



## Weekly Bulletin

# Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

### **The Rich Ruler**

#### ***Troparion of the Resurrection, Tone 1***

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews, while the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, Thou didst rise on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. The powers of heaven therefore cried to Thee, O Giver of Life: Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ! Glory to Thy Kingdom! Glory to Thy dispensation, O Thou who lovest mankind!

#### ***Troparion of Annunciation, Tone 4***

Today is the beginning of our salvation, the revelation of the eternal mystery! the Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin as Gabriel announces the coming of Grace. Together with him let us cry to the Theotokos: Rejoice, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with you.

#### ***Kontakion of Annunciation Tone 8***

O Victorious Leader of triumphant hosts! We, your servants delivered from evil, sing our grateful thanks to you, O Theotokos! As you possess invincible might set us free from every calamity so that we may sing: Rejoice, O Unwedded Bride!

### **The 26th Sunday after Pentecost, Tone 1, December 3rd, Lu. 18:18-27**

The gospel for the thirty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost (Luke 18:18-27) tells us of a rich and powerful man — a ruler— who asked Jesus what was needed to inherit eternal life. Jesus reminds him of the commandments. “All these have I kept from my youth up...” He lacks one thing, Jesus tells him: to sell all his goods and distribute them to the poor. “And come, follow me...” But the man goes sorrowfully away, “for he was very rich”. And Jesus says that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God.

Sometimes it is material wealth which stops a man from entering the Kingdom but there are possessions other than money. Beauty, intelligence, perhaps some disordered human affection or bad habit: these, just as much, can be hindrances which Jesus tells us to free ourselves of before following Him. What are the earthly goods which hold and hinder me, personally, from following Jesus? How can I put these possessions to the service of the poor, and thus liberate my will? The gospel for this Sunday faces each one of us with this question. It is a good question to consider at the time of Christmas, at the time when Jesus comes to us in complete poverty, possessing nothing.

The epistle (Col.3:4-11) contains certain phrases which — by sheer coincidence — are particularly well-suited to Christmas-time...Thus: “When Christ shall appear...Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness...”. This theme of “impurity” and of “healing” reminds us of how Naaman, captain of the Syrian host, who suffered from leprosy, was healed by plunging into the waters of the Jordan, as the prophet Elisha told him to do. A spiritual interpretation of this episode leads our thoughts to Epiphany, to the manifestation of Jesus in the waters of the same river.

(Taken from *Year of Grace of the Lord*, by a Monk of the Eastern Church)

### **From the Lives of the Saints... THE HOLY PROPHET ZEPHANIAH**

Zephaniah was a native of Mount Sarabatha, from the tribe of Simeon. He

## **Announcements and Activities**

**Divine Liturgy for St. Nicholas**— Wednesday, at 9AM.

**Great Vespers**— Saturday, at 5:30 PM.

**Divine Liturgy**— Sunday, at 10AM.

**Coffee Hour**— This week's Coffee Hour is our bagels and coffee week. Brandon and Leanna are bolstering our Lenten coffee hour to honor the baptism of their newborn, Margaret Catherine. Next week's Coffee Hour will be sponsored by Luci F. and Mike Mil.

**Church School/Adult Ed**— Next meeting, Sunday, December 17th, at 9AM.

**The Nativity Fast**— began on November 15th. No meat, eggs, dairy products may be served at Coffee Hours— including items containing these products, such as sour CREAM, MILK Chocolate, Cakes, doughnuts and baked goods containing these items, etc. Fish is permitted on all the Sundays of the fast except for December 24th, which is kept as a stricter fast. The fast ends with the celebration of the Christmas Divine Liturgy on the morning of Monday, December 25th. I pray you have a profitable season of spiritual labor. ALL members of the parish should find time to receive the Holy Sacrament of Confession during the days of the fast. Fr. Lawrence is available before and after Saturday Vespers and by appointment during the week.

**Ethnic Food Faire**— We held our ethnic food faire on Saturday. Thanks and Many Years to so many who made the event possible. The event brings so many living in our community such joy and our time working together for the up-building of the Church is a very God-pleasing aim.

**Marchell Baptism**— the new addition to the Marchell family, Margaret Katherine, was baptized today, December 3rd, at 9AM. Congratulations! A Greek saying has it, "a good paradise".

**Parish Council**— next Sunday, after Coffee Hour.

**Pray for...** Sarah, the daughter of Fr. Lawrence's godfather, health issues. **Youseff and Jimmy— who are ill.** **Jonathan— ill.** **Reposed Barbara Ranjo. . Laure— battling Cancer.** **Paul— ill** **Ralph—ill Archpriest Lawrence**, from Canada, progressive eye disease. **Tsige Roman**— our beloved Tsige reposed on December 3rd. Please keep praying for her homeland of Ethiopia. **Brian— ill.** **Jonathan— ill.** **Katia—** sister of Shkbarra's . **Patrick**, reposed. **Heather Mary**— uncommon fatigue **Lou Mendez**. Battling ongoing health issues. **George and Steve**, a request from Luci. F. Dr. Joseph— personal needs. **Lance**— special request for prayers. **Christian**— prayers for upcoming surgery. **Michelle**— looking for housing. Mike Meko's Mother-in-law, **Lois**. Larissa's newly-reposed husband **Raphael**. Departed **Matushka Priscilla** and **Newly-departed, George.** Aaron C. surgery. **Luci F. upcoming surgery.** **Newly- Departed Marylyn.**

lived and prophesied in the seventh century before Christ, at the time of Josiah the pious king of Judah. Zephaniah was a contemporary of the Prophet Jeremiah. Having great humility and a pure mind raised to God, he was found worthy of discerning the future. He prophesied the day of the wrath of God and the punishment of Gaza, Ashkalon, Ashdod, Ekron, Nineveh, Jerusalem and Egypt. He saw Jerusalem as a filthy and polluted, ... oppressing city.... Her princes within her are roaring lions; her judges are evening wolves; ... her prophets are light and treacherous persons: her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the Law (Zephaniah 3:1-4). Foreseeing the advent of the Messiah, he enthusiastically exclaimed: Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem (Zephaniah 3:14). This seer of mysteries entered into rest at his birthplace to await the General Resurrection and his reward from God.

### **SAINT JOHN THE SILENT [THE HESYCHAST]**

John was a native of Nicopolis in Armenia and was the son of Enkratius and Euphemia. He was tonsured a monk at the age of eighteen and lived a strict and resolute life of asceticism, cleansing his heart by his many tears, fasting and prayer. After ten years, he was appointed bishop of Colonia. By his example, he attracted his brother Pergamius and his uncle Theodore--both distinguished men at the imperial courts of Emperors Zeno and Justinian--to a God-pleasing life. Seeing the malice and intrigues of this world and his inability to put matters right, he abandoned his episcopal throne. He disguised himself as a simple monk and went to the Monastery of St. Sava the Sanctified near Jerusalem. There he remained unknown for many years, conscientiously and capably completing every task that the abbot ordered him to do. For this, St. Sava recommended to Patriarch Elias that he ordain him a presbyter. When the patriarch wanted to ordain John, he confessed that he already possessed the rank of bishop. Then St. John closed himself in a cell and spent years and years in silence and prayer. Afterward he spent nine years in the wilderness feeding himself only on wild vegetables, and then he returned to the monastery. He turned the faithful away from the heresy of Origen and contributed greatly to the condemnation and elimination of this heresy. He clearly discerned the spiritual world and healed people from sickness. Having conquered himself, he easily conquered demons. Great in humility, might and divine wisdom, this servant of God entered peacefully into rest in the year 558 A.D. at the age of 104.

### **HIEROMARTYR THEODORE, ARCHBISHOP OF ALEXANDRIA**

After functioning as patriarch for two years, Theodore was ridiculed and tortured by the pagans. They placed a crown of thorns on his head and finally beheaded him for his Faith in the year 606 A.D.

### **THE VENERABLE THEODULUS**

Theodulus was an eminent patrician at the court of Theodosius the Great. After the death of his wife, he renounced the vanity of the world and withdrew from Constantinople to a pillar near Ephesus, where he lived a life of asceticism for thirty years.

The Prologue of Ochrid, by St. Nikolai (Velimirovich)

*"There do not exist many or few, nor small or great problems. The only problem is the absence of Christ from our lives" (From the life and teachings of Elder Epiphanius Theodoropoulos)*