

Consequently, let us struggle, brethren, to live ecclesiastically, for us to not be religious privately, trapped in egotistical forms of religious self-justification which preserve the ego, but which in the end choke man in the quagmire of self pleasing, dressing this whole effort with the deceptive role of some “spirituality”. Obedience to the Church, keeping the advice and the spiritual counsels of the spiritual father, crushes the hard core of the ego, and man comes out into the plateaus of faith, where he is left like a child and he breathes another air, the air of freedom in Christ. Even though many times his old man causes many problems, the memory – even – of this joy and of this grace of does not abandon him and, sometimes in recession, at other times in a flare of enthusiasm, he struggles to place his whole self in the service of Christ and of Man in the Church.

Thus he leaves room for grace to be conceived in him, and, with this grace of Christ he “chases away” the passions of his neighboring person and comforts him. Thus, he learns like the Apostle Paul, to not live himself, but for Christ to live in him. Amen.

Archim. E. T.

SUNDAY, JULY 23, 2017 7TH SUNDAY OF MATHEW, *Phocas the Holy Martyr, Bishop of Sinope, Ezekiel the Prophet, St. Anna of Levkadio, Pelagia the Righteous of Tinos, Trophimos & Theophilios and the 13 others martyred in Lycia*

tone of the week : *Plagal of the Second Tone*

EOTHINON : *Seventh Orthros Gospel*

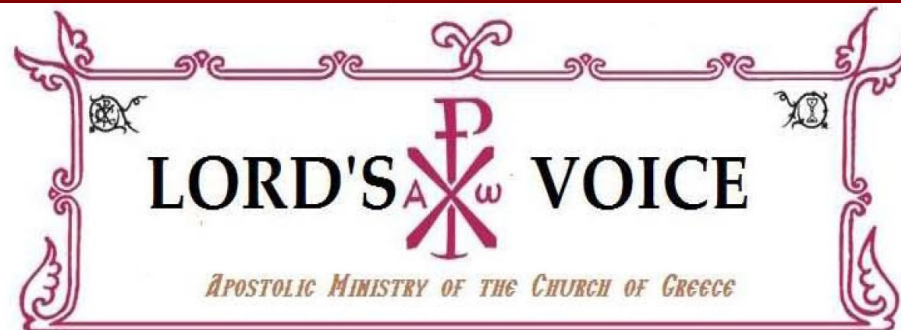
EPISTLE READING: *Romans 15:1-7*

GOSPEL READING: *Matthew 9:27-35*

NEXT SUNDAY, JULY 30, 2017 8TH SUNDAY OF MATHEW *Silas, Silvan, Crescens, Epenetus and Andronicus the Apostles of the 70 Julitta of Caesaria*

EPISTLE READING: *St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 1:10-17*

GOSPEL READING: *Matthew 14:14-22*



65TH YEAR

JULY 23 2017

PAMPHLET # 30 (3347)

FORBEARANCE AND LOVE

In a beautiful manner, beloved brethren, the Apostle today explains to us how the Church is edified, when her living members are struggling to show forbearance and longsuffering in their neighbor's difficulties, to always see him with sympathy, so that in the end, love, as a blessing and energy of God, holds everyone together. For everyone to feel and comprise one Person, gathered together in one Person.

The weaknesses of the weak

In order to help the neighbor in Christ, who also is a member of Christ, you must come out of your own self, your selfishness. Christ Himself is an example for us, Who emptied Himself and from God became a man in order to meet us and to save us. He did not hesitate, instead of being honored and praised by people, to face from their part, even the most painful death by crucifixion, thirsting for our salvation. Paul taking cause from the sufferings of Christ, in order to inspire us, commemorates the Psalmist, especially on that point where Christ says addressing His Father, that “the curses and blasphemies of those who are blaspheming you, fell upon me” (68:10).

ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO ROMANS 15:1-7

BRETHREN, we who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves; let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to edify him. For Christ did not please himself; but, as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached thee fell on me." For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of your Lord Jesus Christ. Welcome one another, therefore, as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

It is unachievable for us to help our neighbor in his whatsoever difficulty and to forbear him, without the help of Christ: liberated from the sediments of egotism, unburdened, for us to hand ourselves over to His grace. In the spiritual life we will gain many lessons from the divine Grace, which as a loving caring mother, sometimes will nurture us and console us, and at other times will "retreat" "will withdraw itself" as we say speaking humanly, in order for us to learn the spiritual battle and to become experienced strugglers. Thus, we ourselves know our weakness and our illnesses, learning from what we "suffered" in the spiritual struggle, we constantly seek the help of divine mercy. Then we contribute to the good of our fellow man and we edify him in virtue. This will also result in our own edification and spiritual progress.

Studying the Scriptures

The Holy Scripture is a treasure. It is imbued by the grace of the Holy Spirit and, studying it in a God-pleasing manner, in

other words, trying with our life to implement the commandments of God, which are an excellent medicine for the various sufferings and illnesses of spirit and soul, consequently also of our physical sufferings and illnesses as well, we become mature spiritually, useful vessels for the ministry of our neighbor. Doing comforting walks in the grassy and refreshing gardens of the Scriptures, with a disposition of discipleship and all that our Fathers explain to us, we receive the fertile gifts of patience and of consolation from above. The divine Grace "hidden" behind the texts, comes and consoles, comforts our soul and body and furthermore informs our mind and heart, Christ who is brought forth Alive with the words, that the Truth cannot be other than Him. Thus we become firm in Christ and in His Church, as precious building stones with one opinion, one heart.

Thus Man lives and moves and exists triunely. Just as the three persons of the Holy Trinity are one God in essence, thus also all people become one Person in essence, and this is the ecclesiastical experience of "being altogether" and "in one mouth". Altogether, like one Person, with one mouth. We hymn and glorify with one soul in one Body the most high God, Who is the God of Jesus Christ as regards his human nature and His Father according to His divine nature.

The Paulian experience unaltered in the Divine Liturgy

This reality, which the Apostle Paul expresses with the word "altogether" is lived in the Orthodox Divine Liturgy, where all those who are communing of the immaculate mysteries become relatives by blood. Today, in the age of sales in every area, it is more necessary than ever, for us to become liturgized people in order for us to give true, guaranteed consolation, the consolation of Christ to the troubled, harmed in many ways and spiritually "anemic" person of our day.