

## "Love never fails"

The Church does not stop praying and loving in Christ, the person who found himself in the horrible darkness of heretical beliefs. With unique vividness, Saint Chrysostom points out that if we must turn away and hate anything, it is heresy and sin, and not the heretic or the sinner.

Because man is the work of God, while error is the work of the devil. "Do not therefore mix the things of God and the things of the devil." May all those who have separated from the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church receive God's illumination and return. To become partakers of the Bread of life and the Drink of immortality, which is imperishable love (St. Ignatius the Godbearer).

Archim. N.K

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15 2023 SUNDAY OF THE 7TH ECUMENICAL COUNCIL**, *Lucian the Martyr of Antioch, Savinos the Bishop of Catania, Barsus the Confessor, Euthymios the New*

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

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

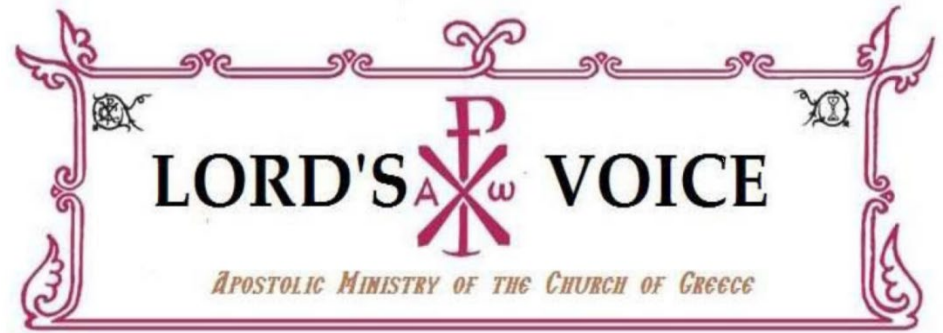
**TONE OF THE WEEK** : *Second Tone*

**ETHINON** : *Eighth Eothinon*

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 22 2023 6th Sunday of Luke**, *Averkios, Equal-to-the-Apostles and Wonderworker, Bishop of Hierapolis Seven Holy Martyred Youths of Ephesus*

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

**GOSPEL READING** : *Luke 8:26-39*



71<sup>ST</sup> YEAR OCTOBER 15 2023 PAMPHLET # 42 (3672)

## THE SELF-CONDEMNATION OF THE HERETICAL PERSON

On today's Sunday, the Church honors the Godbearing Fathers, who convened the Seventh Ecumenical Council in Nicaea of Bithynia in the year 787. The Fathers of the aforesaid Council submitted their experience in Christ with reference to the subject of the veneration of the holy icons. With their theological speech, holiness and their high spiritual level, they proclaimed that, since the Son and Word of God incarnated, we have the ability to depict His figure, according to the ancient church tradition.

The depiction of the Lord expresses the faith of the Church that "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (Jn. 1:14). Also, we depict the figure of the Holy Theotokos, who through the action of the Holy Spirit gave birth to the Son of God, the incarnate and, of course, we depict all the Saints, who were shown to be true members of the Body of Christ and who intercede to God for the salvation of all people. Thus, the Church teaches that the honor, the relative worship of the icon goes, passes, refers to the original, i.e. to the depicted person. Therefore, the truth of the icons is found in the persons that are depicted; and every believer who piously venerates them lives this truth, with grace of God. We consider this to be the position of the Church against the iconoclasts of every era.

### ***EPISTLE ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO TITUS 3:8-15.***

Titus, my son, the saying is sure. I desire you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to apply themselves to good deeds; these are excellent and profitable to men. But avoid stupid controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels over the law, for they are unprofitable and futile. As for a man who is factious, after admonishing him once or twice, have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is perverted and sinful; he is self-condemned. When I send Artemas or Tychicos to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. Do your best to speed Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way; see that they lack nothing. And let our people learn to apply themselves to good deeds, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not to be unfruitful. All who are with me send greeting to you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen

---

### **The reliability of the divine word**

The Epistle reading of this Sunday comes from the Apostle Paul's letter to Titus and is directly connected with the issue of heretics - iconoclasts. Titus with Timothy belonged to Paul's closest colleagues. In Paul's second imprisonment in Rome, Titus is probably near him. Furthermore, before this imprisonment, Paul had entrusted him with the governing of the Church of Crete, with the exhortation to install presbyters there. In Crete, he reposed peacefully, after he had suffered hardships with Paul and other Apostles for the sake of the Gospel of Christ

The Apostle Paul, at the beginning of our passage, underlines the truth of the words he mentioned in the immediately preceding paragraph. In other words, he urges Titus to remind the members of the Church that they have received the baptism of rebirth and the renewal that the Holy Spirit gives. Therefore, they must proceed accordingly, to lead a life full of love for God and fellow man. Love for God is expressed, first of all, by the acceptance of the right faith of the Church. Every heretical deviation from this belief results in man's separation from God. And according to this, the heretic becomes self-condemned, since he himself chooses darkness rather than the light, falsehood rather than the truth, death rather than life.

### **"After a second warning give up"**

The Apostle teaches his disciple Titus to admonish the person who follows heretical teachings once and twice, and then, if he does not allow the error to leave him, because he is now perverted and sins and condemns his own self.

The admonition, the teaching of the pastor of the Church is a persistent teaching effort, the fruit of love and prayer, which aims to have the heretic realize his error, repent and return to the correct faith. Of course, the Church, from apostolic years, has also used other pedagogical means to chasten those who have gone astray, such as cutting them off from her Body. This action does not have a judicial character, but aims at their repentance and, subsequently, at protecting the faithful from the heresy, and to keep the heritage of the faith undefiled.