



DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN
DISTRICT

THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN July 16th, 2017
V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

SUNDAY OF THE FIRST SIX ECUMENICAL COUNCILS



Icon of the First Six Ecumenical Councils

St. Paul's Letter to Titus 3:8-15

Prokeimenon. Mode Plagal 2.

Psalm 31.11,1

Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, O righteous.

Verse: Blessed are they whose transgressions have been forgiven.

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to Titus 3:8-15

TITUS, my son, the saying is sure. I desire you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to apply themselves to good deeds; these are excellent and profitable to men. But avoid stupid controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels over the law, for they are unprofitable and futile. As for a man who is factious, after admonishing him once or twice, have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is perverted and sinful; he is self-condemned.

When I send Artemas or Tychicos to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. Do your best to speed Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way; see that they lack nothing. And let our people learn to apply themselves to good deeds, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not to be unfruitful.

All who are with me send greeting to you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.

Προκείμενον. Ἦχος πλ. β'.

ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 31.11,1

Εὐφράνθητι ἐπὶ Κύριον, καὶ ἀγαλλιᾶσθε δίκαιοι.

Στίχ. Μακάριοι, ὧν ἀφέθησαν αἱ ἀνομίαι.

Πρὸς Τίτον 3:8-15 τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα εἶναι ἀπο

Πιστὸς ὁ λόγος, καὶ περὶ τούτων βούλομαί σε διαβεβαιοῦσθαι, ἵνα φροντίζωσιν καλῶν ἔργων προΐστασθαι οἱ πεπιστευκότες θεῷ. ταῦτά ἐστιν καλὰ καὶ ὠφέλιμα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις· μωρὰς δὲ ζητήσεις καὶ γενεαλογίας καὶ ἔριν καὶ μάχας νομικὰς περιΐστασο, εἰσὶν γὰρ ἀνωφελεῖς καὶ μάταιοι. αἰρετικὸν ἄνθρωπον μετὰ μίαν καὶ δευτέραν νουθεσίαν παραιτοῦ, εἰδὼς ὅτι ἐξέστραπται ὁ τοιοῦτος καὶ ἀμαρτάνει, ὧν αὐτοκατάκριτος. Ὅταν πέμψω Ἀρτεμᾶν πρὸς σὲ ἢ Τυχικόν, σπούδασον ἐλθεῖν πρὸς με εἰς Νικόπολιν, ἐκεῖ γὰρ κέκρικα παραχειμάσαι. Ζηνᾶν τὸν νομικὸν καὶ Ἀπολλῶν σπουδαίως πρόπεμψον, ἵνα μηδὲν αὐτοῖς λείπη. μανθανέτωσαν δὲ καὶ οἱ ἡμέτεροι καλῶν ἔργων προΐστασθαι εἰς τὰς ἀναγκαίαις χρείαις, ἵνα μὴ ὦσιν ἄκαρποι. Ἀσπάζονται σε οἱ μετ' ἐμοῦ πάντες. Ἄσπασαι τοὺς φιλοῦντας ἡμᾶς ἐν πίστει. ἢ χάρις μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν.

Sunday of the Holy Fathers

The Gospel According to Matthew 5:14-19

The Lord said to his disciples, "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

Sunday of the Holy Fathers

Ἐκ τοῦ Κατὰ Ματθαῖον 5:14-19 Εὐαγγελίου τὸ Ἀνάγνωσμα

Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος τοῖς ἐαυτοῦ μαθηταῖς· Ὑμεῖς ἐστε τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου. οὐ δύναται πόλις κρυβῆναι ἐπάνω ὄρους κειμένη· οὐδὲ καίουσι λύχνον καὶ τιθέασιν αὐτὸν ὑπὸ τὸν μόδιον, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τὴν λυχνίαν, καὶ λάμπει πᾶσι τοῖς ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ. οὕτω λαμψάτω τὸ φῶς ὑμῶν ἔμπροσθεν τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ὅπως ἴδωσιν ὑμῶν τὰ καλὰ ἔργα καὶ δοξάσωσι τὸν πατέρα ὑμῶν τὸν ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς. Μὴ νομίσητε ὅτι ἦλθον καταλῦσαι τὸν νόμον ἢ τοὺς προφήτας· οὐκ ἦλθον καταλῦσαι, ἀλλὰ πληρῶσαι. ἀμὴν γὰρ λέγω ὑμῖν, ἕως ἂν παρέλθῃ ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ, ἰῶτα ἐν ἢ μία κεραία οὐ μὴ παρέλθῃ ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου ἕως ἂν πάντα γένηται. ὃς ἐὰν οὖν λύσῃ μίαν τῶν ἐντολῶν τούτων τῶν ἐλαχίστων καὶ διδάξῃ οὕτω τοὺς ἀνθρώπους, ἐλάχιστος κληθήσεται ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν οὐρανῶν· ὃς δ' ἂν ποιῆσῃ καὶ διδάξῃ, οὗτος μέγας κληθήσεται ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν οὐρανῶν.

DEVOTIONS THIS WEEK:

AGAPE COFFEE HOUR is being hosted today in Whitehall. Please join us for coffee and sweets.

TODAY:: we are observing the FEAST of SAINT MARINA with the procession of her sacred icon for veneration.

UP – COMING COMMEMORATIONS:

Sunday,	July 16th	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 SUNDAY , 16th the ‘ SARANTISIS ‘ prayers are offered for the new born son ‘ **LOUKAS KYRIAKOS**’ of the proud parents Charles and Louisa (ROMANO) ASPIOTIS. NA SAS ZESE!

PRAYER and HEALING SERVICE: for the month of July is scheduled for Wednesday evening, July 19th, at 6:30 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. Prayers, Anointing, Scripture, Witnessing and so much more to be experienced. The focused theme is PROPHECY IN THE MODERN AGE as we highlight the Feast of Prophet Elias celebrated on the next morning.

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 !

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION: The Pastor will host his annual festive event on the exact date of his birthday – SUNDAY , JULY 23rd, with PIZZA, PIZZA, PIZZA, SOFT DRINKS, BIRTHDAY CAKE and COFFEE for everyone. Don’t miss the event IT ONLY HAPPENS ONCE A YEAR.....EVERY YEAR ON AND ON AND ON AND ON! See the invitation attached.

SUMMER HOURS: have been well received this summer, with Orthos commencing at 9:00 A.M. and Divine Liturgy at 10:00 A.M. The dismissal at 11:30 A.M. has afforded many to enjoy the Sunday vacation hours. Please try to be on time! The Ukrainian Liturgy NOW starts at 12 noon concluding at 1:30 P.M.

SHUT- IN VISITATIONS for those who are ill and unable to attend Divine Liturgy have commenced. Please call the Church Office for an appointment for your loved one with the clergy. All visitations will be fulfilled before the HOLY ASSUMPTION of the THEOTOKOS on AUGUST 15TH. Please DO NOT WAIT for the last moment to secure an appointment for visitation.

ARTOKLASIES are being registered for the two main feasts of AUGUST, Transfiguration (META-MORPHOSIS) on the 6th and Assumption of the Virgin Mary (REPOSE-KOIMISIS THEOTOKOU) on the 15th. Those celebrating their name-day include SOTIRIOS, SOTIRIA, MARIA, MARY, MARIO, PANAGIOTIS, PANAGIOTA, DESPINA. Chronia Polla to all celebrants!

CULTIVATE your **BASIL PLANTS (VASILIKO)** for the first fifteen days of August as we observe the ‘PARAKLESIS’ supplication devotions to the Blessed Mother each evening. Fresh basiliko and marigold blossoms are offered from your gardens. Marigold blossoms are in full bloom – it is ‘MARY’S GOLD’.

RADIO MINISTRY: Each Saturday at 1:15PM Fr. Eugene hosts and produces the radio broadcast **MATTERS OF CONSCIENCE NOW IN ITS 19TH 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: + NADEJDA KOTELNIKOVA

MEMORIALS NEXT WEEK: + ANTONIA & + JOSEPH CATARA + ANGELO RAVANOS

July 17
Saint Marina

Even though they refused to accept the Messiah, pagans of the third century realized that Christianity added certain wholesomeness to its adherents, particularly to Christian girls whose purity gave added dimension to their beauty and stirred passions within the hearts of pagans who saw no such chastity in their own women.

Numbered among the lovelies who made the supreme sacrifice of martyrdom was a girl named Marina who was born in Antioch during the reign of Emperor Claudius II (A.D. 270), an era faced with a relentless enemy in the polytheists, who still abounded after centuries of idolatry.

When her mother died giving birth to her, her pagan priest father, Edesios, had no choice but to entrust the newborn child to another woman and to go about his affairs, unaware of the fact that the foster mother was a Christian. When Marina reached maturity she had learned to love Jesus Christ with all her heart and had no fear.

Knowing the depth of the Christian faith, the father made no effort to dissuade her but simply took the news with contempt and walked away talking to one of his gods.

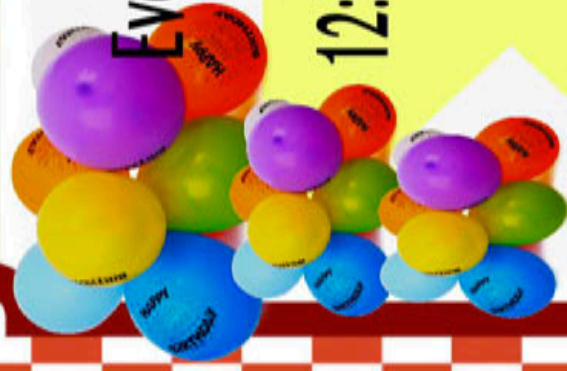
When a suitor asked for her hand, she declined as politely as possible, explaining that she had pledged her life to Jesus Christ.

When it was evident that she was not about to alter her thinking, the love that the suitor had professed was transformed into hate. He shouted that if he could not have her he would see to it that on one else would.

Marina was led away to be tried on charges of treason, among other things, for which she was found guilty and sentenced. Marina was stripped naked, whipped and burned with candles, allowed to heal and then tortured again in the same fashion over an agonizing period until she was finally beheaded. Death came to this devout girl on 17 July 289.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY FATHER EUGENE



Everyone is invited to Father Eugene's
Birthday "Pizza" Party



12:00 Noon Sunday, July 23rd, on Plaza
pizza, cake, soda, coffee,

Anyway you slice it,
You are in for a "GREAT TIME!"





ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



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

Ἐκδίδεται ἀπὸ τὴν Κοινοβιακὴ Γυναικίᾳ Ἱερὰ Μονὴ Ἁγίου Αὐγουστίνου Φλωρίνης – 531 00 ΦΛΩΡΙΝΑ – τηλ. 23850-28610 – info@yghoa.gr

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος ΛΔ' Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 2026	Κυρ. Πατ. Δ' Οἰκ. Συνόδου (Ματθ. 5,14-19) 16 Ἰουλίου 2017	Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος Αὐγουστίνος Ν. Κανπιώτης
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Ἡ θεία νομοθεσία

« Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ἕως ἂν παρέλθῃ ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ, ἰῶτα ἐν ἡ μία κεραία οὐ μὴ παρέλθῃ ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου ἕως ἂν πάντα γένηται » (Ματθ. 5,18)

Νομοθέτες, ἀγαπητοί μου, εἶδε πολλοὺς ὁ κόσμος. Ὁ Δράκων, ὁ Σόλων, ὁ Λυκούργος, ὁ Νουμᾶς, ὁ Πομπήσιος, ὁ Ἰουστινιανὸς εἶνε ἀπὸ τοὺς πιὸ γνωστοὺς.

Παρ' ὅλο, βλέπετε, ὅτι οἱ ἄνθρωποι ἐπιθυμοῦν νὰ εἶνε ἐλεύθεροι καὶ δυσανασχετοῦν ὅταν κάποιος ἐπιχειρῇ νὰ τοὺς ἐπιβάλλῃ περιορισμὸ τῆς ἐλευθερίας τους, ἐν τούτοις παρατηροῦμε ὅτι οἱ ἴδιοι ἀνέχονται ἢ καὶ **ἀναζητοῦν τὸ νομοθέτη**, κάποιον δηλαδὴ ποὺ ἔχει τὴν ἰκανότητα νὰ ὀρίξῃ μέτρα καὶ νὰ θέτῃ ὅρια στὴν ἐλευθερία τους, νὰ θεσπίζῃ νόμους καὶ πειθαρχοῦν σ' αὐτόν.

Πῶς ἐξηγεῖται αὐτό; **Τὸ ἐπιβάλλει ἡ ἀνάγκη τῆς συμβιώσεως** μέσα σὲ μιὰ κοινωνία. Πράγματι, ἐὰν δὲν τεθοῦν φραγμοὶ καὶ ὅρια, δὲν εἶνε δυνατὴ ἡ συμβίωσις, ὅπως καὶ στὰ ὀχήματα ἡ ἀσφαλῆς κίνησις ἐὰν οἱ ὀδηγοὶ δὲν πειθαρχοῦν στοὺς κανονισμοὺς τῆς τροχαίας. Γιὰ νὰ συμβιώσουν οἱ ἄνθρωποι, πρέπει ἡ ἐλευθερία τοῦ ἑνὸς νὰ σταματᾷ ἐκεῖ ποὺ ἀρχίζει ἡ ἐλευθερία τοῦ ἄλλου, ὥστε ν' ἀποφεύγονται οἱ συγκρούσεις. Ἔχει καὶ ὁ ἄλλος δικαίωμα νὰ ζῆσῃ καὶ νὰ κινήθῃ. Διαφορετικά, ὅπου ἐπικρατεῖ τὸ δίκαιο τοῦ ἰσχυροτέρου, ἐκεῖ δὲν ὑπάρχει κοινωνία· «ὁ ἄνθρωπος γιὰ τὸ συνάνθρωπό του γίνεται λύκος» καὶ ἡ κοινωνία μεταβάλλεται σὲ ζούγκλα ἀγρίων θηρίων. Ἔτσι λοιπὸν ἐξηγεῖται πῶς ἀναδείχθηκαν ὄχι μόνο αὐτοὶ ποὺ ἀναφέραμε ἀλλὰ καὶ τόσοι ἄλλοι φημισμένοι νομοθέτες, ὅπως ὁ Χαμμουραμπὶ κ.λπ., σὲ Ἄνατολή καὶ Δύσι.

Μὲ τοὺς νόμους τους οἱ νομοθέτες αὐτοὶ, παλαιοὶ καὶ νέοι, ἐπιδίωκαν νὰ ρυθμίσουν τὰ διάφορα ζητήματα τῆς κοινωνίας, νὰ κάνουν ὅσο τὸ δυνατόν πιὸ ἀρμονικὲς τὶς σχέσεις τῶν κοινωνικῶν τάξεων μεταξύ τους, νὰ ἐπιβάλλουν τὴ δικαιοσύνη, τὴν τάξι καὶ τὴν πει-

θαρχία· γιατί χωρὶς αὐτὲς τὰ ἔθνη καὶ οἱ κοινωνίες δὲν μποροῦν νὰ εὐημερήσουν. **Πολλοὶ οἱ νομοθέτες, πολλὲς καὶ διάφορες οἱ νομοθεσίες**, περισσότερο ἢ λιγώτερο ἐπιτυχημένες, ἀφοῦ ὅλες εἶνε ἀνθρώπινες.

Παραπάνω ὅμως ἀπ' ὅλες τὶς νομοθεσίες τοῦ κόσμου διακρίνεται, αἰῶνες τώρα, μιὰ νομοθεσία ποὺ χαρακτηρίζεται γιὰ τὴν ἀφθαστη τελειότητά της· καὶ αὐτὴ εἶνε ἡ **νομοθεσία τοῦ Χριστοῦ**. Τὴν τελειότητά της ἔχουν θαυμάσει οἱ σοφοὶ καὶ νομομαθεῖς, ποὺ τὴ μελετοῦν καὶ τὴ συγκρίνουν μὲ τὶς ἀνθρώπινες νομοθεσίες. Τὴν τελειότητά της πιστοποιεῖ καὶ ἡ ἱστορία μὲ ἄπειρα παραδείγματα, ὅπου φαίνεται στὴν πράξι ἡ ἀποτελεσματικότητά της. Τὴν τελειότητά της βεβαιώνει πρὸ παντὸς ὁ Κύριος, ὅταν λέῃ στὸ σημερινὸ εὐαγγέλιο· *« Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ἕως ἂν παρέλθῃ ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ, ἰῶτα ἐν ἡ μία κεραία οὐ μὴ παρέλθῃ ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου ἕως ἂν πάντα γένηται »* (Ματθ. 5,18). Τὸ κύρος καὶ ἡ ἰσχὺς τοῦ νόμου τοῦ Κυρίου θὰ μείνῃ ἀκλόνητο καὶ ἀκατάλυτο.

Ἄλλ' ἂς ρωτήσουμε, ἀγαπητοί μου· ποῦ ἀκριβῶς ἐγκεῖται ἡ τελειότης τῆς νομοθεσίας τοῦ Χριστοῦ; Ὅτι **εἶνε τέλεια** ἡ νομοθεσία του αὐτὸ φαίνεται ἀπὸ κάθε ἄποψι· ἐδῶ θὰ τὸ ἐξετάσουμε ἀπὸ τρεῖς συγκεκριμένους ἀπόψεις. Εἶνε τέλεια λόγῳ σοφίας, εἶνε τέλεια λόγῳ ἀγάπης, εἶνε τέλεια λόγῳ αἰωνιότητος. Ἄς δοῦμε σύντομα τοὺς τρεῖς αὐτοὺς χαρακτηρισμοὺς, ποὺ ἀναδεικνύουν τὴν τελειότητα τῆς θείας νομοθεσίας τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

● Εἶπαμε ὅτι εἶνε τέλεια **λόγῳ σοφίας**. Τί ἐννοοῦμε μ' αὐτό; Ἀφοῦ ὁ Κύριος εἶνε ὄχι ἀπλᾶ σοφὸς ἀλλὰ ὁ **Σοφός**, μὲ σῖγμα κεφαλαῖο, μέσα στὸν ὁποῖο ὑπάρχουν ὅλοι *«οἱ θησαυροὶ τῆς σοφίας καὶ τῆς γνώσεως»* (Κολ. 2,3), ἐπόμενο εἶνε

και τὸ ἔργο του, ἡ εὐαγγελικὴ νομοθεσία, νὰ διακρίνεται γιὰ τὴν ἀσύγκριτη σοφία της. Δὲν ἔχει τίς ἐλλείψεις καὶ τὰ χάσματα, ποὺ χαρακτηρίζουν τίς νομοθεσίες τῶν ἀνθρώπων. Ὁ,τι νομοθετεῖ ὁ Κύριος, φέρει τὴ σφραγίδα τῆς θείας σοφίας. Τίποτε, οὔτε μιά γραμμὴ ἀπὸ τὸ νόμο του, δὲν ἀποδείχθηκε ἐσφαλμένο.

Ὁ νόμος τοῦ Κυρίου, ἡ *Ἐπί τοῦ ὄρους ὀμιλία* (βλ. Ματθ. κβ. 59-70) καὶ ἡ ὑπόλοιπη διδασκαλία τῶν Εὐαγγελίων, **ἔχει ὑπ' ὄψιν** τὸ παρελθόν, τὸ παρὸν καὶ τὸ μέλλον τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, **τὸν ὅλο ἀνθρωπο** δηλαδὴ· ἀνταποκρίνεται στοὺς βαθύτερους πόθους τῆς ἀνθρώπινης καρδιάς· καὶ σὰν τεράστιος προβολέας ρίχνει τὸ οὐράνιο φῶς του σὲ ζητήματα στὰ ὁποῖα δίχως αὐτὸ ὁ ἀνθρωπος μένει σὲ σκοτάδι ψηλαφητὸ.

Σκοτεινοί, γριφώδεις, ἐσφαλμένοι σὲ πολλὰ σημεῖα παρουσιάζονται οἱ νόμοι τῶν σοφῶν τῆς γῆς· ἐνῶ ἡ νομοθεσία τοῦ Κυρίου εἶνε **φωτεινὴ, καθαρὴ, ἀλάτρωστη**· καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, ποὺ διψᾷ τὴν ἀλήθεια, σπεύδει ἀπὸ τὸ σκοτάδι στὸ φῶς, ὀρθρίζει πρὸς τὸν νομοθέτη Κύριο σύμφωνα μὲ τὴν ὠραία εἰκόνα ποὺ λέει ὁ προφήτης: *«Ἐκ νυκτὸς ὀρθρίζει τὸ πνεῦμά μου πρὸς σέ, ὁ Θεός, διότι φῶς τὰ προστάγματά σου ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς»* [Ψα. 138].

Μελετώντας λοιπὸν καὶ ἐφαρμόζοντας ὁ ἀνθρωπος τὴ νομοθεσία τοῦ Κυρίου βρίσκει μέσα σ' αὐτὴν κρυμμένους **θησαυροὺς σοφίας καὶ γνώσεως** ποὺ δὲν ὑπάρχουν σὲ καμμιά ἄλλη νομοθεσία. Νά γιατί ἡ νομοθεσία τοῦ Χριστοῦ εἶνε τέλεια, θεϊκὴ.

● **Εἶνε ἀκόμη τέλεια καὶ θεϊκὴ λόγῳ ἀγάπης.** Ὁ Κύριος, δηλαδὴ, νομοθετεῖ ἀπὸ ἀγάπη καὶ μόνο ἀπὸ ἀγάπη πρὸς τὸν ἀνθρωπο.

Οἱ ἀνθρωποι - νομοθέτες, ὅσο κι ἂν εἶνε ἀπηλλαγμένοι ἀπὸ κακία, μέσα στοὺς νόμους θ' ἀναμείξουν καὶ τὰ **προσωπικὰ τους συμφέροντα** ἢ θὰ ὑποστηρίξουν περισσότερο τὰ δίκαια ὠρισμένων τάξεων ἢ προσώπων. Ὑπάρχουν νόμοι ποὺ χαρακτηρίζονται «φωτογραφικοί», ἀφοῦ εἶνε φανερό ὅτι στοχεύουν νὰ ἐξυπηρετήσουν συγκεκριμένα συμφέροντα. Ὑπάρχουν δὲ καὶ νόμοι σὲ ὅλες τίς χῶρες καὶ τίς ἐποχές, ποὺ χρησιμεύουν ὡς μέσα γιὰ ἐκδίκηση, γιὰ ἐπικράτησι, γιὰ πραγματοποίησι καταχθονίων σκοπῶν καὶ σχεδίων.

Ἐλατήρια ποικίλα κινοῦν τὴ μηχανὴ τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων νόμων· ἀλλὰ **τοὺς νόμους τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἓνα καὶ μόνο ἐλατήριο τοὺς κινεῖ, ἡ ἀγάπη**· ἡ ἀγάπη ἐκείνη πρὸς τὸν ἀνθρωπο ποὺ ἀνέβασε τὸν Θεάνθρωπο στὸ σταυρό. Μὲ τίς ἐντολές του ὁ Κύριος δὲν χαρίζεται σὲ κανένα, δὲν μεροληπτεῖ εἰς βάρος ἄλλων, δὲν ἀ-

ποβλέπει στὸ συμφέρον ὠρισμένης τάξεως ἢ φυλῆς καὶ στὴν ἐξουδένωσι τῶν ἄλλων, ἀλλὰ θέλει νὰ διδάξῃ, νὰ ὠφελήσῃ, **νὰ σώσῃ κάθε ἀνθρωπο**, ἀδιαφορώντας ἂν αὐτὸς εἶνε ἄντρας ἢ γυναίκα, λευκὸς ἢ μαῦρος, Ἑλληνας ἢ βάρβαρος. Ἡ νομοθεσία τοῦ Χριστοῦ εἶνε δῶρο τῆς ἀγάπης του πρὸς τὸν ἀνθρωπο, τὸν ὁποῖο ἐπιθυμεῖ νὰ βλέπῃ νὰ ζῆ εὐτυχισμένος στοὺς κόλπους τοῦ οὐρανοῦ Πατρός. Γι' αὐτὸ εἶνε ἡ τέλεια, ἡ θεία νομοθεσία.

● **Εἶνε, τέλος, τέλεια καὶ θεία νομοθεσία λόγῳ αἰωνιότητος.** Δὲν μοιάζει καθόλου μὲ τίς νομοθεσίες ἐκεῖνες, ποὺ ἰσχύουν μόνο γιὰ ἓνα μικρὸ χρονικὸ διάστημα καὶ γιὰ ὠρισμένη ἐποχὴ, κ' ἔπειτα ἐνταφιάζονται μαζί μὲ τὴν πτῶσι ἢ τὸ θάνατο τοῦ νομοθέτου. Ἡ νομοθεσία τοῦ Κυρίου θὰ ἔχῃ διάρκεια αἰῶνων ὀλοκλήρων· θὰ μείνῃ ἀκατάλυτη μέχρις ὅτου ὑπάρχει ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ. Γενεές θὰ διαδέχονται γενεές, ἔθνη θὰ ἐξαφανίζονται· νέες ἰδέες θὰ παρουσιάζονται, θὰ συνταράσσουν τὸν κόσμον, θὰ παλιώνουν καὶ θὰ διασκορπίζονται σὰν σκόνῃ· ἀλλὰ μέσα σ' ὅλες αὐτὲς τίς ἀλλοιώσεις ἡ νομοθεσία τοῦ Κυρίου, ποὺ ἀκούστηκε ἀπὸ τὴν κορυφὴ τοῦ ὄρους Σινὰ καὶ συμπληρώθηκε στὴ Γαλιλαία, θὰ παραμείνῃ ἀναλλοίωτη. Πρὸς αὐτὴν θὰ ἐπιστρέφῃ ἡ ἀνθρωπότης ὅσες φορές πλάνοι ὁδηγοὶ θὰ τὴν παρασύρουν μακριὰ ἀπὸ τὸν προορισμὸ της.

Ἀγαπητοί μου! Τὴ νομοθεσία τοῦ Κυρίου ἔχουμε συμφέρον νὰ τὴ γνωρίσουμε τελειότερα καὶ νὰ τὴ ἐφαρμόσουμε πληρέστερα. Ζώντας κατὰ τίς ἐντολές τοῦ Θεοῦ Νομοθέτου βρισκόμαστε **ἐπάνω στὴν σωτήριο τροχιά τοῦ προορισμοῦ μας**. Γιατί οἱ νόμοι τοῦ Κυρίου χαράζουν τὴν τροχιά ποὺ πρέπει ν' ἀκολουθήσῃ ὁ ἀνθρωπος, ἐὰν δὲν θέλῃ νὰ χαθῇ σὰν οἰκτρὸ ναυάγιο στὸ κενό. Ὅπως τὰ οὐράνια σώματα, ποὺ ἀκολουθοῦν τὴν τροχιά ποὺ τοὺς καθώρισε ὁ Δημιουργὸς τους, δὲν συγκρούονται ἀναμεταξύ τους, ἀλλὰ παρουσιάζουν μιά θαυμάσια ἁρμονία καὶ τάξι μέσα στὸ σύμπαν, παρομοίως κ' ἐμεῖς οἱ ἀνθρωποι, ἐὰν ἀκολουθήσουμε τὴν πνευματικὴ μας τροχιά, ὅπως τὴν καθορίζουν οἱ γεμᾶτοι σοφία, ἀγάπη καὶ παντοδυναμία νόμοι τοῦ Κυρίου, δὲν θὰ συγκρουώμεθα ἀναμεταξύ μας, δὲν θὰ βάρουμε μὲ αἷμα τὴ γῆ, δὲν θὰ ζοῦμε μὲ ἀνησυχίες καὶ θλίψεις καὶ φόβους, ἀλλὰ γαλήνιοι θὰ ταξιδεύουμε πρὸς τὰ ὑψηλά, ἐκεῖ ὅπου ἐπικρατεῖ ἡ τάξι, ἡ ἁρμονία καὶ ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ οὐρανοῦ κόσμου.

(†) **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

Elijah's (Elias') Journey

When the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind, he and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here, please. The LORD has sent me on to Bethel." Elisha replied, "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So they went down to Bethel. The guild prophets who were in Bethel went out to Elisha and asked him, "Do you know that today the LORD will take your master from you?" He replied, "Yes, I know that. Be still."

Elijah said to him, "Stay here, please. The LORD has sent me on to the Jordan." Elisha replied, "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So the two went on together. Fifty of the guild prophets followed and stood facing them at a distance, while the two of them stood next to the Jordan.

Elijah took his mantle, rolled it up and struck the water: it divided, and the two of them crossed over on dry ground. When they had crossed over,

Elijah said to Elisha, "Request whatever I might do for you, before I am taken from you." Elisha answered, "May I receive a double portion of your spirit." He replied, "You have asked something that is not easy. Still, if you see me taken up from you, your wish will be granted; otherwise not." As they walked on still conversing, a fiery chariot and fiery horses came between the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind, and Elisha saw it happen. He cried out, "My father! my father! Israel's chariot and steeds!" Then he saw him no longer. He gripped his own garment, tore it into two pieces, and picked up the mantle which had fallen from Elijah. Then he went back and stood at the bank of the Jordan. Wielding the mantle which had fallen from Elijah, he struck the water and said, "The LORD, the God of Elijah - where is he now?" He struck the water: it divided, and he crossed over. (2 Kings 2:1-15)

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