

The Twenty Fifth Sunday after Pentecost
Luke 10:25-37

And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour? And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, 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 on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise. (KJV)

God's Holy Church is currently in the Nativity Fast. Now is the time to prepare the heart, mind and soul for the coming Feast of the Nativity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Fast provides believers the opportunity and the incentive to carefully examine the heart, mind and soul. Reviewing and assessing personal goals and values has a part in the Nativity Fast.

The world focuses on the commercialization of Christmas. The world offers entertainment and paths that lead far from the Kingdom of God and eternal life. Worldly celebrations often have nothing to do with Jesus Christ's birth.

Jesus Christ taking on human flesh changed the world forever. The Nativity Fast is a time for renewal in Jesus Christ. The Feast of the Nativity is the acknowledgment and celebration of God being with us.

Daily life challenges believers with the threats of war on the world stage and the commonplace of violence everywhere in daily life. The authentic search for peace is only with the Prince of Peace, the Embodiment of Peace, Jesus Christ.

The Nativity Fast is the path to travel to the Feast of the Nativity. The love of God is uncovered and revealed in the path to the Feast of the Nativity. God's love is within each heart, mind and soul.

God's presence is in each relationship founded in Christ. God's Holy Church opens the doors to the Heavenly Kingdom. Believers with eyes to see will recognize Christ in each person in daily life.

The Gospel for today defines the path to eternal life. Believers are called to demonstrate compassion to the suffering people we meet in daily life. Believers are not to turn a blind eye and have a cold heart for those who suffer.

Suffering is everywhere in our midst. Our neighbor next door is suffering with an illness or is lonely. Our co-worker is struggling with a family member who is mentally ill or is fighting alcoholism or drug addiction.

We have friends who are struggling financially due to unexpected events. We know people who have been victims of violent crime. Our eyes will see people along the road who are homeless.

During the Nativity Fast we are challenged to take the initiative to grow in Christ. We are to reach out beyond our comfort zones to help the people nearby in need.

Our relationships reveal if we are really Christians deep in our heart, mind and soul. The way we view and treat people in daily life is the proof whether Jesus Christ lives within and fills our heart, mind and soul.

We confess Jesus Christ as King and as God at Holy Baptism. The proof of our belief is lived out in daily life. We all will stand before Christ at the Last Judgment. What will Christ say at the Last Judgement about our actions?

Today is an opportunity to invest in the Kingdom of God. Now is the time to be sure to travel the path to the Heavenly Kingdom This is the moment to help the suffering people we see with our eyes nearby.

The Samaritan in the present Gospel did not talk about love of neighbor. The Samaritan in the Gospel proved by his actions that he loved his neighbor. Christians are called to prove by their actions their love of their neighbors.

Streets in our cities are filled with homeless people. Where is the resolve to address the homelessness? Tons of money is spent on war and war related expenses. Where are the sincere steps for peace?

God's Holy Church is where to put life in perspective. The Church offers the path to God's Kingdom and eternal life. Each person decides freely whether to travel the road to peace, the Kingdom of God and eternal life.

The Twenty Fifth Sunday after Pentecost. Holy Prophet Habakkuk; St. Urosh, King of Serbia; Venerable Joannicius of Devich. December 2/15, 2024.

Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic