

## Thirteenth Sunday After Pentecost September 7, 2025

*On September 7th we Commemorate  
Martyr Sozon of Cilicia. Venerable Cassia (Cassiane) the Melodist.  
Venerable Cloud of Nogent sur Seine.*



*Icon of the Wicked Vine Dressers*

### Holy Wisdom Orthodox Mission

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Great Vespers, Saturday Evenings at 6:00 pm

Divine Liturgy, Sunday Mornings at 9:30 am (Hours at 9:05 am)

Paraklesis, Most Wednesday Evenings at 6:00 pm

Very Reverend Archpriest Luke Uhl, Retired, Interim Rector

*Holy Wisdom Orthodox Mission  
is a Parish in the Diocese of the West  
of the Orthodox Church in America*

*Under the Spiritual and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of  
Archbishop Benjamin of San Francisco and the West*



### EPISTLE AND GOSPEL READINGS

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**Epistle of the Sunday Before the Feast of the Cross, (215) Galatians 6:11-18**  
**BRETHREN**, See with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand. As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these would compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For not even those who are circumcised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh. But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God. From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

#### **Epistle of the Thirteenth Sunday, (166) 1 Corinthians 16:13-24**

**BRETHREN**: Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong. Let all that you do be done with love. I urge you, brethren—you know the household of Stephanas, that it is the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints—that you also submit to such, and to everyone who works and labors with us. I am glad about the coming of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, for what was lacking on your part they supplied. For they refreshed my spirit and yours. Therefore acknowledge such men. The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Priscilla greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house. All the brethren greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. The salutation with my own hand—Paul's. If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord, come! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

#### **Gospel of the Sunday Before the Feast of the Cross, (9) John 3:13-17**

**THE LORD SAID**: “No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”

#### **Gospel of the Thirteenth Sunday After Pentecost, (87) Matthew 21:33-42**

**THUS SAYS THE LORD**: “Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent *Continued on page 3* ☩”

*Continued from Page 2* ☞ his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit. And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them. Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.' So they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. "Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?" They said to Him, "He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease his vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons." Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes'?"

### REFLECTION ON THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

#### Thirteenth Sunday of Saint Matthew

*In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*

The major theme in today's Gospel is that man is not predestined for salvation, but rather that God constantly appeals to man's free will to correct his actions; i.e., to live in accordance with God's will.

Our salvation is not automatic; it requires our constant participation with God. This is the theological principle called *συνεργεία* (synergy).

This parable told by Jesus, and recorded by Saint Matthew, would have presented a familiar image to the people of Israel. The Prophet Isaiah had spoken using exactly the same imagery (*cf. Isaiah 5:1-7*).

Look how the Lord has done everything for us: he created the world and all that was in it; and it was good (*cf. Genesis 1:1-31*). He even created us with great dignity and incomparable potential, for we were created in His image and were placed on earth to be like Him, having dominion over all that He has created.

In his prophecy, Isaiah noted: "*For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are His pleasant planting; and He looked for justice, but behold, bloodshed; for righteousness, but behold, a cry*" (*Isaiah 5:7*).

What vineyard has the Lord planted for each of us? We have possessions, great or small; we have family members, few or many; we have our work, whatever it may be. We also have joys and sorrows, successes and trials.

All these things He has provided for each one of us individually, and He will demand an accounting of us at His judgment.

*Continued on page 4* ☞

*Continued from Page 3* ☞ Have we been stewards of these blessings? Do we consider everything as coming from God, entrusted to us to be used in accordance with His will? Do we welcome the Owner of the vineyard, His servants, and even His own Son when they visit? These He will reward with even greater abundance, and a place of honor higher than the angels in His heavenly Kingdom.

Or are we rich in worldly things? Have we assumed that everything we own is ours to do with as we please? Have we resented the Owner of the vineyard? Have we rejected His servants? Have we killed the presence of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, within our hearts?

Jesus asked those around Him what would happen to the latter, those who do not show justice and righteousness but produce bloodshed and a cry. They answered: "*He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and He will put those wretches to a miserable death and lease His vineyard to other tenants who will give Him the fruits in their seasons*" (*Matthew 21:41*).

*Amen.*

### HOMILY ON THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

*In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*

Today's Gospel is the parable of the vineyard. An owner built a vineyard, hedged it around, built a winepress and a tower and then let it out to tenants. When he sent servants to take the rent, they were beaten and stoned. He sent others, but they did the same. And when the owner sent own his son, they killed him.

In this parable, the vineyard is Israel. The owner is God. Israel is hedged around with natural borders. The winepress is the altar, the tower is the Temple. The tenants are the Jews. The servants are those sent by God, the prophets and holy ones who reminded the Jews that Israel was not theirs but God's.

But what did God's own chosen people, the Jews, do? They beat and stoned and killed first the servants and then the heir, the Son of God. Why? Because they wanted everything for themselves.

And so they ceased to be God's people, they ceased to be Israel and were cast out of their land and scattered over all the face of the earth. Israel was given to others: the New Israel, the Church, was born.

However, this parable is also addressed today to us Orthodox of the New Israel. The vineyard is the planet where we Orthodox Christians live. It is hedged around by the presence of the Church. The wine-press is the altar. And the tower is the Church. And the servants are the saints. And we Orthodox should ask ourselves what we have done *Continued on page 5* ☞

## 5 HOMILY ON THE SUNDAY GOSPEL (CONTINUED)

*Continued from Page 4* ☞ with God's saints who have been sent twice for our repentance?

When the remnant of the Roman Empire in Constantinople was under threat, God sent one of His servants there, Saint Mark of Ephesus, to warn the Orthodox to keep faith with the Church. Many did not, and so the Empire fell.

When the mighty Russian Empire was under threat at the beginning of the last century, God sent another servant and prophet, Saint John of Kronstadt, to warn the people to repent. Many did not, and so that Empire too fell.

Always those who have denied Christ and His Church have thought that the world belonged to them and that therefore they could do what they wanted with it. Always they have wanted to replace Christ with their own philosophies and ideologies and politics, their own religion. God has sent servants to us Orthodox of the New Israel twice; the next time He will send His Son and that will be the Second Coming, the Coming of the Heir.

This parable is also addressed to each of us today in a personal sense. The vineyard is our own soul. It is hedged around with prayer, our guardian-angel, our patron-saint. The wine-press is where we offer ourselves to Christ. The tower is our inner church where we pray to God. We are tenants of our God-created souls.

The servants sent to us are all those occasions when God speaks to us. He speaks to us in prayer, He speaks to us through the word of His Scriptures, He speaks to us through every opportunity, every meeting, every event that comes into our lives. He speaks to us through the presence of His Church in the world.

And how do we react? Do we reject everything sent to us, everything allowed to us, as a chance to do better, to make good our weaknesses? Do we fail to heed God? Do we ignore the Church? If so, then we too beat and stone and kill the servants of God. We are warned: the Heir is coming.

At the end of the parable of the vineyard, Christ says: *"The stone that the builders rejected is become the head of the corner, and it is marvelous in our eyes."* The stone rejected is of course the Rock of Faith, Christ Himself, for He was rejected and crucified.

And yet He became the head of the corner, and it is marvelous in our eyes. Let us too be rocks of faith then, and though the world will reject us, we too shall become heads of the corner, and it will be marvelous in the eyes of God and men.

*Amen.*

*Reverend Andrew Phillips  
Saint John's Orthodox Church, Colchester, England*

## REFLECTION ON THE EXALTATION OF THE CROSS 6

*The Sunday Before the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross*

*In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*

*Far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. (Galatians 6:14)*

To the world, the cross is an implement of execution, a symbol of torture and death. It represents total separation from this world. Yet, to the Christian, in heaven and among the faithful, the Cross is the highest glory.

Poverty is despised by men in the world, who seek only to add to their wealth and luxury and comforts.

Yet, Jesus teaches us that, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." *(Matthew 5:3)*

We Christians boast of our poverty, knowing that if we confess our total spiritual bankruptcy before the Lord, and seek instead to do His will, we will have blessings and all the wealth of a heavenly kingdom that never ends.

To be laughed at and scorned is a terrible embarrassment in the world; no worldly man seeks ridicule and insults.

Yet, the Christian rejoices when he is cursed. Jesus assures us, "Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account." *(Matthew 5:11)*

Moreover, when the Apostles had been condemned by the Council of the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem, "Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name (of Jesus)." *(Acts 5:41)*

Why? How is it that the Christian acts so contrary to the ways of the world? The answer is simple. We are followers of Christ – we even dare to call ourselves by His name: Christians.

Christ – Whom we follow – took on Himself the form of a slave, for the sake of each of us.

Christ – Whom we seek to emulate – bore sufferings, humiliations, poverty, and insults, for each of us individually although we by and large reject Him and refuse to do His will.

Christ – Whom we claim as our Master – so loved us even when we had rejected Him, that He gave up His life on the Cross for us.

Let us not be ashamed of Christ; let us not be ashamed to of the Cross; let us not be ashamed to boast of our poverty; let us be elated when the world despises us for following the One Who gives us the promise of eternal life!

*Amen.*



## 7 FEAST CELEBRATED TOMORROW

The Nativity of our Most Holy Lady the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary Mary was born at a time when people had reached such a degree of moral decay that restoration seemed impossible. Indeed, God must come into the world to restore faith and not permit the ruin of mankind.

The Son of God chose to take on human nature (to become incarnate) for our salvation. And He chose as His Mother the all-pure and all-holy Virgin Mary, to give birth to the Source of purity and holiness.

*Her own birth is celebrated by the Church as a day of universal joy. Within the context of the Old and the New Testaments, she was born on this radiant day, having been chosen before the ages by Divine Providence to bring about the Mystery of the Incarnation of the Word of God. She is revealed as the Mother of the Savior of the World, Our Lord Jesus Christ.*

She was born in the small city of Galilee, Nazareth. Her parents were Righteous Joachim of the tribe of Judah (of the Kings and Anna from the tribe of Levi (of the Priests). They had been married for fifty years, and Anna was barren.

Despite having reached old age, they did not lose hope in God's mercy. They had strong faith that for God everything is possible, and that He could overcome her barrenness even in old age. They vowed to dedicate the child which the Lord might give them to the service of God in the Temple.

Childlessness was considered among the Hebrew nation as a Divine punishment for sin. Therefore, the righteous couple endured abuse from their own countrymen. On one of the great feasts at the Temple in Jerusalem, Joachim brought his sacrifice to offer to God, but the High Priest would not accept it, considering him to be unworthy since he was childless.

Saint Joachim in deep grief went into the wilderness, and there he prayed with tears to the Lord for a child. Saint Anna wept bitterly when she learned what had happened at the Jerusalem Temple. But never once did either complain against the Lord but rather prayed asking God for mercy.

The Lord fulfilled their petitions, for they were prepared by virtuous lives for a sublime calling: to be the parents of the future Mother of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Archangel Gabriel brought Joachim and Anna the joyous message that their prayers were heard by God, and that of them would be born a most-blessed daughter Mary, through whom would come the Salvation of all the World. We celebrate her conception on December 9th and her birth on September 8th.

The Most Holy Virgin Mary surpassed in purity and virtue not only all mankind, but also the angels. She was manifest as the living Temple of God, as the Church sings: *"the East Gate... bringing Christ into the world for the salvation of our souls"* (2nd Sticheron on "Lord, I Have Cried", Tone 6).

The Nativity of the Theotokos marks a change in history, for the great and comforting promises of God for the salvation of the human race from slavery to the devil are about to be fulfilled in the birth of her Son.

## HYMNS AT THE DIVINE LITURGY

8

### 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 of the Temple (Midfeast of Pentecost)

O Savior at the Middle of the Feast, • 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 4, Troparion (Forefeast)

Today from the stem of Jesse and from the loins of David, • the handmaid of God Mary is being born for us. • Therefore all creation is renewed and rejoices. • Heaven and earth rejoice together. • Praise her, you families of nations, • for Joachim rejoices and Anna celebrates crying out: • "The barren one gives birth to the Theotokos, the Nourisher of our life."

### Tone 4, Troparion (Saint Sozón)

Thy holy martyr Sozón, O Lord, • through his sufferings has received an incorruptible crown from Thee, our God. • For having Thy strength, he laid low his adversaries, • and shattered the powerless boldness of demons. • Through his intercession, save our souls.

### Tone 4, Kontakion (Resurrection)

My Savior and Redeemer • as God rose from the tomb and delivered the earth-born from their chains. • He has shattered the gates of Hades, • and as Master, • He has risen on the third day.

### Tone 8, Troparion of the Temple (Midfeast of Pentecost)

O Savior at the Middle of the Feast, • 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 2, Kontakion (Saint Sozón)

*Glory...* Let us gather today and together sing to Sozón, • the true and divinely wise martyr, • an expert fighter for the faith, • the mystical seer of divine grace, • a generous provider of healing, • who prays to Christ God for us all.

### Tone 3, Kontakion (Forefeast)

*Both...* Today the Virgin Theotokos Mary, • the bridal chamber of the Heavenly Bridegroom, • by the will of the God is born of a barren woman, • being prepared as the chariot of God the Word. • She was foreordained for this, since she is the divine gate and the true Mother of Life.

### Prokeimenon (Sunday Before the Exaltation of the Cross)

O Lord, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance. (Psalm 27:9a)





## Евангелие

*Выслушайте другую притчу: был некоторый хозяин дома, который насадил виноградник, обнёс его оградой, выкопал в нем точило, построил башню и, отдав его виноградарям, отлучился. Когда же приблизилось время плодов, он послал своих слуг к виноградарям взять свои плоды; виноградары, схватив слуг его, иного прибили, иного убили, а иного побили камнями. Опять послал он других слуг, больше прежнего; и с ними поступили так же. Наконец, послал он к ним своего сына, говоря: постыдятся сына моего. Но виноградары, увидев сына, сказали друг другу: это наследник; пойдём, убьём его и завладеем наследством его. И, схватив его, вывели вон из виноградника и убили. Итак, когда придёт хозяин виноградника, что сделает он с этими виноградарями? Говорят Ему: злодеев сих предаст злой смерти, а виноградник отдаст другим виноградарям, которые будут отдавать ему плоды во времена свои. Иисус говорит им: неужели вы никогда не читали в Писании: камень, который отвергли строители, тот самый сделался главою угла? Это от Господа, и есть дивно в очах наших? (Мф. 21, 33-42)*

### Протоиерей Виктор Потапов

*Во имя Отца и Сына и Святого Духа.*



Притчу о злых виноградарях мы встречаем у первых трёх евангелистов (Мф. 21: 33-41; Мк. 12: 1-9; Лк. 20: 9-16). Вот как эту притчу передаёт евангелист Лука:

«Один человек насадил виноградник и отдал его виноградарям, и отлучился на долгое время. И в своё время послал к виноградарям раба, чтобы они дали ему плодов из виноградника; но виноградары, прибив его, отослали ни с чем. Ещё послал другого раба; но они и этого, прибив и обругав, отослали ни с чем. И ещё послал третьего; но они и того, изранив, выгнали. Тогда сказал господин виноградника: что мне делать? Пошлю сына моего возлюбленного; может быть, увидев его, постыдятся. Но виноградары, увидев его, рассуждали между собою, говоря: это наследник; пойдём, убьём его, и наследство его будет наше. И выведя его вон из виноградника, убили. Что же сделает с ними господин виноградника? Придёт и погубит виноградарей тех, и отдаст виноградник другим» (Лк. 20: 9-16).

Эта притча была произнесена незадолго до крестной смерти Господа Иисуса Христа в самом Иерусалимском храме и обращена была к синедриону (высший суд, находившийся в Иерусалиме и состоявший из 72-х членов под председательством первосвященника).

1 ☞ В притче о злых виноградарях, направленной на обличение руководителей народа, отвергавших и избивавших пророков и, главное, также отвергших и распявших Самого Иисуса Христа, - раскрываются история Божия промысления об избранном народе, Божие долготерпение к его вождям и печальный результат их ожесточения против Христа и Его учения. Не подозревая сначала, что притча относится к ним, увлечённые её логикой, первосвященники и старейшины народные сами вынесли себе приговор: «Злодеев сих предаст злой смерти, а виноградник отдаст другим виноградарям, которые будут отдавать ему плоды во времена свои» (Мф. 21: 41), выраженный словами Господа так: «Отнимется от вас Царство Божие и дано будет народу, приносящему плоды его» (Мф. 21: 43).

Для большей ясности речи Христос воспользовался, как канвой, известной фарисеям и законникам «песнью о винограднике» пророка Исаии (Ис. 5: 1-7), в которой говорится о том, что «винограднику» - «дому израилеву», т.е. еврейскому народу в целом с ветхозаветной его Церковью, уделено было Хозяином - Богом много труда и забот. Действительно, избранному народу дано было Богом всё, для его успешного развития. Сам Бог был Вождём народа по выходе его из Египта, являя множество чудес и знамений, затем верховная власть над народом была передана избранным Богом духовным вождям.

Евангелист Матфей добавляет к притче некоторые важные подробности, отсутствующие у апостола Луки. Апостол Матфей сообщает, что хозяин виноградника «обнес его оградой, выкопал в нем точило, построил башню...».

«Ограда» виноградника - это Закон Моисеев, который, как «огненной стеной» защищал евреев от влияния язычников и предохранял от уклонений от жизненной нормы, заключая в себе, в прообразах вероучение, религиозные постановления и обряды, которые должны были дать народу истинное содержание жизни. Бог продолжал промыслять о евреях и после их входа в обетованную землю. «Башня» на винограднике служила жилищем сторожам, охранявшим виноградник. В притче «башня» означала, по толкованию святых Отцов, Иерусалимский храм. «Точило» - буквально оно служило для выжимания виноградного сока, - в притче означало жертвенник, на котором проливалась кровь жертвенных животных, явившаяся прообразом искупительной крови Иисуса Христа.

Благоустроив всё, хозяин виноградника отлучился, оставив в нём виноградарей, которые должны были в определенное время давать хозяину полученные плоды. Так и Господь, благоустроив всё в ветхозаветной Церкви, поручил руководство религиозной и нравственной жизнью народа духовным вождям, в первую очередь, первосвященникам и священникам, которые должны были дать народу содержание жизни в духе Закона Божия и взращивать в народе плоды жизни по Божиим заповедям. От них зависело благосостояние «виноградника», и они несли ответственность перед Богом.

2 ☞ Но, управляя народом, духовные вожди не заботились о его духовном совершенствовании, преследуя личные, корыстные интересы. Слуг Божиих, ветхозаветных пророков, которых, по слову ап. Павла, «весь мир не был достоин» (*Евр. 11: 38*), с озлоблением жестоко избивали за то, что пророки напоминали наставникам народа об их долге перед Богом и требовали от них «плодов», т.е. жизни по Божией воле. Так, например, пророк Исаия был перепилен деревянной пилой, Иеремия и Захария были избиты камнями, многие были замучены или, по слову ап. Павла, «испытывали поругания и побои, а также узы и темницу, были... подвергавшимся пытке, умирали от меча, скитались в милотях и козбых кожах, терпя недостатки, скорби, озлобления...» (*Евр. 11: 36-37; Неем. 9: 26 и др.*). Точно также и апостолов и многих последователей Христа народные вожди избивали, преследовали и мучили.

«Напоследок» (*Мк. 12: 6*) хозяин в притче «послал к ним» единственного «любезного ему сына» своего - в действительности Бог послал Единородного Сына Своего Иисуса Христа, «наследника» (*Евр. 1:2*), «которому всё предано Отцом Его» (*Мф. 11: 27*), но Его, уже в то время, когда произносил Господь эту притчу, духовные руководители народа решили убить, боясь лишиться своего господства над ветхозаветной Церковью и своей власти над народом. Готовившееся первосвященниками и синагогом преступление богоубийства произошло вскоре так, как оно изображено в притче: «Спаситель был предан смертной казни вне виноградника» (*Мф. 21: 39*), - т.е. «вне врат Иерусалима» (*Евр. 13:12*), бывшего средоточием ветхозаветной Церкви.

Окончив притчу, евангелист Матфей пишет, что Господь задал первосвященникам и членам синагог такой вопрос: «Когда придёт хозяин виноградника, что сделает он с этими виноградарями?», на что получил самый логический ответ: «Злодеев сих предаст злой смерти, а виноградник отдаст другим виноградарям, которые будут отдавать ему плоды во времена свои» (*Мф. 21: 40-41*).

Взглянув на собеседников, уверенных в невозможности лишения их присущих им преимуществ, Господь оттенил Свою мысль об исключении их ими же самими из новоустроваемого Царства Христова, напомнив пророчества, которые они сами относили к Мессии: «Камень, который отвергли строители, тот самый сделался главою угла. Это от Господа, и есть дивно в очах наших» (*Мф. 21: 42; Лк. 20: 17; Пс. 117: 22-23; Ис. 28: 16; 1 Кор. 3: 11; Рм. 9: 33 и др.*). Вождям было поручено духовное строительство Церкви Божией, но они отвергли краеугольный Камень этого храма - Христа. Несмотря на отвержение ими, Камень всё же лёг в основу угла, и соединил в Новозаветной Церкви две «стены»: верующих из иудеев и из язычников. Исполнение пророчества на Иисусе Христе доказывает, что Сам Бог Отец послал Его в мир, чтобы основать Церкви и служить всем верующим, искупленным Им, предметом изумления и благоговения (*Мф. 21: 42; Мк. 12: 10-11*). От вождей

3 ☞ народных, отвергших Христа-Мессию и не желавших понять сущности Его Царства, оно будет отнято и дано всем членам Церкви Христовой, приносящим плоды истинной веры и добродетели.

Учителя народные поняли, наконец, что притча относится к ним. Некоторые «слышавшие же это сказали: да не будет!» (*Лк. 20: 16*), т.е. да не будет с ними того, чтобы Церковь была отнята от них и отдана другим.

Святой Иоанн Златоуст пишет, что произнесение врагами Христа самими себе приговора «было ясным доказательством того, что не Наказывающий, но сами наказываемые были виновниками ниспосылаемой на них казни». Это больше всего рассердило и ожесточило первосвященников и фарисеев, и они старались в это время «наложить на Него руки» (*Лк. 20: 19; Мф. 21: 46*). Только страх перед народом, почитавшим Господа за пророка, остановил их на время от этого злодеяния.

Пророчество Христа о наказании злых виноградарей и передаче виноградника другим исполнилось ровно через 35 лет после того, как Иисус произнёс эту притчу. Римский полководец Тит разорил Иерусалим и всю Палестину, и евреи были рассеяны по всему свету.

Виноградарям было хорошо пребывать и трудиться в винограднике, - настолько хорошо, что они стали это место считать своим. Всё, что они имели, всё, что Хозяин им давал на содержание, они стали принимать как должное. Всё это так их захватило, что они совершенно забыли, что всё это временно, и что пройдут годы, и наступит час, когда они должны будут покинуть виноградник и передать его другим. Они свою духовную жизнь исказили и жили только по плоти. Они заглушили свою совесть. Дело дошло до того, что работники виноградника убили и наследника Хозяина, лишь бы не отказаться от довольства виноградника.

Слово Христово - вечно. Притча о злых виноградарях имеет отношение не только к народным вождям времен Христа, но и к нам, людям, работающим в новом винограднике Христовом - в Церкви. Если новые вожди верующего народа, князья Церкви, - патриархи, митрополиты, епископы и священники будут себя вести так, как виноградары в притче, их ожидает та же участь: они будут Хозяином-Богом отвергнуты, и виноградник будет передан другим, достойным работникам.

Эта притча в равной мере относится и каждому верующему христианину. В притче о злых виноградарях Христос предупреждает нас, чтобы не случилось и с нами так, чтобы земная красота, в которой мы живём, не превратилась бы в приточный виноградник и не дала бы нам забыть о том, что Господин виноградника грядёт и потребует отчета о нашей работе.

Будем же трудиться в винограднике, и плоды его приносить его законному Хозяину - Богу.

Аминь.

# The Children's Word

"Let the little children come to me, and do not forbid them, for to such is the Kingdom of Heaven." Mark 10:14

Sunday, September 7, 2025

Volume 13, Issue 36

## A new creation

**Imagine making a tower out of blocks** or Legos. Let's say you are really proud of it, but somebody comes and knocks it all down. Imagine now making a new tower, taller, bigger, stronger, and even better! It's a new, better creation.



Before Jesus came, humans—God's creation—were knocked down by sin. That's what sin does to all of us people. When we sin, or do the wrong thing, we are knocked down! We might not even want to get up. We might not even want to change and do the right thing again!

But in today's epistle reading, Saint Paul writes about what God does for us. Saint Paul writes about how our Lord, Jesus Christ makes *us* into a new creation with His death on the cross. We are God's new creation, and Christ has saved us! He has built us new, taller, bigger, stronger, and even better by our faith in Christ. Christ is the master builder!

When we become Christians, we become part of Christ. We become a new creation, something different. We are something better than we were before. God rebuilds us. He makes us His new creation!

Let's thank God for lifting us up and making us even better.

## WORD SEARCH

Can you find these words in the jumble?

Birthday  
Build  
Christians  
Creation  
Feastday  
Nativity  
Sin  
Thanks  
Theotokos

A	F	A	Y	A	Q	T	Y	L	B	D	N	M	H	H
B	Y	D	S	A	H	A	E	Y	G	V	N	C	S	X
W	U	R	V	A	D	X	J	P	Y	N	O	H	K	Z
L	T	M	N	H	J	T	W	J	A	T	I	K	O	Y
X	O	K	T	B	H	V	S	T	N	J	T	Y	U	U
X	S	R	L	Z	Q	B	I	A	Q	U	A	W	T	S
R	I	J	A	N	X	V	N	O	E	V	E	A	P	U
B	D	W	S	X	I	I	B	G	N	F	R	C	F	U
Y	F	C	N	T	U	Y	L	Q	Z	G	C	C	L	I
Y	C	G	Y	X	Z	Y	Z	O	T	E	D	Y	B	B
S	O	K	O	T	O	E	H	T	S	Y	S	A	U	N
N	J	H	E	N	M	A	B	C	A	I	I	K	I	R
A	S	W	N	X	P	T	S	X	O	S	N	X	L	S
C	O	Z	C	H	R	I	S	T	I	A	N	S	D	E
I	V	W	J	S	R	R	Z	R	X	G	M	Z	V	Y

## WHAT'S IN THE ICON?

Here is a close-up part of the icon of baby Mary's birth. Do you see the servant women cleaning the baby and giving her a bath?



If you look in a Christmas icon, you can find baby Jesus being bathed too!



## ANOTHER NATIVITY THE BIRTH OF THE THEOTOKOS

### Do you celebrate your birthday?

Does your family celebrate your birthday too? Your parents or grandparents are probably especially happy on your birthday, because they remember you as a little baby. They remember how you could grow up to be someone really special.

In our Church tomorrow, we celebrate a very special birthday. It is the day Mary, the Holy Theotokos, was born. Her parents *knew* that she would grow up to be someone really special, because her birth was really a miracle in the first place! Her parents, Saints Joachim and Anna, were very old, and they didn't think they could have any children. With the new little baby, Mary, they knew that she was special to God.

In our Church calendar, we celebrate a few birthdays. Can you think of another? Well, Christmas, of course! Mary knew that her son would be a special person too. We also remember the birthday of Saint John the Baptist too. His parents knew he would be special.

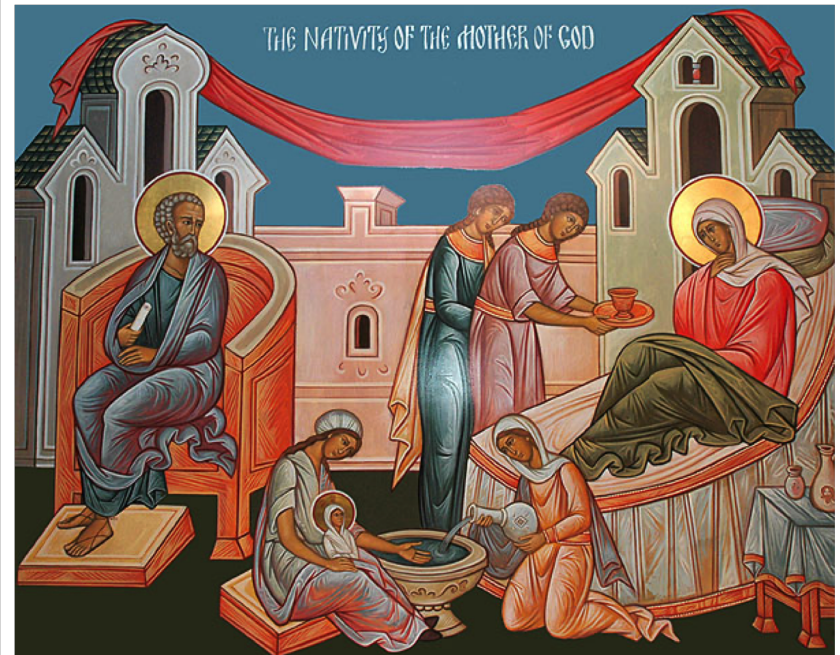
Birthdays are fun to celebrate, but we can also use them as a time to thank God for what He has given us. We can ask God to help us use our lives in the way He wants us to....just like baby Mary grew up and did what God wanted *her* to do!



**We celebrate this feastday tomorrow, September 8th (OC: September 21st).**

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## Nativity of the Theotokos



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