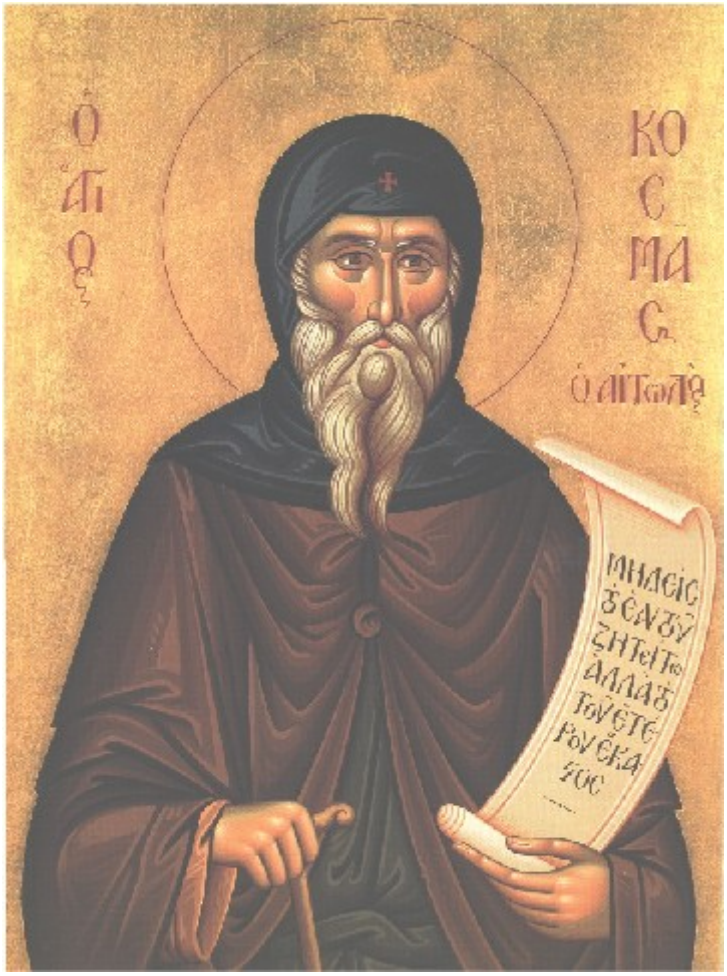
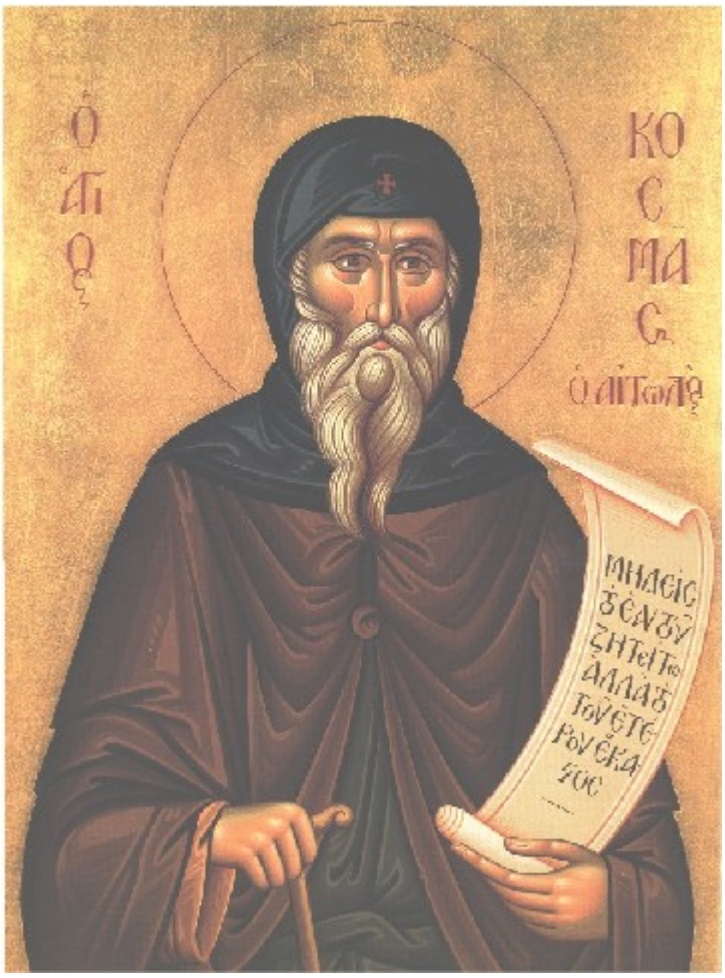
5 Απριλίου 2020

Selected passages from the teachings of Saint Kosmas

Ξένες γλώσσες / In English / Ορθόδοξη πίστη





St Kosmas the Aetolian

GOD

It is proper to begin our teaching with God, and when we finish it to thank God – not that I am worthy to mention and utter the name of God, but I am sure that God suffers me to do so through His great and infinite compassion.

God, the all-good and most merciful, my brethren, is one, and whoever says that there are many Gods is a devil. He is triune: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; yet one nature, one glory, one kingdom, one God. He is all light, all joy, all compassion, all love.

This All-holy Trinity we pious Orthodox Christians glorify and worship. He is the true God, and all other so-called gods are demons. And it is not we along that believe, glorify, and worship the Holy Trinity, but angels, archangels, and all the heavenly hosts, as numerous as the stars of the heavens and the grains of the sand of the sea unceasingly praise in hymns and worship and glorify this All-holy Trinity. Again, out of their love for the Holy Trinity men and women as numerous as the stars of

the heavens and the grains of the sand of the sea spilt their blood, and as many renounced the world and went to the deserts and led a life of spiritual endeavor, and still as many lived in the world with temperance and virginity, fasting, prayer, almsgiving and other practices; and all went to Paradise and rejoice forever.

LOVE

If we want to fare well in this life and to go to Paradise, and to call our God love and father, we must have two loves: the love for God and the love for our neighbor. It is natural for us to have these two loves, and contrary to nature not have them. Just as a swallow needs two wings in order to fly in the air, so we need these two loves, because without them we cannot be saved.

Let us have love for God and for our fellow men. Then God comes and brings us joy and implants the eternal life in our hearts, and we fare well in this life and also go to Paradise, there to rejoice forever.

Fortunate is the man who has these two loves in his heart, that for God and that for his brethren. He surely has God; and whoever has God has every blessing and does not bear to commit sin. Again, wretched is the man who does not have these two loves. Surely he has the devil and evil, and always sins. God, my brethren, asks us to have these two loves. As He Himself says in His Holy Gospel: “On these two commandments hang all the law and the Prophets.” Through these two loves all the Saints of our Church, men and women, attained sainthood and won Paradise. Whoever has blessed love, firstly for God and secondly for his fellow Christian, becomes worthy of receiving the Holy Trinity in his heart.

If you wish to be saved, seek no other thing here in this world as much as love.

Know my brethren that love has two characteristics, two gifts. One of them is to strengthen man in what is good and the other is to weaken him in what is evil. I have a loaf of bread to eat; you do not have. Love tells me: Do not eat it alone, give some to your brethren and you eat the rest. I have clothes; love tells me: Give one garment to your brother and you wear the other one. I open my mouth to accuse you, to tell you lies, to decieve you; but at once I remember love and it deadens my mouth, and does not allow me to tell you lies. I stretch out my hands to take what belongs to you, your money, all your possessions. Love does not allow me to take them. Do you see, my brethren, what gifts love has?

Those of you who earn your bread by means of your toil and sweat should rejoice, because that bread is blessed; and if you give a little of it as alms it is reckoned as

much. But those who live by means of injustice and grasping should mourn, for what you thus acquire is cursed; and if you give alms out of these they do not benefit you at all, being fire that consumes you.

The Martyrs won Paradise through their blood; the Ascetics, through their ascetic life. Now you, my brethren, who have children, how will you win Paradise? By means of hospitality, by giving to your brothers who are poor, blind, or lame.

HUMILITY

The Christian needs two wings in order to soar upward and attain Paradise: humility and love. When the first order of angels fell from angelic glory and became demons, the other nine orders humbled themselves and worshipped the All-Holy Trinity, and remained in their place and rejoice forever. We, too, my brethren, must reflect what an evil thing pride is – that it cast down the dcvil from angelic glory and he will always burn in Hades – and that humility kept the angels in Heaven, and they rejoice perpetually in the glory of the Holy Trinity. Let us then, my brethren, aviod pride, because it is the first daughter of the devil, is a path that leads to Hades; and let us have humility, because it is angelic, is a path that leads to Paradise.

CONFESSION

If you want cure your soul, you need four things. The first is to forgive your enemies. The second is to confess thoroughly. The third is to blame yourself. The fourth is to resolve to sin no more. If we wish to be saved, we must always blame ourselves and not attribute our wrong acts to others. And God, Who is most compassionate, will forgive us.

FASTING

We who are pious Christians must fast always, but easpecially on Wednesday, because the Lord was sold on that day, and on Friday, because He was crucified on that day. Similarly, it is our duty to fast during the Lent seasons, as the Holy Spirit illumined the holy Fathers of the Church to decree, in order to mortify the passions and humble the body. Moreover, if we limt the food we eat, life becomes easier for us. Fast according to your ability, pray according to your ability, give alms according to your ability, and always hold death before the eyes of your mind.

VIRGINITY

Just as we humans prefer gold to sliver, so the Lord indeed likes marriage, but likes virginity more, in order to show you that if you can preserve your viginity and become a monk, or if you are a woman a nun, you are fortunate and thrice blessed, you are free from worldly things, you are like an angel. However, if you want to preserve your virginity, you must put as the first foundation the non possesion-of-property (Aktemonsyne) and must discipline your body with fasts, prayers, vigils, and hardships in order to humble the flesh. Also, you must flee from the world... There is no other way for the monk to be saved except by withdrawing far from the world.

WOMAN

God created woman equal with man, not inferior.

My Christian, you must love your wife as your companion, not consider her as your slave, for she is a creature of God, just as you are. God was crucified for her as much as for you. You call God Father, she calls Him Father, too. Both of you have the same Faith, the same Baptism, the same Book of the Gospels, the same Holy Communion, the same Paradise to enjoy. God does not regard her as inferior to you.

KEEPING SUNDAY

Do not separate yourselves from Christ and from the Church. Do you hear the priest ringing the bells? Rise at once, wash yourselves, and go to church. Attend the Orthros (Matins) attentively and likewise the Divine Liturgy. We should not work or do business on Sunday. The profit that you gain on Sunday is curse... Keep Sunday as a day dedicated to God.

THE JESUS PRAYER -ALSO KNOWN AS “THE PRAYER OF THE HEART”

This prayer should never be absent from you: Lord Jesus Christ, Son and Logos of the living God, through the Theotokos and all the Saints, have mercy upon me, Thy sinful and unworthy servant.” (This is the actual Jesus Prayer: “O LORD JESUS CHRIST, SON OF GOD, HAVE MERCY UPON ME, A SINNER.”) Always say this prayer both with your mouth and with your mind, day and night, wherever you may be,

whether eating, walking, working, or sitting. Always meditate on it, as it benefits you a great deal., frees you here from every evil, delivers you there from eternal Hell, and renders you worthy of going to Paradise, our heavenly country.

MEDITATION ON DEATH

There is no better teacher than death.

Have death before your minds: the time when you will leave this unreal world and will go to the other one, which is eternal.

LIFE AFTER DEATH

We who are pious Christians must henceforth not weep for the dead like the impious and the unbelievers, who do not hope in the resurrection. This world, my brethren, is like a prison. When must man rejoice? When he enters the prison or when he is being liberated from the prison? It seems to me, when enters the prison he must weep and be sad, and when he comes out of the prison he must rejoice. Therefore, my brethren, do not grieve for the dead, but if you love them do what you can for their souls; offer liturgies, memorial services, fasts, prayers, alms.
(Editors notes: CHRIST IS RISEN! TRULY HE IS RISEN!)

TEACHING OF THE SCRIPTURES

Heed all the thoughts of the Holy Gospels, because they are all diamonds, treasures, joy, delight, eternal life. The existence of many churches neither preserves nor strengthens our faith to the proper extent and in the proper manner, if those who believe in God are not enlightened by the Old and the New Testament.

I have found the words and the commandments of Christ pure, holy, true, splendid, brighter than the sun; and whoever believes in Christ and calls Him God and lives in accordance with His teaching, contained in the Holy Gospels, is fortunate and thrice-blessed.

The Holy Spirit illumined firstly the holy Prophets, and they wrote the Divine Scripture; seondly, He illumined the holy Apostles; and thirdly, He has illumined the holy Fathers, and they have explained the books of our Church, in order that we may know how to conduct ourselves.

Our Faith has been made secure by wise and learned Saints, who both explained the Holy Scriptures precisely and have enlightened us through their divinely

inspired discourses.

Source: *Modern Orthodox Saints I, St. Cosmas Aitolos)., by (Dr.) Constantine Cavarnos., INSTITUTE FOR BYZANTINE AND MODERN GREEK STUDIES., Belmont, Massachusetts., pp.81-94.*