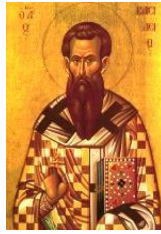


ST BASIL GREEK MELKITE CATHOLIC CHURCH
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SUNDAY 12TH AFTER PENTECOST
Saturday, August 23 & Sunday, August 24, 2020

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**WEEKLY SERVICES**

**Daily Liturgy:** Monday-Friday 8:30AM      **Holy Confession:** Every Monday 4-6PM  
**Holy Liturgy:** Saturday 4:30PM, Sunday 11:00AM      **Vespers:** Every Saturday 3:00PM  
**Matins/Orthos:** Every Sunday at 9:00AM      **Holy Rosary:** Every Sunday 10:30AM

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SPEEDY RECOVERY

Please continue to pray for our convalescing friends, including Archdeacon George Yany, Rt. Rev. Edward Kakaty, Fr. Mark Pasik, Maggy Atallah, Jean Benoit, Nancy Gazzal, Diane Kakaty, Sandra Kakaty, Daniel Klockowski, Julia Nassimos, Rose Pawlinga, Brian Sagrestano.
Please notify Fr. Shofany in case of illness.

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**WEEKLY OFFERINGS: THANK YOU!**

**Weekly Collection August 15/16: \$495.00      Memorial Offerings: \$20.00**  
**Beirut Collection: \$195.00**

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SPIRITUAL ADVICE OF THE DAY

“Let brotherly love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body. Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” ... (Hebrews 13:1-25)

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† **MEMORIAL MASSES** †

**THIS SATURDAY, AUGUST 22**

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Doris Hutchinson & Family

**THIS SUNDAY, AUGUST 23**

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Gloria Shaheen

**NEXT SATURDAY, AUGUST 29**

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Doris Hutchinson & Family

**NEXT SUNDAY, AUGUST 30**

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Gloria Shaheen

**BEING PERFECT IN THE EYES OF GOD**

THE THREE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS – Matthew, Mark and Luke – all record Christ’s meeting with a rich young man who sought His guidance. The young man (Luke calls him a “ruler”) seeks to know what to do to have eternal life. Christ responds by telling him to keep the commandments. When pressed to be more specific, the Lord begins by listing the Ten Commandments. Then He quotes the Great Commandment from Leviticus, “*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*”

The young man says that he has kept all these commandments from his youth and presses the Lord to tell him what more he should do. The Lord Jesus then attempts to lead him from a stage of merely being obedient to God’s commandments, to one of being in a relationship of love with God.

Christ tells the young man what must happen “*If you want to be perfect*” (v. 21): he must give his wealth to the poor and follow Jesus as He went from place to place proclaiming the kingdom of God. The Lord offered this inquirer the chance to join the company of His disciples, to show that he preferred life with Christ to enjoying his possessions. The young man declined.

**What Does It Mean to Be Perfect?** The Lord has held out this goal of “perfection” before, in the Sermon on the Mount. Being “perfect” seems an impossible task if we think it means absolute perfection without any fault or stain. In the Greek of the New Testament (and our Liturgy), however, to be “perfect” or to be “complete” might best be translated “to be all that we were meant to be:” living in the light of the Lord, walking in His way. Jesus pushed His hearers to go beyond the commandments to arrive at a godlier way of life. The Lord then contrasted regard for God with attachment to one’s belongings. They will ever be competing for a person’s devotion; as Christ tells His listeners, “*Where your treasure is there your heart will be also*” (Mt 6:21). The path to perfection, as Christ teaches, begins with making a choice between following Him and devoting oneself to enjoying the things of the world. As He said so clearly, “*No one can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon*” (Mt 6:24).

**Do I Serve Mammon?** Most of us do not think that we are “serving mammon.” We may even look down on the obviously greedy or on people driven by addictions. Yes, there are people who “serve” money, drugs or sex. They may be slaves to alcohol or tobacco. We don’t believe that we are controlled like that.

We may not be overly driven to making inordinate amounts of money, but we should consider that dependency on mammon takes many forms. We should become more conscious of how many of this world’s richest we feel that we “need,” that we “can’t do without,” from our morning coffee to the latest smart phone. We don’t physically need these things; it is our ego that requires them. Is this not another form of serving mammon?

To reflect on just how our ego may be tied to the things of this world, consider how difficult it is to fast for any length of time: how much we feel the loss of a favorite food and to what lengths we go to find a pleasing substitute... and how happy we are when the Fast is over. In addition, “mammon” can also include the non-material wealth of this world: power, prestige or social position. How do we feel when another is promoted over us, receives a bigger bonus or a more lucrative assignment? Serving mammon takes many forms and they all interfere in some way with our relationship to God.

**The Fathers on the Power of Mammon:** When St John Chrysostom commented on this Gospel passage, he noted that being devoted to the things of this world did not make you free. “The rich man is a slave, being subject to loss, and in the power of everyone wishing to do him harm” (Homily 46 on Matthew). Serving mammon is a form of slavery.

In another place, Chrysostom said, “If you see someone greedy for many things, you should consider him the poorest of all, even if he has acquired everyone’s money. Be accustomed to judge poverty and affluence by the disposition of the mind, not by the substance of his possessions. Serving mammon is a kind of poverty. As some people today phrase it, “What you own, owns you.”

(AugustLeaflets2020)