

EΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΣ ΠΛΗΡΩΜΑΤΟΣ
Apostolic Church of the Pleroma

*Delivered by Tau Phosphoros
to the Parish of St. Ambelain
on Sunday, February 4, 2018*

YEAR B - FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

Welcome everybody! There is so much great material in our readings today that it is difficult to decide where to begin or what to address. Let us start by looking at our first reading of the 17th Ode of Solomon and then we'll see what we have time to cover. I am stricken here by the image of the "mountain of perfection." This is an ancient symbol of initiation, occurring repeatedly throughout the various branches of the esoteric tradition. We see it in both the context of the psychical initiation, as with Moses, as well as with the pure pneumatic luminescence of Mt. Tabor. We see it with the Rosicrucian mountain, the alchemical Mons Philosophorum. In Freemasonry we have the mystical Heredom, which relates directly to the "mountain of perfection" mentioned here. As depicted here, if one manages to ascend this holy mount, a transformation of the entire being results; and this transformation is liberating, and gives one the ability to liberate others through Knowledge and Love, that is to say through Gnosis and Agape.

Now, in our 2nd reading from 1st Corinthians, we see a perfect example of the effects of this transformation in action. Paul expresses here how his freedom has enabled him to relate to all people. He makes a notable distinction here between the Jewish law, that is to say the Mosaic law, and God's law, which is Christ's law; the law of love and grace. But Paul does not flaunt this freedom in the face of those who are yet still bound by the demiurgic law. Rather, he says: "To those under the law I became as one under the law, though I am not under the law, that I might gain those under the law." This is very similar to the sentiment he expressed concerning the eating of food sacrificed to idols. In other words, appearance matters. That is to say that if our actions, though licit and permissible, cause our tradition to be misrepresented or viewed negatively by those who would benefit by participating in our faith, then it is better for us to appear to be acting within the bounds of the law - although we are not, since it is temporal, imperfect, insubstantial - so that we might better communicate our Love and Knowledge to the broadest possible audience. This is reflected in the old Rosicrucian admonishment to adopt the manners and dress of one's country. It is also expressed in the Martinist concept of the Mask.

Finally, let me say a brief word on our Gospel reading from Mark. We read here about Jesus healing Peter's mother-in-law and others, and casting out demons. We read then that he awoke very early the next day, when it was still dark out, "and went to a desolate place and prayed there." A couple of days ago we discussed the method of removing oneself from the "desolate place." Now we see the flip side to that coin. The place of darkness is not necessarily "evil" even though it is "negative." It is only in the darkness of night, after all, that we may see our true position in the cosmos. Likewise, there is a place of darkness to which we may withdraw in order to gain a certain perspective.