



DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN
DISTRICT

THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN April 2nd, 2017

V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

FIFTH SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST SUNDAY OF SAINT MARY OF EGYPT



Icon of Saint Mary and Saint Zosimos

Prokeimenon. Mode Plagal 4.

Psalm 75.11,1

Make your vows to the Lord our God and perform them.

Verse: God is known in Judah; his name is great in Israel.

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 9:11-14

BRETHREN, when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

Προκείμενον. Ἦχος πλ. δ'.

ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 75.11,1

Εὕξασθε καὶ ἀπόδοτε Κυρίῳ τῷ Θεῷ ἡμῶν.

Στίχ. Γνωστὸς ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ ὁ Θεός, ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ μέγα τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ.

Πρὸς Ἑβραίους 9:11-14 τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα εἶναι απο

Ἀδελφοί, Χριστὸς δὲ παραγενόμενος ἀρχιερεὺς τῶν μελλόντων ἀγαθῶν, διὰ τῆς μείζονος καὶ τελειοτέρας σκηνῆς, οὐ χειροποιήτου, τοῦτ' ἔστιν, οὐ ταύτης τῆς κτίσεως, οὐδὲ δι' αἵματος τράγων καὶ μόσχων, διὰ δὲ τοῦ ἰδίου αἵματος εἰσῆλθεν ἐφάπαξ εἰς τὰ ἅγια, αἰωνίαν λύτρωσιν εὐράμενος. Εἰ γὰρ τὸ αἷμα ταύρων καὶ τράγων, καὶ σποδὸς δαμάλεως ῥαντίζουσα τοὺς κεκοινωμένους, ἀγιάζει πρὸς τὴν τῆς σαρκὸς καθαρότητα, πόσῳ μᾶλλον τὸ αἷμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὃς διὰ πνεύματος αἰωνίου ἑαυτὸν προσήνεγκεν ἁμωμον τῷ θεῷ, καθαριεὶ τὴν συνείδησιν ὑμῶν ἀπὸ νεκρῶν ἔργων, εἰς τὸ λατρεῦειν θεῷ ζῶντι;

Annunciation Of The Theotokos

The Gospel According To Mark 10:32-45

At that time, Jesus taking the twelve again, he began to tell them what was to happen to him, saying, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death, and deliver him to the Gentiles; and they will mock him, and spit upon him, and scourge him, and kill him; and after three days he will rise." And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him, and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." And he said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?" And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" And they said to him, "We are able." And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared." And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant of James and John. And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are supposed to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Εὐαγγελισμὸς Τῆς Θεοτόκου

Ἐκ Τοῦ Κατὰ Μάρκον 10:32-45 Εὐαγγελίου Τὸ Ἀνάγνωσμα

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, παραλαμβάνει ὁ Ἰησοῦς τοὺς δώδεκα μαθητάς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἤρξατο αὐτοῖς λέγειν τὰ μέλλοντα αὐτῷ συμβαίνειν, ὅτι ἰδοὺ ἀναβαίνομεν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου παραδοθήσεται τοῖς ἀρχιερεῦσι καὶ γραμματεῦσι, καὶ κατακρινοῦσιν αὐτὸν θανάτῳ καὶ παραδώσουσιν αὐτὸν τοῖς ἔθνεσι, καὶ ἐμπαΐξουσιν αὐτῷ καὶ μαστιγώσουσιν αὐτὸν καὶ ἐμπτύσουσιν αὐτῷ καὶ ἀποκτενοῦσιν αὐτόν, καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἀναστήσεται. Καὶ προσπορεύονται αὐτῷ Ἰάκωβος καὶ Ἰωάννης υἱοὶ Ζεβεδαίου λέγοντες· διδάσκαλε, θέλομεν ἵνα ὁ ἕκαστος ἡμῶν ποιήσῃς ἡμῖν. ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· τί θέλετε ποιῆσαί με ὑμῖν; οἱ δὲ εἶπον αὐτῷ· δὸς ἡμῖν ἵνα εἴς ἐκ δεξιῶν σου καὶ εἴς ἐξ ἐωνύμων σου καθίσωμεν ἐν τῇ δόξῃ σου. ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· οὐκ οἴδατε τί αἰτεῖσθε. δύνασθε πιεῖν τὸ ποτήριον ὃ ἐγὼ πίνω, καὶ τὸ βάπτισμα ὃ ἐγὼ βαπτίζομαι βαπτισθῆναι; οἱ δὲ εἶπον αὐτῷ· δυνάμεθα. ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· τὸ μὲν ποτήριον ὃ ἐγὼ πίνω πίεσθε, καὶ τὸ βάπτισμα ὃ ἐγὼ βαπτίζομαι βαπτισθήσεσθε· τὸ δὲ καθίσαί ἐκ δεξιῶν μου καὶ ἐξ ἐωνύμων οὐκ ἔστιν ἐμὸν δοῦναι, ἀλλ' οἷς ἡτοίμασται. Καὶ ἀκούσαντες οἱ δέκα ἤρξαντο ἀγανακτεῖν περὶ Ἰακώβου καὶ Ἰωάννου. ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς προσκαλεσάμενος αὐτοὺς λέγει αὐτοῖς· οἴδατε ὅτι οἱ δοκοῦντες ἀρχεῖν τῶν ἐθνῶν κατακυριεύουσιν αὐτῶν καὶ οἱ μεγάλοι αὐτῶν κατεξουσιάζουσιν αὐτῶν· οὐχ οὕτω δὲ ἔσται ἐν ὑμῖν, ἀλλ' ὃς ἐάν θέλῃ γενέσθαι μέγας ἐν ὑμῖν, ἔσται ὑμῶν διάκονος, καὶ ὃς ἐάν θέλῃ ὑμῶν γενέσθαι πρῶτος, ἔσται πάντων δοῦλος· καὶ γὰρ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἦλθε διακονηθῆναι, ἀλλὰ διακονῆσαι, καὶ δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν.

DEVOTIONS THIS WEEK:

Sunday	April 02nd,	Liturgy of Saint Mary of Egypt	10:30 A.M.
		LAST DAY FOR MEMORIAL COMMEMORATIONS!	11:30 A.M.
		GREEK SCHOOL INDEPENDENCE DAY Program	12:00 P.M.
		Last Sunday for MEMORIAL TRIBUTES until after Saint Thomas Sunday	
Sunday	April 02nd,	Pan Orthodox Vesper at Holy Cross (Bay Ridge) -----	5:00 P.M.
		Fr. Eugene , Guest Homilist -----	-- 6:00 P.M.
Wednesday	April 05th,	Pre-Sanctified Liturgy of St. Gregory -----	9:30 A.M.
Saturday	April 08th,	Liturgy of Saint Lazarus -(Artoklasia by Raptis Family)	9:00 A.M.
Sunday	April 09th,	P A L M S U N D A Y	Orthos
			9:00 A.M.
			Liturgy
			10:30 A.M.
		Orthos (morning prayers will be observed in the UPPER CHURCH -----	until 10:30 A.M.
		Divine Liturgy of the PALM will commence in the LOWER CHURCH(to accommodate the crowd)	10:30 A.M.
		UKRAINIAN ARCHBISHOP ANTHONY will make a hierarchical visit -----	12:00 noon
Sunday	April 09,	NYMPHIOS SERVICE (church proper)	7:00 P.M.

AGAPE COFFEE FELLOWSHIP: is being hosted today by the Greek School P.T.A. Open to all. Please join us in ROSEHALL.

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.

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE: is available in the Church office upon request. The sacred Schedule of services was mailed to all stewards of the Church. DID YOU NOT GET YOURS? REGISTER TODAY WITH THE PARISH FOR ALL MAILINGS. 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.

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](#))

MEMORIAL TODAY: + DEMETRIOS ANTIARIS

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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)

Ἐκδίδεται ἀπὸ τὴν Κοινοβιακὴ Γυναικίᾳ Ἰερὰ Μονὴ Ἁγίου Αἰγυσιανοῦ Φλωρίνης – 531 00 ΦΛΩΡΙΝΑ – τηλ. 23850-23616 – imassfio@yahoo.gr

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος ΑΔ'
Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 2006

Κυριακὴ Ε' Νηστειῶν (Μάρκ. 10,32-45)
2 Ἀπριλίου 2017

Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος
Αἰγυσιανός Ν. Καντιώτης

Ἄστοχα αἰτήματα

«Οὐκ οἶδατε τί αἰτεῖσθε» (Μάρκ. 10,38)

Τὸ τέλος, ἀγαπητοί μου, τὸ τέλος τοῦ ἐπιγείου βίου τοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ πλησίαζε πλέον. Στὸν ὁρίζοντα τῆς πορείας του ἐμφανίζονται τώρα τὰ **πρῶτα σύννεφα**. Μετὰ ἀπὸ λίγο τὰ σύννεφα αὐτὰ τοῦ μίσους καὶ τῆς σατανικῆς ἀντιδράσεως κατὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου θὰ πυκνώσουν, θὰ πυκνώσουν πολὺ, σὲ ἀφάνταστο βαθμό, καὶ τέλος τῇ Μεγάλῃ Ἑβδομάδᾳ θὰ **ξεσπάσῃ θύελλα**, ἡ πρωτοφανὴς ἐκείνη θύελλα τῶν παθῶν, τῶν ἀχράντων παθῶν τοῦ Κυρίου, ποὺ θὰ καταλήξῃ στὸ φρικτὸ ἔγκλημα τοῦ **Γολγοθᾶ**.

Ὅλες τὶς λεπτομέρειες τῶν ἐξελίξεων αὐτῶν τις προγνώνει ὁ Κύριος, καὶ ἐπειδὴ δὲν θέλει ἡ θύελλα νὰ βρῇ τοὺς μαθητάς του τελείως ἀπροετοιμαστούς ψυχικά, τοὺς παίρνει ἰδιαίτερος καὶ «*ἤρξατο αὐτοῖς λέγειν τὰ μέλλοντα αὐτῷ συμβαίνειν*», ἄρχισε νὰ τοὺς λέγῃ **ἐκεῖνα ποὺ ἐπρόκειτο νὰ τοῦ συμβοῦν** (Μάρκ. 10,32).

Ἄλλ' ἐνῶ αὐτὰ ποὺ λέει εἶνε συνταρακτικά, καθὼς μπροστὰ στὰ νοερά μάτια τῶν μαθητῶν ξετυλίγει τὴ φοβερὴ σειρὰ τῶν παθημάτων ποὺ θὰ ὑποστῇ, παραδόξως τὰ λόγια τοῦ Διδασκάλου δὲν προκαλοῦν στοὺς ἀποστόλους κάτι ἰδιαίτερο, αἰσθήματα συγκινήσεως καὶ φόβου. Οἱ μαθηταὶ φαίνεται ὅτι δὲν μποροῦν νὰ φανταστοῦν, πῶς ὁ Διδάσκαλός τους θὰ φανῇ τόσο ἀδύναμος, ὥστε νὰ καταντήσῃ παιχνίδι στὰ χέρια τῶν ἐχθρῶν του. Ὅχι· αὐτοὶ πιστεύουν, ὅτι ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶνε πανίσχυρος, ὅτι εἶνε αὐτὸς ποὺ ἡ δύναμις του θὰ συντρίψῃ ὅλους τοὺς ἀντιπάλους, θὰ ἐκμηδενίσῃ κάθε ἐμπόδιο, θὰ καταλύσῃ κάθε ἄλλη ἀρχὴ καὶ ἐξουσίᾳ στὸ Ἰουδαϊκὸ ἔθνος, καὶ τέλος θ' ἀναγορευθῇ θριαμβευτικὰ ἀπὸ ὅλους τοὺς Ἰουδαίους ὁ νέος βασιλεὺς τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ, ἀσυγκρίτως ἐνδοξότερος ἀπὸ τὸν Δαυὶδ καὶ τὸν Σολομώντα. **Πόσο μακριὰ ὅμως βρίσκονταν ἀπὸ τὴ σκληρὴ πραγματικότητα!**

Ἐχοντας τέτοιες παιδαριώδεις καὶ νηπι-

ακὲς ἀντιλήψεις οἱ δώδεκα μαθηταὶ γιὰ τὸν χαρακτήρα τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἀδυνατοῦν νὰ συλλάβουν τὸ νόημα ποὺ κλείνουν τὰ προφητικὰ λόγια τοῦ Διδασκάλου τους γιὰ τὸ τέλος του, ποὺ πλησίαζει. Ὁνειροπολοῦν γιὰ θρόνους καὶ τιμὲς βασιλικές. Κ' ἐπιθυμοῦν ἀπὸ τώρα νὰ ἐξασφαλίσουν γιὰ τοὺς ἑαυτοὺς των τὶς πρώτες θέσεις στὸ κοσμικὸ βασίλειο τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ποὺ φαντάζονται πῶς θὰ ἰδρυθῇ!

Ἡ ἐπιθυμία αὐτὴ ὑπάρχει στὶς καρδιὲς ὅλων τῶν μαθητῶν. Ἀλλὰ δύο ἀπὸ αὐτοὺς, ὁ **Ἰάκωβος καὶ ὁ Ἰωάννης τὰ ἀδέρφια**, τολμοῦν καὶ τὴν ἐξωτερικεύουν, τὴν ἐκφράζουν στὸν Κύριο. Βρίσκουν εὐκαιρία καὶ τοῦ ὑποβάλλουν τὴ θερμὴ παράκλησί τους, οἱ πρῶτες θέσεις στὴ νέα κυβέρνησι νὰ δοθοῦν σ' αὐτούς. «*Δός ἡμῖν*», λένε, «*ἵνα εἴς ἐκ δεξιῶν σου καὶ εἴς ἐξ ἐξωνύμων σου καθίσωμεν ἐν τῇ δόξῃ σου*»· κάνε μας τὴ χάρι, ὅταν θ' ἀναγορευθῇς ἐνδοξος βασιλεὺς, νὰ καθίσουμε ὁ ἕνας στὰ δεξιὰ σου κι ὁ ἄλλος στ' ἀριστερά σου (ἐλ. 10,37). Καὶ ὁ Ἰησοῦς, βλέποντας πόσο οἱ μαθηταὶ του ἔχουν παρεξηγήσει τὰ λόγια του καὶ τὸ σκοπὸ τοῦ ἔργου του, τοὺς ἀπαντᾷ· «*Οὐκ οἶδατε τί αἰτεῖσθε*» (ἐλ. 10,38). Ἄν ξέρατε τί πρόκειται ν' ἀκολουθήσῃ, δὲν θὰ ὑποβάλλατε τέτοιο αἶτημα.

Ἀλλὰ ἡ παρατήρησι αὐτὴ τοῦ Κυρίου, ἀγαπητοί μου, τὸ «*Οὐκ οἶδατε τί αἰτεῖσθε*» (=δὲν ξέρετε τί ζητᾶτε) θὰ ταίριαζε ἄριστα καὶ σὲ πολλοὺς ἀπὸ μᾶς τοὺς σημερινοὺς Χριστιανούς. Γιατί κ' ἐμεῖς τώρα, ὅπως οἱ μαθηταὶ τότε, δὲν ἔχουμε καταλάβει τὴν πνευματικότητα τῆς θρησκείας τοῦ Ἰησοῦ. Γι' αὐτὸ καὶ οἱ πόθοι τῶν καρδιῶν μας δὲν εἶνε πνευματικοί, καὶ τὰ **αἰτήματά μας**, γεννήματα τῶν πόθων, **δὲν εἶνε πνευματικά**. Ὡς νήπια ποθοῦμε καὶ ζητοῦμε πράγματα ποὺ εἶνε ἄλλοτε μὲν **γελοῖα**, ἄλλοτε πάλι **ἀπραγματοποιήτα**, καὶ πολλὰς φορὲς **ἐπικίνδυνα** ὄχι μόνον γιὰ τὴν ψυχὴ

μας αλλά και γι' αυτήν ακόμα τη σωματική μας κατάσταση. Τὸ νήπιο κλαίει, γιατί ὁ πατέρας του δὲν τ' ἀφήνει ν' ἀγγίξῃ τὰ ἀναμμένα κάρβουνα ἢ νὰ πιάσῃ τὸ μαχαίρι ποὺ γυαλίζει. Καὶ ὅμως μέσα στὴν ἄρνησι αὐτὴ τοῦ πατέρα ὑπάρχει ἡ ἀσφάλεια καὶ ἡ εὐτυχία τοῦ παιδιοῦ. Γιατὶ ξέρεῖ ὁ πολὺπειρος πατέρας ἐκεῖνο ποὺ δὲν ξέρεῖ τὸ ἄπειρο παιδί· ξέρεῖ, ὅτι ἡ φωτιά θὰ κάψῃ καὶ τὸ μαχαίρι θὰ πληγώσῃ τὸ παιδί, καὶ γι' αὐτὸ στίς ἐπίμονες παρακλήσεις τοῦ μικροῦ ὁ πατέρας ἀντιτάσσει ψυχραιμὴ καὶ μυσωμένη ἄρνησι.

Κάτι παρόμοιο λοιπὸν κάνει καὶ ὁ Κύριος σ' ἐμᾶς. Ἐπειδὴ γνωρίζει ἐκεῖνος ὅτι **πολλά** –τὰ περισσότερα θὰ μπορούσαμε νὰ ποῦμε– ἀπὸ τὰ αἰτήματά μας, ὅσο λογικὰ καὶ ἀναγκαῖα κι ἂν φαίνονται σ' ἐμᾶς, εἶνε **ἔξω ἀπὸ τὸν προορισμό μας** καὶ θὰ ὀδηγήσουν σὲ φοβερὴ διαταραχὴ τοῦ πνευματικοῦ μας βίου, γι' αὐτὸ δὲν πραγματοποιεῖ κάθε τι ποὺ τοῦ ζητοῦμε· καὶ ἔτσι, μέσα ἀπὸ τὰ διάφορα γεγονότα τῆς ζωῆς μας, εἶνε σὰν ν' ἀκούμε τὴ φωνή του νὰ μᾶς ἀπαντᾷ· «*Οὐκ οἶδατε τί αἰτεῖσθε*».

● **Τί ζητοῦμε; Δόξα!** Ἀλλὰ ποιὸς ξέρεῖ, ἂν τίσω ἀπὸ τῆς δόξας δὲν κρύβεται ἡ ἀγχόνῃ μας, ἡ καταστροφὴ μας; Ἐμεῖς τὸ ἀγνοοῦμε· τὸ γνωρίζει ὅμως ἐκεῖνος, «*ὁ ἐπιβλέπων ἀβύσσους*». Κ' ἐπειδὴ γνωρίζει τί πολλὰς φορὲς κρύβεται πίσω ἀπ' τοὺς λαμπροστολισμένους θρόνους, γι' αὐτὸ δὲν μᾶς τὸ δίνει, ὅσο κι ἂν κοπιᾶζουμε, ὅσο κι ἂν παρακαλοῦμε. Οἱ ἐνδοξοὶ συχνὰ προκαλοῦν ἄλλους, ποὺ ἀπὸ μισαλλοδοξία τοὺς φθονοῦν, τοὺς ἐπιβουλεύονται καὶ πολλὰς φορὲς τοὺς ἐξοντώνουν. Ἐμείνε στὴν ἱστορία τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Ῥωμαίου Βρούτου, ποὺ μαζί με ἄλλους δολοφόνησε τὸν Ἰούλιο Καίσαρα. Συμφέρει ἄραγε νὰ ἐκτίθεται κανεὶς σὲ τέτοιο κίνδυνο; Νά λοιπὸν γιατί τὸ νὰ ζητοῦμε δόξα εἶνε ἄστοχο καὶ νὰ γιατί δὲν εἰσακουόμεθα. Μᾶς ἀγαπάει ὁ Κύριος!

● **Τί ἄλλο ζητοῦμε; Πλοῦτη!** Ἀλλὰ ποιὸς ξέρεῖ, ἂν τὰ πλοῦτη δὲν ὀδηγήσουν τὴν ψυχὴ μας σὲ παγίδες καὶ σὲ γκρεμοὺς τῆς ἀσωτίας, τῆς φιλαργυρίας, τῆς ἀδικίας; Ὁ Κύριος ὅμως γνωρίζει· βλέπει τὴν ἀδυναμία μας, ἡ ὁποία μόνον μετὰ τὸ χαλινάρι τῆς φτώχειας συγκρατεῖται μέσα σὲ ὅρια κάποιας ἠθικῆς, καὶ δὲν μᾶς δίνει πλοῦτη. Δὲν μᾶς ἀφήνει ν' ἀνεβοῦμε κοινωνικὰ πρὸς ψηλὰ ἀπὸ τοὺς ἄλλους, γιατί τὰ ψυχικὰ μας τρόπον τινὰ «μηχανήματα» δὲν ἀντέχουν γιὰ μεγάλες πτήσεις καὶ ὑπάρχει κίνδυνος νὰ πέσουμε καὶ νὰ συντριβοῦμε στὴ θάλασσα τῆς ἀμαρτίας σὰν ἄλλοι Ἰκαροὶ. Τὰ πλοῦτη ἀπατοῦν τὸν ἄνθρωπο καὶ τὸν μπλέ-

κουν μέσα σ' ἓνα πλήθος ἀπὸ κινδύνους, φόβους, ἀπογοητεύσεις καὶ μέριμνες βιωτικές. Ἀπὸ ὅλα αὐτά, ποὺ παρομοιάζονται μετὰ ἀγκάθια (βλ. *Ματθ. 13,7,22*), μᾶς ἀπαλλάσσει ὁ Κύριος ὅταν κωφεύει στὸ αἶτημα νὰ μᾶς δώσῃ πλοῦτη. Μᾶς κρατᾷ χαμηλά, γιατί μᾶς ἀγαπάει!

● **Τί ἄλλο ἀκόμη ζητοῦμε; Ἡδονή!** Ἀλλὰ καὶ πάλι δὲν γνωρίζουμε ἢ μᾶλλον –λόγω τοῦ σκοτισμοῦ τῶν παθῶν μας– δὲν βλέπουμε τὸ θλιβερὸ κατάντημα στὸ ὁποῖο κατέληξαν καὶ καταλήγουν καθημερινῶς οἱ δοῦλοι καὶ ὑπηρέτες τῶν ἡδονῶν. Ὁ κορεσμὸς καὶ ἡ μέθη τῶν αἰσθήσεων παραλύει καὶ ἀχρηστεύει τὸν ἄνθρωπο· οἱ ὑπερβολικὲς ἀπολαύσεις τῆς γεύσεως μετὰ φαγητὰ καὶ ποτὰ ὑποσκάπτουν τὴν ὑγεία καὶ ὀδηγοῦν στὸν τάφο· οἱ ἀπολαύσεις τῆς σαρκὸς μολύνουν σώματα καὶ ψυχές, δημιουργοῦν οἰκογενειακὰ δράματα, διαδίδουν ἀφροδίσια νοσήματα, διαλύουν κοινωνίες, ἀφανίζουν ἔθνη. Μ' ἓνα λόγο, οἱ ἡδονὲς προκαλοῦν ὀδύνες, ὅπως βεβαιώνουν ὀλοφάνερα τὰ νοσοκομεῖα, τὰ ἄσυλα τῶν ἀνιάτων, οἱ λεγόμενοι παράδεισοι τῶν ναρκωτικῶν. Καὶ ὁ Κύριος, μετὰ διάφορα προσκόμματα, μετὰ ἀπογοητεύσεις καὶ ἀσθένειες, μᾶς ἀποτρέπει ἀπὸ τὸ δρόμο αὐτόν, γιατί μᾶς ἀγαπάει, θέλει τὸ καλὸ μας.

● **Τί ζητοῦμε ἐπὶ τέλους;** νὰ ἐκδικηθοῦμε τοὺς ἐχθροὺς μας; νὰ ματαιωθοῦν τὰ σχέδια τῶν ἄλλων; νὰ γιγαντωθοῦν οἱ ἐπιχειρήσεις μας;... Τὸ μέλλον μᾶς εἶνε τελείως ἀγνωστο. Εἶνε γνωστὸ σὲ ὅλες τὶς λεπτομέρειες στὸν Κύριο. Αὐτὸς καὶ μόνον γνωρίζει τί συμφέρει σ' ἐμᾶς ἀπὸ κάθε ἀποψι.

Ἐάν, ἀγαπητοί μου, ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς γιὰ τοὺς ἐχθροὺς του ὅταν τὸν σταύρωναν εἶπε «*Οὐ γὰρ οἶδατε τί ποιοῦσι*» (Ἰακ. 23,9), γιὰ τοὺς δικούς του ὅταν τοῦ ὑποβάλλουν ἄστοχα αἰτήματα τί θὰ ἔλεγε; «*Οὐ γὰρ οἶδατε τί αἰτοῦσι*»! Καὶ ὁ θεόπνευστος λόγος τῆς Καινῆς Διαθήκης μᾶς ἐλέγχει λέγοντας· «*Αἰτεῖτε καὶ οὐ λαμβάνετε, διότι κακῶς αἰτεῖσθε, ἵνα ἐν ταῖς ἡδοναῖς ὑμῶν δαπανήσητε*» (Ἰακ. 4,3).

Γι' αὐτὸ ἂς θέτουμε πάντοτε τὰ αἰτήματά μας ὑπὸ τὴν ἐγκρισί του, καὶ μὴ δυσανασχετοῦμε ἂν μερικὰ ἢ καὶ ὅλα τυχόν ὅσα ζητοῦμε ἀπορρίπτονται ἀπὸ τὸν Κύριο καὶ δὲν παίρνουν τὸ δρόμο τῆς πραγματοποιήσεως. Πάντοτε ἂς ἐνώνουμε τὴ φωνὴ μας μετὰ τὴ φωνὴ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας μας, ἡ ὁποία δέεται στὸν Κύριο· «*Τὰ καλὰ καὶ συμφέροντα ταῖς ψυχαῖς ἡμῶν καὶ εἰρήνῃν τῷ κόσμῳ παρὰ τοῦ Κυρίου αἰτησώμεθα*».

(†) **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 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

The Mystery of Mankind's Reconciliation with God

He who is true God was born in the complete and perfect nature of a true man, whole in His own nature, whole in ours. By our nature we mean what the Creator had fashioned in us from the beginning, and took to Himself in order to restore it.

He took the nature of a servant without stain of sin, enlarging our humanity without diminishing His divinity. He emptied himself, though invisible He made himself visible, though Creator and Lord of all things He chose to be one of us mortal men. Yet this was the condescension of compassion, not the loss of omnipotence.

Beyond our grasp, He chose to come within our grasp. Existing before time began, He began to exist at a moment in time. Lord of the universe, He hid His infinite glory and took the nature of a servant. Incapable of suffering as God, He did not refuse to be a man, capable of suffering. Immortal, He chose to be subject to the laws of death.

He who is true God is also true man. There is no falsehood in this unity as long as the lowliness of man and the pre-eminence of God coexist in mutual relationship.

As God does not change by His condescension, so man is not swallowed up by being exalted. Each nature exercises its own activity, in communion with the other. The Word does what is proper to the Word, the flesh fulfills what is proper to the flesh.

One nature is resplendent with miracles, the other falls victim to injuries. As the Word does not lose equality with the Father's glory, so the flesh does not leave behind the nature of our race.

One and the same person – this must be said over and over again – is truly the Son of God and truly the son of man. He is God in virtue of the fact that in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He is man in virtue of the fact that the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.

St. Leo the Great

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