

Слава Ісусу Христу!

Слава навіки!



Glory be to Jesus Christ!

Glory for ever!

УСПЕННЯ ПРЕСВЯТОЇ БОГОРОДИЦІ

Dormition of the Mother of God

Sunday, May 17, 2026

“Sunday of the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council”

Reflections for this Weekend

In the seventeenth chapter of the Gospel of John, we are allowed to enter one of the holiest moments in all of Scripture. Before His suffering, before the Cross, before the betrayal and abandonment, Jesus lifts His eyes to heaven and prays. This is not simply a prayer of words; it is the opening of the very Heart of Christ. Here we hear the Son speaking intimately to the Father, revealing the eternal love that existed before the world began.

“Father, the hour has come.” These words carry tremendous spiritual depth. Throughout His earthly ministry, Jesus often said that His hour had not yet come. But now the hour has arrived the hour of sacrifice, obedience, suffering, and glory. In the eyes of the world, the Cross looks like defeat. But in the eyes of God, the Cross is glory because it reveals the fullness of divine love. Christ glorifies the Father not by escaping suffering, but by surrendering Himself completely in love for humanity.

This speaks deeply to our own lives. We often ask God to remove suffering, trials, or uncertainty. Yet Jesus teaches us that true glory is not found in comfort or success, but in faithful obedience. Some of the holiest moments in life happen when a person continues to trust God in darkness, carries the cross with patience, forgives while wounded, or remains faithful despite pain. The Cross is not the end of life; it is the doorway into resurrection.

Jesus then says something extraordinary: “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.” Eternal life is not merely something waiting after death. Eternal life begins now when a soul truly knows God. Many people know about God, but far fewer truly know Him personally, intimately, prayerfully. Eternal life begins when the heart stops running from God and starts living in communion with Him.

Modern society is full of distractions, noise, entertainment, and endless activity, yet so many hearts remain empty. Why? Because the human soul was created not merely for success or pleasure, but for union with God. A person may possess wealth, achievements, and recognition, yet still feel spiritually starving. Only Christ can satisfy the deepest hunger of the soul because He alone reveals the Father.

Jesus also prays for His disciples, saying that they belonged to the Father and were entrusted to Him. This reveals something beautiful: every believer is a gift precious to God. We are not accidents. We are known, loved, and held within the prayer of Christ Himself. Even before the Passion begins, Jesus is already interceding for His people.

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What incredible comfort this gives us. In moments when we feel weak, forgotten, sinful, or overwhelmed, Christ continues to pray for us. He knows our struggles, fears, temptations, and wounds. He sees the hidden battles nobody else understands. And still He prays: “Holy Father, keep them in Your name.” The protection Christ desires is not merely physical safety, but spiritual preservation that our hearts remain united to God.

The world constantly tries to pull believers away from Christ through pride, anger, selfishness, despair, impurity, and indifference. The greatest danger to the soul is not suffering but separation from God. This is why Jesus prays so intensely for His disciples. He knows they will face persecution, confusion, and fear after His departure. Yet He entrusts them to the Father’s love.

Finally, Jesus speaks of His joy being fulfilled in them. This is profound because He says it on the eve of His suffering. Divine joy does not depend on external circumstances. Christian joy is born from union with God. Saints could suffer, sacrifice, and even die with peace because Christ Himself was their joy.

Jesus Christ reminds us in this sacred prayer that the ultimate purpose of life is communion with the Father, faithfulness through the Cross, and the transformation of the human heart by divine love. The Evangelist John invites us not merely to admire Christ from a distance, but to enter into His relationship with the Father to live in prayer, trust, holiness, and eternal love.



MAY DEVOTIONS IN HONOR OF MARY, our Mother & Protectress, will take place at approximately 9:10 a.m. each Sunday in the month of May. (Between the 8:50 a.m. The Third Hour and the 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy)

Thank You to Our Wonderful Parishioners!

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all the parishioners who brought dishes for our monthly potluck. Thanks to your generosity and dedication, we enjoy a wonderful variety of delicious meals each month.

Special appreciation goes to those who **decorated the tables, helped with setup, and organized everything behind the scenes**, as well as to those who **signed up on the coffee schedule**. Your efforts make our gatherings not only delicious but also warm and welcoming.

It’s amazing to see how our potluck has grown, from starting with coffee and sweets to now enjoying full-course meals, thanks to the love, care, and participation of so many in our parish family.

Thank you all for sharing your time, talent, and culinary gifts. Your contribution truly nourishes both body and spirit!

The Spiritual Courage to enter into the mystery joy creating mourning!!!!

In the spiritual masterpiece known as The Ladder of Divine Ascent, John Climacus describes the journey of the soul toward union with God as a ladder ascending from earth to heaven. Each step represents a spiritual struggle, a purification of the heart, and a deeper participation in divine life. The seventh step of the Ladder speaks about “joy creating mourning,” or holy sorrow, and it requires immense spiritual courage to enter into this mystery.

The world usually understands courage as physical bravery, power, confidence, or the ability to overcome external enemies. But spiritual courage is far deeper and far more difficult. Spiritual courage is the willingness to stand honestly before God and before one’s own soul. It is the courage to stop hiding behind excuses, distractions, pride, and false images of ourselves. It is the courage to allow the light of Christ to enter the hidden corners of the heart.

The seventh step calls a person into repentance that is not rooted in fear or despair, but in love. Holy mourning is not depression. It is not hopelessness. It is the tears of a soul that begins to recognize both the beauty of God and the tragedy of sin. When the heart finally sees how deeply God loves us, it also begins to see how often we resist that love. These tears become healing waters. They soften the hardened soul and wash away spiritual blindness.

To reach this step requires courage because most people spend their lives avoiding inner silence. We distract ourselves with noise, entertainment, endless activity, or even religious formalism, simply to avoid confronting the condition of our hearts. But Saint John Climacus teaches that spiritual growth begins when a person stops running away from truth. The courageous soul dares to sit quietly before God and say, “Lord, show me who I truly am.”

This encounter can be painful because the soul discovers wounds, selfishness, pride, anger, judgment, vanity, and fear hidden deep within. Yet this pain is also full of hope because God reveals our brokenness not to condemn us, but to heal us. Divine mercy always stands behind genuine repentance. Christ never humiliates the repentant heart. Instead, He lifts it up with tenderness and compassion.

The courage of the seventh step is also the courage to weep spiritually in a world that often glorifies emotional hardness. Society teaches people to appear strong, independent, and unaffected. But the Gospel reveals that tears can become sacred. Jesus Himself wept at the tomb of Lazarus. The saints often wept not because they were weak, but because their hearts had become alive. Tears born from repentance are signs that the soul is awakening from spiritual sleep.

Saint John Climacus describes holy sorrow as joy creating mourning because repentance

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paradoxically brings peace. When a person confesses sins honestly and places everything before God, the burden carried for years begins to disappear. The soul no longer needs to pretend. Freedom begins when truth enters the heart. This is why many saints who practiced deep repentance also radiated extraordinary joy. Their tears were not signs of defeat, but signs of liberation.

The seventh step also requires perseverance. Spiritual transformation does not happen instantly. Many people desire holiness without struggle, resurrection without crucifixion, or peace without surrender. But the Ladder teaches that every ascent toward God requires patience and endurance. Some days the soul feels full of light. Other days it feels dry and weak. Courage means continuing the climb even when progress seems invisible.

Most importantly, the courage of this step is rooted in trust in God's love. Without trust, repentance becomes fear. Without love, spiritual struggle becomes legalism. But when the soul truly believes that Christ is merciful, then even tears become filled with hope. The repentant heart no longer hides from God like Adam in the garden. Instead, it runs toward Him.

The seventh step of the Ladder ultimately teaches that true courage is not found in dominating others, but in surrendering ourselves to God. It is the courage to become vulnerable before divine love. It is the courage to let God break the stone within us and replace it with a living heart. And it is within this holy sorrow that the soul slowly begins to taste the joy of heaven even while still walking upon the earth



Help Keep Our Parish Cool & Comfortable This Summer!

As the summer heat continues, our parish facilities need extra care to keep everyone safe, comfortable, and able to worship. The costs of **utilities and maintenance** rise significantly during these hot months.

We kindly ask for your generous support to help cover these expenses. Every donation, large or small, makes a difference and ensures that our parish remains a welcoming place for prayer, fellowship, and community.

You can contribute by dropping your donation in the collection basket, online through our parish website, or at the parish office.

Thank you for your continued generosity and care for our parish home. May God bless you abundantly!

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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, May 17

“Sunday of the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council”

Epistle: Acts 20:16-18, 28-36. Gospel: John 17:1-13.

8:50 a.m. The Third Hour and Moleben to the Holy Theotokos

9:30 a.m. Gods blessings and good health for all our parishioners and friends
In loving memory of + Lidia Stefanowska from Jolanta Soutus

Monday, May 18

“The Holy Martyrs Theodotus of Ancyra”

Epistle: Acts 21:8-14. Gospel: John 14:27-15:7.

Tuesday, May 19

“The Holy Hieromartyr Patritius”

Epistle: Acts 21:26-32. Gospel: John 16:2-13.

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

Wednesday, May 20

“The Holy Martyr Thalateus”

Epistle: Acts 23:1-11. Gospel: John 16:15-23.

Thursday, May 21

“The Holy Emperor Constantine and His Mother, Helen”

Epistle: Acts 26:1-5 & 12-20 Gospel: John 10:1-9

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

Friday, May 22

“The Holy Martyr Basiliscus”

Epistle: Acts 27:1-44. Gospel: John 17:18-26

Saturday, May 23

“Fifth All Souls Saturday”

Epistle: Acts 28:1-31 Gospel: John 21:15-25

9:00 am In Loving memory of + Isaslawa Zajac Dresner from Soutus family

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

Sunday, May 24

“Pentecost Sunday”

Epistle: Acts 2:1-11. Gospel: John 7:37-52; 8:12.

8:50 a.m. The Third Hour and Moleben to the Holy Theotokos

9:30 a.m. Gods blessings and good health for all our parishioners and friends
In loving memory of + Vasylyl and + Hanna Bashka from family



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.