

SAINT THEKLA EQUAL TO THE APOSTLES, "SPIRITUAL CHILD" OF THE APOSTLE PAUL

Saint Thekla, who celebrates today, according to Saint Nikodemos the Haghiorite, attended the teaching of the Apostle Paul and was "formulated" spiritually by this. A genuine "spiritual child" of the Apostle of the gentiles, hailing from Iconium and a family of idolaters, which greatly resisted her choice. She often went to the home of Onesiphorus in Iconium, and heard the Paulian speech. Furthermore she would be so absorbed by it, that she would forget even to satisfy all the things necessary for life. She moved missionarily, she preached the Gospel with the blessing of Paul, she faced a multitude of unspeakable trials from the world and its train of thought and, finally, practicing asceticism in the outskirts of Seleucia, where she also performed a multitude of miracles, she reposed in the Lord in a deep old age. We should invoke the intercessions of the Saint, my beloved brethren, so that we can also be shown to be genuine children of our Church. Amen!

Archim. E. T.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2017 1ST SUNDAY OF LUKE *Thekla the Protomartyr & Equal to the Apostles, Silouan of Athos, Coprios the Righteous, Juvenaly & Peter the Aleut, New Martyrs of Alaska, Stephen the Martyr, The Most Holy Theotokos of Palianis, The Commemoration of the Miracle of the Theotokos Myrtidiotissis in Kythyra*

TONE OF THE WEEK : *Plagal of the Third Tone*

EOTHINON *Fifth Orthros Gospel*

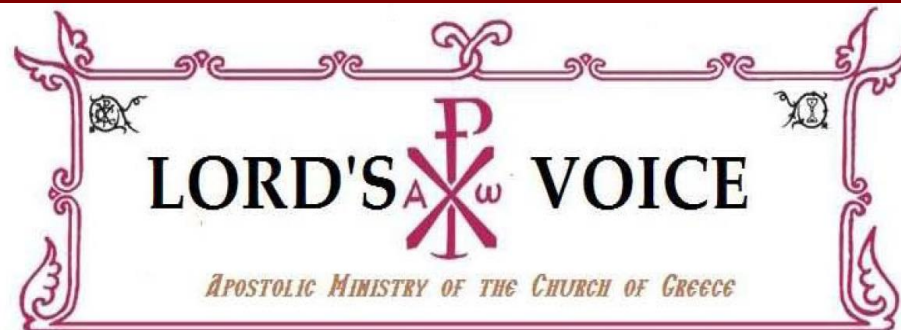
EPISTLE READING: *St. Paul's Second Letter to Timothy 3:10-15*

GOSPEL READING: *Luke 5:1-11*

NEXT SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2017 2ND SUNDAY OF LUKE *The Holy Protection of the Theotokos, Ananias, Apostle of the 70, Romanos the Melodist, John Koukouzelis the Psalti*

EPISTLE READING: *St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 6:16-18; 7:1*

GOSPEL READING: *Luke 6:31-36*



65TH YEAR

SEPTEMBER 24 2017

PAMPHLET # 39 (3356)

UNSHAKABLE IN FAITH

Timothy, to whom the Apostle Paul addresses also this second Epistle, calling him near him, met Paul finally for a second time in Rome, during the second capture of the Apostle of the gentiles. Subsequently he returned to Ephesus, where he remained until the time of the Emperor Dometian, at which time he also underwent a martyrly death, the Apostolic Commands narrate to us.

Difficult times

Paul reminds his trusted colleague Timothy, that the time is difficult. He speaks to him about the false teachers, whom he didn't hesitate elsewhere (Gal. 1:6) to call preachers of another "gospel", as also about obstacles that they are creating in the work of Mission. We're impressed by the pioneering use of the word "gospel", regarding false teachings, without naturally the Apostle rendering any normalcy to this. Using the language so freely and simultaneously so traditionally, he safeguards us younger ones from fanaticisms and strange persistences.

Paul also recommends that he have self denial and heroism, and gives him guiding pastoral "lines" towards his contemporary false teachers, commemorating a little earlier on Filetos and Ymenaios.

ST. PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO TIMOTHY 3:10-15

TIMOTHY, my son, you have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions, my sufferings, what befell me at Antioch, at Iconion, and at Lystra, what persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. Indeed all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil men and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceivers and deceived. But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus...

Paying attention to the text, we see Paul coloring the spiritual condition of Ephesus with rather dark colors, and he exhorts Timothy to preserve firmness in faith, juxtaposing the work and the blameless life of his teacher, to the difficulty of the times, and focusing mainly on his behavior in general, his dispositions and motives, faith, longsuffering and his love, his patience in the sufferings and the persecutions in the areas that Timothy also came to know, as Paul's disciple. He declares to him as a seal, that despite all the persecutions and the oppositions, the Lord saved him, something which makes him even firmer, and Paul exhorts his disciple to follow his example, because similar trials awaits him. Thus Paul inspires firmness in what they have learned and have been handed down, offering Timothy his own life as an example and urging his attention to not be swayed by wicked and deceiving persons, who will be deceived and will be deceiving others.

The teachers and the sacred letters

Our teachers in virtue, precede always in relationship to us. They are experienced and fiery teachers, "at whose feet" we

disciple, and furthermore – we wish it – with a disposition of lifelong discipleship. It is they who will exhort us in our struggle for virtue, they who know by experience the spiritual battle and its dangerous sides, they who came to know their own selves and, consequently, the other people as well, in the light of the truth of Christ.

Paul was one such infallible teacher of virtue in Christ for the Apostle Timothy, who reminds Timothy to keep vividly in his memory, not only all that he learned, but also from whom he learned them. The teacher is he who guides the disciple in Christ, making him at the appropriate time, a crucial vessel of the ecclesiastical body, suitable in whatsoever ministry the Church entrusts to him.

Paul mentions however about Timothy, that from a young child, he knew the Scriptures. This means that from a child, the Apostle Timothy had learned to delve in the Scriptures and the sacred texts, and his mind from then, was drenched by their light. Surely in this, his faithful Jewish mother, Eunice, played a role also.

So it is important that our children today, come into contact with the treasure of the Holy Scripture and the texts of our Fathers. These texts, appropriately given to the children, will comprise the temperate spiritual climate, for their soul and body to develop correctly, always combined with the worship of our Church, because in these texts "they live", "they breathe" and are correctly interpreted.

Consequently, here the serious work of Catechism is presented, in which the Church, from its very beginnings, gave very great importance, however also gives importance, in our days as well. The parents "are obligated", we would say, to contribute to this work, strongly urging their children to go to the catechetical groups of the local parishes, where they will obtain the appropriate spiritual antibodies for the general spiritual epidemic which plagues man in our days.