

November 21, 2021  
Twenty Sixth Sunday after Pentecost  
Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple



**SAINT GEORGE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH**

*Fighting the Good Fight with Faith*

*Come, O Jesus, our Savior, redeem and save us!*

Propers for this Sunday: Resurrectional Tone 1: pg. 125 - 127 and for the Entrance: pp. 268 - 271

Divine Services for the Week:

- SUN., NOV. 21      TWENTY SIXTH SUNDAY after PENTECOST,  
Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple  
8:30 A.M.      DIVINE LITURGY  
+ Philomena Rossi, offered by Mary Booker
- SUN., NOV. 28      TWENTY SEVENTH SUNDAY after PENTECOST  
8:30 A.M.      DIVINE LITURGY  
+ Marge Raychevich, offered by Butch & Judy Dzumba

**Are you sitting at the Lord's feet?** - Mary came and sat at his feet. This was as though she were sitting on firm ground at the feet of him who had forgiven the sinful woman her sins (Luke 7:38). She had put on a crown in order to enter into the kingdom of the Firstborn. She had chosen the better portion, the Benefactor, the Messiah himself. This will never be taken away from her. Martha's love was more fervent than Mary's, for before He had arrived there, she was ready to serve him. "Do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone?" When He came to raise Lazarus to life, she ran and came out first. (*St. Ephreim the Syrian*)



**Mary, the Mother of God, is the first and foremost disciple of Christ.**

**Happy Birthday Greetings This Week:**  
November 22: Francis Hersh (Jr.), November 26: Bonnie Taylor

**Wedding Anniversaries this Week:**  
None for the week

**Please Pray For Our Sick and Shut-ins**

**HOME** – Eileen Batcha, Rebecca Dickun, Marianne Dove, Jean Herdt, Rebecca Hutcheon, Kevin Joray, Mary Ann Jugan, Neil Jugan, Mary Salamon, John Simunick

Ann Trombulak – **Rochester Manor:** (174 Virginia Ave., Rochester, PA 15074)

Josephine Maruhnich – **Beaver Elder Care** (616 Golf Course Road, Aliquippa, PA 15001)

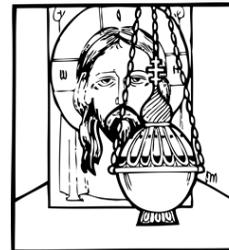
Betty Polas – **Apple Blossom Senior Living** (125 Apple Blossom Wy, #307, Moon Twp., PA 15108)

Carol Huchko – **Concordia at Villa St. Joseph** (1040 State St, Baden, PA 15005)

**Epistle Readers – Nov. 21: Prudy P. – Nov. 28: Joanne F.**

**Ushers – Stand in as needed**

**Troica Holders – Nov. 21: R. Mudron – Nov. 28: M. Bobanic**



THIS WEEK'S SANCTUARY LAMP  
November 21 - 27, 2021  
*Burns before the real presence of our Lord for:*  
+ Philomena Rossi  
*(In Loving Memory)*  
Offered By:  
Betty Zapko

**Every Divine Liturgy is at Heart a Service of Thanksgiving**

This is particularly expressed at the beginning of the anaphora when the priest prays: "Out of nothing You brought us into being, and when we had fallen, raised us up again; and You have left nothing undone until You brought us to Heaven and graciously gave us Your future Kingdom. For all these things, we thank You and Your Only-Begotten Son and Your Holy Spirit: for all these blessings, known and unknown, manifest and hidden, that were lavished upon us. We thank You also for this Liturgy which You are pleased to accept from our hands, though there stand before You thousands of archangels and myriads of angels..."

**New Resource Today!, November 21: Entrance of the Theotokos**

Today we have the reflection **Entrance of the Theotokos** available for your personal formation. Also, the reflection for November: **Run to the Hem of Christ** and **St. Philip's Fast: Weekly Reflections for the Home** are still available. Kindly bring these resources and your Church bulletin home with you weekly for **deeper review** and family discussion. *Many thanks!*

## *Nativity Fast Traditions for Byzantine Greek Catholics, Continued*

### Christian Praxis Activities

As with most periods of fast before the great feasts, the season of advent is a time for a deeper interior conversion to Christ by embracing the four forms of Christian praxis. Below are some suggestions for ways to put into practice the four forms of Christian praxis or asceticism during the Nativity fast.

#### **Prayer**

- Spend at least 15 minutes in the morning and evening in prayer each day.
- Pray the Jesus Prayer, "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner." 100 times a day.
- Display an icon of the Nativity in the prayer corner of your house or room and spend 10 minutes each day meditating on the saving mysteries surrounding the story of Christ's Birth.
- Receive the Mystery of Repentance (Confession) at least once during the fast.
- Use the prayer guide with family or friends.

#### **Fasting**

- Abstain from meat and dairy products on Monday, Wednesdays and Fridays.
- Fast from certain foods, such as soda, alcoholic beverages, or candy.
- With each meal, eat only an amount that is sufficient for nutritional needs, without feeling full.
- Fast from select forms of entertainment (television, movies, radio, internet, novels, etc.).

#### **Almsgiving**

- Give your time, talent and/or treasure to a parish outreach or a special charity.
- Increase your parish tithe for the season.
- Clean out your house of any excessive items or possessions and share them with the poor and needy.
- Purchase gifts for homeless or needy children or families.

#### **Charity**

- Meditate on the Ten Commandments or the Beatitudes and identify one or two of these to put into practice each week.
- Examine your conscience each night, asking for forgiveness from God or others as needed.
- Find opportunities to share your faith with others.

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**Advent Day of Reflection at St. Joseph's, Baden** - On Sunday, December 5, 1:00-4:00 PM, enjoy a prayerful day for a fruitful Advent season with a prayer service followed by time to enjoy soft music, snack on wine and cheese, and enjoy the peacefulness of the grounds at the Sisters of St. Joseph in Baden. Bring your Christmas cards and addresses and write away! They will also have some Christmas cards designed by the sisters which can be purchased on site. The cost is **free** but space is limited. To register, visit: <https://www.stjoseph-baden.org/event/advent-day-of-reflection/> or call Toni Dunlap at 724-869-6587.

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*Come, O Jesus, our Savior, redeem and save us!*

## **A Note from Father Geoff**

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

In the **Our Father**, after praying that God's kingdom would come on earth as it is in heaven, we ask: "Give us this day our daily bread." This petition puts us in our proper place, reminding us that, like children, we are dependent on God our Father.

In the Book of Exodus, after the Hebrew people had been delivered from slavery in Egypt, they worried they might starve in the desert. In their faithlessness, they grumbled: "If only we had died by the Lord's hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death!" (Exodus 16.3) They had forgotten the power and care of the God who had released them from bondage.

So God, rather than simply reprimanding them, showed his fatherly care: "I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day." (Exodus 16.4) No one was to gather any more than they needed for *one day*. (see verses 19-20) God would provide each day for their needs.

This is a lesson to all of us. God did not just create the world and set it spinning in space, ignoring it and letting it go on its own way. Rather, at *every moment* God is continually holding all of creation in existence. And, what's more, in God's perfect and infinite love, he's holding each and every one of us in his mind! Jesus tells us not to worry about the future, for "each day has enough trouble of its own." (Matt. 6.36) But he also has shown us his accustomed mercy and care *every day*. He knows what we need and he provides. (Read Matthew 6.25-34 for more information!)

St. Paul instructs us: "Do not be anxious about anything, but by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God" (Philippians 4.6). This petition of the Lord's Prayer is just that: letting our heavenly Father know of our needs for this day. While our Lord knows our needs before we even ask (Matt. 4.8), he still desires to be in relationship with us; he wants us to ask him. And he delights in our requests, our conversations with him.

But more than our daily food (and other needs), Jesus *himself* is the Bread of Life:

*"I am the Bread of Life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness and they died... I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."* (John 6.48-51)

Jesus gives *himself* to us over and over again, every day: in the words of Holy Scripture, in our neighbors, in the needy. And, in a most remarkable and mysterious way, he gives himself to us in the Bread of Life and the Cup of Salvation every time we partake of the holy Eucharist.

In faith, let us ask the Lord for our "daily bread" - and let us come with joy to meet our Lord as we partake of his Body and Blood.

In Christ, the Bread of Life,  
*Fr. Geoff*

## Entrance of the Theotokos

The Christian life is a hybrid of prayer and service. In Mary, the Mother of God, we see a perfect example of one who lived a life of service but also sat at the feet of the Lord and listened. Mary, the Gospels tell us, “held all these things in her heart” (Lk 2:51). It is for this reason that the Church offers this Gospel, recounting this event in Martha and Mary of Bethany’s life with Jesus for our consideration on this feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos in the temple. The Mother of God wholeheartedly committed herself to serving the Lord.



Martha and Mary of Bethany are sometimes juxtaposed incorrectly, as if Mary was doing the “right” thing and Martha the “wrong” thing. Christ did not reprimand Martha for serving by any means. He did reprimand her because she was allowing her busy-ness and activity to take her away from “the one thing necessary”: listening to him and being in relationship with him.

We are called to serve but we need not be troubled and worried by our service. Our worry over our activities of service is often due to pride. Service, when animated by love of Christ and obedience to His will however, is done in joy and in peace, and we see this example most profoundly in the Mother of God. Christ told the woman in the crowd, and by extension, us: “Blessed are those who hear the word of God AND keep it.” We are called to listen to the Lord, and then we act upon that time of listening by giving of ourselves in service to our brothers and sisters, the Body of Christ. The Mother of God’s greatest blessedness was not from bearing the Lord in her body, but because she wholeheartedly and perfectly heard the word of God and kept it.

### CHALLENGE QUESTIONS:

1. What opportunities in my life are there for me to listen to the Lord? Do I make good use of them? How can I be a better listener?
2. How does the Divine Liturgy offer the opportunity to both listen to the Lord and serve him?
3. How might the Lord be prompting me to serve others?
4. Are my activities of service animated by my love of Christ or of pride? Do I let these activities worry me too much? How can I more fully entrust them to the Lord?

*She showed that she was not so much presented into the Temple, but that she herself entered into the service of God of her own accord, as if she had wings, striving towards this sacred and divine love. For it was desirable and fitting that she should enter into the Temple and dwell in the Holy of Holies.*

St. Gregory Palamas

“Blessed are those who hear the word of God AND keep it.”

## When You Fast: Nativity Fast Traditions for Byzantine Greek Catholics

The Byzantine Greek Catholic Church invites all to participate more fully in the central mysteries of the Gospel of Jesus Christ through her calendar of feasts and fasts.

The feast of the Nativity of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ (Christmas, December 25) is one of the great feasts of the Church year, celebrating the coming or advent of the Messiah (which in Hebrew means "He who is anointed by the Spirit" or in Greek, Christos), Jesus Christ. Christ was born into the world through the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary to offer us the wondrous gifts of salvation and theosis, our transformation into the likeness of God by sharing in His holiness through the energies of His grace.



Through the mystery we celebrate in the Nativity, we too are invited to become the children of God, sons and daughters of our Heavenly Father. But this transformation does not occur overnight. Rather, it requires a rediscovery of the essential disciplines of a disciple of Jesus Christ.

### Training for Body, Mind and Spirit

For Saint Paul, Christian discipleship is like an athletic contest in an arena, which requires both training and effort. This is the root of the Christian understanding of asceticism and praxis.

By training our body, mind and spirit with the help God's grace to seek and follow His commands and cultivate the virtues of the saints, in turn we help to extract the poison of corruption, sin, and death within our own lives and to realize the saving and transforming power of Christ's life given to us in Holy Baptism.

The Church has traditionally taught four main ways to engage in Christian asceticism, no matter what our state in life. These are prayer, fasting, almsgiving and love. By actively engaging in these disciplines of discipleship during the time of the fast, we unite ourselves more perfectly to Christ as we celebrate the joy of the feast of His Nativity. *(Cont. on next page)*

### Church Mice

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**Facilities Supervisor: John Poiarkoff**

Holy Mystery of Reconciliation ..... Before and after Liturgies  
 Holy Mysteries of Initiation ..... Contact the church office  
 Holy Mystery of Anointing ..... Ask prior to surgery or serious illness  
 Holy Mystery of Marriage ..... Contact the church office eight months prior to wedding  
 Religious Education Classes ..... September through May, following Sunday Divine Liturgy  
 St. George Ladies' Guild & Men's Club ..... Everyone welcome to participate



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*O Christ the Savior, our true God, come to us and save us!*