



OUR LADY OF THE CEDARS CHURCH

A MELKITE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

140 MITCHELL STREET, MANCHESTER, NH 03103

TEL # (603) 623-8944 FAX # (603) 645-6017

Email: oloc.church@comcast.net

Website: www.olocnh.org

REV. THOMAS P. STEINMETZ, Pastor

RT. REV. ANDRE ST. GERMAIN (retired)

REV. ROGER BOUCHER - Weekend Ministry

REV. THEOPHAN LEONARCZYK, Eparchial Chancellor

'Enter the Church and repent ... for here is the physician, not the judge. Here one is not investigated, one receives remission of sins.' (St. John Chrysostom)

March 3, 2019 – The Fourth Sunday of Pre-Lent

**The Commemoration of the Holy Hieromartyr Theodotos,
Bishop of Cyrene on Cyprus**

THE SUNDAY OF FORGIVENESS ~ CHEESEFARE SUNDAY ~

Parish Advisory & Finance Council:

KEN MONTY (*PRESIDENT*), ROBERT ANDERSON, ROBIN ANDERSON, JOHN CULLEN,
MARTHA DAGHER, TIM ERMATINGER, KEN KOMISAREK, MARYLOU LAZOS, JESSICA LOMANNO,
MAURICE PARE', RAFAEL PESCHIERA, PAUL ST. GERMAIN, AND JOHN SIWIK

Parish Secretary: ROBIN ANDERSON

Cedars Society President: MARYLOU LAZOS

Sunday School Coordinator: MARTHA DAGHER

N.A.M.Y. Advisor: ROBIN ANDERSON

HOLY MYSTERY OF CONFESSION: Before or after any service, or by appointment;

HOLY MYSTERY OF CHRISTIAN ILLUMINATION: Please contact the clergy in advance to arrange for the required baptismal instructions;

HOLY MYSTERY OF CROWNING: At least six months prior to the proposed wedding, please contact the clergy to arrange for the required interview and instructions;

HOLY MYSTERY OF THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK: Please contact the pastor at any time when this sacrament is needed;

HOLY COMMUNION FOR THE SICK: Anyone too infirm to attend our services may receive Communion in the home. Please advise the clergy whenever this sacrament is needed.

THE ORDER OF TODAY'S LITURGY

The Troparion of the Resurrection (8th Tone) Page 54

The Troparion of the Dormition of the Theotokos (1st Tone): Page 16

The Kontakon of the Sunday of Forgiveness (6th Tone)

O You who guide men towards wisdom, and give them intelligence and understanding, Instructor of the ignorant and Helper of the poor, strengthen and enlighten my heart, O Lord, give me word, O Word of the Father, for behold I will not refrain my lips from crying out to You: O Merciful One, have mercy on me who have fallen.

THE PROKIMENON:

SING PRAISE TO OUR GOD, SING PRAISE!

SING PRAISE TO OUR KING, SING PRAISE!

All you peoples clap your hands! Shout to God with cries of gladness!

Today's Readings: Romans 13: 11b-14: 4 and Matthew 6: 14-21

LITURGY INTENTIONS

Saturday (March 2) 4:30 PM:

For the repose of Rose Solomon (21st), Ernest Elhady (21st),
Stewart Spencer (14th), and Eugene McGrail (39th)

Sunday, (March 3) 10:30 AM:

For the repose of Anthony V. Grieco Sr. (40 day Memorial),
by the Family of Tony Grieco Jr. and Joseline Grieco

For the health and salvation of Fr. Christopher Manuelle

Next Saturday, (March 9) 4:30 PM:

For the repose of John Devine (43rd), and Sada Kfoury (9th)

Next Sunday (March 10) 10:30 AM:

For the repose of the departed members of our parish

Next Sunday: Bring an Icon!

Next Sunday is the Sunday of Orthodoxy. In celebration, we will carry icons in a procession at the end of the Divine Liturgy. Icons will also be available here at the church for anyone that would like to carry them in the procession. However it also an opportunity for you to bring your own icons from home and have the blessing of carrying them in the procession!



The Sunday Divine Liturgies during Great Lent (beginning next Sunday) – except the Sunday of the Lenten Dinner (March 31) – will be followed by a free lunch for the parish! After lunch, a session of adult education will be offered.

Today is the Sunday of Cheese-Fare also known as the Sunday of Forgiveness. Our spiritual journey of Great and Holy Lent is about to begin. During this holy season the Church calls us to draw closer to God through fasting, almsgiving and prayer. To assist us in our almsgiving, mite boxes are available in the back of the church for the Shepherds Care program. The Church suggests that any money saved through fasting be placed in these boxes for later distribution to the poor. As a rule of prayer, consider attending our Lenten services. Services will be offered every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday evenings at 7:00 PM throughout Lent.

Newborn in Christ: The Handmaid of God, Isabella Scarlett Cleminson, will receive the Holy Mysteries of Illumination – Baptism, Chrismation, and Holy Communion – Sunday morning. Isabella is the daughter of James and Elizabeth Cleminson. Congratulations to Isabella and to all of her family! May God grant them many years in health and happiness.

Ice Cream Party Sunday evening...

All are invited to a Cheese-Fare ice cream party at 6:00 PM on Sunday, as a final celebration before Great Lent begins!



...followed by Forgiveness Vespers and the beginning of Great Lent!



The Vespers of Forgiveness, marks the beginning of the Great Fast and will be celebrated at 7:00 PM Sunday evening. Midway through this service the liturgical colors are changed to the dark colors of Great Lent, reminding us that Lent has begun.

This first service of the Lenten season concludes with the rite of forgiveness. People approach the priest one at a time and each ask the other's forgiveness for any wrongs they may have done during the year. The worshippers then ask one another's forgiveness, forming a large a circle around the church until all the members have asked for, received, and given forgiveness to one another. Then all depart in this peace to begin the Great Fast.

There will be a meeting of the Parish Advisory Council on Thursday, March 7, at 7:00 PM

Attendance Last Sat. 4:30 PM: 15 Sun. 10:30 AM: 88
Last Weekend's Collection: \$1,641.⁰⁰ Mortgage: \$875.⁰⁰

The average Sunday envelope donation: \$50.⁰⁵ The balance on our mortgage is: \$66,175.⁴³

SERVICES FOR THE WEEK

Mon., Mar. 4	7:00 PM	Great Compline
Wed. Mar. 6	7:00 PM	Pre-Sanctified Liturgy
Fri., Mar. 8	7:00 PM	Akathist Hymn
Sat., Mar. 9	4:30 PM	Divine Liturgy: The Sunday of Orthodoxy
Sun., Mar. 10	9:40 AM	Sunday Orthros
Sun., Mar. 10	10:30 AM	Divine Liturgy: The Sunday of Orthodoxy

Notes on Fasting



Fasting from foods is intended as spiritual preparation for an experience of deeper communion with God. Each person is a unity of body and soul. A right spiritual diet and a discipline of fasting go together and strengthen each other. Just as prayer benefits not only the soul but also the body so also fasting from foods benefits not only the body but also the soul. Fasting and prayer make us more sensitive to God's personal presence. At important times of their lives the Prophets

fasted and prayed. So did Jesus, the Apostles, Saints and Church Fathers.

Fasting must be undertaken willingly and not by compulsion. God doesn't need our fasting. We don't fast as a kind of personal punishment for our sins. We cannot pay God back for sins but we can only confess them to Him to receive forgiveness. Fasting with a willing spirit and not just with an attitude of fulfilling a religious obligation means that we keep the purposes of fasting always before us which is to develop self control and to remember God and His Kingdom. That way we fast not only in what we eat but also in how *much* we eat. Fasting is simplicity of eating. We leave the table not with loaded stomachs. Being a little hungry during the day becomes a constant reminder of God, of our dependence on Him, and of the fact that the Lord alone can give us "food that lasts for eternal life" (Jn 6:27). In fasting and prayer, He reveals Himself to us as our true food and drink.

Reasons to Fast

God Himself established fasting. In the Old Testament, preparation for a special holy occasion included fasting and prayer. The New Testament often mentions fasting. Our Lord fasted Himself for 40 days before going out to preach. Fasting is clearly not optional inasmuch as Our Lord said, regarding fasting *When you fast* (Matt. 6:16), rather than *If you fast*. Our Lord, speaking of His disciples, said that after His departure, they would fast: *when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then they shall fast*.

Our Lord also said that we can overcome the devil only through prayer and fasting. When His disciples reported to Him that they had been unable to cast out a demon, Our Lord explained to them that *this kind* [the devil and his foul spirits] *can be cast out in no way but by prayer and fasting*. If we are given but two weapons--prayer and fasting-- in our battle against the demonic powers, we should not cast one of these weapons aside and ignore it. What soldier who knows only two weapons work against a particular enemy would throw one away?

Rule of fasting in the Eparchy of Newton

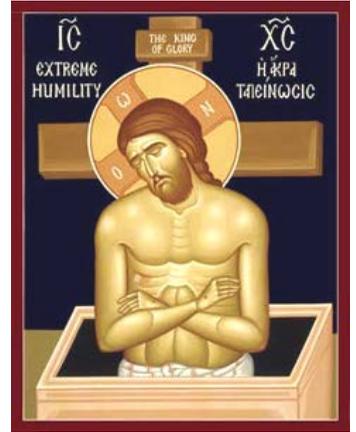
So as not to burden anyone's conscience, the Holy Synod of the Melkite Church permits each eparchial bishop to ease the canonical obligations of fasting, while, at the same time, exhorts all the faithful to fast according to the ancient tradition.

The minimum rule that Melkites in the Eparchy of Newton must observe: **Fasting** from all food and drink from midnight until noon must be observed on the first day of Great Lent (Monday, March 4), and on the last three days of Holy Week (Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday). **Abstinence**, at least from meat, must be observed on every Friday of Great Lent. These requirements are the minimum. The faithful are encouraged to do more, such as also abstaining from meat and dairy throughout the whole of Great Lent, or on every Wednesday and Friday.

Time to Wake from Sleep

TOMORROW IS THE FIRST DAY of the Great Fast. As a reminder, we hear once more these words of St Paul: “*You know what hour it is, how it is full time now for you to wake from sleep*” (Rom 13:11). Each year the Church calls us to four fasting periods – four wake-up calls to focus more intently on the spiritual life in connection with one of its most important feasts. Since the Great Fast prepares us for Pascha, the “Feast of Feasts,” it is naturally more intense than the other fasting periods. Accordingly, the Church sees St Paul’s admonition as especially appropriate today.

How do we observe this Fast? Again, we take our cue from St Paul: “*Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires*” (Rom 13:12-14).



Not in Reveling and Drunkenness

Abstaining from entertainment is the first of St Paul’s examples which has become part of the Church’s Lenten fast. There is a hold on Church parties and celebrations (including marriages) for these forty days. Instead many parishes hold Lenten Dinners with proceeds devoted to charity. In second-millennium Europe it was customary that theaters and all places of entertainment would be shuttered during the Fast. Religious plays and music on Biblical themes would be offered instead. Perhaps the most famous composition of this type, Handel’s Messiah, was premiered at a charity concert in Holy Week, April 1742.

In the past entertainment was, for most people, a relatively rare respite from work. Today it often seems that work is a respite from entertainment, which is available to us day and night at the click of a button. Many people cannot imagine doing without their TV or computer for forty days. Are we called to fast from these devices at least for part of the time during the Fast?

Abstinence from rich food and drink is the signature exercise of spiritual discipline during this period. The specific way this activity is practiced varies from eparchy to eparchy and even from individual to individual. These general principles are universal:

Fasting, the abstinence from all food and drink usually until noon, or even until the celebration of Vespers or the Pre-Sanctified Liturgy in the evening.

Abstinence is the avoidance of specific foods. During the Great Fast abstinence from “meat” (i.e. all animal products, including poultry, fish, eggs, dairy) as well as wine and, in some traditions, oil is practiced daily for the forty days in most Eastern Churches. This is also the root of the Western practice of “giving up something for Lent.”

The Fast is a time for simplifying our physical life, but should it be seen as a time of “giving-up”? The Prodigal did not feel that he was giving something up when he set out for his father because he saw the reality of the life he was living. If we see fasting as “giving-up,” we may have forgotten the first lesson we learned in Sunday school: that the real aim of our life is communion with God.

Not in Quarreling and Jealousy

As long as there has been a Great Fast there have been voices warning against misusing the experience. When we simply equate food fasting as the purpose of the season, St John Chrysostom tells us, we belittle the very season we seek to observe: “Let the mouth fast from disgraceful and abusive words, because, what gain is there when, on the one hand we avoid eating chicken and fish and, on the other, we chew-up and consume our brothers? He who condemns and blasphemes is as if he has eaten brotherly meat, as if he has bitten into the flesh of his fellow man. It is because of this that Paul frightened us, saying: ‘If you chew up and consume one another be careful that you do not annihilate yourselves ... “You did not thrust your teeth into the flesh (of your neighbor) but you thrust bad talk in his soul; you wounded it by spreading dishonor, causing inestimable damage both to yourself, to him, and to many others.””

In the Prayer of St Ephrem the Syrian (“O Lord and Master of my life...”), which we recite so often during this season, we pray to avoid sloth, ambition, inquisitiveness, and vain talking as well the habit of judging others. We ask that we attain patience, love, and humility – virtues that define our relations with others as being in Christ.

Another Lenten experience which seeks to put relationships at the center of our focus during the Fast is the rite of forgiveness held at the end of vespers or the Liturgy on this day. We are enjoined to ask forgiveness and prayers from every other person in the community. In some Churches it is the custom to sing the Paschalia during this rite, pointing toward the kiss we will exchange with everyone in the joy of Christ’s resurrection.

Put On the Lord Jesus Christ

St Paul’s admonition – and the spirit of the Great Fast – does not exalt deprivation, or giving something up for its own sake. Instead it is a way of making room for something greater: living a life of Christian love. Again, Paul is echoed by Chrysostom who writes, “Whoever limits the fast to the deprivation of food, he is the one who, in reality, abhors and ridicules the fast. Are you fasting? Show me your fast with your works. Which works? If you see someone who is poor, show him mercy. If you see an enemy, reconcile with him. If you see a friend who is becoming successful, do not be jealous of him! If you see a beautiful woman on the street, pass her by.” Thus almsgiving is as integral a part of this season as is fasting from food and drink.

St John Chrysostom also offers us other helps in understanding the true purpose of this season when he writes: “If you cannot go without eating all day because of an ailment of the body, beloved one, no logical man will be able to criticize you for that. Besides, we have a Lord who is meek and loving (philanthropic) and who does not ask for anything beyond our power. Because he neither requires the abstinence from foods, neither that the Fast take place for the simple sake of fasting, neither is its aim that we remain with empty stomachs, but that we fast to offer our entire selves to the dedication of spiritual things, having distanced ourselves from secular things.

“If we regulated our life with a sober mind and directed all of our interest toward spiritual things, and if we ate as much as we needed to satisfy our necessary needs and offered our entire lives to good works, we would not have any need of the help rendered by the fast. But because human nature is indifferent and gives itself over mostly to comforts and gratifications, for this reason the philanthropic Lord, ... devised the therapy of the fast for us, so that our gratifications would be completely stopped and that our worldly cares be transferred to spiritual works.”

The Fathers Speak.....*On Fasting:*

Fasting is an exceptional virtue; it represses bodily impulses and gives strength to the soul to fight against the poisoning of the heart through the senses, and provides it with a remedy against any past poisoning. Fasting causes the mind to be cleansed constantly. It withers up every evil thought and brings healthy, godly thoughts -- holy thoughts that enlighten the mind and kindle it with more zeal and spiritual fervor.

-Elder Ephraim of Philotheou Mount Athos, "Counsels from the Holy Mountain"

Abba John the Dwarf said, "If a king wanted to take possession of his enemy's city, he would begin by cutting off the water and the food and so his enemies, dying of hunger, would submit to him. It is the same with the passions of the flesh; if a man goes about fasting and hungry, the enemies of his soul grow weak." *-The Sayings of the Desert Fathers*

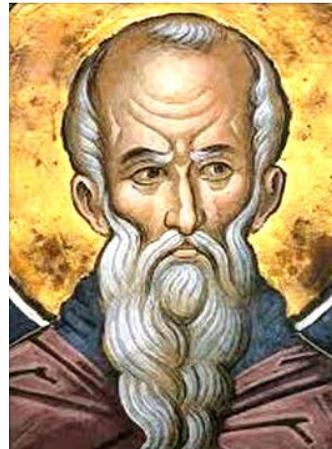
Beware of limiting the good of fasting to mere abstinence from meats. Real fasting is alienation from evil. 'Loose the bands of wickedness.' For give your neighbor the mischief he has done you. Forgive him his trespasses against you. Do not 'fast for strife and debate.' You do not devour flesh, but you devour your brother. You abstain from wine, but you indulge in outrages. You wait for evening before you take food, but you spend the day in the law courts. Woe to those who are 'drunken, but not with wine.' Anger is the intoxication of the soul, and makes it out of its wits like wine. *-St. Basil, in his homilies on the Holy Spirit*

Fasting is absolutely indispensable for man. From the external aspect, it is a struggle of filial obedience to God, Who has given us the rules of fasting through His Holy Spirit. From the inner aspect, fasting is a struggle of restraint and self-limitation. In this lies the great value and sense of fasting, since a strict observance of fasts tempers one's will and perfects the character of one who is firm in his religious convictions and actions. Let us not forget that Christ Himself fasted, and foretold that His apostles would also fast.

-Metropolitan Philaret - On God's Law

It is necessary most of all for one who is fasting to curb anger, to accustom himself to meekness and condescension, to have a contrite heart, to repulse impure thoughts and desires, to examine his conscience, to put his mind to the test and to verify what good has been done by us in this or any other week, and which deficiency we have corrected in ourselves in the present week. This is true fasting.

-St. John Chrysostom.



Devils take great delight in fullness, and drunkenness and bodily comfort.

Fasting possesses great power and it works glorious things.

To fast is to banquet with angels.

St. Athanasius the Great

Please remember to pray for the health and protection of Genevieve Allen, Donna Andruskiewicz, Olivia Aragon, Elizabeth Ashooh, Elsie Ashooh, Erin Baroody, Michael Baroody, Henry Bilodeau, Anthony Blando, Helena Burkush, Fr. Michael Carl, Danielle Caron, Michael Cavanaugh, Meghan Connors, Sarah Cullen, Theresa Cullen, Sarah Dagher, Bishop John Elya, Sher Farrow, Julie Fregeau, Mary Fregeau, Peter Fregeau, John Gallagher, Marguerite Ganem, Mary Ann Garvey, Loretto Gauvin, Bonnie Gomez, Gail Fisher, Laurice Haddad, Nick Haddad, Lucille Harper, Laura Jorba, Virginia Kearney, Leila Khoury, Shirley Lanoue, Susan Latvis, Diana Label, Haley Lesmerises, Ramona Matias, Susan Merrill, Maria Moser, Joanne Nader, Mimi Nasser, Alfred Nasr, Afef Nasr, Raymond Nehme, Samira Nehme, Stefan Notter, Steven O'Leary, Ellen Osgood, Alice Paymant, Marco Enrique Peschiera, MaryJo Pond, Ellen Powell, Sheila Quinn, Daniel Quintal, Deborah Roberts, Adam Rubin, Fr. Andre St. Germain, Kara Salvas, Barbara Schultz, Raymond Sherburne, Tarrant Smith, Iris Angelina Velasquez, Catherine Waldron, George Webber, Martha Webber, Kathy Wise, and Marilyn Whitmore.

If you are visiting our church, our parish family is delighted to welcome you here! Please give us the chance to get to know you by joining us for some coffee, pastry, and conversation in the church hall following the Divine Liturgy. If you would like to know more about the Melkite Catholic Church, check out the brochure entitled *“Welcome to this Holy House,”* located on the table in the back of the church.





Joe Ashooh, Agent
297 South Willow St
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603-624-1000
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Chuck Stephen
814 Elm Street, Suite 503
Manchester, NH 03101
Tel # 603.606.3391
Toll Free 866.491.9675
chuck@glenwoodinvestment.com
www.glenwoodinvestment.com

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**THE
STEPHEN
GROUP**

814 Elm Street, Suite 309
Manchester, NH 03101
Office 603.625.8825
Cell 603.419.9592

JOHN STEPHEN
Managing Partner
jstephen@stephengroupinc.com
www.stephengroupinc.com





Robert Stephen, Attorney at Law
582 Chestnut Street
Manchester, NH 03104
phone 603-663-1007
www.StephenLaw.com

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Today's Readings:

The Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans (Rom. 13:11-14:4)

Brethren, now our salvation is nearer than when we came to believe. The night is far advanced: the day is at hand. Let us therefore lay aside the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light. Let us walk becomingly as in daytime, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in debauchery and wantonness, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and as for the flesh, pay no attention to its lusts.

But whoever is weak in faith, receive him without arguing about opinion. For one believes he may eat all things but another who is weak, let him eat vegetables. Let not the one who eats despise the one who does not; and let not the one who does not eat judge the one who does, for God has received him. Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls but he will stand, for God is able to make him stand.

الرسالة (رومة 13: 11 ج الى 14: 4)

يا إخوة، أن الخلاص أقرب إلينا الآن مما كان حين آمنّا. قد تناهى الليلُ وأقترَبَ النهارُ، فلنخلعْ اذن أعمال الظلمة، ونلبس اسلحة النور. لنسلكنَ سلوكاً لائقاً كما في النهار، لا بالقصوفِ والسكر، ولا بالمضاجعِ والعهر، ولا بالخصامِ والحسد. بل البسوا الربَّ يسوع المسيح، ولا تهتموا بالجسد لقضاءِ شهواتِهِ. من كان ضعيفاً في الايمانِ فقبلوه بغير مباحثَةٍ في الآراء. مِنَ الناسِ من يعتقدُ أن له ان يأكلَ كُلَّ شيءٍ، أما الضعيفُ فيأكلُ بقولاً. فلا يزدِرِ الذي يأكل من لا يأكل، ولا يدينِ الذي يأكل من لا يأكل، لان الله قد قبله. أنتَ من أنتَ يامنُ يدينَ عبدَ غيره، انه لمولاه يثبتُ أو يسقط ، لكنه سيثبتُ لأن الله قادرٌ أن يُثبتَهُ.

The Holy Gospel According to St. Matthew (Mt 6:14-21)

The Lord said, "If you forgive men their offenses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their offenses, neither will your Father forgive you your offenses. And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, who disfigure their faces in order to appear to men as fasting. Amen I say to you they have had their reward.

But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you may not be seen by men to fast, but by your Father, who is in secret; and your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you. Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where worm and rodent consume, and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither worm nor rodent consumes, nor thieves break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there also will be your heart."

انجيل احد مرقع الجبن

الانجيل (متى 6: 14-21)

قال الرب: إن غفرتُم للناس زلاتَّهم، يغفرُ لكم أيضاً أبوكم السماوي زلاتَّكم. وإن لم تغفروا للناس زلاتَّهم، فأبوكم أيضاً لا يغفرُ لكم زلاتَّكم. وإذا صمتُم فلا تكونوا معبَّسين كالمرائين فإنهم يُنكرون وجوههم ليظهروا للناس صائمين. الحقُّ أقول لكم، انهم قد نالوا اجرهم. أما أنتَ فإذا صمتَ، فادهنْ رأسك وأغسل وجهك، لئلا تظهَرَ للناس صائماً بك لأبيك الذي في الخفية، وأبوك الذي ينظرُ في الخفية هو يجازيك علانية. لا تكنزوا لكم كنوزاً على الارض، حيثُ يُفسدُ السوس والصدأ، وحيثُ ينقبُ السارقون ويسرقون. لكن اكنزوا لكم كنوزاً في السماء، حيثُ لا يفسدُ سوس ولا صدأ، ولا ينقبُ السارقون ولا يسرقون. فإنه حيثُ يكونُ كنزُكم هناك يكونُ قلبُكم أيضاً