

✠ St. Gregory's Journal ✠

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St. Gregory the Great Orthodox Church
A Western Rite Congregation of the Antiochian Archdiocese
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An excerpt from a Catechetical Lecture by St. Cyril of Jerusalem d. 386

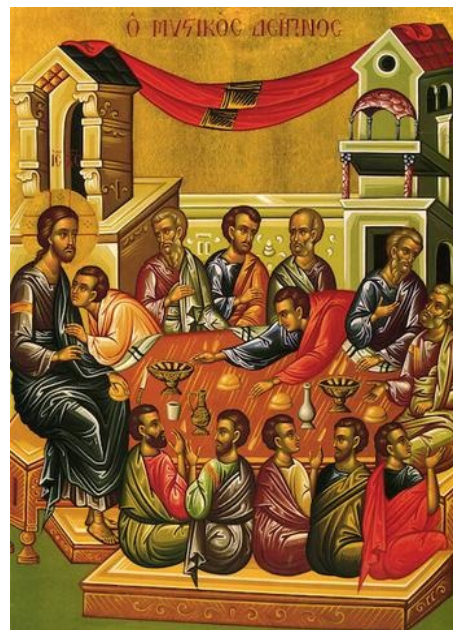
I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread...

This teaching of the Blessed Paul is alone sufficient to give you a full assurance concerning those Divine Mysteries, which when ye are vouchsafed, ye are of the same body and blood with Christ. For he

has just distinctly said, *That our Lord Jesus Christ the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks he brake it, and said, "Take, eat, this is My Body" and having taken the cup and given thanks, He said, "Take, drink, this is My Blood."* Since then He Himself has declared and said of the Bread, *This is My Body*, who shall dare to doubt any longer? And since he has affirmed and said,

Inside:

<i>Ss. Manuel, Sabel, and Ishmael</i>	4
<i>Parish News</i>	6
<i>I Bind Unto Myself</i>	7
<i>Calendar</i>	11



This is My Blood, who shall ever hesitate, saying, that it is not his blood?

He once turned water into wine, in Cana of Galilee, at his own will, and is it incredible that He should have turned wine into blood? That wonderful work He miraculously wrought, when called to an earthly marriage; and shall he not much rather be acknowledged to have bestowed the fruition of His Body and Blood on the children of the bride-chamber?

Therefore with fullest assurance let us partake as of the Body and Blood of Christ: for in the figure of Bread is given to thee his body, and in the figure of Wine his Blood; that thou by partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ, mightest be made of the same body and the same blood with Him. For thus we come to bear Christ in us, because his Body and Blood are diffused through our members; thus it is that, according to the blessed Peter, *we become partakers of the divine nature* [2 Peter 1:4].

Even under the Old Testament there was shew-bread; but this as it belonged to the Old Testament, came to an end; but in the New Testament there is the Bread of heaven, and the Cup of salvation, sanctifying soul and body; for as the Bread has respect to our body, so is the Word appropriate to our soul.

Contemplate therefore the Bread and Wine not as bare elements, for they are, according to the Lord's declaration, the Body and Blood of Christ; for though sense suggests this to thee, let faith

stablish thee. Judge not the matter from taste, but from faith be fully assured without misgiving, that thou has been vouchsafed the Body and Blood of Christ.

The blessed David also shall advise thee the meaning of this saying, *Thou has prepared a table before me in the presence of mine enemies* [Ps. 23:5]. What he says, is to this effect. Before Thy coming, evil spirits prepared a table for men, foul and polluted and full of all devilish influence; but since Thy coming, O Lord, *Thou hast prepared a table before me*. What does he mean but that mystical and spiritual Table, which God hath prepared over against, that is, contrary and in opposition to the evil spirits? And very truly; for that had fellowship with devils, but this, with God. *My cup runneth over* [Ps. 23:5]. Thou seest that cup here spoken of, which Jesus took in his hands, and gave thanks, and said, *This is My Blood, which is shed for many for the remission of sins* [Matt. 26:28].

Solomon, also, pointing at this grace, says in Ecclesiastes, *Come hither, eat thy bread with joy*, (that is, the spiritual bread; *come hither*, calling with words of salvation and blessing) and *drink thy wine with a merry heart*; (that is, the spiritual wine;).

These things having learned, and being fully persuaded that what seems bread is not bread, though bread by taste, but the Body of Christ; and that what seems wine is not wine, though the taste will have it so, but the Blood of Christ; and that of this David sung of old, saying, *And bread which strengtheneth man's heart and oil to make his face to shine* [Ps. 104:15], strengthen thine heart, partaking thereof as spiritual, and make the face of thy soul to shine. And so having it unveiled by a pure conscience, mayest thou *behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord*, and proceed from *glory to glory* [2 Cor. 3:18], in Christ Jesus our Lord: to whom be honor, and might, and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Saints Manuel, Sabel and Ishmael, Martyrs: Feast Day ~ June 17

The life of a diplomat is not an easy one and the responsibilities are great. The fate of nations and the lives of many people often depend on the negotiating skills of the diplomat. The give and take, back and forth, demand and compromise in tense political bargaining require patience and the ability to phrase the bargaining points to the advantage of those the diplomat is representing. In 4th century Persia, one family contributed three sons to this profession and the brothers were very good at diplomacy.

Manuel, Sabel, and Ishmael had been born into a “mixed” family: their father was a pagan, but their mother was Christian and she had raised her sons in the faith. After military service, they all three were employed as ambassadors by the Persian King, Alamundar, and were sent to negotiate a treaty with the Byzantine Emperor, Julian (known as the “Apostate” for his having abandoned the Christian faith). The two empires had been traditional enemies for centuries, each always waiting for an opportunity to invade the other and increase its territory. But it appeared that each ruler was also anxious to avoid armed conflict, so this diplomatic mission was extremely important.

All went well with the meetings, held in the city of Chalcedon, and a peace treaty was agreed upon and signed. The brothers had completed their task and were ready to attend the customary banquet to celebrate the end of negotiations when they were shocked to discover that the Emperor had planned a ceremony of sacrifice to pagan idols before the banquet and that they were expected to participate. While Christianity was the religion of a very small minority of the Persian population, numerous other



religions were practiced and their faith had never been a deterrent to their positions as representatives of the pagan king. As politely as they were able, Manuel, Sabel, and Ishmael declined the banquet invitation and made plans to return home earlier than expected.

But Julian would have none of it. In rage, he nullified the terms of the peace treaty and had the brothers arrested. Perhaps the entire incident had been a “set-up” so that the

Emperor could have an excuse to void the peace treaty and he had simply been trying to determine the Persian army’s readiness for conflict, but peace was now thrown aside and war was inevitable.

A mock “debate” was held between Julian and his diplomatic captives. The brothers were unswerving in their love for Christ and his Church and their refusal to bow down before any false gods. The Emperor then ordered that they be tied to trees and tortured by flailing, that they be put to death by the sword and their bodies burned. The brothers prayed throughout their ordeal of torture and received the crown of martyrdom, faithful to the end. A sudden earthquake prevented the soldiers from burning the bodies of the martyrs as ordered and soon, the local Christians were able to retrieve them for proper burial.

When King Alamundar heard of the murder of his envoys by the Emperor and that Byzantine forces were on their way to attack, he immediately readied his army for battle. Julian was

confident of victory in this war with Persia, but he was killed in battle, his army was trapped, and his war was lost.

Manuel, Sabel, and Ishmael were martyred in the year 362. Thirty years later, another Emperor - Theodosius - built a church at Constantinople in honor of these holy martyrs who had died at the order of his predecessor.

We ask for the prayers of the martyrs Manuel, Sabel, and Ishmael that diplomats may be protected in their work, that diplomacy may help nations achieve peace and avoid war, and that we may be faithful in our love for Christ to the ends of our lives.

Resources: Prologue From Ochrid by St. Nikolai (Velimirovic); Orthodox Saints by George Poulos; online articles from Mystagogy Resource Center and ROCOR New York City Deanery; Western Rite Orthodox Martyrology.

Parish News

The month of June is a month of feasts. We begin with Trinity Sunday on June 3, when we celebrate the great mystery of one God in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. On this one Sunday of the year, we sing the *Quicumque vult*, or Athanasian Creed, at Matins. The Feast of Corpus Christi, celebrating the gift of the Eucharist, will be observed on the Sunday within the Octave, June 10. The Nativity of St. John the Baptist, the Forerunner of Christ, falls on Sunday, June 24.

Please remember Fr. Raphael and Kh. Catherine in your prayers as they travel in the Philippines during this month, visiting family and Orthodox churches.

The joint Parish Life Conference for the Diocese of the Mid-Atlantic and the Diocese of New York and Washington will be

held June 27-July 1 at Antiochian Village. Western Rite Vespers is scheduled for Friday evening, June 29. Please let Fr. Nicholas know if you are able to attend this gathering of our church family.

I Bind Unto Myself



A favorite hymn, which we sing every year on the Feast of the Most Holy Trinity, is “I bind unto myself today the strong Name of the Trinity,” attributed to St. Patrick. Although the oldest manuscripts containing this poem date from the eleventh century, there are many older allusions to it and the legend of its origin (told by the Irish monk Muirchu in the 7th c.) is a wonderful testament to the courage of Christian

missionaries and to their use of elements of the local culture to bring converts to the Christian faith.

As the story goes, Patrick (a Roman Briton who had been held captive as a slave in Ireland in his youth) was consecrated as a bishop to return to the land of his servitude to bring the light of Christianity to the Irish people. The dramatic lighting of the Paschal fire against the explicit order of King Loegaire on the night when a Druid celebration with fire was to take place at Tara was the beginning of the battle for the souls of the Irish people. The King feigned acceptance of Patrick’s presence to lure him to Tara to have him killed.



As Patrick and the monks who accompanied him made their way toward Tara, with the King’s soldiers lying in ambush waiting to attack, a dark mist surrounded them and they were perceived by the soldiers as deer. Going through this “valley of the shadow of death,” Patrick sang this song to bring courage to the monks and to pray for their protection against the evil which surrounded them. The song is called “The Deer’s Cry” because of the appearance of Patrick and the monks and it is also called the lorica, or breastplate, of St. Patrick as it is reminiscent of St. Paul’s admonition to put on the

“breastplate of righteousness”, the “shield of faith”, the “helmet of salvation”, and the “sword of the spirit.” [Ephesians 6]

The Druids’ incantations were similar in style - words which were thought to protect against enemies - but in St. Patrick’s song, the Name of the Holy Trinity is called upon for protection against the murderous methods of those very Druids: the “wizard’s evil craft, the death-wound and the burning, the choking wave, the poisoned shaft.”

St. Patrick’s lorica was preserved and much loved by the Irish, as they gradually became a Christian nation. It is thought that some written versions had the words so arranged that they visually formed a circular shield or breastplate themselves. It is not known what music these words were sung to in earlier times, but in the late 19th century, a Protestant pastor’s wife, Cecil Frances Alexander, made an English metrical paraphrase which has been

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set to two old Irish melodies. This is the version which appears in *The St. Ambrose Hymnal*. A more literal translation by Kuno Meyer (1922), a portion of which is copied below, appears in *St. Gregory's Prayerbook*.

As we sing this favorite hymn on Trinity Sunday, may we again Ask for the protection of the Holy and Blessed Trinity - three Persons in one God - against all the evils of our society today. And may we give thanks for the courage and wisdom of saints such as Patrick as they helped to spread faith in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit throughout the world.

Resources: Lindisfarne Letter: Celtic Christianity by Christopher Bamford; The Hymnal 1940 Companion; The Stories of Hymns by Fr. George Rutler.

St. Patrick's Breastplate

Arise today through a mighty strength - the invocation of the Trinity - through belief in the Three-ness, through confession of the One-ness of the Creator of creation.

Arise today through the strength of Christ's Birth with His Baptism, through the strength of His Crucifixion with His Burial, through the strength of His Resurrection with His Ascension, through the strength of His descent for the judgment of doom.

Arise today, through God's strength to pilot me, God's might to uphold me, God's wisdom to guide me, God's eye to look before me, God's ear to hear me, God's word to speak for me, God's hand to guard me, God's shield to protect me, God's host to save me from snares of devils, from temptation of vices, from everyone who shall wish me ill, afar and near.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>June 2018</h1>						<i>Sunday Services: Matins at 9AM, Sung Mass at 9:30AM</i>
					1 Ember Friday in the Octave of Pentecost	2 Ember Saturday in the Octave of Pentecost; Ss. Marcellinus, Peter and Erasmus, Mm, 304 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
3 Trinity Sunday; First Sunday after Pentecost; St. Kevin of Glendalough, Ab, c. 618 <i>W</i>	4 St. Petroc, C, 564	5 St. Boniface, BM, 754	6	7 Corpus Christi; St. Meriadoc, BC, 659	8	9 St. Columba of Iona, Ab, 597 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
10 Sunday in the Octave of Corpus Christi; St. Margaret of Scotland, QW, 1092 <i>W</i>	11	12 St. Barnabas, Apostle, 1 st c.	13	14 St. Basil the Great, BCD, 379	15 Ss. Vitus, Modestus & Crescentia, Mm, c. 303	16 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
17 Third Sunday after Pentecost <i>G</i>	18 St. Ephrem the Syrian, DnCD, 373	19 Ss. Gervase & Protase, Mm, 2nd. c.	20 St. Silverius, PM, 538; Translation of St. Edward, KM, 980	21	22 St. Alban, Proto-martyr of England, 209 & St. Paulinus of Nola, BC, 431	23 St. Etheldreda, QV, 679 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
24 Nativity of St. John the Baptist; Fourth Sunday after Pentecost <i>W</i>	25	26 Ss. John & Paul, Mm, c. 362	27	28 St. Irenaeus of Lyons, BM, 202; Vigil of Ss. Peter & Paul	29 Ss. Peter & Paul, Apostles, 1st c.	30 Commemoration of St. Paul the Apostle <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>

Confessions may be made during the Psalms at Matins, following Vespers, and by appointment.

Coffee Hour follows Sunday Liturgy. Christian Education for all is offered during Coffee Hour.