

However, for whoever believes in Christ, there is no end, but a thirst for life which activates our being. It makes us put at the disposition of faith, all of our gifts.

The basket, the wicker basket of Paul, is not an indication that we Christians fear for our own self and we are fleeing from fighting to change the world. The wicker basket is the proof of discretion. That God will choose when the time of each person's mission will come to an end. Until then, we are called to give our whole self, so that the truth be revealed. The key is not the place or the time that we are living, but the manner. And we Christians are called, through our relationship with Christ, to change ourselves as much as we able, and to change our world, wherever and when there is a response.

Fr. Th. M.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 31 2021, FIFTH SUNDAY OF LUKE,

Stachys, Andrew, Amplias, Apelles, Urban, Aristobulus, & Narcisus of the 70. Martyr Epinachus of Alexandria, Nicholas the New Martyr of Chios.

TONE OF THE WEEK : *Second Tone*

EOTHINON : *Eighth Eothinon*

EPISTLE READING : *St. Paul's Second Letter to Corinthians 11:31-33; 12:1-9*

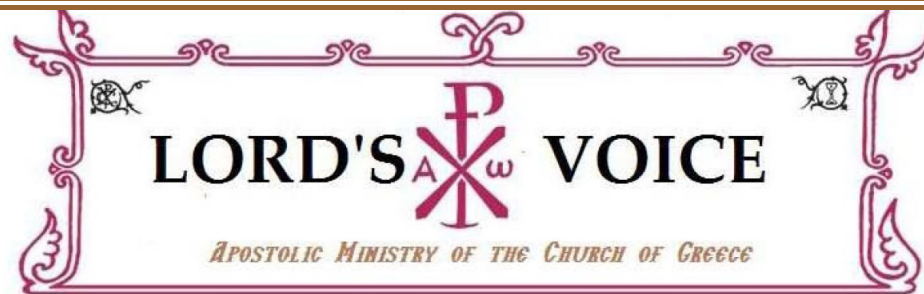
GOSPEL READING : *LUKE 16:19-31*

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 7 2021, SEVENTH SUNDAY OF LUKE, 33

Martyrs of Melitene, Lazarus the Wonderworker, Martyr Athenodorus. Alexander the Martyr of Thesaloniki,

EPISTLE READING : *St. Paul's Second Letter to Galatians 1:11-19*

GOSPEL READING : *Luke 8:41-56*



69TH YEAR OCTOBER 31 2021 PAMPHLET # 44 (3570)

Our life is in God's hands. We believe and leave ourselves to His providence, to His enlightenment. This, however, does not mean fatalism, handing ourselves over to the powers of evil. On the contrary, it means an activation of the soul, so that the spiritual struggle can increase in us with prayer, self-criticism, repentance, finding the root of our passions, which lies in pride and reconciliation with evil. Simultaneously, faith means an activation of all our powers, so that the evil does not trap us. Because people have the impression that for us to believe in God, means that we should not think, but we should allow God to think for us, to not act with our will, but to settle in what we will receive from God, handing ourselves over denotes to us that we need to do whatever passes through our hand and to leave ourselves to God for whatever we are not able to.

The "wicker basket" which saves

The example of the Apostle Paul's conversion is characteristic. From a persecutor he became a Christian. From a zealot Jew, he went around the then known world four times, in order to preach Christ in both words and with works. We see him after his conversion, after the vision he saw while going to Damascus of Syria, when Christ appeared to him and asked him to stop persecuting Him

*EPISTLE READING : ST. PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO
CORINTHIANS 11:31-33; 12:1-9*

Brethren, the God and Father of the Lord Jesus, he who is blessed for ever, knows that I do not lie. At Damascus, the governor under King Aretas guarded the city of Damascus in order to seize me, but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped his hands.

I must boast; there is nothing to be gained by it, but I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven -- whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. And I know that this man was caught up into Paradise --whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows -- and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter. On behalf of this man I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses. Though if I wish to boast, I shall not be a fool, for I shall be speaking the truth. But I refrain from it, so that no one may think more of me than he sees in me or hears from me. And to keep me from being too elated by the abundance of revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, to harass me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I besought the Lord about this, that it should leave me; but he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

after his temporary blindness, after his baptism by the Apostle Ananias, to preach to the synagogues of Damascus that Jesus is the son of God. And the Jews decide to kill him, not being able to interpret how the persecutor became a Christian. And then, as he himself also mentions, the Christians decide to put him to flight, using a wicker basket: "in Damascus the ethnarch Aretas

guarded the city of Damascus, them wanting to catch me, and through the window in a wicker basket I was let down through from wall and I escaped from their hands" (II Cor. 11:32 – 33). In Damascus, the administrator representative of king Aretas put guards in all the city to capture me. However, through an opening of the wall, they lowered me in a basket, and I escaped from his hands".

We remember what God wants

The Apostle Paul shows us that creativity, smartness, ingenuity are not rejected by the faith. On the contrary, the Christian is called to not spend his life in vain, to not pursue martyrdom, but also to not fear it. He is not a victor to the detriment of the secular spirit, who goes to die without it being necessary, but he who does not fear death. He who utilizes his gifts which God has given him in order to live, wins, but also even if he should need to die, he does not retreat and he keeps in his heart alive the truth of faith. The Christian does not spend all his time only with prayer, being occupied with the things of God. He remembers what God wants in whatsoever choice of his life, in work, in his relationships, in his daily life, in the temptations that he faces. The ascetic tradition of the life of the monastics is a way, and it demands all the time of him who chooses to dedicate himself to it. In the world, however, we are living the way of asceticism, by fighting to dedicate as much time as we are able, to God.

We are changing the world

The secularized people, the intellectuals, the disputers of faith, consider that for one to be a Christian, means that he has lost his disposition for life. That he has handed himself to a constant expectation of the end, of death, to a fear of living.