



*May 15, 2009*

**HIS EMINENCE METROPOLITAN ALEXIOS` REFLECTIONS ON THE  
SAMARITAN WOMAN**

My dearly beloved in the Lord,

"The hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such the Father seeks to worship Him." (John 4:23).

As we have said before, the Sundays after Pascha, like the Sundays of Great Lent, have an important lesson to teach us. The Gospel story of the Samaritan Woman is significant because it tells us many important things about the transformative power of repentance, our salvation, a living encounter with Christ and even His two natures.

In the Gospel, we see that our Lord is a human being, like all of us, and that at the sixth hour, or midday, when the disciples left to get food in a nearby town, He is tired, thirsty and hungry. At the well, our Lord asked the Samaritan Woman for drink. As a man and a Jew, it was scandalous for Him to speak with a woman, especially a woman like her, a Samaritan with a questionable reputation.

Because, as God, our Lord also knows the present, past and future, so He knew that the Samaritan Woman had already been married five times and that at present she is living in sin with yet another man. Their conversation becomes spiritual, as He tells her of the "living water" that He can offer her, which will satisfy all her spiritual needs, and then He reveals to her that He is the promised Messiah. It is through Jesus Christ that, like her, we receive what is necessary for our salvation and for eternal life.

We may think of her as the first "evangelist," for the Gospel tells us that "... many of the Samaritans in that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman, who testified `He told me all that I ever did.` " (John 4:39) In Greek sermons from the fourth to the fourteenth centuries she is called "apostle" and "evangelist."

After our Lord's Resurrection, she was baptized and given the name Photini, which means "the enlightened one" and continued her apostolic ministry begun on the day she met the Lord. She preached in many places, including Carthage and Smyrna in Asia Minor, where she was martyred. She had five daughters and two sons, all of whom also became martyrs.

I pray that we too like the Samaritan Woman may bring others to encounter Christ in His Holy Church and receive the Living Water of salvation and eternal life!

ALEXIOS

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