

25th Sunday After Pentecost

Dear Believers,

In our church, the Pylypivka (Philips Fast) continues, a 40-day fast, which began on November 15, the day after the veneration of St Apostle Philip and will last until December 24, the Nativity of Christ. This time is given to us for spiritual preparation for the great holy day - the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ always comes to us. He is constantly born spiritually in the heart of every person who believes and expects Him. He comes to us in prayer and the Holy Mysteries, especially in Holy Confession and Communion. Today He comes to be with us and among us.

It is during Lent that the understanding of the coming of Jesus Christ and His presence among us becomes especially important to us. Amid an incessant pandemic, various disagreements and instabilities, riots, wars, and human rights abuses in different parts of the world, we are thirsty for a deep awareness and conviction that the Lord is truly present in each of us.

Today, in these times, we are in direct need of God's protection. That is why we hold additional Divine Liturgies on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays so that you can come to the Eucharist more often.

Also, yesterday we celebrated the holy day, the Entrance to the Church of the Blessed Virgin. Let's take a look at this holy day.

Having received her first upbringing from her parents, Mary continued it in the temple, learning God's law there, knowing God more deeply so that she could better serve Him. There She got to know people who came to the temple to pray and knew their needs. Through Zechariah and Simeon, God Himself nurtured Her calling as the future Mother of the Son of God and the spiritual Mother of all people.

A young daughter asked her mother for a gift. She asked to buy her a large mirror so that she could decorate herself, clean, dress up, apply makeup. The pious mother responded to her request and bought her a large icon of the Mother of God. The mother, giving this image to her daughter, said, "Here is your mirror." The daughter was at first surprised by this gift, and then every evening she prayed in front of the icon and asked Mary, "Holy Mother! Look at me! Did I please God today?"

The life of the Mother of God should be a kind of spiritual mirror for every Christian, which each of us must often look at in order to grow better spiritually, to confidently build our spiritual temple, the temple of our soul, the temple of God's love according to the words of the Apostle Paul, "...that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?" (1 Cor. 3:16). "...For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, I will live in them and move among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (2 Cor. 6:16).

Dear believers, may the example of Mary and her intercessory prayer strengthen us in the spiritual life, help us to know God and His love better, to unite with Him, to feel God's love and God's presence in daily life, and thus to become members of His spiritual temple - the kingdom of heaven. The temple of love is already here on earth.

Fr. Serhii Deiak

**PATRONAGE OF THE MOTHER OF GOD BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH
AND PATRONAGE at ABINGDON and HAGERSTOWN
ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH**

DIVINE LITURGY SCHEDULE: DECEMBER, 2020 – JANUARY, 2021

(refer to church bulletin for holy day schedule)

As of November 22, 2020

December 6, 2020 (Sunday):

St. Gregory's: Matins - 8:45am; Divine Liturgy - 9:00am

Patronage: Matins – 11:00am; Divine Liturgy – 11:15am

Patronage at Abingdon: Divine Liturgy – 3:00pm

December 13, 2020 (Sunday):

Patronage: Matins – 8:45am; Divine Liturgy – 9:00am

St. Gregory's: Matins – 11:00am; Divine Liturgy – 11:15am

December 19, 2020 (Saturday):

Patronage at Hagerstown: Divine Liturgy – 10:00am

December 20, 2020 (Sunday):

St. Gregory's: Matins - 8:45am; Divine Liturgy - 9:00am

Patronage: Matins – 11:00am; Divine Liturgy – 11:15am

Patronage at Abingdon: Divine Liturgy – 3:00pm

December 27, 2020:

Patronage: Matins – 8:45am; Divine Liturgy – 9:00am

St. Gregory's: Matins – 11:00am; Divine Liturgy – 11:15am

January 2, 2021 (Saturday):

Patronage at Hagerstown: Divine Liturgy – 10:00am

January 3, 2021:

St. Gregory's: Matins - 8:45am; Divine Liturgy - 9:00am

Patronage: Matins – 11:00am; Divine Liturgy – 11:15am

Patronage at Abingdon: Divine Liturgy – 3:00pm

January 10, 2021:

Patronage: Matins – 8:45am; Divine Liturgy – 9:00am

St. Gregory's: Matins – 11:00am; Divine Liturgy – 11:15am

January 16, 2021 (Saturday):

Patronage at Hagerstown: Divine Liturgy – 10:00am

January 17, 2021:

St. Gregory's: Matins - 8:45am; Divine Liturgy - 9:00am

Patronage: Matins – 11:00am; Divine Liturgy – 11:15am

Patronage at Abingdon: Divine Liturgy – 3:00pm

January 24 2021:

Patronage: Matins – 8:45am; Divine Liturgy – 9:00am

St. Gregory's: Matins – 11:00am; Divine Liturgy – 11:15am

January 31, 2021:

St. Gregory's: Matins - 8:45am; Divine Liturgy - 9:00am

Patronage: Matins – 11:00am; Divine Liturgy – 11:15am

Patronage at Abingdon: Divine Liturgy – 3:00pm

