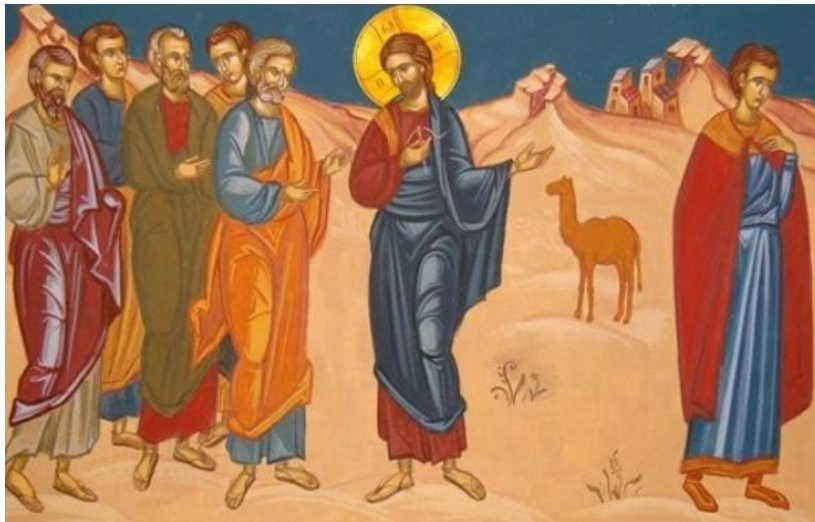


Nov. 29, 2020: The 30th Sunday after Pentecost (Of the rich man – keeping the commandments)

Epistle: Colossians 3:12-16:

Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Gospel: Luke 18:18-27:



Now a certain ruler asked Him, saying, “Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” So Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not bear false witness,’ ‘Honor your father and your mother.’” And he said, “All these things I have kept from my youth.” So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, “You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.” But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich. And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, “How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.” And those who heard it said, “Who then can be saved?” But He said, “The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.”

The last Sunday of November closes the series of the gospel readings that have a common theme: the material wealth. Just two Sundays ago, the Lord was approached by a lawyer, who came to test Him, saying: “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” The dialogue evolved to the point where Christ told the beautiful parable of the Good Samaritan.

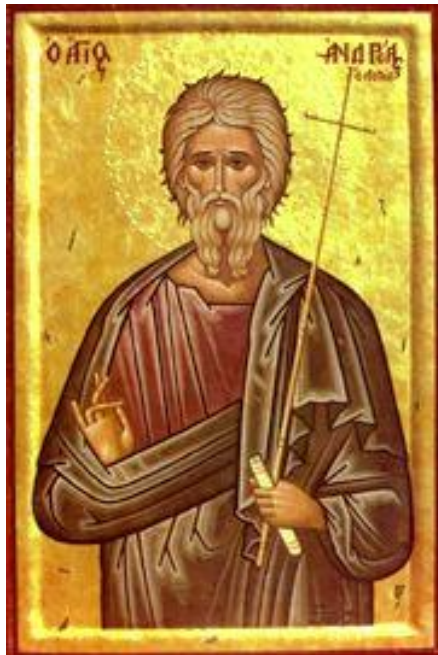
On this Sunday, the Savior is approached by "a certain ruler," who asked him the same question: *"Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"*

If we compare the two answers to the same question, we are tempted to think that the same question has two different answers: *"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"* (Luke 10:27), from two weeks ago, and *"Do not commit adultery," "Do not murder," "Do not steal," "Do not bear false witness," "Honor your father and your mother"*, from this Sunday's gospel reading.

Now, the question is: which one of these answers is the correct one? Actually, they both are. They are seemingly different because they were given to two different people, with different mentalities and understanding of the Law. While the first one came to test the Lord and was told that one cannot love God unless one also loves his neighbor as much as he loves himself, which includes having mercy and compassion on him and caring about his condition, the second one came as a compliant with the Law (so he thought), only to learn that he was in fact in total violation of the first commandment: *"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart..."* When he was told what steps he must take in order to "inherit eternal life:" *"Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me,"* he showed his true allegiance, in terms of which god he was truly serving and was devoted to: *"But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich."* He was unable (unwilling) to part with his riches because they had become his god. He had replaced the true God with his own god, his material possessions, thus betraying the true God, committing **spiritual adultery**.

So, let us heed the message conveyed by these gospel readings and open our minds and hearts, responding with compassion and Christian love to the needs of our fellow human beings, following the example of God the Father, who sends His only begotten Son into the world in complete humility and poverty in order to exalt and enrich mankind!

Fr. George Bazgan



Troparion

Andrew, first-called of the Apostles and brother of the foremost disciple, entreat the Master of all to grant peace to the world and great mercy to our souls.

Kontakion

Let us praise Andrew, the herald of God, the namesake of courage, the first-called of the Savior's disciples and the brother of Peter. As he once called to his brother, he now cries out to us: "Come, for we have found the One whom the world desires!"

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!

We are live streaming the Liturgy

As we continue to operate under these restrictions, we are live streaming the Divine Liturgy on You Tube.

To access the Sunday Services, [click here](#).

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!