

in prison, is sick? By surpassing self-sufficiency and the victory against greed, through a relationship with God and neighbor?

### **The temptation and the Saint**

Once the temptor brought before Anthony the Great's feet, there where he was walking in the desert, a big, shiny, silver tray. Anthony the Great stands nearby for a bit and says: "From where was a tray found in the desert? Here, neither a road, nor a footpath, nor a trace, of passing by, shows anywhere. But even if it fell from some person, would he not have heard it? So, would he not have turned to get it? This is your craft, devil!" the Saint said. "Do you want to mock me? So, it is your gift. Take the tray with you to perdition, to the darkness of Hell, to your dreadful kingdom". However, as soon as the Saint said these things, the tray vanished! The demon had been defeated. In a bit he would encounter abundant gold, which shone brightly and glistened with its brilliance. The Saint passes by it, remembering the word of the Scripture "Wealth if it increases, do not set your heart on it" (Ps. 61:2). Furthermore, even if you see abundant wealth flowing before you, do not allow your heart to get attached to it. Wherever is our treasure, there also is our heart.

Fr.T. M

**Sunday, November 22, 2020, 9<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF LUKE,** *Archippus the Apostle, Philemon the Apostle & his wife, Apphia, Onesimos the Disciple of Paul, Holy Martyr Cecilia and those with her Afterfeast of the Entry of the Theotokos into the Temple, Kallistos Xanthopoulos, Patriarch of Constantinople Anthimos, President of Crete*

**TONE OF THE WEEK :** *Grave Tone*

**EOTHINON** : *Second Eothinon*

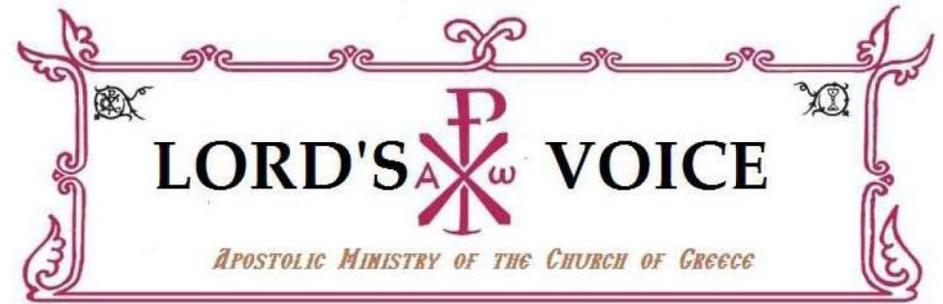
**EPISTLE READING :** *St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 2:14-22*

**GOSPEL READING :** *Luke 12:16-21*

**Sunday, November 29, 2020, 13<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF LUKE,** *Paramonus, Philumenus, and their 370 Companion Martyrs in Bithynia, Our Righteous Father Nicholas, Archbishop of Thessalonica, Dionysios, Bishop of Corinth, Phaedrus the Martyr.*

**EPISTLE READING :** *St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 4:1-7*

**GOSPEL READING :** *Luke 18:18-27*



**68<sup>TH</sup> YEAR NOVEMBER 22, 2020 PAMPHLET # 47 (3521)**

## **THE TRUE TREASURE**

Our Church's persistence is not by chance to select Gospel passages to be read that refer to Christ's teaching related to wealth and money. Our Lord aimed to show what the path of the Kingdom of God is and what are its obstacles. Wealth is one of these. The cause for the parable of the rich fool, after the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, was the dispute of two brothers related to the distribution of their paternal inheritance. They were asking Christ to do it. The Lord however, after stressing to them that He himself was not a judge, urges both they themselves as well as the multitude that had gathered, to avoid every type of greed. And in order to help them understand precisely what He meant, He narrates to them the parable of the rich fool (Luke 12:13-21).

### **The boundaries of material wealth**

The parable closes with the teaching that this is what whoever gathers temporal treasures for himself and does not get rich with whatever God wants, suffers. The foolish rich man is the example of him who stores up treasure for himself. He cares exclusively for the goods, for their storing up, and for their use, aiming at his own enjoyment. The foolish rich man did not think that the earth's fertility did not come as a result only of some toil of his own, but as a

## THE SUNDAY GOSPEL LUKE 12:16-21

The Lord said this parable: "The land of a rich man brought forth plentifully; and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?' And he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns, and build larger ones; and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, be merry.' But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you; and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." As he said these things, he cried out: "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

blessing of God. He did not think of thanking God for the gifts he received. Simultaneously, he did not calculate that the piling up of goods, was not what would give him meaning and joy in his life, but it would close him up in himself and in his self-sufficiency. Retaining wealth however, brings many cares, anxiety, plans, and programming. Thus, the rich man ceases being interested in his fellow man, furthermore, in order to build relationships of love with his own people, friends and relatives. Wealth makes a person lonely. The rich man did not think of sharing the joy for the fertility of his land, but his thought was how to keep it only for himself. Finally, the rich man chose to lock himself in his ego, directing his course in the three facets of "eat, drink, rejoice". His life did not have any other interest, any orientation of spirit and soul. He supported His own self on materials. He did not consider however, that death exists, which abolishes every such plan. Thus, he himself lost the capability of seeing the world through the prism of surpassing time and death, in

other words, through the path of trusting God and love for one's neighbor.

The rich man became rich for himself. And so, with his death, all that he prepared, ceased belonging to him and remained without a possessor. This also occurs with whoever does not see that the true treasure is for us to be glorifying God for whatever is given to us. For us to be functioning as handlers and stewards of His grace, whether it refers to material or it refers to other goods, gifts, knowledge, successes, and acceptance by others. And, simultaneously, instead of handing ourselves over to pleasure-loving sin, for us to be seeing the need to share each thing that was given to us with our neighbor, to the degree possible.

### The innate greed

The rich man's attitude was not just a choice between wealth for himself and wealth in God. It came as a result of his soul's existential condition. Christ tells us that the rich man was greedy. He was thirsty not for love and for joy, not for God and neighbor, but for his individual security. His heart was given to himself. And at the time of temptation, he handed over his soul to his greed. Gradually man is defeated. Gradually the logic of submission to the spirit of the temptation, to self-sufficiency, to treasuring up for our own self is built.

Just as in every parable, Christ allows each one of us to himself judge with which one he identifies. So, the way in which each one of us will be enriched in God remains open. Will it occur with the opposite attitude as regards that of the rich man? Will it happen with a glorification of God and the trust in His blessing for us to be handlers both of the goods as also of grace? Will it happen with charity? With the prayer which is the expression of love? By supporting him who is hungry, thirsting, is a foreigner, is naked, is