



PARISH INFORMATION BULLETIN

PROGRAM FOR 11—17 NOVEMBER 2018

SUNDAY 11 NOVEMBER Martyr, St Menas	8th Sunday of Luke, Luke 10: 25-37 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.30– 11.00am Orthros and Divine Liturgy
<p>***** SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR ALL AGES *****</p> <p>(A free voluntary program organised by the Church)</p> <p><i>Immediately after Holy Communion until Church dismissal, in the building behind the Church, Religious Instruction lessons take place for our children. We have classes for ages ranging from 5yrs to teenage years, which are given in a relaxed, friendly environment. The understanding of our faith through the religious instruction lessons brings our children closer to God and the joy and peace of His Love.</i></p>	
MONDAY 12 NOVEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 10.00am Meeting of Elderly Citizens in Church Hall.• 9.00am Service of Holy Unction
TUESDAY 13 NOVEMBER St John Chrysostom	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.00– 9.30am Orthros and Divine Liturgy• 7.00pm Parishes of St Vasilios and the Presentation of our Lord, Coburg Youth Group will meet in our Church Hall.
WEDNESDAY 14 NOVEMBER Apostle, St Philip (NATIVITY FAST BEGINS ON 15 NOVEMBER)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.00– 9.30am Orthros and Divine Liturgy• 5.00pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos• 7.00pm Young Adults and Married Couples Bible Study Group at St. Vasilios, in the Church Coffee Room.
SATURDAY 17 NOVEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3.45pm Service of Vespers
SUNDAY 18 NOVEMBER	GOSPEL READING: Luke 12: 16-21 EPISTLE READING: Ephesians 4: 1-7

For Orthodox Christians, Christmas Advent begins on November 15 and extends through to December 24. It is a Lenten period with moderate fasting, prayer, scripture reading and reflection on the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.



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Fr Athanasios and
Fr Ephraim
are available at the Church
every Monday to Friday
between 4.00 and 6.00pm
for Holy Confession and
any spiritual need.

"It is madness for a
Christian to be
envious. In Christ
we have all
received infinitely
great blessings."

+ St. John of
Kronstadt

VOICE OF THE CHURCH FATHERS

Draw nigh to the righteous, and through them you will draw nigh to God.
Communicate with those who possess humility, and you will learn morals from them.
A man who follows one who loves God becomes rich in the mysteries of God; but he who follows an unrighteous
and proud man gets far away from God, and will be hated by his friends.
(St. Isaac the Syrian, Sermon 57,8)



The Lord does not show Himself to a proud soul. The proud soul, no matter how many books it reads,
will never know God, since by its pride it does not give place for the grace of the Holy Spirit,
while God is known only by the humble soul.
(St. Silouan the Athonite, Writings, III.11)

8th Sunday of Luke, Luke 10: 25-37

Lessons From The Good Samaritan

Regarding the people of Samaria, also known as Samaritans, Jews had no dealings with them. This is told to us in Gospel of John (4) when Jesus encounters the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well. That's why she ask Jesus, "How is that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" To the Jews, the word "Samaritan" meant 'dog' or 'devil'. They were considered half-breeds and heretics. However, because of the parable Jesus told in today's Gospel, from the Eighth Sunday of Luke (10:25-37), everyone thinks of Samaritans as "good". If I asked anyone who/what a "Good Samaritan" is, virtually all of them could tell me that it's a person who helps someone in need, even if they are a stranger.

However, before Jesus parable of the Good Samaritan became widely known, the old negative connotation was predominant, certainly among the Jews. And because of the bad reputation assigned to the Samaritans, Jesus parable becomes more powerful. In the today's passage we hear of a lawyer trying to test Jesus asking, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life" (v.25). Jesus asks the lawyer what is written in the law and he responds by saying that, "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 neighbour as yourself" (v.27; see Lev.19:18). The lawyer wanted to justify himself and said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbour" (v.29). Jesus answered and told the story of about the man who fell among robbers who assaulted him and left him half-dead (v.30). Two highly respected Jewish religious leaders, a priest and a Levite, came upon the man separately but when each saw him, both passed by on the other side (vv.31-32). But another person came upon the wounded man and had compassion and helped him and took care of him and made sure others took care of him. Who was the one who helped him? It was the half-breed heretic, the Samaritan (vv.33-35).

Fr. Anthony Coniaris, in his book ("Go and Do Likewise" Gems from Sunday Gospels vol.2, p.60) states that the Gospel passage is communicating three lessons, all of which apply to us today. First, only one out of three persons help the man who was robbed and beaten. Thus, most of us, given the chance will likely not act like the Good Samaritan. The most common reason for ignoring those in need is that we are too busy. We have other things to do that are more important. Remember what we said last week about the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31)? The rich man did not actively hurt or harm Lazarus. Like the priest and Levite today, the rich man last week committed the sin of omission, the sin of apathy, the sin of doing nothing.

The second lesson of today's Gospel reading is that religion is not just to be practiced inside the walls of a temple or a church but on the roadside as well. An atheist once asked a poorly dressed person, "If God is love, how come He didn't tell someone to give you clothes and shoes? The person thought for a moment and replied, "I guess God told somebody and that somebody forgot." The priest and the Levite forgot to love your neighbour as yourself.

The third lesson is that wounded people are all around us, all the time. However, they are not only suffering physically. Most people who suffer do so on a mental, emotional and spiritual level. One could argue that by expanding the definition and types of suffering, almost all of us are hurting for one reason or another. Young college graduates worry about finding a job. Middle-age middle managers worry about losing their job to young college graduates. Young couples try to gather and save money to buy a home of their own, while others agonize about making the mortgage payment each month. More seriously, some are grieving the loss of a loved one, while many have anxiety about getting sick and dying. Others endure abuse in relationships and many feel the affects of abuse long after it has ended. Nearly half of all husbands and wives end up divorced, and even more were betrayed by adulterous affairs. Think of the children who try to grasp the fact that their parents don't love each other any more. Think of those who suffer from built up resentment and bitterness, having difficulty forgiving and letting go.

Another lesson in the story of the Good Samaritan is the definition of neighbour. The lawyer asked, "And who is my neighbour?" (v.29). To the Jews of Jesus' time, a Samaritan was not a neighbour. To the ancient Greeks, every foreigner was a 'barbarian.' To the ancient Jews every stranger was a 'Gentile.' To many Muslims, every non-believer is an 'infidel.' However, to Jesus every person is our neighbour, regardless of whether a stranger or family, friend or foe. Fr. Coniaris says that Christians, instead of asking, "Who is my neighbour?", ask "To whom can I be a neighbour?" In other words, Christians should be looking for neighbours all the time. We should be looking for those who are suffering and need God's love and mercy.

Let's step back for a moment and remember that God did not create an evil or imperfect world. He created a world that was originally good. He created mankind, male and female, very good. It was us humans, through our rejection of God's love, the misuse of our free will, that spoiled God's world through sin. Knowing this fact, it's easier to understand why the Son and Word of God became incarnate in the person of Jesus Christ. It is because he saw our helpless, mutilated body on the side of the road. We were robbed, stripped and beaten by the devil. We were doomed to death and sin. Jesus is our Good Samaritan, who saw us and had compassion. He stooped down to us in His birth from the Virgin Mary. Jesus carried us on the Cross, to His crucifixion and death. He healed us through His Resurrection from the dead giving us the oil of Chrismation and Unction. Jesus continues to heal us through the eternal offering of Himself in the wine of the Eucharist. He brings us to the inn of the Church, the hospital for all those who suffer.

As we conclude today, let us ask ourselves, are we looking for someone who needs a neighbour? Or are we too busy to be bothered? Do we have more important things to do? If we see someone in need, who is experiencing physical, emotional, mental or spiritual suffering, will we pass by on the other side, hoping that they don't notice us avoiding them? My brothers and sisters in Christ, let us look for and see, let us have compassion and go to them. Let us love them as Jesus as loved us. Let us bring them to the inn of the Church, which is the source of the best medicines in the world, the sacramental Mysteries of the Eucharist, Unction and Reconciliation. Lord have mercy on all of us! Amen!

Rev. Fr. Richard Demetrius Andrews, Greek Orthodox Church of America