



DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN
DISTRICT

JUBILEE 85TH ANNIVERSARY

THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN June 22nd, 2014

V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST SECOND SUNDAY OF MATTHEW



Icon of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist -- June 24th

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St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 2:10-16

Prokeimenon. Mode 1. Psalm 32.22,1

Let your mercy, O Lord, be upon us. Verse: Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous.

Brethren, glory and honor and peace for every one who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. For God shows no partiality. All who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified. When Gentiles who have not the law do by nature what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness and their conflicting thoughts accuse or perhaps excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.

Πρὸς Ῥωμαίους 2:10-16

Προκείμενον. ᾠχος α΄. ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 32.22,1

Γένοιτο, Κύριε, τὸ ἔλεός σου ἐφ' ἡμᾶς. Στίχ. Ἀγαλλιᾶσθε δίκαιοι ἐν Κυρίῳ

Ἀδελφοί, δόξα δὲ καὶ τιμὴ καὶ εἰρήνη παντὶ τῷ ἐργαζομένῳ τὸ ἀγαθόν, Ἰουδαίῳ τε πρῶτον καὶ Ἑλληνι· οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν προσωποληψία παρὰ τῷ θεῷ. Ὅσοι γὰρ ἀνόμως ἤμαρτον, ἀνόμως καὶ ἀπολοῦνται· καὶ ὅσοι ἐν νόμῳ ἤμαρτον, διὰ νόμου κριθήσονται· οὐ γὰρ οἱ ἀκροαταὶ τοῦ νόμου δίκαιοι παρὰ τῷ θεῷ, ἀλλ' οἱ ποιηταὶ τοῦ νόμου δικαιωθήσονται. Ὅταν γὰρ ἔθνη τὰ μὴ νόμον ἔχοντα φύσει τὰ τοῦ νόμου ποιῇ, οὗτοι, νόμον μὴ ἔχοντες, ἑαυτοῖς εἰσὶν νόμος· οἵτινες ἐνδείκνυνται τὸ ἔργον τοῦ νόμου γραπτὸν ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις αὐτῶν, συμμαρτυρούσης αὐτῶν τῆς συνειδήσεως, καὶ μεταξὺ ἀλλήλων τῶν λογισμῶν κατηγορούντων ἢ καὶ ἀπολογουμένων, ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ὅτε κρινεῖ ὁ θεὸς τὰ κρυπτὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιόν μου, διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

2nd Sunday of Matthew

The Gospel of Matthew 4:18-23

At that time, as Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." Immediately they left their nets and followed him. And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left their boat and their father, and followed him. And he went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people.

2nd Sunday of Matthew

Κατὰ Ματθαῖον 4.18-23

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, περιπατῶν δὲ παρὰ τὴν θάλασσαν τῆς Γαλιλαίας εἶδε δύο ἀδελφούς, Σίμωνα τὸν λεγόμενον Πέτρον καὶ Ἀνδρέαν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ, βάλλοντας ἀμφίβληστρον εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν· ἦσαν γὰρ ἀλιεῖς· καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· δεῦτε ὀπίσω μου καὶ ποιήσω ὑμᾶς ἀλιεῖς ἀνθρώπων· οἱ δὲ εὐθέως ἀφέντες τὰ δίκτυα ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ. Καὶ προβὰς ἐκεῖθεν εἶδεν ἄλλους δύο ἀδελφούς, Ἰάκωβον τὸν τοῦ Ζεβεδαίου καὶ Ἰωάννην τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ, ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ μετὰ Ζεβεδαίου τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτῶν καταρτίζοντας τὰ δίκτυα αὐτῶν, καὶ ἐκάλεσεν αὐτούς· οἱ δὲ εὐθέως ἀφέντες τὸ πλοῖον καὶ τὸν πατέρα αὐτῶν ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ. Καὶ περιῆγεν ὅλην τὴν Γαλιλαίαν ὁ Ἰησοῦς διδάσκων ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς αὐτῶν καὶ κηρύσσων τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας καὶ θεραπεύων πᾶσαν νόσον καὶ πᾶσαν μαλακίαν ἐν τῷ λαῷ.

SERVICES THIS WEEK :

Tuesday	June 24th :	Feast of Saint John the Baptist Liturgy	9:30	A.M.
Wednesday,	June 25th ,	Prayer and Healing Session	6:30	- 8:00 P.M.

UP-COMING LITURGICAL EVENTS:

Saint John the Baptist	VESPER,	Monday, June 23, 7 P.M	GRAMERCY PARK, N.Y.C.
Saint Paul	VESPER,	Saturday, June 28, 7 P.M.	Saint Paul Cathedral HEMPSTEAD, L.I.
Saint Peter	VESPER,	Saturday, June 28, 7.P.M.	Saint Petros Church , BRONX , N.Y.

AGAPE COFFEE FELLOWSHIP : is being hosted by the PARISH COUNCIL in Whitehall in preparation for the opening of the SPRING GENERAL ASSEMBLY at 12:30 P.M. Please sign in for the quorum.

TODAY: we are honoring a few special students from our CATECHETICAL SUNDAY SCHOOL who have shown dedication, diligence, and good attendance for the year long program of Christian studies. Congratulations to the students and equally to the parents who are nurturing them with the 'Faith of their fathers'. Special thanks to the CO-DIRECTORS of the SUNDAY SCHOOL, MS. CHRISTINE HATZOPULOS and MS. MARIA APERGIS for continued service to our youth. The beginning of wisdom is the Respect for God!

.MARK YOUR CALENDAR: The beautiful shrine church for healing of THE HOLY ANARGYROI (Saints Cosmas and Damian) will celebrate the Great Vesper of the Holy Un-mercenaries and Physicians on:
MONDAY EVENING - JUNE 30TH. AT 7:30 P.M.
 1547 SAINT NICHOLAS AVENUE, N.Y.C.
 212- 568-0367

The service is a remarkable treat of Byzantine ritual, chanting, tradition and healing presence. Hope to see you there! The Kandili healing oil is available to all for distribution.

HOISTING OF THE NEW FLAGS: for the community PLAZA will take place on Sunday June 29th, directly after the Divine Liturgy at 12:00 noon. We are grateful for the generosity of Larry and Effie Coyle, Constantina Daniels, Christian Berenson, Kay and Maria Diamond, William and Susan Jannace., Zoe and Elliot Tatkow. We encourage the donors to be present for the lifting of the colors of the UNITED STATES of AMERICA, GREECE and the REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS.

CHOIR MEMBERS HOSTED: Our beloved choir and organist were hosted to a traditional Greek dinner at YIASOU RESTAURANT on the Sheepshead Bay waterfront on Thursday evening through the generosity of the Parish Council. This is a simple expression of gratitude to the many voices that beautify our services week after week and on the high holy day observances . The choir will sing the Liturgy through Sunday, June 29th and return after summer recess on Sunday, September 07th. Have a happy and healthful vacation!

A.H.E.P.A. BARBECUE: will be hosted on the Church Plaza on Monday June 23rd, at 7:00 P.M. The Coney Island Chapter #200 invites everyone to join them for food , drink, dancing and Greek music under the stars – OPEN FREE TO ALL! We salute the Order of A.H.E.P.A. for this outreach.

FATHER'S DAY THANKS: are extended to the RUSSIAN COMMUNITY and the UKRAINIAN COMMUNITY who showed their appreciation to their 'spiritual father' our Pastor FR. EUGENE. The presentations were made at the conclusion of the Liturgy last week from representatives of each group. The fraternal embrace was exchanged between the clergy. HONOR THY MOTHER AND FATHER.

RADIO MINISTRY: Each Saturday at 1:15 PM Fr. Eugene hosts and produces the radio broadcast MATTERS OF CONSCIENCE NOW IN ITS 14TH YEAR OF BROADCASTING LIVE ON WNYE 91.5 COSMOS FM, with listener telephone participation. Subjects of interest regarding Greek Orthodox theology, faith and practice, as well as secular topics confronting the nation and the world are discussed. Tune in and join the dialogue by calling 718-204-8900. Check our live audio at LIVESTREAMINGPLAYER . The website address. W.W.W.gaepis.org (Click live audio)



Saints Peter And Paul Are Portrayed In The Fraternal Embrace Of Christian Agape, They Were Initially Quite Confrontational With Each Other. Peter Was Convinced That The Christ Only Came For The Salvation Of The Jews. Whereas Paul Preached The Conversion Of All The Earth To Christ. In Accommodation They reconciled With Outreach To Everyone, Jew And Gentile Alike.



Saint Romanos The Melodist Is The Patron Saint Of Our Choir. He Was Filled With Grace By The Panagia (Blessed Virgin Mary) And The Holy Spirit To, Compose The Great Volumes of Ecclesiastical Music In Byzantine Notation That We Treasure.



ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



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

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος ΚΑ' Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 1083 ²	Κυριακὴ Β' (Β' Ματθ.) (Ῥωμ. 2,10-16) 22 Ἰουνίου 2014 (2004)	Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος Αὐγουστίνος Ν. Καντιώτης
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Συνείδησις

«... Οἵτινες ἐνδείκνυνται τὸ ἔργον τοῦ νόμου γραπτὸν ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις αὐτῶν, συμμαρτυροῦσης αὐτῶν τῆς συνειδήσεως καὶ μεταξύ ἀλλήλων τῶν λογισμῶν κατηγορούντων ἢ καὶ ἀπολογουμένων» (Ῥωμ. 2,15)

Αυτά, ἀγαπητοί μου, εἶνε λόγια τοῦ ἀποστόλου ποὺ ἀκούσαμε σήμερα. Λόγια ποὺ δὲν ὑπάρχει ζυγαριὰ νὰ τὰ ζυγίσῃ. Εἶνε χρυσάφι, ἀκριβὰ νομίσματα. Ἀλλὰ πρέπει νὰ τὰ κάνουμε λιανά, νὰ τὰ ἐξηγήσουμε.

Ἐάν, ἀγαπητοί μου, ὑπάρχη μιὰ ἀλήθεια ποὺ λάμπει σὰν τὸν ἥλιο, αὐτὴ εἶνε ὅτι **ὑπάρχει Θεός**. Ἀποδείξεις; Ἀναρίθμητες. Ἀποδείξεις ὅτι ὑπάρχει Θεὸς εἶνε **τὰ ἔργα του**. Ὁ ἥλιος π.χ., ποὺ εἶνε ἓνα τεράστιο ἀνεξάντλητο ἐργοστάσιο ἠλεκτρισμοῦ· τὸ φεγγάρι, ποὺ φωτίζει γλυκὰ τὴ νύχτα· τὰ ἀμέτρητα ἀστέρια τοῦ στερεώματος· ἡ γῆ αὐτὴ ποὺ κατοικοῦμε μὲ ὅλο τὸν πλοῦτο της· ἡ θάλασσα ἢ μεγάλη, ποὺ εἶνε γεμάτη ψάρια· ἡ ξηρὰ ὅπου φυτρώνουν τόσα φυτὰ καὶ ζοῦν τόσα ζῶα μικρὰ καὶ μεγάλα· τί λέω; ἓνα κουκκί ἄμμου, ἓνα μόριο τῆς ὕλης ποὺ δὲν τό 'χουμε γιὰ τίποτα, κλείνει μέσα του τέτοια δύναμι, ποὺ μπορεῖ νὰ κινήσῃ ἓνα ὑπερωκεάνιο ἢ νὰ τρυπήσῃ ἓνα βουνό. Ὅλα λοιπὸν κηρύττουν τὴν ὕπαρξιν τοῦ Θεοῦ. «Ὡς ἐμεγαλύνθη τὰ ἔργα σου, Κύριε· πάντα ἐν σοφίᾳ ἐποίησας» (Ψαλμ. 103,24).

Ἀλλὰ καὶ ἂν ἀκόμα δὲν ὑπῆρχαν ὅλα αὐτά, ἔφτανε, ἀγαπητοί μου, ἓνα καὶ μόνο πρᾶγμα ν' ἀποδείξῃ ὅτι ὑπάρχει Θεός. Εἶνε **μιὰ φωνή**. Ποιὸς δὲν τὴν ἔχει ἀκούσει; Κι ὁ φτωχὸς κι ὁ πλούσιος, κι ὁ ἐγγράμματος κι ὁ ἀπαιδευτος, ὁ κάθε ἄνθρωπος. Εἶνε φωνὴ ποὺ δὲν ἔρχεται οὔτε ἀπ' τὰ οὐράνια οὔτε ἀπ' τὰ βάθη τῆς γῆς· ἔρχεται μέσα ἀπὸ τὴν καρδιά. Ἡ μυστηριώδης αὐτὴ φωνὴ ποὺ μᾶς κάνει νὰ συγκλονιζώμεθα, ἢ ἀνερμήνευτος αὐτὴ φωνὴ ποὺ κάνει νὰ σειώνται θρόνοι, λέγεται **συνείδησις**.

Γιὰ τὴν συνείδησις ὁμιλεῖ σήμερα ὁ ἀπόστολος Παῦλος. Ἄν πᾶμε, λέει, καὶ στὰ ἔθνη ὅπου δὲν πάτησε κήρυκας καὶ δὲν ἀκούστηκε

ἡ ἀλήθεια, κ' ἐκεῖ ἀκόμα, **στοὺς ἀγρίους**, χωρὶς νὰ 'χουν ἀκούσει τὸ εὐαγγέλιο, θὰ βροῦμε μέσα τους νὰ ὑπάρχη κάτι· καὶ αὐτὸ εἶνε ἡ συνείδησις, ποὺ τοὺς κάνει νὰ ἐκτελοῦν κι αὐτοί, ἔστω ὑποτυπωδῶς, τὸ θέλημα τοῦ Θεοῦ.

–Μὰ **τί εἶνε** αὐτὴ ἡ συνείδησις;

Ἄνθρωπε, **κάνεις τὸ καλό**; Δίνεις ἓνα ποτήρι νερὸ σ' ἓνα διψασμένο; Μοιράζεσαι τὸ ψωμί σου μὲ κάποιον ποὺ πεινᾷ; Δείχνεις τὸ δρόμο σ' ἓνα τυφλό; Πᾶς στὸ νοσοκομεῖο ἓνα μπουκέτο λουλούδια σ' ἓναν ἄρρωστο; Ἐπισκέπτεσαι στὴ φυλακὴ ἓνα κρατούμενο ποὺ ὅλοι τὸν ἔχουν ἐγκαταλείψει; Ὑποστηρίζεις στὸ δικαστήριον τὸ φτωχαδάκι, ποὺ εἶνε ἔτοιμοι νὰ τὸ φᾶνε οἱ ἰσχυροὶ τῆς ἡμέρας; Βλέπεις ἄνθρωπο ποὺ τὸν παρέσυρε τὸ ποτάμι ἢ τ' ἀφρισμένα κύματα τῆς θαλάσσης, καὶ πέφτεις νὰ τὸν σώσης;... Κάνεις ἓνα ἀπ' αὐτὰ τὰ καλά; Προσπαθεῖς νὰ τηρήσῃς τὸ θεῖο νόμο, νὰ ἐκτελέσῃς τὰ καθήκοντα ἀπέναντι στὸν ἑαυτό σου, στὴν οἰκογένειά σου, στὴν πατρίδα, ἀπέναντι στὸ Θεό; Ἐ, ὅταν τὰ κάνης αὐτά, μέσ' στὴν καρδιά σου αἰσθάνεσαι – τί; Ἄς φωνάζουν οἱ ἄπιστοι, ἄς λένε ὅ,τι θέλουν, – ἐδῶ πῶς τὸ ἐξηγοῦν· ἄμα κάνης τὸ καλό, τὸ βράδου ἐκεῖνο κοιμᾶσαι ἠσυχος. Ἄς μὴν ἔχης στρῶμα, ἄς ξαπλώσῃς πάνω στὴν ἄμμουδιὰ καὶ στὰ χαλίκια· **παράδεισο ἔχεις μέσα σου**. Γιατὶ ἀκοῦς μιὰ φωνὴ ἀπὸ μέσα σου σὰν οὐράνια μουσικὴ, σὰν νὰ κελαηδοῦν χιλιάδες ἀηδόνια καὶ νὰ λένε· Δόξα σ' αὐτὸν ποὺ κάνει τὸ καλό! αὐτὸ δηλαδὴ ποὺ λέει ὁ ἀπόστολος Παῦλος· «**Δόξα καὶ τιμὴ καὶ εἰρήνη παντὶ τῶ ἐργαζομένῳ τὸ ἀγαθόν**» (Ῥωμ. 2,10).

Ἀλλὰ δὲν κάνεις τὸ καλό; Ἐλεύθερος εἶσαι. **Κάνεις τὸ κακό**; Ποιό κακό; Ἄντὶ νὰ βοηθᾷς τὸν ἄλλο, ἀρπάζεις ἀπ' τὸ στόμα του τὸ λίγο ψωμί ποὺ ἔχει; Ἀποφεύγεις νὰ βοηθή-

σης τὸ δυστυχισμένο; Εἶσαι τεχνίτης καὶ δὲν θέλεις νὰ μάθης στὸν ἄλλο τὴν τέχνη σου; Ξέρεις τὸ φυλακισμένο καὶ δὲν πηγαίνεις νὰ τὸν ἐπισκεφθῆς; ἢ τὸν ἄρρωστο καὶ δὲν τὸν πλησιάζεις; ἢ μολύνεις τὸ κορμί σου, ποῦ σοῦ τὸ ἔδωσε ὁ Θεὸς νὰ ἔνε μιὰ καθαρὴ λαμπάδα ποῦ θὰ προσφέρῃς στὸν Κύριο; (μερικοὶ τάζουν λαμπάδες σὰν τὸ μπόι τους· ἢ καλύπτεται λαμπάδα ποῦ θέλει ὁ Θεὸς εἶνε τὸ σῶμα μας) Μολύνεις λοιπὸν τὸ κορμί με πορνείες, μοιχεῖες, ἀκαθαρσίες; Μπαίνεις στὸ σπίτι τοῦ ἄλλου καὶ ἀτιμάζεις τὴ γυναῖκα ἢ τὸ κορίτσι του; Πᾶς στὸ δικαστήριον καὶ ἀπλώνεις τὸ βρωμερό σου χέρι πάνω στὸ Εὐαγγέλιον καὶ παίρνεις ψεύτικο ὄρκον, καὶ κλείνεις τὸν ἀθῶον στὴ φυλακὴ καὶ βγάζεις ἔξω τὸν ἐγκληματία; Ἀρπάζεις, κλέβεις, μολύνεις τὰ χέρια σου με ἀδικίες; Μολύνεις τὴ γλῶσσα σου με ψέματα, κατακρίσεις, συκοφαντίες καὶ διαβολές; Μολύνεις με τὸ φοβερὸτερο ἁμάρτημα, τῆς βλασφημίας; Ἀμελεῖς τὰ καθήκοντά σου; Χτυπάει ἢ καμπάνα τὴν Κυριακὴν κ' ἐσὺ πᾶς γιὰ κυνήγι ἢ ψάρεμα, ἢ πᾶς ἐκδρομῆ, καὶ στὴν ἐκκλησίαν δὲν πατᾶς παρὰ μόνο ἂν ἔχη κανένα μνημόσυνο; (Ἀλλὰ κάθε Κυριακὴ εἶνε μνημόσυνο, τὸ μνημόσυνο τοῦ Χριστοῦ· αὐτὸ σημαίνουν τὰ λόγια τῆς θείας Λειτουργίας «Μεμνημένοι τοίνυν ... τοῦ σταυροῦ, τοῦ τάφου, τῆς τριήμερου ἀναστάσεως, τῆς εἰς οὐρανοὺς ἀναβάσεως...»). Ἔρχονται οἱ μεγάλες μέρες καὶ δὲν πᾶς νὰ ἐξομολογηθῆς τὰ ἁμαρτήματά σου, καὶ ζῆς μιὰ ζωὴ χωρὶς Θεό; Τότε, ἅμα κἀνὴς τὸ κακό, μέσα σου ἔχεις στενοχώρια. Δὲν πᾶς νὰ ξαπλώνης σὲ πούπουλεια στρώματα, δὲν πᾶς νὰ κατοικῆς σὲ παλάτια, δὲν πᾶς νὰ ἔχῃς τοῦ κόσμου τὰ χρήματα; **Δυστυχισμένος εἶσαι.** Ὅπως λέει ὁ ἀπόστολος, «*θλίψεις καὶ στενοχωρία*» *πάνω σ' αὐτόν «ποῦ κατεργάζεται τὸ κακό»* (ἔδ. 2,3).

Λένε γιὰ κάποιον ποῦ σκότωσε τὸν ἀδερφό του κ' ἔγινε αὐτὸς βασιλιάς, ὅτι πῆγε νὰ κοιμηθῆ. Τὰ μεσάνυχτα, ἀκούει κάτι καὶ βλέπει μιὰ σκιά. Ἦταν ἡ σκιά τοῦ ἀδερφοῦ του· κρατοῦσε στὰ χέρια του ἓνα ποτήρι γεμᾶτο αἷμα, τὸν πλησίασε καὶ τοῦ ἔλεγε: **Ἀδελφέ, «πίε τὸ αἷμα τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου!»**. Δὲν μπόρεσε νὰ ἡσυχάσῃ.

Φοβερό πρᾶγμα ἢ συνειδήσι. Γι' αὐτὸ εἶπα φτάνει αὐτὴ ν' ἀποδείξῃ, ὅτι ὑπάρχει Θεός.

* * *

Ἀδελφοί μου· σήμερα ὅλα φαίνονται διαλυμένα. Οἱ ἔμποροι σοῦ λένε· Κρίσι στὸ ἐμπόριο... Οἱ ναυτικοί· Κρίσι στὰ καράβια... Οἱ τραπεζίτες· Κρίσι στὸ χρηματιστήριον... Οἱ διπλω-

μάτες τῶν Ἠνωμένων Ἐθνῶν· Διεθνῆς κρίσις... Ὑπάρχει βέβαια καὶ ἐμπορικὴ κρίσις, καὶ ναυτικὴ κρίσις, καὶ οἰκονομικὴ κρίσις, καὶ παγκόσμιος κρίσις. Ἀλλὰ πίσω ἀπ' ὅλα αὐτά, ἀδέρφια μου, εἶνε ἡ **κρίσις τῆς συνειδήσεως!** Ζοῦμε στὴν πιὸ φοβερὴ ἐποχὴ ἀπὸ ἠθικῆς καὶ θρησκευτικῆς πλευρᾶς. Ὁ διάβολος σφυρίζει στ' αὐτιά ὄλων· Δὲ βαριέσαι! μιᾶς σήμερα γιὰ συνειδήσι; ποιὸς μπορεῖ νὰ ζῆσῃ με τὸ Εὐαγγέλιον;... Καὶ στὸ φτωχαδάκι λέει· –Δὲ βαριέσαι, καημένε! δὲ βλέπεις τὸν ἄλλο ποῦ ὄχι ἀπλῶς πλούτισε, ἀλλὰ ἔγινε μεγάλος ἐφοπλιστής;... Ἔρχεται καὶ στὴν τίμια κόρη καὶ τῆς λέει· –Τί κάθου ἐσὺ ἔτσι; βγές, διασκέδασε, ξεγυμνώσου. Τί κέρδισες με τὸ Εὐαγγέλιον καὶ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν; Δὲ βλέπεις τὴν ἄλλην;... Στὸν ἐργάτη λέει· –Τί πᾶς με τὸ σταυρό; Πάρε στὰ χέρια δυναμίτες καὶ τίναξέ τους στὸν ἀέρα... Καὶ στὸν καθένα λέει· –Δὲν ὑπάρχει τίποτα, μὴν ἀκοῦς παπᾶδες. Ὑλὴ καὶ μόνο ὕλη· τί θὰ πῆ συνειδήσι, τί θὰ πῆ Θεός;...

Ἀδελφοί μου· «*ὄσοι πιστοί*», «*στῶμεν καλῶς!*». Ἄς μὴ πιστεύουν οἱ ἄπιστοι· δικαίωμά τους. Ἐμεῖς νὰ σταθοῦμε στὰ πόδια μας εὐλικρινεῖς, με **συνειδήσι Θεοῦ**. Προτιμότερο τίμιοι με τὸ Χριστό, παρὰ κλέφτες με τὸ διάβολο. Κ' ἐσὺ κορίτσι μου, προτιμότερο ταπεινὴ καὶ ἀγνή σὰν τὴν Παναγίαν, παρὰ μιὰ στολισμένη πόρνη. Νὰ μείνουμε κοντὰ στὴν Ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ Χριστοῦ. Κι ἂν ἀκόμα ὁ διάβολος μᾶς στρώσῃ δρόμον με χρυσάφι, ἐμεῖς νὰ προτιμήσουμε τὸ στενὸ μονοπάτι τοῦ Χριστοῦ μας.

Εὐχομαι ὅλοι ν' ἀποκτήσουμε καὶ νὰ φυλάξουμε **καθαρὴ συνειδήσι**. Μὴν κάνουμε τίποτα ἀντίθετο με τὴ φωνὴ τῆς. Νὰ τὴ ρωτᾶμε καὶ νὰ τὴν ἀκοῦμε. Διαφορετικά, ἢ συνειδήσι εἶνε σαράκι ποῦ τρώει τὸν ἄνθρωπον ὅπως τὸ σκουλήκι τὸ δέντρο· εἶνε κεντρὶ ποῦ πληγώνει χειρότερα ἀπὸ τὸ σκορπιό· εἶνε φίδι ποῦ δαγκώνει· εἶνε σπαθὶ πάνω ἀπ' τὸ κεφάλι· ἢ συνειδήσι εἶνε εἰσαγγελεὺς ποῦ ἀπευθύνει κατηγορῶ.

Ἄς προσέξουμε λοιπὸν, ἀδελφοί μου. Ἄς ζήσουμε με τὸ Εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ. Ἄς κρατήσουμε τὴν ὀρθόδοξον πίστιν. Μὴ δώσουμε τὴν ψυχὴν μας. Κι ἂν ἀκόμη ὁ διάβολος μᾶς προσφέρῃ τὰ πλούτη τοῦ κόσμου, ἐμεῖς φτωχοὶ πάνω στὰ βράχια μας –ἢ Ἐλλάς ὑπῆρξε πάντοτε φτωχή–, μὴ ξεπουλήσουμε τὴν τιμὴν μας. **Χίλιες φορές φτωχοὶ με τὸ Χριστό παρὰ ἑκατομμυριοῦχοι με τὸ διάβολο**. Δὲν θέλουμε τὰ ἑκατομμύριά του. Νὰ μείνουμε ὡς τὸ τέλος με **ἀγαθὴ συνειδήσι**, δοξάζοντες Πατέρα, Υἱὸν καὶ ἅγιον Πνεῦμα εἰς αἰῶνας· ἀμήν.

(†) **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

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

Celebrating the Birth of John the Baptist

The Bible gives us no figure more isolated than John the Baptist, he does not quite fit either the Old or New Testament. ... One dare not forget that according to the infancy narrative the one who came after sanctified His precursor, that is, equipped him for his task, already in his mother's womb.

We glimpse here an event that applies throughout the entire Old Covenant. After all, according to Paul, we see Jesus accompanying His wandering people as a spiritual rock offering water in the desert (1 Cor 10:4), and, according to the Letter to the Hebrews, Moses preferred the humiliation of Christ to the riches of Egypt (Heb 11:26).

Yet the calling of John in his mother's womb takes place explicitly at a specific event, when two women met, and was expressed in equally

concrete terms: "You child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High and shall go before the Lord to prepare his way" (Lk 1:76).

Without question John was aware of his personal vocation as he grew up, and it is out of his awareness of having been called that he discovered his certain symbol, baptizing in the Jordan River. ... John releases his followers to follow Jesus; he does not begrudge them their larger following (Jn 3: 26-27); indeed, he rejoices that his task declines while the One Who is Coming grows. ... John's "joy which is now full" (Jn 3:29) shows how much he belongs - precisely as the one who lets go - to the wedding festivities of the New Covenant.

Father Han Urs van Balthasar

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