

the light...". The saying is not just poetic. It is the complete and strong confirmation of what we have authentically experienced.

Thirdly, through prayer, when the graceful people, those who strive to implement the gospel commandments, the will of God in their lives, and live the sacramental life of the Church, are granted to see Christ.

The treasure of the Church

This treasure of the knowledge of the Person of Christ is kept in the bosom of our Church. This reality reminds us of the event of the good faithlessness of the Apostle Thomas. During our spiritual struggle, let us remember that for everyone, God allows a critical time, a test, a temptation, which will test our authenticity in faith. Many of us wish not to go through such a test, but this kind of Christian life does not exist. May God grant that the resurrected cry of the Apostle Thomas, "My Lord and my God", and the personal certainty that "the Lord is indeed risen", flood our own being as well.

SUNDAY, MAY 12, 2024 *THOMAS SUNDAY, Martyrs Emmanuel, Theodore, George, Michael and the other George of Samothrace, Epiphanius, Bishop of Cyprus, Germanos, Patriarch of Constantinople. Removal of the Sacred Relics of Saint Joachim "Papoulakis" of Vatopaidi, Theodorus the Righteous of Cythera*

EPISTLE READING: *Acts of the Apostles 5:12-20*

GOSPEL READING : *John 20:19-31*

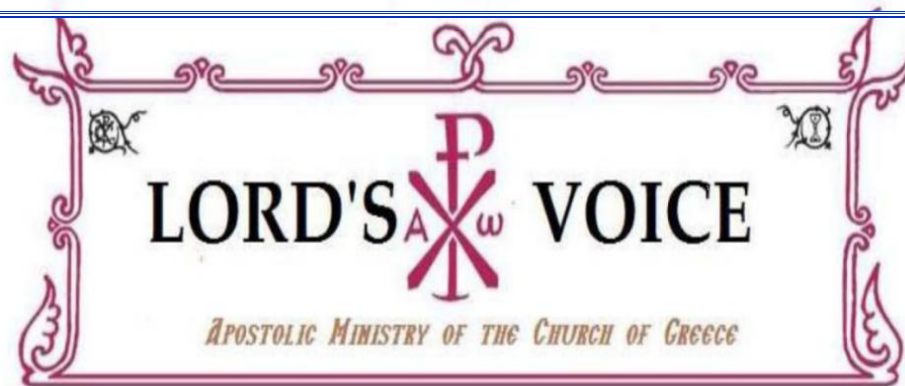
TONE OF THE WEEK:

EOTHINON

SUNDAY, MAY 19, 2024 *SUNDAY OF THE MYRRH-BEARING WOMEN, Patrick the Hieromartyr and Bishop of Prusa and His Fellow Martyrs Acacius, Menander, and Polyaeus, Our Righteous Father Memnonus the Wonderworker, Theotima & Kyriake the Martyrs*

EPISTLE READING: *Acts of the Apostles 6:1-7*

GOSPEL READING : *15:43-47; 16:1-8*



72ST YEAR MAY 12 2024 PAMPHLET # 19 (3702)

THE THREE DENIALS: PETER, JUDAS, THOMAS

In the history of those who followed Christ there were quite a few cases of people who in a moment of weakness yielded. The events surrounding the Lord's passion and Resurrection, which came to life more intensely in the last weeks, reminded us of three characteristic named cases: the yielding of Peter, the fall of Judas, the "good", as it is called, disbelief of Thomas.

Peter's yielding was an emphasis of weakness, a consequence of excessive confidence in his devotion to the Teacher. The fall of Judas was caused by confusion and avarice. He had imagined the Messiah differently; and when he found that the real Christ did not resemble the idol he had created with his mind, with his betrayal, he sacrificed the Truth and not his illusion. Thomas was stopped by the flow of the last sad events, and he sought God at the limits of the rational senses. In all three cases, as we know, the Lord intervenes personally.

The outbreak of faith

In the case of Thomas, the simple presence of the Lord sufficed to bring him around and restore him to his first relationship and trust. Thomas had withdrawn into isolation to

THE SUNDAY GOSPEL (JOHN 20:19-31)

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent Me, even so I send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in His side, I will not believe." Eight days later, His disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. The doors were shut, but Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then He said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see My hands; and put out your hand, and place it in My side; do not be faithless, but believing." Thomas answered Him, "My Lord and My God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen Me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe." Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that

find himself. However, the solution to the problem that preoccupies him is not realized in his loneliness, but through his return to the community of the Disciples. There Jesus meets him and not in the place where he was isolated. He comes into the community of the Apostles, into the Church, but in order to meet him personally. And He tells him: "Bring your finger here and look at my hands and bring your hand and put it in my side and do not become unbelieving, but believing." The Apostle Thomas

immediately responds to the command - request of the Lord and, before even touching Christ, bursts into a confession of faith: "My Lord and my God".

We must pay attention to two points in this confession: a) The Apostle Thomas does not simply point out the identity of the Risen Lord with Jesus Christ, but also recognizes His divinity. b) This recognition is not general, but has the character of a personal relationship and an existential position.

There are, perhaps, moments when we too, as imperfect and weak people, close ourselves in our own thoughts and search for Christ far from His Church or we ask for signs to believe. To avoid this temptation, the Church teaches us that we experience the presence of Christ in three blessed situations:

First, in keeping the commandments of Christ. In other words, if we want to know Christ, there is only one way, the way of the commandments. Whoever accepts His cross, which is the capital of all commandments, finds His glory.

Secondly, with our participation in the sacred Mysteries [Sacraments]. It is no coincidence that the Divine Liturgy ends with the confession chanted by the entire gathering: "We have seen the light...". The saying is not just poetic. It is the complete and strong confirmation of what we have authentically experienced.

Thirdly, through prayer, when the graceful people, those who strive to implement the gospel commandments, the will of God in their lives, and live the sacramental life of the Church, are granted to see Christ.

Secondly, with our participation in the sacred Mysteries [Sacraments]. It is no coincidence that the Divine Liturgy ends with the confession chanted by the entire gathering: "We have seen