

Saturday, July 8, 2017 | Epep 1, 1733

The First Day of the Blessed Month of Epep

Annual Tune | Waters of the river 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 Matthew 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 67:26,27

Bless God in the congregations, The Lord, from the fountain of Israel. There is little Benjamin, their leader, The princes of Judah and their company, The princes of Zebulun and the princes of Naphtali.

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 26:6-13

And when Jesus was in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, a woman came to Him having an alabaster flask of very costly fragrant oil, and she poured it on His head as He sat at the table. But when His disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, "Why this waste? For this fragrant oil might have been sold for much and given to the poor." But when Jesus was aware of it, He said to them, "Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a good work for Me. For you have the poor with you always, but Me you do not have always. For in pouring this fragrant oil on My body, she did it for My burial. Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her."

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 8:2,3

Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have ordained strength, Because of Your enemies, That You may silence the enemy and the avenger. When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained,

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 4:15-24

The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw." Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have well said, I have no husband, for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly." The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is

coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

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 Ephesians. May his blessings be upon us. Amen
Ephesians 5:8-21

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light." See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of 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 3:5-14

For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror. Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered. Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. For "He who would love life And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from speaking deceit. Let him turn away from evil and do good; Let him seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the LORD is against those who do evil." And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness sake, you are blessed. "And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled."

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 21:5-14

When we had come to the end of those days, we departed and went on our way; and they all accompanied us, with wives and children, till we were out of the city. And we knelt down on the shore and prayed. When we had taken our leave of one another, we boarded the ship, and they returned home. And when we had finished our voyage from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais, greeted the brethren, and stayed with them one day. On the next day we who were Pauls companions departed and came to Caesarea, and entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and stayed with him. Now this man had four

virgin daughters who prophesied. And as we stayed many days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. When he had come to us, he took Pauls belt, bound his own hands and feet, and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles." Now when we heard these things, both we and those from that place pleaded with him not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, "What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." So when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, "The will of the Lord be done." *The word of the Lord shall grow, multiply, be mighty, and be confirmed, in the holy Church of God. Amen.*

Synaxarium

The First Day of the Blessed Coptic Month of Epep, 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.

Martyrdom of Saint Febronia the Ascetic

On this day, St. Febronia, the ascetic virgin, was martyred. This saint was the niece of the superior of a convent that had fifty virgins, in a place called '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 unceasing in her prayers.

When Emperor Diocletian issued his edict to worship idols, many Christians were martyred by his hands. When the virgins heard that, they were afraid and left the convent and went into hiding. None was left in the convent except St. Febronia, another sister and the abbess.

On the following day, the envoys of the Emperor came, seized the abbess, and humiliated her. St. Febronia said to them, 'Take me and set free this old woman.' But they took her as well, bound in ropes, and brought them to the Governor. At that time she was twenty years old, and was attractive. The Governor asked her to worship the idols and promised her many things but she refused. He ordered that she be beaten with rods, and her dress to be torn off. The abbess cried out to him saying, 'May God rip you up, O wild beast, for you want to put to shame this young orphan girl.' The Governor was wrathful, and ordered St. Febronia to be squeezed by the wheel, and to comb her body with an iron comb until her flesh was completely torn. During all that, she prayed to the Lord asking for help. He then cut out her tongue and smashed her teeth so that she could not pray. But the Lord strengthened her and comforted her.

Finally, the Governor ordered her head cut off, and she received the crown of martyrdom. A righteous man took her body and shrouded it with costly shrouds, and placed it in a golden box. May her prayers be with us. Amen.

Departure of Saint Bioukha and Saint Benjamin the Priests

On this day also, the fighters Sts. Bioukha and Benjamin, departed. They were priests in the church of 'Tunah' of the diocese of 'Tanda'. Their father was the steward of this church. It happened when the priest Benjamin was celebrating the Divine Liturgy, someone came calling him to see his father who was dying in that instant. He answered him saying, 'I cannot take off my priestly vestment before the end of the service. If God is willing, I shall see him before he dies, otherwise it will be the will of God.' His father asked for him three times, and he responded with the same answer. When he finished the mass, he found his father had departed. The church vessels were stored in a place known only by his father. Benjamin the priest went to St. Daniel, the priest of the wilderness of Shiheet, who guided him by Divine inspiration, to the place where the vessels were stored. These two saints lived a virtuous life until they departed in peace.

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

Divine Liturgy Gospel

Stand in the fear of God and listen to the Holy Gospel. A reading from the Gospel according to our teacher Saint Matthew 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 44:13,14

The royal daughter is all glorious within the palace; Her clothing is woven with gold. She shall be brought to the King in robes of many colors; The virgins, her companions who follow her, shall be brought to You.

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 25:1-13

"Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. "And at midnight a cry was heard: Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him! Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out. But the wise answered, saying, No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us! But he answered and said, Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you. "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

And Glory be to God forever