

means. However, the faithful Christian is nourished by God's grace and thus accomplishes whatever God wants and carries, whatever God allows.

Because persecutions and sorrows help the believer to live not only with piety, virtue and truth, but also to experience the deepest meaning of humility in Christ. That is, the absolute trust and dedication of one's life to the Crucified and Resurrected Lord Jesus. It would be good not to forget that "not in our words, but in matters is piety", as Saint Gregory the Theologian says. That is, piety is not found in words, but in matters; in truth and the works of faith, in the way we assimilate and radiate it to others for the edification of the Body of Christ (Eph. 4:12).

Archim. N.K

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24 2023 1ST SUNDAY OF

LUKE *Thecla the Protomartyr & Equal to the Apostles, The Commemoration of the Miracle of the Theotokos Myrtidiotissis in Kythyra , Silouan of Athos , Stephen the Martyr , The Most Holy Theotokos of Palianis, Coprios the Righteous, Juvenaly & Peter the Aleut, New Martyrs of Alaska.*

EPISTLE READING : *St. Paul's Second Letter to Timothy 3:10-15*

GOSPEL READING : *Luke 5:1-11*

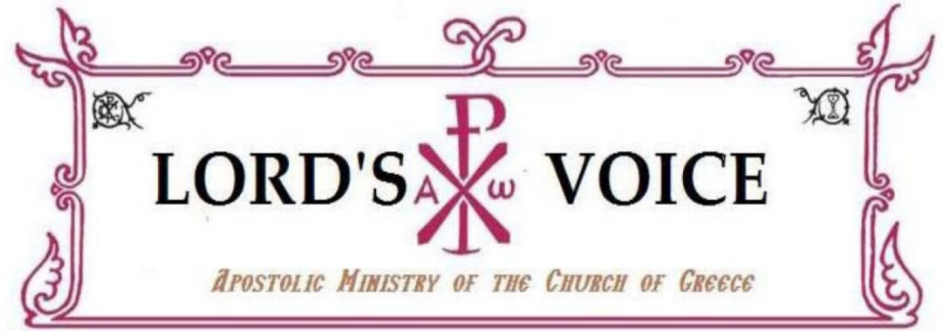
TONE OF THE WEEK : *Grave Tone*

ETHINON : *Fifth Eothinon*

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1 2023 2ND SUNDAY OF LUKE *The Holy Protection of the Theotokos, Ananias, Apostle of the 70 , Romanos the Melodist , John Koukouzelis the Psalti*

EPISTLE READING : *St. Paul's 2nd Letter to Corinthians 6:16-18, 7:1*

GOSPEL READING : *Luke 6:31-36*



71ST YEAR SEPTEMBER 24 2023 PAMPHLET # 39 (3669)

TRUE PIETY

The Apostle Paul in this Epistle passage, which comes from his 2nd Epistle to Timothy, helps us understand what the characteristics of true piety are. "While all those who want to live devoutly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted". Not only I, says the Apostle, but also all those who want to live with piety, according to the will of Jesus Christ, will face persecutions. Here Paul connects piety with life in Christ, that is, the love for God, the relationship, the communion with Him, the adherence to the observance of God's will, but also the persecutions...

In another epistle to him, he points out that "great is the mystery of piety; God was manifested in the flesh" (1 Tim. 3:16). Here we see that piety is called a "great mystery" and is connected with the incarnation of Christ, Who became our true life and shows us the path that leads to the Father.

EPISTLE ST. PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO TIMOTHY

3:10-15

TIMOTHY, my son, you have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions, my sufferings, what befell me at Antioch, at Iconion, and at Lystra, what persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. Indeed all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil men and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceivers and deceived. But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Consequently, faith in the mystery of Christ makes us pious. The godbearing Fathers of the Church regard as true piety, the correct worship of the Holy Trinity. That is, the acceptance of the Church's teaching about God, which implies the expression of respect, love and worship towards Him. And then they characterize as true piety, the effort, man's striving to live according to God's will.

The spiritual struggle of man

Since knowledge and observance of God's will lead the believer to the knowledge of God, then, when this is considered the highest criterion of our conscience, we also live the evangelical virtues of love for God and man, piety, godliness, knowledge of God, as much as possible. Because awareness of God and piety does not come only from the human effort, but

from the energy of the Triune God and the synergy of man. Certainly, the believer's spiritual struggle is beyond his strength, and its outcome is not an easy matter.

That is why the Church urges us to surrender our weakness to the power and love of Christ. However, because sin brings about changes in the proper functioning of man's nature, not infrequently, it convinces him that this surrendering of himself to God means the devaluation and the wiping out of his existence. In reality, however, exactly the opposite happens.

The sorrows and the persecutions

The person who wishes to live in true piety cannot avoid sorrows, pain, and persecutions. After all, the Lord himself was persecuted, reviled, and crucified. And the Apostles were aware that "through many tribulations must we enter into the Kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22). In this sense, piety "in Christ" presupposes an internal and external struggle. The internal struggle is about confronting the various passions that nestle within the human heart. The root of the passions is egocentricity, and on it, all passions grow, such as selfishness, avarice, pleasure-loving, anger, envy, weak faith, malice.

The external struggle refers to the correct facing of the persecutions, the sorrows, the disappointments that come from other people. The faithful Christian passes over these with patience, discernment, prayer, hope in God, humble-mindedness and love. In one sense it is natural for the world to react by persecuting the godly person.

When the egotist, the unjust, the unfaithful, the greedy person is censured by the selflessness, humility, faith, kindness of his pious fellow man, then he should stop this silent censoring by slandering, shaming and exterminating him by all

