

obtain the correct, unshakable faith and he is not ashamed to confess the unbelief which distinguishes him sometimes. He doesn't feel guilt, but with mourning of soul and mournful cries he addresses the only One able to heal him. He hastens to the Lord, he receives that which he is seeking and is made firm also.

Prayer and fasting

To the question of His disciples why they were not able cast out the demon, Christ answered that he is not able to be cast out of a man, except only with prayer and fasting. This "twofold thing" is the double edged sword, which cuts off and slaughters every demonic influence from us also who more or less, suffer from the influences of passions, passionate thoughts and demons and evil desires.

Prayer enflames man's heart, fires it up, in such a way that it becomes a difficult target for the devil. The demons flee, they depart very quickly from a heart which fervently calls upon Christ. Such a climate does not "comfort" them, and so they seek other areas, other hearts.

But also fasting, when it is both physical and spiritual, grants lightness and quickness to the mind and to the soul, so that they maneuver and avoid the circular movements of the devil.

Let us pray and let us fast correctly, beloved brethren, so that we end up, blessed imprints of Christ, living casts of the grace of our Triune God.

Archim. E. T.

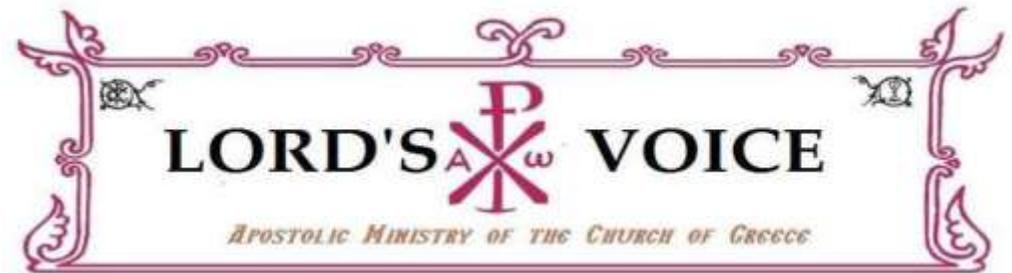
SUNDAY March 30 , 2014 Sunday of St. John Climacus, John Climacus the Righteous, author of The Divine Ladder of Ascent, Sosthenes Apollos, Cephas, Caesar, & Epaphroditos, the Apostles of the 70, Zacharias the New Martyr.

Tone Plagal of the Third Tone, Eothinon 7th. **Epistle** St. Paul's Letter Hebrews 6:13-20, **Gospel** Mark 9:17-31

NEXT SUNDAY April 6, 2014 Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt, Eutychius, Patriarch of Constantinople, 120 Martyrs of Persia, Gregory of Sinai.

Epistle St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 9:11-14,

Gospel Mark 10:32-45



62nd Year

March 30, 2014

Pamphlet #13 (3174)

UNSELFISH FAITH AND PRAYER

In today's gospel passage, beloved brethren, the unfortunate father of an unfortunate child, approached Christ for Him to heal him. From even his childhood age his son was troubled by the demon, which sometimes threw him into the fire in order to burn him and at other times into the water in order to drown him. The child was gritting his teeth, foaming and remaining as if senseless, reminding one of some of the crises of the epileptics.

Different conditions

Epilepsy, possession and mental illnesses are different conditions. In epilepsy there is wounding in the brain, epileptogical outbreaks, which also cause these spasms. In mental illnesses, the cooperation between the soul in the body suffers due to organic causes, for example an accident where a brain injury occurred, or due to unpleasant experiences, of a sinful way of life, which with the passionate thoughts they cause, they end up in a permanent condition for the soul, they also harm the body resulting in needing a medicinal therapy and the cooperation of a pious psychiatrist and spiritual father. In the case of possession however, there is a hypostatic indwelling of a demon or demons in the heart of man, resulting in both his soul as well as his body

Sunday of St. John Climacus

The Gospel of 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."

suffering. Here the special exorcism texts of our Church need to be read combined with a sincere confession of the person suffering and his participation in the saving mystery of the Divine Eucharist. The father of the child clarifies that the demon, as we said before, was throwing the child sometimes in the fire and the other times in the water. The Fathers of the Church in fire distinguished the burning energy of the passionate thoughts and of the flesh on the soul, even also in the body of man, while in water "they saw" the energy of the passionate thoughts of despair and hopelessness, which make the soul sink "as into the waters". So we are also exposed to the various influences of the passions and of the wicked spirits, to which we must lifelong fight against with the help of Christ.

The quality of the faith of the father

The father of the child in his affliction, is crushed and remembers God. He needs Him, he is not suffering from the spirit of self sufficiency and of the haughtiness of the Scribes. His faith nevertheless has a "material basis" we would say, and this means that he is approaching Christ, due to the misfortune which has found him. So for this reason also Christ speaks of an unfaithful generation. If his child were not ill, would he have approached God?

Christ despite this, asks him to bring Him the child, He scolds the demon and after a strong demonic crisis, he abandons the child, leaving him healthy.

A little earlier on however, Christ addresses a key - phrase to the father of the child: "If you are able to believe, everything is possible for him who believes". You are able to believe, as if He is telling him, unselfishly and the benefactions which I will do for you may change the quality of your faith. The father answers that he believes, on the one hand, but he needs to be helped by the Lord, so that correct faith may be given to him. Who is able to boast that he has the correct and strong faith of the saints, of the monastic saints, of the martyrs? No one. The child's father desires to