



Saints Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church THE WEEKLY CHURCH BULLETIN

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SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2017

Κυριακή 26η Νοεμβρίου 2017

ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΙΓ΄ ΛΟΥΚΑ - ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΣΤΥΛΙΑΝΟΥ

Αποστ: Εφ. 4:1-7

Ευαγγ: Λούκα. 18:18-27

13th Sunday of Luke – Feastday of St. Stylianos

Today's Readings

Epistle: Eph. 4:1-7

Gospel: Luke 18:18-27



DO WE NEED TO MAKE A LIST?

As we are busy preparing for the coming holiday season, sometimes in order for us to remember things it helps to write things down on a list. In today's Gospel lesson, the rich young ruler who asked Jesus Christ what he had to do in order to find eternal life also apparently thought in terms of lists. When the Lord told him to keep the commandments of the Old Testament, the man said that he had checked off, that he had kept them his entire life. This is where the story gets really interesting, for the Lord then gives him a commandment that had never been on the man's list and that he couldn't imagine following: Sell all that you have, give to the poor, and come follow me. This fellow was rich and powerful and loved his possessions, so he became very sad and apparently walked away. The Lord knew how hard it was for people who have it all in this life to enter the kingdom of heaven, for they are tempted strongly to love their possessions and status more than God and neighbor. The Lord stunned His disciples by saying, "the things which are impossible with men are possible with God."

Why did Christ say this? He certainly wasn't simply adding another law to a list of requirements to be checked off. Instead, He challenged this man to stop thinking about his relationship with God as a matter of law or a set of behaviors. Someone who responds to the Old Testament laws by saying, "Oh, I've always followed them since I was a child" has a very shallow understanding of what God requires of us. That would be like someone saying, "Oh, I've always been a perfectly faithful Christian since childhood." If we have any spiritual insight at all, we will see that none of us has mastered God's requirements and none of us may stand before the Lord bragging that we have it all down. The truth is that we have all fallen short and need God's mercy and healing in our lives.

Christ jolted this man out of his delusion, of his false self-confidence, by giving him a commandment that He knew he would not keep: giving away all his beloved money, possessions, and power. Perhaps for the first time, this fellow was challenged to see that eternal life is not a matter of checking off a list, not something that we can accomplish by our own ability. If we can't give up that which we love most in this life for God, then we obviously have not fulfilled all that the Lord expects of us.

As we prepare for the coming birth of Christ, we need to remember that this great feast is not about the birth of a mere teacher, law-giver, or example. Were our Lord simply another prophet with a strict

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teaching, we would not rejoice at His coming. Instead, we would—like the rich young ruler—become sad and dejected, for the last thing we need is another law to fail to obey and make us feel guilty. The eternal Son of God was not born at Christmas to add to the burden of the law or to give us a new set of teachings. To the contrary, He became a human being to do what a mere law never could, to bring us into His holiness, to make us partakers of the divine nature, to heal us and to make it possible for us to seek eternal life.

The Lord's shocking statement about giving everything away challenged the rich young ruler to stop thinking of his life before God in legalistic terms. We should use prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and other spiritual disciplines in the Nativity Fast, to be shocked out of our own thoughts of those material concepts and focus on to seeking eternal life. Christ did not come to make us strict legalists who think that life can be reduced to a list of "do's" and "don'ts." And He certainly did not put on flesh in order to make His followers the self-righteous judges of others.

The Son of God out of His love for us wanted to make possible for us what is impossible by our own power. We prepare to receive Christ at Christmas by opening our hearts and souls to His salvation—not by mastering laws—but by true repentance. The closer we grow to Him, the less we will think of salvation as a reward for good behavior according to a check list. May this Christmas season be a time for humility, repentance, and spiritual discipline for all of us, not because we have broken a law, but because we have room to grow in our relationship with Jesus Christ. We are not perfect as our Father in Heaven is perfect. But unlike the rich young ruler, we must not give up and walk away in despair. Instead, we should say, "Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner." For what is impossible with men is possible with the incarnation of Jesus Christ.



MESSAGE FROM FATHER TOM...

A Time to Remember

As we enter the Holy days where we will receive our Lord as a Newborn with the feast of the Nativity, let us pray for a time of good works and kindness amongst all of us that we may experience true joy and good health.

Next Sunday, our Parish will remember all of those who fell asleep in the Lord, particularly those in the year 2017. All parishioners are encouraged on this Sunday to give names of family member that they would like to offer prayers. For more information about our Community Memorial Service on December 3rd, please read the enclosed flyer.

Of course, all parishioners are encouraged at any time to submit names for prayers, both living and the dead and can be submitted by giving a list to me directly, or you may give a list at the Holy Altar, Church office or even by email.

With the great feast of Christmas right around the corner, please know that whatever your pastoral need – I am at your service – please contact me in the Church Office at (708) 974-3400 or email at Tomdemed@aol.com



THE FEASTDAY OF ST. STYLIANOS The Righteous Protector of Children

St, Stylianos was born during the 6th century in Adrianopolis in the province of into a very wealthy family. At a young age, Stylianos joined the monks of the desert with a view toward cleansing his soul through a period of meditation and prayer, as well as through association with men likewise pledging their lives to Jesus Christ. Unlike most other monks, however, he did not withdraw from society altogether.

During this period, Stylianos concerned himself primarily with children, not just the physically afflicted but also with those who were in need of spiritual guidance. His was probably the first day-care center in the world, where mothers could safely leave their children while tending to other matters of the home.

The cheerful countenance of Stylianos was his hallmark, because he was reported to always to be smiling.



ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΙΓ ΛΟΥΚΑ
(Λουκά κεφ. ιη' στίχοι 18-27).
Ο πλούσιος νέος και ο Χριστός.

Η Εκκλησία με τη σημερινή ευαγγελική περικοπή μας δείχνει στο πρόσωπο του πλούσιου νέου πώς η μαγία του πλουτισμού δεν αφήνει τον άνθρωπο να μπει στη βασιλεία του Θεού. Αντίθετα η φιλοχρηματία οδηγεί τον άνθρωπο στην καταστροφή και την απώλεια.

Ο πλούσιος νέος δεν πίστευε μέσα του πως ο Χριστός είναι ο αληθινός μας Θεός. Γι' αυτό και ο Κύριος του υπενθυμίζει ότι «κανένας δεν είναι άγιος, παρά μόνο ένας, ο Θεός». Είναι σα να του έλεγε: «Αφού δε με παραδέχεσαι μέσα σου, ως Θεό, τότε γιατί με ονομάζεις άγιο;» Ο πλούσιος νέος είχε εφαρμόσει από τα μικρά του χρόνια το μωσαϊκό Νόμο. Τον είχε εφαρμόσει όμως τυπικά και ψεύτικα. Η καρδιά του είχε μείνει ασυγκίνητη από την αγάπη, που πρέπει ο άνθρωπος να δείχνει στο Θεό και τους άλλους ανθρώπους. Ο Κύριος για να ξεσκεπάσει την απιστία του, του λέγει: «Όλα όσα έχεις πούλησε τα και μοίρασε τα στους φτωχούς. Έτσι θα έχεις θησαυρό στον ουρανό και έλα να με ακολουθείς». Ο πλούσιος νέος δοκίμασε μέσα του μεγάλη λύπη, γιατί ήταν πάρα πολύ πλούσιος. Αφού δεν είχε μέσα του αγάπη, δεν μπορούσε να πουλήσει τα πλούτη του και να τα μοιράσει στους φτωχούς. Ο νέος μας δεν πίστευε στο Θεό, αλλ' όμως πίστευε στα λεφτά του. Τα πλούτη του ήταν γι' αυτόν ο θεός. Είχε γίνει δηλαδή ένας ειδωλολάτρης και ως εφαρμόζε το μωσαϊκό Νόμο.

Η ζωή μας είναι γεμάτη από τέτοια παραδείγματα, σαν του σημερινού πλούσιου νέου. Έχουμε δει πολλούς πλούσιους, που λάτρευαν και προσκυνούσαν τον πλούτο τους σαν θεό. Ξαφνικά όμως έχασαν όλα τα πλούτη τους και έμειναν στο δρόμο. Αυτό το κατάντημα το θυμόμαστε στην Εκκλησία μας, όταν ψάλλουμε: «πλούσιοι επτάχενσαν και επείνασαν οι δε εκζητούντες (= αυτοί που ψάχνουν να βρουν) τον Κύριον, ουκ ελαττωθήσονται (= δεν θα τους λείψει) παντός αγαθού».

Ο Κύριος μας βεβαίωσε πως είναι φοβερά δύσκολο να μπει στη βασιλεία του Θεού ένας άνθρωπος φιλοχρήματος και φιλάργυρος. Από τώρα πρέπει να προσέξουμε, ώστε να μην είμαστε φιλάργυροι και φιλοχρήματοι. Να συνηθίσουμε να προσφέρουμε με αγάπη στους άλλους από αυτό, που και εμείς έχουμε. Μόνον έτσι μπορούμε να μοιάσουμε του Θεού. Να καταλάβουμε από τώρα πως δεν είμαστε μόνον εμείς, αλλά υπάρχουν και άλλα παιδιά που έχουν ένα σωρό ανάγκες. Αυτά τα φτωχά παιδιά πρέπει να τα ανακαλύπτουμε και να τα βοηθούμε όσο μπορούμε και να δείχνουμε την αγάπη μας. Μόνον έτσι θα ξεπεράσουμε και ο μεγάλο κίνδυνο του εγωισμού και της φιλαργυρίας. Τότε μπορούμε να ζητάμε τη βοήθεια και το έλεος του Θεού για να μας αξιώσει και εμάς να βρεθούμε στη Βασιλεία των ουρανών.

Πηγή: <http://paroutsas.jmc.gr>

Τετάρτη 29η Νοεμβρίου

Ώρα 7:00 μ.μ. - Εσπερινός εις τόν έορτάζοντας
Ίερούς Ναούς του Αγίου Ανδρέα, Σικάγου και South Bend

Πεμπτη 30η Νοεμβριου - Του Αγίου Ανδρέα

Ώρα 8:00 π.μ. Ορθρος και Θεία Λειτουργία

Κυριακη 3η Δεκεμβρίου - Κυριακή ΙΔ' Λουκα

Ώρα 8:00 - 11:15 π.μ. - Ώρθρος και Θεία Λειτουργία

ACTIVITIES THIS WEEK

Today, Sunday, November 26:

Metropolis of Chicago Thanksgiving B-Ball Tournaments – Finals at St. Nectarios, Palatine

Monday, November 27:

7:30 p.m. GOYA - Parea with Kafe at Xando

Tuesday, November 28:

8:00 p.m. High School Boys B-Ball practice

Wednesday, November 29:

3:00 p.m. Youth Choir

6:30 p.m. 3rd/4th Biddy/Grade School
B-Ball practice

7:00 p.m. Vespers at St. Andrew's Churches
Chicago and South Bend, IN

Thursday, November 30:

Feastday of St. Andrew the Apostle

8:00 a.m. Orthros/Divine Liturgy

6:00 p.m. Girls' B-Ball practice

Friday, December 1:

9:30 a.m. Toddler Play Group

6:30 p.m. JOY B-Ball Might Mights

7:30 p.m. JOY B-Ball Minors

8:30 p.m. JOY B-Ball Majors

Saturday, December 2:

GOAL B-Ball Games at St. Nectarios (Away)

1:45 p.m. 3rd/4th Division

2:30 p.m. Biddy Division

3:30 p.m. Grade School Division

4:30 p.m. High School Boys

Sunday, December 3: 14th Sunday of Luke

8 – 11:15 a.m. Orthros and Divine Liturgy

Community Memorial Service - See enclosed flyer

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Church Custodial Position- Part Time

Hours of Work: 9am -1PM

Days of the Week: Monday –Friday

Responsibilities include maintaining the cleanliness of the church proper, managing inventory of all needed supplies, other duties as assigned.

If interested please call Sandra Chakonas at the church office 974-3400. Submit your resume via email to schakon@att.net or drop off a copy to the church office, Attention: Sandra Chakonas.

MEMORIALS

40 Day Helen Fefles
40 Day James Paziotopoulos
40 Day Socratis Pimenidis
1 Year Fay Machinis
1 Year Petros Tsakalakis
3 Years Paul Stavrakos
3 Years Isaak (Totamanidis) Tomas
3 Years Efstratios Vitogiannis

† May their memory be eternal. †

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP

Today's Coffee Fellowship is hosted in memory of Helen Fefles by her family.
Please join them!

FUNERALS

The following funerals were held recently.

Bill J. Manikas - Monday, November 20th

Christina Margaret Makris - Friday, November 24th

† May their memory be eternal. †

SACRAMENTS

BAPTISM

We welcome the following into the Orthodox Faith and we pray that God grant her many, many years!

Saturday, November 25 at 12:30 p.m.

Amalia (Emily), daughter of Michael and Colleen Reczek

Sponsor: Nick Reczek

See you...



...Next SUNDAY!