

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America Diocese of Los Angeles and the West

AUGUST 15, 2021



[The Dormition of the Mother of God, 1565-1567 by Domenikos Theotokopoulos. Holy Church of Koimisis tis Theotokou, Ermoupoli, Syros. (Credit: BCM)]

St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America Diocese of Los Angeles and the West

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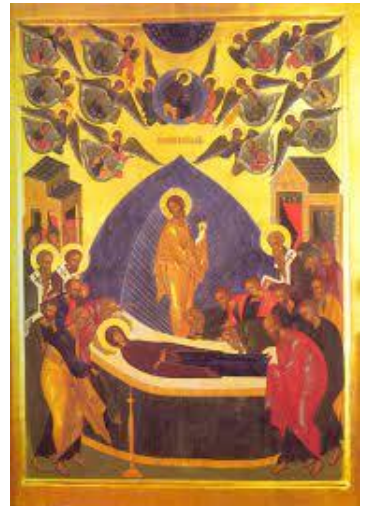
FEAST OF THE DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS

On August 15 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we commemorate the venerable Dormition and Translation of our supremely glorious Lady the Theotokos and Ever-virgin Mary.

*That the world-saving Maiden died is no marvel,
Since, after the flesh, the world's Maker died also.*

God's Mother liveth forever, though she died on the fifteenth.

The Archangel Gabriel appeared to Mary and revealed to her that within three days she will find repose. She returned to her home with great joy, desiring in her heart once more to see in this life, all of the Apostles of Christ. The Lord fulfilled her wish and all of the Apostles, borne by angels in the clouds, gathered at the same time at the home of John on Zion. After seeing them, the Theotokos peacefully gave up her soul to God without any pain or physical illness. The Apostles took the coffin with her body from which an aromatic fragrance emitted and, in the company of many Christians, bore it to the Garden of Gethsemane to the sepulcher of her parents, Saints Joachim and Anna. Only the Apostle Thomas was absent, according to God's Providence, in order that a new and all-glorious mystery of the Holy Theotokos would again be revealed. On the third day, Thomas arrived and desired to venerate the body of the Holy All-pure one. But when the Apostles opened the sepulcher, they found only the winding sheet and the body was not in the tomb. That evening, the Theotokos appeared to the apostles surrounded by a myriad of angels and said to them: "Rejoice, I will be with you always."



By the intercessions of the Theotokos, O God, have mercy on us and save us, since Thou art good and the Lover of mankind. Amen.

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE SEVEN

Thou didst shatter death by Thy Cross, Thou didst open paradise to the thief; Thou didst turn the sadness of the ointment-bearing women into joy. And didst bid Thine Apostles proclaim a warning, that Thou hast risen O Christ, granting to the world the Great Mercy.

APOLYTIKION OF THE DORMITION IN TONE ONE

In thy birth-giving, O Theotokos, thou didst keep and preserve virginity; and in thy falling-asleep thou hast not forsaken the world; for thou wast translated into life, being the Mother of Life. Wherefore, by thine intercessions, deliver our souls from death.

KONTAKION OF THE DORMITION IN TONE TWO

Verily, the Theotokos, who is ever watchful in intercessions, and whose prayers are never rejected, neither tomb nor death could control. But since she is the Mother of Life, He Who dwelt in her ever-virgin womb did translate her to life.

THE EPISTLE

*My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.
For He hath regarded the humility of His servant.*

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Philippians. (2:5-11)

Brethren, let this mind be in you, which is also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, did not think it robbery to be equal with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave, becoming Himself in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. For this cause also God highly exalted Him, and gave Him a Name which is above every name; that in the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and those who are on earth, and those who are under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

THE GOSPEL

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. (10:38-42; 11:27-28)

At that time, Jesus entered a certain village; and a woman named 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, dost Thou not care that my sister has left me to serve 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 Thee, and the breasts that Thou didst suck!" But He said, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

WISDOM

THE HISTORY OF THE FEAST OF DORMITION: Fr. Thomas Hopko

The Holy Scriptures tell us that when our Lord was dying on the Cross, He saw His mother and His disciple John and said to the Virgin Mary, "Woman, behold your son!" and to John, "Behold your mother!" (John 19:25-27). From that hour, the Apostle took care of the Theotokos in his own home.

Along with the biblical reference in Acts 1:14 that confirms that the Virgin Mary was with the Holy Apostles on the day of Pentecost, the tradition of the Church holds that she remained in the home of the Apostle John in Jerusalem, continuing a ministry in word and deed.

At the time of her death, the disciples of our Lord who were preaching throughout the world returned to Jerusalem to see the Theotokos. Except for the Apostle Thomas, all of them including the Apostle Paul were gathered together at her bedside. At the moment of her death, Jesus Christ himself descended and carried her soul into heaven.

Following her repose, the body of the Theotokos was taken in procession and laid in a tomb near the Garden of Gethsemane. When the Apostle Thomas arrived three days after her repose and desired to see her body, the tomb was found to be empty. The bodily assumption of the Theotokos was confirmed by the message of an angel and by her appearance to the Apostles.

...

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 Byzantine 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 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." (Luke 11:27-28)

In giving birth, you preserved your virginity. In failing 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. (Vesper verse) 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.” (Luke 1:47) At the Divine Liturgy we hear the letter to the Philippians where St. 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. (Philippians 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.” (Luke 11:27-28)

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, Byzantine 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 Byzantine 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.

"The Orthodox Faith: Volume II Worship" by Very Rev. Thomas Hopko

[\[The History of the Feast of Dormition\]](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vehicle Storage: In the long red barn next door is a white Ford car, and outside the barn is a blue Chevy pickup. If these are yours, or you know who they belong to, please contact Fr. Mark. If anyone is storing a boat, RV, or any other item next door, please touch base with Fr. Mark.

Appropriate Attire: Even though the hot weather is here, please remember to dress modestly for Church. Adults and children alike, please do not wear shorts at any time at Church, even if cleaning. For the ladies, please remember to cover your shoulders (no spaghetti straps) and avoid short dresses and any excessive cleavage. If you are going somewhere after church where you need to dress casually, bring a change of clothing with you and change after lunch. Remember, use your best judgment and good taste when dressing for church. After all, you do not go to be seen by everyone else—you go to meet and worship God.

Teachers are needed for preschool through 5th grade. If you are interested in teaching after liturgy on Sundays, *please talk with Jen Jensvold or Jan Truebenbach.*

St. John's IOCC August project 50 school-supply kits: In most of the countries where IOCC works, there are children who do not have basic school supplies. Church World Service, collects school-supply kits, prepares them for shipment and works with IOCC and other partners to make sure kits reach children in need. We are collecting supplies to mail them by the end of August. There will be a box at church in the entry where supplies can be placed. Send questions to Jeane: plastinowood@gmail.com, (208) 660-3046.

Missing from the Narthex closet: One black inner cassock belonging to Reader David. If any clergy grabbed a cassock from the old Narthex closet, please double check you have the right one. Thank you! -Fr. Nicholas.

Right To Life Booth, Kootenai County Fair (Aug. 20 – 29): Volunteers are needed! Please call Lacy at 208-731-7278 to sign up for a shift, and state that you are from St. John's Orthodox Church. The shifts are Mon-Friday 11-3, 3-7, 7-10; Saturday/Sunday 10-2, 2-6, 6-10. There are 2 people per shift. *They have a particular need for Aug. 22nd and Aug. 23rd.* Jeane Woods would be happy to join anyone if you let her know: (208) 660-3046, plastinowood@gmail.com.

Help needed in the Cemetery: Anyone who wants to help with weeding, and general maintenance, please come! *Now: Thursday from 9:30am to noon (no longer Wednesday).* Bring your own tools, gloves, etc. See Eleni for details. Thank you!

FREE Lumex Adult Folding Walker with Wheels. Teresa Chala has a brand-new adult walker to give to anyone who needs it. For more information, call: (509) 475-0671.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES & EVENTS [Calendar]

Saturday, August 14: Men's Service Project 9am; Great Vespers and Lamentations 6pm

Sunday, August 15, Dormition of the Theotokos: Orthros & Divine Liturgy 9am

Wednesday, August 18: Vespers 6pm

Friday, August 20: Spiritual Circle 9:30am; Catechumen Class 6pm

Saturday, August 21: Great Vespers 6pm

Sunday, August 22: Orthros & Divine Liturgy 9am

EPISTLE READERS

8/15 Reader Silouan

8/22 Aaron Plew

8/29 TBD

9/5 TBD

If you would like to read the Epistle, please contact Aaron Plew. Sign up: **Epistle Readers*

CLEANING ROTATION (nave, narthex, hallway, upstairs restrooms, and hall floor)

Week of 8/15 TBD, *Volunteers Needed!**

Week of 8/22 Plew family(!)

Week of 8/29 Selina Sandberg, *Volunteers Needed!**

Week of 9/5 TBD

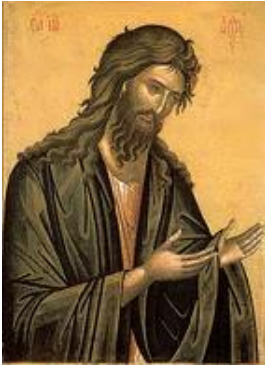
Sign up at **Church clean-up! Or contact Sh. Susan: (940)723-1726.*



PRAYERS FOR THE LIVING: Hay family, Family of Jean Weingand, Bill Sutherland, Marian, Douglas, Weaver family, Khouria Joanna, John/Steven Wood, Korbin (friend of Alyson Gross), Charalambos and Eugenia (Mary Welsh's parents), James & Helen Odell, those suffering with the Covid-19 virus and those caring for the sick and suffering, victims of injustice and social unrest, Metropolitans Paul and John (hostages in Syria), the suffering Christians throughout the Middle East.

PRAYERS FOR THE DEPARTED: Jean, Andrew, Wanda (Lavonne Ayoub's mother), Victims of abortion, Victims of the Covid-19 virus, Victims of injustice and social unrest, the departed Christians throughout the world who have died for the Faith.

CONFESSIONS: Please remember to contact Fr. Mark to schedule confessions, even if you intend to confess after the evening services. This ensures that your confession is well prepared, and that everyone can be heard in an orderly fashion. Father is available to meet at the Church Tuesday through Saturday.



Troparion of St. John the Baptist

The memory of the just is celebrated with hymns of praise, but the Lord's testimony is enough for thee, O Forerunner. For thou wast shown to be more wonderful than the prophets since thou wast granted to baptize Him whom thou didst proclaim. Then having endured great suffering for the truth thou didst rejoice to bring even to those in hades the good tidings, that God who hast appeared in the flesh, takes away the sins of the world, and grants us great mercy.