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THE DELIVERER

A Monthly Newsletter of St. George Upper Darby



AUGUST DATES TO REMEMBER

Dormition of the Theotokos

By Fr. Thomas Hopko

The feast of the Dormition or Falling-asleep of the Theotokos is celebrated on the fifteenth of August, preceded by a two-week fast. This feast, which is also sometimes called the Assumption, commemorates the death, resurrection and glorification of Christ's mother. It proclaims that Mary has been "assumed" by God into the heavenly kingdom of Christ in the fullness of her spiritual and bodily existence.

As with the nativity of the Virgin and the feast of her entrance to the temple, there are no biblical or historical sources for this feast. The Tradition of the Church is that Mary died as all people die, not "voluntarily" as her Son, but by the necessity of her mortal human nature which is indivisibly bound up with the corruption of this world.

The Orthodox Church teaches that Mary is without personal sins. In the Gospel of the feast, however, in the liturgical services and in the Dormition icon, the Church proclaims as well that Mary truly needed to be saved by Christ as all

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- Dormition Fast - 8/1 - 8/14
- Transfiguration (Orthros & Liturgy) - 8/6
- Fellowship of St. Moses the Black - 8/8
- 2022-23 Planning Meeting - 8/13
- Parish Council - 8/14
- Dormition (Orthros & Liturgy) - 8/15
- Coffee Hour Potluck - 8/28
- Beheading of John the Baptist (Orthros & Liturgy) - 8/29

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human persons are saved from the trials, sufferings and death of this world; and that having truly died, she was raised up by her Son as the Mother of Life and participates already in the eternal life of paradise which is prepared and promised to all who “hear the word of God and keep it” (Lk11.27–28).

In giving birth, you preserved your virginity. In falling asleep you did not forsake the world, O Theotokos. You were translated to life, O Mother of Life, and by your prayers, you deliver our souls from death (Troparion).

Neither the tomb, nor death, could hold the Theotokos, who is constant in prayer and our firm hope in her intercessions. For being the Mother of Life, she was translated to life, by the One who dwelt in her virginal womb (Kontakion).

The services of the feast repeat the main theme, that the Mother of Life has “passed over into the heavenly joy, into the divine gladness and unending delight” of the Kingdom of her Son (Vesperal hymn). The Old Testament readings, as well as the gospel readings for the Vigil and the Divine Liturgy, are exactly the same as those for the feast of the Virgin’s nativity and her entrance into the Temple. Thus, at the Vigil we again hear Mary say: “My soul magnifies the Lord and my Spirit rejoices in God my Saviour” (Lk 1.47). At the Divine Liturgy we hear the letter to the Philippians where Saint Paul speaks of the self-emptying of Christ who condescends to human servitude and ignoble death in order to be “highly exalted by God his Father” (Phil 2.5–11). And once again we hear in the Gospel that Mary’s blessedness belongs to all who “hear the word of God and keep it” (Lk 11.27–28).

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Antiochian Women: PLC Recap

by Cynthia Long

The Antiochian Women of the East held their annual meeting and luncheon at the Parish Life Conference at Antiochian Village on June 30, 2022.

The guest speaker was Fr. Patrick Cardine of St. Patrick Church in Bealeton, VA. Fr. Patrick spoke on Raising a Family in the Life of the Church and Keeping Them There. His words were challenging and inspirational. The most important thing in our life, Fr. Patrick said, is: 1) participating in the Divine Liturgy and 2) Praying the hours. The purpose of church is the Divine Liturgy: to receive Christ. Regular prayer and participation in the church services provides stability. We all need stability, especially children; we live in an unstable world. We need to be committed to this participation in the life of the church, to live it so our children see us living it. We need to take it seriously ourselves to convey its importance to the next generation.

Our parish community is a family, Fr. Patrick explained; like a family, it requires sacrifice, commitment, and prioritization. Salvation means being brought into relationship with God and his church. The local church feeds the family; in turn, the family feeds the local church. The best things parents can do for their children is to “love one another with unassailable love.”

Fr. Patrick recommends encouraging our youth in congregational singing. It engages the youth. He also shared a story from his home parish, which he calls Post-Liturgy Loitering. They don’t just have a coffee hour at St. Patrick’s; sometimes they have conversations that last for hours! Fostering community is essential. The complete talk will soon be available on YouTube.

At the luncheon, women also participated in the Humanitarian Acts of Mercy Project by writing letters to incarcerated persons in collaboration with OCPM (Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry). Thirty-one letters will be sent to OCPM Headquarters for distribution.

Finally, Bishop THOMAS addressed the women. He exhorted us to encourage one another to attend next year’s conference because we are a family, and the Parish Life Conference is our “family reunion.”

August Greeters and Readers

August 7

Greeters: Ed Donahue
Reader: Caroline Becker

August 14

Greeters: Burke family
Reader: Sheri San Chirico

August 21

Greeters: Cynthia Long and Michael Martin
Reader: Ed Donahue

August 28

Greeters: San Chirico family
Reader: Caroline Becker

Interested in being a greeter? Contact Ed Donahue at edjdonahue@gmail.com

Interested in being a reader? Contact the office at office@saintgeorgeupperdarby.org.

Upcoming Events

Annual Calendar Planning Meeting

We will hold our annual calendar planning meeting on Saturday, August 13 from 11am - 12:30pm. All heads of ministries and Parish Council members are strongly encouraged to attend. If a ministry / committee lead cannot attend, please send a representative in your place.

Interested in being a Reader?

If you're interested in becoming a reader for the Epistle on Sunday, please contact the church office. We will be holding a workshop for all readers in late August or early September to review the process and create a schedule for readers.

Adopt a College Student: Seeking Sponsor Families!

It's that time of year again! As we prepare to welcome back our college students, we're looking for families who are interested in "adopting" a college student who will attend St. George this fall while they are in the area for school. If you are interested, please fill out this Google form: <https://forms.gle/jNVaDP8wrCHy3iH6A>. We will be pairing students with families in early to mid-September once the students return to campuses.

Save the Date! Fall Retreat 2022

The fall retreat will be held on November 11-13 at St. George. This year's theme will be "Global Orthodoxy and the World Christian Movement". More details will follow early in the fall, but mark your calendar now so you don't miss this great retreat!

Sunday School Registration

Registration for the 2022-23 Sunday School year is now open! If you plan to enroll your child in Sunday School, please complete the Google registration form: <https://forms.gle/usdPEG2GJvRr8iuXA>

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Thus, the feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos is the celebration of the fact that all men are "highly exalted" in the blessedness of the victorious Christ, and that this high exaltation has already been accomplished in Mary the Theotokos. The feast of the Dormition is the sign, the guarantee, and the celebration that Mary's fate is, the destiny of all those of "low estate" whose souls magnify the Lord, whose spirits rejoice in God the Saviour, whose lives are totally dedicated to hearing and keeping the Word of God which is given to men in Mary's child, the Saviour and Redeemer of the world.

Finally it must be stressed that, in all of the feasts of the Virgin Mother of God in the Church, the Orthodox Christians celebrate facts of their own lives in Christ and the Holy Spirit. What happens to Mary happens to all who imitate her holy life of humility, obedience, and love. With her all people will be "blessed" to be "more honorable than the cherubim and beyond compare more glorious than the seraphim" if they follow her example. All will have Christ born in them by the Holy Spirit. All will become temples of the living God. All will share in the eternal life of His Kingdom who live the life that Mary lived.

In this sense everything that is praised and glorified in Mary is a sign of what is offered to all persons in the life of the Church. It is for this reason that Mary, with the divine child Jesus within her, is called in the Orthodox Tradition the Image of the Church. For the assembly of the saved is those in whom Christ dwells.

It is the custom in some churches to bless flowers on the feast of the Dormition of the Holy Theotokos.

August 2022

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2 Matins 9am Paraklesis 6:30pm	3	4 3rd Hour 9am Paraklesis 6:30pm 12 Baskets 8pm	5 Great Vespers 6pm	6 Orthros & Liturgy 9am Vespers 5pm Orthodoxy 101 6pm
7 Orthros & Liturgy 9:30am SKW 12:30pm	8 FSMB 7pm	9 Matins 9am Paraklesis 6:30pm	10	11 3rd Hour 9am Paraklesis 6:30pm	12	13 2022-23 Planning Meeting 11am Vespers 5pm Orthodoxy 101 6pm
14 Orthros & Liturgy 9:30am Parish Council 12:30pm Vespers 6pm	15 Orthros & Liturgy 9am	16 Matins 9am Akathist 7pm Choir Practice 7pm	17 Bible study 7pm	18 3rd Hour 9am Icon Committee 7:30pm	19	20 Vespers 5pm Orthodoxy 101 6pm
21 Orthros & Liturgy 9:30am Hospitality Committee 12pm	22	23 Matins 9am Akathist 7pm Choir Practice 7pm	24	25 3rd Hour 9am	26	27 Vespers 5pm Orthodoxy 101 6pm
28 Orthros & Liturgy 9:30am	29 Orthros & Liturgy 9am	30 Matins 9am Akathist 7pm Choir Practice 7pm	31			

To view the full calendar, visit
www.saintgeorgeupperdarby.org

**Not on our mailing list? Contact Caitlin at office@saintgeorgeupperdarby.org
to add your name to our mailing list.**