

from the person we loved, and furthermore when he pleased God while he was living, his relic is filled with the grace, performs healings and miracles, springs forth myrrh and beautifies the life of the living. Thus, he who left from among us, comes in another form again among us and embraces us in Christ. So for this reason, there are so many great crowds which hasten to the grace-springing relics of the Saints. If they are dead, why are so many people running after them, and furthermore looking towards them? However No. Our Saints are more living than those alive, and furthermore censure, through their presence, those of a good disposition, who- not being able to explain the love of people for Saints- come up with a thousand and one sophistries in order to justify their popularity!

So our Saints, my brethren, seriously took the fact that our Christ ransomed them with the very heavy cost of His blood, and they glorified Him with their body and with their spirit. We?

Archimandrite E. T

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2017 SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON

Meletius, Archbishop of Antioch, Antonius, Archbishop of Constantinople, Christos the New Martyr, Meletios of Ypseni.

TONE OF THE WEEK *First Tone*

EOTHINON : *First Eothinon*

EPISTLE: *St. Paul's First Letter to Corinthians 6:12-20*

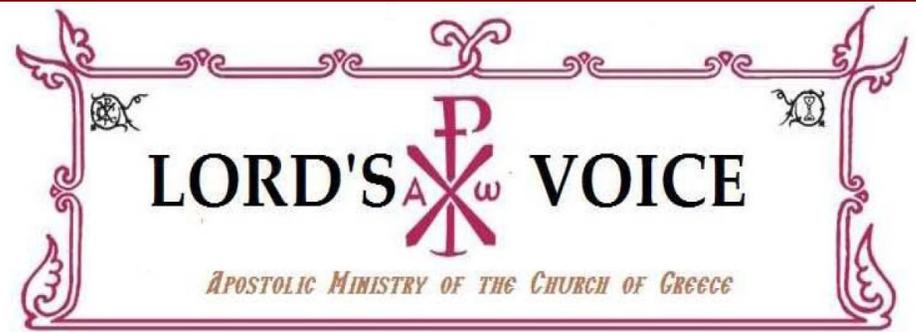
GOSPEL: *Luke 15:11-32*

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2017 JUDGMENT SUNDAY (MEATFARE

SUNDAY) *The Holy Apostles of the Seventy, Philemon, Apphia, Archippus, and Onesimus, Philothei the Righteous Martyr of Athens, Niketas the Younge.*

EPISTLE: *St. Paul's First Letter to Corinthians 8:8-13; 9:1-2*

GOSPEL: *Matthew 25:31-46*



65TH YEAR

February 12 2017

PAMPHLET # 7 (3324)

ASCESIS, FREEDOM AND GRACE

In today's Epistle Reading, my beloved brethren, the Apostle Paul writes makes a deep incision in Christian man. He shows the dangers of the spiritual life and simultaneously enlightens him with his divinely-inspired words to avoid the dangerous paths and to proceed in a God-pleasing manner in the Church.

We have been made free

We are able to do everything, but not everything is to our advantage, he says in his Epistle. In other words, if you tell me that you desire to inhale LPG and not the oxygen of the atmospheric air, I will tell you that you are free to do it, nevertheless however, I must forewarn you, praying that you will voluntarily listen and not obligating you to comply, without you wanting to, that your lungs are created by God in order to function in the atmospheric air and not elsewhere, and that with what you desire, you are in danger of dying from asphyxiation. You, in any case, decide!

ST. PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO CORINTHIANS 6:12-20

Prokeimenon. First Mode.: Let your mercy, O Lord, be upon us.

Verse: Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous.

Brethren, "all things are lawful for me," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be enslaved by anything. "Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food" -- and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that he who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, "The two shall become one flesh." But he who is united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Shun immorality. Every other sin which a man commits is outside the body; but the immoral man sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body and in your spirit which belong to God..

That's how God functions, respecting our freedom, and the only thing He is not able to do is to obligate us to follow Him, otherwise neither would He be God, nor we free, something that shows from the responsibility of our whatsoever choice. Irresponsible freedom does not exist, as also freedom, without compulsion. We exercise ourselves in fasting, vigils and prayer, trying with the ways of the Church, to unite with God. We however, being wicked, usually want to handle our freedom without accountability satisfy our passions, and we load the responsibility of our choices onto others, even onto God as well.

The danger of gluttony

Eating too much and drinking too much according to our Fathers brings about many spiritual difficulties to man. In a little while our Church will underline the virtue of God-given fasting. Again we will experience this grace. When man satisfies that delight of the larynx, he

begins losing control of the body, but also the soul which contains and is contained in such a body, also suffers. It moves with difficulty toward keeping the commandments of God and exercising virtues. Man feels that he is "falling" spiritually. Not rarely, a myriad of evils follow one evil. Often the gluttonous person also becomes the fornicators, sinning very gravely, because the body is "a temple of the Holy Spirit which dwells in us", as the divine Apostle stresses. Precisely here it shows how the consumerism of our age perverts man, makes him end up avaricious and consequently an idolater, anxious and disappointed, as it leaves him to sink in an abyss of false paradises with the final conclusion being his psychosomatic perdition. So for this reason consumerism, even though it seems to love the body and to care for it, in essence undervalues it and destroys it: "let us eat and drink for tomorrow we will die".

Saint Gregory Palamas furthermore, wanting to stress the wonderful and very sacred gift of the body, says that the "in the image of God", as we say about man, does not only refer to his soul, but also to his body. He also stresses that the "in the image" the man is stronger than the "in the image" in the angels, due to the body of man, which enlivens his soul and which body, the angels do not have. And nevertheless, this body which so much is undermined by the way of our life, Christ took upon Him and He associated with us as our friend and brother.

The sacredness of the body

Without Christ, satisfying our lewd desires, longings and passions, we end up dying a "corpse" which we rush to hide in the earth in order to prevent its decomposition and its dreadful stench. Today cremation seems even more practical, as if the body was material for recirculation, we don't endure it dead, to be dissolving beneath the earth-since the hope for resurrection does not exist-and we rush to be delivered from its presence.

With Christ together, journeying in the duration of our life, leaving from this life, we speak of "repose". Burial refers to sewing in the ground and the tomb to a furnace from which the new creation will dawn. The body is a relic, whatever remained