

# Sunday, February 23, 2025 – Sunday of Meatfare; The Holy Hieromartyr Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna.

*Troparia and Kontakia Troparion, Tone 7:* By Your cross You destroyed death;\* You opened Paradise to the thief;\* You changed the lamentation of the myrrh-bearers to joy,\* and charged the apostles to proclaim\* that You are risen, O Christ our God,\* offering great mercy to the world.

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

*Kontakion, Tone 1:* When You come on earth, O God, in glory,\* and the universe trembles,\* while the river of fire flows before the seat of judgement,\* and the books are opened and all secrets disclosed,\* then deliver me from the unquenchable fire,\* and count me worthy to stand at Your right hand,\* O Judge who are most just.

*Prokeimenon, Tone 3* Great is our Lord and great is His strength;\* and of His knowledge there is no end.

*verse:* Praise the Lord, for a psalm is good; may praise be sweet to Him. (Psalm 146:5,1)

*Epistle: 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2 (NRSV)*

*A reading of the Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians*

Brothers and Sisters, “Food will not bring us close to God.” We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall. Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not my

work in the Lord? If I am not an apostle to others, at least I am to you; for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

**Alleluia, Tone 8** *verse:* Come, let us rejoice in the Lord; let us acclaim God our Savior.

*verse:* Let us come before His face with praise, and acclaim Him in psalms. (*Psalm 94:1,2*)

**Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46 (NRSV)**

The Lord said, “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’ Then he will say to those at his left hand, ‘You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?’ Then he will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

**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*)