

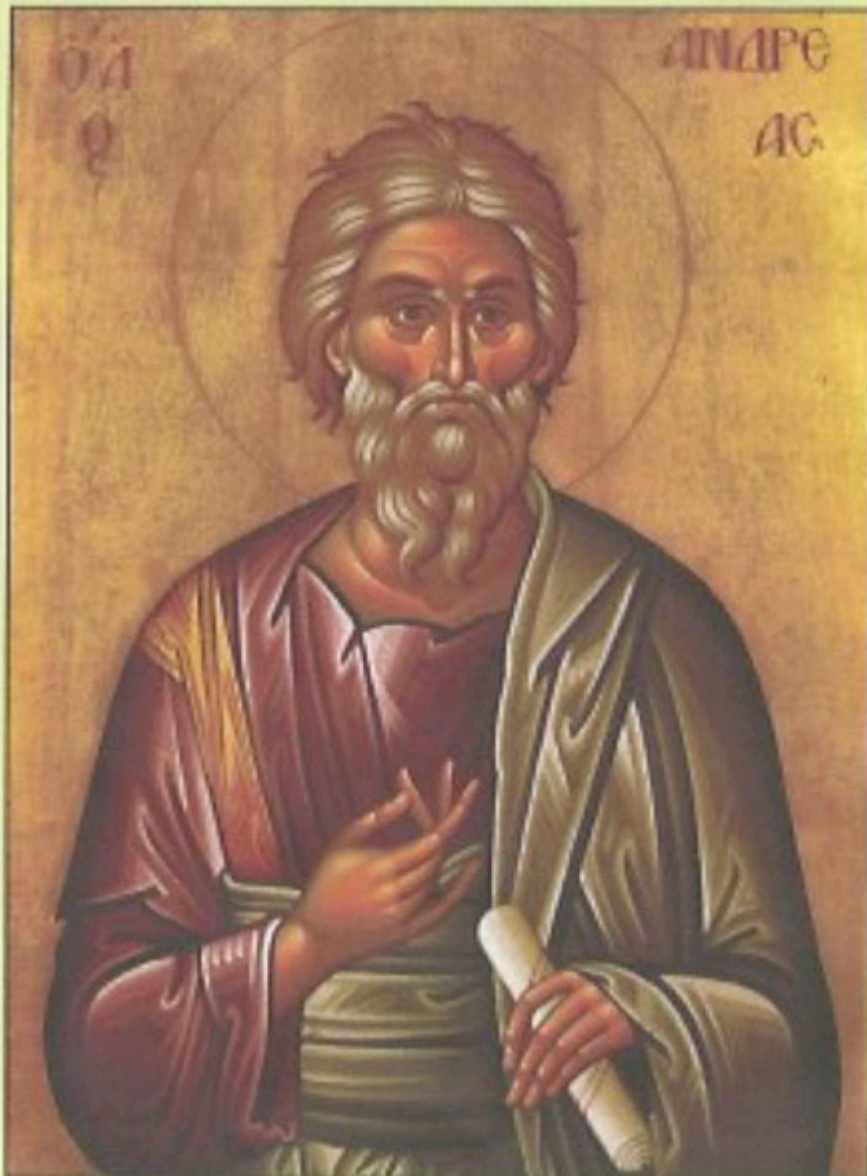


DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN  
DISTRICT

# THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN November 26th, 2017  
V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
THIRTEENTH SUNDAY OF LUKE



*Icon of the Holy Apostle Saint Andrew -- November 30th*

**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 Ephesians 4:1-7

Brethren, I, a prisoner for the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, forbearing one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.

**Προκείμενον. Ἦχος πλ. δ'.**

**ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 75.11,1**

Εὐξασθε καὶ ἀπόδοτε Κυρίῳ τῷ Θεῷ ἡμῶν.

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

Πρὸς Ἐφεσίους 4:1-7 τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα εἶναι ἀπο

Ἀδελφοί, παρακαλῶ οὖν ὑμᾶς ἐγώ, ὁ δέσμιος ἐν κυρίῳ, ἀξίως περιπατῆσαι τῆς κλήσεως ἧς ἐκλήθητε, μετὰ πάσης ταπεινοφροσύνης καὶ πραότητος, μετὰ μακροθυμίας, ἀνεχόμενοι ἀλλήλων ἐν ἀγάπῃ, σπουδάζοντες τηρεῖν τὴν ἐνότητα τοῦ πνεύματος ἐν τῷ συνδέσμῳ τῆς εἰρήνης. Ἐν σῶμα καὶ ἐν πνεῦμα, καθὼς καὶ ἐκλήθητε ἐν μιᾷ ἐλπίδι τῆς κλήσεως ὑμῶν· εἷς κύριος, μία πίστις, ἐν βάπτισμα, εἷς θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ πάντων, ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων, καὶ διὰ πάντων, καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν ἡμῖν. Ἐνὶ δὲ ἐκάστῳ ἡμῶν ἐδόθη ἡ χάρις κατὰ τὸ μέτρον τῆς δωρεᾶς τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

**13th Sunday of Luke**

**The Gospel According to Luke 18:18-27**

t that time, a ruler came to Jesus and asked him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.' " And he said, "All these I have observed from my youth." And when Jesus heard it, he said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." But when he heard this he became sad, for he was very rich. Jesus looking at him said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." Those who heard it said, "Then who can be saved?" But he said, "What is impossible with men is possible with God."

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, ἄρχων λέγων· διδάσκαλε ἀγαθέ, τί ποιήσας ζωὴν αἰώνιον κληρονομήσω; εἶπε δὲ αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· τί με λέγεις ἀγαθόν; οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἰ μὴ εἷς ὁ Θεός. τὰς ἐντολάς οἶδας· μὴ μοιχεύσης, μὴ φονεύσης, μὴ κλέψης, μὴ ψευδομαρτυρήσης, τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα σου. ὁ δὲ εἶπε· ταῦτα πάντα ἐφυλαξάμην ἐκ νεότητός μου. ἀκούσας δὲ ταῦτα ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ἔτι ἐν σοὶ λείπει· πάντα ὅσα ἔχεις πώλησον καὶ διάδος πτωχοῖς, καὶ ἕξεις θησαυρὸν ἐν οὐρανῷ, καὶ δεῦρο ἀκολούθει μοι. ὁ δὲ ἀκούσας ταῦτα περίλυπος ἐγένετο· ἦν γὰρ πλούσιος σφόδρα. ἰδὼν δὲ αὐτὸν ὁ Ἰησοῦς περίλυπον γενόμενον εἶπε· πῶς δυσκόλως οἱ τὰ χρήματα ἔχοντες εἰσελεύσονται εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ! εὐκοπώτερον γάρ ἐστι κάμηλον διὰ τρυμαλιᾶς ραφίδος εἰσελθεῖν ἢ πλούσιον εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ εἰσελθεῖν. εἶπον δὲ οἱ ἀκούσαντες· καὶ τίς δύναται σωθῆναι; ὁ δὲ εἶπε· τὰ ἀδύνατα παρὰ ἀνθρώποις δυνατὰ παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ ἐστίν.

**DEVOTIONS THIS WEEK:**

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>November 26th,</b>	<b>Liturgy of Saint Stylianos and Katherine</b>	<b>10:30 A.M.</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>November 30th,</b>	<b>Liturgy of Saint Andrew</b>	<b>9:30 A.M.</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>December 01st,</b>	<b>HOLY WATER BLESSING (AGIASMOS)</b>	<b>11:00 A.M.</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>December 03rd,</b>	<b>Great Vesper of SAINT BARBARA</b>	<b>7:00 P.M.</b>

**Saint Barbara will be hosted in festal observance on SUNDAY – December 03rd, at THREE HIERARCHS PARISH. Chronia polla to all on their name-day!**

**AGAPE COFFEE FELLOWSHIP:** this Sunday is being hosted in memory of + **KONSTANTINOS** and + **THEONI VASSILAKOS** by their beloved family. Please join us in Whitehall.

**LADIES PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY:** will meet tomorrow evening, MONDAY, November 27th at 7:00 P.M. All ladies of the Parish are cordially invited to attend and share in the philanthropic activities and efforts of the Society. **THEY DO GREAT WORK!**

**SENIOR CLUB:** will meet as usual on Wednesday, November 29th, in WHITEHALL for the FINAL CHINESE AUCTION of the year. This is an excellent opportunity for you to find that extra gift or two for the unexpected Christmas offering to a friend or neighbor. BINGO, SWEETS and COFFEE are always served.

**NOMINATIONS** to the Parish Council TWO YEAR TERM 2018 AND 2019 close today at 12 noon. Elections for the Parish Council will be conducted under the aegis and supervision of the elections committee ( Susan Jannace, Dina Theodosakis and Yvonne Karounos), on Sunday, December 17th, from 10 A.M. to 3 P.M. in School Room #104. Registered stewards may vote.

**ADVENT:** The Christmas fast period of 40 days until Christmas has commenced since November 15th. The strict fast is observed 12 days before Christmas on December 13th – coincidentally **SAINT EUGENE DAY!**

**MANY THANKS: EVCHARISTO! MERCI! GRAZIE! GRACIAS! DANKE! SPASIBA!** to an anonymous lady in the Parish who hosts the Prayer and Healing Service coffee – sweets each month. The ‘ home made ‘ sweets and treats ( Grecian delights ) are enjoyed by all. May our Lord continue to extend grace abundantly to her!

**GEORGIAN ORTHODOX BASKETBALL:** The Georgian Consulate has established a basketball league TRAINING SESSION for young boys and girls which meets on Monday and Thursday evenings at Three Hierarchs gymnasium from 5:30 to 8:00 P.M. Interested youths may see the coach GEORGI at any session.

**MARK YOUR CALENDER:** for the 2017 – 88th Annual Three Hierarchs GALA Dinner – Dance scheduled for FRIDAY evening December 01st, at the fabulous EL CARIBE with dancing and music by the YIANNI PAPASTEPHANOU ORCHESTRA and SINGERS. The Parish is honoring the 5 generations of devoted service to our parish by the VELLIOS CLAN one and all ! Make every effort to join us on this festive night of fellowship, dining and dancing.

**JOURNAL?** Please submit a journal advertisement in honor of a loved one , a baptism, a wedding, an anniversary, a memorial tribute, or just a greeting of THANKSGIVING TO GOD, for all his GRACE upon you and your loved ones. VISIT the church office after liturgy and fill out the AD FORM.

**The Parish Community one and all extend our fondest blessings to each member of the PARISH, their loved ones and those who love them, for all of God’s grace. May your table be full of peace, reconciliation, love, hope and compassion. This is the cornucopia of true THANKSGIVING. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.**

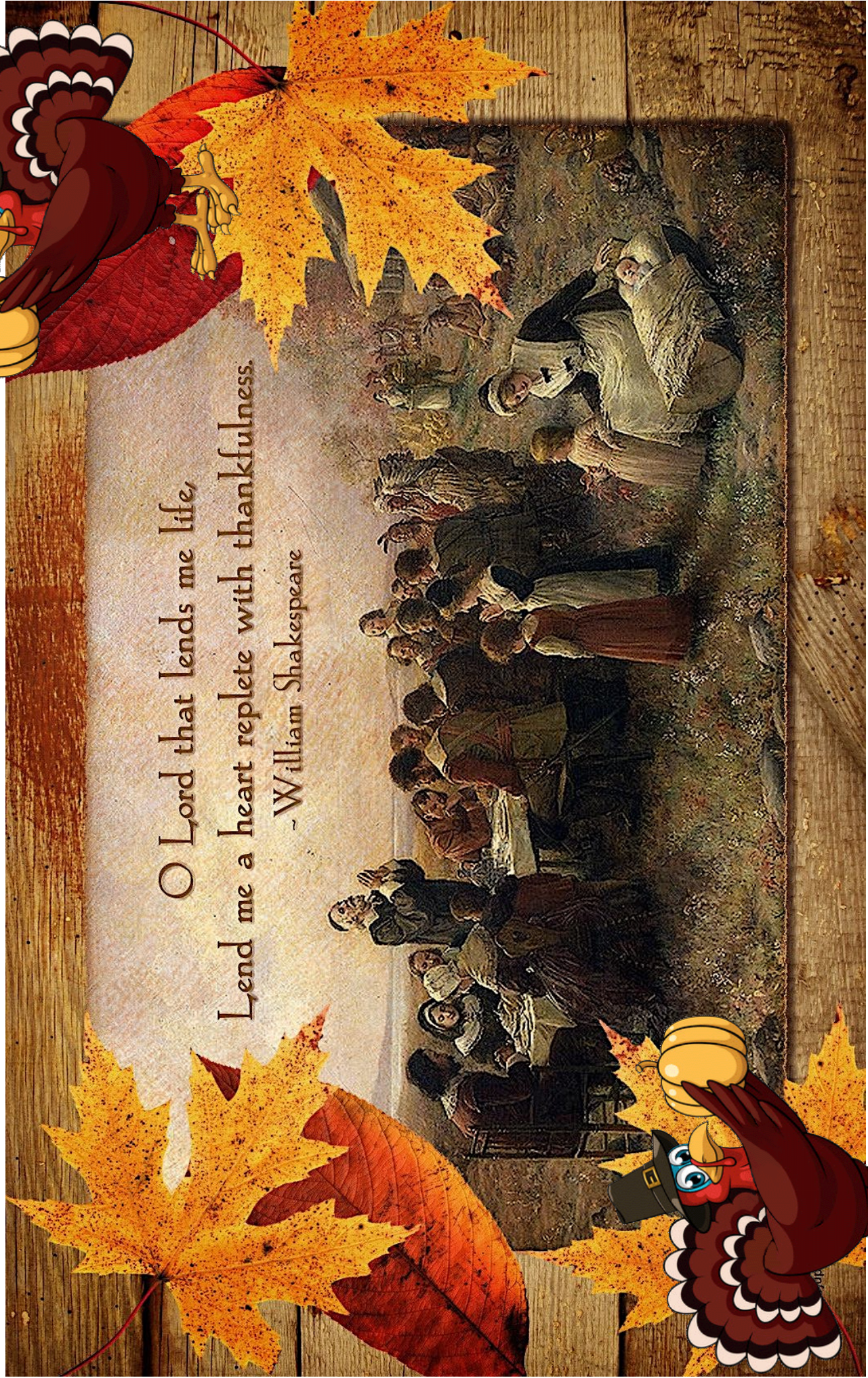
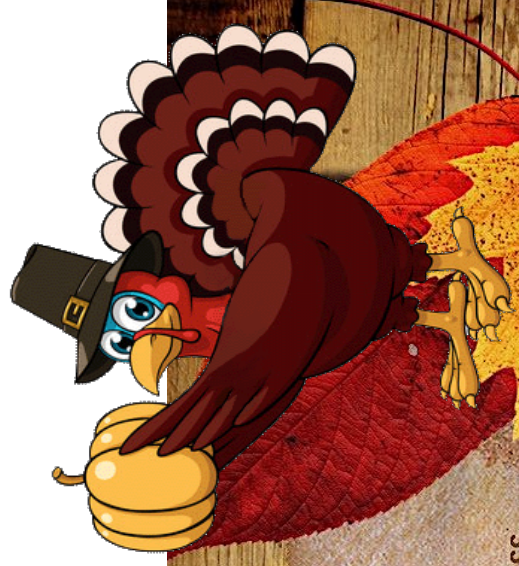
**RADIO MINISTRY:** Each Saturday at 1:15PM Fr. Eugene hosts and produces the radio broadcast **MATTERS OF CONSCIENCE NOW IN ITS 19<sup>TH</sup> YEAR OF BROADCASTING LIVE ON WNYE 91.5 COSMOS FM, with listener** telephone participation. Subjects of interest regarding Greek Orthodox theology, faith and 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](http://W.W.W.gaepis.org) ([Click live audio](#))

**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 .

**MEMORIAL TODAY: + KONSTANTINOS & + THEONI VASSILAKOS**

○ Lord that lends me life,  
Lend me a heart replete with thankfulness.

~ William Shakespeare





## Amazing Grace

Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound,  
that saved a wretch like me...  
I once was lost but now am found,  
Was found but now I see.

T'was Grace that taught...  
my heart to fear.  
And grace, my fears relieved.  
How precious did that Grace appear...  
the hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares...  
we have already come.  
T'was Grace that brought us safe thus far...  
and Grace will lead us home.

The Lord has promised good to me...  
His word my hope secures.  
He will my shield and portion be...  
as long as life endures.

When we've been here ten thousand years...  
bright shining as the sun.  
We've no less days to sing God's praise...  
then when we've first begun.

Amazing race , how sweet the sound,  
That saved a wretch like me...  
I once was lost but now am found,  
Was blind, but now, i see.



## We Gather Together Hymn

We gather together to ask the Lords' Blessing  
He chastens and hastens His will to make known.  
The wicked oppressing now cease from distressing  
Sing praises to His Name: He forgets not His own.

Beside us to guide us, our God with us joining.  
Ordaining , maintaining His kingdom divine;  
So from the beginning the fight we were winning:  
Thou , Lord , were at our side , all glory be Thine@

We- all do extol Thee, Thou Leader - triumphant,  
And pray that Thou still our Defender will be.  
Let Thy congregation escape tribulation:  
Thy Name be ever praised! O Lord , make us free!





# 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 Γενναεῖα Τετρ Μονὴ Ἁγίου Αὐγουστίνου Φλωρίνης - 531 00 ΦΛΩΡΙΝΑ - τηλ. 23850-20610 - [imszallo@yahoo.gr](mailto:imszallo@yahoo.gr)

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος ΛΔ' Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 2053	Κυριακὴ ἸΓ' Λουκά (Λουκ. 18,18-27) 26 Νοεμβρίου 2017	Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος Αὐγουστίνος Ν. Καντιώτης
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## Μὴν καυχηθῆς γιὰ ἀρετὲς

«Οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἶ μὴ εἷς ὁ Θεός» (Λουκ. 18,19)

**Ε**νας φιλάργυρος πλούσιος, ἀγαπητοί μου, ἔρχεται πρὸς τὸν Χριστό· πλησιάζει, γονατίζει μπροστά του καὶ μὲ μεγάλο σεβασμὸ τὸν ρωτᾷ: «*Διδάσκαλε ἀγαθέ, τί ποιήσας ζωὴν αἰώνιον κληρονομήσω; εἶπε δὲ αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς: Τί με λέγεις ἀγαθόν; οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἶ μὴ εἷς ὁ Θεός*» (Λουκ. 18,18-19). Τί πρέπει νὰ κάνω γιὰ νὰ κληρονομήσω τὴν αἰώνιο ζωὴ; ρώτησε τὸν Ἰησοῦ προσφωνώντας τον «*ἀγαθὸ διδάσκαλο*». Τὸ τί σημαίνει αὐτὴ ἢ προσφώνησι φαίνεται ἀπὸ τὴν ἀπάντησι πού ἔδωσε ὁ Κύριος.

Ὁ πλούσιος αὐτὸς δὲν πίστευε στὴ θεότητα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ· θεωροῦσε τὸ Ναζωραῖο ὡς ἓνα μεγάλο μὲν δάσκαλο, ἀνώτερο ἴσως ἀπ' ὅλους τοὺς ἄλλους νομοδιδασκάλους τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ, ἀλλὰ πάντως ὡς ἄνθρωπο, ὄχι ὡς Θεό, ὄχι ὡς τὸ ἓνα ἀπὸ τὰ Πρόσωπα τῆς ἁγίας Τριάδος. Καὶ ἐπειδὴ εἶχε τέτοια ἀντίληψι γιὰ τὸ πρόσωπο τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, γι' αὐτὸ ἀκριβῶς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς τοῦ ἀπαντᾷ: Ἐφ' ὅσον μὲ θεωρεῖς ὡς ἓναν ἀπλὸ ἄνθρωπο, μάθε λοιπὸν ὅτι αὐτὸς ὁ τίτλος, «*ἀγαθός*», μὲ τὴν ἀπόλυτη ἔννοια ἀρμόζει μόνο στὸ Θεὸ καὶ ὄχι σὲ ἄνθρωπο, διότι «*οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἶ μὴ εἷς ὁ Θεός*», κανένας δὲν εἶνε ἀγαθὸς παρὰ μόνο ἓνας, ὁ Θεός.

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Καὶ ἀλήθεια, ἀγαπητοί μου, ἂν ἐξετάσουμε κάπως βαθύτερα τὰ λόγια αὐτὰ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, θὰ πεισθοῦμε, ὅτι καὶ ὁ ἀγιώτερος ἀπὸ τοὺς ἄνθρώπους δὲν δικαιούται καὶ δὲν μπορεί νὰ ὀνομασθῆ «*ἀγαθός*». Γιατί; **Γιὰ τοὺς ἑξῆς τρεῖς λόγους.**

● «*Οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἶ μὴ εἷς ὁ Θεός*». Πρῶτα - πρῶτα δὲν εἶνε «*ἀγαθός*» κανένας θνητός, διότι μοναδικὴ πηγὴ τῆς ἀγαθότητος εἶνε ὁ Θεός, ἐνῶ ἡ ἀρετὴ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου εἶνε κάτι πού αὐτὸς δὲν τὸ κατορθώνει μόνος του, μὲ τὶς ἀτομικὲς του δυνάμεις καὶ προσπάθειες, ἀλλὰ τὸ ἐπιτυγχάνει μὲ τὴ βοήθεια τοῦ Θεοῦ. Ἀπὸ τὸ Θεό, πού εἶνε ἡ πηγὴ τῆς ἀγαθότητος

καὶ τοῦ ἁγιασμοῦ, ὅλοι οἱ ἅγιοι ἀντλοῦν δυνάμεις γιὰ νὰ γίνουν καὶ αὐτοὶ ἅγιοι καὶ ἀγαθοί. Ἡ ἀρετὴ τους εἶνε κατὰ μέγα μέρος καὶ κατ' οὐσίαν δάνειο· τὸ χορηγεῖ ὁ Θεός σ' ἐκείνους πού ἡ καρδιά τους εἶνε ἐπιδεκτικὴ τῆς θείας καλλιέργειας.

Τὸ λέει αὐτὸ καθαρὰ ὁ ἴδιος ὁ Χριστός: «*Χωρὶς ἐμοῦ οὐ δύνασθε ποιεῖν οὐδέν*», χωρὶς ἐμένα τίποτα δὲν μπορείτε νὰ κάνετε (Ἰω. 15,5). Τὸ λέει ὠραῖα καὶ ὁ ψαλμωδός: «*Ἐὰν μὴ Κύριος οἰκοδομήσῃ οἶκον, εἰς μάτην ἐκοπίασαν οἱ οἰκοδομοῦντες· ἐὰν μὴ Κύριος φυλάξῃ πόλιν, εἰς μάτην ἠγρύπνησεν ὁ φυλάσων*» ἂν ἓνα σπιτί δὲν τὸ χτίσῃ ὁ Κύριος, μάταια κοπιᾶζουν οἱ χτίστες, καὶ ἂν μιὰ πόλι δὲν τὴ φυλάξῃ ὁ Κύριος, μάταια ἀγρυπνοῦν οἱ φρουροὶ τῆς πόλεως (Ἠλμ. 12,1). Σύμφωνα μὲ τὸ ῥητὸ αὐτὸ, ὅλες οἱ προσπάθειες τοῦ ἀνθρώπου γιὰ νὰ οἰκοδομήσῃ στὴν καρδιά του καὶ νὰ στήσῃ μέσα του κάτι τι ἀληθινὸ, ὠραῖο καὶ ἀγαθὸ, ἀποβαίνουν μάταιες, ἂν ὁ Κύριος δὲν δώσῃ τὴν εὐλογία του, τὴ βοήθειά του, **τὴ χάρι** του.

Ἄφου λοιπὸν εἶνε γεγονός, τὸ ὁποῖο πιστοποιεῖ ἢ πείρα τῶν τέκνων τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὅτι χωρὶς τὴ βοήθεια τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡ ἀρετὴ, ὅπως τὴν ἐννοεῖ τὸ Εὐαγγέλιο, εἶνε κάτι ἀκατόρθωτο, ἐπομένως κανένας δὲν μπορεί νὰ ὀνομασθῆ ἀγαθὸς μὲ τὴν πλήρη ἔννοια: «*οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἶ μὴ εἷς ὁ Θεός*». Ναί, πηγὴ τῆς ἀγαθότητος εἶνε ὁ Θεός· ὁ ἄνθρωπος μόνο ἐφ' ὅσον ἐπικοινωνεῖ μὲ τὸ Θεό, μετέχει στὴν ἀγαθότητα καὶ στὸν ἁγιασμό Του.

● «*Οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἶ μὴ εἷς ὁ Θεός*». Δεύτερος λόγος γιὰ τὸν ὁποῖο κανένας θνητὸς δὲν μπορεί νὰ ὀνομασθῆ «*ἀγαθός*» μὲ τὴν ἀπόλυτη ἔννοια εἶνε, διότι ἡ ἀρετὴ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου δὲν εἶνε ποτέ πλήρης· πάντοτε θὰ παρουσιάζῃ ἐλλείψεις, οἱ ὁποῖες θὰ ρίχνουν κάποια μικρότερη ἢ μεγαλύτερη σκιά ἐπάνω στὴ φωτεινὴ λάμψι του, στὴν αἴγλη τῆς μορφῆς του.

Καί ὁ ἀγιώτερος ἄνθρωπος θὰ ἔχη τὶς κηλίδες του, τὰ μικρά του ἑλαττώματα.

Εἶνε γνωστὸ ὅτι ἡ **ἀγία Γραφή** δὲν ἀποκρύπτει ἀνθρώπινες ἀδυναμίες καὶ ἀγίων ἀκόμη ἀνδρῶν· ὁ Μωυσῆς π.χ. καὶ ὁ Δαυὶδ στὴν παλαιὰ διαθήκη, ὁ Πέτρος καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι ἀπόστολοι στὴν καινὴ διαθήκη βλέπουμε ὅτι καὶ μετὰ τὴν Πεντηκοστή εἶχαν στιγμὲς ἀνθρώπινες. Καὶ ἂν αὐτὸ συμβαίνει μὲ τοὺς ἀγιώτερους χαρακτήρες, φαντασθῆτε τώρα τί γίνεται μὲ τοὺς ἄλλους, μὲ ὄλους ἡμᾶς, ποὺ ἀσφαλῶς δὲν πετάμε βέβαια στὰ ὕψη τῆς ἀρετῆς, ἀλλὰ κινούμεθα πολὺ χαμηλά, σερνόμαστε σὰν παιδιὰ στὸ ἔδαφος αὐτῆς τῆς καθημερινότητος, πεζοὶ καὶ ἑλεεινοί.

**Δὲν ὑπάρχει καθαρὴ ἀρετὴ**· μείγμα ἀρετῆς καὶ κακίας εἶνε ἡ ζωὴ μας. Δὲν ὑπάρχει ἀγαθὸ στὸ ὅποιο νὰ μὴν ἔχη ρίξει τὶς σταγόνες τῆς –ἔστω καὶ ἐλάχιστες, ἔστω καὶ μία– ἢ κακία. Ἀλλὰ νὰ ξέρατε πόσο ἀλλοιώνει τὴν ποιότητα τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ καὶ μία σταγόνα κακίας! Νὰ σᾶς πῶ πόσο τὴν ἀλλοιώνει; Νά, ὅσο ἐπηρεάζει καὶ κάνει ἀηδιαστικὸ καὶ τὸ πιὸ ἐκλεκτὸ φαγητὸ καὶ μία σταγόνα πετρελαίου ποὺ πέφτει τὴν τελευταία στιγμή μέσα στὸ πιάτο.

Πῶς λοιπὸν μπορούμε νὰ ὀνομασθοῦμε «ἀγαθοί», ἐφ' ὅσον οὔτε ἡμεῖς εἶμαστε ἢ πηγὴ τῆς ἀγαθότητος – αὕτη εἶνε ὁ Θεός, οὔτε καὶ ἀρετὴ πλήρη εἶμαστε ὅσοι νὰ παρουσιάσουμε – αὐτοαγαθότης εἶνε μόνον ὁ Θεός; Κατὰ τὸν προφήτη Ἡσαΐα, ὅλη **«ἡ δικαιοσύνη»** μας εἶνε ἓνα **«ράκος ἀποκαθμένης»**. Ἐνα βρωμερὸ καὶ ἀκάθαρτο κουρέλι (Ἠε 64β). Κατὰ δὲ τὸν ἅγιο Αὐγουστῖνο, κι αὐτὰ ἀκόμη ποὺ ἡμεῖς θεωροῦμε ὡς ἀρετές μας δὲν εἶνε τίποτε ἄλλο παρὰ «λάμποντα ἀδικήματα».

● **«Οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἰ μὴ εἷς ὁ Θεός»**. Τέλος ἕνας τρίτος λόγος γιὰ τὸν ὅποιο κανένας ἀπὸ μᾶς δὲν μπορεῖ νὰ ὀνομασθῆ **«ἀγαθός»** εἶνε, διότι ἡ ἀρετὴ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου δὲν εἶνε κάτι τι μόνιμο καὶ ἀμετάτρεπτο. **Ὁ ἄνθρωπος εἶνε τρεπτός, μεταβλητός**· δηλαδὴ ἀλλάζει, ἀπὸ στιγμή σὲ στιγμή μεταβάλλεται, εὐκόλα ἢ διὰ θέσιν του μεταπίπτει.

Παράδειγμα. **Σήμερα** προσεύχεται, μελετᾷ τὰ θεῖα λόγια, κάνει ἐλεημοσύνη, συγχωρεῖ τοὺς ἐχθρούς του, μεταλαμβάνει τὰ ἄχραντα μυστήρια, **εἶνε θερμὸς στὴν πίστι**· **αὔριο ψυχραίνεται**, ἀμελεῖ, ὑποχωρεῖ, πέφτει στὴν ἁμαρτία, γίνεται πῶμα ἑλεεινὸ καὶ ἀξιοθρήνητο. Πόσοι ἅγιοι, ποὺ εἶχαν στήσει τὶς φωλιές τους στὸν οὐρανό, ἀπὸ μιὰ ἀπροσεξία, ἀπὸ μιὰ σατανικὴ συναρπαγὴ, δὲν ἔπεσαν καί, ἐνῶ ἦταν ἀετοὶ τοῦ πνεύματος, κατήντησαν

σαῦρες καὶ σκουλήκια στὴ λάσπη! Δὲν ἐμπνέει λοιπὸν ἀπόλυτη ἐμπιστοσύνη ἢ ἀρετὴ καὶ τοῦ ἀγιώτερου ἀνθρώπου, ἐφ' ὅσον ἀκόμη ζῆ καὶ βρίσκεται ἐδῶ σ' αὐτὴ γῆ, σ' αὐτὸ τὸ γήπεδο τοῦ ἀγῶνος, στὸ κρίσιμο τοῦτο στάδιο τῆς ἀρετῆς, στὸ φοβερὸ τοῦτο δοκιμαστήριο τῶν ἀξιῶν. Κανένας δὲν μπορεῖ νὰ πῆ, ὅτι ἡ ἀρετὴ του εἶνε σταθερὴ, μόνιμη, ἀμετάτρεπτη.

**Ἀπέναντί μας στέκει ὁ ἐχθρός**, ποὺ καταδοκεῖ νὰ κερδίσει καὶ τὸ ἐλάχιστο ἔδαφος, ν' ἀποσπάσει ἔστω ἓνα πόντο καὶ σιγὰ - σιγὰ νὰ μᾶς ἐκτοπίσει, νὰ μᾶς ρίξει στὴν ἁμαρτία καὶ τελικὰ στὴν κόλαση.

Τρεπτὸς ὁ ἄνθρωπος, τρεπτὴ καὶ ἡ ἀρετὴ του. Ἀμετάβλητος εἶνε μόνον ὁ Θεός, καὶ μόνιμη, σταθερὴ καὶ ἀμετάβλητη εἶνε ἡ ἀρετὴ του. Γιὰ τὸ Θεό, καὶ μόνον γι' αὐτόν, γράφτηκε τὸ ῥητὸ **«Κατ' ἀρχὰς σὺ, Κύριε, τὴν γῆν ἐθεμελίωσας, καὶ ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν σου εἰσὶν οἱ οὐρανοί· αὐτοὶ ἀπολοῦνται, σὺ δὲ διαμένεις, καὶ πάντες ὡς ἰμάτιον παλαιωθήσονται, καὶ ὡσεὶ περιβόλαιον ἐλίξεις αὐτούς, καὶ ἀλλαγῆσονται· σὺ δὲ ὁ αὐτὸς εἶ, καὶ τὰ ἔτη σου οὐ ἐκλείψουσιν»** (Ἠλμ. 101,26-28). Ἐνῶ ὅλα θὰ φύγουν, ἐσὺ θὰ μένης εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα ἀναλλοίωτος.

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Ἐχοντας, ἀγαπητοί μου, ὑπ' ὄψιν τὶς ἀλήθειες αὐτές, **εἶνε ἀνόητο νὰ καυχώμεθα** γιὰ ἀρετές μας καὶ καλὰ ἔργα μας. Ὅ,τι ἀγαθὸ πράττουμε, τὸ πράττουμε μὲ τὴ βοήθεια τοῦ παντοδυνάμου Κυρίου μας. Αὐτὸς μᾶς ἐμπνέει, αὐτὸς μᾶς φωτίζει, αὐτὸς μᾶς δίνει ὅλα τὰ μέσα γιὰ νὰ πραγματοποιοῦμε τὸ ἀγαθό. Εἶνε ἡ πηγὴ τῆς ἀγαθότητος.

Ἀλλὰ καὶ **ὅ,τι ἀγαθὸ πράξαμε** δὲν εἶνε κι αὐτὸ τέλειο· παρουσιάζει τὰ **τρωτά** του καὶ ἔχει τὶς **ἐλλείψεις** του. Τέλειος στὴν ἀγαθότητα εἶνε ἓνας μόνον, ὁ Θεός. Ἄς μὴ καυχώμεθα λοιπὸν γιὰ τὶς ἀρετές μας, οἱ ὅποιες ἐν συγκρίσει μὲ τὴν ἀγαθότητα τοῦ Θεοῦ εἶνε ὅ,τι εἶνε μιὰ ἀσβόλη, **μιὰ μουτζούρα**, μπροστὰ στὸν ἄραιοτερο πῖνακα, ὅ,τι εἶνε ἓνα **ἐξάμβλωμα** καὶ ἔκτρωμα ἐμπρὸς σὲ ἓνα τέλειο ὄργανισμὸ.

Ἐξάλλου ἡ πραγματικότητα λέει, ὅτι οὔτε καὶ ὅταν κατορθώνουμε κάτι μπορούμε νὰ τὸ διατηρήσουμε γιὰ πολὺ. Τὴν ἐπόμενη στιγμή πέταξε κ' **ἔφυγε μέσ' ἀπ' τὰ χέρια μας**.

Ἄν λοιπὸν κάποτε ἡ ὑπερηφάνεια ἔρχεται νὰ μᾶς θολώσῃ τὸ νοῦ μὲ **ψεύτικες φαντασίες** τῆς, ἂς θυμώμαστε καὶ ἂς μελετοῦμε βαθεῖα τὰ λόγια τοῦ Κυρίου Ἰησοῦ· **«Τί με λέγεις ἀγαθόν; οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἰ μὴ εἷς ὁ Θεός»**.

(†) **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**

### *Hallowed Be Thy Name*

How merciful the Lord is to us, how kind and richly compassionate! He wished us to repeat this prayer in God's sight, to call the Lord our Father and, as Christ is God's Son, be called in turn sons of God! None of us would ever have dared to utter this name unless He Himself had allowed us to pray in this way. And therefore, dear friends, we should bear in mind and realize that when we call God our Father we ought also to act like sons and daughters. If we are pleased to call him Father, let him in turn be pleased to call us sons and daughters.

We should live like the temples of God we are, so that it can be seen that God lives in us. No act of ours should be unworthy of the spirit. Now that we have begun to live in heaven and in spirit, all our thoughts and actions should be heavenly and spiritual; for, as the Lord God himself has said: Those who honor me I will honor, and those who despise me shall be de-

spised. And the blessed Apostle wrote in his letter: You are not your own; you were bought with a great price. So glorify and bear God in your body.

We go on to say, May your name be hallowed. It is not that we think to make God holy by our prayers; rather we are asking God that His name may be made holy in us. Indeed, how could God be made holy, He who is the source of holiness? Still, because He Himself said: Be holy, for I am holy, we pray and beseech Him that we who have been hallowed in baptism may persevere in what we have begun. And we pray for this every day, for we have need of daily sanctification; sinning every day, we cleanse our faults again and again by constant sanctification.

*St. Cyprian of Carthage*

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