

Our Participation in the Mystery of the Kingdom of God (Bishop Agathangelos of Fanari)

[Ξένες γλώσσες / In English](#)



‘For many are called, but few are chosen’

The Gospel parable for the 14th Sunday of Matthew presents the mystery of the Kingdom of God and our attitude towards the saving challenge of the love of God.

A king invited friends and acquaintances to a wedding, but they didn’t respond to his invitation. They had many and varied excuses: lack of interest and the cares of life.

But God’s always inviting us into His communion, His body, His salvation. This invitation transcends place and time, in other words it’s eternal and general. Our response to God’s call isn’t an obligation, nor is it coercion or subjugation. It’s an expression of our love for God, submission in freedom to His holy will. It’s precisely this intention of ours that we express when we attend church.



Why should we go to church?

The congregation is the assembly of the people of God, that is of the Church, in the house of God, where they glorify God. In Greek, the word for the Church is 'ecclesia' and is derived from the verb to 'call out, meaning 'to invite, to assemble'. The faithful are invited to attend church by God Himself, since He's responsible for the assembly.

Saint Nikodimos the Athonite writes that we the faithful need to attend church in order to assuage our hunger from the mystical and holy altar of the Body of the Divine Word, which is to be found there. And we can slake our thirst from the life-giving Blood of the Lord and the waters of the teachings of holy scripture. It's also necessary for us to attend church because the Church is an ark. When Christians embark, we're saved from the notional flood of the passions and sins. Saint Paul urges us not to neglect our church attendance, because this strengthens the ties of love between the faithful.

Common Liturgical Prayer

Prayer is the spiritual daughter of our love for the Lord and mother of our love towards our brothers and sisters. This family love which is engendered through common prayer and worship gives force to our supplication. Christ spoke to us about the common prayers of the Church: 'If two of you agree on earth about

anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them' (Matth. 18, 19-20).



Sunday: the Lord's day

One of the ten commandments given by God to Moses refers to the day which is dedicated to the Lord. 'Keep the day of the Sabbaths to sanctify it, as the Lord your God has commanded you'.

For the Jews, the day dedicated to the Lord was Saturday, the Sabbath, that is the day when the Lord rested from the six days of creation. For us Christians, the day dedicated to the Lord is Sunday, the day of Christ's resurrection and His triumph over the devil. It is the day above all others when we should thank the Lord for everything He's done for our salvation. The day for giving praise for His love. The best way for us to honour the Lord's day is to go to His holy house and take part in the common worship of the Church, humbly and discreetly.

The Church preserves our joy. In the Church we find the longing of the disappointed, satisfaction for the sorrowing, comfort for the unhappy, respite for the exhausted. Because, Christ said: 'Come to me all of you who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest'.