

Aiding in the various needs of our fellow man

Immediately afterwards, the Apostle invites Titus to Nikopolis, where he has decided to spend the coming winter, since previously he had sent Artemas or Tychikos to Crete. He urges him also to see off Zenas and Apollo with abundant haste and care, so that this genuine interest of his, a sign of the fruitbearing of his faith in Christ, will serve as a genuine example also to the other Christians. So we see how important Paul considers it that we indicate loving care and the care of love to our colleagues, especially in the area of the Church, and that we not exhaust ourselves on a level of simple official etiquette and superficial expressions in order to cover our lethargy and indifference, like someone who does work therapy in order to overcome the sadness which possesses him. So the "importantly" declares this: that you love and aid your neighbor, in this case your colleague in the spiritual work, not apathetically, but with your whole being, a sign of fruitbearing.

Archim. E. T.

SUNDAY, JULY 16, 2017 SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FATHERS, *Athenogenes the Holy Martyr of Heracleopolis, Julia the Virgin-martyr of Carthage, 1,015 Martyrs in Pisidia, Helier the Hermit, Martyr of Jersey.*

TONE OF THE WEEK : *Plagal of the First Tone*

EOTHINON : *Sixth Orthros Gospel*

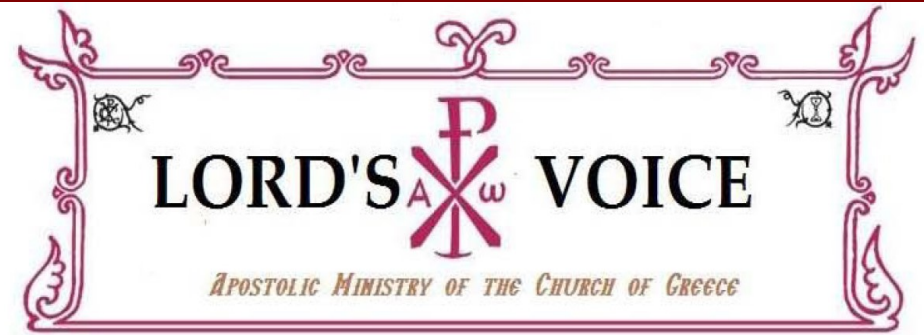
EPISTLE READING: *Titus 3:8-15*

GOSPEL READING: *Matthew 8:28-34, 9:1*

NEXT SUNDAY, SUNDAY, JULY 23, 2017 7TH SUNDAY OF MATHEW, *Phocas the Holy Martyr, Bishop of Sinope, Ezekiel the Prophet, St. Anna of Levkadio, Pelagia the Righteous of Tinos, Trophimos & Theophilios and the 13 others martyred in Lycia*

EPISTLE READING: *Romans 15:1-7*

GOSPEL READING: *Matthew 9:27-35*



65TH YEAR

JULY 16 2017

PAMPHLET # 29 (3346)

DIRECTIONS FOR SPIRITUAL SAILING

The Apostle Titus came from the educated Hellenic Christians from a pagan background, a follower and "genuine child" of Paul in Jerusalem together with Barnabus, at the time of the calling of the apostolic synod. An exceptional colleague of the Apostle of the gentiles, repeatedly in Corinth, his companion in Macedonia, a bishop in Crete with famous colleagues Zenas and Apollos, he was in Dalmatia at the time when Paul was facing in Rome the danger of martyrdom. In this epistle Paul gives him spiritual counsels on matters of selecting Bishops, fighting false teachers and the behavior of lay people and clergymen, stressing that our works are the result and a logical consequence of a journey in repentance, a proof of the presence of the Holy Spirit in our life.

Preaching with incarnate faith

Paul underlines to Titus that our justification, our spiritual renewal and the inheritance of eternal life in the kingdom of God, is a trustworthy word and incarnate truth. A word, in other words, that we trust without limits and boundaries, faith, to which we hand ourselves over without reservations, and for this reason Titus is urged by his spiritual father, in his preaching, to speak with certainty and validity.

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 Christians will then be inspired by his word and will strive to give the good example, to become a "model" in good works, beneficial to everyone, works which will comprise the expression of their life and their faith in Christ.

Consequently preaching cannot be the result of intellectual exercise and the expression of beautiful ideas, in order to beautify our world. On the contrary, the word "be assured" of the Apostle shows that preaching comes from the heart, altered by the grace of faith, it penetrates the souls and the bodies of the listeners, it "garbs" them with spiritual vestments it sanctifies them, it alters them and leads them to Christ, Who grants them His kingdom, from this very life. Thus preaching may change everything, altering them into Church.

This experience lies at the basis of good works, works of people who are struggling and constantly being renewed. Then our works, adorned with faith in humility, remain unto the ages and "speak" in the general silence.

Pastoral care toward the heretics

The Apostle continuing to guide Titus and through him us also, comes to the topic of the heretical false teachers who were already at that time troubling the Church. He urges them to avoid extensive conversations, arguments and disputes, which do not lead anywhere else rather than to the exacerbating of the spirits, since there a spirit of discipleship to the truth and repentance does not exist. Furthermore, Apologetics does not obligatorily give birth to faith to those whom we are trying to convince, because convincing is one thing and faith as a grace which informs the heart about the Truth is another. One thing is certain: that fanaticism on our part in facing the heretics shows, aside from other gaps, also that we are not living our faith. Let us constantly strive, with various pastoral manners, even also "tricks" in case we ignore or underestimate the "breath" of Christ in each person who will end up next to us! May everyone be saved, as the leader and perfecter of our faith, Jesus Christ also wants (1 Tim. 2:4). He did not exempt anyone.

So for this reason also, a "polemical" spirit is not needed, but a spirit of discretion, because in our effort to convert our heretical brethren, possibly some people of a good disposition may be scandalized, for whom probably the time for conversion has not yet rung and prematurely they will be led, embittered, by our manner into more dangerous paths.

People who have a mania for ancient things and believers in the 12 gods, as also judaizer false teachers and many types of heretics, as they exist today, existed then as well. Saint John the Evangelist in his own Second Epistle advises the believers to not even say "rejoice [i.e. greetings]" to some heretics. Of course the pastor does not hate here the heretics, he does not nurture a passion against them, but he wants to safeguard his flock from the possibility of some Christians being deceived, if they keep company with them.