

## Chastity & Resurrection

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Today, the Holy Church commemorates the sinful woman who anointed the feet of Jesus with myrrh.

My beloved, we heard in hymns and in the Gospel passage the story of this woman. During the visit of Jesus to a Pharisee, a sinful woman suddenly entered the house. Under the eyes of everybody, this adulterous woman poured myrrh on Jesus, bowing before Him and wiping His feet with her glorious hair. But the disciples wondered, rightly thinking that there was a better way to use this myrrh. It would have been better to sell this myrrh and distribute its worth to the poor. This rightful question demands an answer. The Gospel passage ends with Judas leaving to deliver Jesus and sell Him, saying, "What will you give me if I deliver you my teacher and Master?"

This event implies an important matter for our life. It is the subject of divorce and wedding. We are in a wedding in which an adulteress enters and a disciple exits. We are in a wedding not with an earthly groom but with the heavenly One. All the hymns we heard compare this repentant woman, who was previously adulterous, and Judas. This woman came in to be wedded and the disciple exited to file a divorce.

The Book of Genesis answers the question, "Why are we created?" The first word of the book of the Acts of God (Genesis) says: "In the beginning God created." Why did He create? We all know the story of Creation and Exodus in the Old Testament, and how great was the sacrifice of God and how He entered History. And we know how man oscillated between love and adultery, between faithfulness with the covenant of God and disloyalty. That's why we heard many times the prophets Isaiah and Hosea calling the people of the Old Testament adulterous because they preferred and went after another god. They loved statutes when God took them as His bride.

Why did God create us? The Holy Bible says in the end of the Book of Revelation, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come" (Revelation 22:17 AV). The bride is every human soul. This bride with the Holy Spirit calls in the Spirit, the Lord Jesus Christ, saying, "Come." This is the purpose of creation. This is the purpose of every living human being. Marriage or celibacy is the same. Christ does not care so much if we are married or if we remain celibate. If we get married, Christ desires that we marry and unite ourselves, our bride, and our children to Him, who is our true Groom. And if we remain celibate, our wedding would be a heavenly one. Everyone comes into being and grows from childhood to become a true and pure bride of Christ. We can unite ourselves to the heavenly Christ whether we are married or celibate. There are many paths in life, but this wedding is unique, and is for everyone. Uniting ourselves to the Lord Jesus is the purpose of all creation. This is the purpose of every man. Today, Holy Wednesday, we meditate on this wedding, as we come closer to the great Paschal event.

What is Pascha? It is leaving behind a life of adultery and entering a life of chastity, a life of betrayal to a life of repentance, of separation like Judas to a life of return, like this woman who repented, to Christ. What is beautiful in this passage is that for her unity to Christ, this woman used the things that she uses for other desires. She bowed, her hair down, and anointed His feet with myrrh. These tools that she used for fornication, she utilized for her real heavenly wedding.

Yes, my beloved, when God wants to unite with us, He does not ask us to abandon either the world, or duties, money, or children. We sin when we do not use all these mediums for Christ. We are pure and chaste if we use them for Him.

Did you get married for Christ? Then you are chaste. Did you remain celibate to satisfy yourself? Then you are a fornicator. Man, or his chastity, is defined by the goals set for his projects and choices in life. This defines if he is adulterous or chaste. A marriage is pure when it is for Christ, and a life of celibacy is not pure when it is not for Christ.

Are you well educated? You are a fornicator if you use your education for selfish purposes. You are educated to serve Christ, or to help your fellow human being, in love. In this way you are chaste. If however you use science for your selfish purposes you are adulterous and a consumer, and not a user. Everything in life is pure. God did not make anything impure, but the misuse of human beings spoils the purity of things. For the hymn that we heard today says that when the sinful woman was offering myrrh, the disciple was bargaining with the law-transgressors. One offered her hair to wipe His feet, and

the other to take the thirty pieces of silver. One was delivered and became the bride of Christ and the other became an evil servant. Great then is repentance and evil is negligence .

Repentance my beloved demands great labor. Sacrificial offering demands great labor. Great is the labor for man and for his neighbor, that is for Christ, and evil is negligence. For negligence is selfishness

Great then is repentance and evil is negligence.  
Amen.