

Erudite clergyman (bishops, archimandrites and priests) were the authors of the written sermon, while the content of the pamphlet aims at the edification of its readers in matters of Orthodox faith and life. During this period, the "Voice of the Lord" remained firmly attached to its initial aim: to be a brief and contemporary edifying pamphlet about life in Christ.

We glorify our philanthropic Lord, because with the intercessions of the Most Holy Theotokos and His Saints, the Apostolic Ministry has been granted to perform this offering for 68 years already. We fervently thank our colleagues in this ministry, and promise to continue our effort, with the grace of the Holy Trinity.

Whoever of the readers, desire and are able to strengthen our effort, are able to deposit their offering – no matter how small it is – to the account number of the National Bank of Greece: 146/558 073-04, IBAN: GR910110146000014655807304

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SUNDAY, JANUARY 12, 2020 SUNDAY AFTER

EPHANY, *Tatiana the Martyr of Rome , Martyr Mertios, Afterfeast of the Theophany of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ , Basil and John the Hieromartyrs, Euthasia the Virgin-Martyr , Peter of Absalom ,*

TONE OF THE WEEK : *Plagal First Tone*

EOETHINON : *Eight Orthros Gospel*

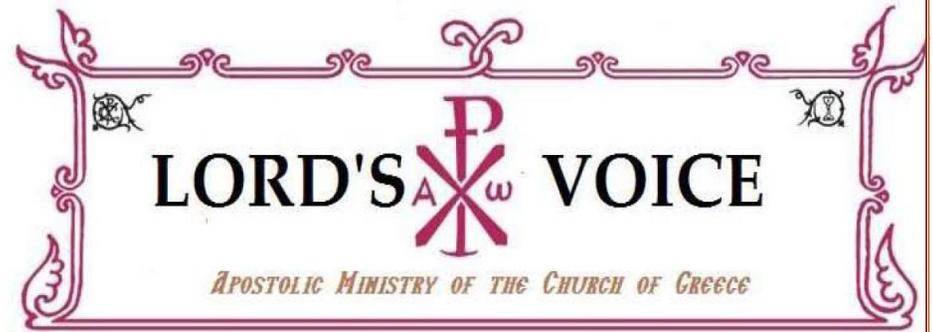
EPISTLE READING: *_St. Paul's Letter Ephesians 4:7-13*

GOSPEL READING: *Matthew 4:12-17*

SUNDAY, JANUARY 19, 2020 12TH SUNDAY OF LUKE , *Macarius the Great of Egypt , Mark, Bishop of Ephesus ,Arsenius of Corfu , Makarios of Alexandria, Makarios, Hierodeacon of Kalogera, Patmos , Removal of the Honorable Relics of Saint Gregory the Theologian , Branwallader, Bishop of Jersey*

EPISTLE READING: *_St. Paul's Letter COLOSSIANS 3:4-11*

GOSPEL READING: *LUKE 17:12-19*



68TH YEAR

JANUARY 12, 2020

PAMPHLET #02 (3476)

THE THREE CATEGORIES OF PEOPLE

Let's go with our mind to the years that Christ came. He had three categories of people whom He had to address: the Jews, the idolaters and the ones indifferent to religion, among whom the philosophers dominated.

Obstacles or self sufficiency

The Jews lived the covenant, the agreement of God with Abraham and his descendants, He would bless him and glorify his name, since he was obedient to His will and he left from the land of Mesopotamia and went to the land of Canaan. This covenant was reverified on Mount Sinai, with the commandments that God gave to Moses, and who prepared the world for the Messiah's coming. Despite the fact that many times the Jews apostatized from their relationship with God, nevertheless they were proud that they were the chosen people. They considered the Messiah as a political ruler, who would liberate them from the Romans and would make them the rulers of the world. The greatest obstacle for them to believe in Christ was their self sufficiency, that they possessed the truth in their fullness.

THE SUNDAY GOSPEL MATTHEW 4:12-17

At that time, when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth he went and dwelt in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, toward the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Humility gives birth to hope

The idol-worshipping peoples were tortured by the polytheism of the idols. They weren't finding answers to the questions of human existence, since they did not have the hope of the Resurrection. They may have believed in the immortality of the soul, but they were not expecting anything for their body. Simultaneously, their life did not have the discipline of the Jews, but they were handed over to the passions and the agony for survival. They also were not free, because they were submitted to the domination of the Romans. Nevertheless, the simplicity, the receptivity and the humility of the daily person, gave birth to grounds for the person of Christ to be accepted.

The philosophers and whoever had trust in their authority and powers, for example King Herod, Pontius Pilate, as also the thinkers after Christ, were not seeking God, but knowledge, they were investigating the mechanisms of life, or they settled in their goods and their glory. The self sufficiency of knowledge, of the passions, of the authority, was the great obstacle in them believing in Christ, who proceeded beyond these characteristics.

Christ is calling to repentance

Christ starts out His earthly activity from the idolaters, from those who were dwelling in the land and the shadow of death. It is these who do not have the pride that they know, but in their simplicity, they are able to sense who God is, and to see their sinfulness, what separates them from Him. So for this reason, the preaching of Christ is repentance. The presence of Christ illumines the being who is ignorant, so long as he has humility and simplicity.

These three categories continue existing also in our age. People are separated into those who think that they know everything about God, in those who have trust in their powers, in the mind, in the material goods, in wisdom and in knowledge, in their authority and they are indifferent for their illumination, and in those who feel that they are dwelling in the land and shadow of death" (Mt. 4:16). The latter ones understand that their works and goods do not give eternity, but make them proceed to death, before whom they are weak. They want however, illumination, they thirst for the truth and they are seeking Someone to share their burden. These are, in the end, the most receptive ones to the message of the Gospel.

Christ addressed everyone. The Church also does the same thing. All three categories of people have a right for illumination. Each one of us however, is called to give an answer to which category he belongs to, and to respond to the Gospel. Repentance is the way and manner for everyone, that which God is proclaiming and is ready to accept it.

Fr. T. M.