

April 29, 2015 Sermon on the Sunday of the Myrrh-bearers

In the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit!

Today we celebrate the day of the Holy Myrrh-bearers. This is a day of faith and faithfulness, self-sacrifice and love. This is a day when reason steps back and the heart triumphs.

What would it seem that these holy women hoped for when they hurried early on Sunday morning to the cave where Christ was interred? They thought, “who could push aside the heavy stone for us?” ... but they had hope. Perhaps they themselves didn’t understand their hope. But, moved by this hope, they hurried to see one more time the One, Whom they loved with all their hearts.

And this hope did not disappoint them. The stone was already pushed aside from the cave and an angel clad in white announced to them that Christ was not there, that He had arisen and was waiting for them in Galilee.

It is possible to come to God through reason. This is a long and difficult journey. But it is possible to go through the heart. This is a quicker path. This kind of heartfelt faith does not waver. It has already given all of itself to the One in Whom it believes, to the One Whom it loves.

What motivated the Myrrh-bearing women? Love, of course. They went to the grave, unlike the male Apostles, who were suffering from thoughts only about what happened in the death of their teacher and not capable of anything except to suffer and be frightened. This boundless love sufficiently motivated and motivates all holy women. And not only the saints whom we can just find on the church calendar, but also all of those who quietly and humbly carry out their labors of faith and love in their own families and among all the people around them.

How many times do we hear complaints from modern women about their lives: that it does not satisfy them, that they are bored, that they need to change something (husband, country, kind of activity, and so forth)? How many examples there are when families are broken apart by such a situation, the children suffer, the women themselves suffer. And why is all this? It is because they do not have genuine love for the Savior, because they place their own interests first.

And it is just this boundless love for Christ that the Myrrh-bearing women had and all Christian women have, that imparts meaning to the seemingly insignificant moments of family life, at work, among friends, in church. It is precisely our attitude and with what we fill our actions and words that determines the value and meaning of our lives, and not at all, the circumstances and people surrounding us.

I urge all of our dear women to take to themselves the example of the holy Myrrh-bearers and to grow in hope, faith, and love for our Savior. Carry this love for Christ everywhere, wherever Divine Providence sends you. Let your Christian life be this kind of warm little fire, which is possible to touch and to be warmed by amidst the cold of the faithlessness and corruption of this life.

In conclusion, I want to offer words from the diary of the holy royal martyr Emperor of Russia, Alexander Feodorovich Romanov:

“There is an important labor that man can do for Christ, - this is what he could and should do in his own home. A man has his own part, important and serious, but the mother is the creator of the home. That is, how she lives imparts to the home its particular atmosphere. God comes to the children at first through her love. As it is said: “God, in order to become closer to all, created mothers”, - a beautiful thought. Motherly love personifies the love of God and it surrounds the life of a child with tenderness... A home is where the lamp continually shines, where words of love are continually spoken to Christ, where, from a young age, children learn that God loves them, where they learn to pray, barely beginning to babble. And, after many years, the memory of these sacred moments will live, illuminating the darkness with rays of light, inspiring in periods of disillusionment, opening the secret of victory in difficult battle, and the angel of God will help to overcome severe trials and to not fall into sin.”

May the Lord keep you, our dear women! We love you very much!

Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!