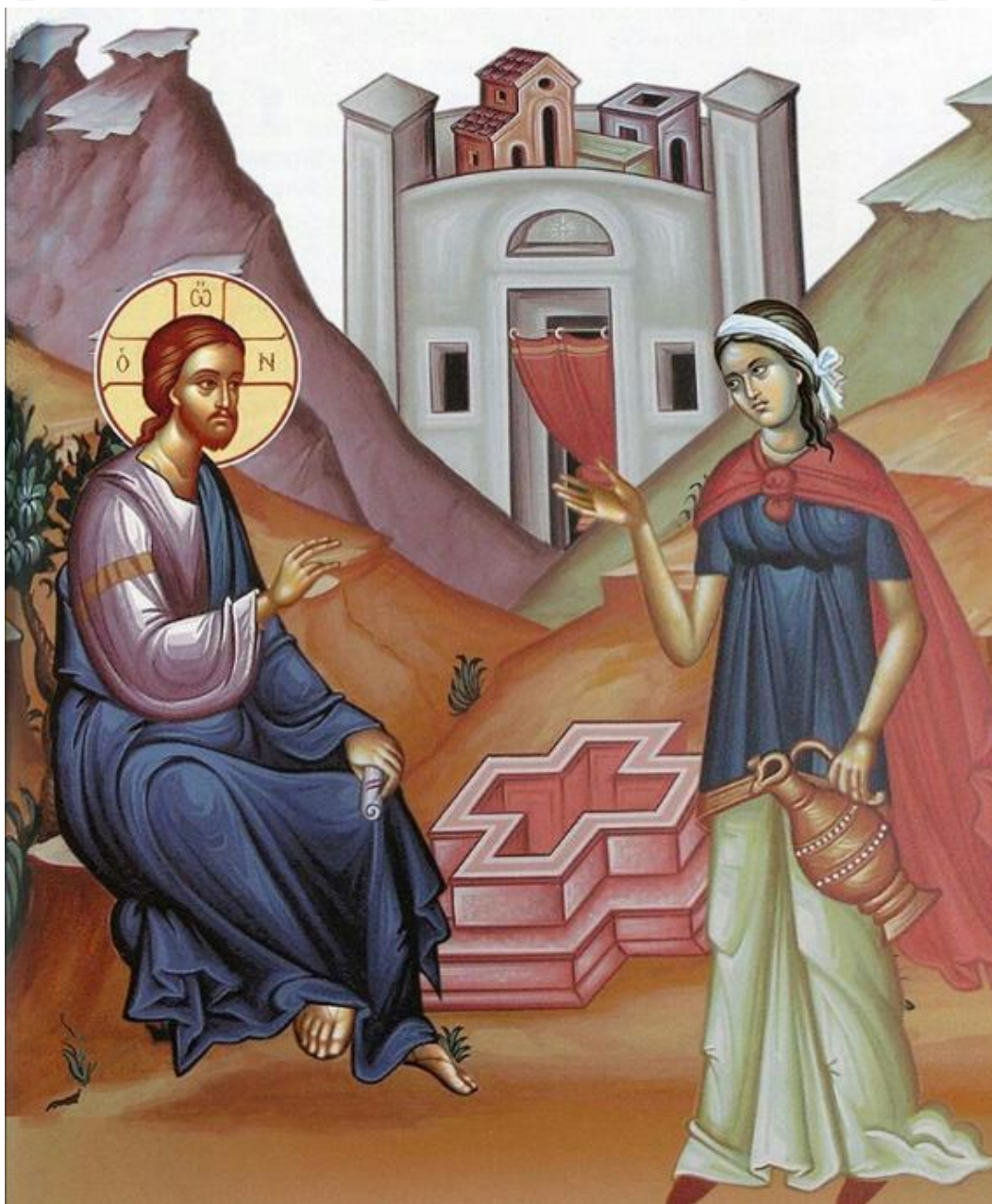


Христос Воскрес! Воістину Воскрес!



Christ is Risen ! Indeed, He is Risen!

УСПЕННЯ ПРЕСВЯТОЇ БОГОРОДИЦІ

Dormition of the Mother of God

Sunday, May 3, 2026

“Sunday of the Samaritan Woman”

Reflections for this Weekend

In the Gospel of John 4, 5 to 42, we are brought to a quiet yet transformative encounter, one that unfolds beside a well, in the ordinary heat of the day, yet reveals the deepest mysteries of the human heart. Jesus meets a Samaritan woman, not by chance, but by divine intention. What begins as a simple request for water becomes a revelation of thirst, identity, and salvation.

Jesus begins with a surprising vulnerability, “Give me a drink.” The One who created the waters asks for water. This is the mystery of divine humility. God approaches us not with overwhelming force, but with a gentle invitation. He enters into our daily lives, into our routines, into the ordinary moments we often overlook. He meets us where we are, not where we pretend to be.

The woman is startled, not only because of cultural boundaries, but because she senses something unusual in this encounter. Jesus then leads her deeper, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is speaking to you, you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.” Here the conversation shifts from physical thirst to spiritual longing.

Beneath every human desire lies a deeper thirst, a thirst that no earthly well can satisfy.

The woman speaks of the well, of the water that must be drawn again and again. This reflects the human condition. We return repeatedly to the same sources, seeking fulfillment in things that cannot sustain us, relationships, achievements, distractions, yet we remain thirsty.

Jesus reveals a different kind of water, one that becomes within us a spring, flowing into eternal life. This is not something external, it is a transformation from within. It is the life of God given to the soul.

As the conversation deepens, Jesus gently brings to light the truth of the woman’s life. He names her past without condemnation, revealing both her wounds and her longing.

This moment is delicate and profound. True encounter with Christ always involves truth. Not to shame, but to heal. He sees her completely, yet does not turn away. This is the kindness of God, to know us fully and still invite us into communion.

The woman begins to perceive that she is standing before someone greater. Her understanding grows, from seeing Him as a stranger, to a prophet, and finally to the Messiah.

This gradual awakening mirrors the journey of every soul. Faith is often not immediate clarity, but a growing recognition, a movement from confusion to light, from doubt to trust.

Then something remarkable happens. The woman leaves her water jar and goes back to the town. This small detail carries great meaning. She leaves behind the very reason she came to the well.

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The physical need is overshadowed by a deeper discovery. She has found something greater than water, she has encountered Christ. And this encounter cannot be contained. It overflows into witness.

She goes to others and says, “Come and see.” There is no complicated explanation, only an invitation. Authentic encounter with Christ naturally leads to sharing. Not from obligation, but from joy. The one who was once isolated now becomes a messenger. The one who came in silence now speaks with courage.

The people come, and many believe, first because of her testimony, and then because of their own encounter. This reveals another truth, faith is both personal and communal. It often begins through the witness of another, but it must become our own experience. Each soul is invited to meet Christ personally.

At the heart of this Gospel is a question that echoes quietly within us, what am I truly thirsting for. Beneath our daily concerns, beneath our desires and fears, there is a deeper longing, a longing for meaning, for love, for God. We may try to satisfy it in many ways, yet it remains until we encounter the living water.

Christ still stands at the well of our lives, waiting, not forcing, but inviting. He asks for our attention, our honesty, our openness. He knows our story, our past, our struggles, yet He does not turn away. Instead, He offers Himself.

The invitation is simple and profound. Come, draw near, listen, receive. Allow the living water to flow within you. And when it does, do not keep it for yourself. Let it overflow into kindness, into witness, into love.

For the one who drinks from this water will never thirst again, not because life becomes easy, but because the soul has found its source.

Christ is Risen ! Indeed, He is Risen!



Dear Parish Family,

Please keep in your prayers the bishop, priests, and deacons of our eparchy, who will be attending the Chrism Conference from Monday, May 4 through Friday, May 8, in Dallas, Texas. This sacred gathering is a time of renewal, reflection, and deeper unity in our shared ministry.

I am planning to attend and participate in this conference as well, and I humbly ask for your prayers, that the Lord may guide us, strengthen us, and fill us with His grace as we continue to serve His people with faithfulness and love. Be assured that you will be remembered in our prayers during this time. With gratitude and blessings.

The Courage to Returns to God ...

In the fifth step of the Ladder of Divine Ascent, John Climacus opens before us a path that is both painful and radiant, the path of repentance. This is not a simple acknowledgment of sin, it is a profound awakening of the soul, a courageous turning from illusion to truth, from self to God, from death to life.

Repentance demands a courage that reaches to the very core of our being. It is the courage to stand without defense before the light of God and allow that light to reveal everything.

Nothing hidden, nothing justified, nothing excused. The human heart often fears this moment, because it exposes our fragility, our wounds, and our failures. Yet it is precisely in this exposure that healing begins. What is brought into the light loses its power to bind us.

There is a deep spiritual battle here. Pride resists repentance with subtle strength. It tells us to delay, to minimize, to compare ourselves with others, or to fall into despair. But true repentance breaks through both pride and despair. It stands in truth, neither denying sin nor surrendering to it. It dares to believe that God's mercy is greater than any darkness within us.

This is why repentance is not merely sorrow, it is a fire. It burns away illusion, it purifies the heart, it awakens a longing for God that nothing else can satisfy. The tears of repentance are not signs of weakness, they are signs that the soul has begun to live again. They are the waters that cleanse, the offering of a heart that refuses to remain distant from God.

Courage in repentance is also the courage to begin again. Not once, not occasionally, but continually. The soul that walks this path understands that falling is not the end. What matters is rising. Again and again, with humility and trust. Each return becomes deeper, more sincere, more rooted in love. Over time, repentance is no longer something we do, it becomes something we are, a constant openness to God, a heart that remains soft, attentive, and alive.

There is also a mystery here that transforms everything. When we truly repent, we do not encounter judgment as we expect, we encounter love. Christ meets the repentant soul not with condemnation, but with embrace. He restores dignity, He renews life, He speaks peace into what was broken. In His presence, repentance becomes not a burden, but a meeting, a sacred encounter between human weakness and divine mercy.

Yet this step requires us to let go of something very deep, the attachment to our false self. The image we try to protect, the identity built on pride or fear, the need to appear strong or perfect. Repentance dismantles these illusions. It strips away what is false so that what is true may emerge. This is why it feels like dying, because something in us is dying. But what dies is not the true self, it is what prevents us from becoming who we are meant to be.

The courage of this step is the courage to trust that beyond this death there is resurrection. That beyond our brokenness there is wholeness. That beyond our sin there is communion with God. So we are invited to ask with deep sincerity, what am I afraid to bring into the light, what truth am I avoiding, what part of my heart is still resisting God. And can I trust Him enough to let go. In that moment of surrender, something eternal begins. The soul is no longer trapped in

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itself, it begins to move toward God with freedom and love. The weight begins to lift, the heart begins to breathe, and a quiet joy emerges, not because we are perfect, but because we are forgiven. Repentance is the doorway through which grace enters most powerfully. It is the place where the soul is reborn. And in the courage to step into it fully, without fear, without delay, we discover that God has been waiting there all along, not to judge, but to restore, not to condemn, but to give life.

This is the mystery of the fifth step. The deeper we descend into repentance, the higher we rise into God.



From the Pastor's Desk!

Sometimes, without even realizing it, we form opinions about others in a single glance. A gesture, a tone, an expression, or even silence can lead us to conclusions that feel certain yet are often incomplete. It is so easy to see only what is on the surface and quietly decide who someone is, without ever hearing their story or understanding what they carry within. Yet every person we encounter holds a life far deeper than what is visible. Behind a hurried word there may be exhaustion, behind a distant look there may be sorrow, behind an unusual behavior there may be a hidden struggle. When we judge too quickly, we risk closing our hearts to the truth of who that person really is, and in doing so, we also distance ourselves from the compassion of God.

Judgment often feels small in the moment, almost harmless, yet it subtly shapes the way we see others. It creates distance where there could have been understanding, and silence where there could have been kindness. Without noticing, we begin to look at others not with openness, but with quiet assumptions. And slowly, something within us becomes less tender, less patient, less capable of love.

Kindness invites us to pause, to look again, to listen even when no words are spoken.

Compassion gently reminds us that we, too, have been misunderstood, seen only in part, or judged without being truly known. In those moments, we did not long for criticism, but for mercy, for patience, for someone willing to see beyond what was immediately visible.

There is a quiet and profound strength in choosing not to judge. It does not mean ignoring what we see, but holding it with humility, leaving space for grace, and trusting that there is always more beneath the surface. It is a way of seeing others as God sees them, not only in their actions, but in their dignity, their wounds, and their potential for goodness.

Perhaps today is an invitation to look at others with gentler eyes and a more open heart. Not to project ourselves onto them, but to receive them as they are. To replace quick conclusions with quiet understanding, and to let kindness shape our thoughts before judgment takes root.

We may never fully know what another person is carrying, but we can always choose how we respond. And sometimes, the greatest gift we can offer is not judgment, but presence, not criticism, but compassion, not distance, but love, especially if we desire to truly live the faith we profess.

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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 3

“Fifth Sunday of Easter”

“Sunday of the Samaritan Woman”

Epistle: Acts 11:19-26, 29-30. Gospel: John 4:5-42.

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

Monday, May 4

“The Holy Martyr Pelagia”

Epistle: Acts 12:12-17. Gospel: John 8:42-51.

Tuesday, May 5

“The Holy and Glorious Martyr Irene”

Epistle: Acts 12:25-13:12. Gospel: John 8:51-59.

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

Wednesday, May 6

“The Holy, Just and Long-suffering Job”

Epistle: Acts 13:13-24. Gospel: John 6:5-14.

Thursday, May 7

“Commemoration of the Appearance of the Sign of the Holy Cross”

Epistle: Acts 14:20-15:4. Gospel: John 9:39-10:9.

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

Friday, May 8

“The Holy Apostle and Evangelist John the Theologian”

Epistle: 1 John 1:1-7. Gospel: John 19:25-27; 21:24-25.

Saturday, May 9

“Translation of the Relics of Nicholas of Myra”

Epistle: Acts 15:35-41. Gospel: John 10:27-38.

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

Sunday, May 10

“Sixth Sunday of Pascha - of the Man Born Blind”

“The Holy Apostle Simon the Zealot”

Epistle: Acts 16:16-34. Gospel: John 9:1-38.

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



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.