

it and the strength, the armor, to overcome with the power of faith, prayer, hope, love, and communion with Christ. That is, just as Christ himself fought the devil's temptations on the Mountain, where he isolated himself for forty days after His baptism.

The Apostle Paul, with much inspiration, uses in our passage, images from the military life of his time, to help us understand that our spiritual life is a constant struggle against our evil self, sin, and the devil. However, in this struggle, God is an invincible ally. For this reason, in the face of evil, adversities, sorrows, the temptation to weaken our hope, to shake our faith and to "cool" our love, let us trust God, as Christ trusted Him, even in the agony of Gethsemane, in the final trial of His death on the cross, and then all temptations will be crushed before His incomparable power and incomprehensible love.

Archim. N.K

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10 26, 2023 10TH SUNDAY OF LUKE, Means, Hermogenes, Eugraphos, Martyrs of Alexandria. Thomas the Righteous of Bithynia.

EPISTLE READING : St. Paul's Letter to Ephesians 6:10-17

GOSPEL READING : Luke 13:10-17

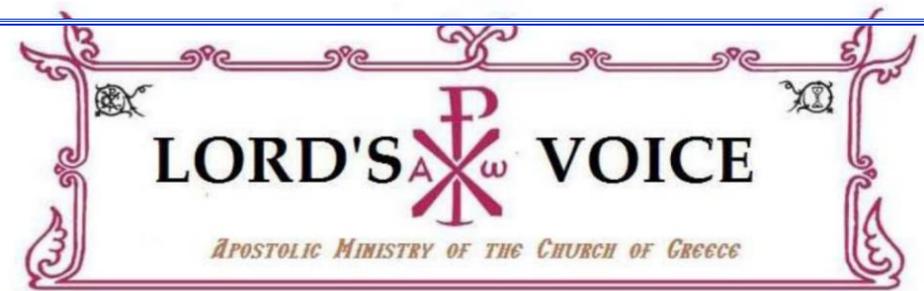
TONE OF THE WEEK : First Tone

ETHINON : Fourth Eothinon

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17 26, 2023 11TH SUNDAY OF LUKE, Daniel the Prophet & Ananias, Azarias & Misail, the Three Holy Youths. Dionysius of Zakynthos.

EPISTLE READING : St. Paul's Letter to Colossians 3:4-11

GOSPEL READING : Luke 14:16- 24.



71ST YEAR DECEMBER 10 2023 PAMPHLET # 50 (3680)

THE SPIRITUAL WEAPONS

The Apostle Paul, as always, so also with the present passage "speaks of edification and prayer and comfort" (1 Cor. 14:3). He addresses the pleroma of the Church of every era, with edifying, encouraging and consoling words. He calls the Ephesians, to whom his epistle is addressed, and every believer, to have the spiritual feeling that in their struggle to experience the Gospel of Christ as the highest criterion of their conscience, they are not alone. The almighty Lord is with them. That is why the Apostle points out that the faithful must draw strength from their union with the Lord and from His great power, since God is the source of strength; the only firm, invincible and almighty one. And this power is necessary, because the spiritual life of the conscientious Christian is a daily struggle not with people, but with principles and authorities, that is, with the rulers of this dark world, the wicked spirits that are between the earth and the sky.

Resist the wiles of the devil

Therefore, Paul exhorts the believers to clothe themselves with the armor that God gives, so that they can face the methods, the tricks of the devil. To resist, when the time of the satanic attack comes, so that they can remain until the end,

EPISTLE ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO EPHESIANS 6:10-17

Brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace; besides all these, taking the shield of faith, with which you can quench all the flaming darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God

firm in their positions. The armor of God is man's unity with God, which is offered to every believer who participates in the life of the Church, that is, in the life of Christ. It's the clothing of the corrupt and finite man with the incorruption and immortality of God, through faith, repentance, holy Baptism and the Divine Eucharist; through prayer and continual training in the struggle of knowledge of God; through striving for the holy evangelical virtues and commandments to be the rule and the measure of the spiritual life. However, man's archenemy, the devil, "like a roaring lion, walks about, seeking something to devour" (1 Peter 5:8). The demonic powers are divisive and disruptive. Out of envy and unimaginable evil, the tempter seeks

the dissolution of man's communion with God and, by extension, with other people. In fact, breaking up the communion with God, means first and foremost, the alteration of true love and the entrapment of man in the absolute darkness of his own Ego, that is, in spiritual alienation and isolation.

The alliance of God

The top interpreter of the Epistles of the Apostle Paul, the sacred Chrysostom, points out that God is an almighty ally in our struggle against evil, temptation, and the devil. God, as our loving father, does not allow us to be tested more than we are able (1 Cor. 10:13). "We have an invincible ally, the grace of the Holy Spirit" proclaims the golden-mouthed father, and he reminds us that our final and glorious victory will be accomplished and manifested in its fullness at the end times; "when we depart from here", when we leave this present life to meet with the Lord of Glory and King of all "face to face".

The communion of love in Christ

In the communion of love in Christ, as offered in the liturgical space of the Church with the holy Mysteries, and life according to Christ, man's egotism is transformed into an indivisible unity of persons; a unity which is inspired and realized by the presence, the visitation of Christ in our lives. The power of spirits of wickedness is found not in their wickedness itself, but in that they do everything possible to destroy the faith of people in the kindness and infinite love of God and, thus, to form the conviction that evil is stronger than goodness. God does not give us explanations for what reasons evil and the power of the devil seem to prevail and triumph, but He gives us strength to fight