

## **Patriarch Daniel: 'Have mercy on me, o God' is the call to the only source of eternal life - Christ**



'After every troparion of the Great Canon of Repentance of Saint Andrew of Crete we have this calling, this insistent supplication, as a breath of the Church: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me,' Patriarch Daniel said at the end of the Great Canon officiated at the Patriarchal Cathedral on Clean Monday.

Have mercy on me, o God!

Referring to this request, His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel said it is 'the call to the only source of eternal life - Christ who conquered death.'

'He conquered sin, hell and death, and granted eternal life to those who believe in Him,' His Beatitude stressed recalling the Saviour's words, 'I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die' (John 11:25).

Why do we address this calling so often during Great Lent? 'Because we admit that we cannot be saved by ourselves.'

The Patriarch of Romania explained that 'salvation means the union between the passing and mortal man and the immortal and eternal God, the source of eternal life and of eternal joy.'

'We cannot give ourselves eternal life, but the only One who can do this thing is our compassionate God,' the Patriarch added March 12, 2019.

However, 'resurrection is not a natural phenomenon, a natural cycle as some pagans believed when spring came.'

'The resurrection given by Christ is not a return to earthly life, but the entry into a life without pain, without sigh and without end. Only Christ the Lord, the source of eternal life, can grant us salvation through His compassion, through His mercy, and His grace.'

The Patriarch explained the word mercy that is so often invoked during the Lenten season saying that 'to have mercy also means to save, i.e. to pour out grace in order to gain eternal life.'

Repentance is a program for entire life

During his homily delivered at the Great Compline on Monday, His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel pointed to the black vestments worn by clergy, the prayers of repentance, and prostrations, representing 'an offering brought to God.'

His Beatitude said that Christ is the centre of the Christian fasting season, and that the purpose of Great Lent is 'to become united with the crucified and risen Christ.'

Insisting on the idea of repentance, Patriarch Daniel noted that it is 'a program for entire life.'

'In our secularized society, the consciousness of sin has weakened, and that is why the practice of repentance has weakened, but where there is no repentance, there is also no longing for holiness.'

'When humility is replaced with self-sufficiency, self-praise, self-overvaluation, justification of evil, man reaches spiritual insensitivity, loses his temper and becomes irresponsible,' the Patriarch said pointing to 'the coming to his senses' of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32).

Pure love is born out of prayer

The Patriarch of Romania noted that during the Lenten season prayer is recommended as a 'source of healing' from sin, which is 'a sickness of the soul.'

‘The man who prays much enlightens his mind, and it is shaped after Christ’s mind. Through the word of prayer we unite with God the Word and our reason is sanctified according to the mind of Christ.’

The Patriarch ended his speech by quoting St Isaak the Syrian who said that ‘pure prayer is the way to the Kingdom of God. It is the way to the Kingdom of God for the individual and for the whole society,







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