

## September 30<sup>th</sup>: Sunday after the Exultation of the Cross

Opening Censing, “Blessed is the Kingdom”, Great Litany, First Antiphon, Little Litany, Second Antiphon, Little Litany, Beatitudes and Little Entrance.

**Tone 1                      Tropar                      (Resurrection)**

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews, / while the soldiers were guarding Your most pure ^body, / You rose on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. / The powers of heaven therefore cried to You, O Giver of Life: / “Glory to Your Resurrection, O Christ! / Glory to Your Kingdom! // Glory to Your dispensation, O Lover of mankind!”

**Tone 1                      Tropar                      (Feast of the Elevation of the Cross)**

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

**Tone 4                      Tropar                      (for the Pokrova/Temple)**

O Mother of God, sheltered by thy coming / we faithful people today keep feast in joy, / and looking at thy most pure image, / moved to the depths of our hearts, we say: / “Protect us with thy precious veil / and deliver us from every ill, / by entreating Christ, thy Son and our God, // to save our souls.

**Tone 1                      Kondak                      (Resurrection)**

As God, You rose from the tomb in glory, / raising the world with Yourself. / Human nature praises You as God, for death has vanished. / Adam exults, O Master! / Eve rejoices, for she is freed from bondage and cries to You: // “You are the Giver of Resurrection to all, O Christ!”

**Tone 1                      Kondak                      (Martyrs Sophia and her daughters)**

The holy branches of noble Sophia, / Faith, Hope, and Love, / confounded Greek sophistry through Grace. / They struggled and won the victory // and have been granted an incorruptible crown by Christ the Master of all.

**Tone 4                      Kondak                      (Feast of the Elevation of the Cross)**

As You were voluntarily raised upon the Cross for our sake, / grant mercy to those who are called by Your Name, O Christ God; / make all Orthodox Christians glad by your power, / granting them victories over their adversaries // by bestowing on them the invincible trophy, Your weapon of peace!

**Tone 2                      Kondak                      (for the Pokrova/Temple)**

The Choirs of Saints and the Virgin / stand in church praying to God for us. / Angels and hierarchs bow in adoration, / Apostles and Prophets all rejoice / in thee, O Mother of God, // who for us prays to God Eternal.

**Prokimen                      Tone 1                      (Psalm 32:22,1; Resurrection)**

Let Your mercy, O Lord, be upon us as we have set our hope on You!

v: Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous! Praise befits the just!

**Prokimen                      Tone 7                      (Psalm 98:5; Sunday after the Elevation)**

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

**Epistle: 2 Corinthians 9:6-11.** But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. As it is written: “He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever.” Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness, while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God.

[Pause briefly then go straight into second reading Galatians 2:16-20]

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.

**Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.                      (Psalm 17:47,50; 73:2)**

v: *God gives vengeance unto me, and subdues people under me.*

v: *He magnifies the salvation of the King and deals mercifully with David,*

*His anointed, and his seed forever.*

v. *Remember Your congregation, which You have purchased of old!*

**Gospel:** St. Mark 8:34-9:1 (Sunday after the Elevation)

**Zadostoinik:** Magnify, O my soul, the most precious Cross of the Lord! You are the mystical Paradise, O Theotokos, in which Christ blossomed; 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 you.

\*\*\* Please join us in the hall for coffee and fellowship after the service. \*\*\*

## 4 Reasons Why Tithing is Good for an Orthodox Parish (Excepted]

By Fr. Andrew Stephen Damick

Tithing is good for the Orthodox Christian and therefore good for the Orthodox parish. So why don't more Orthodox Christians tithe?

We know the usual reasons: We're not used to it. Back in the old country the government paid for the church. The parish was founded on the "dues" model. Tithing is "Protestant." Orthodox people are stingy. We just don't have it in our culture.

Those things are all true in one way or another, but I don't think those are the real reasons that we do not tithe very much as Orthodox Christians. There are some who do, of course, but it's not very many of us. So what is the reason why we're so terrible at tithing?

I believe that it is because we don't know why we tithe.

And because we don't know why, we don't do it. And when we don't do it, then we come up with the various reasons given above as the cause of our non-tithing. But those aren't the real reasons. It's because we don't know why we should tithe.

Now, the reasons I am going to list below are not all equally important. Indeed, if I had to answer the question, "Why should I tithe?" I would answer only with #1. That's the real reason. #2 & #3 are essentially useful effects of tithing that should help us to focus on #1.

**1. tithing enables us to be saved.** As Christians, we want to be saved. We want to be healed. We want to "go to heaven" rather than to hell when we die (setting aside for the moment all the details). We want to become like Christ. Tithing doesn't purchase all that for us, but tithing is a powerful way that we give of ourselves, that we turn over what we have to God so that we are opened to receiving His healing and blessing.

It's a basic principle of Christian spiritual life that we cannot receive God's blessing if we are holding back on Him. Why? We can't be filled with God if we remain full of ourselves. Tithing helps us to empty ourselves.

Don't get me wrong—giving money is not the only way that we work out our salvation and become open to receiving blessings. But whatever we have, we have to give to God. And if we have money, then we have to give money. If we don't have money, then of course we don't have to give it. But we have to give what we have, whatever it is, and with the way our culture is so grasping and possessive about money, it really is one of the best things for us to give if we can.

Money is one of the places where we spiritually hurt the most! So we need to pay attention to that wound.

**2. tithing shows that we're serious.** When I speak of tithing here, I am referring most obviously to giving 10% of income, but for this article, you can define tithing as serious giving. 10% is serious for most of us. For some of us who are more affluent, 10% is not that

## Gospel Reading

**St. Mark 8:34-9:1.** When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "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."

### Patristic Commentary on Cheerful Giving (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

**St. Basil the Great:** People who give reluctantly or under compulsion present a blemished sacrifice which should not be accepted..

**St. John Chrysostom:** Paul's purpose was not only for money to be contributed to the poor but for it to be contributed with great eagerness. Likewise, God appointed almsgiving not only for the nourishment of the needy but also for the benefit of the providers, and much more so for the latter than for the former. For if he considered only the interest of the poor, he would have commanded solely that the money be given, and he would not have asked for the eagerness of the providers. But now you see the apostle in every way ordering by will first and above all for the givers to be joyful: the suppliers to furnish in a cheerful manner. And at one time he says, "Everyone must do as he has chosen in his heart, neither out of grief nor necessity, for God loves a cheerful giver," not simply a giver but the one who does this with pleasure.

Note how Paul does not pray for riches or abundance but only for enough to live on. Nor is this the only thing he should be admired for. He asks the same thing of the Corinthians. He wants them to have enough of this world's goods but more so an overflowing abundance of spiritual blessings.

The things themselves do not remain, but their effects do. Therefore we should not be mean and calculating with what we have but give with a generous hand. Look at how much people give to players and dancers—why not give just half as much to Christ? ... If God rewards those who till the earth with abundance, how much more will he reward those who till the soil of heaven in caring for the soul?

God allowed us to dispose of great things and reserved smaller things for himself. Bodily nourishment belongs exclusively to him, because only he can control the rain and the seasons. But spiritual nourishment he has entrusted to us, since by our own will we can decide whether our fruit will be abundant or not. Bray, G. L. (Ed.). (1999). 1-2 Corinthians (pp. 280-281). InterVarsity Press.

## Upcoming Services (also see our website)

<b>Sunday</b>	9/30	9AM	Divine Liturgy (& BBQ in Northampton)
<b>Thursday</b>	10/4	6PM	Moleban and Memorial Litya
<b>Saturday</b>	10/6	10AM	Divine Liturgy – St. John the Baptist
		4PM	Great Vespers and Canon of Repentance
<b>Sunday</b>	10/7	9AM	Divine Liturgy (w/extra Ukrainian)
<b>Thursday</b>	10/11	6PM	Moleban and Memorial Litya
<b>Saturday</b>	10/13	4PM	Parish Vigil of our Parish Feast (Pokrova)
<b>Sunday</b>	10/14	9AM	Divine Liturgy of our Parish Feast (Pokrova)
<b>Thursday</b>	10/18	6PM	Moleban and Memorial Litya
<b>Saturday</b>	10/20	4PM	Parish Vigil
<b>Sunday</b>	10/21	9AM	Divine Liturgy
<b>Thursday</b>	10/25	6PM	Moleban and Memorial Litya
<b>Saturday</b>	10/27	4PM	Parish Vigil
<b>Sunday</b>	10/28	9AM	Divine Liturgy
<b>Thursday</b>	11/1	6PM	Moleban and Memorial Litya
<b>Saturday</b>	11/3	10AM	Memorial Divine Liturgy (St. Demetrius)
		4PM	Parish Vigil
<b>Sunday</b>	11/4	9AM	Divine Liturgy

Fr. Anthony will be traveling this week with Metropolitan Antony to Chicago for Assembly of Orthodox Bishops meetings. They plan on leaving in time for Fr. Anthony to get back for the Thursday service and Bible Study.

The **Men's Auxiliary** has two projects (caulking outside and painting the women's bathroom) they would like to accomplish. If you can help with this and come in during the week, please see Joe Zimmerman or John Onulack.

We are looking to have another CPR/AED Certification Course. The last one was excellent. Please see Chris Zimmerman for questions or sign-up.

Please join St. Mary's Seniors on December 7 for **lunch and the Christmas Show at American Music Theater** in Lancaster. The cost is \$104. See Elinor Antoniuk for more information.

Our **St Mary's Seniors:** Next meeting – 10/1. Hoagies – 10/24. Join us!

The **Fall Bible Study** meets on Thursdays at 7PM in the chapel. Come and join us!

**We have two Grief Share groups:** Mondays at 10AM and Tuesday at 6:30PM. Both meet in the Library. See Joe Truchan for details.

**Reader Schedule:** 9/23 Robin Bodnar, 9/30 Dennis Ritter, 10/7 Joseph Truchan.

**Greeter Schedule:** 9/23 Judy Miller & Vera Muzychka, 9/30 Pani Tina Perkins, 10/7 Eleanor Fox.

serious, and we should do more because we can. And for some of us, 10% is unaffordable, so we need to be serious with another percentage. But the point is to be serious. So if you're not serious, get serious.

How do you know if you're serious? Well, to start with, if you're spending more on cable TV or other forms of entertainment every month than you're giving to the Church, it's a safe guess that you're not being serious about giving.

I love the phrase "put your money where your mouth is." It's definitely true. Jesus says almost exactly the same thing when He says, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matt. 6:21, Luke 12:34). Where we put our money proves where our hearts are. Where is your heart?

### 3. tithing ends money problems for the parish, once and for all.

If a mission parish has 25 tithing families who each make roughly the national average (\$50k/yr.), the collective income for the parish would be \$125k, which is usually plenty for a mission to function on.

If a parish has 50 tithing families who make that average, pledge income would be \$250k. We are now well above the income of most medium to small parishes.

If there are 100 families who tithe like that, the income would be \$500k. And they're probably about to burn any mortgage, buy new land, build something new or start a new mission. Or maybe they're hiring a couple more clergy, a secretary, etc. How many 100-family parishes have half a million dollars to use every year?

Even if half the families in a parish start tithing or even if that same half started giving just 5%, the parish would probably never have any more money problems ever.

### 4. tithing changes a parish culture.

Related to #3, I sometimes hear that, if only the membership knew all the money problems in their parish, they would be inspired to give a little bit more. But usually the people who say that, knowing full well the financial situation of their parish, have not themselves increased their own giving. Giving information and insight to the unmotivated usually doesn't accomplish much.

But what if we started thinking about parish life in a whole new way?

What if we stopped talking and worrying about paying for things and started thinking about why each of us needs to become generous, serious givers? We have to put the horse before the cart: We don't develop a culture of generosity by complaining about money problems. We develop a culture of generosity, and our money problems go away.

A tithing parish sees itself as a group of people ministering to one another, not as a group of people who are paying for something or expect to get something. And that's the kind of parish that's truly Christian, because they have love for each other (John 13:35).

Welcome to the God-loving and God-protected Orthodox Christian parish of *Pokrova* (“St. Mary Protection of the Holy Theotokos” or “St. Mary’s”)!

**It is a blessing to have you with us today and we encourage you to come back as often as you are able.** Like us, you may find that you have found your spiritual home here (and a wonderful home, it is)!

**We are a parish of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA under the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople and our doors and hearts are open to you, your family, and your friends!**

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