

Thursday, November 19
Evening Prayer
Orthodox Saints

Opening Sentence

Yours is the day, O God, yours also the night; you established the moon and the sun. You fixed all the boundaries of the earth; you made both summer and winter. *Psalm 74:15,16*

Confession

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. Amen.

Invitatory

O God, make speed to save us.

O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

O Gracious Light Phos hilaron

O gracious light,
pure brightness of the everliving Father in heaven,
O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed!
Now as we come to the setting of the sun,
and our eyes behold the vesper light,
we sing your praises, O God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
You are worthy at all times to be praised by happy voices,
O Son of God, O Giver of Life,
and to be glorified through all the worlds.

Part II *Et intravit Israel*

23

Israel came into Egypt, *
and Jacob became a sojourner in the land of Ham.

24

The LORD made his people exceedingly fruitful; *
he made them stronger than their enemies;

25

Whose heart he turned, so that they hated his people, *
and dealt unjustly with his servants.

26

He sent Moses his servant, *
and Aaron whom he had chosen.

27

They worked his signs among them, *
and portents in the land of Ham.

28

He sent darkness, and it grew dark; *
but the Egyptians rebelled against his words.

29

He turned their waters into blood *
and caused their fish to die.

30

Their land was overrun by frogs, *
in the very chambers of their kings.

31

He spoke, and there came swarms of insects *
and gnats within all their borders.

32

He gave them hailstones instead of rain, *
and flames of fire throughout their land.

33

He blasted their vines and their fig trees *
and shattered every tree in their country.

34

He spoke, and the locust came, *

and young locusts without number,

35

Which ate up all the green plants in their land *
and devoured the fruit of their soil.

36

He struck down the firstborn of their land, *
the firstfruits of all their strength.

37

He led out his people with silver and gold; *
in all their tribes there was not one that stumbled.

38

Egypt was glad of their going, *
because they were afraid of them.

39

He spread out a cloud for a covering *
and a fire to give light in the night season.

40

They asked, and quails appeared, *
and he satisfied them with bread from heaven.

41

He opened the rock, and water flowed, *
so the river ran in the dry places.

42

For God remembered his holy word *
and Abraham his servant.

43

So he led forth his people with gladness, *
his chosen with shouts of joy.

44

He gave his people the lands of the nations, *
and they took the fruit of others' toil,

45

That they might keep his statutes *
and observe his laws.
Hallelujah!

Gloria Patri

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Gospel

Matthew 18:1-9 (NRSV)

1 At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" 2 He called a child, whom he put among them, 3 and said, "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. 4 Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 5 Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me. 6 "If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea. 7 Woe to the world because of stumbling blocks! Occasions for stumbling are bound to come, but woe to the one by whom the stumbling block comes! 8 "If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to enter life maimed or lame than to have two hands or two feet and to be thrown into the eternal fire. 9 And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into the hell of fire.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Canticle 17 The Song of Simeon
Nunc Dimittis Luke 2:29-32

Lord, you now have set your servant free *
to go in peace as you have promised;

For these eyes of mine have seen the Savior, *
whom you have prepared for all the world to see:

A Light to enlighten the nations, *
and the glory of your people Israel.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

- Departure of Abba Isaac, the 41st Pope of Alexandria
- Assembly of the Ecumenical Council at Nicaea
- Prophet Obadiah (or Avdi) (IX Cent BC)
- Martyr Varlaam (+c.304)
- Monks Varlaam and Joasaph, son of the emperor of India, and his father the Emperor Avenir (IV)
- Monk Varlaam, Hegumen of Pechersk, in the Nearer Caves (+1065)
- Martyr Aza and with him 150 Soldiers and others (+284-305)

- Martyr Heliodoros (+c.273)
 - Monk Ilarion the Wonderworker (+875, Gruzia)
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On this day in the year 679 A.D. the great holy father Abba Isaac, the 41st Pope of Alexandria, departed. He was born in the City of El-Borolos from rich God-fearing parents. They begot him long after their marriage. When they took him for baptism, the bishop who baptized him saw a cross of light over his head. The bishop laid the boy's hand on his head and prophesied concerning him saying: "The Church of God will be entrusted to him". Then he told his parents: "Take care of him, for he is a chosen vessel of God".

When he grew a little they taught him writing, the Christian doctrine and Church subjects. He read much in the biography of the saints and he was overwhelmed by their stories. As he longed for the monastic life, he left his parents and went to the Desert of St. Macarius. He was made a monk and became a disciple of Abba Zechariah the Hegumen. The angel of the Lord had informed father Zechariah beforehand of his coming and he received him joyfully. One day, a holy elder saw him in the church and prophesied about him saying: "The Church of Christ will be entrusted to him".

Pope John III, the Patriarch at that time, was looking for a monk to be his scribe and private secretary. The people recommended Father Isaac and the Patriarch commissioned him. Father Isaac had to scribe a book and he wilfully made mistakes in his writing hoping that the Pope might send him back to the desert. When the Patriarch knew his intention he said to him: "You have done a good job, do not leave this place".

When Father Isaac realized that the Patriarch would not let him return, he utilised his skills and knowledge and excelled in his work. Nevertheless, because Father Isaac was still longing for solitary life, the Patriarch allowed him to return to the desert.

When the departure of Pope John III drew near, he asked the Lord Jesus to let him know who would replace him as a Patriarch. In a vision he was told that his disciple Isaac would replace him, and he disclosed this vision to the people.

When Father Isaac was enthroned on the See of St. Mark, the Church flourished. He restored many churches, among them the Church of St. Mark the Evangelist and also restored the residence of the Patriarch. Nonetheless he suffered many tribulations during his reign. He was Patriarch for three and a half years and departed in peace.

Also on this day of the year 325 A.D., in the days of Emperor Constantine the Great, 318 fathers assembled in the City of Nicaea. Among them were the heads of the four Sees: Alexandros, the 19th Pope of Alexandria, who was accompanied by Athanasius, his Archdeacon and private secretary;

Estasius, Archbishop of Antioch; Macarius, Archbishop of Jerusalem but Sylvestros, Archbishop of Rome, because of his old age did not attend and delegated two priests to replace him.

The reason for the assembly at Nicaea was to condemn Arius who was a priest in Alexandria. He blasphemed against the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, by saying that He was not equal in essence to God His father and there was a time when the Son did not exist.

Some of the holy fathers who attended were at the rank of the Apostles, able to raise the dead, heal the sick and work wonders. Some also were tortured for the sake of their faith; lost their eyes, had their hands or feet cut off, had their teeth smashed, their nails pulled out or their ribs broken. One of them was St. Bephotius the Confessor, a Bishop in Upper Egypt who was tortured during the days of Diocletian. They plucked out his right eye, burnt the flesh of his left leg, and at one time bound him in chains and took him to cut marble in the mountains. He was called the martyr among the priests. He was an old and holy man and the Lord worked many wonders through his prayers and supplications.

When the Fathers assembled, the righteous Emperor Constantine came and greeted them, starting with St. Bephotius. He revered him greatly to the extent that he kissed the scars of his wounds.

The Emperor then placed his own royal sceptre and his sword before the holy fathers saying to them: "Behold this day, you have the power of the Priesthood and of the Kingdom, to loosen and to bind as the Lord said, "Whosoever you wish to exile or to keep, that will be your authority".

Many of those who were gathered during the Council were enlightened by the Holy Spirit. When the delegates were counted they found 319 bishops, but the chairs were only 318! That fulfilled the saying of the Lord Jesus: "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20).

They had Arius brought before them and they asked him to state his faith. He blasphemed saying: "The Father was when the Son was not". When they explained to him his error and he did not change his mind, they excommunicated him.

At the conclusion of the Council they worded the Christian Creed, known as the Niceen Creed. It states:

1. "We believe in one God, Who created heaven and earth, and all things seen and unseen.
2. We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only-Begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten not created, by Whom all things were made.
3. Who for us and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary, and became Man.
4. And He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, suffered and was buried.

5. And the third day He rose from the dead, according to the scriptures,
6. ascended into heaven; He sits at the right hand of His Father,
7. and He is coming again in His glory to judge the living and the dead, Whose kingdom shall have no end.

This Niceen Creed was extended in the Ecumenical Council of Constantinople in the year 381 A.D. The following verses were added:

8. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Life-Giver Who proceeds from the Father, Who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke by the prophets.
9. And in one holy, catholic and apostolic church.
10. We confess one baptism for the remission of sins.
11. We look for the resurrection of the dead,
12. and the life of the coming age.

The Council prohibited anyone to add to or take away from this Creed and commanded the believers, priests, laity, old and young, men and women, to recite it and to have it said during the Holy Eucharists and in all prayers.

After the Fathers of the Council of Nicaea had excommunicated Arius and exiled him from the Church, and wrote down the Creed, they passed other resolutions:

- I. With regards to Melitus, Bishop of Assiut, who had resisted his superior St. Peter, Pope of Alexandria, the Council confirmed the authority of the Pope of Alexandria over his subjects in the decrees 5, 6, and 7.
- II. They settled the controversy between the Bishops of Africa and of Asia Minor against the Bishop of Rome regarding the baptism of heretics. The Council decreed that the baptism performed by the hands of heretics was worthless, in contrast to what the Bishop of Rome and his followers declared.
- III. They also agreed on the day Easter was to be celebrated. They decided that it would be the Sunday which follows the full moon on which the Jewish Passover occurs; thus, they would not celebrate before or with the Jews. They authorised the Pope of Alexandria to notify the other churches annually about the date Easter is celebrated. The Patriarchs of Alexandria were famous for their knowledge and their accuracy in calculating dates.

The holy Fathers affirmed the authority of the Church and they left to their dioceses.

The Holy Prophet Obadiah [or Avdi] was from the 12 Minor Prophets, and he lived during the IX Century BC. He was a native of the village of Betharam, near Sichem, and he served as house-governor of the impious Israelite king Ahab. In these times the whole of Israel had turned away from the True God and had begun to offer sacrifice to Baal. But Obadiah-Avdi in secret faithfully served the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. When the impious and dissolute Jezebel, the wife of Ahab, set about the exterminating of all the prophets of the Lord, Obadiah-Avdi meanwhile in turn gave them shelter and food (3[1] Kg 18:3ff). Ahab's successor king Okhoziah [Ahaziah] sent 3 detachments of soldiers to arrest the holy Prophet Elias [Elijah or Ilias, commemorated 20 July]. One of these detachments was headed by Saint Obadiah-Avdi. Through the prayer of Saint Elias, two of the detachments were consumed by Heavenly fire, but Saint Obadiah-Avdi and his detachment were spared by the Lord (4[2] Kg 1). From this moment Saint Obadiah resigned military service and became a follower of the Prophet Elias. Afterwards he himself received the gift of prophecy. The God-inspired work of Saint Obadiah-Avdi -- the Book of Prophecies under his name, is the fourth in order of the Books of the Twelve Minor Prophets in the Bible -- contains predictions about the New Testament Church. The holy Prophet Obadiah-Avdi was buried in Samaria.

The Holy Martyr Varlaam lived in Syrian Antioch. During the time of the persecution against Christians under the emperor Diocletian (284-305), Saint Varlaam at an advanced age was arrested and brought to trial, where he confessed himself a Christian. The judge, wanting to compel the saint to renounce Christ, gave orders to conduct Saint Varlaam to the pagan altar, pull his right hand over it, and put into the palm of his hand a red-hot censor burning with incense. The torturer reckoned, that a physically weak old man could not hold out and would drop it on the altar, and in such manner would be offering sacrifice to the idol. But the saint held on to the censor, until his fingers were burnt. After this the holy Martyr Varlaam offered up his soul to the Lord (+304).

The Monks Varlaam the Wilderness-Dweller, Joasaph the son of the Emperor of India, and his father Avenir: In India, -- once formerly having received the Christian faith through the evangelisation of the holy Apostle Thomas, there ruled the emperor Avenir, an idol-worshipper and fierce persecutor of Christians. For a long time he did not have any children. Finally, a son was born to the emperor, and named Joasaph. At the birth of this son the wisest of the emperor's star-gazers predicted, that the emperor's son would accept the Christian faith which was persecuted by his father. The emperor, wanting to ward off the prediction, commanded that there be built for his son a separate palace and he arranged matters such that his son should never hear a single word about Christ and His teachings.

Reaching a youthful age, Joasaph asked permission of his father to go out beyond the palace, and he saw existing there such things as suffering, sickness, old age and death. This led him into ponderings over the vanity and absurdity of life, and he began to engage in some serious thinking.

At this time in a far-off wilderness there asceticised a wise hermit, the Monk Varlaam. By a Divine insight he learned about the youth agonising in search of truth. Forsaking his wilderness, the Monk Varlaam in the guise of a merchant set out to India, and having arrived in the city where Joasaph's palace was situated, he declared that he had brought with him a precious stone, endowed with wondrous powers to heal sickness. Being brought in to Joasaph, he began to present him the Christian faith in the form of parables, and then also "from the Holy Gospel and the Holy Epistles." From the instructions of the Monk Varlaam the youth reasoned out that the precious stone is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and he believed in Him and desired to accept holy Baptism. Having made the sign of the cross over the youth, the Monk Varlaam bid him to fast and pray, and he went off into the wilderness.

The emperor, learning that his son was become a Christian, fell into a rage and grief. On the advice of one of his counsellors, the emperor arranged for a debate about faith between the Christians and the pagans, at which under the guise of Varlaam there appeared the Magi magician Nakhor. In the debate Nakhor was supposed to acknowledge himself beaten and in such manner turn the imperial youth away from Christianity. Through a vision in a dream, Saint Joasaph learned about the deception and he threatened Nakhor with a fiercesome execution, if beaten in the debate. Nakhor in terror not only beat the pagans, but he himself came to believe in Christ, and he repented and accepted holy Baptism and went off into the wilderness. The emperor tried to turn his son away from Christianity by other methods also, but the youth conquered all the temptations. Then on the advice of his counsellors, Avenir bestowed on his son half the realm. Saint Joasaph, having become an emperor, restored Christianity in his lands, built anew the churches, and finally, he converted his own father the emperor Avenir to Christianity. Soon after Baptism the emperor Avenir died, and Saint Joasaph abdicated his rule and went off into the wilderness in search of his teacher, the elder Varlaam. Over the course of two years he wandered about through the wilderness, suffering dangers and temptations, until he found the cave of the Monk Varlaam, asceticising in silence. The elder and the youth began to asceticise together. When the end for the Monk Varlaam approached, he served out the Divine Liturgy, partook of the Holy Mysteries and communed Saint Joasaph, and with this he expired to the Lord, having lived in the wilderness 70 of his hundred years. Having buried the elder, Saint Joasaph remained at the cave and continued with the wilderness efforts. He dwelt in the wilderness for 35 years, and expired to the Lord at age sixty.

The successor of Saint Joasaph as emperor, Barachias, with the help of a certain hermit, found in the cave the undecayed and fragrant relics of both ascetics, and he conveyed them back to his fatherland and gave them burial in a church, built by the Monk-Emperor Joasaph.

The Monk Varlaam, Hegumen of Pechersk, lived during the XI Century at Kiev, and was the son of an illustrious boyar-noble. From the time of his youthful years he yearned for the monk's life and he went off to the Monk Antonii of Pechersk (+1073, commemorated 10 July), who accepted the pious youth so

firmly determined to become a monk, and he bid the Monk Nikon (+1088, commemorated 23 March) to make monastic tonsure over him.

The father of the Monk Varlaam tried forcefully to return him home, but finally becoming convinced that his son would never return to the world, he gave up. When the number of monks at the Caves began to increase, the Monk Antonii made the Monk Varlaam hegumen, while he himself resettled to another cave and again began to live in solitude.

The Monk Varlaam became the first hegumen of the Kievo-Pechersk monastery. In the year 1058, having besought the blessing of the Monk Antonii, the Monk Varlaam built over the cave a wooden church in honor of the Uspenie-Dormition of the Most Holy Mother of God. Afterwards, the Monk Varlaam became hegumen of the newly-formed monastery in honor of the Great Martyr Demetrios. The Monk Varlaam twice made pilgrimage to the holy places in Jerusalem and Constantinople. Having returned from his second journey, he died in the Vladimir Holy-Mountain monastery at Volynia in 1065 and was buried, in accord with his final wishes, at the Pechersk monastery in the Nearer Caves. His memory is likewise 28 September and on the 2nd Sunday of Great Lent.

The Holy Martyr Aza and with him 150 Soldiers suffered at Isauria, in Asia Minor, under the emperor Diocletian (284-305). For his confession of the Christian faith the saint was arrested and brought to trial before the eparch-governor, Aquilinus. There had been sent 150 soldiers to arrest the saint, but they were converted onto the path of salvation and they accepted holy Baptism with water that issued forth in a spring through the prayer of Saint Aza. The martyr persuaded them to fulfill the commandment about obedience to authorities, and therefore to bring him before the eparch. The soldiers together with the saint confessed their Christian faith afront Aquilinus, and for this they were all beheaded. And together with them the eparch executed his own wife and daughter, who had come to believe in Christ, seeing the steadfastness of Saint Aza under torture.

The Holy Martyr Heliodoros lived during the reign of the emperor Aurelian (270-275) in the city of Magidum (Pamphylia). The city-governor Aetius subjected the saint to fierce tortures for his faith in Christ and had him beheaded (+c.273).

The Monk Ilarion the Wonderworker was born in 816 in Kakhetia (Eastern Gruzia-Georgia). He was descended from a line of Gruzian princes, the Vachnadze (Donauri). In very early childhood he displayed an inclination towards asceticism. At 9 years of age he knew by heart the Gospel, and at 12 years of age he was tonsured into monasticism at a monastery founded by his father. At 16 years of age the youth transferred over to the Davido-Garedzhe wilderness monastery. Here the Monk Ilarion spent

10 years as an hermit. By his unceasing prayer, tears, silence vigil and fasting he became known throughout all Gruzia. But glory-seeking was alien to the monk. Having accepted the dignity of priest, he declined the offer to him of a bishop's-seat in Gruzia at Sagaredzho (in Kakhetia), and he withdrew to the Holy Land, for worship at the Sepulchre of the Lord.

Saint Ilarion spent 17 years in the Jordanian desert, living in a cave of the holy Prophet Elias the Tishbite [Thesvitanin], which once had serve as an habitation also for Saint John the Baptist. Here it was that an Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and summoned him to hasten to Gruzia, in order to find his father among the yet-living. Saint Ilarion set off to his native land, where after the death of his father he set up at his parental home a monastery, tonsuring into monasticism both his mother and sister. He remained by this monastery until the death of his mother. Then he gave off half of his inheritance to the Davido-Garezhe monastery, and the other half he distributed amongst impoverished brethren, and then he set off to Constantinople. Having made reverence at the holy places in Tsargrad, Saint Ilarion withdrew to the Mount Olympos in Asia Minor, where in about the year 864 he founded a Gruzian monastery. Here he dwelt for five years. During this period there were reported many healings, worked by the monk through the power of prayer, the sign of the cross and anointing with myrh. Shunning fame, Saint Ilarion set off to Rome to venerate at the graves of the holy First-Ranked Apostles Peter and Paul. Along the way he visited Constantinople and Thessalonika, and worked several healings (a gardener and a lad, having "withered-up" legs). On his return journey the Monk Ilarion again stopped off at Thessalonika, where he spent three years. A miracle is known of, where a deacon (from the church in name of the GreatMartyr Demetrios of Soluneia/Thessalonika) was taken captive by Skythians but then was freed of his fetters, upon prayerfully calling out to Saint Ilarion for help.

Saint Ilarion knew about his impending death 40 days beforehand, and 3 days before his death he communed the Holy Mysteries, took his leave of the brethren and secluded himself in his cell. He peacefully expired to the Lord on 19 November 875.

His venerable relics were consigned to a stone crypt, and after the passage of 40 days the relics were glorified by healings of those that came in faith. On the orders of the emperor Basil the Macedonian (866-886), the relics of Saint Ilarion were transferred from Thessalonika to Constantinople in the year 882. The emperor intended to situate the relics within the imperial palaces, but Saint Ilarion appeared to him in a dream and directed, that his relics should be placed in the newly-constructed church built in honor of the holy Apostles, near the Thracian Bosphorus. The Gruzian-Georgian Church in the IX Century enumerated the Monk Ilarion to the rank of the Saints and established his memory to be observed under 19 November.

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done, on earth as it is in
heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass
against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

Suffrages A

Show us your mercy, O Lord;

And grant us your salvation.

Clothe your ministers with righteousness;

Let your people sing with joy.

Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;

For only in you can we live in safety.

Lord, keep this nation under your care;

And guide us in the way of justice and truth.

Let your way be known upon earth;

Your saving health among all nations.

Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;

Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.

Create in us clean hearts, O God;

And sustain us with your Holy Spirit.

Collect of the Day: Pentecost, proper 28

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

A Collect for Peace

Most holy God, the source of all good desires, all right judgments, and all just works: Give to us, your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, so that our minds may be fixed on the doing of your will, and that we, being delivered from the fear of all enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through the mercies of Christ Jesus our Savior. *Amen.*

For Mission

O God, you have made of one blood all the peoples of the earth, and sent your blessed Son to preach peace to those who are far off and to those who are near: Grant that people everywhere may seek after

you and find you; bring the nations into your fold; pour out your Spirit upon all flesh, and hasten the coming of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

World Cycle of Prayer

We pray for the people of Saudi Arabia.

arab news

Ecumenical Cycle of Prayer

We pray for our sisters and brothers, members of the United Church of Canada.

The United Church of Canada

For Local Government

Almighty God our heavenly Father, send down upon those who hold office in this State (or, Commonwealth, City, County, Town, Area) the spirit of wisdom, charity, and justice; that with steadfast purpose they may faithfully serve in their offices to promote the well-being of all people; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For Those Who Need Continuing Care

Look with mercy, O God our Father, on all persons who have become ill, weak, distressed, or isolated. Provide for them homes of dignity and peace; give them understanding helpers, and the willingness to accept help; and increase their faith and their assurance of your love. This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For the Absent

O God, whose fatherly care reaches to the uttermost parts of the earth: We humbly beseech you graciously to behold and bless whom we love, now absent from us. Defend them from all dangers of soul and body; and grant that both they and we, drawing nearer to you, may be bound together by your love in the communion of your Holy Spirit, and in the fellowship of your saints; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Prayer Attributed to St. Francis

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where

there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

General Thanksgiving

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks for all your goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all whom you have made. We bless you for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for your immeasurable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies, that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up our selves to your service, and by walking before you in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.

A Prayer of St. Chrysostom

Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. Amen.

Benediction

Let us bless the Lord. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia. Alleluia.

May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing through the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen. *Romans 15:13*