



## **Homily One: The Handmaid of the Lord**

*And Mary said: 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord'* ([bible](#)Luke 1.38{/bible}).

Here indeed, brethren, is a true handmaid of the Lord! If a handmaid is she who exchanges her will completely for the will of her Lord, then the Most-holy Virgin is the first among all of the Lord's handmaids. If a handmaid is she who, with intent and with complete attention, beholds her Lord, then again the Most-holy Virgin is the first among the handmaids of the Lord. If a handmaid is one who meekly and quietly endures all insults and trials, awaiting only the reward of her Lord, then again and again the Most-holy Virgin is the first and most excellent of all the handmaids of the Lord. She did not care to please the world, but only God; nor did she care to justify herself before the world, but only before God. She herself is obedience; she herself is service; she herself is meekness. The Most-holy Virgin could in truth say to the angel of God: 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord'. The greatest perfection, and the greatest honour that a woman can attain on earth, is to be a handmaid of the Lord. Eve lost this perfection and honor in Paradise without effort, and the Virgin Mary achieved this perfection and this honor outside Paradise with her efforts.

Through the prayers of the Most-holy Virgin Theotokos, O Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.

## **Homily Two: A Canticle From the Soul of the Theotokos**

*'My soul doth magnify the Lord'* (*{bible}*Luke 1.46*{/bible}*).

Brethren, we have in total only a few words spoken by the Most-holy Theotokos recorded in the Gospels. All of her words pertain to the magnification of God. She was silent before men but her soul conversed unceasingly with God. Every day and every hour, she found a new reason and incentive to magnify God. If only we were able to know and to record all her magnifications of God throughout her whole life, oh, how many books would it take! But, even by this one magnification, which she spoke before her kinswoman Elizabeth, the mother of the great Prophet and Forerunner John, every Christian can evaluate what a fragrant and God-pleasing flower was her most holy soul. This is but one wonderful canticle of the soul of the Theotokos, which has come down to us through the Gospel. However, such canticles were without number in the course of the life of the Most-blessed One. Even before she heard the Gospel from the lips of her Son, she knew how to speak with God and to glorify Him in accordance with the teaching of the Gospel. This knowledge came to her from the Holy Spirit of God, whose grace constantly poured into her like clear water into a pure vessel. Her soul magnified God with canticles throughout her whole life, and therefore God magnified her above the Cherubim and the Seraphim. Likewise, small and sinful as we are, the same Lord will magnify in His Kingdom us who magnify her, if we exert ourselves to fill this brief life with the magnification of God in our deeds, words, thoughts and prayers.

O Most-holy, Most-pure and Most-blessed Theotokos, cover us with the wings of thy prayers. To thee and thy Son and our Lord be glory and praise forever. Amen.

### **Homily Three: The Gospel Instruction of the Theotokos**

*His mother saith unto the servants, 'Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it'* (*{bible}*John 2.5*{/bible}*).

Here is joy for all the faithful: she who is closest to Christ the Saviour in heaven, as she had been on earth, cares for the faithful, appears to them, helps them and advises them: 'Whatsoever He, my Son and my God, saith unto you, do it.' Thus, she advised the servants at the marriage in Cana, and the servants obeyed her and saw a miracle. From those few words of the Most-holy Virgin, God's Bride, recorded in the Gospel, we receive a precious instruction, truly the one and only Gospel instruction that she gave to mankind during her life on earth. Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it! As though she wanted to say: 'He knows all; He can do all; He loves you all; therefore, you should look neither here nor there, but hear Him and obey Him.' She comprehended the responsibility in this world of living for Him and directing others to Him as the Source of life, and she voluntarily continues carrying out this responsibility even from heaven. Throughout the Church's entire history, she has taught the faithful to do whatsoever He said. And even today, from her heavenly glory, she mystically descends among the faithful to counsel them to do that which He has commanded. That is her Gospel -- the Gospel of the Most-holy Virgin, the Theotokos. It consists not of the Four Gospels but of four words: 'Do whatsoever He saith.' O my brethren, let us obey her! Let us obey her as a mother and more than our mother, for she desires the greatest good for us: to reign in the eternal Kingdom of her Son.

O Most-holy Virgin, help us to fulfill His words. To Thee and to Him be glory and praise forever.

## **Nikolai Velimirovich, Three Homilies on the Theotokos**

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Amen.