

Today's Epistle and Gospel Readings

Prokeimenon:

Make your vows to the Lord our God and perform them.

God is known in Judah; His Name is great in Israel.

†Epistle: 2 Cor. 6:16—7:1

Brethren, 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. Therefore come out from them, and be separate from them," says the Lord, "and touch nothing unclean; then I will welcome you, and I will be a father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty." Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, and make holiness perfect in the fear of God.

†Gospel: Luke 6:31–36

The Lord said: "As you wish that men would do to you, do so to them. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend

to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He is kind to the ungrateful and the selfish. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."

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A Word
from Our Fathers

“THE EARLY Christians realized that in order to become the temple of the Holy Spirit, they must *ascend to heaven* where Christ has ascended. . . . For there—in heaven—they were immersed in the new life of the Kingdom; and when, after this ‘liturgy of ascension,’ they returned into the world, their faces reflected the light, the ‘joy and peace’ of that Kingdom and they were truly its witnesses. . . . In church today, we so often find we meet only the same old world, not Christ and His Kingdom. We do not realize that we never get anywhere because we never leave any place behind.”

(*For the Life of the World*, Fr. Alexander Schmemmann)

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