

Sunday of Orthodoxy in the Saint Sava Cathedral in Belgrade



Patriarch Porfirije: Freedom is in life which is in harmony with the will of God, and that means in harmony with all that is true and genuine nature.

His Holiness Porfirije, Serbian Patriarch officiated the Holy Hierarchal Liturgy in the crypt of the Saint Sava Cathedral in the Vracar district, in Belgrade, on Sunday of Orthodoxy, 21 March 2021. Their Graces Bishops Nikodim of Dalmatia and Stefan of Remesiana, Vicar of the Serbian Patriarch, as well archpriests Dragan Sovljanski and Ivan Strbacki, hierodeacon Sava (Bundalo) and protodeacon Mladen Kovacevic concelebrated. Reader Milos Stamenkovic read the Apostle.

- Fasting was established in paradise when the Lord said to Adam and Eve: "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat." That commandment was not a prohibition, it was not a restriction of freedom, just as every commandment of God does not restrict our being, our will and our freedom. On the contrary, all the commandments and rules that we encounter in the experience of the Church, and which spring from the Holy Scriptures, exist in order for us to live true, genuine and full freedom. Freedom is not in doing what we want, freedom is in creating the truth. Freedom is in a life that is in harmony with the will of God, and that means in harmony with what is our true and truthful nature, Patriarch Porfirije said, emphasizing:

- If we can say that fasting limits something, it is that fasting is a restriction of our egoism, our self-love and anarchy in ourselves, a restriction of our actions by which

we limit the freedom of our neighbor. Therefore, fasting reveals to us the true and genuine faith. That is why it is not surprising that the Church, with its God-wise experience and mind, established the first Sunday of fasting as a Sunday called Sunday of Orthodoxy – the Sunday of true and genuine faith and the Sunday of true and genuine life. That holiday was established in 843 in Constantinople. That year, only the faith of the Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council was confirmed. This faith has prescribed that holy icons should be respected and that we can venerate the same icons and holy relics.

– All the heresies, from the earliest ones, were aimed at establishing that the Son of God is not Jesus Christ, that the Son of God is not the true God or on the other hand is not the true man. And the Church has lived by these very truths from the very moment of the incarnation of God. Precisely by fighting against icons, those who were malevolent believed that the image of God could not be painted with the hand of man. By claiming this, they denied a much deeper and more important truth without which there is no salvation, and that is that the Son of God became man. This gives us the possibility, in the way it was revealed to us, that we can establish communion with Him, and therefore we can paint Him, because before that He was painted in our hearts, Patriarch Porfirije taught about the meaning of dogmas about holy icons.

– Therefore, true and genuine faith is important. Because our Church does not exist as an ideological human creation, even with the most honorable goal. It is necessary for us to transform, and thus for the world around us to transform, but that is not enough, Patriarch Porfirije said, concluding:

– The Church is the Body of Christ as an experience of victory over death, as an experience of eternal life. We testify to that with the true and genuine Orthodox faith because we have that experience and we offer that truth to the world. We offer it to a world that lies in evil, that longs for the fullness of truth and love. True faith is not a set of attitudes. And that faith is very simple, such that it is close to the heart of even the most learned and the simplest and ignorant man. It is the faith of our Fathers, the evangelical faith, the Christian faith and the Orthodox faith. That is why today the entire Orthodox Church celebrates the Sunday of Orthodoxy, which reveals the foundation of our life, and that is the Living Lord, one of the Holy Trinity.

The Holy Hierarchal Liturgy, besides lots of faithful people and children of all ages, was also attended by Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Nikola Selakovic and Director of the Office for Cooperation with the Churches and Religious Communities Mr. Vladimir Roganovic, PhD.

Celebrating Sunday of Orthodoxy and after the Holy Hierarchal Liturgy His Holiness Porfirije, Serbian Patriarch, read together with Their Graces Bishops Nikodim of Belgrade and Stefan of Banja Luka, the Great Church of St. Mark of Venice, 843 in in and in that







































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