



Weekly Bulletin

Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

The Miracle of the Apostle Peter's Walking on the Water With Jesus

Troparion of the Resurrec- tion, Tone 8

Thou didst descend from on high, O Merciful One. Thou didst accept the three-day burial to free us from our sufferings. O Lord, our Life and Resurrection: Glory to Thee!

Troparion for Annuncia- tion, Tone 4

Today is the beginning of our salvation, the revelation of the eternal mystery! the Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin as Gabriel announces the coming of Grace. Together with him let us cry to the Theotokos: Rejoice, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with you.

Kontakion of Annunciation, Tone 8

O Victorious Leader of triumphant hosts! We, your servants delivered from evil, sing our grateful thanks to you, O Theotokos! As you possess invincible might set us free from every calamity so that we may sing: Rejoice, O Unwedded Bride!

The 9th Sunday after Pentecost August 14th, Tone 8, Matt. 14:22-34

This account contains precious information that applies to our own spiritual life. The wind-tossed waters on which Peter wants to walk could be compared to our difficulties and, especially, to our temptations. Why does Peter sink? Is it a sign that he was presumptuous, and should not have attempted to walk on the water? But Peter had asked Jesus for permission. He did not leave the ship without a positive invitation from the Lord: 'Come!'. We can learn from this that we should never undertake anything extraordinary without a call, an order from the master.

But the center of gravity of this episode lies elsewhere. As long as Peter goes towards Jesus, as long as his attention remains fixed on that goal, he is able to walk on the sea. It is when his attention is distracted from his goal, when he notices the storm surrounding him, that he starts to be afraid and, so, to drown. Thus, in our moments of temptation, we must look directly, constantly, at the person of Jesus. We must fix in our minds the image of the Savior and pay no attention to the surrounding storm. If we look back at our spiritual defeats, we will see that it is always at the instant when we stopped looking at Christ and going straight towards him that we have begun to be beaten. As soon as we allow our attention to be distracted by the wind and the waves, as soon as we delay in order to consider the temptation and discuss it, instead of going straight towards Jesus, we are lost – for we always find ourselves weaker than the adversary. We are saved from temptation (and all distress) only when we make up our minds to look at Jesus alone, and not at the obstacles.

Briefly, instead of facing the temptation and fighting it head-on, what matters is, instead, to face the Savior, and to substitute his person for the temptation. Many storms surround and threaten us. 'Lord . . . bid me come *unto thee* on the water.'

(Taken from *The Year of Grace of the Lord*, by a Monk of the Eastern Church)

From the Lives of the Saints... THE DORMITION [THE FALL- ING ASLEEP - THE ASSUMPTION] OF THE MOST-HOLY BIRTH-GIVER OF GOD (THEOTOKOS)

The Lord Who, on Mt. Sinai, gave the Fifth Commandment, Honor your father and your mother (Exodus 20:12), showed by His own example how one should respect one's parents. Hanging on the Cross in agony, He remembered His Mother, and indicating to the Apostle John, He said to her: Woman behold your son (John 19:26). After that, He said to John: Behold your mother (John 19:27). And so, providing for His Mother, He breathed His last. John had a home on Mount Zion, in Jerusalem, in which the Theotokos then lived. She dwelt there to the end of her days on earth. By her prayers, kind guidance, meekness and patience, she greatly assisted Her Son's apostles.

Announcements and Activities

Great Vespers for the Dormition— Tonight, at 6PM. Flowers and “fragrant herbage” will be blessed at the Vespers and, if needed, after Liturg

Divine Liturgy for the Feast— Monday, 9AM.

Saturday Great Vespers— 5:30 PM.

Divine Liturgy— Sunday, at 10AM.

Mortgage Drive— Last year we met our pledge goal of 20K and church matching funds of 20K. Our goal was to do the mortgage reduction for 2 consecutive years and see if we can't retire the mortgage in 2023. Let's throw the Mortgage Reduction Red Thermometer on the wall in the Hall over the top and be able to say that this facility is totally in possession of God and His people. We will conclude this particular drive on September 1st. So far, we've only raised about 5K. It will be very blessed for each of us to search our hearts for the extra that we can give toward this phenomenal goal. What a glory it will be to burn the mortgage, and what a credit to your stewardship.

Coffee Hours— This week's Coffee Hour is our bagels and coffee week. Next week's Coffee Hour will be sponsored by the Richeys and Aaron C.

Parish Council— will meet today, after Coffee Hour.

Pray for... Hierarch Nikolai (Soraich)— battling cancer. Samir's friend, **Johnny**, who has been improving in the battle to save his sight. **Brian**, Sunday's brother. **George and Alex**, health problems. **All those who have lost their lives or are suffering as a result of the current Pandemic**. **Archimandrite Alexander** — Fr. Lawrence's long-time father confessor, who reposed. **Our Vladyka Benjamin**— battling on-set parkinsons. **Tsige Roman and Abraham**— I know we are always mindful of Tsige, but please continue to pray for the work and for Ethiopia, torn by civil war, with all the problems that go with a regional terror. **George and Alesis**, Brother and Daughter of Peter and Irene S. **Matushka Ioanna R. reposed. Matushka Priscilla, ill. Anya J**— a longtime friend of the parish who is ill. **Stephen F.**— battling back pain. **John F.**— battling cancer. **Archpriest Anthony**— battling cancer. **Julie**— sister of Kathy M., battling health problems. **Rhoda's requests for Douglas and Kayana. Reposed Constance**— the mother of Andrew F. **Will**— reposed, Michael T.'s brother-in-law. **Reposed Vadim. Christian**— undergoing some medical testing. The reposed— **Novice Nonna, Robbie**— cancer. **Raphael**, cancer. Child **Aidan**— seizures. Child **Henry. Robbie** the cousin of Brian R., who reposed after a battle with cancer. **Louis Joseph M.**, is now home and, thank God, ready to come to church **Reposed Dn. George. Jobie**, cancer. **Darryl and Laura Beth. Diane F.**— short-term illness. **Repose: Stavrophore Elizabeth, of Kazan Skete . Pastor Brad**, a friend of Kirk's who is going through a difficult time. **Sarah**, the daughter of Fr. Lawrence's godfather, health issues. **Youseff and Jimmy**— who are ill. **Matushka Ann Hopko**, reposed.

She spent most of her remaining time on earth in Jerusalem, often visiting those places that reminded her of the great events and of the great works of her Son. She especially visited Golgotha, Bethlehem and the Mount of Olives. Of her few distant journeys, her visit to St. Ignatius the God-bearer [Theophorus] in Antioch is recorded; as is her visit to Lazarus (whom our Lord resurrected on the fourth day), the Bishop of Cyprus. She also visited the Holy Mountain [Athos], which she blessed; and she stayed in Ephesus with St. John the Evangelist [The Theologian] during the time of the great persecution of Christians in Jerusalem. In her old age, she often prayed to her Lord and God on the Mount of Olives, the site of His Ascension, that He take her from this world as soon as possible. On one of these occasions, the Archangel Gabriel appeared to her and revealed to her that she would find repose within three days. The angel gave her a palm-branch, which was to be carried in her funeral procession. She returned home with great joy, hoping in her heart to see her Son's apostles just once more in this life. The Lord fulfilled her wish, and the apostles, borne by angels in the clouds, gathered together at the house on Mount Zion. With great rejoicing she saw them, encouraged them, counseled them, and comforted them. Then she peacefully gave up her soul to God without pain or physical illness. The apostles took up her coffin, from which a heavenly fragrance arose--and, in the company of many Christians, bore it to the Garden of Gethsemane, to the sepulchre of her parents, Saints Joachim and Anna. By God's providence, the procession was concealed by a cloud from the evil Jews. Even so, Aphthonius [Anthony], a Jewish priest, grabbed the coffin with the intention of overturning it, but an angel of God severed both his hands. He then cried out to the apostles for help, and was healed upon declaring his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Apostle Thomas was absent--again, according to God's providence--in order that a new and all-glorious mystery of the Holy Theotokos would be revealed. On the third day, Thomas arrived and desired to venerate [kiss] the body of the Holy Most-pure One. But when the apostles opened the sepulchre, they found only the winding sheet: the body was not in the tomb! That evening, the Theotokos, surrounded by a host of angels, appeared to the apostles and said to them: "Rejoice, I will be with you always." It is not exactly known how old the Theotokos was at the time of her Falling Asleep, but the overwhelming opinion is that she was over sixty years of age.

THE HOLY PROPHET MICAH THE SECOND

Micah was of the tribe of Judah and from the village of Morasth, for which he is called the "Morasthite." He was a contemporary of the prophets Isaiah, Amos, and Hosea, and of the Jewish kings Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. Micah rebuked the people for their vices, and rebuked the false prophets who prophesied of wine and of strong drink (Micah 2:11). He foretold the destruction of Samaria. He also foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, which would come because its leaders accepted bribes, its priests taught for hire, and its prophets told fortunes for money. Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field and Jerusalem shall become as heaps (Micah 3:12). But, of all his prophecies, the most important prophecy is that of Bethlehem as the place of the birth of the Messiah, Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting (Micah 5:2). It is not known exactly whether this prophet was slain by the Jews or whether he died a peaceful death. [Micah the Morasthite prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah and spoke to all the people of Judah saying, Thus said the Lord of hosts; Zion shall be plowed like a field and Jerusalem shall become heaps and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest. Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put him at all to death? Did he not fear the Lord and besought the Lord and the Lord repented him of the evil which he had pronounced against them? Thus might we procure great evil against our souls] (Jeremiah 26:18-19). However, it is known that he was buried in his village. During the reign of Emperor Theodosius the Great, Bishop Zevin of Eleutheropolis had a mystical vision that led to the finding of Micah's relics, together with those of the Prophet Habakkuk.

Taken from the *Prologue of Ochrid*, by St. Nikolai Velimirovich

“There do not exist many or few, nor small or great problems. The only problem is the absence of Christ from our lives” (From the life and teachings of Elder Epiphanius Theodoropoulos)