

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN September 3rd, 2023
V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW



Icon of the Nativity of the Mother of God -- September 8th

Prokeimenon. Mode 4

Psalm 103.24,1

O Lord, how manifold are your works. You have made all things in wisdom.

Verse: Bless the Lord, O my soul.

The reading is from St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 16:13-24

Brethren, be watchful, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love. Now, brethren, you know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints; I urge you to be subject to such men and to every fellow worker and laborer. I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicos, because they have made up for your absence; for they refreshed my spirit as well as yours. Give recognition to such men. The churches of Asia send greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord. All the brethren send greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss. I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. If any one has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed. Our Lord, come! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Προκείμενον. Ήχος δ'

ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 103.24,1

Ὡς ἐμεγαλύνθη τὰ ἔργα σου Κύριε, πάντα ἐν σοφίᾳ ἐποίησας.

Στίχ. Εὐλόγει ἡ ψυχὴ μου τὸν Κύριον.

Πρὸς Κορινθίους α' 16:13-24 τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα

Ἀδελφοί, γρηγορεῖτε, στήκετε ἐν τῇ πίστει, ἀνδρίζεσθε, κραταιοῦσθε. Πάντα ὑμῶν ἐν ἀγάπῃ γινέσθω. Παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί - οἴδατε τὴν οἰκίαν Στεφανᾶ, ὅτι ἐστὶν ἀπαρχὴ τῆς Ἀχαΐας, καὶ εἰς διακονίαν τοῖς ἁγίοις ἔταξαν ἑαυτοὺς - ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς ὑποτάσσησθε τοῖς τοιοῦτοις, καὶ παντὶ τῷ συνεργοῦντι καὶ κοπιῶντι. Χαίρω δὲ ἐπὶ τῇ παρουσίᾳ Στεφανᾶ καὶ Φουρτουνάτου καὶ Ἀχαϊκοῦ, ὅτι τὸ ὑμῶν ὑστέρημα οὗτοι ἀνεπλήρωσαν. Ἀνέπασαν γὰρ τὸ ἐμὸν πνεῦμα καὶ τὸ ὑμῶν· ἐπιγινώσκετε οὖν τοὺς τοιοῦτους. Ἀσπάζονται ὑμᾶς αἱ ἐκκλησίαι τῆς Ἀσίας· ἀσπάζονται ὑμᾶς ἐν κυρίῳ πολλὰ Ἀκύλας καὶ Πρίσκιλλα, σὺν τῇ κατ' οἶκον αὐτῶν ἐκκλησίᾳ. Ἀσπάζονται ὑμᾶς οἱ ἀδελφοί πάντες. Ἀσπάσασθε ἀλλήλους ἐν φιλήματι ἁγίῳ. Ὁ ἀσπασμὸς τῇ ἐμῇ χειρὶ Παύλου. Εἴ τις οὐ φιλεῖ τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν, ἦτω ἀνάθεμα. Μαρὰν ἀθά. Ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ μεθ' ὑμῶν. Ἡ ἀγάπη μου μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. Ἀμήν.

Ἐκ τοῦ Κατὰ Ματθαῖον 21:33-42 Εὐαγγελίου τὸ Ἀνάγνωσμα

The Lord said this parable, "There was a householder who planted a vineyard, and set a hedge around it, and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to tenants, and went into another country. When the season of fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants, to get his fruit; and the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the first; and they did the same to them. Afterward he sent his son to them, saying 'They will respect my son.' But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and have his inheritance.' And they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons." Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures: 'The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner; this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?'"

Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην· Ἄλλην παραβολὴν ἀκούσατε. ἄνθρωπός τις ἦν οἰκοδεσπότης, ὅστις ἐφύτευσεν ἀμπελῶνα καὶ φραγμὸν αὐτῷ περιέθηκε καὶ ὥρυξεν ἐν αὐτῷ ληνὸν καὶ ὠκοδόμησε πύργον, καὶ ἐξέδοτο αὐτὸν γεωργοῖς καὶ ἀπεδήμησεν. ὅτε δὲ ἤγγισεν ὁ καιρὸς τῶν καρπῶν, ἀπέστειλε τοὺς δούλους αὐτοῦ πρὸς τοὺς γεωργοὺς λαβεῖν τοὺς καρποὺς αὐτοῦ. καὶ λαβόντες οἱ γεωργοὶ τοὺς δούλους αὐτοῦ ὃν μὲν ἔδειραν, ὃν δὲ ἀπέκτειναν, ὃν δὲ ἐλιθοβόλησαν. πάλιν ἀπέστειλεν ἄλλους δούλους πλείονας τῶν πρώτων, καὶ ἐποίησαν αὐτοῖς ὡσαύτως. ὕστερον δὲ ἀπέστειλε πρὸς αὐτοὺς τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ λέγων· ἐντραπήσονται τὸν υἱόν μου. οἱ δὲ γεωργοὶ ἰδόντες τὸν υἱὸν εἶπον ἐν ἑαυτοῖς· οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ κληρονόμος· δεῦτε ἀποκτείνωμεν αὐτὸν καὶ κατάσχωμεν τὴν κληρονομίαν αὐτοῦ. καὶ λαβόντες αὐτὸν ἐξέβαλον ἔξω τοῦ ἀμπελῶνος, καὶ ἀπέκτειναν. ὅταν οὖν ἔλθῃ ὁ κύριος τοῦ ἀμπελῶνος, τί ποιήσει τοῖς γεωργοῖς ἐκείνοις; λέγουσιν αὐτῷ· κακοὺς κακῶς ἀπολέσει αὐτούς, καὶ τὸν ἀμπελῶνα ἐκδώσεται ἄλλοις γεωργοῖς, οἵτινες ἀποδώσουσιν αὐτῷ τοὺς καρποὺς ἐν τοῖς καιροῖς αὐτῶν. λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· οὐδέποτε ἀνέγνωτε ἐν ταῖς γραφαῖς, λίθον ὃν ἀπεδοκίμασαν οἱ οἰκοδομοῦντες, οὗτος ἐγενήθη εἰς κεφαλὴν γωνίας· παρὰ Κυρίου ἐγένετο αὕτη, καὶ ἔστι θαυμαστή ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς ἡμῶν;



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA
ARCHDIOCESAN DISTRICT

TODAY: We honor all laboring men and woman who keep our nation operating whether in civic duty, armed forces, education, medicine, juris – prudence , farming , factory and machine works and myriad of other gainfully employed areas. We toil to the service of God, man and society. Whatever your employment may be, we salute your efforts!

BIRTHDAY VESPER of the **BLESSED VIRGIN MARY:** will be celebrated at the Antiochian Orthodox Church of **SAINT MARY** on Ridge Boulevard and 62nd Street. Father Elias has invited all of us to join in the patronal and festal sacred service starting at 7:00 P.M. Hope to see you there and honor the **MOTHER** of the **LORD!**
DIVINE LITURGY of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary will be observed on **SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10TH**, at the 10:30 A.M. service.

ECCLESIASTICAL NEW YEAR: The official Church New Year is **SEPTEMBER FIRST**. This designation is an ancient calculation since at the end of summer season begins the ‘hibernation’ of the new ‘cycle’ of life. This observance is indicted also in the Hebrew celebration of ‘**ROSH HASHONA**’ – Jewish New Year this year (Friday-September 15th.) **ROSH HASHANAH.** **AUTUMN THIS YEAR COMMENCIES** on Saturday – September 23rd.

GRAND-PARENTS DAY: is nationally celebrated today, September 10th. We honor the grandparents of our Lord Jesus Christ at the end of each Divine Liturgy when we intone the names of **SAINT IOAKIM** and **SAINT ANNA**. Maybe it’s time for you to also reach out to your beloved grandparents with a telephone call, a visit, a card, or by lighting a candle in their honor. Let them know you care and **DO** remember all that they did for you in their time. You are indeed bone of their bone and blood of their blood. You are **ONE** with them in the **NOW** and **HEREAFTER!**

Up-Coming Feast: Vesper of HOLY CROSS EXALTATION: Wednesday-September 13th, at Holy Cross Church, Ridge Avenue and 84th Street commencing at 7:00 P.M. Street solemn procession at 8:30 P.M. Community reception at 9:30 P.M.

DIVINE LITURGY of **HOLY CROSS FEAST** at **THREE HIERARCHS** – September 14th, starting at 10:00 A.M. with Doxology and concluding at 12:00 Noon with the distribution of **BASIL** sprigs.

PRAYER and HEALING SERVICE: will be held on Thursday evening, September 14th, 6:00 P.M. The monthly sacramental attended by many will include the veneration of the ‘relic’ of the **CROSS** from **ROME**.

Basiliko plants (BASIL) are requested for the Feast of the Exaltation of the **HOLY CROSS** on Thursday, September 14th. Please cultivate the plants and carry them to church on Sunday – September 10th. The cross will be erected for veneration. Basil ‘sprigs’ will be distributed to all the faithful on the feast day-14th. **Chronia Polla** to every **STAVROS** and **STAVROULA**.

GREEK SCHOOL REGISTRATIONS are commencing. Please consider enrolling your child or grand-child in the program which fosters Hellenic scholarship learning language, history, religion and culture of **GREECE**. **IT IS THEIR HERITAGE and LEGACY!** It’s certainly worth the effort. **KALES SPOUDES !**

ANNUAL ORGANIZATION MEETING: Mailing was posted for all registered members of the Parish. If you have not received yours as yet, please request a copy from Office Secretary. Check your address and make sure you’re registered.

MEMORIALS TODAY : + **IRENE ARGYROS** + **IOANNIS BOLANOS**
Eternal be the memory of the faithfully departed !

MEMORIALS SEPTEMBER 17TH: + **SPYRIDON GALIATSATOS** + **BASILIKI VELLIOS**
+ **JAMES MAOUNIS** + **NICHOLAS MAOUNIS**
Eternal be the memory of the faithfully departed!



Greek Afternoon School Registration



SCHOOL YEAR 2023-2024

Children aged 5 through 13 years old may
be inscribed for weekday Greek Language, History ,
Religion and Culture lessons



REGISTRATION IS OPEN NOW!

Α Β Γ Δ Ε Ζ Η Θ Ι Κ Λ Μ
Ν Ξ Ο Π Ρ Σ Τ Υ Φ Χ Ψ Ω



REGISTRATION FEES

Books and Tuition: 1 child \$650 per year
 2 children \$950 per year

For further details contact the church Office at
718 -339-0280

Principal V. Rev. Fr. Eugene Pappas





**DAUGHTERS OF
PENELOPE
DEMETRA CHAPTER #33**



FOUNDERS DAY LUNCHEON

Join us as we celebrate our 30th Anniversary
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2023
12 NOON - 4:00 PM



THREE HIERARCHS CHURCH
1724 Avenue P
Brooklyn, NY 11229
718-339-0280

MENU

Roast Lemon Chicken (with all the trimmings)
Wine, Soda, Sweets and Coffee

DONATION: \$60.

R.S.V.P.



RAFFLE PRIZES FOR ALL

Effie Galiatsatos: Tel: 718-627- 0967 Email: esgaliatsatos@gmail.com
Argyri Apostolou: h. 718-777-2678 c.917-617-7974



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 - info@yahoo.gr

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος Μ'
Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 2581

Κυριακὴ ΙΓ' Ματθαίου (Μαθ. 21,33-42)
3 Σεπτεμβρίου 2023

Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος
Αὐγουστίνος Ν. Κανπιώτης

Εὐθύνη γιὰ τὴν Ἄμπελο

«Λέγουσιν αὐτῷ· Κακοὺς κακῶς ἀπολέσει αὐτοὺς, καὶ τὸν ἀμπελῶνα ἐκδώσεται ἄλλοις γεωργοῖς, οἵτινες ἀποδώσουσιν αὐτῷ τοὺς καρποὺς ἐν τοῖς καιροῖς αὐτῶν» (Μαθ. 21, 41)

Ἀκούσατε, ἀγαπητοί μου, τὸ ἱερὸ καὶ ἅγιο εὐαγγέλιο.

Τὸ **Εὐαγγέλιο** δὲν εἶνε ἕνα ἐπιστημονικὸ βιβλίο, μία ἀλγεβρα· δὲν εἶνε φιλοσοφικὸ βιβλίο, μὲ δύσκολους ὁρους, συλλογισμοὺς καὶ γριφώδη αἰνίγματα. Ὁ κόσμος τὸ μισὸ χρόνο, ἀπ' ὅσο δαπανᾷ γιὰ νὰ διαβάξῃ διάφορα βιβλία, ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πλεῖστον ἀχρηστα, ἐὰν τὸν διέθετε γιὰ νὰ μελετήσῃ τὸ Εὐαγγέλιο, θὰ ἦταν πολὺ καλύτερος. Τὸ Εὐαγγέλιο εἶνε **βιβλίο ἀπλό**· μπορεῖ νὰ τὸ καταλάβῃ καὶ ὁ ἀγράμματος.

Ἀλλὰ ἐδῶ εἶνε τὸ σπουδαῖο. Αὐτὸ τὸ ἀπλὸ βιβλίο ἔχει τέτοιο βάθος καὶ πλάτος, ὥστε καὶ ὁ πιὸ σοφὸς ἐπιστήμονας, ἑκατὸ χρόνια νὰ τὸ μελετᾷ, δὲν θὰ τὸ ἐξαντλήσῃ. Ὅλοι θαυμάζουν τὸ Εὐαγγέλιο· εἶνε τὸ αἰώνιο βιβλίο τῆς ἀνθρωπότητος. Σωστὰ εἶπαν, ὅτι τὸ Εὐαγγέλιο **μοιάζει μὲ τὴν ἀπέραντη θάλασσα** πού, ἐνῶ στὴν ἀκρογιαλιά τῆς παίζουσι καὶ κολυμποῦν μικρὰ παιδιὰ, στὰ μεγάλα βάθη καὶ πλάτη τῆς κινοῦνται πλοῖα μεγάλα, ὑπερκεάνια καὶ φάλαινες. Καὶ στὸ Εὐαγγέλιο ἡ μὲν ἀπλότης τῶν διδασμάτων του εἶνε προσιτὴ καὶ σὲ ἀγράμματους ψαράδες, τὸ βάθος ὁμως τῶν ἀληθειῶν του κάνει καὶ σοφοὺς νὰ ἐντρυφοῦν καὶ ζαλισμένοι νὰ μένουν ἐννεοί.

Μετὰ τὰ γενικά αὐτὰ ἂς ἔλθουμε τώρα **στὸ σημερινὸ εὐαγγέλιο** (βλ. Μαθ. 21,33-42), πού εἶνε μιὰ εἰκόνα ἀπὸ τὸ φυσικὸ κόσμος, ἀπὸ τὴ γεωργικὴ ζωή.

Ἕνας νοικοκύρης, λέει, πῆρε ἕνα χωράφι χέρσο, ἔβαλε φωτιά κ' ἔκαψε τ' ἀγκάθια, μάζεψε στὴν ἄκρῃ τὰ λιθάρια ἀπὸ τὸ χῶμα, κι ἀφοῦ τὸ ξεχέρωσε τὸ φύτεψε **ἀμπέλι**. Ἔσκαψε πατητήρι, νὰ συλλέγῃ τὸ μούστο ἀπὸ τὰ σταφύλια. Ὑψωσε γύρω - γύρω φράχτη κ' ἔχτισε πύργο γιὰ φρουρὰ ἀπὸ κλέφτες.

Ἐξωπλισμένο καλά, τὸ παρέδωσε σὲ γεωργούς νὰ τὸ καλλιεργοῦν καὶ ἔφυγε. Ἀλλὰ δὲν λησμόνησε τὸ ἀμπέλι του. Ὅταν πλησίασε ὁ καιρὸς τοῦ τρυγητοῦ, ἔστειλε ὑπηρετές νὰ τοῦ φέρουν τοὺς καρπούς. **Οἱ γεωργοὶ** ὁμως δὲν τοὺς δέχτηκαν καθόλου καλά· ἄλλον τὸν ἔδειραν, ἄλλον τὸν σκότωσαν, ἄλλον τὸν λιθοβολήσαν. Ὁ νοικοκύρης ἔστειλε πάλι ἄλλους ὑπηρετές, πιὸ πολλούς, μὰ καὶ σ' αὐτοὺς

τὰ ἴδια ἔκαναν. Τέλος τοὺς ἔστειλε τὸν ἴδιο τὸ γιοῦ του. Θὰ ντραποῦν, σκέφτηκε, τὸ γιοῦ μου. Ἀλλὰ οἱ κακοὶ γεωργοὶ σκέφτηκαν ἄλλιως. Μόλις εἶδαν τὸ γιοῦ τοῦ ἀφέντη, εἶπαν μεταξύ τους· Αὐτὸς εἶνε ὁ διδάσχος, ὁ φυσικὸς κληρονόμος· ἐλάτε νὰ τὸν βγάλουμε ἀπ' τὴ μέση, νὰ μείνῃ σ' ἐμᾶς ἡ κληρονομία του. Καὶ λυσσασμένοι **ἐπίασαν τὸ γιοῦ**, τὸν ἔβγαλαν ἔξω ἀπὸ τ' ἀμπέλι κ' ἐκεῖ **τὸν φόνευσαν**.

Αὐτὴ εἶνε ἡ παραβολή. Κάτω ἀπὸ αὐτὰ πού λέει ἐννεοῖ κάπ' ἄλλο. **Τὸ κλειδί τῆς ἐρμηνείας** ποῖο εἶνε; Εἶνε αὐτὸ πού βλέπουμε στὴ **θεῖα λειτουργία ὅταν λειτουργῇ ἐπίσκοπος**. Τότε, πρὶν ν' ἀναγνωσθῇ ὁ ἀπόστολος, στὸν τρισάγιο ὕμνο, ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς βγαίνει στὴν ὠραία πύλη, ὑψώνει τὰ βλέμματά του ἐπάνω καὶ κρατώντας τὰ δικηροτρύχηρα λέει· «**Κύριε Κύριε, ἐπὶ βλεψὼν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ καὶ ἶδε καὶ ἐπίσκεψαι τὴν ἀμπελον ταύτην καὶ κατάρτισαι αὐτήν, ἣν ἐφύτευσεν ἡ δεξιὰ σου**» (Ψαλμ. 79,15-16). Μὲ ἀπλούστερα λόγια· Ῥίξε, Κύριε, ἀπὸ τὸν οὐρανὸ μιὰ ματιὰ καὶ ἴδὲς τοῦτο τὸ ἀμπέλι, καλλιέργησε καὶ περιποιήσου το· δικό σου εἶνε, τὸ δεξιόν σου χέρι τὸ φύτεψε.

Φαίνονται παράδοξα τὰ λόγια αὐτά. **Ποῖο εἶνε τὸ ἀμπέλι;** Εἶνε ἡ **Ἐκκλησία**, οἱ Χριστιανοί, ἐσεῖς ὅλοι, ἄντρες γυναῖκες καὶ παιδιὰ, ὅσοι ἔχουν βαπτισθῇ εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τῆς ἁγίας Τριάδος. **Κάθε Χριστιανός**, σύμφωνα μὲ τὴν ἀλληγορικὴ γλῶσσα τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, εἶνε ἕνα κλῆμα, μιὰ ρίζα. Καὶ ὅπως ὅλο τὸ κτῆμα - ἀμπέλι ἔχει πολλὰς ρίζες, ἔτσι ἡ ἀμπελος τῆς Ἐκκλησίας ἔχει πολλὰ κλήματα, παλιὰ - γέρικα ἀλλὰ καὶ νεαρὰ πού ἀνανεώνουν τὴ φυτεία.

Τὸ ἀμπέλι θέλει φροντίδα, περιποίησι· σκάψιμο, πότισμα, θεοφίσιμα, κλάδεμα. Τὸ κλάδεμα ἀπαιτεῖ πείρα, γι' αὐτὸ λένε· Ἐχεις ἀμπέλι; πάρε νιὸ νὰ τὸ σκάψῃ ἀλλὰ γέρο νὰ τὸ κλαδέψῃ. Τὸ ἀμπέλι ἀκόμα χρειάζεται φράχτη καὶ φύλακα, δραγάτη. Ἔτσι καὶ ἡ χριστιανικὴ κοινωρία, ἡ Ἐκκλησία, ὁ λαὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ· ἔχει ἀνάγκη ἀπ' ὅλα αὐτά, καὶ πρὸ παντὸς ἀπὸ ἐμπειρο καλλιεργητῇ, κατάλληλο γεωργό.

Ποιοὶ εἶνε οἱ γεωργοὶ στὸ λαὸ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας; Ἐργάτες, πού πρέπει μέρα - νύχτα νὰ περιποιοῦνται τὰ κλήματα τῆς ἀμπέλου τοῦ Θεοῦ, εἶνε πρῶτα - πρῶτα **οἱ κληρικοὶ**· οἱ ἐπίσκοποι, ἱερεῖς, διάκονοι.

Εἶνε ἀκόμα οἱ **ἐκπαιδευτικοὶ καὶ παιδαγωγοί**· οἱ διδάσκαλοι καὶ καθηγηταί, ποὺ καλλιεργοῦν τὴ νεολαία μας πνευματικά, διανοητικά, ἀλλὰ καὶ θρησκευτικά καὶ πατριωτικά.

Παραπάνω ὅμως κι ἀπ' τὸν παπᾶ καὶ τὸ δάσκαλο, γεωργοὶ στὰ νεαρὰ κλήματα, στὰ παιδιὰ μας, εἶνε οἱ **γονεῖς**, ὁ πατέρας καὶ πρὸ παντὸς ἡ μάνα· γιατί μιὰ καλὴ μάνα ἀξίζει παραπάνω ἀπὸ ἑκατὸ δασκάλους.

Γεωργοὶ εἶνε ἀκόμα καὶ οἱ ἀνώτεροι **κρατικοὶ ὑπάλληλοι**, (ὁ ἀξιωματικός, ὁ ἀστυνόμος, ὁ δικαστής, ὁ ὑπάλληλος κ.λπ.) ὅσοι εἶνε ἐντεταλμένοι σὲ εἰδικούς τομεῖς τῆς κοινωνίας, νὰ ὑπηρετοῦν καὶ καλλιεργοῦν καὶ πνευματικά τὴν ἀμπελο τοῦ Κυρίου.

“Ὅλοι αὐτοὶ (ἐκκλησιαστικοὶ καὶ κρατικοὶ) πρέπει ὄχι μόνο **νὰ ἐργάζονται**, ἀλλὰ καὶ —μία λέξι— **νὰ συνεργάζονται**! Κάτι ποὺ δυστυχῶς δὲν συμβαίνει πάντοτε. Διότι, ἅμα δὲν ὑπάρχει συνεργασία, τότε τὸ ἀποτέλεσμα εἶνε λειψό, καμμιά φορὰ καὶ ἀντίθετο ἀπὸ τὸ ἐπιδιωκόμενο. “Ὅταν π.χ. ὁ παπᾶς καὶ ὁ δάσκαλος κάνουν ὅ,τι μποροῦν, ἀλλὰ μέσα στὸ σπίτι ἡ μάνα μὲ τὴ διαγωγή της ἀνατρέπη τὰ πάντα, ποῖο τὸ ὄφελος; ὁ ἕνας νὰ χτίζει κι ὁ ἄλλος νὰ γκρεμίζει, ὁ ἕνας νὰ φυτεύη κι ὁ ἄλλος νὰ ξεριζώνει; Χρειάζεται συντονισμός, **συνεργασία** ὅλων τῶν παραγόντων, ὥστε νὰ προκύψῃ καλὸ ἀποτέλεσμα.

Δυστυχῶς ὅμως συμβαίνει καὶ τὸ ἀκόμη χειρότερο· ὄχι συνεργασία ἀλλ’ **οὔτε κἂν ἐργασία γίνεται ὅπως πρέπει** μέσα στὸν ἀμπελῶνα τοῦ Κυρίου. “Ὅταν ὁ ἐπίσκοπος σκανδαλίζει, ὁ ἱερεὺς χάνη τὸ φόβο τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὁ δάσκαλος ἀμελεῖ, ἡ μάνα κι ὁ πατέρας αἰσχρολογοῦν κι ἀσχημονοῦν μπρὸς στὰ παιδιὰ, οἱ γέροι μὲ τ’ ἄσπρα μαλλιά μένουν κολλημένοι στὰ πάθη, ὅταν οἱ φρουροὶ τῆς νομιμότητος παρανομοῦν, τότε ἡ ἀμπελος τοῦ Κυρίου μοιάζει **ἀμπέλι ξέφραγο**.

Τότε ὅμως, γιὰ τὴ ζημιὰ αὐτὴ τῆς ἀμπέλου τοῦ Κυρίου ἐξ ὑπαιτιότητος τῶν ἐντεταλμένων, ἀκούγεται αὐστηρὰ ἡ ἀπόφασι τοῦ Θεοῦ. Τὸ σημερινὸ εὐαγγέλιο δὲν ἔχει μόνο τὴν τιμὴ καὶ ἐμπιστοσύνη στοὺς γεωργούς, ποὺ τοὺς ἀνετέθη νὰ φροντίσουν τὴν ἱερὰ ἀμπελο· ἔχει καὶ τὴν **ἀπειλὴ καὶ τιμωρία** τους, ἡ ὁποία καὶ ἐκπληρώθηκε κατὰ γράμμα. “Ὁ Κύριος, ἀφοῦ εἶπε τὴν παραβολή, στὸ τέλος ρώτησε τοὺς ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ πρεσβυτέρους τῶν Ἰουδαίων ποῦ τὸν ἀκουοῦσαν· “Δὲ μοῦ λέτε, ὅταν θὰ ῥηθῇ ὁ ἰδιοκτήτης τοῦ ἀμπελῶνος, τί θὰ κάνη στοὺς κακοὺς αὐτοὺς ἐργάτες, ποὺ οὔτε οἱ ἴδιοι φρόντισαν ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς ἀπεσταλμένους του ἐφόνευσαν; Κ’ ἐκεῖνοι, χωρὶς νὰ καταλαβαίνουν ὅτι αὐτοὺς ἀκριβῶς ἐννοοῦσε, ἀπήντησαν· —“**Κακοὺς κακῶς ἀπολέσει αὐτούς, καὶ τὸν ἀμπελῶνα ἐκδώσεται ἄλλοις γεωργοῖς**”· ἀφοῦ ἔδειξαν τέτοια κακὴ συμπεριφορὰ, κακὴ θὰ ᾖ καὶ ἡ ἀμοιβὴ τους, δηλαδὴ θὰ τιμωρηθοῦν (Ματθ. 21,41).

Καὶ πράγματι ὁ **παλαιὸς Ἰσραὴλ**, ποὺ ἦταν τὸ πρῶτο ἀμπέλι τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὁ περιούσιος λαὸς του, στὸν ὁποῖον ἔδωσε τὸ Δεκάλογο καὶ ἔστειλε μοναδικὲς φυσιογνώμιες πατριαρχῶν καὶ προφητῶν, ὁ λαὸς τὸν ὁποῖο προστάτευσεν καὶ ἔσωσε μὲ θαύματα, αὐτὸς ὁ λαὸς παρεξέκλινε ἀπὸ τὴν πορεία του, ἀθέτησε τὸ Νόμο τοῦ Κυρίου καί, ἀντὶ νὰ τοῦ δώσῃ

σταφύλια ἐκλεκτά, ἔδωσε ἀγκάθια καὶ τριβόλια. Τὸ ἀποτέλεσμα εἶνε γνωστό· τιμωρήθηκε παραδειγματικά, **σκορπίστηκε στοὺς τέσσερις ἀνέμους**. Σήμερα καὶ στὸ τελευταῖο χωριουδάκι τῆς Πίνδου θὰ ᾖς φτωχοὶ τσοπαναῖοι νὰ ἔχουν μιὰ ἐκκλησίαν· οἱ πᾶμπλουτοὶ ὅμως Ἑβραῖοι δὲν ἔχουν ἀξιοθῆ μὲχρι σήμερα νὰ ξαναχτίσουν τὸ ναὸ τους. Γιατί; Τοὺς ἀκολουθεῖ ἐκεῖνη ἡ κατάρρα, ἡ ὀργὴ τοῦ Θεοῦ· “**Κακοὺς κακῶς ἀπολέσει αὐτούς**”. Διότι φάνηκαν τόσο σκληροὶ, ὥστε νὰ πριονίσουν τὸν Ἰσραὴλ, νὰ σκοτώσουν τὸν Ἱερεμία, νὰ σταυρώσουν τὸν Υἱὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ.

Οἱ εὐθύνες ὅμως ποὺ βάραιναν τότε τὸν παλαιὸ Ἰσραὴλ **βαρύνουν τώρα ἐμᾶς**, ἀγαπητοί μου, τὸ νέο Ἰσραὴλ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας, τὸ δικό μας λαό. Ἐμεῖς εἴμαστε σήμερα ὁ περιούσιος λαὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ. Δὲν τὸ λέμε ἐγωιστικά, ἀπὸ ὑπερηφάνεια. Καὶ ἂν ἐμεῖς σιωπήσουμε, ἡ ἱστορία μαρτυρεῖ, ὅτι ἡ Ἑλλάδα ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὑπηρετήσε τὸ εὐαγγέλιο τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ κατέχει κεντρικὴ θέσι μέσα στὸ ἐκλεκτὸ ἀμπέλι του.

Θυμηθῆτε γιὰ παράδειγμα τὴ Μικρὰ Ἀσίαν, μὲ τὶς χιλιάδες ἐκκλησίες, τὰ μοναστήρια καὶ τὶς μητροπόλεις τῆς· ἦταν ἀμπέλι τοῦ Θεοῦ, μὲ σοφοὺς ἱεράρχες, ἱερεῖς καὶ δασκάλους, μοναχοὺς καὶ γονεῖς, μητέρες ποὺ μὲ δάκρυα καλλιέργησαν ἕνα σπουδαῖο λαό. Ἦταν ἀμπελος Κυρίου· καὶ ὄχι μόνο ἡ Μικρὰ Ἀσία ἀλλὰ καὶ κάθε γωνιὰ τῆς Ἑλλάδος.

Τώρα —μὴ λέμε ψέματα, μὴν κρυβώμαστε πίσω ἀπ’ τὸ δάχτυλό μας— νὰ δοῦμε τὴν πραγματικότητα, γιατί μόνο ὅποιοι ἀναγνωρίζουν τὰ λάθη τους διορθώνονται. Εἶνε λοιπὸν δυστύχημα ὅτι ἡ **ἀμπελος τοῦ Κυρίου ἔπεσε σὲ κακὰ χέρια**, σὲ κακοὺς γεωργούς. Ἐμεῖς οἱ δεσποτάδες —βάζω πρῶτα τὸν ἑαυτό μου— μὲ διάφορα σκάνδαλα, οἱ ἱερεῖς μὲ τὴν ἀμέλειά τους, οἱ ἐκπαιδευτικοὶ μὲ τὴν ἀπιστία καὶ ἀθεΐα τους, οἱ πλούσιοι μὲ τὴν φιλαργυρία τους, οἱ ὑπάλληλοι μὲ τὴν ἀσυνειδησία τους, ὅλοι **συμβάλαμε νὰ γίνῃ τὸ ἀμπέλι χέρσο, ὅλοι ἀμαρτήσαμε**, ὥστε ἡ πατρίδα μας, ποὺ ἦταν ἀμπελος Θεοῦ, νὰ γίνῃ **ἀμπέλι ξέφραγο**.

Ξέρετε ὅτι οἱ σᾶς λέω τὴν ἀλήθεια. Ὁφείλουμε νὰ ὁμολογήσουμε, ὅτι ἡ Ἑλλάδα τὰ τελευταῖα χρόνια, λόγῳ ἀναξίας ἡγεσίας, πολιτικῆς καὶ ἐκκλησιαστικῆς, ἔχει φτάσει **στὸ χεῖλος τῆς ἀβύσσου**, ἐγίνε ἀμπέλι ὅπου κάθε περαστικὸς μπορεῖ νὰ κάνῃ ὅ,τι θέλει.

Ἀλλὰ ἡ Ἑλλάδα πρέπει νὰ ζήσῃ, νὰ προχωρήσῃ, νὰ δοξαστῇ. **Εἴμαστε ὅλοι ὑπεύθυνοι**. Ἄς ἐργαστοῦμε λοιπόν· καὶ τότε ὁ Θεὸς θὰ εἶνε μαζί μας. Καὶ ἂν ὁ Θεὸς εἶνε μαζί μας, τότε ἄγγελοι θὰ φρουροῦν τὰ σύνορά μας.

Ἔτσι, ἀδελφοί μου καὶ πατέρες, μικροὶ καὶ μεγάλοι, ἂς δουλέψουμε, νὰ γίνῃ ἡ μικρὴ μας πατρίδα ἕνα **ἀμπέλι ἐκλεκτό**, ὥστε ὅταν ὁ ἐπίσκοπος λειτουργῇ, νὰ λήῃ πραγματικά· “**Κύριε Κύριε, ἐπίβλεψον ἐξ οὐρανοῦ καὶ ἴδε καὶ ἐπίσκεψαι τὴν ἀμπελον ταύτην καὶ κατάρτισαι αὐτήν, ἣν ἐφύτευσεν ἡ δεξιὰ σου**”» (Ψαλμ. 79,15-16).

(†) **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.

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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.

The Old Has Passed Away: All Things Are Made New

The fulfillment of the law is Christ himself, who does not so much lead us away from the letter as lift us up to its spirit. For the law's consummation was this, that the very lawgiver accomplished His work and changed letter into spirit, summing everything up in Himself and, though subject to the law, living by grace. He subordinated the law, yet harmoniously united grace with it, not confusing the distinctive characteristics of the one with the other, but effecting the transition in a way most fitting for God. He changed whatever was burdensome, servile and oppressive to what is light and liberating, so that we should be enslaved no longer under the elemental spirits of the world, as the Apostle says, nor held fast as bondservants under the letter of the law.

Justly, then, do we celebrate this mystery since it signifies for us a double grace. We are led toward the truth, and we are led away from

our condition of slavery to the letter of the law. How can this be? Darkness yields before the coming of the light, and grace exchanges legalism for freedom. But midway between the two stands today's mystery, at the frontier where types and symbols give way to reality, and the old is replaced by the new. Therefore, let all creation sing and dance and unite to make worthy contribution to the celebration of this day. Let there be one common festival for saints in heaven and men on earth. Let everything, mundane things and those above, join in festive celebration. Today this created world is raised to the dignity of a holy place for Him who made all things. The creature is newly prepared to be a divine dwelling place for the Creator

St. Andrew of Crete

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