

The Confessor's Tongue for August 28, A. D. 2022

11th Sunday After Pentecost; St. Moses the Black

In honor of St. Maximus the Confessor, whose tongue and right hand were cut off in an attempt by compromising authorities to silence his uncompromising confession of Christ's full humanity & divinity.

The Sayings of St. Anthony the Great 29

A brother in a monastery was falsely accused of fornication, and he arose and went to Abba Anthony. The brethren also came from the monastery to correct him and bring him back. They set about proving that he had done this thing, but he defended himself and denied that he had done anything of the kind. Now Abba Paphnutius happened to be there, and he told them this parable: 'I have seen a man on the bank of the river buried up to his knees in mud, and some men came to give a hand to help him out, but they pushed him further in up to his neck.' Then Abba Anthony said this about Abba Paphnutius: 'Here is a real man, who can care for souls and save them.' All those present were pierced to the heart by the words of the old man and they asked forgiveness of the brother. So admonished by the Fathers, they took the brother back to the monastery.

Saying 29 Sayings of the Desert Fathers

Commentary: How ready we are to accuse others falsely, in our hearts if not in words! True, we usually do not do it maliciously and consciously, but do we not often quickly jump to false conclusions about our brother and pass judgment on him on the sketchiest of evidence? This readiness to leap to conclusions, think the worst, and condemn does great harm to ourselves and others and reveals a lack of love in our hearts for our brother. Love demands that we think the best of others, that we put the best possible construction and interpretation on their ambiguous words and actions rather than thinking the worst. How much trouble we suffer ourselves and inflict on others due to our choosing to think the worst!

The wise words of Abba Paphnutius calm a volatile situation. Rather than being a social thermometer registering the temperature of the conversation, he is a thermostat who changes it. He quickly leads the monks to perceive their error and repent. When they realize their fault, they immediately humble themselves and ask forgiveness rather than digging in to justify themselves. Now suppose that the brother had committed the sin of which he was accused, a serious matter. Even in such a case, one must be careful: one may be right but still be wrong; right concerning the sin and judgment on it, but wrong in dealing with the sinner. The brethren had come to correct the brother and bring him back to the monastery. This reveals their good intent: to restore their brother. But they didn't know how, and they were not fully operating out of love for him and so fell to arguing with him about his supposed guilt, which helped no one. Their sense of being right and their brother wrong kept them from helping him effectively. We tend to notice and judge sins to which we ourselves. Hence, we must always be on guard when dealing with the sins of others lest we be proud or condemning and thereby end up shooting the wounded and then falling ourselves, often into the

same sin. St. Jude thus writes, "Keep yourselves in the love of God...Have mercy on some who are doubting; save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh." (Jude 21-23 NAS). *Fr. Justin Frederick*

The Commandments of Christ

"If ye love Me, keep My commandments."

This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of Me. Luke 22:19

When people hear the word "commandment", what frequently comes to mind is a prohibition of something they might like to do or an order do something they would rather not do. Hence Christ's command to "do this in remembrance of me" is often overlooked when people think about or discuss the commandments.

What Christians are "to do" in this case is to take Christ's body and His blood in remembrance of Him. From the beginning, the Church gathered on the Lord's day to fulfill this command. Now, not only on Sunday may Christians partake, but any day of the week on which the Divine Liturgy is served.

Christ speaks to the necessity of this in John's Gospel: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him" (John 6:53-56). Christ's words are potent, demanding careful consideration. Many Christians very poorly if at all observe this commandment, thinking faith is a matter of the heart to be expressed in prayer and Bible-reading at home and not in the divine-human institution of the Church. Many others observe the command in part, but do not believe that what they receive is actually Christ's body and blood, despite what He said, even as they presume to substitute wafers and grape juice for bread and wine.

Knowing that the bread and wine offered at the altar during the Divine Liturgy become His body and blood and impart life and Christ's presence to them, Christians keep the command "this do in remembrance of Me." The theme of remembering is an important one in the history of God working with man for his salvation. Moses instituted the Passover so that the future generations of Israel might remember how in Egypt the Angel of Death passed over their homes because of the blood of the paschal lamb smeared on the lintel and door posts and how God delivered them from bondage and brought them to the Land He had promised. On the threshold of entering the Promised Land, God spoke through

Moses to warn the people not to forget Him once they possessed the land and its riches—vineyards they had not planted and houses they had not built—lest they became rich and proud and forgot God and what He had done for them and then break the covenant and bring the curse on themselves. Forgetfulness of benefits bestowed and services rendered is a vice that leads to sin, and God wanted to spare His people the consequences of sin, urging them to remember who they had been, who they had become, who God was and what He had done for them so that they would not fall away, break the covenant, and invite the curse, but might abide in God's blessing as He desired.

The history of the Hebrews in this regard foreshadows life in the Church. We by baptism have been delivered from spiritual slavery and given life and freedom in Christ. Through His resurrection, we all have eternal being—death is no longer final—and God desires to give eternal well-being to those who will be reconciled to Him through Christ. He has adopted us creatures as His children. He has given us His Holy Spirit as an earnest of an inheritance to come. There is nothing more important for us to do than to remember this regularly and to return to God fitting thanks and praise. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" St. Paul asks. To forget or neglect all the Lord has wrought for our salvation is to dishonor Him by ingratitude and failing to appraise accurately the value of what He has given us. In fact, we gather regularly to ponder what He has done so that in time we may come to an accurate appraisal of the value of His gift, render him due honor and worship, and hunger and thirst to be filled with more of Him than we now contain. A Christian neglects this command to his great peril. He cannot be indifferent to such things.

The command to "do this in remembrance" is life. To neglect it is not to have life. To obey it without remembering and without discerning Christ's body and blood invites judgment, for then we misuse things that are most holy. May God grant us grace to keep this command faithfully unto life and our eternal good. *Fr. Justin Frederick*

From Elder Paisios of Sihla, Romania (+1990)

Q. Some of the faithful say that they don't read the Psalter because the devil causes many temptations for them. Why is the devil afraid of the Psalms?

A. The demons are afraid of the Psalms because they are burned as with a sword of fire by whomsoever is praying with the Psalms. Great is the power of the Psalter over the evil spirits. With it, the fathers of old performed miracles and cast out evils spirits. And if some don't read the Psalter because they fear temptations, they're fainthearted Christians, who want to go out to battle the devils without weapons. But if we don't have powerful weapons, the devil will immediately disarm us and take us prisoner; that is, he'll make us slaves to sins unto condemnation. The Psalter, fasting, and humility are

the most powerful weapons against the devils. With these the saints drove the devils out of the world, and the angels descended upon earth. Whoever reads the Psalms imitates the angels and sings together with them.

A Little Corner of Paradise, p. 211 Fr. Paisius of Sihla

Q. It is observed that in some places Confessions is neglected, and Holy Communion is given very often. What's the best thing to do in this situation?

A. We have no right to renounce the holy canons and the age-old practice of the Church. Let us follow the path of the Fathers and our predecessors, on the canonical path of holy traditions. Frequent Communion does not bring us to perfection, but repentance with tears, frequent Confession, abandonment of sin, and prayer for the heart do. The zeal of some for frequent Communion is a sign of the weakening of faith and of pride, and not of spiritual advancement. Our correction and advancement on the path of salvation begin with frequent Confession, and continue through fasting and tearful prayer, through the abandoning of sins, almsgiving, reconciliation with everyone, and humility. Only after we do all these things may we have Communion more often, as the holy canons and traditions of the Church show us. Otherwise, how can you receive the Lord of heaven and earth into your house, when your soul is unclean, unconfessed, a slave to passions, and, especially, full of pride? First we have need of tears, prayer, and frequent Confession, then all other gifts will be added unto us. Our monasteries have always kept to the royal middle path. When it is meet and proper, we follow their practice and counsel.

From St. Moses the Black

A brother asked the old man, 'Here is a man who beats his servant because of a fault he has committed; what will the servant say?' The old man said, 'If the servant is good, he should say, "Forgive me, I have sinned."' The brother said to him, 'Nothing else?' The old man said, 'No, for from the moment he takes upon himself responsibility for the affair and says, "I have sinned," immediately the Lord will have mercy on him. The aim in all these things is not to judge one's neighbor. For truly, when the hand of the Lord caused all the first-born in the land of Egypt to die, no house was without its dead.' The brother said, "What does that mean?" The old man said, 'If we are on the watch to see our own faults, we shall not see those of our neighbor. It is folly for a man who has a dead person in his house to leave him there and go to weep over his neighbor's dead. To die to one's neighbor is this: To bear your own faults and not to pay attention to anyone else wondering whether they are good or bad. Do no harm to anyone, do not think anything bad in your heart towards anyone, do not scorn the man who does evil, do not put confidence in him who does wrong to his neighbor, do not rejoice with him who injures his neighbor. This is what dying to one's

neighbor means. To not rail against anyone, but rather say, "God knows each one." Do not agree with him who slanders, do not rejoice at his slander, and do not hate him who slanders his neighbor. This is what it means not to judge. Do not have hostile feelings towards anyone and do not let dislike dominate your heart; do not hate him who hates his neighbor. This is what peace is: Encourage yourself with this thought, "Affliction lasts but a short time, while peace is for ever, by the grace of God the Word. Amen." *Sayings of the Desert Fathers*

From Elder Matoes: What Is Humility?

A brother questioned Abba Matoes saying, 'Give me a word.' He said to him, 'God, and pray God to put compunction in your heart and give you humility; be aware of your faults; do not judge others but put yourself below everyone; do not be friendly with a boy nor with a heretical friend; put freedom of speech far from you; control your tongue and your belly; drink only a small quantity of wine, and if someone speaks about some topic, do not argue with him; but if he is right, say, "Yes"; if he is wrong, say, "You know what you are saying," and do not argue with him about what he has said. That is humility.

1. Abba Matoes said, 'I prefer a light and steady activity, to one that is painful at the beginning but is soon broken off.'

2. He also said, 'The nearer a man draws to God, the more he sees himself a sinner. It was when Isaiah the prophet saw God, that he declared himself "a man of unclean lips."'

4. He also said, 'Satan does not know by what passion the soul can be overcome. He sows, but without knowing if he will respond, sometimes thoughts of fornication, sometimes thoughts of slander, and similarly for the other passions. He supplies nourishment to the passion which he sees the soul is slipping towards.' *Sayings of the Desert Fathers*

Prophecies of St. Paisios of Athos (+1994)

9. Many events will take place but they will not last for long. Orthodoxy will not be destroyed, just as it was never destroyed under communism.

10. Whoever does not receive the seal of antichrist will survive and in fact will be better off than those who accepted the seal because Christ will provide for those who will not be marked. This is not a small thing.

11. The difficult times will last three and half years. The days will be shortened for the elect. God will not abandon His faithful. They will not even realize how quickly it will pass. Take for example a man that was treated unjustly, who accepts the injustice willingly and joyfully. He is granted divine comfort and the Saints, Panagia and even Christ himself may appear to comfort this man. How much more so now when His people will be going through these the difficult times?

It will be but a storm, a small occupation of the antichristian Satan. Then it will receive a slap in the face by our Lord, this whole antichristian system, all the nations on earth will be completely shaken up as a result of this divine intervention. Peace will follow, then, and spread all over the earth for many years. This time Christ will give man, His creature an opportunity to save himself from the Antichrist. He will not forsake them. They will return to Christ and a spiritual peace will come to the whole world for many years. Some like to say that this divine intervention by Christ at the end of the antichrist's rule will be the Second Coming. I can not say that. My thoughts are that it will be the Second Coming when He comes to judge the world, but only a divine intervention because there are so many things that have not happened yet for the world to end. Christ will intervene and the whole system will get a slap in the face, He will strike down all evil and good will triumph. There will be roadside shrines going up everywhere. The buses will have icons in them. Everybody will believe, and they will literally be grabbing you to tell them about Christ. This is how the Gospel will be preached to the ends of the earth, and then Christ will come as the Judge to judge the whole earth. Judgment day is one thing but divine intervention, for Christ to help His creature is another.

12. There are some men spend time reading prophecies and interpret them in their own way. But they do not admit that these prophecies are their own thoughts and creations. Then, they interpret these prophecies based on their sinful passion of pride. Saint Cyril for example, says "I hope that the time of the antichrist is not in our times". Let us look at how two people used their own pride and misinterpreted Saint Cyril.

One man may think that Saint Cyril is fearful of denying his faith. This man will think that he is prepared for these times and far more holy than Saint Cyril. Another man may believe that Saint Cyril is weak in faith. So, this man can justify his own timidity and believe that if he denied Christ it would be an allowable and well understood action because even Saint Cyril was weak in faith.

In reality, Saint Cyril was saying that he hoped that we do not live in the difficult times, so we do not meet the antichrist. Saint Cyril says this, not because he fears the antichrist, but because he does not want to meet the terrible sight of the antichrist. Saint Cyril feels compassion for all the terrible events we will suffer under the antichrist tyranny. Do you see how the devil tries to misinterpret sayings and events?

There are still others who keep their spiritual children immature in faith so the faithful do not feel burdened and distressed. They teach them to not be worrisome as long as they believe in their heart. Or they may avoid speaking about the card system of identification, about the mark, because they do not want to create worry and fear in people. It is far

better to prepare them by advising them to live spiritually, close to Christ, and not to fear martyrdom.

13. You must prepare from now in order to face hard times. As Christ said, become ready (*Mathew 24:44*). It is not only sudden death that we may face but there are many other dangers also. We must be giving and kind, we must offer ourselves to our neighbor in a spirit of self-sacrifice. I see that there are things about to happen, to take place, (the Elder means war, famine, world-wide trials and tribulations in general) and they get put off. Things are getting postponed. Who is doing this? God is putting things off. He is giving us time one month, two months, etc... Because we do not know what awaits us we must cultivate love. This is the most important thing, to have true filial love amongst you, not artificial. Where ever there is true heartfelt love one always acts the right way. Love and goodness are very powerful.

14. There will come a time whether people want it or not that all will believe. Mankind will come to an impasse and Christ will intervene.

15. We live in apocalyptic times. You do not have to be a prophet to realize this. Things are unfolding quickly. We can not be sure of what awaits us. This is why we have to rely on prayer ever more and to battle evil with prayer. This is the only solution. We should beg God to have mercy on mankind, even though we are not worthy of this mercy. Times will become difficult and very confusing.

Everybody will believe in their own thoughts and act according to their own will... As St. Kosmas says, you will walk for an half an hour to find another human being and then you will make him your brother*... people will be eating with gold spoons.

Some people say that what is the point of praying since the prophecies will be fulfilled anyway. Yes, God knows exactly how future events will unfold, but we still have to pray so that God can make these events less painful and to prevent them from spreading even more. That is why he says in the Gospel that for the sake of the elect, He will shorten those days (of the Antichrist) (*Mathew 24, 22*). The situation we are living is serious. It is truly a miracle that the world has not blown up/destroyed yet. Many ask God intervene because the fate of the world (as much as God allows) is in the hands of 3-4 lunatics.

19. The events will take place that will shock the world. It will not be the Second Coming, but Divine Intervention. People will be searching out people (Christians) to talk to them about Christ.

20. We will go through difficult years and many trials. We might even be martyred with the storm that is going to break out. One will only make it through it all by leading a more intense spiritual life. Do not become disappointed. These difficult years will actually be a blessing, because circumstances will force us to draw closer to Christ. It is an opportunity for a more fervent spiritual battle.

The battle now will not be with weapons, but it will be spiritual; against the Antichrist.

He will try to deceive even the elect. (*Mat. 24, 24.*) Everything will be censored and under surveillance by the beast in Brussels. After the credit cards and ID cards (we can see this in America today with the Real ID cards and the enhanced drivers' license) they will with guile make everyone accept the "seal" on their heads or foreheads (meaning the chip implant).

Only those who are sealed will be able to buy and sell and move around freely, those who refuse will have a very difficult time. This is why one must learn to live a simple life from now. Have a plot of land to grow a garden. Some olive trees or some animals (goats, chickens) for the basic family needs. These difficult times will last 3-3½ years. God will not desert us... The Church has to take a stance (on the national ID card in Greece) and ask of the government not to make the new ID card mandatory. It must tell the faithful that to take the ID card would be wrong. Hiding behind the Common Market (European Union) is a Zionist dictatorship. Only Satan could conjure up such an atrocious dismal dictatorship. Accepting the "seal" (mark) is a tantamount to betray. But the ID card is also betrayal. When you receive the symbol of Satan "666" on your hand and your forehead, out of unjustifiable ignorance or indifference, you still loose the Divine Grace and you are influenced by demonic energy.

22. Do not worry my children, God loves Greece and the Greek people. Even if there are only but a few pious Christians left in Greece, that you can count on your fingers, God will, for their sake, protect Greece.

23. Turkey will be broken up into 3-4 pieces. We will get our land back,, the Armenians will get theirs, and the Kurds will get theirs. The Kurdish issue is already in the works. These events will not happen now but in the near future. When the present politicians stop governing Turkey, a new generation of politicians will take over, it is then that Turkey will be divided up.

24. At some point, we will take over the city (Constantinople). It is ours. Nothing bad will happen to us. When we finally march off to Constantinople, we will learn that the city has been taken. Half-way there, we will march back. The "City" will be taken by the Russians, and they will give it to us. Not because they love us, but political circumstances will force them to.

25. Russia will be forced, due to political and military situations, to give us Constantinople. We will be given Constantinople back through the Russians.

28. The usage of the Euphrates river by the Turks for irrigation on a large scale will be a warning for the preparation of the great war (World War) that will ensue.

Upcoming Events 2022

1 September: Church New Year

25 September: Annual Meeting

GLORY BE TO GOD FOR ALL THINGS!