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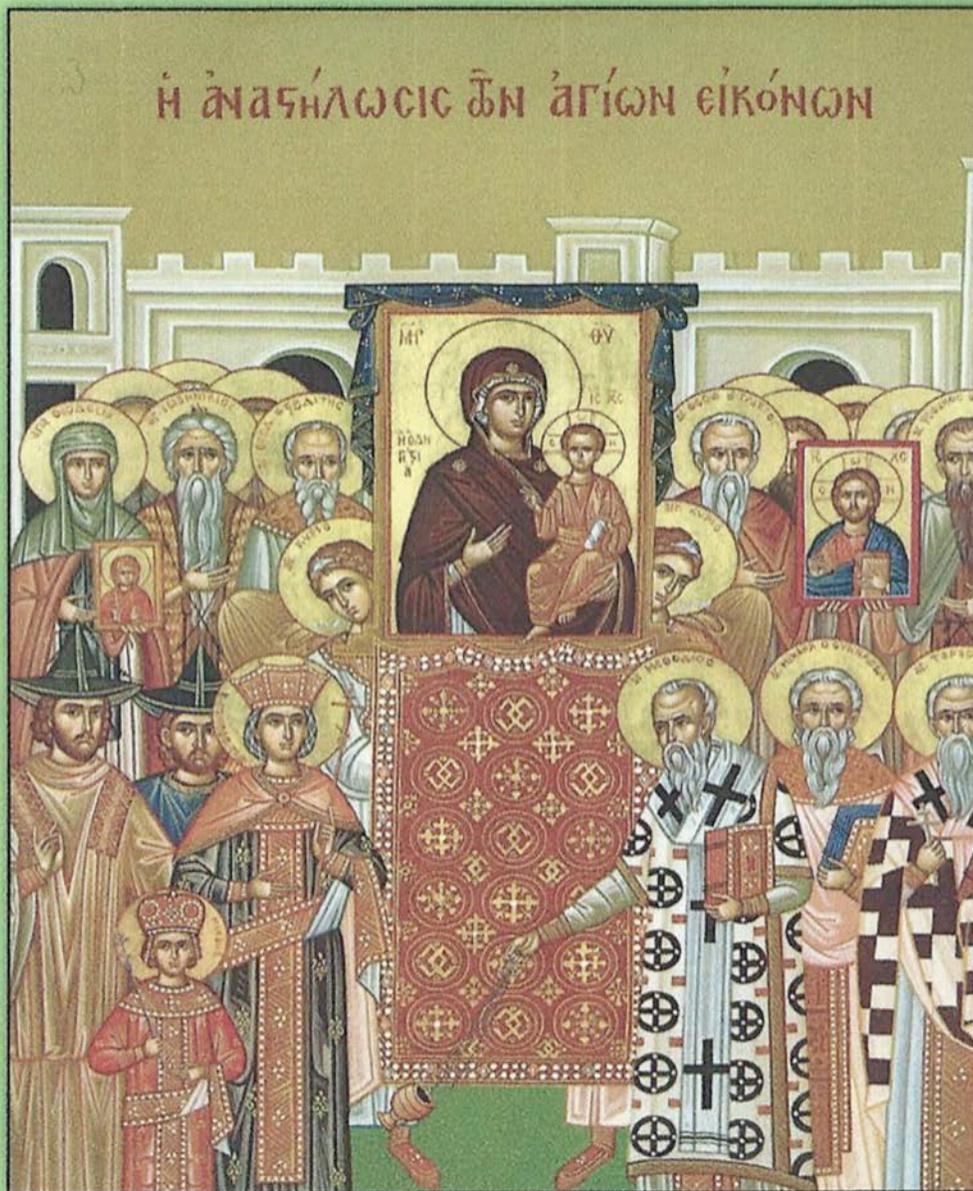
JUBILEE 85TH ANNIVERSARY

THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN March 9th, 2014

V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

FIRST SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY



Icon of the Sunday of Orthodoxy

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St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 12:1-10

Prokeimenon. Mode 4. Daniel 3.26,27

Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our fathers. Verse: For you are just in all you have done.

BRETHREN, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. And have you forgotten the exhortation which addresses you as sons? "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor lose courage when you are punished by him. For the Lord disciplines him whom he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives." It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Besides this, we have had earthly fathers to discipline us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father.

Πρὸς Ἑβραίους 12:1-10

Προκείμενον. Ήχος δ. Δανιήλ 3.26-27

Εὐλογητὸς εἶ, Κύριε, ὁ Θεὸς τῶν Πατέρων ἡμῶν. Στίχ. Ὅτι δίκαιος εἶ ἐπὶ πᾶσιν, οἷς ἐποίησας ἡμῖν.

Ἀδελφοί, τοσοῦτον ἔχοντες περικείμενον ἡμῖν νέφος μαρτύρων, ὄγκον ἀποθέμενοι πάντα καὶ τὴν εὐπερίστατον ἁμαρτίαν, δι' ὑπομονῆς τρέχωμεν τὸν προκείμενον ἡμῖν ἀγῶνα, ἀφορῶντες εἰς τὸν τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτὴν Ἰησοῦν, ὃς, ἀντὶ τῆς προκειμένης αὐτῷ χαρᾶς, ὑπέμεινεν σταυρόν, αἰσχύνῃς καταφρονήσας, ἐν δεξιᾷ τε τοῦ θρόνου τοῦ θεοῦ κεκάθικεν.

Ἀναλογίσασθε γὰρ τὸν τοιαύτην ὑπομεμενηκότα ὑπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτωλῶν εἰς αὐτὸν ἀντιλογίαν, ἵνα μὴ κάμῃτε ταῖς ψυχαῖς ὑμῶν ἐκλυόμενοι. Οὐπω μέχρι αἵματος ἀντικατέστητε πρὸς τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἀνταγωνιζόμενοι· καὶ ἐκλέλησθε τῆς παρακλήσεως, ἣτις ὑμῖν ὡς υἱοῖς διαλέγεται, Υἱέ μου, μὴ ὀλιγῶρει παιδείας κυρίου, μηδὲ ἐκλύου ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ἐλεγχόμενος· ὃν γὰρ ἀγαπᾷ κύριος παιδεύει· μαστιγοῖ δὲ πάντα υἱὸν ὃν παραδέχεται. Εἰς παιδείαν ὑπομένετε, ὡς υἱοῖς ὑμῖν προσφέρεται ὁ θεός· τίς γὰρ ἐστὶν υἱὸς ὃν οὐ παιδεύει πατήρ; Εἰ δὲ χωρὶς ἐστε παιδείας, ἧς μέτοχοι γεγονάσιν πάντες, ἄρα νόθοι ἐστε καὶ οὐχ υἱοί. Εἴτα τοὺς μὲν τῆς σαρκὸς ἡμῶν πατέρας εἶχομεν παιδευτὰς, καὶ ἐνετρεπόμεθα· οὐ πολλῷ μᾶλλον ὑποταγησόμεθα τῷ πατρὶ τῶν πνευμάτων, καὶ ζήσομεν; Οἱ μὲν γὰρ πρὸς ὀλίγας ἡμέρας κατὰ τὸ δοκοῦν αὐτοῖς ἐπαίδεον· ὁ δὲ ἐπὶ τὸ συμφέρον, εἰς τὸ μεταλαβεῖν τῆς ἀγιότητος αὐτοῦ.

Sunday of Orthodoxy

The Gospel of John 1:43-51

At that time, Jesus decided to go to Galilee. And he found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael, and he said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" Nathanael said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the son of God! You are the King of Israel!" Jesus answered him, "Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these." And he said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

Sunday of Orthodoxy

Κατὰ Ἰωάννην 1.44-52

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, ἠθέλησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐξελθεῖν εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν· καὶ εὕρισκει Φίλιππον καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· ἀκολούθει μοι. ἦν δὲ ὁ Φίλιππος ἀπὸ Βηθσαϊδά, ἐκ τῆς πόλεως Ἀνδρέου καὶ Πέτρου. εὕρισκει Φίλιππος τὸν Ναθαναὴλ καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· ὃν ἔγραψε Μωϋσῆς ἐν τῷ νόμῳ καὶ οἱ προφῆται, εὕρηκαμεν, Ἰησοῦν τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Ἰωσήφ τὸν ἀπὸ Ναζαρέτ. καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ Ναθαναὴλ· ἐκ Ναζαρέτ δύναται τι ἀγαθὸν εἶναι; λέγει αὐτῷ Φίλιππος· ἔρχου καὶ ἴδε. εἶδεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὸν Ναθαναὴλ ἐρχόμενον πρὸς αὐτὸν καὶ λέγει περὶ αὐτοῦ· ἴδε ἀληθῶς Ἰσραηλίτης, ἐν ᾧ δόλος οὐκ ἔστι. λέγει αὐτῷ Ναθαναὴλ· πόθεν με γινώσκεις; ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· πρὸ τοῦ σε Φίλιππον φωνῆσαι, ὄντα ὑπὸ τὴν συκῆν εἰδόν σε. ἀπεκρίθη Ναθαναὴλ καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· ῥαββί, σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, σὺ εἶ ὁ βασιλεὺς τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ. ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ὅτι εἶπόν σοι, εἰδόν σε ὑποκάτω τῆς συκῆς, πιστεύεις; μείζω τούτων ὄψει. καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ἀπ' ἄρτι ὄψεσθε τὸν οὐρανὸν ἀνεωγῆτα, καὶ τοὺς ἀγγέλους τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀναβαίνοντας καὶ καταβαίνοντας ἐπὶ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.

SERVICES THIS WEEK:

Sunday	March 9 th	VESPERS of ORTHODOXY, St. Nicholas Cathedral	6:00 P.M.
Wednesday,	March 12 th	Prayer and Healing Service	5:30 P.M.
Wednesday,	March 12 th	Pre-Sanctified Liturgy	6:00 P.M -7:15 P.M.
Wednesday,	March 12 th	FREE Philoptochos POT LUCK (LENTEN) DINNER	7:17 P.M.
Friday,	March 14 th	2 nd , Stanza of the ' BLESSED VIRGIN MARY' SALUTATIONS	7-8:15 P.M.

GIRL SCOUTS of THREE HIERARCHS: are to be commended for their exceptional service and presentation at last week's Divine Liturgy. The little ladies passed the tray offerings, and hosted and served the coffee and Sweets fellowship in WHITEHALL, distributing St. Patrick Favors to the faithful. We salute the leadership of MRS STELLA OBERLE. CHARMAINE , and the 'mothers' committee.

NEXT WEEK: The GOLDEN GREEKS BOY SCOUT TROOP #531 will host the ANNUAL PASTA LUNCHEON directly after Divine Liturgy. Various 'pastas' will be presented for selection to eat as much as you wish. Salad, Bread, Wine, Beer and Soda. Coffee and dessert will top off the 'fund raiser' . Raffles and prizes will be offered. Tickets are donated at \$15.00 for adults and \$10.00 for children under ten years old. EVERY DOLLAR WILL SUBSIDIZE THE SUMMER TWO WEEK CAMPING TRIP of the young boys, HELP US HELP THEM!

LENT and SPRING is but around the corner of the calendar. Are you ready to shake off our 'cabin fever' and join the journey of LENT? So many things are planned to make the Lenten six week period vibrant and spiritually fulfilling. The LENTEN CALENDAR has already been mailed. All enrolled stewards of the church (MEMBERS) HAVE RECEIVED ONE. ARE YOU REGISTERED??? WHY NOT? Enquire in the church office for your calendar and events

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! Please submit your registration membership now.

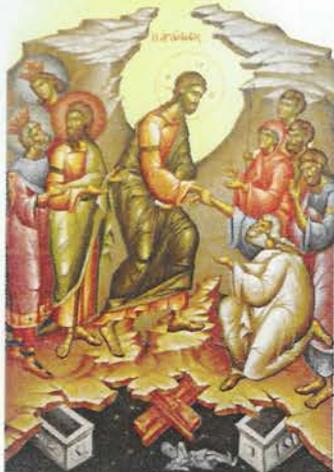
PARKING LOT PERMITS; Will be renewable from JANUARY 01ST 2014. Please be prepared to submit your annual stewardship (DUES) in early January to receive the NEW PARKING PERMIT, for 2014 . Towing of illegally parked vehicles or trespassers will be in effect as the signs read clearly. PLEASE OBLIGE WITH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

TODAY: BROOKLYN CHAPTER #41 of the A.H.E.P.A. will honor ' KOSTAS ZIOTAS ' a distinguished member of our Parish family at their annual Hellenic Heritage Awards Ceremony at the Brooklyn Cathedral. The award will be presented by State Senator Marty Golden and State Assemblywoman Nicole Malliotakis. Mr. Ziotas is Past President of the Parish Council, and is still active as a Member of the Council for over 40 years. He is also the Chairperson of the CROSS of LIFE FUND, liaison with the CHOIR, member of the A.HE.P.A., SENIOR CITIZENS CLUB, MR, MRS, MS, CLUB, and various other organizations of renown. AXIOS ! AXIOS ! AXIOS! A most deserving honoree who brings honor to our Parish.

MEMORIALS TODAY: +DR. JOHN ELEFTERAKIS + ATHANASIOS VAZINTARIS
+ANDREAS GALLIS +RITA and +GEORGE GALLIS + PARISH
COUNCIL, DECEASED MEMBERS and + PHILOPTOCHOS LADIES
DECEASED MEMBERS

MEMORIALS NEXT WEEK: + EMMANUEL PERLEGIS
+ NICHOLAS COURTOS



PASCHAL CARD 2014 APPEAL



In anticipation of the Resurrection of our Lord, and keeping this Great Lent period of spiritual reflection, we are offering you the opportunity to be included in our **“Parish Easter Card”**. Your name will be listed on the card for a nominal donation of \$20.00. In this manner you will benefit your Church, sending the good news of our Lord’s Resurrection to over 1,000 families and friends of the Three Hierarchs parish.

If you wish to be listed on the Parish Easter Card, please complete the form below and return it in the enclosed envelope, together with your check payable to **“Three Hierarchs Church”**.

THE DEADLINE IS SUNDAY APRIL 6, 2014

Αναμένοντας την Ανάσταση του Κυρίου, κατά το διάστημα της Μεγάλης Τεσσαρακοστής, σας δίνουμε την ευκαιρία να συμπεριλάβετε το όνομα σας στην **«Πασχαλινή Ευχητήριο Κάρτα»**. Το όνομα σας θα καταγραφεί με την προσφορά σας των \$20.00. Έτσι βοηθάτε την Εκκλησία σας και στέλνετε τις ευχές σας για την Ανάσταση του Κυρίου σε περισσότερες από 1,000 οικογένειες και φίλους της παροικίας των Τριών Ιεραρχών.

Αν επιθυμείτε να καταγράψετε το όνομα σας στην Πασχαλινή Ευχητήριο Κάρτα, παρακαλούμε συμπληρώστε το παρακάτω απόκομμα και επιστρέψτε το με την επιταγή σας προς **“Three Hierarchs Church”** στον εσώκλειστο φάκελο.

ΑΠΑΝΤΗΣΤΕ ΜΕΧΡΙ ΤΙΣ ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ, 6 ΑΠΡΙΛΙΟΥ, 2014

Αρχ. Ευγένιος Ν. Παπαγιαννάκος
Ιερατικός Προιστάμενος

EASTER CARD LISTING FORM

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ *STATE* _____ *ZIP CODE* _____

TELEPHONE (____) _____

ENCLOSED IS \$20.00 DONATION _____



PAN – ORTHODOX VESPERS

SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY

MARCH 9TH 2014
VESPERS AT 6:00 P.M

HIS GRACE, **BISHOP NICHOLAS** WILL PRESIDE AND WILL BE GUEST
SPEAKER.

AN OPEN **FREE** LENTEN SUPPER WILL FOLLOW

ST. NICHOLAS ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL
355 STATE STREET, BROOKLYN



ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



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

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος Κ'
Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλ. 1024²

Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος
Αὐγουστίνος Ν. Καντιώτης

Δειγματολόγιο ἐπιθυμιῶν

«...Ὅτι ἀνὴρ ἐπιθυμιῶν εἶ σύ» (Δαν. 9,23)

Ἐορτάζουμε, ἀγαπητοί μου, τὸν προφήτη Δανιήλ. Νὰ τὸν ἐπαινέσουμε; Δὲν ἔχει ἀνάγκη ἀπὸ τοὺς δικούς μας ἐπαίνους. Τὸν ἐγκωμιάζει ἡ Ἐκκλησία μὲ ὠραιότατα τροπάρια. Εἶνε, λέει, «ἀστήρ φανότατος», «λαμπρότατος ἥλιος, προφητῶν ὁ περίδοξος», ὁ «πανάριστος στῦλος τῶν δογμάτων», «κρηπίς τῆς οἰκουμένης», «ἡ διόπτρα τοῦ Πνεύματος», δηλαδή τὸ πνευματικὸ τηλεσκόπιο μὲ τὸ ὁποῖο εἶδε τί θὰ συμβῆι στὸ μέλλον (ἐσπ.). Εἶδε θρόνους καὶ βασιλεῖες νὰ πέφτουν, εἶδε τὶς περίφημες «ἐβδομήκοντα ἐβδομάδας» (Δαν. 9,24), καὶ τέλος εἶδε τὴν ἔνδοξο βασιλεία τοῦ «Υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου» (ἐ.ἀ. 7,13-14), τῆς ὁποίας «οὐκ ἔσται τέλος» (Λουκ. 1,33).

Τὸν Δανιήλ ἐπαινοῦν ὄχι μόνο οἱ ὑμνογράφοι τῆς γῆς ἀλλὰ καὶ οἱ ἄγγελοι τοῦ οὐρανοῦ. Τὸν ἐπαινεῖ—μοναδική περίπτωση—ὁ ἴδιος ὁ ἀρχάγγελος Γαβριήλ, ποὺ «οὐρανόθεν ἐπέμφθη εἰπεῖν τῇ Θεοτόκῳ τὸ χαῖρε» (Ἐκκλ. ὑμν. Α). Ὁ ἴδιος ἔλαβε ἐντολή νὰ ἔρθῃ καὶ στὸν Δανιήλ. Κι ὅταν ἦρθε, τὸν βρῆκε νὰ κλαίῃ. Οἱ ἅγιοι δὲν γελοῦν· κλαῖνε, ἀλλὰ μέσ' στὸ κλάμα τοὺς εἶνε ἡ χαρὰ τοῦ παραδείσου. Κλαίει ὁ Δανιήλ.—Γιατί κλαῖς, Δανιήλ;—Κλαίω γιὰ κακοὺς ἰερεῖς, γιὰ ἀσεβεῖς ἄρχοντες, γιὰ τὶς ἁμαρτίες καὶ τὶς συμφορὲς τοῦ λαοῦ μου... Ἐκλαιγε, νῆστευε, ἀγρυπνοῦσε, προσευχόταν ὁ Δανιήλ. Σ' αὐτὴ τὴν κατάστασι τὸν βρῆκε ὁ Γαβριήλ, καὶ τοῦ λέει: Μὴν κλαῖς, Δανιήλ. Γιατί ἀπ' ὅλους μόνο σ' ἐσένα θ' ἀνοίξῃ ὁ Θεὸς τὰ μυστικά του· σὺ θὰ δῆς τὰ μέλλοντα νὰ συμβοῦν. Καὶ σοῦ ἀξίζει, διότι εἶσαι «ἀνὴρ ἐπιθυμιῶν» (Δαν. 9,23). Τί σημαίνουν ἄραγε οἱ δύο αὐτὲς λέξεις;

Ἀπ' ὅλα τὰ ἐγκώμια οἱ λέξεις αὐτὲς εἶνε τὸ λαμπρότερο στεφάνι. Θὰ προσπαθῶ ν' ἀγγίξω τὸ πέλαγος τῶν νοημάτων ποὺ κλείνουν. Τί σημαίνει, ὅτι ὁ Δανιήλ εἶνε «ἀνὴρ ἐπιθυμιῶν»;

Ὁ ἄνθρωπος, ἀγαπητοί μου, κάθε ἄνθρωπος, κλείνει μέσα του ἀμέτρητες ἐπιθυμίες. Τὶς ἐπιθυμίες κατατάσσω σὲ **τρεῖς κατηγορίες**.

1. Πρώτη κατηγορία εἶνε **οἱ φυσικὲς ἐπιθυμίες**. Ἐφ' ὅσον ὁ ἄνθρωπος εἶνε κι αὐτὸς βιολογικὸ ὄν, ἔχει καὶ ἀνάγκες φυσικὲς. Πρώτη ἀνάγκη ἡ τροφή. Ἐπειτα ἡ ἀνάγκη τοῦ ποτοῦ, τοῦ νεροῦ· ἡ ἀνάγκη τῆς ἀναπαύσεως· ἡ ἀνάγκη τοῦ ὕπνου· ἡ ἀνάγκη τῆς ψυχαγωγίας κ.λπ.. Οἱ ἐπιθυμίες γι' αὐτά, ποὺ ὁ Θεὸς τὶς φύτευσε μέσα μας, δὲν εἶνε ἀπόβλητες. Γι' αὐτὸ ὁ ἴδιος ἐνδιαφέρεται νὰ καλύπτωνται οἱ ἀνάγκες αὐτὲς. Διέταξε νὰ βλαστήσῃ ἡ γῆ χλόη καὶ δέντρα καρποφόρα, νὰ πλαστοῦν ζῶα ποὺ προσφέρουν γάλα καὶ κρέας. Ἐκανε τὶς πηγὲς καὶ τὰ ποτάμια. Ἐδωσε τὸν ὕπνο—μέγα δῶρο! Γέμισε τὰ δάση μελωδικὰ πουλιά. Ὁ Θεὸς ἐξασφάλισε ὅλα αὐτά. Καὶ ὁ ἄνθρωπος, ἂν ἔχη λίγη εὐγνωμοσύνη, πρέπει νὰ λήῃ: «*Εὐλόγει, ἡ ψυχὴ μου, τὸν Κύριον... τὸν ἐμπιπλῶντα ἐν ἀγαθοῖς τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν σου*» (Ψαλμ. 102,25).

2. Ὑπάρχουν ὅμως καὶ **οἱ κακὲς ἐπιθυμίες**. Αὐτὲς εἶνε ἡ φυσικὲς ποὺ ὁ ἄνθρωπος προσπαθεῖ νὰ τὶς ἱκανοποιήσῃ παρανόμως, ὄχι διὰ τῆς νομίμου ὁδοῦ, ἢ φυσικὲς ποὺ ξεπερνοῦν τὰ ὅρια τοῦ μέτρου καὶ ξεχειλίζουν σὰν χεῖμαρροι. Οἱ ἴδιες οἱ ἐπιθυμίες, ἂν δὲν προσέξῃ ὁ ἄνθρωπος, γεννοῦν πάθη φοβερὰ, ποὺ κάνουν τὸν ἄνθρωπο δούλο. Ἐτσι, ἂν δὲν προσέξῃ, ἡ ἐπιθυμία τοῦ φαγητοῦ γίνεται λαιμαργία, ἡ ἐπιθυμία τοῦ ποτοῦ γίνεται μέθη, ἡ ἐπιθυμία τῶν διασκεδάσεων γίνεται φιληδονία καὶ ἀκολασία, ἡ ἐπιθυμία τῆς δόξης, τῆς τιμῆς καὶ ἀξιοπρεπείας γίνεται ἀρχομανία καὶ ματαιοδοξία, καὶ ἡ ἐπιθυμία μικρῆς ἰδιοκτησίας, λίγων πραγμάτων, γίνεται φιλοχρηματία, φιλαργυρία, πλεονεξία. Αὐτὲς εἶνε οἱ κακὲς ἐπιθυμίες, ποὺ ἀπαγορεύει ὁ νόμος τοῦ Θεοῦ.

Θυμηθῆτε τὸν **Δεκάλογο**. Ἡ τελευταία ἐντο-

λή του, κρίκος τῶν ἐντολῶν Παλαιᾶς καὶ Καινῆς Διαθήκης, λέει· «*Οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις τὴν γυναῖκα τοῦ πλησίον σου, οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις τὴν οἰκίαν τοῦ πλησίον σου οὔτε τὸν ἀγρὸν αὐτοῦ οὔτε τὸν παῖδα αὐτοῦ οὔτε τὴν παιδίσκην αὐτοῦ οὔτε τοῦ βοῦς αὐτοῦ οὔτε τοῦ ὑποζυγίου αὐτοῦ οὔτε παντὸς κτήνους αὐτοῦ οὔτε ὅσα τῷ πλησίον σου ἐστί*» (Ἔξ. 20,17).

Ἰδού, ἀγαπητοί μου, ὅτι ἐπιθυμίες πού **ἐξέρχονται ἀπὸ τὰ ὄρια τοῦ θεοῦ νόμου ἢ ὑπερβαίνουν τὸ μέτρο**, εἶνε κακές. Γι' αὐτὲς λέει τὸ Πνεῦμα τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὅτι «*ἡ ἐπιθυμία τῆς σαρκὸς καὶ ἡ ἐπιθυμία τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν καὶ ἡ ἀλαζονεία τοῦ βίου*», αὐτὰ τὰ τρία, δὲν εἶνε «*ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς*» τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, ἀλλὰ εἶνε «*ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου*». Καὶ «*ὁ κόσμος παράγεται καὶ ἡ ἐπιθυμία αὐτοῦ*» καὶ μόνο «*ὁ ποιῶν τὸ θέλημα τοῦ Θεοῦ μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα*» (Α' Ἰω. 2,16-17).

Γιὰ νὰ δῆτε **ποῦ ὀδηγοῦν** αἱ κακὲς ἐπιθυμίες, σᾶς παρακαλῶ ν' ἀνοίξετε τὴν Παλαιὰ Διαθήκη στὸ βιβλίο τῶν Ἀριθμῶν. Ἐκεῖ θὰ συναντήσετε τὰ «*Μνήματα τῆς ἐπιθυμίας*» (Ἀριθμ. 11,34-35· 33,16-17). Τί εἶνε αὐτά; Οἱ Ἑβραῖοι μὲ ὀδηγὸ τὸ Μωϋσῆ ἔζησαν στὴν ἔρημο σαράντα ὀλόκληρα χρόνια. Τροφή τους ἐκλεκτὴ καὶ θαυμαστὴ τὸ μάννα τοῦ οὐρανοῦ. Ἄλλ' αὐτοί, μιὰ τέτοια τροφή, τὴν ἀηδίασαν· ζήτησαν κρέας. Ἡ ἐπιθυμία τους σφοδρά. Ὁ Μωϋσῆς παρακάλεσε τὸ Θεό. Καὶ ἀπαντᾷ ἡ φωνὴ τοῦ Θεοῦ· Αὔριο θὰ ἔχουν κρέας· θὰ φᾶνε τόσο πολὺ, πού θὰ τοὺς βγῆ ἀπὸ τὴ μύτη, «*ἐκ τῶν μυκτῆρων*» αὐτῶν (Ἀριθμ. 11,20). Καὶ πράγματι τὸ πρωὶ γέμισε ἡ ἔρημος ἀπὸ ὀρτύκια. Κ' ἔπесαν οἱ Ἑβραῖοι στὰ κρέατα σὰν τὰ ὄρνια στὰ ψοφίμια. Ἐφαγαν ἔφαγαν· τὸ ἀποτέλεσμα; Ἐπαθαν δυσεντερία, καὶ τὴν ἄλλη μέρα πέθαιναν κατὰ χιλιάδες. Τότε ἀνοίξαν τάφους ἀμέτρητους μέσα στὴν ἔρημο καὶ τοὺς ἔθαψαν. Ἔτσι ἡ τοποθεσία πῆρε τὸ ὄνομα «*Μνήματα ἐπιθυμίας*». Ἡ ἐπιθυμία τους αὐτὴ δὲν ἦταν κατὰ Θεόν. Ἦταν λαιμαργία καὶ γαστριμαργία. Νά ποῦ ὀδηγοῦν οἱ κακὲς ἐπιθυμίες.

3. Τέλος, ἀδελφοί μου, μετὰ τίς φυσικὲς ἐπιθυμίες καὶ τίς κακὲς ἐπιθυμίες θὰ σᾶς δείξω τὴν τρίτη κατηγορία ἐπιθυμιῶν. Ἀλλὰ γι' αὐτὲς δὲν εἶμαι ἐγὼ κατάλληλος. Γι' αὐτὲς θὰ ἴπρεπε νὰ μιλήσῃ ἕνας ἅγιος Ἀντώνιος, ἕνας ἅγιος Παχώμιος, ἕνας Ἰωάννης Χρυσόστομος καὶ ἕνας προφήτης Δανιήλ. Εἶνε **οἱ ἅγιες ἐπιθυμίες ἢ ἐπιθυμίες τῶν ἁγίων**. Ποιὲς εἶνε αὐτές; Πρῶτη ἐπιθυμία ἐνὸς ἀνθρώπου τοῦ Θεοῦ εἶνε ἡ ἐπιθυμία τῆς πνευματικῆς τροφῆς, τὸ νὰ γνωρίσῃ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ Θεοῦ, τὸ θεῖο νόμο, πού εἶνε γλυκύτερος «*ὑπὲρ μέλι καὶ*

κηρίον» (Ψαλμ. 18,11). Ἐπιθυμία του εἶνε, αὐτὰ πού διαβάζει ἢ ἀκούει στὴν ἐκκλησία (ψαλσίματα, ἀναγνώσματα, κήρυγμα, θεία λειτουργία), νὰ τὰ κάνῃ αἷμα καὶ ζωὴ, ἀγῶνα καὶ μάχη. Ὅπως ἄλλοι τρέχουν στὰ κέντρα ψυχαγωγίας, αὐτὸς τρέχει στὴν ἐκκλησία· «*Ὡς ἀγαπητὰ τὰ σκηνώματά σου, Κύριε τῶν δυνάμεων. ἐπιποθεῖ καὶ ἐκλείπει ἡ ψυχὴ μου εἰς τὰς αὐλὰς τοῦ Κυρίου*» (Ψαλμ. 83,2-3). Ἐπιθυμεῖ νὰ ἐπισκέπτεται τὸν οἶκο τοῦ Θεοῦ. Ἐπιθυμεῖ πρὸ παντὸς νὰ γεύεται τὸ μέγα μυστήριο τῆς θείας εὐχαριστίας· «*Γεύσασθε καὶ δετε ὅτι χρυστὸς ὁ Κύριος*» (Ψαλμ. 33,9). Ποθεῖ τὴν ἔνωση μὲ τὸν Κύριο. Ἐπιθυμία του τέλος εἶνε, ὅλος ὁ κόσμος νὰ γνωρίσῃ τὸ Θεὸ καὶ τὸ θέλημά του.

* * *

Τέτοιες ἐπιθυμίες εἶχαν οἱ ἅγιοι, τέτοιες εἶχε καὶ ὁ προφήτης Δανιήλ. Γι' αὐτὸ ὁ Γαβριήλ τὸν εἶπε «*ἄνδρα ἐπιθυμιῶν*». Θὰ ρωτήσετε· **Ἐπάρχουν σήμερα τέτοιοι ἄνθρωποι; Ἐπάρχουν**. Κάποιος ἔπασχε ἀπὸ καρκίνο τῆς γλώσσης. Μετὰ τὴν ἐγχείρησι θὰ ἔχανε πλέον τὴ λαλιά του. Τὸν ρώτησαν, ποιά θέλει νὰ εἶνε τὰ τελευταῖα του λόγια. Αὐτὸς εἶπε· «*Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς νικᾷ*» - «*Μνήσθητί μου, Κύριε, ὅταν ἔλθῃς ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου*». Ἦταν σὰν ἐκεῖνα πού εἶπε ὁ ἀπόστολος Παῦλος «*Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς ἦλθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἁμαρτωλοὺς σῶσαι, ὧν πρῶτός εἰμι ἐγώ*» (Α' Τιμ. 1,15).

Ἀδελφοί μου! Σᾶς ἔδωσα ἕνα δειγματολόγιο τῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν· ἐπιθυμίες φυσικὲς, ἐπιθυμίες κακὲς, ἐπιθυμίες ἁγίες. Διαλέξτε καὶ πάρτε. Ἐὰν ἔχετε ἐπιθυμίες φυσικὲς, οὔτε ἔπαινος οὔτε κατηγορία. Ἐὰν ἔχετε ἐπιθυμίες κακὲς, τότε εἶστε δυστυχεῖς. **Ποιὸς θὰ μᾶς ἐμπνεύσῃ ἐπιθυμίες ἁγίες**, γιὰ νὰ γίνουμε κ' ἐμεῖς ὅπως ὁ Δανιήλ «*ἄνδρες ἐπιθυμιῶν*»;

Σᾶς παρακαλῶ, βάλτε τὸ χέρι στὴν καρδιά, πού εἶνε ἡ ἔδρα τῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν, καὶ ρωτήστε· καρδιά, τί ἐπιθυμεῖς; λεπτά, δόξες, μεγαλεῖα, ἡδονές;... «*Πάντα ματαιότης τὰ ἀνθρώπινα...*» (νεκρ. ἀκόλ.). Μηδὲν οἱ ἔρωτες, μηδὲν τὰ πλοῦτη, μηδὲν τὰ ἐπίγεια. Ἄν ἡ καρδιά πάσχη ἀπὸ ἐπιθυμίες κακὲς, τότε γονατίστε καὶ πέστε μαζὶ μὲ τὸν ἄλλο προφήτη, τὸ Δαυῖδ· «*Καρδίαν καθαρὰν κτίσον ἐν ἐμοί, ὁ Θεός*» (Ψαλμ. 50,12). Δώστε μου ἕναν ἄνθρωπο μὲ καθαρὴ καρδιά, δώστε μου μιὰ καρδιά πού νὰ πάλλῃ γιὰ τὸ Θεὸ καὶ τὸν πλησίον!

Ἄς προσπαθήσουμε τίς ἡμέρες αὐτὲς νὰ καθαρίσουμε τίς καρδιές μας ἀπὸ τὰ πάθη, γιὰ νὰ γίνῃ **κάθε καρδιά μιὰ φάτνη**, ὅπου θὰ γεννηθῇ μιὰ φορὰ ἀκόμη ὁ Χριστὸς· 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

A Humble Heart, O Lord, You will not Scorn

Have mercy on me, God, in accord with your merciful love;
in your abundant compassion blot out my transgressions.

Thoroughly wash away my guilt;
and from my sin cleanse me.
For I know my transgressions;
my sin is always before me.

Against you, you alone have I sinned;
I have done what is evil in your eyes
So that you are just in your word,
and without reproach in your judgment.

Behold, I was born in guilt,
in sin my mother conceived me.
Behold, you desire true sincerity;
and secretly you teach me wisdom.

Cleanse me with hyssop, that I may be pure;
wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.
You will let me hear gladness and joy;
the bones you have crushed will rejoice.

Turn away your face from my sins;

blot out all my iniquities.
A clean heart create for me, God;
renew within me a steadfast spirit.
Do not drive me from before your face,
nor take from me your holy spirit.
Restore to me the gladness of your salvation;
uphold me with a willing spirit.
I will teach the wicked your ways,
that sinners may return to you.
Rescue me from violent bloodshed, God, my
saving God,
and my tongue will sing joyfully of your justice.
Lord, you will open my lips;
and my mouth will proclaim your praise.
For you do not desire sacrifice or I would give it;
a burnt offering you would not accept.
My sacrifice, O God, is a contrite spirit;
a contrite, humbled heart, O God, you will not
scorn.

From: Psalm 51

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