

poet who was awarded the Nobel, he complained that in the spiritual climate of our age, the departure from the joy of the senses, bothers him. "Contemporary poetry", he said "unfortunately was enslaved to situations of complexes, influenced by guilts, that the dogmas loaded us with (Christianities, idealisms etc.) In order for my work to be fulfilled, it demanded a life erotically free. I followed my private path, living without obstacles. Authentically. However today they don't understand this holiness of the senses".

One is grieved -, seeing a – supposedly – spiritual person perverting "in a smart-alecky way" the meaning of words, calling "holiness of the senses" erotic looseness without obstacles. It's a shame that this poet did not "read" the entire troparion. If he had "read" it well, he would have noticed that the Woman, who is glorified with this hymn, struggled more than any other person for the true holiness of the senses, feeding our heart only with "whatever is true, chaste, pure and of good reputation". Thus she was granted not simply to taste true joy and peace, but to become the Mother of God of true Peace and the cause of the Joy of All.

Archim. B. L

**SUNDAY, APRIL 21, 2019 PALM SUNDAY, Our Holy Father Maximian, Patriarch of Constantinople, Theodore the Holy, Martyr & his mother Philippa of Perge**

**TONE OF THE WEEK :** *Plagal Second Tone*

**EOTHINON :** *Third Orthros Gospel*

**Epistle Reading:** *Letter to Philippians 4:4-8*

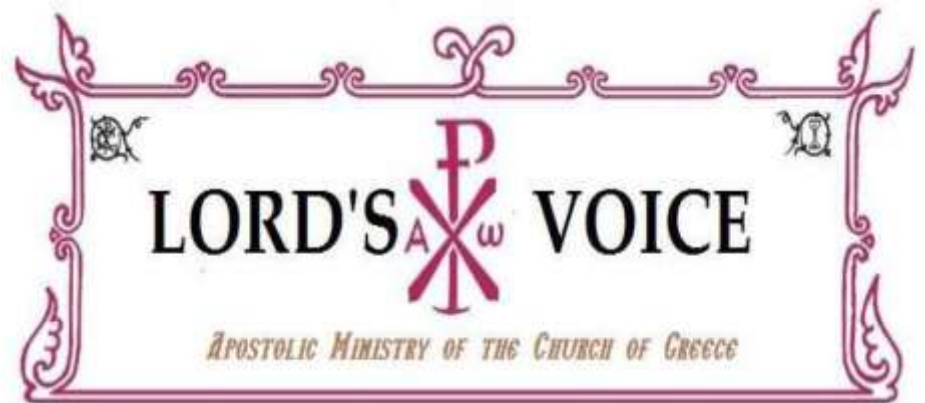
**Gospel Reading:** John 12:1-18

**NEXT SUNDAY, APRIL 28, 2019 GREAT AND HOLY PASCHA ,**

The Holy Nine Martyrs of Cyzicus , John the Martyr of Romania, Memnon the Wonderworker

**EPISTLE READING:** *Acts of the Apostles 1:1-8*

**GOSPEL READING:** John 1:1-17



67<sup>TH</sup> YEAR

APRIL 21, 2019

PAMPHLET # 16 (3438)

## THE HYMN OF JOY

A slogan that is propagandized by all the Means of Mass Communication and which prevails in the contemporary mindset, mainly among the youth, is the familiar: "Life is very small to be grievous. So for this reason, make a party out of it." No retort. Who would not want his life to be a continual party? The reality however, shows that life rather is a "valley of tears," in which there are only moments of joy, whereas the "majority is toil and pain".

### Joy-producing mourning

The strange thing is that today when we are entering into the Week of the Passion of Christ, in par excellence days of mourning and pain, our Church reveals with the mouth of the Apostle Paul, the secret of everlasting joy. Christ promised it to His disciples, speaking to them for the last time before His passion. It is the joy that sprang from His crucifactory death: "for behold joy came through the Cross into all the world" and became undetectable with His resurrection. He told them, bidding

## ST. PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO PHILIPPIANS 4:4-9

BRETHREN, rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let all men know your forbearance. The Lord is at hand. Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, do; and the God of peace will be with you.

He told them, bidding them farewell: "now, on the one hand, you have sadness. However - after my resurrection - I will see you again. And then your heart will fill with joy, which no one and nothing will be able to take away from you" (Jn. 16:22). So justifiably, Saint Paul in today's Epistle passage "doubles" his exhortation for joy. This refers to joy that, according to the sacred Chrysostom, does not oppose the attitude of Christ about those mourning. "Christ did not bless whoever is mourning for the loss of persons or things", the Saint will say, "but those who are mourning for their sins. And the joy about which Paul is speaking to us, isn't simply not contrary to such mourning, but precisely it springs from it." The more we are mourning for our sins, and in repenting, we love the will of the Lord, all the more joy we obtain "in the Lord".

### **The necessary cooperation**

"In the Lord" consequently, means, on the one hand, that the unique source of true and permanent joy is Christ, and, on the other hand, that our own cooperation is also needed in order for us to enjoy this joy. Christ does not impose it on anyone. If He were imposing it, it would not be joy, but hell, because very

simply, there is no joy without freedom. The more freely we seek Christ and are keeping His will, all the more He grants us His own genuine and undetractable joy. And we are keeping His will, His will, on the one hand, with the asceticism of love, of leniency, of revengelessness and of meekness. While we are seeking Him, on the other hand, with prayer, which should not be only supplications and requests, but also a glorificational thanksgiving. Saint Paisios the Haghiorite would characteristically say: "Let the 'glory to Thee oh God' never be missing from your lips. I, even when I am hurting, have the 'glory to Thee oh God' as the pill for the pain. It is higher even than the 'Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me'". My neighbor, Father Tikhon the Russian, used to say: "The 'Lord have mercy' has 100 drachmas, the 'glory to Thee oh God' has 1000 drachmas". Furthermore, the Apostle Paul reminds us of Christ's saying "our deliverance is approaching" with the words "the Lord is near". Any time now, the time of afflictions is finishing, since every moment is bringing us closer to the coming of the Lord.

The fruit of glorificational prayer is deliverance from anxiety and the anxious care for earthly things. Thus, that peace which is incomprehensible for the human mind, comes, that Christ granted us with His crucifactory sacrifice, reconciling us with His Father. This peace safeguards our hearts from every temptation and deception, so that we remain firm in faith and in love for God. And here nevertheless, our free cooperation is absolutely necessary, with us feeding our thoughts with all that is chaste, just, pure, beloved to God, and praiseworthy. Only with such a pure food, says the Apostle Paul, are we able to bear the fruit practically, of the deifying virtues, which are not unimplementable but we saw the Apostle himself first cultivate them.

### **The holiness of the senses**

How grievous it is, the sanctified and so tried method of obtaining genuine peace and joy, being scorned and slandered by some supposedly spiritual people. In an interview of a certain