

ΟΙΚΟΥΜΕΝΙΚΟΝ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΕΙΟΝ  
ΙΕΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ  
ΘΥΑΤΕΙΡΩΝ & Μ. ΒΡΕΤΑΝΝΙΑΣ

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE  
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THYATEIRA & GREAT BRITAIN



ΛΟΓΟΣ ΚΥΡΙΟΥ  
THE WORD OF OUR LORD

ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΙΔ' ΛΟΥΚΑ  
3 Δεκεμβρίου 2023  
Ἦχος α'. Ἀριθμ. 205

14<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF LUKE  
3 December 2023  
1<sup>st</sup> Mode. No. 205

Σοφονίου προφήτου, Ἀγγελῆ νεομάρτυρος, Θεοδούλου Κυπρίου, Ἰωάννου Ἡσυχαστοῦ, Ἀγαπίου, Θεοδώρου πατριάρχου  
Prophet Sophonius, Angelis neomartyr, Theodulus, John the Hesychast, Agapius, Theodore patriarch

ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΝ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑ

Ἐφ. ε'. 8-19

**Α**δελφοί, ὡς τέκνα φωτὸς περιπατεῖτε - ὁ γὰρ καρπὸς τοῦ πνεύματος ἐν πάσῃ ἀγαθωσύνῃ καὶ δικαιοσύνῃ καὶ ἀληθείᾳ - δοκιμάζοντες τί ἐστὶν εὐάρεστον τῷ Κυρίῳ· καὶ μὴ συγκοινωνεῖτε τοῖς ἔργοις τοῖς ἀκάρποις τοῦ σκότους, μᾶλλον δὲ καὶ ἐλέγχετε· τὰ γὰρ κρυφῆ γινόμενα ὑπ' αὐτῶν αἰσχρὸν ἐστὶν καὶ λέγειν. Τὰ δὲ πάντα ἐλεγχόμενα ὑπὸ τοῦ φωτὸς φανεροῦνται· πᾶν γὰρ τὸ φανερούμενον φῶς ἐστίν. Διὸ λέγει, Ἔγειρε ὁ καθεύδων καὶ ἀνάστα ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν, καὶ ἐπιφάσει σοι ὁ Χριστός. Βλέπετε οὖν πῶς ἀκριβῶς περιπατεῖτε, μὴ ὡς ἄσοφοι, ἀλλ' ὡς σοφοί, ἐξαγοραζόμενοι τὸν καιρὸν, ὅτι αἱ ἡμέραι πονηραὶ εἰσιν. Διὰ τοῦτο μὴ γίνεσθε ἄφρονες, ἀλλὰ συνιέντες τί τὸ θέλημα τοῦ Κυρίου. Καὶ μὴ μεθύσκεσθε οἴνῳ, ἐν ᾧ ἐστὶν ἀσωτία, ἀλλὰ πληροῦσθε ἐν Πνεύματι, λαλοῦντες ἑαυτοῖς ψαλμοῖς καὶ ὕμνοις καὶ ᾠδαῖς πνευματικαῖς, ᾄδοντες καὶ ψάλλοντες ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν τῷ Κυρίῳ.

ΑΝΑΣΤΑΣΙΜΟΝ ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ

Ἦχος α'.

**Τ**οῦ 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.

EPISTLE READING

Eph. 5: 8-19

**B**rethren, walk as children of light -for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true- and try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is a shame even to speak of the things that they do in secret; but when anything is exposed by the light it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it is said, Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light. Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart.

RESURRECTION APOLYTIKION <sup>1<sup>st</sup> Mode</sup>

**W**hen the stone had been sealed by the Jews, and while soldiers were guarding your most pure Body, you rose, O Saviour, on the third day, giving life to the world; therefore the heavenly Powers cried out to you, Giver of life: Glory to your Resurrection, O Christ! Glory to your Kingdom! Glory to your dispensation, only Lover of mankind!

## ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΚΟΝ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑ

Λουκ. ιη´, 35-43

**Τ**ῷ καιρῷ ἐκεῖνῳ, ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ ἐγγίζειν τὸν Ἰησοῦν εἰς Ἱεριχὼ τυφλός τις ἐκάθητο παρὰ τὴν ὁδὸν προσαιτῶν· ἀκούσας δὲ ὄχλου διαπορευομένου ἐπυνθάνετο τί εἶη ταῦτα. ἀπήγγειλαν δὲ αὐτῷ ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ὁ Ναζωραῖος παρέρχεται. καὶ ἐβόησε λέγων· Ἰησοῦ Υἱὲ Δαυΐδ, ἐλέησόν με· καὶ οἱ προάγοντες ἐπετίμων αὐτῷ ἵνα σιωπήσῃ· αὐτὸς δὲ πολλῶ μᾶλλον ἔκραζεν· Υἱὲ Δαυΐδ, ἐλέησόν με. σταθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐκέλευσεν αὐτὸν ἀχθῆναι πρὸς αὐτόν. ἐγγίσαντος δὲ αὐτοῦ ἐπηρώτησεν αὐτὸν λέγων· τί σοι θέλεις ποιήσω; ὁ δὲ εἶπε· Κύριε, ἵνα ἀναβλέψω. καὶ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ἀνάβλεψον· ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέ σε. καὶ παραχρῆμα ἀνέβλεψε, καὶ ἠκολούθει αὐτῷ δοξάζων τὸν Θεόν· καὶ πᾶς ὁ λαὸς ἰδὼν ἔδωκεν αἶνον τῷ Θεῷ.

## GOSPEL READING

Luke 18: 18-27

**A**t that time, as Jesus drew near to Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging; and hearing a multitude going by, he inquired what this meant. They told him, Jesus of Nazareth is passing by. And he cried, Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me! And those who were in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent; but he cried out all the more, Son of David, have mercy on me! And Jesus stopped, and commanded him to be brought to him; and when he came near, he asked him, What do you want me to do for you? He said, Lord, let me receive my sight. And Jesus said to him, Receive your sight; your faith has made you well. And immediately he received his sight and followed him, glorifying God; and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

## ΕΡΜΗΝΕΙΑ ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΚΟΥ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑΤΟΣ

«Αὐτός δὲ πολλῶ μᾶλλον ἔκραζε, υἱέ Δαυΐδ ἐλέησόν με»

**Η**θεραπεία τοῦ τυφλοῦ τοῦ σημερινοῦ Εὐαγγελίου ἰχνογραφεῖ τὴν ἐμπειρία τῆς μετανοίας. Ἡ ψυχὴ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου κεῖται ἐξαπατημένη ἀπὸ τὸν μισόκαλο διάβολο καὶ πληγωμένη ἀπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτία. Ὁ ἡγεμονικός νοῦς «τυφλός» ἀδυνατεῖ νὰ εἰσέλθει στὴν ὁδὸ τῆς σωτηρίας καὶ παραμένει «παρὰ τὴν ὁδόν» ζητιανεύοντας (προσαιτῶν). Ὁ γλυκύτατος Ἰησοῦς, «ὁ ἅπαξ ἑαυτὸν τε προσάξας, προσφερόμενος... αἰεὶ σφαγιάζεται», καὶ δὲν μᾶς ἐγκαταλείπει σὲ αὐτὴν τὴν ἄθλια κατάσταση, «τρόπους μετανοίας ὑποτιθέμενος» (Κανὼν καὶ Εὐχή η´, Ἀκολουθία Θείας Μεταλήψεως). Πολύ παραστατικά εἰκονογραφεῖ τὸ Εὐαγγέλιον ὅτι, «ὄχλου διαπορευομένου», δηλαδή μέσα ἀπὸ τὸν θόρυβο τοῦ κόσμου, ἀναφύονται τρόποι μετανοίας καὶ συνάντησης μὲ τὸν Χριστό: «ἀπήγγειλαν δὲ αὐτῷ ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ὁ Ναζωραῖος παρέρχεται». Ἡ ψυχὴ καταπονημένη στὴν προσπάθεια σωτηρίας παίρνει τότε θάρρος καὶ ἀρχίζει νὰ φωνάζει μὲ ὄση δύναμη ἀπολείπεται μέσα της: «Ἰησοῦ υἱέ Δαυΐδ ἐλέησόν με».

Ὁ μισόκαλος διάβολος ὅμως διαβλέποντας τὸν κίνδυνο νὰ τοῦ ξεφύγει ἀπὸ τὰ χέρια ἢ ψυχὴ ἀμέσως ξεκινάει τὴν δική του ἐργασία. Κεντρίζει τοὺς γύρω μας ἀνθρώπους σὲ ἀγανάκτηση γιὰ τὴ διατάραξη τῆς ἡσυχίας τους καὶ μαλώνουν τὸν τυφλό· «σταμάτα πιά μέ τό Θεό σου, δὲν βλέπεις ὅτι ἡ ζωὴ εἶναι ἐδῶ καὶ τώρα»! Ἄλλοι τὸν κοροϊδεύουν· ἀγγελοκρούεται ὁ ἔρημος, «ὡχ ἔγινε θρησκόληπτος ὁ δύστυχος»! Ἡ ἀρρωστημένη ψυχὴ γεννάει ἀδράνια σὲ κάθε πνευματικὴ κίνηση καὶ ἔντονο αἴσθημα ἀνησυχίας, ὅτι δῆθεν ἀντιστρατεύεται ἢ «φύση» της καὶ βιάζει τὸν ἄνθρωπο νὰ τροφοδοτήσῃ καὶ πάλι τὰ πάθη του. Δὲν ξεχνάει ὁ μισόκαλος καὶ τὴν τακτικὴν πού ἀκολούθησε ἐναντία στὸν πολυάθλο Ἰώβ καὶ μέ δοκιμασίες καὶ ἀρρώστιες προσπαθεῖ νὰ γονατίσῃ τὴν ψυχὴν πού προσπαθεῖ νὰ πετάξῃ πρὸς τὸν

Χριστό. Ἐάν δέν καταφέρει νά πνίξει τήν μετάνοια μέ αὐτά τά τεχνάσματα, σκαρφίζεται ὡς πολυμήχανος Ὁδυσσεύς καινούργια τερτίπια καί ψιθυρίζει· «καλή ἡ μετάνοια ψυχὴ μου ἀλλά μήν τό παρακάνεις· πήγαινε στήν ἐκκλησία, κάνε καί καμιά ἐξομολόγηση, ἀλλά μήν τό παρακάνεις· νάχεις πίστη παιδί μου ἀλλά νάχεις καί τή ζωή σου χωρίς νά τά ἀνακατεύεις· πρόσεξε προπάντων μήν γίνεις ζηλώτης καί χάσεις τίς χαρές τοῦ κόσμου τούτου»!

Θλίβεται ἡ ψυχὴ μέ τίς δοκιμασίες καί τόν πόλεμο τοῦ διαβόλου. Βάλλεται ἀπό παντοῦ κι ἄν δέν εἶχε βοήθεια θά χανόταν. Καί ὦ τῆς ἀμέτρητης φιλανθρωπίας σου Κύριε! ἔρχεσαι ἐσύ καί «τείνεις χεῖρα σωτηρίας» στον τυφλό ἄνθρωπο Εὐαγγελίου. Αὐτός δέ «πολλῶ μάλλον ἔκραζε»! Δυναμώνεις καί φωτίζεις τήν ψυχὴ νά ἀλλοιώσει τήν θλίψη σέ πνευματικὴ ἐν Χριστῶ, ἐκούσια, σωτήριο καί χαροποιό. Ὁ γλυκύτατος Ἰησοῦς ἀκούει καί θεραπεύει τόν τυφλό. Ὁ ἀπόστολος Παῦλος συμβουλεύει ὅτι, σέ αὐτήν τήν ζωή «συμπάσχομεν ἵνα καί συνδοξασθῶμεν» (Ρωμ. 8, 17) μέ τόν Χριστόν. Ὁ δέ ἀπόστολος Λουκᾶς ἀναφέρει ὅτι, «διά πολλῶν θλίψεων δεῖ ἡμᾶς εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τήν Βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ» (Πραξ. 14, 22), ἐνῶ ὁ ἀγαπητός μαθητής Ἰωάννης, «ἐν θλίψει καί βασιλείᾳ καί ὑπομονῇ ἐν Ἰησοῦ Χριστῶ» (Ἀποκ. 1, 9).

Ἡ χαρά τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἡ μόνη πραγματικὴ, ἀπαρασάλευτη, αἰώνια χαρά, ὁ πολύτιμος καί πολυτίμητος καρπός, προστατεύεται ἀπό σκληρό κέλυφος, τὸ ὁποῖο εἶναι «οἱ θλίψεις» τῆς ζωῆς μας. Γιά νά γευθοῦμε αὐτόν τόν πολύτιμο καρπό, ἔλεγε ὁ γέροντας Ἀθανάσιος Μυτιληναῖος, πρέπει νά περάσουμε πρῶτα ἀπό τὸ κέλυφος, νά βιώσουμε τήν θλίψη. Ὁ Συμεών ὁ Νέος Θεολόγος μέ τήν εὐθύτητα καί ἀπλότητα τῶν ἀγίων τοῦ Χριστοῦ συνοψίζει: «εἰ μή τά πάθη Χριστοῦ διά μετανοίας καί ὑπακοῆς μιμησάμενοι καί τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ γεγονότες.. οὔτε τῆς πνευματικῆς αὐτοῦ ἀναστάσεως συμμετοχοὶ γενήσονται, οὔτε Πνεῦμα λάβωσιν Ἅγιον. Καί οὐ λέγω τήν ἐπί τήν συντελείᾳ τῶν σωμάτων ἀνάστασιν... ἀλλά τήν καθ' ἑκάστην γινομένην τῶν νεκρῶν ψυχῶν πνευματικῶς πνευματικὴν ἀναγέννησιν καί ἀνάστασιν» (Λόγος Ἡθικός Στ').

Ἄς ἀκολουθήσουμε κι ἐμεῖς τό παράδειγμα τοῦ τυφλοῦ τοῦ Εὐαγγελίου, ἔχοντας μέρα-νύχτα «ἀδιαλείπτως» στά χεῖλη καί τήν καρδιά τήν προσευχή, «Κύριε Ἰησοῦ Χριστέ, ἐλέησόν με» (Α' Θεσ. 5, 17). Ἐνάντια στίς μεθοδεύσεις τοῦ διαβόλου καί τῶν δαιμόνων του, ἐνάντια στήν ἀδυναμία τῆς ἄρρωστης ψυχῆς μας, μέσα ἀπό τίς ἐν Χριστῶ θλίψεις καί ὄχι χλιαρά – στάση πού προκαλεῖ τήν ἀποδοκιμασία Του («οὕτως ὅτι χλιαρὸς εἶ, καί οὔτε ζεστός οὔτε ψυχρός, μέλλω σε ἐμέσαι ἐκ τοῦ στόματός μου», Ἀποκ., 3,16) – ὄχι μηχανικά, ἀλλά με πνευματικὸ ζῆλο καί δύναμη: «Κύριε Ἰησοῦ Χριστέ, ἐλέησόν με». Ἀμήν.

Πρεσβ. Φωκᾶς-Παναγιώτης Σακελλαρίου

## SERMON ON THE EPISTLE READING

*“Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery.  
Instead be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another  
in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs”*

**W**ithin a few weeks our cities will resound with the shouts of drunkenness. At midday of Christmas day, business people will be swaying on the streets

after their office parties, while at night the pavements outside the pubs may witness rowdiness and even fights. What a way to celebrate the Birth of our Saviour! Perhaps, however, celebrating Saturnalia would be a better Pagan justification for this mid-winter festival of disorder? It is no new phenomenon; drunkenness was even witnessed in the rural village of my upbringing. I remember someone visiting my parents who spoke about his experience of the ground coming up to meet him after his alcoholic celebrations. Yet even in those days dedicated Christians, including my parents, never went to the local pub. Consequently, there was always more money in the families which “did not burn money in cigarettes or drink salaries in the pub”.

Is the answer to seasonal rowdiness for us to be completely abstinent? Certainly, in Holy Scripture we are given the examples of Samson and Samuel who were life-long Nazarites (teetotal). Yet it is hardly possible for us when the Lord commanded us to use wine in the Holy Liturgy, or when the Apostle Paul wrote, “*No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.*” (1 Tim 5). Being abstemious, however, befits a Christian better. We have many fasting days when wine is not permitted; these encourage us not to become addicted. Fortunately, today non-alcoholic drinks are provided in social gatherings, so we freely mix with colleagues and friends without feeling isolated from them. It is even possible to drink the loyal toast in water, as I found in a luncheon meeting when I gave a speech.

We should pay attention to our National Health System website, warning about excessive alcohol use. It lists mouth cancer, stroke, heart disease, liver disease and brain damage among the effects. For the Christian there is a necessary balance between avoiding alcohol altogether and being abstemious. This is well-expressed in *Sirach*

*Do not try to prove your strength by wine-drinking, for wine has destroyed many.*

*As the furnace tests the work of the smith, so wine tests hearts when the insolent quarrel.*

*Wine is very life to human beings if taken in moderation. What is life to one who is without wine? It has been created to make people happy.*

*Wine drunk at the proper time and in moderation is rejoicing of heart and gladness of soul.*

*Wine drunk to excess leads to bitterness of spirit, to quarrels and stumbling.*

*Drunkenness increases the anger of a fool to his own hurt, reducing his strength and adding wounds.*

*Do not reprove your neighbor at a banquet of wine, and do not despise him in his merrymaking; speak no word of reproach to him, and do not distress him by making demands of him.*

*(Sirach 31: 25-31)*

We should welcome Christ with love and peace and hope in our hearts, «*instead be filled with the Spirit*».

*Protopresbyter Gregory-Palamás Carpenter*

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