



Sunday Bulletin November 15, 2015
Greek Orthodox Church of the
Annunciation

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Rev. Dr. Michael Bahlatzis, Presiding Priest-Proistamenos

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**Epistle Reading**

**The Reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 2:14-22**

BRETHREN, Christ is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law of commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby bringing the hostility to an end. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; for through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

**Gospel Reading Luke 10:25-37**

At that time, a lawyer stood up to put Jesus to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read?" And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." And he said to him, "You have answered right; do this, and you will live." But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion, and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; then he set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.' Which of these three, do you think, proved neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" He said, "The one who showed mercy on him." And Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

*Message from Fr. Michael...*

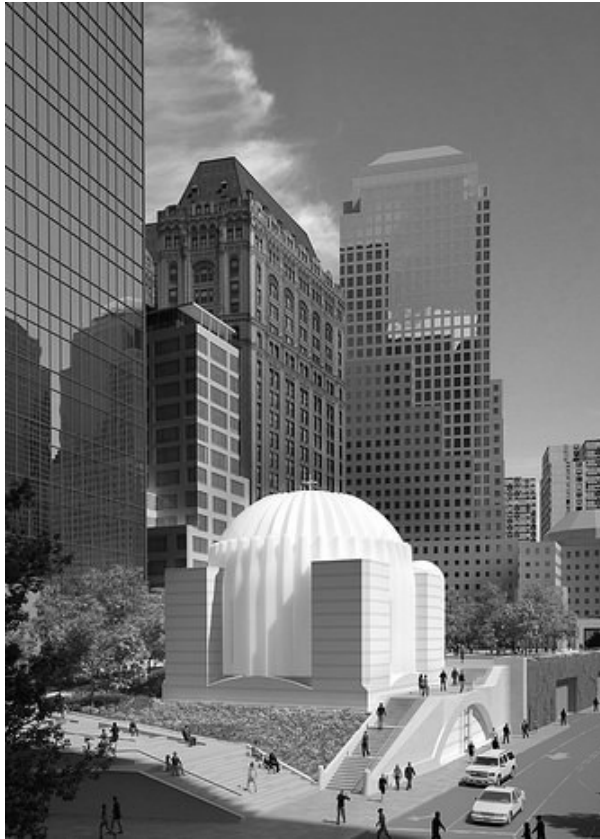
Dearly Beloved Faithful:

In the Holy Gospel reading today, we heard the story of a rich man asking the Lord about inheriting eternal life. During the time that Jesus walked the earth, a wealthy Jew was often wealthy because he had worked with the oppressive Romans often at the cost of his own people. We heard that he adhered to the commandments yet he betrayed his own people. His obedience to the Law of Moses was a superficial obedience and was not a spiritually deep routed one with love. He displayed a false piety which served to distract others from his unpious ways. He learns that "to inherit life" he must sell his possessions, "and give to the poor" and become a follower of Jesus he turns away in sorrow "for he was very rich." He is condemned for his love of worldly things. The rich man places greater value on his earthly treasures than those he should lay up for himself in the Kingdom of Heaven. He is so consumed with his love of wealth that he is truly lost. He is willing to give up eternal salvation in order to hold on to his worldly possessions. It is though he loves his possessions more than he loves God. Although the rich man stated, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" St Clement wrote that this was a trick by the rich man to try to "convict Christ of introducing laws of His own and of dishonoring the commandments spoken by the most wise Moses" (Commentary on Luke, Homily 122, quoted in ACCS, NT, vol III: Luke, p., 283)

The rich man was not looking to establish a friendship with our Lord. The rich man was fooling no one but himself. He was actually poisoning his own soul through his own misguidedness. Salvation, i.e. inheritance of eternal life, joy, and peace could have been granted to him and all he had to do was to follow Christ. If he understood and adhered to a life of self-denial, then he would have moved away from the temporal or worldly things and sought refuge with those things which are everlasting. Brothers and sisters, are we leading a life of misguidedness? Are we too concerned about what we could acquire on Black Friday shopping in stores? Are we too busy complaining about the workings of our church without trying to help God's Church? Do we sit back and let others labor for God while we do nothing to keep God's Church lovingly united? Do we point our finger at others while not realizing that there are three fingers pointing right back at us? St. Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians:8-12: "If there be a ready mind, it is accepted according to what a man has and not according to what he has not" Are we the rich man who walks sad due to not being ready for joy? We are not that type of person! For that type of person prefers to carry the weight of his own sin rather than acquiring the freedom that is gained from taking up the Cross and following our loving Lord, Jesus.

May we lay up treasures in Heaven as our prayers ascend as one, I remain

In His service,  
+Fr. Michael



Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

The Chancellor, Fr. Dean, on behalf of our beloved Metropolitan Nicholas, had requested that we initiate a fund drive to raise money for the construction of the St. Nicholas National Shrine at Ground zero in NYC. This will be an incredible piece of architecture and a holy place where people from all faiths throughout the world may come and worship The Lord. It truly places Orthodoxy in the national lime light. Should you choose to make a donation (usually a minimum of \$100), please make out your check to our church "Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church." Please ear mark the check in Bold writing: donation: St. Nicholas National Shrine in

the memo section of your check. Please give your check only to Peter Diamantakos and no one else so that it does not get mixed up with any other accounts. This donation has nothing to do with your annual dues payment to our church. This donation for this National Shrine Project is purely voluntary. May God bless you for your generosity. You will receive a certificate of recognition for your generous donation. Once our church has collected the funds, the church will forward the monies to the Metropolis of Detroit or Archdiocese for the St. Nicholas National Shrine Project. Thank you and God bless!

+Fr. Michael

***As he looked up, Jesus saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. [2] He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. [3] "I tell you the truth," he said, "this poor widow has put in more than all the others. [4] All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."***

**Luke 20:45-21:4**

**FATHER MICHAEL REQUESTS**...that we, as a faithful community keep the following individuals in our prayers: Michalena (Skiadas) Sukenik, Suzanne Vaishnani, daughter of Ted Simon, Presbyteria Magdalena Michalopoulos, Helen Economides, and Henry Nussbaum. Please notify Fr. Michael if you have anyone else who should be included for special prayers. May they be under the grace and tender watch of our Lord.

At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy today we will have a Memorial Service for George Papastrat (3 years) and Dino Gianakouros (2 years) and other Papastrat family members. George is survived by his son, Harry Papastrat, and daughter-in-law, Gloria, his sister, Mary Gianakouros, and his grandchildren. Interestingly, Harry was born in the house directly across the street from the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church in Binghamton, NY. Harry was a longtime resident of Sidney, NY, who loved his family and took pride in praising his grandchildren. Dino is survived by his beloved wife, Mary, and their children, Fred, Charalambos, and Annie and their families. In addition to being a man of faith, he was a World War II veteran who served our country, in the US Army, honorably in Europe and Northern Africa. We miss them! May their memory be eternal! Our best wishes go out to the families of Harry and Dino and their entire families.

During the Coffee Hour Fellowship TODAY, the General Assembly Meeting of our church will be held. All may attend but only members in good standing may vote and voice concerns at this meeting. Please join us!

**2015 Christmas Card:**

There is a signup sheet located in the Narthex for this year's Christmas Card. Please print your name(s) clearly so that there are no errors once the names are sent to the printer. Cost is \$10.00 for one line, \$20 for more than one line. Please have your name(s) completed no later than November 29, 2015 to allow enough time for printing. Thank you.

Whether you are an Orthodox Christian, or this is your first visit to an Orthodox Church, we are pleased to have you with us. Although Holy Communion is reserved for baptized and chrismated (confirmed) Orthodox Christians, all are invited to receive the "ANTIDORON" (blessed bread) which is not a sacrament, but is a reminder of the "agape feast" that followed worship in the early Church. After the Divine Liturgy this morning, please join us in the Church Hall for fellowship and refreshments. We hope that you will return often to worship with us, to grow in Christ and in our Orthodox Faith. For any spiritual, religious, or sacramental matters, please contact Fr. Michael (607) 795-1474. For any building, facility or church property issues, please contact Parish Council President Steve Anastos, (607) 296-9799. Deadline for suggestions for the bulletin is 12:00 noon on Thursday.

## SCHEDULE OF CHRISTMAS SERVICES FOR 2015 CHRISTMAS SEASON

Saturday, December 12th

Feast of St. Spyridon

Divine Liturgy - 10:00 am (at Holy Trinity Church - Binghamton)

Sunday, December 20th

Sunday before the Nativity

Orthros 8:45 am, Divine Liturgy 9:45 am

Thursday, December 24th

Christmas Eve

Orthros 8:45 pm, Christmas Divine Liturgy 9:45 pm

Since we are having Christmas Liturgy which concludes at midnight or shortly before, there will be no services on Christmas Day in the morning

Sunday, December 27th

Sunday after the Nativity

Orthros: 8:45 am, Divine Liturgy 9:45 am

Friday, January 1st, 2016

The Circumcision of the Lord and the feast day of St. Basil the Great

New Year's Day: Orthros 9:00 am and Divine Liturgy of St. Basil 10:00 am

Sunday, January 3rd, 2016

Sunday before Holy Theophany

Orthros 8:45 am, Divine Liturgy 9:45 am

Wednesday, January 6th, 2016

Feast of Holy Theophany

Orthros 8:45 am, Divine Liturgy 9:45 am

The Great Blessing of the Waters is to be at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy on this day.