Ίησοῦν ζητεῖτε τὸν Ναζαρηνὸν τὸν ἐσταυρωμένον ἡγέρθη, οὐκ ἔστιν ὧδε τόπος ὅπου ἔθηκαν αὐτόν. ἀλλ' ὑπάγετε εἴπατε τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ καὶ τῷ Πέτρῳ ὅτι προάγει ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν ἐκεῖ αὐτὸν ὄψεσθε, καθὼς εἶπεν ὑμῖν. καὶ ἐξελθοῦσαι ἔφυγον ἀπὸ τοῦ μνημείου εἶχε δὲ αὐτὰς τρόμος καὶ ἔκστασις, καὶ οὐδενὶ οὐδὲν εἶπον ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ.

The Gospel according to Mark 15:43-47; 16:1-8

At that time, Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself looking for the kingdom of God, took courage and went to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus. And Pilate wondered if he were already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he was already dead. And when he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the body to Joseph. And he bought a linen shroud, and taking him down, wrapped him in the linen shroud, and laid him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses saw where he was laid.

And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week they went to the tomb when the sun had risen. And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the door of the tomb?" And looking up, they saw that the stone was rolled back; for it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe; and they were amazed. And he said to them, "Do not be amazed; you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen, he is not here; see the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him, as he told you." And they went out and fled from the tomb; for trembling and astonishment had come upon them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

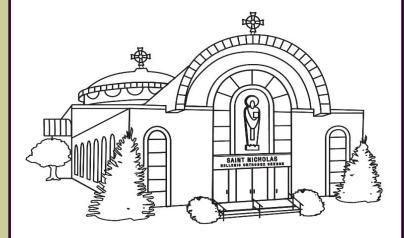
<u>PLEASE NOTE</u>: There will be a Vigil for the Translation of the Relics of Saint Nicholas on Thursday, May 19 at 6:00 p.m. Great Vespers will be followed by Orthros and the Divine Liturgy. Please join us for this special service.

HELP FOR THE 2016 FESTIVAL: This year our Greek Fest will be bigger than ever! We really need many more helping hands. Please sign up to help and please ask relatives, friends and neighbors to help, too! A SIGN-UP sheet is enclosed. We thank you for anything and all you can do!

2016 FESTIVAL DONATIONS: We still need smaller items for the Fest, that can be picked up while you are grocery shopping. May is Catch-All Month. We will be collecting **Mazola Vegetable Oil, and Pop.** We also have a special list for **WINE**. Please take a look at our lists and see if you can help us with something. Any donation amount will help, including your monetary donation, which we would use to purchase items at a discount. **Thank you so much!**

CONGRATULATIONS EARLY BIRD WINNER: Congratulations to The Staff of Atlantic Painting for winning the \$1,000 prize. If you haven't bought a ticket yet there is still time. Maybe you can be our next winner!

Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church



⊕Fr. Christodoulos Margellos Proistemenos

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Sunday, May 15th, 2016

Χριστός Ανέστη! Christ is Risen!
Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearers
Saint Pachomios the Great Martyr
Saint Achillios The Wonderworker, Bishop of Larissa

Readings:

Epistle: Acts 6:1-7

Gospel: Mark 15:45-47, 16:1-8 Epistle Reader: Dimitri Dimizas

MEMORIAL

Lucille Padgitt 1 Year Chris Boutsikakis 1 year **May their Memory be Eternal!**

Coffee Fellowship Hour immediately follows the Divine Liturgy and is sponsored today by the Ladies Philoptochos, in the Dr. Mary Dochios Kamberos Community Center.

PARISH ASSEMBLY TODAY THIS WEEK AT SAINT NICHOLAS

Monday, May 16, 2016 4:30 p.m. Greek School

Tuesday, May 17, 2016

7:00 p.m. Bouzouki Class 7:00 p.m. Adult Greek Dance 7:00 p.m. Philoptochos Meeting

Wednesday, May 18, 2016 4:30 p.m. Greek School

Thursday, May 19, 2016

6:30 p.m. Junior Dance Troupe

Vigil for the Translation of the Relics of Saint Nicholas

6:00 p.m. Vespers followed by Orthros and the Divine Liturgy

Friday, May 20, 2016

7:00 p.m. Great Vespers at Saints Constantine and Helen, Palos Hills

Saturday, May 21, 2016 Saints Constantine and Helen Feast Day

8:00 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy at Saints Constantine and Helen, Palos Hills

THE SPRING PARISH ASSEMBLY will take place TODAY following the Divine Liturgy. In order to be able to vote, parishioners must have completed their 2015 Stewardship Pledge and be Pledged Stewards for 2016.

Plagal of the Fourth

Though You went down into the tomb, You destroyed Hades' power, and You rose the victor, Christ God, saying to the myrrh-bearing women, "Hail!" and granting peace to Your disciples, You who raise up the fallen.

Πράξεις Αποστόλων 6:1-7

Έν ταῖς ἡμεραῖς ἐκείναις, πληθυνόντων τῶν μαθητῶν, ἐγένετο γογγυσμὸς τῶν Ἑλληνιστῶν πρὸς τοὺς Ἑβραίους, ὅτι παρεθεωροῦντο ἐν τῆ διακονία τῆ καθημερινῆ αἰ χῆραι αὐτῶν. Προσκαλεσάμενοι δὲ οἱ δώδεκα τὸ πλῆθος τῶν μαθητῶν, εἶπον, Οὐκ ἀρεστόν ἐστιν ἡμᾶς, καταλείψαντας τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ, διακονεῖν τραπέζαις. Ἐπισκέψασθε οὖν, ἀδελφοί, ἄνδρας ἐξ ὑμῶν μαρτυρουμένους ἑπτά, πλήρεις πνεύματος ἀγίου καὶ σοφίας, οῦς καταστήσωμεν ἐπὶ τῆς χρείας ταύτης. Ἡμεῖς δὲ τῆ προσευχῆ καὶ τῆ διακονία τοῦ λόγου προσκαρτερήσομεν. Καὶ ἤρεσεν ὁ λόγος ἐνώπιον παντὸς τοῦ πλήθους· καὶ ἐξελέξαντο Στέφανον, ἄνδρα πλήρης πίστεως καὶ πνεύματος ἀγίου, καὶ Φίλιππον, καὶ Πρόχορον, καὶ Νικάνορα, καὶ Τίμωνα, καὶ Παρμενᾶν, καὶ Νικόλαον προσήλυτον Αντιοχέα, οῦς ἔστησαν ἐνώπιον τῶν ἀποστόλων· καὶ προσευξάμενοι ἐπέθηκαν αὐτοῖς τὰς χεῖρας. Καὶ ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ ηὕξανεν, καὶ ἐπληθύνετο ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν μαθητῶν ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ σφόδρα, πολύς τε ὄχλος τῶν ἱερέων ὑπήκουον τῆ πίστει.

Acts of the Apostles 6:1-7

IN THOSE DAYS, when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists murmured against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. And the twelve summoned the body of the disciples and said, "it is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brethren, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." And what they said pleased the whole multitude, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochoros, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaos, a proselyte of Antioch. These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands upon them. And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.

Κατὰ Μᾶρκον 15:43-47, 16:1-8

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, ἐλθὼν Ἰωσὴφ ὁ ἀπὸ ᾿Αριμαθαίας, εὐσχήμων βουλευτής, ὃς καὶ αὐτὸς ἦν προσδεχόμενος τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ, τολμήσας εἰσῆλθε πρὸς Πιλᾶτον καὶ ἤτήσατο τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ. ὁ δὲ Πιλᾶτος ἐθαύμασεν εἰ ἤδη τέθνηκε, καὶ προσκαλεσάμενος τὸν κεντυρίωνα ἐπηρώτησεν αὐτὸν εἰ πάλαι ἀπέθανε καὶ γνοὺς ἀπὸ τοῦ κεντυρίωνος ἐδωρήσατο τὸ σῶμα τῷ Ἰωσήφ, καὶ ἀγοράσας σινδόνα καὶ καθελὼν αὐτὸν ἐνείλησε τῇ σινδόνι καὶ κατέθηκεν αὐτὸν ἐν μνημείῳ, ὃ ἦν λελατομημένον ἐκ πέτρας, καὶ προσεκύλισε λίθον ἐπὶ τὴν θύραν τοῦ μνημείου. ἡ δὲ Μαρία ἡ Μαγδαληνὴ καὶ Μαρία Ἰωσῆ ἐθεώρουν ποῦ τίθεται. Καὶ διαγενομένου τοῦ σαββάτου Μαρία ἡ Μαγδαληνὴ καὶ Μαρία ἡ τοῦ Ἰακώβου καὶ Σαλώμη ἠγόρασαν ἀρώματα ἵνα ἐλθοῦσαι ἀλείψωσιν αὐτόν. καὶ λίαν πρωὶ τῆς μιᾶς σαββάτων ἔρχονται ἐπὶ τὸ μνημεῖον, ἀνατείλαντος τοῦ ἡλίου. καὶ ἔλεγον πρὸς ἐαυτάς τίς ἀποκυλίσει ἡμῖν τὸν λίθον ἐκ τῆς θύρας τοῦ μνημείου; καὶ ἀναβλέψασαι θεωροῦσιν ὅτι ἀποκεκύλισται ὁ λίθος ἦν γὰρ μέγας σφόδρα. καὶ εἰσελθοῦσαι εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον εἶδον νεανίσκον καθήμενον ἐν τοῖς δεξιοῖς, περιβεβλημένον στολὴν λευκήν, καὶ ἔξεθαμβήθησαν. ὁ δὲ λέγει αὐταῖς μὴ ἐκθαμβεῖσθε

Resurrectional Apolotikion Ήγος β

Ότε κατῆλθες πρὸς τὸν θάνατον, ἡ Ζωἡ ἡ ἀθάνατος, τότε τὸν ἄδην ἐνέκρωσας τῆ ἀστραπῆ τῆς Θεότητος, ὅτε δὲ καὶ τοὺς τεθνεῶτας ἐκ τῶν καταχθονίων ἀνέστησας, πᾶσαι αἱ Δυνάμεις τῶν ἐπουρανίων ἐκραύγαζον Ζωοδότα Χριστὲ ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν δόξα σοι.

Second Mode

When Thou didst descend unto death, O Life Immortal, then didst Thou slay Hades with the lightning of Thy Divinity. And when Thou didst also raise the dead out of the nethermost depths, all the powers in the Heavens cried out: O Lifegiver, Christ our God, glory be to Thee.

Ήχος β

Ο εὐσχήμων Ἰωσήφ, ἀπὸ τοῦ ξύλου καθελών, τὸ ἄχραντόν σου Σῶμα, σινδόνι καθαρᾳ, εἰλήσας καὶ ἀρώμασιν, ἐν μνήματι καινῷ, κηδεύσας ἀπέθετο ἀλλὰ τριήμερος ἀνέστης Κύριε, παρέχων τῷ κόσμῳ τὸ μέγα ἔλεος

Second Mode

When he took down Your immaculate Body from the Cross, the honorable Joseph wrapped it in a clean linen shroud with spices and laid it for burial in a new tomb. But on the third day You arose, O Lord, and granted the world Your great mercy.

Hymn for the Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearing Women Ήχος β

Ταῖς μυροφόροις Γυναιξί, παρὰ τὸ μνῆμα ἐπιστάς, ὁ Ἅγγελος ἐβόα· Τὰ μύρα τοῖς θνητοῖς ὑπάρχει ἀρμόδια, Χριστὸς δὲ διαφθορᾶς ἐδείχθη ἀλλότριος, ἀλλὰ κραυγάσατε· ἀνέστη ὁ Κύριος, παρέχων τῷ κόσμῳ τὸ μέγα ἔλεος.

Second Mode

The Angel standing at the sepulcher cried out and said to the ointment-bearing women: The ointments are appropriate for mortal men, but Christ has been shown to be a stranger to decay. So go and cry aloud, The Lord has risen and granted the world His great mercy.

Hymn of Saint Nicholas Patron of our Parish Ήχος δ

Κανόνα πίστεως καί εικόνα πραότητος, εγκρατείας Διδάσκαλον, ανέδειξέ σε τή ποίμνη σου, η τών πραγμάτων αλήθεια, διά τούτο εκτήσω τή ταπεινώσει τά υψηλά, τή πτωχεία τά πλούσια, Πάτερ Ιεράρχα Νικόλαε, πρέσβευε Χριστώ τώ Θεώ, σωθήναι τάς ψυχάς ημών.

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.

Memorial Hymn

Μνήσθητι, Κύριε, ὡς ἀγαθὸς τῶν δούλων σου, καὶ ὅσα ἐν βίῳ ήμαρτον, συγχώρησον οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἀναμάρτητος, εἰμὴ σὰ ὁ δυνάμενος, καὶ τοῖς μεταστᾶσι δοῦναι τήν ἀνάπαυσιν.

Kontakion

Ήχος πλ δ

Εἱ καὶ ἐν τάφῳ κατῆλθες ἀθάνατε, ἀλλὰ τοῦ Ἄδου καθεῖλες τὴν δύναμιν, καὶ ἀνέστης ὡς νικητής, Χριστὲ ὁ Θεός, γυναιξὶ Μυροφόροις φθεγξάμενος. Χαίρετε, καὶ τοῖς σοῖς Ἀποστόλοις εἰρήνην δωρούμενος ὁ τοῖς πεσοῦσι παρέχων ἀνάστασιν.

FOLLOWING THE RESURRECTION LITURGY and every service for 40 days until the Ascension of our Lord, the priest turns to the congregation and exclaims:

"Glory to His Third-Day Resurrection!" Δόξα τη Αυτού τριήμερω έγερσει!

and the congregation responds by saying:

"We bow down to His Third-Day Resurrection!" Προσκυνούμεν Αυτού την τριήμερον έγερσιν!

Let us all remember these life-giving words at the conclusion of the Liturgy. Let us say them with feeling and strength for the 40-day period of the Resurrection as is the practice of our Holy Orthodox Church.

HOLY MYRRHBEARERS SUNDAY: About the beginning of His thirtysecond year, when the Lord Jesus was going throughout Galilee, preaching and working miracles, many women who had received of His beneficence left their own homeland and from then on followed after Him. They ministered unto Him out of their own possessions, even until His crucifixion and entombment; and afterwards, neither losing faith in Him after His death, nor fearing the wrath of the Jewish rulers, they came to the tomb, bearing the myrrh-oils they had prepared to anoint His body. It is because of the myrrh-oils that these God-loving women brought to the tomb of Jesus that they are called the Myrrh-bearers. Of those whose names are known are the following: first of all, the most holy Virgin Mary, who in Matthew 27:56 and Mark 15:40 is called "the mother of James and Joses" (these are the sons of Joseph by a previous marriage, and she was therefore their step-mother); Mary Magdalene (celebrated July 22); Mary, the wife of Clopas; Joanna, wife of Chouza, a steward of Herod Antipas; Salome, the mother of the sons of Zebedee, Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus; and Susanna. As for the names of the rest of them, the evangelists have kept silence (Matthew 27:55-56; 28:1-10. Mark 15:40-41. Luke 8:1-3; 23:55-24:11, 22-24. John 19:25; 20:11-18. Acts 1:14).

Together with them we celebrate also the secret disciples of the Saviour, Joseph and Nicodemus. Of these, Nicodemus was probably a Jerusalemite, a prominent leader among the Jews and of the order of the Pharisees, learned in the Law and instructed in the Holy Scriptures. He had believed in Christ when, at the beginning of our Savior's preaching of salvation, he came to Him by night. Furthermore, he brought some one hundred pounds of myrrh-oils and an aromatic mixture of aloes and spices out of reverence and love for the divine Teacher (John 19:39). Joseph, who was from the city of Arimathea, was a wealthy and noble man, and one of the counselors who were in Jerusalem. He went boldly unto Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus, and together with Nicodemus he gave Him burial. Since time did not permit the preparation of another tomb, he placed the Lord's body in his own tomb which was hewn out of rock, as the Evangelist says (Matthew 27:60).

GREEK CULTURE DAY CAMP AT ST. NICHOLAS: The Greek Culture Camp is the week of July 25 to 29th, everyday, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.. Only a short time left for early registration. Please see the enclosed flyer and contact Kathy Roupas at 312-286-5639, if you are interested.



ΕΤΟΣ 64ον

15 Maiou 2016

ΑΡΙΘ. ΦΥΛ. 20 (3285)

Η ΦΩΝΗ ΤΗΣ ΣΥΝΕΙΔΗΣΗΣ

"Απειρες εἶναι οἱ στιγμές τῆς ζωῆς μας κατά τίς ὁποῖες βρισκόμαστε σέ ἀμφιβοπία γιά τό τί πρέπει νά κάνουμε. Καί τίς περισσότερες ἀπό αὐτές διστάζουμε ὅχι ἐπειδή δέν ξέρουμε τί νά ἀποφασίσουμε, τί νά πράξουμε ἤ πῶς νά ἐνεργήσουμε. "Αν καί ξέρουμε ποιό εἶναι τό σωστό, ἄν καί αἰσθανόμαστε ποιό εἶναι τό ἡθικά ἐπιβεβπημένο, ἄν καί συνειδητοποιοιοῦμε τί περιμένει ἀπό ἐμᾶς ὁ "Αγιος Θεός, παρά ταῦτα πράττουμε κάτι τεπείως διαφορετικό, ἄν ὅχι καί ἀντίθετο, ἤ στεκόμαστε ἀναποφάσιστοι, μόνο καί μόνο ἐπειδή συνυποπογίζουμε τίς ἀντιδράσεις τῶν ἀνθρώπων, τό προσωπικό μας συμφέρον ἤ τυχόν πιέσεις πού ποικιποτρόπως μᾶς ἀσκοῦνται. "Αν μάπιστα ἡ ὅποια ἀπόφασή μας ἔχει καί προσωπικό κόστος, πρώτιστα αὐτό δείχνει νά ἐπηρεάζει τήν ἀπόφασή μας καί ὅχι τό θεῖο θέπημα ἤ, ἔστω, ἡ ἡθική τάξη.

Κι αὐτός ὁ δισταγμός, πού ἡ ὑπέρμετρη ἐνδοτικότητα τῆς ἐποχῆς μας ἔχει ὀνομάσει ἀνθρώπινη ἀδυναμία, δέν εἶναι τίποτε ἄθλο παρά ἡ συγκατάθεση στήν ἀρχή τέθεσης ἐνός ἐγκθήματος, μιᾶς πού ἡ ὅποια ἀμαρτία, ὅσο «μικρή» κατ' ἄνθρωπον κι ἄν θογίζεται, στά μάτια τοῦ Θεοῦ δέν παύει νά εἶναι ὑπέρμετρη προσβοθή τοῦ θείου ἐθέους, ἀθθά καί ἡ ἱστορία ἔχει ἀποδείξει ὅτι εἶναι ἡ αἰτία γιά τήν ἐπαύξηση τοῦ κακοῦ στή γῆ. Πράγματι, ἡ θάθος ἀπόφαση, ἰδίως αὐτή πού ἐθήφθη μέ ἰδιοτέθεια, καιροσκοπισμό ἡ μέ διάθεση μετάθεσης τοῦ προβθήματος, εἶναι ὑπεύθυνη κατά τίς ἱστορικές καταγραφές γιά ποθύ πόνο καί καταστροφή στήν ἀνθρωπότητα. Ἡντίθετα, ἀπόφαση πού θαμβάνεται βάσει ἡθικῶν ἀρχῶν καί ἀξιῶν, ἰδίως τῆς ἀθηθινῆς πίστης, ἀκόμη κι ἄν στοιχίζει σέ ὅποιον τήν πάρει, ἐπιφέρει εὐθογία, ἀνάπαυση καί εἰρήνη συνειδήσεων.

`Ιωσήφ ὁ ἀπό `Αριμαθαίαs

Ή σημερινή εὐαγγελική περικοπή, μέσα στούς πολλούς χαρακτήρες πού προβάλλει, ἀναδεικνύει καί τή μορφή τοῦ Ἰωσήφ τοῦ ἀπό ᾿Αριμαθαίας. Τόν προσδιορίζει κατ' ἀρχήν ὡς «εὐσχήμονα βουλευτή». Ὁ χαρακτηρισμός τοῦ εὐσχήμονος παραπέμπει στόν χρηστό καί κόσμιο τρόπο ἐξωτερικής συμπεριφορᾶς, σέ μιά ἀβρότητα καί εὐγένεια πρός ὅλους. Ἡ ἰδιότητα τοῦ βουλευτή παραπέμπει στήν ἰδιότητα τοῦ μέλους τοῦ Συνεδρίου, τοῦ ἀνώτατου ὀργάνου διοικήσεως τοῦ λαοῦ τοῦ Ἱσραήλ, ἀλλά καί τοῦ Ναοῦ τοῦ Σολομώντα. Αὐτό τό ὄργανο, στά πλαίσια ἀνοχής τῶν περιφερειακῶν ἐντόπιων διοικήσεων, τό διατηροῦσε ἡ Ρωμαϊκή Αὐτοκρατορία, γιά νά καλλιεργεῖ τήν ψευδαίσθηση κάποιας αὐτονομίας στούς κατακτημένους λαούς.

Ό Ίωσήφ ποιπόν ήταν ἐπιφανές μέπος τῆς ἰουδαϊκῆς κοινωνίας, καί μάπιστα σεβαστό καί καθοπικά ἀποδεκτό ἀπό ὅπους. Εἶναι ἀπό τίς μορφές πού, ἄν καί ππούσιος καί ἀσκῶν ἐξουσία, τό Εὐαγγέπιο ἐπαινεῖ, γιά νά καταφανεῖ ὅτι ὁ πποῦτος καί ἡ ἐξουσία δέν εἶναι ἐξ ὁρισμοῦ κακά, οὕτε δαιμονοποιοῦνται κατά τήν ἀντίπηψη τῆς χριστιανικῆς ἡθικῆς. ἀντίθετα, τό πρόβπημα εἶναι στούς διαχειριστές τους, ὅταν ἀντί νά τά χρησιμοποιοῦν ὡς ἐργαπεῖα καί εὐκαιρίες διακονίας, τά μετατρέπουν σέ μέσα ἐκμετάππευσης καί καταπίεσης.

Καί αὐτός ὁ ἐπιφανής, ὁ πλούσιος, ὁ δυνατός, τήν κρίσιμη ὤρα νοιάζεται γιά κάποιον φαινομενικά ἀδύναμο. «Τολμήσας εἰσῆλθε πρός Πιλᾶτον καί ἡτήσατο τό σὧμα τοῦ Ἰπσοῦ». ˇ Εδυε ἡ ἤλιος καί ἀποτελοῦσε μεγάλη προσβολή κατά τά ἰουδαϊκά ἔθιμα νά μείνει κρεμασμένο καί ἄταφο νεκρό σὧμα κατά τή νύκτα. Κανείς ὅμως δέν διακινδύνευε νά ζητήσει τό σὧμα αὐτοῦ πού μέ τόση μανία οἱ ἄρχοντες τοῦ Ἰσραήλ καί οἱ ἀκόλουθοί τους ὁδήγησαν στόν ἀτιμωτικό θάνατο τοῦ Σταυροῦ. Γι' αὐτό καί τονίζεται ὅτι ὁ Ἰωσήφ τόλμησε. ˇ Αν καί μέλος τοῦ Συνεδρίου, ἄν καί πλούσιος, ἄν καί ἐπιφανής, δέν λογαριάζει τίποτε, οὕτε κάμπτεται ἀπό τόν φόβο τῆς ἐκδικητικότητας τῶν Ἰουδαίων, οἱ ὁποῖοι καί τό ἀξίωμά του μποροῦσαν νά τοῦ ἀποστερήσουν, καί τήν περιουσία του νά δημεύσουν, ἀλλά καί νά τόν δυσφημήσουν μποροῦσαν σέ κοινωνία πού μεθόδευε ἀποκλεισμούς καί περιθωριοποιήσεις. Παρ' ὅλ' αὐτά, τόλμησε! ˇ Εκανε ὅ,τι τοῦ ὑπαγόρευε ἡ φωνή τῆς συνείδησής του, ἀσχέτως προσωπικοῦ κόστους!

Πιλάτος

'Αλλά καί ὁ Πιλάτος φαίνεται ἀλλαγμένος. "Αν καί συνυπεύθυνος στήν ἄδικη καταδίκη, ἄν καί με πλήρη ἐπίγνωση συνέπραξε στό μεγαλύτερο ἔγκλημα στήν ἰστορία τῆς ἀνθρωπότητας, ἄν καί τήν κρίσιμη στιγμή γιά λόγους ἰδιοτέλειας φίμωσε τή συνείδησή του, τώρα κάνει αὐτό πού πρέπει. Ίσως γιατί δέν ἔχει τήν πίεση τοῦ ὅχλου. Ίσως γιατί δέν φοβᾶται πιά γιά τή θέση του. Ίσως γιατί θέλει νά κάνει κάποιο ἐλάχιστο καλό μήπως καί ἀντισταθμίσει τό μεγάλο κακό.

Καί ἀφοῦ διαπιστώνει ὅτι πραγματικά πέθανε, παραδίδει τό σῶμα τοῦ Ἰπσοῦ στόν πιό ἔντιμο ἄνθρωπο τοῦ ἰουδαϊκοῦ συνεδρίου. Προσοχή στό ρῆμα πού χρησιμοποιεῖ τό Εὐαγγέλιο: «ἐδωρήσατο». Ἡταν συνήθης πρακτική –ἐπειδή τά σώματα τῶν καταδικασμένων νά πεθάνουν μέ τόν πλέον ἀτιμωτικό θάνατο τῆς σταυρώσεως δέν παραδίδονταν σέ ταφή, ἀλλά κατά τόν νόμο ἔπρεπε νά διαπομπευθοῦν – οἱ συγγενεῖς νά δωροδοκοῦν τούς ἀρμόδιους γιά νά πάρουν τό λείψανο. Ὁ Πιλάτος δώρισε τό σῶμα τοῦ Ἰπσοῦ, δηλαδή δέν δέχθηκε νά γίνει κάν λόγος γιά τό ὁποιοδήποτε ἀντάλλαγμα. Τό Εὐαγγέλιο, ἀναδεικνύοντας γιά μιά ἀκόμη φορά τὴν ἀντικειμενικότητα πού τό χαρακτηρίζει, δέν ἀπομειώνει τό πρόσωπο τοῦ Πιλάτου, ἀλλά ὅ,τι καλό κάνει τοῦ τό ἀναγνωρίζει.

Ό Ἰωσήφ τολμᾶ ἀψηφώντας τά ὅσα εἶχε νά χάσει, μέ μόνο του ὅπλο τήν ὑπακοή στή συνείδησή του ὡς φωνή τοῦ Θεοῦ! Ὁ Πιλάτος, ἔστω καί ἀργά, κάνει αὐτό πού πρέπει. Τελικά, ὁ Ἅγιος Θεός εὐλογεῖ αὐτόν πού ἀποφάσισε κατά τό Θεῖο Θέλημα, διαφημίζοντάς τον στήν αἰωνιότητα, ὅπου κηρύσσεται τό Εὐαγγέλιο!

`Αρχιμ. Ί. Ν.