

Friday, June 9, 2017 | Paone 2, 1733

The Second Day of the Blessed Month of Paone

Annual Tune | Winds of heaven Season

Vespers

Vespers Gospel

Stand in the fear of God and listen to the Holy Gospel. A reading from the Gospel according to our teacher Saint Luke the Evangelist. May His Blessings be with us all. From the Psalms of our teacher David the prophet. May his blessings be with us all.

Psalms 34:10,27

All my bones shall say, "LORD, who is like You, Delivering the poor from him who is too strong for him, Yes, the poor and the needy from him who plunders him?" Let them shout for joy and be glad, Who favor my righteous cause; And let them say continually, "Let the LORD be magnified, Who has pleasure in the prosperity of His servant."

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Our Lord God, Savior, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, the Living Son of God to whom be glory forever. Amen.

Luke 7:18-28

Then the disciples of John reported to him concerning all these things. And John, calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to Jesus, saying, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?" When the men had come to Him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?" And that very hour He cured many of infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight. Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me." When the messengers of John had departed, He began to speak to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed those who are gorgeously appareled and live in luxury are in kings courts. But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written: Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You. For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

And Glory be to God forever

Matins

Matins Gospel

Stand in the fear of God and listen to the Holy Gospel. A reading from the Gospel according to our teacher Saint John the Evangelist. May His Blessings be with us all. From the Psalms of our teacher David the prophet. May his blessings be with us all.

Psalms 50:8,19

Make me hear joy and gladness, That the bones You have broken may rejoice. Then You shall be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, With burnt offering and whole burnt offering; Then they shall offer bulls on Your altar.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Our Lord God, Savior, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, the Living Son of God to whom be glory forever. Amen.

John 3:25-36

Then there arose a dispute between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purification. And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified—behold, He is baptizing, and all are coming to Him!" John answered and said, "A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven. You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but, I have been sent before Him. He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease. He who comes from above is above all; he who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all. And what He has seen and heard, that He testifies; and no one receives His testimony. He who has received His testimony has certified that God is true. For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by measure. The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand. He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

And Glory be to God forever

Divine Liturgy

Pauline Epistle

Paul, the servant of our Lord Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, appointed to the Gospel of God. A reading from the Epistle of our teacher Paul to the Hebrews. May his blessings be upon us. Amen

Hebrews 11:1-10

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good testimony. By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible. By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks. By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, "and was not found, because God had taken him"; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith. By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

The grace of God the Father be with you all. Amen.

Catholic Epistle

A Reading from the 1 Epistle of St. Peter. May his blessing be upon us. Amen

1 Peter 1:25-2:10

But the word of the LORD endures forever. "Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you. Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious. Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame." Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone," and "A stone of stumbling And a rock of offense." They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed. But you are a

chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

Do not love the world or the things in the world. The world passes away, and its desires; but he who does the will of God abides forever. Amen.

Acts of the Apostles

The Acts of our fathers the apostles, may their blessings be with us.

Acts of the Apostles 13:25-33

And as John was finishing his course, he said, Who do you think I am? I am not He. But behold, there comes One after me, the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to loose. "Men and brethren, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to you the word of this salvation has been sent. For those who dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they did not know Him, nor even the voices of the Prophets which are read every Sabbath, have fulfilled them in condemning Him. And though they found no cause for death in Him, they asked Pilate that He should be put to death. Now when they had fulfilled all that was written concerning Him, they took Him down from the tree and laid Him in a tomb. But God raised Him from the dead. He was seen for many days by those who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are His witnesses to the people. And we declare to you glad tidings that promise which was made to the fathers. God has fulfilled this for us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus. As it is also written in the second Psalm: You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.

The word of the Lord shall grow, multiply, be mighty, and be confirmed, in the holy Church of God. Amen.

Synaxarium

The Second Day of the Blessed Coptic Month of Paone, may God make it always received, year after year, with reassurance and tranquility, while our sins are forgiven by the tender mercies of our God my fathers and brothers, Amen.

Appearance of Saint John the Baptist and Elisha the Prophet

On this day, the church celebrates the appearance of the bodies of St. John the Baptist and Elisha the Prophet, the disciple of Elijah the Prophet, in the city of Alexandria. Julian the Infidel wished to rebuild the Temple of Jerusalem, having been destroyed by Emperor Vespasian and his son Titus. He intended with malice to prove the invalidity of the saying of the Lord in the Holy Gospel: 'Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down' (Matthew 24:2). He supplied the Jewish people with money to rebuild it. He put Elebius, who asked the Jews to assist him secretly, in charge. Many of the Jews, men, women, old and young, gathered. They started digging the foundation with eagerness, transferring the dirt and rocks away, some with baskets and the others in the tails of their dresses. St. Kyrillos (Cyril), bishop of Jerusalem, ridiculed what they were doing. When they finished raising the rocks of the old foundation, they started to put down the new one. A severe earthquake took place, filled the excavation with dirt, dispersed the building material and killed many of the workers. The Jews were not terrified of that, and returned to the work again. Out of the depths of the earth, fiery balls came, showering the workers with rocks and hitting them so they stopped building. Many of them believed because of that and especially because they had fulfilled the prophesy of the Lord Christ, with their hands, about the destruction of the building of the temple from its foundation. St. Gregory the Theologian and St. John Chrysostom had mentioned this incident. The Jewish historian Emian, in the fifth century, had mentioned this account also incidentally in his writings.

Nevertheless, the Jews told the Emperor, 'The reason for what happened is the presence of the bodies of Christian leaders in that place. They must be removed from it, otherwise the temple will not be built.' Julian ordered that the bodies of the saints be removed from the place and burned. When they took the bodies of St. John the Baptist and Elisha the Prophet to burn them, some believers came forward to the soldiers, gave them a sum of silver and took the two bodies. They brought them to St. Athanasius, Pope of Alexandria. He was pleased and placed them in a special place until he could build a church for them. One day St. Athanasius was sitting in the garden with his scribe, the one to be Pope Theophilus (23rd Pope) who succeeded him on the Chair, and told him, 'If God gives me long days, I will build in this place

a church in the names of St. John the Baptist and Elisha the prophet, and I will lay their bodies in it.'

When Pope Theophilus was enthroned on the Chair of the See of St. Mark, he remembered what Pope Athanasius had told him. He built the church and relocated the pure bodies to it. On their way to the church carrying the holy bodies, they passed by a house of a pagan woman. This woman was in labor for the last four days. She had a difficult labor and she was in severe pain. When she heard the singing and the chanting of the people as they passed by, and when she knew what was happening, she vowed, saying, 'O John, the saint of God, if you deliver me from this tribulation, I will become a Christian.' Before she had finished what she was saying, she gave birth to a boy, and she called him John. Then, her family and she were baptized. They laid the bodies with great honor in the church. Many miracles and wonders were manifested through them. As of the end of Julian the infidel was as follows: He decided to declare a war against Sapor, King of Persia. St. Basilus the Great, the author of the liturgy, and some bishops went to meet him. Emperor Julian asked them, 'Why have you come.' St. Basilus replied, 'We came asking for a shepherd' He mocked them saying, 'Where did you leave the son of the carpenter?' The Saint answered with courage and pride, 'We left him making a coffin for you, for you have lost all wisdom and knowledge.' Julian told him, 'I have read and memorized it.' St. Basilus replied, 'But you did not comprehend it.' Julian became angry and ordered them seized, to be slain after his return from the war with Sapor. St. Basilus told him, 'You will not come back, for God has spoken by my mouth.' The Emperor ordered them imprisoned. The Emperor went to the war. St. Basilus prayed before the icon of St. Marcurius Abu-saifain, asking for the chastisement of the Emperor because he insulted his Lord Christ. St. Marcurius disappeared from the icon, and when he returned, his sword was dripping blood. During the war, Julian was shot by an arrow in his liver. Thlodoritius said in his history of the church: 'When this infidel Emperor was stabbed, he took a handful of the blood that was pouring out of his side and scattered it toward the heaven, saying, 'You have defeated me O Son of Mary.' The prophesy of St. Basilus was fulfilled in him and the church was saved from his evil. When St. Macarius, Bishop of Edko, was martyred, they placed his body with the bodies of St. John the Baptist and Elisha the Prophet. May their prayers be with us. Amen.

Departure of Pope John XVIII (1769-1797) the 107th Patriarch of Alexandria and the See of Saint Mark On this day also, the church celebrates the departure of Pope Yoannis (John) the Eighteenth, the 107th Pope of Alexandria. He was of the people of El-Fayyoun and his name was Joseph. He became a monk in the monastery of the great St. Antonios on the mount of El-Araba. When Pope Marcus the seventh, his predecessor, departed, the bishops, priests, and the notables of the people unanimously agreed on choosing him a Patriarch. They brought him and ordained him a Patriarch in the church of the martyr St. Marcurius in Old Cairo. That was on Sunday, 15th of Babah, 1486 A.M. (October 23, 1769 A.D.). He was called Yoannis the Eighteenth, the 107th Pope of Alexandria. During his days, the Pope of Rome attempted to attract the Eastern Churches and especially the Orthodox Church of Egypt (The Coptic Church) to the Catholic rite. He published the proceedings of the Council of Chalcedone in a book and distributed it in all the countries of the East. This council had caused the schism of the church, and the Saint Pope Dioscorus (25th Patriarch) had refused to recognize the legitimacy of this council. The Pope of Rome then sent an envoy to Pope Yoannis carrying a message inviting him to be united with him. Pope Yoannis gave this message to Anba Yusab El-Abbah, bishop of Girga. He asked him to study it and to respond to it. This great scholar and distinguished theologian replied, refuting all the claims of Rome. He defended his church, its faith, and its doctrines, a splendid defense that immortalized his memory. However, the book of the proceedings of the Council of Chalcedone brought the opposite results of what Rome expected from publishing it. The book was a proof of the sound teachings and doctrines of the Coptic Orthodox church. The Bishop of Rome was sorry for publishing the book in the East, and he gathered its copies and burned them.

During the papacy of Pope Yoannis (John) many tribulations and hardships befell him from the rulers of the country and the Ottoman governors. The Turkish commander of the army seized the patriarchate treasury and took all its funds. That forced the Pope to disappear from the oppression and the injustice of those rulers who over tasked the Christians with their unjust rules and the enormous increase of taxes stipulated from them. Pope Yoannis participated with Ibrahim El-Gohary, the head scribe at that time, in restoring the monasteries and the churches. He also made the Holy Myron. He departed on the second day of the blessed month of Baounah, 1512 A.M. (June 7, 1797 A.D.). He remained on the

patriarchal chair for twenty-six years, seven months, and sixteen days. He was buried in the tomb of the patriarchs in the church of St. Marcurius Abu-Saifain. The chair remained vacant three months and twenty-six days after his departure.

May his prayers be with us and Glory be to God forever. Amen.

Divine Liturgy Gospel

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Psalms 33:20,15

He guards all his bones; Not one of them is broken. The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their cry.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Our Lord God, Savior, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, the Living Son of God to whom be glory forever. Amen.

Matthew 11:2-10

And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples and said to Him, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?" Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me." As they departed, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed, those who wear soft clothing are in kings houses. But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. For this is he of whom it is written: Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.

And Glory be to God forever