

# ⲓϥⲕⲥ ⲛⲏⲗⲁ SAINTS PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

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## Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory to Him Forever!

November 30, 2014	27 <sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost	Divine Liturgy	9:30 am
December 6	Saturday	Great Vespers	4:00 pm
December 7	28 <sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost	Divine Liturgy	9:30 am

**Saints of the Day:** Holy and All-praised Apostle Andrew the First-called (62). Saint Elias, Schemamonk of Valaam and Verkhoturys (1900). New Hieromartyr Priest John (1937). Saint Frumentius, Archbishop of Abyssinia (380). Saint Tudwal, Bishop in Wales and Brittany (6 c.). Saint Alexander, Bishop of Methymna on Lesbos. Saints Peter I (5 c.) and Samuel I (5-6 c.), Catholicoses of Georgia. Saint Vakhtang Gorgasali, King of Georgia (502). Saint Egwin (Ecwine) of Worcester, Bishop (717).

**Please remember in your prayers:** Suffering Christians of Egypt, Syria, the Middle East and Ukraine. Bishop BOULOS Yazigi, Bishop YOHANNA Ibrahim, of Aleppo. Archimandrites Athanasios, Nectarios, Pachomy. Archpriests Alvian, Eugene, Leonid, John, Jason, John, Vincent. Priests Jacobus, Leonid, Vasil, Vasil. Deacons Mark, Demetrios, Philip. Father Victor, Mother Raphaela, Dimitri, Nina, Daniel, Catherine, Helen, Anna, Peter, Helen, Michael, Stephanie, Zara, Nolan, Emelie, Michael, Ed, Nettie, Maria, Michael, John, James, Nancy, Susan, Daniel, Aaron, Mark, Jennifer, Nina, Nadine, Michael, Anna, Gregory, Marianna, Mykola, Helen, Isaiah, Jamie, Albert, Kevin, Robert, Robert, Andrew, David, Warren, Vincent, Diane, Abigail.

**God Grant Many Years!** Prayers for the health of Matthew Pintar, Father Paul Oikawa, Sophia Philips and Archimandrite Nectarios (Cotros) were offered today at Liturgy and Moleben at the request of Father John Udics.

**Memory Eternal.** Prayers for the repose of the soul of newly-departed Anne Danielak were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of Father John Udics.

**Memory Eternal.** Prayers for the repose of the soul of Paul Udics were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of Father John Udics.

**Memory Eternal.** Prayers for the repose of the souls of Paul and Kay Sokol, Andrew Homyk and Deanna Rosenberg were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of the "Memory Eternal Requiem Service Fund."

### STEWARDSHIP. Part I of IV

All Christians are called to be God's stewards. First Jesus commands us to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, give drink to the thirsty (even in the spiritual sense of "watering" the souls of those who need to know Christ) and to visit the sick and imprisoned.

Then there's the gospel lesson about the Good Stewards –

Luke 12:45 -47 But suppose the servant says to himself, 'My master is taking a long time in coming,' and he then begins to beat the menservants and maidservants and to eat and drink and get drunk. The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not *himself*, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*.

King James Bible (Cambridge Ed.) And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom *his* lord shall make ruler over his household, to give *them their* portion of meat in due season?

Matthew 25:21 "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

"Give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward." Luke 16:2

1. The relation which man bears to God, the creature to his Creator, is exhibited to us in the oracles of God under various representations. Considered as a sinner, a fallen creature, he is there represented as a debtor to his Creator. He is also frequently represented as a servant, which indeed is essential to him as a creature; insomuch that this appellation is given to the Son of God when, in His state of humiliation, he "took upon Him the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men."

2. But no character more exactly agrees with the present state of man, than that of a steward. Our blessed Lord frequently represents him as such; and there is a peculiar propriety in the representation. It is only in one particular respect, namely, as he is a sinner, that he is styled a debtor; and when he is styled a servant, the appellation is general and indeterminate: But a steward is a servant of a particular kind; such a one as man is in all respects. This appellation is exactly expressive of his situation in the present world; specifying what kind of servant he is to God, and what kind of service his Divine Master expects from him.

It may be of use, then, to consider this point thoroughly, and to make our full improvement of it. In order to this, let us,

I. First, inquire, in what respects we are now God's stewards.

II. Let us, Secondly, observe, that when he requires our souls of us, we "can be no longer stewards."

III. It will then only remain, as we may, in the third place, observe, to "give an account of our stewardship."

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1. And, first, we are to inquire, in what respects we are now God's stewards. We are now indebted to Him for all we have; but although a debtor is obliged to return what he has received, yet until the time of payment comes, he is at liberty to use it as he pleases. It is not so with a steward; he is not at liberty to use what is lodged in his hands as he pleases, but as his master pleases. He has no right to dispose of anything which is in his hands, but according to the will of his lord. For he is not the proprietor of any of these things, but barely entrusted with them by another; and entrusted on this express condition, -- that he shall dispose of all as his master orders. Now, this is exactly the case of every man, with relation to God. We are not at liberty to use what he has lodged in our hands as we please, but as he pleases, who alone is the possessor of heaven and earth, and the Lord of every creature. We have no right to dispose of anything we have, but according to His will, seeing we are not proprietors of any of these things; they are all, as our Lord speaks, belonging to another person; nor is anything properly our own, in the land of our pilgrimage. We shall not receive our own things, till we come to our own country. Eternal things only are our own: With all these temporal things we are barely entrusted by another, the Disposer and Lord of all. And he entrusts us with them on this express condition, -- that we use them only as our Master's goods, and according to the particular directions which he has given us in his Word.

2. On this condition he hath entrusted us with our souls, our bodies, our goods, and whatever other talents we have received: But in order to impress this weighty truth on our hearts, it will be needful to come to particulars. And, first, God has entrusted us with our soul, an immortal spirit, made in the image of God; together with all the powers and faculties thereof, understanding, imagination, memory, will, and a train of affections, either included in it or closely dependent upon it, -- love and hatred, joy and sorrow, respecting present good and evil; desire and aversion, hope and fear, respecting that which is to come. All these Saint Paul seems to include in two words, when he says, "The peace of God shall keep your hearts and minds." Perhaps, indeed, the latter word, *nohmata*, might rather be rendered thoughts, provided we take that word in its most extensive sense, for every perception of the mind, whether active or passive.

3. Now, of all these, it is certain, we are only stewards. God has entrusted us with these powers and faculties, not that we may employ them according to our own will, but according to the express orders which he has given us; although it is true that, in doing His will, we most effectually secure our own happiness; seeing it is herein only that we can be happy, either in time or in eternity. Thus we are to use our understanding, our imagination, our memory, wholly to the glory of Him that gave them. Thus our will is to be wholly given up to Him, and all our affections to be regulated as he directs. We are to love and hate, to rejoice and grieve, to desire and shun, to hope and fear, according to the rule which he prescribes whose we are, and whom we are to serve in all things. Even our thoughts are not our own, in this sense; they are not at our own disposal; but for every deliberate motion of our mind we are accountable to our great Master.

4. God has, Secondly, entrusted us with our bodies (those exquisitely wrought machines, so "fearfully and wonderfully made,") with all the powers and members thereof. He has entrusted us with the organs of sense; of sight, hearing, and the rest: But none of these are given us as our own, to be employed according to our own will. None of these are lent us in such a sense as to leave us at liberty to use them as we please for a season. No: We have received them on these very terms, -- that, as long as they abide with us, we should employ them all in that very manner, and no other, which he appoints.

5. It is on the same terms that he has imparted to us that most excellent talent of speech. "Thou hast given me a tongue," says the ancient writer, "that I may praise Thee therewith." For this purpose was it given to all the children of men, -- to be employed in glorifying God. Nothing, therefore, is more ungrateful or more absurd, than to think or say, "Our tongues are our own." That cannot be, unless we have created ourselves, and so are independent on the Most High. Nay, but "it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves;" the manifest consequence is, that he is still Lord over us, in this as in all other respects. It follows, that there is not a word of our tongue for which we are not accountable to Him.

6. To Him we are equally accountable for the use of our hands and feet, and all the members of our body. These are so many talents which are committed to our trust, until the time appointed by the Father. Until then, we have the use of all these; but as stewards, not as proprietors; to the end we should "render them, not as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but as instruments of righteousness unto God."

7. God has entrusted us, Thirdly, with a portion of worldly goods; with food to eat, raiment to put on, and a place where to lay our head; with not only the necessaries, but the conveniences, of life. Above all, he has committed to our charge that precious talent which contains all the rest, -- money: Indeed it is unspeakably precious, if we are wise and faithful stewards of it; if we employ every part of it for such purposes as our blessed Lord has commanded us to do.

8. God has entrusted us, Fourthly, with several talents which do not properly come under any of these heads. Such is bodily strength; such are health, a pleasing person, an agreeable address; such are learning and knowledge, in their various degrees, with all the other advantages of education. Such is the influence which we have over others, whether by their love and esteem of us, or by power; power to do them good or hurt, to help or hinder them in the circumstances of life. Add to these, that invaluable talent of time, with which God entrusts us from moment to moment. Add, lastly, that on which all the rest depend, and without which they would all be curses, not blessings; namely, the grace of God, the power of his Holy Spirit, which alone worketh in us all that is acceptable in His sight.

**The Good Steward: A Sermon.** By John Wesley, Edinburgh, May 14, 1768