

Wednesday of the Sixth Week of the Great Fast Our Venerable Father and Confessor James, Bishop of Catania

LITURGY OF THE PRESANCTIFIED GIFTS

At Psalm 140

In Tone 5

10. I am rich in all sorts of passions,
and I am clothed in a garment of hypocrisy,
as I revel in the intemperance of sin.
My lack of mercy is beyond measure,
and I disregard my spirit lying before the gates of repentance.
Starved of every good thing, I suffer from illness.
But You, O Lord, make me like Lazarus who was poor in sin,
so that I will not have to beg for a drop of water
for my tongue suffering from thirst in the eternal fire.
Make me dwell in the bosom of the patriarch Abraham, O Lover of humankind.

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8. With your souls filled with unquenchable love, O holy martyrs,
you endured the most terrible sufferings without ever denying Christ;
and you laid low the impudence of the torturers.
You kept the faith unwavering and unharmed
and have gone to dwell in heaven.
Therefore, having the boldness to approach the Lord,
beg Him to grant us His great mercy.

7. As You walked in the flesh, O Jesus,
in the land beyond the Jordan,
You said to those who were with You:
Our friend Lazarus has died and has been placed in the tomb.
But I rejoice for you, my friends,
for you will learn that I know all things,

and that with God, I am one,
even though by nature I appear in human form.
Therefore, let us go and give life to Lazarus
so that Death may recognize this victory,
and the perfect consummation I shall bring about
by granting great mercy to the world.

6. O faithful, let us imitate Martha and Mary,
and offer virtuous deeds as ambassadors before the Lord,
that when He comes, He may uplift our minds full of misery which now lie dead in the tomb.
Without life, they have no sense of what they are neglecting,
and they are unaware of the awesomeness of God.
Behold, O Lord, now give life to all and grant us Your great mercy,
as once You had pity on Your friend Lazarus,
and by Your awesome power, You raised him from the dead.

In Tone 6

5. Now Lazarus has been in the tomb for two days,
and he sees all generations of the dead.
He beholds such strange and awesome things
and a countless number held within the power of death.
His relatives weep bitterly before his tomb;
but Christ is on His way to give life to His friend,
that He may stir up the same joy in the hearts of all.
Blessed are You, O Saviour; have mercy on us.

In Tone 4

4. You desired the glory which is eternal and does not pass away,
scorning the glory that is transitory and perishing.
You took up your Cross and followed after the crucified One,
subjecting your flesh to ascetic struggles.
therefore, James, we celebrate your memory!

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2. You were crucified to the world and to the passions,
preserving your soul undefiled and pure,
untainted by low things, Father James.
Thus you soared to the heavens with mystical visions.
there you set forth your life as a true friend of Christ,
ever-memorable one, and a most faithful saint.

1. Ever-memorable one,
you were revealed to be innocent, guileless, and merciful,
filled with brotherly love, humility, meekness and charity.
You were adorned with compassion,
gifted with patience, faith and hope.
You were enriched with prayer.
In holiness, you were illumined by the brightness of God!

In Tone 8, Glory... Now...

Attend to the groaning of my broken heart, O bride of God.
Accept the lifting up of my hands.
Do not reject me, O Mary, spotless Virgin, full of love,
so that I may praise and magnify
Him, who in you magnified the human race.

Prokeimenon I, Tone 4

I walk in the presence of the Lord* in the land of the living.
verse: I love the Lord, for He has heard the cry of my appeal.

Reading I (Genesis 43:26-31 and 45:1-16)

When Joseph came home, they brought him the present which was in their hand into the house, and bowed down before him to the earth. Then he asked them about their well-being, and said, "Is your father well, the old man of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?" And they answered, "Your servant our father is in good health; he is still alive." And they bowed their heads down and prostrated themselves. Then he lifted his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, "Is this your younger brother of whom you spoke to me?" And he said, "God be gracious to you, my son." Now his heart yearned for his brother; so Joseph made haste and sought somewhere to weep. And he went into his chamber and wept there. Then he washed his face and came out; and he restrained himself, and said, "Serve the bread." Then Joseph could not restrain himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, "Make everyone go out from me!" So no one stood with him while Joseph made himself known to his brothers. And he wept aloud, and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard it. Then Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph; does my father still live?" But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed in his presence. And Joseph said to his brothers, "Please come near to me." So they came near. Then he said: "I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. For these two years the famine has been in the land, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting. And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt. "Hurry and go up to my father, and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph: "God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not tarry. You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near to me, you and your children, your children's children, your flocks and your herds, and all that you have. There I will provide for you, lest you and your household, and all that you have, come to poverty; for there are still five years of famine.'" "And behold, your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that it is my mouth that speaks to you. So you shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt,

and of all that you have seen; and you shall hurry and bring my father down here.” Then he fell on his brother Benjamin’s neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck. Moreover he kissed all his brothers and wept over them, and after that his brothers talked with him. Now the report of it was heard in Pharaoh’s house, saying, “Joseph’s brothers have come.” So it pleased Pharaoh and his servants well.

Prokeimenon II, Tone 4

I will pay my vows to the Lord,* in the presence of all His people.

verse: I trusted, even when I said: I am sorely afflicted.

Reading II (Proverbs 21:23-22:4)

Whoever guards his mouth and tongue
Keeps his soul from troubles.
A proud and haughty man—“Scoffer” is his name;
He acts with arrogant pride.
The desire of the lazy man kills him,
For his hands refuse to labour.
He covets greedily all day long,
But the righteous gives and does not spare.
The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination;
How much more when he brings it with wicked intent!
A false witness shall perish,
But the man who hears him will speak endlessly.
A wicked man hardens his face,
But as for the upright, he establishes his way.
There is no wisdom or understanding
Or counsel against the LORD.
The horse is prepared for the day of battle,
But deliverance is of the LORD.
A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches,
Loving favour rather than silver and gold.
The rich and the poor have this in common,
The LORD is the maker of them all.
A prudent man foresees evil and hides himself,
But the simple pass on and are punished.
By humility and the fear of the LORD
Are riches and honour and life.