

accountable to God not only for our sins, but also for the good deeds we refuse to do.

### **The condemnation of the benefaction**

One would expect from those people, who for thirty-eight years refused to extend a hand to the sufferer, to applaud the one who did it, or at least to remain silent, being ashamed before the greatness of his act, feeling the burden of guilt. Instead of this, however, what do they do? They get frustrated, because He was supposedly ignoring the Sabbath holiday. How much analgesia, how deep a spiritual paralysis, more terrible even than the physical one from which the healed fellow was suffering from! These people resemble him, to whom one points at the moon, but he, rather, insists on observing the finger. Let's be careful, my brethren, and let's constantly examine ourselves, so that we do not also become inhumane, «but understand what will of the Lord is". Let it be done!

Archim. A. A.

### **SUNDAY MAY 15 2022 SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC**

*Pachomius the Great, Achilius the Wonderworker Archbishop of Larissa, Placing of the Honorable Head of the Apostle Titus, Barbaros the Myrrhbearer of Kerkyra, Andrew the Hermit & Wonderworker .*

**-tone of the week** : Third Tone

**EOTHINON** : Fifth Eothinon

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

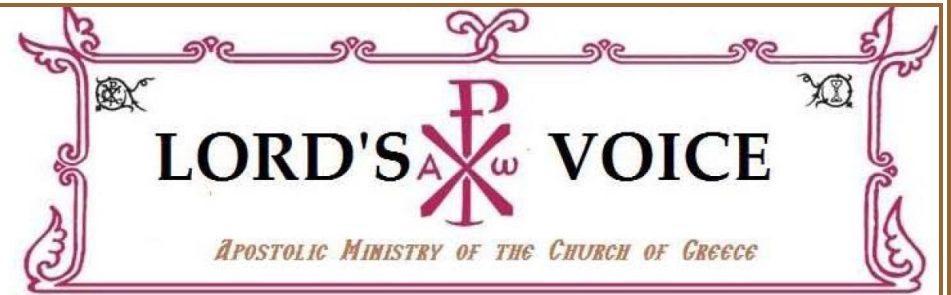
**GOSPEL READING** : John 5: 1- 15

### **SUNDAY MAY 22 2022 SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN**

**WOMAN** *Basiliscus the Martyr, Bishop of Comona. Holy new Martyrs Demetrius and Paul of Tripoli. John-Vladimir ruler of Serbia.*

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

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



70<sup>TH</sup> YEAR MAY 15 2022 PAMPHLET # 20 (3598)

## **A DREADFUL ILLNESS**

Sunday of the Paralytic of Jerusalem today, and our Holy Church reminds us of a miraculous event from the Gospel of John, without taking us away from the paschal climate of the period, or from the environment of the Holy City. Jesus meets a tortured man, and heals him from his terrible disease. Jesus had done very many miracles, always discreetly, of which, some are mentioned in the Gospels, and others are not. In this case, however, the interest is not so much focused on the miracle itself, as on Jesus' dialogue with the sick fellow, which precedes, as also on whatever will follow.

### **The desire for healing**

When Jesus approaches the paralyzed man, He very well knows, of course, the state of his health, but also of his soul. The question that He submits to him seems naïve: "Do you want to be healed?" The answer to this question is theoretically self-evident: "Why, of course, I want to! And who would not want to? " Maybe for this reason, the patient omits the response, complaining that this coveted possibility is not given to him. And yet, this simple question, is anything but superfluous, for the knower of hearts, Christ.

## THE SUNDAY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO 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.

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It is true that man after his expulsion from Paradise is tortured and suffers in various ways. Many times, he even

attributes his affliction to God Himself. Is that really so, however?

Maybe, many times, are we ourselves not often to blame for our troubles? Maybe sometimes the circumstances and the adversities are merely an extremely convenient "alibi" to easily dispose of our own responsibilities? And finally, is it ever possible to be healed if we do not strive for this purpose?

The Paralytic's complaint, of course, seems plausible: "I have no man". True, how much loneliness, how much abandonment, how much frustration does this tragic phrase not hide, and how many people does it not express over time and universally! This complaint, however, is not addressed to God, but to his fellow human beings. How is it possible, with so many people crowding at the Sheep Gate every day, for a passer-by to not be sensitized, at least once, to help this afflicted creature of God? Did no one ever think that in the place of that unfortunate man, he himself could very easily end up? The questions are relentless, and each one of us should pose them to himself.

It is a fact that we humans are guided by our individual interest, as the compass, and it is not easy to realize that our neighbor may have more need than we do. The world judges on the basis of its own criteria, which are not always fair. In fact, sometimes, not only do we turn our eyes away from the one who needs our help, but we pretend to ignore his existence, we avoid dealing with him and condemn him to isolation and social exclusion. Even worse, how many times have we not happened to hear or say in our daily life: "He got what's due to him." Who are we to judge our neighbor? So, let's remember, every time we are stubbornly unmoved before the drama of our fellow man, that we are