

God bless our Church!



The Children's Word is a weekly bulletin for Orthodox Christian young people. Copyright 2018 Alexandra Houck.  
Email is orthodoxchildrensword (at) gmail.com. Find it each week at myocn.net.

# The Children's Word

"Let the little children come to me, and do not forbid them, for to such is the Kingdom of Heaven." Mark 10:14

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## Don't be a hypocrite!

**Do you know what a hypocrite is?** A hypocrite is somebody who pretends (in a bad way!). A hypocrite might act holy and faithful on the outside, but on the inside, he is mean and hateful.



Today, we hear about being a hypocrite in the epistle *and* the Gospel reading.

In the Gospel reading, we hear a story like lots of stories about Jesus in the Bible. It's the story of Christ healing a paralytic, somebody who couldn't walk. The man was sick, lying on a bed, and he wanted to walk again. Our Lord told the man, "Your sins are forgiven!"

Well, some religious leaders (who looked holy on the outside) didn't like that. They grumbled about Jesus and complained to themselves. But Jesus said, "Why do you speak evil in your hearts?" He knew that they were pretending to be faithful people. Then, Jesus healed the man to show them He really did have the power—to heal and to forgive!

These men were hypocrites. They were pretending to be faithful, but they thought all kinds of unfaithful thoughts. In the epistle reading, Saint Paul writes, "Let love be without hypocrisy." That means, when you love God and love each other, don't pretend! Love on the outside *and* on the inside!

# WORD SEARCH

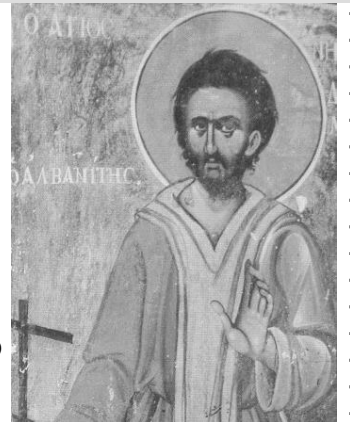
Can you find these words in the jumble?

- ALBANIA
- VITHKUQI
- FORGIVE
- HYPOCRITE
- MOUNT ATHOS
- NIKODEMOS
- PRETEND
- SAINTS

S D N R K X E A G T S S M K D  
 T G B I K O L A T K O H X H Q  
 N L Y T K B R F H H B A Y K C  
 I V S N A O P F T F H U K P U  
 A T H N T T D A E V I G R O F  
 S Q I M Z Z T E K C Q Z T F C  
 C A D B P N F M M B F O U H Q  
 N R X N U D Y V E O J V T H K  
 D G R O E Y O X B Y S I J L W  
 L K M B B T V N Z Q M T S D G  
 Q I G I O S E C A V Z H B X E  
 G U O D T G N R L O B K O D J  
 Z Z N P Q M T P P N D U F N J  
 I H Y P O C R I T E T Q T N O  
 I I U W D C N Y I H S I I V L

## SAINT NIKODEMOS OF ALBANIA AND MOUNT ATHOS

**Have you ever made a bad mistake?** We can always say we are sorry for our bad mistakes. But sometimes we can fix them and make them right. If you make a mess in the kitchen, you can clean it up, right?



This week we celebrate a saint who made a much worse mistake than that, but he wanted to fix it just the same. Nikodemos was born in Vithkuqi, Albania. He was a faithful Christian as a child, and he grew up and had lots of children. Once, he got angry at the Orthodox Church, because he didn't agree with her teachings. He got so mad, that he decided to turn against the Church. He decided to stop being a Christian, and he became Muslim! Even more, he wanted all his children to become Muslim too.

Well, his oldest son wouldn't do that. He left home and went to the holy place of Mount Athos, where monks live and worship God together. Nikodemos was still mad, and followed his son so he could punish him. But when he got there, he realized he had done a terrible thing. He asked God to forgive him. Nikodemos became a monk and grew closer and closer to God.

Later, Nikodemos wanted to fix his terrible mistake. He went back to Albania and showed everyone that he was a Christian again. The Muslim judge had him sentenced to death, but now Nikodemos is a saint of our Church, and our Lord welcomed him to be with Him in heaven!

**We celebrate St. Nikodemos this Wednesday, July 11th (July 24, OC).**

## WHAT'S IN AN ICON?

This Wednesday we celebrate two saints with the name Nikodemos. They both became monks on the holy Mount Athos. (You can see Mount Athos in the background of these two icons!)

