

Texts for a Divine Liturgy for Life

The following texts are recommended as possibilities for Pro-Life Divine Liturgies for January 22 (on that day, and the Sundays before and after), the Anniversary of the Roe-v-Wade Supreme Court decision that created a "right" to kill children in the womb. They may also be used for Respect Life Sunday (the first Sunday in October) in the proper place after the Resurrectional texts, or at any time during the year. The texts are adapted for the Byzantine Liturgy from the texts suggested by the USCCB.

Petitions during the Great Synapte:

Deacon: For our President, members of Congress, and the Supreme Court, and for all political leaders throughout the world, that they may recognize the sacredness of life, and defend the fundamental right of every man and woman to live, from the moment of conception until natural death, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy. *(And after each following petition)*

Deacon: For all children and adults with disabilities, that they will be loved and cared for in healthy and nurturing environments; let us pray to the Lord.

Deacon: For the sick and the suffering, that they may find strength, courage and healing in the cross of Christ and discover the redemptive value of their suffering, let us pray to the Lord.

Deacon: For all who have been involved in abortion, that they may come to true repentance and seek God's merciful and healing love, let us pray to the Lord.

Deacon: For all bishops and priests, that they may teach the world to love the Gospel of Life, encouraging all to embrace each new child, let us pray to the Lord.

Deacon: For the elderly, that they may spend the rest of their lives in peace and repentance, cherishing each day and experiencing the love and care that they need, let us pray to the Lord.

Troparion & Kontakion

Troparion – Tone 2 - O God, Author and Creator of all things, * with Your blessing guide this work which is being undertaken for Your glory. * Deliver us from every evil, * for You alone are almighty and love mankind.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Kontakion – Tone 6 - O Lord, You are prompt to defend and mighty in Your help. * Be present now through the grace of Your power; * bless us and give us strength, and bring to completion the intentions of Your servants to do good works: * for You can as the Almighty do everything You wish.

Prokimenon *Psalm 138(139): 13-14 - Tone 4*

For it was You who created my being, knit me together in my mother's womb.

Verse: I praise You for the wonder of my being, for the wonders of all Your creation.

Epistle - Hebrews 2:9-11

We see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for every one. For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through suffering. *(RSV)*

Alleluia *Psalm 139:7,8 (140:6,7) - Tone 4*

Verse: I have said to the Lord: 'You are my God.' Lord, hear the cry of my appeal.

Verse: Lord my God, my mighty help, You shield my head in the battle.

Gospel - Matthew 18:1-7, 10, 12-14

At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them, and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me; but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened round his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

"Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the man by whom the temptation comes!

"See that you do not despise one of these little ones; for I tell you that in heaven their angels always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven. What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. So it is not the will of my Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish." *(RSV)*

Litany for Special Intention

These petitions may be integrated with the Litany of Supplication after the Gospel or may be prayed as a separate litany after that litany and before the Litany for the Catechumens. If these petitions are integrated with the Litany of Supplication, the first petition is omitted.

Deacon: Have mercy on us, O God, according to Your great mercy, we pray You, hear and have mercy!

People: Lord, have mercy. (3) *(And after each following petition)*

Deacon: Again we pray that every child may be given the opportunity to live in an environment of love and care.

Deacon: Again we pray that politicians and world leaders may guide society according to the principles of right reason, respecting the most fundamental and basic right of each man and woman, which is to live.

Deacon: Again we pray that all parents may seek the good of their children, bringing them ever closer to God.

Deacon: Again we pray that any mother contemplating an abortion may realize the beautiful gift of new life and embrace her child with gratitude and joy, with the support of family and friends.

Deacon: Again we pray that women and men who have been scarred by abortion may turn away from the temptation of discouragement and despair, and find light and joy in the forgiveness of Christ.

Deacon: Again we pray that all who defend life may find the necessary strength and courage to continue despite great challenges.

The priest prays the following prayer quietly:

Priest: O Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son, enlighten the minds and hearts of those blinded to the truth that life begins at conception so that they may see that the pre-born in the womb is already adorned with Your image and likeness. Enable us to guard, cherish and protect the lives of all those who are unable to care for themselves, from conception until natural death.

Aloud:

For You are the Giver of Life, bringing each man and woman from non-being into being, sealing each with your divine and infinite love and we glorify You together with your Father, who is without beginning, and your all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Dismissal

Priest: May Christ our true God, Who taught that we should receive the little children as we would receive Him, have mercy on us and save us, through the prayers of His most holy Mother, [add the proper commemorations for the day] through the prayers of holy father John

Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople; of Saint(s) (NN), whose memory we celebrate today; of Saint(s) (NN), the patron of this temple; and through the prayers of all the Saints, for He is good and loves mankind.

People: Amen.