Andrea Riedl | Elias Haslwanter | Hans-Jürgen Feulner (Hgg.)

DAS GEBET FÜR DIE VERSTORBENEN



Zugänge aus Theologie und Praxis

Aschendorff Verlag

Riedl, Haslwanter, Feulner (Hgg.)
Das Gebet für die Verstorbenen

Andrea Riedl, Elias Haslwanter, Hans-Jürgen Feulner (Hgg.)

DAS GEBET FÜR DIE VERSTORBENEN

Zugänge aus Theologie und Praxis

Aschendorff Verlag

Münster
2025

Gedruckt mit freundlicher Unterstützung
der Technischen Universität Dresden,
des Fachbereichs Liturgiewissenschaft und Sakramententheologie an der
Katholisch-Theologischen Fakultät der Universität Wien,
der Stiftung Pro Oriente, Sektion Graz,
der Erzdiözese Salzburg,
der Diözese Sankt Pölten,
der Diözese Graz-Seckau,
der Diözese Eisenstadt,
des Erzbistums Bamberg,
des Bistums Trier,
des Bistums Eichstätt,
des Bistum Basel,
und des Österreichischen Liturgischen Instituts

Coverabbildung: Reidersche Tafel; Darstellungen der Auferstehung und Himmelfahrt des jugendlichen Christus; Elfenbein, ca. 400 n. Chr., Provenienz Rom oder Mailand; Bestand des Bayerischen Nationalmuseums München (MA 157).

ISBN 978-3-402-24963-5
ISBN 978-3-402-24964-2 (E-Book PDF)
DOI https://doi.org/10.17438/978-3-402-25119-5



This work is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC BY), which means that the text may be used, provided credit is given to the author. For details go to http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/
Creative Commons license terms for re-use do not apply to any content (such as graphs, figures, photos, excerpts, etc.) not original to the Open Access publication and further permission may be required from the rights holder.

© 2024 Andrea Riedl, Elias Haslwanter, Hans-Jürgen Feulner. A publication by Aschendorff Verlag GmbH & Co. KG, Münster
This book is part of the Aschendorff Verlag Open Access program.

www.aschendorff-buchverlag.de

Inhaltsverzeichnis

Einleitung 9

– A –
Theologiegeschichtliche Zugänge zum Gebet für die Verstorbenen

Totengebet im antiken Christentum
Katharina Heyden 23

Warum für die Verstorbenen beten?
Literarisch-theologische und narrative Quellen zum Totengebet im Mittelalter
Andrea Riedl 45

Das Gebet für die Verstorbenen
Martin Luther und die Reformation im 16. Jahrhundert
Martin Hein 65

Zwischen theologischer Argumentation und Kommunikation mit den Armen Seelen
Zur katholischen Fegfeuerlehre auf dem Konzil von Trient und in der Frühen Neuzeit
Klaus Unterburger 77

– B –
Das Gebet für die Verstorbenen in Liturgie und Ritus

Gottesdienstliche Feiern im Umfeld von Sterben und Tod
Begleiten – Begraben – Gedenken und ihre Formen religiöser Praxis in der römisch-katholischen Kirche
Jürgen Bärsch 95

Zeichen der Hoffnung
Fürbitte für die Toten und Totengedenken aus evangelischer Sicht
Michael Meyer-Blanck 133

„In the middest of lyfe we be in death …“
Das Gebet für Verstorbene in der anglikanischen (und methodistischen) Tradition. Eine vorläufige Spurensuche in Lehre und Liturgie
Hans-Jürgen Feulner 159

Praying for the Deceased in the Byzantine Tradition
Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi?
Peter Galadza & Daniel Galadza 193

Zum Gedächtnis der Verstorbenen in der Prothesis
Elias Haslwanter 223

Gedächtnis der Verstorbenen in den Eucharistiefeiern der lateinischen Tradition
Sebastian Braun 249

Gedächtnis der Verstorbenen in den orientalischen Liturgien und Traditionen
Thomas Kremer 277

– C –
Sinnfragen entlang des Gebets für die Verstorbenen

Das große Stattdessen
Gebet, Trauer und Fürbitte aus kompensationstheoretischer Perspektive
Rupert M. Scheule 307

„Gott ist meine toten Freunde“
Das Gebet für die Toten aus systematischer Perspektive
Klaus Vechtel SJ 323

Windeinbrüche
Notizen zur Sprache des Gebets am Grab
Christian Lehnert 345

Die Verstorbenen zwischen Liturgie und Kultur
Lateinamerika und der Tag der Toten
Juan Rego 359

Traditionsabbrüche
Das „Gebet für Verstorbene“ im Spiegel katholischer Gesang- und Gebetbücher
Ansgar Franz 383

Verstorbenen-Beziehung als personalisierte Hoffnung über den Tod hinaus
Ottmar Fuchs 411

– D –
Orte und Vollzüge des Gebets für die Verstorbenen

Stummgemachten Stimme geben
Beten für die Verstorbenen in der KZ-Gedenkstätte Dachau
Ludwig Schmidinger 439

Stillwasser
Susanne Wübker 453

Totengedenken und Totengebet in evangelisch-freikirchlicher Tradition
Eine Reflexion frei evangelischer Gemeindewirklichkeit samt Impulsen für eine neue Praxis
Jochen Wagner 465

Worte, die trösten – Feiern, die tragen – Begegnungen, die begleiten
Trauerfeiern – zwischen Trost für die Hinterbliebenen und Hoffnungszusage für die Verstorbenen
Felicitas Ameling 485

Liturgie am Lebensende
Sterben und Tod als narrative Elemente im Spielfilm
Thomas Bohrmann 497

„Gib ihr deinen Frieden“
Praxiserfahrungen am Sterbeort und Grab
Cornelia Egg-Möwes 511

Abkürzungsverzeichnis 521
Autor:innen 527

Praying for the Deceased in the Byzantine Tradition

Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi?

Peter Galadza & Daniel Galadza

1 Introduction

We have been asked to discuss what Byzantine Rite prayer for the deceased means as regards the relationship of the Orthodox *lex orandi* to the *lex credendi*.[1] More specifically: *a)* What are the overarching eschatological themes proclaimed and enacted in this prayer? *b)* What is death? *c)* How is the separation of the body and soul treated in the Byzantine Rite? *d)* How is the intermediate state of the soul between death and resurrection imaged? and finally *e)* What is asserted about the individual judgment of the deceased as opposed to their final judgment?

[1] Eastern Catholics of the Byzantine tradition potentially tap a *lex credendi* that transcends Eastern Orthodoxy's resources. Thus, the formulations of the Council of Florence and to a certain extent subsequent Catholic magisterial texts could be reviewed here by someone aspiring to produce a more comprehensive analysis. However, we will have to postpone such inclusiveness owing to limitations of space. Catholic eschatology as a whole is a vast field. For example, if an Eastern Catholic were to be asked whether – as per Florence – he or she accepts the doctrine of purgatory, formulations as wide-ranging as Joseph Ratzinger's innovative re-interpretation of the doctrine would have to be analysed. See Joseph Ratzinger, Eschatology. Death and Eternal Life, Washington/DC [2]1988, 218–233. Moreover, the post-Florentine Catholic theological legacy is only slowly being re-assessed by Eastern Catholics inspired by Vatican II's endorsement of the possibility of a distinctive Eastern Catholic theology (cf. LG 23, UR 17). An excellent example of the latter is Ieromonaco Panteleimon (Denys Trofimov), I dibattiti sul fuoco purgatorio al Concilio di Ferrara-Firenze (1438–1439) come culmine della controversia sulla sorte dei defunti tra Oriente e Occidente (AOSBM.Opera 54), Rome 2015. In any case, the Orthodox, who have written immeasurably more on Eastern eschatology, are obliged to relate their doctrine far more directly to the Byzantine liturgical tradition, which they have done. And that tradition is our focus here.

DOI 10.17438/978-3-402-25127-0

The method employed here will be straightforward, even though our findings may occasionally be somewhat byzantine – in the pejorative sense. Typically, we propose to correlate Byzantine liturgical and "paraliturgical" texts and rites to credal statements, scriptural material, patristic assertions, and later Eastern Christian theology; this with a view to yielding synthetic insights that bring to the fore theologies embedded in Byzantine worship.

Those working in the field know that any hope of apprehending a *lex orandi* that easily grounds anything more than discrete elements of a *lex credendi* is illusory. As Nicholas Constas has written: "[T]he nature of the human and its fate after death were never authoritatively defined or formalized by an ecumenical council, nor were they ever the subjects per se of systematic theological inquiry. Thus throughout the Byzantine world one finds an assortment of eschatologies strewn somewhat carelessly about."[2]

Post-Byzantine Orthodox authors, however, have written systematic eschatologies and these will be referenced when appropriate.[3] But because our focus is the liturgy "of the last things", which like all pre-modern worship evolved "spontaneously" over centuries – being codified not long after Byzantium's Fall – it similarly displays an *assorti*. Nonetheless, one must keep in mind that these texts include genuine antinomies typical of classical theology. This compels us to be patient in our attempt to discern their enigmatic message – and hidden riches – in the labyrinth that Eastern Christian thought can be.

1.1 The State of the Research

As concerns the state of research, in 1979 Alexander Schmemann noted that "[t]here exists no comprehensive study of the historical development of the tradition [of funeral rites and the Byzantine system of prayers for the dead], only a few monographic studies of some of its particular aspects"[4]. This assessment by the seminal master of Orthodox liturgical theology remains true. Nonetheless, in spite of the absence of a comprehensive opus, between 1979, the year that Schmemann made this assertion, and 2016, when his words finally made their

2 Nicholas Constas, "To Sleep, Perchance to Dream". The Middle State of Souls in Patristic and Byzantine Literature, in: DOP 55 (2001) 91–124, here: 119. In his magisterial work, Brian E. Daley, The Hope of the Early Church. A Handbook of Patristic Eschatology, Cambridge 1991, 223, makes a similar point as regards specifically patristic eschatology.

3 Without doubt the best of these is Sergius Bulgakov, The Bride of the Lamb, Grand Rapids 2002, 379–526. As for an Orthodox eschatological reflection that includes philosophical and medical questions as well as a contemporary theological review of the funeral rite, "Le sacrament du trépas" in Constantin Andronikoff, Des mystères sacramentels, Paris 1998, 313–377, is also excellent.

4 Alexander Schmemann, The Liturgy of Death. Four Previously Unpublished Talks on the Orthodox Liturgy of Death, Yonkers/NY 2016, 57.

way into print, vital progress did ensue. And it continues. Moreover, the progress pertains not only to the study of liturgical history[5] and theology,[6] but pastoral theology as well.[7] The latter also expresses Christian faith – simply in a different key.

1.2 Credal Foundations

At minimum, an observant practitioner of the Byzantine Tradition will recite the words of the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed (325/381), "I await the resurrection of the dead and the life of the age to come" at least once a day.[8] Moreover, those praying all of the canonical hours of the Byzantine Rite will pronounce them at least three times a day.[9] Significantly, that belief also finds explicit expression in what arguably are the last authoritative statements of the Orthodox faith – "authoritative" and "last" because the most recent Confessions of Orthodox belief carrying greater hierarchical weight are the Confession of Peter Moghila of 1638/1642,[10] and the Confession of Patriarch Dositheus of

5 Cf. Elena Velkovska, Funeral Rites according to the Byzantine Liturgical Sources, in: DOP 55 (2001) 21–51; Miguel Arranz, Избранные сочинения по литургике, vol. 2: Таинства Византийской Традиции, Rome – Moscow 2003; Peter Galadza, The Evolution of Funeral Rites for Monks in the Byzantine Realm. The 10th to the 17th Centuries, in: OCP (2005) 225–257; Themistokles Christodoulou, Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία κατὰ τοὺς χειρόγραφους κώδικες 10ου–12ου αἰώνος, 2 vols., Thera 2005.

6 Cf. Vasileios Marinis, Death and the Afterlife in Byzantium. The Fate of the Soul in Theology, Liturgy, and Art, Cambridge 2017.

7 Cf. J. Mark Barna — Elizabeth J. Barna, A Christian Ending. A Handbook for Burial in the Ancient Christian Tradition, Manton/CA ²2018; Sarah Bryne-Martelli, Memory Eternal. Living with Grief as Orthodox Christians, Chesterton/IN 2022.

8 In all of the following prayer books, the Symbol of Faith is part of at least the introductory prayers said in the morning: Αποστολικη Διακονια της Εκκλησιας της Ελλαδος, Προσευχητάριον τοῦ ὀρθοδόξου χριστιανοῦ, Athens 2001, 15 (Morning Prayers); Byzantine Book of Prayer, Pittsburgh – Allendale/NJ 1976, 10–11 (General and Introductory Prayers); Prosevkhitaire. Prières pour le soir, le matin *et midi* [trans. by Denis Guillaume], Rome 1990, 13 (Compline) and 45 (Morning Prayers).

9 The three times include the Midnight Office, Typika, and Compline: Ὡρολόγιον τὸ μέγα, Rome 1876, 13. 25 (Mesonyktikon, Monday to Saturday), 83 (Typika), 113. 126 (Great and Small Compline); Holy Transfiguration Monastery, The Great Horologion or Book of Hours, 2 vols., Boston 2020, vol. 1, 30. 43 (Midnight Office for Weekdays and for Saturdays), 157 (The Service of the Typica), 183. 202 (The Service of Great Compline and of Small Compline).

10 Cf. Peter Mogila, The Orthodox Confession of the Catholic and Apostolic Eastern Church, 1638/1642, in: Creeds and Confessions of Faith in the Christian Tradition, vol. 1, Part One: Rules of Faith in the Early Church, Part Two: Eastern Orthodox Affirmations of Faith, Part Three. Medieval Western Statements of Faith, ed. by Jaroslav Pelikan – Valerie Hotchkiss, New Haven – London 2003, 559–612, esp. 586–591 (articles 57–68 on the Second Coming of Christ) and 610–612 (articles 120–126 on the resurrection of the dead).

1672.[11] The former was endorsed by all four Eastern patriarchs, and the latter by a Synod in Jerusalem. Thus, among the so-called Symbolic Books of Eastern Orthodoxy, these share a pre-eminence, even though Orthodoxy does not rely on them in the way that Western Churches rely on their Confessions.[12]

As for our use of the term "significantly," we have in mind the fact that both Confessions unambiguously bolster a key aspect of the original kerygma and its corporeal dimension: they highlight the resurrection of the body. This cannot be underappreciated. Throughout the centuries – even among Orthodox – there has been a tendency in Platonic fashion to distort the Creed's affirmation about humanity's post mortem fate. Modern Western Christians have gone even further – introducing "hermeneutical understandings". Both eviscerate the material – not to mention cosmic – dimension of the scriptural kerygma.

However, as adumbrated, Moghila's Confession, quoting Gregory the Theologian, states:

> "In the end *the soul receives its well-known body from the earth, which first supplied it and now had kept it safe in store* [emphasis added], after a manner only known to God, who first joined and afterwards separated them. With that body, wherein it had afore lived the heavenly life, it enters now united, to possess the heritage of celestial glory."[13]

Similarly, Dositheus's Confession asserts:

> "We believe that the souls of those who have fallen asleep are either at rest or in torment, according to how each has lived; for when they are separated from their bodies, they depart immediately either to joy or to sorrow and lamentation – though it must be confessed that neither the enjoyment nor the condemnation is complete. For after the common resurrection, *when the soul shall be united with the body* [emphasis added] in which it had behaved itself well or ill, each shall receive the completion either of enjoyment or of condemnation."[14]

Of course, other signposts, e. g. patristic writings, point to this conviction and shall be referenced anon. We have begun with the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed and the last two pan-Orthodox Confessions, however, not only because

[11] Dositheus and the Synod of Jerusalem, Confession, 1672, in: Pelikan – Hotchkiss, Creeds and Confessions of Faith (see n. 10), 613–635.

[12] Regarding their ecclesially eminent status see Jaroslav Pelikan, Credo. Historical and Theological Guide to Creeds and Confessions of Faith in the Christian Tradition, New Haven – London 2003, 421.

[13] Gregory Nazianzenus, Εἰς Καισάριον τὸν ἑαυτοῦ ἀδελφὸν ἐπιτάφιος, 7,21 [CPG 3010.7] (SChr 405, 234; Calvet-Sebasti). We are quoting the translation of Gregory provided by Pelikan – Hotchkiss, Creeds and Confessions of Faith (see n. 10), 588, as it forms part of the translation of Moghila reproduced there.

[14] Dositheus and the Synod of Jerusalem, Confession (1672), in: Pelikan – Hotchkiss, Creeds and Confessions of Faith (see n. 10), 631.

of their unique authority but also owing to their succinctness in affirming a *lex credendi*.

The other Nicene assertion directly germane to our topic, "He shall come again in glory to judge the living and the dead", will be taken up below.

2 The Funeral of a Layperson

Limitations of space require us to focus on the funeral rite celebrated for a layperson.[15] Presently, distinct burial *ordines* are also appointed for priests,[16] monastics[17] and infants/children,[18] with the exception that during the week after Pascha ("Bright Week") the rites differ from all of the above, replicating as they do the Easter Matins (Orthros) service.[19] Except for this last ordo, which any given year obtains for only one week, the burial *ordines* for priests and monks reveal variations on themes that dominate the funeral of a layperson. Consequently, a familiarity with this one ordo provides an adequate – if not comprehensive – sense of the nature of the theologies embedded in the other ordines.[20]

[15] Only because of its established status, we will be citing Εὐχολόγιον τὸ μέγα, ed. by Spyridon Zervos, Athens [4]1992. However, as is often the case, official texts are variously adapted and abbreviated. For a prudent example of the latter among the Greeks, see, for example, Μικρὸν Εὐχολόγιον ἤ ἁγιασματάριον/The Priest's Service Book [trans. by Evagoras Constantinides], Merrillville/IN 2008.

[16] Zervos, Εὐχολόγιον τὸ μέγα (see n. 15), 437–470; English translation, though with minor variations reflecting East-Slavic usage, Great Book of Needs. Expanded and Supplemented, vol. 3: The Occasional Services, ed. by St. Tikhon's Seminary, South Canaan/PA 2002, 252–321. For a descriptive commentary, see Alexis Kniazeff, The Death of a Priest According to the Slavic Trebnik, in: Temple of the Holy Spirit. Sickness and Death of the Christian in the Liturgy. The Twenty-First Liturgical Conference Saint-Serge [trans. by Matthew J. O'Connell], New York 1983, 65–94.

[17] Zervos, Εὐχολόγιον τὸ μέγα (see n. 15), 421–437; St. Tikhon's Seminary, Great Book of Needs (see n. 16), 215–251.

[18] Zervos, Εὐχολόγιον τὸ μέγα (see n. 15), 476–482. The Greek contains only the hymnographic canon. For a fuller text reflective of East-Slavic usage see St. Tikhon's Seminary, Great Book of Needs (see n. 16), 158–179. For a descriptive commentary, see Alexandre Nélidow, Rite for the Funeral of Children, in: Temple of the Holy Spirit. Sickness and Death of the Christian in the Liturgy (see n. 16), 161–174. Naturally, prayers for the forgiveness of sins are not recited at the funeral for an infant or young child.

[19] See St. Tikhon's Seminary, Great Book of Needs (see n. 16), 325–39. For a descriptive commentary see Pierre Kovalevsky, Funeral Rites in the Easter Season and Prayers for the Dead from Easter to Ascension, in: Temple of the Holy Spirit. Sickness and Death of the Christian in the Liturgy (see n. 16), 95–106. After Bright Week – until the Eve of Ascension – a far smaller quantity of Paschal hymns is added to the rites used year-round.

[20] Note that the most fulsome Western-language translation and compilation of Byzantine rites and prayers for the dead, along with explanatory notes, is St. Tikhon's Seminary,

As for the history, the oldest extant Greek euchologion, the eighth-century codex *Barberini gr. 336*, contains several discrete prayers for the dead, as well as one for the "departure of the soul", when the person is about to die – in the hope that he/she "might turn and live"[21]. However, it is only from the tenth or eleventh century that an *akolouthia* (i. e. a complete funeral rite) is extant.[22] Note that, though a single rite, it is "customized" near the end of the service for different categories of Christians.[23]

2.1 Overarching Eschatological Themes

In today's *textus receptus*,[24] more or less codified in the sixteenth century by Venetian Greek printers,[25] the very first specifically funerary chants and prayers heard by the assembly during the preliminary domestic rite[26] already signal four key

Great Book of Needs (see n. 16). The section comprises a full 388 pages of texts and rubrics.

21 *Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Barberini gr. 336*, fol. 207^{r}–207^{v} (Diktyon 64879); Elena Velkovska — Stefano Parenti, Евхологий Барберини гр. 336. Издание текста, предисловие и примечания, Omsk 2011, 414 (no. 214). It petitions God for mercy and peace for the soul, knowing that He does not desire the death of sinners but that they come to the knowledge of truth. Later in the manuscript, a series of prayers for the dead – though bereft of an office per se – includes the prayer "O God of spirits and of all flesh" (see 2.1.3 below). It can be considered a "collect", followed by an "inclination prayer" (fol. 248^{r}–251^{v}). This suggests that the prayer was intended for a liturgical rite. Cf. Velkovska, Funeral Rites (see n. 5), 23.

22 This service survives in codex *Grottaferrata Γ.β. X* (10th cent., Diktyon 17902) and its structure is a fusion of monastic matins, cathedral stational liturgy, and funeral rites proper. See Velkovska, Funeral Rites (see n. 5), 31–33 [description] and 46–51 [edition]; Galadza, Evolution of Funerals for Monks (see n. 5), 228–230. We find an initial blessing and Psalm 90, followed by a *synapte* (litany) with the prayer "O God of spirits and all flesh." The latter is repeated later in the service. Among the many chants are the alleluia and various hymns, including hymnographic canons, kontakia, and stichera.

23 In *Grottaferrata Γ.β. X* the different categories are: a hegoumen; "those who have fallen asleep"; a hierarch; a hieromonk and hierodeacon; a non-monastic deacon; and an infant/child.

24 The Slavonic textus receptus differs slightly from the Greek, but this does not impact our theological analysis.

25 See Εὐχολόγιον seu sacrae preces, ed. by Nikolaos Sophianos, Venice 1545, fol. 236^{r}–244^{r} (Ἀκολουθία τοῦ ἐξοδιαστικοῦ τῶν μοναχῶν), fol. 244^{r}–254^{v} (Τάξις γινομένη ἐπὶ τελουτήσαντα ἱερέα), fol. 255^{r}–258^{r} (Ἀκολουθία νεκώρσιμος εἰς κοσμικὸς ἄνδρας), fol. 258^{r}–260^{v} (Ἀκολουθία νεκρῶσιμος εἰς κοιμηθείσας γυναῖκας), fol. 260^{v}–263^{r} (Ἀκολουθία νεκρώσιμος εἰς νήπια τελουτήσαντα), where the funeral of a monk and of a priest are elaborated and the particularities of funerals for laymen, laywomen, and children consist primarily of different and more specific hymnography.

26 Called "the Trisagion for the Deceased" in Greek. For the text, see Zervos, Εὐχολόγιον τὸ μέγα (see n. 15), 394–395, and "Litia" (заупокойная літія) by most Slavs. See Кіево-Печерская Лавра, Требникъ, Kyiv 1863, 122^{r}–124^{r}. Curiously, among West Ukrainians and Transcarpathian Rusyns the *Litia* service has come to be called a *Panakhyda*, an odd mu-

themes repeated throughout the euchological corpus. These are petitions *i)* that God grant repose to the soul of the departed, and *ii)* that the latter's sins and transgressions be forgiven. Other recurring phrases mention *iii)* the triumph of Christ over death and the devil, and *iv)* ask that God remember the deceased – even eternally.

Thus, the present-day funeral of a layperson as a whole includes almost 70 petitions for the repose of the soul and approximately 35 for the remission of the deceased's sins. As for eschatological victory, allusions to the theme occur almost 30 times, though a third of these occurrences derive from the repetition of the same prayer "O God of spirits and all flesh" (see 2.1.3 below). Finally, varied requests that God remember the deceased appear almost 10 times. All of these outweigh other eschatological themes and thus deserve particular attention.

2.1.1 Reposing – in Anticipation of Rising

Turning to the first theme, the opening hymn (*troparion*) of the *Litia* reads: "With the spirits of the righteous made perfect, grant rest, O Saviour, to the soul of your servant, keeping it for the blessed life with you, O Lover of mankind."[27] No doubt owing to a "loss of the scriptural mind"[28], few practitioners of the Byzantine Rite will realize the significance of mentioning "the spirits of the righteous made perfect". However, it, along with the phrase "keeping it for the blessed life […]", contains implied meanings suggestive of the most authentic New Testament eschatology. The phrase derives from Hebrews 12, which, in context, reads:

> "For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that no further messages be spoken to them [cf. Exodus 19:12–25 and its reference to Mount Sinai], but you have come to Mount Zion and the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant […]." (Hebrews 12:18–24a, ESV)

The "you" referenced here is obviously the believers addressed in the epistle, but exegetes agree that that "the spirits of the righteous made perfect" also "embraces all those attested by God as faithful under both covenants who have been 'per-

tation considering that the *Litia* lasts 10 to 15 minutes, while *Panakhyda* derives from "all night". English in St. Tikhon's Seminary, Great Book of Needs (see n. 16), 180–183.

27 Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain, The Divine Liturgy of Our Father Among the Saints John Chrysostom [trans. by Ephrem Lash], Oxfordshire 2011, 99.

28 See Georges Florovsky, The Lost Scriptural Mind, in: Collected Works of Georges Florovsky, vol. 1: Bible, Church, Tradition: An Eastern Orthodox View, Belmont/MA 1972, 9–16.

fected' on the basis of Jesus' sacrifice"[29]. Moreover – and this is crucial – "they await the culminating moment of the resurrection and the clothing of their spirits with glorified bodies"[30].

Consequently, we would insist that the constant plea – almost 70 petitions – for God's bestowal of rest to the deceased and the "preservation" of the soul expressed in this very first funeral hymn and repeated throughout the rite, points to the authentically New Testament conviction that a climax far more comprehensive than "souls going to heaven" is awaited. The phrase, "preserving it *for* the blessed life with You" (φυλάττων αὐτὴν εἰς τήν μακαρίαν ζωὴν) certainly bolsters this interpretation. Significantly, the original Greek is an accusative construction, rather than the Slavonic locative (во блаженнѣй жизни ["*in* the blessed life"]), presumably a textual corruption. The Greek makes it clear that the departed soul awaits something. Within a credal Christian context this "something" can only be "the resurrection of the dead and the life of the age to come". And while Byzantine funeral texts fall short of proclaiming a fuller, that is, comprehensively cosmic, eschatological future for humanity and creation as a whole, the focus on "the individual's fate" is an appropriate start considering these texts function within burial and memorial services.

Before proceeding, we need to return for a moment to elucidate our references to the "authentic scriptural kerygma" mentioned above. That authenticity, as hinted, requires a stress on the "corporality" of the resurrection. Nicholas T. Wright, arguably the most compelling modern scholar treating the bible's teaching on the resurrection – both Christ's and humanity's – merits particular attention. In addition to the rigorous probity of his work, one discerns an affinity between his sophisticated historical realism and the realism (albeit at times naïve) of many Byzantine liturgical texts fêting the resurrection.
Several illustrative quotations from the Anglican scholar's enormous output on this topic would be apropos,[31] but Wright summarizes tomes of his rigorous scholarship in the following more popular formulation:

[29] William L. Lane, Hebrews 9–13 (Word Biblical Commentary 47B), Dallas 1991, 471. Lane's argument, as Peter T. O'Brien, The Letter to the Hebrews (The Pillar New Testament Commentary), Grand Rapids 2010, 487, n. 222 points out, is grounded in the analysis of David G. Peterson, Hebrews and Perfection. An Examination of the Concept of Perfection in the "Epistle to the Hebrews", Cambridge 1982, 163–165.

[30] Philip E. Hughes, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, Grand Rapids 1977, 550. The question of how the term "perfection" remains appropriate when this culmination has yet to take place is treated in ibid., 550 f.

[31] Citing 1 Corinthians 6:14–15a, "God both raised the Lord, and will also raise us through His power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of the Messiah?" Wright asserts: "Verse 14 is the key. The emphasis of the Greek, hard to bring out in English, is as crucial here as in Chapter 15: The 'both…and…' joins together the resurrection of Jesus and that of believers, both of them accomplished (as usual in Paul) by the divine power

> "[T]he traditional picture of people going either to heaven or hell as a one-stage post-mortem journey (with or without the option of some kind of purgatory or continuing journey as an intermediate stage) represents a serious distortion and diminution of the Christian hope. Bodily resurrection is not just one bit of that hope. It is the element that gives shape and meaning to the rest of the story we tell about God's ultimate purposes."[32]

Regarding such bodily restoration, the words of Orthodox theologian Georges Florovsky are also relevant: "[T]he full integrity of personal existence, distorted and reduced by death, will be restored in the general Resurrection."[33] This is not a matter of fussing over "now recondite" scriptural assertions. It cuts to the heart of God's original plan for creation, not to mention the psychosomatic nature of the human person with everything that this entails. If the Creator of life is indeed the God described in the Scriptures, then that plan cannot ultimately be thwarted. Thus, the opening "theme song" (*troparion*) of the Great Pannykhida (παννυχίδα, панихида) or memorial service, also inserted into some redactions of the funeral rite, sings of "Our Fashioner and God […] the only Creator, who with profound wisdom lovingly arranges all things; and bestows on all people that which is beneficial […]". Protology and eschatology are coupled.

Moreover, "the notion of an 'indestructible person' is an integral part of the Gospel"[34]. Thus, for Christians, "the accretion that is Plato's immortality of the soul", as Florovsky dubs it, dare not overshadow this core aspect of the kerygma. As Schmemann has written: "[T]he body is not the darkness of the soul, but rather the body is its freedom, for the body is the soul as love, the soul as communion, the soul as movement … [W]hen the soul loses the body, when

(*dynamis*). Clearly Paul assumes that the body – the same body which can be abused in immoral behavior – is meant 'for the Lord'; this refers, it seems, to the eventual union with the Messiah, anticipated in baptism, which will take place in the resurrection …" Nicholas T. Wright, The Resurrection of the Son of God (Christian Origins and the Question of God 3), Minneapolis 2003, 289. See ibid., 440–449 as well. Also, Id., Paul and the Faithfulness of God (Christian Origins and the Question of God 4), Minneapolis 2013, 936.

32 Nicholas T. Wright, Surprised by Hope. Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church, New York 2008, 148. Of course, belief in humanity's bodily rising from death is grounded in Christ's inauguration of this triumph. As Wright notes: "It is commonly asserted, often indeed simply assumed, that Paul held what in the modern sense is called a 'spiritual' view of the resurrection, that is, one for which a body, and an empty tomb, would be irrelevant. This whole Part of the book is designed not least to argue conclusively against this idea, and in particular against a disastrous mistranslation in 1 Corinthians 15 which has given it wide currency." See the chapter "Resurrection in Paul" in Id., Resurrection (see n. 31), 213.

33 Georges Florovsky, The Last Things and the Last Events, in: Collected Works of Georges Florovsky, vol. 3: Creation and Redemption, Belmont/MA 1976, 243–265, here: 260.

34 Ibid., 259.

it is separated from the body, it loses life; it dies, even if this dying of the soul is not a complete annihilation, but a dormition, or sleep."[35]

In spite of everything written above, however, one must admit that the theme of bodily resurrection is not evoked in the present-day Byzantine funeral service *as explicitly* as one might hope.[36] This should be of concern, especially as the theme did figure more prominently in earlier versions of the Byzantine funeral service, as we ourselves have noted elsewhere.[37]

However, subsequent reflection has led us to the following conclusion. Funeral rites were never intended to be the Church's only pronouncement about death. Especially in the Byzantine Rite a sublime celebration of bodily death's downfall takes place every Sunday – even during Lent. This feasting is concentrated in the Sunday Matins service (Orthros). Not only is the corporality of resurrected life in Christ fêted with ceaseless chants about God's bestowal of incorruptibility, but the cosmic renewal of all creation is also rehearsed.[38] Consequently, the actual problem is that those attending a Byzantine Rite funeral are frequently doing so in a liturgical vacuum. This is unfortunate. The weekly Sunday services provide a requisite grounding in the Paschal mystery. On the other hand, the current funeral service, with its lamentation, sapiential and penitential streams, arms the believer to confront and work through – rather than evade and mask – the here and now of loss and grieving. The importance of facing death's ugliness and pain with a view to discerning life's meaning and purpose cannot be overemphasized in a consumerist culture bent on denying death.[39]

35 Alexander Schmemann, O Death, Where is Thy Sting? [trans. by Alexis Vinogradov], Crestwood/NY 2003, 42 f.

36 Although the practice of regularly reading (from Monday to Saturday) the pericopes appointed for "votive Divine Liturgies" for the deceased is hardly desirable, it should be noted that two of the six Pauline epistles that are prescribed (Tuesdays: 1 Corinthians 16:39–45; Fridays: 1 Corinthians 16:47–57) focus on resurrection of the body. Incidentally, in view of the fact that two of the twentieth century's greatest Orthodox theologians devote substantial attention to the resurrection of the body, it is all the more unfortunate that the theme is not explicitated more often in the burial rites. See Dumitru Staniloae, The Experience of God. Orthodox Dogmatic Theology, vol. 6: The Fulfillment of Creation, Brookline/MA 2013, 161–181; Bulgakov, The Bride of the Lamb (see n. 3), 435–454.

37 Peter Galadza, Lost and Displaced Elements of the Byzantine Funeral Rites. Towards a Pastoral Reappropriation, in: StLi 33 (2003) 62–74.

38 A compilation of these texts is available in Holy Transfiguration Monastery, The Octoëchos, Boston 2019.

39 See the dissertation by Robert A. [Cyprian] Hutcheon, From Lamentation to Alleluia. An Interpretation of the Theology of the Present-day Byzantine-rite Funeral Service Analyzed through Its Practical Relationship to Bereaved Persons [dissertation, Saint Paul University, Ottawa], 2003; Adam A. J. DeVille, Eschatology and Funerary Practices Today. Byzance après Byzance?, in: Logos. A Journal of Eastern Christian Studies 58 (2017) 281–305.

2.1.2 Forgiveness of Sins

As regards the second most dominant theme of the Byzantine funerary tradition, supplication for the forgiveness of the departed individual's sins, we arrive at a problem that has plagued theology for centuries. Granted it becomes truly explosive only during the Reformation, but the fact that already in the early patristic period the practice is discussed – requiring defence – indicates that questions and/or objections to such intercession were raised earlier. In any case, the promotion of intercession for the deceased's sins in the writings of Fathers such as Chrysostom[40] is an indubitable facet of the *sensus fidelium*. Besides, the Septuagint, including 2 Maccabees, is the Byzantine Church's Old Testament.[41] And as Joseph Ratzinger has written: "The capacity, and the duty, to love beyond the grave might even be called the true primordial datum in this whole area of tradition – as 2 Maccabees 12:42–45 first makes clear. Furthermore, this original 'given' has never been in dispute between East and West."[42]

Arguably, it would seem that the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed's scripturally-grounded reference to Christ's return as judge has buttressed the desire of the living to pray for their deceased forebears who will undergo judgment. It is not insignificant that the very first "all-souls" Saturday of the Lenten period (discussed at 3.2.1 below) actually falls on the day before the Byzantine Church proclaims the gospel of the Last, that is, Fearful, Judgment (Matthew 25:31–46).

We are not suggesting that the practice of praying for the remission of the deceased's sins was bound to emerge from the belief in a judgment, but in the context of a conviction that the living and the dead remain in communion, it would seem that praying for forgiveness of sins should be among the more logical petitions to voice on behalf of those "who continue to live". Again, the aforementioned Symbolic Books mention the practice.[43] Moghila, for example, writes: "[I]t is certain that many sinners are freed from the chains of Hades: not

40 The work of Daley, The Hope of the Early Church (see n. 2), draws attention to Chrysostom's *In Act apostolorum homiliae* 21,4 (CPG 4426), *In epistulam ad Philippenses argumentum et homiliae* 3,3 (CPG 4432), as well as *In epistulam I ad Corinthios argumentum et homiliae* 31,4 (CPG 4428).

41 Incidentally, a regard for "deuterocanonical" books is not simply a matter of respecting a distinctive ecclesial identity but, just as importantly, of highlighting that "intertestamental literature" provides an invaluable bridge facilitating a better understanding of the New Testament.

42 Ratzinger, Eschatology (see n. 1), 233.

43 See Pelikan – Hotchkiss, Creeds and Confessions of Faith (see n. 10), 588–590. Dositheus in his Confession asserts that the Eucharist is a "propitiatory sacrifice offered for all the faithful, living and dead" (ibid., 630).

by their own repentance or confession … but for the good works and alms of the living, and for the prayers of the church, made in their behalf."[44]

As is evident, then, praying for the forgiveness of sins of those departed this life is among the antinomies hinted at in our introduction. Such prayers, on the one hand, are "useless", but on the other hand, just like many prayer intentions, remain "unavoidably inexorable": humans will "irrationally" plead with God to regard the concerns of grieving hearts, whatever those may be. This is particularly legitimate when part of the grief may derive from the offenses that the departed had inflicted on those attending the funeral. It also becomes the ecclesia's way of forgiving.

Part of the Byzantine tradition's enactment of the community's forgiveness of the deceased is the constant reference to "involuntary" offenses for which pardon is implored.[45] This certainly highlights the need for humans to be sensitive to the unintended nature of many of their neighbours' transgressions. Even more strikingly, East-Slavic euchologies direct the presider to read a final prayer of absolution over the *corpse*.[46] Again, we encounter an antinomy. The extravagance of God's unconditional love becomes the Church's final word over a body that theoretically cannot receive absolution.

2.1.3 Eschatological Victory Over Evil

Throughout his corpus Schmemann asserts eschatology's privileged place within Christian faith. It involves "belief in the saving power of certain historical events, and belief in the final victory of God in Christ and of the Kingdom of God"[47]. Unfortunately, the theme of eschatological victory is not as pronounced as one might hope, but it does appear in various parts of the Byzantine funeral service – beginning with the *Litia*. There we find the oldest presidential oration, still used in Byzantine services for the deceased, "O God of spirits and of all flesh" (Ὁ Θεὸς τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης σαρκός).[48] Though presumably older, the prayer is already extant in a papyrus fragment dated to *c*. 600.[49] When served without

[44] Ibid., 588 f.

[45] Zervos, Εὐχολόγιον τὸ μέγα (see n. 15), 394 *passim*.

[46] See Great Book of Needs. Expanded and Supplemented, vol. 3: The Occasional Services, ed. St. Tikhon's Seminary, South Canaan/PA 2002, 213 f.

[47] Alexander Schmemann, Liturgy and Eschatology, in: Sobornost 7/1 (1985) 6–14, here: 9.

[48] Text from *Barberini gr. 336*, fol. 248^{r}–248^{v} (no. 264; Velkovska – Parenti, Евхологий Барберини гр. 336 [see n. 21], 449). See also Zervos, Εὐχολόγιον τὸ μέγα (see n. 15), 394 f.

[49] The prayer is preserved on papyrus fragments, in epigraphy, and in parchment manuscripts. The earliest extant witness of this prayer is known through a papyrus fragment from the Negev, Nessana Papyrus 96 dated to *c*. 600. The prayer is, however, likely older than this fragment and its geographical dispersion is quite vast: the Nessana Papyrus comes from the Negev, located halfway between Sinai and Jerusalem, but there are numer-

abbreviations, the burial of a layperson prescribes its recitation nine times. The oration, which incidentally includes twenty scriptural references, ends by addressing Christ as "the resurrection, the life and the repose" of the deceased.

The very first divine act cited in the oration is Christ's "trampling down death and making the devil powerless" (ὁ τὸν θάνατον καταπατήσας καὶ τὸν διάβολον καταργήσας).[50] Note the prayer's allusion to Hebrews 2:14: "Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the power of the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil." (ESV) Later in the service, in the Theotokion of the First Ode of the Canon, this incarnational theme is again coupled with that of triumph: "He Who, at first from a rib didst fashion Eve, our first mother, from thy most-pure womb didst clothe Himself in flesh, by which the power of death was destroyed, O pure One."[51]

In the Seventh Ode of the Canon "the Word, the source of life", is fêted as the one who "killed arrogant death". Then, Mary, "the all blameless one" is hymned as having become "nobler than any other creature by conceiving God, who smashed the gates of death and shattered their bars"[52].

If we invoke the category of "implied meanings", the victory theme appears at least another ten times. This occurs especially in the canon where the sufferings and triumph of the martyrs – crowned as victors – are hymned. Someone not conversant with the underlying significance of such narratives may wonder why they should figure in funeral hymnography. However, without them, the paschal mystery remains a reality of the past, confined to Christ. The "triumphant athletes", as martyrs are styled in the Byzantine tradition, enflesh and demonstrate in ongoing generations the power of dying and rising with Christ. Death is thus

ous inscriptions of the whole prayer on stone from Nubia dated to between 858 and 1243. The prayer in the inscriptions also includes the names of the dead and even their age in the text of the prayer, while in the papyrus and parchment witnesses the text of the prayer is generic and without specific names of the dead. Marco Stroppa, Un'iscrizione funerbia dalla Nubia, Riedizione di P.Ness. III 96, in: Comunicazioni dell'Istituto Papirologico "G. Vitelli" 13 (2019) 11–21. Its first witness in Byzantine liturgical manuscripts is in the earliest extant Greek Euchologion, *Barberini gr. 336* from the 8th century.

50 Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Thyateira, The Divine Liturgy (see n. 27), 100 f. Certain versions of this prayer have the verbs and nouns inverted, "making death powerless and trampling down the devil" (ὁ τὸν θάνατον καταργήσας καὶ τὸν διάβολον καταπατήσας). See, for example, *Barberini gr. 336*, fol. 248r–248v (no. 264; Velkovska – Parenti, Евхологий Барберини гр. 336 [see n. 21], 449). Presumably, the subsequent repetition throughout the centuries of the Paschal troparion, in which one ceaselessly sings of Christ "trampling down *death* by death" caused the inversion.

51 St. Tikhon's Seminary, Great Book of Needs (see n. 16), 193.

52 Ibid., 199.

also linked to discipleship and the importance of witnessing to the one Lord – even at the cost of one's life.

Among other texts of the funeral service redolent with this victory theme are references to Christ's descent into Hades;[53] the opening Psalm with its mention of "walking on asp and basilisk, and trampling down lion and dragon" (Ps. 90:13 LXX);[54] and the Beatitudes.[55] The latter, being the manifesto of those who have already died in baptism and thus have nothing to lose (cf. Romans 6:7), also bear an implied note of triumph. Moreover, in traditional Byzantine fashion, they are introduced with the refrain, "In your kingdom remember us, O Lord, when you come in Your kingdom"[56].

Finally, it goes without saying that the two scriptural readings appointed for every funeral of a layperson[57] contain the victory theme. Thus, for example, the Gospel has Jesus proclaiming how hearers of the word and believers pass over from death to life (John 5:24).

2.1.4 God Remembers – Eternally

The biblical theology of "God remembering" has been studied extensively.[58] The plea that He would remember the deceased is expressed in a uniquely powerful manner, especially in the Slavic forms of the Byzantine tradition. The climactic chant "Memory Eternal" (αἰωνία ἡ μνήμη, вѣчная память) exists in several haunting versions and can evoke strong emotions even among the most Stoic of worshippers. This, incidentally, indicates the importance of studying liturgy not only as a text but as an embodied experience, embracing all the senses. The legendary power of Slavic church music exemplifies this. While the theme of divine remembrance occurs approximately 10 times in the funeral rite, it is the chanting of вѣчная память, occurring only two or three times, which frequently becomes the most cathartic moment of the rite.[59] Ironically, most worshippers presume that the deceased is to be remembered by us humans – those whom he/she has left behind. However, the chant actually implores God to remember the deceased – eternally – something that only God, of course, can do.

53 Zervos, Εὐχολόγιον τὸ μέγα (see n. 15), 394.

54 Ibid., 395.

55 Ibid., 414 f.

56 Ibid., 414.

57 1 Thessalonians 4:13–17 and John 5:24–30. The Byzantine tradition, unfortunately, does not provide for alternate readings, even though different pericopes can be found in the manuscripts prior to the sixteenth-century codification, brought on by printing.

58 See Brevard S. Childs, Memory and Tradition in Israel, London 1962. Cf. Theological Lexicon of the New Testament, ed. by Ceslas Spicq [trans. by James D. Ernest], Peabody/MA 1994, vol. 2, 491–492.

59 Кіево-Печерская Лавра, Требникъ (see n. 26), 143^{v}.

Divine action is central to this biblical metaphor for God's faithful care. In the Old Testament, God remembers Noah in order to bring an end to the flood (Gen. 9:15–16). Similar consequences of divine remembrance are Lot's escape (Gen. 19:29), the opening of Rachel's womb (Gen. 30:22) and the Exodus from Egypt (cf. Ps. 105:42). While the New Testament has only four references to God's remembering, the Slavic funerary tradition maintains the stress on divine intervention in conjunction with such memory by appending the phrase, "With the saints give rest, O Christ" to the chant вѣчная память.[60] Thus, memory and consequential action remain coupled.

The phrase *αἰωνία ἡ μνήμη* is already attested as an exclamation in the Hellenistic period. Among Christians, for example at the Fourth Ecumenical Council in 451, we find it as an acclamation for deceased church figures: *Κυρίλλου αἰωνία ἡ μνήμη*.[61] By the fifteenth century liturgical manuscripts consistently prescribe it at the conclusion of funerals, though it was no doubt used earlier.[62] While we have not located theological reflections that would relate this funeral chant to the dying thief's entreaty of the crucified Christ that He remember him when He comes in His kingdom (Luke 23:43), such reflection would be pregnant with possibilities. Death, paradise, the kingdom, forgiveness, and salvation coalesce in this dialogue that naturally evokes the theme of everlasting remembrance.

2.2 What is Death?

In typically antinomic fashion death is understood in Byzantine Christian prayers for the deceased as both foe and friend.[63] The two can even be fused in the same composition.

As regards its inimical status, death antagonizes most simply because (as expressed by the deceased, who is given voice in the hymns) "just yesterday I was talking to you … but I shall not walk with you again, nor speak with you

60 Ibid.

61 A. A. Lukashevich, Вечная память, in: PrEnc 8, 93. In the New Testament, however, the word μνήμη appears only in 2 Peter 1:15: "And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things" (*σπουδάσω δὲ καὶ ἑκάστοτε ἔχειν ὑμᾶς μετὰ τὴν ἐμὴν ἔξοδον τὴν τούτων μνήμην ποιεῖσθαι*).

62 Christodoulou, Ἡ *νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία* (see n. 5), vol. 1, 341.

63 As Florovsky writes: "Death is a catastrophe. But persons survive, and those *in Christ* are still alive – even in the state of death." Florovsky, Last Things (see n. 33), 260. For synthetic overviews of, and reflections on, patristic and systematic theological texts regarding the nature of death by Orthodox authors see Jean-Claude Larchet, La Vie après la mort selon la tradition orthodoxe, Paris 2001, 37–61; and Staniloae, Experience of God (see n. 36), 1–19.

anymore …"[64]. As Florovsky has written: "In a sense, death means a disintegration of human personality, because man is not designed to be immaterial."[65] Thus death, being "arrogant" (θρασυνόμενος), is "slain by the Word", who is described as "the superlative source of life" (ζωαρχικώτατος). Moreover, "death's gates are smashed and their bars shattered"[66].

The hymns of the final kiss also describe the hour of death as "dread"[67]. This fearsome tenor is even more pronounced – in macabre fashion – in the *Canon of Supplication* and the *Order at the Departure of the Soul* (see 3.3.3. below).

As for death's welcomed status, it not only brings an end to physical pain but also to the possibility of sinning. At the final kiss those present are urged to give thanks that the deceased is "hastening to the grave", and "no longer burdened by the much-wearied flesh"[68].

2.3 The Separation of the Body and Soul

In addition to the woeful description of the soul's separation from the body[69] found in the three offices treated below, the actual funeral rite describes this parting of the two as an ἀγῶνα[70] (ordeal). Later, the final kiss and the experience of separating from relatives and friends heightens the drama: "Hades and destruction (ἀπώλεια)" are called to mind,[71] something not surprising since "the soul is about to be snatched by force from the body by frightening angels"[72].

According to several of the hymns, death occurs as a result of God's command.[73] This could bring some solace, except that the command is sometimes portrayed as punitive – retribution for Adam's sin (cf. the wages of sin is death, Romans 6:23). Nonetheless earlier in the service, during the chanting of the Beatitudes, a troparion injects a note of comfort into reflection on the separation theme with the words: "O You who rule over souls and bodies, in whose hands is our breath, O Consolation of the afflicted, grant rest …"[74].

64 Zervos, Εὐχολόγιον τὸ μέγα (see n. 15), 419 (Doxastichon of Final Kiss).
65 Florovsky, Last Things (see n. 33), 259.
66 Zervos, Εὐχολόγιον τὸ μέγα (see n. 15), 411 (Ode 7, first troparion and then Theotokion).
67 Ibid., 419 (Doxastichon).
68 Ibid., 417 (First sticheron at the Final Kiss).
69 For synthetic overviews of, and reflections on, patristic and Byzantine texts regarding the separation of the body and soul see Larchet, La Vie après la mort (see n. 63), 63–83; and Marinis, Death and the Afterlife in Byzantium (see n. 6), 49–53.
70 Zervos, Εὐχολόγιον τὸ μέγα (see n. 15), 413 (Tone 2 Nekrosima sticheron). The Slavonic renders ἀγῶνα with a term that denotes an ascetic struggle (подвигъ).
71 Ibid., 418 (Fifth sticheron of the Final Kiss).
72 Ibid., 418 (Eighth sticheron of the Final Kiss).
73 Ibid., 414 (Tone 7 Nekrosima sticheron and Tone 8 Nekrosima sticheron).
74 Ibid., 415 (Troparion after "Blessed are the peacemakers").

2.4 Intermediate State of the Soul

The question of the intermediate state of the soul is where the Constantinopolitan tradition can be the most "byzantine"[75]. This should not be surprising. As John McGuckin has noted: "[T]he early Church preserve[d] a deep awareness that eschatology cannot be explained within temporal categories, only symbolically sketched and hinted at."[76] However, by the fifth century "[a] de-eschatologized translation of early Christian thought on 'new kairos' into the doctrine of the last things can be seen progressively advancing"[77]. This creates the convoluted *assorti* mentioned by Constas at the beginning of our paper. The liturgical texts reflect this clash of "paradigms" about the intermediate state that can result from the later desire for "clarity".

Significantly, the funeral rite contains no allusions to a third-, ninth-, and fortieth-day sojourn of the soul. There are also no references to "toll-houses". As for the post-mortem "location" of (all) souls, the Byzantine Church's prayers sometimes suggest that they dwell in Hades, while also praying that they be spared such a fate. In the case of the latter, occasionally the hope expressed is that they may dwell in "paradise". Nonetheless, on the basis of liturgical texts one cannot simplistically suggest the binary: "righteous souls provisionally inhabit paradise" while (only) the unrighteous "dwell in Hades".

As regards paradise, in a series of chants that conclude the recitation of Psalm 118, the assembly sings – on its own behalf and that of the deceased – "Grant me the desired homeland, making me again a citizen of Paradise."[78] Three more references to the latter are found in this series called the *Evlogitaria*.[79] Protology and eschatology are again linked. Such allusions have their roots in Jewish apocalyptic literature, "which contains the conviction that the final (or second) age will be characterized by the blessed state at creation of the first age …"[80]. This linkage is theologically significant. Without it, it is easy to lose site of the way in which humans were actually intended from the beginning to know a blessedness that Christ has simply restored. Thus, the fallen state is not "natural".

[75] For synthetic overviews of, and reflections on, patristic and systematic theological texts regarding the intermediate state of the soul see Staniloae, Experience of God (see n. 36), 77–117; and Larchet, La Vie après la mort (see n. 63), 149–211.

[76] John A. McGuckin, Eschatological Horizons in the Cappadocian Fathers, in: Apocalyptic Thought in Early Christianity, ed. Robert J. Daly, Brookline/MA 2009, 193–210, here: 197.

[77] Ibid.

[78] Zervos, Εὐχολόγιον τὸ μέγα (see n. 15), 407.

[79] Ibid., 407 f.

[80] The Anchor Bible Dictionary, vol. 5, ed. by David Noel Freedman et al., New York 1992, 154.

2.5 Individual Judgment of the Deceased and Final Judgment

We now turn to the only other Nicene Credal assertion directly germane to the present study, "He shall come again in glory to judge the living and the dead"[81]. General references to judgment are found in various parts of the funerary rite, but none of them is noteworthy for its style or theology. Curiously enough, the funeral texts are relatively reserved in their depiction of the "particular" and "final" judgment. Compared, for example with the multiple references to the "river of fire," and "the gnashing of teeth grounding [the condemned] to powder" in the hymnography for the Sunday of the Last Judgment when Matthew 25:31–46 is read,[82] we find a singular harrowing image: "Let us listen to what the Almighty cries: Woe to those who seek to behold the dread day of the Lord; for it is darkness: it will test all things by fire." Ironically, this is the *troparion* sung after the concluding verse of the Beatitudes, "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven"[83].

Moreover, when judgment is mentioned, the various works of mercy enumerated by Christ in Matthew 25 are nowhere to be found. One presumes that the monastic provenance of much funeral hymnography (like the hymns for the Sunday of the Last Judgment) explains this reticence about "feeding the hungry" and "clothing the naked" etc. Certainly, a supplementing of the *textus receptus* with hymnography that would mention the Lord's actual criteria for judgment is called for, especially if ethical questions are to figure in a *lex credendi*.

However, a potentially related – and subversive – dimension of the funeral hymnography is its stress on the levelling nature of death: "Wealth does not last …"[84]; "I looked again into the tombs and saw the naked bones, and I said: Who then is a monarch or a soldier, rich man or beggar?"[85] Indeed, all – whether rulers, judges or potentates – will be judged without regard for person.

3 Other Liturgical *Loci*

Naturally, the Byzantine Rite *lex credendi* regarding death and the afterlife is expressed not only it its burial rites, but may also be gleaned from other areas of its *lex orandi*.

81 For synthetic overviews of, and reflections on, patristic and systematic theological texts regarding individual and universal, final judgment by Orthodox authors, see Larchet, La Vie après la mort (see n. 63), 137–148. 261–274; and Staniloae, The Experience of God (see n. 36), 29–75, 183–193.

82 The Lenten Triodion, trans. by Mother Mary – Kallistos Ware, London 1978, 150–179.

83 Zervos, Εὐχολόγιον τὸ μέγα (see n. 15), 415.

84 Ibid., 415 (Tone 3 Nekrosima sticheron).

85 Ibid., 414 (Tone 5 Nekrosima sticheron).

3.1 Anaphoras

The commemoration of the deceased is central to the intercessions of most Anaphoras. Interestingly, the order of these commemorations (i. e. deceased or living first) varies, depending on the relationship between the epiclesis and the fruits of communion with the intercessions. For example, the commemoration of the deceased placed between the enumeration of the fruits of communion, which are benefits received by the communicants, and the commemoration of the living, implies that the deceased are (also) beneficiaries of the Eucharistic offering. Moreover, the prayer of the living for all the deceased or the intercession of the saints among the deceased for the living becomes a topic of debate.

In the Anaphora of CHR, immediately after the epiclesis and the enumeration of the fruits of communion (sobriety of soul, remission of sins, communion in the Holy Spirit, fullness of the kingdom, and *parrhesia* before the Father),[86] the presider offers the worship, called λογικὴ λατρεία (Romans 12:1), "for those who have gone to their rest in faith" (ὑπὲρ τῶν ἐν πίστει ἀναπαυσαμένων): "forefathers, fathers, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, preachers, evangelists, martyrs, confessors, ascetics and every righteous spirit made perfect in faith (καὶ παντὸς πνεύματος δικαίου ἐν πίστει τετελειωμένου; cf. Hebrews 12:23, καὶ πνεύμασι δικαίων τετελειωμένων);[87] above all for our all-holy, pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, Mother of God and Ever-Virgin, Mary." After the commemoration of the Theotokos, John the Baptist and the saint of the day, the presider continues: "Remember too all those who have fallen asleep in hope of resurrection to eternal life, and give them rest where the light of your countenance watches" (Καὶ μνήσθητι πάντων τῶν κεκοιμημένων ἐπ' ἐλπίδι ἀναστάσεως ζωῆς αἰωνίου καὶ ἀνάπαυσον αὐτούς, ὅπου ἐπισκοπεῖ τὸ φῶς τοῦ προσώπου σου [Psalm 4:6]).[88] Likewise, at the same point in the Anaphora of BAS, the presider remembers "all those who have gone to sleep before us in the hope of the resurrection of eternal life ... [and prays that God] grant them rest where the light of your countenance shines" (πάντων τῶν προκεκοιμημένων ἐπ' ἐλπίδι ἀναστάσεως ζωῆς αἰωνίου […] καὶ ἀνάπαυσον αὐτούς, ὅπου ἐπισκοπεῖ τὸ φῶς τοῦ προσώπου σου).

[86] Robert F. Taft, The Fruits of Communion in the Anaphora of St. John Chrysostom, in: Ildebrando Scicolone (ed.), Psallendum. Miscellanea di studi in onore del Prof. Jordi Pinell i Pons (ALit 15 / StA 105), Rome 1992, 275–302.

[87] Cf. Hebrews 12:23: καὶ πνεύμασι δικαίων τετελειωμένων. This paraphrase of Hebrews 12:23 in CHR and BAS is quoted later by other authors, such as Mark of Ephesus. See Louis Petit, Documents relatifs au concile de Florence La question du purgatoire a Ferrare, Documents I–VI (PO 15/1), Paris 1920, 44; Panteleimon (Trofimov), I dibattiti (see n. 1).

[88] Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Thyateira, The Divine Liturgy (see n. 27), 47.

3.1.1 Explaining Prayers for the Dead in the Anaphora in Late Antiquity

What is apparent in these intercessions is a connection between the living and the dead through prayer and the liturgical offering made to God. As Robert F. Taft has noted:

> „The notion that others besides ourselves and the triune God are protagonists of the Church's liturgical action is obviously rooted in ancient doctrines and practices: the heavenly liturgy, the credal affirmation of the communion of saints, the cult of martyrs, the ago-old practice of veneration of the dead, and the belief that our prayers can benefit them. But although all these elements were mirrored in liturgical prayer from an earlier period – the association of the angelic choirs in our hymn of praise and the cult of martyrs are both in place in the time of the Apostolic Fathers – the actual naming of saints or categories of saints in the eucharistic prayer is not visible until the fourth century."[89]

From the fourth century onward we see a developed theology acknowledging the intercessory and propitiatory value of the Eucharist, particularly as sacrificial and coming after the consecration.[90] For example, Cyril of Jerusalem's *Mystagogical Catechesis* 5,8–9 prays for (ὑπέρ) the Church, rulers, and others, living and dead (ὑπὲρ τῶν προκεκοιμημένων ἁγίων πατέρων καὶ ἐπισκόπων καὶ πάντων ἁπλῶς τῶν ἐν ἡμῖν προκεκοιμημένων), but commemorates (μνημονεύομεν) patriarchs, apostles, prophets, and martyrs for whom the sacrifice is offered and, in general, for all who have fallen asleep before us, believing great profit will come to the souls for whom the petition is made as this holy and awe-filled sacrifice is being presented (καὶ πάντων ἁπλῶς τῶν ἐν ἡμῖν προκεκιμημένων, μεγίστην ὄνησιν πιστεύοντες ἔσεσθαι ταῖς ψυχαῖς, ὑπὲρ ὧν ἡ δέησις ἀναφέρεται, τῆς ἁγίας καὶ φρικωδεστάτης προκειμένης θυσίας).[91] Cyril then explains the practice of offering the Eucharist:

> "And I want to persuade you by means of an example. For I know many who say, 'How can a soul receive profit after having left this world, either with or without sins, if it is remembered in prayer?' But surely if a king had made exiles out of certain people who had given him offense, and then their relatives wove a crown and offered it to him for those in need of help, would he not give them relief from their punishments? In the same way we also, offering our petitions to God for those who have fallen asleep, although they are sinners, we do not weave crowns, but we offer Christ

[89] Robert F. Taft, Praying to or for the Saints? A Note on the Sanctoral Intercessions – Commemorations in the Anaphora: History and Theology, in: Michael Schneider – Walter Berschin (eds.), Ab Oriente et Occidente (Mt 8,11). Kirche aus Ost und West [GS Wilhelm Nyssen], St. Ottilien 1996, 439–455, here: 444.

[90] Cf. ibid., 451 f.

[91] St Cyril of Jerusalem, Lectures on the Christian Sacraments [trans. by Maxwell E. Johnson] (Popular Patristics Series 57), Yonkers/NY 2017, 124–127.

> slaughtered for our sins, propitiating God the lover of humanity both for them and for ourselves."[92]

Cyril is clearly responding to doubts about the utility of such offering and pointing to early Christian apologies for both the power of intercessory prayer and the possibility of growth in life after death. This is reflected in the theological current represented by Gregory of Nyssa who opined that the deceased continue to desire and develop even after death.[93] Thus, praying for a saint need not evoke such surprise.

Although already in the fourth and fifth centuries supplications for the intercession of the saints are known, the commemoration of the dead in the Anaphora becomes a firmly established feature after 593, when the presbyter Eustratius of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople completes his work on the state of souls after death.[94] Towards the end of his lengthy treatise, where he quotes numerous Old Testament, New Testament, and patristic authors and sources by name, Eustratius enumerates several reasons for memorializing the dead on the third, ninth, and fortieth day, connecting their commemoration to post-resurrectional events in the life of Christ. Not surprisingly, he connects the third day to Christ's appearance to the apostles on the third day after his own death, where he comforted them by exclaiming to them "Peace be with you" and "Receive the Holy Spirit" (John 20:19–22). On the eighth day, which Eustratius mentions can be reckoned as the ninth day depending on how one counts, Christ appeared to the apostles with Thomas (John 20:26). The fortieth day commemorates the bodily Ascension of Christ (Acts 1:2–3).[95] As Maximos Constas notes, "Eustratius drew creatively on the language of contemporary christology in order to articulate a theory of theological anthropology commensurate with ritual practice, not simply for the sake of philosophical musing, but to align a system of theistic metaphysics with liturgical worship"[96].

Another explanation for the commemoration of the dead on the third, ninth, and fortieth day is attributed to John Lydos (6th cent.), who connects

92 Mystagogical Catechesis 5,10 (ibid., 126 f.).

93 Gregory of Nyssa, De uita Moysis (CPG 3159); Grégoire de Nysse, Vie de Moïse ou Traité de la perfection en matière de vertu, 2,239, ed. by Jean Daniélou (SC 1bis), Paris 1955, 109.

94 Eustratii Presbyteri Constantinopolitani de statu animarum post mortem (CPG 7522), ed. by Peter van Deun (CCSG 60), Turnhout 2006. See Stefano Parenti, L'anafora di Crisostomo. Testo e contesti (JThF 36), Münster 2020, 372–375. 390–401. 412–417. 440–442.

95 Eustratius, De statu animarum post mortem 97 f. (CCSG 60, 2361–2381; Van Deun).

96 Nicholas Constas, An Apology for the Cult of Saints in Late Antiquity: Eustratius Presbyter of Constantinople, *On the State of Souls after Death* (CPG 7522), in: JECS 10/2 (2002) 267–285, here: 282.

these days to the various states and stages of development of the human body and soul after conception, during gestation, after birth, and after death.[97]

3.1.2 Who is Interceding for Whom? The Case of the Theotokos

Along with questions about the power of intercessory prayer come issues of the relationship between the living and the dead and distinctions between various categories of the deceased; in other words, are *we* praying as intercessors *for* them or are we praying *to* them as intercessors for *us*? The most notable example is Mary, the Mother of God. The particular commemoration of the Theotokos by name in the *ekphonesis* of the intercessions is not inserted into the Anaphora until after 458, by Patriarch Gennadius I (458–471), at the command of Emperor Leo I (457–474), an innovation provoked by Patriarch Martyrius (459–740) of Antioch's refusal to grant Mary the title "Theotokos"[98]. The eleventh-century *Protheoria* notes that this is an intercession *for* the Theotokos, insisting that Christ is the only one who is offered and offers (Σὺ γὰρ εἶ προσφέρων καὶ προσφερόμενος, ὁ προσδεχόμενος καὶ διαδιδόμενος), quoting the prayer of apology Οὐδεὶς ἄξιος said by the presider before the Great Entrance in the Divine Liturgy.[99] Nicholas Cabasilas finds this unacceptable and explains the preposition "for", by uncharacteristically agreeing with Latin theology: the Eucharist is offered for the benefit of the deceased but in honour of the saints.[100] Following Cabasilas, Symeon of Thessalonica interpretation aligns with the concluding statement of the Intercessions in BAS, namely "by their supplications, visit us, O God" (ὧν ταῖς ἱκεσίαις ἐπίσκεψαι ἡμᾶς, ὁ Θεός), turning the tables on intercessory prayer – from the living for the dead to the dead for the living.[101]

Observing this development, Stefano Parenti points out that what might have been acceptable and understandable theology in the fourth or eleventh

97 Gilbert Dagron, Troisième, neuvième et quarantième jours dans la tradition byzantine. Temps chrétien et anthropologie, in: Le temps chrétien de la fin de l'Antiquité au Moyen Âge III[e] à XIII[e] siècles, Paris, 9–12 mars 1981 (Colloques internationaux du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique 604), ed. by Jean-Marie Leroux, Paris 1984, 419–430.

98 Cf. Taft, Praying to or for the Saints? (see n. 89), 440; Id., A History of the Liturgy of St John Chrysostom, vol. 4: The Diptychs (OCA 238), Rome 1991, 100–102.

99 Nicholas of Andida, Protheoria, 28 f. (PG 140, 456 f.). See also Robert F. Taft, A History of the Liturgy of St John Chrysostom, vol. 2: The Great Entrance. A History of the Transfer of the Gifts and other Pre-Anaphoral Rites (OCA 238), Rome [2]2004, 119–143.

100 Διὰ τοῦτο οὐδὲν αὐτοῖς εὔχεται ὁ ἱερεύς, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον αὐτὸς παρ' ἐκείνων εἰς τὰς εὐχὰς δεῖται βοηθεῖσθαι. Ὅτι οὐχ ἱκέσιον ἀλλὰ χαριστήριον, ὡς εἴρηται, ποιεῖται ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν τὴν τῶν δώρων προσαγωγήν. Nicolas Cabasilas, Explication de la divine liturgie suivi de Explication des ornements sacrés et Explication des rites de la divine liturgie, ed. by Sévérien Salaville et al. (SC 4bis), Paris 1967, 210.

101 Cf. St. Symeon of Thessalonika, The Liturgical Commentaries, ed. and trans. by Steven Hawkes-Teeples (STPIMS 168), Toronto 2011, 252 f.

century was less comprehensible in the fourteenth century and required an explanation. Parenti further speculates that the doubts about what praying for the Theotokos might mean could have impacted the structure of the Divine Liturgy and led to the introduction and definitive placement of the Marian hymn during the Intercessions of the Diptychs for the Dead after the fourteenth century.[102] Ultimately, the living offer the Eucharist *for* everyone – including the Theotokos, who bore Christ and is praised as immaculate and more honourable than ranks of angels – to Christ, who offers it to God "on behalf of all and for all" (σοὶ προσφέρομεν κατὰ πάντα, καὶ διὰ πάντα, cf. Hebrews 2:17).

The text of the Anaphora and its history show clearly just how nebulous the divide was in the Eucharistic prayer between the living who offer and the dead for whom the Eucharist is offered; between the ranks of saints and the deceased, for whom the Eucharist is offered. The unity of heavenly and earthly, of the living and the deceased, in the Eucharistic celebration is something made possible by the hypostatic union, which grants to humans by grace what God has by nature, overcoming through baptism the division imposed by human death, which is a type of Christ's death. This unity of the baptized living and deceased is made tangible in the Church.[103]

3.2 Liturgical Year and the Liturgy of the Hours

The liturgical year itself evidences several occasions when prayers for the deceased are prescribed within the Liturgy of the Hours. Among the most significant is the so-called Kneeling Vespers of Pentecost Sunday evening. The kneeling is related to the ancient practice of beginning the next period of penitence on the Monday after Pentecost, when the 50 days of Pascha have ended. Contrition for sins evokes the desire to include prayers for the forgiveness of the faults of the deceased as well. Thus, the third set of unique prayers at this equally unique Vespers praise Christ for "vouchsafing to accept the supplicatory prayers of forgiveness for those that are held in Hades"[104].

[102] See Parenti, L'anafora (see n. 94), 363 f. 391–410.

[103] For this sacramental vision of the Church, see Vassa Kontouma, The Understanding of the Sacraments in John of Damascus' Theology, in: John of Damascus. More Than a Compiler, ed. by Scott Ables (TSEC 26), Leiden 2022, 153–171.

[104] Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Pentecostarion, Boston 2014, 250. For the Greek, see Dmitrievskii's Euchologia. A Modified English Version of Volume II of Aleksei Dmitrievskii's Description of Liturgical Manuscripts Preserved in the Libraries of the Orthodox East (Kyiv 1901), ed. by Ilias Nesseris et al. (Kyivan Christianity Series 32), Lviv 2023, 16. This prayer, "Eternally over-flowing, life-giving, and enlightening fountain" (Ἡ ἀεννάως βρύουσα ζωτικὴ καὶ φωτικστικὴ πηγή), is absent from *Barberini gr. 336* but is found in the Constantinopolitan Euchologion *Paris BnF Coislin 213* (ad 1027, Diktyon 49354) and the scroll *Sinai gr.* 956 (10th cent., Diktyon 59331) as the third prayer. This prayer is

3.2.1 Soul Saturdays

The practice of prescribing prayers for the deceased on the Saturdays of Great Lent is clearly attested in Byzantine liturgical books after the ninth century, though the day when Christ rested in the tomb has been the day for commemorating the dead since antiquity.[105] This Saturday rest is evoked at every funeral in the chanting of Psalm 118, one of its oldest components. The latter is prescribed for most Saturdays of the year as well as Holy Saturday, when the One who obeyed the Law to the end lies in the tomb. The implied appeal to imitate such obedience is obvious.

Canon 51 of Laodicea specified that the memory of martyrs should not be celebrated on the weekdays of Lent, but rather moved to Saturdays and Sundays, which Theodore Balsamon (c. 1140–c. 1195) interpreted to mean the commemoration of martyrs and all the deceased.[106] Here we see once more a conflation of martyrs commemorated as saints on the one hand and all the deceased on the other, regardless of their "level" of veneration.

As for the Saturday before Meatfare Sunday, Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos (c. 1256–1335) highlights that the commemoration of the deceased on this day is intended as an eschatological commemoration of all the deceased, from Adam until the present day, in anticipation of the Last Judgment, which is commemorated the following day, Meatfare Sunday.[107]

3.2.2 Vespers and Matins for the Dead

Vespers and Matins (Vigil) for the Deceased,[108] whose propers are rarely heard, especially as the Matins service essentially duplicates the Great Pannykhida, nonetheless contain theologically rich hymnography. A sticheron of Vespers, for example, cannot but have been inspired by the Anaphora's anamnesis and the

attributed to St Basil the Great in the manuscript *Venezia Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana (BNM) gr. I. 016* (coll. 1415) (Diktyon 70112), fol. 217^{v}, where it is a prayer of the Psalter. See Paul Jonathan Fedwick, Bibliotheca Basiliana Universalis. A Study of the Manuscript Tradition, Translations and Editions of the Works of Basil of Caesarea, vol. 4/3, Turnhout 2000, 1531 (prayer iv 8 in MSS k7955); Miguel Arranz, Les prières de la Gonyklisia ou de la Génuflexion du jour de la Pentecôte dans l'ancien Euchologe byzantin, in: OCP 48 (1982) 92–123, especially: 99. 106 f. 113.

105 Cf. Olga A. Krasheninnikova, К истории формирования седмичных памятей октоиха, in: BoTr 32 (1996) 260–268; Job Getcha, The Typikon Decoded. An Explanation of Byzantine Liturgical Practice [trans. by Paul Meyendorff] (OLS 3), Yonkers/NY 2012, 147–148. 116–118.

106 Cf. Getcha, Typikon Decoded (see n. 105), 186.

107 Cf. Hiéromoine Macaire de Simonos Pétra, Mystagogie du Grande Carême. Essai de théologie du temps liturgique, Limours – Mount Athos, 2018, 395 f. For an analysis of anthropological themes connected with eschatology and death in the hymns of the Lenten Triodion on these days, see ibid., 35–55.

108 Cf. St. Tikhon's Seminary, Great Book of Needs (see n. 16), 122–157.

latter's memorialization of the cross, the tomb, the resurrection on the third day, and the ascension into heaven:[109]

> "Thou didst die on the Cross, paying our debt, O sinless Lord; and placed in the tomb, thou didst free them that were in hades; and having ascended into Heaven, most gloriously Thou didst grant them life in eternal light. And now, O Good-hearted One, by the unsparing shedding of Thine all-pure Blood, having cleansed from sin him that has departed from us unto Thee in faith, do Thou free him from every misfortune, and lead him purified into Thy kingdom."[110]

3.3 Liturgical Texts and Practices Less Central to the "Liturgy of Death"

The phrase "less central" here is only intended to indicate that many Christians of the Byzantine Rite will not even be aware of the existence of these texts and practices, especially if they reside outside the ancestral territories of the tradition. In some cases this is very unfortunate. In at least one case, as we will argue, it is providential.

3.3.1 Nocturnal Recitation of the Psalter in the Presence of the Corpse before Burial

In North America until World War II, when funeral homes became more widespread, it was not uncommon, especially among the Slavs, for a lector/cantor or other more literate member of the community to receive an offering to spend several hours throughout the night reciting the Psalter "over the deceased". This, of course, hearkens back to the stress on psalmody at the time of death attested already in the *Apostolic Constitutions* on the third, ninth, and thirtieth day, as well as the annual anniversary, accompanied by expiatory offerings to the poor for the pious (εὐσεβῶν) deceased, but considered useless as expiation for the impious (ἀσεβῶν).[111] Byzantine texts from the ninth century specifically refer to the reading of the Psalter both for monks and laypeople.[112] In ancestral territories like Western Ukraine, the tradition has endured in many communities to the present day – this in spite of decades of Soviet discrimination against religion.[113]

[109] Cf. Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Thyateira, The Divine Liturgy (see n. 27), 45.

[110] St. Tikhon's Seminary, Great Book of Needs (see n. 16), 128.

[111] See Const. Ap. 8,42–43 (SChr 336, 258–261; Metzger). This is referenced in the introduction to the Funeral Rites in St. Tikhon's Seminary, Great Book of Needs (see n. 16), 112.

[112] Cf. Christodoulou, Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία, (see n. 5), vol. 1, 117–119.

[113] Being a relatively private practice – performed during a less conspicuous part of the night – and in a part of the world where the wake still took place in the home, government officials presumably believed the practice could be tolerated.

3.3.2 Kollyba and Other Foods

The rite of kollyba (κόλλυβα), an offering of boiled wheat prepared in honour of saints and for the commemoration of deceased,[114] is an almost paraliturgical practice associated with praying for the dead that blurs the lines between death and holiness. The symbolism of a buried grain of wheat rising from the earth (cf. John 12:24–26) is the inspiration for the practice.

Prayers for kollyba are found in the oldest extant Greek euchologion, codex *Barberini gr. 336*, where the prayers are dedicated primarily to "the memory of the saints" but also ask God to remember those who have died/been perfected in piety (μνημονεύσον τῶν εὐσεβείᾳ τελειωθέντων).[115] Thus, the originally ancient Greek grain offering or cake known as *basynias* (βασυνίας), attested as far back as the Greek grammarian Semus (c. AD 200), came to be associated with both saints and the dead in Byzantium and its Slavic peripheries.

By at least the ninth or tenth century, distinct prayers are known in Greek euchologia for the kollyba of the saints and for the kollyba of the deceased.[116] The kollyba for distinct categories of deceased eventually emerge. Thus, we find kollybas specifically for deceased monks,[117] priests,[118] and laypeople.[119] These include particular rites (ἀκολουθία), hymns (κανών), and prayers (εὐχὴ ἐπὶ τῶν κολλύβων), on the third, ninth, and fortieth day for the repose of the deceased.[120] The dispute over the preparation of kollyba for the dead on Sundays – the day of resurrection – as opposed to their proper commemoration on Saturdays or weekdays, gave rise to a spiritual movement known as the Kollyvades. Initiated in 1754 on Mount Athos, it promoted what can be described as a liturgical reform. The "reformers" hoped to restore an authentic approach to Sunday, and

114 Cf. Frank R. Trombley — Alexander Kazhdan, Kollyba, in: ODB 2, 1137 f.

115 Cf. *Barberini gr. 336*, fol. 222^{r}–222^{v} (Εὐχὴ εἰς κουκία ἁγίων, no. 229; no. 264; Velkovska – Parenti, Евхологий Барберини гр. 336 [see n. 21], 425. 449) and fol. 226^{v}–227^{r} (Εὐχὴ τῶν κολλύβων ἤγουν τῶν κουκουδίων, no. 236; no. 264; Velkovska – Parenti, Евхологий Барберини гр. 336 [see n. 21], 429). See: Lexikon zur byzantinischen Gräzität besonders des 9.–12. Jahrhunderts, vol. 1 (A–K), ed. by Erich Trapp et al., Vienna 2001, 850, for some of the variants of the name for this grain offering, which include κόλβα, κόλβια, κόλυβα.

116 Cf. *Sinai gr. 957* (9th–10th cent., Dikyton 59332), fol. 28^{v}–29^{r}; cf. Nesseris et al., Dmitrievskii's Euchologia (see n. 104), 8.

117 Cf. *Sinai gr. 995* (15th cent., Diktyon 59370), fol. 493^{r}; cf. Nesseris et al., Dmitrievskii's Euchologia (see n. 104), 409.

118 Cf. Athos Xeropotamou, s.n. (16th cent.), fol. 35^{r}; Nesseris et al., Dmitrievskii's Euchologia (see n. 104), 858.

119 Cf. *Sinai gr. 964* (13th–14th cent., Diktyon 59339), fol. 37^{r}; Nesseris et al., Dmitrievskii's Euchologia (see n. 104), 226.

120 Cf. "[…] διὰ τῶν προκειμένων σου δώρων […]", in *Sinai gr. 973* (AD 1153, Diktyon 59348), fol. 91^{r}; Nesseris et al., Dmitrievskii's Euchologia (see n. 104), 102. See the index of prayers in ibid., 1006.

thus curtail an individualistic votive accent that had come to prevail. In addition to a focus on Sunday as the Lord's Day, the reformers also stressed frequent communion, and a revival of the prayer of the heart.[121]

3.3.3 Three Offices Preceding the Actual Funeral[122]

In anticipation of death, the Byzantine Rite prepares the faithful and offers several liturgical prayers to be said at the deathbed of the one lying ill. In all three cases, the prayers contain hymnographic canons expounding upon what is taking place and what will occur at death.

Canon of Supplication at the Parting of the Soul[123]

In spite of the heading at the very beginning of this Office, which labels it a canon to Christ and the Mother of God, all of the *troparia* are actually to the latter. Thus, as dreaded death and demons threaten, maternal solicitude is invoked. The service also contains a curious rubric noting that the canon is recited on behalf of one who "is not able to speak". However, on the previous page the priest is enjoined to "seek out everything and question him/her that is dying concerning […] any malice toward any brother that has remained unconfessed or unforgiven". The stress on forgiveness in the face of death is certainly among the most beautiful – and unfortunately rather rare – accents in the codified Byzantine funerary tradition.

The Order at the Parting of the Soul from the Body When One Has Suffered for a Long Time[124]

We hinted above how fortuitous it may be that some received texts of the Byzantine tradition remain unknown. This certainly applies to the following Order. One wonders if it is attributed to St. Andrew of Crete, the author of the Great Penitential Canon, because of its harsh tone.[125] Whatever the case, the sixth ode contains appalling phrases such as "Do not bury my body in the earth, for it is not worthy. But cast it away and throw it to the dogs [*sic*]." And then, "Leave [my body] unburied and let the dogs eat my heart."[126] No doubt this Office, like

[121] See Hieromonk Patapios – Archbishop Chrysostomos, Manna from Athos. The Issue of Frequent Communion on the Holy Mountain in Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries, Oxford 2006, 27–43.

[122] Cf. Christodoulou, Ἡ νεκρώσιμη ἀκολουθία, (see n. 5), vol. 1, 119–121.

[123] Cf. St. Tikhon's Seminary, Great Book of Needs (see n. 16), 73–83.

[124] Cf. Zervos, Εὐχολόγιον τὸ μέγα (see n. 15), 389–393; St. Tikhon's Seminary, Great Book of Needs (see n. 16), 84–94.

[125] Cf. Zervos, Εὐχολόγιον τὸ μέγα (see n. 15), 389.

[126] St. Tikhon's Seminary, Great Book of Needs (see n. 16), 90. The Greek and Slavonic reveal slight variations in phrasing, but both contain the reference to dogs eating the heart of an unburied corpse.

much middle and late-Byzantine hymnography, derives from monastic circles, and one can only begin to imagine the level of self-loathing – especially towards the body – that inspired such heretical phrases. The *lex credendi* has certainly been violated here.

The Office at the Departure of the Soul from the Body[127]

The themes of this Office essentially replicate those of the actual funeral. One prays for the repose of the departed soul and the forgiveness of the deceased person's sins. The third ode of the canon contains a unique request that the deceased "be settled in the Church [assembly] of the first born"[128], and the sixth ode, inspired by the ode's grounding in Jonah, celebrates the overthrow of Hades "when [Christ] raised up the dead from the ages"[129].

4 Conclusion

What does the Orthodox *lex orandi* tell us about the *lex credendi*? In spite of, though sometimes precisely owing to, antinomic formulations – a mode of thought incidentally quite appropriate to the unique mystery of death – the Byzantine euchological and hymnographic corpus provides rich evocations of salvation in Christ. Redolent of scripture, creedal statements, patristic reflection, and monastic wisdom – though not without theologically incomplete expressions – Byzantine prayer for the deceased continues to enact meaning for today. This in spite of the fact that no significant changes to the Rite have occurred in more than half a millennium.

Four key themes repeated throughout the euchological corpus are the repose of the soul of the departed, the forgiveness of their sins, remembrance of Christ's triumph over death and the devil, and God's remembrance of the deceased – even eternally. Thus, the present-day funeral of a layperson as a whole includes almost 70 petitions for the repose of the soul, approximately 35 for the remission of the deceased's sins, 30 allusions to Christ's eschatological victory (though sometimes only implied), and 10 requests that God remember the deceased. While Byzantine funeral texts fall short of proclaiming a fuller, comprehensively cosmic, eschatological future for humanity and creation as a whole, the focus on the individual's fate is not surprising in a burial/memorial service, especially as a much fuller proclamation occurs every Sunday.

Attention to those who have gone before us is also evident in the Byzantine Church's two anaphoras. There, the unity of the living and the dead, as well as

127 Ibid., 96–109.
128 Ibid., 100.
129 Ibid., 102.

the fluid link between recognized saints on the one hand and all the departed on the other is celebrated. The unity of heavenly and earthly in the Church's worship is made possible by Christ's hypostatic union, which grants to humans by grace what God has by nature, overcoming through baptism and the remembrance of Christ's salvific death and resurrection the division imposed by death.

The ordo also calls for several days of memorial (all-souls Saturdays) throughout the year. These contain fulsome liturgical offices. Moreover, even as the Christian is preparing to die, the Byzantine tradition proposes meditative prayers and reflections about death, though this is where the tradition can be most flawed in its presentation of a *lex credendi*.

The notion of implied meanings is important for seeing how a theme such as bodily resurrection, which may not be foregrounded as explicitly as one might hope, can nonetheless makes itself felt.