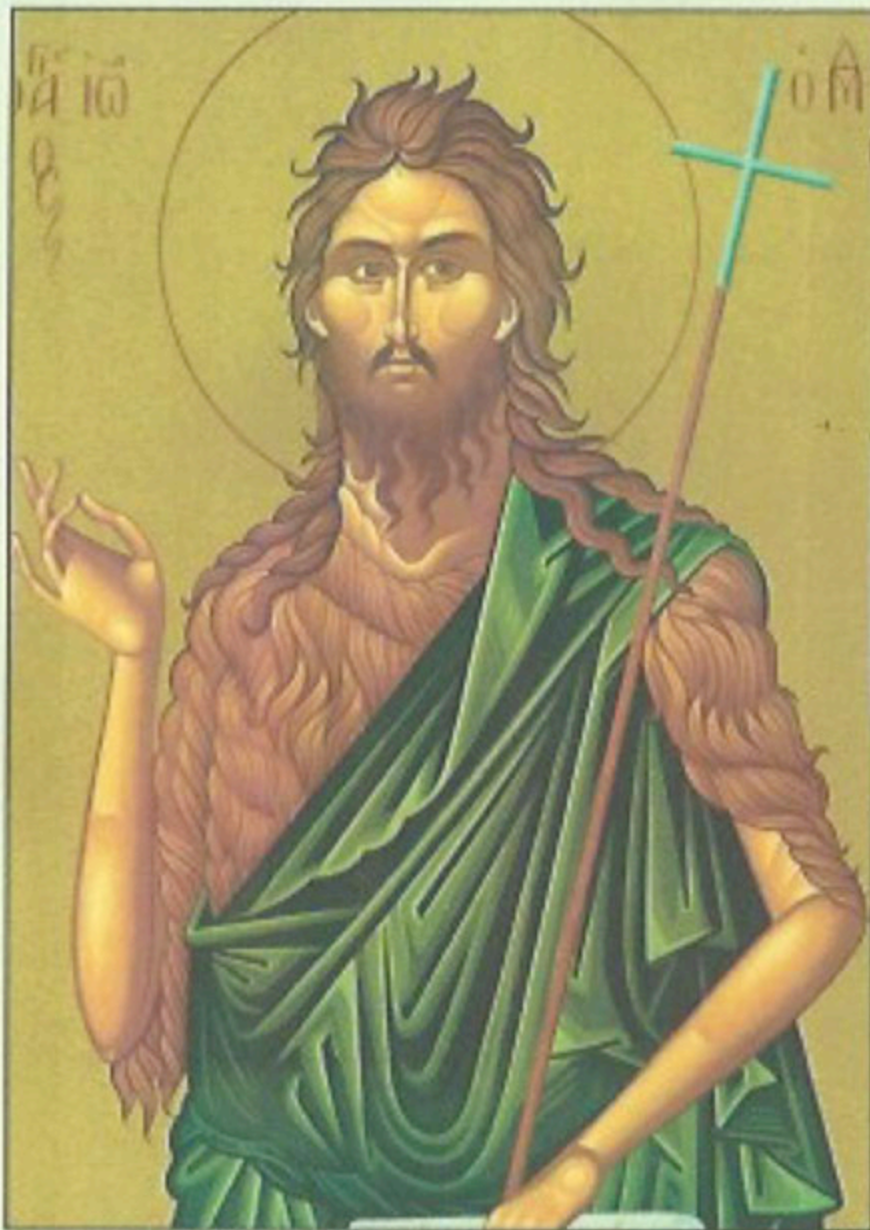


## THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN January 7th, 2018  
V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

### SYNAXIS OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST



*Icon of Saint John the Baptist*

Acts of the Apostles 19:1-8

**Prokeimenon. Grave Mode.**

**Psalm 63.11,1**

The righteous shall rejoice in the Lord.

Verse: Oh God, hear my cry.

The reading is from Acts of the Apostles 19:1-8

In those days, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the upper country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. And he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said, "No, we have never even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They said, "Into John's baptism." And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus." On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. There were about twelve of them in all. And he entered the synagogue and for three months spoke boldly, arguing and pleading about the kingdom of God.

**Προκείμενον. Ἦχος βαρύς.**

**ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 63.11,1**

Εὐφρανθήσεται δίκαιος ἐν Κυρίῳ.

Στίχ. Εἰσάκουσον, ὁ Θεός, τῆς φωνῆς μου.

Πράξεις Ἀποστόλων 19:1-8 τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα εἶναι ἀπο

Ἐν ταῖς ἡμεραῖς ἐκεῖναις, ἐγένετο δέ, ἐν τῷ τὸν Ἀπολλῶ εἶναι ἐν Κορίνθῳ, Παῦλον διελθόντα τὰ ἀνωτερικὰ μέρη ἐλθεῖν εἰς Ἐφεσον· καὶ εὐρών τινας μαθητὰς εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτούς, Εἰ πνεῦμα ἅγιον ἐλάβετε πιστεύσαντες; Οἱ δὲ εἶπον· Ἐν τῷ πνεύματι ἁγίῳ οὐδὲν εἰς πνεῦμα ἅγιον ἐστίν, ἠκούσαμεν. Εἶπεν τε πρὸς αὐτούς, Εἰς τί οὖν ἐβαπτίσθητε; Οἱ δὲ εἶπον, Εἰς τὸ Ἰωάννου βάπτισμα. Εἶπεν δὲ Παῦλος, Ἰωάννης μὲν ἐβάπτισεν βάπτισμα μετανοίας, τῷ λαῷ λέγων εἰς τὸν ἐρχόμενον μετ' αὐτὸν ἵνα πιστεῦσωσιν, τοῦτ' ἐστίν, εἰς τὸν Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν. Ἀκούσαντες δὲ ἐβαπτίσθησαν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ. Καὶ ἐπιθέντος αὐτοῖς τοῦ Παύλου τὰς χεῖρας, ἦλθεν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἐπ' αὐτούς, ἐλάλουν τε γλώσσαις καὶ προεφήτεον. Ἦσαν δὲ οἱ πάντες ἄνδρες ὡσεὶ δεκαδύο. Εἰσελθὼν δὲ εἰς τὴν συναγωγὴν ἐπαρρησιάζετο, ἐπὶ μῆνας τρεῖς διαλεγόμενος καὶ πείθων τὰ περὶ τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ.

Synaxis of John the Holy Glorious Prophet, Baptist, & Forerunner

The Gospel According to John 1:29-34

At that time, John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks before me, for he was before me.' I myself did not know him; but for this I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel." And John bore witness, "I saw the Spirit descend as a dove from heaven, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him; but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."

Ἐκ τοῦ Κατὰ Ἰωάννην 1:29-34

Εὐαγγελίου τὸ Ἀνάγνωσμα

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, βλέπει ὁ Ἰωάννης τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐρχόμενον πρὸς αὐτὸν καὶ λέγει· ἴδε ὁ ἄμνος τοῦ Θεοῦ ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου. οὗτός ἐστι περὶ οὗ ἐγὼ εἶπον· ὀπίσω μου ἔρχεται ἄνθρωπος ὃς ἐμπροσθέν μου γέγονεν, ὅτι πρῶτός μου ἦν. καὶ ἐγὼ οὐκ ᾔδειν αὐτόν, ἀλλ' ἵνα φανερωθῇ τῷ Ἰσραὴλ, διὰ τοῦτο ἦλθον ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ ὕδατι βαπτίζων. καὶ ἐμαρτύρησεν Ἰωάννης λέγων ὅτι τεθέαμαι τὸ Πνεῦμα καταβαῖνον ὡς περιστερὰν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, καὶ ἔμεινεν ἐπ' αὐτόν. καὶ ἐγὼ οὐκ ᾔδειν αὐτόν, ἀλλ' ὁ πέμψας με βαπτίζειν ἐν ὕδατι, ἐκεῖνός μοι εἶπεν· ἐφ' ὃν ἂν ἴδῃς τὸ Πνεῦμα καταβαῖνον καὶ μένον ἐπ' αὐτόν, οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ βαπτίζων ἐν Πνεύματι Ἁγίῳ. καὶ ἐγὼ εἶδον καὶ μεμαρτύρηκα ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ.

**DEVOTIONS THIS WEEK:**

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>January 07,</b>	<b>SAINT JOHN the BAPTIST LITURGY</b>	<b>10:30 A.M.</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>January 07,</b>	<b>ARTOKLASIA of the Baptist</b>	<b>11:30 A.M.</b>
<b>BY : JOHN THEOLOGIS, JOHN NOTIAS</b>			

**Russian and Ukrainian and Georgian CHRISTMAS SERVICES:**

following the OLD CALENDAR ( Julian calculation) also known as ‘little Christmas’ many of our faithful will attend services as follows:

<b>Saturday</b>	<b>January 06,</b>	<b>Old Calendar CHRISTMAS EVE</b>	<b>8:00 P.M.</b>
		<b>This is an evening service with vespers</b>	
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>January 07,</b>	<b>Old Calendar CHRISTMAS DAY</b>	<b>12:30 P.M.</b>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>January 08,</b>	<b>Synaxis of the THEOTOKOS</b>	<b>10:00 A.M.</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>January 09,</b>	<b>Saint Stephanos Liturgy</b>	<b>10.00 A.M.</b>

**AGAPE COFFEE FELLOWSHIP:** is being hosted in loving memory of +VICTORIA ANN CHARITAS, beloved daughter of John and Anita Charitas of Staten Island. The Ladies of the Philoptochos will serve. Please join us in Whitehall.

**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.

**HOUSE AND BUSINESS BLESSINGS** for the EPIPHANY will commence the week of January 8th, by appointment and arrangement with the clergy directly. Call for a visitation 718-339-0280.

**PONSETTIAS, TREES: WREATHS, GARLANDS** and so much more .... many thanks are extended to our ‘PARISH FLORISTS’ one and all, who so diligently and professionally decorated the interior and exterior of our sacred space for the Christmas, New Year and Epiphany HIGH HOLY DAYS! We embrace with prayer of health, peace and restored health to AVENUE “ J “ , BEN’S , HENRY’S, MADISON, PLAZA, MARINE, IRENE, and ELLINGVILLE FLORISTS. Eucharisto! KOSTAS, LOUIS, KOSTA JR. , FRANK , PETER , VASILIOS, NICHOLAS, JIMMY , GEORGE , JIMMY and STEVE!

**SPECIAL GRATITUDE** to Gus Christakos and Family for the Christmas tree in front of the altar.

**TO BE CELEBRATED** are the **QUIET WORKERS: MR. STEVE SAVAS** who each year helps to deliver all the altar supplies for the EPIPHANY HOLY WATER BLESSING. May God bless his children and grandchildren.

**WE ACKNOWLEDGE with much AFFECTION: the BOY SCOUT TROOP leadership in Scoutmaster Dean Veroutis and the Avenue “ J “ crew under the leadership of LOUIS AND GUS VELLIOS for the spectacular presentation of NEW YEAR EVE’S celebration** in ROSEHALL. Were YOU there? Hollywood couldn’t do it better. FANTASY, SPLENDER, PIZZAZ! Happy New Year to 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 VASILIIY, 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.

**MARK THE CALENDAR:** Monday , January 15th, (MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY ) the gracious ladies of the PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY will present the 85th, ANNUAL LUNCHEON at Russo on the Bay Caterers at 12 noon. It is always a major success and hit as the ladies celebrate their philanthropic efforts for charities outside the parish walls. Dining, dancing, and prizes galore!!! Please join us and bring a friend too. Three Ladies will be honored by the Chapter:

Niki Bouroutis, Maritsa Konstas and Eleni Lambrakis.

**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 \(Click live audio\)](#)

**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:**

**+ ANNA KALLINIKOS**





**2018**  
HAPPY NEW YEAR



### ΚΑΛΑΝΤΑ ΠΡΩΤΟΧΡΟΝΙΑΣ

Αρχιμηνιά κι αρχήχρονιά  
Ψιλή μου δενδρολιβανιά  
Κι αρχή καλός μας χρόνος  
Εκκλησιά με τ'άγιο θρόνος

Αρχήπου βγήκε ο Χριστός  
Αγίος και πνευματικός  
Στη γή να περπατήσει  
Και να μα καλικοαρδίσει.

Αγιος Βασίλης έρχεται  
Αρχοντες τον κατέχετε  
Από τηνΚαισαρεία  
Σ'είσαι αρχόντισσα κυρία.

Βαστά εικόνα και χαρτί  
Ζαχαροκάντιο ζυμψτή  
Χαρτί και καλαμάρι  
Δες και με το παλληκάρι.

Το καλαμάρι έγγραφε  
Την μοίρα του την έλεγε  
Και το χαρτί ομίλει  
Λσπρε μου χρυσέ μου ήλιε.

Κάτσε να φάς κάτσε να πείς  
Αν μ'αγαπάς να μου το πείς  
Κάτσε να τραγουδίσεις  
Και να μας καλοκαρδίσεις



### ΛΣΜΑ

Πάει ο παλιός ο χρόνος  
Ας γιορτάσουμε παιδιά  
Και του χωρισμού ο πόνος  
Ας κοιμάται στην καρδιά.  
Καλή χρονιά χρόνια πολλά  
Χαρούμενη  
Πρωτοχρονιά.



Γέρε χρόνε φύγε τώρα  
Πάει η δική σου η σειρά  
Ηρθε ο νέος με τα δώρα  
Με τραγούδια και χαρά  
Καλή χρονιά, χρόνια πολλά  
Χαρούμενη χρυσή Πρωτοχρονιά.



*You're Invited !*

**85th**

*Three Hierarchs  
Ladies Philoptochos  
Annual Luncheon*



Admit 1 ~ Table 3  
Your Invitation to a  
spectacular event. Honoring three  
special ladies. Niki Bouroutis,  
Maritsa Konstas & Helen Lambrakis  
Music, raffles, prizes, laughter.  
Take your seat and have the time of  
your life.

**V.I.P.**



*Dancing , Raffles, Prizes  
Monday January 15th ,2018  
12:00 Noon*

*Russo's on the Bay  
Howard Beach, New York*

*For Reservations call  
Marie Paizis  
(718) 338-1446  
Effie Paraponiaris  
(718) 253-7219*

*Bus available from  
Three Hierarchs  
Free of Charge*



Donation \$65.00





# ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

## ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



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

Εκδίδεται ἀπὸ τὴν Κοινοβιακὴ Γυναικεία Ἱερὰ Μονὴ Ἁγίου Αὐγουστίνου Φλωρίνης - 531 00 ΦΛΩΡΙΝΑ - τηλ. 23850-28510 - [imazflo@yahoo.gr](mailto:imazflo@yahoo.gr)

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος Κ' Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 931²	Σύναξις Ἰωάννου τοῦ Βαπτιστοῦ Κυριακὴ 7 Ἰανουαρίου 2018 (2003)	Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος Αὐγουστίνος Ν. Καντιώτης
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## Τὸ κήρυγμα τοῦ Βαπτιστοῦ

**Χ**θές, ἀγαπητοί μου, ἦταν ἡ μεγάλη ἑορτὴ τῶν Φώτων· βαπτίσθηκε ὁ Χριστός. Σήμερα ἡ Ἐκκλησία μας τιμᾷ τὴ **μνήμη** ἐκείνου ποὺ ἀξιώθηκε νὰ τὸν βαπτίσῃ, τοῦ ἁγίου Ἰωάννου τοῦ **Βαπτιστοῦ**.

Νὰ τὸν ἐπαινέσουμε; Εἴμαστε ἀνάξιοι. Ἄλλωστε ὁ ἅγιος Ἰωάννης δὲν ἔχει ἀνάγκη ἀπὸ τοὺς δικούς μας ἐπαίνους· **τὸν ἐπαίνεσε ὁ ἱδιος ὁ Χριστός**. «Μνήμη δικαίου μετ' ἐγκωμίων, σοὶ δὲ ἀρκέσει ἡ μαρτυρία τοῦ Κυρίου, Πρόδρομε...» (ἰμνολ.). Ὁ Χριστὸς εἶπε «Οὐκ ἐγγίγεται ἡ γεννητοῖς γυναικῶν μείζων Ἰωάννου τοῦ βαπτιστοῦ» (Μαθ. 11,11)· ἀπὸ τὴν ἐποχὴ τοῦ Ἀδάμ, μετὰ τοῦ πληθους ποὺ γεννήθηκαν, δὲν ὑπῆρξε ἄλλος ἀνώτερος ἀπὸ τὸν Βαπτιστή.

Τί λοιπὸν νὰ προσθέσουμε ἐμεῖς; Παρὰ ταῦτα ἂς ψελλίσουμε λίγες λέξεις στὴν ἑορτὴ του.

\*\*\*

Ὁ Ἰωάννης ὁ Πρόδρομος, ἀγαπητοί μου, ἦταν παιδί εὐσεβῶν γονέων, τοῦ Ζαχαρίου καὶ τῆς Ἐλισάβετ, ποὺ ἀξιώθηκαν νὰ τὸν ἀποκτήσουν σὲ μεγάλη ἡλικία κατὰ τρόπο θαυμαστό. Ἰωάννης θὰ πῇ «δῶρο Θεοῦ». Καὶ ἦταν δῶρο Θεοῦ ὁ Ἰωάννης. **Ἐμβρυο ἀκόμα**, μέσα ἀπ' τὴν κοιλία τῆς μητέρας του, χαιρέτισε καὶ προσκύνησε τὸ Χριστό, ὅταν ἡ Παναγία ἔγκυος, ἐπισκέφθηκε τὴν Ἐλισάβετ. Τότε **ἐσκήρτισε τὸ βρέφος**, ὁ Ἰωάννης, **«ἐν τῇ κοιλίᾳ»** τῆς μητέρας του (Μαθ. 1,41). Ἀπὸ τότε **ἦταν ἁγιασμένος**. Ὅταν μεγάλωσε, πῆγε **στὴν ἔρημο** τοῦ Ἰορδάνου. Ἐκεῖ **ἀσκήθηκε αὐστηρά**. Ἐζῆσε βίο ὑπεράνθρωπο. Ἡ ἐνδυμασία του ἀπλὴ. Τὸ φαγητό του λιτό. Ποτό του τὸ νερὸ τοῦ ποταμοῦ. Στρώμα του ἡ ἄμμουδιὰ τῆς ὄχθης, ὁροφὴ τὰ ἄστρα τ' οὐρανοῦ, συντροφιά του τὰ θηρία.

Μέσα σὲ τέτοιες συνθήκες ἀνδρώθηκε. **Βιβλίο, ποὺ μελετοῦσε, ἦταν ἡ φύσις**. Τὰ πάντα μιλοῦν, ὅλα κηρύττουν τὸ μεγαλεῖο τοῦ Θεοῦ· **«Αἰνεῖτε αὐτὸν ἥλιος καὶ σελήνη, αἰνεῖτε αὐτὸν πάντα τὰ ἄστρα καὶ τὸ φῶς»** (Ψαλ. 148,3).

Πανεπιστήμιο τοῦ Ἰωάννου ἡ **ἔρημος**. Ἐκεῖ καταρτίσθηκε, καὶ ἐκεῖ ἔλαβε τὴν ἐντολὴ ν' ἀρχίσῃ τὸ βάπτισμα καὶ τὸ **κήρυγμα**. Ἐνα κήρυγμα ποὺ διέφερε ἀπὸ τὰ κηρύγματα τῶν φαρισαίων καὶ γραμματέων, κήρυγμα ποὺ ἐυπνοῦσε τὴν συνειδήσι, ἀναγκαῖο στὴν ἐκφυλισμένη γενεά.

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### Ποιὸ ἦταν τὸ κήρυγμά του;

● Τὸ βασανισμένο **λαὸ** τὸν ἐβλεπε ὁ Ἰωάννης μὲ συμπάθεια καὶ τὸ κήρυγμά του ἦταν κήρυγμα παρηγορίας καὶ ἐνισχύσεως. Τοὺς συνιστοῦσε, νὰ ἔχουν ἀγάπη καὶ ἀλληλεγγύη μετὰ ξύ τους· συνιστοῦσε πρὸ παντός τὴν ἐλεημοσύνη. Θεὸ ἄρωμα! Τὰ ωραιότερα λόγια τὰ ἔχει πεῖ τὸ Εὐαγγέλιο. Ἄς τ' ἀκούσουν ὅσοι πιστεύουν στὸ Μᾶρξ καὶ στὸ Λένιν, ποὺ ἐκλεψαν συνθήματα ἀπὸ τὸ Εὐαγγέλιο καὶ τὰ κλεμμένα τὰ ἀνακάτεψαν μὲ ὕλισμὸ καὶ ἀθεΐα. Ἰδοὺ τὸ μεγάλο σφάλμα τους. Τί ἔλεγε λοιπὸν ὁ Ἰωάννης; Ὅποιος ἔχει **δυὸ ποικάμισα**, νὰ δώσῃ τὸ ἓνα σ' αὐτὸν ποὺ εἶνε γυμνός· καὶ ὅποιος ἔχει **δυὸ ψωμιά**, νὰ δώσῃ τὸ ἓνα στὸν ἄλλο ποὺ πεινᾷ (Μαθ. 23,1). Αὐτὰ τὰ εἶπε πολὺ προτοῦ παρουσιαστοῦν οἱ διάφοροι λεγόμενοι θεωρητικοὶ διδάσκαλοι τῆς ἰσότητος καὶ δικαιοσύνης. Κήρυγμα κοινωνικὸ, ριζοσπαστικὸ, κήρυγμα ἐλεημοσύνης καὶ φιλανθρωπίας, κήρυγμα ἀληθινῆς ἰσότητος καὶ δικαιοσύνης.

● Ἐρχονταν κατόπιν κοντὰ του **τελώνες**. Τί ἦταν αὐτοί; Δὲν εἶχαν καλὸ ὄνομα. Ἦταν ὑπάλληλοι τοῦ Ῥωμαϊκοῦ κράτους, ἔφοροι καὶ εἰσπράκτορες, ποὺ δὲν ἀρκούνταν νὰ εἰσπράττουν τὴ νόμιμη φορολογία, ἀλλὰ πίεζαν πολὺ τὸ λαό, γι' αὐτὸ ἦταν μισητοί. Σ' αὐτοὺς ἔλεγε: Μὴ πιέζετε καὶ μὴν εἰσπράττετε περισσότερα ἀπὸ ὅ,τι πρέπει νὰ εἰσπράττετε (Μαθ. 23,12-13).

● Ἐρχονταν μετὰ **στρατιῶτες** τῶν Ῥωμαϊκῶν λεγεώνων, πανίσχυροι κατὰ κόσμον. Σ' αὐ-

τούς τί ἔλεγε; Δὲν ἔλεγε νὰ ρίξουν τὰ ὅπλα· διότι εἶνε ἀναγκαῖα γιὰ τὴν ἀσφάλεια τῆς δημοσίας τάξεως. Ἀλλὰ τί τοὺς ἔλεγε; Τὸ ὅπλο, ποὺ σὰς ἔδωσε ἡ πατρίδα, μὴν τὸ χρησιμοποιοῦτε κάνοντας κατάχρησι καὶ ἀδικία, μὴν ἐκμεταλλεύεστε τὴν ἐξουσία σας γιὰ ν' ἀρπάξετε· ἀρκεσθῆτε στὸ μισθὸ σας (βλ. ἔλ. 3, 14).

● Πρὸς ὅλο τὸν ὄχλο μιλοῦσε μὲ εὐθύτητα. Ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνοι ποὺ προκαλοῦσαν περισσότερο τὸν ἔλεγχό του ἦταν οἱ **φαρισαῖοι**, ἡ ἀρχουσα τάξις. Αὐτοὶ καυχόνταν γιὰ τὴ σοφία τους, γιὰ τὶς γνώσεις τους, γιὰ τὴν «ἀγιωσύνη» τους. Σ' αὐτοὺς ἦταν σκληρός, πολὺ σκληρός. Τοὺς ὠνόμαζε ὀχιές, «γεννήματα ἐχιδνῶν» (ἔλ. 3, 7). Γιατί; Γιατί ἦταν μητροκτόνοι καὶ πατροκτόνοι σὰν τὴν ὀχιά, ποὺ ὅταν πρόκειται νὰ γεννηθῇ τρώει τὴ κοιλία τῆς μάνας της καὶ τὴν θανατώνει. Τοὺς ὠνόμαζε ἀκόμη δέντρα σαπρά, ποὺ τὰ περιμένει τσεκούρι καὶ φωτιά· «Πᾶν δένδρον μὴ ποιοῦν καρπὸν καλὸν ἐκκόπτεται καὶ εἰς πῦρ βάλλεται» (ἔλ. 3, 9). Τὸ καλὸ δέντρο ἔχει καρπούς· ἡ μηλιά τὰ μῆλα, ἡ ἀχλαδιά τὰ ἀχλάδια, ἡ πορτοκαλιά τὰ πορτοκάλια. Ἐσὺ τί κάνεις, ἀχρηστε ἀνθρώπε;

Τέλος ὁ Ἰωάννης ἔκανε ἓνα τόλμημα. Τὶς ἡμέρες ἐκεῖνες ἓνας βασιλιάς παντοδύναμος, ὁ **Ἡρώδης**, ἔδωξε τὴ νόμιμη γυναῖκα του, πῆρε ὡς παλλακίδα τὴ γυναῖκα τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ του, τὴν αἰσχρὴ Ἡρωδιάδα, καὶ συζοῦσε μαζί της. Ὅσοι ἀνέβαιναν στὰ ἀνάκτορα τὸν κολάκευαν. (Ἔτσι εἶνε. Νὰ κάνω τώρα τὸν παραλληλισμό; Διότι συνέβη αὐτὸ καὶ στίς μέρες μας. «Λεβέντη» τὸν λέγανε ἓνα πόρνο, 75 χρονῶν ἀνθρώπο, ποὺ διέλυσε τὴν οἰκογένειά του καὶ συζοῦσε μὲ ἄλλη γυναῖκα). Τέτοιοι εἶνε οἱ ἀνθρώποι... Ὁ Ἰωάννης ὁμως ἀνέβηκε στὰ ἀνάκτορα καὶ ἔρριξε τὸν κεραυνό. Κεραυνὸς ἦταν ὁ λόγος του «*Οὐκ ἔξεστί σοι ἔχειν τὴν γυναῖκα τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου*» (Μαρκ. 6, 18)· δὲν σοῦ ἐπιτρέπεται, βασιλιά, νὰ ἀτιμάζῃς τὸν ἑαυτό σου καὶ νὰ συζῇς παράνομα μὲ τὴ γυναῖκα τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου. Αὐτὸς ἦταν ὁ λόγος του· πέντε λέξεις κήρυγμα. Ἀλλὰ οἱ λέξεις αὐτὲς ἀξίζουν περισσότερο ἀπὸ μυριάδες κηρύγματα. Καὶ τελικὰ αὐτὲς στοίχισαν τὸ κεφάλι τοῦ τιμίου Προδρόμου.

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Τέτοιος ἦταν ὁ Πρόδρομος. Καὶ τέτοια παράδοσι ἀφῆσε στὴν Ἐκκλησίᾳ μας. Ἄν πρέπη νὰ ὑπάρχη κήρυγμα στὴν Ἐκκλησίᾳ, τὸ **κήρυγμα** δὲν πρέπει νὰ 'νε κολακεία· πρέπει νὰ 'νε σθεναρό, ριζοσπαστικό, ἀποτελεσματικό. Νὰ ἐλέγχει τοὺς πάντες· ὄχι μόνο τοὺς μικροὺς

τοῦ ὄχλου, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς μεγάλους ποὺ κατέχουν τὰ ὑψηλὰ ἀξιώματα.

Ὑπάρχει σήμερα τέτοιο κήρυγμα; Δόξα τῷ Θεῷ **ὑπάρχει**, ἀδελφοί μου, παρ' ὅλο ὅτι εἶνε σπάνιο. Δύο - τρία παραδείγματα ἀναφέρω.

✓ **Στὴ Γερμανία** ἦταν ὁ Χίτλερ. Αὐτὸς διέταξε, πάνω στὴν ἀγία τράπεζα, ἐκτὸς τοῦ Εὐαγγελίου, νὰ βάλουν τὸ βιβλίον του μὲ τίτλο «Ὁ ἀγὼν μου», ἓνα ἀθελίστικο βιβλίο. Ὅλοι οἱ πάστορες ὑπέκυψαν, καὶ δίπλα στὸ Εὐαγγέλιο ἔβαλαν τὸ βιβλίο τοῦ Χίτλερ. Ἐνας μόνον, ποὺ ὑπῆρξε καὶ ἥρωας τοῦ πρώτου παγκοσμίου πολέμου, δὲν ὑπέκυψε καὶ δὲν πειθάρχησε. Συνελήφθη, ὠδηγήθη στίς φυλακές. Ἐκεῖ τὸν ἐπισκέφθηκαν οἱ ἄλλοι πάστορες καὶ τοῦ εἶπαν· «Πῶς εἶσαι μέσα; Ἐσὺ ὁ ἥρωας τῆς Γερμανίας, ὁ μορφωμένος, ὁ ἐκλεκτός, νὰ εἶσαι μέσ' στίς φυλακές!». Καὶ αὐτὸς τί ἀπήντησε· «Ἐσεῖς ἀπορεῖτε πῶς εἶμαι μέσα ἐγώ, κ' ἐγὼ ἀπορῶ πῶς εἶστε ἔξω ἐσεῖς...». Σοφὰ λόγια, ἐλεγχος ὅλων τῶν δειλῶν ἱεροκηρύκων.

✓ **Στὴ Ρουμανία**, ὅταν ἐγίνε ἡ ἐπανάστασι καὶ γκρέμισαν τὸ τρομερὸ καθεστῶς, τότε ποὺ ὑπῆρχε πείνα καὶ δυστυχία ἀνευ προηγουμένου, ποῖός ἀναψε τὴ φωτιά; Ἐνας Ρουμᾶνος ἱερεὺς! Αὐτός, θαρραλέος, ἔρριξε τὴ θρυαλίδα. Ἠλεγξε τὸν ἀρχοντα τῆς χώρας ὡς ἄλλος Πρόδρομος, καὶ συνελήφθη...

✓ **Νὰ πᾶμε στὴ Ρωσία**; Ὅταν ὁ Στάλιν διέταξε νὰ παύσουν πλέον τὰ κηρύγματα, οἱ διδασκαλίες, τὰ πάντα, ἐκεῖ παρουσιάστηκαν ἥρωες, ἐκ τῶν ὁποίων ἓνας ὑπῆρξε ἱερεὺς καὶ ἄλλοι μοναχοί, ἀπλοὶ καλόγεροι. Ἀλλὰ ὑπῆρχε καὶ ἓνας, ὁ Σολτζενίτσιν, ποὺ ἐκλόνισε ἐκ θεμελίων τὸ καθεστῶς μὲ τὰ γενναῖα κηρύγματά του. Ἔτσι τὰ Χριστούγεννα τοῦ 1989 ἐγίνε τὸ θαῦμα. Ὑστερα ἀπὸ 75 χρόνια χτύπησε πάλι ἡ καμπάνα στὴ Μόσχα. Ὁ Χριστὸς δὲν πέθανε, ζῇ καὶ βασιλεύει εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας.

✓ **Κ' ἐγώ**, ἀγαπητοί μου, ὁ γέρων ἐπίσκοπος - δὲν θέλω νὰ περιαιτολογίσω - ἐλάλησα τὰ πρέποντα, μικρὸς καὶ ἀσήμαντος μιμητὴς τοῦ ἁγίου Ἰωάννου καὶ τῶν πατέρων τῆς Ἐκκλησίας. Δὲν ἔπαυσα νὰ ἐλέγχω. Δὲν χτυπῶ τὸ καλάμι ὅταν εἶνε πεσμένο, τὸ θεωρῶ ἀνανδρία· τὸ χτυπῶ ὅταν εἶνε ὀρθιο. Ἠλεγξα καὶ κινδύνευσα, καὶ σώθηκα ἐκ θαύματος.

Ζητῶ λοιπὸν καὶ ἀπὸ σᾶς, νὰ συμβάλλετε νὰ **ἐφαρμόζεται ἀπὸ ὅλους τὸ Εὐαγγέλιο**. Τότε ἡ μαρτυρικὴ μας πατρίδα θὰ γίνῃ ἔθνος ἅγιο, ποὺ θὰ δοξάσῃ πάλι τὸ Χριστό· ὃν, παῖδες Ἑλλήνων, ὑμνεῖτε καὶ ὑπερυψοῦτε εἰς πάντας τοὺς αἰῶνας· 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.

**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

### *The Voice is John, the Word is Christ*

John is the voice, but the Lord is the Word who was in the beginning. John is the voice that lasts for a time; from the beginning Christ is the Word who lives forever.

Do you need proof that the voice passes away but the divine Word remains? Where is John's baptism today? It served its purpose, and it went away. Now it is Christ's baptism that we celebrate. It is in Christ that we all believe; we hope for salvation in Him. This is the message the voice cried out.

Because it is hard to distinguish word from voice, even John himself was thought to be the Christ. The voice was thought to be the word. But the voice acknowledged what it was, anxious not to give offense to the word. I am not the Christ, he said, nor Elijah, nor the prophet. And the question came: Who are you, then? He replied: I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way for the Lord.

The voice of one crying in the wilderness is the voice of one breaking the silence. Prepare the way

for the Lord, he says, as though he were saying: "I speak out in order to lead him into your hearts, but he does not choose to come where I lead him unless you prepare the way for him."

To prepare the way means to pray well; it means thinking humbly of oneself. We should take our lesson from John the Baptist. He is thought to be the Christ; he declares he is not what they think. He does not take advantage of their mistake to further his own glory.

If he had said, "I am the Christ," you can imagine how readily he would have been believed, since they believed he was the Christ even before he spoke. But he did not say it; he acknowledged what he was. He pointed out clearly who he was; he humbled himself.

He saw where his salvation lay. He understood that he was a lamp, and his fear was that it might be blown out by the wind of pride.

*St. Augustine of Hippo*

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