

FIRST FESTIVAL PLANNING MEETING: Our First Festival meeting will be OPEN to all and held on **Wednesday, January 20th from 6:30-8:30 p.m.** Everyone is welcome to attend. Let's work together to make this our best and most successful Festival ever.

SUPERBOWL 2016: Mark your calendars for **Sunday, February 7th**, so you don't miss our **Annual SUPERBOWL Party**. \$50 Game Board tickets are now on sale and Raffle Tickets at \$10 each or 3 for \$20 are also available to win a Big Screen TV. Dinner Only tickets are \$12. Enjoy Snacks, Buffet Dinner, Dessert and Coffee while watching the game. Join the fun and have a great time!

ST. NICHOLAS DANCE TROUPES: Every Thursday our youth Dance Troupe will be practicing. They are for children ages 4 to 12 the Junior Dance Troupe will meet from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. and for young people of High School age the Senior Dance Troupe will meet from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. Please see the enclosed flyer to apply.

"PARADOSIS" ADULT GREEK DANCE TROUPE: is beginning on Tuesday, January 26, 2016 and Open to all Adults College Age and Above, who are interested in learning a variety of Greek dances. Please see the enclosed flyer to apply.

PHILOPTOCHOS COOKING CLASS: On Saturday, January 30 There is still time to make your reservation for our Ladies Philoptochos Cooking Class. This event is very popular and always a wonderful afternoon, learning new recipes and enjoying a wonderful meal! Please call Anna Paramboukas or the Church Office.

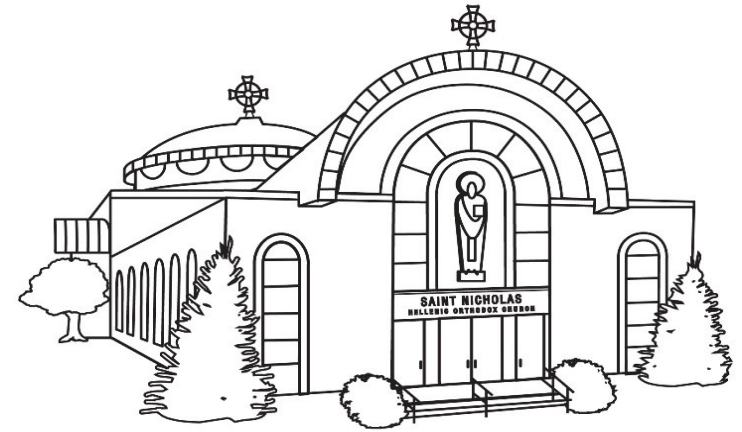
G.O.Y.A. MEETING: On Monday, January 18th at 6:30 p.m. we will be having a G.O.Y.A. meeting here at the church. Everyone is welcome to attend.

SMALL PARAKLESIS EVERY THURSDAY: Along with our Adult Religious Education classes on Thursday we also do a Small Paraklesis service that everyone is welcome to attend and submit names. It is a wonderful service where we supplicate the Most Holy Theotokos to intercede on our behalf for numerous different reasons. Let us try to take advantage of the rich liturgical life of our church and please join us for this most beautiful service.

WHY SPIRITUAL DEPRESSION: St. Paul tells us that when he was so unbearably crushed in Asia that he despaired of life itself, he believed that the purpose of this experience was to make him rely more completely on God. As he expressed it: "Why we felt that we had received the sentence of death; but that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raised the dead; He delivered us from so deadly a peril, and He will deliver us; on Him we have set our hope that He will deliver us again" (2 Cor. 1:9, 10). When the Christian comes to the end of his rope, he finds there God's hand holding the rope and he commits himself completely into that all-powerful, all-loving hand.

Fr. Elchaninov has written, "I will tell you the conclusion that I have long since reached from reading the Holy Fathers: periods of aridity are entirely normal, and we must bear them patiently and with equanimity. These periods implant in us the humble realization of our helplessness and compel us to place in God alone all our hope for the revival of our hearts."

Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church



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Sunday, January 17th, 2016
12th Sunday of Luke
Saint Anthony the Great
Saint Anthony the New of the Berropas Skete

Readings:

Epistle: Hebrews 13:17-21

Gospel: Luke 17:12-19

Epistle Reader: Daniel Biesiada

Memorials:

Christ Lamnatos 10 Years

Athena Lamnatos 19 Years

Coffee Fellowship Hour immediately follows the Divine Liturgy and is sponsored today by Nicholas Lamnatos in loving memory of his parents Christ and Athena Lamnatos in the Dr. Mary Dochios Kamberos Community Center.

THIS WEEK AT SAINT NICHOLAS

Monday, January 18, 2016

Saints Athanasios and Cyril

8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy

No. Greek School

6:30 p.m. G.O.Y.A. meeting

Wednesday, January 20, 2016

4:30 p.m. Greek School

6:30 p.m. Open Festival Meeting

7:00 p.m. Basketball Practice

Thursday, January 21, 2016

6:00 p.m. Small Paraklesis

followed by Adult Religious Education

6:30 p.m. Junior Dance Troupe

Saturday, January 23, 2016

5:00 p.m. Great Vespers

COMMUNION ANNOUNCEMENT: While we pray and work for the reconciliation and unity of all the world's Christians, the reality remains that there is still no intercommunion between our Orthodox Churches and the Churches of the West. This means that only baptized, chrismated and observant Orthodox faithful receive Communion in our churches. At the same time, we warmly welcome all non-Orthodox to join us in prayer and celebration, and humbly offer to all present the *Antidoro* bread of fellowship at the end of the service. We offer this important symbol 'instead of the Gifts', in the words of the Apostle Paul, 'Till we *all* come to the unity of the Faith' (Eph. 4.13).

HARD TO GIVE: Man finds it hard to get what he wants because he does not want the best. God finds it hard to give, because He would give the best and man will not take it.

St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 13:17-21

Brethren, obey your leaders and submit to them; for they are keeping watch over your souls, as men who will have to give account. Let them do this joyfully, and not sadly, for that would be of no advantage to you. Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things. I urge you the more earnestly to do this in order that I may be restored to you the sooner. Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do His will, working in you that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Κατὰ Λουκᾶν 17:12-19

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, εἰσερχομένου αὐτοῦ εἰς τινα κώμην ἀπήντησαν αὐτῷ δέκα λεπροὶ ἄνδρες, οἱ ἕστησαν πόρρωθεν, καὶ αὐτοὶ ἤραν φωνὴν λέγοντες· Ἰησοῦ ἐπιστάτα, ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς. καὶ ἰδὼν εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· πορευθέντες ἐπιδείξατε ἑαυτοὺς τοῖς ἱερεῦσι. καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ ὑπάγειν αὐτοὺς ἐκαθαρίσθησαν. εἷς δὲ ἐξ αὐτῶν, ἰδὼν ὅτι ἰάθη, ὑπέστρεψε μετὰ φωνῆς μεγάλης δοξάζων τὸν Θεόν, καὶ ἔπεσεν ἐπὶ πρόσωπον παρὰ τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ εὐχαριστῶν αὐτῷ· καὶ αὐτὸς ἦν Σαμαρεῖτης. ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν· οὐχὶ οἱ δέκα ἐκαθαρίσθησαν; οἱ δὲ ἐννέα ποῦ; οὐχ εὐρέθησαν ὑποστρέφαντες δοῦναι δόξαν τῷ Θεῷ εἰ μὴ ὁ ἄλλογενὴς οὗτος; καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ἀναστὰς πορεύου· ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέ σε.

The Gospel according to Luke 17:12-19

At that time, as Jesus entered a village, He was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance and lifted up their voices and said: "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." When He saw them He said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they went they were cleansed. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; and he fell on his face at Jesus's feet, giving Him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. Then said Jesus: "Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" And He said to him: "Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well."

ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: Our Adult Religious Education class will resume on **Thursday, January 14th**. We will begin with a Small Paraklesis Service at 6:00 p.m. and follow with our class beginning at 7:00 p.m. Please join us to learn more about the richness of our faith as we strive together to grow closer to our Lord.

YOUR COOPERATION IS NEEDED! We remind our faithful that the Divine Liturgy begins at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday. **Please be prompt and on time!** Please turn off cell phones before entering church. No conversation should take place during worship. During the reading of the Gospel people in the narthex should not be purchasing or lighting candles but standing reverently and listen to the reading. If possible avoid using center aisle during high points of Divine Liturgy. Lipstick and lip-gloss should be removed before kissing icons, receiving Holy Communion and kissing the hand of the priest. When receiving antidoron, please use both hands and do not allow the crumbs to fall to the floor.

STEWARDSHIP 2015: Now as we are starting fresh in 2016, please make sure that your 2015 Stewardship Obligation is complete. Thank You!

Resurrectional Apolotikion

Ἦχος πλ δ

Ἐξ ὕψους κατήλθες ὁ εὐσπλαγχνος, ταφὴν καταδέξω τριήμερον, ἵνα ἡμᾶς ἐλευθερώσῃς τῶν παθῶν. Ἡ ζωὴ καὶ ἡ Ἀνάστασις ἡμῶν, Κύριε δόξα σοι.

Mode Plagal of the fourth

From on high didst Thou descend, O Compassionate One; to burial of three days hast Thou submitted that Thou mightest free us from our passions. O our Life and Resurrection, Lord, glory be to Thee.

Saint Anthony the Great

Ἦχος δ

Τὸν ζηλωτὴν Ἠλίαν τοῖς τρόποις μιμούμενος, τῷ Βαπτιστῇ εὐθείαις ταῖς τρίβοις ἐπόμενος, Πάτερ Ἀντώνιε, τῆς ἐρήμου γέγονας οικιστής, καὶ τὴν οἰκουμένην ἐστήριζας εὐχαίς σου, διὸ πρέσβευε Χριστῷ τῷ Θεῷ, σωθῆναι τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν.

Fourth Mode

O Father Anthony, you imitated the zealous Elijah. You followed the straight paths of the Baptist and became a desert dweller. By prayer you confirmed the universe. Wherefore, intercede with Christ our God to save our souls.

Hymn of Saint Nicholas Patron of our Parish

Ἦχος δ

Κανόνα πίστεως καὶ εἰκόνα πραότητος, εγκρατείας Διδάσκαλον, ἀνέδειξέ σε τῇ ποιμνῇ σου, ἡ τῶν πραγμάτων ἀλήθεια, διὰ τοῦτο ἐκτίσω τῇ ταπεινώσει τὰ ὑψηλά, τῇ πτωχείᾳ τὰ πλούσια, Πάτερ Ιεράρχα Νικόλαε, πρέσβευε Χριστῷ τῷ Θεῷ, σωθῆναι τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν.

Fourth Mode

A model of faith and the image of gentleness, the example of your life has shown you forth to your sheep-fold to be a master of temperance. You obtained thus through being lowly, gifts from on high, and riches through poverty. Nicholas, our father and priest of priests, intercede with Christ our God that He may save our souls.

Kontakion

Ἦχος α

Ὁ μήτραν παρθενικὴν ἀγιάσας τῷ τόκῳ σου, καὶ χεῖρας τοῦ Συμεὼν εὐλογήσας ὡς ἔπρεπε, προφθάσας καὶ νῦν ἑσώσας ἡμᾶς Χριστέ ὁ Θεός. Ἀλλ' εἰρήνευσον ἐν πολέμοις τὸ πολίτευμα, καὶ κραταίωσον Βασιλεῖς οὓς ἡγάπησας, ὁ μόνος φιλόανθρωπος.

First Mode

Your birth sanctified a Virgin's womb and properly blessed the hands of Symeon. Having now come and saved us O Christ our God, give peace to Your commonwealth in troubled times and strengthen those in authority, whom You love, as only the loving One.

Πρὸς Ἑβραίους 13:17-21

Ἀδελφοί, πείθεσθε τοῖς ἡγουμένοις ὑμῶν, καὶ ὑπαίκετε· αὐτοὶ γὰρ ἀγρυπνοῦσιν ὑπὲρ τῶν ψυχῶν ὑμῶν, ὡς λόγον ἀποδώσοντες· ἵνα μετὰ χαρᾶς τοῦτο ποιῶσιν, καὶ μὴ στενάζοντες· ἄλυσιτελες γὰρ ὑμῖν τοῦτο. Προσεύχεσθε περὶ ἡμῶν· πεποιθήμεν γὰρ ὅτι καλὴν συνείδησιν ἔχομεν, ἐν πᾶσιν καλῶς θέλοντες ἀναστρέφεσθαι. Περὶ σσοτέρως δὲ παρακαλῶ τοῦτο ποιῆσαι, ἵνα τάχιον ἀποκατασταθῶ ὑμῖν. Ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης, ὁ ἀναγαγὼν ἐκ νεκρῶν τὸν ποιμένα τῶν προβάτων τὸν μέγαν ἐν αἵματι διαθήκης αἰωνίου, τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν, καταρτίσαι ὑμᾶς ἐν παντὶ ἔργῳ ἀγαθῷ εἰς τὸ ποιῆσαι τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ, ποιῶν ἐν ὑμῖν τὸ εὐάρεστον ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ, διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ· ᾧ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. Ἀμήν

“WHERE ARE THE OTHER NINE?” At the time of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the idea of gratefulness for God's blessings was again a matter of great religious significance. Christ spoke out about gratitude and the lack of it among the people. Remember the story of the ten lepers who were healed by Christ one day? After they had started for home, one stopped, looked at his healing flesh, then turned around and came back to the Lord. He knelt at Jesus' feet in thanksgiving for His help. “Were not ten healed?” Jesus asked. “But where are the other nine? Has not one been found to return and give glory to God except this foreigner?” Christ rebuked those who had failed to express their thanks, and He commended the one who took the trouble to express his gratitude.

How shall we give thanks to God? What better way is there than by “thanks-living?” This is, living day by day in the spirit of gratitude. Not only expressing our thanks with our lips, but living our thanks with our lives. Let us all truly mean it when we say in the Divine Liturgy: “Let us give thanks unto the Lord.”

BUILDING UP THE BODY OF CHRIST: What is the Body of Christ? The Church. The Lord has made us worthy to make up His Body. In order for the Body to work properly, the Lord has given us provision. He has given “gifts” to each member of His Body, and these gifts are meant to be used for the glory of God and for the building up of the Church. In other words, we ought not to hoard these gifts to ourselves – first, because they are not ours to keep and, second, because they must be used to serve others.

What gifts has the Lord given to us? Saint Paul answers this question, saying, “And His gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers” (Ephesians 4:11). Each *charisma* has a unique purpose – the Apostles preached and led the pagans and Jews to Christ, the prophets interpreted God's will, the teachers instructed others in the Faith. We see in the Body of Christ, many members with different functions. Yet these members do not oppose one another, otherwise, there would be chaos and sickness. The members all work toward one goal. That goal is this: “to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for the building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:12-13). “Mature manhood” is Christian perfection. We Christians have the highest calling, to become perfect, to acquire every virtue and to overcome every sin. In order to do this, the Lord has not left us alone, but has given us helpers and teachers so that we may learn to travel the straight path toward heaven, toward Christian perfection.

CHUCKLE: A little girl and her dog are walking through the forest when they suddenly fall into a pit. They scramble and scramble but can't make their way out. The little girl yells, the dog barks, but no one is around to hear their calls for help. Slowly, the night sky turns black and they find themselves engulfed in utter darkness. Off in the distance, the wolves begin howling. Each howl is louder and closer than the last. The little girl holds the dog close to her chest and says sadly to the dog, “This is the worst mess in which we have ever found ourselves, my darling Sparky.” “Yeah,” the dog says, “we're in trouble.” “Sparky,” the girl says, astonished, “I didn't know you could talk.” “Well,” the dog says, “I was kinda waiting for the right time to tell you.”



ΕΤΟΣ 64ον

17 Ιανουαρίου 2016

ΑΡΙΘ. ΦΥΛ. 3 (3268)

Η ΕΚΜΕΤΑΛΛΕΥΣΗ ΤΗΣ ΠΙΣΤΗΣ

Σύνθηες φαινόμενο διαχρονικά, είναι τό νά ἐνεργεῖ ὁ ἄνθρωπος μέ ὑπολογισμό καί ὑστεροβουλία. Ὑπερβολικά παραδείγματα, κατά τά ὁποῖα ἀκόμη καί ἅγιοι στόχοι καί σκοποὶ ἀμαυρώθηκαν ἀπό τή ροπή τοῦ ἀνθρώπου νά σκέπτεται τό ἴδιον ὄφελος, ἀκόμη καί σέ κρίσιμες συνθήκες, ὅποτε ἡ ὑπέρβαση τοῦ ἀτομισμοῦ ἀποτελεῖ πρόταγμα γιά τή διάσωση τοῦ κοινωνικοῦ συνόλου. Βρίθαι ἡ ἱστορία ἀπό περιστατικά κατά τά ὁποῖα ἡ ἐπιβολή τοῦ συμφέροντος τοῦ ἑνὸς μεθοδεύθηκε ἐνάντια στή σωτηρία τῶν πολλῶν, ἡ ἀκόμη καί ἀπό περιπτώσεις κατά τίς ὁποῖες ὁ ἕνας ἐξαπάτησε τοὺς πολλοὺς, ἀδιαφορώντας γιά τίς συνέπειες.

Αὐτό δυστυχῶς, διαπιστώνεται πολλῆς φορές, ἀκόμη καί μέσα στήν Ἐκκλησία, ὅταν οἱ ἄνθρωποι μέ διάφορες προφάσεις καί δικαιολογίες ἢ, ἀκόμη χειρότερα, χωρίς αὐτές, παραθεωροῦν τήν ἠθική τῆς διδασκαλίας καί τό θεμέλιο τῆς ἀγάπης καί πορεύονται μέ δεύτερες σκέψεις καί ἰδιοτελέια. Κι αὐτό δέν ἀφορᾷ μόνο σέ συγκεκριμένους κατηγορίας ἀνθρώπους, μιᾶς πού ὅλοι εἴμαστε ἐπιρρεπεῖς σέ πάθη, ἀλλὰ καί ὅλοι κάποιες φορές ἀφήνουμε τόν διάβολο νά μάς νικήσει. Κι ὅμως, ὁ Χριστός ἔχει γιά ὅλα αὐτά προειδοποιήσει...

Ἡ ἐξ ἀνάγκης πίστις

Στή σημερινή εὐαγγελική περικοπή παρατίθεται τό περιστατικό τῆς θαυμαστῆς θεραπείας τῶν δέκα ληπρῶν ἀπό τόν Κύριο τῆς δόξης. Δέκα ταλαιπωροὶ ἄνθρωποι, ψημένοι στό καμίνι τῆς ἀρρώστιας καί τοῦ πόνου, κατακρεουργημένοι ὄχι τόσο ἀπό τήν ἀνίατη ἀσθένεια, ἀλλὰ κυρίως ἀπό τήν κοινωνική περιθωριοποίηση κι ἀπόρριψη, στέκονται, ὄχι στήν ἄκρη τοῦ δρόμου ἀπ' ὅπου θά περνοῦσε ὁ Χριστός, ἀλλὰ «πὸ ῥωθεν», μακριά, ἐξ αἰτίας τοῦ φόβου καί τῆς ματίας τῶν ἀνθρώπων. Κι ἀπό κεῖ μακριά «ἤραν φωνήν», ἔβαλαν μεγάλη φωνή γιά νά τοὺς ἀκούσει ὁ Χριστός μας, νά τοὺς προσέξει καί τελικά νά τοὺς ἐλεήσει.

Τί σημαίνει τό «ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς» πού φώναζαν στόν Χριστό οἱ ληπροί; Κάποι-οι ἀπό τοὺς Πατέρες ἐρμηνεύουν ὅτι μέ τό νά μή ζητοῦν κάτι συγκεκριμένο, ἀνέθεταν καί ἐμπιστεύονταν τόν ἑαυτό τους στή φιλόανθρωπη προαίρεση τοῦ Χριστοῦ γιά νά τοὺς προσφέρει τό καλύτερο δυνατό. Αὐτὸς ὅμως, εἶναι ὁ λόγος γιά τόν ὁποῖο ἐμεῖς μαθαίνουμε στήν Ἐκκλησία καί ἡμεῖς «Κύριε ἐλέησον».

Ἄλλοι Πατέρες πάλι, ἐρμηνεύουν ὅτι αὐτό πού φώναζαν σήμαινε ὅτι ζητοῦσαν κάτι ἀπὸ τόν Χριστό, χωρίς νά μποροῦν νά τό προσδιορίσουν καί χωρίς νά περιμένουν ἢ νά πολυπιστεύουν σέ κάτι μεγάλο καί σπουδαῖο. Ζητοῦσαν φωνάζοντας, ἐπεὶ δέν εἶχαν τίποτε νά χάσουν. Ἀντίθετα, τό παραμικρό θά ἦταν γι' αὐτοὺς κέρδος. Γι' αὐτό καί ὁ Χριστός, χωρίς νά τοὺς θεραπεύσει πρῶτα, τοὺς παραγγέλλει νά πᾶνε στοὺς ἱερεῖς τοῦ Ναοῦ τοῦ Σολομώντα, οἱ ὁποῖοι εἶχαν τήν ἀρμοδιότητα νά πιστοποιοῦν τήν τυχόν θεραπεία ἀπὸ τή λή-πρα καί νά ἐπιτρέπουν τήν κοινωνική ἐπανάταξη τῶν πρῶν ἀσθενῶν. Ὑπερ-ῆε μέ τόν τρόπο αὐτό νά τοὺς αὐξήσει τήν πίστιν. Διότι ἂν ἐμπιστεύονταν τόν λό-γο του καί πῆγαιναν, αὐτομάτως θά ξέφευγαν ἀπὸ τήν κατάσταση τῆς ὠφελιμι-στικῆς διεκδίκησης καί θά ἐπεδείκνυαν ὑπακοή. Ὑπερ-ῆε ἔκαναν, γι' αὐτό καί ἔλα-βαν ὡς ἀνταπόδομα τή θαυμαστή θεραπεία!

Τό βόλημα

Κι ὅταν διαπίστωσαν ὅτι θεραπεύθηκαν, οἱ ἑννέα ληπροί τί ἔκαναν; Τίποτε! Πέτυχαν, ὄχι ἀπλῶς αὐτό πού ἤθελαν, ἀλλὰ αὐτό πού ἐνδεχομένως δέν περι-μεναν ποτέ. Ὑπερ-ῆε, ἦταν γνωστό ὅτι ὁ Χριστός εἶχε γίνει στόχος τῶν γραμ-ματέων καί τῶν Φαρισαίων, οἱ ὁποῖοι εἶχαν ἀρχίσει νά κάνουν ἀποσυναγώ-γους, δηλαδή ὄχι μόνον νά ἀποδιώκουν ἀπὸ τή συναγωγή, ἀλλὰ καί νά περι-θωριοποιοῦν κοινωνικά, ὅποιον τόν ἀκολουθοῦσε, ἐπομένως δέν ἤθελαν νά βρεθοῦν γιά χάρη του σέ μιὰ θέση, ἀπὸ τήν ὁποία ἐξ αἰτίας του γλίτωσαν... Φο-βερός παραλογισμός! Ἀπολαμβάνουν τή θαυμαστή θεραπεία, μέ τήν ὁποία ὁ Χριστός κι ἡ ἀγάπη του τοὺς ἐπανεισάγει στήν κοινωνία τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ἀρνοῦνται ὅμως, τήν ὁποιαδήποτε ἐπαφή καί σχέση μέ τόν Χριστό ὑποδουλι-μένοι στοὺς ἀνθρώπους καί τόν φόβο τους!

Πολλοὶ διαβάζοντας τήν περικοπή, μιλοῦν γιά ἀχαριστία. Σέ γενικές γραμ-μές ἔχουν δίκιο. Ὑπερ-ῆε ὅμως, μελετήσουμε τήν περικοπή θά διαπιστώσουμε νά παρουσιάζεται ἀνάγλυψη μιὰ ἀλλήλη κατάσταση γνώριμη καί οἰκεία. Εἶναι αὐτό πού στά νέα ἐλληνικά ὀνομάζουμε «βόλημα». Εἶναι ἡ διάθεση νά ἐνεργήσεις δουλιὰς τά πάντα γιά νά ἐπιτύχεις κάτι καί στή συνέχεια, ὅταν τό ἐπιτύχεις καί γί-νει ἡ δουλειά σου, νά τοὺς ξεχάσεις ὅλους, νά μὴν ἀναγνωρίζεις τίποτε, νά με-τατρέψεις σέ τυραννίσκο τῶν ὧν βρίσκονται στήν ἴδια κατάσταση πού ἦσαν προηγουμένως, τοὺς ὁποῖους τώρα κοιτᾷς ἀφ' ὕψηλῳ ὑπερασπιζόμε-νος τό «κεκτημένο»...

Πολλοὶ πορεύθηκαν πρὸς τόν Χριστό καί τήν Ἐκκλησία του μέ διάθεση νά ἐπιτύχουν ἕνα «βόλημα», ἀνάλογα μέ τήν περίπτωσή του ὁ καθένας. Κι ὁ Χρι-στός κι ἡ Ἐκκλησία του, ἐν ἐπιγνώσει ὅτι δέν ὑφίσταται διάθεση σεβασμοῦ, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον διάθεση ἐκμετάλλευσης, παραχωροῦν πολλῆς φορές φιλόανθρω-πευόμενοι τήν ἱκανοποίηση τοῦ ὁποιοῦ αἰτήματος, περιμένοντας τή μετάνοια. Ὑπερ-ῆε πάλι, καθὼς στήν ψυχὴ μεγαλώνουν μαζί οἱ σπόροι τοῦ καλοῦ καρποῦ καί τά ζιζάνια, θέλουν μέ κάποια παραχώρηση νά ἐνισχύσουν τόν ἀνθρώπο-στόν ἀγῶνα του νά ξεριζώσει τά ζιζάνια καί νά καλλιεργήσει τόν καλὸ καρπὸ.

Ὑπερ-ῆε ὁ ἕνας ληπρὸς πού ἐπέστρεψε «δοῦναι δόξαν τῷ Θεῷ», ἄκουσε ὅτι, πιό οὐσιαστικό μπορεῖ ν' ἀκούσει ἄνθρωπος ἀπὸ τό ἀψευδὲς στόμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ: «Ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέ σε». Καλλιέργησε τήν πίστιν, ὄχι γιά νά κερδίσει κάτι ἐπι-γείο καί προσωρινό, ἀλλὰ τό μόνο οὐσιαστικό, τήν αἰώνια σωτηρία. Αὐτό εἶναι τό παράδειγμα πού καλοῦμαστε ὅλοι ν' ἀκολουθήσουμε.

Ἀρχιμ. Ἱ. Ν.