

Erudite clergyman (bishops, archimandrites and priests) were the authors of the written sermon, while the content of the pamphlet aims at the edification of its readers in matters of Orthodox faith and life. During this period, the “Voice of the Lord” remained firmly attached to its initial aim: to be a brief and contemporary edifying pamphlet about life in Christ.

We glorify our philanthropic Lord, because with the intercessions of the Most Holy Theotokos and His Saints, the Apostolic Ministry has been granted to perform this offering for 68 years already. We fervently thank our colleagues in this ministry, and promise to continue our effort, with the grace of the Holy Trinity.

Whoever of the readers, desire and are able to strengthen our effort, are able to deposit their offering – no matter how small it is – to the account number of the National Bank of Greece: 146/558 073-04, IBAN: GR910110146000014655807304

Follow the Program of the Radio Station of the Church of Greece (www.ecclesia.gr)

“THE VOICE OF THE LORD” in the whole world through the Internet: www.apostoliki-diakonia.gr

SUNDAY, JANUARY 19, 2020 12TH SUNDAY OF

LUKE *Macarius the Great of Egypt , Mark, Bishop of Ephesus ,Arsenius of Corfu , Makarios of Alexandria, Makarios, Hierodeacon of Kalogera, Patmos , Removal of the Honorable Relics of Saint Gregory the Theologian , Brantwallader, Bishop of Jersey*

TONE OF THE WEEK : *Plagal First Tone*

EOTHINON : *Eight Orthros Gospel*

EPISTLE READING: *St. Paul’s Letter Colossians 3:4-11*

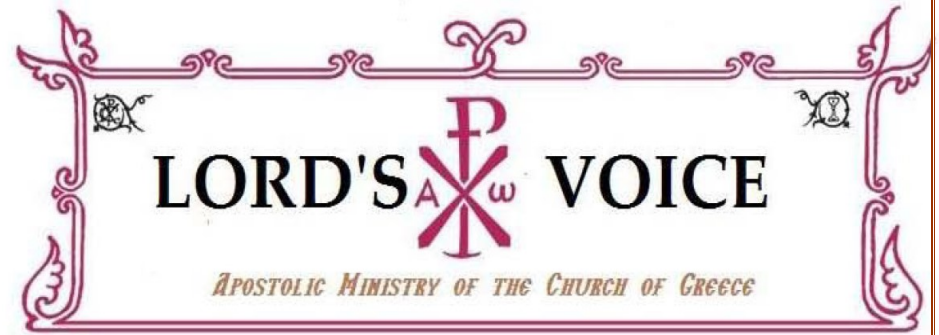
GOSPEL READING: *Luke 17:12-19*

SUNDAY, JANUARY 26, 2020 15TH SUNDAY OF LUKE

Xenophon & his Companions Symeon the Elder of Mount Sinai

EPISTLE READING: *St. Paul’s First Letter to Timothy 4:9-15*

GOSPEL READING: *Luke 19:1-10*



68TH YEAR JANUARY 19 2020 PAMPHLET #03 (3477)

THE CHURCH AS A SPIRITUAL CLINIC

People today have a different opinion about priests than what we had in older times. For some people, the priest is a remnant of the past. He is the symbol of a way of life, in which people were seeking in religious faith, answers to their fears and their agonies, to their illnesses, to everything which they could not explain. For others, the priest is a religious teleturgist, necessary for feasts and customs, but not “productive” for the economy. For others again, the priest exists in order to show what is moral, what is necessary in life, what is useful, so that discipline and order exist in society. For others finally, the priest is called to inspire good deeds, works of love, so that the weaker people are comforted.

“Go to the priests”

When Christ met the ten lepers, between Samaria and Galilee, they asked Him to have mercy on them, standing afar off, as the law of that time appointed. And Christ, answering their request, exhorts them to go to the priests and show themselves to be examined by them (Luke 17:14).

THE SUNDAY GOSPEL LUKE 17:12-19

At that time, as Jesus entered a village, he was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance and lifted up their voices and said: "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." When he saw them he said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they went they were cleansed. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; and he fell on his face at Jesus's feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. Then said Jesus: "Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" And he said to him: "Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well."

This exhortation shows that Christ did not come in order to overturn the way people were living in their everyday life. The purpose of His teaching, was for the people to be able to accept the ethos of the Kingdom of the Heavens, to find the way to encounter God and neighbor, for them to live eternally. Christ, both with the teachings, as also with the miracles, but also with His own life finally, is not preaching a revolution against the authority or the political condition or the customs of people, but a transfiguration of man's heart, which will lead him to a new communion.

The clergy in the life of faith

Christ's exhortation to the lepers to appear to their priests, who were the expressers of the Old Testament, leaves us a model for what the priest is in the life of faith. He is the guarantor of the connection with God. He is the continuer of Christ and the Apostles' work and our representative before God. He expresses the hierarchy in which the Church is based. He receives the gift,

in order to show the way of the Kingdom. He imparts the mysteries. He assures about the boundaries of the truth. He is not sinless and infallible, but a struggler. And he needs our respect.

Christ's exhortation to the lepers to appear to their priests, shows the connection of faith with the society of men. No one could keep company with the lepers, out of fear that maybe the illness would also be imparted to him. Their whatsoever cure however, had to be verified, so that they could return to society with the others. And it was only the priests who had the validity to assure the other people that the former lepers could be reinstated in society together with them.

The spiritual leprosy

Today, physical leprosy has been cured. There is however, spiritual leprosy that leads man to avoid or to reject communion with God. It makes him measure everything with himself as the compass, and not be interested in the course of his fellow men. Thus it causes phenomena of social automatism (the one social group turning against the other one). Simultaneously, it dissolves every meaning of order and hierarchy in our life, as shows from the absence of respect to the institutions and the projection of whoever is not worthy of their mission. So we need to look again at this exhortation of Christ.

The life of the Church is a constant cure of the illness of sin. It is a constant return to the Truth of the Kingdom of God. Helpers in this struggle are the priests. Let us respect them and let us pray that they be worthy of their mission.

Fr. T. M.