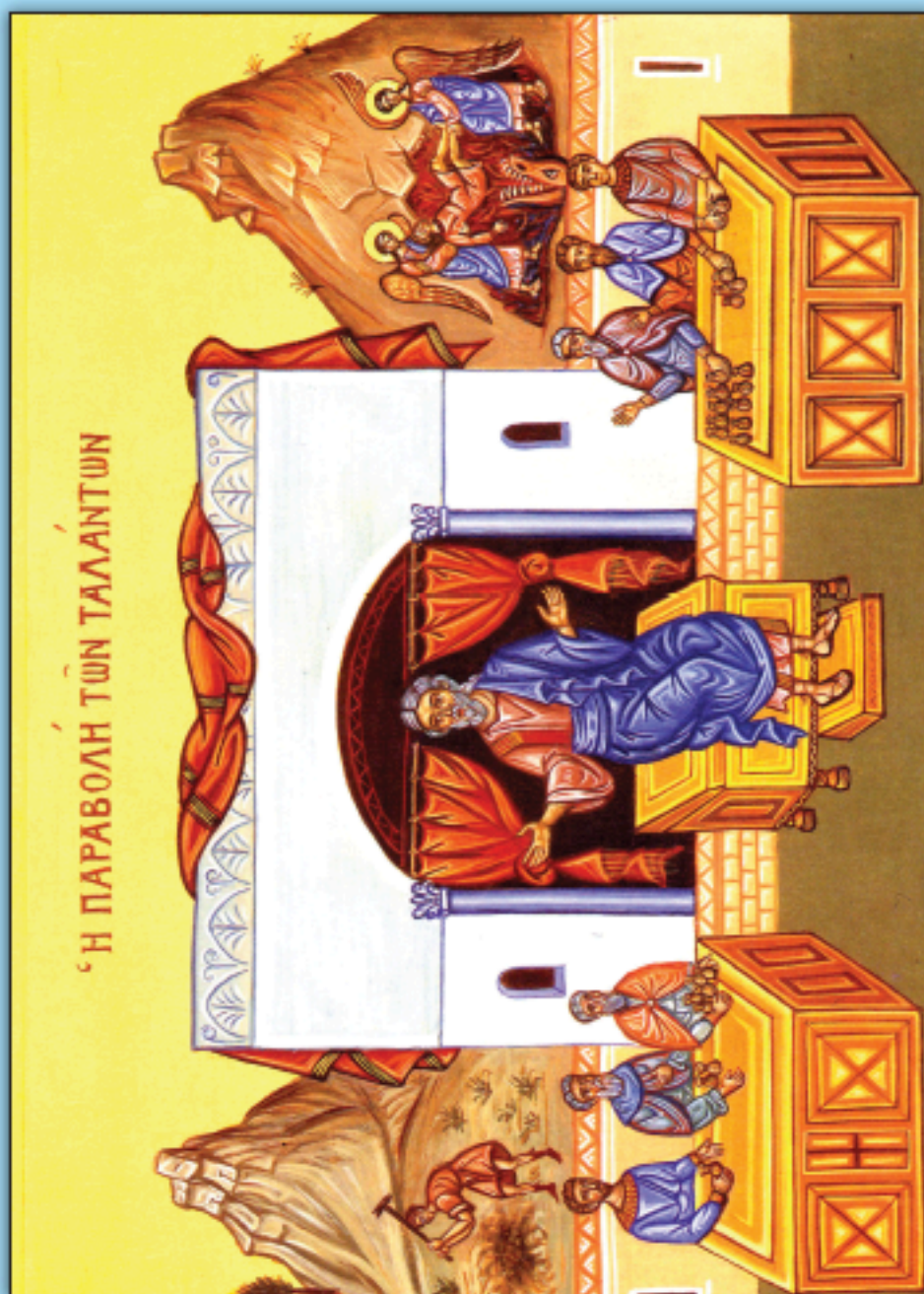


THREE HIERARCHS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SUNDAY WEEKLY BULLETIN February 11th, 2024
V. Rev. Archimandrite Eugene N. Pappas

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW



Icon of the Parable of the Ten Talents (Matthew 25:14-30)

Prokeimenon. Mode 3

Psalm 46.6,1

Sing praises to our God, sing praises.

Verse: Clap your hands, all you nations.

The reading is from St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 6:1-10

Brethren, working together with him, we entreat you not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says, "At the acceptable time I have listened to you, and helped you on the day of salvation." Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. We put no obstacle in any one's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, tumults, labors, watching, hunger; by purity, knowledge, forbearance, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

Προκείμενον. Ἦχος γ'

ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 46.6,1

Ψάλατε τῷ Θεῷ ἡμῶν, ψάλατε.

Στίχ. Πάντα τὰ ἔθνη κροτήσατε χεῖρας.

Πρὸς Κορινθίους β' 6:1-10 τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα

Ἀδελφοί, συνεργοῦντες δὲ καὶ παρακαλοῦμεν μὴ εἰς κενὸν τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ δέξασθαι ὑμᾶς - λέγει γάρ, Καὶρῷ δεκτῷ ἐπήκουσά σου, καὶ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ σωτηρίας ἐβοήθησά σοι· ἰδοὺ, νῦν καιρὸς εὐπρόσδεκτος, ἰδοὺ, νῦν ἡμέρα σωτηρίας - μηδεμίαν ἐν μηδενὶ διδόντες προσκοπήν, ἵνα μὴ μωμηθῇ ἡ διακονία· ἀλλ' ἐν παντὶ συνιστῶντες ἑαυτοὺς ὡς θεοῦ διάκονοι, ἐν ὑπομονῇ πολλῇ, ἐν θλίψεσιν, ἐν ἀνάγκαις, ἐν στενοχωρίαις, ἐν πληγαῖς, ἐν φυλακαῖς, ἐν ἀκαταστασίαις, ἐν κόποις, ἐν ἀγρυπνίαις, ἐν νηστείαις, ἐν ἀγνότητι, ἐν γνώσει, ἐν μακροθυμίᾳ, ἐν χρηστότητι, ἐν πνεύματι ἀγίῳ, ἐν ἀγάπῃ ἀνυποκρίτῳ, ἐν λόγῳ ἀληθείας, ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ, διὰ τῶν ὅπλων τῆς δικαιοσύνης τῶν δεξιῶν καὶ ἀριστερῶν, διὰ δόξης καὶ ἀτιμίας, διὰ δυσφημίας καὶ εὐφημίας· ὡς πλάνοι καὶ ἀληθεῖς· ὡς ἀγνοοῦμενοι, καὶ ἐπιγινωσκόμενοι· ὡς ἀποθνήσκοντες, καὶ ἰδοὺ, ζῶμεν· ὡς παιδευόμενοι, καὶ μὴ θανατούμενοι· ὡς λυπούμενοι, ἀεὶ δὲ χαίροντες· ὡς πτωχοί, πολλοὺς δὲ πλουτίζοντες· ὡς μηδὲν ἔχοντες, καὶ πάντα κατέχοντες.

The Gospel According to Matthew 25:14-30

The Lord said this parable: "A man going on a journey called his servants and entrusted to them his property; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them; and he made five talents more. So also, he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master.' And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here I have made two talents more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master.' He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not winnow; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' But his master answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sowed, and gather where I have not winnowed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to every one who has will more be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth.' As he said these things he cried out: "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

Coffee FELLOWSHIP Hour: TODAY is being hosted and served by the Parish Council in Whitehall after the Divine Liturgy:

ARTOKLASIA TODAY: is offered in loving tribute to SAINT HARALAMBOS (solemnized yesterday- February 10th) by Harry ORTHOS. May our beloved ‘Harry’ be blessed with life, joy, peace and health.
CHRONIA POLLA!

Senior Club Members: will host their ‘VALENTINE DAY’ celebration on Wednesday, February 14th, at 1:00 P.M. in Whitehall. The colors for the day are RED and White: Be a walking Valentine’s Day card. Loving cards, hearts, sweets and treats of all sorts will be served to all in attendance. **B I N G O** crowns the afternoon for the avid players. Come down any Wednesday afternoon at 1:00 P.M .and join us!

A.H.E.P.A. HELLENIC HISTORY TOURNAMENT will be held on Saturday, February 17th with \$4,500 in cash prizes. The ‘JEOPARDY- LIKE’ competition is for student teams of three from grades 8th through 12th. The NEW YORK STATE venue is at Saint Nicholas Church – Flushing, N.Y. Competition commences at 11:00 A.M. Please see centerfold flyer.

PRAYER HEALING SERVICE as per usual is scheduled for **WEDNESDAY – FEBRUARY 21st**. You’ve read about it, but have yet to attend! Give it a try. It’s an informal yet structured spiritual and intellectual epiphany on so many levels. The round circle discussions involve homily, scripture, prayer, witnessing, anointing and concludes with’ Goode Olde ‘ Christian fellowship with familiar and unfamiliar faces from Church. We invite you to join us.

PHILOTOCHOS LADIES will convene a General Membership Meeting on Sunday, February 25th, directly after Divine Liturgy and the Coffee Fellowship Hour.

HOLY CROSS OUTREACH CENTER: will celebrate the 10th ANNIVERSARY of the philanthropic Pan – Orthodox distribution center of food, clothes, toiletries and other items to those in need. The celebration – **OPEN TO ALL** is at the CEBU RESTURANT on Monday, February 26th, (BAY RIDGE 3rd AVENUE AND 88th STREET) from 6:00 TO 9:00 P.M. Political dignitaries will attend. **OPEN TO ALL!**

PASTA LUNCHEON: Each year the ‘GOLDEN GREEKS’ BOY SCOUT TROOP #531 hosts and serves the spectacular fundraiser for the young lads. Mark your calendar from NOW: **SUNDAY – MARCH 03rd**. (The Gospel of the PRODIGAL SON). Since the event will be before LENT commences, a variety of sauces, meats, marinara, garlic and oil and many other GRECO-ITALO savory treats will be presented. Beer Wine, Soda and desserts will be offered. The afternoon of food fun and fellowship will include the ‘myriad’ of raffle prizes and the **GRANDE 50/50** cash drawing, join us

AGIASMOS HOLY WATER BLESSING) is offered on the **FIRST** of EACH MONTH! Except when it falls on a Sunday and is transferred to the next day (MONDAY). Please keep this in mind with every **FIRST** of the MONTH at 11:00 A.M. **KALO MINA!** The next Agiasmos: **IS SCHEDULED FOR FRIDAY, MARCH 1st, AT 11:00 A.M. PREPARE YOURSELF WITH HOLY WATER FOR LENT (Tessarakosti).**

Scouting Programs are in full review. All youngsters male and female are invited to enroll at any time in our CUB SCOUT, BOY SCOUT, and GIRL SCOUT programs that meet every Friday evening from 7:00-9:00 P.M. in Whitehall, Rosehall and the GYM! This is an opportunity for mental physical, spiritual and moral health building. We are indeed proud of our TROOPS! Congratulations to our leaders and chaperones.

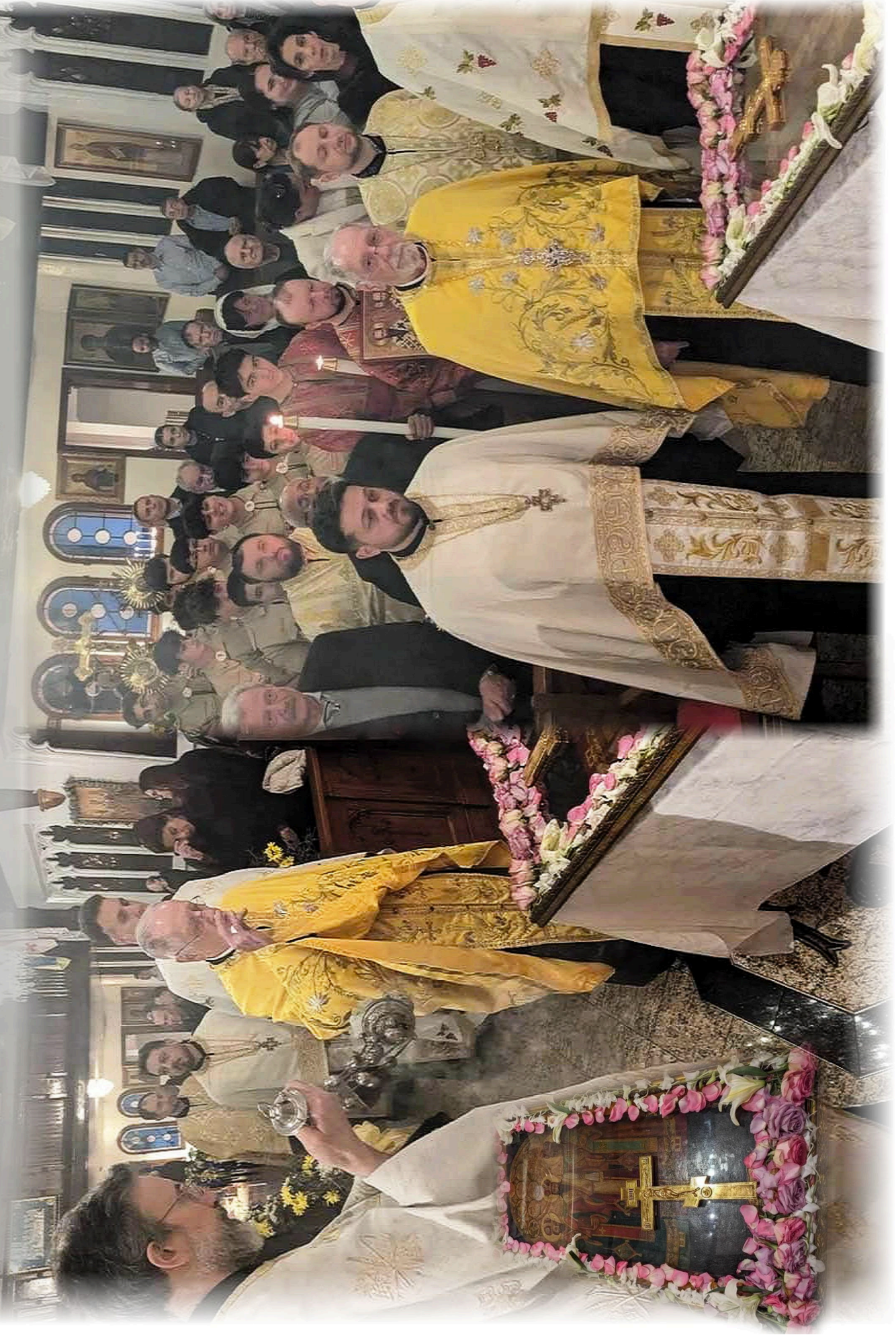
T.H.Y. Our **TEEN CLUB** meets on Friday evenings from 9:00-11:00P.M for activities, fellowship, games and friendships. All teens (13 through 18) are invited to join on any Friday evening. Just show up, and we’ll do the rest!

HAVE YOU REGISTERED YOUR STEWARDSHIP MEMBERSHIP TO THREE HIERARCH CHURCH FOR THE NEW YEAR 2024? Please remember it’s a privilege as well as an obligation to register support for your parish church. **BE A MEMBER! GOD DOES WONDERS!**

MEMORIALS TODAY + MENELAOS and STAVROULA (Stella) BONIS
February 18th: + APOSTOLOS + ALEXANDRA PAPOUTSAKIS
+ MARY GEORGHIOU + FRANCES PAVLAKOS + ANDREAS MANICKAS

Eternal be the souls of the faithfully departed

The officiating celebrant for the Great Vesper was the Pastor of our sister-parish of Holy Cross, the V.Rev. Gerasimos Makris. The guest homilist for the evening celebration was the Dean of Saint Contantine and Helen Cathedral. Fr. Evagoras Constantinides. A sumptuous buffet reception followed the service hosted by the Ladies Philoptochos Society in Whitehall. The Daughters of Penelope Demetra Chapter #33 hosted the second reception after the Divine Liturgy the following morning.





The festivities of the Three Hierarchs Great Vesper on January 29th, are highlighted here with the presence of distinguished visiting clergy from the Holy Archdiocese..the Antiochian Archdiocese and the Ukrainian Archdiocese of America.



ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ

ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΝ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ



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

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

Περίοδος Δ' - Ἔτος Κ' Φλώρινα - ἀριθμ. φύλλου 957*	Κυριακὴ ΙΣΤ' Ματθαίου 11 Φεβρουαρίου 2024 ἑσπέρας (2003)	Συντάκτης (†) ἐπίσκοπος Αὐγουστίνος Ν. Καντιώτης
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Β'. Γιατί νὰ Τὸν ἀγαποῦμε

(Τὴν περασμένη Κυριακὴ εἶδαμε, ὅτι τὸ μεγαλύτερο ἁμάρτημα ἐνὸς Χριστιανοῦ, ἁμάρτημα γὰρ τὸ ὁποῖο ὁ Παῦλος κρίνει τὸν ἁμαρτωλὸ ὄχι ἀναθεματισμοῦ, εἶνε τὸ νὰ μὴν ἀγαπᾷ τὸν Χριστό. Τώρα θὰ δοῦμε, γιατί πρέπει ν' ἀγαποῦμε τὸν Χριστό)

Ἐπάρχουν, ἀγαπητοί μου, **μύριοι λόγοι**, γιὰ τοὺς ὁποίους πρέπει ν' ἀγαποῦμε τὸν Κύριο καὶ ἡ καρδιά μας νὰ φλέγεται ἀπὸ τὴν ἀγάπῃ του. **Ποιοὶ εἶνε οἱ λόγοι αὐτοί;**

Πρέπει ν' ἀγαποῦμε τὸν Κύριο πρῶτον **γιὰ τὶς ὑλικὲς εὐεργεσίαις του**. Εἶνε ὁ Δημιουργὸς καὶ Πλάστης μας. Ρίξτε ἓνα βλέμμα γύρω στὴ φύσι. Κοιτάξτε τὸ ταπεινὸ χορτάρι. Λὲς καὶ κάποιος μυστικὸς ἀργαλειὸς δουλεύει ὅλο τὸ χειμῶνα μέσ' στὰ σπλάχνα τῆς γῆς καὶ ὑφαίνει περσικοὺς τάπητες, καὶ τὴν ἀνοιξὶ στρώνει ὅλη τὴ γῆ. Τὸ χορτάρι ποὺ πατοῦμε δὲν εἶνε δικό μας· εἶνε τοῦ Χριστοῦ. Τὰ δέντρα, ποὺ τὰ κλαδιά τους λυγίζουν ἀπὸ τοὺς καρπούς, τοῦ Χριστοῦ εἶνε. Τὰ ῥυάκια ποὺ κελαρύζουν, οἱ ποταμοὶ ποὺ κυλοῦν τὰ ῥεύματά τους, ἡ θάλασσα ποὺ ἀπλώνεται μεγάλη κι ἀφρίζει, ἔργα τοῦ Χριστοῦ εἶνε. Τὰ ζῶα ποὺ μᾶς ὑπηρετοῦν, τὰ πουλιὰ ποὺ ψάλλουν μέσ' στὰ δάση, ὅλα τοῦ Χριστοῦ εἶνε. Ὁ ἀέρας, μὲ τὸ ὄξυγόνο ποὺ ἀναπνέουμε, τοῦ Χριστοῦ εἶνε. Ὁ ἥλιος, ποὺ μᾶς θερμαίνει, τοῦ Χριστοῦ εὐεργεσία εἶνε. Ἀτενίστε καὶ τὴ νύχτα τὸν οὐρανό· θὰ δεῖτε στὰ ὕψη μυριάδες ἀστέρια, καντήλια καὶ πολυελέους τοῦ Ὑψίστου. Ὅλα αὐτὰ εὐεργεσίαις τοῦ Χριστοῦ μας εἶνε.

Δὲν σὰς εἶπα τίποτα. Περισσότερο ἀπ' ὅλα αὐτά, ἐλάτε νὰ σὰς πᾶω κάπου ἄλλου νὰ θαυμάσετε τὸ Θεό. Ἐκεῖ πλέον κι ὁ ἄπιστος γίνεται πιστός. Ἐλάτε μέσα **στὸ σπῆτι** ἐνὸς οἰκογενειάρχου καὶ πλησιάστε στὴν κούνια τοῦ παιδιοῦ. Τὸ κλάμα τοῦ παιδιοῦ, τὸ χαμόγελο τοῦ παιδιοῦ, εἶνε ἀνώτερα ἀπὸ τὰ ἀστρα καὶ τὰ λουλούδια. Μανάδες, ποὺ κρατᾶτε στὴν ἀγκαλιά σας αὐτοὺς τοὺς ἀγγέλους, σκεφτήκατε, ὅτι αὐτὰ εἶνε δῶρα τοῦ Χριστοῦ μας;

Αὐτὰ δὲν εἶνε δικές μου ἰδέες, ἀγαπητοί μου· **εἶνε λόγια τοῦ Εὐαγγελίου**. Τὸ εὐαγγέλιο ποὺ διαβάζεται τὴ νύχτα τῆς Ἀναστάσε-

ως λέει· «*Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ Λόγος...*». Καὶ παρακάτω· «*Πάντα*», ὅλα τὰ δημιουργήματα, «*δι' αὐτοῦ*», διὰ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, «*ἐγένετο, καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἓν ὃ γέγονεν*» (ἰ. 1,3). Δὲν ὑπάρχει τίποτε στὸν κόσμον ποὺ νὰ ἔγινε χωρὶς τὴ δύναμι καὶ τὴ θέλησί του.

Καὶ αὐτὰ μὲν εἶνε οἱ ὑλικὲς τοῦ εὐεργεσίαις. Ἄλλ' ἐκτὸς ἀπὸ αὐτὲς ὑπάρχουν καὶ **οἱ πνευματικὲς εὐεργεσίαις**. Ὁ ἄνθρωπος, λόγῳ τοῦ δεσμοῦ μὲ τὴ γῆ καὶ τὶς φυσικὲς ἀνάγκες, αἰσθάνεται τὶς ὑλικὲς εὐεργεσίαις. Πόσοι δμως αἰσθάνονται καὶ τὶς πνευματικὲς εὐεργεσίαις; Ποιὲς εἶν' αὐτές; Ἡ μεγαλύτερη, ἡ ὑψίστη εὐεργεσία, τὸ ἀποκορύφωμα τῆς ἀγάπης τοῦ Χριστοῦ, εἶνε τὸ τίμιο ξύλο, τὸ «*τρισμακάριστον ξύλον, ἐν ᾧ ἐτάθη Χριστός*» (κατὰ Ἰ. 1, 36), δηλαδὴ ὁ τίμιος σταυρός.

Κι ἂν ἀκόμη, ἀγαπητοί μου, ἔλειπαν ὅλα δὲ ὑπάρχουν στὸν κόσμον καὶ ὑπῆρχε μόνο ὁ σταυρός, ἔφτανε καὶ μόνο ὁ σταυρὸς νὰ μαρτυρήσῃ τὸ μήκος καὶ τὸ πλάτος καὶ τὸ ὕψος τῆς ἀγάπης τοῦ Θεοῦ. Πόσο ἀγάπησε ὁ Θεὸς τὸν κόσμον! «*Οὕτω γὰρ ἠγάπησεν ὁ Θεὸς τὸν κόσμον, ὥστε τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ τὸν μονογενῆ ἔδωκεν, ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν μὴ ἀπόληται, ἀλλ' ἔχῃ ζωὴν αἰώνιον*» (ἰ. 3,16).

Τί λέξεις καὶ τί εἰκόνες νὰ βρῶ γιὰ νὰ σὰς δεῖξω τὴν ἀγάπῃ τοῦ Χριστοῦ πρὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπο; Θ' ἀναφέρω **δύο - τρία παραδείγματα**, γιὰ νὰ τονίσω, ὅτι παραπάνω ἀπὸ τὶς φυσικὲς εἶνε οἱ πνευματικὲς εὐεργεσίαις του.

α'. Ὑπάρχει ἓνα πουλὶ ποὺ λέγεται **πελεκᾶνος**. Ὅσοι ἔχουν ζήσει στὴν ὑπαιθρο, θὰ τὸ ἔχουν δεῖ. Ὁ πελεκᾶνος εἶνε φιλόστοργος, ἀγαπᾷ τὰ παιδιά του. Συμβαίνει λοιπὸν κάποτε, ὅταν ὁ πελεκᾶνος λείπῃ γιὰ νὰ φέρῃ τροφή, ἡ φωλιά νὰ μείνῃ ἀφροῦρητῇ καὶ τότε φίδι φαρμακερὸ κατορθώνει νὰ φτάσῃ ὡς ἐκεῖ καὶ νὰ δηλητηριάσῃ τὰ παιδιά του. Ὅταν

ὁ πελεκᾶνος γυρίζει, βλέπει τὰ πουλιά του νὰ σπαρταροῦν. Δὲν εἶνε βέβαια γιατρός οὔτε φαρμακοποιός· ἀλλὰ ἡ ἀγάπη, τὸ ἐνστικτο, τὸν κάνει καὶ γιατρὸ καὶ φαρμακοποιό. Αὐτό, ποὺ ὕστερα ἀπὸ τόσους αἰῶνες ἀνακάλυψε ἡ ἐπιστήμη, τὴ μετὰγγισι αἵματος, τὸ γινώριζε ὁ πελεκᾶνος νωρίτερα. Ὅταν λοιπὸν βλέπη τὰ πουλιά του νὰ κινδυνεύουν, σχίζει μὲ τὸ ράμφος τὸ στήθος του πρὸς τὴν καρδιά, παίρνει ἀπ' τὸ δικό του ζωογόνο αἷμα, ποτίζει ἕνα - ἕνα τὰ πουλιά του, κι αὐτὰ ζωντανεύουν· ἀναζωογονοῦνται μὲ τὸ αἷμα τοῦ πατέρα τους.

Παράδειγμα εἶνε αὐτό. Ποιά εἶνε τὰ πουλιά; Ἐμεῖς ὅλοι. Ποιὸ εἶνε τὸ φίδι; Εἶνε ὁ σατανᾶς, ὁ ἐωσφόρος, «ὁ ὄφις ὁ μέγας ὁ ἀρχαῖος,... ὁ πλανῶν τὴν οἰκουμένην ὄλην» (Ἰη. 12,3). Ποιὸ εἶνε τὸ φάρμακ; Ἡ ἁμαρτία. Ποιός εἶνε ὁ πελεκᾶνος; Εἶνε ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, ποὺ ἀνοίξε τὴν πλευρά του καὶ πότισε τὴν ἀρρωστημένη ὑπαρξί μας μὲ τὸ ζωογόνο αἷμα του. Δὲν σὰς λέω δικὰ μου φανταστικά πράγματα. Τὸ βράδυ τῆς Μεγάλης Παρασκευῆς, ὅταν θὰ παρακολουθήσετε τὸν Ἐπιτάφιο θρῆνο, μεταξὺ τῶν ἄλλων ὡραίων τροπαρίων θ' ἀκούσετε νὰ ψάλλῃ ὁ ψάλτης·

«Ὅσπερ πελεκᾶν
τετρωμένος τὴν πλευράν σου, Λόγε,
σοὺς θανόντας παῖδας ἐζώωσας
ἐπιστάξας ζωτικὸς αὐτοῖς κρουνούς» (Ἐκ.).

Ὁ Χριστέ! σὺν τὸν πελεκᾶνο, ποὺ ἀνοίξε τὴν πλευρά του καὶ ἔσταξε στὸ στόμα τῶν παιδιῶν του τὸ αἷμα του τὸ ζωογόνο, ἔτσι κ' ἐσὺ ἀνοίξεις τὶς φλέβες σου καὶ **μᾶς πότισες μὲ τὸ αἷμα σου τὸ τίμιο.** Τὸ εἶχε πεῖ ὁ ἀπόστολος Παῦλος· Ἦμασταν νεκροὶ λόγῳ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν, καὶ ὁ Θεὸς «μᾶς ζωοποίησε μαζὶ μὲ τὸ Χριστό» (βλ. Εφ. 2,5· Κολ. 2,13).

Ἀλλὰ δυστυχῶς **δὲν ἀγαποῦμε τὸ Χριστό.** Λίγοι ἐκτιμοῦν τὴν εὐεργεσία αὐτῆ, γιὰ τὴν ὁποία θὰ ἔπρεπε νὰ τὸν εὐγνωμονοῦμε ἀδιαλείπτως. Δὲν ἔχει ὅμως ἀνάγκη ἀπὸ μᾶς. Ἄν οἱ Εὐρωπαῖοι εἶνε ἀγνώμονες, ἔφθασε ἡ ὥρα ν' ἀγαπηθῇ ὁ Χριστὸς ἀπὸ ἄλλους λαοὺς, στοὺς ὁποίους κηρύττουν τώρα οἱ ἱεραπόστολοι.

β'. Κάποιος ξένος βρῆκε στὰ νησιά τοῦ ὠκεανοῦ ἕναν ἀγριο ποὺ εἶχε βαπτισθῇ Χριστιανός. Εἶδε, ὅτι ὁ ἰθαγενὴς αὐτός, ὅποτε ἀνέφερε τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Χριστοῦ, δάκρυζε. -Γιατί, τοῦ λέει, ὅταν λές τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Χριστοῦ δακρύζεις; Ἡ καρδιά τοῦ ἀγρίου πλημμύριζε ἀπὸ ἀγάπη, ἀλλὰ ἡ γλῶσσα του ἦταν φτωχή. -Νὰ σοῦ πῶ, λέει, τί μοῦ ἔκανε ὁ Χριστός... Ἔσκυψε καὶ μὲ τὸ δάχτυλό του ἔκανε πάνω στὸ χῶμα

ἕνα κύκλο. Ἐπειτα πῆρε χορταράκι ξηρό, ἀχυρο, κ' ἔβαλε γύρω - γύρω στὴν περιφέρεια· ἔγινε ἔτσι ἕνας κύκλος ἀπὸ χόρτο ξηρό. Κατόπιν ἔπιασε ἕνα σκουλήκι καὶ τὸ ἔβαλε ἀκριβῶς στὸ κέντρο τοῦ κύκλου. Ἐν συνεχείᾳ πῆρε σπέρτο, ἔβαλε φωτιά στὸ χόρτο ἀπ' ὁλές τὶς μεριές καὶ ἡ φωτιά σχημάτισε ἕνα πύρινο στεφάνι. Τὸ σκουλήκι ἐνίσωσε τὶς φλόγες καὶ ἄρχισε νὰ κάνῃ ἀπεγνωσμένες προσπάθειες πρὸς κάθε κατεύθυνσι γιὰ νὰ βγῇ ἀπὸ τὸν κλοιό. Ἀλλὰ παντοῦ συναντοῦσε τὶς φλόγες καὶ ὠπισθοδρομοῦσε· ἔως ὅτου, ἀπελπισμένο, κουλουριάστηκε καὶ περίμενε πλέον τὸ θάνατο. Τότε ὁ ἰθαγενὴς ἀπλώνει τὸ χέρι, τὸ παίρνει καὶ τὸ βάζει στὴν παλάμη του. -Μὲ κατάλαβες; τοῦ λέει. Ἐγὼ εἶμαι τὸ σκουλήκι. Τὸ πύρινο στεφάνι εἶνε ἡ ἁμαρτία τοῦ κόσμου· ὅπου νὰ πηγαίνα, μπροστά μου ἦταν ἡ ἁμαρτία. Ἀλλὰ **ἦρθε ὁ Χριστὸς καί, μὲ τὰ ματωμένα χέρια του, πῆρε ἔμένα τὸ σκουλήκι καὶ μὲ ἔσωσε ἀπ' αὐτὴ τὴ φωτιά.**

Βλέπετε ἕνας ἀγριος πῶς αἰσθάνεται τὴν ἀγάπη τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ποὺ λείπει ἀπὸ τοὺς «πολιτισμένους»; Στοὺς «χριστιανούς» τῆς Δύσεως δὲν ὑπάρχει πιά ἡ ἀγάπη πρὸς τὸ Χριστό. Ὑπῆρχε ἄλλοτε. Ἦταν κάποτε ἐποχὴ ποὺ οἱ ἄνθρωποι ἀγαποῦσαν πραγματικά τὸ Χριστό. Τώρα «ἐψύγη ἡ ἀγάπη τῶν πολλῶν» (1 Joh. 2,12).

γ'. Ἀναφέρω ἕνα ἀκόμη παράδειγμα καὶ τελειώνω. Στοὺς πρώτους αἰῶνες ζοῦσε ἕνας φλογερὸς ἅγιος, ὁ **ἅγιος Ἰγνάτιος ὁ Θεοφόρος.** Ἀγαποῦσε τὸ Χριστό καὶ ἔλεγε· Ἄν ἀνοίξετε τὴν καρδιά μου, δὲν θὰ βρῆτε μέσα μου «πῦρ φιλόυλον», δὲν θὰ βρῆτε ἀγάπη κοσμική· μέσα μου ὑπάρχει μιὰ μόνο ἀγάπη, ὁ ἔρωτας τοῦ Χριστοῦ... Τὸν ἔπιασαν, τὸν μετέφεραν σιδηροδέσμιο καὶ τὸν ἔρριξαν μέσα στὸ ἀμφιθέατρο τῆς Ρώμης. Λιοντάρια βρυχώμενοι ἔπεσαν πάνω του, ἐνῶ ἐκεῖνος προσευχόταν -τὴν ὥρα ἐκείνη δὲν πατοῦσε πιά τὴ γῆ- καὶ κατακομμάτιασαν τὸ σῶμα τοῦ ἁγίου. Ἡ παράδοσις λέει, ὅτι ἀπ' ὅλο τὸ σῶμα του, ἐκεῖνο τὸ μέλος ποὺ δὲν ἔθιξαν καθόλου ἀλλὰ τὸ σεβάστηκαν κι αὐτὰ τὰ θηρία, ἦταν ἡ καρδιά του. Διότι μέσα στὴν καρδιά του ἦταν γραμμένο μὲ χρυσὰ γράμματα «Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, ὁ ἔρωτας τῆς ψυχῆς μου».

Σὰς ἀνέφερα, ἀδελφοί μου, τοὺς λόγους, γιὰ τοὺς ὁποίους πρέπει ν' ἀγαποῦμε τὸ Χριστό. Ἀπομένει νὰ ποῦμε, **πῶς ἐκδηλώνεται ἡ ἀγάπη πρὸς αὐτόν.** Ἀλλὰ γι' αὐτὸ θὰ μιλήσουμε σὺν Θεῷ τὴν ἐρχόμενη Κυριακῇ.

(†) **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 2024 commitment **TODAY!** The benefits you shall receive beyond grace include the satisfaction and knowledge that this Church and community thrive thanks to your outreach.

As a teaching for Christians

The parable of the talents has been seen as an exhortation to Jesus' disciples to use their God-given gifts in the service of God, and to take risks for the sake of the Kingdom of God.

These gifts have been seen to include personal abilities ("talents" in the everyday sense), as well as personal wealth.

- The master is Christ.
- The journey of the master to another place and His return speaks of Christ's going away to Heaven at his ascension and His return as the time when He comes again.
- His entrustment to His servants of His possessions while He is away on His journey should be Christ's gifts and various possessions ("capital") given to the believers in His church in anticipation of them

producing a spiritual "profit" for Him in the Kingdom of God.

- His evaluation of the business they have conducted during His absence takes place on His return and is an account of their activity. This must be the Judgment Seat of Christ, which is only for believers. This pictures the evaluation of stewardship.
- The positive rewards for the two servants is based upon their faithfulness to properly use what Christ entrusted to them. This probably speaks of positive reward for believers who are faithful to serve Christ.
- The negative reward for the unfaithful servant speaks of some negative dealing by Christ with an unfaithful believer.

RADIO MINISTRY: Each Saturday at 1:15 PM Fr. Eugene hosts the radio broadcast **MATTERS OF CONSCIENCE NOW IN ITS 26th 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**)

WEB SITE: information is **ALWAYS ON LINE** ready to see and read. If you submit **YOUR E-MAILING** address we can forward Bulletin Information to you personally.

See :Website: www.threehierarchsbrooklynny.org