

The phrase that the Apostle uses here is “everything and in everything Christ”. In other words, the person of God doesn’t make distinctions, since he is dispassionate: he doesn’t distinguish the man from the woman, the rich from the poor, the Hellene from the foreigner, the one speaking his own tongue from the one speaking another language, the virtuous from the immoral person. All of them he lovingly embraces like a More spacious mother, because from his heart and from experience he knows that God came for all people to be saved without distinction, and to know the truth (1 Tim. 2:4), and that the conversion of each person may be both sudden and radical, whereas the unknown time of death excludes every loud-mouthed certainty. His heart is a living Church which contains all the indigent people of the earth, and grieves with the perspective that some may be lost.

In such a “Paulian” spirit the saint of our days, Porphyrios of Kavsokalyvia, penetratingly could see beyond and behind the deceptive phenomena of the hearts of men, and would say that “we are one also with the people who are not in the Church. Everything is eros for Christ”!

Archimandrite E. T

SUNDAY, JANUARY 15, 2017 12TH SUNDAY OF LUKE, *Paul of Thebes, John the Hut-Dweller, Pansophios the Martyr of Alexandria*

TONE OF THE WEEK *Plagal of the First Tone*

EOTHINON : **Eighth Eothinon**

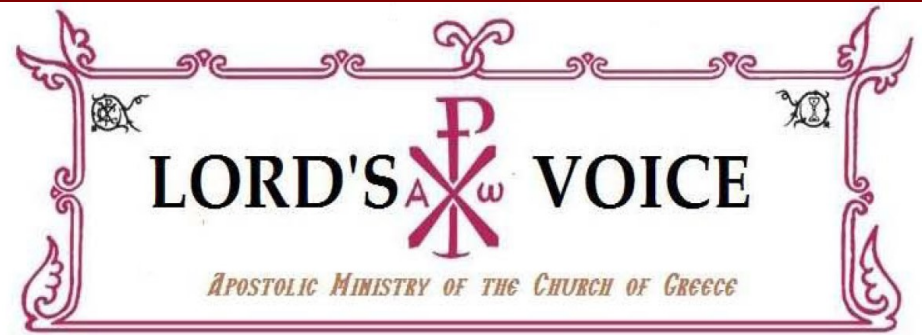
EPISTLE: *St. Paul’s Letter to the Colossians 3:4-11*

GOSPEL: *Luke 17:12-19*

NEXT SUNDAY, JANUARY 22, 2017 15TH SUNDAY OF LUKE, *Timothy the Apostle of the 70, The Righteous Martyr Anastasius of Persia, Joseph the Sanctified*

EPISTLE: *St. Paul’s First Letter to Timothy 4:9-15*

GOSPEL: *Luke 19:1-10*



65TH YEAR

January 15 2017

PAMPHLET # 3 (3320)

RENEWAL IN CHRIST

In today’s Epistle reading, my beloved brethren, the Apostle Paul briefly and clearly describes the characteristics of the person renewed in Christ. The Divine Grace gives new life to the Christian, initially hidden together with Christ, but when the believer makes known his disposition to God to follow Him in his life, Christ reveals Himself in the life and works of this person and glorifies him.

The pathology of man

In each person is hidden under an infinite number of versions, as many, as all the people upon the earth, the triple evil, in the form of three capital passions, that is, of loving to rule, of avarice and of pleasure-loving. Each person presents also a different “clinical” image of this triple combination. The Apostle advises that we utilize the Grace in Christ, a gift of our Baptism, and for us to be deadened in a life-giving manner. In other words, not for us to uproot, but for us to transfigure our passions, furthermore he mentions some: fornication, impurity, enslavement to evil, wicked desire, wrath, anger, wickedness, blasphemy foul speech, falsehood and greed, which he furthermore

St. Paul's Letter to the Colossians 3:4-11

Prokeimenon. Mode Plagal 1: You, O Lord, shall keep us and preserve us

Verse: Save me, O Lord, for the godly man has failed..

BRETHREN, when Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. In these you once walked, when you lived in them. But now put them all away; anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all.

considers idolatry. All the passions, consequently also the passions which the apostolic text is mentioning, are mixed together and contain one another. The one leads to the other and the person being unhappy. Ends up in a pitiable but also dangerous condition spiritually.

It's a fact that also in our days, the condition in a person's heart has not changed. It functions always in the same manner and, regarding greed, one could say today that what we call crisis is probably a crisis "in our tastes", as someone aptly mentions, our greed is being tried more, in other words, our wolverine idolatry. This refers either to persons, things and various goods or to our own self, where, in our good life, far from the ascetical character of Orthodoxy, we move selfishly and centrifugally admiring ourselves, we slip constantly more and more into the abyss of perdition.

"Wrath" of God?

In a human manner of speaking, the Apostle uses this expression wanting to chasten the Colossians, but through these also, the Christians of all centuries. God, being dispassionate, does not get wrathful. He is love. The unrepentant person however, is wrathful against himself and against God. He apostasies against both, and mistreats both of them. He systematically rejects God's love and is miserable. That we are baptized, chrismated and we often possibly don't partake of the immaculate mysteries, it cannot function, if we don't undertake a systematic struggle against the flesh, the secular train of thought and the demonic attacks. The lewd and problematic manner of our life, has become our second nature. The grace, consequently of the mysteries (sacraments), is not activated for our healing and cure, if we don't want to cooperate with it, in other words, together with Christ. It remains inactive!

For this reason also, the Apostle uses the verb "cast off", in other words, always with the help of Christ, take off, throw off from over you and from in you, your old self. The battle with the old man is so dramatic, many times, that the struggle reminds us of birth pains or, even better, the separation of Siamese brothers!

Despite these things, if God sees in a person, a spirit of repentance and a disposition of cooperation with Him, He hastens and undertakes the more difficult part of the struggle, and together with the temptations the outcome, the solution, the comfort and consolation comes. Thus in our life, the psalm verse is verified "we went through fire and water and you took us out unto refreshment" (65:12).

With Christ as garment

The more a person struggles for himself to retreat, to cleanse his disposition, keeping the commandments of Christ, "a perfect medicine" according to our Fathers and exercising himself in the virtues, "he quenches" his individual, his egotism and progressively his person dawns in Christ, that is Christ Himself reveals Himself in his soul, body and in his works. The in the image is renewed and he progressively resembles God.