

## FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE HOLY CROSS OCTOBER 30, 2022

The rich man in Christ's parable may have felt that he "needed" every scrap he had acquired but, as St. John Chrysostom affirmed, he did not know what he needed it for: "If a person enjoys luxury in moderation and distributes the rest to the stomachs of the poor, then his wealth does him good. But if he is going to give himself up to luxury and profligacy, not only does it not help him at all, but it even leads him down to the great pit. This is what happened to this rich man" (*On Wealth and Poverty*).

### Where Do We Encounter God?

Devout believers are convinced that they encounter God in worship – in the words of the Bible, in the Eucharistic presence. The Lord taught the very thing: "*Where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am there in the midst of them*" (Mt 18:20). When the Body of Christ comes together in worship – particularly in the Divine Liturgy – the Head is surely there as well.

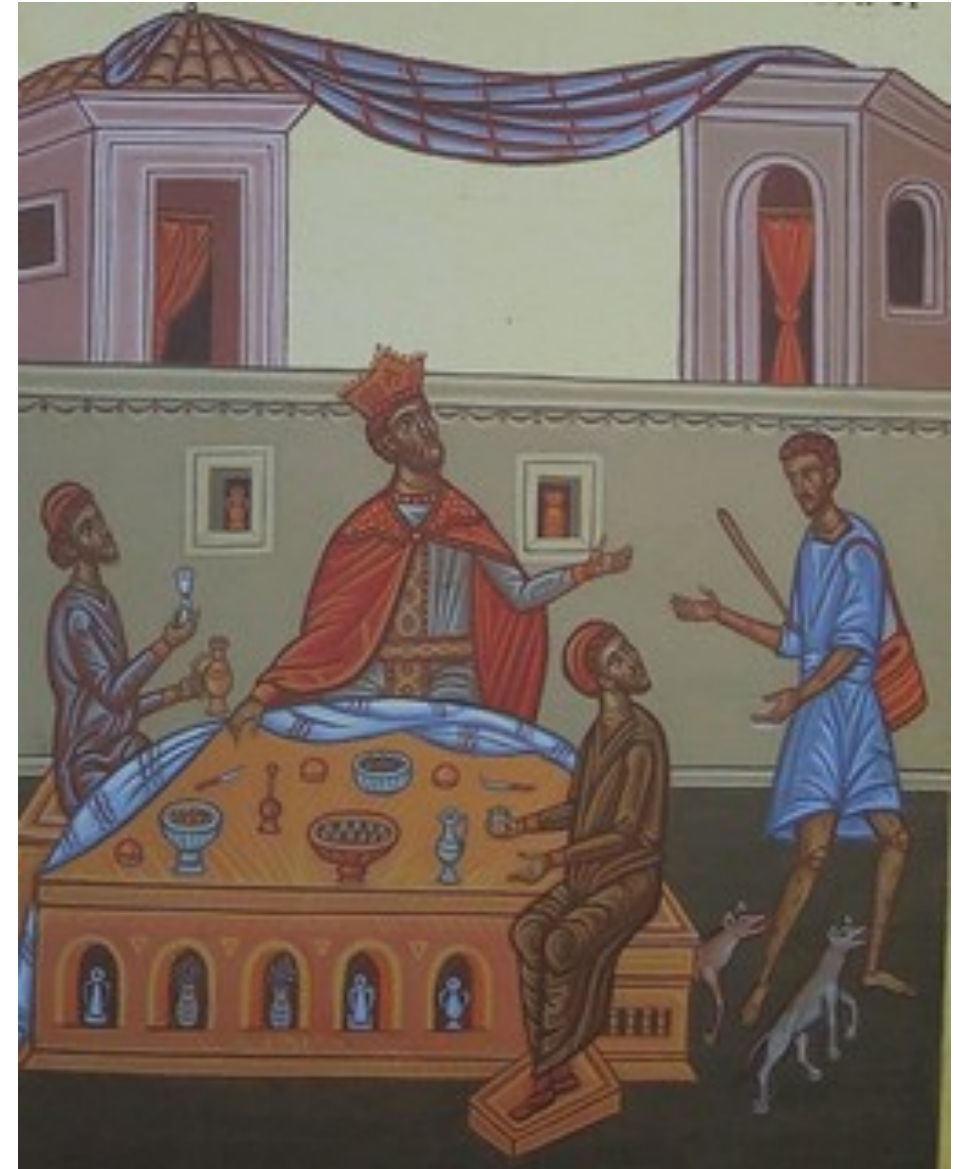
But Christ also indicates another instance of His presence in our midst. He affirms that He is present in the needy of this world. In His parable of the last judgment Christ rewards those who fed and clothed Him, who welcomed Him or visited Him when He was sick or in prison. "*Assuredly I say to you,*" He tells them, "*inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren you did it to Me*" (Mt 25:40).

In the Liturgy we truly encounter the glorious Christ: the candles, the singing, the incense and the icons all point to Him as He is now: at the right hand of the Father, praised by the saints and angels. But in the poor we encounter the Christ who put aside His glory and took on our broken humanity that we might ultimately share in His divine sonship. The person in need is an icon of the humiliated Christ, the suffering Christ, the dying Christ – as much an icon of Christ in its way as is the Liturgy. Most of us find it easier to see the Lord of glory in the Liturgy. It seems to take a Dorothy Day, a Mother Teresa of Calcutta or a Father Damian of Molokai to see Christ incarnate in human weakness.

The late Catherine de Hueck Dougherty, daughter of a noble Russian family, tells of how her parents recognized the presence of Christ in the poor. "Early in my childhood, the truth that Christ is in my neighbor was shown to me by my parents' example and words. No one was ever turned from our door, bum or beggar, woman of the streets or thief. The men were welcomed by my father. He gave them a bath himself, or mother would do it for the women; then they would be given clothing if they needed it. They would be served by Mother and Father and by us children – if we had been good through the week and thus worthy of serving Christ in the poor – on our best linen and from our best china in the main dining room" (*My Russian Yesterdays*).

The baron and baroness had clearly learned what the rich man in Christ's parable had not: that the beggar at the gate is one whom God sends as a means for the salvation of the rich. As St John Chrysostom phrased it, "The Rich Man had in Lazarus an opportunity to learn virtue and to show forth love. Instead of accepting Lazarus' help, he betrayed himself with heartless greed and an unwillingness to share his own wealth... for nothing can so make a man an imitator of Christ as caring for his neighbors.

Indeed, even though you fast, or sleep on hard ground, or even suffer unto death, but should take no thought of your neighbor, you have done nothing great; despite what you have done, you still stand far from this model of a perfect Christian" (*On Wealth and Poverty*)



RICH MAN & LAZARUS

**Our Lady of Perpetual Help Melkite Catholic Church**  
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**Email: olphmelkite@gmail.com**  
**Rev. Bryan McNeil, Pastor**  
**Email: Brymc56@comcast.net Cell: (978) 314-1962**  
**Divine Liturgy: Sunday 10:00 AM**

### Antiphon (3rd)

- 1: Come, let us sing joyfully to the Lord; let us shout with joy to God our Savior.  
*O Son of God, who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to You, Alleluia*
- 2: Let us come into His presence with thanksgiving and let us joyfully sing psalms to Him.  
*Khallisna Ya-Bnallah, Ya Man qama min baynil-amwaat, nahnu muranneemeena Laka. Haleloueya.*
- 3: For God is a great Lord and a great King over all the earth.  
*O Son of God, who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to You, Alleluia.*

### Entrance Hymn

**Priest: Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ!**

**People: O Son of God, who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to You. Alleluia!**

### Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 4) pg. 40

The women disciples of the Lord, having learned from the angel the joyful announcement of the resurrection, and having rejected the ancestral sentence, proudly told the apostles: Death is despoiled. Christ God is risen, bestowing to the world great mercy.”

### Patronal Troparion (Tone 1) Pg. 15

In giving birth, you have preserved your virginity and in falling asleep you did not forsake the world, O Mother of God. You have passed to life being the Mother of Life. Through your intercession, save our souls from death.

### Kondakion (Tone 2) Pg. 16

O never failing Protectress of Christians and their ever-present intercessor before the Creator, despise not the petitions of us sinners, but in your goodness extend your help to us who call upon you with confidence. Hasten, O Mother of God, to intercede for us, for you have always protected those who honor you.

### **Christ’s Alternative**

A parable is a story with a moral, not a detailed history of an event. In this case, as in most, the moral is found at the end of the story. When the rich man in the parable asks Abraham to send Lazarus to shake up his brothers, Abraham says, “*They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them*” (Luke 16:29). In other words, they have the Scriptures – what we call the Old Testament – as their means of discerning the mind of God for them.

This saying, of course, is directed at us – it is the moral of the story. We are meant to base our faith on the mystery of Christ as revealed in the Scriptures rather than on some fantasy that the holy Virgin or an angel might visit us. Just as our daily life must be based on something more practical than a hope of winning the lottery, so our Christian life must have the solid foundation of the word of God to us.

We have not only the Law and the prophets, but the Gospels and Epistles. We have the witness of Christ and the apostles, the testimony of the martyrs and the ascetics. We have the power of the holy mysteries, the voice of our liturgical texts and the unspoken voice of the holy icons. These are the voice of the Lord to us – let us hear them in faith.

### **A Missed Opportunity**

When people think about violating God’s law they think about sins of commission: doing something prohibited like stealing, harming another, or the like. We often forget that sins of omission – things that we neglect to do – are often even more damaging.

The rich man in Christ’s parable is not accused of any sin of commission. He is not blamed for being rich any more than Lazarus is praised for being poor: in itself having money is not a sin. We are not told how he made his money. He is not accused of defrauding people as Zacchaeus claimed to have done. The only thing he is accused of is not giving alms.

The poor man, Christ says, lay at the rich man’s gate, hoping for scraps. It may be easy to ignore a panhandler on the street; it is not so easy to ignore him when he is at your doorstep day after day. Yet this is what the rich man did. He did not overlook abstract appeals from far-away charities; he passed by a flesh-and-blood person in need on his own doorstep, “the living creature,” as St John Chrysostom describes him, “for whom God cares” (*On Wealth and Poverty*).

### **The Purpose of Wealth**

One of the ultimate questions behind this parable is, “What is money for?” In the ethics of the world the answer is clear: money is there for us to buy more and bigger and newer and better. According to the Scriptures, however, though we walk in the flesh, we do not live according to the flesh. We know that our money is the Lord’s, however we may have gathered it.

The purpose of money according to the vision of the kingdom of God depicted in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus is set forth directly in St Paul’s Second Epistle to the Corinthians. He writes, “*God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work*” (2 Cor 9:8). Our resources as meant to provide us with “all sufficiency,” meaning everything that we truly need, and “an abundance” – everything more than we need – for doing good. Does having multiple cars and homes or a TV in every room fall under the heading of “sufficiency”?

continued on back page)

**DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS**

**Today**

**Our father and bishop Francois  
Wyatt William Rahall  
+Corinne Halal**

**Nov 20**

**+John &Souhalia Arraje, Paula Arraje Lewis. Requested by  
Susan Arraje**

**Nov 27**

**+Aileen Abraham, Robert Abraham. Requested by Ron Abraham**

**Today's Coffee Hr. is hosted by Janice & Bill Abdelnour  
Next week's Coffee Hr. will be hosted by Maria Filewicz**

**Welcome to any visitors we may have with us this morning! We are happy to have you worship with us.**

**Please join us downstairs in the church hall for the coffee hour so that we can get to know each other better and answer any questions you may have about the parish or the Melkite Church.**

**THANKSGIVING FOOD DRIVE**

**We are going to have a Thanksgiving Food Drive again this year. You can participate by making a monetary donation or putting non-perishable food items (i.e. canned vegetables, cranberry sauce, stuffing mix, etc.) in the box that will be placed in the narthex, beginning next week. We will use the monetary donations to purchase turkeys and anything else we need. We will donate food to a local food pantry so that our brothers and sisters who are struggling will be able to have Thanksgiving dinner for them and their families.**

**Thanks in advance for your generosity to those who need our help!**

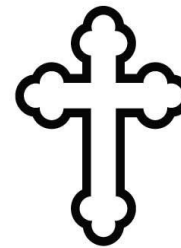
Please remember in your prayers: George Arraj, Jr., Ron Abraham, Peter Abraham, Vi Gazal, Robert Ghiz, Sadie Mirante, Archie Opatka, Katherine Thomas, Charlotte Stockhaus, Ruth Welsh, James Rahall, Richard Abraham, Sr., Daneil Sarrouf, Bob Lynch, Michael Mooradian, Michael McNeil, Jeff McNeil, Wyatt Willian Rahall, St. Patrick's Manor, the people of Ukraine, and those who suffered a loss as a result of Hurricane Ian .

If there are people for whom you would like me to pray, please reach out and give me their names. Part of our vocation as Christians is to pray for each other, especially when someone is sick or suffering in any way.

**UPCOMING LITURGICAL SCHEDULE**

**Mon 11/7, 6PM - Great Vespers for the feast of the Archangel Michael and all Angels**

**Mon 11/21, 6PM - Divine Liturgy for the feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos**



**Last Week's Collection**

<b>Weekly</b>	<b>\$ 1,067</b>
<b>Candles</b>	<b>\$ 7</b>
<b>Coffee Hr.</b>	<b>\$ 28</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>\$ 9</b>
<b>Diocesan</b>	<b>\$ 10</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 1,121</b>

**God bless you for your generosity!**

**We will be painting the hall, kitchen, bathrooms, and stairways in the next couple of weeks. If you would like any of the mirrors or pictures on the walls in the hall, please let me know as soon as possible.**



## The Rich Man in Hades (Lk 16:19-31)

WOULD WE BE AFFECTED if someone rose from the dead? We would probably say “Yes,” but the Lord says “No.” What does He know that we don’t?

Throughout the centuries, and even today, many people have what might be called mystical experiences. They see visions and dream dreams, to quote the prophet Joel. Thus St. Paul experienced the risen Christ on the road to Damascus and it changed his life. Similarly St. Peter and the other disciples encountered Christ risen from the dead and proclaimed it throughout the world. These experiences energized their ministries and jump-started the spread of the Gospel throughout the ancient world.

Such experiences continued throughout Christian history right up to our own day. One well-known Christian thinker in the modern world, the Russian Orthodox bishop in London, Metropolitan Anthony Bloom (1914-2003) described his encounter with the Lord in these words: “I met Christ as a Person at a moment when I needed Him in order to live, and at a moment when I was not in search of Him. I was found; I did not find Him. “I was a teenager then. ... I could not accept aimless happiness. Hardships and suffering had to be overcome, there was something beyond them. Happiness seemed to be stale if it had no further meaning. ... I decided that I would give myself a year to see whether life had a meaning, and if I discovered it had none I would not live beyond the year. I had no use for Church. I did not believe in God.”

Under duress, young Anthony attended a religious lecture at the Russian youth organization. He was greatly disturbed by the lecture and asked his mother for a copy of the New Testament to check the truth of what the speaker had been saying. He describes what happened:

“I expected nothing good from my reading, so I counted the chapters of the four Gospels to be sure that I read the shortest, not to waste time unnecessarily. And thus it was the Gospel according to St Mark which I began to read.

“I do not know how to tell you of what happened. I will put it quite simply and those of you who have gone through a similar experience will know what came to pass. While I was reading the beginning of St Mark’s Gospel, before I reached the third chapter, I became aware of a Presence. I saw nothing. I heard nothing. It was no hallucination. It was a simple certainty that the Lord was standing there and that I was in the presence of Him whose life I had begun to read with such revulsion and such ill-will... This was my basic and essential meeting with the Lord. From then I knew that Christ did exist.”

PBS commentator Frederica Mathewes-Green tells of a similar experience. She was a vocal agnostic who had dabbled in Hinduism. In *Facing East – A Pilgrim’s Journey into the Mysteries of Orthodoxy* (San Francisco, 1997), she describes her husband Gary as “a political animal who just didn’t think much about God.” She then tells how that changed:

“Gary’s shell began to crack when a professor required his philosophy class to read a Gospel. As he read the words of Jesus, he became convinced that here was one who ‘speaks with authority.’ Since Jesus said there was a God, Gary began to doubt his doubting.”

Frederica’s turn came on their honeymoon trip to Europe where the following took place:

“One day in Dublin I looked at a statue of Jesus and was struck to my knees, hearing an interior voice say, ‘I am your life.’ I knew it was the One I had rejected and ridiculed, come at last to seize me forever.”

### Why “Few Are Chosen”

The apostles were religious people; they observed the precepts of Judaism as practiced in their day. Others were contemptuous of religion and had ridiculed it. Yet somewhere deep inside them was a search for meaning, a hidden disposition to faith, even if they were not practicing any religion at the moment. Thus, when these momentous experiences took place, they received them wholeheartedly and changed their entire way of life.

People who have no interest in God or in any kind of an interior life, who are content pursuing a materialist way of life might easily shrug off a spiritual experience as some kind of delusion. They might blame it on a touch of the flu or having too much to drink.

Similarly the rich man’s brothers in the parable may have paid lip service to the Scriptures but the focus of their lives was far from the things of God. They would not even have heard a voice from the dead.

### Prokimenon

**Reader:** How great are Your works, O Lord! In wisdom You have wrought them all.

**People:** How great are Your works, O Lord! In wisdom You have wrought them all.

**Reader:** Bless the Lord. O my soul! You are very great indeed, O Lord my God!

**People:** How great are Your works, O Lord! In wisdom You have wrought them all.

**Reader:** How great are Your works, O Lord!

**People:** In wisdom You have wrought them all.

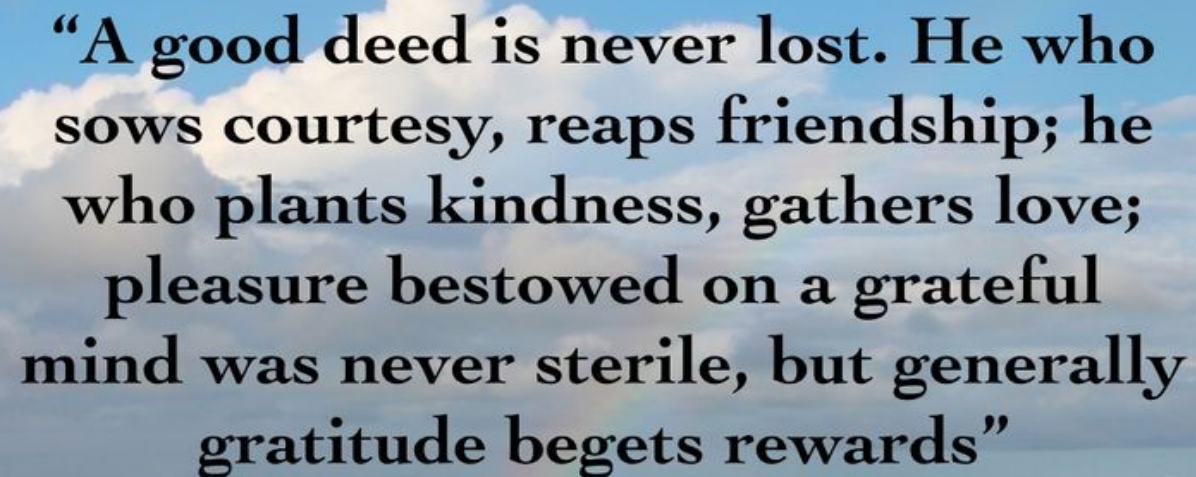
### Epistle: Gal. 2:16-20

### Alleluia Verses

String your bow, go forth, reign for the sake of truth, meekness and righteousness, and Your right hand shall lead You wonderfully.

**Verse:** You loved righteousness and hated iniquity: therefore God, Your God, anointed You with the oil of joy above Your companions.

### Gospel: Lk. 16:19-31



“A good deed is never lost. He who sows courtesy, reaps friendship; he who plants kindness, gathers love; pleasure bestowed on a grateful mind was never sterile, but generally gratitude begets rewards”

- Saint Basil The Great