

The Memorial Service

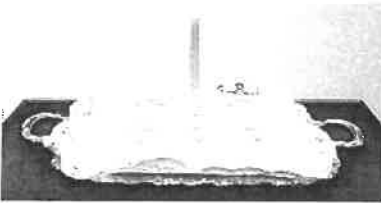


The Memorial Service

Set me as a seal upon your heart; for love is as strong as death.

- The Song of Songs 8:6

Prayer for the dead is not seen by Orthodox Christians as an optional extra. Praying for those who have died is not merely an expression of mourning – it is a proclamation that Christ has risen from the dead and that, in His love, even death cannot separate us from one another! Forty days after the death of a loved one (or on the nearest Sunday to the 40 days), it is the custom of our Church to celebrate a prayer service in remembrance of the deceased known in English as a Memorial Service. In this service, which at St. Paul's normally takes place on Sundays just before the beginning of the Liturgy, we ask God to “grant rest” to the deceased “in the bosom of Abraham” (*Luke 16:22-23*) and to place him/her “in a place of light, a place of happiness, a place of refreshment, where there is no pain, no sorrow and no suffering” (*Revelation 21:4*).



A tray of boiled wheat, raisins and powdered sugar called “*kolyva*” in Greek is prepared for the service and is later, at the parish coffee hour, distributed to the community.

This practice is based on the words of the Lord Jesus used to describe His own death and resurrection, “Amen, I say to you: unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains a single grain of wheat. But if it dies, it brings forth a good harvest” (*John 12:24*). The tray of *kolyva* is a symbol of our faith in the life giving death and resurrection of Christ.

In addition to the 40 day Memorial Service, Memorial Services are normally held annually on or near the anniversary of the loved one's death. Everyone is also encouraged to remember their departed loved ones annually on the Saturdays of Souls associated with Great Lent and the celebration of Pentecost.



The Memorial Service

Near the conclusion of Morning Prayer on Sunday morning the clergy process to the memorial table in the solea and begin the service of prayer for those who have fallen asleep in the Lord.

Verses from the Psalms and Hymns

Priest: Blessed are You, O Lord, teach me Your commandments.

The choir of the saints has found the fountain of life and the door of Paradise. May I also find the way through repentance. I am the sheep that is lost: O Savior, call me back and save me.

Priest: Blessed are You, O Lord, teach me Your commandments.

Of old You created me from nothing and honored me with Your divine image. But when I disobeyed Your commandment, O Lord, You cast me down to the earth from where I was taken. Lead me back again to Your likeness, and renew my original beauty.

Priest: Blessed are you, O Lord, teach me Your commandments.

I am an image of Your ineffable glory, though I bear the scars of my transgressions. On Your creation, O Master, take pity and cleanse me by Your compassion. Grant me the homeland for which I long and once again make me a citizen of Paradise.

Priest: Blessed are You, O Lord, teach me Your commandments.

People: Give rest, O God, to Your servant, and place him (*her*) in Paradise where the choirs of the saints and the righteous will shine as the stars of heaven. To Your departed servant give rest, O Lord, and forgive all of his (*her*) offenses.

Priest: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit

The threefold radiance of the one God let us praise, and let us shout in song: Holy are You, eternal Father, co-eternal Son, and divine Spirit! Illuminate us who worship You in faith and deliver us from the eternal fire.

Priest: Both now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Rejoice, O gracious Lady, who for the salvation of all gave birth to God in the flesh, and through whom the human race has found salvation. Through you, O pure and blessed *Theotokos*, may we find Paradise.

People: Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory to You, O God (3x).



Tone Eight

Chanters & People: With the saints give rest, O Christ, to the soul of Your servant where there is no pain, nor sorrow, nor suffering, but life everlasting.

Tone Four

Priest: Among the spirits of the righteous made perfect in faith, grant rest, O Savior, to the soul of Your servant. Bestow upon him (*her*) that blessed life which is from You, O loving Lord.

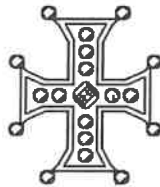
Priest: Within Your peace, O Lord, where all Your saints repose, grant rest also to the soul of Your servant, for You alone are immortal.

Priest: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

You are our God who descended into Hades and loosened the pains of those who were chained there. Grant rest also, O Savior, to the soul of Your servant.

Priest: Both now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Most pure and spotless Virgin, who ineffably gave birth to God, intercede with Him for the salvation of the soul of your servant.



The Petitions

Deacon: Have mercy upon us, O God, according to Your great love; we pray to You, hear us and have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy (3x).

Deacon: Again we pray for the repose of the soul of the departed servant of God (*Name*) who has fallen asleep, and for the forgiveness of all his (*her*) sins, both voluntary and involuntary.

People: Lord, have mercy (3x).

Deacon: May the Lord our God place his (*her*) soul where the righteous find rest. Let us ask for the mercies of God, the kingdom of Heaven, and the forgiveness of his (*her*) sins from Christ, our immortal king and God.

People: Lord, have mercy (3x).

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: O God of spirits and of all flesh, You have trampled down death, abolished the power of the devil, and given life to Your world. Grant rest to the soul of Your departed servant *(Name)* in a place of light, in a place of rest, in a place of refreshment, where there is no pain, no sorrow, and no suffering. As a good and loving God, forgive every sin he *(she)* has committed in thought, word or deed, for there is no one who lives and is sinless. You alone are without sin. Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Your word is truth.

For You are the resurrection, the life and the repose of Your departed servant *(Name)*, Christ our God, and to You we give glory, with Your eternal Father and Your all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

The Dismissal

Priest: Glory to You, O Christ our God and our hope, glory to You

May Christ our true God, who rose from the dead and as immortal King has authority over the living and the dead, have mercy on us and save us, through the intercessions of his spotless and holy Mother; of the holy, glorious, and praiseworthy Apostles; of our venerable and God-bearing Fathers; of the holy and glorious forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; of His holy and righteous friend Lazarus, who lay in the grave four days; and of all the saints; establish the soul of His servant *(Name)*, departed from us, in the dwelling place of the saints; grant rest to him *(her)* in the bosom of Abraham and number him *(her)* among the righteous.

People: Amen.

The Final Blessing

(For men)

Priest: May your memory be eternal, dear brother, for you are worthy of blessedness and everlasting memory.

(For women)

Priest: May your memory be eternal, dear sister, for you are worthy of blessedness and everlasting memory.

Priest, Chantor and People then sing three times:

Eternal be his *(her)* memory.

Eternal be his *(her)* memory.

May his *(her)* memory be eternal.

Priest: Through the prayers of our holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us.

People: Amen.



I am the Resurrection



and the Life