

with invoking God to help, will help us to ascertain that the evil is not invincible, but it is defeated first within us, with the freedom of our heart.

The Church will not cease teaching us the need for prudence and patience, for self-critique and repentance, for humble faith in God's providence and at the same time, in the certainty that Christ defeated evil in its various forms with His death and resurrection and with Him, we also are able to. In this way, even if temporarily the evil seems undefeatable, we will not lose our hope. But also, we will not cause greater harm to our own self, trying to defeat something which is very fierce to be faced with our insufficient powers.

Fr. T. M

SUNDAY, JULY 12 2020, 5TH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW *Proclus & Hilary the Martyrs of Ancyra, Our Holy Father Michael of Maleinus, Gerasimos of Byzantium and Akakios the young ascetic, Paisios the Athonite, Veronica, the woman with the issue of blood who was healed by Jesus, Andre the Commander & his Companion Martyrs.*

TONE OF THE WEEK : Fourth Tone

EOTHINON : Fifth Eothinon

EPISTLE READING : St. Paul's Letter to Romans 10:1-10

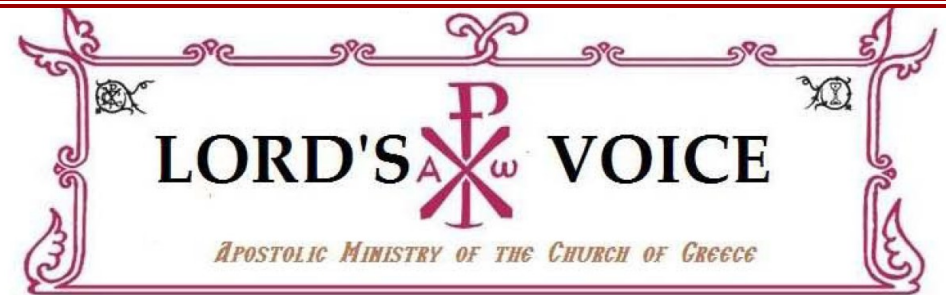
GOSPEL READING : Matthew 8:28-34; 9:1

SUNDAY, JULY 19 2020, SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FATHERS OF THE 4TH ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, *Macrina the Righteous, sister of St. Basil, Dius, Abbot of Antioch, Saint Theodore, Bishop of Edessa, Translation of the Holy Relics of Righteous Seraphim of Sarov*

EPISTLE READING : St. Paul's Letter to Romans 10:1-10

GOSPEL READING : Matthew 8:28-34; 9:1

VOICE OF THE LORD', a weekly pamphlet of Orthodox faith and life of the "Apostolic Ministry of the Church of Greece". Iasiou 1, 115 21 Athens. Publisher -Director . Metropolitan of Phanouriou Agathangelos, Composition, tel. 210.7272.331. Execution, tel. 210.7272.338. It is distributed for free by the sacred churches. From the Press of the Apostolic Ministry.



68TH YEAR JULY 12 2020 PAMPHLET # 28 (3502)

FOR US TO DEAL WITH EVIL

Can the evil in our life be dealt with? Christ's encounter with the two possessed men in the country of the Gergesenes is very didactic. Christ knows that the people are possessed by evil. The signs are obvious. They are "very fierce", they dwell in the tombs, and no one is able to pass by the road which they controlled with their mere presence (Mt. 8:28). In their persons, the signs of evil are imprinted: the fierceness, in other words, their wildness of heart, which makes you fear to look at them in the face, their constant remaining in death and its forms – loneliness, lack of communion with the other people, introversion -and the control of violence and of fear that they have imposed, there where they are.

The essential soberness and trust

It is noteworthy that people avoid them. They know that they are not able to fight against them and to subject evil. They have handed over the specific area to them. They understand that it will be a wound forever. They are not going to fight with them head on. It is not simply that they fear. Down deep, they feel that they are unable to defeat evil with their own powers. So, they choose a defeatist attitude seemingly, prudent, however, in essence

THE SUNDAY GOSPEL *MATTHEW 8:28-34; 9:1*

At that time, when Jesus came to the country of the Gergesenes, two demoniacs met him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one would pass that way. And behold, they cried out, "What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?" Now a herd of many swine was feeding at some distance from them. And the demons begged him, "If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of swine." And he said to them, "Go." So they came out and went into the swine; and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea, and perished in the waters. The herdsmen fled, and going into the city they told everything, and what had happened to the demoniacs. And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus; and when they saw him, they begged him to leave their neighborhood. And getting into a boat he crossed over and came to his own city.

Only Christ is able to face evil head on. And the demons, its expressors, know this well. So, for this reason, they do not resist Christ. They're not however, able to defeat evil, which became their nature. So, they ask Him to leave the people, but to enter into the herd of swine, which, the inhabitants of the place are raising, contrary to Mosaic law, in other words, the commandments of God. And Christ gives them the permission. He allows them to do their will, resulting in the pigs drowning.

Self knowledge

Christ did not yield to the power of evil. He indicated, with His way and decision, to the inhabitants of the Gergesenes, that they also in their turn, even though they are seemingly safeguarding themselves from the evil of their encounter with the

Possessed men, in essence they were his prisoners. Because they also, in the name of profit, of pleasure-loving, and of their rights, had inside them the signs of evil. They were "spiritually fierce", because they had departed from communion with God, as this is expressed with obedience to His will. They were dwelling in the tombs of profiteering, of indifference towards society with the rest of the Jews, since they had chosen the path of idolatry. They were selling the pigs to the idolaters in order to gain money and to live "in comfort", whereas they were not able to escape from their passions, resulting in not wanting Christ to dwell among them. So, He, with sadness, will leave from their country. He will show in this way, that toward evil, in the end, the head on attack, is not always the solution, but the departure from coexisting with it, so long as it's bearers remain unrepentant and so long as there is the capability of us ending up somewhere else.

Our own attitude

These three ways of facing evil, teach us many things also in our own reality. On the one hand, so long as we locate it, we are called to measure our powers against it. If they do not suffice, prudence and patience give us the capability of gaining time, so that with God's help, and that of those who love us, we will be able to defeat it when the fullness of time comes. On the other hand, a self critique, when it becomes self knowledge and brings true repentance, gives us the capability to see if we've also chosen the way of evil. And then obedience to the will of God, choosing love and not greed, as also the disposition for true communion with the neighbor, with whom we are called to coexist, is the starting point of victory against evil. Finally, the deliverance from the demonic haughtiness that, on our own, we are able to manage them, together