

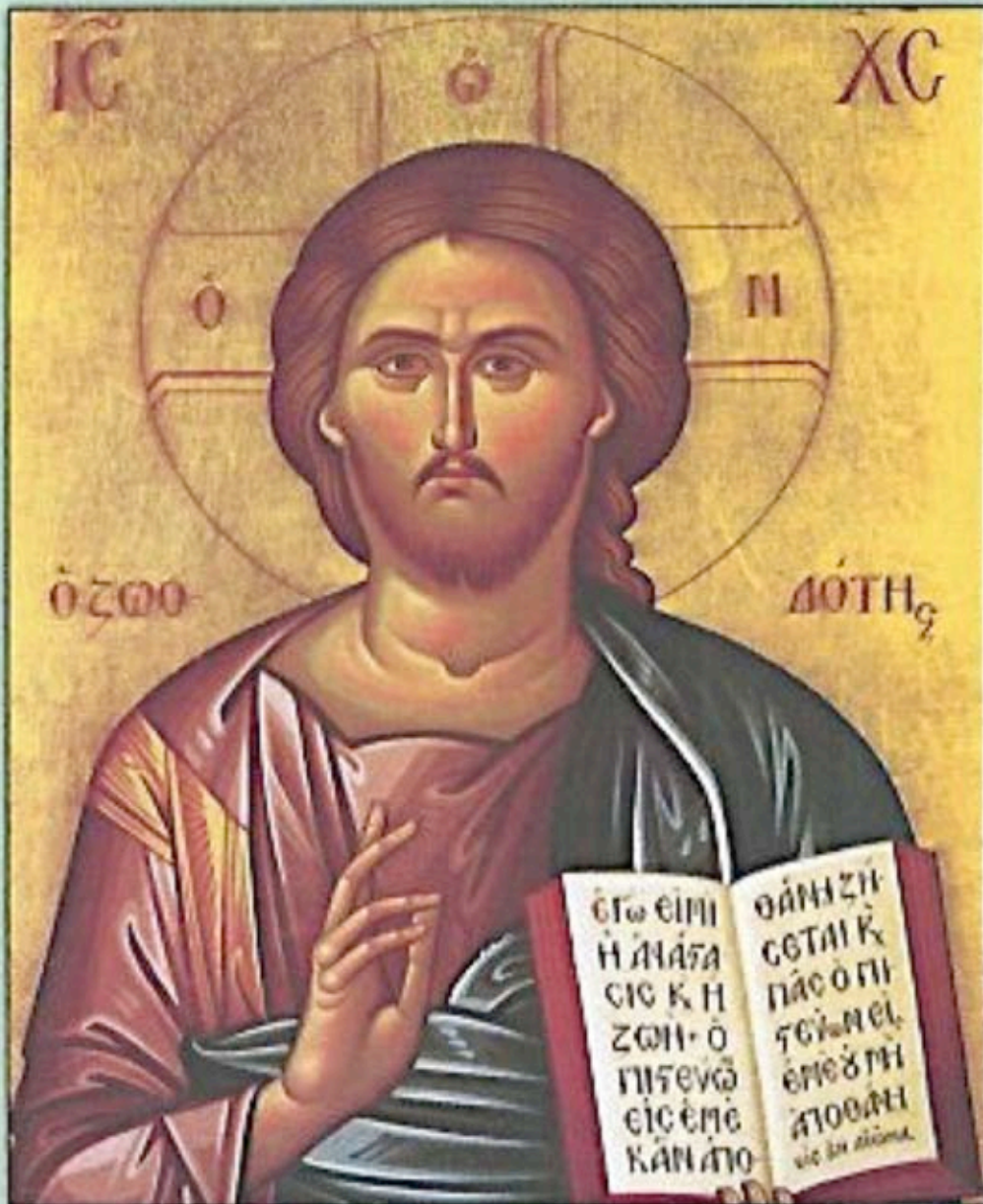


DIRECT ARCHDIOCESEAN
DISTRICT

THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN March 13th, 2016
V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

FORGIVENESS SUNDAY



Icon of Christ the Teacher

St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 13:11-14; 14:1-4

Prokeimenon. Mode Plagal 4.

Psalm 75.11,1

Make your vows to the Lord our God and perform them.

Verse: God is known in Judah; his name is great in Israel.

Brethren, salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed; the night is far gone, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

As for the man who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not for disputes over opinions. One believes he may eat anything, while the weak man eats only vegetables. Let not him who eats despise him who abstains, and let not him who abstains pass judgment on him who eats; for God has welcomed him. Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for God is able to make him stand.

Πρὸς Ῥωμαίους 13:11-14, 14:1-4

Προκείμενον. Ἦχος πλ δ.

ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 75.11,1

Εὐξασθε καὶ ἀπόδοτε Κυρίῳ τῷ Θεῷ ἡμῶν.

Στίχ. Γνωστὸς ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ ὁ Θεός, ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ μέγα τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ.

Ἀδελφοί, νῦν ἐγγύτερον ἡμῶν ἢ σωτηρία ἢ ὅτε ἐπιστεύσαμεν. Ἡ νύξ προέκοψεν, ἡ δὲ ἡμέρα ἤγγικεν· ἀποθώμεθα οὖν τὰ ἔργα τοῦ σκότους, καὶ ἐνδυσώμεθα τὰ ὄπλα τοῦ φωτός. Ὡς ἐν ἡμέρᾳ, εὐσημιόνως περιπατήσωμεν, μὴ κώμοις καὶ μέθαις, μὴ κοίταις καὶ ἀσελγείαις, μὴ ἔριδι καὶ ζήλῳ. Ἀλλ' ἐνδύσασθε τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν, καὶ τῆς σαρκὸς πρόνοιαν μὴ ποιεῖσθε, εἰς ἐπιθυμίας. Τὸν δὲ ἀσθενοῦντα τῇ πίστει προσλαμβάνεσθε, μὴ εἰς διακρίσεις διαλογισμῶν. Ὅς μὲν πιστεῦει φαγεῖν πάντα, ὁ δὲ ἀσθενῶν λάχανα ἐσθίει. Ὁ ἐσθίων τὸν μὴ ἐσθίοντα μὴ ἐξουθενεῖτω, καὶ ὁ μὴ ἐσθίων τὸν ἐσθίοντα μὴ κρινέτω· ὁ θεὸς γὰρ αὐτὸν προσελάβετο. Σὺ τίς εἶ ὁ κρίνων ἀλλότριον οἰκέτην; Τῷ ἰδίῳ κυρίῳ στήκει ἢ πίπτει. Σταθήσεται δέ· δυνατὸς γάρ ἐστιν ὁ θεὸς στήσαι αὐτόν.

Forgiveness Sunday

The Gospel according to Matthew 6:14-21

The Lord said, "If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

"And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Forgiveness Sunday

Κατὰ Ματθαῖον 6:14-21

Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος· Ἐὰν γὰρ ἀφήτε τοῖς ἀνθρώποις τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν, ἀφήσει καὶ ὑμῖν ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν ὁ οὐράνιος· ἐὰν δὲ μὴ ἀφήτε τοῖς ἀνθρώποις τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν, οὐδὲ ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν ἀφήσει τὰ παραπτώματα ὑμῶν. Ὅταν δὲ νηστεύητε, μὴ γίνεσθε ὡσπερ οἱ ὑποκριταὶ σκυθρωποὶ· ἀφανίζουσι γὰρ τὰ πρόσωπα αὐτῶν ὅπως φανῶσι τοῖς ἀνθρώποις νηστεύοντες· ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι ἀπέχουσι τὸν μισθὸν αὐτῶν. σὺ δὲ νηστεύων ἄλειψαί σου τὴν κεφαλὴν καὶ τὸ πρόσωπόν σου νίψαι, ὅπως μὴ φανῆς τοῖς ἀνθρώποις νηστεύων, ἀλλὰ τῷ πατρί σου τῷ ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ, καὶ ὁ πατὴρ σου ὁ βλέπων ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ ἀποδώσει σοι ἐν τῷ φανερωῷ. Μὴ θησαυρίζετε ὑμῖν θησαυροὺς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, ὅπου σῆς καὶ βρῶσις ἀφανίζει, καὶ ὅπου κλέπται διορύσσουσι καὶ κλέπτουσι· θησαυρίζετε δὲ ὑμῖν θησαυροὺς ἐν οὐρανῷ, ὅπου οὔτε σῆς οὔτε βρῶσις ἀφανίζει, καὶ ὅπου κλέπται οὐ διορύσσουσιν οὐδὲ κλέπτουσιν· ὅπου γὰρ ἐστὶν ὁ θησαυρὸς ὑμῶν, ἐκεῖ ἔσται καὶ ἡ καρδία ὑμῶν.

DEVOTIONS THIS WEEK:

Sunday, March 13th,	SUNDAY of CHEESEFARE (St. Christina)	10:30 A.M.
Sunday, March 13th	BOY SCOUT TROOP 'PASTA LUNCHEON'	12:30 P.M.
Monday, March 14th	OPENING of LENTEN SEASON (Fasting Commences)	
Monday, March 14th	A.H.E.P.A. LENTEN DINNER (free)	7:00 P.M.
Tuesday, March 15th	Paraklesis to the WEEPING VIRGIN MARY	7:00 P.M.
	Saint Paul Cathedral, Hempstead Father Eugene celebrant and homilist	
Wednesday, March 16th	PRE-SANCTIFIED LITURGY of Pope Gregory of Rome	9:30 A.M.
Friday, March 18th	1st. Salutations to the THEOTOKOS	7:00 P.M.
Saturday March 19th	3rd. and FINAL PSYCHOSABBATON -Feast day of Saint Theodoros) (Kollyva)	9:00 A.M.
Sunday March 20th	Icon Procession of Orthodoxias	12:00 Noon
Sunday March 20th	PAN – Orthodox VESPER of ORTHODOXY	5:00 P.M.
	Saint Nicholas Antiochian Cathedral- Free Lenten dinner for all attending	7:00 P.M.

**ARTOKLASIA today in honor and memory of the Holy Forty Martyrs (Saranta Martyrs) by the Soumakis Family.
CHRONIA POLLA SARANTOS!**

**AGAPE COFFEE FELLOWSHIP HOUR: is being hosted in Rosehall by the Boy Scout Troop #531 (GOLDEN GREEKS)
with a full LENTEN PASTA LUNCHEON.**

LENTEN FULL SCHEDULE of all services from NOW until HOLY WEEK has been printed and mailed to all member stewards of the parish. If you have NOT received one please register with the church office NOW! Upon request of the staff, copies of the schedule are available in the OFFICE. Take special note of the evening sacred devotions and liturgies.

PASCHAL (Easter Card) In anticipation of the Resurrection of our Lord, and Keeping this Great Lent period of spiritual reflection, we are offering you the opportunity to be included in our "Parish Easter Card". Your name will be listed on the card for a nominal donation of \$20.00. In this manner you will benefit our Church, sending the good news of our Lord's Resurrection to over 1,000 families and friends of the Three Hierarchs parish. If you wish to be listed on the Parish Easter Card, please complete the form sent to you and return it in the enclosed envelope, together with your check payable to "Three Hierarchs Church.. DEADLINE IS SUNDAY, APRIL 10, 2016.

PSYCHOSABBATON: Please refer to the insert PSYCHO-CHARTION to submit the names of your beloved deceased for memorial commemoration. The names of the faithfully departed will be read for the Saturday of All Souls next week. Please deposit the envelope at the altar basket as per usual. Let us remember our loved ones in blessed commemoration. There is only ONE MORE COMMEMORATION on Saturday March 19th.

EMMAUS ADULT EDUCATION LECTURE SERIES: Continues each month. On Thursday evening, March 31st, at 7:00 P.M. V.Rev. Fr. Gerasimos (Pastor of Holy Cross Parish) will speak on the theme of CHRISTIAN ORTHODOX SACRAMENT of BAPTISM at the Koimisis Theotokou Church in Brooklyn. An open reception of Lenten goodies and coffee follows at 8:00 P.M.

SAINT PATRICK'S ICON: is in the centerfold of the bulletin this week. The venerable ORTHODOX SAINT is celebrated as the Patron of Ireland on March 17th, whereas on the Julian Orthodox Calendar he is feasted and honored on MAY 19th. He is ours too!

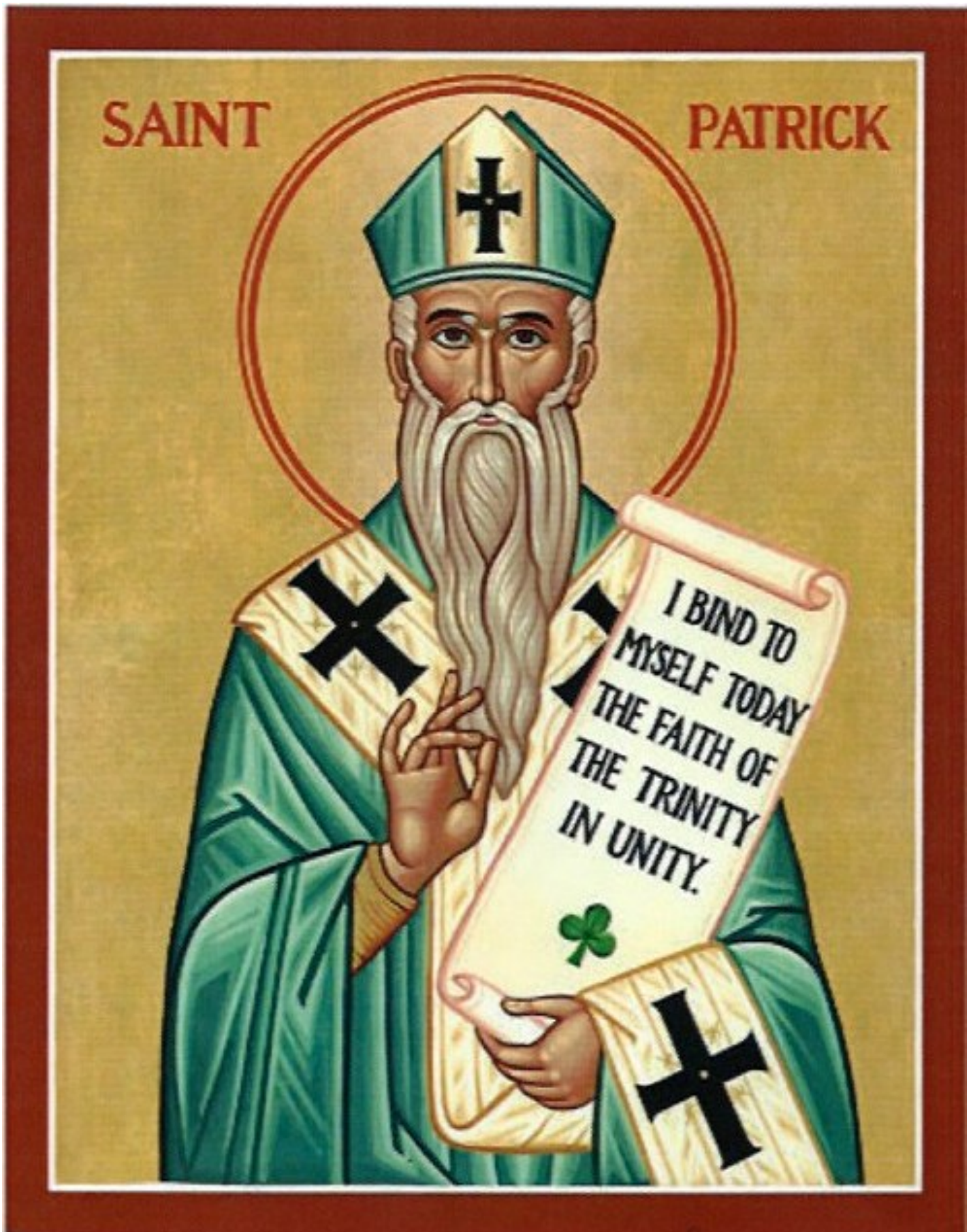
SAINT JOSEPH'S ICON: is in the centerfold also as the custodian and guardian spouse of the blessed Virgin Mary and 'father' of the Christ child JESUS. He is celebrated on March 19th, as Patron of Italy whereas on the Julian Orthodox calendar his observance is celebrated on December 16th. He too is ours!

HELLENIC HERITAGE EVENT: The annual observance of Hellenic Heritage will be held at BROOLYN BOROUGH HALL on Monday evening March 28th, from 6:00 – 8:00 P.M. with dinner and desserts and drinks offered FREE TO ALL ATTENDING. We are pleased and acknowledge the TWO CANDIDATES from Three Hierarchs selected for the borough citation **MR. HARRY LAMBRAKIS and MR. JOHN EUGENIS** we appreciate all they have done for our Parish over these many decades of service. Let us honor them with our presence. A FREE BUS will be available ON A FIRST COME BASIS FOR THOSE WISHING A SEAT TO THE EVENT. Please register with the OFFICE by signing the roster. SEE THE INSERT FLYER.

U.P.K. REGISTRATION is NOW GOING ON at THREE HIERARCHS SCHOOL for children born in 2012. This is accredited U.P.K. of the Department of Education of the City of New York. IT IS TUITION FREE. All 4 year olds born in 2012 are eligible to attend full day classes from 8:00 A.M. to 3☺) P.M. with snacks and Lunch provided by the CITY.....FREE. Call the administration at (347) 729 – 0446 Ms. Eugenia the Principal , or Ms. Georgia the Secretary for full details. don't miss this opportunity to give your child a 'HEAD START' in formal education through UNIVERSAL PRE – KINDERGARTEN. CALL NOW!

RADIO MINISTRY: Each Saturday at 1:15PM Fr. Eugene hosts and produces the radio broadcast MATTERS OF CONSCIENCE NOW IN ITS 16TH 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: + DR. JOHN ELEFTERAKIS + JOHN ELEFTERAKIS SR.
+ HELEN GARDIANOS + SVETLANA BRITSOVA**



St. Patrick – Enlightener of Ireland



St. Joseph - Custodian Father of the Christ



ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



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

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος ΚΑ' Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 1043'	Κυριακὴ τῆς Τυροφάγου (Ματθ. 6,14-21) 13 Μαρτίου 2016 πρῶν	Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος Αύγουστίνος Ν. Καντιώτης
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Οἱ θησαυροὶ καὶ ὁ Θησαυρὸς

«Θησαυρίζετε δὲ ὑμῖν θησαυροὺς ἐν οὐρανῷ, ὅπου οὔτε σὴς οὔτε βρῶσις ἀφανίζει, καὶ ὅπου κλέπται οὐ διορύσσουσιν οὐδὲ κλέπτουσιν» (Ματθ. 6,20)

Ἀκούσατε, ἀγαπητοί μου, τὸ ἱερὸ καὶ ἅγιον **εὐαγγέλιο**. Ἀλλὰ δὲν ἀρκεῖ νὰ τὸ ἀκοῦμε μόνο· χρειάζεται καὶ νὰ τὸ πιστεύουμε καὶ **νὰ τὸ ἐφαρμόζουμε**. Γι' αὐτὸ καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς εἶπε· «Ὁ ἔχων ὦτα ἀκούειν ἀκουέτω», ὁποῖος ἔχει αὐτιά γιὰ ν' ἀκοῦῃ ὡς ἀκοῦῃ (Ματθ. 11,15). Μὲ τὴν ἐλπίδα ὅτι ἔχετε αὐτιά ἀνοικτὰ στὸ λόγο τοῦ Θεοῦ, τολμῶ νὰ μιλήσω.

Ὅποιος διαβάξει ἐπιπόλαια, θὰ νομίσῃ ὅτι τὸ εὐαγγέλιο σήμερα ἔχει μέσα πράγματα ἀντιφατικά. Διότι ἐνῶ ἀπὸ τὸ ἓνα μέρος λέει «Μὴ θησαυρίζετε» (Ματθ. 6,19), ἀπὸ τὸ ἄλλο λέει «Θησαυρίζετε» (Ματθ. 6,20). Δὲν εἶνε αὐτὰ ἀντίθετα, δὲν ἔρχονται σὲ σύγκρουσι μεταξύ τους; Ὅποιος ὁμως προσέχει βαθύτερα, θὰ πεισθῇ ὅτι **δὲν ὑπάρχει ἀντίφασι**· τὰ λόγια τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἔχουν μεταξύ τους συμφωνία καὶ ἁρμονία. Διότι ὅταν λέει ὁ Χριστὸς γιὰ «θησαυροὺς», ἐννοεῖ **δύο εἰδῶν**, κάνει διάκρισι. Ὑπάρχουν θησαυροὶ - **χαλίκια**, καὶ θησαυροὶ - **διαμάντια**. Διαλέξτε καὶ πάρτε. Καὶ οἱ ἄνθρωποι τί διαλέγουν; Περιέργο πρᾶγμα. Αὐτοὶ ποὺ φημίζονται γιὰ τὴν ἐξυπνάδα τους, ἀποδεικνύονται ἀνόητοι διαλέγουν τὰ χαλίκια.

Ποιά εἶνε τὰ χαλίκια καὶ ποιά τὰ διαμάντια; Τὰ ξεχωρίζει καλὰ ὁ Κύριος. Ὅταν λέει «Μὴ θησαυρίζετε ὑμῖν θησαυροὺς», ἐννοεῖ τοὺς **ὕλικους θησαυροὺς**. Ἐννοεῖ τὰ χωράφια, τὰ σπίτια κ.τ.λ., καὶ πρὸ παντὸς **τὸ χρῆμα**.

Καὶ ὁμως **τὸ χρῆμα κυνηγοῦν ὅλοι**. Ρώτησαν κάποτε γιὰ τὴ λίρα, γιατί εἶνε κίτρινη, καὶ κάποιος ἀπῆντησε μεταξύ ἀστείου καὶ σοβαροῦ· Τὴν κυνηγοῦν πολλοὶ καὶ ...κιτρίνισε ἀπὸ τὸ φόβο της. Δὲν εἶνε πολλὰς μέρες ποὺ σ' ἓνα χωριὸ τῆς Μακεδονίας, μ' αὐτὸ τὸ κρῦο ποὺ τὸ θερμότερο δείχνει κάτω ἀπ' τὸ μηδέν, χωριάτες μὲ ἀξίνες βγήκαν καὶ πήγαν σ' ἓνα ἔ-

ρημο ἐξωκκλήσι. Ἔσκαβαν ὅλη τὴ νύχτα γιὰ νὰ βροῦν, λέει, θησαυροὺς· ἔως ὅτου τοὺς ἐπιασε ἡ ἀστυνομία. Νὰ τοὺς πῆς νὰ ἔρθουν στὴν ἐκκλησία σὲ κάποια ἀγρυπνία, δὲν τὸ κάνουν· ἐκεῖ... Δίψα χρήματος, λύσσα χρήματος!

Θὰ ρωτήσετε· **Καταδικάζει ἡ Ἐκκλησία τὸ χρῆμα**; Ὁχι. Εἶνε χρήσιμο καὶ ἀναγκαῖο. Μ' αὐτὸ **ἐξυπηρετεῖται ἡ κοινωμία**· ἀγοράζει ψωμί, ροῦχα, φάρμακα... Σπουδαία ἡ ἐλληνικὴ γλῶσσα. Ποιά εἶνε ἡ ἐννοια τῆς λέξεως *χρῆμα*; *Χρῆμα* θὰ πῆ ἓνα πρᾶγμα χρήσιμο, κάτι ποὺ τὸ μεταχειρίζεται, τὸ χρειάζεται ὁ ἄνθρωπος. Συνεπῶς δὲν πρέπει νὰ μένη σὰν τὸ στάσιμο νερὸ ποὺ σαπίζει, δὲν πρέπει νὰ τὸ ἀφήνης ἀχρησιμοποίητο. Τὸ χρῆμα **πρέπει νὰ χρησιμοποιηται**. Εἶνε μέσο, ὄχι σκοπός. Ἐὰν κάποιος τὸ ἔχη ὡς μέσο, κανεὶς δὲν τὸν κατηγορεῖ (ἐφ' ὅσον τὸ ἀποκτᾷ μὲ τὸν ἰδρωτᾶ του). Ἀλλὰ δυστυχῶς οἱ ἄνθρωποι δὲν ἔχουν τὸ χρῆμα ὡς μέσο, ὡς ὄργανο· τὸ ἔκαναν **σκοπὸ**. Καὶ μετὰξὺ μέσου καὶ σκοποῦ ὑπάρχει μεγάλη διαφορὰ. Σκοπὸς πλέον τὸ χρῆμα. Τὸ λατρεύουν, **ἔγινε θεός**, «*μαμωνᾶς*» (Ματθ. 6,24). Δὲν λατρεύουν τὸ Χριστὸ σήμερα, τὸ χρυσοὺ λατρεύουν· εἶνε χρυσολάτρες, ὄχι Χριστολάτρες. Πηγαίνουν στὸ δικαστήριον καὶ παλαμίζουν τὸ εὐαγγέλιο, κάνουν ἀπάτες, νοθεῖες, πλαστογραφίες· παίρνουν τὸ ψωμί ἀπὸ τὸ στόμα τοῦ ὄρφανοῦ καὶ τῆς χήρας· ἐγκληματοῦν μὲ κίνητρο τὸ χρῆμα. Μήπως καὶ τῶν πολέμων ἐλατήριο δὲν εἶνε τὸ χρῆμα; Αὐτὸ τὸ κίνητρο, αὐτὴ τὴν προσκόλλησι καταδικάζει ἡ ἁγία μας Ἐκκλησία, μὲ ἄλλα λόγια τὴ φιλαργυρία καὶ τὴν πλεονεξία.

Ἀλλὰ **γιατί κυνηγοῦν τὸ χρῆμα** μὲ τόση μαγία; Πρῶτον, διότι νομίζουν, ὅτι σ' αὐτὸ εἶνε ἡ εὐτυχία. Μὰ τί λέει ἡ πείρα, ἡ ἱστορία, τὰ παραδείγματα; Θὰ θυμᾶστε ἀπὸ τὴ μυθολογία τὸ βασιλιά τῆς Φρυγίας **Μίδα**. Αὐτὸς ζήτησε

ἀπὸ τοὺς θεοὺς νὰ τοῦ κάνουν μιὰ χάρι· ὅ,τι πιάνει νὰ γίνεται χρυσάφι. Καὶ τοῦ ἔκαναν, λέει, τὴ χάρι. Ἀγγίζει ἓνα πρόβατο, γίνεται χρυσό· ἀγγίζει ἓνα δέντρο, γίνεται χρυσό... Πάει στὸ σπίτι του· ἀγγίζει τὸ πιάτο, χρυσό· ἀγγίζει τὸ ψωμί, χρυσό... Δυστυχία του! κινδύνευσε νὰ πεθάνῃ τῆς πείνας. Πλάνη, λοιπόν. Μὲ τὸ χρήμα ὅλα μπορεῖς νὰ τ' ἀγοράσῃς, ἓνα δὲν ἀγοράζεις· τὴν εὐτυχία. Τὸναντίον· ὅσο πιὸ πολλὰ χρήματα μαζεύει ὁ ἄνθρωπος, τόσο περισσότερὴ ἀγωνία φορτώνεται. Ποιοὶ αὐτοκτονοῦν περισσότερο; μήπως οἱ φτωχοὶ; Στατιστικὲς μαρτυροῦν, ὅτι περισσότερο αὐτοκτονοῦν πλούσιοι κ' ἑκατομμυριοῦχοι. Ὑστερὸν τὸ χρήμα δὲν φέρνει τὴν εὐτυχία.

Ἐπειτὰ τὸ χρήμα εἶνε φθαρτὸ καὶ μεταβλητό. Εἶνε μετανάστης· κινεῖται ἀπὸ τόπο σὲ τόπο καὶ χάνεται. Διάβαζα τί ἔπαθε ἓνας στὸ Μεξικό. Ἀγαποῦσε τὰ λεφτά. Ἡ γυναῖκα καὶ τὰ παιδιὰ του φώναζαν. Αὐτὸς μάζευε μάζευε τὰ χαρτονομίσματα. Κ' ἐπειδὴ δὲν εἶχε ἐμπιστοσύνη, δὲν τὰ πῆγαινε στὴν τράπεζα, ἀλλὰ τὸ ἔβαζε σ' ἓνα σεντούκι. Πέντε ἑκατομμύρια πεζὸ (ἔτσι λέγεται τὸ νόμισμα ἐκεῖ) εἶχε μαζέψει στὸ σεντούκι. Κάποτε ὁμως πάει νὰ τ' ἀνοίξῃ, καὶ τί νὰ δῇ· ὅλο τὸ χαρτονομίσμα τὸ εἶχε φάει ὁ σκόρος! Τρελλάθηκε... Νὰ λοιπὸν σὲ σύγχρονο παράδειγμα, πόσο ἀληθεύει τὸ εὐαγγέλιο πού λέει: «Μὴ θησαυρίζετε ὑμῖν θησαυροὺς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, ὅπου σῆς (δηλαδὴ σκόρος) καὶ βρώσις ἀφανίζει» (Ματθ. 6, 19).

Ἄλλ' ἐνῶ ὁ Χριστὸς δὲν μᾶς θέλει φιλαργύρους, ἐν τούτοις λέει «**Θησαυρίζετε**». Θησαυρίζετε ὄχι χρήμα, ἀλλὰ τί; Μέχρι τώρα, ὅσο μιλοῦσα γιὰ τὸ θεὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου, προσέχατε. Τώρα θὰ μιλήσω γιὰ κάτι ἄλλο, καὶ ξέρω ὅτι κανεὶς ἀπὸ ἐσᾶς δὲν θὰ συγκινηθῇ.

Ποιὸς εἶνε ὁ θησαυρὸς πού συνιστᾷ ὁ Κύριος νὰ ἐπιδιώκουμε; Εἶνε τὰ καλὰ ἔργα, ἡ καλωσύνη, δηλαδὴ ἡ ἐλεημοσύνη.

Ξέρω κάποιον πού πῆγε στὴν Ἀμερικὴ, μάζευε χρήματα, τὰ ἔφερε στὴν πατρίδα, τὰ ἔδωσε ὅλα καὶ χτίστηκε στὸ χωριὸ του ἓνα θαυμάσιο **σχολεῖο**· αὐτὸς ἐγίνε φτωχός, ἀλλὰ θησαύρισε τὴν ἀγάπη καὶ ἐκτίμησι δλων. Ξέρω καὶ κάποιον συνταξιούχο πού πῆρε τὸ «ἐφ' ἄπαξ», καὶ δὲν κράτησε δραχμὴ· ἔχτισε νηπιαγωγεῖα σὲ κάποιον χωριό. «**Αἰρετώτερον δνομα καλὸν ἢ πλοῦτος πολὺς**» λέει ἡ Γραφή (Περρ. 2, 1), ἀνώτερο ἀπὸ τὰ πλούτη εἶνε τὸ καλὸ δνομα. Καὶ ὅλοι θὰ ξέρετε κάποιον ἄλλον, φτωχαδάκι, πού ἔφυγε ξυπόλητος ἀπὸ τὸ Μέτσοβο, πῆγε στὸ Κάιρο καὶ δούλεψε σκληρά. Νή-

στευε καὶ ζοῦσε φτωχικά. Τὸν νόμιζαν φιλάργυρο καὶ πλεονέκτη. Ἄλλ' αὐτὸς μάζευε ἑκατομμύρια λίρες καὶ τὰ ἔδωσε στὴν πατρίδα. Καὶ ἡ φτωχὴ Ἑλλάδα ἀγόρασε τὸ **θωρηκτὸ «Α-βέρωφ»**, πού μάντρωσε στὰ Δαρδανέλλια τὸν Τοῦρκο. Ἐνας ἄνθρωπος τί εὐεργεσία προσέφερε! Ὑπάρχουν σήμερὰ τέτοιοι **εὐεργέτες**; Σπάνιο πρᾶγμα. Τώρα οἱ πολλοὶ θησαυρίζουν μόνο γιὰ τὸν ἑαυτὸ τους, γιὰ τὰ παιδιὰ καὶ τὰ ἐγγόνια τους· γιὰ νὰ τρέχουν ἐκεῖνα μετὰ μέχρι τὸν Ἄρειο Πάγο καὶ νὰ διαπληκτίζωνται γιὰ οἰκόπεδα καὶ πολυκατοικίες.

Θησαυρίζετε **θησαυροὺς ἀθανάτους** καὶ αἰωνίους. Ἐχεις λεφτά; δῶσε στὴν ἐκκλησία, δῶσε στὸ σχολεῖο, δῶσε στὸ νοσοκομεῖο...

Ἄλλὰ θησαυρὸς δὲν εἶνε μόνο ἡ ἐλεημοσύνη· θησαυρὸς εἶνε καὶ τὸ ἔλεος, καὶ ἡ συγχώρησις, καὶ ἡ ἀνεκτικότητα, καὶ ἡ αὐταπάρνησις, καὶ ἡ καλωσύνη, καὶ ἡ ἐγκράτεια, καὶ ἡ ἀγάπη, καὶ **κάθε ἀρετὴ**. Αὐτὸς εἶνε ὁ ἀληθινὸς θησαυρὸς· τὸ εἶπαν καὶ οἱ ἀρχαῖοι πρόγονοί μας· «**Πᾶς ὁ τ' ἐπὶ γῆς καὶ ὑπὸ γῆς χρυσὸς ἀρετῆς οὐκ ἀντάξιός**» (Πλάτων, Νόμ. 5, 784). ὅλο τὸ χρυσάφι πού ὑπάρχει πάνω στὴ γῆ καὶ κάτω ἀπὸ τὴ γῆ δὲν ἔχει τόση ἀξία ὅση ἡ ἀρετὴ.

Ἐρασταὶ τῆς ἀρετῆς λοιπὸν νὰ γίνουμε. Naί, τῆς ἀρετῆς καὶ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, ὄχι τῆς γῆς καὶ τοῦ χρήματος ἐρασταί. Naί τὰ χαλίκια, νὰ καὶ τὰ διαμάντια· διαλέξτε καὶ πάρτε.

Ἀπὸ αὔριο ἀνοίγει ἡ μεγάλη Τεσσαρακοστὴ. Σαράντα μέρες! πῶς θὰ τὶς περάσουμε; Ἐδῶ ὅλοι θὰ ἔχετε κάποιον **βιβλιᾶριο**. Δὲν καταδικάζω τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀποταμιεύσεως· χρῆσιμο εἶνε. Σᾶς συνιστῶ ὁμως μιὰ ἄλλη ἀποταμίευσις. Ἀπὸ αὔριο πάρτε βιβλιᾶριο καὶ γράφετε μέσα κάθε καλὸ πού θὰ κάνετε· μιὰ ἐλεημοσύνη, μιὰ συγχώρησις, μιὰ ἀγαθοεργία, ἓνα δάκρυ πού πέφτει ἀπὸ τὰ μάτια τοῦ ἁμαρτωλοῦ. Naί ὁ ἀληθινὸς θησαυρὸς. Τέτοιους θησαυροὺς, τέτοια καλὰ πράγματα, τέτοιες ἀρετὲς νὰ σημειώνουν οἱ ἄγγελοι. Κι ὅταν πᾶμε στὸν οὐρανὸ ἐπάνω, νὰ βροῦμε τὰ βιβλιᾶριά μας γεμάτα με καταθέσεις καὶ νὰ ἐκκληρώσουμε τὴν ἐντολὴ τοῦ Χριστοῦ «**Θησαυρίζετε δὲ ὑμῖν θησαυροὺς ἐν οὐρανῷ, ὅπου οὔτε σῆς οὔτε βρώσις ἀφανίζει, καὶ ὅπου κλέπται οὐ διορύσσουσιν οὐδὲ κλέπτουσιν**» (Ματθ. 6, 20).

Ὁ δὲ Κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς διὰ πρεσβειῶν τῆς ὑπεραγίας Θεοτόκου καὶ πάντων τῶν ἁγίων νὰ εἶνε μαζί σας, ὥστε νὰ περάσετε τὴν περίοδο τῆς ἁγίας Τεσσαρακοστῆς καὶ νὰ ἐορτάσετε ἐν χαρᾷ καὶ ἀγαλλιάσει τὴν ἐνδοξη ἀνάστασί του· 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 2016 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

Fasting and Almsgiving

Abstinence is the first medicine the human being must take, but for a complete cure the expenditure of mercy is required. Abstinence puts out the fever; but the bodily members dried up by the fire of a long-lasting fever cannot return to full health unless they are bathed in a lavish amount of ointment, unless they are moistened with the most soothing of lotions, unless they are aided by taking other medicines. Thus, although fasting repels the diseases of vice, excises the passions of the flesh, drives out what causes offenses, nevertheless, without the ointment of mercy, without the flow of kindness, without the practice of almsgiving, it does not restore complete health to the mind.

Fasting heals the wounds of sins, but without mercy it does not cleanse the scars made by the wounds. ... Engaging only in fasting tears out the vices, eradicates offenses, prepares the field of both mind and body for a good harvest. Fasting is a holy oblation, a sacrifice that is pure, but without the fire of mercy it cannot ascend as a fragrant offering to God.

What the soul is to the body is analogous to what mercy is to fasting. When fasting lives off mercy, then it gives life to the one who is fasting. Fasting, the ship of the virtues, carries what one has gained in life and transports the profit of salvation; but the one who enters the seas of the flesh, who cuts across the waves of the vices, who passes between the rocks of offenses, and traverses the shores of the passions, unless he quickly enters the harbor of kindness, he cannot exercise the virtues, and he cannot have the profit that comes from the virtues.

May the one who knows that he stands unsteadily in this life, who understands that he slips as he passes through the way of the flesh, and who realizes that he is subject to attacks from ignorance and to accidents from negligence, may he keep his fast in such a way that does not omit mercy.

St. Peter Chrysologus

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