

Слава Ісусу Христу!

Слава навіки!



Glory be to Jesus Christ!

Glory for ever!

Dormition of the Mother of God

Sunday, June 28, 2026

"Fifth Sunday after Pentecost"

Reflections for this Weekend

Today's Gospel presents one of the most dramatic encounters in the ministry of Christ. Two men, tormented by demons, lived among the tombs, isolated from society, feared by everyone, and imprisoned by powers they could not overcome. When Jesus arrived, everything changed. Darkness recognized the Light, evil trembled before holiness, and the One whom the world often rejected revealed Himself as the only true Liberator.

This Gospel is not merely about two possessed men long ago, it is also about every human heart today. We may not live among tombs, yet many people live surrounded by spiritual death. Some are imprisoned by anger, others by bitterness, addiction, pride, envy, fear, anxiety, despair, or the wounds of the past. These invisible chains can be just as powerful as those described in the Gospel. They rob us of peace, isolate us from others, and slowly convince us that freedom is impossible.

The most striking moment is that the demons immediately recognize Jesus. They know His authority, they know His holiness, they know that their power is temporary. Ironically, evil recognizes what many human hearts refuse to acknowledge. We often spend years trying to solve our deepest problems without surrendering them to Christ. We rely on our own strength, our own plans, our own wisdom, and only after exhausting ourselves do we finally turn toward the Savior who has been waiting all along.

Jesus never argues with evil. He simply commands, and darkness obeys. His authority comes from who He is, the Son of God. This should fill every Christian with hope. No sin is greater than His mercy, no addiction is stronger than His grace, no wound is deeper than His healing love. We may believe our situation is hopeless, but Christ never sees anyone as beyond redemption. Where we see failure, He sees the possibility of restoration. Where we see chains, He sees the promise of freedom.

Yet the Gospel ends with a painful irony. The people of the city ask Jesus to leave. They are more disturbed by the loss of their pigs than amazed by the restoration of two human lives. Material possessions became more valuable than transformed souls. This remains one of the greatest temptations of our own generation. We often become more concerned about financial security, personal comfort, reputation, convenience, or worldly success than about the condition of our souls. We become anxious when our possessions are threatened, yet remain

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strangely calm when our prayer disappears, when our charity grows cold, or when our relationship with God weakens.

Every disciple must ask a difficult question. If Jesus enters my life and begins removing everything that keeps me from Him, will I welcome Him, or will I quietly ask Him to leave because His presence demands change, sacrifice, forgiveness, and conversion? Christ never forces Himself into a heart. He knocks, He invites, He heals, but He waits for our freedom to answer.

The Gospel concludes with Jesus crossing back over the water. His mission continues because there are always more wounded hearts waiting for His healing touch. Today, He continues that same journey toward us. He enters the hidden places of our hearts, places we try to conceal from others, places filled with fear, regret, disappointment, and sorrow. He is not frightened by our darkness because His light is infinitely greater.

Perhaps the greatest miracle in this passage is not the expulsion of demons, but the revelation that no person is abandoned by God. Christ deliberately crossed the sea to rescue two forgotten men whom everyone else had given up on. That same love reaches each one of us today.

He knows our hidden battles, He hears our silent cries, and He never grows tired of seeking us. The closer we draw to Him through prayer, repentance, the Holy Mysteries, and humble trust, the more every chain begins to lose its strength. In His presence, fear gives way to peace, despair becomes hope, brokenness is transformed into new life, and the soul discovers that true freedom is found only in the loving embrace of Jesus Christ.



Please Note!

Tomorrow, June 29, we celebrate the glorious feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, pillars of the Church and faithful witnesses of the Gospel who gave their lives in service to Christ and His people.

On this special day, we will gather as a parish family for the Divine Liturgy at 6:00 pm.

All are warmly invited to come and give thanks to God for the witness of these great Apostles and to ask for their intercession for the Church and for our own journey of faith.



A heartfelt thank you to everyone who has generously hosted our former “coffee and sweets,” now lovingly transformed into a full lunch after the Divine Liturgy. Clearly, we have moved from “light refreshments” to “serious hospitality,” and no one is complaining.

Your kindness, effort, and delicious offerings continue to build our parish community in a beautiful way, one meal, one conversation, and one shared smile at a time.

May God bless all who cook, serve, set up, and clean up, your reward in heaven, and in parish compliments, is surely great.

A new hosting list is now posted on the bulletin board.

The Spiritual Courage to the struggle to letting go of our deep yearnings for all the stuff here on Earth

The twelfth step on St John Climacus's Ladder is a seriously intense part of our spiritual climb It's not just about saying sorry for the bad things we've done in the past which we've hopefully already started doing it's about digging much deeper Much like taking apart an old house piece by piece this step is about breaking down the very desires and strong feelings that keep pulling us towards things that aren't good for us It's about letting go of our deep yearnings for all the stuff here on Earth things like wanting lots of expensive possessions chasing after fame or always needing people to tell us we're doing a good job

Think of this step as a big personal battle inside your heart You're facing your most stubborn habits and the false ideas you have about what truly makes you happy It's about cutting ties with those feelings that make us selfish not just a little bit but truly taking away the power of our "me first" attitude This isn't about just giving up and letting things happen it's about actively and forcefully choosing to step away from the strong pull of worldly pleasures and the things that make us feel good in the moment The amazing gift we get from going through this tough fight isn't about being super strict and joyless but about finding an incredible freedom

Imagine the Ladder steps like rungs you climb If the first steps were about learning to walk steadily this twelfth step is about learning to truly fly It makes us question whether we can really trust our own feelings and wants because they can trick us and lead us astray It's about seeing how all the good things in the world are only here for a short time not just as a smart idea but truly feeling in our gut that these things can actually stop us from reaching our real goal which is getting closer to God

The big amazing lesson here is how it turns popular ideas on their head The world constantly tells us to get more buy more and express ourselves But this step demands that we intentionally let go and make ourselves smaller so that we can make room for something infinitely better It's about being okay with showing our weaknesses and seeming silly or not tough in the eyes of the world if it means gaining real strength inside Climacus understood that our biggest problems aren't things outside of us but deep inside us like the strong patterns in our thoughts and feelings that always put ourselves first

This step also helps us understand what real love (the kind that's not selfish) truly means It teaches us that we can't fully love God or other people if our hearts are still split between loving ourselves and loving earthly things It's like cleaning out the very source of our love allowing it to flow freely towards what it's truly meant for When we let go of our selfish love we can then truly experience a love that gives and expects nothing in return a love that reflects God's own

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love That's why this step is so important not just a good suggestion but a necessary part of our spiritual journey

Now let's think about how this actually works in our everyday lives How do you truly let go of selfish love when you're living in the world It's not about giving up all the good things in life but about changing what we care about most It's about knowing the difference between enjoying something and being completely controlled by it between feeling happy and making something an idol It's a continuous battle inside us a constant checking of why we do things what we really want and who or what we're truly dedicated to It means finding comfort not in things that quickly come and go but in the steady presence of God

So this twelfth step isn't the finish line but a new start It opens the door to even deeper spiritual truths It prepares us for genuine humility for lasting peace and for hope that can't be shaken It's a clear reminder that growing spiritually isn't about collecting good qualities but about getting rid of everything that stops us from being truly open to God It's a painful process but one that ultimately sets us free It shows how much God's grace can change us and how committed a person's soul can be when it truly longs to be one with its Creator



From the Pastor's Desk

I kindly ask you to remember in your prayers many of our parishioners who are currently struggling with their physical health. Some are facing ongoing illnesses, others are recovering from surgeries or treatments, and several are carrying heavy burdens of pain and weakness in their daily lives. For them, each day can feel especially difficult, marked by fatigue, uncertainty, and the quiet struggle to regain strength.

In these moments, our prayer becomes a powerful expression of love and unity. Even when we cannot be physically present with them, we can remain close in spirit by lifting them up before the Lord. Let us ask the Good Lord, the Divine Physician of our souls and bodies, to grant them speedy recovery, renewed strength, and the gift of restored health according to His holy will.

May Christ, who touched the sick and comforted the suffering, stretch out His healing hand upon them. May He bring peace to their hearts, courage to their spirits, and patience in their healing journey. And may the Holy Theotokos intercede for them, surrounding them with her maternal care and protection.

Let us also not forget that our prayers are a sign of true Christian support. In prayer we carry one another, we strengthen one another, and we remind each other that no one suffers alone in the Body of Christ. A simple remembrance at the Divine Liturgy, a quiet prayer at home, or a heartfelt mention by name before God can become a great source of comfort and hope.

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Sunday Divine Liturgy:
8:50 a.m. The Third Hour
And
Prayer Service for Peace in
Ukraine.
9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy

Religious Education
September - May

Sacraments Penance:
Sunday before Liturgies
or by appointment

Baptism - Matrimony
In most instances
six-month membership
required

Funerals
Membership of an
immediate family member
required

Communion to the
Homebound
If you or your family
members are confined to a
health center or are
homebound, please contact
Fr. Hugo directly so that
arrangements can be made
for his visitation.

Sunday, June 28

"5th Sunday after Pentecost"

Epistle: Romans 10:1-10. Gospel: Matthew 8:28-9:1.

8:50 a.m. The Third Hour and Prayer Service for Peace in Ukraine
9:30 a.m. God's blessings and good health for all our parishioners and friends
God's blessings and good health for Rebecca Morrissey from Soutus family

Monday, June 29

"The Holy, Glorious, All-Praiseworthy Apostles Peter and Paul"

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 11:21-12:9. Gospel: Matthew 16:13-19.

6:00 p.m. God's blessings and good health for Ulana and Rickard Martindale
from Soutus family

Tuesday, June 30

"The Synaxis of the Holy, Glorious Twelve Apostles"

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 4:9-16. Gospel: Matthew 3:13-19.

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

Wednesday, July 1

"The Holy Unmercenaries and Wonderworkers Cosmas and Damian"

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 2:9-3:8. Gospel: Matthew 13:31-36.

Thursday, July 2

"The Placing of the Precious Robe of Our Holy Theotokos"

Epistle: Hebrews 9:1-7. Gospel: Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28.

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

Friday, July 3

"The Holy Martyr Hyacinth"

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 4:5-8. Gospel: Matthew 13:44-54.

Saturday, July 4

"Our Father Andrew of Jerusalemite, Archbishop of Crete"

Epistle: Romans 9:1-5. Gospel: Matthew 9:18-26.

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

Sunday, July 5

"6th Sunday after Pentecost"

"Our Venerable Father Athanasius of Athos"

Epistle: Romans 12:6-14. Gospel: Matthew 9:1-8.

8:50 a.m. The Third Hour and Prayer Service for Peace in Ukraine
9:30 a.m. God's blessings and good health for all our parishioners and friends

We are most appreciative for your generosity in donations to the church, and pray that the Lord bless you all with many blessings and good health.