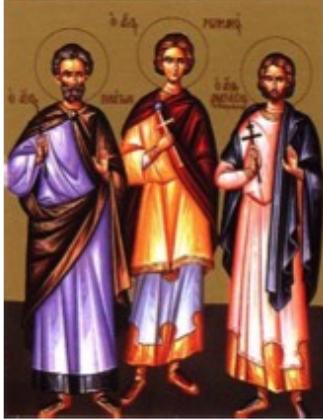


This weekly bulletin insert complements the curriculum published by the Department of Christian Education of the Orthodox Church in America. This and many other Christian Education resources are available at <http://dce.oca.org>.



Luke 17: 20-37 contain one of Jesus' extended teachings, and gives us a lot to think about.

Jesus is answering a question that the Pharisees have posed to Him: When will the Kingdom of God come? They seem to expect that the time of its coming will be clearly marked with signs, and Jesus wants them to understand that this is not the kind of Kingdom they should expect or seek. So He tells them, "The Kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; nor will they say, 'Lo, here it is!' or 'There!' for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you." He is describing the Kingdom as a reality that is already present, both in His Person and in their hearts if they are ready to follow Him.

Nor should they be deceived about His Second Coming, going along with anyone who tells them, "Lo, there!" or "Lo, here!" Don't go with such people, because the coming of the Son of Man "in His day" will be as clear as when the "lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one side to the other." But before that, many other things must happen, including His suffering and rejection by His own

generation.

When they ask Him not when but where His words will be fulfilled, He gives an indirect answer, but one that uses plain language: The Second Coming will be evident, as unmistakable as when vultures gather around a carcass.

The Holy Martyr Plato (or Platon) also used plain words, especially comparisons, to help people understand the Gospel. Many times he used these comparisons to challenge the thinking of those he encountered.

For example, living as he did in a time of persecution of Christians, he like many others was tortured for his faith. He told his persecutors to be even harsher, so that the comparison between their inhumanity and his endurance could be more clearly seen, providing evidence that a believer would undergo any suffering for the truth of Christ.

When one of his jailers spoke admiringly of the famous philosopher Plato, he was quick to say that he and that earlier Plato were alike in name only: "I learn and teach to others the wisdom of Jesus Christ; that philosopher taught the wisdom that is folly." He was referring to the words of Saint Paul in I Corinthians 1: 22-25.

Denied food or drink for eighteen days, he managed to survive and retain consciousness. When his jailers expressed their amazement, he told them, "You get your satisfaction from food; mine comes from prayer to God. You take joy in wine, but I rejoice in Christ, Who is the true Vine."

We know that silence can sometimes be more powerful than words. But plain words, carefully chosen and readily understandable, can express the lofty truths that form our faith.

#### Kontakion - Tone 3

Your holy memory delights the universe, O Plato,  
bringing us together to honor you in our joy!  
With hymns we praise your great deeds  
crying out to you with faith:  
"Save our land from its enemies, O Holy one!"



# St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre Church

**Address:** PO Box 134, 108 E Main St, Clinton, CT 06413-0134

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**Fr Steven Hosking**

Rector

**Phone:** 860-866-5802

**Email:** [frsteve@stalexischurch.org](mailto:frsteve@stalexischurch.org)

## Services Schedule

Please see our [online calendar](#) for dates and times of Feast Day services.

Bulletin for Sunday, November 18, 2018

## Welcome



Jesus Christ taught us to love and serve all people, regardless of their ethnicity or nationality. To understand that, we need to look no further than to the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). Every time we celebrate the Divine Liturgy, it is offered "on behalf of all, and for all." As Orthodox Christians

we stand against racism and bigotry. All human beings share one common identity as children of God.

*"There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus"* (Galatian 3:28)

### Weekly Services

Tuesdays at 8:30a - Daily Matins  
Wednesdays at 6:00p - Daily Vespers (The Church is open at 4:30p for "Open Doors" - confession, meditation and reflection).  
Thursday at 8:30a - Daily Matins  
Saturday at 5:30p - Great Vespers  
Sunday at 9:30a - Divine Liturgy

**Members of our Parish Council are:***Susan Hayes - Council President**Susan Egan - Council Treasurer**Greg Jankura - Member at Large**Glenn PenkoffLedbeck - Council Secretary**James Pepitone - Council Vice President**Vincent Melesko - Member at Large***Pastoral Care - General Information**

- *Emergency Sick Calls* can be made at any time. Please call Fr Steven at (860) 866-5802, when a family member is admitted to the hospital.
- *Anointing in Sickness*: The Sacrament of Unction is available in Church, the hospital, or your home, for anyone who is sick and suffering, however severe.
- *Marriages and Baptisms* require early planning, scheduling and selections of sponsors (crown bearers or godparents). See Father before booking dates and reception halls!
- *Funerals* are celebrated for practicing Orthodox Christians. Please see Father for details. The Church opposes cremation; we cannot celebrate funerals for cremations.

## Announcements

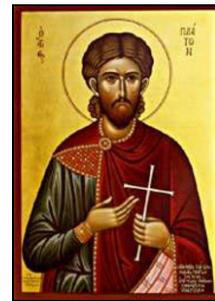
Wednesday, Nov 21st, is the Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos. This year, because (in part) of it's proximity to Thanksgiving, I am planning on celebrating Liturgy at 6:30a. If you are able to attend,

I am also planning on following Liturgy with breakfast at the Coffee Break". Please let me know if you would like to join me.

—

The Nativity (or Apostle Philip's Fast) has begun. As this is one of the Church's four primary fasting seasons, you are encouraged to devote more time to your prayer life (both private and corporate), alms-giving, and, of course, fasting. We enter in to this Fast as a community, and we ought to fast as a community as well. We do so, not only to receive support, but to encourage one another as well. Beginning Wed, Nov 28th, I begin a series of Nativity Reflections, which will be held on each subsequent Wednesday until the conclusion of the Fast. We will be reading from the work of St Innocent entitled "Indication of the Way into the Kingdom of Heaven". This publication is available in many places on the internet, or you may download a PDF version from [here](#).

## Saints and Feasts

**November 18****Plato the Great  
Martyr of Ancyra**

Saint Plato contested in martyrdom in 266, when Agrippinus was proconsul. He was from the city of Ancyra in the province of Galatia.

His angel, God assisted the Virgin and sent Her mystical food, with which She was strengthened in nature, while in body She was brought to maturity and was made purer and more exalted than the angels, having the Heavenly spirits as servants. She was led into the Holy of Holies not just once, but was accepted by God to dwell there with Him during Her youth, so that through Her, the Heavenly Abodes might be opened and given for an eternal habitation to those who believe in Her miraculous birthing.

So it is, and this is why She, from the beginning of time, was chosen from among the chosen. She Who is manifest as the Holy of Holies, Who has a body even purer than the spirits purified by virtue, is capable of receiving ... the Hypostatic Word of the Unoriginate Father. Today the Ever-Virgin Mary, like a Treasure of God, is stored in the Holy of Holies, so that in due time, (as it later came to pass) She would serve for the enrichment of, and an ornament for, all the world. Therefore, Christ God also glorifies His Mother, both before, and also after His birth.

We who understand the salvation begun for our sake through the Most Holy Virgin, give Her thanks and praise according to our ability. And truly, if the grateful woman (of whom the Gospel tells us), after hearing the saving words of the Lord, blessed and thanked His Mother, raising her voice above the din of the crowd and saying to Christ, "Blessed is the womb that bore Thee, and the paps Thou hast sucked" (Luke 11:27), then we who have the words of eternal life written out for us, and not only the words,

but also the miracles and the Passion, and the raising of our nature from death, and its ascent from earth to Heaven, and the promise of immortal life and unfailing salvation, then how shall we not unceasingly hymn and bless the Mother of the Author of our Salvation and the Giver of Life, celebrating Her conception and birth, and now Her Entry into the Holy of Holies?

Now, brethren, let us remove ourselves from earthly to celestial things. Let us change our path from the flesh to the spirit. Let us change our desire from temporal things to those that endure. Let us scorn fleshly delights, which serve as allurements for the soul and soon pass away. Let us desire spiritual gifts, which remain undiminished. Let us turn our reason and our attention from earthly concerns and raise them to the inaccessible places of Heaven, to the Holy of Holies, where the Mother of God now resides.

Therefore, in such manner our songs and prayers to Her will gain entry, and thus through her mediation, we shall be heirs of the everlasting blessings to come, through the grace and love for mankind of Him Who was born of Her for our sake, our Lord Jesus Christ, to Whom be glory, honor and worship, together with His Unoriginate Father and His Coeternal and Life-Creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

reason also all the lineage of Seth were called “sons of God,” because from this lineage a son of man would be born the Son of God. The name Seth signifies a rising or resurrection, or more specifically, it signifies the Lord, Who promises and gives immortal life to all who believe in Him.

And how precisely exact is this parallel! Seth was born of Eve, as she herself said, in place of Abel, whom Cain killed through jealousy (Gen. 4:25); and Christ, the Son of the Virgin, was born for us in place of Adam, whom the author of evil also killed through jealousy. But Seth did not resurrect Abel, since he was only a type of the resurrection. But our Lord Jesus Christ resurrected Adam, since He is the very Life and the Resurrection of the earth-born, for whose sake the descendents of Seth are granted divine adoption through hope, and are called the children of God. It was because of this hope that they were called sons of God, as is evident from the one who was first called so, the successor in the choice. This was Enos, the son of Seth, who as Moses wrote, first hoped to call on the Name of the Lord (Gen. 4:26).

In this manner, the choice of the future Mother of God, beginning with the very sons of Adam and proceeding through all the generations of time, through the Providence of God, passes to the Prophet-king David and the successors of his kingdom and lineage. When the chosen time had come, then from the house and posterity of David, Joachim and Anna are chosen by God. Though they were childless, they were by their virtuous life and good disposition the finest of all those descended

from the line of David. In prayer they besought God to deliver them from their childlessness, and promised to dedicate their child to God from its infancy. By God Himself, the Mother of God was proclaimed and given to them as a child, so that from such virtuous parents the all-virtuous child would be raised. So in this manner, chastity joined with prayer came to fruition by producing the Mother of virginity, giving birth in the flesh to Him Who was born of God the Father before the ages.

Now, when Righteous Joachim and Anna saw that they had been granted their wish, and that the divine promise to them was realized in fact, then they on their part, as true lovers of God, hastened to fulfill their vow given to God as soon as the child had been weaned from milk. They have now led this truly sanctified child of God, now the Mother of God, this Virgin into the Temple of God. And She, being filled with Divine gifts even at such a tender age, ... She, rather than others, determined what was being done over Her. In Her manner 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. She considered it desirable and fitting that she should enter into the Temple and dwell in the Holy of Holies.

Therefore, the High Priest, seeing that this child, more than anyone else, had divine grace within Her, wished to set Her within the Holy of Holies. He convinced everyone present to welcome this, since God had advanced it and approved it. Through



**November 18**

### **Holy Martyr Romanus**

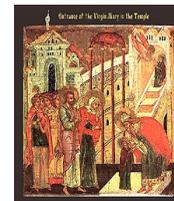
Saint Romanus, who was from Antioch, lived during the reign of Maximian. He presented himself before Asclepiades the Eparch, and rebuked him, saying,

"The idols are not gods; even a little child could tell you that." Then the Saint asked that a child be brought in from the market, that he might be the judge of the matter at hand. Therefore, when the child was asked, "Which God must we worship?" he replied, "Christ." The child was beaten mercilessly and beheaded at the command of the tyrant. As for Saint Romanus, his tongue was cut out, and then he was cast into prison, where he was strangled in the year 305.

## **Lives of the Saints**

### **The Entry of the Most Holy Mother of God into the Temple**

Commemorated on [November 21](#)



According to Holy Tradition, the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple took place in the following manner. The parents of the Virgin Mary, Saints Joachim and Anna, praying for an end to their childlessness, vowed that if a child were born to them, they would dedicate it to the service of God.

When the Most Holy Virgin reached the age of three, the holy parents decided to fulfill their vow. They gathered together their relatives and acquaintances, and dressed the All-Pure Virgin in Her finest clothes. Singing sacred songs and with lighted candles in their hands, virgins escorted Her to the Temple (Ps. 44/45:14-15). There the High Priest and several priests met the handmaiden of God. In the Temple, fifteen high steps led to the sanctuary, which only the priests and High Priest could enter. (Because they recited a Psalm on each step, Psalms 119/120-133/134 are called “Psalms of Ascent.”) The child Mary, so it seemed, could not make it up this stairway. But just as they placed Her on the first step, strengthened by the power of God, She quickly went up the remaining steps and ascended to the highest one. Then the High Priest, through inspiration from above, led the Most Holy Virgin into the Holy of Holies, where only the High Priest entered once a year to offer a purifying sacrifice of blood. Therefore, all those present in the Temple were astonished at this most unusual occurrence.

After entrusting their child to the Heavenly Father, Joachim and Anna returned home. The All-Holy Virgin remained in the quarters for virgins near the Temple.

According to the testimony of Holy Scripture (Exodus 38; 1 Kings 1: 28; Luke 2: 37), and also the historian Josephus Flavius, there were many living quarters around the Temple, in which those who were dedicated to the service of God dwelt.

The earthly life of the Most Holy Theotokos from Her infancy until She was taken up to Heaven is shrouded in deep mystery. Her life at the Jerusalem Temple was also a secret. "If anyone were to ask me," said Saint Jerome, "how the Most Holy Virgin spent the time of Her youth, I would answer that that is known to God Himself and the Archangel Gabriel, Her constant guardian."

But there are accounts in Church Tradition, that during the All-Pure Virgin's stay at the Temple, She grew up in a community of pious virgins, diligently read the Holy Scripture, occupied Herself with handicrafts, prayed constantly, and grew in love for God. From ancient times, the Church has celebrated the Feast of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple. Indications that the Feast was observed in the first centuries of Christianity are found in the traditions of Palestinian Christians, which say that the holy Empress Helen (May 21) built a church in honor of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple.

Saint Gregory of Nyssa, in the fourth century, also mentions this Feast. In the eighth century Saints Germanus and Tarasius, Patriarchs of Constantinople, delivered sermons on the Feast of the Entry.

The Feast of the Entry of the Most Holy

Theotokos into the Temple foretells God's blessing for the human race, the preaching of salvation, the promise of the coming of Christ.

## Parish Calendar

### Service and Events

November 15 to November 26, 2018

#### Thursday, November 15

Nativity Fast

#### Sunday, November 18

9th Sunday of Luke  
Annual Meeting  
Evangelism and Outreach Ministry meeting  
IOCC Sunday  
9:30AM Divine Liturgy

#### Monday, November 19

Thomas Brubaker - B  
Obadiah the Prophet

#### Tuesday, November 20

Alexei Hoehnebart  
The Forefeast of the Presentation of the Theotokos into the Temple  
8:30AM Daily Matins

#### Wednesday, November 21

The Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple  
6:30AM Divine Liturgy - Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple

#### Thursday, November 22

Archippus the Apostle, Philemon the Apostle & his wife, Apphia, Onesimos

Source of life was lifted up [on the Cross] because of His immeasurable goodness and love for mankind. He intensely desired the salvation of His creature, i.e., that His creature would be restored by Himself. In contrast to this, the author of evil wanted to bring God's creature to ruin, and thereby put mankind under his own power, and tyrannically to afflict us. And just as he achieved the conquest and the fall of mankind by means of injustice and cunning, by deceit and his trickery, so has the Liberator brought about the defeat of the author of evil, and the restoration of His own creature with truth, justice and wisdom.

It was a deed of perfect justice that our nature, which was voluntarily enslaved and struck down, should again enter the struggle for victory and cast off its voluntary enslavement. Therefore, God deigned to receive our nature from us, hypostatically uniting with it in a marvelous way. But it was impossible to unite that Most High Nature, Whose purity is incomprehensible for human reason, to a sinful nature before it had been purified. Therefore, for the conception and birth of the Bestower of purity, a perfectly spotless and Most Pure Virgin was required.

Today we celebrate the memory of those things that contributed, if only once, to the Incarnation. He Who is God by nature, the Co-unoriginate and Coeternal Word and Son of the Transcendent Father, becomes the Son of Man, the Son of the Ever-Virgin. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today, and forever" (Heb. 13:8), immutable in His divinity and blameless in His humanity,

He alone, as the Prophet Isaiah prophesied, "practiced no iniquity, nor deceit with His lips" (Is. 53: 9). He alone was not brought forth in iniquity, nor was He conceived in sin, in contrast to what the Prophet David says concerning himself and every other man (Ps. 50/51: 5). Even in what He assumes, He is perfectly pure and has no need to be cleansed Himself. But for our sake, He accepted purification, suffering, death and resurrection, that He might transmit them to us.

God is born of the spotless and Holy Virgin, or better to say, of the Most Pure and All-Holy Virgin. She is above every fleshly defilement, and even above every impure thought. Her conceiving resulted not from fleshly lust, but by the overshadowing of the Most Holy Spirit. Such desire being utterly alien to Her, it is through prayer and spiritual readiness that She declared to the angel: "Behold the handmaiden of the Lord; be it unto Me according to thy word" (Luke 1:38), and that She conceived and gave birth. So, in order to render the Virgin worthy of this sublime purpose, God marked this ever-virgin Daughter now praised by us, from before the ages, and from eternity, choosing Her from out of His elect.

Turn your attention then, to where this choice began. From the sons of Adam God chose the wondrous Seth, who showed himself a living heaven through his becoming behavior, and through the beauty of his virtues. That is why he was chosen, and from whom the Virgin would blossom as the divinely fitting chariot of God. She was needed to give birth and to summon the earth-born to heavenly sonship. For this

renowned for piety and understanding, and for their God-pleasing words and deeds.

In the beginning, there was one who rose up against us: the author of evil, the serpent, who dragged us into the abyss. Many reasons impelled him to rise up against us, and there are many ways by which he enslaved our nature: envy, rivalry, hatred, injustice, treachery, slyness, etc. In addition to all this, he also has within him the power of bringing death, which he himself engendered, being the first to fall away from true life.

The author of evil was jealous of Adam, when he saw him being led from earth to Heaven, from which he was justly cast down. Filled with envy, he pounced upon Adam with a terrible ferocity, and even wished to clothe him with the garb of death. Envy is not only the begetter of hatred, but also of murder, which this truly man-hating serpent brought about in us. For he wanted to be master over the earth-born for the ruin of that which was created in the image and likeness of God. Since he was not bold enough to make a face to face attack, he resorted to cunning and deceit. This truly terrible and malicious plotter pretended to be a friend and useful adviser by assuming the physical form of a serpent, and stealthily took their position. By his God-opposing advice, he instills in man his own death-bearing power, like a venomous poison.

If Adam had been sufficiently strong to keep the divine commandment, then he would have shown himself the vanquisher of his enemy, and withstood his deathly attack. But since he voluntarily gave in to sin,

he was defeated and was made a sinner. Since he is the root of our race, he has produced us as death-bearing shoots. So, it was necessary for us, if he were to fight back against his defeat and to claim victory, to rid himself of the death-bearing venomous poison in his soul and body, and to absorb life, eternal and indestructible life.

It was necessary for us to have a new root for our race, a new Adam, not just one Who would be sinless and invincible, but one Who also would be able to forgive sins and set free from punishment those subject to it. And not only would He have life in Himself, but also the capacity to restore to life, so that He could grant to those who cleave to Him and are related to Him by race both life and the forgiveness of their sins, restoring to life not only those who came after Him, but also those who already had died before Him. Therefore, Saint Paul, that great trumpet of the Holy Spirit, exclaims, "the first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit" (1 Cor. 15:45).

Except for God, there is no one who is without sin, or life-creating, or able to remit sin. Therefore, the new Adam must be not only Man, but also God. He is at the same time life, wisdom, truth, love, and mercy, and every other good thing, so that He might renew the old Adam and restore him to life through mercy, wisdom and righteousness. These are the opposites of the things which the author of evil used to bring about our aging and death.

As the slayer of mankind raised himself against us with envy and hatred, so the

the Disciple of Paul

### Friday, November 23

A. Martins - N  
Amphilochius, Bishop of Iconium

### Saturday, November 24

Akathist to St Catherine  
Our Holy Father Clement, Pope of Rome  
5:30PM Great Vespers

### Sunday, November 25

Buildings and Grounds Ministry Meeting  
13th Sunday of Luke  
9:30AM Divine Liturgy

### Monday, November 26

Alypius the Stylite of Adrianopolis  
Christine Boyd - B

## Prayers, Intersessions and Commemorations



William, Sophia, Robert, Ann, Evelyn, Nina, John, Alex, Luke, Kathryn, Anastasia, Malcolm, Veronica, Darlyne, Irene, Nancy, Elena, Jevon, the new born Stella Anna, Ivan and Joscean.

And for... Sofie, Katrina, Olena, Valeriy, Olga, Tatiana, Dimitri, Alexander and Maxim.

All of our College Students: Alex, Kaitlyn, Jack, Sam, Connor, Nadia, Isaac and Matthew.

—  
*Many Years! to:*

Thomas Brubaker and Alexei Hoehnebart on the occasion of their birthdays.

—  
Pray for: All those confined to hospitals, nursing homes, and their own homes due to illness; for all those who serve in the armed forces; widows, orphans, prisoners, victims of violence, and refugees;

All those suffering chronic illness, financial hardship, loneliness, addictions, abuse, abandonment and despair; those who are homeless, those who are institutionalized, those who have no one to pray for them;

All Orthodox seminarians & families; all Orthodox monks and nuns, and all those considering monastic life; all Orthodox missionaries and their families.

All those who have perished due to hatred and intolerance and all those departed this life in the hope of the Resurrection.

—  
*Today we commemorate:*

Martyr Plato of Ancyra (ca. 306). Martyr Romanus the Deacon, of Caesarea, and the youth Barulas (303). Martyrs Zacchæus the Deacon, and Alphæus, of Cæsarea in Palestine (303).

## Hymns of the Day

### Tone 8 Troparion (Resurrection)

You descended from on high, O Merciful One!  
You accepted the three day burial to free us  
from our sufferings!//  
O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to  
You!

### Tone 4 Troparion (Martyrs Plato and Romanus)

Your holy martyrs Plato and Romanus, O Lord,  
through their sufferings has received  
incorruptible crowns from You, our God.  
For having Your strength, they laid low their  
adversaries,  
and shattered the powerless boldness of  
demons.//  
Through their intercessions save our souls!

### Tone 8 Kontakion (Resurrection)

By rising from the tomb, You raised the dead  
and resurrected Adam.  
Eve exults in Your Resurrection,  
and the world celebrates Your rising from the  
dead, O greatly Merciful One!

### Tone 3 Kontakion (Martyr Plato)

Your holy memory delights the universe, O  
Plato,  
bringing us together to honor you in our joy.  
With hymns we praise your great deeds,  
crying out to you with faith:  
"Save our land from its enemies, O holy one!"

## Gospel and Epistle Readings

### Epistle Reading

#### Prokeimenon. 8th Tone. Psalm 75.11,1.

Make your vows to the Lord our God and  
perform them.  
Verse: God is known in Judah; his name is  
great in Israel.

### The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 4:1-7.

Brethren, I, a prisoner for the Lord, beg you to  
lead a life worthy of the calling to which you  
have been called, with all lowliness and  
meekness, with patience, forbearing one  
another in love, eager to maintain the unity of  
the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one  
body and one Spirit, just as you were called to  
the one hope that belongs to your call, one  
Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and  
Father of us all, who is above all and through  
all and in all. But grace was given to each of  
us according to the measure of Christ's gift.

### Gospel Reading

#### 9th Sunday of Luke

#### The Reading is from Luke 12:16-21

The Lord said this parable: "The land of a rich  
man brought forth plentifully; and he thought  
to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere  
to store my crops?' And he

said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns,  
and build larger ones; and there I will store all  
my grain and my goods. And I will say to my  
soul, 'Soul, you have ample goods laid up for  
many years; take your ease, eat, drink, be  
merry.' But God said to him, 'Fool! This night  
your soul is required of you; and the things  
you have prepared, whose will they be?' So is  
he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not  
rich toward God." As he said these things, he  
cried out: "He who has ears to hear, let him  
hear."

## Wisdom of the Fathers

It is only when in the darkness of this world  
we discern that Christ has already "filled all  
things with Himself" that these things,  
whatever they may be, are revealed and given  
to us full of meaning and beauty. A Christian is  
one who, wherever he looks, finds Christ and  
rejoices in Him.

### Fr. Alexander Schmemmann

*For the Life of the World, p. 113, 20th century*

## Reflection



Thessalonica

If a tree is known by its fruit, and a good tree  
bears good fruit (Mt. 7:17; Luke 6:44), then is  
not the Mother of Goodness Itself, She who  
bore the Eternal Beauty, incomparably more  
excellent than every good, whether in this  
world or the world above? Therefore, the  
coeternal and identical Image of goodness,  
Preeternal, transcending all being, He Who is  
the preexisting and good Word of the Father,  
moved by His unutterable love for mankind  
and compassion for us, put on our image, that  
He might reclaim for Himself our nature which  
had been dragged down to uttermost Hades,  
so as to renew this corrupted nature and raise  
it to the heights of Heaven. For this purpose,  
He had to assume a flesh that was both new  
and ours, that He might refashion us from out  
of ourselves. Now He finds a Handmaiden  
perfectly suited to these needs, the supplier of  
Her own unsullied nature, the Ever-Virgin now  
hymned by us, and Whose miraculous  
Entrance into the Temple, into the Holy of  
Holies, we now celebrate. God predestined  
Her before the ages for the salvation and  
reclaiming of our kind. She was chosen, not  
just from the crowd, but from the ranks of the  
chosen of all ages,

DISCOURSE ON THE  
FEAST OF THE ENTRY

OF OUR MOST PURE  
LADY THEOTOKOS

INTO THE HOLY OF  
HOLIES

by Saint Gregory  
Palamas, Archbishop of