



Orthodox Mission of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple

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21727

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<http://EntranceMission.org>

The Three U's of Sanctity June 27, 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory forever!

The Holy Church commemorates saints every day. However, because there have been God pleasers who struggled in obscurity and were not revealed to the Holy Church, the Church has established a day on which we glorify all those who have pleased God throughout the ages, so that not one might be left unglorified by the Church. (St. Theophan. On the Sunday of All Saints)

Each Sunday before most people are even awake, the subdeacon and I gather at the church to begin the Divine Services. Typically, this starts around 7:30 AM. Preparations, Kairon Entrance Prayers and Vesting are followed by a short Service called Proskomedie. At Proskomedie the Profera (Bread of the Offering) is taken, blessed and cut into its representative pieces on the Diskos, pieces that represent each member of the Church. First, the Lamb that will be transformed by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ; a measure of wine is mingled with water and set into the Chalice for its transformation into the Blood of Christ. Then segments representing the whole Church are added: segments for the Theotokos, the nine ranks of saints, all the living and all the dead who are part of the Church and present in the celebration of the Holy Mystery of God's self-giving in the Holy Eucharist.

Among the nine ranks of saints are the saints appointed by the Church for remembrance, or commemoration, on the date on which the Divine Services are celebrated. Sometimes there are a great many of them, hundreds on some days, particularly when there are commemorations of those martyred as a group at the hands of the godless. Always, at the end of the commemoration of the appointed saints of the day, the priest adds the

phrase, "... and all the saints."

"And all the Saints." Whoever they are, wherever they have lived, in every and any time and place. This Sunday has been set aside to commemorate them, the vast number of saints who, in the words of St. Theophan, "were not revealed to the Holy Church ... and have pleased God throughout the ages."

What qualities to these people have in common? They come from different eras, different cultures, different times, and different places. I think of their common characteristics as the "**Three 'U's**". They were:

- **United to Christ**
- **United to neighbor in need**
- **Unwilling to compromise either their union to Christ or their neighbor in need.**

Think for example, of three modern saints who are virtually unknown by members of the modern Church: One from the Republic of Georgia, another from France and a third from our own land. From the Republic of Georgia is [Saint Gabriel of Georgia](#) (in birth Goderdzi Urgebadze), son of a soviet official who stood for Christ against the militant atheism of that regime. He became known to the world when he burned a banner of Lenin in the 1930s at an international worker's gathering and later as a monk was known for his uncompromising union to Christ as a holy fool for Christ.

From Paris is our now beloved [St. Maria Skobtsova](#), often remembered as Mother Maria of Paris. Her convent refugee center provided false baptismal certificates to many Jewish refugees and saved them from deportation to Nazi death camps. She herself was martyred by the Nazis for her uncompromising faith that "theology and service to the poor in need go together."

Finally, think of [St. Alexis Toth](#), who came as a married Unia priest from Slovakia to the United States and was persecuted by a powerful Catholic bishop for daring to serve as a priest while married. His uncompromising devotion to the truth led to the formation of a large portion of the Orthodox Church in America.

These three saints, still unknown among so many today, are representative of those who have never been recognized by the Church and who showed the same devotion to Christ and their neighbor in need.

These three 'U's, Uncompromising devotion to Christ, Uncompromising devotion to neighbor in need and Unwillingness to compromise on these principles are the qualities that all the saints of any time, place or culture all had in common. Known or unknown, we commemorate them all on this Sunday, the Sunday of All Saints!

Fr. Elias

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