



DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN  
DISTRICT

## THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN July 23rd, 2023

V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

SEVENTH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW



*Icon of Jesus Healing Two Blind Men*

**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 Romans 15:1-7

Brethren, we who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves; let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to edify him. For Christ did not please himself; but, as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached thee fell on me." For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Welcome one another, therefore, as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

**Προκείμενον. Ἦχος 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 Ῥωμαίους 15:1-7 τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα

Ἀδελφοί, ὀφείλομεν δὲ ἡμεῖς οἱ δυνατοὶ τὰ ἀσθενήματα τῶν ἀδυνάτων βαστάζειν, καὶ μὴ ἑαυτοῖς ἀρέσκειν. Ἐκαστος ἡμῶν τῷ πλησίον ἀρεσκέτω εἰς τὸ ἀγαθὸν πρὸς οἰκοδομήν. Καὶ γὰρ ὁ Χριστὸς οὐχ ἑαυτῷ ἤρεσεν, ἀλλὰ, καθὼς γέγραπται, Οἱ ὀνειδισμοὶ τῶν ὀνειδιζόντων σε ἐπέπεσον ἐπ' ἐμέ. Ὅσα γὰρ προεγράφη, εἰς τὴν ἡμετέραν διδασκαλίαν προεγράφη, ἵνα διὰ τῆς ὑπομονῆς καὶ διὰ τῆς παρακλήσεως τῶν γραφῶν τὴν ἐλπίδα ἔχωμεν. Ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς ὑπομονῆς καὶ τῆς παρακλήσεως δώη ὑμῖν τὸ αὐτὸ φρονεῖν ἐν ἀλλήλοις κατὰ Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν· ἵνα ὁμοθυμαδὸν ἐν ἐνὶ στόματι δοξάζητε τὸν θεὸν καὶ πατέρα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. Διὸ προσλαμβάνεσθε ἀλλήλους, καθὼς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς προσελάβετο ὑμᾶς, εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ.

**Ἐκ τοῦ Κατὰ Ματθαῖον 9:27-35 Εὐαγγελίου τὸ Ἀνάγνωσμα**

At that time, as Jesus passed by, two blind men followed him, crying aloud, "Have mercy on us, Son of David." When he entered the house, the blind men came to him; and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to him, "Yes, Lord." Then he touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith be it done to you." And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly charged them, "See that no one knows it." But they went away and spread his fame through all that district. As they were going away, behold, a dumb demoniac was brought to him. And when the demon had been cast out, the dumb man spoke; and the crowds marveled, saying, "Never was anything like this seen in Israel." But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the prince of demons." And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people.

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, παράγοντι ἐκεῖθεν τῷ Ἰησοῦ ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ δύο τυφλοὶ κρίζοντες καὶ λέγοντες· ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, υἱὲ Δαυῖδ. ἐλθόντι δὲ εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν προσῆλθον αὐτῷ οἱ τυφλοὶ, καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· πιστεύετε ὅτι δύναμαι τοῦτο ποιῆσαι; λέγουσιν αὐτῷ· ναί, Κύριε. τότε ἤψατο τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν αὐτῶν λέγων· κατὰ τὴν πίστιν ὑμῶν γενηθήτω ὑμῖν. καὶ ἀνέωχθησαν αὐτῶν οἱ ὀφθαλμοί· καὶ ἐνεβριμήσατο αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγων· ὁρᾶτε μηδεὶς γινωσκέτω. οἱ δὲ ἐξελθόντες διεφήμισαν αὐτὸν ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ γῇ ἐκείνῃ. Αὐτῶν δὲ ἐξερχομένων ἰδοὺ προσήνεγκαν αὐτῷ ἄνθρωπον κωφὸν δαιμονιζόμενον· καὶ ἐκβληθέντος τοῦ δαιμονίου ἐλάλησεν ὁ κωφός, καὶ ἐθαύμασαν οἱ ὄχλοι λέγοντες ὅτι οὐδέποτε ἐφάνη οὕτως ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ. οἱ δὲ Φαρισαῖοι ἔλεγον· ἐν τῷ ἄρχοντι τῶν δαιμονίων ἐκβάλλει τὰ δαιμόνια. Καὶ περιῆγεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὰς πόλεις πάσας καὶ τὰς κώμας διδάσκων ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς αὐτῶν καὶ κηρύσσων τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας καὶ θεραπεύων πᾶσαν νόσον καὶ πᾶσαν μαλακίαν ἐν τῷ λαῷ.

**Fellowship Hour:** Today we are celebrating our Spiritual Father's BIRTHDAY! Everyone is invited to WHITEHALL for the festivity of cake, cookies, soft drinks, coffee, bagels and more... Celebrating your annual date of birth should always be shared with loved ones near and far. Count yourself among the loved ones and join us. Fathers Eugene never hides his age...but wishes you to guess the correct ONE --- 72? 63? or 59? Now don't cheat! Just pick one of the numbers or you can add them ALL TOGETHER and be close ! ! ! ! As the song goes "IT'S MY PARTY, AND I'LL CRY IF I WANT TO!"

**CHECK IT OUT!** We are up-dating our WEB-SITE at Three Hierarchs Parish and YOU are a most essential part of it. Please respond to the information listed on the centerfold page. WE DO NEED YOUR e-mail address to better communicate with you and the family instantly. **COMMUNICATION IS THE ANSWER.**

**UP- COMING EVENTS ON THE CALENDAR:**

Feast of Saint CHRISTINA ON Monday – JULY 24<sup>TH</sup>,  
 Chronia Polla to every Christina, Chryssi, Chris  
 Feast day of SAINT PANTELEIMON on THURSDAY, JULY 27<sup>TH</sup>,  
 (OUR UKRAINIAN MISSION AT THREE HIERARCHS IS HONORED TO CARRY  
 THE NAME OF SAINT PANTELEIMON) Chronia Polla to all in the mission.)

**CONFESSIONS:** Will be heard by appointment on Wednesday afternoon July 26<sup>th</sup> in preparation for the two week fast for the Blessed Virgin Mary's REPOSE ( ASSUMPTION) – August 1 – 15<sup>th</sup>. ( 718-339-0280)

Devotions of August:	TUESDAY	AUGUST 01,	AGIASMOS ( Holy Water Blessing)	11:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.
	TUESDAY	AUGUST 01,	Paraklesis ( Supplications)	7:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.
	THURSDAY	AUGUST 03,	Paraklesis ( Supplications)	7:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.
	SUNDAY	AUGUST 06	TRANSFIGURATION ( grapes blessed)	12:00 Noon
	MONDAY	AUGUST 07,	Paraklesis (Supplications)	7:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.
	WEDNESDAY	AUGUST 09,	Paraklesis (Supplications)	7:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.
	FRIDAY	AUGUST 11,	Paraklesis (Supplications)	7:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.
	TUESDAY	AUGUST 15,	ASSUMPTION (Repose) of the Virgin Mary	10:00 A.M.

Artoklasies are most welcomed. Veneration of the EPITAPHION from August 01-15<sup>th</sup>,

**GRAPES** are needed and requested for the FEAST of HOLY TRANSFIGURATION ( Sunday – AUGUST 06<sup>TH</sup> , 12 Noon. Please communicate with the Church Office if you will be donating grapes for the feast and distribution.

**THERE MUST BE SOMETHING TO CELEBRATE!!!?** Is there a birthday, anniversary, graduation, new birth, engagement or wedding you may wish to joyously share with GOD and MAN.... Do it through an 'ARTOKLASIA' in honor of that individual. Bring them to church on Sunday, and then 'surprise' them as their name is called out to come forward for the special blessing of the five loaves, wine and oil. It's a moment caught in time that will be forever cherished.

**SCOUTING TROOP ANNUAL CAMPING SOJORN.** Each year we are pleased to send many young boys to 'summer camp' for two weeks. This wonderous nature experience assists the young men in achievements towards their 'EAGLE' accomplishment. The period extends from Saturday – July 22<sup>nd</sup> through August 06<sup>th</sup>. Are your lads (sons' grandsons) members of the Parish Scouting Program? Take advantage of this enjoyable program making boys into men through Hellenism, Orthodoxy and Nature!

**ON VACATION TRIP?** We always remind our faithful while on vacation traveling in the U.S.A. or abroad – consult with Father Eugene for the closest church and Greek Orthodox community that may be in your vicinity. Always greet the clergy and announce where you come from and extend greeting from THREE HIERARCHS and FATHER EUGENE. You would be surprised to learn how well known our 'parish' is in the global map of faithful Orthodox communities. Going abroad? We can supply you with the nearest Greek Orthodox Church..... anywhere! Don't miss the opportunity to evangelize in the most remote places.

**25<sup>th</sup> Year Opening Anniversary of the 'RADIO MINISTRY of Father Eugene's MATTERS of CONSCIENCE BROADCASTS** each Saturday afternoon prime-time 1 -2 :00 P.M. on COSMOS RADIO W.N.Y.E. 91.5 FM. This stellar programming includes relative subjects involving medicine, education, religion, politics, legislation, morals and ethics facing the 'globe' . The program is now cosmic (global) through the inter-net links. **DO YOU LISTEN IN?**

Marigold flower blossoms are the tradition bloom offered to the THEOTOKOS, hence it is named 'mary's gold' marigold. Pick some from your home garden and place them at the 'epitaphion' of the Mother of God!

**SPECIAL NOTICE:** we are in need of sacramental wine(Commanderia, Mavrodaphne, Kagor) please see the clergy to Secure a bottle or two or a full case. Not every wine is appropriate for sacramental use- see the clergy.



You are Cordially invited to the  
celebration of

*Fun*

Fr. Eugene's Birthday # \_\_\_\_\_

TODAY July 23rd, 2023

12:00 Noon Whitehall

Open to Everyone



*Fun*

*Happy  
Birthday*

Take the Quiz How old is :

1: Father Eugene?

39

☐

70

☐

80

☐

other (be kind)

☐

2: Would Father Eugene  
miss us (the congregation)  
if he were on vacation?

yes

☐

sometimes

☐

no

☐

3: If Father Eugene teases you,  
does that mean he loves you?

yes

☐

maybe

☐

no

☐

4: What is Father Eugene's  
baptismal name?

Gregory

☐

Sue

☐

Nicholas

☐

Coffee, Cake, Sweets



*Fun*









# ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

## ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



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

Ἐκδίδεται ἀπὸ τὴν Κοινοβιακὴ Γυναικεία Ἱερὰ Μονὴ Ἁγίου Αὐγουστίνου Φλωρίνης – 531 00 ΦΛΩΡΙΝΑ – τηλ. 23850-28610 – imaafla@yahoo.gr

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος ΚΓ'  
Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 1276<sup>2</sup>

Κυριακὴ Ζ' Ματθαίου (Ματθ. 9,27-35)  
23 Ἰουλίου 2023 (2006)

Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος  
Αὐγουστίνος Ν. Καντιώτης

## Οἱ πνευματικοὶ ὁδηγοὶ

Ὁ ἄνθρωπος, ἀγαπητοί μου, δὲν μπορεῖ νὰ ζήσει χωρὶς θρησκεία. Ὅπως τὸ ψάρι ψοφáει ἔξω ἀπ' τὸ νερό, ἔτσι κι ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἔξω ἀπὸ τὴν ἁγία πίστι τοῦ Χριστοῦ. Ἐμεῖς οἱ ὀρθόδοξοι ἔχουμε τὴν πιὸ ὠραία θρησκεία. Δὲν εἴμαστε φράγκοι - δὲν πιστεύουμε στὸν πάπα, οὔτε προτεστάντες οὔτε χιλιασταί· εἴμαστε ὀρθόδοξοι. Καὶ ὅλοι οἱ ὀρθόδοξοι λαοὶ εἴμαστε μιὰ οἰκογένεια ἐνωμένοι στὴν ἁγία μας **Ὁρθοδοξία**.

Καμμιά δύναμι δὲν θὰ μπορέσῃ νὰ καταστρέψῃ τὴν **Ἐκκλησία**. Γιατί; Διότι δὲν τὴν ἔφτιαξε ἄνθρωπος· τὴν ἔφτιαξε **ὁ Χριστός, ποὺ εἶνε ὁ Θεός**. Ὑπάρχουν ἀποδείξεις; Κι ἂν ἔμεῖς σιωπήσουμε, καὶ οἱ πέτρες θὰ φωνάξουν· **«Εἷς ἅγιος, εἷς Κύριος, Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, εἰς δόξαν Θεοῦ Πατρὸς· ἀμήν»** (Φίλ. 2,11 καὶ Θ. Λεπ.).

Ὁ Χριστὸς εἶνε Θεός. Τὸ φωνάζουν τὰ **θαύματά** του, ποὺ εἶνε ἀμέτρητα. Καὶ μόνο ὁ Χριστὸς ἔχει θαύματα; Καὶ ἡ Παναγία καὶ οἱ ἅγιοι ἔχουν θαύματα. Ἀλλὰ τὰ ἔκαναν ὄχι ἀφ' ἐαυτῶν. Ὅπως τὸ φεγγάρι δὲν ἔχει δικό του φῶς, ἀλλὰ παίρνει τὸ φῶς ἀπὸ τὸν ἥλιο, ἔτσι καὶ οἱ ἅγιοι ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἔκαναν τὰ θαύματά τους· τὰ θαύματα δηλαδὴ τῶν ἁγίων εἶνε θαύματα τοῦ Χριστοῦ· δι' ὧν αὐτῶν λάμπει - ἀστράφτει ἡ θεότης τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

Ἀκούω ὅμως ἀντίρρηση· Θαύματα δὲν γίνονται σήμερα· μόνο **«τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ»**... Καὶ τώρα γίνονται θαύματα καὶ θὰ σὰς πῶ στὸ τέλος ἓνα. Εἶνε ὅμως ἀλήθεια ὅτι σήμερα **γίνονται λιγώτερα** ἀπ' ὅ,τι στὴν παλιὰ ἐποχὴ. **Γιατί**, ποιὸς εἶνε ὁ λόγος; Στὸ ἐρώτημα αὐτὸ ἀπαντᾷ τὸ εὐαγγέλιο σήμερα. Τί λέει τὸ εὐαγγέλιο σήμερα; Τὸ ἀκούσατε.

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Ἦταν **δυὸ τυφλοί**· δὲν ἔβλεπαν καθόλου. Μιὰ μέρα πέρασε ὁ Χριστὸς ἀπὸ τὸ χωριό τους. Ἄλλοι, ἀδιάφοροι, τὸν περιφρόνησαν. Τί εἶν' αὐτός; εἶπαν· ἓνας φτωχὸς ξυλουργός.

Καὶ θὰ μᾶς κάνῃ αὐτὸς τὸ δάσκαλο; Ἐμεῖς ἔχουμε ἄλλους δασκάλους... Ἀλλὰ οἱ δύο τυφλοί, ποὺ εἶχαν τὸν πόνο τους, μόλις ἔμαθαν ὅτι ἦρθε ὁ Χριστός, ἔδειξαν ἐνδιαφέρον. Ὁ Χριστὸς, σκέφτηκαν, κάνει θαύματα. Καὶ μέσα τους πίστεψαν· Αὐτὸς θὰ μᾶς κάνῃ καλά!... Ἔκαναν λοιπὸν τὸ λαρύγγι τους σάλπιγγα καὶ φώναζαν· **«Ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, υἱὲ Δαυὶδ»** (Ματθ. 9,27). Ἐλεγαν δηλαδὴ τὸ **«Κύριε, ἐλέησον»**, αὐτὸ ποὺ λέμε κ' ἔμεῖς κατ' ἐπανάληψιν στὴ λατρεία μας - καὶ στὴν πρώτη ἐκκλησία τὸ ἔλεγε ὅλος ὁ λαός. Αὐτὸ τὸ **«Κύριε, ἐλέησον»**, μιὰ φορὰ νὰ τὸ πῆς **μὲ πίστι** - ἀκούς τί σοῦ λέω;-, τὰ ἄστρα κατεβάξεις κάτω στὴ γῆ. Διαφορετικά, χίλιες φορές νὰ τὸ πῆς, εἶνε κάλπικος παρᾶς. Κάλπικοι παρᾶδες εἶνε τὰ **«Κύριε, ἐλέησον»** τὰ δικά μας. Γνήσιο νόμισμα, χρυσὸς κεκαθαρμένος διὰ τοῦ πυρὸς τῆς πίστεως, τῆς ἀγάπης καὶ τῆς ἐλπίδος, ἦταν τὸ **«Κύριε, ἐλέησον»** τῶν δύο τυφλῶν.

Τὸ εἶπαν μιὰ φορὰ. Ὁ Χριστὸς ἔκανε πῶς δὲν ἀκούει· ὄχι πῶς τοῦ διέφυγε, ἀλλὰ γιὰ νὰ φανῇ **ἡ πίστι τους**. Κι αὐτοὶ ἀπὸ μακριὰ δὲν σταματοῦσαν νὰ φωνάζουν. Ὅταν ἦρθε στὸ σπίτι, οἱ δυὸ τυφλοὶ τὸν πλησίασαν κ' ἐκεῖνος τοὺς λέει· -Πιστεύετε, ὅτι ἐγὼ μπορῶ νὰ τὸ κάνω αὐτὸ ποὺ ζητᾶτε; (προτοῦ δηλαδὴ νὰ τοὺς θεραπεύσῃ, ζήτησε τὴν πίστι τους). Καὶ οἱ δυὸ λένε· -Ναί, Κύριε. Ἐνα «ναί», ποὺ ἔφτασε μέχρι τὰ ἄστρα τοῦ οὐρανοῦ. Τότε ὁ Χριστὸς ἄγγιξε τὰ μάτια τους καὶ εἶπε· -Νὰ γίνῃ κατὰ τὴν πίστι σας. Κι ἀμέσως τὰ μάτια τους ἄνοιξαν.

Ἐν συνεχείᾳ ὁ Χριστὸς ἔβγαλε τὸ δαιμόνιο ἀπὸ ἓνα κωφάλαλο δαιμονιζόμενο καὶ αὐτὸς γιαιτρεύκητε κι ἄρχισε νὰ μιλάῃ. Ὅσοι τὰ εἶδαν αὐτὰ εἶπαν· **Τέτοια θαύματα κανεῖς δὲν ξαναεἶδε!** καὶ πίστεψαν ὅλοι στὸ Χριστό.

Τί εἶπα, «ὅλοι»; Λάθος· **ὄχι ὅλοι**. «Στοῦ διαβόλου τὸ χωριὸ μὴν κάνῃς ποτέ καλὸ». Ἐκεῖνοι ποὺ περιφρονοῦσαν τὸ Χριστό, οἱ φαρι-



σαῖοι, σὰν φίδια φαρμακερὰ ἄνοιξαν τὸ στόμα τους καὶ τί εἶπαν· ὅτι ὁ Χριστὸς κάνει τὰ θαύματα μὲ τὴ δύναμι τοῦ σατανᾶ· «*Ἐν τῷ ἄρχοντι τῶν δαιμονίων ἐκβάλλει τὰ δαιμόνια*» (ἔ.ἀ. 9,34)! Τὰ λόγια αὐτὰ εἶνε **ἡ πιὸ μεγάλη βλασφημία**, εἶνε τὸ ἀσυγχώρητο ἁμάρτημα τῆς βλασφημίας τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος. Τί ἀποδεικνύει αὐτό; Ὅτι τέτοιοι ἄνθρωποι, ὅσα θαύματα καὶ ἂν ἔκανε ὁ Χριστός, θὰ τὰ ἀμφισβητοῦσαν, θὰ τὰ κακολογοῦσαν, θὰ τὰ ἀπέδιδαν στὸν ἐχθρὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

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Καὶ σήμερα αὐτὸ ἐπαναλαμβάνεται. Ὅχι οἱ σημερινοὶ κληρικοὶ ποὺ εἴμαστε ἁμαρτωλοί, ὄχι ἄγιοι ὅπως ὁ μέγας Βασίλειος κι ὁ μέγας Ἀθανάσιος, ὄχι ἄγγελοι καὶ ἀρχάγγελοι, ἀλλὰ αὐτὸς ὁ Χριστὸς νὰ κατεβῇ πάλι στὸν κόσμον καὶ νὰ κἀν θαύματα, **λίγοι θὰ πιστέψουν**. Υπάρχουν βέβαια καὶ οἱ ταπεινοὶ καὶ ἄγνοοι ἄνθρωποι ποὺ πιστεύουν, ἀλλὰ οἱ ἄλλοι; Ὡ οἱ ἄλλοι, θὰ τὸν ξανασταυρώσουν! Τέτοιος εἶνε ὁ κόσμος· δὲν ἄλλαξε ἀπὸ τὴν ἐποχὴ τοῦ Χριστοῦ. Πάντοτε θὰ ὑπάρχουν οἱ ἄνθρωποι τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ οἱ ἄνθρωποι τοῦ σατανᾶ.

Γιὰ νὰ γίνῃ λοιπὸν τὸ θαῦμα τί χρειάζεται, τί διδάσκει σήμερα τὸ εὐαγγέλιο; Καλὴ **διάθεσι**. Ἄν δὲν ἔχῃς διάθεσι, χίλια θαύματα νὰ δῇς δὲν πιστεύεις· ἂν ἔχῃς διάθεσι, τότε παντοῦ θὰ βλέπῃς τὸ θαῦμα καὶ θὰ δοξάζῃς τὸ Θεό. Ὡδεῖξε ὁ Χριστὸς σήμερα ὅτι, γιὰ νὰ γίνῃ θαῦμα, **χρειάζεται πίστι**. Ἐὰν λοιπὸν δὲν γίνονται σήμερα θαύματα, αἰτία εἶνε ὅτι δὲν ὑπάρχει αὐτὴ ἡ πίστι ποὺ ὑπῆρχε στίς καρδιὰς τῶν δύο τυφλῶν. Πιστεύετε; ἂν πιστεύετε, **καὶ σήμερα γίνονται θαύματα**.

Πέρασε ἀπὸ τὸ γραφεῖο μου ἕνας ὀνομαστός δικηγόρος τῶν Ἀθηνῶν ὀνόματι **Ἰάκωβος Γρίσπος**, παλαιὸς συμμαθητῆς μου στὸ Γυμνάσιο Σύρου. Εἶχε διοριστῇ δικαστικὸς ἀντιπρόσωπος σὲ ἐκλογικὸ τμήμα τῆς Φλωρίνης γιὰ τὴ διενέργεια δημοψηφίσματος. Τοῦ λέω· «Ἰάκωβε, μικρὸς πίστευες· πιστεύεις καὶ τώρα, ποὺ πῆγες στὸ Παρίσι, μορφώθηκες, ἔγραψες βιβλία, θεωρεῖσαι ἕνας ἀπὸ τοὺς καλύτερους δικηγόρους;» — «Ἄ, λέει, πιστεύω σὰν τὴ μάνα μου. — Γιατί πιστεύεις; εἶδες κανένα θαῦμα;» — «Ἦμουν τελειόφοιτος τῆς νομικῆς, λέει, ὅταν πῆγα στὸ χωριὸ μου, στὸ νησάκι μου τὴν Ἀμοργό. Πῆγα στὴν ἐκκλησίαν τὴν ἡμέρα τῆς Παναγίας καὶ φέρανε ἐκεῖ ἀπὸ ἕνα χωριὸ ἕνα παιδί παράλυτο 15 χρονῶν. Ἐγὼ εἶπα μέσα μου· «Μπα, καὶ τί περιμένουν νὰ γίνῃ σήμερα;». Ξαφνικά, ὅταν περνοῦσαν τὰ ἅγια, σὰν νὰ ἔγινε σεισμός· κουνιόντουσαν τὰ καντήλια κι ὁ

πολυέλεος, σείονταν τὸ ἔδαφος, οἱ εἰκόνες, τὸ τέμπλο, καὶ **τὸ παιδί σηκώθηκε πᾶν** κι ἄρχισε νὰ κλαίῃ. (Ἦταν μπροστὰ κι ὁ πρωτοσύγκελλος, ὅταν μοῦ τὰ ἔλεγε αὐτὰ κ' ἔκλαιγε σὰν μικρὸ παιδί). Τὸ θαῦμα αὐτὸ τὸ εἶδα, λέει, μὲ τὰ μάτια μου, κι ὅπου βρεθῶ, σὲ σαλόνια μεγάλων, μεταξὺ καθηγητῶν καὶ ἀνθρώπων τῆς ἀνωτέρας κοινωνίας τῶν Ἀθηνῶν, τὸ διηγούμαι καὶ τοὺς λέω· Ἐγὼ πιστεύω, **εἶδα μὲ τὰ μάτια μου θαῦμα** στὸ χωριό, παράλυτος σηκώθηκε ὀρθὸς καὶ περπατοῦσε!

Καὶ σήμερα λοιπὸν γίνονται θαύματα ὅπως τότε ποὺ οἱ δύο τυφλοὶ εἶδαν τὸ φῶς τους. Μόνο ποὺ ὑπάρχουν **τυφλοὶ καὶ τυφλοί**. Αὐτοὶ οἱ τυφλοὶ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, προτοῦ ν' ἀνοίξῃ τὰ μάτια τους ὁ Χριστός, ἔβλεπαν! Πῶς; Ἐβλεπαν, δηλαδὴ πίστευαν στὸ Χριστό. Μάτια δὲν εἶχαν καὶ μάτια εἶχαν. Οἱ ἄλλοι, οἱ φαρισαῖοι, μάτια εἶχαν ἀλλὰ μάτια δὲν εἶχαν. Ποιοὶ εἶνε **οἱ ὄντως τυφλοί; Αὐτοὶ ποὺ δὲν πιστεύουν**. Μὰ θὰ πῇ κάποιος· — Ποῦ εἶνε τώρα ὁ Χριστός; μπορῶ νὰ τὸν βρῶ, νὰ τὸν ἀκολουθήσω;

**Ἐδῶ** εἶνε ὁ Χριστός, **στὴν Ἐκκλησίαν**. Ποιοὶ συνεχίζουν τὸ ἔργο του; Ὁ παπᾶς ποὺ φορεῖ τὸ πετραχήλι κι ὁ δεσπότης. Εἶνε ὁ ἴδιος ὁ Χριστός. Κι ὅποιος δὲν ἀκούει αὐτοὺς, εἶνε σὰν νὰ μὴν ἀκούῃ τὸν ἴδιο τὸ Χριστό.

**Πίστι ἴσον ὑπακοή**. Αὐτὸς ποὺ πιστεύει στὸ Χριστό, ὑπακούει στὴν Ἐκκλησίαν του. Κ' ἐμεῖς εἴμαστε σὲ θέσι **πνευματικοῦ ὁδηγοῦ τοῦ λαοῦ**. Μὴ λέτε, Καὶ τί εἶν' ὁ παπᾶς, τί εἶν' ὁ δεσπότης!... Ὡς ἄτομο εἶμαι μηδέν. Ὡς κληρικὸς ὅμως μελετῶ Γραφὴ καὶ πατέρες, σπούδασα ὀρθόδοξη θεολογία καὶ πιστεύω αὐτὰ ποὺ κηρύττω· ἂν δὲν τὰ πίστευα, θὰ ἔσπαζα τὴν ποιμαντορικὴ ράβδο ποὺ κρατῶ καὶ γιὰ νὰ ζήσω θὰ γινόμουν λοῦστρος νὰ γυαλίζω παπούτσι. Πιστεύω στὸν ἐν Τριάδι Θεό, πιστεύω στίς ἱερὲς παραδόσεις, κ' εἶμαι ἕτοιμος καὶ τὸ αἷμα μου νὰ χύσω. Γι' αὐτὸ **ζητῶ καὶ τὸ ποίμνιο νὰ ὑπακούῃ**.

Ὅ, τι λέω τὰ λέω μὲ ἀγάπη κι ἀπὸ τὰ βάθη τῆς ψυχῆς. «*Ὅσοι πιστοί*», λοιπόν, ἀκολουθήστε. Διαφορετικά, νίπτω τὰς χεῖρας μου, δὲν φέρω εὐθύνη. Σᾶς δείχνω τὸ δρόμο τοῦ Θεοῦ, τῶν ἁγίων καὶ μαρτύρων, τὸ δρόμο τῆς αἰωνιότητος. Ἐὰν δὲν ἀκολουθήσετε, τότε πρόβατο ποὺ φεύγει ἀπὸ τὴν μάντρα καὶ τὸν τσοπάνο, ἀπὸ τὴν ἀγία Ἐκκλησίαν, **τὸ τρώει ὁ λύκος**.

Δὲν θέλω νὰ χαθῇ κανένα πρόβατο. Καὶ ἐλπίζω στὸν Κύριο, ὅτι διὰ πρεσβειῶν τῆς Παναγίας καὶ τῶν ἁγίων, ὅλοι θ' ἀνοίξετε τ' αὐτιά σας, θ' ἀκούσετε τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν, καὶ πιστὰ καὶ ἀφωσιωμένα τέκνα θὰ ἔχετε τὴν εὐλογία τοῦ οὐρανοῦ.

(†) **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 2023 commitment **TODAY!** The benefits you shall receive beyond grace include the satisfaction and knowledge that this Church and community thrive thanks to your outreach.

*They Saw Because They Believed*

At that point, two blind men follow the Lord as He was passing by. But if they could not see, how could the blind men know of the Lord's departure as well as His name? Moreover, they called him "Son of David" and asked to be made well. In the two blind men, the entire earlier pre-figuration is complete. The ruler's daughter seems to be from these people, namely, the Pharisees and John's disciples, who already made common cause in testing the Lord. To these unknowing persons the law gave evidence as to the one from whom they sought a cure. It indicated to them that their Savior in the flesh was of the line of David. It also introduced light to the minds of those who were blind from past sins. They could not

see Christ but were told about Him.

The Lord showed them that faith should not be expected as a result of health but health should be expected because of faith. The blind men saw because they believed; they did not believe because they saw. From this we understand that what is requested must be predicated on faith and that faith must not be exercised because of what has been obtained. If they should believe, He offers them sight. And He charges the believers to be silent, for it was exclusively the task of the Apostles to preach.

*St. Hilary of Poitiers*

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