

chance transgressions of the other person, not losing control, but with meekness, “very calmly” according to the sacred Chrysostom, so that we not also fall into temptation. We must also have the same longsuffering when we need not to correct, but simply to “carry” the fall of the other person. “Does a person exist without faults?” Saint John asks rhetorically. “Since there doesn’t exist any, then you forbear the faults of the other person, so that he also forbears your own. Thus you will fulfill the law of Christ”, Paul concludes, which is the commandment of love.

Archim. B. L

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2019 6TH SUNDAY OF LUKE,

Artemius the Great Martyr of Antioch, Matrona the Righteous of Chios, Gerasimus of Cephalonia, Andronicus the Righteous Martyr

TONE OF THE WEEK : First Tone

EOTHINON : Seventh Orthros Gospel

EPISTLE READING: St. Paul’s Second Letter to Corinthians 9:6-11

GOSPEL READING: Luke 8:26-39

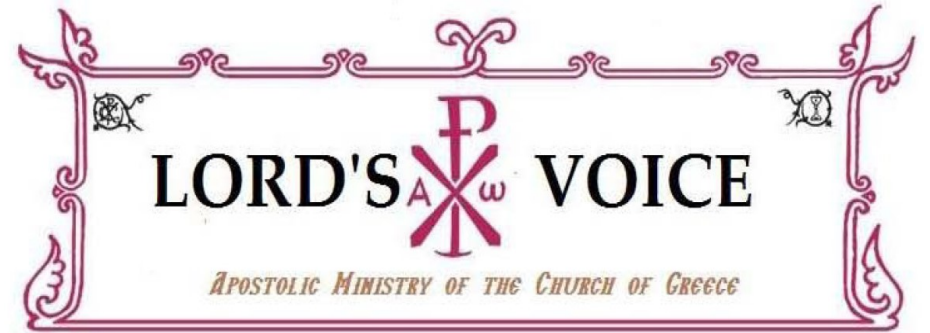
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2019 7TH SUNDAY OF LUKE,

Nestor the Martyr of Thessaloniki, Kyriakos, Patriarch of Constantinople, Procla, wife of Pontius Pilate.

EPISTLE READING: St. Paul’s Second Letter to Corinthians 11:31-33;

GOSPEL READING: Luke 8:41-56

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67TH YEAR OCTOBER 20 2019 PAMPHLET #42 (3464)

THE PURPOSE OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

It is noteworthy that the Christians of the first centuries were slandered by the “gentiles”, the idolators, “as a body-loving race”. Thus the philosopher Celsus called the Christians, who, following Plato, put down the body as a “prison of the soul”. Obviously he understood a little better than some Christians, the central message of the Christian faith, which is not a cloudy moralistic speech, but the “I await the resurrection of the dead”. He understood, in other words, that the Christians go to Church in order to save not only their soul, but also their body.

A life giving deadening

Truly there is no other religious tradition which honors the human body as much as the Orthodox Christian faith. For us the chief meeting on earth with God occurs in a sensorial “Supper”, where He condescends to unite with us through the eating of His Body and the drinking of His Blood. And this mainly occurs on the “Lord’s” day [i.e. Sunday], when we celebrate His physical Resurrection from the dead, with which He granted us the certainty of the resurrection of our own bodies also. All these things do not contradict all that the Apostle Paul writes to the Galatians – in the verses before today’s reading – about the

EPISTLE ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO GALATIANS.(5:22-6:2)

Brethren, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Let us have no self-conceit, no provoking of one another, no envy of one another. Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Look to yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ...

contradiction between the "flesh" and the "spirit".

The "flesh" here does not have the meaning of the "body", but of the egotistical train of thought, that scorns the will of God and feeds the sinful passions. It is noteworthy that the Apostle, enumerating these "works of the flesh", aside from fornications, adulteries and lewdnesses, also includes enmities, angers, divisions, heresies, envies and murders". And he says that the person who is enslaved to such passions is not able to inherit the Kingdom of God. Only if he "crucifies his flesh", in other words, he deadens his fleshly train of thought, is he able to belong to Christ and to His Church.

The fruit of the Spirit

The words, of course, "crucifixion" and "deadening" refer to aphasia and motionlessness. It refers however, to motionlessness only as regards sin. And this motionlessness, because it is not by force, but it springs from love for Christ and free obedience to His will, is very fruitful. It bears the sweetest fruits: the fruits of the Holy Spirit. The first fruit, "inclusive of the others, their root and cause" –according to Zygavenos – is love. From this, joy, peace, longsuffering, a good disposition towards

others and it's good manifestation for them, trustworthiness, meekness and temperance "sprout".

To the usual retort that we encounter such virtues in peoples and in ages when they had not even heard about the Holy Spirit, the Apostle Paul answers that "every nation of men" was created by the One and unique true God and according to His image. We "are" also "His race" and - whether consciously or without realizing it – "we live and move and are in Him". Consequently, whatsoever true wisdom and virtue exists in whatsoever civilization of whatsoever age, "every good gift and every perfect giving", descends from the One Father of lights. Where so ever there exists even the slightest small ray of true Light, it springs from this unique sun. Only that now the "years of ignorance" ended and "the light of knowledge" dawned in the person of Christ. And the responsibility of all us believers is huge, to live "in Spirit" and to "walk by the Spirit", in other words, to behave according to the beckoning of the Holy Spirit and not with vainglory, argumentativeness and envy, so that other people also come to the knowledge of the One Truth, which is granted also only through the Holy Spirit.

"Bear one another's burdens"

Saint Seraphim of Sarov, stressing that the aim of Christian life is not only the acquisition, but also the imparting of the Holy Spirit, counseled: "Distribute the gifts of Grace, to whoever seeks them. One lit candle, without losing from its brilliance, also lights other candles. If the earthly fire has such a quality, what can one say about the fire of the Grace of the Holy Spirit?" In this imparting however, of Grace, attention and discretion is necessary, because many people, in going to light the other's candle, either burned it, or their own candle also was quenched. The Apostle Paul notes such a danger, exhorting us to correct per