



Parish Information Bulletin

Program for 17—23 NOVEMBER 2024

SUNDAY 17 NOVEMBER	9TH SUNDAY OF LUKE, Luke 12: 16-21 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.30am Orthros and Divine Liturgy
2024 SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR ALL AGES (A free voluntary program organised by the Church) Lessons take place in the building behind the church and begin at 10.30am until Church dismissal. We have classes for ages ranging from 5yrs to teenage years. Lessons are taught in a relaxed, friendly environment. Please bring your children along to learn of their rich Orthodox faith and come close to God and His Love.	
MONDAY 18 NOVEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 9.00am Service of Holy Unction• 10.00am Meeting of Elderly Citizens in Church Hall
WEDNESDAY 20 NOVEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5.00pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos
THURSDAY 21 NOVEMBER <i>Entry of the Theotokos to the Temple</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.30am Orthros and Divine Liturgy <p>★ TEENAGE YOUTH GROUP (In Church Hall upstairs behind Church)</p> <p>ALL TEENAGERS WELCOME <i>In Church Coffee Room on side of the Church</i></p>
FRIDAY 22 NOVEMBER <i>St Iakovos Tsalikis of Evia</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.30am Orthros and Divine Liturgy
SUNDAY 24 NOVEMBER	GOSPEL READING: Luke 18: 18-27 EPISTLE READING: Galatians 6: 11-18

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.

The Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple— 21 November

Soon after the beginning of the Nativity Fast (Advent), the Holy Church celebrates the Feast of the Entrance of the Most-Holy Theotokos into the Temple.

Here we encounter the holiness of Mary a small child separated from the world, brought to live in the Temple a life set apart, consecrated, and in a state of intimacy with God something that all of us are called to be.

We also see in this Feast a comparison between the Temple of stone and Mary, the Living Temple the Temple of the Saviour for she will bear God the Word the God-Man in her womb, thus showing herself to be a holier Temple than that at Jerusalem. It is the Living Temple the instrument of the Incarnation which sanctifies the Temple built of stone.

Excerpt taken from "These Truths We Hold - The Holy Orthodox Church: Her Life and Teachings". Compiled and Edited by A Monk of St. Tikhon's Monastery.

St Iakovos Tsalikis of Evia—22 November

Elder St Iakovos said: "The grace of our Saints has even imbued the wood of the holy icons. Once in Asia Minor a Turkish breeder tried with his axe to split the wood of an old icon. At the first chop the wood began to bleed. Seized by despair, the Turk gave the picture to Christians, and told them about the miracle."

Again, in the procession of the icon of the Virgin Mary, the Elder saw the Virgin Mary standing before him, lifting up her hand and blessing him.

Regarding the fasting, the Elder said: "Fasting is the first commandment of God. Christ even fasted. Fasting did no harm to me even though I am 70 years old. Fasting keeps away all the demons, illness, and passions."

WHAT IS SUCCESS?

by Fr. Luke Veronis

There was a rich man whose land produced abundantly. In fact, he was so wealthy, that he decided to take early retirement. He said to himself, "Soul, you have done so well; you have enough for many, many years to come. Therefore, take it easy - relax, eat, drink and be merry."

What do we think, when we hear about such a man? Obviously, many of us would think, he is a very successful person. When we hear about his life, and about his opportunity to retire early, with comfort and abundance, many of us would envy his life. We would call him a success. And yet, in today's Gospel lesson, God calls such a person a "fool!"

Nowhere is it said that the man is a dishonest business man. Nowhere is it said that he cheated his workers. Nothing negative is said about the man in the Gospel. So why does God call him a fool? Can it be that sometimes what the world sees as success is foolishness in the eyes of God? St. Paul himself often wrote that the friendship with the standards of the world are contrary to friendship with God.

Look at how the world views success. For many people, success is related to money and possessions. When you have much money and become rich, you are a success. When you build a big home, you are a success. When you have a nice car, you are a success. When you have many possessions, and you can sit back, take it easy, and enjoy life, you are a success in the eyes of the world.

But the mistake with this view of success is that it is totally centered on one's self, on what we do for ourselves, how we improve our life. Life is not seen from a communal perspective, where we are interested in the needs of our brother, but from an individualistic, self-centered perspective where our ego becomes the centre of the world.

This was the sin of the rich man. This is why he is a "fool" in the eyes of God. His focus is on what he has, on how his possessions will bring him comfort, on how he can enjoy his life. He has forgotten that life isn't about what we do for ourselves, but how we serve others.

Jesus said, "The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve others." On the night when Christ washed the feet of his disciples, he said to them, 'You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done.' We followers of Christ are not to fulfill our own desires and pleasures, but our call in life is to take care of others. It is in denying ourselves, that we discover what true life is.

Success in the eyes of God does not depend on how many possessions we have, but on how few possessions we need to be content in life. Success in the eyes of God does not depend on how much we can acquire, but on how much we can give away to help others. Success in the eyes of God does not depend on how comfortable and easy our life is, but on how we strive without ceasing to sacrifice for the sake of others, to make the lives of others more comfortable.

One holy person said, "God did not call me to be successful in the eyes of the world, but to be faithful in His eyes." Being faithful is different than successful. Being faithful implies living a life of self-sacrifice, self-denial, taking up one's cross, and following the example of Christ. This is true success in God's eyes.

The mistake of the rich man is that he thought he could enjoy all his riches for a long time. And yet, none of us know when death will come. We may die today, tomorrow, or after many years. When the rich man was ready to relax and enjoy his possessions, God said to him, "You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be." Jesus ended the parable by saying, "And so it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God."

Since no one knows when the end will come, we must always be vigilant. One of our Church Fathers said, "The present age is not a time for rest and sleep, but it is a continuous struggle and combat ... therefore we must devote ourselves to holy action." While we're still here on earth, let us be alert, striving to be rich toward God through serving our fellow man. God blesses us with riches so that we can use them to help others. Remember, we are only stewards of all our possessions. God has lent them to us, hoping that we will use them to alleviate the needs of others.

There is a beautiful story from the life of St. Makarios of Alexandria. One day, a certain brother brought a bunch of grapes to the holy Makarios; but he, who for love's sake did not think of his own needs but instead thought of others, carried the grapes to another brother who seemed to be in greater need. This sick brother gave thanks to God for the kindness of Makarios, but he also decided that his neighbour had greater need for it, so he took the grapes to another brother. This brother acted in the same way, until the same bunch of grapes were passed around to all the cells, scattered as they were far over the desert, and no one knowing who first had sent them. Finally, they were brought once again to the first giver, St. Makarios, who praised God for the love and generosity of all the brothers.

How does God view each of us today? Is he also saying to us, "You fool!" or is he looking upon us with joy, seeing that we are acting as good and faithful stewards with all that he has given us!

Source: Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America