



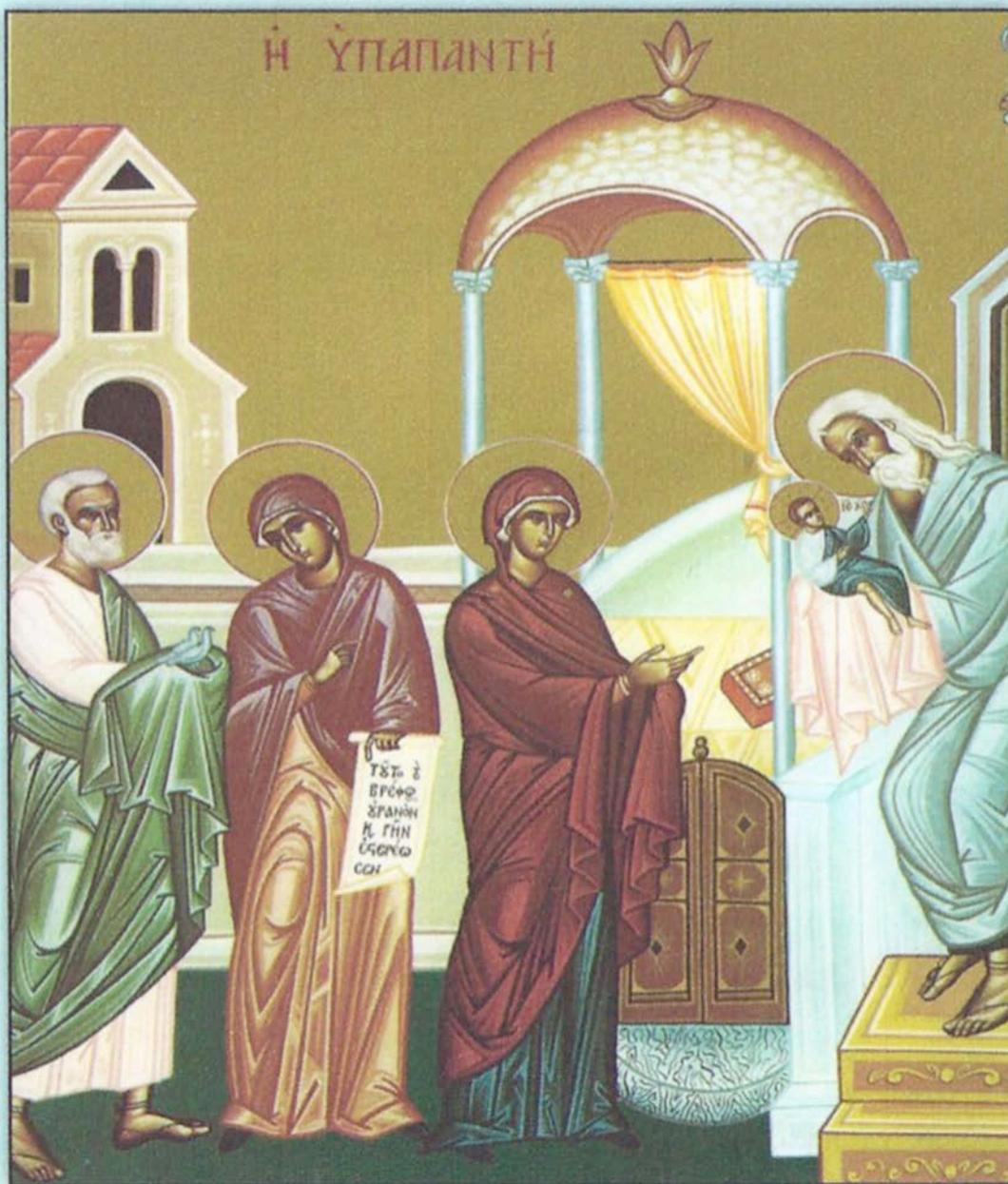
DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN
DISTRICT

THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN February 2nd, 2014

V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD IN THE TEMPLE



Icon of the Presentation of Our Lord -- February 2nd

St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 7:7-17

Prokeimenon. Mode 3. Luke 1: 46-48

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. Verse: For he has regarded the humility of his servant. BRETHREN, it is beyond dispute that the inferior is blessed by the superior. Here tithes are received by mortal men; there, by one whom it is testified that he lives. One might even say that Levi himself, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, for he was still in the loins of his ancestor when Melchizedek met him. Now if perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the order of Melchizedek, rather than one named after the order of Aaron? For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well. For the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests. This becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek, who has become a priest, not according to a legal requirement concerning bodily descent but by the power of an indestructible life. For it is witnessed of him, "Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek."

The Presentation of Our Lord and Savior in the Temple

The Gospel of Luke 2:22-40

At that time, the parents brought the child Jesus up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord") and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons." Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Symeon, and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And inspired by the Spirit he came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

"Lord, now let your servant depart in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel."

And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him; and Symeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is spoken against (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher; she was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years from her virginity, and as a widow till she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. And coming up at that very hour she gave thanks to God, and spoke of him to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. And when they had performed everything according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

The Presentation of Our Lord and Savior in the Temple

Κατὰ Λουκᾶν 2.22-40

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, ἀνήγαγον αὐτὸν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα παραστήσαι τῷ Κυρίῳ, καθὼς γέγραπται ἐν νόμῳ Κυρίου ὅτι πᾶν ἄρσεν διανοίγον μήτραν ἅγιον τῷ Κυρίῳ κληθήσεται, καὶ τοῦ δοῦναι θυσίαν κατὰ τὸ εἰρημένον ἐν νόμῳ Κυρίου, ζευγὸς τρυγόνων ἢ δύο νεοσσοὺς περιστερῶν. Καὶ ἰδοὺ ἦν ἄνθρωπος ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις ᾧ ὄνομα Συμεὼν, καὶ ὁ ἄνθρωπος οὗτος δίκαιος καὶ εὐλαβής, προσδεχόμενος παράκλησιν τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ, καὶ Πνεῦμα ἦν Ἅγιον ἐπ' αὐτόν· καὶ ἦν αὐτῷ κεχηματισμένον ὑπὸ τοῦ Πνεύματος τοῦ Ἁγίου μὴ ἰδεῖν θάνατον πρὶν ἢ ἴδῃ τὸν Χριστὸν Κυρίου. καὶ ἦλθεν ἐν τῷ Πνεύματι εἰς τὸ ἱερόν· καὶ ἐν τῷ εἰσαγαγεῖν τοὺς γονεῖς τὸ παιδίον Ἰησοῦν τοῦ ποιῆσαι αὐτοὺς κατὰ τὸ εἰθισμένον τοῦ νόμου περὶ αὐτοῦ, καὶ αὐτὸς ἐδέξατο αὐτὸν εἰς τὰς ἀγκάλας αὐτοῦ καὶ εὐλόγησε τὸν Θεὸν καὶ εἶπε·

νῦν ἀπολύεις τὸν δοῦλόν σου, δέσποτα, κατὰ τὸ ῥῆμά σου ἐν εἰρήνῃ, ὅτι εἶδον οἱ ὀφθαλμοί μου τὸ σωτήριόν σου, ὃ ἠτοίμασας κατὰ πρόσωπον πάντων τῶν λαῶν, φῶς εἰς ἀποκάλυψιν ἐθνῶν καὶ δόξαν λαοῦ σου Ἰσραὴλ.

καὶ ἦν Ἰωσήφ καὶ ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ θαυμάζοντες ἐπὶ τοῖς λαλουμένοις περὶ αὐτοῦ. καὶ εὐλόγησεν αὐτοὺς Συμεὼν καὶ εἶπε πρὸς Μαριάμ τὴν μητέρα αὐτοῦ· ἰδοὺ οὗτος κεῖται εἰς πτώσιν καὶ ἀνάστασιν πολλῶν ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ καὶ εἰς σημεῖον ἀντιλεγόμενον. καὶ σοῦ δὲ αὐτῆς τὴν ψυχὴν διελεύσεται ῥομφαία, ὅπως ἂν ἀποκαλυφθῶσιν ἐκ πολλῶν καρδιῶν διαλογισμοί. Καὶ ἦν Ἄννα προφῆτις, θυγάτηρ Φανουὴλ, ἐκ φυλῆς Ἀσήρ· αὕτη προβεβηκυῖα ἐν ἡμέραις πολλαῖς, ζήσασα ἔτη μετὰ ἀνδρὸς ἐπτὰ ἀπὸ τῆς παρθενίας αὐτῆς, καὶ αὕτη χήρα ὡς ἐτῶν ὀγδοήκοντα τεσσάρων, ἣ οὐκ ἀφίστατο ἀπὸ τοῦ ἱεροῦ νηστεύσασα καὶ δεήσασα λατρεύουσα νύκτα καὶ ἡμέραν· καὶ αὕτη αὕτη τῇ ὥρᾳ ἐπιστᾶσα ἀνθωμολογεῖτο τῷ Κυρίῳ καὶ ἐλάλει περὶ αὐτοῦ πᾶσι τοῖς προσδεχομένοις λύτρωσιν ἐν Ἱερουσαλήμ. Καὶ ὡς ἐτέλεσαν ἅπαντα τὰ κατὰ τὸν νόμον Κυρίου, ὑπέστρεψαν εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν εἰς τὴν πόλιν ἑαυτῶν Ναζαρέτ. Τὸ δὲ παιδίον ἠῤῥξανε καὶ ἐκραταιοῦτο πνεύματι πληρούμενον σοφίας, καὶ χάρις Θεοῦ ἦν ἐπ' αὐτό.

COFFEE HOUR; Fellowship is hosted by the Maillis Family in blessed memory of their son + **GEORGE MAILLIS.**

TODAY: CHURCHING: We are pleased to receive into the embrace of the Church 'JORDAN ALEXANDER' son of Demetrios and Amada Giannios. NA SAS ZESE!

TODAY: The Artoklasia in honor of the **FEAST OF THE HOLY PRESENTATION 'YPAPANTI'** is graciously offered by Mrs Eleni Hatzis and Family. Blessed are those who rejoice in serving the people of God!

THREE HIERARCHS HELLENIC HERITAGE AWARD ESTEEMED PAST RECIPIENTS

2003 -- Antonios H. Diamataris;	Publisher, National Herald Newspaper
2004 -- Yiannis Somonides;	Director , Cosmos FM WNYE, National Public Radio
2005 ---Ambassador Loucas Tsilas;	Director, U.S.A. Alexander S. Onassis Foundation
2006 ---Eugene Rossides;	U.S. Treasury Secretary, Hellenic American Institute, D.C.
2007 ---John Sitolides;	Chairman, Woodrow Wilson Center, South Europe Desk, D.C.
2008 ---Basilios Theodosakis; Kostas Vellios;	Athenagoras Humanitarian Award
2009 ---Dino Anagnost;	Maestro Symphony Chorale , Lincoln Center Orchestra Society
2010 ---Gregory Pappas;	Editor Publisher, Greek American Magazine
2011 ---Emmanuel A. Kampouris;	CEO American Standard, Publisher Kairos Journal
2012 ---Peter J. Pappas;	Chairman P.J.M. Holding Group, Founder P.J. Mechanical
2013 ---Chris P. Tomaras;	Founder and Chairman, Pan – Hellenic Scholarship Foundation U.S.A.
2014 ---Anthony Kouzounis	Supreme President, Order of A.H.E.P.A.

EUCHARISTO! GRACIAS! MERCI! DANKE! GRAZIE!

Three Hierarchs Feast Day on Wednesday and Thursday were a major success despite the inclement cold weather. We were most pleased with the presence of many faithful, visiting clergy and hierarchs of the Holy Archdiocese.

NEW BROOKLYN BOROUGH PRESIDENT, the Honorable **ERIC ADAMS** graced our festivities both in Church at the Vesper and the Grand Reception in Rosehall. He was most impressed and anxiously anticipates a return visit.

Gratitude is expressed to the Parish Council who did a commendable effort to keep church order, to the Ladies Philoptochos Society and the Demetra Chapter of the Daughters of Penelope who hosted and served coffee and Greek sweets and pastries at two receptions in Rosehall. We thank our **BOY SCOUT TROOP #531** who served as an honor guard, our **ALTAR BOY SOCIETY** who graced the services and our Parish **FLORISTS; MADISON, AVENUE 'J', MARINE PARK, and HENRY'S** who decorated our Church for the festivities. Everyone did their part and it was to **TO THE GREATER GLORY OF GOD! Alleluia ! Alleluia ! Alleluia !!**

Our Lady of Good Counsel Roman Catholic Church, 230 E. 90th St. 2nd & 3rd Ave, Manhattan, tel: 212-426-9405, will host Father Eugene next Sunday at a lecture on Christian Unity and the Paschal Date Formula at 3:00 P.M. All are invited to share the afternoon and reception.

2014 STEWARDSHIP: commenced on January 1st. Please put the parish as one of your top and first response priorities and register with the church office your membership as a faithful steward of Christ's church militant! You made it to 2014 ! Give praise to the Lord and show your appreciation for life by supporting the ministry of the parish. **THREE HIERARCHS NEEDS YOU, YES YOU!**

PARKING LOT PERMITS; Will be renewable from **JANUARY 01ST 2014.** Please be prepared to submit your annual stewardship (DUES) in early January to receive the **NEW PARKING PERMIT,** for 2014 . Towing of illegally parked vehicles or trespassers will be in effect as the signs read clearly. **PLEASE OBLIGE WITH SECURING A CHURCH PERMIT!**

RADIO MINISTRY: Each Saturday at 1:15 PM Fr. Eugene hosts and produces the radio broadcast **MATTERS OF CONSCIENCE NOW IN ITS 14TH YEAR OF BROADCASTING LIVE ON WNYE 91.5 COSMOS FM,** with listener telephone participation. Subjects of interest regarding Greek Orthodox theology, faith and practice, as well as secular topics confronting the nation and the world are discussed. Tune in and join the dialogue by calling 718-204-8900. Check our live audio at **LIVESTREAMINGPLAYER .** The website address. **W.W.W.gaepis.org (Click live audio)**

MEMORIALS TODAY : + **GEORGE MAILLIS** + **ELEUTHERIA MANIOUDAKIS**
+ **KONSTANTINOS PAPADIMITRIOU,** + **BEATRICE PANAGIOTA DOUVRES**
MEMORIALS NEXT WEEK: + **KATHERINE** and + **THEODORE CONTOS**

THREE HIERARCHS 2014



CONGRATULATIONS A.H.E.P.A. CHAPTER #200

NEW YEAR'S EVE !



AND DAUGHTERS OF PENELOPE CHAPTER #33



ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



«Ἐγενόμην ἐν Πνεύματι ἐν τῇ Κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ καὶ ἤκουσα φωνὴν ὀπίσω μου μεγάλην ὡς ἀάλπιγγος» (Ἀπ. 1,10)

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος Κ' Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 940 ²	Ἑξαπαντὴ τοῦ Κυρίου Κυριακὴ 2 Φεβρουαρίου 2014 (2003)	Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος Αὔγουστινος Ν. Καντιώτης
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Θέλεις νὰ δῆς τὸ Χριστό;

Τὴν πρώτη (1η) Ἰανουαρίου ἦταν τοῦ ἁγίου Βασιλείου. Χθὲς πρώτη (1η) Φεβρουαρίου ἦταν τοῦ ἁγίου Τρύφωνος. Καὶ σήμερα: Σήμερα δὲν ἐορτάζει ἅγιος. Ἐορτάζει ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν ἁγίων, ὁ ἀρχηγὸς τῆς πίστεώς μας, ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστός. Εἶνε δεσποτική ἐορτή, ἡ ἐορτὴ τῆς Ἑξαπαντῆς. Τί εἶνε ἡ Ἑξαπαντή; Μὲ ἀπλᾶ λόγια θὰ τὸ ἐξηγήσουμε.

Ὁ Χριστός, ἀγαπητοί μου, δὲν ἦταν μόνο ἄνθρωπος, ἦταν καὶ Θεός. Καὶ ὡς Θεὸς δὲν ὑπάρχει στιγμή τοῦ χρόνου ποὺ νὰ μὴν ὑπάρχει. Ὑπάρχει πάντοτε. Εἶνε αὐτὸ ποὺ λέμε «*νῦν καὶ αἰεί*». Ἐμεῖς εἴμεθα στὸ «*νῦν*», τώρα, ἐνῶ ὁ Χριστὸς εἶνε καὶ στὸ «*αἰεί*», πάντοτε: «... *νῦν καὶ αἰεί καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰῶνων*». Ὡς Θεὸς λοιπὸν εἶνε αἰώνιος, ὡς ἄνθρωπος ὁμοίως, ποὺ ἐφόρεσε σάρκα, μπήκε στὴν ἱστορία, στὸ χρόνο. Γεννήθηκε σὲ ὀρισμένο χρόνο καὶ τόπο, σὲ ἓνα μικρὸ χωριό. Γεννήθηκε σὰν ἓνα φτωχὸ νήπιο. Ἡ Μάνα του δὲν εἶχε ποὺ νὰ τὸν βάλῃ, καὶ τὸν ἔβαλε στὸ παχνὶ τῶν ζώων. Γεννήθηκε σὲ μιὰ σπηλιά, σ' ἓνα σταῦλο. Ποιὸς θὰ φανταζόταν, ὅτι **τὸ νήπιο ἐκεῖνο εἶνε ὁ βασιλεὺς τοῦ κόσμου;**

Πέρασαν ἀπὸ τὴ Γέννησι σαράντα ἡμέρες. Τὴν τεσσαρακοστὴ ἡμέρα εἶχαν τότε συνήθεια, ὅπως καὶ τώρα, νὰ πηγαίνουν τὸ **βρέφος στὸ ναό**. Τὸ πῆγαιναν γιὰ νὰ τὸ ἀγιάσουν, νὰ τὸ καθαρίσουν, νὰ σαραντίσῃ ἡ μάνα. Σήμερα δυστυχῶς ἀρχισαν αὐτὰ νὰ μὴν τὰ προσέχουν. Ἀμελοῦν. Θυμηθῆτε ὁμοίως τὰ λόγια μου: παιδί, ποὺ ἡ μάνα δὲν τὸ σαραντίζει, θὰ γίνῃ τέρας. Θὰ γεμίσῃ ὁ κόσμος ἀπὸ κακούργους.

Συνηθίζαν, λοιπὸν, οἱ Ἑβραῖοι στὶς σαράντα ἡμέρες νὰ φέρνουν τὸ παιδί στὸ ναό, καὶ συγχρόνως νὰ προσφέρουν δῶρα. Ἄν ἦταν πλούσιοι, πῆγαιναν ἓνα βόδι, ἓνα θαλαλάκι· ἂν ἦταν φτωχοί, πῆγαιναν ἓνα ζευγάρι τρυγῶνια ἢ δυὸ μικρὰ περιστέρια. Γιατί: Γιὰ νὰ εὐ-

χαριστήσουν τὸ Θεό, ποὺ ἔδωσε τὸ παιδί. Διότι τὸ παιδί εἶνε ὁ μπουναμάς τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, τὸ πιὸ μεγάλο δῶρο. Δὲν πᾶ' νὰ ἔχῃ τὸ σῆμα τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, ἀλλὰ τὸ σῆμα τοῦ γῆ. Διότι ἄλλο θέ'ς ἂν μέσα σ' αὐτὸ δὲν ἀκούγεται κλάμα παιδιοῦ, καὶ λείπει. Γι' αὐτὸ οἱ γονεῖς νὰ εὐχαριστοῦν τὸ Θεό. Διότι τὸ παιδί δὲν τὸ ἔκανες ἐσύ – λάθος ἔχεις. Ἄμα ὁ Θεὸς δὲν εὐλογήσῃ τὰ δέντρα, καρπὸ δὲν πιάνουν· καὶ ἄμα ὁ Θεὸς δὲν εὐλογήσῃ τὴ γῆ, σπαρτὰ δὲν θερίζεις. Καὶ ἄμα ὁ Θεὸς δὲν εὐλογήσῃ τὴν κοιλία τῆς γυναίκας, ἄς πάῃ σ' ὄλους τοὺς γιατρούς, παιδί δὲν κάνει. **Τὰ παιδιά τὰ δίνει ὁ Θεός.** Γι' αὐτὸ οἱ μανάδες πρέπει νὰ φέρνουν τὰ παιδιά τους στὴν ἐκκλησία ὅταν γίνονται σαράντα ἡμερῶν, νὰ τὰ σαραντίζουν καὶ νὰ εὐλογοῦνται. Αὐτὸ ἔκανε ἡ Παναγία, αὐτὸ νὰ κάνουμε κ' ἔμεῖς.

Ἡ Παναγία πῆρε στὴν ἀγκαλιά της τὸ Χριστό καὶ μαζί μὲ τὸν δίκαιο Ἰωσήφ τὸν προστάτη πῆγαν **στὸ ναὸ** τοῦ Σολομώντος. Μαζί της πῆγαν καὶ ἄλλες γυναῖκες πλούσιες. Τὰ μάτια τῶν ἀνθρώπων εἶνε στοὺς πλουσίους. Ἐκεῖνη ἦταν φτωχιά καὶ κανεὶς δὲν τὴν πρόσεχε. Ἄλλὰ τί λέω; Κάποιος τὴν πρόσεξε. Ποιός; Ἐνας γέροντας ποὺ τὸν ἔλεγαν **Συμεών**. Τί ἦταν αὐτός; Αὐτὸς διάβαζε τὴν ἁγία Γραφή, διάβαζε τοὺς προφήτας, καὶ ἀπὸ 'κει ἔμαθε, ὅτι μιὰ μέρα «θὰ ἀνατεῖλῃ ἓνα ἄστρο» στὸν κόσμο· ἔμαθε, ὅτι θὰ ἔρθῃ «ἓνας ἄνθρωπος», ὁ Μεσσίας, ὁ Λυτρωτὴς τοῦ κόσμου, ὁ Χριστός. Ὁ Συμεὼν ὁμοίως λυπόταν ὅτι δὲν θὰ ζήσει **νὰ δῆ τὸ Χριστό**. Τέτοια λαχτάρια εἶχε. Καὶ ἔλεγε: Θεέ μου, ἄφησέ με νὰ ζήσω· ἄς δῶ τὸ Χριστό καὶ ἄς πεθῶ!... Καὶ ὁ Θεὸς ἄκουσε τὴν προσευχή του.

Τὴν ὥρα ποὺ ἡ Παναγία ἔφθανε στὸ ναό, ὁ Συμεὼν ἄκουσε φωνή: Πῆγαινε τώρα στὸ ναό, κ' ἐκεῖ θὰ δῆς τὸ Χριστό!... Ἐκανε φτερά στὰ πόδια ὁ γέροντας καὶ νάτον στὸ ναό. Ἄλλὰ ἐκεῖ ἦταν πολλές γυναῖκες· ποιὰ ἀπ' ὅσες ἦταν ἡ Παναγία; Ὅπως ὁ Θεὸς φώτισε τὸν Ἰωάννη τὸν Πρόδρομο καὶ ἀνάμεσα στὶς

χιλιάδες που βαπτίζονταν εκεί στο ποτάμι διέκρινε το Χριστό, έτοι έδω το Πνεύμα το άγιο φώτισε τον Συμεών να διακρίνη το Χριστό και να καταλάβη ποιά είνε ή Παναγία. Καί τότε πλησίασε κοντά. Τά μάτια του βούρκωσαν. Ύψωσε το βλέμμα στον ούρανό, πήρε στην άγκαλιά του το Χριστό, έκανε την προσευχή του και είπε: «*Νῦν ἀπολύεις τόν δούλόν σου, δέσποτα, κατά τὸ ῥήμά σου ἐν εἰρήνῃ...*» τώρα, λέει, ἄς πεθάνω· **εἶδα τὸ Χριστό** [κκ.23].

Μετά ὁ Συμεών είπε: **Αὐτὸ τὸ παιδί θά συγκλονίσῃ τὸν κόσμον.** Κανένας ἄλλος δέν θ' ἀλλάξῃ τὸν κόσμον ὅπως αὐτό. Αὐτὸ τὸ παιδί ἄλλοι θά τὸ ἀγαπήσουν καί γιὰ τὴν ἀγάπη του θά θυσιάσουν τὰ πάντα, κι ἄλλοι θά τὸ μισήσουν... Καί ἔτσι εἶνε. Τὸ Χριστὸ ἢ θά τὸν ἀγαπήσῃς ἢ θά τὸν μισήσῃς. Καί θά γίνῃ πόλεμος μεγάλος· οἱ ἀντίχριστοι θά τὸν πολεμοῦν, οἱ ἄλλοι θά τὸν λατρεύουν, καί τέλος θά νικήσῃ ὁ Χριστός.

Φαντάσου τώρα τὸ Συμεών νὰ βλέπῃ ἕνα μικρὸ παιδάκι καί νὰ λήῃ αὐτὰ τὰ πράγματα! **Καί τὰ βλέπουμε σήμερα πραγματοποιούμενα.**

Κατόπιν συνέχισε **πρὸς τὴν Παναγία**· Μάνα εὐλογημένη, μάνα εὐτυχισμένη, ἄλλὰ καί μάνα πικραμένη! Εὐλογημένη, γιατί γέννησες τὸ Χριστό, Πικραμένη, γιατί θά τὸν δῆς τῆ Μεγάλῃ Παρασκευῇ νὰ τὸν καρφώνουν οἱ ἀντίχριστοι, κ' ἔσένα μαχαίρι δίκικο θά περάσῃ τὴν καρδιά σου... Αὐτὰ είπε ὁ Συμεών.

Στὸ ναὸ ἦταν τότε καί μιὰ γριά χήρα 84 χρονῶν, ἡ **Ἄννα**. Αὐτὴ παντρεύτηκε, ἔζησε 7 χρόνια μὲ τὸν ἄντρα της, μετὰ χήρευσε καί δέν ἤλθε σὲ δεῦτερο γάμο, δέν ξαναπαντρεύτηκε. Γιατί μιὰ φορὰ παντρεύονται οἱ ἄνθρωποι. Στὰ παλιὰ τὰ χρόνια ἔτσι ἦταν. Γιὰ ἰδέστε καί τὰ τρυγόνια. Ἔχουν ἀγάπη. Σκότωσε ὁ κυνηγὸς τὸ ἀρσενικό; τὸ θηλυκὸ δέν ζευγαρώνει πλέον μὲ ἄλλο ἀρσενικό. Γι' αὐτὸ λένε «ἀγαπιοῦνται σάν τὰ τρυγόνια». Τώρα ὁμως βλέπεις τὸν ἄλλο, ἀκόμα δέν ἔθαψε τὴ γυναῖκα του καί ζητάει νέα γυναῖκα· καί βλέπεις τὴν ἄλλη, ἀκόμα δέν ἔθαψε τὸν ἄντρα της καί ζητάει δεῦτερο ἄντρα. Ὅχι, δέν εἶνε ἔτσι τὰ πράγματα. Ἐνας ἄντρας καί μιὰ γυναῖκα εἶνε ὁ ἰδεώδης γάμος ποῦ εὐλογεῖ ὁ Χριστός.

Ἔτσι ἔζησε ἡ Ἄννα. Καί τώρα δέν πῆγαινε ἀπὸ σπίτι σὲ σπίτι νὰ κουτσομπολεῦῃ καί νὰ κατακρίνῃ. Ἦταν διαρκῶς στὸ ναὸ, νῆστευε, προσευχόταν, ὑπηρετοῦσε τὸ Θεὸ καί διάβαζε τὴ Γραφή. Κι ὅταν **εἶδε τὸ Χριστὸ** στὴν ἀγκαλιά τοῦ Συμεών, ἔτρεξε κι αὐτὴ κοντά, δοξολογοῦσε τὸ Θεὸ καί κήρυττε τὸ Χριστὸ στους προσκυνητὰς.

Αὐτὴ εἶνε, ἀγαπητοί μου, ἡ ἑορτὴ τῆς Ὑπαπαντῆς. Μπορεῖ τώρα κάποιος νὰ πῇ: Ἄχ πόσο ἤθελα κ' ἐγὼ νὰ ζοῦσα τότε καί νὰ δῶ τὸ Χριστό!... Ὑπάρχει σήμερα τέτοια λαχτάρα; **Ἐπιθυμοῦμε νὰ δοῦμε τὸ Χριστό**, ὅπως ὁ Συμεών καί ἡ Ἄννα;

Ἄλλ' ἂν ζητοῦμε αὐτό, τὸ ἔχουμε. Ὑπάρχει τρόπος νὰ δῆς τὸ Χριστό. Ποῦ νὰ τὸν δῆς; Ἐδῶ. Δέν εἶνε ἀνάγκη οὔτε στὰ Ἱεροσόλυμα νὰ πῆς, οὔτε στὰ οὐράνια ν' ἀνεβῆς, οὔτε ὄραματα νὰ δῆς. **Μπορεῖς νὰ δῆς τὸ Χριστὸ στὴν Ἐκκλησία!** Ἀπίστευτο, ἄλλὰ ἀληθινὸ.

Τὰ παλιὰ τὰ χρόνια, ποῦ οἱ ἄνθρωποι ἦταν ἅγιοι, ἄς μὴν εἶχαν σχολεῖα, εἶχαν ὁμως Θεό. Ἐρχονταν στὴν ἐκκλησία, κι ὅταν ἔβγαινε τὸ δικοπότηρο, —δέν εἶνε ψέμα— ἔβλεπαν τὸ Χριστό, τὴν Παναγία, ἀγγέλους καί ἀρχαγγέλους· γιατί εἶχαν μάτια ἀγγελικά. Ἐμεῖς τώρα ἔχουμε μάτια κτηνώδη (μάτια σκύλου, μάτια χοίρου, μάτια τίγρεως, μάτια λιονταριοῦ). Καί τέτοια μάτια δέν εἶνε ἄξια νὰ βλέπουν τέτοια ὄραματα. Ὅταν τὰ χέρια καί τὰ κορμιά εἶνε ἀκάθαρτα, τότε καί τὰ μάτια εἶνε ἁμαρτωλά καί ἀνάξια. Γιὰ νὰ δῆς τὸ Χριστό, **πρέπει νὰ ἔχῃς καθαρὴ τὴν καρδιά** [λ. κκ. 23].

Ἐδῶ εἶνε ὁ Χριστός. Ὅσα λέει ὁ παπᾶς κι ὁ ψάλτης, ὅλα εἶνε λόγια τοῦ Χριστοῦ. Μὰ δέν τὰ καταλαβαίνουμε. Γιατί ἂν πάρῃς μιὰ κιθάρα ἢ ἕνα βιολί καί πᾶς καί παίξῃς σ' ἕνα στάβλο, τὰ γαϊδούρια δέν καταλαβαίνουν τὴ μουσικὴ σου· αὐτὰ θέλουν σανό. Καί ἂν μπροστὰ στὰ γουρούνια πετιᾶξῃς διαμάντια, δέν συγκινοῦνται· αὐτὰ θέλουν λάσπη καί ἀκαθαρσία. Καί οἱ ἄνθρωποι σήμερα δέν θέλουν διαμάντια καί πολῦτιμα πράγματα· θέλουν ψευτιὰς, ποῦ ἔχει τὸ ράδιο καί ἡ τηλεόρασι. Ἐκεῖ τὸ αὐτάκι μας καί ἐκεῖ τὰ μάτια μας, ὦρες ὀλύκληρες, νὰ δοῦμε κορμιά γυμνά, ν' ἀκούσουμε τραγούδια αἰσχροῦ...

Ἀδέρφια μου, δέν λέω ψέματα. Σὺς λέω τὴν ἀλήθεια, ποῦ κι ἂν ἐμεῖς τὴν ἀρνηθοῦμε, κι αὐτὲς οἱ πέτρες θά τὴ φωνάζουν· ὁ Χριστὸς εἶνε ὁ ἀληθινὸς Θεός! Ὅπου εἶνε ὁ Χριστός, εἶνε ἡ ἀλήθεια· ὅπου λείπει ὁ Χριστός, εἶνε τὸ ψέμα. Ὅπου εἶνε ὁ Χριστός, εἶνε ἡ δικαιοσύνη, ἡ λευτεριά, ἡ ἀγάπη, ἡ εἰρήνη, ὁ παράδεισος· ὅπου λείπει ὁ Χριστός, εἶνε ἡ ἀδικία, ἡ σκλαβιά, τὸ μῖσος, ὁ πόλεμος, ἡ κόλασι. Διαλέξτε καί πάρτε. Κλείστε τὰ ραδιόφωνα, κλείστε τίς τηλεοράσεις, κι **ανοίξτε τὴν καρδιά σας** νὰ μπῇ ὁ Χριστός, **νὰ δῆτε τὸ Χριστό**· ὄν, παῖδες Ἑλλήνων, ὑμνεῖτε καί ὑπερυψοῦτε εἰς πάντας τοὺς αἰῶνας· ἀμήν.

(†) **ἐπίσκοπος Αὐγουστῖνος**

The Lord gives us once again an opportunity to express our solidarity by becoming a supporting and registered member of the parish. We can only urge you to do so because your sustaining membership keeps this parish functioning and responding to the needs of all the faithful. Don't wait until some insignificant date on the calendar. Register with the Church Office **TODAY** and garner all the benefits of being a supporter of Christ's mission on earth.

FAMILY REGISTRATION FOR HUSBAND & WIFE: \$275 PER YEAR

SINGLE MEMBERSHIP: \$225 PER YEAR

SENIOR CITIZEN INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP: \$150 PER YEAR

SENIOR CITIZEN HUSBAND & WIFE MEMBERSHIP: \$200 PER YEAR

WE DO NEED YOUR HELP!

Registering with your local parish is not so much a duty or obligation as it is a **PRIVILEGE**. By registering and offering your annual stewardship, you become an integral member of the living body of Christ as a faith community. By virtue of your Baptism, Chrismation (Confirmation), and Holy Eucharist (Communion), you claim to be a follower of Christ, a witness for Christ, and a practitioner for Christ. May we ask you then to live up to these promises by making your 2014 commitment **TODAY!** The benefits you shall receive beyond grace include the satisfaction and knowledge that this Church and community thrives thanks to your outreach.

YOU ARE PART OF THE GREAT FRESCO OF FAITH

Feast of the Presentation of the Lord

Our lighted candles are a sign of the divine splendor of the one who comes to expel the dark shadows of evil and to make the whole universe radiant with the brilliance of His eternal light. Our candles also show how bright our souls should be when we go to meet Christ. The Mother of God, the most pure Virgin, carried the true light in her arms and brought Him to those who lay in darkness. We too should carry a light for all to see and reflect the radiance of the true light as we hasten to meet Him.

The true light has come, the light that enlightens everyone who is born into this world. Let all of us, my brethren, be enlightened and made radiant by this light. Let all of us share in its splendor, and be so filled with it that no one remains in the darkness. Let us be shining ourselves as we go together to meet and to receive with the aged Simeon the light whose brilliance is eternal. Rejoicing with Simeon, let us sing a

hymn of thanksgiving to God, the Father of the light, who sent the true light to dispel the darkness and to give us all a share in His splendor.

Through Simeon's eyes we too have seen the salvation of God which He prepared for all the nations and revealed as the glory of the new Israel, which is ourselves. As Simeon was released from the bonds of this life when he had seen Christ, so we too were at once freed from our old state of sinfulness.

By faith we too embraced Christ, the salvation of God the Father, as He came to us from Bethlehem. Gentiles before, we have now become the people of God. Our eyes have seen God incarnate, and because we have seen Him present among us and have mentally received Him into our arms, we are called the new Israel. Never shall we forget this presence; every year we keep a feast in His honor.

St. Sophronius

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