

vineyard of His Church. Of course, the chief consolation is for the pastor to see souls being saved through his ministry, as Saint Haralambos was granted to see former idolaters gaining even the crown of martyrdom, inspired by his own example.

And it is not odd, for the example of true pastors to be giving such fruits, when they support themselves on the memory and the invincible tower of the Resurrection of Christ. The former persecutor of the resurrected Christ and now His Apostle, is the most appropriate and most valid witness of this truth. While his successor, Saint Haralambos was graced to himself perform the resurrection of a dead fellow, glorifying the Resurrection of Christ.

There's why the imprisoned Apostle Paul may have his hands and feet bound, but no one is able to bind his holy mouth, with which he continues granting to so many souls, resurrection and freedom from deception, writing his godly illumined epistles.

Archim. B. L

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2019 *Sunday of the Cannanite, Hieromartyr Haralambos, Anastasios Patriarch of Jerusalem, Porphyrios and Bartos the monk martyrs.*

TONE OF THE WEEK : *Fourth Tone*

EOTHINON : *Fourth Orthros Gospel*

EPISTLE READING: *Second Letter to Timothy 2: 1-10*

GOSPEL READING: *Matthew 15:21-28*

NEXT SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2019 *Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee: Triodion Begins Today, Theodore the Tyro, Great Martyr, Mariamne, Sister of Apostle Philip, Righteous Auxentius, Theodore the New Martyr of Byzantium, Hermogenes (Germogen), Patriarch of Moscow, The Pious Rulers Marcian and Pulcheria*

EPISTLE READING: *Second Letter to Timothy 3: 10-15*

GOSPEL READING: *Luke 18: 10-14*



67TH YEAR

FEBRUARY 10, 2019

PAMPHLET #6 (3428)

THE DEBT OF THE TRUE PASTOR

How many times, I wonder, must the holy hieromartyr Haralambos, who celebrates today, have read the Apostle Paul's pastoral Epistles to the Apostles Timothy and Titus? He must have stood innumerable times also at today's Epistle reading, from the Second Epistle to Timothy, where Paul sets the foundations of the true pastor's life. Saint Haralambos built his priestly ministry on these foundations and thus he became "an unshakable pillar of the Church of Christ and an ever shining lantern of the universe".

Father and model

The true pastor, first of all, is a loving caring father, who wants to address his every "sheep" with the address "my child." The likewise true pastor, sacred Chrysostom, does not leave tenderness of Paul's phrase, uncommented on saying: "with much loving care he brings forth the exhortation, calling Timothy, not simply child, but my child. And on this loving care, he also supports the exhortation: "if you are my child, imitate the father".

ST. PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO TIMOTHY 2:1-10

Timothy, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me before many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier on service gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to satisfy the one who enlisted him. An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. It is the hardworking farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops. Think over what I say, for the Lord will grant you understanding in everything.

Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descended from David, as preached in my gospel, the gospel for which I am suffering and wearing fetters like a criminal. But the word of God is not fettered. Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain salvation in Christ Jesus with its eternal glory.

The golden mouth of the Church notes the secret key of the apostle's pastoral care, which is not so much teaching with words as with the example. The Apostle Paul writes his Epistle not from his comfortable office but from within the prison, "suffering hardship down to bonds as a criminal". And if he were to merely write this phrase to Timothy, it would be enough to comprise the highest seminar of pastoral care. "There does not exist", the Golden-tongued one says, "a greater source of courage for the disciple who is fighting in the sea, than to see his teacher being shipwrecked and being saved. The soldier gains analogous courage in battles, seeing the general being wounded and continuing the struggle. Thus also Timothy, hearing that Paul, who with his preaching controlled the entire universe, is in bonds and in afflictions, without furthermore despairing because all his own people abandoned him, considers it natural to also suffer the same things, suffering hardship for Christ."

Soldier, athlete and farmer

Naturally the pastor must also have the imparting ability of teaching through speech, since "faith is from hearing, while hearing, is through the word of God" (Romans 10:17). And the over one hundred year old imitator of the Apostle Paul, Saint Haralambos, before being granted a martyrly end, for his entire life "triumphantly proclaimed the Orthodox faith", leading a multitude of people, being saved from the delusion of the idols, to the truth of Christ. Here the apostle in a masterful way, uses the images of the soldier, the athlete and the farmer. All three toil, each one for his own purpose.

The soldier probably needs to sacrifice his life also. "And if something like that gives great glory to the soldier who is serving the earthly king", says Saint John, "how much greater glory is it for you to be a soldier of the heavenly King Christ and to suffer hardship for His will!" In the bonds of prison, the faithful soldier of Christ, the Apostle Paul, was granted incomparably greater glory than the glory of the Emperor Nero: "Who was brighter?" The golden mouth of the Church asks rhetorically: "he who is winning in bonds, or he who is defeated in the royal robe? Paul who was bound with chains was winning, whereas he who was dressed with a royal robe was defeated".

Certainly, not just the toils, but also the dreadful tortures which the extremely aged Saint Haralambos underwent for Christ, were Indescribable. Following the Apostle's exhortation, he did not abandon only the secular cares, in order to please Christ who enlisted him, but he dedicated his entire self to his god-pleasing priestly ministry. He gained both crowns, of the priesthood and of contesting, because he contested lawfully, having contested the divine contest well", as a troparion of his says. How could his contesting not have been lawful, when he did not pursue anything for his own comfort and honor, but full of humility and love even for his persecutors, he sacrificed everything, and in the end, even his life for the glory of Christ?

Rewards and fruits of the Resurrection

However, the true pastor, aside from the persistent and sometimes bloody debt of lawfully contesting, also has rights and rewards, which he may taste even from this life. God does not leave without material and spiritual consolations, the faithful workers of the