



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AUSTRALIA

PARISH OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF OUR LADY, “EVANGELISMOS”

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SUNDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2018 – THE GOOD SAMARITAN

EPISTLE The Reading is from St Paul’s Second Letter to the Corinthians [4:6-15]

For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed – always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus’ sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So then death is working in us, but life in you. And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, *“I believed and therefore I spoke”*, we also believe and therefore speak, knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

EXPLANATION:

The Creator of all, Who caused light to shine from nothing commissioned Paul and the Apostles to bring knowledge of Him, through the life of His Son, to those who have receptive hearts. **(4:6)** The **“treasure”** is the light of God’s glory in Christ. The **“earthen vessels”** refer to our humanity. That is, man is created from the dust of the earth and those who teach the Gospel are earthen vessels which carry the Word of God. **(4:7)** Paul now reflects that even though every aspect of his life and ministry have been fraught with great difficulty, he is able to continue by remembering always that Christ lived and died to give man a way back to God. Those who really understand this truth carry on His work, in spite of the tribulations it may bring. **(4:8-10)** He had been beaten, stoned, put in stocks and driven out of cities. No one would willingly suffer as he had without having upheld the wonder of God. **(4:11-12)** Paul expresses his compulsion to teach the Gospel in spite of danger. The truth and power of the saving message of Jesus Christ cannot be restrained. Paul knows that death can come at any time. He does not seek it but does not fear guide his actions. He carries on, doing whatever is necessary to propagate the Gospel. His complete faith in the Resurrection of Christ assures him that there will be a universal Resurrection, after which all true Christians will be together **with Jesus. (4:13-14)**

GOSPEL **The Reading is from St Luke [10:25-37]** And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” He said to him, “What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?” So he answered and said, *“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself.”* And He said to him, “You have answered rightly; do this and you will live.” But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbour?’ Then Jesus answered

and said: *“A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, ‘Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.’ So which of these three do you think was neighbour to him who fell among the thieves?”* And he said, *“He who showed mercy on him.”* Then Jesus said to him, *“Go and do likewise.”*

EXPLANATION: **“What shall I do to inherit eternal life?”** This is a momentous question for every person. Jesus’s answer is to love God above all else, and to love one’s neighbour. In this parable, Jesus teaches us that our **neighbour** is anyone in immediate need, even a supposed enemy. Symbolically, the **Good Samaritan** is Christ Himself. The **wounded man** is humanity set upon by demons and the **inn** is the Church. Love for neighbour proves our love for God. The action of the Samaritan is contrasted with the inattention of the priest and Levite. Their behaviour was inexcusable. They were probably among those Jews who felt that they were right in ministering only to their own kind. But Jesus makes it clear that “neighbour” had no such formal restricted meaning as “one’s own people”, in racial, ethnic or religious terms. There is no one to whom the obligation to minister out of love does not apply. The Lord defines “neighbour” not only as the human object of one’s loving care, but also as the person who out of love deals compassionately with someone in need. When the Lord says, **“Go and do likewise”**, he is telling the lawyer to be a “neighbour” to anyone he encounters, especially anyone who

needs his mercy and compassion, without regard for whom he is, without judging whether he deserves such help. If we love God with all our being, every human being becomes our neighbour. What Jesus is saying to the Jews of His day is, "If a despised Samaritan, whose very name is a curse word, whom you do not even consider a neighbour, and who has an inferior faith compared to yours, if he will not hesitate to go and rescue a Jew in trouble, how much more ought you who are God's chosen people, you who have experienced the love of God, you who have the true religion; how much more should you be willing to translate your religion into works of love?" Jesus spoke through this parable not only to the Jews of old, but also to us today. That is, most of us are not like the Good Samaritan; most of us are like the priest and Levite. We are too busy with ourselves to respond to the needs of others. We find a thousand excuses not to get involved. We pass by on the other side. The sin of the priest and the Levite was the sin of omission. They did nothing when they could have done something. By doing nothing they left the wounded man to die. Jesus reminds us that the supreme test of religion was right there on the roadside and they failed it. The wounded are all around us. They are not just the physically wounded, but also those wounded by misery, by unemployment, by racism, by homelessness. There you have your neighbour. He may not always be lying on the side of the road. He may be walking, driving, or even running, but he is wounded nonetheless. He needs someone to be a neighbour to him and comfort him. Having told the story of the Good Samaritan, Jesus asked the lawyer, "**Which of these do you think was neighbour?**" And he said, "**The one who showed mercy on him.**" There you have the true neighbour. Any man. Anywhere. In need. **(10:25-37)**