04/04/2020

The types of sadness – photo journal from the Akathist Hymn



The Akathist Hymn is the most widely used hymn to honor the Virgin Mary.

The word “Rejoice” is the most widely used word in the akathist hymn and this, according to the spiritual law, is due to the fact that sadness was the most present in the life of the Virgin.

The types of sadness

But we must distinguish between spiritual sadness which is the pain of longing for God in contrast to the fallen world in which we live and the animal or rational sadness.

- **Animal sadness**. Someone is sad when he does not fulfill his instincts, his selfish will. In a final analysis, he doesn’t care about others. He cares just in order to ensure the fulfillment of his desires. We realize we have this kind of

sadness when we don’t see anyone else in our sadness. This can lead to nerve diseases.

- **Rational sadness**. Someone is sad if it is not perfect from a material point of view but also from a spiritual point of view. Perfection, both materially and spiritually, is a term with a meaning that varies greatly from person to person. This rationality can bring man closer to God, but it can bring him closer to the likeness of the devil. We realize if we suffer from this kind of sadness when the presence of God is not pregnant within us.
- **Divine sadness**. Someone is sad because not everyone shares the love of God and so not all are happy. This sadness is characterized by an intense sweetness, love for all, a smooth and paradoxical joy interwoven with sadness and an intense presence of the grace of God.

Being strangers in the valley of mourning, far from our home, which is the kingdom of heaven, we must continually have sadness within us, but we must strive to have the divine sadness interwoven with joy, even if the devil pushes us toward animal sadness or, at least, in towards the rational one.

The way we reach divine sadness is prayer, mercy and patience. Let’s not forget to forgive.

Based on Saint John of the Ladder

The photos are from the service of the Akathist Hymn, Vatopedi Monastery, Mount Athos, where Elder Ephraim of Vatopedi read on his knees a prayer against the pandemic.

— Source: asceticexperience.com