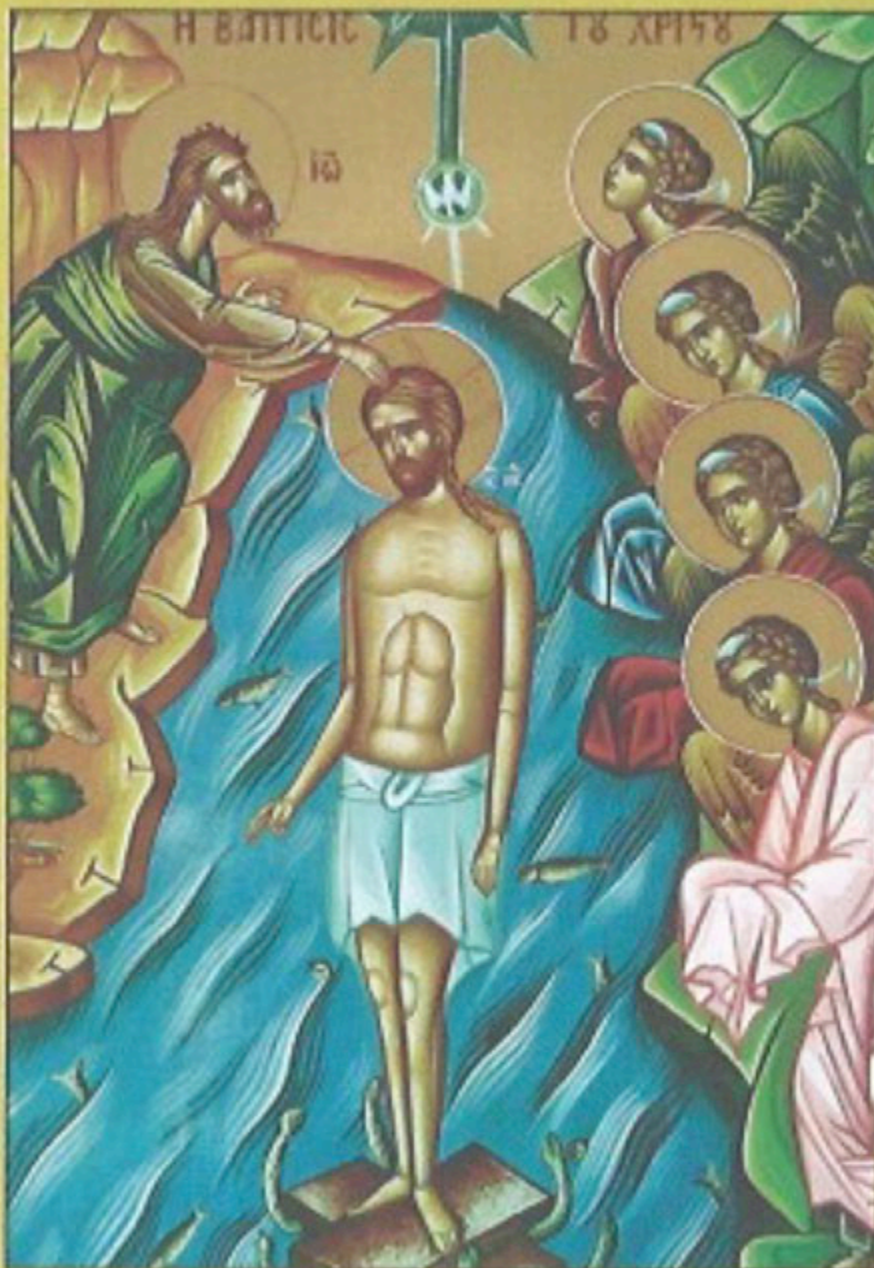


SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN January 14th, 2018  
V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

## LEAVE-TAKING OF THEOPHANY (EPIPHANY)



*Icon of the Theophany (Epiphany) of Our Lord*

**Prokeimenon. Mode 1.**

**Psalm 32.22,1**

Let your mercy, O Lord, be upon us.

Verse: Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous.

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 4:7-13

BRETHREN, grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it is said, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men." (in saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is he who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Πρὸς Ἐφεσίους 4:7-13

**Προκείμενον. Ἦχος α'.**

**ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 32.22,1**

Γένοιτο, Κύριε, τὸ ἔλεός σου ἐφ' ἡμᾶς.

Στίχ. Ἀγαλλιᾶσθε δίκαιοι ἐν Κυρίῳ

Πρὸς Ἐφεσίους 4:7-13 τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα εἶναι ἀπο

Ἀδελφοί, ἐνὶ ἐκάστῳ ἡμῶν ἐδόθη ἡ χάρις κατὰ τὸ μέτρον τῆς δωρεᾶς τοῦ Χριστοῦ. Διὸ λέγει, Ἀναβάς εἰς ὕψος ἠχμαλώτευσεν αἰχμαλωσίαν, καὶ ἔδωκεν δόματα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις. Τὸ δέ, Ἀνέβη, τί ἐστὶν εἰ μὴ ὅτι καὶ κατέβη πρῶτον εἰς τὰ κατώτερα μέρη τῆς γῆς; Ὁ καταβάς, αὐτός ἐστιν καὶ ὁ ἀναβάς ὑπεράνω πάντων τῶν οὐρανῶν, ἵνα πληρώσῃ τὰ πάντα. Καὶ αὐτὸς ἔδωκεν τοὺς μὲν ἀποστόλους, τοὺς δὲ προφήτας, τοὺς δὲ εὐαγγελιστάς, τοὺς δὲ ποιμένας καὶ διδασκάλους, πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων, εἰς ἔργον διακονίας, εἰς οἰκοδομὴν τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ· μέχρι καταστήσωμεν οἱ πάντες εἰς τὴν ἐνότητα τῆς πίστεως καὶ τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ, εἰς ἄνδρα τέλειον, εἰς μέτρον ἡλικίας τοῦ πληρώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

Sunday after Epiphany

The Gospel According to Matthew 4:12-17

At that time, when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth he went and dwelt in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, toward the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Sunday after Epiphany

Ἐκ τοῦ Κατὰ Ματθαῖον 4:12-17 Εὐαγγελίου τὸ Ἀνάγνωσμα

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, ἀκούσας δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι Ἰωάννης παρεδόθη, ἀνεχώρησεν εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν, καὶ καταλιπὼν τὴν Ναζαρέτ ἐλθὼν κατώκησεν εἰς Καπερναοὺμ τὴν παραθαλασσίαν ἐν ὀρίοις Ζαβουλὼν καὶ Νεφθαλεὶμ, ἵνα πληρωθῇ τὸ ῥηθὲν διὰ Ἡσαΐου τοῦ προφήτου λέγοντος· γῆ Ζαβουλὼν καὶ γῆ Νεφθαλεὶμ, ὁδὸν θαλάσσης, πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου, Γαλιλαία τῶν ἐθνῶν, ὁ λαὸς ὁ καθήμενος ἐν σκότεινῷ φῶς μέγα, καὶ τοῖς καθημένοις ἐν χώρα καὶ σκιᾷ θανάτου φῶς ἀνέτειλεν αὐτοῖς. Ἀπὸ τότε ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς κηρῦσσειν καὶ λέγειν· μετανοεῖτε· ἤγγικε γὰρ ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.

**DEVOTIONS THIS WEEK:**

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>January 14th,</b>	<b>OLD CALENDAR ( SAINT BASIL DAY )</b>	<b>12:30 P.M.</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>January 14th,</b>	<b>The Martyred Holy Fathers of Sinai Liturgy</b>	<b>10:30 A.M.</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>January 17th,</b>	<b>Veneration of ICON of Saint Anthony</b>	<b>noon</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>January 18th,</b>	<b>Veneration of ICON of Saint Athanasios</b>	<b>noon</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>January 18th,</b>	<b>OLD CALENDAR Epiphany Liturgy</b>	<b>8:00 P. M.</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>January 19th,</b>	<b>OLD CALENDAR THEOPHANY LITURGY</b>	<b>10:00 P.M.</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>January 21st,</b>	<b>Saint Maximos the Confessor Liturgy</b>	<b>10:30 A.M.</b>

**AGAPE COFFEE FELLOWSHIP:** is hosted today by the Daughters of Penelope Demetra Chapter #33. Please join us in WHITEHALL. Open to all.

**TODAY:** Elections are on going from 10:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. for the Parish Council term of office 2018 and 2019. Ballots are secured in Room #104 of the School Building by the Election Committee. You must have been a paid steward of the Church through 2017 to be eligible to vote. Exercise your right.

**TOMORROW: MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY:** Philoptochos Ladies of Three Hierarchs Parish will honor three faithful dedicated ladies of the philanthropic society: NIKI BOUROUTIS, MARITSA KONSTAS and ELENI LAMBRAKIS at Russo on the Bay Caterers, from 12 noon. This is the 85th Annual Luncheon hosting a delicious meal, dance music, wine, prizes and fellowship. Donation is \$65.00 for an afternoon full of fun and entertainment until 5:00 P.M. Please see flyer for details.

**CALENDARS 2018 :** The bilingual GREEK/English and the RUSSIAN/English Liturgical Calendars were mailed to the homes of all the Parish registered stewards. Did you get yours? Are you registered as a supporting steward (member) of the parish and Archdiocese. Make a resolution now, sign up in the Church Office for the NEW YEAR 2018! Get your coveted calendar while they last.

**2018 CHURCH STEWARDSHIP** (Membership) is due. Please register with the Church Office. It is imperative for us to have your essential information in our records, (NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE and/or email) With this registration you will receive all mailings and important announcement from the parish and the Archdiocese.

**61st POLICE PRECINCT PROGRAM,** is scheduled for Wednesday, January 17th, at 7:00 P.M at Kingsborough Community College in Manhattan Beach PLEASE REFER TO INSERT FLYER. All your questions will be addressed in a most personal way by your neighborhood officers. Light food and refreshments will be served. Call NOW and reserve your seat FREE/ open to all. Bring a friend along for the company. Our PARISH has a magnificent relationship with our OFFICERS. SAM SHAYA AND DANNY CHIU. They ALWAYS respond to our needs. THIS PARISH ADMIRES, SUPPORTS AND ENCOURAGES OUR POLICE PRECINCT!

**SENIOR CLUB:** will celebrate Saint Anthony Day, Wednesday, January 17th, with a hearty soup and crusty bread lunch! This is a monastic tradition honoring the founder of Orthodox monasticism. 1:30 P.M. Seniors are requested to update their membership stewardship for 2018! BINGO will follow with coffee and sweets for all.

**RUSSIAN, UKRAINIAN and GEORGIAN** parishioners are to be thanked for their expression of loving kindness to our Pastor Father Eugene during the Liturgy of Christmas: BORIS, TEODOZIA, FLORYNA, TATYANA, SOPHIA R. ANNA, IRINA, LYUDMILA, NADEZHDA and ALEXANDER, LARISA and IRINA, DINA, MARIA, NEONILA, LARISA and VASILYI, TATYANA, GIOGI, TEIMURAZ, LEVAN, SOPHIA, ANNA, ALLA, DONANNA, TATEYANA and VASILY, OLGA and PETER, OXANA, MARGARITY, YANA, KRISTINA, IOANNIS, GEORGE, GENNADIY, MANANA, ELENA, OLGA, ELENA, NINA, MELINA, IVAN, ELISABETH, LYUMILY and LEONID, ANDREY, LYUMILA, TATYANA, LYUDMILA, MIKHAIL .....and so many more.

**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.gaepis.org](http://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 8:30A.M. through 2:30 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: + FR. ANTONIOS MORFESIS, + NADEJDA KOTELNIKOVA**



Christmas celebrations were observed at the Parish on the NEW (Gregorian) and OLD (Julian) Calendars. Photographed are the clergy, the Chanters, and the acolytes ( altar servers ). The Choir hosted a most elegant dinner at 'YIASOU' Greek Restaurant in Sheephead Bay. WINE, SONG, and YOU -- what more is needed? The dinner was sumptuous with Grecian Delicacies for dessert.



Approximately 200 guests attended the 2018 NEW YEAR REVEILLON at our Parish ROSEHALL. Thanks to the 'GOLDEN GREEK' Boy Scout Troop #531 Scoutmaster Dean Veroutis and Crew and Louis Vellios of Avenue 'J' Florist a magnificent display of festivity, food, drink, and sweets accompanied music all night until 4:00 A.M. Were YOU there? See you next year? The clergy of the Parish, Fathers EUGENE, NIKOLAI and MYSTISLAV attended.



# ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

## ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



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

Ἐκδίδεται ἀπὸ τὴν Κοινοβιακὴ Γραμματεία τῆς Ἁγίας Ἀγιοσύνης Θεσσαλονίκης - 531 00 ΘΕΣΣΑΛΟΝΙΚΗ - τηλ. 23850-28610 - [imasfio@synho.gr](mailto:imasfio@synho.gr)

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος Κ'  
Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 933<sup>2</sup>

Κυριακὴ μετὰ τὰ Φῶτα (Ματθ. 4,12-17)  
14 Ἰανουαρίου 2018 (2003)

Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος  
Αὐγουστῖνος Ν. Καντιώτης

## Τὰ τρία βαπτίσματα

«*Ἀπὸ τότε ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς κηρύσσειν καὶ λέγειν· Μετανοεῖτε· ἤγγικε γὰρ ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν*» (Ματθ. 4,17)

**Ο**λοι, ἀγαπητοί μου, ὄλοι οἱ ὀρθόδοξοι Χριστιανοὶ γίναμε μέλη τῆς Ἐκκλησίας μετὰ τὸ ἱερὸ βάπτισμα. Μεγάλον τὸ μυστήριον αὐτὸ καὶ σπουδαία ἡ σημασία του, ὅπως ἐξηγήσαμε ἄλλοτε. Ἀναγεννᾷ καὶ λευκαίνει τὴν ψυχὴν, τὴν καθαρίζει ἀπὸ τὸ προπατορικὸν καὶ κάθε ἄλλο προσωπικὸν ἁμάρτημα. Γεννᾶται ὁμως τὸ ἐρώτημα: **Τί γίνεται μετὰ τὸ βάπτισμα; Διατηροῦμε τὴν καθαρότητα ποῦ μᾶς χάρισεν τὸ θεῖον αὐτὸ λουτρό;**

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Τὰ παιδιὰ –καὶ οἱ μεγάλοι– ποῦ βγαίνουν ἀπὸ τὴν ἱερὰν κολυμβήθρα μετὰ τὸ βάπτισμα πρέπει νὰ ζήσουν μιὰ ἀναμάρτητη ζωὴ. Πρέπει νὰ κρατήσουν λευκὸν, καθαρὸν, ἀπαστράπτοντα σὰν τὸ χιόνιν τὸ ἔνδυμα τοῦ βαπτίσματος. Ποιὸς ὁμως μπορεῖ νὰ τὸ κατορθώσῃ αὐτό; Κι ἀφοῦ αὐτὸ εἶνε ἀνθρωπίνως ἀδύνατον, **τί γίνεται ὅταν μετὰ τὸ βάπτισμα ὁ Χριστιανὸς ἀμαρτήσῃ;** Εἶνε πράγματι μεγάλο τὸ κακόν. Καταλογίζεται σοβαρὰ. Ἀλλιώως κανονίζει ἡ Ἐκκλησία τὰ πρὸ τοῦ βαπτίσματος καὶ ἄλλως τὰ μετὰ τὸ βάπτισμα ἁμαρτήματα. Στὴν ἀρχαίαν Ἐκκλησίαν ὑπῆρχε καὶ μία γνώμη, ποῦ ὑποστήριξαν ὠρισμένοι θεολόγοι, ὅτι ἐὰν ἀμαρτήσῃ κάποιος μετὰ τὸ βάπτισμα δὲν ὑπάρχει γι' αὐτὸν συγχώρησις. Ἀλλὰ τὴν γνώμην αὐτὴν δὲν τὴν δέχθηκε ἡ Ἐκκλησία, καὶ κατεδίκασεν αὐτοὺς ποῦ τὴν ὑποστήριζαν.

Γιὰ τὰ ἁμαρτήματα μετὰ τὸ βάπτισμα **ὠρισε ἡ Ἐκκλησία ἕνα ἄλλο δευτέρον βάπτισμα.** Αὐτὸ εἶνε γιὰ ὄλους τοὺς πιστοὺς ἀπὸ 'κει καὶ πέρα. Τὰ μικρὰ παιδιὰ καὶ ὄλοι οἱ νεοφῶτιστοι περνοῦν ἀπὸ τὴν πρώτην κολυμβήθρα καὶ βγαίνουν ἄγγελοι. Μετὰ ὁμως χρειάζεται ἄλλη κάθαρσις. Ὅλοι ἐμεῖς, ἀπὸ ἑπτὰ χρονῶν παιδιὰ –γιατὶ ἀπὸ τότε πονηρεῖται ὁ ἀνθρω-

πος–, μέχρι τὸν ἀσπρομάλλη γέροντα, ὄλοι μας πρέπει νὰ περάσουμε κι ἀπὸ μιὰ ἄλλη κολυμβήθρα. Ποιὰ εἶν' αὐτή; Εἶνε τὸ ἄλλο μυστήριον, ποῦ ἱδρυσεν ὁ Κύριος μετὰ τὴν προτροπὴν τοῦ σημερινοῦ εὐαγγελίου «*Μετανοεῖτε*» (Ματθ. 4,17). Τὸ ἱδρυσεν καὶ μετὰ τὰ ἄλλα λόγια ποῦ εἶπε στοὺς ἀποστόλους: «*Λάβετε Πνεῦμα ἅγιον· ἂν τινῶν ἀφῆτε τὰς ἁμαρτίας, ἀφίενται αὐτοῖς...*» (Ἰω. 20,22). Εἶνε τὸ μυστήριον ποῦ δὲν παραδέχονται οἱ προτεστάντες καὶ ἀπορρίπτουν οἱ χιλιασταί. Εἶνε τὸ μυστήριον τῆς μετανοίας καὶ ἐξομολογήσεως. Σ' αὐτὸ πρέπει κάθε Χριστιανὸς νὰ προσέρχεται μετὰ τὸ βάπτισμα.

Ἐὰν τὸ βάπτισμα σβήνῃ τὸ προπατορικὸν ἁμάρτημα, ἡ μετάνοια καὶ ἡ ἐξομολόγησις σβήνει τὰ προσωπικά μας ἁμαρτήματα. Καὶ ποιὸς μπορεῖ νὰ τὰ μετρήσῃ αὐτά; Εὐκολώτερον εἶνε νὰ μετρήσῃ τις τριῆρες τῆς κεφαλῆς σου ἢ τὴν ἄμμο τῆς θαλάσσης ἢ τις σταγόνες τῶν ὠκεανῶν, παρὰ τὰ ἁμαρτήματά σου καὶ τὰ ἁμαρτήματα ὄλης αὐτῆς τῆς γενεᾶς. **Ἐχεις λοιπὸν ἀνάγκη μετανοίας;** ἔτσι εἶσαι ὑποχρεωμένος νὰ προσέρχῃς στὸ μυστήριον αὐτό.

–Γιὰ ποιὸ λόγον; Ἐγὼ δὲν κάνω τίποτε κακόν...

Δὲν κάνεις τίποτε; Δὲν ἔχουμε ἀνάγκη μετανοίας, ἀδέρφια μου, γι' αὐτὰ ποῦ περνοῦν ἀπὸ τὸ μυαλὸν μας, γιὰ τοὺς αἰσχροὺς καὶ τόσοσους ἄλλους **λογισμοὺς;** Μὰ ὄλα ξεκινοῦν ἀπ' τὸ μυαλόν. Αὐτὸς ποῦ μισεῖ λ.χ., δὲν χρειάζεται νὰ πάρῃ τὸ μαχαίρι καὶ νὰ σκοτώσῃ τὸν ἄλλον γιὰ νὰ ποῦμε ὅτι ἀμαρτήσῃ· διότι καὶ «*ὁ μισῶν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ ἀνθρωποκτόνος ἐστίν...*» (1' Ἰω. 1,15). Καὶ ὁ ἐμβλέψας γυναῖκα μετὰ βλέμμα πονηρὸν, λέει ὁ Χριστός, κι αὐτὸς ἔκανε τὴν ἁμαρτίαν μέσα στὴν ψυχὴν του (βλ. 1' Πέτρ. 5,28). Ἐχουμε λοιπὸν ἀνάγκη μετανοίας γιὰ τοὺς ἁμαρτωλοὺς λογισμοὺς, γιὰ τοὺς ὄρκους, τις

βλαστήμιες, τὰ ἄπρεπα λόγια (ψέματα, συκοφαντίες, κατακρίσεις) – πόσα ἁμαρτήματα δὲν κάνει ἡ γλῶσσα! Ἔχουμε ἀνάγκη μετανοίας γιὰ τὶς πορνείες, τὶς μοιχεῖες, τὶς κλοπές, τὴ σατανικὴ μαγεία, τὶς ἀδικίες, τὶς ἀρπαγές ποὺ κάνουμε, γιὰ τὸ αἷμα τῶν ἀθῶων... Ἐδῶ ὁμως ἀκούω διαμαρτυρία:

–Ἐμεῖς δὲν κάναμε κανένα φόνο, δὲν βάψαμε τὰ χέρια μας μὲ αἷμα...

Λάθος κάνετε. Ἄν ἕνας ἄγγελος πάρῃ ζυγαριά, θὰ δῆτε πόσοι φονιάδες θὰ βρεθοῦν.

–Φονιάδες; Ἐμεῖς δὲν σφάζουμε οὔτε κόττα!...

Καὶ ὁμως! Ἀνατριχιάζουμε τὶς μέρες αὐτὲς ὅταν ἀκούμε, ὅτι ὁ Ἡρώδης πῆρε τὸ μαχαίρι κ' ἔκοψε σὰν τὰ πράσα, τὰ θέρισε σὰν τὰ στάχυα, δεκατέσσερις χιλιάδες νήπια. Ὁ Ἡρώδης τότε δεκατέσσερις χιλιάδες. Σήμερα ἐμεῖς;... Μοῦ ἔρχεται νὰ σταματήσω. Γιατί θὰ τὸ πῶ, ἀλλὰ ποιός θ' ἀκούσῃ; Ὁ Ἡρώδης, ποὺ δὲν πίστευε, ἔσφαξε τότε δεκατέσσερις χιλιάδες νήπια. Κ' ἐμεῖς σήμερα; ἀσυγκρίτως περισσότερα! Δὲν εἶνε τίποτα τὰ Ἑλληνόπουλα ποὺ ἔσφαξαν οἱ ἔχθροί, Τοῦρκοι καὶ Βούλγαροι. Ποῦ νὰ τὸ πῆς, ὅτι οἱ γονεῖς, ἡ μάνα κι ὁ πατέρας, ξερρίζωσαν μέσ' ἀπ' τὰ σπλάχνα τους τὰ λουλούδια τοῦ οὐρανοῦ μὲ τὶς ἐκτρώσεις! Κι ὁμως αὐτοὶ λέγονται χριστιανοί, ἔρχονται στὴν ἐκκλησία καὶ τολμοῦν καὶ κοινωνοῦν. Πλούτισαν καὶ θησαύρισαν οἱ ἀσυνεῖδητοι γιατροί, ἔχτισαν ἐπαυλεις. Ἀλλοίμονό μας! Θὰ γίνῃ σεισμὸς καὶ μόνο γιὰ τὸ ἁμάρτημα αὐτὸ τῶν ἐκτρώσεων. Εἶνε μικρότερη ἁμαρτία τὸ νὰ βάλῃς δυναμίτη καὶ νὰ τινάξῃς στὸν ἀέρα μιὰ ἐκκλησία ἀπὸ τὸ νὰ ξερρίζωσῃς ἕνα παιδί μέσ' ἀπ' τὰ σπλάχνα σου. Τὸ παιδί σου τὸ ἔδωσε ὁ Θεός, δὲν τὸ ἔκανες ἐσὺ μὲ τὸ ἐνστικτο· τὸ ἔκανε ὁ Θεὸς καὶ ἡ Παναγία. Ἡ ἅγια Τριάς τὸ φύτεψε λουλούδι μέσ' στὴ γλάστρα σου, κ' ἐοῦ πηγες καὶ τὸ ξερρίζωσες. Ἄν ἔρθῃ ἡ γειτόνισσα καὶ σου ξερρίζωσῃ ἀπὸ τὴ γλάστρα τὸ βασιλικό, θὰ πιαστήτε καὶ θὰ γίνετε μαλλιά - κουβάρια. Κ' ἐδῶ ξερρίζωνεις μὲ τὰ χέρια σου τὸ λουλούδι τοῦ Θεοῦ! Κάποιος διδάσκαλος τῆς Ἐκκλησίας λέει, ὅτι γι' αὐτὰ τὰ ἁμαρτήματα πρέπει ὁ καθένας μας νὰ κλάψουμε, ἀδέρφια μου, – ξέρετε πόσο; Πρέπει νὰ χύσουμε τόσα δάκρυα ὅσο νερὸ εἶχε ἡ κολυμβήθρα ποὺ μᾶς βαπτίσανε!

Μὰ δὲν ἔχουμε δάκρυα. Στέρεψαν οἱ πηγὲς τῶν δακρύων, στέρεψαν οἱ καρδιές· ἔγιναν πέτρινες, ἀναίσθητες, πεπωρωμένες. Ἄλλ' ἂν δὲν ἔχουμε τόσα δάκρυα ὅσα εἶχε ὁ Δαυὶδ, ποὺ σηκωνόταν τὴ νύχτα καὶ μούσκειε τὴν

κλίνη του, ἂν δὲν ἔχουμε τὰ δάκρυα τῆς πόρνης καὶ τοῦ Πέτρου ποὺ «ἐκλαυσε πικρῶς» (Ματθ. 26,75), ἂν δὲν ἔχουμε τὰ δάκρυα τῶν ἁγίων καὶ τῶν ἀσκητῶν, ὅς βροῦμε τοῦλάχιστον ἕνα δάκρυ. Ὅπως οἱ ἐπίτροποι βγάζουν δίσκο καὶ μαζεύουν τὸν ὀβολὸ τοῦ ἐκκλησιασματος, ἔτσι καὶ κάποιος ἄγγελος βγάζει ἕναν ἄλλο δίσκο. Καὶ τί ζητᾷ: Ἔνα δάκρυ! Θέλει ἀπ' ὅλους μας νὰ πάρῃ ἕνα δάκρυ, γιὰ νὰ τ' ἀνεβάσῃ μπροστὰ στὸ Θεό. Ἔνα δάκρυ πραγματικῆς μετανοίας εἶνε Ἰορδάνης ποταμὸς, κολυμβήθρα ποὺ σβήνει τὰ ἁμαρτήματα.

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Εἶδαμε, ἀγαπητοί μου, δύο βαπτίσματα· τὸ ἕνα εἶνε στὰ μικρά μας τὰ χρόνια, τὸ δεύτερο εἶνε ἡ μετάνοια καὶ ἡ ἐξομολόγησι. Ὑπάρχει βέβαια κ' ἕνα τρίτο βάπτισμα. Αὐτὸ εἶνε ἀνώτερο ὄλων, κι ἀπὸ τὴν κολυμβήθρα κι ἀπὸ τὴ μετάνοια. Ἄλλ' ἐμεῖς, βρωμερὰ σκουληκία τῆς γῆς, κοράκια μαῦρα καὶ ἀπαίσια, δὲν τὸ ἀξίζουμε. Ποιὸ εἶν' αὐτό; Τὸ τρίτο βάπτισμα εἶνε, νὰ σ' ἀρπάξουν, νὰ σὲ κλείσουν μέσα, νὰ βάλουν ἕνα σταυρὸ κάτω, νὰ σοῦ ποῦν –Πάτησέ τον, νὰ πῆς –Ὅχι δὲν τὸν πατῶ! καὶ νὰ σὲ σφάξουν γιὰ τὸ Χριστό. Αὐτὸ εἶνε τὸ βάπτισμα τοῦ αἵματος, τὸ βάπτισμα ποὺ πῆραν οἱ ἅγιοι ὄχι μέσα στὰ νερά ἀλλὰ μέσα στὸ δικό τους αἷμα.

Τρία, λοιπόν, βαπτίσματα.

Ἀδελφοί μου! Πολλοὶ τὶς ἡμέρες τοῦ Δωδεκαήμερου πηγαίνουν στὰ Ἱεροσόλυμα, παίρνουν ἁγιασμένο νερὸ ἀπὸ τὸν Ἰορδάνη, κι ὅταν ἐπιστρέφουν τοὺς λένε χατζήδες. Ἄν ὁμως ἐσεῖς δὲν μπορῆτε νὰ πάτε στὸν Ἰορδάνη, δὲν πειράζει. Γιατί μπορεῖ χίλιες φορὲς νὰ περάσετε τὸν Ἰορδάνη, κι ὁμως νὰ μὴ σβήσετε οὔτε μιὰ ἁμαρτία σας. Κάποιος ἄλλος Ἰορδάνης εἶνε κοντά μας τώρα. «Ἀντιλήσατε ὕδωρ μετ' εὐφροσύνης ἐκ τῶν πηγῶν τοῦ σωτηρίου» (Ψαλμ. 123)· ἐλάτε, λέει, νὰ πάρετε νερὸ ἀπὸ 'κεῖ ποὺ πηγάζει ἡ σωτηρία.

Κοντά μας εἶνε, ἀδέρφια μου, τρεῖς Ἰορδάνηδες ποὺ τρέχουν. Ὁ ἕνας εἶνε ἡ κολυμβήθρα τοῦ μυστηρίου τοῦ βαπτίσματος· ἀπὸ 'κεῖ βγαίνουν ἄγγελουόδια. Ὁ ἄλλος εἶνε τὰ δάκρυα τῆς μετανοίας· ἀπὸ 'κεῖ βγαίνουν ἅγιοι. Καὶ ὁ τρίτος εἶνε τὸ αἷμα· ἀπὸ 'κεῖ βγαίνουν μάρτυρες καὶ ὁμολογηταί.

Ὁ Θεέ μου, ὦ Χριστέ, ὦ Παναγία, τί μυστήρια ἔχει ἡ θρησκεία μας! Εἶνε ζωντανή. Ἄς τὰ πιστεύουμε. Ἄς τὰ λατρεύουμε. Ἄς εἴμαστε πιστὰ τῆς τέκνα. Κι ἅμα φτάσῃ ἡ τελευταία ὥρα τῆς ζωῆς μας, νὰ σφραγίσουμε τὰ χεῖλη μας μὲ τὸ «Μνήσθητί μου, Κύριε...» (Ψαλμ. 24,2) ἀμήν.

(†) 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 2018 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**

### *A Matter of Death and Life*

Our Lord made a covenant with us through baptism in order to give us eternal life. There is in baptism an image both of death and of life, the water being the symbol of death, the Spirit giving the pledge of life. The association of water and the Spirit is explained by the two-fold purpose for which baptism was instituted, namely, to destroy the sin in us so that it could never again give birth to death, and to enable us to live by the Spirit and so win the reward of holiness.

The water into which the body enters as into a tomb symbolizes death; the Spirit instills into us his life-giving power, awakening our souls from the death of sin to the life that they had in the beginning. This then is what it means to be born again of water and the Spirit: we die in the water, and we come to life again through the Spirit.

To signify this death and to enlighten the baptized by transmitting to them knowledge of God, the great sacrament of baptism is administered by means of a triple immersion and the invocation of each of the three divine Persons. Whatever grace there is in the water comes not from its own nature but from the presence of the Spirit, since baptism is not a cleansing of the body, but a pledge made to God from a clear conscience.

As a preparation for our life after the resurrection, our Lord tells us in the gospel how we should live... Through the Holy Spirit we are restored to paradise, we ascend to the kingdom of heaven, and ... blessing is showered upon us, both in this world and in the world to come.

*St. Basil the Great*

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