

February 24, 2013: The 33rd Sunday after Pentecost (the Publican and the Pharisee)

Epistle reading: II Tim. 3:10-15:

"But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra—what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

Gospel reading: Luke 18:10-14:



"Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.' And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

With the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee we begin a new chapter in the Ecclesiastical year: THE TRIODION, which runs until Great Saturday (Easter Eve).

The Triodion is the time of repentance and spiritual cleansing, which takes us through three weeks of preparation for the unique journey of Great Lent, whose highlight is the Holy Week.

The Church announces this event at the Matins service of this week with some beautiful hymns/prayers, such as: *"Open to me the doors of repentance, O, Giver of Life..."*

This comes in the context of the Gospel reading, which portrays the *"Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector,"* and their completely opposite

attitude while praying. The Pharisee stands in arrogance and pride in front of the Temple and lists all the good deeds he had acquired, despising at the same time his fellow worshiper, the Publican, who, in total humility and overcome with the genuine spirit of repentance, prays and says: *"God, be merciful to me a sinner!"*

The two men represent the two categories of people/Christians who attend the same church service but return to their homes with different results, based on the attitude and the intent they came to church with.

May the Good and Merciful God give us the the Publican's humility and spirit of repentance!

Fr. George Bazgan

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting is scheduled for February 24, 2013 after the Divine Liturgy. On the Agenda: Financial and other committees reports, the election of a New Parish Council for the next two years. Members in good standing will be able to vote. All are invited to attend. See you on February 24, 2013!

KITCHEN RENOVATION

Our kitchen is in dire need for expansion and renovation.

In the fall of 2012 we launched a campaign to fundraise for this important project.

The last estimate for the project came at around \$80,000.

We appeal to all of our members, supporters and friends to give generously towards this major project and support our fundraising events!

All donors will receive a tax-deductible receipt and our heartfelt appreciation.

THANK YOU AND MAY THE GOOD LORD BLESS YOU!