***5 21 17***

***“THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK”***

***“I have appeared to you for this purpose….delivering you from the people and from the Gentiles, to whom I send you to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God”***

      “Glory be to Thee who has shown us the light!” Beloved in our sweetest Lord Jesus, let us thank our gracious Lord who has given us the light, who is the Light. As long as we are in His presence, we can see things as they really are. When we were gentiles, that is, not a part of the God’s Holy Church, we were living in the darkness. We could not see the beauty of the creation as a reflection of the beauty of our God. Now when we look at the majesty of the stars and the moon we glorify the beauty and wisdom of the One who created them. Previously, when we felt love deep in our hearts for our children and for those close to us we thought this was a “natural feeling” and now we know where this comes from. We know that it is given to us by the One who loves us- and that our natural feelings are only a pale reflection of the love He has for us. When we feel this love, we ourselves begin to burn with love.

When we were gentiles, we submitted to no one, felt no obligation for anyone, and our goal was to simply to live life for ourselves (and at best for our families). Now that Light dwells in us with, we see that we are servants to Him and to each blessed human being that He has placed in front of us on this glorious journey. We know that we must submit to the One who loves us and to each other also. We are not our own masters for we have one Master. We can now see that this is the only way we can be free. We were placed here on this earth to serve each other, for the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve. Let us serve each other in our families, in our workplaces, in every minute of our daily lives.

 In today’s Epistle, St. Paul recounts his miraculous deliverance from darkness to light. The light came down from heaven and for the first time he began to see things as they really were. Most important, God’s purpose in giving him the light, was that he should go to others and share this same light. This light was not given to him to be used for himself. It was not given to him so that now he could live a life of self-fulfillment. He was not told to grow in his self-esteem and self-love. This light did not make him feel better than others. He was told to go and serve others.

 Beloved in Christ Jesus, our task in this life is to receive the light only for one purpose- to give it and share it with those whom God loves- that is every human being on this earth. We must not condemn those who live in darkness, for they cannot see. They sin only because they do not have the sinless One inside of them. We must bring light to them not by bringing them advice, theology, or having them join our institutional “Church.” We must bring them the Church through our love for them, for the Church is love Himself. When we were baptized, She gave us this Love and this Light. When we take Holy Communion She fills our bodies with the sacrificed Love of God. She fills us with the One who takes away our sins gives us the Light which shatters the darkness inside of us. Let us love those around us that the light of God may begin to shine brightly in this darkened world. As we love in this way, a light will come down from heaven and we will begin to see, and all of those around us will begin to see also. Together, as we serve one another, we will begin to see things as they really are. Amen.