



DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN
DISTRICT

THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN February 11th, 2018
V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

MEATFARE SUNDAY SUNDAY OF THE LAST JUDGMENT



Icon of the Last Judgment

Prokeimenon. Mode 4.

Psalm 146.5;134.3

Great is our Lord, and great is his power.

Verse: Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good.

The reading is from St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 8:8-13; 9:1-2

Brethren, food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. Only take care lest this liberty of yours somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. For if any one sees you, a man of knowledge, at table in an idol's temple, might he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols? And so by your knowledge this weak man is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died. Thus, sinning against your brethren and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food is a cause of my brother's falling, I will never eat meat, lest I cause my brother to fall.

Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are not you my workmanship in the Lord? If to others I am not an apostle, at least I am to you; for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

Προκείμενον. Ύχος δ'.

ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 146.5;134.3

Μέγας ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν, καὶ μεγάλη ἡ ἰσχὺς αὐτοῦ.

Στίχ. Αἰνεῖτε τὸν Κύριον, ὅτι ἀγαθός.

Πρὸς Κορινθίους α' 8:8-13, 9:1-2 τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα εἶναι ἀπο

Ἀδελφοί, βρῶμα ἡμᾶς οὐ παρίστησιν τῷ θεῷ· οὔτε γὰρ ἐὰν φάγωμεν περισσεύομεν, οὔτε ἐὰν μὴ φάγωμεν ὑστερούμεθα. Βλέπετε δὲ μήπως ἡ ἐξουσία ὑμῶν αὕτη πρόσκομμα γένηται τοῖς ἀσθενοῦσιν. Ἐὰν γὰρ τις ἴδῃ σε τὸν ἔχοντα γνῶσιν ἐν εἰδωλείῳ κατακείμενον, οὐχὶ ἡ συνείδησις αὐτοῦ ἀσθενοῦς ὄντος οἰκοδομηθήσεται εἰς τὸ τὰ εἰδωλόθυτα ἐσθίειν; Καὶ ἀπολείται ὁ ἀσθενῶν ἀδελφός ἐπὶ τῇ σῆ γνώσει, δι' ὃν Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν; Οὕτως δὲ ἀμαρτάνοντες εἰς τοὺς ἀδελφούς, καὶ τύπτοντες αὐτῶν τὴν συνείδησιν ἀσθενοῦσαν, εἰς Χριστὸν ἀμαρτάνετε. Διόπερ εἰ βρῶμα σκανδαλίζει τὸν ἀδελφόν μου, οὐ μὴ φάγω κρέα εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, ἵνα μὴ τὸν ἀδελφόν μου σκανδαλίσω. Οὐκ εἰμι ἀπόστολος; Οὐκ εἰμι ἐλεύθερος; Οὐχὶ Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν ἑώρακα; Οὐ τὸ ἔργον μου ὑμεῖς ἐστε ἐν κυρίῳ; Εἰ ἄλλοις οὐκ εἰμι ἀπόστολος, ἀλλὰ γε ὑμῖν εἰμι· ἢ γὰρ σφραγίς τῆς ἐμῆς ἀποστολῆς ὑμεῖς ἐστε ἐν κυρίῳ.

The Gospel According to Matthew 25:31-46

The Lord said, "When the Son of man comes in his glory and all the holy angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.' Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' Then he will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me.' And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος· Ὅταν δὲ ἔλθῃ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐν τῇ δόξῃ αὐτοῦ καὶ πάντες οἱ ἅγιοι ἄγγελοι μετ' αὐτοῦ, τότε καθίσει ἐπὶ θρόνου δόξης αὐτοῦ, καὶ συναχθήσεται ἔμπροσθεν αὐτοῦ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, καὶ ἀφοριεῖ αὐτοὺς ἀπ' ἀλλήλων ὡς περ ὁ ποιμὴν ἀφορίζει τὰ πρόβατα ἀπὸ τῶν ἐρίφων, καὶ στήσει τὰ μὲν πρόβατα ἐκ δεξιῶν αὐτοῦ, τὰ δὲ ἐρίφια ἐξ εὐωνύμων. τότε ἔρεῖ ὁ βασιλεὺς τοῖς ἐκ δεξιῶν αὐτοῦ· δεῦτε οἱ εὐλογημένοι τοῦ πατρὸς μου, κληρονομήσατε τὴν ἡτοιμασμένην ὑμῖν βασιλείαν ἀπὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου. ἐπεινασα γάρ, καὶ ἐδώκατέ μοι φαγεῖν, ἐδίψησα, καὶ ἐποτίσατέ με, ξένος ἦμην, καὶ συνηγάγετέ με, γυμνός, καὶ περιεβάλετέ με, ἠσθένησα, καὶ ἐπεσκέψασθέ με, ἐν φυλακῇ ἦμην, καὶ ἦλθετε πρὸς με. τότε ἀποκριθήσονται αὐτῷ οἱ δίκαιοι λέγοντες· κύριε, πότε σε εἶδομεν πεινῶντα καὶ ἐθρέψαμεν, ἢ διψῶντα καὶ ἐποτίσαμεν; πότε δὲ σε εἶδομεν ξένον καὶ συνηγάγομεν, ἢ γυμνὸν καὶ περιεβάλομεν; πότε δὲ σε εἶδομεν ἀσθενῆ ἢ ἐν φυλακῇ, καὶ ἦλθομεν πρὸς σε; καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐρεῖ αὐτοῖς· ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ἐφ' ὅσον ἐποιήσατε ἐνὶ τούτων τῶν ἀδελφῶν μου τῶν ἐλαχίστων, ἐμοὶ ἐποιήσατε. τότε ἔρεῖ καὶ τοῖς ἐξ εὐωνύμων· πορεύεσθε ἀπ' ἐμοῦ οἱ κατηραμένοι εἰς τὸ πῦρ τὸ αἰώνιον τὸ ἡτοιμασμένον τῷ διαβόλῳ καὶ τοῖς ἀγγέλοις αὐτοῦ. ἐπεινασα γάρ, καὶ οὐκ ἐδώκατέ μοι φαγεῖν, ἐδίψησα, καὶ οὐκ ἐποτίσατέ με, ξένος ἦμην, καὶ οὐ συνηγάγετέ με, γυμνός, καὶ οὐ περιεβάλετέ με, ἀσθενῆς καὶ ἐν φυλακῇ, καὶ οὐκ ἐπεσκέψασθέ με. τότε ἀποκριθήσονται αὐτῷ καὶ αὐτοὶ λέγοντες· κύριε, πότε σε εἶδομεν πεινῶντα ἢ διψῶντα ἢ ξένον ἢ γυμνὸν ἢ ἀσθενῆ ἢ ἐν φυλακῇ, καὶ οὐ διηκονήσαμεν σοι; τότε ἀποκριθήσεται αὐτοῖς λέγων· ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ἐφ' ὅσον οὐκ ἐποιήσατε ἐνὶ τούτων τῶν ἐλαχίστων, οὐδὲ ἐμοὶ ἐποιήσατε. καὶ ἀπελεύσονται οὗτοι εἰς κόλασιν αἰώνιον, οἱ δὲ δίκαιοι εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον.

DEVOTIONS THIS WEEK:

Sunday	February 11th,	Divine Liturgy of Saint BLAISE	10:30 A.M.
Sunday	February 11th,	APOKREES (Carnivale Week) Fasting Commences	
Saturday	February 17th,	SECOND PSYCHOSABBATON (All Souls)	9:00 A.M.
Sunday	February 18th,	Saint LEO , Pope of Rome Liturgy	10:30 A.M.
Sunday	February 18th,	CHEESEFARE SUNDAY – LENT BEGINS TOMORROW	
Monday	February 19th,	GREAT and HOLY LENT COMMENCES (40 fast days)	

AGAPE COFFEE FELLOWSHIP: is hosted and served by the Parish Council. .PLEASE JOIN US!

TODAY: Our Parish Philoptochos Society will host their ANNUAL BASILOPITA LUNCHEON with all proceeds going to Saint Basil Academy in Garrison New York for the care of children. Tickets to the luncheon and cutting of the Saint Basil Cake , is only 10.00 (TEN DOLLARS). PLEASE MAKE YOUR DONATION TO THE CHILDRENS'S FUND AND SUPPORT. We always have a fun time to see who receives the blessed coin in the bread.

SENIOR CLUB CELEBRATION : Each and every Wednesday afternoon from 1:00 P.M through 5:00 P.M. an exciting event is hosted with fellowship coffee, sweets and bingo. This week we are celebrating SAINT VALENTINE'S DAY with treats, hearts, roses and cards. will you be MY Valentine? See you there if you truly care!

TODAY: The **ARTOKLASIA** is being offered by TOM and HELEN ANDROS in honor of the feast of Saint Haralambos (2/10). May the holy grace of the saint envelope your family with agape!

LENTEN SCHEDULE of SERVICES: (GREEK and ENGLISH) is available in the Church office upon request. The program was mailed to all 1,000 CHURCH STEWARD MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES. SINCE YOU ARE not registered with the Parish Office you did not receive one. REGISTER TODAY as a faithful supporter of the Church and Christ's holy mission.

GOLDENGREEKS BOY SCOUT TROOP #531 : will host and serve the ANNUAL PASTA LUNCHEON on Sunday February 25th, (in two weeks). A complete luncheon of a variety of pasta dishes will be served with beer, wine and soda for all. Coffee and sweets to follow the RAFFLE PRIZES GALORE and the ' famous ' 50///50 Drawing. It's a family event for everyone in support of our Parish Scouting Program. TICKETS are only \$15.00 for adults and \$10.00 for children 10 years old and younger. Mark your calendar and join us in a fun filled afternoon at ROSEHALL.

ORTHODOXY SUNDAY: February 25th, will be a Pan-Orthodox Event at 4:00 P.M. at Saint Nicholas ANTIC0HIAN (Syrian/Lebanese) ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL 355 State Street, Brooklyn (four blocks from Saint Constantine Greek Cathedral). Traditionally 30 or more priests and deacons join in declaring the CONFESSION of FAITH SERVICE. The guest speaker will be A NIGERIAN ARCHIMANDRITE from the ALEXANDRIAN PATRIARCHATE, of ALL AFRICA! A Lenten supper is hosted FREE to all in attendance. Delicious Arabic food and delicacies will be served. COME JOIN US!

PSYCHOSABBATA: There are three Saturdays of ALL SOULS (February 10, 17, and 24th.) Tradition dictates that our faithfully departed be memorialized in prayers and intonation of their name at the sacred high altar. Early Christians expressed their concern for the repose of the soul of their beloved one by personal and communal (liturgical) prayer. Saint John Chrysostom (our Patron) recommended that prayers for the well-being of the faithfully departed also benefit the person offering the prayers (you and me). Saint Cyril of Jerusalem also expresses that memorial prayers tied to the Divine Liturgy greatly benefit the clemency of God towards our faithfully departed. The CHURCH is NOT only constituted of the living members on earth (church militant) but ALSO of the members who have fallen 'asleep ' , in the Lord (triumphant church) in heaven. The APOSTOLIC CONSTITUTIONS of the early church encourage 'MEMORAL SERVICES' for the deceased on the 3rd, 9th, and 40th day after their demise, as well as annual tributes as close to the day of passing.

PLEASE TAKE NOTE: Enclosed with the bulletin is a memorial form to be filled out and given to the clergy for proper commemoration. Each Saturday a NEW FORM must be completed in the subsequent Saturdays or Sundays. The names will be intoned aloud in the order of reception. Come early and listen for your names to be commemorated.

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.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.

MEMORIALS TODAY: + CHRISTOS VLAHOS + ROSARIO and + ROSEMARY CANGELOSI
MEMORIALS NEXT WEEK: + ANNA and + ANDREAS FOUNDOULAKIS

OFFERED BY THE DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN DISTRICT

"The Journey of Marriage"

PREPARATION SEMINARS

SPRING 2018

FOR FEBRUARY:

3rd: St. Sophia Cathedral, Washington, D.C.
17th: St. Demetrios Cathedral, Astoria, NY
24th: St. Barbara Church - Orange, CT

FOR MARCH:

3rd: Kimisis Tis Theotokou Church,
Brooklyn, NY
10th: Kimisis Tis Theotokou Church,
Poughkeepsie, NY
10th St. Eleftherios Church, Manhattan, NY
24th St. Paul Cathedral, Hempstead, NY

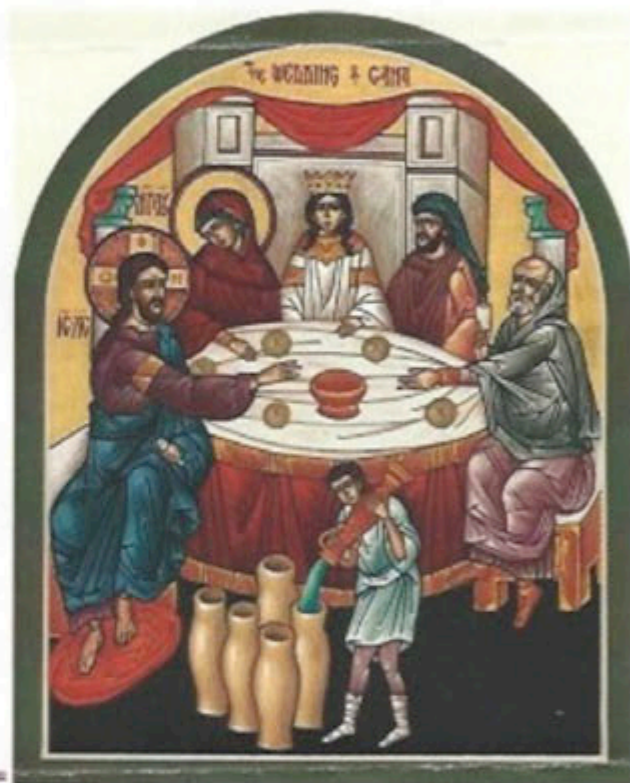
FOR APRIL:

14th: St. Nicholas Church, Flushing, NY
21st: Assumption Church, Danbury, CT

FOR MAY:

5th: Church of Our Saviour, Rye, NY

For more information and REGISTRATION FORMS for a Marriage Seminar, please see your Parish Priest or go to the Direct Archdiocesan District website, www.ny.goarch.org



Reactions from participating couples:

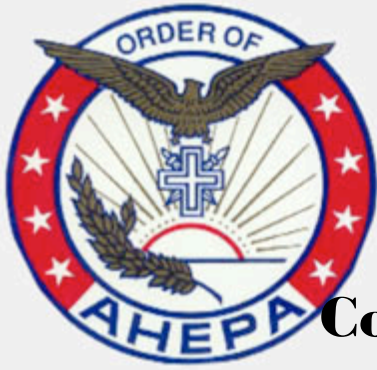
"It was excellent from start to finish!"

"I thought it was helpful and eye-opening."

*"My 'aha!' moment:
that communication is key."*

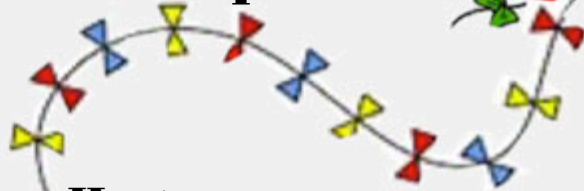
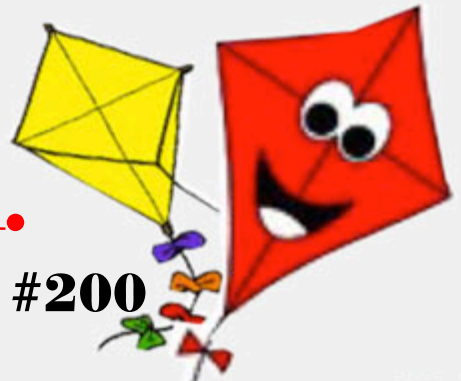
*Take advantage of this opportunity to
grow together!*





A. H. E. P. A.

Coney Island Chapter #200



Hosts

SARAKOSTIANO GLENDI

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2018

KATHARI DEFTERA



**Three Hierarchs Whitehall
7:30 - 11:00 PM**

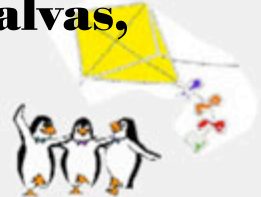
Dinner Menu:

**Fasolada, Pasta with Seafood sauce, Halvas,
Various salads,
Wine, soda & coffee**

Live Music

Raffles & Prizes

FREE WILL ADMISSION





ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



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

Ἐκδίδεται ἀπὸ τὴν Κοινοβιακὴ Γυναικεία Τετρὴ Μονὴ Ἁγίου Αὐγουστίνου Φλωρίνης - 531 00 ΦΛΩΡΙΝΑ - τηλ. 23850-23610 - imazflo@yzshoo.gr

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος ΛΕ'
Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 2068

Κυριακὴ τῆς Ἀπόκρεω
11 Φεβρουαρίου 2018

Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος
Αὐγουστίνος Ν. Καντιώτης

Φοβερὴ ἡμέρα!

Ἔρχεται ἡμέρα μεγάλη, Κυρίου παντοκράτορος (βλ. Ματ. 4,1. ΐεζ. 7,10. Πράξ. 2,20. Ἀπ. 16,14)

Σήμερα, ὅπως ὄλοι γνωρίζετε, ἀγαπητοί μου, εἶνε ἡ **Κυριακὴ τῆς Ἀπόκρεω**. Ἡ Κυριακὴ αὐτὴ στὴ γλῶσσα τοῦ κόσμου ἴσον· διασκέδασις, γλέντια, χοροί, μάσκες, μεθύσια, βωμολοχίες, ὅ,τι «*αἰσχρὸν ἐστὶ καὶ λέγειν*» (Ἐφ. 5,12). Γιὰ τὴν Ἐκκλησίᾳ μας ἀντιθέτως ἡ ἡμέρα αὐτὴ εἶνε ἡμέρα κατανύξεως καὶ συναισθήσεως, γιὰ σοβαρὴ σκέψι ἐπάνω στὰ μεγάλα ζητήματα τῆς ζωῆς.

Ἀκριβῶς γι' αὐτὸ ἡ ἁγία μας Ἐκκλησία, γιὰ νὰ μᾶς συγκρατήσῃ ἀπ' τὸν κατήφορο τῶν παθῶν ἰδίως τὶς μέρες αὐτές, ὥρισε νὰ διαβάζετᾱ σήμερα ἓνα εὐαγγέλιο (βλ. Ματ. 23,1-48), ποὺ εἶνε τὸ φοβερώτερο ἀπ' ὅσα ἀκούγονται ὄλο τὸ χρόνο· ὁποῖος τ' ἀκούει καὶ δὲν αἰσθάνεται **φόβο**, θά 'νε πωρωμένος, λιθοκάρδιος, ἔχει καρδιὰ πέτρινη. Ἐδῶ **ὁ ὕμνωδὸς** λέει σήμερα, ὅτι «*Ἐννοῶν*», καθὼς δηλαδὴ συλλογίζομαι, «*τὰ πλήθη τῶν πεπραγμένων μοι δεινῶν*», τὰ κρίματά μου, «*τρέμω τὴν φοβερὰν ἡμέραν τῆς κρίσεως*» (Ἰακ. 5,16). Ἐδῶ **ὁ ἱερός Χρυσόστομος** λέει, ὅτι Ὑπάρχει κόλασι· θά 'θελα νὰ μὴν ὑπάρχη, γιὰτὶ κ' ἐγὼ εἶμ' ἁμαρτωλὸς καὶ τρέμω τὴν ἡμέρα ἐκείνη, μὰ ὑπάρχει. Ἐδῶ **ὁ Ἐφραίμ ὁ Σῦρος**, ὁ ἅγιος ποὺ μελετοῦσε πάντα τὴν ἡμέρα αὐτὴ, ἔλεγε· Στὴ σκέψι τῆς τὰ χεῖλη παγώνουν, ἡ γλῶσσα τρέμει, τὰ μέλη παραλύουν, ὁ λογισμὸς σκοτίζεται.

Γιὰτὶ λοιπὸν ἐμεῖς ἀκούμε τώρα αὐτὸ τὸ εὐαγγέλιο χωρὶς τὸ φόβο ποὺ ἐνιωθᾱν οἱ παλαιοί· Διότι, ἀγαπητοί μου, **δὲν ὑπάρχει πίστις**.

Φοβοῦμεθα μόνο αὐτὰ ποὺ δημιουργοῦν τώρα ἄμεση ἐντύπωσι, ὄχι τὰ μέλλοντα ποὺ προλέγει ὁ Κύριος. Θὰ φέρω μερικὰ **παραδείγματα**. Ἀκούετᾱ βροντὴ καὶ πέφτει κεραυνός. Ἄν βρίσκεσαι ὄχι μέσα στὴν πόλι ἀλλὰ στὸ ὕπαιθρο, ὅπως βρέθηκα πολλές φορές, μέσα σὲ δάση, κὶ ἀστράψῃ ξαφνικά, νιώθεις τρόμο καὶ παρακαλεῖς τὸ Θεὸ νὰ μὴν πέσῃ ὁ κεραυνὸς πάνω σου. Ἡ φουσκᾶνει τὸ **ποτάμι**, τὰ νερὰ ξεχειλίζουν, κὶ ὄσοι κατοικοῦν δεξιὰ κὶ ἀριστερὰ στὴν κοίτῃ ἀγωνιοῦν, ἐτοιμάζονται νὰ φύγουν,

παρακαλοῦν νὰ σωθοῦν τὰ σπιτικά τους. Ἡ γίνεται **σεισμὸς** πάνω στὴ φλοῦδα τῆς γῆς, ποὺ λὲς καὶ ὁ Θεὸς ξύνει τὸ ἔδαφος μὲ τὸ νύχι του, κὶ ἀνατριχιάζουν ὄλοι ἀπ' τὸ φόβο μὴν πέσουν τὰ κτήρια καὶ τοὺς πλακῶσουν, καὶ ξεφωνίζουν, καὶ πέφτουν στὰ γόνατα παρακαλῶντας νὰ σταματήσῃ ὁ κλόνος. Ἡ ὁ ναυτικός, ποὺ πλέει μέσ' στὸν ὠκεανό, βλέπει τὰ **κύματα** νὰ ὑψώνωνται, νὰ γίνωνται σκόνῃ στὸν ἄνεμο, νὰ χτυποῦν τὸ πλοῖο ἔτοιμα νὰ τὸ καταπιοῦν, καὶ πέφτει στὰ γόνατα σὲ μιὰ γωνιά τοῦ καταστρώματος καὶ παρακαλεῖ· Παναγιά κὶ ἅγιε Νικόλα, σώστε με νὰ γυρίσω στὴν πατρίδα στὸ χωριό μου. Ἡ πιάνει **φωτιά** τὸ δάσος καὶ κινδυνεύουν οἰκισμοί, ἡ γίνεται ἔκρηξι ἡ βραχυκύκλωμα στὴν πόλι καὶ καίγεται τὸ σπιτί ἡ τὸ κατάστημα, κ' οἱ ἄνθρωποι τρέχουν πανικόβλητοι καὶ ἀλλόφρονες...

Λοιπὸν, ἄνθρωπε, φοβᾶσαι τὸν κεραυνό, τὴν πλημμύρα, τὸ σεισμό, τὸ κύμα, τὴ φωτιά· ἀλλὰ τί εἶν' αὐτά; Μικρὰ δείγματα γιὰ νὰ καταλάβουμε τί τρόμος θὰ πέσῃ τὴν ἡμέρα ἐκείνη, ἡ ὁποία **δὲν εἶνε παραμύθι**. Ὅσο εἶνε βέβαιο ὅτι αὔριο θὰ ξημερώσῃ Δευτέρα, τόσο βέβαιο εἶνε ὅτι θὰ ἔρθῃ ἡ ἡμέρα αὐτὴ. Κὶ ἂν τρέμουμε τὰ στοιχεῖα τῆς φύσεως, πόσο περισσότερο ἐκεῖνον ποὺ τὰ δημιούργησε! Εἶνε «*ὁ ἐπιβλέπων ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν καὶ ποιῶν αὐτὴν τρέμειν, ὁ ἀπτόμενος τῶν ὀρέων καὶ καπνίζονται*» (ΐηλ. 103,32).

* * *

Ἄλλὰ ποιά γλῶσσα, ἀδελφοί μου, θὰ μπορέσῃ νὰ περιγράψῃ τὴ **φρίκη** τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης τῆς μελλούσης κρίσεως καὶ ἀνταποδόσεως!

Μπροστὰ ἀπὸ τὸ βῆμα τοῦ Κριτοῦ θὰ ρέῃ «*ποταμὸς πύρινος*» (Ἰακ. 3,6 Ἰακ. 3,6), σὸν νὰ 'χῃ ἀνοίξει ὁ Βεζούβιος ἡ ἡ Αἴτνα καὶ νὰ 'χῃ βγῇ κάτω ἀπ' τὸ φλοῦδι τοῦ ἐδάφους, μέσ' ἀπ' τὰ ἔγκατα τῆς γῆς, ἓνα ποτάμι ὄχι σὸν τὸν Ἄλιόκμονα τὸν Πηνεῖο καὶ τὸ Δούναβι, ἀλλὰ **ἓνα ποτάμι φωτιάς**, ποὺ θὰ κάψῃ πάλαι· κοινοβούλια, δικαστήρια, πανεπιστήμια, θέατρα, ἔργο-

στάσια, στρατόπεδα... Τί θα κάνη δηλαδή τότε ο Θεός· θα κάνη απολύμανσι! Γιατί τή βρωμίσαμε τή Γῆ. Ἡ ἀνόνητη «ἐπιστήμη» μας φοβάται μή μολύνουμε τή Σελήνη – τὸ φεγγάρι θεωρεῖται παρθένο· μᾶς ἐνδιαφέρει μή μολύνουμε τή Σελήνη ἢ τὰ ἄστρα, ἐνῶ ἔχουμε μολύνει τούτη τή Γῆ. Ὅπως λοιπὸν σ' ἓνα σπῆτι πού ἔχουν ἄρρωστο μὲ μεταδοτικὴ ἀσθένεια παίρνουν τὰ ρούχα του καὶ τὰ βάζουν στὸν κλίβανο καὶ τ' ἀπολυμαίνουν, ἔτσι ἡ Γῆ θὰ μπῆ ὀλόκληρη μέσ' στὴ φωτιά, γιὰ νὰ καηῖ ὁ,τι εἶνε σκουριά, οἱ ἀτιμίες καὶ τὰ αἴσχη, καὶ νὰ μείνη ὁ,τι εἶνε χρυσάφι, ὁ,τι καθαρὸ καὶ ἅγιο.

Τὴν ἡμέρα ἐκεῖνη θὰ στηθῆ **ἓνας θρόνος**, Τί θρόνος; Ὅχι ὕλικός, ἀπὸ εὐγενῆ μέταλλα καὶ στολισμένος μὲ πολύτιμους λίθους, ἀλλὰ ἓνας «**θρόνος δόξης**» (εἰ), τὸν ὁποῖο θὰ σηκώνουν ὄχι χέρια ὑπασπιστῶν καὶ στρατηγῶν ἀλλὰ ἄυλα χέρια καὶ φτερά ἀγγέλων καὶ ἀρχαγγέλων· θρόνος πού θὰ λάμπη παραπάνω ἀπὸ τὸν ἥλιο καὶ τὸν Σείριο· θρόνος, στὸν ὁποῖο θὰ κάθεται ὄχι ὁ ἄλφα ἢ βῆτα ἐπίγειος δυναστής, ἀλλὰ **«ὁ δίκαιος Κριτῆς»**, **«ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν βασιλευόντων καὶ κύριος τῶν κυριευόντων»** (β' Τιμ 4,8· 4' Τιμ 6,15), ἐκεῖνος πού ἔχει στὰ χέρια του τὰ κλειδιά τῆς ζωῆς, **«τοῦ θανάτου καὶ τοῦ ἔδου»** (ἄπ 1,18), ἐκεῖνος πού ἐδώ στὴ γῆ περπάτησε γυμνός κι ὁ κόσμος ἀντὶ θρόνου τοῦ ἐπιφύλαξε ἓνα σταυρὸ καὶ πάνω σ' αὐτὸν ἐξέπνευσε, ἐκεῖνος πού στρατιῶτες τοῦ Πιλάτου τοῦ εἶπαν τότε ἐμπαϊκτικὰ **«Χαῖρε, ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων»** (Ματθ. 27,29. Μαρκ. 15,18. Ἰω. 19,3), ἀλλὰ στὸ τέλος πραγματικὰ καὶ μὲ φόβο καὶ τρόμο θὰ γονατίσῃ μπροστά του **«πᾶν γόνυ ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων καὶ καταχθονίων, καὶ πᾶσα γλῶσσα»** θὰ ὁμολογήσῃ (ἄλ 2,10-11) ὅτι αὐτὸς εἶνε ὁ Βασιλεὺς τοῦ κόσμου.

Μπροστά σ' ἐκεῖνο τὸ βῆμα θὰ παρουσιαστοῦν **οἱ ὑπόδικοι**. Εἶδατε ποτέ σὲ δικαστήριον πῶς ὁ κατηγορούμενος μὲ μάρτυρες καὶ δικηγόρους, μὲ ὅλη τὴ στάσι τὸ ὕφος καὶ τὰ δάκρυα προσπαθεῖ νὰ ἐξευμενίσῃ τὸ δικαστήριον, κι ὅταν ὁ δικαστὴς τοῦ μιλήσῃ γλυκὰ νιώθει ἐλπίδα, ἐνῶ ὅταν ὁ δικαστὴς ἢ ὁ εἰσαγγελέας μιλήσουν αὐστηρὰ τότε τρέμει ἡ καρδιά του; Ἐὰν τρέμουμε μπροστά σὲ ἐπιγεῖους δικαστὰς, **«ὦ ποῖος φόβος τότε!»** (ἄλ 1,27· ἄπ 1,27), ὅταν παρουσιαστοῦμε μπροστά σ' Ἐκεῖνον τὸν ἀδέκατο **«κριτὴν Θεὸν (τῶν) πάντων»**, **«ζώντων καὶ νεκρῶν»** (ἄλ 12,23· ἄπ 10,42)! Τότε θὰ σταθοῦν μπροστά του οἱ βασιλιάδες, οἱ στρατηγοί, οἱ πλοῦσιοι, οἱ ἄσωτοι, οἱ κλέφτες, οἱ ψευδομάρτυρες, οἱ ἐπίορκοι, οἱ βλάσφημοι, οἱ μάγοι, οἱ παιδοκτόνοι, οἱ ἀχάριστοι, οἱ ἄστοργοι στοὺς γονεῖς,

αὐτοὶ πού διέπραξαν ὄργια...· ὅλοι θὰ βρεθοῦμε μπροστά στὸ κριτήριο καὶ θὰ τρέμουμε σὰν τὰ φύλλα ὅταν πνέῃ σφοδρὸς ἄνεμος.

Καὶ ὁ **«δικαιότατος Κριτῆς»** (ἄπ 1,27· ἄπ 1,27) θ' ἀνοίξῃ τὰ **βιβλία** τῶν πεπραγμένων. Εἶνε ψέμα ἀν κάποιος πῆ πῶς ξέρει τὸ διπλανό του, ὁ ἄντρας τὴ γυναῖκα του, ἡ γυναῖκα τὸν ἄντρα της. Κάθε ἄνθρωπος εἶνε ἓνα κλειστὸ βιβλίον, ὅπου τὰ μυστικά του μένουν ἐπτασφράγιστα. Τότε λοιπὸν **«βίβλοι ἀνοιγῆσονται, φανερωθήσονται πράξεις»** (ἄπ 1,27· ἄπ 1,27) καὶ συνειδήσεις. Θὰ κριθοῦν ὄχι μόνο τὰ **ἔργα**, τὰ ἐξωτερικά μας ἔργα, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ **λόγια**· τὸ Εὐαγγέλιον λέει, ὅτι θὰ ἀπολογηθοῦμε γιὰ κάθε **«ἀργὸν λόγον»** πού εἶπαμε (Ματθ 12,36). Καὶ μόνο τὰ ἔργα καὶ οἱ λόγοι; Καὶ ἡ σκέψι μας ἀκόμα, ναι αὐτὰ πού σκέπτεσαι. Γιατί πέσ μου τί σκέπτεσαι τὴ νύχτα, νὰ σοῦ πῶ τί εἶσαι. Ὁ Κριτῆς θὰ κρίνῃ μὲ **ἀκρίβεια**, θὰ ζυγίσῃ ὄχι μὲ πλάστιγγα ἀλλὰ μὲ ζυγαριὰ φαρμακείου, πού ζυγίζει καὶ τὸ τελευταῖο δράμι, τὴν τελευταία οὐγγιά, τὸ τελευταῖο γραμμάριον. Λέει κάπου τὸ Εὐαγγέλιον ὅτι **«καὶ αἱ τρίχες τῆς κεφαλῆς (μας) πᾶσαι ἠριθμημέναι εἰσὶ»** (Ματθ 10,30). Τί σημαίνει αὐτό· ὅτι ὁ Κύριος, ὅπως λέει ὁ ἅγιος Ἐφραίμ ὁ Σύρος, ξέρει καὶ θὰ κρίνῃ μὲ ἀκρίβεια καὶ τοὺς **λογισμοὺς** πού ἔχουμε μέσα μας.

Ἐνας ἄπιστος ζοῦσε μὲ τὴν ἰδέα ὅτι δὲν ὑπάρχει κόλασι. Μιά μέρα ὁμως ἡ **ἀπιστία του κλονίστηκε**· βρῆκε κάποιον ἀγράμματον, πού ἔσκαβε τὴ γῆ, κι αὐτὸς τοῦ εἶπε· **«Λὲς πῶς δὲν ὑπάρχει· καὶ ἂν ἓνα τοῖς χιλίοις ὑπάρχη; τί γίνεται τότε;... Καὶ ὄντως· μπορεῖ ὅλοι νὰ ψεύδωνται, ἀλλὰ ἓνας δὲν μᾶς εἶπε ψέμα ποτέ, ὁ Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός· αὐτὸς μᾶς βεβαιώνει.**

* * *

Τὸ συμπέρασμα, ἀδελφοί μου. Σήμερα ἡ Ἐκκλησία μᾶς μοίρασε **προσκλήσεις**. Ὅταν ἔρθῃ κλήσι **γιὰ δικαστήριον**, σταματᾶς κάθε τι ἄλλο, προσπαθεῖς νὰ βρῆς μάρτυρες ὑπερασπίσεως, πληρῶνεις δικηγόρους. Τώρα λοιπὸν πήραμε **πρόσκλησι**, καὶ **ἔρχεται ἡ ἡμέρα τῆς δίκης**, **ἡ ἡμέρα Κυρίου παντοκράτορος** (ἄλ 1,20· ἄπ 1,14). Μάρτυρες ὑπερασπίσεως καὶ δικηγόροι ἐκεῖ θὰ εἶνε τὰ ἔργα μας, αὐτὰ καὶ μόνο. Γιὰ σκέψου· ὑπάρχει ἓνα μάτι πού τὰ βλέπει ὅλα, ἓνα αὐτὶ πού τ' ἀκούει ὅλα, κ' ἓνα χέρι πού τὰ γράφει ὅλα.

Ἄς πέσουμε **σὲ μετάνοια**. Καὶ **μὲ τὶς λαμπάδες ἀναμμένες** ὅπως οἱ φρόνιμες παρθένας, ὅταν ἀκουστῇ ἡ φωνὴ **«Ἰδοὺ ὁ Νυμφίος ἔρχεται»** (Ματθ 25,10), νὰ σπεύσουμε νὰ τὸν ὑποδεχθοῦμε. Νὰ πέσουμε στὰ πόδια του καὶ νὰ ποῦμε· Χριστέ, ἐλέησόν μας διὰ πρεσβειῶν τῆς ὑπεραγίας Θεοτόκου καὶ πάντων τῶν ἁγίων· 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

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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 thrive thanks to your outreach.

YOU ARE PART OF THE GREAT FRESCO OF FAITH

Abundant Rewards of His Love

We ought never to forget, beloved, that we have renounced the world. We are living here now as aliens and only for a time. When the day of our homecoming puts an end to our exile, frees us from the bonds of the world, and restores us to paradise and to a kingdom, we should welcome it. What man, stationed in a foreign land, would not want to return to his own country as soon as possible? Well, we look upon paradise as our country, and a great crowd of our loved ones awaits us there, a countless throng of parents, brothers and children longs for us to join them. Assured though they are of their own salvation, they are still concerned about ours. What joy both for them and for us to see one another and embrace! O the delight of that heavenly kingdom where there is no fear of death! O the supreme and endless bliss of everlasting life!

There is the glorious band of apostles, there, the exultant assembly of prophets, there, the innumer-

able host of martyrs, crowned for their glorious victory in combat and in death. There, in triumph, are the virgins who subdued their passions by the strength of continence. There the merciful are rewarded, those who fulfilled the demands of justice by providing for the poor. In obedience to the Lord's command, they turned their earthly patrimony into heavenly treasure.

My dear brothers, let all our longing be to join them as soon as we may. May God see our desire, may Christ see this resolve that springs from faith, for He will give the rewards of His love more abundantly to those who have longed for Him more fervently.

St. Cyprian of Carthage

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