

SUNDAY OF THE FATHERS OF THE
7TH ECUMENICAL COUNCIL



Icon of Seventh Ecumenical Council

St. Paul's Letter to Titus 3:8-15

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.

TITUS, my son, the saying is sure. I desire you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to apply themselves to good deeds; these are excellent and profitable to men. But avoid stupid controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels over the law, for they are unprofitable and futile. As for a man who is factious, after admonishing him once or twice, have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is perverted and sinful; he is self-condemned.

When I send Artemas or Tychicos to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. Do your best to speed Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way; see that they lack nothing. And let our people learn to apply themselves to good deeds, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not to be unfruitful.

All who are with me send greeting to you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.

Πρὸς Τίτον 3:8-15

Προκείμενον. Ἦχος δ. Δανιήλ 3.26-27

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

Πιστὸς ὁ λόγος, καὶ περὶ τούτων βούλομαι σε διαβεβαιουῦσθαι, ἵνα φροντίζωσιν καλῶν ἔργων προῖστασθαι οἱ πεπιστευκότες θεῷ. ταῦτα ἐστὶν καλὰ καὶ ὠφέλιμα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις· μωρὰς δὲ ζητήσεις καὶ γενεαλογίας καὶ ἔριν καὶ μάχας νομικὰς περιῖστασο, εἰσὶν γὰρ ἀνωφελεῖς καὶ μάταιοι. αἰρετικὸν ἄνθρωπον μετὰ μίαν καὶ δευτέραν νοουθεσίαν παραιτοῦ, εἰδὼς ὅτι ἐξέστραπται ὁ τοιοῦτος καὶ ἀμαρτάνει, ὢν αὐτοκατάκριτος. Ὅταν πέμψω Ἀρτεμᾶν πρὸς σέ ἢ Τυχικόν, σπουδάσον ἐλθεῖν πρὸς με εἰς Νικόπολιν, ἐκεῖ γὰρ κέκρικα παραχειμάσαι. Ζηνᾶν τὸν νομικὸν καὶ Ἀπολλῶν σπουδαίως πρόπεμψον, ἵνα μηδὲν αὐτοῖς λείπῃ. μανθανέτωσαν δὲ καὶ οἱ ἡμέτεροι καλῶν ἔργων προῖστασθαι εἰς τὰς ἀναγκαίας χρείας, ἵνα μὴ ᾧσιν ἄκαρποι. Ἀσπάζονται σε οἱ μετ' ἐμοῦ πάντες. Ἄσπασαι τοὺς φιλοῦντας ἡμᾶς ἐν πίστει. ἡ χάρις μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν.

Sunday of the 7th Ecumenical Council

The Gospel of Luke 8:5-15

The Lord said this parable: "A sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell along the path, and was trodden under foot, and the birds of the air devoured it. And some fell on the rock; and as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns grew with it and choked it. And some fell into good soil and grew, and yielded a hundredfold." And when his disciples asked him what this parable meant, he said, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God; but for others they are in parables, so that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand. Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. The ones along the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, that they may not believe and be saved. And the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy; but these have no root, they believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature. And as for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bring forth fruit with patience." As he said these things, he cried out "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

Sunday of the 7th Ecumenical Council

Κατὰ Λουκᾶν 8.5-15

Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην· Ἐξῆλθεν ὁ σπείρων τοῦ σπείραι τὸν σπόρον αὐτοῦ. καὶ ἐν τῷ σπείρειν αὐτὸν ὁ μὲν ἔπεσε παρὰ τὴν ὁδόν, καὶ κατεπατήθη, καὶ τὰ πετεινὰ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ κατέφαγεν αὐτό· καὶ ἕτερον ἔπεσεν ἐπὶ τὴν πέτραν, καὶ φυὲν ἐξηράνθη διὰ τὸ μὴ ἔχειν ἰκμάδα· καὶ ἕτερον ἔπεσεν ἐν μέσῳ τῶν ἀκανθῶν, καὶ συμφυεῖσαι αὐτὸ ἀκανθαὶ ἀπέπνιξαν αὐτό. καὶ ἕτερον ἔπεσεν εἰς τὴν γῆν τὴν ἀγαθὴν, καὶ φυὲν ἐποίησε καρπὸν κατονταπλασίονα. ταῦτα λέγων ἐφώνει· ὁ ἔχων ὄρα ἀκούειν ἀκουέτω. Ἐπηρώτων δὲ αὐτὸν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ λέγοντες· τίς εἶη ἡ παραβολὴ αὕτη; ὁ δὲ εἶπεν· ὑμῖν δέδοται γινῶναι τὰ μυστήρια τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ Θεοῦ, τοῖς δὲ λοιποῖς ἐν παραβολαῖς, ἵνα βλέποντες μὴ βλέπωσι καὶ ἀκούοντες μὴ συνιῶσιν. ἔστι δὲ αὕτη ἡ παραβολὴ· ὁ σπόρος ἐστὶν ὁ λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ· οἱ δὲ παρὰ τὴν ὁδόν εἰσιν οἱ ἀκούσαντες, εἴτα ἔρχεται ὁ διάβολος καὶ αἶρει τὸν λόγον ἀπὸ τῆς καρδίας αὐτῶν, ἵνα μὴ πιστεύσαντες σωθῶσιν. οἱ δὲ ἐπὶ τῆς πέτρας οἱ ὅταν ἀκούσωσι, μετὰ χαρᾶς δέχονται τὸν λόγον, καὶ οὗτοι ρίζαν οὐκ ἔχουσιν, οἱ πρὸς καιρὸν πιστεύουσι καὶ ἐν καιρῷ πειρασμοῦ ἀφίστανται. τὸ δὲ εἰς τὰς ἀκάνθας πεσόν, οὗτοί εἰσιν οἱ ἀκούσαντες, καὶ ὑπὸ μεριμνῶν καὶ πλούτου καὶ ἡδονῶν τοῦ βίου πορευόμενοι συμπνίγονται καὶ οὐ τελεσφοροῦσι. τὸ δὲ ἐν τῇ καλῇ γῇ, οὗτοί εἰσιν οἳ τινες ἐν καρδίᾳ καλῇ καὶ ἀγαθῇ ἀκούσαντες τὸν λόγον κατέχουσι καὶ καρποφοροῦσιν ἐν ὑπομονῇ. ταῦτα λέγων ἐφώνει· ὁ ἔχων ὄρα ἀκούειν ἀκουέτω.

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?

SERVICES THIS WEEK:

THURSDAY, October 16th evening prayers at the Brooklyn Cathedral 6:30.-7:00 P.M.
Saints Constantine and Helen. Film Festival follows in Hall.

SATURDAY, October 18th, Saint Nicholas National Shrine BLESSING of the GROUND 12:00 P.M.
at World Trade Center and building of the NEW CHURCH.

SUNDAY, October 19th, Feast of JOEL the Prophet 10:30A.M.

NEW YORK CITY ‘GREEK FILM FESTIVAL’ will commence Wednesday October 22nd, through Friday, October 31st, at Theaters in Manhattan and Astoria. Two major events will be held:
1; Film History Museum in Astoria – Wednesday, October 22
2: Ziegfield Theater (Broadway) NYC Thursday, October 23

AGAPE COFFEE HOUR FELLOWSHIP: is being hosted today by the Senior Citizen Club. Join us after Liturgy for coffee and sweets in WHITEHALL.

Archdiocesan Presbyters’ Council which is comprised of 18 priests from across the nation representing all Metropolises will be convening in SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday) October 13, 14 and 15th. Our Pastor Father Eugene will represent the DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN DISTRICT (NEW YORK). He will be on duty Thursday morning as the Orthodox Christian Film Festival commences. SEE YOU AT THE MOVIES ... bring pop-corn!

ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN FILM FESTIVAL: Hosted by the Emmaus Lecture Series will present FREE of CHARGE the viewing of GOD’S NOT DEAD a film depicting college philosophy professor’s curriculum challenged by his new student who does believe that God exists. This film truly stirs the mind. On what side of the fence do you stand? The film is followed with a discussion by the clergy and a coffee and sweets reception. FILM PRESENTATION Thursday , October 16th at 7:00 P.M. Saints Constantine and Helen Cathedral, 64 Schermerhorn Street – downtown Brooklyn. The FILM FESTIVAL continues at various churches until EASTER (PASCHA). Different films will be presented each month for your pleasure and spiritual edification.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: Saint Nicholas National Shrine at World Trade Center ‘ground blessing ceremony’ Saturday, October 18th, at 12:00 noon. OPEN TO ALL THE PUBLIC !

YOU MAY WISH TO HOST A COFFEE FELLOWSHIP ONE SUNDAY 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?

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.

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)



THE
SAINT NICHOLAS NATIONAL SHRINE
AT THE WORLD TRADE CENTER

GROUND BLESSING CEREMONY

"Upon this rock I will *rebuild* my church."

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2014

This Special Historical Event Is Open To The Public At Large. It Is Imperative That The Greek Orthodox Faithful Of The New York Archdiocese Present A United Front In Support Of This Long Over-Due Rebuilding Of The Sacred Shrine To SAINT NICHOLAS. It Would Be Wise To Take Subway Transportation To The World Trade Center Site Since Parking May Be Near Impossible. The Ceremonies Commence At 12 Noon With His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios As Chief Celebrant Assisted By Deacons And Priests Of The Holy Archdiocese. Photos May Be Taken By One And All.

If you would like to attend, please contact the Church office 631-283-6169 or Fr. Constantine 646-483- 5378.

~ 85th ~

 **Three Hierarchs**
Annual Dinner Dance

Three Hierarchs Parish

Friday October 24, 2014

8:00 P.M

Banquet Menu

Cocktail Hour: Shrimp Cocktail Stuffed Crab
Mushrooms, Swedish Meatballs,
Spanakopita,
Chicken Wings
Greek Salad

Dinner Choices

Prime Rib
Rack Of Veal
Shrimp Scampi
Broiled Salmon
Grilled Chicken

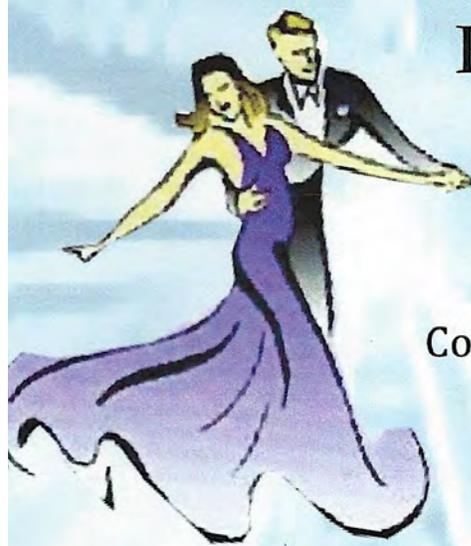
Oven Brown Potatoes And Garden
Vegetables
Complimentary 2 Bottles Of Wine Per Table

Donation
\$85.00
Children 12-
16 - \$40.00
Under 12 yrs
FREE !

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Dining
Dancing
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ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



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

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος ΛΑ'
Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 1858

Κυριακὴ Πατέρων Ζ' Οἴκουμ. Συνόδου
12 Ὀκτωβρίου 2014 ἑσπέρας

Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος
Αὐγουστίνος Ν. Καντιώτης

Ἀπάντησι στοὺς κατηγοροὺς τῶν ἱ. κανόνων

Τὸν περασμένο Ἰούλιο, ἐπ' εὐκαιρίᾳ τῆς μνήμης τῶν Πατέρων τῆς Δ' Οἴκ. Συνόδου ἀνοίξαμε ἓνα θέμα. Ἡ μνήμη τῶν Πατέρων τῆς Ζ' Οἴκ. Συνόδου καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα ὑποτιμήσεως τόσο τῶν ἁγίων πατέρων («μεταπατερικὴ» θεολογία) ὅσο καὶ τῶν ἱερῶν κανόνων («κωδικοποίηση»), μᾶς δίνουν πάλι τὴν εὐκαιρία νὰ συνεχίσουμε ἐκθέτοντας τὴν σχετικὴ διδασκαλία τοῦ π. Αὐγουστίνου περὶ τῶν ἱ. κανόνων ἀντλώντας ἀπὸ τὰ ἔργα του.

Ἐάν, ἀγαπητοί μου, ἐγκύψῃ κανεὶς στὴ μελέτη τῶν ἱερῶν κανόνων ὅπως τοὺς ἐρμηνεύουν σοφοὶ κανονολόγοι τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου Ἐκκλησίας καὶ μάλιστα ὁ ἅγιος Νικόδημος ὁ Ἄγιορείτης, ἐὰν πρὸ παντὸς πιστεύῃ ὅτι οἱ ἱεροὶ κανόνες εἶνε ἀποφάσεις ὄχι ἐνὸς ὑπουργικοῦ συμβουλίου ἢ κάποιας βουλῆς ἀλλὰ ἱερῶν ἀνδρῶν ποὺ συνέρχονται καὶ συσκέπτονται ἐν ἀγίῳ Πνεύματι, τότε θὰ τοὺς βλέπῃ μὲ διαφορετικὸ βλέμμα. Θὰ βλέπῃ τὸ βάθος τῆς πατερικῆς σκέψεως καὶ ὄχι τὴν ἐπιφάνεια, **τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ὄχι τὸ γράμμα**. «*Τὸ γράμμα ἀποκτέννει, τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα ζωοποιεῖ*» (Β' Κορ. 3,6). Ἡ οὐσία, ποὺ περικλείεται στὰ σχήματα τῶν ἱερῶν κανόνων, ἔχει αἰώνια ἀξία.

Μερικοί, γιὰ νὰ ἐξευτελίσουν καὶ διακωμωδήσουν τοὺς ἱεροὺς κανόνες, ἀναφέρονται σὲ μερικοὺς ἀπὸ αὐτοὺς ποὺ θίγουν διάφορα ζητήματα ἠθικῆς τάξεως καὶ ὠχυρωμένοι πίσω ἀπὸ τὸ γράμμα τοὺς ἰσχυρίζονται ὅτι οἱ κανόνες **δὲν ἔχουν πλέον θεοὶ στὴ σύγχρονη ζωῆ**.

Ἐμεῖς τοὺς ἀπαντοῦμε τὰ ἐξῆς.

1. Λένε ὅτι οἱ κανόνες, ἀφοῦ θεσπίσθηκαν πρὸ 1.200 - 1.600 ἐτῶν, **εἶνε παμπάλαιοι**. Λησμονοῦν ὅμως ὅτι μερικὰ πράγματα δὲν παλιώνουν. Παράδειγμα **ὁ ἥλιος**, ποὺ παρὰ τὴν ἡλικία του εἶνε γιὰ ὅλους ἀπολύτως ἀπαραίτητος. Μπορεῖ νὰ καταργηθῇ ὁ ἥλιος;

Ἄλλ' ὅ,τι εἶνε γιὰ τὸ ὑλικὸ σύμπαν ὁ ἥλιος, εἶνε γιὰ τὸ πνευματικὸ σύμπαν ὁ ἠθικὸς νόμος, τὰ ἀθάνατα ῥήματα τοῦ Ναζωραίου στοῦ Εὐαγγελίου· εἶνε τὸ **φῶς**, πρὸς τὸ ὁποῖο σπεύδουν οἱ ψυχῆς ποὺ ζητοῦν τὴν ἀλήθεια. «*Ἐκ νυκτὸς ὀρθρίζει τὸ πνεῦμά μου πρὸς σέ, ὁ Θεός, διότι φῶς τὰ προστάγματά σου ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς*» φωνάζει ὁ προφήτης Ἡσαΐας (26,9). Ὅσοι αἰῶνες κι ἂν περάσουν καὶ ὅσες μεταβολές κι ἂν γίνουν, ὁ εὐαγγελικὸς νόμος θὰ ἐξακολου-

θῇ νὰ ἰσχύῃ. Ἡ ψυχὴ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, ὅπως ἔλεγε ὁ Τερτυλλιανός, εἶνε φύσει χριστιανικῆ.

Καὶ οἱ ἱεροὶ κανόνες εἶνε **οἱ ἀκτίνες τοῦ πνευματικοῦ ἡλίου**, ποὺ κατεβαίνουν μέχρι τις λεπτομέρειες τῆς ζωῆς μας πρὸς καθαγιασμόν καὶ διαθλῶνται στὰ χρώματα τῶν ποικίλων ἀρετῶν. Φωτεινὲς ἀκτίνες οἱ ἱεροὶ κανόνες, ἀπαύγασμα τοῦ ἡλίου τοῦ Εὐαγγελίου. Ὅποιοιδήποτε κανόνα καὶ ἂν ἐξετάσῃς, θὰ δῆς ὅτι δὲν εἶνε αὐθύπαρκτος ἀλλὰ στηρίζεται σὲ κάποιο θεόπνευστο λόγο τῆς ἁγίας Γραφῆς, τὸν ὁποῖο θέλει νὰ ἐφαρμόσῃ σὲ ὠρισμένη περίπτωσι τῆς ἀνθρώπινης ζωῆς.

Ὁ ἥλιος δὲν μεταβάλλεται· καὶ ἡ ἠθικὴ τοῦ Εὐαγγελίου, ὅπως ἐκφράζεται στοὺς ἱεροὺς κανόνες, δὲν μεταβάλλεται. Παραμένει ἡ ἴδια, ὅσες χιλιάδες χρόνια κι ἂν περάσουν. Τὸ εἶπε ὁ Κύριος· «*Ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ παρελεύσονται, οἱ δὲ λόγοι μου οὐ μὴ παρέλθωσι*» (Ματθ. 24,35).

2. Οἱ ἱεροὶ κανόνες, λένε, εἶνε ὄχι μόνο παμπάλαιοι ἀλλὰ καὶ **ἀνεφάρμοστοι**. Ἀνεφάρμοστη λοιπὸν ἡ χριστιανικὴ ἠθικὴ ποὺ εἰσηγοῦνται οἱ κανόνες; ἀνεφάρμοστη ἡ νηστεία, ὁ τακτικὸς ἐκκλησιασμός, ἡ ἐξομολόγησις, ἡ παρθενικὴ ζωὴ, ἡ μονογαμία καὶ τὸ ἰσόβιο τοῦ γάμου, ἡ ἀφιλαργυρία καὶ ἡ ἀκτημοσύνη;... Ὅχι! Ἐφ' ὅσον καὶ **ἓνας ἄνθρωπος** πάνω στὴ γῆ θὰ ἐφαρμόζῃ στὴ ζωὴ του τις ἐντολές τοῦ ἠθικοῦ νόμου, φτάνει αὐτὸς γιὰ ν' ἀποδείξῃ ὅτι ἡ χριστιανικὴ ἠθικὴ δὲν εἶνε ἀνεφάρμοστη. Γιατὶ ὅσα πράττει ἓνας, μποροῦν νὰ πράξουν καὶ οἱ πολλοί, ἀφοῦ εἶνε τῆς ἴδιας φύσεως. Ἄν τώρα πολλοὶ δὲν θέλουν νὰ συμμορφωθοῦν μὲ τὰ παραγγέλματα τῶν ἱερῶν κανόνων, αἰτία δὲν εἶνε οἱ κανόνες ἀλλὰ ἡ θέλησί τους ποὺ δὲν ὑποτάσσεται στοῦ θεοῦ θέλημα. Ὑπάρχουν φάρμακα γιὰ ριζικὴ θεραπεία· ἀλλ' ἐὰν ὁ ἄρρωστος παρὰ τις συστάσεις τοῦ γιατροῦ δὲν θέλῃ νὰ τὰ πάρῃ καὶ πε-

θαίνη, αἴτιος τοῦ θανάτου δὲν εἶνε ὁ γιατρὸς ἀλλὰ ὁ ἄρρωστος.

Δὲν συμφωνοῦμε μ' ἐκείνους ποὺ λένε ὅτι, ἐπειδὴ ἡ κοινωνία ἐξελίσσει καὶ ἀλλάζει, πρέπει καὶ ἡ Ἐκκλησία χάριν τῶν πολλῶν νὰ συμμορφωθῇ μὲ τις ἀπαιτήσεις τῶν καιρῶν καὶ νὰ καταργήσῃ τοὺς ἱεροὺς κανόνες. Ἄς ἀκούσουν τὰ αἰώνια λόγια ποὺ εἶπε ὁ Κύριος: «**Εἰσελάθετε διὰ τῆς στενῆς πύλης· ὅτι πλατεῖα ἡ πύλη καὶ εὐρύχωρος ἡ ὁδὸς ἡ ἀπάγουσα εἰς τὴν ἀπώλειαν, καὶ πολλοὶ εἰσιν οἱ εἰσερχόμενοι δι' αὐτῆς. τί στενὴ ἡ πύλη καὶ τεθλιμμένη ἡ ὁδὸς ἡ ἀπάγουσα εἰς τὴν ζωὴν, καὶ ὀλίγοι εἰσιν οἱ εὐρίσκοντες αὐτήν!**» (Ματθ. 7,13-14).

Ἄν ἀρχίσῃ ἡ Ἐκκλησία τοῦ Χριστοῦ νὰ παρακολουθῇ τὸ ρεῦμα τοῦ κόσμου, **θὰ γίνῃ ἀγνώριστη**. Ἄν π.χ. αὐριο ὁ κόσμος νομιμοποιήσῃ τὴν ὁμοφυλοφιλία καὶ ἀναγνωρίσῃ τὸ γάμο τῶν ὁμοφυλοφίλων, τί, πρέπει καὶ ἡ Ἐκκλησία μὲ τοὺς ἱερεῖς της νὰ ἐπευλογήσῃ τὸν καταραμένο αὐτὸ δεσμό; Κι ἂν ἀκόμη ὅλη ἡ κοινωνία καταντήσῃ Σόδομα καὶ Γόμορρα καὶ οἱ πιστοὶ μείνουν λίγοι, ἡ Ἐκκλησία δὲν θὰ ὑποχωρήσῃ. Θὰ παραμείνῃ στὶς θέσεις της ἀνυποχώρητη. Θὰ μείνῃ δηλαδὴ ἀσυγχρόνιστη σὲ ζητήματα ἀρχῶν ἠθικῆς· καὶ δείχνοντας σταθερὰ τὸν κατάστερο οὐρανὸ τῶν ἠθικῶν ἀξιών θὰ προσφέρῃ τὴν ὑψίστη ὑπηρεσία στὴν ἀνθρωπότητα ποὺ κινδυνεύῃ νὰ ταφῇ στὴ διαφθορά.

3. Ὑπάρχουν ὅμως, μᾶς λένε, καὶ μερικοὶ κανόνες ποὺ ἔχουν **περιστατικὸ χαρακτήρα**, γιατί ἀναφέρονται σὲ ζητήματα ποὺ τάραξαν κάποτε τὴν Ἐκκλησία... Ἀλλὰ ἐπειδὴ ὠρισμένες αἰρετικὲς διδασκαλίαι καὶ πλάνες, γιὰ τίς ὁποῖες ἐλήφθησαν εἰδικὰ μέτρα καὶ συνεστήθησαν εἰδικὰ φάρμακα, ἐξέλιπον, τὰ εἰδικὰ ἐκεῖνα φάρμακα χάνουν τὴν ἀξία τους; Ὁχι. Θὰ φυλαχθοῦν στὸ φαρμακεῖο τῆς Ἐκκλησίας καί, ἂν τυχὸν παρουσιασθοῦν παρόμοιες περιπτώσεις ψυχικῶν ἀσθενειῶν, θὰ τεθοῦν καὶ πάλι σὲ χρῆσι. Ἀλλὰ τὸ σπουδαιότερο ἐδῶ εἶνε τὸ ἐξῆς: **ποιὸς εἶνε ἐκεῖνος ποὺ θὰ χαρακτηρίσῃ** ἕνα κανόνα ὡς περιστατικὸ ἢ θὰ θεσπίσῃ νέους κανόνες ποὺ πάντως δὲν θὰ εἶνε ἀντίθετοι μὲ τὸ πνεῦμα τῶν προγενεστέρων ἱερῶν κανόνων; Ὁχι βέβαια ὁ ἄλφα ἢ ὁ βῆτα ὀρθολογιστῆς ἢ ἄπιστος, ἀλλὰ ἡ Ἐκκλησία τοῦ Χριστοῦ σὲ ἁγίες τοπικὲς ἢ οἰκουμενικὲς Συνόδους.

4. Φοβοῦνται τέλος οἱ κατήγοροι ὅτι ἡ ἀναγνώρισις τοῦ κύρους τῶν κανόνων θὰ ἐνισχύσῃ τοὺς «ζηλωτὰς» νὰ ἐπιβάλουν μία **κοινωνία μασσαϊωνική**. Μπράβο τους, διέγνωσαν τὸν κίνδυνο ποὺ διατρέχει ὁ τόπος μας! Ἀλλὰ οἱ «ζηλωταί», γιὰ τοὺς ὁποίους μιλοῦν τόσο πε-

ριφρονητικά, ἐκτὸς ἀπὸ τὴν πίστι τους στὸ λόγο τοῦ Θεοῦ, κανένα ἄλλο ὄπλο δὲν ἔχουν. Οὔτε τάνκς οὔτε ἀεροπλάνα γιὰ ν' ἀνατρέψουν καθεστῶτα. Τέτοια ὄπλα ἄλλοι διαθέτουν. **Οἱ πιστοὶ δὲν γίνονται βίαιοι ἀνατροπεῖς**. Μάρτυρες καὶ ὁμολογηταὶ ναί, ἀνατροπεῖς διὰ τῆς βίας ὄχι. Ὅσες φορές ἐμφανίσθηκαν οἱ σπάνιοι αὐτοὶ ἄνδρες ποὺ ποθοῦν τὴ δόξα τοῦ Θεοῦ, διώχθηκαν, ἐξευτελίσθηκαν, ἐξουδενώθηκαν καὶ βρῆκαν μαρτυρικὸ θάνατο ἀπὸ τὰ ὄργανα τοῦ καίσαρος. Ὁ κόσμος θέλει ἕνα χριστιανισμὸ μέτριο καὶ χλιαρό. Ὁχι, κύριοι! **Ὁ Χριστιανισμὸς ἔχει ὑψηλοὺς στόχους**. Μὲ τὴν ἐφαρμογὴ τῶν ἱερῶν κανόνων, ἡ κοινωνία μας θὰ γίνῃ κράτος Θεοῦ, ἀληθινὴ ἀποικία ἀγγέλων· ἐνῶ μὲ τὴν καταπάτησι καὶ περιφρόνησί τους κινδυνεύει νὰ γίνῃ κοινωνία ἀμοραλιστῶν, οἱ ὁποῖοι κατὰ τὴν προφητεία τοῦ ἁγίου Κοσμά τοῦ Αἰτωλοῦ θὰ ζοῦν σὰν ἀχαλίνωτα ζῶα κι ἀκόμη χειρότερα.

* * *

Οἱ ἱεροὶ κανόνες, ἀγαπητοί μου, εἶνε φωτεινοὶ δείκτες στὴν πορεία πρὸς τὰ ἄνω. Εἶνε χαλινάρια στὶς κτηνώδεις ὀρέξεις τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. Εἶνε πηδάλιο σὲ ἄγρια θάλασσα. Εἶνε, γιὰ νὰ φέρουμε ἀγιογραφικὴ εἰκόνα, ὁ **φράχτης** ποὺ ἔβαλε ὁ Κύριος γύρω ἀπὸ τὸ θεοφύτευτο Ἀμπέλι του (Ματθ. 21,33· Μάρκ. 12,1), γιὰ νὰ μὴν εἰσβάλλουν σ' αὐτὸ ἄγρια ζῶα, ἀλεπουδες καὶ «**μονιοί**» (δηλαδὴ ἀγριόχοιροι: Ψαλμ. 79,13), καὶ τρῶνε τοὺς καρπούς καὶ ξεπατώνουν τίς ρίζες. Οἱ ἱεροὶ κανόνες ἢ νόμοι τῆς Ἐκκλησίας εἶνε, γιὰ νὰ θυμηθοῦμε καὶ τὴν προγονικὴ μας σοφία, σὰν τὰ ἰσχυρὰ **τείχη** τῶν πόλεων, ἐπάνω στὰ ὁποῖα στέκονται οἱ γενναῖοι ὑπερασπισταὶ καὶ ἀποκρούουν τίς ἐπιθέσεις τῶν βαρβάρων. Χωρὶς τείχη οἱ ἀρχαῖες πόλεις ἦταν εὐάλωτες· ἀλλὰ καὶ χωρὶς σταθεροὺς νόμους οἱ κοινωνίες πέφτουν καὶ διαλύονται. Καὶ ποιοὶ ἄλλοι νόμοι εἶνε φωτεινότεροι, ὠραιότεροι, εὐεργετικώτεροι, τελειότεροι ἀπὸ τοὺς ἱεροὺς κανόνες τῶν ἁγίων οἰκουμενικῶν καὶ τοπικῶν Συνόδων;

Νά, ἀγαπητοί μου, ἡ ριζικὴ ἀντίθεσι καὶ διαφωνία μας μὲ τοὺς περιφρονητὰς τῶν ἱερῶν κανόνων. Δὲν ἀγωνιζόμεθα γιὰ κάποιες ἐπουσιώδεις λεπτομέρειες, ἀλλὰ γιὰ ἱεροὺς κανόνες. Καὶ δηλώνουμε, ὅτι γιὰ τὸ κῦρος τῶν ἱερῶν κανόνων **θ' ἀγωνισθοῦμε μέχρι τέλους**. Στ' αὐτιά μας ἤχοῦν τὰ λόγια τοῦ ἀρχαίου φιλοσόφου Ἡρακλείτου: «**Μάχεσθαι δεῖ τὸν δῆμον ὑπὲρ τοῦ νόμου ὄκωσπερ τείχεος**»· πρέπει ὁ λαὸς νὰ ὑπερασπίζεται τοὺς νόμους ὅπως ὑπερασπίζεται τὸ τεῖχος τῆς πόλεώς του.

(†) **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

Being the Good Soil

Let it be a law for ourselves ... that we should run after perfection. Once we have heard the word of truth and of mercy, let us be "the good soil" (Mt 13: 8) for it, and let it put forth in us rootlets, striking root in our souls, and sprouting so as to "give fruit, thirty- fold, sixty-fold, and a hundred-fold" (Mt 13: 23). Do not let us prove to be "thorny ground" (Mt 13: 22), choking the seed of truth, with the result that we ourselves are choked of life on that day of judgment of our Lord. Nor let us be the poor earth on the roadway which does not allow anyone to hide the good seed, but the birds come along and peck it up, so that it never sprouts. Thus we should not be the hard ground, otherwise the word of life will not enter us and strike root in us, but instead the evil one will snatch the good seed from our earth. Nor should our minds be far distant from awareness, and we be like the thin soil in which seed withers and does not sprout.

Let us, rather, be diligent in providing fruit lest, when there spring up children who perform the acceptable and perfect will of our Lord, we ourselves actually wither under the new "Sun of justice with its healing rays" (Mal 3: 20).

So once we have heard the Word which summons us to the way of life of our Lord and of His heralds, let us come and allow ourselves to be made perfect; let us set as a law for ourselves their imitation, saying, Why do we not become like them, seeing that they themselves were like us? Let us listen to Paul who says, "I have despised all that is visible," "and I consider as dung all the gain" (Phil 3: 8) that will remain behind (when I die), and not accompany me to that world of truth and of glory. "Become like me" (Phil 3: 17), for I too was like you. You see that, if we want, we shall become like Paul.

*The Book of Steps
(5th Century Syriac Spiritual Literature)*

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