



## *Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles*

Office of the Bishop

***To be read in church and distributed  
over parish social media***

### BISHOP'S LETTER ON TREASURE

January 11, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In my previous two letters I addressed “time” and “talent”. I now turn my thoughts and reflection to the gift of treasure. One of the most famous sayings of Jesus is found in the Gospel of Matthew: “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Matthew 6:21). It is interesting to note that in this sixth chapter of the Gospel Jesus first addresses giving alms (to the poor); he then speaks about prayer and teaches his apostles the Lord’s Prayer that we all know so well. Jesus then reflects on the gift of fasting and finally he speaks of our “treasures”. In reality the gift of “treasure” represents two things: The gift represents the giver; and the gift represents an act of “thanksgiving to God”.

In the previous passage, Jesus correctly notes that our earthly treasures will rust, or be stolen or simply lost. As we know, we leave the world at our death the way entered into the world at our birth – with nothing. The Holy Scriptures have literally hundreds of references to material goods and their proper use. We will never be able to outdo the generosity of God as St. Paul tells us, “You will be enriched in every way for great generosity, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.” (2 Corinthians 9:10-11). The proper use of what God has given to us in the form of material possessions must be used in accordance with His will. I believe that, while taking care of ourselves and our families, the will of God is also that we use our material goods for others in acts of charity.

Our *Stewardship of Treasure* allows for many different possibilities. One central and important way is our support of our local parish. It is in the parish that we come for the blessing of our marriage and where we bring our children to be baptized and receive the Eucharist; it is in the parish that we bring our beloved deceased for Christian burial. The Eparchy is another way we share the material gifts given to us by God. The Eparchy supports directly the work of the parish. Outside of the parish and Eparchy there are many charitable opportunities with organizations and institutions that also do the work of the Lord. Of course, there is also our ability to assist the poor directly, sometimes person-to-person, sometimes through groups that deal directly with the poor and needy. These are all ways to be thankful to God through our generosity.

Remember that, however we choose, we should always respond with an open heart “for God loves a cheerful giver.” (2 Corinthians 9:7).

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+A. Elias Zaidan

Bishop of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles