



73rd Year

September 28, 2025

Pamphlet #39 (3774)

THE SUNDAY EPISTLE (2 Corinthians 6:1-10)

An acceptable time

Brethren, working together with him, we entreat you not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says, "At the acceptable time I have listened to you, and helped you on the day of salvation." Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. We put no obstacle in any one's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, tumults, labors, watching, hunger; by purity, knowledge, forbearance, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

THE SUFFERINGS OF THE COWORKERS OF GOD

Great truths are revealed by Saint Paul in today's Epistle reading. He speaks of the sufferings endured by the Apostles in their effort to spread the Gospel to people, and of the spiritual

gifts by which they opposed the hostility of the worldly spirit. They showed patience, endured hardships and afflictions, were mistreated, imprisoned, faced human opposition, kept vigil, and went hungry. In response to this condition, they demonstrated integrity, sincere love, proclaimed the truth, remained tolerant, were enlightened by the Holy Spirit, and preached the truth and the power of God. Against human hatred, they responded with love and were considered deceivers, even though they spoke the truth. And this truth was sealed by the fact that they were tortured many times and came close to death, yet lived. They experienced afflictions, but never lost their joy; they lived in poverty, yet made many rich; they had nothing, yet possessed everything.

Violence against the clergy

The successors of the Apostles, the clergy, who undertook the very great work of spiritual guidance for Christians, suffered exactly the same treatment from godless and anti-Christian systems that sought to dominate history. Whenever atheistic movements attempted to conquer the religious conscience of people, the clergy were the first and easiest target. Whenever atheistic movements used violence and coercion to suppress Christian faith and life, the sacred clergy endured unbelievable abuse, even martyrdom, systematic slander, and organized discrediting – and all this not without reason. The clergy always functions as a spiritual guide, a leader in struggles, a servant of the weak, a beacon during times of oppression, and a unifying link within society.

Defamation of priestly reputation

Similar behaviors are experienced by the sacred clergy in our own time, which are sometimes based on the failings and weaknesses of certain of its representatives. These weaknesses, which often scandalize the pleroma of the Church, are arbitrarily generalized and shamelessly presented as the norm of life for modern clergymen. To this end, the godless pseudo-culture of

our era and the mass media, which disregard truth, willingly participate: they exaggerate situations, speak in catastrophic terms, defame priestly reputations, distort the timeless monastic contribution, sensationalize scandals, and engage in systematic brainwashing, demonstrating a remarkable adherence to Goebbels-style methods of misinformation and mass subjugation. At the same time, they scorn and erase, with a single stroke, the holiness of priestly ministry, its charismatic nature, and the wondrous spiritual and social work carried out by the Church through its clergy – work that, ultimately, cannot be equaled. It cannot be flattened or erased, despite systematic efforts to do so.

Resistance to the spirit of the world

The goal is singular and timeless: the people of God must, at all costs, turn their backs on ecclesiastical life – that is, to renounce their true life and the prospect of their salvation. For this reason, constant resistance is needed against the deceptive spirit of the world, along with prudence and wisdom, so that we may stand before the bearers of God's grace with the respect and honor befitting their charismatic nature, refusing to let others judge or decide for us what our stance and position within the Church should be. Let us also keep in mind the words of a wise hierarch of our Church, who said of the sacred clergy: "The priest is the 'salt of the earth.' Without him, the Church cannot exist – this wondrous spiritual organism whose head is Christ and whose body is the faithful. 'Without them, the priests,' says Ignatius the God-Bearer, disciple of the Apostles, 'there can be no gathering of the faithful.' Therefore, salvation without them is not possible. Without the priest, you have neither baptism, nor participation in the mysteries, nor enjoyment of blessings. Therefore, you are not a Christian."

Archimandrite E. Oik.

September 28, 2025: 1st Sunday of Luke

Chariton the Confessor († 350), Baruch the Prophet (600 BC).

Grave Tone – Eothinon: 5 – Epistle: 2 Corinthians 6:1-10
– Gospel: Luke 5:1-11

NEXT SUNDAY: October 5, 2nd Sunday of Luke
Epistle: 2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1 – Gospel: Luke 6:31-36

FROM THE EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CATECHESIS AND ORTHODOX WITNESS

The Apostolic Ministry's testimony of love, which seeks to contribute to the highest work of catechesis and assistance to fellow human beings, is evident through the operation of the following online educational programs of the Department of Catechesis and Orthodox Witness:

- PREPARATORY COURSE FOR PROSPECTIVE CATECHISTS
- SEMINAR ON LEARNING GREEK SIGN LANGUAGE

For more information, you may contact:

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- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/apostoliki.diakonia>
- Website: www.apostoliki-diakonia.gr → Section: *Ποιοι είμαστε* → *Τομέας Κατηχήσεως καὶ Ὁρθοδόξου Μαρτυρίας*, where all educational and catechetical activities of the Catechesis Office are described in detail.

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