

slavery, but also sealed with her martyrical death, her agony and care to safeguard their honor and dignity. But also today, when “the love of the many has grown cold”, there are people who emulated the Saint of Joppa. Worthy of mention is the reference that a contemporary priest and psychiatrist makes to his reposed grandmother: “At her funeral many unknown people appeared, and were speaking about her with gratitude. Just like that aged lady, who was saying that grandmother continued receiving her at her home, when everyone avoided her, because she had a child out of wedlock, a little after the war, and they considered her a prostitute. She would relate, between her tears, how she would put her bags with food beneath the coat, asking her for no one to learn it”.

So the strange “general” for human eyes, the Apostle Peter, whereas, on the one hand, he imposes on Ananias and Sapphira, the most strict and irrevocable penance, on the other hand, he heals the paralytic and grants “honorary permission” of a return to life, to Tabitha. With such pastoral strategies, He who entrusted His flock to him, favored for the number of those believing in His name to increase.

Archim. B. L

SUNDAY, MAY 19 2019 SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC

Patrick the Hieromartyr and Bishop of Prusa and His Fellow Martyrs Acacius, Menander, and Polyaenus , Our Righteous Father Memnonus the Wonderworker, Theotima & Kyriake the Martyrs

TONE OF THE WEEK : *Third Tone*

EOTHINON : *Fifth Eothinon*

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

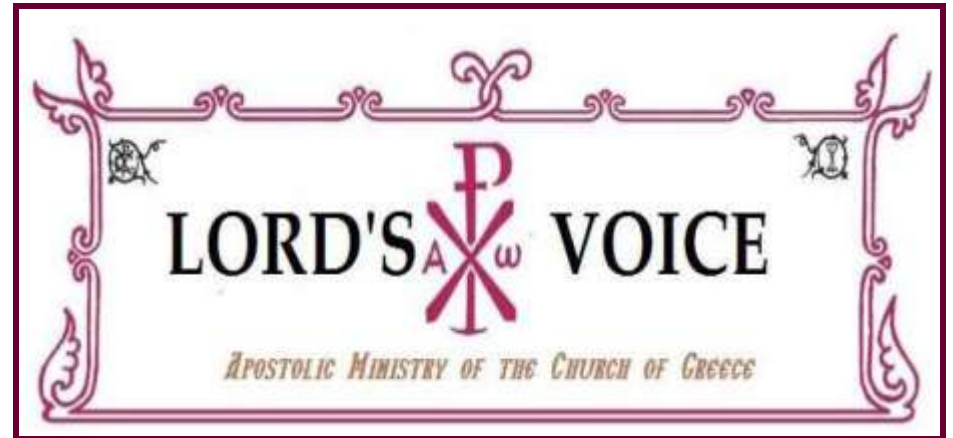
GOSPEL READING: *John 5:1-15*

NEXT SUNDAY, MAY 26, 2019 SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN

WOMAN_ *Carpos and Alphaeus, Apostles of the 70 , Alexandros the New Martyr of Thessaloniki, George the New of Sofia Carpos and Alphaeus, Apostles of the 70 , Alexandros the New Martyr of Thessaloniki, George the New of Sofia , Augustine, Archbishop of Canterbury.*

Epistle Reading: *Acts of the Apostles 11:19-30*

GOSPEL READING: *John 4:5-42*



67TH YEAR MAY 19, 2019 PAMPHLET # 20 (3442)

“A STRANGE GENERAL”

“The fruits of inspecting a general” could be the title of today’s Epistle passage. We are borrowing it from the sacred Chrysostom, who interpreting it says: “Just like a certain general who is inspecting the ranks of his army, thus also Peter goes around all the areas where the Gospel was preached, in order to ascertain which part was structured, which was in an order for journeying, and which needed his presence more’. Because what other than ‘soldiers of Jesus Christ’ (2 Tim. 2:3), were the newly illumined Christians, “hoplites of the rank of the Lord”, who were enlisted in order to fight, not their fellow men, but their passions, every type of delusion and “the rulers of the world of the darkness of this age”, the demons?

“Christ is healing you”

Sickness, of course, and death are enemies more visible for the infant minded person, even if less dangerous than the previous ones. And because no one goes directly from the nursery school to the university, for this reason also, the Apostle Peter supports here the “newly recruited ones” in the faith with the “thick” and tangible signs of the cure of a paralytic and the resurrection of a dead woman

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 9:32-42

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.

The first miracle took place in Lydda. The sick man was called Aeneas and he was bedridden for eight years. The paralytic of today's gospel passage was sick for 38 years. Both cures have however, common points also: 1) in both Christ was the doctor. The first occurred, on the one hand, with the mediation of the Apostle Peter. However, in order for no misunderstanding to occur as to the worker of the cure, the Apostle Peter hastens and clarifies: "Aeneas, Christ is curing you". 2) The common point is that in both, a confession of faith

was not asked for, before the cure. Saint Peter, according to the Golden-tongued one, imitates his Teacher, Who when He began the miracles was not asking for faith.

And the Apostle may not have asked for faith, but he asked from the paralytic, after he gets up, to spread his bed on his own. The detail is not unimportant. Obviously, the first reason was for the complete cure to become manifest. The interpreters, nevertheless, note a second reason also: Because God does what is greatest and supernatural, we should not cross our hands and await in everything, solutions descending from heaven. We must do with responsibility and diligence, the small or least thing that suits our powers. The miracle is a wakeup call for work, not a cause for indolence and resting.

The fullness of good works

The merciless enemy of indolence was Tabitha, on whom the Apostle Peter performed the second miracle. So for this reason, she also was "full of good works and charities". Of course, this phrase of the Epistle text comprises, according to Saint John, a great praise for Tabitha. She herself, obviously, hid her good works. They were not however, able to remain hidden after her death. When Peter went there, called by the neighboring Lydda, he heard and saw the most descriptive funerary praise: widows were crying showing the clothing that Tabitha had made for them. It was the strongest witness of her great love and charity. A charity which, according to the Holy Scripture, "saves a person from death" (Tob. 12:9). So they did not need to ask him to resurrect her. Her virtue itself, was calling and shouting for it. And after the Apostle Peter knelt and prayed, he started her life again. Here his shadow was not enough for the miracle. He knelt, giving a "sign of intense prayer". "God does not allow all the miracles to occur with the same ease" Saint John Chrysostom will observe. "This also benefited the apostles, for whose salvation, God did not cease striving". Much more so it benefits us, teaching us the meaning of persistence, of patience and physical toil in prayer.

The virtue of charity

In the history of the Church, souls were not lacking who imitated the virtues of Saint Tabitha. A chief example in relation to the more recent period, is Saint Philothei the Athenian, who did not only warm the clothing of downtrodden women in the freezing cold of