

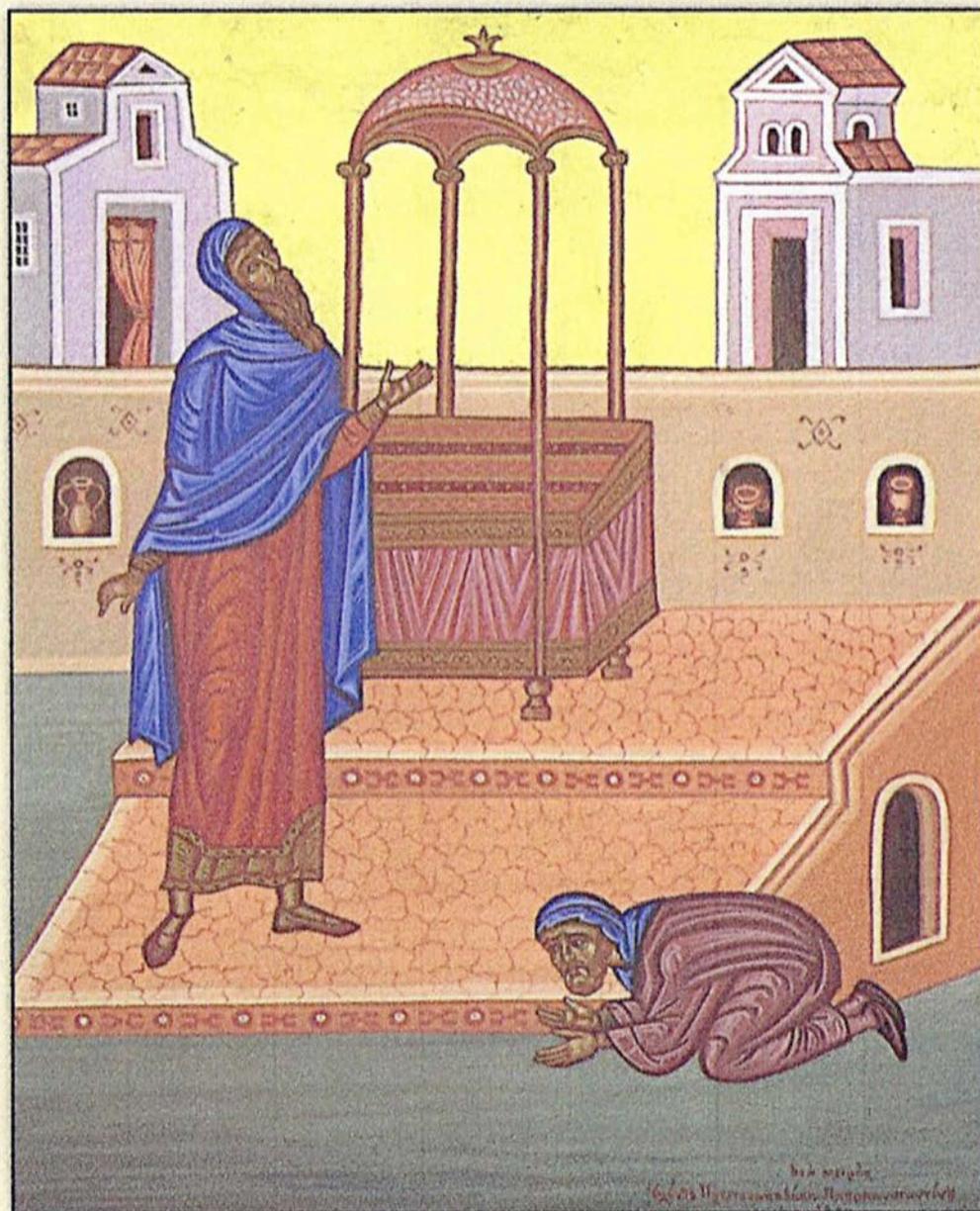


DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN
DISTRICT

THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN February 9th, 2014
V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

SUNDAY OF THE PUBLICAN AND PHARISEE



Icon of the Publican and Pharisee

St. Paul's Second Letter to Timothy 3:10-15

Prokeimenon. Mode Plagal 4. Psalm 75.11,1

Make your vows to the Lord our God and perform them. Verse: God is known in Judah; his name is great in Israel.

TIMOTHY, my son, you have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions, my sufferings, what befell me at Antioch, at Iconion, and at Lystra, what persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. Indeed all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil men and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceivers and deceived. But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Πρὸς Τιμόθεον β' 3:10-15

Προκείμενον. ᾠχος πλ δ. ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 75.11,1

Εὔξασθε καὶ ἀπόδοτε Κυρίῳ τῷ Θεῷ ἡμῶν. Στίχ. Γνωστὸς ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ ὁ Θεός, ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ μέγα τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ.

Τέκνον Τιμόθεε, παρηκολούθηκάς μου τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ, τῇ ἀγωγῇ, τῇ προθέσει, τῇ πίστει, τῇ μακροθυμίᾳ, τῇ ἀγάπῃ, τῇ ὑπομονῇ, τοῖς διωγμοῖς, τοῖς παθήμασιν, οἷά μοι ἐγένετο ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ, ἐν Ἰκονίῳ, ἐν Λύστροις, οἷους διωγμοὺς ὑπήνεγκα· καὶ ἐκ πάντων με ἐρρύσατο ὁ κύριος. Καὶ πάντες δὲ οἱ θέλοντες εὐσεβῶς ζῆν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ διωχθήσονται. Πονηροὶ δὲ ἄνθρωποι καὶ γόητες προκόψουσιν ἐπὶ τὸ χεῖρον, πλανῶντες καὶ πλανώμενοι. Σὺ δὲ μένε ἐν οἷς ἔμαθες καὶ ἐπιστώθης, εἰδὼς παρὰ τίνος ἔμαθες, καὶ ὅτι ἀπὸ βρέφους τὰ ἱερά γράμματα οἶδας, τὰ δυνάμενά σε σοφίσει εἰς σωτηρίαν διὰ πίστεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.

Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee: Triodion Begins Today

The Gospel of Luke 18:10-14

The Lord said this parable, "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all that I get.' But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee: Triodion Begins Today

Κατὰ Λουκᾶν 18.10-14

Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην· Ἄνθρωποι δύο ἀνέβησαν εἰς τὸ ἱερόν προσεύξασθαι, ὁ εἷς Φαρισαῖος καὶ ὁ ἕτερος τελώνης. ὁ Φαρισαῖος σταθεὶς πρὸς ἑαυτὸν ταῦτα προσηύχετο· ὁ Θεός, εὐχαριστῶ σοι ὅτι οὐκ εἰμι ὡσπερ οἱ λοιποὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ἄρπαγες, ἄδικοι, μοιχοί, ἢ καὶ ὡς οὗτος ὁ τελώνης· νηστεύω δις τοῦ σαββάτου, ἀποδεκατῶ πάντα ὅσα κτῶμαι. καὶ ὁ τελώνης μακρόθεν ἐστὼς οὐκ ἤθελεν οὐδὲ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἐπάρει, ἀλλ' ἔτυπεν εἰς τὸ στήθος αὐτοῦ λέγων· ὁ Θεός, ἰλάσθητί μοι τῷ ἁμαρτωλῷ. λέγω ὑμῖν, κατέβη οὗτος δεδικαιωμένος εἰς τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ ἢ γὰρ ἐκεῖνος· ὅτι πᾶς ὁ ὑψῶν ἑαυτὸν ταπεινωθήσεται, ὁ δὲ ταπεινῶν ἑαυτὸν ὑψωθήσεται.

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP: is being hosted and served by the **CONEY ISLAND CHAPTER #200** of the **A.H.E.P.A.** (American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association), all are invited to **WHITEHALL** for refreshments

TODAY: Father Eugene will deliver a lecture on **CHRISTIAN UNITY** to the Roman Catholic at **OUR LADY of GOOD COUNSEL CHURCH** 230 East 90th street (between 2nd.and 3rd. Avenues, N.Y.C) at 3:00 P.M. This is part of an on-going program celebrating ecumenism and Christian Unity endeavors. The highlight of this year's **PILGRIMAGE** of **POPE FRANCIS** and **PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW** meeting in **JERUSALEM** on May 24th and 25th.

MONTHLY HOLY WATER BLESSING: is offered from 11:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M. on the **FIRST 91st.** of **EVERY MONTH!** If the first of the month falls on a **SUNDAY**, the blessing is transferred to the next day (**MONDAY**). Please try to attend these beautiful services on the first day of the month.

SENIOR CLUB NEWS: This Wednesday, February 12th, a Valentine's Day Party will be hosted for all seniors in Rosehall at 1:00 P.M. The color dress code is something Red! Candy hearts for broken hearts will be distributed with sweet-heart cards for all. A light luncheon will be served with coffee and sweets, **BINGO** will be held as usual.

PRAYER AND HEALING SERVICE: is scheduled for **WEDNESDAY**, February 19, at 6:30 P.M. after the sacred anointing, a refreshment reception is hosted for all at 8:00 P.M. **COME** and **LEARN** more about your spiritual journey!

PSYCHO-SABBATON COMMENCES: The insert in the bulletin may be used for any of the **THREE Psychosabbata** starting February 22, March 1st and March 8th. **MEMORIAL TRIBUTES** will be invoked at 10:30 A.M. Please submit the names of your faithfully departed to be remembered at the sacred Liturgy. **Kolyva** will be available at the **Pangari** upon request.

CENTERFOLD highlights the **Three Hierarch's Vesper** festivities last week.

PHILOPTOCHOS LUNCHEON: Mark your calendar **NOW!** The **80th ANNUAL LUNCHEON** of **THREE HIERARCHS LADIES PHILOPTOCHOS** is being hosted Saturday, March 1st. at 12 noon. **REX MANOR CATERERS** 1100- 60th street will mark the venue. Music, dancing, raffles, prizes, sumptuous luncheon with wines will crown the event. Reservations may be secured through: **SUSAN JANNACE:** 917-952-8105 and **DINA THEODOSAKIS** 718 -338-0126 Ticket donation is \$65.00 each with the proceeds going to charity.

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!**

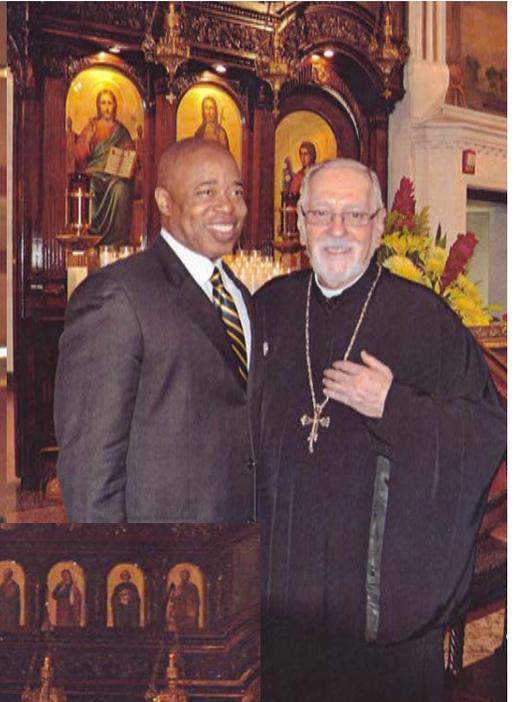
PARKING LOT PERMITS; Will be renewable from **JANUARY 01ST 2014**. Please be prepared to submit your annual stewardship (**DUES**) in early January to receive the **NEW PARKING PERMIT**, for 2014 . Towing of illegally parked vehicles or trespassers will be in effect as the signs read clearly. **PLEASE 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: + **KATHERINE** and + **THEODORE CONTOS**

MEMORIALS NEXT WEEK: + **ALICE CLISSURAS** + **BARBARA VELIOS**
+ **SPYRIDOULA VELLIOS** + **CHRISTINA PATSIS**

Patronal Feast Vesper 2014



Hellenic Heritage Honors Ceremony 2014





ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



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

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| Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος ΚΒ' Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 1139 ² | Κυρ. Τελώνου & Φαρισαίου (Λκ 18,10-14) 9 Φεβρουαρίου 2014 (2005) | Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος Αύγουστίνος Ν. Καντιώτης |
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Φαρισαῖοι, ταπεινωθῆτε

Ἐάν, ἀγαπητοί μου, ρίξουμε μιὰ ματιὰ γύρω στὴ φύσι, θὰ δοῦμε κάτι ἐκπληκτικό· ὅτι **ὅλα τὰ δημιουργήματα προσεύχονται**, καθένα μὲ τὸν τρόπο του. Ἡ θάλασσα εὐχαριστεῖ τὸ Θεὸ μὲ τὸ φλοῖσβο τῶν κυμάτων της, τὸ ρυάκι μὲ τὸ κελάρυσμά του, τὰ δέντρα μὲ τὸ θρόισμα τῶν φύλλων τους, τὰ πουλιὰ μὲ τὴ μελωδία τους, τὰ ἄστρα μὲ τὸ φῶς τους ποὺ τρεμοσβήνει... Εἶδατε καὶ τὴν ὄρνιθα ὅταν πίνη νερό; σὲ κάθε γουλιὰ σηκώνει τὸ κεφάλι ψηλά, σὰ νὰ λέῃ «Θεέ μου, σ' εὐχαριστῶ».

Ἀπὸ τὸ ἱερὸ αὐτὸ προσκλητήριο μπορούσε ν' ἀπουσιάζη ὁ ἄνθρωπος; **Καὶ ὁ ἄνθρωπος προσεύχεται**. Ἀπὸ τὰ παιδικὰ μας χρόνια ἡ καλὴ μητέρα μᾶς ἔμαθε νὰ σταυρώνουμε τὰ χεράκια μπροστὰ στὸ εἰκόνημα τῆς Παναγίας καὶ νὰ ψελλίζουμε μιὰ ἀπλὴ προσευχὴ στὸν οὐράνιο Πατέρα – ἀλησμόνητες στιγμές. Ἀργότερα μάθαμε κοντὰ στ' ἄλλα παιδιὰ νὰ ἀπαγγέλλουμε στὴν ἐκκλησία τὸ «*Πάτερ ἡμῶν*» καὶ τὸ «*Πιστεύω*» καὶ μαζί μὲ ὄλο τὸ ἐκκλησίασμα νὰ παρακαλοῦμε τὸν Κύριό μας.

Ἡ εὐγενέστερη ἐκδήλωσι τῆς ἀνθρώπινης καρδιάς εἶνε ἡ **ὥρα τῆς προσευχῆς**. Τὸ κτίσμα ἐπικοινωνεῖ μὲ τὸ Δημιουργό του. Εἶνε ἡ στιγμή ποὺ ὁ ἄνθρωπος αἰσθάνεται τὴν ἀνάγκη νὰ εὐχαριστήσῃ γιὰ τίς τόσες εὐεργεσίες, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡ στιγμή ποὺ, γεμάτος θλίψι καὶ μὴ ἔχοντας ἐλπίδα βοήθειας, καταφεύγει στὴν παντοδυναμία του καὶ ζητᾷ βοήθεια καὶ προστασία.

Ἀλλά, ἀδελφοί μου, τί βλέπω, τί ἀκούω; **Ὁ ἄνθρωπος καὶ τὴν ὥρα αὐτὴ τὴ βεβηλώνει** τὴν ὥρα τῆς προσευχῆς ἀμαρτάνει. Μὰ πῶς; Τὴν ἀπάντησι μᾶς δίνει ὁ Χριστὸς μὲ τὴ σημερινὴ παραβολὴ τοῦ τελώνου καὶ τοῦ φαρισαίου.

* * *

Ὁ Κύριος μᾶς μεταφέρει **στὸ ναὸ τοῦ Σολομώντος ἐν ὥρᾳ προσευχῆς τῶν Ἰουδαίων**. Ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐκεῖ ἐνίωθε τὴν παρουσία τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὅτι ὁ Θεὸς κατεβαίνει σ' αὐτὸν καὶ αὐτὸς ἀνουπώνεται στὸ Θεό. Πλήθη, λοιπόν,

μπαίνουν στὸ ναὸ μὲ εὐλάβεια, γιὰ νὰ προσευχηθοῦν. Οἱ κινήσεις καὶ ἡ στάσι τους εἶνε ἀθόρυβες.

Τὴν ἱερότητα ὅμως αὐτὴ διαταράσσει κάποιος. Εἶνε ὁ **φαρισαῖος**. Τί κάνει αὐτός; Ἀποφεύγει τοὺς ἄλλους, βαδίζει μόνος. Τὸ βάδισμά του ὑπερήφανο, τὸ παράστημά του ἀγέρωχο. Θεωρεῖ, ὅτι αὐτός εἶνε ἅγιος, δίκαιος, καθαρὸς· δὲν συμφύρεται μὲ ἄλλους, μὴ τυχὸν τὸν μολύνουν. Ἐπὶ τέλους εἰσέρχεται μὲ θόρυβο. Πρέπει οἱ ἄλλοι νὰ σταματήσουν καὶ νὰ στρέψουν τὸ βλέμμα σ' αὐτόν. Μία προσευχὴ πρέπει ν' ἀκουσθῇ, ἡ δική του. Κατευθύνεται λοιπὸν στὸ μέσον τοῦ ναοῦ καὶ σηκώνει τὰ χέρια γιὰ ν' ἀρχίσῃ νὰ προσεύχεται σὲ τὸν ὕψηλό.

Ἄλλ' αὐτὸ δὲν εἶνε προσευχὴ. **Ἡ προσευχὴ τοῦ φαρισαίου εἶνε ἐμπαιγμὸς** τοῦ Θεοῦ. Δὲν σκέφθηκε, ὅτι ἀπέναντί του δὲν ἔχει κάποιον ἀπλοϊκὸ Ἰουδαῖο ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνον ποὺ τρέμουν τὰ σύμπαντα. Φουσκωμένος ἀπὸ ἐγωισμό, δὲν ἐννοεῖ νὰ σκύψῃ τὸ κεφάλι, νὰ γονατίσῃ καὶ νὰ ζητήσῃ ἔλεος. Καὶ ἀρχίζει λοιπὸν.

Ἀρχίζει μὲ τὸ «*εὐχαριστῶ*» (Λκ. 18,11). Γιὰ ποῖο πρᾶγμα ἄραγε εὐχαριστεῖ τὸ Θεό; Γιὰ τὴν ὑγεία, γιὰ τὰ πλούσια ἀγαθὰ ποὺ σκόρπισε στὸ σπίτι του, γιὰ τὸν φύλαξε ἀπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτία; γιὰ ποῖο εὐχαριστεῖ; Ἀκούστε τον· «*Εὐχαριστῶ σοι ὅτι οὐκ εἶμι ὡσπερ οἱ λοιποὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ἄρπαγες, ἄδικοι, μοιχοί, ἢ καὶ ὡς οὗτος ὁ τελώνης· νηστεύω δις τοῦ σαββάτου, ἀποδεκατῶ πάντα ὅσα κτῶμαι*» (ἐ.δ. 18,11-12). Σ' εὐχαριστῶ, Θεέ μου, γιὰ τὴν ὑγεία, γιὰ τὰ πλούσια ἀγαθὰ ποὺ σκόρπισε στὸ σπίτι σου, γιὰ τὸν φύλαξε ἀπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτία; δὲν εἶμαι σὰν τοὺς ἄλλους ἀνθρώπους; δὲν ἀρπάζω τὰ ξένα πράγματα καὶ χρήματα, δὲν εἶμαι ἄδικος, δὲν εἶμαι μοιχός, δὲν εἶμαι σὰν κι αὐτὸν τὸν ἁμαρτωλὸ τελώνη; ἐπὶ πλέον νηστεύω δύο μέρες τῆ βδομάδα, κι ἀπὸ τὰ ἀγαθὰ μου δίνω τὸ ἓνα δέκατο... Τὴν προσευχὴ αὐτὴ τὴν ἔκανε στὸ Θεό; Τὴν ἔκανε γιὰ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους, ν' ἀκούσουν τίς ἀρετές του καὶ νὰ τὸν θαυμάσουν. Μετέτρεψε δηλαδὴ καὶ τὴ στάσι

τῆς προσευχῆς σὲ βῆμα ἐπιδείξεως. Ποῦ ἡ συναίσθησι, ποῦ ἡ κατάνυξι, ποῦ ἡ ταπεινὴ στάσι, ποῦ ἡ συνείδησι τῆς ἀμαρτωλότητός του καὶ ἡ ἐκζήτησι τοῦ ἐλέους τοῦ Θεοῦ; Αὐτὸς περιστρέφεται στὸν ἑαυτό του. «Δὲν εἶμαι ἄρπαγας, δὲν εἶμαι ἄδικος, δὲν εἶμαι μοιχός...». Δὲν εἶσαι αὐτά, ἀλλ' **εἶσαι ἐγλωιστὴς καὶ ὑπερήφανος**. Καὶ στὸ Θεὸ περισσότερο μισητὴ ἀπὸ κάθε ἄλλο πάθος καὶ κακία εἶνε ἡ ὑπερηφάνεια. Μακάρι νὰ ἦσουν ἄρπαγας ἄδικος μοιχός, καὶ νὰ μὴν ἦσουν ὑπερήφανος. Διότι τότε ἡ ταπεινώσι θὰ σὲ ὠδηγοῦσε σὲ μετάνοια καὶ ἔτσι θὰ εἴλκυες τὸ ἔλεος τοῦ Θεοῦ.

Ἦ φαρισαῖε· ἔφυγες φουσκωμένος ἀπὸ τὸ ναό, γιατί κατώρθωσες ν' ἀποσπάσης τὸ θαυμασμὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων· σὲ μακάρισαν καὶ σὲ ἔκριναν ὡς καλόν. Συμφώνησε ὅμως μὲ τὴν κρίσι αὐτὴ καὶ ὁ Θεός; σοῦ εἶπε μπράβο ὁ Θεός; δέχτηκε τὴν προσευχή σου; Τέτοια προσευχὴ δὲν φτάνει στ' αὐτιά τοῦ Θεοῦ. Γι' αὐτὸ ὁ Χριστός, ἔχοντας ὑπ' ὄψιν του αὐτὲς τίς καταστάσεις, εἶπε πῶς πρέπει νὰ προσευχώμαστε· Θέλεις, ἄνθρωπε, νὰ ἐπικοινωνήσης μὲ τὸν οὐρανὸ; Κλείσου στὸ «**ταμιεῖόν σου**», στὴν κάμαρά σου, κ' ἐκεῖ ἐνώπιος ἐνώπιω πὲς στὸ Θεὸ τὰ αἰτήματά σου (βλ. Ματθ. 6,6). **Προσευχὲς φαρισαϊκὲς πηγαίνουν χαμένες.**

Νὰ λοιπὸν πῶς, μὲ τὴν ὑπερηφάνεια, εἶνε δυνατὸν ἀκόμα καὶ κατὰ τὴν ὥρα τῆς προσευχῆς ὁ ἄνθρωπος νὰ ἀμαρτήσῃ φοβερά.

Μὰ γιατί νὰ μείνουμε μὲ τὴν θλιβερὴ εἰκόνα τοῦ φαρισαίου; Ὁ Κύριος στὴν παραβολὴ μᾶς παρουσιάζει, στὸν ἴδιο ναό, καὶ τὴν ἰδανικὴ εἰκόνα προσευχομένου ἀνθρώπου. Ἐκεῖ εἶχαμε ἕνα ἐγλωιστὴ καὶ ὑπερήφανο, ἐδῶ ἔχουμε ἕνα ταπεινὸ καὶ συνετὸ ἄνθρωπο. Ποιὸς εἶν' αὐτός; **Ὁ τελώνης**. Ἐξετάζει κι αὐτὸς τὸν ἑαυτό του. Ὁ φαρισαῖος ἔβλεπε ὅλο ἀρετές· ὁ τελώνης βλέπει ὅλο ἀμαρτίες. Ἀπὸ τὰ χεῖλη τοῦ φαρισαίου ἔβγαινε ἕνα εὐχαριστῶ γεμᾶτο αὐταρέσκεια· ἀπὸ τὰ χεῖλη τοῦ τελώνη βγαίνει ἕνα «**Ἰλάσθητί μοι τῶ ἀμαρτωλῶ**» (βλ. Λκ. 18,13) γεμᾶτο πόνος καρδιάς. Ἐκεῖνος ἐκόμπαζε, τοῦτος χτυπᾷ τὰ στήθη του. Ἐκεῖνος δὲν ἐνιωθε ποιὸν ἔχει ἀπέναντί του, τοῦτος νιώθει ὅτι ἀπέναντί του εἶνε ὁ Θεός, ὁ μόνος ἅγιος καὶ τέλειος, ἐκεῖνος ποῦ ἡ ἀρετὴ του «**ἐκάλυψεν οὐρανοὺς**» (Αμβ. 3,3). Νιώθει πῶς εἶνε ἕνας ἄθλιος καὶ ἐλεινὸς ἀμαρτωλός. Οὔτε κἂν τὰ μάτια του σηκώνει. Πῶς τὰ βλαμμένα μάτια ν' ἀντικρύσουν τὸν ἥλιο; καὶ πῶς ὁ ἀμαρτωλὸς ἄνθρωπος ν' ἀντικρύσῃ τὸν ἅγιο Θεό; Πονεῖ, κλαίει, ὀδύρεται, χτυπᾷ τὰ στήθη του καὶ φωνάζει: «**Ὁ Θεός, ἰλάσθητί μοι τῶ ἀμαρτωλῶ**».

Ἦ **καρδιὰ ταπεινὴ**, ποῦ κατάλαβες τὰ ὕψη τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ τὴ δική σου ἀθλιότητα! ποῦ δὲν ἦρθες γιὰ ἐπίδειξι, οὔτε γιὰ ν' ἀποσπάσης τὸ θαυμασμὸ ἀνθρώπων, ἀλλὰ ἦρθες νὰ πῆς τὸν πόνον σου, νὰ ἐξομολογηθῆς τὴν κατάστασί σου, νὰ ζητήσης τὸ ἔλεος τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τὴν ἀγάπη του!

Γι' αὐτὸ ἡ προσευχὴ τοῦ τελώνη δὲν πῆγε χαμένη. Θὰ νόμιζε κανεῖς, ὅτι ὁ ἄνθρωπος αὐτός, σὰν ἀμαρτωλός, δὲν θὰ εἰσακουόταν ἀπὸ τὸ Θεό, ἀφοῦ ὅλοι τὸν περιφρόνησαν καὶ περισσότερο ὁ φαρισαῖος. Ἦ κρίσι τῶν ἀνθρώπων τίς περισσότερες φορὲς εἶνε λανθασμένη. Δὲν ξέρουμε τί γίνεται στὸ ἐσωτερικὸ τῆς καρδιάς τοῦ καθενός. Ἦ κρίσι τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἦταν καταδίκη τοῦ τελώνη, ἡ κρίσι ὅμως τοῦ Θεοῦ δικαίωσις. Οἱ ἄνθρωποι τὸν περιφρόνησαν, μὰ ὁ Θεὸς **δέχθηκε τὴν προσευχή του**. Ἦ ταπεινώσι τοῦ τελώνη εἴλκυσε τὴν ἀγάπη τοῦ Θεοῦ.

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Καὶ σήμερα, ἀγαπητοί μου, ὑπάρχουν **φαρισαῖοι καὶ τελῶνες**. Καὶ σήμερα ἄνθρωποι ἔρχονται στὴν ἐκκλησία νὰ προσευχηθοῦν. Πόσοι, ὅπως ὁ φαρισαῖος, δὲν ἔρχονται μὲ ὕψος ὑπερήφανο, μὲ παράστημα ἀγέρωχο! Πόσοι καὶ πόσες δὲν κάνουν μεγάλους σταυροὺς γιὰ νὰ ἐπιδειχθοῦν. Πόσες δὲν ἔρχονται ὄχι γιὰ νὰ προσευχηθοῦν, ἀλλὰ γιὰ νὰ ἐπιδείξουν τὸ φόρεμα, τὸ ἐπανωφόρι, τὰ βραχιόλια τους, μὲ σκοπὸ ν' ἀποσπάσουν τὸ θαυμασμὸ, νὰ γίνουν θέμα συζητήσεως! Πόσοι δὲν λένε «Σ' εὐχαριστοῦμε, Θεέ, γιατί εἴμαστε καλύτεροι ἀπ' τοὺς ἄλλους»; Πόσοι δὲν λένε, ὅτι Ἐγὼ εἶμαι καλὸς χριστιανός! Ἄλλ' ὑπάρχουν πάντοτε καὶ οἱ τελῶνες. Ἐκεῖνη ἡ γερόντισσα, ποῦ κάθετα στὴ γωνιά τῆς ἐκκλησίας καὶ μὲ συντετριμμένη καρδιὰ λέει, Παναγία μου σῶσε με, στὸν τελώνη μοιάζει. Ἦ ἅγιες ψυχές!...

Ἄπευθύνομαι στοὺς φαρισαῖους. **Φαρισαῖοι τῆς ἐποχῆς μας**, μὴν ἐπαναπαύεσθε στὸ τί λένε οἱ ἄνθρωποι γιὰ σᾶς. Ἐξετάστε τὸν ἑαυτό σας, μήπως ὁ ὄφισ τῆς ὑπερηφανείας σᾶς δάγκασε καὶ νοσεῖτε. Ἐξετάστε νὰ δῆτε ἂν ὁ Θεὸς εἶνε μαζί σας. Καὶ ἂν ὄχι, κλάψτε, πενηθῆστε καὶ πῆτε κ' ἐσεῖς «**Ἰλάσθητι ἡμῖν τοῖς ἀμαρτωλοῖς**», γιὰ νὰ δικαιωθῆτε. Διότι οὐδεὶς ἀναμάρτητος. Σὲ ὅσο ὕψος ἀρετῆς κι ἂν φθάσετε, σὲ κάτι θὰ ὑστερήτε. Γι' αὐτὸ **ταπεινωθῆτε** ἐνώπιον τοῦ Θεοῦ, γιὰ νὰ σᾶς ὑψώσῃ (βλ. 1ακ. 4,10. Α' Πέτρ. 5,6). Διότι ὁ Θεὸς «**ὑπερηφάνοις ἀντιτάσσεται, ταπεινοῖς δὲ δίδωσι χάριν**» (Παροιμ. 3,34. 1ακ. 4,6. Α' Πέτρ. 5,5).

(†) **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

Humility is the Mark of a Sinner

In the case of that Pharisee who was praying, the things he said were true. Since he was saying them out of pride and the tax collector was telling his sins with humility, the confession of sins of the last was more pleasing to God than the acknowledgment of the almsgiving of the first. It is more difficult to confess one's sins than one's righteousness. God looks on the one who carries a heavy burden. The tax collector therefore appeared to Him to have had more to bear than the Pharisee had. He went down more justified than the Pharisee did, only because of the fact he was humble. If this Pharisee had been sinful, his prayer would have added iniquity to iniquity, but the Lord purified the tax collector of his iniquity. If just by praying, the Pharisee's prayer provoked God's wrath, then as a result of that provocation, the prayer of the tax collector proved all the more potent.

St. Ephrem the Syrian

The stern Pharisee, who in his self pride not

only boasted of himself but also discredited the tax collector in the presence of God, made his justice void by being guilty of pride. Instead of the Pharisee, the tax collector went down justified, because he had given glory to God, the Holy One. He did not dare lift his eyes but sought only to plead for mercy. He accused himself by his posture, by striking his breast, and by entertaining no other motive except propitiation. Be on your guard, therefore, and bear in mind this example of severe loss sustained through arrogance. The one guilty of insolent behavior suffered the loss of his justice and forfeited his reward by his bold self-reliance. He was judged inferior to a humble man and a sinner because in his self-exaltation he did not await the judgment of God but pronounced it himself. Never place yourself above anyone, not even great sinners. Humility often saves a sinner who has committed many terrible transgressions.

St. Basil the Great

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