



DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN DISTRICT

THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN November 27th, 2016
V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
THIRTEENTH SUNDAY OF LUKE



Icon of the Mother of God and Christ -- The Fountain

St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 2:4-10

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, God who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God: not because of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Πρὸς Ἐφεσίους 2:4-10

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 θεός, πλούσιος ὢν ἐν ἐλέει, διὰ τὴν πολλὴν ἀγάπην αὐτοῦ ἣν ἠγάπησεν ἡμᾶς, καὶ ὄντας ἡμᾶς νεκροὺς τοῖς παραπτώμασιν συνεζωοποίησεν τῷ Χριστῷ - χάριτί ἐστε σεσωσμένοι - καὶ συνήγειρεν, καὶ συνεκάθισεν ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ· ἵνα ἐνδείξηται ἐν τοῖς αἰῶσιν τοῖς ἐπερχομένοις τὸν ὑπερβάλλοντα πλοῦτον τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ ἐν χρηστότητι ἐφ' ἡμᾶς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ· τῇ γὰρ χάριτί ἐστε σεσωσμένοι διὰ τῆς πίστεως, καὶ τοῦτο οὐκ ἐξ ὑμῶν· θεοῦ τὸ δῶρον· οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων, ἵνα μὴ τις καυχῆσθαι. Αὐτοῦ γὰρ ἐσμεν ποίημα, κτισθέντες ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ἐπὶ ἔργοις ἀγαθοῖς, οἷς προητοίμασεν ὁ θεός, ἵνα ἐν αὐτοῖς περιπατήσωμεν.

13th Sunday of Luke

The Gospel according to Luke 18:18-27

At that time, a ruler came to Jesus and asked him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.' " And he said, "All these I have observed from my youth." And when Jesus heard it, he said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." But when he heard this he became sad, for he was very rich. Jesus looking at him said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." Those who heard it said, "Then who can be saved?" But he said, "What is impossible with men is possible with God."

13th Sunday of Luke

Κατὰ Λουκᾶν 18:18-27

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, ἄρχων λέγων· διδάσκαλε ἀγαθέ, τί ποιήσας ζωὴν αἰώνιον κληρονομήσω; εἶπε δὲ αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· τί με λέγεις ἀγαθόν; οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἰ μὴ εἷς ὁ Θεός. τὰς ἐντολάς οἶδας· μὴ μοιχεύσης, μὴ φονεύσης, μὴ κλέψης, μὴ ψευδομαρτυρήσης, τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα σου. ὁ δὲ εἶπε· ταῦτα πάντα ἐφυλαξάμην ἐκ νεότητός μου. ἀκούσας δὲ ταῦτα ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ἔτι ἐν σοὶ λείπει· πάντα ὅσα ἔχεις πώλησον καὶ διάδος πτωχοῖς, καὶ ἔξεις θησαυρὸν ἐν οὐρανῷ, καὶ δεῦρο ἀκολουθεῖ μοι. ὁ δὲ ἀκούσας ταῦτα περίλυπος ἐγένετο· ἦν γὰρ πλούσιος σφόδρα. ἰδὼν δὲ αὐτὸν ὁ Ἰησοῦς περίλυπον γενόμενον εἶπε· πῶς δυσκόλως οἱ τὰ χρήματα ἔχοντες εἰσελεύσονται εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ! εὐκοπώτερον γὰρ ἐστι κάμηλον διὰ τρυμαλιᾶς ραφίδος εἰσελθεῖν ἢ πλούσιον εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ εἰσελθεῖν. εἶπον δὲ οἱ ἀκούσαντες· καὶ τίς δύναται σωθῆναι; ὁ δὲ εἶπε· τὰ ἀδύνατα παρὰ ἀνθρώποις δυνατὰ παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ ἐστίν.

DEVOTIONS THIS WEEK:

Wednesday,	November	30th.	Liturgy of SAINT ANDREW (first – called)	9:30 A.M.
Thursday,	December	01st,	AGIASMOS – Blessing Of Holy Water	11:00 A.M.
Saturday,	December	03rd,	Vesper of SAINT BARBARA (Canal Street N.Y.C.)	7:00 P.M.
			Visit the Shrine of miracles	
Sunday,	December	04th,	FEAST of SAINT BARBARA Liturgy Three Hierarchs Church	10:30 A.M.
			Parish Council NOMINATIONS close this day	12:00 P.M.

MAJOR FEAST DAYS COMING UP:

Tuesday,	December	06th,	SAINT NICHOLAS
Friday,	December	09th,	SAINT ANNA
Monday,	December	12th,	SAINT SPYRIDON
Tuesday,	December	13th,	SAINT EUGENE
Thursday,	December	15th,	SAINT ELEUTHERIOS

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.

TODAY: The AGAPE COFFEE FELLOWSHIP is being hosted by the Mr. and Mrs. Club WHITEHALL. Please join us for sweets and coffee.

CONGRATULATIONS: to Parish Council Member and LEGAL COUNSEL Nicholas and Monica Eleftherakis who have a new born daughter 'PENELOPE'. After many sons ...finally a blessed girl!

FAITH and HEALING Services are held mid –month –and- every month. Why not visit us on these WEDNESDAY evening (6:30 – 8:00 P.M.) special spiritual journeys. You will be in a religious renaissance. TRY IT!

CONDOLENCES are extended to the EDITOR of our WEEKLY BULLETIN, Mrs. Stella Oberle and her family on the passing into repose of her brother + NICHOLAS. The requiem of peace was offered at Three Hierarchs last week.

Eternal be his memory.

ARTOKLASIES are always welcomed for name-day celebrations, birthdays, anniversaries, new born babies, or other celebratory occasions. Please register with the church office if you wish to host an 'artoklasia' (blessing of the five loaves). Major saint days are upcoming. Honor a loved one in YOUR family with a surprise blessing at the artoklasia.

GRATITUDE is extended to the faithful members of the community who attended last week's GENERAL ASSEMBLY for the end of 2016. The budget for our PARISH was accepted for 2017 and all indicators are on the plus side of economics. We have NO MORTGAGE, we have NO OUTSTANDING DEBTS, but we do have major campaigns for the ELEVATOR FUND, for the SACRED ALTAR WOODWORKS that were refinished and for the PLAZA STEPS AND RAMP that are being finished for easy access. Your help is much needed to defray the costs of these ongoing projects. Many thanks to the Parish Council that hosted the INFORMATIVE , POSITIVE , AND SUCCINCT (one hour) meeting.


CHRISTMAS CARD PROJECT: Extolling the good news of our Savior Jesus Christ's Nativity to 1000 homes in the parish family and friends is your personal greeting for 2016. Please do so by having your name and loved ones printed in the exquisite Byzantine Triptych of icons depicting the ANNUNCIATION, the PRESENTATION and the NATIVITY iconography in detail. It's a treasure to have, to keep and TO SEND. All the work including postage is done for you with a donation of only \$20.00. (twenty dollars). Spread the word and keep the CHRIST in CHRISTMAS! Fill in the form at the church office after services.

MUCH TO BE THANKFUL ABOUTas a nation, a people, a faith, a community of Brooklynites, let us give due praise to the GOD OF OUR FATHERS. Count your blessings and truly see how fortunate you REALLY are. God loves you and so do we at Three Hierarchs. LOVE US BACK!

TOYS FOR TOTS : Christmas appeal for those children outside the parish in need will commence SUNDAY. November 27th. Think of your childhood and what you as little boy or girl desired MOST! Anonymously, unwrapped gifts may be left at the foot of the Blessed Virgins ICON for proper handling distribution.

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: + ELENI PAPADATOS



*God
Bless You,
Father*

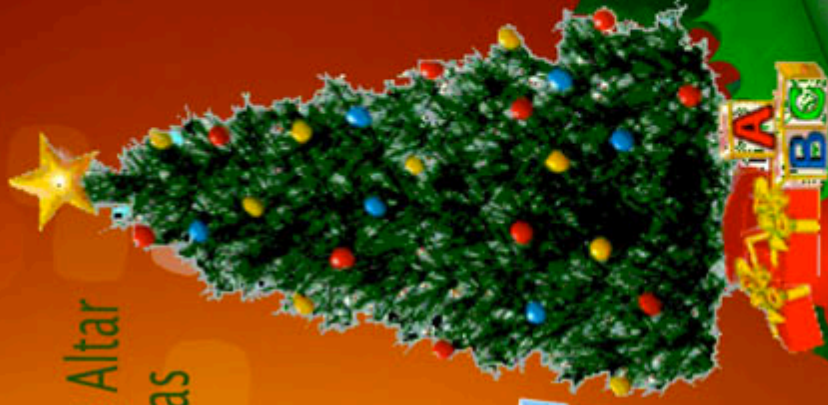
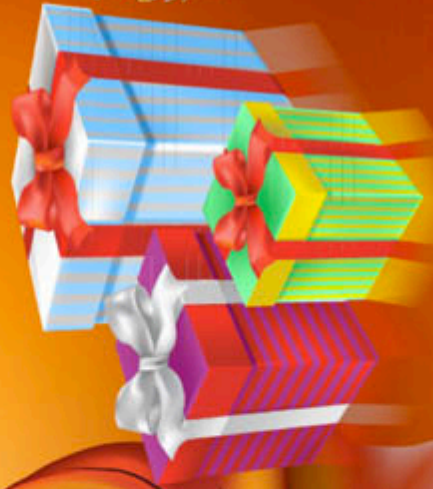
AT THANKSGIVING



Happy Thanksgiving

Toys for Tots

Place your unwrapped toys
at the foot of the Virgin Mary Icon by the Altar
Bring A smile to a Child this Christmas





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 1982	Κυριακὴ ΚΓ' [ΣΤ' Λουκ.] (Ἐφ. 2,4-10) 27 Νοεμβρίου 2016	Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος Αὐγουστῖνος Ν. Καντιώτης
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«Θεοῦ ποίημα»

«Θεοῦ ἐσμεν ποίημα» (Ἐφ. 2,10)

Ἀρχίζω, ἀγαπητοί μου, μὲ ἓνα ἐρώτημα ποῦ θὰ σᾶς φανῆ παράξενο· ἐπισκεφθήκατε καμμιά φορὰ κανένα μουσεῖο στὴν πατρίδα μας, ποῦ εἶνε τόπος ἀρχαιοτήτων; Ἐὰν ἐπισκεφθήκατε μουσεῖο, θὰ εἶδατε ἀρχαῖα ἀγάλματα, ποῦ ἦταν θαμμένα στὴ γῆ, τ' ἀνεκάλυψαν ἀρχαιολόγοι, τὰ καθάρισαν, τὰ ἔστησαν μέσα σὲ αἴθουσες, καὶ ἔρχονται οἱ ξένοι καὶ τὰ θαυμάζουν.

Ἐνα λόγου χάριν ἀπὸ αὐτὰ τὰ ἀριστουργήματα τῆς ἐλληνικῆς τέχνης εἶνε ὁ Ἑρμῆς τοῦ Πραξιτέλους. Μετὰ τὴ Μικρασιατικὴ καταστροφὴ ἀλλὰ καὶ κατόπιν, λόγῳ ἀνάγκης, γίνονταν σκέψεις νὰ τὸ βγάλουν στὸ ἐξωτερικὸ, νὰ τὸ ἐκθέσουν σὲ διάφορες πόλεις, καὶ μὲ τὸ εἰσιτήριο ποῦ θὰ ἔπαιρναν νὰ ξεχρεωθῆ ἡ Ἑλλάδα· ἀπὸ φόβο ὅμως μήπως πάθῃ ζημιὰ τὸ ἀπέφυγαν.

—Μὰ τί ἔπαθες; θὰ μοῦ πῆτε· γιὰ ἀγάλματα μιλᾶς ἐδῶ; Ἐσὺ εἶσαι ἱεροκήρυκας· νὰ τὰ πῆ αὐτὰ ἓνας ἀρχαιολόγος, ὄχι ἐσὺ...

Ἔχω τὸ σκοπὸ μου. Ὅμιλῶ περὶ ἀγαλμάτων, γιὰτὶ θέλω νὰ σᾶς πῶ γιὰ κάποιον ἄλλο ἀγαλμα ἀπειρῶς ἀνώτερο. Οἱ ὑποκριταὶ ἐμεῖς φοβόμαστε μὴν πάθῃ καμμιά ζημιὰ ὁ Ἑρμῆς τοῦ Πραξιτέλους, ἀλλὰ γιὰ τὸ ἀγαλμα αὐτό, τὸ ἀπειρῶς ἀνώτερο, δὲν δεῖχνουμε καμμιά φροντίδα. Ποιὸ εἶνε αὐτό; Τὸ ἀγαλμα αὐτό, τὸ ἔμψυχο, εἶνε ὁ ἄνθρωπος· εἶμαστε ἐγὼ, ἐσὺ, ὅλοι οἱ ἄνθρωποι ἀδιακρίτως χρώματος, καταγωγῆς, γλώσσης ἢ ἄλλης ἐξωτερικῆς διακρίσεως.

Γιὰ τὸ ἔμψυχο αὐτὸ ἀγαλμα ὀμιλεῖ ὁ σημερινὸς ἀπόστολος ὅταν λέει· Σκεφτήτε τὴ μεγάλη μας ἀξία, ὅτι «Θεοῦ ἐσμεν ποίημα» [Ἐφ. 2,10]. Οἱ ἀρχαῖοι γλύπτες κάτω στὴ βᾶσι τοῦ ἔργου τους ἔγραφαν τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ δημιουργοῦ, π.χ. «Πραξιτέλης ἐποίησε» ἢ «Φειδίας ἐποίησε». Μ' αὐτὴ τὴν ἔνδειξι λοιπὸν ἀντιστοιχεῖ ὁ λόγος τοῦ σημερινοῦ ἀποστόλου, ὅτι «αὐτοῦ (τοῦ Θεοῦ) ἐσμεν ποίημα», εἶμαστε δημιουργήματα τοῦ Θεοῦ· ἔργο τοῦ Θεοῦ εἶνε ὁ ἄνθρωπος.

Ἐάν, ἀγαπητοί μου, σ' ἓναν ξένο ποῦ ἔρχεται στὰ μουσεῖα μας τοῦ πῆτε ὅτι «Αὐτὸ τὸ ἀγαλμα ποῦ θαυμάζεις δὲν τὸ ἔφτιαξε κανεὶς· ἦταν ἓνα μάρμαρο μέσ' στὴ γῆ καὶ μιὰ μέρα, ἔτσι μόνο του, βγήκε, πελεκήθηκε, πήρε μορφή, καὶ σὲ μιὰ στιγμὴ παρουσιάστηκε καὶ στηθῆκε μέσα στὸ μουσεῖο», τί θὰ ἔλεγε, θὰ τὸ πίστευε; Ὅποιος τολμοῦσε νὰ ἰσχυρισθῆ τέτοιο πρᾶγμα, θὰ φαινόταν γελοῖος· καὶ ἂν ἐπέμενε σ' αὐτό, θὰ ἔλεγαν ὅτι κάτι ἔπαθε τὸ μυαλό του καὶ θὰ τὸν ὠδηγοῦσαν στὸ φρενοκομεῖο. Κανεὶς δὲν μπορεῖ νὰ παραδεχθῆ ὅτι ἓνα ἀγαλμα ἔγινε ἔτσι χωρὶς τεχνίτη.

Ταλαίπωρε ἄνθρωπε! γιὰ κανένα ἀγαλμα τῶν ἀρχαιολογικῶν μουσείων δὲν δέχεσαι ὅτι ἔγινε μόνο του· καὶ ὅμως κάθεσαι κι ἀκοῦς ἀδιαμαρτύρητα διάφορους ἀθέους νὰ λένε, ὅτι τὸ ὑπέροχο ἀγαλμα ποῦ λέγεται ἄνθρωπος ξεφύτρωσε ἔτσι πάνω στὴ γῆ· καὶ κλονίζεσαι καὶ κοντεύεις κ' ἐσὺ νὰ παραδεχθῆς ὅτι ἔτσι ἔγινε. Καλὰ ὁ ἄθεος, νὰ τὸ λήῃ αὐτό· μὰ ἐσὺ πῶς κάθεσαι κι ἀκοῦς αὐτὲς τὶς ἀνοησίες;

Ξέρεις τί μεγαλουργήμα εἶνε ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐξωτερικῶς, ἐσωτερικῶς, νοητικῶς, ψυχολογικῶς, φιλοσοφικῶς...; Ἀπὸ ποῦ νὰ τὸ πιάσουμε;

Τὸ σῶμα του, τὸ κορμί του; Πρῶτα - πρῶτα ἀπ' ὅλα τὰ ζῶα αὐτὸς εἶνε ὄρθιος. Ξέρεις τί θὰ πῆ ὄρθιος; Γιὰ ρωτήστε τοὺς μηχανικοὺς πόσο κοπιάζουν νὰ στήσουν ἓνα κτήριο· λίγη κλίσι νὰ πάρῃ, ἔπεσε. Ὁ ἄνθρωπος εἶνε τὸ μόνο ὄρθιο πλάσμα· γιὰ νὰ βλέπῃ τὸν οὐρανὸ καὶ τὰ ἄστρα, ν' ἀντιλαμβάνεται ὅτι ἔχει μεγάλο προορισμό. Τὸ χέρι του; τὸ ἔφτιαξε ἔτσι ὁ Θεός, ὥστε νὰ κἀνῃ ὄλες τὶς ἐργασίες, εἶνε τὸ τελειότερο ἐργαλεῖο. Τὸ μάτι του; εἶνε ἡ τέλεια φωτογραφικὴ μηχανὴ μὲ τὸν ἀριστο φακό. Τὸ αὐτί του; ραντάρ ποῦ πιάνει καὶ τοὺς πιὸ λεπτοὺς ἤχους. Οἱ φλέβες καὶ οἱ ἄρτηριες του; λεπτοὶ σωλῆνες μῆκους χιλιομέτρων, ὑδραγωγεῖο ὁλόκληρο ποῦ ποτίζει ὄλο τὸ σῶμα, εὐ-

λύγιστοι και άνθεκτικοί, από ύλικό καλύτερο απ' τὸ νάυλον. Τὰ πνευμόνια του; διυλιστήριο τοῦ ἀέρα. Ἡ καρδιά του; ἀντλία ποῦ ὠθεῖ συνεχῶς τὸ αἷμα και τὸ σκορπάει ζωογόνο μέχρι τὸ τελευταῖο ἄκρο τοῦ σώματος. Τὸ δὲ μυαλό του; τί μηχανισμὸς εἶνε αὐτός, τί ἠλεκτρονικὸς ἐγκέφαλος! ἐν σχέσει μὲ τὸ μυαλό τοῦ χιμπαντζῆ διαφέρει λίγα γραμμάρια, τὸ μυαλό ὁμως τοῦ ἀνθρώπου γράφει βιβλία και κατασκευάζει πυραύλους, διαστημόπλοια, τόσα ἄλλα πράγματα.

Και αὐτὰ μὲν εἶνε τὰ σωματικά· ἄλλα πίσω ἀπὸ τὸν σωματικὸ ὀργανισμό, αὐτὸ τὸ θαυμαστὸ ἐργοστάσιο, μέσα στὸν ἀνθρωπο ὑπάρχει ἕνα «μοτέρ», ποῦ κινεῖ τὸ χέρι, τὸ μάτι, τὴν καρδιά· και τὸ ἀόρατο αὐτὸ μοτέρ ποῦ κινεῖ τὰ πάντα λέγεται **ψυχή**, **πνεῦμα** ἄυλο και ἀθάνατο. Αὐτὴ ἡ ψυχή! Μόνο ὁ Χριστός, ποῦ τὴν ἐπλασε, μόνο αὐτὸς μπορεῖ νὰ μᾶς πῆ τὴν ἀξία της. Αὐτὸς εἶπε· «*Τί ὠφελήσει ἀνθρωπον ἐὰν κερδήσῃ τὸν κόσμον ὅλον, και ζημιωθῇ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ; ἢ τί δώσει ἀνθρωπος ἀντάλλαγμα τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ;*» (Ματθ. 16,26). Ἡ ψυχή σκέπτεται, αἰσθάνεται, ἐνεργεῖ, ἔχει φτεροῦγες και ὑψώνει τὸν ἀνθρωπο μέχρι τὸν οὐρανὸ – ὅπως π.χ. τὴν ὥρα τῆς θείας λειτουργίας – και ψάλλει τὸ «*ἀλληλουῖα*» στὴν ἁγία Τριάδα.

«*Θεοῦ*» λοιπὸν «*ποίημα*» εἶνε ὁ ἀνθρωπος. **Ἔπαθε ὁμως ζημιά**, σὰν τὸ πουλὶ ποῦ χτυπήθηκε στὴ φτερούγα και δὲν μπορεῖ νὰ πετάξῃ. Τὸ ἔμψυχο ἄγαλμα, ποῦ ἔστησε ὁ Θεός, πῆρε σφυρὶ ὁ διάβολος και τὸ ἔκανε κομμάτια. Ὁ ἀνθρωπος κατήντησε στὸ χάλι ἐκεῖνο ποῦ λέει ἡ παραβολὴ τοῦ καλοῦ Σαμαρείτου γιὰ τὸν ὁδοιπόρο ποῦ ἔπεσε σὲ ληστὰς (βλ. Λουκ. 10,25-37).

Γι' αὐτὸ ὁ Κύριος τὸν πῆρε πάλι, γιὰ δευτέρη φορά, στὸ **ἐργαστήριό** του. Ποιὸ εἶνε τὸ ἐργαστήριό αὐτό; Εἶνε τὸ «*πανδοχεῖον*» τῆς παραβολῆς αὐτῆς (βλ. 11,34). Τὴν πρώτη φορά βγήκε ἀπὸ τὰ χέρια τοῦ Δημιουργοῦ ὅταν ὁ Κύριος εἶπε «*Ποιήσωμεν ἀνθρωπον κατ' εἰκόνα ἡμετέραν και καθ' ὁμοίωσιν*» (Γεν. 1,26) και δημιούργησε τὸν Ἀδάμ. Τὴ δευτέρη φορά τὸν ἔβγαλε ἀπὸ τὸ ἐργαστήριό του, τὸ «*πανδοχεῖον*», λαμπρότερο και ὑψηλότερο ἀπὸ τὸν Ἀδάμ· διότι τὸ θεϊκὸ ἐργαστήριό, ποῦ παίρνει τὸ λύκο και τὸν κάνει ἀρνί, παίρνει τὸ συντετριμμένο ἄγαλμα και στὴ θέσι του φτειάχνει μιὰ νέα δημιουργία, εἶνε ἡ ἁγία μας **Ἐκκλησία**, τὸ ἐργαστήριό τῆς χάριτος. «*Θεοῦ ἐσμὲν ποίημα*».

—Μά, θὰ πῆτε, θεωρητικὰ φαίνονται αὐτά...

Ἔλα, ἀδελφοί μου, στὸν κόσμον, ἀπὸ τὰ ἀστέρια τοῦ οὐρανοῦ μέχρι τὴ χλόη και τὸ βρύο, ὅλα ἔχουν τὸν προορισμὸ τους· ὁ ἥλιος νὰ

φωτίζει, ἡ γῆ νὰ τρέφῃ, τὰ ζῶα νὰ ὑπηρετοῦν, ὁ ἀετὸς νὰ πετάῃ...· δὲν ὑπάρχει τίποτα χωρὶς σκοπὸ. **Κι ὁ ἀνθρωπος τί προορισμὸ ἔχει;** Μήπως τὸ «*Φάγωμεν και πῖωμεν, αὐριον γὰρ ἀποθνήσκωμεν*» (Ψαλμ. 22,15=4 Κορ. 15,32); Εἶνε σὰν τὸν ἀετὸ, ποῦ δὲν μπορεῖς νὰ τὸν κλείσῃς σ' ἕνα κοττέτσι, γιὰτὶ θὰ σκάσῃ. Ὁ ἀνθρωπος εἶνε πλασμένος ὄχι γιὰ τὴν κοπριά τῆς γῆς ἄλλα γιὰ ἕνα μεγάλο προορισμὸ, ποῦ καλεῖται νὰ πραγματοποιηθῇ. Ποιὸς ὁ προορισμὸς του; Νὰ τὸν πῶ ἐγώ; Ἔλα, Παῦλε ἀπόστολε, ποῦ γνωρίζεις τὰ μυστήρια τοῦ Θεοῦ κι ἀνέβηκες μέχρι «*τρίτου οὐρανοῦ*» και ἄκουσες «*ἄρρητα ῥήματα*» (βλ. Κορ. 12,4) και δίδαξες στὴν Ἀθήνα τοὺς φιλοσόφους, ἔλα νὰ μᾶς πῆς ἐσοῦ τὸν προορισμὸ μας.

«*Θεοῦ ἐσμὲν ποίημα*», λέει, και συνεχίζει «*κτισθέντες ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ἐπὶ ἔργοις ἀγαθοῖς*» (Ἐφ. 2,10). Ἰδοῦ ὁ προορισμὸς μας· ὁ κάθε ἀνθρωπος ἔγινε γιὰ νὰ κάνῃ ἔργα καλά, νὰ ἀσκῇ τὴν ἀρετὴ, **νὰ κάνῃ τὸ καλὸ**. Μὲ ἄλλα λόγια· σοῦ ἔδωσε μάτια ὁ Θεός, ὄχι γιὰ νὰ βλέπῃς τὰ αἰσχρά, ἄλλα γιὰ νὰ βλέπῃς στὴν ἐκκλησία τις εἰκόνας, τὴν Παναγία και τὸ Χριστό· σοῦ ἔδωσε τ' αὐτιά, ὄχι γιὰ ν' ἀκοῦς ὅ,τι ἀκατονόμαστο και συκοφαντικὸ, ἄλλα γιὰ ν' ἀκοῦς τὰ πουλιά νὰ κελαδοῦν και τὸ λόγο τοῦ Θεοῦ· σοῦ ἔδωσε τὰ χέρια, ὄχι γιὰ νὰ κρατῆς σπιλέττα και βόμβες, ἄλλα γιὰ νὰ σφουγγίξῃς δάκρυα τῶν πονεμένων· σοῦ ἔδωσε τὰ πόδια ὄχι γιὰ νὰ τρέχῃς σὲ καταγῶγια, ἄλλα γιὰ νὰ ἔρχεσαι στὴν ἐκκλησία και ὅπου σὲ καλεῖ ἡ ἀγάπη· σοῦ ἔδωσε τὸ μυαλό ὄχι γιὰ νὰ σκέπτεσαι τὸ κακὸ και νὰ καλλιεργῆς τὰ ἄθεα γράμματα ποῦ θὰ καταστρέψουν τὸν κόσμον, ὅπως εἶπε ὁ Παπουλάκος, ἄλλα γιὰ νὰ τὸ γεμίξῃς μὲ νοήματα θεϊκά, νὰ σπουδάξῃς και νὰ μαθαίνῃς τὴ θεϊκὴ σοφία.

Δὲν εἶμαστε ἐναντίον τῆς ἐπιστήμης, ἄλλα ὁ ἀνθρωπος εἶνε κυρίως **καρδιά**. Σοῦ ἔδωσε λοιπὸν μιὰ καρδιά ὁ Θεός, ὄχι γιὰ νὰ τὴν πετάξῃς στὴ λάσπη, ἄλλα γιὰ ν' ἀγαπᾷς ὅ,τι ὠραῖο στὸν κόσμον αὐτόν· τὰ λουλούδια, τὰ πουλιά, τὰ ζῶα, τὴ μάνα ποῦ σὲ γέννησε, τὸν πατέρα ποῦ σὲ ἀνέθρεψε, τὴν πατρίδα ὅπου ζῆς, ν' ἀγαπᾷς κι αὐτοὺς ἀκόμα τοὺς ἐχθρούς σου· και παραπάνω ἀπ' ὅλα **ν' ἀγαπᾷς τὸ Χριστό**, τὸν Κύριό μας, ποῦ σὲ δημιούργησε ἀνθρωπο, και μετὰ τὴν πτώσι στὴν ἁμαρτία σὲ ἔβαλε πάλι στὸ ἐργαστήριό τῆς ἀγάπης του και μὲ τὸ αἷμα του σὲ ἔκανε νέα δημιουργία, και δὲν παύει νὰ σὲ φροντίζει, ἕως ὅτου σὲ ὀδηγήσῃ στὴ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν, τῆς ὁποίας εἶθε ὅλοι νὰ γίνουμε ἄξιοι διὰ πρεσβειῶν ὄλων τῶν ἁγίων και τῆς ὑπεραγίας Θεοτόκου· 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

The Word Took Our Nature from Mary

The Apostle tells us: The Word took to Himself the sons of Abraham, and so had to be like His brothers in all things. He had then to take a body like ours. This explains the fact of Mary's presence: she is to provide Him with a body of His own, to be offered for our sake. Scripture records her giving birth, and says: She wrapped him in swaddling clothes. Her breasts, which fed him, were called blessed. Sacrifice was offered because the child was her firstborn.

Gabriel used careful and prudent language when he announced His birth. He did not speak of "what will be born in you" to avoid the impression that a body would

be introduced into her womb from outside; he spoke of "what will be born from you" so that we might know by faith that her child originated within her and from her.

Even when the Word takes a body from Mary, the Trinity remains a Trinity, with neither increase nor decrease. It is forever perfect. In the Trinity we acknowledge one Godhead, and thus one God, the Father of the Word, is proclaimed in the Church.

St. Athanasius the Great

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