



▪ The work of a true educator

Eight Year Old Myrto And Her Wise Teacher

Remember Myrto, a charming little girl. She developed acute leukemia. With unparalleled silence and patience she braved the most aggressive treatments given to her, with a sweet expression constantly lighting up her pale little face.



The more she patiently endured, the more her parents broke down, and together with their hopes they gradually lost the last traces of their faith. They were not particularly religious to begin with, but some small seed was in them.

They had sent her to a good school. She had a teacher that adored her. Before going to sleep, Myrto would always make the sign of the Cross, saying: "O Cross of Christ, save us by Thy power," as her teacher, Paraskeve, had taught her.

"Why do you cross yourself?" her mother would ask.

"So that Christ will give me strength," she replied. "That's how Ms. Paraskeve taught us at school."

"Wouldn't it be better to ask Him to heal you?"

"I don't need to, since He gives me strength and joy!"

Her parents did not insist. They didn't understand much anyway.

As Myrto's illness progressed, however, they began to blame God. But they could not blame their child, who continued to cross herself and say prayers.

Myrto died at eight years old, asking her mother to say the

“Our Father,” as she had no strength left. Letting go of her doll, she crossed her arms over her chest and asked for the prayer.

Her mother could not refuse. She said the prayer between her sobs. She left aside the logic of arguments and proofs, of narrow-mindedness and reasoning, and entered into the world of her child.

Together with the tears in her eyes, faith welled up in her heart.

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This true story, apart from being deeply moving, makes one think. We see that God uses different ways to draw people who are indifferent or negatively disposed to the faith closer to Him. Even by the death of a small child, as harsh or unjust as that may seem to us. God acts from the perspective of eternity.

As for Ms. Paraskeve, Myrto’s teacher, how inspiring is her example! She planted in the soul of her young student the seed of faith in Christ. And the seed sprouted and grew into a tree of faith—a faith that had the power to sustain the little girl in moments of pain, even in the face of death.

Indeed, how great is the work of a true educator!



Source: “*Syndesmos*” No. 529 (May 2018), Kalamata, p. 139. Translated from the Greek.