

the universe in order to proclaim the message of the Resurrection in its holy spiritual basis, shedding even their blood for this truth, that “the Lord truly resurrected”.

Why does our Church present the specific apostolic passage in its greatest feast? Why because today also, as then, human behaviors towards the Resurrection are observed which more so resemble people without the Holy Spirit, rather than people enlightened with the grace of the sacraments. While furthermore, in the last decades the ascertaining is tragic, that on the day of Pascha in our homeland, instead of theology prevailing it is cast aside by a folklore which obviously gives priority to the external, material elements of the celebration, to the detriment of the message of the feast. While it’s characteristic is the thoughtless and simultaneously irrational behavior of many people, who claim as a custom, as soon as the “Christ is Risen” is heard, they turn their back on the Church where as a supernatural food the Immaculate Body and Precious Blood of the Resurrected Deliverer is presented, in order for them to “rush” to the “festal menu”, sufficient only to satiate the belly unto bursting, incapable however, of preserving the message of the Resurrection, to give the perspective of salvation as a sure hope.

The similarity is amazing in the timeless repetition of the improper human behaviors. Then they were caring for earthly dominance and authority, today they are interested in earthly enjoyment and consumption. In each case it shows how much we’re far from living the fact that CHRIST RESURRECTED in its fullness!

Archim. I. N.

SUNDAY, APRIL 12, 2015 GREAT AND HOLY PASCHA, Basil the Confessor, Bishop of Parium , Anthoussa the Righteous of Constantinople, Akakios of Kavsoalyvia.

tone of the week: -, Eothinon - Eothinon

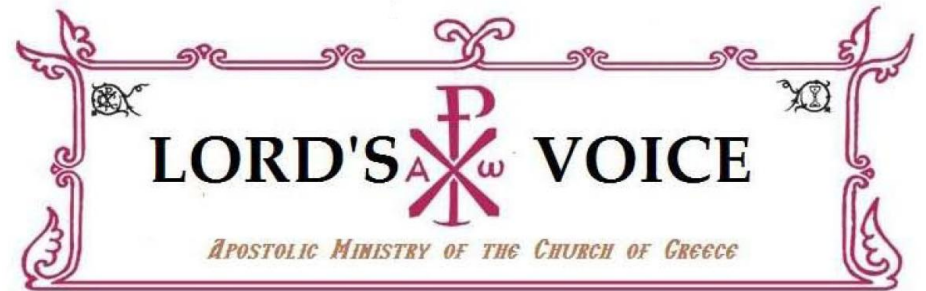
EPISTLE Acts of the Apostles 1:1-8

GOSPEL John 1:1-17

NEXT SUNDAY, APRIL 19, 2015 , Thomas Sunday, The Holy Hieromartyr Paphnutius, George the Confessor

EPISTLE Acts of the Apostles 5:12-20

GOSPEL John 20:19-31



63rd

April 12, 2015

Pamphlet # 15 (3228)

CHRIST IS RISEN

The “feast of feasts and celebration of celebrations” dawns again as Light from the empty tomb, in order to proclaim our Christ’s victory over death to the world. And the Church presents the beginning of the fifth book of the New Testament, as the Epistle Reading, which is called the Acts of the Apostles, not only because in these first verses there is a unique reference to the Resurrection of the Lord, but mainly in order to forewarn. Showing the example of the Apostles, who before Pentecost had not received the Holy Spirit, it shows how much a person may be deceived, when deprived of divine illumination, even when with his own eyes he has the signs of divine power before him, as he insists in giving the priority to the little and unimportant things, unable to realize the magnitude of the events of divine Economy.

The acceptance of the Resurrection

Probably there is no event in human history which was fought so much as the Resurrection of our Christ. And this because this event comprises the cornerstone of our faith. “If Christ is not risen, our faith is in vain” (1 Cor. 15:17) the Apostle Paul will stress. And nevertheless this polemic against the Resurrection doesn’t begin in the area, nor is it traced to the people of the age where the

Acts of the Apostles 1:1-8

Prokeimenon. Mode Plagal 4.

Psalms 117.24,29

This is the day which the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Verse: Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his mercy endures for ever.

IN THE FIRST BOOK, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commandment through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. To them he presented himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days, and speaking of the kingdom of God. And while staying with them he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me, for John baptized with water, but before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom of Israel?" He said to them, "it is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth."

Resurrection took place. On the contrary, it's indisputable acceptance is documented as a real event. While the chief expression of accepting the event of the Resurrection is the behavior of the protagonists

of the Crucifixion. When the Scribes and the Pharisees hear the witness of the soldiers who were guarding the tomb, that "an angel rolled away the stone from the door" (Mt. 28:28), and that the tomb is empty, they don't dispute their witness, but on the contrary they immediately offer silver coins in order for a lie to be spread! Thus they accept that Christ resurrected, indifferent of if they are fighting God!

And this is documented in the first verses of the Acts of the Apostles. But the disciples for 40 days see, whether in groups, or in a private events, the resurrected Lord and furthermore "assembling together with them", in other words in a close relationship and communion with them. Whichever events occur are not formulated as a denial of the Resurrection, but in wonder for what is occurring, which nevertheless, is overcome by the resurrected Christ's face to face appearance. The common denominator in all the events of Christ's appearance is the deep experience of encounter of whatsoever persons with Christ as victor over death. Thus, from the first Church, the resurrection is documented emphatically not simply as a certain and historical fact, but as non negotiable, based on the common experience of all the disciples of Christ's closer and the wider circle.

The behavior of people

And while the disciples have the utmost honor of touching the resurrected Lord and enjoying his teachings, they behave like completely earthly people! Like people who have seen something, on the one hand, they didn't realize however, that which they saw, and it didn't shake them up enough to take them out of the boundaries of their little world. Suddenly they pose the question which proves how close in place and how dreadfully far they are in manner from the Teacher, "Lord, is it in this time that you are restoring the kingdom to Israel!" Without the Holy Spirit and while they are living the Resurrection, they're not able to understand its ecumenical message and they are asking about an earthly kingdom and earthly authority.

This behavior of the disciples doesn't impress the Church. Nor does anyone criticize them for that which they asked. Human naiveté is simply ascertained, which without the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit is not able to realize the divine benefactions. The same ones who were asking this foolishness, after Pentecost become the lions who run all over