

ST. JOSEPH THE BETROTHED

MELKITE GREEK- CATHOLIC CHURCH
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PRAYER INTENTIONS

P. H. S.: Rev. Dn. Jos. Daratony. Mich. Abda. Marie Barron.
Nikki Boudreaux. George Bales Sr. Lucille Bales. Jayne Buck-
ley. Chris Carey. John Coury. Maryann Nappi Donahue. Car-
ol Downer. Dav. Fairclough, Sr. Rob. Fairclough, Sr. Sara
Gomez. Niko Mayashairo. Mary McNeilly. Jos. Ed. Bartnicki.
Sue Solsman. SusVieselmeyer. Dean & Sherry Yockey.

MEMORY ETERNAL: ✱Rev. Char. Aboody. ✱Rev. Mich. Jol-
ly. ✱Rev. Jos. Francavilla. ✱Rev. Theo. Leonarczyk ✱Rev. Frank
Milienewicz ✱Dn. John Karam. ✱Marie Abda. ✱Charlotte &
James Abda. ✱Marie Abda. ✱Nancy Abda. ✱Janice Assaf. ✱
Thalia Assaf ✱Paul Bauman. ✱A.J. Bolus. ✱Jos. Bolus. ✱Gary
Bolos. ✱Nich. Cianci. ✱Patricia Cimacosky. ✱Ann Coury. ✱
Mary Sue Betress. ✱Cecilia Davidson ✱Margt. Dillenburg ✱Eric
Jolly. ✱Jos. King ✱Blakely Landell. ✱Elaine Manuele. ✱Frank
Milewski, Sr. ✱Frank Milewski, Jr. ✱Mary L. Mooty. ✱Karen
Murray. ✱Marie Patchoski. ✱Anth. Simon. ✱Bill Simon. ✱Ruth
Sirgany. ✱Mary A. Walsh. ✱Gen. Zaydon

CLERGY:

Rev. Christopher Manuele, Presbyter

DIVINE SERVICES:

Tuesday :

Compline 0:00 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: 5:30 P.M.

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

HOLY MYSTERY OF CONFESSION:

Before Vespers at 3:00 P.M.; following
any service; or by appointment.

HOLY ANOINTING OF THE SICK:

Following services /call the Rectory.

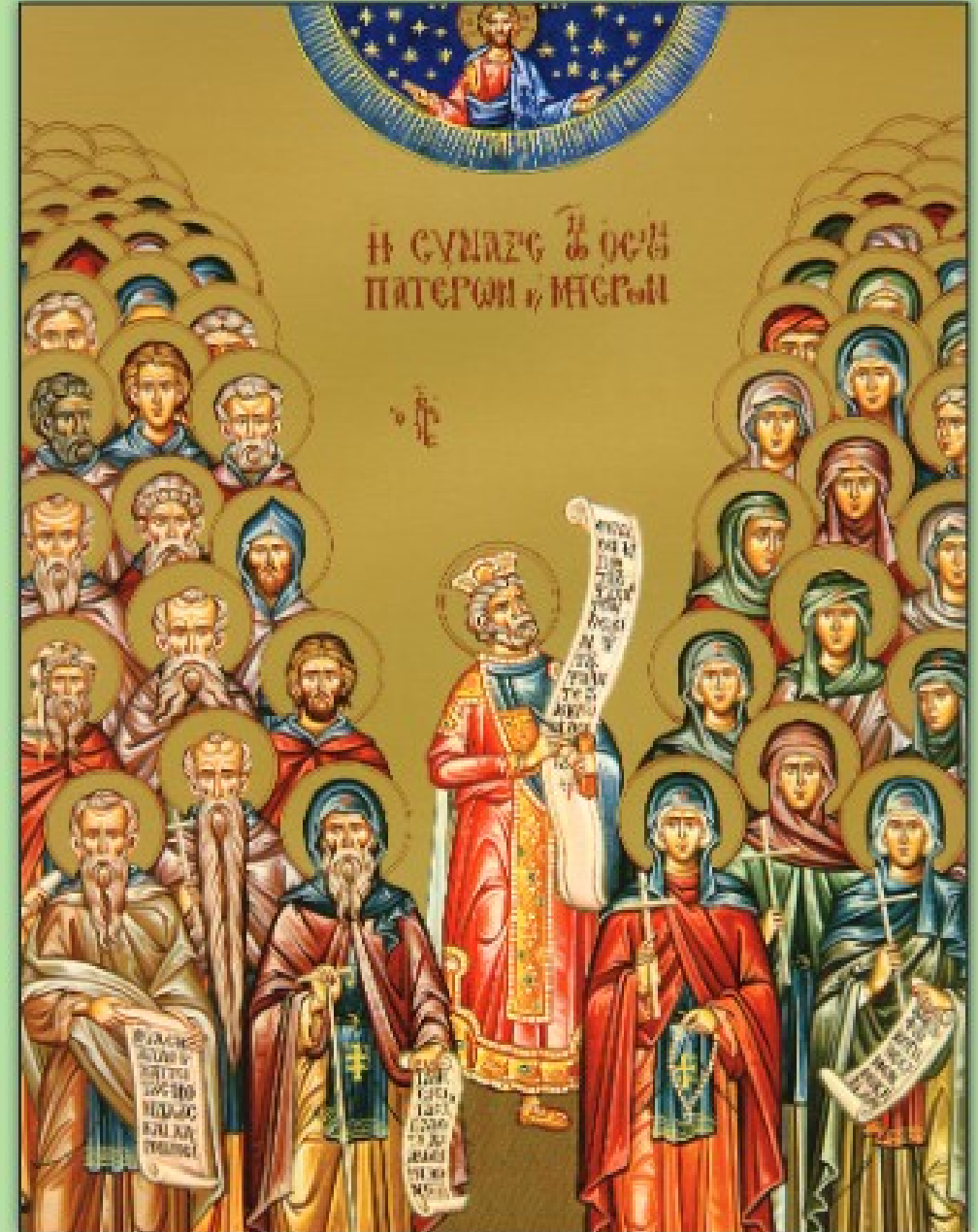
HOLY MYSTERY OF CROWNING:

Call rectory at earliest convenience.

VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR:

Report Sexual Abuse: 1.800.479.5910

SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD SUNDAY OF THE ANCESTORS



Icon of the Holy Ancestors

DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

18 DECEMBER 2022 ♦ TONE 03 EOTHINON 06 † SUNDAY BEFORE TEH NATIVITY/GENEALOGY SUNDAY

GREAT DOXOLOGY:

ANTIPHON:

FIRST:

SECOND:

THIRD:

ENTRANCE HYMN:

APOLYTIKIA:

Resurrection (Tone 3)

Nativity Preparation

Faith can accomplish great things. Through it, the Three Holy Children rejoice in the flames as if they had been in refreshing water, and Daniel in the midst of lions is like a shepherd among his sheep. Through their intercession, O Christ God, save our souls

Nativity Preparation

Bethlehem, make ready, for Eden has been opened for all; Ephrata, be alert, for the Tree of Life has blossomed forth from the Virgin in the cave. Her womb has become a spiritual paradise wherein the divine Fruit was planted – and if we eat of it, we shall live and not die like Adam. Christ is coming forth to bring back to life the likeness that had been lost in the beginning.

St. Joseph

KONTAKION: *Preparation of the Nativity*

TRISAGION:

PROKIMENON: *Ps. 75: 12, 2 (Tone 3)*

EPISTLE:

Brethren, by faith, Abraham lived in the Land of the Promise as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the co-heirs of the same promise, for he was looking for the city with fixed foundations, of which city the architect and builder is God. And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barac, Samson, Jephthe, David and Samuel and the prophets, who by faith conquered kingdoms, wrought justice, obtained the fulfillment of promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of sword, recovered strength from weakness, became valiant in battle, routed foreign armies. Women had their dead restored to them though resurrection. Others were tortured, refusing to yield for their release in order to obtain a better resurrection. Others again suffered mockery and blows, even chains and jailings. They were stoned, cut to pieces, put to the question, killed by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, distressed, afflicted (of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts, mountains, caves and holes in the ground. And none of these, despite the positive witnessing of faith, received what was promised, for God has something better in store for us, so that they were not to reach their final perfection without us.

ALLELUIA: *Psalm 98:6, 33:18*

O God, our ears have heard, our fathers have declared to us the deeds You did in their days, in the days of old.

The just cried out, and the Lord heard them, and He delivered them from all their trials.

GOSPEL:

St. Luke 14:16-24

The book of the origin of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, Jacob begot Judah and his brethren. Judah begot Perez and Zarah whose mother was Thamar. Perez begot Hezron, Hezron begot Ram. And Ram begot Amminadab, Amminadab begot Nahshon, Nahshon begot Salma. Salma begot Boaz of Rahab. Boaz begot Obed of Ruth, Obed begot Jesse, Jesse begot David the King. And David the King begot Solomon of the former wife of Uriah. Solomon begot Rehoboam, Rehoboam begot Abijah, Abijah begot Asa. And Asa begot Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat begot Joram, Joram begot Azariah. And Azariah begot Jotham, Jotham begot Ahaz, Ahaz begot Ezechiah. And Ezechiah begot Manasseh, Manasseh begot Amon, Amon begot Josiah. And Josiah begot Jeconiah and his brethren at the time of deportation to Babylon. And after the deportation to Babylon, Jeconiah begot Shealtiel, Shealtiel begot Zerubbabel. And Zerubbabel begot Abiud, Abiud begot Eliakim, Eliakim begot Azor. And Azor begot Zadok, Zadok begot Achim, Achim begot Eliud. And Eliud begot Eleazar, Eleazar begot Matthan, Matthan begot Jacob. And Jacob begot Joseph, the husband of Mary, and of her was born Jesus, Who is called Christ. So, all the generations from Abraham to David are

Liturgy Book p. 17

Liturgy Book p. 29

Liturgy Book p. 32

Liturgy Book p. 36/ 40

Liturgy Book p. 38

Liturgy Book p. 40

Tone 2

Tone 4

Liturgy Book p. 47

Liturgy Book p. 150

Liturgy Book p. 50

Liturgy Book p. 55

Hebrews 11:9-10; 32-40

(Tone 2)

dreams may urge a person to commit ungodly acts or embrace a false belief, to see ourselves as singled out for unique blessings or cause us to despair.

Other dreams have a godly origin and purpose as the lives of some saints attest. In nineteenth century Italy a nine-year old John Bosco dreamed of Christ and His mother showing him a crowd of “... animals: goats, dogs, cats, bears and a variety of others.

““This is your field, this is where you must work,’ the Lady told me. ‘Make yourself humble, steadfast, and strong. And what you will see happen to these animals you will have to do for my children.’

“I looked again; the wild animals had turned into as many lambs, gently gamboling lambs, bleating a welcome for that Man and Lady.

“At this point of my dream I started to cry and begged the Lady to explain what it all meant because I was so confused. She then placed her hand on my head and said: ‘In due time everything will be clear to you.’

“After she had spoken these words, some noise awoke me; everything had vanished.”

The boy would devote his life to working with street children, establishing schools and forming teachers to staff them.

So Should I Believe in My Dreams?

While it is clear that God can and does speak to people in dreams, none of us should presume that we are equipped to discern or judge whether a dream is of God or not. Saints and elders throughout the ages counsel us to be wary of judging that a dream is the voice of God. “*He who believes in dreams is completely inexperienced*,” says St. John Climacus, “*but he who distrusts all dreams is a wise man*” *The Ladder*, step 3.

If we are convinced we have had a godly dream, advise Saints Barsanuphius and John, “*Strive to receive an interpretation of its significance from the Saints, and do not believe your own idea.*” “The Saints” here include those Fathers and elders throughout the centuries who have taught the Church about the ways God communicates with us. It also includes those whom we can consult personally for advice on how to consider our dreams.

We should respond to powerful dreams the same way we deal with other areas of our spiritual life: by consulting with our spiritual guide. Someone who knows the Tradition and who knows us equally well can often discern whether our dreams are of God, of our own devising, or of demonic powers. This guide can be wrong and misjudge a godly dream; but if the dream reflects God’s will for us, God surely will find another way to make His will clear to us.

St. Nicholas and the Emperor

Another dream celebrated in our Tradition concerns St. Nicholas. When three officers had been unjustly accused to the emperor and condemned to death, Nicholas “appeared for the defense” in dreams, securing their release.

When you appeared in a dream to Constantine the King and to Evlavios, you gave them this warning: “Release at once from prison those you have unjustly confined; for they are innocent – no murder did they commit as you claim. O King, listen to me; or else I shall call upon the Lord!”

(Vespers sticheron, December 6)

DOES GOD SPEAK THROUGH OUR DREAMS?

EVERYONE DREAMS, we are told, but not everyone remembers all their dreams. Some dreams have been described as powerful experiences, portraying a numinous presence with clarity, intensity and vividness.

Since dreams are so much a part of everyone’s life, they have been the objects of study for millennia, from Babylonian astrologers to contemporary psychologists. Many people today recount dreams of their departed relatives, angels and saints. Is belief in dreams compatible with the Christian faith?

Religious interpretation of dreams has figured in all Middle Eastern religions including Christianity. It has been said that approximately one-third of the Bible is devoted to dreams, visions, prophetic calls and angelic visitations. The patriarch Jacob, for example, dreamed of a ladder reaching to heaven and sanctified that place as Bethel, the house of God (Gen 28:11-19).

It was in a night vision that Jacob heard God’s call to take his people into Egypt (Gen 46:1-4). It was by interpreting their kings’ dreams that Joseph rose to prominence in Egypt and Daniel in Babylon.

The Gospel of Matthew tells of four dreams experienced by Joseph, the spouse of the Theotokos. In the first dream he learns of the conception of Jesus (Mt 1:20-21); in another he is told to flee Herod’s wrath and go to Egypt (Mt 2:13). Joseph brings his family back from Egypt after Herod’s death as the result of a dream (Mt 2:19-20) and settles in Nazareth after another (Mt 2:22-23).

In Acts we are told that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost will result in dreams and visions, as the prophet Joel foretold (Joel 2:28-29). Dreams by or of the saints have been reported from earliest days of the Church until today. In the second century *The Martyrdom of Ignatius* testified that St Ignatius of Antioch subsequently appeared to some eyewitnesses of his death. *“It came to pass, on our falling into a brief slumber, that some of us saw the blessed Ignatius suddenly standing by us and embracing us, while others beheld him again praying for us...”* In the fourth century St Monica, mother of the Blessed Augustine, was grieving over her son’s immoral lifestyle. She then had the following dream: she saw herself praising God in heaven and her son worshiping with her. Her son was ultimately converted and is now, along with his mother, glorified among the saints.

The Sources of Dreams

Dreams arise from a variety of causes and have been classified by many Christian writers as follows.

- *Dreams of purely human origins* – What we have on our minds, good or bad, might surface as a dream. Some dreams, as contemporary psychiatrist Karen Horney writes in her book *Self-Analysis*, may be the voice of our aspirations. Others, as St Gregory of Sinai attested in the tenth century, are the result of too much food!
- *Dreams of supernatural origin* – Not every “spiritual” dream is godly. The Scriptures record incidents of false prophets basing their ideas on dreams and on God’s response. *“‘Do I not fill heaven and earth?’ says the Lord. ‘I have heard what those prophets have said who prophesy lies in my name saying, ‘I have dreamed, I have dreamed’”* (Jer 23:24-25). Such

SAINT JOSEPH CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

fourteen generations. And from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to Christ, fourteen generations. Now the origin of Christ was like this. When Mary His mother had been betrothed to Joseph, she was found, before they came together, to be with child by the Holy Spirit. But Joseph her husband, being a just man and not wishing to expose her to reproach, was thinking of putting her away privately. But while he was considering these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Do not be afraid, Joseph, son of David, to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is begotten in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she shall bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins.” Now all this came to pass that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled, *“Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son; and they shall call his name Emmanuel;”* which is interpreted, “God with us.” So, Joseph, arising from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him, and took Mary to be his wife. And he did not know her till she brought forth her firstborn son. And he called His name Jesus.

EVENTS IN DECEMBER

Saturday Evening, December 17th

Confessions: 3:00 p.m.

Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.

Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 18th

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

Religious Education

Church Decoration

Friday, December 23rd

Royal Hours 10:00 a.m.

Confessions 11:30 am – Noon

Saturday, December 24th

Great Vespers 5:30 p.m.

D. Liturgy: J. Chrysostom: 6:00 p.m.

D. Liturgy: St. Basil: Midnight

Sunday, December 25th

Nativity Orthros 8:30 a.m.

Basil Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH

O St. Joseph, chaste spouse of the Lady Theotokos, head of the Holy Family, we again place ourselves under your patronage. † Through your powerful intercession, bestow up on us every good thing both spiritual and temporal. † Protect this your parish from all spiritual harm and renew in us the spirit of repentance and a fervent desire for the kingdom of heaven. † Make this vineyard flourish with new souls and by an increase of faith, hope and love; may forgiveness, peace and joy reign within our holy fellowship. † In all we do, may the Name of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be glorified, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

- 17 December: ✠Janice Assaf
from St. Joseph Ladies Society
- 18 December: ✠Janice Assaf
from Joseph & Jemille Zaydon
- 24 December: ✠Eugene &
Thalia Marlene Assaf
- 25 December ✠Janice Assaf

2022 WEEKLY COLLECTION

December 04

Weekly Offering:	\$ 790.00
Christmas Flowers:	\$415.00
Candles:	\$ 25.00
Total:	\$ 1,300.00

DEC. 17: HOLY PROPHET DANIEL & 3 YOUNG MEN

IN OUR FIRST TONE TROPARION of the resurrection, sung repeatedly throughout the year, we chant these words: “Glory to Your economy, O You who alone are the Lover of mankind.” Our secular society uses the word *economy* for financial matters exclusively; the term has other meanings in the Church, particularly in the East.

“Divine economy” is the traditional way we refer to the way God interacts with the world, particularly in achieving the restoration of humanity to communion with Himself. Sometimes the term is paraphrased as plan of salvation or *dispensation*. The creation itself, and all the events connected with our redemption in Jesus Christ are included in the Church’s term *economy*. They are the way God “manages” His creation.

The highpoint of God’s plan for us is the Incarnation of the Word. Everything in the divine economy leading up to the coming of Christ is in some way a preparation for this event. The saga of Abraham and his descendants, the Israelites in Egypt, their exodus to the promised land and their subsequent history are all aspects of this plan which St Paul calls “*the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ*” (Eph 3:9).

One particular moment in the story of Israel figures prominently in our celebration during the Nativity Fast: the exile of the Jews to Babylon and the experience of three of them in the fiery furnace. These three young men are remembered along with the prophet Daniel on December 17 each year. They are also specifically invoked on the two Sundays before the Nativity because of the accomplishments of their faith.

The Babylonian Exile and the Book of Daniel

In 605 BC the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem and made its king a vassal. Responding to several rebellious incidents the Babylonians pillaged the city in 597 BC and destroyed the temple built by Solomon. The Jewish king, his court and many prominent Jews were taken captive and deported to Babylon. Their exile would end in 538 BC when the Persian king Cyrus the Great defeated the Babylonians and allowed the Jews to return home.

The story of the exile and captivity of the Jews forms the background of the Book of Daniel. Its present form, written in Hebrew and Greek, dates to the mid-second century BC, but contains some original Aramaic tales dating from the exile as well. It is generally considered an apocalyptic book, offering its readers consolation that their present troubles (Greek and Roman occupation) would one day end as the Babylonian exile had ended: with the liberation of the Jews and the restoration of true worship.

Daniel was a highly placed Jew, highly regarded for his faithfulness to the Law in an era when the Law was largely neglected. The prophet Ezechiel, who lived through the Babylonian exile, puts Daniel in the highest company in this prophecy: “*The word of the LORD came again to me, saying: ‘Son of man, when a land sins against Me by persistent unfaithfulness, I will stretch out My hand against it; I will cut off its supply of bread, send famine on it, and cut off man and beast from it. Even if these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job, were in it, they would deliver only themselves by their righteousness,’ says the Lord GOD*” (EZ 14:14).

The first part of the book includes three dramatic and prophetic scenes concerning Daniel and three other young Jewish nobles. When they were taken captive, they were im-

pressed into their captor’s service and given Babylonian names. “*Then the king instructed Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs, to bring some of the children of Israel and some of the king’s descendants and some of the nobles, young men in whom there was no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who had ability to serve in the king’s palace, and whom they might teach the language and literature of the Chaldeans. And the king appointed for them a daily provision of the king’s delicacies and of the wine which he drank, and three years of training for them, so that at the end of that time they might serve before the king. Among those who were chosen were some from Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. The chief official gave them new names: to Daniel, the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego*” (Dan 1:3-7). The book uses these names indiscriminately, which sometimes confuses readers.

From the first these young Jews refused to violate the Law. They would not eat the meats given them and would only eat vegetables. Nevertheless they rose to positions of responsibility in the Babylonian Empire.

When Nebuchadnezzar erected a golden idol on the plain of Dura, the three young men refused to worship it as the king had commanded, even though he had stipulated: “*whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace*” (Dan 3:6).

When confronted by the king the three Jews insisted, “*Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up*” (Dan 3:17-18). They knew that God could deliver them and believed that He would. But if that was not His will, they would not lose faith: they still were not going to worship the idol.

“*And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste and spoke, saying to his counselors, ‘Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?’ They answered and said to the king, ‘True, O king.’ ‘Look!’ he answered, ‘I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like a Son of God’*” (Dan 3: 23-25).

The angel of God who protected these young Jews is seen by the Church as a type of Christ, the One who walks among His people at all times, in the midst of every circumstance, even when God seems absent. It is He whose coming in the flesh we are about to celebrate.

Troparion and Kontakion (Dec. 17)

Faith can accomplish great things! Through it the three holy young men rejoice in the flames as if they had been in refreshing water; and Daniel in the midst of lions is like a shepherd among his sheep. Through their intercession, O Christ God, save our souls.

Armed with God’s invisible power, you shunned the adoration of man-made idols, O thrice-blessed young men. Strengthened with this power beyond words, you stood in the midst of a devouring fire and called upon God, saying: “Hasten, O merciful One, and speed to our help, for You are good and have the might to do as You please.”