

A WORD FOR THE DAY

On the Holy Transfiguration:

One word dominates this feast in all its prayers, hymns and readings. This word is light. "Let your everlasting light shine also upon us sinners." The world is a dark, cold and terrifying place. And this darkness is not dispelled by the physical light of the sun. On the contrary, perhaps, the sun's light makes human life seem even more terrible and hopeless as life surges relentlessly and inexorably, bound by sufferings and loneliness, toward death and annihilation. All is condemned, all suffers, all is subject to the incomprehensible and merciless law of sin and death. But then comes the appearance on earth, the entrance into the world, of a man, humble and homeless, who has no authority at all over anyone, who has no earthly power whatsoever. And He tells people that this kingdom of darkness, evil and death is not our true life; that this is not the world God created; that evil and suffering and finally death itself can and must be conquered; and that He is sent by God, his own Father, to save people from this terrible bondage to sin and death.

Human beings have forgotten their true nature and calling, renounced them. They must turn to see that they have lost the ability to see, to hear what they are already incapable of hearing. They must come to believe all over again that good is stronger than evil, love stronger than hate, life stronger than death. Christ heals, helps and gives himself to everyone. And nevertheless the people do not understand, do not hear, do not believe. He could have revealed his divine glory and power and forced them to believe in him. But He wants from them only freely-given faith, freely-given love, freely-given acceptance. He knows that in the hour of his ultimate sacrifice, ultimate self-giving, everyone will flee in fear and forsake him. But right now, so that afterwards, when everything is finished, the world would still have some evidence of where He is inviting people to come, what He is offering us as a gift, as life, as the fullness of meaning and joy; now, therefore, hidden from the world and from the people, He reveals to three of his own disciples that glory, that light, that victorious celebration to which man is called from eternity.

The divine light, permeating the entire world. The divine light, transfiguring man. The divine light in which everything acquires its ultimate and eternal meaning. "It is good for us to be here," cried the apostle Peter seeing this light and this glory. And from that time, Christianity, the Church, faith is one continuous, joyful repetition of this "it is good for us to be here." But faith is also a plea for the everlasting light, a thirst for this illumination and transfiguration. This light continues to shine, through the darkness and evil, through the drab grayness and dull routine of this world, like a ray of sun piercing through the clouds. It is recognized by the soul, it comforts the heart, it makes us feel alive, and it transfigures us from within.

"Lord! It is good for us to be here!" If only these words might become ours, if only they might become our soul's answer to the gift of divine light, if only our prayer might become the prayer for transfiguration, for the victory of light! "Let your everlasting light shine also upon us sinners!"

Fr. Alexander Schmemmann

ST. NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish Of The New England Diocese ✦ Orthodox Church In America

August 8, 2017

Ninth Sunday After Pentecost — Tone 8. The Holy Transfiguration Of Our Lord God And Savior Jesus Christ (Second "Feast Of The Savior" In August).



Divine Services

Saturday, Aug. 12.....Reader's Vespers6:00 p.m.
Sunday, Aug. 13Divine Liturgy..... 10:00 a.m.
(Hours Begin at 9:40 a.m.)

Today's Readings

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 3:9-17
2 Petr 1:10-19 (*Feast*)

Gospel: Matthew 14:22-34
Matthew 17:1-9 (*Feast*)

Next Week's Readings

1 Corinthians 4:9-16

Matthew 17-14-23

For Next Week, August 13

Hours and Thanksgiving PrayersIrene Vassos

For the health and well-being of Archpriest Joseph and Matushka Julia, Abdullah, David, Tony, Stanislav, Leonard, Timothy, Helen, Fenaeda, Raya, Dennis, Svetlana, Konstantin, Vladislav, Nancy, Maria, Al, Mat. Myra, Michael, Ludmila, Nick, and Koren.

August Birthdays

Greg Beskalo (8/01), Steven Nikitas (8/01), Barbara Parhizgar (8/03), Ruthann Eagen (8/03), Corinne Keegan (8/06), Julianna Salinovici (8/22), Banchi Tafet (8/27), Theodore Metros (8/27), Nick Bobrovsky (8/28)

Announcements

Today we bless the First Fruits! It is from the 3rd century that we continue the tradition of blessing of first fruits and thanksgiving for the Fall harvest. It then became a practice to celebrate this blessing on the Feast of the Transfiguration.



August Charities will go to the Protodeacon

Gregory Hatrak Memorial Fund: Protodeacon Gregory Hatrak fell asleep in the Lord the evening of July 1, 2017, at the age of 46. He had previously served at St. Tikhon's Seminary and more recently at St. Vladimir's as Director of Marketing and Operations for the Bookstore. The seminary has set up a memorial fund for his widow, Matushka Robyn Hatrak and for

his funeral expenses. Individuals and churches are contributing to this fund and we hope you will help with your donations for our August donations. Thank you.

Thank you again! These parishioners came once again to work on cleaning out the barn yesterday: Nick, Len, Sorin, Allen, Serge and Lucian. We have faithful members who continue to show their support for St. Nicholas with their talents.

No Item or Food Storage Policy: The Parish Council asks that no one bring or leave any items in the rectory, basement, barn or other areas without first clearing it with Rick Goudey. We want to try and keep things organized and clean. This also includes not leaving food after Sunday Coffee Hours. We had expenses for mice removal last year that we want to avoid, as well as wanting to maintain a healthy environment in the rectory.

Upcoming Events

No Daily Wednesday Readers' Vespers for August: We will continue these services in the Fall. We will continue to have Reader's Vespers on Saturday.

August Calendar: The August calendar is in the back of the church. Please pick one up on your way out. **Note:** we have added a few services for August from Fr. John Kreta's church in Salisbury, CT for those wishing to attend the Dormition Feast Day services and the Akathist for St. Herman of Alaska.

September 10: Baptism of Grace Makdisi - at 12:30 p.m.!

Collections

Last Week's Collection	\$2,513
2017 Budget	\$96,142
Progress Towards Budget	\$48,351