

Christ heals

Christ is the only one who is able to heal man, each one of us, from the impure spirit of this age. He shows us that without Him, our heart leaves room for evil. What is odd about man, of course, today, is that he does not see, does not hear, does not believe that there is an impure spirit. And our life moves in his servitude, without him revealing himself.

Let us resist within the Church, without waiting for others to pray, to speak, to be anxious for us, but each one of us addressing Christ personally. Because we are not encountering representatives in Church, but Christ himself. All of us are the Church. And the impure spirit leaves only with our own personal encounter with the Lord. Let this message be the key for us to extend our spiritual efforts in the second half of Lent. And the Lord will forbear us; He will help us in the weakness of our faith and He will cure us.

Fr. T. M.

SUNDAY, MARCH 29, 2020 SUNDAY OF ST. JOHN

CLIMACUS, *Mark, Bishop of Arethusa, Martyr Cyril the Deacon and Those with him, The Holy Martyrs Jonas and Barachesius, Eustathios the Confessor, Bishop of Bithynia*

TONE OF THE WEEK : *Plagal Fourth Tone*

EOTHINON : *Eight Eothinon Gospel*

EPISTLE READING : *St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 6:13 - 20*

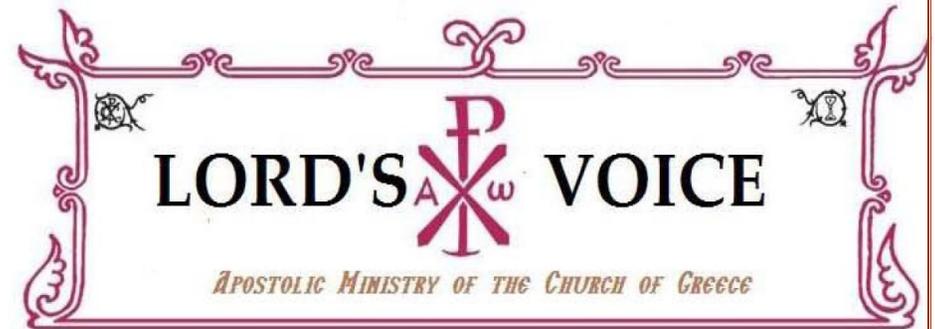
GOSPEL READING: *Mark 9:17-31*

SUNDAY, APRIL 5, 2020 SUNDAY OF ST. MARY OF

EGYPT, *Monk-Martyrs Claudius, Diodore, Victor, Victorinus, and those with them, Theodora the Righteous of Thessaloniki, Agathopodes and Theodulos the Martyrs, George the new Martyr.*

EPISTLE READING : *St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 9:11 - 14*

GOSPEL READING: *Mark 10:32-45*



68TH YEAR MARCH 29 2020 PAMPHLET #13 (3487)

THE IMPURE SPIRIT

Immediately after His Transfiguration, the Lord coming down from Mount Tabor with the three disciples, Peter, James and John, meets the remaining nine, surrounded by people. Together with them, there also is a father, who has brought his child, for Christ to heal him from the demonic spirit, which possesses him. Christ asks him to believe. And the father answers: "I believe, O Lord!" but help me, because my faith is not strong" (Mark 9:24). Then Christ orders the impure spirit to come out of the child and not again enter into him, showing everyone God's power. To His disciples' question, furthermore, why they themselves were not able to cast the spirit out of the child, Christ will answer that the race of demons cannot leave man, except only with prayer and fasting (vs. 17-31).

Let's consider father's drama, seeing his child having been overcome by an impure spirit, which bound his freedom, did not allow him to hear and speak, and he made attempts to lead him to death. When the father heard about Christ, he hastened to seek hope and help. But, because he was anxious, he did not wait for the Lord himself. The agony and seeking a solution, make him not care who, so long as the cure takes place. And so for this reason, Christ speaks about a faithless

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK 9:17-31

At that time, a man came to Jesus kneeling and saying: "Teacher, I brought my son to you, for he has a dumb spirit; and wherever it seizes him it dashes him down; and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid; and I asked your disciples to cast it out, and they were not able." And he answered them, "O faithless generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him to me." And they brought the boy to him; and when the spirit saw him, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth. And Jesus asked his father, "How long has he had this?" And he said, "From childhood. And it has often cast him into the fire and into the water, to destroy him; but if you can do anything, have pity on us and help us." And Jesus said to him, "If you can! All things are possible to him who believes." Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, "I believe; help my unbelief!" And when Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You dumb and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him, and never enter him again." And after crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse; so that most of them said, "He is dead." But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. And when he had entered the house, his disciples asked him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" And he said to them, "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer and fasting." They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And he would not have any one know it; for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of man will be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him; and when he is killed, after three days he will rise."

generation. The people do not understand who God is, but they're trying to find hope and meaning in whoever seems to be near Him. They are not seeking help from Him, but from those

who are considered as His representatives. So for this reason, he also criticizes them, when he ascertains that they are not healing from their own selves!

The deprivation of freedom

The impure spirit, the devil, influences man in every age. Primarily he deprives him of freedom. Man is not able to think and act with knowledge, using his senses in order to see who God is, who the world and his fellow man truly are. He is not able, in other words, to communicate, to coexist, to live with love and the opening of his heart. The impure spirit binds with sin and leads to corruption, to the absence of a meaning for life, to anxiety and agony, to separation from God, his fellow man, and the world.

We do not see God

The impure spirit is hiding today in the false sense that, inside pleasures, in omniscience, in science, in the arts of our culture, we are self-sufficient and free. But we are not able to defeat time and death, when God does not exist in our life. And so, within our sinfulness, within the fact that we are separated from God, we are trapped in our "ego". We do not hear God. We become senseless before our neighbor, his needs, his ponderings, his afflictions. We become speechless before the television screen, the computer, the telephone, unable to share emotions, ponderings, agonies with the others, because we do not have time and the disposition, sometimes not even for our children. The impure spirit of this age, leads us to a deadened heart, handing us over to a spirit of narrow rationalism. When our only care is our own self, then we have closed ourselves up in it, and we are not able to open up. "And when the one is not dying for the other, we are already dead", as a poet says.