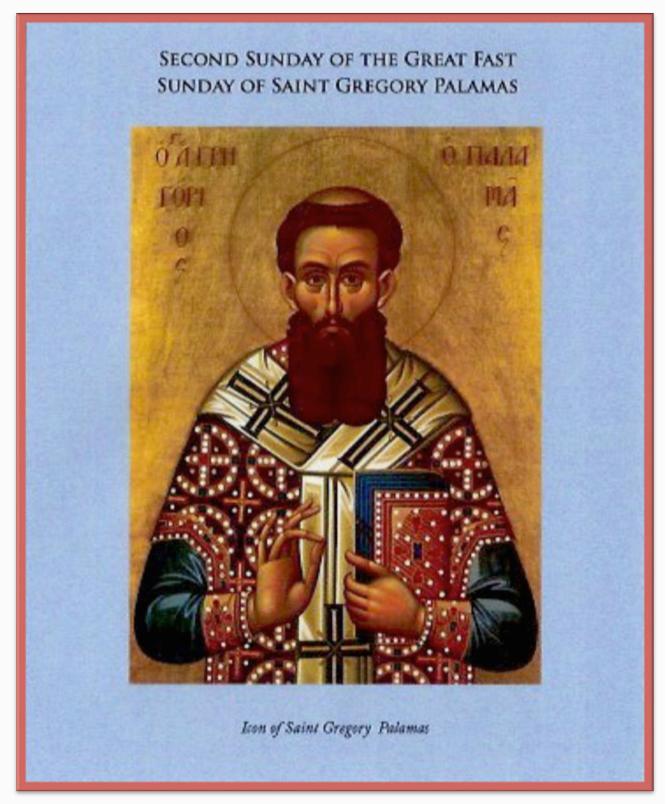


THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN March 12th, 2017 V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas



1724 Avenue P Brooklyn, New York 11229-1206 Tel: (718) – 339-0280

Web site: www.threehierarchsbrooklynny.org E-mail: info@threehierarchsbrooklyn.org

St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 1:10-14; 2:1-3

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.

"IN THE BEGINNING, Thou, Lord, didst found the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of thy hands; they will perish, but thou remainest; they will all grow old like a garment, like a mantle thou wilt roll them up, and they will be changed. But thou art the same, and thy years will never end." But to what angel has he ever said, "Sit at my right hand, till I make thy enemies a stool for thy feet?" Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to serve, for the sake of those who are to obtain salvation?

Therefore we must pay closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. For if the message declared by angels was valid and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard him.

Ποὸς Ἑβοαίους 1:10-14, 2:1-3

Προκείμενον. ή Ηχος πλ α΄.

ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 11.7.1

Σὺ Κύριε, φυλάξαις ἡμᾶς καὶ διατηρήσαις ἡμᾶς.

Στίχ. Σώσον με, Κύριε, ὅτι ἐκλέλοιπεν ὅσιος.

Κατ' ἀρχάς, Κύριε, τὴν γῆν ἐθεμελίωσας, καὶ ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν σού εἰσιν οἱ οὐρανοί· αὐτοὶ ἀπολοῦνται, σὺ δὲ διαμένεις· καὶ πάντες ὡς ἱμάτιον παλαιωθήσονται, καὶ ὡσεὶ περιβόλαιον ἑλίξεις αὐτοὺς, καὶ ἀλλαγήσονται· σὺ δὲ ὁ αὐτὸς εἶ, καὶ τὰ ἔτη σου οὐκ ἐκλείψουσιν. Πρὸς τίνα δὲ τῶν ἀγγέλων εἴρηκέν ποτε, Κάθου ἐκ δεξιῶν μου, ἔως ἄν θῶ τοὺς ἐχθρούς σου ὑποπόδιον τῶν ποδῶν σου; Οὐχὶ πάντες εἰσὶν λειτουργικὰ πνεύματα, εἰς διακονίαν ἀποστελλόμενα διὰ τοὺς μέλλοντας κληρονομεῖν σωτηρίαν; Διὰ τοῦτο δεῖ περισσοτέρως ἡμᾶς προσέχειν τοῖς ἀκουσθεῖσιν, μήποτε παραρρυῶμεν. Εἰ γὰρ ὁ δι' ἀγγέλων λαληθεὶς λόγος ἐγένετο βέβαιος, καὶ πᾶσα παράβασις καὶ παρακοὴ ἔλαβεν ἔνδικον μισθαποδοσίαν, πῶς ἡμεῖς ἐκφευξόμεθα τηλικαύτης ἀμελήσαντες σωτηρίας; "Ητις, ἀρχὴν λαβοῦσα λαλεῖσθαι διὰ τοῦ κυρίου, ὑπὸ τῶν ἀκουσάντων εἰς ἡμᾶς ἐβεβαιώθη.

Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas

The Gospel according to Mark 2:1-12

At that time, Jesus entered Capernaum and it was reported that he was at home. And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room for them, not even about the door; and he was preaching the word to them. And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him; and when they had made an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic lay. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "My son, your sins are forgiven." Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, "Why does this man speak thus? It is a blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you question thus in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your pallet and walk? But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins"-he said to the paralytic-"I say to you, rise, take up your pallet and go home." And he rose, and immediately took up the pallet and went out before them all; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas Κατὰ Μᾶρχον 2:1-12

Τῷ καιοῷ ἐκείνῳ, εἰσῆλθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἰς εἰς Καπερναοὺμ δι ἡμερῶν καὶ ἡκούσθη ὅτι εἰς οἶκόν ἐστι. καὶ εὐθέως συνήχθησαν πολλοί, ὅστε μηκέτι χωρεῖν μηδὲ τὰ πρὸς τὴν θύραν· καὶ ἐλάλει αὐτοῖς τὸν λόγον. καὶ ἔρχονται πρὸς αὐτὸν παραλυτικὸν φέροντες, αἰρόμενον ὑπὸ τεσσάρων· καὶ μὴ δυνάμενοι προσεγγίσαι αὐτῷ διὰ τὸν ὄχλον, ἀπεστέγασαν τὴν στέγην ὅπου ἦν, καὶ ἐξορύξαντες χαλῶσι τὸν κράβαττον, ἐφ' ῷ ὁ παραλυτικὸς κατέκειτο. ἰδὼν δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὴν πίστιν αὐτῶν λέγει τῷ παραλυτικῷ· τέκνον, ἀφέωνταί σοι αἱ ἀμαρτίαι σου. ἦσαν δέ τινες τῶν γραμματέων ἐκεῖ καθήμενοι καὶ διαλογιζόμενοι ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις αὐτῶν· τί οὖτος οὕτω λαλεῖ βλασφημίας; τίς δύναται ἀφιέναι ἀμαρτίας εἰ μὴ εἶς ὁ Θεός; καὶ εὐθέως ἐπιγνοὺς ὁ Ἰησοῦς τῷ πνεύματι αὐτοῦ ὅτι οὕτως αὐτοὶ διαλογίζονται ἐν ἑαυτοῖς, εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· τί ταῦτα διαλογίζεσθε ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν; τί ἐστιν εὐκοπώτερον, εἰπεῖν τῷ παραλυτικῷ, ἀφέωνταί σου αἱ ἀμαρτίαι, ἢ εἰπεῖν, ἔγειρε καὶ ἆρον τὸν κράβαττόν σου καὶ περιπάτει; ἴνα δὲ εἰδῆτε ὅτι ἐξουσίαν ἔχει ὁ υἰὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἀφιέναι ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἀμαρτίας - λέγει τῷ παραλυτικῷ· σοὶ λέγω, ἔγειρε καὶ ἄρον τὸν κράβαττόν σου καὶ ὅπαγε εἰς τὸν οἶκόν σου. καὶ ἡγέρθη εὐθέως, καὶ ἄρας τὸν κράβαττον ἐξῆλθεν ἐναντίον πάντων, ὥστε ἐξίστασθαι πάντας καὶ δοξάζειν τὸν Θεὸν λέγοντας ὅτι οὐδέποτε οὕτως εἴδομεν.

DEVOTIONS THIS WEEK:

Sunday	March 12th,	Feast of Saint Gregory of PALAMAS	9:30 A.M.
		DIVINE LITURGY	10:30 A.M.
Wednesday	March 15th,	Pre-Sanctified Liturgy of Saint Gregory Pope of Rome	9:30 A.M.
Friday	March 17th,	SAINT PATRICK'S DAY (HE WAS OURS!)	7:00 P.M.
		Third Salutations to the THEOTOKOS	
Sunday	March 19th,	STAVRO-PROSKYNISIS	
		Veneration of the Holy Cross Liturgy	10:30 A.M.
		Solemn Procession of the RELIC	12:00 P.M.

AGAPE COFFEE FELLOWSHIP: is being hosted today by the Senior Citizen Club. Open to all. Please join us in ROSEHALL.

CONGRATULATIONS: are extended to the Parish Council Executive Officers and Board that took the Archdiocesan OATH of OFFICE last Sunday. We hail and salute the efforts of these 'volunteers' who extend TIME, TALENT and TREASURE for God's holy church militant. It's nice to acknowledge their sacrifices for us.

BUS RESERVATIONS FREE! We wish to fill the bus going to Brooklyn Borough Hall for the HELLENIC HERITAGE AWARDS CEREMONY on Monday-March 20th. The bus will depart from the Church at 4:30 ON THE DOT! Ceremonies will begin promptly at 5:30 P.M. The reception dinner open to all FREE is being served at 6:45 P.M. in the rotunda. Please join us for an evening of delight honoring THREE of our outstanding Parish Council Members. The BUS will return approximately 8;30 P.M. REGISTER YOUR NAME WITH THE SECRETARY IN THE CHURCH OFFICE. SEATS WILL BE RESERVED FOR YOU AND YOUR GUESTS!

Final Date for MEMORIALS: before the Paschal feast is Sunday, April 02nd. There are NO MEMORIALS permitted on PALM SUNDAY, EASTER SUNDAY (PASCHA) and BRIGHT WEEK SUNDAY of SAINT THOMAS. Please register your commemorations for April 02nd. TODAY! Call: 718-339-0280.

COMMEMORATION SAINTS: This week in America two saints are observed with joyful solemnity by our IRISH and ITALIAN neighbors. The Celtic Patron Saint Patrick will be honored on March 17th, by proud Irish Americans as will Saint Joseph the Guardian-father of our LORD on March 19th by our Italian friends. Many within our faith community at THREE HIERARCHS have married Irish and Italian spouses with whom we are proud to share these holidays ..God bless the Patricks, Patricias, Josephs and Josephines.... one and all!

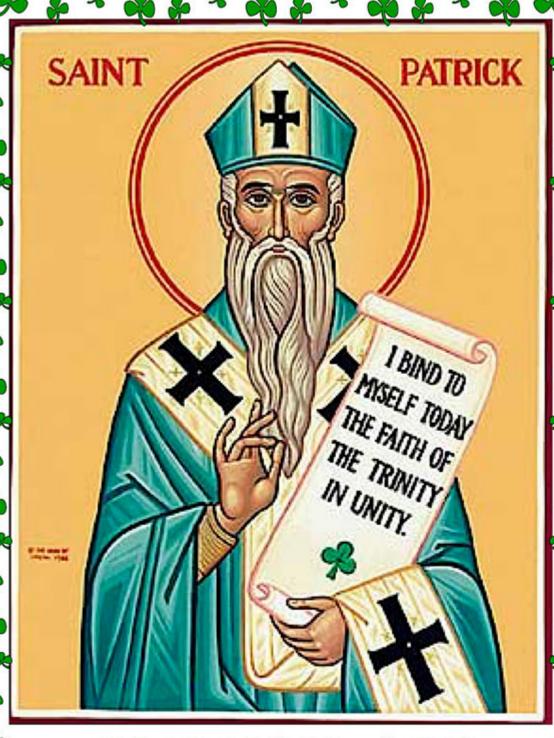
PLEASE SEE CENTERFOLD FOR ORTHODOX ICONS OF THE TWO PATRONS

EPITAPHION FLOWERS: Two ladies of the AUXILARY PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY (our right and left hands) in philanthropic efforts, will be standing by the clergy during the distribution of the 'anti-doron'. They are collecting your offering donation for the funeral flowers for the (2) Epitaphia which will process through the streets on Good Friday. Please make an offering forJesus' burial cortege'. These flowers are distributed to ALL the faithful at the conclusion of the Good Friday lamentations.

HELLENIC HERITAGE COMMITTEE announces the Annual Citation of Greek-American Brooklyn luminaries for MONDAY-MARCH 20th at 6:00 P.M. in the ROTUNDA of BOROUGH HALL.. Three members of our parish will be honored with distinction. George P. Annis, Julia Demakakos, and Connie Ioannides. Buses will be available FREE from the church to and from Borough Hall. Reserve your bus seat NOW!

EARLY REGISTRATIONS; PRE- K FOR ALL: Any child 4 years of age is eligible for FREE enrollment at our school operated by the New York City Department of Education. Classes are held each day from 8;00 A.M. through 3:00 P.M. with free lunch served by the City. IT'S ALL YOURS FREE FOR THE ASKING AND TAKING. DON'T MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUR CHILDREN /GRANDCHILDREN! Call now: (347) 729-0446. TWO "OPEN-HOUSE" RECEPTION DAYS ARE WEDNESDAY FEB 8TH, 4P.M-7P.M AND MARCH 08TH 4P.M. – 7 P.M.

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)

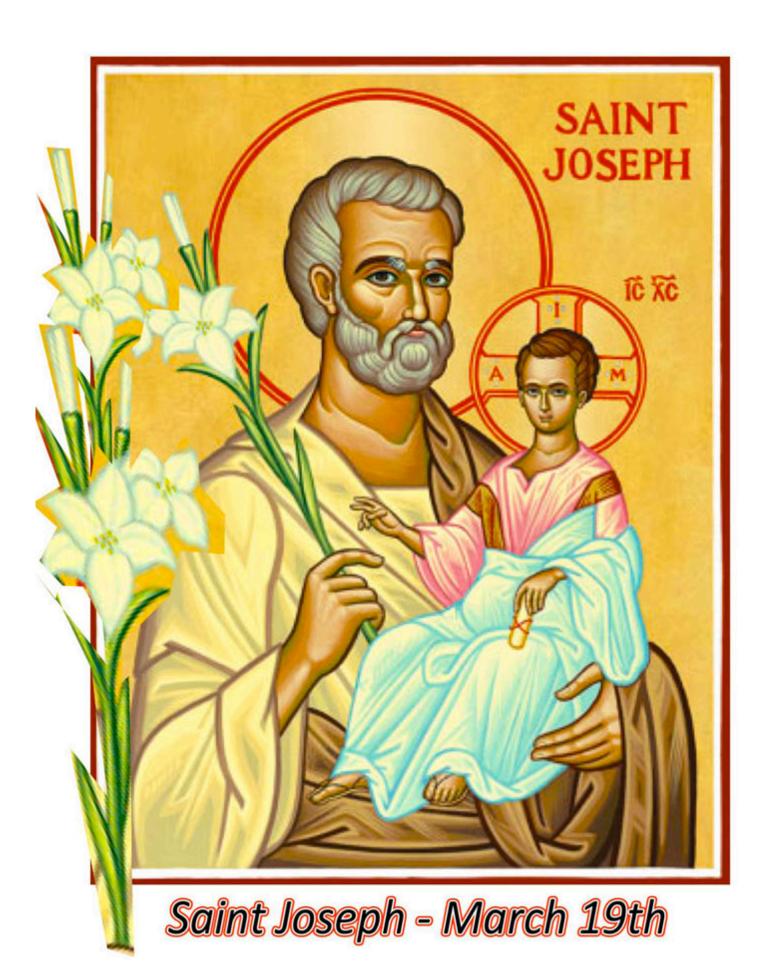


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Saint Patrick-March 17th

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«Έγενόμην έν Πνεύματι έν τή Κυριακή ήμέρα καὶ ἥκουσα φωνήν ὁπίσω μου μεγάλην ὡς σάλπιγγος» (Ἀπ. 1.10)

Έκδιδεται ἀπό την Κοινοβιακή Γυναικεία Ίερα Μονή Ίλγίου Λύγουστίνου Ολωρίνης – 531 00 ΦΛΩΡΙΝΑ – τηλ. 23850-28610 –imaaflo@yahoo.gr

Περίοδος Δ' - "Έτος ΑΔ' Φλώρινα - άριθμ. φύλλου 2000 Κυριακή Β' τῶν Νηστειῶν 12 Μαρτίου 2017 Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος Αὐγουστῖνος Ν. Καντιώτης

'Εκκλησιαζόμεθα μὲ συναίσθησι;

Ο α προσπαθήσω νὰ σᾶς πῶ λίγα ἀπλᾶ λόγια μὲ τρόπο ποὺ ὅλοι νὰ μὲ καταλάβετε.
"Όταν, ἀγαπητοί μου, βρισκόμαστε στὸ ναό,
ἐκτελοῦμε τὴν ἐντολὴ τοῦ Κυρίου «"Εξ ἡμέρας ἐργᾳ καὶ ποιήσεις πάντα τὰ ἔργα σου" τῷ
δὲ ἡμέρᾳ τῷ ἐβδόμῃ σάββατα Κυρίῳ τῷ Θεῷ
σου» [Εξ ΔΒ]" ἐκτελοῦμε τὴν προτροπὴ τοῦ ἀγίου Πνεύματος, ποὺ διὰ τοῦ Δαυίδ λέει" «Έν
ἐκκλησίαις εὐλογεῖτε τὸν Θεόν...» [Ψὰμ ΕΖ].

Άλλα φτάνει μόνο ή σωματική παρουσία μας στὸ ναό, γιὰ νὰ ποῦμε ἄτι ἐκτελοῦμε τὸ καθήκον τοῦ ἐκκλησιασμοῦ; "Όχι βέβαια. Γιατὶ ἐκτὸς άπὸ μᾶς καὶ ἄλλα πράγματα εἶνε παρόντα ἐκεῖ' εἶνε καὶ ...τὰ μανουάλια, οἱ πολυέλεοι, τὰ στασίδια, τὰ παγκάρια... Άν ρωτήσουμε τὸ ξύλο, πού 'νε μέσ' στὴν ἐκκλησία, Τί κατάλαβες; δὲν θὰ μᾶς ἀπαντήση τίποτε. "Όπως καὶ αν μέσα στὴν ἐκκλησία εἶνε παρὼν ἕνας ποὺ δὲν ξέρει τὴν ἐλληνικὴ γλῶσσα καὶ τὸν ρωτήσουμε, Τί ἄκουσες; θὰ μᾶς τῆ: Τίποτα. Μερικοὶ λοιπὸν Χριστιανοὶ στέκονται στὴν έκκλησία ὅπως καὶ τὰ στασίδια, σὰν τὰ ξύλα ἀν καταλαβαίνη τὸ ξύλο, καταλαβαίνουν κι αὐτοί. Πολλοί άκοῦνε τοὺς ὕμνους καὶ τὶς εὐχὲς σὰν νά 'νε μιὰ ξένη ἄγνωστη γλώσσα.

√ Δὲν ἀρκεῖ λοιπὸν νὰ εἶνε παρὸν τὸ σῶμαχρειάζεται νά 'χουμε καὶ προσοχή· ὅπως στὸ σχολεῖο. 'Απὸ τὴν ὧρα ποὺ μπαίνουμε στὸ ναὸ μέχρι τέλους ἡ διάνοια - ἡ σκέψι νά 'νε προσηλωμένη στὰ τελούμενα καὶ λεγόμενα ἐκεῖ.

Τοποιος ἐκκλησιάζεται ἐννοεῖται βέβαια ὅτι ἔχει πίστι, πιστεύει σ' αὐτὰ ποὐ ἔρχεται νὰ
λατρεύση διαφορετικά;... Πιστεύεις; ἔλα στὴν
ἐκκλησία δἐν πιστεύεις; κάθισε στὸ σπίτι σου.

Τέκτὸς τώρα ἀπὸ τὴν προσοχὴ καὶ τὴν πίστι
χρειάζεται ἀκόμη συναίσθησι καὶ κατάνυξι. Δὲν
βρισκόμαστε οὕτε στὸ σπίτι μας, οὕτε στὴν ἀγορά, οὕτε στὸν κινηματογράφο, οὕτε στὸ παλάτι ἐνὸς ἐπίγειου βασιλιᾶ βρισκόμαστε οὲ
χῶρο ἱερὸ καὶ νιώθουμε ῥῖγος ἐνώπιον τοῦ οὐρανίου Βασιλέως. Γι' αὐτὸ ἡ Ἐκκλησία μας, ἄν

προσέξατε, δὲν παρακαλεῖ τὸ Θεὸ γιὰ ὅλους ἀνεξαιρέτως ὅσοι μπαίνουν στὸ ναό, ἀλλὰ κάνει διάκρισι. Μπορεῖ νὰ μποῦν μέσα χίλιοι, δὲν προσεύχεται γιὰ ὅλους προσεύχεται μόνο γιὰ τοὺς δέκα, γιὰ τοὺς πέντε, γιὰ τὸν ἔνα. Ποιόν; Γιὰ ἐκεῖνον ποὺ μπαίνει μὲ πίστι, μὲ εὐλάβεια καὶ φόβο Θεοῦ «Ύπὲρ τοῦ άγίου οἴκου τούτου καὶ τῶν μετὰ πίστεως, εὐλαβείας καὶ φόβου Θεοῦ εἰσιόντων ἐν αὐτῷ τοῦ Κυρίου δεηθῶμεν» (Ν.Μ.). "Αν λοιπὸν κάποιος μπῆκε μέσα χωρὶς τὸς προῦποθέσεις ποὺ ἀναφέραμε, αὐτὸν δὲν τὸν καλύπτουν οἱ προσευχὲς τῆς Ἐκκλησίας.

Πῶς, μὲ ποιό τρόπο, μποροῦμε νὰ βοηθηθοῦμε στὴν ἐκκλησία ἄστε νὰ νιώθουμε τὸ μεγαλεῖο τοῦ Θεοῦ; Μὲ παραδείγματα ἀγίων.

 Θά 'χετε ἀκούσει γιὰ τὸν Ἰακώβ, τὸν ἔνδοξο έκεϊνον ἄνδρα τῆς παλαιᾶς διαθήκης. "Ηταν πατριάρχης του άρχαίου Ίσραήλ, γνωστός γιὰ τὰ δώδεκα παιδιά του. Αὐτὸς μισήθηκε ἀπὸ τὸν άδελφό του, ό όποῖος ἥθελε νὰ τὸν σκοτώση. "Εφυγε λοιπὸν ἀπὸ τὸ πατρικό του καὶ βρέθηκε πρόσφυγας καὶ πικραμένος στὴν ἐρημιά, ἐνῷ πέρα τὰ θηρία μούγκριζαν. Κουρασμένος ξάπλωσε καταγής έχοντας μιὰ πέτρα γιὰ προσκέφαλο. Καθώς ἀποκοιμήθηκε, εἶδε στ' ὄνειρό του μία μεγάλη σκάλα, ποὺ πατοῦσε στὴ γῆ, ἡ κορυφή της έφτανε στὸν οὐρανό, καὶ πάνω της άνέβαιναν καὶ κατέβαιναν ἄγγελοι τοῦ Θεοῦ. Ξύπνησε καὶ φοβισμένος είπε: «Ώς φοβερός ὁ τόπος οὖτος: οὐκ ἔστι τοῦτο ἀλλ' ἢ οἶκος Θεοῦ. καὶ αὔτη ή πύλη τοῦ οὐρανοῦ»[ˈixː纽ː/]. "Εβαλε σημάδι έκεῖ καὶ ὑποσχέθηκε στὸν Κύριο, ἂν ξαναγυρίση στὴν πατρίδα του γερός, νὰ τοῦ χτίση ἐκεῖ θυσιαστήριο Βιἐἰ 22/1. "Όπως λοιπὸν ό Ίακὼβ αίσθάνθηκε έκεϊ ίερὸ ῥῖγος, ἔτσι κ' ὲσύ, Χριστιανέ, ὅταν μπαίνης στὸ ναὸ νὰ λὲς «Ώς φοβερός ό τόπος ούτος· οὐκ ἔστι τοῦτο άλλ' ἢ οἶκος Θεοῦ, καὶ αὅτη ἡ πύλη τοῦ οὐρανοῦ».

 "Αν θέλετε κι ἄλλο παράδειγμα, διαβάστε τὸν βίο τοῦ Μωυσῆ. "Όταν βρέθηκε κι αὐτὸς στὴν ἐρημιά, ἐκεῖ ποὺ ἔβοσκε τὰ πρόβατα τοῦ πεθεροῦ του, βλέπει μιὰ παράδοξη φωτιά· οἰ φλόγες της πυρπολοῦσαν μία βάτο χωρὶς ὅ-μως νὰ τὴν καῖνε. Ἀπόρησε, πάει νὰ πλησιάση, καὶ τότε ἀκούει τὸν Κύριο νὰ τοῦ λέη· Μωυσῆ, μὴν πλησιάσης ἐδῶ, βγάλε τὰ σανδάλια σου, γιατὶ ὁ τόπος αὐτὸς εἶνε «γῆ ἀγία» (Ἦξι). "Όπως λοιπὸν στὸ Μωυσῆ ἔτσι καὶ σ' ἐμᾶς ὁ Θεὸς φωνάζει· "Αμαρτωλέ, προτοῦ νὰ μπῆς στὴν ἐκκλησιά, δὲν ἀρκεῖ νὰ ἀλλάξης μόνο ροῦχα· ἄλλαξε διαγωγή, ῶστε νὰ γίνης καθαρός.

Αὐτά, θὰ μοῦ πῆτε, εἶνε παραδείγματα τῆς παλαιᾶς διαθήκης ἐμεῖς ζοῦμε στὴν καινὴ διαθήκη, ποὺ ὁ Θεὸς δὲν παρουσιάζεται ἔτσι, σὰν φωτιὰ ποὺ καίει, ἀλλὰ εἶνε γεμᾶτος στοργὴ κι ἀγάπη... Σωστὸ αὐτό ἀλλὰ εἶνε καὶ ἔνας λόγος παραπάνω νὰ τρέχουμε μὲ πόθο στὸ ναό, ὅπως ἔτρεξαν οἱ ἄνθρωποι τοῦ σημερινοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἐκεῖ ποὺ ἦταν ὁ Χριστός – κι αὐτὸ εἶνε τὸ τρίτο παράδειγμα, ἀπὸ τὴν καινὴ διαθήκη, τὸ ὁποῖο παρακαλῶ νὰ προσέξουμε.

• Ό Χριστὸς δίδασκε σ' ἔνα σπίτι. "Όταν οἱ ἄνθρωποι ἄκουσαν ποῦ βρίσκεται, τ' ἄφησαν ὅλα κ' ἔτρεξαν ἐκεῖ. Μπήκαν μέσα, γέμισε ὅλο τὸ σπίτι καὶ συνωστίζονταν στὴν πόρτα. Βελόνα ἄν ἔρριχνες, δὲν ἔπεφτε κάτω. "Εφεραν τότε τέσσερις σπλαχνικοὶ ἄνθρωποι ἔναν παράλυτο κ' ἐπειδὴ δὲν τοὺς ἄνοιγαν δρόμο, αὐτοὶ ἀνέβηκαν στὴ στέγη, άφαίρεσαν τὰ κεραμίδια καὶ τὸν κατέβασαν μέσα στὸ δωμάτιο ποὺ ἦταν ὁ Κύριος. Κι ὅταν ὁ Χριστὸς εἶδε τὴν πίστι τους εἶπε στὸν παράλυτο: «Τέκνον, άφέωνταί σοι αἱ άμαρτίαι σου» (Μακ. ἐξ): καὶ τοῦ χάρισε διπλῆ θεραπεία, τοῦ σώματος ὰλλὰ καὶ τῆς ψυχῆς. "Όπως λοιπὸν αὐτοί, ἔτσι κ' ἐμεῖς ἄς τρέχουμε ὅπου εἶνε ὁ Ἰησοῦς Χριστός.

Θὰ μοῦ πῆτε: "Αν ζούσαμε κ' ἐμεῖς στὴν ἐποχή τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ μαθαίναμε ποῦ βρίσκεται, θὰ τρέχαμε κοντά του... Έδῶ λοιπὸν εἶνε τὸ σπουδαϊο, άγαπητοί μου. Ὁ Χριστός, ὁ βασιλεύς τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τῆς γῆς –ᾶν πιστεύουμε-, ὁ Χριστὸς είνε ἐδῶ, μέσα στὴν ἐκκλησία! "Όσοι ἔχουν μάτια καὶ αὐτιὰ καὶ καρδιά, τὸ αἰσθάνονται. Είνε παρών μέσα στὴν ἐκκλησία ὄχι μόνο πνευματικά άλλά καὶ σωματικά. Φαίνεται παράδοξο; Κι όμως είνε άληθινό. Τὸ βεβαίωσε ό ἴδιος ὅταν μᾶς εἴπε ὅτι «"Όπου εἶνε δύο ἢ τρεῖς μαζεμένοι στὸ δικό μου ὄνομα, ἐκεῖ βρίσκομαι κ' έγὼ ἀνάμεσά τους» (Β.Μπί. 1821). Στὴν ἐκκλησία όμως δὲν βρίσκονται μόνο δυὸ - τρεῖς άλλὰ πολλοὶ περισσότεροι: συνεπῶς ἐκεῖ εἶνε καὶ ὁ Χριστός, σύμφωνα μὲ τὸ λόγο του.

Ναί, ἀδελφοί μου. Τὰ λόγια, ποὺ εἶπε τότε ὁ Χριστός, τὰ ἴδια λόγια ἀκοῦμε καὶ στὴν ἐκκλησία όταν διαβάζεται τὸ ίερὸ καὶ ἄγιο Εὐαγγέλιο. Έκεῖνο ποὺ εἶπε τότε στὸν σημερινὸ παράλυτο, «Τέκνον, ἀφέωνταί σοι αἱ ἀμαρτίαι σου», αὐτὸ ἀκούει κι ὁ Χριστιανὸς τώρα στὴν έκκλησία ὅταν έξομολογεῖται μπροστά στὸν πνευματικό πατέρα. Τὸ ψωμί, ποὺ ὁ Χριστὸς εύλόγησε τότε στὴν ἔρημο καὶ χόρτασε τὸ πλήθος, τὸ ἴδιο αὐτὸ ψωμί εὐλονεῖ καὶ στὸ τέλος τὸ μοιράζει ὁ ἱερεὺς σὰν ἀντίδωρο· εἶνε ή εὐλογία τοῦ Χριστοῦ μας. Μὰ δὲν σᾶς εἴπα άκόμη τίποτα· στὴν ἐκκλησία γίνεται κάτι ἄλλο άφάνταστο – ποιό; 'Ο μυστικὸς δεῖπνος, ποὺ έτέλεσε ο Χριστός τὸ βράδυ τῆς Μεγάλης Πέμπτης καὶ εἶπε «Λάβετε φάνετε...», «Πίετε έξ αύτοῦ πάντες...» Μιπί 3527, εἶνε ὁ ἴδιος ποὺ τελεΐται καὶ τώρα πάνω στὴν ἀγία τράπεζα, εἶνε αὐτὸ τὸ σῶμα καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ αἰμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ μας! Συνεπώς είνε παρών ό Χριστός.

Έμεῖς τώρα μάτια ἔχουμε, καὶ τηλεοράσεις έχουμε· έκεῖνο ποὺ μᾶς λείπει εἶνε **ἡ πίστις**. Στὰ παλιὰ τὰ χρόνια, ποὺ οἱ ἄνθρωποι πίστευαν στὸ Θεὸ καὶ ἔρχονταν στὴν ἐκκλησιά, ἔβλεπαν θαύματα όταν ό ίερεὺς κρατοῦσε τὰ ἄγια. Δὲν εἶνε φαντασία αὐτά: ρωτῆστε τὶς γιαγιάδες τῆς παλιᾶς γενιᾶς, ποὺ δὲν ἦξεραν νὰ βάλουν τὴν ὑπογραφή τους, ἀλλ' ὅταν περνοῦσαν τὰ ἄγια αἰσθάνονταν πὼς βρίσκονται μπροστὰ στὸ Θεό, ἔλεγαν «Μνήσθητί μου, Κύριε…» Ιλικ. 23,40 κι όλα τὰ μάτια ήταν δακρυσμένα. Άνοῖξτε τοὺς βίους τῶν ἀγίων, νὰ δῆτε· ὅταν λειτουργούσε ὁ ἄγιος Σπυρίδων, οί Χριστιανοί –λέει τὸ ἀπολυτίκιό του– ἔβλεπαν δίπλα του αγγέλους· «...αγγέλους ἔσχες συλλειτουργοῦντάς σοι, ἱερώτατε» (ὑολιπ.ὑι. Σπιμ.).

Τώρα δυστυχῶς δὲν νιώθουμε τὸ «Ώς φοβερὸς ὁ τόπος οὖτος...». Προτιμῶ μέσ' στὴν ἐκκλησιὰ νὰ 'χω πέντε ἀνθρώπους ποὺ πιστεύουν παρὰ χιλιάδες ποὺ τὸ μυαλό τους τρέχει ἔξω, δεξιὰ κι ἀριστερά. "Όπως σ' ἔνα παλάτι μπαίνει κανεὶς μὲ προσοχή, ἔτσι ἄς μπαίνουμε κ' ἐμεῖς στὸ ναὸ τοῦ Κυρίου.

Σήμερα δυστυχώς κι ό ἐκκλησιασμός ἀραίωσε· ἀπό τοὺς ἐκατὸ Χριστιανοὺς ἔνας ἐκκλησιάζεται. Άλλὰ σὺ ὁ ἔνας, ποὺ ἐκκλησιάζεσαι ὄχι γιὰ τὸ μνημόσυνο κάποιου συγγενοῦς σου ἀλλὰ γιὰ τὸ μνημόσυνον Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ· ὅλοι ὅσοι ἔρχεστε στὴν ἐκκλησία γιατὶ παραπάνω ἀπὸ τὸν πατέρα ἢ τὴ μάνα μας εἶνε ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὁ Ναζωραῖος, «ὄν πάσα κτίσις εὐλογεῖ» ω. Ν. Πεμως μέτ], ἄς παρακαλέσουμε τὸν Κύριο νὰ μᾶς δώση πάλι μιὰ νέα ἐκκλησία, ἐκκλησία ἀγγέλων καὶ ἀρχαγγέλων, γιὰ νὰ ὑμνοῦμε σ' αὐτὴν αἰωνίως τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ· ἀμήν.

(†) ἐπίσκοπος Αύγουστῖνος

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 2017 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

Wisdom from St. Gregory Palamas

"If, then, the time of this life is for repentance, the very fact that a sinner still lives is a pledge that God will accept whoever desires to return to Him. Free will is always part and parcel of this present life. And it lies within the power of free will to choose or to reject the road of life or the road of death ... for it can pursue whichever it wishes. Where, then, are the grounds for despair, since all of us can at all times lay hold of eternal life whenever we want to?"

"The passion for popularity brings such injury upon those it masters that it shipwrocks faith itself."

"Natural things are not indictable; for they were created by God who is good, so that through them we can act in ways that are also good. Hence in themselves they do not indicate sickness of soul, but they become evidence of such sickness when we misuse them. When we coddle the flesh in order to foster its desires, then the passion becomes evil and self-indulgence gives rise to the carnal passions and renders the soul diseased."

"We start the imitation of Christ with Holy Baptism, which symbolizes the Lord's Burial and Resurrection. Virtuous living and conduct in accord with the Gospel are its intermediate stage, and its perfection is victory through spiritual struggles against the passions, which procures painless, indestructible, heavenly life."

"It is pointless for someone to say that he has faith in God if he does not have the works which go with faith ... namely, deeds of love and compassion."

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