



It is worth noticing that, after acquiring spiritual understanding, the defects and faults of one's neighbour begin to seem very slight and insignificant, as redeemed by the Savior and easily cured by repentance—those very faults and defects which seemed to the carnal understanding so big and serious. Evidently the carnal mind, being itself a plank, gives them this huge significance. The carnal mind sees in others sins that are not there at all.

Saint Ignatius Brianchaninov

29 May is the Sunday of the Samaritan Woman

Matins Gospel: John 20:1-10

Epistle: Acts 11:19-30

Gospel: John 4:5-42

Resurrectional Apolytikion:

Having learned the joyful proclamation of the Resurrection from the Angel, and having cast off the ancestral condemnation, the women disciples of the Lord spake to the Apostles exultantly: Death is despoiled and Christ God is risen, granting great mercy to the world.

Seasonal Kontakion:

Though You went down into the tomb, You destroyed Hades' power, and You rose the victor, Christ God, saying to the myrrh-bearing women, "Hail!" and granting peace to Your disciples, You who raise up the fallen.

Readings and saints for this week:

Monday, 30 May: Acts 12:12-17; John 8:42-51
Isaacius of Dalmatus; Macrina, grandmother of St. Basil the Great

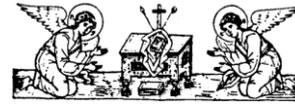
Tuesday, 31 May: Acts 12:25; 13:1-12; John 8:51-59
Martyr Hermias; Eusebius & Haralambos the Monk-martyrs

Wednesday, 1 June: Acts 13:13-24; John 6:5-14
Martyr Justin the Philosopher; Righteous Pyrrus

Thursday, 2 June: Acts 14:20-28; 15:1-4; John 9:39-10:9
Nicephorus, Abp. of Constantinople; Erasmos of Ochrid & his Companion Martyrs

Friday, 3 June: Acts 15:5-12; John 10:17-28
Martyrs Lucillian & Paul; Athanasios the Wonderworker

Saturday, 4 June: Hebrews 7:26-28; 8:1-2; John 10:1-9
Metrophanes Archbishop of Constantinople; Martha & Mary, Sisters of Lazarus



Evangelion

A Bulletin of Orthodox Christian Faith

29 May 2016

Living Water

Today the Church commemorates the Sunday of the Samaritan Woman. Saint John's Gospel tells us of the extraordinary conversation she had with Jesus at Jacob's Well in Samaria. Not only does Jesus Christ break through accepted Jewish practices by meeting with a woman and a Samaritan, but He reveals that He knew exactly what had been going on in this woman's past.

More fundamentally, however, Jesus Christ reveals to this woman her own deepest desires, and her thirst for God, and He Himself fulfils this thirst. He asks her for a drink of water, but she ends up realizing that He is the Living Water that she is longing for.

The Church gives us this Gospel account in the middle of the Easter season because we too are realizing our own thirst for the Living Water that only the Risen Christ can give us. This past Wednesday on mid-Pentecost we prayed: "Give to my thirsty soul to drink from the waters of true praise."

Like the Samaritan woman – whom the Church identifies as St Photini – we often do not realize our true need for God. We may even have become adept at lying to ourselves

about who we really are in the same way as she sought to cover up her shady past. A true encounter with the Risen Christ will involve acknowledging the truth of who we really are in order to be able to accept God's mercy and His overwhelming love.



He asks for water, who hung the earth upon the waters. He seeks water, who pours out springs and pools of water, as He wishes truly to draw her who is hunted by the warlike foe, and to quench with the water of life the thirst of her who is aflame with foul desires, as He alone is compassionate and loves mankind.

From Small Vespers for the Sunday of the Samaritan Woman

Imitate the Honeybee...

by Saint Paisios the Athonite

Some people tell me that they are scandalized because they see many things wrong in the Church. I tell them that if you ask a fly, "Are there any flowers in this area?" it will say, "I don't know about flowers, but over there in that heap of rubbish you can find all the filth you want." And it will go on to list all the unclean things it has been to.

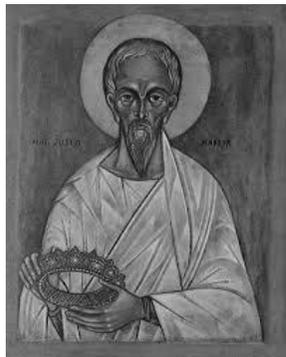
Now, if you ask a honeybee, "Have you seen any unclean things in this area?" it will reply, "Unclean things? No, I have not seen any; the place here is full of the most fragrant flowers." And it will go on to name all the flowers of the garden or the meadow.



You see, the fly only knows where the unclean things are, while the honeybee knows where the beautiful iris or hyacinth is.

As I have come to understand, some people resemble the honeybee and some resemble the fly. Those who resemble the fly seek to find evil in every circumstance and are preoccupied with it; they see no good anywhere. But those who resemble the honeybee only see the good in everything they see. The stupid person thinks

stupidly and takes everything in the wrong way, whereas the person who has good thoughts, no matter what he sees, no matter what you tell him, maintains a positive and good thought.



Saint Justin the Martyr

On Wednesday we commemorate Saint Justin the Martyr. He was born a pagan in the town of Shechem in Palestine in 103 and devoted his life to the search for the truth, investigating many different philosophical schools. One day, while he was walking on the beach, an old man came and spoke to him and told him about the prophets and the apostles who had learned about God not through their own wisdom, but through God's revelation of Himself. St Justin then read the Scriptures and became convinced of the Christian message. He was baptized and settled in

Rome where he defended the Christian doctrines against the pagan philosophers. There he was arrested and tried for being a Christian, something which he wholeheartedly admitted to before the Roman tribunal before being martyred in 167.

Who was Saint Photini?

The Samaritan woman whom we commemorate today is remembered in the Church as the Great Martyr Photini. She was baptized by the Apostles and, radically changing her way of life, she proclaimed the Good News of Jesus Christ in her own region of Samaria. She converted her four sisters and her two sons and they became tireless in preaching the Gospel. After the martyrdom of Saints Peter and Paul, Saint Photini travelled to Carthage and, together with her son Joses, helped to establish the Church there.



Saint Photini's other son, Victor, was in the service of the emperor and was ordered to root out the Christians in Galilee. However, instead of this, he preached the Gospel there. When the emperor heard this, he had him arrested and tortured, together with his brother.

When Saint Photini's two sons refused to renounce Christ despite three years of arrest and torture, the emperor ordered that Saint Photini be arrested. She was brutally tortured and finally martyred in the year 66. She is commemorated by the Church as "Equal to the Apostles."

As regards all the commandments given us by God, we have already received from Him power to keep them, so that we may neither feel discontented as though anything strange were demanded of us, nor be elated as though we paid more than was given us. And by this power – if we work rightly and fittingly – we fulfill in godly manner the life of virtue; but if we corrupt its workings we are carried away into vice. This is a definition of vice – an evil use, and one contrary to the command of the Lord, of things given us by God for good. Similarly the virtue required by God may be defined as the use of them with a good conscience according to the commands of the Lord.

This being so, we may say the same about love. Having received a commandment – to love God – we possess the power to love implanted in us at the moment that we were formed. The proof of this is not external, but anyone can learn it from oneself and within oneself. For by nature we desire beautiful things, though we differ as to what is supremely beautiful; and without being taught we have affection towards those near and dear to us, and we spontaneously show goodwill towards our benefactors.

Now what is more marvelous than the divine beauty? What thought has more charm than the magnificence of God?

Saint Basil the Great