

of the Christian also against the passions and the demons. Whoever knows how to use them well, wins. These are the truth, a military "belt" of his age. The Christian, in other words, is girded with the truth and, if he lives this, he becomes a difficult target for the devil. "Sandals" are the eagerness and the zeal for the spiritual life that secures the believer from the plots of the wicked spirits. It is the change of the way of life of the prodigal, who wearing new shoes, approaches the Divine Eucharist.

"A helmet" is chastity and the purity of thoughts, enlightened thought and ceaseless prayer which makes the mind brave and unassailable by the arrows of wickedness. It is the discretion of spirits and the wisdom of the virtuous person. A "knife" sharp like a sword, is the word of God that smoothens, kneads, pierces the soul, revealing its unknown and hidden things and giving birth to tears of repentance, but which also garbs the believer with spiritual vestments, rejoicing and joy. The invincible weapon, a neuralgic center of all these spiritual supplies is ceaseless prayer. "We capture" the mother and she gives us her children, the virtues, the joy of Christ. Amen.

Archim. E. T.

SUNDAY,, DECEMBER 10, 2017 *10th Sunday of Luke The Holy Martyrs Menas, Hermogenes, and Eugephus Thomas the Righteous of Bithynia*

TONE OF THE WEEK : *Tone Two*

EOTHINON : *Fifth Orthros Gospel*

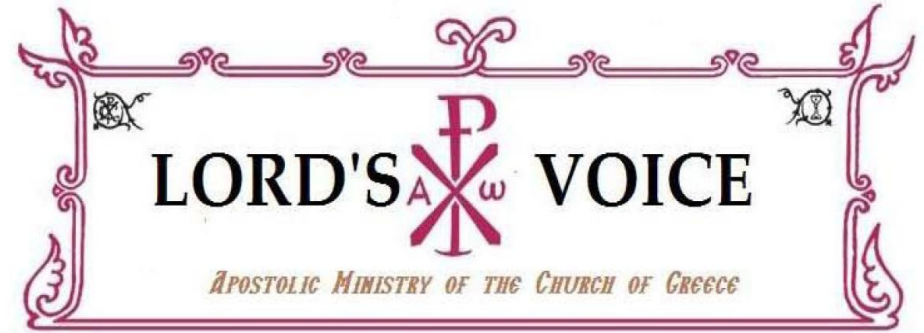
EPISTLE READING: *St. Paul's Letter to Ephesians 6:10-17*

GOSPEL READING: *Luke 13:10-17*

NEXT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2017, 11TH SUNDAY OF LUKE , Daniel the Prophet & Ananias, Azarias, & Misail, the Three Holy Youths, Dionysius of Zakynthos

EPISTLE READING: *St. Paul's Letter to Colossians 3:4-11*

GOSPEL READING: *Luke 14:16-24*



65TH YEAR

DECEMBER 10 2017

PAMPHLET # 50 (3367)

THE SPIRITUAL BATTLE AND PRAYER

In today's Epistle passage to the Ephesians, the Apostle Paul speaks about the spiritual battle that the Christian faces, and which is not a sensorial battle, but a noetic one, and much more fearsome than the sensorial battles, no matter how dreadful these are. And this because the eternal course of our soul depends on our victory or our defeat in the noetic battle.

Our entrance into the Church

With the mystery of Baptism each one of us put on Christ. Our body and our soul were drenched in the blinding and resurrectional transfiguring Light of Christ. We were planted in the garden of the Church. With holy Chrism we received the gifts of the Holy Spirit. So we are "plantings" which can develop, grow and be sanctified in the mystical body of Christ, which is His Church. So our embodiment occurs with Baptism and Chrism. With our participation however, in the body and blood of Christ, the Divine Communion we become one body, we become one body between us, in Christ. So the "planting" needs the mild climate of the Church and the "drinking" of Divine Communion to advance spiritually. Otherwise "it withers", and while man is mechanically baptized, essentially he does not differ from

ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO EPHESIANS 6:10-17

Brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace; besides all these, taking the shield of faith, with which you can quench all the flaming darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

an unbaptized person, even an atheist person who is also against the Church.

The “spiritual things of wickedness”

The innumerable swarms of demons, about whom the Apostle speaks, circumambulate in the air and use in a very sly manner, as his colleagues, people who declare to be atheists by conviction, battle-loving, enmitous to the Church, who are money-loving, pleasure-loving, of free morals and authority mongers, probably sometimes manifestly also on the side of the devil. Sometimes the demons may sway even whole nations to destruction, even the entire world, which “lies in wickedness” (1 Jn. 5:19).

However the greatest success of the devil is to convince the unknowing ones that he does not exist, to use them easily as his instruments. He camouflages himself thus easily. Just as also he hides behind man’s passions in order to throw the complete

responsibility for his falls on him and to make him despair. He uses however, as a supporting means of his “kingdom” and of his domination, the passions of whoever of us remain unrepentant, immovable in our evil customs and habits and in our sinful works.

The demons cooperate with each other and push people also with the same passions to cooperate under the façade of “friendship”, because only one friendship exists, friendship in Christ. Thus he who is swayed by alcohol, will find consolation in the alcoholic. The avaricious one, in the money-loving person. The pleasure-loving one, in the fleshly person. The hooked person, on the hooked person! Thus what our ancient forbears were saying is very triumphantly verified, “the similar one forever keeps company with the similar one”, in other words, those similar in way of life, keep company with each other. This, of course, can be said positively also.

If a friendship is not based on Christ, even if there is good will in the beginning, it develops into a cooperation only for evil, while in the end, it takes the form of a “sham friendship”, it blows up in the air also, leaving an unbelievable sense of bitterness and revenge in the poor person. Furthermore, those whom the devil allies himself with in the beginning, afterwards he exposes them, precisely because he never stands in the truth. So for this reason, we need to stress to our children also the need for them to build lasting friendships, lifelong ones, with Christ however, as the foundation. Let’s take Basil the Great and Saint Gregory the Theologian as an example. Their friendship remained proverbial, because it was made firm on the unshakable rock of faith in Christ. So a friendship in Christ is one of the most serious spiritual weapons of a Christian today.

Other spiritual weapons

We know initially from the mouth of Christ himself that the passions and the demons are hit with two strong weapons, prayer and fasting. In a symbolic manner, Paul mentions other weapons