

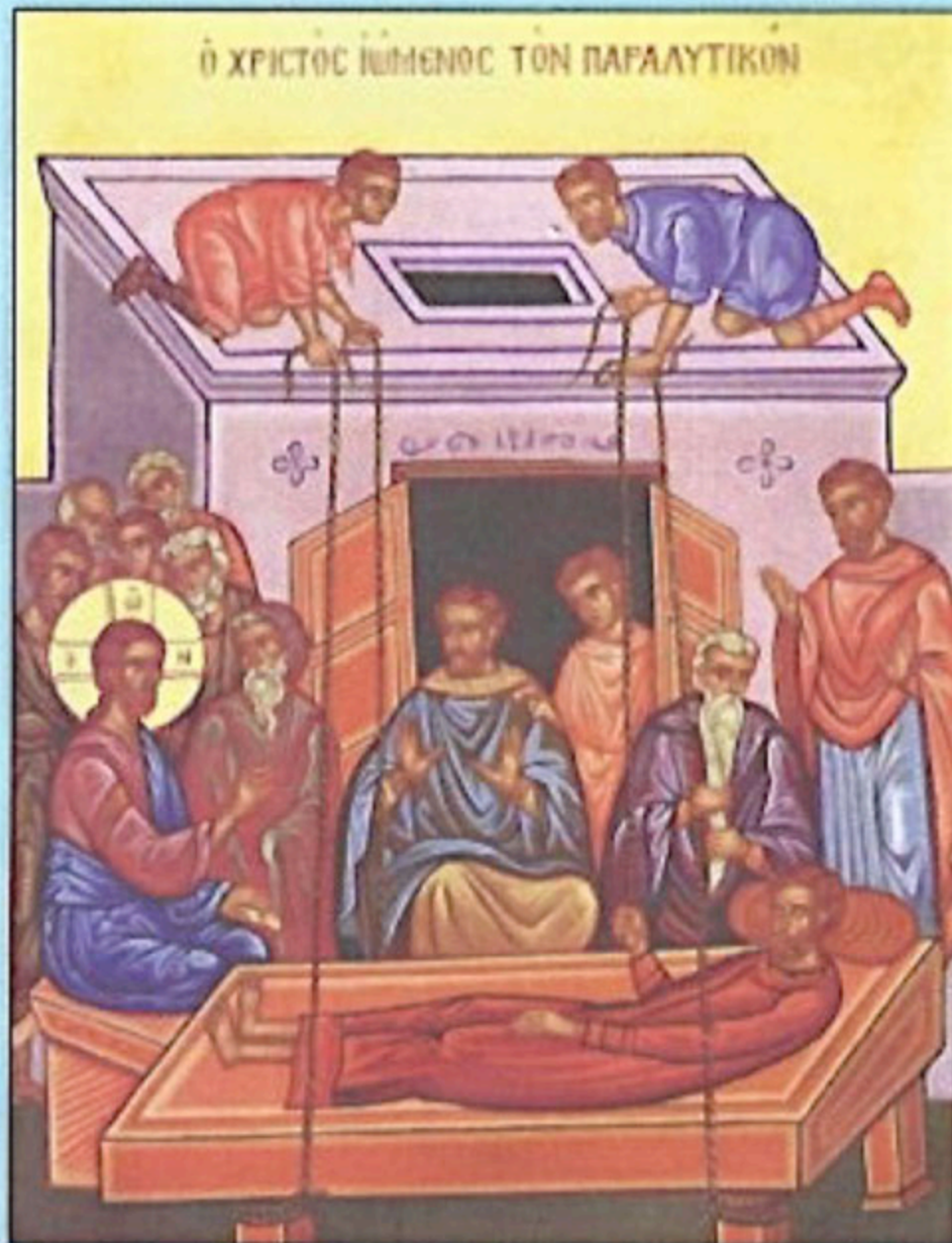


DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN
DISTRICT

THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN March 4th, 2018
V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

SECOND SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST SUNDAY OF ST. GREGORY PALAMAS



Icon of Healing the Paralytic

Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas
St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 1:10-14; 2:1-3

Prokeimenon. Mode Plagal 2.

Psalm 27.9,1

O Lord, save your people and bless your inheritance.

Verse: To you, O Lord, I have cried, O my God.

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 1:10-14; 2:1-3

"IN THE BEGINNING, Thou, Lord, didst found the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of thy hands; they will perish, but thou remainest; they will all grow old like a garment, like a mantle thou wilt roll them up, and they will be changed. But thou art the same, and thy years will never end." But to what angel has he ever said, "Sit at my right hand, till I make thy enemies a stool for thy feet?" Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to serve, for the sake of those who are to obtain salvation?

Therefore we must pay closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. For if the message declared by angels was valid and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard him.

Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas

Πρὸς Ἑβραίους 1:10-14, 2:1-3

Προκείμενον. Ήχος πλ. β'.

ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 27.9,1

Σῶσον, Κύριε τὸν λαὸν σου καὶ εὐλόγησον τὴν κληρονομίαν σου.

Στίχ. Πρὸς σέ, Κύριε, κεκράξομαι ὁ Θεός μου.

Πρὸς Ἑβραίους 1:10-14, 2:1-3 τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα εἶναι ἀπο

Κατ' ἀρχάς, Κύριε, τὴν γῆν ἐθεμελίωσας, καὶ ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν σου εἰσιν οἱ οὐρανοί· αὐτοὶ ἀπολοῦνται, σὺ δὲ διαμένεις· καὶ πάντες ὡς ἱμάτιον παλαιωθήσονται, καὶ ὡσεὶ περιβόλαιον ἐλίξεις αὐτοὺς, καὶ ἀλλαγήσονται· σὺ δὲ ὁ αὐτὸς εἶ, καὶ τὰ ἔτη σου οὐκ ἐκλείψουσιν. Πρὸς τίνα δὲ τῶν ἀγγέλων εἴρηκέν ποτε, Κάθου ἐκ δεξιῶν μου, ἕως ἂν θῶ τοὺς ἐχθρούς σου ὑποπόδιον τῶν ποδῶν σου; Οὐχὶ πάντες εἰσὶν λειτουργικὰ πνεύματα, εἰς διακονίαν ἀποστελλόμενα διὰ τοὺς μέλλοντας κληρονομεῖν σωτηρίαν; Διὰ τοῦτο δεῖ περισσοτέρως ἡμᾶς προσέχειν τοῖς ἀκουσθεῖσιν, μήποτε παραρρυῶμεν. Εἰ γὰρ ὁ δι' ἀγγέλων λαληθεὶς λόγος ἐγένετο βέβαιος, καὶ πᾶσα παράβασις καὶ παρακοὴ ἔλαβεν ἑνδικὸν μισθαποδοσίαν, πῶς ἡμεῖς ἐκφευξόμεθα τηλικαύτης ἀμελήσαντες σωτηρίας; Ὅτις, ἀρχὴν λαβοῦσα λαλεῖσθαι διὰ τοῦ κυρίου, ὑπὸ τῶν ἀκουσάντων εἰς ἡμᾶς ἐβεβαίωθη.

Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas

The Gospel According to Mark 2:1-12

At that time, Jesus entered Capernaum and it was reported that he was at home. And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room for them, not even about the door; and he was preaching the word to them. And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him; and when they had made an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic lay. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "My son, your sins are forgiven." Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, "Why does this man speak thus? It is a blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you question thus in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your pallet and walk? But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins"-he said to the paralytic-"I say to you, rise, take up your pallet and go home." And he rose, and immediately took up the pallet and went out before them all; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

Ἐκ τοῦ Κατὰ Μάρκον 2:1-12 Εὐαγγελίου τὸ Ἀνάγνωσμα

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, εἰσῆλθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἰς Καπερναοὺμ δι' ἡμερῶν καὶ ἠκούσθη ὅτι εἰς οἶκόν ἐστι. καὶ εὐθέως συνήχθησαν πολλοί, ὥστε μηκέτι χωρεῖν μηδὲ τὰ πρὸς τὴν θύραν· καὶ ἐλάλει αὐτοῖς τὸν λόγον. καὶ ἔρχοντα πρὸς αὐτὸν παραλυτικὸν φέροντες, αἰρόμενον ὑπὸ τεσσάρων· καὶ μὴ δυνάμενοι προσεγγίσει αὐτῷ διὰ τὸν ὄχλον, ἀπεστέγασαν τὴν στέγην ὅπου ἦν, καὶ ἐξορύξαντες χαλῶσι τὸν κράβαττον, ἐφ' ᾧ ὁ παραλυτικὸς κατέκειτο. ἰδὼν δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὴν πίστιν αὐτῶν λέγει τῷ παραλυτικῷ· τέκνον, ἀφέωνταί σοι αἱ ἁμαρτίαι σου. ἦσαν δὲ τινες τῶν γραμματέων ἐκεῖ καθημένοι καὶ διαλογιζόμενοι ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις αὐτῶν· τί οὕτως οὕτω λαλεῖ βλασφημίας; τίς δύναται ἀφιέναι ἁμαρτίας εἰ μὴ εἷς ὁ Θεός; καὶ εὐθέως ἐπιγνοὺς ὁ Ἰησοῦς τῷ πνεύματι αὐτοῦ ὅτι οὕτως αὐτοὶ διαλογίζονται ἐν ἑαυτοῖς, εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· τί ταῦτα διαλογίζεσθε ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν; τί ἐστιν εὐκοπώτερον, εἰπεῖν τῷ παραλυτικῷ, ἀφέωνταί σοι αἱ ἁμαρτίαι, ἢ εἰπεῖν, ἔγειρε καὶ ἄρον τὸν κράβαττόν σου καὶ περιπάτει; ἵνα δὲ εἰδῇτε ὅτι ἐξουσίαν ἔχει ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἀφιέναι ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἁμαρτίας - λέγει τῷ παραλυτικῷ· σοὶ λέγω, ἔγειρε καὶ ἄρον τὸν κράβαττόν σου καὶ ὑπάγε εἰς τὸν οἶκόν σου. καὶ ἡγέρθη εὐθέως, καὶ ἄρας τὸν κράβαττον ἐξῆλθεν ἐναντίον πάντων, ὥστε ἐξίστασθαι πάντας καὶ δοξάζειν τὸν Θεὸν λέγοντας ὅτι οὐδέποτε οὕτως εἶδομεν.

DEVOTIONS THIS WEEK:

Sunday	March 04th,	Divine Liturgy of Saint Gregory Palamas	10:30 A.M.
		Please see centerfold for observance information	
Wednesday	March 06th,	Pre-Sanctified Liturgy of Saint Gregory	9:30 A.M.
Friday	March 09th,	3rd. Stanza of the Salutations to the Blessed Virgin Mary	7:00 P.M.
Sunday	March 11th	Veneration of the Holy Cross Liturgy	10:30 A.M.
		Solemn Procession of the Relic of the TRUE CROSS	
		and distribution of blessed flowers from the shrine	

AGAPE COFFEE FELLOWSHIP hosted by the Parish Council. All are welcome to attend.

HELLENIC HERITAGE AWARDS: for the Borough of Brooklyn, issued to the Brooklyn Greeks who have displayed exceptional efforts in support of Hellenism and Orthodox Christianity. The large CITATIONS are signed and presented by the Borough President The Honorable ERIC ADAMS. Two ladies from the parish are being honored most deservedly:

SYLVIA VELLIOS & HELEN PAVLIDES

Please mark your calendars for this monumental honor to our parish for Monday –March 19th at 5:30 p.m. at Borough Hall –Court Street. a bus free will transport 40 guests to the event departing from the church at 4:30 P.M. Seats will be reserved on a first come – first seated list. RESERVE YOUR SEAT TODAY through the Church Office. A full Greek dinner buffet, wines soda and sweets with coffee will be offered by the Committee, free to all attending. The bus will return to the church at 8:30 P.M. Let's all hail our ladies!

SENIOR CLUB: meets every Wednesday afternoon from 1:00 – 5:00 P.M. with fellowship, fun, games, bingo, auctions, luncheons, coffee, sweets, fruits and so much more... Why sit at home, come on down and join the afternoon festivity. OPEN TO ALL!

GREEK SCHOOL P.T.A. – will host a meeting of parents, teachers and administration on Monday evening, March 05th, from 7:00 P.M.– 8:00 P.M.

DAUGHTERS of PENELOPE DEMETRA CHAPTER #33 will host a BINGO NIGHT with prizes galore, refreshments and an evening of fun filled excitement. There will be cash prizes. The Donation for all this ONLY \$10.00. for a BINGO CARD and ONE DOLLAR (\$1.00) for each additional card. WHO CAN GO WRONG? BE A WINNER- COME AND JOIN THE EVENT, on MONDAY EVENING MARCH 05th P.M. in WHITEHALL.

VISITATION TO THE SHUT-INS: or those hospitalized is done only by specific invitation and in the presence of other family members. Please call the church office (718) 338-0280 to secure a visit prior to HOLY WEEK! Help those who cannot help themselves.

PASCHAL HOLY WEEK NEEDS: as usual, there are many who wish to reach out and help in: the preparations for PASCHA. Please speak with the clergy directly if you plan to make an offering of any of the following necessities: Altar WINE , PROSPHORA, ANTHO-NERO, AROMATICS (Euchelaion) OLIVE OIL, LARGE FLAT WHITE SHEETS – (apo-kathelosis). ALTAR CLOTHS. Too much of ONE thing and none of ANOTHER does not help! Lord bless those who live the beauty of thy house! KALI TESSARAKOSTI!

PASCHA-EASTER CARD: What more pleasant greeting can you express to one and all than “CHRISTOS ANESTI ! ALITHOS ANESTI!” For a donation of twenty dollars (\$20) your name will be imprinted on the triptych icon of Byzantine design and mailed to 1,000 homes of the parish registry. Don't miss out in sharing the good news that CHRIST IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD....ALLELUIA! Please see flyer.

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.

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)

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.

St. Gregory Palamas

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

*Rev. Luke Palumbis
St Basil the Great Greek Orthodox Church,
Houston, Texas*

*"O Gregory the miracle worker,...
preacher of grace, intercede forever
that our souls may be saved."
— apolytikion of st. Gregory palamas.*

*The pilgrimage of great lent is the Church's
invitation for the faithful to recognize and receive the gift
of God's grace.*

*Recognizing God's grace begins with recognizing our need
for it. Individuals and communities alike eventually come
to the understanding that life offers both opportunities
and challenges -- many explored and overcome through
self-efforts or the help of others; others bring us to the
humbling realization that they're beyond our capacity to
navigate. In this moment of self-awareness, we have the
greatest opportunity to mature in our faith, accepting that
we need God. Such maturity positions us to receive His
grace.*

*Journeying to receive God's grace is the path embarked
upon by Christians. Knowing that He can offer His grace
in any way He chooses we respond by investing where He
has assured us He does-- we participate in the life of His
Church.*

*Often misunderstood as a period of tasks and legalism,
Great Lent is an opportunity to remind ourselves that we
need Him, and that He is present for us in His Church.*

*In this Sunday's Gospel reading, the paralytic and his
peers understand that they need Christ, and they present
themselves to Him so that something beyond their control*



*can take place by His grace. Each of us can offer to Christ
the opportunities and challenges in our lives, and in the lives
of others, by coming to Church during Great Lent. His
grace is waiting for you-- rejoice!*

*We thank you, our King and our God,
for the gift of Your grace,
and Your rich blessings
Made us careful stewards of those gifts
that we may serve our neighbors.*



DAUGHTERS OF PENELOPE DEMETRA CHAPTER#33

Sponsor BINGO NIGHT



MONDAY MARCH 5th , 2018
7:00 P.M., WHITEHALL
THREE HIERARCHS CHURCH
1724 Avenue P
Brooklyn, N.Y.
718-627-0967

YOU ARE ALL INVITED !
A NIGHT FULL OF FUN!
PLEASE COME AND SUPPORT
OUR EFFORTS.



Many Prizes and
Refreshments





ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



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

Ἐκδίδεται ἀπὸ τὴν Κοινοβιακὴ Γυναικεία Ἱερὰ Μονὴ Ἁγίου Αὐγουστίνου Φλωρίνης - 531 00 ΦΛΩΡΙΝΑ - τηλ. 23850-20610 - imssflo@yahoo.gr

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος ΛΕ'
Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 2073

Β' Κυριακὴ Νηστειῶν (Μάρκ. 2,1-12)
4 Μαρτίου 2018 πρωὶ

Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος
Αὐγουστίνος Ν. Καντιώτης

Πρόθυμοι γιὰ βοήθεια στὸν πλησίον μας

«Καὶ ἔρχονται πρὸς αὐτὸν παραλυτικὸν φέροντες, αἰρόμενον ὑπὸ τεσσάρων· καὶ μὴ δυνάμενοι προσεγγίσει αὐτῷ διὰ τὸν ὄχλον, ἀπεστέγασαν τὴν στέγην ὅπου ἦν, καὶ ἐξορύξαντες χαλῶσι τὸν κράβατον, ἐφ' ᾧ ὁ παραλυτικὸς κατέκειτο» (Μάρκ. 2,3-4)

Ἡ εἰδήσις, ἀγαπητοί μου, ὅτι ὁ Ἰησοῦς «εἰσ-
ῆλθε πάλιν εἰς Καπερναοὺμ» (Μάρκ. 2,1), ὅτι ἐ-
πανῆλθε στὸ κέντρο τῆς Γαλιλαίας, διαδόθη-
κε ἀστραπιαία μέσα στὴν πόλι, κι ἀμέσως λα-
ὸς πολὺς, ποὺ διψοῦσε ν' ἀκούσῃ τὴν θεία δι-
δασκαλία, τρέχει μὲ πόθο ἐκεῖ ποὺ ἦταν ὁ
Θεῖος Διδάσκαλος.

Γνωρίζουμε ὅτι ὅπου εἶνε ὁ Χριστός, ἐκεῖ
εἶνε ἡ Ἐκκλησία. Καὶ σήμερα οἱ πιστοὶ συγ-
κεντρώνονται στὴν ἐκκλησία, γιὰ νὰ βροῦν
τὸν Κύριο. Μποροῦμε λοιπὸν νὰ ποῦμε ὅτι
καὶ τότε τὸ σπῆτι ἐκεῖνο, στὸ ὁποῖο βρισκόταν
ὁ Χριστός, μὲ τὴ συρροή τῶν ἀνθρώπων γύρω
του μεταβλήθηκε ἔτσι σὲ ἐκκλησία.

Διδάσκει ὁ Ἰησοῦς κι ὁ λαὸς ἀκούει· καὶ ἐν
τῷ μεταξύ ἔρχονται ὅλο καὶ περισσότεροι. Τὸ
σπῆτι γεμίζει ἀσφυκτικὰ σὲ τέτοιο σημεῖο λέ-
ει ὁ εὐαγγελιστὴς Μάρκος, «ὥστε μηκέτι χω-
ρεῖν μηδὲ τὰ πρὸς τὴν θύραν» (ἐλ. 22), δὲν μπο-
ρεῖ νὰ εἰσχωρήσῃ πλέον κανεὶς, ὅχι στὸ δω-
μάτιο ποὺ βρίσκεται ὁ Χριστὸς καὶ διδάσκει
ἀλλ' οὔτε κἀν στήν εἴσοδο. «Ὅλοι θέλουν ν'
ἀκούσουν τὰ ῥήματα ἐκεῖνα τῆς αἰωνίου ζω-
ῆς ποὺ εἶνε γλυκύτερα κι ἀπ' τὸ μέλι, ὅλοι
προσπαθοῦν ν' ἀντικρύσουν ἔστω κι ἀπὸ μα-
κριὰ τὴ μορφή τοῦ προσώπου του.

Ἔνας ὅμως ἄνθρωπος μέσα στὸ πλῆθος ἐ-
κεῖνο ἔχει καὶ μιὰ ἄλλη μεγαλύτερη ἀνάγκη.
Αὐτὸς δὲν θὰ ἤθελε μόνο νὰ τὸν ἀκούσῃ καὶ
νὰ τὸν δῇ· θέλει καὶ νὰ τοῦ ζητήσῃ τὴ θερα-
πεία του ἀπὸ μιὰ βαρεὶα καὶ ἀγιάτρευτη ἀ-
σθένεια ποὺ τὸν ταλαιπωρεῖ· εἶνε ἕνας «πα-
ραλυτικὸς». Καὶ τώρα βέβαια αὐτός, μὲ τέ-
τοια κοσμοσυρροή, δὲν μπορεῖ οὔτε ἀπὸ μα-
κριὰ νὰ τὸν δῇ. Πῶς νὰ τοῦ μιλήσῃ γιὰ τὴν
ἀνάγκη του, πῶς νὰ τὸν εἰδοποιήσῃ;

Φοβερὴ ἀσθένεια ἡ παραλυσία. Ποιὸς ξέ-
ρει πόσο καιρὸ τὸν εἶχε καθηλώσει στὸ κρε-

βάτι τοῦ πόνου. Περίλυτος ἔβλεπε νὰ περνᾶ-
νε ἔτσι μέρες, νύχτες, βδομάδες, μῆνες, χρό-
νια ὀλόκληρα· εἶχε πιά ἀπελπιστῇ. Ξαφνικὰ ὁ-
μως μαθαίνει ὅτι κάποιος, ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀπὸ τὴ
Ναζαρέτ, ἔχει τὴ δύναμι νὰ θεραπεύῃ τοὺς ἀ-
σθενεῖς· γιάτρεψε πολλοὺς ἄλλους, θὰ μπο-
ροῦσε λοιπὸν νὰ γιатρέψῃ κι αὐτόν. Ἡ ἐλπί-
δα του ἀναπτερώνεται.

Πῶς ὅμως –πράλυντος αὐτός– νὰ κινηθῇ,
πῶς νὰ πάῃ νὰ συναντήσῃ τὸν Ἰησοῦ; Πόδια
ἔχει καὶ πόδια δὲν ἔχει. Μένει ἐκεῖ ἀσάλευ-
τος. Καὶ φοβᾶται ὁ δυστυχὴς πῶς ἡ εὐκαιρία
αὐτὴ θὰ χαθῇ. Τί κρίμα!

Ἀλλὰ νὰ· ἐνῶ ὅλοι οἱ ἄλλοι τρέχουν νὰ συ-
ναντήσουν τὸν Ἰησοῦ, τέσσαρις πονετικοὶ ἄν-
τρες σταματοῦν. Βλέπουν τὴ θλιβερὴ κατά-
στασι τοῦ ἀνήμερου αὐτοῦ ἀνθρώπου, τὸν
σπλαχνίζονται, συνεννοοῦνται μεταξύ τους
καὶ ἀποφασίζουν· ἀναλαμβάνουν νὰ τὸν με-
ταφέρουν αὐτοὶ μπροστὰ στὸν Ἰησοῦ.

Καλὴ ἡ ἀπόφασί τους, μὰ καθόλου εὐκόλο
αὐτὸ ποὺ ἐπιχειροῦν. Ἀπ' τὴν ἀρχὴ κιόλας συ-
ναντοῦν ἐμπόδια μεγάλα. Ἐμπόδιο ὁ ὄχλος
ποὺ φράζει τὴν εἴσοδο τοῦ σπιτιοῦ, ἐμπόδιο
ἡ ἀδιαφορία τῶν πολλῶν ποὺ δὲν σκέπτονται
τὴν ἀνάγκη τοῦ παραλύτου, ἐμπόδιο ἡ φιλαυ-
τία τους ποὺ δὲν τοὺς ἀφήνει νὰ παραμερί-
σουν, νὰ κάνουν μιὰ θυσία γιὰ τὸν ἄλλο.

Οἱ τέσσαρις ὅμως αὐτοὶ εὐλογημένοι ἄν-
τρες δὲν ἀποκάνουν, δὲν «τὸ βάζουν κάτω». Βάζουν τὸ μυαλὸ νὰ δουλέψῃ, ἐπινοοῦν τρό-
πο καὶ καταστρώνουν σχέδιο τολμηρὸ, πρωτά-
κουστο· θὰ τὸν κατεβάσουν μπροστὰ στὸ Χρι-
στό, μέσα ἐκεῖ στὸ δωμάτιο ποὺ μιλάει, ἀνοι-
γοντας ἀπὸ πάνω τὴ στέγη! Αὐτὸ βέβαια ἀπαι-
τεῖ τώρα πρόσθετο κόπο, μὰ αὐτοὶ δὲν σταμα-
τοῦν μπροστὰ σὲ τίποτα. Καὶ τότε μόνο ἤσου-
χάζουν, ὅταν βλέπουν τὸν παράλυτο νὰ σηκώ-

νεται μπροστά σὲ ὅλους ὑγιῆς καὶ νὰ φεύγῃ φορτωμένος μάλιστα τὸ κρεβάτι του.

Ἡ προθυμία, ἀγαπητοί μου, ποὺ ἔδειξαν οἱ τέσσερις αὐτοὶ ἄνθρωποι γιὰ τὴν ἐξυπηρέτησι ἐνὸς δυστυχισμένου συνανθρώπου τους, ἃς γίνῃ **παράδειγμα σὲ ὅλους μας.** Γιατὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἀνακυκλώνεται καὶ τὰ περιστατικὰ ἐπαναλαμβάνονται· ἔτσι βρισκόμαστε κ' ἐμεῖς πολλές φορές μπροστά σὲ παρόμοιες περιπτώσεις δυστυχίας. Ἀκοῦμε τίς θλιβερὲς φωνὲς τοῦ πόνου ἀδελφῶν μας, βλέπουμε τὰ δάκρυά τους, ἀντιλαμβανόμαστε ὅτι κάποια λύπη βαθεῖα τυραννεῖ καὶ θλίβει τὴν καρδιά τους. Τί πρέπει νὰ κάνουμε λοιπόν; νὰ ἀδιαφορήσουμε καὶ νὰ προσπεράσουμε ἀσπλαχνα, ὅπως ὁ ὄχλος σήμερὰ ἢ ὁ ἱερεὺς καὶ ὁ λευίτης τῆς γνωστῆς ἐκείνης παραβολῆς (βλ. *Λουκ. 10,30-37*); ἢ μήπως νὰ ἐκμεταλλευθοῦμε τὴν κατάστασι καὶ νὰ τῇ δοῦμε ἰδιοτελῶς, ὡς εὐκαιρία δικοῦ μας πλουτισμοῦ; ἢ τέλος νὰ μιμηθοῦμε τὸν καλὸ Σαμαρεῖτη καὶ τοὺς τέσσερις σπουδαίους ἄντρες τοῦ σημερινοῦ εὐαγγελίου;

Ἄντι-**βέβαια**— ν' ἀδιαφορήσουμε, ὅπως ἔκαναν οἱ πολλοὶ τοῦ ὄχλου, ποὺ συνωστίζονταν γύρω ἀπὸ τὸν Ἰησοῦ δίχως νὰ παραμερίζουν λίγο, ὥστε ν' ἀνοιχθῇ μιὰ δίοδος γιὰ νὰ περάσῃ ὁ παραλυτικὸς· ὅχι νὰ κλείνουμε τὰ σπλάχνα καὶ τὴν καρδιά μας καὶ ἀδιάφοροι νὰ συνεχίζουμε τὸ δρόμο μας, χωρὶς νὰ ρίχνουμε οὔτε ἓνα βλέμμα συμπαθείας στοὺς τραυματίες τῆς ζωῆς, ποὺ μένουν τληγωμένοι στὴ μέση τοῦ δρόμου ἀδύναμοι νὰ σύρουν τὰ βήματά τους. Ἄντι-**πολύ περισσότερο**— νὰ θελήσουμε νὰ ἐκμεταλλευθοῦμε τὴν δυστυχία τους, ὅχι νὰ πατήσουμε ἐπάνω στὰ πτώματά τους, γιὰ ν' ἀνεβοῦμε ἐμεῖς πρὸ ψηλὰ καὶ ν' ἀποκτήσουμε δύναμι μεγαλύτερη. Ἀλλὰ τί πρέπει λοιπόν νὰ κάνουμε; Τὰ καθήκοντά μας στὸ ζήτημα αὐτὸ τὰ ὑπαγορεύει σαφῶς ἡ συμπεριφορὰ τῶν τεσσάρων.

● Καὶ πρῶτα - πρῶτα νὰ σταθοῦμε καὶ νὰ **πλησιάσουμε**, ὅπως αὐτοί, **ἐκεῖ ποὺ βρίσκεται ὁ δυστυχισμένος.** Δὲν θὰ τὸν παρηγορήσουμε ἀπλῶς μὲ λίγα λόγια χριστιανικῆς ἀγάπης, ἀλλὰ καὶ θ' ἀναλάβουμε κάθε κόπο γιὰ νὰ τὸν ἀνακουφίσουμε, ὅπως ἔκαναν καὶ οἱ τέσσερις συνοδοὶ τοῦ παραλυτικοῦ.

● Θὰ χτυπήσουμε κατόπιν γι' αὐτὸν πόρτες καὶ ἄλλων, ἂν ἐμεῖς μόνοι μας δὲν μπορούμε νὰ τὸν βοηθήσουμε. Θὰ **ζητήσουμε** λοιπόν **καὶ τὴ βοήθεια τῶν ἄλλων.** Γιατὶ ὅπως ὁ ἓνας δὲν μπορούσε μόνος του νὰ σηκώσῃ καὶ νὰ μεταφέρῃ τὸν παραλυτικὸ μπροστὰ στὸν Ἰησοῦ,

ἀλλὰ χρειάστηκε γι' αὐτὸ καὶ τὴ βοήθεια τῶν ἄλλων τριῶν συντρόφων του, τὸ ἴδιο κ' ἐμεῖς πολλές φορές δὲν μπορούμε μόνοι μας νὰ προσφέρουμε ἀποτελεσματικὴ βοήθεια σὲ δυστυχισμένους, ἐὰν δὲν καλέσουμε σὲ βοήθεια καὶ ἄλλους. Μόνοι μας δὲν μπορούμε, μαζὶ μὲ ἄλλους μπορούμε.

● Ἐπειτα, πρέπει νὰ **συνοδεύσουμε τὸν δοκιμαζόμενο ὡς τὸ τέλος τοῦ μαρτυρίου του.** Ὅχι νὰ τὸν «πετάξουμε» στὸ ὄρφανотροφεῖο ἢ στὸ γηροκομεῖο ἢ στὸ ἀσυλὸ τῶν ἀνιάτων ἢ στὸ νοσοκομεῖο, κ' ἔπειτα νὰ τὸ βάλουμε στὰ πόδια θεωρώντας ὅτι τὸ χρέος μας τελείωσε, χωρὶς νὰ ἐνδιαφερώμαστε πιά γι' αὐτόν, χωρὶς νὰ τὸν ἐπισκεπτῶμαστε. Οἱ τέσσερις αὐτοὶ δὲν ἔκαναν ἔτσι. Δὲν ἄφησαν τὸν παραλυτικὸ ἔξω ἀπ' τὴν πόρτα τοῦ σπιτιοῦ ποὺ βρισκόταν ὁ Ἰησοῦς, ἀλλ' ἀγωνίστηκαν νὰ τὸν βάλουν μέσα στὸ σπίτι κ' ἐκεῖ νὰ συναντήσῃ τὸν Θεραπευτὴ. **Δὲν ἄφησαν δηλαδὴ τὸ καλὸ ἡμιτελές,** δὲν ἄφησαν τὴ δουλειὰ στὴ μέση, ἀλλὰ προσπάθησαν καὶ ἔφεραν τὸ καλὸ εἰς πέρας, παρὰ τὰ ἐμπόδια ποὺ συνάντησαν. Αὐτὸ λοιπόν νὰ κάνουμε κ' ἐμεῖς.

● Ἡ προθυμία μας γιὰ βοήθεια στὸν ἄλλο ἃς μὴ σταματᾷ μπροστὰ στὸ πρῶτο ἐμπόδιο ποὺ θὰ συναντήσουμε. Θὰ βρεθοῦν ἀσφαλῶς πολλοὶ ποὺ θὰ παρεξηγήσουν τὸ ἔργο τῆς ἀγάπης μας· ἄλλοι δὲν θὰ μᾶς νιώσουν, καὶ ἄλλοι μὲ τίς κακίες τους θὰ σταθοῦν μπροστὰ μας φραγμός· κι αὐτὰ θὰ εἶνε γιὰ μᾶς δοκιμαστήριο τῆς ὑπομονῆς καὶ τῆς ἀντοχῆς μας στὴν ἐργασία τῶν ἐντολῶν τοῦ Κυρίου. Ἀλλ' ἐμεῖς ἃς μιμηθοῦμε καὶ στὸ σημεῖο αὐτὸ τοὺς τέσσερις συνοδοὺς τοῦ παραλυτικοῦ· ἡ προθυμία μας γιὰ τὸ καλὸ πρέπει νὰ 'νε τόση, ὥστε, καὶ ἂν ὅλους τοὺς δρόμους μᾶς τοὺς κλείνουν, ἐμεῖς νὰ **προσπαθοῦμε νὰ βροῦμε ἄλλο νέο τρόπο**—ὅπως οἱ τέσσερις ποὺ «**ἀπεστέγασαν τὴν στέγην**»—κι ἀπὸ 'κεῖ κατέβασαν τὸν παραλυτικόν, καὶ ἔτσι νὰ κατορθώσουμε νὰ ὁλοκληρώσουμε τὸ καλόν.

Ὁ Κύριος, ἀγαπητοί μου, ποὺ θὰ βλέπη τὴν προθυμία, τὴν ἀδελφικὴ συνεργασία, τὸν κόπο, τὴν ἐπιμονή, τὴν ἐπινοητικότητα μας γιὰ νὰ πετύχουμε τὸ καλόν, θὰ μᾶς φωτίξῃ πάντοτε, ὥστε καὶ νέους δρόμους ἀγαθοεργίας νὰ βρίσκουμε, καὶ νέες δυνάμεις θὰ μᾶς χαρίξῃ, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ Ἰδιὸς θὰ ἔρχεται νὰ μᾶς εὐλογῇ καὶ νὰ ἐπιστεγάξῃ μὲ θαυμαστὸ τρόπο κάθε ἔργο ποὺ θὰ ἀναλαμβάνουμε γιὰ τὴ βοήθεια τοῦ πλησίον καὶ τὴ δόξα τοῦ Θεοῦ.

(†) **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 thrive thanks to your outreach.

YOU ARE PART OF THE GREAT FRESCO OF FAITH

You are Forgiven and Healed

In Capernaum Jesus is surrounded by great numbers of people. As He preaches to the crowd, four friends of a paralyzed man lower him on his mat through the roof so that he can be close enough for Jesus to see him and cure him. Jesus responds to this act of faith, not by healing the man immediately, but by touching off the first of a series of controversial dialogues with the Scribes and Pharisees. When Jesus says, "Child, your sins are forgiven," He is as much as saying, "It is God whom you approach." In the Old Testament, only God is capable of forgiving sins; and it was expected that He would do so only at the end of time. It becomes clear why the Scribes murmur "he is blaspheming" and why Jesus brings it all out in the open. His claim to be able to forgive sins better reveals His identity as Son of God than do the miracles He performs.

Aware of the silent censure His forgiving word has caused in the crowd, Jesus proceeds to prove that "the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins on earth" by commanding the man to rise and walk in the sight of everyone. In concluding this miracle, Mark asks his readers to praise God for His presence in their midst as the forgiver-healer, just as the crowd did, even in the face of those who did not believe.

It is significant that Mark has chosen to present this miracle and teaching about Jesus' power to forgive sins so early in his Gospel drama. It shows that the need for the experience of God's forgiveness was as important to first-century Christians as it is today. Mark's readers praise God for saying clearly, and even today, "My sons, my daughters, I absolve you from your sins."

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