

blindness, not wanting to see the miracle of the paralytic's cure and to glorify God. Much more so, they did not want to understand that He, who was benefactoring the people on the Sabbath, was also the legislator and Lord of the Sabbath. And they will strive to murder Him, seemingly, on the one hand, because He was supposedly abolishing the Sabbath, in essence however, because they were envious of Him, because He was uncovering their hypocrisy" (Saint Theophylaktos).

We, let us sanctify not only the Sabbath's, but also our entire life, by ceasing wicked works and our firm repentance, repeating the compunctionate prayer which the kondakion of the feast, grants us: "just as also to the paralytic with your divine presence, resurrect, O Lord, to me also, my – on account of my sins – dreadfully paralyzed soul. Thus, after I stand on my feet, I will be able to glorify your compassion and almightiness".

Archim. B. L.

SUNDAY, SUNDAY, APRIL 29, 2018 SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC,
Jason and Sosipater the Apostles of the 70 and their Companions, Holy Martyr Cercyra, Our Holy Father John of Kaloktenos, Metropolitan of Thebes. Basil, Bishop of Montenegro, Nektarios the New Martyr of Optina

tone of the week : *Tone Three*

EOTHINON : *Fif Sophia of Kleisoura th Orthros Gospel*

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

GOSPEL READING: *John 5:1-15*

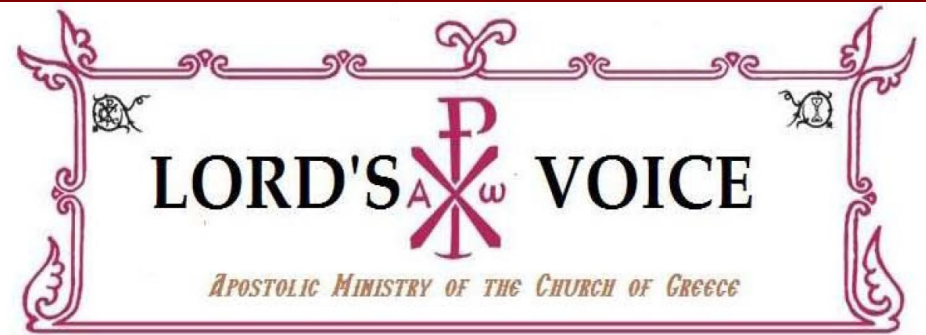
NEXT SUNDAY, MAY 6, 2018 SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN,
Job the Prophet , Our Holy Father Seraphim the Struggler of Mt. Domvu , Sophia of Kleisoura.

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

GOSPEL READING: *John 4:5 - 42*

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66TH YEAR APRIL 29 2018 PAMPHLET #17 (3387)

RESURRECTION OF THE UNBEARIED DEAD PERSON

Christ who after his three day burial, resurrected, comes today to resurrect an "unburied dead man" for 38 years. The paralytic's "penance" seems a little excessive, who - as Christ revealed - was being chastised for his sins. The sacred Chrysostom will comment, teaching: "where are they who say, it is unjust, for one moment when I killed, and for a few moments when I committed adultery, I should be damned forever? What can this paralytic also say, who did not sin for so many years, as many as he was being punished? And nevertheless, he spent a life in punishment. Because the sins are not judged from their duration, but from their nature and gravity."

"I do not have a man!"

Certainly he who was paralyzed for so many years, had reached very near the utmost despair. Thus the hymnodist also believes, who places in his mouth the words: "what am I gaining by continuing to live? My bed became my tomb." From what it seems, however, from his many year-long "burial" he had huge gain. He had obtained noteworthy patience and longsuffering. So much so, that, not only did he not grumble with Christ's question "do you wish to become well?" Not only did he not answer Him –

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN 1:5-15

At that time, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Hebrew called Bethesda which has five porticoes. In these lay a multitude of invalids, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water; for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool, and troubled the water; whoever stepped in first after the troubling of the water was healed of whatever disease he had. One man was there, who had been ill for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him and knew that he had been lying there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be healed?" The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is troubled, and while I am going another steps down before me." Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your pallet, and walk." And at once the man was healed, and he took up his pallet and walked.

Now that day was the sabbath. So the Jews said to the man who was cured, "It is the sabbath, it is not lawful for you to carry your pallet." But he answered them, "The man who healed me said to me, 'Take up your pallet, and walk.'" "They asked him, 'Who is the man who said to you, 'Take up your pallet, and walk?'" Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, as there was a crowd in the place. Afterward, Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse befall you." The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him.

according to the Golden-tongued one – "to make fun of me did you come and you laughed to my detriment?" but, on the contrary, "meek and with much leniency" he answered Him: "Lord, I do not have a man, so that – when the water is stirred –to place me in the pool".

Let's allow the hymnodist here to "surpass" the evangelist with the – every other than lyrical – rendering of Christ's answer: "for you I became a man. For you I put on human flesh. And are you saying I do not have a man? Get up! Pick up also your bed and walk". Christ's

words don't mean: "are you seeking a man? There! I was found, and I will help you". Nor did He simply want to tell him: "what do you care? I am God and I will heal you". Christ, in this miracle also, is not only the doctor of human sickness. He is the new Adam, the Godman, who came to "witness to the truth". And the true meaning of His words are: "I, the only begotten Son and Word of God, also became a man, in order to give the capability both to you and to every person, to be renewed. For you to become new people. New creation. For you to become, not simply good people, altruists, who will help one another, but by grace, my children, and fellow inheritors of my Kingdom."

Firm repentance

This, of course, renewal, is not imposed by force. It is only the fruit of the free cooperation of fallen man with Christ. Its beginning is holy Baptism. And it is noteworthy that both, interpreters and hymnographers of the Church, associate the pool of Bethesda with the holy font of Baptism: "in the Sheep pool at times an angel would descend and would heal one person per year. While with divine baptism now, Christ cleanses infinite multitudes".

The cleansing through Baptism however, due to our sins, needs constant renewal. It needs not circumstantial, but firm repentance. It is a shame, an "edifice", which in order to obtain firm foundations –38 years of harsh work, let's say, were needed, to collapse, from relapsing into sin for one moment. So for this reason also, Christ forewarns the former paralytic with His philanthropy, who, just stood on his physical and spiritual feet, to not sin again, so that he not again live a new trial, in the future.

How do we honor the Sabbath?

The paralytic's cure, and the transporting of his bed on the Sabbath day, scandalized the incurably "paralyzed" Jews. Their spiritual paralysis, on account of their hypocrisy, did not allow them to "walk" further over than the literal interpretation of the Mosaic law, and to understand that the essential honoring of the Sabbath was "doing good and abstaining from evil". Thus they insisted in their voluntary