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Resurrection of Christ
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**Sunday, December 18, 2022
Divine Liturgy Sundays at 9:30 AM
Confessions 8:45-9:15 AM**

Today: St. Sabbas the Sanctified

****Tomorrow, Monday 19 December:**
**St. Nicholas Abp. of Myra
Divine Liturgy 9:30 AM****



Церковь живет не только Священным Писанием, но и Преданием. И поэтому именно в Преданиях, в памяти церкви хранится память о Великом святителе. Она не просто хранится где-то там

в кладовых, на полках пылящихся, а живо, действительно, по настоящему, потому, что, каждый из нас, живущий здесь, или в другом городе и вообще по всей вселенной постоянно обращаются к святителю Николаю. Но при всем многообразии его жизненном пути церковь оставила в тропаре два главных основания, на чем, действительно, зиждилась вся его жизнь: «Правило веры и образ кротости». То есть он является Правилom для каждого из нас: и вера, и подражатель веры, и кротость.

Но что такое кротость в наше время? кротость это нечто иное, нежели подразумевает человек, если он рассуждает на эту тему.

Почему очень трудно современному человеку рассуждать о кротости и жить по кротости? Потому, что успех в понятии современного человека это конечно же, деньги, слава, роскошная жизнь и, конечно же, человек стремится обладать этим. Но человек самообманывается. Не зря именно выбрал ту стезю святитель Николай, которое называется кротостью. Потому, что кротость, это состояние человеческого духа.

Кротость — это состояние человеческого духа, исходящего, когда человек ставит во главу угла своей жизни Бога, и тогда Бог поселяется в

сердце человека, делает этого человека кротким, т.е. благодетельным, милостивым, и, этот человек не просто скрывает в себе некую личину, которую нужно, действительно, скрыть, а человек показывает свою кротость во всем: в делах, в заботах, в милосердии и вообще по всей своей жизни.

Но, к сожалению, это именно чувство, в современном человеке и отсутствует. И еще один момент: это есть вера: Правило Веры! Действительно ли мы с вами по вере живем? Действительно ли мы исповедуем чистоту веры, которую исповедовал сам святитель Николай?

Вот поэтому-то святитель Николай и был Правилom Веры. Если каждый из нас будет именно этим Правилom Веры, то тогда и дети наши, и внуки наши, будут жить хорошо, и, мир, который окружает нас, будет благоустроен.

Будем же просить силы у Святителя Николая, который даровал бы нам и кротость, и правило веры. *(протоиерей Михаил Пономарев)*



Every time the Church celebrates the memory of the saint, then at the liturgy in the gospel reading, she brings to our attention the commandments of Christ about the beatitudes. And this is what I would like to draw your attention to today, on the day of the memory of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker, brothers and sisters beloved in Christ: why, at the beginning of these commandments, does the Lord bless spiritual poverty, that is, humility?

The answer to this question is contained in the words of the troparion in honor of St. Nicholas: “therefore thou hast achieved the heights by humility, riches by poverty.” From these words it is clear that the entire height of the moral Christian

life and all the riches of the grace of the Holy Spirit are acquired through humility. It is the basis of all our salvation. From this it is clear why the Lord placed the commandment of humility at the basis of all His beatitudes.

Without humility one cannot weep over sins, for how will a proud person weep over his sins when he does not recognize these sins in himself, always justifying himself and blaming others? Without humility one cannot be meek, for the proud do not forgive insults. Without humility one cannot hunger and thirst for the truth of Christ, for the proud one hungers and thirsts only for his own views as the truth, even if they are false. Without humility one cannot be merciful, for the proud are hard-hearted. Without humility one cannot have a pure heart, for pride is the repository of all wickedness and vices.

Without humility one cannot be a peacemaker either: pride not only does not contribute to peace, but it is the source of malice, enmity and all kinds of confusion among people. Without humility, one cannot take on oneself the feat of being persecuted for the truth of Christ, and even more so, one cannot endure reproach, exile, and any slander for the sake of Christ, for a proud person can be persecuted and endure all misfortunes, up to death, but only for the sake of his pride.

Thus, without humility one cannot take even a step towards accomplishing a truly Christian good deed, which, being based on humility, is accompanied by it and is distinguished by it as its most characteristic feature. The Lord testified to this truth in His Sermon on the Mount, not only by putting the commandment of humility in the first place, but also by those words of His, in which He commanded us to secretly give alms, prayer and fasting and do good deeds in such a way that our left hand would not know what the right one does

(*Matt. 6:3*). That's why the saints of God, those true disciples of Christ, tried to hide their good deeds from the eyes of others. Once St. Pimen the Great was asked what virtue is the highest. He said: "the one that is done secretly."

Bearing in mind the teaching of Christ on the significance of humility for the Christian life, knowing that the virtuous life of the saints was imbued with humility and was distinguished by it as its most essential property, let us, beloved, strive to have humility, without which we will never become true Christians.

Of course, the acquisition of humility is the most difficult of all feats. Often even the Lord Himself, sending us great trials and sorrows, cannot force us to humble ourselves. But, without humility we will never achieve salvation. Therefore, let us try to acquire it, at least at first in its simplest and most original form, that is, we will recognize our sinfulness and insignificance before God.

Only by reaching such a degree of humility will we be able to acquire its highest and most perfect form, which consists in the fact that we attribute all our good deeds not to our own strength, but to God, and together with the divine Psalmist from the bottom of our hearts we say: Not to us, Lord, not us, but give glory to your name (*Ps. 113:9*). Then we will be able to perfectly fulfill all the divine commandments.

When we acquire humility, we will learn from our own experience why the Lord in the first place in His commandments about the beatitudes put the commandment about spiritual poverty. Then we will become true followers of Christ, bearers of all Christian virtues, and in our life the words of Christ will be fulfilled: So let your light shine before men, as if they see your good deeds and glorify your Father, Who is in heaven (*Matt. 5, 16*) . Amen.

(*Abp. Seraphim (Sobolev)*)

“Beloved ones, love your church! Consider it your own, something near and dear to you, take care of it and support your parish priest in any way you can. It is difficult even for the strongest ones when they are alone, and it’s also much easier for a weak priest when he feels that he is among friends and feels their strong and loving support. Let your parish be this way, so that it may grow, develop, and blossom, which is what I wish for you with all my heart.”

Metropolitan Philaret (Voznesensky)

The rest of this sermon and other sermons by our hierarchs from ROCOR's first 100 years are available in "Grains of Wisdom and Piety," available here: (copy and paste):

<https://www.stinnocentpress.com/collections/rocor-centenary-publications>