

is to cultivate this field, this very expensive dowry of the Lord of Savaoth, the beloved newly planted" which the Prophet Isaiah calls, the "field of God", which the Apostle Paul will say.

The agony of Christ

To this agony, the great Russian writer Nikolai Gogol positively answered, even if in a ripe age, and in a younger age, "his spiritual child", Dostoyevsky. In 1849 a simple woman gave to the 28 year old anarchist, Dostoyevsky, a New Testament, while he was leaving for Siberia, condemned to a four year exile. At first he was ripping pages in order to clean his pipe. At a certain moment however, he wanted out of curiosity to read. So he allowed this "amputated" Gospel to enter like a seed to his, up till then, infertile soul and to transfigure it into a very fruitful tree, which continues nourishing with its juicy fruits, those "hungering and thirsting for the righteousness" of God.

Christ agonizes. "I waited", He shouts, "for you to do righteousness". "I'm waiting for what fruits you will make. I await many and good fruits from the field, which I gave you". Let us not disappoint Him. Let us not make Him mourn for any of us, with a mouth again of the very loud voiced Isaiah saying: "I waited for it to make grapes, while it made thorns. I waited for it to do righteousness, while it made iniquity" (5:4).

Archim. B. L.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2018 SUNDAY OF THE 7TH ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, Nazarius, Gervasius, Protasius, & Celsus of Milan, Praised Ignatius, Archbishop of Methymna, Righteous Paraskeve of Serbia

TONE OF THE WEEK : *Second Tone*

EOTHINON : *Eighth Orthros Gospel*

EPISTLE READING: *2nd Letter to Titus 3:8-15*

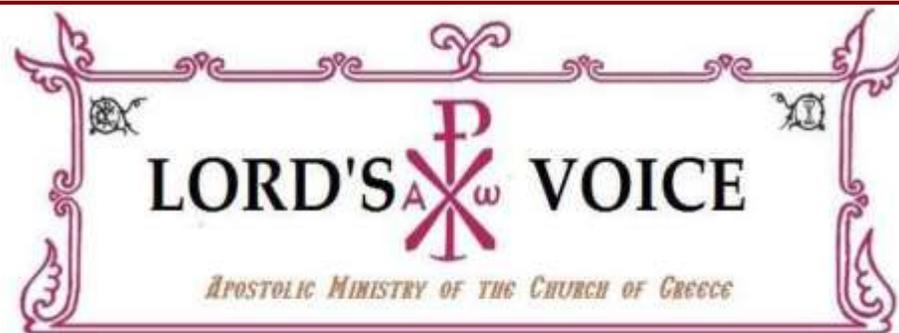
GOSPEL READING: *Luke 8:5-15*

NEXT SUNDAY SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2018 6TH

SUNDAY OF LUKE , Hilarion the Great , Our Righteous Father Christodoulos, the Wonderworker of Patmos , Martyrs Theodote and Socrates, John the New Martyr of Peleponnesos, Righteous Philotheus.

EPISTLE READING: *Letter to Galatians 2:16-20*

GOSPEL READING: *Luke 8:526-39*



66TH YEAR OCTOBER 14 2018 PAMPHLET #41 (3411)

BECOME GOOD EARTH

In quite a few parables, Christ uses images from farm life. In the parable, however, of the sower, He forms a very strange farming image. No farmer, no matter how inexperienced he is, throws his seed on the road, on rocks, or in the thorns. Despite these things, Christ "just as the sun dawns upon the wicked and the good and He rains upon the righteous and the unrighteous", thus He wants to "be sewing" His word in all types "of grounds" of the hearts of men.

How does the field become useless?

The interpretation which He Himself makes on the parable, reveals the painful truth that we fallen people, don't "go crazy" furthermore, to hear His words. They are not to us –as they ought to be – "more desirable than gold and very precious stone" nor "sweeter than honey and wax" (Ps. 18:11). We allowed our heart to be charmed by the deceptive sweetness of our passions. Thus it was abandoned, uncultivated and unfertile, and it ended up like the "hard and unplowed path", according to Saint Cyril of Alexandria, "which the demons and a world which lies in wickedness trample on, together with our passions". We

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO (LUKE 8:5-15)

The Lord said this parable: "A sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell along the path, and was trodden under foot, and the birds of the air devoured it. And some fell on the rock; and as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns grew with it and choked it. And some fell into good soil and grew, and yielded a hundredfold." And when his disciples asked him what this parable meant, he said, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God; but for others they are in parables, so that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand. Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. The ones along the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, that they may not believe and be saved. And the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy; but these have no root, they believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature. And as for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bring forth fruit with patience." As he said these things, he cried out "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

"humiliated it", according also to the Alexandria and poet, "in the many relations of the world, in the many movements and speeches.... Exposing it to the daily foolishness of relationships and companies". In such a heart, the sewn word of God will be "lightly placed» since our indolence did not allow us to "completely hide" it deep within us, for it to take root and to bear fruit. And the devil very easily, like the birds, "lifts the word" whenever he wants, from our heart.

Rocky ground is the heart of the fainthearted person, who – according to Zegavenos –does not have "much earth, that is firmness". It does not have enough dirt in order to receive the seed and to sprout. The thorns, finally, which we allowed to grow and to altogether choke the seed, the Evangelist Matthew denotes more aptly, speaking about the care of this age and the deception of wealth". "Notice," says the sacred Chrysostom, "he did not say that this age, in other words, that we're living in this age, or that the wealth chokes up the seed. But the care of this age and the deception of wealth. Let us not accuse the things but our own corrupt opinion". It is not the world or our age, "which don't allow us to be sanctified', but our own evil disposition.

Freely seek to learn!

And the "to you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God" Christ told His disciples, when they asked Him for an interpretation of the parable, not because He is a favorer of persons. Christ does not make distinctions, nor does He pre-decide who will be saved. The "you" explains Saint Theophylactos, refers "to those who seek to learn". Everyone without exception, whoever freely thirsts to learn the mysteries of the kingdom of God, become "chosen", not because God arbitrarily chose them, but because they chose Him, making good use of their freedom.

Consequently, only our own "corrupt opinion", the fruit of our own evil use of freedom, is the basic cause which makes the "very good" God-given fields of our hearts to end up, one, on the one hand, a trampled road, another, on the other hand, a rocky ground and another a valley full of thorns. So for this reason also, Christ moving out of His infinite philanthropy is humbled, and as a supposed "inexperienced" (without experience) farmer, He sews not only in the "good earth" of the saints, but also in the uncultivated grounds of sinners. And He waits full of agony, for when a person will freely understand, that the basic goal of his life