



DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN  
DISTRICT

## THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN December 19th, 2021

V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

### SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD



*Icon of the Holy Ancestors*

### 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 St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 11:9-10; 32-40

BRETHREN, by faith Abraham sojourned in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city which has foundation, whose builder and maker is God. And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets - who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated - of whom the world was not worthy - wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

### Προκείμενον. Ήχος δ΄. Δανιήλ 3.26-27

Εὐλογητὸς εἶ, Κύριε, ὁ Θεὸς τῶν Πατέρων ἡμῶν. Στίχ. Ὅτι δίκαιος εἶ ἐπὶ πᾶσιν, οἷς ἐποίησας ἡμῖν.

Πρὸς Ἑβραίους 11:9-10, 32-40 τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα

Ἀδελφοί, πίστει παρώκησεν Ἀβραὰμ εἰς τὴν γῆν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας ὡς ἀλλοτρίαν, ἐν σκηναῖς κατοικήσας μετὰ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ τῶν συγκληρονόμων τῆς ἐπαγγελίας τῆς αὐτῆς· ἐξεδέχετο γὰρ τὴν τοῦς θεμελίους ἔχουσαν πόλιν, ἧς τεχνίτης καὶ δημιουργὸς ὁ Θεός. Καὶ τί ἔτι λέγω; Ἐπιλείπει γάρ με διηγούμενον ὁ χρόνος περὶ Γεδεών, Βαράκ τε καὶ Σαμψών καὶ Ἰεφθάε, Δαυὶδ τε καὶ Σαμουὴλ καὶ τῶν προφητῶν, οἱ δὲ διὰ πίστεως κατηγωνίσαντο βασιλείας, ἐῖργασαντο δικαιοσύνην, ἐπέτυχον ἐπαγγελιῶν, ἔφραξαν στόματα λεόντων, ἔσβεσαν δύναμιν πυρός, ἔφυγον στόματα μαχαίρας, ἐνεδυναμώθησαν ἀπὸ ἀσθενείας, ἐγενήθησαν ἰσχυροὶ ἐν πολέμῳ, παρεμβολὰς ἔκλιναν ἀλλοτρίων· ἔλαβον γυναῖκες ἐξ ἀναστάσεως τοῦς νεκροὺς αὐτῶν· ἄλλοι δὲ ἐτυμπανίσθησαν, οὐ προσδεξάμενοι τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν, ἵνα κρείττονος ἀναστάσεως τύχωσιν· ἕτεροι δὲ ἐμπαιγμῶν καὶ μαστίγων πεῖραν ἔλαβον, ἔτι δὲ δεσμῶν καὶ φυλακῆς· ἐλιθάσθησαν, ἐπρίσθησαν, ἐπειράσθησαν, ἐν φὺνι μαχαίρας ἀπέθανον, περιήλθον ἐν μηλωταῖς, ἐν ἀίματι ἐρμασιν, ὑστερούμενοι, θλιβόμενοι, κακουχούμενοι, ὧν οὐκ ἦν ἄξιος ὁ κόσμος, ἐν ἐρημίαις πλανώμενοι καὶ ὄρεσι καὶ σπηλαίοις καὶ ταῖς ὁπαῖς τῆς γῆς. Καὶ οὗτοι πάντες μαρτυρηθέντες διὰ τῆς πίστεως οὐκ ἐκομίσαντο τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν, τοῦ Θεοῦ περὶ ἡμῶν κρείττον τι προβλεψαμένου, ἵνα μὴ χωρὶς ἡμῶν τελειωθῶσι.

### Sunday before Nativity

### ΕΚ τοῦ Κατὰ Ματθαῖον 1:1-25 Εὐαγγελίου τὸ Ἀνάγνωσμα

Βίβλος γενέσεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, υἱοῦ Δαυὶδ υἱοῦ Ἀβραάμ. Ἀβραὰμ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ἰσαὰκ, Ἰσαὰκ δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ἰακώβ, Ἰακώβ δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ἰούδαν καὶ τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς αὐτοῦ, Ἰούδας δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Φαρέσ καὶ τὸν Ζαρά ἐκ τῆς Θάμαρ, Φαρέσ δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ἑσρῶν, Ἑσρῶν δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ἀράμ, Ἀράμ δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ἀμιναδάβ, Ἀμιναδάβ δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ναασσών, Ναασσών δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Σαλμών, Σαλμών δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Βοὸζ ἐκ τῆς Ῥαχάβ, Βοὸζ δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ὠβὴδ ἐκ τῆς Ῥούθ, Ὠβὴδ δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ἰεσσαί, Ἰεσσαί δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Δαυὶδ τὸν βασιλέα. Δαυὶδ δὲ ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐγέννησε τὸν Σολομῶνα ἐκ τῆς τοῦ Οὐρίου, Σολομῶν δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ῥοβοάμ, Ῥοβοάμ δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ἀβιά, Ἀβιά δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ἀσά, Ἀσά δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ἰωσαφάτ, Ἰωσαφάτ δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ἰωράμ, Ἰωράμ δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ὀζιάν, Ὀζιάν δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ἰωάθαμ, Ἰωάθαμ δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ἀχαζ, Ἀχαζ δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ἐζεκίαν, Ἐζεκίας δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Μανασσῆ, Μανασσῆ δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ἀμὼν, Ἀμὼν δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ἰωσίαν, Ἰωσίας δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ἰεχονίαν καὶ τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τῆς μετοικεσίας Βαβυλῶνος. Μετὰ δὲ τὴν μετοικεσίαν Βαβυλῶνος Ἰεχονίας ἐγέννησε τὸν Σαλαθιήλ, Σαλαθιήλ δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ζοροβάβελ, Ζοροβάβελ δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ἀβιοῦδ, Ἀβιοῦδ δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ἐλιακίμ, Ἐλιακίμ δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ἀζώρ, Ἀζώρ δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Σαδῶκ, Σαδῶκ δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ἀχείμ, Ἀχείμ δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ἐλιοῦδ, Ἐλιοῦδ δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ἐλεάζαρ, Ἐλεάζαρ δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ματθάν, Ματθάν δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ἰακώβ, Ἰακώβ δὲ ἐγέννησε τὸν Ἰωσήφ τὸν ἄνδρα Μαρίας, ἐξ ἧς ἐγεννήθη Ἰησοὺς ὁ λεγόμενος Χριστός. Πᾶσαι οὖν αἱ γενεαὶ ἀπὸ Ἀβραάμ ἕως Δαυὶδ γενεαὶ δεκατέσσαρες, καὶ ἀπὸ Δαυὶδ ἕως τῆς μετοικεσίας Βαβυλῶνος γενεαὶ δεκατέσσαρες, καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς μετοικεσίας Βαβυλῶνος ἕως τοῦ Χριστοῦ γενεαὶ δεκατέσσαρες. Τὸ δὲ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἡ γέννησις οὕτως ἦν. μνηστευθείσης γὰρ τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ Μαρίας τῷ Ἰωσήφ, πρὶν ἢ συνελθεῖν αὐτοὺς εὐρέθη ἐν γαστρὶ ἔχουσα ἐκ Πνεύματος Ἁγίου. Ἰωσήφ δὲ ὁ ἀνὴρ αὐτῆς, δίκαιος ὢν καὶ μὴ θέλων αὐτὴν παραδειγματίζειν, ἐβουλήθη λάθρα ἀπολῦσαι αὐτήν. ταῦτα δὲ αὐτοῦ ἐνθυμηθέντος ἰδοὺ ἄγγελος Κυρίου κατ' ὄναρ ἐφάνη αὐτῷ λέγων· Ἰωσήφ υἱὸς Δαυὶδ, μὴ φοβηθῆς παραλαβεῖν Μαριάμ τὴν γυναῖκά σου· τὸ γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν ἐκ Πνεύματος ἁγίου ἐστὶν Ἁγίου. τέξεται δὲ υἱὸν καὶ καλέσεις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν· αὐτὸς γὰρ σώσει τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν. Τοῦτο δὲ ὅλον γέγονεν ἵνα πληρωθῇ τὸ ῥηθὲν ὑπὸ τοῦ Κυρίου διὰ τοῦ προφήτου λέγοντος· ἰδοὺ ἡ παρθένος ἐν γαστρὶ ἔξει καὶ τέξεται υἱόν, καὶ καλέσουσι τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἐμμανουήλ, ὃ ἐστὶ μεθερμηνευόμενον μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ Θεός. Διεγερθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰωσήφ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕπνου ἐποίησεν ὡς προσέταξεν αὐτῷ ὁ ἄγγελος Κυρίου καὶ παρέλαβε τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ, καὶ οὐκ ἐγίνωσκεν αὐτήν ἕως οὗ ἔτεκε τὸν υἱὸν αὐτῆς τὸν πρωτότοκον, καὶ ἐκάλεσε τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν.

**COFFEE FELLOWSHIP HOUR TODAY:** is being hosted by Kenneth and Pamela Vellios KELLY in honor of the churching of their new grand-daughter 'SANTINA CHRISTO'. Everyone is cordially invited to WHITEHALL for the refreshments.

**CHURCHING:** Today we are pleased to receive into the embrace of the Holy Mother the new born second child of Michael and Dina (KELLY FRATANGELO). The new daughter will be named "SANTINA CRISTON"  
NA SAS ZESE.

**TOY COLLECTION for CHRISTMAS:** Each year we are MOST successful in this 'anonymous' drive to bring joy to the little ones. Any gift item for either gender (boy or girl---or for both) may be left at the feet of the Holy Icon of the Blessed Virgin Mary – anonymously! Please 1. DO NOT WRAP THE GIFT (we must determine what it is and for which gender and age group. 2. Please DO NOT ATTACH ANY CARD for acknowledgement. ALL GIFTS COME FROM SAINT NICHOLAS (SANTA CLAUS). Please 3. Give some attention to 'arts and crafts ' for 8 year olds and older. Educational toys or crafts from infancy onward are THE BEST!! Thank you for your interest and outreach.

**SAINT JUDE THADDEAUS:** A magnificent hand painted Byzantine icon of the blessed APOSTLE has been commissioned and completed for the veneration of the faithful at THREE HIERARCHS. The sacred icon will be available from December 12th, through December 19th, for petition and supplication, viewed on the solea of the church proper. Consecration of the icon will take place with anointing ritual after the( OCTAVE ) eight day period of sanctification. Saint Jude Hospital for Children is most famous and recognizable. HE IS THE PATRON SAINT of HOPELESS CASES! Miracles have been wrought in his name interceding with JESUS. Join us in this special tribute and life-changing experience. The Raptis family has generously commissioned the iconography in Thanksgiving.

**GREEK SCHOOL P.T.A. and FACULTY** Ms. Maria and Ms. Emmanuella are to be hailed for their outreach to the community in the arrangements for TODAY'S PAGENT. We applaud the 'special students' selected for this annual tribute. BRAVO, BRAVO, BRAVO TO ALL THE PLAYERS. Special refreshments will be hosted at the FELLOWSHIP HOUR. Join us!

**SACRED STORY of SAINT JUDE** will be revealed and related Today –. This will be HIS 'Christmas gift' to you. BE PRESENT. BE ACCEPTING. BE GRATEFUL.

**CHRISTMAS SERVICES SCHEDULED:**

**FRIDAY** December 24th,

**SATURDAY** December 25th,

**SUNDAY** December 26th,

**EVE SERVICE of the Vespertal Liturgy** 10:30 P.M.

**Christmas Doxology and Carols** 12 MIDNIGHT

**NATIVITY LITURGY** 10:30 A.M.

**Greek and American Carols at Noon**

**HOLY SYNAXIS of the VIRGIN MARY** 10:30 A.M.

**Veneration of the Nativity Icon** Noon

You are invited to all the services. Choose at least ONE LITURGY to attend and display your Choose at least ONE LITURGY to attend and display your reverence to the CHRIST and NEW BORN KING. Our gift to HIM is our reverent prayerful presence at the 'manger'. We indeed have abundant blessings we are grateful for day after day. COUNT YOUR PERSONAL BLESSINGS 'UNSOLICITED'! Light a candle for those distant from the homestead and also for those asleep in the Lord in heavenly peace.

**PHILOPTOCHOS CHRISTMAS PARTY:** was a flavorful success for all in attendance. The Ladies Society cooked and presented a sumptuous dinner with all the Christmas trimmings, open to the community as their guests. Raffles and prizes topped off the evening excitement and frivolity.

**PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS** for new term of two years (2022-2024) will take place today, in the School Office from 10:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. Only registered stewards having submitted their annual obligation to the church will be able to vote. Hopefully you are a steward!

**FATHER EUGENE'S CHRISTMAS DAY BROADCAST** on Cosmos F.M. 91.5 Saturday, December 25th at 1:00 P.M. will feature all the things YOU never knew about the INCARNATION and BETHLEHEM STORY. Monsignor Guy Massie will be the guest.

**MEMORIALS: TODAY:** ANNA XENAKIS +KONSTANTINOS PAPADARATSAKIS





**The "GOLDEN GREEKS" Boy Scout Troop #531 with their scoutmasters decorated the church proper for the holiday season. Pictured here are many of the young lads offering service to the Lord by admiring the 'BEAUTY OF HIS HOUSE'**



**Ladies of the PHILOPTOCHOS BOARD served a sumptuous, delicious, gastronomic lenten (ADVENT) dinner to a full Whitehall assembly of guests. Their CHRISTMAS MEAL was a 'Grecian Delight for the welcomed guests.**









# ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

## ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



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

Ἐκδίδεται ἀπὸ τὴν Καννοβακὴ Γυναικεία Γερὰ Μονὴ Ἁγίου Αὐγουστίνου Φλωρίνης - 531 00 ΦΛΩΡΙΝΑ - τηλ. 23650-28610 - [imaefto@yahoo.gr](mailto:imaefto@yahoo.gr)

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος ΛΗ' Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 2432	Κυριακὴ πρὸ Χρ. Γεννήσεως (Ματθ. 1,1-25) 19 Δεκεμβρίου 2021	Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος Αὐγουστίνος Ν. Καννιώτης
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## Ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ Χριστοῦ μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα

«Καὶ τῆς βασιλείας αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἔσται τέλος» (Λουκ. 1,33)

Τὸ σημερινὸ εὐαγγέλιο, ἀγαπητοί μου, τῆς Κυριακῆς πρὸ τῆς Χριστοῦ Γεννήσεως (βλ. Ματθ. 1,1-25), ἔχει ἓνα μεγάλο **κατάλογο ὀνομάτων**· εἶνε τρεῖς δεκατετράδες (42 ὀνόματα). Ἐκ πρώτης ὁψεως τὰ ὀνόματα αὐτὰ δὲν ἔχουν ἐνδιαφέρον· ὅποιος ὁμως μελετᾷ τὴν ἁγία Γραφή, Παλαιὰ καὶ Καινὴ Διαθήκη, ἀρχίζει νὰ καταλαβαίνει, γιατί τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιο φώτισε τὸν εὐαγγελιστὴ Ματθαῖο νὰ γράψῃ αὐτὸ τὸν κατάλογο στὴν ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου του, καὶ γιατί ἡ Ἐκκλησία ὥρισε νὰ διαβάζωνται τὰ ὀνόματα αὐτὰ σήμερα· εἶνε μία **περιληπτικὴ ἀφήγησι τοῦ σχεδίου τῆς θείας οἰκονομίας**, πῶς δηλαδὴ ὁ Θεὸς μερίμνησε νὰ σωθῇ τὸ ἀνθρώπινο γένος διὰ τῆς ἐνανθρωπήσεως τοῦ Υἱοῦ του.

Ὁ κατάλογος ἀρχίζει ἀπὸ τὸν Ἀβραάμ γιὰ νὰ καταλήξῃ στὸ Χριστό, ποῦ ἐτοιμαζόμαστε νὰ ἐορτάσουμε τὴ Γέννησί του. Ἡ πρώτη δεκατετράδα ὀνομάτων ἀρχίζει μὲ τὸν Ἀβραάμ (ἔζησε τὸ 2.000 π.Χ.) καὶ φτάνει στὸν βασιλεῆα Δαυὶδ (ἔζησε τὸ 1.000 π.Χ.). Ἡ δευτέρη δεκατετράδα ἀρχίζει ἀπὸ τὸν Δαυὶδ καὶ φτάνει στὸν Ἰεχονία «ἐπὶ τῆς μετοικεσίας Βαβυλῶνος» (ἐλ. 1,11) τὸ 586 π.Χ.. Καὶ ἡ τρίτη δεκατετράδα ἀρχίζει μὲ τὸν Ἰεχονία καὶ φτάνει στὸ Χριστό. Ὁ Δαυὶδ λοιπὸν καὶ ἡ «μετοικεσία Βαβυλῶνος» ἢ βαβυλωνίος αἰχμαλωσία εἶνε δύο σημαντικοὶ σταθμοὶ στὴν ἱστορία τῆς σωτηρίας μας.

Γιὰ τὸν προφητάνακτα Δαυὶδ ἔχουμε μιλήσει καὶ ἄλλοτε. Τώρα σὰς παρακαλῶ νὰ στρέψουμε τὴν προσοχή μας στὸ ἄλλο γεγονός, στὴν **βαβυλωνίαν αἰχμαλωσίαν**.

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Ἄς μεταφερθοῦμε, ἀγαπητοί μου, νοερῶς στὸν 6ο π.Χ. αἰῶνα καὶ ἄς παρακολουθήσουμε τὴν ἐξιστόρησι ἀπὸ τὸ **25ο κεφάλαιο τοῦ βιβλίου Δ' Βασιλειῶν**. Ἡ μεγάλη δύναμις ποῦ ἐπικρατοῦσε στὸν τότε γνωστὸ κόσμον ἦταν οἱ Βαβυλώνιοι ἢ Χαλδαῖοι. Βασιλεῖα τὰ χρόνια ἐ-

κεῖνα εἶχαν τὸν ἑξακουστὸ **Ναβουχοδονόσορα**, ὁ ὁποῖος βασιλεύσε 43 χρόνια. Νικοῦσε κάθε ἀντίπαλον· ἔνεκα μάλιστα τῆς ἀσεβείας καὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν τῶν Ἑβραίων ὁ Θεὸς ἐπέτρεψε αὐτὸς νὰ ὑποδουλώσῃ καὶ τὸν ἐκλεκτὸ λαὸ του.

Μιὰ μέρα μὲ τὰ στρατεύματα καὶ τὰ ὄπλα τὰ του πολιορκήσε ἀσφυκτικὰ τὴν Ἱερουσαλήμ. Ἔπρεπε πείνα, ποῦ ἔκαμψε τὴν ἀντίστασι τῶν πολιορκουμένων. Ἐπιχείρησαν νὰ διαφύγουν, ἀλλὰ οἱ Χαλδαῖοι τοὺς κυνήγησαν καὶ συνέλαβαν τὸν βασιλεῆα τοὺς Ἑζεκία. Τὸν ἔφεραν μπροστὰ στὸ Ναβουχοδονόσορα. Αὐτὸς τὸν δίκασε καὶ μπροστὰ στὰ μάτια του ὁ Ναβουχοδονόσορ ἔσφαξε τὰ παιδιὰ του τὰ πριγκιπόπουλα, τύφλωσε τὸν ἴδιο καὶ τὸν μετέφερε σιδηροδέσμιο στὴ Βαβυλῶνα. Ἐπειτα ἔβαλε φωτιά, ἔκαψε τὸ ναὸ τοῦ Σολομῶντος καὶ τὰ ἀνάκτορα τοῦ βασιλεῖα. Σύλησε τὸν πλοῦτον ποῦ βρῆκε καὶ θανάτωσε τοὺς ἱερωμένους. Τέλος, ὅπως ὁ τσοπάνος ὁδηγεῖ τὸ κοπάδι στὸ μαντρί, ἔτσι ὁ Ναβουχοδονόσορ ὠδήγησε τοὺς Ἑβραίους μακριὰ ἀπὸ τὴν Παλαιστίνη. (Αὐτὸ συνέβη καὶ μ' ἐμᾶς στὴ Μικρὰ Ἀσία ὅταν ὁ Κεμάλ μᾶς κυνήγησε καὶ ἔκανε πρόσφυγες χιλιάδες Χριστιανούς). Ὁ Ναβουχοδονόσορ, λοιπόν, ἄρπαξε τοὺς Ἰουδαίους καὶ τοὺς μετέφερε μακριὰ, στὴ Βαβυλῶνα. Τὸ γεγονός αὐτὸ ἐννοεῖ τὸ σημερινὸ εὐαγγέλιο ὅταν λέει «ἐπὶ τῆς μετοικεσίας Βαβυλῶνος» (Ματθ. 1,11). Ἐκεῖ στὴ Βαβυλῶνα ἔζησαν ἐβδομήντα χρόνια μὲ πόνο καὶ δάκρυ, ἕως ὅτου ἐπιστρέψουν πάλι στὴν Ἱερουσαλήμ.

Μὴ νομίσουμε ὁμως ὅτι ὁ ἀγέρωχος ἐκεῖνος κατακτητὴς ἦταν ἀδέσποτος· δοκίμαζε φόβους καὶ αὐτός. Κάποτε, ὅπως διαβάζουμε στὸ **4ο κεφάλαιο τοῦ βιβλίου τοῦ προφήτου Δανιήλ**, ὁ Ναβουχοδονόσορ εἶδε ἓνα ὄνειρον ποῦ τὸν τάραξε. Τί εἶδε; Φύτρωσε στὴ μέση τῆς γῆς ἓνα πελώριο **δέντρο**, ποῦ ἀπλωνε τὰ κλαδιά του



στά πέρατα τῆς οἰκουμένης καὶ τὰ ὕψωνε ὡς τὸν οὐρανό. Τὰ φύλλα καὶ οἱ καρποὶ τοῦ ἦταν πλούσιοι. Στὰ κλαδιά του φώλιαζαν ἀρπακτικὰ πουλιά καὶ στὴ σκιά του κατέφευγαν ἀγρία θηριά· κάθε ζωντανὸ εὕρισκε ἐκεῖ τροφή. Μὰ ξαφνικὰ ἀκούστηκε φωνὴ ἀγγέλου ἀπ' τὰ οὐράνια· Μπρός, ξυλοκόποι, χτυπάτε τὸ δέντρο μὲ τσεκούρια, κόψτε τὰ κλαδιά, μαῆστε τὰ φύλλα, ῥίξτε κάτω τοὺς καρπούς, διώξτε ἀπ' αὐτὸ πουλιά καὶ θηριά· νὰ μείνῃ μόνο ἡ ῥίζα του... Τί σήμαινε τὸ ὄνειρο; Μόνο ὁ Δανιὴλ μπόρεσε νὰ τὸ ἐξηγήσῃ. Τὸ δέντρο, εἶπε, εἶσαι σὺ ὁ ἴδιος, βασιλιά· εἶνε ἡ αὐτοκρατορία σου, ποὺ ἀπλώθηκε σ' ἀνατολὴ καὶ δύσι, κι ἀπ' τὴν ὑπερφηφάνειά σου νόμιζες πὼς θὰ φτάσῃς καὶ στὰ ἀστρα, θὰ γίνῃς θεὸς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. Μὰ ἐρχεται ἡ ὥρα τῆς τιμωρίας, γιὰ νὰ μάθῃς ὅτι **μόνο ὁ Ὑψίστος κυριεύει στὸν κόσμον.**

Ὁ Ναβουχοδονόσορ ὅμως ἔμεινε ἀμετανόητος. Καὶ μετὰ ἀπὸ δώδεκα μῆνες, σὲ ὥρα ποὺ καμάρωνε τὰ μεγαλεῖα του, ξαφνικὰ **ἔχασε τὸ μυαλό του**, ἀγρίεψε, καὶ γιὰ ἓνα διάστημα ἔζησε μέσα στὰ δάση σὰν ἀγριο θηρίο. Μετὰ ἀπὸ καιρὸ ἦρθε πάλι στὸν ἑαυτό του.

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Κάθε ὄνομα ἀπὸ αὐτὰ τοῦ σημερινοῦ εὐαγγελίου εἶνε, ἀγαπητοί μου, καὶ μιὰ ἱστορία ποὺ διδάσκει τὴ **ματαιότητα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου**. Γενεές γενεῶν περνοῦν καὶ φεύγουν. Πλούσιοι πεθαίνουν, ὁμορφες γυναῖκες σαπίζουν μέσα στὰ μνήματα, λεβέντες γίνονται κόκκαλα καὶ στάχτη, στρατηγοὶ καὶ βασιλιᾶδες χάνονται. Τὰ **«πάντα ῥεῖ»** (Ἠρόδοτος παρὰ Μγ, τοῦτο Ε97 σ. 191, Π405 σ. 365). Ὅλα παρέρχονται, σὰν τὰ νερά τῶν ποταμῶν, σὰν τὰ φύλλα ποὺ κιτρινίζουν καὶ πέφτουν. **«Πάντα ματαιότης τὰ ἀνθρώπινα...»** (Ναφ. ἀπολ.).

Ἀλλὰ μέσα στὴν διαρκῆ ροὴ τῶν γεγονότων ὑπάρχουν καὶ μερικὰ πράγματα ποὺ μένουν. Μένει π.χ. ὁ ἥλιος χιλιάδες τῶρα χρόνια, μένουν ἀπὸ τὴν ἐποχὴ τοῦ Ὁμήρου τὰ ποτάμια οἱ θάλασσες τὰ βουνά. Μένουν; Λάθος ἔκανα. Γιατὶ θὰ ῥθῃ ὥρα κατὰ **«τὴν φοβερὰν ἡμέραν Κυρίου»** (Ἐλ. Νικαρ. 7), τὴν ἡμέρα τῆς κρίσεως, ποὺ καὶ τὰ βουνὰ θὰ λειώσουν καὶ τὰ ποτάμια θὰ ξεραθοῦν καὶ οἱ θάλασσες θ' ἀδειάσουν κι ὁ ἥλιος θὰ σβῇσῃ ὅπως τὸ καντήλι δταν σωθῇ τὸ λάδι του. Ὅλα φεύγουν σ' αὐτὸ τὸν κόσμον· ἓνα μένει, ἡ **βασιλεία τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ**. Αὐτὸς εἶνε **«χθὲς καὶ σήμερον ὁ αὐτὸς καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας»** (Ἐβρ. 13,8).

Πόσες γενεές —ὑπολογίστε—, πόσα χρόνια πέρασαν ἀπ' τὴν ἡμέρα ποὺ γεννήθηκε ὁ Χριστός! Ὅλα διαβαίνουν· κάλλη, δόξες, πλοῦτη, χρήματα. Πέρασαν τόσοι αἰῶνες, θὰ περάσουν

κι ἄλλοι. Τὰ πάντα θὰ μεταβληθοῦν· πόλεις, κράτη, νόμοι, συστήματα, νομίσματα. Ὁ χάρτης θ' ἀλλάξῃ ἑκατὸ φορές. Ἄγνωστο τὸ μέλλον τοῦ κόσμου, ἓνα μόνο εἶνε βέβαιον· **ὅτι κανεὶς, ποτέ μὰ ποτέ, δὲν θὰ μπορέσῃ νὰ σβῇσῃ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Χριστοῦ**, ποὺ εἶνε ἡ παρηγορία καὶ σωτηρία τοῦ κόσμου! Ἄς πασχίζουν οἱ ἄθεοι καὶ ἄπιστοι νὰ ἐξαλείψουν τὸ πρόσωπό του· ματαιοπονοῦν. Ἡ ἀπόπειρά τους θυμίζει κάτι ποὺ συνέβη στὴ Θεσσαλονίκη στὰ χρόνια τῆς κατοχῆς· ἓνας νέος, ἀπὸ τὴν πείνα καὶ ἄλλα δεινὰ ποὺ ἔζησε, ἔχασε τὸ μυαλό του, τρελλάθηκε· ἀρχισε νὰ τρέχῃ στὴν κεντρικὴ ὁδὸ καὶ σὲ μιὰ στιγμὴ φοβηθήκαμε ὅλοι, γιατί τὸν εἶδαμε νὰ σκαρφαλῶνῃ σὰν γατὶ πάνω σ' ἓνα στύλο τοῦ ρεύματος κι ἀπὸ κεῖ νὰ φτύνη τὸν ἥλιο καὶ νὰ λέῃ, ὅτι θὰ τὸν σβῇσῃ! Ἔτσι εἶνε καὶ οἱ ἄθεοι· ὁ Χριστὸς εἶνε ὁ ἥλιος, ποὺ δὲν μποροῦν νὰ τὸν σβῇσουν μὲ τὰ σάλια τους.

Γενεές γενεῶν παρέρχονται. Ὑπῆρξαν παλαιότερα γενεές μὲ πίστι. **Ἡ δική μας γενεὰ εἶνε ἀμαρτωλὴ καὶ ἄπιστη**. Ἀπὸ τοὺς ἑκατὸ χριστιανούς οὔτε 2 ἐκκλησιάζονται, κι ἀπὸ τοὺς χίλιους οὔτε 1 ἐξομολογεῖται. Οἱ ἐκκλησιᾶς μένουν ἀδειανές, κι ἄς σημαίνῃ ἡ καμπάνα. Αὐτὴ ἡ καμπάνα θὰ μᾶς δικάσῃ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ κρίσεως.

Καὶ πνευματικοὶ ὑπάρχουν γιὰ τὸ μυστήριον τῆς μετανοίας, καὶ διαφώτισις ἔχει γίνεῖ. Ἀλλ' ἀφοῦ ἐπιμένουν στὴν ἀρνησί, τὰ Χριστούγεννα **ὅσους ἀρνοῦνται νὰ ἐξομολογηθοῦν δὲν θ' ἀφήσω νὰ κοινωνήσουν**. Δὲν θὰ δώσω τὰ ἅγια σὲ ψυχὲς ἀμετανόητες, δὲν θὰ ῥίξω τὰ διαμάντια στὸ βοῦρκο καὶ τὴν ἀτιμία. Θὰ ἐξομολογηθῇς, θὰ πῇς τ' ἀμαρτήματά σου, θὰ πλυθῇς νὰ καθαρισθῇς, καὶ τότε θὰ πλησιάσῃς **«μετὰ φόβου Θεοῦ, πίστεως καὶ ἀγάπης»** (β. Ἰερ.).

Ἐπικρατεῖ ἐξαθλίωσις οἰκογενειακὴ, κοινωνικὴ καὶ ἐθνικὴ. Τί μέλλει γενέσθαι; Ἀρμόζει νὰ μᾶς πῇ ὁ Χριστός· **«Ὁ γενεὰ ἄπιστος καὶ διεστραμμένη»** (Ματθ. 17,17. Λουκ. 9,41). Κι ἂν ἐμεῖς τὸν ἀρνηθοῦμε, χιλιάδες καὶ ἑκατομμύρια - δισεκατομμύρια ἄγγελοι καὶ ἀρχάγγελοι τίς ἅγιες αὐτὲς ἡμέρες τοῦ ψάλλουν διαρκῶς μὲ χρυσὲς κιθάρες **«Δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις Θεῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς εἰρήνῃ, ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκία»** (Λουκ. 2,14).

Δὲν ἔχει ἀνάγκη ἀπὸ μᾶς ὁ Χριστός, ἐμεῖς ἔχουμε τὴν ἀνάγκη του· τὸ δαχτυλάκι του νὰ κουνήσῃ, ἐμεῖς γίναμε κάρβουνο. Γράψτε το, σημειώστε το· ὅποιος, εἴτε ἄντρας εἴτε γυναῖκα, πάει **κόντρα μὲ τὸ Χριστό**, θὰ γίνῃ στάχτη. Ὅποιος εἶνε **μαζὶ μὲ τὸ Χριστό**, αὐτὸς καὶ ἐδῶ θὰ ἔχῃ ζωὴ εἰρηνικὴ καὶ ἁγία, καὶ ἐκεῖ στὸν ἄλλο κόσμον θὰ ἔχῃ ζωὴν αἰώνιον· ἀμήν.

(†) **ἐπίσκοπος Αὐγουστῖνος**



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 Story of the Origin of Jesus Christ, Son of David, and the Rest of the Names*

Matthew's genealogy is extraordinarily comprehensive in his theology of the roots of Jesus' story in the Old Testament. But that is only one part of the story of Jesus Christ. The story has a sequence as well; and the continuing sequence is what makes the genealogy "good news" for Matthew's audience and for us. Human beings have been empowered to preserve, proclaim, and convey the salvation brought by Jesus Christ throughout history. The God who wrote the beginnings with crooked lines also writes the sequence with crooked lines, and some of those lines are our own lives and witness.

A God who did not hesitate to use the scheming as well as the noble, the impure as well as the pure, men to whom the world hearkened and women upon whom the world frowned – this God continues to work through the same melange. If it was a challenge to recognize in the last part of

Matthew's genealogy that totally unknown people were part of the story of Jesus Christ, it may be a greater challenge to recognize that the unknown characters of today are an essential part of the sequence. The proclamation of that genealogy in the Advent liturgy is designed to give us hope about our destiny and our importance.

By stressing the all-powerful grace of God, the genealogy presents its greatest challenge to those who will accept only an idealized Jesus Christ whose story they would write only with straight lines and whose portrait they would paint only in pastel colors. If we look at the whole story and the total picture, the Gospels teach us that Jesus' ministry was not thus; the history of the church teaches us that the sequence is not thus. God's grace can work even with people like us.

*Father Raymond E. Brown, S.S.*

**RADIO MINISTRY:** Each Saturday at 1:15 PM Fr. Eugene hosts the radio broadcast **MATTERS OF CONSCIENCE NOW IN ITS 23rd 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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