**11 13 16**

***“Thought for the Week”***

***“Brethren, it was fitting that we should have such a High Priest, holy, blameless, unstained, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens.”***

My beloved in Christ Jesus let us never forget our high calling! When the priest says at the end of the Divine and Holy Liturgy ***“O Lord save Thy people and bless Thine Inheritance”*** we respond, ***“we have seen the true light, we have received the heavenly spirit”*** Let us, indeed, rejoice in what we have inherited- the holiness of our God. Everything our Lord has and is by nature, is ours by His grace. We must only make this grace active in our lives. We must receive it, accept it, and make it real. Our Lord, in the parable of the prodigal son, tells us “All that I have is yours.” This means that we are not simply here “to live good Christian lives” but rather we are here to become sons and daughters of the living God, to become ***“holy , blameless, unstained, separated from sinners, and above the heavens.”***

Of course, in this Sunday’s Epistle St. Paul writes this first and foremost about our Lord Jesus Christ. However, it is crucial that we understand he writes this about the human nature that He came to heal. He writes this about the human nature that our Lord has restored to each one of us through Holy Baptism. It was given to us as our inheritance, and yet we must each make it our own. This nature has been manifest in all of our Saints. That is why we read this on the feast day of our beloved Hierarch St. John Chrysostom- who displayed all of these virtues in his holy episcopacy. St. John made every one of these divine virtues his own, and so must each one of us.

Since these virtues have been given to us, let us study them carefully. Each of these virtues requires an infinite number of sermons, however, today let us focus on what it means to be “***blameless.”-***as it is translated in today’s text.  In Greek, the word is***ἄκακος.*** This word has a wonderful depth of different shades of meaning. It means, without guile or fraud, harmless, free from guilt, fearing no evil from others, distrusting no one. St. John Chrysostom interprets it to mean to be free of deceit or craftiness. My dear ones in Christ Jesus, as we grow in the experience of God in each of our lives, we realize that He has all things under His Divine and watchful eye. He will protect us from all evil, if we strive for good. He will never let us be lost if we wish to be found. He will never let us die, if we seek life in Him. As we grow in this realization, then we will have no fear. We will become innocent, for we will fear no evil from others-for God is with us. We will assume the best of others not the worst. We will leave all craftiness behind, for we seek, above all, God’s will and not our own distorted agendas. This then is what it means to be blameless. Let us seek to be ***ἄκακος*** with every fiber of our being, for in so seeking this we will become glorious on this earth, and becomes sons and daughters of the living God. Amen.