

Without presuppositions near Christ

We go close to Christ without presuppositions. We leave ourselves to Christ in a way beyond reasoning, not irrationally, without speaking with our logic which is not necessary. We dare to address Him a crazy phrase: "Lord, whether I want to or not, save me"! As if man turns himself upside down, so differently he functions in relation to that which is called "secular train of thought". Nick Pentzikes, a charming man of God, a little strange and childlike, advises and pushes to this suprarational way of life, telling us to leave ourselves "to the sea purple of the lambda's and the ni's", in other words, that we not entrust our thought too much and that we humble ourselves to those more experienced.

In this way we show the Lord our disposition to be cleansed. On this will of ours, God "builds" his interventions in our life. One enters into an "adventure of revealing Christ in his life. He tastes both the sweetenings and the inspirations of divine grace, as also the bitterness of the demons. He becomes light-receiving and light-granting, graceful and lifegiving, a point of God among his people, a living witness of partaking of the Supper of the Kingdom, a signpost for the rest of the members of the Church of Christ.

Archim. E. T.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2014, 11th Sunday of Luke, *The Holy Martyrs Thyrsus, Leucius, and Callinicus of Asia Minor, and Philemon, Apollonius, and Arian of Alexandria.*

TONE OF THE WEEK: Tone 2nd, Eothinon 5th Eothinon

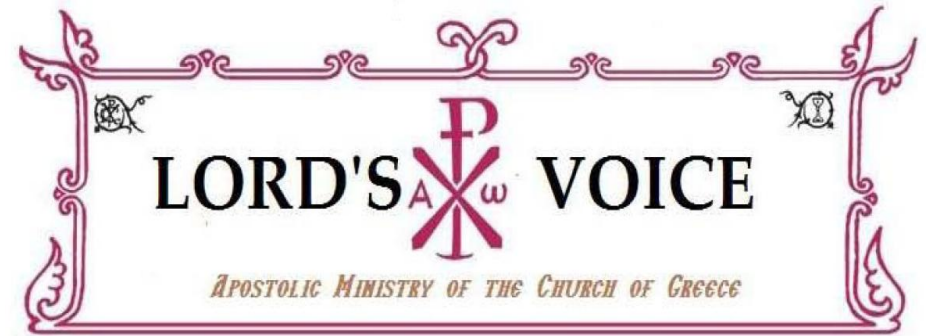
EPISTLE *St. Paul's Letter to the Colossians 3:4-11*

GOSPEL *Luke 14:19-24*

NEXT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2014, SUNDAY BEFORE NATIVITY, *Forefeast of the Nativity of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, Juliana of Nicomedia & her 630 Companion Martyrs, Themistocles the Martyr of Myra, Saint Peter, Metropolitan of Moscow*

EPISTLE *St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 11:9-10; 32-40*

GOSPEL *Matthew 1:1-25*



62nd Year

December 14, 2014

Pamphlet #50 (3211)

INVITED TO THE SUPPER OF THE KINGDOM

In today's gospel passage, beloved brethren, Christ speaks about the supper that a certain man held and he invited many people. However a strange thing, at the time of the specific approaching to the supper ("everyone") began quitting using excuses. The first, because he bought a field and he had to go see it from up close, the second wanted to go try the five new pairs of oxen which he had just obtained, the third because he got married, as if marriage were an obstacle. Justly then, the housemaster became frustrated and he told his servant to quickly go to the streets and the town squares and to bring to the supper all the poor, and the physically, consequently also spiritually needy people. The servant did precisely that and told his master that there's still more room. He sends him out again to shout "by force" even more people, until his house would fill up. In the end, the housemaster makes the stern ascertainment that none of those who were initially invited would take part in the supper because whereas they were invited, they forgot the honor which was given them. They remained called, without utilizing the invitation.

11th Sunday of Luke

The Gospel of Luke 14:16-24

The Lord said this parable: "A man once gave a great banquet, and invited many; and at the time of the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for all is now ready.' But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I go out and see it; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I must go to examine them; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So the servant came and reported this to his master. Then the householder in anger said to his servant, 'Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and maimed and blind and lame.' And the servant said, 'Sir, what you commanded has been done, and there is still room.' And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet. For many are called, but few are chosen.'"

The field, the oxen and the " marriage"

All of us Orthodox Christians are through Baptism and Christmas grafted into the Church, the Body of Christ. Partaking conscientiously in the Divine Liturgy, we partake in the Kingdom of God, we taste Paradise. We are with the grace of Christ in the end times, which "already and not yet" inundate our life. In the twilight of the idols and of all the "spectrums" of reality that we were in danger and are in danger of believing in, the light of the Kingdom dawns and intoxicatingly calls us.

Obstacles in this struggling journey are earthly cares, which are denoted by "the field", the luxurious life of the (five) senses which are denoted by the "five pairs of oxen" and which make man

bestly, making him search for truth, love and freedom, there where they don't exist. This way of life influences married life also. Thus a marriage of such specifications is a very serious obstacle to the spiritual life, which means meeting with Christ.

To the problematic couples of our times, the careful student of today's parable will discover a likewise problematic subsoil of the luxurious life and avarice which dehumanizes man, and excludes him from the Supper of the Kingdom. Thus, the companion-spouse ends up as an object to be used, instead of being and becoming constantly more so a person of love.

The Divine Liturgy is the supper to which Christ himself calls us

Christ, on the night of Holy Thursday handed down to us the dreadful mysteries, with the commanding indication "do this in remembrance of me". Consequently a philosophy in the style of "I stay at my home and pray and try to be a good person" doesn't suffice. This is merely a theology of a private type, foreign to the ecclesiastical event. The person who lives thus, self excommunicates himself, in other words he goes outside the boundaries. However we all know that outside of the Church salvation does not exist. Christ categorically stressed that he who will not eat of His body and will not drink His blood does not have life in him. That's why the Fathers also call Divine Communion the "medicine of immortality".

It is a gift and a granting that not even the most eminent of the righteous people of the Old Testament enjoyed. There the unincarnate Word was being revealed, was consoling them, enlightening them, speaking to them, nurturing them and comforting them. However the location for gathering was lacking. The Son and Word of God making an entrance in the last times into the world, gathers the multitudes together, just as "a hen gathers her own chicks" in His body. In the Church, we don't simply approach, we embrace and kiss Christ, but according to the sacred Chrysostom we place our teeth on His body and drink His blood.