



DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN
DISTRICT

THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN May 20th, 2018
V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

SUNDAY OF THE FATHERS OF THE FIRST COUNCIL



Icon of the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicea

Prokeimenon. Mode 4.

Daniel 3.26,27

Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our fathers.

Verse: For you are just in all you have done.

The reading is from Acts of the Apostles 20:16-18, 28-36

IN THOSE DAYS, Paul had decided to sail past Ephesos, so that he might not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hastening to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost. And from Miletos he sent to Ephesos and called to him the elders of the church. And when they came to him, he said to them: "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God which he obtained with the blood of his own Son. I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears. And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities, and to those who were with me. In all things I have shown you that by so toiling one must help the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, 'it is more blessed to give than to receive.'" And when he had spoken thus, he knelt down and prayed with them all.

Προκείμενον. Ἦχος δ'.

Δανιήλ 3.26-27

Εὐλογητὸς εἶ, Κύριε, ὁ Θεὸς τῶν Πατέρων ἡμῶν.

Στίχ. Ὅτι δίκαιος εἶ ἐπὶ πᾶσιν, οἷς ἐποίησας ἡμῖν.

Πράξεις Ἀποστόλων 20:16-18, 28-36 τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα εἶναι ἀπο

Ἐν ταῖς ἡμεραῖς ἐκείναις, ἔκρινεν ὁ Παῦλος παραπλεῦσαι τὴν Ἔφεσον, ὅπως μὴ γένηται αὐτῷ χρονοτριβῆσαι ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ· ἔσπευδεν γάρ, εἰ δυνατόν ἦν αὐτῷ, τὴν ἡμέραν τῆς Πεντηκοστῆς γενέσθαι εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα. Ἀπὸ δὲ τῆς Μιλήτου πέμψας εἰς Ἔφεσον μετεκαλέσατο τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἐκκλησίας. Ὡς δὲ παρεγένοντο πρὸς αὐτόν, εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, προσέχετε οὖν ἑαυτοῖς καὶ παντὶ τῷ ποιμνίῳ, ἐν ᾧ ὑμᾶς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἔθετο ἐπισκόπους, ποιμαίνειν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ κυρίου καὶ θεοῦ, ἣν περιποιήσατο διὰ τοῦ ἰδίου αἵματος. Ἐγὼ γὰρ οἶδα τοῦτο, ὅτι εἰσελεύσονται μετὰ τὴν ἄφιξίν μου λύκοι βαρεῖς εἰς ὑμᾶς, μὴ φειδόμενοι τοῦ ποιμνίου· καὶ ἐξ ὑμῶν αὐτῶν ἀναστήσονται ἄνδρες λαλοῦντες διεστραμμένα, τοῦ ἀποσπᾶν τοὺς μαθητὰς ὀπίσω αὐτῶν. Διὸ γρηγορεῖτε, μνημονεύοντες ὅτι τριετίαν νύκτα καὶ ἡμέραν οὐκ ἐπαυσάμην μετὰ δακρύων νουθετῶν ἕνα ἕκαστον. Καὶ τὰ νῦν παρατίθεμαι ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, τῷ θεῷ καὶ τῷ λόγῳ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ, τῷ δυναμένῳ ἐποικοδομῆσαι, καὶ δοῦναι ὑμῖν κληρονομίαν ἐν τοῖς ἡγιασμένοις πᾶσιν. Ἀργυρίου ἢ χρυσοῦ ἢ ἱματισμοῦ οὐδενὸς ἐπεθύμησα. Αὐτοὶ γινώσκετε ὅτι ταῖς χρεῖαις μου καὶ τοῖς οὖσιν μετ' ἐμοῦ ὑπῆρέτησαν αἱ χεῖρες αὐταί. Πάντα ὑπέδειξα ὑμῖν, ὅτι οὕτως κοπιῶντας δεῖ ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι τῶν ἀσθενούντων, μνημονεῦειν τε τῶν λόγων τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ, ὅτι αὐτὸς εἶπεν, Μακάριόν ἐστιν μᾶλλον διδοῦναι ἢ λαμβάνειν. Καὶ ταῦτα εἰπὼν, θείσ τὰ γόνατα αὐτοῦ, σὺν πᾶσιν αὐτοῖς προσηύξατο.

Fathers of the 1st Council

The Gospel According to John 17:1-13

At that time, Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him power over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work which you gave me to do; and now, Father, you glorify me in your own presence with the glory which I had with you before the world was made.

"I have manifested your name to the men whom you gave me out of the world; yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you; for I have given them the words which you gave me, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you did send me. I am praying for them; I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are mine; all mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me; I have guarded them, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to you; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves."

Fathers of the 1st Council

Ἐκ τοῦ Κατὰ Ἰωάννην 17:1-13 Εὐαγγελίου τὸ Ἀνάγνωσμα

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, ὁ Ἰησοῦς, καὶ ἐπήρε τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ εἶπε· πάτερ, ἐλήλυθεν ἡ ὥρα· δόξασόν σου τὸν υἱόν, ἵνα καὶ ὁ υἱὸς σου δοξάσῃ σε, καθὼς ἔδωκας αὐτῷ ἐξουσίαν πάσης σαρκός, ἵνα πᾶν ὃ δέδωκας αὐτῷ δώσῃ αὐτοῖς ζωὴν αἰώνιον. αὕτη δὲ ἐστὶν ἡ αἰώνιος ζωὴ, ἵνα γινώσκωσί σε τὸν μόνον ἀληθινὸν Θεὸν καὶ ὃν ἀπέστειλας Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν. ἐγὼ σε ἐδόξασα ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, τὸ ἔργον ἐτελείωσα ὃ δέδωκάς μοι ἵνα ποιήσω· καὶ νῦν δόξασόν με σύ, πάτερ, παρὰ σεαυτῷ τῇ δόξῃ ἣν εἶχον πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον εἶναι παρὰ σοί. Ἐφανέρωσά σου τὸ ὄνομα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις οὓς δέδωκάς μοι ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου. σοὶ ἦσαν καὶ ἐμοὶ αὐτοὺς δέδωκας, καὶ τὸν λόγον σου τετηρήκασι. νῦν ἔγνωκαν ὅτι πάντα ὅσα δέδωκάς μοι παρὰ σοῦ ἐστίν· ὅτι τὰ ῥήματα ἃ δέδωκάς μοι δέδωκα αὐτοῖς, καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔλαβον, καὶ ἔγνωσαν ἀληθῶς ὅτι παρὰ σοῦ ἐξῆλθον, καὶ ἐπίστευσαν ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας. Ἐγὼ περὶ αὐτῶν ἐρωτῶ· οὐ περὶ τοῦ κόσμου ἐρωτῶ, ἀλλὰ περὶ ὧν δέδωκάς μοι, ὅτι σοὶ εἰσι, καὶ τὰ ἐμὰ πάντα σὰ ἐστί καὶ τὰ σὰ ἐμὰ, καὶ δεδόξασμαι ἐν αὐτοῖς. καὶ οὐκέτι εἰμι ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ, καὶ οὗτοι ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ εἰσὶ, καὶ ἐγὼ πρὸς σὲ ἔρχομαι. πάτερ ἅγιε, τήρησον αὐτοὺς ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου ᾧ δέδωκάς μοι, ἵνα ὥσιν ἐν καθὼς ἡμεῖς. ὅτε ἦμην μετ' αὐτῶν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ, ἐγὼ ἐτήρουν αὐτοὺς ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου· οὓς δέδωκάς μοι ἐφύλαξα, καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐξ αὐτῶν ἀπόλετο εἰ μὴ ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας, ἵνα ἡ γραφή πληρωθῇ. νῦν δὲ πρὸς σὲ ἔρχομαι, καὶ ταῦτα λαλῶ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἵνα ἔχωσιν τὴν χαρὰν τὴν ἐμὴν πεπληρωμένην ἐν αὐτοῖς.

DEVOTIONS UP-COMING

Sunday	May 20th,	Liturgy of Saints Thallelaios and Asterios	10:30 A.M
		A.H.E.P.A. DAY Annual Observances	11:30 A.M.
		ARTOKLASIA	12:00 noon
		Great Vesper of Saint Constantine and Helen	7:00 P.M.
		BROOKLYN CATHEDRAL – Schermerhorn Street	
Monday	May 21st,	LITURGY of SAINTS CONSTANTINE and HELEN	9:30 A.M.
		Three Hierarchs Observance with ARTOKLASIES	
Saturday	May 26th,	FINAL P S Y C H O -- S A B B A T O N	9: 00 A.M.
		The fourth and final Saturday of ALL SOULS	
		Commemoration of faithfully departed	
Sunday	May 27th,	PENTECOST FEAST (Liturgy of Holy Spirit)	10:30 A.M.
		Kneeling Prayers at 12 noon.	

This is National Memorial Week – end. This is a most appropriate time to commemorate your beloved deceased.

PENTECOST FEAST (Kneeling Service) Descent of the HOLY SPIRIT

AGAPE COFFEE HOUR: Is being hosted today by the AHEPA BRUNCH. The Coney Island Chapter #200 of the men's society will honor two brothers of the AHEPA, Anthony Kallinikos and Dionysios (DENNIS) Gonatas at the event. Dionysios Gonatas will receive the **AHEPA SERVICE AWARD from the Supreme Lodge in Washington D.C.** for all his good work and service to the faith community at large over the past 22 years! All Congregants are cordially invited as GUESTS to the BRUNCH to be served on the PLAZA or in case of rain, in WHITEHALL. PLEASE JOIN US IN FELLOWSHIP

ARTOKLASIES: honoring Saint Constantine and Helen are being offered in tribute by Sophia Drouvalakis, Haritini Pandis , Pamela Kelly, and Joanna Korkofigas as devotional thanksgiving.

ICON PRESENTATION TODAY: Archon Deputatos Kostas Vellios who was cited as 2017 Parish Honoree at the Gala last December will be presented with his patronal icon of Saint Constantine and Helen which will nostalgically mark the event. God grant him many years!

GRECIAN FESTIVAL: The Annual Parish GREEK FEAST will be hosted on the Plaza of our community center FRIDAY – SUNDAY June 1, 2, 3. Please join us for one or more days as we celebrate our Hellenic heritage, legacy and ethnic pride. Music, dancing, singing, dining, games, Greek cuisine, desserts, full bar, sodas and beer. Everything will be celebrated under the great white tents 'UNDER THE STARS'. The GRANDE RAFFLE will be drawn on Saturday night of the feast. Have you bought your raffles yet?

FLEA MARKET: The GRECIAN FESTIVAL will present a flea market for the public during the FESTIVAL WEEK-END. Any articles from home or office you may wish to donate are gratefully received. NO CLOTHING PLEASE! Kitchen , dining room, bath bed and beyond, garden items....whatever you do not need and deem valuable to others please submit it to the Church Office for the 'MARKET'.....Thank you.

CLERGY LAITY CONGRESS of the National Church is scheduled for July 1-5th, in Boston , Massachusetts. This is the highest legislative body of the Greek Orthodox faith in the United States of America. Father Eugene will be representing our parish and community at the CONGRESS. In these trying times of financial stress facing the Archdiocese input and change is essential. RESPONSIBILITY, ACCOUNTABILITY and TRANSPARENCY on all parts, that's the course;

Please give ample advance notice if you wish to have a memorial announced in the church weekly bulletin and /or if you intend to order 'KOLLYVA' boiled wheat for the tribute commemoration. MAY THEIR MEMORY BE ETERNAL !

RADIO MINISTRY: Each Saturday at 1:15PM Fr. Eugene hosts and produces the radio broadcast MATTERS OF CONSCIENCE NOW IN it's 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)

NOTE – WELL: Three Hierarchs Church 'MEMORIAL CARDS' sent by the Church Office upon request of the donor to the bereaved family may be secured through the OFFICE SECRETARY only. The minimum offering is \$25.(twenty –five dollars) for each acknowledgment. ALL MEMORIAL DONATIONS for the card are directed to the THREE HIERARCHS PARISH. Thank you.

MEMORIALS TODAY: + NICHOLAS GLYPTIS
+ DOMINIC ALUOTTO



MEMORIAL DAY 2018

*The Last Post Of The Greek
American Veterans
Association Of World War II
Is Housed At Three Hierarchs. We
Shall Honor Our G.A.V.A. Members
At The Psychosabbaton
Of May 26th.
Eternal Be Their Memory
One And All!*



Memorial Day Tribute

*"They Answered Their Country's
Call To Arms,
Into Battle They Did Go,
Where Their Final Destination Was,
No One Will Ever Know.
May Their Final Resting Place,
Under Some Unknown Sod,
Be Forever Hallowed,
For It Is Known
Only To God."*

NO CLOTHING PLEASE!



Three Hierarchs Festival 'Flea Market' June 1st-3rd

Find
Bargains
Here!



We are looking for donated items to be placed in our Flea Market during our Festival which will be held from Friday June 1st through Sunday June 3rd. PLEASE! We are asking that any items donated are cleaned before submitting to the Church. Items can be dropped off at the Church Office during normal Church hours 11:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.. If you have any questions or need further information, please call the Church Office.

718-339-0280



Sale





ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



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

Ἐκδίδεται ἀπὸ τὴν Κανονικὴν Γυναικίαν Ἱερὰ Μονὴ Ἁγίου Αὐγουστίνου Φλωρίνης - 531 00 ΦΛΩΡΙΝΑ - τηλ. 23850-28610 - info@yghoo.gr

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος ΛΕ'
Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 2092

Κυρ. Πατ. Α' Οἰκ. Συνόδου (Ἰω. 17,1-13)
20 Μαΐου 2018

Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος
Αὐγουστίνος Ν. Καντιώτης

Χριστιανέ, εἶσαι ὠπλισμένος;

«Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ ἐπάρας ὁ Ἰησοῦς τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν εἶπε· Πάτερ, ἐλήλυθεν ἡ ὥρα...» (Ἰω. 17,1)

Ὁλόκληρη, ἀγαπητοί μου, ἡ σημερινὴ περικοπή τοῦ εὐαγγελίου εἶνε **προσευχή**.

Εἶνε ἓνα μέρος –γιὰ τὴν ἀκρίβεια ἀποτελεῖ τὴν ἀρχή– τῆς προσευχῆς ἐκείνης, ἡ ὁποία ἀπὸ τοὺς θεολόγους τῆς Ἐκκλησίας μας ὠνομάστηκε **ἀρχιερατικὴ προσευχή** τοῦ Κυρίου. Πῶς πῆρε τὸ ὄνομα αὐτό; Ἀπὸ τὴν δογματικὴ διδασκαλία τῆς Ἐκκλησίας μας μαθαίνουμε, ὅτι τρία εἶνε τὰ ἀξιώματα τοῦ Χριστοῦ· τὸ ἀρχιερατικόν, τὸ προφητικὸ καὶ τὸ βασιλικόν. Ἄλλες ἐνέργειές του τίς ἔκανε ὡς ἀρχιερεὺς, ἄλλες τίς ἔκανε ὡς προφήτης, καὶ ἄλλες τίς ἔκανε ὡς βασιλεὺς. Σ' αὐτὰ ποὺ ὁ Κύριός μας ἐνήργησε ὡς ἀρχιερεὺς ἀνήκει καὶ ἡ προσευχή. Πολλὲς φορές ἀναφέρουν τὰ εὐαγγέλια ὅτι προσευχήθηκε ὁ Χριστὸς κατὰ τὸν ἐπίγειο βίον του. Καὶ ἐπειδὴ ἡ προσευχὴ αὐτὴ τῆς σημερινῆς εὐαγγελικῆς περικοπῆς εἶνε ἡ πιὸ σημαντικὴ ἀπ' ὅλες τίς προσευχάς του, ὠνομάστηκε κατ' ἐξοχὴν **ἀρχιερατικὴ προσευχή**.

Ὁ μέγας ἀρχιερεὺς μας Χριστὸς ἀπηύθυνε τὴν προσευχὴ αὐτὴ πρὸς τὸν οὐράνιο Πατέρα του κατὰ **τὴν τελευταία νύχτα τῆς ἐπιγείου ζωῆς του**, τὸ βράδυ τῆς Μεγάλης Πέμπτης. Στὸ τέλος τοῦ Μυστικοῦ Δείπνου, ἀφοῦ παρέδωσε στοὺς μαθητὰς του τὰ φρικτὰ μυστήρια, τὸ μυστήριον τῆς θείας εὐχαριστίας, σὲ στιγμὲς μοναδικές καὶ ἀνεπανάληπτες, εἶπε τὴν προσευχὴ αὐτή. Σὲ λίγο μαζὶ μὲ τοὺς ἀποστόλους του ἐπρόκειτο ν' ἀφήση πλέον τὸ ὑπερῶο τῶν Ἱεροσολύμων, γιὰ νὰ βγῆ ἔξω καὶ νὰ βρεθῆ πέραν τοῦ χειμάρρου τῶν Κέδρων, στὸν κῆπο τῆς Γεθσημανῆ.

Ἡ ἀρχιερατικὴ προσευχὴ του ἦταν τὸ ἐπιστέγασμα τῆς τελευταίας παρατεταμένης διδασκαλίας τοῦ Κυρίου στοὺς μαθητὰς του – εἶνε ἐκείνη ποὺ ἀκοῦμε τὴ Μεγάλῃ Ἑβδομάδα στὸ πρῶτο καὶ μεγαλύτερο ἀπὸ τὰ δώδεκα εὐαγγέλια τῆς ἀκολουθίας τῶν Ἀχράντων

Παθῶν. Ἡ **μακρὰ αὐτὴ διδασκαλία** τοῦ Κυρίου, ποὺ περιέχει τίς πιὸ σημαντικὲς παραγγελίες του, τὴν πολύτιμη **διαθήκη** ποὺ ἀφήνει πρὶν ἀπὸ τὸν ζωοποιὸ θάνατό του, περιέχεται σὲ τέσσαρα κεφάλαια τοῦ κατὰ Ἰωάννην εὐαγγελίου (τὸ 13ο, τὸ 14ο, τὸ 15ο καὶ τὸ 16ο).

Ἄν τώρα μὲ τὴ διδασκαλία αὐτὴ ὁ Χριστὸς ἔρριξε τὴ νύχτα ἐκείνη φῶς οὐράνιο στὴ διάνοια τῶν μαθητῶν, μὲ τὴν **προσευχὴ** ποὺ ἀκολούθησε στὸ τέλος τῆς διδασκαλίας θέρμανε τὴν καρδιά τους καὶ ἀνοίξε μέσα τῆς βαθύτερα τὰ αὐλάκια γιὰ νὰ δεχτοῦν τὸν θεῖο σπόρο. Πρὸ παντὸς ὅμως ἡ προσευχὴ αὐτὴ ὠπλισε μὲ δύναμι, θάρρος καὶ ἐλπίδα τοὺς ἁγίους ἀποστόλους, οἱ ὁποῖοι σὲ λίγο θὰ μείνουν μόνοι καὶ θὰ σκορπίσουν, καὶ ἐν συνεχείᾳ θὰ κληθοῦν νὰ βαδίσουν κι αὐτοὶ μὲ τὴ σειρά τους τὴν ὁδὸ τοῦ μαρτυρίου. Γιατὶ οἱ τελευταῖες φράσεις τῆς διδασκαλίας τοῦ Κυρίου ἦταν λόγια ποὺ προμήνυαν θεύλλες καὶ καταιγίδες. «Ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ», τοὺς προεῖπε ὁ Θεὸς Διδάσκαλος, «**θλίψιν ἔξετε** (στὸν κόσμον θὰ δοκιμάσετε θλίψι)· **ἀλλὰ θαρσεῖτε, ἐγὼ νενίκηκα τὸν κόσμον** (ἀλλὰ νὰ ἔχετε θάρρος, ἐγὼ ἔχω νικήσει τὸν κόσμον)» (Ἰω. 16,33).

Καὶ ἀμέσως μετὰ ἀπὸ τὰ λόγια αὐτὰ ὁ Διδάσκαλος ὑψώνει τὰ μάτια του στὸν οὐρανὸ καὶ προσεύχεται! Μ' αὐτὸ τὸν τρόπο διδάσκει τοὺς μαθητὰς του μεταξὺ τῶν ἄλλων, ὅτι στὸν καιρὸ τῶν θλίψεων, ποὺ θὰ συναντήσουν στὴν πορεία τους, πρέπει κι αὐτοὶ **νὰ καταφεύγουν μὲ τὴν προσευχὴ τους στὸ οὐράνιο Πατέρα**.

Ἡ προσευχὴ, ἀγαπητοί μου! Νὰ τὸ ὄπλο τὸ ὁποῖο πρέπει νὰ μεταχειρισθοῦν οἱ ἀπόστολοι, ὅταν βρεθοῦν ἀντιμέτωποι μὲ τὸν κόσμον, ποὺ μὲ ὅλα τὰ δικά του ὄπλα θὰ ζητοῦσε νὰ τοὺς ἐξαφανίση ἀπὸ τὸ πρόσωπο τῆς γῆς.

Καὶ πράγματι τὸ ὄπλο αὐτὸ **τὸ χρησιμοποι-**

ησαν πολὺ ἀποτελεσματικὰ οἱ ἅγιοι ἀπόστολοι, ὅπως βλέπουμε στὶς Πράξεις καὶ στὶς Ἐπιστολές τους. Μιμήθησαν τὸ παράδειγμα τοῦ Διδασκάλου τους, ὁ ὁποῖος πρὶν δώσῃ τὶς ἀποτελεσματικὲς μάχες του κατὰ τοῦ διαβόλου προσευχόταν. Προσευχήθηκε στὴν ἔρημο τῶν πειρασμῶν ἀμέσως μετὰ τὴ βάπτισί του ἀπὸ τὸν Ἰωάννη στὸν Ἰορδάνη. Προσευχήθηκε τώρα στὸ Μυστικὸ Δείπνο. Θὰ προσευχηθῆ μετὰ ἀπὸ λίγο στὸν κήπο τῆς Γεθσημανῆ. Καὶ προτοῦ νὰ κλείσῃ τὰ μάτια του ἐπάνω στὸ σταυρό, πάλι θὰ προσευχηθῆ. Μέχρι τὴν τελευταία ἀναπνοή του συνεχῶς ἐπικοινωνοῦσε μὲ τὸν οὐράνιο Πατέρα του.

Τὸ παράδειγμα αὐτὸ τοῦ Κυρίου μιμήθηκαν καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ του. Στὶς κρίσιμες καὶ τρομερὲς περιστάσεις, μέσα στὶς ὁποῖες βρέθηκαν, οἱ ἅγιοι ἀπόστολοι δὲν λησμόνησαν τὴν προσευχή. **Ἄσπλοι αὐτοὶ κατὰ κόσμον, νίκησαν τὸν κόσμο μὲ τὴν προσευχή τους:** μὴ προσευχῆ ὄχι ὅπως οἱ δικές μας ἀδύναμες προσευχές, ἀλλὰ προσευχῆ γεμάτη πίστι, ἀγάπη καὶ ἐλπίδα στὸν Κύριο, προσευχῆ ποὺ κατέβαζε τὸν οὐρανὸ στὴ γῆ.

Καὶ ἀκριβῶς διότι οἱ ἅγιοι ἀπόστολοι γνώριζαν ἐξ ἰδίας πείρας τὴ δύναμι τῆς προσευχῆς, γι' αὐτὸ, ὅπως ὁ Διδάσκαλός τους, συνιστοῦν τώρα κι αὐτοὶ θερμὰ τὴν προσευχὴ στοὺς Χριστιανοὺς. Ὅποιος διαβάσει τὶς ἐπιστολὲς τους, ἰδίως τὶς ἐπιστολὲς τοῦ ἀποστόλου Παύλου, βλέπει ὅτι εἶνε γεμάτες ἀπὸ προσευχὲς καὶ προτροπὲς γιὰ προσευχή. Νὰ τὶς ἐπαναλάβουμε ἐδῶ; Εἶνε τόσο πολλές, ποὺ οὔτε ὁ χρόνος οὔτε ὁ χώρος ἐπαρκεῖ.

Μήπως καὶ τὸ σημερινὸ ἀποστολικὸ ἀνάγνωσμα, ἀπὸ τὶς Πράξεις τῶν ἀποστόλων, δὲν τελειώνει μὲ προσευχή; Ἄφηνε ἐκεῖ στὴ Μίλητο τῆς Μικρᾶς Ἀσίας καὶ ὁ ἀπόστολος Παῦλος, ὅπως ὁ Κύριός του, τὶς τελευταῖες του ὑποθήκες, τὴν διαθήκη του μποροῦμε νὰ ποῦμε, στοὺς κληρικούς τῆς Ἐφέσου, γιατί δὲν ἐπρόκειτο πιά νὰ τοὺς ξαναδῆ. Κι ἀφοῦ τελειώνει τὸ λόγο του, προσέξατε τί λέει τὸ ἱερὸ κείμενο, πῶς κλείνει σήμερα ὁ ἀπόστολος: **«Καὶ ταῦτα εἰπὼν, θείς τὰ γόνατα αὐτοῦ σὺν πᾶσιν αὐτοῖς προσήύξατο»** (Πράξ. 20,36). Νὰ πῶς οἱ ἀπόστολοι ἀκολούθησαν τὰ ἴχνη τοῦ Κυρίου.

Ἀπὸ ὅλες τώρα τὶς προτροπὲς τους στοὺς πιστοὺς γιὰ προσευχή, ἄς σημειώσουμε ἐδῶ **μία μόνο προτροπὴ** τοῦ ἀποστόλου Παύλου. Γράφοντας **στοὺς Χριστιανοὺς τῆς Ἐφέσου** τοὺς συνιστᾷ, νὰ ἐφοδιαστοῦν ἀπαρατήτως μὲ τὰ ὄπλα ἐκεῖνα, ποὺ θὰ τοὺς βοηθήσουν νὰ βγοῦν νικηταὶ ἀπὸ τοὺς πειρασμούς. Με-

ταξὺ τῶν ὄπλων αὐτῶν, ποὺ ἀπαρτίζουν τὴν πνευματικὴ πανοπλία κάθε πιστοῦ, ὁ θεοπνευστος ἀπόστολος συγκαταλέγει καὶ τὴν προσευχή. Ἀκούστε πῶς ἀκριβῶς τὸ λέει: **«Ἀναλάβετε τὴν πανοπλίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἵνα δυνηθῆτε ἀντιστῆναι ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ πονηρᾷ καὶ ἅπαντα κατεργασάμενοι στήναι... διὰ πάσης προσευχῆς καὶ δεήσεως, προσευχόμενοι ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ ἐν Πνεύματι, καὶ εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο ἀγρυπνοῦντες ἐν πάσῃ προσκαρτερήσει καὶ δεήσει περὶ πάντων τῶν ἁγίων, καὶ ὑπὲρ ἑμοῦ...»** (Ἐφ. 6,12-18). Ὁπλισθῆτε! φωνάζει ὁ Παῦλος. Ὁ ἐχθρὸς ἐτοιμάζεται νὰ σᾶς ἐπιτεθῆ. Ὁπλισθῆτε μὲ ὅλα τὰ ὄπλα τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ πρὸ παντὸς μὲ **τὴν προσευχή!** μὲ κάθε εἶδος προσευχῆς (δέησι, ἐξομολόγησι, εὐχαριστία, δοξολογία): προσευχῆ κάθε στιγμῆ, ἀδιάλειπτα, καρτερικά, μὲ χάρι ἁγίου Πνεύματος: προσευχῆ γιὰ ὅλους τοὺς πιστοὺς ἀδελφούς σας, προσευχῆ καὶ γιὰ μένα ποὺ ἔχω ἀνάγκη.

Ζοῦμε, ἀγαπητοί μου, σὲ ἡμέρες πονηρῆς. Ποιὸς δὲν τὸ βλέπει; Ὁ σατανᾶς, ἀφοῦ φόρτισε τὶς ψυχὲς τῶν ἀνθρώπων μὲ ἀγριο μίσος, ἐξοπλίζει ἤδη καὶ τὰ κράτη μὲ τρομεροὺς ἐξοπλισμούς. Ἀπέναντι σ' αὐτὴ τὴν ἐμπαθῆ μαγία οἱ Χριστιανοί, ὅπουδήποτε στὴ Γῆ κι ἂν βρισκώμαστε, ἄς ἀντιτάξουμε τὴν **πανοπλία τοῦ Θεοῦ**. Ἄς πάρουμε στὰ χέρια μας τὸ ὄπλο τῆς προσευχῆς κι ἄς πολεμήσουμε μ' αὐτὸ, ὅπως λέει ὁ ἀπόστολος Παῦλος, **«τὰς ἀρχάς, τὰς ἐξουσίας, τοὺς κοσμοκράτορας τοῦ σκότους τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου»** (Ἐφ. 6,12). Ἄς παρακαλοῦμε τὸν οὐράνιο Πατέρα, νὰ διαλύσῃ τὰ σύννεφα τοῦ μίσους καὶ νὰ χαρίσῃ στὴ Γῆ τὴν εἰρήνη, τὴν ἀγάπη, τὴν ἐνότητα ἐκεῖνῃ τῶν ψυχῶν, τὴν ὁποία μὲ τόση θερμότητα καὶ κατ' ἐπανάληψιν ζήτησε ὁ Κύριος ἀπὸ τὸν οὐράνιο Πατέρα του γιὰ τοὺς μαθητὰς του. Καὶ ὁ οὐράνιος Πατέρας θὰ μᾶς δώσῃ ὅ,τι τοῦ ζητοῦμε **«ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι»** τοῦ Χριστοῦ. Γιατί ὁ Κύριος τὴ νύχτα τοῦ Μυστικοῦ Δείπνου μᾶς βεβαίωσε: **«Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν (σᾶς βεβαιῶνω μὲ τὸν πιὸ ἐπίσημο τρόπο) ὅτι ὅσα ἂν αἰτήσητε τὸν πατέρα ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου, δώσει ὑμῖν. Ἔως ἄρτι οὐκ ἠτήσατε οὐδὲν ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου· αἰτεῖτε καὶ λήψετε, ἵνα ἡ χαρὰ ὑμῶν ᾖ πεπληρωμένη»** (Ἰω. 16,23-24).

Χριστιανέ, σὲ ἐρωτῶ καὶ πάλι: εἶσαι ὀπλισμένος μὲ τὸ ὄπλο τῆς προσευχῆς; Ἐὰν ὄχι, τότε πῶς θὰ ἀντιμετωπίσῃς τὶς θλίψεις καὶ τοὺς πειρασμούς τοῦ κόσμου τούτου; Ποῦ θὰ βρῆς ἀσφαλισμένο καταφύγιο;

(†) **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

Knowledge of the True God Nurtures Us to Eternal Life

Are we saying that knowledge is eternal life? Are we saying that to know the one true and living God will suffice to give us complete security for the future without need of anything else? Then how is "faith apart from works dead?" When we speak of faith, we mean the true knowledge of God and nothing else, since knowledge comes by faith. The prophet Isaiah tells us this: "If you do not believe, neither shall you understand." But he is not talking about a knowledge that consists in barren speculations, which is entirely worthless. For one of the holy disciples said, "You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe and shudder." What then shall we say to this? How is it that Christ speaks the truth when He says that eternal life is the knowledge of God the Father, the one true God, and with Him of the Son? I think, indeed, we must answer that the saying of the Savior is completely true. For this knowledge is life, laboring as it were in birth of the whole meaning of the mystery and

granting to us participation in the mystery of the Eucharist, whereby we are joined to the living and life-giving Word. And for this reason, I think, Paul says that the Gentiles are made fellow members of the body and fellow partakers of Christ, inasmuch as they partake in His Blessed Body and Blood. And our members may in this sense be conceived of as being members of Christ. This knowledge, then, which also brings to us the Eucharist by the Spirit, is life. For it dwells in our hearts, reshaping those who receive it into son-ship with Him and molding them into incorruption and piety toward God through life, according to the Gospel. Our Lord Jesus Christ, then, knowing that the knowledge of the one true God brings to us and promotes our union with the blessings of which we have spoken, says that it is eternal life. It is the mother and nurse of eternal life, being in its power and nature pregnant with those things that cause life and lead to life.
St. Cyril of Alexandria

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