

JUBILEE 85TH ANNIVERSARY
THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN September 14th, 2014
V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

FEAST OF THE
EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS



Icon of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross -- September 14th

St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 1:18-24

Prokeimenon. Grave Mode. Psalm 98.9,1

Exalt the Lord our God. Verse: The Lord reigns; let the people tremble.

BRETHREN, the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the cleverness of the clever I will thwart." Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Πρὸς Κορινθίους α' 1:18-24

Προκείμενον. Ἦχος βαρύς. ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 98.9,1

Ὑψοῦτε Κύριον τὸν Θεὸν ἡμῶν. Στίχ. Ὁ Κύριος ἐβασίλευσεν, ὀργιζέσθωσαν λαοί.

Ἀδελφοί, ὁ λόγος γὰρ ὁ τοῦ σταυροῦ τοῖς μὲν ἀπολλυμένοις μωρία ἐστίν, τοῖς δὲ σωζομένοις ἡμῖν δύναμις θεοῦ ἐστίν. Γέγραπται γάρ, Ἀπολῶ τὴν σοφίαν τῶν σοφῶν, καὶ τὴν σύνεσιν τῶν συνετῶν ἀθετήσω. Ποῦ σοφός; Ποῦ γραμματεὺς; Ποῦ συζητητῆς τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου; Οὐχὶ ἐμώραναν ὁ θεὸς τὴν σοφίαν τοῦ κόσμου τούτου; Ἐπειδὴ γὰρ ἐν τῇ σοφίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐκ ἔγνω ὁ κόσμος διὰ τῆς σοφίας τὸν θεόν, εὐδόκησεν ὁ θεὸς διὰ τῆς μωρίας τοῦ κηρύγματος σῶσαι τοὺς πιστεύοντας. Ἐπειδὴ καὶ Ἰουδαῖοι σημεῖον αἰτοῦσιν, καὶ Ἕλληνες σοφίαν ζητοῦσιν· ἡμεῖς δὲ κηρύσσομεν Χριστὸν ἐσταυρωμένον, Ἰουδαίοις μὲν σκάνδαλον, Ἕλλησιν δὲ μωρίαν· αὐτοῖς δὲ τοῖς κλητοῖς, Ἰουδαίοις τε καὶ Ἕλλησιν, Χριστὸν θεοῦ δύναμιν καὶ θεοῦ σοφίαν.

The Elevation of the Venerable and Life-Giving Cross

The Gospel of John 19:6-11, 13-20, 25-28, 30

At that time, when the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no crime in him." The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and by that law he ought to die, because he has made himself the Son of God." When Pilate heard these words, he was the more afraid; he entered the praetorium again and said to Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave no answer. Pilate therefore said to him, "You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?" Jesus answered him, "You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore he who delivered me to you has the greater sin." When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called the Pavement, and in Hebrew, Gabbatha. Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" They cried out, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King!" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." Then he handed him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus, and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called the place of a skull, which is called in Hebrew Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them. Pilate also wrote a title and put it on the cross; it read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. But standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold your son!" Then he said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home. Then when Jesus had received the vinegar, he said, "It is finished"; and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

The Elevation of the Venerable and Life-Giving Cross

Κατὰ Ἰωάννην 19.6-11, 13-20

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, συμβουῖον ἐποίησαν οἱ ἄρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ ὑπηρέται, ἐκραύγασαν λέγοντες· σταύρωσον σταύρωσον αὐτόν. λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Πιλάτος· λάβετε αὐτὸν ὑμεῖς καὶ σταυρώσατε· ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐχ εὐρίσκω ἐν αὐτῷ αἰτίαν. ἀπεκρίθησαν αὐτῷ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι· ἡμεῖς νόμον ἔχομεν, καὶ κατὰ τὸν νόμον ἡμῶν ὀφείλει ἀποθανεῖν, ὅτι ἑαυτὸν Θεοῦ υἱὸν ἐποίησεν. Ὅτε οὖν ἤκουσεν ὁ Πιλάτος τοῦτον τὸν λόγον, μᾶλλον ἐφοβήθη, καὶ εἰσηλθεν εἰς τὸ πραιτώριον πάλιν καὶ λέγει τῷ Ἰησοῦ· πόθεν εἶ σύ; ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς ἀπόκρισιν οὐκ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ. λέγει οὖν αὐτῷ ὁ Πιλάτος· ἐμοὶ οὐ λαεῖς; οὐκ οἶδας ὅτι ἐξουσίαν ἔχω σταυρῶσαί σε καὶ ἐξουσίαν ἔχω ἀπολύσαί σε; ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς· οὐκ εἶχες ἐξουσίαν οὐδεμίαν κατ' ἐμοῦ, εἰ μὴ ἦν σοι δεδομένον ἄνωθεν· διὰ τοῦτο ὁ παραδιδούς μέ σοι μείζονα ἁμαρτίαν ἔχει. ὁ οὖν Πιλάτος ἀκούσας τοῦτον τὸν λόγον ἤγαγεν ἔξω τὸν Ἰησοῦν, καὶ ἐκάθισεν ἐπὶ τοῦ βήματος εἰς τόπον λεγόμενον Λιθόστρωτον, ἐβραῖστί δὲ Γαββαθᾶ· ἦν δὲ παρασκευὴ τοῦ πάσχα, ὥρα δὲ ὡσεὶ ἕκτη· καὶ λέγει τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις· ἴδε ὁ βασιλεὺς ὑμῶν. οἱ δὲ ἐκραύγασαν· ἄρον ἄρον, σταύρωσον αὐτόν. λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Πιλάτος· τὸν βασιλέα ὑμῶν σταυρώσω; ἀπεκρίθησαν οἱ ἄρχιερεῖς· οὐκ ἔχομεν βασιλέα εἰ μὴ Καίσαρα. τότε οὖν παρέδωκεν αὐτὸν αὐτοῖς ἵνα σταυρωθῇ. Παρέλαβον δὲ τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἤγαγον· καὶ βαστάζων τὸν σταυρὸν αὐτοῦ ἐξῆλθεν εἰς τὸν λεγόμενον κρανίου τόπον, ὃς λέγεται ἐβραῖστί Γολγοθᾶ, ὅπου αὐτὸν ἐσταύρωσαν, καὶ μετ' αὐτοῦ ἄλλους δύο ἐντεῦθεν καὶ ἐντεῦθεν, μέσον δὲ τὸν Ἰησοῦν. Ἐγραψε δὲ καὶ τίτλον ὁ Πιλάτος καὶ ἔθηκεν ἐπὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ· ἦν δὲ γεγραμμένον· Ἰησοῦς ὁ Ναζωραῖος ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων. τοῦτον οὖν τὸν τίτλον πολλοὶ ἀνέγνωσαν τῶν Ἰουδαίων, ὅτι ἐγγὺς ἦν τῆς πόλεως ὁ τόπος ὅπου ἐσταυρώθη ὁ Ἰησοῦς· καὶ ἦν γεγραμμένον Ἑβραῖστί, Ἑλληνιστί, Ῥωμαῖστί. Οἱ μὲν οὖν στρατιῶται ταῦτα ἐποίησαν. εἰστήκεισαν δὲ παρὰ τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡ ἀδελφὴ τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ, Μαρία ἡ τοῦ Κλωπᾶ καὶ Μαρία ἡ Μαγδαληνῆ. Ἰησοῦς οὖν ἰδὼν τὴν μητέρα καὶ τὸν μαθητὴν παρεστῶτα ὃν ἠγάπα, λέγει τῇ μητρὶ αὐτοῦ· γύναι, ἴδε ὁ υἱός σου. εἶτα λέγει τῷ μαθητῇ· ἰδοὺ ἡ μήτηρ σου. καὶ ἀπ' ἐκείνης τῆς ὥρας ἔλαβεν ὁ μαθητὴς αὐτὴν εἰς τὰ ἴδια. Μετὰ τοῦτο εἰδὼς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι πάντα ἤδη τετέλεστοι, ἵνα τελειωθῇ ἡ γραφή, λέγει· διψῶ. ὅτε οὖν ἔλαβε τὸ ὄξος ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπε, τετέλεστοι, καὶ κλίνας τὴν κεφαλὴν παρέδωκε τὸ πνεῦμα.

SERVICES THIS WEEK: TODAY:	September 14th	EXALTATION of HOLY CROSS	9:30 -10:30 A.M
MONDAY	September 15th	Greek School AGIASMOS	4:00 P.M.
WEDNESDAY	September 17th,	Prayer And Healing Service	6:30 P.M.
THURSDAY	September 18th	Fraternal Order of Police Blessing	7:00 P.M.

VASILIKO/BASILIKO: donations of plantings for the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (September 14) may be made directly to the altar area. Basil cuttings will be distributed to the faithful today at the conclusion of Divine Liturgy.

AGAPE COFFEE HOUR FELLOWSHIP: is being hosted by the Ladies Philoptochos Society. Join us for refreshments in Whitehall.

YOU MAY WISH TO HOST A COFFEE FELLOWSHIP ONE SUNDAY OVER THE SUMMER MONTHS IN GRATEFUL THANKSGIVING FOR PRAYERS ANSWERED, OR FOR MEMORIAL REMEMBRANCE OF A LOVED ONE. For a donation of (\$125. dollars) coffee, cookies, set up of tables, serving and clean up will be done by the church with proper recognition of the donor. We need donor volunteers. How about you?

ASIA MINOR COMMEMORATION of the 'KATASROPHE' HOLOCAUST 1914-1923 is scheduled for our Parish on SUNDAY, September 21st. at 12:30 P.M. In light of the many terrorist activities throughout the world indicating the surge of Islamic intolerance, we are once again reminded that 'WHAT GOES AROUND ...COMES AROUND' Please plan to attend this annual memorial tribute to those who sacrificed for life , liberty, faith and culture. OUR presence is built on the foundation of their sacrifices.

GREEK SCHOOL REGISTRATIONS: are in order for the academic year 2014-2015. Please refer to the insert flyer for all the details. Give your child a head-start by being BI-LINGUAL at a early age. When they go to JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL they can subscribe for a third language facility, i.e. Spanish French, Chinese: beyond learning a foreign language, the students also learn about Their Hellenic Heritage, Culture, Tradition and Orthodox Christian Faith. Our faculty are licensed foreign language educators.

TODAY: on the Feast of the Holy Cross (SEPTEMBER 14TH , is a most appropriate day to wear your baptismal cross or any cross as a public witnessing of your faith to others. WEAR YOUR CROSS AND BE PROUD OF IT!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW: PARISH ANNUAL DINNER DANCE, FRIDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 24th 8:00 P.M. in ROSEHALL. THIS IS OUR '85' ANNIVERSARY YEAR. HELP US CELEBRATE.

OFFICE RENOVATIONS COMMENCE: After early 60 years of use and occasional disregard, the business office and the pastoral study are being brought into the TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY with a total renovation of up to date equipment, machines, furniture and modern out-fitting. The cost of the project is estimated at \$55,000. (FIFTY-FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS) and will surely be an asset to the good functioning of our beloved PARISH.

We would be remiss if we did not acknowledge the 'marathon' efforts on behalf of this project by our Parish Council PRESIDENT MRS. JOANNA VASSILAS, and COUNCIL support, our 'in-house' ARCHITECT MR. HARRY ORTHOS and CONTRACTOR – LUIS PINTO , special thanks to our 'in house electrician' and VICE PRESIDENT , MR. JOHN EVGENIS for his professional services.

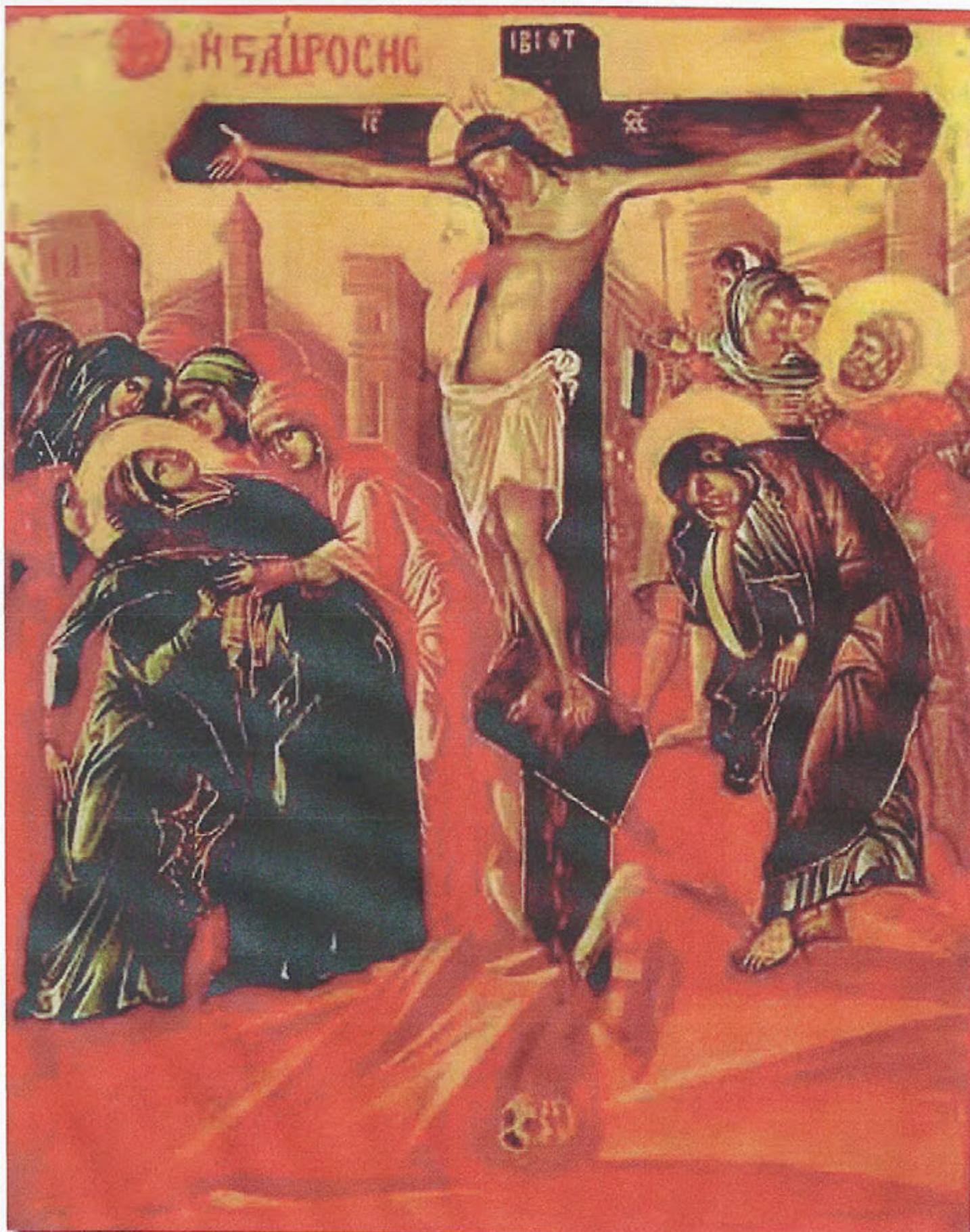
A major benefactor for the project is MRS. NICOLITA THEOPHILUS who at the Feast of the Assumption (AUGUST 15th) submitted a personal donation of \$25,000. (TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS) towards the campaign. We are indeed grateful and need more support however much you may be able to offer. NO OFFERING IS REFUSED, HOW ABOUT YOU?

MR & MRS & MS CLUB: Welcome back all members and potential recruits to join them for fun and fellowship at their FIRST MEETING of SEPTEMBER, Tuesday, September 16th at 7:00 P.M. Refreshments will be served to all. COME ! SEE! JOIN!

RADIO MINISTRY: Each Saturday at 1:15 PM Fr. Eugene hosts and produces the radio broadcast MATTERS OF CONSCIENCE NOW IN ITS 15TH 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 TODAY + JAMES MAOUNIS + NICHOLAS MAOUNIS + STEVEN DELLAMONICA

MEMORIAL NEXT WEEK + GENEVIENE "JENNY" SCLAVUNAS



This centerfold is part two of last week's history of the Cross. This is a wonderful teaching instrument for the children in school to identify the cross of Christ.

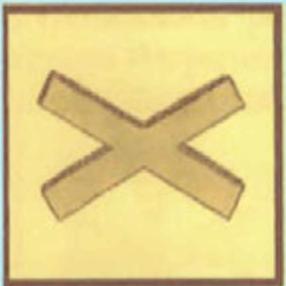
MALTA CROSS: The origin of this cross is unknown. It is the oldest cross in heraldry. Some believe that it has an Arabic motif. It can be considered a geometric design as seen on ancient mosques in Jerusalem, Damascus and Baghdad, and also found in Europe and in Sicily. By the thirteenth century, the cross of Malta was a common heraldic symbol in England, France, Germany, and Poland.



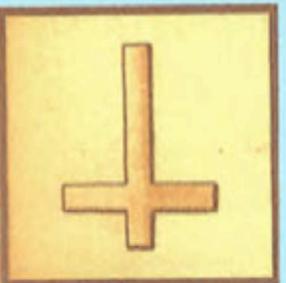
The four arms represent the cross of Jesus, and the eight points symbolize the Beatitudes that He taught during the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:3-10)

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
2. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.
3. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.
4. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.
5. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.
6. Blessed the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
7. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.
8. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness: sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

ST. ANDREW'S CROSS. St. Andrew was the first(protokletos in Greek) of the apostles to be called by Jesus. Andrew suffered martyrdom in the town of Patras, Greece. At Patras, Andrew cured and converted Maximilla, wife of the Pagan proconsul, Aegeagtes. Andrew, Maximilla denied Aegeates his marital rights because he was a pagan. Aegeates had Andrew thrown into prison. There he was beaten and ten condemned to be crucified. Stratocles wanted to rescue Andrew, but the apostle refused and was tied to a cross. Andrew remained alive for two days continually preaching to his people. Stratocles and Maximilla buried his body. Subsequently, Andrew's coffin was taken to Constantinople in AD 337. When Constantinople fell in the Fourth Crusade in 1204, Andrew's skull was taken to Amalfi, Italy, and the face bones were taken to St. Peter's in Rome. In September 1965, Pope Paul VI returned the relics in a reliquary to Athenagoras, the Ecumenical Patriarch, who then returned the reliquary to Patras, Greece. The reliquary is enshrined at the church of St Andrew. Tradition has it that Andrew was crucified on an X-shaped cross. Some historians write that most likely his cross was a tau cross, but by the Middle Ages, it became an X cross---the X representing *chi* for *Christos*.



ST PETER'S CROSS. This is an inverted cross. When St. Peter was to be executed on an upright cross, he said that he was not worthy to be crucified in the same way as his Lord. He was therefore crucified upside down. The inverted cross represents humility.



TAU CROSS. The tau cross is a cross taken from antiquity. It is the shape of the letter "T" and was adopted by the early Christians as a Christian Symbol.



TREFOIL CROSS. The trefoil cross is a cross with the arms ending in a threefold cluster. The three-fold clusters signify the Trinity.





ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



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

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος ΛΑ'
Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 1838

Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος
Αὐγουστῖνος Ν. Καντιώτης

Τί εἶνε Ὁρθοδοξία (Γ')

(μαρτύριο & εὐποιία)

Ἡ ἑορτὴ τῆς Ὁρθοδοξίας μᾶς ἔδωσε ἀφορμὴ νὰ σκιαγραφήσουμε τὸν χαρακτήρα της. Μερικὲς πινελλιᾶς στὸ πορτραῖτο της ἦταν· ἡ ἱερὰ παράδοσις, τὸ μυστήριον θείας εὐχαριστίας, ἡ ἐν Χριστῷ ἐλευθερία, καὶ ἡ ἀγιότης. Τί ὑπολείπεται τώρα γιὰ νὰ ὁλοκληρώσουμε;

5. ΜΑΡΤΥΡΙΟ. Μία ἀκόμη πινελλιᾶ, ἀλλ' αὐτὴ εἶνε κόκκινη· εἶνε τὸ **αἷμα!** Ποιὸ αἷμα; Ὅχι τὸ ξένο ἀλλὰ τὸ δικό μας. Ἡ Ἐκκλησία - ἡ Ὁρθοδοξία μας ποτίστηκε καὶ ἐγένε δέντρο μεγάλο μὲ δύο πράγματα· δάκρυ μετανόιας καὶ αἷμα μαρτυρίου. «*Τῶν ἐν ὄλῳ τῷ κόσμῳ μαρτύρων σου ὡς πορφύραν καὶ βύσσον τὰ αἵματα ἡ Ἐκκλησία σου στολίσασμένη δι' αὐτῶν βοᾷ σοι, Χριστέ ὁ Θεός...*» (ἰσλ. κ.ρ. ἡ. 1101)· ἡ Ἐκκλησία, λέει, στολίστηκε μὲ τὰ αἵματα τῶν μαρτύρων σὰν μὲ ἀλουργίδα βασιλική, καὶ λάμπει καὶ ἀστράφτει.

Καὶ ἐρωτῶ· ποιὸς ἄλλος ἀπὸ τοὺς χριστιανούς ἔχυσε τόσο αἷμα γιὰ τὴν πίστι τοῦ Χριστοῦ; οἱ προτεστάντες, οἱ παπικοί, ποιοί; Ξέρετε τί εἶνε ἡ Ὁρθοδοξία; Δὲν ὑποτιμῶ τοὺς κόπους τῶν παπικῶν ἢ τὰ κηρύγματα τῶν προτεσταντῶν. Ἀλλ' ἐὰν ὁ Χριστιανισμὸς εἶνε ἓνα στράτευμα, ἡ Ὁρθοδοξία εἶνε ἡ **ἐμπροσθοφυλακή**. Οἱ ὀρθόδοξοι - δὲν καυχώμεθα, τὸ λέμε ἀντικειμενικά-, ἐδῶ στὴ γωνιά πού σταθήκαμε, στὴν Ἀνατολὴ πού μᾶς ἐφύτευσε ὁ Θεός, εἴμαστε στὴν πρώτη γραμμὴ. Ἐὰν σπάσῃ ἡ Ὁρθοδοξία, δὲν θὰ ὑπάρχῃ Χριστιανισμὸς. Ἐμπρός, στρατιῶτες, σαλπίζετε· προχωρεῖτε προχωρεῖτε! Καὶ πέφτουν καὶ συνεχῶς πέφτουν κορμιά καὶ ματώνει τὸ χῶμα καὶ γέμισε ἡ γῆ **μυριάδες μαρτύρων**. Ποτάμια αἷμα ἔχυσε αὐτὴ ἡ Ὁρθοδοξία. Καὶ ἔτσι ἀποδεικνύεται ἡ γνησιότης.

Θέλετε νὰ καταλάβετε τὸν Χριστιανὸ καὶ τὸν κληρικό; θέλετε νὰ καταλάβετε τοὺς παπᾶδες σας, τοὺς δεσποτάδες σας, τοὺς θεολόγους σας; Παρατηρήστε ποιὸς εἶνε ἕτοιμος γιὰ θυσία, ποιὸς διώκεται. «*Πάντες οἱ θέλον-*

τες εὐσεβῶς ζῆν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ διωχθήσονται» (β. 1μ. 12). Ὅποιος θέλει νὰ κρατήσῃ τὸ Εὐαγγέλιο, θὰ διωχθῇ στὸν κόσμον αὐτόν. Ὁ κληρὸς τοῦ δικαίου, τοῦ τιμίου ἀνδρός, τοῦ εὐλικρινοῦς κήρυκος τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, εἶνε ὁ **διωγμὸς**. Καὶ διώχθηκε πράγματι ἡ κατὰ ἀνατολὰς ἡ Ἐκκλησία. Ἔδωσε **ἀγῶνα**. Ποῦ; Ἐναντίον τῶν αἰρετικῶν, π.χ. τῶν εἰκονομάχων ἐπὶ ἑκατὸ καὶ πλέον ἔτη. Ἐμπροσθοφυλακὴ δὲν εἶπαμε;

Ξέρετε πόσο αἷμα ἔχυσε ἡ Ἐκκλησία μας ν' ἀναχαιτίσῃ - ποιό; τὸ **Ἰσλάμ**. Ἄχ! ζωντανεῖτε πάλι τὸ Ἰσλάμ, θηρίο πού κοιμόταν - δὲν πήραμε χαμπάρι. Δὲν θέλω τώρα νὰ μπῶ στὴν πολιτικὴ, εἶνε ἔξω ἀπὸ τὸ στόχο μου. Ζύπνησε πάλι τὸ Ἰσλάμ μὲ κεφαλὰς πολλές... Τί κύμα τῆς ἀβύσσου εἶν' αὐτό! Σὰ ν' ἀκούω Ἀποκάλυψι. Εἶδα νὰ βγαίῃ θηρίο ἀπὸ τὴν ἔρημο, τὸ θηρίο τοῦ Μωάμεθ· καὶ προχώρησε, καὶ ἔφθασε μέχρι ποῦ; μέχρι τῆ Βιέννης. Καὶ ἀπέναντί του στάθηκε - ποιὸς ἐδῶ στὴν Ἀνατολή; ἡ ἐμπροσθοφυλακὴ, ἡ Ὁρθοδοξία μας.

Σήμερα ἀκοῦμε στὴν Ἐκκλησία «*Αἰωνία ἡ μνήμη*» τῶν πατέρων, ὄλων ἐκείνων πού μᾶς παρέδωσαν τὴν Ὁρθοδοξία κ' ἔφθασε μέχρι τὰ χρόνια μας. Δυὸ ἑκατομμύρια σφάχτηκαν σὰν ἄρνια ἀπὸ τὸν ἀντίχριστο **Κεμάλ** στὴ Μικρὰ Ἀσία. Κ' ἐμεῖς φρουροῦμε γι' αὐτόν στὴ Θεσσαλονίκη. Ὅταν περνᾶω καὶ τὸ βλέπω, ραγίζει ἡ καρδιά μου νὰ βλέπω Ἕλληνες φαντάρους νὰ φυλᾶνε τὸ μνήμα τοῦ θηρίου αὐτοῦ τῆς Ἀποκαλύψεως. Κι ὅταν ἀκούω τὰ λόγια ἐνὸς ἀρχιεπισκόπου Ἀμερικῆς ὅτι «*Εγὼ εἶμαι Τοῦρκος*», τί νὰ πῶ; Ξέρω ὅτι πάνω ἀπὸ τὰ ἔθνη εἶνε ἡ Ὁρθοδοξία, ἀλλὰ θὰ εἴμαστε ἀδικοὶ ἂν πέσουμε νὰ προσκυνήσουμε τὸν Τοῦρκο. Ὅχι. Θὰ ἀγαπήσουμε καὶ τὸν δῆμιό μας, ἀλλὰ δὲν θὰ τὸν κάνουμε ἀφέντη.

Θέλετε νὰ δῆτε τί εἶνε Ὁρθοδοξία; Σ' ἓνα χωριὸ τῶν **Γρεβενῶν** ἓνας εὐκατάστατος ἰεχωβίτης παντρεύτηκε ἓνα σεμνὸ κορίτσι βοσκοῦ

– θυμᾶμαι πού ὁ μητροπολίτης τὴν κάλεσε καὶ τὴν ἐπήνεσε, διότι τί ἔγινε; Τὴν πρώτη βραδία τοῦ γάμου, πῆγε ἐκεῖνη ν’ ἀνάψη τὸ καντήλι στὸ εἰκονοστάσι τῆς καλύβας· καὶ σηκώνεται αὐτός –τότε φανερώθηκε· σοῦ λέει, τώρα τὴν ἔχω στὸ χέρι–, ἀρπάζει τὶς εἰκόνες καὶ τὶς καίει! Ἄν ἦτανε καμμιά ἀπ’ τὸ Κολωνάκι, θὰ τὸν ἀνεχόταν· αὐτὴ ἢ ἀγράμματη, μόλις τὸ εἶδε αὐτό, τοῦ λέει «Φύγε, διάβολε!...» καὶ τὸν ἔδιωξε πύξ-λάξ. Εὐλογημένη νά ’νε!

Τὸ 1822 ἔφθασε **στη Χίο** ἡ ἀρμάδα, τὰ πλοῖα τῶν Τούρκων. Ἔπιασαν 30.000 γυναικόπαιδα, ὅπως ἱστορεῖ ὁ Γάλλος Πουκεβίλ, τὰ πῆγαν στὴν παραλία, ἔβαλαν χάμω στὴν ἀμμουδιά ἕνα σταυρό, τὸν πάτησαν, καὶ τοὺς λένε· Ὅποιος ἀπὸ σᾶς θὰ πατήσῃ τὸ σταυρό, θὰ ζήσῃ· ὅποιος δὲν τὸν πατήσῃ, δὲν θὰ ζήσῃ· σᾶς δίνω προθεσμία. Δὲν κουνήθηκε οὔτε ἕνας, οὔτε παιδί οὔτε νέος, κανεὶς. Σὰν ἀρνιά τοὺς ἔσφαξαν καὶ κοκκίνισε ἡ θάλασσα.

Αὐτὴ εἶνε ἡ πίστις μας καὶ αὐτοὶ οἱ **ἥρωες** πού τὴν κρατᾶνε. «Ἦ Ὁρθοδοξία, ὦ πατροπαράδοτον σέβας· ἐν σοὶ ἐγεννήθημεν, ἐν σοὶ ζῶμεν, καὶ ἐν σοὶ κοιμηθησόμεθα» (Ἦσφθ Βρυένιος).

6. ΕΥΠΟΪΙΑ. Σᾶς ἔδειξα μὲ λίγες λέξεις τί εἶνε Ὁρθοδοξία. Καὶ τώρα ἂς φύγουμε ἀπὸ τὸ ὕψος αὐτὸ καὶ νὰ πέσουμε – πού; Στὴν ἀφεντιά μου καὶ στὴν ἀφεντιά σας, καὶ νὰ κάνουμε ἕνα ἐρώτημα· **Ἐμεῖς εἴμαστε παιδιὰ τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου Ἐκκλησίας;** Πολλὰ θὰ μπορούσαμε νὰ ποῦμε ἐπ’ αὐτοῦ· θὰ θίξω ἕνα μόνο σημεῖο.

Ἐάν θέλουμε νὰ εἴμαστε δίκαιοι, ὀφείλουμε νὰ ὁμολογήσουμε ὅτι, ἐνῶ ὑπερτεροῦμε σ’ αὐτὰ πού ἐκθέσαμε, σὲ ἕνα σπουδαῖο τομέα ὑστεροῦμε. Μᾶς νικοῦν ἐκεῖ οἱ ἄλλοι, οἱ προτεστάντες καὶ οἱ παπικοί. Ἐνῶ ἔχουμε ἕνα μεγαλεῖο ἀφθαστο, θεωρητικὸ μεγαλεῖο, **ὑστεροῦμε** στὰ ἔργα ἀγάπης καὶ φιλανθρωπίας.

Στὴν Ἀθήνα πέθανε ἕνα φτωχαδάκι. Πῆγαν νὰ κανονίσουν τὰ τῆς κηδεῖας. Τοὺς λένε· –Τόσο γιὰ τὸν παπᾶ, τόσο γιὰ τὸ διάκο, τόσο γιὰ τὸν πολυέλεο, τόσο γιὰ τὸ ἕνα, τόσο γιὰ τὸ ἄλλο... –Μὰ δὲν ἔχουμε, τί θὰ γίνῃ; –Ἄ, δὲν ξέρω (ἦταν ἕνας παπᾶς φιλάργυρος). Τὸ μαθαίνει ὁ αἰρετικός (παπικός) καὶ πάει στὸ σπῖτι ἀμέσως. –Τί συμβαίνει; λέει. –Δὲν ἔχουμε νὰ τὸν θάψουμε. –Γι’ αὐτὸ στενοχωριέστε; τὸν θάβω ἐγὼ δωρεάν. Τὸν πῆρε, τὸν ἔθαψε, καὶ τὸ βράδυ τοὺς γέμισε τὸ σπῖτι ροῦχα καὶ τρόφιμα. Θὰ μοῦ πῆτε, καὶ πρέπει γι’ αὐτὰ ν’ ἀφήσουν τὴν Ὁρθοδοξία; Ὅχι ὄχι· ἀλλὰ μὰ Ἐκκλησία πού εἶνε μάνα πρέπει νὰ κοιτάξῃ τὰ παιδιὰ τῆς καὶ στὸν τομέα τῆς φιλανθρωπίας ὅσο τοῦλάχιστον οἱ αἰρετικοί. Ὑστεροῦμε, ἀδέρφια μου, **στὴ φιλανθρωπία.**

Θὰ δῆ κανεὶς στὴν Ἑλλάδα ἀπ’ τὸ ἕνα μέρος πολυτέλεια κι ἀπὸ τὸ ἄλλο δυστυχία. Κάπου στὶς ὑπώρειες τῆς Πίνδου θὰ δῆ καὶ κάτι σπιτάκια θαῦμα. Τὰ εἶδα κ’ ἐγὼ καὶ ρώτησα· Αὐτὰ ποιός τὰ ἔχτισε; τὸ κράτος ἢ κάποιος ἐφοπλιστής; Τὰ ἔχτισαν, μοῦ εἶπαν, ὄχι Ἑλληνες ἀλλὰ Ἑλβετοί· πάστορες (δηλαδὴ «παπᾶδες»), ἔμαθαν ὅτι ἐδῶ ὑποφέρει κόσμος, ὠρῖσαν σὲ δεκαπέντε καντόνια – διαμερίσματα **νὰ νηστεύσουν μία μέρα** ἀπ’ τὸ πρωὶ μέχρι τὸ βράδυ, καὶ μὲ ὅσα θὰ ξῶδευαν γιὰ τὸ φαῖ μάζεψαν ἕνα μεγάλο ποσό, μὲ τὸ ὁποῖο χτίστηκαν τὰ σπιτάκια. Αὐτοὶ εἶνε προτεστάντες, νηστεῖες δὲν ἔχουν· στὸ ζήτημα αὐτὸ ὅμως ἐφήρμοσαν τὴν Ὁρθοδοξία, ἔκαναν αὐτὸ πού εἶπε ὁ Μέγας Βασίλειος· «*Νηστεύσωμεν, ἀδελφοί, ἵνα ἐλεήσωμεν.*».

Γιὰ φανταστῆτε νὰ νηστεύαμε ὅλοι μία μέρα! Τί μπορούσαμε νὰ κάνουμε μὲ ὅσα ξοδεύονται τὶς ἀπόκριες στὰ καρναβάλια! Γι’ αὐτὸ σᾶς λέω ὅτι, ἐνῶ εἴμαστε ὀρθόδοξοι, ὑστεροῦμε στὰ ἔργα ἀγάπης καὶ φιλανθρωπίας καὶ **μᾶς νικοῦν** στὸν τομέα αὐτὸν καὶ οἱ φράγκοι καὶ οἱ προτεστάντες. Γι’ αὐτὸ εἶνε ἀνάγκη νὰ τελειώσω καὶ νὰ σᾶς πῶ τὸ δρᾶμα τῆς Ὁρθοδοξίας.

* * *

Ἡ Ἀποκάλυψις λέει, ἀγαπητοί μου, ὅτι φάνηκε νὰ πετάῃ ἕνα πουλί, ἕνας «*ἀετὸς μέγας*» (Ἀπ. 12,14). Ἄλλὰ ὁ ἀετὸς, ὅπως καὶ κάθε πουλί, γιὰ νὰ πετάξῃ χρειάζεται δύο φτερούγες· μὲ μία δὲν πετάει· ἅμα πληγωθῆ ἀπὸ σκάγια στὴ μία φτερούγα, ὁ ἀετὸς βασανίζεται καὶ χτυπιέται κάτω στὴ γῆ. Καὶ ἡ **Ὁρθοδοξία μας ἔχει δυὸ φτερούγες**, πίστι καὶ ἔργα. Ἡ μία φτερούγα κρατιέται ἀλώβητη· εἶνε ἡ πίστις ἢ ἀμώμητος. Ἡ ἄλλη φτερούγα ὅμως δέχθηκε σκάγια, εἶνε πληγωμένη, κι ὁ ἀετὸς βασανίζεται. Αὐτὴ ἡ φτερούγα εἴμαστε ἐμεῖς, πού ὑστεροῦμε στὰ ἔργα.

Ἐάν, ἀδελφοί μου, δώσουμε στὴν Ἐκκλησία μας καὶ ἔργα καλά, τότε ὁ ἀετὸς θὰ γίνῃ «*μεγαλοπτερυγος*» (Ἐ.ἀ. 16, 17,3), θὰ πετάξῃ στὰ ὕψη, καὶ τότε, ὦ τότε!... Πολλὰ θὰ γίνουν· τὰ παιδιὰ καὶ τὰ ἐγγόνια σας πολλὰ θὰ δοῦν. Ἐνα σᾶς λέω καὶ τὸ πιστεύω ἀκραδάντως· ὅταν ἡ Ὁρθοδοξία ἀποκτήσῃ καὶ τὴν ἄλλη φτερούγα, τῆς φιλανθρωπίας καὶ τῶν καλῶν ἔργων, τότε θὰ μεσουρανήσῃ. Καὶ τότε θὰ δῆτε· δὲν θὰ νικήσῃ οὔτε ὁ πάπας οὔτε οἱ προτεστάντες. Θὰ νικήσῃ ἡ Ὁρθοδοξία, θὰ γίνῃ **ἄστρο φωτεινὸ**. Καὶ τότε θὰ ἔρθουν τὰ παιδιὰ τῆς ἐκ δυσμῶν καὶ ἑώας, ἐξ Ἀμερικῆς καὶ Αὐστραλίας, ἐκ βορρᾶ καὶ νότου, καὶ ὅλα μαζί σὰν μιά κιθάρα θὰ ψάλλουν «*Ὑμνεῖτε Χριστὸν εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας.*».

(†) **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

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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

Exalting the Cross

Inasmuch as the cross has become as it were the altar of this fearful sacrifice – for on the cross the Son of God died for the fall of man – therefore the cross is justly revered and worshipped and depicted as the sign of the common resurrection of all men, so that those who bow down before the wood of the cross might be delivered from the curse of Adam and receive the blessing and grace of God for the doing of every virtue. For Christians the cross is magnification, glory, and power: for all our power is in the power of Christ who was crucified; all our sinfulness is mortified by the death of Christ on the cross; and all our exaltation and all our glory are in the humility of God, who humbled Himself to such an extent that He was pleased to die even between evildoers and thieves. For this very reason Christians who believe in Christ sign themselves with the sign of the cross not simply, not just as it happens, not carelessly, but with all

heedfulness, with fear and with trembling, and with extreme reverence. For the image of the cross shows the reconciliation and friendship into which man has entered with God.

Therefore the demons also fear the image of the cross, and they do not endure to see the sign of the cross depicted even in the air, but they flee from this immediately knowing that the cross is the sign of the friendship of men with God ...

Those who have understood this mystery and in very fact have known in experience the authority and power which the cross has over demons, have likewise understood that the cross gives the soul strength, power, meaning, and divine wisdom ... To the degree of the reverence which one has toward the cross, he receives corresponding power and help from God. To Him may there be glory and dominion forever. Amen.

St. Symeon the New Theologian

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