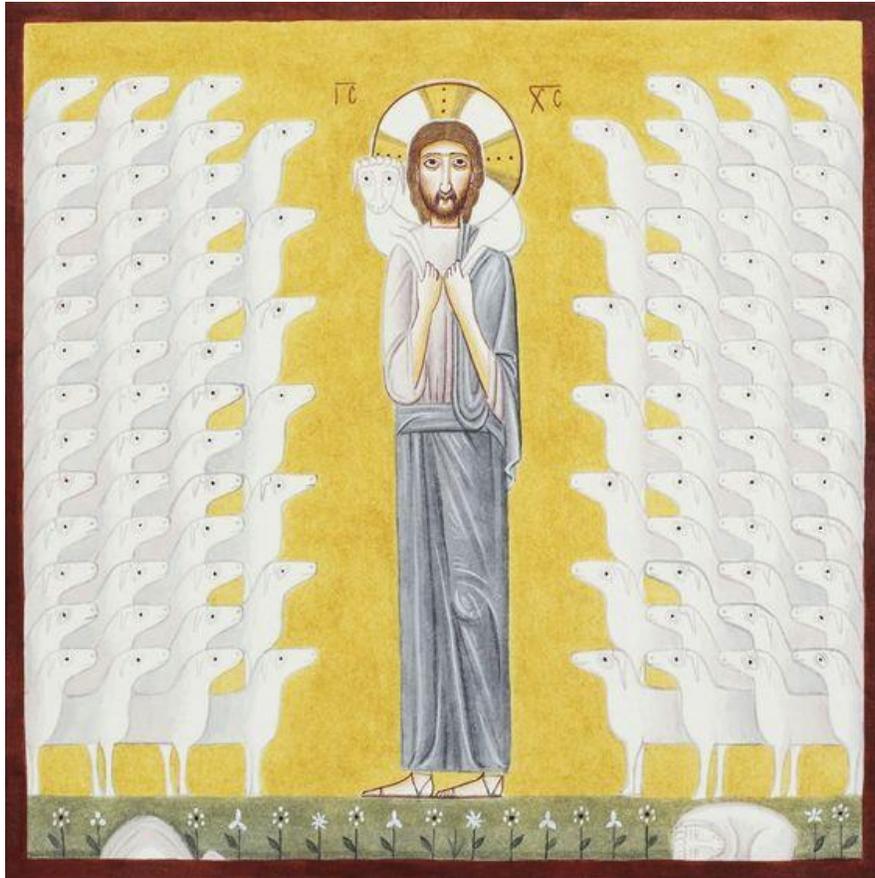


Memorial Services



My Dear Brothers and Sisters, in life, the only thing that we can be sure of is our death; even though we may be familiar with death, nonetheless it is abnormal and horrific, not part of God's original plan, but at the same time His gift of escape from the corruption, physical and spiritual, of this world.

When faced with the death of someone close to us, we feel sadness and grief in our hearts but at the same time we have hope for our common Resurrection in the Lord.

For this reason, immediately after the falling asleep and the Funeral Service, we offer the Memorial Services. From the beginning the Church established prayers for the repose of the souls of the dead, because we believe that the dead live even after death, in Jesus Christ and through prayers we keep a continuing communion with the departed.

When we offer a memorial service for the repose of our beloved in Christ, we need to know the traditional Orthodox way to prepare for these memorial services.

Memorial Services are offered:

- 9 days after the death we arrange the *Ninth-Day* memorial. The *ninth-day* memorial takes place at the cemetery where we offer a *Trisagio* for the departed; we have prepared and have with us a plate of *Kolliva* (earthy wheat berries studded with toasted nuts and dried fruit and blanketed with a drift of powdered sugar).
- 40 days after the death we arrange the *Fortieth-Day* memorial. The *fortieth-day* memorial takes place at the church, approximately 40 days after the death. It doesn't matter if it is before or after the exact 40th day; God accepts our prayers regardless if it is before or after 40 days; it is superstition to believe otherwise. For the *fortieth-day* memorial we offer all things necessary for the celebration of the Divine Liturgy that

day (an itemized list of what is needed can be found at the end of this text) and the *Kolliva*. According to tradition we sponsor, also, the coffee hour or we offer a *Makaria* (Memorial Dinner) after the Services. The day before, we visit the grave at the cemetery for the *Trissagio*.

- 3 months after the death we arrange the *Third-Month* memorial. The Third-Month memorial sometimes is not prepared; the decision rests with the family. We do the same arrangements as for the *Fortieth-Day* Memorial.
- 6 months after the death we arrange the *Sixth-Month* memorial. We do the same arrangements as for the *Fortieth-Day* Memorial.
- 1 year after the death we arrange the *One-Year* memorial. We do the same arrangements as for the *Fortieth-Day* Memorial.
- 3 years after the death we arrange the *Third-Year* memorial. We do the same arrangements as for the *Fortieth-Day* Memorial.

Prior to the Memorial one needs to confirm, with the Priest, the date because not all Sundays are permitted. A date/time also has to be arranged for going to the cemetery.

Either the day before or early Sunday morning (the day of the memorial) we need to prepare the offerings in memory of the departed:

- A *Prosforo* (Offering Bread) that we prepare carefully with a nice seal
- Olive oil for the *candelia* of the Church
- A bottle of sweet wine for the Divine Eucharist (preferably Russo or Commandaria)
- Charcoals and wicks for the *candelia*
- Incense
- 3 large candles for the table of the *kollyva*

If you cannot prepare all the above items, necessary for the D. Liturgy, the church office has prepared packages you can offer, which cost approximately \$75 but you are welcome to offer whatever you can and wish. Simply inform the church office or Priest.

If you wish to offer a Makaria (memorial dinner in memory of the deceased) or the coffee hour after the memorial service, please make the necessary arrangements with the Philoptohos Society @ (203) 858-1772 (Sophia Stefanidis).

