



Sunday Bulletin October 30, 2022
Greek Orthodox Church of the
Annunciation

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**Rev. Dr. Michael Bahlatzis, Presiding Priest-
Proistamenos**

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## **Epistle Reading**

**Prokeimenon. Third Mode. Psalm 46.6,1.**  
**Sing praises to our God, sing praises.**  
**Verse: Clap your hands, all you nations.**

### **The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 1:11-19**

Brethren, I would have you know that the gospel which was preached by me is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it; and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother.

## **Gospel Reading**

**Luke 16:19-31**

The Lord said, "There was a rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, full of sores, who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table; moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried; and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes, and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus in his bosom. And he called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy upon me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame.' But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.' And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.' But Abraham said, 'They have Moses, and the prophets; let them hear them.' And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if some one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' He said to them, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.'"

## ***Message From Fr. Michael....***

Dearly Beloved Faithful:

Two themes can be extrapolated from today's gospel reading. The Jews are symbolized in the parable by the Rich Man and the Gentiles seem to be portrayed by the poor man Lazarus. The rich are those who are wealthy with the riches of the earth, to Him, the rich are those who believe in Him to adhere to God's Commandments. At the same time, the poor are not those who live in poverty, because to God, the poor are the people who do not believe in Him and disregard His holy word. Whatever our status, rich or poor, we will all one day physically die and take nothing with us but our good and bad deeds.

Like the Rich Man who was clothed with fine linen, in contrast, the Jews were clothed with the One True God. Whereas the Gentiles or non-Jews, were awoken by God's teachings when the time had finally come at hand, when they would officially be introduced to the True God. We saw this in the parable by the poor man Lazarus, the beggar, who sat outside the Rich Man's house waiting for the food scraps to be thrown to him. At the same time this was prophesied that the Jews were to reject Christ. As you know, Christ was basically cast out just like the Rich Man threw his food scraps out to Lazarus. The Rich Man's food scraps became a form of sustenance for Lazarus, who depended on them for survival. In the same way to the Jews Christ was nothing, but to the nations He became their hope for salvation and source for life everlasting, for He is the Messiah. Even when we take the literal message from the parable, the Rich Man is described as someone who had plenty, but would not share with his fellow man who sat outside suffering, eating of the food scraps while dogs licked his wounds.

In the parable we are only given the name of the poor man; Lazarus, while the other man is only referred to as the Rich Man, Christ here is showing us, that the important and rich people of this world are un-important to God, but the humble, the ones who are neglected in this life, the suffering, are all of great importance to God. We must realize that it doesn't mean that if you have been blessed with riches, you are not liked by God, because with those riches, you can help many people who are like Lazarus was, imitating Abraham who was blessed with plenty, but was very giving and hospitable. The greatest example rich people can follow is also the most obvious one; God Who is the Creator of all riches and is the All-powerful one, is also the All-merciful one. His mercy is endless with us, even though we flee from Him, blaspheme Him, disregard His Holy Commandments and use the freedom He gave us against Him either directly or indirectly.

God was merciful and saw the faith which the Gentiles had in their hearts, and accepted them into repentance as the new chosen people of God. Lazarus was a sinner just like you and I, but Lazarus' sores were on the outside of his skin. His sores were licked by the dogs, which ultimately gave him some comfort, symbolic of man's sins being cleansed, once he repents. On the other hand, the Rich Man's sores or sins were internal, making therapy very difficult, this was due to the Rich Man's greed and vanity and lack of love and compassion for his fellow man. When "the beggar died," he "was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom." When this beggar who nobody cared about died, it was like nothing happened, a non-event. But the death of his body signified his birth into the eternal life, a matter of great rejoicing in the heavens, because the angels escorted him into Abraham's bosom.

Solomon says; "But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die: and their departure is taken for misery and their going from us to be utter destruction: but they are in peace. For though they be punished in the sight of men, yet is their hope full of immortality. And having been a little chastised, they shall be greatly rewarded: for God proved them, and found them worthy for himself. As gold in the furnace hath he tried them, and received them as a burnt offering. And in the time of their visitation they shall shine, and run to and from like sparks among the stubble."

Abraham's bosom refers to salvation. This is what we all seek...to be cradled in the arms of our Creator. When we die, we will all know what we should have done while we were still alive. It will be too late to plead our innocence, because all the evidence is kept in the book of life by Christ who will Judge all people and there will be no excuses, nor will there be anyone present there to testify for us, we will all accept the consequences for our actions. When the Rich Man died, he knew that he was in a place of anguish and suffering, a place of torment, as it is described in the parable and what made things worse, is that he was able to see from a distance, the happiness and joy and comfort of those who were saved. The Rich Man saw Lazarus resting in Abraham's Bosom, but notice that Lazarus does not see the Rich Man; this was because where Lazarus was, there is no sorrow or sadness. The Rich Man then said to Abraham, "send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." Of course in the spiritual world, a soul cannot physically thirst nor does it have a physical tongue, neither can it physically burn, but with these words we get an understanding of the unpleasantness and punishment which awaits the unrighteous, a punishment that was made for Satan and his dark angels. The Rich Man was viewed as being one of God's people, after all he was a Jew, this also shows us that no one is exempt from the final judgment, not even God's elect, nor will there be favouritism for them if they haven't kept their covenant with God intact.

Abraham said to him, remember that you had plenty in your lifetime, pleasures, luxuries, happiness and wealth, whereas Lazarus had nothing but suffering, discomfort, sorrow and poverty in his lifetime, so now it is his time to be comforted and yours to be tormented.

Again Abraham goes on to say "between us and you there is a great chasm so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence."

Let there be no doubt that hell is eternal and real! Even though these days hell and Satan are believed to be just myths. The Rich Man acknowledged his guilt, he wanted to make amends, but after death there is no repentance. Those who do not keep the Holy Scriptures and Holy Traditions of the Church or keep God's Commandments, will never be regarded as followers of Christ, even if they were to physically see Him return on earth, because the Word of God is Christ Himself. That is why our relationship with God is based upon how much faith we have in Him and how much we love Him. Of course to love Christ means to keep His Commandments.

The Rich Man, like so many people in this life, said he believed, but did not change. He was not tender in compassion. His preoccupation with luxury numbed his senses, as he basked in worldly splendor. Lazarus, the blessed one, suffered with patience and was saved. May God help us also, to tolerate and endure all things until the very end of our lives, so that we too may be taken up to Abraham's Bosom, by the heavenly angels.

Prayerfully, in His service,  
+Fr. Michael

## Saints and Feasts Commemorated

### Joseph, Patriarch of Constantinople

#### 5th Sunday of Luke

These Saints were from Aegae in Cilicia, brought up in piety by their parents. Zenobius was a physician, and healed many freely by the power of God; because of his virtue he was consecrated Bishop of Aegae. With his sister he was taken by Lysias the Governor, and after many tortures they were beheaded, about the year 290, during the reign of Diocletian. Apolytikion of Martyrs Zenobius & Zenobia



#### Fourth Tone

Thy Martyrs, O Lord, in their courageous contest for Thee received as the prize the crowns of incorruption and life from Thee, our immortal God. For since they possessed Thy strength, they cast down the tyrants and wholly destroyed the demons' strengthless presumption. O Christ God, by their prayers, save our souls, since Thou art merciful. Kontakion of Martyrs Zenobius & Zenobia

#### Plagal of the Fourth Tone

With songs inspired by God, let us now render honour, as is due unto Zenobius and wise Zenobia, the pair of siblings in the flesh, who proclaimed true religion; those two martyrs of truth, who, passing their lives as one, also received together through martyrdom crowns that shall not fade.

**FATHER MICHAEL REQUESTS**...that we, as a faithful community keep the following individuals in our prayers: Theodore Kermidas (son of John and Cassie) Ted Simon, Maria Lambrinos, Steve Anastos, Angelo Romas, and Suzanne Vaishnani, daughter of Ted Simon. 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.

There is a sign-up list for those who wish to volunteer to assist in Coffee Hour Fellowship. This list will have all the future Sunday's listed, for this ecclesiastical year, in the Exo-Narthex. Please sign up for as many Sundays as you would like to help make our Coffee Hour Fellowship a success. Coffee is being provided to the entire parish this year for free. Please join us in helping with this worthy cause.

#### **PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS**

Philoptochos Fundraiser will be showing the "Man of God" (Life of St. Nektarios) movie on October 30th, 2022 during coffee hour. Pizza and coffee will be served. Please plan on staying to watch and learn about this incredible saint.

Holiday Bake sale - Please place your orders online <https://www.GreekLadiesVestal.com>  
We will be collecting perishable food items for Chow.

## **OXI DAY Remembrance**

Dearly Beloved Faithful:

As we will be celebrating Veteran's Day in the U.S. on November 11th, it got me thinking of OXI Day which is celebrated every year in Greece on October 28th. The anniversary celebration relates to a historical event. General Ioannis Metaxas' strong reply of "OXI" (no) to Mussolini's request to allow Italian troops to enter Greece, during the early part of WW II. This powerful stern reply by Metaxas helped pave the way for Greece's neutral stance which it held for generations that followed. Despite the "OXI" reply, Italians invaded Greece. However, the might and fortitude of the Greeks pushed back the Italians into Albania. In 1935, King George II was restored to the Greek throne. The king appointed General Ioannis Metaxas prime minister. Nine months later, Metaxas assumed some powers of dictatorship with the king's support. This was done to prevent a coup by the communists.

On October 28, 1940, Prime Minister Metaxas rejected Italy's ultimatum. Metaxas followed through with his resistance movement road of resistance. Greek Cypriots were inspired by Greece's refusal to allow the Italian troops entry. The Greek Cypriots assumed the stance of resistance against Turkish aggression that they faced in their island nation.

OXI Day is a joyous celebration throughout Greece. The OXI Day spirit and will of Hellenic people perseveres. Zito Ellas!

May our spirit of OXI be used in our Christian life in the rejection of evil. May we use our prayerful life to reject the worldly things so that we may be attended by angelic hosts to receive the King of all!

Saying "OXI" to sin, I remain

Prayerfully in His service,  
+Fr. Michael

## **Wisdom of the Fathers**

By these words it is surely shown that in his [the rich man] daily feasting he had frequently sinned by his tongue, seeing that, while burning all over, he demanded to be cooled especially in his tongue. Again, that levity of conduct follows closely upon gluttony sacred authority testifies ... For the most part also edacity leads us even to lechery, because, when the belly is distended by repletion, the stings of lust are excited.

### **St. Gregory the Dialogist**

The Book of Pastoral Rule, Chapter XIX, 6th century

The man who has once chosen pleasure in this life, and has not cured his inconsiderateness by repentance, places the land of the good beyond his own reach; for he has dug against himself the yawning impassable abyss of a necessity that nothing can break through.

### **St. Gregory of Nyssa**

*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.*