

Dormition of the Mother of God

Sunday, October 5, 2025

"17th Sunday after Pentecost"

Reflections for this Weekend

"Do to others as you would have them do to you..."

Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful."

This passage from the Gospel of Luke is one of the most challenging invitations of Jesus. It is not merely a rule of fairness; it is a summons to live in a way that mirrors the very heart of God. In our ordinary life, we often live by the logic of exchange: *I will be kind to you if you are kind to me. I will forgive if you first show remorse. I will love, but only when it is safe or when it benefits me in return.* Yet Jesus calls us beyond this narrow measure. He calls us to a love that is not calculated, not conditional, not self-serving, but free, generous, and overflowing, because it is the love of God Himself.

At the heart of this teaching lies a profound truth: mercy is the face of God. When we choose mercy, when we forgive an offense, when we show kindness to one who cannot repay, when we act with compassion toward one who has wounded us, we are participating in God's own way of loving. We are not simply "being nice"; we are allowing the divine life to flow through our fragile humanity. In these moments, the Gospel becomes flesh in us.

But this is not easy. Our pride resists mercy. Our wounds cry out for justice on our terms. Our fears whisper that if we love too much, we will be taken advantage of. And so the words of Jesus strike us at our weakest point. He does not deny the pain we suffer, but He invites us into a higher way, the way of the Cross. For it was on the Cross that He gave the most radical witness of this teaching: forgiving those who crucified Him, loving without return, offering His life for those who did not deserve it.

To live Luke 6:31–36 is to allow the Cross to shape our hearts. It means learning to see others not through the lens of what they deserve, but through the eyes of the Father, who is merciful. Think of how God treats us: with patience, with compassion, with a mercy renewed each morning. If God kept score, none of us could stand. And yet He loves us into life, again and again.

This is why Jesus says: *"Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful."* It is not merely a moral command; it is an invitation to become like the One we worship. To be Christian is not only to believe in God but to reflect His image. And nothing reflects Him more clearly than mercy.

When we begin to live this way, even imperfectly, something extraordinary happens.

Resentments lose their grip. Generosity becomes possible. We begin to taste freedom, the freedom of children of God. For the measure we give will truly be the measure we receive.

The more we open our hearts, the more we discover that His mercy is already embracing us.

The Courage to say no to unnecessary wants,

In the quiet of our hearts, many of us recognize a great struggle that touches the fabric of our daily lives. It is not always persecution from the outside, nor is it always dramatic trials of faith. More often, it is the constant stream of small distractions, the endless demands of the world, and the subtle temptations of comfort and convenience that test the depth of our discipleship. Consumerism, digital media, and busyness, these are not just neutral parts of modern life; they are spiritual battlegrounds where our love for God and our loyalty to the Gospel are tried.

We live in a world that tells us, “You need more.” More possessions to be happy, more entertainment to be fulfilled, more activity to feel valuable. Yet, the more we consume, the more restless we become. The soul is not nourished by abundance of things, but by the presence of God. The Holy Theotokos shows us this truth in her Dormition: she departed from this life not clinging to earthly riches, but resting entirely in the hands of her Son. Her simplicity is a quiet rebuke to our restless desire to fill emptiness with noise and objects. She reminds us that peace is found not in what we possess, but in whom we trust.

Digital media, too, has a way of colonizing the soul. The constant notifications, the scrolling, the endless flow of images and words, these can numb our spirit, fragment our attention, and silence the still, small voice of God. The danger is not only the time wasted, but the way our hearts are trained to expect distraction rather than silence. Prayer requires stillness, the sacraments require reverence, the Gospel requires space in our minds and hearts. To choose silence, even for a few moments, is to resist a culture that thrives on noise. It is a small act of courage, but a profoundly Christian one.

Busyness, finally, may be the most deceptive temptation of all. We can fill our lives with good things, work, service, family obligations, yet still miss the one thing necessary: the abiding presence of Christ. When Martha welcomed Jesus into her home, she was busy with much serving, but her sister Mary sat at His feet and listened. In that moment, Jesus gently reminded her that only one thing was truly necessary. How often do we, like Martha, allow our work, even our work for the Church, to crowd out the deeper call to rest in Him?

And yet, in all of these struggles, there is hope. Every small decision we make to turn away from consumerism, every effort to pause from digital noise, every moment we claim for prayer amid busyness, is a step toward Christ. These choices may appear insignificant, but they are acts of fidelity. The Kingdom of God is built in these hidden sacrifices.

The Holy Theotokos, whose Dormition we honor in our parish, shows us the way. She lived a life of quiet fidelity, of simple obedience, of constant attention to God’s word. She was not distracted by the world’s promises, nor overcome by its noise, nor consumed by its endless activity. In her purity of heart, she became the dwelling place of God Himself. We, too, are invited to let our hearts become that dwelling place, spaces where the Lord may enter, rest,

(continue on page 3)

(continue from page 2)

and reign. To live this way requires courage, not the dramatic courage of the battlefield, but the gentle courage of daily perseverance. It is the courage to say no to unnecessary wants, to turn off the device and kneel in silence, to prioritize the Divine Liturgy when schedules press in, to teach our children to pray even when the world teaches them to consume. This courage is not our own; it is a gift of grace, strengthened by the sacraments and nourished in prayer.

If we remain faithful in these small, hidden ways, we will discover a profound truth: holiness is not an unreachable ideal. It is the fruit of ordinary lives offered in extraordinary love. It is the light of Christ shining quietly through people who refuse to be swept away by the currents of the age.

So let us ask ourselves each day: Will I let busyness define me, or will I choose to rest in God? Will I let consumerism drive me, or will I seek the treasures of heaven? Will I drown in noise, or will I create silence for the Lord? These choices shape our souls.

They shape the witness of our parish community. They shape the legacy of faith we leave for those who come after us.

And when we falter, let us remember: the Lord does not abandon us in our weakness.

He calls us back gently, reminding us that His yoke is easy and His burden light.

In every Eucharist, He renews us. In every Confession, He lifts us up. In every prayer, however distracted, He draws us near.

May we walk together, as members of the Dormition of the Mother of God, with courage, simplicity, and love, choosing Christ each day, in the midst of an often restless world, until the moment we too may rest in Him as Mary did, in peace, in hope, and in glory.



We are most appreciative for the generous donations to the church, and pray that the Lord grant you many, many blessings, prosperity and good health!

Parish Rummage Sale – Donations Needed!

Our parish will be holding a **Rummage Sale on October 18th and 19th**, and we are now collecting donations. If you have gently used household items, clothing, furniture, or other treasures you would like to contribute, please bring them to the parish.

If you are unable to deliver your items, please contact **Fr. Hugo**, and we will gladly make arrangements to come and pick them up.

Thank you in advance for your generosity and support. Your donations not only help make our rummage sale a success but also strengthen our parish community.

**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 *Entry with the Gifts*, often called the Great Entrance, is one of the most theologically rich and historically developed moments in the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom.

1. Theology and Meaning

The Great Entrance occurs when the bread and wine, prepared earlier during the Proskomedia, are solemnly carried in procession to the holy altar. This action is much more than a practical transfer of food, it is a mystery with deep symbolism.

Offering of Creation and Ourselves:

The bread and wine represent the gifts of creation, the work of human hands, and our very lives. In bringing them forward, the Church offers back to God what He has first given to us. This reflects the ancient prayer of the anaphora: “From what is Yours, we offer to You, on behalf of all people and for all things.”

Christ’s Entry into His Passion:

The Great Entrance is often seen as a liturgical icon of Christ’s final journey, His voluntary procession to suffering and death. The priest and deacon carrying the gifts symbolize Christ being led to Golgotha, while the faithful surrounding Him represent the disciples, angels, and the Church accompanying Him.

Communion of Heaven and Earth:

The solemnity of the procession and the chants of the cherubic hymn emphasize that this moment is not merely human action but participation in heavenly worship. The faithful mystically join the angelic liturgy as the earthly gifts are prepared to be transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ. Thus, the Great Entrance is both a symbol and a reality: it makes present the mystery of Christ’s self-offering and calls us to join our lives with His sacrifice.

2. Historical Development

The Great Entrance did not begin in the highly ceremonial form we know today. Its development can be traced through several stages in the life of the Church:

Early Church (1st–4th centuries)

In the earliest liturgies, the faithful themselves brought bread and wine from their homes as an offering for the Eucharist and for the poor. The gifts were collected in the narthex and brought forward at the appropriate time, often in a very simple manner. The act was communal and practical, tied directly to the life of the Christian community.

(Continue on page 6)

Byzantine Development (4th–9th centuries)

With the growing formality of the liturgy, especially in the great churches of Constantinople (such as Hagia Sophia), the procession of the gifts became more elaborate. Instead of a simple carrying of bread and wine, a solemn ritual developed, accompanied by chanting and incense. The clergy, choirs, and faithful joined in prayer, and the act came to be seen less as a simple offering of the community and more as a mystical representation of Christ’s journey to sacrifice.

*The **Cherubic Hymn** (introduced under Emperor Justin II in the 6th century) further deepened this symbolism: the faithful are invited to mystically represent the angels, laying aside worldly cares to join in Christ’s self-offering. This shifted the emphasis from practicality to profound theological mystery.*

Middle Byzantine Period (9th–14th centuries)

Over time, the faithful ceased bringing their own bread and wine, and the gifts were prepared by the clergy alone during the Proskomedia. The Great Entrance thus became less about collecting offerings and more about the dramatic presentation of the already-prepared gifts in solemn procession. The sense of Christ’s Passion became central: the gifts were now carried as if in funeral procession, leading toward His death and resurrection.

Later Byzantine and Modern Usage

The Great Entrance as we know it today retains this highly ceremonial character. The clergy process with the gifts, surrounded by incense and prayer, while the faithful sing the Cherubic Hymn. Though the practical dimension of community offering is largely gone, the spiritual and symbolic depth has increased: the Entrance is seen as the Church’s ascent into heavenly worship, preparing to join Christ in His sacrifice.

Spiritual Participation of the Faithful

*For the faithful, the Great Entrance is not simply a time to watch the clergy move about. It is a moment of **personal offering**. As the bread and wine are carried forward, we are invited to place upon the paten and chalice our own lives, our struggles, joys, prayers, and even our sins, to be united with Christ’s sacrifice.*

This is why the priest often prays for the bishop, civil authorities, the faithful, and for the entire Church during the Entrance. The procession carries not only bread and wine, but the entire people of God, lifted into the mystery of salvation

.....

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, October 5

"17th Sunday after Pentecost"

"The Holy Martyr Charitina"

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1. **Gospel:** Luke 6:31-36

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

Gods blessings and good health for **Dr Laurel Retay-Nagle** from parishioners

Monday, October 6

"The Holy and Glorious Apostle Thomas"

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 4:9-16. **Gospel:** John 20:19-31.

Tuesday, October 7

"The Holy Martyrs Sergius and Bacchus"

Epistle: Ephesians 5:20-26. **Gospel:** Luke 6:37-45

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

Wednesday, October 8

"Our Venerable Mother Pelagia"

Epistle: Ephesians 5:25-33. **Gospel:** Luke 6:46-7:1

Thursday, October 9

"The Holy Apostle James, Son of Alphaeus"

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 4:9-16. **Gospel:** Luke 10:16-21.

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

Friday, October 10

"The Holy Martyrs Eulampius and Eulampia"

Epistle: Ephesians 6:18-24. **Gospel:** Luke 7:31-35

9:30 a.m. Gods blessings and good health for **Sean & Rebecca Morrissey**
(10th Weeding Anniversary)

Saturday, October 11

"The Holy Apostle Philip, One of the Seven Deacons"

Epistle: Acts 25:1-13. **Gospel:** Luke 10:1-15

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

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