

Sunday, February 26, 2023 – First Sunday of the Great Fast: The Sunday of Orthodoxy; Our Holy Father Porphyrius, Bishop of Gaza (420)

Troparia and Kontakia Troparion, Tone 5: Let us the faithful acclaim and worship the Word,* co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit,* and born of the Virgin for our salvation.* For He willed to be lifted up on the cross in the flesh, to suffer death* and to raise the dead by His glorious resurrection.

Troparion, Tone 2: We bow before Your most pure image, O kind Lord,* and beg pardon for our sins, O Christ our God.* Of Your own will You consented to ascend the Cross in the flesh to free Your handiwork from enslavement to the enemy.* In thanksgiving we cry aloud to You:* by coming to save the world, our Savior, You filled all things with joy.

+Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Kontakion, Tone 8: The uncircumscribed Word of the Father* became circumscribed when He took flesh of you, O Mother of God,* and when He restored the divine image to its ancient glory,* He suffused it with the beauty of God.* Therefore, confessing our salvation in deed and word,* we portray it in images.

Prokeimenon, Tone 4 Blessed are You, Lord God of our fathers,* and praised and glorified is Your Name for ever. *verse:* For You are righteous in everything You have done to us. (*Daniel 3:26,27*)

Epistle - A reading of Paul to the Hebrews - Hebrews 11:24-26,32-40; 12:1-2 (NRSV) Brothers and Sisters, by faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called a son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to share ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He considered abuse suffered for the Christ to be greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking ahead to the reward. And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets— who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, refusing to accept release, in order to obtain a better resurrection. Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and

imprisonment. They were stoned to death, they were sawn in two, they were killed by the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, persecuted, tormented— of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground. Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had provided something better so that they would not, apart from us, be made perfect. Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

Alleluia, Tone 4 *verse:* Moses and Aaron are among His priests and Samuel among those who call upon His name.

verse: They called on the Lord, and He heard them. (*Psalm 98:6*)

Gospel - John 1:43-51 (NRSV)

At that time Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, “Follow me.” Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth.” Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.” When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him, he said of him, “Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!” Nathanael asked him, “Where did you get to know me?” Jesus answered, “I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you.” Nathanael replied, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” Jesus answered, “Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these.” And he said to him, “Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.”

Hymn to the Mother of God

In you, O Full of Grace, all creation rejoices: the angelic ranks and all the human race. Sanctified temple and spiritual paradise, virgins’ pride and boast, from whom God is made flesh and became a little Child; and He who is our God before all ages, He made your womb a throne, and He made it wider than all the heavens. In you, O Full of Grace, all creation rejoices. Glory be to you.

Communion Hymn Praise the Lord from the heavens;* praise Him in the highest. (*Psalm 148:1*)* Rejoice in the Lord, O you just;* praise befits the righteous.* Alleluia, alleluia,* alleluia. (*Psalm 32:1*)