



DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN
DISTRICT

THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN December 9th, 2018
V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

TENTH SUNDAY OF LUKE



Icon of Saint Ann and Mary — December 8-9

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Prokeimenon. Grave Mode.

Psalm 63.11,1

The righteous shall rejoice in the Lord.

Verse: Oh God, hear my cry.

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 4:22-27

Brethren, Abraham had two sons, one by a slave and one by a free woman. But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, the son of the free woman through promise. Now this is an allegory: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar. Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother. For it is written, "Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear; break forth and shout, you who are not in travail; for the children of the desolate one are many more than the children of her that is married."

Προκείμενον. Ήχος βαρύς.

ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 63.11,1

Εὐφρανθήσεται δίκαιος ἐν Κυρίῳ.

Στίχ. Εἰσάκουσον, ὁ Θεός, τῆς φωνῆς μου.

Πρὸς Γαλάτας 4:22-27 τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα

Ἀδελφοί, Ἀβραὰμ δύο υἱοὺς ἔσχεν· ἓνα ἐκ τῆς παιδίσκης, καὶ ἓνα ἐκ τῆς ἐλευθέρας. Ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν ἐκ τῆς παιδίσκης κατὰ σάρκα γεγέννηται, ὁ δὲ ἐκ τῆς ἐλευθέρας διὰ τῆς ἐπαγγελίας. Ἐτινά ἐστὶν ἀλληγορούμενα· αὗται γάρ εἰσιν δύο διαθήκαι· μία μὲν ἀπὸ ὄρους Σινᾶ, εἰς δουλείαν γεννώσα, ἣτις ἐστὶν Ἄγαρ. Τὸ γὰρ Ἄγαρ Σινᾶ ὄρος ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ Ἀραβίᾳ, συστοιχεῖ δὲ τῇ νῦν Ἱερουσαλήμ, δουλεῖ δὲ μετὰ τῶν τέκνων αὐτῆς. Ἡ δὲ ἄνω Ἱερουσαλήμ ἐλευθέρη ἐστίν, ἣτις ἐστὶν μήτηρ πάντων ἡμῶν· γέγραπται γάρ, Εὐφράνθητι, στεῖρα, ἢ οὐ τίκτους· ῥῆξον καὶ βόησον, ἢ οὐκ ὠδίνουσα· ὅτι πολλὰ τὰ τέκνα τῆς ἐρήμου μᾶλλον ἢ τῆς ἐχοῦσης τὸν ἄνδρα.

The Gospel According to Luke 13:10-17

At that time, Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. And there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity for eighteen years; she was bent over and could not fully straighten herself. And when Jesus saw her, he called her and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your infirmity." And he laid his hands upon her, and immediately she was made straight, and she praised God. But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the sabbath, said to the people, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be healed, and not on the sabbath day." Then the Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to water it? And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?" As he said this, all his adversaries were put to shame; and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him.

Ἐκ τοῦ Κατὰ Λουκᾶν 13:10-17 Εὐαγγελίου τὸ Ἀνάγνωσμα

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, Ἦν δὲ διδάσκων ἐν μιᾷ τῶν συναγωγῶν ἐν τοῖς σάββασι. καὶ ἰδοὺ γυνὴ ἣν πνεῦμα ἔχουσα ἀσθενείας ἔτη δέκα καὶ ὀκτώ, καὶ ἦν συγκύπτουσα καὶ μὴ δυναμένη ἀνακῦναι εἰς τὸ παντελές. ἰδὼν δὲ αὐτὴν ὁ Ἰησοῦς προσεφώνησε καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῇ· γύναι, ἀπολέλυσαι τῆς ἀσθενείας σου· καὶ ἐπέθηκεν αὐτῇ τὰς χεῖρας· καὶ παρακρῆμα ἀνωρθώθη καὶ ἐδόξαζε τὸν Θεόν. ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ ἀρχισυνάγωγος, ἀγανακτῶν ὅτι τῷ σαββάτῳ ἐθεράπευσεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς, ἔλεγε τῷ ὄχλῳ· ἔξ ἡμέραι εἰσὶν ἐν αἷς δεῖ ἐργάζεσθαι· ἐν ταύταις οὖν ἐρχόμενοι θεραπεύεσθε, καὶ μὴ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ σαββάτου. ἀπεκρίθη οὖν αὐτῷ ὁ Κύριος καὶ εἶπεν· ὑποκριτά, ἕκαστος ὑμῶν τῷ σαββάτῳ οὖν λύει τὸν βοῦν αὐτοῦ ἢ τὸν ὄνον ἀπὸ τῆς φάτνης καὶ ἀπαγαγὼν ποτίζει; ταύτην δέ, θυγατέρα Ἀβραὰμ οὖσαν, ἣν ἔδησεν ὁ σατανᾶς ἰδοὺ δέκα καὶ ὀκτώ ἔτη, οὐκ ἔδει λυθῆναι ἀπὸ τοῦ δεσμοῦ τούτου τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ σαββάτου; καὶ ταῦτα λέγοντος αὐτοῦ κατησχύνοντο πάντες οἱ ἀντικείμενοι αὐτῷ, καὶ πᾶς ὁ ὄχλος ἔχαιρεν ἐπὶ πᾶσι τοῖς ἐνδόξοις τοῖς γινομένοις ὑπ' αὐτοῦ.

DEVOTIONS THIS WEEK:

Wednesday:	December 12th, Veneration of the Icon of SAINT SPYRIDON	ALL DAY
Thursday:	December 13th, DIVINE LITURGY of SAINT EUGENE Coffee and sweets reception in the vestry for all	9:30 A.M.
Saturday:	December 15th, TRANSFER of SAINT ELEUTHERIOS feast observance to SUNDAY the 16th, (ARTOKLASIA)	
Sunday:	December 16th , Feast of Saint Eleutherios Artoklasia by Philoptochos President Eleutheria XENAKIS. Chronia Polla to all on their name-day.	9:30 A.M.

AGAPE COFFEE FELLOWSHIP: Is hosted today by Sophia R. Neaguin honor of St. Nicholas.

DECEMBER 16TH: Students from the Greek School will present their Annual Christmas Nativity Pageant in Church. A special visitor will grace the event as a treat to the students.

PHILOPTOCHOS CHRISTMAS PARTY: is being hosted on Monday evening December 10th, at 7:30 P.M. in WHITE-HALL. Open to all! Please join us with an escort or more, for fellowship.

SAINT BASIL ACADEMY, Garrison, New York will be the venue for the ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PAGEANT by the children housed at the Academy, on Saturday, December 15th, at 11:00 A.M. The event is open to the public FREE!

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS TOY DRIVE: COMMENCES with this announcement until December 23rd. The gifts submitted must NOT be wrapped, so that the distribution is made according to age, gender and ability. Your generosity over the past many years has been notable and most grateful. Gifts are being accepted from INFANCY to TWELVE YEARS OLD. Arts and Crafts, learning games and other such intellectually stimulating gifts are most needed. All gifts (ANONYMOUSLY) may be left for collection in front of the iconostases icon of the BLESSED MOTHER MARY. The collections are distributed to those children less fortunate outside the parish. IT'S FUN TO SHOP FOR CHILDREN DURING CHRISTMAS SEASON.

JOURNAL AD and CHRISTMAS CARD APPEAL flyers are included in the insert TODAY. Please find the opportunity to share in this 90th YEAR ANNIVERSARY HISTORIC JOURNAL of our parish church, (1929-2019). This book will represent the past, present and future memorable events of our people in this little corner of America. Commemorate your grandparents, parents, children, grandchildren with a notation and photo (Baptism, Wedding, Special Occasion). The JOURNAL becomes archival treasure for the community, the Archdiocese and world HELLENISM WE WERE HERE! WE ARE HERE! WE WILL CONTINUE TO BE HERE! Celebrate our determination and achievements over the past 5 generations....you are part of it.

Wine is needed for the high holy days. Christmas, New Year , Epiphany celebrations are upon us. To order some wine please see the clergy personally. Not all wine is appropriate. Commanderia and Mavro-Daphne is proper.

CHRISTMAS CARD APPEAL is in full swing. Please submit your \$20.00. contribution for the BYZANTINE TRIPTYCH ICON that will include your name as greeting to the thousands of eyes that will gaze upon the NATIVITY phenomenon. Don't let it go by! Register in the OFFICE today. Fill out the form after church and before the fellowship coffee.

PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY is collecting food for the CITY HARVEST to be distributed to needy families during the holiday season. Please bring NON-PERISHABLE items canned or boxed to the collection box outside the school office. Do not submit breakable 'glass' jars. Please see the included flyer for items most needed. Clean out YOUR pantry or visit the local grocers for-ample supply. THANK YOU!

RADIO MINISTRY: Each Saturday at 1:15PM Fr. Eugene hosts and produces the radio broadcast MATTERS OF CONSCIENCE NOW IN it's 20TH 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)

MEMORIAL TODAY: + TELEMACHOS & + DESPINA PAIZIS
MEMORIALS NEXT WEEK: + GEORGIANNA PANAYIOTA KATSONOPOULOS
+ JANICE KOORIE +GEORGE ANASTASIADES
+ CALLIOPE HOURMOUZIS + JOANNE & + THEODORE PAVLOUNIS.

Toys for Tots

Place your unwrapped toys
at the foot of the Virgin Mary Icon by the Altar
Bring A smile to a Child this Christmas





You're Invited !

86th

Three Hierarchs Ladies Philoptochos Annual Luncheon



*Admit 1 ~ Table 3
Your Invitation to a
spectacular event.
Music, raffles, prizes, laughter.
Take your seat and have the time
of your life.
Thank you for coming.*

V.I.P.



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ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



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

Ἐκδίδεται ἀπὸ τὴν Κοινοβιακὴ Γυνακκία Τερῶ Μονῆ Ἁγίου Αὐγουστίνου Φλωρίνης - 531 00 ΦΛΩΡΙΝΑ - τηλ. 23850-28610 - info@kyriaki.gr

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος ΛΕ'
Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 2140

Κυριακὴ Γ' Λουκᾶ (Λουκ. 13,10-17)
9 Δεκεμβρίου 2018

Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος
Αὐγουστίνος Ν. Καντιώτης

Μήπως εἶσαι αἰχμάλωτος;

«Καὶ ἰδοὺ γυνὴ ἦν πνεῦμα ἔχουσα ἀσθενείας ἔτη δέκα καὶ ὀκτώ, καὶ ἦν συγκύπτουσα καὶ μὴ δυναμένη ἀνακῦψαι εἰς τὸ παντελές» (Λουκ. 13,11)

Αἰχμάλωτος! Νά μία λέξις, ἀγαπητοί μου, τὴν ὁποία τὰ τελευταῖα χρόνια συχνὰ ἀκοῦμε στὰ δελτία εἰδήσεων ἢ βλέπουμε στὶς στήλες τῶν ἐφημερίδων, ἐξ αἰτίας τῶν διαφόρων ἐχθροπραξιῶν καὶ πολεμικῶν συγκρούσεων σὲ διάφορα σημεῖα τοῦ πλανήτου.

Ἡ φλόγα τοῦ **πολέμου**, σὰν νὰ ὑπάρχη κάποιος εἰδικὸς **θερμαστής** (ἔτσι λέγεται ὁ ἐργάτης ποὺ συντηρεῖ τὴ φωτιά στὴν ἐστία τοῦ λέβητος, εἴτε σὲ ἐργοστάσια εἴτε ὀπουδηποτε ἄλλοῦ), καίει διαρκῶς. Λὲς καὶ ὑπάρχει ἕνας ἐντεταλμένος ποὺ ἐπιμελῶς τροφοδοτεῖ τὴ φωτιά τῆς ἐνόπλου συρράξεως, κι αὐτὴ δυστυχῶς ἀναρριπίζεται κάθε τόσο, καὶ φουντώνει, καὶ δὲν παύει νὰ καίη ἐπὶ χρόνια τώρα. Φαίνεται ὅτι τὰ ἐργοστάσια ποὺ παράγουν πολεμικὸ ὕλικὸ βρῖσκουν ἔτσι ἐπικερδεῖς εὐκαιρίες καὶ νέους ἀγοραστὰς, ὥστε νὰ διοχευτεύουν τὴν παραγωγή τους καὶ ν' αὐξάνουν διαρκῶς τὶς πωλήσεις τους. Ἴδου λοιπὸν πῶς ἡ φωτιά τοῦ πολέμου διατηρεῖται ἀσβηστη καὶ γιατί. Ἐὰν συμβῆ κάποτε σὲ ἕνα μέτωπο νὰ σβῆσῃ, ἀνάβει ἀμέσως σὲ κάποιο ἄλλο. Εἶνε φρικτὸ κάποιοι, μὲ τὸν ἀποτρόπαιο θάνατο πλήθους ἄλλων, θυμάτων τῆς κερδοσκοπίας τους, αὐτοὶ νὰ πλουτίζουν! Ἄλλ' ἂς ἐπανέλθουμε στοὺς αἰχμαλώτους, διότι ἡ κατάσταση τους εἶνε διδακτικὴ.

Τὰ κατὰ καιροὺς ἀνακοινωθέντα τῶν στρατηγείων τῶν ἐκατέρωθεν διαμαχομένων προβάλλουν μὲ καύχησι τὶς ἐπιτυχίες τους· κ' ἐμεῖς ἀκοῦμε κάθε τόσο, ὅτι οἱ δυνάμεις τους συνέλαβαν τόσους ἢ τόσους αἰχμαλώτους ἀπὸ τὴν ἀντίθετη παράταξι. Οἱ ταλαίπωροι αὐτοὶ **αἰχμάλωτοι** κρατοῦνται σὲ ἰδιαίτερους χώρους συγκεντρώσεως καὶ φρουροῦνται αὐστηρὰ ἐκεῖ ἀφοπλίζονται, ἀπομονώνονται καὶ ζοῦν μιὰ ζωὴ στέρησεων, στενοχωρίας, θλίψεως, βασάνων, μαρτυρίου πολλὰς φορές.

Δὲν μποροῦν νὰ κινηθοῦν, νὰ ἐπικοινωνήσουν μὲ τὴν πατρίδα τους, μὲ τοὺς συγγενεῖς καὶ τοὺς φίλους τους.

Παλαιότερα, ὅταν τὸ ἄγριο αἶσθημα τῆς ἐκδικήσεως κόχλαζε στὰ στήθη τῶν διαμαχομένων, ἡ **ζωὴ** τῶν αἰχμαλώτων κρεμόταν ἀπὸ τὶς διαθέσεις τοῦ ὄχλου· ὅλο τὸ μῖσος, ποὺ οἱ ἐχθροὶ ἔτρεφαν ἐναντίον τοῦ ἀντιπάλου ἔθνους, ξεσποῦσε πάνω στοὺς δυστυχεῖς αἰχμαλώτους μὲ διάφορα μέτρα σκληρὰ, ἄγρια, ἀπάνθρωπα. Καὶ τόση ἦταν ἡ φρίκη ποὺ προξενοῦσε στὶς ψυχὰς τῶν μαχομένων στρατιωτῶν ἡ λέξις **αἰχμαλωσία**, ὥστε πολλοὶ μαχηταί, σκεπτόμενοι τὸ ἐνδεχόμενο νὰ συλληφθοῦν αἰχμάλωτοι, προτιμοῦσαν τὸν **ἐντιμὸ θάνατο** στὸ πεδίο τῆς μάχης παρὰ τὴν αἰχμαλωσία.

Ἄλλὰ γιατί σήμερα σὰς ὀμιλῶ γιὰ πολέμους καὶ αἰχμαλώτους; τί σχέσι ἔχουν αὐτὰ μὲ τὸ κήρυγμα τῆς Ἐκκλησίας; Αὐτὰ, ἀγαπητοί μου, εἶνε μιὰ βοηθητικὴ εἰκόνα. Ἀπὸ τὴν **εἰκόνα** λοιπὸν τοῦ αἰχμαλώτου καὶ τῆς αἰχμαλωσίας ἂς ἔλθουμε τώρα σὲ μιὰ **πραγματικότητα**, ἡ ὁποία δὲν εἶνε λιγώτερο ὀδυνηρὴ.

Δυστυχησμένοι οἱ αἰχμάλωτοι. Πιὸ δυστυχησμένοι ὅμως ἀπ' τοὺς αἰχμαλώτους αὐτοὺς τῶν πολέμων εἶνε οἱ **ἁμαρτωλοὶ**. Αὐτοὶ εἶνε οἱ πιὸ τραγικοὶ αἰχμάλωτοι, γιὰ τοὺς ὁποίους ἀξίζει καὶ πρέπει νὰ χύσῃ κανεὶς δάκρυα.

Αἰχμάλωτοι οἱ ἁμαρτωλοὶ. **Τίνος;** Τῶν **ἐλαττωμάτων**, τῶν **κακιῶν**, τῶν **παθῶν**, τοῦ **σατανᾶ**· γιὰ τὴν πίσω ἀπ' αὐτὰ κρύβεται ὁ σατανᾶς. Ναι, αὐτὸς διεξάγει πόλεμο ἐναντίον τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. Θέλει νὰ αἰχμαλωτίσῃ ὄχι ἀπλῶς τὸ σῶμα του, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν ψυχὴ του. Καὶ ἐδῶ εἶνε ὁ σοβαρώτερος κίνδυνος.

Ἡ πιὸ φοβερὴ ἀπ' ὅλες τὶς αἰχμαλωσίες εἶνε ἡ **αἰχμαλωσία τῆς ψυχῆς**, ἡ ὑποδούλωσις δηλαδὴ τοῦ πνεύματος στὶς κατώτερες ὀρ-

μές και επιθυμίες μας. Το σώμα μπορεί να συλληφθῆ, να δεθῆ, να περιορισθῆ, να ριχθῆ στη φυλακή· ἀλλ' ἐφ' ὅσον ἡ ψυχὴ δὲν ὑποτάσσεται στὴ βία τῆς ἁμαρτίας καὶ στὶς ἐπιταγὲς τῶν παθῶν, ὁ ἄνθρωπος στὴν πραγματικότητα ἐξακολουθεῖ νὰ εἶνε ἐλεύθερος. Τὰ κρατητήρια, τὰ κάγκελλα τῶν φυλακῶν καὶ οἱ χειροπέδες δεσμεύουν τὸ σῶμα, ἀλλὰ τὴν ψυχὴ τὴν ἀφήνουν ἄθικτη. Τίποτα δὲν μπορεί νὰ περιορίσῃ τὴ ζωὴ καὶ τὶς κινήσεις τοῦ ἐσωτερικοῦ πνευματικοῦ μας κόσμου.

Οἱ ἅγιοι μάρτυρες, ὅταν τοὺς ἔπιαναν καὶ τοὺς ἔρριχναν στὶς φυλακές, σωματικὰ ἦταν αἰχμάλωτοι τῶν τυράννων τους, ψυχικὰ ὅμως ἦταν ἐλεύθεροι· τὸ κελλὶ τῆς φυλακῆς τους μεταβαλλόταν σὲ ναό, ὅπου ὁ Χριστὸς λατρευόταν πιὸ θερμὰ καὶ πιὸ φλογερὰ ἀπ' ὅ,τι στοὺς σημερινοὺς μεγαλοπρεπεῖς ναοὺς τῶν χριστιανῶν. Ὅπως ἐξιστορεῖ ὁ εὐαγγελιστὴς Λουκᾶς στὶς Πράξεις τῶν ἀποστόλων, οἱ ἀπόστολοι Παῦλος καὶ Σίλας δὲν σταμάτησαν καὶ ἐγκλειστοὶ στὴ φυλακὴ τῶν Φιλίππων καὶ αὐστηρὰ φρουρούμενοι νὰ λατρεύουν τὸν Κύριο, νὰ ἀντηχῆ τὴ νύχτα ἡ φυλακὴ ἀπὸ τοὺς ὕμνους καὶ ν' ἀκοῦνε οἱ ἄλλοι κρατούμενοι: «*κατὰ δὲ τὸ μεσονύκτιον Παῦλος καὶ Σίλας προσευχόμενοι ὕμνον τὸν Θεόν· ἐπηκροῶντο δὲ αὐτῶν οἱ δέσμοι*» [Ἠρ. 16,25].

Ὅσο λοιπὸν ἡ ψυχὴ παραμένει ἀδέσμευτη καὶ ἀδούλωτη, ὁ ἄνθρωπος εἶνε ἐλεύθερος, κάτω ἀπὸ ὅποιεσδήποτε ἐξωτερικὲς συνθήκες καὶ ἂν βρίσκεται. Ἄλλ' ἐὰν ἡ ψυχὴ –πὺ αὐτὴ εἶνε ὁ κυρίως ἄνθρωπος– ἀρχίσῃ νὰ ὑποχωρῆ στὶς κακίες καὶ νὰ δεσμεύεται ἀπὸ τὰ πάθη, τότε ἀρχίζει ἡ ὑποδούλωσις, ἡ πραγματικὴ αἰχμαλωσία. **Ὁ δούλος τῶν παθῶν** δὲν εἶνε ἐλεύθερος ἄνθρωπος, εἶνε ἓνας αἰχμάλωτος. Σὰν σκυλάκι σέρνεται καὶ ὀδηγεῖται δεμένος μὲ τὴν ἀλυσίδα τοῦ φοβεροῦ τυράννου, τοῦ πάθους του. Μέσα στὴν ψυχὴ του στρογγυλοκάθεται καὶ θρονιάζεται ὁ σατανᾶς· αὐτὸς κρατᾶει πλέον τὰ γκέμια τῆς ψυχῆς του· ὅ,τι κάνει, ὅλα γίνονται κατὰ τὴ δικὴ του διαταγὴ. Ὁ ἄνθρωπος αὐτός, ὡς **αἰχμάλωτος τοῦ σατανᾶ**, ἐργάζεται σὰν σκλάβος στὰ καταναγκαστικὰ ἔργα τῆς κακίας. Εἶνε ὁ πιὸ ἀξιολύπητος ἀπ' ὅλους τοὺς αἰχμαλώτους.

Τὸ σημερινὸ εὐαγγέλιο, πὺ εἶνε μία περικοπὴ ἀπὸ τὸ 13ο κεφάλαιο τοῦ κατὰ Λουκᾶν Εὐαγγελίου, μιλάει γιὰ μία γυναῖκα πὺ ὁ σατανᾶς τὴν εἶχε δέσει, ὡστε νὰ εἶνε 18 χρόνια διαρκῶς σκυμμένη στὴ γῆ καὶ νὰ μὴ μπορῆ καθόλου νὰ ἀνορθωθῆ· «*ἦν συγκύπτουσα καὶ μὴ δυναμένη ἀνακύβαι εἰς τὸ παντελές*» [Ἠκ. 13,11].

Ἀλλὰ ἓνας δούλος τῶν παθῶν καὶ αἰχμάλωτος τοῦ σατανᾶ βρίσκεται **σὲ ἀκόμη πιὸ δεινὴ θέσι καὶ ἀπὸ τὴ γυναῖκα αὐτὴ**· διότι αὐτὴ διατηροῦσε τὴν ἐλευθερίαν της, ἐνῶ αὐτὸς ὄχι.

Νὰ φοβηθοῦμε, ἀγαπητοὶ μου, τὴν αἰχμαλωσία αὐτὴν, πὺ δημιουργεῖ ἡ ἁμαρτία. Πλασθήκαμε ἐλεύθεροι, ἡ ἁμαρτία ὅμως δεσμεύει τὴν θεόδοτη ἐλευθερίαν μας καὶ μᾶς σκλαβώνει. Καὶ ἐνῶ θὰ ἔπρεπε νὰ πετᾶμε σὰν ἀετοὶ στὰ ὕψη τῆς ἀρετῆς, ἐμεῖς τώρα εἴμαστε κλεισμένοι μέσα στὰ κλουβιά τῆς κακίας.

Ἡ ψυχὴ αἰχμάλωτη! Δὲν ὑπάρχει ἐλευσινότερο θέαμα. Τί τὸ ὄφελος νὰ ἔνε τὸ σῶμα ἐλεύθερο, νὰ κινῆται ὅπου θέλει, νὰ κἀνη ταξίδια, ν' ἀνεβαῖν στὰ ὕψη τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, νὰ ζῆ μὲ ἀνέσεις σὲ ἀνάκτορα, τὴ στιγμή πὺ ἡ ψυχὴ ἀναστενάζει κάτω ἀπὸ δεσμὰ τῆς ἁμαρτίας, ὑπόδουλη στὸ σατανᾶ;

Θυμηθῆτε τὴν σύζυγο τοῦ Πετεφρῆ στὴν Αἴγυπτο [βλ. Γέν. κβ. 30], τὴν αἰσχρὴ ἐκείνη γυναῖκα, πὺ ζητοῦσε νὰ παρασύρῃ στὴν ἁμαρτία τὸν Ἰωσήφ, «*τὸν δουλωθέντα μὲν τῷ σώματι, τὴν ψυχὴν δὲ ἀδούλωτον συντηροῦντα*» [βλ. Μ. Δοκ.]. **Ὁ Ἰωσήφ**, μολονότι δούλος, αἰχμάλωτος καὶ φυλακισμένος κατὰ τὸ σῶμα, εἶχε διατηρήσει τὴν ψυχὴ του ἀδούλωτη· ἦταν ὁ ἀληθινὰ ἐλεύθερος, γιὰτὶ δὲν ἄφησε τὴν ἁμαρτία νὰ τὸν αἰχμαλωτίσῃ. Ἐνῶ ἡ **γυναῖκα τοῦ Πετεφρῆ**, μολονότι ἀφέντρα στὰ ἀνάκτορα, ἦταν ἐν τούτοις δούλη καὶ αἰχμάλωτη, γιὰτὶ τὸ αἰσχρὸ πάθος τὴν εἶχε ὑποδουλώσει μέχρι τέτοιου σημείου, ὡστε νὰ γίνῃ δούλη τοῦ δούλου της; Ὁ Ἰωσήφ ἐλεύθερος μὲς' στὶς φυλακές, αὐτὴ αἰχμάλωτη μὲς' στὰ ἀνάκτορα· ὁ δούλος κύριος καὶ αὐτοκράτωρ, κυρίαρχος ἐπὶ τοῦ ἑαυτοῦ του, ἡ κυρία δούλη τοῦ πάθους της.

Ἀγαπητὲ ἀδελφέ! **Ἐξέτασε** καλὰ τὸν ἑαυτὸ σου, μήπως εἶσαι αἰχμάλωτος σὲ κάποιο ἐλάττωμα μικρὸ ἢ μεγάλο. Καὶ ἐὰν εἶσαι, μὴν ἀφήσῃς νὰ περνᾶ ὁ καιρὸς καὶ νὰ πληθύνωνται οἱ ἡμέρες τῆς αἰχμαλωσίας σου. Ζήλωσον «*τὴν ἐλευθερίαν τῆς δόξης τῶν τέκνων τοῦ Θεοῦ*» [Ρωμ. 8,21], **ζήλεψε** τὴν ἐνδοξὴ ἐλευθερίαν πὺ χαρίζει ὁ Θεὸς στὰ παιδιά του. **Τρέξε** στὸ Χριστό. Καὶ Ἐκεῖνος, πὺ ἐλευθέρωσε σήμερα τὴν συγκύπτουσα ἀπὸ αἰχμαλωσία 18 ἐτῶν, εἶνε ὁ μόνος πὺ **μπορεῖ νὰ ἐλευθερώσῃ κ' ἐσένα**, ὅσα χρόνια κι ἂν διετελέσῃς ὑπὸ τὴν ἐξουσία τῆς ἁμαρτίας. Καὶ τότε θὰ εἶσαι πραγματικὰ ἐλεύθερος. Γιὰτὶ ὅπως εἶπε ὁ ἴδιος ὁ Ἰησοῦς, «*ἐὰν ὁ υἱὸς ὑμᾶς ἐλευθερώσῃ, ὄντως ἐλεύθεροι ἔσεσθε*» [Ἠ. 8,36].

(†) **ἐπίσκοπος Αὔγουστινός**

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

If Moses did not Take off his Shoes

Moses was prevented from approaching the burning bush until he had taken off his shoes. You are aspiring to stand in the presence of the One who is greater than every thought and every passion. How then can you refuse to strip yourself of every passionate thought?

Praying means rejecting pleasures and banishing anger.

Do not open your heart to fleshly longings. They stir up emotions that trouble the eye of the mind and therefore destroy prayer.

Your prayer ought to be steadfast and fervent. So dispel all distractions and wandering thoughts the moment they present themselves. They disturb you and worry you so that your fervor is weakened.

During your prayer, try to keep your mind deaf and dumb. Only so will you be able to pray.

Do not be content with external attitudes of prayer. Turn your mind to the prayer of the spirit, with awe and fearfulness.

St. Evagrius of Pontus

WEB-SITE: information is **ALWAYS ON LINE** ready to see and read. If you submit **YOUR E-MAIL** address we can forward Bulletin Information to you personally. See :Website: www.threehierarchsbrooklynny.org