

The value of the Fathers

It is precisely there where the value of the Fathers is shown. They are the measures of truth. Their faith is the faith of Christ. They are the reference points about what is Orthodox. If the Church is "Christ extended unto the ages", the Fathers are the mouths of Christ in the various ages, who do not preach something different, but whatever Christ preached. In the Church we speak of a copying memory and we mean that the later generations copy in their preaching those who preceded in faith, preaching the same, authentic truth, as they received it, crystal clear, from the infallible mouth of Christ.

My brethren, the Church does not obligate, does not impose. She invites to faith, she exhorts to experience the truth. Out of love for man and from the certain knowledge that her faith is the salvation of man, she preaches it and offers it without innovation, for centuries now. The only thing in which she has increased vigilance and sensitivity is on how this faith will remain without deviation, unchanged, unadulterated. To this, she urges the attention of her Christians, speaking about Tradition and reminding us that the Tradition has to do with the responsibility of him who is handing it down and not with him who is receiving it. Our responsibility is the imparting of faith to those following, precisely as we received it, as we lived it, as our Fathers safeguarded it.

Archim. I. N.

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

TONE OF THE WEEK: Grave Tone, **Eothinon** 10th Eothinon

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

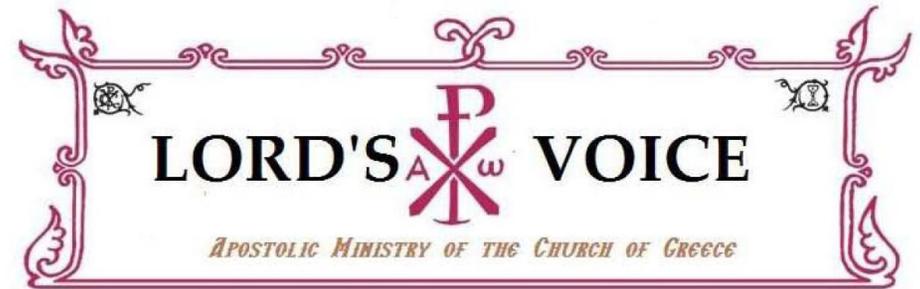
GOSPEL Luke 17:12-19

NEXT SUNDAY, JANUARY 25, 2015 15TH SUNDAY OF LUKE,

Gregory the Theologian, Archbishop of Constantinople, The Synaxis of the New Martyrs of Russia

EPISTLE St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 7:26-28; 8:1-2

GOSPEL Luke 19:1-10



63rd Year

January 18, 2015

Pamphlet # 03 (3216)

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF FAITH

Athanasios and Cyrill, Patriarchs of Alexandria, today and the Church in her effort to help us to understand what the Fathers mean for its faith and life, uses an Epistle reading from the Epistle to the Hebrews of the apostle to the Gentiles, Paul. With this Epistle Paul strives to convince his compatriots that Christ is the awaited Messiah, the Savior and Deliverer of the human race, the only begotten Son and Word of God, incomparably superior to the Angels, the Prophets, Moses and Aaron. So for this reason, the only one who is able with the sacrifice He is offering, the sacrifice of his Own Self, to connect us to God as his children. Paul imprints the realization which he has, that true and perfect religion is only that one which can create an essential, personal relationship between God and man. Only Christianity manages this with Christ as the Great High Priest, who performs the voluntary sacrifice on Golgotha, but also hands down the truth of the faith as divine Revelation to man.

The question about what I will believe

And precisely there begins the responsibility of Christians of every age, of every generation, of every place. The responsibility of handling and of preserving this truth, which came forth from the infallible mouth of Christ, preserving it pure and.

ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO THE HEBREWS 13:7-16

Prokeimenon. Mode 4.

Daniel 3.26,27

Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our fathers.

Verse: For you are just in all you have done.

Brethren, remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God; consider the outcome of their lives, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever. Do not be led away by diverse and strange teachings; for it is well that the heart be strengthened by grace, not by foods, which have not benefited their adherents. We have an altar from which those who serve the tent have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp. So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. Therefore let us go forth to him outside the camp and bear the abuse he endured. For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city which is to come. Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

unadulterated, without additions or alterations by human interventions .

What do many people invoke, in our days, but also in every age in the past? They say, no one is able to impose on me what I will believe. I believe that which I accept as the truth, I have my own perception concerning God and I believe in some superior being, whom I may not be able to define, but I believe in this, generally and vaguely. They accept Christianity as an interesting religion, but not as the revealed truth, essentially because they cannot endure the results of such a handing over of themselves. They mix philosophy, ideologies and theology, whereas firmly oriented to innerworldly aims, they ignore the calling to end up citizens of the Kingdom of the Heavens.

God is revealed in the person of Christ

What does Paul answer to these things? "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today the same also unto the ages. Do not be swayed also, by diverse and foreign teachings". All the above things are nothing other than survival, in our days, of primitive forms of thought about the religious phenomenon. Man seeks God and in this effort of his, he uses reasoning, fantasy, and emotion, in order to discover and come to know Him. God, however, has revealed Himself in the person of Christ! Whoever tries, with their own powers, to approach Him, no matter how great these are, is striving in vain, because finite man is not able to conceive the infinite God. Our God benefactored us, revealing Himself in the person of Christ and asking us to experience Him in the Church. While it is dreadfully tragic for people to persist in ignoring or also denying this revelation, insisting on their autonomization.

What is even more tragic, is the effort of certain people to try to "correct" Christ. Imprisoned in their own manner of thought, they try "to complete", "to reveal all that Christ did not reveal". They present themselves thus smarter, wiser, and holier than Christ, proving only an egotism and a stubbornness. The Church calls them heretics, not because she wants to lessen them or cast them off to the side, but in order to indicate that they very simply prefer their own beliefs, falsifying the truth of the faith. And this is not dangerous for the truth of Christ. It is dangerous for the soul of the Christian! Especially because it is easier for those weaker in the faith to be swayed by the beautiful words of whoever tries to alter the unalterable Christ.