

it. A gradual lessening of secularization and the adoption of the crucifixional-resurrectional life.

Because this is in the end, the path of the cross. The conviction and living of the Resurrection. In a world without hope of eternity, where pain seems strong and triumphant, and where man tries to forget both the passions and the trials and death, Christian life is the voluntary journey to the cross, with a hope however, and expectation of the resurrection. We know that just as the Lord resurrected, the same thing will also happen with us. And then we see the world as it was truly made. For him also to partake, but also we, in the glory of God "in Christ". So, the path of the joy-sadness of the cross and of the resurrection, let it be the gift that we are seeking from God, as we are venerating in the middle of Great Lent the Precious Cross in our churches and the rest will be added to us!

Fr. T. M

**SUNDAY APRIL 4, 2021 SUNDAY OF HOLY CROSS,** *George the Righteous of Maleon, Righteous Plato the Studite, Nicetas the Hieromartyr, Struggler of Serrai (1808), Righteous Zosimas Theonas, Archbishop of Thessaloniki, Founder and Renovator of the Sacred Monastery of Saint Anastasia of Pharmakolytria, Halkidiki Theodoulos and Agathopoulos of Thessaloniki*

**TONE OF THE WEEK** : *Second Tone*

**EOTHINON** : *Tenth Eothinon*

**EPISTLE READING** : *St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:1-6*

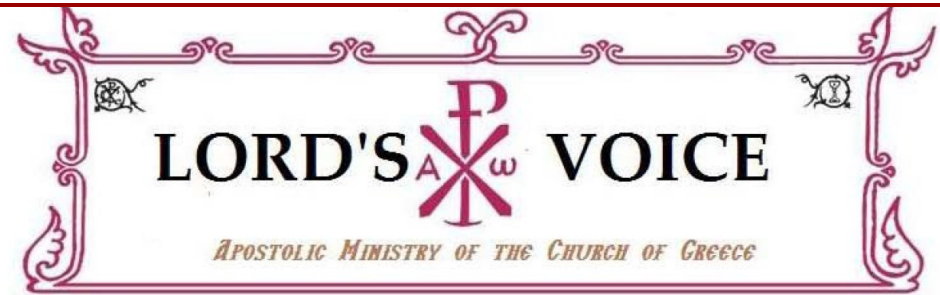
**GOSPEL READING** : *Mark 8:34-38; 9:1*

**SUNDAY APRIL 11, 2021 SUNDAY OF ST. JOHN OF CLIMACUS**

*Antipas, Bishop of Pergamum , Pharmuthios the Anchorite, Guthlac the Hermit of Crowland*

**EPISTLE READING** : *St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 6: 13-20*

**GOSPEL READING** : *Mark 9:17-31*



**69<sup>TH</sup> YEAR APRIL 4 2021 PAMPHLET # 14 (3540)**

## THE CROSS, OUR ONLY PATH

Man seeks from God to offer him life, goods, health, assurances both for the present time and world, as also for eternity. On the contrary, we see God, in the person of Christ and on the cross, offering man, as a gift, His Own Self (Heb. 4:14 and 5:1), as a sacrifice for all human sins, our choices in deed and word, the actions and omissions with which we are separated from Him. Christ's self-offering becomes a calling for all of us to proceed in a life of repentance and love. Instead of waiting from God or from our fellow men, let us make the step, the beginning.

### Obedience to the divine will

On the cross, the world again found its true destination. Because the world was created by the Triune God in order to partake in His glory. To commune with God, to be illumined by him and to share the light of eternity and of life. At the same moment, the world exists also for man's sake. For man to be able not simply to survive in it, but also to know through natural contemplation, that is, through the beauty and the harmony of creation, who the creator is. A presupposition for this path is humility. Man refused to humbly obey God's will, resulting in

## **EPISTLE READING : ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO THE HEBREWS 4:14-16; 5:1-6**

BRETHREN, since we have a high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. Because of this he is bound to offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people. And one does not take the honor upon himself, but he is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, "Thou art my Son, today I have begotten thee"; as he says also in another place, "Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek."

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him being led to the cessation of communion with Him, to the fall. It might seem that Christ on the cross is dying, being mocked, and having been rejected by people, at the same moment, however, "his strength is perfected in weakness". So, for this reason also, He becomes the king of glory. Because He humbly accepts His Father's will, and at the same moment, because He puts up with people becoming instruments of the devil, who in every way try to kill him, so that he can rejoice in the triumph of evil in the world, and in changing the purpose of creation.

## **A change of course**

On the cross man is called to love, to forgive, to be offered and to be delivered. This path is not of a moral content, but of an existential one. Otherwise, the Christian faith would aim at us becoming better people. In such a case, Christ would not need to become a man or also to be crucified, because the improvement of our life has to do with man's innate sociability, with the laws and the organization of the state, as also with the ideology and philosophy. We are called in the life of the Church, to commune "Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:2) in other words, for us to prepare our heart and our entire being, soul and body, so that He can dwell within us. The moral stance follows communion with Christ. Only with faith and communion with Him is it possible for us to truly love, even our enemies. For us to sacrifice our rights. To be delivered from death and to hope in the resurrection. This is the life of the cross.

## **The crucifixional-resurrectional life**

On the cross, man is called to give the Crucified One sins, as a gift back, for His offering. To leave aside the sense that he has justifications for the passions, the evils, his pettiness. The cross reveals the lie, in which we have chosen to live. The world is not almighty. What we see is not our only choice. We remain in the world, because our calling is to find the path of salvation in it. We struggle to be preserved from sin. To do ascesis through prayer and fasting in communion with God and in the sense for our neighbor. To ascertain the roots of the passions which defile us. It is not God who turns us away. It is our heart which pulls us to the world and its burdens, which do not allow us to accept Him. He constantly descends to our life, and simultaneously ascends on the cross in order to show us that there is no other path. So, repentance and true life, in the world and not flight from