

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Thyateira and GB Youth Weekly Meditation: Dealing with those who treat us unjustly



One great challenge in our efforts to lead Christian lives is how we treat those around us. Often we find that one of our fellows annoys us, acts unjustly or unfairly to us, and in many cases for no apparent reason. This can create unrest, a lack of peace within us, and sometimes even a sense of insecurity or sadness, dwelling on the fact our classmate or neighbour does not like or respect us.

In the Gospel we are strongly reminded to 'first be reconciled to your brother and then come and offer your gift' before the altar. (Matt 5:24) In the coming weeks we hope to have the opportunity to return to our churches, so let us prepare appropriately in reconciling with those around us before gathering in church as members of Christ's body.

Saint Porphyrios gives us relevant advice on this matter by offering this short story:

'...you are walking quietly on your way and see your brother walking in front of

you, also quietly, when at one point a crook jumps out in front of him from a side road and attacks him. He beats him, pulls his hair, wounds him and throws him down bleeding. Faced with a scene like that would you be angry with your brother or would you feel sorry for him?

How could I possibly be angry with my wounded brother, who fell victim to the criminal? The thought doesn't even cross my mind. Of course I would feel sorry for him and I would try to help him as much as I could.

In the same way. . .everyone who insults you, who hurts you, who slanders you, who does you an injustice in any way whatsoever is a brother of yours who has fallen into the hands of the criminal...the evil one. When you notice that your brother does you an injustice what should you do? You must feel very sorry for him, commiserate with him and entreat God warmly and silently both, to support you in that difficult time of trial, and to have mercy on your brother.'

Dear friends, as Christians, we are always called to be understanding and show compassion on those who do wrong to us, in order for God to then take pity on, and forgive our own sins and mistakes. This is of course a daily struggle and a commitment for life. Christianity requires struggle; a struggle against our ego, against any barriers that separate us from our neighbours and from our Creator God. Let us follow the footsteps of our Saints, who lit the path toward Him Who is the source of light, and the Sun of righteousness, our Lord Jesus Christ. Throughout the British Isles we find astonishing examples of local saints who gave up everything 'immediately' (Matt 4:20) for the preaching of the Gospel and for the building up of Christ's church and mission in these lands. Saint Ninian is such an example, who brought Christianity to Southern Scotland. After studying in Rome and visiting Gaul (in particular St Martin's monastery in Tours), he returned to his homeland, in the south of Scotland, and, following St Martin's example, founded a monastery and missionary centre, and as Bishop of Whithorn converted many to Christ.

We may not be called to build monasteries or convert many by our preaching. However, we can break the barriers of our ego and build up, within us, compassion, our understanding and our love for others, mirroring the unconditional love God has for all of His creation. This alone is a Christ-like mission and calling.

For those of you in the age groups of 8-10, 11-14 and 15-18 please join us this coming Sunday for our weekly Sunday School sessions. We will be discussing the theme of Creation!

Sign up at [\[email protected\]](#)

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