



THE RICH MAN & LAZARUS

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21ST 20th Sunday of Pentecost

8:40a.m. Hours
9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 24TH Joy of All Who Sorrow Icon

9:00a.m. Akathist

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27TH

5:00p.m. Bible Study
6:00p.m. Great Vespers

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 28TH 21st Sunday of Pentecost

8:40a.m. Hours
9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour

READER SCHEDULE

Sunday, Oct. 28th

Gabriela Jones

Sunday, Nov. 4th

Bruce Eckerd



CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OF OCTOBER 21, 2012

Welcome Visitors

It is great to have you with us today! We hope you all consider staying after Liturgy for coffee hour and fellowship!

Parish Council Meeting

Today, Sunday, October 21st, there will be a meeting of the Parish Council, following the coffee hour. Everyone is welcome to attend the meeting which will be held in the chapel.

Prayers for Those in the Healing Ministries

will be offered at the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, Nov. 4th, the Sunday following the feast of Ss. Cosmas and Damian, the Wonderworkers and Unmercenary Healers (Nov. 1st). Doctors, pharmacists, dentists, nurses, counselors and all those involved in the fields of health and wellness are asked to come forward near the conclusion of the Liturgy for a prayer and blessing.



St. Michael's Party – Sunday, November 4th

On Sunday, Nov. 4th (the Sunday after Halloween and before the Feast of the Archangels – November 8th) we will have a St. Michael's Party for the children. After the Divine Liturgy, the children will get dressed up as Saints and Angels and have a parade during the coffee hour. Questions, please see Mat. Emily



2013 Calendars & Pocket Planners

can be ordered via the order sheet in the back of the church. The calendars are \$5.00 a piece and the pocket planners \$4.00. The order sheet will be in the back of the church for the next month or so.



Parishioners That Are Home Bound

If you or a loved one cannot make it to Church, Fr. John would be more than pleased visit at your home, in the hospital, at a nursing home, or any other place. It is no inconvenience at all. Please be sure to schedule a visit.



Expanded Financial Summary

At the request of the finance committee, the financial summary found at the bottom of each week's Sunday bulletin has been expanded to offer additional information. If you have any questions regarding the summary, please see Fr. John or Bruce Eckerd, our treasurer.

Prayer List: Fr. Michael Mihalick, Fr. Alexander Atty, Fr. Christian, Mat. Dunia, Bill Parrish, Hayley, Tyler Pelesh, Wallace & Michelle, John Trax, Maleah Morsey, Victoria Kokkinos, Karen Nichols, Denise Royal, Jane Koshutko, Nina Gordon, Mirela & Chris, Bruce Eckerd, Stella, Ari, Nedelina, Liliana, Nada and child, Jess and child, Kathryn (newly departed).

OPERATING THRU 9/30			RENOVATION THRU 9/30			OCTOBER OPERATING			FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT – 10/21/12		
Income	Expense	Net	Income	Expense	Net	Income	Goal	Difference	Checking	Overdue	Due 2/2014
49,582	38,244	+11,338	68,207	88,583	-20,475	3,238	4,858	-1,620	1,596	3,756	29,965

FOUR REASONS WHY PEOPLE GIVE

From "Compelled to Give" By VRev. Vladimir Berzonsky



- 1) **Obligation** – People who give only because it's an obligation. We pay taxes that way. We open our bills and write checks reluctantly. Perhaps that's the way we deal with society at large, but this is not the attitude to take when we are asked to give from our heart to the upkeep and enhancement of the holy Church;
- 2) **Satisfaction** – There's something satisfying about contributing to charity. When we make a gift to an established charity, we feel good about ourselves. In the autumn season after Labor Day and through the remaining days of the year, we are solicited by so many appeals that we must make choices. Do we put something in the Salvation Army pots at each shopping center, or do we pick and choose?
- 3) **Pride** – We all know those who make an issue of their contributions. It doesn't count unless it appears in the media that the contributors are People of Importance. They used to flaunt their donations to the party of their choice or even hedge their bets, giving to both major political parties. With new rules they must find a way to do the same, but not so conspicuously.
- 4) **Love** – All of the above are acceptable to the recipients, and all of them have value in their own right; however, gifts at the highest level first come as a true sacrifice. They are not just an excess of funds that the giver can well do without and even derives tax benefits from them, but they come from hearts that feel a compulsion to contribute. When the feeling arises within that you cannot do otherwise than to meet the needs laid out before you, when you are presented with a situation, a crisis or a grief that so overwhelms you that you are desperate to provide from your means an alleviation for that person, group or situation, you are a cheerful giver.

FOR CONSIDERATION

From the Prologue of Ochrid – St. Nikolai of Zicha

We have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens (II Corinthians 5:1), says the discerning Apostle Paul. All our efforts for God on earth have this purpose: to merit, according to our power, this eternal house in the heavens not made by hands. The Indian King Gundafor decided to build himself a magnificent palace, unlike any other on earth. When Abban, his envoy, sought a skilled craftsman to build the king's palace, he met the Apostle Thomas by God's providence. St. Thomas told him that he was a craftsman, and that no one else could build what the king wanted. Thomas therefore received much gold from the king for the building of this palace. As soon as he departed from the king, he distributed all the gold to the poor. The palace site was some distance from the king's capital, and after two years the king sent servants to ask Thomas if the palace was completed. Thomas replied: "Everything is ready except the roof," and he sought more money from the king; and the king gave it to him. Again, Thomas distributed it all to the poor, and went throughout the kingdom doing his work, preaching the Gospel. The king, learning that



Thomas had not even begun to build the palace, seized him and threw him into prison. That night, the king's brother died, and the king fell into great sorrow. An angel took the soul of the deceased and, leading him through Paradise, showed him a magnificent palace, such as the mind of man could not imagine. The soul of the deceased wished to enter that palace, but the angel told him that he could not, for it was his brother's palace, which the Apostle Thomas had built with his alms. Then the angel returned the brother's soul to his body. When he came to himself, he said to the king: "Swear to me that you will give me anything I ask." And the king swore. Then the brother said: "Give me the palace that you have in the heavens." The king was amazed that he had a palace in the heavens. When the brother described everything in detail, the king believed and immediately released Thomas from prison. Then, when he heard the apostle's preaching of salvation and eternal life, the king and his brother were baptized. King Gundafor undertook new works of charity, and built an even more magnificent palace in the heavens for himself.



GOD'S LAW: THREAT OR PROMISE?

By the Very Rev. John Breck



"Welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, to the glory of God!" (Romans 15:7)

When he wrote his various letters to churches around the Mediterranean and throughout Asia Minor, the apostle Paul used a literary convention widespread in the Hellenistic world. He began with a personal identification and blessing, followed by a word of thanksgiving for all that God had accomplished through his ministry in the life of that particular community. Then he moved on to the body of the letter, combining proclamation of the Gospel with practical teachings. This was followed toward the end by a series of exhortations: directives indicating practical, concrete ways his teachings should be put into effect within the church. Finally, he concluded with greetings to members of the community and a final benediction.

We find a good example of the apostle's exhortations in the brief passage, Romans 15:1-7. Based on the Gospel proclamation that makes up the body of the letter, these words draw out specific consequences for believers, consequences that take the form of responsibilities or obligations. He concludes the passage, "Welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, to the glory of God."

There are two extremely different ways we can read exhortations of this kind. They can be taken, as they so often are, in a legalistic sense, as strict commands that tell us how to conform our behavior to the will of a just and righteous God. Or they can be seen as means of grace, by which God Himself works out a transformation in our life, leading to our eternal sharing in His very existence.

The juridical or legalistic approach is one we often identify with Western (Roman Catholic and Protestant) Christianity. But there is no question that it has infected Orthodoxy as well. In this perspective, God is viewed primarily as the righteous Judge, who gives us laws or commandments -- various rules and regulations -- to govern our conduct. Because God is righteous, He cannot accept our sinful unrighteousness. Therefore we must put things right with Him. This we do by obeying His commandments. At the Last Judgment, we shall

be brought before the heavenly tribunal, to be judged on the way and degree to which we have obeyed God's Law, God's commands. If we have been obedient to them, God will vindicate us. If not, then God will punish us by condemning us to outer darkness, where there is "weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth." In this way of viewing things, the Church is basically a courtroom, God is the presiding Judge, and our salvation depends on the degree to which we have accepted His commandments and conformed our lives to them. There is a "right way" and a "wrong way" to conduct ourselves; and not even God will help us if we choose the wrong way....

It's understandable that this kind of image should have taken on such major if distorted proportions. Many of us grow up in a rather authoritarian environment, where parents, school teachers and other influential figures lay down the law and expect us to obey it. If we don't, then we suffer the consequences. It's almost inevitable that we project this image, and its accompanying experiences, onto our relationship with God, imagining Him to be the ultimate authority figure, who holds in His hands absolute power to acquit us or to condemn us, to vindicate us or to relegate us to eternal damnation.

This image of God, of judgment and of the Church represents a total distortion of the Gospel message. It's a tragic parody of certain aspects of reality that conform more to human interactions than to our relations with the Holy Trinity. Certainly we shall be judged on the basis of our deeds and attitudes, as the apostle Paul declares and as Jesus makes clear in His parables and other teachings. But that judgment is not the action of a vindictive God, who wants us to conform to His will for His own sake, or who will damn us if we fail to obey. God's commandments are given to us for life, not for death and condemnation.

To the Eastern Church Fathers, the Church is not a courtroom; it is a hospital. The Body of Christ is a locus of healing, of renewal and reconciliation. Nor is God primarily a Judge. If He is depicted that



continued on page 4...

God's Law: Threat or Promise continued from pg 3.

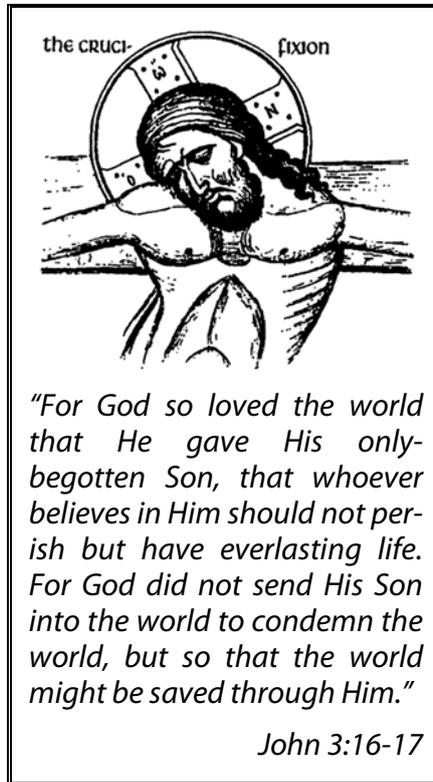
way in Jesus' parables, it is to make the point that judgment is a reality. Yet we are judged not so much by God as by ourselves, by our own refusal to accept the "straight and narrow path" that leads through the darkness and corruption of this world and into the splendor and glory of the Kingdom.

Perhaps we can imagine it this way. In this earthly life, you and I are wandering, lost, in a vast forest, stumbling about, unsure of where we are and how to return home. In the midst of that forest God opens before us a pathway, narrow and difficult, which is the only one that leads out of the darkness and towards the light. The choice is ours. We can continue to stumble blindly, trying in vain to extricate ourselves. Or we can take the pathway He proposes, by conforming to His will, His commandments, that lead to life, hope and salvation.

This means that we need to rethink entirely our notion of God's Law and the meaning of the commandments He gave to Israel and, through Jesus Christ, to the Church. Unfortunately, we have no good translation for the Hebrew term Torah. Torah suggests "law," commandment, as in the Ten Commandments, which became developed and multiplied in Israel's experience so as to cover virtually every aspect of human conduct (the book of Leviticus, for example). Torah, however -- the "Law of God" -- signifies not so much "laws" or "rules and regulations" as it does "Life." Conformity to Torah, to God's will for our lives, actually works a transformation within us, to make us holy as God is holy. Ethicists have long known that we become virtuous by performing virtuous deeds: our actions change us so that we actually become what we do. So it is with Torah: to accept God's Law and to act upon it brings the grace of change into our life. It lifts us out of our error, our egotism, our anxieties, our rebellion, and sets us on that narrow pathway that leads to love, joy, peace and life: fruits of the Holy Spirit.

In Jesus Christ, the whole of Torah is summed up in a single word, a single concept: Love. The New Commandment Christ issues, therefore, takes the form of a call to love others with a self-giving

abandon that can lead even to death: "Greater love has no one than this, to lay down their life for their friends" (John 15:13). This is why the apostle's exhortation summons us to "Welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, to the glory of God." To welcome one another is not just some moral obligation. It is a response of love, in the image of Christ who first loved us beyond all measure. Every act of obedience we can perform is predicated on this prior action of God on our behalf -- and



this, because God Himself is Love. That love can include judgment; but its entire purpose is to lead us out of the death into which we have plunged ourselves, and to call us to a life whose every aspect serves "to the glory of God."

Like the notion of Torah or Law, the "glory of God" also needs to be clearly understood. God does not need us to glorify Him. If we are called to render Him "glory," it is for the same reason we are called to obey His commandments: so that something vital, essential, might be transformed within us. In a word, by glorifying God, we actually participate in His glory, in the life, the beauty, the splendor of His divinity. To do all things to the glory of God, therefore, is not so much for God's sake

as it is for ours. By glorifying God, we enter into the sphere of His glory and share in it fully.

In the old Reformed Church catechism there is a statement that summarizes all of this very well. It's a statement that speaks of "man," used in the generic sense, referring to men and women, young and old. "The chief end of man -- of the human person -- is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever." "To glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever." Insofar as we strive to glorify God by accepting the narrow way of conformity to His will, to His commandment of love, it becomes possible to welcome one another -- to receive, serve and love one another -- as Christ has welcomed us. This is how we truly glorify God. And by this very act we come to know that God leads us through this world, not for judgment and condemnation, but for life. We come to know in the depths of our being that our chief end, the only real purpose and meaning in our life, is to know God, to glorify Him, and to enjoy Him -- to rejoice in Him -- forever.