

reference of man to the Person of the incarnate Word.

The believer can live "becomingly" and overcome his sinfulness and mortality only with the re-putting on of Christ, that is, the life according to Christ, and his synergy in the matter of his salvation.

The Church reminds people of these truths, especially in the struggle of Great Lent. The motivation and criterion of our spiritual struggle is the love of Christ, which we must, indiscriminately, offer to everyone, friends and enemies.

Archim. N.K

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2023 FORGIVENESS SUNDAY ,

Porphyrius, Bishop of Gaza Women ,The Holy Great Martyr Photine, the Samaritan ,Holy Martyr Theocletus , John Claphas the new Martyr.

EPISTLE READING:St. Paul's Letter to Romans 13:11-13,14:1-4

GOSPEL READING : Matthew 6:14 - 21

TONE OF THE WEEK : Fourth Tone

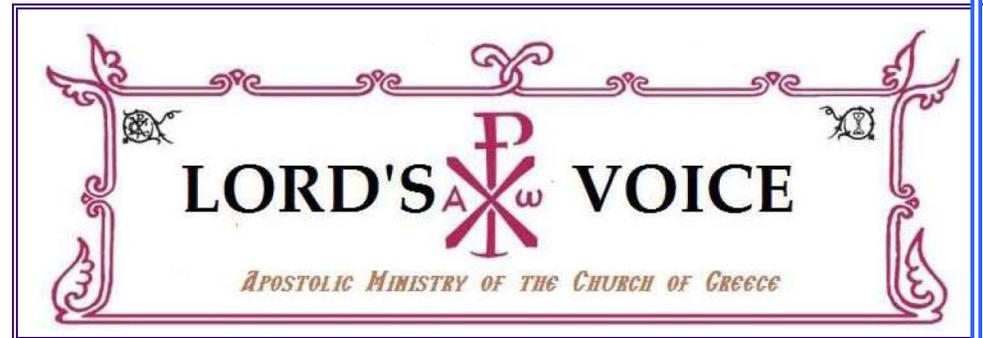
EOTHINON : Fourth Eothinon

SUNDAY, MARCH 5, 2023 SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY , Conon

the Gardener , Parthenios the New Martyr who contested in Didymoteichos , Mark the Ascetic , Righteous Father Mark of Athens , John the Bulgarian , Mark the Faster , George the New-Martyr of Rapsani , Eulogios the Martyr , Eulabios the Martyr , Conon the Isaurian , Archelaos the Martyr of Egyp

EPISTLE READING:St. Paul's Letter to Hebrews 11:24-26

GOSPEL READING : John 1:43-51



71ST YEAR FEBRUARY 26 2023 PAMPHLET # 9 (3639)

AT THE OUTER DOOR OF THE HOLY LENT

The Epistle reading for today's Sunday seeks to help the faithful understand the importance that Great Lent has for their spiritual life. From tomorrow, Clean Monday, the appointed centuries-old fast begins, which every Christian ought to piously observe.

The days that it lasts have been determined in imitation of Biblical models. Both the prophet Moses on Mount Sinai, as well as the prophet Elijah in the desert of Horeb, fasted for forty days before meeting God. And the Lord, after His baptism, fasted "forty days and forty nights" (Mt. 4:2). For this reason, the fast of Great Lent is, according to the Fathers, "the fast of the Lord", which was established "according to the typos of the saving fast" of Christ.

The period of Holy Lent is projected by the Church as an icon of the present life and therefore, as a constant opportunity for repentance, re-catechism, forgiveness, temperance, love, alienation from sin, prayer, humility and, in general, of spiritual struggles, for us to march towards Pascha; to be co-crucified and co-resurrect with Christ, and to share "more fully" in His Kingdom.

THE SUNDAY EPISTLE *ROMANS 13:11-13, 14:1-4*

Brethren, salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed; the night is far gone, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

As for the man who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not for disputes over opinions. One believes he may eat anything, while the weak man eats only vegetables. Let not him who eats despise him who abstains, and let not him who abstains pass judgment on him who eats; for God has welcomed him. Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for God is able to make him stand.

The proximity of the future life

In our passage, the Apostle points out the nearness of the future age and the coming Kingdom of God. The night passed and the day has come, he says to the Romans. The present life, is considered to be "night," because it is subject to the influence of the darkness of sin." The future life is called "Day", as it is illuminated by the holiness and splendor of God's glory. Therefore, Paul asks us to throw away from us the dark works of sin, and to put on the bright works of the day as spiritual weapons.

With sin, man walks in the darkness of the night, so for this reason, he loses sight of reality. The surpassing of the

darkness happens only with the presence and action of the light. This truth is described in a hymn of the ancient Church, which the Apostle preserves in his Epistle to the Ephesians: "Arise you who are sleeping and resurrect from the dead (death of sin) and Christ shall shine upon you" (Eph. 5:14). In this life every person is given, through repentance, the possibility to cast off the works of darkness and to live "becomingly", as the Apostle underlines.

"Let's walk becomingly"

Paul's exhortation for us to live "becomingly" does not only concern ethical parameters of the Christian life. The believer must, first of all, live according to the form of his creation by God, i.e. "in the image of his creator" (Col. 4:11). The "becomingly" indicates the correct form that man is called upon to complete during his earthly course, the acquisition of "the same ethos as God" in order for us to remember Saint Ignatius of Antioch. On the contrary, the works of darkness, which Paul briefly describes, lead to "ugliness", the distortion and alteration of God's image in man.

"Put on the Lord Jesus Christ"

Christ is the garment of the believer from the moment of his baptism (Gal. 3:27), the "bright robe" and the "garment of incorruption". And as St. Photius says, "we do not put on Christ as an external garment, but as the heart and the thoughts filled with light and the person with grace". The anthropology of Paul, as well as of the Fathers of the Church, is founded in the innermost relationship, reduction and