

Слава Ісусу Христу!

Слава навіки!



Glory be to Jesus Christ!

Glory for ever!

Dormition of the Mother of God

Sunday, September 27, 2026

"18th Sunday after Pentecost"

Reflections for this Week!!!!

The Gospel of Luke presents us with a profound mystery of Christian life. Christ comes to the shore of the Sea of Galilee, enters Simon's boat, and transforms an ordinary moment of disappointment into the beginning of a vocation. Simon and the other fishermen have worked throughout the night and caught nothing. Their nets are empty, their bodies are tired, and their hopes have been exhausted. Yet it is precisely into this human emptiness that Christ comes. This is one of the beautiful truths of our spirituality. God does not wait for us to become strong before He approaches us. He enters our weakness, our poverty, our weariness, and even our failures. Grace does not destroy our humanity, but enters into it and transfigures it. Jesus says to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." Simon has every practical reason to resist. He is the fisherman. He knows the lake. He knows that they have already worked all night. Yet something greater than experience speaks to him. He answers, "At your word I will let down the nets."

These words reveal the heart of Orthodox and Eastern Catholic spirituality: obedience to Christ is not merely following instructions. It is an act of trust that opens the human person to divine grace. Simon places his experience beneath the word of Christ. He allows divine wisdom to become greater than his own understanding.

The deep therefore becomes an image of the spiritual life. Christ continually calls us beyond the shallow waters of comfortable Christianity. He calls us into the depths of prayer, repentance, forgiveness, sacrifice, and communion with God. We cannot experience the fullness of divine life while remaining permanently at the shore.

Then the miracle occurs. The nets become full, so full that they begin to break. Yet the abundance of fish is not the deepest miracle. The true miracle happens in Simon himself. When he encounters the holiness and power of Christ, he falls before Him and cries, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

This is repentance, not despair. Simon sees his sin because he has encountered divine holiness. In the presence of Christ, the human person discovers the truth about himself. Yet Christ does not reject Simon. He answers, "Do not be afraid."

This is the movement of Eastern Christian repentance. We do not confess our sins merely to feel guilty. We confess so that what is wounded may be healed, what is darkened may be illumined, and what is separated from God may be restored to communion. Repentance is the

(continue to page 3)

(continue from page 2)

doorway toward theosis, toward participation in the life of God.

Christ does not say to Simon, “You are too sinful to serve Me.” Instead, He gives him a vocation: “From now on you will be catching men.” The man who recognizes his weakness becomes the man entrusted with a mission. Grace does not merely forgive Simon; grace transforms Simon.

The boat itself can be understood as an image of the Church. Christ enters the boat, teaches from the boat, and sends the disciples from the boat into the deep. The Church is not simply an institution where religious activities take place. She is the living community in which Christ continues to teach, heal, sanctify, and send His people into the world.

And notice that Simon does not remain alone. The Gospel speaks of his companions and of the other boat. The Christian vocation is never merely individual. We are saved into communion. We pray together, worship together, carry one another’s burdens, and become instruments through which the grace of Christ reaches others.

Perhaps today your own nets feel empty. Perhaps you have prayed and seen no answer, served and received little recognition, loved and experienced disappointment, or worked faithfully without seeing the fruit you hoped for. Do not assume that the empty net means that Christ has abandoned you. Sometimes the empty net becomes the place where we finally hear His voice. Christ is still saying, “Put out into the deep.”

Go deeper in prayer. Go deeper in forgiveness. Go deeper in repentance. Go deeper in love. Go deeper into the sacramental life of the Church. Go deeper into the mystery of Christ.

And when He calls, let our answer be the prayer of Simon: “At your word.”

For the purpose of the Christian life is not simply to fill our nets with blessings. It is to allow Christ to transform us so completely that our entire life becomes an offering, our boat becomes a place of grace, and our hands become instruments through which others encounter the mercy of God.

The deepest miracle is not what Christ places into our nets. It is what Christ creates within our hearts.



The Feast of the Protection of the Holy Theotokos reminds us of Mary’s loving presence and maternal intercession for the Church and for all who seek refuge under her heavenly protection. Let us gather in prayer and place our lives, families, parish, and world under her mantle of mercy. We warmly invite everyone to celebrate the Divine Liturgy on the eve of the feast at 6:00 p.m. Come and pray together, asking the Holy Theotokos to protect and guide us always.

The Courage to stand before God without pretending to be someone we are not.!!

The twenty fifth step of the Ladder of Divine Ascent brings us to the mystery of humility. Saint John Climacus places humility among the highest virtues because it is not merely one virtue among many. It is the spiritual soil in which every other virtue grows. Without humility, prayer can become self admiration, fasting can become pride, knowledge can become vanity, service can become a desire for recognition, and even holiness can become an illusion of our own greatness.

To take this twenty fifth step requires courage because humility asks us to stand before God without pretending to be someone we are not.

The world often teaches us to build ourselves, defend ourselves, promote ourselves, and prove ourselves. We are encouraged to make our accomplishments visible and our weaknesses invisible. Humility walks in another direction. It does not deny our gifts, but it teaches us where those gifts come from. It does not demand that we think less of ourselves, but that we stop making ourselves the center of everything.

The courageous person is therefore not the one who never sees weakness. The courageous person is the one who can see his weakness without running away from God.

This is where humility becomes deeply connected with repentance. When we are proud, we must protect an image of ourselves. We become defensive when corrected, wounded when overlooked, angry when our efforts are not recognized, and restless when another person receives praise. But when humility begins to grow within us, we no longer need to prove ourselves constantly.

We can simply stand before Christ and say, “Lord, have mercy on me.”

That prayer is not humiliation. It is freedom.

Humility releases us from the exhausting burden of being our own savior.

The Eastern tradition understands salvation as participation in the life of God, the healing and transformation of the human person by divine grace. Humility is essential because grace can be received only by a heart that knows it is in need. A cup that is already full cannot receive more. A heart filled with itself has little room for God.

This does not mean that the humble person considers himself worthless. Christianity does not teach self hatred. Every human person bears the image and likeness of God. Our dignity is immense precisely because we belong to Him. True humility therefore does not destroy our dignity. It restores it by placing our identity in God rather than in achievements, reputation, possessions, positions, or the opinions of others. There is another courage required by this step. We must have the courage to rejoice when someone else succeeds.

(continue to page 5)

(continue from page 4)

Pride secretly asks, “Why not me?” Humility learns to say, “Thank God for the gifts He has given this person.”

That is difficult because comparison can quietly poison the heart. We can serve faithfully and still desire recognition. We can love others and secretly compete with them. We can participate in the life of the Church and still want our contribution to be noticed.

The medicine is humility.

Humility teaches us to serve even when nobody sees. It teaches us to pray without applause, forgive without receiving an apology, give without being thanked, and remain faithful without needing recognition.

This is the humility of Christ.

The Lord of glory entered the world not through earthly greatness but through Bethlehem. He accepted the poverty of the manger, the hiddenness of Nazareth, the rejection of His ministry, the humiliation of the Cross, and finally the silence of the tomb. Yet His humility was not weakness. It was love emptied of self seeking.

The Cross reveals the deepest meaning of this twenty fifth step. Christ does not save humanity by dominating it. He saves by giving Himself.

Therefore, the courage of humility is the courage to descend with Christ so that we may rise with Him.

There are moments when we must choose silence instead of defending ourselves, forgiveness instead of resentment, gratitude instead of comparison, service instead of recognition, repentance instead of excuses, and love instead of pride.

These choices may seem small, but they are steps upward on the spiritual ladder.

Perhaps today God is showing you an area where pride has quietly entered your heart. Do not become discouraged. Seeing it is already grace. Bring it into the light of Christ. Do not justify it. Do not hide it. Do not condemn yourself. Simply offer it to God.

The humble heart does not say, “I have nothing to offer.”

It says, “Everything I have is a gift.”

The twenty fifth step teaches us that the way upward is mysteriously downward. We ascend toward God by descending into humility. We become greater not by making ourselves greater, but by allowing Christ to become greater within us.

May we have the courage to take this step, to become smaller in our own eyes so that Christ may become greater in our hearts. For when pride disappears, the heart becomes spacious enough for grace, and when the heart becomes spacious enough for grace, the soul begins to taste the freedom of the Kingdom of God.



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Sunday Divine Liturgy:

9:00 a.m. The Third Hour

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, September 27

"18th Sunday after Pentecost"

"The Holy Martyr Callistratus and His Wife"

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 9:6-11. Gospel: Luke 5:1-11.

9:00 a.m. The Third Hour

9:30 a.m. God's blessings and good health for all our parishioners and friends
n loving memory of **+Hanna** and **+Vasyl Bashta** from family

Monday, September 28

"Our Venerable Father and Confessor Chariton"

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 4:6-15. Gospel: Luke 6:17-23.

Tuesday, September 29

"Our Venerable Father Cyriacus the Anchorite"

Epistle: Philippians 1:8-14. Gospel: Luke 5:12-16.

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

Wednesday, September 30

"The Priest-Martyr Gregory, Bishop of Great Armenia"

Epistle: Philippians 1:12-20. Gospel: Luke 5:33-39.

6:00 p.m. God's blessings & good health for **Rebecca Morrissey** from Soutus family

Thursday, October 1

"The Protection of the Holy Theotokos"

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

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

Friday, October 2

"The Holy-Priest Martyr Cyprian; Justina; and Holy Andrew"

Epistle: Philippians 1:27-2:4. Gospel: Luke 6:17-23.

Saturday, October 3

"The Holy Priest-Martyr Dionysius the Areopagite"

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 15:58-16:3. Gospel: Luke 5:17-26.

In loving memory of **+ Yaroslav Wirlo** and **+ Osyb Badynsky**
from Martindale family

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

Sunday, October 4

"19th Sunday after Pentecost"

"The Holy Priest-Martyr Hierotheus"

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 11:31-12:9. Gospel: Luke 6:31-36.

9:00 a.m. The Third Hour

9:30 a.m. God's blessings and good health for all our parishioners and friends
In loving memory of **+Charles Retay** from Dr. Laurel

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.