

## Believers and not followers

The heretical people have missionary zeal, which is translated into seeking and cultivating interpersonal relationships. They feel the need to convince. The same thing also with whoever. in their effort to understand and attract others also, with their innovations, remaining many times in making a show, they have zeal and enthusiasm. However, our tradition does not want followers in the Church but believers in Christ. Secularization, in the end, is handing ourselves into sin, into the rejection of the truth, into breaking the word of the Gospel, into refusing to follow the spirit and the ethos of the Fathers. Secularization is our refusal to place our thoughts, word, our inspirations under the criterion of the Church and trusting in the number of whoever is following and not in the humility of patience and obedience.

So let us ponder, and let us seek in the life and teaching of our Fathers, those models, who will help us live the life of the Church more genuinely and that we not be swayed by people who, with the perversion of their word, will find our weakness and will pull us away from the truth.

Fr. T. M

**SUNDAY, JUNE 13, 2021** *Fathers of the 1st Council , Aquilina the Martyr of Syria , Triphyllos the Bishop of Nicosia*

**tone of the week** : -Plagal Second

**EOthinon** : Tenth

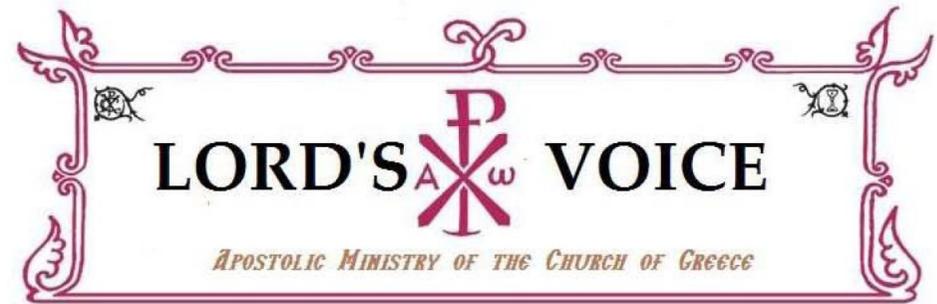
**Epistle Reading** : Acts of the Apostles 20:16-18, 28-36

**Gospel Reading** : John 17:1-13

**SUNDAY, JUNE 20, 2021 HOLY PENTECOST** , *Methodios the Martyr, Bishop of Olympus , Kallistos I, Patriarch of Constantinople, Nicholas Cabasilas of Thessaloniki*

**Epistle Reading** : Acts of the Apostles 2:1-11

**Gospel Reading** : John 7:37-52; 8:12



69<sup>TH</sup> YEAR JUNE 13 2021 PAMPHLET # 24 (3550)

## THE CHURCH, THE CRITERION OF TRUTH

Often, we Christians accuse the world and the secularized spirit, which we consider to be the cause for people to break away from the life of the Church and their handing themselves over to a manner without God. We protest for this spirit also, within the life of the Church. And we locate it in the use of technology, in lenience for human falls, and the lack of chastity in behavior, in the suggestion for small changes in the way with which the Church addresses the world.

The authentic tradition of our Church, however, informs us that the real secularized spirit, in the sense of departure from the truth, in the way of salvation that Christ gives us, is found from the beginning within the walls. As the Apostle Paul characteristically mentions to the Christians of Ephesus, when he is about to depart from there, “among you, people will come out who will teach deceptions. in order to sway the believers to their side” (Acts 20:30). And if we ponder, we will ascertain that matters have not changed, either with the heretics, or with those who close the door of belief to those who are less strong, or with whoever makes their falls, a rule.

## Enlistment in the body of Christ

This happens because man does not trust the experience of the Church, the authority of the patristic word, the enlightenment of the

## EPISTLE READING ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 20:16-18, 28-36

IN THOSE DAYS, Paul had decided to sail past Ephesos, so that he might not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hastening to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost. And from Miletos he sent to Ephesos and called to him the elders of the church. And when they came to him, he said to them: "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God which he obtained with the blood of his own Son. I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.

Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears. And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities, and to those who were with me. In all things I have shown you that by so toiling one must help the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, 'it is more blessed to give than to receive.' " And when he had spoken thus, he knelt down and prayed with them all.

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great personalities who traced healthy lines in the life of faith, but only in their own self and their own seekings. And whereas his motive is healthy, as he is seeking something above in understanding, and in living the word and the Christian experience, he does not have his seeking in the body of Christ, but strives to sway this body to his own logic, his own direction. So, his word, from a word of seeking, becomes a perverted word. It may seem attractive, because it covers also the worries of others. It is not however, authentic.

No seeking is able to end up healthy, if it is not enlisted in the

body of Christ, in the striving of the Tradition. This, however, does not mean stationalness in seeking or a feeling of self-sufficiency. Some people believe that the more ancient ones have spoken about everything. It is not however, healthy for us to not be able to utilize the wisdom, the knowledge and the experience of the more ancient ones as a basis for us to proceed in whatsoever dialogue with our own self, with our age, with our world. The word of the more ancient ones is the boundary, is the border in which our seeking is able to feel that it is healthy.

### God's condescension

The heretics usually have a mania for perfection. Having the thirst to be censoring, they are not able to accept that God condescends to human weakness, that He takes on human nature and He co-unites it with the godhead, that he is lead to the passion, death, that with His Resurrection He readopts the human body and with His glorious Ascension He lifts it up to heaven, in full communion with the Father. On the other hand, there also are those who hand themselves over to their passions and want to justify them. Thus, they hide behind God's love and abolish boundaries and rules. Love is revealed in repentance. It becomes economy to man's need to live in the difficulties of the world. It does not become however. a justification for further sin.

This does not mean that we are justified to seek a God who is strict to the transgressions of others, a God who is lenient with whoever is keeping His commandments and will give them a distinct position in relation to whoever are seemingly or really far from Him, whereas God is for everyone. God does not justify those strict people who are imbued by a spirit of pride for their achievements, mainly ascetical ones, but He accepts everyone's repentance, condescending also to whoever, with real agony and thirst for salvation of other's also, give their gifts, so that the message of the truth attracts those of a good disposition.