

prayer. And this was enough for Nathaniel to confess "You are the Son of God, you are the king of Israel" and to end up one of the most fiery Apostles!

What do we understand from this pastoral example of our Lord? That even though He knew Nathaniel's complaints, even though He saw the objections, He was not getting angry, nor moving revengefully or punishingly. He simply awaited... He awaited for the soul with experience and prayer to mature, so that the enlightenment could be given and the flame of faith could light up, in order to grow and impart the gospel message to those of a good disposition all over the earth. It is the way God acts! It is the method with which He fishes the souls of men, He saves them from the world and guides them to His unending Kingdom!

Many people may get upset with the apostasy and the perversion of faith which seems to prevail in our age. However the Church is Christ's and He directs both the Church and the world. He knows when each one is ready to confess Him as his Lord and God, He does not obligate, He does not coerce, He is not in a hurry. As a father He awaits seeking from us also to await, cooperating with Him for the return of our brethren, avoiding whatsoever action places their journey towards Him in danger. Archimandrite I. N

SUNDAY MARCH 20, 2016 SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY *Righteous Fathers slain at the Monastery of St. Savas, Saint Cuthbert the Wonderworker, Bishop of Lindisfarne, Myron the New Martyr of Crete, Photini the Samaritan Woman*

TONE OF THE WEEK: *First Tone*

EOTHINON *Nineth Eothinon*

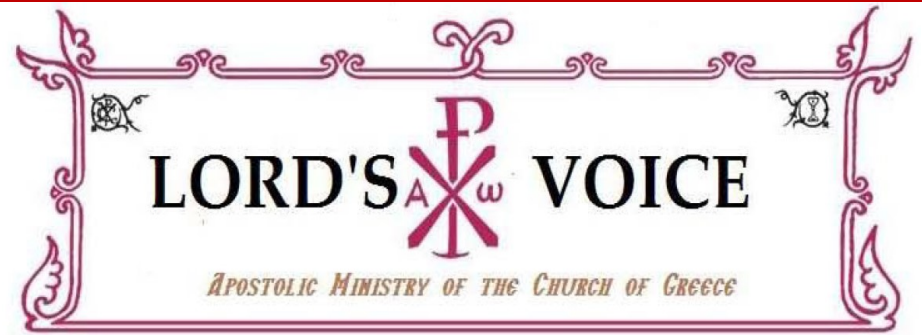
EPISTLE: St. Paul's First Letter to the Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-40

GOSPEL: Matthew 6:14-21

NEXT SUNDAY, MARCH 27, 2016 SUNDAY OF ST. GREGORY PALAMAS
The Holy Matrona of Thessalonica, Paul, Bishop of Corinth

EPISTLE: St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 1:10-14; 2:1-3

GOSPEL: Mark 2:1-12



64TH YEAR MARCH 20, 2016 PAMPHLET # 12 (3277)

THE CORRECT FAITH

A grievous ascertainment, our age has forgotten God! Or rather, because thus is to its advantage, it has chosen to turn its back on Him, especially in those areas where technological advancement, in other words, the better tools, or also financial prosperity, usually the taking advantage of the weaker ones, led man to believe that he also became almighty. In any case, it is obvious that man does whatever he can, in order to take God out of his life, deifying himself, based only on his logic and guided only by his desires. And merely referring to God suffices to cause in the best case, condescendingly, if not ironic smiles, while many times also, violent reactions, from whoever cannot endure, even the possibility of God's existence.

On the other hand, man's excessive self confidence, trust in his own abilities and a mistaken sense of sufficiency, have cultivated the idea in many people, that, on their own, they are able to discover God. Led thus to create their personal dogmas and theories, believing not whatever God has revealed about Himself, but whatever their fantasy or their deluded logic submits to them. The result is equally spiritually destructive and the struggle of the Church on two fronts, is shown forth, not only against atheism, but also against bigotry, of the heresies, of "private religion".

SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN 1:43-51

At that time, Jesus decided to go to Galilee. And he found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael, and he said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" Nathanael said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the son of God! You are the King of Israel!" Jesus answered him, "Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these." And he said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man

The experience

And in this climate, on today's Sunday our Church insists on celebrating the triumph of faith "against all the heresies". And furthermore, not only the ones which have sprung forth in the past, but also those which continue existing or will appear in the future! The faith of the Church in the word of the Lord that "the gates of Hades shall not prevail against her" prevails (Mt. 16:18). No matter how many opponents appear, no matter how many methods they craft, the Church will remain unto the ages, as the

safe refuge of people, the port of salvation and a ladder to heaven. And history up to now has shown this.

In today's gospel reading, experience is projected as the best manner for one to taste faith. The example of the Apostle Phillip is presented, who although ready and desiring to be numbered among the disciples of Christ, from shyness was hesitating. So Christ facilitates him and calls him to become His disciple. And he, after saying the very eager "yes", strives also for his friend, Nathaniel. As soon as he received experience of Christ, he immediately hastens to become his preacher! Thus we also learn, that we cannot keep whatever is beneficial only for our own self, but we have a duty to impart it, for others to partake of the benefit as well.

And Nathaniel, not out of disbelief, but because he wanted to cross check everything that Phillip was telling him with everything he knew, having been taught his paternal faith, shows doubt in good faith. Then Phillip immediately gives the best solution: "Come and see"! Come to see on your own. Come to live. Come to investigate and you will see. The true faith doesn't have anything to hide, doesn't have anything to fear, doesn't have anything to hesitate. Consequently, everything is manifest, just as discipleship in faith is the firstfruit of the essential spiritual life. How many set out to read the Holy Scripture in order to refute it and they end up becoming the most dynamic preachers!

The expectation

When Nathaniel arrives to meet Christ, He addresses him with the "behold truly an Israelite in whom there is no guile". And when, wondering Nathaniel asks Him from where He knows him, Christ answers him: "Before Philip called you, I saw you under the fig tree", in other words, before Philip called you, when far from every human eye you were praying beneath the fig tree, I, in a supernatural and spiritual manner, saw you, as I was receiving the