

whose charity resurrected her, as at another time the son of the widow of Sarepta, whom, due to her charity, Elijah resurrected, but also Elisha the son of the Shumanite widow, due to the hospitality which she granted him and who is a figure of charity.

It is a great blessing for us to be helping materially our neighbor who is in need, especially in these latter times of this crisis we are living and which is very deeply spiritual, with very many consequences in the area of material goods, and where our Church is taking a leading role with her blessed initiatives. She is motivating an unbelievable multitude of volunteers in all the Metropolises, eager to comfort suffering fellow man.

Spiritual charity also, to which quite a few of our Christian brethren are giving themselves is vigil, fasting, prayer for those sick, for those in need in whatsoever manner and for the reposed, without omitting good works also, showing in action that which Saint Isaac the Syrian defines mainly as charity, in other words "a burning of heart for the sake of all creation"

Archim. E. T.

**SUNDAY, MAY 7, 2017 SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC**, Cyril, Archbishop of Jerusalem, Commemoration of the Precious Cross that appeared in the sky over Jerusalem in 351 A.D. Repose of St. Nilus, abbot of Sora, Akakios the Centurion of Byzantium Pachomios the New Martyr of Patmos.

**TONE OF THE WEEK** : Tone Three

**EOTHINON** : Fifth Orthros Gospel

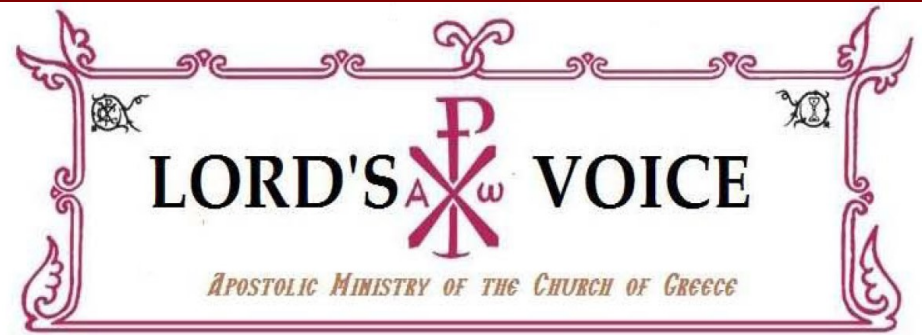
**EPISTLE READING**: Acts of the Apostles 9:32-42

**GOSPEL READING**: John 5:1-15

**NEXT SUNDAY, MAY 14, 2017 SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN**, Isidore the Martyr of Chios, Holy Hieromartyr Therapontus, Holy New Martyrs Mark and John, Serapion the Holy Martyr, Leontius, Patriarch of Jerusalem

**EPISTLE READING**: Acts 11:19-30

**GOSPEL READING**: John 4:5-42



65<sup>TH</sup> YEAR

May 7 2017

PAMPHLET # 19 (3336)

## THE POWER OF CHARITY

Today's passage from Acts, beloved brethren, refers to two miracles of the Apostle Peter, who seems to be the most "sign bearing" of the Apostles, to the point that multitudes of people desire for merely his shadow to touch them! The first miracle is the cure of the paralytic from eight years, Aineas, and the second the resurrection of the charitable Tabitha.

### The case of Aineas

Peter traveling descended from the areas of Lydda, to the Christians there, where he met a certain paralytic for eight years, and he told him that Christ will heal him. He exhorted him furthermore to get up and to take care of his bed. The inhabitants of the area of Lydda and of the field of the river Sarona, as soon as they saw this miracle "returned to the Lord", which means that they repented and asked after that to be baptized.

Peter showed that not on his own, but with the power of faith in Christ he cured the Aineas, who obviously must have repented. More important, of course, than the healing of the body is the healing in Christ of man's soul.

IN THOSE DAYS, as Peter went here and there among them all, he came down also to the saints that lived at Lydda. There he found a man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden for eight years and was paralyzed. And Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you; rise and make your bed." And immediately he rose. And all the residents of Lydda and Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord. Now there was at Joppa a disciple named Tabitha, which means Dorcas. She was full of good works and acts of charity. In those days she fell sick and died; and when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men to him entreating him, "Please come to us without delay." So Peter rose and went with them. And when he had come, they took him to the upper room. All the widows stood beside him weeping, and showing tunics and other garments which Dorcas made while she was with them. But Peter put them all outside and knelt down and prayed; then turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, rise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. And he gave her his hand and lifted her up. Then calling the saints and widows he presented her alive. And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed in the Lord..

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So we see the Holy Spirit in this age, performing many miracles, then when the Church was in the beginning of her journey in History, "attracting" through the miracle working, multitudes of good intentioned people, who afterwards were added to the flock and were baptized, finding real healing.

### **The case of Tabitha**

Peter continuing his journey, ended up in Joppa, today's Jaffa in Israel. There a very charitable soul, Tabitha lived, full of good works. She became ill and died. It was heard that Peter was near them, in Lydda, and the Christian disciples, through messengers,

asked him to come. As Peter was arriving in Joppa, many people greeted him crying who had been benefactored by Tabitha, showing him the clothing which she made for them when she was alive. Peter arrived at the home where the dead woman was lying, he took out those present, he knelt praying and then, turning toward the dead body, he told her to get up. The spirit of Tabitha returned and Tabitha sat up. Peter presented her alive to the people and many of them who saw the miracle, but also of those who were informed of it, believed in Christ.

### **The real charity**

In the case of the lame person, whom Peter had cured elsewhere, the Apostle says something very important: "I don't have silver or gold to give you, whatever I have all and all is for you to get up to walk in the name of Christ". The Saint showed, in this manner, that the name of Christ is almighty and that also the joy which He gives and which comes from physical healing, mainly however spiritual healing in man, is worth above and beyond every wealth. It is the real charity. Furthermore only the person who has received charity in Christ truly gives charity, thus in a pleasing manner to God.

So for this reason also, we Christians, lay people and clergymen, should strive, so that with the cultivation of virtues and the implementation of the commandments of the Gospel, using as the unique manual "for the directions for man's use" and as a constitutional charter of our behavior, for us to be repenting, to be becoming useful vessels for God and for neighbor, in other words comfort, consolation, healing, a place of safety and rest for the needy of the whole earth: if it is possible, for everyone to fit in the country of the living, where "there is still room", and where there is real life and abundance of life, Christ in his Church.

This however should not turn us away toward a fleshless spirituality of "immaterialized" beings, being indifferent toward their neighbor. Here also the answer from the life of Saint Tabitha the charitable comes,