

Nov. 22, 2020: The 26th Sunday after Pentecost (Of the rich fool)

Epistle: Ephesians 5:8-19:

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light." See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord

Gospel: Luke 12:16-21:



Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater ones, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat,

drink, and be merry." But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

This Sunday's gospel reading is the perfect lesson on how dangerous material wealth can be for some people. Since this rich man's old barns were still full with crops from the previous year's harvest (*'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?'*), it is obvious that he never thought about sharing, at least his surplus, with the poor. It would have been much cheaper and more beneficial for him and his fellow human beings had he decided to give away the old crops and use the old barns in which to store the new crops.

The constant desire to acquire wealth can very easily turn into obsession and anxiety. When this happens, one loses his/her discernment and the sense of real value and purpose in life. The person becomes confused, unable to see the needs of others; his concentration/obsession is on himself only: *"And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry."*

The reason the Church Fathers ordained these Sunday gospel readings in the month of November which share the theme of material wealth is because we are supposed to get ready to meet, at the end of the Christmas Fast, Messiah, the only begotten Son of God, who comes in total humility and poverty so those who "have ears to hear" might embrace His message and heed his advice to get *"rich toward God."*

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!

Special Services during Advent

During the Christmas Fast, we'll have
Vespers, every Saturday at 5:00 PM.

Following the Vespers Service, Confession
will be heard for those who want to
prepare for Holy Communion.

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!