

eternity, where the edge of the tomb is their boundary, and the mystery of death, the prism, through which conditions are clarified and obtain their real value, then easily, so many things and so many "important things", comfortably are defined as unimportant, superfluous, little weights in life.

On the other hand, we have the example of the people of God, of the real people, the Saints, who through their way of life, prove to be "those who have nothing and possess everything" those who, in human terms, seem to sacrifice or to "lose" many things, in order to gain, in the end, everything. They who, in every case, are really living and rejoicing over life. They who, even if some people forget them, God remembers them, because He lives them in His eternity, at the same moment when the "famous ones" in worldly terms, end up unimportant, in perpetuity.

The Cross of Christ is projected still in our churches as a scale of justice now, upon which we are able to weigh our pursuits, dreams and decisions. The justice of the Cross, as an evaluating system which shows in eternity, is the safest criterion for us to not waste our life in the pursuit of vanity, serving burdensome and temporal aims. There is no counterbalance to the loss of the eternal God. Our journey toward Him, is the most safe and beneficial decision, to which, the whatsoever other pursuits in this life, ought to be subjected.

Archimandrite I. N

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2016 SUNDAY AFTER HOLY CROSS

Eumenius the Wonderworker, Bishop of Gortynia. Ariadne the Martyr, Afterfeast of the Holy Cross

tone OF THE WEEK *ToneFour*

EOTHINON : *Second Eothinon*

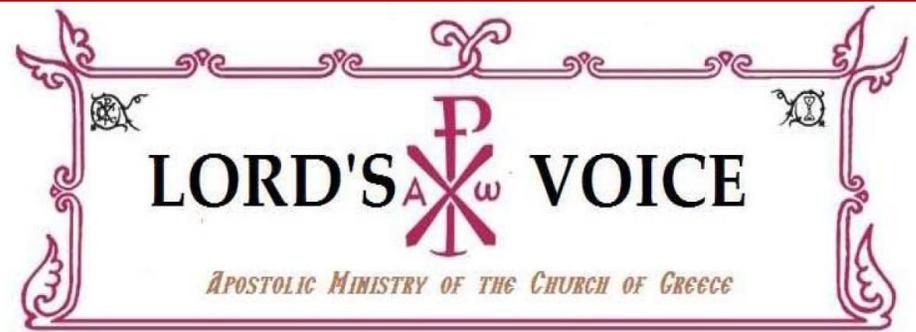
EPISTLE: *St. Paul's Letter to Galatians 2:16-20*

GOSPEL: *Mark 8:34-38; 9:1*

NEXT SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2016, 1ST SUNDAY OF LUKE, *Euphrosyne of Alexandria, Paphnoutios the Martyr & his 546 Companions in Egypt, Synaxis of the Most Holy Theotokos of Evangelistria, Mochos, Our Righteous Father Sergius of Radonezh, Finbar the Confessor, First Bishop of Cork*

EPISTLE: *St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 1:21-24; 2:1-4*

GOSPEL: *Luke 5:1-11*



64TH YEAR

SEPTEMBER 18, 2016

PAMPHLET # 38 (3303)

PROFITS, LOSSES AND EXCHANGES

As "the beauty of the Church", the Precious Cross, is still elevated in the center of our churches, since our Church is still celebrating its Universal Elevation, since we can't get our fill of gazing at the instrument which, from a means of death and humiliation, became a symbol of power and glory, today's gospel passage comes to remind us of a saying of the Lord, not simply expressive, but so categorical, that it touches the borders of an offense. And this, because Christ is trying to wake us up from the lethargy and the drowsinesses of the life of the world, precisely because He has truths to say, which furthermore are not general and fake, but hard truths of life, with an eternal perspective.

What Christ wants with His words today is to cause a historic shaking up in each one of us, so that, making life decisions, we evaluate and prioritize priorities and aims. For this reason, He also declares and asks: "whosoever wishes to save his life according to the terms of the world and of the historic happenstance in which he is living, he will lose the real true life. Whoever however, rejecting the secular views of the ruling social atmosphere, loses and sacrifices his life, according to the measures of human beliefs, persisting in the confession of the name of Christ and in his obedience to the gospel law, he in the end saves his soul and gains the assurance of the heavenly kingdom. Because what will it benefit a person to gain all this temporal world, satisfying his every desire, pursuit and ambition, and in the end, he loses his immortal soul? And when a person loses that which ensures him in divine eternity, then

SUNDAY AFTER HOLY CROSS
The Gospel according to Mark 8:34-38; 9:1

The Lord said: "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? For what can a man give in return for his life? For whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." And he said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power."

what exchange can he give, in order to expiate his soul from the eternal perdition?"

The vain and the temporal things

When the first European colonists arrived in the American continent, they perceived the impression that the many colored pieces of glass and some beads which they were carrying with them, products of the technical capabilities of the age, were causing to the Indians. They immediately hastened to exchange, these unimportant objects without essential value, for expanses of land and precious metals. The result, for some little crystals and beads, some people lost many things, and some people were benefited disproportionately, resulting in them dominating in the American continent. The same thing also happened in the Colonies of the Great Powers in Africa, where with cheap but impressive exchanges, some people obtained the wealth of the African continent, which they also own, invoking these «validated» rights of theirs, to this day, abandoning the peoples of Africa to poverty, unlearnedness and being taken advantage of.

The contemporary world uses the same «trick» before every person, and especially the young people, when they are about to make decisions of life and to trace the course which they will follow. It dazzles

them with the false and impressive things, in order to enlist them in the service of the system, bleeding dry every vitality and creative ability, depriving them of years of life, for which people usually repent for the manner with which they squandered it, or rather they lost it.

What can be considered as the chief thing which a person can claim in the present life and under the prevailing social conditions, views and beliefs? Authority? No one, of those who seem to be controlling the people, in reality has the capability of doing whatever he wants. He is obligated to submit to the pressures of the powerful people, to align himself to the beckoning of the others, to reconcile, in order to keep every authority, which in any case, he cannot own, except only for a certain period of time, until the "next one" appears, in order to take away from him, always with conditions and rules interpreted and implemented according to the happenstance of the moment.... Wealth? There does not exist any more ungraspable dream. The poor people melt in the chasing and claiming of it, in order to gain, in the best of cases, a livelihood, tasting many bitternesses and disappointments, especially when they manage, even for a bit, to obtain many things, in order to see them subsequently be tossed to the wind. Beauty? There does not exist any more untrustworthy "friend". Something that time withers, something that the fashion changes the models in periods, something the toil which one needs to put forth and the money he must spend, in order to retain or to alter that which he disposes, we easily conclude in the fact that disproportionate sacrifices are needed for despairing temporal results. Knowledge? Confessing the important achievements of our science, we ought to simultaneously observe, on the one hand, that it gave the capability for various, great and unheard of destructions, to the detriment of man, to a point where henceforth its moral delimitation is seriously demanded through the rules of bioethics, on the other hand, the one sided attachment to this, leads to an unsatisfied mess, since the questions are always more numerous, and more complicated than before.

A scale of justice

Really, as many things as the present historic happenstance has to offer man, they resemble the cheap things for which some people lost unimaginable wealth, being impressed, causing harm to their own selves and to their offspring. If someone examines them in the perspective of