

## The Good Thief in Paradise



The Children's Word is a weekly bulletin for Orthodox Christian young people. Copyright 2020 Alexandra Houck.  
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# 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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## Growing strong roots



**Have you ever looked at a tree,** after it has fallen down? Sometimes we forget how deep the roots of a tree are. One tree expert says that they can grow as much as 20 feet below ground! That's taller than your house! We don't see the roots underground. But roots are so important, aren't they? They keep the whole tree standing up.

Without strong roots, a tree would fall over, just like that.

Today we hear the Gospel story about the person who plants seeds. Then we hear about what happens to these seeds. Let's think about some of these seeds—the ones that fall on rock. Those ones are those who, "when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away."

Sometimes when we are in church, or in church school, or with our church friends, we are happy to listen. We are happy to hear about God, and are ready to do what God tells us! But then when we are tempted to do something wrong, we forget about all that, and we fall away from God.

Do you remember about the roots? We have to have strong roots to stand up, and not fall over! We can grow strong roots by practicing good works. We can grow strong roots by praying to God as much as we can. We can grow strong roots by staying close to Christ and His Church.

# WORD SEARCH

Can you find these words in the jumble?

FORGIVENESS  
HUMBLE  
JESUS CHRIST  
MISTAKES  
PRAYER  
ROOTS  
SOWER  
STRONG  
THIEF

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

## THE HOLY THIEF GOD FORGIVES A SINNER!

**Think back to Holy Week.**

Do you remember the story of Christ on the Cross? Do you remember how Christ was nailed to a Cross, along with two thieves? Even though our Lord was perfect, even though He hadn't done anything wrong, He was punished along with two awful thieves.



But those two thieves were very different! One of them made fun of Jesus. The other one asked Jesus to forgive him. And our Lord did forgive him. He forgave that good thief, and gave him the best gift ever! Christ told the good thief, "Truly, today you will be with Me in paradise."

One of our wonderful saints (Saint John of San Francisco) once wrote something about that good thief. He said that he must have looked at himself, and then he must have looked at Christ on the Cross. When the thief looked at himself, he remembered that he had done lots of wrong things. But when he looked at Christ, he knew that Christ was perfect. He knew that Christ had done nothing wrong. He compared himself to Jesus, and all he could do was ask Him to forgive him!

We can do that too! When we think about Jesus, we know that He is perfect. When we think about ourselves, we know we have made lots of mistakes. Then, all we can do is ask God to forgive us!

**We celebrate the Good Thief tomorrow, October 12th.**

## What's in an icon?

Here is an icon of the Good Thief. Did you know he is a saint in our Church?

What is this saint carrying in his arms?

The beautiful trees in the background remind us that he is in paradise!

