



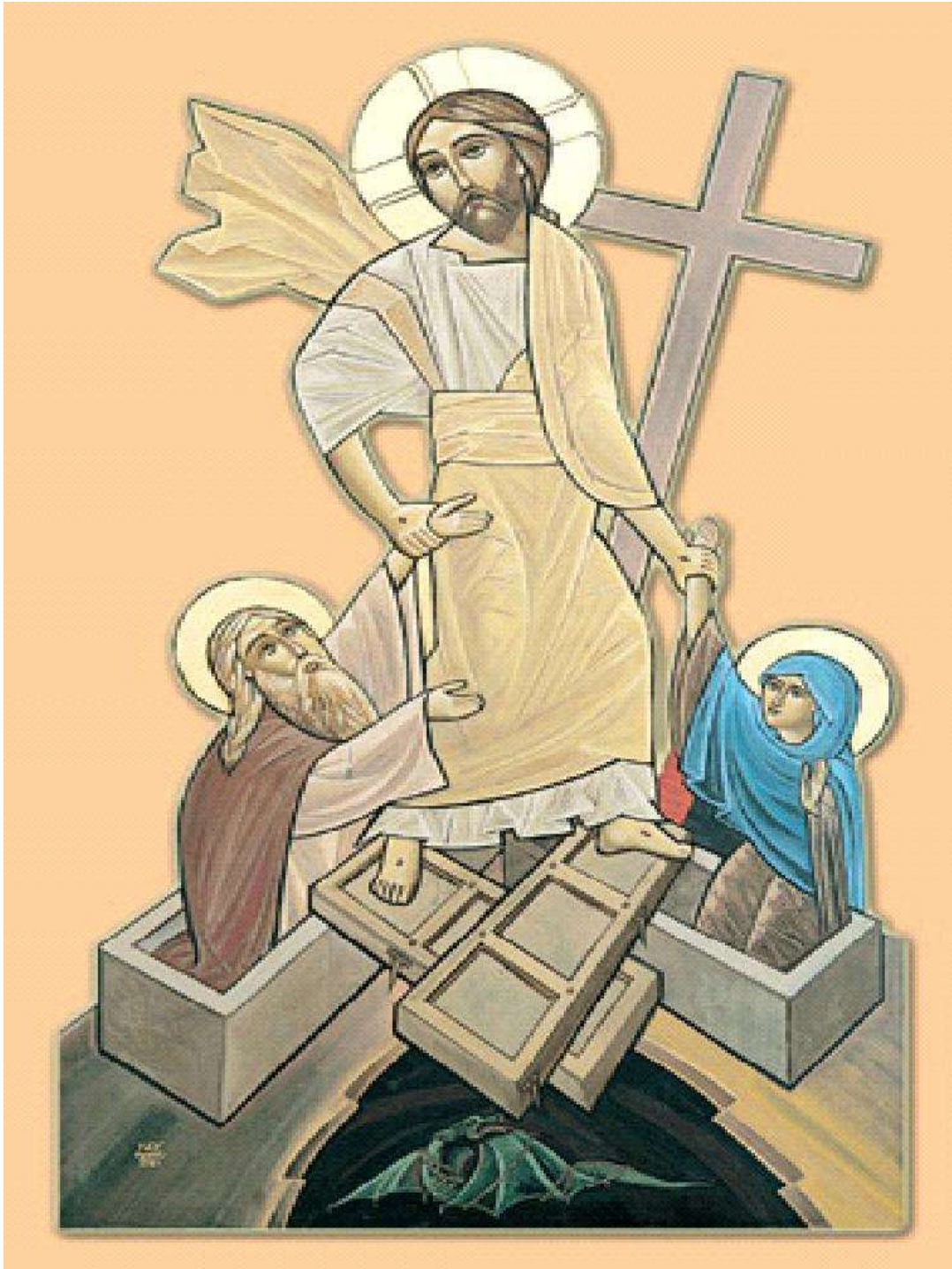
Servants Benefiting from Pascha



“in Hebrew - **Pascha means Passover**; because the Pascha was then celebrated for the first time by God’s people, when the angel of death passed over God’s people when he saw the blood of the lamb on the door posts. It also reminds us of their flight from Egypt, they cross over the Red Sea.

“Christ, **our Passover** lamb, has been sacrificed.” -1Corinthians 5:7





We go through holy week with a view to the resurrection. Notice how Power of Resurrection is mentioned before the suffering in this verse:

St. Paul explained, “***that I may know Him and the power of His Resurrection and the sharing of His sufferings.***”
(***Philippians 3:10***)



Five Physical Senses

Church Uses All of them to Lift you up to God

- Seeing - Icons
- Hearing - Hymns & Prayers
- Smelling - Incense
- Tasting - Holy Communion
- Touching - Holy Kiss of Peace,



- Black cloth and drapes - MOURNING for the sin that resulted in death
- Through Christ, now dead to sin
- No entry into the altar Mon-Wed, no incense, no Communion
- Sad Tunes
- **Reminder for the servant of sin that separated us from God**
- **Reminder to Focus our senses on Christ**
- **Reminder to CONTINUE focussing on Christ during Joy of Resurrection**

Immerse your senses in Holy Week

Black (visual):

- darkness, death, caused by sin

No Communion (taste), Monday- Wednesday, and Friday:

- deprived of the Tree of Life because of sin.

Sad Tune (aural) for Gospel Readings and Hymns

- sorrow caused by our sin but accompanied by hope and praise as we follow our Savior
- **No Agpeya- Focus on the Paschal Doxology instead**
- **Phai Etaf Enf- sounds like a lamb being slaughtered.**

Physical greetings and kisses (tactile)

- **cease** as of the end of the Eve of Wednesday until the end of the Bright Saturday Liturgy. Clergy and congregation do not greet one another with a holy kiss, nor kiss the gospel and icons, in remembrance of Judas Iscariot's kiss- (How often have I betrayed you, used words of prayer, but behaved contrary to you?"')

No Incense Raising (smell)

- Monday through Wednesday, no incense even for those who depart (die) during the week at any time.





A **servant's life** is one that ALWAYS

- **Focusses on Christ**
- **Praises and exults Christ in his/her life in *words and deeds***

....I heard the voice of many angels around the throne... saying...:

" Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing!" And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth I heard...:

" Blessing and honor and glory and power.....to Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb, forever and ever!"

1 Chronicles 29:11: states: "Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all."

"Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have perfected praise'?"

-Matthew 21:16; Psalm 8:2

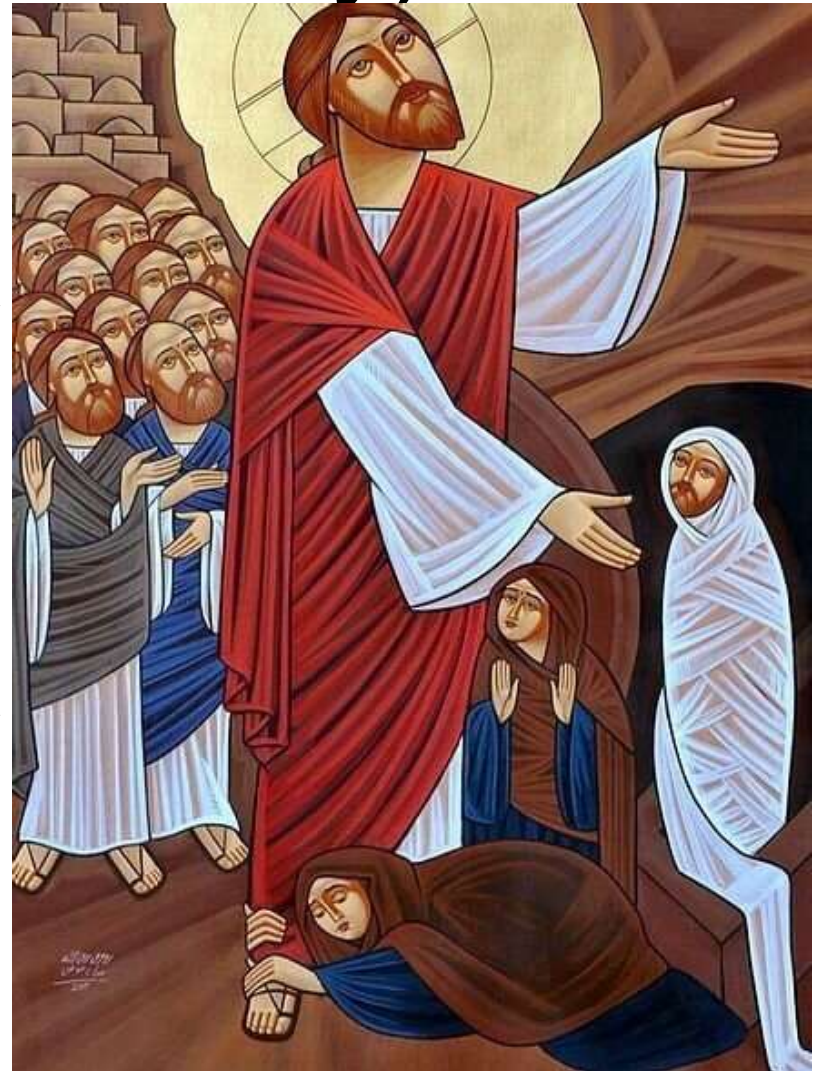
Lazarus Saturday (Before Palm Sunday)

Celebrates the miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead at Bethany (John 11: 1-46).

In the house of Lazarus in Bethany a dinner gathering was prepared for Jesus. Many people came to Bethany to see the man whom Jesus raised from death.

Celebration of the victory of Christ over death and the affirmation of His divinity as the Resurrection and the Life, demonstrated by raising Lazarus after four days in the tomb.

Servants are to rely on Christ, who reverses death, in the trials that come in life and in service





- Greet Him Our Victorious, Heavenly King, ready to *lay down* our lives for him. Is He King of your life? Does He have majesty to you, over your life? Or is He “King only when you get your way? Notice He came on a Donkey. The servant must be humble. Some servants want glory for themselves. (Did the donkey think the crowd was cheering for him?)

A servant humbles himself/herself

- What kind of “donkey” am I. A blessed, obedient one who can carry Christ, or a disobedient one who is a glory hog and wants to be an attention grabbing war horse.



- Malleability of the human heart: “Hosanna to the Son of David” → “Crucify Him Crucify Him” Treatment of God as a Vending Machine/Genie
- “Thine is the ...Majesty???” Only if you trust Him and give Him sovereignty over your heart, including accepting suffering.
A servant learns to trust God in all circumstances and is steadfast in his/her unwavering Loyalty/ Faithfulness to Christ



***‘My house shall
be called a house
of prayer,’ but
you have made it
a den of thieves’***
~Matthew 21:13

What has stolen your heart?
What has preoccupied your
heart so that it is no longer
a house of prayer?

Rededicate your “house” to
being a house of prayer

Monday of Holy Week

Cursing the Fig Tree

The next day as they were leaving Bethany, Jesus was hungry. Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to find out if it had any fruit. When he reached it, he found nothing but leaves, because it was not the season for figs. Then he said to the tree, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again." And his disciples heard him say it.

Mark 11:12-14



Warning against:

**-Adam and Eve covering with fig leaves instead of confessing sin.
Servants ought to be confessing regularly.**

Warning against:

-Fruitlessness

-Hypocrisy

Don't worry about the outward decoration of leaves, but work on bearing fruit.

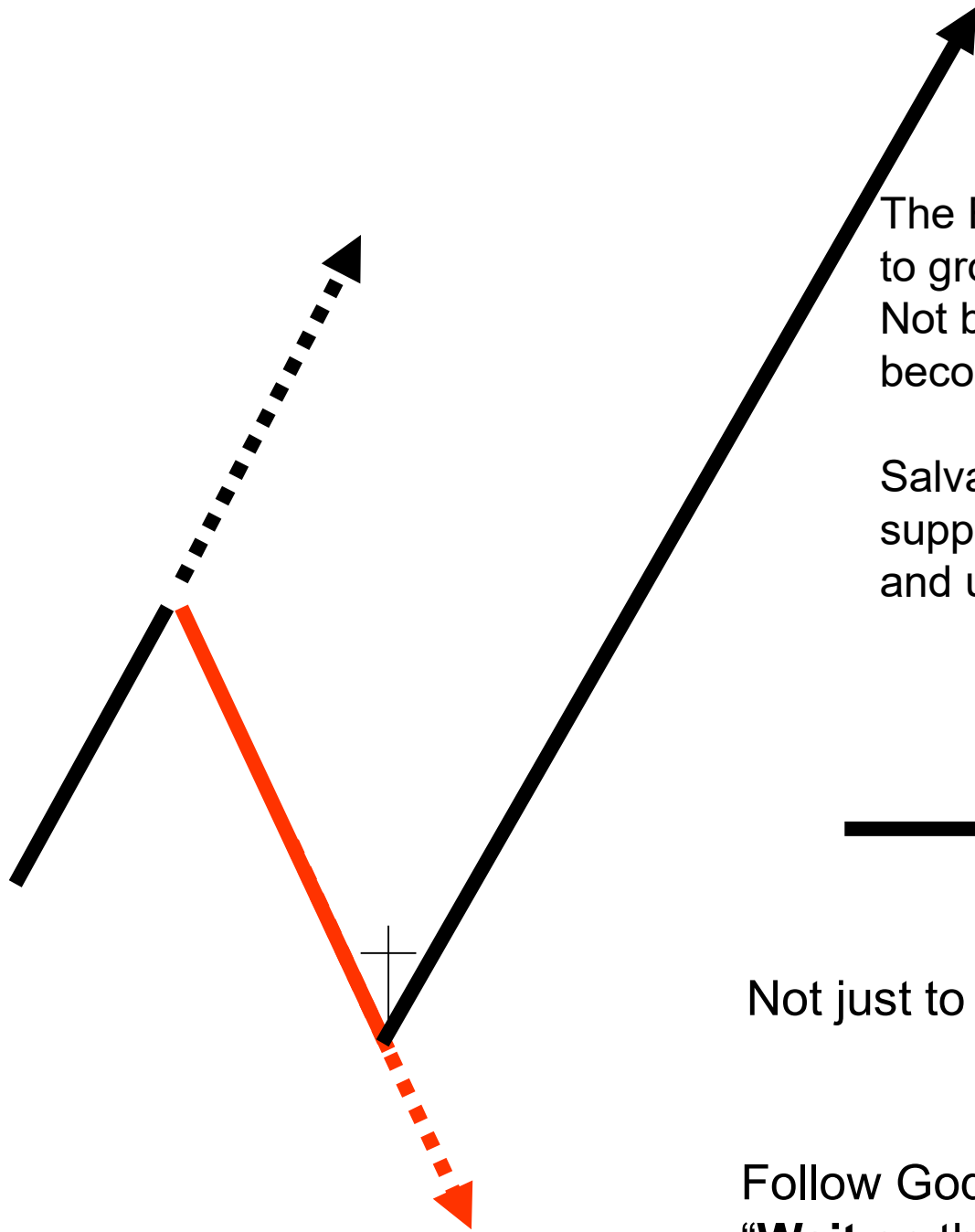
For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” Gen 3:5

“...It was *not the season for figs.*” A servant is patient, does things in its season with the the advice of Fr. of Confession, Spiritual advisor.



...Not by independence from and disobedience to God, but to become “like” God by grace, by obedience, by uniting to Him. Don’t **jump the gun.**





The Fathers teach that Adam was to grow and grow in unity with God. Not by jumping the gun and becoming God-like without Him

Salvation leads to what Adam was supposed to become in obedience and unity with God.



Not just to the level of what Adam was

Follow God's plan, timing and will.
"Wait on the Lord" – PSALM 27:14

... Tuesday of Holy Pascha

**A servant is to be prepared, ready, vigilant
TIME IS A GIFT**





... Tuesday of Holy Pascha

Preparedness and Vigilance

'Pray, fast, and be holy, for tomorrow, we die.'



A servant understands that time is short and the ability to change, in time is a gift.

In time and space we can change. Outside of time and space is timelessness and you can no longer repent.

A servant is constantly repenting, able to change with God's grace.

"What time is it"

-Anba Youstus



Wednesday

Love of Mary of Bethany Vs. Selfishness and betrayal of Judas



A servant loves Jesus, and give Him his best.

He does not condemn or judge others.

Mary of Bethany put very costly oil on Jesus, showing she loved Him and valued Him MORE than money. Or worldly things. A servant ought to have this same priority.

Wednesday

Love of Mary of Bethany Vs. Selfishness and betrayal of Judas

Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who would betray Him, said, ⁵ "Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" ⁶ ***This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it.***
-John 12:4-6

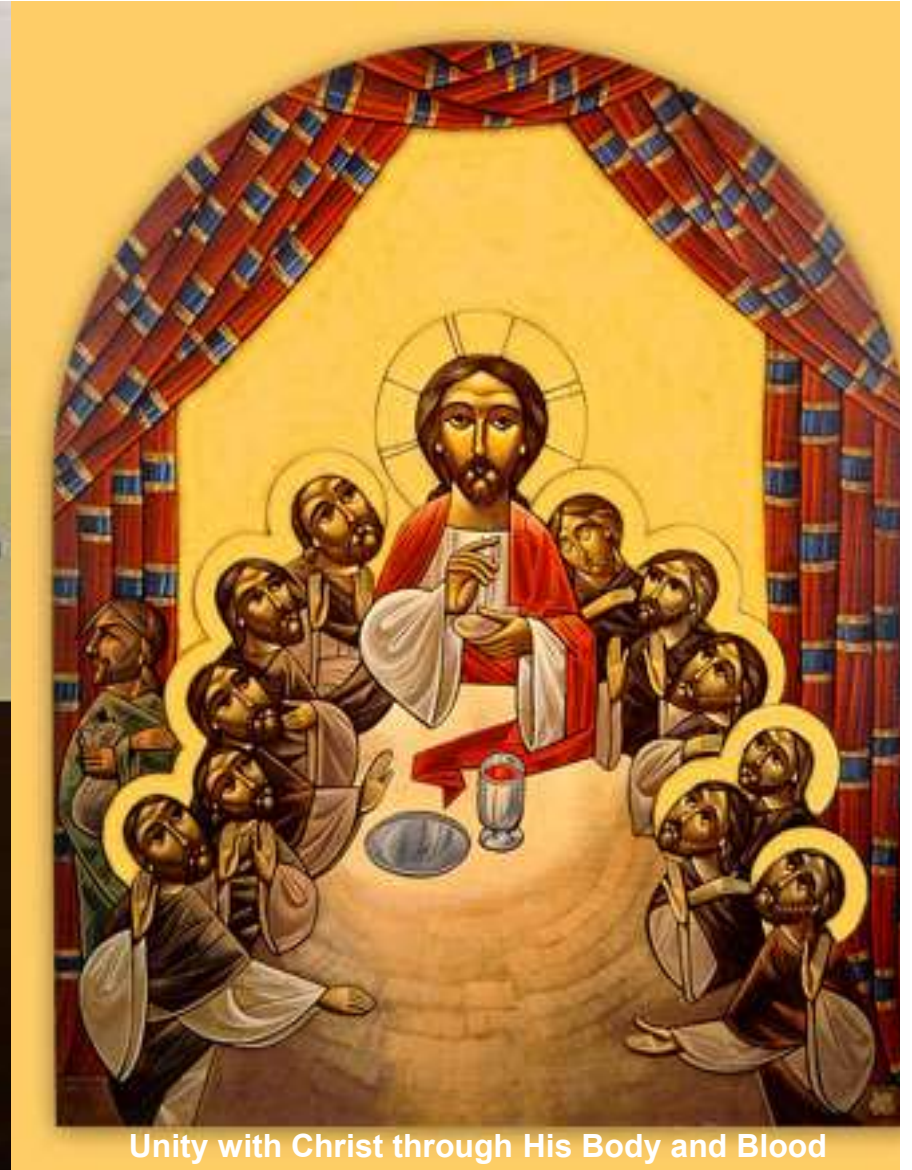
Judas asked, What are you willing to give me if I deliver him over to you?" So they counted out for him thirty pieces of silver.

Matthew 26:15-16



Lord, as Your Servant, help me not to sell you or betray you for anything. Help me to value you more than anything. Stop my thievery of not giving you my best, my time, and my all.

Great Thursday







Good Friday

Cursed is the ground **for your sake**, “thorns and thistles” it shall bring forth to you

They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand and knelt in front of him and mocked him. "Hail, king of the Jews!" they said. They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. -Mat. 27:28-30

*“He was wounded for our transgressions., He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all”
-Isaiah 5:6.*

What was so agonizing for Christ at the Garden of Gethsemani that he began to sweat blood?

Everything that separates humanity from God was about to be placed on Him.

He made Him who knew no sin *to be sin for us*, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

-2 Co 5:21

Knowing this agony, a servant ought to struggle against sin, knowing the agony it caused.

Servants recognize He did this out of love for them. So they are able and willing to take up their cross and unite their suffering to Him, and complete their mission

Does God Care about human suffering, about servants suffering in service?

Answer: What is God doing suffering on the cross?

“IT IS
FINISHED”
– John 19:30
=
Mission
Accomplished



Eloi, Eloi, Lamasabacthani...

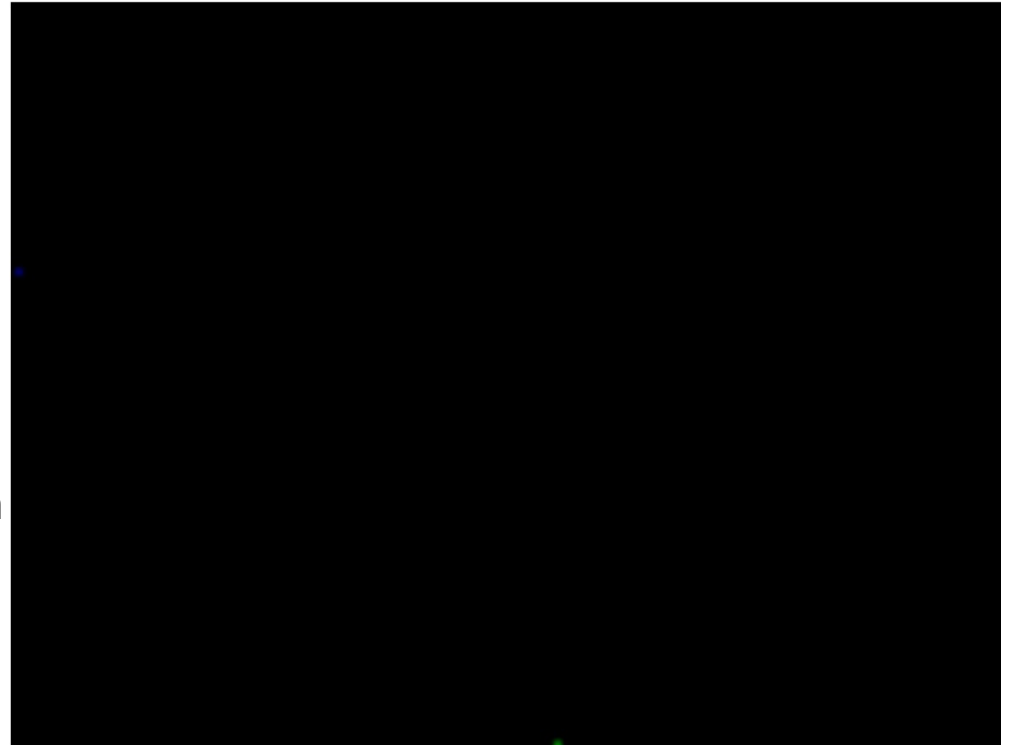
- Prophetic Psalm 22

“An assembly of evildoers enclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet.... They look and stare at me... they divided my garments among themselves. And for my clothing they cast lots.

Since He took our nature, Jesus experiences our alienation from God in His humanity, knowing our suffering and distress. He says these words on our behalf as though it were us on the cross.

As it is a prophetic psalm He may have recited the entire psalm on the cross.

DURING PASCHA WEEK, SERVANTS CAN BENEFIT MUCH FROM FOLLOWING THE READINGS AND CONEMPLATING ON THE WORDS OF THE HYMNS. WHAT IS THE PROPHECY SAYING? MAKE YOUR FIATH MORE FIRM BY SEEING HOW THE PROPHECIES WERE FULFILED.





CHRIST IS *Risen!*

Saturday- Apocalypse night. Christ Descends into Hades and frees the captives to Paradise.

Hymns take on a more joyful tune before the Feast of the Resurrection, where our nature, perfected in Christ Physically rises from the dead before ascending to heaven 50 days later.

Victory over sin and death. At the end of Passion Week. There is victory. The fruit of this victory is yours if you remain in Him. Christ said, "Abide in Me and I in you... In the world you WILL have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD. "

A servant remains in HIM, overcomes the world through Him. IC XC NIKA, Jesus Christ, Victorious Conqueror.



*“O Death, where is your sting?
O Hades, where is your victory?*

1 Corinthians 15:55-57)

*Christ is risen,
and you, o death,
are annihilated !”*

-St. John Chrysostom

**A servant suffers with and for Christ,
including in Pascha week, and by grace
and faith, receives the victory in his life
of the Resurrection**