

Her First Love

REVELATION 2:4



April 4-7, 2024

Rejoice!

with

Fr. Philopateer Younan

Welcome!

Dearest Sisters, rejoice! God is alive, faithful and good! What a special commandment we have been given by our Lord Jesus Christ and through the mouth of his holy apostle, St. Paul, to rejoice always!

This year, at HFL, we hope we learn together how to experience, appreciate, and trust Christ on a deep level so that we can't help but to rejoice. Fr. Philopateer Younan from Jacksonville, Florida is our guest speaker this year. We pray God grants us joy that fills our hearts and radiates through us and into the world.

Our hope for this weekend is that we are able to connect with ourselves, each other, and most importantly, with our beautiful Lord and Savior—a very worthy cause of Joy!

Table of Contents

Schedule	4
Convent Rule	6
Spiritual Songs	8
Quiet Time Reflection #1	21
Lecture One	22
Small Group #1	27
Lecture Two	28
Spiritual Talk with a Mother	33
Quiet Time Reflection #2	37
Lecture Three	38
Small Group #2	42
Spiritual Talk with a Mother	43
Saints of HFL 2024	47
Prayers	59

Schedule

April 4, 2024 - Thursday

Bookstore available 3 pm – 5 pm

2 pm-7 pm- Registration/Room Assignments

7 pm-8 pm- Dinner

8 pm-8:30pm- Welcome

8:30 pm-9:15 pm- Intro of Theme by Speakers

9:15 pm-9:45 pm- Explanation of Quiet Time materials and registration for later arrivals

10 pm- Sleep

April 5, 2024 - Friday

4 am-6 am- Midnight Prayers and Praises

6 am-7am- Raising of Incense

7 am-10 am- Rest/Quiet Time

Bookstore available 9 am – 12 pm

10:30 am-11:30 am- Lecture One and Q&A

11:30 am-12 pm- Second Welcome

12 pm-2 pm- Divine Liturgy

2 pm-3 pm- Lunch

3 pm-3:45 pm- Small Group Meeting #1

4 pm-5 pm- Lecture Two

5 pm-5:30 pm- Break

5:30 pm-7 pm- Spiritual Talk with a Mother or Sister

7 pm-8 pm- Dinner

8 pm-9pm- Q&A

9:30 pm- Snacks

10 pm- Sleep

Schedule

April 6, 2024 - Saturday

4 am-6 am- Midnight Prayers and Praises

6 am-8 am- Matins and Liturgy

8 am-9 am- Breakfast

9 am-11 am- Free Time/Quiet Time

Bookstore available 8:30 am – 1:30 pm

11 am-12 pm- Lecture Three

12 pm-12:45 pm- Small Group Meeting #2

1 pm-2 pm- Lunch

2 pm-3 pm- Women's Panel

3 pm- GROUP PICTURE

3:15 pm-4 pm- Break

4 pm-6:30 pm- Vespers

6:30 pm-7:30 pm- Dinner

7:30 pm-8:30 pm- Spiritual Talk with a Mother or Sister

8:30 pm-9 pm- Reflection/Personal Prayer Time

9 pm-9:30 pm- Prayer and Songs

9:30 pm- Snacks

10 pm- Sleep

April 7, 2024 - Sunday

3 am-7 am- Midnight Prayers and Praises

7 am-9am- Morning Incense and Divine Liturgy

9:30 am-10:15 am- Breakfast

10:15 am-11 am- Final Thoughts

11 am-12 pm- Break/Pack-Up/Clean

12 pm- Conclusion of Retreat

Bookstore available 12 pm – 1 pm

Convent Rules

Dress Code

- Women are asked to dress modestly, without excessive makeup or accessories.
- Skirts must be well below the knees. Shorts are prohibited, as well as short-skirts, tight skirts, tight jeans, sleeveless blouses, and tank tops.

General conduct on the premises

- Always walk quietly and maintain a low speaking volume at all times.
- Use of the swimming pool is prohibited.
- Children are to be attended to at all times.
- Absolutely no recreational activities on the convent grounds (i.e. soccer, bicycle...)
- Use of cigarettes, drugs, and alcohol is strictly forbidden.
- Pets are not allowed on the convent premises.

Overnight Stay

- The Retreat House observes quiet time from 10PM to 4AM. During this time, no one is to be outside of their rooms.
- Please ask permission should you like to move any furniture in the rooms.
- Please do not eat or drink in the rooms.
- Please turn off lights and air conditioning when you are not in the room.
- Cleaning products are under the sink in every room. Please leave the room as clean and tidy as you received it.

General conduct during worship

- All prayers must be attended. No loitering during hours of prayer.
- Women's heads must be covered at all times when in church.
- Photographing and videotaping is not permitted.

Convent Rules

Dining Hall

- Prayers must be said before meals.
- Dining Hall must be cleaned after every meal.
- Do not leave any garbage outside or throw anything in the lake.
- All chairs brought outside must be returned after use.

Retreat Termination or Permanent Ban Will Occur if You or Your Group:

- Damages, defaces or removes any convent property;
- Fails to comply with the convent rules and guidelines or causes a disturbance
- Makes use of cigarettes, alcohol or drugs on the property.

Retreat Rules and Suggestions

- Adhere to convent rules
- Maintain a prayerful and respectful spirit
- Participate in retreat lectures, activities, and quiet times as indicated on the schedule
- Unplug. Enjoy the joys of quietness with Christ and fellow sisters
- Make new friends
- Ask questions. Dig deep. Be vulnerable.

SPIRITUAL SONGS

IN THE MIDST OF THE RAGING SEA

In the midst of the raging sea,
There I was sailing.
The waves were pounding me,
Making me afraid.
(And it seems That Christ has left me,) x2
(But I no longer see him because of my weak faith) x2

Refrain:
Jesus when he saw me,
Came to me quickly.
In my despair and darkness,
He opened my eyes.
(When I saw him, I cried have mercy) x2
(He came to me quickly and had mercy on me) x2

The sounds of the angry waves,
Agonized my ears.
Darkness of the creeping night,
Has threatened my peace.
(And the tears, have not left my eyes) x2
(And the sleepless nights, have overwhelmed me) x2

I took the oar and started rowing,
But my hopes have failed
My weakness and my ignorance,
Brought more grief to me.
(And my Lord, at the shore sees me) x2
(When will you come to me, and restore my hope?) x2

I was in despair and drowning,
And my hope is torn.
I came to my beloved Jesus,
Offering him my tears.
(When he saw me, He had compassion on me) x2
(He stretched out his sweet hand, and dried my tears) x2

NO EYE HAS SEEN

No eye has seen another God like you
Who opens the jails and shatters the chains x2
who parts the sea and behold there's a path
No mountain or barriers get in his way
No eye has seen another God like You (x2)

Who else but You could appear in the flames
Or rescue a soul from the lion's den (x2)
Who lights the way when the darkness comes
with a blaze of love in a pillar of fire
No eye has seen another God like You (x2)

Who else but You went to Calvary
Who else paid my debts, carried my iniquity (x2)
And You promised me You're coming very soon
To take me to heaven for eternity.

No eye has seen another God like You (x2)

BETTER IS ONE DAY

How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord Almighty
For my soul longs and even faints for you
For here my heart is satisfied, within your presence
I sing beneath the shadow of your wings

Refrain:

Better is One day in your courts
Better is One day in your house
Better is One day in your courts
Than Thousands elsewhere

- One thing that I ask, that I would seek
To see your beauty
To find you in the place Your glory dwells
For here my heart is satisfied, within your presence
I sing beneath the shadow of your wings
- My heart and flesh cry out, to you the living God
Your spirit's water for my soul
I've tasted and I've seen, come once again to me
I will draw near to you, I will draw near to you

I CAN HEAR MY SAVIOR CALLING

1- I can hear my Savior calling (3), Take the cross and follow, follow me.

1- حيث قادنى اسير (3) أمشى معك دوماً كل حين.

2- Where He leads me I will follow (3), I will go with Him, with Him all the way.

2- ولو قادنى للصلب (3) أمشى معك دوماً كل حين.

3- If He leads me to the judgment (3), I will go with Him, with Him all the way.

3- ولو إلى جثماني (3) أمشى معك دوماً كل حين.

4- If He leads me to crucifixion (3), I will go with Him, with Him all the way.

4- أن فى حرب أم سلام (3) أمشى معك دوماً كل حين.

5- If He leads me in war on in peace (3), I will go with Him, with Him all the way.

5- فى صحه ام سقام (3) أمشى معك دوماً كل حين.

6- If in health or in sickness (3), I will go with Him, with Him all the way.

6- لو ضربت او اوهنت (3) أمشى معك دوماً كل حين.

7- If I am beaten or afflicted (3), I will go with Him, with Him all the way.

7- لو سجننت او رجمت (3) أمشى معك دوماً كل حين.

8- He will lead me to grace and glory (3), I will go with Him, with Him all the way.

8- سيقودنى للظفر (3) أمشى معك دوماً كل حين.

9- ويأخذنى للمجد (3) أمشى معك دوماً كل حين.

10- ربي اجذبني ورائك (3) أمشى معك دوماً كل حين.

رَبِي رَاعِي وَسَلَامِي

رَبِي رَاعِي وَسَلَامِي عَمْرِي مَا أَحْتَاج لِسِوَاهُ
فِي الْجَدُوبِ هُوَ طَعَامِي فِي الْعَطَشِ نَبْعَ الْحَيَاةِ
وَإِنْ بَوَادِي الْمَوْتِ مَشَيْتَ لِيهِ أَخَافُ وَأَنَا مَعَاهُ
خَيْرِي فِيهِ مَضْمُونٌ وَكَافِي كُلِّ أَيَّامِ الْحَيَاةِ

القرار

قَالِي مَا تَخَافُشْ فِي دُخُولِكَ وَفِي خُرُوجِكَ مِنَ الْخَطَرِ
هَاسْتَرَكْ مِنَ الرِّيحِ وَأَيْدِي تَكُونُ مَظْلَهُ فِي الْمَطَرِ
اِخْتَبِرْ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ إِنَّكَ عَلَيَّ قَلْبِي عَزِيزٌ

-2-

اسْمُهُ بَرَجٌ حَصِينٌ وَأَمْنٌ لِي لِجَأَ لِحِمَاهُ
وَاللِّي مِنْ قَلْبِهِ يَأْمَنُ يَلْقَى فِي الرَّبِّ النِّجَاةَ
دَا الظَّلَامِ إِنْ زَادَ وَغَطَى عَ الْأَرْضِ وَالْبَشَرِ
نُورُهُ يَشْرِقُ مَجْدُهُ يَمَلَأُ أَرْضَ مَنْ طَلَبَهُ وَصَبْرُهُ

-3-

يَمْتَلِئُ الْفَمُ بِمَدِيحِهِ وَأَفْتَخِرُ طُولَ عَمْرِي بِيهِ
مَنْ هَدَانِي لِلْمَرَاةِ مِنْ حَمَلْنِي عَلَيَّ مِنْكِبِيهِ
لَا عِوْزَ لِي يَنَادُوهُ وَلَكِنْ يَشْبَعُ النَّاطِرِينَ

rabiy raei wasalami eumri ma 'ah taj lisiwah
fi aljadub hu taeami fi aleatash nabe alhayaa
wa'iina bawadi almawt mashayt lih 'akhaf wa'ana maeah
khayri fih madmun wakafi kula 'ayaam alhayaa
alqarar

qali matikhafash fi dukhulik wafi khurujik min alkhatar
hastark min alriyh wa'aydi takun mazalah fi almatar
akhtubir fi kuli yawm 'iinak ealaa qalbi eaziz

-2-

aismuh burj husayn wamin liliy yalja lihimah
wallly min qalbih yamin yalqaa fi alrabi alnajaa
da alzalam 'iin zad waghataa e al'aradaa walbashar
nuruh yushriq majdah yamla ard man talabah wasabrah

-3-

yamtali alfam bimadihih wa'aftakhir tul eumraa bih
man hadani lilmaraei min hamalani eali mankibih
la eawaz lili yunaduilah walakin yashbiealnaazirin

IN CHRIST ALONE

In Christ alone my hope is found;
He is my light, my strength, my song;
This cornerstone, this solid ground,
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace,
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease!
My comforter, my all in all—
Here in the love of Christ I stand.

In Christ alone, Who took on flesh,
Fullness of God in helpless babe!
This gift of love and righteousness,
Scorned by the ones He came to save.
Till on that cross as Jesus died,
The wrath of God was satisfied;
For ev'ry sin on Him was laid—
Here in the death of Christ I live.

There in the ground His body lay,
Light of the world by darkness slain;
Then bursting forth in glorious day,
Up from the grave He rose again!
And as He stands in victory,
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me;
For I am His and He is mine—
Bought with the precious blood of Christ.

No guilt in life, no fear in death—
This is the pow'r of Christ in me;
From life's first cry to final breath,
Jesus commands my destiny.
No pow'r of hell, no scheme of man,
Can ever pluck me from His hand;
Till He returns or calls me home—
Here in the pow'r of Christ I'll stand.

HIS SWEET VOICE

Once I wandered so far away
from my Good Savior Jesus.
He came to me, He who saved me,
and called for me to return.

Refrain:

His sweet voice did call me, call me:
“Prolong not thy straying away.
O dear child, return quickly,
and come to Me, come to Me!”

Cruel thorns left my feet to bleed out,
wounds and agony unparalleled.
I heard the Voice call out to me,
“Thou art in error, return.”

Refrain

Never did I ever care to
heed to Him, nor to His words.
Therefore I walked away with His
warnings of pain in contempt.

Refrain

My path grew ever more treacherous,
menacing darkness has prevailed.
I cried in my profound anguish:
“Where is Thy delightful Face?”

Refrain

My grief has exceeded limits
due to my straying away.
Desolated, I requested:
“O my Savior! Come to me!”

Refrain

Straightaway, a light shone brightly,
O how radiant it was!
My tender Redeemer with a
smile appeared to my aid.

LORD, I NEED YOU

Lord, I come, I confess
Bowing here I find my rest
Without You I fall apart
You're the One that guides my heart

*Lord, I need You, oh, I need You
Every hour I need You
My one defense, my righteousness
Oh God, how I need You*

Where sin runs deep
Your grace is more
Where grace is found
is where You are
And where You are, Lord, I am free
Holiness is Christ in me

*Lord, I need You, oh, I need You
Every hour I need You
My one defense, my righteousness
Oh God, how I need You*

To teach my song to rise to You
When temptation comes my way
When I cannot stand I'll fall on You
Jesus, You're my hope and stay

*Lord, I need You, oh, I need You
Every hour I need You
My one defense, my righteousness
Oh God, how I need You*

*You're my one defense, my righteousness
Oh God, how I need You*

TO THE LORD I
OWE MY LIFE

To the Lord I owe my life
My soul He redeemed
(He paid all my debts
When He died for me) (x2)

CHORUS:

He paid all my debts
The Pure Lamb of God
(On the Cross He died and said,
“Now it is all done.”) (x2)

The heavenly throne He left
To redeem mankind
(On the Cross, His blood was shed
The spear pierced His side) (x2)

He paid all my debts
The Pure Lamb of God
(On the Cross He died and said,
“Now it is all done.”) (x2)

Righteous works of the Law
Could not save mankind
(Only through Your Cross O Lord,
Salvation is mine.) (x2)

He paid all my debts
The Pure Lamb of God
(On the Cross He died and said,
“Now it is all done.”) (x2)

You the Blameless took my blame
You the Sinless bore my sin
(Your blood was the price
That opened Paradise) (x2)

He paid all my debts
The Pure Lamb of God
(On the Cross He died and said,
“Now it is all done.”) (x2)

TRAMPLE O MY
SOUL

Trample O my soul
Always on the enemy
I will not ever fall
For Christ has given me strength.

Refrain:

And if the world falls apart around
me,
Satan will never defeat me.
As long as Christ is holding me
I believe that His hand is mighty. (2)

With Christ I fear not war
I walk among the flames
My faith brings down walls
And even mountains shake.

Refrain

I will never bow
God’s promises lift me up
Christ is my one safeguard
His power is enough.

Refrain

YOU ARE MY PROTECTOR

You're my protector
From all that is evil
You hold me by the right hand
My heart with You rejoices

(R) You're the true Shepherd
You carry me on Your shoulders
You take me to green pastures
Your love is overwhelming

You're always with me
You will never leave me
Your voice is within me
"Do not fear, My Child"

You will elevate me
In the midst of my suffering
You strengthen my weakness
You are my true fortress

You will support me
In times of tribulations
Your hand guides me
Doing good for me

YOU ARE MY PROTECTOR

‘ant allaa bitahminaa
min kuli alshurur
mask beyaminee
qalbaa maeak masrur

Refrain

‘anta alrabu alraaeaa
ealaa katifik shayalnaa
batakhadnaa almuraeaa
wabihabik ghamarnaa

ant allaa bitarafueinaa
faa wasat alamaa
faa daefaa tashajieunaa
ya masdar salam

Refrain

ant allaa maeaya
wala yumkin tusayubnaa
wasootuk Gowaya
Mutakhafishe ya ‘abnaa

Refrain

ant allaa bitsidinaa
faa alzarf almurir
‘ayidik bitushkiline
wabitaemal lilkhayr

ما أنت الرب الراعى
على كتفك شايئنى
بتاخذننى المراعى
وبحبك غامرئنى

أنت اللى بتحمينى
من كل الشرور
ماسك بيمنى
قلبى معاك مسرور

القرار

انت اللى بترفعنى
فى وسط الآمى
فى ضعفى تشجعنى
يا مصدر سلامى

القرار

انت اللى معايا
ولا يمكن تسيئنى
وصوتك جوايا
متخافشى يا أبئنى

القرار

انت اللى بتسدنى
فى الظرف المرير
أيدك بتشكلى
وبتعمل للخير

MY LORD PRECIOUS JESUS

My Lord, precious Jesus,
No one is more beloved,
With Him I am no stranger,
And the cross is no burden.

Refrain:

How beautiful is life with Him,
Jesus, Lord of heaven!
He blesses life,
Living with Him is pleasant!
In His protection I live.

2) With vigor my soul tread,
Upon all the lusts,
My beloved is lovely,
Filled with splendor.

Refrain

3) My pains in the wilderness,
Their number matters not,
In eternal meadows,
The Omnipotent carries me.

WHEN I FEEL WORRIED

When I feel worried, to whom shall I go? (2)

You comfort me O my Lord

I kneel and pray to you (2)

When I feel tired, to whom shall I go? (2)

You give me rest O my Lord

I kneel and pray to you (2)

When I feel sad, to whom shall I go? (2)

You give me joy O my Lord

I kneel and pray to you (2)

When I feel sick, to whom shall I go? (2)

You heal me O my Lord

I kneel and pray to you (2)

When I feel oppressed, to whom shall I go? (2)

You defend me O my Lord

I kneel and pray to you (2)

When I feel lost, to whom shall I go? (2)

You guide me O my Lord

I kneel and pray to you (2)

O THOU IN WHOSE PRESENCE
DELIGHTETH MY SOUL

O Thou in whose presence delighteth my soul
And whom in my distress I call
My comfort by day and my refuge by night
My stronghold whenever I fall.

Shepherd of my soul I beg Thee to tell
Where thou keepest thy sheep to rest
For why should I roam in the valley of tears
And wander as one who is lost.

I ask thee to tell me daughters of Zion
Have ye seen the One I adore
I seek him in vain in the night of my soul
But now I can find Him no more.

Shepherd of my soul I shall follow Thee
O how sweet Thy voice is to me
So guide me and lead me and show me the way
My only desire is Thee.

I am my beloved's and He is mine
He calleth me sister and bride
O how do I long for the day we shall wed
In heaven in His Father's house.

SHE CAME WITH THE SPICES

She came with the spices
To Thy tomb O Lord,
Knowing not that Thou
Above the earth had soared.
She came void of all hope;
She came expecting death;
Forgetting the Life-Giver
Who is the living breath.

In trials and tribulations,
Do we not do the same:
Looking at our errors,
Despairing in our blame?
How often do we wallow,
Abandoning all hope –
As though on our own –
With burden we could cope.

If Peter lost all hope when
Our Lord exposed his sin,
Luke would not record
The three thousand he would win.
If Paul considered nothing
But his murderous past,
Would his inspired letters
To this generation last?

Moses' life was evil,
Every sin he did commit,
But from this desert bandit,
A shining lamp was lit.
If Mary, Egypt's harlot,
Had not tried to win his grace,
Would she now be in heaven –
Would she have won the race?

Our Lord set an example,
Compelled, we do the same:
Fight, strive, persevere and
On us will be no blame.
If our loving Savior
Had not endured all pain,
Would Redemption and Salvation
Ever be our gain?

I come now with hope
To Thy Tomb O Lord,
Knowing that in Truth,
Above the earth Thou soared,
I come now with joy,
I come expecting life;
Knowing that through Thee
I can endure all strife.

Quiet Time Reflection #1

Psalm 5:11- “But let all those rejoice who put their trust in You; Let them ever shout for joy, because You defend them; Let those also who love Your name Be joyful in You.”

Reflection Questions:

- What comes to mind when you read “ever shout for joy”? Do you feel like you can connect to that idea of always rejoicing in God? Why or why not?
- How has God defended you in your life?
- What about God is or could be a cause for joy?

Psalm 27:6- “And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me; Therefore I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the Lord.”

Reflection Questions

- Why do you think King David called it a “sacrifice of joy”?
- At times, it is hard to be joyful. How can we offer our joy as a sacrifice to God?

Lecture One

Discovering everyday miracles with Christ

Notes:

Small Group #1

Discussion Questions

What is Joy?

What makes a heart hardened to Joy? How can this be prevented?

What are some everyday miracles that have happened in your life or the life of someone you know?

Lecture Two

Joy in Difficult Times

Notes:

Spiritual Talk

Spiritual Talk with a Mother

Notes:

Quiet Time Reflection #2

Psalm 43 (NKJV)

Vindicate me, O God,
And plead my cause against an ungodly nation;
Oh, deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man!
For You are the God of my strength;
Why do You cast me off?
Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?
Oh, send out Your light and Your truth!
Let them lead me;
Let them bring me to Your holy hill
And to Your tabernacle.
Then I will go to the altar of God,
To God my exceeding joy;
And on the harp I will praise You,
O God, my God.
Why are you cast down, O my soul?
And why are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God;
For I shall yet praise Him,
The help of my countenance and my God.

Reflection Questions:

- What stands out to you about this psalm?
- Why do we mourn when we go through a hard time?
- It is human to feel tired from suffering. What would it take for us, like the Psalmist does here, to “yet praise Him”?
- How does God send out His light and His truth to us? What can we learn from this Psalm?

Lecture Three

Standing Out in the World with Joy

Notes:

Small Group #2

Discussion Questions

Who are some people in your life who have unshakable, contagious joy? What sets them apart?

You're in a very toxic work environment, and you notice that everyday the sin around you is slowly breaking you down. How do you not let the world steal your joy? How do you spread your joy to others?

Spiritual Talk

Spiritual Talk with a Mother

Notes:

Notes:

The Saints of HFL 2024

St. Mary



Our beautiful mother, St. Mary. She was dedicated to God at three years of age. She lived with the virgins in the Temple for 12 years. At the counsel of the priests of the Temple, she was engaged to St. Joseph because she grew too old to remain in the Temple. Archangel Gabriel appeared to her and announced that the Son of God, Jesus Christ, was to be incarnated from her. She lived a beautiful life in humble submission to God. She followed and ministered to Jesus Christ through His passion, crucifixion and burial. She lived for 60 years, and her body was taken up to heaven. St. Thomas saw her holy body ascending with angels. The Holy Spirit told the disciples, “The Lord did not will to leave her body on earth”. She is commemorated many times, including Tout 21, Hator 21, Kiahk 3, Kiahk 21, Toba 21, Amshir 21, Baramhat 21, Bashons 1, Bashons 21, Pona 21, Abib 21, Mesra 16, and Tout 21.

St. Elizabeth

St. Elizabeth, the cousin of St. Mary, the Mother of God. She was born in Jerusalem to Matthan and Sofia from the tribe of Levi and the house of Aaron the priest. She was righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless (Luke 1:6). She was barren and continually supplicated God who gave them St. John the Baptist. When St. Mary visited St. Elizabeth to congratulate her on her pregnancy, the babe (St. John the Baptist) leaped in St. Elizabeth's womb, and St. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:41). She completed her days in purity, righteousness and chastity and departed in peace. She is commemorated on Amshir 16.



St. Mary Magdalene

During Jesus Christ's ministry on earth, He cast seven demons out of her. She would then follow and serve Jesus Christ during His passion, crucifixion, death, and burial. The Sunday after His Crucifixion she came early to the sepulcher and saw that the stone had been rolled back, and the angel was sitting on it. Jesus Christ visited her there and instructed her to tell His disciples He had risen from the dead and will ascend to His Father. After the ascension of Jesus Christ, she remained ministering to the disciples. She also preached with the disciples, and brought back many women to the faith of Christ. She was ordained a deaconess to teach the women and to assist in their baptisms. She is commemorated on Abib 28.



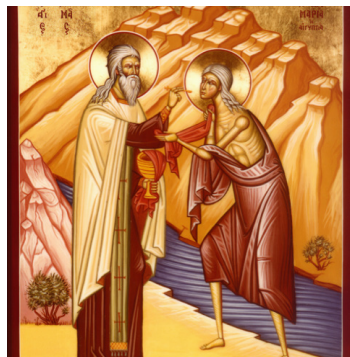
St. Sophia

St. Sophia was from a rich, noble family in Antioch. She had three daughters Pistis (faith), Helpis (hope), and Agape (love). St. Sophia took her daughters to Rome to worship God. There, they were summoned to come before Emperor Hadrianus, the infidel. St. Sophia encouraged her daughters, then 12, 10, and 9, respectively, to stand fast in their faith, and to “be patient and persevere until you meet your Bridegroom, the Christ, with Whom you will enter into the everlasting joy”. After torturing her daughters, the Emperor beheaded them. St. Sophia carried their bodies outside the city, sat and wept, and asked the Lord Christ to take her soul also. The Lord granted her wish. The Emperor was then struck with small pox in his eyes, and he became blind. Worms grew in his body, and he died a dreadful death. They are commemorated on Toba 30.



St. Mary the Egyptian

For seventeen years from the age of 12, St. Mary lived a life of sexual immorality until the mercy of God touched her life. One day on a trip, she wanted to enter the door of the church of the Resurrection, but she felt a hidden power preventing her from entering. She realized it was because of her uncleanness. She lifted her eyes with a broken heart, and she wept asking for the intercessions of St. Mary. A voice from the icon of St. Mary instructed her to cross the Jordan river where she will find rest and salvation. She lived in the wilderness for 47 years. In the wilderness, Satan fought against her by the fornication she repented from, but she overcame by God’s grace. In the 45th year of her living in the desert, St. Zosima saw her, and she told him all about her life and asked him to bring her communion. He did so the next year. The following year, he returned to find she had passed away. A lion that had been protecting her body dug a grave, and St. Zosima buried her. She is commemorated on Baramouda 6.



St. Photini

The Samaritan Woman is famous for honestly admitting her sins to Jesus Christ when He met her at a well in the middle of the day. So moved by her encounter with Jesus Christ, she preached to all those around her about Him. She was then baptized on Pentecost and received the name Photini. She then traveled from Palestine to modern day Tunisia, then to Rome. She was tortured in Rome by Emperor Nero, along with her sisters and son, whom St. Photini had converted to Christianity. After surviving various tortures, Emperor Nero threw them in prison for three years. He then beheaded the sisters. St. Photini was thrown into a well and then imprisoned alone for 20 days. She was sad she had not also received the crown of martyrdom. Nero asked again if she would worship idols, but St. Photini spat in his face. She was then thrown back into a well where God appeared to her in a vision telling her she would give up her soul in the same place she was born (the well!).



St. Theognosta

St. Theognosta was kidnapped by an envoy of the King of India, and they took her back with them. She became the head of the King's attendants and his wives. She made the Sign of the Cross over the King's son when he fell sick, and he recovered immediately. She was then set free. The King went to war and thick clouds and fog came upon him there. Learning from St. Theognosta, he made the Sign of the Cross over the fog, and it cleared up. He also used the Sign of the Cross to vanquish his enemies. When the King returned from war, he bowed down at the feet of St. Theognosta and asked her to baptize him and the people of his city. She told him it was not for her to baptize. He sent for a priest who baptized them and gave them Communion. St. Theognosta then built a convent for herself and the many other virgins who desired the monastic life. She is commemorated on Tout 17.



Sts. Barbara and Juliana

Sts. Barbara and Juliana. St. Barbara was the daughter of a noble man in Dioscorus. He built a tower for St. Barbara to live in. In the tower, St. Barbara often contemplated on the beauty of the sky and determined there must be a wise and able Creator and determined that it was the Almighty God. Origen, the scholar, was informed of St. Barbara, went to her, and taught her the principles of Christianity. When her father discovered her love for God he chased her, seized her, and took her to the governor who ultimately ordered she be tortured with various tortures. St. Juliana watched St. Barbara while she was being tortured and wept for her. St. Juliana saw that the Lord was strengthening and comforting St. Barbara, and she, too, believed in Jesus Christ. Both St. Barbara and St. Juliana were beheaded and received the crown of martyrdom. They are commemorated on Kiahk 8.



St. Alexandra

St. Alexandra was Emperor Diocletian's wife. St. George the martyr made Emperor Diocletian believe he was going to worship the idols. Thus, the Emperor brought St. George in his royal palace. There, St. George prayed, read some of the psalms before Empress Alexandra, and explained the Lord's divinity to her. She believed in Jesus Christ. St. George stood before the idols, called on the Name of the Lord Christ, and the idols were destroyed. This humiliated the Emperor and those with him. The Emperor returned and told the Empress what happened. She replied, "Did I not tell you not to set yourself against the Galilean, for their God is strong and powerful? ". This enraged the Emperor. He tortured her severely then threw her in prison where she departed in peace. She is commemorated on Baramouda 15.



St. Verena

St. Verena was a nurse who served in the army with St. Maurice. They were called to go to Switzerland. While there, the Emperor found out that St. Maurice and his legion were Christian and ordered that they worship his idols or be murdered. The soldiers stood fast, and they were all martyred. St. Verena stayed in Switzerland and ministered to the people there. She gave to the needy and taught them health and care for their bodies and souls. She healed many, cast out demons, and converted many people to Christianity. The emperor found out and imprisoned her. Her feast is celebrated on Tout 4.



St. Febronia

St. Febronia was the niece of the superior of a convent that had fifty virgins in Ouryana in Mesopotamia. Her aunt brought her up in the fear of God and taught her the reading of the Holy Books. St. Febronia vowed herself to the Lord Christ, and she fought the good fight by asceticism, fasting for two days at a time, and praying unceasingly. Emperor Diocletian issued an edict to worship idols. The virgins in the convent were afraid, left the convent, and went into hiding. St. Febronia remained at the convent, along with another sister and the Abbess. The envoys of the Emperor came and seized and humiliated the Abbess. St. Febronia asked that she be taken instead, but the envoy took them both. The Governor ordered her to be tortured in many ways, but the Lord strengthened and comforted her. She was ultimately beheaded and received the crown of martyrdom. She is commemorated on Abib 1.



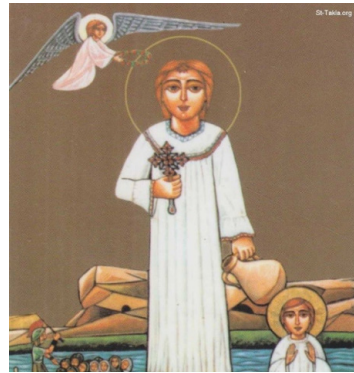
St. Marina the Ascetic

St. Marina the Ascetic was originally named Mary. She was born to a rich Christian family. Her mother died when she was young. Her father wanted to give her away in marriage and become a monk. She refused saying, “O my Father, why would you save your own soul and destroy mine?”. She determined she would become a monk as well by shaving her head and wearing men’s clothes. Her father then changed her name to Marina, and they lived together in a monastery for 10 years until he died. She remained a disguised monk and doubled her fasting and prayers and increased her asceticism. She was falsely accused of fathering a child, but she bore the responsibility of raising the child and the associated punishments from the Abbot. The child grew to become a monk in the monastery as well. When she died, the other monks and the Abbot realized she was a woman and felt sorry for what they had done to her. She is commemorated on Mesra 15.



St. Mohrael

St. Mohrael’s father was a priest named Abouna Youannis. Her mother, Telaria, was barren. Telaria went to the bishop of Manf and asked him to pray for her that God may give her righteous children. The bishop prayed for her, and he spoke by the Holy Spirit and said God would give her two fruits that will become righteous and wear crowns. St. Mohrael was famous for healing pregnant women. She also healed her cousin who was going to die after falling from a top of a building. St. Mary and St. Elizabeth appeared to Fr. Youannis. St. Mary told him, “I am coming to espouse your daughter to my son.”



St. Mohrael went to the seashore to fill water. She found a boat of Christians going to be martyred and joined them. She endured many tortures and received the crown of martyrdom. Before she was martyred, Jesus appeared to her and promised that whoever mentions her name in prayer will receive the answer to their request because she accepted suffering with great joy and patience. She is commemorated on Toba 14.

St. Theodora of Alexandria

St. Theodora of Alexandria was the only daughter of noble, Christian parents in Alexandria. She refused to get married because she desired in her heart to worship God and to strive for His Name's sake. She sold all of what her father bought her, gave to the needy, and then built a church outside the city of Alexandria. She then went to Abba Athanasius who shaved her hair and made her a nun in one of the convents outside of Alexandria. She devoted herself to the ascetic life, fought the spiritual fight, and became worthy of seeing divine visions, distinguishing angels from Satan, and knowing the thoughts of the minds. Pope Athanasius visited her often and instructed her. She was steadfast in her strife and departed in peace when she was 100 years old. She is commemorated on Baramouda 11.



St. Euphemia

St. Euphemia saw one of the deputies of Diocletian passing down the road. With him were some saints with iron chains around their necks. St. Euphemia's heart waxed hot. She felt sorry for them, and she wept. She then cursed the Emperor and his idols and admonished the Governor saying, "O you whose heart is like a stone, do you not have compassion on these holy men! Or are you not afraid that their God might destroy you?" The Governor became enraged and informed the Emperor about what she had done and said. The Emperor brought her and asked about her belief. She confessed that she was a Christian. He tortured her severely by beating and burning until she delivered up her pure soul in the hand of the Lord. She is commemorated on Abib 17.



St. Eupraxia

St. Eupraxia was the daughter of a noble family in the city of Rome and was related to the Emperor Honorius. Her father asked the Emperor to take care of her after his death. St. Eupraxia visited a convent with her mother and loved the life in the convent. She promised the nun who served her that she would never leave the convent. She refused to return with her mother stating, "I have vowed myself to Christ, and I have no need for this world, for my true Bridegroom is the Lord Christ." Her mother then gave all her money and goods to the poor and needy, and she lived with her daughter in the convent for many years, then departed in peace. Emperor Honorius allowed her to stay in the convent. She contended strenuously in the ascetic life. Satan was jealous of her and struck her with an illness in her feet, causing St. Eupraxia pain for a long time, which God later healed. She was given the gift of healing the sick. The Abbess saw in a vision that Eupraxia was to depart the earth soon. Shortly after, she departed. She is commemorated on Baramhat 26.



St. Anastasia

St. Anastasia was a native of Rome and the daughter of Christian parents. Her parents wanted her to get married but she did not want to. Instead, she chose to lead a spiritual life and longed for the heavenly glories since her young age. She entered one of the convents of the virgins in Rome and put on the monastic garb. She subdued her body with devoutness and asceticism. During the Holy Lent, she ate only on Saturdays and Sundays after the prayer of the sixth hour of the day. On the way to a feast, St. Anastasia saw the soldiers of Emperor Decius, the Infidel, torturing some Christians and dragging them. She shouted, "O you hard-hearted men is that what you do to those whom God created in His own form and image and for whom He gave Himself up?" One of the soldiers seized her and brought her to the Governor. She confessed being a Christian. He inflicted her with severe tortures, crucified her, and lit a fire under her, but she was not harmed. She was then beheaded and received the crown of martyrdom. She is commemorated on Baba 1.



St. Athanasia

St. Athanasia was born in Menouf to pious, rich parents. When her parents died, she turned her house into a shelter for the poor and the sojourners. She accepted everyone that came to her, fulfilling their every need until she ran out of money. Evil people gathered around her and turned her mind to the ungodly way. She turned her home into a house of prostitution. The elders of Shiheet heard this and sorrowed greatly. They called upon St. John the Short and asked him to go to her. He went, saw her, and wept. When she asked why he was weeping, he replied saying, “Because I see the devils playing on your face”. She asked if there was any repentance for her. He told her, “Yes, but not in this place.” She said to him, “Take me wherever you wish.” He then took her to one of the convents. On the way, it became dark. St. John saw a pillar of light and found the angels of God carrying the soul of St. Athanasia. In tears, he prayed fervently asking God to reveal her fate. He heard a voice saying, “Her repentance was accepted in the moment that she repented.” She is commemorated on Mesra 2.



St. Pelagia

St. Pelagia was born in the city of Antioch to pagan parents. She had a corrupt faith and a corrupt manner of life. She met a holy bishop named Paul who preached to her. She believed in the Lord Christ through him and confessed to him everything she had done. He encouraged her and taught her not to despair but to repent with a true determination. He then baptized her, and she was illuminated by the grace of baptism. She led a penitent life with a firm heart and a pure determination. She exhausted her body with strenuous worship. She dressed herself in men's garb and went to Jerusalem where she worshipped in its sanctuaries. She met Abba Alexandros, Patriarch of Jerusalem, who sent her to one of the convents nearby Jerusalem. She dwelt there 40 years and departed in peace. She is commemorated on Baba 11.



St. Julietta

St. Julietta and her son St. Cyriacus. When Cyriacus was three years old, St. Julietta left Iconium, her home town, and went to Tarsus, fleeing from the Governor who was persecuting Christians. However, she found the Governor there in Tarsus. Some had laid accusation against her before the Governor. He brought her and ordered her to worship the idols. She answered him, "What you say to me cannot be accepted by a three-year-old child." The governor said to her, "We can ask your child." God then made the child talk, who cried out saying, "Your gods are made of stone and wood by the hands of men, there is no other True God except my Lord Jesus Christ." Those who heard were amazed, and the Governor was exposed. Thus, he inflicted pain over the child that surpassed his age. He also tortured St. Julietta with many kinds of tortures, but the Lord delivered them safely each time. Many saw this and believed in the Lord Jesus Christ and received the crown of martyrdom. Finally, the Governor ordered to cut off their heads, and they received the crown of martyrdom. They are commemorated on Abib 15.



St. Theodosia

St. Theodosia, mother of St. Proconius, along with two prefects and twelve other women, were martyred. When Theodosia heard that her son became Christian, and the Emperor had tortured him severely until he was close to death, she went to see him. She found them bringing him out of prison and all his wounds were healed. She and all those who were with her marveled. They all cried saying, "We believe in the God of Proconius." The Emperor ordered their heads cut off and they received the crown of martyrdom. She is commemorated on Abib 6.



St. Irene

St. Irene was the daughter of a pagan king, Lucianus. Her father loved her very much and desired to protect her from anything that might defile the name and honor of their family. Thus, he built a fortified mansion for her, leaving statues for her to worship. Her father also assigned a wise teacher to instruct her whom her father did not know was a Christian. One day, St. Irene saw a vision involving a dove, an olive leaf, and an eagle that confused her. Her teacher told her “the dove is the teaching of the Law, the olive leaf is baptism, the eagle is the victory, and the crown is the glory of the saints.

The raven is the king, and the serpent is persecution.” He told her she had to struggle for the sake of the faith in the Lord Christ. One day, her father informed her that she should marry one of the princes. She prayed to the statues, asking their advice, but they did not answer. She then prayed, “O God of the Christians, guide me to whatever pleases you.” The angel of the Lord appeared to her and said, “Tomorrow one of the disciples of St. Paul will come to you, will teach you what you need to know, and then will baptize you.” St. Timothy, the apostle, came and did so. Her father learned of her conversion and tortured her by tying her to the tail of an untamed horse. She was not harmed, but instead, the horse hurled her father to the ground and killed him. St. Irene prayed for her father, and he rose from the dead. Her father, his wife, and 3,000 others converted to Christianity. She is commemorated on Mesra 21.



MORNING PRAYER

O Lord,

grant me to meet the coming day in peace.

Help me in all things to rely upon Your holy will.

In every hour of the day, reveal Your will to me.

Bless my dealing with all who surround me.

Teach me to treat all that comes to me throughout the day with peace of soul and with firm conviction that

Your will governs all.

In all my deeds and words, guide my thoughts and feelings. In unforeseen events, let me not forget that all are sent by You. Teach me to act firmly and wisely, without embittering and embarrassing others.

Give me strength to bear the fatigue of the coming day

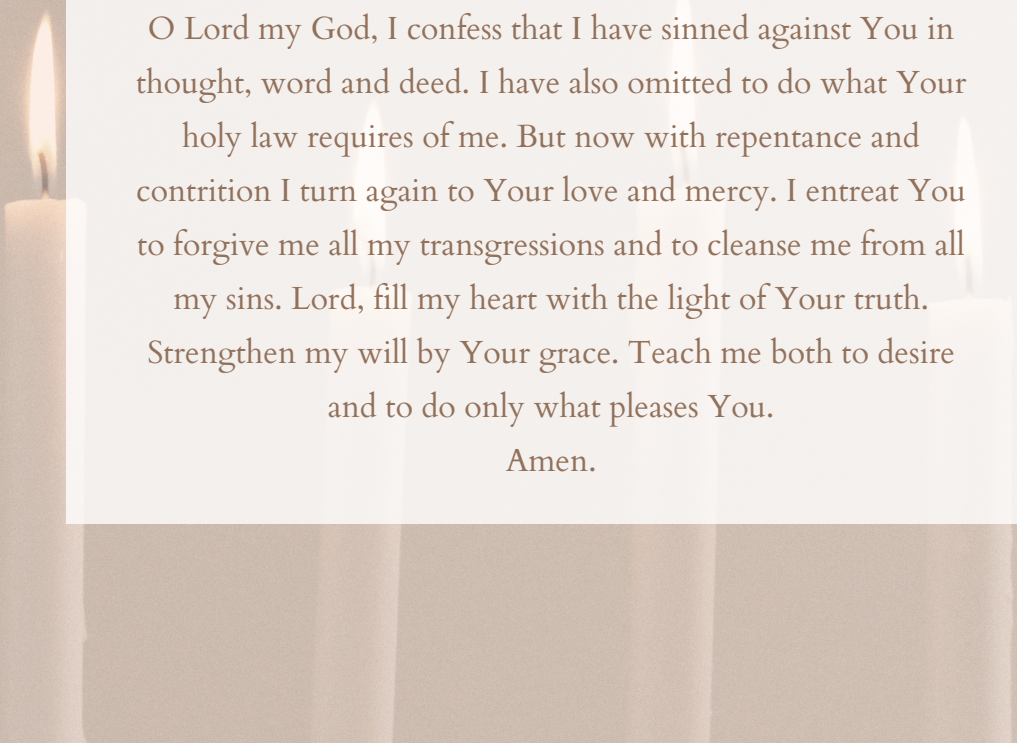
with all that it shall bring. Direct my will, teach me to pray, pray You Yourself in me. Amen.

- *Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow*

PRAYER FOR REPENTANCE

God, my good and loving Lord, I acknowledge all the sins which I have committed every day in my life, whether in thought, word or deed. I ask for forgiveness from the depths of my heart for offending You and others and repent of my old ways. Help me by Your grace to change, to sin no more and to walk in the way of righteousness and to praise and glorify Your Name, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Amen.



O Lord my God, I confess that I have sinned against You in thought, word and deed. I have also omitted to do what Your holy law requires of me. But now with repentance and contrition I turn again to Your love and mercy. I entreat You to forgive me all my transgressions and to cleanse me from all my sins. Lord, fill my heart with the light of Your truth. Strengthen my will by Your grace. Teach me both to desire and to do only what pleases You.

Amen.

PRAYER FOR LOVE

Christ my God, set my heart on fire with love in You that in its flame I may love You with all my heart, with all my mind, and with all my soul and with all my strength, and my neighbor as myself, so that by keeping Your commandments I may glorify You the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

Amen.

PRAYER FOR OUR ENEMIES

Lord Jesus Christ, in Your great mercy You prayed for the forgiveness of those who crucified You, and You taught us to love our enemies and to pray for those who persecute us. Lord, I pray that You forgive those who treat me unjustly and speak out against me, and that You bless them and guide them according to Your will. Take away any bitterness I may have in my heart against them. Lord, may Your forgiveness, goodness and love be revealed in all of us, for Your praise and glory.

Amen.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Almighty God and Creator, You are the Father of all people on the earth. Guide, I pray, all the nations and their leaders in the ways of justice and peace. Protect us from the evils of injustice, prejudice, exploitation, conflict and war. Help us to put away mistrust, bitterness and hatred. Teach us to cease the storing and using of implements of war. Lead us to find peace, respect and freedom. Unite us in the making and sharing of tools of peace against ignorance, poverty, disease and oppression. Grant that we may grow in harmony and friendship as brothers and sisters created in Your image, to Your honor and praise. Amen.

PRAYER TO YOUR PATRON SAINT

Saint (Name), Holy Mother of God and all the saints, who have pleased God in your lives; pray to Christ my Lord that I might live this day in peace, love, and humility.

Pray unto God for me, O Holy Saint (Name), well pleasing to God: for I turn to you, who are a speedy helper and intercessor for my soul.

“The kingdom of God is within you’ means the joy which the Holy Spirit plants in your hearts. For He is the icon and token of eternal joy which the souls of the saints enjoy.” – St Gregory of Nyssa

“Joy is not something one can define or analyze. One enters into joy. And we have no other means of entering into that joy, no way of understanding it, except through the one action which from the beginning has been for the Church both the source and the fulfillment of joy – the very sacrament of joy, the Eucharist... The Liturgy is, before everything else, the joyous gathering of those who are to meet the risen Lord and to enter with Him into the bridal chamber.” – Fr. Alexander Schmemmann



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