

Слава Ісусу Христу!

Слава навіки!



Glory be to Jesus Christ!

Glory for ever!

Dormition of the Mother of God

Sunday, July 19, 2026

"8th Sunday after Pentecost"

Reflections for this Weekend

Matthew 14:14 through 22 reveals far more than the miracle of feeding five thousand people. It reveals the heart of Christ, the heart every disciple is called to imitate. The Gospel begins by telling us that Jesus saw the vast crowd and His heart was moved with compassion. Before He multiplied the loaves, before He taught, before He performed any miracle, He looked at the people and truly saw them. Compassion always begins with seeing.

We live in a world filled with people who are seen but not noticed, heard but not listened to, surrounded by others yet profoundly lonely. It is possible to know someone's name without knowing their pain. Jesus never looked at people as interruptions or burdens. He saw each person as a beloved child of the Father. This Gospel invites us to ask a challenging question. When we look at those around us, do we see problems to avoid or people to love?

The disciples respond differently. Seeing the late hour and the hungry crowd, they offer what appears to be a practical solution. "Send the crowds away." Their reasoning is understandable. The need is too great, the resources are too small, and the responsibility feels overwhelming. How often do we respond the same way? Faced with broken families, loneliness, poverty, addiction, suffering, or declining faith, we quietly conclude that someone else should take care of it. Jesus refuses that solution. He tells His disciples, "There is no need for them to go away. Give them some food yourselves."

Those words echo through every generation of Christians. Christ still speaks them to His Church. Feed the hungry. Comfort the grieving. Forgive the offender. Welcome the stranger. Teach the faith. Encourage the discouraged. Visit the sick. Pray for those who have no one to pray for them. The miracle begins when disciples stop saying, "Someone should do something," and begin saying, "Lord, use me."

The disciples immediately focus on what they lack. They have only five loaves and two fish. They see insufficiency. Jesus sees possibility. The greatest obstacle to God's work is often not the absence of resources but the absence of trust. God has never asked us to begin with abundance. He asks us to begin with willingness. A small gift surrendered into the hands of Christ becomes more than enough.

Every one of us possesses five loaves and two fish. They may not be bread and fish, but they

(continue to page 3)

(continue from page 2)

are the gifts God has already placed within our lives. Perhaps it is time, compassion, patience, a listening ear, a generous heart, professional skills, financial resources, or the simple ability to pray faithfully for others. We often underestimate what God can accomplish through ordinary people who place ordinary gifts into His extraordinary hands.

Jesus first blesses the bread before He breaks it. There is a profound spiritual lesson hidden here. God often blesses us, then allows us to be broken so that we may become nourishment for others. None of us enjoys moments of suffering, disappointment, illness, loss, or failure. Yet these experiences can become places where God's grace flows most abundantly. Bread remains beautiful on the table, but it feeds no one until it is broken. Hearts become capable of deeper compassion after they have experienced suffering themselves.

The miracle also points toward the Holy Eucharist. Jesus takes the bread, looks toward heaven, blesses it, breaks it, and gives it to His disciples. Every Divine Liturgy continues this sacred mystery. Christ still feeds His people, not only with earthly bread but with His own Body and Blood. The Eucharist is not merely something we receive. It is the strength that enables us to become bread for others through lives of self giving love.

The practical invitation of this Gospel is beautifully simple. Each morning ask yourself, "Who is hungry today because of me?" Perhaps someone hungers for encouragement, forgiveness, hope, friendship, understanding, or simply a kind word. Before looking for extraordinary opportunities to serve God, be faithful in ordinary acts of charity. Visit someone who is homebound. Call a family member who may be lonely. Share a meal with someone who lives alone. Pray for a person who has hurt you. Offer your talents without expecting recognition. Bring your five loaves and two fish to Christ every day.

The Gospel concludes with everyone being satisfied and twelve baskets left over. God's generosity always exceeds human expectations. When we place our small gifts into the hands of Jesus, He never simply multiplies the gift. He multiplies the love behind it. The miracle of the loaves continues every day wherever Christians refuse to send people away empty, choosing instead to become the hands through which Christ still feeds a hungry world.



May every person who enters our parish leave knowing that they have encountered not only a beautiful Divine Liturgy, but also the love of Christ reflected in His people.

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.

The Spiritual Courage To Learn To Love As Christ Loves!!!!

The fifteenth step of the **Ladder of Divine Ascent** leads us to one of the most beautiful and misunderstood virtues of the Christian life, chastity and purity, incorruptible purity and virginity. Many people immediately think this step speaks only about sexuality, but Saint John Climacus invites us to contemplate something far greater. Purity is the complete restoration of the human heart. It is learning to love as Christ loves, with a heart that is free, undivided, and entirely open to God.

This step requires extraordinary courage because we live in a world that constantly confuses love with pleasure, freedom with self indulgence, and happiness with instant gratification. We are surrounded by images, messages, and temptations that encourage us to satisfy every desire without asking whether it brings us closer to God. The world often tells us, "Follow your heart." Christ teaches us something deeper, "Give Me your heart."

Purity is not primarily about what we avoid. It is about whom we love. A pure heart does not spend its life running away from sin. It spends its life running toward Christ. When the heart becomes filled with His presence, sinful desires gradually lose their attraction because something infinitely more beautiful has taken their place.

Jesus proclaims, "Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God." Notice that He does not say the intelligent will see God, or the successful, or the powerful. He says the pure of heart. Purity gives spiritual vision. Sin clouds the soul, while purity makes the presence of God unmistakably clear. A pure heart begins to recognize God in ordinary moments, in prayer, in the Divine Liturgy, in the beauty of creation, and in every person created in His image.

Saint John Climacus reminds us that purity is impossible by human effort alone. It is the fruit of grace working together with our daily choices. Every temptation resisted, every prayer offered in secret, every act of self control, every sincere confession, every reception of the Holy Eucharist, and every humble beginning becomes another stone in the foundation of a pure heart.

Purity is needed by every Christian, whether married, single, widowed, ordained, or consecrated. A married couple lives chastity by loving each other faithfully, selflessly, and with reverence. A single person lives chastity by waiting with patience and honoring the dignity of every person. A religious lives chastity by offering an undivided heart completely to Christ and His Church. In every vocation, chastity is not the absence of love. It is love purified by God's grace.

The greatest enemy of purity today is not simply immorality. It is distraction. Many hearts have become so filled with endless entertainment, social media, unhealthy comparisons, selfish ambition, and constant noise that they no longer have room to hear the gentle voice of God.

(continue to page 5)

(continue from page 4)

Purity begins whenever we remove whatever keeps Christ from occupying first place in our lives.

Practically, this step begins with guarding the eyes, because what enters the eyes eventually settles in the heart. Be careful what you watch, what you read, and what you allow to shape your imagination. Guard your ears by refusing gossip and conversations that diminish the dignity of others. Guard your thoughts by turning immediately to prayer whenever temptation appears. Fill your heart with Sacred Scripture before the world fills it with confusion. Receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation regularly, because confession washes away not only sin but also discouragement. Spend time before God or in quiet prayer before an icon, allowing Christ to cleanse the hidden corners of your soul.

Most importantly, learn to see every human person as someone deeply loved by God, never as an object to satisfy personal desires or selfish ambitions. Purity changes the way we look at people. Instead of asking what someone can give us, we begin asking how we can reflect Christ's love to them.

The fifteenth step is ultimately a journey toward becoming whole. A pure heart is not a perfect heart that has never struggled. It is a heart that has learned to surrender every struggle to Christ. God does not ask for impossible perfection before He loves us. He asks only that we keep returning to Him with humility, confidence, and hope.

When Christ becomes the deepest desire of our hearts, every other desire finds its proper place. Then purity is no longer a burden but a joy, no longer a restriction but true freedom. The soul discovers that the greatest beauty is not found in possessing the world, but in belonging completely to the One who alone can satisfy every longing of the human heart.



A Thought for the Week

Every person who walks through the doors of our church carries a story. Some arrive with grateful hearts, others with heavy burdens. Some come seeking answers, others simply looking for peace. We may never know the struggles hidden behind a smile, the tears shed in silence, or the prayers whispered from a broken heart.

That is why every smile, every kind word, every handshake, and every act of welcome matters. You may never realize how much your kindness can mean to someone who desperately needs hope.

As a parish family, let us continue to be a community where everyone feels loved, accepted, and valued. Welcome someone you do not know. Sit with a visitor. Pray for those who are sick, lonely, or grieving. Remember, the Church is not merely a building where we gather once a week. It is a family where we carry one another, rejoice together, and help each other grow closer to Christ.

Ukrainian Catholic Parish
Pastor
Very Rev. Hugo Soutus
Address:
3720 West Maryland Ave.
Phoenix, AZ. 85019
Rectory: (602) 973-3667
Parish: (602) 347-9267
Emergency:
602-329-3281

E-mail:
DMofGod@cox.net

Website:
www.Ukrainianchurch.org

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, July 19

"8th Sunday after Pentecost"

"Commemoration of the First Six Ecumenical Councils"

"Our Venerable Mother Macrina"

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1:10-18. Gospel: Matthew 14:14-22.

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 **Lawrence and Mary Sosnowich**
from Soutus family

Monday, July 20

"The Holy and Glorious Prophet Elijah"

Epistle: James 5:10-20. Gospel: Luke 4:22-30.

Tuesday, July 21

"Our Venerable Father Simeon"

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 12:12-26. Gospel: Matthew 18:18-22; 19:1-2; 13-15.

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

Wednesday, July 22

"The Holy Myrrh-bearer Mary Magdalene"

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 13:4-14:5. Gospel: Matthew 20:1-16.

Thursday, July 23

"The Holy Martyrs Throphimus, Theophilus and Those with Them"

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 14:6-19. Gospel: Mathew 20:17-28.

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

Friday, July 24

"The Holy Martyrs Borys and Hlib"

Epistle: Romans 8:28-39. Gospel: John 15:17-16:2.

Saturday, July 25

"The Dormition of Saint Anna, Mother of the Holy Theotokos"

Epistle: Galatians 4:22-31. Gospel: Luke 8:16-21.

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

Sunday, July 26

"9th Sunday after Pentecost"

"The Holy Priest-Martyr Hermolaus and Those with Him"

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 3:9-17. Gospel: Matthew 14:22-34.

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 **Michele Tabasso** from the parish