



HOLY TRINITY

ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH



723 N BODINE ST PHILADELPHIA, PA 19123

CHURCH BULLETIN

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The 12th Sunday after Pentecost

Gospel Reading Matthew 19: 16 - 26

At that time, a young man came up to Jesus, kneeling and saying, "Good Teacher, what good deed must I do, to have eternal life?" And he said to him, "Why do you call me good? There is only one who is good. If you would enter life, keep the commandments." He said to him, "Which?" And Jesus said, "You shall not kill, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother, and You shall love your neighbor as yourself." The young man said to him, "All these I have observed; what do I still lack?" Jesus said to him, "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to

the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions. And Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly, I say to you, it will be hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." When the disciples heard this they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?" But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Apostle Reading 1 Corinthians 15: 1 - 11

Brethren, Now I would remind you, brothers and sisters, of the good news that I proclaimed to you, which you in turn received, in which also you stand, through which also you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the message that I proclaimed to you—unless you have come to believe in vain. For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than

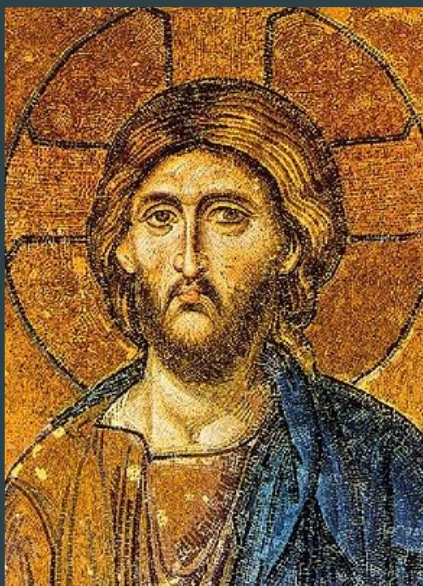
five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me has not been in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them—though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. Whether then it was I or they, so we proclaim and so you have come to believe.

Synaxarion. Sunday August 30, 2020 (The 12th Sunday after Pentecost): Holy Hierarchs Varlaam, Metropolitan of Moldavia, and Ioan of Râșca and Secu; Holy Hierarchs Alexander, John and Paul the New, Patriarchs of Constantinople



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No Perfection Without Sacrifice

"If you want to be perfect, go and sell everything you have and give the money to the poor, and you will have riches in heaven; then come back here and follow me" (Matthew 19:16-36).

These words spoke Jesus to the rich young ruler whose heart was inflamed with a desire for eternal life. They are not human words, but divine — words of unchangeable, eternal value, inasmuch as they are the words of the Son of God. When the American astronauts succeeded in landing on the moon, the President of the United States made the following statement: "This is the greatest historical event ever recorded since the creation of the world." Of course, we must strongly disagree with the President in this matter. The moon landing, while it certainly seemed spectacular at the moment, was but an historic human event which, like all such events, will before long become "stale news" — something about which people are already tired of hearing. The other day a Pennsylvania judge celebrated his 100th birthday. A newspaper reporter asked him what he considered to be the most noteworthy event of his lifetime. The judge's reply was "the invention of the automobile." For the judge, in his time, it was astonishing. For us, it is nothing.

The greatest historical event since the creation was the second creation — the Incarnation of the Son of God, which was to result in the restoration of the first creation. God, as St. Athanasius points out, entered the stream of human history in order that He might regenerate (renew) the human race. Ever since that time, all human history has been divided into two great periods: B.C. and A.D. Through our intellectual and physical powers we can now travel to the moon, and eventually most likely we will reach the other planets in our solar system as well. Yet it is through Jesus Christ that we can soar to the very heights — to the very Kingdom of God. On the moon we behold little else but rocks, and the tranquil lunar "seas." In the Kingdom of heaven, we shall see God Himself face-to-face. "For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know fully



just as I also have been fully known" (I Corinthians 13:12). Today, Jesus Christ is the goal, as well as the life, of every true Christian, for He Himself said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). Moreover, He said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12). Who among mortal men would dare utter those words? (Perhaps a deluded politician?) Basil the Great, famous astronomer and observer of his era, wrote, "Each word, each action, of

our Lord Jesus Christ is a paragon of virtue. The whole of His teaching is an entirely new system, a new covenant, which shall never become antiquated or pass away. Those who practice the teachings of Christ," St. Basil adds, employing a biblical metaphor, "shall renew themselves like eagles."

A young man approaches the great Rabbi, the great Teacher of Galilee. He was not a useless ruffian; this boy had ideals in life. He obeyed the Mosaic Law very strictly. (The three synoptics all agree here; cf. Mark 10:17-27, and Luke 18:18-27.) He was a good lad, and he wanted to become better. He was excellent; he wanted to be perfect. Although he lived amid the splendor of wealth, he wanted to become a citizen of heaven. "Good Master," he said, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" The Lord asked from him something that was monumental — his life, his life of wealth and ease. "Go," said Jesus, "sell what you have, give the money to the poor, and you'll have a treasure in heaven. Then come and follow Me."

Perfection, dear brethren, demands sacrifice. We must deny ourselves. It is not enough to preach the truths of the Gospel with our lips alone; we must practice what we preach. God wants more from each of us than a "small contribution."

Of him who has much, much is expected. Of him who has little, little is expected. And surely, even he who has nothing can give of himself, visiting the sick and lonely, etc.

Jesus told the young man that he was to dispose of all his wealth. Jesus Himself had nothing in the way of material possessions, as He Himself witnessed: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (Matthew 8:20). Jesus also preached, "Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God" (Luke 6:20). Who are the poor whom Jesus is addressing? The drunken derelicts of the Bowery? The heroin addicts of Harlem? The self-proclaimed young social outcasts of California? Did Christ pronounce a benediction on these people. No. He loves them, but He cannot accept them until they are willing to accept Him, to give up living their way, and surrender their lives to His Lordship. Jesus' reference was to the "poor in spirit." St. Chrysostom observed that there are many wealthy men who are spiritually impoverished, and many poor men who possess the blessings of eternity.

The young man in today's Gospel Lesson heard the invitation of Jesus, but did not come. He bowed his head, and slowly walked away. He disappeared — perhaps forever — among the crowds of Judaeian humanity, although there are those who believe that he returned at some later date and accepted Jesus on the Lord's own terms — which, indeed, is the only way we can accept Him. At any rate, the Gospels are silent on this point. Centuries later Dante the poet was to imagine the young man furtively running to and fro in the regions of the damned. Some Church fathers, such as the illustrious John Chrysostom, believed that the youth was saved, despite the fact that he could not, at the precise moment of our Gospel Lesson, bring himself to a point of total commitment. Surely the Lord is patient and merciful, although we are warned many times in the pages of Holy Scripture not to try His patience, nor yet to tamper with His mercy.

Dearly beloved, the invitation that Jesus Christ extended to that young man, He extends to each of us today. And our destiny for all of eternity depends on how, or whether, we respond to His call of "Come; follow me." Be sure to count the cost, beloved. Jesus demands all of your life, every part of you. But He promises in return to transform you, to make you a new creature in Himself, to bestow upon you a life that is truly abundant, now, and throughout the ages to come. The choice is yours. The invitation stands. "Come, follow me."

Fr. George Dimopoulos

HOLY TRINITY'S Liturgical Schedule from August 30 to September 8, 2020

Sunday August 30 (12th Sunday after Pentecost):

9:00 am - Matins
10:00 am - Divine Liturgy
11:00 am - Sunday School Begins
12:00 pm - Coffee Hour
12:30 pm - Romanian Language Day:
Romanian Music Concert.

- ♦ Ciprian Porumbescu: *The Ballad for violin and piano*; and
- ♦ Bela Bartok: *Romanian Folk Dances from Transylvania.*

Performers: Mr. Mugurel RADU, violin and Miss Mădălina DĂNILĂ, piano.

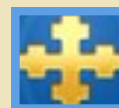
Tuesday September 1— The Orthodox Ecclesiastic Year Begins

Sunday September 6 (Sunday before the Elevation of the Holy Cross):

9:00 am - Matins
10:00 am - Divine Liturgy
11:00 am - Sunday School
12:00 pm - Coffee Hour

Tuesday September 8 — Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos:

9:00 am - Matins
10:00 am - Divine Liturgy
12:00 pm - Coffee Hour



Only One Is Good

When my children were small I would play a little game with them. Whenever they would tell me that they were being “good,” I would quip back, “Only one is good.” At first I would get a confused look from them. Over time, when they began to understand the Gospel reference, I would get that special groan that children reserve for their parents. They knew I was teasing them, and enjoying it. They also knew that I was trying to teach them something.

This week’s Gospel lesson is the story of the Rich Young Man (Matthew 19:16-26) who comes to Jesus asking: “Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?” (v. 16) Jesus responds by asking back: “Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good” (v. 17). This phrase sets the terms of the conversation between them. The young man comes to Jesus seeking knowledge about eternal life. Jesus gives him the answer he cannot bear to hear.

Some of the early Biblical commentators seem to suggest that the young man might have been coming to test Jesus with the question, as had the Scribes, the Pharisees and the Lawyers. But St. John Chrysostom reflecting on the character of this person says that if he were coming to tempt Jesus he would not have left grieving over what he had heard. He had not come with an evil heart, but rather one that was too feeble. He did indeed desire life, but, after Jesus’ advice, realized he was held captive by another stronger desire. He couldn’t let go.

Let’s go back to the beginning of the story. The young man comes to Jesus asking what good deed he must do. He comes to him not understanding who Jesus really is, but thinking him to be a “teacher.” He came for advice, albeit, spiritual advice, about the path to eternal life. One can surmise that he had asked other “teachers” the same question, and was hoping Jesus would give him the answer he wanted to hear.

But Jesus responds in a way that compels him to reexamine and contemplate the question he had just asked. Jesus draws the man’s attention to the premise of the question, the basic underpinning: “Why do you call me good? There is only one who is good,” he says to him. The young man thinks he is close to the path. He thinks that

he has figured out this greatest of spiritual mysteries. Perhaps he is close. He is at least asking the right question. But here is the trap: too often we judge ourselves against other people and think, “in comparison to them, we’re really not that bad,” or perhaps even, “we are very good,” next to them. Jesus draws our attention to a different comparison, not with other people, but with God Himself.

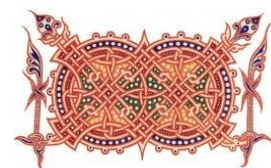
Jesus tells him that first he should obey the Commandments. He cites the

“Ten,” but they both understand he means the whole of the Law. The young man tells him that he’s followed them from his youth. In his account, St. Mark adds this powerful detail. He says: “Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, “You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me” (Mark 10:21).

The young man was devastated. He was lost. He had come to Jesus thinking he was close to perfection, and Jesus, like a skillful physician, diagnoses the illness and with love prescribes the remedy. Only this remedy was too much for the young man. He was held prisoner by his passion for the things of this world, and he knew it. He was too comfortable.

Many of us think that we are good — or perhaps worse — do not even ponder the question of what it might mean to actually be good. When we decide to follow Christ, our Lord draws us directs our attention elsewhere, heavenward, to the Author of Good, and the Father of lights (cf James 1:17). We should always ask ourselves: “What good deed must I do to inherit eternal life?” And, prepare ourselves to hear the answer we need to hear.

Fr. Nicholas Apostola



Romanian - a Unique Language

History

The Romanian language is an Indo-European language, with its roots in the Latin Romance languages. Though it is sometimes referred to as Daco-Romanian, and various spellings of "Romanian" include Rumanian and Roumanian, it is most often called Romanian.

When the Roman people began their conquests on Romanian territory in 106AD, the Dacian people were the native people living there. The land was rich in silver and gold, and was colonized and kept by the Romans for the next two hundred years. In this time, the Latin language was enforced as being the primary language for business and administration. Then, in the 3rd century, the Dacian people forced the Romans to withdraw. The branch of spoken language then derived from the local language and the Latin language itself.

From this point, the Romanian language had little to do with the other Romance languages, and has developed linguistically to be relatively insular. At some point between the 7th and 10th centuries, under the rule of the Byzantine Empire, all the individual dialects of Romania were unified in a Proto-Romanian language. Here, the language was influenced by the Greek language, as well as the Slavic languages.

Popularity

The Romanian language is an official language in its origin country of Romania, as officially classified by the Constitution of Romania in 1991. Public messages must have translations of foreign words into the Romanian language by law. It is also an official language in the Republic of Moldova, and the Vojvodina region in Serbia. In the Republic of Moldova, however, the Romanian language is named Moldovan, and despite certain local dialects, it is basically considered to be the same language as Romanian. However, this is a contentious issue, with even the speakers of Moldo-Romanian in Moldova writing either Romanian or Moldovan on census forms, to refer to the same language. Romanian is also an official minority language in the country of Ukraine. While it is spoken primarily in Romania and Moldova, around 26 million people in total speak the Romanian language, with around 4 million of these people being second language speakers of the Romanian language.

Language

There are recorded communities of Romanian speakers in Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Kazakhstan, Macedonia, Russia, Serbia and Spain, with smaller communities in the U.S., Australia, Canada, Israel, Germany and New Zealand, although these "smaller" communities can still have many speakers within them. In Israel, for example, around 5% of the population speaks Romanian, though the language is primarily spoken in South-eastern, Central and Eastern Europe, where it is also a common option to learn as a second language, and courses are available in

many higher education establishments. Because the language has seen such a variety of speakers throughout the world, it is unsurprising that the language itself has many different worldwide dialects, though within Romania itself the main dialect is that of the variety spoken around the Danube River.

Why Learn The Romanian Language?

The country of Romania itself is a beautiful one. It is the fourth fastest growing country in the world, in relation to travel and tourism, receiving around 6.6 million visitors in 2004. If you like gothic architecture and castles, the cities of Transylvania are well worth visiting, while if natural attractions are more your interest, then there is still plenty on offer, from the Danube Delta to the caves of the Apuseni Mountains. The Romanian language has also recently begun to enjoy notoriety for its music and film industry. The Numa Numa song by the Romanian band O-Zone became popular over viral video, and there are many other modern singers and bands that have, with the global nature of the internet, become much more famous in countries that ordinarily may not have heard of them. Likewise, there have been several Romanian films in the last few decades that have won awards at the Cannes Film Festival. The arts culture in the Romanian language is increasing more and more, and learning the Romanian language would be an excellent way to discover a whole new avenue of artistic endeavor.

(Source: <https://effectivelanguagelearning.com/language-guide/romanian-language/>)

