



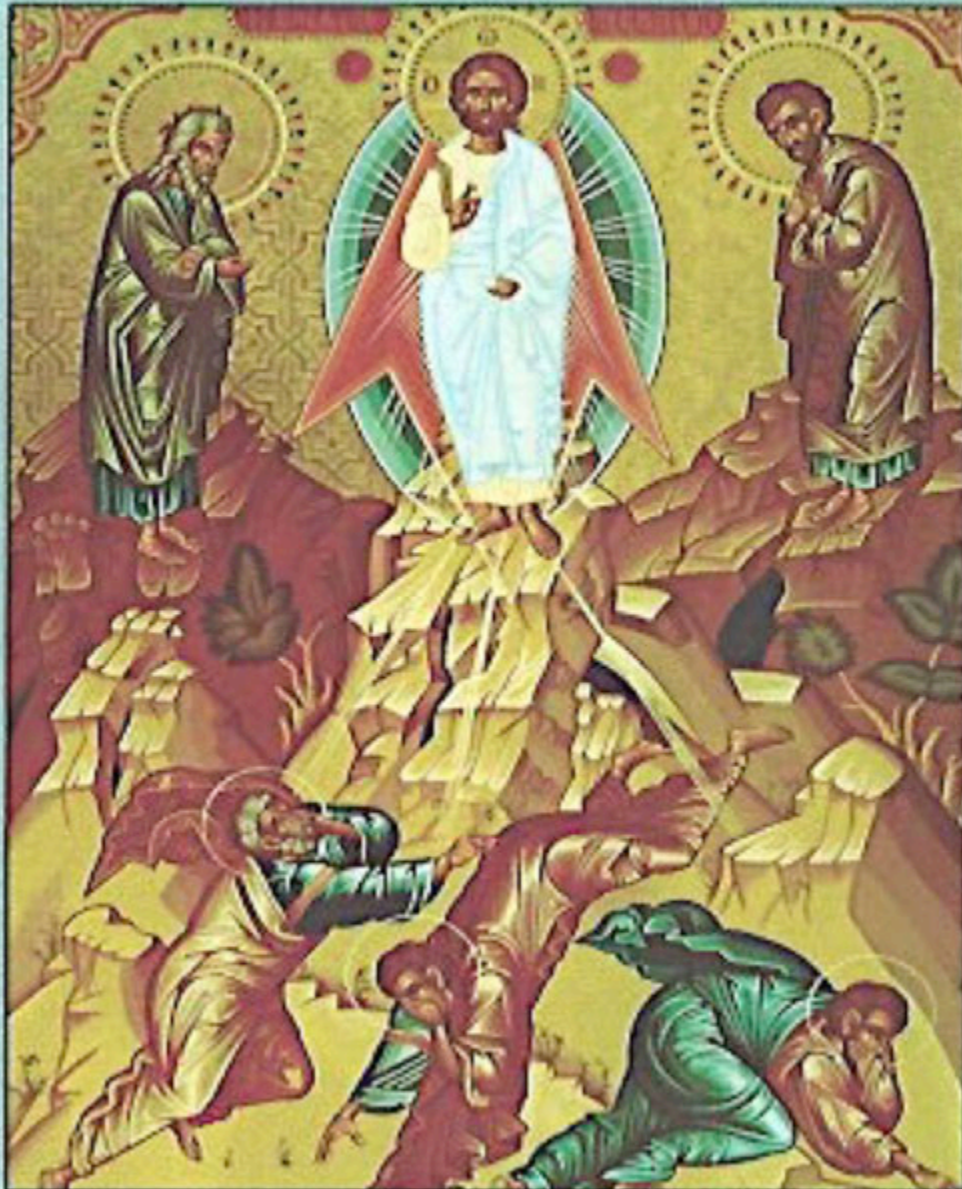
DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN
DISTRICT

THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN July 31st, 2016

V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

SIXTH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW



Icon of the Transfiguration -- August 6th

St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 12:6-14

Prokeimenon. Mode Plagal 1.

Psalm 11.7,1

You, O Lord, shall keep us and preserve us.

Verse: Save me, O Lord, for the godly man has failed.

BRETHREN, having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching; he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with brotherly affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Never flag in zeal, be aglow with the Spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints, practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.

Πρὸς Ῥωμαίους 12:6-14

Προκείμενον. Ἦχος πλ α΄.

ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 11.7,1

Σὺ Κύριε, φυλάξαις ἡμᾶς καὶ διατηρήσαις ἡμᾶς.

Στίχ. Σῶσον με, Κύριε, ὅτι ἐκκέλοιπεν ὁσῖος.

Ἀδελφοί, ἔχοντες δὲ χαρίσματα κατὰ τὴν χάριν τὴν δοθεῖσαν ἡμῖν διάφορα, εἴτε προφητείαν, κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν τῆς πίστεως· εἴτε διακονίαν, ἐν τῇ διακονίᾳ· εἴτε ὁ διδάσκων, ἐν τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ· εἴτε ὁ παρακαλῶν, ἐν τῇ παρακλησίᾳ· ὁ μεταδιδούς, ἐν ἀπλότητι· ὁ προϊστάμενος, ἐν σπουδῇ· ὁ ἐλεῶν, ἐν ἰλαρότητι. Ἡ ἀγάπη ἀνυπόκριτος. Ἀποστυγοῦντες τὸ πονηρόν, κολλώμενοι τῷ ἀγαθῷ. Τῇ φιλαδελφίᾳ εἰς ἀλλήλους φιλόστοργοι· τῇ τιμῇ ἀλλήλους προηγούμενοι· τῇ σπουδῇ μὴ ὀκνηροί· τῷ πνεύματι ζέοντες· τῷ κυρίῳ δουλεύοντες· τῇ ἐλπίδι χαίροντες· τῇ θλίψει ὑπομένοντες· τῇ προσευχῇ προσκαρτεροῦντες· ταῖς χρείαις τῶν ἁγίων κοινωνοῦντες· τὴν φιλοξενίαν διώκοντες. Εὐλογεῖτε τοὺς διώκοντάς ὑμᾶς· εὐλογεῖτε, καὶ μὴ καταρᾶσθε.

6th Sunday of Matthew

The Gospel according to Matthew 9:1-8

At that time, getting into a boat Jesus crossed over and came to his own city. And behold, they brought to him a paralytic, lying on his bed; and when Jesus saw their faith he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven." And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say 'Rise and walk?' But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins" he then said to the paralytic -- "Rise, take up your bed and go home." And he rose and went home. When the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

6th Sunday of Matthew

Κατὰ Ματθαῖον 9:1-8

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, ἐμβὰς εἰς πλοῖον διεπέρασε καὶ ἦλθεν εἰς τὴν ἰδίαν πόλιν. Καὶ ἰδοὺ προσέφερον αὐτῷ παραλυτικὸν ἐπὶ κλίνης βεβλημένον· καὶ ἰδὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὴν πίστιν αὐτῶν εἶπε τῷ παραλυτικῷ· θάρσει, τέκνον· ἀφέωνταί σοι αἱ ἁμαρτίαι σου. καὶ ἰδοὺ τινες τῶν γραμματέων εἶπον ἐν ἑαυτοῖς· οὗτος βλασφημεῖ. καὶ ἰδὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὰς ἐνθυμήσεις αὐτῶν εἶπεν· ἵνα τί ὑμεῖς ἐνθυμεῖσθε πονηρὰ ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν; τί γάρ ἐστιν εὐκοπώτερον, εἰπεῖν, ἀφέωνταί σοι αἱ ἁμαρτίαι, ἢ εἰπεῖν, ἔγειρε καὶ περιπάτει; ἵνα δὲ εἰδῆτε ὅτι ἐξουσίαν ἔχει ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἀφιέναι ἁμαρτίας - τότε λέγει τῷ παραλυτικῷ· ἐγερθεὶς ἄρῃ σου τὴν κλίνην καὶ ὑπάγε εἰς τὸν οἶκόν σου. καὶ ἐγερθεὶς ἀπῆλθεν εἰς τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ. ἰδόντες δὲ οἱ ὄχλοι ἐθαύμασαν καὶ ἐδόξασαν τὸν Θεὸν τὸν δόντα ἐξουσίαν τοιαύτην τοῖς ἀνθρώποις.

DEVOTIONS THIS WEEK:

Monday ,	August 01st	AGIASMOS (Blessing of Holy Water)	11:00 A.M.
Monday,	August 01st	FIRST PARAKLESIS to the Blessed Virgin Mary	11:30 A.M.
Tuesday,	August, 02nd	Paraclesis to the Blessed Virgin Mary	7:00 P.M.
Wednesday	August, 03rd	Paraclesis to the Blessed Virgin Mary	7:00 P.M.
Thursday ,	August, 04th	Paraclesis to the Blessed Virgin Mary	7:00 P.M.
Friday,	August, 05th	TRANSFIGURATION VESPERS (Corona – Queens)	7:00 P.M.
Saturday,	August, 06th,	Liturgy of the Transfiguration (Three Hierarchs Church)	9:00 A.M.
		Blessing of the GRAPES	11:00 A.M.
Sunday,	August, 07th,	Liturgy of Saint NIKANOR	10:30 A.M.

CHECK THE BULLETIN FOR LITURGY SCHEDULING AND HOURS OF SERVICES!

ARTOKLASIES are welcomed for NAME-DAY HOLIDAY observances. Please register your artoklasia with the Church Office for proper announcements. **PARAKLESIS SERVICES:**(SUPPLICATIONS to the BLESSED VIRGIN MARY) will commence on Monday Morning AUGUST 01st. at 11:30 A.M. Evening services of the PARAKLESIS will be offered on: TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, and THURSDAY -7:00P.M.

TRANSFIGURATION VESPERS: will be celebrated at the **CORONA-QUEENS** Parish Of The Holy Transfiguration on Friday evening August 05th. at 7:00 P.M. Divine Liturgy at **THREE HIERARCHS** and the **BLESSING OF THE GRAPES** will be held on **SATURDAY MORNING** August 06th 9:00 AM-11:00 A.M. Chronia Polla to all those name-day celebrants Sotiria and Soterios! Donations of grapes (white, black, red) may be brought to the altar during the morning services for sanctification and distribution to the faithful. **CHRONIA POLLA !**

AGAPE COFFEE FELLOWSHIP Today is being hosted by the Elefterakis Family in blessed memory of father and son + JOHN ELEFTERAKIS SR. and + DR. JOHN ELEFTERAKIS .For \$125, (ONE HUNDRED TWENTY – FIVE DOLLARS) you can host the coffee fellowship as a birthday, anniversary tribute or memorial recognition any Sunday with coffee, tea, bagels and smears. Our committee will do the serving upon request. Call: 718-339-0280. Share the recognition of ‘THE DAY’ with others through fellowship.

MANY EXPRESSIONS OF GRATITUDE: are extended to all the beloved faithful who participated in Father Eugene’s double celebration last Sunday July 24th, on the occasion of his **50 PRIESTLY ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY** and his **76th BIRTHDAY (JULY 23RD.)** A congregational observance was held after Liturgy in Whitehall with refreshments and cake for everyone!

GRAPE DONATIONS are welcomed for the feast of the Holy Transfiguration next SATURDAY, AUGUST 06TH AT 11:00 A.M. A display of festive grape harvest (red , white and black grapes) will be displayed on the ‘solea’ for the great blessing of the first harvesting.

CHURCHING NEXT WEEKEND: We welcome into the embrace of the Holy Mother Church: SAMANTHA APHRODITE the new born daughter of Jovell and Maria (SAKKAS) Lundi, and EMILY ARIADNE the new born daughter of Satak Alamarie and Maria Kalogiannis. NA SAS ZESOUN!!!!!!

SACRAMENTAL WINE: is needed for altar use. Donors of wine may secure MAVRODAPHNE wine or make a purchase from KINGS HIGHWAY LIQUORS for the appropriate red sweet wine. Thank you for the generosity of your purchase.

CHRISMATION: is the appropriate sacramental service for the reception of non-Orthodox Christians (Roman Catholic, Anglican, Protestant) who are validly baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity entering the ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH. We are receptive to any interested parties who may wish to enter the sacramental life of Orthodoxy by confession of faith and anointing. Please communicate with the clergy if you or another is interested. The ancient rite of CHRISMATION (confirmation) will be administered during the Divine Liturgy of Sunday, August 14th, prior to the Eucharistic distribution . COME ! SEE ! LEARN ! REJOICE !

ELEVATOR PROJECT: is on the rise..... donations are always welcomed as we inch by inch look forward to the finalization of this much needed accessibility for our ‘senior citizen’ members. You may **NOT** be one today, but surely will be one tomorrow. MAKE A DONATION. THANK YOU!

THREE HIERARCHS U.P.K. OBSERVATION REPORT from the City of New York earned ABOVE AVERAGE RATING in overall score to program structure. Hence we have ONE of the BEST U.P.K. PROGRAMS IN THE city. DO YOU HAVE CHILDREN OR GRAND-CHILDREN 4 YEARS OF AGE IN SEPTEMBER THAT CAN BE ENROLLED? This program 8:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. DAILY --- is TUITION FREE. There is no COST to the parents. It is a service offered by the city department of education. SIGN UP NOW! **SEND US YOUR E MAIL ADDRESS :** and we will send the weekly bulletin to your home. Going to Greece? Show the bulletin to your family in your old home town. What a treat.....and it’s FREE! Call the office 718 339-0280 and speak to Effie.

RADIO MINISTRY: Each Saturday at 1:15PM Fr. Eugene hosts and produces the radio broadcast **MATTERS OF CONSCIENCE NOW IN ITS 18TH 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.gaepis.org ([Click live audio](#))

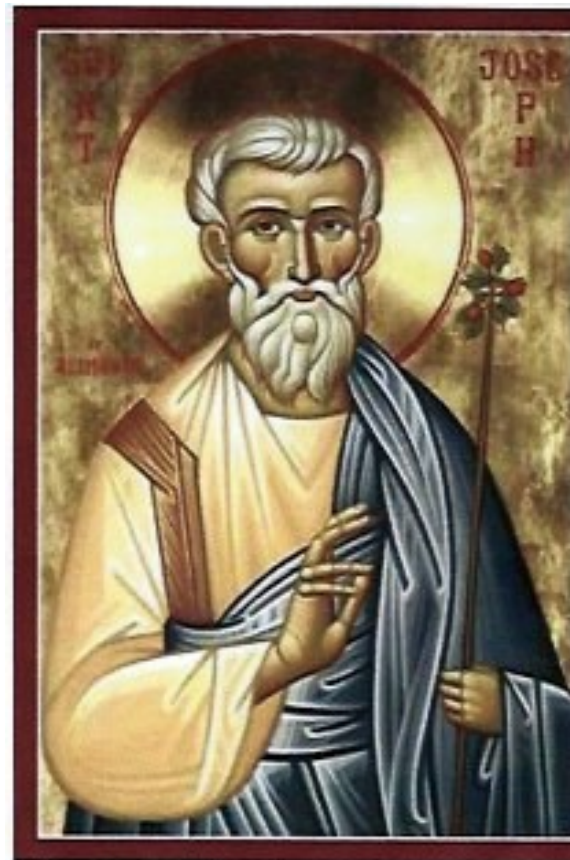
MEMORIALS TODAY: + JOHN ELEFTERAKIS SR. + DR. JOHN ELEFTERAKIS
MEMORIALS NEXT WEEK: + TOM (Anastasios) COURTOS + MARY TERZIDIS
+ PANAGIOTIS GRIGORPOULOS
+ DONALD + DONNY + JOAN MC COMISKY

Today July 31st We Honor
St. Joseph Of Arimathea

The supreme religious Council as well as the highest court in the ancient Jewish nation bore the name of Sanhedrin. It bears a close resemblance to the Greek word “synedrion” which has similar meaning, literally :sitting together. The Sanhedrin appears as the body which voted to condemn Jesus to death. Although Joseph of Arimathea is remembered as the leading Council member he abstained in the voting. Chapter 23, Verse 50 of St. Luke

And behold there was a man named Joseph, a councilor and he was a good man, and just; he was of Arimathea, a city of Jews, who also waited for the Kingdom of God.

This man went unto Pilate and begged for the body of Jesus



When Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out of a rock.

Joseph of Arimathea joined with St Philip and a dozen other apostles in an arduous and dangerous journey to the far away island now known as England.

The missionaries were at first eyed with suspicion, but they made steady progress in the Christianization of the people.

A chapel was erected in the name of the Archangel Gabriel, a favorite patron saint of Joseph of Arimathea's. He lived out his remaining days there and was buried in what is now Avlon, thousands of miles from the tomb he gave to Jesus years before.



This Saturday August 6
The Holy Transfiguration of Christ.

The
transfiguration of
Jesus is a miracle.

Apostles Peter,
John and James
accompany Jesus
to the top of Mt.

Tabor for a
personal glimpse
of the power of
God the Father.

Here Jesus is
bathed in a
dazzling glow of
radiating glorious
light and hears
God declare

<< This is my
beloved Son, in
whom I am well
pleased>> .

The apostles
witness to the
divine vocal
declaration and
the apparition of
Moses and Elijah
in conversation
with Jesus.

The two prophets represent the Law of God (Commandments) and the Prophecies of the Old Testament referring to the Messiah.

Here , both prophets encourage the "son of man" Jesus to endure the forthcoming
PASSION OF THE CROSS





ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



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

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος ΚΒ'
Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 1191²

Κυριακὴ ΣΤ' Ματθαίου (Ματθ. 9,1-8)
31 Ἰουλίου 2016 (2005)

Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος
Αὐγουστίνος Ν. Καντιώτης

Τὸ χειρότερο κακὸ

Θὰ μιλήσουμε, ἀγαπητοί μου, ὅπως πάντοτε, ἀπλᾶ.

Ἐνα κακὸ ποὺ φοβοῦνται ὅλοι εἶνε ἡ ἀσθένεια. Ἐὰν ἀρρωστήσουν οἱ ἄνθρωποι, ἀνησυχοῦν, τρέχουν στὸ γιατρό, ἀγοράζουν φάρμακα, προσπαθοῦν νὰ γίνουν καλά. **Ὑπάρχει ἄραγε ἄλλο κακὸ μεγαλύτερο ἀπὸ τὴν ἀρρώστια;** Σ' αὐτὸ τὸ ἐρώτημα θ' ἀπαντήσουμε.

Ἐνας δάσκαλος ρώτησε μιὰ μέρα τοὺς μαθητάς: Ἀπὸ τὰ **δυσάρεστα** ποὺ συμβαίνουν στὸν κόσμον ἐσὺς ποιοὶ σὰς κάνει πιὸ μεγάλη ἐντύπωση; Οἱ μαθηταὶ ἀπήντησαν. Ἐνας εἶπε: Ἐμένα μοῦ φαίνεται μεγάλο κακὸ νὰ τρακάρουν δυὸ αὐτοκίνητα καὶ νὰ σκοτωθῇ ἄνθρωπος. Ἄλλος εἶπε: Κακὸ εἶνε νὰ περνᾷ λεωφορεῖο ἀπὸ μιὰ γέφυρα, ξαφνικὰ ἡ γέφυρα νὰ πέσῃ, τὸ λεωφορεῖο καὶ βρεθῇ μέσ' στὸ ποτάμι καὶ νὰ πνιγοῦν οἱ ἐπιβάτες. Ἄλλος ἀπήντησε: Κακὸ εἶνε νὰ γίνῃ ναυάγιο, νὰ καταποντισθῇ τὸ καράβι καὶ ὅλοι οἱ ἐπιβάτες νὰ χαθοῦν. Ἄλλος εἶπε: Κακὸ εἶνε νὰ πετᾷ καὶ ξαφνικὰ τὸ ἀεροπλάνο νὰ πέσῃ καὶ νὰ γίνῃ κομμάτια. Ἄλλος εἶπε: Ἐγὼ θεωρῶ φοβερὸ νὰ πέσῃ πείνα καὶ νὰ μὴν ἔχουν οἱ ἄνθρωποι ψωμί νὰ φᾶνε. Ἄλλος εἶπε: Κακὸ μεγάλο εἶνε νὰ γίνῃ σεισμός, νὰ γκρεμιστοῦν τῇ νύχτᾳ ὅλα τὰ σπιτία, καὶ νὰ πλακωθοῦν χιλιάδες ἄνθρωποι. Ἄλλος εἶπε: Κακὸ εἶνε νὰ γίνῃ πυρκαϊά. Καὶ ἄλλος εἶπε: Κακὸ εἶνε νὰ γίνῃ πόλεμος. –Τελειώσατε; ρώτησε ὁ δάσκαλος. Ἐχετε κάτι ἄλλο νὰ πῆτε; Κακὰ εἶνε ὅλα αὐτά· μὰ παραπάνω ἀπ' αὐτὰ ὑπάρχει ἓνα ἄλλο κακὸ πολὺ μεγαλύτερο... Θεέ μου, φώτισέ μας νὰ τὸ καταλάβουμε. Τὸ μεγαλύτερο ἀπ' ὅλα τὰ κακὰ εἶνε μιὰ λέξι, ποὺ δὲν τὴν προσέχουμε. Τὴν ἀκοῦμε στὴν ἐκκλησία, στὰ ἱερὰ βιβλία: **τὸ μεγαλύτερο κακὸ εἶνε ἡ ἁμαρτία**. Ποιὸς τὸ λέει αὐτό; Τὸ λέει τὸ εὐαγγέλιο σήμερα.

Σὲ κάποιο χωριὸ ζοῦσε ἓνα παλληκάρι. Ἦ-

ταν γερός, μὲ μπράτσα καὶ πόδια δυνατά. Ἐτρεχε σὰν τὸ ζαρκάδι, πῆγαινε ὅπου ἤθελε, ἔκανε δουλειές – χαρὰ στὸ σπίτι του. Μὰ ξαφνικὰ ἓνα βράδυ μούδιασε τὸ πόδι του τὸ δεξιό, τὸ ἀριστερό, μούδιασε ὅλο τὸ κορμί του κ' ἔπεσε στὸ κρεβάτι. Δὲν μπόρεσε πιά νὰ σηκωθῇ. Αὐτός, ποὺ ἔτρεχε χιλιόμετρα, δὲν μποροῦσε νὰ κἀνῃ ἓνα βῆμα, οὔτε τὸ κουτάλι του νὰ σηκώσῃ· ἡ μάνα του τὸν τὰϊζε. Πόδια εἶχε, καὶ πόδια δὲν εἶχε· χέρια εἶχε, καὶ χέρια δὲν εἶχε. Ἀπλῶς μόνο ἀνέπνεε, τίποτα περισσότερο. Οἱ γονεῖς του ἀσφαλῶς θὰ ἔκαναν ὅ,τι ἔλεγε ἡ ἐπιστήμη. Ἀλλὰ τοῦ κάκου· **ὁ παράλυτος** ἔμενε ἀθεράπευτος, σὰν νεκρὸς πάνω στὸ κρεβάτι.

Πέρασαν χρόνια ἔτσι. Κάποτε ἀκούστηκε, ὅτι ἦρθε στὸ χωριὸ κάποιος ξένος. Ἦταν πάμπωχος, δὲν εἶχε δραχμὴ στὴν τσέπη, δὲν εἶχε σπίτι νὰ κοιμηθῇ· ὅταν ἄκουσε μιλοῦσε τὰ λόγια του ἦταν γλυκύτερα ἀπ' τὸ μέλι, κι ὅπου ἄπλωνε τὸ ἅγιό του χέρι ἔκανε θαύματα. Ὅλοι γι' αὐτὸν μιλοῦσαν. Ἦταν **ὁ Χριστός**. Ὅταν ἄκουσε γι' αὐτὸν τὸ παλληκάρι, εἶπε: Ὁ Χριστὸς θὰ μὲ κἀνῃ καλά! Παρακάλεσε φίλους καὶ συγγενεῖς, τὸν σήκωσαν καὶ τὸν πῆγαν στὸ Χριστό.

Τί περίμενε τώρα ὁ παράλυτος ἀπὸ τὸ Χριστό; Ν' ἀπλώσῃ τὸ ἅγιό του χέρι ἐπάνω του καὶ νὰ τὸν κἀνῃ καλά. Αὐτὸ ἔκανε ὁ Χριστός; Δὲν ἔκανε αὐτό. Ἡ μάλλον τὸ ἔκανε κι αὐτό, ἀλλὰ προηγουμένως τοῦ λέει: **«Θάρσει, τέκνον· ἀφένωνταί σοι αἱ ἁμαρτίαι σου»**· παιδί μου ἔχε θάρρος, σοῦ συγχωροῦνται τὰ ἁμαρτήματά σου (Ματθ. 9,2). Γιατί ἄραγε, ἐνῶ πῆγε γιὰ νὰ θεραπευθῇ ἀπὸ τὴν ἀσθένεια τοῦ σώματος, ὁ Χριστὸς πρῶτα εἶπε: **«Τέκνον· ἀφένωνταί σοι αἱ ἁμαρτίαι σου»**; **Τί ἤθελε νὰ δείξῃ μ' αὐτό;**

Δὲν ἀδιαφορεῖ ὁ Χριστὸς γιὰ τὸ σῶμα. Ὁχι. Γιατὶ καὶ τὸ σῶμα ὁ Θεὸς τὸ ἐφτείαζε, κ' εἶνε ἓνα ἀριστούργημα. Καὶ ἡ καρδιά καὶ τὰ πνευμόνια καὶ οἱ ἄρτηριες καὶ τὰ νεῦρα, ὅλα εἶνε ἀξιοθαύμαστα. Ἐνδιαφέρεται ὁ Χριστὸς γιὰ

τὸ σῶμα. Ἀλλὰ παραπάνω ἀπὸ τὸ σῶμα, ποὺ μιὰ μέρα θὰ σαπίσῃ μέσ' στὸν τάφο, ὁ Χριστὸς ἐνδιαφέρεται γιὰ κάτι ἄλλο ἀπείρως ἀνώτερο· καὶ αὐτὸ εἶνε ἡ **ψυχὴ**. Καὶ ἀκριβῶς γιὰ τὴν ψυχὴ τοῦ νέου, ποὺ ἦταν κι αὐτὴ ἄρρωστη, φρόντισε ὁ Χριστός. Γι' αὐτὸ τοῦ εἶπε «*Τέκνον· ἀφέωνταί σοι αἱ ἁμαρτίαι σου*».

Ἦθελε νὰ δείξῃ, ὅτι κακὸ μεγαλύτερο ἀπὸ τὴν ἀρρώστια εἶνε ἡ ἁμαρτία. Αὐτὴ εἶνε ἡ **πηγὴ** ἀπὸ τὴν ὁποία προέρχονται ὅλα τὰ κακὰ στὸν κόσμο. Ὅ,τι κακὸ νὰ φανταστῇς, ἀπὸ 'κεῖ πηγάζει. Καὶ ἂν κλείσῃς τὴν πηγὴ αὐτὴ, θὰ σταματήσουν ὅλα τὰ κακὰ. Γι' αὐτὸ ὁ Χριστὸς θεραπεύει πρῶτα τὴν ψυχὴ τοῦ παιδιοῦ, ποὺ ἦταν καὶ αὐτὴ ἁμαρτωλὴ. Γιατί αὐτὸ ποὺ ἔπαθε τὸ παιδί, ἡ παραλυσία, προερχόταν ἀπὸ ἁμάρτημα. Ἔκανε κάποια ἁμαρτία, καὶ ἐξ αἰτίας τῆς ἁμαρτίας παρέλυσε.

Τὸ σημερινὸ εὐαγγέλιο, ἀγαπητοί μου, μᾶς διδάσκει, ὅτι χειρότερη ἀπὸ τὴν ἀρρώστια τοῦ σώματος εἶνε ἡ ἀρρώστια τῆς ψυχῆς, ἡ **ἁμαρτία**. Αὐτὴ σκοτίζει τὸ μυαλό, μολύνει τὰ εὐγενέστερα αἰσθήματα, χαυνώνει καὶ παραλύει τὴ θέλησι. Εἶνε ἡ πιὸ μεγάλη ἀσθένεια στὸν κόσμο. Καὶ ὁποῖος δὲν προσέξῃ, θὰ ἔχῃ τὸ κατάντημα τοῦ παραλύτου τοῦ σημερινοῦ εὐαγγελίου. Σὰς ἀναφέρω μερικὰ παραδείγματα, νὰ δῆτε ποῦ καταντοῦν, ἰδίως τὰ παιδιά καὶ οἱ νέοι, ὅταν ἀφήνουν τὸν ἑαυτὸ τους νὰ παρασυρθῇ ἀπὸ τὸ φοβερὸ ρεῦμα τῆς διαφθορᾶς.

● Ἦταν ἓνα λαμπρὸ καὶ εὐφυὲς κορίτσι στὴν Ἀθήνα. Πρῶτη στὸ σχολεῖο, περνοῦσε τίς τάξεις καὶ ἀρίστευε, τὴν καμάρωναν γονεῖς καὶ καθηγηταί. Ξαφνικὰ στόπ! Ἀρχισε νὰ καθυστερῇ στὰ μαθήματα, καὶ τέλος ἔμεινε στὴν ἴδια τάξι. Καὶ μόνο αὐτό; Ἐνῶ ἦταν παιδί ὅλο χαρά, τὴν ἔπιασε μελαγχολία· φαγητὸ δὲν ἔτρωγε, τὴ νύχτα δὲν κοιμόταν, σηκωνόταν ἐπάνω, φώναζε, ὠρυόταν. Τὴν πῆγαν σὲ γιατρούς. Ἐκρῦβε κάποιο μυστικὸ· εἶχε μπλέξει μὲ κακὲς παρέες κι αὐτὲς τὴν κατέστρεψαν. Καὶ ἀπὸ τὴν ἡμέρα ἐκείνη δὲν εἶχε πιά ἡσυχία. Νὰ τ' ἀποτελέσματα τῆς ἁμαρτίας.

● Θέλετε ἄλλο παράδειγμα; Στὴν Πτολεμαῖδα ὁδοκαθαριστῆς τῆς πόλεως βρῆκε τίς πρωινὲς ὥρες ἔξω ἀπὸ ἓνα νυκτερινὸ κέντρο ξαπλωμένη σὲ ἐλεεινὴ κατάστασι, μὲ σκισμένα τὰ ρούχα καὶ μελανιασμένο τὸ πρόσωπο, μιὰ κοπέλλα δεκάξι - δεκαεπτὰ χρονῶν. Τὴ σκουτάει δὲν κουνιόταν. Εἶδοποιεῖ τὴν ἀστυνομία καὶ τὴν πῆρε τὸ «ἐκατό». Εἶδαν κ' ἔπαθαν νὰ τὴν ἀναγνωρίσουν. Ἦταν μιὰ φτωχὴ κοπέλ-

λα, ποὺ ξεκίνησε ἀπὸ ἓνα χωριὸ νὰ κατέβῃ στὴν πόλι νὰ δουλέψῃ νὰ βοηθήσῃ τὸν πατέρα της, κ' ἔπεσε σὲ μαφία, σὲ κακοὺς ἀνθρώπους· αὐτοὶ τὴν κατέστρεψαν, καὶ τὸ πρῶτὴν ἄφησαν ἔτσι.

● Θέλετε κι ἄλλα; Πρῶτα στὴν πατρίδα μας οὔτε ἓνας νέος δὲν ἔπαιρνε ναρκωτικὰ· ἄγνωστο ἦταν τὸ χάσις. Τώρα; Κάθε μέρα βρίσκουν ναρκομανεῖς πεσμένους στὸ δρόμο σὲ ἀθλία κατάστασι. Βλέπεις νέους χαυνωμένους, κοιμισμένους, ἀποβλακωμένους. Καὶ εἶνε πολλοί, πάρα πολλοὶ οἱ **ναρκομανεῖς**.

Νὰ λοιπὸν **τ' ἀποτελέσματα τῆς ἁμαρτίας**. Εἶνε ἀρρώστια χειρότερη ἀπ' τὸν καρκίνο.

Καὶ τὸ συμπέρασμα; Δὲν θὰ ἡσυχάσῃ ἡ γῆ, ἐὰν μέσα ἀπὸ τίς καρδιές μας δὲν ξεριζωθῇ αὐτὴ ἡ λερναία ὕδρα. Μία εἶνε ἡ λύσις· **μακριὰ ἀπ' τὴν ἁμαρτία!** Ἐτσι συμβούλευαν παλαιότερα οἱ μανάδες καὶ οἱ γιαγιάδες. Γνώρισα ἓναν ἀνώτατο ὑπάλληλο τοῦ κράτους καὶ μοῦ ἔλεγε· Πέρασα ἀπὸ πολλὰ σχολεῖα, πῆγα στὸ ἐξωτερικὸ, μορφώθηκα, ἔμαθα γλῶσσες. Ἀλλὰ τώρα τὰ ἔεχασα ὅλα σχεδόν. Ἐνα θυμῶμαι. Εἶχα μιὰ γιαγιά ἀγράμματη. Ἐγώ, μικρὸ ἀγοράκι τεσσάρων χρονῶν, βγῆκα στὴ γειτονιά. Ὅταν γύρισα, εἶπα μιὰ κακιὰ λέξι ποὺ ἄκουσα ἔξω, μιὰ βλαστήμια. Μόλις μ' ἄκουσε ἡ γιαγιά, παίρνει μὲ τὴ τοιμπίδα ἓνα κάρβουνο, μοῦ ἀνοίγει τὸ στόμα καὶ μοῦ καίει τὴ γλῶσσα. Ἀπὸ τότε δὲν ξαναεἶπα κακὴ λέξι... Ποιά μάνα, ποιά γιαγιά τὸ κάνει σήμερα αὐτό;

Ὡ καὶ νὰ ὀνειδίσῃ ὁ Θεὸς νὰ σβῇσῃ ἀπὸ τὸν κόσμον ἡ ἁμαρτία! Ἡ γῆ θὰ γινόταν παράδεισος. Θὰ μοῦ πῆτε· Εἶνε δυνατόν ἓνας ἀνθρώπος νὰ μείνῃ ἀναμάρτητος; Ὅχι βέβαια. Ἀλλὰ γι' αὐτὸ ὁ Χριστὸς ἔδωσε τὴ **μετάνοια**, ποὺ συγχωρεῖ τὰ ἁμαρτήματα. Καὶ ὁποῖος ἀνθρώπος στὸν κόσμον αὐτὸν γλιστρήσῃ, **ὄχι ἀπελπισία!** Τί νὰ κάνουμε; Σὰν τὸν παράλυτο νὰ τρέξουμε στὸ Χριστό, σὰν τὴν πόρνη νὰ κλάψουμε, σὰν τὸ ληστὴ νὰ μετανοήσουμε. Νὰ ποῦμε· Χριστέ, συχώρεσέ μας! Κι ἅμα τὸ ποῦμε ἀπ' τὴν καρδιά μας, τότε ἀπὸ τὰ οὐράνια θ' ἀκουστῇ· «*Θάρσει, τέκνον· ἀφέωνταί σοι αἱ ἁμαρτίαι σου*». Παιδί μου, παίρνω σφουγγάρι καὶ σβήνω τ' ἁμαρτήματά σου· καὶ πρόσεξε ἀπὸ 'δῶ κ' ἐμπρὸς νὰ μὴν ἁμαρτάνῃς· νὰ φυλάγεσαι ἀπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτία ὅπως φυλάγεσαι ἀπὸ τὸ φίδι (βλ. Σ. 22). «*Φεῦγε καὶ σώζου*».

Ὁ δὲ Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, διὰ πρεσβειῶν τῆς ὑπεραγίας Θεοτόκου καὶ πάντων τῶν ἁγίων, ἃς ἐλεήσῃ καὶ σώσῃ πάντας ἡμᾶς· 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 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

Seeing God

If you say, "Show me your God," I will say to you, "Show me what kind of person you are, and I will show you my God." Show me then whether the eyes of your mind can see, and the ears of your heart hear. ... Those who can see with the eyes of their bodies are aware of what is happening in this life on earth. ... So it is with the ears of our heart and the eyes of our mind in their capacity to hear or see God.

God is seen by those who have the capacity to see Him, provided that they keep the eyes of their mind open. All have eyes, but some have eyes that are shrouded in darkness, unable to see the light of the sun. Because the blind cannot see it, it does not follow that the sun does not shine. The blind must trace the cause back to themselves and their eyes. In the same way, you have eyes in your mind that are shrouded in darkness because of your sins and evil deeds.

A person's soul should be clean, like a mirror reflecting light. If there is rust on the mirror his face cannot be seen in it. In the same way, no one

who has sin within him can see God.

But if you will you can be healed. Hand yourself over to the doctor, and he will open the eyes of your mind and heart. Who is to be the doctor? It is God, who heals and gives life through His Word and wisdom. Through His Word and wisdom He created the universe, for "by his Word the heavens were established, and by his Spirit all their array." (Psalm 32:6)

If you understand this, and live in purity and holiness and justice, you may see God. But, before all, faith and the fear of God must take the first place in your heart, and then you will understand all this. When you have laid aside mortality and been clothed in immortality, then you will see God according to your merits. God raises up your flesh to immortality along with your soul, and then, once made immortal, you will see the Immortal One, if you believe in Him now.

Saint Theophylus of Antioch

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