

with His Body. He left to us the heritage of His body and blood, urging us to "do thus in order to remember me", meaning the repetition of the Mystical Supper, the first Divine Liturgy which He performed upon the earth, on the night of Holy Thursday. Thus, in every Divine Liturgy, the Bishop and the Priests, successors of the Apostle Peter and of the other Disciples, commune, under the form of bread and of wine, the entire resurrected Christ, His body and His blood, from Christ Himself, whereas from their hands, the lay members of the ecclesiastical gathering commune.

In every Divine Liturgy we live the transfiguration of Christ. The holy Altar Table is aflame as Mount Tabor, and just as then the Disciples saw the uncreated Light of Christ outside their body with their physical eyes, strengthened by the divine Grace, something incomparably superior occurs now: the heart of those humble liturgists and those being liturgized becomes a flaming Mount Tabor and the transfigured Christ comes into their heart, transfiguring the believer. Henceforth, in us, the light of Christ enters in, and our heart lives from now already, the kingdom of God, as much as, of course, we cultivate, according to the Apostle Peter, the calling which we received from Christ, with ascesis, keeping His commandments thus that "the entrance into the eternal kingdom shall be granted to us" (2 Peter 1:11). Amen.

Archim. E. T.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 6, 2017 *Transfiguration of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*

TONE OF THE WEEK : *Grave Tone*

EOTHINON : *Luke 9:28-36 Orthros Gospel*

EPISTLE READING: *St. Peter's Second Universal Letter 1:10-19*

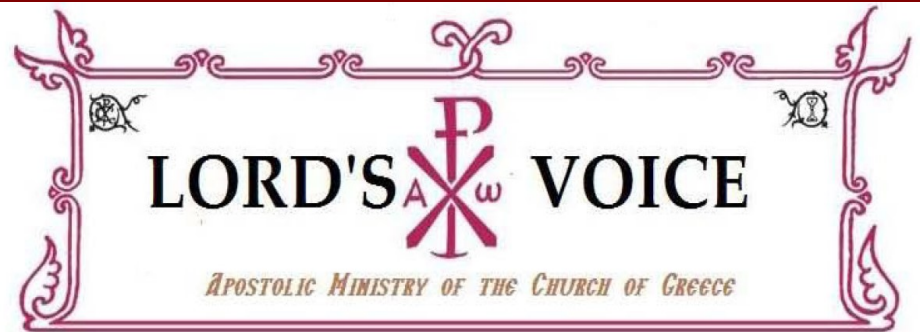
GOSPEL READING: *Matthew 17:1-9*

NEXT SUNDAY, AUGUST 13, 2017 10TH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW

Maximus the Confessor, Apodosis of the Transfiguration, Our Righteous Fathers Sergius, Stephanus, Castor and Palamonus, Dorotheus, Abba of Gaza, Tikhon of Zadonsk

EPISTLE READING: *St. Peter's First Letter to the Corinthians 4:9-16*

GOSPEL READING: *Matthew 17:14-23*



65TH YEAR

AUGUST 6 2017

PAMPHLET # 32 (3349)

LIGHT-FIGURED AND LIGHTBEARING CHRISTIANS

The Apostle Peter from the Second Catholic Epistle from which we read today's passage, was one of the three disciples of Christ, together with James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who ascended to Mount Tabor and admired, partook and were altered by His glorious Transfiguration. More precisely, the three disciples were transfigured by the grace of the Holy Spirit and were able, without their sense of vision being harmed, to see, to be amazed and to enjoy Christ, in the glory of His Godhead. They also heard the voice of the Father which witnessed about Jesus that He is His beloved Son in Whom He is pleased. This was an experience which sealed their life.

Dedicated to Christ down to the ends of the earth

A little while before the supernatural experience of his co-transfiguration with Christ, Peter falls into the triple denial "I do not know the man", he mourns bitterly and repents throughout his whole life, which he seals also with his martyrdom in the outskirts of Rome. Thus, he is a precise and infallible example of repentance and dedication to the Lord for the Christians of all later years..

St. Peter's Second Universal Letter 1:10-19

BRETHREN, be more zealous to confirm your call and election, for if you do this you will never fall; so there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Therefore I intend always to remind you of these things, though you know them and are established in the truth that you have. I think it right, as long as I am in this body, to arouse you by way of reminder, since I know that the putting off of my body will be soon, as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. And I will see to it that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things.

For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For when he received honor and glory from God the Father and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased," we heard this voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain. And we have the prophetic word made more sure. You will do well to pay attention to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

The purpose, of course, of the Transfiguration of Christ is referred to also in the related dismissal hymn: "so that when they see you crucified, on the one hand, they will understand the passion to be voluntary, while, on the other hand, they can preach to the world that you truly are the Father's effulgence".

Christ foreknowing that the Disciples would be shaken – as weak people – seeing Him in a wretched condition hanging on the cross, and leaving His last breath there, for the sake of all sinners, as a sinful person, the sinless Godman, wanted, earlier on, to reveal Himself and His glory to them. Out of love for them, He

also wanted to make them by grace, partakers of this glory. The Father presents His Son to the Disciples, in the light of the Holy Spirit. And it is the Son that leads us forth, "takes" us to the Father, "we have access", as we say. So with His will, He voluntarily forbore the cross and the dishonorable death upon the cross.

Experience of the uncreated light

The day of the Transfiguration, a day surnamed with the uncreated light of Christ, of the light of the Resurrection and of the light of our baptism, of all Orthodox Christians, is inscribed in the heart of the Disciples and of Peter, and now comprises the basis of his preaching and of his spiritual course, as also of the rest of the Disciples. He proclaims the indescribable joy of his companionship with Christ which defeats death, even though it awaits him in a little, as the Lord Himself revealed to him, he toils to live worthily of God's benefactions and urges the believers to do the same thing, to be careful of their life, so that they can unobstructedly enter into the kingdom of God.

That Christ is the Son of God and resurrected from the dead, exists and is presented as a truth present in Peter's preaching. He does not speak abstractly about some ideas, but just as he was an eyewitness and listener himself of many events, among which also, was that of the divine Transfiguration, he knows existentially-inside him-that death has been defeated and its agony can no longer overcome us. And precisely on account of these events, and not of some abstract theories, he is now ready to become a martyr and to go to the life that surpasses death.

A noetic Tabor and Divine Liturgy

Christ, leaving from the earth, as a visible physical presence, continues to be present among us, God invisibly present