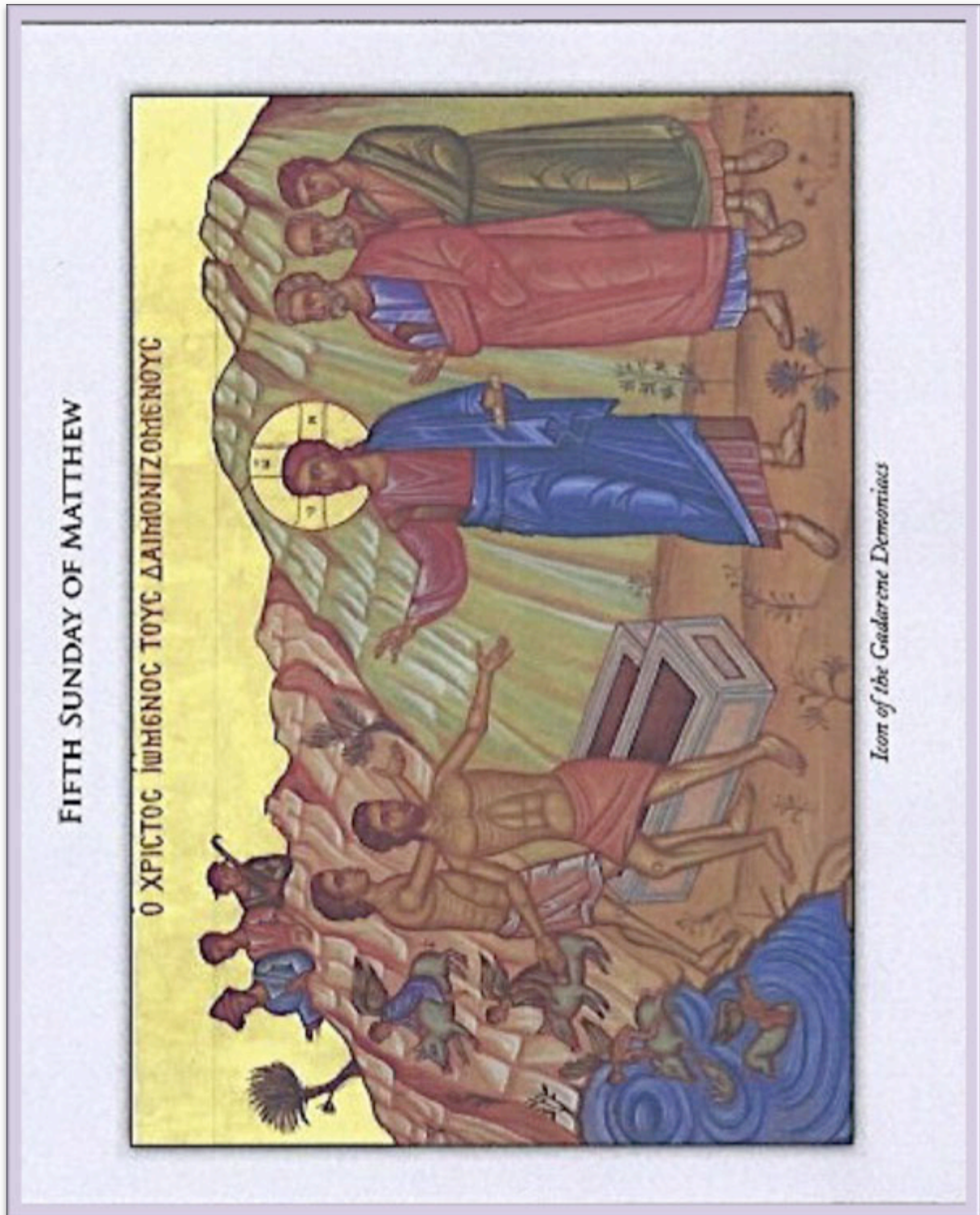




DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN
DISTRICT

THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN July 21st, 2019
V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas



St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 10:1-10
Prokeimenon. mode-0.

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 10:1-10

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but it is not enlightened. For, being ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. For Christ is the end of the law, that every one who has faith may be justified. Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on the law shall live by it. But the righteousness based on faith says, Do not say in your heart, "Who will ascend into heaven?" (that is, to bring Christ down) or "Who will descend into the abyss?" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart (that is, the word of faith which we preach); because, if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For man believes with his heart and so is justified, and he confesses with his lips and so is saved.

Προκείμενον. mode-0.

Πρὸς Ῥωμαίους 10:1-10 τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα

Ἀδελφοί, ἡ μὲν εὐδοκία τῆς ἐμῆς καρδίας καὶ ἡ δέησις ἡ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ὑπὲρ τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ ἐστὶν εἰς σωτηρίαν. Μαρτυρῶ γὰρ αὐτοῖς ὅτι ζῆλον θεοῦ ἔχουσιν, ἀλλ' οὐ κατ' ἐπίγνωσιν. Ἄγνοοῦντες γὰρ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην, καὶ τὴν ἰδίαν δικαιοσύνην ζητοῦντες στήσαι, τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐχ ὑπετάγησαν. Τέλος γὰρ νόμου Χριστὸς εἰς δικαιοσύνην παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι. Μωϋσῆς γὰρ γράφει τὴν δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ τοῦ νόμου, ὅτι ὁ ποιήσας αὐτὰ ἄνθρωπος ζήσεται ἐν αὐτοῖς. Ἡ δὲ ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοσύνη οὕτως λέγει, Μὴ εἴπῃς ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου, Τίς ἀναβήσεται εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν; - τοῦτ' ἔστιν Χριστὸν καταγαγεῖν - ἢ, Τίς καταβήσεται εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσον; - τοῦτ' ἔστιν Χριστὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναγαγεῖν. Ἀλλὰ τί λέγει; Ἐγγύς σου τὸ ῥῆμά ἐστίν, ἐν τῷ στόματί σου καὶ ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου· τοῦτ' ἔστιν τὸ ῥῆμα τῆς πίστεως ὃ κηρύσσομεν· ὅτι ἐὰν ὁμολογήσῃς ἐν τῷ στόματί σου κύριον Ἰησοῦν, καὶ πιστεύσῃς ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου ὅτι ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ἤγειρεν ἐκ νεκρῶν, σωθήσῃ· καρδίᾳ γὰρ πιστεύεται εἰς δικαιοσύνην, στόματι δὲ ὁμολογεῖται εἰς σωτηρίαν.

5th Sunday of Matthew
The Gospel According to Matthew 8:28-34; 9:1

At that time, when Jesus came to the country of the Gergesenes, two demoniacs met him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one would pass that way. And behold, they cried out, "What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?" Now a herd of many swine was feeding at some distance from them. And the demons begged him, "If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of swine." And he said to them, "Go." So they came out and went into the swine; and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea, and perished in the waters. The herdsmen fled, and going into the city they told everything, and what had happened to the demoniacs. And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus; and when they saw him, they begged him to leave their neighborhood. And getting into a boat he crossed over and came to his own city.

5th Sunday of Matthew
The Gospel According to Matthew 8:28-34; 9:1

ᾧ καιρῷ ἐκεῖνῳ, ἐλθόντος τῷ Ἰησοῦ εἰς τὸ πέραν εἰς τὴν χώραν τῶν Γεργεσηνῶν ὑπήντησαν αὐτῷ δύο δαιμονιζόμενοι ἐκ τῶν μνημείων ἐξερχόμενοι, χαλεποὶ λίαν, ὥστε μὴ ἰσχύειν τινὰ παρελθεῖν διὰ τῆς ὁδοῦ ἐκείνης. καὶ ἰδοὺ ἔκραξαν λέγοντες· τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ υἱὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ; ἦλθες ὧδε πρὸ καιροῦ βασανίσαι ἡμᾶς; ἦν δὲ μακρὰν ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἀγέλη χοίρων πολλῶν βοσκομένη. οἱ δὲ δαίμονες παρεκάλουν αὐτὸν λέγοντες· εἰ ἐκβάλλεις ἡμᾶς, ἐπίτρεψον ἡμῖν ἀπελθεῖν εἰς τὴν ἀγέλην τῶν χοίρων. καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· ὑπάγετε. οἱ δὲ ἐξελθόντες ἀπῆλθον εἰς τὴν ἀγέλην τῶν χοίρων· καὶ ἰδοὺ ὤρμησε πᾶσα ἡ ἀγέλη τῶν χοίρων κατὰ τοῦ κρημοῦ εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ ἀπέθανον ἐν τοῖς ὕδασι. οἱ δὲ βόσκοντες ἔφυγον, καὶ ἀπελθόντες εἰς τὴν πόλιν ἀπήγγειλαν πάντα καὶ τὰ τῶν δαιμονιζομένων. καὶ ἰδοὺ πᾶσα ἡ πόλις ἐξῆλθεν εἰς συνάντησιν τῷ Ἰησοῦ, καὶ ἰδόντες αὐτὸν παρεκάλεισαν ὅπως μεταβῆ ἀπὸ τῶν ὁρίων αὐτῶν. Καὶ ἐμβὰς εἰς πλοῖον διεπέρασε καὶ ἦλθεν εἰς τὴν ἰδίαν πόλιν.

AGAPE COFFEE HOUR: is being sponsored and hosted by the Parish Council today. Please join us in WHITEHALL for refreshments and fellowship.

TODAY: we welcome Father Stephen who is replacing Fr. Vasyl who is attending a ceremony elsewhere. Fr. Stephen who comes to us from the Ukrainian Chancery will be with us two weeks, including next Sunday.

TODAY: we are observing the tragic illegal invasion of Turkish military forces that over-ran the sovereign REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS on July 20th, 1974. Memorial anniversary prayers will be intoned for the faithfully departed martyrs of this on-going conflict dividing the Cypriot people and their Island Nation
ETERNAL BE THEIR MEMORY! ZITO KYPROS!

TODAY: Churching service is offered for the new and first born daughter 'EVANGELINE' of Evangelos and Andrea Pappas. This is the first grandchild of George and Effie Pappas. NA SAS ZESE

Two mile-stones July 01st, this past week were celebrated by our Pastor Father Eugene. This commences his 36th, (THIRTY-SIX) year as pastor and shepherd of the Three Hierarchs faith community and parish. It also marks his 21st, (TWENTY FIRST) year broadcasting live each Saturday on W.N.Y.E. Cosmos F.M. RADIO (91.5 FM) as host and producer of his program Matters of Conscience. The broadcast is live-steamed globally and has a varied and international listening audience.

YOU'RE INVITED: Today July 21, to celebrate the annual birthday anniversary ofyou know whom! The good-shepherd of Kings Highway will be #_____ years of youthful vibrancy. Come and share the party in WHITEHALL directly after church services. Young and old alike share in the jubilee of years well spent. Cakes, cookies, ice-cream soda and balloons for everyone. HAPPY BIRTHDAY.

PILGRIMAGE TO CONSTANTINOPLE, NICAEA, and SILIVRIA is scheduled for Sunday, November 10th, through Saturday November 16th. Please see enclosed flyer for details.

PRAYER and HEALING SERVICE is scheduled for THIS Wednesday evening 6:00 P.M.

July 24th. Come! Listen! Learn! Witness! Share! A birthday cake will be cut to celebrate the Pastor's happy day. Refreshments are served at 7:30 P.M. OPEN TO ALL!

SAINT PARASKEVE VESPER: is to be celebrated on Thursday evening July 25th at 7:00 P.M in Greenlawn Long Island. The Shrine Church of Saint Paraskeve and the holy well spring of water will be blessed for the faithful. A solemn procession carrying the relics of the saint will highlight the outdoor veneration. COME AND SHARE THE HOLY VISITATION of the Patroness of EYE illnesses. Be anointed with the sacred waters. Father Eugene will be the honored celebrant and homilist at the Greenlawn, Long Island Shrine..

ALTAR BOYS: go to Coney Island, this Friday evening July 26th, for dinner at 'PAUL'S DAUGHTER' on the boardwalk at 6:00 P.M and rides, rides, rides at DENO'S WONDER WHEEL PARK, at 7:00 PM. The night ends with ice cream sundaes and the 'fire-works' on the Coney Island Beach and Boardwalk. IS THE YOUNG MAN IN YOUR FAMILY AN ALTAR-BOY?

NEXT SUNDAY CHURCHING of the first child and daughter KATERINA ELENI of Jimmy (Demetri) and Calliope Kokotas. NA SAS ZESE! The baby is honorably named after the two YIAYIAS! Sunday – July 28th.

NEXT SUNDAY CHURCHING of the first child and daughter GIA MARIE of Anthony Joseph and Lena Marie (nee Poulos) RUSSO. NA SAS ZESE! Sunday – July 28th.

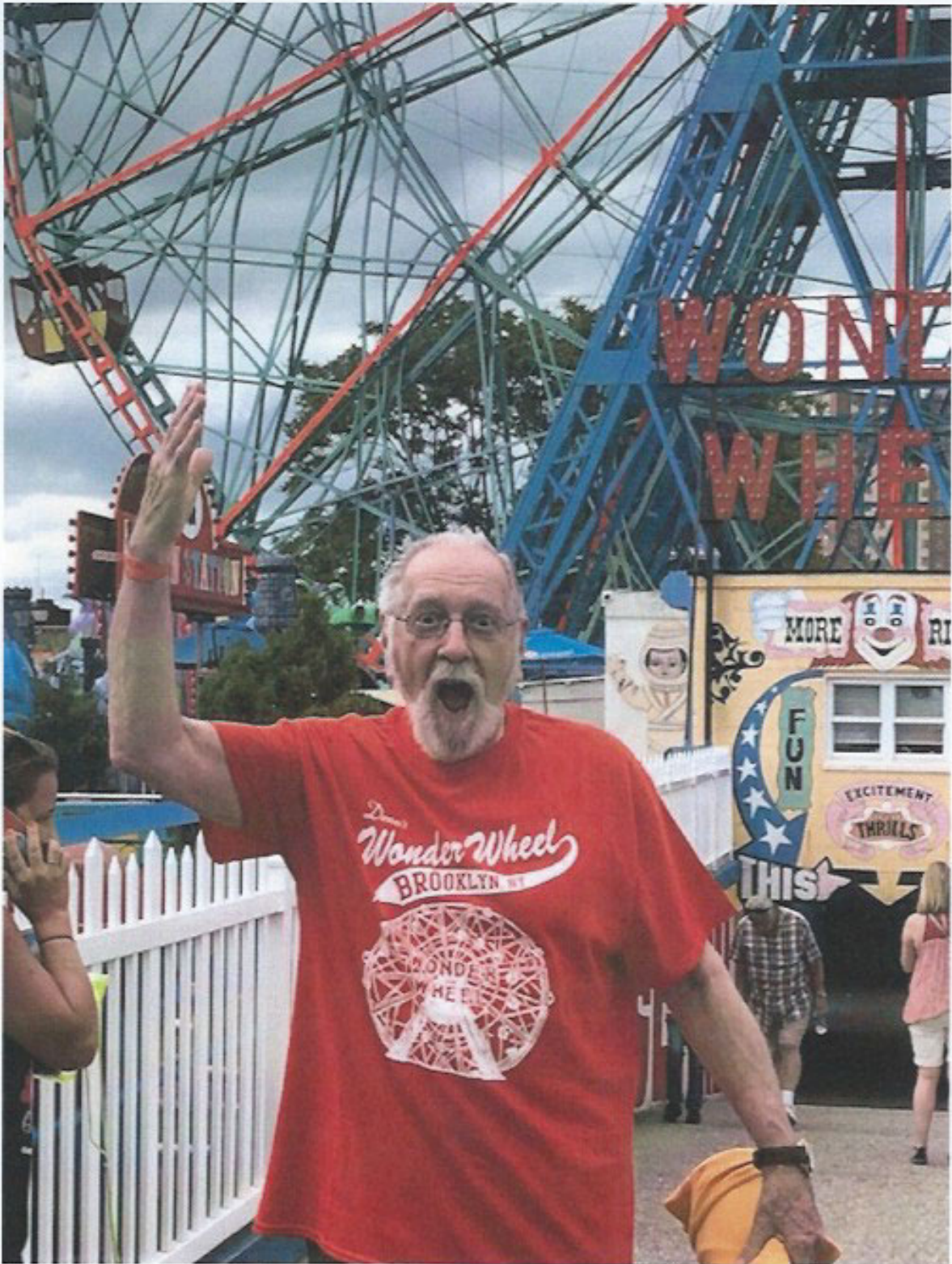
GRATITUDE is extended to GEORGIA BOUZAKIS for her generous donation of the 'prayer placards' of the CREED (PISTEVO) and the LORD'S PRAYER (PATER IMON) which are in the pew book racks. please use these beautifully illustrated bi-lingual prayer assist at the sacred services. Please do not remove from the pews! If you are desirous of a personal copy, they are available for \$3.(three dollars) upon request of the clergy. ASK AND YOU WILL RECEIVE! THANK YOU DEAR GEORGIA!

RADIO MINISTRY: Each Saturday at 1:15PM Fr. Eugene hosts and produces the radio broadcast MATTERS OF CONSCIENCE NOW IN it's 21st 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: + ANTONIA CATARRA + EILEEN GREGOS
MEMORIALNEXT WEEK: + ELENI KLAMSON



Happy Birthday Celebrations today as we observe the #(Fill In , But Be Kind!)
Anniversary Year Of Our Pastor's Arrival. Yes! Pictured here are one and the
same person. ONE PERSONA contemplates the Greek Adage 'EOS POTE'
while the -----▶



'OTHER PERSONA' heralds another year blessed by God and robbed from the Devil! Many happy returns of the year Dear Father Eugene! As you have often said, "we celebrate for those around us whom we love and who love us!"

REJOICE AND BE GLAD IN IT!



ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



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

Ἐκδίδεται ἀπὸ τὴν Κοινοβιακὴ Γενναϊκία Ἱερὰ Μονὴ Ἁγίου Αὐγουστίνου Φλωρίνης - 531 00 ΦΛΩΡΙΝΑ - τηλ. 23850-28610 - imsello@yahoo.gr

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος ΛΣΤ'
Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 2207

Κυριακὴ Ε' Ματθαίου (Ματθ. 8,28 - 9,1)
21 Ἰουλίου 2019

Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος
Αὐγουστίνος Ν. Καντιώτης

Αὐτὸς εἶνε ὁ σατανᾶς

Ο Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, ἀγαπητοί μου, ὅπως λέει ὁ θεόπνευστος λόγος, ἦρθε στὴ γῆ «ἵνα λύσῃ τὰ ἔργα τοῦ διαβόλου», φανερώθηκε στὸν κόσμον μὲ σκοπὸ νὰ καταλύσῃ τὰ ἔργα τοῦ σατανᾶ (Ἰω. 3,8).

Ὁ σατανᾶς προηγουμένως φαινόταν ἀνίκητος. Ἦταν ἓνας «κοσμοκράτωρ» ὅπως χαρακτηρίζεται (Ἰβ. 6,12). Οἱ ἄνθρωποι δὲν μπορούσαν νὰ τοῦ ἀντισταθοῦν, νὰ τὸν νικήσουν. Ἦταν ὑπηρετὲς τῶν θελημάτων του, σκλάβοι. Ὅταν ὁμως ἐμφανίστηκε ὁ Χριστὸς στὴ γῆ, τὸν ἐξουδετέρωσε· συγκρούστηκε μαζί του καὶ τὸν νίκησε ὀριστικά.

Μία ἀκτίνα τῆς δυνάμεως τοῦ Χριστοῦ μας περιγράφει τὸ σημερινὸ εὐαγγέλιο.

Ἔρχεται, ἀδελφοί μου, «εἰς τὴν χώραν τῶν Γεργεσηνῶν» (Ματθ. 8,28). Ἀφοῦ διέσχισε τὴ λίμνη τῆς Τιβεριάδος, φτάνει ἀπέναντι ὅπου κατοικοῦσαν οἱ Γεργεσηνοὶ ἢ Γαδαρηνοί. Ἐκεῖ ἔρχεται. Θέλει νὰ βοηθήσῃ αὐτοὺς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους, νὰ τοὺς διδάξῃ, νὰ τοὺς φωτίσῃ. Ἀποβιβάζεται λοιπόν, ἀλλὰ καθὼς βαδίζει συναντᾷ δύο δυστυχισμένους. Ἦταν σὰν ἄγρια θηρία πού εἶχαν στήσει ἐκεῖ τὴ φωλιά τους. Ἦταν **δαιμονιζόμενοι**, ἄνθρωποι δηλαδὴ πού τὶς ψυχὰς καὶ τὰ σώματά τους εἶχε κυριεύσει τὸ πονηρὸ πνεῦμα· εἶχαν γίνει ὄργανα τοῦ σατανᾶ. Εἶχαν ἐγκαταλείψει τὰ σπίτια καὶ τὸ χωριὸ τους. Ζοῦσαν ἔξω, κοιμόντουσαν μέσα σὲ μνήματα καὶ σπηλιές. Εἶχαν γίνει ὁ φόβος καὶ τρόμος τῶν κατοίκων, τρομοκράτες τῆς περιοχῆς. Κανεὶς δὲν μπορούσε νὰ περάσῃ ἀπὸ κεῖ. Αὐτὴ ἦταν ἡ κατάστασί τους.

Ἀλλὰ δαιμονιζόμενοι δὲν ἦταν μόνο τότε οἱ δύο αὐτοὶ δυστυχισμένοι ἄντρες, οὔτε εἶνε καὶ σήμερα ὅσοι πάσχουν παρομοίως· δαιμονιζόμενοι εἶνε καὶ ἄλλοι. Δὲν εἶνε μόνο ἐκεῖνοι πού φωνάζουν, βρίζουν, τρίζουν τὰ δόντια, ἀφρίζουν, πέφτουν κάτω, μένουν ξεροὶ κι

ἀναίσθητοι, καὶ τοὺς πηγαίνουν οἱ δικοὶ τους στὸν ἅγιο Γεράσιμο τῆς Κεφαλονιάς γιὰ νὰ θεραπευθοῦν. **Δαιμονιζόμενοι εἶνε πολλοί!** Θέλετε μερικὰ παραδείγματα;

✓ **Δαιμονιζόμενος εἶνε ὁ μέθυσος.** Δὲν τοῦ ἀρέσει τὸ σπίτι, συχνάζει στὸ καπηλειό. Κι ὅταν ἐπιστρέφει γίνεται ὁ τύραννος τῆς οἰκογενείας, τρομοκρατεῖ καὶ τὴν κοινωνία. Εἶνε ἓνα θηρίο μᾶλλον παρὰ ἄνθρωπος. Μιὰ παροιμία λέει «Ὁ τρελλὸς εἶδε τὸ μεθυσμένο κ' ἔφυγε».

✓ **Δαιμονιζόμενος ὁ βλάσφημος.** Ὁ Πλάστης τοῦ ἴδωσε τὴ γλῶσσα νὰ δοξολογῇ τὸ Θεὸ· ἀλλ' αὐτὸς τὴ χρησιμοποιεῖ γιὰ νὰ τὸν ὑβρίζῃ. Δηλητήριο στάζει γλῶσσα του.

✓ **Δαιμονιζόμενος εἶνε ὁ ἀκόλαστος.** Ὅταν τὸν κυριεύει τὸ πάθος τῆς σαρκός, γίνεται ἐκτός ἑαυτοῦ, ὑποδουλώνεται στὴν αἰσχρὰ ἐπιθυμία, λέει λόγια καὶ κάνει ἐνέργειες πού προσβάλλουν καὶ ἀτιμάζουν ἄλλα πρόσωπα, ἀλλὰ κι ἴδιος ἐξευτελίζεται, καταρρακώνει τὴν τιμὴ τῆς οἰκογενείας του, γελοιοποιεῖται.

✓ **Δαιμονιζόμενος καὶ ὁ θυμώδης,** πού τὴν ὥρα τοῦ παροξυσμοῦ χάνει τὴν αὐτοκυριαρχία του, δὲν ξέρει τί λέει καὶ τί κάνει.

✓ **Δαιμονιζόμενος ὁ ἐγωιστής,** πού φαντασιώνεται καὶ ζῆ μὲ αὐτάρεσκες παραισθήσεις, φιλόδοξες ἰδέες καὶ ἐξωπραγματικὲς ἀξιώσεις.

✓ **Δαιμονιζόμενος ὁ χαρτοπαίκτης,** πού μέσα σὲ μιὰ νύχτα καταστρέφει κόπους, ἰδρώτα, οικονομίες ὀλόκληρης ζωῆς καὶ αὐτοκαταδικάζεται σὲ φτώχεια.

✓ **Δαιμονιζόμενος μ' ἓνα λόγο κάθε ἁμαρτωλός.** Δὲν ἀρέσκειται στὴ ζωὴ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας τοῦ Θεοῦ, δὲν θέλει ν' ἀκούῃ τὰ λόγια τοῦ Εὐαγγελίου· χτυπάει ἢ καμπάνα τὴν Κυριακὴ, κι αὐτὸς κοιμᾶται ἢ τρέχει ἀλλοῦ μακριά...

Ἄλλ' ἂς δοῦμε τί ἔκανε ὁ Χριστὸς μὲ τοὺς δύο δαιμονιζόμενους. Αὐτοί, μόλις τὸν ἀντικρίζουν, ταραζόνται. Ὅπως οἱ κακοῦργοι ἄ-

μα δούν άστυνομία «τὰ χρειάζονται», έτσι κι αυτοί. Φοβούνται. Καταλαβαίνουν ότι ήρθε ή ώρα τους, τὸ βασιλείο τους λήγει· άρκετὰ βασάνισαν τοὺς ανθρώπους, τώρα πρέπει νὰ φύγουν. Άλλὰ οἱ δαίμονες δὲν θέλουν· δὲν μπορούν νὰ ήσυχάσουν, δὲν ξέρουν άνάπαυσι. Γι' αυτό παρακαλοῦν· «Άφου μᾶς διώχνεις, Κύριε, ἐπίτρεπέ μας νὰ πᾶμε στὸ κοπάδι τῶν χοίρων» (βλ. 8,31). Καὶ ὁ Κύριος ἐπιτρέπει. Φεύγουν, μπαίνουν στους χοίρους, καὶ τότε θέαμα φοβερό· οἱ χοῖροι ὄρμουν καὶ πέφτουν μέσα στὴ λίμνη καὶ πνίγονται ὅλοι.

Ἔτσι εἶνε ὁ σατανᾶς καὶ οἱ ἄνθρωποι του· ὅταν δὲν μπορούν νὰ κάνουν κακὸ στὸν ἄνθρωπο, ξεθυμαίνουν στὰ ἄλογα κτίσματα. Δὲν μπορούν νὰ πειράξουν τὸ κοικοκύρη; σκοτώνουν τὰ ζῶα του· δὲν μπορούν νὰ καταστρέψουν αὐτόν; κόβουν τὰ δέντρα του...

Γιατί ὅμως ὁ Κύριος ἐπέτρεψε νὰ συμβῆ αὐτὴ ἡ ζημιά; Διότι τὴν ἐκτροπὴ τῶν χοίρων τὴν εἶχε ἀπαγορεύσει ὁ θεῖος νόμος. Ἐκεῖνοι ποὺ ἔτρεφαν χοίρους ἀμάρταναν, διότι **παρέβαιναν τὴν ἐντολὴ τοῦ Θεοῦ**, ἡ ὁποία ἔλεγε γιὰ τοὺς χοίρους· «*Άπό τούτων οὐ φάγεσθε*» (Δευτ. 14,46). Ἡ περιουσία τους αὐτὴ ἦταν παράνομη, γι' αὐτὸ καὶ καταστρέφεται.

Μάθε το, ἀδελφέ μου. Περιουσία ποὺ τὴν ἔχει κάποιος μαζέψει μαζὶ μὲ τὸν διάβολο, θὰ χαθῆ. Ὁ ἴδιος ὁ σατανᾶς, ποὺ τὸν βοήθησε νὰ τὴν ἀποκτήσῃ, αὐτὸς θὰ τὴν κἀνὴ νὰ σκορπιστῆ στους πέντε ἀνέμους. «**Τὰ διαβολομαζώματα - ἀνεμοσκορπίσματα**». Τοὺς Γεργεσηνοὺς ὁ σατανᾶς τοὺς εἶχε βάλει νὰ κάνουν τὸ κοπάδι, αὐτὸς καὶ τοὺς τὸ καταστρέφει. Κ' ἐσὺ στὴ δουλειά σου ποτέ μὴν παίρνεις βοηθὸ τὸ σατανᾶ. Νὰ ἐργάζεσαι μὲ τιμιότητα καὶ εὐλικρίνεια· ἂν θησαυρίζῃς μὲ πονηρία, κλοπὴ καὶ ἀδικία, ματαίως θησαυρίζεις· θὰ τὰ κάψῃ ὅλα ἡ ὄργη τοῦ Θεοῦ, δὲν θὰ μείνῃ τίποτα. Αὐτὸ δὲν εἶδαμε σήμερα στους Γεργεσηνοὺς; τίποτα δὲν σώθηκε, ὅλη ἐκεῖνη ἡ μεγάλη περιουσία καταποντίστηκε.

Ἄσταν οἱ βοσκοὶ ἔμειναν χωρὶς κοπάδι, τρέχουν, πηγαίνουν στὴν πόλι καὶ περιγράφουν ὅλα τὰ συμβάντα μὲ τοὺς δαιμονιζομένους. Σηκώνονται τότε τ' ἀφεντικά κ' ἔρχονται ἐκεῖ ποὺ ἦταν ὁ Χριστός, καὶ μαζὶ μ' αὐτοὺς ὅλοι οἱ κάτοικοι. Δυστυχῶς ὅμως **δὲν ἀναγνωρίζουν τὴν ἁμαρτία τους**. Μένουν σκληροὶ καὶ πείσμονες. Δὲν συναισθάνονται τὴν παρανομία τους ὥστε νὰ ποῦν· Καλὰ μᾶς ἔκανες, Κύριε, εἴμαστε παραβάτες τῶν ἐντολῶν σου καὶ ἔπρεπε νὰ τιμωρηθοῦμε.

Στέλνει καὶ σ' ἐμᾶς κάποτε, ἀγαπητοί μου,

τιμωρίες ὁ Θεός. Τὰ δέντρα μένουν ἄκαρπα, τὰ ζῶα ψοφοῦν, τὰ χωράφια δὲν ἀποδίδουν. Σπέρνουμε, ποτίζουμε, τσαπίζουμε, καλλιεργοῦμε, καὶ δὲν θερίζουμε. Κοπιάζουμε, καὶ δὲν ἀποζημιωνόμαστε, οἱ κόποι μας δὲν ἀνταμείβονται· ἔρδεύουμε, καὶ δὲν εἰσπράττουμε. Τί εἶν' αὐτά; Εἶνε **τιμωρία τοῦ Θεοῦ** γιὰ σωφρονισμό, εἶνε μπάτσοι - χαστούκια ποὺ μᾶς δίνει ὁ Θεός γιὰ νὰ ξυπνήσουμε ἀπὸ τὸ λήθαργό μας, εἶνε ραβδισμοὶ - ξυλιές γιὰ νὰ διορθωθοῦμε. Μὰ ἐμεῖς τίποτα!

Μοιάζουμε μὲ τοὺς Γαδαρηνοὺς. Ἄντι νὰ μετανοήσουμε, γινόμαστε χειρότεροι. Ἄντι νὰ πλησιάσουμε τὸ Χριστό, ἀπομακρυνόμεθα περισσότερο. Ἄντι νὰ καλοῦμε καὶ νὰ ὑποδεχώμαστε τὸ Χριστό, ἐμεῖς τὸν διώχνουμε, τοῦ λέμε· Φύγε, ἀπομακρύνσου ἀπὸ τὰ ὄριά μας, τίς δουλειές μας, τὰ σπίτια μας· δὲν σὲ θέλουμε. Θέλουμε νὰ ζήσουμε μὲ τὰ πάθη μας, καλὰ περνᾶμε συντροφιά μὲ τὰ δαιμόνια!...

Ἄσ ἀδελφοί μου, ἂς ἀλλάξουμε πορεία! Ὅπως βαδίζουμε **πᾶμε γιὰ τὸ γκρεμό**.

Τί ἔκανε ὁ σατανᾶς· ἔφερε τὸ κοπάδι τῶν χοίρων ἐπάνω στὸ γκρεμό, καὶ μετὰ ἀπὸ ἐκεῖ τοὺς ἔρριξε μέσα στὰ νερὰ καὶ τοὺς ἐπνιξε. Τί ἔκανε μὲ τοὺς δύο δαιμονιζομένους· τοὺς ἔβγαλε ἀπὸ τὰ σπίτια τους καὶ τὴν κοινωνία, τοὺς ἔστειλε νὰ σέρνονται στὰ ρουμάνια, νὰ τσακίζονται στὶς πέτρες καὶ τοὺς ἔρριξε νὰ κοιμῶνται μέσ' στὰ μνήματα.

Ἔτσι εἶνε ὁ σατανᾶς. **Ῥίχνει γλυκὰ δολώματα γιὰ νὰ μᾶς ξεγελάσῃ**, νὰ τὸν πλησιάσουμε καὶ νὰ τὸν ἐμπιστευθοῦμε. Εἶνε σὰν τὸ χασάπη, ποὺ ρίχνει στὸ χοῖρο ξυλοκέρατα γιὰ νὰ τὸν τραβήξῃ στὸ σφαγεῖο· σὰν τὸν ψαρᾶ, ποὺ βάζει δόλωμα στὸ ἀγκίστρι γιὰ νὰ συλλάβῃ τὸ ψάρι· σὰν τὸν κυνηγό, ποὺ στήνει παγίδα γιὰ νὰ ζωγρήσῃ τὸ θήραμα.

Ἔλα κοντά μου! μᾶς φωνάζει ὁ πονηρός. Ἄλλὰ σὺ, Χριστιανέ, **μὴν τὸν ἀκούς**· φύγε μακριά του, γιατί θὰ σὲ ὀδηγήσῃ στὸ γκρεμό, θὰ σὲ ρίξῃ στὴν ἄβυσσο, θὰ σὲ κἀνὴ ἕνα πτώμα.

Ἔλα κοντά μου! σοῦ λέει ὁ Χριστός. **Δέξου τὸ σταυρό μου**, καὶ θὰ σὲ ξεκουράσω, θὰ σὲ ἐλευθερώσω ἀπὸ τὰ δεσμὰ τοῦ σατανᾶ. Ἐγὼ δὲν σὲ ἀπατῶ, δὲν θέλω τὸ κακό σου, θέλω τὴ σωτηρία σου. Δὲν σὲ ἐπεισε ἡ θυσία μου γιὰ σένα; Ἐγὼ θὰ σὲ εὐλογῶ· κοντά μου θὰ εἶσαι εὐτυχισμένος, θὰ βρῆς αὐτὸ ποὺ ποθεῖς.

Ἄς ἀκούσουμε τὴ φωνὴ τοῦ Σωτῆρος μας, ἂν δὲν θέλουμε νὰ θρηνησοῦμε ἀνώφελα καὶ στὴ ζωὴ αὐτὴ καὶ στὴν ἄλλη. 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: \$300 PER YEAR

SINGLE MEMBERSHIP: \$250 PER YEAR

SENIOR CITIZEN INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP \$200 PER YEAR

SENIOR CITIZEN HUSBAND & WIFE MEMBERSHIP: \$225 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 2019 commitment **TODAY!** The benefits you shall receive beyond grace include the satisfaction and knowledge that this Church and community thrive thanks to your outreach.

YOU ARE PART OF THE GREAT FRESCO OF FAITH

Asking Jesus to Leave

Of all the miracle stories of Jesus, the one recorded in today's Gospel reading stands out as unique. In most other occasions when Jesus healed or cured, the result was that more people came and asked to be cured. However, in the case of Jesus expelling demons from the man in the Gadarene territory, the result was that the whole village came out and asked Jesus to leave that area! (Matthew 8:34)

Ingratitude is certainly not the reaction we would expect the townsfolk to have since a member of their community restored to his right mind by the command of Jesus. Previously, he was prone to fits of madness and the source of his madness was understood to be demonic possession. Jesus commanded the demons to leave the man and restored the man to his right mind. Had this been the end

of the story, perhaps the people would have been filled with gratitude. However, Jesus sent the demons into a herd of swine, which then jumped over a cliff and drowned.

Why did Jesus send the demons into the swine? According to Jewish law, pork is considered to be an unclean product. Jews were to have no contact with pork. Because of this, the Jews of that town were breaking their own religious law.

By expelling the demons into the swine, Jesus not only healed a man, but also reestablished a forgotten value system in a town. Unfortunately, the inhabitants were not ready to receive this lesson. It is no surprise, then, why they met Jesus with such ingratitude and asked Him to leave their district.

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