



■ † Sunday of the Myrrh-bearers

Feeling and Reasoning*
“We must combine the two”

Epistle

(Acts 6:1-7)

In those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them and said, “It is not fitting that we should leave the Word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brethren, look ye out among you for seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word.” And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip and Prochorus and Nicanor, and Timon and Parmenas and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch, whom they set before the apostles. And when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. And the Word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly, and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

Gospel

(St Mark 15: 43- 16: 8)

Joseph of Arimathea, an honorable council member who also was waiting for the Kingdom of God, came and went in boldly unto Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. And Pilate wondered if He were already dead; and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether He had

been any while dead. And when he learned it from the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph. And Joseph bought fine linen, and took Him down and wrapped Him in the linen. And he laid Him in a sepulcher which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulcher. And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James beheld where He was laid. And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint Him. And very early in the morning on the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulcher at the rising of the sun. And they said among themselves, “Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulcher?” And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away, for it was very large. And entering into the sepulcher, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were frightened. And he said unto them, “Be not afraid. Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. Behold the place where they laid Him. But go your way. Tell His disciples and Peter that He goeth before you into Galilee. There shall ye see Him, as He said unto you.” And they went out quickly and fled from the sepulcher, for they trembled and were amazed; neither said they any thing to any man, for they were afraid.

The tireless women! They would not give sleep to their eyes nor slumber to their eyelids (cf. Ps. 131:4) until they found their Beloved One!

The men, on the other hand, as it were dragged their feet: they went to the tomb, saw it empty, and remained in confusion about what it could mean, since they did not see the Lord.

Does this mean that they had less love than the women? No, here was a reasoning love which feared mak-



ing a mistake owing to the high price of this love and its object. When they also saw and touched Him, then each of them, not with his tongue, like Thomas, but with his heart confessed: "My Lord and my God!" (St. John 20:28), and no longer could anything separate them from the Lord.

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The Myrrh-bearers and the Apostles are an image of the two sides of our life: **feeling** and **reasoning**.

Without feeling, life is not life. **Without reasoning**, life is blind and bears little sound fruit, much of which is wasted. We must combine the two.

Let **feeling** go forward and rouse us to action; let **reason** determine the time, place, method and, in general, the practical implementation of what the heart prompts us to do.

Within, the **heart** comes first, but in practical application, **reason** comes first.

When our feelings are exercised in discerning good and evil, then perhaps it will be possible to rely on the **heart** alone.

Just as shoots, flowers, and fruits grow from a living tree, likewise goodness alone begins to emerge from the **heart**, and will be **rationally** merged into the course our life.

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(*) St. Theophan the Recluse, *Thoughts for Each Day of the Year According to the Daily Church Readings from the Word of God*.