

Back to Basics with the *Law of God* Part 9: Commandments & Beatitudes



A Straightforward Teaching of Orthodox Christianity based upon
the Slobodskoy *Law of God* Study Book

Priest Justin Patterson / Continuing into January 2019

What is the Law of God?

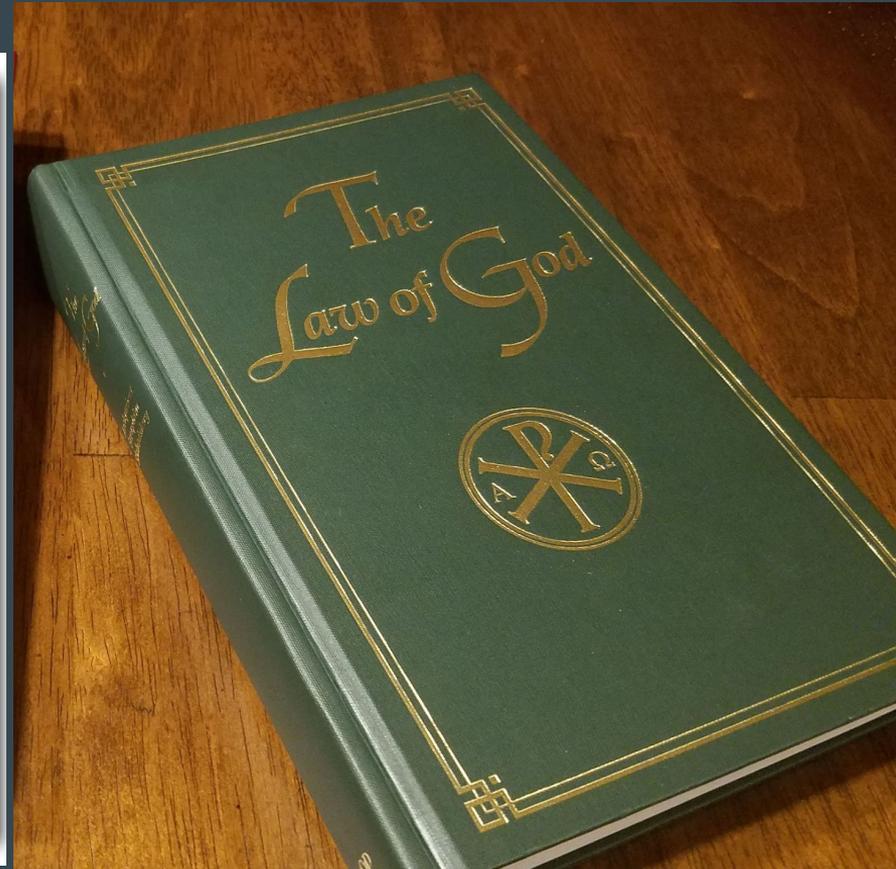
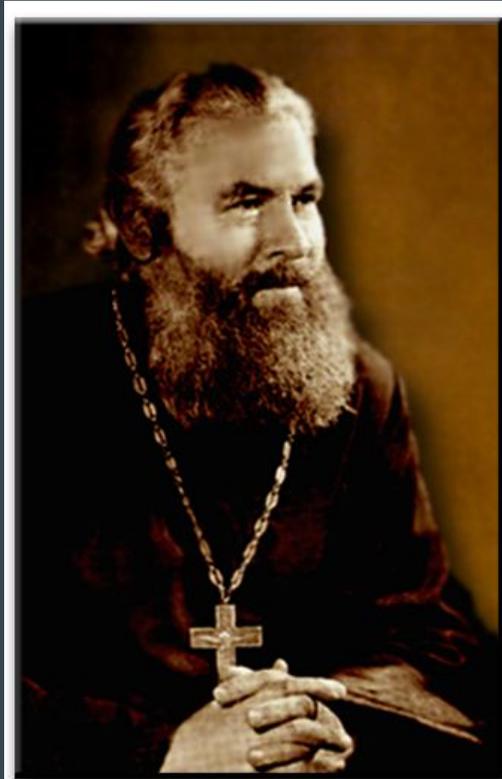
The Law of God

“For Study at Home
and at School”

Compiled by
Archpriest Seraphim
Slobodskoy 1912-71

Holy Trinity Press in
Jordanville

1966; English 1993



Weeks 1 & 2: Introduction & Broad Topic of Prayer

+Physicality in Prayer (sign, posture, standing)

+3 broad categories of prayer:

1. Prayers of Praise & Thanksgiving
2. Prayers of Petition
3. Penitential Prayers

+Disposition in Prayer (peace, focus, fasting, purity)

+Tools for Prayers (Akathists, Prayer Books, Special Services of Need, and more)

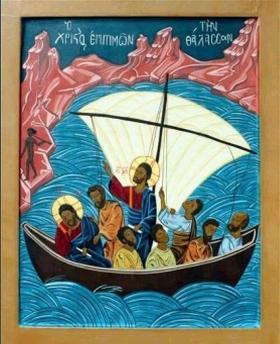
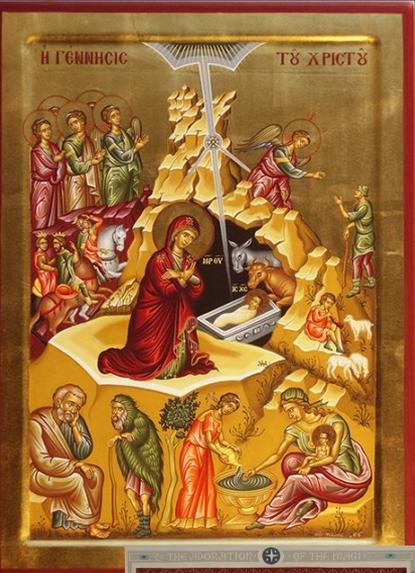


Weeks 3 & 4: The Gospel in the Old Testament

- +Intro to the Old Testament
 - +Days of Creation & Making of Man
 - +The Fall, Sin, Cain & Abel
 - +The Flood
 - +Vital Vignettes from the Old Testament
- Especially CHRIST in the OT!



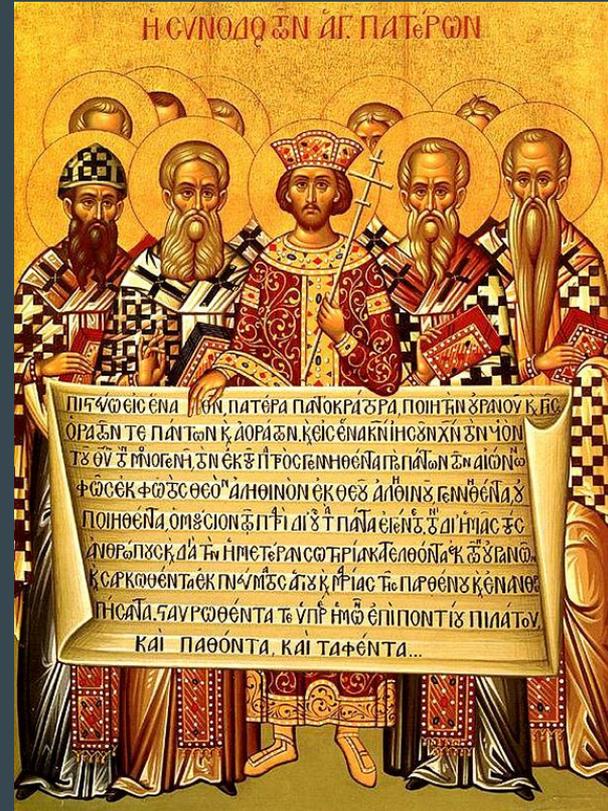
Weeks 5 & 6: The Gospel in the New Testament, Parts 1 & 2



Week 7: We started our current section “Christian Life & Faith”

We looked in week 7 at:

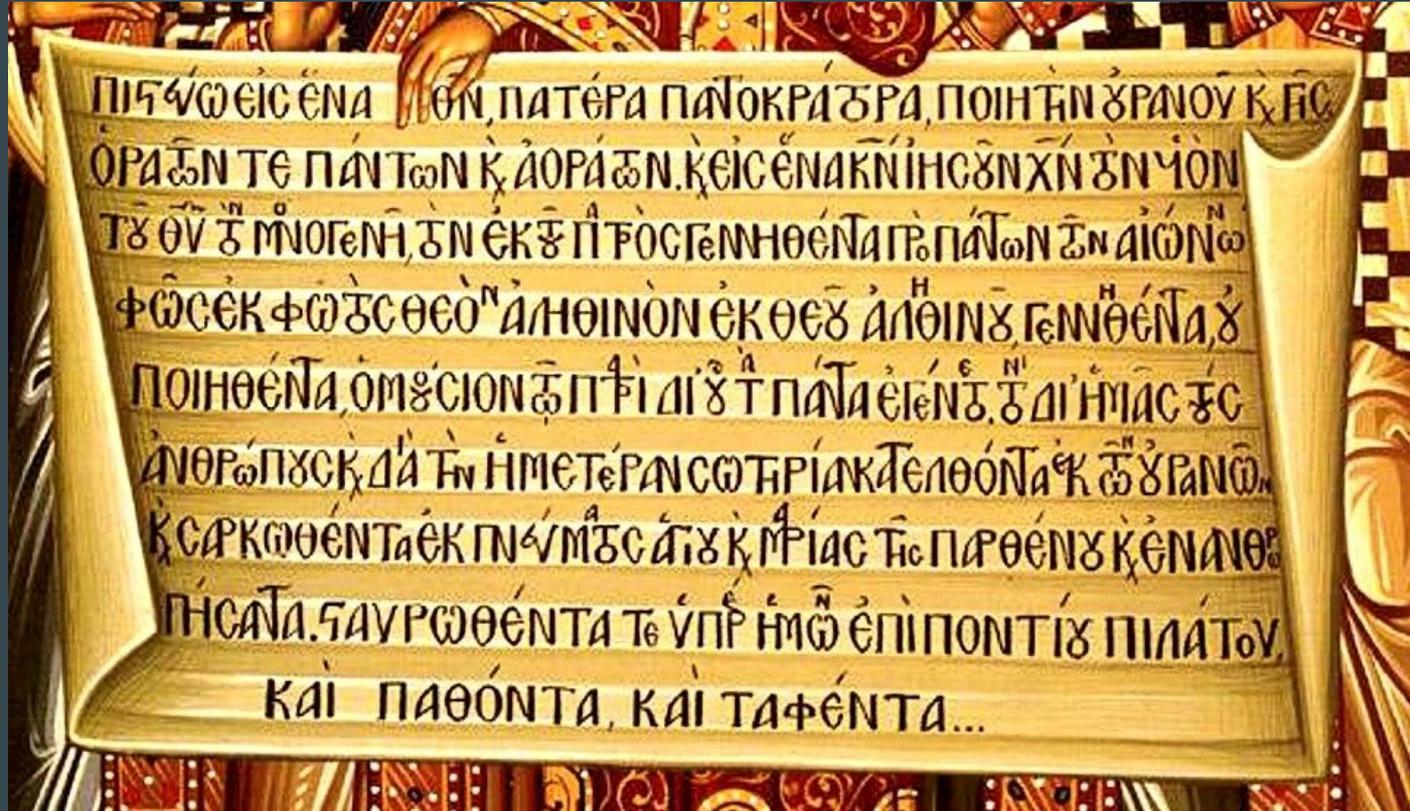
- Natural Revelation & Divine Revelation
- Scripture AND Tradition as sources for belief in the Orthodox Church
- The Orthodox Canon of Scripture
- The Seven Ecumenical Councils



In Week 8: The Christian Faith (The Symbol of Faith/Creed)

Fr. Seraphim:

“The Creed is a concise summary of all the truths of Christian Faith... Whoever does not accept these truths is not an Orthodox Christian.”



In Week 8: 12 “Articles” of the Creed...

We discussed in great detail the “12 articles” of the Creed and included in the article about believing in “one baptism” a tour of the Sacraments of the Church.

What are the “7 Sacraments” outlined by Fr. Seraphim?

Did we identify any others? (beyond what Fr. Seraphim suggested?)

Символ веры

¹Вѣрую во еди́наго Бѣ́га Отца́, Все-
держителя, Творца́ не́бу и землі́, ви́ди-
мым же всем и неви́димым. ²И во еди́на-
го Го́спода Иису́са Христа́, Сы́на Бѣ́жия,
Единоро́днаго, И́же от Отца́ рождѣ́нна-
го прѣ́жде всехъ векъ; Свѣ́та от Свѣ́та, Бо́-
га и́стинна от Бѣ́га и́стинна, рождѣ́нна,
несотворѣ́нна, единосу́щна Отцу́, И́мже
вся бы́ша. ³Нас ра́ди челове́к и на́шего
ра́ди спасѣ́нія спше́дшаго с небесъ, и во-
плотившагося от Ду́ха Свя́та и Мари́и
Дѣ́вы, и вочелове́чшася. ⁴Распя́таго же за
ны́ при Понтийе́м Пилáте, и страда́вша,
и погребѣ́нна. ⁵И воскресе́шаго в тре́тій
день по Писáнием. ⁶И возше́дшаго на не-
беса́, и сядя́ша одесну́ю Отца́. ⁷И па́ки
гряду́шаго со сла́вою судити живы́м и
ме́ртвым, Его́же Ца́рствию не бу́дет кон-
ца́. ⁸И в Ду́ха Свята́го, Го́спода, Живот-
творя́щаго, И́же от Отца́ исходя́щаго,
И́же со Отце́м и Сы́ном спокланя́ема и
ссла́вима, глаго́лавшаго проро́ки. ⁹Во
еди́ну Святу́ю, Соборну́ю и Апосто́ль-
скую Це́рковь. ¹⁰Испове́дую еди́но креще́-
ние во оставле́ние грехо́в. ¹¹Чаю́ вос-
кресе́ния ме́ртвых, ¹²и жи́зни бу́дущаго
вѣ́ка. Ами́нь.

Other Sacraments?



In Week 9 (THIS WEEK):

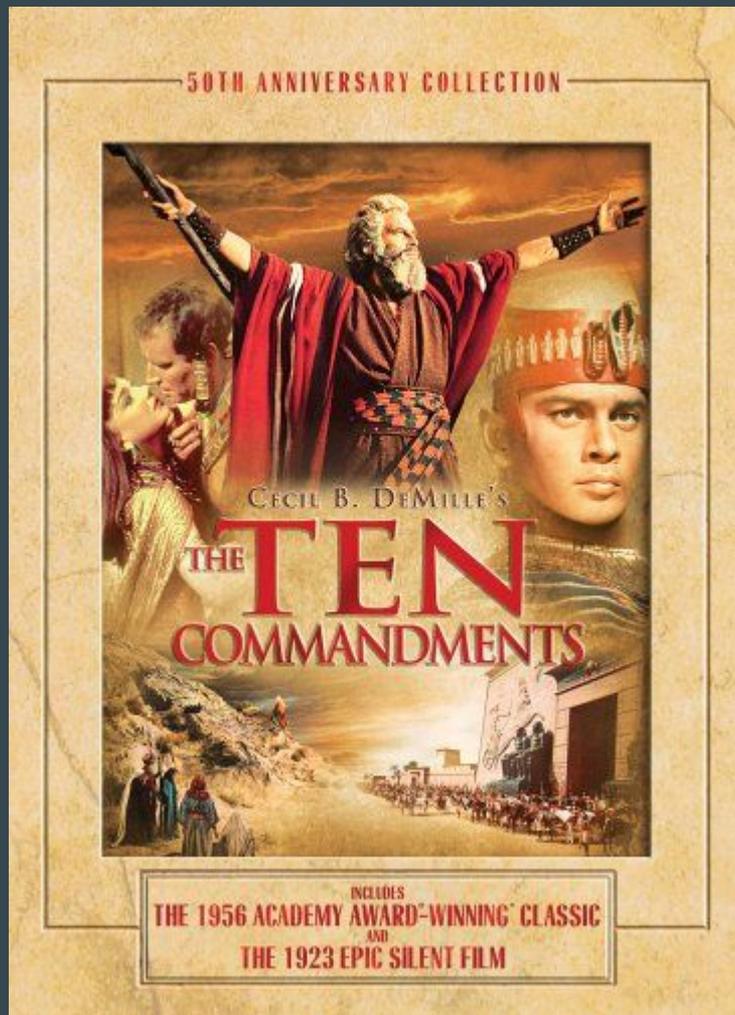
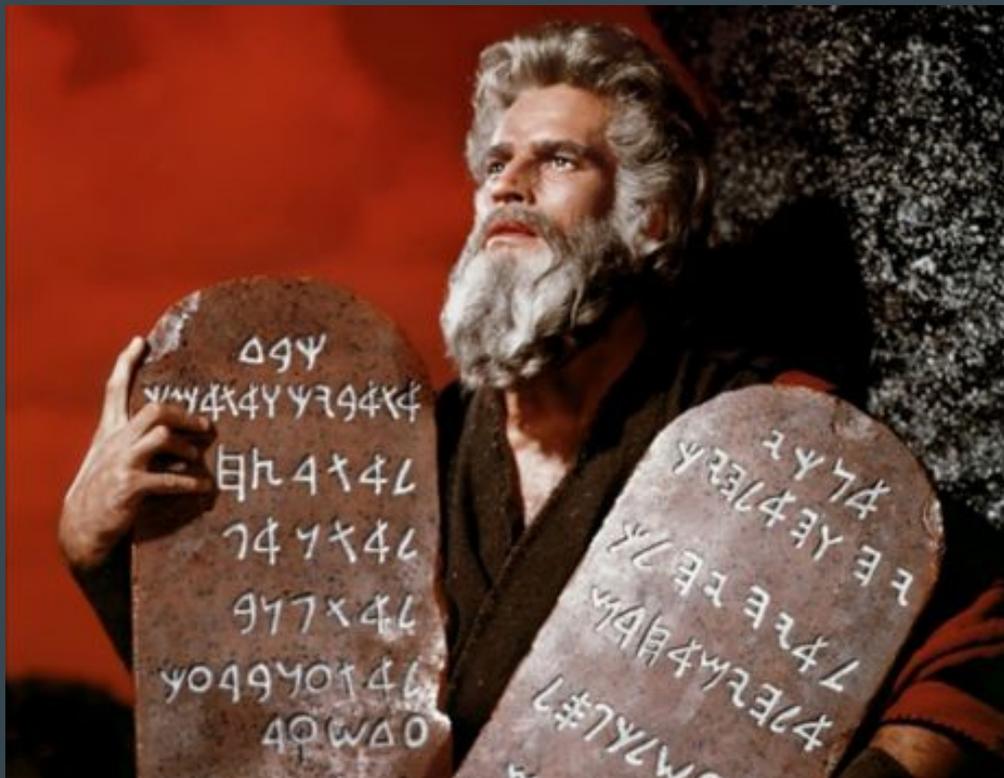
- The 10 Commandments
- The Beatitudes of the Savior
- Contemporary Teaching & Faith in God

In Week 10: we explore the liturgical framework of Orthodoxy (including vestments and basic service books)

In Weeks 11 and 12 (respectively) we will carefully examine Vigil & Liturgy



So....



10 Commandments: Orthodox Go with Numbering on Left

How does Fr. Seraphim introduce the 10 Commandments? *Read pp. 489-490*

Exodus 20 & Deuteronomy 5



I. First Commandment

“I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt have no other gods beside Me.”

What must we do to acquire true knowledge of God? *Read p. 491*

What are our obligations (concretely) with regard to the First Commandment? *Read. p. 491*

What are the sins that derive from breaking the First Commandment? *Read . 491-492*



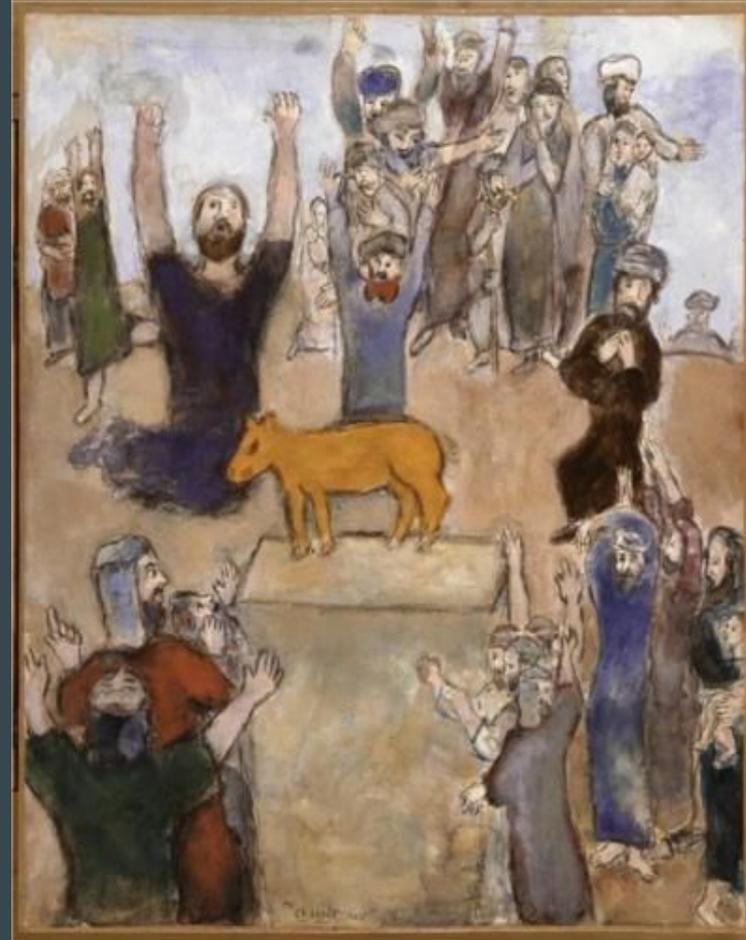
II. Second Commandment

“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them.”

Worshipping and serving of idols forbidden!

Note Fr. Seraphim’s defense of iconography. *Read p. 492-493*

Finally, note the sins that derive from idolatry. *Read. 494*



III. Third Commandment

“Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord in vain.”

Read the entry on p. 494.

+But note that nowhere is a prohibition on “cuss words.”+



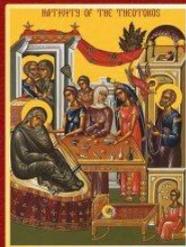
IV. Fourth Commandment

“Remember the Sabbath Day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord *thy God*.”

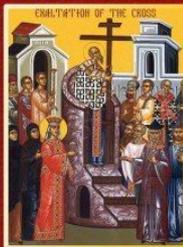
Read entire entry, pp. 495-496... And note the Feasts!



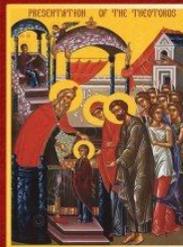
THE 12 GREAT FEASTS (ΔΩΔΕΚΑΗΜΕΡΑ) OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH



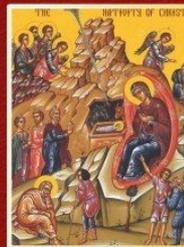
NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS
SEPTEMBER 8



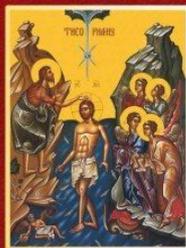
EXALTATION OF THE CROSS
SEPTEMBER 14



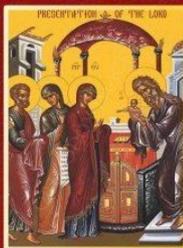
PRESENTATION OF THE THEOTOKOS
NOVEMBER 21



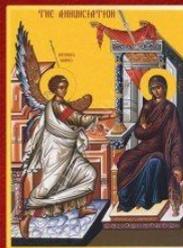
NATIVITY OF CHRIST - CHRISTMAS
DECEMBER 25



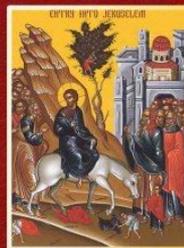
BAPTISM OF CHRIST - THEOPHANY
JANUARY 6



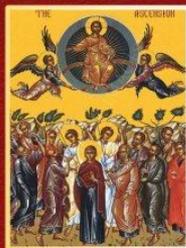
PRESENTATION OF CHRIST AT THE TEMPLE
FEBRUARY 2



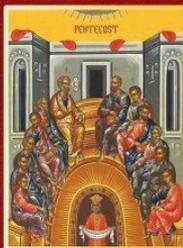
THE ANNUNCIATION
MARCH 25



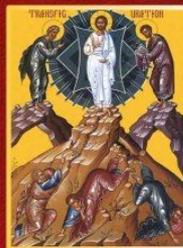
ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM - PALM SUNDAY
THE SUNDAY BEFORE PASCHA



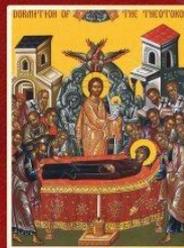
THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST
40 DAYS AFTER PASCHA



PENTECOST
50 DAYS AFTER PASCHA



TRANSFIGURATION
AUGUST 6



DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS
AUGUST 15

V. Fifth Commandment

“Honor thy father and thy mother that it may be well with thee and that thy days may be long upon the earth.”

Read the full entry, with special emphasis on how the Church tends to expand out the commandment, p. 498.



VI. Sixth Commandment

“Thou shalt not kill.”

Read the full entry, with special focus on the additional ways one might “kill” other people, both in terms of manslaughter, but also in terms of spiritual killing! P. 498-499



An aside... on the Sixth Commandment

Two Canons from St. Basil the Great on the taking of Human Life

11. As for one that has committed an involuntary murder, he has fulfilled the requirements of justice by a term of eleven years. For it is plain that in the case of the ones assaulted we may observe the rules of Moses, and not deem one to have been murdered when he has been knocked down by the blows he received but has been able to walk again with a stick (Exod. 21:18-19). But if he did not recover from the blows, and the man who struck had no intention of killing him, we deem the assailant a murderer, to be sure, but an involuntary murderer.

13. Our Fathers did not consider murders committed in the course of wars to be classifiable as murders at all, on the score, it seems to me, of allowing a pardon to men fighting in defense of sobriety and piety. Perhaps, though, it might be advisable to refuse them communion for three years, on the ground that they are not clean-handed.



VII. Seventh Commandment

“Thou shalt not commit adultery.”

Simply read the entire entry, p. 500.



VIII. Eighth Commandment

“Thou shalt not steal.”

Read the full entry for all the varying permutations of “stealing.” p. 500-501

Image at right of the “Wise Thief”



IX. Ninth Commandment

“Thou shalt not bear false witness.”

How do we unpack this commandment?
Read the rest of the entry, p. 501-502.

At right, the Lord being slandered by false witnesses



X. Tenth Commandment

“Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s wife; thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s house, nor his land, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor’s.”

Key sin at work here is the sin of **envy**. *Read entire entry on p. 502.*



The Beatitudes

Where are they from?

The Beatitudes

Where are they from?

The Sermon on Mount (Matthew 5)



“Blessed are the Poor in Spirit...”

... for theirs in the Kingdom of Heaven.”

Idea of “Blessed,” which means joyful!

Main virtue enjoined: **humility**

“Blessed are they that mourn”

“... for they shall be comforted.”

Virtue being enjoined: godly sorrow borne out of repentance and co-suffering. (It is not worldly grief, which is disconnected from repentance! These two are often confused.)

(Bright sadness.)

“Blessed are the Meek...”

“... for they shall inherit the earth.”

Virtue being enjoined: “peaceful, full developed Christian love, free from malice.”
Meek people are not prone to irritation. They are able to endure slights and insults.

A meek person begins to look forward to correction and only shows anger towards his own sins.

“Blessed are they that hunger and thirst...

“... after righteousness, for they shall be filled.”

Those people who, having begun to repent, yearn for God. (King David was an icon of this quality.)

“Blessed are the merciful...

“... for they shall obtain mercy.”

Bodily Works of Mercy

1. Feeding Hungry & giving drink to thirsty
2. Clothing naked
3. Visiting imprisoned
4. Visiting sick and helping them
5. Giving respite to strangers
6. Burying the dead

Spiritual Works of Mercy

1. Converting someone by word or deed
2. Teaching the truth
3. Giving good advice
4. Comforting the grieving
5. Refraining from returning evil
6. Forgiving offenses from one's heart
7. Praying for friends and enemies

“Blessed are the pure in heart...

“... for they shall see God.”

“The hearts of such people are free from attachment and infatuation with physical and earthly things. In general, they are free from sinful passions caused by self-centeredness, egotism, and pride... they think about God!”

What helps in this struggle?

- To observe the fasts
- Guard against gluttony, drunkenness, depraved spectacles, improper teachings, and indecent books.

“Blessed are the Peacemakers...

“... for they shall be called the sons of God.”

Making peace and reconciliation is part of the human calling, subverted by the evil one!

“Blessed are they who are persecuted...

“... for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.”

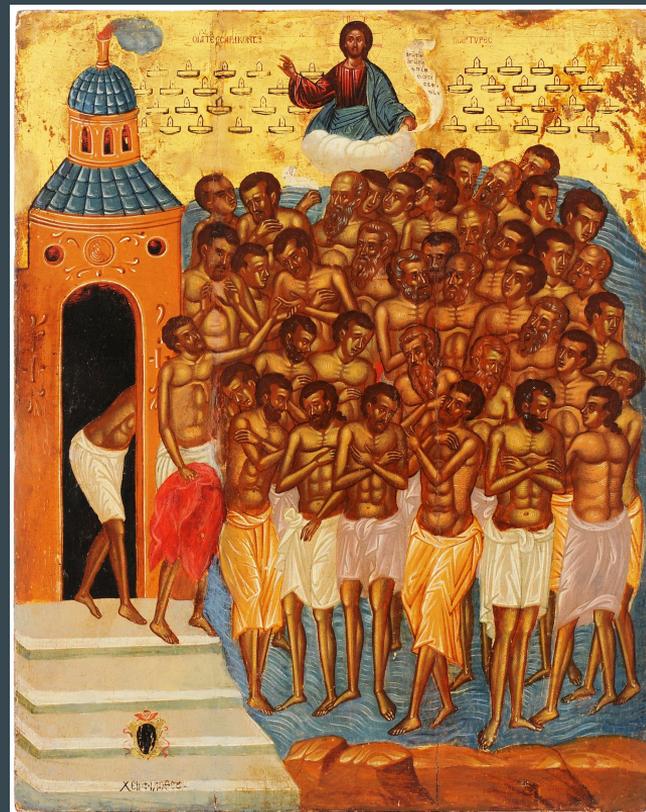
What is truly required if one is to suffer real persecution? (rather than imagined persecution?)

- Love for truth
- Steadfast in virtuous living
- Both courage and patience
- Both faith and hope in God

“Blessed are you when men shall revile you...

“...and persecute you and shall say all manner of evil against falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in Heaven.”

Here, Fr. Seraphim notes, the Lord is expressly speaking of martyrdom: a most high calling and blessedness for Christians.



The Two Causes of Evil

Read... pp. 511-512

Next Week (Week 10)

In Week 10: we explore the liturgical framework of Orthodoxy (including vestments and basic service books)

In Weeks 11 and 12 (respectively) we will carefully examine Vigil & Liturgy

