



THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN November 29th, 2020
V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY OF LUKE



Icon of the Rich Young Ruler and Christ (Luke 18:18-27)

Prokeimenon. Mode Plagal 4.

Psalm 75.11,1

**Make your vows to the Lord our God and perform them.
Verse: God is known in Judah; his name is great in Israel.**

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 4:1-7

Brethren, I, a prisoner for the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, forbearing one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift

Προκείμενον. Ἦχος πλ. δ'.

ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 75.11,1

**Εὔξασθε καὶ ἀπόδοτε Κυρίῳ τῷ Θεῷ ἡμῶν.
Στίχ. Γνωστὸς ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ ὁ Θεός, ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ μέγα τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ.**

Πρὸς Ἐφεσίους 4:1-7 τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα

Ἀδελφοί, παρακαλῶ οὖν ὑμᾶς ἐγώ, ὁ δέσμιος ἐν κυρίῳ, ἀξίως περιπατῆσαι τῆς κλήσεως ἧς ἐκλήθητε, μετὰ πάσης ταπεινοφροσύνης καὶ πραότητος, μετὰ μακροθυμίας, ἀνεχόμενοι ἀλλήλων ἐν ἀγάπῃ, σπουδάζοντες τηρεῖν τὴν ἐνότητα τοῦ πνεύματος ἐν τῷ συνδέσμῳ τῆς εἰρήνης. Ἐν σῶμα καὶ ἐν πνεῦμα, καθὼς καὶ ἐκλήθητε ἐν μιᾷ ἐλπίδι τῆς κλήσεως ὑμῶν· εἰς κύριος, μία πίστις, ἐν βάπτισμα, εἰς θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ πάντων, ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων, καὶ διὰ πάντων, καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν ἡμῖν. Ἐνὶ δὲ ἐκάστῳ ἡμῶν ἐδόθη ἡ χάρις κατὰ τὸ μέτρον τῆς δωρεᾶς τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

The Gospel According to Luke 18:18-27

At that time, a ruler came to Jesus and asked him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.' " And he said, "All these I have observed from my youth." And when Jesus heard it, he said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." But when he heard this he became sad, for he was very rich. Jesus looking at him said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." Those who heard it said, "Then who can be saved?" But he said, "What is impossible with men is possible with God."

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, ἄρχων λέγων· διδάσκαλε ἀγαθέ, τί ποιήσας ζωὴν αἰώνιον κληρονομήσω; εἶπε δὲ αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· τί με λέγεις ἀγαθόν; οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἰ μὴ εἰς ὁ Θεός. τὰς ἐντολάς οἶδας· μὴ μοιχεύσης, μὴ φονεύσης, μὴ κλέψης, μὴ ψευδομαρτυρήσης, τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα σου. ὁ δὲ εἶπε· ταῦτα πάντα ἐφυλαξάμην ἐκ νεότητός μου. ἀκούσας δὲ ταῦτα ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ἔτι ἐν σοὶ λείπει· πάντα ὅσα ἔχεις πώλησον καὶ διάδος πτωχοῖς, καὶ ἔξεις θησαυρὸν ἐν οὐρανῷ, καὶ δεῦρο ἀκολούθει μοι. ὁ δὲ ἀκούσας ταῦτα περίλυπος ἐγένετο· ἦν γὰρ πλούσιος σφόδρα. ἰδὼν δὲ αὐτὸν ὁ Ἰησοῦς περίλυπον γενόμενον εἶπε· πῶς δυσκόλως οἱ τὰ χρήματα ἔχοντες εἰσελεύσονται εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ! εὐκοπώτερον γὰρ ἐστὶ κάμηλον διὰ τρυμαλιᾶς ραφίδος εἰσελθεῖν ἢ πλούσιον εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ εἰσελθεῖν. εἶπον δὲ οἱ ἀκούσαντες· καὶ τίς δύναται σωθῆναι; ὁ δὲ εἶπε· τὰ ἀδύνατα παρὰ ἀνθρώποις δυνατὰ παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ ἐστίν.

TODAY SUNDAY LIGHTING: is still a service rendered by the Parish Council for those who are unable to attend church services personally. Please visit the church WEB SITE at www.threehierarchsbrooklynny.org There you will find all proper direction to have your candles lighted for that LITURGY! Make yourself spiritually present through the light of faith ---your candle!

CONGRATULATIONS: to our Russian Orthodox Priest here at Three Hierarchs FR. MYSTISLAV who had his first grandson 'LUCA VINCENT ' baptized yesterday by Fr. Eugene. Congratulations to the parents and grandparents. NA SAS ZESE!

SAINT ANDREW'S FEAST DAY: is marked on the calendar as November 30th. In light of the continued restrictions by civic authorities we will be observing the important occasion with a PRE-FEAST Divine Liturgy, Sunday on Sunday November 29th. We welcome any artoklasies of thanksgiving for the Patron Saint's Name-day for all called ANDREW, ANDREA, ANDRIANNA.

FINAL AGIASMOS for 2020! On Tuesday December 01st, we will offer the final monthly blessing of Holy Water this year! It has been a year, as Queen Elizabeth of England nicknamed 'ANNUS HORRIBULUS' ! Come to the service and receive Holy Water (AGIASMOS) with which to bless your doorways and windows, beds, automobiles, and family gathering areas against all adverse elements. The service commences at 11:00 A.M. and concludes at 11:30 A.M. It is truly a source of GRACE and comfort. This agiasmos may be sprinkled or consumed.

EUCCHARISTO! GRACIAS! MERCI! SPASIBA! THANK YOU! ARIGATO! GRAZIE! is extended to Miss Evangelina BAUSO daughter of Gregory and Demetra Bauso, who was inspired at the age of 17 as a senior student at BAY RIDGE PREP, to do an outreach program to the 'seniors' at Three Hierarchs Church. Evangelina has prepared gift bags as a TAKE-CARE KIT of facial masks, hand sanitizers, sanitized wipes etc. as preventative action for our most vulnerable congregants. Everyone admitting 60 years of age and older will be offered the gift kit. We are requesting only ONE TO A CUSTOMER! Let's protect first those who came to church and weathered the storm of the pandemic. Please be kind and oblige. Evangelina is preparing to go to the University next year and pursue a career in the medical arts and sciences. We are so proud of our young people who responded with compassion.

His Grace BISHOP DEMETRIOS of Mokissos, as Hierarchal Proistamenos of the Saint Photios National Shrine in Saint Augustine, Florida invites us all to participate in the annual CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE to be observed Sunday afternoon, December 06th, at 4:00 P.M. Please refer to the centerfold for all the particulars. Visit the Shrine and be impressed!

A series of popular Saint Feast Days are upon us. As we begin the month of December we observe the veneration of Saint Barbara, Saint Nicholas, Saint Spyridon and Saint Eleutherios. This is an opportunity to honor your patron namesake and give thanksgiving to the Lord for our life, health, restoration, joy and familial peace. Rejoice and be glad in it! CHRONIA POLLA..... ARE YOU CONSIDERING AN 'ARTOLASIA' for the occasion? Please call the Office for details.

ANNUAL TOY DRIVE COMMENCES: the day after Thanksgiving we will be pleased to receive UNWRAPPED, NEW TOYS, ARTS and CRAFTS for boys and girls less fortunate.

THE GIFTS are for children between the ages of 1 year through 12 years of age. Anonymously, your offering may be placed at the feet of the ICON of the VIRGIN MARY and CHILD on the Iconostasion. We request DO NOT WRAP the gift in order to facilitate distribution by gender and age. Do it all anonymously and receive reward from the Lord.

CHRISTMAS CARD APPEAL: Have you registered your name in the triptych Iconographed Christmas card that will be posted to 1,000 eyes for the Nativity Feast? For a donation of only \$20.00 (twenty-dollars) your greeting and name will be printed for all to see and enjoy. Don't miss the opportunity. SEND your check today: 1724 Avenue 'P' Brooklyn, New York 11229. Wishing you all a most holy and healthful holiday season.

RED ZONE LOCKDOWN; Please come back to church. We long to see you again. Simply call us and inform us how many will be with you for seating.

MEMORIALS TODAY: + WILLIAM VAFAKOS + ELENI PAPADATOS + OLGA TUNKEVICH



St. Photios Greek Orthodox
National Shrine



Cordially Invites you to The 2nd Annual Christmas Open House

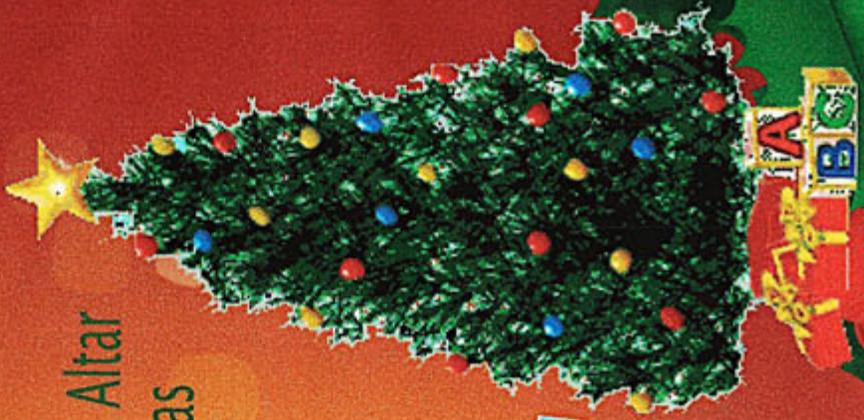
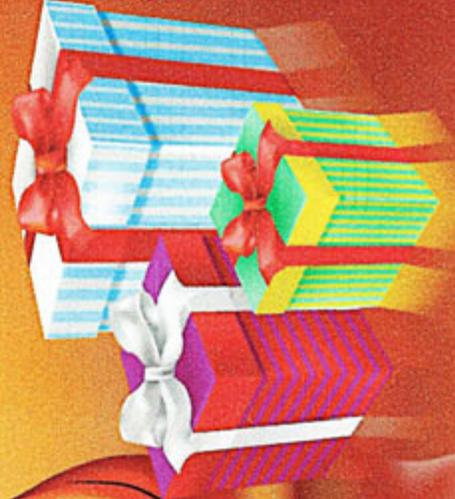
Sunday, December 6, 2020
4pm -7pm

Please join us for
a celebration of
faith, culture, and
hors d'oeuvres.

Saint Photios
Greek Orthodox National Shrine
41 St George Street
St. Augustine, FL 32085
(904) 829-8205 - www.StPhotios.com

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





ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



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

Ἐκδίδεται ἀπὸ τὴν Κοινοβιακὴ Γραμματεία τῆρὰ Μονὴ Ἁγίου Αὐγουστίνου Φλωρίνης - 531 03 ΦΛΩΡΙΝΑ - τηλ. 23850-23810 - imaaflo@yahoo.gr

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος ΙΗ'
Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 804'

Κυριακὴ ΙΓ' Λουκᾶ (Λουκ. 18,18-27)
29 Νοεμβρίου 2020 (2001)

Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος
Αὐγουστίνος Ν. Καντιώτης

Περὶ αἰωνίου ζωῆς

«*Τί ποιήσας ζωὴν αἰώνιον κληρονομήσω;*» (Λουκ. 18,18)

Όταν, ἀγαπητοί μου, ὅταν ὁ Χριστὸς ἦταν ἐδῶ στὸν κόσμο, πολλοὶ τὸν πλησίαζαν. Ποιοὶ ἦταν αὐτοὶ ποὺ ἔρχονταν κοντὰ στὸ Χριστό; Ἦταν οἱ ἄρρωστοι· οἱ τυφλοὶ, οἱ παράλυτοι, οἱ λεπροί... **Τοὺς ἔφερνε ἡ ἀνάγκη.** Ἄν δὲν ἦταν ἀσθενεῖς, ἀμφιβάλλω ἂν θὰ πλησίαζαν τὸ Χριστό.

Αὐτὸ ἐξακολουθεῖ νὰ γίνεται καὶ σήμερα. Ἐκεῖνο ποὺ κάνει συχνὰ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους νὰ πλησιάζουν τῇ θρησκείᾳ εἶνε ἡ ἀνάγκη. Ὅταν εἶνε καλά, ὅταν βρίσκονται στὰ ἀξιώματα, δὲν θυμοῦνται τὸ Χριστό. Ὅταν ἀντίθετα γεγονότα σαρώσουν τῇ ζωῇ μας, τότε θυμούμεθα τὸ Χριστό. Στὰ νοσοκομεῖα λ.χ. ὄλοι παρακαλοῦν τὴν Παναγία καὶ τοὺς ἁγίους. Ἡ ὕλική - σωματικὴ ἀνάγκη εἶνε ἐκείνη ποὺ σπρώχνει τοὺς ἀνθρώπους πρὸς τὸ Θεό. Καὶ στὸ Εὐαγγέλιο διαβάζουμε ὅτι, ὅταν ὁ Χριστὸς χόρτασε τοὺς χιλιάδες ἀνθρώπους, τὴν ἄλλη μέρα ἤρθαν κοντὰ του διπλάσιοι. Εἶσατε, τοὺς εἶπε, διπλάσιοι ὄχι γιατί θέλατε νὰ ἀκούσετε τὸ λόγο τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἀλλὰ γιατί **φάγατε τὰ ψωμιά καὶ χορτάσατε** (βλ. Ἰωάν. 6,25).

Στὶς ψυχὰς τῶν ἀνθρώπων δυστυχῶς **κυριαρχοῦν οἰκονομικοὶ παράγοντες.** Συνήθως λίγοι ἔρχονται στὴν ἐκκλησία. Ἄν ὅμως ἀκουστῇ, ὅτι ὁ παπᾶς αὔριο θὰ λειτουργήσῃ καὶ στὸ τέλος θὰ μοιράσῃ ἀπὸ μιὰ λίρα, τότε ὄχι μόνο ὁ ναὸς θὰ εἶνε γεμάτος ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ προαύλια καὶ τὰ νεκροταφεῖα ἀκόμα. Τὰ πνευματικὰ δὲν τὰ ἐκτιμοῦμε...

Μέσα ὅμως στὸ πλῆθος ὑπάρχουν καὶ **εὐγενικὲς ψυχές,** ποὺ θέτουν πάνω ἀπὸ τὰ ὕλικά πράγματα τὰ πνευματικὰ. Μία τέτοια ὑπαρξὴ ἦταν ὁ ἄνθρωπος τοῦ σημερινοῦ εὐαγγελίου.

Ἦταν πολὺ πλούσιος, ὑγιής, νέος, ἔνδο-

ξος. Εἶχε ὅμως καὶ μιὰ ἀνάγκη πνευματικὴ, ποὺ τὴν αἰσθανόταν βαθύτατα. Τί νὰ τὰ κάνῃ ὄλα τὰ ἄλλα; Δὲν εἶνε μόνο στομάχι καὶ κόκαλα **ὁ ἄνθρωπος· ἔχει καὶ πνεῦμα, ἔχει καὶ ψυχὴ.** Ὅπως πεινᾷ τὸ σῶμα, πεινᾷ καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ· καὶ ὅπως τὸ σῶμα ἔχει ἀνάγκη ἰατρῶν καὶ φαρμάκων, ἔτσι καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ.

Ἔρχεται, λοιπόν, μπροστὰ στὸ Χριστό, γονατίζει στὰ πόδια του καὶ τὸν παρακαλεῖ. **Ζητεῖ τὴν «αἰώνιον ζωὴν»** (βλ. Ἰωάν. 18,18).

Τί εἶνε αὐτὴ ἡ αἰώνιος ζωὴ;

Ὅσα καὶ ἂν σᾶς πῶ, Χρυσόστομος καὶ Βασίλειος νὰ γίνω, δὲν θὰ σᾶς πείσω· διότι ὁ ὕλισμός ἔχει κυριαρχήσει. Ἐνδύεται ὄλα τὰ προσωπεῖα· ὕλισμός κόκκινος, ὕλισμός μαῦρος, ὕλισμός κίτρινος. Παρακαλῶ τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιο, νὰ σᾶς φωτίσῃ νὰ καταλάβετε, ὅτι ἐκτός τῶν ὕλικῶν ἀναγκῶν **ὑπάρχουν καὶ ἄλλες ἀνάγκες, πνευματικές.** Καὶ ἀλλοίμονο ἐὰν δὲν τὶς αἰσθάνεσθε.

Ἡ αἰώνιος ζωὴ **εἶνε ἀτελεύτητη.** Ἡ ἐπίγειος ζωὴ πόσο διαρκεῖ; Πενήντα, ἐξήντα, ἑβδομήντα, ὀγδόντα χρόνια; ἔστω νὰ φτάσῃ καὶ στὰ ἑκατὸ, ὅπως ὑπόσχονται οἱ γιατροὶ ὅτι θὰ παρατείνουν τὸ ὄριο ἡλικίας. Ἀξία δὲν ἔχουν τὰ χρόνια, ἀξία ἔχει τὸ περιεχόμενο τῆς ζωῆς. Ὑπάρχει ἓνα πουλί, ὁ κόρακας, ποὺ ζῆ διακόσα χρόνια· γι' αὐτὸ ὅταν θέλουν νὰ εὐχηθοῦν σὲ κάποιον νὰ ζῆσῃ πολλὰ χρόνια, τοῦ λένε «**κορακοζώητος**». Τί νὰ τὸν κάνῃς ὅμως τὸν κόρακα ποὺ ζῆ διακόσα χρόνια μὲ τὴν πτωμαίνῃ; Προτιμότερο ἓνα ἀηδονάκι, ποὺ ζῆ δυὸ - τρία χρόνια καὶ κελαηδαίει μέσα στὸ δάσος, παρὰ διακόσα χρόνια ἀχρηστὰ κ' ἔλεεινά.

«**Καλύτερα μιᾶς ὥρας ἐλεύθερη ζωὴ,**

παρὰ σαράντα χρόνια σκλαβιά καὶ φυλακῆ.»

Οἱ κράχτες τῆς ἀπιστίας σφύριζαν στὰ αὐτιά τοῦ εὐγενικοῦ μας λαοῦ, ὅτι ὁ **τάφος εἶνε**

τὸ **τέρμα**. **Ὅχι!** Δὲν εἶνε τὸ **τέρμα** ὁ **τάφος**· εἶνε ἡ ἀρχὴ μιᾶς νέας ἀπέραντης ζωῆς, τῆς ζωῆς ποὺ ποθοῦσε καὶ ὁ νέος τοῦ σημερινοῦ εὐαγγελίου.

—**Ἄ, ἐγὼ θέλω ντοκουμέντα!** θὰ πῆς.

Θέλεις λοιπὸν ἀποδείξεις ὅτι **ὑπάρχει ψυχή**; Πολλές ἀποδείξεις θὰ μπορούσαμε ν' ἀναφέρουμε, ἀλλὰ ἡ μεγαλύτερη εἶνε μία.

Σὰς ἐρωτῶ **Τί ἰδέα ἔχετε γιὰ τὸ Χριστό;** Εἶνε ἀπλῶς ἓνας φιλόσοφος; ἓνας κοινωνιολόγος; ἓνας ποιητής; ἓνας δημιουργὸς μεγάλων ἔργων; Ἀπαντήστε. Ὁ Χριστὸς δὲν εἶνε ἀπλῶς ἄνθρωπος· εἶνε **Θεάνθρωπος**, τέλειος ἄνθρωπος καὶ τέλειος Θεός. Συνεπῶς, ὅ,τι εἶπε εἶνε ἀληθινό. Οἱ ἄλλοι ψεύδονται. Ὅλοι οἱ ἄνθρωποι ψεύδονται· *«Πᾶς ἄνθρωπος ψεύστης»* (Ματ. 15,2). Αἰῶνες πέρασαν καὶ αἰῶνες θὰ κυλήσουν, ὁ κόσμος θ' ἀλλάξῃ, ἀλλὰ οἱ λόγοι του *«οὐ μὴ παρέλθωσι»* (Ματ. 24,35).

Τί εἶπε λοιπὸν ὁ Χριστός; Δὲν μ' ἐνδιαφέρει τί εἶπε ὁ Σωκράτης καὶ ὁ Πλάτων, μ' ἐνδιαφέρει **τί εἶπε ὁ Χριστός**· διότι ὅ,τι εἶπε ἐκεῖνος εἶνε ἀληθινό. Ὁ Χριστὸς **βεβαίωσε**, ὅτι ἀπελεύσονται *«οἱ τὰ ἀγαθὰ ποιήσαντες»* εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον *«οἱ δὲ τὰ φαῦλα πράξαντες»* εἰς κόλασιν αἰώνιον (Ματ. 5,29).

Εἶπε ὁ Χριστὸς μιὰ ἀλήθεια, **ἓνα διαμάντι**. Τὸ διαμάντι αὐτό, ὅσο καὶ νὰ ψάξῃς σ' ὅλα τὰ βιβλία τῶν ἀρχαίων καὶ νεωτέρων φιλοσόφων, δὲν θὰ τὸ βρῆς. Ποιὸ εἶνε τὸ διαμάντι· *«Τί ὠφελήσει ἄνθρωπον ἐὰν κερδίῃ τὸν κόσμον ὅλον, καὶ ζημιωθῇ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ;»* (Ματ. 13,36). Ἴδου λοιπὸν· ὁ Χριστὸς κηρύττει τὴν **ἀθανασία τῆς ψυχῆς**. Κηρύττει, ὅτι **ὑπάρχει** πέραν τοῦ τάφου ἀπέραντη καὶ αἰώνια ζωὴ, πέλαγος ἀτελείωτο.

Τὴ Μεγάλῃ Παρασκευῇ, ὅταν ἦταν πάνω στὸ σταυρὸ καὶ δίπλα του ὁ σκληρὸς ληστής, τότε ἀνοιξαν τὰ μάτια τοῦ ληστοῦ, εἶδε ὅτι δὲν ὑπάρχει μόνο ἡ γῆ αὐτὴ ἀλλὰ πέραν τῆς γῆς ὑπάρχει ἄλλος κόσμος, καὶ εἶπε· *«Μνήσθητί μου, Κύριε, ὅταν ἔλθῃς ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου»*. Ὅχι τῆ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ κόσμου, ὄχι τῆ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ καίσαρος, ὄχι τῆ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ Πιλάτου, ὄχι τῆ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ πλοῦτου, ὄχι τῆ βασιλείᾳ τῶν ἡδονῶν. Τὴ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ Κυρίου ζήτησε ὁ ληστής. Καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς **τί ἀπάντησε**· *«Ἀμὴν λέγω σοι, σήμερον μετ' ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ»* (Ματ. 24,43). Αὐτὸς εἶνε λόγος φοβερός. Ἐβεβαίωσε ὁ Χριστὸς, ὅτι θὰ ξεψυχήσῃ ἐπάνω στὸ σταυρὸ ὁ ληστής, κοράκια θὰ φᾶνε τὶς σάρκες του, ἀλλὰ ἡ ψυχὴ του **θὰ φτερουγίσῃ** στὸν οὐράνιο κόσμον.

Πουλήστε τὸ ποικάμισό σας καὶ πάρτε τὴν Ἀποκάλυψιν τοῦ Ἰωάννου. Διαβάστε αὐτὰ ποὺ εἶνε στὴν Ἀποκάλυψιν· ἔχουν κῦρος αἰώνιο. Τὰ δύο τελευταῖα κεφάλαια (Κατ. 21-22) περιγράφουν τὴν αἰώνιο ζωὴν μὲ χρώματα ζωηρότατα, ἀθάνατα. Εἰς πείσμα τῶν δαιμόνων καὶ τῶν ἀθέων **ὑπάρχει αἰώνιος ζωὴ**. Αὐτὸ εἶνε τὸ δόγμα, ἐπὶ τοῦ ὁποίου στηρίζεται ὁ χριστιανισμός.

Εἶνε γεγονός, ὅτι **σπανίως σκεπτόμαστε** τὴν αἰώνιο ζωὴν.

Ἄχ, πατρίδα εὐλογημένη, ἅγια! Ἀγράμματοι ἄνθρωποι στὸ χωριὸ μου ἔλεγαν στίς ἐορτὲς **«Καλὸν παράδεισο!»**. Τὴν ἀκοῦτε τώρα αὐτὴ τὴ λέξι; Ὁ ἓνας περιμένει κίτρινο παράδεισο, ὁ ἄλλος κόκκινο παράδεισο, ὁ ἄλλος μαῦρο, ὁ ἄλλος περιμένει τὸν παράδεισο τῶν πετρελαίων... Γίναμε πλέον κτήνη, καὶ τὸ σύνθημά μας εἶνε· *«Φάγωμεν καὶ πίωμεν, αἴριον γὰρ ἀποθνήσκομεν»* (Κατ. 22,13. Ἄ Κορ. 15,32).

Καὶ ὅμως τὸ «σκουλήκι» ὑπάρχει. Καὶ στὸ μεγαλύτερο ἄθεο καὶ ὑλιστὴ ἔρχονται στιγμές, ποὺ κάτι τὸν κεντᾶει μέσα του καὶ ἀναρωτιέται **Τί ὑπάρχει ἄραγε πέραν τοῦ τάφου;**

Τελειώνω μὲ ἓνα **ἀνέκδοτο**. Ἐνας λαμπρὸς νέος ἔδωσε ἐξετάσεις στὴ Σχολὴ τῶν Εὐελπίδων, πέτυχε μεταξὺ τῶν πρώτων, καὶ τελείωσε τὴ σχολὴ πάλι πρώτος. Τὸν πλησίασε κάποιος θεολόγος, πνευματικὸς ἄνθρωπος, καὶ τοῦ λέει· —Μπράβο, Γιώργο, ἔγινες ἀνθυπολοχαγός. Μετὰ τί περιμένεις; —Θὰ γίνω ὑπολοχαγός. —Μετά; —Λοχαγός. —Μετά; —Ταγματάρχης. —Μετά; —Συνταγματάρχης. —Μετά; —Ταξίαρχος. —Μετά; —Στρατηγός. —Μετά;... —Ἀπόστρατος. —Μετά; —Γηρατειά. —Μετά;... —Ἐνα φέρετρο. —Μετά; —... **Ἐκεῖ σταμάτησε ὁ νέος.**

Πέρα ἀπὸ τὴ ματαῖα δόξα τῶν ὑλικῶν πραγμάτων βρίσκεται ἡ **ἀθάνατη δόξα τοῦ οὐρανοῦ**. Γι' αὐτὸ ὑπάρχει ἡ Ἐκκλησία. Ὁ κόσμος μᾶς δείχνει τὴν ὕλη, ἡ Ἐκκλησία μᾶς δείχνει τὸν οὐρανὸ. Ἡ Ἐκκλησία εἶνε ὁ φάρος, ποὺ φωτίζει τὰ σκότη τῆς ὑπάρξεώς μας καὶ μᾶς λέει· *«Ἄνω σχῶμεν τὰς καρδίας»* (βλ. Λατ.). Μᾶς δίνει φτερὰ ἀετοῦ, γιὰ νὰ πετοῦμε ψηλὰ καὶ νὰ φτάσουμε μέχρι τὸν οὐρανὸ.

Εὐχομαι, ὅταν πλησιάσῃ ἡ τελευταία μας στιγμὴ, ὅλοι νὰ τελειώσουμε τὸν βίον μας μὲ τὸ **δράμα τῆς αἰώνιου ζωῆς** καὶ νὰ σφραγίσουμε τὰ χεῖλη μας μὲ τὴ φωνὴ τοῦ ληστοῦ· *«Μνήσθητί μου, Κύριε, ὅταν ἔλθῃς ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου»* (Ματ. 24,42)· 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: \$300 PER YEAR

SINGLE MEMBERSHIP: \$250 PER YEAR

SENIOR CITIZEN INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP \$200 PER YEAR

SENIOR CITIZEN HUSBAND & WIFE MEMBERSHIP: \$225 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 2020 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

The Danger of Riches

One day, an Indian boy found a large pearl. It represented the fulfillment of all his hopes and dreams. His days of hardship and toil would be over. He would never have to work again. But, when he tried to sell the pearl, his real problems began. Buyers tried to trick him, bandits tried to attack him, and even his friends tried to manipulate him. Possessing great wealth was nothing like he expected it would be, so he took the pearl and threw it back into sea.

The boy in this story is quite a contrast to the young man of whom Jesus spoke in the Gospel reading for this Sunday. Jesus spoke of a young man who desired to be justified by God. He had faithfully kept all the commandments, but Jesus told him that there

was one thing he still needed to do: sell all he had and give to the poor. With that, the young man went away saddened because he was not able to easily part with all his possessions. Jesus then spoke one of His most enduring statements, "It will be easier for a camel to pass through the needles eye, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." (Matthew 21:24)

What type of hold do our possessions have on us? Are we willing to share what we have with others, including our time, our talents, as well as our treasure? Everything that we have is a gift from God, which must be freely shared with others as a gift. Our Lord Himself tells us, "The gifts you have freely received, now give as a gift." (Matthew 10:8)

RADIO MINISTRY: Each Saturday at 1:15 PM Fr. Eugene hosts the radio broadcast MATTERS OF CONSCIENCE NOW IN ITS 22nd 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 radio)

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