



# The Weekly Forerunner

St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church

301 Struthers Liberty Rd

Campbell, OH 44405

OCA - Diocese of the Midwest



## AUGUST BULLETIN SPONSOR

*In memory of Karen Muzyka– Given by AP Andrew Bartek*

### **Liturgical & Events Schedule**

#### **Sunday, August 4**

9:35 AM: Hours

10:00 AM: Divine Liturgy / Social / Pre-Advent Social Meeting

#### **Monday, August 5**

6:00 PM: Vespers w/ Litya (Blessing of fruit)

#### **Tuesday, August 6**

Liturgy @ Transfiguration Monastery

#### **Thursday, August 8**

9:00– 10:30 AM: Calling Hours for Andy Zenko at Stewart-Kyle Funeral Home in Hubbard, OH

10:30 AM: Panchida at funeral home followed by burial

#### **Saturday, August 10**

6:00 PM: Great Vespers / Confessions

#### **Sunday, August 11**

9:35 AM: Hours

10:00 AM: Divine Liturgy / Panachida for Olga Zelina / Social by Matthew Vansuch Family / Church Council Meeting

### **7 Holy Youths “Seven Sleepers” of Ephesus / Commemorated on August 4**

The Seven Youths of Ephesus: Maximilian, Iamblicus, Martinian, John, Dionysius, Exacustodianus (Constantine) and Antoninus, lived in the third century. Saint Maximilian was the son of the Ephesus city administrator, and the other six youths were sons of illustrious citizens of Ephesus. The youths were friends from childhood, and all were in military service together.

When the emperor Decius (249-251) arrived in Ephesus, he commanded all the citizens to offer sacrifice to the pagan gods. Torture and death awaited anyone who disobeyed. The seven youths were denounced by informants, and were summoned to reply to the charges. Appearing before the Emperor, the young men confessed

their faith in Christ.

Their military belts and insignia were quickly taken from them. Decius permitted them to go free, however, hoping that they would change their minds while he was off on a military campaign. The youths fled from the city and hid in a cave on Mount Ochlon, where they passed their time in prayer, preparing for martyrdom.

The youngest of them, Saint Iamblicus, dressed as a beggar and went into the city to buy bread. On one of his excursions into the city, he heard that the emperor had returned and was looking for them. Saint Maximilian urged his companions to come out of the cave and present themselves for trial.

Learning where the young men were hidden, the emperor ordered that the entrance of the cave be sealed with stones so that the saints would perish from hunger and thirst. Two of the dignitaries at the blocked entrance to the cave were secret Christians. Desiring to preserve the memory of the saints, they placed in the cave a sealed container containing two metal plaques. On them were inscribed the names of the seven youths and the details of their suffering and death.

The Lord placed the youths into a miraculous sleep lasting almost two centuries. In the meantime, the persecutions against Christians had ceased. During the reign of the holy emperor Theodosius the Younger (408-450) there were heretics who denied that there would be a general resurrection of the dead at the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Some of them said, “How can there be a resurrection of the dead when there will be neither soul nor body, since they are disintegrated?” Others affirmed, “The souls alone will have a restoration, since it would be impossible for bodies to arise and live after a thousand years, when even their dust would not remain.” Therefore, the Lord revealed the mystery of the Resurrection of the Dead and of the future life through His seven saints.

The owner of the land on which Mount Ochlon was situated, discovered the stone construction, and his workers opened up the entrance to the cave. The Lord had kept the youths alive, and they awoke from their sleep, unaware that almost two hundred years had passed. Their bodies and clothing were completely undecayed.

Preparing to accept torture, the youths once **Con't Pg 9**

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## PLEASE KEEP OUR ELDERS OF THE CHURCH & SHUT-INS IN YOUR PRAYERS– UPDATED 5-8-24

Send a “Thinking of You” card or remember their Birthday with a card. If anyone needs to be added, please contact Fr. Andrew.

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### **Romans 12:6-14 (Epistle)**

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

### **Matthew 9:1-8 (Gospel)**

So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city. Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, “Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you.” And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, “This Man blasphemes!” But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, “Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Arise and walk’? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins” – then He said to the paralytic, “Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.” And he arose and departed to his house. Now when the multitudes saw it, they marveled and glorified God, who had given such power to men.

## PRAYER LIST– Updated 8-1-24

**PARISHIONERS:** Achilles Arvan / Audrey Chengelis / Donna Chiarelli / Helen Colaluca / Joan Cross / Ann Cvercko / Pauline Fesz / Mary Fredericks / George Horodnic / Paula Kennedy / Sue Kennedy / George Kolesar / Barbara Kolesar / Matushka Helen Psinka / Mary Jane Puskas / Carol Ruff / Kenny Ruff / Sub-deacon Vladimir Rusnak / Joanna Shepelevich / Dorothy Shirilla / Julia Simko / Emilia Yannitto / Marion Zwinski

**HIERARCHS & CLERGY:** Archbishop Benjamin / AP James Gleason (Fr.) / AP Emil Hutyan / AP Vladimir Demshuk / Fr. Matthew Nyumu & his family & parish

**FAMILY & FRIENDS:** David (Willison) / Dominic (Centofanti) / Ellen (Clark) / Genna & her newborn baby girl (Koval) / Melinda Dubiec (Fr.) / Trudy Ellmore (Fr.) / John Galpin (Fr.) / Bruce Harris (Sabo) / Karen (Gammel) / Katie (Garrity) / Basil Glovinsky (Fr.) / Ellen (Kessler) / Paul (Kolesar) / Karen (Vansuch) / Kathy (Kolesar) / Malakai (Kolesar) / Joe Kollar (Fr.) / Andrew LaChard (Jesko) / Jonathan Leso (Fr.) / Mea (Mahan) / Mary (Mahan) / Pauline Meath (Fr.) / Matushka Raissa (Nicoloff) / Eugene (Pallai) / Teri Petroff (Fr.) / Chris Quotap (Fr.) / Julia Shirilla / Bob Smrek (Sirilla) / Katherine (Steffaro) / Johanna (Tusinac) / Richard (Tusinac) / Brian (Shirilla) / Joseph (Vansuch) / Eleanor Marie (Vansuch) / Paula (Voytilla) / Mary Ann Bozichovich (Kennedy) / Patty Bozichovich (Vansuch) / Drew (Willison) / Ron Zenko / Catherine Zile (Fr.) / Brenna & her unborn baby (Fr.)

**MILITARY FAMILY & FRIENDS:** Cory Deaton (Fr.) / Alena Grabavoy (Fr.) / Liam Garrity (Zelinsky)

**MISCELLANEOUS:** Metropolitan Paul (Orthodox Diocese of Aleppo) & Archbishop John (Archdiocese of Aleppo) still being held captive & Metropolitan Arseny imprisoned / The UN & IOCC humanitarian aid workers around the world / Those suffering persecution in Syria, Iraq, Israel, Egypt, Ukraine and around the world.

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### Archpastoral Visit and Grand Reopening in Kansas City

Reconciliation Services in Kansas City, MO, recently celebrated a significant milestone filled with joy and gratitude. On the feast day of Saint Maria of Paris, Saturday, July 20th, 2024 we held the first Divine Liturgy in the newly established Chapel of St. Maria of Paris within Reconciliation Services. His Eminence Archbishop Daniel of Chicago and the Midwest who established the Chapel as an institutional chapel within the Diocese of the Midwest, presided over the first Divine Liturgy.

Archpriest Justin Mathews, Hieromonk Alexii, co-founder of Reconciliation Services served with the Archbishop. The responses were sung by Archpriest Timothy Sawchak and his family.

The chapel, located on the fifth floor and overlooking downtown KC, features stunning iconography by Seraphim O'Keefe. Following the Divine Liturgy, Archbishop Daniel blessed all five floors of our newly renovated building. The weekend continued with a grand banquet and multiple dinners with local OCA clergy and their spouses, including also Fr. Christopher Foley visiting from Holy Cross (NC).

On Monday, July 22nd, the official grand reopening of Reconciliation Services and Thelma's Kitchen at the corner of 31st Street and Troost Ave was held. This event marked the culmination of over two years of comprehensive renovations, transforming the historic building, built around 1910, into an enhanced community space that will significantly increase access to critical social and mental health services for

over 3,500 client guests annually.

“The reopening of Reconciliation Services on Troost Ave., a street long associated with division and discrimination, represents more than the opening of a beautiful building or a \$16-million investment in a community long burdened under the weight of compounding disinvestment”, reported Fr. Mathews. “It symbolizes our commitment to addressing poverty and trauma in our community as Orthodox Christians, along with others who share our sense of urgency to “love one another—so long as it is love to the end, and without exceptions,” quoting Mother Maria. Sitting atop the highest point on Troost, like a light upon a hill, Reconciliation Services and the Chapel of St. Maria serve as a reminder of the possibility of authentic reconciliation and care for our neighbor as we seek to be faithful to God and the missionary spirit of the Orthodox Church in America.”

The grand reopening began at 9:00 a.m., with the street closed to accommodate almost 500 attendees who enjoyed music, coffee, and pastries. Archbishop Daniel offered an invocation and shared inspiring remarks to commence the ceremony. Remarks from a City Council member, the City Manager, Board President Ryan Brunton, and myself were followed by a ceremonial ribbon cutting.

After the ribbon cutting, Thelma's Kitchen, Kansas City's first pay-it-forward café, which closed on March 13th, 2020, due to COVID-19, officially reopened its doors. This social venture café offers a shared table where all are welcome, regardless of their economic status or need.

Named after the late Mat. Michaela “Thelma” Altschul, co-founder of RS, Thelma's Kitchen is inspired by her life and ministry. It is a place where we can **Con't pg 5**

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## AUGUST Candle & Bulletin Sponsors

*NOTE: If anything is missing from the Sponsorships please contact Fr. Andrew ASAP*

- Bulletin:** In memory of Karen Muzyka– Given by AP Andrew Bartek  
**Wine:** In memory of my family & friends- FGiven by AP Andrew Bartek  
**Incense:** In memory of nephew Francis Imburgia– Given by Emilia Yannitto  
**Iconostasis Candles & Eternal Light:** In Memory of George & Ruth Libertin- Given by Nick & Monica / In honor of the Readers Nicholas 80th B-day on Aug. 12 & their granddaughter Zoe Faith on 1st b-day / In memory of Mary Sveda- Given by Mr & Mrs George Kolesar  
**Altar Candles:** In memory of my mother Olga Zelina– Given by Maureen Koval  
**Tetrapod Candles:** In honor of Michael Centofanti on the occasion of his b-day- Given by Martha Centofanti & Sue Kennedy  
**St. Herman Candles:** Commemorating all who participate in maintenance of the church, the teachers, singers & those who participate in social events. Praying for everyone to love one another.  
**St. Panteleimon Icon Candles:** In memory of Mary Kennedy on the occasion of her b-day- Given by Martha Centofanti & Sue Kennedy  
**Protection Icon Candles:** In memory of my mother Helene Flaherty on the occasion of her birthday– Given by Maria Demkosky  
**St. John the Baptist Candles:** in honor of my brother Michael’s b-day- given by Nancy Tusinac  
**Flowers:** In honor of Gary Thompson on occasion of his birthday– Given by Patty Thompson

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|--|--|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;"><u>\$50 per month</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Wine</li> <li>*Bulletin</li> <li>*Iconostasis Candles &amp; Eternal Light</li> <li>*Altar Candles</li> <li>*Tetrapod Candles</li> </ul> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>\$30 per month</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*St. Herman candles</li> <li>*St. Panteleimon Icon candles</li> <li>*Protection Icon candles</li> <li>*St. John the Baptist candles</li> </ul> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>\$25 per month</u></p> <p>Incense</p> <p><b>Flowers - \$50 for 2 weeks at a time– Updated</b></p> |
|--|--|---|

ATTENDANCE: A Comparison - JULY	2023	2024
<b>1st week</b>		
Vespers	10	No Vespers
Divine Liturgy	72 / 50	60 / 34
<b>2nd Week</b>		
Vespers	32	No Vespers
Divine Liturgy	57 / 40	70 / 43
<b>3rd Week</b>		
Vespers	8	No Vespers
Divine Liturgy	66 / 37	57 / 38
<b>4th Week</b>		
Vespers	No Vespers	10
Divine Liturgy	45/ No record	29 DC Service a
<b>5th Week</b>		
Vespers	9	No 5th Week
Divine Liturgy	61 / 43	No 5th Week

FINAL JULY FINANCIALS	
Expenses	\$12,919.97
Income	\$15,549.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,629.03</b>
Weekly Tithes	\$13,440
Weekly Candles	\$364
Weekly Flowers	\$50
Un-needed Gifts	\$1,250
Wine	\$50
St. John the Baptist Candles	\$30
Altar Candles	\$150
St. Panteleimon Candles	\$30
Icon Screen & Eternal Light Candles	\$100
Tetrapod Candles	\$50
Pre-Advent Social	\$10
Holy Day Offerings	\$25
Protection Candles	\$30
Charity: St Herman Seminary	\$649

### 40 DAY REMBRANCE

- August 4– Diane Tyron  
 August 11– Dan O’Brien  
 August 18– Newborn Trip Nicholas Williams  
 August 25– Betty Ewenish / AP Alexis  
 September 1– Maria Michaels / William Romanchek, Jr  
 September 8– Andy Zenko

### AUGUST Special Monthly Charity

Transfiguration Monastery in Ellwood City

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## Reposed List for AUGUST

- Joseph Uhrin (1973) ©  
Sophie Kotanchik (1964)  
1- Peter Vansuch (1971) ©  
2- Dr. Zervas (1931) ©  
4- Rose Bartek (1984)  
4- Nicholas Kioussis (1956) ©  
4- Mary Kovach (1963) ©  
5- Elias Lisko (1925) ©  
6- Julia Sirilla (1992) ©  
6- George Libertin (2019) ©  
6- Mike Kropinak (1959) ©  
7- Helen Kropinak (1991) ©  
7- George Rusnak, Jr (2021) ©  
7- Mike Gerakios (1937) ©  
8- Stella Gebbia (1998) ©  
8- Christina Krajnak (1920) ©  
9- Anna Marie Tennis (1973) ©  
10- Olga Zelina Kucheruk (2013) ©  
11- Carl D. Essex (2014)  
11-George Tobak, Sr (1972) ©  
11- John Kropinak (1926) ©  
12- Fr. Stephen Jula (2014)  
12- Michael Pacak (1978) ©  
12- John Kristian (1956) ©  
13- Daria Voytilla (2019) ©  
13- Elia Milovancovich (1933) ©  
13- John Holecko (1939) ©  
14- Bobby Almasche (2022)  
14- Kaliopie Koulianos (1950) ©  
15- Archpriest John Mutusiak (2019)  
15- Eugene Sanders (2014) ©  
15- Alice Stalian (1920) ©  
15- John Georgeadis (1941) ©  
15- Thomas Kristian (2023) ©  
16- Shawn Larriccia (2022)  
16- Anna Livosky (1984) ©  
16- Joseph Fedorchoh (1987) ©  
16- Justin Pubos (1989) ©  
16- Anna Mikita (1999) ©  
16- Margaret Kalas (1920) ©  
17- Helene Flaherty (2015)  
17- Mary Pikos (1943) ©  
17- Jack Vallas (1944) ©  
18- Mary Duritza (1984) ©  
18- Anna Cverko (1982) ©  
18- George Madich (1920) ©  
19- Fr. George Dyak (1995)  
19- Steve Hanuscin (1920) ©  
19- Harry Kidon (1925) ©  
20- John Kaschak (1976) ©  
21- Fr. Paul Herbert (2016)  
21- Sophie Boldish (1967) ©  
22- Fr. Peter Molchany (1990)  
22- Mary Rusnak (1991) ©  
22- George Roseta (1922) ©  
22- Basil Sarokos (1930) ©  
22- Kostas Zombobi (1930) ©  
22- Joseph Raschak (1930) ©  
22- Mary Karcotis (1943) ©  
22- Infant John Emil Graban (1956) ©  
23- Helen Gerakios (1925) ©  
24- Rosica Rago (1922) ©  
24- Felogia Fradzeskus (1924) ©  
25- Steve Kalas (1938) ©  
26- Michael Hally (1991) ©  
26- George Tabus (2000) ©  
27- John Vrabel (1972) ©  
27- Christopher Forgac (1976) ©  
27- Mike Lawrence (1961) ©  
28- Matthew Lariccia Sr (1992)  
28- John Simko (1969) ©  
28- Simeon Kaliscak (1921) ©  
28- Harry Sosnovchik (1925) ©  
28- George Despetarich (1956) ©  
28- Karen Muzyka (2023)  
29- Anna Vrabel (1972) ©  
29- Pani Gizella Mihaly (1975)  
29- Joseph Vansuch (1964) ©  
30- Mike Pihunias (1948) ©  
31- Mike Lawrence (1930) ©  
31- George Vasilos (1930) ©

### ***Kansas City con't from pg 3***

share our family stories and build friendships to make reconciliation more possible today than it was yesterday.

Guests were invited to explore the expanded program spaces, including the new Center for Reconciliation event space, the fifth-floor outdoor therapy garden, and the Chapel of St. Maria of Paris.

For more information about Thelma's Kitchen and the ministry of Reconciliation Services, please visit [ThelmasKitchen.org](https://www.thelmasKitchen.org) and [RS3101.org](https://www.RS3101.org).

## **Procession of the Honorable Wood of the Life-Giving Cross of the Lord (First of the three “Feasts of the Savior” in August) / Commemorated on August 1**

The origin of this Feast is explained in the Greek Horologion of 1897: “Because of the illnesses which occur during the month of August, it was customary at Constantinople to carry the Precious Wood of the Cross in procession throughout the city for its sanctification, and to deliver it from sickness.”

On the eve (July 31), the Cross was removed from the imperial treasury and placed it upon the Holy Table of the Great Church of Hagia Sophia (which is dedicated to Christ, the Wisdom of God). From August 1 until the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos, there was a procession throughout the entire the city, and then the Cross was placed where all the people could venerate it.

In the Russian Church this Feast is combined with the remembrance of the Baptism of Rus on August 1, 988. In the “The order of services for the holy, catholic, and apostolic Great Church of the Dormition,” which was compiled in 1627 by order of Patriarch Philaret of Moscow and All Rus, there is a similar explanation of the Feast: “On the day of the Procession of the Precious Cross there is a Cross Procession with the Sanctification of Water, for the enlightenment of the people, in all the towns and places.”

Knowledge of the day of the actual Baptism of Rus is preserved in the Chronicles of the XVI century: “The Baptism of the Great Prince Vladimir of Kiev and of all Rus took place on August 1.”

In the current practice of the Russian Church, the service of the Lesser Sanctification of Water on August 1 takes place either before or after Liturgy. Because of the Blessing of Water, this first Feast of the Savior in August is sometimes called “the Savior of the Water.” Along with the Blessing of Water, there may also be a Blessing of Honey (thus it is also called “the Savior of the Honey),” because on this day, the newly-gathered honey is blessed and tasted.

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## **The Holy Transfiguration of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ (the Second “Feast of the Savior” in August) / Commemorated on August 6**

Discourse on the Holy Transfiguration of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ of Saint Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica

For an explanation of the present Feast and understanding of its truth, it is necessary for us to turn to the very start of today’s reading from the Gospel: “Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James and

John his brother, and led them up onto a high mountain by themselves” (Mt.17:1).

First of all we must ask, from whence does the Evangelist Matthew begin to reckon with six days? From what sort of day is it? What does the preceding turn of speech indicate, where the Savior, in teaching His disciples, said to them: “For the Son of Man shall come with his angels in the glory of His Father,” and further: “Amen I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death, until they have seen the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom” (Mt.16:27-28)? That is to say, it is the Light of His own forthcoming Transfiguration which He terms the Glory of His Father and of His Kingdom.

The Evangelist Luke points this out and reveals this more clearly saying: “Now it came to pass about eight days after these words, that He took Peter and John and James, and went up the mountain to pray. And as He prayed, His countenance was altered, and His raiment became a radiant white” (Luke 9:28-29). But how can the two be reconciled, when one of them speaks definitively about the interval of time as being eight days between the sayings and the manifestation, whereas the other (says): “after six days?”

There were eight on the mountain, but only six were visible. Three, Peter, James and John, had come up with Jesus, and they saw Moses and Elias standing there and conversing with Him, so altogether there were six of them. However, the Father and the Holy Spirit were invisibly with the Lord: the Father, with His Voice testifying that this was His Beloved Son, and the Holy Spirit shining forth with Him in the radiant cloud. Thus, the six are actually eight, and there is no contradiction regarding the eight. Similarly, there is no contradiction with the Evangelists when one says “after six days,” and the other says “eight days after these words.”

But these twofold sayings as if were present is a certain format set in mystery, and together with it that of those actually present upon the Mount. It stands to reason, and everyone rationally studying in accordance with Scripture knows that the Evangelists are in agreement one with another. Luke spoke of eight days without contradicting Matthew, who declared “after six days.” There is not another day added on to represent the day on which these sayings were uttered, nor is the day on which the Lord was transfigured added on (which a rational person might reasonably imagine to be added to the days of Matthew).

The Evangelist Luke does not say “after eight days” (like the Evangelist Matthew says “after six days”), but rather “it came to pass eight days after these words.” But where the Evangelists seem to contradict one another, they actually point out to us something great and mysterious. In actual fact, why did the one say “after six days,” but the other, in ignoring the seventh day, have in mind the eighth day? It is because the great vision of the Light of the Transfiguration of the Lord is the mystery of the Eighth Day, i.e., of the future age, coming to be revealed after the passing away of the world created in six days. **Con’t Next Pg**

## Celebrations in AUGUST

### BIRTHDAYS

- 4 Meiriam Dardovski
- 9 Elaine Basala
- 12 Layne Demkosky, Reader Nick Vansuch
- 13 Frank Batura, Jr., Ed Kusinski
- 14 Eli Arvan, Katie Zelinsky
- 15 Anthony Cavaliere
- 16 Anthony Jesko, Jr.
- 29 Archbishop Michael
- 31 Sharon LaVallee, Fr. Emilian Hutnyan, Melanie Rusnak

### ANNIVERSARY

- 10 Fr. Michael & Pani Mellissa Chendorain
- 18 Nicola & Shelly Nicoloff, Philip & Trudy Ellmore
- 21 Fr. Gregory & Matushka Xenia Burner, Dc. David & Mat. Gemmel
- 27 Fr. Michael & Presbyteria Jessica
- 28 Fr. Eli Bremer Priestly ordination
- 29 Zoland & Claudia Zile
- 30 Fr. Peter & Pani Bernadette

### NAMES DAY

- 23 AB Irene of Canada
- 30 AB Alexander of Dallas

### *Transfiguration con't from previous pg*

About the power of the Divine Spirit, through Whom the Kingdom of God is to be revealed, the Lord predicted: "There are some standing here who shall not taste death, until they have seen the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom" (Mt.16:28). Everywhere and in every way the King will be present, and everywhere will be His Kingdom, since the advent of His Kingdom does not signify the passing over from one place to another, but rather the revelation of its power of the Divine Spirit. That is why it is said: "come in power." And this power is not manifest to simply ordinary people, but to those standing with the Lord, that is to say, those who have affirmed their faith in Him like Peter, James and John, and especially those who are free of our natural abasement. Therefore, and precisely because of this, God manifests Himself upon the Mount, on the one hand coming down from His heights, and on the other, raising us up from the depths of abasement, since the Transcendent One takes on mortal nature. Certainly, such a manifest appearance by far transcends the utmost limits of the mind's grasp, as effectualized by the power of the Divine Spirit.

Thus, the Light of the Transfiguration of the Lord is not something that comes to be and then vanishes, nor is it subject to the sensory faculties, although it was contemplated by corporeal eyes for a short while upon an inconsequential mountaintop. But the initiates of the

Mystery, (the disciples) of the Lord at this time passed beyond mere flesh into spirit through a transformation of their senses, effectualized within them by the Spirit, and in such a way that they beheld what, and to what extent, the Divine Spirit had wrought blessedness in them to behold the Ineffable Light.

Those not grasping this point have conjectured that the chosen from among the Apostles beheld the Light of the Transfiguration of the Lord by a sensual and creaturely faculty, and through this they attempt to reduce to a creaturely level (i.e., as something "created") not only this Light, the Kingdom and the Glory of God, but also the Power of the Divine Spirit, through Whom it is meet for Divine Mysteries to be revealed. In all likelihood, such persons have not heeded the words of the Apostle Paul: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man, what things God has prepared for those who love Him. But to us God has revealed them through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God" (1 Cor.2:9-10).

So, with the onset of the Eighth Day, the Lord, taking Peter, James and John, went up on the Mount to pray. He always prayed alone, withdrawing from everyone, even from the Apostles themselves, as for example when with five loaves and two fish He fed the five thousand men, besides women and children (Mt.14:19-23). Or, taking with Him those who excelled others, as at the approach of His Saving Passion, when He said to the other disciples: "Sit here while I go over there and pray" (Mt.26:36). Then He took with Him Peter, James and John. But in our instance right here and now, having taken only these same three, the Lord led them up onto a high mountain by themselves and was transfigured before them, that is to say, before their very eyes.

"What does it mean to say: He was transfigured?" asks the Golden-Mouthed Theologian (Chrysostom). He answers this by saying: "It revealed something of His Divinity to them, as much and insofar as they were able to apprehend it, and it showed the indwelling of God within Him." The Evangelist Luke says: "And as He prayed, His countenance was altered" (Luke 9:29); and from the Evangelist Matthew we read: "And His face shone as the sun" (Mt.17:2). But the Evangelist said this, not in the context that this Light be thought of as subsistent for the senses (let us put aside the blindness of mind of those who can conceive of nothing higher than what is known through the senses). Rather, it is to show that Christ God, for those living and contemplating by the Spirit, is the same as the sun is for those living in the flesh and contemplating by the senses. Therefore, some other Light for the knowing the Divinity is not necessary for those who are enriched by Divine gifts.

That same Inscrutable Light shone and was mysteriously manifest to the Apostles and the foremost of the Prophets at that moment, when (the Lord) was praying. This shows that what brought forth this blessed sight was prayer, and that the radiance occurred and was manifest by uniting the mind with God, and it is granted **Con't next pg**

## Transfiguration con't from previous page

to all who, with constant exercise in efforts of virtue and prayer, strive with their mind towards God. True beauty, essentially, can be contemplated only with a purified mind. To gaze upon its luminance assumes a sort of participation in it, as though some bright ray etches itself upon the face.

Even the face of Moses was illumined by his association with God. Do you not know that Moses was transfigured when he went up the mountain, and there beheld the Glory of God? But he (Moses) did not effect this, but rather he underwent a transfiguration. However, our Lord Jesus Christ possessed that Light Himself. In this regard, actually, He did not need prayer for His flesh to radiate with the Divine Light; it was but to show from whence that Light descends upon the saints of God, and how to contemplate it. For it is written that even the saints “will shine forth like the sun” (Mt. 13:43), which is to say, entirely permeated by Divine Light as they gaze upon Christ, divinely and inexpressibly shining forth His Radiance, issuing from His Divine Nature. On Mount Tabor it was manifest also in His Flesh, by reason of the Hypostatic Union (i.e., the union of the two perfect natures, divine and human, within the divine Person [Hypostasis] of Christ, the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity). The Fourth Ecumenical Council at Chalcedon defined this Hypostatic union of Christ’s two natures, divine and human, as “without mingling, without change, without division, without separation.”

We believe that at the Transfiguration He manifested not some other sort of light, but only that which was concealed beneath His fleshly exterior. This Light was the Light of the Divine Nature, and as such, it was Uncreated and Divine. So also, in the teachings of the Fathers, Jesus Christ was transfigured on the Mount, not taking upon Himself something new nor being changed into something new, nor something which formerly He did not possess. Rather, it was to show His disciples that which He already was, opening their eyes and bringing them from blindness to sight. For do you not see that eyes that can perceive natural things would be blind to this Light?

Thus, this Light is not a light of the senses, and those contemplating it do not simply see with sensual eyes, but rather they are changed by the power of the Divine Spirit. They were transformed, and only in this way did they see the transformation taking place amidst the very assumption of our perishability, with the deification through union with the Word of God in place of this.

So also she who miraculously conceived and gave birth recognized that the One born of her is God Incarnate. So it was also for Simeon, who only received this Infant into his arms, and the aged Anna, coming out [from the Jerusalem Temple] for the Meeting, since the Divine Power illumined, as through a glass windowpane, giving light for those having pure eyes of heart.

And why did the Lord, before the beginning of the Transfiguration, choose the foremost of the Apostles and lead them up onto the Mount with Him? Certainly, it was to show them something great and mysterious. What is particularly great or mysterious in showing a sensory light, which not only the foremost, but all the other Apostles already abundantly possessed? Why would they need a transforming of their eyes by the power of the Holy Spirit for a contemplation of this Light, if it were merely sensory and created? How could the Glory and the Kingdom of the Father and the Holy Spirit project forth in some sort of sensory light? Indeed, in what sort of Glory and Kingdom would Christ the Lord come at the end of the ages, when there would not be necessary anything in the air, nor in expanse, nor anything similar, but when, in the words of the Apostle, “God will be all in all” (1 Cor. 15: 28)? That is to say, will He alter everything for all? If so, then it follows that light is included.

Hence it is clear that the Light of Tabor was a Divine Light. And the Evangelist John, inspired by Divine Revelation, says clearly that the future eternal and enduring city “has no need of the sun or moon to shine upon it. For the Glory of God lights it up, and the Lamb will be its lamp” (Rev 21:23). Is it not clear, that he points out here that this [Lamb] is Jesus, Who is divinely transfigured now upon Tabor, and the flesh of Whom shines, is the lamp manifesting the Glory of divinity for those ascending the mountain with Him?

John the Theologian also says about the inhabitants of this city: “they will not need light from lamps, nor the light of the sun, for the Lord God will shed light upon them, and night shall be no more” (Rev 22:5). But how, we might ask, is there this other light, in which “there is no change, nor shadow of alteration” (Jas 1:17)? What light is there that is constant and unsetting, unless it be the Light of God? Moreover, could Moses and Elias (and particularly the former, who clearly was present only in spirit, and not in flesh [Elias having ascended bodily to Heaven on the fiery chariot]) be shining with any sort of sensory light, and be seen and known? Especially since it was written of them: “they appeared in glory, and spoke of his death, which he was about to fulfill at Jerusalem” (Luke 9:30-31). And how otherwise could the Apostles recognize those whom they had never seen before, unless through the mysterious power of the Divine Light, opening their mental eyes?

But let us not tire our attention with the furthestmost interpretations of the words of the Gospel. We shall believe thus, as those same ones have taught us, who themselves were enlightened by the Lord Himself, insofar as they alone know this well: the Mysteries of God, in the words of a prophet, are known to God alone and His perpetual proximity. Let us, considering the Mystery of the Transfiguration of the Lord in accord with their teaching, strive to be illumined by this Light ourselves and encourage in ourselves love and striving towards the Unfading Glory and Beauty, purifying our spiritual eyes of worldly thoughts and refraining from perishable and quickly passing delights and beauty which darken the garb of the soul and **Con't Next Pg**



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lead to the fire of Gehenna and everlasting darkness. Let us be freed from these by the illumination and knowledge of the incorporeal and ever-existing Light of our Savior transfigured on Tabor, in His Glory, and of His Father from all eternity, and His Life-Creating Spirit, Whom are One Radiance, One Godhead, and Glory, and Kingdom, and Power now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

## **Apostle Matthias of the Seventy / Commemorated on August 9**

The Holy Apostle Matthias was born at Bethlehem of the Tribe of Judah. From his early childhood he studied the Law of God under the guidance of Saint Simeon the God-Receiver (February 3).

When the Lord Jesus Christ revealed Himself to the world, Saint Matthias believed in Him as the Messiah, followed constantly after Him and was numbered among the Seventy Apostles, whom the Lord “sent them two by two before His face” (Luke 10:1).

After the Ascension of the Savior, Saint Matthias was chosen by lot to replace Judas Iscariot as one of the Twelve Apostles (Acts 1:15-26). After the Descent of the Holy Spirit, the Apostle Matthias preached the Gospel at Jerusalem and in Judea together with the other Apostles (Acts 6:2, 8:14). From Jerusalem he went with the Apostles Peter and Andrew to Syrian Antioch, and was in the Cappadocian city of Tiamum and Sinope. Here the Apostle Matthias was locked into prison, from which he was miraculously freed by Saint Andrew the First-Called.

The Apostle Matthias journeyed after this to Amasea, a city on the shore of the sea. During a three year journey of the Apostle Andrew, Saint Matthias was with him at Edessa and Sebaste. According to Church Tradition, he was preaching at Pontine Ethiopia (presently Western Georgia) and Macedonia. He was frequently subjected to deadly peril, but the Lord preserved him to preach the Gospel.

Once, pagans forced the saint to drink a poison potion. He drank it, and not only did he himself remain unharmed, but he also healed other prisoners who had been blinded by the potion. When Saint Matthias left the prison, the pagans searched for him in vain, for he had become invisible to them. Another time, when the pagans had become enraged intending to kill the Apostle, the earth opened up and engulfed them.

The Apostle Matthias returned to Judea and did not cease to enlighten his countrymen with the light of Christ's teachings. He worked great miracles in the Name of the Lord Jesus and he converted a great many to faith in Christ.

The Jewish High Priest Ananias hated Christ and earlier had commanded the Apostle James, Brother of the Lord, to be flung down from the heights of the Temple, and now he ordered that the Apostle Matthias be arrested and brought for judgment before the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem.

The impious Ananias uttered a speech in which he blasphemously slandered the Lord. Using the prophecies of the Old Testament, the Apostle Matthias demonstrated that Jesus Christ is the True God, the promised Messiah, the Son of God, Consubstantial and Coeternal with God the Father. After these words the Apostle Matthias was sentenced to death by the Sanhedrin and stoned.

When Saint Matthias was already dead, the Jews, to hide their malefaction, cut off his head as an enemy of Caesar. (According to several historians, the Apostle Matthias was crucified, and indicate that he instead died at Colchis.) The Apostle Matthias received the martyr's crown of glory in the year 63.

### ***7 Holy youths con't from pg 1***

asked Saint Iamblicus to buy bread for them in the city. Going toward the city, the youth was astonished to see a cross on the gates. Hearing the name of Jesus Christ freely spoken, he began to doubt that he was approaching his own city.

When he paid for the bread, Iamblicus gave the merchant coins with the image of the emperor Decius on it. He was detained, as someone who might be concealing a horde of old money. They took Saint Iamblicus to the city administrator, who also happened to be the Bishop of Ephesus. Hearing the bewildering answers of the young man, the bishop perceived that God was revealing some sort of mystery through him, and went with other people to the cave.

At the entrance to the cave the bishop found the sealed container and opened it. He read upon the metal plaques the names of the seven youths and the details of the sealing of the cave on the orders of the emperor Decius. Going into the cave and seeing the saints alive, everyone rejoiced and perceived that the Lord, by waking them from their long sleep, was demonstrating to the Church the mystery of the Resurrection of the Dead.

Soon the emperor himself arrived in Ephesus and spoke with the young men in the cave. Then the holy youths, in sight of everyone, lay their heads upon the ground and fell asleep again, this time until the General Resurrection.

The emperor wanted to place each of the youths into a jeweled coffin, but they appeared to him in a dream and said that their bodies were to be left upon the ground in the cave. In the twelfth century the Russian pilgrim Iguumen Daniel saw the holy relics of the seven youths in the cave.

There is a second commemoration of the seven youths on October 22. According to one tradition, which entered into the Russian Prologue (of Saints' Lives), the youths fell asleep for the second time on this day. The Greek Menaion of 1870 says that they first fell ***Con't next pg***

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asleep on August 4, and woke up on October 22.

There is a prayer of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus in the Great Book of Needs (Trebnik) for those who are ill and cannot sleep. The Seven Sleepers are also mentioned in the service for the Church New Year, September 1.

## St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church

301 Struthers Liberty Road - Campbell, OH

<https://www.stjohnthebaptist-campbell.org/>



**2ND ANNUAL  
PARISH PICNIC**

**Saturday  
August 17  
1:00 PM  
to  
??? PM**

**1:00 PM – Blessing of Emergency Vehicles  
and First Responders**



Food

Fun

Christian fellowship

**Dunk Tank  
(who will be the target?!?)**

**Horseshoes**

**Interactive games**



**Bring your family, grandchildren,  
neighbors!**



RSVP by August 11, 2024 not necessary but helpful for food planning.

Office: 330-755-4931 / Cell: 570-212-8747

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