



DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN
DISTRICT

THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN April 23rd, 2017
V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

THOMAS SUNDAY FEAST OF SAINT GEORGE THE MARTYR



Icon of Saint George -- April 23rd

Great is our Lord, and great is his power.
Verse: Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good.

The reading is from Acts of the Apostles 12:1-11

ABOUT THAT TIME, Herod the king laid violent hands upon some who belonged to the church. He killed James the brother of John with the sword; and when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. This was during the days of Unleavened Bread. And when he had seized him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four squads of soldiers to guard him, intending after the Passover to bring him out to the people. So Peter was kept in prison; but earnest prayer for him was made to God by the Church.

The very night when Herod was about to bring him out, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries before the door were guarding the prison; and behold, an angel of the Lord appeared, and a light shone in the cell; and he struck Peter on the side and woke him, saying, "Get up quickly." And the chains fell off his hands. And the angel said to him, "Wrap your mantle around you and follow me." And he went out and followed him; he did not know that what was done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. When they had passed the first and the second guard, they came to the iron gate leading into the city. It opened to them of its own accord, and they went out and passed on through one street; and immediately the angel left him. And Peter came to himself, and said, "Now I am sure that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting

."Προκείμενον. Ήχος δ'.

ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 146.5;134.3

Μέγας ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν, καὶ μεγάλη ἡ ἰσχὺς αὐτοῦ.

Στίχ. Αἰνεῖτε τὸν Κύριον, ὅτι ἀγαθός.

Πράξεις Ἀποστόλων 12:1-11 τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα εἶναι ἀπο

Κατ' ἐκεῖνον τὸν καιρὸν, Κατ' ἐκεῖνον δὲ τὸν καιρὸν ἐπέβαλεν Ἡρώδης ὁ βασιλεὺς τὰς χεῖρας κακῶσαι τινὰς τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐκκλησίας. Ἀνεῖλεν δὲ Ἰάκωβον τὸν ἀδελφὸν Ἰωάννου μαχαίρα. Καὶ ἰδὼν ὅτι ἀρεστόν ἐστιν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις, προσέθετο συλλαβεῖν καὶ Πέτρον - ἦσαν δὲ αἱ ἡμέραι τῶν ἀζύμων - ὃν καὶ πιάσας ἔθετο εἰς φυλακὴν, παραδοὺς τέσσαρσιν τετραδίοις στρατιωτῶν φυλάσσειν αὐτόν, βουλόμενος μετὰ τὸ Πάσχα ἀναγαγεῖν αὐτὸν τῷ λαῷ. Ὁ μὲν οὖν Πέτρος ἐτρεῖτο ἐν τῇ φυλακῇ· προσευχὴ δὲ ἦν ἐκτενὴς γινομένη ὑπὸ τῆς ἐκκλησίας πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ. Ὅτε δὲ ἐμελλεν αὐτὸν προάγειν ὁ Ἡρώδης, τῇ νυκτὶ ἐκείνῃ ἦν ὁ Πέτρος κοιμώμενος μετὰ δύο στρατιωτῶν, δεδεμένος ἀλύσειν δυσὶν· φύλακές τε πρὸ τῆς θύρας ἐτήρουν τὴν φυλακὴν. Καὶ ἰδοὺ, ἄγγελος κυρίου ἐπέστη, καὶ φῶς ἔλαμψεν ἐν τῷ οἰκήματι· πατάξας δὲ τὴν πλευρὰν τοῦ Πέτρου, ἤγειρεν αὐτὸν λέγων, Ἀνάστα ἐν τάχει. Καὶ ἐξέπεσον αὐτοῦ αἱ ἀλύσεις ἐκ τῶν χειρῶν. Εἶπεν τε ὁ ἄγγελος πρὸς αὐτόν, Περίψωσαι καὶ ὑπόδησαι τὰ σανδάλιά σου. Ἐποίησεν δὲ οὕτως. Καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ, Περιβαλοῦ τὸ ἱμάτιόν σου, καὶ ἀκολουθεῖ μοι. Καὶ ἐξελθὼν ἠκολούθει αὐτῷ· καὶ οὐκ ᾔδει ὅτι ἀληθὲς ἐστὶν τὸ γινόμενον διὰ τοῦ ἀγγέλου, ἐδόκει δὲ ὄραμα βλέπειν. Διελθόντες δὲ πρῶτην φυλακὴν καὶ δευτέραν, ἦλθον ἐπὶ τὴν πύλην τὴν σιδηρὰν, τὴν φέρουσαν εἰς τὴν πόλιν, ἣτις αὐτομάτῃ ἠνοιχθῇ αὐτοῖς· καὶ ἐξελθόντες προῆλθον ῥύμην μίαν, καὶ εὐθέως ἀπέστη ὁ ἄγγελος ἀπ' αὐτοῦ. Καὶ ὁ Πέτρος, γενόμενος ἐν ἑαυτῷ, εἶπεν, ὃν οἶδα ἀληθῶς ὅτι ἐξαπέστειλεν κύριος τὸν ἄγγελον αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐξείλετό με ἐκ χειρὸς Ἡρώδου καὶ πάσης τῆς προσδοκίας τοῦ λαοῦ τῶν Ἰουδαίων.

The Gospel According to John 20:19-31

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them: "Peace be with you." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him: "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them: "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in His side, I will not believe."

Eight days later, His disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. The doors were shut, but Jesus came and stood among them, and said: "Peace be with you." Then He said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side; do not be faithless, but believing." Thomas answered Him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to Him: "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe."

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

Ἐκ τοῦ Κατὰ Ἰωάννην 20:19-31 Εὐαγγελίου τὸ Ἀνάγνωσμα

Οὔσης οὖν ὀψίας τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ τῇ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων, καὶ τῶν θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων ὅπου ἦσαν οἱ μαθηταὶ συνηγμένοι διὰ τὸν φόβον τῶν Ἰουδαίων, ἦλθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ ἔστη εἰς τὸ μέσον, καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· εἰρήνη ὑμῖν. καὶ τοῦτο εἰπὼν ἔδειξεν αὐτοῖς τὰς χεῖρας καὶ τὴν πλευρὰν αὐτοῦ. ἐχάρησαν οὖν οἱ μαθηταὶ ἰδόντες τὸν Κύριον. εἶπεν οὖν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς πάλιν· εἰρήνη ὑμῖν. καθὼς ἀπέσταλκέ με ὁ πατήρ, καὶ γὰρ πέμπω ὑμᾶς. καὶ τοῦτο εἰπὼν ἐνεφύσησε καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· λάβετε Πνεῦμα Ἅγιον· ἃν τινῶν ἀφῆτε τὰς ἁμαρτίας, ἀφίενται αὐτοῖς, ἃν τινῶν κρατῆτε, κεκράτηνται.

Θωμᾶς δὲ εἷς ἐκ τῶν δώδεκα, ὁ λεγόμενος Δίδυμος, οὐκ ἦν μετ' αὐτῶν ὅτε ἦλθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς. ἔλεγον οὖν αὐτῷ οἱ ἄλλοι μαθηταί· ἐώρακαμεν τὸν Κύριον. ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· ἐὰν μὴ ἴδω ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν αὐτοῦ τὸν τύπον τῶν ἥλων, καὶ βάλω τὸν δάκτυλόν μου εἰς τὸν τύπον τῶν ἥλων, καὶ βάλω τὴν χεῖρά μου εἰς τὴν πλευρὰν αὐτοῦ, οὐ μὴ πιστεύσω. Καὶ μεθ' ἡμέρας ὁκτὼ πάλιν ἦσαν ἔσω οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ Θωμᾶς μετ' αὐτῶν. ἔρχεται ὁ Ἰησοῦς τῶν θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων, καὶ ἔστη εἰς τὸ μέσον καὶ εἶπεν· εἰρήνη ὑμῖν. εἶτα λέγει τῷ Θωμᾷ· φέρε τὸν δάκτυλόν σου ὧδε καὶ ἴδε τὰς χεῖράς μου, καὶ φέρε τὴν χεῖρά σου καὶ βάλε εἰς τὴν πλευρὰν μου, καὶ μὴ γίνου ἄπιστος, ἀλλὰ πιστός. καὶ ἀπεκρίθη Θωμᾶς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ὁ Κύριός μου καὶ ὁ Θεός μου. λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· ὅτι ὥρακάς με, πεπίστευκας· μακάριοι οἱ μὴ ἰδόντες καὶ πιστεύσαντες. Πολλὰ μὲν οὖν καὶ ἄλλα σημεῖα ἐποίησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐνώπιον τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ, ἃ οὐκ ἔστι γεγραμμένα ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τούτῳ· ταῦτα δὲ γέγραπται ἵνα πιστεύσητε ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ ἵνα πιστεύοντες ζωὴν ἔχητε ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ.

DEVOTIONS THIS WEEK:

SUNDAY

**April 23rd, JOINT FEAST: Saint George and Saint Thomas
Divine Liturgy
Artoklasia to Saint Lazarus (Raptis Family)**

**10:30 A.M.
Noon**

PASCHAL GRATITUDE: is extended to the myriad of volunteers who helped to make PASCHA 2017 nostalgic inspirational and memorable.

APPLAUSE to the PALM CROSS WEAVERS, to the RED EGG DYERS, to the MARY and MARTHA SOCIETY (linen and altar drapers, laundresses) to the Psaltai and Choir Members, to the Altar Boy Society of Saint Stephanos and to BOY SCOUT TROOP #531 and leaders, to the many florists who decorated the Church (upper and lower) and the 3 THREE EPITAPHIA for the street procession, to the Parish council , to our secretarial and bulletin staff EFFIE AND STELLA, to the custodial staff, DENNIS, MAYA and JOEL., and to YOU THE FAITHFUL who responded in person to the sacred services and offerings and to the donors of sacramental wine , olive oils, linen/shrouds, rose essence and Rose Water for Good Friday.

GOD IS WELL PLEASED INDEED! so is Father Eugene!

AGIASMOS for MONTH of MAY: is being up-dated to NEXT SATURDAY APRIL 29th, 1:00 -1:30

HELLENIC COLLEGE/HOLY CROSS: will be the venue in BOSTON for the three day Archdiocesan Presbyters' Council Meeting (Monday-Wednesday / April 24-26). Father Eugene is the New York Archdiocesan Representative to the NATIONAL COUNCIL of 20 PRIESTS.

FLORISTS TO BE CONGRATULATED: AVENUE 'J' , MADISON , MARINE PARK, HENRY'S PLAZA, BEN'S , IRENE'S and ELLINGVILLE FLORISTSONE AND ALL. THE LORD LOVES THOSE WHO BLESS THE HOUSE OF GOD AND BEAUTIFY HIS TEMPLE.

TURKISH CULTURAL CENTER of New York has invited Father Eugene to be a presenter and speaker at the BAKU on Ocean Avenue and Emmons Avenue on Thursday evening at 7:30 P.M. Fraternal relations are being cultivated in the face of political Islamic fervor in once secular Turkey. Times are tense, and nerves are uneasy in the recent Turkish referendum in Turkey.

ARTOKLASIES TODAY: are being offered by Council President George Annis, the Raptis family In honor of SAINT LAZAROS for their son, Altar boy 'LAZAROS' and by Voula Lambros in honor of SAINT GEORGE for her beloved husband 'GEORGE'. Chronia Polla to all celebrating their feast and Name Day today, George , Georgia, Thomas , Thomaina and Lazarus!

MR. and MRS. CLUB: will host their Paschal Party on Tuesday evening April 25th in WHITEHALL at 7:00 P.M. (Greek lamb dinner with all the trimmings including Greek sweets) catered for all members and guests FREE! Come and share the bounty of the table.

PARISH WOMAN of the YEAR 2017: Committee ladies representing 20 different clubs, groups, societies in the community will gather on : FRIDAY EVENING, MAY 05th, AT 7:00 FOR THE SECRET BALLOT. Last year's recipient Was Mrs. Efthymia Pappas!

GRECIAN FESTIVAL: Is scheduled for our parish FRIDAY, SATURDAY, SUNDAY, JUNE 2, 3, 4TH on the plaza of our community center. PLEASE REFER TO THE INSERT FLYER.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: for the annual festival highlighting our culture, food, delicacies , music and folk dancing. you may wish to help in food servicing , beverage bars, merchandise sales, sweets and pastries area. Please call
GEORGE PLEVITIS Festival Chairman at 917-541-7034

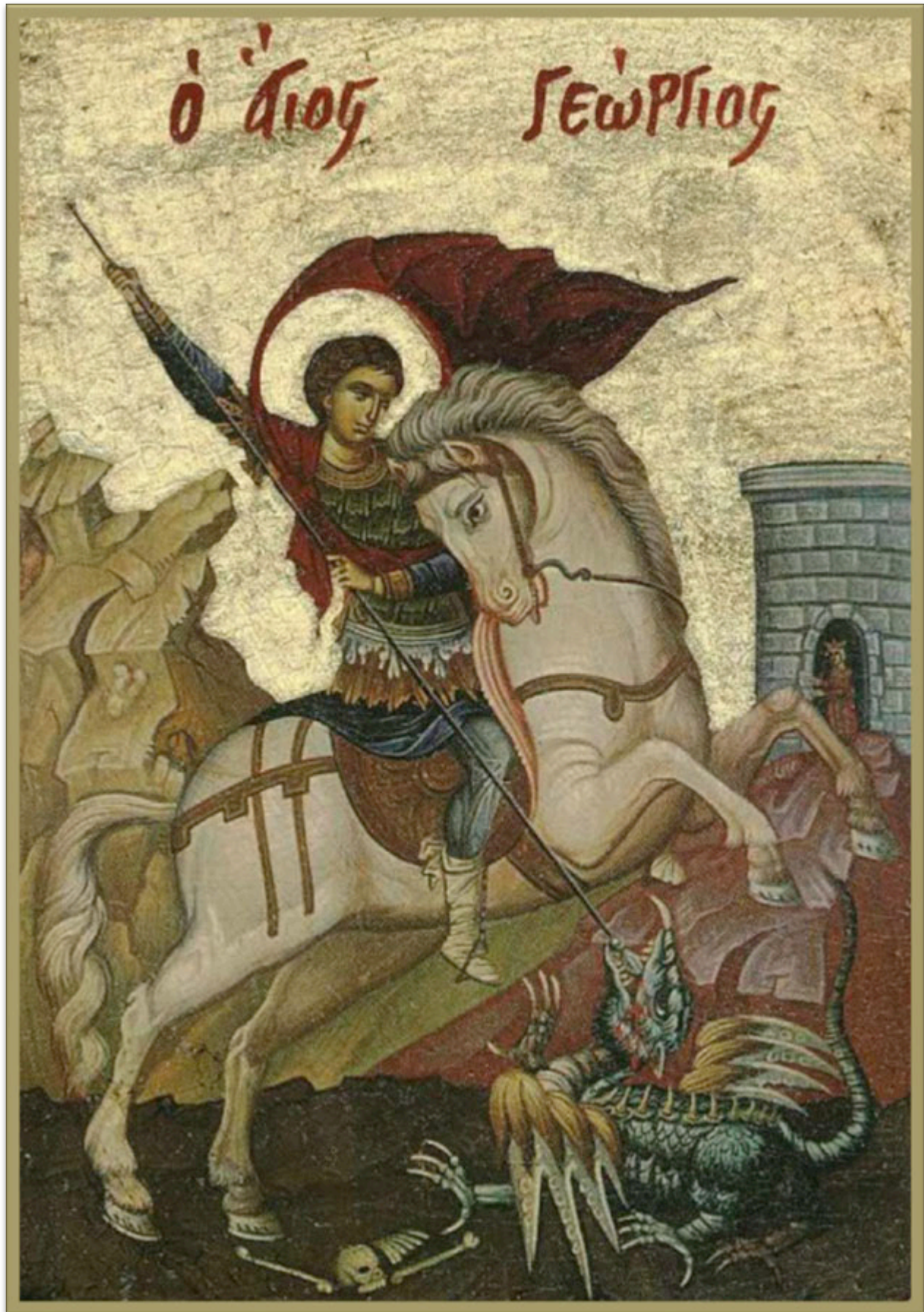
EARLY REGISTRATIONS; PRE- K FOR ALL : Any child 4 years of age is eligible for FREE enrollment at our school operated by the New York City Department of Education. Classes are held each day from 8:00 A.M. through 3:00 P.M. with free lunch served by the City. IT'S ALL YOURS FREE FOR THE ASKING AND TAKING. 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](#))

MEMORIALS commence again on APRIL 30th : + STAMATIA ANTZOULIS, + STEVE ARNIOTES
+ EVDOKIA FIRIOS + MARIA MITSIOS

Please register through the Office now

DOUBLE HEADER



ST. GEORGE - APRIL 23 ANNUALLY

PATRON SAINTS FEAST



ST. APOSTLE THOMAS 1st SUNDAY AFTER PASCHA



ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



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

Ἐκδίδεται ἀπὸ τὴν Κοινοβιακὴ Γενναεὶα Τετρὰ Μονὴ Ἁγίου Αὐγουστίνου Φλωρίνης - 531 00 ΦΛΩΡΙΝΑ - τηλ. 23850-28610 - imaallo@yahoo.gr

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος ΛΔ' Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 2010	Κυριακὴ τοῦ Θωμᾶ (Ἰω. 20,19-31) 23 Ἀπριλίου 2017	Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος Αὐγουστίνος Ν. Καντιώτης
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Θὰ μείνης στὴν ἀπιστία σου;

«Μὴ γίνου ἀπιστος ἀλλὰ πιστός» (Ἰω. 20,27)

Ἡ δοῦ, ἀγαπητοί μου, νὰ ἡ συμβουλὴ ποὺ ἀπηύθυνε ὁ ἀναστὰς Κύριός μας σὲ ἓνα ἀπὸ τοὺς μαθητὰς του, τὸν δύσπιστο Θωμᾶ. Μὲ τὴν ἀπειρὴ συγκατάβασί του τὸν προσκαλοῦσε νὰ μὴ διστάσῃ νὰ τὸν πλησιάσῃ καὶ νὰ τὸν ψηλαφήσῃ μὲ τὸ ἴδιο του τὸ χέρι, γιὰ νὰ πεισθῇ, ὅτι εἶνε ὁ ἴδιος ὁ Κύριος. «Φέρε τὸν δάκτυλόν σου ὧδε καὶ ἴδε τὰς χεῖράς μου, καὶ φέρε τὴν χεῖρά σου καὶ βάλε εἰς τὴν πλευράν μου, καὶ μὴ γίνου ἀπιστος, ἀλλὰ πιστός» εἶπε ὁ Κύριος στὸ Θωμᾶ (Ἰω. 20,27).

Ἀλλὰ τὴν ἴδια συμβουλὴ, ἀγαπητοί μου, ὁ Κύριος ἐξακολουθεῖ νὰ τὴν ἀπευθύνῃ διὰ μέσου τῆς Ἐκκλησίας του καὶ πρὸς ὅλους ἐκείνους τοὺς συνανθρώπους μας ποὺ ὁ χαρακτήρας τους μοιάζει ὅπως ὁποῖοτε μὲ τὸν χαρακτήρα τοῦ ἀποστόλου Θωμᾶ. Γιατὶ ὑπάρχουν καὶ σήμερα μεταξύ τῶν Χριστιανῶν αὐτοὶ ποὺ δυσπιστοῦν καὶ ἀμφισβᾶλλουν. Εἶνε οἱ σύγχρονοι **δύσπιστοι Θωμᾶδες**.

Αὐτοὶ μὲ **δυσπιστία** ἀκοῦνε τὸ κήρυγμα τοῦ θείου λόγου· μὲ **δυσπιστία** ἀνοίγουν καὶ διαβάζουν ἓνα θρησκευτικὸ βιβλίον· μὲ **δυσπιστία** ἀκοῦνε τὴν μαρτυρίαν καὶ διαβεβαιώσεις ἄλλων, πιστῶν ἀκολουθῶν τοῦ Ναζωραίου, γιὰ τὴν πνευματικὴ δύναμι τοῦ Χριστιανισμοῦ. Αὐτοὶ δὲν ἔχουν τὴν εὐπιστία τῶν μικρῶν παιδιῶν, ποὺ μὲ τὴν ἀθήα καρδιά τους δίνουν ἀπόλυτη πίστι σὲ ὅσα τοὺς λένε οἱ γονεῖς καὶ οἱ δασκάλους τους. Αὐτοί, γιὰ νὰ πεισθοῦν, θέλουν νὰ δοῦν καὶ νὰ ἐλέγχουν οἱ ἴδιοι τὸ κάθε τι· ζητοῦν ἀποδείξεις.

Ἀλλὰ ὁ Χριστιανισμός εἶνε γεμάτος ἀποδείξεις. Ὁ Χριστιανισμός δὲν ἀρέσκεται, ὅπως κάνουν οἱ θρησκείες τοῦ κόσμου, νὰ ζῇ καὶ νὰ κινῆται στὰ σκοτάδια τῆς ἀμαθείας, ἡ ὁποία ἀμάθεια ἐκτρέφει κάθε εἶδος δεισιδαιμονίας καὶ πλάνης. Δὲν φοβᾶται τὴν ἔρευνα·

ἀγαπᾷ, ὅσο καμμία ἄλλη θρησκεία, τὸ φῶς τῆς ἀληθείας. Ὁ ἰδρυτὴς τοῦ Χριστιανισμοῦ καὶ ἀρχηγὸς τῆς πίστεώς μας δὲν εἶνε ἐκεῖνος ποὺ ὠνόμασε τὸν ἑαυτό του «Φῶς τοῦ κόσμου» (Ἰω. 1,9); Δὲν εἶνε ἐπίσης ἐκεῖνος ποὺ εἶπε «Γνώσεσθε τὴν ἀλήθειαν, καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια ἐλευθερώσει ὑμᾶς» (Ἰω. 8,32); Δὲν εἶνε ἐκεῖνος ποὺ ζήτησε τὴν ἔρευνα ὡς μέσο γιὰ πλήρη ἐξακρίβωσι τῆς ἀληθείας καὶ γιὰ πληρέστερη ἐπίγνωσι τοῦ προσώπου του, ὅταν ἔλεγε «Ἐρευνάτε τὰς γραφάς, ὅτι... ἐκεῖναί εἰσιν αἱ μαρτυροῦσαι περὶ ἐμοῦ» (Ἰω. 5,39);

Ὅσοι λοιπὸν ἔχουν ἀμφιβολίες γύρω ἀπὸ τὴν πίστι μας, ἂς πλησιάσουν κι αὐτοὶ κοντὰ ὅπως ὁ δύσπιστος Θωμᾶς. Ὁ Χριστὸς –νὰ εἶνε βέβαιον– δὲν τοὺς διώχνει, ὅπως δὲν ἔδιωξε καὶ τὸ Θωμᾶ. **Δέχεται καὶ ὁ ἴδιος καὶ ἡ θρησκεία του νὰ ὑποβληθοῦν σὲ ἔρευνα**, ἔρευνα ὅπως ψύχραιμη, ἀντικειμενικὴ, ἀπροκατάληπτη, ἔρευνα ποὺ μοναδικὸς τῆς σκοπὸς θὰ εἶνε ἡ ἀνακάλυψι τῆς ἀληθείας καὶ εὐθύς ἀμέσως ἡ συμμόρφωσι ὅλης τῆς ζωῆς τοῦ ἐρευνητοῦ πρὸς τὴν ἀλήθεια. Ἐὰν μὲ τέτοια διάθεσι καὶ μὲ τέτοια προοπτικὴ ἐρευνήσῃ ὁ δύσπιστος τὴν χριστιανικὴ διδασκαλία, τότε δὲν θ' ἀργήσῃ νὰ καταλήξῃ στὸ συμπέρασμα ἐκεῖνο τῆς ἐρεύνης, τὸ ὁποῖο μὲ τόσο ἐνθουσιασμό καὶ τόσο θαυμασμό ἐξέφρασε ὁ ἀπόστολος Θωμᾶς φωνάζοντας «Ὁ Κύριός μου καὶ ὁ Θεός μου» (Ἰω. 20,28).

Ὡ δύσπιστε ἀδελφέ μου, ὦ Θωμᾶ τῶν νεωτέρων χρόνων! Ἡ διάνοιά σου χρόνια τώρα παλεύει μὲ τὰ κύματα τῆς ἀπιστίας καὶ τῆς ἀμφιβολίας. Ἡ πάλη αὕτη σὲ ἔχει κουράσει. Ζητᾷς τὴν γαλήνη ἐκείνη τοῦ πνεύματος, τὴν ὁποία παρέχει ἡ Ἀλήθεια. Ἄν θέλῃς νὰ καταπαύσῃ ἡ τρικυμία τῶν λογισμῶν σου, μὴ μένεις μακριὰ ἀπὸ τὸ Χριστό. Πλησιάσέ τον ὅπως ὁ Θωμᾶς. «Φέρε» ὅχι πλέον «τὸν δάκτυ-

λόν σου καὶ τὰς χεῖράς σου», ἀλλὰ φέρε ὅλο τὸν ἑαυτὸ σου (τὸ νοῦ σου, τὴν καρδιά σου, τὴν αἰσθήσεις σου) κοντὰ στὸν Κύριο· καὶ **ἄρχισε νὰ ἐρευνᾷς τὸ Χριστὸ** μὲ ὅλους τοὺς φακούς τοῦ πνεύματός σου. Καὶ νὰ εἶσαι ἐκ τῶν προτέρων βέβαιος ὅτι, ὅσο θὰ ἐξετάζης σοβαρὰ τὸν ἴδιο καὶ τὴ διδασκαλία του, τόσο καὶ περισσότερο φῶς θὰ σοῦ ἀποκαλύπτεται ἀπὸ τὸ πρόσωπό του, τόσο καὶ πιὸ δυνατὰ θὰ ἐλκύεσαι ἀπὸ τὴ μεγάλη αὐτὴ φυσιογνωμία ποὺ λέγεται Ἰησοῦς Χριστός.

Ἀπορεῖς καὶ διατάξεις ἀκόμη; Λοιπὸν **ἄνοιξε τὸ Εὐαγγέλιό του**. Ἐκεῖ θ' ἀκούσης τὴ γλυκεῖα καὶ αὐθεντικὴ φωνή του. Μελέτησε ὅχι ἐπιπόλαια ἀλλὰ προσεκτικὰ τὴ διδασκαλία του. Σύγκρινέ την, ἂν ἔχῃς τὸν καιρὸ καὶ τὰ μέσα, μὲ τὴ διδασκαλία ὁποιοῦδήποτε ἄλλου σοφοῦ τῶν ἀρχαιοτέρων ἢ τῶν νεωτέρων χρόνων. Συνέχισε τὴν ἔρευνά σου παραβάλλοντάς τὴ διδασκαλία τοῦ Ἰησοῦ μὲ τὴ διδασκαλία κάθε ἄλλης θρησκείας παλαιᾶς ἢ νέας. Ἀπὸ τὴν ἔρευνά σου αὕτη θὰ βγῇ λαμπρότερος ὁ Χριστός. Καὶ Αἰνστάιν ἀκόμη ἂν εἶσαι στὸ πνεῦμα καὶ στὴν ἐπιστήμη, θὰ ὁμολογήσῃς τὴν ἀλήθεια, ὅτι «ἡ δύναμις τῆς προσωπικότητος τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἀναβλύζει ἀπὸ κάθε λέξι του· τὰ λόγια του εἶνε ἀξιοθαύμαστα. Καὶ ἐὰν ἀκόμη μερικὰ ἀπὸ τὰ λόγια του εἰπώθηκαν πρὶν ἀπὸ αὐτὸν μὲ τὸν ἴδιο τρόπο, κανένας ὁμῶς λόγος του δὲν ἐκτομίστηκε μὲ τόσο **θεϊκὸ τρόπο**». Ἀληθινὰ, θὰ πῇς κ' ἐσὺ ὅπως εἶπαν ἐνωρίτερα κάποιοι ἄλλοι, «οὐδέποτε οὕτως ἐλάλησεν ἄνθρωπος, ὥς οὗτος ὁ ἄνθρωπος», ποτέ δὲν μίλησε ἄλλος ἄνθρωπος ὅπως ὁ ἄνθρωπος αὐτός (βλ. 7,46).

Ἀλλὰ ἐγὼ δὲν σε συμβουλεύω νὰ σταματήσῃ ὡς ἐδῶ ἡ ἔρευνά σου. Ἐφ' ὅσον ζητᾷς ἀποδείξεις, ἐγὼ ποτέ δὲν θὰ σοῦ προβάλλω τὸ διαδεδομένο ῥητὸ «**πίστευε καὶ μὴ ἐρεῦνα**». Τὸ ῥητὸ αὐτό, ἂν κάνετε τὸν κόπο νὰ τὸ ἀναζητήσετε, δὲν θὰ τὸ βρῇτε πουθενὰ μέσα στὴν ἀγία Γραφή· γι' αὐτὸ καὶ δὲν ἐκφράζει τὸ καθαρὸ καὶ φωτεινὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ Χριστιανισμοῦ. Εἶνε φανερό ὅτι τὸ «**πίστευε καὶ μὴ ἐρεῦνα**» ἀποτελεῖ θρησκευτικὸ παράγγελμα κοινότητος ποὺ θέλει νὰ διαμορφώσῃ ὁπαδοὺς ἄβουλους, χωρὶς κρίσις, καὶ μὲ τυφλὴ πειθαρχία στὴν ἡγεσία τοῦ δόγματος.

Ἐγὼ, ἀντιθέτως, θὰ σοῦ συστήσω **ἔρευνα, περισσότερη ἔρευνα**. Ἐρεῦνησε ὅχι μόνον τὴ διδασκαλία ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴ ζωὴ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, καθὼς ἐπίσης καὶ τὸ τέλος τοῦ ἐπιγείου βίου του· κι ὅταν ἐρευνήσῃς, θὰ δῇς μὲ θαυμασμό, ὅτι τὸ ἡθικὸ ἀνάστημα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ὑψώνεται

σὰν μία τεράστια πνευματικὴ στήλη ποὺ φωτίζει αἰῶνες τώρα τὸν κόσμον· θὰ δῇς, ὅτι «ἡ ἀρετὴ του ἐκάλυψε» καὶ αὐτοὺς τοὺς «οὐρανοὺς» ὅπως εἶπε ὁ προφήτης (βλ. 33).

Ἐὰν καὶ μετὰ ἀπὸ αὐτὰ ὑπολείπονται ἀκόμη μέσα στὴν ψυχὴ σου ἀμφιβολίες καὶ δισταγμοί, μπρός! συνέχισε τὴν ἔρευνά σου· Ῥίξε τώρα τὸν προβολέα τῆς ἐρεῦνης σου ὅχι πιά στὸ πρόσωπο τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἀλλὰ στὸ ἔργο ποὺ ἐκεῖνος μὲ τὸ τίμο αἷμα του θεμελίωσε, δηλαδὴ στὴν **Ἐκκλησίᾳ** του. Ἐδῶ θὰ βρεθῇς μπροστὰ σὲ νέες ἐκπλήξεις. Θὰ δῇς τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν, τὸ αἰώνιο αὐτὸ θεανθρώπινο σῶμα, νὰ παλεύῃ ἐναντίον μυρίων ἐχθρῶν, νὰ προχωρῇ διὰ μέσου τῶν αἰώνων σὰν πλοῖο, νὰ κλυδωνίζεται μέσα στὸν ὠκεανὸ τῆς ἀνθρωπότητος, ἀλλὰ ποτέ νὰ μὴν καταποντίζεται. Θὰ δῇς ἐπίσης τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν σὰν ἰατρεῖο καὶ θεραπευτήριον, ποὺ παρέχει φάρμακα καὶ καταπολεμεῖ τὰ πάθη. Θὰ δῇς τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν ἀκόμη σὰν ἀπαράμιλλο σχολεῖο, ποὺ ἐργάζεται γιὰ τὴν πνευματικὴ καὶ ἠθικὴ ἀναμόρφωσι λαῶν καὶ ἀτόμων, σὰν μοναδικὸ κέντρο ἁγιασμοῦ καὶ ψυχικῆς λυτρώσεως. Θὰ δῇς ἀκόμη τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν καὶ σὰν προμαχῶνα κατὰ τῆς βαρβαρότητος, σὰν ἀφθαστο πολιτιστικὸ φορέα ποὺ ἐξευγενίζει τὰ ἔθνη καὶ τὴ ζωὴ τῆς ἀνθρωπότητος. Θὰ δῇς τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν καὶ σὰν ἀκατάλυτο φρούριον καὶ «**πύργον ἰσχύος**» (βλ. 10,3), μέσα στὸν ὁποῖο φυλάσσονται τὰ ὑψηλότερα ἰδανικά καὶ οἱ κατακτήσεις τοῦ κόσμου. Θὰ δῇς τέλος τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν σὰν τὴ νέα κιβωτό, ἡ ὁποία διασώζει ὅ,τι πολυτιμότερο ὑπάρχει ἀπὸ τὰ δημιουργήματα τοῦ Κτίστου, τὴν ἀθάνατες ψυχές, γιὰ νὰ τίς φέρει ἀλώβητες στὸ λιμάνι τῆς οὐρανόου βασιλείας τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

Ὡς δὲ οὐσίτοι τοῦ σημερινοῦ αἰῶνος, μὴ μένετε στὴν ἀπιστία σας. Πόσο εὐτυχέστεροι ἀπὸ τὸ Ὡμα εἶστε! Ἐκεῖνος τότε μπορούσε νὰ ἐρευνῇ μόνον τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ, αὐτὸ ἦταν τὸ ἀντικείμενο τῆς ἐρεῦνης του. Ἐσεῖς τώρα ἔχετε ἓνα ἀπέραντο πεδίο ἐρεῦνης, τὸ ὁποῖο δημιούργησε μία γόνιμη **ἱστορία** 20 αἰώνων Χριστιανισμοῦ. Μὴ διστάσετε λοιπόν. **Ζητήστε τὸ Χριστὸ καὶ ἐρευνήστε τον διὰ μέσου τῆς ἱστορίας**. Θὰ τὸν δῇτε νὰ ξεπροβάλλῃ σὰν ὁλόλαμπρος ἥλιος ἀπὸ κάθε τῆς σελίδας. Μπροστὰ στὸ θεϊκὸ τοῦ φῶς ἐλπίζω ὅτι κ' ἐσεῖς τελικά, ὅπως καὶ τόσοι ἄλλοι, θὰ ἐνώσετε τὴ φωνή σας μαζί μὲ τὴ φωνή τοῦ Ὡμα καὶ θὰ κάνετε τὴν μακαρία ὁμολογία «**Ὁ Κύριός μου καὶ ὁ Θεός μου**».

(†) **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

Fight the Good Fight of Faith

"Let us celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." ... Elsewhere the Apostle says: "Let us run with fidelity the race that has been set before us, with our eyes on Jesus, the origin and the goal of our faith."

So a man who openly despises the accolades of this world and rejects all earthly glory must also practice self-denial. Such self-denial means that you never seek your own will but God's, using God's will as a sure guide; it also means possessing nothing apart from what is held in common.

In this way it will be easier for you to carry out your superior's commands promptly, in joy and in hope; this is required of Christ's servants who are redeemed for service to the brethren. For this is what the Lord wants when He says: Whoever wishes to be first and great among you must be the last of all and a servant to all.

Our service of mankind must be given freely. One who is in such a position must be subject to everyone and serve his brothers as if he were paying off a debt.

Moreover, those who are in charge should work harder than the others and conduct themselves with greater submission than their own subjects. Their lives should serve as a visible example of what service means, and they should remember that those who are committed to their trust are held in trust from God.

Those, then, who are in a position of authority must look after their brothers as conscientious teachers look after the young children who have been handed over to them by their parents.

If both disciples and masters have this loving relationship, then subjects will be happy to obey whatever is commanded, while superiors will be delighted to lead their brothers to perfection. If you try to outdo one another in showing respect, your life on earth will be like that of the angels.

St. Gregory of Nyssa

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