

A WORD FOR THE DAY

On the Feast of the Dormition

"The circumstances surrounding the Dormition of the Mother of God are well known in the Orthodox Church from the time of the Apostles. St. Dionysius the Aeropagite wrote in the first century about her Dormition. In the second century, the story of the Most Holy Virgin's bodily translation into heaven is found in the works of Meliton, Bishop of Sardica. In the fourth century, St. Epiphanius of Cyprus refers to the tradition of the Dormition of the Mother of God. In the fifth century, St. Juvenal, Patriarch of Jerusalem said to the holy right-believing Greek Queen Pulcheria, "Although there is nothing written in Holy Scripture about the circumstances surrounding her (the Theotokos's) death, we nevertheless know about them from ancient and most reliable tradition." This tradition was collected and set forth in detail in the ecclesiastical history of Nicephorus Callistos from the fourth century.

Holy Tradition tells us that all the Apostles, with the exception of St. Thomas, were transported mystically to Jerusalem in order to be with the Mother of God – the Theotokos – as she reposed, and to be present at her burial. When the Apostle Thomas arrived the next day, the Apostles opened the tomb so that he could kiss her farewell. As the tomb was opened, the body of the Most Pure Virgin was missing, and the cave was filled with flowers and the sweet fragrance of Paradise. This was a sure sign of her great purity and holiness to the faithful.

Therefore as part of our celebration of Dormition we bless flowers and fragrant herbs – and the faithful traditionally keep them in their homes. The herbs, used as natural medicine, are blessed in commemoration of the numerous healings and the extraordinary grace bestowed on the pilgrims at the blessed tomb of the Mother of God. During times of family strife or illness, it is a pious custom to place the flower petals in the house censer, together with the incense, and cense the whole house with it...."

from a sermon of St. John of Kronstadt

The words of one of the deepest and most beautiful prayers addressed to Mary now come to mind. "Rejoice, bright dawn of the mystical Day!" (Akathist Hymn). The light which pours from the Dormition comes precisely from that never-ending, mystical Day. In contemplating this death and standing at this deathbed we understand that death is no more, that a person's very act of dying has now become an act of living, the entrance into a larger life, where life reigns. She who gave herself completely to Christ, who loved him to the end, is met by him at these radiant gates of death, and there at once death is turned into joyful meeting - life is triumphant, joy and love rule over all.

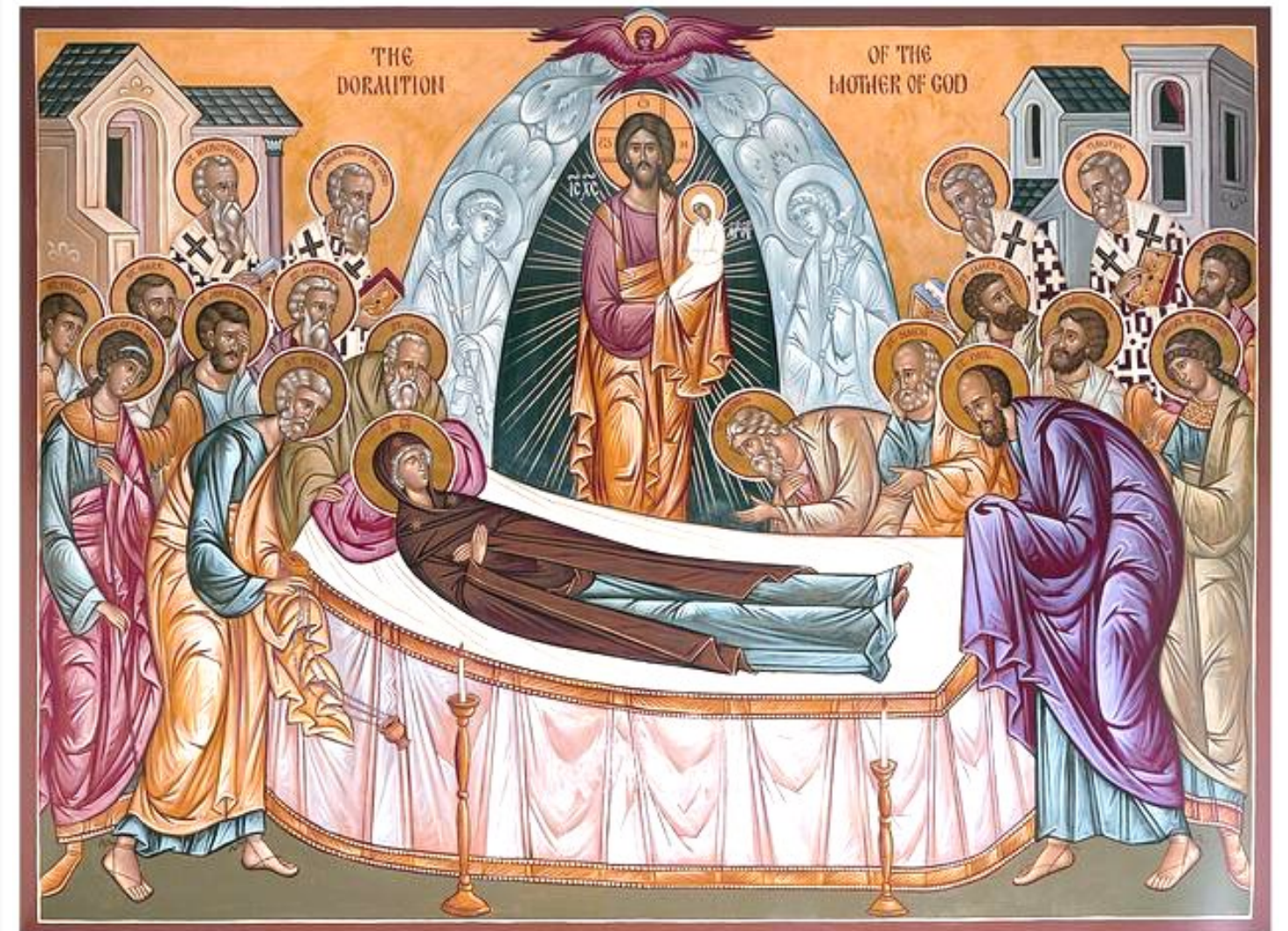
Fr. Alexander Schmemmann

ST. NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH

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

August 13, 2017

10th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 1. Leavetaking of the Transfiguration. St. Tikhon, Bishop of Vorónezh, Wonderworker of Zadónsk and All Russia (1783). Translation of the Relics of St. Maximus the Confessor (662). Uncovering of the Relics of Ven. Maxim of Moscow, Fool-for-Christ (ca. 1547). Martyr Hippolytus of Rome and those with him: Martyr Concordia, Irenæus, and Abundius (258). The Icon "PASSION" of the Most-holy Theotokos. (Note: The service for St Tikhon is transferred to August 12.)



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 4:9-16

Gospel: Matthew 17-14-23

Next Week's Readings

1 Corinthians 9:2-12

Matthew 18:23-35

For Next Week, August 20

Hours and Thanksgiving PrayersIrene Vassos

Epistle:.....Tanya Bogaevsckaya

Coffee Hour:Diane Dunn

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, Koren, and Gregory.

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 Flowers and Herbs! It is traditional on the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos for the faithful to bring fresh flowers and herbs to be blessed. Fr. Igor will bless the flowers at the end of the Divine Liturgy.

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 you donations for our August donations. Thank you.

Upcoming Events

August 17th: Third Thursday in Pittsfield from 5:00 to 8:00. Third Thursday is this week. We can use help plus donations of food or funds to purchase foods. See Rick Goudey if you can help out.

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 evening.

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 service on August 15th.

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

Collections

Last Week's Collection.....\$1009

2017 Budget.....\$96,142

Progress Towards Budget....\$49,360