

GENUFLECTION

The [Prayer](#) of Genuflection is performed in the [Coptic Church](#) on the eve of Whitsunday (the **Feast** of Pentecost) to indicate the end of Eastertide, during which prostration does not occur. This [prayer](#) signals another period in the liturgical calendar, during which prostration is permitted.

Ireneaus **Bishop** of Lyon wrote, “Do not kneel on the Lord’s Day as symbol of the resurrection, through which by Christ’s grace we have been freed from our sins.” In the third century, Tertullian wrote, “As for ourselves, according to our tradition, only on the day of the Lord’s resurrection should we refrain from this custom [of kneeling]. . . . The same holds for the season of Pentecost, that is marked by the same joyous celebration.”

Eusebius of Caesarea, expounding the Gospel of Luke, wrote, “Wherefore we are not allowed to toil during this festival. . . . Consequently, we neither bend the knee at prayers nor afflict ourselves with **fasting**.” The Armenian **Lectionary** of the fifth century states that on the eve of the Feast of the Pentecost, there are three genuflections and a [reading](#) from the Gospel of John (16:5-15).

Severus of Antioch at the beginning of the sixth century composed a hymn for this occasion by saying that we do not bend our knees during Eastertide. Hence, the tradition of kneeling or prostration on the eve of the Feast of the Pentecost is well attested by the Church Fathers.

The Coptic [prayer](#) book of genuflection mentions an incident that occurred during the patriarchate of a certain [Macarius](#) of Antioch. While the **patriarch** was reciting his prayers on the eve of Pentecost, a storm arose three times and the believers understood this as God’s will for prostration to take place three times. Although the practice of genuflection is well attested as early as the second century, this legend is simply considered another demonstration for the practice.

Manuscript 42 Vatican is dated 1032 a.m. (1316 a.d.) and was originally from the Church of the Virgin Mary in Haret Al-Rum, Old Cairo. A manuscript from the Church of the Virgin Mary in Haret Zuweila, Cairo, is dated 1177 a.m. (1461 a.d.) and, in addition to an incomplete manuscript also from Haret Zuweila, is now located in the Italian city of Pisa. This rite of genuflection is mentioned by Abu al Barakat **ibn Kabar** in his encyclopedia entitled *The Lamp of Darkness for the Explanation of the Service* (chapter 19).

There exists in the Greek Church a rite for the necessity of performing seven prayers. According to Coptic rites, there are three liturgical segments (sections), each of which contains readings from Deuteronomy, a Pauline epistle, a psalm, and a gospel reading. Each segment then concludes with the prayers found in the rites of the Greek Church. Each [prayer](#) of the Coptic genuflection follows the same structure.

Within the prayers, several themes are apparent, such as fire, speaking in tongues, feast of the weeks, kneeling, and the ministry of the Apostles, all of which are relevant Pentecostal themes. Important to note is that the first [prayer](#) of genuflection consists of some prayers taken from the Vesper **Psalmody**:

<i>First Genuflection</i>	<i>Second Genuflection</i>	<i>Third Genuflection</i>
ProphecyDeut. 5:23-33, 6:1-3 These commandments the Lord spoke in a great voice to your whole assembly on the mountain out of the fire.	ProphecyDeut. 6:17-25.You must diligently keep the commandments of the Lord your God . . . and you may enter and occupy the rich land, which the Lord promised by oath to your forefathers.	ProphecyDeut. 16:1-18.Observe the month of Abib and keep the Passover to the Lord Your God . . . <i>Seven weeks</i> shall be counted from the time.
I Cor. 12:28—13:1-12. God has appointed, in first place apostles, in the second place prophets. . . . <i>I may speak in tongues</i> of men or of angels, but if I am without love.	I Cor. 13:13, 14:1-17. And now abides faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love. <i>I would that you all spake with tongues but rather that you prophesied.</i>	I Cor. 14:18-40.I thank my God, for <i>I speak with tongues more than you all.</i> . . . Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and <i>forbid not to speak with tongues. Let all things be done decently and in order.</i>

<p>Psalms 96:8, 1. <i>Worship</i> (kneel) Him all you angels. Zion heard and was glad. The Lord reigns.</p>	<p>Psalms 115:9-10-13. The Lord remembered us and He blessed the house of Aaron. He blessed them that fear the Lord, both small and great.</p>	<p>Psalms 65:4, 72:11. All the earth shall <i>worship</i> (kneel) Thee and shall sing unto Thy name. You, all kings will <i>kneel</i> down in front of Him and all nations will worship Him.</p>
<p><i>First Genuflection</i></p>	<p><i>Second Genuflection</i></p>	<p><i>Third Genuflection</i></p>
<p>John 17:1-26. As you sent Me to the world even so have I <i>sent</i> them to the world. . . . I in them and Thou in Me that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast <i>sent Me</i>, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me.</p>	<p>Luke 24:36-53. And as they thus spake, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them and saith unto them, 'Peace be unto you.' . . . And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. And it came to pass while He blessed them; He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. And they <i>worshipped</i> (kneeled) Him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy.</p>	<p>John 4: 1-24 When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptised more disciples than John . . . But the hour comes, and now is, when the true <i>worshippers</i> shall <i>worship</i> the Father in Spirit and in truth: for the Father seeks such to worship Him. God is Spirit and they that worship Him must <i>worship</i> Him in spirit and truth.</p>
<p>First and Second prayer</p>	<p>Third and Fourth prayer</p>	<p>Fifth, sixth and seventh prayers</p>

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