



DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN  
DISTRICT

# THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN March 26st, 2017  
V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST SUNDAY OF SAINT JOHN CLIMACUS



*Icon of the Ladder of Divine Ascent*

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Prokeimenon. Grave Mode.

Psalm 28.11,1

The Lord will give strength to his people.

Verse: Bring to the Lord, O sons of God, bring to the Lord honor and glory.

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 6:13-20

BRETHREN, when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore to himself, saying, "Surely I will bless you and multiply you." And thus Abraham, having patiently endured, obtained the promise. Men indeed swear by a greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he interposed with an oath, so that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible that God should prove false, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to seize the hope set before us. We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

Προκείμενον. Ἦχος βαρύς.

ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 28.11,1

Κύριος ἰσχὺν τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ δώσει.

Στίχ. Ἐνέγκατε τῷ Κυρίῳ υἱοὶ Θεοῦ, ἐνέγκατε τῷ Κυρίῳ δόξαν καὶ τιμὴν.

Πρὸς Ἑβραίους 6:13-20 τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα εἶναι ἀπο

Ἀδελφοί, τῷ Ἀβραάμ ἐπαγγειλάμενος ὁ θεός, ἐπεὶ κατ' οὐδενὸς εἶχεν μείζονος ὁμόσαι, ὥμοσεν καθ' ἑαυτοῦ, λέγων, ἼΗ μὴν εὐλογῶν εὐλογήσω σε, καὶ πληθύνων πληθυνῶ σε. Καὶ οὕτως μακροθυμήσας ἐπέτυχεν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας. Ἄνθρωποι μὲν γὰρ κατὰ τοῦ μείζονος ὁμνύουσιν, καὶ πάσης αὐτοῖς ἀντιλογίας πέρας εἰς βεβαίωσιν ὁ ὄρκος. Ἐν ᾧ περισσώτερον βουλόμενος ὁ θεὸς ἐπιδειξαι τοῖς κληρονόμοις τῆς ἐπαγγελίας τὸ ἀμετάθετον τῆς βουλῆς αὐτοῦ, ἐμεσίτευσεν ὄρκῳ, ἵνα διὰ δύο πραγμάτων ἀμεταθέτων, ἐν οἷς ἀδύνατον ψεῦσασθαι θεόν, ἰσχυρὰν παράκλησιν ἔχομεν οἱ καταφυγόντες κρατῆσαι τῆς προκειμένης ἐλπίδος· ἦν ὡς ἄγκυραν ἔχομεν τῆς ψυχῆς ἀσφαλῆ τε καὶ βεβαίαν, καὶ εἰσερχομένην εἰς τὸ ἐσώτερον τοῦ καταπετάσματος· ὅπου πρόδρομος ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν εἰσῆλθεν Ἰησοῦς, κατὰ τὴν τάξιν Μελχισεδέκ ἀρχιερεὺς γενόμενος εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.

St. John Climacus - 4th Sunday of Lent

Gospel: Mark 9:17-31

Then one of the crowd answered and said, "Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit. And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not." He answered him and said, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me." Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth. So He asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood. And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us." Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes." Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it: "Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!" Then the spirit cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him. And he became as one dead, so that many said, "He is dead." But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" So He said to them, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting." Then they departed from there and passed through Galilee, and He did not want anyone to know it. For He taught His disciples and said to them, "The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him. And after He is killed, He will rise the third day."

Ἐκ τοῦ Κατὰ Μάρκον 9:17-31

Εὐαγγελίου Τὸ Ἀνάγνωσμα

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, ἀνθρωπὸς τις προσῆλθε τῷ Ἰησοῦ λέγων, διδάσκαλε, ἤνεγκα τὸν υἱόν μου πρὸς σε, ἔχοντα πνεῦμα ἄλαλον. καὶ ὅπου ἂν αὐτὸν καταλάβῃ, ῥήσσει αὐτόν, καὶ ἀφρίζει καὶ τρίζει τοὺς ὀδόντας αὐτοῦ, καὶ ξηραίνεται· καὶ εἶπον τοῖς μαθηταῖς σου ἵνα αὐτὸ ἐκβάλωσι, καὶ οὐκ ἴσχυσαν. ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς αὐτῷ λέγει· ὦ γενεὰ ἀπίστος, ἕως πότε πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἔσομαι; ἕως πότε ἀνέξομαι ὑμῶν; φέρετε αὐτὸν πρὸς με. καὶ ἤνεγκαν αὐτὸν πρὸς αὐτόν. καὶ ἰδὼν αὐτὸν εὐθέως τὸ πνεῦμα ἐσπάραξεν αὐτόν, καὶ πεσὼν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἐκυλίετο ἀφρίζων. καὶ ἐπηρώτησε τὸν πατέρα αὐτοῦ· πόσος χρόνος ἐστὶν ὡς τοῦτο γέγονεν αὐτῷ; ὁ δὲ εἶπε· παιδιόθεν. καὶ πολλάκις αὐτόν καὶ εἰς πῦρ ἔβαλε καὶ εἰς ὕδατα, ἵνα ἀπολέσῃ αὐτόν· ἀλλ' εἴ τι δύνασαι, βοήθησον ἡμῖν σπλαγχνισθεὶς ἐφ' ἡμᾶς. ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ τὸ εἰ δύνασαι πιστεῦσαι, πάντα δυνατὰ τῷ πιστεῦοντι. καὶ εὐθέως κράζας ὁ πατὴρ τοῦ παιδίου μετὰ δακρύων ἔλεγε· πιστεύω, κύριε· βοήθει μου τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ. ἰδὼν δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι ἐπισυντρέχει ὄχλος, ἐπέτιμψε τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἀκαθάρτῳ λέγων αὐτῷ· τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἄλαλον καὶ κωφόν, ἐγὼ σοι ἐπιτάσσω, ἔξελθε ἐξ αὐτοῦ καὶ μηκέτι εἰσέλθῃς εἰς αὐτόν. καὶ κράζαν καὶ πολλὰ σπαράξαν αὐτὸν ἐξῆλθε, καὶ ἐγένετο ὡσεὶ νεκρός, ὥστε πολλοὺς λέγειν ὅτι ἀπέθανεν. ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς κρατήσας αὐτόν τῆς χειρὸς ἤγειρεν αὐτόν, καὶ ἀνέστη. καὶ εἰσελθόντα αὐτόν εἰς οἶκον οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ ἐπηρώτων αὐτόν κατ' ἰδίαν, ὅτι ἡμεῖς οὐκ ἠδυνήθημεν ἐκβαλεῖν αὐτό. καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· τοῦτο τὸ γένος ἐν οὐδενὶ δύναται ἐξελεῖν εἰ μὴ ἐν προσευχῇ καὶ νηστείᾳ. καὶ ἐκεῖθεν ἐξεληθόντες παρεπορεύοντο διὰ τῆς Γαλιλαίας, καὶ οὐκ ἤθελεν ἵνα τις γνῶ· ἐδίδασκε γὰρ τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς ὅτι ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου παραδίδοται εἰς χεῖρας ἀνθρώπων, καὶ ἀποκτενοῦσιν αὐτόν, καὶ ἀποκτανθεὶς τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἀναστήσεται.

**DEVOTIONS THIS WEEK:**

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>March 26th,</b>	<b>Feast of Saint John Klimacos Liturgy</b>	<b>10:30 A.M.</b>
		<b>Doxology for Greek Independence</b>	<b>12:00 P.M.</b>
		<b>Veneration of the ANNUNCIATION ICON</b>	<b>all day</b>
		<b>GREEK PARADE FIFTH AVENUE -----bus departs at</b>	<b>1:00 P.M.</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>March 29th,</b>	<b>Prayer and Healing</b>	<b>5:30 P.M.</b>
		<b>Pre-Sanctified Liturgy of Saint Gregory</b>	<b>6:00 P.M.</b>
		<b>Lenten Dinner hosted by the DAUGHTERS of PENELOPE</b>	<b>7:15 P.M.</b>
		<b>(Demetra Chapter #33 )</b>	
<b>Friday</b>	<b>March 31st,</b>	<b>AKATHIST HYMN (all Salutations) to the Virgin Mary</b>	<b>7:00 P.M.</b>
		<b>the BLESSED THEOTOKOS</b>	
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>April 01st,</b>	<b>HOLY WATER BLESSING (Agiastos)</b>	<b>11:00 A.M.</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>April 02nd,</b>	<b>Saint Mary of Egypt Liturgy</b>	<b>10:30 A.M.</b>
		<b>LAST DAY FOR MEMORIAL COMMEMORATIONS!</b>	<b>11:30 A.M.</b>
		<b>Greek School Students Program</b>	<b>12:00 P.M.</b>
		<b>(GREEK INDEPENDENCE)</b>	

**AGAPE COFFEE FELLOWSHIP:** is being hosted today by the Parish Council. Open to all. Please join us in ROSEHALL.

**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.

**HOLY WEEK NECESSITIES:** As each year, may we indulge your assistance in special necessities ( materials ) used in the sacred services of PASSION WEEK;

- OLIVE OIL for the anointing of Holy Wednesday
- WINE for all the Eucharistic services
- SHEETS ( new king size FLAT ) for APOKATHELOSIS FRIDAY
- AROMATICS for the Euchelaion on Holy Wednesday
- ROSE OIL and ROSE WATER for PASCHA!

Please see Father Eugene for approval of your offering. Too much of one thing and none of another is NOT the correct recipe.  
THE LORD INDEED LOVES AND BLESSES THE CHEERFUL GIVER!

**PALM WEAVERS** are needed for the week of April 3rd, through April 6th. Approximately 5,000 palm woven crosses are distributed on PALM SUNDAY , April 9th. Nimble fingers do the work! Come and LEARN a beautiful tradition of our church and culture. Refreshments (Lenten) are always served to the diligent workers.

**CONGRATULATIONS** are extended to three of our Parish Council members who were awarded the BROOKLYN BOROUGH PRESIDENT’S HELLENIC HERITAGE AWARD last Monday evening at Borough Hall. Felicitations to GEORGE ANNIS, JULIA DEMAKAKOS, and CONNIE IOANNIDES! These hard workers in the vineyard of the Lord are most deserving.

**HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE:** of all services, devotions and liturgies is PREPARED and is MAILED to all stewards (members registered ) with the PARISH. Did you get yours? If NOT, then why aren’t you registered as a member of the parish. PLEASE CHECK WITH THE CHURCH OFFICE.

**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 for ‘.....Jesus’ burial cortege’. These flowers are distributed to ALL the faithful at the conclusion of the Good Friday lamentations.

**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 18<sup>TH</sup> 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](http://W.W.W.gaepis.org) ([Click live audio](#))

**MEMORIALS TODAY:** + ROMMA VAYNTRUB  
**MEMORIALNEXT WEEK:** + DEMETRIOS ANTIARIS



*Three Hierarchs School Faculty and staff shared a festive Saint Patrick's Day celebration with the students. Take note that everyone wore "GREEN" in honor of the Irish Patron Saint..... who was indeed Orthodox!*

*Top row left to right*

*Gabriella Gonzales, Tetania Pavlyshche, Jessica More, Maria Sakkas Margarita Ginzburg, Marlene Borman*

*Bottom row left to right:*

*Polina Robins, Father Eugene, Georgia Bouzakis*





*Congratulations to our Parish Council  
Hellenic Heritage Award Recipients  
George Annis, Julia Demakakos, and Connie Ioannides*



# ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

## ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



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

Ἐκδίδεται ἀπὸ τὴν Κοινοβιακὴ Γυναικεία Ἱερὰ Μονὴ Ἁγίου Αὐγουστίνου Φλωρίνης – 531 00 ΦΛΩΡΙΝΑ – τηλ. 23050-20610 – imazflo@yahoo.gr

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος ΛΔ' Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 2004	Κυριακὴ Δ' Νηστειῶν (Μάρκ. 9,17-31) 26 Μαρτίου 2017	Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος Αὐγουστίνος Ν. Καντιώτης
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## Γιατί δυσπιστοῦμε;

« Πιστεύω, κύριε· βοήθει μου τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ » (Μάρκ. 9,24)

**Δ**αιμόνιο, ἀγαπητοί μου, **δαιμόνιο ἐξαιρετικὰ κακοποιό** ἦταν τὸ δαιμόνιο ποῦ βασάνιζε τὸν δυστυχημένο νέο τοῦ σημερινοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἀπὸ τὴν παιδική του ἡλικία.

Πῶς νὰ παρομοιάσουμε, μὲ ποιά εἰκόνα νὰ παραστήσουμε τὴν φρικτὴ κατάστασι τοῦ δαιμονισμοῦ; Ὅταν –μὴ γένοιτο, Κύριε–, ὅταν τὸ δαιμόνιο ἐπιτρέψη ὁ Θεός, γιὰ διαφόρους λόγους ποῦ εἶνε δύσκολο νὰ ὀρίσουμε, νὰ καταλάβῃ τὸν ἄνθρωπο, τότε αὐτὸς ξέρεϊς πῶς γίνεται; Γίνεται ὅπως **ἓνα ὑποζύγιο ποῦ ὁ ἀναβάτης του** δὲν εἶνε ἓνας συνετὸς καὶ λογικὸς ἄνθρωπος, ἀλλὰ εἶνε ἓνας παράφρων, ἓνας ἀσύνετος καὶ **τρελλός**, ἱκανὸς νὰ τὸ ὀδηγήσῃ καὶ στὸ χειρότερο γκρεμό.

Ὅπως λοιπὸν ἓνας τρελλὸς καβαλλάρης μπορεῖ νὰ ὀδηγήσῃ τὸ ἄλογό του στὸ βάραθρο καὶ τὴν **καταστροφή**, κατὰ παρόμοιο τρόπο καὶ τὸ δαιμόνιο, ἀφοῦ ἔγινε κυρίαρχο ἐπάνω στὴν ὑπαρξί τοῦ ταλαίπωρου ἐκείνου νέου, δοκίμαζε ἰδιαίτερη χαρὰ, χαιρεκακία, διεστραμμένη χαρὰ, νὰ ταλαιπωρῇ καὶ νὰ βασανίζῃ τὸ νέο. Ἄν μποροῦσε, θὰ ἠθελε καὶ **νὰ τὸν θανατώσῃ**· ἢ κακία του αὐτὸ ἐπιδίωκε, ἀλλὰ δὲν τοῦ τὸ ἐπέτρεπε ὁ Θεός.

Μαζὶ ὅμως μὲ τὸ παιδί τὸ δαιμόνιο χαιρόταν νὰ βασανίζῃ καὶ τὸν πατέρα του. Μόνο ὅσοι εἶστε γονεῖς μπορεῖτε νὰ νιώσετε τὴ θλίψι καὶ τὸν πόνο αὐτοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. Πόσες φορές αὐτὸς ὁ πατέρας δὲν θὰ ἀντίκρουσε ἀνατριχιαστικὰ θεάματα καὶ δὲν θὰ ἔζησε τρομερὲς σκηνές, πόσες φορές δὲν θὰ εἶδε τὸ παιδί του στὶς καταστάσεις ποῦ ἀκοῦμε νὰ περιγράφει ὁ ἴδιος καὶ διαβάζουμε στὸ κείμενο τοῦ ἱεροῦ εὐαγγελιστοῦ! τὸ δαιμόνιο, λέει, «*ὅπου ἂν αὐτὸν καταλάβῃ, ῥήσσει αὐτόν, καὶ ἀφρίζει καὶ τρίζει τοὺς ὀδόντας αὐτοῦ, καὶ ξηραίνεται*»· ὅπου δηλαδὴ τὸν πιάσῃ τὸ δαιμόνιο, τὸν ρίχνει καταγῆς, καὶ βγάζει ἀφροὺς ἀπὸ τὸ στόμα καὶ τρίζει τὰ δόντια του

καὶ μένει ξερός (Μάρκ. 9,18). Δυστυχημένο τὸ παιδί, μὰ πιὸ **δυστυχημένος ὁ πατέρας**.

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**Ποιὸς τώρα θὰ μπορούσε νὰ ἐλευθερώσῃ τὸ ταλαίπωρο αὐτὸ παιδί** ἀπὸ τὸ δαιμόνιο ἐκεῖνο, ποῦ σὰν ἀόρατος δράκοντας, σὰν πανίσχυρο φίδι τὸ περιτύλιγε, τὸ ἐσφιγγε καὶ τὸ ἐπνιγε, καὶ σὰν καταραμένη βδέλλα ἀπομυζοῦσε τὴ σωματικὴ ὑπαρξί τοῦ νέου; Κανένας γιατρός δὲν μπορούσε νὰ κάνῃ τίποτα, γιὰτὶ μὲ φάρμακα καὶ μὲ τὰ ἄλλα μέσα τῆς ἰατρικῆς ἐπιστήμης δὲν ἐξαναγκάζεται ὁ σατανὰς νὰ παραδοθῇ. Γιὰ νὰ ἐκδιωχθῇ ὁ τρομερὸς δαίμονας ἀπὸ τὸν ἄνθρωπο, χρειάζονται **φάρμακα ἄλλης φύσεως**, χρειάζεται θεία ἐπέμβασις. Γι' αὐτὸ ὁ πατέρας τοῦ νέου καταφεύγει στὴ δύναμι τοῦ Θεοῦ.

Πλησιάζει αὐτοὺς ποῦ ἀποτελοῦν τὸ ἄμεσο περιβάλλον - τὴ συνοδεία τοῦ Χριστοῦ (ὁ ὁποῖος τὴν ὥρα ἐκείνη ἔλειπε), **ζητᾷ τὴ βοήθεια τῶν μαθητῶν τοῦ Κυρίου**. Ἐνωρίτερα, ὅπως βλέπουμε στὸ κατὰ Μάρκον εὐαγγέλιο, οἱ δώδεκα μαθηταί, μὲ ἐξουσία ποῦ τοὺς ἔδωσε ὁ θεῖος Διδάσκαλος, ἐνεργοῦσαν κατὰ «*τῶν πνευμάτων τῶν ἀκαθάρτων*» (ἐ.ε.η), ἐβγάζαν δαιμόνια. Ἄλλ' αὐτὴ τὴ φορὰ καὶ οἱ μαθηταί δὲν κατορθώνουν νὰ φέρουν ἀποτέλεσμα· ἀποδεικνύονται ἀδύνατοι, ἀνίκανοι νὰ ἐλευθερώσουν τὸ νέο ἀπὸ τὸ δαιμόνιο. Ἐπιχειροῦν μὲν νὰ τὸ ἐκδιώξουν, ἀλλὰ τὸ δαιμόνιο δὲν φαίνεται νὰ ἐνοχλήται ἀπὸ τὶς ἐπικλήσεις καὶ τοὺς ἐξορκισμοὺς τῶν μαθητῶν. Παραμένει μέσα στὸ παιδί ἐμπαίζοντας ἔτσι τοὺς ἀποστόλους τοῦ Χριστοῦ γιὰ τὴν ἀδυναμία τους, σὰν κάποιος τρομερὸς ληστὴς ποῦ παρὰ τὰ κακουργήματά του μένει ἀσύλληπτος ἀπὸ τὴν ἀστυνομία καὶ στὰ μάτια τῆς κοινῆς γνώμης ἐμπαίζει τὰ ὄργανα τῆς τάξεως ποῦ δὲν κατορθώνουν νὰ τὸν συλλάβουν.

**Ὁ πατέρας**, ποῦ κατέφυγε στοὺς ἀποστό-

λους με την ελπίδα να βρῆ βοήθεια καὶ τώρα βλέπει τὴν ἀδυναμία τους, κλονίζεται καὶ **ἀρ- χίζει ν' ἀπογοητεύεται**. Ἄραγε, σκέπτεται, ἀφοῦ οὔτε αὐτοὶ ἔχουν τὴ δύναμι νὰ με βοηθήσουν, κανεὶς δὲν θὰ μπορέσῃ νὰ θεραπεύσῃ τὸ παιδί μου;...

Μὲ τέτοιους λογισμοὺς ὀλιγοπιστίας, ἀποκαρδιωμένος καὶ ἀπορώντας γιὰ τὴν ἀδυναμία τῶν ἀποστόλων, πλησιάζει τὸν Κύριο (ὁ ὁποῖος ἐκείνη τὴν ὥρα μόλις εἶχε κατεβῆ ἀπὸ τὸ ὄρος Θαβώρ, ὅπου εἶχε μεταμορφωθῆ μπροστὰ στοὺς τρεῖς μαθητὰς του. Τοῦ διηγεῖται τὴ συμφορὰ του, καὶ ζητᾷ πλέον τὴ δική του ἐπέμβασι, **ὄχι ὅμως μὲ ἀπόλυτη ἐμπιστοσύνη**. «*Ἄλλ' εἴ τι δύνασαι*», λέει, «*βοήθησον ἡμῖν σπλαγχνισθεὶς ἐφ' ἡμᾶς*» ἂν μπορῆς νὰ κάνῃς κάτι, λυπήσου μας. Ὁ Κύριος τοῦ ἀπαντᾷ λέγοντας· «*Εἴ δύνασαι πιστεῦσαι, πάντα δυνατὰ τῷ πιστεύοντι*» (ἔ.ἔ. 9:23-24).

Μὲ τὴν παρατήρησί του αὐτὴ ὁ Κύριος **βάζει τὰ πράγματα στὴ θέσι τους**. Μὲ τὰ λόγια του εἶνε σὰν νὰ λήξῃ στὸν πατέρα τοῦ παιδιοῦ·

Δυστυχισμένε πατέρα! Παραπονιέσαι ἐναντίον τῶν μαθητῶν μου, γιατί δὲν μπόρεσαν νὰ θεραπεύσουν τὸ παιδί σου. Καὶ ἄρχισες τώρα νὰ ἐκφράζεσαι μὲ μεγάλη ἀμφιβολία καὶ γιὰ τὴ δική μου δύναμι. Μάθε λοιπόν, ὅτι αἰτία ὅλης αὐτῆς τῆς καταστάσεως, τοῦ ὅτι δηλαδὴ ὁ γιός σου δὲν ἔχει ἀκόμη θεραπευθῆ, εἶσαι σὺ ὁ ἴδιος. **Ἡ ὀλιγοπιστία σου στὴ δύναμί μου, νὰ ἢ αἰτία**. Πιστεύεις σ' ἐμένα; τὸ παιδί σου θὰ θεραπευθῆ· δὲν πιστεύεις σ' ἐμένα; τὸ παιδί σου θὰ μένη ἔτσι, ἀθεράπευτο. Ἀπὸ σένα ἐξαρτᾶται νὰ πάρῃς στὰ χέρια σου τὸ μυστικὸ καὶ παντοδύναμο κλειδί τῆς πίστεως καὶ ν' ἀνοίξῃς μ' αὐτὸ ὅλες τὶς θύρες τοῦ θεικοῦ ἐλέους.

Ἀκούγοντας τὴν ἀπάντησι τοῦ Χριστοῦ ὁ πατέρας κατάλαβε καλὰ καὶ ἐνίωσε βαθειὰ τὴν παρατήρησι αὐτῆ τοῦ Κυρίου. Ἀνέκρινε τὸν ἑαυτό του καὶ εἶδε, ὅτι ἡ πίστι του στὸν Σωτῆρα Χριστὸ εἶνε τόσο μικρὴ, ὥστε κινδυνεύει νὰ σβῆσῃ τελείως. Ἦρθε σὲ **συναίσθησι**, πόνεσε καὶ τότε «*μετὰ δακρύων*» φωνάζει στὸν Κύριο· «*Πιστεύω, κύριε· βοήθει μου τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ*» πιστεύω, ἀλλὰ ἡ πίστι μου εἶνε ἀσθενική, βοήθη με στὴν ὀλιγοπιστία μου (ἔ.ἔ. 9:23-24). Μετὰ ἀπὸ αὐτὴ τὴν ταπεινὴ αἴτησι τὸ ἀποτέλεσμα ἦρθε ἀμέσως· τὸ δαιμόνιο ἐκδιώχθηκε καὶ τὸ παιδί θεραπεύθηκε.

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Ἄχ πόσες φορές κ' ἐμεῖς, ἀγαπητοὶ μου, δὲν βρισκόμαστε σὲ κατάστασι παρόμοια μὲ τὴν κατάστασι τοῦ πατέρα τοῦ δαιμονιζομένου

παιδιοῦ! Πάσχουμε κ' ἐμεῖς ὅπως ἐκεῖνος. Ὑποφέρουμε βαθειὰ. Θλίψεις, ἀτομικὲς καὶ οἰκογενειακὲς, πιέζουν σὰν ἐφιάλτες τὰ στήθη μας. Ἐνάντιες περιστάσεις φράζουν τὸ δρόμο τῆς ζωῆς μας σὰν ἀμετακίνητοι ὀγκόλιθοι. Κ' ἐμεῖς κάτω ἀπὸ τὴν πίεσι τῶν γεγονότων καταφεύγουμε στὸν Κύριο, ὄχι ὅμως μὲ τὴν ἀπόλυτη ἐμπιστοσύνη. Καταφεύγουμε δυστυχῶς μὲ τὴν **ὀλιγοπιστία αὐτῆ** ποὺ εἶδαμε στὸν πατέρα τοῦ δαιμονιζομένου νέου. Ἡ διψυχία, ποὺ ἐκφράζει ἐκεῖνο τὸ «*εἴ τι δύνασαι...*», χαρακτηρίζει καὶ τὰ δικά μας αἰτήματα. Σὰν νὰ λέμε· **Ἐ, ἂς δοῦμε τί μπορεῖ νὰ μᾶς κάνῃ κι ὁ Χριστός!**

Μὲ τέτοια ὀλιγοπιστία, ποὺ **λίγο διαφέρει ἀπὸ τὴν ἀπιστία**, πλησιάζουμε οἱ πολλοὶ τὸν Κύριο, κ' ἔπειτα ἔχουμε τὴν ἀξίωσι νὰ μᾶς ἀκούσῃ.

Ἐὰν εἶνε **ὑποτιμητικὸ** γιὰ ἓνα πανίσχυρο ἄρχοντα τῶν ἡμερῶν μας νὰ ἐκφραζώμαστε μὲ κάποια ἀμφιβολία γιὰ τὴ δύναμί του, ἐὰν δηλαδὴ καὶ κατὰ πόσον εἶνε σὲ θέσι νὰ πραγματοποιήσῃ κάθε τι ποὺ ὑπόσχεται, ἀσυγκρίτως πιὸ προσβλητικὸ εἶνε γιὰ τὸν ἀληθινὰ παντοδύναμο Κύριο νὰ ἔχουμε μέσα μας ἀμφιβολίες γιὰ τὴ δύναμί του, ποὺ εἶνε ἀνεξάντλητη σὲ τρόπους καὶ σὲ μέσα νὰ βοηθήσῃ τὸν ἄνθρωπο. Ὅχι λοιπόν «*εἴ τι δύνασαι*», ὅπως ὁ πατέρας τοῦ νέου, ἀλλὰ **Κύριε, «οἶδα ὅτι πάντα δύνασαι, ἀδυνατεῖ δέ σοι οὐδέν»**, γνωρίζω ὅτι μπορεῖς τὰ πάντα καὶ τίποτα δὲν εἶνε ἀδύνατο σ' ἐσένα (ἰβ. 10:13-42).

Τέτοια πίστι ὅμως δὲν ὑπάρχει σὲ ὅλους μας. Γι' αὐτὸ καὶ εὐκολὰ ἀπογοητευόμαστε καὶ γογγύζουμε κατὰ τῆς Θείας Προνοίας. Καὶ πάνω στὴν ἀφροσύνη τῆς ὀλιγοπιστίας μας –γιατί **ἀφροσύνη εἶνε ἡ ὀλιγοπιστία**– νομίζουμε ὅτι ὁ Κύριος μᾶς ἄφησε καὶ δὲν ἐνδιαφέρεται πιά γιὰ μᾶς. Ἐνῶ Ἐκεῖνος εἶνε πάντοτε ὀλοπρόθυμος νὰ μᾶς βοηθήσῃ σὲ κάθε περίστασι, ἀρκεῖ ἐμεῖς μὲ θερμὴ καὶ ἀκλόνητη πίστι νὰ χτυπήσουμε τὴν θύρα τοῦ ἐλέους του. Ἐμπιστοσύνη, **ἐμπιστοσύνη ἀπόλυτη σ'** Αὐτὸν ζητᾷ ἀπὸ κάθε δοῦλο του, καὶ τότε αὐτὸς ὑπόσχεται νὰ τὸν ὀδηγήσῃ στὴ λύτρωσι. Χωρὶς ἐμπιστοσύνη στὸν στρατηγὸ τίποτα δὲν μποροῦν νὰ κάνουν οἱ στρατιῶτες· ἀλλὰ καὶ χωρὶς ἐμπιστοσύνη σὸ πρόσωπο τοῦ Κυρίου μας Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, χωρὶς ἀκράδαντη πίστι σ' αὐτόν, δὲν θὰ μπορέσουμε κ' ἐμεῖς νὰ κατορθώσουμε τίποτα γενναῖο, νὰ λάβουμε βοήθεια καὶ νὰ πᾶμε μπροστά. Γι' αὐτὸ ἂς προσευχώμαστε μὲ δάκρυα στὸν Κύριο λέγοντας· «*Πιστεύω, Κύριε· βοήθει μου τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ*» (ἰβ. 9:24).

(†) **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 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. John Climacus*

"To admire the labors of the saints is good; to emulate them wins salvation; but to wish suddenly to imitate their life in every point is unreasonable and impossible."

"A servant of the Lord is he who in body stands before men, but in mind knocks at Heaven with prayer."

"To judge others is a shameless arrogation of the Divine prerogative; to condemn is the ruin of one's soul."

"In all your undertakings and in every way of life, whether you are living in obedience, or are not submitting your work to anyone, whether in outward or in spiritual matters, let it be your rule and practice to ask yourself: Am I really doing this in accordance with God's will?"

"The Christian is one who imitates Christ in thought, word and deed, as far as is possible for human beings, believing rightly and blamelessly in the Holy Trinity."

"Let your prayer be completely simple. For both the publican and the prodigal son were reconciled to God by a single phrase."

"Do not say, after spending a long time in prayer, that nothing has been gained; for you have already gained something. And what higher good is there than to cling to the Lord and persevere in unceasing union with Him?"

"Some people with a hot temper do not worry about it and ignore the remedies that would heal them. They forget, unfortunately, what is written: 'Surely anger kills the fool, and jealousy slays the simple,' (Job 5:2)."

"A charitable and sensible mind takes careful note of whatever virtues it sees in anyone. But a fool looks for faults and defects. And of such it is said: 'They have searched out iniquity and explored in the search.' Do not condemn, even if you see with your eyes, for they are often deceived."

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