

Pastoral Message from Fr. George for 11.24.23



In the parable in this past Sunday's Gospel lesson (Luke 12:16-21) Christ teaches us about a rich man who owned a profitable land. This man, however, possessed riches but did not possess wisdom. He was rich in this world, but he was not rich towards God because he could see neither his

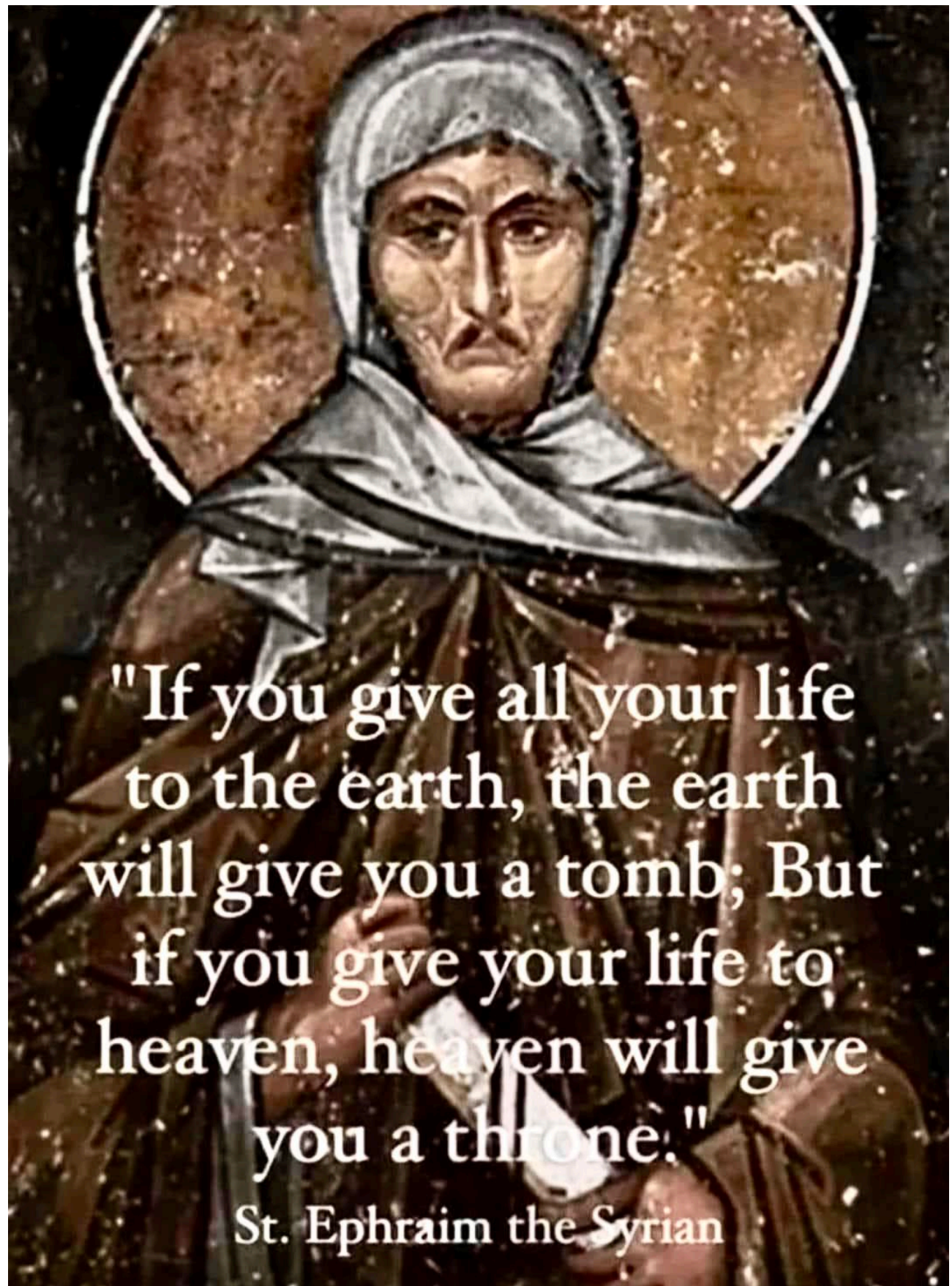
riches nor his life in the broader context of the Kingdom of God. He did not understand that his riches were a gift from God. He wanted to keep it all for himself, without considering the poor and the needy and without realizing that his own life would one day end, and he would not be able to carry any wealth on to the next life.

The Apostle Paul tells us that those rich in this present age should not be arrogant nor trust in uncertain riches but in the living God. He teaches us to do good, to be rich in good works, ready to give, and willing to share, so we can lay down a good foundation for eternal life.

The greatest riches in this world are communion with God, peace, and love. These only come by trusting God above all else and desiring Him over everything this world offers. Saint Porphyrios of Kavso-kalyvia says, “Complete trust in God – that’s what holy humility is.” By sharing what God gives us with the needy, we love God and our neighbor. In this way, our wealth of peace and joy increases, laying a foundation for eternal life.

God is the creator of all things, and all things belong to Him. He gives us generously and provides for all our needs because He loves us as a Father who provides for His children. When we receive His gifts with thankful hearts, we become rich towards God. When we use the riches, we are called to provide for the needy, the Church, and our loved ones, we become spiritually rich.

Selflessness and generosity bring joy and peace from God. It makes us rich with God. The more we give, the more blessings we receive from Him, even eternal life. No one can out-give God. Let us always trust our Father, Who provides us with every good gift from above and imitate Him in using riches with love and generosity for the benefit of others as a means towards the Kingdom of God. [From Archdiocese Department of Religious Education]



"If you give all your life
to the earth, the earth
will give you a tomb; But
if you give your life to
heaven, heaven will give
you a throne."

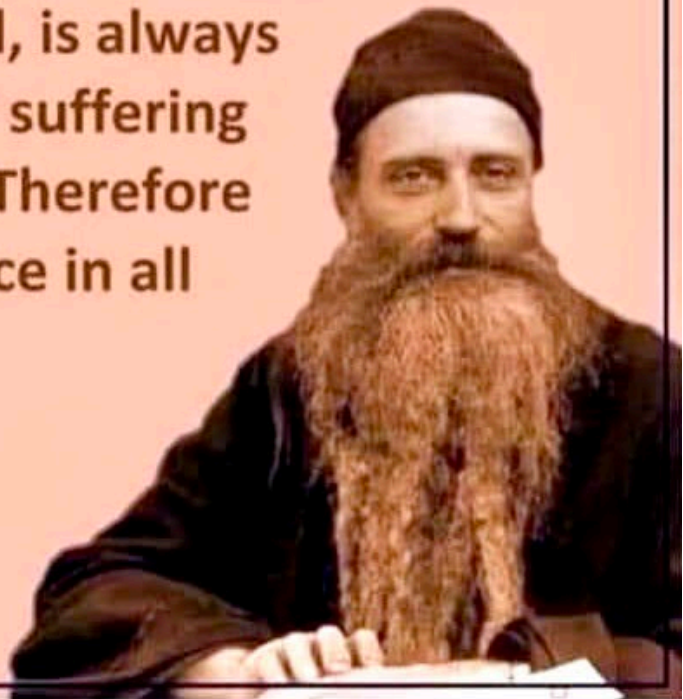
St. Ephraim the Syrian

Don't worry too much about how spiritually poor you are—God sees that, but for you it is expected to trust in God and pray to Him as best you can, never to fall into despair, and to struggle according to your strength.

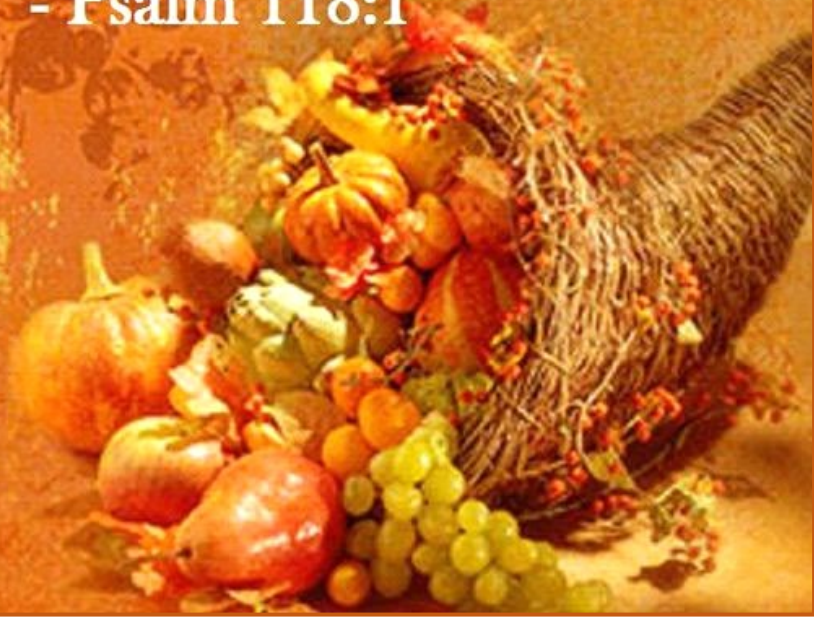
If you ever begin to think you are spiritually “well off”—then you can know for sure that you aren't!

True spiritual life, even on the most elementary level, is always accompanied by suffering and difficulties. Therefore you should rejoice in all your difficulties and sorrows.

- Fr. Seraphim Rose
(-1982)



Give thanks to the Lord,
for He is good; His love endures forever.
- Psalm 118:1



A PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Lord God, on this day of Thanksgiving,
We ask your blessings on our family,
our friends, our home, our health—and
on the food we are about to eat.

We thank you for this time together and
the many gifts that you have given us.

Help us to remember in this time of
bounty those less fortunate. And may
your love consume us all that we
might share in your glory.

Amen.





"Let us give thanks unto the Lord."

-The Divine Liturgy



The Divine Liturgy is also referred to as the Divine Eucharist. The word Eucharist is derived from the Greek word ευχαριστία (eucharistia) meaning "thanksgiving." Every Divine Liturgy we come together to give thanks to God and every Thanksgiving we come together to give thanks for what He has given us.



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

[Click to share a thought that comes to mind
about THANKSGIVING with Fr. George](#)



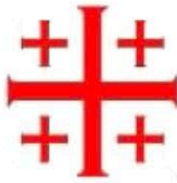
"The Nativity Forty-day Fast represents the fast undertaken by Moses, who, having fasted for forty days and forty nights, received the Commandments of God, written on stone tablets. And we, fasting for forty days, will reflect upon and receive from the Virgin, the living Word - not written upon stone - but born, incarnate, and we will commune of His Divine Body." - St. Symeon of Thessaloniki



His Eminence, Metropolitan Gregory's
NATIVITY FAST PRAYER CHALLENGE 2023

To Be Prayed Every Evening of the Nativity Fast

Most-merciful Master, Lord Jesus Christ our God, at Your Holy Birth, the choirs of angels proclaimed peace on earth. At Your Glorious Resurrection, You came to Your disciples saying "Peace be with you!" As we prepare to celebrate Your coming in the flesh, send Your peace upon the whole world, especially upon the Holy Land and all other places of warfare and unrest. Cleanse us of all impurity, O Lord, so that our hearts may be filled with Your peace which surpasses all understanding. In this way, may we live peacefully according to Your commandments in our families, communities, and churches. For You are the King of Peace and the Savior of our Souls, and to You we give glory forever. Amen!



PATRIARCHS AND HEADS OF THE CHURCHES IN JERUSALEM

Statement on the Celebration of Advent and Christmas in the Midst of the War

November 10, 2023

Each year during the sacred seasons of Advent and Christmastide, our Christian communities throughout the Holy Land take great delight in their preparations for the commemoration of the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In addition to attendance in religious services, these celebrations have normally involved participation in numerous public festivities and the large-scale display of brightly lit and expensive decorations as a means of expressing our joy at the approach and arrival of the Feast of the Nativity.

But these are not normal times. Since the start of the War, there has been an atmosphere of sadness and pain. Thousands of innocent civilians, including women and children, have died or suffered serious injuries. Many more grieve over the loss of their homes, their loved ones, or the uncertain fate of those dear to them. Throughout the region, even more have lost their work and are suffering from serious economic challenges. Yet despite our repeated calls for a humanitarian ceasefire and a de-escalation of violence, the war continues.

Therefore, We, the Patriarchs and Heads of the Churches in Jerusalem, call upon our congregations to stand strong with those facing such afflictions by this year foregoing any unnecessarily festive activities. We likewise encourage our priests and the faithful to focus more on the spiritual meaning of Christmas in their pastoral activities and liturgical celebrations during this period, with all the focus directed at holding in our thoughts our brothers and sisters affected by this war and its consequences, and with fervent prayers for a just and lasting peace for our beloved Holy Land.

Moreover, during this season of giving, we also invite the faithful to advocate, pray, and contribute generously as they are able for the relief of the victims of this war and for those in dire need, as well as to encourage others to join them in this mission of mercy.

In these ways, we believe, we will be standing in support of those continuing to suffer—just as Christ did with us in his Incarnation, in order that all of God's children might receive the hope of a New Jerusalem in the presence of the Almighty, where "death shall be no more, neither mourning, nor crying, nor pain, for the former things have passed away" (Revelation 21:4).

—The Patriarchs and Heads of the Churches in Jerusalem

November 23, Thanksgiving Day

Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous, and give thanks to His Holy Name! (Ps. 97:12)

November 25, Feast of St. Katherine the Great Martyr (St. Christopher Church)

7:45 Orthros

9:00 Divine Liturgy

November 26, 13th Sunday of St. Luke

7:45 Orthros

9:00 Divine Liturgy

10:45 General Parish Assembly

1:00 Let's EAT!

November 27, (Archangel Michael Chapel)

9:00 Divine Liturgy

November 30, Feast of St. Andrew the First-Called (St. Christopher Church)

9:00 Divine Liturgy

December 3, 14th Sunday of St. Luke

7:45 Orthros

9:00 Divine Liturgy, Blessing of Five Loaves offered by

Susan & Pete Kleto & December Commemorations

11:00 Religious Education Classes

11:45 Community Tree Decorating – all invited to assist

Noon Deadline for Parish Council Nominations to be

received by Board of Elections members

