

candles can be lit also! We must note that, after we light it, we place our candle on the candle holder. Only if we place it firmly and vertically does the whole candle get all expended and give light, a symbol that only he who is firmly placed in the faith and its ethos does expend himself and consume the time of his life, becoming all light for the glory of Christ. If however, the candle is placed crookedly, then it might illumine on the one hand, simultaneously however, it will drip, gets dirty, lose its matter quickly and in vain, a sign that the slightest bending in the spiritual life brings about consequences and unpleasant results. While if the bending is so great, then the candle itself goes out on its own, as its matter flows out and puts out the flame, a proof that our own self is able to refuse the grace and the illumination of the Holy Spirit. And then, not only is he himself darkened, but also he cannot enlighten others either!

My brethren, our responsibility as Christians is a double challenge. For us to respond with the way of our life to God's love, and for us to disseminate this love and its results to other people. Let us light our candle with knowledge of what this symbolizes, with knowledge of how we are asked to live and with a decision that we respond to the double challenge of divine illumination.

Archim. I. N.

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 11, 2015 SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY,** *Our righteous Theodosius the Cenobiarch, Vitalis of Gaza, Afterfeast of the Theophany of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*

**TONE OF THE WEEK:** Plagal of the 2nd Tone, **Eothinon** 9<sup>th</sup> Eothinon

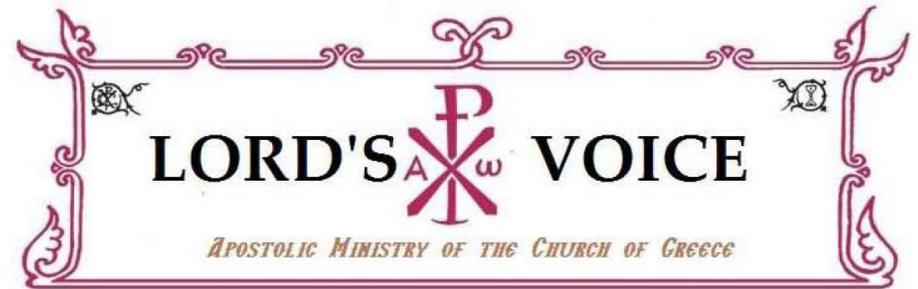
**EPISTLE** St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 4:7-13

**GOSPEL** Matthew 4:12-17

**NEXT SUNDAY, JANUARY 18, 2015 12TH SUNDAY OF LUKE,** *Athanasios & Cyril, Patriarchs of Alexandria, Zenia the Martyr*

**EPISTLE** St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 13:7-16

**GOSPEL** Luke 17:12-19



63<sup>rd</sup> Year

January 11, 2015

Pamphlet #02 (3215)

## THE LIGHT OF THE CHRISTIAN

God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness... who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. Our Church celebrates Saint Theodosios the Cenobiarch today with the Epistle reading which she presents, she wants to honor the Saint, as a reference point in the organization and foundation of monasticism, but also to explain how God acts in the world, enlightening through his own people.

### The human person

In Orthodox Theology the understanding of the human person is crucial. Without expanding a lot on the development of this understanding, we will remind you that only when God wanted to save the human race from the domination of sin, of corruption and of death, but also to draw us to the height of His majesty, did He reveal Himself "in the flesh", and become a man. He took on human nature and reformed it in the person of Christ. While He showed in this way that the theoretical generality of the Law does not confer salvation, but rather a prayerful relationship and sacramental keeping company with the person of Christ.

## SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

### ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO THE EPHESIANS 4:7-13

Prokeimenon. Grave Mode.

Psalm 115.15,12

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.

Verse: What shall I render to the Lord for all that he has given me?

BRETHREN, grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it is said, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men." (in saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is he who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

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But also the perspective of eternal life goes through the personal relationship of God and man. "This is eternal life, that they know you the only true God and whom you sent Jesus Christ" (1 Jn. 2:23). The saving events of the divine Oeconomy are activated in the person of Christ and the perspective of eternity is our personal relationship with God.

### Activity through the people of God

When His Church on earth had to be made firm, God selected again the way of activity through persons. And this way

of activity through the people of God, the wisdom of our Fathers imprinted in a very symbolical action, which we all have done, probably thousands of times, and nevertheless we have not realized its meaning. This motion is none other than the lighting of the candle and furthermore as our first action upon entering the Lord's church. Why does the Church, before leading us into the main church for whatsoever Service, put us to also light a candle? What does this symbolize? Did this ever occupy us, or do we allow the dust of a mistrustful critique and bias as regards the existence of candles at the entrance of the church, to also cover our soul as we consider other things?

The candle is placed near the entrance of the church and furthermore in a supine, horizontal position, a symbol that so long as a person is outside the Church he is fallen and run down, like the half dead person of the parable of the Good Samaritan. When we enter the church, we grab our candle and raise it up, a sign that the person is entering into the ark of salvation which is the Church of Christ, he is resurrecting and being raised up. Then what do we do? We go to the candle holder and light our candle. From where do we light it? Maybe from our pocket do we take out matches or a lighter and light it? No! We light it from some other candle which burns there before our own, a symbol that man is enlightened with the divine grace when he enters the Church, but through another person! A person who has preceded there in partaking of grace and can disseminate it! The King of Glory established that man should be saved through the Sacraments, which nevertheless, another person is performing. To be enlightened by the illumination of the Gospel, which nevertheless, another person will interpret and preach to him. To know in Christ God the Father, but through people.

### Our responsibility as Christians

And here lies the responsibility of the Christian. In how he will preserve the flame of his candle, so that it exists so that other