

prevailing of worldliness. For man to realize what a gift the Church gives him!

How high she elevates him, but also what responsibility she entrusts to him, calling him to stand at this height! Because the fire of the Holy Spirit, which nothing worldly and temporal can abolish, the human will is able to abolish and quench it, when it is differentiated from the Divine. When a man traces a different path from the path of the Lord and turns his back on Him!

How is this fire preserved in us? With Mysteries it lit up, with Mysteries it is preserved! Confession and Divine Communion. They exist for the fire to grow, for the dust to be shaken off and for the flame to not choke, for the consuming fire to be strengthened at our every moment, so that our whole life be Godly. But also with all that the asceticism of our Orthodoxy uses, like other pieces of wood, which are thrown into the fire in order to keep it lit. The Church has all the means at our disposition. The decision of what, in the end, we will be in us, remains to us!

Archimandrite I. N

SUNDAY, JULY 12, 2015, 6TH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW, *Proclus & Hilary the Martyrs of Ancyra, Our Holy Father Michael of Maleinus, Veronica, the woman with the issue of blood who was healed by Jesus, Andre the Commander & his Companion Martyrs*

TONE OF THE WEEK: Tone Fifth, EOTHINON Sixth Eothinon

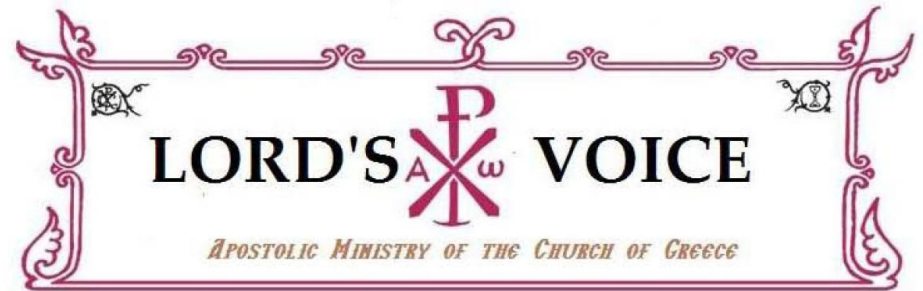
EPISTLE *St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 12:6-14*

GOSPEL *Matthew 9:1-8*

NEXT SUNDAY, JULY 19, 2015 SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FATHERS, *Macrina the Righteous, sister of St. Basil, Dius, Abbot of Antioch, Translation of the Holy Relics of Righteous Seraphim of Sarov, Saint Theodore, Bishop of Edessa*

EPISTLE *St. Paul's Letter to Titus 3:8-15*

GOSPEL *Matthew 5:14-19*



63RD YEAR

JULY 12, 2015

PAMPHLET # 28 (3241)

THE FIRE OF THE SPIRIT IN THE ICE AGE

When Paul was writing the Epistle to the Romans, in Corinth, of course, he didn't have our age in mind. He simply wanted to prepare his trip to Rome, with which he aimed to ascertain the progress of the Church there. Of a Church which was founded not by Apostles, but by merchants and travelers, by whoever arrived from Jerusalem imparting all that had occurred there, and spreading the new faith among former idolaters. So for this reason also, Paul writes addressing Christians, not from a Jewish but from a pagan background. So for this reason also, the presentation of his preaching with this Epistle doesn't have the strict character of other Epistles, but he is striving more to offer and encourage the keeping of the Christian ethos in the heart of the world-dominating Rome.

The glaciers

This does not refer to the glaciers of the farthest history on earth, when everything was covered, for a huge period of time, by a thick layer of ice. Nor again, is there talk about the ice of the cities of the earth, which unaltered for centuries, on account of human abuse and greed are in danger with the overturning of the natural order and already with the beyond their expectation fusion, create destructive results. And both the ones and the others, under the analogous conditions, melt and are abolished.

ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS 12:6-14

Prokeimenon. Mode Plagal 1.

Psalm 11.7,1

You, O Lord, shall keep us and preserve us.

Verse: Save me, O Lord, for the godly man has failed.

BRETHREN, having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching; he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold **fast** to what is good; love one another with brotherly affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Never flag in zeal, be aglow with the Spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant **in prayer**. Contribute to the needs of the saints, **practice** hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.

The speech refers to the icebergs which the cold human hearts par excellence produce and maintain, resulting in harmful results, not only for the heart itself, but also for whoever approaches them. And how do hearts freeze? "Because of the multiplying of iniquity, the love of the many will grow cold" (Mt. 24:12). Wherever iniquity prevails, **cumulatively** and even human, while much more so, divine righteousness is scorned, then the hearts freeze, as love is abolished.

What happens then? Do we need to describe it, I wonder? Don't we all live it in our daily life? Never before had moral failure been documented so intensely and dramatically in our land! Never before the country and its people hadn't shown signs of such advanced rotting! Never before had our homeland, Orthodox

Greece been defined as "the champion of corruption" by whoever articulates public or special scholarly speech. Man's autonomizing from God his Father, the projecting of our own self egotistically, dealing and facing our society selfishly, all these things, signal the abolition of the law of love and the freezing of hearts. And this freezing doesn't melt with human maneuvers, ideas and viewpoints.

The fire of the Spirit

The only thing which overcomes man's spiritual freezing, is the fire of the Godhead. It is not by chance that during Pentecost, the Holy Spirit indwells "in the form of fiery tongues". The fire of the Spirit fires up each Apostle, and makes him an eminent preacher of the Revealed Truth. And thus, man himself who previously appeared scared, cowardly, miserable, afterwards appears as "a fire breathing lion"!

What had our Lord defined as his mission: "I came to light a fire upon the earth" (Lk. 12L49). I came to light a fire on the earth, to light a fire in the good-dispositioned hearts so that a fiery love could be created and zeal for God and one's brother! So for this reason also, his Apostle Paul, literally commands: "burning in the spirit". Whoever of you wish to be, and not only to be called Christians, you must be burning by the fire of the Spirit, so that your internal powers are moved by the fervent dedication, which faith cultivates and consequently, the motives of whatsoever action, of whatsoever decision, of whatsoever desire, should be Godly, an imprint and a procession of the divine will, characterized by the inspiration of the Spirit.

How does this fire light up in us? It lights up during Baptism and Chrism, when with these Mysteries [Sacraments] man receives the robe undefiled, the heritage intact and the seal unbroken. The challenge is for these things to be retained, and not be cast away in the name of secularity and the