

## EESTI EVANGEELIUMI LUTERIUSU KIRIKU LOS ANGELESE KOGUDUS

1306 West 24<sup>th</sup> Street | Los Angeles | CA 90007

# KOGUDUSE TEATED

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## IGAST TÜHJAST SÕNAST

*Yet the first bringer of unwelcome news  
Hath but a losing office, and his tongue  
Sounds ever after as a sullen bell,  
Remember'd tolling a departing friend.*

*Kuid ikkagi on kurja teate toojal  
vaid ebatulus amet, sest ta keel  
ka hiljem kõlab leinakellana,  
mis lahkund sõbra matust meenutab.*

Arvatakse, et neist William Shakespeare'i värssidest (Kuningas Henry Neljas, II osa) on saanud alguse ütlemine «*Don't shoot the messenger!*» – «*Ära tulista sõnumitoojat!*» See on elementaarne põhimõte, mida meile õpetati juba siis, kui läksime lasteaeda: tähtis pole mitte see, kes midagi ütleb, vaid kas see, mida öeldakse, on õige või vale, hea või halb. Paraku juhindutakse täiskasvanute maailmas sellest põhimõttest üha harvemini ning vahel näib, et ainus reaktsioon ebasümpaatse inimese suust kostvale sõnumile on kõrvade kinni katmine ja võimalikult valjuhäälselt oma sõnumi kuulutamine. Kui keegi usub, et taoline toimimisviis ühiskonda kuidagi aitab, siis pole ta oma mõtlemises isegi lasteai lapse tasemel, aga selline meie elutegelikkus paraku on.

Muidugi pole see tõsi ainult tänapäeval. Juba Shakespeare'i aegadel oli sõnumi – iseäranis halva sõnumi – toomine ebameeldiv, koguni ohtlik ülesanne. Kahtlemata on alati neid, kes hindavad ja otsivad tõde, eelistades seda valele ka siis, kui see võib neile haiget teha, ent vähemalt sama palju on neid, kes lasevad end pigem hellitada meeldival vael kui kohutada karmil tõel. Ning ikka ja jälle sõltub palju sellest, kes midagi ütleb.

Ka Jeesus pidi seda kogema. Kord ütles Ta nõnda: «Kellega ma võrdleksin seda sugupõlve? See on laste sarnane, kes istuvad turgudel, hõigates teistele: *«Me oleme teile vilet puhunud ja te ei ole tantsinud. Me oleme teile itkenud ja te ei ole vastu rindu löönud.»* Sest Johannes tuli, ei söönud ega joonud, ja nad ütlevad: *«Tal on kuri vaim.»* Inimese Poeg tuli, sööb ja joob, ja nad ütlevad: *«Ennäe, see inimene on söödik ja veinijoodik, tõlnerite ja patuste sõber!»*» (Matteuse 11:16–19)

Ühel teisel korral käskis Jeesus oma vastastel viimaks ometi ära otsustada, kelleks nad Teda peavad. Seekord kasutas Ta võrdpilti heast ja halvast puust: *«Kui puu on hea, siis on ta viligi hea, või kui puu on halb, siis on ta viligi halb; sest puud tuntakse tema viljast.»* (Matteuse 12:33) Põhjuseks oli, et Jeesuse vastased süüdistasid Teda koostöös saatanaga, öeldes: *«See ei aja kurje vaimu välja kellegi muu kui Peltsebuli, kurjade vaimude ülema abil.»* (Matteuse 12:24)

Jeesus vastas sellele süüdistusele karmilt, näidates, et tegemist on ränga jumalateotusega – Püha Vaimu teotamisega, mida ei andestata inimesele ei sellel ega tulevasel ajastul. Kui inimene võtab teadlikult seisukoha, mis on vastuolus selgelt äratuntava tõega – nagu Jeesuse puhul oli see, et Ta ei tegutsenud mitte kurjade vaimude, vaid Jumala Vaimu abil –, siis on see inimene parandamatus, lootusetus olukorras, kuna ta on ennast tõe suhtes kurdiks ja pimedaks tehes sulgenud end ka Jumalale ja Tema armule.

Jeesuse teod – Tema vili – näitavad, et Ta on otsekui hea puu. Tema vastaste teod – nende vili – tõestavad paraku vastupidist. See, milles nad Jeesust süüdistavad, iseloomustab neid endid: nad ei ole võimelised rääkima tõtt, kuna nad on kurjad. Nad ei ole võimelised tooma oma südamest esile head, vaid võivad külvata üksnes kurja, kuna nende süda on täidetud kurjuse, mitte headusega. Jeesus võrdleb oma vastaseid rästikutega, mürkmadudega, kelle salvamine toob surma, ning hoiatab, et absoluutselt kõik inimesed peavad kord Jumala kohtu ees andma aru mitte ainult oma tegudest, vaid ka oma sõnadest – *«igast tühjast sõnast, mis nad on rääkinud, sest su sõnadest mõistetakse sind õigeks ja su sõnadest mõistetakse sind süüdi.»* (Matteuse 12:37)

See kõik ei puuduta mitte ainult suhtumist Jeesusesse, vaid ka meie suhtumist üksteisesse. On viimane aeg tuletada meelde õpetussõnad, millega meid kord lasteaeda saadeti, ning hakata suhtuma inimestesse austuse ja armastusega – ka siis, kui sõnum, mida nad toovad, ei pruugi meile meeldida, või kui näiteks nende poliitilised vaated ei kattu meie omadega. Sest *«mida te iganes tahate, et inimesed teile teeksid, tehke ka nendele»* (Matteuse 7:12).

Õpetaja Enn Auksmann

# ÕPETAJA ENN AUKSMANNI KÕNE PIISKOP ELECTUS THOMAS VAGA MATUSEL LAKEWOODI EESTI KIRIKUS

Beloved in Christ!

Did you notice that in the Gospel passage we just heard, a name was mentioned? That name was Thomas. Thomas was one of Jesus' twelve apostles – commonly known as Unbelieving Thomas or Doubting Thomas. I have to admit that I do not agree with this nickname, as Thomas was actually one of the most faithful of Jesus' disciples and the first to acknowledge Him as his Lord and his God.

The fact that Thomas wanted to see the risen Lord and make sure that it was truly Him is absolutely understandable: who among us, after seeing the arrest and execution of his beloved Teacher, would not have wanted to see Him alive again, to talk to Him, to even touch Him, to be sure that it is indeed Him?

Thomas is mentioned few times in the Gospel of St. John. The first time he says to his companions, pointing to Jesus going to Jerusalem: *«Let us also go, that we may die with Him.»* The second time he says to Jesus the words we heard in today's Gospel: *«Lord, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?»* The third time he bows before the resurrected Jesus and says to Him: *«My Lord and my God!»*

The apostle Thomas was not an unbeliever or a doubter – he was a seeker and a learner. He didn't doubt Jesus, and I believe he meant it when he said he was ready to go and die with his Lord. We know that he died as a martyr – after preaching the good news of the crucified and risen Christ among many nations.

I don't know what the parents of our dear brother Thomas Vaga were thinking when they named him this: whether they did it in honor of the Apostle Thomas or whether they thought it was just another nice name for a boy. But I think the name suited him well. And his last name, Vaga – the Pious –, suited him well. I would even say that it all sounds downright prophetic: not Unbelieving Thomas or Doubting Thomas, but Pious Thomas!

A pious Thomas, who was willing both to die for his Lord and to dedicate his whole life to Him. A pious Thomas, who was not so much a seeker as a learner. This is one of the first things that comes to my mind when I think of Thomas Vaga: how interested he was in everything that was going on around him, especially everything that had to do with God and His Word and the opportunity to serve people with God's Word and with other means of grace to help them find the merciful God and the salvation of their souls.

We heard two Scripture readings today. The first was from St. Paul's First Epistle to the Thessalonians. The apostle speaks there of the grief and the pain of parting. He doesn't say that we should not grieve for our departed. He says we don't have to grieve as those who have no hope. There is an important difference: yes, we feel the pain of parting, but we nevertheless have a wonderful hope because we know that we will see our departed again.

We know they are with the Lord in His peace and joy, and we believe that one day we will be there too. What a wonderful blessing and joy it will be: first, to see face to face our Saviour, who has redeemed us with His precious blood, and then to meet again all those dear ones from whom life or death have parted us. *«For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep.»*

In the second Lesson, we heard the Gospel about how Jesus encouraged His disciples before His suffering and death: *«Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.»*

We see that in the last hours before suffering and dying on the cross, our Saviour did not think of himself, but of His disciples, of His loved ones – all of us. He wasn't worried about what would happen to Him because He knew He was in His Father's hands. All He cared about was that those He loved might be with Him forever.

This is what He came into this world for: *«For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.»*

Jesus is *«the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by»* Him. It may sound exclusionary, but it is actually a loving invitation: here is the way to the Father and into the eternal life. A way that is open to all of us – not a toll road, but a true freeway. Free for us, as the highest price has already been paid for it.

Our beloved Thomas lived in this knowledge and faith, and shared this knowledge and faith with all those whom the Lord brought him together on his life's journey. There were many of them and I believe they are all grateful to him. The best way to thank Thomas for his life and work is to take seriously his guidance and walk the same path that he walked – the path that is our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Then we need not grieve as those who have no hope, because we have the hope of eternal life. Then we no longer have to say, like the apostle Thomas once did, that we don't know the way, because we know it. Then we can say with joy and exultation as in the hymn we just sang:

*«What shall be, what shall be / All the joy in store for me? / Lord, I know not, eyes are holden, / Till Jerusalem, the golden, / In its beauty I shall see! / In its beauty I shall see!*

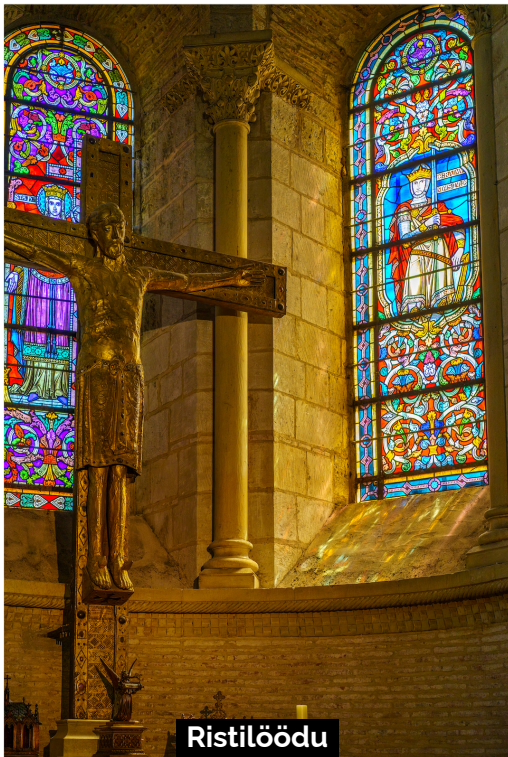
*Paradise, Paradise, / Fairest truths delights our eyes; / Where thy verdant trees are planted, / Bliss beyond our dreams is granted: / Take us, Lord, to Paradise, / Take us, Lord, to Paradise.»*

Rest eternal grant unto him O Lord: and let light perpetual shine upon him. May he rest in peace. Amen.

*Piiskop electus Thomas Vaga sündis Saaremaal 8. märtsil 1938. aastal ning kutsuti igavikku 9. juulil 2023. aastal New Jerseys*



# PILTE ÕPETAJA AUKSMANNI JA TEMA PERE PUHKUSEREISILT PRANTSUSMAALE



# KALENDARIIUM

Los Angelese Eesti Segakoori harjutused toimuvad reedeti kell 7:30 õhtul Eesti Majas. Lähemat infot annab koorijuht Kaie Pallo, tel. 213-440-3490. Uued lauljad on teretulnud.

## P, 27. august

kell 2 p.l.

**Jumalateenistus Eesti Majas.** Teenivad õpetaja Enn Auksmann ja organist Kaie Pallo. Nõukogu liikmed Uve Sillat ja Malle Tael. Kohvilaud.

## P, 10. september

kell 2 p.l.

**Jumalateenistus Eesti Majas.** Teenivad õpetaja Enn Auksmann ja organist Kaie Pallo. Nõukogu liikmed Asta Auksmann ja Mirje Auksmann. Kohvilaud.

## K, 20. september

kell 11 e.l.

**Senioride Klubi kokkutulek Eesti Majas.** Lõunasöök.

## P, 24. september

kell 2 p.l.

**Jumalateenistus Eesti Majas.** Teenivad õpetaja Enn Auksmann ja organist Kaie Pallo. Nõukogu liikmed Helge Laan ja Milvi Laan. Kohvilaud.

## P, 15. oktoober

kell 11 e.l.

**Lõikuspüha jumalateenistus** Garden Grove'is Linda ja Edgar Kaskla kodus. Teenivad koguduse õpetaja ja organist. Nõukogu liikmed: Edgar Kaskla ja Mati Laan. **Järgneb koguduse suvepäev.** Lõunasöök, koosviibimine, loterii. Kohvilauale palutakse tuua küpsiseid ja kooke meie tavapärasel viisil.

## K, 18. oktoober

kell 11 e.l.

**Senioride Klubi kokkutulek Eesti Majas.** Lõunasöök.

## P, 29. oktoober

kell 2 p.l.

**Usupuhastuspüha jumalateenistus Läti kirikus.** Teenivad õpetaja Enn Auksmann ja organist Kaie Pallo. Nõukogu liikmed Raivo Neggo ja Johannes Nukk. Kohvilaud.

### Tähelepanu!

Palume nõukogu liikmetel, kes teenivad kaasa jumalateenistusel, tulla kohale 30 minutit enne teenistuse algust, et aidata katta kohvilaud.