

Cross, is gaining people not on account of the grace of God, but on account of his eloquence". However, a very educated father of the church is saying this about an also very educated Apostle. Consequently, we should not reach the other extreme, maintaining that Orthodoxy is the confession of "simple people." The chief contemporary theologian, Father George Florofsky, will protest intensely saying: "That the faith of the illiterate old lady is considered a model of Orthodox piety comprises the most dangerous form of darkening, that changes Orthodoxy into some type of moralistic speech". Furthermore also, Saint Kosmas did not only say that "the evil will come from the educated ones", but he also said that "our faith was not made firm by unlearned saints, but by wise and educated ones, who both explained the Holy Scriptures precisely to us and through the divinely inspired words sufficiently enlightened us..."

The message of the truly wise- both in God and in the world - Paul is that the worker of the Gospel must use his whatsoever gifts and worldly supplies for the glory of God, and not for his own self, and place them in the ministry of the unity of the Church.

Archim. B. L.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 11, 2019 8TH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW, *Euplus the Holy Martyr & Archdeacon of Cantania, Our Holy Father Niphonus, Patriarch of Constantinople, Commemoration of St. Spyridon's Miracle in Corfu against the Turkish invasion of 1716, Blane, Bishop of Bute*

TONE OF THE WEEK : *Grave Tone*

EOETHINON : *Eight Orthros Gospel*

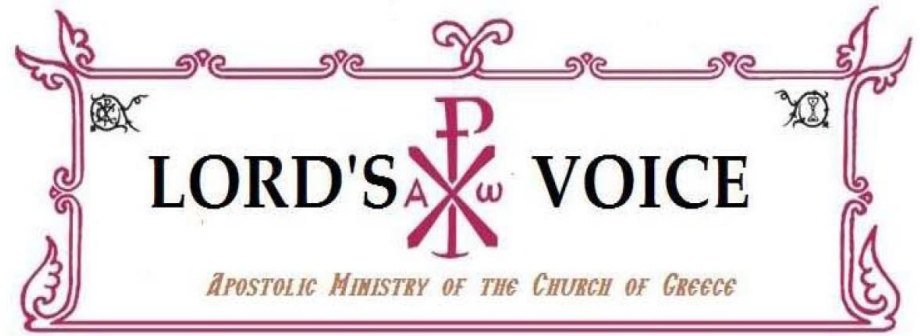
EPISTLE READING: *St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 1:10-17*

GOSPEL READING: *Matthew 14:14-22*

NEXT, SUNDAY, AUGUST 18, 2019 9TH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW, *Floros & Lauros the Monk-martyrs of Illyria, Hermos the Martyr, Leontus the martyr, John & George, Patriarchs of Constantinople, Relics of Arsenios the Righteous of Paros, Afterfeast of the Dormition of our Most Holy Lady the Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary, Constantine the New Martyr of Capua, Matthew the New Martyr of Gerakari*

EPISTLE READING: *St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 3:9-17*

GOSPEL READING: *Matthew 14:22-34*



67TH YEAR AUGUST 11 2019 PAMPHLET #32 (3454)

THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH

Christ, finishing His high priestly prayer, which He addressed to His Father immediately after the Mystical Supper, said the words: "My holy Father, I am praying not only for my disciples but also for those who with the preaching of my disciples will believe in me, so that everyone may be one. Just as you, Father, are united with me, and I with you, thus so they also may be united with us" (Jn. 17:21). Three times Christ repeats this phrase in his high priestly prayer: "That they may be one", in other words, that everyone who believes in me may be one.

"In the same opinion"

After these things, how could the unity of the believers in the churches that he supported not be a primary agony of the Apostle Paul? Thus, when he was informed that in the church of Corinth "schisms" had been caused, he dedicated almost the one fourth of this first epistle to them, trying to cure this big wound. These were "schisms" but not in the later ecclesiastical meaning. Neither were they separated by dogmatic differences, but there were groups attached to certain presiding people of the Christian community. Each group considered its own leader as more genuine, higher and more charismatic than the others. The condition had taken on dangerous dimensions, because it was abolishing the unity of the Church

THE GOSPEL 1ST ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO CORINTHIANS 1:10-17

Brethren, I appeal to you by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree and that there be no dissensions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment. For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there is quarreling among you, my brethren. What I mean is that each one of you says, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ." Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispos and Gaius; lest any one should say that you were baptized in my name. (I did baptize also the household of Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized any one else.) For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

So justifiably, the pain of the founder of Christian eccleiology, the Apostle Paul, is great, and he will express it in a pastoral manner. He begins in a mild tone with the "I ask". Furthermore, as if he himself on his own did not suffice, he asks them "through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ". And the sacred Chrysostom desires to raise the tones and he puts in the mouth of the apostle the words: "I take on Christ as an ally, and helper, his mistreated and cursed name". But the breaking up of the unity of His Church is an injustice and curse.

So for this reason, repeating the definition "the same" three times, he indicates to them the cure, urging them to have identity of confession of faith, identity of train of thought and identity of inner disposition, in other words love. And wanting to help them to understand the foul dimensions of their breakup, "he discusses with them more strikingly", according to Saint Theophylactos. He scolds them noting that the idolization of persons "separates" the Person itself of Christ. And it is tragic that some people fell into

"idolization" even of Christ, "putting in equal rank the master with the servants", with making Him their own exclusive "group leader". It was as if they were saying: "we do not need teachers and apostles, but we belong directly to Christ and only from Him do we accept guidance".

The greater destruction

After these things the Apostle, not finding another way to express his bitterness, breaks out with a question: "So was Christ apportioned? I'm addressing everyone who say, we are Paul's, and I ask them: maybe was Paul crucified for your salvation? Or maybe are you baptized in the name of Paul, so that you henceforth belong to him?" This "explosion" surprises even the Golden-tongued one: "Do you see anger?" he says. "Do you see surprise? Do you see words full of frustration?" It is a justified frustration, since in the end "what is more destructive than everything" is the breakup of the Church.

The Apostle refers to baptism, because it comprised the cause of group-making around the person who was doing the baptism. So for this reason also, he tells them, according to Photius the Great: "I thank God, because having baptized few people I did not give to some people a cause to say: I baptized many, for him to gather around him a group of disciples and thus to obtain the name of a teacher". Baptism, of course, is a great mystery. However it is not the one baptizing that makes it "great" but Christ. Furthermore, baptism is the work "only of the priest. While preaching, of a brave man who bears pain and is ready for death", Zygavenos will say "photographing" Paul. It takes a lot of toil for the preacher to change the mind of the unbeliever, to chase away the delusion and then to plant in his soul the truth.

A unifying use of gifts

And of course, the main supplies of the preacher are neither the university degrees nor the eloquence of Demosthenes. "If Paul were more educated than Plato", says Chrysostom, "then they would have said that his preaching, in other words, the foolishness of the