



St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre Orthodox Church

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Services Schedule

Please see our [online calendar](#) for dates and times of Feast Day services.

Bulletin for Sunday, November 10, 2024

Welcome



Jesus Christ taught us to love and serve all people, regardless of their ethnicity or nationality. To understand that, we need to look no further than to the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). Every time we celebrate the Divine Liturgy, it is offered "on behalf

of all, and for all." As Orthodox Christians we stand against racism and bigotry. All human beings share one common identity as children of God. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatian 3:28)

Members of our Parish Council are:

Greg Jankura - Vice President
Position Vacant- President
Sharon Hanson - Member at Large
Luba Martins - Member at Large
Susan Egan - Treasurer
Dn Timothy Skuby - Secretary

Pastoral Care - General Information

Emergency Sick Calls can be made at any time. Please call Fr Steven at (860) 322-2906, when a family member is admitted to the hospital.

Anointing in Sickness: The Sacrament of Unction is available in Church, the hospital, or your home, for anyone who is sick and suffering, however severe.

Marriages and Baptisms require early planning, scheduling and selections of sponsors (crown bearers or godparents). See Father before booking dates and reception halls!

Funerals are celebrated for practicing Orthodox Christians. Please see Father for details. The Church opposes cremation; we cannot celebrate funerals for cremations.

Announcements

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting will take place after Liturgy on Sunday, Nov 17th. **All parishioners (members and catecumens)** are expected to participate. All relevant documents will be available via the cloud (the link to be provided) a week before the meeting. If you would like to propose a resolution for the parish to consider, it must be presented to me *in writing*, the week before the meeting.

Vacation Time

Mat. Anne and I will be "away" on vacation from November 18th through December 6th. Please contact Fr Dn Timothy if you have any needs as he will be coordinating

coverage as necessary. Services will still be held as scheduled, although the Typica will be held instead of Liturgy. Please note that I will not be responding to emails or texts while away.

Steward Sunday 2024

<https://www.oca.org/news/headline-news/steward-sunday-thriving-in-ministry-program-for-parish-priests-and-clergy-wives>

Donations can be made at [oca.org/donate](https://www.oca.org/donate)

Prayers, Intercessions and Commemorations



Many years! to Daniel Cummings and Natalie Kurcharski on the occasion of their birthday,

Pray for: All those confined to hospitals, nursing homes, and their own homes due to illness; for all those who serve in the armed forces; widows,

orphans, prisoners, victims of violence, and refugees;

- All those suffering chronic illness, financial hardship, loneliness, addictions, abuse, abandonment and despair; those who are homeless, those who are institutionalized, those who have no one to pray for them;
- All Orthodox seminarians & families;

- all Orthodox monks and nuns, and all those considering monastic life; all Orthodox missionaries and their families.
- All those who have perished due to hatred, intolerance and pestilence; all those departed this life in the hope of the Resurrection.

Please let Fr. Steven know via email if you have more names for which to pray.

- Departed: Fr Anthony, Nona, Mat Ann Sovyrda, Evelyn and John
- Clergy and their families: Fr Sergei B, Fr David K, Fr Patrick B
- Catechumen: Kevin, James and Sarah
- Individuals and Families: Luba, Suzanne, Gail Galina, Rosemary, John, Daniel & Dayna, Kristen, Charles, Victor, Susan
- Birthdays and Name's Days this Month: Daniel Cummings (B), Natalie Kurcharski (B)
- Anniversaries this Month:
- Expecting and Newborn: Lynn, David and their unborn child, Keree, Steve and their unborn child, Valerie, Jason and their unborn child
- Traveling: Michael
- Sick and those in distress: Thomas, Sheri, Joanna, Joshua, Remy, Stormy, Scott, Anne, Noah, Nancy, Cathy, Joe, Stephen, Susan

Today's commemorated feasts and saints

20th SUNDAY AFTER

PENTECOST — Tone 3. Apostles of the Seventy: Erastus, Olympas, Herodion, Sosipater, Quartus, and Tertius (1st c.).

Martyr Orestes the Physician of Cappadocia (204). Hieromartyr Mílos (or Milēs) the Wonderworker, and two disciples (341). Ven. Theocteristus, Abbot of Symbola on Mt. Olympus, Bithynia (8th c.). Martyr Constantine, Prince of Georgia (852).

- Again we pray for those who have lost their lives because of the wars in Ukraine and in the Middle East: that the Lord our God may look upon them with mercy, and give them rest where there is neither sickness, or sorrow, but life everlasting.
- Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, for those who are suffering, wounded, grieving, or displaced because of the wars in Ukraine and in the Middle East.
- Again we pray for a cessation of the hostilities against Ukraine and the Middle East, and that reconciliation and peace will flourish there, we pray thee, hearken and have mercy.

A Prayer for Seminarians

Again we pray that the Lord our God will show favor to these students and will inspire their hearts, their minds, and their lips with the spirit of wisdom, of understanding, of holiness and fear; that He will enlighten those students with the light of His knowledge and will give them strength and perseverance, so that they may eagerly learn His divine law; that He will enable them to grow in wisdom, understanding, and virtue, for the glory of His holy name, and will give them health and long life for the upbuilding of His holy Church, we beg Thee, O Lord, hear us and

have mercy.

Parish Calendar

St Alexis Parish

November 10 to November 18, 2024

Sunday, November 10

Blessing of Icon of St Olga
8th Sunday of Luke
9:30AM Divine Liturgy

Monday, November 11

Menas of Egypt

Tuesday, November 12

Daniel Cummings
John the Merciful, Patriarch of Alexandria
8:30AM Matins
7:00PM Seekers and Catechumens

Wednesday, November 13

John Chrysostom, Archbishop of
Constantinople
8:00AM Akathist to St John Chrysostom

Thursday, November 14

Philip the Apostle
8:00AM Akathist to St Gregory Palamas
8:30AM Matins

Friday, November 15

Nativity Fast Begins

Saturday, November 16

Matthew the Apostle & Evangelist
Natalie Kucharski - B
8:30AM Akathist to St Matthew Evangelist
5:30PM Great Vespers

Sunday, November 17

Stewards of the OCA
Annual Meeting
9th Sunday of Luke
9:30AM Divine Liturgy

Monday, November 18

Plato the Great Martyr of Ancyra

Saints and Feasts

November 10

Erastus, Olympas, Rodion, Sosipater, Quartus, and Tertios, Apostles of the 70

Of these Saints, Olympas and Rodion became disciples of Peter, the chief Apostle, and came to Rome, where they were beheaded by Nero. The others reposed in peace, having become bishops: Sosipater of Iconium, Quartus of Beirut, and Erastus of Paneas, or Paneias (which was also called Caesarea of Philippi); Saint Erastus had been chamberlain of the city of Corinth (Rom.16:23).

November 11

Martyr Vincent

Saint Vincent is the most illustrious of the Martyrs of Spain. Because of his virtue, he was ordained deacon by Valerius, Bishop of Saragossa, who, because of his advanced age and an impediment in his speech, commissioned Vincent to be preacher of the Gospel. In 303, the impious Emperors Diocletian and Maximian sent Dacian to Spain as governor, with an edict to persecute the clergy. Saint Vincent

was brought with Bishop Valerius to Valencia; the bishop was sent into exile, but the holy deacon was tortured on a rack, and after suffering other cruel torments, gave up his soul into the hands of God on January 22 in the year 304.

November 13

John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople

This greatest and most beloved of all Christian orators was born in Antioch the Great in the year 344 or 347; his pious parents were called Secundus and Anthusa. After his mother was widowed at the age of twenty, she devoted herself to bringing up John and his elder sister in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. John received his literary training under Anthragathius the philosopher, and Libanius the sophist, who was the greatest Greek scholar and rhetorician of his day. Libanius was a pagan, and when asked before his death whom he wished to have for his successor, he said, "John, had not the Christians stolen him from us." With such a training, and with such gifts as he had by nature, John had before him a brilliant career as a rhetorician. But through the good example of his godly mother Anthusa and of the holy Bishop Meletius of Antioch (see Feb. 12), by whom he was ordained reader about the year 370, he chose instead to dedicate himself to God. From the years 374 to 381 he lived the monastic life in the hermitages that were near Antioch. His extreme asceticism undermined his health, compelling him to return to Antioch, where

Saint Meletius ordained him deacon about the year 381. Saint Meletius was called to Constantinople later that year to preside over the Second Ecumenical Council, during which he fell asleep in the Lord. In 386 Bishop Flavian ordained John presbyter of the Church of Antioch. Upon his elevation to the priesthood his career as a public preacher began, and his exceptional oratorical gifts were made manifest through his many sermons and commentaries. They are distinguished by their eloquence and the remarkable ease with which rich imagery and scriptural allusions are multiplied; by their depth of insight into the meaning of Scripture and the workings of God's providence; and, not least of all, by their earnestness and moral force, which issue from the heart of a blameless and guileless man who lived first what he preached to others. Because of his fame, he was chosen to succeed Saint Nectarius as Patriarch of Constantinople. He was taken away by stealth, to avoid the opposition of the people, and consecrated Patriarch of Constantinople on February 28, 398, by Theophilus, Patriarch of Alexandria, who was to prove his mortal enemy.

At that time the Emperor of the East was Arcadius, who had had Saint Arsenius the Great as his tutor (see May 8); Arcadius was a man of weak character, and much under the influence of his wife Eudoxia. The zealous and upright Chrysostom's unsparing censures of the lax morals in the imperial city stung the vain Eudoxia; through Theophilus' plottings and her collaboration, Saint John was banished to Pontus in 403. The people were in an uproar, and the following night an earthquake shook

the city; this so frightened the Empress Eudoxia that she begged Arcadius to call Chrysostom back. While his return was triumphant, his reconciliation with the Empress did not last long. When she had a silver statue of herself erected in the forum before the Church of the Holy Wisdom (Saint Sophia) in September of 403, and had it dedicated with much unseemly revelry, Saint John thundered against her, and she could not forgive him. In June of 404 he was exiled to Cucusus, on the borders of Cilicia and Armenia. From here he exchanged letters with Pope Innocent of Rome, who sent bishops and priests to Constantinople requesting that a council be held. Saint John's enemies, dreading his return, prevailed upon the Emperor to see an insult in this, and had John taken to a more remote place of banishment called Pityus near the Caucasus. The journey was filled with bitter sufferings for the aged bishop, both because of the harshness of the elements and the cruelty of one of his 310 guards. He did not reach Pityus, but gave up his soul to the Lord near Comana in Pontus, at the chapel of the Martyr Basiliscus (see May 22), who had appeared to him shortly before, foretelling the day of his death, which came to pass on September 14, 407. His last words were "Glory be to God for all things." His holy relics were brought from Comana to Constantinople thirty-one years later by the Emperor Theodosius the Younger and Saint Pulcheria his sister, the children of Arcadius and Eudoxia, with fervent supplications that the sin of their parents against him be forgiven; this return of his holy relics is celebrated on January 27.

Saint John was surnamed Chrysostom ("Golden-mouth") because of his eloquence. He made exhaustive commentaries on the divine Scriptures and was the author of more works than any other Church Father, leaving us complete commentaries on the Book of Genesis, the Gospels of Saints Matthew and John, the Acts, and all the Epistles of Saint Paul. His extant works are 1,447 sermons and 240 epistles. Twenty-two teachers of the Church have written homilies of praise in his honour. Besides his feasts today and on January 27, he is celebrated as one of the Three Hierarchs on January 30, together with Saint Basil the Great and Saint Gregory the Theologian.

It should be noted that, because September 14 is the Exaltation of the Cross, the Saint's memory has been transferred to this day.

November 14

Philip the Apostle

This Apostle, one of the Twelve, was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and was a compatriot of Andrew and Peter. He was instructed in the teachings of the Law, and devoted himself to the study of the prophetic books. Therefore, when the Lord Jesus called him to the dignity of apostleship, he immediately sought out and found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of Whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph" (John 1.45). Having preached Jesus the God-man throughout many parts of Asia Minor, and having suffered many things for His Name's sake, he was finally crucified upside down

in Hierapolis of Phrygia.

November 14

Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessaloniki

This divine Father, who was from Asia Minor, was from childhood reared in the royal court of Constantinople, where he was instructed in both religious and secular wisdom. Later, while still a youth, he left the imperial court and struggled in asceticism on Mount Athos, and in the Skete at Beroea. He spent some time in Thessalonica being treated for an illness that came from his harsh manner of life. He was present in Constantinople at the Council that was convened in 1341 against Barlaam of Calabria, and at the Council of 1347 against Acindynus, who was of like mind with Barlaam; Barlaam and Acindynus claimed that the grace of God is created. At both these Councils, the Saint contended courageously for the true dogmas of the Church of Christ, teaching in particular that divine grace is not created, but is the uncreated energies of God which are poured forth throughout creation: otherwise it would be impossible, if grace were created, for man to have genuine communion with the uncreated God. In 1347 he was appointed Metropolitan of Thessalonica. He tended his flock in an apostolic manner for some twelve years, and wrote many books and treatises on the most exalted doctrines of our Faith;

and having lived for a total of sixty-three years, he reposed in the Lord in 1359. His holy relics are kept in the Cathedral of Thessalonica.

November 15

Nativity Fast Begins

The Nativity Fast is one of [four main fast periods throughout the ecclesiastical year](#). Beginning on November 15 and concluding on December 24, the Nativity Fast gives individuals the opportunity to prepare for [the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord and Savior in the Flesh on December 25](#). By abstaining from certain food and drink, particularly from meat, fish, dairy products, olive oil, and wine, as well as focusing more deeply on prayer and almsgiving, we can find that the [primary aim of fasting is to make us conscious of our dependence upon God](#).

November 16

Matthew the Apostle & Evangelist

This Apostle, who was also called Levi, was the son of Alphaeus and had Galilee as his homeland. A publican before being called by Christ, he became one of the Twelve Apostles, and an Evangelist. While still in Palestine, he wrote his Gospel first in Hebrew, being also the first of all to write the Gospel. When he is depicted in icons, there is portrayed next to him the likeness of a man, one of the symbolic living creatures mentioned by Ezekiel (1.10),

which, as Saint Irenaeus writes, is a symbol of our Saviour's Incarnation.

Hymns of the Day



Tone 3 Troparion (Resurrection)

Let the heavens rejoice!
Let the earth be glad!
For the Lord has shown strength with His arm.
He has trampled down

death by death.
He has become the first born of the dead.
He has delivered us from the depths of hell,
and has granted to the world//
great mercy.

Tone 4 Troparion (St. Alexis)

O righteous Father Alexis, our heavenly intercessor and teacher, ☩divine adornment of the Church of Christ! ☩Entreat the Master of All to strengthen the Orthodox Faith in America, ☩to grant peace to the world and to our souls great mercy.

Tone 3 Troparion (Apostles)

Holy Apostles, Erástus, Olýmpas, Ródion, Sosipáter, Qúartus and Tértius, entreat the merciful God,// to grant our souls forgiveness of transgressions!

Tone 3 Kontakion (Resurrection)

On this day You rose from the tomb, O Merciful One,

leading us from the gates of death.
On this day Adam exults as Eve rejoices;
with the Prophets and Patriarchs//
they unceasingly praise the divine majesty of Your power.

Tone 5 Kontakion (St. Alexis)

Let us, the faithful praise the Priest Alexis, a bright beacon of Orthodoxy in America, a model of patience and humility, a worthy shepherd of the Flock of Christ. He called back the sheep who had been led astray and brought them by his preaching to the Heavenly Kingdom.

Tone 2 Kontakion (Apostles)

Illumined by divine light, O holy Apostles, you wisely destroyed the works of idolatry. When you caught all the pagans you brought them to the Master// and taught them to glorify the Trinity.

Tone 6 Kontakion (Steadfast Protectress)

Steadfast Protectress of Christians, ☩Constant Advocate before the Creator; despise not the entreating cries of us sinners, ☩but in your goodness come speedily to help us who call on you in faith. ☩Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us, ☩O Theotokos, for you always protect those who honor you!

COMMUNION HYMN

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! (*Ps. 148:1*)

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Gospel and Epistle Readings

Epistle Reading

Prokeimenon. 3rd Tone. Psalm 46.6,1.

Sing praises to our God, sing praises.

Verse: Clap your hands, all you nations.

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 1:11-19.

Brethren, I would have you know that the gospel which was preached by me is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it; and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother.

Gospel Reading

8th Sunday of Luke

The Reading is from Luke 10:25-37

At that time, a lawyer stood up to put Jesus to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read?" And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." And he said to him, "You have answered right; do this, and you will live."

But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion, and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; then he set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.' Which of these three, do you think, proved neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" He said, "The one who showed mercy on him." And Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Wisdom of the Fathers

When a man reveres God with all his heart and with faith, he receives through God's providence the power to control anger and desire; for it is desire and anger which are the cause of all evils.

St. Antony the Great

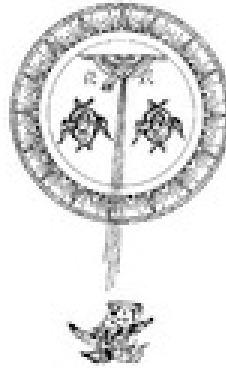
On the Character of Men no. 12, Philokalia Vol. 1 edited by Palmer, Sherrard and Ware; Faber and Faber pg. 331, 4th century

'The Lord your God is one Lord' (cf. Deut. 6:4), revealed in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit: in the unbegotten Father; in the Son, who is begotten eternally, timelessly and impassibly as the Logos, and who through Himself anointed that which He assumed from us and so is called Christ; and in the Holy Spirit, who also comes forth from the Father, not begotten, but proceeding. This alone is God and alone is true God, the one Lord in a Trinity of Hypostases, undivided in nature, will, glory, power, energy, and all the characteristics of divinity. Him alone shall you love and Him alone shall you worship with all your mind and with all your heart and with all your strength.

St. Gregory Palamas

A New Testament Decalogue no. 1, Philokalia Vol. 4 edited by Palmer, Sherrard and Ware; Faber and Faber pg. 323, 14th century

Beyond the Sermon



The Gospel passage for this Sunday includes the famous "Parable of the Good Samaritan," and it contains the most important question that could be asked. "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" No other question is more fundamental to our condition in a fallen world. It is another way of asking, "what is the

Gospel?" A scholar who was an expert in the Law of Moses (here, called a "lawyer") asked the question. The answer, of course, is found in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who, even though we are sinners, loves us, came down to us and gave Himself to heal us and restore us to eternal life.

To answer the Biblical scholar's question, the Lord starts with the teaching found in the Old Testament: "What is written in the Law?" The answer summarizes the two central teachings of the Mosaic Law: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." At this point, the Lord allows the lawyer to ask another question: "And who is my neighbor?" The lawyer does not yet see that all people, especially those with no one to help them, are his neighbors.

Jesus then tells a parable (a vivid story) that includes many common elements of that

time. The road from Jerusalem to Jericho (still there today) was notoriously filled with robbers because it was a deserted road. A man is beaten and robbed, and the religious leaders (a Priest and a Levite) pass by and ignore him, but a Samaritan takes care of him.

As the Fathers explain, these elements become symbols of spiritual realities that speak of Christ and our human condition. The Samaritans were an ethnic and religious group considered by the Jewish people as religiously unclean. This hostility was deeply rooted in the history of the Old Tes-

tament when the Kingdom of Israel was divided in the 10th century BC. However, as the Lord Jesus emphasizes in the parable, it is the Samaritan who helped the Jewish man, half dead on the ground. The Samaritan was literally “moved with compassion,” so he took care of his wounds and took him to the Inn (a lodge). There, the Samaritan provided for the wounded man’s healing process and paid the innkeeper for ongoing care until he would return.

The Samaritan represents Christ. The man who was beaten and robbed is nameless because he represents all humanity (in Greek, ἄνθρωπος). As the Church Fathers see it, this becomes a symbol of humanity’s journey from Paradise to the fallen world. It points to the Lord’s own journey of coming down to us in His Incarnation: “coming in the likeness of men . . . He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:6-8). He did so to help and heal us when we were in our deepest need. The Lord came to save us when sin had beaten and robbed

us, leaving us half-dead. The love of God came to us in Christ, and He does not pass by or ignore us in our pain.

The Good Samaritan used wine and oil to treat the man’s wounds. Wine and oil were commonly used for that purpose at that time (to sterilize and soften). This points to the Sacraments, especially the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist, and the anointing in Baptism and Holy Unction (the Greek word for oil, ἔλαιον, is related to the word for mercy, ἔλεος. “Kyrie Eleison” is translated as “Lord, have mercy” — but literally means, “Lord, pour on Your healing oil”).

Just as the Samaritan rescued the man, the Lord heals our wounds and takes us to the Inn to be healed. As Saint John Chrysostom says, “the Inn is the Church, which receives travelers, who are tired with their journey through the world, and oppressed with the load of their sins; where the wearied traveler casting down the burden of his sins is relieved, and after being refreshed is restored with wholesome Food.” This Food is Christ’s

very own Body and Blood.

The Lord rescues us from sin and death and places us in His Church, among His people, through the Holy Sacraments. In the Church, we worship God and He gives us His grace to be illumined, purified, and united to Him. He fills our hearts with His love and peace. He restores us from brokenness into wholeness. He transforms us into His likeness.

The Lord is always with us, and yet He promises that He will come back again on the Last Day to restore all things, to establish His eternal kingdom, on that day that will never end. In the meantime,

He gives “two denarii” to the Church, which symbolizes the gifts and talents we have been given to bless and serve one another. God gives us strengths not for ourselves, but to fill a need around us. We serve Him by serving one another, and in this way, we grow in the likeness of Christ and edify His Church.

Our neighbor is every human being. A true neighbor shows mercy to others in concrete ways. By loving others, we love God in whose image they are created. We are all neighbors to one another, and this becomes particularly necessary to recognize when we encounter people who seem different from us. We encounter people from other races, social conditions, countries, languages, cultures, worldviews, and even religions. The Samaritan in the parable was marginalized by the very people he loved and helped. Jesus was marginalized, disdained, and killed by the people He loved. Yet, He remained obedient to His Father, Who sent Him into the world for the salvation of humanity. We, too, may be marginalized and disdained when seeking to help others. We may be repaid with evil for good and question why we serve others. Such crises are an opportunity to examine ourselves and discover our deeper motivations. In such moments, we can ask ourselves if we are serving others to get something in return, or serving them out of free, voluntary obedience to Christ, Who came to serve and not be served.

God’s compassion is not an abstract ideal. It is real and active; He acts through the Church, through His members who carry on His salvific work (leading to grace

and salvation) through their faith and practice. We become like Christ when we serve others: when we provide for their material needs, protect the weak, care for the poor, and provide for their healing and restoration, of the body and of the soul. We love our neighbors by drawing close to them, especially through heartfelt prayer. The neighbor is the one who shows mercy and helps, as well as the one who receives mercy and help.

To truly love God is to love all people. To imitate Christ is to go to others, bandage their wounds, pour wine and oil on them, and carry their burdens. We show kindness and compassion by stopping and being attentive to those in need, whoever they may be. We imitate Jesus Christ by removing cultural, racial, gender, and religious barriers to reach out to others and provide healing when needed. He shows mercy to us because of His goodness, while we show mercy to one another because of God’s goodness given to us. He has compassion on us so that we may enjoy Him thoroughly, while we have compassion on another so that we may thoroughly enjoy Him. This is the inheritance of eternal life.

•THE GOOD SAMARITAN•

