

УСПЕННЯ ПРЕСВЯТОЇ БОГОРОДИЦІ

Dormition of the Mother of God

Sunday, March 8, 2026

“Veneration of the Holy Cross”

“Third Sunday of Lent”

Reflections for this Weekend

In Gospel of Mark 8:34–9:1, Jesus Christ speaks words that challenge the deepest instincts of the human heart: “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.” These words reveal a paradox at the center of the spiritual life.

What appears to be loss becomes the doorway to true life. What feels like surrender becomes the path to freedom.

Human beings naturally build their lives around self-preservation. We try to protect our image, secure comfort, control outcomes, and guard our desires. Yet Jesus exposes a hidden truth: a life built only around saving the self slowly becomes empty. The more tightly we cling to our own agenda, the smaller our world becomes. Fear begins to guide our decisions.

We avoid risk, avoid sacrifice, avoid love that might cost us something. In trying to preserve our lives, we unintentionally shrink them.

The invitation to “deny yourself” is often misunderstood as self-hatred or harsh self-rejection. But the deeper meaning is the willingness to release the illusion that the self must always sit at the center. It is the quiet courage to loosen our grip on ego, pride, and the endless need to prove ourselves. When Jesus speaks of taking up the cross, he is not calling people to search for suffering. Rather, he is inviting them to accept the cost of living truthfully, lovingly, and faithfully in a world that often resists those things.

Every person encounters small crosses in ordinary life. They appear when telling the truth risks misunderstanding, when choosing integrity costs opportunity, when forgiving someone requires letting go of justified resentment, or when serving others interrupts personal comfort. These moments feel insignificant compared to the historical reality of the cross, yet they are precisely where discipleship becomes real. The cross is not only an ancient symbol; it becomes a daily posture of the heart.

Jesus then reveals another mystery: whoever loses their life for his sake will save it. This is not spiritual poetry but a profound observation about the nature of the soul. Life expands when it is given away. Love deepens when it becomes sacrificial. Purpose grows when we align our lives with something greater than our own advancement. When the self is no longer the center, space opens for grace, joy, and courage.

Practically, this teaching invites a daily reorientation. Instead of beginning the day asking,

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“What do I want most today?” a disciple learns to ask, “Where can I follow Christ today?” This question changes ordinary decisions. It might lead someone to listen more patiently, to give more generously, to stand for truth when silence would be easier, or to serve someone who cannot repay the kindness. These choices may feel like losses in the moment, but over time they shape a life that is rich with meaning.

Jesus concludes with a promise that some standing there would see the kingdom of God come with power. The kingdom is not merely a distant future reality; it begins to break into the present whenever people live with this cruciform love. Every act of self-giving faithfulness becomes a glimpse of that kingdom.

The strange secret of the cross is that it transforms the very definition of victory. In losing the life built around the self, we discover the life that God intended all along. And in that discovery, the heart finally becomes free.



The Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great is used on all the Sundays of the Great Lent. The prayers are longer than we are used to hearing in the St. John Chrysostom’s Liturgy, but the beauty of the prayers make them spiritually rich.

Please remember, in your prayers, all our parish members who are in convalescent homes or are homebound because of illness.

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.

This Saturday, we invite you to join us for the 4th All Soul Saturday, a special time to pray for the souls of our loved ones, pastors, founders, benefactors, and all who have touched our lives with faith and service.

As we come together in worship, let us remember that our prayers for them are not just an act of duty, but an offering of love and gratitude.

If we forget them, the future generation also may forget us when our time comes.

But through our prayers, we create a bond that lasts beyond life, supporting one another in faith across all generations.

Let’s gather with hearts full of compassion, knowing that our prayers will help guide them toward eternal peace.

We look forward to seeing you this Saturday to worship, remember, and pray together.



Ukrainian Pysanky Workshop

Join us for our beginner-friendly Ukrainian Pysanky (Easter Egg Decorating) workshop where you can learn about the history, basic techniques, materials, colors, and designs of this ancient Eastern European art of egg decorating! All supplies will be provided.

DATE & TIME	LOCATION	ENTRY FEE
21 MARCH 2025 FROM 10 AM - 1 PM	DORMITION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD CHURCH 3720 W MARYLAND AVE. PHOENIX, AZ 85019	\$35 PER PERSON

FOR REGISTRATION & INFORMATION

[HTTPS://UKIEPYSANKY.EVENTBRITE.COM](https://ukiepysanky.eventbrite.com)

The courage to take up the cross requires a kind of courage that is very different from the courage the world often celebrates

The call of Gospel of Mark to take up our cross and follow Jesus Christ is not an invitation to a life of glory or comfort. It is a call to deep spiritual courage, a courage that speaks not in grand gestures but in quiet, often unnoticed moments. The cross, in its essence, is not just a symbol of suffering but a path to transformation. When Jesus asks us to take up our cross, he is inviting us to surrender our natural desires for self-preservation and choose a higher way, one defined by love, humility, and faithfulness.

To carry the cross requires a type of courage that the world does not often recognize. The world values strength, success, and self-assertion, but the courage of the cross is something different. It is the courage to remain faithful when the path gets difficult, to love when love is hard, to forgive when forgiveness feels impossible, and to stand for truth when truth is met with opposition. This kind of courage does not seek fame or validation; it simply chooses to be faithful in the small, quiet moments that make up life.

In a world that often encourages us to protect our ego and pursue comfort, the call to take up the cross challenges our deepest instincts. We want to avoid pain, to hold onto control, to protect our reputation. But Jesus calls us to let go of these things. He invites us to trust that life is found not in self-preservation but in self-giving. This does not mean we seek suffering, but it means that when suffering comes, we can face it with the strength that comes from choosing to love despite the cost.

The courage to carry the cross is not always loud or dramatic. It is the quiet decision to love someone when they do not deserve it, to forgive when it feels unjust, to serve when no one is watching, and to stand firm in integrity even when it costs us something. These are the daily crosses we are called to bear, the small but significant choices that gradually shape our hearts into something more Christ-like.

The beauty of this courage lies in the transformation it brings. As we follow Christ's example and choose the way of the cross, we begin to experience a deeper sense of peace, purpose, and freedom. The very acts of sacrifice that seem painful at first begin to free us from the chains of selfishness and pride. We find that the more we give, the more we receive; the more we love, the more love we experience. In the end, we discover that the cross is not a burden that crushes us but the pathway to true life.

Moreover, we are not alone on this journey. Jesus, who walked the path of the cross before us, empowers us to follow him. His life and sacrifice make it possible for us to take up our cross without fear, knowing that every step of surrender brings us closer to the heart of God.

The courage to take up the cross is a journey of self-emptying love. It is the willingness to lose ourselves for the sake of others and, in doing so, to discover the life God has always intended for us. In the end, we find that the cross, though heavy at times, is the doorway to the deepest peace and the most fulfilling life

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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, March 8

"3rd Sunday of Lent"

"Veneration of the Holy Cross"

Epistle: Hebrews 4:14-5:6 Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1

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

Monday, March 9

"The Holy Forty Martyrs of Sebaste"

Reading: Genesis 8:21-9:7; Reading: Proverbs 11:19-12:6

Tuesday, March 10

"The Holy Martyr Condratus and Those with Him"

Reading: Genesis 9:8-17 Reading: Proverbs 12:8-22.

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

Wednesday, March 11

"Our Holy Father Sophronius"

Reading: Genesis 9:18-10:1; Reading: Proverbs 12:23-13:9.

6:00 p.m. Presanctified Liturgy (English)

Gods blessings and good health Luba Komar from Rick and Ulana Martindale

Thursday, March 12

"Our Venerable Father and Confessor Theophanes"

Reading: Genesis 10:32-11:9 Reading: Proverbs 13:19-14:6

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

Friday, March 13

"The Transfer of the Relics of Our Holy Father Nicephorus"

Reading: Genesis 12:1-7; Reading: Proverbs 14:14-26.

6:00 p.m. Presanctified Liturgy (Ukrainian)

Saturday, March 14

"4th All Souls Saturday"

Epistle: Hebrew 6:9-12. Gospel: Mark 7:31-37.

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

9:30 a.m. In loving memory of the souls of our deceased parishioners and family

Sunday, March 15

"4th Sunday of Great Lent"

"John Climacus"

Epistle: Hebrew 6:13-20. Gospel: Mark 9:17-31.

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 +Kenneth Martindale from Rick and Ulana Martindale