

ΟΙΚΟΥΜΕΝΙΚΟΝ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΕΙΟΝ
ΙΕΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ
ΘΥΑΤΕΙΡΩΝ & Μ. ΒΡΕΤΑΝΝΙΑΣ

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ΛΟΓΟΣ ΚΥΡΙΟΥ
THE WORD OF OUR LORD



ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΤΟΥ ΘΩΜΑ
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Symeon Kinsman of the Lord, Eulogius the Hospitable, Symeon & George Stylites*

ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΝ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑ

Πράξ. ε΄, 12-20

Εν ταῖς ἡμεραῖς ἐκείναις, διὰ δὲ τῶν χειρῶν τῶν ἀποστόλων ἐγένετο σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα ἐν τῷ λαῷ πολλά· καὶ ἦσαν ὁμοθυμαδὸν ἅπαντες ἐν τῇ στοᾷ Σολομῶντος. Τῶν δὲ λοιπῶν οὐδεὶς ἐτόλμα κολλᾶσθαι αὐτοῖς, ἀλλ' ἐμεγάλυνεν αὐτοὺς ὁ λαός· μᾶλλον δὲ προσετίθεντο πιστεύοντες τῷ Κυρίῳ, πλήθη ἀνδρῶν τε καὶ γυναικῶν· ὥστε κατὰ τὰς πλατείας ἐκφέρειν τοὺς ἀσθενεῖς, καὶ τιθέναί ἐπὶ κλινῶν καὶ κραββάτων, ἵνα ἐρχομένου Πέτρου κἂν ἡ σκιά ἐπισκιάσῃ τινὶ αὐτῶν. Συνήρχετο δὲ καὶ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν πέριξ πόλεων εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ, φέροντες ἀσθενεῖς καὶ ὀχλουμένους ὑπὸ πνευμάτων ἀκαθάρτων, οἵτινες ἐθεραπεύοντο ἅπαντες. Ἀναστὰς δὲ ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς καὶ πάντες οἱ σὺν αὐτῷ - ἡ οὖσα αἵρεσις τῶν Σαδδουκαίων - ἐπλήσθησαν ζήλου, καὶ ἐπέβαλον τὰς χεῖρας αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀποστόλους, καὶ ἔθεντο αὐτοὺς ἐν τηρήσει δημοσίᾳ. Ἄγγελος δὲ Κυρίου διὰ τῆς νυκτὸς ἤνοιξεν τὰς θύρας τῆς φυλακῆς, ἐξαγαγὼν τε αὐτοὺς εἶπεν, Πορεύεσθε, καὶ σταθέντες λαλεῖτε ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ τῷ λαῷ πάντα τὰ ῥήματα τῆς ζωῆς ταύτης.

EPISTLE READING

Acts 5: 12-20

In those days, many signs and wonders were done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico. None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high honor. And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women, so that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and pallets, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed. But the high priest rose up and all who were with him, that is, the party of the Sadducees, and filled with jealousy they arrested the apostles and put them in the common prison. But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out and said, Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life.



ΑΝΑΣΤΑΣΙΜΟΝ ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ

Ἦχος α΄.

Τοῦ λίθου σφραγισθέντος ὑπὸ τῶν Ἰουδαίων καὶ στρατιωτῶν φυλασσόντων τὸ ἄχραντόν σου Σῶμα, ἀνέστης τριήμερος, Σωτήρ, δωρούμενος τῷ κόσμῳ τὴν ζωὴν· διὰ τοῦτο αἱ δυνάμεις τῶν οὐρανῶν ἐβόων σοι, Ζωοδότα· Δόξα τῇ Ἀναστάσει σου, Χριστέ, δόξα τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου, δόξα τῇ οἰκονομίᾳ σου, μόνε φιλόανθρωπε.

ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΚΟΝ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑ

Ἰωάν. κ', 19-31

Οὔσης ὀψίας τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ τῇ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων, καὶ τῶν θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων ὅπου ἦσαν οἱ μαθηταὶ συνηγμένοι διὰ τὸν φόβον τῶν Ἰουδαίων, ἦλθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ ἔστη εἰς τὸ μέσον, καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· Εἰρήνη ὑμῖν. Καὶ τοῦτο εἰπὼν ἔδειξεν αὐτοῖς τὰς χεῖρας καὶ τὴν πλευρὰν αὐτοῦ· ἐχάρησαν οὖν οἱ μαθηταὶ ἰδόντες τὸν Κύριον. Εἶπεν οὖν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς πάλιν· Εἰρήνη ὑμῖν, καθὼς ἀπέσταλκέ με ὁ Πατήρ, καὶ ἐγὼ πέμπω ὑμᾶς. Καὶ τοῦτο εἰπὼν ἐνεφύσησε καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· Λάβετε Πνεῦμα Ἅγιον. Ἄν τινων ἀφῆτε τὰς ἁμαρτίας, ἀφιένται αὐτοῖς, ἄν τινων κρατῆτε, κεκράτηνται. Θωμᾶς δέ, εἷς ἐκ τῶν δώδεκα, ὁ λεγόμενος Δίδυμος, οὐκ ἦν μετ' αὐτῶν ὅτε ἦλθεν Ἰησοῦς· ἔλεγον οὖν αὐτῷ οἱ ἄλλοι μαθηταὶ· Ἐωράκαμεν τὸν Κύριον. Ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Ἐὰν μὴ ἴδω ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν αὐτοῦ τὸν τύπον τῶν ἥλων, καὶ βάλω τὸν δάκτυλόν μου εἰς τὸν τύπον τῶν ἥλων, καὶ βάλω τὴν χεῖρά μου εἰς τὴν πλευρὰν αὐτοῦ, οὐ μὴ πιστεύσω. Καὶ μεθ' ἡμέρας ὀκτὼ πάλιν ἦσαν ἔσω οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ, καὶ Θωμᾶς μετ' αὐτῶν. Ἐρχεται ὁ Ἰησοῦς τῶν θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων, καὶ ἔστη εἰς τὸ μέσον καὶ εἶπεν· Εἰρήνη ὑμῖν. Εἶτα λέγει τῷ Θωμᾶ· φέρε τὸν δάκτυλόν σου ὧδε, καὶ ἴδε τὰς χεῖράς μου. καὶ φέρε τὴν χεῖρά σου καὶ βάλε εἰς τὴν πλευρὰν μου, καὶ μὴ γίνου ἄπιστος ἀλλὰ πιστός. Καὶ ἀπεκρίθη ὁ Θωμᾶς, καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· Ὁ Κύριός μου καὶ ὁ Θεός μου. Λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Ὅτι ἐώρακάς με πεπίστευκας, μακάριοι οἱ μὴ ἰδόντες, καὶ πιστεύσαντες. Πολλὰ μὲν οὖν καὶ ἄλλα σημεῖα ἐποίησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐνώπιον τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ, ἃ οὐκ ἔστιν γεγραμμένα ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τούτῳ· ταῦτα δὲ γέγραπται ἵνα πιστεύσητε ὅτι ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ ἵνα πιστεύοντες, ζωὴν ἔχητε ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ.

GOSPEL READING

John 20: 19-31

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, Peace be with you. When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, Peace be with you. As the Father has sent Me, even so I send you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained. Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, We have seen the Lord. But he said to them, Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in His side, I will not believe. Eight days later, His disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. The doors were shut, but Jesus came and stood among them and said, Peace be with you. Then He said to Thomas, Put your finger here, and see My hands; and put out your hand, and place it in My side; do not be faithless, but believing. Thomas answered Him, My Lord and My God! Jesus said to him, Have you believed because you have seen Me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe. Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, you may have life in His name.

ΕΡΜΗΝΕΙΑ ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΚΟΥ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑΤΟΣ

Εχουν ἤδη περάσει ὀκτὼ ἡμέρες ἀπὸ τὴν Ἀνάσταση καθὼς καὶ ἀπὸ τὴν πρώτη ἐμφάνιση τοῦ Κυρίου στοὺς μαθητές Του. Ὅλοι εἶναι χαρούμενοι ἐπειδὴ παντοῦ φθάνει τὸ μήνυμα ὅτι «ἠγέρθη ὁ Κύριος ὄντως» (Ἰωάν. κ', 19-31). Εἶναι γεγονός πὸς τὸ ζοῦν ἔντονα. «Ἐωράκαμεν τὸν Κύριον» ἀναφωνοῦν γεμάτοι ἐνθουσιασμό στὸν Θωμᾶ, ὁ ὁποῖος ἀπουσίαζε τὴ στιγμή τῆς ἐμφάνισης τοῦ Κυρίου. Ὁ Θωμᾶς θέλει νὰ πιστέψει. Ἡ λογικὴ του, ὅμως, τὸν ἐμποδίζει, μὲ ἀποτέλεσμα νὰ ἀποκλείει τὸ ὑπερφυσικὸ καὶ καταπληκτικὸ γεγονός τῆς Ἀναστάσεως. «Ἐάν δὲν δῶ μὲ τὰ μάτια μου τὰ σημάδια ἀπὸ τὰ καρφιά καὶ ἄν δὲν βάλω τὸ δάκτυλό μου στὰ σημάδια, καὶ ἀκόμη ἄν δὲν βάλω τὸ δάκτυλό μου στὴν πλευρά Του, τὴν τρυπημένη ἀπὸ τὴν λόγχη, δὲν πρόκειται νὰ πιστέψω» (Ἰωάν. κ', 19-31).

Ἀπό τή φύση του ὁ Θωμᾶς ἦταν καλοπροαίρετος, ὅμως ἦταν καί χαρακτηῖρας πού γιά ὅλα ἤθελε ἀποδείξει. Ἡ ἀλήθεια εἶναι πώς δέν ἀμφέβαλε οὔτε πρὸς στιγμή στή μαρτυρία τῶν ὑπολοίπων μαθητῶν ὅτι πραγματικά εἶχαν δεῖ τόν Κύριο. Ὅμως, ἡ φυσική του ἀδυναμία καί ἡ δυνατή ἀγάπη του γιά τόν Χριστό καί ἡ ἐπιθυμία του νά ξαναδεῖ τόν διδάσκαλο, μετὰ ἀπό τὰ ὅσα συνέβησαν τίς τελευταῖες ἡμέρες, τόν κάνουν δύσπιστο, ὄχι ἄπιστο. Αὐτὴ τὴ δυσπιστία τοῦ μαθητῆ ἡ Ἐκκλησία μας σήμερα τὴν ὀνομάζει «καλή» καί γι' αὐτὸ ψάλλει «Ὡ καλή ἀπιστία τοῦ Θωμᾶ! Τῶν πιστῶν τὰς καρδίας εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν ἤξε...» δηλαδή «Ὡ καλοπροαίρετη ἀπιστία τοῦ Θωμᾶ πού ὀδηγεῖ τίς καρδιές τῶν πιστῶν στή διαβεβαίωση καί στή διαπίστωση τῆς Ἀναστάσεως».

Μπορεῖ ὅμως ἡ ἀπιστία νά εἶναι καλή; Πῶς γίνεται νά ἐξυμνεῖται, ὅταν γνωρίζουμε ὅτι ἡ πίστη στό Θεό ἐκδηλώνεται πρὶν ἀπ' ὅλα σάν ἐμπιστοσύνη ἀπέναντί Του; Μήπως ὁ Θωμᾶς δέν εἶχε αὐτὴ τὴν ἐμπιστοσύνη; Μά φυσικά καί τὴν εἶχε. Ἡ ἐπιθυμία του ὅμως νά ξαναδεῖ τόν Διδάσκαλο, τόν ἀναγκάζει στήν «καλή ἀπιστία». Δέν περιορίστηκε μόνο νά δεῖ τόν Κύριο, ἀλλὰ ζητοῦσε νά Τόν αἰσθανθεῖ μέ τὴν ἀφή του, νά Τόν ψηλαφίσει, γιά νά μὴν ἔχει ψευδαισθήσεις.

Ὁ Κύριος στό παράπονο καί στήν ἐπιθυμία τοῦ μαθητοῦ δείχνει συγκατάβαση. Μετὰ ἀπό ὀκτὼ ἡμέρες ξαναεμφανίζεται, «τῶν θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων». Ὅπως στήν πρώτη ἐμφάνιση, ἔτσι καί τώρα. Ἐνῶ οἱ μαθητὲς ἦταν πάλι συγκεντρωμένοι, μαζί τους καί ὁ Θωμᾶς, ἐφανίσθηκε καί τούς χαιρέτησε μέ τὴν φράση: «Εἰρήνη ὑμῖν». Εἰρήνη, εὐχεται ὁ Ἰησοῦς στους μαθητὲς, ἀποκαλύπτοντας ὅτι εἶναι «Θεὸς ἰσχυρὸς, Ἐξουσιαστής, ἄρχων εἰρήνης». Τὴν εἰρήνη τοῦ Θεοῦ πού βιώνουμε οἱ πιστοὶ κατὰ τὴν τέλεση τῆς Θεῆας Λειτουργίας. Γευόμαστε τὴν εἰρήνη καί τὴν χαρὰ τοῦ Κυρίου καί προγευόμαστε τὴν Οὐράνια Βασιλεία ἤδη ἀπὸ τὴν παρούσα ζωὴ. Ὁ Θωμᾶς μὴ ἔχοντας μέσα του τὴν προϋπόθεση τῆς εἰρήνης, δυσκολεύτηκε νά δεχθεῖ τὸ γεγονός τῆς Ἀναστάσεως καί τὴν χαρὰ πού προσφέρει ὁ Χριστός.

Ἡ συγκατάβαση, ὅμως, καί ἡ ἀνοχή τοῦ Διδασκάλου, ἀλλὰ καί ἡ ἀγάπη πού δείχνει στὸν ἐγκλωβισμένο στήν ἀνάγκη του μαθητὴ, εἶναι μοναδική καί ἀσύγκριτη. Τοῦ δείχνει ὅτι γνωρίζει τίς σκέψεις του, ἀκόμη καί πῶς τίς καταλαβαίνει. Δέν τὸν ἀφήνει νά ζεῖ στήν ἀμφιβολία. «Ἐλα λοιπὸν νά δεῖς καί ψηλάφισέ με» τοῦ λέει. Ὁ Θωμᾶς δέν ἤθελε περισσότερο γιά νά βεβαιωθεῖ. Καί μόνο ἡ παρουσία τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, τὸν κάνει νά ἀναφωνήσει αὐθόρμητα «ὁ Κύριός μου καί ὁ Θεός μου». Ἀφοῦ, δηλαδή, στερεώθηκε στήν πίστη δέν ἀναγνωρίζει ἀπλῶς τόν Ἰησοῦ σάν Κύριό του, ἀλλὰ ὁμολογεῖ τὴ θεότητα Του, μέ τέτοιο τρόπο πού κανεῖς μέχρι ἐκείνη τὴ στιγμή δέν τὴν εἶχε ἀναγνωρίσει καί ὁμολογήσει ἔτσι.

Ἡ ἀπιστία τοῦ Θωμᾶ, ἐξυμνεῖται ἀπὸ τὴν Ἐκκλησία μας, ὅπως εἶπαμε, ὡς «καλή ἀπιστία», ἐπειδὴ μᾶς βοηθεῖ νά στηρίζουμε τὴν πίστη μας. Μᾶς δείχνει ὅτι ἡ μαρτυρία γιά τὴν Ἀνάσταση δέν προέρχεται ἀπὸ χεῖλη ἀνθρώπων, ἀλλὰ ἀπὸ αὐτόπτες μάρτυρες, οἱ ὁποῖοι παρέμειναν δύσπιστοι μέχρι τὴ στιγμή πού ικανοποιεῖται καί ἡ λογικὴ τους. Τὸ πρόσωπο τοῦ προβαλλομένου Ἀποστόλου Θωμᾶ γίνεται γιά μᾶς αἰτία νά ἀφήσουμε τὴν καρδιά μας νά μᾶς ὀδηγήσει στὸν Ἀναστημένο Χριστό, ἐπειδὴ ἡ λογικὴ μας θά ἀποτελεῖ πάντοτε τὸν ὀγκόλιθο πού θά κρατᾷ ἐμᾶς τούς ἴδιους ἀποκλεισμένους ἀπὸ τὴν ἀλήθεια. Τὸ θαῦμα, ὅμως, τῆς ἀναστημένης παρουσίας Του θά συνεχίζει μέσα στήν ἱστορία νά τὸ χαρίζει ὁ Ἴδιος, ὅπως καί τότε, ὄχι σέ ὅσους ψάχνουν ἀδιάφορα, ἀλλὰ σέ ὅσους ποθοῦν νά τὸν συναντήσουν ἀκόμη καί μέσα ἀπὸ τὴν ἀνθρώπινη ἀδυναμία τους γιά νά ὁμολογοῦν στὸν κόσμον τὴν ἀλήθεια «ὁ Κύριός μου καί ὁ Θεός μου, δόξα σοι».

Ἀρχιμ. Αἰμιλιανὸς Παπαδάκης

SERMON ON THE GOSPEL READING

Forgiveness of sins is one of the great gifts that our Lord, Jesus Christ has given to us through His Suffering and Resurrection. In the evening of the first Sunday, when He appeared to His disciples, He breathed on them and said: 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.' This gift the Lord gave to the apostles for the salvation of the world. However, the Lord didn't give the apostles simply the power to

forgive sins; He gave them a directive as well: *'As the Father has sent me, so I send you.'* The gifts the Lord gave to the apostles then, and continues to give to His servants in the Church today, go together with a responsibility, a duty, or a task. He gives us gifts, so that we with serious commitment may use them for the salvation of the world.

The joy of the resurrection cannot take root in our hearts unless we, too, become partakers of this gift, that is, unless we, too, receive forgiveness of our sins through the Church, through our confessors. Of course, it is the Holy Spirit who ultimately forgives sins; but the Lord gave His Church the power to administer this gift through priesthood in the sacrament of confession. Forgiveness of sins doesn't happen in the abstract; it happens when we bring our repentance concretely to the Church, to the confessor.

The time between Easter and Pentecost isn't, of course, a time of lamentation; it is rather a time of joy and of expectation. If we leave behind worldly cares for a while and immerse ourselves in the atmosphere of the Resurrection of Christ, we can draw spiritual joy, strength and inspiration to continue our struggle in the midst of our daily difficulties. The world wants us to forget this joy and to draw us away from the spiritual power of the Holy Church, which in the end is the only real source of life and spiritual joy. The world wants us to stay in the state of unbelief and spiritual blindness; not to see the signs in Jesus' hands and side, and say, like St Thomas, when he finally saw Jesus risen from the dead: *'My Lord and my God!'*

In the Church we live in this period also with a sense of expectation in view of Pentecost. We live like the apostles in Jerusalem, *'waiting for the promise of the Father'* (Acts 1:4). The Lord said to them after His Resurrection: *'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now. ... You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth'* (Acts 1: 5, 8). May this time of joyful expectation increase in all of us profound faith in the power of the Resurrection of Christ, in His Gospel and in the activity of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church and within us.



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We would like to thank you for visiting and worshipping with us today. Kindly know that although all are welcome to attend our Sacred Services, a prerequisite to receive Holy Communion is unity in the Faith, as well as spiritual preparation by prayer, fasting, and regular participation in the Sacrament of Holy Confession. Non-Orthodox Christians are kindly requested to refrain from receiving Communion. All are, however, welcome to partake of the "antidoron" (blessed bread) distributed by the clergy at the conclusion of the Service, as well as to introduce themselves while doing so.

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