

ΟΙΚΟΥΜΕΝΙΚΟΝ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΕΙΟΝ
ΙΕΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ
ΘΥΑΤΕΙΡΩΝ & Μ. ΒΡΕΤΑΝΝΙΑΣ

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE
ARCHDIOCESE OF
THYATEIRA & GREAT BRITAIN



ΛΟΓΟΣ ΚΥΡΙΟΥ
THE WORD OF OUR LORD



ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΠΑΝΤΩΝ
30 Ἰουνίου 2024
Ἦχος πλ. δ'. Ἀριθμ. 235

SUNDAY OF ALL SAINTS
30 June 2024
Plagal of the 4th mode. No. 235

Σύναξις τῶν 12 Ἀποστόλων, Πέτρου μάρτυρος ἐκ Σινώπης, Μελίτωνος μάρτυρος
Synaxis of the Apostles, Peter martyr, Meliton martyr

ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΝ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑ

Ἑβρ. ια', 33-40 - ιβ', 1-2

Ἄδελφοί, οἱ Ἅγιοι πάντες διὰ πίστεως καταγωνίσαντο βασιλείας, εἰργάσαντο δικαιοσύνην, ἐπέτυχον ἐπαγγελιῶν, ἔφραξαν στόματα λεόντων, ἔσβεσαν δύναμιν πυρός, ἔφυγον στόματα μαχαίρας, ἐνεδυναμώθησαν ἀπὸ ἀσθενείας, ἐγενήθησαν ἰσχυροὶ ἐν πολέμῳ, παρεμβολὰς ἐκκλιναν ἄλλοτρίων. Ἦλαβον γυναῖκες ἐξ ἀναστάσεως τοὺς νεκροὺς αὐτῶν· ἄλλοι δὲ ἐτυμpanίσθησαν, οὐ προσδεξάμενοι τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν, ἵνα κρείττονος ἀναστάσεως τύχωσιν· ἕτεροι δὲ ἐμπαιγμῶν καὶ μαστίγων πείραν ἔλαβον, ἔτι δὲ δεσμῶν καὶ φυλακῆς ἐλιθάσθησαν, ἐπίσθησαν, ἐπειράσθησαν, ἐν φόνῳ μαχαίρας ἀπέθανον· περιῆλθον ἐν μηλωταῖς, ἐν αἰγείοις δέρμασιν, ὑστερούμενοι, θλιβόμενοι, κακουχούμενοι - ὧν οὐκ ἦν ἄξιος ὁ κόσμος - ἐν ἐρημίαις πλανώμενοι καὶ ὄρεσιν καὶ σπηλαίοις καὶ ταῖς ὄπαῖς τῆς γῆς. Καὶ οὗτοι πάντες, μαρτυρηθέντες διὰ τῆς πίστεως, οὐκ ἐκομίσαντο τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν, τοῦ θεοῦ περὶ ἡμῶν κρείττον τι προβλεψαμένου, ἵνα μὴ χωρὶς ἡμῶν τελειωθῶσιν. Τοιγαροῦν καὶ ἡμεῖς, τοσοῦτον ἔχοντες περικείμενον ἡμῖν νέφος μαρτύρων, ὄγκον ἀποθέμενοι πάντα καὶ τὴν εὐπερίστατον ἀμαρτίαν, δι' ὑπομονῆς τρέχωμεν τὸν προκείμενον ἡμῖν ἀγῶνα, ἀφορῶντες εἰς τὸν τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτὴν Ἰησοῦν.

EPISTLE READING

Heb. 11: 33-40; 12: 1-2

Brethren, all the saints through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated - of whom the world was not worthy - wandering over deserts and mountains and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect. Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.

ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ Ἦχος γ'. Θείας πίστεως.

Θεῖα ὄργανα, τοῦ Παρακλήτου, καὶ ἐκφάντορες, τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου, ἀνεδείχθητε θεόπται Ἀπόστολοι, Βαρθολομαῖε τῶν Δώδεκα σύσκηνε, καὶ Βαρνάβα ὡς υἱὸς παρακλήσεως. Ἀλλὰ αἰτήσασθε, Χριστὸν τὸν Θεὸν πανεύφημοι, δωρήσασθαι ἡμῖν τὸ μέγα ἔλεος.

ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΚΟΝ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑ

Ματθ. θ', 36, ι', 1-8

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, ἰδὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τοὺς ὄχλους ἐσπλαγχνίσθη περὶ αὐτῶν, ὅτι ἦσαν ἐκλελυμένοι καὶ ἐρριμμένοι ὡς πρόβατα μὴ ἔχοντα ποιμένα. τότε λέγει τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ· ὁ μὲν θερισμὸς πολὺς, οἱ δὲ ἐργάται ὀλίγοι. δεήθητε οὖν τοῦ Κυρίου τοῦ θερισμοῦ ὅπως ἐκβάλλῃ ἐργάτας εἰς τὸν θερισμὸν αὐτοῦ. Καὶ προσκαλεσάμενος τοὺς δώδεκα μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ἐξουσίαν πνευμάτων ἀκαθάρτων ὥστε ἐκβάλλειν αὐτὰ καὶ θεραπεύειν πᾶσαν νόσον καὶ πᾶσαν μαλακίαν. Τῶν δὲ δώδεκα ἀποστόλων τὰ ὀνόματα εἰσι ταῦτα· πρῶτος Σίμων ὁ λεγόμενος Πέτρος καὶ Ἀνδρέας ὁ ἀδελφὸς αὐτοῦ, Ἰάκωβος ὁ τοῦ Ζεβεδαίου καὶ Ἰωάννης ὁ ἀδελφὸς αὐτοῦ, Φίλιππος καὶ Βαρθολομαῖος, Θωμᾶς καὶ Ματθαῖος ὁ τελώνης, Ἰάκωβος ὁ τοῦ Ἀλφαίου καὶ Λεββαῖος ὁ ἐπικληθεὶς Θαδδαῖος, Σίμων ὁ Κανανίτης καὶ Ἰούδας ὁ Ἰσκαριώτης ὁ καὶ παραδοὺς αὐτόν. Τούτους τοὺς δώδεκα ἀπέστειλεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς παραγγέλλας αὐτοῖς λέγων· εἰς ὁδὸν ἔθνων μὴ ἀπέλθῃτε καὶ εἰς πόλιν Σαμαρειτῶν μὴ εἰσέλθῃτε· πορεύεσθε δὲ μᾶλλον πρὸς τὰ πρόβατα τὰ ἀπολωλότα οἴκου Ἰσραὴλ. πορευόμενοι δὲ κηρύσσετε λέγοντες ὅτι ἤγγικεν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν. Ἀσθενοῦντας θεραπεύετε, λεπροὺς καθαρίζετε, νεκροὺς ἐγείρετε, δαιμόνια ἐκβάλλετε· δωρεὰν ἐλάβετε, δωρεὰν δότε.

GOSPEL READING

Matt. 9: 36; 10: 1-8

At that time, when Jesus saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him. These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

ΕΡΜΗΝΕΙΑ ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΚΟΥ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑΤΟΣ

Μὲ τὴ σημερινὴ Κυριακὴ τῶν Ἁγίων Πάντων ὀλοκληρῶνεται ἡ περίοδος τῶν κινήτων ἐορτῶν ποὺ ἀκολουθοῦν τὴν ἐορτὴ τῆς Ἀναστάσεως τοῦ Κυρίου. Εἶναι λογικὸ ἔτσι νὰ συμβαίνει, ἐφόσον ἡ Ἀνάσταση τοῦ Κυρίου μᾶς δίνει τὴ δύναμη νὰ διακηρύξουμε ὅτι ἡ πίστη μας δὲν εἶναι ἀπλῶς μιὰ ἰδεολογία, ἀλλὰ εἶναι μιὰ πορεία μεταμόρφωσης καὶ ἀγιότητας ποὺ ὀδηγεῖ στὴν προσωπικὴ μας ἀνάσταση. Καὶ δὲν εἶναι καθόλου τυχαία ἡ τοποθέτηση τῆς ἐορτῆς τῶν Ἁγίων Πάντων ἀμέσως μετὰ τὴν Κυριακὴ τῆς Πεντηκοστῆς, καθὼς οἱ Ἅγιοι εἶναι οἱ κατ' ἐξοχὴν πνευματοφόροι, ἔχοντας ἐφαρμόσει στὴ ζωὴ τους τὸ «δὸς αἷμα καὶ λάβε πνεῦμα».

Οἱ τελευταῖοι στίχοι ἀπὸ τὸ σημερινὸ ἀποστολικὸ ἀνάγνωσμα μᾶς δίνουν μιὰ πολύτιμη πνευματικὴ συμβουλή, «δι' ὑπομονῆς τρέχωμεν τὸν προκειμένον ἡμῖν ἀγῶνα, ἀφορῶντες εἰς τὸν τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτὴν Ἰησοῦν». Τὸ ρῆμα «ἀφορῶ εἰς τινὰ» σημαίνει, στὸ κείμενο ποὺ ἀναλύουμε, «κοιτάζω κάποιον μὲ μεγάλη καὶ ἀδιάσπαστη προσοχή» καὶ πρέπει ἀπαραίτητα νὰ γίνῃ γιὰ ὅλους μας τρόπος ζωῆς. Ἄς μὴν ἀσχολούμαστε μὲ ὅ,τι δὲν ἐπηρεάζει τὴ σωτηρία μας. Ἄς κάνουμε μὲ ὑπομονὴ τὸν προσωπικὸ μας ἀγῶνα, καὶ ἄς ἔχουμε στραμμένη τὴν προσοχή μας στὸ Χριστό, τὸν ἀρχηγὸ τῆς πίστεώς μας, ἔτσι ὥστε νὰ μὴ λοξοδρομήσουμε καὶ νὰ μὴν καταντήσουμε «εἰς τὸν ῥερυπωμένον βίον, καὶ εἰς τὰς ὀλεθρίους ὁδοὺς» (στ' εὐχὴ Εὐχελαίου).

Ἦς θυμηθοῦμε τὴν ἐντολὴ τοῦ Κυρίου, ὅπως τὴν διατυπώνει ὁ Μωυσῆς: «φυλάξεσθε ποιεῖν ὃν τρόπον ἐνετείλατό σοι Κύριος ὁ Θεός σου· οὐκ ἐκκλινεῖτε εἰς δεξιὰ οὐδὲ εἰς ἀριστερά» (Δευτ. 5, 32). Λέει σχετικὰ ὁ ἱερὸς Χρυσόστομος: «Ὅπως ἀκριβῶς σ' ὅλες τὶς τέχνες καὶ τὰ ἀγωνίσματα, ὅταν προσέχουμε τοὺς δασκάλους μας, τότε ἐντυπώνουμε τὴν τέχνη στὴ διάνοιά μας καὶ βλέποντας παίρνουμε μερικοὺς κανόνες, ἔτσι κι ἐδῶ. Ἦν θέλουμε νὰ τρέχουμε, καὶ μάλιστα νὰ μάθουμε καλὰ νὰ τρέχουμε, ἄς στρέψουμε τὰ βλέμματά μας πρὸς τὸ Χριστό, τὸν ἀρχηγὸ καὶ τελειωτὴ τῆς πίστεώς μας».

Ἦισως παραπονεθεῖ κάποιος λέγοντας, «ὁ ἀδελφός μου μὲ ἔβλαψε, μὲ πίκρανε...». Συγχώρησε καὶ προχώρα, μὲ τὰ μάτια τῆς ψυχῆς σου προσηλωμένα στὸ Χριστό, ὅπως παροτρύνει ὁ σπουδαῖος ἱεροκήρυκας τοῦ 19ου αἰῶνα Νικηφόρος Θεοτόκης: «Ὅταν οἱ ἄλλοι σὲ συκοφαντοῦν ἢ σὲ ὑβρίζουν... βλέπε τὸ Χριστὸ νὰ συκοφαντεῖται ἀπὸ τοὺς Φαρισαίους, νὰ προδίδεται ἀπὸ τὸν Ἰούδα, νὰ σύρεται στὰ δικαστήρια ἀπὸ τοὺς παρανόμους... ἐὰν ἀνοίξεις τὰ μάτια τῆς ψυχῆς σου καὶ τὰ προσηλώνεις στὸ Χριστό, ὄχι μόνον φεύγεις μακριὰ ἀπὸ τὸ σκοτάδι τῆς ἀμαρτίας, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ φῶς τῶν θείων ἀρετῶν περιλάμπει τὴν ψυχὴ σου». Στὴν πνευματικὴ ζωὴ εἶναι ἀπαραίτητο συνεχῶς νὰ ἀσχολούμαστε μὲ τὰ γεγονότα ποὺ συμβαίνουν στὴν καρδιά μας. Τὸ χρόνο ποὺ σπαταλᾶμε στὸ διαδίκτυο, ἄς τὸν ἀφιερώνουμε στὴν προσευχὴ, στὴ μελέτη, στὶς ἀγαθοεργίες, δίνοντας ὅλη τὴν προσοχή μας στὸ Χριστό. Μά, θὰ ἀντιτάξει κάποιος ἄλλος, πρέπει νὰ φορέσουμε παρωπίδες; Ἐδῶ ὀφείλουμε νὰ θυμηθοῦμε τὰ λόγια τοῦ Κυρίου μας, «τί γὰρ ὠφελήσει ἄνθρωπον ἐὰν κερδήσῃ τὸν κόσμον ὅλον, καὶ ζημιωθῇ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ; ἢ τί δώσει ἄνθρωπος ἀντάλλαγμα τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ;» (Μάρκ. 8, 36-37).

«Ἀφορῶντες εἰς τὸν τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτὴν Ἰησοῦν». Αὐτὸ εἶναι τὸ «μυστικὸ» τῆς χριστιανικῆς ζωῆς, ἡ διάθεση τῆς καρδιᾶς νὰ ἐπικεντρώνεται ὄχι στον κόσμο μὲ τὰ θέλητρα καὶ τὶς ἐπιρροές του, οὔτε κἄν στὸν ἑαυτὸ μας μὲ τὶς μικρές μας ἐπιτυχίες καὶ τὶς πολλές μας ἀποτυχίες, ἀλλὰ σὲ Ἐκεῖνον ποὺ εἶναι ἡ πηγὴ ὅλης τῆς πνευματικῆς μας δύναμης. Τὸ νὰ ἔχουμε τὰ μάτια μας «καρφωμένα» στὸν Χριστὸ εἶναι ὁ μόνος ἀσφαλῆς τρόπος νὰ ζήσουμε σὲ ἕναν ἀμαρτωλὸ κόσμο, ἀφοῦ, ὅπως μᾶς διαβεβαιώνει ὁ Εὐαγγελιστὴς Ἰωάννης, «ὁ κόσμος ὅλος ἐν τῷ πονηρῷ κεῖται» (Α' Ἰω. 5, 19). Εἶθε ὁ Κύριος, διὰ πρεσβειῶν τῆς Ὑπεραγίας Θεοτόκου καὶ πάντων τῶν Ἁγίων, τῶν ὁποίων σήμερα ἐορτάζουμε τὴν Σύναξιν, νὰ δώσει σὲ ὅλους μας ὑπομονὴ καὶ δύναμη στὸν πνευματικὸ μας ἀγῶνα καὶ νὰ μᾶς βοηθήσει πάντοτε νὰ ἔχουμε προσηλωμένα τὰ μάτια μας σὲ Ἐκεῖνον «τὸν ἀπόστολον καὶ ἀρχιερέα τῆς ὁμολογίας ἡμῶν» (Ἐβρ. 3, 1).

Πρεσβύτερος Δαβὶδ Σόμαλης

SERMON ON THE GOSPEL READING

The Lord Jesus loves his people, and understands their situation: he says that they are like lost sheep without a shepherd. He chose twelve men to help with his mission and continue it after his departure, and he gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal the sick. This was the beginning of their apostolic work: it began with the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and at the end of Matthew's Gospel we read that Jesus told them to go to all nations and make disciples (Matt. 28:19)

And what a mixed bunch they were! Simon Peter, Andrew, James and John were fisherman on the Sea of Galilee, and they appear frequently in the Gospels. Peter became the first bishop of Rome, and it was there that he was martyred. His brother Andrew went to the north of the Black Sea and the area of Ukraine: according to tradition, he established the Church in Byzantium, and he was martyred in Patras. Later some of his relics were taken to Scotland, and until the Reformation they were venerated in

the town known as St Andrew's. James was the first of the Apostles to be martyred (Acts 12:2), and one tradition says he had gone to preach in Spain.

The Apostle John ('the Theologian') is well known: he wrote the fourth Gospel and the book of Revelation; he settled in Ephesus and was the last of the twelve to die. Philip has a Greek name, and he may have known Greeks who visited Jerusalem (see *Joh. 12:20-22, 1:43-46*): he went to preach in Greece and Asia Minor, and was martyred in the city of Hierapolis in Phrygia. Bartholomew is usually identified with Nathaniel (*Joh. 1:45-51*): he is supposed to have gone to preach in India, and then to Armenia, where he was martyred. Thomas is mentioned a number of times in John's Gospel, and Tradition tells us that he went to preach in south India, and was martyred there. Matthew was a tax collector, who worked for the Romans: he wrote the first edition of his Gospel, probably in Aramaic, and it was translated into Greek with additional material also found in Mark and Luke. He may have gone on to preach in Ethiopia. About the three others we know little: Thaddaios is called Jude by St Luke, and Luke calls Simon the Cananaean 'the Zealot' - which means he belonged to a political group who were bitterly opposed to the Romans.

But whatever their background, the important thing about the Apostles was that Jesus gave them authority: it was in his name and by his grace that they went out to preach about the kingdom of heaven, to encourage people to live God's way, in accordance with his commandments. The Apostles passed on this authority to the bishops, and throughout the centuries the bishops have passed on authority to their priests. But all Christians are called to take part in the evangelistic work of the Church.

At Baptism we are illumined with the light of Christ, and he says to each one of us, 'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father in heaven' (*Matt. 5:16*). Who around us is in need of the light of Christ? Perhaps members of our family who may have wandered off and become lost sheep. Perhaps our neighbours, and the people we meet in clubs or societies. Perhaps those who work with us in our place of employment or at our school or university. So, let your light shine! And be prepared (as St Peter says) to answer anyone who asks us about the things we believe and hope for - with gentleness and with respect (*1 Pet. 3:15*).

Presb. David Gilchrist



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Archdiocese of Thyateira & Great Britain, 5 Craven Hill, London W2 3EN
Tel.: 020 7723 4787 • E-mail: archthyateira@gmail.com • Website: www.thyateira.org.uk