



73rd Year

July 6, 2025

Pamphlet #27 (3762)

THE SUNDAY EPISTLE (Romans 6:18-23)

Real freedom

Brethren, having been set free from sin, you have become slaves of righteousness. I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once yielded your members to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now yield your members to righteousness for sanctification. When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. But then what return did you get from the things of which you are now ashamed? The end of those things is death. But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the return you get is sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

SIN AND ITS HEALING

Addressing the Romans, the Apostle Paul writes to new Christians who, before coming to know the light of Christ, lived in the darkness of idolatry. Idolatry is the deification of human weakness, the idolization of sin, and its acceptance as a natural way of life. A little earlier, Paul notes that it is not possible for a person to unite with Christ and live in the Church while being reconciled with sin and surrendered to it, as was the case with

the idolaters. For this reason, he teaches that through baptism, the Christian has been handed over to the righteousness of Christ, having been freed from the slavery of sin. He concludes by saying that the fate of the one who, although a Christian, chooses to surrender himself to sin, is the death of the soul.

Sin as an illness of the soul

Paul's perspective can be more easily understood if we place it within the framework of biological life. In analogy to sin as an illness of soul, we can place bodily disease, which often leads to biological death. Every very serious bodily illness leads to biological death. Likewise, as an illness of soul, sin leads to the death of the soul and the deprivation of eternal life.

This understanding of our Orthodox Church stands in contrast to the Western perspective, which gives sin a moral form and legal dimension. According to a learned hierarchy, "Among the Fathers of the Church, sin takes the form of an illness, and its eradication is presented in the form of healing. Thus, we have sickness and healing. Sin is the illness of the person and not simply a disorder of the person who does not obey God like an underling. For sin is not an act or a violation of state laws. There are laws; a lawbreaker violates the law and must be punished by the law. Augustine – the Western Church – understood sin in this way: that God gave commandments, man broke the commandments of God, and was punished accordingly. The diagnosis is that man suffers from this illness called sin, which is darkening. And how many times does one encounter this expression among the Fathers, "the darkening of the nous..."? The darkening of the nous is the diagnosis of sin. And what is the cure? The illumination of the nous. So, we have darkening and illumination. Darkness and light.

Repentance heals

It is important to keep these images within us: sin is the darkness, and the darkness is dispelled by the light. Sin is a

disease that is healed with a specific medicine, in a specific healing center; otherwise, it leads to the death of the soul. The healing center is the Church. As an elder hierarch has stated, "The Church's foremost work is to deliver man from the tyranny of sin, to awaken him spiritually, to chasten his heart, to guide him along the path of virtue and true humaneness. It is to cultivate within him a luminous and refined conscience, to cultivate his inner spiritual world, to free his heart from the wild passions of egotism, wickedness, and avarice, and to enrich his heart with the spirit of genuine love, with a spirit of sacrifice toward one's fellow man – the humanization of the person and his transformation into a new creation."

The medicine by which man is healed from the illness of sin is repentance. Let us hear how Saint John Chrysostom describes it: "Repentance is the clinic that heals sin. It is a heavenly gift, a wondrous power, a grace that conquers the consequences of the laws. That is why it does not reject the fornicator, does not hinder the adulterer, does not turn away from the drunkard, is not repulsed by the idolater, does not distance itself from the foul-mouthed, nor casts out the blasphemer or the arrogant, but transforms them all... It opens heaven to us; it leads us into paradise." Amen!

Archimandrite E. Oik.

From the publications of the Apostolic Ministry:

Η ΠΟΛΙΤΕΙΑ ΤΗΣ ΕΡΗΜΟΥ
(THE DESERT CIVILIZATION)

1st Edition, in Greek, Size 14x24 cm, 104 pages

by Metropolitan Agathangelos of Fanarion, General Director of the
Apostolic Ministry of the Church of Greece

The Apostolic Ministry proceeded with the publication of this spiritual book, which analyzes solitude, silence, and prayer as concepts of Orthodox spirituality.

July 6, 2025: 4th Sunday of Matthew
Venerable Sisoës the Great († 429), and the Martyrs Lucia († 301),
Apollonius, Epimachus, and Alexandrion

3rd Tone – Eothinon: 4 – Epistle: Romans 6:18-23
– Gospel: Matthew 8:5-13

NEXT SUNDAY: July 13, 5th Sunday of Matthew
Epistle: Titus 3:8-15 – Gospel: Matthew 5:14-19

From the publications of the Apostolic Ministry:

ΑΓΙΟΛΟΓΙΟΝ ΙΤΑΛΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ **(HAGIOLOGION OF ITALIAN SAINTS)**

1st Edition, in Greek, Size 24x28 cm, Volumes 1 and 2, 592 and 448 pages
by Photios Anastasios Tzelepis

In the first part of the present study, the saint-loving reader will admire the systematic compilation of a “Monthly Hagiology of All Saints in Italy,” beginning with the month of September and concluding with August. The second part, titled “Systematic Hagiology,” follows, which includes: (a) a martyrological map of local martyrs of the Italian peninsula, and (b) a chronological map of holy virgins, virgin-martyrs, venerable monks and nuns, venerable fathers and mothers of the Italian peninsula.

ΘΕΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΣ ΣΕ ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑ: ΟΨΕΙΣ ΤΗΣ ΕΝ ΧΡΙΣΤΩ ΖΩΗΣ **(GOD AND MAN IN COMMUNION: ASPECTS OF LIFE IN CHRIST)**

1st Edition, in Greek, Size 14x24 cm, 264 pages
by Charalambos G. Sotiropoulos

This edition aspires to offer an Orthodox Biblical-patristic understanding of God and man. Although human thought has evolved significantly from the 1st to the 21st century, the core of the Christian faith – the belief in the one Triune God and in Jesus Christ as Savior and Redeemer – remains steadfast. Likewise, the essence of life in Christ remains the same: faith, love, and the expectation of the Kingdom of God.

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