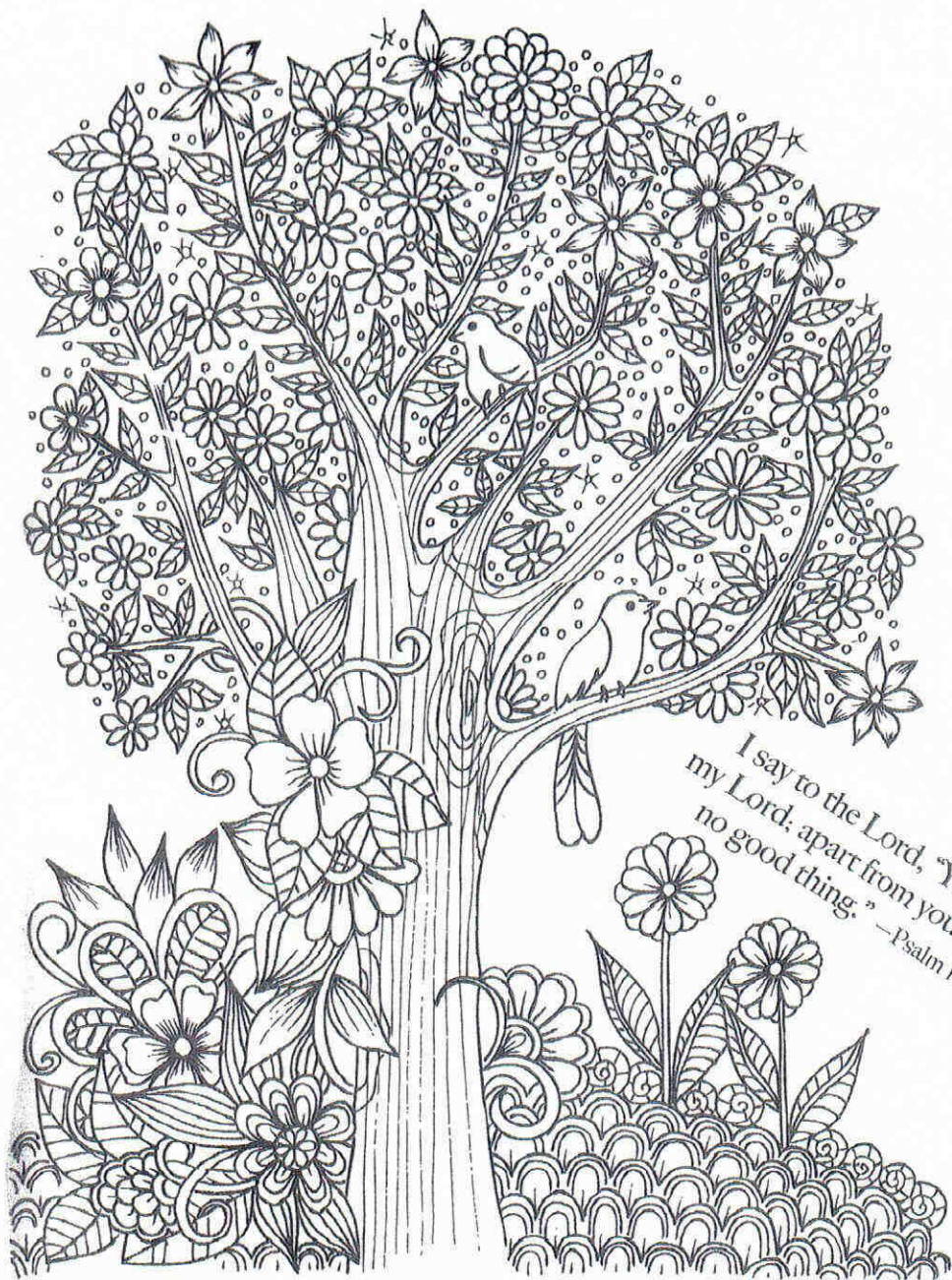
So, too, all of us are rebels against our heavenly Father and under a sentence of death. Another, Christ, has intervened in our behalf. We, too, are saved but only at the expense of the person of Jesus Christ. When skeptics questioned the truth of Christ's death after his Resurrection from the dead, Christ showed them his hands, his bruised and pierced hands! If you claim him as your Saviour, as the Lover of mankind, as the Lover of your soul, the curfew of eternal death will never toll for you!

Can you say with absolute confidence, born of faith in Christ and the witness of his Church: "He died for me"?

It was for crimes that I had done
He groaned upon the tree!
Amazing Pity! Grace Unknown!
And love beyond degree!

Christ died among sinners that we might live among saints.

LORD, KEEP YOUR
ARM AROUND
MY SHOULDER
AND YOUR HAND
OVER MY MOUTH



I say to the Lord, "You are
my Lord; apart from you I have
no good thing." —Psalm 16:2

Hearing and Understanding: The language of the soul

"This is why I speak to them in parables.

'Though seeing, they do not see, and hearing, they do not hear or understand.' In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, 'You will be ever hearing but never understanding, seeing but never perceiving.' " Matthew 13: 13.

There are many in the Church of Christ who are still between two languages. We recall the worship of our childhood, where every word was uttered in a foreign tongue. No doubt at an early age, many could read the Hours or even the epistle lesson, but could hardly comprehend what was chanted. Yes, with unending repetition we caught on to the sense of the proclamation, but we wished for worship in an understandable language. That we felt sure would be the solution and way to salvation of us American born. And moreover, of the uncounted multitudes who would be brought to the True Faith when they could understand and thus relate to our impelling worship.

Now it has been fulfilled. Today our language "problems" have been considerably reduced to endless discussions and debate over the use of *Thee* and *You*, *trespasses* and *debts*, or versions of the Holy Bible; however, another language problem, one much greater than any other, has appeared to frustrate our missionary and evangelical efforts. This generation has lost the language of the *soul*. And it faces a conflict of desire. How can we offer what is not wanted? What good is salvation to those who seek material prosperity? Who cares about a Kingdom of God in a society which insists on focusing its full attention on limited humanity and nothing more? Where is there any interest in the soul in a culture to elucidate the complexities of doctrinal statements to a people whose train of thought is limited to sound bites and bumper sticker slogans? How do we appeal to the value of the soul when all we feel we need is satisfaction of the flesh, here and now?

Some religious communities reach out with a message of relevancy: social action, mental relaxation, family values. All of them worthwhile in themselves, yet missing the thrust of Jesus Christ's plain, main message: "The Kingdom of God is at hand!"

Somehow in those old days, when the bishops required interpreters and the faithful required bi-lingual service books for comprehension, the language might have been foreign, but the meaning was native to the heart attuned to God's Holy Spirit. People were gifted with faith and could easily respond to whatever means was offered to augment their giftedness with additional strengthening affirmative grace.

The task ahead is formidable, but not impossible. Just as our Lord used the vehicle of parables to reach his listeners, so too, we must struggle to find ways to touch the hearts of those who may feel that the way of the world is in fact very limited.

Some element within them is thirsting for a refreshment that no beverage can quench. Their souls cry out with a hunger that no earthly food can satisfy. So many of these searchers live with us. They themselves many not be aware of the requirements of their souls, since our society denies or ignores this elementary and basic aspect of our human makeup. And also because the Church has not made a genuine effort to evangelize each generation and bring it up to the standard of salvation in Christ. We have failed in our spiritual duties on every level and permitted the flock to waste away and drift off into other religious bodies where they mistakenly thought abundant food for soul would be available. We have not done our work of appropriately evangelizing the valued souls of our faithful. They have come to us, but we literally deprive them of nurture and spiritual sustenance because of our system..

Ultimately they will arrive, as some of them already have, at the state of the Teacher in Ecclesiastes: "Meaningless! Meaningless! Vanity of Vanities! Everything is meaningless!" Ecclesiastes 1: 2.

Hopefully, then they may be ready to hear the meaning behind the message of the Lord hidden within good English.

Hopefully, too, the Church in the persons of bishops, priests and deacons, will be equipped and ready to meet hungry souls and nourish them with salutary lessons of mercy and peace.

Hopefully, above all else the language spoken and communicated will be found to express divine and unsatiated love for souls in those commissioned to lead, to enrich and to triumph in victory for the sake and cause of the Lord.

Hopefully, leaders will lead us to heaven; souls will absorb the mercy lessons offered and God's kingdom will once again be restored in our midst. We will then be able to save souls.

True Charity

Charity is at the heart of the Church's approach to all matters, particularly social doctrine. Our charity must be true charity established in the heart of the Saviour.. Without truth, charity degenerates into mere sentimentality. On the other hand, practicing charity in truth, helps people to understand that adhering to the values of Christianity is not merely useful but absolutely essential for true integral development.

We might look at this in light of the Lord's Prayer. The very first two words of that prayer, "Our Father," taken seriously make us realize the truth that all of us are members of one family with a common origin.

From this perspective, it is easier for us to see how the law and the prophets are summarized in Christ's two great commandments – that we love God totally and love our neighbors as ourselves. Thus we are able to speak of charity in truth.

When we understand that we are all members of the same human family and accept the impelling and compelling value they embrace, we can no longer ask Cain's question, "Am I my brother's keeper" Genesis 4: 9? Instead, we must realize that our freedom cannot take the form of simply amassing as much wealth as we can. Instead, the actions we take should reflect the reality of our familial connection to our neighbor, and we should take stock of how every thing we do affects others. In fact, to be a Christian is to be a man or woman for others.

Sadly, not everyone will focus on this message of the Lord. Some will try to view its understanding as political, as support for their policy preferences or political philosophy. But to do that would miss the very obvious point. The Church does not have technical solutions to interfere in any way in the politics of states. She does however, have a preeminent mission of truth to achieve.

The truth of Jesus Christ is how it can help us grow in our faith as pious children of God and members of the human family as eagerly as we desire to be avid communicants of the Body of Christ. All human beings, including the unborn, are part of the one family of God. Openness to life is at the very center of true development. When a society moves towards the denial or suppression of life, it embraces not; the cause of the Creator, but that of his worst

enemies. It then ends no longer finding the necessary motivation and energy to strive for man's true objective good. If personal and social sensitivity towards the acceptance of a new life is lost, the other forms of acceptance that are valuable for society also wither away.

Religious liberty is a key component to development. Christianity can offer its singular and unique contribution to development only if God has a place in the public realm, specifically in regard to its cultural, social, economic and particularly its political dimensions.

We must explore what contributions we are making to the advancement of public health care, social services, education and religious freedom so that every facet of Christian teaching are given appropriate expression in our midst and that God be always glorified by our genuine heart – felt efforts. The success of each of these pursuits must be the result of commitment by individual believers in our parishes so that charity in truth is understood and lived.

With the obedience of faith, Christian believers are to accept and fulfill as best they can, with the aid of God's strengthening and affirming grace, all that is incumbent upon them as a result of their baptismal richness, enabled by anointing with Christ and a regular and treasured Eucharistic life.

Being an integral part of the People of God, a descriptive phrase that has its root in the Old Testament notion of the chosen people, the individual believer desires to be a participant and contributor to the values and worth of the Church. In fulfillment of God's promises, we do not want to be absent from the effort of advancing the cause of the Cross in our present day world.

Together with our bishops, priests and deacons, we must nurture the people of God in truth and love and inspire the kind of example that is contagious to men of the world, that they be drawn in reality to the heart of our Saviour. Our common vocation as believers is in exercising our baptismal ministry to nourish Christ's people with divine life so that our faith communities are local manifestations of the universal Church to manifest interconnected parts of a single living salutary organism.

Let us honor the legacy of the Body and Bride of Christ by renewing our commitment to true charity in our lives and in the daily functioning of our parish faith communities.

My "Yes" to God!

When other kids are being bad,
When ugly words are being said,
When things are done that make God sad,
I'll say no to that!

When temptation starts to get too strong,
When things look right but are really wrong,
When someone says, "Just go along!"
I'll say no to that!

I believe in God the Father, Creator of our world so wide.
I believe in Jesus Christ, who for me was crucified.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, sent by God to be my guide.
I say yes to that!

I believe in the Orthodox Church
and all the saints in heaven too.
I know that God forgives my sins
and helps me to begin anew.
I say yes to that!

Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
help me keep each promise true.
Make me strong and wise and good
so I can always follow You.
Amen.

VESPER VERSES ACCORDING TO THE EIGHT TONES

TONE 3

1. O Christ our Savior,
By your cross the might of death has vanished;
The deceit of the devil has been broken;
The human race saved by faith.
Therefore we offer You unceasing praise.
2. O Lord our God,
By your glorious resurrection creation has
been enlightened,
Paradise has been opened.
The universe extols You and offers You
unceasing praise.
3. I glorify the power of the Father;
I extol the power of the Son;
I sing a hymn to the power of the Holy Spirit,
One Divinity, indivisible, uncreated,
Equal in essence and reigning forever.
4. We bow in worship to your cross, O Christ;
We praise and glorify your resurrection.
Through your wounds we were all made well.
5. We sing a hymn to the Savior :
He was crucified for us, He rose on the third
day,
He bestowed great mercy upon us.
6. Christ descended to the Abyss.
In these words he announced the good tidings :
“ Have confidence now, for I have conquered.
I am the resurrection :

I will set you free by breaking the gates of
Death. ”

7. Although unworthy, we stand in your temple,
O Christ our God.

We offer our evening hymns of praise;

We proclaim loudly :

“ O Christ our God, lover of mankind,

You have enlightened mankind by your
resurrection :

Deliver your people,

Save them from the hands of your enemies. ”

8. Glory be to the Father ✙, and to the Son, and
to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever.
Amen.

O Lady most honorable,

How can we not stand in wonder :

You gave birth to the Incarnate God;

He was born of the Father before all ages.

You gave him birth and remained a virgin.

He is perfect God and man,

The two natures are joined intact,

Neither losing any of its properties.

Therefore, O Virgin Mother,

intercede with him to save us.

We believe and confess you are the Mother of
God.

At the Apostichon

1. The sun was darkened at your passion,
O Christ;

The light of your resurrection enlightened
creation;

It overwhelmed it with joy

Receive an evening hymn of praise from us :

You alone love mankind.

2. Your life-giving resurrection, O Lord,
Has given light to the universe.
It has renewed our corrupt nature.
You delivered us from Adam's curse.
We cry out : " O Lord Almighty, glory be
to You! "
3. As God, You are without change,
Yet You suffered in the changing flesh.
The earth could not bear to see You on the
Cross;
It trembled in fear and sighed in praise of
your long-suffering.
You descended to the Abyss; you rose on the
third day.
You granted life and great mercy to the world.
4. You accepted death to save our race from
death, O Christ our God!
On the third day You rose from the dead.
You raised with You those who recognized
You as the true God.
You enlightened the world.
O Lord, glory be to You!
5. Glory be to the Father ✝, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and
forever. Amen.

By the good pleasure of the Father,
By the work of the Holy Spirit,
As a Virgin you conceived the Son of God.
He was born of the Father before all ages.
In you, He became man for us.
You gave Him birth without a father;
You nourished Him as a child.
Never cease to intercede with Him
That He save our souls from affliction.

“Who Do People Say I Am?”

Matthew 16:13-23

At Caesarea Philippi, Jesus asked his disciples, “Who do people say I am?”
“Some say you’re John the Baptist. Others say Elijah. Still others think you’re Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

He said to them, “Who do you say that I am?”

Peter spoke up. “You’re the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

“You’re blessed, Peter,” said Jesus. “No man told you this. My Father in heaven has shown it to you. This is the rock on which I’ll build my church. You, Peter, are a stone in that building. And the church I’ll build is stronger than the gates of Hell.” He sternly told them, “Don’t tell anyone I’m the Christ.”

He began to tell his disciples what would soon happen: “I’ll go to Jerusalem. There I’ll suffer and be killed. Three days later, I’ll return from death.”

“God forbid it, Lord,” declared Peter. “This must never happen to you!”

Jesus rebuked Peter. “If you think that way you’ll block my plans. Your words are from Satan. You see me as a human king. Instead, you must understand: God sent me so that these things could happen.”

Questions: Who did Peter say Jesus was? What was going to happen to Jesus in Jerusalem?



Jesus Teaches on the Mountain

Matthew 5:1-9

Jesus saw the huge crowds on the mountain; His disciples too, came to him and he taught them:
The poor in spirit are blessed because theirs
is the kingdom of heaven.
The meek are blessed because they'll inherit the earth.
People who are hungry to do right are blessed
because they'll be filled.
People who have mercy are blessed because
they'll be given mercy.
The pure in heart are blessed because they'll see God.
Peacemakers are blessed because they'll be
called children of God.

Questions: What kind of people inherit the earth? What kind of people are called children of God?

Matthew...



BAPTIZE	HEALING	PLATTER
BETRAY		PREACH
BIRTH	INSULT	
BLIND		REGION
BOAT	LAME	
	LAMP	SPLENDOR
CHURCH	LEATHER	
CROWDS	LEPROSY	TEMPTED
	LIFE	TENANTS
DEMONS		TOMB
DEVIL	MAGI	TOOTH
DISCIPLES	MUTE	TRUTH
DISOWN		
DOCTOR	NEIGHBOR	UNION
DOUBT	NEWS	
		VIRGIN
FAITH	PARABLE	
FASTING	PLANK	WORTHY

I N O Q K P N S H T O O T L
G P O N I H R O T C O D S I
A D A I C I O E I N L E N V
M L I R N H D H A G A A O E
P V U S A U N N F C E N M D
C H U S C B E W V M H R E E
C L W D N I L B O E A T D T
T E Y O G V P E A S P T O B
N P Y H R N S L A M I M S U
I R B A P T I Z E T B D D O
G O I M R N H T G S H P W D
R S R U G T W Y S W M E O M
I Y T T K R E T T A L P R T
V H H E T A O B L I F E C Q

Some Biblical scholars believe that Jonah was the son of the widow in Zarepheth who the Prophet Elias brought back to life. Called by the Lord to go to the pagan city of Ninevah and demand that they repent for their wicked ways, a frightened Jonah disobeyed the voice of God and boarded a ship headed elsewhere. While at sea, a fierce storm arose and threatened the ship and its passengers with destruction. The superstitious crew decided to cast lots to determine who was responsible for this impending calamity. When the lots fell on Jonah, he was forced to confess his sinful behavior. "Cast me into the sea," he lamented, "and the waters shall be calm."

Jonah was thrown overboard and, true to his prediction, the storm ceased immediately! But Jonah's adventure was just beginning! By the will of God, a whale swallowed the Prophet alive! He spent three days in the belly of the whale, where he prayed constantly for forgiveness and deliverance. After three days had passed, Jonah was spit up by the whale and washed onto the shore. The Church has always viewed this incident as a prefigurement of Christ's three-day burial and Resurrection.



After this harrowing experience, Jonah obediently went to Ninevah to fulfill God's command to him. He warned the inhabitants that the wrath of God would be upon them if they failed to heed his words. After a period of prayer and fasting, they were forgiven and found favor with the Lord.