

addicts, people with psychiatric problems, sick people, imprisoned, those in dire need etc. covering the whole twenty four hours. Material aid was not lacking either. Certainly at the Second Coming those benefactored will give a witness about them to Christ.

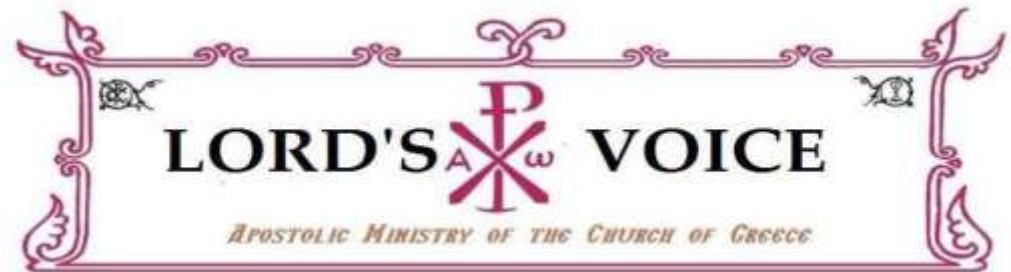
The day of judgement

The day of judgement however for each person is the day of his death. Death comes like “a thief in the night”, its time, in other words, is undeclared. If we live Christ, we don’t have anything to fear because he who believes in Him “does not come into judgement but has gone from death to life” (Jn. 5:24). Christ defeated death for our sake, and he who takes the matter of his salvation seriously, struggles to reveal the life of Christ in his own life. He knows that after a short or long time period he will end up in the tomb, but there where he will descend, Christ descended before him, and so for this reason he does not fear. Already from here, even if in the midst of many and fearful trials, he awaits his dew-scattering repose, certain that “a place of rest was prepared for him.

Archim. E. T.

SUNDAY February 23, 2014 Judgment Sunday (Meatfare Sunday), Polycarp the Holy Martyr & Bishop of Smyrna, Proterios, Archbishop of Alexandria, Gorgonia the Righteous, sister of Gregory the Theologian, Damian the New Martyr of Mount Athos. Tone Second, Eothinon Second, - . **Epistle** St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 8:8-13; 9:1-2, **Gospel** Matthew 25:31-46

NEXT SUNDAY March 2, 2014 Forgiveness Sunday, Hesychius the Martyr, Our Holy Father Nicholas Planas, Andronikos & Athanasia the Martyrs, Theodotos the Holy Martyr, Bishop of Cyrenia. **Epistle** St. Paul's First Letter to the Romans 13:11-14; 14:1-4, **Gospel** Matthew 6:14-21



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GOOD WORKS ARE WORKS OF LOVE FOR CHRIST

The third Sunday of the Triodion, beloved brethren, is dedicated to the most fearful event of human History, the future Judgement and the Second Coming of Christ, which will occur at the end of this world and are described in the Gospel according to Matthew. These events are foundational principles of our faith and contribute to a fruitful pondering during this period of fasting and prayer. The Lord Himself speaks today about these events.

The coming of Christ

The coming itself of Christ comprises a judgment for all people, of all ages. Because Christ doesn’t have love, but is Love, as Love He closes History and as Love He judges the world. It comprises the utmost criterion. So for this reason He focuses His judgement on the love people showed-while they were living-before their fellow man. He who didn’t show love, chose to remain alone and this loneliness of his during the Second Coming of Christ “becomes official”, enters an eternal, unending agony and loneliness.

JUDGMENT SUNDAY THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW 25:31-46

The Lord said, "When the Son of man comes in his glory and all the holy angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.' Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' Then he will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me.' And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Hell and Paradise are understood as noetic places or rather as perfectly different ("a great chasm") ways of being in the Light of Christ. Both the just and the unjust are in the uncreated light: the difference is that for the first ones the light functions as illumination, unending joy and rejoicing which occurs from codwelling with Christ, whereas for the

second ones, whoever in other words didn't strive to repent practically during their earthly life, the same light functions as a burning fire, a fire of unbearable agony, loneliness and grief, fruits of their own choice. They can't endure the presence of Christ.

Love is the criterion

Christ addressing people, speaks of those hungry, thirsty, imprisoned, foreign and naked who were filled, quenched, received consoling visits, received hospitality, were dressed or not. His criterion is the love of each one towards his neighbor, which comprises a proof of his love for God. Furthermore the evangelist John very aptly questions how it is possible for someone to say that he loves God whom He does not see, whereas his neighbor whom he sees he doesn't love (1 Jn. 4:21).

Really the unhypocritical love we show towards our neighbor is the touchstone which proves the validity of our spiritual experiences, the truth of our spiritual life. The danger of deception and hypocrisy easily creeps in. When a person lacks spiritual experiences he enters an anxious, agonizing effort to convince the others about something he is not, interested in his public image, not for God or for his neighbor. At the Second Coming of Christ he will end up tragically alone.

Good works is absolutely necessary for the Christian, because they prove or ought to prove his faith in Christ, not to himself. Then his works are truly "made tasty with salt", adorned with humility and then they truly benefit. In these works Christ will recognize Himself because in the end they had Him as the receiver.

Aside from material good works, spiritual good works also grant great benefit. There are our fellow men who keep vigil, pray and fast in order to cover others who aren't able to struggle, specific categories of people with various problems. One might remember Elder Amphilochios in Patmos who appointed to certain people to pray every hour or two hours for needy brethren: alcoholics, unemployed, drug