

ΟΙΚΟΥΜΕΝΙΚΟΝ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΕΙΟΝ
ΙΕΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ
ΘΥΑΤΕΙΡΩΝ & Μ. ΒΡΕΤΑΝΝΙΑΣ



ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE
ARCHDIOCESE OF
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ΛΟΓΟΣ ΚΥΡΙΟΥ
THE WORD OF OUR LORD

ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΠΑΤΕΡΩΝ
Δ' Οικουμενικής Συνόδου
19 Ιουλίου 2020
Ήχος πλ. α'. Ἀριθμ. 29

SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FATHERS
4th Oecumenical Council
19 July 2020
Plagal of the 1st Mode. No. 29

Μακρίνης & Δίου ὁσίων, Θεοδώρου Σαββαΐτου
Macrina (sister of Basil the Great), Dius abbot of Antioch, Theodore of Edessa abp

ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΝ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑ

Τίτ. γ', 8-15

Πιστὸς ὁ λόγος, καὶ περὶ τούτων βούλομαι σε διαβεβαιοῦσθαι, ἵνα φροντίζωσιν καλῶν ἔργων προῖστασθαι οἱ πεπιστευκότες Θεῷ. ταῦτά ἐστιν καλὰ καὶ ὠφέλιμα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις· μωρὰς δὲ ζητήσεις καὶ γενεαλογίας καὶ ἔριν καὶ μάχας νομικὰς περιῖστασο, εἰσὶν γὰρ ἀνωφελεῖς καὶ μάταιοι. αἰρετικὸν ἄνθρωπον μετὰ μίαν καὶ δευτέραν νουθεσίαν παραιτοῦ, εἰδὼς ὅτι ἐξέστραπται ὁ τοιοῦτος καὶ ἁμαρτάνει, ὧν αὐτοκατάκριτος. Ὅταν πέμψω Ἄρτεμᾶν πρὸς σέ ἢ Τυχικόν, σπούδασον ἐλθεῖν πρὸς με εἰς Νικόπολιν, ἐκεῖ γὰρ κέκρικα παραχειμάσαι. Ζηνᾶν τὸν νομικὸν καὶ Ἀπολλῶν σπουδαίως πρόπεμψον, ἵνα μηδὲν αὐτοῖς λείπη. μανθανέτωσαν δὲ καὶ οἱ ἡμέτεροὶ καλῶν ἔργων προῖστασθαι εἰς τὰς ἀναγκαίας χρείας, ἵνα μὴ ὦσιν ἄκαρποι. Ἄσπάζονται σε οἱ μετ' ἐμοῦ πάντες. Ἄσπασαι τοὺς φιλοῦντας ἡμᾶς ἐν πίστει. ἡ χάρις μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν.

EPISTLE READING

Tit. 3: 8-15

Titus, my son, the saying is sure. I desire you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to apply themselves to good deeds; these are excellent and profitable to men. But avoid stupid controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels over the law, for they are unprofitable and futile. As for a man who is factious, after admonishing him once or twice, have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is perverted and sinful; he is self-condemned. When I send Artemas or Tychicos to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. Do your best to speed Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way; see that they lack nothing. And let our people learn to apply themselves to good deeds, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not to be unfruitful. All who are with me send greeting to you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.

According to the text, 'We are the body of Christ and each of us is one of its members' (cf. 1 Cor. 12:27), we are said to be the body of Christ. We do not become this body through the loss of our own bodies; nor again because Christ's Body passes into us hypostatically or is divided into members; but rather because we conform to the likeness of the Lord's flesh by shaking off the corruption of sin. For just as Christ in His manhood was sinless by nature both in flesh and in soul, so we too who believe in Him, and have clothed ourselves in Him through the Spirit, can be without sin to Him if we so choose.

[St. Maximus the Confessor]

ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΚΟΝ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑ

Ματθ. ε', 14-19

Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ μαθηταῖς· Ὑμεῖς ἐστε τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου. οὐ δύναται πόλις κρυβῆναι ἐπάνω ὄρους κειμένη· οὐδὲ καίουσι λύχνον καὶ τιθέασι αὐτὸν ὑπὸ τὸν μῶδιον, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τὴν λυχνίαν, καὶ λάμπει πᾶσι τοῖς ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ. οὕτω λαμψάτω τὸ φῶς ὑμῶν ἔμπροσθεν τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ὅπως ἴδωσιν ὑμῶν τὰ καλὰ ἔργα καὶ δοξάσωσι τὸν πατέρα ὑμῶν τὸν ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς. Μὴ νομίσητε ὅτι ἦλθον καταλῦσαι τὸν νόμον ἢ τοὺς προφήτας· οὐκ ἦλθον καταλῦσαι, ἀλλὰ πληρῶσαι. ἀμὴν γὰρ λέγω ὑμῖν, ἕως ἂν παρέλθῃ ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ, ἰῶτα ἓν ἢ μία κεραία οὐ μὴ παρέλθῃ ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου ἕως ἂν πάντα γένηται. ὃς ἐὰν οὖν λύσῃ μίαν τῶν ἐντολῶν τούτων τῶν ἐλαχίστων καὶ διδάξῃ οὕτω τοὺς ἀνθρώπους, ἐλάχιστος κληθήσεται ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν οὐρανῶν· ὃς δ' ἂν ποιήσῃ καὶ διδάξῃ, οὗτος μέγας κληθήσεται ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν οὐρανῶν.

GOSPEL READING

Matt. 5: 14-19

The Lord said to his disciples, «You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven».

ΕΡΜΗΝΕΙΑ ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΚΟΥ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑΤΟΣ

Ὑμεῖς ἐστε τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου

Ο ἱερός ἐρμηνευτὴς τοῦ ἱεροῦ Εὐαγγελίου μεταφράζει τὸν λόγο πού ἀπηύθυνε ὁ Κύριός μας στοὺς ἀγίους μαθητάς καὶ Ἀποστόλους Του: «Ἐσεῖς εἶστε τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου, διότι ἔχετε προορισμὸ μέ τὸ φωτεινὸ σας παράδειγμα καὶ μέ τὰ λόγια σας, πού μεταδίδουν τὸ φῶς τῆς ἀλήθειας, νά φωτίζετε τοὺς ἀνθρώπους πού βρίσκονται στὸ σκοτάδι τῆς ἀμαρτίας καὶ τῆς πλάνης». Τὸν ἴδιο λόγο ἀπευθύνει καὶ πρὸς τοὺς Χριστιανούς, οἱ ὁποῖοι ὀφείλουν νά καταστοῦν φῶς τοῦ κόσμου. Ἀσφαλῶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς εἶναι τὸ μόνο ἀληθινὸ Φῶς, καθὼς εἶπε, «ἐγὼ εἶμι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου» (Ἰω. 8, 12), ἐνῶ οἱ ἄνθρωποι ὡς κτίσματα τοῦ Θεοῦ καταυγάζονται ἀπὸ αὐτὸ τὸ φῶς τῆς θεότητος καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ θεῖο φῶς ἀντανακλοῦν.

Παρομοίως, οἱ ἅγιοι Πατέρες τῆς Ἐκκλησίας μας λάμπουν καὶ φωτίζουν μέ τὸ βίον καὶ τὴν διδασκαλίαν τους τὸν κόσμον ὅλο ὡς ἀστέρες πολὺφωτοι τοῦ νοητοῦ στερεώματος, ὅπως τοὺς ἀποκαλεῖ ὁ μέγας ὑμνογράφος ὁσιος Γεώργιος Ἐπίσκοπος Νικομηδείας. Διότι ἀκριβῶς, οἱ Ἅγιοί μας καθίστανται ὁδοδείκτες καὶ μᾶς δείχνουν τὴν ὁδὸν πρὸς τὸ φῶς καὶ τὴν θέωση, δηλαδὴ πρὸς τὸν Κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν. Αὐτὸς μέ τὴν ἐνανθρώπισή Του ἔνωσε τὴν θεῖαν μέ τὴν ἀνθρώπινον φύσιν καὶ ἔδωσε στὸν ἄνθρωπον τὴν δυνατότητα νά κοινωνεῖ τὴν ἴδιαν τὴν θεότητα.

Εἶναι δυνατόν ὁ ἄνθρωπος νά πορευθεῖ πρὸς τὸ Φῶς καὶ πολὺ περισσότερο νά δεῖ τὸ Φῶς; Γράφει σχετικὰ ὁ ἅγιος Μάξιμος, ὁ Ὁμολογητής: «Τὸ αἰσθητό

φῶς φωτίζει τήν αἴσθησι, γιά νά ἀντιλαμβάνεται τά σωματικά, ἐνῶ τό πνευματικό φῶς καταυγάζει τό νοῦ γιά τή θεωρία πρός κατανόηση τῶν πραγμάτων πέρα ἀπό τήν αἴσθησι». Καί ὁ ἅγιος Γρηγόριος ὁ Θεολόγος ἐπίσης θεολογεῖ: «ὁ Θεός εἶναι τό ὕψιστο, τό ἀπροσπέλαστο καί ἀνέκφραστο φῶς, τό ὁποῖο οὔτε νοῦς μπορεῖ νά κατανοήσῃ, οὔτε λόγος νά ἐκφράσῃ καί αὐτό φωτίζει κάθε λογική φύση. Αὐτό τό φῶς εἶναι γιά τά νοητά, ὅ,τι εἶναι ὁ ἥλιος γιά τά αἰσθητά». Ὁ ἴδιος Πατήρ ἀποκαλεῖ φῶς τίς ἐντολές τοῦ Θεοῦ, διότι πράγματι, κατά τον Ψαλμωδῶ, φῶς τά προστάγματα Του ἐπί τῆς γῆς.

Ἐπί πλέον ὁ ἅγιος Γρηγόριος, ὁ Παλαμαῆς, ὁ κῆρυξ τοῦ φωτός, ὁμιλεῖ γιά τό ἄκτιστο φῶς, τό ὁποῖο ὁ ἅγιος Τριαδικός Θεός ἀξιώνει τόν ἄνθρωπο νά ἰδεῖ. Ὁ μέγας Ἀθανάσιος μάλιστα διευκρινίζει ὅτι τό φῶς πού ἔβλεπαν οἱ Ἅγιοι δέν ἦταν ἡ οὐσία τοῦ Θεοῦ, διότι αὐτή εἶναι ἀμέθεκτη, ἀλλά ἡ δόξα Του, ὅπως τήν εἶδαν οἱ Ἅγιοι Ἀπόστολοι στό ὄρος Θαβῶρ κατά τή θεία Μεταμόρφωση. Εἶναι λοιπόν φανερό ὅτι στήν Ἐκκλησία τοῦ Χριστοῦ εἶναι δυνατό ὁ ἄνθρωπος νά βιώσει οὐράνιες ἀποκαλύψεις! ὥστόσο αὐτό συμβαίνει μόνον ἐάν ζεῖ μέ μετάνοια, ταπείνωση καί συμμετοχή στά θεία Μυστήρια. Ἐλκύει δηλαδή τή Χάρη τοῦ Θεοῦ καί δοκιμάζει θεῖες ἀναβάσεις μέ τήν κάθαρση, τό φωτισμό καί τή θέωση. Γι' αὐτό ὁ Κύριος μᾶς καλεῖ σήμερα, καί ὄχι αὔριο, νά ἐργασθοῦμε τόν προσωπικό μας ἀγιασμό, ὥστε μέ φρόνημα ταπεινό νά ζοῦμε μέσα στό φῶς τῶν ἀρετῶν καί νά δίδουμε τήν εὐκαιρία στόν Κύριο νά μᾶς ἀξιοποιεῖ στό ἔργο τῆς σωτηρίας τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ὅσων εὐρίσκονται μακριά ἀπό τή μάνδρα Του.

Σωτήρ, ἀλλά καί φῶς τοῦ κόσμου, εἶναι ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, ἀποτελεῖ ὅμως μεγάλη τιμή καί εὐλογία γιά τόν πιστό ἄνθρωπο νά τόν ἀξιοποιεῖ ὁ ἅγιος Θεός, ὅταν κι αὐτὸς γίνεται φῶς μέ τά ἔργα του, πρός ἀγιασμό καί φωτισμό ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου. Ἀμήν.

Πρεσβ. Ἀστέριος Καραμιπατάκης

SERMON ON THE GOSPEL READING

“You are the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14)

On the Sunday that falls between the 13th to the 19th of July, we remember the six hundred and thirty holy and God-bearing Fathers of the Fourth Ecumenical Council in Chalcedon in the year 451 A.D. They made clear that Christ is fully God and fully human: one person with two natures. They rejected the views of the Monophysites who claimed the Lord has only one nature: that is, Christ after His incarnation bears only the divine nature, which is what the presbyter Eutyches of Constantinople taught. If that was the case, we could not participate in His divine life – for we are simply humans – and it would be hard to see how Christ’s death and resurrection had a transformative impact on us. Today’s commemoration is not simply a reminder about Church history; it is a proclamation of the Gospel, for Jesus Christ must be both fully God and fully human in order to bring us into eternal light and true life in Christ.

The Saviour wants us to shine with holiness, like the Church Fathers, such that we become *“the light of the world”* (Matt. 5:14), illuminating it with goodness so that all will give glory to God (Matt. 5:16). So, it is not enough to refrain from the physical acts of sin but to *“be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect”* (Matt. 5:48). Therefore,

our calling is much higher than being merely nice. Jesus did not “*come to abolish the law and the prophets*” of the Old Testament, “*but to fulfil them*” (Matt. 5:17). Those who “*shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven*” are those who obey the commandments and teach others to do so. And, likewise, those who relax God’s requirements and teach others to follow their example “*shall be called least in the kingdom of Heaven*” (see Matt. 5:19). As Orthodox Christians we must show other people what the faith contains. It contains an ethic, which calls us to act correctly, just as we believe correctly: think straight, believe straight, act straight: that is the Orthodox rule of life. St Paul was conveying this is the epistle today.

The Church Fathers shed light on the Holy Scriptures regarding the person of Christ in the Ecumenical Councils. The Councils are infallible as the highest authority in the Orthodox Church and are guided by the grace of the Holy Spirit, when finally accepted by the Church. Eutyches and Dioscorus the Patriarch of Alexandria were excommunicated for preaching a false theology on Christ. Those who accepted the Monophysites’ teachings are called non-Chalcedonian or Oriental Orthodox, such as the Assyrian, Armenian, Ethiopian, Indian (St Thomas Malabar in South India), Syro-Jacobite and Copts in Egypt. All of them unfortunately broke away from the Catholic and Apostolic Church after the Fifth Ecumenical Council in 553 A.D. Thankfully, today these groups have good relations with the Orthodox Church and are in dialogue to resolve their differences. The person of Christ was further discussed up to the Sixth Ecumenical Council. This shows how much the Church Fathers tried to resolve these issues through theological dialogue.

Chalcedon laid down that Christ was revealed in two natures without confusion, change, division, or separation. Chalcedon also established that the difference between the divine nature and the human nature of Christ is not abolished by their union. The two natures unite to form one person–hypostasis (*prosopon*). Anything else claimed about Christ just isn’t true. That is why Chalcedon still matters. For the Creed of Chalcedon is the whole truth: the Catholic and Apostolic Faith which makes the Church Holy.

In decisive moments of Church History, the Holy Ecumenical Councils promulgated their dogmatic definitions, as trustworthy delimitations in the spiritual battle for the purity of Orthodoxy, which will last until such time, as «*all shall come into the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God*» (Eph. 4:13). In the struggle with new heresies (false beliefs), the Church does not abandon its former dogmatic concepts nor replace them with some sort of new formulations. The dogmatic formulae of the Holy Ecumenical Councils need never be superseded; they remain always contemporary to the Living Tradition of the Church (see Canon I of the Council of Trullo). Holy Fathers of the Fourth Ecumenical Council enlighten us Orthodox Christians and others to know the True Christ as experienced, revealed and proclaimed by the holy Apostles and the Church Fathers who received it from them. Amen.

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