Parastas

A Memorial Service
For the Faithful Departed
In the Orthodox-Catholic tradition, “it is a holy and pious thought…to pray for the dead.” (2 Maccabees 12:45.44) The most intense prayer for those departed is at the funeral rite itself. We have lost the presence of our loved one in this world, but our faith is that we are never completely separated from those who have died in faith, as Christ taught: “I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live.” (John 11:25)

We trust in God, and we respect his judgment, but our prayer is our expression of love for our brother or sister in faith, and we offer prayer to God for them, knowing that he will hear our prayer and take account of our love, which surpasses the boundaries between life and death, between time and eternity, between presence and absence. St. Paul taught, “For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:38-39) We pray for a perfect rest for those departed, and that God “remember them forever.” Our prayers tell us that there is no one without sin. By this we do not mean grievous sin that would turn us away from God, but the sins of human weakness and imperfection that afflict all of us. To come into God’s presence means the cleansing of all sin, and it is this for which we pray.

The Parastas Service is an act of charity, a continuation of our supplication at the funeral itself, combining both the vigil prayers and the morning prayers that we offer for the repose of the departed and their full forgiveness of all sin. The Catechism of the Catholic Church quotes our Holy Father John Chrysostom, “Let us help and commemorate them. If Job’s sons were purified by their father’s sacrifice, why would we doubt that our offerings for the dead bring them some consolation? Let us not hesitate to help those who have died and to offer our prayers for them.” (Homily on 1 Corinthians 41, 5 in § 1032) The Orthodox Bishop Kallistos (Ware) adds, “…Christians here on earth pray for one another and ask for one another’s prayers, so they pray also for the faithful departed and ask the faithful departed to pray for them. Death cannot sever the bond of mutual love which links the members of the Church together.” (The Orthodox Church, p. 258)

ETERNAL MEMORY – The Byzantine Parastas concludes with the singing of the hymn for the departed, “Eternal Memory!” Sometimes this is misinterpreted to mean the memories we keep of the beloved, which are themselves mortal. What it does mean is that we continue to exist in God’s mind, the Creator and Sustainer of all being. Only his “memory” is eternal, and only in his memory do we truly and really find life.
Parastas

The priest vests in the epitrachilion and phelonion. The deacon, having received the blessing from the celebrant, vests in the sticharion and orarion. Dark vestments are worn unless it is a post-festive time during which the vestments appropriate to the feast are worn.

The celebrant, concelebrants, and deacon proceed to the place where the Parastas will be served, and the deacon (or the celebrant, if there is no deacon) incenses.

Deacon: Reverend Father [or: Most Reverend (Arch)Bishop], give the blessing!

Celebrant: Blessed is our God, always, now and ever and forever.

Response: Amen.

The faithful immediately continue with the following:

Come, let us worship our King and God. Come, let us worship Christ, our King and God. Come, let us worship and bow before the only

Lord Jesus Christ, the King and our God.
Psalm 90
Tone 8 Kontakion

The one who dwells in the shelter of the Most High abides in the shadow of the God of heaven. He says to the Lord:

"You are my Protector, my Refuge, and my God in whom I trust."

It is he who will free you from the snare of the fowler who seeks to destroy you; he will conceal you with his pinions and under his wings you will find refuge. You will not fear the terror of the night nor the arrow that flies by day,
nor the plague that lays in the darkness nor the scourge that lays waste at noon. A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand fall at your right, you, it will never approach; his faithfulness is buckler and shield. Your eyes have only to look to see how the wicked are repaid, you who have said: "Lord, my refuge!" and have made the Most High your dwelling. Upon you no evil shall fall, no plague approach where you dwell. For you has he commanded his angels, to keep you
in all your ways. They shall bear you upon their hands lest you strike your foot against a stone. On the lion and the viper you will tread and trample the young lion and the dragon. Since he clings to me in love, I will free him; protect him for he knows my name.

When he calls I shall answer: "I am with you," I will save him in distress and give him glory. With length of days I will content him; I shall let him see my saving power.
Then three times, with a bow each time:

Glo-ry to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Ho-ly Spir-it,
now and ever and for-ev-er. A-men.

Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Glo-ry to you, O God.

Litany

Deacon: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, have mer-cy.

Deacon: For the servant[s] of God (Name/s) and for (his-her-their) blessed repose, let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, have mer-cy.
Whenever a general commemoration of the departed is made, the following replaces the previous petition:

Deacon: For the souls of all who have departed throughout the ages in the true faith and in the hope of resurrection and eternal life; for our departed fathers, brothers, and sisters; for the blessed founders and benefactors of this holy church or: this holy monastery, let us pray to the Lord.

Deacon: That (his-her-their) every transgression, voluntary and involuntary, be forgiven, let us pray to the Lord.

Deacon: That (he-she-they) be numbered with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, let us pray to the Lord.

Deacon: That (his-her-their) soul[s] be committed to the region of the living, to the place of light where all the saints and the just repose, let us pray to the Lord.

Deacon: That (he-she-they) may stand uncondemned before the fearsome judgment-seat of Christ, let us pray to the Lord.

Deacon: That (he-she-they) may inherit the eternal kingdom of heaven, let us pray to the Lord.

Deacon: That (he-she-they) share the constant joy prepared for the saints from the beginning of time, let us pray to the Lord.

Deacon: That we be delivered from all affliction, wrath, and need, let us pray to the Lord.

Deacon: Protect us, save us, have mercy on us, and preserve us, O God, by your grace.

Deacon: Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.
Response:

To you, O Lord.

Celebrant: O God of spirits and of all flesh, you trampled death and broke the power of the devil and granted life to your world. Now grant rest, O Lord, to the soul[s] of your departed servant[s] (Name/s), in a place of light, joy, and peace where there is no pain, sorrow, nor mourning. As a good and loving God, forgive every sin committed by (him-her-them) in word, deed, or thought, since there is no one who lives and does not sin. You alone are without sin; your justice is eternal justice; and your word is truth.

For you, O Christ our God, are the resurrection, the life, and the repose of your departed servant[s] (Name/s), and we give glory to you, with your eternal Father, and your all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and forever.

Response:

A - m e n.

ALLELUIA
Tone 8 Troparion (Psalm 64:5; Sirach 39:9)

The following Alleluia and verses are chanted by the deacon (or by the celebrant, if there is no deacon) and the faithful respond as indicated.

Deacon:

Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

Response:

Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!
During the Troparion and Theotokion, the deacon incenses.

**TROPARION AND THEOTOKION**

**Tone 8**

In the depth of your wisdom, Only Creator,
you govern all with love and supply the needs of each.
Now give rest to the soul[s] of your servant[s], for she has placed her hope in you, our Creator, their Maker, and our God.

Cantor:

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever.

Amen.

We have in you a defense and a refuge,
First Station
Select verses from the 17th Kathisma
(Psalm 118:1,2,72,73,92,93), with refrain.

The following psalm verses are chanted by the celebrant or one priest, and the faithful respond as indicated after each verse.

Celebrant:

and an advocate acceptable to God,
to whom you gave birth, O Virgin Theotokos,
the salvation of the faithful.

They are happy whose life is blameless, who follow God's law!
**Response:**

Blessed are you, O Lord; teach me your commandments.

*The same refrain is sung after each of the next three verses.*

**Celebrant:**

They are happy who do his will, seeking him with all their hearts.

**Celebrant:**

The law of your mouth means more to me than thousands in gold and silver.
Celebrant:

Refrain

Your hands have created me and formed me.

Celebrant:

Had not your law been my delight I would have died in my affliction.

Response:

I will never forget your precepts, for with them you give me life.
SECOND STATION
Select verses from the 17th Kathisma
(Psalm 118:94,105,131,132,169,175,176), with refrain.

The following psalm verses are chanted by the celebrant or one priest, and the faithful respond as indicated after each verse.

Celebrant:

Save me, for I am yours.

Response:

O Savior, save the soul[s] of your servant[s].

The same refrain is sung after each of the next four verses.

Celebrant:

Your word is a lamp for my steps and a light for my path.

Refrain

Celebrant:

I open my mouth and sigh as I yearn for your commands.

Refrain
Celebrant:

Turn to me in mercy as you turn to those who love your name.

Refrain

Celebrant:

Lord, let my cry come before you, teach me by your word.

Refrain

Celebrant:

Give life to my soul that I may praise you, let your decrees give me help.

Response:

I am like a lost sheep; seek your servant, for I remember your commands.
Evlogitaria of the Deceased
Tone 5 Samopodoben

All of the verses preceding the following hymns are chanted by the celebrant or one priest, and the faithful sing the hymn in response.

Celebrant:

Blessed are you, O Lord; teach me your commandments.

The choir of Saints has found the fountain of life and the gate of Paradise. May I also find the path through repentance. I am the lost sheep; call me back,

O Savior, and save me.
Celebrant:

Blessed are you, O Lord; teach me your commandments.

Fashioning me from nothing long ago, you honored me with your divine image. For transgressing your commandment you returned me again to the earth from which I had been taken. Lead me back to your likeness and reform the original beauty.
Celebrant:

Blessed are you, O Lord; teach me your commandments.

I am the image of your ineffable glory even though I bear the scars of my transgressions. Take pity on your creature, O Master, and purify me in your compassion. Grant me the homeland for which I yearn, and, again, make me a citizen of paradise.
Celebrant:

Blessed are you, O Lord; teach me your commandments.

Come all of you who have walked the narrow and difficult path in life, who have taken up the cross like a yoke, and followed me in faith: Enjoy the rewards prepared for you, and the heavenly crowns.

Celebrant:

Blessed are you, O Lord; teach me your commandments.
You saints who preached the lamb of God and like lambs were slain;
you martyrs who have been transferred to invisible and unaging life; pray to him insistently to grant us remission of our trespasses.

Celebrant:

Blessed are you, O Lord; teach me your commandments.

Grant rest, O God, to your servant[s], and place them
in Paradise, where the choirs of saints and righteous shine like stars. O Lord, grant rest to your servant[s] who has fallen asleep, and overlook all his faults.

Celebrant:

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
Let us piously sing hymns to the three-fold brilliance of the one divinity, crying out: Holy are you, the Father without beginning, the Son who was in the beginning with you, and the divine Spirit. Enlighten us who serve you with faith, and snatch us out of the eternal fire.

Celebrant:

Now and ever and ever and ever. Amen.
Rejoice, pure one who bore God in the flesh for the salvation of all. Through you, the human race has found salvation. Through you may we also find paradise, pure, blessed Theotokos.

Then three times, with a bow each time:

Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!

Al-le-lu-ia! Glory to you, O God!
Our Savior, give rest to your servant[s] among the just,

and make her dwell in your courts, as it is written.

In your goodness, overlook his voluntary and involuntary sins and all those done knowingly or unknowingly,

O Lover of us all.

Cantor:

Glory to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy
Psalm 50

Have mercy on me, O God, in your kindness.
In your compassion blot out my offense.
O wash me more and more from my guilt
and cleanse me from my sin.

My offenses truly I know them;
my sin is always before me.
Against you, you alone, have I sinned;
what is evil in your sight I have done.

That you may be justified when you give sentence
and be without reproach when you judge,
O see, in guilt I was born,
a sinner was I conceived.

Indeed you love truth in the heart;
then in the secret of my heart teach me wisdom.
Sprinkle me with hyssop, then I shall be clean;
O wash me, I shall be whiter than snow.

Make me hear rejoicing and gladness,
that the bones you have crushed may thrill.
From my sins turn away your face
and blot out all my guilt.

A pure heart create for me, O God,
put a steadfast spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from your presence
nor deprive me of your Holy Spirit.

Give me again the joy of your help;
with a spirit of fervor sustain me,
that I may teach transgressors your ways
and sinners may return to you.

Deliver me from blood-guilt, O God, my saving God,
and my tongue shall ring out your goodness.
O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will declare your praise.

For in sacrifice you take no delight,
burnt offering from me you would refuse,
my sacrifice, a contrite spirit,
a contrite, humbled heart you will not spurn.

In your goodness, O Lord, show favor to Zion;
rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.
Then you will be pleased with lawful sacrifice,
burnt offerings wholly consumed;
then you will be offered young bulls on your altar.
Canon – Ode One

The Irmos and Troparia for Ode One of the Canon are now chanted by the faithful in Tone 6 Irmos (“Jáko po súchu pišěštovav Izrail’…”). All of the verses are chanted by the celebrant or one priest.

Irmos:

When Is-rael walked on the waves of the a-byss as on dry

land, they watched Pha-raoh, their pur-su-er, drown, and they

shou-ted: let us sing a vic-to-ry hymn to God.

Celebrant:

O Lord, rest the soul[s] of your de-par-ted ser-vant[s].

The no-ble mar-tyrs in the heaven-ly bri-dal cham-bers be-seech
you, O Christ, to make the faithful one[s],

whom you have transferred from the earth, worthy
to enjoy eternal good things.

Celebrant:

O Lord, rest the soul[s] of your departed servant[s].

When you arranged all things, you fashioned me,
a composite living creature lowly and lofty alike.

Therefore, O Savior, give rest to the soul[s]
Celebrant:

Glo-ry to the Fa-ther, and to the Son, and to the Ho-ly Spir-it.

In the be-gin-ning you ap-poin-ted me ci-ti-zen and till-er

of pa-ra-dis-e, but you ba-nished me when I trans-gressed your

com-mand. There-fore, O Sa-vior, give rest to the

soul[s] of your ser-vant[s].
Celebrant:

Now and ever and ever Amen.

God, who once fashioned our first mother Eve from a rib,
clothed himself in flesh from your womb, O pure one,
and thereby destroyed the power of death.

Sessional Hymns
Tone 6 Troparion

All is vanity, indeed. Life is but shadow
and sleep. One is born to be tormented by futility, as the Scripture
says. Even if we have gained the whole world, we will still come to occupy a grave with kings and paupers alike. Therefore, Christ God, as the Lover of us all, give rest to your departed servant[s].

Cantor:

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.

All holy Theotokos, do not abandon me
Kontakion
Tone 8

With the saints, O Christ, give rest to your servant[s],
where there is no pain, sorrow, nor mourning, but life ever lasting.

Ikos

Cantor: (recitando, except for the special melody for the concluding phrase)
You alone are immortal, Creator and Maker of humanity. We mortals were formed out of earth and we will return to the same earth, as you, my maker, commanded when you said to me, “You are dust and shall return to dust,” where all mortals will go,
The Irmos and Troparia for Ode Eight of the Canon are now chanted by the faithful in Tone 6 Irmos ("Jáko po súchu pišéštvovav Izrail’…"). All of the verses are chanted by the celebrant or one priest.

Irmos:

You made dew well up from the flames for the Holy Youths and,
with water, you burned up the sacrifice of the righteous Elijah.

O Christ, by your will, alone, you can do all things, and we exalt you above all forever.

Celebrant:

O Lord, rest the soul[s] of your departed servant[s].

O victorious martyrs of Christ, you engaged steadfastly in the contest and have been adorned with the crown of victory.

You cry out: "We exalt you above all forever."
Celebrant:

O Lord, rest the soul[s] of your departed servant[s].

Grant rest to the faithful who have piously left this life behind, O Master: those whom you have taken to yourself. Since you are compassionate, receive those who exalt you above all forever.

Celebrant:

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
O Savior, let all those who have fallen asleep before us find a place in the land of the meek. By their faith in you and by grace, justify those who exalt you above all forever.

Celebrant:

Now and ever and ever Amen.

We all call you blessed, O All-Blessed One, for you bore the truly blessed Word, who became
The Irmos and Troparia for Ode Nine of the Canon are now chanted by the faithful in Tone 6 Irmos (“ Jáko po súchu piščtvovav Izrail’... ”). All of the verses are chanted by the celebrant or one priest.

**Irmos:**

It is impossible for mortals to see God, upon whom even the ranks of angels dare not gaze. But through you, All-Pure One, the incarnate Word has appeared to mortals.

Exulting him along with the heavenly armies, we
Celebrant:

O Lord, rest the soul[s] of your departed servant[s].

Hope emboldened the choir[s] of martyrs and set them a-fire to fly toward your love. It truly foreshadowed for them the future un-shakeable rest. Make the faithful one[s] whom you have transferred worthy of this repose, O Good One.
Celebrant:

O Lord, rest the soul[s] of your departed servant[s].

Let the faithful one[s] whom you have transferred, O Christ, enjoy your bright and divine illumination and the eternal bliss of those who are worthy. Since you alone are merciful, grant him rest in the bosom of Abraham.

Celebrant:

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
By nature you are compassionate and kind.
You deeply desire mercy and compassion. To the one[s] whom you have transferred from this place of affliction, over-shadowed by death, O Savior, grant a place where your light shines.

Celebrant:

Now and ever and ever Amen.

O Pure Lady, we recognize you as a holy tent,
the ark, and the tablets of the Law of grace. For through you, forgiveness has been granted to those who have been justified by the blood of him who took on a body in your womb, O All-Spotless One.

It is truly proper to glorify you, O Theotokos, the ever-blessed, immaculate and the mother of our God.

More honorable than the cherubim, and beyond compare more
The faithful continue with the following customary beginning prayers:

**Panachida**

The faithful continue with the following customary beginning prayers:

Glo-ry to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Ho-ly Spir-it, now and ever and forever. A-men.
Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us; Lord, cleanse us of our sins;

Master, forgive our transgressions; Holy One, come to us and heal our infirmities for your name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,

now and ever and forever. Amen.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come;
Celebrant: For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever.

Response: Amen.

**Troparia**
*Tone 4*

The deacon incenses the faithful as they sing the following hymns:

With the souls of the just brought to perfection, give rest, O

Savior, to the soul[s] of your servant[s], keeping him them
for the blessed life with you, for you love us all.

In your place of rest, O Lord, where all your saints repose,
give rest to the soul[s] of your servant[s],

for you alone love us all.

Cantor:

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

You are the God who descended into Hades and loosed
the bonds of those imprisoned there. Now, O Savior, give rest to
the soul[s] of your servant[s].

Cantor:

Now and ever and forever. Amen.

Virgin, uniquely pure and immaculate, without seed you gave birth to God. Intercede for the salvation of the soul[s] of your servant[s].
Litany for the Deceased

The deacon incenses while intoning the following litany for the deceased:

Deacon: Have mercy on us, O God, according to your great mercy, we pray you, hear and have mercy.

Response:

Deacon: Again we pray for the repose of the soul[s] of the departed servant[s] of God, (Name/s), and that (his-her-their) every transgression, voluntary and involuntary, be forgiven.

Response: Lord, have mercy. (Three times, as above)

Deacon: May the Lord God commit (his-her-their) soul[s] to the place where the just repose.

Response: Lord, have mercy. (Three times, as above)

Deacon: For the mercy of God, for the kingdom of heaven, and for the remission of (his-her-their) sins, let us beseech Christ, the immortal King and our God.

Response: Grant this, O Lord.
Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, have mercy.

The celebrant prays aloud:

Celebrant: O God of spirits and of all flesh, you trampled death and broke the power of the devil and granted life to your world. Now grant rest, O Lord, to the soul[s] of your departed servant[s] (Name/s), in a place of light, joy, and peace where there is no pain, sorrow, nor mourning. As a good and loving God, forgive every sin committed by (him-her-them) in word, deed, or thought, since there is no one who lives and does not sin. You alone are without sin; your justice is eternal justice; and your word is truth.

For you, O Christ our God, are the resurrection, the life, and the repose of your departed servant[s] (Name/s), and we give glory to you, with your eternal Father, and your all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and forever.

Response: Amen.

Homily

A homily may be offered at this time, during which the faithful may sit.

If there is no homily, the faithful should remain standing and continue with the Dismissal prayers on the following page.
Dismissal

Deacon: Wisdom!

Response:

More honorable than the cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious

than the seraphim; who, a virgin, gave birth to God the Word,

you, truly the Theotokos, we magnify.

Celebrant: Glory to you, O Christ God, our hope, glory to you.

Response:

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,

now and ever and forever. Amen. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy. [Most Reverend (Arch) Bishop,] Give the blessing.
Facing the faithful, the celebrant intones the Prayer of Dismissal:

**Celebrant:** May Christ our true God, [throughout Pascha, add: risen from the dead,] who rules over the living and the dead, place the soul[s] of his departed servant[s] in the abode of the just and grant (him-her-them) rest in the bosom of Abraham and number (him-her-them) among the just, and have mercy on us and save us through the prayers of his most pure Mother; and of our venerable and God-bearing fathers; and through the prayers of all the saints; for Christ is good and loves us all.

**Response:**

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\[\text{\textbf{A - m e n.}}\]
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**Celebrant:** In blessed repose, grant, O Lord, eternal rest to your departed servant[s] (Name/s) and remember (him-her-them) forever.

**Response:**

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\[\text{\textbf{E - t e r - n a l m e m - o r y, e - t e r - n a l m e m - o r y,}}}\]
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