

The victory of Christ

The example of the holy Fathers and their sacred legacy, comprise a spiritual endowment of inconceivable value for Christians of all the ages. Many times, the man of our time, each of us individually, complains that he is alone and defenseless and, therefore, vulnerable to the diverse and polynomial crafts of the devil. What the holy Fathers of all the Ecumenical Councils handed down to us, has enormous value, but also a double meaning; one part has to do with the accuracy of the dogmas and the preservation of the right faith, while the other, with the conviction and certainty that, however much the weeds have grown in Christ's field, Christ himself holds the hand of the genuine sower. So let us take courage, let us invoke the intercession of our Saints, and He will heal all the rest.

Archim. A. A

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2022 SUNDAY OF THE 7TH
ECUMENICAL COUNCIL** , Longinus the Centurion , The Two
Soldiers martyred with Saint Longinus

EPISTLE READING: *St. Paul's Letter to Titus 3:8-15*

GOSPEL READING: *Luke 8:5-15* .

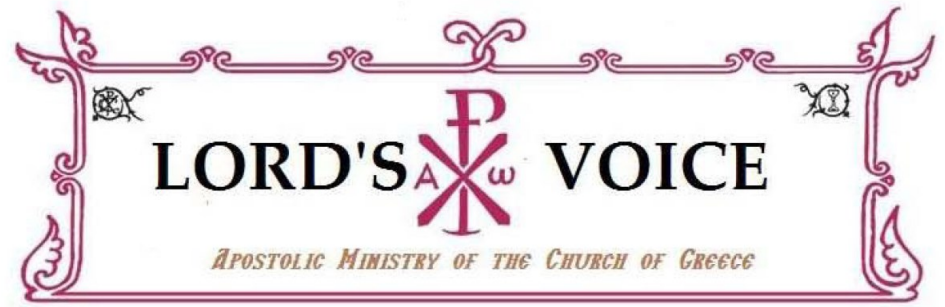
TONE OF THE WEEK : *First Tone*

EOTHINON : *Seventh Eothinon*

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2022 6TH SUNDAY OF LUKE ,
*James (Iakovos) the Apostle, brother of Our Lord , Our Righteous Father
Ignatius, Patriarch of Constantinople*

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

GOSPEL READING: *Luke 8:26-39*



70TH YEAR October 16 2022 PAMPHLET # 42 (3620)

A SURE ROAD

We hear the parable of the Sower today during the Divine Liturgy of this Sunday, which is also dedicated to the memory of holy and godbearing Fathers of the 7th Ecumenical Council (787 AD). We could say that the content of today's instructive gospel narrative is a signpost and a guide for the workers of the Church, clergy, laity and monks of every age, who work with divine zeal, self-denial and a sacrificial spirit for the calling of making disciples of the nations.

The sowers of Christ, with their teaching and life, with their preaching and silence, with their testimony and martyrdom, sow the divine word in the field of people's souls, they evangelize "day by day" the salvation that springs from participation in the Body of Christ. Sometimes, they find a rocky field, at other times a barren one, full of weeds, many times, exposed to the bulimia of all kinds of birds. Their desire and prayer, effort and sweat are offered so that, in the end, it becomes fertile and fruitful.

THE SUNDAY GOSPEL READING: LUKE 8:5-15

The Lord said this parable: "A sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell along the path, and was trodden under foot, and the birds of the air devoured it. And some fell on the rock; and as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns grew with it and choked it. And some fell into good soil and grew, and yielded a hundredfold." And when his disciples asked him what this parable meant, he said, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God; but for others they are in parables, so that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand. Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. The ones along the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, that they may not believe and be saved. And the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy; but these have no root, they believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature. And as for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bring forth fruit with patience." As he said these things, he cried out "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

The devil's polemics

The devil has always struggled to convince the workers of the Church that their struggle is in vain, that he

himself and his deceitful methods will prevail and conquer the field of the soul of the people, and indeed of the faithful and elect. The convocation of the Ecumenical Synods is precisely due to the organized polemic of the devil against the Church. Specifically, the Seventh Ecumenical Council was convened at the end of the 8th century in Nicaea in Bithynia at the initiative of Saint Irene the Athenian, to restore the veneration of the holy icons, and 350 bishops participated in it, under the presidency of the Patriarch of Constantinople, Tarasios. The Seventh Ecumenical Synod denounced the decisions of the iconoclastic Synod of Iereia, which had been convened a few years before, by Emperor Constantine the 5th. It condemned the iconoclast patriarchs and bishops and restored the honor of sacred icons based on the theology of Saint John of Damascus. It determined that the icons of the Saints are not venerated by the faithful for the material from which they are made, but their veneration goes to prototype. The Synod thus easily rejected the accusation that the healthy love of icons is equated with idolatry.

The good-hating devil, however, did not stop sowing weeds in Christ's field, and fighting the genuine sowers. Thus, in the beginning of the 9th century, Emperor Leo V, the Armenian, inaugurated the second phase of iconoclasm. He convoked a Synod in the church of Blachernae, which wanted to abolish the decisions of the canonical Council of Nicaea, and to proclaim the Synod of Iereia as the so-called Seventh Ecumenical. However, quickly, by the grace of God, Queen Theodora - who reigned as the guardian of her minor son Michael III, - convened a new Synod in Constantinople in the middle of the 9th century, which annulled the council of the Blachernes and ratified the minutes of the 7th Ecumenical Council.