



74th Year

August 23, 2026

Pamphlet #34 (3821)

THE SUNDAY GOSPEL (Luke 10:38-42, 11:27-28)

"While Mary has chosen the good portion"

At that time, Jesus entered a village; and a woman called Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving; and she went to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve you alone? Tell her then to help me." But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things; one thing is needful. Mary has chosen the good portion, which shall not be taken away from her." As he said this, a woman in the crowd raised her voice and said to him, "Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts that you sucked!" But he said, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

THE THEOTOKOS, GATE OF LIFE

In today's liturgical Gathering, the celebration of the Dormition of the Theotokos is brought to its conclusion. From apostolic times, the Church has fittingly honored the All-Holy Theotokos, not only for the virtues that adorned her, such as her unsurpassed love and devotion to God, her humble-mindedness, obedience, and trust in the divine promises, but above all, because she was deemed worthy to become the one and only Theotokos. She is the one who bore and gave birth to God the Word, the Son of the living God, through the action of the Holy Spirit. The sacred hymnographers and theologians of the Church describe the Virgin

Mary as the Gate of Life. Through her, Christ, the Savior of people, descended into this world of sorrow, tears, pain, injustice, and wars in order to sanctify it, transform it, ennoble it, and call all people freely to Himself. And through the Holy Theotokos, who is the image and symbol of the Church, man ascends to God the Father, to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to the Holy Spirit, toward the Light of the Triune Godhead.

For this reason, the Virgin Mary is the Gate of Life, the ladder that leads us to Heaven, the dwelling place of the Uncontainable One, the Mother of Life. The faithful of the Church, together with the company of the Apostles, who were “continually united in prayer and supplication, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus” (Acts 1:14), had the Most Holy Theotokos at the center of their assembly. The cooperation of the Virgin Mary in the mystery of the Lord’s Incarnation took place on behalf of all humanity. Consequently, the Theotokos is regarded as both the most precious gift of God to mankind and the greatest gift of mankind to God.

One thing is useful and necessary

The Gospel passage read today in honor of the Virgin Mary in the Divine Liturgy, comes from the Gospel according to Luke. The Evangelist recounts Jesus’ journey to Jerusalem and His encounter in a certain village with Martha and Mary. These women, sisters according to the flesh, had different characters. Martha, more outgoing and active, was overly occupied with attending to the Lord’s hospitality, while Mary sat at His feet and listened attentively to His teaching without distraction. At one point, Martha expressed her complaint because her sister had left her alone to carry out the work of hospitality. Then she received the following answer from Christ: “You are anxious and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful.” You are occupied and worried about many things, but only one thing is necessary. Mary had chosen the good portion, which would never be taken away from her. This beneficial portion is the fervent desire of every truly faithful person: to be always near the Lord; to be nourished, enlivened, and inspired by His presence, by His word, and by the mysteries of His Kingdom. Service is necessary, and hospitality is essential. However, they must not come at the expense of our effort to be everywhere and always with Christ. Christ must be the center of our lives, the Sun of Righteousness who

will illumine every facet of life, our thoughts, our works. path, guide our decisions, and give meaning and purpose to all that we do. Through our constant communion with Him, every act of service and every work. His Gospel must become the supreme criterion of the human conscience.

The All-Holy Virgin Mary as a model of spiritual life

At the end of the passage, the Lord blesses all those who hear the word of God and keep it. The Theotokos, who gave birth to Him and nursed Him, is truly the All-Blessed One, because the power and energy of the divine word embraced her entire being and brought her whole life into harmony with it. A person who listens to the word of Christ and regards it as the guiding force of his life resembles, as much as possible, the Theotokos and the Saints.

This is the highest gift and blessing of God to every believer. For amid inner darkness, general turmoil, insecurity, and fear, the faithful can say together with the Prophet David: "Your law is a lamp to my feet and a light to my paths" (Psalm 119:105 [LXX 118:105]). Your law, O Lord, is the light of my life, a light that illumines the course of my existence. May it be that, through the prayers of the Most Holy Theotokos, this light of the divine word shines in the life of every human being, so that God may be glorified, the One who brings us "out of darkness and the shadow of death" (Psalm 107:14 [LXX 106:14]) and fills our conscience with the light of His divinity.

Archimandrite N. K.

August 23, 2026: 12th Sunday of Matthew

Leave-taking of the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos (Our Lady of Proussos / Panagia Prousiotissa); Lupus the Martyr (4th century); Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons († 202).

3rd Tone – Eothinon: 1 – Epistle: Philippians 2:5-11
– Gospel: Luke 10:38-42, 11:27-28

NEXT SUNDAY: August 30, 13th Sunday of Matthew
Epistle: 1 Corinthians 16:13-24 – Gospel: Matthew 21:33-42

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