

eucharistic offering to God of our own selves, and through us, of all creation; and then in the activation of the gift of prayer for the whole world, for all the descendants of Adam, for those who lived, for those who are alive and those who will live, until the end of the ages.

Therefore, those of us who have the gift of the special Priesthood and those of us who are participating in the general Priesthood of Christ, let us bless and let us thank God, because "through him - Christ - therefore we are offering a sacrifice of praise for all to God, that is the fruit of lips confessing his name" (Heb. 13:15).

Archim. N.K

SUNDAY, MARCH 19, 2023 SUNDAY OF HOLY CROSS

Holy martyrs Chrysanthus and Daria, Demetrius the New Martyr.

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

GOSPEL READING : *Mark 8:34-36, 9-1*

TONE OF THE WEEK : *Grave Tone*

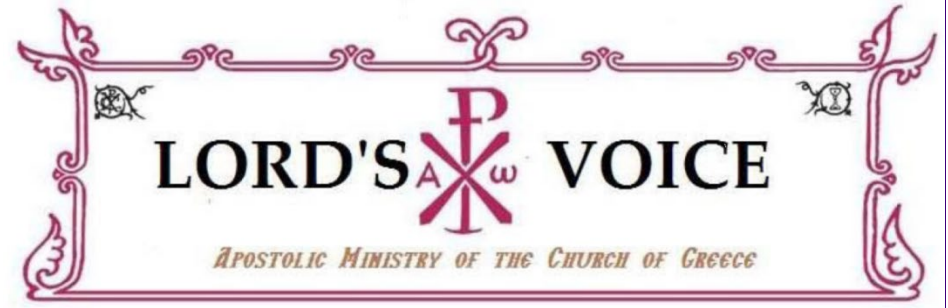
EOTHINON : *Seventh Eothinon*

SUNDAY, MARCH 26, 2023 SUNDAY OF SAINT JOHN OF

CLIMACUS, *Synaxis in honor of Archangel Gabriel, 26 Martyrs in Crimea, Irenaeus the Hieromartyr of Hungary.*

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

GOSPEL READING : *Mark 9: 17-31*



71ST YEAR MARCH 19 2023 PAMPHLET # 12 (3642)

THE CROSS AND BELIEVERS

On today's Sunday, and while we are in the middle of Great Lent, the Church raises the precious and life-giving Cross of the Lord and calls us to worship Him. That is, to express our love, faith, devotion, and gratitude to Christ who sacrificed himself for our salvation, since "He who does not confess the martyrdom of the Cross" - says Saint Polycarp of Smyrna in his letter to the Philipppians - "is from the devil."

The Epistle reading of the day helps us to establish our faith in the person of the Lord. Paul points out: "Brothers, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. Because we have a great high priest, Jesus, the Son of God, who reached up to the throne of God" (Heb. 4:14). The high priestly office of the Lord originates from His voluntary sacrifice on the cross, which is ultimately performed for the life and the salvation of the world, the overcoming, healing and restoration of man from sin. With the crucifactory sacrifice of Christ, all the sacrifices and worship of the Old.

THE SUNDAY EPISTLE *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."

Testament were completed, the value of which lay in the foreshadowing of the sacrifice of Christ .

It is precisely this confession concerning the person of Christ that all of us who belong to Him must keep, and faithfully safeguard. Jesus Christ is the Son and Word of the living God, who, as the Apostle says, can share in our weaknesses, because He was tested in everything, because He became a man like us, yet without sinning. Sin does not belong to man's nature, it does not come from God; it is the fruit of the misuse of human freedom.

Through the conscious and firm confession of our faith - with deeds and words - we become colleagues in the mystery of our salvation, which is provided to us as a grace with the Cross and the Resurrection of the Lord.

Priests of God

The Lord Jesus, as Paul writes, is the eternal Priest and kings of the ages "according to the order of Melchizedek." The name Melchizedek means King of justice and peace. Melchizedek offered the patriarch Abraham a sacrifice of bread and wine (Gen. 14:17-20). In the person of Melchizedek, whose father or mother or family tree no one knows; nor when he was born or when he died (Heb. 7:3), Christ is represented, who is "motherless from the Father" and "fatherless from the mother". That is, as God he has no mother and as a man he has no father. The sacrifice of Christ is also foreshadowed, the effect of which, with the serving of the divine Eucharist, reaches the ages and manifests the coming Kingdom of God.

The Lord was honored and glorified by God and His Father as the Eternal Priest. But also, every believer who has been baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity and has put on Christ (Gal. 3:27) as light and as grace, participates in the general Priesthood of Christ, in His prophetic, high priestly and royal office, as we read in Revelations: "He made us a kingdom, priests to God and his father" (Rev. 1:6).

Therefore, apart from the special Priesthood that the Bishop, the Presbyter and the Deacon bear, and without which there can be no Church and Christianity, there is also the general Priesthood, in which the laity participate, i.e. the people of God. It basically consists in the sacrificial and