

Homily on the Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearing women (Metropolitan of Pisidia Sotirios)

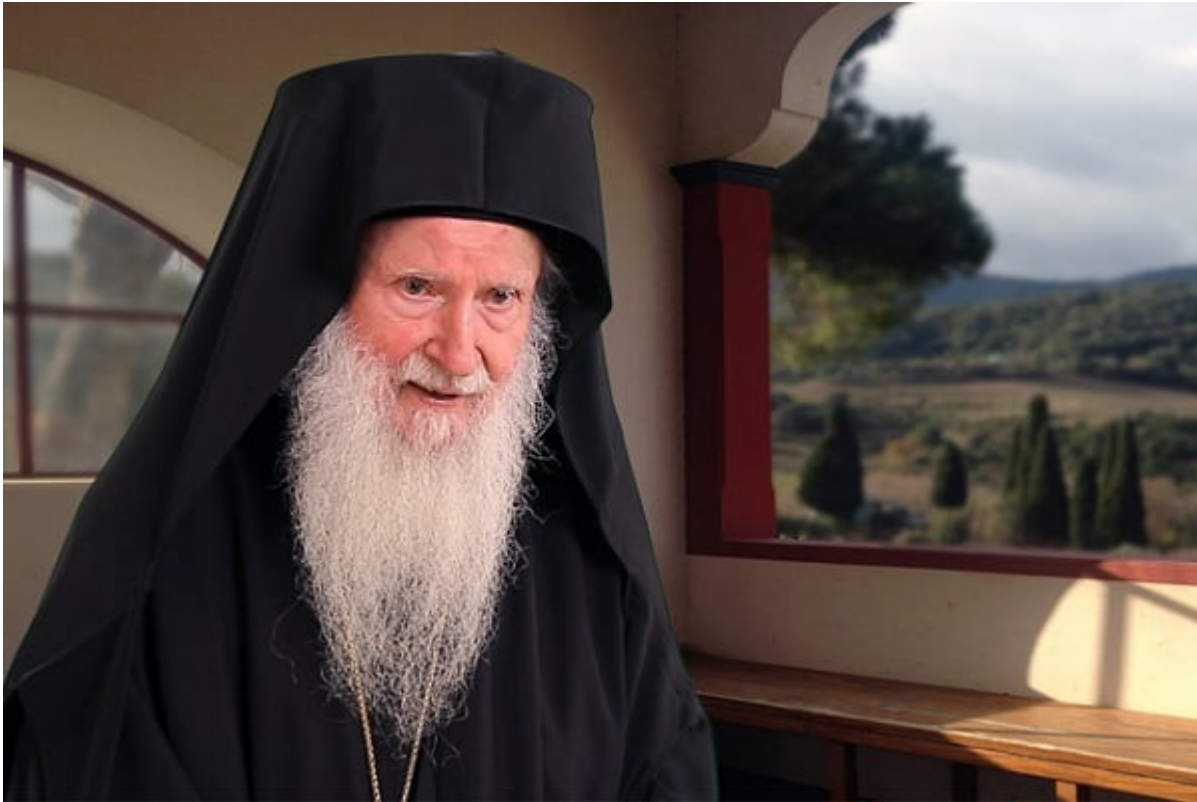
[Ξένες γλώσσες / In English](#)



When reading the Holy Gospels, one of the most striking things we see is that after the Lord's Resurrection, His Disciples were not the first to see Him. Instead, it was the women who had anointed Jesus' dead body with myrrh, who would receive the blessing to see the Lord first. These pious women, who remained faithful to Him since the beginning, kept the flame of devotion constantly burning in their hearts. They followed Jesus and the Twelve Apostles during their public ministry, and served them in the needs of daily life. St. Luke the Evangelist notes that the women who accompanied Jesus provided for His needs from what they had (see Luke 8:3). Some of them were wealthy, such as Joanna, the wife of Chuza, who was an official for King Herod.

What is most remarkable about the Myrrh-bearers is their dedicated love for Christ, which was constant. They were there from the start, and remained with Him always. They were not only there with Him when He was speaking, doing miracles and attracting crowds, but also when He was abandoned by everyone else. They were there when He was arrested and crucified on the Cross as a criminal. They

remained at the foot of the Cross, and stood by as He was taken down. They were there for His burial by Joseph and Nicodemus, and then returned to the tomb on Sunday morning to offer myrrh in their worship of Christ.



They would not allow fear or any threats to keep them away from the Lord. What a great example for all of us! To maintain our devotion to Christ to the very end, and to His Holy Body, the Church.

Sadly, sometimes there are many who have been with Christ in the Church for a long time, believing in Him and following Him, but are later separated from the Church. They can be clergy or laypeople, and it happens for a variety of reasons. What this reveals is that these people have not really understood who Christ is, or what the Church is. Some view the Church of Christ in a human way, as if it was just a club that people go to in order to see friends on a Sunday morning. If those "friends" stop coming to Church, they also do not come. They forget that the Church is where we go to meet Christ, Who is the best and most faithful friend we could ever have. What other friend is there who sacrificed for us, loves us and embraced the Cross for our salvation? It is Christ alone, Who also calls us His friends. Not only do we rejoice in our fellowship and conversation with Him, but we also unite with Him and commune with Him in the Holy Mysteries! Our Lord Jesus Christ waits for us in His Holy Church with love, to relieve us of our burdens. All hardship, pain, sorrow and anxiety are healed in His loving embrace, curing us of the anguish caused by our sins. We are nourished by His Holy Body and Blood,

and receive strength, peace of mind and the joy that enables us to continue to struggle towards the Heavenly Kingdom. If a person fails to realize this, then it will be easy for them to fall away for some frivolous reason. Perhaps they stay away because of a personal conflict with someone in the Church, it could even be their priest or bishop. They may also become jealous of another because they think they receive more honor or attention. It is painful to see brothers and sisters overcome by such things.

On the other side, when we see the steadfast love of the Myrrh-bearers to Christ, we are inspired. Even though we do not have Jesus Christ with us physically as He was then, we know that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). He Himself told us, "I will always be with you to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20). This constant living presence of the Lord among us comes through the Church, which the Lord Himself founded (Matthew 16:18), Himself being the Head (Ephesians 5:23), and "the Church is the Body of Christ" (Ephesians 1:23).

There have been countless women of great faith associated with the Resurrection of Christ and His Church through the centuries, even to today. They too are "myrrh-bearers," offering their service to the Church in many ways. This includes charity, catechism, missionary work and serving the needs of others. They know that whatever they do for the poor, hungry, sick, and the stranger, the Lord accepts it as an offering to Him. Just as the Resurrected Lord appeared to the Myrrh-bearers, so too will He be revealed in all His glory to call upon those who have loved Him, and remained united with Him through His Church, to enjoy His eternal blessing.

May God enlighten us all to understand the great truth in all of this. Amen.

NOTE: We do not know the names of all the pious women who accompanied Jesus from Galilee to Calvary, and brought their gifts to the Tomb that morning of the Resurrection. St. Luke the Evangelist writes that along with the Virgin Mother of the Lord there were many others who had come to adorn Him (see Luke 8:3). Of these, only seven are mentioned in the Holy Gospels:

St. Mary Magdalene, who was possessed by demons before being healed by the Lord. She followed Him with gratitude and devotion to the very end. St. Mark the Evangelist writes that after His Resurrection, Jesus first appeared to her (see Mark 16:9).

St. Mary, the wife of Alpheus and mother of St. James the Less, as he was called, in order to distinguish him from St. James the Greater, both Apostles.

St. Salome, wife of Zebedee and mother of the Apostles James and John.

St. Mary, wife of Cleopas. St. John the Evangelist call her “Jesus’ Mother’s Sister” (John 19:25). This is because her mother was the wife of the brother of St. Joachim, the father of the Theotokos)

St. Joanna, wife of Chuza, who was a Commissioner of King Herod.

Sts. Mary and Martha, the sisters of St. Lazarus, who was resurrected by the Lord.