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# HOLY TRINITY ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH



723 N BODINE ST PHILADELPHIA, PA 19123

## CHURCH BULLETIN

Vol. 13 No. 41 \* Sunday October 4, 2020 \* Editor: V. Rev. Fr. Nicolai Buga

### The 19th Sunday after Pentecost

#### Gospel Reading Luke 6: 31 - 36

The Lord said, "And as you wish that men would do to you, do so to them. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive,

what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the selfish. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."

#### Apostle Reading 2 Corinthians 11: 31- 33; 12: 2- 9

*Brethren*, you are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will live in them and move among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Therefore come out from them, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch nothing unclean; then I will

welcome you, and I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty." Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, and make holiness perfect in the fear of God.

**Synaxarion. Sunday October 4, 2020  
(The 19th Sunday after Pentecost)-  
Holy Hieromartyr Hierotheus of Athens**



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# The Quality of Mercy

"Be ye therefore, merciful as your Father is also merciful"

(Luke 6:31-36).

One of the most outstanding verses of Holy Scripture, dear brethren, is contained in today's Gospel reading. The Roman Emperor, Alexander Severus, was so deeply impressed by this verse that he not only repeated it often himself, but commanded his public officers to engrave it on all the walls throughout the city: "and as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise." Socrates had much to say; Plato philosophized endlessly; Aristotle imparted much to the sciences; and we, we study them diligently. But nowhere in their writings can we find a verse containing as much thought and depth as that spoken by our Lord. Many atheists and persons indifferent to the Faith, were readily converted upon hearing this one verse. Others that do not accept Jesus Christ as God, at least proclaim Him as an outstanding moral teacher.

Oftentimes we explain this reading. Our readers have read it and heard it on an equal number of occasions. And the more you read and study it, the deeper you go into its meaning, which opens up new vistas of thought on the subject. It is filled with wisdom and divine revelation. It encourages the right type of relations and behavior between fellow men. It exhorts men to be Christ-like and to come as close to God as possible in their virtues. In others words, not to reach God in quantity, that is, in His power and wisdom. This is beyond the natural capabilities of human beings. For example, it was from that very moment when Adam and Eve sought to know as much as God, when they tried to become as God, listening to the devil — it was from this time that they were farthest away from God. What was it that the devil told them? ... "do you want to become as God? It is simple and very easy. Do not listen to God. Revolt against Him and His will." We know the results of the Fall. As Scripture otherwise says, a great gap was opened between God and man.

Nowhere in Scripture will we find one verse that exhorts us to become as equals to God in His knowledge, Power, or Wisdom, and the rest of the natural, divine attributes. And when man took the initiative in this area, he met



instant destruction.

In the Old Testament, we read about man's attempt to reach God by climbing above Him in a tower, and from there trying to dethrone Him. The tower was the famous Tower of Babel. When commencing to build the tower, there arose mass confusion amongst the builders. They lost their under-

standing of their common language and were unable to communicate with one another. Eventually the tower collapsed and the men were scattered all over the face of the earth (Gen. 11:4-9).

Almost the same thing was said by Russia's first astronauts, during the reign of the supposed all-mighty Krushchev ... "they said to us that God is in the skies. We went there and we conquered the heavens. But we never met God. We travelled to the stars and we did not find God there. We went beyond our planet and we did not see God anywhere." In the language of the ancient Greeks this would have been considered as an insult. And the insulter would have been punished severely, by being excommunicated from the intellectual community as an offender against the divine realities. Today, in our own terminology, we call it blasphemy of the worst order. The results are well-known. Krushchev's end was very insignificant, to the point that many people are still very anxious to know what has happened to the former all-mighty boss of the Iron Curtain. Does he still live, or was he simply excommunicated? Yesterday it was Czechoslovakia, today Romania, and tomorrow Poland. Their influence dwindles every day because it is a proven fact that the religious convictions of peoples dedicated to God can never be squelched.

We must never forget that no man can ever find God when his purpose is evil; when he seeks God in order to blaspheme and humiliate Him. We must never seek to find God outside of ourselves, outside of our own existences. With much authenticity does Paul speak on this subject... "know ye not that ye are the temple of God and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defiles the temple of God, him shall God destroy for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

The great eighteenth century German philosopher, Kant,

in his moral proof of the existence of God moves from the moral law which exists in us ... "there exists an absolute moral law, catholic; previous and supreme, every human law which is expressed in positive command. Do not do evil, do good. Consequently, there exists a Supreme Law-Maker, who is the Absolute Mind, All-Mighty and Absolute Holy Being. This moral law is absolute and universal. The conscience even in a more deviate condition is in a position to make the distinction between good and evil."

We said before that we cannot reach God in the quantity of His power, nor does any scriptural verse advise differently. However, we do find many verses in Scripture which exhort us to reach God in the quality of His virtue. One such verse is the above mentioned ... "Be ye, therefore, merciful as your Father is also merciful" (Luke 6:31-36). The unfortunate Nietzsche used to say to his students, "Become strong and step on the weak, in order to climb up to separate the strong from the weak. Life is only for the strong." The Gospel tells us to love our fellow man in the same way as God loves us all. It is only that man who feels this love towards his fellows that will remain in God, and God in him.... . "God is love and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him."

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God and everyone that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. He that has no love can never know God, for God is love. God's love for us is so perfectly manifested because God sent His Only-begotten Son into the world that we might live in Him." I strongly suggest, beloved, that you read tonight — immediately — the whole Catholic epistle of John.

The ancient Greeks and Romans tried to describe their mythological gods as being full of power, wrath, and anger. One of the gods was charged with thunder, the other the tempests, and the third, storms. They were always ready to dash their powers against man whenever he became disorderly. But our God is full of goodness and love. He forgives, even when man commits sins seventy times seven. And for the salvation of humanity He sends His Only-Begotten Son.

My brothers, let us follow His example. Let us always exude our love and mercy. And in so doing we become imitators of our Heavenly Father ... "merciful as He is merciful." Amen.

**Rev. Fr. George Dimopoulos**



## HOLY TRINITY'S Liturgical Schedule from October 4 to October 18, 2020

### **Sunday October 4 (19<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentcost):**

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

### **Saturday October 10:**

12:00 pm—3:00 pm - Traditional Romanian Food Festival. Drive-by

### **Sunday October 11 (21<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Pentecost):**

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

### **Wednesday October 14 - Holy Venerable Parascheva of Iași:**

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

### **Sunday October 18 (20<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost):**

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



## The Golden Rule

Not simply the Golden Rule, but what believers might describe as the "Diamond Rule," is our objective and our challenge in life. We who follow Christ already relate to those with whom we are friends and treat them as we would have them treat us. But on the command and expectation of our Lord, we are willing to go a step further and put into practice a far more serious and responsible insight shared with us today.

Initially our Lord observes a common human characteristic we easily put into practice. It is one that characterizes each of us. We all admit readily we like the people who like us. We even love the people who like us and wish them well. Our Lord asks the pertinent question: "If you love those who love you, what merit have you? Even sinners love those who love them."

It becomes obvious enough, then, that we who follow the Saviour have a richer, deeper vocation to pursue. The rest of the world, including pagans, who have no enriching sacramental grace live and act the way we do. So our Lord is raising the bar for us if we wish to identify ourselves with him. The very badge or sign of Christianity is pure love and consideration for one another out of love for Christ our God. It means doing as He does, it means relating to all other as He relates to them.

We like the loftiness of Christ's ideal, but dismiss it quickly as unattainable, since we are limited human beings, but we forget the truth enunciated by St. Paul in the epistle reading, We can do all things in Christ because of the answer our heavenly Father gave him when he asked for a reprieve from the thorn he suffered in the flesh, "My grace is sufficient for you; for strength is made perfect in weakness."

How much we are reminded of the life of Jonah, the reluctant prophet. Our God is calling him,

commanding him to go to Nineveh, a city outside the periphery of God's Chosen People, the home of the Assyrian people, one of the most cruel and barbaric on the face of the earth. They were in the process of trying to conquer the known world of that day. They were making war against city state after city state and they would stay at war as long as it took until they finally conquered that place, overran their target.. They camped outside the walls of the city of Samaria for three solid years until they finally starved them out. Stubborn people those Assyrians and in their regard now that we look at them they would have made great present day Orthodox, don't you think?

The British museum in London in its Assyrian Hall has a collection of stone carvings from the Assyrian palaces and among them is the playing catch with the heads of their victims. Even brutes would agree, these were not nice people. They were most cruel, militaristic and were literally attempting to wipe God's people off the face of the earth.

Jonah, of course, cannot understand why God is interested in these Ninevites. As a matter of fact, we will never understand how much our heavenly Father loves us until we come to grasp and appreciate and plainly understand how much God loves people like the Assyrians. It is so easy in our subconscious mind to think what many of us are occasionally tempted to think when we stand in front of the mirror getting dressed up to go out for a day of serving God and kingdom: "God loves me and I am not surprised. If I were God, I would love me, too!" But the love our God has for us is exactly the same in its depth and passion, in its encompassing seriousness as the love God has for the people of Nineveh.

It has no deferential respect for our character, no respect to our actions and no respect to our family or background. God loves me; God loves you; God loves each us because He chooses to love us and it has nothing to do about whether we deserve it or not. The reality of God's love for us is illustrated in his love for the most unlovable, unworthy through we be. And of course, we Orthodox can be the most unlovable because we have been given the greatest of all gifts and do not know what to do with them. Undoubtedly, to us applies the adage, "the right religion has been given to the wrong people!"

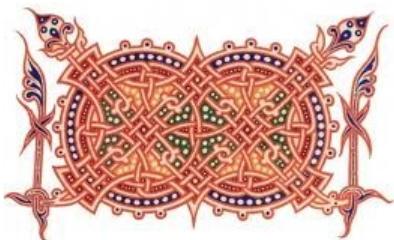
Jonah does not want to be what God expects of him. He likes his own self-definition and self-determination. But our Lord insists the dignity of man is far greater than Jonah perceives it and understands it. In the end, Jonah does go, does preach and even the king is converted by God's grace.

Because God's method, God's idea, God's will, God's procedures are pursued, there is success.

Loving our enemies, then, is a difficulty that must be overcome. It starts with our prayer life being entrusted to his will. Permit today's narrative be an inspiration. May even the reluctance of Jonah inspire us that with God's grace everything good thing is possible, even for us!

Father Robert E Lucas

Source: <http://www.stpaul-freehold.com/sermon102311.html>



## ORDINATION to the Holy Diaconate of Mr. PETRU BOGDAN MANEA

On Saturday, October 31 and Sunday, November 1, 2020, His Eminence Nicolae, Archbishop of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese of the United States and Metropolitan of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolia of the Americas, will visit our Holy Trinity Parish in Philadelphia, PA.

On this occasion, our church cantor, Mr. PETRU BOGDAN MANEA, will be ordained to the holy diaconate by His Eminence.

The program of Metropolitan Nicolae's visit to Philadelphia will include the Vespers, on Saturday evening, at 6 pm, and the Holy and Divine Liturgy next day, Sunday, November 1, at 10 am.

HE Metropolitan Nicolae will preside over a group of priests that will join our local priests, Fr. Nicolai Buga and Fr. Timotei Avram. V. Rev. Fr. Daniel Ene, V. Rev. Fr. Daniel Adrian Ene, Dean for Eastern USA, will also serve.

During the Holy Liturgy, the ordination of the new deacon will take place. The precise moment of the ordination ritual is before the Lord's Prayer.



# TRADITIONAL ROMANIAN FOOD FESTIVAL

## Drive-by Only

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2020  
12 PM – 3 PM

723 N BODINE ST. PHILADELPHIA 19123



### HOLY TRINITY ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH in PHILADELPHIA, PA

has the pleasure to invite you to enjoy the delicious traditional Romanian dishes and sweets. We have no doubt that the traditional Romanian dishes will not only be the happy occasion of a joyful family meal, but also the chance of having a taste of Romania, our beautiful and blessed native country. This is the main purpose of the Festival. At the same time, we want to raise funds to carry out our projects concerning the needs of the community and of the church.

**We thank you in advance for supporting our church.**

**May God bless you all.**

Please, see the **MENU** on [www.holytrinityphiladelphia.org](http://www.holytrinityphiladelphia.org).

You may order your favorite food **right now !**

Call MARINELA at **609- 346-622.**

You may pay your donation to the church by check, PayPal or Credit Card. If you choose to use PayPal or Credit, please access our church's website: [www.holytrinityphiladelphia.org](http://www.holytrinityphiladelphia.org) and click the "DONATE" button. In the "Write a Note" section, type "For Food Festival". If you choose to pay by check, please mention: "Pay to the order of Holy Trinity Romanian Church Philadelphia". Add also "For Food Festival". The check must be sent as soon as possible, so that your check could be processed before the day you pick up the order and your donation could be credited to the church account. When you send the check, make sure to write on the envelope:

„To The HOLY TRINITY ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH.

Attn. Food Festival.

723 N Bodine St. Philadelphia, PA 19123-2913".

Pick up orders ( drive-by) at 723 N Bodine St. Philadelphia, PA 19123.

Saturday October 10, 2020 from 12 PM through 3 PM. Thank you.