

## WEEK OF EXTERNAL MISSION

Witness of faith and hope From the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> of March 2020

The Office of External Missions of the Apostolic Ministry of the Church of Greece strives for the following:

Spreading the word of God, especially in the countries of Africa and Asia.

Monthly payment of native clergymen.

A monthly bonus for widows of reposed native clergymen.

A monthly bonus for clergymen and lay people from Greece who are working in a missionary manner in Africa and Asia.

Missionary Seminar: Theology and methodology of mission.

“Panta ta Ethni” [i.e. “All Nations”]: a tri-monthly missionary magazine.

We thank you for your support of our missionary work. The number of the bank Account of the National Bank: 146/558074-94.

We fervently ask, after whatsoever deposit, that you always communicate with the Office of External Missions at the telephone 210-727 2313, 315, 316

SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

**SUNDAY, MARCH 08, 2020, SUNDAY OF**

**ORTHODOXY\_Theophylact the Confessor, Bishop of Nicomedia ,  
Hermas the Apostle of the 70, Paul the Confessor, Dometios the  
Righteous, Felix of Burgundy, Enlightener of East Anglia**

**TONE OF THE WEEK :** Plagal First Tone

**EOTHINON :** Fifth Eothinon Gospel

**EPISTLE READING:** St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-40

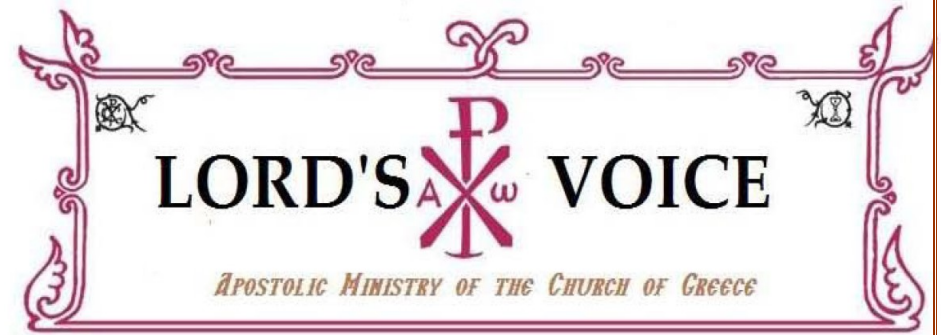
**GOSPEL READING:** John 1:43-51

**SUNDAY, MARCH 15, 2020 SUNDAY OF ST. GREGORY**

**PALAMAS\_ , Agapius the Martyr & His Companions , Manuel the  
New Martyr of Crete, Holy Apostle Aristobulos of the Seventy, Bishop  
of Britain**

**EPISTLE READING :** St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 1:10-14; 2:1-3

**GOSPEL READING:** Mark 2:1-12



68<sup>TH</sup> YEAR MARCH 08 2020 PAMPHLET #10 (3484)

## THE RABBI

One of the most beautiful titles that both His disciples and the people who heard him they rendered to Christ is “Rabbi”, in other words, “Teacher”. Furthermore, this title is accompanied also by confession of faith in Him and His mission: “Rabbi, you are the son of God, you are the king of Israel” (Jn. 1:50), in other words, Teacher, you are the son of God, you are the king of Israel. Christ is the teacher, is the son of God, in other words, God himself, and the king of Israel, the king of all of humanity, just as according to the covenant, the promise of God to Abraham, his descendants will reign in the universe. The Church preserves these three qualities of the Lord unto the ages and she reminds us of them.

### Christ as a teacher

Christ was a “rabbi”, a teacher not only of His disciples but also of the whole world, because the teaching was the mission itself. He came however, in order to give us not simply knowledge about God, but His own self. Usually people who have the gift or the quality of teacher, teach, based on the knowledge, the erudition, the vision of their life. Christ, however, did not simply utilize the law and the prophets, the tradition, in other words, of men. He is a different “rabbi”, because He teaches what He himself is: the way of God, the way of the Kingdom, the encounter and the communion through

## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN 1:43-51

At that time, Jesus decided to go to Galilee. And he found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael, and he said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" Nathanael said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" Jesus answered him, "Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these." And he said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

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Him with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Christ is the unique "rabbi", because it is He himself who is teaching and simultaneously He himself is the content of His teaching. He is an unprecedented "rabbi"!

### **Worldly wisdom is fragmentary**

People throughout the ages follow teachers, ideologists, philosophers, representatives of religions, and cultural currents. The teaching however, of the wise people of this age, helps us to see fragmentary facets of life: the economy, the quality of life, knowledge, academia. Discipleship near them, is important without discussion, in the best case, it helps us to illumine many of the "how's" and "why's" of this world. It secures for us a relative quality of life, because we know where we must invest and where not. It justifies our passions, however, our rejection to see life in the perspective of ascesis, of exiting from our ego and encountering our neighbor. It creates the false sense that we have time, or that science and technology will secure for us an

extension of life, will push back death for our account.

Sometimes it convinces us of the annihilation of our existence, since the wise people of the world do not believe in God and eternity.

### **The Church preserves Christ**

The Orthodox Church however, preserves the uniqueness, the differentiation and the unprecedentedness of our Lord as "rabbi". It calls us to the way of faith, to encounter the Divine Eucharist, to love, to ascesis, to repentance, for us to become in our turn disciples of the Lord. To allow Him to enter into our heart. To follow His word, to study it and to make it action in our life. And for us to have as a priority in our life, His theandric person and our relationship with Him.

Christ gives the fullness of meaning, answers to every "why?", to every "how?" of the world, even if the answer sometimes requires patience and silence. Christ does not reject the world, but the spirit of the devil, which exists within it. He does not deny human relations, but their becoming absolute, the prioritizing of love for our own selves and our own people in relation to love for everyone and for God. He does not reject secular forms, but their deification. He does not reject human needs, but the changing of man into a hunter of bread, of pleasure, of pride, and of vainglory.

In the Orthodox Church we find the authenticity of the person of Christ intact and without innovation, and at the same time, His teaching, unadulterated. And so for this reason, when we are celebrating on the Sunday of Orthodoxy, the restoration of the sacred icons, we're constantly promising that the Lord, as a teacher of our hearts and life, will be He whom we are seeking, so as to live Him and to impart Him to those coming after us. That we will fight to be continuers of His work. We have the certainty of His promise, as it is imprinted in His last teaching on the earth, that He will be with us "all the days" (Matthew 28:20). Let us not be swayed by the spirit of this age, and let us be seeking Him in Church!

Fr. T. M.