



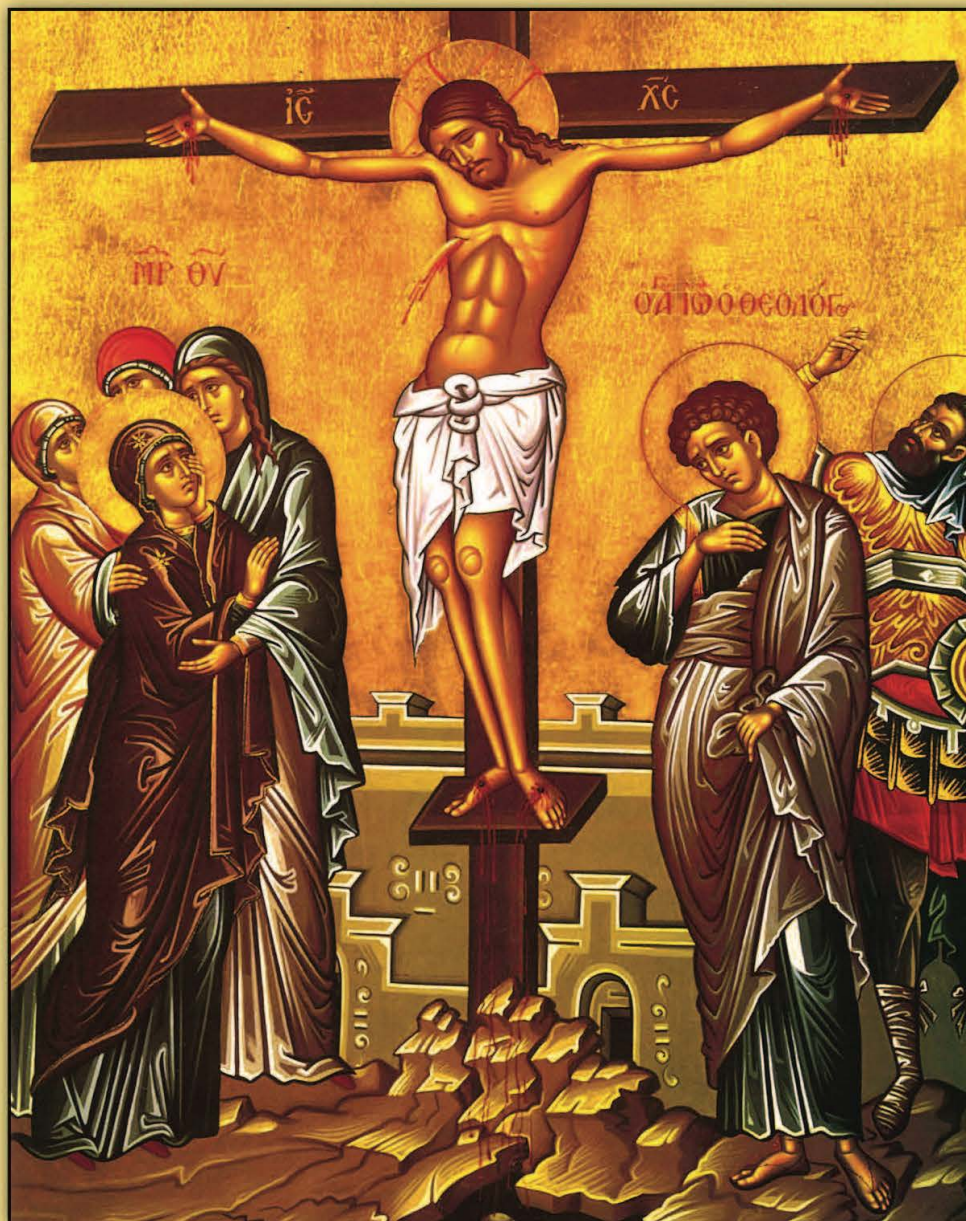
DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN
DISTRICT

THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN September 17h 2023

V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

SUNDAY AFTER THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS



Icon of the Crucifixion of Christ on the Cross

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 Galatians 2:16-20

Brethren, knowing that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the law, because by works of the law shall no one be justified. But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we ourselves were found to be sinners, is Christ then an agent of sin? Certainly not! But if I build up again those things which I tore down, then I prove myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

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 Γαλάτας 2:16-20 τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα

Ἀδελφοί, εἰδότες ὅτι οὐ δικαιούται ἄνθρωπος ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, ἐὰν μὴ διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπιστεύσαμεν, ἵνα δικαιωθῶμεν ἐκ πίστεως Χριστοῦ, καὶ οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου· διότι οὐ δικαιωθήσεται ἐξ ἔργων νόμου πᾶσα σὰρξ. Εἰ δέ, ζητοῦντες δικαιωθῆναι ἐν Χριστῷ, εὐρέθημεν καὶ αὐτοὶ ἁμαρτωλοί, ἄρα Χριστὸς ἁμαρτίας διάκονος; Μὴ γένοιτο. Εἰ γὰρ ἃ κατέλυσα, ταῦτα πάλιν οἰκοδομῶ, παραβάτην ἑμαυτὸν συνίστημι. Ἐγὼ γὰρ διὰ νόμου νόμῳ ἀπέθανον, ἵνα θεῷ ζήσω. Χριστῷ συνεσταύρωμαι· ζῶ δέ, οὐκέτι ἐγώ, ζῇ δὲ ἐν ἐμοὶ Χριστός· ὃ δὲ νῦν ζῶ ἐν σαρκί, ἐν πίστει ζῶ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ, τοῦ ἀγαπήσαντός με καὶ παραδόντος ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ.

The Gospel According to Mark 8:34-38; 9:1

The Lord said: "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? For what can a man give in return for his life? For whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." And he said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power."

Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος· Εἴ τις θέλει ὀπίσω μου ἔλθεῖν, ἀπαρνησάσθω ἑαυτὸν καὶ ἀράτω τὸν σταυρὸν αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἀκολουθείτω μοι. ὃς γὰρ ἂν θέλῃ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ σῶσαι, ἀπολέσει αὐτήν· ὃς δ' ἂν ἀπολέσῃ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ψυχὴν ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ καὶ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, οὗτος σώσει αὐτήν. τί γὰρ ὠφελήσει ἄνθρωπον ἐὰν κερδήσῃ τὸν κόσμον ὅλον, καὶ ζημιωθῇ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ; ἢ τί δώσει ἄνθρωπος ἀντάλλαγμα τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ; ὃς γὰρ ἐὰν ἐπαισχυνηθῇ με καὶ τοὺς ἐμοὺς λόγους ἐν τῇ γενεᾷ ταύτῃ τῇ μοιχαλίδι καὶ ἁμαρτωλῷ, καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐπαισχυνηθήσεται αὐτὸν ὅταν ἔλθῃ ἐν τῇ δόξῃ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ μετὰ τῶν ἀγγέλων τῶν ἁγίων. Καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς· ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι εἰσὶ τινες τῶν ὧδε ἐστηκότων, οἵτινες οὐ μὴ γεύσονται θανάτου ἕως ἂν ἴδωσι τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐληλυθυῖαν ἐν δυνάμει.



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA
ARCHDIOCESAN DISTRICT

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP Hour is being hosted by Frances Eugenis in tribute memory of her mother + Vasiliki Vellios of eternal memory. Please join us in WHITEHALL for refreshments after the Divine Liturgy.

Post Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross is observed TODAY. Are you wearing your baptism cross? Many of the faithful treasure the piece of jewelry to the point that it is obscured from sight in a 'safe deposit box'. Wear IT! It's your privilege to do so! It is witnessing publically for Jesus.

SENIOR CLUB FIRST MEETING: Wednesday September 20th, 1:00 P.M.

Up – coming CHURCHING of a new born daughter 'VIKTORIYA MEENA' of Vijay and Yekaterina (Desyarnikova) KITSON is scheduled for Sunday October 01st. NA SAS ZESE!

ANAVRITIOTI SOCIETY: will honor our Parish with their Annual Observance in solemn dedication to the PANAYIA PHANEROMENI (Our Lady of the Sign) with a ARTOCLASIA, MEMORIAL TRIBUTE, and FELLOWSHIP RECEPTION open to all in WHITEHALL on SUNDAY, OCTOBER 01ST. JOIN US!

DAUGHTERS of PENELOPE: Grand celebration and anniversary of FOUNDERS DAY is scheduled for the ROSEHALL on Sunday, October 29th, 2023 at 12 NOON. Please support our Demetra Chapter on this 30th, Jubilee Event. Check the insert flyer for all the details. SEE YOU THERE? OF course!

Archbisop Elpidophoros' Patronal Name-day Dinner is announced for SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5TH. In New York City. Further details will follow shortly.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW: on the evening of Friday, October 20th, through the all night vigil to Saturday, October 21st the Oil Streaming Tearful ICON of PANAGIA KARDIOTISSA will arrive at Three Hierarch Church. Her last appearance was over six years ago during the Lenten observance of the Holy Salutations to the Theotokos. Thousand of faithful from various churches creeds, races and ethnic groupings flooded the church all night long for an anointing and veneration of the miraculous healing presence of the Virgin Mother of God. Many clergymen heard confessions all through the night in preparation for the morning Divine Liturgy and reception of the EUCHARIST. Further details of the visitation, schedule of services and anointing will be forthcoming as the date approaches. This wonder working healing icon comes to us from Taylor, Pennsylvania where it is continually visible for reverence and prayer. NOW, she comes to US: WE ARE INDEED GRATEFUL!

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:

+ SPYRIDON GALIATSATOS	+ BASILIKI VELLIOS
+ JAMES MAOUNIS	+ NICHOLAS MAOUNIS
+ ZURAB PESVIANIDZE	

Up- coming memorial tribute for + Paraskevas (PERRY) Kokotas, second year anniversary will be hosted by the family on Sunday, October 01st, and Dennis Gonatas, 3 years.

Eternal be the memory of the faithfully departed!



Senior Club Newsletter September - October 2023



Wednesday September 20th, 1:00 P.M.

Opening HOME- COMING
B.I.N.G.O.
Sweets, treats, and more sweets!
Coffee, tea and soft drinks.

Wednesday September 27th, 1:00 P.M.



ORGANIZATIONAL DAY- join in the
planning of the autumn season
events, trips, field days!
B.I.N.G.O.
Autumn cakes and buns sweets
Coffee and soft drinks



Wednesday October 04th, 1:00 P.M.

Wine and Cheese Festival!
Tasting of the fruit of the vine
and a variety of cheeses and dips.
B.I.N.G.O.
Coffee, tea and MORE WINE!



Wednesday October 11th, 1:00 P.M.

COLUMBUS DAY TRIBUTE
Italian cookies, biscotti
coffee tea, soda
B.I.N.G.O.



Wednesday October 18th, 1:00 P.M.

PANAGIA KARDIOTISSA Tale of
miracle working anointing.
Distribution of the 'VISITING'
ICON on this Friday evening!



Light a Candle



Lecture by Fr. Eugene
Sweets, treats, coffee.
B.I.N.G.O.

Wednesday October 25th, 1:00 P.M.

OXI-DAY Observance 1940!
Flag waving, patriotic hymns
BLUE and WHITE colors of the day.
Grecian farmers luncheon,
Hearty soup, horiati salata,
Psomi tou fourno, and WINE!
B. I. N.G.O.



We are indeed pleased to welcome so many back to the 'table' in ROSEHALL. Some of our members have taken ill and we pray for their recovery and happiness. Always remember that if the weather proves inclement, telephone the church to verify the meeting is scheduled.....winter is around the corner with snow and ice.



Georgia Stamos
Co-President



Demetri Bouroutis
o-President







ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



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

Ἐκδίδεται ἀπὸ τὴν Κοινοβιακή Γυναικεῖα Ἱερὰ Μονὴ Ἁγίου Αὐγουστίνου Φλωρίνης – 531 00 ΦΛΩΡΙΝΑ – τηλ. 23850-28610 – imadflor@yahoo.gr

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος ΚΓ' Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 1287 ²	Κυριακὴ μετὰ τὴν Ὑψωσιν (Μάρκ. 8,34–9,1) 17 Σεπτεμβρίου 2023 (2006)	Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος Αὐγουστίνος Ν. Καντιώτης
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Προσκλητήριο ἐπιστρατεύσεως

«Ὅστις θέλει ὀπίσω μου ἀκολουθεῖν, ἀπαρνησάσθω ἑαυτόν» (Μάρκ. 8,34)

Τὸ Σεπτέμβριο, ἀγαπητοί μου, ποὺ ὁ λαός μας τὸν λέει καὶ **τρυγητὴ** γιατί τρυγοῦν τὸν εὐλογημένο καρπὸ τῆς ἀμπέλου, εἶνε ἡ **μεγάλῃ ἐορτῇ τοῦ Σταυροῦ**. Προσκυνοῦμε τὸ σταυρό, ποὺ κάνει θαύματα. Γιὰ παράδειγμα, στὴ Θήβα, σ' ἓνα χωριό, κάποιος ἔκοψε ἓνα πεῦκο καὶ μέσα στὸν κορμὸ εἶδε ζωγραφισμένο σταυρό, κ' ἔμεινε κατάπληκτος· χτύπησε ἡ καμπάνα, μαζεύτηκε λαὸς καὶ κληρὸς μὲ τὸ δεσπότη κ' ἔκαναν δέησι. Καὶ μόνο αὐτό; Ἀναρίθμητα τὰ θαύματα τοῦ σταυροῦ. Ἀλλὰ τὸ μεγαλύτερο, ἐμπρὸς στὸ ὁποῖο ὅλα τ' ἄλλα ὡχριοῦν, εἶνε ὅτι ὁ σταυρὸς –κι ὅταν λέμε σταυρὸ ἐννοοῦμε τὸν Ἑσταυρωμένο– τί ἔκανε; Πῆρε ἓνα λύκο καὶ τὸν ἔκανε ἀρνί· πῆρε τὸ ληστή, ποὺ τὰ χέρια του ἔσταζαν αἷμα, καὶ τὸν ἔκανε νὰ πῇ «*Μνήσθητί μου, Κύριε, ὅταν ἔλθῃς ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου*» (Λκ. 23,42). Αὐτὰ τὰ θαύματα, ποὺ μεταβάλλουν τὸν ἄνθρωπο, εἶνε τὰ μεγαλύτερα.

Τὸ Σεπτέμβριο λοιπὸν ἡ πιὸ μεγάλη γιορτὴ εἶνε ἡ Ὑψωσις τοῦ Σταυροῦ. Τὸν ἄλλο μῆνα, τὸν Ὀκτώβριο, οἱ Ἕλληνες ποὺ πιστεύουν στὸ Χριστὸ καὶ ἀγαποῦν τὴν πατρίδα περιμένουν νὰ ἐορτάσουν τὴν **ἐορτὴ τῆς 28ης Ὀκτωβρίου**, ποὺ γράφτηκε στὴν ἱστορία. Ἡ Ἰταλία μὲ τὸ δικτάτορά της χτύπησε τὴν πόρτα μας καὶ εἶπε· «Ἑλλάς, παραδόσου! προθεσμία τρεῖς ὥρες». Καὶ ἡ Ἑλλάς μὲ τὸ στόμα τοῦ τότε πρωθυπουργοῦ της ἀπῆντησε «*Μολὼν λαβέ!*» (αὐτὸ ποὺ εἶπαν οἱ πρόγονοί μας στὶς Θερμοπύλες)· εἶπε τὸ «Ὅχι». Ἦμουν νεαρὸς διάκονος στὸ Μεσολόγγι κι ἀκούω τὴ νύχτα νὰ χτυποῦν καμπάνες, νὰ τοιχοκολλοῦν προκηρύξεις καὶ ὅλοι νὰ λένε· Πόλεμος! **ἐπιστράτευσις!**... Εἴκοσι ἡλικίες κατετάγησαν. Ἀλλάξε ἡ ὄψις τῆς Ἑλλάδος. Οἱ γεωργοὶ ἀφῆσαν τὰ δρεπάνια, οἱ βοσκοὶ τὰ πρόβατα, οἱ ἐργάτες τὰ ἐργαλεῖα, οἱ δασκάλοι τὰ σχολεῖα. Τὰ παιδιὰ τῆς Ἑλλάδος, μὲ τὸ σταυρουδάκι τοῦ Κυρίου στὸ στήθος, μὲ

τὴν εὐχὴ μανάδων καὶ συζύγων ποὺ τοὺς φώναζαν «Ἡ Παναγία μαζί σας», ἀνέβηκαν στὰ βουνὰ τῆς Πίνδου. Καὶ πῆραν τὶς κορυφές καὶ τὶς ἔνωσαν μὲ τ' ἀστέρια! Ἡ Ἑλλὰς γνῶρισε μοναδικὴ τιμὴ. Τότε, ὅταν στὴ Νέα Ὑόρκη καὶ στὸ Λονδῖνο ἔβλεπαν Ἕλληνα, τὸν σήκωναν στὰ χέρια. Τέτοια δόξα εἶχε τὶς μέρες ἐκεῖνες ἡ πατρίδα μας ἐνωμένη ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.

Θὰ μοῦ πῆτε· Καλὰ εἶν' αὐτά, ἀλλὰ νὰ τὰ πῇ ὁ δάσκαλος, ὁ καθηγητής, ὁ νομάρχης, ὁ πρωθυπουργός, ὁ πρόεδρος τῆς δημοκρατίας. Ἐμεῖς ἀπὸ σένα περιμένουμε ν' ἀκούσουμε **λόγο ἐκκλησιαστικό**, ὄχι ἐθνικό.

Ἀπαντῶ. Γιὰ μᾶς οἱ γιορτὲς ἔχουν διπλὸ χαρακτηριστὴρα, θρησκευτικὸ καὶ ἐθνικό. **Πίστι καὶ πατρίδα εἶνε ἐνωμένα** ὅπως τὸ κρέας μὲ τὸ νύχι. Ὅποιος ἀγαπάει τὸ ἓνα, ἀγαπάει καὶ τὸ ἄλλο. Στὰ ψηλὰ βουνά, ποὺ ἀνεβήκαμε τὰ χρόνια ἐκεῖνα ὡς στρατιωτικοὶ ἱερεῖς, κάθε βράδυ γινόταν προσκλητήριο, καὶ ἀκουγες· «Ἀπὼν ἔπεσε ὑπὲρ πίστεως καὶ πατρίδος!» Κι ὅταν καταλάμβαναν μιὰ κορυφὴ καὶ ὕψωναν τὴ σημαία μας, ἔψαλλαν «*Τῇ ὑπερμάχῳ στρατηγῷ τὰ νικητήρια...*». Συνεπῶς, δὲν εἶμαι ἐκτὸς θέματος. Ἀλλωστε καὶ τὸ εὐαγγέλιο σήμερὰ ταιριάζει μ' αὐτὰ ποὺ λέω. Πῶς ταιριάζει;

Ἄν ἀγαποῦμε τὴν πατρίδα μιὰ φορά, χίλιες φορὲς πρέπει ν' ἀγαποῦμε τὸ Χριστὸ μας, ποὺ εἶνε πάνω ἀπὸ τὴν πατρίδα κι ἀπ' ὅλο τὸ σύμπαν. Κι ὅπως ἡ πατρίδα κάνει ἐπιστράτευσι, ἔτσι καὶ **ὁ Χριστὸς κάνει ἐπιστράτευσι**. Εἶνε ὁ ἀρχηγός μας, ὁ ἀρχιστράτηγός μας, ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν βασιλείων. Σημαία του ὁ τίμιος σταυρός· σάλπιγγα τὸ κήρυγμα τοῦ εὐαγγελίου· στρατιῶτες ὅλοι ἐμεῖς. Κι ὅπως ὁ στρατιώτης βγάζει τὰ ρούχα του καὶ βάζει τὴ στολὴ τοῦ στρατοῦ, ἔτσι κ' ἐμεῖς. Καὶ τὸ εὐαγγέλιο σήμερὰ, μὲ ἀπλὰ λόγια, τί λέει; Κάνει **προσκλη-**

τῆριο. Πόλεμος γίνεται! ὄχι ὁρατός, ἀλλὰ ἀόρατος καὶ ἀσυγκρίτως σπουδαιότερος. Ἐπιστράτευσι κάνει ὁ Χριστός. Τὸν ἀκούσατε τί εἶπε; «Ὅστις θέλει ὀπίσω μου ἀκολουθεῖν...» (Μάρκ. 8:34). Σὰς καλῶ ὄλους, λέει, ἄντρες - γυναῖκες - παιδιὰ, μικροὺς - μεγάλους, δεξιούς - ἀριστερούς, ὄλων τῶν χρωμάτων, νὰ καταταχθῇτε μὲ τὴν καρδιά σας ὑπὸ τὴν σημαία μου. Δὲν βιάζει κανένα. **Θέλει ἐθελοντάς,** ὄχι διὰ τῆς βίας. Ὁ Χριστὸς σέβεται τὴν ἐλευθερία μας.

Τί χρειάζεται; Ἐνα, δύο, τρία πράγματα. Τὸ ἕνα· «ἀπαρνησάσθω ἑαυτόν». Τὸ δεύτερο· «ἀράτω τὸν σταυρόν αὐτοῦ». Τὸ τρίτο· «καὶ ἀκολουθεῖτω μοι» (ἐλ.). Ἀπὸ αὐτὰ θὰ ἐξηγήσω τὸ πρῶτο, τὸ «ἀπαρνησάσθω ἑαυτόν».

Ὅποιος θέλει νὰ ᾖ Χριστιανός, «ἀπαρνησάσθω ἑαυτόν». Τί σημαίνει «ἀπαρνησάσθω ἑαυτόν»; Νὰ ἀρνηθῇς, νὰ μισήσῃς τὸν ἑαυτό σου. Δύσκολο πρᾶγμα αὐτό. Ὁ ἄνθρωπος εἶνε διπλός, ἔχει σῶμα καὶ ψυχὴ. Τί μᾶς λέει λοιπόν; Μερικοὶ τὸ ἐρμήνευσαν λάθος. Νόμισαν, ὅτι ὁ Χριστὸς λέει νὰ μισήσουμε τὸ σῶμα. Ὅχι· τέτοιο πρᾶγμα δὲν λέει ὁ Χριστός. **Τὸ σῶμα** εἶνε θαυμαστὸ δημιούργημα τοῦ Θεοῦ· τὰ μάτια, τὰ αὐτιά, ἡ καρδιά, τὰ ἑκατομμύρια κύτταρα, τὰ πάντα. Εἶνε τὸ πιὸ θαυμαστὸ ἐργοστάσιο. Δὲν εἶπε λοιπὸν ὁ Χριστὸς νὰ μισήσουμε τὸ σῶμα. Ἀντιθέτως πρέπει νὰ τὸ προσέξουμε. Καὶ πῶς τὸ βλάπτουμε; μὲ τίς διάφορες ἁμαρτωλὲς καταχρήσεις ποὺ κάνουμε. Ὅποιος ζῇ βίον ἐγκρατῆ, μὲ τὴ βοήθεια τοῦ Θεοῦ ἔχει καὶ ὑγεία· ὅποιος κάνει ἄσωτη ζωὴ, καταστρέφει καὶ τὴν ὑγεία.

Κάτι ἄλλο σημαίνει τὸ «ἀπαρνησάσθω ἑαυτόν». Ἐννοεῖ, νὰ μισήσουμε **τὸν διεφθαρμένο ἑαυτό μας**, τὴν κακία μας, τὸ κακὸ ποὺ φωλιάζει βαθειὰ μέσα στὴν καρδιά μας.

Μέσα στὸν ἄνθρωπο εἶνε **δυὸ δυνάμεις**· ἡ μία σὲ παίρνει καὶ σὲ ἀνεβάζει στὰ οὐράνια, ἡ ἄλλη σὲ ἀρπάζει καὶ σὲ βυθίζει στὸν ᾗδην· ἕνας ἄγγελος ποὺ μὲ τίς φτεροῦγες του μᾶς ὑψώνει στὸν οὐρανό, κ' ἕνας σατανᾶς ποὺ μᾶς σπρώχνει στὴν κόλασι. Ἄν θέλῃς γίνεσαι ἡ ἀπόστολος Παῦλος καὶ πετᾷς στὰ ὕψη ἢ ἰουδας καὶ προδίδεις τὸ Χριστό. Δυὸ δυνάμεις παλεύουν. Τὸ κακὸ μᾶς καλεῖ ὁ Χριστὸς νὰ μισήσουμε, τὴν ἁμαρτία, τὸ πάθος ἢ, ὅπως ἔλεγε ὁ ἅγιος Κοσμάς, τὸ «γουρουνάκι» ποὺ ἔχουμε μέσα μας καὶ μᾶς σπρώχνει στὸ κακὸ.

Τὸ κακὸ εἶνε πολύμορφον· ἡ **ἁμαρτία** εἶνε δέντρο μὲ πολλὰς διακλαδώσεις. Πορνεία, μοιχεία, κλοπὴ, πλεονεξία, γαστριμαργία, μῖσος, ὀργή... Πλῆθος οἱ ἁμαρτίες. Κι ὅταν αὐ-

τὲς χρονίζουν, ἡ ψυχὴ ἀποκτᾷ **πάθη**. «Ἀπαρνησάσθω ἑαυτόν» σημαίνει νὰ κηρύξουμε **αὐτοπόλεμον** ἐναντίον ὄλων αὐτῶν.

Ὡς νὰ μπορούσε ὁ ἄνθρωπος νὰ ξεερριζώσῃ αὐτὰ τὰ κακὰ! Δώστε μου ἄνθρώπους ἀπαλλαγμένους ἀπὸ ἁμαρτίες καὶ πάθη, καὶ ἡ γῆ θὰ γίνῃ παράδεισος. Τώρα τὸ κακὸ βασιλεύει καὶ **κάνει τὴ ζωὴ μας κόλασι**.

Δὲν θὰ πῶ περισσότερα. Πρὶν τελειώσω θὰ ὑπογραμμίσω ἕνα κακὸ, ποὺ μαστίζει ἐμᾶς τοὺς Ἕλληνες. Εἶνε ἡ **φιλονικία, τὸ μῖσος, ἡ διχόνοια**. Ἀναφέρω δύο - τρία παραδείγματα.

● Βλέπετε τὴν **οἰκογένεια** καὶ τὴ νομίζεις ἀγαπημένη. Ἡ γυναῖκα ὅμως μισεῖ τὸν ἄντρα, κι ἂς τρώῃ κι ἂς κοιμᾶται μαζί του. Ἐτσι ἐξηγεῖται πῶς μιὰ γυναῖκα πῆρε τσεκούρι καὶ σκότωσε τὸν ἄντρα της καὶ ἐφρίξε ὁ κόσμος.

● Ὅταν περιώδευα ὡς ἱεροκήρυκας στὴν Πίνδο μὲ τὰ πόδια -τὸ καλύτερο αὐτοκίνητο-, πέρασα κι ἀπὸ ἕνα **χωριό** μὲ βοσκούς, μὲ τοπία, μὲ δάση, μὲ νερὰ κρυστάλλινα - παράδεισος ἦταν. Σὲ λίγο ὅμως τί ἔμαθα· τὸ χωριὸ διχάστηκε. Ὁ σατανᾶς ἐσπείρε μῖσος ἀνάμεσά τους. Χωρίστηκαν σὲ δυὸ παρατάξεις, ἄρπαξαν τίς καραμπίνες καὶ σκοτωθήκανε. Δέκα νεκροὶ καὶ σαράντα τραυματίες! Ἐσβησε τὸ χωριό, δὲν ὑπάρχει. Ἐλειψε ἡ ἀγάπη; δὲν ὑπάρχει οὔτε οἰκογένεια οὔτε χωριό.

● Θέλετε κ' ἕνα ἄλλο; Αὐτὸ τὸ **μῆνα ἢ πατρίδα** θρηνεῖ τὴν ἐπέτειο τῆς μικρασιατικῆς καταστροφῆς· τέτοια ἐποχὴ ἦταν. Πῶς ἦρθε ἡ συμφορὰ; μᾶς νίκησαν οἱ Τοῦρκοι; Ὁχι. Ὁ ἱδιὸς ὁ Κεμάλ τὸ εἶπε· «Δὲ νικήσαμε τοὺς Ἕλληνες· μόνοι τους νικήθηκαν, μὲ τὴ διχόνοια». Ἐνωμένοι κι ἀγαπημένοι, ἤμασταν ἀήττητοι· ὅταν γίναμε δυὸ παρατάξεις, διαλυθήκαμε.

Καὶ τώρα πάλι τέτοια σημάδια διαιρέσεως παρουσιάζονται. Καὶ κλαίω κι ἀναστενάζω, γιατί φοβᾶμαι καμμιά νέα καταστροφὴ χειρότερη. Διότι **φύγαμε ἀπὸ τὸ Θεό**.

Ὁ Χριστὸς κάνει προσκλητήριο ἐπιστρατεύσεως. Ὁ σταυρὸς του κάνει θαύματα, **κάνει καὶ τοὺς λύκους ἄρνια**. Ἡ Ἐκκλησία μας καλεῖ ὅλα τὰ παιδιὰ της κοντά, χωρὶς διακρίσεις, σὰν τὴν κλῶσσα ποὺ ἀγαπάει ὅλα τὰ πουλάκια της ὁποιοδήποτε χρῶμα κι ἂν ἔχουν. Κ' ἐσεῖς εἰστε παιδιὰ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας καὶ τῆς πατρίδος. Μεῖνετε ἀγαπημένοι καὶ ἐνωμένοι. Τότε θὰ ἐορτάζουμε μὲ ἀγαλλίασι τίς μεγάλες ἐορτὲς καὶ θὰ λέμε· Δόξα στὸ Θεό, δόξα στὸ Χριστό· ὄν, παῖδες Ἑλλήνων, ὕμνεῖτε καὶ ὑπερυψοῦτε εἰς πάντας τοὺς αἰῶνας· ἀμήν.

(†) **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.

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.

Whatever Their Size, Carry Them

"Whoever loses his life for my sake and the Gospel's will save it." One who knew the meaning of Jesus' words so well was Flannery O'Connor, the distinguished Catholic novelist who died in 1964 at the age of 39. From the age of 25 she lived with the knowledge she had a terminal disease, Lupus, - not to mention her sufferings from bone disintegration, shingles, anemia, and a tumor. Yet it was during fourteen years of sickness and suffering that she produced her greatest works of literary art. Her strong faith enabled her to say: "I have never been anywhere but sick. In a sense sickness is a place, more instructive than a long trip to Europe. Sickness before death is a very appropriate thing and I think those who don't have it miss one of God's mercies ..."

Those are strong words! How could a young woman call sickness one of God's mercies? Yet Jesus' words in the Gospel are just as strong: "If a man wishes to come after me, he must deny his very self, take up his

cross, and follow in my steps."

In some way Flannery O'Connor was able to accept the cross of her sickness and follow in the Lord's footsteps. But she didn't do it with a nice sweet smile on her face. She did it with strong courage and conviction. She realized that her own sickness was the very thing that helped her to look at life around her with the eyes of faith; and to translate that life into literary pages that would win her international fame as a writer. Each one of us is called upon to carry a cross in our life at some time. For some it may be the cross of emotional or spiritual suffering, rather than physical suffering. Sometimes there are big crosses, sometimes small. Whatever their size, Jesus calls upon us to carry them.

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