



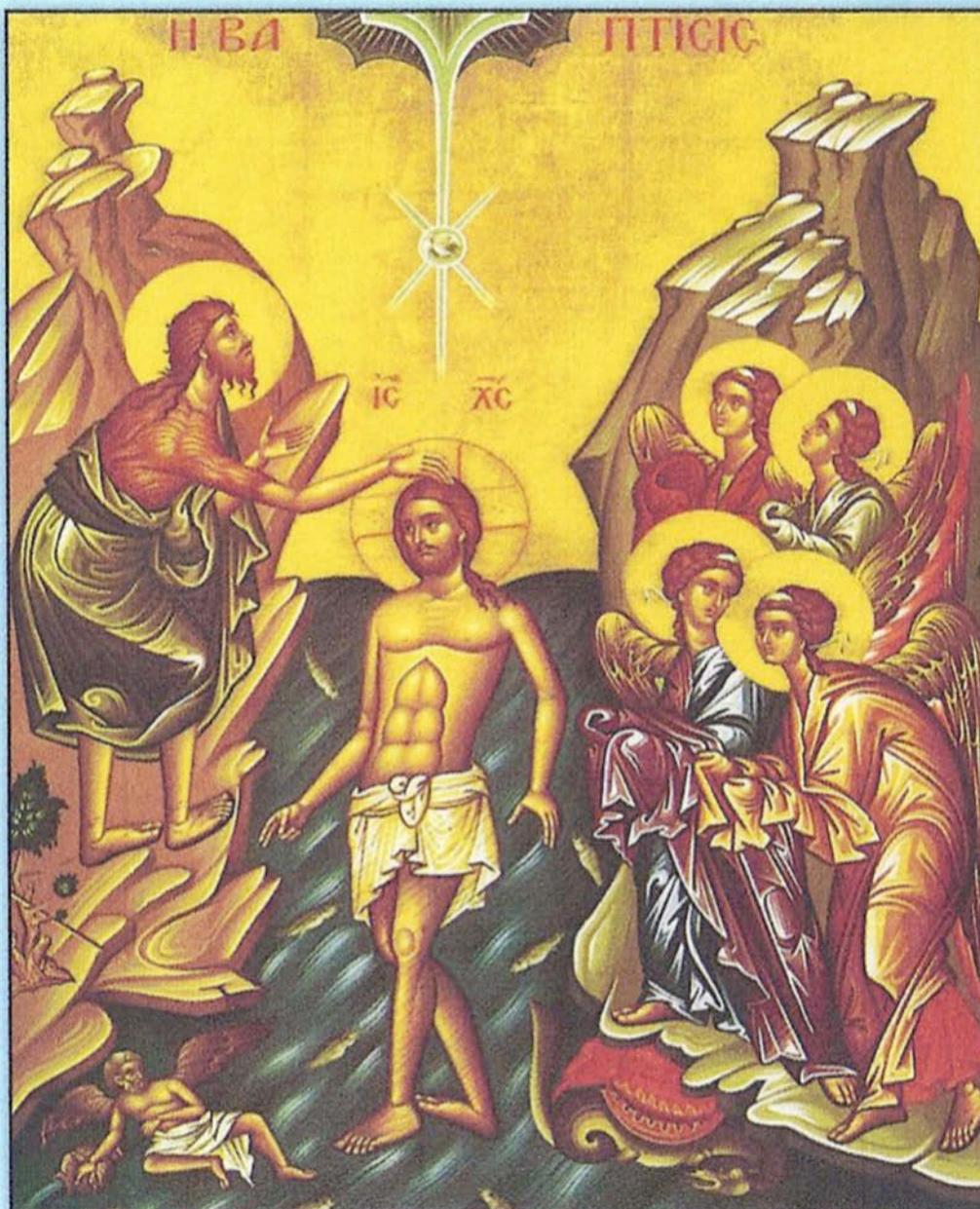
THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN January 5th 2014

V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN
DIOCESE

SUNDAY BEFORE THEOPHANY



Icon of Theophany -- January 6th

St. Paul's Second Letter to Timothy 4:5-8

Prokeimenon. Mode Plagal 2. Psalm 27.9,1

O Lord, save your people and bless your inheritance. Verse: To you, O Lord, I have cried, O my God.

TIMOTHY, my son, always be steady, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil your ministry.

For I am already on the point of being sacrificed; the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

Πρὸς Τιμόθεον β' 4:5-8

Προκείμενον. ᾠχος πλ β'. ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 27.9,1

Σῶσον, Κύριε τὸν λαὸν σου καὶ εὐλόγησον τὴν κληρονομίαν σου. Στίχ. Πρὸς σέ, Κύριε, κεκράζομαι ὁ Θεός μου.

Τέκνον Τιμόθεε, νῆφε ἐν πᾶσιν, κακοπάθησον, ἔργον ποιήσον εὐαγγελιστοῦ, τὴν διακονίαν σου πληροφόρησον. Ἐγὼ γὰρ ἤδη σπένδομαι, καὶ ὁ καιρὸς τῆς ἐμῆς ἀναλύσεως ἐφέστηκεν. Τὸν ἀγῶνα τὸν καλὸν ἠγωνίσμαι, τὸν δρόμον τετέλεκα, τὴν πίστιν τετήρηκα· λοιπὸν, ἀπόκειται μοι ὁ τῆς δικαιοσύνης στέφανος, ὃν ἀποδώσει μοι ὁ κύριος ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ, ὁ δίκαιος κριτής· οὐ μόνον δὲ ἐμοί, ἀλλὰ καὶ πᾶσιν τοῖς ἠγαπηκόσιν τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν αὐτοῦ.

Sunday before Epiphany

The Gospel of Mark 1:1-8

The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, 'Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who shall prepare your way; the voice of one crying in the wilderness: prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.' John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, and had a leather girdle around his waist, and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Sunday before Epiphany

Κατὰ Μάρκον 1.1-8

Ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ. Ὡς γέγραπται ἐν τοῖς προφήταις, ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἀποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου πρὸ προσώπου σου, ὃς κατασκευάσει τὴν ὁδὸν σου ἔμπροσθέν σου· φωνὴ βοῶντος ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ, ἐτοιμάσατε τὴν ὁδὸν Κυρίου, εὐθείας ποιεῖτε τὰς τρίβους αὐτοῦ. ἐγένετο Ἰωάννης βαπτίζων ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ καὶ κηρύσσω βᾶπτισμα μετανοίας εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν. Καὶ ἐξεπορεύετο πρὸς αὐτὸν πᾶσα ἡ Ἰουδαία χώρα καὶ οἱ Ἱεροσολυμίται, καὶ ἐβαπτίζοντο πάντες ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνῃ ποταμῷ ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ἐξομολογούμενοι τὰς ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν. Ἦν δὲ ὁ Ἰωάννης ἐνδεδυμένος τρίχας καμήλου καὶ ζώνην δερματίνην περὶ τὴν ὀσφὺν αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐσθίων ἀκρίδας καὶ μέλι ἄγριον. Καὶ ἐκήρυσσε λέγων· ἔρχεται ὁ ἰσχυρότερός μου ὀπίσω μου, οὗ οὐκ εἰμὶ ἰκανὸς κύψας λῦσαι τὸν ἱμάντα τῶν ὑποδημάτων αὐτοῦ· ἐγὼ μὲν ἐβάπτισα ὑμᾶς ἐν ὕδατι, αὐτὸς δὲ βαπτίσει ὑμᾶς ἐν Πνεύματι Ἁγίῳ.

SERVICES THIS WEEK: TRIDUUM: Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday January 5th, 6th, 7th.
EPIPHANY LITURIGIES of the BAPTISM of CHRIST 9:30-12:00 noon.
Holy Water Blessings (AGIASMOS) will be offered at each liturgical service.
Holy Water Bottles will be distributed.

COFFEE HOUR: Fellowship is being hosted TODAY by the NEW PARISH COUNCIL Come and share in the sweets and hot coffee refreshments: All are invited.

The NEW PARISH COUNCIL and OFFICERS are listed:

PRESIDENT: JOANNA VASSILAS, **EXEC. V.P.:** ANTHONY KALLINIKOS, **1ST V.P.:** –ALEXANDRIA DIOLIS
2ND V.P.: –JOHN EUGENIS, **TREASURER:** GEORGE ANNIS, **SECRETARY:** MARIA LAMBRIANAKOS
FISHER. Members - Demetrios Bouroutis, John Konstandakis, Harry Lambrakis, Stella Oberle,
Rose Palividas, George Plevritis, Nicolita Theophilus & Costas Ziotas

Brooklyn/Staten Island PHILOPTOCHOS CHAPTERS will host the Annual Combined Luncheon on MONDAY, JANUARY 20th (Martin Luther King Jr. Weekend) at RUSSO ON THE BAY, starting at 12:00 Noon. All proceeds will be earmarked for Greek Relief Fund.

GIRL SCOUT TROOP: Under the able leadership of Mrs. Stella Oberle and other mothers, our church troop successfully completed a can and boxed food drive for the CITY HARVEST PANTRIES. There was an overwhelming response by the faithful who deposited food-stuffs in the Church Office for the collection. BRAVA! BRAVA! BRAVA! ... our little troop once again did their best.

TODAY: The congregation is requested to join in the singing of the GREEK NEW YEAR KALANDA! The song sheet is inserted in the bulletin. Help to keep these traditional aspects of the season alive and well.

TODAY: HOLY WATER BOTTLES WILL BE DISTRIBUTED AT THE END OF THE DIVINE LITURGY. PLEASE REMEMBER THE BLESSING AND THE WATER IS FREE! HOWEVER A MINIMAL OFFERING OF \$2/DOLLARS COVERS THE COST OF EACH ENGRAVED BOTTLE. HELP US DEFRAY THE COST TO THE CHURCH! YOU MAY RECEIVE AS MANY BOTTLES AS YOU REQUIRE. "ASK AND YOU SHALL RECEIVE."

CHRISTMAS CARD DRIVE: was also a major success this year thanks to the many faithful who subscribed their name and greeting to 1,000 homes! Did you check to see YOUR name?

NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY: hosted by the A.H.E.P.A. and the DAUGHTERS of PENELOPE was a fun filled evening of dining, dancing drinking, and fellowship for one and all. At the stroke of midnight ushering in the New Year 2014, the candle-lighted church was open for Father Eugene's traditional blessing of life, health and peace upon each family as they came before the sanctuary. WHAT A SUPERB WAY TO ENTER THE YEAR!

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!

Father Eugene our beloved Pastor wishes to acknowledge with much gratitude the many expressions of loving kindness extended to him from the PARISH COUNCIL, the RUSSIAN and UKRAINIAN COMMUNITIES, parish clubs and organizations and a myriad of parishioners, during the holiday season. Your cards are posted on the bulletin board for display and reflection.

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)

MEMORIAL NEXT WEEK: + CONSTANTINE BAKAKOS



THE HOLY TRINITY - ONE IN ESSENCE!



FATHER the Creator,
Son (Logos/word) the Savior,
Holy Spirit the Sanctifier.

In the Orthodox Christian Icon of the Epiphany (THEOPHANIA) the Holy Trinity is manifested in GLORY. Here we see The Divine Presence in the Christ (Logos /Incarnate) in the Jordan waters ; the ‘ voice ’ of the FATHER declaring ...”THIS IS MY BELOVED SON IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED’ ” and the HOLY SPIRIT descending upon the Christ Jesus as if in the form of a ‘dove’.

THE TRINITY IS MADE MANIFEST....ALLELUIA!



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 1833	Κυριακὴ πρὸ τῶν Φώτων (Β' Τιμ. 4,5-8) 5 Ἰανουαρίου 2014	Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος Αὐγουστίνος Ν. Καντιώτης
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«*Νῆφε ἐν πᾶσι*»

Τέκνον Τιμόθεε, «νῆφε ἐν πᾶσι» (Β' Τιμ. 4,5)

Σήμερα, ἀγαπητοί μου, ἀκούγονται δύο σάλπιγγες, μία τοῦ ἀποστόλου καὶ ἡ ἄλλη τοῦ εὐαγγελίου· ἡ μία εἶνε ἡ φωνὴ τοῦ Παύλου καὶ ἡ ἄλλη ἡ φωνὴ τοῦ Προδρόμου τὴν ὁποία διέσωσε ὁ εὐαγγελιστὴς Μάρκος. Ἐδῶ θὰ σαλπίσουμε μὲ τὴ **σάλπιγγα τοῦ ἀποστόλου Παύλου**, ὅπως ἀκούσατε, ἀπευθύνει ὠρισμένες συμβουλές καὶ προτροπές στὸ πνευματικὸ του τέκνο τὸν Τιμόθεο ἀλλὰ καὶ σὲ κάθε Χριστιανό.

Ποῦ ἦταν τότε ὁ Παῦλος ὅταν ἔγραφε αὐτά; **Στὴ φυλακῇ**. Γιατί; τί ἔκανε; ἔκανε κανένα ἔγκλημα; Naί. Καὶ ποιό τὸ ἔγκλημά του; Κήρυττε τὸ εὐαγγέλιο, τὴν Ἀλήθεια (μὲ ἄλφα κεφαλαῖο). Γιατί ἀδέρφια μου, σὲ ἐποχὴ ποῦ οἱ ἄνθρωποι ἔχουν φύγει ἀπ' τὸ δρόμο τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὅπως τότε ἐπὶ Νέρωνος, τὸ νὰ διαδίδῃς τὸν Χριστιανισμό εἶνε ἔγκλημα. Γι' αὐτὸ τὸν συνέλαβαν, τὸν ἔρριξαν στὴ φυλακὴ τῆς Ῥώμης, κ' ἐκεῖ ἀπὸ ὥρα σὲ ὥρα περίμενε νὰ τὸν ἐκτελέσουν.

Τὴν παραμονὴν λοιπὸν τῆς ἐκτελέσεως ἔγραψε τὴν ἐπιστολὴ αὐτὴ στὸν Τιμόθεο, ποῦ βρισκόταν μακριὰ του. Ὁ **Τιμόθεος** εἶνε ὁ πρῶτος ἐπίσκοπος **Ἐφέσου**, ποῦ δυστυχῶς, ὅπως καὶ τόσες ἄλλες πόλεις τῆς Μικρᾶς Ἀσίας, χάθηκαν. Γιὰ τὴν ἀμαρτίαν μας αὐτὲς οἱ «**λυχνίες**» τῆς Ἀποκαλύψεως (βλ. Ἀπ. 1,12-13,20· 2,1) ἔσβησαν. Τοῦ γράφει λοιπὸν καὶ μεταξὺ ἄλλων συμβουλῶν, τὸν προτρέπει: **Τέκνον Τιμόθεε, παιδί μου Τιμόθεε, «νῆφε ἐν πᾶσι»** (Β' Τιμ. 4,5).

Τί θὰ πῆ **«Νῆφε ἐν πᾶσι»**; **Ἔχε τὰ μάτια σου ἀνοιχτά**, δεκατέσσερα, τετρακόσα. Ζῆς σὲ κοινωνία διεφθαρμένη, ποῦ χρησιμοποιεῖ καὶ μαχαίρι καὶ δημίους καὶ κάθε ἄλλο μέσο γιὰ νὰ σφραγίσῃ τὸ στόμα ἐργατῶν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου. Σὲ μιὰ τέτοια ἐποχὴ, **«νῆφε ἐν πᾶσι»**.

Δὲν ἦταν ὁ Τιμόθεος ἀπλὸς Χριστιανός· ἦταν κληρικός, ἐπίσκοπος, **ποιμένας**. Κι ἂν κάθε Χριστιανός πρέπει νὰ προσέχη, πολὺ περισσότερο ἓνας πατέρας, μιὰ μάνα, ἓνας προϊστάμενος, ἓνας στρατηγός, ἓνας βασιλιάς, πρὸ παν-

τὸς ἓνας ἐπίσκοπος, πρέπει νὰ ἀγρυπνῇ. Κοιμᾶται παρακαλῶ ὁ τσοπάνος ὅταν τὴ νύχτα γύρω ἀπ' τὸ μαντρί οὐρλιάζουν λύκοι; κοιμᾶται ὁ καπετάνιος ὅταν τὰ κύματα ἀπειλοῦν νὰ πνίξουν τὸ πλοῖο; κοιμᾶται ἡ μάνα ὅταν τὸ παιδί της χαροπαλεύῃ; κοιμᾶται ὁ γιατρός ὅταν ὁ ἀσθενὴς κινδυνεύῃ; κοιμᾶται ὁ ἀξιωματικὸς ὅταν ἀπὸ ὥρα σὲ ὥρα ἐπικεῖται αἰφνιδιασμὸς τοῦ ἐχθροῦ; Μένουν ἀγρυπνοὶ ὅπως ὁ πολυόμματος Ἄργος ὁ **Πανόπτης** τῆς μυθολογίας. Ἔτσι ἔπρεπε νὰ εἶνε καὶ ὁ ἐπίσκοπος Τιμόθεος· αὐτὸ τοῦ λέει σὲ γλώσσα ἐλληνικὴ ὁ ἀπόστολος Παῦλος: **Τέκνον Τιμόθεε, «νῆφε ἐν πᾶσι»· νὰ εἶσαι ξυπνητός, ἀγρυπνος** μέρα - νύχτα στὴν ἔπαλξι τοῦ καθήκοντος τῆς ἀποστολῆς.

Ἄλλ', ἀγαπητοί μου, οἱ δύο αὐτὲς λέξεις, **«Νῆφε ἐν πᾶσι»**, δὲν ἀπευθύνονται μόνο στὸν Τιμόθεο, δὲν γράφτηκε ἡ ἐπιστολὴ αὐτὴ μόνο γι' αὐτόν· γράφτηκε γιὰ κάθε ἱερέα, κήρυκα, ἐπίσκοπο, κάθε ἄνθρωπο μὲ εὐθύνη, γιὰ κάθε Χριστιανὸ καὶ Χριστιανή. **Ἡ φωνὴ αὐτὴ διαβαίνει τοὺς αἰῶνες καὶ φτάνει σ' ἐμᾶς**. Σ' ἐμένα καὶ σ' ἐσένα, ἀδελφέ μου, ἀπευθύνεται ἡ προτροπὴ αὐτὴ, τώρα μάλιστα στὸ μεταίχμιο τοῦ χρόνου, καὶ λέει: **Τέκνον, «νῆφε ἐν πᾶσι»**. Πρέπει λοιπὸν κ' ἐμεῖς νὰ εἴμαστε ξύπνιοι, ἀγρυπνοὶ.

Ζοῦμε σὲ ἐποχὴ, ποῦ ἐγὼ τοῦλάχιστον τὴν χαρακτηρίζω ὡς τὴν χειρότερη τῆς ἱστορίας, ἐποχὴ **Ἀρμαγεδῶνος** (βλ. Ἀπ. 16,16). Δὲν μιλῶ σὲ ἀθέους, ἀνθρώπους ἔξω ἀπὸ τὴ μάνδρα τοῦ Χριστοῦ· μιλῶ σὲ πιστὰ τέκνα τῆς Ἐκκλησίας, ποῦ ἀποτελοῦν τὸ **«μικρὸν ποίμνιον»** (Ἰωκ. 12,32). Πρὸς ὅλους ἐμᾶς ἀπευθύνεται ἡ προτροπὴ, αὐτὸ τὸ σῆμα ποῦ στέλνει ὁ ἀπόστολος Παῦλος σὰν στρατηγὸς τοῦ πνευματικοῦ ἀγῶνος. **«Νῆφε ἐν πᾶσι»**, λέει στὸν καθένα μας, διότι **κινδυνεύουμε**.

Κινδυνεύουμε **σωματικῶς**· καὶ τὸ σῶμα εἶνε καλλιτέχνημα, δῶρο Θεοῦ. Ἀφ' ὅτου λ.χ. ἐφευρέθηκε τὸ αὐτοκίνητο –εὐλογημένη ἡ ἐποχὴ

πού οί άνθρωποι πήγαιναν με τὰ πόδια καὶ τὰ γαϊδουράκια—, ἀπὸ τότε μέχρι σήμερα πόσα ἑκατομμύρια ἔχουν φονευθῆ σὲ τροχαῖα δυστυχήματα! Στάζουν οἱ δρόμοι ἀπὸ τὰ αἵματα. Βγαίνεις τὸ πρωὶ ἀπ’ τὸ σπίτι καὶ δὲν ξέρεις ἂν τὸ βράδυ σὲ φέρουν νεκρὸ ἢ τραυματισμένο. Κινδυνεύουμε ἀπὸ τὰ μέσα συγκοινωνίας. Κινδυνεύουμε ἀκόμη ἀπὸ ἀσθένειες πού σαρώνουν· καὶ θὰ γίνῃ ἡ προφητεία τοῦ Κοσμᾶ τοῦ Αἰτωλοῦ, ὅτι θὰ βαδίζῃς χιλιόμετρα γιὰ νὰ συναντήσῃς ἄνθρωπο νὰ τοῦ πῆς καλημέρα.

Κινδυνεύουμε σωματικῶς, ἀλλὰ πρὸ παντὸς κινδυνεύουμε **ψυχικῶς καὶ πνευματικῶς**. Στούς πνευματικούς καὶ ψυχικούς κυρίως κινδύνους ἀναφέρεται ἡ προτροπὴ «*Νῆφε ἐν πᾶσι*».

Εἴμαστε σὲ ἐποχὴ σὰν ἐκείνη γιὰ τὴν ὁποία ὁ ἀπόστολος Παῦλος —λίγο παραπάνω— λέει, ὅτι «*ἐνστήσονται καιροὶ χαλεποὶ*»^{β΄ Τιμ. 3, 1}, θὰ ῥθουν χρόνια δύσκολα, πού οἱ ἄνθρωποι θὰ βουλώσουν τ’ αὐτιά τους νὰ μὴν ἀκοῦνε τὸ Εὐαγγέλιο τοῦ Χριστοῦ. Ἄν σήμερα μιλήσῃς γιὰ ἔρωτες, χρηματιστήριο, πολιτικὴ κι ἄλλα τέτοια, σ’ ἀκοῦνε μὲ αὐτιά ὀρθάνοιχτα· ἂν ὅμως ἀνοίξῃς τὸ Εὐαγγέλιο, ἂν τοὺς διαβάσῃς συναξάρια καὶ βίους ἁγίων, θὰ τοὺς δῆς νὰ χασμουριοῦνται. Ἀρέσκονται σὲ λόγια πού διεγείρουν τὶς αἰσθήσεις γιὰ **ἀπολαύσεις σαρκικές**.

Θὰ «*ἐπισωρεύσουν*», λέει, «*διδασκάλους*» πλάνης^{ἰ. 11, 4}, θὰ παρουσιαστοῦν **ψευδοπροφήτες**. Καὶ ὄντως παρουσιάστηκαν. Τοὺς βλέπεις καὶ ἐξωτερικῶς εἶνε ἄσφογοι, εὐγενέστατοι, μέλι στάζει ἡ γλῶσσα τους, ἀλλὰ κάτω ἀπ’ τὸ μέλι κρύβεται τὸ φαρμάκι τῆς αἰρέσεως. Ἐννοῶ τοὺς «*μάρτυρες τοῦ Ἰεχωβά*», τοὺς χιλιαστάς. Προτιμότερο νὰ σὲ δαγκώσῃ ὀχιὰ παρὰ νὰ σὲ πλησιάσῃ ἕνας τέτοιος ψευδοπροφήτης, πού θὰ προσπαθήσῃ νὰ σὲ ἀποπλανήσῃ. Γι’ αὐτὸ «*νῆφε ἐν πᾶσι*», πρόσεχε νὰ μὴ χάσῃς τὴν πίστι σου, πρόσεχε **τὴν Ὁρθόδοξο πίστι** ὡς κόρην ὀφθαλμοῦ, πρόσεχε τὴν σὰν τὰ μάτια σου.

«*Νῆφε ἐν πᾶσι*» ἀκόμα, διότι κινδυνεύεις καὶ ἀπὸ **τὸ οἰκιακό σου περιβάλλον**· ἀπὸ τὸν ἄντρα ἢ τὴ γυναῖκα σου ἂν εἶνε ἄπιστοι, ἀπὸ τὰ παιδιά σου ἂν πῆραν δρόμο κακό, ἀπὸ τοὺς δικούς σου. Πολλές φορὲς τὸ κακὸ πού γίνεται δὲν τὸ κάνουν ἐχθροὶ ἀλλὰ συγγενεῖς καὶ φίλοι. Γι’ αὐτὸ ὁ Χριστὸς εἶπε —καὶ ὁ λόγος του εἶνε αἰώνιος— ὅτι «*ἐχθροὶ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου οἱ οἰκιακοὶ αὐτοῦ*»^(Ματθ. 10, 36).

«*Νῆφε ἐν πᾶσι*», πρόσεχε ἀπὸ τοὺς ψευδοπροφήτες, ἀπὸ ἀνθρώπους τοῦ σπιτιοῦ σου· «*νῆφε ἐν πᾶσι*» ἀκόμα, γιὰ νὰ μὴ σὲ παρασύρῃ **τὸ ρεῦμα τῆς μόδας**. Ὅπως τὸ χειμῶνα τὰ ποτάμια πλημμυρίζουν καὶ παρασύρουν κορ-

μούς καὶ βράχους, ἔτσι εἶνε ρεῦμα καὶ οἱ νέες ἰδέες πού παρασύρουν τὸν κόσμο. Δὲν ἐννοῶ τίς καλὲς ἰδέες, ἐννοῶ τίς μοντέρνες ἰδέες καὶ τὴ μοντέρνα ζωὴ. Σιγὰ - σιγὰ ἡ ἀγνή ζωὴ μὲ τίς παραδόσεις τῶν πατέρων καὶ τῶν προγόνων μας, ἡ ὀρθόδοξος χριστιανικὴ ζωὴ, πάει πλέον· ἔρχεται μιὰ μοντέρνα ζωὴ, πού δὲν θέλει ν’ ἀκούῃ οὔτε γιὰ νηστεῖες οὔτε γιὰ ἑορτὲς καὶ πανηγύρεις χριστιανικές· περιφρονεῖ τὰ ὄσια καὶ ἱερὰ τοῦ γένους μας.

Κινδυνεύουμε λοιπὸν ἀπὸ ὅλα αὐτά. Ἄλλὰ ὁ μεγαλύτερος κίνδυνος, ἀδελφοί μου, εἶνε ἀπὸ τὸν ἀόρατο ἐχθρό, ἀπὸ τίς σκοτεινὲς δυνάμεις «*τοῦ ἀέρος*»^(Ἐφ. 2, 2)· κινδυνεύουμε **ἀπὸ τὸν διάβολο**, ὁ ὁποῖος ἰδίως στὴν ἐποχὴ μας ἔχει κηρύξει πανστρατιά. Πολλὰ μηχανήματα ἔχει, ἀλλὰ τὸ κυριώτερο εἶνε ἡ **ἀναβολή**. Ὅταν πρόκειται νὰ κάνῃς τὸ καλὸ, σοῦ λέει «*Αὔριο, αὔριο*»· ὅταν πρόκειται νὰ κάνῃς τὸ κακό, σοῦ λέει «*Τώρα ἀμέσως!*». Τὸ αὔριο ὅμως δὲν εἶνε δικό μας, εἶνε τοῦ Θεοῦ· δικό μας εἶνε τὸ σήμερα. Ὁ διάβολος στρώνει τὸ δρόμο γιὰ τὴν κόλασι μὲ «*θά...*»· ὁ ἕνας λέει «*Θὰ ἐξομολογηθῶ*» καὶ οὐδέποτε ἐξομολογεῖται, ὁ ἄλλος «*Θὰ κοινωνήσω*» καὶ οὐδέποτε κοινωνεῖ, ὁ ἄλλος «*Θὰ συγχωρήσω*» καὶ οὐδέποτε συγχωρεῖ. Ὁ σατανᾶς μᾶς παρασύρει νὰ σπαταλοῦμε τὸ χρόνο ὁ ἕνας στὸ καφφενεῖο, ἄλλος σὲ φλυαρίες καὶ κατακρίσεις, ἄλλος σὲ θεάματα, ἄλλος σὲ ταξίδια καὶ τουρισμό, ἄλλος σὲ χαρτοπαίγνια καὶ καζίνο. Πῶς νὰ μείνῃ χρόνος μετὰ γιὰ μελέτη, ἐνδοσκοπήσι, ἀνάτασι;

Ἐνας ἡθοποιός, γιὰ νὰ εἰσπράξῃ χρήματα, κάλεσε ὅλους στὸ γήπεδο. Ἐμπηξε στὴ γῆ ἔνα κοντάρι, κάρφωσε στὴν κορυφὴ του μιὰ βελόνα, καὶ μετὰ, καλπάζοντας ἔφιππος, πλησίασε τὸ κοντάρι καὶ —φантаστήτε τὴ δυσκολία— πέρασε μιὰ κλωστή στὴν τρύπα τῆς βελόνας! Ὅλοι χειροκρότησαν, ὁ βασιλιάς ὅμως τὸν κάλεσε καὶ τοῦ λέει· —Πόσο καιρὸ κοπίασες γιὰ νὰ τὸ πετύχῃς αὐτό;— **Δώδεκα χρόνια**. Διατάζει λοιπὸν· —Σ’ αὐτὰ τὰ χρόνια μποροῦσε νὰ κάνῃ πολλὰ σπουδαιότερα πράγματα, κι αὐτὸς τὰ **σπατάλησε**· γι’ αὐτὸ κλεῖστε τον στὴ φυλακή.

Ἀδελφοί μου, μὴν πάθουμε κ’ ἐμεῖς τὸ πάθημα αὐτό. Ἄς ἀκούσουμε τὴ φωνὴ τοῦ Παύλου «*Νῆφε ἐν πᾶσι*», τὴ φωνὴ τοῦ Προδρόμου «*Μετανοεῖτε*»^(Ματθ. 3, 2) διότι «*κάθε δέντρο ἄκαρπο κόβεται καὶ ρίχνεται στὴ φωτιά*»^(ἰ. 1, 9), καὶ τὴ φωνὴ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας μας «**Τὸν ὑπόλοιπον χρόνον τῆς ζωῆς ἡμῶν ἐν εἰρήνῃ καὶ μετανοίᾳ ἐκτελέσαι παρὰ τοῦ Κυρίου αἰτησώμεθα**»· 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

The Christ

Now, in the mystery of Christ's Baptism in the Jordan River, we again encounter and represent the truth of the Lord's incarnation and His manifestation as the Christ. Jesus' Baptism is in fact His definitive manifestation as the Messiah or Christ to Israel, and as the Son of the Father to the entire world. Here we find the dimension of the Epiphany which was His manifestation to all nations. The Father's voice from heaven shows that Jesus of Nazareth is the eternal Son and the descent of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove shows the Trinitarian nature of the Christian God. The true and unique God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, shows Himself in Christ, through Him, with Him and in Him.

The Baptism in the Jordan returns to the great Christmas theme of "Christification", Jesus of Nazareth's spiritual anointing, His presentation

as the Anointed One par excellence, the Messiah or the One sent by the Father for the salvation of mankind. The Spirit that descended on Jesus shows and seals in an incontrovertible way the "Christification" of Jesus' humanity that the Word had already fulfilled from the first moment of His miraculous conception by Mary. Jesus, from the very beginning, was always the Lord's Christ, He was always God. Yet, His one, true humanity, that which is perfect in every way, as the Gospel records, constantly grew in natural and supernatural perfection. "And Jesus increased in wisdom, in stature, and in favor with God and with men" (Lk2:52). In Israel at 30 years of age, one reached full maturity and therefore could become a master. Jesus came of age and the Spirit, descending and remaining on Him, definitively consecrated His whole being as the Christ.

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