

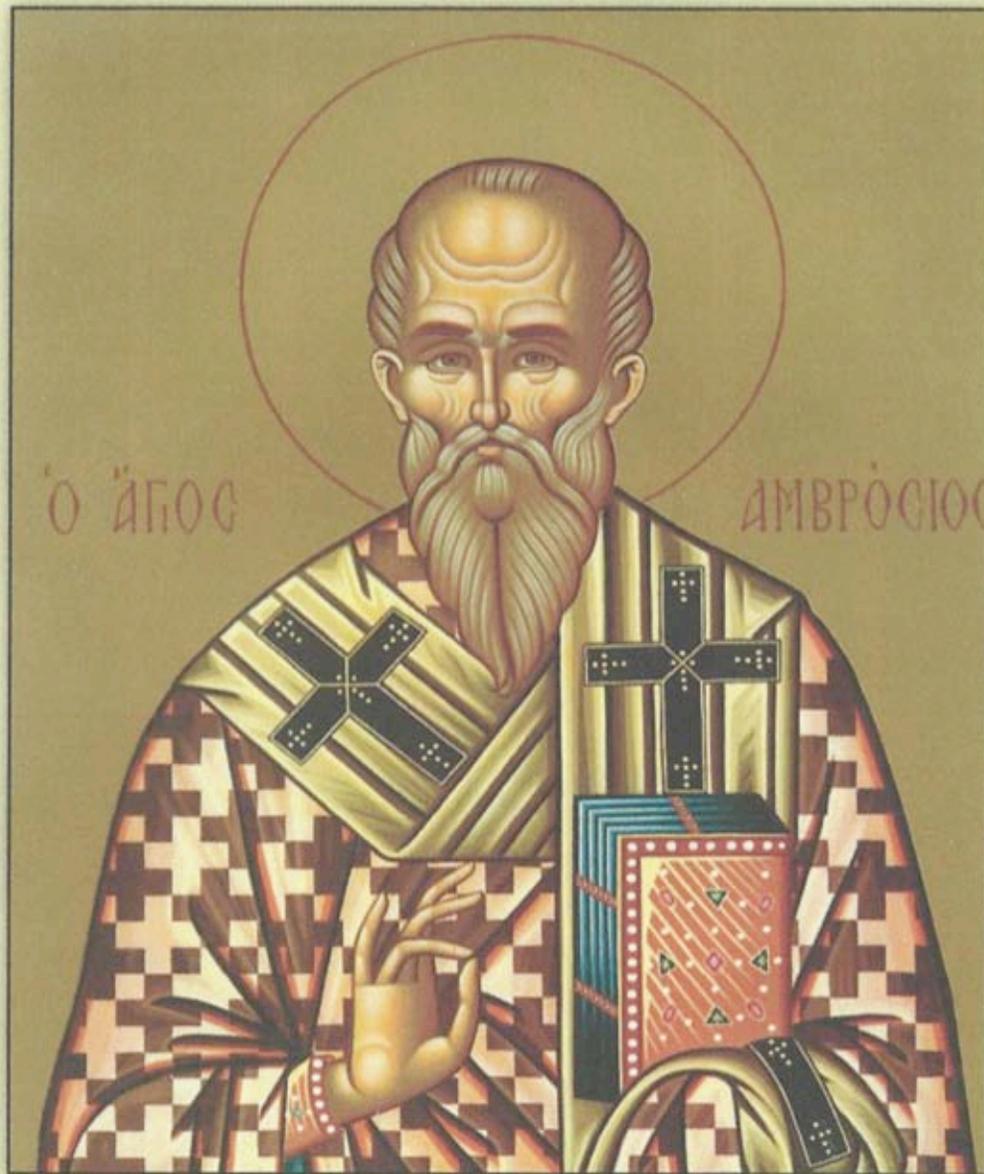


DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN
DISTRICT

JUBILEE 85TH ANNIVERSARY
THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN December 7th , 2014
V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
TENTH SUNDAY OF LUKE



Icon of Saint Ambrose of Milan -- December 7th

St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 5:8-19

Prokeimenon. Mode 1. Psalm 32.22,1

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

Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is a shame even to speak of the things that they do in secret; but when anything is exposed by the light it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it is said, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light." Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart.

Πρὸς Ἐφεσίους 5:8-19

Προκείμενον. Ἦχος α΄. ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 32.22,1

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

Ἀδελφοί, ὡς τέκνα φωτὸς περιπατεῖτε - ὁ γὰρ καρπὸς τοῦ πνεύματος ἐν πάσῃ ἀγαθῶσυνῃ καὶ δικαιοσύνῃ καὶ ἀληθείᾳ - δοκιμάζοντες τί ἐστὶν εὐάρεστον τῷ κυρίῳ· καὶ μὴ συγκοινωνεῖτε τοῖς ἔργοις τοῖς ἀκάρποις τοῦ σκοτόυς, μᾶλλον δὲ καὶ ἐλέγχετε· τὰ γὰρ κρυφῆ γινόμενα ὑπ' αὐτῶν αἰσχρὸν ἐστὶν καὶ λέγειν. Τὰ δὲ πάντα ἐλεγχόμενα ὑπὸ τοῦ φωτὸς φανεροῦνται· πᾶν γὰρ τὸ φανερούμενον φῶς ἐστίν. Διὸ λέγει, Ἔγειρε ὁ καθεύδων καὶ ἀνάστα ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν, καὶ ἐπιφάσει σοὶ ὁ Χριστὸς. Βλέπετε οὖν πῶς ἀκριβῶς περιπατεῖτε, μὴ ὡς ἄσοφοι, ἀλλ' ὡς σοφοί, ἐξαγοραζόμενοι τὸν καιρὸν, ὅτι αἱ ἡμέραι πονηραὶ εἰσιν. Διὰ τοῦτο μὴ γίνεσθε ἄφρονες, ἀλλὰ συνιέντες τί τὸ θέλημα τοῦ κυρίου. Καὶ μὴ μεθύσκεσθε οἴνῳ, ἐν ᾧ ἐστὶν ἀσωτία, ἀλλὰ πληροῦσθε ἐν πνεύματι, λαλοῦντες ἑαυτοῖς ψαλμοῖς καὶ ὕμνοις καὶ ᾠδαῖς πνευματικαῖς, ᾄδοντες καὶ ψάλλοντες ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν τῷ κυρίῳ.

10th Sunday of Luke

The Gospel of Luke 13:10-17

At that time, Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. And there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity for eighteen years; she was bent over and could not fully straighten herself. And when Jesus saw her, he called her and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your infirmity." And he laid his hands upon her, and immediately she was made straight, and she praised God. But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the sabbath, said to the people, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be healed, and not on the sabbath day." Then the Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to water it? And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?" As he said this, all his adversaries were put to shame; and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him.

10th Sunday of Luke

Κατὰ Λουκᾶν 13.10-17

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, Ἦν δὲ διδάσκων ἐν μιᾷ τῶν συναγωγῶν ἐν τοῖς σάββασι. καὶ ἰδοὺ γυνὴ ἣν πνεῦμα ἔχουσα ἀσθενείας ἔτη δέκα καὶ ὀκτώ, καὶ ἦν συγκύπτουσα καὶ μὴ δυναμένη ἀνακῦσαι εἰς τὸ παντελές. ἰδὼν δὲ αὐτὴν ὁ Ἰησοῦς προσεφώνησε καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῇ· γύναι, ἀπολέλυσαι τῆς ἀσθενείας σου· καὶ ἐπέθηκεν αὐτῇ τὰς χεῖρας· καὶ παραχρῆμα ἀνωρθώθη καὶ ἐδόξαζε τὸν Θεόν. ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ ἀρχισυνάγωγος, ἀγανακτῶν ὅτι τῷ σαββάτῳ ἐθεράπευσεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς, ἔλεγε τῷ ὄχλῳ· ἕξ ἡμέραι εἰσὶν ἐν αἷς δεῖ ἐργάζεσθαι· ἐν ταύταις οὖν ἐρχόμενοι θεραπεύεσθε, καὶ μὴ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ σαββάτου. ἀπεκρίθη οὖν αὐτῷ ὁ Κύριος καὶ εἶπεν· ὑποκριτά, ἕκαστος ὑμῶν τῷ σαββάτῳ οὐ λύει τὸν βούν αὐτοῦ ἢ τὸν ὄνον ἀπὸ τῆς φάτνης καὶ ἀπαγαγὼν ποτίζει; ταύτην δέ, θυγατέρα Ἀβραάμ οὖσαν, ἦν ἐδησεν ὁ σατανᾶς ἰδοὺ δέκα καὶ ὀκτώ ἔτη, οὐκ ἔδει λυθῆναι ἀπὸ τοῦ δεσμοῦ τούτου τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ σαββάτου; καὶ ταῦτα λέγοντος αὐτοῦ κατησχύνοντο πάντες οἱ ἀντικείμενοι αὐτῷ, καὶ πᾶς ὁ ὄχλος ἔχαιρεν ἐπὶ πᾶσι τοῖς ἐνδόξοις τοῖς γινομένοις ὑπ' αὐτοῦ.

AGAPE COFFEE HOUR: Today will be hosted by the Holy Order.

TUESDAY DECEMBER 09TH: Chapter #200 Coney Island is hosting their CHRISTMAS DINNER at Perry's Restaurant on Nostrand Avenue at 7:00 P.M. President Peter Moskovitis is inviting all AHEPANS to attend and share the table feast.

FATHER EUGENE will be absent from parochial duties NEXT SUNDAY DECEMBER 14th. Fr. Eugene will be going to MEXICO CITY, MEXICO, where Fr. will celebrate the Liturgy honoring Saint Eugenios at the Cathedral of Santa Sophia. Father Eugene will return on Wednesday December 17th. The PARISH welcomes FR. NICHOLAS SOTEROPOULOS who will replace the Pastor in his vacation absence, next SUNDAY! WE ALL WELCOME FATHER NICHOLAS WHO HAS SERVED OUR NEEDS MANY TIMES BEFORE.

TODAY DEC. 07 the members of the HOLY ORDER will observe their ANNUAL COMMUNION BREAKFAST. They will also offer an ARTOKLASIA for their members.

MR. and MRS. MS. CLUB: will celebrate their Christmas Party on TUESDAY DECEMBER 16TH. in WHITEHALL. Everyone is invited to join the Club and share in the festivities. Dinner will be served with a Chinese Auction to cover the costs. COME and HAVE FUN!

TODAY: THE METROPOLITAN GREEK CHORALE under the baton of MAESTRA MARINA ALEXANDER will present a full chorus concert FAITH MYTH and SONG highlighting, Kalanda from various regions of Greece with 'premiers' of STINIDIS' TO CHRIST IN THE CASTLE and M. ALEXANDERS' CHRISTMAS CHURCH BELLS; at the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church at 91st Street and West End Avenue TODAY at 7:30 P.M. All tickets at \$20.00 each include a post concert reception at the Church Hall.

TODAY ARTOKLASIES for Saint SPYRIDON and Saint ELEUTHERIOS SUNDAY, DECEMBER 07th for all to share. Liturgies of the 12th and 13th will also be observed today.

COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CARD: Which will be forward to 1,000 homes as an ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN greeting for the Holy Nativity may be inscribed with your name or family name as desired. Please fill out the enclosed form and return it to the Church Office today with your offering of \$20.00. (twenty dollars). Santa Claus is making a list and SO ARE WE Don't be left out! Others will be looking for your name too. SUPPORT THE CHRISTMAS CARD DRIVE.

PHILOTOCHOS HOSTS CHRISTMAS PARTY: The ladies will host for their members and family supporters the ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DINNER TOMORROW, 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.

PRAYER and SERVICE for the December month is scheduled for FRIDAY December 19TH, FROM 6:30 P.M. A reception of coffee and holiday sweets will follow the service in the VESTRY. If you have not yet experienced a 'spiritual renewal' service please join us. The informality and spirituality of the experience can be over-whelming. The anointing will take place at the conclusion of the service for one and all.

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.** See Flyer. Usher in the New Year 2015 with family and friends here.

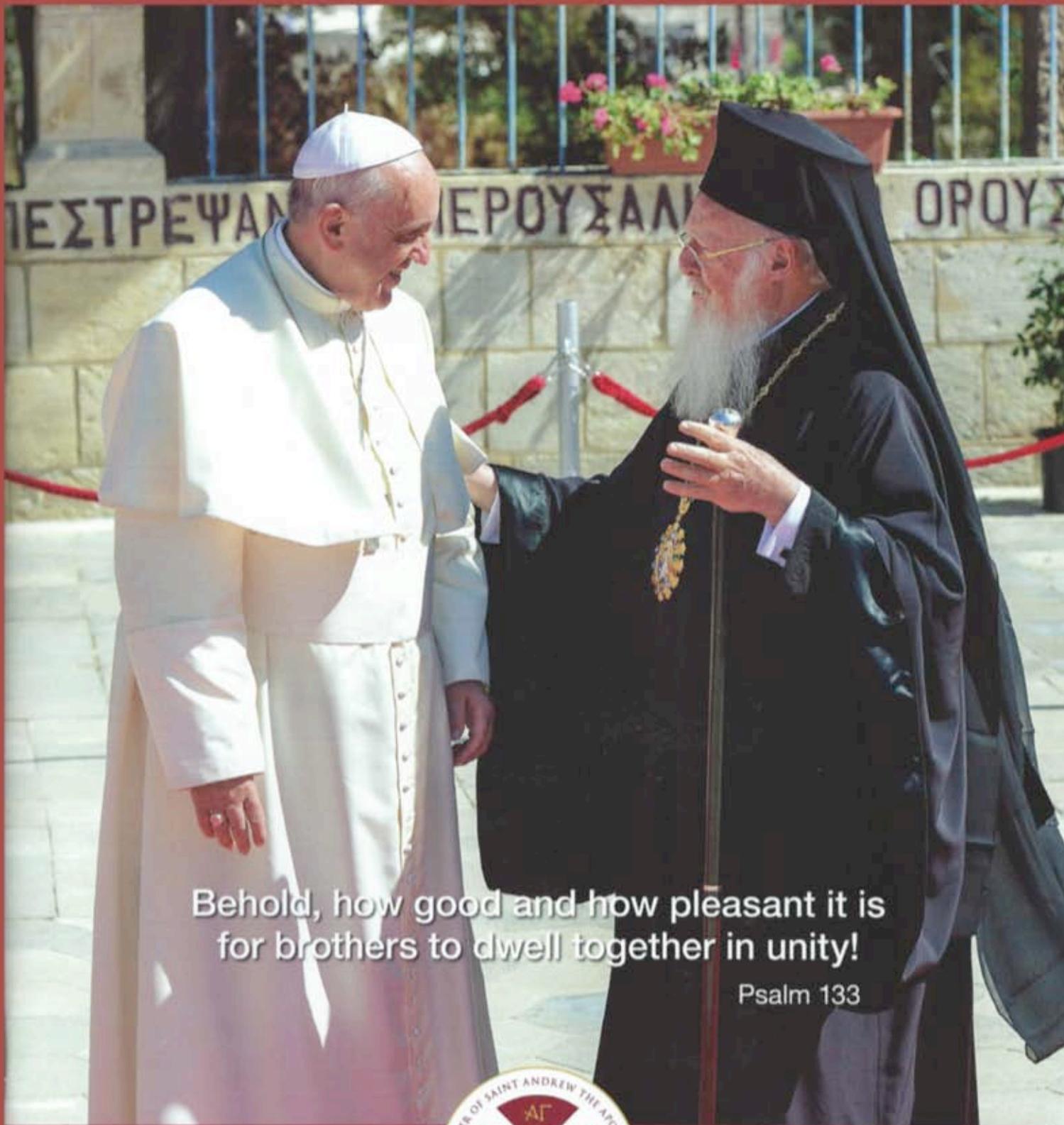
TOY DRIVE FOR CHILDREN; Please consider purchasing a toy for a BOY or GIRL or BOTH from infancy to 12 years of age for distribution by social services before the Christmas Holy Days! The gifts (ARTS and CRAFTS/ LEARNING GAMES /CARS, PLANES, TRUCKS, DOLLS) may be placed before the Icon of the Blessed 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.

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 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. 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!

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 + LYUSYA DEMIDENKO + ANNA SARRIS
+ ALEXANDRA PARASKEVOPOULA + FEDORA DROZDROVA



Behold, how good and how pleasant it is
for brothers to dwell together in unity!

Psalm 133

Annual



Report

2014



The Brothers of Galilee: Peter and Andrew in the Holy Land

"This fiftieth anniversary of the historic meeting between the late Pope Paul VI and our ever-memorable predecessor Patriarch Athenagoras is an exceptional opportunity to deepen the fraternal bonds between Peter and Andrew, for both our Sees owe their foundations to them. For this reason, following in the footsteps of Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras, we express our desire to further the relations between the Roman Catholic and the Orthodox Churches. Two thousand years ago, it was in Jerusalem where the Light dawned from the Tomb. May it be in Jerusalem again where the light of peace, mutual trust, and brotherly love shines brightly, for the sake of our two Churches and the sake of the whole world."

– His All-Holiness



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 1862

Κυριακὴ Ι' Λουκᾶ (Λουκ. 13,10-17)
7 Δεκεμβρίου 2014

Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος
Αὐγουστίνος Ν. Καντιώτης

Ἡ ἀστυφιλία

Ἀσθενής ἦταν ἡ γυναίκα τοῦ σημερινοῦ εὐ-
αγγελίου, ἀγαπητοί μου, βαρεῖα ἀσθενής
ἐπὶ δεκαοχτῶ χρόνια (Λουκ. 13,16), μὲ ἀσθένεια δαιμο-
νική. Ὁ σατανᾶς τῆς εἶχε λυγίσει τὸ κορμὶ σὺν
κρίκο· τὸ κεφάλι τῆς ἄγγιζε τὴ γῆ καὶ περπατοῦ-
σε μὲ τὰ τέσσερα. Μὰ σὲ μιὰ στιγμή τὸ κορμὶ
τῆς, στὸν παντοκρατορικὸ λόγον τοῦ Χριστοῦ,
τινάχθηκε ὄρθιο, καὶ τότε γιὰ πρώτη φορὰ εἶ-
δε κι αὐτὴ οὐρανὸ, ἄστρα, καὶ δόξασε τὸ Θεό.

Ἀσθενής ἦ ἡ γυναίκα αὐτῆ· ἀλλὰ ἀσθενεῖς,
ἀδελφοί μου, εἴμαστε καὶ ὅλοι ἀνεξαιρέτως,
κ' ἐγὼ ποὺ σὰς μιλῶ κ' ἐσεῖς ποὺ μ' ἀκούτε. Ἀ-
σθενεῖς καὶ ἡ οἰκογένεια, καὶ τὸ σχολεῖο, καὶ ἡ
παιδεία, καὶ ἡ πολιτεία, καὶ ἡ ἐκκλησία, **ἀσθε-
νὴς ὁ κόσμος ὅλοκληρος**. Καὶ μακάρι νὰ τὸ κα-
ταλάβουμε αὐτό, νὰ συναισθανθοῦμε ὅτι ὁ δι-
άβολος μᾶς ἔχει δέσει χειροπόδαρα, ἄλλον πέν-
τε, ἄλλον δέκα, ἄλλον δεκαοχτῶ χρόνια.

Κάποιοι λένε, ὅτι ὁ κόσμος δὲν θεραπεύε-
ται πλέον παθολογικῶς ἀλλὰ χειρουργικῶς. Ἐ-
γὼ θέλω νὰ πιστεύω ὅτι δὲν φτάσαμε στὸ ση-
μεῖο αὐτό, ὥστε ἡ ἀνθρωπότης νὰ μπῆ πάλι στὸ
χειρουργεῖο ἐνὸς πολέμου· πιστεύω ὅτι εἶνε
δυνατὸν νὰ σωθῇ **παθολογικῶς**, θεραπευο-
μένη ἀπὸ τὸν Κύριό μας Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν.

Δὲν θὰ μιλήσω γιὰ ἀσθένειες σωματικές·
θὰ μιλήσω γιὰ **μιὰ ἀσθένεια κοινωνικὴ** καὶ
πνευματικὴ, μιὰ ἀσθένεια τοῦ καιροῦ μας
ποὺ ὁδηγεῖ στὴν ἐγκατάλειψι τῆς ὑπαίθρου.

Ἄλλοίμονο ἂν ἡ ἀσθένεια αὐτὴ ἐξακολουθή-
σῃ. Αὐτὴ ἐρήμωσε τὴν ἐπαρχία, τὶς φτωχὲς κα-
λύβες ὅπου γεννηθήκαμε. Εἶνε σὺν τῇ μῦγα· ὅ-
πως ἡ μῦγα κολλάει στὰ ἄλογα κι ἀπὸ τὴν ὦ-
ρα ἐκεῖνὴ τὰ ζῶα δὲν ἡσυχάζουν ἀλλὰ τρέχουν
δεξιὰ - ἀριστερά, ἔτσι κι αὐτὴ ἔχει κολλήσει
στὸ λαό μας. Αὐτὴ ἄδειασε τὰ χωριά· κι ὅταν
σβήσῃ τὸ χωριὸ ἢ πατρίδα πεθαίνει. Ἡ «μῦ-
γα» αὐτὴ στὰ ἑλληνικά, σὲ γλώσσα ἐπιστημο-
νικὴ ἐξευγενισμένη, λέγεται **ἀστυφιλία**.

Ἡ ἀστυφιλία, ἀγαπητοί μου, εἶνε ἡ ἀσθέ-

νεια ποὺ κάνει τὸν **χωρικὸ** ν' ἀφήνῃ τὸ μέρος
του, τὸ σπίτι του, τοὺς συγγενεῖς, τὸν καθα-
ρὸ ὑγιεινὸ ἀέρα, τὰ μνήματα τῶν γονέων του,
καὶ μ' ἓνα μπογαλάκι **νὰ κουβαλιέται μέσ' στὴν
πόλι**. Ἔτσι ἡ Ἀθήνα, ποὺ ἐπὶ τοῦ Ὁθωνοῦ εἶ-
χε μόλις τριάντα χιλιάδες κατοίκους, τώρα γέ-
μισε σπίτια. Δὲν χαίρομαι γι' αὐτό, κλαίω ὡς
Ἕλληνας καὶ Χριστιανός. Ἄν ἀνεβῆς στὸ Λυ-
καβηττό, θὰ δῆς μιὰ θάλασσα ἀπὸ τὰ Τουρκο-
βούνια ὡς τὸ Αἰγάλεω καὶ τὸ Πέραμα, κι ἀπὸ
τὴν Πάρνηθα καὶ τὴν Πεντέλη ὡς τὸν Πειραιᾶ.
Εἴμαστε μιὰ μικρὴ χώρα καὶ στὴ γούρνα - στὸ
λεκανοπέδιο αὐτὸ μαζεύτηκαν ἑκατομμύρια.

Γιατί μαζεύεται ἐδῶ αὐτὸς ὁ κόσμος; **ποῖος
μαγνήτης** τὸν τραβάει στὴ μεγάλη πολιτεία;

Εἶνε ἀλήθεια ὅτι στὶς πόλεις ὑπάρχει **χρῆ-
μα, εὐκολίες**, ἀνέσεις, κομφὸρ τῆς ζωῆς, με-
ρικὰ πράγματα ποὺ δὲν ὑπάρχουν στὰ μικρὰ
χωριά. Ὑπάρχει ὅμως καὶ κάτι ἄλλο. Γιὰ τεντῶ-
στε τ' αὐτί σας. Μὴν ἀκούσετε ἐμένα τὸν ἁμαρ-
τωλό· ἀκούστε τὸν προφήτη Δαυὶδ ποὺ λέει:
«*Εἶδον ἀνομίαν ἐν τῇ πόλει...*» (Ψαλμ. 54,9 κ.ε), μέσα στὴ
μεγάλῃ πόλι εἶδα νὰ ὑπάρχῃ **ἀνομία**. Ἄν πα-
ρατηρήσῃς τὴν κοινωνία αὐτὴ μὲ τὰ μάτια εἰ-
δικοῦ, μὲ μάτια κοινωνιολόγου, μάτια ἀστυ-
νομικοῦ, μάτια δικαστικοῦ, μάτια ἱερέως, μά-
τια πνευματικῶν πατέρων, ποὺ εἶνε μάτια ὀξυ-
δερκῆ· ἂν βυθίσῃς τὸ βλέμμα στὸ ὑπέδαφος,
ἐρευνήσῃς τὰ βάθη τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης κοινω-
νίας κι ἀφουγκρασθῆς τὸν κρυφὸ πόνο, τότε,
ἀγαπητέ μου, πρέπει νὰ ἔχῃς ποτάμια δάκρυα
γιὰ νὰ κλάψῃς τὴν πολιτεία τὴ μεγάλη.

● «*Εἶδον*», λέει, «*ἀνομίαν ἐν τῇ πόλει*». Δηλα-
δῆ; Εἶδα **κλοπὴ** καὶ **ἀδικία**, ποὺ δὲν γίνεται ὅ-
πως στὰ χωριά· γίνεται μὲ τέχνη, μὲ τὸ γάντι,
μὲ νόμους, μὲ χίλιους - δυὸ τρόπους. Ἄλλος
ἀπὸ τὸ ἓνα μέρος διαθέτει χρυσάφι μὲ τὸ
φτυάρι, καὶ ὁ ἄλλος δὲν ἔχει εἰσιτήριο νὰ κα-
τεβῆ στὴν πόλι. Πολλὴ καὶ μεγάλη ἀδικία.

● Εἶδα ἀκόμα, λέει ὁ προφήτης, **ἀσπλαχνία**. Τώ-
ρα τὸ χειμῶνα, ποὺ τὸ θερμόμετρο κατεβαίνει

καὶ πέφτει χιόνι, γιὰ μερικοὺς λὲς κ' εἶνε ἄνοιξι - καλοκαιράκι· αὐτοὶ ἔχουν σκεπάσματα καὶ κουβέρτες, ἠλεκτρικὲς θερμάστρες καὶ καλοριφέρ, δὲν καταλαβαίνουν κρύο, καὶ ἀδιαφοροῦν ἂν κάποιοι στὸ Αἰγάλεω, τόσα πλάσματα τοῦ Χριστοῦ μας, χῆρες καὶ ὄρφανὰ, κρυώνουν σὲ παράγκες· δὲν ρωτοῦν ποῦ κοιμοῦνται αὐτοί, ἔχουν νὰ φᾶνε, πῶς ζοῦν;

● «*Εἶδον ἀνομίαν ἐν τῇ πόλει*». Εἶδα ἀκόμη μέσα στὴν πόλι – τί· **ἀκολασία**. Κάθε τόσο λαγωνικά τῆς ἀστυνομίας κάνουν ἐφόδους κι ἀνακαλύπτουν κορίτσια –δὲν τὶς καταδικάζω, οὔτε ὁ Χριστὸς τὶς καταδίκασε—, κορίτσια ποὺ ἔρχονται στὴν πόλι καὶ πουλᾶνε τὸ κορμάκι τους γιὰ ἓνα κομμάτι ψωμί. Σπίτια καὶ πολυκατοικίες ἔγιναν ἄντρα ἀκολασίας, κέντρα διαφθορᾶς, Σόδομα καὶ Γόμορρα.

● «*Εἶδον ἀνομίαν ἐν τῇ πόλει*»...

Ἄλλ' ἄς σταματήσω τὴν περιγραφή καὶ ἄς ρωτήσω· ἄραγε, ὕστερα ἀπ' ὅλα αὐτά, αὐτοὶ ποὺ κάθονται στὶς πόλεις εἶνε εὐτυχισμένοι; Ὅχι δυστυχῶς. Φαντάζει πολὺ ἢ πόλις καὶ νομίζει καθένας ὅτι στὴ μεγάλη πολιτεία θὰ βρῆ τὴν εὐτυχία του. Μὰ **ὑπάρχει ἐκεῖ εὐτυχία**;

Θὰ μοῦ πῆτε· Στὸ χωριὸ δὲν ἔχω δραχμὴ νὰ κουνηθῶ, ἐνῶ **στὴν πολιτεία ὑπάρχει πλοῦτος**...

Στὴν πόλι βέβαια, ἅμα κανεὶς πάρη καὶ τὸν διάβολο συνεργάτη, **γέμισαν τὰ πορτοφόλια του**· ὁποῖος πλουτίζει, συνήθως κάποια συμμαχία ἔχει μὲ τὸν διάβολο. Ἀλλὰ καὶ ἂν ἀκόμη ὑποθέσουμε ὅτι τὸν πλοῦτο τὸν ἀπέκτησε τιμῶς καὶ τὸν κατέχει δικαίως, καὶ πάλι τὸ χρῆμα δὲν μπορεῖ νὰ τὸν κἀνῃ εὐτυχισμένο.

Τί νὰ σοῦ κἀνῃ τὸ χρῆμα; Λεπτά! φωνάζει ὁ ἓνας· λεπτά! ὁ ἄλλος· ὅλοι θέλουν τὰ «*τριάκοντα ἀργύρια*» (Ματθ. 26,15-27,3). Δίψα σατανική. Μὰ τί νὰ σοῦ κάνουν τὰ λεφτὰ ὅταν π.χ. μέσ' στὸ σπίτι ὑπάρχη οικογενειακὸ δρᾶμα (μοιχεία, διαζύγιο), ὅταν ὑπάρχη μιὰ ἀσθένεια ἀνίατη ἢ ἀναπηρία, ἢ ὅταν συμβῆ θάνατος καὶ ὑπάρχη φέρετρο; Μὲ τὰ λεφτὰ ἀγοράζεις ὅλα τὰ πράγματα· ἓνα δὲν ἀγοράζεις, τὴν εὐτυχία. Μὲ τὰ λεφτὰ θὰ ἀγοράσης ἓνα μαντήλι μεταξωτὸ νὰ σφουγγίζης τὰ δάκρυά σου, ἢ μιὰ λεκάνη χρυσοῦ νὰ φτύνης τὸ αἷμα σου· μὰ τὰ δάκρυα εἶνε δάκρυα εἴτε τὰ σφουγγίζεις μὲ μεταξωτὰ μαντήλια εἴτε πέφτουν κάτω στὴ μαύρη γῆ· καὶ τὸ αἷμα εἶνε αἷμα, εἴτε πέφτει κάτω στὸ χῶμα εἴτε μαζεύεται σὲ χρυσὲς λεκάνες.

Εἶχα διαβάσει ὅτι σὲ κάποιο βασιλεῖο ἔξω ἀπ' τὰ δικαστήρια εἶχαν δυὸ κρεμάλες γιὰ τοὺς καταδίκους· ἢ μιὰ εἶχε σχοινὶ ἀπὸ ἀπλὴ τριχιά, ἢ ἄλλη εἶχε σχοινὶ πολυτελείας, ἀπὸ μετάξι· τὰ φτωχαδάκια, ἂν ἔκαναν ἐγκλήματα, τὰ κρεμοῦ-

σαν μὲ τὴν ἀπλὴ τριχιά, τοὺς ἄλλους τοὺς κρεμοῦσαν μὲ τὸ μεταξωτὸ σχοινί· μὰ ὁ θάνατος, εἴτε ἔτσι εἴτε ἄλλιῶς, θάνατος εἶνε. Τί σοῦ προσφέρει λοιπὸν τὸ χρῆμα; Ἀπλῶς θὰ σοῦ δώση μιὰ κηδεῖα μεγαλοπρεπῆ, μιὰ κάσσα πολυτελείας· καὶ ἐνῶ οἱ φτωχοὶ κηδεύονται ἀπὸ ἓνα παπᾶ, ἐσένα θὰ σὲ κηδέψουν δεσποτάδες...

Διαβάζετε, ἀδελφοί μου, τί λέει ἡ Ἀποκάλυψις; Μιὰ μέρα, λέει, πάνω ἀπὸ τὶς πολιτείες, ποὺ ἔγιναν Σόδομα καὶ Γόμορρα καὶ **Βαβυλώνες** καὶ Πομπηῖες, θὰ ἀπλωθοῦν μαῦρα σύννεφα, καὶ μέσα σὲ μιὰ νύχτα οἱ πολιτείες θὰ ἐρημώσουν. Λοιπὸν, μὴ μοῦ μιλάτε οὔτε γιὰ Ἀθήνα οὔτε γιὰ Ῥώμη οὔτε γιὰ Παρίσι οὔτε γιὰ Λονδῖνο οὔτε γιὰ Μόσχα οὔτε γιὰ Νέα Ὑόρκη. «*Οὐαὶ*» τῷ κόσμῳ, οὐαὶ στὶς πόλεις ποὺ ἐγκλημάτησαν καὶ ὠργίασαν! (βλ. Ἀπ. κ.φ. 18ο [11]).

Διαβάζετε καὶ τὸν ἀπόστολο Παῦλο; Δὲν ὁμιλεῖ γιὰ τέτοιες πόλεις. «*Ἄνω σχῶμεν τὰς καρδίας*» (βλ. Ἀπ. κ.φ. 16ο [14]). ὁμιλεῖ γιὰ μιὰ ἄλλη πόλι, τὴν «*ἄνω Ἱερουσαλήμ*» (βλ. Ἀπ. κ.φ. 21ο [2]). Ποιὰ εἶνε αὕτη ἢ «*ἄνω Ἱερουσαλήμ*»; Ὡ, ἀδέρφια μου, βάλτε φωτιά καὶ κάψτε τὰ ἄθλια ἀναγνώσματα, καὶ πάρτε στὰ χέρια σας τὰ συναξάρια, τοὺς βίους τῶν ἁγίων, τὸ Εὐαγγέλιο καὶ τὴν Ἀποκάλυψι. Κι ἂν δὲν ἔχετε λεφτὰ, πουλήστε καὶ τὸ ποικύμισό σας ἀκόμα γιὰ ν' ἀγοράσετε τὴν Ἀποκάλυψι τοῦ Ἰωάννου –εἶνε ἄλλωστε φτηνὸ βιβλίον— καὶ διαβάστε τὸ 21ο (ΚΑ') κεφάλαιο τῆς Ἀποκαλύψεως (βλ. 21,10-27).

Τί λέει ἐκεῖ; Ἄγγελος πῆρε τὸν Ἰωάννη, τὸν ἀνέβασε σὲ ψηλὴ κορυφή, κι ἀπὸ ἐκεῖ εἶδε μιὰ πολιτεία ἰδεώδη, ἀνώτερη ἀπὸ τοῦ Πλάτωνος, τὴν «*ἁγίαν Ἱερουσαλήμ*», νὰ κατεβαίνη ἀπὸ τὸν οὐρανὸ καὶ νὰ ῥιζώνη στὴ γῆ, μέσα στὶς ἀνθρώπινες καρδιές. Ἐνα κάστρο τετράγωνο μὲ τρεῖς πύλες σὲ κάθε πλευρά, ἀνατολὴ - δύσι - βορρᾶ - νότο. Τὸ τεῖχος καὶ τὰ σπίτια τῆς ἀπὸ πολῦτιμα πετράδια, ἢ πλατεῖα τῆς ἀπὸ χρυσάφι. Ναὸ δὲν ἔχει· ναὸς τῆς εἶνε ὁ ἴδιος ὁ Θεός. Δὲν χρειάζεται τὸν ἥλιο καὶ τὴν σελήνη· τὴν φωτίζει ἢ λάμπει τῆς ἁγίας Τριάδος κ' ἔχει παντοτινὰ ἡμέρα. Καὶ τὸ πιὸ παρήγορο· **ἐκεῖ δὲν ὑπάρχουν δάκρυα καὶ φέρετρα** (βλ. Ἀπ. κ.φ. 7,17-21,4), ὅπως ἐδῶ, ἀλλ' ἀκούγεται ἀκαταπαύστως τὸ «*ἄλληλουῖα*».

Ἄμποτε, ἀδελφοί μου, ὅταν μιὰ μέρα φύγουμε ἀπὸ τὸ μάταιο τοῦτο κόσμον, νὰ συναντηθοῦμε ὅλοι, κ' ἐγὼ ὁ ἁμαρτωλὸς κ' ἐσεῖς, ἐκεῖ ἐπάνω, ὅπου εἶνε οἱ πρόγονοί μας, οἱ μάρτυρες, τὰ πνεύματα τὰ ἀθάνατα, ἀφοῦ σφραγίσουμε τὴ ζωὴ μας μὲ τὸ «*Μνήσθητί μου, Κύριε, ὅταν ἔλθῃς ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου*» (βλ. Λουκ. 23,42)· 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

Preaching the Good News

The Church of the Lord is built upon the rock of the apostles among so many dangers in the world; it therefore remains unmoved. The Church's foundation is unshakable and firm against the assaults of the raging sea. Waves lash at the Church but do not shatter it. Although the elements of this world constantly beat upon the Church with crashing sounds, the Church possesses the safest harbor of salvation for all in distress. Although the Church is tossed about on the sea, it rides easily on rivers, especially those rivers that Scripture speaks of: The rivers have lifted up their voice. These are the rivers flowing from the heart of the man who is given drink by Christ and who receives from the Spirit of God. When these rivers overflow with the grace of the Spirit, they lift up their voice.

There is also a stream which flows down on God's saints like a torrent. There is also a

rushing river giving joy to the heart that is at peace and makes for peace. Whoever has received from the fullness of this river, like John the Evangelist, like Peter and Paul, lifts up his voice. Just as the apostles lifted up their voices and preached the Gospel throughout the world, so those who drink these waters begin to preach the good news of the Lord Jesus.

Drink, then, from Christ, so that your voice may also be heard. Store up in your mind the water that is Christ, the water that praises the Lord. Store up water from many sources, the water that rains down from the clouds of prophecy.

St. Ambrose of Milan

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