



26th Sunday After Pentecost

Afterfeast of the Entry of the Theotokos

St. Alexander Nevsky

23 November / 6 December

Resurrection Tropar, Tone 1: When the stone had been sealed by the Jews; / while the soldiers were guarding Thy Most Pure Body; / Thou didst rise on the third day, O Saviour, / granting life to the world. / The Powers of Heaven therefore cried to Thee O Giver of Life: / glory to Thy Resurrection O Christ! / Glory to Thy Kingdom; / Glory to Thy Dispensation, O Thou who lovest mankind.

Troparion of the Feast: Today is the prelude of God's goodwill/ and the prophecy of the salvation of men./ The Virgin appears openly in the temple of God and foretells Christ to all./ So let us cry to her with loud voices:/ Rejoice, thou who art the fulfilment of the Creator's providence.

Troparion — Tone 4: Christ revealed you, O Blessed Alexander / as a new and glorious worker of wonders; / a man and a prince well pleasing to God / and a divine treasure of the Russian Land. / Today we assemble in faith and love / to glorify the Lord by joyously remembering you. / He granted you the grace of healing, / therefore entreat Him to strengthen your suffering spiritual children, / and to save all Orthodox Christians.

Resurrection Kondak, Tone 1: As God, Thou didst rise from the tomb in glory, / Raising the world with Thyself. / Human nature praises Thee as God, for death has vanished. / Adam exults O Master, Eve rejoices, for she is freed from bondage, and cries to Thee; / Thou art the Giver of Resurrection to all, O Christ.

Kontakion of the Feast: The most pure Temple of the Saviour,/ the most precious bridal chamber and Virgin,/ the sacred treasury of the glory of God,/ today enters into the house of the Lord,/ bringing with her the grace that is the Divine Spirit./ And the angels of God sing of her:/ This is the heavenly tabernacle.

Kontakion — Tone 8: We honor you as a most radiant, spiritual star, / rising up from the east; going down in the west! / As you enriched the Russian people with good works and miracles, / so now enlighten us who remember you in faith, O Blessed Alexander. / Today as we celebrate your falling asleep, we ask you to beseech the Lord / that He may strengthen his suffering servants and save all Orthodox Christians!

Matins Gospel IV

for Sunday: Eph . 5:8-19

Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), Finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light." See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.

NOT AS FOOLS, BUT AS WISE, REDEEMING THE TIME, BECAUSE THE DAYS ARE EVIL

The acquisition of God's Spirit is also capital, but grace-given and eternal, and it is gained in very similar ways, almost the same ways as monetary, social and temporal capital. God the Word, the God-Man, our Lord Jesus Christ, likens our life to a market, and the work of our life on earth He calls buying, and says to us all: Buy till I come, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. That is to say, economize the time for receiving heavenly blessings through earthly goods. Earthly goods are virtuous acts performed for Christ's sake and conferring on us the grace of the Holy Spirit, without whom there is not and cannot be any salvation; for it is written: 'By the Holy Spirit is every soul quickened and by purity exalted, yea, is made bright by the Three in One in holy mystery' [from Orthodox Matins hymn]. The Holy Spirit Itself enters our souls, and this entrance into our souls of Him the Almighty ...is only granted to us through our own assiduous acquisition of the Holy Spirit, which prepares in our soul and body a throne for the all-creative presence of God with our spirit according to His irrevocable word: I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people (Lev. 26:12) ...Most of all it is given through prayer; for prayer is somehow always in our hands as an instrument for acquiring the grace of the Spirit ...prayer is always possible for everyone, rich and poor, noble and simple. strong and weak. healthy and suffering, righteous and sinful ...Trade thus spiritually in virtue. Distribute the gifts of the grace of the Holy Spirit to them that ask, as a candle, burning with earthly fire, lights other candles for the illumining of all in other places, but diminishes not its own light.

St. Seraphim of Sarov, Conversation with Nicholas Motovilov Concerning the Aim of the Christian Life. B#26, pp. 269-270.

for the Saint: Gal . 5:22-6:2

for Sunday Luke 12:16-21

Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry." ' But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

THE RICH MAN WHO HAD A GOOD HARVEST

The Gospel for last Sunday related to us the parable about the Merciful Samaritan and finished with these words: "Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise" (Lk. 10:37). And today's Gospel- how does it end? "But God said unto him... This night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God" (Lk. 12:20)

Here are two different ways. They both bring us to our last moment- to death. But there is no death, but rather eternal life. This means that these different paths bring us to the mysterious passage, to the meeting with eternity. All of us have to meet this mysterious something

And this meeting will prove to be the most important moment of our entire life on earth, basically what we have lived for. There aren't even words in our language to express it; but today's Gospel and also last Sunday's Gospel give us some indications of this moment, this meeting. At the end of one way will thunder the terrible word, "Fool!" (Lk. 12: 20). At the end of the other way, the Gospel does not even give us the word which we will hear, but says only: "Go, and do thou likewise!"

This means, only do the same, act in the same way! And you will receive what no words can express. What determines these two paths? The entire attitude of our life. And this attitude is expressed in our every step, in every action, in every breath. And how strange! Attitude seems to be something unimportant to people, something incidental. But it is not so in God's eyes. This attitude is just what defines that great mystery which you and I will meet then, at the moment of departure; and that which will determine our lot for ever.

The Merciful Samaritan lived in love for God and neighbour. And every human being was his neighbour. He was as if living in one great family of the Heavenly Father. For him everyone was a brother or sister, and he was a brother to everyone. And the one who fell among robbers was dear to him - he could not pass him by. He stopped, although he too was probably hurrying on some business, like those who did pass by. He helped him, put him on his donkey, brought him to an inn, and entrusted his further care to the innkeeper. He paid for him, and should the innkeeper spend more, he promised to reimburse him when he returned. From all this, it is not difficult for us to determine the attitude of this his life: he loved God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his strength, with all his mind; and his neighbour as himself (Lk. 10:27).

What was the life attitude of the rich man in today's Gospel? As a manager he apparently was a good one; and as a man he was sensible and practical. See how he reasoned: "I will pull down my barns, and build greater: and there will I bestow all my fruits and my (Lk. 12:18). Listen to what he says: my fruits, my goods, not even mentioning God; and yet the harvest came from God! And further: I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry (Lk. 12: 19). And where was love for neighbour? There was none. Not even a thought for his neighbour. All care was for himself alone: rest, food, drink, merriment - only for himself. Selfishness - this was the attitude of his life.

Brothers and sisters, what is the spirit of our life, what is its attitude? I think if we honestly answer this question, then we will see in ourselves some of both. We have in us mercy, but not a little egotism. And if this is so, let us think about these words: "This night thy soul shall be required of thee." Indeed, this is so, this is true. "This night" means for us any night, any day or hour; but it will definitely be taken. And then, what will our soul hear? What the rich man, the egotist, heard, "Fool!" or will we see that light which appeared to the Merciful Samaritan? Yes, this will be a sentence for all eternity, and this sentence depends on the whole attitude of our life, its spirit.

Before it is too late, let us choose this wonderful attitude of the Merciful Samaritan and let us fight our selfishness as our enemy. Let us fight until death. And let us always remember, "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy" (Mt. 5:7)

Archbishop Andrei, The One Thing Needful

for the Saint: Matt . 11:27-30

Saints of the week

23 November / 6 December — Afterfeast of the Entry into the Temple of the Most Holy Theotokos —Nativity Fast — St Amphilochius, Bishop of Iconium — A fellow-countryman and friend of St Basil the Great and other great saints of the fourth century, Amphilochius early forsook the bustle of the world and withdrew to a cave where, as the solitary, he lived in asceticism for forty years. The episcopal throne in Iconium then fell empty, and Amphilochius was chosen in a wonderful way and consecrated as Bishop of Iconium. He was a marvellous shepherd and a great defender of the purity of the Orthodox faith, and took part in the Second Ecumenical Council in 381. He fought zealously against Macedonius, and against the Arians and the Eunomians. He personally begged Theodosius the Great to drive the Arians out of every city in the Empire, but the Emperor did not comply with his request. After a few days, Amphilochius came before the Emperor again. When the bishop was taken into the presence-chamber, the Emperor was sitting on his throne with his son Arcadius, whom he had taken as co-Emperor, sitting at his right hand. Entering the room, Amphilochius did reverence to Theodosius, but ignored Arcadius as though he were not there. Infuriated by this, the Emperor Theodosius commanded that Amphilochius be instantly driven from court. The saint then said to the Emperor: 'Do you see, O Emperor, how you do not tolerate a slight paid to your son? In the same way, God the Father does not tolerate dishonour paid to His Son, turning with loathing from those who blaspheme against Him, and being angered at that accursed Arian heresy.' Hearing this, the Emperor understood the reason for Amphilochius's seeming disrespect towards his son, and marvelled at his wisdom and daring. Among many other works, Amphilochius wrote several books on the Faith. He entered into rest in 395 in great old age, and went to immortal life.

St Alexander of the Neva (Nevsky) - The son of Prince Yaroslav, his heart was drawn to God from his youth. He overcame the Swedes on the river Neva on July 15th, 1240, whence he took the name 'of the Neva'. On that occasion, Ss Boris and Gleb appeared to one of Alexander's generals and promised their aid to the great prince, their kinsman. Among the Golden Horde of the Tartars, he refused to sacrifice to idols or pass through fire. The Tartar Khan valued him for his wisdom, and his physical strength and beauty. He built many churches, and performed innumerable works of mercy. He entered into rest at the age of forty-three, on November 14th, 1263, today being the commemoration of the translation of his relics to the city of Vladimir; St Gregory, Bishop of Agrigentum; St Mitrophan, Bishop of Voronezh' St. Trudo, Abbot.

24 November / 7 December — Afterfeast of the Entry into the Temple of the Most Holy Theotokos —Nativity Fast — The Holy and Great Martyr Catherine — The daughter of King Constus, she lived with her mother in Alexandria after her father's death. Her mother was secretly a Christian and, through her spiritual father, brought Catherine to the Christian faith. In a vision, St Catherine received a ring from the Lord Jesus Himself as a sign of her betrothal to Him. This ring remains on her finger to this day. Catherine was greatly gifted by God, exceptionally well-educated in Greek philosophy, medicine, rhetoric and logic, and added great physical beauty to this. When the wicked Emperor Maxentius offered sacrifice to idols and ordered everyone to do the same, St Catherine came with daring before him and denounced his idolatrous errors. The Emperor, seeing that she surpassed him in wisdom and learning, summoned fifty of the wisest men, to dispute with her about faith and put her to shame, but Catherine was wiser than they, and put them to shame. The furious Emperor commanded that all fifty wise men be burned. These wise men, at St Catherine's prayers, all confessed the name of Christ at the moment of death, and proclaimed themselves Christians. When the martyr was in prison, she brought Porphyrius the general, with two hundred of his soldiers, to the Faith, and also the Empress, Augusta-Vasilissa. They all suffered for Christ. At St Catherine's martyrdom, an angel of God appeared to her, stopping and breaking the wheel on which she was being tortured, and after that the Lord Christ Himself appeared to her, strengthening her. After many tortures, Catherine was beheaded with the sword at the age of eighteen, on November 24th, 310. Milk flowed from her body in place of blood. Her wonderworking relics are preserved on Sinai. St. Minver, virgin of Cornwall, St. Romanus of Bordeaux (d.382)' The Holy and Great Martyr Mercurius; The Holy Maiden Mastridia.

25 November / 8 December — Apodosis of the Entry into the Temple — Nativity Fast - The Hieromartyr Clement Bishop of Rome - Born in Rome and of royal blood, he was a contemporary of the apostles. His mother and two brothers were caught by a storm on a voyage and driven to different places. His father then went off to find his wife and sons, and himself disappeared. Clement, being then twenty-four years old, set off eastwards to look for his parents and brothers. In Alexandria, he made the acquaintance of the Apostle Barnabas, and afterwards became a friend of the Apostle Peter, who was already being followed by his two brothers, Faustinus and Faustinian. By God's providence, the Apostle Peter found Clement's aged mother, who was living as a beggar-woman, and then his father also. Thus the whole family was reunited, and they all returned to Rome as Christians. Clement remained linked with the great apostles, who made him bishop before their death. After Peter's death by martyrdom, Linus was bishop in Rome, then Cletus—both of them only for a short time—and then Clement. He governed the Church of God with burning zeal and, from day to day, brought large numbers of unbelievers to the Faith. He set seven scribes to record the lives of the Christian martyrs who were at that time suffering for their Lord. The Emperor Trajan drove him out to Cherson, where Clement found about two thousand exiled Christians, who were all put to the hard toil of cutting stone in an arid region. The Christians welcomed Clement with great joy, and he was to them a living source of comfort. By his prayers, he brought water from the dry ground and converted so many of the pagan inhabitants to Christianity that there were seventy-five churches built in that place in one year. To prevent the further spreading of the Christian faith, Clement was condemned to death, and drowned in the sea with a stone round his neck in the year 101. His wonderworking relics were taken out of the sea only in the time of Ss Cyril and Methodius; The Hieromartyr Peter, Archbishop of Alexandria; Our Holy Father Paphnutius.

26 November / 9 December — Nativity Fast— Our Holy Father Alypius the Stylite - Born in Hadrianopolis, a city in Paphlagonia, he was from his youth dedicated to the service of God. As a deacon, he served in the church in that city with Bishop Theodore. But, desiring a solitary life of prayer and meditation, Alypius withdrew to a Greek cemetery outside the city, from which people fled as from a place of terror, as demonic visions had been seen there. Here he erected a Cross, and built a church in honour of St Euphemia, who had appeared to him in a dream. Near the church, he built a high pillar, climbed up onto it and spent fifty-three years there in fasting and prayer. Neither the mockery of men nor the evil demons could drive him away or shake his purpose. This saint endured endless assaults from the demons. They not only tried to terrify him with demonic apparitions, but also stoned him and gave him no peace day nor night for a long time. But Alypius courageously defended himself against this diabolical power with the sign of the Cross and the name of Jesus. Finally, the vanquished demons left him and fled, and men began to revere him and to come to him for his prayers, comfort, teaching and healing. Two monasteries were built beside his pillar, on one side for men and on the other for women. His mother and sisters lived in the women's monastery. St Alypius guided the monks and nuns from his pillar by word and example, and shone like the sun in the sky for them all, showing them the way of salvation. This man of God had such grace that he was often bathed in heavenly light, and a pillar of this light stretched above him to heaven. Alypius was a great and mighty wonderworker, both in his lifetime and after his death. Living for a hundred years, he entered into rest in the year 640, in the time of Emperor Heraclius. Of his holy relics, the head is preserved in the monastery of Koutloumousiou on the Holy Mountain. Our Holy Father James the Solitary; Our Holy Father Stylianus; Our Holy Father Nikon the Preacher of Repentance; St Innocent of Irkutsk.

27 November / 10 December — Nativity Fast -The Holy Martyr James the Persian - Born in the Persian town of Elapa, or Vilat, of Christian parents, he was brought up in the Christian faith and married a Christian wife. The Persian king, Yezdegerd, loved James for his gifts and for his skill, and made him a noble at his court. Flattered by the king, James was deluded and offered sacrifice to idols, which the king also worshipped. His mother and wife, hearing of this, wrote him a reproachful letter in which they grieved over him as an apostate and one spiritually dead, begging him at the end of the letter to repent and return to Christ. Moved by this letter, James repented bitterly, and courageously confessed his faith in Christ the Lord before the king. The furious king condemned him to death, and added that his body was to be cut to pieces, little by little, until he breathed his last. The executioners fulfilled this command of the accursed king to the letter, and first cut off James's fingers, then his toes, his legs and arms, his shoulders and finally his head. During the entire process, the repentant martyr gave thanks to God. A fragrance came from his wounds as of cypress. Thus this wonderful man repented of his sin, and his soul went to Christ his God in the heavenly Kingdom. He suffered in about 400. His head is to be found in Rome, and a part of his relics in Portugal, where he is commemorated on May 22nd. St. Congar, bishop of Somerset; St. Fergus, bishop of Glamis; The Seventeen Holy Fathers Martyred in India; Our Holy Father Romanus the Wonderworker; Our Holy Father Pinuphrius; Our Holy Father Nathanael.

28 November / 11 December — Nativity Fast — Our Holy Father, the Martyr Stephen the New - As aforesaid Hannah the mother of Samuel, so Anna the mother of Stephen prayed God to give her a son. Praying thus at one time in the Blachernae church in front of the icon of the most holy Mother of God, a light sleep fell on her, in which she saw the holy Virgin, radiant like the sun, and heard her voice: 'Woman, go in peace; in fulfilment of your prayer, you have a son in your womb.' Anna indeed conceived and bore a son, this holy Stephen. He received the monastic habit at the age of sixteen on Mount St Auxentius near Constantinople, at the hands of the elder John, from whom he learned divine wisdom and asceticism. When John entered into rest in the Lord, Stephen remained on that mountain in strict asceticism, taking on himself labour upon labour. His holiness drew many disciples to him. When the Emperor Constantine Copronymos began to persecute the icons even more ferociously than his foul father, Leo the Isaurian, Stephen showed himself to be a zealous defender of the veneration of the holy icons. The demented Emperor listened to various slanders against Stephen, and himself devised a number of intrigues, solely to break Stephen and get him out of the way. Stephen was exiled to the island of Proconnesus, and then taken to Constantinople, put in chains and cast into prison. There he met three hundred and forty-two captive monks, brought from all sides and thrown into prison for their veneration of icons. In the prison, they followed the whole order of church services as in a monastery. The wicked Emperor condemned Stephen to death. The saint foresaw his death forty days before, and took his leave of the brethren. The Emperor's servants took him from the prison and, beating and buffeting him, dragged him through the streets of Constantinople, calling on all who were on the Emperor's side to stone this 'enemy of the Emperor'. One of the heretics aimed a blow at the saint's head with a piece of wood, and the saint breathed his last. As Stephen the Protomartyr suffered at the hands of the Jews, so this Stephen suffered at the hands of the iconoclast heretics. This glorious soldier of Christ suffered in the year 767, at the age of fifty-three, and was crowned with unfading glory. The Holy New Martyr Christos; Our Holy Mother Anna; The Holy and Devout Emperor Maurice.

29 November / 12 December — Nativity Fast — The Holy Martyr Paramon, and 370 others - In Asian Bithynia, the governor, Aquilinus, was ferociously persecuting Christians. He once seized three hundred and seventy Christians and took them with him in bonds to some place where there was a temple to the god Poseidon. Here, the wicked governor tried to force them to offer sacrifice to idols. Although he threatened with death any who refused to obey his command, not a single one of the Christians submitted to it. At that time, there passed along the road running beside the temple a respected man called Paramon. He stopped beside the group of bound men and learned what was happening, then cried out: 'Oh how many innocent and righteous men does this foul governor desire to slaughter because they will not bow down to his dumb and dead idols? Paramon then continued on his way, and the furious governor sent servants to kill him. They caught up with him and seized him, first piercing his tongue with a thorn and then stripping him and stabbing him all over. Holy Paramon, with prayer in his heart, gave his soul into God's hands. After that, these three hundred and seventy martyrs, great sons of God and innocent lambs, were beheaded with the sword and thus entered into the immortal Kingdom of Christ the Lord. They suffered

in the year 250. Our Holy Father Acacius of Sinai; The Holy Martyr Dionysius Bishop of Corinth; St Tiridates King of Armenia; The Holy Martyr Apollonius.

St. Brendan of Birr - Friend and brother monk with Saint Brendan the Navigator at Clonard abbey. Spiritual student of Saint Finian. Founded the monastery at Birr in central Ireland c.540, and served as its abbot. Friend and advisor of Saint Columba. At Brendan's death, Columba had a vision of the abbot's soul being carried away by angels.

Tropar of Saint Brendan of Birr, Tone 8: Most glorious ascetic and chief of Ireland's Prophets, O Father Brendan, thou wast a bright beacon in the western isle guiding many to salvation. At thy heavenly birthday the Angels rejoiced and miraculously announced their joy to our Father Columba. The prayers of the righteous avail much for us sinners. Wherefore O Saint, pray to God for us that He will find us a place in the Mansions of the Blest.

Saint Sadwen of Wales - Brother of Saint Illtyd. Disciple of Saint Cadfan. Sixth century hermit. Several Welsh churches are dedicated to him.

Tropar of St Sadwen, tone 8: The remoteness of the Welsh mountains was thy desert, O Father Sadwen,/ where thou didst serve God in fasting and humility./ May thy continual intercession avail for us sinners that our souls may be saved.

HYMN OF PRAISE - Saint Alexander Nevsky

A knight of Christ, St. Alexander, A prince of the people and servant of the Lord- Ruler on earth and slave of the Almighty- This was the life of Nevsky. On the outside opulence, on the inside weeping; On the outside struggle, on the inside serenity; On the outside illusion, on the inside truth. Christ was the prize of this hero, Both in war and deceptive peace. In torment, Christ was his joy, In suffering, Christ was his assurance, In victory, Christ was the victor, And in death, Christ was his Resurrector! To him, in both worlds, all was Christ! He was the end; He was the living goal. The pious prince was an exemplar to his people, Of how one should serve the Lord. O holy Prince, help us also, By your brilliant power, by your holy prayers!

REFLECTION

God permits misfortune to befall the righteous, that He might glorify them more greatly. The overcoming of misfortune reveals both the glory of God and the glory of the righteous. St. Gregory of Agrigentum was, in all things, righteous and pleasing to God. But God permitted misfortune to befall him, similar to that misfortune that once overtook St. Athanasius and St. Macarius. Two priests, Sabinus and Crescens, for whom Gregory had done much good, could not at all tolerate Gregory's virtuousness. For such is the nature of vice, that it cannot tolerate virtue. Consequently, Sabinus and Crescens found a notorious prostitute and bribed her to malign Gregory by saying that he had had immoral relations with her. So it was that when Gregory was in church, the woman crept into his bedroom, and just as Gregory came out of church with the people, she emerged from his room. The two priests began to revile Gregory as a libertine. However, Gregory was composed and prepared for every suffering. They confined him in prison and then transferred him to Rome. The pope believed the slanderers and kept Gregory in prison for two and a half years, without a trial or a verdict. A council was then convened to try Gregory's case, but God judged before man could judge. The woman went insane and was brought mad before the council. She was unable to answer any questions. Gregory, the miracle-worker, prayed to God for her and she was healed, for the evil spirit came out of her. Then, through her tears, she confessed that she had been bribed to malign the man of God, and that immediately after she had committed the slander, the evil spirit had entered her and held her in its power. Sabinus and Crescens, along with the other maligners-more than a hundred in number-found their faces suddenly turned as black as coal, and they were punished with exile. St. Gregory was returned to his diocese and was received with great exultation by his people.

HOMILY on grace and gifts

But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ (Ephesians 4:7).

Here is the beginning of distinctions among Christians. At first, the Apostle enumerated that which unites us, that is, *one Lord, one Faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all* (Ephesians 4:5-6). Nevertheless, here he emphasizes that which makes us unwillingly different. The measure of the gift of Christ makes us different, the measure according to which the grace of the Holy Spirit is given. Christ is the Head of the great body that is called the Church. He creates that body and, individually, every member of that body; He is the Builder and He is the only One who knows the plan of that building. He does not allow one member in this building to be disproportionately great or small. He gives the proper measure to everything and everyone. Thus, He gives one five talents, another two, and another, one. He measures, and the Holy Spirit pours out His grace accordingly. No one should be angry or envious. No one should be angry, for if he has received less, he will have less to answer for. No one should be envious, for if someone has received more, it is not his, but God's. If he has much, much will be asked of him, as it is said in the divine parable of the talents.

O my brethren, let every one of us be conscious of the measure of our gift and our responsibility. Let us respect our gift and the gift of our neighbour, for all gifts are from God and are God's.

O Lord Jesus, the great Giver of diverse gifts, **to Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.**