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DISTRICT

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THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN April 27th , 2014

V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

THOMAS SUNDAY



Icon of Thomas Sunday

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Acts of the Apostles 5:12-20

Prokeimenon. Mode 4. Psalm 146.5;134.3

Great is our Lord, and great is his power. Verse: Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good.

IN THOSE DAYS, many signs and wonders were done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico. None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high honor. And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women, so that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and pallets, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed. But the high priest rose up and all who were with him, that is, the party of the Sadducees, and filled with jealousy they arrested the apostles and put them in the common prison. But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out and said, "Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life."

Πράξεις Αποστόλων 5:12-20

Προκείμενον. Ἦχος δ. ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 146.5;134.3

Μέγας ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν, καὶ μεγάλη ἡ ἰσχὺς αὐτοῦ. Στίχ. Αἰνεῖτε τὸν Κύριον, ὅτι ἀγαθός.

Ἐν ταῖς ἡμεραῖς ἐκεῖναις, διὰ δὲ τῶν χειρῶν τῶν ἀποστόλων ἐγένετο β σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα ἐν τῷ λαῷ πολλά· καὶ ἦσαν ὁμοθυμαδὸν ἅπαντες ἐν τῇ στοᾷ Σολομῶντος. Τῶν δὲ λοιπῶν οὐδεὶς ἐτόλμα κολλᾶσθαι αὐτοῖς, ἀλλ' ἐμεγάλυνεν αὐτοὺς ὁ λαός· μᾶλλον δὲ προσετίθεντο πιστεύοντες τῷ κυρίῳ, πλήθη ἀνδρῶν τε καὶ γυναικῶν· ὥστε κατὰ τὰς πλατείας ἐκφέρειν τοὺς ἀσθενεῖς, καὶ τιθέναι ἐπὶ κλινῶν καὶ κραββάτων, ἵνα ἐρχομένου Πέτρου κἂν ἡ σκιά ἐπισκιάσῃ τινὶ αὐτῶν. Συνήρχετο δὲ καὶ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν περὶ πόλεων εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ, φέροντες ἀσθενεῖς καὶ ὀχλουμένους ὑπὸ πνευμάτων ἀκαθάρτων, οἵτινες ἐθεραπεύοντο ἅπαντες. Ἀναστὰς δὲ ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς καὶ πάντες οἱ σὺν αὐτῷ - ἡ οὖσα αἵρεσις τῶν Σαδδουκαίων - ἐπλήσθησαν ζήλου, καὶ ἐπέβαλον τὰς χεῖρας αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀποστόλους, καὶ ἔθεντο αὐτοὺς ἐν τηρήσει δημοσίᾳ. Ἄγγελος δὲ κυρίου διὰ τῆς νυκτὸς ἤνοιξεν τὰς θύρας τῆς φυλακῆς, ἐξαγαγὼν τε αὐτοὺς εἶπεν, Πορεύεσθε, καὶ σταθέντες λαλεῖτε ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ τῷ λαῷ πάντα τὰ ῥήματα τῆς ζωῆς ταύτης.

Thomas Sunday

The Gospel of John 20:19-31

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them: "Peace be with you." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him: "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them: "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in His side, I will not believe." Eight days later, His disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. The doors were shut, but Jesus came and stood among them, and said: "Peace be with you." Then He said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side; do not be faithless, but believing." Thomas answered Him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to Him: "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe." Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

Thomas Sunday

Κατὰ Ἰωάννην 20.19-31

Οὔσης οὖν ὀψίας τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκεῖνῃ τῇ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων, καὶ τῶν θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων ὅπου ἦσαν οἱ μαθηταὶ συνηγμένοι διὰ τὸν φόβον τῶν Ἰουδαίων, ἦλθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ ἔστη εἰς τὸ μέσον, καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· εἰρήνη ὑμῖν. καὶ τοῦτο εἰπὼν ἔδειξεν αὐτοῖς τὰς χεῖρας καὶ τὴν πλευρὰν αὐτοῦ. ἐχάρησαν οὖν οἱ μαθηταὶ ἰδόντες τὸν Κύριον. εἶπεν οὖν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς πάλιν· εἰρήνη ὑμῖν. καθὼς ἀπέσταλκέ με ὁ πατήρ, καὶ γὰρ πέμπω ὑμᾶς. καὶ τοῦτο εἰπὼν ἐνεφύσησε καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· λάβετε Πνεῦμα Ἅγιον· ἂν τινῶν ἀφῆτε τὰς ἁμαρτίας, ἀφίενται αὐτοῖς, ἂν τινῶν κρατῆτε, κεκράτηνται. Θωμᾶς δὲ εἷς ἐκ τῶν δώδεκα, ὁ λεγόμενος Δίδυμος, οὐκ ἦν μετ' αὐτῶν ὅτε ἦλθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς. ἔλεγον οὖν αὐτῷ οἱ ἄλλοι μαθηταί· ἐώρακαμεν τὸν Κύριον. ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· ἐὰν μὴ ἴδω ἐν ταῖς χερσίν αὐτοῦ τὸν τύπον τῶν ἥλων, καὶ βάλω τὸν δάκτυλόν μου εἰς τὸν τύπον τῶν ἥλων, καὶ βάλω τὴν χεῖρά μου εἰς τὴν πλευρὰν αὐτοῦ, οὐ μὴ πιστεύσω. Καὶ μεθ' ἡμέρας ὀκτῶ πάλιν ἦσαν ἔσω οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ Θωμᾶς μετ' αὐτῶν. ἔρχεται ὁ Ἰησοῦς τῶν θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων, καὶ ἔστη εἰς τὸ μέσον καὶ εἶπεν· εἰρήνη ὑμῖν. εἶτα λέγει τῷ Θωμᾷ· φέρε τὸν δάκτυλόν σου ὧδε καὶ ἴδε τὰς χεῖράς μου, καὶ φέρε τὴν χεῖρά σου καὶ βάλε εἰς τὴν πλευρὰν μου, καὶ μὴ γίνου ἄπιστος, ἀλλὰ πιστός. καὶ ἀπεκρίθη Θωμᾶς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ὁ Κύριός μου καὶ ὁ Θεός μου. λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· ὅτι ἐώρακάς με, πεπίστευκας· μακάριοι οἱ μὴ ἰδόντες καὶ πιστεύσαντες. Πολλὰ μὲν οὖν καὶ ἄλλα σημεῖα ἐποίησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐνώπιον τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ, ἃ οὐκ ἔστι γεγραμμένα ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τούτῳ· ταῦτα δὲ γέγραπται ἵνα πιστεύσητε ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ ἵνα πιστεύοντες ζωὴν ἔχητε ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ.

SAINT THOMAS SUNDAY, today we congratulate all those named THOMAS or THOMAE on their patron Saint Name-day. CHRONIA POLLA KAI EVTYCHISMENA !

Coffee Fellowship today is being hosted by the Daughters of Penelope.

No memorials are being celebrated this day as we are observing EASTER PASCHA WEEK which highlights the Holy Resurrection of the Lord. Hence lamentation and memorials will be observed NEXT SUNDAY. MAY 04 th , commemorating the HOLY MYRRH-BEARERS.

Protocol Liturgical Notes:

1. Our salutations for the next 40 days will be **CHRISTOS ANESTI !** followed by **ALITHOS ANESTI !** rather than the secular cosmic greetings of ‘ good morning ‘ or ‘ good bye’ . This general reminder of the **reason for the season** will continue until ASCENSION THURSDAY MAY 29th. Which coincidentally falls on the same calendar date as the **FALL of CONSTANTINOPLE** (MAY 29, 1453) and the end of the **HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE** in **CONSTANTINOPLE**.

2. During the RESURRECTIONAL SEASON until PENTECOST (FIFTY DAYS AFTER PASCHA) Sunday, June 08th, we are not obliged to kneel at the Divine Liturgy ‘ consecration ‘ as we traditionally observe. Kneeling resumes on Pentecost Sunday, resolving the conclusion of the Paschal period.

WASHINGTON , D.C. will be the venue of the Archdiocesan Council and the Presbyter’ Council this week. Father Eugene as representative of the D.A.D. (NEW YORK METROPOLIS) will be in the Capital Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday – April 29 – 30, May 1st.) attending the consultation.

AGIASMOS for the MONTH of MAY will be celebrated FRIDAY – MAY 02nd , at 11:00 A.M. Please take note that the **AGIASMOS will NOT BE ON THE FIRST**, but rather on the **SECOND of the MAY MONTH**.

WOMAN of the YEAR 2014 selection committee will convene in secret conclave to select the next honoree from our female parishioners, on Thursday evening MAY 01, at 7:30 P.M. in room # 104 of the school building. Twenty women will represent all the service, fraternal and philanthropic , and youth organizations in making this selection from criteria standards. The award will be presented on MOTHERS’ DAY MAY 11th.

SENIOR CLUB: Invites all Senior Citizens to join them in their WEDNESDAY afternoon gatherings from 1:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M for lunches, trips, activities, theater, coffee and sweets, guest lecturers and BINGO ! Come on down, you are most welcomed!

MR, MRS, and MS. Club ask you to mark your calendar NOW and NOT miss their annual PASCHAL DINNER on MAY 13th, AT 7:00 P.M. in WHITEHALL. It’s a Grecian Easter with all the traditions and trimmings.

HOLY WEEK WAS A PHENOMENAL SUCCESS with all services very well attended sometimes to over-flowing, with lots of children in attendance. Thanks for sharing the days!

CHURCHING TODAY: we are pleased to receive into the embrace of the Church, the new-born son ‘CARTER JAMES ‘ of Christopher and Alexa (PEIST) Francese. NA SAS ZESE:

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 NEXT SUNDAY! +GEORGIA VEROUTIS + STAMATIS HANDZIMANOLIS



Three Hierarchs salutes its clergy for the inspiring and grace filled Holy Week services rendered to God's faithful young and old.

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CHRIST IS RISEN ! TRULY HE IS RISEN !

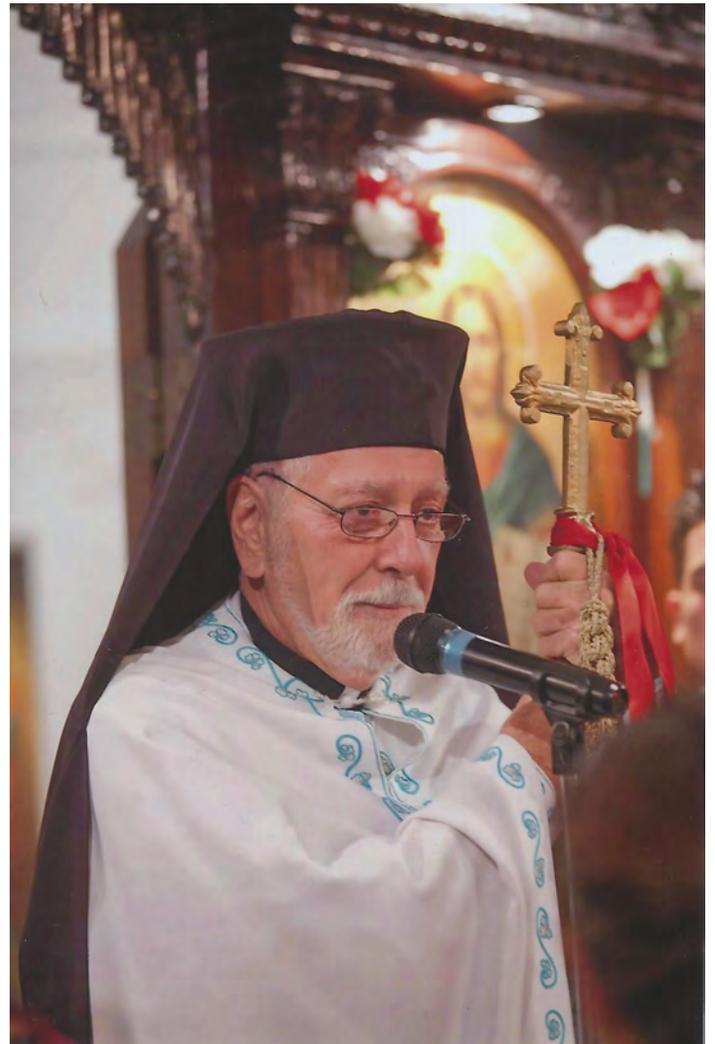
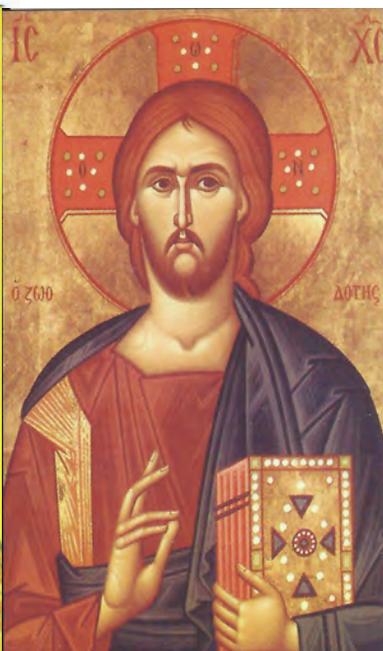


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ALITHOS ANESTI !





ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



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

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος ΛΑ'
Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 1847

Κυριακὴ τοῦ Θωμᾶ (Ἰω. 20,19-31)
27 Ἀπριλίου 2014

Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος
Αὐγουστῖνος Ν. Καντιώτης

Οἱ σύγχρονοι Θωμᾶδες

«Καὶ ἀπεκρίθη Θωμᾶς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· Ὁ Κύριός μου καὶ ὁ Θεός μου» (Ἰω. 20,28)

Εορτὴ σήμερα, ἀγαπητοί μου· «αὕτη ἡ ἡμέρα, ἦν ἐποίησεν ὁ Κύριος· ἀγαλλιασώμεθα καὶ εὐφρανθώμεν ἐν αὐτῇ» (Ψαλμ. 113,4). **Τριπλῆ ἑορτῆ.** Εἶνε πρῶτον Κυριακῆ. Δεύτερον εἶνε ὄχι ἀπλῶς Κυριακῆ ἀλλὰ ἡ πρώτη Κυριακῆ μετὰ τὸ Πάσχα· γι' αὐτὸ στὴ γλῶσσα τῆς Ἐκκλησίας μας ὀνομάζεται *Κυριακὴ τοῦ Ἀντίπασχα*, τῆς πρώτης δηλαδὴ ἐπαναλήψεως τῆς ἑορτῆς τοῦ Πάσχα, ποῦ θ' ἀκολουθῆ ἐν συνεχείᾳ κάθε ὀκτῶ ἡμέρες. Καὶ τρίτον τὴν Κυριακῆ αὐτῆ ἡ Ὁρθόδοξος Ἐκκλησία τιμᾷ τὸν ἅγιο ἀπόστολο Θωμᾶ.

Ἀνοίγονται λοιπὸν πολλὰ θέματα. Ἐδῶ θὰ περιορισθοῦμε στὸν ἀπόστολο **Θωμᾶ**.

Ὁ Θωμᾶς, ἀγαπητοί μου, ἦταν **ἓνας ἀπλὸς Γαλιλαῖος**. Δὲν καταγόταν ἀπὸ τίς μεγάλες οἰκογένειες, δὲν ἔζησε σὲ αὐλὲς βασιλέων, δὲν φοίτησε σὲ στοῦς φιλοσόφων καὶ ρητόρων. Ἦταν ἓνας ἀπὸ ἐκείνους ποῦ κάλεσε ὁ Χριστός. Δέχθηκε τὴν πρόσκλησι «*Δεῦτε ὀπίσω μου καὶ ποιήσω ὑμᾶς ἀλιεῖς ἀνθρώπων*» (Ματθ. 4,20), ἐγκατέλειψε τὰ πάντα, συγγενεῖς καὶ φίλους, καὶ ἀνῆκε πλέον στὴ χορεία τῶν δώδεκα ἀποστόλων.

Ἦταν εὐγενὴς ὕπαρξι, ἀλλὰ **εἶχε ἓνα ἐλάττωμα**. Ὑπάρχει ἄνθρωπος χωρὶς ἐλάττωμα; Καὶ ὁ ἀγιώτερος θὰ ἔχη κάποιον ἐλάττωμα, ὅπως πάλι καὶ ὁ μεγαλύτερος κακοῦργος θὰ ἔχη κι αὐτὸς κάποιον προτέρημα. Μεῖγμα εἶνε ὁ ἄνθρωπος κακίας καὶ ἀρετῆς.

Ποιὸ λοιπὸν ἦταν τὸ ἐλάττωμα τοῦ Θωμᾶ; **Ἦταν μελάγχολος**. Ὁ μελάγχολος χαρακτήρας τὰ βλέπει ὅλα μαῦρα (τὸ ἀντίθετο τοῦ αισιοδόξου, ποῦ καὶ τὰ μαῦρα τὰ βλέπει ἄσπρα). Ὁ Θωμᾶς τὰ ἐβλεπε ὅλα σκοτεινά. Κατ' ἐπανάληψιν ἐκφράσθηκε ἀπαισιόδοξα ὡς πρὸς τὴν πορεία τοῦ Κυρίου. Ἀλλὰ ἡ μελαγχολία του ἔφτασε στὸ ζενιθ ἢ μάλλον στὸ ναδίρ – πότε; Ὅταν εἶδε ὅτι τὰ ὄνειρα κ' οἱ ἐλπίδες του διαψεύσθηκαν. Ἦλπιζε, ὅτι μιὰ μέρα ὁ Ναζωραῖος θὰ νικοῦσε τοὺς ἐχθρούς, θὰ ἔδιωχνε τίς

λεγεῶνες τῶν Ῥωμαίων κατακτητῶν, καὶ θὰ ἴδρουε παγκόσμιο βασίλειο. Ὅταν ὅμως εἶδε τὸ Διδάσκαλό του νὰ συλλαμβάνεται, νὰ ὀδηγῆται στὰ πραιτώρια, νὰ ραπίζεται, νὰ μαστιγώνεται, νὰ σταυρώνεται, εἶπε· Πάει, ὄνειρο ἦταν καὶ διαλύθηκε. Ἐπέστρεψε λοιπὸν στὶς προηγούμενες ἀσχολίες του, ἀκόμη πιὸ μελάγχολος τώρα.

Ἀλλὰ ξαφνικὰ μέσ' στὸ σκοτάδι ἔπεσε φωτοβολίδα. Ὅχι ἀπλῶς φωτοβολίδα ἀλλὰ ἥλιος ἦταν τὸ μεγάλο ἄγγελμα, τὸ μήνυμα τὸ ὑπὲρ πάντων μήνυμα, ὅτι **ὁ Χριστὸς ἀναστήθηκε**. Τὴν πρώτη κιόλας ἡμέρα ἐμφανίσθηκε στοὺς συναθροισμένους μαθητὰς καὶ εἶπε τὸ θεσπέσιο ἐκεῖνο «*Εἰρήνη ὑμῖν*» (Ἰω. 20,19-20). Αὐτὸ ποῦ ζητάει σήμερα ὁ κόσμος εἶνε ἡ ἐπιφανειακὴ εἰρήνη. Ἄλλη εἰρήνη παρέχει ὁ Χριστός, τὴν εἰρήνη τοῦ βάθους. Ἡ εἰρήνη ποῦ δίνει ὁ Χριστὸς εἶνε τριπλῆ· εἰρήνη μετὰ τὸ Θεό, εἰρήνη μετὰ τὸν πλησίον, εἰρήνη μετὰ τὸν ἑαυτό μας. Αὐτὸ εἶνε τὸ βάθος τῆς εἰρήνης τοῦ ἀναστάντος Χριστοῦ.

Τότε οἱ μαθηταὶ πείσθηκαν ὅτι ὁ Κύριος ἀναστήθηκε. Ὁ Θωμᾶς ὅμως ἀπουσίαζε ἀπὸ τὴν ἱερά σύναξι. Ὅταν κατόπιν τὸν εἶδαν οἱ συμμαθηταὶ τοῦ ἔλεγαν· –«*Ἐωράκαμεν τὸν Κύριον*» (Ἰω. 20,25), ἀναστήθηκε! –Μπᾶ, τοὺς ἀπαντᾷ, **δὲν πιστεύω**. –Ἀναστήθηκε! ἐπέμεναν ἐκεῖνοι. Αὐτὸς ὅμως δὲν ἤθελε νὰ τὸ πιστέψῃ. Σὰ ν' ἀκούω τὸ διάλογό τους. –Μὰ δὲ μᾶς πιστεύεις λοιπὸν; ψέματα σοῦ λέμε; μᾶς ξέρεις γιὰ ψεῦτες, ἀπατεῶνες; –Ὅχι, δὲν πιστεύω· μόνο ἂν τὸν δῶ μετὰ τὰ μάτια μου, τὸν ἀκούσω μετὰ τ' αὐτιά μου, τὸν ψηλαφήσω μετὰ τὰ χέρια μου, τότε θὰ πεισθῶ.

Μετὰ ἀπὸ ὀκτῶ ἡμέρες στὴ σύναξί τους ἦταν καὶ ὁ Θωμᾶς. Ἔρχεται πάλι ὁ Χριστὸς «*τῶν θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων*» (Ἰω. 20,26).

Στὸ σημεῖο αὐτὸ ἀνοίγω μία παρένθεσι. Ἐρωτοῦν οἱ ἄπιστοι· Πῶς εἶνε δυνατόν νὰ ἐμφανισθῆ «*κεκλεισμένων τῶν θυρῶν*»;... Ὅταν ἤμασταν μικροὶ στὸ σχολεῖο ἓνας δάσκαλος μᾶς ἔθετε τὸ αἶνιγμα· «Κλείνω τὸ σπιτάκι μου κι ὁ

κλέφτης εἶνε μέσα· τί εἶνε;». Ἐμεῖς δὲν μπορούσαμε νὰ τὸ βροῦμε· κ' ἐκεῖνος, ἀφοῦ γιὰ λίγο μᾶς βασάνιζε, ἔλεγε· Εἶνε ὁ ἥλιος, πού περνάει τὰ τζάμια καὶ μπαίνει! Στὶς μέρες μας ἔχουμε κι ἄλλα παραδείγματα. Εἶσαι κλεισμένος στὸ σπίτι, ἀνοίγεις τὸ ραδιόφωνο κι ἀκοῦς φωνές πού ἔρχονται ἀπὸ τὰ ἄκρα τῆς γῆς. Κλειστὸ εἶνε τὸ σπίτι, ἀνοίγεις τὴν τηλεόρασι καὶ βλέπεις μέσα στὸ δωμάτιό σου ποικίλα πρόσωπα, σὰν νὰ τὰ ἔχης μπροστά σου. Πῶς γίνονται αὐτά; Δὲν εἶνε θαῦμα, εἶνε ἐρτζιανὰ κύματα πού λέει ἡ φυσικὴ. Αὐτὸς λοιπὸν πού ἔκανε τὸν ἥλιο ὥστε νὰ διαπερνᾷ τὰ τζάμια, πού ἔκανε τὰ ἐρτζιανὰ κύματα ὥστε νὰ φτάνουν μέσα στὸ σαλόνι σου, δὲν μπορούσε νὰ ἐμφανισθῆ «κεκλεισμένων τῶν θυρῶν»; Εἶνε ὁ Κύριος τοῦ παντός.

Εἰσηλθε λοιπὸν «κεκλεισμένων τῶν θυρῶν, καὶ ἔστη εἰς τὸ μέσον». Καλεῖ τότε τὸν Θωμᾶ καὶ τοῦ λέει· Γιατί ἀπιστεῖς; Ἔλα, πλησίασέ με· «φέρε τὸν δάκτυλό σου ὧδε καὶ ἴδε τὰς χειράς μου, καὶ φέρε τὴν χειρὰ σου καὶ βάλε εἰς τὴν πλευράν μου, καὶ μὴ γίνου ἄπιστος ἀλλὰ πιστός» (ἔ.ἄ. 20,27). Ὁ Θωμᾶς κατάπληκτος φωνάζει· «Ὁ Κύριός μου καὶ ὁ Θεός μου» (ἔ.ἄ. 20,28). Ἔτσι ἔσβησε κάθε ἀμφιβολία πού ὑπῆρχε μέσα του.

«Ὁ Κύριός μου καὶ ὁ Θεός μου». Σὲ κάποιον ἄλλο κήρυγμα ἐπέστησα τὴν προσοχὴ στὴ σημασία πού ἔχει ἐκεῖνο τὸ «μου». Ὅταν μιλάμε σὲ ἕνα γιατρό, τὸν προσφωνοῦμε «γιατρέ»· ἂν ὁμως ὁ γιατρὸς αὐτὸς σὲ θεραπεύσῃ καὶ σὲ σώσῃ, τότε πλέον δὲν λὲς «γιατρέ», ἀλλὰ λὲς «γιατρέ μου» καὶ στοὺς ἄλλους λὲς «Αὐτὸς εἶνε ὁ γιατρός μου». Αὐτὸ τὸ «μου» λείπει σήμερα. Ζήτημα μέσ' στοὺς χίλιους ἀνθρώπους ἕνας νὰ λέῃ «ὁ Χριστός μου», «ὁ Σωτήρας μου», «ὁ Κύριός μου καὶ ὁ Θεός μου», μὲ τρόπο δηλαδὴ πού δείχνει ὄχι τυπικὴ ἀλλὰ στενὴ οὐσιαστικὴ σχέσι μὲ τὸν Θεάνθρωπο.

Ἀπὸ τότε, ἀγαπητοί μου, πέρασαν εἴκοσι αἰῶνες. Τί στάσι τηροῦν σήμερα οἱ ἄνθρωποι ἀπέναντι στὸν ἀναστάντα Χριστό; Ἄν ρίξουμε μιὰ ματιά, θὰ διακρίνουμε **τρὲς κατηγορίες**.

● Ὑπάρχουν οἱ **ἄπιστοι**. Πέρα ἀπ' τὸ φαί, τὴ διασκέδασι, τὸ αὐτοκίνητο, τὸ θέαμα, τὸ σέξ, τίποτε ἄλλο δὲν τοὺς ἐνδιαφέρει. Ἡ ζωὴ τους εἶνε «Φάγωμεν καὶ πίωμεν, αὔριον γὰρ ἀποθνήσκομεν» (Ἠσα. 22,13-Ἰ Κορ. 15,32). Δὲν τοὺς συγκινοῦν οὔτε θαύματα οὔτε διδασκαλίες. Ὅ,τι κι ἂν δοῦν, μένουν ἄπιστοι. Αὐτοὶ εἶνε ἡ πλειονότης.

● Ἐκτὸς αὐτῶν ὑπάρχει μιὰ μειονότης, πού ὅσο πάει γίνεται καὶ πιὸ μικρὴ. Εἶνε οἱ **πιστοί**, αὐτοὶ πού λένε «Ὁ Κύριός μου καὶ ὁ Θεός μου».

● Τέλος ὑπάρχουν καὶ οἱ ἀμφιταλαντευόμενοι

μεταξὺ πίστεως καὶ ἀπιστίας. Αὐτοὶ εἶνε οἱ **δύσπιστοι** ὅπως ὁ Θωμᾶς. Κυμαίνονται, προβληματίζονται. Ἀκοῦνε, διαβάζουν, μὰ πάλι λένε· Ἐμεῖς δὲν πιστεύουμε. Τί ἔχουμε νὰ ποῦμε σ' αὐτούς;

Σύγχρονοι Θωμᾶδες! κανεὶς μὴ νομίζει ὅτι ὁ Χριστὸς εἶπε «πίστευε καὶ μὴ ἐρεῦνα». Πουθενὰ στὸ Εὐαγγέλιο δὲν ὑπάρχει αὐτό (εἶνε δόγμα τῶν παπικῶν ἰησουϊτῶν). Ἀντιθέτως ὁ Χριστὸς μᾶς εἶπε «**Ἐρευνᾶτε...**» (ἔ.ἄ. 20,31). Ἔλα, λέει, ψηλάφησέ με. Δέχεται νὰ γίνῃ ἀντικείμενο ἐρεῦνης. Κι ὅσο τὸν ἐρευνοῦμε καὶ τὸν δοκιμάζουμε, τόσο περισσότερο τὸν θαυμάζουμε. Ὑστερα ἀπὸ ἔρευνα ὁ Ντοσκογιέφσκυ, ὅπως καὶ ἄλλοι διανοούμενοι, πίστεψαν καὶ φώναξαν κι αὐτοὶ «Ὁ Κύριός μου καὶ ὁ Θεός μου». Τὸ δικό μου «ὠσαννά», εἶπε ὁ Ντοσκογιέφσκυ, δὲν βγήκε μέσα ἀπὸ θεωρίες, βγήκε μέσα ἀπὸ τὸ πυρωμένο καμίνι τῆς δοκιμασίας.

Σήμερα οἱ ἄνθρωποι, ἐνῶ δυσπιστοῦν στὴν χιλιομαρτυρημένη ἀλήθεια ὅτι ὁ Χριστὸς ἀναστήθηκε, παραδόξως εἶνε πολὺ **εὐπιστοι**, ἔτοιμοι νὰ δεχθοῦν παραμύθια ἀπάτης.

Στὴ Φλώρινα ὑπῆρχε ἕνας λαϊκὸς φιλόσοφος, ὁ **Δάντης**. Στὴν ἀρχὴ ἦταν ἄπιστος. Πῶς πίστεψε; Τοῦ συνέβη κάτι συγκλονιστικό. Σὲ καιρὸ χειμῶνος μὲ χιόνι, περπατώντας στὸ δάσος νομίζω στὴν Κλαδορράχη, βρέθηκε μπροστά σὲ λύκου. Σκαρφάλωσε σ' ἕνα δέντρο, ἀλλὰ οἱ λύκοι δὲν ἔφευγαν· περίμεναν ὅλη τὴ νύχτα ἀπὸ κάτω, νὰ πέσῃ νὰ τὸν φᾶνε. Ἄρχισε τότε νὰ παρακαλῆ τὸ Θεὸ νὰ τὸν γλυτώσῃ. Ἐπὶ τέλους βγήκε ὁ ἥλιος, ἔφυγαν οἱ λύκοι καὶ κατέβηκε, ἀλλὰ τελειῶς ἀλλαγμένος· ἄπιστος ἀνέβηκε στὸ δέντρο, πιστὸς κατέβηκε. Καὶ συνέθεσε ἕναν ὕμνο, τὸν ὁποῖο ἔψαλλε·

«Ὁ Κύριος καὶ Θεός μου, / μεγάλο τὸ ὄνομά σου...»

Μιὰ ἀκτίνα ἀπὸ τὸ Πνεῦμα σου / στείλε καὶ φώτισέ με...». Βλέπετε; Πρέπει λοιπὸν νὰ μᾶς συμβοῦν συνταρακτικὰ γεγονότα γιὰ νὰ πιστέψουμε;

Τώρα, ὅσο ἔχουμε καιρὸ, νὰ πιστέψουμε. Νὰ ποῦμε κ' ἐμεῖς «Ὁ Κύριός μου καὶ ὁ Θεός μου». Ὁ Χριστὸς οὕτως ἢ ἄλλως εἶνε Κύριος· κι ἂν ἐμεῖς τὸν ἀρνηθοῦμε, «καὶ οἱ λίθοι κεκράξονται» (Λουκ. 19,40). Ὅλη ἡ κτίσις ὁμολογεῖ ὅτι «**Εἶς ἄγιος, εἶς Κύριος, Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, εἶς δόξαν Θεοῦ Πατρὸς· ἀμήν**» (Φιλ. 2,11 καὶ θ. Λεϊτ.). Ἄλλὰ πρέπει νὰ ὁμολογήσουμε, νὰ λύσουμε τὸ πρόβλημα αὐτό· ν' ἀπαντήσουμε κ' ἐμεῖς μαζί μὲ τὸν ποιητὴ·

«Χριστέ σὲ τοῦτα τ' ἄπιστα καταραμένα χρόνια πού δὲν πιστεύουν τίποτα οὐτ' ἀγαποῦν κανένα, ἐγὼ πιστεύω κι ἀγαπῶ ὀλόψυχα Ἰεσένα.

Πιστεύω σὰν τὴ μάνα μου, πιστεύω σὰν παιδάκι, πίνω τὸ ἀθάνατο νερὸ κι ἀφήνω τὸ φαρμάκι».

(†) **ἐπίσκοπος Αὐγουστίνος**

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

Be Not Faithless, But Believing

Consider the mercy of the Lord, how for the sake of one soul, He exhibits His wounds. And yet the disciples deserved credit, and He had Himself foretold the event. Notwithstanding, because one person, Thomas, would examine Him, Christ allowed him. But He did not appear to him immediately, but waited till the eighth day, in order that the admonition being given in the presence of the disciples, might kindle in him greater desire, and strengthen his faith for the future. And after eight days again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be to you.

Jesus then comes Himself, and does not wait till Thomas interrogates Him. But to show that He heard what Thomas said to the dis-

ciples, He uses the same words. And first He rebukes him. Then says He to Thomas, reach hither your finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither your hand, and thrust it into My side. A second time, He admonishes him. Be not faithless, but believing. Note how that before they receive the Holy Spirit faith wavers, but afterward is firm. We may wonder how an incorruptible body could retain the marks of the nails. But it was done in condescension; in order that they might be sure that it was the very person Who was crucified.

If anyone then says, would that I had lived in those times, and seen Christ doing miracles! Let him reflect, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

St. John Chrysostom

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