#### OIKOYMENIKON IIATPIAPXEION ΙΕΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ ΘΥΑΤΕΙΡΩΝ & Μ. ΒΡΕΤΑΝΝΙΑΣ



# ΛΟΓΟΣ ΚΥΡΙΟΥ THE WORD OF OUR LORD



ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE

ARCHDIOCESE OF THYATEIRA & GREAT BRITAIN

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Μαρκιανοῦ & Μαρτυρίου τῶν Νοταρίων, Χρυσάνθης μ., Ταβιθᾶς ἐλεήμονος Tabitha, Marcianus & Martyrius, Anastasius the Fuller, Chrysanthë Martyr

### ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΝ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑ

 $\Gamma\alpha\lambda$ .,  $\alpha'$  11-19

🛮 δελφοί, γνωρίζω δὲ ὑμῖν τὸ **Α**εὐαγγέλιον τὸ εὐαγγελισθὲν ὑπ' έμοῦ, ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν κατὰ ἄνθρωπον. Οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐγὼ παρὰ ἀνθρώπου παρέλαβον αὐτό, οὔτε ἐδιδάχθην, ἀλλὰ δι' ἀποκαλύψεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. Ήκούσατε γὰρ τὴν ἐμὴν ἀναστροφήν ποτε έν τῷ Ἰουδαϊσμῷ, ὅτι καθ' ύπερβολην έδίωκον την έκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ ἐπόρθουν αὐτήν καὶ προέκοπτον ἐν τῷ Ἰουδαϊσμῷ ὑπὲρ πολλοὺς συνηλικιώτας ἐν τῷ γένει μου, περισσοτέρως ζηλωτής ὑπάρχων τῶν πατρικῶν μου παραδόσεων. Ότε δὲ εὐδόκησεν ὁ θεὸς ὁ ἀφορίσας με ἐκ κοιλίας μητρός μου καὶ καλέσας διὰ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ, ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοὶ ἵνα εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, εὐθέως οὐ προσανεθέμην σαρκὶ καὶ αἵματι· οὐδὲ ἀνῆλθον εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα πρὸς τοὺς πρὸ ἐμοῦ ἀποστόλους, άλλὰ ἀπῆλθον εἰς Ἀραβίαν, καὶ πάλιν ύπέστρεψα είς Δαμασκόν. Έπειτα μετὰ έτη τρία ἀνῆλθον εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ίστορῆσαι Πέτρον, καὶ ἐπέμεινα πρὸς αὐτὸν ἡμέρας δεκαπέντε. Έτερον δὲ τῶν ἀποστόλων οὐκ εἶδον, εἰ μὴ Ἰάκωβον τὸν ἀδελφὸν τοῦ κυρίου.

### EPISTLE READING

Gal. 1: 11-19

rethren, I would have you Dknow that the gospel which was preached by me is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it; and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother.

# ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΚΟΝ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑ

Λουκ. η΄, 26-39

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, ἐλθόντι τῷ Ἰησοῦ εἰς τὴν χώραν τῶν Γαδαρηνῶν, ἥτις ἐστὶν άντίπερα τῆς Γαλιλαίας. ἐξελθόντι δὲ αὐτῷ έπὶ τὴν γῆν ὑπήντησεν αὐτῷ ἀνήρ τις ἐκ τῆς πόλεως, δς είχε δαιμόνια ἐκ χρόνων ἱκανῶν, καὶ ἱμάτιον οὐκ ἐνεδιδύσκετο καὶ ἐν οἰκία οὐκ ἔμενεν, ἀλλ' ἐν τοῖς μνήμασιν. ἰδὼν δὲ τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἀνακράξας προσέπεσεν αὐτῷ καὶ φωνῆ μεγάλη εἶπε τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ, υἱὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου; δέομαί σου, μή με βασανίσης. παρήγγειλε γὰρ τῷ πνεύματι τῶ ἀκαθάρτω ἐξελθεῖν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. πολλοῖς γὰρ χρόνοις συνηρπάκει αὐτόν, καὶ έδεσμεῖτο άλύσεσι καὶ πέδαις φυλασσόμενος, καὶ διαρρήσσων τὰ δεσμὰ ἠλαύνετο ὑπὸ τοῦ δαίμονος εἰς τὰς ἐρήμους. ἐπηρώτησε δὲ αὐτὸν ό Ἰησοῦς λέγων τί σοί ἐστιν ὄνομα; ὁ δὲ εἶπε· λεγεών ότι δαιμόνια πολλά εἰσῆλθεν εἰς αὐτόν καὶ παρεκάλει αὐτὸν ἵνα μὴ ἐπιτάξη αὐτοῖς εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσον ἀπελθεῖν. ἦν δὲ ἐκεῖ άγέλη χοίρων ἱκανῶν βοσκομένων ἐν τῷ όρει καὶ παρεκάλουν αὐτὸν ἵνα ἐπιτρέψη αὐτοῖς εἰς ἐκείνους εἰσελθεῖν καὶ ἐπέτρεψεν αὐτοῖς. ἐξελθόντα δὲ τὰ δαιμόνια ἀπὸ τοῦ άνθρώπου εἰσῆλθον εἰς τοὺς χοίρους, καὶ ώρμησεν ή 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 ίδεῖν τὸ γεγονός, καὶ ἦλθον πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ εὖρον καθήμενον τὸν ἄνθρωπον, ἀφ' οὖ τὰ δαιμόνια ἐξεληλύθει, ἱματισμένον καὶ σωφρονοῦντα παρὰ τοὺς πόδας τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, καὶ έφοβήθησαν. ἀπήγγειλαν δὲ αὐτοῖς οἱ ἰδόντες πῶς ἐσώθη ὁ δαιμονισθείς. καὶ ἠρώτησαν αὐτὸν ἄπαν τὸ πλῆθος τῆς περιχώρου τῶν Γαδαρηνῶν ἀπελθεῖν ἀπ' αὐτῶν, ὅτι φόβω μεγάλω συνείχοντο. αὐτὸς δὲ ἐμβὰς εἰς τὸ πλοῖον ὑπέστρεψεν. ἐδέετο δὲ αὐτοῦ ὁ ἀνήρ, ἀφ' οὖ ἐξεληλύθει τὰ δαιμόνια, εἶναι σὺν αὐτῷ· ἀπέλυσε δὲ αὐτὸν ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγων ὑπόστρεφε είς τὸν οἶκόν σου καὶ διηγοῦ ὅσα ἐποίησέ σοι ὁ Θεός. καὶ ἀπῆλθε καθ' ὅλην τὴν πόλιν κηρύσσων ὄσα ἐποίησεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς.

#### **GOSPEL READING**

Luke 8: 26-39

t 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

Τό σημερινό εὐαγγελικό ἀνάγνωσμα εἶναι παρμένο ἀπό τόν εὐαγγελιστή Λουκᾶ. Τό ἴδιο ἀνάγνωσμα ἀναφέρεται καί ἀπό τόν εὐαγγελιστή Ματθαῖο, μέ τή διαφορά ὅτι ὁ Ματθαῖος κάνει λόγο γιά δύο δαιμονιζομένους. Τό παρόν ἀνάγνωσμα, λέει ὅτι ὁ Κύριος εὑρισκόταν στή περιοχή τῶν Γαδαρηνῶν. Ἐκεῖ ζοῦσε ἔνας δαιμονιζόμενος. Ὁ εὐαγγελιστής Λουκᾶς μέ παραστατικότητα μᾶς περιγράφει αὐτήν τήν κατάσταση, λέγοντας ὅτι ὁ ἄνθρωπος αὐτός σέ ὧρες κρίσεως ἔσπαζε τίς ἀλυσίδες, μέ τίς ὁποῖες ἦταν δεμένος, ἐγκατέλειπε τό σπίτι του, κυκλοφοροῦσε γυμνός καί κατοικοῦσε μέσα σέ τάφους. Αὐτή ἡ εἰκόνα γέμιζε τούς ἀνθρώπους τῆς περιοχῆς μέ φόβο.

Ἡ παρουσία τοῦ Κυρίου ἐκεῖ, ὁδηγεῖ τό δαιμονιζόμενο κοντά του. Τό δαιμόνιο ὁμιλεῖ μέ τό στόμα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου καί ἐπιδιώκει διάλογο μέ τόν Κύριο. Τότε ὁ Κύριος διέταξε τό δαιμόνιο νά ἐγκαταλείψει τό θύμα του καί νά τό ἀφήσει ἐλεύθερο. Ὅταν ὁ Κύριος ρώτησε τόν ἄνθρωπο πῶς λεγόταν, ἐκεῖνος ἀπάντησε «λεγεών», δηλαδή κατοικοῦσαν πολλά δαιμόνια μέσα του. Οἱ δαίμονες, ἀφοῦ χτυπήθηκαν ἀπό τή θεϊκή ἀκτίνα, γνώριζαν ὅτι δέν μποροῦσαν νά ἀντισταθοῦν στήν παρουσία τοῦ Κυρίου, γιά τοῦτο παρακαλοῦσαν τόν Κύριο ἀποχωρώντας νά εἰσέλθους στούς χοίρους, οἱ ὁποῖοι ἔβοσκαν στό βουνό. Ὁ Κύριος τούς ἐπέτρεψε. Τότε, μόλις οἱ χοῖροι κατέστησαν δαιμονόπληκτα, ἄρχισαν νά τρέχουν καί ἀφοῦ πήδηξαν ἀπό τόν κρημνό στά νερά τῆς λίμνης, ἐπνίγησαν.

Οἱ βοσκοί ὅταν ἀντίκρυσαν τοῦτο τό θέαμα, ἔντρομοι ἐγκατέλειψαν τόν τόπο καί ἀνήγγειλαν παντοῦ τά συμβάντα. Τότε οἱ ἄνθρωποι τῆς περιοχῆς καί οἱ ἰδιοκτῆτες τοῦ κοπαδιοῦ προσέτρεξαν νά δοῦν μέ τά μάτια τους καί νά πληροφορηθοῦν ἀπό πρῶτο χέρι τά γενόμενα. Ὅταν δέ πλησίασαν, βρῆκαν τόν πρώην δαιμονιζόμενο ἄνθρωπο, ἐνδεδυμένο καί σωφρονοῦντα νά κάθεται πλησίον τοῦ Κυρίου, νά παρακολουθεῖ, νά ἀκούει τή διδασκαλία Του καί τούς κατέλαβε φόβος. Ἐνώπιον αὐτῆς τῆς καταστάσεως, θά περίμενε κάποιος νά ἀκούσει λόγους εὐγνωμοσύνης καί εὐχαριστίας γιά τήν εὐεργεσία τοῦ Κυρίου στόν τόπο τους καί στόν πάσχοντα συνάνθρωπό τους. ἀλλά φαίνεται ὅτι ὅλοι οἱ κάτοικοι τῆς πόλης εἶχαν κυριευθεῖ ἀπό τά δαιμόνια τῆς ἀχαριστίας καί τῆς ἀπληστίας. Γι' αὐτό ζήτησαν ἀπό τόν Κύριο νά ἐγκαταλείψει τόν τόπο τους. Ἐπίσης τούς κατεῖχε φόβος, ὁ ὁποῖος προερχόταν ἀπό τίς ἁμαρτίες τους, γιατί ἦταν παραβάτες τοῦ Μωσαϊκοῦ Νόμου. Πρέπει νά ὑπενθυμίσουμε ὅτι ὁ Νόμος ἀπαγόρευε τήν ἐκτροφή χοίρων καί τήν κατανάλωση χοιρινού κρέατος, καθώς αυτά ἐθεωροῦντο ἀκάθαρτα ζῶα. Κατά συνέπεια διέπραταν ἁμαρτία ὅσοι ἔτρεφαν χοίρους

Ό Κύριος δέχθηκε τήν ὑπόδειξη καί ἀπαίτησή τους καί ἀναχώρησε. Ἦκανε πρῶτος πράξη τά λόγια Του πρός τούς Μαθητές, «καὶ δς ἐὰν μὴ δέξηται ὑμᾶς μηδὲ ἀκούση τοὺς λόγους ὑμῶν, ἐξερχόμενοι ἔξω τῆς οἰκίας ἢ τῆς πόλεως ἐκείνης ἐκτινάξατε τὸν κονιορτὸν τῶν ποδῶν ὑμῶν» (Ματθ. 10, 14). Ἐδῶ μποροῦμε νά παρατηρήσουμε πόσο ὁ Θεός σέβεται πραγματικά τήν ἐλευθερία τοῦ ἀνθρώπου! Μοναδική ἐξαίρεση στή συμπεριφορά τοῦ πλήθους ὑπῆρξε ὁ θεραπευθείς, ὁ ὁποῖος παρακαλοῦσε τόν Κύριο νά τόν πάρει μαζί του. Ὁ Κύριος, ὅμως, δέν ἀπέβλεπε στό νά ἔχει ἀκολούθους, ἀλλά στό νά φωτίζονται ὅσοι βρίσκονταν στό σκοτάδι καί ἔψαχναν τό ἀληθινό φῶς. Γιά τοῦτο, ὁ Κύριος δέν πῆρε τόν πρώην δαιμονισμένο μαζί του. Τόν προέτρεψε ὅμως νά παραμείνει κοντά στούς δικούς του, στόν τόπο του καί νά διηγεῖται τά ὅσα συνέβησαν στόν ἴδιο ἀπό τό Θεό, ὤστε αὐτός νά ἐπιτελεῖ ἱεραποστολικό ἔργο: «ὑπόστρεφε εἰς τόν οἶκόν σου καί διηγοῦ ὅσα ἐποίησέ σοι ὁ Θεός» (Λουκ. 8, 39). Ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὑπάκουσε καί γυρνοῦσε σέ ὅλη τήν πόλιν κηρύσσων ὅσα ἐποίησεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς» (αὐτόθι).

Ό διάβολος φορώντας διάφορους ὑποκριτικούς μανδύες, προσπαθεῖ συνεχῶς μέ πολλά τεχνάσματα νά ἐξουσιάζει τοὺς ἀνθρώπους καί νά τούς ἀπομακρίνει ἀπό τό Θεό. Αὐτό

ἔχει ὡς ἀποτέλεσμα ὁ ἄνθρωπος, ὁ ὁποῖος ζεῖ μακριά ἀπό τό Θεό, νά πέφτει εὔκολα στίς παγῖδες του καί νά ὑποφέρει μή μπορώντας νά ἀντισταθεῖ στά ἁμαρτωλά πάθη. Αὐτήν τήν συμπεριφορά τῶν Γαδαρηνῶν τήν ζοῦμε καθημερινά. ἀρκετοί από ἐμᾶς δέν ἐκτιμοῦμε τίς εὐεργεσίες τοῦ Θεοῦ. Ἡ εὐλάβειά ἔτσι πολλῶν ἀνθρώπων ἔχει καθαρά συμφεροντολογικό χαρακτήρα. Ἐμεῖς ὀφείλουμε νά προσευχόμαστε γιά ὅλους τούς συνανθρώπους μας καί νά ζητοῦμε ἀπό τό θεραπευτή τῆς οἰκουμένης Ἰησοῦ Χριστό νά μᾶς καθαρίσει καί θεραπεύσει ὅλους ἀπό τά δαιμόνια, τά ὁποῖα προκαλοῦν τίς πνευματικές ἀσθένειες. Τοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἡ τιμή καί ἡ δόξα στούς αἰῶνες. ἀμήν!

Πρωτοπρεσβ. Κωνσταντῖνος Θεοχάρους

# SAINT DEMETRIOS OF THESSALONIKI

Tomorrow, 26 October, our Church celebrates the memory of the Great Martyr Demetrios of Thessaloniki. St Demetrios, lived in the 4th century AD. A son of noble parents, he was adorned with so many gifts and abilities that he was made Commander of the Roman Army in Thessaly and Proconsul of Hellas. But above all he was a faithful Christian and a fervent witness to Christ through his virtuous life and word. When Demetrios' missionary activities became known to the Emperor Maximian during his visit to Thessaloniki, the latter ordered for the imprisonment of Demetrios and eventually his execution. Nestor, the young man who, inspired by St Demetrios, defeated the gigantic Lyaios in the stadium, and Lupus, the Saint's servant, were also martyred at about the same time.

Reading the Synaxarion of Saint Demetrios one is amazed by his courage and dedication. How could a young man with such an illustrious career before him, admired by all, could sacrifice everything, his life itself, for the sake of his faith? St Paul the Apostle, in today's Epistle Reading, himself in prison and awaiting execution explains to Timothy how this is possible. He tells him that as a Christian he is a soldier of Christ whose constant care should be how to please Him. As such he should not be distracted by worldly cares that cool down one's zeal and drain his energy. Rather he should focus on how to struggle for Christ as a Christian athlete who wants to be crowned by Him. He will be crowned if he struggles lawfully, that is, not as one wants but according to the will of God.

Yes, life in Christ is a struggle, often a martyrdom, which, however, leads to the crown of eternal life. And yet, the struggle itself is a source of grace and joy. One is sanctified as he walks this path and tastes the joy of conversing with Christ, of coming to know Him more and more. No other way of life compares to this. As one follows this path, struggling lawfully, he tastes the sweetness of life in the Holy Spirit and is ready to die rather than loose it by denying Christ.

For the Christian, this earthly life is a gift of God. One should embrace it and thankfully enjoy it living it according to the Lord's Commandments. But one can really enjoy this life only if he knows that it is not all there is. If he believes that Christ, the giver of both biological and eternal life, will crown us with his glory after our departure, then he will make the most of this life and at the same time, like St Paul, he will be ready to 'depart and be with Christ'.

Just like St Demetrios, the Christian martyrs not only did they not die but now they are universal. They belong to and—through their prayers—help the whole world. In their continuous presence in the Church we see how true the Lord's words are: «I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die» (Joh. 11:25).

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