

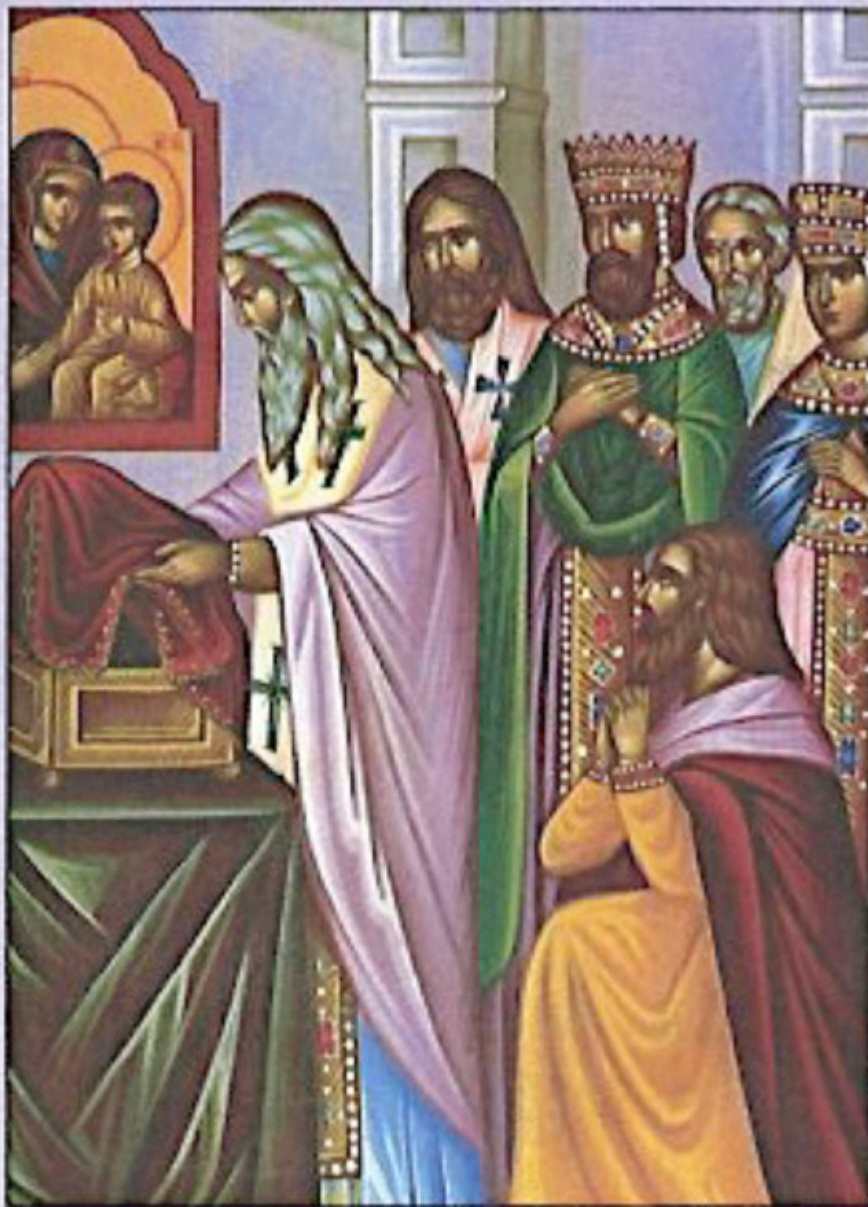


DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN  
DISTRICT

# THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN July 2nd, 2017  
V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

## FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST FOURTH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW



*Icon of the Robe of the Theotokos*

Prokeimenon. Mode 3.

Luke 1: 46-48

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

Verse: For he has regarded the humility of his servant.

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 9:1-7

BRETHREN, the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly sanctuary. For a tent was prepared, the outer one, in which were the lampstand and the table and the bread of the Presence; it is called the Holy Place. Behind the second curtain stood a tent called the Holy of Holies, having the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, which contained a golden urn holding the manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail. These preparations having thus been made, the priests go continually into the outer tent, performing their ritual duties; but into the second only the high priest goes, and he but once a year, and not without taking blood which he offers for himself and for the errors of the people.

Προκείμενον. Ἦχος γ'.

Λουκάν 1:46-48

Μεγαλύνει ἡ ψυχὴ μου τὸν Κύριον, καὶ ἠγαλλίασε τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐπὶ τῷ Θεῷ τῷ σωτῆρί μου.

Στίχ. Ὅτι ἐπέβλεπεν ἐπὶ τὴν ταπείνωσιν τῆς δούλης αὐτοῦ.

Πρὸς Ἑβραίους 9:1-7 τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα εἶναι ἀπο

Ἀδελφοί, εἶχεν ἡ πρώτη σκηνὴ δικαιώματα λατρείας, τὸ τε ἅγιον κοσμικόν. Σκηνὴ γὰρ κατεσκευάσθη ἡ πρώτη, ἐν ᾗ ἡ τε λυχνία καὶ ἡ τράπεζα καὶ ἡ πρόθεσις τῶν ἄρτων, ἣτις λέγεται ἅγια. Μετὰ δὲ τὸ δεῦτερον καταπέτασμα σκηνὴ ἡ λεγομένη ἅγια ἁγίων, χρυσοῦν ἔχουσα θυμιατήριον, καὶ τὴν κιβωτὸν τῆς διαθήκης περικεκαλυμμένην πάντοθεν χρυσίῳ, ἐν ᾗ στάμνος χρυσοῦ ἔχουσα τὸ μάννα, καὶ ἡ ῥάβδος Ἀαρὼν ἡ βλαστήσασα, καὶ αἱ πλάκες τῆς διαθήκης· ὑπεράνω δὲ αὐτῆς Χερουβὶμ δόξης κατασκιάζοντα τὸ ἱλαστήριον· περὶ ὧν οὐκ ἔστιν νῦν λέγειν κατὰ μέρος. Τούτων δὲ οὕτως κατεσκευασμένων, εἰς μὲν τὴν πρώτην σκηνὴν διὰ παντὸς εἰσίσιν οἱ ἱερεῖς, τὰς λατρείας ἐπιτελοῦντες· εἰς δὲ τὴν δευτέραν ἅπαξ τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ μόνος ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς, οὐ χωρὶς αἵματος, ὃ προσφέρει ὑπὲρ ἑαυτοῦ καὶ τῶν τοῦ λαοῦ ἀγνοημάτων·

4th Sunday of Matthew

The Gospel According to Matthew 8:5-13

At that time, as Jesus entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to him, beseeching him and saying, "Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, in terrible distress." And he said to him, "I will come and heal him." But the centurion answered him, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard him, he marveled, and said to those who followed him, "Truly, I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth." And to the centurion Jesus said, "Go; be it done for you as you have believed." And the servant was healed at that very moment.

4th Sunday of Matthew

Ἐκ τοῦ Κατὰ Ματθαῖον 8:5-13 Εὐαγγελίου τὸ Ἀνάγνωσμα

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, εἰσελθόντι δὲ αὐτῷ εἰς Καπερναοὺμ προσῆλθεν αὐτῷ ἑκατόνταρχος παρακαλῶν αὐτὸν καὶ λέγων· Κύριε, ὁ παῖς μου βέβληται ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ παραλυτικός, δεινῶς βασανιζόμενος. καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· ἐγὼ ἔλθων θεραπεύσω αὐτόν. καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ ἑκατόνταρχος ἔφη· Κύριε, οὐκ εἰμὶ ἱκανὸς ἵνα μου ὑπὸ τὴν στέγην εἰσέλθῃς· ἀλλὰ μόνον εἰπὲ λόγῳ, καὶ ἰαθήσεται ὁ παῖς μου. καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπός εἰμι ὑπὸ ἐξουσίαν, ἔχων ὑπ' ἐμαυτὸν στρατιώτας, καὶ λέγω τούτῳ, πορεύθητι, καὶ πορεύεται, καὶ ἄλλῳ, ἔρχου, καὶ ἔρχεται, καὶ τῷ δούλῳ μου, ποιήσον τοῦτο, καὶ ποιεῖ. ἀκούσας δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐθαύμασε καὶ εἶπε τοῖς ἀκολουθοῦσιν· ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, οὐδὲ ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ τοσαύτην πίστιν εὔρον. λέγω δὲ ὑμῖν ὅτι πολλοὶ ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν καὶ δυσμῶν ἥξουσι καὶ ἀνακλιθήσονται μετὰ Ἀβραάμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν οὐρανῶν, οἱ δὲ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας ἐκβληθήσονται εἰς τὸ σκότος τὸ ἐξώτερον· ἐκεῖ ἔσται ὁ κλαυθμὸς καὶ ὁ βρυγμὸς τῶν ὀδόντων. καὶ εἶπεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τῷ ἑκατοντάρχῳ· ὕπαγε, καὶ ὡς ἐπίστευσας γενηθήτω σοι. καὶ ἰάθη ὁ παῖς αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ ὥρᾳ ἐκείνῃ.

## DEVOTIONS THIS WEEK:

Today, July 02nd, Feast of PANAGIA VLACHERNAE 12:00 Noon  
Icon will be presented for veneration  
Today, July 02nd INDEPENDENCE DAY OBSERVANCE  
at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy . WE ARE ALL PATRIOTS

**AGAPE COFFEE HOUR** is being hosted today in Whitehall. Please join us for refreshments on the National Celebration.

**NEXT SUNDAY:** we honor the memory of Martyred Saint Pankratios and Saint Dionysios Orator.

### UP – COMING COMMEMORATIONS:

Monday ,	July 17th	Martyred Saint Marina	9:30 A.M.
Thursday,	July 20th,	Prophet Elias	9:30 A.M.
Thursday,	July 27th,	JOINT OBSERVANCE	9:30 A.M.
		Saints Paraskeve and Panteleimon	

**CHURCHING TODAY:** The ‘ SARANTISIS ‘ prayers are offered for the new born son ‘ LOUKAS KYRIAKOS ‘ of the proud parents Charles and Louisa (ROMANO) ASPIOTIS. NA SAS ZESE!

**CHURCHING NEXT SUNDAY: ( JULY 09Th ) ‘ LEONIDAS NICHOLAS ‘** the new born son of the proud parents Scott and Diana Romano. . NA SAS ZESE!

**LADIES PHILOPTOCHOS OFFICERS** have received the endorsement of their election from his Eminence for the term May 2017 – May 2019, from the office of His Eminence the Archbishop. Best wishes and congratulations to the new President Eleutheria XENAKIS and her board of Officers.

**CHURCH OFFICE:** will be closed on Monday and Tuesday July 3rd, and 4th, in observance of American Independence Day celebrations. May we wish everyone a healthful, happy and safe ‘4th,’ ! Don’t play with fire - works.

**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 !

**Three Hierarchs Parish** has always been foremost in its patriotic enthusiasm over nine decades of American history, trial and tribulation. Our G.A.V.A. ( Greek American Veterans Association ) Post #1 has served the Veterans of our wars over these many decades. Our WAR MEMORIAL in front of the Church building honors the memory of all who served in uniform in the United States Armed Forces. One can see all who served in uniform in the ARMY, NAVY , AIR FORCE and MARINES engraved on each side of the obelisk. Let us remember with honor those who sacrificed life and limb for the cherished freedoms we so often ‘ take for granted!’ Have you taken notice of the G.A.V.A. distinctive flag which hangs from the choir balcony of our church proper ? Let us never forget, but rather honor the memory of our parochial heroes.

**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 ([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.





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*One can see all who served in uniform in the ARMY, NAVY , AIR FORCE and MARINES engraved on each side of the obelisk. Let us remember with honor those who sacrificed life and limb for the cherished freedoms we so often ' take for granted!' Have you taken notice of the G.A.V.A. distinctive flag which hangs from the choir balcony of our church proper ? Let us never forget, but rather honor the memory of our parochial heroes.*

### **Freedom's Price**

Today we celebrate  
freedom

thanks to those who  
came before.

Those brave men who  
fought and died  
in each and every war.

Freedom always comes  
at a price,

And while we celebrate  
We should tip our hats

to the heroes  
who made our country  
great.





# 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 Ἱερὰ Μονὴ Ἁγίου Αὐγουστίνου Φλωρίνης - 531 00 ΦΛΩΡΙΝΑ - τηλ. 23850-20810 - [imazflo@yahoo.gr](mailto:imazflo@yahoo.gr)

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος ΛΔ' Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 2024	Κυριακὴ Δ' Μαθαίου (Ματθ. 8,5-13) 2 Ἰουλίου 2017	Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος Αὐγουστίνος Ν. Καντιώτης
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## Ἐκθρονισμοὶ καὶ ἐνθρονισμοὶ

«Λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι πολλοὶ ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν καὶ δυσμῶν ἤξουσι καὶ ἀνακλιθῇσονται μετὰ Ἀβραάμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν οὐρανῶν, οἱ δὲ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας ἐκβληθήσονται εἰς τὸ σκότος τὸ ἐξώτερον· ἐκεῖ ἔσται ὁ κλαυθμὸς καὶ ὁ βρυγμὸς τῶν ὀδόντων» (Ματθ. 8,11-12)

Ὅπως ὅλα τὰ θαύματα ποὺ ἔκανε ὁ Ἰησοῦς, ἀγαπητοί μου, τοῦ ἔδιναν ἀφορμὲς γιὰ νὰ διδάξῃ τὸ λαὸ ψυχοσωτήριες ἀλήθειες, ἔτσι καὶ ἡ θεραπεία τοῦ δούλου τοῦ ἐκατοντάρχου τῆς Καπερναοῦμ τοῦ ἔδωσε **ἀφορμὴ νὰ πῇ μία ἀλήθεια**, ἡ ὁποία πιστοποιεῖται μὲ ἀναρίθμητα παραδείγματα. Τὴν ἀλήθεια αὐτὴ τὴν διατύπωσε μὲ τὰ ἑξῆς λόγια. «Πολλοὶ ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν καὶ δυσμῶν ἤξουσι καὶ ἀνακλιθῇσονται μετὰ Ἀβραάμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν οὐρανῶν, οἱ δὲ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας ἐκβληθήσονται εἰς τὸ σκότος τὸ ἐξώτερον· ἐκεῖ ἔσται ὁ κλαυθμὸς καὶ ὁ βρυγμὸς τῶν ὀδόντων» (Ματθ. 8,11-12). Πάνω στὴν ἀλήθεια αὐτὴ θὰ μιλήσουμε τώρα.

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Τί σημαίνουν τὰ λόγια αὐτὰ τοῦ Σωτῆρος; ὅτι **οἱ μὲν Ἰουδαῖοι**, ποὺ ἦταν «οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας», λόγῳ τῆς ἀθλίας διαγωγῆς τους ἀπέναντι στὸν Κύριο **θὰ ἐκδιωχθοῦν** ἀπὸ τὰ ἀνάκτορα τῆς θεϊκῆς εὐνοίας καὶ θὰ ρίχτουν στὶς φυλακὲς τῆς αἰώνιου κολάσεως, **οἱ δὲ εἰδωλόλατρες**—αὐτοὶ εἶνε οἱ «ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν καὶ δυσμῶν», λόγῳ τῆς πίστεως καὶ τῆς μετανοίας ποὺ θὰ δείξουν ἀκούγοντας τὸ κήρυγμα τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, **θὰ γίνουν δεκτοὶ** στὰ ἀνάκτορα τῶν οὐρανῶν καὶ θὰ καταλάβουν τὶς θέσεις ἐκεῖνες, ποὺ εἶχαν προετοιμασθῇ στὴ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν γιὰ τοὺς Ἰουδαίους.

Καὶ ποῖο ἦταν ἐκεῖνο ποὺ ἔκανε τὸν Κύριο νὰ πῇ τὰ λόγια αὐτά; ἡ εἰλικρινής, βαθειὰ καὶ ἔμπρακτη «**πίστις**» (ἐλπίς), ποὺ ἔδειξε ὁ ἐκατοντάρχος ἐξ ἀφορμῆς τῆς ἀσθενείας τοῦ δούλου του. Μολονότι ὁ ἀξιωματικὸς αὐτὸς ἦταν ὄχι Ἰουδαῖος ἀλλὰ Ῥωμαῖος καὶ ἀνῆκε σὲ ξένη θρησκεία, μολονότι ἔβλεπε τὸ δούλο του νὰ βρίσκεται στὶς τελευταῖες του στιγμὲς καὶ κά-

θε ἐλπίδα σωτηρίας του νὰ χάνεται, μολονότι τὸ ἀξίωμα ποὺ κατεῖχε—ἢ μᾶλλον ὁ ἐγωισμὸς ποὺ δημιουργοῦν σὲ ψυχρὴ ἐπιπόλαιες τὰ ἀξιώματα— θὰ γινόταν ἐμπόδιο ὥστε νὰ μὴν πλησιάσῃ τὸν ἀπλοῖκό Διδάσκαλο καὶ νὰ μὴν ταπεινωθῇ σ' αὐτὸν ζητώντας τὴ βοήθειά του, παρ' ὅλα αὐτὰ ὁ ἐκατοντάρχος **ἐκτιμᾷ τὸν Ἰησοῦ ἀσυνκρίτως περισσότερο** ἀπὸ ὅ,τι οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι. Νιώθει καὶ πιστεύει ὅτι καὶ ἕνας μόνον λόγος τοῦ Κυρίου ἔχει τὴ δύναμι νὰ θεραπεύῃ καὶ τὴ χειρότερη ἀσθένεια, ὅπως αὐτὴ τοῦ δούλου του, ποὺ τὸν βασάνιζε «**δαινῶς**» (ἐλπίς). Γι' αὐτὸ στέκει μπροστά του μὲ εὐλάβεια καὶ σεβασμό, ὅπως στέκει μπροστά στὸ βασιλεῖα ὁ ἀπλὸς στρατιώτης. Δὲν κοιτάζει τὰ ἐξωτερικὰ ἐμβλήματα τοῦ ἀξιωματοῦ του ἀλλὰ συναισθάνεται τὴν ἀθλιότητα ποὺ κάθε ἄνθρωπος ἔχει, καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ ἀξιωματοῦχος ὁμολογεῖ τὴ μηδαμινότητά του ἀπέναντι στὸν Κύριο λέγοντας: «**Κύριε, οὐκ εἰμὶ ἱκανὸς ἵνα μου ὑπὸ τὴν στέγην εἰσέλθῃς**»· δὲν εἶμαι, Κύριε, ἄξιος νὰ σὲ δεχτῶ στὸ σπίτι μου (ἐλπίς).

Ποῖός ἀπὸ τοὺς φαρισαίους, ποὺ ἔβλεπαν ἕναν ἀξιωματικὸ νὰ ζῇ στὰ στρατόπεδα καὶ ὅχι ὅπως αὐτοὶ, θὰ μπορούσε νὰ φανταστῇ, ὅτι στὴν καρδιά τοῦ Ῥωμαίου αὐτοῦ στρατιωτικοῦ εἶχε ἐνθρονισθῇ τέτοια πίστι καὶ ἀρετή; Αὐτοί, **οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι**, παρ' ὅλη τὴν προγονικὴ τους δόξα καὶ τὴν ἐξωτερικὴ τους θρησκευτικότητα, ἐξ αἰτίας τοῦ ἐγωισμοῦ καὶ τῆς κακίας τους, **ἀπομακρύνονταν** συνεχῶς ἀπὸ τὸν Ἰησοῦ καὶ κινδύνευαν νὰ χάσουν τὴ σωτηρία τῶν ψυχῶν τους, ἐνῶ αὐτὸς, ἕνας ἐθνικὸς ἐκατοντάρχος, ποὺ γεννήθηκε καὶ ἀνατράφηκε σὲ εἰδωλολατρικὸ περιβάλλον, **πλησιάζει τώρα τὸ Χριστό**, προσκολλᾶται σ' αὐτὸν καὶ σῶζεται!

Ἀλλὰ ἡ προφητεία αὐτὴ τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὅτι οἱ



μὲν Ἰουδαῖοι, οἱ περισσότεροι ἀπὸ αὐτοῦς, θ' ἀποσκορπίσονται καὶ θὰ χαθοῦν, ἐνῶ οἱ ἐθνικοὶ, οἱ εἰδωλολάτρες, θὰ ἐπιστρέψουν στὸ Θεὸ καὶ θὰ σωθοῦν, ἡ **προφητεία αὐτὴ ἐξακολουθεῖ καὶ μέχρι σήμερα νὰ ἐκπληρώνεται**. Γιατὶ ὅ,τι συνέβη μεταξύ τῶν Ἰουδαίων, συμβαίνει τώρα μεταξύ τῶν Χριστιανῶν.

**Οἱ Χριστιανοὶ** ζοῦν στοὺς κόλπους τῆς Ἐκκλησίας· αὐτοὶ εἶναι κατ' ἐξοχὴν «οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας». Ζοῦν αὐτοὶ σὲ στενὴ ἐπικοινωνία μὲ τὸν Κύριον· τὸ νόμο του μελετοῦν, στοὺς ναοὺς του συχνάζουν, ἐξομολογοῦνται, κοινωνοῦν, μετέχουν σὲ ὅλες ἐκεῖνες τὶς εὐλογίες ποὺ ἀπολαμβάνουν «οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας», τὰ παιδιὰ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ Πατέρα. Ἀλλ' ἐὰν δὲν προσέξουν, ἐὰν δὲν ἐκτιμῇσουν ὅπως πρέπει καὶ ὅσο πρέπει τὴ μεγάλη τιμὴ ποὺ τοὺς ἔκανε ὁ Κύριος νὰ τοὺς ὀνομάζῃ «τέκνα Θεοῦ» (Ἰω. 1,12-13), «ἀδελφοὺς» του (Ματθ. 23,10), «υἱοὺς τῆς βασιλείας» (ἔξ. 3,12-13) καὶ «φίλους» του (Λουκ. 12,4-5; 15,14), ἐὰν δὲν δείξουν διαγωγὴ σύμφωνη μὲ τὴν ὑψηλὴ κλῆσιν τους, ὑπάρχει φόβος νὰ ἐκπέσουν ἀπὸ τὴ χάρι τοῦ Θεοῦ· νὰ πάθουν δηλαδὴ δυστύχημα μεγαλύτερο ἀπ' αὐτὸ ποὺ παθαίνει ἓνας βασιλιᾶς ἐνδόξου κράτους ποὺ λόγῳ σφαλμάτων του ἐκθρονίζεται, γίνεται ἐκπτώτος, χάνει τὰ μεγαλεῖα του, πέφτει σὲ ἀφάνεια καὶ πεθαίνει πικραμένος στὰ ξένα. Εἶναι δυστυχισμένος ὁ βασιλιᾶς αὐτός; ἔ, πολὺ πιὸ δυστυχισμένος εἶναι «ὁ υἱὸς τῆς βασιλείας»· γιατί χάνει θέσι-θρόνο ἐνδοξότερο ἀπὸ κάθε ἄλλο θρόνο τῆς γῆς.

**Παραδείγματα** τέτοιων τρομερῶν πνευματικῶν ἐκθρονίσεων ἔχουμε, ὅπως εἶπαμε, ἀναρίθμητα. Ἐνα ἀπὸ αὐτὰ εἶναι ὁ **Ἰούδας**. Ἦταν κι αὐτὸς «υἱὸς τῆς βασιλείας», ἓνας ἀπὸ ἐκείνους ποὺ ὁ Κύριος εἶπε πὼς θὰ καθίσουν «ἐπὶ δώδεκα θρόνους κρίνοντες τὰς δώδεκα φυλὰς τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ» (Ματθ. 19,28; Λουκ. 22,30)· γιατί ἡ θέσι ποὺ εἶχε ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ὁ Ἰούδας κοντὰ στὸ Χριστὸ ἦταν ἀσυγκρίτως ἀνώτερη ἀπὸ ἓνα κοσμικὸ θρόνο. Καὶ ὅμως ἐξ αἰτίας τῆς φιλοχρηματίας του πέφτει. Πέφτει, τὴν ὥρα ποὺ μία πόρνη καὶ ἓνας ληστής – ἡ μὲν πόρνη μὲ τὰ δάκρυα τῆς μετανοίας, ὁ δὲ ληστής μὲ τὴ θερμὴ προσευχὴ του «*Μνήσθητί μου, Κύριε, ὅταν ἔλθῃς ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου*» (Λουκ. 23,42)– ἐπιστρέφουν ὅπως οἱ ἄσωτοι υἱοὶ καὶ καταλαμβάνουν θέσι περιλαμπρὴ στὴ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.

Τὰ παραδείγματα αὐτά, ποὺ πολλὰ παρόμοια μπορεῖς νὰ μελετήσῃς στὴν ἀγία Γραφή, στὴν Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ ἱστορία, καὶ νὰ διῇς στὴ ζωὴ τῆς συγχρόνου Ἐκκλησίας, ἐπιβεβαιώνουν τὰ προφητικὰ λόγια τοῦ Κυρίου, ἀλλὰ καὶ πρέπει νὰ **βάδουν σὲ φόβο** τὶς ψυχές μας. Τί εἶσαι,

ἀδελφέ μου, **ἅγιος**; Ἔστω ὅτι εἶσαι. Ἀλλὰ καὶ πάλι πρέπει νὰ φοβάσαι τὴν **πτῶσι**. Ἄνοιξε τὰ μάτια σου νὰ διῇς πόσοι, ποὺ ἔφτασαν στὰ ὕψη τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ ἔστησαν τὴ φωλιὰ τους ἀνάμεσα στὰ ἄστρα (Ἰλ. 40,12-13), ἔπεσαν καὶ τσακίστηκαν· καὶ ἡ πτῶσι τους ἦταν τόσο πιὸ μεγάλη ὅσο μεγαλύτερο ἦταν τὸ ὕψος τῆς ἀρετῆς ὅπου εἶχαν ἀνεβῇ. Δὲς τὶς πτώσεις τῶν Ἰουδαίων, τοῦ Ἰούδα, τοῦ διακόνου Νικολάου (ποὺ ἔγινε ἀρχηγὸς τῶν νικολαϊτῶν, τῆς πιὸ αἰσχρῆς αἱρέσεως), τοῦ Ἀρείου καὶ τόσων ἄλλων. Ἐὰν αὐτοὶ ἔπεσαν καὶ ἐκδιώχθηκαν, πόσο μάλλον ἐσύ μπορεῖς νὰ πέσης καὶ νὰ χαθῇς; Βλέπε τὰ μνημεῖα τῶν πεσόντων καὶ μὴ μετανοησάντων πλέον, βλέπε τοὺς γκρεμοὺς καὶ τὰ βάραια τῆς ἁμαρτίας, βλέπε τὴν ἀσθένεια τῶν ψυχικῶν σου δυνάμεων, καὶ νὰ καλλιεργῇς μέσα σου ἐκεῖνο τὸ φόβο ποὺ τόσο ἐντονα συνιστᾷ ὁ ἀπόστολος Παῦλος λέγοντας: «*Μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου τὴν ἑαυτῶν σωτηρίαν κατεργάζεσθε*» (Φιλ. 2,12).

Ἄς φοβώμαστε, ἀλλ' **ὄχι μὴ ἀπελπιζώμαστε** οὔτε γιὰ τὴ δική μας σωτηρία οὔτε γιὰ τὴ σωτηρία τῶν ἄλλων ποὺ ζοῦν τώρα μακριὰ ἀπὸ τὸ Χριστό. Ἔπεσες; Μπορεῖς νὰ σηκωθῇς καὶ νὰ βαδίσῃς καὶ πάλι τὸ δρόμο τῆς σωτηρίας. Δὲς τὶς πτώσεις τοῦ Πέτρου καὶ τοῦ Δαυὶδ· ἔπεσαν, ἀλλὰ πάλι σηκώθηκαν καὶ ἐπανέκτησαν τὶς θέσεις ποὺ πρὸς στιγμὴν εἶχαν χάσει. Ζοῦν μακριὰ ἀπὸ τὸ Χριστὸ οἱ ἄλλοι; μὴν τοὺς ἀπελπίσῃς, μὴν τοὺς περιφρονῇς. Ποὺ ξέρεις, ἐὰν αὐτοὶ ποὺ ζοῦν σήμερα τὴ ζωὴ τοῦ ἀσώτου, μήπως αὔριο μιμηθοῦν καὶ τὴ μετάνοια τοῦ ἀσώτου; Εἶναι **σήμερα «υἱοὶ γεέννης»** (Ματθ. 23,15), ἀλλ' **αὔριο γίνονται «υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας»**. Ζοῦν σήμερα στοὺς σταύλους τῆς ἁμαρτίας, ἀλλὰ αὔριο φιλοξενοῦνται στὰ θεϊκὰ ἀνάκτορα· εἶναι σήμερα ῥακένδυτοι, ἀλλὰ αὔριο εἶναι ντυμένοι ὅπως οἱ πρίγκιπες τῶν οὐρανῶν· εἶναι σήμερα ἐκπτώτοι, ἀλλ' αὔριο ἐκθρονίζονται!

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Ἀδελφοί μου! Ἐφ' ὅσον ζοῦμε σὲ τοῦτο τὸν κόσμον, ὅπου κάθε μέρα συμβαίνουν ἀκατάπαυστες ἀλλοιώσεις, ὄχι μόνο στὸ βασίλειο τῆς φύσεως ἀλλὰ καὶ στὸ βασίλειο τῆς χάριτος, ἂς ταπεινοφρονούμε· ἂς φοβώμαστε, ἐνθυμούμενοι αὐτὰ τὰ λόγια ποὺ εἶπε ὁ Κύριός μας: «*Πολλοὶ ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν καὶ δυσμῶν ἔξουσιν καὶ ἀνακλιθήσονται μετὰ Ἀβραάμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν οὐρανῶν, οἱ δὲ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας ἐκβληθήσονται εἰς τὸ σκότος τὸ ἐξώτερον*».

(†) **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

*The Holy Robe of the Theotokos*

During the late fifth century, two brothers who were associates of Emperor Leo the Great, left Constantinople for Palestine to venerate the holy places. In Nazareth, they stayed in the home of an old Jewish woman. They noticed in the house a room where many lamps were lit, incense burned, and sick people were gathered. When they asked her what the room contained, the pious woman did not want to give an answer for a long time. After persistent requests, she said that she had a very precious sacred item: the robe of the Theotokos, through which many miracles and healings had occurred. It seems that before her Dormition the Theotokos had given one of her garments to a pious Jewish girl, an ancestor of the old woman, instructing her to leave it to another virgin after her death. And so, the robe of the Mother of God was preserved in this family from generation to generation.

The jeweled chest, containing the sacred robe, was brought to Constantinople. Saint Gennadius, Patriarch of Constantinople, and Leo the Emperor, having learned of this sacred treasure, were convinced of the incorrupt state of the holy robe, and they certified its authenticity. On June 2, 458, Patriarch Gennadius transferred the sacred robe into the church at Blachernae, near the city gates at the seacoast, placing the relic within a new reliquary.

In the years following, the great veil or outer robe of the Theotokos, and part of her belt were also put into the reliquary with her robe. This event also influenced the iconography of the feast, in connecting the two events: the Placing of the Robe, the feast day of July 2nd, and the Placing of the Belt of the Mother of God, the feast day August 31st in Blachernae.

"O Pure One, full of the grace of God, you have given your sacred robe as a garment of incorruption to all the faithful, with it you covered your holy body, O divine protection of all mankind. We celebrate its enshrinement in Blachernae with love and we cry aloud with awe: 'Rejoice, O Virgin, boast of Christians.'" (Kontakion)

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