

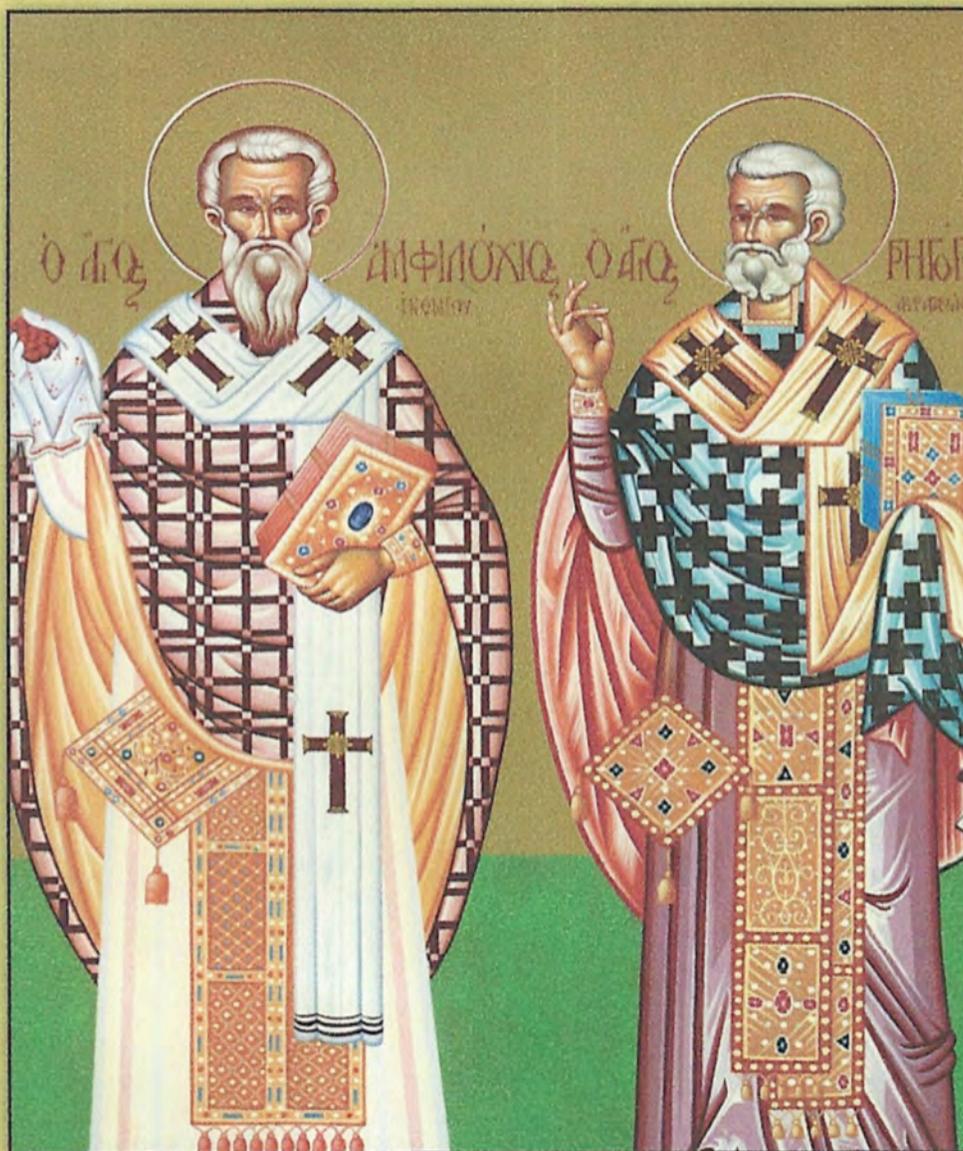


DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN
DISTRICT

JUBILEE 85TH ANNIVERSARY
THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN November 23rd, 2014
V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
NINTH SUNDAY OF LUKE



Icon of Saints Amphilocheus and Gregory -- November 23th

St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 2:14-22

Prokeimenon. Grave Mode. Psalm 28.11,1

The Lord will give strength to his people. Verse: Bring to the Lord, O sons of God, bring to the Lord honor and glory.

BRETHREN, Christ is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law of commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby bringing the hostility to an end. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; for through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Πρὸς Ἐφεσίους 2:14-22

Προκείμενον. Ἦχος βαρύς. ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 28.11,1

Κύριος ἰσχὺν τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ δώσει. Στίχ. Ἐνέγκατε τῷ Κυρίῳ υἱοὶ Θεοῦ, ἐνέγκατε τῷ Κυρίῳ δόξαν καὶ τιμὴν.

Ἀδελφοί, Χριστός ἐστιν ἡ εἰρήνη ἡμῶν, ὁ ποιήσας τὰ ἀμώτερα ἓν, καὶ τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ λύσας, τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ, τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν, καταργήσας· ἵνα τοὺς δύο κτίσῃ ἐν ἑαυτῷ εἰς ἓνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον, ποιῶν εἰρήνην, καὶ ἀποκαταλλάξῃ τοὺς ἀμφοτέρους ἐν ἐνὶ σώματι τῷ θεῷ διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ, ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν αὐτῷ· καὶ ἔλθων εὐηγγελίσατο εἰρήνην ὑμῖν τοῖς μακρὰν καὶ τοῖς ἐγγύς· ὅτι δι' αὐτοῦ ἔχομεν τὴν προσαγωγὴν οἱ ἀμώτεροι ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι πρὸς τὸν πατέρα. Ἄρα οὖν οὐκέτι ἐστὲ ξένοι καὶ πάροικοι, ἀλλὰ συμπολιταὶ τῶν ἁγίων καὶ οἰκεῖοι τοῦ θεοῦ, ἐποικοδομηθέντες ἐπὶ τῷ θεμελίῳ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ προφητῶν, ὄντος ἀκρογωνιαίου αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἐν ᾧ πᾶσα οἰκοδομὴ συναρμολογουμένη αὕξει εἰς ναὸν ἅγιον ἐν κυρίῳ, ἐν ᾧ καὶ ὑμεῖς συνοικοδομεῖσθε εἰς κατοικητήριον τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν πνεύματι.

9th Sunday of Luke

The Gospel of Luke 12:16-21

The Lord said this parable: "The land of a rich man brought forth plentifully; and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?' And he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns, and build larger ones; and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, be merry.' But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you; and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." As he said these things, he cried out: "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

9th Sunday of Luke

Κατὰ Λουκᾶν 12.16-21

Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην· Ἄνθρωπου τινὸς πλουσίου εὐφόρησεν ἡ χώρα· καὶ διελογίζετο ἐν ἑαυτῷ λέγων· τί ποιήσω, ὅτι οὐκ ἔχω ποῦ συνάξω τοὺς καρπούς μου; καὶ εἶπε· τοῦτο ποιήσω· καθελῶ μου τὰς ἀποθήκας καὶ μείζονας οἰκοδομήσω, καὶ συνάξω ἐκεῖ πάντα τὰ γενήματά μου καὶ τὰ ἀγαθὰ μου, καὶ ἐρῶ τῇ ψυχῇ μου· ψυχὴ, ἔχεις πολλὰ ἀγαθὰ κείμενα εἰς ἔτη πολλά· ἀναπαύου, φάγε, πίε, εὐφραίνου. εἶπε δὲ αὐτῷ ὁ Θεός· ἄφρον, ταύτη τῇ νυκτὶ τὴν ψυχὴν σου ἀπαιτοῦσιν ἀπὸ σοῦ· ἃ δὲ ἠτοίμασας τίνι ἔσται; οὕτως ὁ θησαυρίζων ἑαυτῷ, καὶ μὴ εἰς Θεὸν πλουτῶν.

OFFICE RENOVATIONS COMMENCE: After nearly 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 outfitting. 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. The corridor hallways on the first level of the school building are also being renewed with fresh paint and a change of lighting.

CHURCH RENOVATION PROJECT: We submit ourselves to your generosity and love for your home parish of THREE HIERARCHS to make an offering in any amount for the completion of our renovation plans. Please take a 'peek' today and witness the beautiful transformation. Room 104 is temporarily our business office. Stop in, say hello and drop off your much needed contribution, Today!

SERVICES NEXT WEEK

Sunday,	November 30th,	FEAST OF SAINT ANDREW THE APOSTLE	10:30 A.M.
Monday,	December 01st	AGIASMOS (BLESSING OF THE HOLY WATER)	11:00 A.M.
Wednesday,	December 03rd,	VESPER of SAINT BARBARA(N.Y.C.)	7:00 P.M.
Thursday,	December 04th,	FEAST of SAINT BARBARA (CHURCH)	9:30 A.M.
Friday,	December 05th,	VESPER of SAINT NICHOLAS (Flushing)	7:00 P.M.
Saturday	December 06th,	FEAST of SAINT NICHOLAS (CHURCH)	9:30 A.M.

AGAPE COFFEE FELLOWSHIP: is hosted TODAY by the MR & MRS CLUB in WHITEHALL.

ARTOKLASIES: The Blessing of the 5 loaves of bread on FEAST NAMEDAY celebrations are always welcomed. Please register with the OFFICE (718) 339-0280 to have your offering announced by the CLERGY.

UPCOMING FEASTS: SAINTS; KATHERINE, ANDREW, SAVAS, BARBARA, NICHOLAS, SPYRIDON, EUGENIOS, ELEUTHERIOS and many others!

PLEASE TAKE NOTE: ARTOKLASIES for Saint SPYRIDON and Saint ELEUTHERIOS will be transferred to SUNDAY, DECEMBER 07th for all to share. LITURGIES of the 12th and 13th will be observed on DECEMBER 07TH.

PHILOTOCHOS HOSTS CHRISTMAS PARTY: The ladies will host for their members and families supporters the ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DINNER ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 08TH, AT 7:00 P.M. IN WHITEHALL. The event is open FREE to all members and supporters of the SOCIETY! Greek Folk and dance music will be provided with a sumptuous catered meal. Santa Claus is expected to make a spot appearance.

SAVE THE DATE: NEW YEARS'S EVE REVELLION, GALA DINNER/DANCE, Wednesday, December 31st Rosehall, 8:00 P.M. Hosted and SPONSORED BY THE **A.H.E.P.A. CONEY ISLAND CHAPTER #200 and the DAUGHTERS of PENELOPE DEMETRA CHAPTER #33.** Details to follow next week!!!! Usher in the New Year 2015 with family and friends here.

EMMAUS CHRISTIAN ORTHODOX FILM SERIES; continues Thursday, November 13th, with the presentation of the second 'film' in the 7 month long program. This film titled THE QUESTION of ORIGINS will be viewed at the HOLY CROSS PARISH 8401 Ridge Boulevard, Brooklyn at 7:00 – 8:00 P.M. with refreshments to follow the dialogue. This monthly series of OPEN FREE TO ALL! Bring a friend to the movies and join in the open dialogue afterwards.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY of the PARISH, for the fall is scheduled TODAY, directly after Divine Liturgy in WHITEHALL. We encourage all the faithful to attend, participate and vote in the progressive future of our faith based community. REGISTERED STEWARDS for 2014 may speak and vote. ARE YOU REGISTERED AS A STEWARD for this year? DO SO NOW!

TOY DRIVE FOR CHILDREN; Please consider purchasing a toy for a BOY or GIRL or BOTH from infancy to 12 years of age for distribution by social services before the Christmas Holy Days! The gifts (ARTS and CRAFTS/ LEARNING GAMES /CARS, PLANES, TRUCKS, DOLLS) may be placed before the Icon of the Blessed Mother **UN-WRAPPED.** The anonymous gifts must be visible for proper distribution by age and gender accordingly. This project has increased year by year and is always a source of blessing to the cheerful GIVER too! The PROJECT TOY GIFT begins TODAY and runs until CHRISTMAS EVE.

TODAY: We will sing our traditional Thanksgiving Hymns as we learned in elementary school. Please join us in singing the sacred hymns along with the Choir. We indeed have much to be grateful for!

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)

MEMORIALS TODAY: + YUSYA DEMIDENKO + MR. MRS. CLUB DECEASED MEMBERS
MEMORIAL NEXT WEEK: + HELENE COQUEREAU



Amazing Grace

Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me....
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind, but now, I see.

T'was Grace that taught...
my heart to fear.
And Grace, my fears relieved.
How precious did that Grace appear...
the hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares...
we have already come.
T'was Grace that brought us safe thus far...
and Grace will lead us home.

The Lord has promised good to me...
His word my hope secures.
He will my shield and portion be...
as long as life endures.

When we've been here ten thousand years...
bright shining as the sun.
We've no less days to sing God's praise...
then when we've first begun.

Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me....
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind, but now, I see.

We Gather Together Hymn

We gather together to ask the Lord's blessing;
He chastens and hastens His will to make known.
The wicked oppressing now cease from distressing.
Sing praises to His Name; He forgets not His own.

Beside us to guide us, our God with us joining,
Ordaining, maintaining His kingdom divine;
So from the beginning the fight we were winning;
Thou, Lord, were at our side, all glory be Thine!

We all do extol Thee, Thou Leader triumphant,
And pray that Thou still our Defender will be.
Let Thy congregation escape tribulation;
Thy Name be ever praised! O Lord, make us free!



Three Hierarchs Parish Wishes
"A Happy Thanksgiving to All"





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 1861

Κυριακὴ ΚΔ' (Ζ') Λουκᾶ (Ἐφ. 2,14-22)
23 Νοεμβρίου 2014

Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος
Αὐγουστίνος Ν. Καντιώτης

Πόθος εἰρήνης

«Ὁ Χριστὸς ἐστὶν ἡ εἰρήνη ἡμῶν» (Ἐφ. 2,14)

Ἐάν, ἀγαπητοί μου, ὑπάρχη μία λέξι πού ὄλοι ἔχουν στὰ χεῖλη, εἶνε ἡ λέξις **εἰρήνη**.

Ποιὸς ἀπὸ μᾶς εἶνε «**υἱὸς εἰρήνης**» (Λουκ. 10,6), ἄξιος νὰ τὴν ἀναφέρῃ; Θά ἴπρεπε νὰ κατεβῆ πάλι ἀπὸ ψηλὰ ἕνας **ἄγγελος** ἀπὸ ἐκεῖνους πού ἔψαλαν στὴ Βηθλεέμ «**Δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις Θεῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς εἰρήνη, ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκία**» (Λουκ. 2,14).

«**Εἰρήνη φίλη, τὸ γλυκὺ καὶ πρᾶγμα καὶ ὄνομα**», ὅπως λέει ὁ ἅγιος Γρηγόριος ὁ Ναζιανζηνός (Ρ.Γ. 35,1132). Εἰρήνη! ἰδανικό, κορυφαῖο ἀγαθὸ τῆς ἀνθρωπότητας. Ὅπως λέει ὁ προφήτης Ἱερεμίας, θά ῥθῃ ἐποχὴ πού θά λένε: «**Εἰρήνη εἰρήνη. καὶ ποῦ ἐστὶν εἰρήνη;**» (Ἰερ. 6,14). Καὶ σήμερα ἀκριβῶς ἐφαρμόζεται ὁ προφητικὸς αὐτὸς λόγος· λέμε κ' ἐμεῖς «**εἰρήνη εἰρήνη, καὶ ποῦ εἶσαι εἰρήνη;**».

Ἔρασταί τῆς εἰρήνης, ἄς ἐπιχειρήσουμε τῶρα ἓνα **νοερὸ περίπατο ζητώντας τὴν εἰρήνη**.

● Καὶ πρῶτα ἄς ἐπισκεφθοῦμε τὰ **παλάτια καὶ μέγαρα**. Μπαίνοντας σὲ πολυτελεῖς αἵθουσες καὶ δωμάτια ἀναζητοῦμε τὴν εἰρήνη. Ἀλλὰ εἰρήνη μέσα ἐκεῖ δὲν ὑπάρχει. Τὸ ἀντρόγυνο, πού κατοικεῖ ἐδῶ, ἐνῶ δὲν στεροῦνται τίποτα, δὲν εἶνε ἀγαπημένοι· βρίσκονται σὲ ψυχρότητα, ὀδηγοῦνται σὲ διάστασι. Κάθονται νὰ φᾶνε μὲ σερβίτσια σπάνια, μὲ ὑπηρετές καὶ μαγείρους, μὰ ὄρεξι δὲν ἔχουν. Φαρμάκι τὸ ψωμί, τὸ γλύκισμα, ὅ,τι εἶνε πάνω στὸ τραπέζι. Αὐτὸ πού ὄλα τὰ κάνει ἄνοστα καὶ μεταβάλλει τὸ σπίτι σὲ κόλασι εἶνε ἡ **διχόνοια**, οἱ ἔριδες καὶ φιλονικίες. Ἔτσι βλέπεις πλούσια σπίτια νὰ ἴνε δυστυχημένα, ἢ γυναῖκα νὰ τρέχη σὲ δικηγόρους γιὰ διαζύγιο, ὁ ἄντρας ν' ἀναστενάξη καὶ νὰ ζητᾶ παρηγοριά στίς ἀκρογιαλιές.

Καὶ τότε θυμᾶσαι τὸ σοφὸ Σολομῶντα πού λέει, ὅτι προτιμότερο νὰ τρῶη κανεὶς ἓνα κομμάτι ξερὸ ψωμί μὲ εἰρήνη, παρὰ μοσχάρια μὲ φιλονικίες: «**Κρείσσων ξενισμὸς μετὰ λαχάνων πρὸς φιλίαν καὶ χάριν ἢ παράθεσις μόσχων μετὰ ἔχθρας**» (Παροιμ. 15,17). Ἔχω ὠραίες ἀναμνήσεις

βοσκῶν τῆς ὑπαίθρου στὰ ψηλὰ βουνά, πού τὸ ἀντρόγυνο κατοικεῖ ἀγαπημένο στὴν καλύβα, τρῶνε μονοιασμένοι πάνω στὰ χορτάρια τῆς γῆς -τὸ εἶδα, τὸ ἀπήλαυσα αὐτό-, κάνουν τὸ σταυρὸ τους, εὐλογοῦν τὸ Θεό. **Ἡ εἰρήνη τῆς καλύβας** δὲν ἀνταλλάσσεται μὲ τὰ πλοῦτη τῶν ἀνακτόρων. Ἐκεῖ ὑπάρχει σχετικὴ εἰρήνη, στὰ μέγαρα ἡ εἰρήνη εἶνε μὲ τὸ σταγονόμετρο.

● Φεύγω τῶρα ἀπὸ ἐκεῖ καὶ κατεβαίνω στὸ κέντρο τῆς **πόλεως**, ὅπου σφύζει ἡ οἰκονομικὴ ζωὴ μὲ τὰ ἱλιγγιώδη ποσὰ σὲ τράπεζες καὶ **χρηματιστήρια**, μὲ τίς μεγάλες βιομηχανίες καὶ τὸ ἐμπόριο. Βλέπω ἀνθρώπους νὰ τρέχουν μανιασμένοι. Τοὺς σταματῶ - δὲν σταματοῦν, τοὺς μιλῶ - δὲν κουβεντιάζουν. Μὰ ἀλογόμυγα τοὺς ἔπιασε; τί συμβαίνει; Εἶνε ἄρρωστος ὁ «θεός» τους. Αὐτοὶ Μεγάλῃ Παρασκευῇ δὲν κλαῖνε, δὲν πάσχουν μὲ τὸ Χριστό. Ἀλλὰ τῶρα εἶνε ἄρρωστος ὁ «θεός» τους, ὁ μαμωνᾶς, τὰ τριάκοντα ἄργύρια, ἡ λίρα. Ὁ «ναός» τους, τὸ χρηματιστήριο, κλονίζεται. Ἀνεβαίνει ἡ λίρα - κατεβαίνει ἡ λίρα κ' ἡ καρδιά τους πάει νὰ πάθῃ συγκοπή.

● Ζήτησα τὴν εἰρήνη στὰ παλάτια, δὲν τὴ βρήκα· τὴ ζήτησα στὰ χρηματιστήρια καὶ τὸν ἐμπορικὸ κόσμον καὶ εἶδα ἀγωνία. Κάπου ἄλλοῦ σταματῶ· βλέπω ἓνα παλάτι μαρμάρينو, χτισμένο μὲ χρήματα ὄλων τῶν ἐθνῶν. Ἀπ' ἔξω κυματίζουν σημαίες, μὰ πάνω ἐκεῖ ἀπ' τὸ μέγαρο ἓνα περιστέρι πετάει τρομαγμένο στοὺς οὐρανοὺς. Τὸ μέγαρο αὐτό, πού χτίστηκε μὲ τόσες ἐλπίδες γιὰ μιὰ παγκόσμια εἰρήνη, εἶνε γνωστό· εἶνε ὁ **Ὄργανισμὸς Ἡνωμένων Ἐθνῶν** (Ο.Η.Ε.).

Μπαίνω μέσα, βλέπω ὄλους μαζεμένους. Ἀνεβαίνουν στὸ βῆμα, μιλοῦν σὲ διάφορες γλώσσες. Ὅλοι στὰ χεῖλη ἔχουν τὴ λέξι «εἰρήνη». Τὸ μέγαρο ὄμως πρέπει νὰ ὀνομαστῆ ὄχι Ἡνωμένα Ἐθνη, ἀλλὰ **Πύργος Βαβέλ**. Μιλοῦν γιὰ εἰρήνη, ἐνῶ ὁ κόσμος σείεται. Δυστυχῶς ἀμάρτησαν πολὺ. Ὅσο καὶ ἂν ποθοῦν τὴν εἰρήνη, βρίσκονται σὲ σάλο. Ὅλοι οἱ κάτοικοι τῆς

γής, οί τελευταῖες γενεές, θὰ πληρώσουμε μιά μεγάλη ἄμαρτία, ἓνα τρομερό ἔγκλημα. Ποιό;

Κάποτε στὰ χωριά μας, ὅταν πέθαινε ἄνθρωπος, ἓνα μῆνα ἔκλαιγαν. Ἐπὶ τῶν ἡμερῶν μας συνέβη ὁ **δεύτερος παγκόσμιος πόλεμος**. Σκοτώθηκαν –μετρήστε– 58 ἑκατομμύρια ἄνθρωποι! Γίναμε Κάϊν· κι ἀκούγεται ἡ φωνὴ «Κάϊν, ποῦ εἶνε ὁ ἀδελφός σου;» (βλ. Γέν. 4,9). Αὐτὸ τὸ αἷμα, αὐτὰ τὰ ἐγκλήματα ποῦ ἔγιναν ἐντεῦθεν καὶ ἐκεῖθεν, αὐτὰ σεῖουν τώρα τὴν οἰκουμένη. Κάϊν Κάϊν, ἀνθρωπότης ἀνθρωπότης, ποῦ εἶνε τὰ παιδιὰ σου; Γι' αὐτὸ τρέμουμε ἀπὸ ἀγωνία.

● Θέλετε νὰ δῆτε **στὴν κοινωνία** ποῦ φαίνεται ἡ ἀγωνία; Πηγαίνετε στὰ φαρμακεῖα καὶ ρωτήστε, ποιά φάρμακα ἔχουν τὴ μεγαλύτερη κατανάλωσι; Δύο εἶδη. Τὸ ἓνα δὲν τὸ λέω δημοσίως· θὰ τὸ ἔλεγα ἂν εἶχα μπροστά μου μόνο τοὺς μεγάλους, ποῦ τὰ χέρια τους στάζουν αἷμα ἀπὸ φόνους μικρῶν παιδιῶν. Τὸ ἄλλο εἶδος ποῖο εἶνε; τὰ λεγόμενα **ψυχοφάρμακα**, τὰ καταπραϋντικά τῶν νεύρων καὶ τὰ ὑπνωτικά.

Εἶνε μικρὸ νὰ πέφτης τὸ βράδου καὶ νὰ κοιμᾶσαι ἤσυχα καὶ νὰ ξυπνᾷς τὸ πρωὶ ὄροσᾶτος νὰ πιάνης δουλειά; **Ὁ ὕπνος εἶνε δῶρο Θεοῦ**. Οἱ πονηροί, ὅπως λέει κάπου ἡ Παλαιὰ Διαθήκη, δὲν ἔχουν ὕπνο (βλ. Περφ. 4,13). Καὶ πράγματι στὴν ἐποχὴ μας ὁ Θεὸς ἀφαίρεσε τὸν ὕπνο· βλέπεις νέους ἀνθρώπους, ἄντρες, γυναῖκες, ἐπιστήμονες, νὰ μὴ μποροῦν νὰ κοιμηθοῦν κι ἀναγκάζονται νὰ παίρνουν χάπια. Ἀφαιρέθηκε ἡ ἡσυχία ἀπὸ τὴ γῆ.

Δὲν ὑπάρχει λοιπὸν **πουθενὰ εἰρήνη**; Ὡ ἀδέρφια μου, ὑπάρχει κάπου. Ἀλλὰ θὰ μ' ἀκούσετε; Θὰ τὸ πῶ ὁ ἐλάχιστος ἐγώ·

Ἔτσι ζητᾶτε τὴν εἰρήνην σὲ πλούτη, διασκεδάσεις, δόξες καὶ τιμές, σὰς φωνάζουν ἡ Ἱστορία, οἱ τάφοι, μυριάδες παραδείγματα· εἰρήνη δὲν ὑπάρχει στὶς σχολές οὔτε τοῦ Ἐπικούρου οὔτε τοῦ Σαρδανάπαλου οὔτε τοῦ Νέρωνος οὔτε νεωτέρων ψευδοσωτήρων. Ὑπάρχει κάπου ἄλλοῦ. Ποῦ; Ἀφήστε τοὺς δρόμους τοὺς σκολιούς, «**εὐθείας ποιεῖτε τὰς τρίβους**» ὑμῶν (Ματθ. 3,3· Ματθ. 1,3· Λουκ. 3,4). Ἐλάτε ν' ἀνακαλύψουμε μαζὶ τὸ στενὸ ἀνηφορικὸ δρομάκι ποῦ ὁδηγεῖ **στοὺς Γολγοθᾶ** καὶ νὰ τὸ ἀνεβοῦμε. Κ' ἐκεῖ τί θὰ δοῦμε;

Θὰ δοῦμε τοὺς **προφήτες καὶ ἀποστόλους** νὰ κηρύττουν τὴν εἰρήνην, ποῦ ἔφερε ἡ θυσία τοῦ Χριστοῦ· ἄλλος νὰ λέη «**Οὗτος τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν φέρει καὶ περὶ ἡμῶν ὀδυνᾶται...**» (Ματθ. 53,4)· ἄλλοι νὰ λένε, ὅτι ἐπὶ τῆς βασιλείας του θὰ ῥθῆ μέρα ποῦ τὸ σίδηρο, ἀντὶ μαχαίρι καὶ ὄπλο πολεμικὸ, θὰ γίνη γεωργικὰ ἐργαλεῖα (βλ. Μαρκ. 4,3· Ματθ. 2,4), ὁ λύκος θὰ βόσκη μὲ τὸ ἀρνί (βλ. Ματθ. 11,9). Θὰ γίνη τότε μιά πνευματικὴ ἄνθησι, καὶ ὁ ἀπόστολος θὰ δεῖχνη τὸν Ἑσταυρωμένο λέγοντας·

«**Δεῦτε προσκυνήσωμεν καὶ προσπέσωμεν αὐτῷ**», «**αὐτὸς γάρ ἐστὶν ἡ εἰρήνη ἡμῶν**» (Ἐφ. 2,14).

Ποιά εἶνε **ἡ εἰρήνη τοῦ Χριστοῦ** τὸ λέει σήμερα ὁ ἀπόστολος· «**ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ κατήλαξε τοὺς ἀμφοτέρους** (=ἰουδαίους καὶ εἰδωλολάτρεις)» (Ἐφ. 2,15-16), νίκησε καὶ νέκρωσε τὴν ἄμαρτία. Ἔτσι εἰρηνεύσε ὁ ἄνθρωπος. Ὅποιος ἔχει τὸ Χριστό, εἰρηνεύει **μὲ τὸ Θεό**· ὁ Θεὸς εἶνε γι' αὐτὸν πατέρας. «**Πάτερ ἡμῶν**» (Ματθ. 6,9), λέει κι ἀκούει βαθεῖα μέσα του τὸ «**ἄββᾶ ὁ πατήρ**» (Ρωμ. 8,15· Γαλ. 4,6). Εἰρηνεύει ἐπίσης **μὲ τὸν πλησίον**, τὸν νιώθει ἀδελφός. Εἰρηνεύει ἀκόμη **μὲ τὸν ἑαυτό του**· ἄγγελος Κυρίου στὸ ἐξομολογητήριον σβήνει ὅσα ὁ διάβολος ἔγραψε στὸ μαῦρο πίνακα. «**Τὸ αἷμα Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ... καθαρῖζει ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τὰς ἁμαρτίας**» (1^η Ἰω. 1,7)· ἓνα ἠλεκτρόνιο ἀπὸ τὸ αἷμα του φτάνει! Εἰρηνεύει τέλος καὶ **μὲ τὴ φύσιν**· ἔχουμε παραδείγματα ἁγίων –ἄς μὴν τὰ πιστεύουν οἱ μοντέρνοι, ἐγὼ τὰ πιστεύω–, ποῦ καὶ τὰ στοιχεῖα τῆς φύσεως, ἀκόμα καὶ τὰ θηρία, ἡμερεύουν κοντὰ σὲ ἁγίους.

Ἀδελφοί μου· ὅσοι πιστεύουμε στὸ Χριστὸ **νὰ γίνουμε ἄνθρωποι τῆς εἰρήνης**. Ὅχι τῆς εἰρήνης τοῦ κόσμου τούτου, ποῦ ὅταν λέει εἰρήνη ἄλλα ἐννοεῖ. Εἰρηνεύετε λοιπὸν σύζυγοι μετὰ ξύ σας, παιδιὰ μὲ τοὺς γονεῖς, ἐργάτες μὲ τοὺς ἐργοδότες, εἰρηνεύετε πατρίδα μας, εἰρηνεύετε οἱ πάντες. Ἀλλὰ ὑπὸ ἓνα ὄρον· τὸ θεμέλιο τῆς εἰρήνης δὲν εἶνε ἡ ἀδικία, ἡ ἐκμετάλλευσι, ἡ βία· τὸ θεμέλιο τῆς εἰρήνης εἶνε ὁ βράχος τοῦ Γολγοθᾶ, ὅπου μὲ αἷμα γράφτηκε τὸ «**Ἀγαπᾶτε ἀλλήλους**» (Ματθ. 13,24· 15,12· 17,1· 1^η Ἰω. 3,11· 4,7). Διαφορετικά, ὅπως λέει ὁ ἅγιος Γρηγόριος ὁ Ναζιανζηνός, «**Κρείττων ἐπαινετός πόλεμος εἰρήνης χωριζούσης Θεοῦ**» (PG 35,488)· ἐγὼ τοῦλάχιστον προτιμῶ τὸν πόλεμο ἀπὸ μιὰ «εἰρήνην» ποῦ χωρίζει ἀπὸ τὸ Θεό.

Εἰρηνεύετε μὲ ὅλους· ἓναν μόνο νὰ πολεμᾶτε μὲ κάθε τρόπο, τὸ σατανᾶ. Νὰ κηρύξουμε πόλεμο ἐναντίον τῶν σκοτεινῶν δυνάμεων τῆς ἀβύσσου, τῆς αἰρέσεως, κάθε κακοθηρίας. Καὶ τότε ἡ εἰρήνη τοῦ Χριστοῦ «**ἡ ὑπερέχουσα πάντα νοῦν**» (Φιλιπ. 4,7) θὰ πλημμυρίζη τὶς καρδιές μας, θὰ εἴμαστε υἱοὶ καὶ θυγατέρες εἰρήνης, ἕως ὅτου διαβαίνοντας τὴν «**κοιλιάδα τοῦ κλαυθμῶνος**» (Ψαλμ. 83,7) φθάσουμε ἐκεῖ. Γιατὶ ἐδῶ ἡ εἰρήνη εἶνε σχετικὴ· (καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ Χριστός, λέει τὸ Εὐαγγέλιο, εἶπε· «**Νῦν ἡ ψυχὴ μου τετάρακται**» (Ματθ. 12,27), πέρασε κ' ἐκεῖνος ὠκεανὸ θλίψεως, ἀλλὰ στὰ βάθη του εἶχε εἰρήνη). Κι ὅταν πλέον διαβοῦμε τὴν χαράδρα κι ἀνεβοῦμε ψηλά, θ' ἀκούσουμε ἄλλη μιὰ φορά· «**Δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις Θεῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς εἰρήνη, ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκία**» (Λουκ. 2,14)· 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

Gratitude for Independence

In such a [current] state of things it is, in an especial manner, our duty as a people, with devout reverence and affectionate gratitude, to acknowledge our many and great obligations to Almighty God, and to implore Him to continue and confirm the blessings we experience.

Deeply penetrated with this sentiment, I **GEORGE WASHINGTON**, President of the United States, do recommend to all religious societies and denominations, and to all persons whomsoever within the United States, to set apart and observe a day of **PUBLIC THANKSGIVING** and **PRAYER**; and on that day to meet together and render their sincere and hearty thanks to the Great Ruler of Nations for the manifold and signal mercies which distinguish our lot as a nation - particularly for the possession of constitutions of government, which unite, by their union establish liberty with order - for the preservation of our peace foreign and domestic - for the reasonable control which has been given to a spirit of disorder, in the suppression of the late insurrection - and generally, for the prosperous course

of our affairs public and private; and at the same time, humbly and fervently to beseech the kind Author of these blessings graciously to prolong them to us - to imprint on our hearts a deep and solemn sense of our obligations to Him for them - to teach us rightly to estimate their immense value - to preserve us from the arrogance of prosperity, and from hazarding the advantages we enjoy by delusive pursuits - to dispose us to merit the continuance of His favors, by not abusing them, by our gratitude for them, and by a corresponding conduct as citizens and as men - to extend among us true and useful knowledge - to diffuse and establish habits of sobriety, order, morality and piety; and finally, to impart all the blessings we possess, or ask for ourselves, to the whole family of mankind.

George Washington

This proclamation was issued by the President of the United States in 1795.

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