

TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
NINTH SUNDAY OF LUKE



Icon of the Mother of God into the Temple -- November 21st



November 20, 2016

27TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – TONE 2

PREFEAST OF THE ENTRANCE INTO THE TEMPLE

OUR VENERABLE FATHER AND CONFESSOR GREGORY THE DECAPOLITE

OUR HOLY FATHER PROCLUS, ARCHBISHOP OF CONSTANTINOPLE

*COMMEMORATION OF BLESSED JOSAPHATA HORDASHEVSKA, FIRST SUPERIOR OF THE SISTERS
SERVANTS OF MARY IMMACULATE (+1919)*

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF NOVEMBER 20 – NOVEMBER 27

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20 – PREFEAST OF THE ENTRANCE INTO THE TEMPLE

6:00 PM – *GREAT VESPERS FOR THE FEAST OF THE ENTRANCE (SATISFIES OBLIGATION)*

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 21 – THE ENTRANCE INTO THE TEMPLE OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS (OBLIGATORY FEAST)

9:30 AM – DIVINE LITURGY

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26

Please note: NO VESPERS

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27 – 28TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; *THE HOLY GREAT MARTYR JAMES THE PERSIAN;*
OUR VENERABLE FATHER PALLADIUS

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy For All Parishioners

Fr. James will be away...

Fr. James will be out of town through 11/23 through 11/27. In case of an emergency please contact either:

- Fr. Brian Escobedo at (858) 277-2511
- Fr. James Babcock at (714) 600-3660
- Fr. Ihor Koshyk at (323) 663-6307.

During Fr. James' absence next Sunday, Divine Liturgy will be celebrated by Fr. James Babcock.

Blessed Nativity Fast!!!!

Are you fasting? Show me your fast with your works. Which works? If you see someone who is poor, show him mercy. If you see an enemy, reconcile with him. If you see a friend who is becoming successful, do not be jealous of him! Love your neighbor.

–St. John Chrysostom

“The Woman Whom even God dreamed of before the world was made; The Woman of Who, though no priest, could yet on Calvary’s Hill breathe, ‘this is my Body; this is my Blood’ – for none save Her gave Him human life. The Woman Who guides my pen, which falters so with words in telling of the Word. The Woman Who, in a world of reds, shows forth the blue of hope. Accept these dried grapes of thoughts from this poor author, who has no wine; work a miracle and save a soul forgetting not my own.”

– *Venerable Fulton Sheen*
(Dedication Poem in *World’s First Love*)

WHY WE FAST BEFORE CHRISTMAS

Vincent Gabriel

The time of preparation before Christmas is intended to be a time of purposeful asceticism, almsgiving, and learning to say yes to God while saying no to our own desires.

But Christmas, and especially in present day America, has become a time of great anxiety and materialism, despite the fact that most every song one hears, most every retail ad one reads, and most every film that is produced—with “Christmas” as a theme—will try to convince us that it’s a time for warmth, joy, spending time with family, and even taking a break from the regular hustle of everyday life. If *only* this were the case.

On the contrary, Christmas — a period of time that seems to grow longer and more arduous by the year — is preceded by ominous social media status updates that lament: “I can’t believe it’s already November ... Christmas is just around the corner,” or “My children won’t stop bothering me about [insert the latest gadget here] ... I can’t wait until Christmas is over,” and so on. Many will also complain: “Wow. I am not ready for Christmas. Where has the time gone?”

This grief and anxiety should not be. No, we have certainly missed the purpose of this feast — and the time of preparation and fasting that precedes it — if all we can do is approach it with stress and sorrow.

As I mentioned above, the time before Nativity — Advent (or “Coming”) in the West, and the Fast of St. Philip the Apostle (due to its beginning on the eve of this Saint’s feast) or simply “the Nativity fast”

in the Orthodox Church — is intended to be utilized for one’s Spiritual benefit (and indeed, for the life of the world), not for remorse or regret.

The Nativity fast dates to the year 1166 and a synod at Constantinople, where our fathers inaugurated a forty-day period of fasting and preparation before the annual celebration of Christ’s Incarnation. This period of forty days is analogous to the forty days that Moses fasted before receiving the commandments from God.

Of this connection, St. Symeon of Thessaloniki (ca. A.D. 1381–1429) writes:

The Nativity Forty-day Fast represents the fast undertaken by Moses, who — having fasted for forty days and forty nights — received the Commandments of God, written on stone tablets. And we, fasting for forty days, will reflect upon and receive from the Virgin the living Word — not written upon stone, but born, incarnate — and we will commune of His Divine Body.

If nothing else, then, the time of prayer and fasting before Nativity reminds us that we, as Orthodox Christians, are given the immense and unthinkable blessing, privilege, and honor of receiving the very Body and Blood of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ. But as we say yes to Christ in the holy mysteries, we must also learn to say no to ourselves, making a point to both follow Christ and serve those in need.

It is no coincidence that Christ, in one of the Gospel readings during Nativity exhorts: “Whoever does not bear his cross” as well as “forsake all that he has cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:27,33). While the faithful prepare to receive Christ anew in his Incarnation, we must also be prepared to relinquish whatever it is we possess that keeps us from the glory of his everlasting kingdom.

But even as the faithful are called to a period of spiritual quietude and even asceticism during this fasting period, we should not engage in asceticism and bear this cross as an end unto itself. Rather, we learn to say no to ourselves so that we can say yes to God. And in saying yes to the poor and the needy, we are saying yes to Christ, so that we might share in the vision of Cornelius, hearing: “Your prayers and alms have ascended as a memorial before God” (Acts 10:4).

An effective remedy for the anxieties and desires of this time of year is found in a concern for our fellow man. Rather than being so caught up in the materialism and “me too” nature of contemporary celebrations, Orthodox Christians should play a pivotal role in showing a wholly better and more noble way forward.

Incidentally, the other Gospel readings throughout the Nativity fast remind us not only why we are participating, but also how we can make the most out of it. For example, we should not lay up treasure for ourselves, while neglecting God (Luke 12:16–21), but should rather be “rich” towards God — and by consequence, towards those who are in need. We should not make excuses when it comes to serving or helping those in distress

(Luke 13:10–17). And, of course, we should be willing to “sell all that [we] have and distribute to the poor” (Luke 18:22).

It’s in these virtues, and in a genuine concern for others, that we can be released from the empty cares of this world, especially as they are emphasized during the holiday season. If we give to the poor, we are giving to God. If we say no to our own desires, we can fulfill the needs of those who are looking for someone — *anyone* — that is willing to say yes on their behalf.

As families, we can help our children give or donate to a family, friend, or even a complete stranger in need, rather than providing them with more and more stuff.

As individuals, we can honor the fast, spend more time in prayer, and make a conscious effort to love our neighbors as ourselves, dedicating this season to be a time for true, spiritual growth. We can practice the religion of St. James that is “pure and undefiled” before God: “... to visit orphans and widows in their afflictions, and to keep oneself unstained by the world” (James 1:27). Instead of overeating for the next month, spending countless hours at parties and other premature celebrations, we can fast from our regular intake of food so that we have more time and resources to give to those who are truly in need—not to mention more focus and attention for prayer and spiritual growth.

Rather than approaching this Nativity season with anxiety and distress, dedicate yourself to the true spirit of the season and the greater purpose that lies within: the salvation and healing of the world through the Incarnation of Jesus Christ.

ВВЕДЕННЯ В ХРАМ ПРЕСВЯТОЇ БОГОРОДИЦІ

21 листопада

*"Пречистий храм Спасів, прецінна світлиця і
Діва; священний скарб Божої слави, днесь
вводиться в дім Господній"
(Кондак празника).*

ДУХОВНЕ ЗНАЧЕННЯ ПРАЗНИКА ДЛЯ НАС

Про що нам говорить празник Введення? Яку духовну науку він нам дає? Празник Введення говорить нам насамперед про радісну жертву святих Йоакима й Анни. Вони свою,

в Бога вимолену, донечку самі приводять до храму на службу Богові. На каноні утрєні празника в восьмій пісні читаємо:

"Анна колись, приводячи Пречистий Храм (Марію) у дім Божий, голосно закликала і з вірою сказала до священника: "Прийми сьогодні дитину, Богом мені дану, введи її у храм твого Творця і радісно співай йому: благословіть усі діла Господа". Та не тільки батьки радо приводять свою дитину на службу Богові, але й Марія радо йде за голосом Божим і своїх батьків. Як святий Йоаким і Анна, так і Марія є для нас гарним

зразком радісної жертви і служби Богові.

Може ще ніколи уся Христова Церква, а в тім і наша Церква, не переживала такого великого браку покликань на



священиків, монахів і монахинь, як сьогодні. Дух матеріалізму й секуляризму щораз більше й більше проникає в наші родини,

тому щораз менше й менше маємо молоді, охочої на жертву й посвяту для Бога, своєї Церкви й народу. Щораз менше в нас батьків, які за прикладом святої Анни були б готові сказати нашій Церкві: "Прийми дитину, яку Бог мені дав".

Ознакою глибокої релігійности якогось народу є не тільки його величаві й численні церкви й монастирі, але передусім його численні покликання, тобто священики,

місіонери монахи й монахині. Нічого не допоможуть нам навіть найкращі святині й золоті престоли, коли не матимемо священиків, які в тих храмах і на тих престолах приносили б Безкровну Жертву, уділяли б святі таїнства й голосили б Боже слово. Наш слуга Божий митрополит Андрей Шептицький каже: “Зрозумійте, що народові треба до спасення ревних і святих священиків”. Брак духовних покликань у народі веде до повільного завмирання Церкви й духовного життя її вірних, бо духовний стан — це серце й душа Церкви.

Де шукати розв’язок цієї важливої проблеми? Де властиво родяться і виростають духовні покликання? Найкращий городець, де ростуть і дозрівають покликання до священицького й монашого стану — це добрий християнський дім. “Добрий родинний дім, — каже німецький кардинал М. Фавльгабер, — це перша духовна семінарія”. А свята Церква часто називає родинний дім колискою покликань. Статистика свідчить, що п’ятдесят відсотків духовних покликань вирішується між шостим і чотирнадцятим роком життя, це той час, коли дитина ще під повним впливом своїх батьків.

Дух жертви в родині для Бога і своєї Церкви є дуже важливим чинником у

плеканні покликань. Без духа жертви нема любови ідеалів, бо жертва це мова любови. Тому батьки повинні відразу від колиски заправляти своїх дітей до жертви й посвяти.

Та, на жаль, сьогодні не багато таких християнських батьків, які плекали б в родині дух жертви та ідеал духовного покликання. Зате в нас є багато батьків, що в зародку вбивають голос покликання у серцях своїх дітей.

Майбутнє нашої Церкви й народу багато в чому залежить від того, як наші українські батьки виховують своїх дітей. Нам потрібні батьки, які за прикладом святого Йоакима й Анни радо благословили б своїх дітей на цілопальну жертву для Бога, своєї Церкви й народу. Нам потрібна ідейна молодь, яка за зразком Пречистої Діви Марії радо йшла би за Божим голосом на службу Богові, Церкві й народові. І щойно тоді зможемо сміливо дивитися в майбутнє нашої Церкви й народу.



The Presentation of the Most Holy Mother of God In the Temple

November 21

*“The most pure Temple of the Saviour,
the most precious chamber and Virgin;
sacred treasure of God’s glory, today
is being presented in the house of the Lord.”
(Kontakion of the feast)*

The Spiritual Significance of the Feast

What does the feast of the Entrance convey to us? What spiritual lesson does it offer us? First of all, it speaks to us of the joyful sacrifice of Joachim

and Anna. They themselves bring their daughter to the Temple and offer her to the service of God. In the canon of Matins of this feast in the eighth Ode we

read: “Anna, when bringing the Most Pure Temple (that is Mary) into the house of God, exclaimed to the priest: Today, receive the child given to me by God, take her into the Temple of your Creator and joyfully sing to Him: all you bless the works of the Lord.”

But not only do the parents joyfully bring their child to offer her to the service of God; Mary also gladly obeys the voice of God and of her parents. Like Joachim

and Anna, Mary too is a very beautiful example for us of joyful sacrifice and service to God.

Perhaps today, more than ever before, the



entire Church of Christ, our Church included, is suffering from a great dearth of vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

The spirit of materialism and secularism is invading our families more and more, and we have fewer and fewer youths willing to sacrifice and dedicate themselves to the service of God, their Church and their nation. There are fewer and fewer parents among our people who, like St. Anna, are ready to say to our Church: “Receive the child given to me by God.”

A sign of deep piety of a nation is not only its magnificent and numerous

churches and monasteries but, above all, its numerous vocations – its priests, missionaries, monks and nuns. The most beautiful churches and gilded altars will be of no help to us if we do not have priests to offer the Unbloody Sacrifice, administer the Holy Sacraments, and preach the word of God in those churches. The Servant of God Metropolitan Andrew Sheptytsky says: “You must understand that the nation also needs zealous and holy priests to bring salvation.” The lack of religious vocations among a people must lead to a gradual dying of the Church and of the spiritual life of its faithful, for the religious state is the heart and soul of the Church.

Where are we to look for the solution to such a burning problem? Where are religious vocations nurtured? The best garden where vocations to the priesthood or religious state grow and mature is a good Christian home. “A good Christian home,” says the German Cardinal M. Faulhaber, “is the first spiritual seminary.” Holy Church frequently calls the home the cradle of vocations. Statistics show that fifty percent of the religious vocations arise between the ages of six and fourteen, that is, during that time of life when the child is still under the full influence of its parents.

The spirit of sacrifice in the family in relation to God and one’s Church is a very

important factor in fostering vocations. Without the spirit of sacrifice, there is no pursuit of ideals, for sacrifice is the language of love. Consequently, parents should prepare their children from the very cradle for sacrifice and dedication.

Unfortunately, however, there are few such Christian parents today who strive to cultivate the spirit of sacrifice and the ideal of a religious vocation in the home. On the contrary, among our faithful there are many parents who suppress the first signs of a vocation in the hearts of their children.

To a very great degree, the future of our Church and nation depends upon how our Ukrainian parents educate their children. We need parents who, following the example of SS.Joachim and Anna, would gladly offer their children as a “burnt” offering to God, their Church and their nation. We need youth with ideals, who like the model of the Most Pure Virgin Mary, would gladly follow the voice of God and dedicate themselves to the service of God, the Church and the nation. Only then will we be able to look forward to a brighter and happier future for our Church and our nation.



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If you do not have access to a computer, please inform the pastor.

Sunday offering for November 13

Amount	Number
\$15.00	1
\$20.00	3
\$30.00	1
\$39.00	1 (loose)
\$40.00	3
\$50.00	1
\$85.00	1
\$100.00	1
\$400.00	1
<hr/>	
\$899.00	

Parishioner Total: \$899.00

Average / parish household (42): \$11.53

Weekly Stewardship Goal: \$1288.00

Deficit: (\$389.00)

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Stephen Hojsan
Maria Hughes
Bohdan Kniahynyckyj

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**Українська Греко-Католицька Церква
Святого Йоана Хрестителя
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Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church**

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Spiritual Reflection for Tomorrow's Feast

Stretching out His hand over His disciples, the Lord Christ declared: Here are my mother and my brothers; anyone who does the will of my Father who sent me is my brother and sister and my mother. I would urge you to ponder these words. Did the Virgin Mary, who believed by faith and conceived by faith, who was the chosen one from whom our Savior was born among men, who was created by Christ before Christ was created in her — did she not do the will of the Father? Indeed the blessed Mary certainly did the Father's will, and so it was for her a greater thing to have been Christ's disciple than to have been His mother.

Now listen and see if the words of Scripture do not agree with what I have said. The Lord was passing by and crowds were following

him. His miracles gave proof of divine power, and a woman cried out: Happy is the womb that bore you, blessed is that womb! But the Lord, not wishing people to seek happiness in a purely physical relationship, replied: More blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it. Mary heard God's word and kept it, and so she is blessed. She kept God's truth in her mind, a nobler thing than carrying His body in her womb. The truth and the body were both Christ: He was kept in Mary's mind insofar as He is truth, He was carried in her womb insofar as He is man; but what is kept in the mind is of a higher order than what is carried in the womb.

St. Augustine of Hippo

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