

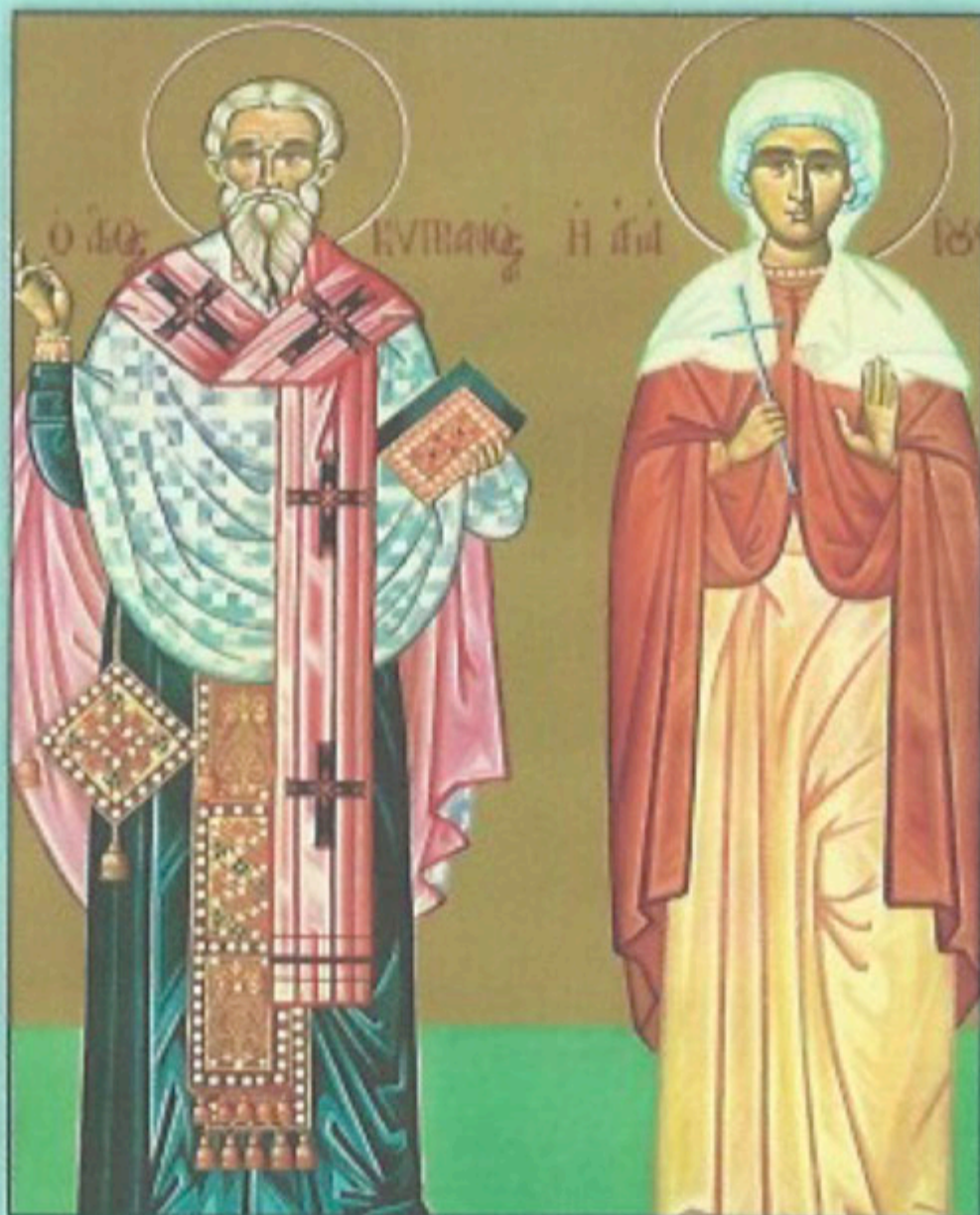


DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN
DISTRICT

THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN October 2nd , 2016
V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

SECOND SUNDAY OF LUKE



Icon of Saints Cyprian and Justina -- October 2nd

St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 4:6-15

Prokeimenon. Mode Plagal 2.

Psalm 27.9,1

O Lord, save your people and bless your inheritance.

Verse: To you, O Lord, I have cried, O my God.

Brethren, it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For while we live we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us, but life in you.

Since we have the same spirit of faith as he had who wrote, "I believed, and so I spoke," we too believed, and so we speak, knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into His presence. For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

Πρὸς Κορινθίους β' 4:6-15

Προκείμενον. Ἦχος πλ β'.

ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 27.9,1

Σῶσον, Κύριε τὸν λαὸν σου καὶ εὐλόγησον τὴν κληρονομίαν σου.

Στίχ. Πρὸς σέ, Κύριε, κεκράζομαι ὁ Θεός μου.

Ἀδελφοί, ὁ θεὸς ὁ εἰπὼν ἐκ σκότους φῶς λάμψαι, ὃς ἔλαμψεν ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν πρὸς φωτισμὸν τῆς γνώσεως τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν προσώπῳ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. Ἔχομεν δὲ τὸν θησαυρὸν τοῦτον ἐν ὄστρακίνοις σκεύεσιν, ἵνα ἡ ὑπερβολὴ τῆς δυνάμεως ἧ τοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ μὴ ἐξ ἡμῶν· ἐν παντὶ θλιβόμενοι, ἀλλ' οὐ στενοχωρούμενοι· ἀπορούμενοι, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐξαπορούμενοι· διωκόμενοι, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐγκαταλειπόμενοι· καταβαλλόμενοι, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀπολλύμενοι· πάντοτε τὴν νέκρωσιν τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι περιφέροντες, ἵνα καὶ ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι ἡμῶν φανερωθῇ. Αἰεὶ γὰρ ἡμεῖς οἱ ζῶντες εἰς θάνατον παραδιδόμεθα διὰ Ἰησοῦν, ἵνα καὶ ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ φανερωθῇ ἐν τῇ θνητῇ σαρκὶ ἡμῶν. Ὡστε ὁ μὲν θάνατος ἐν ἡμῖν ἐνεργεῖται, ἡ δὲ ζωὴ ἐν ὑμῖν. ἔχοντες δὲ τὸ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα τῆς πίστεως, κατὰ τὸ γεγραμμένον, Ἐπίστευσα, διὸ ἐλάλησα, καὶ ἡμεῖς πιστεύομεν, διὸ καὶ λαλοῦμεν· εἰδότες ὅτι ὁ ἐγείρας τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἡμᾶς διὰ Ἰησοῦ ἐγερεῖ, καὶ παραστήσει σὺν ὑμῖν. Τὰ γὰρ πάντα δι' ὑμᾶς, ἵνα ἡ χάρις πλεονάσασα διὰ τῶν πλειόνων τὴν εὐχαριστίαν περισσεύσῃ εἰς τὴν δόξαν τοῦ θεοῦ.

2nd Sunday of Luke

The Gospel according to Luke 6:31-36

The Lord said, "And as you wish that men would do to you, do so to them. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the selfish. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."

2nd Sunday of Luke

Κατὰ Λουκᾶν 6:31-36

Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος· καθὼς θέλετε ἵνα ποιῶσιν ὑμῖν οἱ ἄνθρωποι, ποιεῖτε αὐτοῖς ὁμοίως. καὶ εἰ ἀγαπᾶτε τοὺς ἀγαπῶντας ὑμᾶς, ποία ὑμῖν χάρις ἐστί; καὶ γὰρ οἱ ἁμαρτωλοὶ τοὺς ἀγαπῶντας αὐτοὺς ἀγαπῶσι. καὶ ἐὰν ἀγαθοποιήτε τοὺς ἀγαθοποιῶντας ὑμᾶς, ποία ὑμῖν χάρις ἐστί; καὶ γὰρ οἱ ἁμαρτωλοὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ποιοῦσι. καὶ ἐὰν δανείζητε παρ' ὧν ἐλπίζετε ἀπολαβεῖν, ποία ὑμῖν χάρις ἐστί; καὶ γὰρ ἁμαρτωλοὶ ἁμαρτωλοῖς δανείζουσιν ἵνα ἀπολάβωσι τὰ ἴσα. πλὴν ἀγαπᾶτε τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ὑμῶν καὶ ἀγαθοποιεῖτε καὶ δανεῖζετε μηδὲν ἀπελπίζοντες, καὶ ἔσται ὁ μισθὸς ὑμῶν πολὺς, καὶ ἔσσεσθε υἱοὶ ὑψίστου, ὅτι αὐτὸς χρηστός ἐστιν ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀχαρίστους καὶ πονηροὺς. Γίνεσθε οὖν οἰκτίρμονες, καθὼς καὶ ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν οἰκτίρμων ἐστί.

AGAPE COFFEE FELLOWSHIP: is being hosted today by Choir members under the able leadership of Katie Hambas. Please join us for refreshments in WhiteHall. Offer Congratulations to our Choir.

UP-COMING EVENTS: CHOIR HONORS DAY ; is scheduled TODAY, October 02nd.
Honoring the Patron Saint of Orthodox ecclesiastical music Saint Romanos.
Our choir will be blessed with an ARTOKLASIA.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW! FRIDAY EVENING: DECEMBER 02nd, 8:00 P.M.

Our Parish's 87th, ANNUAL DINNER DANCE will honor the 50th Priestly Ordination of V. REV. EUGENE N. PAPPAS as our PASTOR these past 35 years of ministerial service to the LORD. Please make an effort to join at the EL CARIBE CATERERS in Mill Basin, dining , dancing and tributes. History is being made and recorded.

STELLAR GRADUATE STUDENT of our Parochial School MISS ALEXIS GREGOS will be united in the sacrament of Holy Matrimony this Saturday, October 08th. at 3:30 PM. The groom LAWRENCE AYNSLEY was also baptized by Father Eugene and is most welcomed into the embrace of our faith community. KALA STEPHANA to the newly weds to be!

CONGRATULATIONS: are extended to our SUNDAY CATECHETCAL SCHOOL Director Ms. MARIA APERGIS who was married Saturday October 1st, to Mr. NICHOLAS RINIS at 4:00 P.M. Miss Apergis has been involved in every facet of school and youth activity at Three Hierarchs since her birth! As Director of Sunday School with Ms. Christina Hatzopoulos for over a decade, she has been a model teacher, guide and mentor for our children.

We wish MARIA and NIKO.... KALA STEPHANA!

SENIOR CLUB celebrates 'Columbus Day' on Wednesday, October 12th. at 1:00 P.M. A pizza party, Italian cookies, Café espresso, Italiano or Grecco may be on the menu. Bring an 'ITALIAN FRIEND' or neighbor to join our festivity. BINGO is always on the schedule . UNA FACIA-UNA RACIA! You **DO** know that Christophoros Columbus was a crypto - greco!

AMERICAN FLAG NEEDED: Rather than purchase a NEW American flag for the plaza flagpole, we prefer to raise a 'Veterans' Olde Glory which was presented at the Veteran's funeral service. If anyone wishes to have this honor in the memory of their loved one now departed, please contact the Church Office or the clergy.

CYPRLOT FLAG: Donor is requested for the purchase of a professional nylon large national flag. Catalogue price is secured.

GREEK FILM FESTIVAL COMMENCES: from Thursday, September 29th, through Wednesday, October 19th, at various locations and theaters in N.Y.C., Astoria – Queens , and Manhasset, Long Island. This TENTH ANNUAL FILM FESTIVAL highlights the award winning Greek and bi – lingual cinematic achievements in Europe. Mark your calendar and choose a winner film for the evening with a good friend.

GREEK SCHOOL ; registrations have already commenced with the September 14th, AGIASMOS for students, faculty and administration. ARE YOUR CHILDREN ENROLLED?

JOURNAL ADS: are needed for this year's 87th, JUBILEE ANNIVERSARY of our PARISH. The journal traditionally is presented at the end of the year. PLEASE SECURE YOUR MEMORIAL TRIBUTE, CONGRATULATORY NOTE , ANNIVERSARY – BIRTHDAY GREETING or BUSINESS ADVERTISEMENT now. We do so much appreciate it.

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.W.gaepis.org (Click live audio)

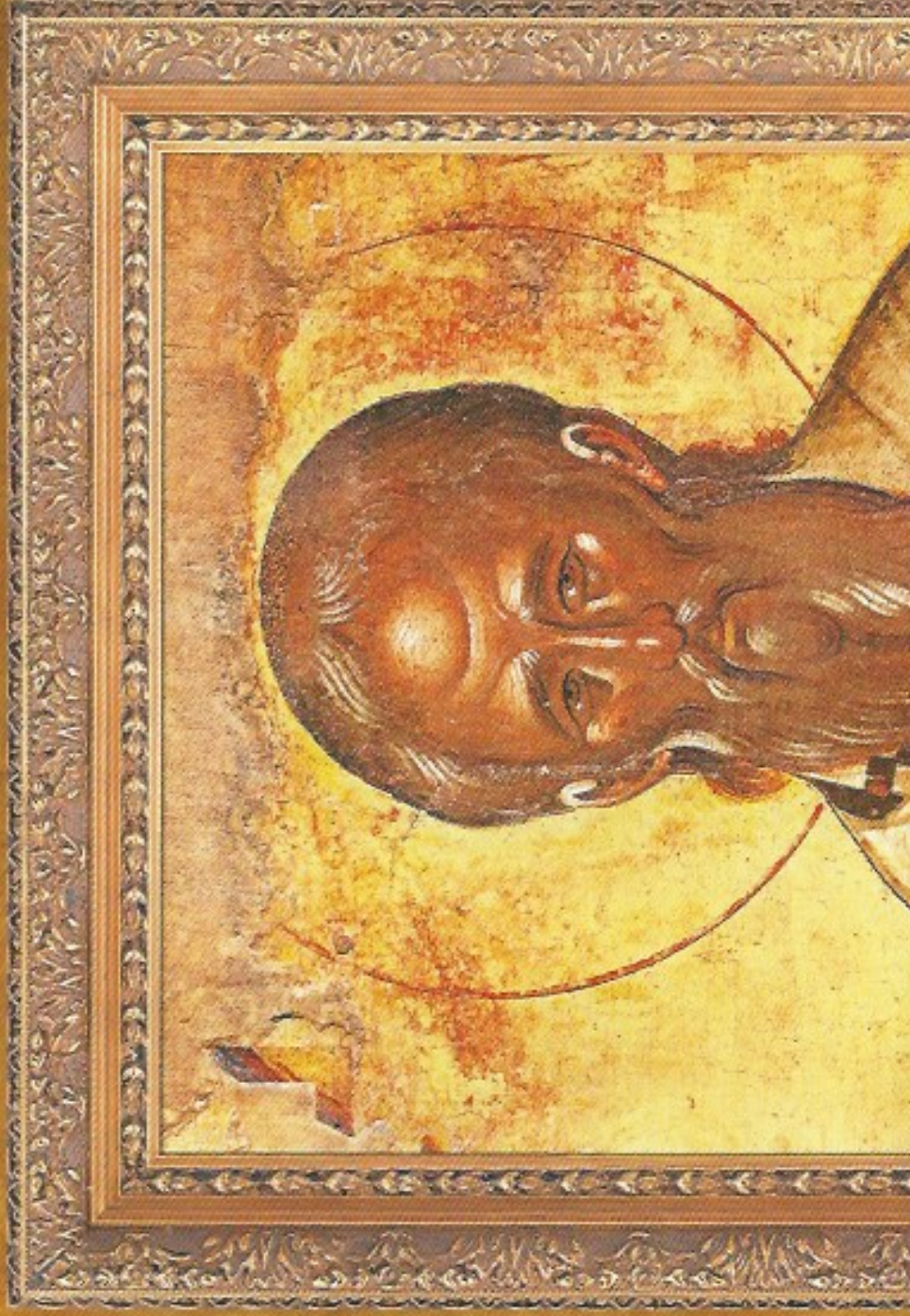
MEMORIAL NEXT WEEK: + THEODOROS GAVARIS

NATIONAL CHURCH MUSIK SUNDAY

OCTOBER 2, 2016

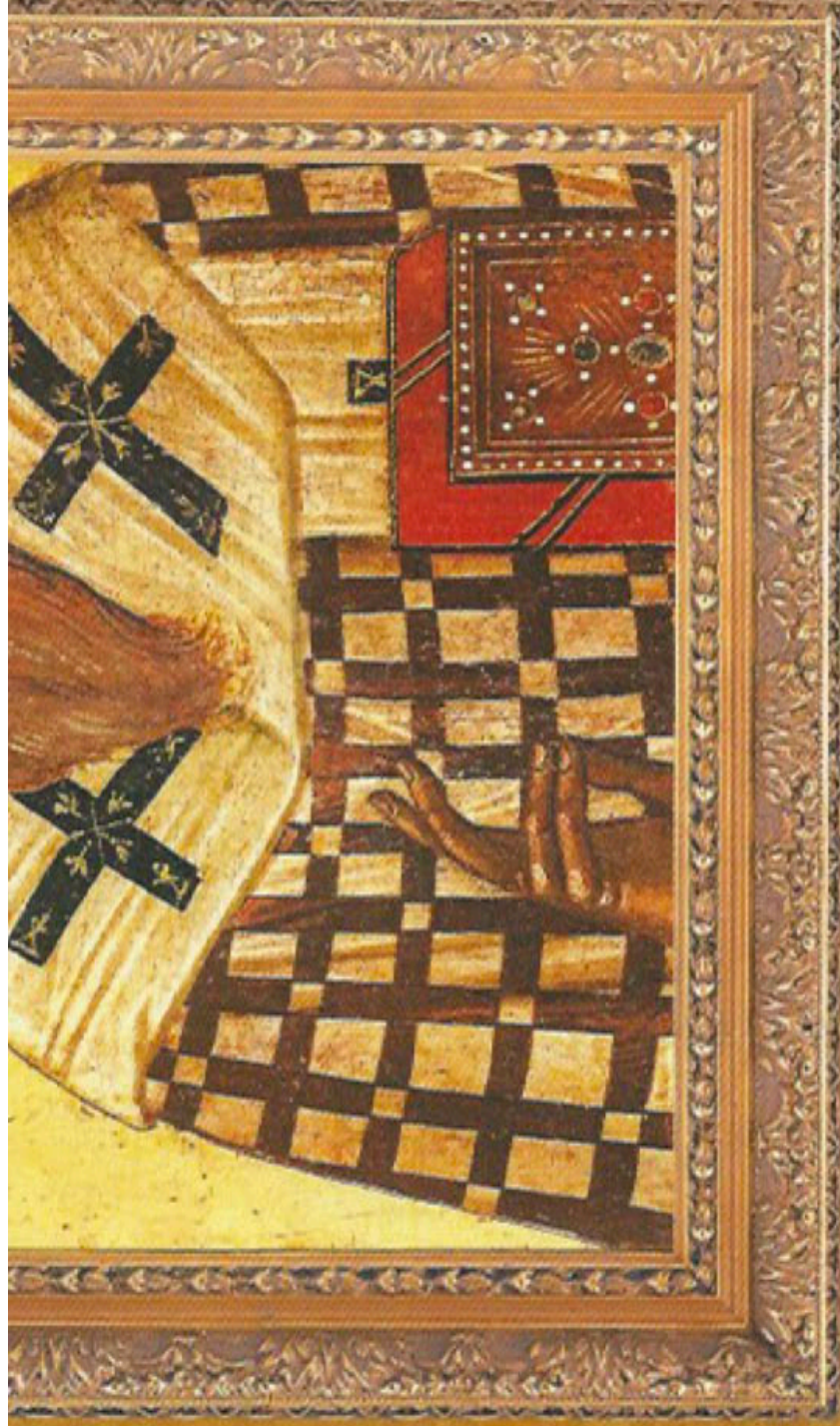
ST. SOPHRONIOS
PATRIARCH OF
JERUSALEM

*Come, one and all,
receive the
Spirit of wisdom,
the Spirit of
understanding,*



*the fear of God,
from Christ Who
now has shone
forth.*

**Stichera at
the Great Blessing
of Water**



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CHURCH MUSICIANS
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NATIONAL FORUM OF GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH MUSICIANS
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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 1971	Κυριακὴ Β' Λουκᾶ (Λουκ. 6,31-36) 2 Ὀκτωβρίου 2016	Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος Αὐγουστίνος Ν. Καντιώτης
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Ἡ ἀγάπη πρὸς τοὺς ἐχθροὺς

«*Ἀγαπάτε τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ὑμῶν...*» (Λουκ. 6,35)

Ἐάν, ἀγαπητοί μου, ἐὰν ὑπάρχη μία ἐντολή τοῦ Εὐαγγελίου πού προκαλεῖ ἀντιρρήσεις, **ἰσχυρὴ ἀντίδρασι** καὶ σφοδρὴ ψυχικὴ ἀντίστασι τῶν ἀνθρώπων, αὕτη εἶνε ἡ ἐντολὴ «*Ἀγαπάτε τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ὑμῶν...*» (Λουκ. 6,35). Πῶς ἐξηγεῖται τὸ φαινόμενο αὐτό;

Στὴν **περίοδο τῆς παλαιᾶς διαθήκης**, περίοδο νηπιακὴ καὶ γιὰ ἀρχαίους στὴν ἀρετὴ καὶ τὴν πνευματικὴ ζωὴ, ἴσχυε ὅπως γνωρίζουμε ἡ ἐντολὴ «*ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου καὶ μισήσεις τὸν ἐχθρόν σου*» (Ματθ. 5,43). Ἦταν αὐτὸ πού μπορούσε τότε νὰ κατανοήσῃ καὶ νὰ δεχθῆ ὁ σκληρόκαρδος ἄνθρωπος τῆς ἐποχῆς ἐκείνης· ὑψηλότερα δὲν μπορούσε ἀκόμη νὰ ἀναχθῆ.

Ἡ περίοδος ὁμοῦς ἐκείνη πέρασε. Τώρα βρισκόμαστε στὴν **περίοδο τῆς καινῆς διαθήκης**. Μὲ τὴν ἔλευσι τοῦ Χριστοῦ στὸν κόσμον ἄρχισε τὸ κήρυγμα τοῦ Εὐαγγελίου· ἡ Ἐκκλησία συνεχίζει τὸ ἀπολυτρωτικὸ του ἔργο, φωτίζει καὶ ἀναγεννᾷ τὸν κόσμον. Ὅσοι λοιπὸν δεχθήκαμε τὴν ἀλήθεια τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ ἀναγεννηθήκαμε μὲ τὸ ἅγιο βάπτισμα, ὑποτίθεται ὅτι ἔχουμε ὑπερβῆ πλέον τὸ νηπιακὸ στάδιο, προωδεύσαμε πνευματικά, ὑψωθήκαμε σὲ ἓνα ἀνώτερο ἐπίπεδο.

Ἐν τούτοις καὶ σήμερα πολλοί, λεγόμενοι Χριστιανοί, φαίνεται ὅτι εἶνε Χριστιανοί μόνο στὸ ὄνομα καὶ στὴν ταυτότητα. Στὴν χριστιανικὴ πίστι καὶ ζωὴ **ἔχουν μείνει πίσω**. Ὅπως στὸ σχολεῖο οἱ ἀμελεῖς μαθηταὶ δὲν προβιβάζονται ἀλλὰ μένουν στὴν ἴδια τάξι, ἔτσι κι αὐτοὶ δὲν θέλησαν νὰ προσπαθήσουν περισσότερο. Ἐμειναν, μὲ δική τους εὐθύνη, στὸ νηπιακὸ στάδιο· βρίσκονται ἀκόμη στὸ ἐπίπεδο τῆς παλαιᾶς διαθήκης.

Τὸ χειρότερο εἶνε, ὅτι ἀρέσκονται στὴν κατάσταση αὕτη, κατάστασι ἀδυναμίας, κατά-

στασι παθολογική. Δὲν θέλουν νὰ ξεκολλήσουν ἀπὸ 'κεῖ, δὲν συναισθάνονται ὅτι ἡ ψυχὴ τους νοσεῖ, ὅτι **πάσχουν ἀπὸ τὸ πάθος τοῦ μίσους**. Καὶ ὅσο ἓνας ἀσθενὴς δὲν συνειδητοποιεῖ τὴν ἀσθένειά του ἀλλὰ νομίζει ὅτι εἶνε ὑγιής, ἀποκρούει τὴ θεραπεία.

Ἔτσι λοιπὸν ἐξηγεῖται ἡ περιέργη ἀντίδρασί τους. Τὸ μῖσος δηλαδὴ, τόσο πολὺ ἔχει διαφθείρει τὴν ἀνθρώπινη καρδιά καὶ τόσο βαθειὰ ἔχει φωλιάσει σ' αὐτήν, ὥστε καὶ στὸ ἄκουσμα μόνο αὐτῆς τῆς ἐντολῆς τοῦ Εὐαγγελίου, «*Ἀγαπάτε τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ὑμῶν...*», ἐξανίστανται, ἀντιδρῶν καὶ ἐπ' οὐδενὶ λόγῳ δέχονται νὰ λάβουν **τὸ φάρμακο αὐτὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ**. Διότι ὅλες οἱ θεῖες ἐντολές δὲν εἶνε τίποτε ἄλλο παρὰ θεραπευτικὰ φάρμακα.

Ἄλλὰ ὁ Χριστός, παρ' ὅλες τίς προφάσεις, τίς διαμαρτυρίες, τίς ἀντιστάσεις τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, δὲν ὑποχωρεῖ, ὅπως δὲν ὑποχωρεῖ καὶ ὁ γιατρός. **Ὁ καλὸς γιατρός**, ἐπειδὴ γνωρίζει τὴν ἀποτελεσματικότητά ἐνὸς φαρμάκου, ἐπιμένει στὸν ἀσθενῆ του νὰ τὸ πάρῃ. Καὶ ὁ Χριστός μας, μέσα σ' ἓνα κόσμον πού βασανίζεται ἀπὸ τὴ φοβερὴ ἀσθένεια τοῦ μίσους, ἐξακολουθεῖ νὰ φωνάζῃ καὶ νὰ συιστᾷ τὸ φάρμακό του «*Ἀγαπάτε τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ὑμῶν*». Εἶνε σὰν νὰ λέῃ· Ἄνθρωποι πού μισεῖσθε μετὰ ἐξ ὑμῶν κ' ἔχετε καταστήσει τὴ ζωὴ σας ἀφόρητη, μόνο μὲ τὴν ἀγάπην θὰ βρῆτε τὴ λύτρωσί σας καὶ τὴν εὐτυχία σας· γι' αὐτὸ «*ἀγαπάτε τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ὑμῶν*».

Σωτήριο τὸ φάρμακο, ἀδελφοί μου! Καὶ μόνο τίς ἐπίγειες ὠφέλειες νὰ λάβουμε ὑπ' ὄψιν μας πού θὰ ἔχουμε ἐφαρμόζοντας τὴν ἐντολὴ αὕτη τοῦ Κυρίου, θὰ ἔπρεπε ὄχι νὰ διαμαρτυρώμαστε ἀλλὰ νὰ εὐγνωμονοῦμε τὸν Κύριό μας, διότι μᾶς ἔδωσε μιὰ τέτοια ἐντολή. Ἄλλὰ **ποιές εἶνε οἱ ὠφέλειες**; θὰ ρωτήσε-

τε. Για εκείνους που έχουν μάτια να βλέπουν, οι ωφέλειες είναι πολλές· ο μισθός εκείνου που εκτελεί την εντολή αυτή είναι «πολύς» (Λουκ 6,35)· «πολύς εν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς» (Ματθ 5,12, Λουκ 6,23), αλλά «πολύς» και επί τῆς γῆς ἀκόμη. Διότι –για ν’ ἀναφέρουμε ἐμεῖς ἐδῶ μόνο δύο ωφέλειες– ἡ ἀγάπη πρὸς τοὺς ἐχθροὺς μας **πρῶτον** προλαμβάνει τὴν ἐπέκτασι τοῦ κακοῦ, καὶ **δεύτερον** φέρνει τὴ μετάνοια.

● **Ἡ ἀγάπη προλαμβάνει τὴν ἐπέκτασι τοῦ κακοῦ.** Ποιός δὲν καταλαβαίνει, ὅτι ἡ ἐχθρα εἶνε μιὰ φωτιά που καίει καὶ καταστρέφει; Τῆ φωτιά λοιπὸν αὐτὴ πρέπει νὰ τὴν περιορίσουμε, γιὰ νὰ μὴν πάρη διαστάσεις καὶ ξαπλωθῆ παντοῦ. Ἀλλὰ πῶς θὰ τὴν περιορίσουμε; Ὅχι βέβαια βρίζοντας, καταρώμενοι, ἐκδικούμενοι, ζητώντας μὲ κάθε μέσο τὴν ἐξόντωσι τοῦ ἐχθροῦ μας. Ἐὰν στὸ δικό του μῖσος προσθέσουμε καὶ τὸ δικό μας, τότε θὰ μοιάσουμε μὲ τὸν ἄνθρωπο ἐκεῖνον που ζητάει νὰ σβῆσῃ μιὰ πυρκαϊὰ ρίχνοντας σ’ αὐτὴν ξύλα, λάδι, πετρέλαιο, βενζίνη· ἡ πυρκαϊὰ θὰ ἐπεκταθῆ, οἱ φλόγες θὰ φουντώσουν, μέσα σὲ λίγη ὥρα θὰ δημιουργηθῆ κόλασις πυρός. Κάτι παρόμοιο παθαίνουν καὶ ὅσοι δὲν ἀκοῦνε τὴ φωνὴ τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἀλλὰ μόλις προσβληθοῦν καὶ στὸ ἐλάχιστο ἀπὸ τοὺς ἐχθροὺς τους, μόλις δηλαδὴ ὁ σατανᾶς ἀνάσῃ τῆ φωτιά του, αὐτοὶ ἀμέσως ἀρχίζουν νὰ τοῦ προμηθεύουν ἄφθονο καύσιμο ὑλικό· καὶ ἡ φωτιά ὄχι μόνο δὲν ὑποχωρεῖ, ἀλλὰ δυναμώνει καὶ συνεχίζεται καὶ διατηρεῖται ἐπ’ ἀπειρον.

Ἐὰν λοιπὸν τὸ μῖσος, ὡς εὐφλεκτὴ ὕλη, δὲν ἀφήνῃ αὐτὴ τὴ φωτιά τοῦ διαβόλου νὰ σβῆσῃ, ἡ ἀγάπη ἀντιθέτως περιορίζει τὴν ἐστία τοῦ πυρός καὶ σχηματίζει γύρω της μιὰ ζώνη κατασβέσεως. «Ὡς ἐδῶ καὶ μὴ παρέκει!» φωνάζει ἡ ἀγάπη· καὶ τὸ μῖσος, ὅσο λυσσαλέο κι ἂν εἶνε, ἐφ’ ὅσον δὲν τροφοδοτεῖται ἀπ’ ἐξω, τί θὰ κάνῃ; θὰ σβῆσῃ, ὅπως σβῆνει ἡ φωτιά που δὲν ἔχει πιά ἄλλη καύσιμη ὕλη.

Καὶ σὰς ἐρωτῶ· μικρὴ εἶνε ἡ ωφέλεια αὐτῆ;

● Ἄλλ’ ἐκτὸς ἀπὸ αὐτὴν ὑπάρχει καὶ ἡ ἄλλη ὠφελεία· ὅτι ἡ ἀγάπη φέρνει τὴ μετάνοια. Σὲ ποιόν; Στὸν ἐχθρό μας. Μάλιστα. Ὅταν ὁ ἐχθρός μας βλέπῃ ὅτι ὄχι μόνο δὲν τὸν ἐκδικούμεθα καὶ δὲν τοῦ ἀνταποδίδουμε τὰ ἴσα («ὀφθαλμὸν ἀντὶ ὀφθαλμοῦ καὶ ὀδόντα ἀντὶ ὀδόντος» Ἐξ 21,24, Λευτ. 24,20, Δεσπ. 19,21-Ματθ. 5,38), ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸν περιβάλλουμε μὲ ἀγάπη, ἔ τότε, καὶ θηρίο ἂν εἶνε, δὲν μπορεῖ παρὰ θὰ ἐρθῆ στιγμὴ που θὰ μετανοήσῃ γιὰτὶ μᾶς ἔβλαψε καὶ μᾶς καταδίωξε. Θὰ πῆ·

«**Τί κρίμα!** Καταδίωξα καὶ ἔβλαψα ἕναν ἄν-

θρωπο, που θὰ ἔπρεπε νὰ τὸν εἶχα φίλο μου. Γιατὶ ἂν τώρα, που εἶμαι ἐχθρός του, αὐτός με ἀγαπάει, πόσο περισσότερο θὰ με ἀγαποῦσε ἂν ἦμουν καὶ φίλος του;».

Κάτω ἀπὸ τὴ δυνατὴ ἐνέργεια τῆς ἀγάπης **ὁ ἐχθρός μετανοεῖ καὶ γίνεται φίλος!** Ὑπάρχουν πολλὰ παραδείγματα ἀνθρώπων που κέρδισαν τοὺς ἐχθροὺς τους καὶ τοὺς ἔκαναν φίλους, γιὰτὶ ἔδειξαν ἀπέναντι σ’ αὐτοὺς ἀγάπη χριστιανικὴ.

Τίποτε ἄλλο δὲν ὑποτάσσει τόσο τὴν ἀτίθαση καρδιά ὅσο ἡ ἀγάπη, ἡ ἀγάπη πρὸς τοὺς ἐχθρούς. Αὐτὴ γεφυρώνει τὰ χάσματα, αὐτὴ μαλακώνει γρανίτες, αὐτὴ συλλαμβάνει στὰ δίχτυα τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ τὰ πιά ἄγρια θηράματα.

Ἄπορεῖτε; Διαβάστε λοιπὸν σὰς παρακαλῶ τὰ **μαρτυρολόγια**, γιὰ νὰ δῆτε στὶς σελίδες τους πόσοι μάρτυρες κατῶρθωσαν νὰ ὀδηγήσουν σὲ μετάνοια ἐχθροὺς τους. Πολλοὶ ἀπὸ αὐτοὺς τοὺς τελευταίους δὲν μπόρεσαν νὰ μείνουν γιὰ πολὺ ἀπαθείς καὶ ἀσυγκίνητοι μπροστὰ στὸ πρωτοφανὲς θέαμα, νὰ βλέπουν τοὺς Χριστιανούς νὰ προσεύχωνται ὑπὲρ τῶν διωκτῶν τους! Ἡ ἀγάπη, τὴν ὁποία οἱ μάρτυρες ἀντέτασαν στὸ ἄγριο μῖσος τῶν ἐχθρῶν τους, αὐτὴ πρὸ παντὸς ὠδήγησε ἐμπρὸς στὸ σταυρό, ταπεινοὺς προσκυνητὰς τοῦ Ναζωραίου, τοὺς διώκτες καὶ δημίους.

Ἡ ἀγάπη αὐτὴ, τὴν ὁποία δείχνουν καὶ σήμερα, σὲ ἄλλα ἐπίπεδα ζωῆς καὶ δράσεως, τόσο ἀκόλουθοι καὶ μαθηταὶ τοῦ Κυρίου, που ἐφαρμόζουν πιστὰ τὴ μεγάλη του ἐντολή, τὸ «**Ἀγαπᾶτε τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ὑμῶν**», αὐτὴ ἐξακολουθεῖ νὰ θαυματοουργῆ, νὰ συμφιλιώνει οἰκογένειες· νὰ φέρνῃ σὲ ἐπαφὴ καρδιῆς που τὸ μῖσος τίς κρατοῦσε γιὰ πολὺν καιρὸ μακριά, πολὺ μακριά· νὰ ἀλλάξῃ σκέψεις, ἐπιθυμίες καὶ ἀποφάσεις· ν’ ἀνακαινίσῃ τὸν ἄνθρωπο· νὰ τὸν ὀδηγῆ σὲ μετάνοια. Ὡ, μὲ τὴν ἀγάπη μας οἱ ἐχθροὶ μας γίνονται δικοὶ μας φίλοι καὶ συγχρόνως φίλοι τοῦ Χριστοῦ, τοῦ νομοθέτου τῆς ἐντολῆς.

* * *

Ἀγαπητοί μου· Δὲν ὑπάρχει νομίζω, ἀμφιβολία ὅτι τὸ συμφέρον μας εἶνε νὰ ἐκτελοῦμε τὴν ἐντολή τοῦ Κυρίου «**Ἀγαπᾶτε τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ὑμῶν**». Ἀλλὰ ἐπειδὴ ἡ ψυχὴ μας, ὅπως εἶπαμε στὴν ἀρχή, εἶνε διεφθαρμένη ἀπὸ τὸ μῖσος καὶ γι’ αὐτὸ ἀντιτάσσεται κατὰ τῆς ἐντολῆς αὐτῆς, **ὡς παρακαλοῦμε θερμὰ τὸν Κύριο** νὰ μᾶς δίνη τὴ δύναμι τοῦ γιὰ νὰ ἐκτελοῦμε κάθε θέλημά του που μεταξὺ τῶν περισσοτέρων ἀνθρώπων θεωρεῖται ἀδύνατο.

(†) **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

Seek the Good of All

Why are there strife and passion, schisms and even war among you? Do we not possess the same Spirit of grace which was given to us and the same calling in Christ? Why do we tear apart and divide the body of Christ? Why do we revolt against our own body? Why do we reach such a degree of insanity that we forget that we are members of one another?

Do not forget the words of Jesus our Lord: Woe to that man; it would be better for him if he had not been born rather than scandalize one of my chosen ones. Indeed it would be better for him to have a great millstone round his neck and to be drowned in the sea than that he lead astray one of my chosen ones. Your division has led many astray, has made many doubt, has made many despair, and has brought grief upon us all. And still your rebellion continues.

Pick up the letter of blessed Paul the apostle. What did he write to you at the beginning of his ministry? Even then you had developed factions. So Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, wrote to you concerning himself and Cephas and Apollos. But that division involved you in less sin because you were supporting apostles of high reputation and a person approved by them.

We should put an end to this division immediately. Let us fall down before Our Master and implore His mercy with our tears. Then He will be reconciled to us and restore us to the practice of brotherly love that befits us.

St. Clement of Rome

For more information on Eastern spirituality, visit
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