



Parish Information Bulletin

SUNDAY 1 NOVEMBER

*Holy Unmercenaries
Saints Kosmas and Damian
Osios David of Evia*

5th Sunday of Luke, Luke 16: 19-31

- 8.00am
Orthros and Divine Liturgy

TUESDAY 3 NOVEMBER

*Recovery of Holy Relics of St George
the Trophy-Bearer*

- 8.00am
Orthros and Divine Liturgy

SUNDAY 8 NOVEMBER

Epistle Reading: Hebrews 2: 2-10
Gospel Reading: Luke 8: 41-56

Telephone Contact Numbers

St Vasilios Church
9387 7693

Fr Athanasios
9383 4151

Fr Ephraim
0490 378 215

Website:
stvasiliosbrunswick.com

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 pointless for
someone to say
that he has faith in
God if he does not
have the works
which go with faith.

What benefit were
their lamps to the
foolish virgins who
had no oil
(Mt. 25:1-13),
namely, deeds of
love and
compassion?



Gregory Palamas

Saint David of Evia (Euboea) - 1 November

Blessed David was born at the beginning of the 16th century in the sea-side village of Gardinitza, opposite the island of Evia. His father was a devout and virtuous priest. When David was no more than three years old, Saint John the Baptist appeared to him one night and took him to the nearby church which was dedicated to him. He remained standing there, barefoot, for six days, lost in the vision, in front of the icon of the Forerunner. Nourished from an early age on the principles of obedience to his parents, asceticism and ceaseless prayer, he left his family home at the age of fifteen, in search of a spiritual father. He found him in the person of the Hieromonk Akakios, who was well-known in the villages of the region for his virtuous life and powerful preaching.

David was tonsured a monk in Akakios' monastery, and there demonstrated perfect obedience, accompanied with humility and unceasing prayer. Because his Elder wished to find a monastery more advanced in the spiritual life, David followed him first to Ossa, near Olympus, and then, after he had been ordained deacon, on a pilgrimage to the monasteries on the Holy Mountain. Akakios went on to Constantinople alone, leaving David in the Great Lavra. Akakios was consecrated Metropolitan of Artta and Nafpaktos by Patriarch Ieremias, and soon afterwards summoned David to his see to assist him with his pastoral duties.

Despite living in the hurly-burly of the world, David did not relax in the slightest his fasting, all-night-vigils, countless prostrations and complete obedience to his spiritual father. He soon became a priest and was appointed Abbot of the Monastery of the Mother of God, known as Varnakova, near Nafpaktos. But his zeal and spiritual demands were a cause of conflict with the lax monks there, who wanted nothing other than to do their own will. So he left the monastery and went to look for a place of tranquillity. He settled in a barren place on a mountain near Parnassos. While there he was attacked by a great many satanic temptations.

Charged with sheltering a runaway slave, he was arrested by the Turks and subjected to torture over a long period of time, before being freed through the payment of a ransom collected by the faithful living in the area. He then set off to find a new hermitage on the island of Evia. There he rebuilt a small church in honour of the Transfiguration of the Saviour and it was not long before a group of disciples gathered who shared his way of life and love of prayer. In imitation of Christ, David showed boundless love towards all who came to him, especially the poor, upon whom he could not look without shedding tears.

He shared the monastery's goods unstintingly with all those in need, deserving or not, Christian or Muslim. And so he spent many years radiating the presence of God with his virtues and many miracles. While he was travelling to mediate in the divisions among the bishops of the Peloponnese, his ship sank and David was saved by a miracle. Having been deemed worthy of the gift of pre-cognition, he helped a great many people to find salvation and knew in advance the day of his death. He gathered his disciples and passed to them his final spiritual instructions. He departed this life at the moment when he had confided to those around him that Christ had just then appeared to him. After his demise (in either 1589 or 1601), a large number of miracles occurred at the saint's grave.

Source: *Νέος Συναξαριστής της Ορθοδόξου Εκκλησίας* Indiktos Publications

Learning to see and Serve Christ in Poor Lazarus

It is tempting to think that those who seem to have it all in this world are God's favourites whose success is a reward for holiness and virtue. It is appealing to think that God's kingdom is simply an eternal manifestation of the arrangements of this world, of life as we know it, where the powerful usually lord it over the weak and the rich almost always seem to get their way.

The parable of Lazarus and the rich man powerfully warns again that temptation, for it shows that those who love, worship, and serve only themselves ultimately become blind to Christ as they encounter Him in their poor and needy neighbours. It shows that God's reign is a great reversal where the humble will be exalted, blessed, and comforted, while the high and mighty will be put down. The issue, of course, is not simply how much money one has, but whether we have opened our souls in humility to personal union with the Lord such that His mercy, love, and holiness have become characteristic of us. The issue is whether we have been healed of the ravages of sin, whether our spiritual vision has been filled with light that overcomes the darkness within us. Ultimately, the question is whether we have become living icons of Jesus Christ.

The rich man ignored the clear teachings of Moses and the prophets on his obligation to care for his poor neighbours. By literally stepping over the wretched beggar Lazarus on his front porch time and time again, he blinded himself to the humanity of one created in the image and likeness of God and with whom Christ identified Himself as "the least of these my brethren." He ignored God every time that he ignored his neighbour. This blindness became so characteristic of the rich man that, once he departed this life, he was unable to behold the brilliant glory of God and could perceive only a tormenting flame. St. Isaac the Syrian referred to the sufferings of those in Hades as "the scourge of love." In other words, God's love remains eternally, but some become so distorted by self-centeredness, disregard for their neighbours, and hatred of God that they are incapable of experiencing being in the presence of the Lord as anything other than the torment of "bitter regret." They suffer the consequences of their own self-imposed rejection of a relationship with Him.

We do not yet have the eyes to see it, but everything that we say, do, and think in this life shapes who we are before God, both now and for eternity. That is especially true in matters relating to other people, particularly those who are needy, inconvenient, and easy to overlook. Whether we liked it or not, our Lord has identified Himself with them. If we say that we love and serve Him while disregarding the poor, sick, and lonely, we are simply deceiving ourselves.

Our Lord brought salvation to the world by lowering Himself even to the point of death on the Cross, burial in a tomb, and descent into Hades. He went to the place of the dead in order to look for fallen Adam and Eve and to set them, and all the departed, free from the slavery to sin and death that had so distorted their ancient glory as those created to become like God in holiness. Having lowered Himself out of love, Christ rose in glory and brought them into the eternal presence of God.

We will take our place in this narrative of salvation by manifesting in our own lives the descent of the Saviour into a world corrupted by sin and death out of love for others. We will find the healing of our souls as we learn to see, serve, and love Christ in the people we encounter every day. The point is not to attempt to use God in order to get what we want in this life or the next, but instead to find the fullness of life in Him by joining ourselves to the selfless offering that Lord has made on the Cross for the salvation of the world. We will have good hope of rising with Him in glory when we serve Him in the Lazaruses we encounter daily. Already today, right now, we may participate in the great reversal of God's Kingdom by blessing those who are last in the world as we know it. In serving them, we serve Jesus Christ. When we call out for His mercy as we struggle to live faithfully in this way, we will behold a measure of the divine glory and find ourselves already participating in the eternal Reign of God.

Fr. Philip LeMasters

St. George Karslidis the New Confessor of Drama - 4 November

St. George Karslides was born in Argyroupolis (Gümüşhane), Pontos in 1901. He was orphaned very young, so it was his pious grandmother, who raised the young Athanasios (St. George's baptismal name) to have a "holy fear of God and a fervent love for the Church's divine services." Because of the extremely difficult situations he was facing, at the age of seven Athanasios decided to run away, and was sheltered for awhile by some crypto-Christians. St. George the Great-martyr was a great protector of Athanasios, and he appeared to him, told him to mount his horse, and helped him to travel to Tiflis, Georgia where a pious priest took care of him. The priest was impressed by his spirituality and maturity, and clothed him in a cassock from age nine. In 1919 Athanasios was tonsured a monk with the name Symeon, and during his tonsure the bells of the monastery began to run by themselves. (Excerpt from the life of St. George) He concelebrated with saints. "I rarely celebrate alone" the Elder would say. He was particularly devoted to the Mother of God, the Honourable Forerunner and Saint George.

"Strive to intensify your faith, and during the Divine Liturgy be undistracted and attached to the celebration of the service so that you might be granted to behold the majesties of God."

"Don't be sad, for we will all depart from here. We are passing travellers. We came here to show our works and to leave."

"Love all your fellow men, even your enemies. This is the most basic thing. Always love not only those who love us, but also those who hate us. Let us forgive them and love them all even if they have done us the greatest evil; then we are truly children of God. Then our own sins are also forgiven... Always preach love. This is the most basic law of God: love and love alone."

"The Christian who loves all people has a great reward, especially if he forgives those who do him evil. For if we don't love our neighbour, all the good works we do will be worthless. They amount to nothing, we will be worthless. Love, my brethren, God requires love from us."

"The Panagia does not want big candles, she wants charity shown to the poor."

"One day a lady brought some quinces to the Elder. A pregnant woman stopped her along the way and asked for some, but she refused. When she arrived at the monastery and gave them to the Elder, he told her, "On the way the gate of Paradise opened and you closed it."

"God cares for everyone. Despair is in effect a lack of faith."

St. George the Great-martyr, the Trophy-bearer, the Wonderworker and St George Karslidis the New Confessor, pray to God for us!