

experienced workers: the apostles, the prophets, the preachers of the Gospel, the pastors and teachers of His Church. The apostles are the founders of the edifice and the pillars. The prophets are the “lanterns of the Light”, the first ones who opened the “windows” so that the building could be lit up. The preachers of the Gospel are the “mouths of the Word”, who invite guests to the royal Supper. And the pastors and teachers are the faithful stewards of the House of the Father, who strive for the curing and sufficient food of the inhabitants.

It depends on us, if we will utilize all these precious benefactions, which the philanthropy of God granted us, so that we can be able to reach the unity that Christ prayed that we obtain in His high priestly prayer. The unity which is not a unity of viewpoints on religious topics, but a unity of living faith and knowledge of the only true God.

Archim. B. L

SUNDAY JANUARY 13, 2019 SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY,

The Holy Martyrs Hermylus and Stratonikus , Maximos the Righteous of Kapsokalyvia, Mount Athos , Afterfeast of the Theophany of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Hilary of Poitiers, Synaxis of the Most Holy Theotokos – Mediatress, Kentigern, Bishop of Glasgow use

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

EOTHINON : *Eleventh Orthros Gospel*

EPISTLE READING: *Ephesians 4:7-13*

GOSPEL READING: *Matthew 4:12-17*

NEXT SUNDAY SUNDAY, JANUARY 20, 2019 12TH SUNDAY

OF LUKE , Righteous Euthymius the Great , Zacharias the New Martyr of Patra, John the Hieromartyr

EPISTLE READING: *Second Letter to the Corinthians 4:615*

GOSPEL READING: *Luke 17:12-19*



67TH YEAR JANUARY 13, 2019

PAMPHLET #2 (3424)

THE UNITY OF FAITH LORD

Christ, in finishing His” high priestly” prayer, which He addressed to His Father immediately after the Mystical Supper, said: “my holy Father, I’m praying not only for my disciples, but also for those, who, through their preaching will believe in me, so that everyone may be one”. Christ repeats this phrase three times in His specific prayer: “that they may be one” that everyone who will believe in me, may be one. And this unity, He considers a basic presupposition, for all the rest of the people to believe in His divine nature and His divine mission.

The gifts and their purpose

The Apostle Paul also recommends this unity to the Ephesians. And he stresses that the variety of the gifts that Christ gives, aim to strengthen and not to break up. Here the apostle is not referring to the general and “more important” – according to Chrysostom – gifts, that are common, in other words, to baptism, to the salvation that faith gives, that we have God as father and that we all partake in the Holy Spirit. He is referring to the more particular gifts which are personal. This refers to the gift of abilities, which nevertheless, as particular services, also create greater responsibilities. From him who received the five talents,

ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO EPHESIANS 4:7-13

BRETHREN, grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it is said, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men." (in saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is he who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

another five were asked for. So for this reason, do not be distressed, if such and such, received a certain gift more, because also the toil in him, will be more," notes Saint John. Furthermore, the other one did not get more and another less, because that's what he was worthy of. God does not owe us anything! But to each one He gave, as He judged. "If He measured them thus, in any case, He measured them well and aiming at the advantage of each one", another interpreter concludes.

So that no doubt remains that Christ provides everything for our advantage and for our salvation, the Apostle Paul tries to describe the indescribable wealth of His philanthropy. He who is the source of all the gifts, is He who ascending with His Ascension – as Godman henceforth – to heaven, elevated also His human nature and made it coenthroned with His Father. Thus He gave the possibility to all of us, without exception, not simply to refund the lost paradise but also something incomparably higher: for us to also ascend, each one utilizing his gifts, and becoming: coenthroned with His Father. This is the final goal of all "gifts" (grants) and of His charismas. And for this reason, to each one of

our responsibility is huge for their correct and fruitbearing utilization.

"Heaven and earth are full of your glory"

However this equality to God by grace, that He granted us with His Ascension, was not for Himself something without expense. It cost Him very dearly. So that He could give us also as a gift, that which He had by nature, He had to descend very low. "He emptied Himself from His divine glory, He took the form of a servant and became similar to humans. And He humbled Himself showing complete obedience to His Father unto death, and furthermore, a death by crucifixion" (Phil. 2:7). And with His god-bodied burial He descended "to the lower parts of the earth" "unto the lowest parts of hades". No one henceforth is able to dare, together with the blasphemous contemporary song maker, to tell him: "you're sitting fine up there. Throw a glance down here as well".

He did not simply throw a glance. But He Himself descended to the "pit of our hardship" (Ps. 39:3). He fought with our real enemies, "the devil, death, the curse and sin" (Saint Theophylactos) and He imprisoned them. "Do you see spoils and weapons?" Chrysostom asks with wonder. The spoils are our souls which He liberated from their hands. And the par excellence weapon is complete obedience unto death to His Father, whose practical model, He Himself became.

The workers of the edifice

However participation in this fullness of the glory of Christ, in "the pleroma of Christ," as the Apostle calls it, cannot occur from one day to the next. A coming of age is needed. And in order for us to grow up, we need constant edification and spiritual building. For this "constructive" work, our Christ secured