



The Canaanite Woman

Troparion of the Resurrection, Tone 7

By Thy Cross, Thou didst destroy death! To the thief, Thou didst open Paradise! For the myrrhbearers, Thou didst change weeping into joy! And Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God, to proclaim that Thou art risen, granting the world great mercy!

Troparion of the Annunciation, Tone 4

Today is the beginning of our salvation, the revelation of the eternal mystery! the Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin as Gabriel announces the coming of Grace. Together with him let us cry to the Theotokos: Re-joice, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with you.

Kontakion of Annunciation, Tone 8

O Victorious Leader of triumphant hosts! We, your servants delivered from evil, sing our grateful thanks to you, O Theotokos! As you possess invincible might set us free from every calamity so that we may sing: Re-joice, O Unwedded Bride!

Weekly Bulletin

Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

January 30th , Tone 7, Matt. 15:21-28

The gospel for this Sunday (Matt. 15:21-28) describes how a Canaanite woman comes up to Jesus in the region of Tyre and Sidon. Her daughter is possessed with a devil, and she implores Jesus and cries out to him; but Jesus does not answer, and His disciples want him to tell her to go away. Jesus then says that he has only been sent to the lost sheep in Israel; but still the woman is not discouraged and keeps on insistently. Jesus answers her with apparent hardness: is he to take the bread from the children to cast it to the dogs? Truth, Lord, says the woman humbly, but the dogs themselves eat the crumbs which fall from the table. "Great is thy faith" Jesus says to her: let it be done unto this woman according to her faith. And her daughter is immediately made whole.

This episode is probably reported by Matthew to show how the mission of the Messiah, at first destined for the Jews, is graciously extended to the Gentiles. Spiritually, this gospel shows what intense faith, and prayer which is humble and insistent can achieve. Jesus seems to be silent. He seems to say hard things...Our Lord acts in this way when he wants to test the strength of our faith. But he does not refuse grace to someone who is humble enough to compare themselves to a dog feeding on crumbs fallen from the table.

Let us look at the Canaanite woman's reaction when Jesus says that he has only been sent to the lost sheep of Israel: "Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me". It is often at the very moment when Jesus seems to put up a decisive refusal that we must redouble our faith, come near to him, worship him and beg for his help. The formula "help me" is always acceptable to the Lord, even if the particular form of help we are seeking is not that which he desires to give us. "Lord, Thou dost say "no" to me. I come to Thee and adore Thee: help me as Thou dost judge it good

(taken from Year of the Grace of the Lord, by a Monk of the Eastern Church)

From the Lives of the Saints... THE THREE HIERARCHS: SAINT BASIL THE GREAT, SAINT GREGORY THE THEOLOGIAN, AND SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

Each of these saints has his own feast day: St. Basil the Great, January 1; St. Gregory the Theologian, January 25; and St. John Chrysostom, January 27. This combined feast day, January 30, was instituted in the eleventh century during the reign of Emperor Alexius Comnenus. Once, a debate arose among the people concerning who among the three was the greatest. Some extolled Basil because of his purity and courage; others extolled Gregory for his unequalled depth and lofty mind in theology; still others extolled

Announcements and Activities

Vespers for the Meeting of the Lord – Tuesday, at 6PM. Candles will be blessed.

Liturgy for the Feast– Wednesday, at 9AM.

Saturday Great Vespers– on Saturday, at 5:30 PM.

Sunday Divine Liturgy– 10AM.

House Blessings– Fr. Lawrence placed a sign-up sheet for House Blessings in the Social Hall, on the table against the wall with the double doors to the patio. If, in addition to the blessing itself, you are interested in dining or having refreshments with Father and Matushka, you'll want to adjust the time you sign up for accordingly. There are, of course, still concerns about the new Omicron variant and its highly contagious characteristic. If you would prefer to not have Fr. Lawrence come for now, he understands completely and will gladly do it at another time when you are feeling more comfortable. Let Fr. Lawrence know if you become ill and he will let you know if he becomes ill.

Church School/Adult Ed.— met today, and will next meet on Sunday, February 13th.

Coffee Hours– This week's Coffee Hour is being sponsored by Sunday and Rhoda. Next week's Coffee Hour will be sponsored by Luci and Linda.

Annual Meeting– We had a good Annual Meeting. We adopted the budget presented by Parish Council to the parish. Mike Miller, Elise Russell and Kirk MacLane were elected to two year terms on the council.

Pray for... Hierarch Nikolai (Soraich)—battling cancer. Samir's friend, Johnny, who has been improving in the battle to save his sight. Brian, Sunday's brother. George and Alex, health problems. All those who have

Chrysostom because of his eloquence and clarity in expounding the Faith. Thus some were called Basilians, others Gregorians, and the third were called Johannites. This debate was settled by divine providence, to the benefit of the Church and to the even greater glory of the three saints. Bishop John of Euchaita (June 14) had a vision in a dream: At first all three of these saints appeared to him separately in great glory and indescribable beauty, and after that, all three appeared together. They said to him: "As you see, we are one in God and there is nothing contradictory in us; neither is there a first or a second among us." The saints also advised Bishop John to write a common service for them and to order a common feast day of celebration. Following this wonderful vision, the debate was settled in this manner: January 30 would be designated as the common feast of these three hierarchs. The Greeks consider this feast not only an ecclesiastical feast, but also their greatest national school holiday.

THE HIEROMARTYR [PRIESTLY-MARTYR] HIPPOLYTUS, BISHOP OF ROME

Hippolytus suffered for the Faith during the reign of Claudius. When the virgin Chrysa was mercilessly tortured for Christ in Rome, St. Hippolytus interceded on her behalf before the torturers and denounced them. Because of this protest, Hippolytus also was brought to court and condemned and, after prolonged tortures, was sentenced to death. They bound his hands and feet and drowned him in the sea. Along with Hippolytus and Chrysa, twenty other martyrs also suffered. St. Hippolytus suffered in the year 269 A.D.

THE HOLY MARTYR THEOPHILUS THE NEW

As a commander of the Emperor Constantine and the Empress Irene, Theophilus was enslaved by the Hagarenes and was kept in prison for four years. When he refused all pressures of the Moslems to abandon the Christian Faith, Theophilus was beheaded with the sword, taking up his aode with the Lord in the year 784 A.D.

SAINT PETER, KING OF BULGARIA

Peter, the son of Simeon, was a great admirer of St. John of Rila. He gained independence from Constantinople for the Bulgarian Church, and preserved Orthodoxy in Bulgaria from the Bogomils. After an unsuccessful war with the Hungarians and Russians, Peter reposed in 967 A.D., in the fifty-sixth year of his life.

REFLECTION

Here is an example of how emperors seek counsel from the saints, how the saints avoid vanity and riches, and how they counsel emperors. The Orthodox King Peter of Bulgaria set off with his retinue for Rila Mountain, driven by the insatiable desire to see St. John of Rila and to benefit from his instruction. The king sent men ahead to inform the saint of his arrival, but the saint did not agree to meet with the king. The saddened king again sent some men with foodstuffs and an ample amount of gold, as well as a petition requesting the saint to write some counsel for him. John accepted the food but returned the gold, not even wanting to touch it; and he replied to the king: "If you desire the Heavenly Kingdom, be merciful like the Heavenly Father. Do not trust in injustice and do not be covetous; be meek, quiet and accessible to everyone. Do not accept praises from your noblemen. Let your purple robe radiate with virtues. May the remembrance of death never depart from your soul. Humble yourself before the feet of our Mother Church; bow your head before her chief hierarchs so that the King of kings, seeing your sincerity, may reward you with goodness such as never entered into the heart of man." Receiving that letter, the king kissed it, and he later read it frequently.

Taken from the Prologue of Ochrid, Compiled and edited by St. Nikolai Velimirovic)

"There do not exist many or few, nor small or great problems. The only problem is the absence of Christ from our lives" (From the life and teachings of Elder Epiphanius Theodoropoulos)