

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
TWELFTH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW



Icon of the Deposition of the Zone (Belt) of the Virgin Mary -- August 31st

St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 9:1-7

Prokeimenon. Mode 3. Luke 1: 46-48

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. Verse: For he has regarded the humility of his servant. BRETHREN, the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly sanctuary. For a tent was prepared, the outer one, in which were the lampstand and the table and the bread of the Presence; it is called the Holy Place. Behind the second curtain stood a tent called the Holy of Holies, having the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, which contained a golden urn holding the manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail. These preparations having thus been made, the priests go continually into the outer tent, performing their ritual duties; but into the second only the high priest goes, and he but once a year, and not without taking blood which he offers for himself and for the errors of the people.

Πρὸς Ἑβραίους 9:1-7

Προκείμενον. ᾠχος γ. Λουκάν 1:46-48

Μεγαλύνει ἡ ψυχὴ μου τὸν Κύριον, καὶ ἠγαλλίασε τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐπὶ τῷ Θεῷ τῷ σωτῆρί μου. Στίχ. Ὅτι ἐπέβλεψεν ἐπὶ τὴν ταπεινωσιν τῆς δούλης αὐτοῦ. Ἀδελφοί, εἶχεν ἡ πρώτη σκηνὴ δικαιοῦματα λατρείας, τό τε ἅγιον κοσμικόν. Σκηνὴ γὰρ κατασκευάσθη ἡ πρώτη, ἐν ἣ ἦ τε λυχνία καὶ ἡ τράπεζα καὶ ἡ πρόθεσις τῶν ἄρτων, ἣτις λέγεται ἅγια. Μετὰ δὲ τὸ δεῦτερον καταπέτασμα σκηνὴ ἡ λεγομένη ἅγια ἁγίων, χρυσοῦν ἔχουσα θυμιατήριον, καὶ τὴν κιβωτὸν τῆς διαθήκης περικεκαλυμμένην πάντοθεν χρυσίῳ, ἐν ἣ στάμνος χρυσοῦ ἔχουσα τὸ μάννα, καὶ ἡ ῥάβδος Ἀαρὼν ἡ βλαστήσασα, καὶ αἱ πλάκες τῆς διαθήκης· ὑπεράνω δὲ αὐτῆς Χερουβὶμ δόξης κατασκιάζοντα τὸ ἱλαστήριον· περὶ ὧν οὐκ ἔστιν νῦν λέγειν κατὰ μέρος. Τούτων δὲ οὕτως κατασκευασμένων, εἰς μὲν τὴν πρώτην σκηνὴν διὰ παντὸς εἰσίστασιν οἱ ἱερεῖς, τὰς λατρείας ἐπιτελοῦντες· εἰς δὲ τὴν δευτέραν ἅπαξ τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ μόνος ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς, οὐ χωρὶς αἵματος, ὃ προσφέρει ὑπὲρ ἑαυτοῦ καὶ τῶν τοῦ λαοῦ ἁγνοημάτων·

12th Sunday of Matthew

The Gospel of Matthew 19:16-26

At that time, a young man came up to Jesus, kneeling and saying, "Good Teacher, what good deed must I do, to have eternal life?" And he said to him, "Why do you call me good? One there is who is good. If you would enter life, keep the commandments." He said to him, "Which?" And Jesus said, "You shall not kill, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother, and You shall love your neighbor as yourself." The young man said to him, "All these I have observed; what do I still lack?" Jesus said to him, "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions. And Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly, I say to you, it will be hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." When the disciples heard this they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?" But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

12th Sunday of Matthew

Κατὰ Ματθαῖον 19.16-26

Καὶ ἰδοὺ εἷς προσελθὼν εἶπεν αὐτῷ· διδάσκαλε ἀγαθέ, τί ἀγαθὸν ποιήσω ἵνα ἔχω ζωὴν αἰώνιον; ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· τί με λέγεις ἀγαθόν; οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἰ μὴ εἷς ὁ Θεός. εἰ δὲ θέλεις εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν ζωὴν, τήρησον τὰς ἐντολάς. λέγει αὐτῷ· ποίας; ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπε· τὸ οὐ φονεύσεις, οὐ μοιχεύσεις, οὐ κλέψεις, οὐ ψευδομαρτυρήσεις, τίμα τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὴν μητέρα, καὶ ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν. λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ νεανίσκος· πάντα ταῦτα ἐφυλάξαμην ἐκ νεότητός μου· τί ἔτι ὑστερῶ; ἔφη αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· εἰ θέλεις τέλειος εἶναι, ὕπαγε πώλησόν σου τὰ ὑπάρχοντα καὶ δὸς πτωχοῖς, καὶ ἔξεις θησαυρὸν ἐν οὐρανῷ, καὶ δεῦρο ἀκολούθει μοι. ἀκούσας δὲ ὁ νεανίσκος τὸν λόγον ἀπῆλθε λυπούμενος· ἦν γὰρ ἔχων κτήματα πολλά. Ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπε τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ· ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι δυσκόλως πλούσιος εἰσελεύσεται εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν. πάλιν δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν, εὐκοπώτερόν ἐστι κάμηλον διὰ τρυπήματος ῥαφίδος διελθεῖν ἢ πλούσιον εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ εἰσελθεῖν. ἀκούσαντες δὲ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ ἐξεπλήσσοντο σφόδρα λέγοντες· τίς ἄρα δύναται σωθῆναι; ἐμβλέψας δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· παρὰ ἄνθρωποις τοῦτο ἀδύνατόν ἐστι, παρὰ δὲ Θεῷ πάντα δυνατά ἐστι.

SERVICE THIS WEEK: Tuesday , September 02nd AGIASMOS (blessing water) 11:00 A.M.

AGIASMOS for the SEPTEMBER MONTH will be held on TUESDAY September 02nd. since Monday is LABOR DAY and the Offices will be closed for the holiday.

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 on the SUNDAY OBSERVANCE of the FEAST, at the conclusion of Divine Liturgy.

AGAPE COFFEE FELLOWSHIP: today is being gratefully hosted by MR. BORIS RODRONOV a most devoted and pious member of our Russian Community. God grant him many years!

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 for the months of JULY and AUGUST. 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.

ECCLESIAICAL NEW YEAR: is observed each year on SEPTEMBER FIRST (1ST) This date heralds the beginning of the cycle of ordinary daily readings from the scriptures for saints and holy days of obligation. The date is called 'THE INDICTUS' and from Byzantine Roman times it was the 'indicator' of the collection of taxes for the Empire and the commencement of civil and religious observances. So.... you see, you have another chance to make a 'resolution' to change our life's habits, the BAD ONES, of course. HAVE YOU PLACED AN ADVERTISEMENT IN THE ANNIVERSARY JOURNAL 2014!???? PLEASE DO SO AT YOUR EARLIEST CONVENIENCE AS WE CELEBRATE OUR 85TH , YEAR.

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.

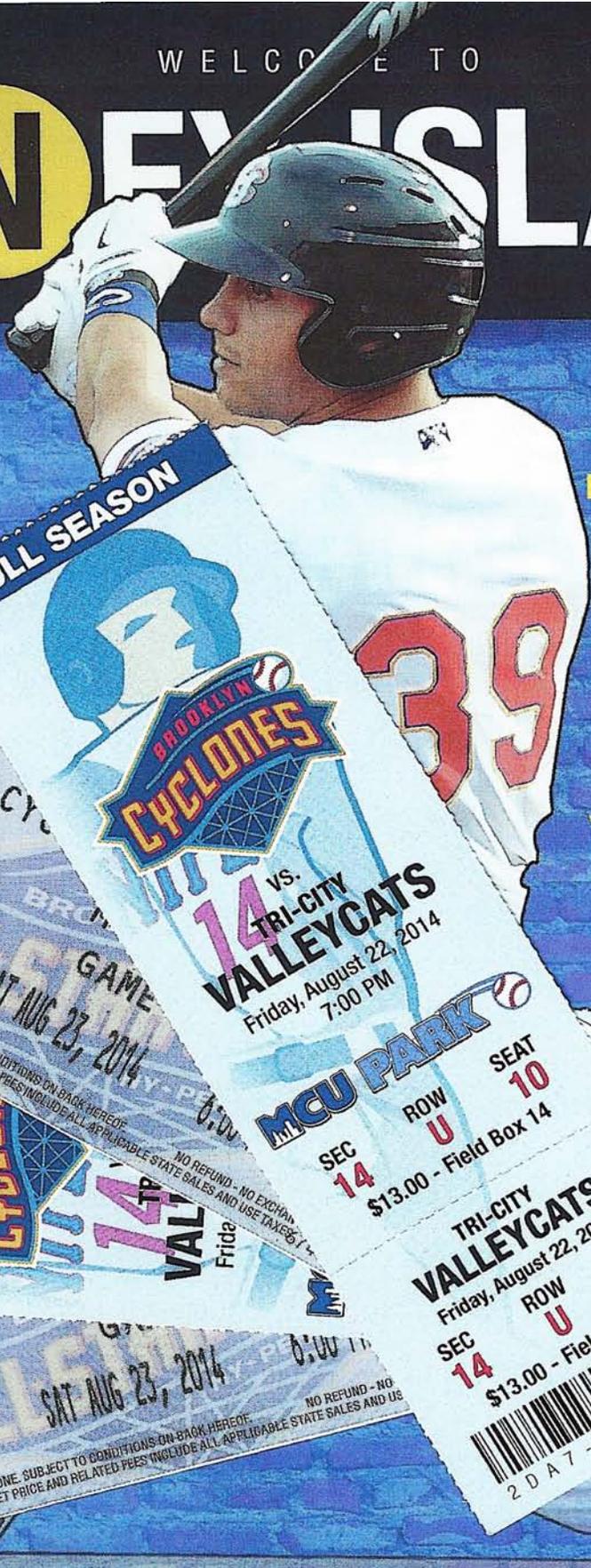
We would be remiss if we did not acknowledge the 'marathon' efforts on behalf of this project by our Parish Council PRESIDENT MRS. JOANNA VASSILAS, and COUNCIL support, our 'in-house' ARCHITECT MR. HARRY ORTHOS and CONTRATOR – LUIS PINTO , special thanks to our 'in house electrician' and VICE PRESIDENT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

FLAGS RAISED: Thanks to the expertise efforts of the FIRE HOUSE East 12th Street 'Firemen', three large new flags representing the U.S.A., GREECE and CYPRUS were lifted to glory on FRIDAY, AUGUST 22nd. We are most grateful to the 'fire fighters' who with diligence professionally care for our safety and needs. GOD BLESS ALL THE MEN AT THE FIREHOUSE!

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)

WELCOME TO
CO N EY ISLAND



The SAINT STEPHANOS ALTAR SOCIETY of our Parish enjoyed an evening of fun, eats and baseball at CYCLONES 'PARK' Friday , August 22nd . The group numbering 20 young lads serve all sacred services at the altar.

You may sign-up your son or grand-son any Sunday by seeing the clergy for direction.



2014 GAME PROGRAM

THIRD EDITION







ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



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

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος ΛΑ'
Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 1836

Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος
Αὐγουστῖνος Ν. Καντιώτης

Τί εἶνε Ὁρθοδοξία (Α')

(ιερά παράδοσις & θεία εὐχαριστία)

Σήμερα ἑορτή, ἀγαπητοί μου· εἶνε μία ἀπὸ τῆς λαμπρότερας ἑορτῆς τῆς Ἐκκλησίας μας, Κυριακὴ τῆς Ὁρθοδοξίας.

Τί εἶνε ἡ Ὁρθοδοξία; Θὰ προσπαθῶ νὰ σᾶς δώσω μιὰ εἰκόνα τῆς.

1. ΙΕΡΑ ΠΑΡΑΔΟΣΙΣ. Ἄν ὑπάρχη μιὰ λέξι πού χαρακτηρίζει τὴν Ἐκκλησία μας, εἶνε ἡ λέξι **παράδοσις**. Ὁρθοδοξία ἴσον παράδοσις.

Τί θὰ πῆ παράδοσις; Ὑποθέστε, ὅτι ἕνας ἔχει ἕνα **θησαυρό**, ἀπὸ 100 πολύτιμα πετράδια, καὶ τὰ ἐμπιστεύεται σὲ καθένα ἀπὸ μᾶς καὶ μᾶς λέει: Πάρτε αὐτὰ τὰ πετράδια καὶ νὰ προσέξετε νὰ τὰ φυλάξετε· θὰ ἔρθω πάλι νὰ τὰ παραλάβω· δὲν πρέπει νὰ λείπη οὔτε ἕνα· ἕκατὸ σᾶς ἔδωσα, ἕκατὸ θὰ μοῦ παραδώσετε. Προσέξετε ἀκόμη νὰ μὴ ἀντικαταστήσετε ἕνα πραγματικὸ πετράδι μὲ κάποιον ψεύτικο... Παραβολικὸς ὁ λόγος· θησαυρὸς ἀνεκτίμητος εἶνε ἡ Ὁρθοδοξία. Πετράδια πού ἀστράφτουν εἶνε ἡ διδασκαλία τῆς. Καὶ φύλακας, στὸν ὁποῖον ὁ Κύριος ἔχει ἐμπιστευθῆ αὐτὸ τὸ θησαυρό, εἴμαστε ὅλη ἡ Ἐκκλησία, κληρὸς καὶ λαός, καὶ μάλιστα ὁ λαός· αὐτὸς εἶνε ὁ φύλακας τῆς Ὁρθοδοξίας. Πρέπει νὰ προσέξουμε τὸ θησαυρό μας. Γι' αὐτὸ ὁ ἀπόστολος Παῦλος φωνάζει: «*Στήκετε, καὶ κρατεῖτε τὰς παραδόσεις τὰς ὁποίας ἐδιδάχθητε εἴτε διὰ λόγου εἴτε δι' ἐπιστολῆς ἡμῶν*» (β' Θεο. 2,15).

Νὰ φοβούμεθα κρατώντας τὸν πολύτιμο θησαυρό. Ὅπως ἕνα παιδάκι πού ἡ μητέρα τοῦ δίνει ἕνα χρυσὸ νόμισμα καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ κάνει κομπόδεμα, καὶ προσέχει μὴν τὸ χάσῃ, ἔτσι καὶ ἡμεῖς αὐτὸ πού μᾶς παρέδωσαν γενεὲς γενεῶν νὰ τὸ κρατήσουμε πολὺ προσεκτικά. Νὰ ἀγρυπνοῦμε, μήπως μιὰ γενεὰ παραδῶσῃ στὴν ἄλλη κάτι λιγώτερο ἀπ' ὅ,τι παρέλαβε. Ἄν ἡ δικὴ μας γενεὰ ἀπὸ τὰ 100 πετράδια παραδῶσῃ στὴν ἄλλη 99, ἡ ἄλλη γενεὰ θὰ παραδῶσῃ στὴν ἐπομένη 98, ἡ ἄλλη γενεὰ θὰ παραδῶσῃ 97 κ.ο.κ.. Ξέρετε πού θὰ φθάσουμε ἔτσι; **Ἀφαιρώντας**

ἕνα - ἕνα τὰ πετράδια ἀπ' αὐτὸ τὸ στέμμα τῆς Ὁρθοδοξίας, θὰ φθάσουμε σὲ μιὰ γενεὰ μακρινὴ στὴν ὁποία θὰ λεγώμαστε ὀρθόδοξοι ἀλλὰ δὲν θὰ εἴμαστε πλέον ὀρθόδοξοι. Νὰ ἔχουμε ἐπίσης φόβο μήπως κάποια γενεὰ παραδῶσῃ στὴν ἄλλη κάτι διαφορετικὸ ἀπ' ὅ,τι παρέλαβε, μήπως γίνῃ **νοθεία** τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τῆς Ἐκκλησίας μας.

Οἱ ὀρθόδοξοι πιστεύουμε σὲ ὅ,τι παρέλαβαν καὶ δίδαξαν οἱ ἅγιοι πατέρες· ἡ Ἐκκλησία μας εἶνε Ἐκκλησία τῶν πατέρων. Πιστεύουμε σ' αὐτὰ πού οἱ πατέρες παρέλαβαν ἀπὸ τοὺς ἀποστόλους, σ' αὐτὰ πού οἱ ἀπόστολοι παρέλαβαν ἀπὸ τὸ Χριστό, σ' αὐτὰ πού ὁ Χριστὸς παρέλαβε ἀπὸ τὸν οὐράνιο Πατέρα. Ἀπὸ 'κεῖ ἀρχίζει ἡ παράδοσις, ἐκεῖ εἶνε ὁ πρῶτος κρίκος. Ὅπως ὁ **πολυέλεος** - πού ἔχει συμβολισμό - κρέμεται ἀπὸ μιὰ ἀλυσίδα, τῆς ὁποίας ὁ πρῶτος κρίκος εἶνε πιασμένος ἐπάνω στὸν τροῦλλο, ἔτσι καὶ ἡ παράδοσις εἶνε μιὰ σειρὰ κρίκων, **χρυσῆ ἀλυσίδα** μὲ πολλοὺς κρίκους. Ὁ πρῶτος κρίκος εἶνε ἡ ἅγια Τριάς, ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ ἀπὸ 'κεῖ κατόπιν κατεβαίνουμε· ἀκολουθοῦν οἱ ἀπόστολοι, μετὰ οἱ πατέρες, καὶ προχωρώντας φθάνουμε ἕως ἡμᾶς, μέχρι τῆς γενεᾶς μας. Χρειάζεται μεγάλη προσοχὴ νὰ μὴ ἀδυνατίσῃ καὶ νὰ μὴ σπάσῃ κανένας κρίκος, νὰ μὴ γίνῃ ἀλλοίωσις τῆς διδασκαλίας πού παραλάβαμε.

Ἡ Ὁρθοδοξία εἶπαμε εἶνε θησαυρός, εἶνε χρυσός. Καὶ ἔτσι, σὰν χρυσὸ νόμισμα, κυκλοφορεῖ στὸν κόσμον διὰ μέσου τῶν γενεῶν. Ἀλλὰ στὴν ἀγορὰ κοντὰ στὰ γνήσια χρυσᾶ νομίσματα κυκλοφοροῦν καὶ κίβδηλα, κάλπικα. Ἡ μπορεῖ κάποιος ἀπατεῶνς μὲ μιὰ λίμα νὰ φθείρουν ἕνα χρυσὸ νόμισμα ἀφαιρώντας κάτι ἐλάχιστο ἀπὸ τὴν ἀξία του. Γι' αὐτὸ βρέθηκε μηχανήμα, μέσα στὸ ὁποῖο ρίχνουν ὅλα τὰ νομίσματα, καὶ αὐτὸ κάνει ἔλεγχον· κρατᾷ ὅσες λίρες εἶνε γνήσιες, καὶ ὅσες ἔχουν καὶ τὴν ἐλάχιστη φθορὰ τὶς πετάει ἔξω. Ἔτσι καὶ ἡ Ὁρθοδο-

ξία· δοκιμάζει ποιά διδασκαλία ξεφεύγει από την παράδοσι και την απορρίπτει και ποιά εἶνε σύμφωνη και την κρατάει, κατὰ τὸ λόγο τοῦ Παύλου «*Στήκετε, καὶ κρατεῖτε τὰς παραδόσεις...*».

2. ΘΕΙΑ ΕΥΧΑΡΙΣΤΙΑ. Ἡ Ὁρθοδοξία, ἀγαπητοί μου, θεωρεῖ τὸν λόγο - τὸ κήρυγμα οὐσιώδεις στὴ ζωὴ τῆς· γι' αὐτὸ ἐπάνω στὴν ἁγία τράπεζα ὑπάρχει τὸ Εὐαγγέλιο. Τὸ κέντρο ὅμως τοῦ βάρους πέφτει στὴ μυσταγωγία. Εἶνε μυσταγωγικός ὁ χαρακτήρας τῆς Ἐκκλησίας. Ἡ καρδιά τῆς Ὁρθοδοξίας μας, ποὺ μεταδίδει τὸ αἷμα σὲ ὅλο τὸ σῶμα, εἶνε τὸ ἁγιώτατο καὶ ὑπερφυέστατο μυστήριο, **ὁ μυστικός δεῖπνος**· τὸ σῶμα καὶ τὸ αἷμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ, τὸ «*Λάβετε, φάγετε...*» – «*Πίετε ἐξ αὐτοῦ πάντες...*» (Ματθ. 26:26-27. Μάρκ. 14:22-23, τὸ ποτήριον τῆς καινῆς διαθήκης (Λουκ. 22:20. Α' Κορ. 11:25).

Ἐν ἀντιθέσει μὲ τοὺς προτεστάντες, ποὺ δὲν πιστεύουν στὸ μυστήριο ἀλλὰ θεωροῦν τὰ τελούμενα ὡς σύμβολα καὶ σκιές καὶ ἀνάμνησι, κ' ἐν ἀντιθέσει μὲ τοὺς παπικούς, ποὺ δὲν κοινωνοῦν ὅλοι παρὰ μόνο οἱ κληρικοὶ ἀπὸ τὸν οἶνο καὶ τὸν ἄρτο, ἡ Ἐκκλησία μας εἶνε ἡ μόνη ποὺ **κοινωνεῖ ὅλο τὸ λαό** τῆς καὶ ἀπὸ τὸ σῶμα καὶ ἀπὸ τὸ αἷμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

Ἡ θεία λειτουργία εἶνε ὁ πνευματικός ἥλιος ποὺ ζωογονεῖ ὀλόκληρη τὴν Ἐκκλησία μας. Γιὰ νὰ τὴν ἐξηγήσουμε θὰ χρειάζονταν πολλὰ κηρύγματα· μιὰ εἰκόνα τῆς ἀπλῶς θὰ δώσω. Ἡ θεία λειτουργία εἶνε **μιὰ περίληψις καὶ ἔκφρασις τοῦ ὅλου μυστηρίου τῆς θείας οικονομίας**. Ἀρχίζει ἀπὸ τὴ Βηθλεέμ, ἀπὸ τὸ «*Δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις Θεῶ...*» (Λουκ. 2:14), καὶ φθάνει μέχρι τὴν Ἀνάληψι, μέχρι τὸν οὐρανό, πέρα ἀπὸ τὸν οὐρανό. Ἄν προσέξατε, ἀπὸ τὸ «*Εὐλογημένη ἡ βασιλεία...*» μέχρι τὸ «*Δι' εὐχῶν τῶν ἁγίων πατέρων...*» τρεῖς φορές βγαίνει ὁ ἱερεὺς ἀπὸ τὸ ἱερό βῆμα. Τὴ μία βγαίνει ὑψώνοντας τὸ Εὐαγγέλιο στὴν λεγομένη *μικρὰ εἴσοδο*. Τί εἶνε ἡ *μικρὰ εἴσοδος*; εἶνε ἡ ἔλευσις τοῦ Χριστοῦ στὸν κόσμον ὡς διδασκάλου· εἰκονίζει τὸ ὅτι ὁ Χριστὸς ἔρχεται στὸν κόσμον ὡς κῆρυξ τῶν αἰωνίων ἀληθειῶν. Γι' αὐτὸ λέει «*Σοφία· ὀρθοί*» καὶ κατόπιν «*ἀκούσωμεν τοῦ ἁγίου Εὐαγγελίου*». Ἡ δεύτερη φορά εἶνε ὅταν ἀνοίγει ἡ θύρα γιὰ τὴν λεγομένη *μεγάλη εἴσοδος*· τότε ἐξέρχεται ὁ Χριστὸς ὄχι πλέον ὡς διδάσκαλος, ἀλλὰ ὡς ἀρχιερεὺς καὶ ὡς «*ὁ Βασιλεὺς τῶν ὄλων*». Ἡ *μεγάλη εἴσοδος* στὴν ὁποία ὁ ἱερεὺς κρατᾷ τὰ τίμια δῶρα ποὺ θὰ μεταβληθοῦν σὲ σῶμα καὶ αἷμα Χριστοῦ, εἶνε ἡ πορεία πρὸς τὸν Γολγοθᾶ· ἔρχεται ὁ Χριστὸς γιὰ νὰ προσφέρει τὴ θυσία ποὺ τώρα τελεῖται ἀναιμάκτως. Καὶ ἡ τρίτη φορά εἶνε ὅταν ἔχει τελεσθῆ τὸ μυστήριο καὶ τότε πλέον κρατώντας τὰ ἅγια, τὸ πο-

τήριο μὲ τὸ σῶμα καὶ τὸ αἷμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἀνοίγει τὰ βημόθυρα καὶ λέει· «*Μετὰ φόβου Θεοῦ, πίστεως καὶ ἀγάπης προσέλθετε*». Ἡ θυσία ἐτελέσθη· δεῦτε πάντες τρυφήσατε, «*πάντες ἀπολαύσατε τοῦ συμποσίου τῆς πίστεως*» (κατὰ λόγ. Πάσχα), «*Λάβετε, φάγετε...*».

Ἡ θεία λειτουργία ἔχει **μεγαλοπρέπεια** ἀφάνταστη. Ἀλλὰ ποιός τὴν αἰσθάνεται; Τὴν ἔχουμε συνηθίσει, ὅπως ἔχουμε συνηθίσει καὶ τὸν ἥλιο, καὶ δὲν αἰσθανόμεθα τὸ μυστήριο. Καὶ ἡ συνήθεια καταστρέφει τὸν θαυμασμό. Γιὰ νὰ σᾶς δείξω τί δύναμι ἔχει ἡ θεία λειτουργία, θὰ σᾶς φέρω ἓνα παράδειγμα.

Πρὶν χίλια χρόνια **τὸ μεγάλο ἔθνος τῶν Ῥώσων** ζοῦσε στὸ σκοτάδι, ἦταν εἰδωλολάτρες. Τότε ὁ βασιλεὺς τους Βλαδίμηρος κάλεσε τοὺς ἐπιτελεῖς του καὶ λέει· Θὰ πᾶτε στὰ κέντρα τῶν διαφόρων θρησκειῶν καὶ θὰ δῆτε ποῦ εἶνε ἡ καλύτερη θρησκεία. Ἔτσι αὐτὴ ἡ πρεσβεία ἔφθασε καὶ στὴν Κωνσταντινούπολι. Ἦταν Κυριακή. Στὸ ναὸ τῆς Ἁγίας Σοφίας λειτουργοῦσε ὁ πατριάρχης μὲ ὅλο τὸ ἱερατεῖο, παρίστατο ὁ αὐτοκράτωρ, ἡ βασίλισσα, οἱ πρίγκιπες καὶ ἀξιωματοῦχοι καὶ λαὸς πολὺς. Μπήκαν μέσα οἱ ξένοι, στάθηκαν καὶ ἄκουσαν τὴν ψαλμωδία, εἶδαν τὸ δεσπότη μὲ τὰ ἄμφια καὶ τὸν αὐτοκράτορα, εἶδαν τὸ ναὸ μὲ τὸν τροῦλλο καὶ τὸ φῶς νὰ μπαίνει ἀπ' τὰ παράθυρα, μὰ παραπάνω ἀπ' ὅλα τοὺς ἔκανε ἐντύπωσι ἡ εὐλάβεια καὶ κατάνυξι ποὺ ἐπικρατοῦσε στὸ ἐκκλησίασμα. Ὅταν βγῆκαν ἔξω, αὐτοὶ οἱ βάρβαροι ἦταν πλέον ἄλλοι ἄνθρωποι. Γύρισαν στὴ Ῥωσία καὶ εἶπαν· Πήγαμε παντοῦ, ἀλλὰ πουθενὰ δὲ βρήκαμε θρησκεία ἀνώτερη ἀπὸ αὐτὴν ποὺ λατρεύεται μέσα στὴν Ἁγία-Σοφία· αὐτὴ ἡ θρησκεία εἶνε ἡ πιὸ ὑπέροχη· ἐκεῖ πραγματικὰ λατρεύεται ὁ ἀληθινὸς Θεός. Ἔτσι ὁ Βλαδίμηρος ἀποφάσισε καὶ οἱ Ῥῶσοι βαπτίσθηκαν ὀρθόδοξοι. Ἀπὸ μία λειτουργία ποὺ παρακολούθησαν στὸ ναὸ τῆς Ἁγίας Σοφίας! Τέτοια δύναμι ἔχει ἡ θεία λειτουργία.

Τώρα τελευταῖα ἀρχίζουν **τὰ λειτουργικά βιβλία** μας (Παρακλητική, Μηναῖα, Τριώδιο κ.λπ.) νὰ τὰ μεταφράζουν στὴν Ἀμερική, στὴν Αὐστραλία, στὴν Ἀφρική. Γιατὶ δὲν ὑπάρχουν ὠραιότερα τραγούδια· δὲν τὰ ἔφτιαξαν ἐπιστήμονες στὰ γραφεῖα μὲ τὸ μυαλό, τὰ ἔφτιαξαν ἀσκηταὶ μὲ τὴν καρδιά μέσα σὲ σπήλαια.

* * *

Αὐτὴ λοιπὸν εἶνε ἡ Ὁρθοδοξία μας· ἡ ἱερὰ παράδοσις καὶ τὸ θεῖο μυστήριο στὴ θεία λειτουργία. Δὲν τελειώσαμε. Τί εἶνε ἀκόμα ἡ Ὁρθοδοξία μας; Θὰ συνεχίσουμε σὺν Θεῷ αὖριο.

(†) **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

More Will Be Given

They justly, therefore, enter into the kingdom of heaven who have denied themselves according to the Lord's Word and have loved the Lord alone with their whole heart. Because of their great love they will be recompensed with the greatest of heavenly gifts. For in the afflictions, crucifixions, patience, and faith are hidden the promises, the glory, the possession of heavenly good things just as in the seed that is thrown into the earth the fruit lies already hidden or in the tree that is covered with thorns and grows amid vile and dirty dung.

Then they will reveal that in them were the dignity and glory and manifold fruit as the Apostle says: "Through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Acts 14: 22). And the Lord says:

"In your patience you will possess your souls" (Lk 21: 19), and again: "In the world you will have tribulation" (Jn 16: 33).

For there is need of effort and patience, restraint and every kind of watchfulness, of alacrity and perseverance in prayer to the Lord so that one can rise above earthly desires and the snares and traps of sense pleasures, above the enticements of the world, and avoid the attacks of evil spirits. One needs to know well by what vigilance and attentive faith and love the saints possess the heavenly treasure, that is, the power of the Spirit in their souls and in heaven, which is the balm of the kingdom.

Pseudo-Macarius

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