Πάρος, περιοδικό Γερμανικής Κατοχής. Μετά από δολοφονούν Ελλήνες έναντι τόν κατα‑κτητών, ο Γερμανός διοικητής μάζεψε και ἀπο‑φάσισε νά εκτελέσει, ὡς αντίτοιχο, ἐκατόν πενήντα νέους τοῦ νησίου. Ἡ ἀπόφαση ἦταν τελεσίδικη καί ἐκατόν πενήντα νέους τοῦ νησίου, ὁ Γερμανός παρέμεινε ἀμετάπειστος.

Ὁ οσιακῆς μνήμης Γέροντας π. Φιλόθεος Ζερβάκος, ἡγούμενος τῆς Ἱερᾶς Μονῆς Λογγοβάρδας, προσκάλεσε τὸν Γερμανὸ διοικητὴ καὶ τὴν ἀκολουθία του στὸ μοναστήρι του, γιὰ νὰ τοὺς φιλοξενήσει. Τοὺς παρέθεσε πλουσιοπάροχα τράπεζα, ζήτησε τὰ ὀνόματα τῶν οἰκείων τους καὶ τέλεσε τὴν Παράκλησι τῆς Παναγίας, ὑπὲρ ὑγείας αὐτῶν τῶν προσώπων. Ὁ Γερμανὸς συγκινήθηκε. Ἡ ἀπόφασή του θα γίνει, μετὰ τὸ τέλος τῆς Παράκλησι, «ἀλλοιώθηκε» καὶ παρακάλεσε τὸν Γέροντα νὰ τοῦ ζητήσει ὁποιαδήποτε χάρη, ἐκτὸς ἀπὸ τὸ νὰ μὴν γίνει ἡ ἐκτέλεση τῶν δύστυχων ὁμήρων τῆς νήσου.

Ἄγαπητοί μας ἀδελφοί,

Μέσα στὴν ἀφθονία καὶ στὴν πλησμονὴ τῆς ἐποχῆς μας, τίποτα περισσότερο δὲν φαίνεται, σήμερα, νὰ ἔχει ἀνάγκη ὁ ἄνθρωπος, ὅσο τὴν ἀγάπη. Τὴν ἀγάπη, ἄλλο, ἀληθινή καὶ γνήσια ἀγάπη τοῦ Χριστοῦ, παρακάλω, καὶ εὐχομαί ὑμῖν ἀγάπην τοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ Γεννηθέντος Χριστοῦ μας, νὰ χαρίσει σὲ ὅλους μας.

The following occurred on the island of Paros during the German Occupation. After an act of sabotage by the Greeks against their conquerers, the German commander in retaliation apprehended and decided to execute one hundred and fifty young inhabitants of the island. His decision was final, and despite the supplications and mediations of mayors, bishops, and other prominent islanders, the German commander remained unyielding.

Elder Philotheos Zervakos of blessed memory, the abbot of the sacred monastery of Logovarda at that time, invited the German commander along with his entourage to his monastery, intending to offer them hospitality. He gave them a warm reception and offered them a generous meal. He asked for the names of their family members, and conducted a Supplicatory Canon to the Mother of God on their behalf. All this deeply touched the German commander. He was soothed, he was transformed, and at the completion of the service he asked Elder Philotheos to request any favor from him, except to revoke the execution of the misfortunate young hostages of the island.

Father Philotheos said, “Before making any request, I first want you to give me your word of military honor that you will carry out what I ask.” “You have my word of military honor,” replied the German commander. Then, the ever-memorable Elder said, “I want you to include me with the one hundred and fifty hostages and execute me first.” This astonishing proposal “vanquished” the German commander, and, subsequently, he ordered that all the islanders who had been sentenced to death be released.

My beloved brothers and sisters,

In our present times, which are filled with an abundance and surplus of material goods, more than anything else, man is in need of love.

Not the love that arises out of necessity, or the love that issues from self interest. Not the love that is fueled by transient pleasure, or love that rests upon pretentiousness, but, rather, the love that makes sacrifices when others are in need, the love that reveals the likeness of the Divine Face within pure and enlightened godly souls.

I wish you all a good, blessed Christmas, and may the New Year 2022 be peaceful and filled with the graces of God.

Μέ πολλὴν τήν ἐν Χριστῷ τῷ τεχθέντι ἀγάπην
With much love in the newborn Christ,

Ἀρχιμανδρίτης Ἰωσήφ
καὶ οἱ σὺν ἐμοὶ ἐν Χριστῷ ἀδελφοί