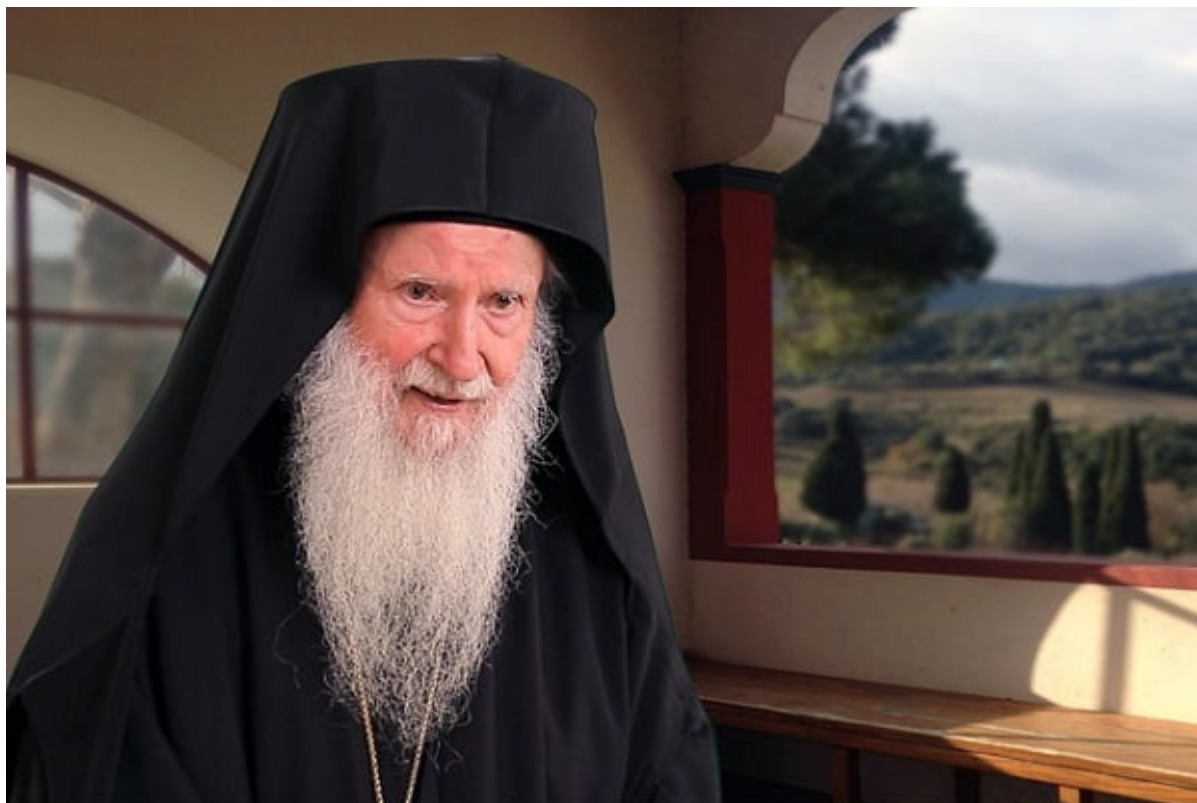


Sermon on the Apostolic Reading for the 10th Sunday of Luke (Galatians 3:23-29; 4:1-5) (Metropolitan of Pisidia Sotirios)

[Ξένες γλώσσες / In English](#)



In this selection from the Apostle Paul's Letter to the Galatians, he compares the spiritual state of a person who follows the Mosaic Law with the higher spiritual state a person rises to when they believe in Christ. Because from a spiritual point of view, we are babies who need to be taught until we reach a mature spiritual age. This "tutoring" was done by the Mosaic Law. Its purpose was to prepare the people for the coming of Christ in the world, so that they would be able to believe in Him. Now those who have known the Messiah Christ, have no need to live narrowly behind walls, abiding by the formal provisions of the Law. We are free now, as long as we believe in Christ as our Lord and God, are baptized and live according to His will.



The Apostle Paul then emphasizes the value of the Holy Baptism we received! “As many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (verse 27), he writes. Those who have received Christian Baptism, by faith in Christ as our Savior, are united with Christ. We are so close to Christ, as clothing to the body, which is perfectly fitted. After we become one with Christ, who is the Son of God, we also become God’s children with Him. God the Father, with His love, has adopted us. As the Apostle Paul writes elsewhere, the Holy Spirit gives us the courage to say to God: Abba, my Father! And the same Spirit of God assures our own spirit that we are God’s children. Since we are His children, we are Heirs of God, who shares in the divine gift with Christ (see Romans 8:15-17). The Apostle Peter adds: “You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people” (1 Peter 2:9).

The Apostle Paul emphasizes that this honor of the Lord is granted to everyone, be they man or woman, and to all races and social classes. “You are all one in Christ Jesus” (verse 28).

Have we appreciated, my brothers and sisters, how honorable a position Christ has put us in, only by our faith toward Him? This is what the holy Martyrs understood, such as the glorious Great Martyr Catherine, whom we celebrate today. She lived in a time when the idolatrous emperors of the Roman Empire persecuted Christians and, with harsh torture, demanded they renounce their faith in Christ! This was the case in 305 AD, in Alexandria (Egypt) during the reign of Maxentius. At the start, he

invited 150 idolatrous philosophers, orators and teachers to debate Catherine with the reasoned arguments of the ancient philosophers. But Saint Catherine, with a rich knowledge of these philosophies and the illumination of the Holy Spirit, not only defeated their arguments but also convinced them to renounce their idolatrous teachings and to believe in Christ. Maxentius, in his brutality makes threats of the most terrible torments. But the Saint prefers to suffer everything, to sacrifice her life for her love and faith in Christ! So did the other eleven million Holy Martyrs who were persecuted in the first three centuries of Christianity. Neither tortures, nor riches or human glory could shake the love and faith from the hearts of the Holy Martyrs, as we read in their lives. Their eyes were continuously looking towards heaven, to the everlasting joy of the kingdom of God, along with Christ, whom they constantly enjoy.

My brothers and sisters, the Apostle Paul declares to us that those who believe in Christ and live united with Him are given a most invaluable gift: "He raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:6). Is there another honor or glory greater than that? Let us take care in our lives to be found worthy of this honor. Amen.