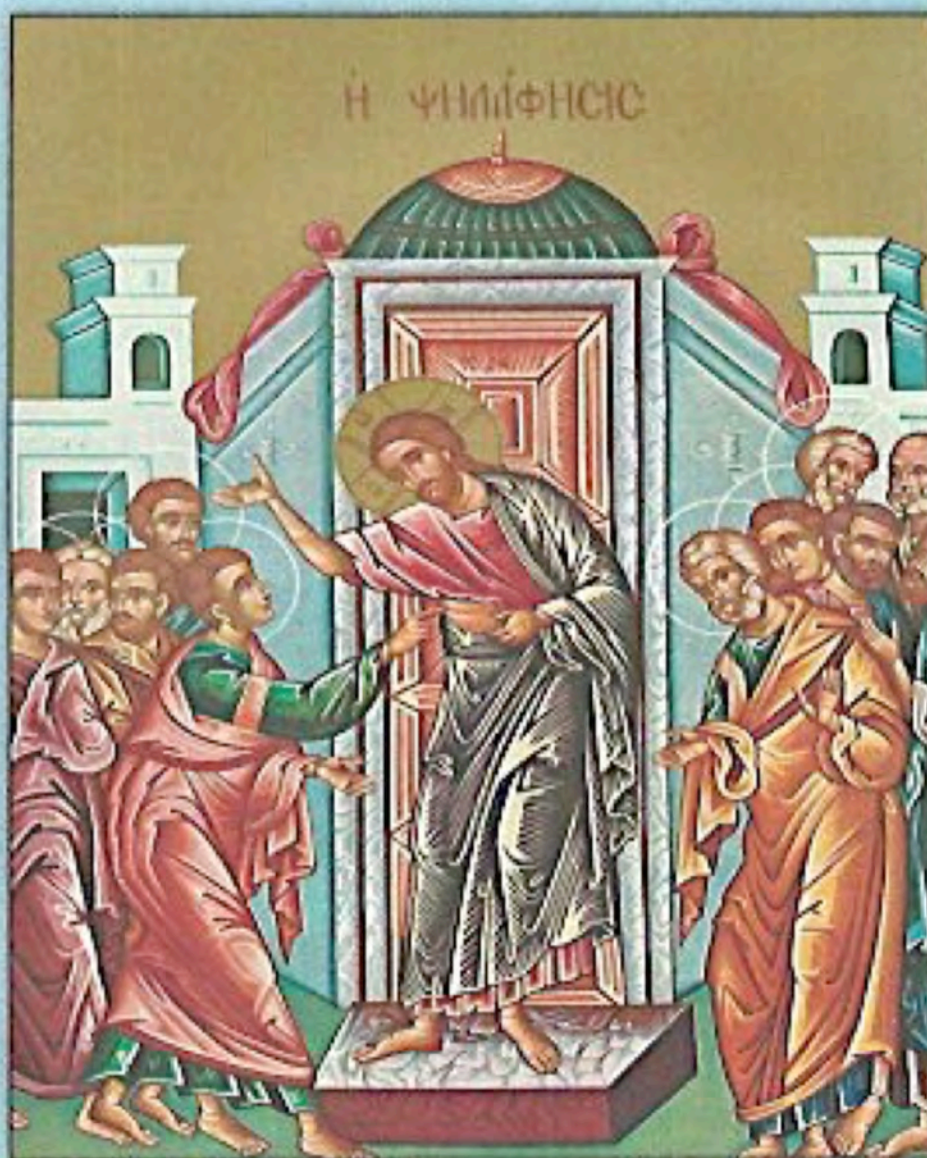




THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN May 8th, 2016
V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

THOMAS SUNDAY



Icon of Saint Thomas and Christ

St. John's First Universal Letter 1:1-7

Prokeimenon. Mode 4.

Psalm 18.4,1

Their voice has gone out into all the earth.

Verse: The heavens declare the glory of God.

THAT WHICH WAS from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life - the life was made manifest, and we saw it, and testify to it, and proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father and was made manifest to us - that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. And we are writing this that our joy may be complete.

This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not live according to the truth; but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

Ἰωάννου α' 1:1-7

Προκείμενον. Ἦχος δ.

ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 18.4,1

Εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν ἐξῆλθεν ὁ φθόγγος αὐτῶν.

Στίχ. Οἱ οὐρανοὶ διηγούνται δόξαν Θεοῦ.

Ὁ ἦν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, ὃ ἀκηκόαμεν, ὃ ἐώρακάμεν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ἡμῶν, ὃ ἔθεασάμεθα, καὶ αἱ χεῖρες ἡμῶν ἐψηλάφησαν περὶ τοῦ λόγου τῆς ζωῆς. Καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἐφανερώθη, καὶ ἐώρακάμεν, καὶ μαρτυροῦμεν, καὶ ἀπαγγέλλομεν ὑμῖν τὴν ζωὴν τὴν αἰώνιον, ἣτις ἦν πρὸς τὸν πατέρα, καὶ ἐφανερώθη ἡμῖν. Ὁ ἐώρακάμεν καὶ ἀκηκόαμεν, ἀπαγγέλλομεν ὑμῖν, ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς κοινωνίαν ἔχητε μεθ' ἡμῶν· καὶ ἡ κοινωνία δὲ ἡ ἡμετέρα μετὰ τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ μετὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ· καὶ ταῦτα γράφομεν ὑμῖν, ἵνα ἡ χαρὰ ἡμῶν ἢ πεπληρωμένη. Καὶ ἔστιν αὕτη ἡ ἀγγελία ἣν ἀκηκόαμεν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀναγγέλλομεν ὑμῖν, ὅτι ὁ θεὸς φῶς ἐστίν, καὶ σκοτία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδεμία. Ἐὰν εἴπωμεν ὅτι κοινωνίαν ἔχομεν μετ' αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐν τῷ σκότει περιπατῶμεν, ψευδόμεθα, καὶ οὐ ποιοῦμεν τὴν ἀλήθειαν· ἐὰν δὲ ἐν τῷ φωτὶ περιπατῶμεν, ὡς αὐτὸς ἐστίν ἐν τῷ φωτὶ, κοινωνίαν ἔχομεν μετ' ἀλλήλων, καὶ τὸ αἷμα Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ καθαρίζει ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ πάσης ἀμαρτίας.

Thomas Sunday

The Gospel according to John 20:19-31

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them: "Peace be with you." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him: "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them: "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in His side, I will not believe."

Eight days later, His disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. The doors were shut, but Jesus came and stood among them, and said: "Peace be with you." Then He said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side; do not be faithless, but believing." Thomas answered Him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to Him: "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe."

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

Thomas Sunday

Κατὰ Ἰωάννην 20:19-31

Οὔσης οὖν ὀψίας τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ τῇ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων, καὶ τῶν θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων ὅπου ἦσαν οἱ μαθηταὶ συνηγμένοι διὰ τὸν φόβον τῶν Ἰουδαίων, ἦλθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ ἔστη εἰς τὸ μέσον, καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· εἰρήνη ὑμῖν. καὶ τοῦτο εἰπὼν ἔδειξεν αὐτοῖς τὰς χεῖρας καὶ τὴν πλευρὰν αὐτοῦ. ἐχάρησαν οὖν οἱ μαθηταὶ ἰδόντες τὸν Κύριον. εἶπεν οὖν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς πάλιν· εἰρήνη ὑμῖν. καθὼς ἀπέσταλκέ με ὁ πατήρ, καὶ γὰρ πέμπω ὑμᾶς. καὶ τοῦτο εἰπὼν ἐνεφύσησε καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· λάβετε Πνεῦμα Ἅγιον· ἂν τινῶν ἀφήτε τὰς ἀμαρτίας, ἀφίενται αὐτοῖς, ἂν τινῶν κρατήτε, κεκράτηνται.

Θωμᾶς δὲ εἷς ἐκ τῶν δώδεκα, ὃ λεγόμενος Δίδυμος, οὐκ ἦν μετ' αὐτῶν ὅτε ἦλθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς. ἔλεγον οὖν αὐτῷ οἱ ἄλλοι μαθηταί· ἐώρακάμεν τὸν Κύριον. ὃ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· ἐὰν μὴ ἴδω ἐν ταῖς χερσίν αὐτοῦ τὸν τύπον τῶν ἥλων, καὶ βάλω τὸν δάκτυλόν μου εἰς τὸν τύπον τῶν ἥλων, καὶ βάλω τὴν χεῖρά μου εἰς τὴν πλευρὰν αὐτοῦ, οὐ μὴ πιστεύσω. Καὶ μεθ' ἡμέρας ὀκτὼ πάλιν ἦσαν ἔσω οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ Θωμᾶς μετ' αὐτῶν. ἔρχεται ὁ Ἰησοῦς τῶν θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων, καὶ ἔστη εἰς τὸ μέσον καὶ εἶπεν· εἰρήνη ὑμῖν. εἶτα λέγει τῷ Θωμᾶ· φέρε τὸν δάκτυλόν σου ὧδε καὶ ἴδε τὰς χεῖράς μου, καὶ φέρε τὴν χεῖρά σου καὶ βάλε εἰς τὴν πλευρὰν μου, καὶ μὴ γίνου ἄπιστος, ἀλλὰ πιστός. καὶ ἀπεκρίθη Θωμᾶς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ὁ Κύριός μου καὶ ὁ Θεός μου. λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· ὅτι ἐώρακάς με, πεπίστευκας· μακάριοι οἱ μὴ ἰδόντες καὶ πιστεύσαντες. Πολλὰ μὲν οὖν καὶ ἄλλα σημεῖα ἐποίησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐνώπιον τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ, ἃ οὐκ ἔστι γεγραμμένα ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τούτῳ· ταῦτα δὲ γέγραπται ἵνα πιστεύσητε ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστίν ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ ἵνα πιστεύοντες ζωὴν ἔχητε ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ.

DEVOTIONS THIS WEEK:

Sunday	May 08th	SAINT THOMAS SUNDAY (St. John Evangelist)	10:30 A.M.
Sunday	May 08th	Artoklasia honoring SAINT GEORGE	12:00 P.M.
Sunday	May 08th	Woman of the Year Honors	12:30 P.M.

TODAY: The Artoklasia of SAINT GEORGE is graciously offered by the Steve and Sylvia RAPTIS family in honor of the patronal name-day of YIAYIA GEORGIA and GRAND-DAUGHTER GEORGIA. Na Mas Zesoun! Chronia Polla Me Ygeia Kai Eutychia.

CHURCHING TODAY: WE WELCOME INTO THE EMBRACE OF THE HOLY MOTHER CHURCH- ‘Olivia Emilia’ new born daughter of Michael Gorczyka and Theodosia Kyparissiotis and ‘Aaliyah Maya’ new born daughter of Vasilios Kyparisiotis and Sherley Jacques. NA SAS ZESOUN! CONGRATULATIONS TO BOTH COUPLES!

GOLF TOURNAMENT: A.H.E.P.A. Chapter #41 Brooklyn will hold their ANNUAL Combined Golf Outing on FRIDAY, MAY 13th, at the DYKER BEACH GOLF COURSE starting at 12:00 noon with Lunch. The benefit is to support all the Brooklyn Parishes and the AHEPA SCHOLARSHIP FUND. The awards DINNER and RAFFLE will be hosted at the Beach Club House at 6:00 P.M. Call Theodore Pavlounis, ESQ. for details (718) 787-1430.

FREE PARISH BREAKFAST to be hosted by the Coney Island Chapter of AHEPA #200 is scheduled for NEXT SUNDAY – MAY 15th on the PLAZA or in case of inclement weather - in Whitehall. OPEN TO EVERYONE FREE!! The AHEPA is honoring their past PRESIDENT PETER MOSCOVITIS. AXIOS!

FATHER EUGENE will be honored as a distinguished alumnus of Holy Cross Seminary on the 50th Anniversary of his graduation and ordination in BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS May 18 – 19th.

SENIOR CLUB: will host a POST MOTHER’S DAY OBSERVANCE on Wednesday afternoon at 1:00 P.M. Father Eugene will lecture on the theme: THE FEMALE OF THE SPECIES AT 1:30 P.M. Come and join in fellowship .

WOMAN OF THE YEAR 2016: will be announced and honored at the Divine Liturgy TODAY on the occasion of the national observance of MOTHER’S DAY! The ladies committee of 20 parish female leaders convened on Wednesday , May 04th, at 7:00 P.M. for the election. **BRAVA TO THE HONOREE!**

GRATITUDE TO SOOOOOO MANY: Where do we begin to relate the generous out pouring of TIME, TALENT and TREASURE of our many parishioners and visiting guests during the HOLY WEEK OBSERVANCES. AVENUE ‘J’ FLORIST and in particular Louis and his son Gus Vellios for the magnificent cathedral atmosphere of the ‘lower church’. It only gets better each year by their talents and generosity. The EPITAPHIA of both churches were ideal and fragrant.

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 donations for the NARTHEX will commence after PASCHA. Please consider a POST – PASCHA memorial tribute to our loved one.

UP-COMING EVENTS: FRIDAY MAY 13TH A.H.E.P.A. GOLF TOURNAMENT at DYKER BEACH RANGE 12:00 NOON
SUNDAY MAY 15TH CONEY ISLAND AHEPA CHAPTER BREAKFAST ON THE PLAZA(FREE)
WED. MAY 11TH Senior Club Lecture THE FEMALE of the SPECIES 1:30 P.M.

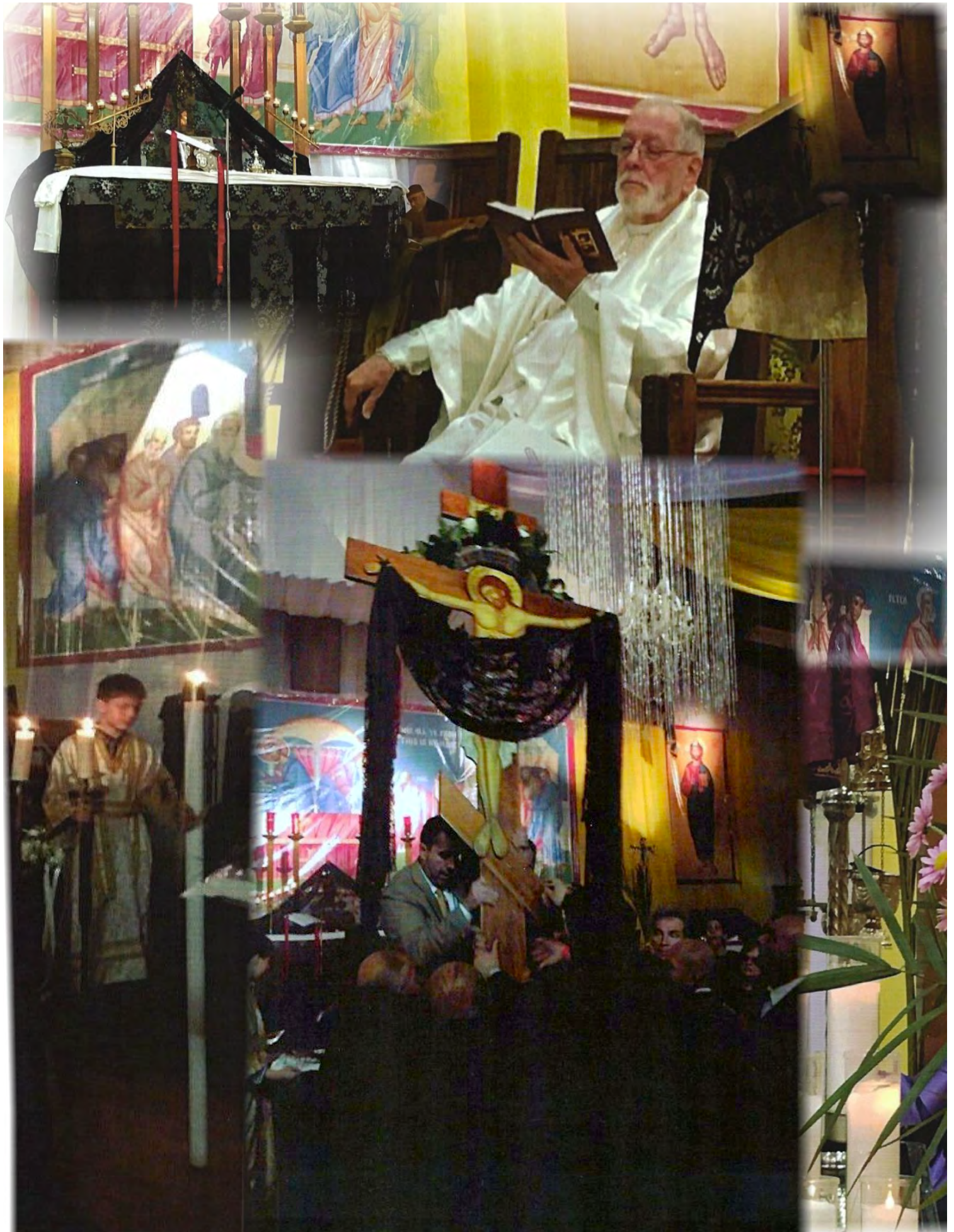
TURKISH COMMUNITY of BROOKLYN: will honor Father Eugene at the BAKU RESTAURANT on Emmons Avenue on the evening of Thursday, May 26th at 7:00 P.M. The Annual Inter – faith Event highlights people with outreach efforts for mutual understanding and tolerance.

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 NEXT WEEK:

+ EUGENIA TOULANTIS + CHRISTOS VELLIOS + BEATRICE (PANAGIOTA) DOUVRES







ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



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

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος ΙΖ' Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 715'	Κυριακὴ τοῦ Θωμᾶ (Ἰω. 20,19-31) 8 Μαΐου 2016 (2000)	Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος Αὐγουστῖνος Ν. Καντιώτης
--	--	---

Τί ὄφελος ἔχουμε ἀπὸ τὴν Ἐκκλησία

«Θωμᾶς δὲ εἶς ἐκ τῶν δώδεκα, ὁ λεγόμενος Δίδυμος, οὐκ ἦν μετ' αὐτῶν ὅτε ἦλθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς» (Ἰω. 20,24)

ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ εἶνε σήμερα, ἀγαπητοί μου, ἡμέρα τοῦ Κυρίου, οἱ ἐκκλησίες ὅλες λειτουργοῦν καὶ καλοῦν τοὺς πιστοὺς στὸν ἐκκλησιασμό.

Στὴν παλιὰ ἐποχὴ, ποὺ οἱ ἄνθρωποι πίστευαν στὸ Θεό, μόλις ἄκουγαν νὰ χτυπᾷ ἡ καμπάνα, τὰ πόδια τους ἔκαναν φτερά καὶ πήγαιναν ὅλοι στὴν ἐκκλησία. Τώρα οἱ ἄνθρωποι, λὲς κ' ἔχουν μολύβια στὰ πόδια τους, **δὲν πατοῦν στὴν ἐκκλησία**. Κι ὅταν τοὺς πηρῆς, **Γιατί δὲν πᾶτε στὴν ἐκκλησία; σοῦ ἀπαντοῦν**

–Καὶ τί ἔχουμε ἐμεῖς νὰ κερδίσομε ἀπὸ τὴν Ἐκκλησία; Σὲ τί θὰ ὠφεληθοῦμε;

Σ' αὐτοὺς θ' ἀπαντήσομε τώρα. Θ' ἀπαντήσω ὄχι ἐγώ, ἀλλὰ ὁ ἀπόστολος **Θωμᾶς**, ποὺ ἐφορτάζει σήμερα καὶ τὸ εὐαγγέλιο ποὺ διαβάσαμε μιλάει γι' αὐτόν.

Τί ἔκανε ὁ ἀπόστολος **Θωμᾶς**; Ἐκανε καὶ αὐτὸς τὴν ἁμαρτία ποὺ κάνουν οἱ περισσότεροι: **ἀπουσίασε ἀπὸ τὴν Ἐκκλησία**.

Ὅταν εἶδε τὸ Χριστὸ νὰ τὸν καρφώνουν στὸ σταυρό, **ἀπογοητεύτηκε**. Εἶπε: Ἐσθῆσαν πιά οἱ ἐλπίδες μας σ' αὐτόν... Σκέφτηκε νὰ γυρίσῃ στὴν παλιὰ του δουλειά, στὸ ψάρεμα, μαζί μὲ τοὺς ἄλλους ψαράδες.

Οἱ ἄλλοι μαθηταὶ μαζεύτηκαν, γιὰ νὰ κάνουν τὴν προσευχή τους καὶ νὰ θυμηθοῦν τὸ Χριστό. Ἔτσι ἐκείνη τὴν ἡμέρα **ἔλειπαν δυὸ** ὁ Ἰούδας, ποὺ τὸν πρόδωσε, καὶ ὁ **Θωμᾶς**. Τότε ὅμως ἐγίνε τὸ πιὸ καταπληκτικὸ γεγονός, τότε ἦρθε τὸ μεγάλο μήνυμα.

Ἐνῶ οἱ μαθηταὶ ἦταν κλεισμένοι, ἐκεῖ κατὰ τὸ ἡλιοβασιλεμα, ξαφνικά, «τῶν θυρῶν κλεισμένων» (Ἰω. 20,19), μὲ κλειστὲς τὶς πόρτες καὶ τὰ παράθυρα, **παρουσιάστηκε ὁ Χριστὸς μπροστὰ τους ὀλοζώντανος**. Ἐμείναν κατάπληκτοι.

Καὶ ἡ πρώτη λέξι τοῦ Χριστοῦ ποιά ἦταν; «**Εἰρήνη ὑμῖν**», τοὺς εἶπε. Καὶ «**ἐχάρησαν οἱ μαθηταὶ ἰδόντες τὸν Κύριον**» (Ἰω. 20,20). **Ἐ τί ἔχασε ὁ Θωμᾶς**, ποὺ ἔλειπε τὴν ἡμέρα ἐκείνη!

Πῆγαν καὶ τὸν βρῆκαν. Τὸν εἶδαν σκεπτικὸ, λυπημένο, καὶ τοῦ εἶπαν

–Θωμᾶ, τὰ ἔμαθες; **Ἀνέστη ὁ Κύριος!** Τὸν εἶδαμε. «**Ἐωράκαμεν τὸν Κύριον**» (Ἰω. 20,25).

–Ὅχι, λέει ὁ **Θωμᾶς**. Ἐὰν δὲν βάλω τὸ δάκτυλό μου στὰ σημάδια τῶν πληγῶν του, **ἐγὼ δὲν πιστεύω**.

Μετὰ ὀκτῶ ἡμέρες νάτοι πάλι οἱ μαθηταί. Ἄλλ' αὐτὴ τὴ φορά πρῶτος ἀνάμεσά τους ὁ **Θωμᾶς**. Ἀπουσίασε μιὰ φορά, ἀλλὰ **τὴ δευτέρα φορά ἦταν ἐκεῖ**. Καὶ ξαφνικά παρουσιάζεται πάλι ὀλοζώντανος ὁ Χριστός.

–Θωμᾶ, ἔλα ἐδῶ, τοῦ λέει. **Βάλε τὸ δάκτυλό σου** στὶς πληγές μου. Ἔλα νὰ δῆς, ὅτι ἐγὼ εἶμαι, ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὁ Ναζωραῖος.

Καὶ ὁ **Θωμᾶς** τολμᾷ νὰ πλησιάσῃ τὸ Χριστό. Τότε **πείσθηκε πλέον**. Ἐσκύψε, προσκύνησε καὶ εἶπε ἐκεῖνα τὰ ὠραία λόγια, ποὺ εὐχομαί, ἀγαπητοί μου, νὰ γίνουν καὶ δικὰ μας λόγια. Τί εἶπε: «**Ὁ Κύριός μου καὶ ὁ Θεός μου**» (Ἰω. 20,28).

Σὰς ἐρωτῶ. Τὴν πρώτη φορά δὲν πῆγε στὴ σύναξι, καὶ στερήθηκε τὴν παρουσία τοῦ ἀναστάντος Χριστοῦ. Ἐὰν καὶ τὴ δευτέρη φορά ἀπουσίαζε ἀπὸ τὴν ἱερά συγκέντρωσι, δὲν θὰ γινόταν ἄπιστος; **Τί μᾶς διδάσκει αὐτό;**

Ὁ **Θωμᾶς** μᾶς λέει: Ἐγὼ ἔλειψα μιὰ φορά ἀπὸ τὴν Ἐκκλησία, καὶ κόντεψα νὰ γίνω ἄπιστος; γι' αὐτὸ κ' ἐσεῖς οἱ Χριστιανοὶ **νὰ μὴ λείπετε ποτέ ἀπὸ τὴν Ἐκκλησία**.

Θὰ πῆτε: Ὁ **Θωμᾶς** εἶδε τὸν ἴδιο τὸ Χριστό; ἐμεῖς ὅμως τί βλέπουμε ἐδῶ πέρα;...

Αὐτὸ ποὺ θὰ σὰς πῶ θὰ σὰς φανῇ ἀπίστευτο. Ἐμεῖς **ἔχουμε μάτια ζῶνδη**. Τὰ παλιὰ τὰ χρόνια ἐμπαιναν μέσα στὴν ἐκκλησία καὶ ἐ-

βλεπαν ἀγγέλους καὶ ἀρχαγγέλους, ἔβλεπαν τὸ Χριστὸ μέσα στὸ ἅγιο δισκοπότηρο. Δὲν εἶνε ψέμα αὐτό. Τώρα τὰ μάτια τὰ δικά μας δὲν εἶνε μάτια ἀγγέλων καὶ ἀρχαγγέλων.

Ὅταν λειτουργοῦσε ὁ ἅγιος Σπυρίδων, στὴν ἐκκλησία **ἔβλεπαν ἀγγελούδια**. «*Ἀγγέλους*», λέει τὸ ἀπολυτίκιό του, «*ἀγγέλους ἔσχατος σὺλ-λειτουργοῦντάς σοι, ἱερώτατε*».

Ἄν εἶχαμε μάτια ἀγγελικά, θὰ βλέπαμε ἐδῶ τὸ θαῦμα. Θὰ βλέπαμε ἐν μέσῳ ἡμῶν τὸν Χριστό. Ὅρατός εἶνε ὁ Χριστός, ἀλλὰ μένει ἀόρατος σ' ἐμᾶς, γιατί δὲν ἔχομε «τελεβίζιον». Ὅπως αὐτὸς ποὺ δὲν ἔχει τελεβίζιον δὲν βλέπει τίποτε, ἔτσι κ' ἐμεῖς **δὲν ἔχομε πνευματικὸ τελεβίζιον**. Καὶ τὸ τελεβίζιον, μὲ τὸ ὁποῖο μπορεῖς νὰ δῆς τὸ Χριστό, εἶνε ἡ **πίστι**.

Ποῦ θὰ βλέπης τὸ Χριστό; **Στὴν ἐκκλησία**. Στὴ Ῥωσία οἱ ἄθεοι κατεδίωκαν τὴν Ἐκκλησία. Ἄλλ' ὅσοι ἦταν μέσα στὴν ἐκκλησία, ὅταν περνοῦσαν τὰ ἅγια, γονάτιζαν καὶ ἔκλαιγαν. Καὶ τὸ «*Πιστεύω*» καὶ τὸ «*Πάτερ ἡμῶν*» τὸ ἔλεγαν γονατιστοί. Γιατί **πίστευαν** στὸ Θεό.

Τώρα ἐδῶ μπαίνουν στὴν ἐκκλησία σὰν νὰ μπαίνουν σ' ἓνα καφφενεῖο, σ' ἓνα χοροδιδασκαλεῖο. Δὲν ξέρουν ποῦ πάνε. **Ἐξέλιπε ἡ πίστις** ἀπὸ τὴ σημερινὴ γενεὰ τῶν Ἑλλήνων.

Λοιπὸν, «*ἠωράκαμεν τὸν Κύριον*». Ἄν εἶσαι μέσα στὴν Ἐκκλησία, τὰ λόγια ποῦ ἀκοῦς εἶνε **λόγια τοῦ Χριστοῦ**.

Θέλεις καὶ κάτι ἄλλο περισσότερο; Βλέπεις τὴν ἅγια τράπεζα; Βλέπεις ἐπάνω κρασί; βλέπεις ψωμί; Τί γίνεται; Ἄν πιστεύης —«*ὄσοι πιστοί*»—, ἐκεῖνο τὸ ψιχουλάκι εἶνε **ὁλόκληρος ὁ Χριστός**, κ' ἐκεῖνη ἡ σταλαγματιά εἶνε **τὸ αἷμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ** μας! Αὐτὴ εἶνε ἡ πίστις τῶν ὀρθοδόξων Χριστιανῶν.

Λοιπὸν ἐδῶ **στὸ ναὸ «ἠωράκαμεν τὸν Κύριον»**. Ὅπως οἱ μαθηταὶ ἦταν συγκεντρωμένοι καὶ τότε εἶπαν «*ἠωράκαμεν τὸν Κύριον*», ἔτσι κ' ἐμεῖς συγκεντρωμένοι ἐδῶ μέσα στὴν ἐκκλησία κάθε Κυριακὴ θὰ λέμε «*ἠωράκαμεν τὸν Κύριον*». **Βλέπουμε τὸν Κύριο**. Τὸν βλέπουμε διὰ τῆς πίστεως, διὰ τῶν αἰσθήσεων, δι' ὅλης τῆς ὑπάρξεώς μας.

Μάλιστα! Εἶνε **μεγάλο πρᾶγμα ἡ Ἐκκλησία**. Θέλετε παραδείγματα;

● **Ξέρω ἄνθρωπο**, ποὺ πήρε μαχαίρι καὶ εἶχε σκοπὸ νὰ σφάξῃ ἄνθρωπο, νὰ κἀνῃ ἐγκλημα. Ἀλλὰ δὲν τὸ ἔκανε. Ποιὸς τὸν σταμάτησε; Ἄκουσε τὴν καμπάνα καὶ μπήκε στὴν ἐκκλησία μὲ τὸ μαχαίρι, ὅπως ἦταν. Καὶ τὴν ὥρα ἐκεῖνη ὁ ἱεροκλήρυκας, κατὰ θεῖαν οἰκονομία, μιλοῦσε καὶ ἐρμήνευε τὸν Δεκάλογο. Ἐρμήνευε τὸ «*οὐ φονεύσεις*» (Ἐξ 20,13). Ἐλεγε, ὅτι δὲν πρέπει

οὔτε μυρμηγκι νὰ πατᾶμε, ὄχι ἄνθρωπο νὰ σκοτώνουμε. Καὶ αὐτός, ὅταν βγήκε ἔξω, ἦταν διαφορετικός. Μπήκε φονιάς, βγήκε ἅγιος. Πέταξε τὸ μαχαίρι στὸ ποτάμι καὶ δὲν σκότωσε. Μέσα στὴν ἐκκλησία ἄλλαξε. **Μπήκε λύκος, βγήκε ἄρνι**.

● **Ξέρω ἓναν ἄλλο**, ποὺ ἦταν τελείως ἀπελπισμένος καὶ σκεπτόταν ν' αὐτοκτονήσῃ. Περνοῦσε ἔξω ἀπὸ μιὰ ἐκκλησία καὶ μπήκε μέσα. Τί συνέβη μέσα στὴν καρδιά του τὴν ὥρα ἐκεῖνη, κι ὅταν βγήκε ἀπὸ τὴν ἐκκλησία ἦταν χαρούμενος! **Μπήκε ἀπελπισμένος, βγήκε χαρούμενος**. Καὶ δὲν αὐτοκτόνησε.

● **Ξέρω στὴν Ἀθήνα μιὰ χήρα μὲ ἑπτὰ παιδιὰ**, σὲ μιὰ φτωχοσυνοικία τοῦ Περιστερίου, ποὺ δουλεῖε σκληρά. Καὶ τὴ ρώτησα:

—Πῶς ὑπέφερες αὐτὸ τὸ μαρτύριο; Ἐσύ, μιὰ γυναίκα μόνη, νὰ σηκώνεσαι νύχτα καὶ νὰ πηγαίνης νὰ πλένης καὶ νὰ καθαρίζῃς μέχρι τὰ μεσάνυχτα; Ποιὸς σοῦ ἔδωσε τέτοια δύναμη, νὰ κρατηθῆς **τίμια καὶ εὐλικρινῆς**;

—**Ὁ Χριστὸς** μοῦ δίνει τὴ δύναμη, μοῦ λέει.

—**Καὶ ποῦ εἶνε**, τῆς λέω, ὁ Χριστός;

—**Ἄ**, ἐγώ, μοῦ ἀπαντᾷ, κάθε πρωί, πρὶν πάω στὴ δουλειά μου, περνώ ἀπὸ τὴν ἐκκλησία, ἀνάβω τὸ κερί μου, γονατίζω στὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ Χριστοῦ, τὸν παρακαλῶ, καὶ **παίρνω δύναμη**.

Μεγάλο πρᾶγμα ἡ Ἐκκλησία! Προφήτευσε ὁ ἅγιος Κοσμάς ὁ Αἰτωλός, ὅταν τὸν ρώτησαν πῶς θὰ καταλάβουν ὅτι ἦρθαν τὰ ἔσχατα χρόνια. Ἐκλαυσε καὶ εἶπε δέκα σημάδια. Τὸ ἓνα σημάδι ποὺ εἶπε εἶνε αὐτό: **Θὰ ἔρθουν χρόνια, ποῦ θ' ἁδειάσουν οἱ ἐκκλησιᾶς καὶ θὰ γεμίσουν οἱ φυλακές**. Γίνεται αὐτὸ στίς μέρες μας, ἀδελφοί μου. Κι ἀκόμα εἴμαστε στὴν ἀρχή.

Ἡ Ἐκκλησία, ἀγαπητοί μου, εἶνε τὸ μαντρί. Μπορεῖ τὸ πρόβατο τὴ νύχτα τοῦ χειμῶνα, ποὺ χιονίζει ἔξω καὶ οὐρλιάζουν οἱ λύκοι, νὰ πῆ «*Μαντρί, δὲν σὲ χρειάζομαι*»; Ἄν δὲν μπῆ στὸ μαντρί, **θὰ τὸ φάῃ ὁ λύκος**.

Μαντρί εἶνε ἡ Ἐκκλησία, τσομπάνος εἶνε ὁ Χριστός, πρόβατα εἴμαστε ἐμεῖς. Ὅσοι φύγουν ἀπὸ τὴν Ἐκκλησία, θὰ τοὺς φάῃ ὁ «*λύκος*», οἱ αἰρέσεις καὶ τὰ ποικίλα ἄλλα θηρία.

Ἐδῶ λοιπὸν στὴν Ἐκκλησία τοῦ Χριστοῦ νὰ εἴμαστε. Νὰ μὴν ἀπουσιάζουμε κ' ἐμεῖς ποτέ ἀπὸ τὴν ἱερὰ σὺναξι, ἀλλὰ νὰ εἴμαστε πάντοτε παρόντες, γιὰ νὰ ἐπαναλάβουμε κ' ἐμεῖς: «*ἠωράκαμεν τὸν Κύριον*». Νὰ ποῦμε κ' ἐμεῖς σὰν τὸ Θωμᾶ: «*Ὁ Κύριός μου καὶ ὁ Θεός μου*».

(†) **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

Jesus the Lamb of God

In Egypt the Passover lamb was slain, in Sion the True Lamb slaughtered. My brothers, let us consider the two lambs, let us see where they bear resemblance and where they differ. Let us weigh and compare their achievements - of the lamb that was the symbol, and of the Lamb that is the Truth. Let us look upon the symbol as a shadow, let us look upon the Truth as the fulfillment. Listen to the simple symbols that concern that Passover, and in the double achievements of this our Passover. With the Passover lamb there took place for the Jewish people an exodus from Egypt, and not an entry. So with the True Lamb there took place for the Gentiles an Exodus from error, and not an entry.

With the Living Lamb there was a further Exodus, too, for the dead from Sheol, as from Egypt. For in Egypt two symbols are depicted, since it reflects both Sheol and Error. With the Passover lamb, Egypt's greed learned to give back, against its wont; With the Living Lamb, Sheol's banquet

gave back the dead, against its nature. With the True Lamb, greedily Error rejected and cast up the Gentiles who were saved; With that Passover lamb, Pharaoh returned the Jewish people whom, like Death, he had held back.

With the Living Lamb, Death has returned the just, who left their graves. With the True Lamb, Satan gave up the Gentiles whom, like Pharaoh, he had held back. In Pharaoh two types were depicted; he was a pointer to both Death and Satan. With the Passover lamb, Egypt was breached and a path stretched out before the Hebrews. With the True Lamb, Satan, having fenced off all paths left free the path that leads to Truth. The True Lamb had trodden out, with that cry which he uttered, the path from the grave for those who lie buried. Praise to the Son, the Lord of symbols who fulfilled every symbol at His Resurrection.

St. Ephrem the Syrian

For more information on Eastern spirituality, visit
www.ecpubs.com

WEB-SITE: information is **ALWAYS ON LINE** ready to see and read. If you submit YOUR E-MAIL address we can forward Bulletin Information to you personally. See :Website: www.threehierarchsbrooklynny.org