

The divine fatherhood which we all seek

Christ is “the habitation of human eros”, as Saint Nicholas Cabasilas calls Him. All of us are seeking such a paternal embrace, beloved brethren. Our Christ constantly is waiting and does not leave from His obligations, because His mouth is the only infallible one.

One moment of deep attention and prayer is needed, into the depths of our own self, to dive deep into the center of our insufficiency and egotism, without rejecting them, in order to find, each one of us, the other lost center. For all of us to see, and each one individually, to what degree we have left God for other gods - here the defilement of the flesh and of the spirit stands, which today’s Epistle passage hints at- and for us to mourn wailing for our wretchedness. The attention and prayer of the mind which is crying out, just like the women ready to give birth (See Rom. 8:22 and Jn. 16:21) shakes the heavens, and has as a beneficial result for the anemic contemporary man, from every viewpoint, the finding of the consolation of Christ.

Archim. E. T.

SUNDAY, , OCTOBER 1, 2017 2ND SUNDAY OF LUKE *The Holy Protection of the Theotokos, Ananias, Apostle of the 70, Romanos the Melodist, John Koukouzelis the Psalti*

TONE OF THE WEEK : *Plagal of the Fourth Tone*

EOETHINON *Sixth Orthros Gospel*

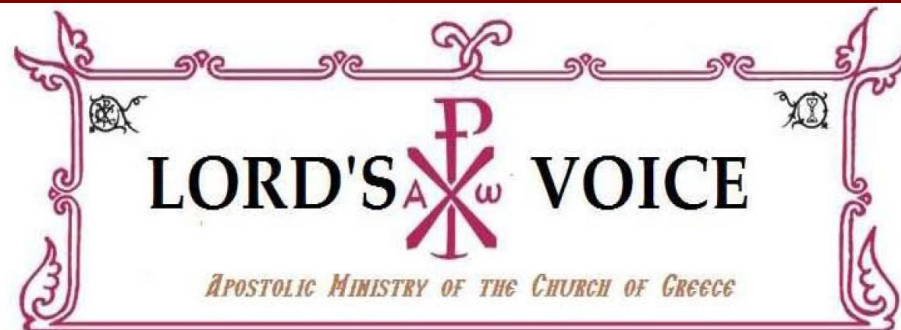
EPISTLE READING: *St. Paul’s Second Letter to the Corinthians 6:16-18; 7:1*

GOSPEL READING: *Luke 6:31-36*

NEXT SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2017 3RD SUNDAY OF LUKE, *Pelagia the Righteous, Pelagia the Virgin-martyr of Antioch, Taisia the Harlot of Egypt, Phillip, Bishop of Gortyna*

EPISTLE READING: *St. Paul’s Second Letter to the Corinthians 9:6-11*

GOSPEL READING: *Luke 7:11-16*



65TH YEAR

OCTOBER 1 2017

PAMPHLET # 40 (3357)

APPARENT AND HIDDEN IDOLATRY

Matters in Corinth, my beloved brethren, were difficult, because they were contesting the authority of the Apostle Paul, either from the idolaters, or – mainly from the followers of Apollos, or from the Jewish synagogue, which was slandering him. So he sends, with his close colleague Titus, this second Epistle also for a second time - the first time the Epistle was lost-regulating important matters, one of which is also how the believers deal with the idolaters.

Attention is necessary

The Apostle urges the believers attention to not have close relations with the idolaters, because they are unsuitable things, but furthermore they are in danger as well, because they have not yet become very firm in faith.

Not only Paul, but also the other Saints and Fathers, urged the believers to not have close dealings with unbelievers, believers of other beliefs or believers of other religions, not because the others are obligatorily evil by disposition, but because the new believers, as unedified, are usually in danger of being swayed. Our Fathers and Saints more generally, simply are safeguarding us, without nurturing any passion against the persons of the schismatics, atheists, or idolaters.

ST. PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS 6:16-18; 7:1

Brethren, you are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will live in them and move among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Therefore come out from them, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch nothing unclean; then I will welcome you, and I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."

Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, and make holiness perfect in the fear of God.

Furthermore, they use – pedagogically, some harsh phrases also, as Paul does here, that it is not possible in the same place for the temple of God to be dwelling together with the idols – calling the believers “temple of God” and the unbelievers “idols”.

This distinction seems rather crude, but it is justified pastorally, and furthermore, in order to justify this expression that he also he uses elsewhere (1 Cor. 3:16), he borrows a passage which refers to the dwelling and the “walking” of God in man (Exod. 29:45). First man leaves - in terms of place, when necessary – from the causes of the passions and the noise, which is unavoidably related to persons and conditions, and afterwards his attention turns to the inner person, to his passions and his desires, and he undertakes a struggle, so that in time, they depart from him, and according to Paul’s saying “the world is crucified to me, and I to the world” (Gal. 6:24).

Inside our heart

Consequently we not only externally need to make “room” for Christ, paying attention to the company we keep, but we also need to “make it easy” for Him, we would say in a human

manner, for Him to enter in us, into our heart. And in there, we have to face a second idolatry, much more serious than the first one, and this is our passions, which, according to the viewpoint of a sanctified man, have the rigor mortis of a statue and the height of the Ural Mountains.

In each struggling person in Christ in the Church, the world of darkness attacks, the triple and ancient evil: the world, the flesh and the devil. The worldly train of thought with the flesh correspond to another three passions which dominate the fringes of man’s heart, and are loving to rule, avarice and love of pleasure. It is these same suggestions, which the devil used, when he attempted to tempt Christ.

Precisely because we are unique persons, these dominating passions branch out into a myriad other ones and their combinations, with a different combination in each one of us. We would say, in a pastoral-medical language, that each believer presents a different “series of symptoms”, which he’s called to fight against, with the means that only our Church grants, and to be healed, in other words, with her saving mysteries.

First the struggling person is cleansed of his passions, then he is illumined and afterwards deified, according to the Fathers. The purification is painful but also a graceful process of many years, with many “changes of seasons” – heat waves and strong winds and glaciers – until the polyarchy of our passions becomes an oligarchy – the many become few, in other words- and the oligarchy is changed, with the grace of God and the sacramental life, into the monarchy of our mind in our heart, where he, as a Priest, united with the mind of Christ, ceaselessly worships the Lord. Then the person casts off the hide, that is the skin garment of egotism and selfishness, he has the mind of Christ, and in his life, the Paulian experience of “I’m no longer living, rather Christ is living in me,” is verified (Gal. 2:20).