

This is the ethos of a liturgized person

Our age, brethren, is an especially critical period in Man's history, an age of dreadful upheavals. Things that were self evident in other ages and importantly firm things, upon which Man has been formulated, are entering the furnace of the New Age and tend to comprise "equally exchangeable solutions". The sense of man's god-likeness seems to be vanishing from our "leaders" and from all those who seem to be playing a protagonistic role in the final directions of the Worldwide Vessel.

The Christians, nevertheless, know that the Christ of Paul awaits in the end to close the ages. Love in person, is closing History and for this reason, we ought as liturgized Christians, with a feverish, diligent and enthusiastic rhythm, to exercise the virtues and to keep the Gospel with self denial, not having anything else, "except Jesus alone", preparing ourselves for this meeting.

Archim. E. T.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 20, 201, 11TH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW, *Samuel the Prophet, Holy Martyr Luke of Bouleutos, Afterfeast of the Dormition of our Most Holy Lady the Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary, Stephen, First King of Hungary, Hierotheos, Bishop of Hungary, Oswin the Martyr, King of Deira*

TONE OF THE WEEK : *Tone Two*

EOTHINON *Eleventh Orthros Gospel*

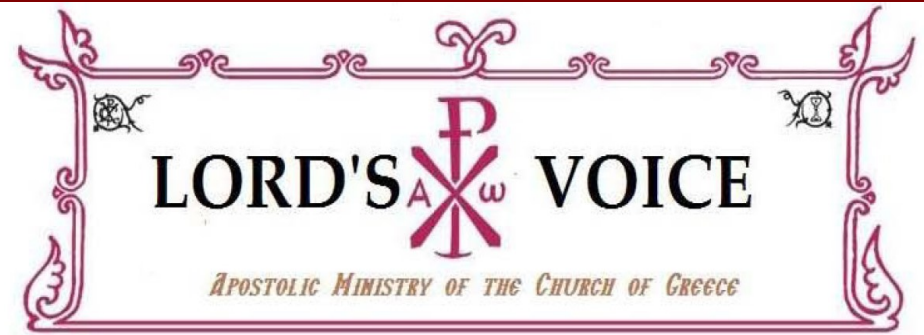
EPISTLE READING: *St. Peter's First Letter to the Corinthians 9:2-12*

GOSPEL READING: *Matthew 18: 23 - 35*

NEXT SUNDAY, AUGUST 27, 2017 12TH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW, *Pimen the Great, Holy Martyr Phanurius , Anthousa the Martyr, Monica, Poimen of Palestine, Hosisos the Confessor, Liverios, Pope of Rome.*

EPISTLE READING: *St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 6:10-17*

GOSPEL READING: *Matthew 19: 16 - 26*



65TH YEAR

AUGUST 20 2017

PAMPHLET # 34 (3351)

THE CHRISTIAN'S SELF DENAIL

In today's passage from the First Epistle to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul poses an issue of self denial from the viewpoint of the pastors, directly answering the accusations of those who, misinterpreting him, didn't consider him equal in value to the other apostles, because, aside from other things, he renounced his lawful rights, as regards his upkeep.

The Corinthians

First of all the Church itself of Corinth is the seal of his pastoral work and the spiritual fruit of Paul himself, since he led them to Christ, he gave birth to them in Christ. Precisely this seal proves his apostolic quality. He was enlisted to impart Christ to the people all over the earth, in a multitude of difficulties and indescribable trials, he, an apostle coming from the "gentiles", and this was one more reason for them to look at him in disbelief, but also the reason for him to strive so that his ministry would be preserved blameless, refusing even the lawful rights of his food and upkeep.

Thus, both he, as well as Barnabas work, in order to provide for themselves, rejecting their rights to have the members of the Church provide for them, as occurs with the other apostles, since

ST. PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS 9:2-12

Brethren, you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. This is my defense to those who would examine me. Do we not have the right to our food and drink? Do we not have the right to be accompanied by a sister as wife, as the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working for a living? Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard without eating any of its fruit? Who tends a flock without getting some of the milk? Do I say this on human authority? Does not the law say the same? For it is written in the law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain." Is it for oxen that God is concerned? Does he not speak entirely for our sake? It was written for our sake, because the plowman should plow in hope and the thresher thresh in hope of a share in the crop. If we have sown spiritual good among you, is it too much if we reap your material benefits? If others share this rightful claim upon you, do not we still more? Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ.

Paul and Barnabas were toiling for them spiritually. They also refuse to have a Christian woman, a sister in Christ, accompany them, for her to minister to them.

Rejecting our "rights"

At a first glance, it seems excessive for someone to refuse things which are blameless, which they have the right for, and which would offer them some comfort, so that the neighbor could feel comfortable, "for his thought" as we say. Deep down however, this is not a quirk or a pride, which can also occur. Furthermore many types of such behaviors occur in the ecclesiastical area today. Here we are dealing with something else: an exceptional pastoral sensitivity and discernment of the great Apostle. Precisely as, although a Christian has the comfort to eat meat, he may not do it, so that another Christian who was formerly an idolater would not be fought by his thought, at merely the site, he combines the completely allowed meat with the eating the food sacrificed to idols in his previous life, before he came to know Christ.

So it happens, moving leniently towards my neighbor, that I become strict with myself, opening an area in my heart in order to house this neighbor. This leniency presupposes strictness with my own self, so for this reason also, it brings a result. The leniency of the indolent and pleasure loving person is another kind, which wants to please others, himself doing the same things as them, in which case no one is benefitted, and different is the leniency which the person has, who has become bone thin from asceticism and exudes the scent of a faster, in order to "contain" his neighbor. The difference is basic. These are two different types of existence: on the one hand, I am living selfishly, narcissistically, interested in the opinion of the world, and on the other hand, I am living for God whom I encounter in each neighbor - image of His.

Furthermore, didn't the Lord do the same thing? He was condemned voluntarily as the worst of sinners, the Sinless one, in order to save all people, which means that He loaded Himself with all our sins and iniquities, in order to "contain" us inside Him.

For-giveness [Containing with, in Greek] and Divine Liturgy

The par excellence "place" of revealing this manner of existence is the Divine Eucharist, where we are embodied in Christ partaking in His own existence. Christ becomes the joy that places a positive polarity on our sadness and alters it into joy which comforts and renews our neighbor, because it is His own joy. And this joy "no one takes from us", no one is able to deprive us of it, except we ourselves from our own self, if due to lack of attention we are defiled by the soot of haughtiness.

There are people who hurt without protesting. Others, who express their pain. Others, who don't pay any attention to their own sadness in order to be at the disposal of their neighbor. This joy that they offer, is returned to them many times over, and subsequently they also multiply their unseen toils for the sake of their suffering fellow man. Others, who pray in their secret room for all people and many times they renounce their "right" also for man's so natural night time rest.