

He give it to His Father? Why, on the one hand, we're not held prisoner by the Father, on the other hand, what Father is he who delights in the Blood of his Only Begotten Son?"

And the Saint answers, illuminating matters: "Yes," he says. "It is obvious that the Father received the ransom. However, neither did He ask for it, nor did He have need of it. He accepted it, because the plan of our salvation was for man to be sanctified by the human nature of Christ". The perfect obedience of the Son to the Father sanctified us. An obedience unto death, not in order to satisfy the divine Justice, but in order to crush the authority of the disobedient and rebel devil, and thus for us to also be freed, to the degree, of course, that we freely obey the will of the Father.

Archim. B. L

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2019 ECCLESIASTICAL NEW

YEAR. *Symeon the Stylite, Synaxis of the Recovery of the Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos of Miasenae, The 40 Holy Ascetic Virgin Martyrs of Thrace and their Teacher Ammon the Deacon, Holy Martyrs Calliste and Siblings: Euodus and Hermogenes, Righteous Meletius, The Struggler of the Muioupolis Mountain, Jesus (Joshua) of Navi, Nicholas of Kourtaliotis*

TONE OF THE WEEK : *Second Tone*

GOTHINON : *Eleventh Orthros Gospel*

EPISTLE READING: *St. Paul's First Letter to Timothy 2:1-7*

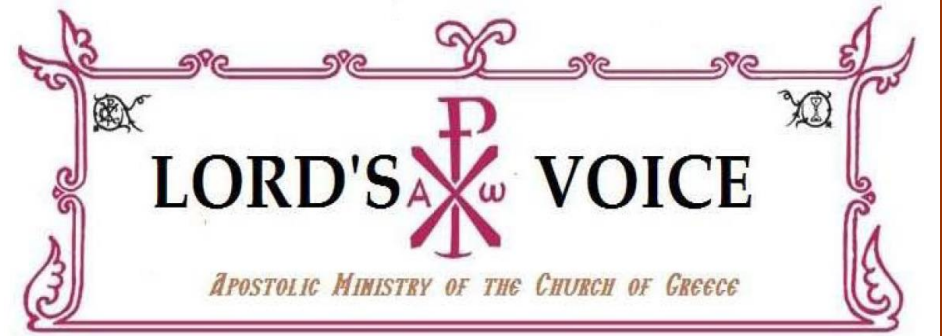
GOSPEL READING: *Luke 4:16-22*

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 08, 2019 SUNDAY BEFORE HOLY

CROSS, *The Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, Sophronios, Bishop of Iberia.*

EPISTLE READING: *St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 6:11-18*

GOSPEL READING: *John 3:13-17*



67TH YEAR SEPTEMBER 1 2019 PAMPHLET #35 (3457)

THE DELIVERING MEDIATION

The head composer of a large American periodical, in a recent book of his, describes the relative honorable experiment he did, in order to become a conscientiously religious person, only for one year. After this experiment, he did not maintain bonds with a certain confession. He admitted however, that he kept a good habit, worthy of imitation: to pray for others. "I continue to like these prayers", he says. For me it is a spiritual training. Every night, I pray for 10 minutes, for friends who are being tried. It is 10 minutes, during which I cease being egocentric."

Prayer for everyone

The ascertainments of the foreign writer are quite "Orthodox". He considers prayer "spiritual training", which – even for 10 minutes – frees us from the bonds of our egocentrism. And whereas every training has some toil, this non conscientious Christian, admits that these prayers please me, since "I continue liking them", many Christians by name do not like them, whom he scolds. The sacred Chrysostom – interpreting today's epistle reading: "Let us learn at some point", he says, to be correct Christians. And how will we learn it, if we do not do the easiest thing, to pray, in other words, for the others".

THE GOSPEL 1ST FIRST LETTER TO TIMOTHY 2:1-7

Timothy, my son, first of all, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way. This is good, and it is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, the testimony to which was borne at the proper time. For this I was appointed a preacher and apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

Consequently, justifiably, the Apostle Paul urges the pastor Timothy to have as his first care, the cultivation of prayer in the believers, not only each one for himself, but for all people. And this prayer should not be limited only to supplications, but it should include also thanksgivings for the goods which God grants to everyone without discretion, just like the sun and the rain that He gives to righteous and unrighteous ones. "So thanking God for the goods that He gives in common for everyone", the Golden-tongued one will note, we are urged to love also the unjust and wicked people and for us to behave towards them with kindness. And our prayer becomes cause for unity with everyone". Even for those who persecute us or swear at us.

Again let us pray for the impious?

The Apostle will make a particular exhortation that we pray for the rulers, whose authorities as institutions "are appointed by God" (Rom. 13:1). So unrelated to if bearers of authority are disposed in an enmity way towards the Church or not, we

ought to be praying for them, with the hope that we be living a calm and quiet life "godly and respectful in every way". Furthermore, even in the darkness of the Turkish Occupation, St. Kosmas the Aitolian, faithful to the exhortation of the Preeminent Apostle, was teaching the enslaved ones: "First, beseech God for the king and all the zapitades (that is the officers) to enlighten them to govern the people with meekness and justice".

Prayer, that should embrace even our enemies, obviously is not an easy thing. Only He, who prayed even for His crucifiers, is able to help us "to be widened" (2 Cor. 6:13) and to contain in our prayer our persecutors as well. And the prayer of such a "spacious" heart is very pleasing to the God of love, "who wants all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth".

Christ entrusted the Apostle of the Gentiles, Paul to preach this great mystery of our salvation to us also. And the Apostle, with a high sense of the responsibility of such a mission, illumines in today's passage, the mediating role of Christ, who realized it with His incarnation. Christ would not be able to be a saving mediator between God and men, if He were not perfect God and perfect man. And for this delivering mediation, not only was He not paid, but He paid Himself "the mediating" – that is, the intervention – by giving a "ransom" of His own Self. His own Blood with His crucifactory sacrifice.

The ransom and the Deliverer

Saint Gregory the Theologian heads off the – dangerous down to blasphemous – misunderstandings, that can happen, related to the meaning of "deliverer", We speak of a "ransom" when we refer to the cost that the owner of a slave must get, in order to free him. We were under the authority of the devil, to whom we were sold, due to our sins. So, to whom, did Christ offer the "ransom" of His Blood? It would be a blasphemy for us to say that He gave it to the devil", says Saint Gregory. "Then, did