

**ST. JOSEPH THE BETROTHED**

**MELKITE GREEK- CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
**130 ST. FRANCIS CABRINI AVENUE ✕ SCRANTON, PA 18504**

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**PRAYER INTENTIONS**

P. H. S.: Rev. Dn. Joseph Daratony. Michael Abda. Marie Bar-  
ron. Nikki Boudreaux. George Bales Sr. Lucille Bales. Jayne  
Buckley. Chris Carey. John Coury. Maryann Nappi Donahue.  
Carol Downer. Robert Fairclough, Sr. Sara Gomez. Niko Ma-  
yashairo. Mary McNeilly. Sue Solsman. Susan Vieselmeyer.  
Dean & Sherry Yockey. **MEMORY ETERNAL:** ✕Rev.

Charles Aboody. ✕Rev. Michael Jolly. ✕Rev. Joseph Fran-  
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Abda. ✕Charlotte Abda. ✕James Abda. ✕Marie Abda. ✕Nancy  
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Eric Jolly. ✕Joseph King ✕Blakely Landell. ✕Elaine Manuele.  
✕Frank Milweski. ✕Frank Milweski, Jr. ✕Mary Lou Mooty. ✕  
Karen Murray. ✕Marie Patchoski. ✕Anthony Simon. ✕Bill  
Simon. ✕Ruth Sirgany. ✕Mary Ann Walsh. ✕Genevieve  
Zaydon

**CLERGY:**

Rev. Christopher Manuele, Presbyter

**DIVINE SERVICES:**

Wednesday :

Compline ..... 7:30 P.M

Saturday:

Great Vespers: ..... 3:15 P.M

Sunday:

Orthros ..... 9:00 A.M.

Divine Liturgy: ..... 10:00 A.M.

Holy Days:

Eve: Great Vespers: .... 7:00 P.M.

Day: Divine Liturgy ... 5:30 P.M

**HOLY MYSTERY OF CONFESSION:**

Before Vespers at 3:00 P.M.; follow-  
ing any service; or by appointment.

**HOLY ANOINTING OF THE SICK:**

Following services /call the Rectory.

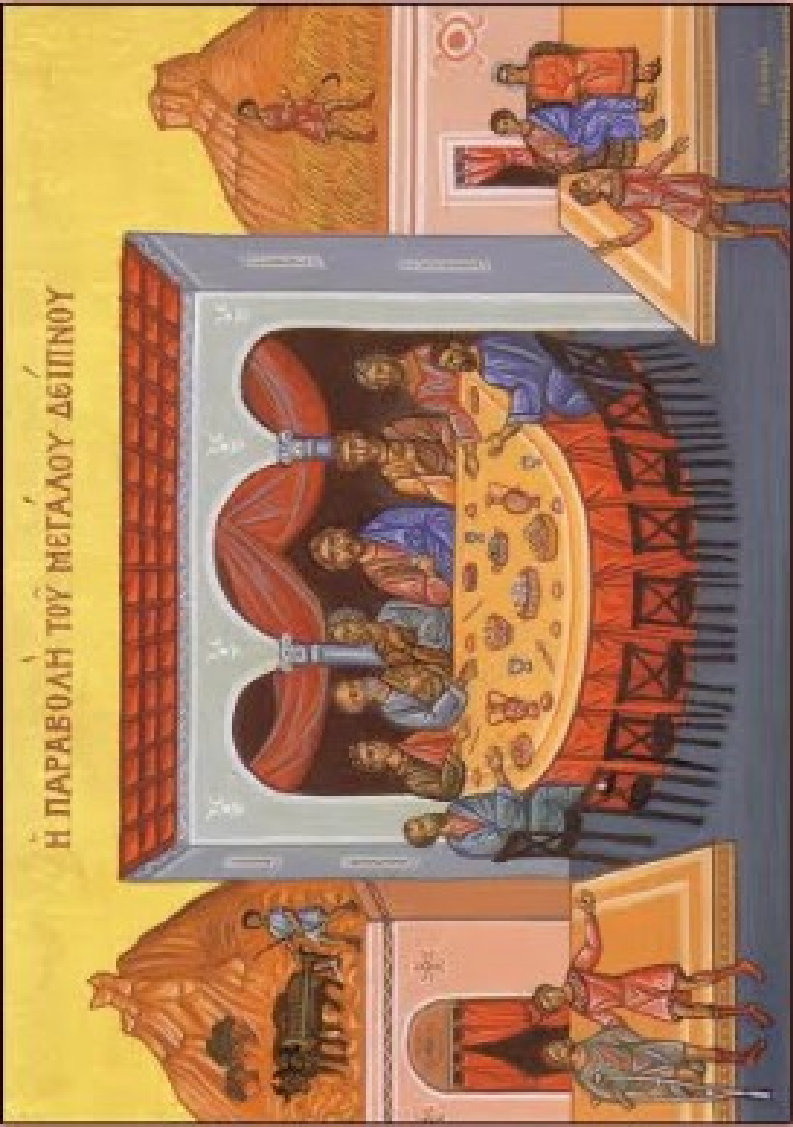
**HOLY MYSTERY OF CROWNING:**

Call rectory at earliest convenience.

**PARISH ADVISORY COUNCIL:**

Meetings as scheduled.

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



Icon of the Great Supper (Matthew 22:1-14)

# DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

06 SEPTEMBER 2020 ♦ TONE 05 ♦ EOTHINON 03 † FOURTEENTH SUNDAY PENTECOST / WEDDING FEAST

GREAT DOXOLOGY:

ANTIPHONS:

FIRST:

SECOND:

THIRD: *(Tone 5)*

ENTRANCE HYMN:

APOLYTIKIA:

*Resurrection (Tone 5)*

*Miracle worked by the Archangel Michael at Colossae*

O Captain and Leader of the armies of heaven, unworthy as we are, we beseech you without cease to surround us with your intercessions and cover us beneath the shelter of the wings of your ethereal glory. We bend our knee and cry out with perseverance: “Deliver us from danger, O Prince of the Powers on high!”

*St. Joseph*

KONDAKION: *Nativity of Theotokos*

TRISAGION:

PROKIMENON: *Psalms 11:8, 2*

You, O Lord, shall keep us and preserve us.

*Stichon:* Save me, O Lord, for the godly man has failed.

EPISTLE:

*Brethren*, the one who strengthened you and us in Christ, who anointed us, is God, who also stamped us with his seal and gave us the Spirit as a pledge in our hearts. Now, I call God to witness against my soul that it was to spare you that I did not come again to Corinth. Not that we lord it over your faith, but rather we are fellow-workers in your joy, for in faith you stand. I made up my mind not to come to you again in sorrow. For if I make you sad, who can gladden me; save the very one who is grieved by me? And I wrote to you as I did, that when I come I may not have sorrow upon sorrow from those who ought to give me joy: for I trust in all of you that my joy is a joy to all of you. For I wrote to you in much affliction and anguish of heart, with many tears, not that you might be grieved, but that you might know the great love I have for you.

ALLELUIA: *Psalms 88:2, 3*

I will sing of your mercies, O Lord, for ever. † For You have said, “Mercy shall be built up for ever.”

GOSPEL:

*The Lord told this parable:* The kingdom of heaven is like a king who made a marriage feast for his son. And he sent his servants to call in those invited to the marriage feast, but they would not come. Again he sent out other servants saying: ‘Tell those who are invited, behold. I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and fatlings are killed, and everything is ready; come to the marriage feast.’ But they made light of it, and went off, one to his own farm and another to his business; and the rest laid hold of his servants treated them shamefully, and killed them. But when the king heard of it, he was angry; and he sent his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Then he said to his servants, ‘The marriage feast indeed is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy; go therefore to the crossroads, and invite to the marriage feast whomever you shall find.’ And his servants went out into the roads and gathered all those they found, both good and bad; and the marriage feast was filled with guests. Now the king went in to see the guests, and he saw there a man who had not on a wedding garment. And he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?’ But he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind his hands and feet, take hold of him, and throw him out into the darkness, where there will be weeping and the gnashing of teeth.’ For many are called, but few are chosen.”

HIRMOS:

KINONIKON:

*Liturgy Book p. 1*

*Liturgy Book p. 11*

*Liturgy Book p. 11*

*Liturgy Book p. 18*

*Liturgy Book p. 14*

*Liturgy Book p. 18*

*(Tone 4)*

*Liturgy Book p. 20*

*Liturgy Book p. 107*

*Liturgy Book p. 23*

*(Tone 5)*

*2 Corinthians 1:21-2:4*

*St. Matthew 22:2-14*

*Liturgy Book p. 150*

*Liturgy Book p. 151*

In his book, Theotokos, Archbishop Raya tell us that the Western Church sets aside Sept. 12 to honor the name of Mary. He also says that the early writers and Fathers of the Church translated "Miriam" to mean "the enlightened one", "the light giver" but St. Bernard of Clairvaux gives the name to mean "Star of the Sea." He says we should call upon Mary when we are "battered to and fro by the gales and storms of this life's ocean" and if "waves of pride or ambition or slander or envy toss you...if billows of anger or avarice ... or the enormity of your sins troubles you... if the dread of judgment appalls you, if you begin to slip into the deep of despondency, in the pit of despair, think of Mary". (p. 86) One of the verses of the Acathist to Mary is "Hail O Star who manifest the Sun." (Byzantine Daily Worship p.969)

The feast of the Nativity of Mary is connected to the feast of Saints Joachim and Anne on Sept. 9 and the feast of the Maternity of Anne on Dec. 9. The icon of Joachim and Anne embracing at the city gates is based on the story told in the Protevangelium of James and The Gospel of the Birth of Mary, apocryphal books used by the Eastern Church. These books have influenced the subject matter of icons and also liturgical prayers of the feasts. In the first chapter of Matthew a genealogy of Jesus Christ is given ending with Joseph, the husband of Mary and foster father of Jesus. The first verse says that Jesus is "son of David and son of Abraham." This is important because the prophecies concerning the Messiah reveal that the Christ would be a descendant of King David (see Psalm 132:11; Isaiah 11: 1-2, 10; Jeremiah 23.5-6 and 33: 15-16). The Gospel of the Birth of Mary begins: "The blessed and ever glorious Virgin Mary, sprang from the royal race and family of David, was born in the city of Nazareth, and educated in the Temple of the Lord." It is in this book that we learn that her father's name is Joachim who is from Nazareth in Gallilee, and her mother's name is Anna who was from the town of Bethlehem. Her parents were fairly wealthy and generous. They divided their substance into three parts, one part for the Temple and its staff; one part for strangers and the poor; and the third part was for the use of their household. For about twenty years Anna prayed for a child and vowed to dedicate that child to the service of the Lord if God favors her prayer. When Joachim goes to Jerusalem to bring his yearly offering, the high priest rejects his offering saying it would not be acceptable to God. He cites Scripture: "Cursed is every one who shall not beget a male in Israel"(p. The LOST BOOKS OF THE BIBLE and the forgotten books of EDEN, World Bible Publishers, Inc. p.18). He says Joachim should not give offerings to God until he has a child.

The Protevangelion says that Joachim then goes into the wilderness and fasts forty days and nights saying" I will not go down either to eat or drink, till the Lord my God shall look down upon me, but prayer shall be my meat and drink." Anna, too, is distressed about her barrenness when she sees a sparrow's nest. She accuses herself because all of creation is fruitful but she is not. Without children there was no hope of giving birth to the Messiah. Then the Angel appears to Joachim and Anna separately telling them that the Lord has heard their prayers. The Gospel of the Birth of Mary says the Angel tells Joachim that he shall have a daughter and call her "Mary". The angel then tells him that Mary shall be devoted to the Lord from infancy "and be filled with the Holy Ghost from her mother's womb" and "while yet a virgin, in a way unparalleled, bring forth the Son of the most High God, who shall be called Jesus, and, according to the significance of his name, be the Savior of all nations." The angel foretells that when Joachim comes to the golden gate of Jerusalem that Anna shall be there watching for him. The icon of Joachim and Anna embracing at the golden gate of Jerusalem speaks to us this story.

The Genesis reading for the feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos focuses on the vision of Jacob, son of Isaac, son of Abraham. At Bethel he sees in a dream a ladder set up on earth and the top reaching into heaven with the angels of God ascending and descending on it. The title "Jacobs Ladder" is often applied to the Theotokos because she was the means by which God incarnate was made present to His people, living with and redeeming mankind and all things. From the Acathist to Mary we read "Hail O Celestial Ladder by whom God came down; hail O Bridge leading earthly ones to heaven!" (The reading from Ezechiel focuses on Mary as ever virgin: "This gate shall remain shut; it shall not be opened, and no one shall enter by it; for the Lord, the God of Israel, has entered by it: therefore it shall remain shut." (44:2). The Acathist reads: "Hail, O Lady, unique gateway through whom the Lord alone has passed!" (BDW p.961)

Proverbs focuses on gaining wisdom by listening to instruction and pondering on it and then acting in righteousness, justice and equity. Gaining Christ is the focus, and not doing evil, for Christ is the Wisdom and Word of the Father. Proverbs coincides with the Epistle and Gospel readings.

The Epistle read for the feast tells us to have the mind of Christ, extreme humility. The Gospel tells us to focus on Christ and not to let daily duties deter us. The Gospel ends with "Blessed, rather, are those who hear the word of God and keep it." This returns us to the Divine Plan: salvation for all. We honor Mary not only for who she is, Mother of the Lord, but for her total dedication to the will of God.

# The Nativity of the Theotokos:

When I was a young mother and Archbishop Joseph Raya was our pastor I remember that he told me to teach my children to respect things. At the time I thought it was just practical advice. I never thought of it as spiritual advice. But during the years I have said the Trisagion prayers it finally hit me that in that prayer we say that the Holy Spirit is "present in all places and filling all things". All creation, things as well as persons, have the potential of being the vehicle by which man touches God and God touches man. This is the theology of the icon as well as the sacrament. (See Ephesians 1: 10; Col 1: 16-20, 23; John 12: 32-some translations use the word "things"). In the Eastern Church the Church Year begins on September 1. So the Church cycle of feasts begins at the beginning of the story of how God became man, through the faithful and most pure Virgin Mary. In order to understand the icon one will continually encounter certain words and symbols:

incarnation  
light and darkness  
good and evil  
life and death

The doctrine of the incarnation of Christ, the fact that Christ has two natures, and the fact that mankind is made in the image and likeness of God are basic reasons used in the defense of the use of icons made by St. John of Damascus. God became man, "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us...we have beheld His glory...I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life" (John 1:14; 8: 12). Because God became man the world is no longer in darkness but is penetrated by the light of Christ. Therefore matter is changed, recreated, and becomes in the icon and in the sacraments the means of the presence of Christ on earth, giving all creation the potential to reveal Christ to us. Furthermore, Christ's human nature is the model from which mankind is made and thus is our human potential by the powerful gift of the Holy Spirit.

The artist and the photographer know that light is everything. Light reveals a certain truth about the situation depicted and its awesomeness. Light strikes an object and spreads its revelation to the objects surrounding it. According to St. Bonaventure "light had a sacred character. Light participates somehow in the properties of God; it rises above matter and space, multiplies itself, and spreads out over all being...light played a predominant role in the stained glass windows of Gothic cathedrals...light makes colors shine and thus gives them life...unites itself to colors by penetrating them...becoming one with them...For this reason, certain theologians have seen light as a symbol of the Holy Spirit descending into the Virgin Mary." (The Icon, Image of the Invisible by Egon Sendler; p.168.)

The birth of the Theotokos (God bearer) on September 8 is the beginning of the act of incarnation and our salvation through Jesus Christ. Note that the beginning of the Church Year is the Nativity of Mary and the end of the Church Year is her Falling Asleep (August 15). The Troparion of the feast sums up what has been said:

"Your nativity, O Mother of God, heralded joy to the whole universe, for from you rose the Sun of Justice, Christ our God, taking away the curse, He imparted the blessings, and by abolishing death, He gave us everlasting life."

The icon shows St. Anne reclining on a couch attended by women. In the foreground is the Midwife preparing to wash the child Mary. Joachim is often shown in the icon but not in all icons of the Nativity.

By the sixteenth century some icons also show a scene in which Joachim and Anne are caressing their infant. According to the apocryphal book the Protevangelium of St. James, the name "Mary" or "Miriam" was given by the Angel when he announced to Joachim and Anne they would have the child they had prayed for. Only one other Old Testament person bore the name Mary or Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron. Mary means "hope". Miriam was the "hope" of the liberation of the Israelites because she saved Moses who would become liberator and savior of her people Israel as found in the book of Exodus 2:4-8. Like the Nativity of John the Baptist and the birth of Isaac from the sterile Sarah, the Nativity of the Mother of God was considered to be a prefiguring of the Resurrection. "But the Nativity of the Mother of God is more than a figure, for in the person of St. Anna-a woman freed from her sterility to bring into the world a Virgin who would give birth to God incarnate-it is our nature which ceases to be sterile in order to start bearing the fruits of grace." (The Meaning of Icons by Vladimir Lossky and Leonid Ouspensky, p. 146.) The largest figure in the icon is St. Anne and in some icons, St. Joachim who are the focus of the icon. If Adam and Eve are the parents of fallen humanity then Joachim and Ann are grandparents of God's "re-creation".

## SAINT JOSEPH CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

### EVENTS IN SEPTEMBER

Saturday, September 05, 2020

*Great Vespers 3:15 p.m.*

*Sunday Divine Liturgy 4:00 p.m.*

Sunday, September 06, 2020

*Sunday Divine Liturgy 8:30 a.m.*

*Sunday Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.*

Monday, September 7th

*Great Vespers 7:00 p.m.*

Tuesday, September 8th

**NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS**

**ONE OF THE TWELVE GREAT FEASTS**

*Divine Liturgy 5:30 p.m.*

Sunday, September 13th

*Divine Liturgy 5:30 p.m.*

Monday, September 14th

**EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS**

**ONE OF THE TWELVE GREAT FEASTS**

*Divine Liturgy and Procession*

*10:00 a.m.*

*Gregory the Great Academy*

*119 Griffin Road*

*Elmhurst Township PA 18544*

### EVENTS IN OCTOBER

Wednesday, October 14th

*Ladies Society Pasta Dinner*

*Take-out and curb-side pickup*

*4:00 p.m. – 6 :00 p.m.*

### 2020 WEEKLY COLLECTION

August 30

**Weekly Offering \$ 1,320.00**

**Monthly \$ 5.00**

**Holydays \$ 40.00**

**Divine Liturgy \$30.00**

**Candles \$ 15.00**

**Total: \$ 1,410.00**

*Thank you for your support!*

### DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

05 September†Anthony Joseph Bolus  
from Barbara Albert

06 September†Anthony Joseph Bolus  
from Barbara Albert

12 September†Anthony Joseph Bolus  
from Barbara Albert

13 September†Anthony Joseph Bolus  
from Barbara Albert

19 September†Anthony Joseph Bolus  
from Barbara Albert

20 September†Anthony Joseph Bolus  
From James & Alexis Davis

26 September†Anthony Joseph Bolus  
From James & Alexis Davis

27 September†Anthony Joseph Bolus  
From Frank Toolan

03 October†Dolores Ruthowski & Beverly  
Thomas from St Joseph Church

04 October†Anthony Joseph Bolus  
from Jean Cecci

10 October†Anthony Joseph Bolus  
from Jim & Betsy Zaydon

11 October†Anthony Joseph Bolus  
from St. Joseph Ladies Society

17 October†Anthony Joseph Bolus  
from Anthony & Kathie Barrett



# Story of a Royal Wedding

*Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost*

THE GOSPEL PARABLE READ at today’s Divine Liturgy is actually two stories with two different, if complementary, points. The first concerns those invited to the banquet and those who finally came. The second is the issue of the so-called “wedding garment.”

The Gospel of Matthew depicts Christ as encountering increasing opposition the closer He came to the center of the Jewish establishment, Jerusalem. In Mt 21:1-17, Jesus enters the Holy City, ejects the money-changers from the temple and confronts the chief priests. Then we read four vignettes, each criticizing the Jewish leadership in the harshest of terms.

The first such condemnation is the episode of the withered fig tree (Mt 21:18-22). Then, in Mt 21:28-32, we read about the two sons: one who professed obedience to his father, but in words only – a veiled criticism of the Pharisees, who claimed to know the will of God – and the second who actually did the father’s will.

In the words of St Hilary of Poitiers, the religious leaders “...put their faith in the Law and despised repentance from sin, glorying instead in the noble prerogative that they had from Abraham (*Homily on Matthew* 21:13).

The second son recalls the sinners who repented at the preaching of John the Baptist: the tax collectors and harlots who enter the kingdom of God before “the righteous,” because one can repent of greed and lust, but not for the denial of the need for repentance. Finally, in verses 33-46, we read the parable of the wicked vinedressers, whose infidelity leads the owner of the vineyard to lease it to others. And, as the Gospel reminds us, “*When the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables, they perceived that He was speaking of them*” (Mt 21:45).

## The Royal Wedding

The story of the wedding banquet is in many ways an echo of the parable of the vinedressers. In each story, an important person reaches out to his people; he is rebuffed and finally turns to others. The vineyard owner in the first parable and the king in the second both represent God. The disdainful tenants and the invited guests signify the people of Israel. The new tenants of the first story and the new guests of the second represent the Gentiles, who would respond in faith.

It may be hard for us to imagine the reaction of the invited guests to the banquet. An invitation to such an occasion would be esteemed, even coveted. “*But,*” as the Gospel says, “*they made light of it and went their way: one to his own farm, another to his business*” (Mt 22:5). It is as if Matthew were describing our own day rather than his. This is the way that Many Christians – our own friends and relatives sadly among them – react to their invitation to the Eucharistic banquet week after week. But how could an invitation to a royal wedding be dismissed so easily?

Couching this parable in terms of a royal wedding is a way of saying that the initiative of God in sending to Israel the prophets who announced the coming Messiah was at least as compelling as an invitation to a king’s gala. One after another, prophets came and were recognized in some way as foretelling what was to come. At last the Forerunner came and proclaimed, “Everything is ready – this is the Lamb of God” but was ignored by many who heard him. Those invited had so lost themselves in the concerns of the everyday world that they treated the king’s invitation like junk mail.

## Those Who Accept the Invitation

The messengers seek out – not the pillars of society at their farms and businesses –but the insignificant on

the highways, representing the Gentiles. According to the Jewish opinion of the day, the Gentiles were inferior in God’s eyes to the Chosen People. Nevertheless, they respond to the king’s invitation while the “important people” did not.

Churchmen are often criticized for catering to the well-to-do: landowners, benefactors, etc. Pope Francis of Rome has repeatedly pushed Catholics to focus their efforts on the poor, without ignoring the leaders of society. In fact, he notes, what generally happens in our world is generally the opposite. “If investments in the banks fail, ‘Oh, it’s a tragedy.’” He said at a Pentecost vigil in Rome; “but if people die of hunger or don’t have food or health, nothing happens. This is our crisis today.” In the language of Matthew 22, Pope Francis might be called “the bishop of the highways.”

## The Wedding Garment

In the second part of this parable, the people from the highways have come to the banquet, but one is not wearing the appropriate “wedding garment.” In Jewish tradition, this meant *finery*, one’s best clothing. A Jewish parable tells of a king inviting people to a banquet. Some went home and prepared immediately. Others continued working and arrived still in their work clothes and so were not allowed in. In the Gospel, this theme of readiness is frequently found in Jesus’ teachings, particularly in the parable of the wise and foolish virgins (Mt 25:1-13).

Many Fathers interpreted “the appropriate garment” to mean a virtuous life. The Gentiles may have replaced the leadership of Israel in the People of God, but if they ignored the Gospel way of life, they too would be excluded. St Gregory the Dialogist saw the garment as woven out of love for God and love for others. “These are great precepts,” he wrote, “sublime precepts, and for many they are hard to fulfill; nevertheless, this is the wedding garment. And whoever sits down at the wedding feast without it, let him watch with fear: for when the King comes in, he shall be cast forth.”

The “Bridegroom Matins” of Holy Week uses this interpretation as the basis for its beloved exapostilarion, “I see Your bridal chamber adorned, O my Savior, but I not possess the right garment that I might enter therein. Brighten the robe of my soul, O Giver of light, and save me.” We must acknowledge our own spiritual emptiness (“I have no garment”) and seek God’s grace (“Brighten the robe of my soul”) to be made worthy of a place at the banquet.

How shall I enter the splendor of Your holy place, for I am unworthy? If I dare to enter the bridal chamber, my clothing will accuse me, since it is not a wedding garment, and I shall be chained and cast out by the angels. O Lord, cleanse the stain of my soul and save me, for You are the Lover of mankind.

O Bridegroom more beautiful than all men, who have called us to the spiritual banquet of Your bridal chamber, remove from me the ill-clad image of my iniquities by this sharing in Your sufferings. Adorn me with the glorious robe of your beauty and manifest me as a radiant guest of your kingdom, for You are compassionate.

*From the Bridegroom Matins of Holy Week*