

An important saying! I don't simply put up with the other person, as our secularized civilization preaches, but I should accept him and love him as my brother! The bar rises greatly and the aim ends up dreadfully high! And nevertheless, this is what we live in the Church, where experientially we live the way the many become one Body with Christ as the head!

Our emigrants universally impart this sense of general familiarity to us, when they speak of the Church abroad. Even those who in Greece didn't have such an intense relationship with the Church. This sense that in the Church I am in my land and that the other person is my own person, is nothing other than a foretaste of the Paradise of our common homeland, of our common inheritance. So for this reason also, the more a person departs from God and His will, the more he cuts himself off from the Church and becomes autonomized, all the more he loses this sense of the heavenly homeland, of the familiarity and of the unity with the brothers. And he treats himself unjustly depriving himself of the sense of the family, sinking himself into loneliness and isolation. Brethren, let us not condemn ourselves to exile, let us not insist in our being abroad. The Church as a mother awaits to unite everyone, squeezing us in her embrace, guiding us to God the Father!

Archimandrite I. N

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2015 8TH SUNDAY OF LUKE *Guria, Shamuna, & Habib, Martyrs & Confessors of Edessa, Thomas, Archbishop of Constantinople*

tone of the week: Plagal of the Third Tone

EOTHINON *Second Eothinon*

EPISTLE *St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 2:14-22*

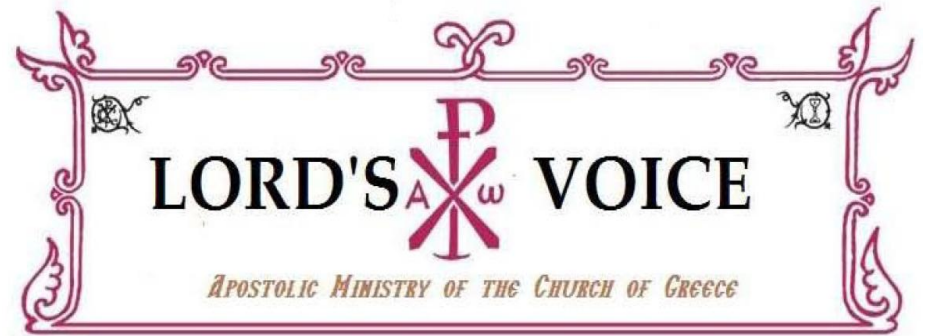
GOSPEL *Luke 10:25-37*

NEXT SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2015 9TH SUNDAY OF LUKE,

Archippus the Apostles, Philemon the Apostle & his wife, Apphia, Onesimos the Disciple of Paul, Holy Martyr Cecilia and those with her, Afterfeast of the Entry of the Theotokos into the Temple

EPISTLE: *St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 4:1-7*

GOSPEL: *Luke 12:16-21*



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UNITY

One of the worst results of the contemporary crisis which struck our homeland, is the phenomenon of the emigration of our children. Because in their land they can't establish themselves jobwise, they are forced to seek a solution in their impasse, in foreign lands. And one of the greatest truths which the experience of our Hellenic history throughout time preserves, is that the bread of foreign lands, no matter how satiating it is, is always bitter and without comfort. Not only due to the strict laws of the foreign land for the emigrant, but also due to the harshness of the foreign employer, the demands, the unhealthy work conditions, the competition and the uncertainty.. And from up close the grief of the departure from beloved persons, the different train of thought of the other people, the foreign language, the nostalgia for the homeland.

There is something worse than going abroad. It exists and this is exile! Because in a foreign land you decide to go. You also select the place and the time you will leave, and you try to create the appropriate presuppositions, so that the move is as smooth as possible. To exile however, you don't want to go! You don't select either the place, or the time, or the presuppositions. So for this reason, in the historical conscience of humanity, exile always was a very grave punishment, a little lighter than death or having your limbs cut off.

ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO THE EPHESIANS 2:14-22

Prokeimenon. Mode Grave
Psalm 28.11,1

The Lord will give strength to his people
Verse: Bring to the Lord, O sons of God,
bring to the Lord honor and glory.

BRETHREN, Christ is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law of commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby bringing the hostility to an end. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; for through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

“Christ is our peace”

We also were exiles! Exiled from divine love, since we missed the mark in appearing worthy of it. And in the person of our Genitor Adam, we embittered God and broke off the relationship with Him, resulting in being cast out of the Paradise of delight. Some people probably here, will retort their objection, why are we to blame since we had not yet been born then. Why should we be burdened with someone else's mistake? In other words, we could give the answer that this occurs just as a child inherits the estate, or the debts, or the more general obligations of his parents.

Or just as when a general is defeated, his army is defeated together with him as well. Or again as a governor, a politician misses the mark, in which case the people of his land pays for his missing the mark. And we thus inherited the guilt of Adam and its results.

But Christ came and overturned everything! Not only did He abolish the state of exile in which we previously were, but He also set us up as familiar with God. So familiar, that henceforth God is our Father and we His children! How do we understand this in practical terms? Prior to Christ, in all religions, the believers didn't dare enter the temple of their “god”. In the historical subconscious of humanity, the understanding of enmity with God was preserved. So thus, while our ancient forbears constructed brilliant temples externally, internally these temples are simple and plain. And this because they didn't need to decorate their temples since no one was allowed to enter in except the priests. Likewise the Israelites also were not allowed to enter into the Temple of Solomon, except the priest, who had to cense and offer the sacrifice. We however, look how we stand! Not henceforth outside, but in the Temple of the Lord, in the house of our Father as His children with full rights.

“You no longer are foreigners and passersby”

And the Apostle Paul will underline something more. Christ did not reconcile us only with God the Father, but also with one another. Substituting the dividing wall of the law with the dogmas of the Faith, he no longer allows the distinction between Jews and Gentiles, since we all become brothers in Christ. So for this reason, he also stresses, you no longer are foreigners between each other, nor exiled from God's love, but fellow citizens of the Saints and relatives of God!