

"he was lost... So that the Scripture might be fulfilled" does not mean a fulfillment of a goal. "It refers to an idiomatic expression of the Scripture" says the sacred Chrysostom, "which poses as a final cause, the free outcome of the matter".

Probably something else furthermore from this prayer of Christ may sound a little odd to our ears: "I completed" he says, "the work that you entrusted me to do". Surely the work which Christ undertook, the salvation of the world, has not been completed. It is a work that is not able to be completed one-sidedly, only from the side of Christ. Our own cooperation is also needed.

He placed "the root of the goods" in the field of our hearts, as the golden-tongued one observes, but the fruitfulness depends also on our own eager work. The work which Christ "finished" is that He glorified His Father with perfect obedience to His will, and that He revealed His name to people. He revealed to us, in other words that, just as He Himself, thus also His Father is the creator of the world, our light and life, the victor of death, holy and full of so much love for us, that He sent His Son in order to save us.

The perfect joy of salvation, which He also prays to His Father for us to taste, presupposes the free adoption of this gift on our part.

Archim. B. L.

SUNDAY , MAY 20, 2018, FATHERS OF THE 1ST COUNCIL , *The Holy Martyr Thalleleus , Mark the Hermit , Father Alexis, Metropolitan of Moscow , Lydia of Philippi, Equal to the Apostles, John, Joseph, and Nikitas the Monks of Chios*

TONE OF THE WEEK : *Tone Plagal Second*

EOTHINON : *Tenth Orthros Gospel*

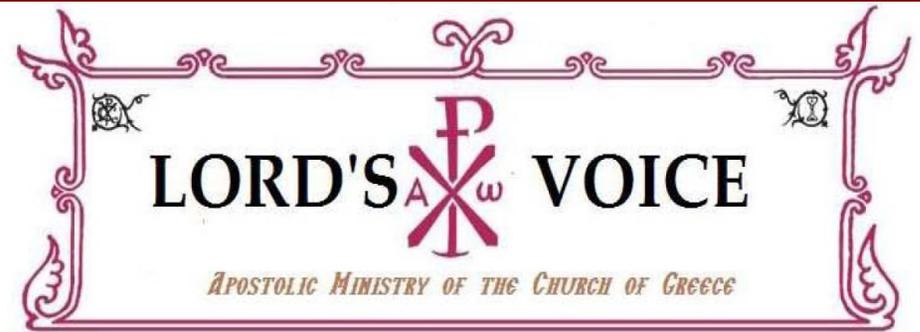
EPISTLE READING: *Acts of Apostles 20:28-36*

GOSPEL READING: *John 17:1-13*

NEXT SUNDAY, MAY 27, 2018 HOLY PENTECOST , *The Holy Hieromartyr Helladius , John the Russian of Evia , Theodora the Virgin-martyr & Didymos the Martyr, Venerable Bede .*

EPISTLE READING: *Acts of Apostles Acts 2:1-11*

GOSPEL READING: *John 7:37-52; 8:12*



66TH YEAR MAY 20 2018 PAMPHLET #20 (3390)

GUARDIANS OF THE APOSTOLIC TRADITIONS

Today our Church calls us to honor the memory of the 318 Fathers, who comprised the First Holy and Ecumenical Synod in 325 in Nicaea of Bithynia. There they championed the correct faith in the divinity of Christ, condemning the blasphemous heresy of Arius. That the Son is of one essence with the Father, in other words, He also is perfect God, is a basic dogma of our faith, which is supported also in the witness of Christ, which is contained in His high priestly prayer. An excerpt of this prayer, which Christ did after His last words to His disciples in the Mystical Supper, is today's gospel reading.

Above in the throne, below in the tomb

Christ witnesses about the truth that He is of one essence, co-unbeginning and co-everlasting with His Father, that He was always, as also His Father, before time was made, "before all the ages". And now that His earthly mission is finishing, He asks from His Father to glorify him also as a man with the glory that He had near Him, before the world was created. This glory will appear especially with His brilliant Resurrection and with His glorious Ascension, when He sits also with His human nature at the right of the throne of His Father.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN 17:1-13

At that time, Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him power over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work which you gave me to do; and now, Father, you glorify me in your own presence with the glory which I had with you before the world was made.

"I have manifested your name to the men whom you gave me out of the world; yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you; for I have given them the words which you gave me, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you did send me. I am praying for them; I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are mine; all mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me; I have guarded them, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to you; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves."

Christ however, also considers His glory equally to be also His crucifactory sacrifice, His obedience unto death to His Father and His love for us. So for this reason He says: "the time came. Glorify your Son, O Father, so that your Son can also glorify You". Thus He shows very clearly that He is proceeding to the cross not involuntarily but with His will. Because" how much more

intensely could He show this"-Chrysostom asks – "rather than by praying for this and considering it His glory?"

Worthy of the calling

Christ makes particular mention in His high priestly prayer of His disciples. This is a reference, which is extended forward also in the holy Fathers, the "precise guardians of the apostolic traditions". He asks His Father to preserve them united with Him and with each other, so that they be one body, just as He and His Father are one, having the same nature and essence.

The phrase "I'm not asking you about the world but about those whom you gave me" should not be interpreted as a favoritism. The Apostle Paul tells us that "God wants all people to be saved" and that "there is no favoritism in God". He is simply praying here for the Church. He is praying, in other words, that "the leaven which will leaven the whole bread" or "the salt of the earth" which will make the world tasty will not ruin and will not allow it to rot. And in such a prayer the distinction of the Church from the world of disbelief and of sin is necessary.

Furthermore also, the phrase which is repeated so much "those whom you gave me" should not lead to the misunderstanding that God- also playing favorites – selected some people, and furthermore without their will, in order to make them disciples of Christ. The Apostle Paul again, explains that God called and glorified those whom He knew from before, would freely love Him. Only freely can one become worthy of the calling of God.

"In freedom were you chosen"

And only freely can one lose this honor for himself to be lost just as Judas. Christ called him the "son of perdition", because "he himself with his will, or rather with his wickedness and his profanity, led himself to perdition (Saint Cyril of Alexandria). The