

Dormition of the Mother of God

Sunday, October 12, 2025

"18th Sunday after Pentecost"

Reflections for this Weekend

"When the Lord saw her, He was moved with compassion for her and said to her, 'Do not weep.'" (Luke 7:13)

The scene at Nain is one of the most tender moments in the Gospel, where divine compassion meets human desolation. A widow, already wounded by loss, now walks behind the bier of her only son. Her world has collapsed, her hope extinguished. Yet Christ meets her at the gate of the city, the very threshold between life and death. The heart of God stops the funeral procession of despair.

The Desert Fathers understood this encounter not only as a historical miracle but as a **mystery of the soul**. Each of us, they would say, is that widow, carrying within us the dead body of our lost faith, our forgotten love, our abandoned prayer. Yet Christ meets us, too, at the gate, and with His word awakens what has died within.

Abba Poemen once said:

"Do not give your heart to that which does not satisfy the heart."

In the widow's sorrow, we see a heart emptied of all earthly satisfaction, ready now to be filled by the compassion of God. Christ comes not only to comfort, but to transform her grief into the soil of resurrection. What is dead in us, our prayer life, our faith, our hope, can be raised when we allow His compassion to touch our wounds.

Abba Isaac the Theban taught:

"The prayer of one who humbles himself is like a golden censer full of sweet fragrance that rises up to God."

The widow's tears are such a prayer, silent, but rising like incense. The Lord does not pass her by; He stops, He looks, He feels. His compassion is not pity but divine power flowing from a heart that unites itself with human suffering. The miracle begins not with a word of command, but with the movement of His heart.

Abba Macarius of Egypt said:

"If we would enter into the heart and dwell there, we would see the Kingdom of God."

At the gate of Nain, the Kingdom broke through, not in thunder or majesty, but in the quiet power of love stronger than death. When Jesus says, *"Young man, I tell you, arise,"* He speaks also to every soul entombed in sin, fatigue, or despair. His voice calls us to rise, to live again in the freshness of grace.

The crowd glorified God, saying, *"God has visited His people."* Indeed, every moment of true repentance, every stirring of new life within the soul, is a visitation of God.

The Courage To Choosing Fidelity to the Church.

"In the silence of the night, under the deep starry sky of our own lives, the Church whispers the eternal truth: "Be still and know that I am God."

But in a world so full of noise, chaos, doubts, and distractions, how do we stay still? How do we hold onto the deep currents of faith when everything around us calls us to go elsewhere? This is the question each of us must confront, especially in our modern world. We are invited not only to honor the passing of the Holy Theotokos into eternal life, but also to reflect deeply on the nature of her life, her choices, and the unwavering courage she demonstrated in her fidelity to God's will.

Imagine the moment when the Archangel Gabriel appeared to the young Mary, asking her to bear the Son of God. The weight of that question, of the life she was being asked to live, must have been incomprehensible. To say "Yes" to God meant that Mary would be at odds with the world, that she would face misunderstanding, judgment, and heartache. Yet, in the face of all the unknowns, her response was simple yet profound: **"Let it be to me according to your word."**

In that moment, she chose fidelity to God's plan over every personal fear, every comfort, and every expectation of the world. She chose faith over certainty, trust over her own understanding, and obedience over convenience.

This is the essence of courage in the Christian life. It is not the absence of fear or the absence of doubt, it is the ability to choose to follow God's will even when the road ahead is unclear and difficult.

When we think about our own lives, do we not encounter the same challenges? We live in an age of endless distractions, and the temptation to conform to societal pressures, to follow the path of least resistance, is ever-present. Yet, the truth remains: we are called to choose fidelity to the teachings of the Church, to walk in the path of Christ, even when it demands sacrifice. One of the greatest challenges we face today is not a lack of belief, but rather **a lack of trust**, trust in God's promises, trust in the wisdom of the Church, and trust in the unseen hands that are guiding us. The world around us tells us that faith is something we must control, something we must manage, but true faith is surrendering ourselves into the hands of God, believing that **His ways are higher than our ways** (Isaiah 55:9).

God reminds us of the deep spiritual truth that, even in the face of the most difficult and incomprehensible challenges, God is faithful. Mary's life was not one of ease or worldly glory, but one of humility, suffering, and ultimate triumph through God's grace. And in her Dormition, as she was taken into heaven, we see the fulfillment of the promise: **Those who remain faithful to God, who cling to His ways, will never be abandoned.**

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In a world where truth seems to be relative, and where individualism often trumps community, the Church stands as a beacon of unwavering truth, grounded in the teachings of Christ. The Church, led by the Holy Spirit, is not just a human institution, it is **the Body of Christ**, the community of believers who have been entrusted with the sacred knowledge of salvation. To remain faithful to the Church is to remain faithful to God Himself. The teachings of the Church are not arbitrary; they are the guiding principles that help us navigate the turbulence of life. They do not promise an easy life, but they promise a life that is rooted in eternal truth. Just as the Holy Theotokos remained in unwavering faith to God’s plan, we too are called to remain anchored in the doctrines handed down to us. We are called to believe not simply in a set of teachings, but in the very God who revealed them to us, knowing that **obedience to these teachings is not a burden, but the key to true freedom.**

As parishioners of the Dormition of the Mother of God, we are invited to reflect on how we, too, are called to **remain faithful to God’s will**, even when it seems hard or contrary to our desires. The Holy Theotokos showed us that faith requires a steadfast heart, a heart that does not falter in the face of struggle, a heart that does not let the storms of life steal its peace.

There will be times when we may be tempted to turn away from the Church’s teachings because they are difficult, unpopular, or challenging. But in those very moments, we are called to recall the example of Mary, who did not hesitate when called to surrender her life to God’s plan.

Choosing fidelity to the Church is not about blind obedience, it is about choosing trust, surrender, and love. The Church's teachings are like a mother’s loving hand, guiding us to truth, leading us through the chaos of the world, and holding us firm when the winds of doubt threaten to knock us down.

In this moment, as we reflect on the Dormition of the Holy Theotokos, let us ask for the courage to choose fidelity, to choose God’s will, and to trust His plan for our lives. Let us not allow fear, doubt, or the pressures of the world to rob us of our peace. May we be filled with the same faith, humility, and courage that Mary showed at every turn of her life. The Holy Theotokos, whose love for her Son and for all of us is unfathomable, intercedes for each of us. Let us open our hearts to her, trusting that her maternal embrace will lead us ever closer to her Son, Jesus Christ.



**Dormition of the Mother of God
Ukrainian Catholic Church**

Rummage Sale

Saturday Oct 18, 2025

8:00 am - 3:00 pm

Sunday Oct 19, 2025

11:00 am - 3:00 pm

**& Bake
Sale!**



**Clothes,
Kid & Baby,
Home Decor, Dishes,
Books, Art Supplies,
& More!**



**3720 West Maryland Ave.
Phoenix, Arizona. 85019**

The Small Entrance with the Gospel: A Touching Moment in the Divine Liturgy

In the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, the Small Entrance is not merely a ritual action, but a profound liturgical moment. It is a moment that connects the faithful to the heavenly realm and marks the arrival of Christ among us. Let's reflect on both its liturgical meaning and its historical significance.

The Small Entrance is a key moment in the Divine Liturgy, occurring after the Great Litany and just before the beginning of the Antiphons. The celebrant, accompanied by the deacon or altar servers, enters the sanctuary with the Holy Gospel Book, often with great reverence.

The Gospel is not just a physical book; it is the embodiment of Christ's presence among His people. In the ancient Church, the entrance of the Holy Gospel into the sanctuary symbolized Christ's arrival into the world and His Word being brought to the faithful.

The Small Entrance is a moment that emphasizes the presence of Christ. As the clergy enter with the Gospel, the congregation stands, recognizing that they are about to hear the living Word of God. The Gospel is carried in procession, just as Christ entered the world, across the threshold, in humility and glory, a sign that He is with us.

The Gospel book, carried solemnly, represents Christ Himself, who, according to the Gospel of John, is the "Word made flesh" (John 1:14). In the entrance, we are reminded that Christ, the eternal Word, is coming to us in the form of His Scriptures. Thus, this moment speaks to the profound truth that the Kingdom of Heaven is breaking through into our world at every moment of the Liturgy.

The hymn sung during this entrance, "Come let us worship and fall down before Christ," reinforces this idea. It is a call to acknowledge the King of Glory in the most humble of forms, the Word, which will soon be proclaimed aloud to nourish and transform the people.

Historically, the practice of the Small Entrance evolved as a reflection of the early Church's understanding of Christ's presence in the Liturgy. In the earliest Christian liturgies, the entrance with the Gospel was part of a much larger procession that symbolized the coming of the Kingdom of God and Christ's presence in the Church.

In the Byzantine tradition, this practice has roots in the early Christian assemblies, which were not yet formalized in the way we know them today. In the 4th and 5th centuries, particularly during the time of St. John Chrysostom (d. 407), the Church began to develop more structured liturgical practices. The Small Entrance was part of a larger movement to make the liturgical actions more focused on the central presence of Christ. By the time of St. John Chrysostom, this entrance became a moment not just for a physical procession, but for a deeply symbolic act of Christ entering the Church through His Word.

The Gospel Book was highly revered by the early Christians, often placed in a position of prominence. In fact, early Christian worship practices included a procession with the Gospel at the beginning of the service. Over time, as the Liturgy became more formalized, this procession was shortened to the Small Entrance with the Gospel being brought into the sanctuary to

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highlight Christ's presence.

On a personal level, the Small Entrance with the Gospel is an invitation to contemplate Christ's Word in our lives. As the Gospel is processed into the sanctuary, we are invited to ask ourselves: "How has Christ's Word entered into my heart today?" It is an invitation to let the light of the Gospel shine into our personal darkness, transforming us from within.

For the entire congregation, the Small Entrance is a moment of unity. The faithful, standing as one body, acknowledge that Christ is present among them, and the Gospel, proclaimed from the altar, is meant to speak not just to individuals, but to the whole Body of Christ, the Church. Just as the Word was made flesh in the person of Jesus Christ, so too the Word now becomes present in the lives of the faithful as it is heard and embodied in the worship of the Church.

The historical development of the entrance with the Gospel also connects us to a long history of worship, from the apostolic times through the early Church Fathers, to the present moment.

The tradition we inherit is one that transcends time and space, bringing us into communion with the early Church, who also processed with the Gospel to receive the Word of God.

In conclusion, the Small Entrance with the Gospel during the Divine Liturgy is not merely a liturgical action, but a profound theological statement: Christ is truly with us, His Word is alive among us, and the Kingdom of Heaven is made present in the Church. As we participate in this moment, we are reminded of Christ's coming, both in His earthly ministry and in His continuing presence with us in the Holy Eucharist.

In this simple but powerful action, we find the Church's devotion to Christ's Word, and our own invitation to open our hearts to receive it. The Small Entrance is a symbolic procession of Christ's presence, His Word that continues to dwell among us, and our call to listen, to respond, and to live in communion with Him.

May this moment of the Liturgy deepen our awareness of Christ's constant presence in our lives, and may it encourage us to carry His Word with us, as a light to guide our journey through the world. Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, the King of Glory, who comes to us in the living Word!

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Reminder: Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession)

Please note that during the Prayer Service of the Third Hour every Sunday, which begins at 8:50 a.m., Fr. Hugo is available for those who wish to receive the Mystery (Sacrament) of Reconciliation (Confession).

If you would prefer a more private or scheduled time, feel free to request an appointment with Fr. Hugo after the service.

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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, October 12

"18th Sunday after Pentecost"

"Sunday of the Fathers of the 7th Ecumenical Council"

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 9:6-11. **Gospel:** Luke 7:11-16

8:50 a.m. The Third Hour and

Prayer Service for Peace in Ukraine

9:30 a.m. Gods blessings and good health for all our parishioners and friends

In loving memory of +Paulina Soutus from family

Monday, October 13

"The Holy Martyrs Carpus, Pappylas and Agathonicus"

Epistle: Philippians 1:1-7. **Gospel:** Luke 7:36-50

Tuesday, October 14

"The Holy Martyrs Nazarius, Gervasius, Protasius and Celsus"

Epistle: Philippians 1:8-14. **Gospel:** Luke 8:1-3

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

Wednesday, October 15

"Our Venerable Father Euthymius the Younger"

Epistle: Philippians 1:12-2. **Gospel:** Luke 8:22-25

Thursday, October 16

"The Holy Martyr Longinus the Centurion"

Epistle: Philippians 1:20-27. **Gospel:** Luke 9:7-11

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

Friday, October 17

"The Holy Prophet Hosea"

"The Venerable-Martyr Andrew of Crete"

Epistle: Philippians 1:27-2:4. **Gospel:** Luke 9:12-18

Saturday, October 18

"The Holy Apostle and Evangelist Luke"

Epistle: Colossians 4:5-9; 15, 18. **Gospel:** Luke 10:16-21.

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

Sunday, October 19

"19th Sunday after Pentecost"

"The Holy Prophet Joel"

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 11:31-12:9. **Gospel:** Luke 8:5-15

8:50 a.m. The Third Hour and

Prayer Service for Peace in Ukraine

9:30 a.m. Gods blessings and good health for all our parishioners and friends