

Patriarch Daniel: Christ overturns the logic of worldly thinking / Honour derives not from personal ambition



Patriarch Daniel recalled on Sunday the lesson that Christ taught His disciples when He received the request of the apostles James and John to hold worldly positions and pointed out that the Saviour had overturned the selfish logic of worldly thinking; a type of logic encountered even today in contemporary society.

Christ showed them that “honour in the Church derives not from personal ambition, not from struggle and competition for honour to be above others, but from humble service, through humble and merciful love,” His Beatitude said in his sermon at the historic chapel of the patriarchal residence.

“Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory

The request full of worldly glory made by the apostles James and John, who wished to be placed one at Christ’s right and the other at His left, aroused envy and anger among the other disciples. But the Saviour’s answer would bring peace to them, His

Beatitude said.

“The Saviour, with His divine wisdom, enlightened the disciples and corrected the two brothers eager for worldly honour. He enlightened them and corrected them by telling them that to sit at His right or left can be decided only by God, for those for whom they have been prepared. In other words, to sit at the right and left of the Saviour in glory is not a right, but a gift of God; it is not a right of those who consider themselves worthy, but a gift for those whom He, God, considers worthy to receive this gift.”

“And he tells the other disciples, all rulers of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; but not so with you, that is, with His disciples, there must not be the same mind, that is, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all.”

St. Mary of Egypt, model of repentance

His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel pointed out that the Fifth Sunday of Lent is dedicated to St. Mary of Egypt, a woman who was attracted to many sins in the first part of her life, but then through repentance acquired holiness.

She lived 47 years in many hardships but rose above the ground during prayer because her soul was more united with God than with worldly things, His Beatitude highlighted.

“Saint Mary of Egypt became a model of repentance, of encouragement for all those who were enslaved by passions, but who through repentance renewed themselves, rebuilt their lives and passed from sin to virtue, from passions to holiness,” Patriarch Daniel said April 18, 2021.

“Saint Mary is the protectress and enlightener of those who repent greatly and want to change their lives and want to give thanks to God for the power given to them by God’s grace to draw near to God and fulfil His will in their lives.”

The Gospel reading, the Patriarch of Romania said, summarizes the following teachings:

Christ foretells to His disciples His sufferings, His death, and His Resurrection after three days, which means that the sufferings of His cross are directed to the Resurrection. In other words, the Cross is directed to the Resurrection, and the Resurrection is hidden in the Cross, in the humility of the Cross;

Primacy or honour in life does not come from lording over others, but from humble service and merciful help to others;

The life of St. Mary of Egypt has become an icon of repentance, of the renewal of human life so that one can pass from the deadly sin to the life-giving holiness through repentance, fasting, prayer and much humility.

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