



DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN  
DISTRICT

JUBILEE 85<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

## THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN July 20th, 2014

V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

### SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST SIXTH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW



*Icon of Saint Elias — July 20th*

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## St. James' Universal Letter 5:10-20

Prokeimenon. Mode 1. Psalm 109.4,1

You are a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. Verse: The Lord said to my Lord: Sit at my right hand, till I make your enemies my footstool. BRETHREN, take as an example of suffering and patience the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Behold, we call those happy who were steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful. But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath, but let your yes be yes and your no be no, that you may not fall under condemnation. Is any one among you suffering? Let him pray. Is any cheerful? Let him sing praise. Is any among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith will save the sick man, and the Lord will raise him up; and if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effects. Elijah was a man of like nature with ourselves and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. Then he prayed again and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth its fruit. My brethren, if any one among you wanders from the truth and some one brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

## Ἰακώβου 5:10-20

Προκείμενον. Ἦχος α΄. ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 109.4,1

Σὺ ἱερεὺς εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα κατὰ τὴν τάξιν Μελχισεδέκ. Στίχ. Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος τῷ Κυρίῳ μου· Κάθου ἐκ δεξιῶν μου, ἕως ἂν θῶ τοὺς ἐχθροὺς σου ὑποπόδιον τῶν ποδῶν σου. Ἀδελφοί, ὑπόδειγμα λάβετε, ἀδελφοί μου, τῆς κακοπαθείας, καὶ τῆς μακροθυμίας, τοὺς προφῆτας οἱ ἐλάλησαν τῷ ὀνόματι κυρίου. Ἴδου, μακαρίζομεν τοὺς ὑπομένοντας· τὴν ὑπομονὴν Ἴωβ ἠκούσατε, καὶ τὸ τέλος κυρίου ἴδετε, ὅτι πολὺσπλαγγχὸς ἐστὶν καὶ οἰκτίρμων. Πρὸ πάντων δέ, ἀδελφοί μου, μὴ ὀμνύετε, μήτε τὸν οὐρανόν, μήτε τὴν γῆν, μήτε ἄλλον τινὰ ὄρκον· ἦτω δὲ ὑμῶν τὸ ναί, ναί, καὶ τὸ οὐ, οὐ· ἵνα μὴ εἰς ὑποκρίσιν πέσητε. Κακοπαθεῖ τις ἐν ὑμῖν; Προσευχέσθω. Εὐθυμεῖ τις; Ψαλλέτω. Ἀσθενεῖ τις ἐν ὑμῖν; Προσκαλεσάσθω τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἐκκλησίας, καὶ προσευξάσθωσαν ἐπ' αὐτόν, ἀλείψαντες αὐτὸν ἐλαίῳ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου· καὶ ἡ εὐχὴ τῆς πίστεως σώσει τὸν κάμνοντα, καὶ ἐγερεῖ αὐτὸν ὁ κύριος· κὰν ἁμαρτίας ἦ πεποιηκώς, ἀφεθήσεται αὐτῷ. Ἐξομολογεῖσθε ἀλλήλοις τὰ παραπτώματα, καὶ εὐχεσθε ὑπὲρ ἀλλήλων, ὅπως ἰαθῆτε. Πολὺ ἰσχύει δέησις δικαίου ἐνεργουμένη. Ἦλιος ἄνθρωπος ἦν ὁμοιοπαθὴς ἡμῖν, καὶ προσευχῇ προσηύξατο τοῦ μὴ βρέξαι· καὶ οὐκ ἔβρεξεν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἑνιαυτοὺς τρεῖς καὶ μῆνας ἕξ. Καὶ πάλιν προσηύξατο, καὶ ὁ οὐρανὸς ὑετὸν ἔδωκεν, καὶ ἡ γῆ ἐβλάστησεν τὸν καρπὸν αὐτῆς. Ἀδελφοί, ἐάν τις ἐν ὑμῖν πλανηθῇ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀληθείας, καὶ ἐπιστρέψῃ τις αὐτόν, γινωσκέτω ὅτι ὁ ἐπιστρέψας ἁμαρτωλὸν ἐκ πλάνης ὁδοῦ αὐτοῦ σώσει ψυχὴν ἐκ θανάτου, καὶ καλύψει πλῆθος ἁμαρτιῶν.

## 6th Sunday of Matthew

### The Gospel of Matthew 9:1-8

At that time, getting into a boat Jesus crossed over and came to his own city. And behold, they brought to him a paralytic, lying on his bed; and when Jesus saw their faith he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven." And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say 'Rise and walk?' But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins" he then said to the paralytic -- "Rise, take up your bed and go home." And he rose and went home. When the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

## 6th Sunday of Matthew

### Κατὰ Ματθαῖον 9.1-8

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, ἐμβὰς εἰς πλοῖον διεπέρασε καὶ ἦλθεν εἰς τὴν ἰδίαν πόλιν. Καὶ ἰδοὺ προσέφερον αὐτῷ παραλυτικὸν ἐπὶ κλίνης βεβλημένον· καὶ ἰδὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὴν πίστιν αὐτῶν εἶπε τῷ παραλυτικῷ· θάρσει, τέκνον· ἀφέωνταί σοι αἱ ἁμαρτίαι σου. καὶ ἰδοὺ τινες τῶν γραμματέων εἶπον ἐν ἑαυτοῖς· οὗτος βλασφημεῖ. καὶ ἰδὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὰς ἐνθυμήσεις αὐτῶν εἶπεν· ἵνα τί ὑμεῖς ἐνθυμεῖσθε πονηρὰ ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν; τί γάρ ἐστὶν εὐκοπώτερον, εἰπεῖν, ἀφέωνταί σοι αἱ ἁμαρτίαι, ἢ εἰπεῖν, ἔγειρε καὶ περιπάτει; ἵνα δὲ εἰδῆτε ὅτι ἐξουσίαν ἔχει ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἀφιέναι ἁμαρτίας - τότε λέγει τῷ παραλυτικῷ· ἐγερθεὶς ἄρον σου τὴν κλίνην καὶ ὑπάγε εἰς τὸν οἶκόν σου. καὶ ἐγερθεὶς ἀπῆλθεν εἰς τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ. ἰδόντες δὲ οἱ ὄχλοι ἐθαύμασαν καὶ ἐδόξασαν τὸν Θεὸν τὸν δόντα ἐξουσίαν τοιαύτην τοῖς ἀνθρώποις.

AGAPE COFFEE FELLOWSHIP HOUR: Today is being hosted in blessed memory of + DEMETRIOS KOUTSOGIANNOPOULOS by his loving family in ROSEHALL. Everyone is invited for refreshments.

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.

ARTOKLASIA TODAY: is being offered in THANKSGIVING for the name-day feast of the altar boy DAMIAN VAGANOV. We extend to our youngest altar server .....CHRONIA POLLA KAI EVTYCHISMENA! Many years of life and good health, to him and all in his family. He is among our finest young boys.

ARTOKLASIA TODAY: is being offered by LOUISA PALOYMPIS on the occasion of her name-day (PROPHET ELIAS). Her husband Bill and children Miltidades and Basiliki will escort her for the traditional blessing. Chronia Polla Me AGAPE!

ALTAR BOY SOCIETY of SAINT STEPHANOS Last Thursday July 17th at 5:30 P.M. our boy's enjoyed their second summer event with a teen-age boy's delight dinner at KOUROS RESTAURANT on Nostrand Avenue. The boys were hosted to cheeseburgers, chicken fingers French fries, soda and ice cream! Then on to the UNITED ARTISTS THEATERS in Sheepshead Bay for thrilling cinema on the giant screen. The group numbered 30 including the 3 chaperones.

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.

IFTAR DINNER HOSTED: The Turkish Brooklyn community is once again hosting the closing of the RAMADAN fasting period with a sumptuous dinner of Turkish native dishes, sweets and Greek/Turkish folk music tomorrow evening, MONDAY, JULY 21st at 7:30 P.M. in ROSEHALL. Everyone is invited FREE OF CHARGE to share a 'friendship neighbors dinner'. Please make an effort to come, to share, to eat to learn, and to WITNESS A BLESSED PHENOMENON OF BREAKING BREAD TOGETHER. invite your neighbors and friends to join us ....This is our fourth annual dinner. Last year over 160 people attended. SEE YOU AT 7:30 P.M. ???

TODAY! July 20th a special celebration will be held, directly after the Divine Liturgy. YES! You ARE invited to be there! HUSH.... it is still a secret. .... don't tell Father Eugene!

BOY SCOUT CAMP: Our Parish Troop #531 'THE GOLDEN GREEKS' departed for their two week camping experience in nature from JULY 19th, through August 02nd. What a superb adventure for young boys 12 through 18 years of age to live in God's nature and develop their strengths and combat their weaknesses. THIS IS CHARACTER BUILDING AT ITS BEST! Scoutmaster Dean Veroutis and other adult male advisors will escort the young lads on their 'odyssey' in the wooded wilderness. Is your child a part of our scouting program? SIGN UP TODAY! YOUR SON IS WORTHY.

NEW PRECINCT CHIEF: It is with pride and honor that we welcome into our 61st. Precinct "community" the newly appointed DEPUTY INSPECTOR CARLOS VALDEZ. Our faith community has always enjoyed the finest and expertise protection and service of the NEW YORK POLICE DEPARTMENT and our treasured 61st. PRECINCT. We wish the Deputy Inspector Valdez our Blessings for a peaceful, safe and productive tenure in our 'parcel of paradise' called South Brooklyn! Our parishioner GEORGE MASTROKOSTAS formerly Captain of the 61st. Precinct was elevated to DEPUTY INSPECTOR for Brooklyn. Congratulations to both men!

BASILIKO PLANTS: are requested by the altar for up-coming celebrations. If inclined and so disposed, please bring your plantings to church ANY DAY OF THE WEEK to the office for care and placement. Rosemary samplings are also used if you have rooted plantings. We are saving the environment and keeping it 'green'.

NEXT SUNDAY: On July 27th, Father Eugene will be attending and participating in a Divine Liturgy in the CHICAGO METROPOLIS. Our replacement priest will be Father Alexander to whom we will extend our hospitality. The Pastor will be back on office duty Tuesday morning the 29th.

85th, ANNIVERSARY CHURCH JOURNAL: has commenced requesting ads of thanksgiving, memorial tribute, congratulations of business and commercial advertisements. A direct mailing is going out to the community, however AD FORMS are available upon request in the Church Office. This historical volume of commentary is archived at the Church for future generations.... include your family name and salutation.

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 15<sup>TH</sup> 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: + DEMETRIOS KOUTSOGIANNOPOLOS + ANGELO RAVANOS  
+ KONSTANTINOS TSAPELAS

# Happy Birthday Party

Feliz Cumpleanos!

Buona Festa Di Nato!

## Can You Guess? Take The Quiz.

1: Father Eugene? 59   
66   
70   
other (be kind)



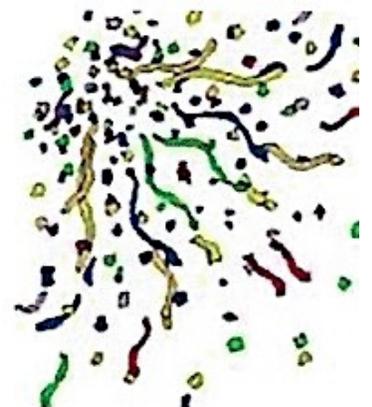
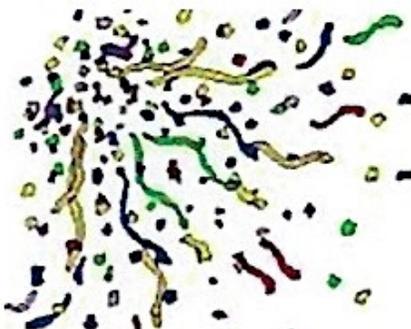
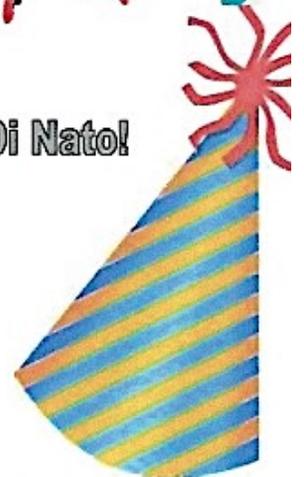
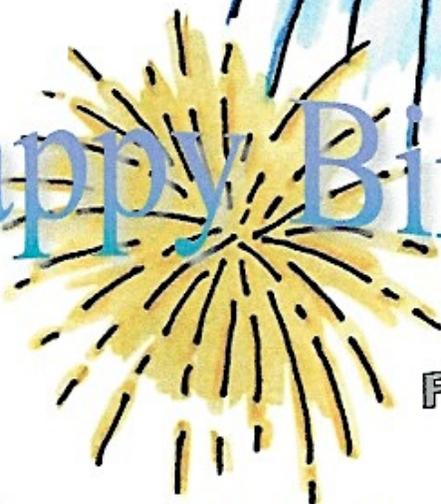
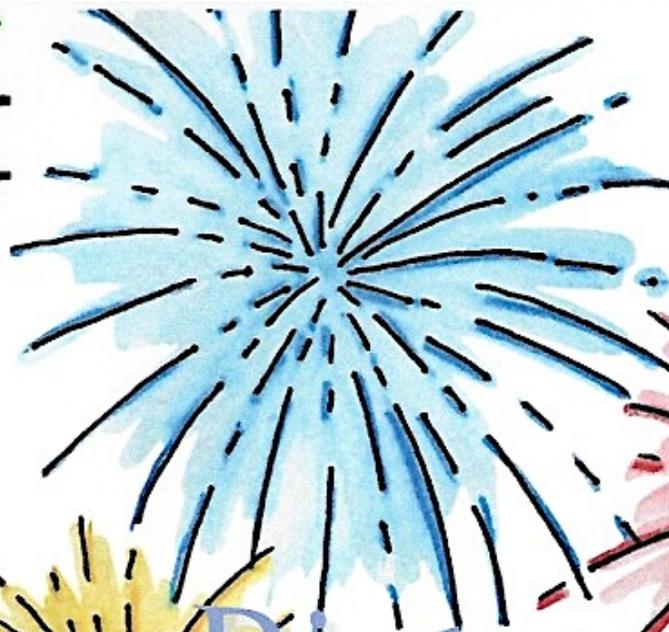
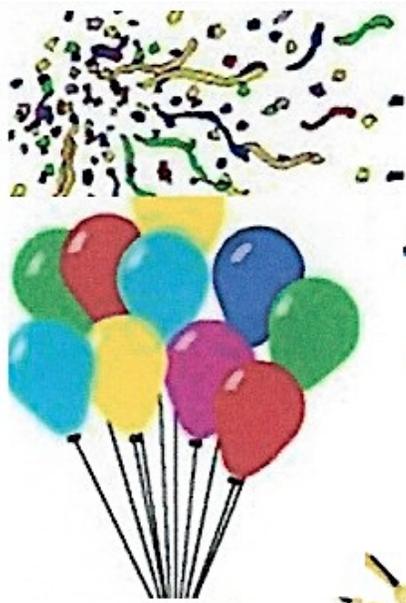
2: Does Father Eugene miss us (the congregation) when he is on vacation? yes   
sometimes   
no

3: If Father Eugene teases you, does that mean he loves you? yes   
maybe   
no

4: What is Father Eugene's baptismal name? Gregory   
Leonidas   
Nicholas

**Chronia Polla!**

**Joyeux Fete!**



—CHRISTIANS IN THE MIDDLE EAST—

*“We are persuaded that it is not arms, but dialogue, pardon and reconciliation that are the only possible means to achieve peace.”*

—RELIGIOUS UNDERSTANDING—

*“We invite all Christians to promote an authentic dialogue with Judaism, Islam and other religious traditions. Indifference and mutual ignorance can only lead to mistrust and unfortunately even conflict.”*

—SAFEGUARDING GOD’S CREATION—

*“Together, we pledge our commitment to raising awareness about the stewardship of creation; we appeal to all people of goodwill to consider ways of living less wastefully and more frugally, manifesting less greed and more generosity for the protection of God’s world and the benefit of His people.”*

Excerpts from  
The Joint Declaration





# ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

## ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



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

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος ΙΖ'<br>Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 719 <sup>α</sup> | Κυριακὴ ΣΤ' Ματθαίου (Ματθ. 9,1-8)<br>20 Ἰουλίου 2014 (2000) | Συντάκτης (f) ἐπίσκοπος<br>Αὔγουστινας Ν. Καντζῆς |
|--|--|---|

## Τὸ φοβερώτερο βάρος

«Εἶπε τῷ παραλυτικῷ· *Θάρσει, τέκνον· ἀφέωνται σοι αἱ ἁμαρτίαι σου*» (Ματθ. 9,2)

**Α**κούσατε, ἀγαπητοί μου, τὸ ἱερό εὐαγγέλιο. Ἦθελα, ἂν μπορούσα, τὸ δίδαγμα του νὰ τὸ φυτέψω μέσα σας ὅπως ὁ γεωργὸς φυτεύει τὸ σπόρο στὴ γῆ. Καὶ ἂν αὐτὸ τὸ ἐνιωθε ὁ κόσμος ὅλος, θὰ ἄλλαζε ἡ ὄψι τῆς γῆς. Μὰ ποιὸ εἶνε αὐτὸ τὸ **δίδαγμα**;

\*\*\*

Πρὶν φθάσουμε σ' αὐτὸ, θὰ σᾶς κάνω ἓνα ἐρώτημα.

**Ἀπ' ὅλα τὰ δυστυχήματα ποιὸ θεωρεῖτε πιὸ μεγάλο;** Ἀπ' τὴν ἀπάντησι, ποὺ θὰ δώσετε, θὰ σᾶς ζυγίσω καὶ θὰ καταλάβω ἂν εἶστε Χριστιανοί. Σύμφωνα μὲ τὸ λόγο τοῦ Θεοῦ, τὴν ἀγία Γραφή, τὸ φοβερώτερο δυστύχημα εἶνε ἡ **ἁμαρτία**.

Ἦταν κάποτε ἐποχὴ, ποὺ οἱ ἄνθρωποι φοβοῦνταν καὶ τὴν πιὸ μικρὴ ἁμαρτία. Οἱ μάνες ἔλεγαν στὰ παιδιά· Μὴν τὸ κάνεις αὐτὸ, εἶνε ἁμαρτία! Κ' ἐκεῖνα ἔτρεμαν. Τότε ἡ γῆ ἦταν γεμάτη ἀγγέλους. **Τώρα κανένας φόβος γιὰ τὴν ἁμαρτία**. Ὑποτιμοῦν τὸν κίνδυνο ἀπὸ αὐτὴν.

Εἶμαστε στὰ χρόνια ποὺ λέει τὸ βιβλίον τοῦ Ἰώβ, ὅτι ὁ ἄνθρωπος θὰ βρῆται σὲ **ἀναισθησία**. Ὅπως πίνει κανεὶς ἓνα ποτήρι κρύο νερὸ τώρα τὸ καλοκαίρι, ἔτσι σήμερα κάνει τὴν πιὸ φοβερὴ ἁμαρτία. Ἡ ἀδικία, τὰ διαζύγια, οἱ ἐκτρώσεις, ἡ ἀσέβεια, ἡ βλασφημία εἶνε σὰν τὸ κρύο νερὸ τοῦ διαβόλου *Ματθ. 23,35*. Δὲν εἶνε τίποτε, λένε. ἡ ἁμαρτία... Σὲ τέτοια ἐποχὴ ζοῦμε.

Καὶ ὁμως ἡ ἁμαρτία εἶνε τὸ φοβερώτερο κακὸ ἀπ' ὅλα· κι ἀπ' τὸν καρκίνο, κι ἀπ' τὴν πυρκαγιά, κι ἀπ' τὸ σεισμό, κι ἀπ' τὸ φαρμάκι τῆς κόμπρας... Ὡ καὶ νὰ ἄνοιγαν τὰ μάτια μας καὶ νὰ βλέπαμε!

Θὰ ποῦν μερικοί, ὅτι τὰ λέω ὑπερβολικά. Ὅχι. Δὲν σᾶς εἶπα οὔτε τὸ ἓνα χιλιοστὸ τῆς

πραγματικότητος. Νὰ ἔχα καιρό, θὰ σᾶς ἀνέλυα πόσα καὶ ποιά κακὰ φέρνει ἡ ἁμαρτία.

Πρῶτα - πρῶτα χτυπάει τὸ **κορμί** τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. Οἱ γιατροὶ τώρα ἄρχισαν νὰ τὸ καταλαβαίνουν καὶ νὰ τὸ παραδέχονται αὐτὸ. Κάτι, ποὺ ἀπὸ πολὺ παλιὰ τὸ λέει ὁ Παρακλητικὸς κανόνας· «*Ἀπὸ τῶν πολλῶν μου ἁμαρτιῶν ἀσθενεῖ τὸ σῶμα, ἀσθενεῖ μου καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ...*».

Ὡ ἡ ἁμαρτία! Εἶνε δύναμι καταστροφῆς, διαφθορᾶς καὶ ἀποσυνθέσεως. Ἀποσυνθέτει ὄχι μόνο καὶ τὸν πιὸ γερὸ ἀνθρώπινο ὄργανισμό, ποὺ μιὰ μέρα θὰ πάη κι αὐτὸς στὸν τάφο, ἀλλὰ καταστρέφει καὶ μεγαλύτερο καὶ πολὺ πιὸ πολύτιμο· καταστρέφει **τὴν ψυχὴ**.

Ἡ ἁμαρτία θολώνει τὸ μυαλὸ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, χτυπάει τὸ συναίσθημα, μολύνει τὴν καρδιά, παίρνει ψαλίδι καὶ κόβει τὰ νεῦρα τῆς ψυχῆς· τὸ δὲ νεῦρο τῆς ψυχῆς εἶνε ἡ **θέλησις**.

Μὲ ἄρρωστη τὴ θέλησι, ὁ ἄνθρωπος μοιάζει σὰν τὸν παραλυτικὸ, ποὺ μένει ἀκίνητος. Βλέπει τὸ καλὸ μπροστά του, καὶ δὲν μπορεῖ νὰ τὸ κάνη. Χτυπᾷ ἡ καμπάνα, κι αὐτὸς **δὲν ἔρχεται στὴν ἐκκλησία**. Ἄλλος πάλι, ἐνῶ χτυπᾷ ἡ πρώτη καμπάνα, χτυπᾷ ἡ δευτέρη καὶ ἡ τρίτη καμπάνα. ἔρχεται ἐκεῖ κατὰ τὸ τέλος τῆς θείας λειτουργίας.

Ὅσοι ἀπὸ σᾶς ἔχετε τὴν καλὴ συνήθεια νὰ ἔρχεστε νωρὶς στὴν ἐκκλησία, νὰ εἶστε εὐλογημένοι. Ὅταν ἔρχεστε νωρὶς, ἀκούτε καὶ τὸν **Ἐξάψαλμο**, τὰ ἔξι λουλούδια τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, ποὺ εἶνε ἓνα μεγαλεῖο.

Πολλὰ βιβλία διάβασα, ἀλλὰ σὰν τὸν Ἐξάψαλμο δὲν εἶδα. Μακάρι νὰ εἶχα χρόνο νὰ τὸν ἐρμηνεύσω. **Ξέρετε τί νοήματα κρύβει;** Μὴ μοῦ μιλάτε γιὰ ἄλλους ποιητὰς, γιὰ Πίνδαρο, Εὐριπίδη καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους. Πέστε μου γιὰ τὸ

Δαυίδ· γι' αὐτὴ τὴν οὐράνια κιθάρα, γι' αὐτὸ τὸ βιολί, γι' αὐτὸ τὸ ἀηδόνι τῆς Ἐκκλησίας.

Λέει κάπου λοιπὸν στὸν Ἐξάψαλμο· «*Οὐκ ἔστιν εἰρήνη ἐν τοῖς ὀστέοις μου ἀπὸ προσώπου τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν μου. ... ὡσεὶ φορτίον βαρὺ ἐβαρύνθησαν ἐπ' ἐμέ*» *Ψαλμ. 137*. Τί θὰ πῆ αὐτό; Ὅτι οἱ ἁμαρτίες εἶνε βουνό, φορτίο βαρὺ, πάνω ἀπ' τὸ κεφάλι μου, καὶ ὑποφέρω ἀπὸ τὸ βάρος τους. Καὶ τὸ λέει αὐτὸ ὄχι ἓνας ἄσχημος, ἀλλὰ ἓνας ἐνδοξος καὶ πλούσιος βασιλιάς, στὸν κολοφῶνα τοῦ μεγαλείου. Ἀναστενάζει ὁ Δαυίδ καὶ φωνάζει· Θεέ μου, ἐλευθέρωσέ με ἀπὸ τὸ βάρος τῆς ἁμαρτίας πού ψυχοπλακώνει τὴν καρδιά μου.

Φορτίο βαρὺ ἢ ἁμαρτία. Μολύβι, πού ἂν τὸ ρίξεις στὴ θάλασσα πάει μὲ ὄρμη στὸν πάτο.

\* \* \*

Ἕνας μεγάλος ζωγράφος ζωγράφισε τὸν ἁμαρτωλὸ σὰν ἀχθοφόρο, σὰν χαμάλη, πού ὁ διάβολος τὸν φόρτωσε φορτίο βαρὺ, καὶ τὸ ἔδεσε πάνω του καλὰ μ' ἓνα συρματοσχίνο. Μετὰ τὸν ἄφησε. Προχώρα, τοῦ λέει, μὲ τὸ φορτίο· καὶ νὰ δοῦμε ποιὸς θὰ σὲ λύσει.

Προσπαθοῦσε ὁ ταλαίπωρος νὰ λυθῆ. Κουράστηκε. Ποτάμι ἔτρεχε ὁ ἰδρώτας του. Ἔπινε κάτω, ἀλλὰ δὲν κατάφερε τίποτε.

Κάποια στιγμή εἶδε νὰ περνοῦν ἀπὸ μπροστά του οἱ μεγάλοι φιλόσοφοι, ὁ Σωκράτης, ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης, ὁ Πλάτων, ἄλλα μεγάλα πνεύματα. Σὰς παρακαλῶ πολὺ, τοὺς εἶπε, λύστε με ἀπὸ τὸ φορτίο! Αὐτοὶ ὅμως κάθονταν καὶ φιλοσοφοῦσαν γιὰ τὸ φορτίο. Τὸ ἐξέταζαν, τὸ ἐρευνοῦσαν, τὸ ζύγιζαν, μὰ κανεὶς τους δὲν μποροῦσε νὰ τοῦ ἀφαιρέσει οὔτε κάτι ἐλάχιστο ἀπὸ τὸ βάρος. Ἦταν ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἀπελπισμένος. Ἀναστενάζε καὶ ἔκλαιγε.

Ἐπὶ τέλους πέρασε κ' ἓνας ἀσκητὴς μὲ τὸ ραβδί του. Αὐτὸς τοῦ εἶπε· Ἄνθρωπέ μου, ἂν θέ'ς νὰ λυτρωθῆς, βλέπεις αὐτὸ τὸ ἀνηφοράκι; Ἀνέβα στὴν κορυφή, καὶ τότε θὰ πέσει ἀπὸ τοὺς ὠμους σου τὸ φορτίο πού ἔχεις. Ὁ ἄνθρωπος πίστεψε στὰ λόγια του. Μπουσουλώντας σιγά - σιγά ἀνέβηκε στὴν κορυφή. Κ' ἐκεῖ τί εἶδε; Εἶδε τὸν Κύριο ἐσταυρωμένο, πού ἔλαμπε περισσότερο ἀπὸ τὸν ἥλιο. Καὶ ὁ Ἐσταυρωμένος τοῦ λέει· «*Δεῦτε πρὸς με πάντες οἱ κοπιῶντες καὶ πεφορτισμένοι, κἀγὼ ἀναπαύσω ὑμᾶς*» *Ματθ. 11:28*. Καὶ πίστεψε ὁ ἄνθρωπος στὸ Χριστὸ καὶ εἶπε· Σὺ εἶσαι ὁ Σωτὴρας τοῦ κόσμου!

Ἐκείνη τὴ στιγμή ἄγγελοι πέταξαν ἀπὸ τὰ οὐράνια, ἔκοψαν τὰ δεσμὰ καὶ ἐλευθέρωσαν τὸν ἄνθρωπο. Αὐτόματως ἔφυγε ἀπὸ τὴν πλάτη του τὸ φορτίο. Ἀκούστηκαν τότε μου-

σικὲς καὶ ἐμβατήρια οὐράνια. Γιατὶ εἶπε ὁ Χριστὸς· «*Χαρὰ ἔσται ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ ἐπὶ ἐνὶ ἁμαρτωλῷ μετανοοῦντι*» *Ματθ. 5*.

\* \* \*

Ἀδέρφια μου, δὲν εἶνε λόγια αὐτά, δὲν εἶνε ποιήσις, δὲν εἶνε ζωγραφία. Εἶνε μιὰ πραγματικότης. Καθένας ἀπὸ μᾶς ἔχει πάνω στοὺς ὠμους του τὶς ἁμαρτίες του. Αὐτὲς εἶνε τὸ μεγαλύτερό μας δυστύχημα, πού ἔχει συνέπειες καὶ πέρα ἀπὸ τὸν τάφο.

Ἀπὸ τὸ Γολγοθᾶ ὁ Χριστὸς μᾶς καλεῖ· **Ἐλάτε**, ἁμαρτωλοὶ ὁδοιπόροι τοῦ κόσμου· γυναῖκες καὶ ἄντρες, μικροὶ καὶ μεγάλοι, πλούσιοι καὶ φτωχοί, ἐλάτε γιὰ νὰ πάρω ἀπὸ τοὺς ὠμους σας τὸ φορτίο καὶ **νὰ σᾶς ξεκουράσω**.

**Δόξα στὸ Χριστό!** Αὐτός, σὰν τὸν μυθικὸ Ἄτλαντα, σηκώνει τὶς ἁμαρτίες τοῦ κόσμου.

Τὸ φάρμακο κατὰ τῆς ἁμαρτίας εἶνε ἓνα· ἢ ἀκράδαντη **πίστι στὸ Χριστό**. Ποιά πίστι; ὅτι ὁ Χριστὸς εἶνε ὄχι ἓνας ἀπλὸς ἄνθρωπος, ἀλλὰ ὁ ἀληθινὸς Θεὸς καὶ Σωτὴρας τοῦ κόσμου.

Κοίταξε τὸ ἅγιο ποτήριο μὲ πίστι. Μιὰ σταγόνα ἀπ' τὸ **αἷμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ** καίει τὰ ἁμαρτήματα ὄλου τοῦ κόσμου καὶ μᾶς καθαρίζει ἀπὸ κάθε ἁμαρτία. Αὐτὸ εἶνε τὸ θεμέλιο τῆς πίστεώς μας, αὐτὸ ἢ ἐλπίδα μας.

Εἶπα στὴν ἀρχή, ὅτι ὄλη ἡ εὐαγγελικὴ περικοπή ἔχει ἓνα δίδαγμα. Ἀσθενὴς καὶ παράλυτος, πού εἶχε μολύβι τὸ κορμί του, ἀλλὰ καὶ πιὸ μολύβι τὴν ψυχὴ του, ἦταν ὁ παραλυτικὸς τοῦ εὐαγγελίου. Ἐμεῖς βλέπουμε τὸ κορμί του, ὁ Χριστὸς βλέπει τὴν ψυχὴ του. Γι' αὐτὸ δὲν τοῦ λέει πρῶτα τὸ «*Ἐγειρε καὶ περιπάτει*», ἀλλὰ τὸ «*Ἀφέωνταί σου αἱ ἁμαρτίαι σου*» *Ματθ. 9:2*. Λοιπὸν, **μεγαλύτερη προσοχὴ νὰ ἔχουμε στὴν ψυχὴ ἀπ' ὅ,τι στὸ σῶμα**.

Ἡ χάρις τοῦ Θεοῦ ν' ἀνοίξη τὰ μάτια μας καὶ νὰ φυλαχθοῦμε ἀπ' τὸ κεντρί τῆς ἁμαρτίας. Ὁ ἀπόστολος Παῦλος λέει· «*Ἀποστύγουντες τὸ πονηρὸν*» *Ῥωμ. 7*, μίσος δηλαδὴ κατὰ τοῦ κακοῦ. Φεῦγε ἀπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτία, λέει καὶ ἡ Παλαιὰ Διαθήκη, «*ὡς ἀπὸ προσώπου ὄφως*» *Ἐξ. 34*, σὰν ἀπὸ φίδι. Κι ὅταν πέφτουμε σὲ ἁμάρτημα, νὰ τὸ θεωροῦμε μεγάλο δυστύχημα τῆς ζωῆς σας. Ἀλλὰ **νὰ μὴν ἀπελπιστοῦμε**. Διότι φτάνει μιὰ σταγόνα ἀπὸ τὸ αἷμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ γιὰ νὰ μᾶς ξεπλύνῃ. Ὁ Χριστὸς, πού δέχτηκε ὄλους τοὺς ἁμαρτωλοὺς, θὰ δεχτῆ κ' ἐμᾶς καὶ θὰ μᾶς πῆ· «*Θάρσει, τέκνον· ἀφέωνταί σοι αἱ ἁμαρτίαι σου*» *Ματθ. 9:2*.

Τῆς ἀφέσεως αὐτῆς εἶθε νὰ τύχουμε ὅλοι ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ Σωτῆρι ἡμῶν· 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**

### *Elijah's (Elias) Journey*

When the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind, he and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here, please. The LORD has sent me on to Bethel." Elisha replied, "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So they went down to Bethel. The guild prophets who were in Bethel went out to Elisha and asked him, "Do you know that today the LORD will take your master from you?" He replied, "Yes, I know that. Be still."

Elijah said to him, "Stay here, please. The LORD has sent me on to the Jordan." Elisha replied, "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So the two went on together. Fifty of the guild prophets followed and stood facing them at a distance, while the two of them stood next to the Jordan.

Elijah took his mantle, rolled it up and struck the water: it divided, and the two of them crossed over on dry ground. When they had

crossed over, Elijah said to Elisha, "Request whatever I might do for you, before I am taken from you." Elisha answered, "May I receive a double portion of your spirit." He replied, "You have asked something that is not easy. Still, if you see me taken up from you, your wish will be granted; otherwise not." As they walked on still conversing, a fiery chariot and fiery horses came between the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind, and Elisha saw it happen.

He cried out, "My father! my father! Israel's chariot and steeds!" Then he saw him no longer. He gripped his own garment, tore it into two pieces, and picked up the mantle which had fallen from Elijah. Then he went back and stood at the bank of the Jordan. Wielding the mantle which had fallen from Elijah, he struck the water and said, "The LORD, the God of Elijah - where is he now?" He struck the water: it divided, and he crossed over. (2 Kings 2:1-15)

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