



13th Sunday of Luke 18:18-21

*"Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written of the Son of man by the prophets will be accomplished. For he will be delivered to the Gentiles, and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon; they will scourge him and kill him, and on the third day he will rise."  
(Thursday gospel Luke 10:19-21)*

On Wednesday we asked people before dinner what their expectations were when they go to church. What do they expect to find when they enter the building? Many things were said that require more of our attention and thought. Margaret did not wait her turn and said smiling and happy: "God and communion. Yes, that's what I expect to find." Margaret speaks slowly and with difficulty and she lives on heavy medication that keeps her alive, she says. That's why she can have only one espresso at a time, even though she loves it and would like more. Because of the medication, she doesn't know if the next day she would be able to come to us for the meal. "I don't know if I can come. I don't remember things and I don't know if I'll remember to come." However, one thing she remembers is that God is good. She keeps telling us that and that she loves Him. She loves communion too. She lives in church, she says.

Another answer that came back to us the next day, in the chapel when we reflected on the gospel of the day, was from Linda. She said that she expected to find the cross in church. Linda's answers are always short and well thought. She does not say anything that has no meaning for her. And she enjoys hearing the other answers, especially when they bring about humour in the room. On Thursday, her answer was revealed by the gospel and made us more attentive.

Jesus was preparing to go to Jerusalem when the young rich man came to Him. Just after He talks to him he tells the third time to his apostles about Jerusalem and the cross that was waiting for him there. When he told the young rich man to follow him, the road was clear and so was the invitation. Jesus loved the rich young man because of the goodness that he followed from an early age in his life. He had prepared all his life for this moment, to meet God face to face. For the encounter. And Christ invites him to come to the place where He was going to be glorified; and to share with Him the sacrificial love that God has for the sons of men. To be with Him by the cross where He was going to experience complete abandonment. Christ invites the rich young man to join His solitude while being on the cross. To break the betrayal of man with an act of faithfulness. He prepared for this moment, he was ready; but he failed, just because of one thing: his riches.

We do not know how Jesus received within his heart the failure of the young man but

we are left with the sorrowful heart of the rich young man that cannot be comforted by man. It is the heart that Jesus does not leave without hope: *"What is impossible with men is possible with God."*

*"No one is good but God alone."*

The church is the gathering of the saints that pick up the cross and follow Christ. A path of radical vulnerability in the abundant freedom that challenges the indulgence of the soul. In Deuteronomy, chapter 12, when God gives the commandments to Moses, He does so, the book says, in order for men to have no idols. To keep them safe from them and to have their heart for God alone. Riches are a powerful idol. Apart from all the moral implications that come out of it, riches are the place where evil hides



(Psalms) . One could not be on the cross being rich because that's the place where you have nothing, where even your faith is perishing. It is the place of radical poverty, the place that does not reveal in the heart the love that you knew. It is the place where power lacks. On the cross one loses everything and gains only one thing: faithfulness to the Father. It is this faithfulness to the Father that reveals his love and forgiveness for those who persecute the innocents who are vulnerable and powerless. The cross brings you as close as it gets to the goodness of the Father. This is the reward for the One on the cross while forgiveness and love starts to penetrate the hearts of the oppressors: "Truly this was the Son of God" .Mt 27:54

This was the place where the rich young man was invited to come. From a friend to a friend. From a heart that loves to the heart that genuinely is longing for love.

*"That he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby bringing the hostility to an end."* Sunday epistle - Ephesians 2:14-22

On the same day, Thursday, outside of the church, I met an old friend that I see maybe twice a year. He comes every now and then. This time he was passing by and stopped in front of the mission when he saw us outside. He stopped more to say hello to M. He told me that he believed that the community did a lot of good to her in the past. He knew

her from before, when she used to be all by herself in a house, looking out the window all day long. And now she was here looking happy and talking to people, welcoming them. He came and asked her if she recognized him. She said yes and he became happy. A. is a complex man with a complex heart. He's seen too much and done too much. He would say at times he is not a good man. However, there is something within him that cares for those who are profoundly vulnerable. Maybe he saw too much evil in his life, which made him sensitive to pure innocence. Who knows how the heart of man works? However, on Thursday, what I got to receive from him was a lot of rage against the church. This came from an innocent discussion when I mentioned to him about a movie that Br Luke was planning to play on Saturday for the young people: "Gods and men " (about the Trappist monks who were kidnapped and executed in Algeria). I knew that he had been there (I wouldn't have been surprised to hear that he had actually been in Algeria in the 90's, when the tragedy happened) and he spoke the language. He also speaks French very well and a few other languages. He told me things about the war between the French and the Algerians and the atrocities that the French did to them, he said. This hit a nerve that fueled all the rage against anything that is Christian, going down to any form of religious manifestation. He told me again things about the war in Algeria. He met people there who had experienced it. He attacked the Catholic church as he attacked the Orthodox about the present war in Ukraine and about how the church is rich and their leaders have expensive watches. There was so much anger in him that he would not even accept the need for reconciliation. At the end, he made a compromise. He said that reconciliation could happen but that it had to be on the terms of those who lived the oppression. For him, the church partners with the state and bears the same guilt if not even more because of her hypocrisy.

I felt for A' soul on Thursday. All that anger that does not believe in reconciliation is condemning its own soul. When we left, he gave me a hug, as a gesture that his anger is not towards the community, who takes care of M. and others, but against an evil that he saw happening and with which he cannot reconcile because forgiveness for him is a pie in the sky.

Richness is just an idol, the only one that keeps the people captive in order not to become saints. All the others eventually find a way to look within the heart for innocence. God knows, being in church we try to follow Christ, having many problems and struggling with many sins. However, the gathering, the heart of the community, is called to keep the church innocent of power. Not to become rich. To accept, through its "broken saints", to stay by the cross, as unworthy as we may feel at times. To reject the only idol that hides the cross away from us. Linda expects to find the cross in church, because Christ is on it. It is through this vulnerability that we can repent for all the things we did wrong in the past and in the present and be credible to people. The reconciliation with the world would come on its own terms, even though the wound could be deeply

filled up with anger. As right as my friend might have been about the history and present of our faults as the gathering that looks for holiness, one thing he lacks is forgiveness. This is coming only through the cross, whether he likes it or not. Because Christ does not speak to the powerful, that's the place where he stays silent, but rather with the innocents upon whom pain is inflicted. He comforts them and pleads with them to forgive. We need to become like unto them, in order to be credible to God and to men.

## Part I On going to Confession

We have entered the fasting period before Christmas.

This is a good time to approach the sacrament of Confession.

There are different practices on how often an Orthodox Christian should go to confession. The general rule is that the more often you receive Communion the more often you should receive the sacrament of confession.

At the Mission each of us who receive communion should speak with Father Nicolaie and ask how often we should receive communion and go to confession.

Why?

Frequent reception of the Eucharist (going to communion) implies a fervent Christian life. This implies that I don't live my life alone, making decisions all on my own, living with no other reference but what I want or like.

When I go to confession, I let another have a word in my life, challenging me or encouraging depending on what we confess.

It's not a confession of a series of infractions!

Confession does not make us "worthy" of the Eucharist. Living a life that is in conformity to the Eucharist we receive is the way we prepare for this gift. Going to confession is part of a fervent life that is hungry and thirsty for holiness.

So what shall we do? This coming Friday December 2 during the evening vigil father will be available for confession.

Fr. Roberto

## Community life

One of the interpretations about the needle and the camel was the narrow gate and the camel that cannot go through and enter the city.

Old churches in Romania had small doors, in order to prevent the Turks from entering them with their horses



and desecrating them, during the frequent invasions of those times. Eliana compared the needle with the airport check up point, where we have to go through the metal frame. She said at times you forget

about your baggage if you want to catch the plane. You just cannot take too many with you. And if you are late, you leave everything behind. Especially if the plane takes you to the ones you love.

On Friday, Coleen said that she learned more from the Friday reflection. And that the people who attended were really attentive. That was so true. We learned so much about the love that people have for the Truth in their heart, even though this truth reflects differently and in a personal way in each of us. The gospel puts the pieces together.



- Rev. Dr. Andrew Summerson continued this past Wednesday his three-week series of talks about The Liturgy and St Maximus the Confessor. Those in attendance received much food for thought. Please join us this coming Wednesday for Dr. Summerson`s last presentation of the series.
- During the fasting period before Christmas, you can bring home the icon of our patron saint, St. John the Compassionate, and keep it for one week, in order to pray for your families and for the poor. Please sign up on the sheet posted at the mission.
- There will be two Friday vigils in December. Please mark them in your calendars.

Mission church collections of 1 Sunday: Nov 13 2022, Donations 450,wine/candles \$30, Candle box \$28.25

Prayer list for the sick and those who have recovered:

Gaia; Linda; Leon; Trixie; Nick; Peter; José, George, Mihaela, Richard; Bernadette, Elisha; Kayla; Harley, Maria and Carlos; Omar; Elisabeth; Ben, Kim: George; Bernadette, Maria Becatam ;Seena; Ocean ,Tony, Nikitha; Dianne; Joy; Susie; Alex; Maurice; Lynn; Molly; Thomas; Varghese; Delia; Leela; Mary; Tanya; Basma; Aditi; Larry; Darius; Lori; Lisa; Cindy; Césare; Fatima; Debbie; Donald; Hermina; Råul; EK Thomas; Nebu; Evangelia; Sarah; Shelley; Bill; Ruth, Kristian and Frank; Maria; Binja ; Mike; Luke; Anusia; Lavalin's son; Sana; Father George Patrick, and Father Michael Miklos/Pani Karen Miklos; Dominique and her daughter; Mike; Luke; Arjuna; Joy; Susie; Alex; Lynn; Molly'; Thomas; Alex; Fathima; Frank; Chris; Evlokia; Mikayla and Luca; Karunawathi, Gloria, Vijekumari, Ronda, and Regina; Delia; Valerie; Tom; Traian; Peter; Marco; Kim; Tihomir; Kate; Payton Clark; Sana, and her family in Egypt; Isaiah; Mary; Sydney; Peter; Christine; Stephanie; Iulia; Jason; Sophia; Alexander; Charles; Tom; Paul; Phillip and his wife Juliet; Cristeena; Ann brown's daughter; Silvia; Jincy; Shiron Crisreen; Allain; Seena and her husband; Waheeda and children; Faizah; Shirin and her family; Cristina; Daniela, Jerry; Delia ; Ragaie; Victoria; Mike; Farida; Roselyne and family ; Ana; Cornelia; Leon; Jerry; Ocean; Gloria; Anne; Marina; Marie; Edemene; Joanna and family; Rejoice; Romana, Coline, Michael, Peter, Henry, George, Kelly; Tom; Marina; Kumari; Susan; child James; Aaron; Sylvia; Fr Jonathan; Tharshini and her two children; Ann Tyron and her family; Sandra Gomaz's children; Sameen; Sophia; Amy; Swetha and children; Charitha; Jitesh's parents; Demene; Carol; Gloria; Hawa Bibi; Vimaladevi; Fr. John and Pani Marie; Lynn; Michelle; Emanuel(Mani); Stefanie;

Geoff; Joey; Evangelia; Sophia; Melanie; Tanya; Piper; Darius; Zamalk; Nelly; Nahla; Mira; Sandral; Brenda; Vol; Gomaz; ; Helen; Paul; Wafaa. Fr David; Pani Donna

Please pray for the deceased: Jake; Richard; Fr Tony; Zatia; Tom; Fred; Shrin; Andre; Andree; Akhir; Arjuna; Dillon; Elena; Pani Mary; Rejoice`s mother; Edmund; Pani Eleanor; Fr John; Alexandru; Constantin; Robert; Fr Aurel; Georgi; Rada; Petre; Stela; William; Samuel; Debbie; John; Amy, Willie; Dave`s wife; Ana; Shirin`s cousin in Jordan; Father Lawrence; Dave; Anne Tyran`s father; Edith, Sr. Mary Magdalene; Joice; BettyAnn; James; Pauanasuy Kamthasang; Maria; Andrei; Agostina; Carminda; Vimaladevi's sister; Sri's mother; Carol's Mother and 23 year old nephew; Demene`s mother, Dalalzaki.



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We are an apostolate of the ecumenical patriarchate "Mother Church of Christ`s poor" under the Omophorion of Metropolitan Gregory of Nyssa

St. Silouan Chapel, November 27, 2022

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