

Saints Michael and Gabriel Antiochian Orthodox Church (SMG)

Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines

Parish Priest: Very Rev Fr Michal Zghaib

72 Belmore St Ryde NSW 2112

Keep in touch with us: www.smg.org.au

Facebook: Sts Michael and Gabriel Orthodox Church;

SMG Playgroup Meadowbank; SMG OYYA

Very Rev Fr Michal Zghaib: 0403 847 690 or parishpriest@smg.org.au

Sunday, 14 October 2018

**9am Matins – Orthros | 10am Divine Liturgy (English) | 6pm Divine Liturgy (Arabic) |
Tone 3 | Eothinon 9 | Holy Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council & Fourth Sunday of
Luke**

Commemorated today: Martyrs Nazarius, Gervasius, Protasius and Celsus of Milan; Cosmas the Hymnographer, Bishop of Maïuma; Venerable Paraskeva of the New of Thrace

Welcome to SMG

Welcome to our parish and please stay after the Divine Liturgy to share in fellowship with us as we would love to get to know you better. During school term, your children are also welcome to join our Church School lessons, which takes place directly after the Divine Liturgy in the Parish house.

You will notice that at SMG we do not pass a plate collection, and that general donations and offerings can be placed in the donation boxes located at the candle stands as you enter the Church. Generally, our parishioners participate in the Financial Stewardship Program based on regular ongoing pledging.

We look forward to meeting you. And please feel free to take this bulletin home.

Today's Divine Liturgy

Refer p.11 of service book

Troparion Of The Resurrection, In Tone 3

Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad. For the Lord has done a mighty act with his own arm. He has trampled death by death and became the first born from the dead. He has delivered us from the depths of hades, Granting the world the great mercy.

Troparion for the Holy Fathers, In Tone 4

You, O Christ, are our God of exceeding praise who did establish our holy Fathers as luminous stars upon earth, and through them did guide us unto the true Faith, O most merciful One, glory to You

Troparion Of The Archangels, In Tone 4

Commanders of the heavenly hosts, we who are unworthy beseech you; by your prayers encompass us under the wings of your incorporeal glory, and faithfully preserve us who fall down and cry out to you; deliver us from all harm, for you are the commanders of the powers on high.

Kontakion Of The Theotokos, In Tone 2

Protector of Christians, champion undefeated, mediator most sure with our creator, disregard not the voice of prayer of sinners, but come quickly in your goodness, to help us who cry out to you with faith: Be swift to intercede, make hast to supplicate, O Theotokos, protector always of those who honour you.

The Epistle

Refer p. 13 of service book

Prokeimenon: Blessed are You, O Lord, the God of our Fathers. For You are just in all that You have done to us.

The Reading From The Epistle Of St. Paul To His Disciple Titus (3:8-15)

Titus, my son, the saying is sure. I desire you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to apply themselves to good deeds; these are excellent and profitable to men. But avoid stupid controversies, genealogies, dissension, and quarrels over the law, for they are unprofitable and futile. As for a man who is factious, after admonishing him once or twice, knowing that such a person is perverted and sinful; he is self-condemned. When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. Do your best to speed Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way; see that they lack nothing. And let our people learn to apply themselves to good deeds, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not to be unfruitful. All who are with me send greetings to you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.

The Gospel

Refer p. 14 of service book

The Reading From The Holy Gospel According To St. Luke (8:5-15)

The Lord spoke this parable: "A sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell along the path, and was trodden under foot, and the birds of the air devoured it. And some fell on the rock; and as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns grew with it and choked it. And some fell into good soil and grew, and yielded a hundredfold." And when his disciples asked him what this parable meant, Jesus said, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God; but for others they are in parables, so that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand. Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. The ones along the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, that they may not believe and be saved. And the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy; but these have no root, they believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature. And as for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bring forth fruit with patience." As Jesus said this, he called out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

Gospel Reflection

A Radical Critique of Selfishness

"And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature" [Luke 8:14].

There is an interior connection between the Parable of the Sower and the Parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man [Luke 16:19-31], for the "rich man" of the parable is the embodiment of a person who has been "choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life," as described in the Parable of the Sower. Brushing aside the teaching of the Torah and the Jewish emphasis on charity as one of the great acts of true piety, the rich man remained coldly indifferent to poor Lazarus who was clearly visible at his very gate. Preoccupied with fine linen and sumptuous feasting [v. 19], the rich man was scarcely prepared in his heart to alleviate the sufferings of Lazarus—sufferings that were exemplified by the dogs that licked his sores [v. 20]. Such indifference is frightening when seen in the light of the many scriptural admonitions that either chastise the neglect of the poor—"He who closes his ear to the cry of the poor will himself cry out and not be heard"—or encourage care for the poor: "He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will repay him for his deed" [Proverbs 21:13; 19:17]. And the severity of the consequences of such neglect of the poor is vividly described in the parable's "reversal of fortune," with the rich man languishing in hades, unable to be relieved of his torment there. The contrast of his fate and that of Lazarus being carried into the "bosom of Abraham" by a heavenly escort is striking [vv. 22-23].

The Parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man was delivered with the Pharisees in mind, for right before Jesus proclaimed the parable, we hear this unflattering description of the Pharisees: "The Pharisees who were lovers of money, heard all this, and they scoffed at Him. But He said to them, 'You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts; for what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God'" [Luke 16:14-15]. Whatever or whoever may have prompted the words of the Lord during his ministry, our concern now is with our own attitude and treatment of the poor. To think or believe otherwise is to fail to "hear" the parable as it is proclaimed today for our chastisement or encouragement. The words of the Lord – the "Gospel truth" – cannot be properly assessed within the narrow limits of any political allegiances—Democrat or Republican—nor even of a wider-scoped ideology – liberal or conservative. The Gospel transcends these categories as something far greater and infinitely more demanding of our allegiance. At a time when neither political parties nor even political ideologies existed or had any real impact on the prevailing cultural or social assumptions of the time, Saint John Chrysostom [+407] delivered a series of brilliant homilies on the Parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man. (These seven homilies now exist in English translation under the title *On Wealth and Poverty*). With his impressive knowledge of the Scriptures and his unmatched rhetorical skills—but most importantly his profound zeal for the moral and ethical teaching of the Gospel—Saint John offered a radical critique of selfishness and a radical exhortation to overcome such selfishness for the sake of the poor. Challenging conventional notions of what theft is, he famously expanded its definition by meditating deeply on the parable at hand: "I shall bring you testimony from the divine Scriptures, saying that not only the theft of others' goods but also the failure to share one's own goods with others is theft and swindle and defraudation. What is this testimony? Accusing the Jews by the prophet, God says, 'The earth has brought forth her increase, and you have not brought forth your tithes; but the theft of the poor is in your houses' [Mal. 3:8-10]. Since you have not given the accustomed offering, He says, you have stolen the goods of the poor. He says this to show the rich that they hold the goods of the poor even if they have inherited them from their fathers or no matter how they have gathered their wealth. And elsewhere the Scripture says, 'Deprive not the poor of his living' [Sir. 4:1]. To deprive is to take what belongs to another; for it is called deprivation when we take and keep what belongs to others. By this we are taught that when we do not show mercy, we will be punished just like those who steal. For our money is the Lord's, however we may have gathered it. If we provide for those in need, we shall obtain great plenty. This is why God has allowed you to have more; not for you to waste on prostitutes, drink, food, expensive clothes, and all the other kinds of indulgence, but for you to distribute to those in need.... If you are affluent, but spend more than you need, you will give an account of the funds which were entrusted to you.... For you have obtained more than others have, and you have received it, not to spend it for yourself, but to become a good steward for others as well" [*On Wealth and Poverty, Homily Two*].

This **is** a radical teaching, though again not based on any particular social or political philosophy. For Saint John Chrysostom, the "true philosophy" was adherence to the Gospel. Saint John is primarily concerned with uncovering the meaning and implications of what we discover in the Scriptures. If that is challenging to the point of seeming "impossible" or of at least taking us far out of our "comfort zones," then rather than "soft-pedaling" the Gospel message, Saint John would continue in the hope of inspiring us to strengthen our efforts and to put on "the mind of Christ."

About the Author

Father Steven Kostoff is rector of Christ the Savior-Holy Spirit Church, Cincinnati, Ohio. He is also a member of the adjunct faculty of the theology department at Xavier University in Cincinnati, where he has taught various courses on Orthodox theology.

Full article can be found here: <https://oca.org/reflections/fr.-steven-kostoff/a-radical-critique-of-selfishness>

Important Messages

Confessions and prayer requests



Father Michal is available to hear confessions and receive prayer requests at any time during the week and weekend.

Please contact Fr Michal via mobile/ SMS on 0403 847 690 or email parishpriest@smg.org.au

Hospitality Sundays



"Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it." (Hebrews 13:2)

As many of you know, following Sunday Divine Liturgy we gather to enjoy fellowship and a light snack. This is a wonderful time to catch up with fellow parishioners and greet our guests. Hospitality Sundays are hosted by parish volunteers, one of the many service opportunities at Sts. Michael and Gabriel.

Maybe you also want to celebrate a special occasion in your family? Hosting a Hospitality Sunday is a great way to bring that celebration into the church family.

We ask people hosting to please observe fasting guidelines. Please also note that Sts. Michael and Gabriel parish supplies coffee, tea, milk, cups, plates and cutlery.

Please contact Fr Michal with your preferred date.

Calendar Of Events

Our Liturgical Calendar



St Demetrios Vigil Night

When: Thursday 25 October 2018 at 6.30pm

Followed by a Dinner

Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia, New Zealand, and the Philippines



Celebrating the First Anniversary of the Enthronement of His Eminence Metropolitan Basilios Kodseie

On this memorable occasion under his patronage and attendance, the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines, clergy and laity cordially invite you to a banquet dinner.

Date: Thursday, 29 November 2018 at 7.30pm

Venue: The Lemnos, 42 Albert St, Belmore NSW.

Cost: \$120

SMG Adult Bible Study



Adult Bible study

Next Adult Bible Study: Friday, 2 November 2018 at 7pm. Topic: Matthew 11. Both John The Baptist and Jesus Christ are Rejected despite the Signs that were Prophesied by Isaiah.

For more information please contact Ray via raymondhaddad5@gmail.com

Ladies Auxiliary Bible study

Session are held every second Monday at 7pm. after the Paraklesis service. Hosted by Fr Michal.

For more information please contact Fr Michal or Nouha on 0404 886 964.

SMG Church School



Church School lessons are held in the parish house after Divine Liturgy during school term. All students are encouraged and welcome to join the children's choir.

Contact: Christine Ayoub, SMG Church School Director
0410643685 | cjabbour23@hotmail.com

SMG Under 5's Playgroup



**ST MICHAEL AND GABRIEL
PLAYGROUP**
www.smg.org.au

Playgroup is held every Thursday during school term, 10am-12pm at Shepherd's Bay Community Centre, 3a Bay Drive, Meadowbank.

The playgroup is an informal gathering for parents and caregivers with children under the age of 5. All children must be supervised by an adult carer.

For more information please contact: Dr Victoria Khoury via drvictoriajk@ihug.com.au or 0414 547 842. Facebook: SMG Playgroup Meadowbank.

ACOY



Grand Ball 2018 (18+ event)

Saturday 27 October 2018 at 6pm

The Lemnos Club, Belmore

Dress code: black tie

Tickets: \$120 via [www.acoy.com.au`](http://www.acoy.com.au)



Please do not block our neighbours' driveways or park on any footpath or grassed areas.

Thank you for your cooperation.