

“As a grain of wheat...”

Memorial Prayers in the Greek Orthodox Church

For Christians, the act of gathering to pray for those who have died goes back to the earliest days of the Church. In particular, martyrs were honored (for example, placing the Altar Table of a church upon the site where the relics of a martyr were buried); however, gathering at the burial place of a friend or family member was also a common practice among Christians. When we gather today in the Church for a memorial, we are continuing a centuries-old practice.

So, why do we use ‘kollyva’? In John 12:24, Jesus says: “Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.” The boiled wheat is used in the Orthodox Church as a symbol of our hope in the Resurrection. From the grain that died comes the fruit of eternal life. Why, then, do we call the wheat ‘kollyva’? This name comes from a term commonly used during the fourth century, particularly where the following miracle occurred. The Emperor Julian the Apostate tried to have the fruits and vegetables, for use by Christians who were fasting during Great Lent, contaminated! In a dream, Saint Theodore the Tyron appeared to Patriarch Evdioxios and told him to instruct the faithful to consume only boiled wheat (‘kollyva’). The faithful responded accordingly and were able to continue the fast! This miracle is commemorated annually on the third Saturday of Souls.

When should we hold memorials? The practice of the Church is to hold them on Saturdays (since the souls are traditionally commemorated on Saturdays); however, the common practice has become Sundays, since we gather on Sundays for Liturgy. Regarding the usual times for memorials, besides the Saturdays of the Souls (the ‘psychosavata’), it should be noted that, according to ancient sources, memorials were held on the third, sixth, ninth, and fortieth day, as well as one year, after someone died. Currently, memorials are held around the fortieth day and the first anniversary of one’s death (although they may also take place at other times as well).

To arrange a memorial, one calls the church to schedule the service with the priest. If they would also like to hold a service at the gravesite, they discuss that with the priest as well. The name of the one for whom the memorial was arranged should be given to the priest (additional names may also be given for commemoration during the Preparation of the Gifts [the ‘Proskomidi’] and the Liturgy). It is traditional – though not required – to bring other items as well: Prosforon and wine, for use during the Liturgy, and olive oil, for the vigil light on the Altar.

As we pray, not only for the living (the Church Militant) but for the souls (the Church Triumphant) as well, we are drawn together with our Lord and Savior. Let us come together at all possible opportunities, seeking His blessings and His salvation.

Father Anthony Stratis / Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral

SATURDAY OF SOULS

ΨΥΧΟΣΑΒΒΑΤΟ (PSYCHOSAVATO)

ORTHROS @8AM & DIVINE LITURGY @9:00AM

JUNE 11, 2022

Please **bring your own kollyva dish** to church by 8:45am *Place dish on table and submit +List of Names with your offering.*

If you do not want to prepare your own you may wish to **order individual kollyva dish**. Cost for individual SOS kollyva is **\$30**.

Those who do not wish to have their own kollyva dish may **participate in the COMMUNAL KOLLYVA TRAY**. The cost for this is \$15.00.

Please contact the church office and make arrangements by Thursday before the Saturday of Souls.

973-584-0388 info@standrewgonj.org

LIST OF NAMES of your +Beloved for eternal memory and blessed repose will be prayed for on **Saturday**. *You may submit your +List along with your offering for the priest by 9 am on the day of service or bring them (+LIST OF NAMES and priest's stipends) to the office the week of.*

KOLLYVA arrange for your kollyva and bring your donation to the office with your *check payable to St. Andrew* or bring your prepared kollyva from home.

TRISAGIO SERVICE AT CEMETERY: *After the Service Fr. John will visit the Locust Hill Cemetery in Dover to pray for our +Loved ones.*

Saint Andrew Greek Orthodox Church
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ΨΥΧΟΣΑΒΒΑΤΟ (PSYCHOSAVATO) SATURDAY OF THE SOULS

Please PRINT CLEARLY +BAPTISMAL NAME (1st Name) only

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Baptismal Names please: for example **+Nicholas** not Nick, **+Vasiliki** not Vickie

Αιωνία η Μνήμη Αυτών

May Their Memory Be Eternal

NAME _____

TELEPHONE _____ email _____