

passage we will ascertain another familiar condition we know, carved out. It is what in Modern Greek we call “becoming comfortable”. It is the disposition for you to act servilely in everything in order to obtain something and subsequently, when you achieve it and it becomes your job, you forget everyone, you don’t recognize anyone, you are changed into a little tyrant and whoever is in the same condition you were previously in, whom you now only look at from on high, defending “what you have obtained.”

Many proceeded to Christ and his Church with a disposition of obtaining a “comfortable position”, each one according to his circumstance. Both Christ and his Church, realizing that they’re not dealing with a disposition of respect, but rather a disposition of being taken advantage of, many times being philanthropic, grant the satisfaction of whatsoever request, awaiting repentance. Probably again, as in the soul, the seeds of the good fruit and the tares grow together, want with some allowance to strengthen man in his struggle to uproot the tares and to cultivate the good fruit.

The one leper who returned “to give glory to God,” heard the most essential thing one can hear from Christ’s infallible mouth: “Your faith has saved you”. He cultivated faith, not in order to gain something earthly and temporal, but the only essential thing, eternal salvation. This is the example we are all called to follow.

Archimandrite I. N

SUNDAY, JANUARY 17, 2016 12TH SUNDAY OF LUKE, Anthony the Great, Anthony the New of the Berropas Skete, George the New Martyr of Ioannina, Theodosius the Emperor

tone of the week: Plagal of the Fourth Tone

EOETHINON Eleventh Eothinon

EPISTLE: St. Paul’s Letter to the Hebrews 13:17-21

GOSPEL: Luke 17:12-19

NEXT SUNDAY, JANUARY 24, 2016 14TH SUNDAY OF LUKE, Xenia, Deaconess of Rome, Vavylas the Holy Martyr, Xenia of St. Petersburg, Fool-for-Christ

EPISTLE: St. Paul’s First Letter to Timothy 1:15-17

GOSPEL: Luke 18:35-43



64TH YEAR JANUARY 17, 2016 PAMPHLET # 3 (3268)

TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE FAITH

A usual phenomenon throughout time, is for man to act with calculation and ulterior motives. Infinite are the examples, during which even holy aims and purposes became darkened by man’s tendency to think of his own benefit, even in critical conditions, in which case the surpassing of individualism is a must for the preserving of the social whole. History is full of circumstances during which the imposition of one’s advantage was plotted against the salvation of the many, or furthermore of cases during which the one deceived the many, being indifferent about the consequences.

This unfortunately, is ascertained many times, even in the Church, when people with various excuses and justifications or, even worse, without them, ignore her moral teaching and the foundation of love, and proceed with secondary thoughts and selfishness. And this does not concern only specific categories of people, since we all tend to passions, but also we all sometimes allow the devil to defeat us. And nevertheless, Christ has forewarned about all these things....

**12TH SUNDAY OF LUKE,
*The Gospel according to Luke 17:12-19***

At that time, as Jesus entered a village, He was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance and lifted up their voices and said: "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." When He saw them He said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they went they were cleansed. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; and he fell on his face at Jesus's feet, giving Him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. Then said Jesus: "Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" And He said to him: "Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well."

Faith by necessity

In today's Gospel Passage the circumstance of the wondrous cure of the 10 lepers by the Lord of glory is presented. Ten wretched people, burned in the furnace of sickness and pain, cut to pieces not so much by the incurable illness, but mainly by being socially cast aside and rejected, stand, not at the corner of the road from where Christ would be passing by, but "from afar", far away, on account of the fear and the rage of the people. And from there afar they "lifted a voice", they gave a great shout for our Christ to hear them, to pay attention to them and in the end to have mercy on them.

What does the "have mercy on us" that the lepers were shouting to Christ mean? Some of the Fathers interpret that by not seeking something specific, they presented and entrusted themselves to Christ's philanthropic disposition for Him to offer them the best thing possible. This however, is the reason for which we learn in Church to say "Lord have mercy".

Other Fathers again, interpret that what they were shouting means that they were seeking something from Christ, without being able to define it and without awaiting or believing very much, in something great and important. They were seeking shouting, because they didn't have anything to lose. On the contrary, the slightest thing would be a gain for them. So for this reason also, Christ, without healing them first, orders them to go to the priests of the Temple of Solomon, who were the proper ones to certify a per chance cure from leprosy and to allow the formerly sick people to reenter society. He wanted, in this way, to increase their faith. Because if they trusted His word and went, automatically they would escape from the condition of the advantageous claiming and would be indicating obedience. That's what they did, so for this reason also, they received as a reward, the amazing cure!

Becoming comfortable

And when they ascertained that they were cured, what did the nine lepers do? Nothing! They achieved, not simply what they wanted, but that which consequently they weren't ever expecting. Furthermore, it was familiar that Christ had become the target of the Scribes and of the Pharisees, who had begun casting out of the synagogues, in other words, not only chasing them away from the synagogue, but even socially casting aside, whoever followed him, consequently they didn't want to end up for his sake, in a position, from which, on his account, they escaped... What dreadful absurdity! They enjoy the wondrous cure, with which Christ and His love brings them back into the society of men, they refuse however, whatsoever contact and relationship with Christ, being enslaved to people and to their fear!

Many people, reading the passage, speak about ingratitude. In general lines they are right. If however, we carefully study the