

## GOSPEL OF JOHN 17 B (17:3-13)

- ❖ This passage is read on the Sunday between Ascension on Pentecost on which the Church remembers the First Ecumenical Council in Nicea A.D. 325 at which the heresy of Arianism which taught that Christ was “created” and there was a time when he was not in existence was condemned.

**<sup>3</sup>“And this is the eternal life, that they may know You, *the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom You did send forth.*”**

St. Cyril of Alexandria: “For this knowledge is life, laboring as it were in birth of the whole meaning of the mystery and granting to us participation in the mystery of the Eucharist, whereby we are joined to the living and life-giving Word *the nations are to be joint-heirs, and fellow members of the body, and joint-partakers of His promise in the Christ, [Eph. 3:6]* in as much as they partake in His blessed body and blood. This knowledge then, which also brings us to the Eucharist by the Spirit, is life.

Saint Chrysostom: “‘The only true God,’ He says, by way of distinction from those which are not gods; for He was about to send them to the nations.” [Hom. 80, P.G. 59:474 (col. 435).]

**<sup>4</sup>“I glorified You on the earth. I finished the work which You have given Me that I should do.**

**<sup>5</sup>“And now, O Father, glorify You Me with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world *came* to be.**

### **The work of God, the re-creation of the human being in the image of Christ, God.**

Fr. Behr: “In his writings Irenaeus expounds the ‘economy’ (the way God works out our salvation) in terms of the work of God fashioning the human being with His Hands, the Son and the Spirit...it is Christ Himself who is ‘coming throughout the whole economy’ the ‘Beginning who appeared at the end’. It is a continuous and uninterrupted project, worked out through the long pedagogy (the manner in which God teaches or reveals his plan to the human race) of the economy., at the end of which Adam is finally made in the image and likeness of God. According to Irenaeus, the reason for the whole and single, economy of God, is found in the words of Christ about the glory which He had with the Father ‘before the world was’, the same glory which He asks to be glorified as He approaches the Cross (John 17:5), and further asks that His disciples should be there with Him to behold that glory ( <sup>24</sup>“*Father, I will that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, in order that they may behold the glory, that which is Mine, which You gave Me; for You did love Me before the foundation of the world. [Jn. 17:24]*)...the Cross is primarily the expression of the love that God is...*the glory of God is a living human being* (St. Irenaeus) meaning by this...the martyr pg. 199).”

**<sup>6</sup>“I manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. Yours they were, and You have given them to Me, and they have kept Your word. <sup>7</sup>“Now they have come to know that all things whatsoever You have given Me are from You. <sup>8</sup>“For the words which You have given Me, I have given them; and they received *them*, and know truly that I came forth from You; and they believed that You did send Me forth.**

*Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God* (Matt 5:8) – **by seeing God human beings live**

Fr. Behr (quoting Irenaeus): “...but in regard to His love and kindness, and as to His infinite power, even this He grants to those who love Him, that is, to see God...but when He (God) pleases He is seen by human beings, by whomever He wills, and whenever He wills and as He wills...For those who see the light and within the light, and partake of its brilliancy, so also those who see God are in God, and receive His splendor...those

therefore, who see God, do receive life...for this reason, He, ...rendered Himself visible and comprehensible and within the capacity of those who believe, so that He might vivify (bring to life); those who receive and behold Him through faith...It is not possible to live apart from life, and the means of life is found in participation in God; but participation in God is to know God, and to enjoy His goodness. Pg. 201)”

Fr. Behr: “To see Jesus ‘in the flesh’, and so to know the Father, and so to live, is for John, Ignatius and Irenaeus, pivoted upon the Cross and sharing in His flesh (communion). And as such, as Irenaeus makes clear later, ‘the human being’ is the martyr (the living sacrifice made by offering ones’ life completely to Christ, dying to oneself). Quoting Irenaeus – “therefore, the martyrs *bear witness* and despise death... by the readiness of the Spirit. For when the weakness of the flesh is absorbed, it manifests the Spirit as powerful; and again, when the Spirit absorbs the weakness, it inherits flesh for itself, and from both of these is made a living human being: living indeed because of the participation of the Spirit, and human because of the substance of the flesh.”

“...the glory and the honor is that of the martyr’s crown. For the way to the Kingdom is the martyrria — bearing witness to Christ. And this means crucifixion and suffering. A marriage which does not constantly crucify its own selfishness and self-sufficiency, which does not “die to itself” that it may point beyond itself, is not a Christian marriage. The real sin of marriage today is...the refusal to understand marriage as directed toward the Kingdom of God. (Schmemmann).”

**<sup>9</sup>“I make request concerning them. I do not make request concerning the world, but concerning these whom You have given Me, for they are Yours; <sup>10</sup>“and all My things are Yours, and Your things *are* Mine, and I have been glorified in them.**

Bp. Gerasimos: “For the people who have not yet believed, He will pray later. But at this moment the theme of the prayer is the Church, her members. Jesus speaks to the Father about the disciples.”

**<sup>11</sup>“And I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep in Your name those whom You have given Me, in order that they may be one, even as We.**

**<sup>12</sup>“When I was with them in the world, I was keeping them in Your name. Those whom You have given Me I guarded, and none of them perished, except the son of the perdition (Judas) that the Scripture might be fulfilled (Psalm 41:9 Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, has lifted up his heel against me., 109:2-13).**

The Eucharistic Prayer of the Didache

“We give You thanks, Holy Father, For Your Holy Name Which You have caused to dwell in our hearts and for the knowledge and faith and immortality which You have made known to us.”

Bp. Gerasimos: “In this verse and in the following verses, we have the purpose and reason for the prayer. Christ manifested the name of God, the disciples believed, and the first Church was founded. But now Christ is leaving, He is on His way toward the Father, and the Church will remain in the hostile world. The disciples have been separated from the world; they have been given to Christ...the danger of falling, of becoming again of the world, is great. For this reason, the prayer places the faithful into the love of God the Father.”

**<sup>13</sup>“And now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy made full in them.**

❖ The joy of the Kingdom having come!

