

Fifteenth Sunday After Pentecost September 21, 2025

*On September 21st we Commemorate
Apostle Quadratus of the Seventy.
Uncovering of the Relics of Demetrius, Bishop of Rostov.
Leavetaking of the Exaltation.*



Icon of Jesus and the Pharisee's Lawyer

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



Orthodox Church in America

*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*



Diocese of the West

EPISTLE AND GOSPEL READINGS

2

Epistle for the Sunday After the Elevation of the Cross, (203) Galatians
2:16-20

BRETHREN, Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified. "But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Epistle of the Fifteenth Sunday, (176) 2 Corinthians 4:6-15

Brethren, It is the God Who commanded light to shine out of darkness, Who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So then death is working in us, but life in you. And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed and therefore I spoke," we also believe and therefore speak, knowing that He Who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

Gospel for the Sunday After the Exaltation, (37) Mark 8:34-9:1

THE LORD SAID: "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." And He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power."

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Gospel for the Fifteenth Sunday After Pentecost, (92) Matthew 22:35-46

AT THAT TIME: A lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?” Jesus said to him, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.” While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, “What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?” They said to Him, “The Son of David.” He said to them, “How then does David in the Spirit call Him ‘Lord,’ saying: ‘The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool”’? If David then calls Him ‘Lord,’ how is He his Son?” And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.

REFLECTION ON THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

Fifteenth Sunday of Saint Matthew

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

Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, saying, “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” (Matt 22:35)

Those opposing Jesus, thinking they were wiser and more educated than He, tried to test Him and see if they could find some fault in Him, or at least to find a way to begin proving Him wrong before the people.

The lawyer was a man very well versed in the Law of Moses and its rabbinical interpretations. He knew, of course, very well what the First Commandment in the Decalogue (the Ten Commandments) was, so his question was not to ask Jesus for information.

Rather, the lawyer sought to get a handle on Him, thinking that perhaps Jesus would amend or alter the Commandment. If He were to do so, they could ridicule Him for pretending to make Himself out as greater than God from Whom the Law was received. Of course, they did not understand or believe that Jesus was indeed God incarnate.

Jesus, though, knew what was in their minds, and how they neither truly loved God or man. For if they loved God, they would appreciate the good and godly things that Jesus did; and if they loved their fellow man, they would not be jealous of Him or seek to discredit Him.

Jesus knew that their questions were prompted by no charity, that they were brooding with envy of Him, and were seized with jealousy of His authority and power. This is why He answered very clearly: *Continued on page 4 ☞*

Continued from Page 3 ☞ “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matt. 22:37-39)

Sadly, these men would find it very difficult to love God — Whose ways and Whose demands are far greater than those of any man — because they did not even love their neighbor.

Saint Maximos the Confessor says: “Do not neglect the commandment of love; for through it you will become a son of God but transgressing it you will become a son of Gehenna.”

With reason Jesus says that these commandments are the basis of the Law and the Prophets, indeed He also said to Peter: “If you love Me, feed My sheep.” (John 21:16-17)

Amen.

HOMILY ON THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

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

Today’s Gospel concerns the young man who asked Christ what it is necessary to do in order to have eternal life.

Our Lord tells him first of all to keep the commandments: you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not bear false witness, honor your father and mother – all the commandments given by divine inspiration to Moses. However, our Lord, here and elsewhere in the Gospels, sums up those commandments, by giving only two commandments: Love God and love thy neighbor as thyself.

As it is said elsewhere in the Gospels, these two commandments are linked. For as we know from recent human history, from the history of dictators and tyrants, World Wars and human misery, those who do not love God, do not love God’s creation. And the summit of God’s creation is mankind. Those who hate men are those who have first hated God. And such haters of men are also those who hate the rest of God’s creation: those who recklessly cut down forests and pollute the air and the water and the earth, these too are haters of God, for it is clear that they hate God’s Creation. And thus they do the work of the Devil, which is hatred.

As others have put it, those who deny the Fatherhood of God, deny also the Brotherhood of man. Let us notice how our Lord tells us in this Gospel that we are to love our neighbor as ourselves. What does this mean?

This does not mean that we are to love ourselves in the sense that we must be selfish, self-centered, pandering to our every whim and desire. It means that we are to love ourselves as we were created by *Continued on page 5 ☞*

Continued from Page 4 ☞ God, not to love ourselves as we are now, all sinful and sullied, but to love ourselves as God intended us to be, bright, sinless, as Adam and Eve were in Paradise. Love is not doing what we like or giving others what they want: true love is giving to ourselves and to others what is of benefit.

And here we enter into the understanding of that terrible mystery of self-hatred, self-destruction through alcohol or other drugs, self-mutilation, even of suicide, that is, self-murder. Those who enter on to such paths are those who have so lost faith, being so blinded by misfortune and depression, that they have lost all faith in God to restore them to what they could be and have so lost faith in themselves, that they are ready to undertake their self-destruction. Having become blind to the Beauty of the Creator, they have become blind to the original and potential beauty of the Creation, which they themselves are.

The young man who spoke to Christ kept the commandments. Probably, this was fairly easy for him, he had been well brought up, he had been well instructed. However, our Lord tells him that there is a higher way to salvation, a way to become perfect. This is for him to give away all his wealth. The disciples, not yet enlightened by the Crucifixion, the Resurrection and the Descent of the Holy Spirit, were astonished at Christ's words about the rich and asked who could be saved. His words seemed to them to be hard words and that therefore none could be saved.

However, if we examine more closely Christ's words, we see that He does not say that the rich cannot be saved. Rather, He says that those who are attached to their riches cannot be saved. And this is the tragedy of the soul of the young man, for he went away sorrowful, for he had 'great possessions.' In other words, the discerning eyes of Christ saw that the young man was unlike those disciples who had abandoned their fishing boat in order to follow the Savior; it was not so much that the young man had many possessions, but rather that he was possessed by his possessions.

This is the secret of wealth. In the history of the Church and in the Lives of the Saints, we often read of people who came into great wealth, but they did not allow themselves to become possessed by their wealth. They were wealthy for a time, and then gave it away – to orphanages, beggars, charities, churches, monasteries. They understood that wealth is granted by God, only for a time and only for a purpose. God calls the wealthy not to be possessors, but rather distributors, of wealth. We are called to be channels, instruments, agents of the grace and benefactions of God. Nothing should come from us; we should be like mirrors reflecting God's Will and Infinite Mercy.

Amen.

Reverend Andrew Phillips

The Sunday After the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross

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

"Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power."

These words from today's Gospel are addressed to us, but what do they mean? What are we to understand when we read, "to taste of death?" What is it, "to see the kingdom of God?"

Simply stated, "to taste of death" means to suffer from all that entered into the world when death entered into the world. In other words, when Adam and Eve fell death entered the world bringing with it hard work, the pain of childbirth, anguish, depression, stress, worry, disease, and old age, etc.

In Adam and Eve's fall, we have all fallen, and we are all exiled from the Paradise of Eden. Thus, because Adam and Eve tasted of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, we also have all tasted of good and evil.

All the difficult things, therefore, "taste of death." Every time that we undergo them, we suffer a part of death, and we have a foretaste of death.

Nonetheless, there is a way to overcome these travails of earthly life. There is a way to avoid "the taste of death."

Death is overcome by "reversing the process" of the Fall: by returning to Eden, by living according to God's commandments, and by eating of the Tree of Life as God desires us to do.

Today's service tells us how to do this, how to be restored to the state of mankind before the Fall: by tasting of the Fruit of the New Tree of the New Adam in the New Eden.

The New Tree is the Cross, and the New Adam is Christ. The Fruit of the New Tree of the New Adam is the Resurrection, and the New Eden is the Church: the Resurrected Body of Christ.

We taste of the Fruit of the Resurrection whenever we taste the Body and Blood of Christ in Holy Communion, which is offered to us by, and within, the Church, the Body of Christ.

And this is precisely the meaning of the words in today's Gospel that it is possible "to see the kingdom of God present with power."

In other words, if we face up to life's difficulties with the Cross of Christ, we shall not taste of death. Indeed, in the light of the resurrecting power of the Cross, the difficulties we experience in life will no longer hold for us the bitter taste of death.

And this is the whole difference between the Church which accepts the Cross and the world which rejects the Cross.

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7 THIS SUNDAY'S COMMEMORATION (CONTINUED)

Continued from page 6 ☞ The world sees all human problems with anguish, for it is locked into pessimism. It sees no way out of its difficulties, for it does not have an eternal perspective, the perspective of the Cross.

On the other hand, the Church sees all the difficulties which we naturally come up against in life as challenges, opportunities to combat evil, merely temporary difficulties.

However long those difficulties may last, at the end, the worst thing that can happen to us is that we shall die. For the Christian, however, to die is to be with Christ. Moreover, death holds no sting, for Christ has overcome death.

In the light of the Cross and Its fruit, the Resurrection, death holds no fear for us. In fact, in the Cross the taste of death becomes the taste of life.

Moreover, the Cross and the Resurrection bring life more abundantly. In the light of the Cross and of the Resurrection we see the Kingdom, “where there is no sickness, nor sorrow, nor sighing, but only life everlasting.” In other words, a place where those things that “taste of death” no longer exist.

In the perspective of the Cross and of the Resurrection, the perspective of the kingdom of God, of which we have a foretaste even now, all human life with all its problems is but a single passing moment in eternity.

And if we look at our lives from this Christian perspective, then indeed, we do not taste of death, for we have already to some small extent seen the Kingdom of God.

Amen.

*Your Cross we venerate, O Master,
and Your Holy Resurrection we glorify!*



HYMNS AT THE DIVINE LITURGY

8

Tone 6, Troparion (*Resurrection*)

The Angelic Powers were at Thy tomb; the guards became as dead men. Mary stood by Thy grave, seeking Thy most pure body. Thou didst capture Hades not being tempted by it. Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life. O Lord, Who didst rise from the dead, glory to Thee.

Tone 1, Troparion (*Feast*)

O Lord, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries; and by virtue of Thy Cross, preserve Thy habitation.

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 6, Kontakion (*Resurrection*)

When Christ God, the Giver of Life, raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty hand, He bestowed resurrection on the human race. He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all.

Tone 4, Kontakion of the Temple (*Midfeast of Pentecost*)

Glory... 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 4, Kontakion (*Feast*)

Both... As Thou wast voluntarily raised upon the Cross for our sake, grant mercy to those who are called by Thy Name, O Christ God; make all Orthodox Christians glad by Thy power, granting them victories over their adversaries by bestowing on them the invincible trophy, Thy weapon of peace.

Prokeimena (*Resurrection and Feast*)

O Lord, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance.

Extol the Lord our God: worship at His footstool for He is holy.

Tone 8, Instead of “It is truly meet...,” we sing:

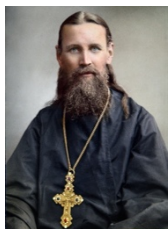
Magnify, O my soul, the most precious Cross of the Lord! • Thou art a mystical Paradise, O Theotokos, • who, though untilled, hast brought forth Christ; • through Him the life-bearing wood of the Cross was planted on earth. • Now at its Exaltation, • as we bow in worship before it, we magnify thee.





Евангелие

И один из них, законник, искушая Его, спросил, говоря: Учитель! какая наибольшая заповедь в законе? Иисус сказал ему: возлюби Господа Бога твоего всем сердцем твоим и всею душою твоею и всем разумением твоим: сия есть первая и наибольшая заповедь; вторая же подобная ей: возлюби ближнего твоего, как самого себя; на сих двух заповедях утверждается весь закон и пророки. Когда же собрались фарисеи, Иисус спросил их: что вы думаете о Христе? чей Он сын? Говорят Ему: Давидов. Говорит им: как же Давид, по вдохновению, называет Его Господом, когда говорит: сказал Господь Господу моему: седи одесную Меня, доколе положу врагов Твоих в подножие ног Твоих? Итак, если Давид называет Его Господом, как же Он сын ему? И никто не мог отвечать Ему ни слова; и с того дня никто уже не смел спрашивать Его (Мф. 22, 35-46).



Святой праведный Иоанн Кронштадтский

Во имя Отца и Сына и Святого Духа.

Евангелие нынешнего дня начинается так: Один из фарисеев, законник, искушая Иисуса Христа спросил Его: Учитель, какая наибольшая заповедь в законе? Иисус сказал ему: возлюби Господа Бога твоего всем сердцем твоим и всею душою твоею и всем разумением твоим. Сия есть первая и наибольшая заповедь. Вторая же подобная ей: возлюби ближнего твоего, как самого себя. На сих двух заповедях утверждается весь закон и пророки. (Матф. 22, 35-46).

Законник из фарисеев спрашивает вечного законодателя Христа, не признавая Его однако же таковым: Учитель, какая наибольшая заповедь в законе? — Вопрос весьма важный, потому что правильное решение его крайне нужно всем нам знать и исполнять, так как **от исполнения его зависит вечная жизнь человека**, — и Господь разрешил его самым положительным образом: возлюби Бога и ближнего. (Мф. 22, 37, 39). Но, предлагая Христу столь важный

1 вопрос, иудейский законник не верует в Иисуса Христа, как истинного законодателя, признавая Его только учителем. Поэтому в конце нынешнего Евангелия Господь спрашивает его и фарисеев: *что вы думаете о Христе? Чей Он Сын? Фарисеи отвечали, что Он Сын Давидов. Говорит им: как же Давид, по вдохновению, называет его Господом? Если Давид называет Его Господом, как же Он Сын Ему? И никто не мог отвечать Ему ни слова, и с того дня никто уже не смел спрашивать Его (Мф. 22, 42, 46).*

Так решительно действовало праведное слово Господа на фарисеев, что они, пораженные явною истиною, не смели больше спрашивать Его. А нынешние наши ученые фарисеи, чиновники, профессора, учителя высших и средних учебных заведений, толстовцы, убеждаются ли явною истиною евангельскою и безчисленными чудесами Христа Спасителя, что Он есть истинно Господь, Творец и Спаситель мира? — Нет, не убеждаются. Почему? Потому что обезумели, поверили толстовской и жидовской лжи; если Ваалу поверили, как Богу, то истинному Богу могут ли верить? Нет, потому что **лукавый помрачил их душевные очи**. Но вот придет в страшной славе Своей Господь во второе свое пришествие, — и тогда все уверуют, но уже будет поздно. Тогда будет воздаяние, а не состязание.

Теперь перейдем к вопросу законника: *какая наибольшая заповедь в законе?* Господь отвечает: *возлюби Господа Бога твоего всем сердцем твоим и всей душою твоею и всем разумением твоим. Это первая и наибольшая заповедь. Вторая же подобная ей: возлюби ближнего твоего как сам себя.*

Совершенно естественная, справедливая и жизненная заповедь: люби Бога и ближнего. Господь возлюбил нас прежде, чем мы Его возлюбили: Он возлюбил нас прежде бытия нашего; помыслил об нас — и сотворил нас; если бы не помыслил, — и не было бы нас. А сколько Он даровал нам благ, сотворив нас? — нет числа; пройдите мысленно время с зачатия вашего и донныне; переберите, сколько можете, все, чем вы пользовались и пользуетесь из даров Божиих естественных и общежитейских, воздухом, пищею и питьем, животворным светилем, общественным положением, развитием ваших способностей, кругом родства и добрых знакомых, друзей и проч.; но особенно вспомните: сколько вы получили неоцененных даров через веру Христову; им по истине нет числа; и после всего этого — скажите, чувствуете ли вы потребность сердечную — веровать в Бога, любить и благодарить Его, каяться пред Ним во всех грехах ваших, коими вы ежеминутно оскорбляете Его? — **Господь возлюбил нас любовью вечною, праведною и святою**, и, дав нам столько благ в здешней жизни, Он приготовил нам бесконечную жизнь, полную

2 ☞ безчисленных неоцененных радостей в будущем веке вместе с ангелами и святыми угодниками. Скажите, после этого, **как мы должны любить Его? Именно, всем сердцем, всею душою и всем разумением.**

А что же мы? Мы иногда и разуместь не хотим, сколько безмерны Его к нам любовь и благодать. Мы полюбили без меры себя, мир прелюбодейный и грешный, плоть свою, ея мимолетныя удовольствия, — прилепились сердцем ко всякой суете. Глупые, мы любим, что должны презирать, и не любим Господа, Свой вечный живот, своего Спасителя, Промыслителя всещедраго, своего Пищедавца и Светодавца. Оставили Господа, Источник воды живой и выкопали себе дырявые колодцы, которые не могут держать живой воды. Оттого мы и бедствуем всячески и бедствиям нашим нет конца.

Что нам главным образом препятствует любить Бога, иметь всецелую к Нему преданность? Именно — наше самолюбие, наше пристрастие к земным, именуемым благом. Поэтому главная заповедь есть наше самоотвержение. — *Кто хочет идти за Мною, отвернись себя и возьми крест свой и иди за мной. (Лук. 9, 23).* Апостолам Своим Он заповедал: *не берите с собою ни сумы, ни хлеба, ни при поясе меди, и не имейте по две одежды (Марк. 6, 8), чтобы не иметь ни к чему привязанности, а всем сердцем отдать себя Богу и Его промыслу и стремиться к небу и к нашему вечному отечеству и больше всего заботиться о спасении душ человеческих. И они возлюбили Бога всем сердцем и всю жизнь предали Ему, даже до смерти, пострадав за Него с радостью.*

Вот образец любви к Богу и ближнему. Постараемся же, дорогие братия и сестры, так возлюбить Его.

Аминь.



Протоиерей Вячеслав Резников

Во имя Отца и Сына и Святого Духа.

Однажды некий законник спросил Иисуса, искушая Его: «Какая наибольшая заповедь в законе»? А Господь Своим ответом дал ключ вообще к каждой заповеди закона. Он сказал: «Возлюби Господа Бога твоего всем сердцем твоим, и всею душою твоею, и всем разумением твоим». Сия есть первая и наибольшая заповедь. Вторая же подобна ей: «возлюби ближнего твоего, как самого себя». На сих двух заповедях утверждается весь закон и пророки». Задача не в том, чтобы выполнить те или иные заповеди, но - **чтобы любовь была сердцевиною всякого дела.**

3 ☞ А сами дела порой могут выглядеть очень противоречиво. Сказано: «*чти отца и мать*». А преподобный Феодосий Печерский ушел в монастырь вопреки запрету своей матери. Сказано: «*кто любит отца или мать более, нежели Меня, недостойн Меня*». А Иоанн Златоуст, по просьбе матери, медлил оставлять мир, и сделал это только после ее кончины. Закон повелевает мужу не оставлять жены, а преподобный Алексей Божий человек сразу после свадьбы тайно ушел и от молодой жены, и вообще из дома. Епископу предписывается не оставлять своей паствы, а святой Павлин Ноланский надолго бросил вверенных ему Богом людей и продал себя в рабство, чтобы освободить всего лишь одного человека. Апостол Павел писал: «*Не подавайте соблазна ни иудеям, ни еллинам, ни церкви Божией*» (1 Кор. 11, 32), - а преподобный Симеон Столпник так перетягивал веревкой свое тело, что оно начало гнить, и распространяло такой смрад, что его даже изгнали из монастыря. А сколько мы знаем примеров, как иные подвижники, вопреки церковному закону, при людях ели мясо в пост, чтобы лишиться себя человеческой славы. Один принимает смерть, чтобы не отречься от Христа, а другой говорит: «*Я желал бы сам быть отлученным от Христа за братьев моих, родных мне по плоти*» (Рим. 9, 3). Кто им всем судья, кроме Господа, Который Один только видит их сердца, и Которого они возлюбили всею душою своею, и всем помышлением своим?

Всегда поступающий по любви, - идёт по жизни, как по острию меча: «*Мы отовсюду притесняемы, но не стеснены; мы в отчаянных обстоятельствах, но не отчаиваемся; мы гонимы, но не оставлены; низлагаемы, но не погибаем. Всегда носим в теле мертвость Господа Иисуса, чтобы и жизнь Иисусова открылась в смертной плоти нашей*».

А почему в одном рождается любовь, а в другом - нет? Апостол пишет, что у иных «*бог века сего*», то есть диавол, «*ослепил умы, чтобы для них не воссиял свет благовествования о славе Христа*»; а иным «*Бог, повелевший из тьмы воссиять свету, озарил ... сердца... познанием славы Божией в лице Иисуса Христа*». Но не с Бога надо спрашивать, почему одним Он попустил быть ослепленными, а другим повелел прозреть; Бог каждому говорит: «*Возлюби Господа Бога твоего всем сердцем твоим, и всею душою твоею, и всем разумением твоим*», - а также: «*Возлюби ближнего твоего, как самого себя*». Господь обращается к каждому, потому что каждый наделён свободой, и с Божией помощью может всё. И не почему-либо, а **только по своей свободной воле** один дает себя ослепить, а другой тянется к прозрению и свету.

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 21, 2025

Volume 13, Issue 38

Don't be ashamed!

Can you think of something you were really embarrassed about? Maybe it was something that was actually no big deal, like dropping your lunch at school or tripping over your own two feet. But have you ever been embarrassed about bigger things? Like your Christian faith?

In today's Gospel reading, we hear what Jesus said about being ashamed of your faith. Jesus told the crowds, "Whoever is ashamed of me and of my words....of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." In other words, if we are embarrassed or ashamed of our Lord, Jesus Christ, then He will be ashamed of us too! How awful it would be for our Lord to be ashamed of us, to be disappointed in us!

Now, what can we do to make our Lord happy with us? What can we do to make our Lord know we are really His followers? How do you act at school or with your friends? Are you ashamed or embarrassed to be a Christian? Do you act like a Christian even when you are away from your church or family?

Sometimes keeping words from the Bible in your heart can help you make good choices. "Whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed." So, don't be ashamed to be a Christian!



WORD SEARCH

Can you find these words in the jumble?

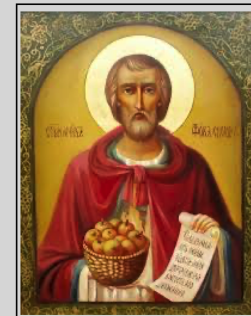
Ashamed
Compassion
Cross
Eternal
Gardener
Heaven
Hospitality
Love
Phocas
Poor
Saint

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

WHAT'S IN THE ICON?

Here is another icon of St. Phocas, the Gardener.

Do you see what he is holding? A basket of fruit that he would share with the poor!

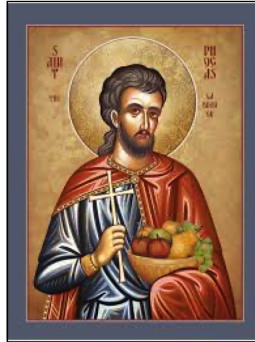


SAINT PHOCAS THE GARDENER

Have you ever planted a garden?

When it was time to pick, what did you do with your fruits or vegetables or flowers? Did you keep them for yourself or did you share them with somebody else?

Long, long ago, a saint named St. Phocas planted a small garden each year. He was a little poor, but he still shared what he grew with people who were even poorer.



Saint Phocas gave hospitality and love to everyone! Later in his life, the authorities found out he was a Christian, and they sent soldiers to arrest him! But St. Phocas was hospitable and loving even to the soldiers, and he gave them food and let them stay the night at his little house!

We always try to be like the saints. In Toronto, Canada, some Orthodox Christians plant a special garden. They plant lots of fruits and vegetables. When things are ready to pick, everything goes to the poor people in the city! This group is called the St. John the Compassionate Mission, and they do many other things to help the poor and needy in their city.



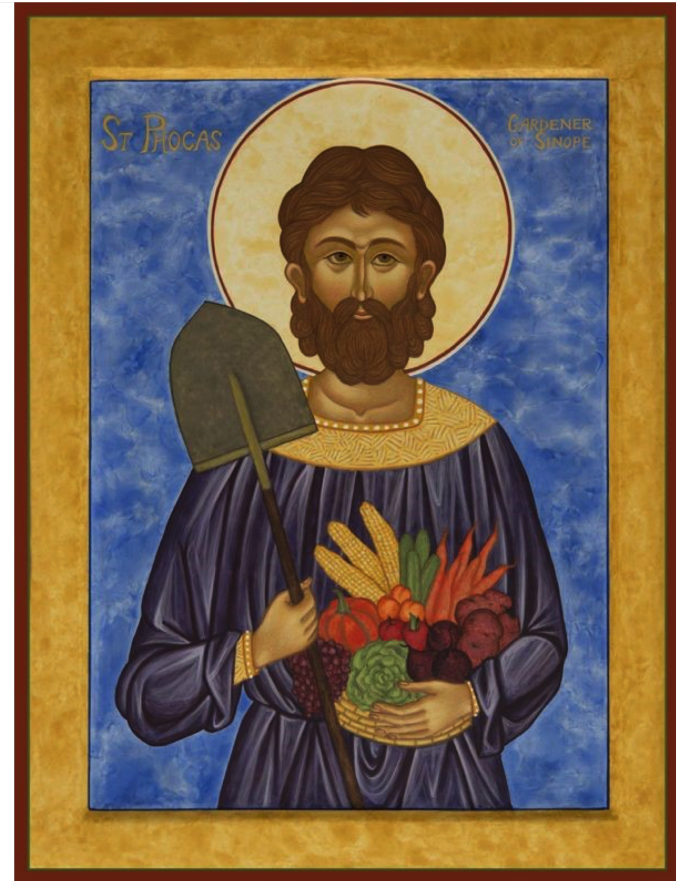
You may not have a garden, but what can *you* do to try to be like St. Phocas the Gardener?

This priest is getting a garden ready for the poor!

We celebrate St. Phocas tomorrow, September 22nd (OC: October 5th).

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Saint Phocas, pray for us!



The Children's Word is a weekly bulletin for Orthodox Christian kids. Copyright 2025 Alexandra Houck. Email is [orthodoxchildrensword \(at\) gmail.com](mailto:orthodoxchildrensword@gmail.com). Find it each week at orthodoxchildrensword.org.