

ΟΙΚΟΥΜΕΝΙΚΟΝ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΕΙΟΝ
ΙΕΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ
ΘΥΑΤΕΙΡΩΝ & Μ. ΒΡΕΤΑΝΝΙΑΣ

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE
ARCHDIOCESE OF
THYATEIRA & GREAT BRITAIN



ΛΟΓΟΣ ΚΥΡΙΟΥ THE WORD OF OUR LORD



ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΣΤ' ΛΟΥΚΑ
20 Ὀκτωβρίου 2024
Ἦχος πλ. δ'. Ἀριθμ. 251

6th SUNDAY OF LUKE
20 October 2024
Plagal of the 4th Mode. No. 251

Ἀρτεμίου μεγαλομάρτυρος, Γερασίμου Κεφαλληνίας, Ματρώνης ὁσίας Χιοπολίτιδος
Artemius the Great martyr, Gerasimus of Cephalonia, Matrona of Chios

ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΝ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑ

Β' Κορ. στ', 16-18 - ζ', 1

Αδελφοί, ὑμεῖς ἐστε ναὸς Θεοῦ ζῶντος, καθὼς εἶπεν ὁ Θεός ὅτι Ἐνοικήσω ἐν αὐτοῖς, καὶ ἐμπεριπατήσω καὶ ἔσομαι αὐτῶν Θεός, καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔσονται μοι λαός. Διό, Ἐξέλθετε ἐκ μέσου αὐτῶν καὶ ἀφορίσθητε, λέγει Κύριος, καὶ ἀκαθάρτου μὴ ἄπτεσθε· καὶ γὰρ εἰσδέξομαι ὑμᾶς, καὶ ἔσομαι ὑμῖν εἰς πατέρα, καὶ ὑμεῖς ἔσεσθέ μοι εἰς υἱοὺς καὶ θυγατέρας, λέγει Κύριος παντοκράτωρ. Ταῦτας οὖν ἔχοντες τὰς ἐπαγγελίας, ἀγαπητοί, καθαρῶς καθαρίζομεν ἑαυτοὺς ἀπὸ παντὸς μολυσμοῦ σαρκὸς καὶ πνεύματος, ἐπιτελοῦντες ἁγιωσύνην ἐν φόβῳ Θεοῦ.

EPISTLE READING

2 Cor. 6: 16-18 ; 7: 1

Brethren, you are the temple of the living God; as God said, I will live in them and move among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Therefore come out from them, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch nothing unclean; then I will welcome you, and I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty. Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, and make holiness perfect in the fear of God.



ΑΝΑΣΤΑΣΙΜΟΝ ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ

Ἦχος πλ. δ'.

Εξ ὕψους κατήλθες ὁ εὐσπλαγχνος, Ἐταφὴν κατεδέξω τριήμερον, ἵνα ἡμᾶς ἐλευθερώσῃς τῶν παθῶν. Ἡ ζωὴ καὶ ἡ ἀνάστασις ἡμῶν, Κύριε, δόξα σοι.

RESURRECTION APOLYTIKION

Plagal of the 4th Mode

You the Compassionate came down from above, you accepted burial for three days, that you might free us from the passions. Our life and resurrection, Lord, glory to you!

ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΑΡΤΕΜΙΟΥ

Ἦχος πλ. α'. Τὸν συνάναρχον Λόγον.

Εὐσεβείας τοῖς τρόποις καλλωπιζόμενος, ἀθλητικῆς ἀγλαίας ὥφθης σοφῆ κοινωνός, πρὸς ἀγῶνας ἀνδρικούς παραταξάμενος· ὅθεν ὡς λύχνος φωταυγής, τῶν θαυμάτων τὰς βολὰς, ἐκλάμπεις τῇ οἰκουμένῃ, Ἀρτέμιε Ἀθλοφόρε, πρὸς σωτηρίαν τῶν ψυχῶν ἡμῶν.

ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΓΕΡΑΣΙΜΟΥ

Ἦχος α'. Αὐτόμελον.

Τῶν Ὁρθοδόξων προστάτην καὶ ἐν σώματι ἄγγελον, καὶ θαυματουργὸν θεοφόρον νεοφανέντα ἡμῖν, ἐπαινέσωμεν πιστοὶ θεῖον Γεράσιμον· ὅτι ἀξίως παρὰ Θεοῦ ἀπέιληφεν, ἰαμάτων τὴν ἀέναον χάριν· ῥώννυσι τοὺς νοσοῦντας, δαιμονῶντας ἰάται· διὸ καὶ τοῖς τιμῶσιν αὐτόν, βρῦει ἰάματα.

ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΚΟΝ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑ

Λουκ. η´, 26-39

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκεῖνῳ, ἐλθόντι τῷ Ἰησοῦ εἰς τὴν χώραν τῶν Γαδαρηνῶν, ἣτις ἐστὶν ἀντίπερα τῆς Γαλιλαίας. ἐξελθόντι δὲ αὐτῷ ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν ὑπήντησεν αὐτῷ ἀνὴρ τις ἐκ τῆς πόλεως, ὃς εἶχε δαιμόνια ἐκ χρόνων ἱκανῶν, καὶ ἱμάτιον οὐκ ἐνεδιδύσκετο καὶ ἐν οἰκίᾳ οὐκ ἔμενεν, ἀλλ´ ἐν τοῖς μνήμασιν. ἰδὼν δὲ τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἀνακράξας προσέπεσεν αὐτῷ καὶ φωνῇ μεγάλῃ εἶπε· τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ, Υἱὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ Ὑψίστου; δέομαί σου, μὴ με βασανίσῃς. παρήγγειλε γὰρ τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἀκαθάρτῳ ἐξελθεῖν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. πολλοὶ γὰρ χρόνοις συνηπάκει αὐτόν, καὶ ἐδεσμεῖτο ἀλύσει καὶ πέδαις φυλασσόμενος, καὶ διαρρήσων τὰ δεσμὰ ἠλαύνετο ὑπὸ τοῦ δαίμονος εἰς τὰς ἐρήμους. ἐπηρώτησε δὲ αὐτὸν ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγων· τί σοὶ ἐστὶν ὄνομα; ὁ δὲ εἶπε· λεγεῶν· ὅτι δαιμόνια πολλὰ εἰσῆλθεν εἰς αὐτόν· καὶ παρεκάλει αὐτόν ἵνα μὴ ἐπιτάξῃ αὐτοῖς εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσον ἀπελθεῖν. ἦν δὲ ἐκεῖ ἀγέλη χοίρων ἱκανῶν βοσκομένων ἐν τῷ ὄρει· καὶ παρεκάλουν αὐτόν ἵνα ἐπιτρέψῃ αὐτοῖς εἰς ἐκείνους εἰσελθεῖν· καὶ ἐπέτρεψεν αὐτοῖς. ἐξελθόντα δὲ τὰ δαιμόνια ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου εἰσῆλθον εἰς τοὺς χοίρους, καὶ ὥρμησεν ἡ ἀγέλη κατὰ τοῦ κρημνοῦ εἰς τὴν λίμνην καὶ ἀπεπνίγη. ἰδόντες δὲ οἱ βόσκοντες τὸ γεγενημένον ἔφυγον, καὶ ἀπήγγειλαν εἰς τὴν πόλιν καὶ εἰς τοὺς ἀγρούς. ἐξῆλθον δὲ ἰδεῖν τὸ γεγονός, καὶ ἦλθον πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ εὗρον καθημένον τὸν ἄνθρωπον, ἀφ´ οὗ τὰ δαιμόνια ἐξεληλύθει, ἱματισμένον καὶ σωφρονοῦντα παρὰ τοὺς πόδας τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, καὶ ἐφοβήθησαν. ἀπήγγειλαν δὲ αὐτοῖς οἱ ἰδόντες πῶς ἐσώθη ὁ δαιμονισθεὶς. καὶ ἠρώτησαν αὐτόν ἅπαν τὸ πλῆθος τῆς περιχώρου τῶν Γαδαρηνῶν ἀπελθεῖν ἀπ´ αὐτῶν, ὅτι φόβῳ μεγάλῳ συνείχοντο. αὐτὸς δὲ ἐμβὰς εἰς τὸ πλοῖον ὑπέστρεψεν. ἐδέετο δὲ αὐτοῦ ὁ ἀνὴρ, ἀφ´ οὗ ἐξεληλύθει τὰ δαιμόνια, εἶναι σὺν αὐτῷ· ἀπέλυσε δὲ αὐτόν ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγων· ὑπόστρεφε εἰς τὸν οἶκόν σου καὶ διηγοῦ ὅσα ἐποίησέ σοι ὁ Θεός, καὶ ἀπῆλθε καθ´ ὅλην τὴν πόλιν κηρύσσων ὅσα ἐποίησεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς.

GOSPEL READING

Luke 8: 26-39

At that time, as Jesus arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, there met him a man from the city who had demons; for a long time he had worn no clothes and he lived not in a house but among the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him, and said with a loud voice, What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beseech you, do not torment me. For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For many a time it had seized him; he was kept under guard, and bound with chains and fetters, but he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the desert. Jesus then asked him, What is your name? And he said, Legion; for many demons had entered him. And they begged him not to command them to depart into the abyss. Now a large herd of swine was feeding there on the hillside; and they begged him to let them enter these. So he gave them leave. Then the demons came out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned. When the herdsmen saw what happened, they fled, and told it in the city and in the country. Then people went out to see what had happened, and they came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had gone, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. And those who had seen it told them how he who had been possessed with demons was healed. Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gadarenes asked him to depart from them; for they were seized with great fear; so he got into the boat and returned. The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him; but he sent him away, saying, Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you. And he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole city how much Jesus had done for him.

ΕΡΜΗΝΕΙΑ ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΚΟΥ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑΤΟΣ

Η σημερινή Ευαγγελική περικοπή κινείται στους εξής άξονες: την φιλανθρωπία του Θεού για τον άνθρωπο, τον φόβο που προκαλεί η παρουσία του Ιησού στα δαιμόνια και τον σεβασμό της ελευθερίας του ανθρώπου από τον Δημιουργό του. Τα τεκταινόμενα λαμβάνουν χώρα στην άγρια και αφιλόξενη γη των Γαδαρηνών. Όντας σε αυτή τη χώρα, ο Ιησούς δέχεται την επίσκεψη ενός νέου που ταλαιπωρείται από τις ενάντιες δυνάμεις σε ψυχικό, σωματικό και πνευματικό επί-

πεδο. Το θέαμα είναι φρικτό, η αλλοίωση του προσώπου του νέου εμφανής.

Ο Θεός δημιούργησε «κατ'εικόνα και καθ'ομοίωσιν» τον άνθρωπο, και εδώ συγκεκριμένα, αφενός οι αμαρτίες αλλά και τα δαιμόνια, αμαυρώνουν το «κατ'εικόνα» του νέου φρικτά. Η σωτηρία έρχεται από τον φιλεύσπλαχνο Κύριο, ο οποίος αντικρίζοντας τον ταλαιπωρημένο νέο, τον συμπονά, τον λυπάται, και τον ελεεί.

Τα δαιμόνια μόλις αντικρίζουν τον Ιησού, τρομοκρατημένα, του ζητούν να μην τα πειράξει. Ο Κύριος είναι εξουσιαστής των πάντων και τα δαιμόνια φρίττουν στην παρουσία Του. Αν σκεφτούμε ότι στην θέα του Σταυρού τα δαιμόνια εξαφανίζονται, πόσο μάλλον στην ολόσωμη παρουσία του Κυρίου; Όντως ο Ιησούς διατάζει τα δαιμόνια να εξέλθουν από τον νέο και αυτά, τρομοκρατημένα, κατευθύνονται σε ένα κοπάδι χοίρων που βόσκει εκεί κοντά, με αποτέλεσμα τα ζώα να χάσουν τα λογικά τους και να γκρεμιστούν.

Ο νέος, ήρεμος, γαλήνιος, φωτισμένος, στέκεται με ένα πρόσωπο που εικονίζεται από ευγνωμοσύνη δίπλα στον Χριστό, μια που ελευθερωμένος από τα δαιμόνια, επανήλθε στην πρότερη κατάσταση. Ο άνθρωπος που είναι κοντά στον Χριστό, που αγωνίζεται καθημερινά και γίνεται συχνά μέτοχος των μυστηρίων του Θεού, είναι ο άνθρωπος εκείνος που εκπληρώνει την ρήση του Κυρίου: «*άγιοι γίνεσθε, ότι εγώ άγιός είμι*» (Α΄ Πέτρ. 1,16). Η κόπωση από την αμαρτία φεύγει μόνο με την χάρη του Θεού, δια του Μυστηρίου του Εξομολογήσεως και της Θείας Ευχαριστίας.

Οι κάτοικοι, οι οποίοι παρακολουθούν τα τεκταινόμενα, που θα περιμέναμε να βρίσκονται θετικά έκπληκτοι σε όλα αυτά, αρνούνται στον Χριστό να παραμείνει στην χώρα τους και τον διώχνουν. Ο Ιησούς, σεβόμενος την ελευθερία της βουλήσεώς τους, αναχωρεί από τη γη των Γαδαρηνών. Βλέπει το σκοτάδι που επικρατεί στις ψυχές και τις διάνοιες αυτών των ανθρώπων, των ανθρώπων για τους οποίους τα υλικά αγαθά έχουν άμεση προτεραιότητα έναντι της πνευματικής τελειοποίησής τους. Οι άνθρωποι αυτοί είναι σκληροί από την φύση τους, τα μάτια της ψυχής τους είναι κλειστά, δεν ενδιαφέρονται να έχουν κάποια σχέση με τον Θεό και παραμένουν αποστασιοποιημένοι από το φως και την σωτηρία. Η ευκαιρία να θεωθούν, να αγιάσουν και να βρεθούν τον Παράδεισο και την αιωνιότητα, χάθηκε για αυτούς έναντι των υλικών αγαθών. Προτίμησαν τα επίγεια, αντί των ουρανίων, τα φθαρτά, αντί των άφθαρτων, τα πρόσκαιρα, αντί των αιωνίων. Έτσι λοιπόν, η Ευαγγελική περικοπή μας προσφέρει ένα ερώτημα: Εμείς, ποιον δρόμο θέλουμε να ακολουθήσουμε; Τον δρόμο των Γαδαρηνών; ή του νέου, που η παρουσία του Χριστού τον λύτρωσε, τον φωτίσε και του έδωσε την δυνατότητα να ζει αιωνίως; Η απάντηση έγκειται στον καθένα από εμάς.

Πρωτοπρεσβ. Ιωάννης Παντελίδης

SERMON ON THE GOSPEL READING

Today's Gospel brings us face to face with the fearful reality of evil. Evil has plagued humanity throughout history and will continue to do so. It is something we all have to face daily. Let us, therefore, consider what the Church teaches about evil.

Evil in and of itself has no real existence. Evil is not the opposite of good. Rather evil is either the absence or the perversion of good. Darkness is a good example. Darkness is not the opposite of light but its absence. We are not able to create darkness. Darkness is simply the result of the absence of light. An example of evil as perversion is hate. As children of God, we are called to love. Hating is failure to love and a perversion of our true nature as created by God.

Evil cannot exist without free will. The fallen angels were the first beings to abuse this gift. Instead of choosing to follow God, they decided to rebel against Him and thus evil was 'born'. They in turn, out of jealousy and hatred towards man, tempted him down the same path of disobedience. Thus we humans also chose to use our free will to act contrary to God's will. There is no man guiltless of this sin. None but one: Christ Himself. And it's only through Christ that we, too, are able to correct our disobedience and eradicate evil from our lives. Otherwise we risk taking it with us into eternity.

Admittedly, the problem of evil and suffering is the strongest card in the atheist's deck. But it is not as strong as they would like to believe. It is one thing to say that God created evil – that would be a problem. However, it is quite another thing to say that God created a world where evil

was a possibility. If evil were not a possibility then neither would good be. If we were not free to do evil neither would we be free to do good. And if we were not free to hate neither would we be free to love. And a world without love is not worth creating or living in. We are aware that there is more to this life than meets the eye. There is eternal life too. And in eternity, God has 'all the time in the world' to correct the injustices of this life. He can even turn suffering into glory. All the suffering we undergo in this world will help us in the next. But when that suffering is innocent, well that is sheer glory. If only we were wiser and more courageous, we would gladly bear and even welcome the suffering we unavoidably will meet. The best way to reduce suffering is, paradoxically, by suffering.

As free agents, we are responsible for all our actions. No one can take that away from us. Every time we act contrary to God's will we allow evil to enter into our lives. The impact may not be felt immediately, so we may think we 'got away with it'. But in actual fact we do not get away with anything, neither in the next life nor in this one. Sooner or later all our lies, sins and evil will seek vengeance. Every lie we tell incurs a debt to the truth. And every sin we commit incurs a debt to the good. The evil one will make us pay every last penny we owe.

The only way to avoid that debt is by repentance. We constantly need to make an honest inventory of our life and find the humility to admit our misdeeds. We then take that to confession. The confessional is the one place the devil cannot go. As soon as we humble ourselves before our spiritual father, the devil loses all power and claim over our soul. We either deal with our shame (through confession) or the devil will deal with it (to destroy us). The shame we bear in confession then becomes strength to overcome our sins and passions.

Therefore, brethren, ultimately we need not fear neither evil nor the devil. Rather we need to cleave to God and the good. The healthy fear of God casts out the unhealthy fear of evil. It is sinning that we need to fear, which means falling away from God. That is how we overcome evil in our lives. To us sinners (of whom I am chief) belongs the shame but to Christ our redeemer and saviour we ascribe glory forever and ever. Amen.

Hieromonk Barholomew



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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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