

Liturgy Alive of Saints Basil the Great and Gregory of Nazianzen, Memorial

Saints Basil the Great and Gregory of Nazianzen,

Bishops and Doctors of the Church

Memorial

January 2

Introduction

Today's liturgy unites in one celebration two close friends, called the Cappadocians (as both came from the region of Cappadocia in Turkey), both monks before becoming bishops. Basil reorganized monastic life. As bishop of Caesarea, he asserted the Church's independence from civil power, vigorously fought the Arian heresy, and did much to aid the poor; a great theologian, he wrote on the Holy Spirit and also reformed the liturgy; he gave the Oriental Church one of its two greatest eucharistic prayers.

Gregory became bishop first of Nazianzen, later of Constantinople. He could not face the troubles of his times and resigned his office to dedicate himself to theological writing. Notwithstanding his momentary lack of courage, he too became a saint.

Opening Prayer

Lord God,

Saint Gregory wrote
that the Holy Spirit was his intimate friend
who prompted him to dedicate his life
to make people worship the Blessed Trinity.
We pray that he and his great friend Basil
may inspire all leaders of your Church
and be examples for all of us
by their dedication to the service of the gospel
and to the people entrusted to them.

Grant this through Christ our Lord.

Prayer over the Gifts

God, our Father,

we have prepared the table
to celebrate the memory of your Son.
Let Saints Basil and Gregory inspire us
to be friends with one another
and to share in the table of your Son
as communities who are one heart and soul,
and which live for you and for one another,

by the Spirit of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prayer after Communion

Our loving God,

as we have eaten from the table of your Son,
may we put into practice the words of Saint Basil
that the food we set aside
belongs to the hungry,
our reserve set of shoes to the barefoot
and the money hidden safely away to the needy.
Make us generous and prayerful people,

through Jesus Christ our Lord.