



Sunday, November 10, 2019

Gospel: St. Luke 10:25-37

Tone 4

Epistle: Galatians 2:16-20

21st Sunday after Pentecost

Apostles of the Seventy: Erastus, Olympas, Herodion, Sosipater, Quartus, and Tertius
Martyr Orestes of Cappadocia / Hieromartyr Milles, Bishop in Persia, and two disciples

NOVEMBER Bulletin Sponsor: Fr. Andrew

In memory of his mother Dorothy

Liturgical & Events Schedule

Sunday, November 10

9:05 am: Hours followed by Divine Liturgy / Social / Change Altar Linens

Monday, November 11

9:30 am: Divine Liturgy for Veterans & Dorothy Bartek
6:30 pm: Orthodoxy 101

Wednesday, November 13

6:00 pm: Public Village Meeting

Thursday, November 14

6:00 pm: Lions Club

Saturday, November 16

4:00 pm: Great Vespers

Sunday, November 17

9:05 am: Hours followed by Divine Liturgy / Memorial Sunday / Social

BUILDING / RESTORATION FUND

Our 125th Anniversary is coming!

Fund Purpose: To collect funds to pay for the restoration, repair and beautification of the building and parish room. This will avoid using general funds which are earmarked for budgetary items.

Please consider contributing generously to the *Building/Restoration Fund.*

40 DAY REMEMBRANCE

November 24: Catherine Beat

December 1: 3 soldiers killed in training in GA

December 8: Serge Mihaly Jr, John McDonald

VIGILS- NOVEMBER 3

Susan Guzy (2) Special intentions

Laura Kovach (4) In memory of John McDonald; Health of Joe, Joe, Mark, Lisa, Steve, Chuck, Julia; Safe travel for family; Wedding blessings to Courtney and Brian

Stephanie Kowal (1) Health of Marika

Sandy Martin (1), Special intentions

Jim Mazur(2) Health of family and friends

Darlene, Nick & Gabe Mazurik (1) Special intentions

Ron & Bobbie Royhab (1) Special intentions

Twarek (7) In loving memory of John McDonald; In memory of Father's cousin Serge; Health and recovery of Chuck, Steve, and infant Bohdi; Health of Nancy, Judy, Liz, Christine, MaryAnn and Bob; Health of Joe, Sonya, Julia, Diane, Stella, Ron, Becky, Jake, Helen; Special intentions; Special intentions

CANDLE / BULLETIN SPONSORS FOR NOVEMBER

Bulletin: (\$50) Fr. Andrew: In memory of his mother Dorothy on 15th Anniversary of repose

Chandelier: (\$50) Elchisco Family: In loving memory of our brother, George Michael

Altar Candles: (\$50) Basil: In loving memory of sister, Marian

Candles on the tomb: (\$25) Diane in loving memory of Aunt Marion and Uncle Norm

Eternal Light & Icon Screen: (\$25) Tammy in memory of her dad, William Rentz



ATTENDANCE - NOVEMBER

Sunday November 3: 32 Total (20 members; 1 non-reg. Member; 2 children; 9 guests; 23 communicants; 6 attended Vespers

MONTHLY TITHING ONLY FOR NOVEMBER

Goal Pledged per month: \$4,100

Sunday, November 3: \$958

OTHER WEEKLY INCOME

Sunday, November 3: \$19 Candles; \$25 Extra Candles; \$72 Vigils; \$25 Eternal Light; \$10 Restoration; \$110 Food Pantry; \$125 Special Collection (St Vlad); \$21 Special Collection (Holiday Bureau)

PRAY FOR OUR CATECHUMENS

Tim Heffernan Rachael Adamcio
Luke Welch Lydia Welch
Tristen Welch

Possible Catechumans:

Loreen Welch Cheyenne Welch

May God & the Holy Spirit guide them in their journey in the Orthodox Church and the Orthodox way of Life.

NOVEMBER

Cleaners Readers Social

3	Open	Natalie	<i>Open</i>
10	Natalie	Tim	<i>Open</i>
17	Ed & Irene	Ron	<i>Open</i>
24	Christi	Wayne	<i>Open</i>

Martyrdom of the Great-martyr George of Georgia

Commemorated on November 10

Celebrated by the whole Christian world, Great-martyr George was slain by Emperor Diocletian in the year 303.

The holy martyr is appropriately considered the intercessor for all Christians and the patron saint of many. He is regarded with special reverence among the Georgian people, since he is believed to be the special protector of their nation. Historical accounts often describe how Saint George appeared among the Georgian soldiers in the midst of battles.

The majority of Georgian churches (in villages especially) were built in his honor and, as a result, every day there is a feast of the great-martyr George somewhere in Georgia. The various daily commemorations are connected to one of the churches erected in his name or an icon or a particular miracle he performed.

November 10 marks the day on which Saint George was tortured on the wheel. According to tradition, this day of commemoration was established by the holy Equal-to-the-Apostles Nino, the Enlightener of Georgia. Saint Nino was a relative of Saint George the Trophy-bearer.

She revered him deeply and directed the people she had converted to Christianity to cherish him as their special protector.

CANDLE / BULLETIN SPONSORS FOR DECEMBER

Bulletin: (\$50)

Chandelier: (\$50) Elchisco Family: in loving memory of mom Helen Elchisco

Altar Candles: (\$50)

Candles on the tomb: (\$25) Diane: in loving memory of Aunt Marion & Uncle Norm

Eternal Light & Icon Screen: (\$25) Jean: In memory of her father William Pipenur

NOVEMBER SPECIAL COLLECTION

Holiday Bureau

PRAYER LIST Updated 10-24

Clergy:

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius
His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman
John Duranko (*Father's home pastor*)
James Gleason (*Father's Spiritual Father*)
Moses Barry
Joseph Gibson
Gregory Grivna
Emilian Hutnyan
Josef Von Klarr
Vladimir Lecko
Myron Manzuk
Christopher Phillips
Peter Tutko
Deacon Paul Mitchell
Deacon Mark Sauskojus
Sub-deacon Wylie Meath

Matushkii:

Pani Patricia Duranko
Melania Adamcio
Virginia Lecko
Snezana Ruzic
Sonya Tutko
Victoria Kopistiansky

Parishioners / & their Family:

John Beadle (*Elcishko*)
MaryAnn Cook (*Cousin to Twarek's*)
John Richard Elchisco
Ruthe Flewelling
Debbie Garnek (*Roddie's sister*)
Michael Glovinsky (*Basil's nephew*)
Ernest Gresh (*Basil's nephew*)
Shirley Gresh (*Wife of Ernest*)
Aldin Griffith (*Soski*)
Julia Guzy
Joseph Habegger (*Laura brother-in-law*)
Alice Jackson (*Mazurik*)
William Jappsen (*Diane T.*)
Michael Kouznetsov (*Mary Hiser's son*)
Kristen (*Cassell's daughter*)
David LaValle (*Fr.'s cousin*)
Helen Lis
Walter Litzie (*Fr.'s cousin*)
Greg Mazur
Judy Mazurik (*Paul Mazurik's*)

Baby Stella Miller
Katelyn Pipenur (*Niece of Jean*)
Earl Rindfleisch
Helen Jean Rofkar (*Elchisco*)
Margaret Rose
Steven Schirtzinger (*Soski*)
Christy Schutt (*Joe's sister*)
Peter Truta (*Jean H's cousin*)
Diane Tryon
Greg Tryon
Christine Twarek
Katie and her newborn Bodhi
(*Cassell's daughter-in-law*)
Pani Stacey Mihaley & her un-
born baby

Other Requests:

Alexia
George Bicheler
Dick Biro (*Natalie's friend*)
Anna Burch (*Wayne's friend*)
Michael Chemorov (*Cassell*)
Mary Ann Cook (*Twarek*)
Bob Cook (*Twarek*)
Ben Franklin (*Laura friend*)
Theodore Geletka
(*St. Michael Broadview Heights'*
choir director)
Brad George (*Christi's friend*)
Donald Gresh (*Basil*)
Elliot Joy (*Police chief's son*)
Scott Kluding (*Twarek*)
Tommy Leonchik (*Fr's friend*)
Jake Lipstraw (*Twarek*)
Mark Ludvik (*Guzy*)
Anna Maiani (*Friend of Wayne*)
Pauline Meath (*Fr's*)
Charlie Nowak (*Avery's*)
Debbie Pribanic (*Golob*)
Beth Reinhard (*Diane friend*)
Elvis Reyes (*Fr's friend*)
Sandy Scafaria (*friend of Jean*)
Scott Smith (*Sammy friend*)
Matthew Sterling (*Tyron*)
Janice Timko
Philip (Andy) Timko
Steve Turinsky (*Twarek*)

Chuck Wiedenhoft (*Twarek*)
Rachel (*Darlene M.*)
Tracy (*Cassell*)
Mat. Carley & her newborn-
born Anna Alexandra
(*Cathedral in Chicago*)
Elizabeth McDonald & her
unborn Baby (*Fr's friend*)
Kristina and her unborn baby
(*Fr. Friend*)

Military:

Craig Cassell
Nathan Brown

Captives:

Metropolitan Paul
(*Orthodox Archdiocese of
Aleppo*)
Archbishop John
(*Syriac Archdiocese of
Aleppo*)

The UN & IOCC humanitar-
ian aid workers in & around
Syria; Those suffering perse-
cution in Iraq, Syria, Israel,
Egypt, Ukraine and through-
out the world

*NOTE: Please let Fr. Andrew
know when someone needs to
go on or come off the list.*

For Your Prayers

Julia Guzy (96 yrs old)
1601 Church Rd
Marblehead, OH 43440

Please remember her & Susan
(her daughter) in your prayers.
Send a card of greeting.

Metropolitan Requests Prayers for Victims of California Fires

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon requests the prayers of the faithful for the monastics, our brothers and sisters, the first responders, and all those affected by the fires currently burning in Sonoma County and throughout California.

His Eminence, Archbishop Benjamin reports the community of the Holy Assumption Monastery in Calistoga, California remains under an evacuation advisory. So far, the monastery has not been given notice to evacuate and it is expected the advisory will be lifted some time on Thursday. Several families from the Saint Seraphim Cathedral parish in Santa Rosa, California have been evacuated as the fires have threatened communities to the north and west of Santa Rosa. Santa Rosa itself experienced devastating fires two years ago and the area is still recovering from that blaze. No word has reached His Eminence that anyone has lost their home so far.

We ask your prayers for all those who have been evacuated and lost their homes be they members of our flock or not.

THE SALVATION ARMY'S 16th ANNUAL TREE-A-RAMA CHARITY AUCTION

Sunday, December 8 2019

Mon Ami Historic Restaurant and Winery
3845 East Wine Cellar Road
Port Clinton, OH 43452

Silent Auction: 2:00pm

Live Auction: 4:00pm

For more information call the Salvation Army @ 419-732-2769 & ask for the Director, Maureen Saponari or Amanda.

The fliers are on the bulletin Board in Church Basement



OCA Represented at 800th Anniversary of Autocephaly Celebration of Serbian Orthodox Church

The Serbian Orthodox Church is celebrating the 800th anniversary of autocephaly this year, and has been holding local celebrations here in North America throughout 2019. On Saturday, November 2, at the invitation of His Grace, Bishop Irinej, Archpriest Alexander Rentel, Chancellor of the Orthodox Church in America, represented His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon at the Diocese of Eastern America's celebration of the anniversary at the Cathedral of Saint Sava, Cambridge, Massachusetts. The Serbian Orthodox Church was granted autocephaly in the year 1219 by Ecumenical Patriarch Manuel I.

The Dioceses of Western America, and of Mid-America held similar celebrations over the summer at which Metropolitan Tikhon was represented by His Eminence, Archbishop Benjamin of San Francisco, and His Grace, Bishop Paul of Chicago respectively.

Earlier this year Metropolitan Tikhon sent a congratulatory message for the anniversary to His Holiness, Patriarch Irinej. In that letter Metropolitan Tikhon celebrated the close bonds shared between the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Orthodox Church in America, particularly through the 20th century saints Tikhon of Moscow, Sebastian of Jackson, Saint Nikolaj of Zicha, and Mardarije of Libertyville. Reflecting on the collaboration among these holy men, Metropolitan Tikhon wrote, "My prayer is that, in imitation of the blessed Serbian-American saints, the common work of our two churches here in North America may continue to "grow with the increase that is from God" while we jointly "hold fast to the Head," our one common Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ (Colossians 2:19)."

Metropolitan Tikhon, having visited Serbia in the past while he was the bishop of Philadelphia, has been invited by His Holiness, Patriarch Irinej to celebrate the consecration of the Cathedral of Saint Sava in Belgrade during the summer of 2020.

NOVEMBER CELEBRATIONS

ANNIVERSARY	BIRTHDAY	BIRTHDAY
11-13-2012: The Most Blessed Tikhon (Elected as Primate) 14- Fr. Matthew Moriak priestly ordination 11-15-1980: Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit <p style="text-align: center;">NAMESDAY</p> 11-6: Bishop Paul of Chicago 11-6: Retired Bishop Varlaam 11-25: Retired Bishop Lazar of Ottawa	1- Fr John Zdinak 7-Philip Sokolov 11- Amanda Kovach 16- Valerie Schutt 16- Madelyn 17- Kim Sorrentino 17- Cole Heffernan 17- Roddie Mazurik	18- Angie Kukay 19- Fr. Andrew Groom 19- Kristen Cassell 23- Cheyanne Welch 23- Joe Samilenko 28- Darryl Whitham 30- Kristen Basala

If there are those names to be added or removed, please contact Fr. Andrew. He would like to list all members of your family Orthodox and non-Orthodox.

NOVEMBER REPOSED

1-Peter Felenchak (1974)	11- Dorothy Bartek (2005)	23- George Michael Elchisco (2016)
2- Donald Sennich (1994)	11- Protodeacon Dennis Lucak (2018)	26- Janet Elchisko (2018)
3- Marian Glovinsky (2001)	11- Matushka Helen Lucak (2018)	28- Anna Grabonsky (1972)
5- Margaret Pietropolo (2009)	18- Archpriest George Timko (2000)	29-Alexander Mazur (2003)
6- Joseph Guzy (1974)	Former Pastor	Michael Guzy (1927)
6- William Rentz (2018)	19- Evelyn Biecheler (2002)	Mary Lou Hobson (2015)
8- Ann G Stretchberry (2003)	19- Fr. John Dolhy (2006)	Mary Hritsko (1948)
8- Anne Catherine Glovinsky (2004)	21- Ann S. Ratica (1991)	Anna Holodnak (1951)
	21- FR. Joseph Mihaly (1975)	John Danchisen (1951)
9- Ann Golob	22- Joann Carender	

Galatians 2:16-20 (Epistle)

knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Bishop Paul's Travel Schedule

St. Tikhon's Seminary, Waymart, PA, November 8th to 11th (*Student visitation*)

Holy Synod Fall Session, Syosset, NY, November 11th to 15th

Holy Trinity Cathedral, Chicago, IL, November 16th to 17th

Holy Trinity/St. Elizabeth the New Martyr, St. Paul, MINN, November 21st to 24th (*Ordinations of Luke Freeman, Craig Jarrell, and Sub Deacon Dan Bassett to the Diaconate*)

Metropolitan Tikhon welcomes Archbishop Elpidophoros to OCA Chancery

On Monday, November 4, 2019, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon, welcomed His Eminence, Archbishop Elpidophoros of the [Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America](#) on his first official visit to the Chancery of the Orthodox Church in America.

Accompanying His Eminence were His Grace, Bishop Apostolos of Medeia, Chief Secretary of the Holy Eparchial Synod; Protospresbyter Alexander Karloutsos, Vicar General of the Archdiocese; Archpriest Nicholas Kazarian and Mr. Nicholas Anton of the Archdiocese's Office of Inter-Orthodox, Ecumenical, and Interfaith Relations; and Deacon Eleftherios Constantine. In attendance from the Orthodox Church in America were His Eminence, Archbishop Michael of New York, Secretary of the Holy Synod, Archpriest Alexander Rentel, Chancellor, Protospresbyter Leonid Kishkovsky, Director of [External Affairs](#), and Archdeacon Joseph Matusiak, Secretary to the Metropolitan.

The visit began with Metropolitan Tikhon welcoming Archbishop Elpidophoros to Saint Sergius of Radonezh Chapel. After venerating the altar and the relics of the North American Saints, Metropolitan Tikhon addressed words of greetings to Archbishop Elpidophoros and presented him with an icon of the Valaam Mother of God. "With brotherly love, and great joy, I welcome Your Eminence to the Chancery of the Orthodox Church in America. It has been my honor in the past to host your predecessor, Archbishop Demetrios, and I am confident that my visit to the headquarters of the Greek Archdiocese and your visit here today will build upon the friendship we have developed over the years, and that we can look forward to a long and fruitful relationship as our churches look to work together for the Glory of God and the encouragement of the flock we lead."

In turn, His Eminence addressed the following words to Metropolitan Tikhon, "I am personally very happy to be here today because I feel that we have a very good friendship from the time I was Metropolitan and I had the joy and pleasure to host and welcome you to my monastery in Halki in Constantinople. And now, I see this new visit we have today as a continuation of our good friendship, and brotherhood that we

have established throughout the years. I am sure these good relations will continue, let's pray to see where this good friendship and love will guide us."

Lengthy discussions on various topics of mutual interest took place during a luncheon in the Chancery dining room. Among the matters discussed were the current and future relations, and dialogue between the Orthodox Church in America and the Ecumenical Patriarch; the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the USA; as well as the place of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Turkey.

With a Little Help from My (Dinosaur) Friends by Fr. Lawrence Farley

Who would have thought that dinosaurs would feature in Christian apologetics? Like everyone of my vintage, I loved dinosaurs when I was a child, and later thrilled to *Jurassic Park* (yep; I'm that old). But for all their reptilian roaring wonderfulness, dinosaurs never figured prominently in the world of my apologetic attempts to convert people to the Christian faith. Dinosaurs of course existed (we can view their re-assembled skeletons in museums), but—whatever. The truth (or otherwise) of the Christian Faith depended upon the evidence of the empty tomb and the resurrection of Jesus, not upon those large dinosaur skeletons.

Imagine then my surprise when one of my intelligent young people informed me that he was leaving the Church and abandoning the Faith because he "could not find dinosaurs in the Bible". My initial reaction was: "Wait—what?" When I eventually sorted it all out, the argument against the Faith went something like this: the Book of Genesis represented an historical account of creation, and since it did not mention dinosaurs, and since dinosaurs obviously existed (remember those skeletons in the museums), then the Book of Genesis was obviously wrong, and since the Church believed that the Book of Genesis recorded an historically accurate account of primordial history, the Church obviously could not be relied upon. So, the Christian Faith was wrong, and he was out of here. Years of pondering his defection still leaving me asking the question, "Wait—what?"

Con't Pg 7

Fr. Lawrence Con't

The question of course involves how we interpret the Book of Genesis. Do we believe that it represents an historical account of what actually happened? In some versions of this question, dates get mentioned, with some people doing the math in Genesis (and sometimes reading the Fathers), and concluding along with Archbishop Ussher and his crowd that the earth was created about 6000 B.C. Others avoid doing the math, but still read the first chapters of Genesis as an account of what actually went down historically long ago.

The Fathers read it as an historical account, but were not that emphatic or excited about the history. For them, the point of Genesis was not the historical narrative, but the meaning of the narrative, and this meaning could be best understood through an allegorization of the narrative. One soon gets the idea that our historical concerns (with our interminable debates over evolution) were not those of the Fathers, and perhaps would have bored them considerably. What happened historically was rather less important to them than what it all *meant*.

Meanwhile, the modern question remains as to how we should interpret the Book of Genesis. Should we read it primarily as a story expressing theological truth through the medium of ancient cosmology (with its assumption that the sky was solid and kept the celestial sea from falling down upon the earth), or should we read it primarily as an historical account of what actually happened? That is the question.

Some thoughtful readers have acknowledged a mythological element or two in Genesis—such as that solid sky in Genesis 1, or that talking snake in Genesis 3. But at the end of the day, they still accept it basically as an historical account, even if it does contain obviously mythological elements (or, if one prefers, “meta-historical elements”). Such people regard as non-negotiable the assertion that death and conflict in the world began only after the fall of Adam, so that before Adam sinned, no sentient being died. Death (defined as “the death of sentient beings”) only began after Adam sinned.

Admittedly the Genesis narrative does not specify what it means by “death” any more than St. Paul

does when he mentions it passing in his Epistle to the Romans. The sentence of death in Genesis clearly was intended for Adam, Eve, and presumably for their progeny. Not a word was said about the death of the animals that were created before them. Including the animals in the sentence of death God announced for Adam and Eve in Genesis (or Romans) is not exegesis, but interpretation—and perhaps eisegesis. Note too that asserting that animals did not die before Adam sinned also involves denying that any of them were created to be carnivores—something that is also absent from the Genesis text, and perhaps alien to its thought. One gets the idea that when Genesis says that God created the animals (such as the lions) it expected the readers to understand by this the animals they were familiar with—i.e. lions that ate meat, and roared after their prey, seeking their food from God (as in Psalm 104:21).

It is just here that an interpretation that reads these Genesis stories as meta-history (like the meta-histories of other creation stories of the ancient Near East) receives a little help from its dinosaur friends. All scientists acknowledge that dinosaurs lived before man appeared on earth. There is no credible dissenting scientific voice about this. Dinosaurs did not die out after Man appeared on earth, but *before* Man appeared on earth. This being so, it is clear that sentient beings died before Man appeared on earth and before Man (or Adam) sinned. So...(let's connect the dots) those stories of Genesis cannot be received and interpreted as historical accounts of what went down long ago, but as something else.

There really is no way around this conclusion. Let's review: IF the Genesis account is fundamentally historical to the point that the death of sentient beings occurred only died after Adam sinned, THEN dinosaurs lived and died out *after* Man/ Adam came upon the earth. If one is not willing to assert this, but acknowledges that dinosaurs died out before Man appeared on earth, then one must tweak the view that Genesis represents that kind of historical account, and must acknowledge that death, conflict, and “nature red in tooth and claw” *predated* the coming of Man/ Adam. One must then look again at what Genesis and Paul meant when they said that death came with Adam's sin, and ask the question, “What did Genesis and Paul mean by ‘death’?”

Con't Pg 8

Fr. Lawrence Con't

Acknowledging that dinosaurs lived and died before Man arose on the earth does not mean that the Bible is wrong, or that the Church has no credibility, or that one must renounce the Christian Faith and leave the Church to retain intellectual integrity. It simply means that the view which reads Genesis as primarily an historical account is not the only one on the market. One doesn't have to read the Book of Genesis as if it came from the History Channel. One can read it as if it came from the ancient Near East, and used the ancient cosmology as the vehicle for theological truth. I suggest the latter, and also suggest that the theological truth it offers was never more needed than it is today.

Luke 10:25-37 (Gospel)

And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" So he answered and said, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbor as yourself.'" And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live." But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.' So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

The Acquisition of Possessions

There is a lot of material wealth in this country. Many people have a good standard of living, and it shows by the kinds of things we have or are given. I gave up long ago buying gifts for anyone in my family, because they have so many things. I don't know what I could give them that they don't already have. So I resort to gift cards. It makes gift shopping for Christmas a whole lot easier. Here in Chicago, my Christmas shopping consists of a local trip to the Jewel-Osco grocery store, a visit to the gift card kiosk, and the Christmas gift card-holder part of the greeting card section.

We buy our children all kinds of sophisticated and expensive toys; let's not forget the Barbie dolls, and of course marketed toys from famous movies. Mel Brooks, playing "Yogurt" in the movie "Spaceballs," said the key to the Schwartz (instead of the Force), was "Merchandizing!" But it always amazes me how real young children get tremendous pleasure in going into a kitchen cabinet to take out pots and pans, banging them around, and maybe putting them back in, and taking them out again! Give a child some safe items from a junk drawer, and they will find something to do with them and be occupied for a while.

As we approach this Advent Fast, let us reflect on our acquisition of possessions. What do we really need versus what do we really want? What is our budget for gift buying? Can a part of the budget be diverted to supporting a worthy charitable endeavor? If you have a local FOCUS chapter or something comparable to that, would a more appropriate family gift be to take a shift and work at serving a meal? You can even sit down and get to know some of the people that come seeking a meal.

This Sunday, November 10th is the Sunday when the Good Samaritan parable is read. It always is read just before the Fast begins. Most know this story and have heard many sermons preached on it. If Christ in that gospel reading is the image the Good Samaritan, what can the story teach about our possessions, how we use them, and to what end? What does Christ teach us about what it means to be a Good Samaritan? Finally, to what end do we acquire things, for what purpose? The blessing of the Lord be upon you!
The unworthy +Paul