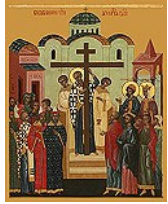


## ✠Bulletin✠

Week of November 23rd to November 29th



## Holy Cross Orthodox Church

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**24th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 7**  
**Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom**

### Afterfeast of the Entry Into the Temple

**Repose of Rt. Blv. Great Prince Alexander Nevsky, in schema Aleksey (1263).**

St Amphilokhios, Bishop of Iconium (394). St. Gregory, Bishop of Agrigentum (6th-7th c.). St. Metrophán, in schema Makáry, Bishop of Vorónezh (1703). Sisinius the Confessor, Bishop of Cyzicus (3rd c.). Martyr Theodore of Antioch (4th c.).

### Weekly Liturgical Service Schedule

**Sunday November 23rd**

**9:15 am** - Hours

**9:30 am** - Divine Liturgy

### Weekly Schedule

**Sunday, November 23rd**

- Choir Practice
- Inquirers & Catechism classes following Liturgy

## Cultivate the Spiritual Discipline of Gratitude

By Fr. Luke A. Veronis

*The spiritual person is the one who is grateful for everything. He is the one who receives everything with thanksgiving, and who knows that he has nothing except what he has received from God (cf. Jn 3.27).*

Sometimes, we look at gratitude as a spontaneous response to something someone has done for us. That's nice. Yet, gratitude as a spiritual discipline means consciously cultivating a spirit of gratitude to God in **ALL** circumstances – for whatever we perceive as good as well as for the blessings we receive even in the midst of difficult, unfortunate or challenging experiences.

Cultivating a spirit of gratitude means opening our hearts to see God's presence, everywhere, in all things and at all times. That's surely hard to do at times and it may take serious discernment. Even when our emotions and feelings tempt us to complain or to see all that is wrong, the spiritual discipline of gratitude guides us to look for goodness and beauty and love in all circumstances. Expressing gratitude to God, instead of complaining; this surely takes effort. Yet the more we practice and cultivate a spirit of gratitude, the more it will come naturally to us.

**An Estonian proverb says, “Who does not thank for little will not thank for much.”** Of course, the opposite is what we strive to develop in our spiritual discipline. When we practice thanking God and others for the little things of life, this will develop into thanking God for the countless blessings we receive every day.

Our ultimate goal is to be filled with eyes that see God's wonder everywhere we look, to see God's beauty in everyone we encounter.

I look at my son, Paul, who was a skinny little teenager. For years now he's been working out almost every day, and as a result he's gained 30 pounds of muscle. How did that happen? Not overnight. Not by simply wishing it. Not by going to the gym once in a while only when he felt like it. It happened with regular exercise and almost daily working out.

**Practicing gratitude consciously and consistently in little ways develops over the years into a rock-solid habit.** This practice of finding reasons to

thank God on a daily basis opens up our eyes to see the wonders and blessings of God we receive every day, so that we can perceive His hand present in all circumstances of life.

St. Nikolai Velimirovic reminds us that “God does not for a moment tire of giving us good things, so how can we tire of thanking Him for these good things every day?”

St. Ambrose of Optina says, “We must begin with thanksgiving for everything for the beginning of joy is to be content with your situation.”

St. John Chrysostom puts it this way, “Happiness is achieved when we look inward and learn to be grateful for whatever life brings us. Of course, this requires transforming greed into gratitude.”

Saint Anthony the Great advises that when we learn to discipline our souls to offer thanks for whatever we encounter in the course of life as a part of the mystery of life, as a part of God’s providential ordering of all things, we conform to God’s will and discover peace.

**Each day we have a choice to make when we wake up** – will we express gratitude and thanksgiving to God for this particular day, with all the blessings that await us, or will we choose to focus on the problems and uncertainties of life, allowing our particular worries to control our worldview? Realize, though, that **our choice will reflect the authenticity of our relationship with Jesus Christ** and our understanding of our Orthodox Christian faith. To live in Christ and have His Spirit dwelling within us automatically implies a life of gratitude and thanksgiving!

As we walk with our Lord, from the moment we wake up until the end of each day, our entire outlook in life cannot but be one of appreciation and gratefulness.

We have our loving, merciful and compassionate Creator and Father watching over us, walking with us, guiding us in all our steps, carrying us when we are tired or afraid, comforting us in our moments of distress, and ultimately filling us with His abundant Spirit and continual presence. When we understand and believe all of His precious promises to us, how can we not see life without unceasing gratitude, praise and thanksgiving?

May we live each and every day with a joyous thanksgiving spirit!

## The Cure for Grumbling is Doxology

Grumbling is caused by misery, and it can be put aside by doxology (giving praise). Grumbling begets grumbling and doxology begets doxology. When someone doesn’t grumble over a problem troubling him, but rather praises God, then the devil gets frustrated and goes off to someone else who grumbles, in order to cause everything to go even worse for him. You see, the more one grumbles, the more one falls into ruin. Sometimes the devil deceives us and makes us unable to be pleased with anything; however, one can celebrate all things in a spiritual manner, with doxology, and secure God’s constant blessing.

- *Elder Paisios of Mount Athos Spiritual Councils IV: Family Life*

## Quotes of Thanksgiving

“Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” (1 Thess 5.16–18).

“Rejoice always in the Lord; again I say, Rejoice! Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Phil 4.4–7).

Let us give thanks to God continually. For, it is outrageous that when we enjoy His benefaction to us, indeed every single day, we do not acknowledge the favor with so much as a word; and this, when the acknowledgment confers great benefit on us. He does not need anything of ours, but we stand in need of all things from Him.

— *St. John Chrysostom, Homily 25, Homilies on the Gospel of St. Matthew*

To thank God in everything and for everything is the result of faith and faithfulness in God. It is the result of absolute trust in the Lord who knows best what we need for our salvation and does all that He can within the evil conditions of the world to bring us to eternal life, to peace and to joy.

— *The Orthodox Faith, Volume IV – Spirituality – Gratitude*

### Prayer Requests

James Clark – Parishioner of St. Herman's  
Nicholas Kowalski  
Carolyn – Robert & Debra's Forster's daughter  
Anne and Scott Peatross  
Robert (John) Forster  
Robert Kozera  
Megan – David & Phyllis Bartos' daughter  
Rosemary – Friend of David & Phyllis Bartos

### Please pray for our families in Ukraine

Leonid, Nadiia, Andrii, Halyna,  
Volodymyr, Maryna, Dmytro, Bohdan,  
Nadiia, Oleksandr, Tetiana,  
Roman, Mykola  
Anatoly, Olga, Maria, Andrei

**Please let us know of anyone you would like to add to the Prayer Lists.**

### Inquirers & Catechism Class

Classes will be on Sundays following Divine Liturgy. For those new to understanding Orthodoxy or for those who want to expand your foundation, please join us for our classes. Please check the schedule for changes.

### [tithe.ly.com](http://tithe.ly.com)

Another way to "donate". This app can be downloaded to your phone and Holy Cross can be accessed via this app. Also, [tithe.ly](http://tithe.ly) can be accessed through the church website [www.HolyCrossFtMyers.org](http://www.HolyCrossFtMyers.org)

## **The Divine Liturgy**

**Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom**  
Variable Hymns and Readings

### **Tone 7 Troparion** *(Resurrection)*

By Thy Cross Thou didst destroy death.  
To the thief Thou didst open Paradise.  
For the Myrrhbearers Thou didst change weeping into joy,  
and Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God,  
to proclaim that Thou art risen,//  
granting the world great mercy.

### **Tone 4 Troparion** *(Feast of the Entrance of the Most Holy Theotokos)*

Today is the prelude of the good will of God,  
of the preaching of the salvation of mankind.  
The Virgin appears in the Temple of God,  
in anticipation proclaiming Christ to all.  
Let us rejoice and sing to her:  
"Rejoice, O Fulfillment//  
of the Creator's dispensation!"

### **Tone 4 Troparion** *(Sts. Amphilokhios and Gregory)*

O God of our Fathers,  
always act with kindness towards us;  
take not Thy mercy from us,  
but guide our lives in peace//  
through the prayers of the hierarchs Gregory and Amphilokhios!

### **Tone 7 Kontakion** *(Resurrection)*

The dominion of death can no longer hold men captive,  
for Christ descended, shattering and destroying its powers.  
Hell is bound, while the Prophets rejoice and cry:  
"The Savior has come to those in faith;//  
enter, you faithful, into the Resurrection!"

### **Tone 2 Kontakion** *(St. Amphilokhios)*

Holy thunder, spiritual trumpet,  
nurse of the faithful and axe striking down heresy,  
O hierarchy Amphilokhios,  
great and well-pleasing servant of the Trinity,  
as you stand forever with the Angels,//  
unceasingly pray for us all!

### **Tone 4 Kontakion** *(Feast of the Entrance of the Most Holy Theotokos)*

The most pure Temple of the Savior;  
the precious Chamber and Virgin;  
the sacred Treasure of the glory of God,  
is presented today to the house of the Lord.  
She brings with her the grace of the Spirit,  
therefore, the angels of God praise her://  
"Truly this woman is the abode of Heaven!"

**Tone 7 Prokeimenon** *(Resurrection)*

The Lord shall give strength to His people. / The Lord shall bless His people with peace. *(Ps. 28:11)*

*V. Offer to the Lord, O you sons of God! Offer young rams to the Lord! (Ps. 28:1a)*

**Tone 3 Prokeimenon** *(Song of the Theotokos)*

My soul doth magnify the Lord, / and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior. *(Lk. 1:46-47)*

**Ephesians 2:14-22 (Epistle)**

For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

**Tone 7**

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

*V. It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to Thy Name, O Most High. (Ps. 91:1)*

*V. To declare Thy mercy in the morning, and Thy truth by night. (Ps. 91:2a)*

**Tone 8**

*V Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thine ear! (Ps. 44:11)*

**Luke 12:16-21 (Gospel)**

Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. 'And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.'" But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

**Explanation of Today's Gospel Reading Luke 12:16-21**

By Blessed Theophylact

Archbishop of Ochrid and Bulgaria

The Lord had said that the life of a man is not lengthened by an abundance of possessions, and now He offers this parable in confirmation of this truth. See how He describes for us the insatiable thoughts of the foolish rich man. God did His part and showed His mercy; for all the ground of the rich man brought forth plentifully, not just one of his fields. But the rich man, himself, bore so little fruit from the mercy shown him that even before he had gathered the crops, he imagined them already locked up for himself. See also the pleasures of the rich man: *What shall I do?* Does not the pauper say the same thing as well, "What shall I do? I have nothing to eat or to put on." Think, if you will, about the words of the rich man. *What shall I do, because I have no room where to gather my crops!* At the very least, he could take a good rest. If both the pauper says, "What shall I do because I have not?" and the rich man says, "What shall I do because I have not?" then what do we gain by gathering more and more? We do not gain any rest, and it is clear from all the cares that come from our further efforts that we are piling up for ourselves only a great multitude of sins. Yet the foolish man says, *I will pull down my barns and build greater.* And if your land yields even more bountifully in the future, will you pull these down and build them again? But what need is there to pull down and build? You have available to you as storehouses, the stomachs of the poor which can hold much and are indestructible and imperishable. They are in fact heavenly and divine storehouses, for he who feeds the pauper, feeds God.

See something else that is foolish: *my fruits and my goods*. The rich man did not consider that he had received these things from God. If he had, he would have treated these things as would a steward of God. But he imagined that these things were the fruits of his own labors, which is why he usurped them for himself, calling them *my fruits and my goods*. "I am the sole owner," he thinks, "and there is no one else entitled to share. These things are not God's, but mine, and therefore I alone will enjoy them. I will not now take God in as a partner to enjoy my profit."

Because he spoke foolishly, let us see what happened.

*Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years.* He determines that he will have a long life, as if length of years was something else he could obtain by working his land. But a long life is not a crop you can grow, and it is not another of your belongings. "*Eat, drink, and be merry.* Three cheers for the good things of my soul!" But to eat and drink are the good things only of an irrational soul. Because this man has an irrational soul, it is fitting that he plans to reward himself with these things. But the good things of a rational soul are to understand, to reason, and to be glad in the law of God and in good thoughts. Do eating and drinking not suffice for you, O fool, but you must also order up for your soul that which accompanies these things, namely, shameful and base pleasure? Euphemistically did the Lord employ the words *be merry*, indicating by them the most wanton passions which are the consequence of too much food and drink. *But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you.'* The words *God said unto him* do not mean that God conversed with the rich man, although the parable puts it in this form. Instead, the thoughts that came into the man's mind are what God spoke. You *fool*. He calls him a fool because everything he wanted was foolish, as we have shown. And every man like him is foolish and acts in vain, for, as David says, *In vain does every man disquiet himself.* (Psalms 38:12)

Why?

Because he stores up things without knowing for whom he gathers them. How can he not be called a fool who does not know that the length of a man's life rests with God alone and that no man can set the limits of his own life? Notice also the words *will be required*. Like some stern imperial officers demanding tribute, the fearsome angels will ask for your soul, and you will not want to give it because you love this life and claim the things of this life as your own. But they do not demand the soul of a righteous man, because he himself commits his soul into the hands of the God and Father of spirits,

and he does so with joy and gladness, not in the least bit grieved that he is handing over his soul to God. For him the body is a light burden, easily shed. But the sinner has made his soul fleshy, something in substance like the body and like the earth, rendering it difficult to separate from the body. **This is why the soul must be demanded of him**, the same way that harsh tax collectors treat debtors who refuse to pay what is due. See that the Lord did not say, "*I shall require your soul of you,*" but, *your soul will be required of you*. For the souls of the righteous are already in the hands of God. Truly it is at night when the soul of such a sinner is demanded of him. It is night for this sinner who is darkened by the love of wealth, and into whom the light of divine knowledge cannot penetrate, and death overtakes him.

Thus, he who lays up treasure for himself is called foolish: he never stops drawing up plans and dies in the midst of them. But if he had been laying up treasure for the poor and for God, it would not have been so. Let us strive, therefore, to be *rich toward God*, that is, to trust in God, to have Him as our wealth and the treasury of wealth, and not to speak of *my goods* but "the good things of God." If they are God's, then let us not deprive God of His own goods. This is what it means to be *rich toward God*: to trust that even if I empty myself and give everything away, I will not lack the necessities. God is my treasury of good things, and I open and take from that treasury what I need.

**Instead of "It is truly meet...," we sing:**

*(Feast of the Entrance of the Most Holy Theotokos)*

**Tone 4**

The angels beheld the entrance of the Pure One and were amazed.//

How has the Virgin entered into the Holy of Holies?

Since she is a living Ark of God

let no profane hand touch the Theotokos.

But let the lips of believers unceasingly sing to her,

praising her in joy with the angel's song://

"Truly, thou art more exalted than all, O pure Virgin!"

**Communion Hymn**

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! *(Ps. 148:1)*

I will receive the cup of salvation and call on the Name of the Lord.

*(Ps. 115:4)*

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!