

## 9<sup>th</sup> Gospel of Luke - The Gospel According to Luke 12:16-21

*“Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; **take your ease, eat, drink, be merry.**” But God said to him, “Fool! This night your soul is required of you.”*



The young woman who came at the end of dinner on Wednesday (some would say she was in her 20's, others in her 30's), just before Great Compline, was not at ease with herself or with others. She was nearly half naked and she collapsed on a chair. She was new to us; nobody had seen her before. Later she told us that she was running from somebody. Or at least she thought that she was being chased. One could easily tell that she was high, but that was not the main thing that transpired from her behaviour. It really seemed that she was running away from a form of evil, being already defeated by it. She needed to eat and drink coffee; she needed clothes and shoes. One could see her bare feet, with a few missing toes, a sign that evil had already put a mark on her body. She tried to eat, and she did so with difficulty. She drank the very hot coffee in one breath, just like a thirsty person would drink cold water on a summer day. The hot coffee must have burned her, but nobody could reach her quick enough to make her stop. It seemed that she was either very cold or that she was connecting to her pain by inflicting more on herself in that very moment. It was hard to watch and be close to her. Even though there was an inexplicable grace around her. It was hard because her condition seemed to defeat the purpose of any hope. The rich man in the parable had plenty of goods in his life and that was going to bring him closer to death. The young girl, it seemed at that moment, had no goods left for her soul, and yet hopes for her life were few to be seen. How do we understand the gospel of today when the life of a poor soul is rapidly perishing?

We brought her clothes and food. And a lady volunteer stayed with her and eventually succeeded in helping her change her clothes and shoes. “I can’t change the shoes, I have no time, I am being chased, I am trying to run away....” “The shoes will help you to run faster”, the volunteer said, and that made sense to her.

All the time she stayed with us she was absent, looking at you with big eyes who saw no hope around her and within people. If hell is real, she was coming right up from it. It was a mystery how she really ended up in church just as we were about to close.

We started Great Compline while she was still changing, with the help of the volunteer who did miracles with her. During incensing at the beginning of the service she was fully clothed and with shoes on. As the incensing was completed in the main room and as I was going back to the chapel, one could hear her voice behind, a voice that sounded different than before: “I want some of that...” She was incensed indeed, and she bound her head for a blessing. She received the blessing and it seemed that she would have stayed still there forever.

The gospel today is difficult for us to make sense of. Because the tendency in our life is to store the goods we have. Whatever those might be. Goodness in general, being fragile and so hunted today, seems in need of protection, being at risk in any encounter between people. If we have something good in our life it must be enjoyed away from the eyes of others, in solitude. Because evil feeds on goodness. How could anybody share with all the little good we have? Therefore, any modern man is “predestined” to end up like the rich full man because that’s his condition: to produce wealth and to consume it himself.

In the same way, the event on Wednesday was unexpected and hard to be understood with hope. If it was not for the blessing at the end when the poor child asked: “God bless me”. The question is not if the young woman has life preserved in her, but how can she, in the hell in which she lives, see God and ask for His blessing?

Being in a good place, surrounded by goods, where God has blessed him already, the rich man does not see Him anymore. God is absent for him. It is the rich man who answered his own question without bothering to wait for God’s answer. While in hell, the soul who is hunted by evil is running towards God and asks for His blessing because for her God is the only One who makes sense, the Only one she trusts.

Just as the goods cannot be stored in newly built houses, so life cannot be buried in hell. However, the Truth that we all hear and enjoy today comes at the price of the rich man’s soul and at the suffering of the young woman. Had they known each other, the fragility of life would have prevailed both in good and evil places.

**The question On Friday** - *“Who is the fool? Who is he today”* (coming from Tony, a volunteer)  
**Answer Ps 13:** *“The fool hath said in his heart: There is no God”*.

Tony told us that for him the fool is the one that does not forgive you when you make a mistake. He said, if you walk on the street and bump into somebody and then apologize and he still returns to you and says: “Hey, be careful where you are walking!” This had happened to him two days before. Br Luke said the fool is the one who answers hatred for hate. He gave us an example, from when he was walking down the street with a disturbed person we know. As she was swearing at people going by, he was surprised to see that people would reply to her in the same way. With the same words and with the same hatred. Even though one could see that the lady had a serious problem.

If there is no God, then man is nothing but a fool. And every evil is possible and justified. And any path that comes out of that foolishness takes us to death. Like in the psalms, we all become corrupt and anxious, and nothing can save us from self destruction.

We ended the day on Friday with a brother coming inside the church to tell us that this is a holy place. And that there is nothing above love. Love is above all, he says, above the Universe. He asked us to pray for him and his daughter, so that they may reconnect. She is in another country. He left the mission crying and asked for a hug.

Mission church collections of 1 Sunday: Nov 12, 2023, Church Donations \$300, Candles box \$28.25

*"I did not understand why the angel asked for his soul".* (the wondering of a child)

Only death can end a rich fool's greed. As only war can end the greed of rich nations. What is left behind is the suffering of many and the land that is desolate and produces no more fruit. The place where the prayer of the poor is the only hope for man to encounter the mercy of God.



The triumph of death, Brueghel painting

**This week:**

Feast of the presentation of the Mother of God into the Temple

**Monday, November 20 at 6:30 PM**

**Vesperal Divine Liturgy**

St Zoticos Mission, 193 Markham Road

Please, if you can, bring some finger food to share

**Wednesday, November 22 at 6:30**

Bridges – A review of St Basil's sermon

"In Time of Famine and Drought"



Retreat lead by Sister Catherine Aubin - **Jealousy: One of the Eight Deadly Thoughts**

**Saturday, November 25**

3 p.m. – first presentation by Sister Aubin

4:30 p.m. – Vespers, followed by a pizza supper, and a further one-hour presentation by Sister Aubin

**Sunday, November 26 - 8:30 a.m.** – Divine Liturgy; during coffee hour afterward, Sister Aubin will wrap things up for the community

**November 20 – 27**

**Monday – 6:30pm** Vespersal Divine Liturgy at St Zoticus Mission (193 Markham Rd – Please bring finger food)

<b>Tuesday</b>	8:30 am	Morning Prayer	<b>Wednesday</b>	4:00 pm 6:30 pm 7:45 pm	Vespers Bridges - review of St Basil's sermon Molben – prayer for peace
<b>Thursday</b>	8:30 am 12:30 pm 2:00 pm	Morning Prayer Noon Hours Jesus Prayer	<b>Friday</b>	7:00 am 12:30pm 2:00pm	Orthros Noon Hours Jesus Prayer
<b>Saturday</b>	3:00pm  4:30pm	1 <sup>st</sup> Sr. Aubin presentation Vespers, pizza & 2 <sup>nd</sup> presentation	<b>Sunday</b>	7:00 am 8:30 am	Orthros Divine Liturgy during coffee hour afterward, Sr. Aubin will wrap things up for the community



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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. Siluan Chapel, November 19, 2023

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