



72nd Year

October 6, 2024

Pamphlet #40 (3723)

THE SUNDAY GOSPEL (Luke 6:11-16)

The abolition of death

At that time, Jesus went to a city called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him. As he drew near to the gate of the city, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a large crowd from the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep." And he came and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." And the dead man sat up, and began to speak. And he gave him to his mother. Fear seized them all; and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us!" and "God has visited his people!"

THE CONQUEROR OF DEATH

The Gospel reading of the 3rd Sunday of Luke speaks to us about the resurrection of the dead child of a widow at the gate of the city of Nain in Galilee. The conqueror of death, Jesus Christ, encounters death before Him and utters the phrase we read in the passage: "Young man, I say to you, arise." It is the call of life to the person defeated by death, the hopeful and life-filled command of Christ, the truth of the resurrection.

The mystery of death

Death is the greatest agony of the world. Its mystery remains an ontological reality that touches every human being and casts doubt on the meaning of life in general.

Due to sin, our ancestors lost the beauty of immortality that was given to them at the beginning of creation. They became subject to death after the sin of Adam. The nature of the human condition becomes mortal due to sin, which is the fruit of disobedience. Alienation from God is spiritual death, and the collapse of the material side of man is physical death.

The immortality of God

Christ reshapes the image of God in man, having assumed the entire human nature during His incarnation, yet without sin, and is the life-giving principle that unites the separated aspects of body and soul. Thus begins the "destruction of evil and the abolition of death." (St. Gregory of Nyssa) Only the immortality of God can guarantee the immortality of the mortal nature of man, since "the mortal, becoming one with the immortal, became immortal." (St. Gregory of Nyssa). Christ gave Himself as a ransom for those under the power of death "to destroy him who holds the power of death, that is, the devil." (Hebrews 2:14) The true prevention of death is accomplished through the Resurrection of Christ.

The sweetness of the life to come

Therefore, death is now a birth that opens to us the true life. It is the true birth. But why does man still fear death today? St. Gregory of Nyssa tells us: "It is like prisoners who are accustomed to their darkness and do not realize the misery of their condition. Similarly, man, deceived by the deceptive pleasures of the senses, considers them true goods and fears to be deprived of them."

Whoever is close to the Risen Christ and lives His presence within the Church, essentially and not just formally, does not agonize before death and does not fear. Through the sacramental life of the Church, the victory over sin and death is transmitted to people, precisely because this victory is realized in Christ. Through the mystery of Baptism, man receives the seal of immortality. The concept of death, after baptism, changes for the baptized, since, by imitating the death of Christ, he rises with Christ and is elevated to the communion of divinity. In the “baptism of tears,” the mystery of repentance and confession, we kill our sins and continuously crush our death. In the mystery of the Divine Liturgy, we commune of the Body and Blood of the Lord, which is the “medicine of immortality” and the “antidote to not dying” (St. Ignatius the God-bearer), and we participate in the immortality of Christ, foretasting the sweetness of the life to come. Therefore, Christians consider death as sleep, expecting, as we confess in the Symbol of Faith [i.e. the Creed], “the resurrection of the dead and the life of the age to come.”

† F. A.

From the publications of the Apostolic Ministry:

*ΕΡΜΗΝΕΙΑ ΠΑΛΑΙΑΣ ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗΣ
Α΄ - Β΄ ΕΣΔΡΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΝΕΕΜΙΑΣ
(THE OLD TESTAMENT, 1st and 2nd Esdras and Nehemiah)*

(in Greek, Size 14x21 cm, 344 pages)

by JEREMIAH FOUNTAS,
Metropolitan of Gortyna and Magalopolis (†)

The book of 1st Esdras narrates the history of the people of God from the reign of Josiah to the return of the priest Ezra to Jerusalem. The main theme of the book of 2nd Esdras is the return of the captives, the rebuilding of the Temple of Jerusalem, and the activities of the priest Ezra in Jerusalem.

October 6, 2024: 3rd Sunday of Luke

Thomas the Apostle of the Twelve, Eroteis the Martyr of Cappadocia
Pl. 2nd Tone – Eothinon: 4 – Epist: 2 Cor. 4:6-15 – Gosp: Luke 6:11-16
NEXT SUNDAY: October 13th, 4th Sunday of Luke, 7th Ecumenical Council
Epistle: Titus 3:8-15 – Gospel: Luke 8:5-15

SEMINAR FOR LEARNING GREEK SIGN LANGUAGE

The offering of pure and sincere love is the motivation behind the creation and operation of the Seminar for Learning Greek Sign Language. Participants in this educational activity of the Apostolic Ministry, which is offered for free, have the opportunity to help all our fellow human beings who lack hearing but have other means of communication and who simultaneously thirst to learn about God and the Church.

- Thursday, October 3rd, the start of the seminar will take place.
- For more information, those interested can address:
 - The Office of Catechism and Youth of the Apostolic Ministry tel. 210-727-2347-348 (Mon-Fri 8am-2pm)
 - E-Mail: katixisi@apostoliki-diakonia.gr
 - The Apostoliki Diakonia Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/apostoliki.diakonia>
 - The website www.apostoliki-diakonia.gr, in the section “ΠΟΙΟΙ ΕΙΜΑΣΤΕ” and the subsection “ΤΟΜΕΑΣ ΚΑΤΗΧΗΣΕΩΣ ΚΑΙ ΟΡΘΟΔΟΞΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΙΑΣ”, in which the educational-catechetical activities of the Office of Catechism are described.

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