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His Eminence
Metropolitan JOSEPH, PrimateHis Grace, Bishop JOHN,
Auxiliary Bishop for Worcester
and New England

Rev. Fr. Milad Selim, Dean

Rev. Arch Dn. Seraphim Solof

Rev. Dn. Anthony Payne



August Reflection*

The Dormition of the Mother of God

by Fr. Milad Selim

On August 15th of every year, the Orthodox Church celebrates the Dormition (Falling Asleep) of the Ever Virgin Mary. This Feast is anticipated with fourteen days of fasting as a way to reflect on our call to imitate the example of the Theotokos who lived a life of purity, humility, wisdom and love. Being one of the twelve major Feasts of the Church, the Falling Asleep, or death of Mary, is a joyful event that brings hope to the whole world. It directs us to the saving power of Christ who is seen in the icon of the Feast carrying His mother as a babe while she lies in a tomb surrounded by the Apostles, Angels and Bishops.

The Tradition of the Orthodox Church holds that the Virgin Mary died naturally as all humans die due to our mortal nature. Her natural death provides us with the hope in the promised bodily Resurrection - "Do not marvel at this, for the hour is coming and now is when all who are in the tombs will hear the voice of the Lord and come out - those who have done good to the Resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment" (John 5:28-29). Mary was fully reliant on her Lord and Son to save her as all human persons are saved from the trials, sufferings and death of this world. She was set aside before the foundation of the world as the holy and undefiled temple of God. And today, we magnify her as being more honorable than the Cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim as she is already in the presence of the Glory of God, the Angels and the Saints, who also have been glorified, all interceding on our behalf. Christ desires that we imitate His Pure Mother and the Saints in our way of life so that we too may achieve divine unity with Him. In other words, denying ourselves so that God may dwell within us, being mindful of our thoughts and actions so that God may purify and act through us, and emptying ourselves (Kenosis) so that we may become perfectly one with Him (Theosis).

One can imagine how joyous and yet difficult it must have been to live as the Blessed Mother of God. St. Ambrose of Milan described her as being "a Virgin not only in body, but also in soul, humble of heart, circumspect in word, wise in mind, not overly given to

speaking, a lover of reading and of work, and prudent in speech". Notice the level of mindfulness that is required of us as we seek the Glory of God. She persevered in the path of purity and humility despite having lived in a fallen world full of fear, pride, hatred, emptiness and suffering. In all things, she pointed to Christ, never seeking attention or glory, yet she was made the holiest of all the saints. In the words of St. Gregory of Palamas, "If, then, 'death of the righteous man is honorable' (Ps. 115:6) and the 'memory of the just man is celebrated with songs of praise' (Prov. 10:7), how much more ought we to honor with great praises the memory of the holiest of the saints, she by whom all holiness is afforded to the saints."

The hymns of this Feast parallel the hymns of Holy and Great Friday, which is a celebration of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. This magnificent correlation connects the death of a mother to the death of her Son while pointing us to the hope of our own resurrection. On the eve of the Feast, many Orthodox churches sing the lamentations at the Bier of the Mother of God in which the Epitaphion of the Theotokos or the Festival Icon is placed, as we do for Christ on Holy Friday.

Let us therefore my beloved ask for her intercession as we celebrate her Falling Asleep with great joy and as we journey toward our heavenly abode.

Troparion (First Tone)

In birth, you preserved your virginity; in death, you did not abandon the world, O Theotokos. As mother of life, you departed to the source of life, delivering our souls from death by your intercessions.

Kontakion (Second Tone)

Neither the grave nor death could contain the Theotokos, the unshakable hope, ever vigilant in intercession and protection. As Mother of life, He who dwell in the ever-virginal womb transposed her to life.

Fr. Milad



* This Reflection was previously published in August, 2013

DORMITION OF
THE MOST HOLY
THEOTOKOS
+ AUGUST 15

*O thou most Holy Virgin,
who knew not wedlock, the
heavens rejoice in thy glorious
falling asleep, the hosts
of angels are glad, and the
whole earth crieth out in joy,
singing to thee the funeral
song, O Mother of the Lord
of all, thou who hast delivered
human kind from its
ancestral condemnation.*

--Orthros of the Feast, Tone 4

Archdeacon Seraphim's

Fun Fact

July was a relatively quiet month on the church front, apart from commemorating some wonderful saints like St. Seraphim of Sarov, the Holy Prophets Elijah and Ezekiel and St. Mary Magdalene – one after another! August, on the other hand, is anything but quiet, with two fasts (for the Dormition of the Theotokos: August 1-14; and the Beheading of St. John the Baptist: August 29) and two great feasts (the Transfiguration: August 6; and the Dormition: August 15). There's far too much to cover in one column, so let's focus this time on the Feast of the Transfiguration.

To set the stage, the apostles have finally recognized that Jesus is the Christ (Mt. 16:13-20). He foretells to them His death and resurrection (Mt. 16:21-23). He tells them they must take up their own cross and follow Him – and He promises them a glimpse of the glory to come (Mt. 16:24-28). And then, just six days later, He is transfigured before them, His face shining like the sun and His clothes as white as the light! (Mt. 17:1-9)

Just as the Jewish feast of Passover is fulfilled in the Lord's Pascha, and the Jewish feast of Pentecost (which celebrates the giving of the Law to the Jews) becomes our Pentecost (which celebrates the giving of the Holy Spirit to the Church), so too does the Jewish feast of Tabernacles ("Sukkot") become

The Women's Club Volunteers in Action From several Churches



On June 17, 2017 at our Parish Life Conference at St. George Antiochian Orthodox Cathedral in Worcester, MA, the ladies from the following Churches were present: St. Mary Church in Cambridge, MA; St. Michael Church in Cotuit, MA; St. John of Damascus Church in Dedham, MA; St. George Church in Lawrence, MA; St. George Church in Lowell, MA; St. George Church in Norwood, MA; St. Stephen Church in Springfield, MA; Emmanuel Church in Warren, MA; St. George Church in West Roxbury, MA; and St. George Cathedral in Worcester, MA. On this day, before our general meeting, we were very busy assembling 120 hygiene kits to help those in need. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the families that find themselves in tragic circumstances through no fault of their own. A special thank you to IOCC for expanding its humanitarian work assisting Syria's displaced and exiled families, and distributing emergency kits for those in need. It is with great pleasure that our women's groups gathered together to assemble emergency kits that will be distributed to many families in many countries. May God guide us and protect us.

Our 2017 Stewardship Theme

"As the Father Has Sent Me, So I Send You."

(John 20:210)

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REMINDER
27th Annual CHARLES M. DOWD
Memorial Golf Tournament
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THURSDAY • AUGUST 31
 We welcome all of our parishioners
 and friends to join us on
 August 31, 2017 for Golf or Dinner.



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St. George Orthodox Cathedral Mission Statement:

The mission of St. George Orthodox Cathedral is to preserve and proclaim the Gospel of our Lord, God, and Saviour Jesus Christ, and grow in our Christian faith by joyfully serving and uniting all people through love, charity, education, and worship.



Continued from previous page

our Feast of the Transfiguration. Sukkot is an annual reminder of how close God was with Israel in the days (long past) when the people dwelt in tents (tabernacles) in the wilderness. Transfiguration is, conversely, the annual celebration of the closeness of God with all of us (today, here and now) as He dwells within a tent of human flesh, having ascended in that very flesh (as we celebrated back in May) and now sits at the right hand of the Father.

Jesus was transfigured in the presence of his closest disciples, Peter, James and John, and is seen by them conversing with Moses (representing the Law, the dead, and those buried beneath the earth) and Elijah (representing the Prophets, the living, and those in Heaven) "who appeared in glory and spoke [with Him] of His decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem." (Lk. 9:31)

In other words, they were speaking with Him of His coming passion and death – of the Cross. This connection between the Transfiguration and the Cross is prominent in the hymns of the feast, and also in the timing – as August 6 falls precisely 40 days before September 14, the Feast of the Elevation of the Cross.

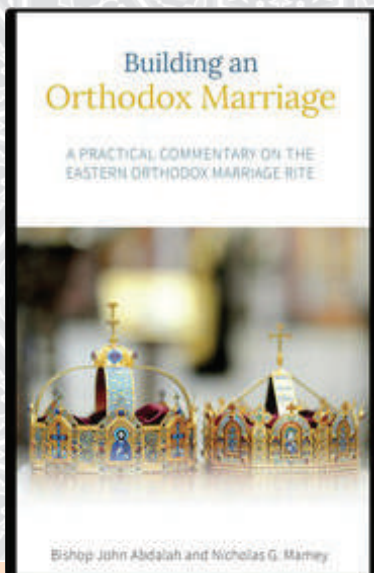
A new book has arrived, hot of the press

Building an Orthodox Marriage: **A Practical Commentary on the** **Eastern Orthodox Marriage Rite**

By His Grace Bishop JOHN and Nicholas G. Mamey

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Building an Orthodox Marriage offers sage counsel that is both practical and grounded in the teaching of the Church, as found in Scripture, tradition, and the marriage service itself. The co-authors bring their knowledge and experience to the aid of readers: Bishop JOHN (Abdalah) distills his insights from his many years of marriage and pastoral guidance, as well as from the teaching of Fr Alexander Schmemmann, and Nicholas G. Mamey contributes his perspective as a newly married man. Together, they take readers on a journey that prepares them to understand marriage, the "great mystery" that is an icon of "Christ and his Church" (Eph 5.32).



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Something to think about...

We know and are convinced that falling away from the Church, whether into schism, heresy, or sectarianism, is complete perdition and spiritual death. For us there is no Christianity outside of the Church. If Christ established the Church, and the Church is His Body, then to be cut off from His Body is to die.

(St. Hilarion Troitsky,
On Life in the Church)

The Light

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SAVE THE DATE...

Contact the Cathedral Office or organization members for more details or refer to the weekly online bulletin for updates and more information.

Reservations may be required for some events!

*Feed My Starving Children
MobilePack Event • August 12*

*27th Annual Charles M. Dowd
Memorial Golf Tournament
RESCHEDULED -August 31, 2017*

*Holy Trinity's 11th Annual
Food and Wine Fest • October 19*



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August 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Dormition Fast Begins August 1-14 (No Weddings)	2 Dormition Fast Paraklesis 7 pm	3 Dormition Fast	4 Dormition Fast Paraklesis 7 pm	5 Dormition Fast Vespers 5 pm
6 Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord Orthros: 9 am Divine Liturgy: 10 am	7 Dormition Fast PC Meeting 7 PM	8 Dormition Fast	9 Dormition Fast Paraklesis 7 pm	10 Dormition Fast Feed My Starving Children -Truck Arrives	11 Dormition Fast Feed My Starving Children - Setup Paraklesis 7 pm	12 Dormition Fast Feed My Starving Children - Packing No Vespers
13 Dormition Fast Orthros: 9 am Divine Liturgy: 10 am	14 Dormition Fast Vespers at St. Mary's Albanian Orthodox Church 6:30	15 Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos	16	17	18	19 Vespers 5 pm
20 Orthros: 9 am Divine Liturgy: 10 am	21	22	23	24	25	26 Vespers 5 pm
27 Orthros: 9 am Divine Liturgy: 10 am	28 Evening Divine Liturgy 6:30	29 [Strict Fast] Beheading of St. John the Baptist	30	31 Golf Tournament	1	2 Vespers 5 pm