

Spiritual Commentary on the Gospel Readings of the Days of the Great Lent by Father Louka Sidarous (3)

Tuesday of the First Week of Lent

Luke 12:41-50

"Then Peter said to Him, "Lord, do You speak this parable only to us, or to all people?"

42 And the Lord said, "Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his master will make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season? 43 Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. 44 Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has. 45 But if that servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and be drunk, 46 the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. 47 And that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. 48 But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.

49 "I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! 50 But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished!"

This gospel reading warns us of the conduct of the lazy servant in eating, drinking, and fulfilling the pleasures of the flesh. The reason for his behavior is that he ignored the arrival of his master. He said in his heart, my master is delaying his coming. His master disappeared from his vision, even from his heart and mind; and, here lies the danger.

My Master be present with me in my wakefulness and in my sleep.

My Master be before my eyes and fill my whole being wherever I go and whatever I do.

My Master, You never delay Your coming and You are never absent. You are the Omnipresent. You are always with us. Space cannot confine You and You are present at all times.

Therefore, my soul, in your fasting stop behaving like the lazy servant in eating, drinking and getting drunk with the cares of this life. You have a different food. "My food is to do the will of Him who sent me". Labor for the food that endures for everlasting life. Anticipate the coming of your Master and his reward is in his hand, an eternal reward. Labor diligently and with energy for the days are short and the Master is at the door.

Multiply your effort and increase your watchfulness lest He comes and finds you asleep, living a lax life. Await the Master's coming for you love Him and love His coming. For when He comes there will be an abundance of grace and goodness.

What about your fellow servants? What should you do with them? The lazy servant has acted with arrogance and superiority. He believed that he is not a servant and he fell in the pit of pride.

A servant should be humble. When he acts with humility, he is not doing anything out of the ordinary. Humility and poverty are fit for a servant. A servant should warn his fellow servants. My soul be kind to your fellow servants. A sinner should always find an excuse for other sinners, and not judge anyone.

If you have a stewardship over your fellow servants give them their portion of food in its due season. Every good gift comes down from heaven. Do not hold it back from anyone. It is rightfully theirs. Their nourishment is prepared for them by the Master. It is not you who provide but the Master.

Be energetic in serving others for you are a servant. Wash their feet so that the Master will reward you when He comes.

The conclusion of today's gospel states that the Lord came to send fire on the earth, and he wishes it to be kindled. There is no place for lukewarmness. There is no place for being cold in dealing with others. Let the fiery love be the foundation of our relationships.

There is no place for coldness and slackness in prayers. Let the fire be aflame in the heart so it burns the thorns of sins. Let the tears run endlessly. Let the fire of your love, my master- be my foundation and the power that propels me.

Give me a fiery conduct to do everything because of your love and to honor your name.

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