



# Holy Cross Orthodox Church

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## CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!

Week of May 14<sup>th</sup> to May 20<sup>th</sup>

### 5th SUNDAY OF PASCHA — Tone 4.

**Samaritan Woman.** Martyrs Isidore and Myrope of Chios (251). Ven. Isidore, Fool-for-Christ, Wonderworker of Rostov (1474). St. Nikéas, Bishop of Novgorod, Recluse of the Kiev Caves. Martyr Maximus (ca. 250). Ven. Serapion of Egypt (5th c.). St. Leontius, Patriarch of Jerusalem (1175). First opening of the Relics of St. Tikhon of Zadonsk (1846).

### Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

Epistle: Acts 11:19-26, 29-30

Gospel: John 4:5-42

### Weekly Liturgical Schedule

Sundays 9:15 am – Hours

9:30 am - Divine Liturgy

### **The Courage to Face the Truth: Sunday of the Samaritan Woman in the Orthodox Church**

By Fr. Philip LeMasters

It is strangely appealing to define ourselves by our failures, especially when others know that we have stumbled and treat us poorly as a result. As well, our own pride often causes us to lose perspective such that we obsess about how we do not measure up to whatever illusion of perfection we have accepted. People are often their own harshest critics in ways that are not healthy at all.

On this Sunday of the Samaritan Woman, we celebrate that our Lord's great victory over death enables us to be free from defining ourselves by our sins or by how other people may view us. He rises in glory not only over the tomb and Hades, but overall the distortions of the beauty of the human person created in His image and likeness. Today we commemorate that His salvation extends to our

most painful failings and to the harsh judgments of others upon us. Even such difficult circumstances may become points of entry into the joy of the empty tomb.

The woman at the well certainly knew what it was like to be defined by others as someone who did not measure up. She was a Samaritan, and therefore rejected by the Jews as a heretic and a member of a despised group that had intermarried with Gentiles.

So now imagine her surprise, then, when the Savior asked her for a drink of water and then engaged in a conversation about spiritual matters with her. Jewish men simply did not strike up conversations with women in that time and place, and consuming food or drink from a Samaritan was out of the question. **How even more shocking it is that Jesus Christ's conversation with her is the longest recorded between Him and any one person in the four gospels.** He spoke straightforwardly to her and did not shy away from uncomfortable truths that hit her where she lived. But instead of shutting down the conversation or running away in fear, this Samaritan woman told the people of her village about Christ.

This Samaritan woman is known in the Church as St. Photini, which means "the enlightened one." Through the Savior's conversation with her, Photini became an evangelist who boldly shared the good news, even to her Samaritan neighbors who were surely used to viewing her in anything but spiritual terms. That took tremendous courage. Photini was not only brave in preaching to them, but ultimately in responding to the persecution of the pagan Roman emperor Nero, to whom she said "O most impious of the blind, you profligate and stupid man! Do you think me so deluded that I would consent to renounce my Lord Christ and instead offer sacrifice to idols as blind as you?" The Great Martyr Photini refused to back down and gave the ultimate witness to Christ's victory over death by laying down her life for Him.

Too many of us today flee in shame from uncomfortable truths, whether we encounter them in our own thoughts or in the opinions of others. Too many of us define ourselves by our failings, weaknesses, and temptations. Too many of us accept some unrealistic cultural standard of "the good life" as the norm we must meet in order to be worthwhile. Thank God, St. Photini the Great Martyr did none of that. In response to her shocking encounter with the Savior, she humbly acknowledged the truth about her brokenness; she did not react defensively or make excuses. She did not end the conversation or run away in shame. Instead, she was open to the healing of her soul, to the possibility of a new and restored life

through the mercy of the Lord. This was such a great blessing to her that she immediately shared the good news with the people of her village and refused to stop, even to the point of laying down her life.

In this joyous season of Pascha, we celebrate that Christ's victory over death delivers us from all the corrupting effects of sin, including our deeply ingrained habits of thought and action that distract us from facing the truth about ourselves. By setting us free from bondage to the fear of death, our Risen Lord enables us to make even our most bitter failures points of entry into the new day of His eternal life. **He has conquered death, the wages of sin, which means that our sins now have only the power over us that we allow them to have.** When, like St. Photini, we acknowledge them straightforwardly and turn away from them, we participate personally in the good news of Pascha. We rise from death to life as we enter into the joy of the empty tomb.

No matter what we have done, no matter how distorted and corrupt any dimension of our life may be, no matter how anyone else treats or views us, Christ is able to raise us up with Him from death to life. That is not only a future promise, but a present reality. He rose in glory with His wounds still visible, and no wound that we or others have inflicted puts us beyond the good news of His resurrection. In this glorious season of Pascha, let us all become like the Great Martyr Photini by embracing enthusiastically the new life that the Savior has brought to the world, for Christ is Risen!!

#### **Prayer Request for the sick**

Robert (John) Forster  
Robert Kozera  
Matushka Larysa  
Megan – David & Phyllis Bartos' daughter  
Herta Brasowski – Former Parishioner  
Linda, Christine & Lisa – Friend of Robert & Debra Forster  
Rosemary – Friend of David & Phyllis Bartos

#### **Please pray for our families over in Ukraine**

Olga, Yaroslav, Lydia, Sergei  
Anatoly, Olga, Maria, Andrei;  
Anatoly, Svetlana, Yulia, Alina  
Leonid, Nadezhda, Andrei, Halina,  
Vladimir, Marina, Dmitry, Nina  
Nadezhda, Alexander, Tatyana,  
Roman, Nikolai  
Roman, Olessia, Alexander  
Vitaly, Denis, Vasily, Raisa, Valery, Nikolay

Olga, Halina, Petr, Natalia

**Please let us know if there is anyone you would like to add to the Prayer List.**

#### **Tone 4 Troparion (Resurrection)**

When the women disciples of the Lord learned from the angel the joyous message of Thy Resurrection,  
they cast away the ancestral curse  
and elatedly told the apostles:  
“Death is overthrown!  
Christ God is risen,//  
granting the world great mercy!”

#### **Tone 8 Troparion (Midfeast)**

In the middle of the feast, O Savior,  
fill my thirsting soul with the waters of piety, as Thou  
didst cry to all:  
“If anyone thirst, let him come to Me and drink!”//  
O Christ God, Fountain of our life, glory to Thee!

#### **Tone 8 Kontakion (Pentecostarion)**

The Samaritan Woman came to the well in faith;  
she saw Thee, the Water of wisdom and drank  
abundantly.//  
She inherited the Kingdom on high, and is ever glorified!

#### **Tone 4 Kontakion (Midfeast)**

Christ God, the Creator and Master of all,  
cried to all in the midst of the feast of the Law:  
“Come and draw the water of immortality!”  
We fall before Thee and faithfully cry://  
“Grant us Thy mercies, for Thou art the Fountain of our  
life!”

#### **Tone 3 Prokeimenon (Pentecostarion)**

Sing praises to our God, sing praises! / Sing praises to our  
King, sing praises!  
*(Ps. 46:6)*

*V. Clap your hands, all peoples! Shout to God with  
loud songs of joy! (Ps. 46:1)*

#### **Tone 4**

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

*V. Go forth, prosper and reign, for the sake of  
meekness, righteousness and truth! (Ps. 44:3b)*

*V. For Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest  
iniquity. (Ps. 44:6)*

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

The Angel cried to the Lady, full of grace:

"Rejoice, O pure Virgin! Again, I say: Rejoice,  
thy Son is risen from His three days in the tomb!  
With Himself He has raised all the dead."  
Rejoice, O ye people!

Shine, shine, O new Jerusalem!  
The glory of the Lord has shone on thee.  
Exult now, and be glad, O Zion!  
Be radiant, O pure Theotokos,  
in the Resurrection of thy Son!

#### **Communion Hymn**

Receive the Body of Christ; taste the fountain of  
immortality!  
Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the  
highest! *(Ps. 148:1)*  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

## **Scripture Readings**

### **Acts 11:19-26, 29-30 (Epistle)**

19 Now those who were scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to no one but the Jews only.

20 But some of them were men from Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they had come to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists, preaching the Lord Jesus.

21 And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord.

22 Then news of these things came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas to go as far as Antioch.

23 When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord.

24 For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord.

25 Then Barnabas departed for Tarsus to seek Saul.

26 And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

29 Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea.

30 This they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

### **John 4:5-42 (Gospel)**

5 So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

7 A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink."

8 For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.

9 Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.

10 Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

11 The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water?"

12 Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?"

13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again,

14 but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."

15 The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw."

16 Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here."

17 The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,'

18 for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly."

19 The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.

20 Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship."

21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father.

22 You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews.

23 But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.

24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

25 The woman said to Him, “I know that Messiah is coming” (who is called Christ). “When He comes, He will tell us all things.”

26 Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am He.”

27 And at this point His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, “What do You seek?” or, “Why are You talking with her?”

28 The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men,

29 Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?

30 Then they went out of the city and came to Him.

31 In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.”

32 But He said to them, “I have food to eat of which you do not know.”

33 Therefore the disciples said to one another, “Has anyone brought Him anything to eat?”

34 Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.

35 Do you not say, ‘There are still four months and then comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!

36 And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.

37 For in this the saying is true: ‘One sows and another reaps.’

38 I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors.”

39 And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, “He told me all that I ever did.”

40 So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days.

41 And many more believed because of His own word.

42 Then they said to the woman, “Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world.”