



73rd Year

December 14, 2025

Pamphlet #50 (3785)

THE SUNDAY EPISTLE (Colossians 3:4-11)

The mortification of the passions

Brethren, when Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. In these you once walked, when you lived in them. But now put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE CHURCH

Religious, social, and racial divisions separated people and fueled passions in the pre-Christian era. All these were overturned by the God-Man Lord within the Church. This is what the Apostle Paul teaches the Christians of Colossae, emphasizing the need to cast off from their lives all the corrupt elements of their old life, which amounted to idolatry, and to put on the new, renewed person, in the image of Jesus Christ. The teaching of the Lord, which the holy Apostles explained and offered to the

nations, is the foundation upon which the much-celebrated human rights were born and spread, even to our own day.

The undervaluing of the human person

Respect for the various human rights is the basis for social peace and balance. For these rights, rivers of blood have been shed throughout history, volumes of revolutionary declarations have been written, yet the outcome remains weak. In the 21st century, racial discrimination, social inequalities, religious persecutions, and ethnic cleansings constitute a tragic reality. Wherever the Spirit of God is absent and people oppose the truth of Jesus Christ, nations grow savage, are tested, and suffer. Even in so-called Christian environments, Christ is pushed to the margins of social life, the spirit of the Church becomes the object of mockery and contempt, and the human person is insulted and devalued. This is why so much is said in our time about human rights, because now they are a “scarce commodity.”

The Gospel enlightens the conscience

The complete failure of the struggles for human rights is due, in large part, to the fact that they were founded upon the materialistic principles of humanistic Enlightenment, which sought to remove from societies the sense of the divine and the sacred. As the late Archbishop emphatically noted: “Atheistic humanism made the mistake of severing man from God and proclaiming him an independent existence, supported solely by his own strength. The result was the trampling of the human image, the collapse of the human idol into the chaos of the denial of every human value. The Gospel of Christ, by contrast, shaping within each of us the awareness of our true origin and heritage, and of our genuine destiny, composes an authentic humanism, a humanism with a human face, which respects the personality and freedom of the other. Atheistic humanism raised walls between people, divided them into classes, deprived them of the gift of freedom, and cast them into the gulags of unfreedom and into apartheid of racial discrimination, it distorted dimensions

through the deforming mirror of materialism and prosperity... The right to life and freedom is not the content of an ideology or a theory; it is a matter of human conscience, yet conscience enlightened by divine Revelation, not one autonomous and emancipated from the will of God. A conscience cut off from God risks getting lost in the endless labyrinth of worldly thinking, while the danger of missing its true purpose becomes much greater.

Our Church will always work for the safeguarding and promotion of human rights, precisely because the Christian message of salvation and the truth of Revelation concern the human being in his totality. Our Church will always present as a model of peaceful coexistence and social balance its ancient communal tradition, which is perfectly preserved in the expression of cenobitic monasticism, but also in its parish practice.

Our Church will continually struggle for the restoration of human dignity and the safeguarding of the integrity of the person, because in every human being it sees the living image of God. Wherever the message of the Church is understood and finds receptive ears, then the hope for a truly human world and a genuinely prosperous society will always remain alive.

Archimandrite E. Oik.

From the publications of the Apostolic Ministry:

Η ΖΥΜΗ ΤΟΥ ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΥ
THE LEAVEN OF THE GOSPEL

2nd extended edition, in Greek

Homilies on Gospel passages and feasts of the year by the
Metropolitan of Fanari, Agathangelos.

December 14, 2025: 11th Sunday of Luke

Of the Holy Forefathers.

Thyrus, Apollonius, Arianus, and their fellow martyrs († 286–287).

2nd Tone – Eothinon: 5 – Epistle: Colossians 3:4-11

– Gospel: Luke 14:16-24, Matthew 22:14

NEXT SUNDAY: December 21, Sunday before the Nativity of Christ

Epistle: Hebrews 11:9-10,32-40 – Gospel: Matthew 1:1-25

From the publications of the Apostolic Ministry:

**ΔΙΠΤΥΧΑ ΤΗΣ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ,
ΗΜΕΡΟΔΕΙΚΤΗΣ ΤΟΙΧΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΕΠΕΤΗΡΙΔΑ 2026**
*DIPTYCHS OF THE CHURCH OF GREECE,
WALL CALENDAR AND ALMANAC 2026*

The **Diptychs of the Church** contain the specific liturgical guidelines of the 2026 calendar, dedicated to the commemoration of two hundred years since the great historical event of the heroic Exodus of Messologi.

The **Wall Calendar** includes the daily feast calendar and timely theological messages for each day's feast or topics concerning Christian life. The frame is adorned with a four-color, ornate portable icon of the Most Holy Theotokos.

The **Almanac** – a pocket calendar – contains a concise and alphabetical calendar of feasts, a weekly planner, notebook, and useful information. It is dedicated to the 90 years of service of the Apostolic Ministry of the Church of Greece in Catechesis, Mission, Youth, and Culture (1936–2026). The cover is decorated with an icon of Jesus Christ teaching in the Temple of Jerusalem.

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