



Weekly Bulletin

Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

The Parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man

Troparion of the Resurrection, Tone 8

Thou didst descend from on high, O Merciful One. Thou didst accept the three-day burial to free us from our sufferings. O Lord, our Life and Resurrection: Glory to Thee!

Troparion of the 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 the 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 17th Sunday after Pentecost Tone 8, October 20th, Luke 18:19-31

In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

As every of Christ's parables of the judgment today's parable has got a very simple aspect and at the same time should be reflected on a deeper level.

The simple aspect is this: you have had on earth all that was good, Lazarus has had nothing; he therefore receives in eternity all the goods which he has lacked on earth and you are deprived of it. But this is not the real and deeper meaning of it.

Who is this rich man? It is a man who not only possessed all that the earth could give him: wealth, a good name, a status among his fellow-citizens; it is a man who craved for nothing else. All he wanted, all he needed was material wealth, a good standing among men, reverence, admiration, a slavish obedience of those who were under him.

Lazarus possessed nothing; but from the parable we see that he did not complain, he received what the rich man needed not; he ate the crumbs from his table. But — he had a living soul; perhaps did he crave for more: who doesn't want to have a roof, who doesn't want to have the security of food? But he received what was given with gratitude. And when they died, what did they take with them? The rich man had nothing to take because he had never had any concern for anything that the earth couldn't give. Lazarus had always longed for more than the earth could give: for justice, for peace, for love, for compassion, for human brotherhood — for all those things which make the human being human. The rich man was in a condition which is described in one of the prophecies: Israel has grown fat with wealth and has forgotten God... The poor man could do no such thing; he was too poor to be rooted into the earth — he was free.

Now, this applies to all of us; because all of us we possess within ourselves both the rich man and Lazarus. On the one hand, how much we have, how rich we are, how secure, how opulent. On the other hand, if we are here, it means that there is another dimension within our soul that longs for something else. But the question is to be asked: if we had to choose — what we would choose? What is what we really treasure? Is it security which the earth so far has given us — or is it the vastness, the depth of understanding, communion with God, love of our neighbor, compassion — so many other things which the Gospel has taught us?

And this is where the parable refers not only to two men of the past, or to others than we are, it refers to us personally: who am I, — or if you prefer, which is more fair — who predominates in me? Am I more like the rich man, so rooted into the earth that the things of God, the things of the spirit, the things of eternity, or simply, what is truly

Announcements and Activities

Divine Liturgy for the Apostle James, the Brother of the Lord— Wednesday, at 9AM.

Great Vespers— Saturday, at 5:30PM.

Divine Liturgy— Sunday, at 10AM

Coffee Hour— This week's Coffee Hour is being sponsored by Larissa. Next week's coffee hour will be our community potluck. Bring your favorite dish..

Church School/Adult Education — will next be held on Sunday, November 3rd, at 9AM.

Parish Council— we adopted a September treasurer's report in the black. And discussed ministries.

Pray for... Sarah, the daughter of Fr. Lawrence's godfather. **Reposed**— Kalche. Eutychia's husband: **Stephen**— **battling cancer.** **Barbara H.** health issues. **Archbishop Benjamin**— our Vladyka, parkinsons. **Luci F.** recovering from knee procedure. Fr.'s grandson, **Christian, joint pain and problems from an inherited gene.** **Monk who is suffering from heart issues.** **Archpriest Matthew Tate**— a leader of diocese that is **battling Leukemia.** **Archpriest James,** seizures. **Catherine**— eye. **Philip**— special request. St. John Monastery— threat of fire. **Novice Alexandra** — who recently had surgery and is recovering. **Linda**— general health. **Grandson of Larissa.** **Rebecca**— Philip's daughter, health issues. **Abbess Victoria**— recovering. **Reposed John & Jakov**

human comes secondly — or am I one of those for whom what to be human matters more than anything?

And then, there is another thing in the parable. The rich man, seeing himself devoid of all, of every thing turns to Abraham and says, Send Lazarus to my brothers who are still on earth to give them a warning, that they may not come to this place of torment... And Christ says, Even if one came back from the dead, if they have not listened to what has been revealed in the past, they will not believe, they will perish in their sin...

How, that echoes in a tragic way with the situation in which people were when they stood as a milling crowd around the Cross on which Christ was dying. Some were believers, His own people — but where were they? They had fled. Some were His disciples faithful at the core of their being, faithful with their hearts, the women who had followed Him — they stood at a distance; only the Mother of God and John stood by the Cross. But in the crowd there were such who, together with the High Priest, the Pharisees who had condemned Christ, were saying: Descend now from the Cross — and we shall believe... How many thought: If He only did that, we could believe without taking any risk, believe with security, safely; believe and follow One Who had already won His victory; but can we, can we possibly believe and follow One Who now, defeated, reviled, rejected hangs on the Cross between two criminals?

That is what the parable says; and which is shown in the life of so many.

Where do we stand? Are we prepared to believe Christ's word? Are we prepared, captured by the beauty, the ineffable, the unutterable beauty of Christ's personality to follow Him at all risk? And risk, we know, is great: we will be reviled, we will be laughed at, we will be strangers, people will think that we are tramps on earth, not that we are pilgrims of Heaven; but are we prepared to do this?

We must give thought to these two aspects of the parable; because otherwise it is irrelevant, it has nothing to do with us — and yet, so much it has!

Let us think of it, deeply, standing judgment before it. God does not judge us in order to condemn. God presents us with reality and asks of us only one thing: Respond to reality! Do not accept a world which is a mirage! Do not accept yourself while you remain a mirage: be real, and then you will be children of the Kingdom.

And what can be greater: brothers and sisters of Christ, sons and daughters of the Living God; and messengers — messengers of God on earth. Can we hope for anything greater? And yet — this is what is offered to each and all of us! What a wonder, what a joy! How can we turn away from this? Amen. (A sermon by Metropolitan Anthony Bloom)

From the Lives of the Saints...THE VENERABLE GERASIMUS THE NEW

Gerasimus was from Trikala in the Peloponnese of the prominent Notaras family. He was born in 1509 A.D. He lived a life of asceticism on Mount Athos, and then in Palestine, where he fasted for forty days. After that, he settled on the island of Cephalonia, where he founded a convent. By his prayer he brought down rain, healed the sick, and foretold the future. He rested in the Lord on August 15, 1579 A.D. Gerasimus was a miracle-worker both during his life and after his repose.

Taken from 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)