

No more putting off

Usually we put off or await from God to give us progress. The life of faith, however, demands initiative, readiness and struggle, and not a putting off for the future. Now we need to fight, to make the beginning of repentance in our life, to locate what is paralyzing us, and to seek the help of God and our brothers, our spiritual fathers, to do asceticism in the means that the ascetical and spiritual tradition of our Church gives us, so that we can be ready to enter into there, where life is given.

It is not consequently, the others that are to blame and make us delay. Sometimes, it is the paralysis of our soul, our resting in justifications that render us passive viewers of life. The relationship with the resurrected Christ wakes up and makes us carry "our bed", our cross, and walk. And the life of the Church keeps us healthy. So long as we participate with love for God and neighbor as strugglers in the spiritual path. And the Lord will make up for whatever we are lacking. Christ is Risen!

Fr. T. M

SUNDAY, MAY 10, 2020, SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC

Simon the Zealot & Apostle, Laurence of Egypt, Isodora of Egypt

tone of the week : *Third Tone*

EOTHINON : *Fifth Eothinon*

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

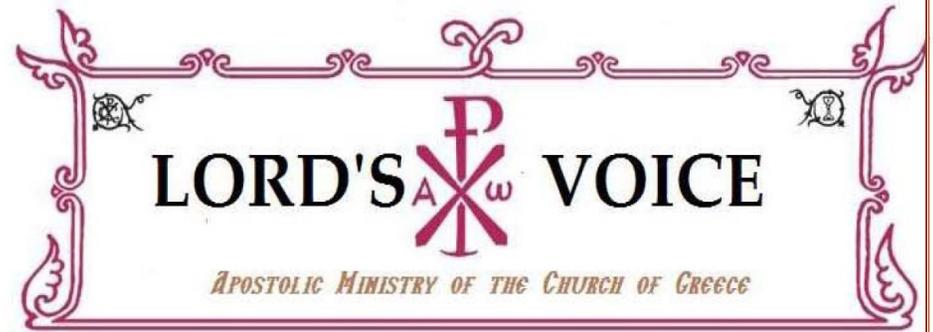
GOSPEL READING: *John 5:1-15*

SUNDAY, MAY 17, 2020, SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN

WOMAN, *The Holy Apostles Andronicus and Junia, Holy Godbearing Nectarius, the Builder of the Holy Monastery of Varlaam of Meteora, Theodotos the Martyr of Ancyra & the 7 Virgin-martyrs, Athanasios, Archbishop of Christianopolis, The New Martyrs of Batak, Bulgaria, Nicholas the Younger who was martyred in Metsovo, Epirus*

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

GOSPEL READING : *John 4:5-42*



68TH YEAR MAY 10 2020 PAMPHLET #19 (3493)

THE PARALYSIS OF SEPARATION FROM GOD

Many times in our life, whereas we are preparing to achieve a goal, we ascertain that some others manage to do it before us. "We were late", is a phrase which spontaneously comes to our lips. The paralytic of Bethesda (John 5:1 – 15) felt the same thing each time the Angel would descend and disturb the water of the pool and someone else would manage to go in before him and be healed. He doesn't remain however, only in this. "Lord I have no man", he tells Christ. It was also his loneliness that made him not have someone as a support, to help him fall into the pool first and be healed.

Sin gives birth to loneliness

The paralytic of Bethesda, however, did not see the main cause of his illness, and this was none other than sin. The 38 years of illness did not make the paralytic sincerely examine his life, to admit his whatsoever faults, his separation from God, to turn to himself and to see what was to blame. The 38 years of his invalidity did not make him dynamically organize the whatsoever life he had, even in his illness, but it made him a passive viewer of the pool, who simply awaited a miracle for his

THE SUNDAY GOSPEL JOHN 5:1-15

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.

life to change. The 38 years of his paralysis made him not have any friend, anyone who would truly love him, probably because he himself was not a friend with someone and did not love someone, resulting in him always delaying.

It was not just the miracle of healing and of changing the external side of his life that the paralytic passively awaited. It was also the miracle of socialization and the surpassing of loneliness, which he also awaited passively, without making any movement. So, for this reason also, Christ immediately denotes his sin: it was separation from God and from fellow man, that made him also be paralyzed physically. And the miracle of physical healing may have come. If however, he remained unsocial and far from people, closed up in his misery, and rendering all his delay of living to others, something worse would find him, which is none other than spiritual death, the definitive separation of man, both from God and from neighbor.

The relationship with Christ heals us

So, the relationship with the resurrected Christ heals our putting off and indolence. Simultaneously, it makes us come out of the passivity of life. For us to surpass the mindset of the viewer in the world, and to take life in our hands. For us to strive for true socialization, love for our neighbor and again, if we are not able to change our life, at least to give meaning to it in its paralysis. To show that we have not abandoned the effort to live, to struggle, to hasten. To have purpose and meaning. And this is achieved with the manner of the Church.

The spiritual life is not a passive listening and participation in whatsoever miracle. The Church is the pool of Bethesda, in which the water is disturbed, in other words, God comes down and calls us to enter into the life of faith, communing of His Body and Blood. Only that each one of us needs to be ready. In the paralysis that every type of sin – moral, social, spiritual, physical – causes, we should have the readiness to reap whatsoever opportunity is given to us to meet Christ.