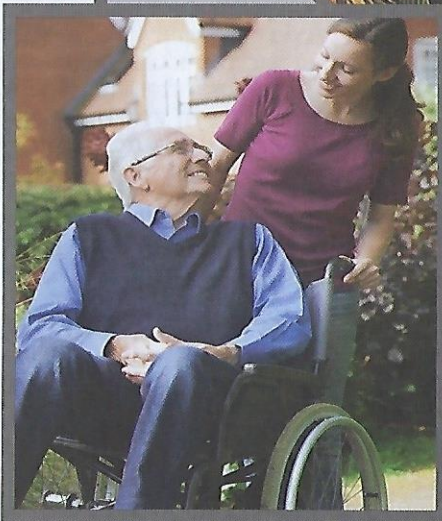
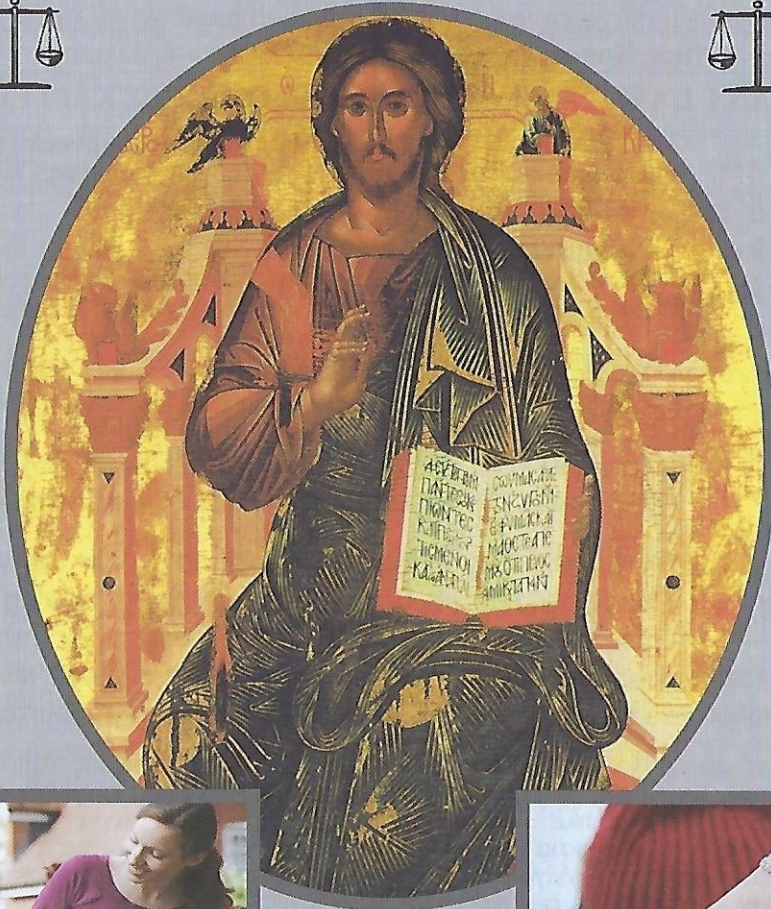


DIVINE JUDGMENT



MEAT-FARE SUNDAY

We are entering a pre-lenten time in which the Church gets us ready for the spiritual experience that should come in the Great Fast. Today's Gospel calls us to prepare for **DIVINE JUDGMENT**. There is a tremendous truth contained in the Lord's description of this day. It is the acknowledgement of Christ's Presence in this world; we must see Him in our fellow man, and once we see Him there, minister and love Him. How slow we have been to learn this lesson! How stubbornly we refuse to see Christ in the outcast around us.

But our Lord is crystal clear in His account. He says the nations of the world shall be gathered before His throne for judgment. He shall divide them into 2 groups. The King will say to those on His **RIGHT**, "Come, you blessed of my Father, and inherit the kingdom prepared for you . . . For I was hungry, thirsty, naked, sick, a stranger, in prison . . . and you cared for Me and helped Me." The righteous were surprised and said: "Lord, when did we see **YOU** hungry, thirsty, sick . . . and helped **You**?" And the Lord shall answer: ". . . inasmuch as you did it to the least of these My brethren, you have done it unto **ME**."

Then Christ went on to tell what happens to those on His **LEFT**. "Depart from me you cursed . . . For I was hungry, thirsty, naked, sick, in prison . . . and you did not help me." The group protests, saying they had never seen Christ in such need, for surely if they had seen Him they would have been more than willing to come to His aid. But the answer is: "Inasmuch as you did it not to the least of these My brethren, you did it not unto **ME**."

What a gauge we have here, for our evaluation as followers of Jesus. How quickly we can find out how high we score on Christ's scale of service and love. Yes, these two great commandments go together: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and all thy soul and with all thy mind . . . **AND** thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

"God is love," St. John proclaims. And it is only as we love that we serve Him. "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples," Christ said, "if you have love for one another."

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"Let the Christian consider well when he/she enters in the church that he/she is entering another heaven. That same majesty of God which is in heaven is also in his/her church, and on this account, we must enter with reverence and awe."

Κοντάκιον 'Ηχος α΄ .

Kontakion Tone 1st

Όταν ἔλθῃς ὁ Θεός, ἐπὶ γῆς μετὰ
δόξης, καὶ τρέμωσι τὰ σύμπαντα,
ποταμὸς δὲ τοῦ πυρὸς πρὸ τοῦ
Βήματος ἔλκη, καὶ βίβλοι ἀνοίγωνται,
καὶ τὰ κρυπτὰ δημοσιεύονται, τότε
ῥῦσαί με, ἐκ τοῦ πυρὸς τοῦ ἀσβέστου,
καὶ ἀξίωσον, ἐκ δεξιῶν σου μὲ στήναι,
Κριτὰ δικαιοῦτατε.

O God, when You come upon the
earth in glory, the whole world will
tremble. A river of fire will bring all
before Your Judgment Seat and the
books will be opened, and everything
in secret will become public. At that
time, deliver me from the fire which
never dies, and enable me to stand by
Your right hand, O Judge most just.