

The journey unto the end

Faith is a journey of perfection. Even in the defeat of time and of death, he who believes, leaves himself to God and His grace, just as Moses did, even if the struggle seems unjustified for the world. Even if his burial occurs outside of the land of promise, even if his word will be forgotten, will be distorted, just as the Mosaic law by the Jews, who made it the worship of form and regulations of scribes, the essence of life will remain incorrupt. Christ will give to everything a new content. With his presence everything will become law, hope and resurrection.

Celebrating Orthodoxy, let us not forget that faith passes through the persons and let each of us, every woman and man become such a link, a member of the body of Christ, of fellow traveler in the journey to the Kingdom. It is the meaning the changes our life. Let us fight for it in Church!

Fr. T. M

SUNDAY, MARCH 21, 2021 SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY James the Confessor, Thomas I, Patriarch of Constantinople, Philemon and Dominos

TONE OF THE WEEK : *Plagal Fourth Tone*

EOTHINON : *Eighth Eothinon*

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

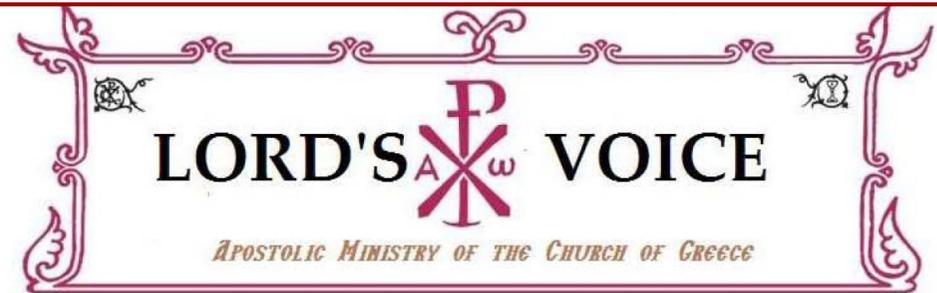
GOSPEL READING : *John 1:43-51*

SUNDAY MARCH 28, 2021 SUNDAY OF ST. GREGORY

PALAMAS, *Hilarion the New, Herodion the Apostle of the 70, Stephen the Wonderworker*

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

GOSPEL READING : *Mark 2:1-12*



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Witnesses of Faith

Orthodoxy is a sequence of events of faith, that sets out from the Old Testament, reaches up to our age, and has not stopped in time, since our journey is towards eternity. The Church projects in her spiritual daily life, the persons who lived the faith, since this is not an abstract idea or a series of logical arguments but it was lived by the persons who met the Revealed God in creation, history and the expectation of the end times. These persons, however, are not auto-illuminated. They are enlisted organically in the tradition, which is incarnated in the body of Christ, in our Church. Here, all of us together point to Christ and through Christ we are saved. And whoever believes in Christ knows the Father and is illumined by the Holy Spirit, in other words, he confesses the Triune God.

The God-seer and his people

The Apostle Paul, addressing his compatriot Jews, brings as an example of this faith, the God-seer Moses, who

EPISTLE READING : ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO THE HEBREWS 11:24-26, 32-40

Brethren, by faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to share ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets -- who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign enemies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated -- of whom the world was not worthy -- wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

who brought the Jews out of the slavery to the Egyptians, he led them to the passage, to the Pascha of the Red Sea, he gave them the law, he led them to the Land of Promise. The god-seer, however, cannot be understood outside of his people. Furthermore, his faith made him a partaker of the hardships that his people endured in slavery, in the desert, in the battles, in starvation, and in thirst. He communed with them in their joy and sadness. Furthermore, he preferred to take on

himself the sin of the frequent disbelief of his people, rather than to allow them to pay for it. Thus, he did not want to enter without the people into the Land of Promise. He preferred furthermore, to not be called the son of the daughter of Pharaoh, who saved him from the river when he was an infant, she raised him with all the privileges of a prince, she gave him the opportunity to become an officer in Egypt, so long as he would reject his compatriots, change his identity and live his life.

Faith as an exit and Pascha

This is the faith. An exit from the promises of a world without God. A choice of hardship, struggle, spiritual battle, but also journeying with a people who many times, does not know what they are seeking. With fellow men who say that they believe, but they grumble. Who reject the love of God and the love of their fellow men, thanks to their own their own ideas and viewpoints. Mainly however, the configuration with a culture that offers everything -, so long as we deny our identity: whatever we were called to believe, in other words, to love, to be true, to struggle ascetically, to live with a different measure.

Faith is an exile from the spirit of the world and a trip to the desert of a Sinai which has few consolations. Moses made a family, he shared as a human, those things that our nature appoints, he calmed down for a bit, but subsequently he undertook a mission to leave out whatever was his own, just as he took off his shoes before the flaming bush. To keep only God in his heart, independent of the cost. To toil, to defeat every fear, every rationalization, but also the loneliness of being the only one who knows what God wanted. So, we also are called, without necessarily leaving human consolations, to keep God in our heart, to defeat fears and rationalizations, but also the loneliness of our life sometimes being without supporters. God however, hears and helps us to live everything as a Pascha, as a passage to true life with Him!