

The Prologue - Tuesday November 7/20, 2018

THE HOLY MARTYR HIERON AND HIS COMPANIONS

Compassion, purpose – they make us ready for life's decisive moments.

Link: <http://westserbdio.org/en/prologue/686-november-7?tmpl=component&print=1&page=>

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Read the prologue every day.



33 martyrs of Militine

Summary for November 7.

THE HOLY MARTYR HIERON AND HIS COMPANIONS

The holy martyr Hieron was martyred at the very end of the third century. What can we glean from his life? Blessed Nikolai will help you in this task – read his description of the saint, and especially his meditation and homily regarding him. It is very good for us to read the Prologue because Bishop Nikolai has a skill that we all need. He is able to apply the lives of the holy saints to his life and our life. When you are reading the Prologue or Scriptures or anything holy, you should be looking for things that will help you to become better. Perhaps you need to be encouraged. Perhaps you need to be chastised. Perhaps you need more understanding. Perhaps you need to compare yourself to someone holy and see some way in which you can make changes. Perhaps you will see your sins and someone who is not holy, and you will have a new resolve to do better.

The holy martyr had a compassionate heart. We see this in that he took care of his aged mother. There is *no sin that you should fear so much* as a heart that is cold, indifferent, lacking in compassion. Our modern age encourages in us such a heart. Learn to recognize the signs. When you are distracted by worldly cares, you have a cold heart. Your heart is not

compassionate. Perhaps you not see it this way, but if you look more closely you will see that it is true. A distracted heart does not see the needs of those around him, or even if he does, they do not resonate in his heart and bring him to action. It is certain that the martyr Hieron's compassionate heart prepared him for his later ascetical feat of martyrdom. You may not be called to physical martyrdom, but you are daily called to a spiritual martyrdom (the word "martyr" means "witness"). The best preparation for this martyrdom is a compassionate heart.

Another virtue of the martyr that should jump off the page is that he believed in something and is willing to dedicate his life to it (What do you believe in so much that you will dedicate your life to it? The authentic answer to this question is not what you say, but what you do). Hieron could have become a soldier, and more or less hidden out as a Christian. He would have been forced to make compromises, but he would've been alive. Countless hundreds and thousands of men did this. Most people in the world do this. They compromise their Christian faith with their worldly ambition or because following it to letter would cause great inconvenience for them and their family or their workplace or among their friends.

The most striking lesson from the life of the holy martyr is the lamentable fate of one of his kinsmen. There is no way to improve upon blessed Nikolai's words so they are quoted here in full:

"There are decisive moments in life upon which a man's eternal life or eternal death depend. We do not know when this decisive moment will come for us--perhaps today--and because of this we must be unceasingly vigilant. Victor, a kinsman of St. Hieron, was arrested with him. On the day before their torture, Victor, in terror of the impending tortures, went to the prison warden and begged him to take his name off the list of the condemned and release him, promising to give him his land. The warden removed his name and released him. However, upon returning home, Victor died of natural causes in the same moment that St. Hieron and his companions died in torments for Christ. Thus, Victor vainly missed the decisive moment: he lost his land, his friends and both his earthly and heavenly life. In that same decisive moment, Hieron gained all.

"No one vied for Victor's body, while many vied for Hieron's body. When Christians sought the head of Hieron from the eparch, he asked as much gold for it as it weighed. Chrysanthus, a wealthy and devout man, paid that much gold for the martyr's honorable head. Anthony and Matronian hid one of St. Hieron's severed hands and brought it to Hieron's mother, the blind Stratonika. She took her son's hand and wept bitterly: 'O my beloved son, I gave birth to you whole, and now I have only one part of you!'"

Use the link, and read with humility and longing and learn something that will make you better today:

<http://westserbdio.org/en/prologue/686-november-7?tmpl=component&print=1&page=>

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