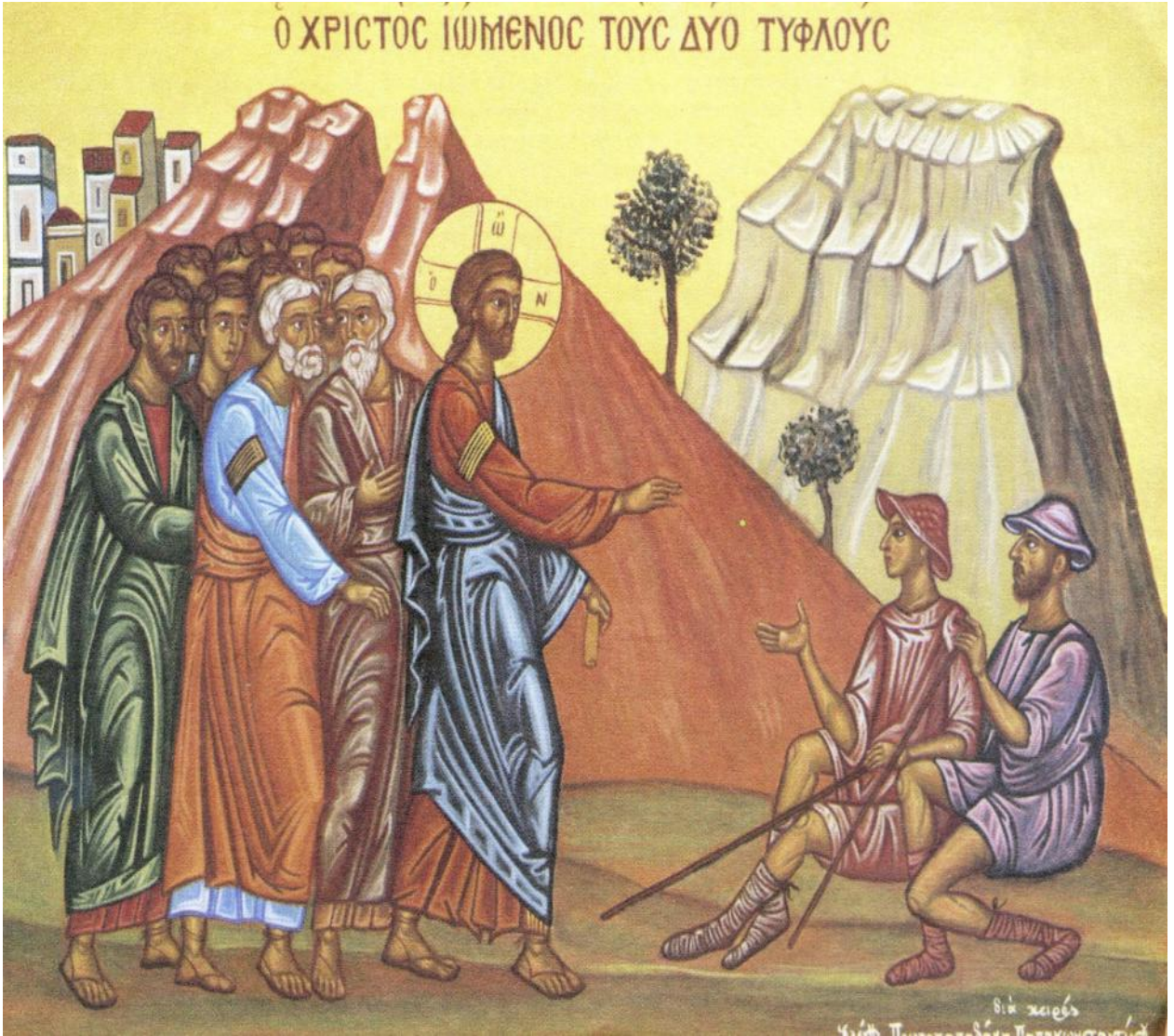


Слава Ісусу Христу!

Слава навіки!



Glory be to Jesus Christ!

Glory for ever!

Dormition of the Mother of God

Sunday, July 12, 2026

"7th Sunday after Pentecost"

Reflections for this Weekend

Matthew 9:27 through 35 reveals the transforming power of faith, compassion, and the presence of Christ. In these verses Jesus restores sight to two blind men, gives speech to a man possessed by a demon, and continues His mission of teaching, preaching, and healing throughout every town and village. Beneath these miracles lies a profound invitation to every disciple, the courage to open the eyes of the soul so that we may truly recognize God at work in our lives.

The two blind men continually cry out, "Have pity on us, Son of David." They cannot see Jesus with their physical eyes, yet they recognize Him with the eyes of faith. Those who possess perfect eyesight often failed to recognize the Messiah standing before them, while these blind men saw with hearts illuminated by hope. Their blindness became the very path that led them to deeper vision. Sometimes God allows moments of darkness in our own lives so that we stop depending on our own strength and begin trusting completely in Him. Physical vision allows us to see the world, but faith allows us to see eternity.

Jesus asks them a remarkable question, "Do you believe that I can do this?" He already knows the answer, yet He desires that they freely profess their faith. Every believer eventually hears the same question. Do you believe that Christ can heal your wounded heart, restore your broken relationships, forgive your sins, or transform your fears into peace? Faith is not simply believing that God exists, it is entrusting our entire lives into His loving hands even when the outcome remains unseen.

The healing of the man unable to speak reveals another spiritual truth. Sin, fear, bitterness, resentment, and despair can silence the soul. Many people have lost the ability to speak words of hope, gratitude, forgiveness, and love because their hearts have become imprisoned by spiritual darkness. When Christ enters the human heart, He not only removes what binds us, He restores our ability to proclaim His goodness. A Christian whose heart has been touched by Christ cannot remain spiritually mute. The Gospel naturally overflows into words of encouragement, acts of mercy, and joyful witness.

The response of the crowds and the Pharisees also challenges us. The crowds glorify God because they recognize His mighty works. The Pharisees, however, reject the miracles because

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pride blinds them. Miracles alone do not produce faith. A humble heart recognizes God's presence, while a proud heart finds reasons to deny Him. The greatest obstacle to seeing Christ is often not ignorance, but self sufficiency. Pride convinces us that we already know enough, while humility keeps the heart open to continual conversion.

The Gospel concludes by describing Jesus traveling through every town and village, teaching, proclaiming the Kingdom, and healing every disease and infirmity. Christ never waits for suffering people to come to Him. He seeks them. He enters their villages, their homes, and their brokenness. This remains His mission today. He walks into the hidden places of our hearts where pain, disappointment, loneliness, and fear still reside. No wound is too deep for His mercy, no darkness too great for His light.

The practical invitation of this Gospel is beautifully simple. Begin each morning by asking Jesus to open the eyes of your heart before opening your eyes to the demands of the day. When difficulties arise, imitate the persistence of the blind men by praying with confidence instead of surrendering to discouragement. Before speaking, ask whether your words will bring healing or division. Each evening reflect upon where you recognized Christ during the day, and where pride or fear may have blinded you to His presence.

The greatest miracle in this Gospel is not merely that blind eyes were opened or silent lips began to speak. The greatest miracle is that ordinary people encountered Jesus and were forever changed. The same Lord still passes through the villages of our daily lives. He still asks, "Do you believe that I can do this?" Every time we answer with trust, our spiritual blindness begins to disappear, our hearts become filled with His light, and we become living witnesses that nothing is impossible for those who place their faith completely in Christ.



Parish Smile

Did you know that Sunday is the one day of the week when many of us set three alarms, only to discover that the church bells were the most effective one all along?

If you happen to arrive a few minutes early for the Divine Liturgy, do not worry, you are not lost. You have simply discovered one of the best kept secrets of parish life. Those quiet moments before the service are a beautiful opportunity to pray, leave the worries of the week behind, and prepare your heart to meet the Lord.

And if you happen to sit in someone else's "usual seat," do not be alarmed. It is a wonderful reminder that every seat in God's house belongs to Him first.

May our parish always be a place where strangers become friends, friends become family, and everyone leaves with a little more hope than when they arrived.

May God bless you with a joyful week, and remember, the shortest path to heaven still begins by walking through the church doors.

The Spiritual Courage To Wage War Against Gluttony!!!!

The fourteenth step of the Ladder of Divine Ascent calls us to wage war against one of the most subtle and destructive passions, gluttony. At first glance this step may appear to concern only food, but Saint John Climacus leads us much deeper. Gluttony is not simply eating too much, it is allowing any appetite to rule the heart instead of allowing Christ to reign within it. It is the constant desire to fill an emptiness that only God can satisfy. To climb this step requires extraordinary courage because it demands that we confront the illusion that happiness comes from satisfying every desire.

From the beginning of human history, temptation entered through misplaced desire. Adam and Eve reached for what looked pleasing instead of trusting the One who had given them everything. Their hunger was not for bread, but for control. Ever since then, the human heart has searched for satisfaction in possessions, comfort, pleasure, recognition, entertainment, success, and countless distractions. We consume more than ever before, yet many souls remain deeply hungry.

Saint John Climacus teaches that gluttony is the mother of many other passions because an undisciplined appetite easily spreads into every area of life. A person who cannot say no to unnecessary food may also struggle to say no to anger, greed, pride, gossip, laziness, or selfishness. The battle is not about food itself, because every good gift comes from God. The battle is about freedom. The question is simple, who governs the heart, our desires, or the Holy Spirit.

Jesus reveals the true path when He fasts for forty days in the wilderness. The devil tempts Him to turn stones into bread. Christ is hungry, yet He refuses to allow physical hunger to become greater than spiritual obedience. His answer echoes through every generation, "One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." The greatest hunger of every human being is not physical, but spiritual. Until the soul feeds upon God, nothing else will ever be enough.

The courage required for this step is the courage to live with holy restraint. The world constantly tells us to indulge every craving immediately. If we want something, we are encouraged to buy it, eat it, watch it, or pursue it without delay. Saint John Climacus teaches the opposite. Every small act of self denial strengthens the soul. Every time we freely choose God over our impulses, we become a little more like Christ. We discover that freedom is not doing whatever we desire, freedom is having the strength to choose what leads to eternal life.

This struggle extends far beyond the dining table. Many people consume endless hours of entertainment while neglecting prayer. Others feed themselves with constant news, endless

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scrolling, or endless worry. Some hunger for praise, others for power, others for approval. These hidden appetites can quietly dominate the soul. Whenever something becomes more necessary than God, it has become our master.

Practically, this step begins with simple acts of discipline. Eat with gratitude instead of haste. Stop before becoming completely full and offer that small sacrifice to Christ. Before reaching for unnecessary comforts, spend a few moments in prayer. When you feel the urge to complain, replace it with thanksgiving. When you desire immediate gratification, pause and ask whether your soul truly needs what your body or emotions are demanding. Learn to distinguish between desire and necessity. This simple habit gradually restores peace to the heart.

This step also teaches compassion. A person who has learned to master personal desires becomes more generous toward those in need. Fasting naturally leads to charity. The money saved through simplicity becomes bread for the hungry. The time saved through self discipline becomes time for prayer and service. A restrained heart becomes an open heart.

As this virtue matures, an extraordinary transformation takes place. Gratitude replaces dissatisfaction. Joy replaces constant craving. Prayer becomes sweeter than comfort. The heart discovers a quiet contentment that no earthly pleasure can provide. We begin to understand that holiness is not found in possessing more, but in needing less because Christ has become enough.

The fourteenth step is ultimately an invitation to rediscover the deepest hunger placed within every human soul, the longing for communion with God. Every appetite that is surrendered to Christ becomes an offering of love. Every sacrifice made with faith becomes a step upward on the holy ladder. Every victory over selfish desire enlarges the heart for divine grace. When Christ becomes our daily bread, our greatest delight, and our lasting satisfaction, we discover that the soul which hungers most for God is the soul that is finally, completely, and eternally filled.



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.

Please Keep Our Parish Family in Your Prayers

Many members of our parish family are facing illness, recovering from surgery, or carrying the burden of ongoing physical challenges. We may not always know their names or their struggles, but God knows each one of them and lovingly holds them in His care.

Please remember our sick and homebound parishioners in your daily prayers. A simple prayer offered with faith can bring comfort, hope, strength, and peace to those who are suffering.

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 12

"7th Sunday after Pentecost"

"The Holy Martyrs Proclus and Hilary"

Epistle: Romans 15:1-7. Gospel: Matthew 9:27-35.

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
In loving memory of **+Jozef Rydzaj** from family

Monday, July 13

"Synaxis of the Holy Archangel Gabriel"

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 9:13-18. Gospel: Matthew 16:1-6.

Tuesday, July 14

"The Holy Apostle Aquila"

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 10:5-12. Gospel: Matthew 16:6-12.

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

Wednesday, July 15

"The Holy Volodymyr, Equal To The Apostles"

Epistle: Galatians 1:11-19. Gospel: John 10:1-9.

Thursday, July 16

"The Holy Priest-Martyr Athenogenes and His Ten Disciples"

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 10:28-11:7. Gospel: Matthew 16:24-28.

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

Friday, July 17

"The Holy Great Martyr Marina"

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 11:8-22. Gospel: Matthew 17:10-18

Saturday, July 18

"The Holy Martyr Hyacinth of Amastris"

Epistle: Romans 13:1-10. Gospel: Matthew 12:30-37.

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

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