

In other words, it is the treasure of the Church, which is not adopted to human forms, nor serves expediencies. It does not aim at numerical magnitudes of followers and is not altered according to what one thinks “so as to not distress anyone”. Faith is an experiential condition to which a person is invited, he adopting to and accepting this faith! It is whatever is most important in man’s life, so for this reason also, the Church does not put up with superficialities, flip flopping, or games. She wants to completely show to man that his decision to accept this faith must be a product of a conscientious and binding examination for the continuation of his life. So for this reason also, she causes dispute herself, she cultivates seeking, and does not hesitate to even project the opposite viewpoint, so that the person may freely embrace the faith, having come to a conclusion also with the greatest possible decisiveness!

The evangelist John says it very clearly today: “while all these things are written so that you may believe that Jesus is that Christ the son of God, and so that believing you may have life in his name” (Jn. 20:31)!

Archimandrite I. N

SUNDAY, MAY 8, 2016, THOMAS SUNDAY, *John the Apostle, Evangelist, & Theologian, Synaxis of the Holy Powder (or manna) which emitted from the tomb of Saint John the Theologian, Arsenios the Great, Emelia, mother of St. Basil the Great.*

TONE OF THE WEEK: *Grave Tone*

EOTHINON : **First Eothinon**

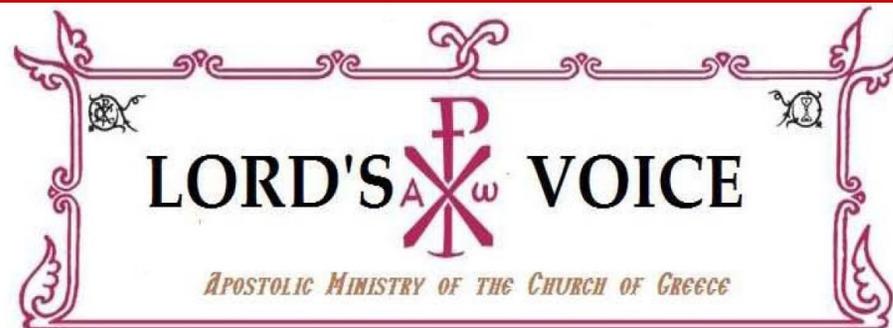
EPISTLE: *Acts of the Apostles 1:1-8*

GOSPEL: *John 1:1-17*

NEXT SUNDAY, MAY 15, 2016 SUNDAY OF THE MYRRH-BEARING WOMEN *Pachomius the Great, Achillius the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Larissa, Barbaros the Myrrhbearer of Kerkyra, Andrew the Hermit & Wonderworker, Placing of the Honorable Head of the Apostle Titus*

EPISTLE: *Acts of the Apostles 6:1-7*

GOSPEL: *Mark 15:43-47; 16:1-8*



64TH YEAR

MAY 8, 2016

PAMPHLET # 19 (3284)

“JESUS IS THE CHRIST THE SON OF GOD”

The Gospels are the most unconventional texts in humanity! Not only because they abolish the properness and social conventionality, due to their content, which abolishes the terms and boundaries of the present life and of our finite world, opening the path toward the eternity of the Kingdom of God. But also because they are written so freely, that they don’t hesitate to put forth even the opposite of what they are preaching, without discrediting or targeting it, since human seeking is gladly accepted as an expression of human freedom, but also as a focal point in each person’s journey till his encounter with God!

Going along with this, our Church also, comprises whatever more subversive human history has to show, since with her Tradition, especially the liturgical one, having full knowledge of the unique truth which she possesses, not only does she preach another new and sacrificial ethos, but she does not furthermore hesitate to even cause disputing, doubt, or polemics. And she does this, to show to each bona fide seeker that her faith is the only one which endures the torture of exhaustive examination about the precision of matters, since throughout the ages, whatsoever arguments or syllogisms have been invented to tear down her teaching, were not just refuted, but being abolished, proved that nothing is able to quash the revealed truth, as the infallible mouth of our Christ handed it down to us!

THOMAS SUNDAY

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN 20:19-31

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them: "Peace be with you." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him: "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them: "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in His side, I will not believe."

Eight days later, His disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. The doors were shut, but Jesus came and stood among them, and said: "Peace be with you." Then He said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side; do not be faithless, but believing." Thomas answered Him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to Him: "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe."

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name

The Church challenges human logic

Whoever studies communications or public relations, cannot but characterize at least as mistakes, whatever our Church does on the days of the week from Pascha till today's Sunday of Antipascha. Instead of going through whatever she is able, in order to project the event of the Resurrection, as indisputable,

she does precisely the opposite. All week long, gospel passages are read which describe the Resurrected Lord's appearances; mainly however they document many people's reactions to the unique the event. And especially those who are fighting the Resurrection of Christ, are presented; the Church herself projecting the disputing and the undermining.

The main thing which our Church does is, on the day of Pascha, in the Agape Vespers, to read today's gospel passage, but in half of its extent. In other words, until the point where Thomas refuses to believe the witness of the rest of the Apostles that they saw the Resurrected Lord. On the day of her greatest feast, the Church closes it with the phrase "I shall not believe"! And in the par excellence projection of the event of the Resurrection, she confirms the doubt and the refusal, since this saying of Thomas resounds in our hearts for a whole week. While just today she reads the passage in its totality, so that the saving confession can be heard, "my Lord and my God"!

It would be logical and human for the Church to want to choke every dispute, to silence whatsoever reaction, to present an ideal image of triumph and success. When, however, did our Church proceed with terms of human logic? It is not a political party or a philosophical system which would claim it's prevailing in every manner, and so for this reason to get mixed up in every type of tactics and beautifications of supporting viewpoints. Her method is to challenge human logic, in order to surpass it and in this way to show forth her truth unembellished.

The unique truth

The Church exists in order for people to be enlightened "into all the truth" (Jn. 16:13). What is the truth of the Church? Her saving faith as she received it from Christ himself. Pay attention to the word "faith"! The Church does not exist in order to preach and to spread a system of principles and ideas, some type of knowledge, or a totality of theoretical acceptances of formulated events so that as many more people as possible numerically, are able to embrace it. The Church exists in order to preach faith in Christ, in other words, that which overcomes the person, renews him, leads him to experience the truth and to dictate to him terms of life.