



On the Commemoration of Sts. Cyprian and Justina (2 October)

Do We Bear the Name of God?*



Sts. Cyprian and Justina had already received Our Lord Jesus Christ as their God and Savior, had been Baptized in His Name, and, the one as Bishop, the other as Deaconess, were working as missionaries, proclaiming the mighty acts of the living God.

Just like the God-inspired Paul, they were set forth by Divine Grace as “chosen vessels” “to bear the Name” of our Lord “before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel” (Acts 9:15), which eventually led them to their glorious martyrdom.

It is a great honor and blessing for a person to “bear the Name of God” before men, to confess the good confession of His Holy Faith, to disseminate the evangelical preaching of the Name of the Triune God, to strive in the good struggle of the Truth and Life in Christ.

It is a great honor, but also a great responsibility. To bear something means that one carries it as a weight and burden, perhaps suffering difficulties, taking pains, concentrating one’s attention, dedicating oneself to one’s work, being in continual watchfulness.

To bear the Name of the Lord is therefore a work of the highest responsibility and a difficult mission. And this is so, since to bear the Name of Christ means bearing the Cross for his Name, being tried in patience and thanksgiving for the sake of Him Who was crucified for us, being crucified with Him, in order to dwell with Him eternally.

Our Lord and God Jesus Christ was and is a King, but a crucified King. His glory is His Cross, His Passion. All of these things indicate that the nature of our journey on earth is one of crucifixion and resurrection, until we enter into the unending glory and blessedness of the Heavenly Kingdom.

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But the question arises: Do we, today, bear the Name of God consciously and consistently? Do we firmly uphold in word and deed the confession of our Holy Orthodox Faith, so that the Divine good pleasure is expressed to us, as it was to the “Angel of the Church in Pergamon”?

These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges; I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan’s seat is; and thou holdest fast My Name, and hast not denied My Faith (Revelation 2:12-13).

The Name of God is the most precious thing that God, in His love for mankind, has entrusted to us: it is our wealth beyond measure; it is our life; it is the great dignity which we received through Holy Baptism. Are we conscious of our Divine calling? “Ye were called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord” (I Corinthians 1:9).

Those who bear the Trinitarian Name of the True God first and foremost fully live this fellowship with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. By means of the holy life of Grace within the Orthodox Church, we slake the thirst of our souls, are made to drink the Spirit of God, and become deified:

As the Father is the spring (Jeremiah 2:13), and the Son is called a river (Psalm 64:10, *Septuaginta*), we are said to drink the Spirit; for it is written: “we are all made to drink one Spirit” (I Corinthians 12:13). Being made to drink the Spirit, we drink Christ: “For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.” (I Corinthians 10:4) (St. Athanasios the Great, *Bibliotheke ton Ellenon Pateron kai Ekklesiastikon Syngrapheon*, Vol. XXXIII, pp. 107-108).

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The glorious Martyrs Cyprian and Justina remind us once again, on their Feast Day, of this great honor and responsibility. Let

us continually examine our conscience to see if we bear the Name of God. And let us take care, calling on their holy intercessions, in a spirit of humility and struggle, worthily to bear the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, so that we might gain eternal life. Amen.

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*Source: *Άγιος Κυπριανός*, No. 232 (September-October 1989), pp. 89-90.