

(Gal. 2:20). The human person must be so graced, so as to reach to the “in the likeness”. Man must become a small Christ, in the particular conditions of his life and under the challenges of his whatsoever life. The disfigured, egotistical train of thought which alters the beauty of the human person, must with God and man's cooperation be reformed into a train of thought of obedience, in accepting the divine will. The word “repentance” itself is a challenge, since it means “change of mind”. Who accepts, especially today, that he is not thinking correctly, or that he is not able to trust his judgment? And nevertheless, this is the preliminary issue in order for man to change, to claim and to obtain “the mind of Christ”.

These two verses hide a power which it is proven is able also to change the course of life. In the eighth book of the “Confessions” of the sacred Augustine, it was these two verses which in an amazing manner challenged him and led him to his conversion, so that from a heretic he would become an Orthodox Christian and furthermore so fervent and conscientious, so that he would end up the bishop of Hippo, and more importantly, a Saint! Let us pay attention to them, let us embrace them, in order to obtain Holiness!

Archim. I. N.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2015 FORGIVENESS SUNDAY, *The Finding of the Precious Relics of the Holy Martyrs in the Quarter of Eugenius, Our Righteous Fathers Thalassius and Baradatus , Anthousa the Martyr & her 12 Servants*

tone of the week: 4th Tone, **Eothinon** 4th Eothinon

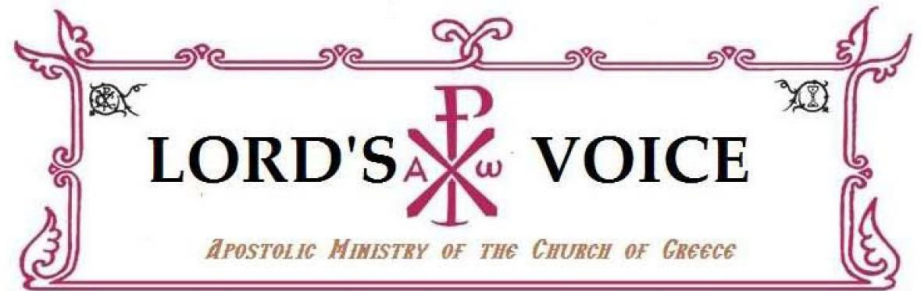
EPISTLE *St. Paul's First Letter to the Romans 13:11-14; 14:1-4*

GOSPEL *Matthew 6:14-21*

NEXT SUNDAY, SUNDAY, MARCH 1, 2015 SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY, *The Holy Righteous Martyr Eudocia the Samaritan , Andonina the New Martyr.*

EPISTLE *St. Paul's First Letter to Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-40*

GOSPEL *John 1:43-51*



63rd Year

February 22, 2015

Pamphlet # 08 (3221)

“WAKE UP!”

Many times this word has been heard as a beloved slogan of many ideologies, political or revolutionary And many times whoever believed them, realized afterwards into what a deep lethargy they were sunk, attracted by beautiful speech, smarty things and utopian views, but also how they squandered their life chasing chimeras, being taken advantage of by the «leader» and even ending up criminals for many of their fellow men.

“Wake up”, the Apostle Paul also says to the Romans connecting the eternal eschatological message of our Church with the particularity of life in the capital of an Empire. And this because the conditions in Rome hid particular temptations and difficulties. And how much has not been written to describe the life in Rome then! The common denominator, familiarity with all types of sin, to a point of yielding or amnestying it and furthermore to a point much worse than what occurs today. The Church there, having been founded by merchants and not by Apostles, whom she met later on, in order to see them martyr unto blood for Christ, even though grace filled by the dew of the Holy Spirit, also had weak members. These members were lured by an economic dimension of life and wealth, and the luxurious and loose life provoked, whereas political plotting and intrigue also influenced, all main characteristics of the world-ruling city then.

ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS 13:11-14; 14:1-4

Prokeimenon. Mode Plagal 4.

Psalm 75.11,1

Make your vows to the Lord our God and perform them.

Verse: God is known in Judah; his name is great in Israel.

Brethren, salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed; the night is far gone, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

As for the man who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not for disputes over opinions. One believes he may eat anything, while the weak man eats only vegetables. Let not him who eats despise him who abstains, and let not him who abstains pass judgment on him who eats; for God has welcomed him. Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for God is able to make him stand.

And in material animalistic conditions the grace of the All Holy Spirit managed to act, not automatically and magically, but for the sake of whoever was struggling and remaining diligent to their Christian quality.

Despite this, the dust of sin and of daily life sat upon souls creating, if nothing else, concerns, worries, cares. And it is there where the Apostle trumpet calls his waking message. He calls the Christians to separate their way of life from that of other people, without judging the other people. Their perspective is to reject sin, not the other person, the neighbor, brother! Their care, to put on

the Lord Jesus Christ and "to make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires."

"Make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires"

Many have misinterpreted this verse. The Apostle Paul does not reject our care for our human nature, does not institute rejecting our created nature, nor does he put down the body as regards the soul. His rejection is founded in the cultivation of sinful desires. John Chrysostom will clarify: "he did not prevent caring for the flesh, but gratifying its desires". Whereas the interpreter Theodoretus will say emphatically: "herein he silences the mouths of the heretics who criticize the body. For he did not forbid caring for the body, but he cast out luxury and intemperance". The necessary care for our created nature is placed as a self evident factor. That which he rejects is the excess which leads to passions. Serving human need is legitimate, cultivating sinful desires is inconceivable. And all these as a presupposition for that which is posed as the aim in the life of every Christian to be realized.

"Put on the Lord Jesus Christ"

This verse reminds us of the hymn which instead of the Thrice holy is chanted on the great feasts of the Lord and which is always heard as the crowning of the Baptism of each Christian, "whoever has been baptized in Christ, has put on Christ". Whoever is baptized in the name of Christ must put on Christ. What does this mean? It means that the spiritual struggle doesn't have to do with developing a mechanical external behavior, or ending up patented copies of some peculiar models. While much more so, it doesn't have to do with that which oversimplifying, some people say "that we become good". The spiritual struggle, to which par excellence our Church calls us in the period which is beginning, has to do with that which Paul again will express with clarity: "while I do not live any longer, rather Christ lives in me"