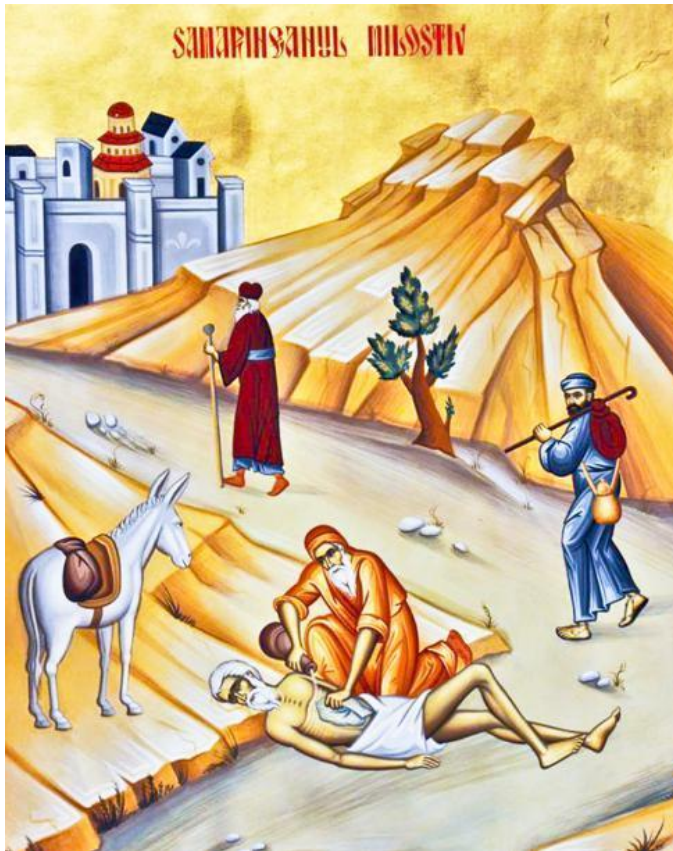


Nov. 15, 2020: The 25th Sunday after Pentecost (The Good Samaritan)

Epistle: Ephesians 4:1-7:

I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men."

Gospel: Luke 10:25-37:



And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" So he answered and said, " 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbor as yourself.' " And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live." But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when

he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed,

he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.' So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

At the beginning of Advent, the gospel reading tells us this beautiful parable of the Good Samaritan because Advent marks the time of our spiritual preparation to receive, six weeks later, the visitation of Messiah, the incarnate Son of God, the Good Samaritan who comes to check on the condition of His people and restore man, the masterpiece of His creation to his original dignity.

The dire situation of the man who *"fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead,"* is a very accurate image of mankind's condition when God the Father decided to implement His eternal plan for the salvation and restoration of the entire creation, especially man.

Based on what our Savior says in John 3:16: "*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life,*" we understand clearly that the reason for sending into the world of His only begotten Son, was God's infinite love for His creation. It is, therefore, no wonder that the parable of the Good Samaritan was told in the context of the first and the greatest commandment: "*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind and your neighbor as yourself.*"

The command "*Go and do likewise,*" given to the teacher of the Law echoes throughout the millennia and is addressed to every generation, including ours, as the beneficiaries of God's infinite love, to imitate Christ, the Good Samaritan and become ourselves good samaritans, stooping over with love and compassion and bandaging the wounds of our fellow human beings just as the Good Samaritan has done.

Fr. George Bazgan

Sunday Service Attendance

Due to the continuing State of Emergency, which limits the number of people attending Church services, we are asking our members to make sure that, for time being, only 1 (one) person from each family attend our Sunday Divine Liturgy.

We apologize for this inconvenience and hope that the restrictions will continue to be relaxed in the near future.

Those who attend, are kindly asked to observe the recommendations of the experts, such as: wearing a mask, washing hands, social distancing, etc.

Thank you all and may God keep us safe!

MEMBERSHIP / PLEDGE

The Board of Directors extends a warm appeal to all supporters of our parish, asking them to pay their membership as soon as possible.

This way we can ensure that we have the necessary funds to fulfill our financial obligations for the rest of the year.

We also encourage you to renew your financial pledge and be as generous as you can.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

Prayer at the time of pandemic

O Lord, our God, who are rich in mercy and, with Your wise care, guard our lives, listen to our prayer, receive our repentance for our sins, stop this pandemic, as You have ceased the punishment of the people in the days of King David. You who are the Physician of our souls and our bodies, give healing to those contaminated with this disease, hastily raising them from their bed of suffering, to glorify You, the Most Merciful Savior, and protect those who are healthy from any disease.

Bless, strengthen and shield, O Lord, with Your grace, all those who, with love of people and sacrifice, care for the sick at their homes or in hospitals. Remove all disease and suffering from the people and teach us to value life and health as gifts coming from You.

Grant us, O God, Your peace, and fill our hearts with unwavering faith in Your protection, with hope in Your help, and with love towards You and our neighbor.

For Yours is to show mercy and to save us, O our God, and to You we give glorify: Father and Son and Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen!