



” Do you want to be made well?”

On Friday, people jogging on the street wearing special sports gear or those walking their pets on Broadview would have been terrified by S's screaming and cursing. That is how she came to us on Friday. This time it was not us who caused her distress. She was carrying it with her. She disturbed everybody, passers by, people visiting the mission, volunteers, and staff. Nobody was left indifferent, including the pets. Her confession was honest: "I hate everybody, including the pets." She said it with deep anger, leaving no place for arguing because she did not care: "I do not care", she would scream. However, her public confession was not complete. A homeless guy who moved in the neighborhood a couple of days before confronted her: "Young lady watch your language in front of a priest". "I ain't no young lady. I need to get it out of my chest."

After having said this, she did try to "calm down". She even started to eat. She has visited us before, causing trouble, but I had never seen her eating like that. She is very thin, skin and bones. She would accept cigarettes and coffee, but not food. "I have only one vice...smoking", she confesses. "I don't need anything else."

As she was eating, she dropped food on her, and she was offered a napkin, but she refused it. "I don't care about myself," she yelled in anger. "I hate myself; I am disgusted with myself..." Her yelling pierced the whole neighbourhood. Now her confession was complete.

This was the last cry before she kind of calmed down. After that, she started spelling the bad words she wanted to say, so that people couldn't understand what she was saying. By the end of the day, she fell asleep on what could be described as a little 2" by 4" concrete wall. Br Luke was observing how comfortable she looked sleeping on that tiny space. Nobody else did it before. What happened at night with her, we don't know. "That's why I sleep during the day because at night they don't leave me alone".

At the mission, we often come across such confessions of one's hate for themselves. But never with such intensity, with such anger, with so much truth and with so much belief and need to confess it. One could have imagined her drown within her own anger if she did not get it out.

Lately, within the community, formal confession has diminished while the informal ones, on the street or around the table, have increased. People speak about serious things from their lives with an urgency, at times aloud, looking not for hope, but for forgiveness. It feels like the end of the world is coming and they don't want to leave before confessing their suffering. It was the experience of this week, to have people come to the mission directly from hell. That's what T.

told me when I asked him how he was doing: "I just came out of hell". And he described to me what that world looked like, when taken over by addictions and people who do the work of the evil one. "They are existential vampires. They lend you money and at the end they suck everything from you. They are everywhere in the neighborhood and follow you everywhere. I've been clean for some time now, after coming out of the hospital. If you want to pray for something, pray for me so that I may not be taken back ... Do you think people can get stuck in hell? "

The answer took us in front of the icon of the resurrection. T. was surprised to hear that Christ conquered death. He stayed that morning with us in the chapel and sang "Christ is risen!"

On the street, it feels like 38 years would be a good compromise if at the end of them recovery would happen. Most of the time people don't last so long and nobody asks them if they want to get well but rather how to make them more captive to the hate that they feel for themselves and for others; how to humiliate and shame them even more. However, it is not them who are stuck in hell, but those who hate themselves in silence. Those who do not confess the hate they have for their own soul. Those who do not want to be made well because they do not believe that there is such great forgiveness for the sins they have committed. It is this lack of energy that hell is relying on to bring about its destruction: the lack of faith that comes from the soul who does not want to be made well.

"But Jesus answered them, "My Father is working still, and I am working." (Jn 5:17)

The question of being made well is addressed to all of us. What are we going to say? It is the real question that challenges the honesty of the heart. It is the question we forget to ask ourselves; it is the question that we don't dare to ask people like S. because we are afraid of the answer, whatever that answer might be. However, the Father is working until now and so does the Son. We are not done with creation yet. Whatever is touched by sin in us, wounded and twisted, is brought within the light of the resurrection through time. We are not left the way we are now. Sick, or less healthy, with more and less purity of heart, we are all in the hands of the Creator who brings us up to see and fall in love with the beauty of His face.

The public confession of S. is the voice of the world that today hates itself in silence for the crimes that it has committed publicly. Her confession broke the silence that keeps the sinner unrepenting. We pray that God would ask her: "Do you want to be made well?" for us all to partake fully in His resurrection. Which means, as Laura said, to be free to live eternally starting today.

"My soul yearns for you in the night, my spirit within me earnestly seeks you. O Lord our God, other lords besides you have ruled over us, but we acknowledge your name alone. Your dead shall live, their corpses shall rise. O dwellers in the dust, awake and sing for joy! For your dew is a radiant dew, and the earth will give birth to those long dead." (Reading -V Ode Is 26:9, 13, 19)

Mission church collections of 1 Sunday : April 30 2023, Donations \$200, Candle collections \$22.50



"Sir, I have no man ..."

Community life
Br Luke stories:

Someone poorer than myself

Sometimes at the mission you have one long conversation that seems like it goes nowhere and that may be the main fruit of your day. The other day, the mission door person called me out of prayer to talk to someone who needed help with a "legal issue." I

found this person lingering around the garbage cans outside. A slight guy covered in soot, bewildered with a lost stare. I had noticed him when I had entered but felt unable to approach him. He began asking for a lawyer but the next hour and a half are about himself and his past. He shows me his hands that he has taped up himself with electrical tape to cover burn marks he received trying to put out a battery fire in his storage locker where he had been staying since he had been evicted. "All my stuff was there. All my tools. They took everything" he says "I've lost everything. I don't want to call the police. They won't listen to me. I've seen them take people's bikes because they were stolen. I have a record for assault. I've been off the street 3 years but now I'm homeless. I'm going to go on a shooting rampage." He says this last sentence, watching me closely to see my reaction. What became evident was that he didn't really want help to regain his things, at least not from me. Maybe he knew that the people ripping him off had a better case than he was letting on. Maybe I didn't convince him as someone who could be an effective ally in this pursuit. Who knows exactly what the state of things was. It was fairly obvious though that what he wanted was not solutions or resources. Nor was it someone to share in his helplessness. His desires were much more deep than that, quite bottomless, actually. He wanted someone to be present to him who was MORE helpless than him, someone he was capable of wounding and absorbing all the bitterness and alienation he had experienced. someone who could exorcize the deep spell of powerlessness and hopelessness that shrouded him. It was so clear what his thirst was for, his real thirst. "So many of my friends have died" he said at one point staring off forlornly, "thanks for listening."

The mask is off

One day last week I wandered out to the steps to get some fresh air at the end of tea time. Maybe I had a intimation that someone was coming to meet me. And there she was coming up the steps. A woman I had never seen before who seemed rough and maybe a little bit crazy. She didn't

want much from us only a napkin and to share what she had been seeing around her. And perhaps to receive a confirmation that she was not crazy.

She had been living in the hotels that have been turned into shelters by the city and received training in the highly touted "harm reduction" programs in the cities. She obviously had not had an easy life and was in a position to gain from an association with either program. But something in her could not get behind them and she was repulsed by what she had seen. "More people die in the hotels [from drugs] and the harm reduction centers than anywhere else," she says. "I did the trainings [for harm reduction] the people doing them are all there for the money. They are teaching people to push the needles with the drugs into the peoples arms if they can't do it themselves. It's not right, right? Am I crazy?"

a new normal

A volunteer comes to clean the church for holy week. At tea break she recounts how her children had asked her to attend a function for a family member at a local church but she, taking a stand, had told them that she didn't want to go. "Now I want to do some things for me" she says. Having spent the morning watching her activities closely: scrubbing the church rugs on her hands and knees, doing dishes, cleaning silver pots, I am confused that this qualifies somehow as "doing things for me." Her family tells her it is not normal to do these things...it is definitely not normal.



**Reflection on
psalm 11, verse 1
May 9, 2023
07:30**

By Fr Roberto

May 8 - 14

Tuesday	8:30 am 7:30 pm	Morning Prayer Psalms Study – via zoom	Wednesday	4:00 pm 6:30 pm	Vespers Divine Liturgy
Thursday	8:30 am 12:30 pm 2:00 pm	Paschal Hours Paschal Hours Paschal Hours	Friday	7:00 am 12:30pm 2:00pm	Divine Liturgy Paschal Hours Paschal Hours
Saturday	9:00am	Paschal Hours	Sunday	7:00 am 8:30 am	Orthros Divine Liturgy



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We are an apostolate of the ecumenical patriarchate "Mother Church of Christ's poor" under
the Omophorion of Metropolitan Gregory of Nyssa

St. Silouan Chapel, May 7, 2023

5 of 5

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