



**Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Ukrainian Catholic Church
(St. Mary's)**

**6719 Token Valley Road
Manassas, VA 20112
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Reverend Alexander Dumenko — Pastor (301) – 421 – 1739

Sunday Divine Liturgies: 8:30 a.m.

Holy Days as scheduled in the Bulletin

DIVINE LITURGY SCHEDULE

November 14, 2021

Sunday, 14, 2021 25th Sunday after Pentecost

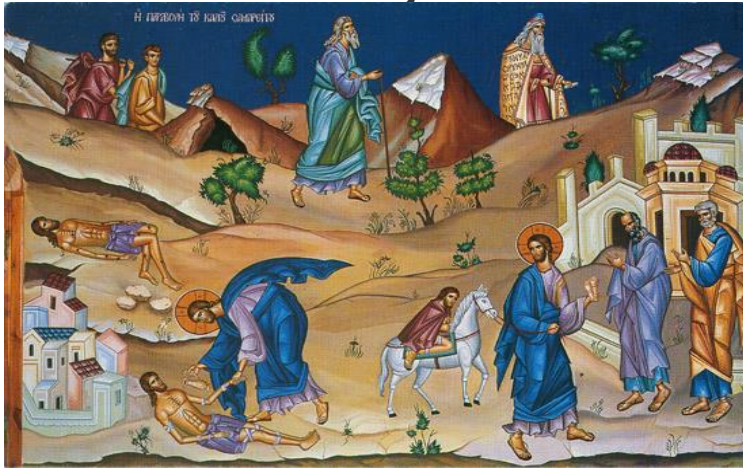
08:00 – Mattins; 08:30AM – For God's Blessings on Our Parishioners

Sunday, November 21, 2021 26th Sunday after Pentecost

08:00 – Mattins; 08:30AM – For God's Blessings on Our Parishioners

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25th Sunday after Pentecost



Today's Gospel reading gives us the secret of how to be steadfast. Be a Merciful Samaritan everywhere, always, and to everyone. Let us examine ourselves. Are we really like this? There were children

around us — did we teach them good things? Or a man came to us who was on the verge of moral destruction. Did we support him in his fight against sin? Did we help him to get out of this swamp which was sucking him down? Maybe all we had to do was stretch out not even a hand, but just a finger, and he would have been saved. How many there were who needed just one word of encouragement, some attention. And we could have given all this. But did we give it, like the Merciful Samaritan? If to all these questions our conscience answers, no, we did not help — then, yes, we are in danger of being torn away from the robe of Christ. Let us hasten to mend this. Mercy alone can keep us with Christ

Source: saintgeorgepittsburgh.org/

**TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST THE HOLY
AND ALL-PRAISEWORTHY APOSTLE PHILIP**

Troparion (8): You came down from on high, O Merciful One, and accepted three days of burial to free us from our sufferings. O Lord, our life and our resurrection, glory be to You.

Troparion (3): O Philip, proclaimer of God's word, the world is adorned and Ethiopia dances for joy for it is arrayed in beauty as with a crown. Enlightened by you it feasts your memory. For you taught all to believe in Christ, finishing the course of the gospel as is right. And so, Ethiopia boldly lifts its hands to God. Pray to Him to grant great mercy to us.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Kontakion (8): The God-inspired Philip, Your friend, disciple and imitator of the Passion, proclaimed You as God to the whole world, O Christ, all merciful. By his intercessions and those of the Mother of God guard your Church and every city from lawless enemies.

Now and for ever and ever: Amen. Kontakion (8): When You rose from the tomb, You also raised the dead and resurrected Adam. Eve exults in Your resurrection, and the ends of the world celebrate Your rising from the dead, O Most Merciful One.

Prokimenon (8): Pray and give praise to the Lord our God.

Verse: In Judea God is known; His name is great in Israel.

Prokimenon (8): Their utterance has gone forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world. **Verse:** The heavens tell the glory of God, and the firmament declares the work of His hand.

Epistle: Reading of the Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians.

(Eph 4,1-6) Brethren: I, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to live in a manner worthy of the call you have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another through love, striving to preserve the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace: one body and one Spirit, as you were also called to the one hope of your call; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all.

Alleluia Verses: Verse (8): Come, let us rejoice in the Lord; let us acclaim God our Savior: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia. Verse (8): Let us come before His countenance with praise and acclaim Him with psalms. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia. Verse: The heavens shall confess Your wonders, O Lord, and Your truth in the church of the saints. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia. Verse: God is glorified in the assembly of the saints. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Gospel: (Lk 10,25-37) At that time, there was a scholar of the law who stood up to test him and said, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read it?" He said in reply, "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." He replied to him, "You have answered correctly; do this and you will live." But because he wished to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied, "A man fell victim to robbers as he went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. They stripped and beat him and went off leaving him half-dead. A priest happened to be going down that road, but when he saw him, he passed by to the opposite side. Likewise a Levite came to the place, and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. But a Samaritan traveler who came upon him was moved with compassion at the sight. He approached the victim, poured oil and wine over his wounds and bandaged them. Then he lifted him up on his own animal, took him to an inn and cared for him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper with the instruction, 'Take care of him. If you spend more than what I have given you, I shall repay you on my way back.' Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbor to the robbers' victim?" He answered, "The one who treated him with mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Communion Verse: Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise Him in the highest. Their utterance has gone forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome! Our warmest greetings are extended once again to all visitors and guests who are participating in Divine Liturgy. It is always a joy to have you praying with us. After the service please do not hesitate to introduce yourself to Fr. Alexander and our parishioners and find out more about our faith and our parish.

Sunday Coffee Hour! We invite everyone to come to the church hall for refreshment after the service, and we encourage you to participate by bringing pastries/sandwiches for coffee hour on Sunday. May God bless us all!

Food Drive: Our parish is collecting non-perishable food, toiletries, and monetary contributions for area food banks. Please leave donated items in the designated boxes in the back of the church.

Support your Church You may send your donations to PO Box 2735, Manassas VA 20108

YOUR OFFERINGS Collection: November 07, 2021 - 

Sincere thanks to all for your kindness and generosity to our Holy Church!

Adult Catholic Adult Education:

The Institute of Catholic Culture ("ICC") is an adult catechetical organization, whose mission is to be faithful to the Magisterium and is dedicated to the Church's call for a new evangelization. The ICC fulfills this mission by offering educational programs structured on the classical liberal arts and by offering opportunities in which authentic Catholic culture is experienced and lived.

Like God With Us Online, the ICC offers free one-hour lectures and lectures in series, which participants may livestream (and ask questions) or view the recordings at a later time. Unlike God With Us Online, the ICC offers one or two semester-long courses each semester. Courses involve reading preparation for a weekly class, which students may audit or take for certificate credit. Those participants choosing the certificate track must also take a weekly quiz and a final exam.

The ICC has an impressive array of lectures and courses in its library in Theology, Philosophy, Scripture, Catechetics, History, Literature, and Liturgical Studies ([Live Events \(instituteofcatholicculture.org\)](https://www.instituteofcatholicculture.org)). All of the instructors are experts in their fields and the lectures are well worth the time. The Fall Quarter Curriculum is attached.

QUARTER I

The first quarter of the ICC curriculum year, beginning just before the Advent season and concluding with the celebration of the Nativity of the Lord, focuses on the ancient and biblical world, the fundamentals of human nature, and Old Testament revelation, preparing attendees for the Advent of the Christ and the beginning of the Christian Era.



DEFEATING THE INFIDEL: THE STORY OF THE BATTLE OF LEPANTO

Christopher Check on Monday, October 4

Pre-class Discussion @ 7:30 PM ET, Lecture from 8:00 - 9:00 PM ET

On October 7, 1571, the most important sea battle in history was fought by the Holy League and the Ottoman Turks. As political and religious conflicts imperiled Europe from within, the Turk was threatening to devour Christendom from without. It took the daring leadership of one man, the deep faith of a great pope, and the intervention of the Blessed Virgin to save it.



CATECHESIS IN CRISIS: THE BREAKDOWN OF DOCTRINE, FAITH, AND CONSCIENCE

Jared Staudt, Ph.D., on Sunday, October 17

Pre-class Discussion @ 7:30 PM ET, Lecture from 8:00 - 9:00 PM ET

The task of transmitting the faith has become increasingly difficult with an excessive focus on freedom in our culture. Conscience has been misunderstood to represent the autonomy of each individual's beliefs in contrast to the authority of the Church. Discover how true liberty comes from belief in the Church's doctrine and how we can strengthen our efforts to catechize today.



GOOD SERVANTS, BAD MASTERS: SAINT THOMAS ON THE PASSIONS

Rev. Paul Scallia on Tuesday, October 19

Pre-class Discussion @ 7:30 PM ET, Lecture from 8:00 - 9:00 PM ET

What role do the emotions or passions play in our lives? For most people, it's too much or too little. Saint Thomas, the Common Doctor, teaches us about the passions of the human soul and how we can integrate them for a deeper relationship with God and with others.



FIRE ON THE MOUNTAIN: RECEIVING THE LAW AT MOUNT SINAI

Steven Smith, Ph.D., on Tuesday, October 26

Pre-class Discussion @ 7:30 PM ET, Lecture from 8:00 - 9:00 PM ET

Is God's continued action throughout salvation history merely a series of reactions to the choices of fallen men? To explore this question, we will look at what happened on Mount Sinai over three millennia ago and explore its significance for understanding God's plan for the life of His Church.



DESPOILING THE EGYPTIANS: THE CHRISTIAN APPROACH TO PAGAN LITERATURE

Glenn Arbery, Ph.D., on Tuesday, November 16

Pre-class Discussion @ 7:30 PM ET, Lecture from 8:00 - 9:00 PM ET

"What indeed has Athens to do with Jerusalem?" —Tertullian

The Church Fathers debated the value of studying the literary and cultural achievements of the pagans. We will explore the principles by which a Christian reader ought to approach the classics.



WOMEN OF FAITH: HEROINES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Rev. Sebastian Carnazzo, Ph.D., on Mondays, November 8 & 15
Pre-class Discussion @ 7:30 PM ET, Lecture from 8:00 - 9:00 PM ET

"Blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord." —Luke 1:45

Many faithful women hold prominent places in the stories of the Old Testament. Join Father Sebastian Carnazzo to learn about these great women and how they ultimately point forward to the Blessed Virgin Mary, her Son, and the Church.



WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR? ADVENT, THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS, AND JOHN THE BAPTIST

John Bergsma, Ph.D., on Tuesday, November 30
Pre-class Discussion @ 7:30 PM ET, Lecture from 8:00 - 9:00 PM ET

Advent is a time of waiting. To wait well, we can draw lessons from the ancient Essenes, the Jewish sect that left us the Dead Sea Scrolls. This all-male monastic community lived at the shore of the Dead Sea along the route they expected the Messiah to take up to Jerusalem. We can better understand Jesus' ministry through their writings and their greatest pupil: John the Baptist.



CONCEIVED BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT & BORN OF THE VIRGIN

Tim Staples on Tuesday, December 7
Pre-class Discussion @ 7:30 PM ET, Lecture from 8:00 - 9:00 PM ET

Paul referred to Christ crucified as "a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to the Greeks" (1 Cor 1:23). For the Jews, "How could the infinite and all-powerful God become a man and die?" And for the Greeks, "How could God who is pure actuality become anything at all?" Join us as we ponder this great mystery and discuss how the the Incarnation does not violate the laws of reason.

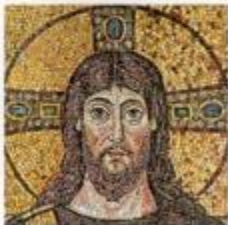


WONDERFUL, COUNSELOR, THE MIGHTY GOD: A BIBLICAL STUDY OF HANDEL'S MESSIAH

Rev. Msgr. Charles Pope on Tuesday, December 14
Pre-class Discussion @ 7:30 PM ET, Lecture from 8:00 - 10:00 PM ET

"For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given... His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." —Isaiah 9:6

Enjoy a guided tour of scriptural passages and musical themes in Handel's masterpiece, the *Messiah*.



THEOLOGY 101: FUNDAMENTALS OF CATHOLIC DOCTRINE

Jared Staudt, Ph.D., on Thursdays, January 20 - June 23
Pre-class Discussion @ 7:30 PM ET, Lecture from 8:00 - 9:15 PM ET

Live Course: Application opens November 30

This course provides an introduction to theology, the Church's systematic understanding of God's revelation. It examines theology's methods and sources and explores the articulation of the most important doctrines of the Catholic faith.



SCAN HERE TO REGISTER!

or visit www.InstituteofCatholicCulture.org/events

**MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
FOR THE FIFTH WORLD DAY OF THE POOR**

14 November 2021, Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

“The poor you will always have with you” (Mk 14:7)

1. “The poor you will always have with you” (Mk 14:7). Jesus spoke these words at a meal in Bethany, in the home of a certain Simon, known as the leper, a few days before Passover. As the Evangelist recounts, a woman came in with an alabaster flask full of precious ointment and poured it over Jesus’ head. This caused great amazement and gave rise to two different interpretations.

The first was indignation on the part of some of those present, including the disciples, who, considering the value of the ointment – about 300 denarii, equivalent to the annual salary of a labourer – thought it should have been sold and the proceeds given to the poor. In Saint John’s Gospel, Judas takes this position: “Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?” Saint John goes on to note that Judas “said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box, he used to take what was put in it” (12:5-6). It was no accident that this harsh criticism came from the mouth of the traitor: it shows those who do not respect the poor betray Jesus’ teaching and cannot be his disciples. Origen has strong words in this regard: “Judas appeared to be concerned about the poor... If in our own day some hold the purse of the Church and, like Judas, speak out for the poor, but then take out what they put in, let them share in the lot of Judas” (*Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew*, 11, 9).

The second interpretation was that of Jesus, and it makes us appreciate the profound meaning of the woman’s act. He says, “Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a beautiful thing to me” (Mk 14:6). Jesus knows that his death is approaching, and he sees in her act an anticipation of the anointing of his lifeless body prior to its placement in the tomb. This was beyond anything the others present could imagine. Jesus was reminding them that he is the first of the poor, the poorest of the poor, because he represents all of them. It was also for the sake of the poor, the lonely, the marginalized and the victims of discrimination, that the Son of God accepted the woman’s gesture. With a woman’s sensitivity, she alone understood what the Lord was thinking. That nameless woman, meant perhaps to represent all those women who down the centuries would be silenced and suffer violence, thus became the first of those women who were significantly present at the supreme moments of Christ’s life: his crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection. Women, so often discriminated against and excluded from positions of responsibility, are seen in the Gospels to play a leading role in the history of revelation. Jesus’ then goes on to associate that woman with the great mission of evangelization: “Amen, I say to you, wherever the Gospel is proclaimed to the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her” (Mk 14:9).

2. This powerful “empathy” established between Jesus and the woman, and his own interpretation of her anointing as opposed to the scandalized view of Judas and others, can lead to a fruitful reflection on the inseparable link between Jesus, the poor and the proclamation of the Gospel.

The face of God revealed by Jesus is that of a Father concerned for and close to the poor. In everything, Jesus teaches that poverty is not the result of fate, but a concrete sign pointing to his presence among us. We do not find him when and where we want, but see him in the lives of the poor, in their sufferings and needs, in the often inhuman conditions in which they are forced to live.

As I never tire of repeating, the poor are true evangelizers, for they were the first to be evangelized and called to share in the Lord's joy and his kingdom (cf. *Mt* 5:3).

The *poor*, always and everywhere, *evangelize us*, because they enable us to discover in new ways the true face of the Father. "They have much to teach us. Besides participating in the *sensus fidei*, they know the suffering Christ through their own sufferings. It is necessary that we all let ourselves be evangelized by them. The new evangelization is an invitation to recognize the salvific power of their lives and to place them at the centre of the Church's journey. We are called to discover Christ in them, to lend them our voice in their causes, but also to be their friends, to listen to them, to understand them and to welcome the mysterious wisdom that God wants to communicate to us through them. Our commitment does not consist exclusively of activities or programmes of promotion and assistance; what the Holy Spirit mobilizes is not an unruly activism, but above all an attentiveness that considers the other in a certain sense as one with ourselves. This loving attentiveness is the beginning of a true concern for their person which inspires me effectively to seek their good" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 198-199).

3. Jesus not only sides with the poor; he also *shares their lot*. This is a powerful lesson for his disciples in every age. This is the meaning of his observation that "the poor you will always have with you". The poor will always be with us, yet that should not make us indifferent, but summon us instead to a mutual sharing of life that does not allow proxies. The poor are not people "outside" our communities, but brothers and sisters whose sufferings we should share, in an effort to alleviate their difficulties and marginalization, restore their lost dignity and ensure their necessary social inclusion. On the other hand, as we know, acts of charity presuppose a giver and a receiver, whereas mutual sharing generates fraternity. Almsgiving is occasional; mutual sharing, on the other hand, is enduring. The former risks gratifying those who perform it and can prove demeaning for those who receive it; the latter strengthens solidarity and lays the necessary foundations for achieving justice. In short, believers, when they want to see Jesus in person and touch him with their hands, know where to turn. The poor are a sacrament of Christ; they represent his person and point to him.

Many are the examples of saints who made mutual sharing with the poor their life project. I think, among others, of Father Damien de Veuster, the saintly apostle to the lepers. With great generosity, he answered the call to go to the island of Molokai, which had become a ghetto accessible only to lepers, to live and die with them. He rolled up his sleeves and did everything he could to improve the lives of those who were poor, ill and outcast. He became both doctor and nurse, heedless of the risks involved, and brought the light of love to that "colony of death", as the island was then called. He himself contracted leprosy, which became the sign of his total sharing in the lot of the brothers and sisters for whom he had given his life. His testimony is most timely in our own days, marked by the coronavirus pandemic. The grace of God is surely at work in the hearts of all those who, without fanfare, spend themselves for the poorest, sharing with them in concrete ways.

4. We need, then, wholeheartedly to follow the Lord's invitation to "repent and believe in the Gospel" (*Mk* 1:15). This *conversion* consists primarily in opening our hearts to recognizing the many different forms of poverty and manifesting the Kingdom of God through a lifestyle consistent with the faith we profess. Often the poor are viewed as persons apart, as a "category" in need of specific charitable services. Yet following Jesus entails changing this way of thinking and embracing the challenge of mutual sharing and involvement. Christian discipleship entails deciding not to accumulate earthly treasures, which give the illusion of a security that is actually fragile and fleeting. It requires a willingness to be set free from all that holds us back from achieving true

happiness and bliss, in order to recognize what is lasting, what cannot be destroyed by anyone or anything (cf. *Mt 6:19-20*).

Here too, Jesus' teaching goes against the grain, for it promises what can only be seen and experienced with complete certainty by the eyes of faith. "Everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands for my name's sake will receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life" (*Mt 19:29*). Unless we choose to become poor in passing riches, worldly power and vanity, we will never be able to give our lives in love; we will live a fragmented existence, full of good intentions but ineffective for transforming the world. We need, therefore, to open ourselves decisively to the grace of Christ, which can make us witnesses of his boundless charity and restore credibility to our presence in the world.

5. Christ's Gospel summons us to display special concern for the poor and to recognize the varied and excessive forms of moral and social disorder that are generating *ever new forms of poverty*. There seems to be a growing notion that the poor are not only responsible for their condition, but that they represent an intolerable burden for an economic system focused on the interests of a few privileged groups. A market that ignores ethical principles, or picks and chooses from among them, creates inhumane conditions for people already in precarious situations. We are now seeing the creation of new traps of poverty and exclusion, set by unscrupulous economic and financial actors lacking in a humanitarian sense and in social responsibility.

Last year we experienced yet another scourge that multiplied the numbers of the poor: the pandemic, which continues to affect millions of people and, even when it does not bring suffering and death, is nonetheless a portent of poverty. The poor have increased disproportionately and, tragically, they will continue to do so in the coming months. Some countries are suffering extremely severe consequences from the pandemic, so that the most vulnerable of their people lack basic necessities. The long lines in front of soup kitchens are a tangible sign of this deterioration. There is a clear need to find the most suitable means of combating the virus at the global level without promoting partisan interests. It is especially urgent to offer concrete responses to those who are unemployed, whose numbers include many fathers, mothers, and young people. Social solidarity and the generosity which many, thanks be to God, have shown are, together with far-sighted projects of human promotion, making a most important contribution at this juncture.

6. Nonetheless, one question, which is by no means obvious, remains. How can we give a tangible response to the millions of the poor who frequently encounter only indifference, if not resentment? What path of justice must be followed so that social inequalities can be overcome and human dignity, so often trampled upon, can be restored? Individualistic lifestyles are complicit in generating poverty, and often saddle the poor with responsibility for their condition. Yet poverty is not the result of fate; it is the result of selfishness. It is critical, therefore, to generate *development processes* in which the abilities of all are valued, so that complementarity of skills and diversity of roles can lead to a common resource of mutual participation. There are many forms of poverty among the "rich" that might be relieved by the wealth of the "poor", if only they could meet and get to know each other! None are so poor that they cannot give something of themselves in mutual exchange. The poor cannot be only those who receive; they must be put in a position to give, because they know well how to respond with generosity. How many examples of sharing are before our eyes! The poor often teach us about solidarity and sharing. True, they may be people who lack *some things*, often *many things*, including the bare *necessities*, yet they do not lack *everything*, for they retain *the dignity of God's children* that nothing and no one can take away from them.

7. For this reason, *a different approach to poverty* is required. This is a challenge that governments and world institutions need to take up with a farsighted social model capable of countering the new forms of poverty that are now sweeping the world and will decisively affect coming decades. If the poor are marginalized, as if they were to blame for their condition, then the very concept of democracy is jeopardized and every social policy will prove bankrupt. With great humility, we should confess that we are often incompetent when it comes to the poor. We talk about them in the abstract; we stop at statistics and we think we can move people's hearts by filming a documentary. Poverty, on the contrary, should motivate us to creative planning, aimed at increasing the freedom needed to live a life of fulfilment according to the abilities of each person. It is an illusion, which we should reject, to think that freedom comes about and grows through the possession of money. Serving the poor effectively moves us into action and makes it possible to find the most suitable ways of raising and promoting this part of humanity that all too often is anonymous and voiceless, but which has imprinted on it the face of the Saviour who asks for our help.

8. "The poor you will always have with you" (*Mk 14:7*). This is a summons never to lose sight of every opportunity to do good. Behind it, we can glimpse the ancient biblical command: "If one of your brothers and sisters... is in need, you shall not harden your heart nor close your hand to them in their need. Instead, you shall open your hand to them and freely lend them enough to meet their need... When you give to them, give freely and not with ill will; for the Lord, your God, will bless you for this in all your works and undertakings. For the needy will never be lacking in the land..." (*Deut 15:7-8, 10-11*). In a similar vein, the Apostle Paul urged the Christians of his communities to come to the aid of the poor of the first community of Jerusalem and to do so "without sadness or compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (*2 Cor 9:7*). It is not a question of easing our conscience by giving alms, but of opposing the culture of indifference and injustice we have created with regard to the poor.

In this context, we do well to recall the words of Saint John Chrysostom: "Those who are generous should not ask for an account of the poor's conduct, but only improve their condition of poverty and satisfy their need. The poor have only one plea: their poverty and the condition of need in which they find themselves. Do not ask anything else of them; but even if they are the most wicked persons in the world, if they lack the necessary nourishment, let us free them from hunger. ... The merciful are like a harbour for those in need: the harbour welcomes and frees from danger all those who are shipwrecked; whether they are evildoers, good persons, or whatever they may be, the harbour shelters them within its inlet. You, too, therefore, when you see on land a man or a woman who has suffered the shipwreck of poverty, do not judge, do not ask for an account of their conduct, but deliver them from their misfortune" (*Discourses on the Poor Man Lazarus, II, 5*).

9. It is crucial that we grow in our awareness of the needs of the poor, which are always changing, as are their living conditions. Today, in fact, in the more economically developed areas of the world, people are less willing than in the past to confront poverty. The state of relative affluence to which we have become accustomed makes it more difficult to accept sacrifices and deprivation. People are ready to do anything rather than to be deprived of the fruits of easy gain. As a result, they fall into forms of resentment, spasmodic nervousness and demands that lead to fear, anxiety and, in some cases, violence. This is no way to build our future; those attitudes are themselves forms of poverty which we cannot disregard. We need to be open to reading the signs of the times that ask us to find new ways of being evangelizers in the contemporary world. Immediate assistance in responding to the needs of the poor must not prevent us from showing foresight in implementing new signs of Christian love and charity as a response to the new forms of poverty experienced by humanity today.

It is my hope that the celebration of the *World Day of the Poor*, now in its fifth year, will grow in our local Churches and inspire a movement of evangelization that meets the poor personally wherever they may be. We cannot wait for the poor to knock on our door; we need urgently to reach them in their homes, in hospitals and nursing homes, on the streets and in the dark corners where they sometimes hide, in shelters and reception centres. It is important to understand how they feel, what they are experiencing and what their hearts desire. Let us make our own the heartfelt plea of Father Primo Mazzolari: "I beg you not to ask me if there are poor people, who they are and how many of them there are, because I fear that those questions represent a distraction or a pretext for avoiding a clear appeal to our consciences and our hearts... I have never counted the poor, because they cannot be counted: the poor are to be embraced, not counted" ("Adesso" n. 7 - 15 April 1949). The poor are present in our midst. How evangelical it would be if we could say with all truth: *we too are poor*, because only in this way will we truly be able to recognize them, to make them part of our lives and an instrument of our salvation.

Rome, Saint John Lateran, 13 June 2021, Memorial of Saint Anthony of Padua

FRANCISCUS