



THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN June 25th, 2017
V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST THIRD SUNDAY OF MATTHEW



Icon of Saints Peter and Paul -- June 29th

St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 5:1-10

Prokeimenon. Mode 2.

Psalm 117.14,18

The Lord is my strength and my song.

Verse: The Lord has chastened me sorely.

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 5:1-10

BRETHREN, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God. More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us. While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Why, one will hardly die for a righteous man -- though perhaps for a good man one will dare even to die. But God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we are now justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

Προκείμενον. Ἦχος β'.

ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 117.14,18

Ἰσχύς μου καὶ ὑμνησίς μου ὁ Κύριος.

Στίχ. Παιδεύων ἐπαίδευσέ με ὁ Κύριος.

Πρὸς Ῥωμαίους 5:1-10 τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα εἶναι ἀπο

Ἀδελφοί, δικαιοθέντες οὖν ἐκ πίστεως, εἰρήνην ἔχομεν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν διὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, δι' οὗ καὶ τὴν προσαγωγὴν ἐσχήκαμεν τῇ πίστει εἰς τὴν χάριν ταύτην ἐν ᾗ ἐστήκαμεν, καὶ καυχώμεθα ἐπ' ἐλπίδι τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ. Οὐ μόνον δέ, ἀλλὰ καὶ καυχώμεθα ἐν ταῖς θλίψεσιν, εἰδότες ὅτι ἡ θλίψις ὑπομονὴν κατεργάζεται, ἡ δὲ ὑπομονὴ δοκιμὴν, ἡ δὲ δοκιμὴ ἐλπίδα· ἡ δὲ ἐλπίς οὐ καταισχύνει, ὅτι ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ ἐκκέχυται ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου τοῦ δοθέντος ἡμῖν. Ἔτι γὰρ Χριστός, ὢντων ἡμῶν ἀσθενῶν, κατὰ καιρὸν ὑπὲρ ἀσεβῶν ἀπέθανεν. Μόλις γὰρ ὑπὲρ δικαίου τις ἀποθάνεται· ὑπὲρ γὰρ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ τάχα τις καὶ τολμᾷ ἀποθανεῖν. Συνίστησιν δὲ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἀγάπην εἰς ἡμᾶς ὁ θεός, ὅτι ἔτι ἁμαρτωλῶν ὢντων ἡμῶν Χριστὸς ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἀπέθανεν. Πολλῶ οὖν μᾶλλον, δικαιοθέντες νῦν ἐν τῷ αἵματι αὐτοῦ, σωθησόμεθα δι' αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῆς ὀργῆς. Εἰ γὰρ ἐχθροὶ ὄντες κατηλλάγημεν τῷ θεῷ διὰ τοῦ θανάτου τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ, πολλῶ μᾶλλον καταλλαγέντες σωθησόμεθα ἐν τῇ ζωῇ αὐτοῦ.

3rd Sunday of Matthew

The Gospel According to Matthew 6:22-33

The Lord said, "The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is sound, your whole body will be full of light; but if your eye is not sound, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O men of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek all these things; and your heavenly Father knows you need them all. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well."

3rd Sunday of Matthew

Ἐκ τοῦ Κατὰ Ματθαῖον 6:22-33 Εὐαγγελίου τὸ Ἀνάγνωσμα

Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος· Ὁ λύχνος τοῦ σώματός ἐστιν ὁ ὀφθαλμός· ἐὰν οὖν ὁ ὀφθαλμός σου ἁπλοῦς ᾖ, ὅλον τὸ σῶμά σου φωτεινὸν ἔσται· ἐὰν δὲ ὁ ὀφθαλμός σου πονηρὸς ᾖ, ὅλον τὸ σῶμά σου σκοτεινὸν ἔσται. Εἰ οὖν τὸ φῶς τὸ ἐν σοὶ σκότος ἐστί, τὸ σκότος πόσον; Οὐδεὶς δύναται δυοὶ κυρίους δουλεύειν· ἢ γὰρ τὸν ἓνα μισήσει καὶ τὸν ἕτερον ἀγαπήσει, ἢ ἐνὸς ἀνθέξεται καὶ τοῦ ἑτέρου καταφρονήσει. οὐ δύνασθε Θεῷ δουλεύειν καὶ μαμωνᾷ. Διὰ τοῦτο λέγω ὑμῖν, μὴ μεριμνᾶτε τῇ ψυχῇ ὑμῶν τί φάγητε καὶ τί πίητε, μηδὲ τῷ σώματι ὑμῶν τί ἐνδύσησθε· οὐχὶ ἡ ψυχὴ πλεῖον ἐστὶ τῆς τροφῆς καὶ τὸ σῶμα τοῦ ἐνδύματος; ἐμβλέψατε εἰς τὰ πετεινὰ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, ὅτι οὐ σπεύρουσιν οὐδὲ θερίζουσιν οὐδὲ συνάγουσιν εἰς ἀποθήκας, καὶ ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν ὁ οὐράνιος τρέφει αὐτά· οὐχ ὑμεῖς μᾶλλον διαφέρετε αὐτῶν; τίς δὲ ἐξ ὑμῶν μεριμνῶν δύναται προσθεῖναι ἐπὶ τὴν ἡλικίαν αὐτοῦ πηχυν ἓνα; καὶ περὶ ἐνδύματος τί μεριμνᾶτε; καταμάθετε τὰ κρίνα τοῦ ἀγροῦ πῶς αὐξάνει· οὐ κοπιᾷ οὐδὲ νήθει· λέγω δὲ ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐδὲ Σολομὼν ἐν πάσῃ τῇ δόξῃ αὐτοῦ περιεβάλετο ὡς ἐν τούτων. Εἰ δὲ τὸν χόρτον τοῦ ἀγροῦ, σήμερον ὄντα καὶ αὔριον εἰς κλίβανον βαλλόμενον, ὁ Θεὸς οὕτως ἀμφιέννυσιν, οὐ πολλῶ μᾶλλον ὑμᾶς, ὀλιγόπιστοι; μὴ οὖν μεριμνήσητε λέγοντες, τί φάγωμεν ἢ τί πίωμεν ἢ τί περιβαλώμεθα; πάντα γὰρ ταῦτα τὰ ἔθνη ἐπιζητεῖ· οἶδε γὰρ ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν ὁ οὐράνιος ὅτι χρήζετε τούτων ἀπάντων. ζητεῖτε δὲ πρῶτον τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τὴν δικαιοσύνην αὐτοῦ, καὶ ταῦτα πάντα προστεθήσεται ὑμῖν.

DEVOTIONS THIS WEEK:

Thursday	June 29th	Saint Peter and Saint Paul Liturgy	9:30 A.M.
Saturday	July 01st,	AGIASMOS-Holy Water Blessing	11:00 A.M.
		Feast of Saints Anargyroi	
Friday	June 30th,	Veneration of the Holy Apostles ICON	10:00 A.M.
Sunday,	July 02nd,	Feast of PANAGIA VLACHERNAE	12:00 Noon
		Icon will be presented for veneration	
Sunday,	July 02nd	INDEPENDENCE DAY OBSERVANCE	
at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy . WE ARE ALL PATRIOTS			

TODAY: GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING: 12:30 P.M. immediately following Liturgy. Please join us to share in the progress of our faith based community.

ARTOKLASIES TODAY: are being offered in gratitude to God for birthday blessings, continued health and restored health. May our Lord in His bountiful compassion extend life, health and peace to the servants who surrender themselves to HIM..... Jimmy Kokotas and George D. Apergis.

GREEK SCHOOL CHILDREN will celebrate their ANNUAL FIELD DAY TRIP to Deno's WONDER WHEEL PARK on the boardwalk of Coney Island to enjoy the rides.....rides.....rides.... and then on to TOM'S on the boardwalk for hamburgers, fries, hot dogs, soda and ice cream!!!! The Principal Father Eugene and two faculty members Mrs. Zoe and Mrs. Maria will join in the fun. Our gratitude is extended to the VOURDERIS BROTHERS (Dennis And Steve) and to JIMMY KOKOTAS for their generosity in hosting the kids....one and all including the faculty members!!!! Tuesday-June 27th or rain date Thursday June 29th . commencing AT 4:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.

SENIOR CITIZENS: AND THE DISABLED: TAKE NOTICE! Citizens aged 65 years old and older are eligible to obtain REDUCED FARE METRO CARDS ! APPOINTMENTS ARE NOT NECESSARY!

TAKE NOTE: FRIDAY , JULY 28th. from 10:00 A.M. - to NOON t ASSEMBLYMAN WILLIAM

COLTON'S COMMUNITY OFFICE 155 Kings highway (West 12th – West 13th Street) 718-236-1598

WHAT TO BRING: PROPER proof of age (MEDICARE CARD, DRIVERS LICENSE) Valid Photo I.D Processing may take 8 weeks --- but you will get your CARD !

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](#))

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.

MEMORIAL TODAY: With Nostalgic memory we commemorate the ‘ falling asleep ‘ in the Lord of our Choir – Master Maestro + CHRIS COSTANTAKOS and his beloved spouse + DR. CRISSY COSTANTAKOS.
MAY THEIR MEMORY BE ETERNAL



The CONEY ISLAND CHAPTER #200 of the A.H.E.P.A. hosted the National Recognition Day ceremonies at Three Hierarchs on Sunday. Highlighting the festivities was a grand Lodge Award to Mr. and Mrs. Spyro (Efthymia) GALIATSATOS for their years of work in the AHEPA FAMILY. A Sumptuous brunch was catered by TOM'S of Coney Island for the entire congregation. A major success! Thank you Jimmy Kokotas and crew.



Honoring our Philoptochos
Presidents for 2016 & 2017
Kay Diamond
and
Susan Jannance



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 Γυναικεία Τερὰ Μονὴ Ἁγίου Αὐγουστίνου Φλωρίνης - 531 00 ΦΛΩΡΙΝΑ - τηλ. 23850-23610 - info@yahoo.gr

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος ΛΔ'
Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 2022

Κυριακὴ Γ' Ματθαίου (Ματθ. 6,22-33)
25 Ἰουνίου 2017

Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος
Αὐγουστίνος Ν. Καντιώτης

Μάτια - πίστι - νοῦς

«Ὁ λύχνος τοῦ σώματός ἐστιν ὁ ὀφθαλμός» (Ματθ. 6,22)

Ἀπλᾶ, ἀγαπητοί μου, ἀπλᾶ μιλοῦν οἱ πατέρες καὶ διδασκαλοὶ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας, ἀπλᾶ μιλάει αὐτὸς ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, ἀπλᾶ θὰ μιλήσουμε κ' ἐμεῖς. Τὸ Εὐαγγέλιο δὲν εἶνε φιλοσοφίες. Στὸ ζήτημα π.χ. τῆς ψυχῆς ὁ Χριστὸς ἔδωσε τὴν ἀπάντησι μετ' ὁλοκλήρου ἢ **ψυχῆ**, λέει, εἶνε ἀθάνατη (βλ. Μάρκ. 8,35-37). Ἔτσι καὶ στ' ἄλλα θέματα ὁ Κύριος μᾶς μίλησε μετ' **ἀπλότητα**, μετ' **εἰκόνες καὶ παραδείγματα** ἀπ' τὴ φύσι.

● Σήμερα τὸ εὐαγγέλιο ὡς πρῶτο παράδειγμα τῆς διδασκαλίας τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἔχει τὸ **μάτι** τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (βλ. Ματθ. 6,22). **Τί εἶνε τὸ μάτι;** Ἔνα ἀπὸ τὰ λεπτότερα ὄργανα· μιὰ φωτογραφικὴ μηχανή, ποὺ ἐργάζεται αὐτομάτως ἐπὶ χρόνια ὁλόκληρα χωρὶς μπαταρία. Ποιὸς τὴν ἐφτείαξε; Ὁ Θεός. Καὶ μόνο γιὰ τὰ μάτια θὰ ἔπρεπε νὰ τὸν εὐχαριστοῦμε μέρα καὶ νύχτα.

Καὶ **γιατί** μᾶς **τά ἔδωσε τὰ μάτια;** Ὅχι γιὰ νὰ ἱκανοποιοῦμε τὴν ἀμαρτωλὴ περιέργεια, νὰ βλέπουμε τὰ αἰσχρὰ καὶ ἀκατονόμαστα. Μᾶς **τά ἔδωσε** γιὰ ἓνα μεγάλο σκοπὸ· νὰ βλέπῃς τὸ πανόραμα τῆς δημιουργίας, τὸν ἥλιο τὸ πρῶτον ἀνατέλλει καὶ νὰ λὲς «**Δόξα σοι τῷ δεῖξαντι τὸ φῶς**» (Ἰακώβ. 1,5)· νὰ βλέπῃς τὸ βραδάκι νὰ κἀνὴν βουτιά στὸ πέλαγος καὶ νὰ λὲς «**Φῶς ἱλαρὸν ἀγίας δόξης ... Ἰησοῦ Χριστέ, ἐλθόντες ἐπὶ τὴν ἡλίου δύσιν...**» (Ἰερεμ. 16,7)· νὰ βλέπῃς τὴ νύχτα τ' ἀναρίθμητα ἀστέρια, τὰ καντηλάκια τῆς Παναγίας, νὰ τὰ βλέπῃς ὅλα αὐτὰ καὶ νὰ λὲς «**Οἱ οὐρανοὶ διηγοῦνται δόξαν Θεοῦ, ποίησιν δὲ χειρῶν αὐτοῦ ἀναγγέλλει τὸ στερέωμα**» (Ψαλμ. 132).

● Στὸ σημερινὸ εὐαγγέλιο ὁ Χριστὸς λέει, ὅτι «**ὁ λύχνος τοῦ σώματός ἐστιν ὁ ὀφθαλμός**» (Ματθ. 6,22). Ὅπως τὴ νύχτα, ὅταν δὲν ὑπάρχῃ φῶς, κρατᾷς φανάρι γιὰ νὰ μὴ σκοντάψῃς, ἔτσι καὶ γιὰ νὰ βαδίξῃς μετ' ἀσφάλεια στὴ ζωὴ σου στὸν κόσμο αὐτὸν σοῦ ἔδωσε καὶ **κάποια ἄλλα μάτια**.

Ἡ φυσικὴ ὄρασι δὲν εἶνε καὶ τόσο σπουδαῖο πρᾶγμα· τὴν ὄρασι αὐτὴ τὴν ἔχουν καὶ τὰ ζῶα·

μερικὰ μάλιστα, ὅπως π.χ. ὁ ἀετός, ἔχουν ἰσχυρότερη ὄρασι ἀπὸ τὸν ἀνθρώπο. Ἀλλὰ ἐδῶ δὲν ἐννοοῦμε τὴν ὄρασι αὐτὴ· ἐννοοῦμε **κάποια ἄλλη ὄρασι**, ποὺ ἡ ἀξία τῆς εἶνε ἀπείρως μεγαλύτερη καὶ τὴν ὁποία πολὺ λίγοι διαθέτουν. Ποιὰ εἶνε ἡ ὄρασις αὐτή, γιὰ τὴν ὁποία κυρίως ὁμιλεῖ ὁ Κύριος; **Ἡ πίστι**.

Ἄς φέρουμε παράδειγμα. Εἴμαστε μαζεμένοι μέσα στὴν ἐκκλησία καὶ ὅλοι ἔχουμε μάτια. Καὶ τί βλέπουμε; Βλέπουμε κολῶνες, εἰκόνες, στασίδια, ἀναλόγια, δεσποτικὸ θρόνο, τέμπλο, ἁγία τράπεζα, ἀνθρώπους ποὺ ἐκκλησιάζονται, ἐπιτρόπους, ψαλτάδες, παπᾶδες ντυμένους μετ' ἁμφια... Σὰς ἐρωτῶ· μόνο αὐτὰ ὑπάρχουν μέσα στὸ ναό; Ἄχ, ἀδελφοί μου, δὲν ὑπάρχουν μόνο αὐτὰ· ὑπάρχουν κι ἄλλα πράγματα, ποὺ δὲν τὰ βλέπουμε γιὰτὶ δὲν ἔχουμε τὰ κατάλληλα μάτια, δὲν ἔχουμε τὴν ὄρασι ποὺ λέγεται **πίστι**· ἂν εἴχαμε τὴν ὄρασι αὐτή, πολλὰ θὰ βλέπαμε. Τώρα ἔχουμε μάτια ζωῶδη, μάτια λύκου, μάτια γερακιῶ, μάτια ἀρκουῶδας, μάτια χοίρου...· γιὰτὶ ὁ ἕνας εἶνε ἀσπλαχνος, ὁ ἄλλος σκληρόκαρδος, ὁ ἄλλος ἀρπαγας, ὁ ἄλλος θυμώδης, ὁ ἄλλος ἀσελγής, καὶ ὅλοι ὀλιγόπιστοι. Ἄν εἴχαμε **πίστι**—αὐτὴ εἶνε ἡ **ἄλλη ὄρασι**—, θὰ βλέπαμε πολλὰ ἄλλα.

Διαβάσετε τοὺς βίους τῶν ἁγίων; Ἐκεῖ θὰ δῆτε ὅτι, ὅποιοι εἶχαν **πίστι καὶ καθαρὴ καρδιά**, στὴν ἐκκλησία αἰσθάνονταν τὸ θαῦμα ποὺ τελεῖται, ἀκούγαν ἀγγελικοὺς ὕμνους, ἔβλεπαν πάνω στὴν ἁγία τράπεζα τὸ Χριστὸ νὰ ἀκτινοβολῇ, τὴν ὑπεραγία Θεοτόκο καὶ τοὺς ἁγίους, ἔβλεπαν ἀγγέλους καὶ ἀρχαγγέλους. Τὸ ἀπολυτικίον τοῦ ἁγίου Σπυρίδωνος λέει: «...καὶ ἐν τῷ μέλπειν τὰς ἀγίας σου εὐχὰς ἀγγέλους ἔσχευς συλλειτουργοῦντάς σοι»· ὅταν δηλαδὴ λειτουργοῦσε ὁ ἅγιος Σπυρίδων, οἱ Χριστιανοὶ ἔβλεπαν νὰ συλλειτουργοῦν μαζί του ἄγγελοι. Ἄν ἔχουμε κ' ἐμεῖς πίστι, διὰ τῆς πίστεως θὰ δοῦμε τὰ μεγαλεῖα τοῦ Θεοῦ.

● Άλλά ἐγώ, ἀδελφοί μου, θά ἔλεγα· ἄς μὴν ἔχουν οἱ ἄνθρωποι σήμερα τὴν ὄρασι τὴν πνευματικὴ πού εἶχαν οἱ ἅγιοι· νὰ ἔχουν τούλάχιστον τὴ φυσικὴ ἱκανότητα νὰ διακρίνουν, **τὴν καθαρότητα δηλαδὴ τοῦ νοῦ**, νὰ ἔχουν τούλάχιστον τὸ μυαλό τους ὑγιὲς ὥστε νὰ σκέπτεται λογικά. —Μά, θὰ πῆτε, δὲν σκέπτονται ὅλοι οἱ ἄνθρωποι λογικά; Ἄν νομίζετε ἔτσι, κάνετε λάθος· μακάρι νὰ σκέπτονταν λογικά.

Ἔδωσε ὁ Θεὸς τὰ μάτια, νὰ βλέπῃς τὴ φύσι, ὅ,τι ὑπάρχει γύρω σου· ἔδωσε τὴν πίστι ὡς ἔκκτη αἴσθησι, νὰ βλέπῃς τὸν παράδεισο, τὰ οὐράνια. Ἀλλ' ἐκτός ἀπὸ τὰ δύο αὐτά, ὑπάρχει καὶ κάποιο ἄλλο φανᾶρι, πού τὸ ἔδωσε σὲ ὅλους, τὸ ἔχουν καὶ οἱ ἅγιοι ἀκόμα. Ποιὸ εἶν' αὐτό; **ὁ νοῦς - τὸ μυαλό** τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.

Ἄχ αὐτὸ τὸ μυαλό, τί θαῦμα εἶναι! Ἄν ἀνοίξῃς τὸ κρανίον τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, **ὁ ἐγκέφαλος** εἶνε μιὰ λάσπη, κάτι σὰν ἀσβέστης. Καὶ ὅμως ἐκεῖ μέσα τί δὲν ὑπάρχει! Εἶνε ἀνώτερο ἀπ' ὅλες τὶς μηχανές. Καὶ τὸ πιὸ τέλειον ἐργοστάσιον μὴδὲν εἶνε μπροστά του. Ὁ ἐγκέφαλος ἔχει ἐκατομμύρια τῶν ἐκατομμυρίων μικρὰ - μικρὰ «καλῶδια». Εἶνε τόσο λεπτειλέπτος καὶ εὐπαθής, πού, μιὰ σταγόνα αἷμα νὰ πέσῃ μέσα στὰ ἀγγεῖα του, ὁ ἄνθρωπος τελείωσεν.

Γιατί λοιπὸν τὸ ἔδωσε ὁ Θεὸς αὐτὸ τὸ μυαλό; Σοῦ τὸ ἔδωσε, γιὰ **νὰ σκέπτεσαι λογικά**, γιὰ νὰ γίνῃς βασιλεὺς ὅλης τῆς κτίσεως, νὰ προσδεύῃς καὶ νὰ εὐτυχῇς, νὰ διακρίνῃς τὸ ψέμα ἀπὸ τὴν ἀλήθειαν, νὰ προχωρῇς νὰ προχωρῇς καὶ νὰ φτάσῃς μέχρι τὰ ἄστρα τοῦ οὐρανοῦ. Φαίνεται ὅμως ὅτι κάποτε τὸ μυαλό τὸ χάνουμε. Γιατί ἂν δὲν τὸ χάναμε, δὲν θὰ εἶχαμε φτάσει στὸ σημεῖον πού φτάσαμε.

Τρελλοκομεῖο καὶ κάτι χειρότερον καταντήσαμε. Σήμερα ἡ ἀνθρωπότης κινδυνεύει ἀπὸ τὶς ἐφευρέσεις τῶν «ἐπιστημόνων», αὐτῶν μὲ τὰ μεγάλα μυαλά, πού μπορεῖ ν' ἀνεβοῦν στὰ οὐράνια κι ἀπὸ ἑκεῖ νὰ ρίξουν κάτω στὴ γῆ βόμβες. **Τὸ μυαλό**, ἀντὶ νὰ 'νε καθαρὸ, **σκοτίζεται**. Ὅπως ἓνας πού πίνει κρασί ζαλίζεται καὶ δὲν ξέρεي τί λέει καὶ τί κάνει, ἔτσι εἶνε σήμερα ὁ ἄνθρωπος· δὲν ξέρεي τί κάνει. Ἄς ἔχῃ μάτια καὶ τηλεσκόπια· ἐφ' ὅσον μέσα του ὑπάρχει ἡ ἁμαρτία, τὸ κακό, ὁ ἄνθρωπος ζῇ στὸ σκοτάδι, στὸν «ζόφον τοῦ σκότους» πού λέει ὁ ἀδελφός Θεὸς Ἰούδας στὴν Ἐπιστολὴ του [π. 13].

Ἄν θέλῃς νὰ δῇς σὲ τί σκοτάδι φτάνει ὁ ἄνθρωπος, δὲς τὸν ἄλλο **Ἰούδα, τὸν προδότη**, γιὰ τὸν ὁποῖο τὴ Μεγάλῃ Πέμπτῃ ἀκούμε· «Ὅτε οἱ ἐνδοξοὶ μαθηταὶ ἐν τῷ νηπιῇ τοῦ δείπνου ἐφωτίζοντο, τότε Ἰούδας ὁ δυσσεβὴς φιλαργυρίαν νοσήσας ἐσκοτίζετο». Καὶ τὸ Εὐαγγέλιον

λέει ὅτι, *ὅταν ὁ σατανᾶς εἰσῆλθε* στὴν καρδίαν τοῦ Ἰούδα καὶ βγήκε ἀπὸ τὸ μυστικὸ δείπνον νὰ προδῶσιν τὸ Χριστό, ἦταν «**νύξ**» (Ἰα 13,30,27).

Ἡ **φιλαργυρία** εἶνε τὸ πάθος πού σκοτίζει περισσότερο ἀπ' ὅλα. Κάθε ἁμαρτωλὸς μυαλό δὲν ἔχει, πρὸ παντὸς ὅμως ὁ φιλάργυρος. Τὸν βλέπεις καὶ μαζεύει μαζεύει. Τί θὰ τὰ κάνῃ; Αὐτὰ πού ἔχει τὸν φτάνουν νὰ ζήσῃ χίλια χρόνια. Οὔτε τὶς δικές του λογικὲς ἀνάγκες ξέρει νὰ σταθμίσῃ, οὔτε τὸν φτωχὸ σκέπτεται πού δὲν ἔχει νὰ ζήσῃ οὔτε μιὰ μέρα. Μαζεύει συνεχῶς, λὲς κ' ἔκανε συμβόλαιον μὲ τὸ θάνατον ὅτι θὰ ζήσῃ χιλιάδες χρόνια. Τὸ εὐαγγέλιον σήμερα λέει, ὅτι δὲν μπορεῖς νὰ προσθέσῃς στὴ ζωὴ σου οὔτε μιὰ μέρα (βλ. Ματθ. 6,27). Ὅταν ἔρθῃ ὁ χάρος, δὲν σοῦ δίνει οὔτε ἓνα λεπτὸ διωρίαν· «**Ἄφρον, ταύτῃ τῇ νυκτὶ τὴν ψυχὴν σου ἀπαιτοῦσιν ἀπὸ σοῦ· ἃ δὲ ἡτοίμασας τίνι ἔσται;**» (Ἰακ 12,20). Μυαλό δὲν ἔχει, γι' αὐτὸ τὸν ὀνομάζει «**ἄφρονα**». Ὁ δὲ ἀπόστολος Παῦλος γιὰ ἀνάλογες περιπτώσεις λέει, ὅτι «**παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς ὁ Θεὸς εἰς ἀδόκιμον νοῦν**» (Ρωμ. 1,28).

Σήμερα ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἔχει **χαλασμένο μυαλό**. Κρίμα στὰ σχολεῖα, στὰ πανεπιστήμια καὶ στὶς γλῶσσες. Ἐνας ἀγράμματος σκέπτεται καλύτερα ἀπὸ ἓναν ἐπιστήμονα, ἀπ' αὐτοὺς πού ἐτοιμάζονται νὰ κάνουν τρίτον παγκόσμιον πόλεμον. Χαλασμένα εἶνε τὰ μυαλά τῶν φιλαργύρων, φιλοδόξων καὶ ἀρχομανῶν, ξεκουρδισμένα ρολόγια πού τὰ ξεκούρδισε ὁ διάβολος νὰ μὴ δουλεύουν. Μπορεῖ ἄπειρα πράγματα νὰ σκέπτονται· ἓνα δὲν σκέπτονται, τὸ Θεὸ καὶ τὸ θάνατον. Γι' αὐτὸ μᾶς λέει ὁ Κύριος, νὰ προσέξουμε τὸ μυαλό μας νὰ 'νε καθαρὸ.

Προτοῦ τελειώσω, ἀγαπητοί μου, θὰ θυμίσω μιὰ εἰκόνα ἀπὸ τὴν ὑπαιθρον. Ὅπως ὁ περιβολάρης δένει τὸ **γαϊδουράκι** στὸ **μαγγανοπήγαδον** μὲ κλειστὰ τὰ μάτια, γιὰ νὰ γυρίζῃ καὶ νὰ τοῦ βγάξῃ νερό, ἔτσι ὁ διάβολος μᾶς ἔχει δέσει στὰ καταραμένα μαγγανοπήγαδά του (τῆς μοιχείας, τῆς πορνείας, τῆς χαρτοπαιξίας, τῆς βλασφημίας, τῆς ἀτιμίας, τῆς κλοπῆς, τῆς ἀθείας κ.λπ.)· μᾶς ἔβαλε τυφλοπάνι, κ' ἐμεῖς τρέχουμε κάνοντας τὸ θέλημά του.

Ἄς βγάλουμε τὰ τυφλοπάνια—ὁ καθένας τὸ δικό του—, νὰ δοῦμε τὸ Θεό, νὰ πιστέψουμε στὸ Χριστό, νὰ γίνουμε ἄνθρωποι. Γιατί μᾶς ἔδωσε τρία πράγματα· μάτια νὰ βλέπουμε τὰ ὠραῖα πράγματα, πίστι νὰ τὸν λατρεύουμε, καὶ μυαλό νὰ τὸν σκεπτόμαστε. Ἄν ζήσουμε καὶ πολιτευθοῦμε ἔτσι, θὰ ἔχουμε τὴ χάρι καὶ εὐλογία τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ· 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.

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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 Illustrious and Pre-Eminent Apostles Peter and Paul

The New Testament clearly shows Peter as the leader of the Apostles, chosen by Jesus to have a special relationship with him. With James and John he was privileged to witness the Transfiguration, the raising of a dead child to life and the agony in Gethsemane. His mother-in-law was cured by Jesus. He was sent with John to prepare for the last Passover before Jesus' death. His name is first on every list of apostles. But the Gospels prove their own veracity by the unflattering details they include about Peter. He clearly had no public relations person. It is a great comfort for ordinary mortals to know that Peter also has his human weakness, even in the presence of Jesus. After Jesus' Ascension, Peter presided in Jerusalem, was bishop of Antioch, and finally presided over the Church in Rome where on the Vatican Hill he was martyred, head downwards according to tradition, in the Circus of Nero.

Paul had been the most Pharisaic of Pharisees, the most legalistic of Mosaic lawyers. Following his

conversion, he suddenly appears to other Jews as a heretical welcomer of Gentiles, a traitor and apostate. Paul's central conviction was simple and absolute: Only God can save humanity. No human effort – even the most scrupulous observance of law – can create a human good which we can bring to God as reparation for sin and payment for grace. To be saved from itself, from sin, from the devil and from death, humanity must open itself completely to the saving power of Jesus. Paul never lost his love for his Jewish brothers and sisters, though he carried on a lifelong debate with them about the uselessness of the Law without Christ. He reminded the Gentiles that they were grafted on the parent stock of the Jews, who were still God's chosen people, the children of the promise. According to tradition, Paul was beheaded in Rome near the Ostian Way where the church of Tre Fontane now stands.

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