

disregarding the consequences. Thus he was recompensed and now, for the expenses he incurred in offering a meal to the Apostles: "He washed and was washed. He fed and was fed", Chrysostom will say, meaning the Mystery of Baptism which the prison guard reaped from the hands of the Apostles.

More so, one would await the conversion of the prisoners, since they tasted more intensely the miracle of the deliverance from the bonds. And for one to think that they lived also not the smallest miracle of the all night stance of the Apostles. The Golden-tongued one colorfully describes it: "Even though they received so many beatings, wounds and curses, even though they were firmly bound in the darkest prison, they were not defeated either by drowsiness, nor by pain, nor by fear. On the contrary, all these stirred them up to a vigil of prayer, filling them with ineffable joy and pleasure". "How oddly the free will of people works", another interpreter wonders, seeing that the bright example of the Apostles woke up only the prison guard, leaving all the prisoners indifferent.

Christ said that the essential sin, for which the Comforter will censure the world, is because people did not believe in Him. And even if they saw the Light of his truth clearly, they preferred remaining in the darkness

Archim. B. L

### **SUNDAY, JUNE 02, 2019 SUNDAY OF THE BLIND**

**MAN** *Nicephorus The Confessor, Patriarch Of Constantinople, Erasmos Of Ochrid & His Companion Martyrs, Demetrios The New Martyr Of Philadelphia , Constantine The New Martyr Of The Hagarenes*

**tone of the week :** *Plagal First Tone*

**EOTHINON :** *Eigth Eothinon*

**EPISTLE READING:** *Acts of the Apostles 16:16-34*

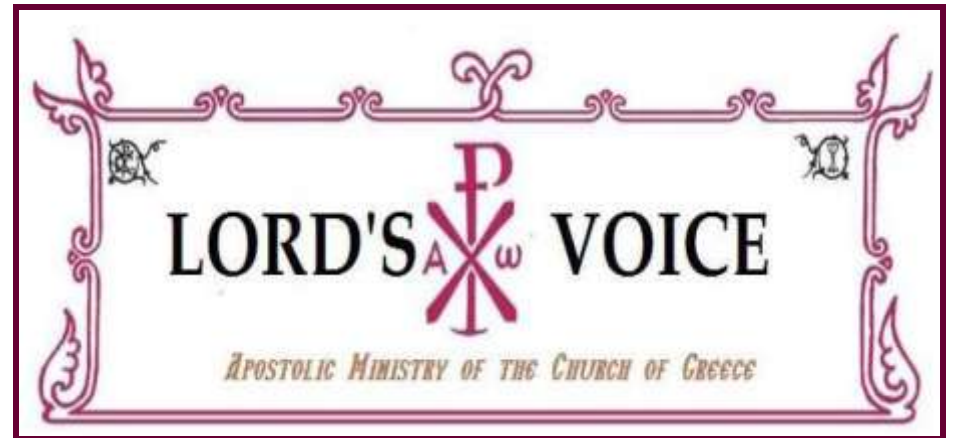
**GOSPEL READING:** *John 9:1-3*

### **NEXT SUNDAY, JUNE 09, 2019 FATHERS OF THE 1ST COUNCIL**

*Cyrl, Patriarch of Alexandria , 3 Virgin-martyrs of Chios , 5 Nuns beheaded in Persia: Thecla, Mariamne, Martha, Mary, & Enmatha, Righteous Father Columba of Iona, Righteous Father Cyril of Belozersk*

**EPISTLE READING:** *Acts of the Apostles 20:16-18, 28-36*

**GOSPEL READING:** *John 17:1-13*



**67<sup>TH</sup> YEAR    JUNE 2, 2019    PAMPHLET # 22 (3444)**

### **“LOVE OF DARKNESS OR OF LIGHT?”**

Today the gospel does not only refer to the healing of the blind man. In the passage from the Book of Acts we also see the Apostles healing people born blind. The difference is that in the first reading, a physically blind person is healed, whereas in the second one, people blind in soul.

### **Causes of spiritual blindness**

It is obvious that curing the eyes of the soul is more difficult than curing physical blindness. To begin with, the person blind in soul, it is not always a given that he admits his blindness, something which never occurs with those physically blind. Afterwards, he is usually not disposed to cooperate with the doctor. In the case of spiritual blindness also there is no hope of cure, without the eager cooperation of patient and doctor. The basic reason for unwillingness is that - not rarely - the person blind in soul has gotten comfortable in the darkness. Sometimes so much so, that he has begun loving it. And how can he not love it, when the darkness “serves” very well: it covers his passions and shames, it encourages the tumbling down into indolence and carefreeness, it nurtures false senses that everything is going well. So, whoever attempts to take him out of this egotistical comfort, becomes hateful to him. Christ denoted it with the words: “Each one who does house, and set food before them; and he rejoiced with all his household that he had believed in God

## ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 16:16-34

IN THOSE DAYS, as we apostles were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by soothsaying. She followed Paul and us, crying, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation." And this she did for many days. But Paul was annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit, "I charge you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour. But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the market place before the rulers; and when they had brought them to the magistrates they said, "These men are Jews and they are disturbing our city. They advocate customs which it is not lawful for us Romans to accept or practice." The crowd joined in attacking them; and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely. Having received this charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and every one's fetters were unfastened. When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul cried with a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here." And he called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out and said, "Men, what must I do to be saved?" And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their wounds, and he was baptized at once, with all his family. Then he brought them up into his house, and set food before them; and he rejoiced with all his household that he had believed in God

## Causes of hate towards the Truth

The Apostle Paul, the "son of light" and preacher of the only true Light, curing the young slave who had a "spirit of divinization", revealed initially the slyness of "advertising" which the devil did to him. With this "advertisement," the wicked spirit wanted to deceive those favorably disposed to Paul and to draw them to trust in his "soothsayings". Aside, of course, from the devil's slyness, the Apostle uncovered also the avarice of the masters of the possessed woman. And the "young girl" on the one hand, was delivered from the possession of the demon. Her masters though, suited to the darkness of avarice, instead of believing in the preaching of the Apostle and thanking him for curing their slave girl, slandered him to the Authorities and managed to lock him up –together with his companion, the Apostle Silas, - in prison.

Obviously it was not only the avarice which blinded the wretched people. It was also their trust in the soothsaying "gift" of the woman. It refers to a trust which comprised one of the basic causes of hate of the idol worshipping world toward the preaching of the Apostles. The Historian Lactantius mentions that Diocletian took the first measures against the Christians, when in a teleturgical sacrifice, he ascertained, as an eye witness, that the smooth outcome of a gazing at innards was disturbed by the Christians present who did their cross. And later on, Julian the Apostate will order, in Antioch, the departure of the relic of Saint Babylas from the courtyard of Apollo's temple, because it prevented the sorcerers from using it. Based on this event, a wonderful poem was written. It is truly a great tragedy, instead of opening your eyes to the light, for you to not simply be closing them hermitically shut, but also for you to be becoming its merciless enemy.

## The bravery of love for light

On the contrary, it is a great bravery to be keeping your eyes open to the light, no matter how much the cost of the cure is, which that (the light) revealed, that you must accept. Such a bravery., the prison guard of the Apostles showed. The earthquake and the bravery of Paul, opened up the eyes of his soul. He also admired the Apostle's philanthropy, because not only did he not leave, whereas he could have, but he also prevented him (the prison guard) from committing suicide. The bright virtues of the holy prison guard revealed to him the "path of salvation". So for this reason, he eagerly accepted to be catechized and be baptized as a family,