

Patriarch Daniel: The Prodromitissa Icon connects two Gardens of the Mother of God, Athos and Romania



“It is a joy to see that an icon of the Mother of God gathers in the love of the Holy Trinity a lot of people from different parts of the country, but also of different ages,” said His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel on Sunday at the summer patronal feast of the National Cathedral’s Chapel.

At the end of the festive Divine Liturgy, the Patriarch of Romania told the believers that the Prodromitissa Icon connects two Gardens of the Mother of God, Mount Athos and Romania.

‘Mount Athos is called the Garden of the Mother of God because the Theotokos chose that place to be a home for monastics as she told St Peter the Athonite.’

‘Romania is also called the Garden of the Mother of God,’ Patriarch Daniel said recalling the miraculous apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary to St Joseph of Bisericani in the fifteenth century.

“After the Turks invaded and set fire to the church, St. Joseph and his disciples wanted to go to Mount Athos. Shortly after they left the monastery, the Mother of

God appeared to them in an oak tree and told them to return to the monastery and rebuild the church, because there was her garden too.”

During his sermon, Patriarch Daniel also referred to the Sunday gospel reading stressing that Christ’s kindness frees humans from the demonic wickedness.

The Patriarch explained that Christ went to the people tormented by demons to deliver them, to heal them, to save them.

“Jesus goes from merciful love to these people alienated from other people, who lived in graves, who were in a spiritual death by their distancing from other people and their hatred of other people.”

Like other miracles performed, the Patriarch of Romania reminded that Jesus does not work miracles in order to be praised by people, to assert Himself selfishly.

“He works miracles out of humble and merciful love for those who suffer either from physical or spiritual illness.”

His Beatitude pointed out that the attitude of the Gadarenes was one in contrast to the miracle of the Saviour.

“Although they should have been happy because the Saviour Jesus Christ no longer leaves them exposed to the violence of the two demonized in the area, they had no gratitude, but were saddened by the material damage caused by the entry of demons into the herd of pigs.”

“The gospel shows us that sometimes in people’s lives God can allow some material damage. It does not directly punish people, but it can rebuke them through material damage, especially when they have become too attached to material things and have forgotten the spiritual life, the merciful love for others.”

The Gospel passage read on Sunday refers to man’s deliverance from demonic powers: “It shows us that the Saviour Jesus Christ allowed demons to enter the herd of pigs first to teach us that demons don’t have unlimited power over humans and that humans can be set free of demons with the help of Christ.”

“Evil spirits can be cast out by the power of the Holy Spirit, and the struggle with them is through prayer, fasting, confession, participation in the Mystery of the Holy Unction, and partaking of the Holy Eucharist.”

“The demons at the end of the ages will be punished and sent to the depths, that is, to hell, just as the pigs were taken by the demons to the depths of the sea, that

is, they were lost,” His Beatitude explained July 12.

The patriarch recommended that we follow the example of Christ and assist the sick.

“It is very important that when there are sick people we pray for them as well, just as Jesus, without being invited by anyone, went to help them, to set them free and to enlighten the lives of those who were tormented by demons.”

At the end of his speech, Patriarch Daniel congratulated the chapel’s priests for their missionary activity and praised the piety of the faithful. ‘It is a joy to see that an icon of the Mother of God gathers in the love of the Most Holy Trinity a lot of people from different parts of the country, and of different ages.’

“We want to highlight a special work, in times of sadness, during the pandemic, namely, the work of the volunteers of the Romanian People’s Salvation Cathedral during the states of emergency and alert when a lot of old people, sick people, were visited, helped with food, medicines and spiritual encouragement,” said Patriarch Daniel.

His Beatitude blessed everyone wishing them ‘good health and joy, peace and much help from God, under the protection of the Theotokos and of all the Saints.’

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