

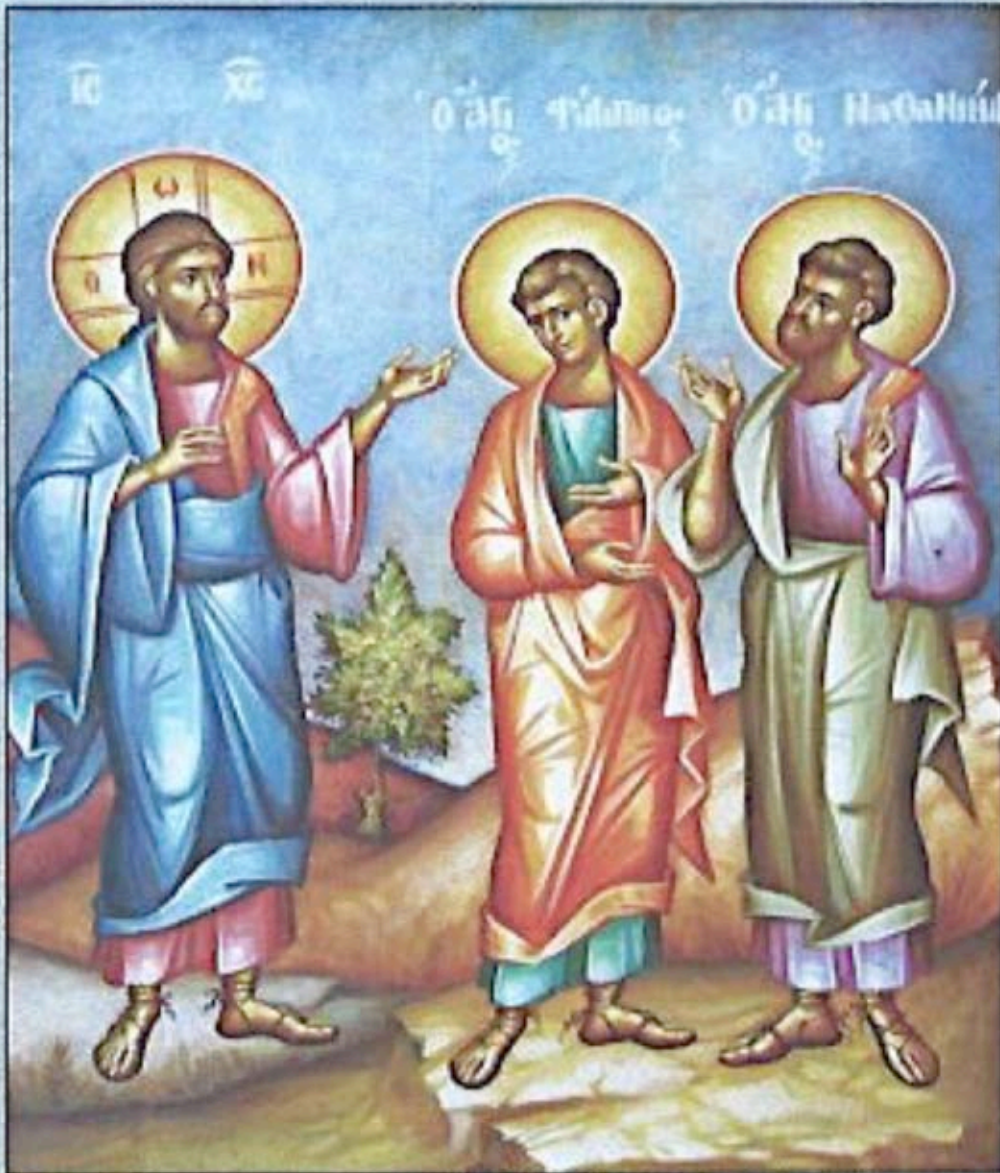


DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN  
DISTRICT

# THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN March 20th, 2016  
V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

## FIRST SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY



*Icon of the Call of Philip and Nathaniel*

## St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-40

Prokeimenon. Mode 4.

Daniel 3.26,27

Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our fathers. Verse: For you are just in all you have done.

Brethren, by faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to share ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets -- who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign enemies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated -- of whom the world was not worthy -- wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

## Πρὸς Ἑβραίους 11:24-26, 32-40

Προκείμενον. Ἦχος δ.

Δανιήλ 3.26-27

Εὐλογητὸς εἶ, Κύριε, ὁ Θεὸς τῶν Πατέρων ἡμῶν. Στίχ. Ὅτι δίκαιος εἶ ἐπὶ πᾶσιν, οἷς ἐποίησας ἡμῖν.

Ἀδελφοί, πίστει Μωϋσῆς μέγας γενόμενος ἠρνήσατο λέγεσθαι υἱὸς θυγατρὸς Φαραώ, μᾶλλον ἐλόμενος συγκακουχεῖσθαι τῷ λαῷ τοῦ θεοῦ ἢ πρόσκαιρον ἔχειν ἀμαρτίας ἀπόλαυσιν· μείζονα πλοῦτον ἠγησάμενος τῶν Αἰγύπτου θησαυρῶν τὸν ὀνειδισμόν τοῦ Χριστοῦ· ἀπέβλεπεν γὰρ εἰς τὴν μισθαποδοσίαν. Καὶ τί ἔτι λέγω; Ἐπιλείπει γὰρ με διηγούμενον ὁ χρόνος περὶ Γεδεών, Βαράκ τε καὶ Σαμψών καὶ Ἰεφθάε, Δαβὶδ τε καὶ Σαμουὴλ καὶ τῶν προφητῶν· οἱ διὰ πίστεως κατηγωνίσαντο βασιλείας, εἰργάσαντο δικαιοσύνην, ἐπέτυχον ἐπαγγελιῶν, ἔφραξαν στόματα λεόντων, ἔσβησαν δύναμιν πυρός, ἔφυγον στόματα μαχαίρας, ἐνεδυναμώθησαν ἀπὸ ἀσθενείας, ἐγενήθησαν ἰσχυροὶ ἐν πολέμῳ, παρεμβολὰς ἔκκλιναν ἀλλοτρίων. Ἔλαβον γυναῖκες ἐξ ἀναστάσεως τούτων νεκρῶν· ἄλλοι δὲ ἐτυμπανίσθησαν, οὐ προσδεξάμενοι τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν, ἵνα κρείττονος ἀναστάσεως τύχωσιν· ἕτεροι δὲ ἐμπαυγμῶν καὶ μαστίγων πείραν ἔλαβον, ἔτι δὲ δεσμῶν καὶ φυλακῆς· ἐλιθάσθησαν, ἐπίσθησαν, ἐπειράσθησαν, ἐν φόνῳ μαχαίρας ἀπέθανον· περιήλθον ἐν μηλωταῖς, ἐν αἰγείοις δέρμασιν, ὑστερούμενοι, θλιβόμενοι, κακουχούμενοι - ὧν οὐκ ἦν ἄξιος ὁ κόσμος - ἐν ἐρημίαις πλανώμενοι καὶ ὄρεσιν καὶ σπηλαίοις καὶ ταῖς ὀπαῖς τῆς γῆς. Καὶ οὗτοι πάντες, μαρτυρηθέντες διὰ τῆς πίστεως, οὐκ ἐκομίσαντο τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν, τοῦ θεοῦ περὶ ἡμῶν κρείττον τι προβλεψαμένου, ἵνα μὴ χωρὶς ἡμῶν τελειωθῶσιν.

## Sunday of Orthodoxy

### The Gospel according to John 1:43-51

At that time, Jesus decided to go to Galilee. And he found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael, and he said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" Nathanael said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the son of God! You are the King of Israel!" Jesus answered him, "Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these." And he said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

## Sunday of Orthodoxy

### Κατὰ Ἰωάννην 1:44-52

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκεῖνῳ, ἠθέλησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐξελεθεῖν εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν· καὶ εὕρισκει Φίλιππον καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· ἀκολούθει μοι. ἦν δὲ ὁ Φίλιππος ἀπὸ Βηθσαϊδά, ἐκ τῆς πόλεως Ἀνδρέου καὶ Πέτρου. εὕρισκει Φίλιππος τὸν Ναθαναὴλ καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· ὃν ἔγραψε Μωϋσῆς ἐν τῷ νόμῳ καὶ οἱ προφῆται, εὕρηκαμεν, Ἰησοῦν τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Ἰωσήφ τὸν ἀπὸ Ναζαρέτ. καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ Ναθαναὴλ· ἐκ Ναζαρέτ δύναται τι ἀγαθὸν εἶναι; λέγει αὐτῷ Φίλιππος· ἔρχου καὶ ἴδε. εἶδεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὸν Ναθαναὴλ ἐρχόμενον πρὸς αὐτὸν καὶ λέγει περὶ αὐτοῦ· ἴδε ἀληθῶς Ἰσραηλίτης, ἐν ᾧ δόλος οὐκ ἔστι. λέγει αὐτῷ Ναθαναὴλ· πόθεν με γινώσκεις; ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· πρὸ τοῦ σε Φίλιππον φωνῆσαι, ὄντα ὑπὸ τὴν συκὴν εἶδόν σε. ἀπεκρίθη Ναθαναὴλ καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· ῥαββί, σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, σὺ εἶ ὁ βασιλεὺς τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ. ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ὅτι εἶπόν σοι, εἶδόν σε ὑποκάτω τῆς συκῆς, πιστεύεις; μείζω τούτων ὄψει. καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ἀπ' ἄρτι ὄψεσθε τὸν οὐρανὸν ἀνεφρότα, καὶ τοὺς ἀγγέλους τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀναβαίνοντας καὶ καταβαίνοντας ἐπὶ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.

**DEVOTIONS THIS WEEK:**

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>March 20th</b>	<b>ORTHODOXY SUNDAY PROCESSION OF SACRED ICONS</b>	<b>12:00 Noon</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>March 20th</b>	<b>PAN – Orthodox VESPER of ORTHODOXY</b>	<b>5:00 P.M.</b>
		<b>Saint Nicholas Antiochian Cathedral- Free Lenten dinner for all attending</b>	<b>7:00 P.M.</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>March 23rd</b>	<b>Prayer and Healing Service</b>	<b>6:00 P.M.</b>
		<b>PRE-SANCTIFIED LITURGY</b>	<b>6:00 P.M.</b>
		<b>Philoptochos POT-LUCK DINNER (Free)</b>	<b>7:30 P.M.</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>March 24th</b>	<b>Annunciation Great Vesper ( N.Y.C.)</b>	<b>7:00 P.M.</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>March 25th</b>	<b>EVANGELISMOS (Annunciation Liturgy)</b>	<b>9:30 A.M.</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>March 25th</b>	<b>DOXOLOGY for GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY</b>	<b>12:00 noon</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>March 25th</b>	<b>2nd. Stanza of the Virgin’s Salutations</b>	<b>7:00 P.M.</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>March 27th</b>	<b>Saint Gregory Palamas Liturgy</b>	<b>10:30 A.M.</b>

**AGAPE COFFEE FELLOWSHIP HOUR:** is being hosted today by the Senior Club. Please join us in WhiteHall for refreshments.

**OATH of OFFICE:** for the 2016 Administration of the Parish Council the Archdiocesan Oath will be administered to the duly elected, ratified and approved members who fulfilled the prescription and requirements to serve God and His Church Militant:

**PARISH COUNCIL OF THREE HIERARCHS 2016 EXECUTIVE BOARD**

GEORGE ANNIS, PRESIDENT, JOHN EUGENIS, EXE. V.P., HARRY LAMBRAKIS, 1ST V.P. GUS VELLIOS 2ND V.P., MARIA LAMBRIANAKOS FISHER, SECRETARY, JULIA DEMAKAKOS, TREASURER, JIMMY RAVANOS ASST. TREASURER,  
**MEMBERS**

ANASTASIOS CALAKOS, ALEXANDRA DIOLIS, JOHN ELEFTERAKIS, NICK ELEFTERAKIS, CONNIE IOANNIDIS, ANTHONY KALLINIKOS, ROSE PALIVIDAS, HARITINI PANDIS, NIKOLAOS PARAS, GEORGE PLEVRETTIS, GEORGIA TSISMENAKIS, JOANNA VASSILAS.

**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.

**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.

**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 16<sup>TH</sup> 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](http://W.W.W.gaepis.org) ([Click live audio](#))

**NARTHEX RENOVATION COMMENCES:** Please excuse our narthex conditions while we are under renovation and renewal of the area. With your support and assistance the finished product will be a pride to our church. Solicitation of donation for the NARTHEX will commence after Pascha.

**MEMORIAL TODAY:** + XENOPHON RAPTIS

**MEMORIALS NEXT WEEK:** + CHRISTOS VLAHOS + MARY TERZIDIS



The Feast of the Annunciation of Our Most Holy Lady, the Theotokos and Ever – Virgin Mary is celebrated on March 25th each year. The Feast commemorates the announcement by the Archangel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Son of God, would become incarnate and enter into this world through her womb.



1821 ~ Greek Independence ~2016





# ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

## ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



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

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος ΛΓ' Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 1936	Κυρ. Α' Νηστ. (Ἔβρ. 11,24-26,32-40 - 12,2) 20 Μαρτίου 2016	Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος Αὐγουστίνος Ν. Καντιώτης
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### Ἡ προτίμησι

«Πίστει Μωυσῆς μέγας γενόμενος ἠρνήσατο λέγεσθαι υἱὸς θυγατρὸς φαραῶ, μᾶλλον ἐλόμενος συγκακοχεῖσθαι τῷ λαῷ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἢ πρόσκαιρον ἔχειν ἁμαρτίας ἀπόλαυσιν» (Ἔβρ. 11,24-25)

Σήμερα, ἀγαπητοί μου, εἶνε ἡ πρώτη Κυριακὴ τῶν Νηστειῶν ἢ ὅπως λέγεται διαφορετικὰ ἡ Κυριακὴ τῆς Ὁρθοδοξίας. Ὅλοι οἱ ἱεροκήρυκες θὰ μιλήσουν γιὰ τὴν Ὁρθοδοξία. Νὰ μιλήσουμε κ' ἐμεῖς γιὰ τὴν Ὁρθοδοξία; Στὴ λίγη ὥρα ποὺ διαθέτουμε μᾶλλον θὰ τὴν ἀδικήσουμε.

Ἀλλὰ κι ἂν εἶχαμε χρόνο, ποιά γλῶσσα μπορεῖ νὰ τῆς πλέξη ὕμνο ἐπάξιο! Γιατί τί εἶνε Ὁρθοδοξία; Εἶνε ἡ βάτος ἡ καιομένη καὶ μὴ καταφλεγόμενη, εἶνε ὁ ἴδιος ὁ Χριστὸς ποὺ ζῆ καὶ βασιλεύει εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, εἶνε τὸ «ἄφραστον θαῦμα» (πρ. 11,26ff), κάτι ποὺ δὲν ἐκφράζεται μὰ τὸ ζῆ καὶ τὸ αἰσθάνεται κανεὶς. Μπορεῖ νὰ εἶσαι καθηγητῆς θεολογίας, δεσπότης, πατριάρχης, νὰ ἔχῃς κάνει τὸ κεφάλι σου ἐγκυκλοπαιδικὸ λεξικὸ θεολογίας, μὰ δὲν τὴ νιώθεις τὴν Ὁρθοδοξία ὅπως τὴ νιώθει ἕνας ἀπλὸς Χριστιανὸς ποὺ πιστεύει βαθειὰ στὸ ὀρθόδοξο δόγμα.

Ἄς εὐχαριστήσουμε τὸ Θεό, γιατί ἐν τῷ ἀπείρῳ ἐλέει του ἐξέλεξε αὐτὴ τὴ μικρὴ γωνιά, ποὺ ἔνε βράχια καὶ πέτρες, νὰ εἶνε τρία πράγματα: **φύλακας, κήρυκας καὶ μάρτυρας** τῆς Ὁρθοδοξίας. Γι' αὐτὸ ἐμεῖς τώρα ἔχουμε χρέος νὰ φανοῦμε ὄξιοι τῶν προγόνων μας.

Ἡ Ἐκκλησία μας σήμερα ὑψώνει τὰ τιμημένα λάβαρα, προβάλλει τὶς ἱερὲς εἰκόνες τοῦ Κυρίου καὶ τῶν ἁγίων καὶ ἐπικαλεῖται τὴ βοήθειά τους. Προβάλλει ἀκόμα μπροστὰ μας τοὺς ἥρωες τῆς πίστεως καὶ τῆς ἀρετῆς, οἱ ὅποιοι διὰ λόγου, διὰ θαυμάτων καὶ δι' αἵματος μαρτυρίου βεβαίωσαν τὴν πίστι. Μεταξὺ δὲ τῶν ὀνομάτων ποὺ ἀνήκουν στὸν κόσμον τῆς παλαιᾶς διαθήκης ὁ ἀπόστολος μνημονεύει στὴν ἀρχὴ τὸ **Μωυσῆ**. Καὶ μ' αὐτὸν θὰ μοῦ ἐπιτρέψετε νὰ σὰς ἀπασχολήσω γιὰ λίγο. Τὸν προβάλλει γιὰ νὰ τὸν μιμηθοῦμε. Σὲ τί νὰ τὸν μιμηθοῦμε; Σὲ μιὰ ἡρωικὴ του **ἀπόφασι**. Τί ἔκανε ὁ Μωυσῆς;

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Μωυσῆς εἶνε ὄνομα ὄχι ἐλληνικὸ ἀλλὰ ἐβραϊ-

κό. Σημαίνει «**αὐτὸς ποὺ σώθηκε ἀπὸ τὰ νερά**». Γιατί; Τὴν ἐποχὴ ἐκείνη ἕνας τύραννος φαραῶ εἶχε βγάλει διαταγὴ, ὅλα τὰ ἀρσενικὰ παιδιὰ τῶν Ἑβραίων νὰ σκοτώνωνται – γενοκτονία δηλαδή –, καὶ ἦταν ὑπεύθυνοι ἡ μαμμὴ, ἡ μάνα καὶ ὁ πατέρας. Ἡ Ἑβραία μητέρα τοῦ τὸν ἔριξε στὸ ποτάμι ὄχι βέβαια γιὰ νὰ τὸν θανατώσῃ, ὅπως κάνουν σήμερα οἱ γυναῖκες μὲ τὶς ἐκτρώσεις, ἀλλὰ γιὰ νὰ τὸν σώσῃ. Καὶ ἐπέπλεε στὰ ἀβαθῆ νερὰ τοῦ Νεῖλου, ἐκεῖ στὶς καλαμιές μέσα σ' ἕνα πανεράκι, τὸ χαριτωμένο αὐτὸ μικρὸ παιδί ποὺ ὀνομάστηκε Μωυσῆς.

Σώθηκε λοιπὸν ἀπὸ τὰ νερά. **Πῶς σώθηκε;** Ἡ θυγατέρα τοῦ φαραῶ ἔκανε τὸν περιπάτο της μὲ ἀμάξι στὶς ὄχθες τοῦ ποταμοῦ. Εἶδε νὰ ἐπιπλῆ τὸ πανεράκι μὲ τὸ παιδί, τὸ πήρε, τὸ ἔφερε στὰ ἀνάκτορα τοῦ πατέρα της καὶ τὸ υἱοθέτησε. Ἐκεῖ ἀνατράφηκε μὲ ὅλα τὰ πλοῦτη, τὶς ἀνέσεις καὶ ἀπολαύσεις ποὺ ἔχουν τὰ παλάτια. Ἡ πριγκίπισσα τὸ ἐμπιστεύθηκε σὲ σοφοὺς δασκάλους. Καὶ εἶχε ἡ Αἴγυπτος τότε σπουδαίους ἀστρονόμους, μαθηματικούς, φυσικούς καὶ ἄλλους μεγάλους ἐπιστήμονες, ποὺ κατασκεύαζαν μεγάλα τεχνικὰ ἔργα – ἀπόδειξις οἱ γνωστὲς πυραμίδες. Ἐκπαιδεύτηκε λοιπὸν τὸ παιδί αὐτὸ μὲ ὅλη τὴ σοφία τῶν Αἰγυπτίων, μὲ σκοπὸ νὰ γίνῃ μιὰ μέρα διάδοχος τοῦ φαραῶ. Ἀνοιγόταν μπροστὰ του μέλλον λαμπρό.

Ἔμαθε ὅμως τὴ γενιά του, τὴν ἱστορία του, ἀπὸ ποῦ κατάγεται, ποιοὶ εἶνε οἱ πρόγονοί του. Κι ὅταν μεγάλωσε, μιὰ μέρα **ἔγινε ἀφαντος ἀπὸ τὰ παλάτια!** Κλαίει ὁ φαραῶ, κλαίει ἡ πριγκίπισσα, κλαίει οἱ πάντες, διότι ὁ χαριτωμένος αὐτὸς νέος χάθηκε. Ποῦ πήγε, τί ἔκανε;

Ρωτᾶτε τί ἔκανε; Ἐκανε κάτι ποὺ δὲν κάνουμε ἐμεῖς. Καὶ γι' αὐτὸ ἀκριβῶς προβάλλεται σήμερα ὡς παράδειγμα. **Πῆρε ζυγαριὰ καὶ ζύγισε.** Ἀπ' τὴ μιὰ μεριά ἔβαλε τὰ παλάτια, τοὺς θησαυροὺς, τὰ βιβλία τῶν σοφῶν, τὶς πυραμίδες, τὰ

στέμματα, τὰ σπαθιά, τὶς ἀνέσεις, τὶς διασκεδάσεις, τὰ τραγούδια, τὶς γυναῖκες, ὅ,τι ἐλκυστικό ὑπάρχει στὸν κόσμον. Ἀλλὰ ἡ ζυγαριὰ ἐκλίνει πρὸς τὸ ἄλλο μέρος, ποῦ ἦταν βαρύτερο. Ποιὸ εἶνε τὸ βαρύτερο; Τὸ λέει σήμερον ὁ ἀπόστολος καὶ τὸ εἶπα στὴν ἀρχή· «*Πίστει Μωυσῆς μέγας γενόμενος ἠρνήσατο λέγεσθαι υἱὸς θυγατρὸς φαραῶ, μᾶλλον ἐλόμενος συγκακουχεῖσθαι τῷ λαῷ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἢ πρόσκαιρον ἔχειν ἀμαρτίας ἀπόλαυσιν*» (Ἑβρ. 11:24-25). Αὐτὰ ποῦ λέμε στὴν ἐκκλησίαν ἔχουν ὄλα νόημα, ἀλλὰ εἶνε «χοντρὸ νόμισμα» καὶ χρειάζεται νὰ τὰ κάνη κανεὶς λιανὰ γιὰ νὰ τὰ καταλάβῃ ὁ λαὸς μας.

Λέει σήμερον ὁ ἀπόστολος, ὅτι ὁ Μωυσῆς τὰ ζύγισε ὄλα, καὶ εἶδε ὅτι παραπάνω ἀπὸ αὐτά, ὄχι μόνο ἀπὸ τὴν Αἴγυπτον ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀπὸ τὴ Γῆ ὀλόκληρη, τὰ ἀστέρια καὶ τοὺς Ὑβριῶνες, πιὸ βαρὺ εἶνε – ποιό; **Ἡ πίστις!** αὐτὴ βαραίνει παραπάνω. Καὶ ὁ Μωυσῆς εἶδε ὅτι μέσ' στὰ παλάτια κινδυνεύει νὰ χάσῃ τὴν πίστιν του καὶ νὰ γίνῃ εἰδωλολάτρης, νὰ λατρεύῃ τὶς μοῦμιες μέσ' στὶς πυραμίδες, τὰ φίδια, τὰ κρεμμύδια καὶ τὰ σκόρδα – γιὰ αὐτὰ εἶχαν ἐκεῖ γιὰ θεοὺς· καὶ προτίμησε νὰ μείνῃ πιστὸς στὸ Θεὸ τῶν πατέρων του, νὰ πιστεύῃ σάν τὴ μάνα καὶ τὴ γιαγιά του, ὅπως οἱ πρόγονοί του. Γι' αὐτὸ ἐγένε ἀφαντοῦς. Βάδισε χιλιόμετρα, ἔφυγε μακριά, πῆγε κ' ἐγένε – τί; τσοπάνης, νὰ βόσκη ἀρνιά καὶ νὰ παίξῃ φλογέρα. Ναί· χίλιες φορὲς τσοπάνης μετὴν πίστιν στὸ Θεὸ, παρά βασιλιάς ποῦ νὰ μὴν πιστεύῃ στὸν Κύριον. Αὐτὸ τὸ δίδαγμα παίρνομε σήμερον. Ἐχει μεγαλεῖο ἡ πίστις μας· παραπάνω ἀπὸ ὄλα εἶνε ἡ **Ὁρθόδοξος πίστις**.

Πόσα χρόνια ἐζήσε ἔτσι; Σαράντα χρόνια. Καὶ ὕστερα τὸν κάλεσε ὁ Θεὸς καὶ τὸν ἀνέδειξε ἡγέτη καὶ ἀπελευθέρωσε τὸ λαὸ του ἀπὸ τὴ δουλείαν τοῦ φαραῶ.

\* \* \*

Τέτοιο παράδειγμα, ἀδελφοί μου, μᾶς παρουσιάζει σήμερον ἡ Ἐκκλησίαν μας· **παράδειγμα ἡρωικῆς ἀποφάσεως**. Ἀνάλογα παραδείγματα ἔχει καὶ ἡ ἱστορία τοῦ μικροῦ ἀλλὰ ἐνδόξου ἔθνους μας. Ἡ ἐθνικὴ ἐορτὴ τῆς 25ης Μαρτίου μᾶς δίνει τὴν εὐκαιρίαν ν' ἀνοίξομε τὴν ἱστορίαν μας, νὰ διαβάσομε καὶ νὰ κλάψομε. Μόνον ὁποῖος εἶνε πέτρα δὲν θὰ συγκινηθῇ διαβάζοντας τὸ βίον τοῦ Καραϊσκάκη, τοῦ Κολοκοτρώνη, ὄλων ἐκείνων ποῦ θυσίασαν τὰ πάντα γιὰ νὰ ζοῦμε ἐμεῖς ἐλεύθεροι. Πῶς ἔφτασε ἡ λευτεριά σ' ἐμᾶς; δὲν ἔφτασε ἔτοιμη στὸ πιάτο, ἀλλὰ μέσ' ἀπὸ κόπους, δάκρυα καὶ αἵματα. Ἄν ἔχομε σήμερον ἐκκλησιᾶς καὶ κάνομε γιορτῆς καὶ κυματίζῃ στὴν Ἀκρόπολιν ἐλληνικὴ σημαία, ὡς εἶνε αἰωνία ἡ μνήμη ὄλων ἐκείνων ποῦ στὰ

βουνά, τὰ λαγκάδια καὶ τὶς θάλασσες ἔδωσαν τὸ παρὼν στὸ προσκλητήριο· ἔτσι ζῆ σήμερον ἡ πατρίδα καὶ πρὸ παντὸς ἡ πίστις ἡ ὀρθόδοξος.

Γιὰ διαβάστε π.χ. γιὰ τὸν **Ἀθανάσιον Διάκονον**. Ἦταν λεβέντης Ῥουμेलιώτης μετ' ἐπιείκειαν. Καὶ μᾶς διδάσκει κάτι παρόμοιον μετ' ὁ Μωυσῆς. Στάθηκε καὶ πολέμησε στὰ στενά, καὶ τὸν ἔπιασαν οἱ Τούρκοι. Θαύμασαν τὸ ἀνάστημα, τὴν ὀμορφίαν, τὴν παλληκαριά του. –Ἀλλάζεις τὴν πίστιν σου; τοῦ λέει ὁ Ὁμὲρ Βρυώνης· πασοῦς θὰ γίνῃς, θὰ σοῦ δώσομε τὸ πασσαλίκι, θὰ ἐξουσιάσῃς ὄλη τὴν Ῥούμελην. –Ἐγὼ Γραικὸς γεννήθηκα, λέει, Γραικὸς θὰ πεθάνω!... Καὶ προτίμησε νὰ τὸν σουβλίσομεν, τὴν ὄρα ποῦ ἀνθίζε ἡ γῆ τὴν ἀνοιξίαν... Δὲν εἶνε παραμύθια αὐτά, εἶνε γεγονότα.

Ὁ διάβολος ἐρχεται σὲ ὄλους καὶ μᾶς φέρνει τὸ δίλημμα. Κ' ἐμεῖς, «τράμπα - τραμπαλίζομαι», δὲν παίρνομε ἡρωικὰς ἀποφάσεις. Στὸ φτωχαδάκι προτείνει νὰ πάῃ στὴ χάβραν τῶν Ἑβραίων, νὰ γίνῃ ἰεχωβίτης, καὶ τοῦ τάξει δολλάρια μετ' ἀπ' τὸ Σικάγο. Στὴ φτωχὴ κόρη, ποῦ πάνω στὴ βελόνα «βγάζει τὰ μάτια της», τῆς προτείνει νὰ γίνῃ μεγάλη κυρία κάνοντας ἀβαρία στὶς ἀρχές της. Πάει στὸν ἄλλον καὶ τοῦ λέει· –Θέλεις νὰ γίνῃς πλούσιος; προσκύνησέ με... Πάει καὶ στὸν ἄλλον, τὸν παπᾶ, καὶ τοῦ λέει· –Θέ'ς νὰ γίνῃς δεσπότης, μητροπολίτης, πατριάρχης; προσκύνα τὸν διάβολον μέσῃ στὶς στοῆς καὶ θὰ γίνῃς...

Ναί, ἔτσι παίζει ὁ διάβολος τὶς ψυχὰς. Ἄλλ' ἐμεῖς ὄχι! Ἐν ὀνόματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ τῆς Ὁρθοδοξίας ποῦ ἐορτάζομε, ν' ἀνανεώσομε τὴν ἀπόφασίν μας **νὰ ζήσομε καὶ νὰ πεθάνομε ὀρθόδοξοι**. Νὰ βάλομε ζυγαριάν. Προτιμότερον φτωχὸς μετ' ὁ Χριστὸς παρά ἑκατομμυριοῦχος μετ' ὁ διάβολος. Προτιμότερον φτωχὸς τῆς κόρης καὶ ἄτιμια. Προτιμότερον φτωχὸς μετ' ὁ Χριστὸς παρά ἰεχωβίτης μετ' ὁ διάβολος. Προτιμότερον –ἐγὼ τοῦλάχιστον προτιμῶ– νὰ εἶμαι ἕνας παπᾶς, ἕνας καλόγερος, νὰ κρατᾶ ἕνα κομποσχοίνι καὶ νὰ λέω «*Κύριε, ἐλέησον*», παρά νὰ γίνω πατριάρχης μετ' ὁ διάβολος.

Ὅχι, ἀδελφοί μου, **δὲν θὰ πουλήσομε τὴν Ὁρθοδοξίαν**. Κι ἂν ἀκόμα μᾶς στρώσομεν τὴ γῆ μετ' ἀμάντια καὶ χρυσάφι, ἐμεῖς γεννηθήκαμε ὀρθόδοξοι, θὰ πεθάνομε ὀρθόδοξοι. «*Αὕτη ἡ πίστις τῶν ἀποστόλων, αὕτη ἡ πίστις τῶν πατέρων, αὕτη ἡ πίστις*» (Ἰωάν. Ὑβριᾶν) ἔσωσε τὸν κόσμον. Ὁ Θεὸς δι' εὐχῶν τῶν ἁγίων πατέρων καὶ ὄλων τῶν ἡρώων, τῶν ὁποίων τὴν ἱερὰ μνήμην ἐορτάζομε σήμερον, ὡς σῶσις καὶ σκέπη πάντας ἡμᾶς· ἀμήν.

(†) **ἐπίσκοπος Αἰγυοῦσιος**

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**

### *Forgiveness and Generosity*

Let us flee to the mercy of God, everywhere present, so that the holy Passover of the Lord may be celebrated with a worthy observance. Let the hearts of all the faithful sanctify themselves. Let harshness be softened, let wrath be calmed, let all forgive faults one to another, and let those who seek forgiveness not exact vengeance. When we say, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive those in debt to us," we bind ourselves with the most unyielding chains unless we fulfill what we profess. If the sacred pact of this prayer is not yet observed in its totality, now at least all know their own consciences. By forgiving others' faults, people can obtain the forgiveness for their own sins. For the Lord says, "If you forgive others their failings, your Father who is in heaven will forgive you yours." What He demands from all does not lie far from them, since the sentence of the Judge depends on the kindness of the sup-

pliants themselves. He who is merciful and just in hearing the prayers of humanity has ordained His justice according to our kindness, so that the law of severity would not hold for us, whom he had found not greedy for vengeance.

Generosity also is proper to merciful and gentle souls. There is nothing more worthy of human beings than to be the imitators of their Creator, and, according to the measure of their own faculties, to be executors of divine work. When the hungry are fed, the naked clothed, the sick cared for, does not the help of God fill full the hands of the minister, and is not the kindness of the servant a gift of the Lord? Although He has no need of help in applying His mercy, He so regulates His power that He supports the sufferings of human beings through human beings.

*St. Leo the Great*

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