



Weekly Bulletin

Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

"The Feast of the Transfiguration"

Troparion of the Resurrection, 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 of Transfiguration, Tone 4

Thou wast transfigured on the mountain, O Christ God, revealing Thy glory to Thy Disciples as far as they could bear it. Let Thine everlasting Light also shine upon us sinners, through the prayers of the Theotokos!!! O Giver of Light, glory to Thee!

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, Tone 8, August 6th, Matt. 17:1-9

When He created the world, God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness (Gen. 1:26). God's image manifests in man's mental capabilities, in his authority over nature, his power, and his ability to create. God's likeness in man consists in his moral perfection, his spiritual strivings, and in his possibility of attaining sanctity.

God's image and likeness, in which our fore-parents were created, was fully reflected in them before the fall. Sin disrupted both the former and the latter, although it did not entirely deprive man of them. Man retained his mind and the other qualities that gave him God's image, but he needs to apply greater effort to develop them, yet he achieves only a small measure of what his fore-parents had received in full. The yearning to be the likeness of God has remained in man to a certain degree, although it sometimes wanes beyond all recognition.

In order to return to man his original closeness to God, the Son of God descended to earth and became incarnate. He put on human nature and became like man in every aspect except for that of sin. He came to recreate our first created beauty in the image of God. But if in the beginning God created man in His image and likeness, then in order to recreate the first image, man's own participation is also needed. Man must strive for perfection in order to attain it through the grace and help of God. The Lord showed the way to perfection through His teachings and by His own example. This is the path of moral perfection, self denial, and readiness to free oneself of everything sinful. Sin entered deeply into human nature, mingling with it, as it were. Every person is born with the seed of sin, and the struggle to be free of it is a struggle with his own self. That is why this struggle is so agonizing; but it is necessary in order to come closer to God. If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me (Mt. 16:24). The cross that we must take up is that very struggle with our own weaknesses, vices, and sin. Gradually freeing ourselves from them, man comes closer to God, in Whose image he was created. Man himself does not have sufficient strength to accomplish this, but he is aided by God's grace, which He gave through the Church created by His incarnate Son. For this He became incarnate—to raise once again His

Announcements and Activities

Great Vespers for St. Herman – Tuesday, at 6 PM

Divine Liturgy for St. Herman— Wednesday, at 9AM.

Great Vespers— Saturday, at 5:30PM

Divine Liturgy— Sunday, at 10AM

Coffee Hour— This week's Coffee Hour is our monthly being sponsored by Tricia and Edie. Next week's Coffee Hour will be our Bagels and Coffee week. The Coffee Hours for August 6th and 13th fall within the Dormition Fast. As they are on big feasts (Transfiguration and St. Tikhon of Zadonsk), fish, wine and oil are permitted. But no meat, eggs or dairy or items with dairy: sour cream, chocolate, etc. The fast will conclude with the celebration of the Dormition Liturgy on August 15. I wish you all a good fast.

Church School/Adult Ed— summer recess until October.

Parish Council— next Sunday, after our Coffee Hour.

August BBQ Fundraiser— Are you selling those tickets? We're just 2 weeks away. We will need help with all aspects of the fundraiser: set up, cooking, preparing plates and, as of right now, selling tickets. I think everyone will be delighted with the food, so let's be sure to get those tickets sold. Thank you!

Pray for... Sarah, the daughter of Fr. Lawrence's godfather, health issues. **Youseff and Jimmy**— who are ill. **Jonathan**— ill. **Reposed Barbara Ranjo**. **Laure**— battling Cancer. **Paul**— ill **Ralph**—ill **Archpriest Lawrence**, from Canada, progressive eye disease. **Tsige Roman**— our beloved Tsige reposed on December 3rd. Please keep praying for her homeland of Ethiopia. **Brian**— ill. **Jonathan**— ill. **Katia** — sister of Shkbarra's **Grace**, Heather's goddaughter. **Reposed Priest, James. Reposed Hierarch Tikhon. Rufin**— soldier in Ukraine. **Elise**, ill. **Sally**, surgery, **Reposed Patrick, Reposed Jim, Reposed Alex; Christian**, prayers. **Chris**, reposed. **Galina**, reposed. **Patrick**, reposed. **Clint Arsenios**— reposed. **Heather Mary**— uncommon fatigue **Lou Mendez**. Battling ongoing health issues. **George and Steve**, a request from Luci. F.

fallen image.

On Mt. Tabor Christ manifested the beauty and glory of His Divinity, so that the apostles might know of it and through them the whole world, the likeness of Whom is man, and to show what man can attain when he spiritually upraises himself. To the degree that man purifies himself of sin and comes closer to God, the glory of God is ever more clearly reflected in him. That is why saints are called in Russian *prepodobny*, meaning "like unto". The glory of God is reflected in their souls as in a mirror, filling them with its radiance. When his earthly struggles are over, the degree of likeness that he has achieved is finally and permanently sealed. When the eternal Kingdom comes and all people are resurrected, their souls are united with their bodies, and "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father (Mt. 12:43)", as Christ Himself said.

St. John of Shanghai (Maximovitch)

Translation by Nun Cornelia (Rees)

From the Lives of the Saints... THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD, GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST

In the third year of His preaching, the Lord Jesus often spoke to His disciples of His approaching passion, and also of His glory following His suffering on the Cross. So that His impending passion would not totally weaken His disciples, and so that no one would fall away from Him, He, the All-wise, wanted to show them a portion of His divine glory before His passion. For that reason, He took Peter, James and John with Him and went by night to Mt. Tabor, and was there transfigured before them: And His face shone as the sun and His garments became white as snow (Matthew 17:2). Moses and Elias [Elijah], the great Old Testament prophets, also appeared beside Him. Seeing this, His disciples were stunned. Peter said: Lord, it is good for us to be here: if You will, let us make here three tabernacles; one for You, one for Moses and one for Elias (Matthew 17:4). While Peter still spoke, Moses and Elias departed, and a bright cloud overshadowed the Lord and His disciples, and there came a voice from the cloud saying: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear Him (Matthew 17:5). Hearing the voice, the disciples fell face down on the ground as though dead, and remained that way, prostrate in fear, until the Lord came to them and said: Arise, and be not afraid (Matthew 17:7). Why did the Lord take only three disciples onto Tabor, and not all? Because Judas was not worthy to behold the divine glory of the Teacher, Whom he will betray; and the Lord did not want to leave him alone at the foot of the mountain, so that the betrayer would not, because of this, justify his betrayal. Why was our Lord transfigured on a mountain and not in a valley? So as to teach us two virtues: love of labor and godly-thoughts--for climbing to the heights requires labor, and the heights themselves represent the elevation of our thoughts to the things of God. Why was our Lord transfigured at night? Because the night is more suitable than the day for prayer and godly-thoughts; and the night, by its darkness, conceals all the beauty of the earth, and reveals the beauty of the starry heavens. Why did Moses and Elias appear? In order to destroy the Jewish fallacy that Christ was one of the prophets--Elias or Jeremiah or some other. That is why He appeared as a King, above the prophets, and that is why Moses and Elias appeared as His servants. Until then, our Lord had manifested His divine power many times to the disciples; but on Mt. Tabor He manifested His Divine Nature. This vision of His Divinity, and the hearing of the heavenly witness to His being the Son of God, must have served the disciples in the days of the Lord's passion--in the strengthening of a steadfast faith in Him and in His final victory.

Taken from, 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)