

CHURCH STAFF

- Parish Priest: Very Reverend Archimandrite Christodoulos Margellos
- Parish Council President: Jim (Demetrios) Katsitis
- Philoptochos President: Eleni Giakoumopoulos
- Sunday School Directors: Susu Saba & Peli Galiti
- Greek School: Ilektra Kolokouri
- Choir Director: George Tzougros

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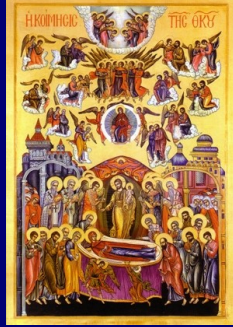
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The Message

AUGUST 2020

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 ac-

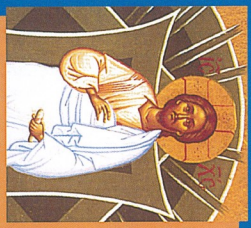
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What wondrous gifts our God has given us!

Feast of the Holy Transfiguration of Our Savior August 6

“This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to Him.” (Matthew 17:5)

- + Christ is the central figure, blessing with His right hand.
- + His left hand contains a scroll, signifying His authority.
- + Divine glory and light radiate out from Christ in the cloud atop Mount Tabor.
- + Elijah stands at the top of the left mountain peak, and he bows toward Christ with his right hand raised in a gesture of intercession.
- + Moses stands at the top right mountain peak, holding the Law.
- + St. John Chrysostom explains that Elijah and Moses represent the Law and the Prophets—Moses received the Law from God, and Elijah was a great prophet.
- + Both experienced visions of God—Moses on Mount Sinai and Elijah on Mount Carmel.
- + Also, Elijah and Moses represent the living and the dead, as Moses died a natural death, while Elijah was carried up into heaven while living.



- + Below Christ are the three Apostles—Peter, John, and James—who have fallen to the ground in amazement in response to the Transfiguration of Christ.
- + They have been granted the blessing to gaze upon the Light of all, and they, too, will be transfigured by God. This should be our hope, as well.
- + St. John Chrysostom says that Christ did not show His whole divinity, but just a small portion of it. He did this, on the one hand, to give information about what the divine glory of the Kingdom is like, and on the other hand, out of love for mankind, lest they lose their life in seeing the full glory of God.
- + The impact of the vision alone has left the Apostles' garments in a state of disarray.
- + Yet, through Christ, we are able to be joined with God, “feeling the rays yet not being burned by the Sun.”



What can we give back?

Developed by the
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America
Office of Parish Development
www.development.goarch.org
(847)825-1432

The Parish Council Update

August 2020

Officers: Jim Katsihtis, President; Maria Molzahn, Vice President; Bruce Hansen, Secretary; Niko Papadopoulos, Treasurer; Scott Storck, Assistant Treasurer

Members: John Bayouth, Christy Chappell-Belkin, Conn Choles, Maria Schirmer-Devitt, Dori Hosek, Carol Griskavich, Mike Smith

We hope and pray that you are all well during this continued COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you for your patience and support of the safety precautions and guidelines we've implemented for worshipping together. We continue to work very closely with our Metropolis and our own Parish Safety Team to minimize the risk of spreading the virus. We know some of the procedures can be challenging at times, and we appreciate the love for your neighbor that you are showing by following them. The current situation is a great opportunity for us to grow in humility, patience and obedience. Let us be inspired by knowing how much more Christ condescended, becoming like one of His creation and taking on our sins out of love to restore and save us.

We again thank Very Rev. Fr. Christodoulos, our Chanters, Alter Servers, Ushers, Safety Team and Cleaning Team for their ongoing efforts and service. Please especially remember Fr. Christodoulos in your prayers, who arrived at such a challenging time, as he leads us through this. Thanks also to our Philoptochos and many Ministries for the wonderful work they continue to do for our community.

We're pleased to announce that the back parking lot and wall/fence project is now completed and looks beautiful! Thanks to all involved in making that a success, especially Mike Smith who worked closely with our general contractor.

While Sunday School is not meeting, we have dedicated one of the Sunday School classrooms (ClassRoom #3) for nursing Mothers.

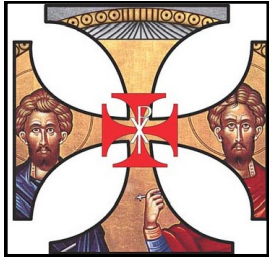
As Father Christodoulos has communicated, we will be switching to a new, "sign-up" based model for services in August. We look forward to seeing you and to the celebration of the feastday of our Parish on August 15th.

Thank you to all who continue to support our parish via their many forms of stewardship. Our parish relies on your loving stewardship. As a reminder, we are in the midst of a Matching Funds campaign. Please continue to pray for and support our parish. And please let us know how we can serve you better.

The next Parish Council meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday August 4th.

On behalf of the Parish Council,

Jim Katsihtis
407-408-3096
jkatsihtis@gmail.com



FOCUS ON PHILOPTOCHOS HELP US TO HELP OTHERS

**President, Eleni Giakoumopoulos, lenagiak@gmail.com
608-556-8186**

**Vice President: Maria Molzahn, Secretary: Sue Soloninka, Treasurer: Maria Heide,
Asst. Treasurer: Jenny Glatch, Corresponding Secretary: Nancy Briamis, Asst. Corre-
sponding Secretary: Kathie Fafalios**

Our sincere wishes for everyone to be healthy and safe during this challenging time. Thank you for all your support in the work we do. We are #PhiloStrong because of the support of this amazing community!!

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES:

philoptochos virtual bake sale

Join us for a Virtual Mini Bake Sale!!

Miss our Greek Fest Plus? We do too! While we can't risk the health and safety of our community and hold the traditional festival this year, we are going to try a mini-bake sale and we're doing it all online. To make this process as safe as possible, this will be a pre-order and pay sale only.

Please watch your email for more details on this virtual fundraiser. If you haven't yet, please go to our website: agocwi.org and set up a VANCO account through the AGOC online giving page here. We are excited to offer this opportunity to our AGOC family.

Masks matter Initiative

The chapter has become involved in the Metropolis humanitarian initiative Masks Matter. The goal for the Metropolis is to sew and distribute 10,000 masks by December 31 to non- first responders (ie. caregivers, other hospital workers, grocery store clerks, and parishioners). If anyone is interested in becoming involved, you may contact Nancy Briamis (nbriamis@gmail.com).

2020 MEMBERSHIPS

Thank you to all our Philoptochos members who renewed memberships and/or joined the chapter. Our committed members for 2020 are 58.

MAY 2020 commitments

Thank you to all chapter members who joined the General Chapter meeting on 5/22/2020. In addition to the standard monthly commitments, the chapter voted to continue support to the local organization Porchlight, Inc for \$2,000 (\$500 monthly installments from May-August).

METROPOLIS

There are 58 parishes in the Metropolis of Chicago. If you wish to contribute directly to the Metropolis of Chicago COVID-19 Parish Relief Fund, you can do so online, send a check or via text message. More information is available here: <https://chicago.goarch.org/donate>.

June 13 – All President’s Zoom Meeting

NATIONAL PHILOPTOCHOS

You can support the National Philoptochos COVID-19 Emergency Fund Drive. You can find more information on the page here: <https://www.philoptochos.org/whats-happening/>

The 45th Clergy Laity Congress and 2020 National Philoptochos Biennial Convention will be a virtual convention to be hosted on August 21-22, 2020.

River Food Pantry - Nancy Briamis, nbriamis@gmail.com

The River Food Pantry has established a COVID-19 Emergency Food Fund to see the nutritional needs of food-insecure households for the duration of the coronavirus pandemic. The fund will help to provide curb side pick up of boxes of groceries for hundreds of households, as well as provide pre-bagged lunches for children delivered to 9 low-income neighborhoods 6 days a week.

The River, like other food pantries, have a shortage of volunteers right now as they try to meet the increased need for food. Many children receive 2 meals a day at school and with many schools starting back up that include virtual learning options, this may create a hardship for some families. The River would like to offer delivery of groceries and meals to those in need in the general public that are not already receiving services but they must first insure a network of volunteers to provide this transport and delivery. They are reaching out to organizations that have supported them for help.

To donate to the COVID-19 Emergency Food Fund or to register to volunteer, please visit their website - info@riverfoodpantry.org or call (608) 442-8815.

THE RIVER
Food • Resources • Faith

COVID-19 Emergency Food Fund

MOST-NEEDED ITEMS

(as of May 2020)

FOOD	HYGIENE PRODUCTS
<input type="checkbox"/> Boxed meals	<input type="checkbox"/> Deodorant
<input type="checkbox"/> Canned fruits	<input type="checkbox"/> Diapers
<input type="checkbox"/> Canned meats	<input type="checkbox"/> Dishwashing soap
<input type="checkbox"/> Cereals	<input type="checkbox"/> Feminine products
<input type="checkbox"/> Condiments	<input type="checkbox"/> Liquid hand soap
<input type="checkbox"/> Fresh produce <i>(please wash!)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Lotions & creams
<input type="checkbox"/> Jelly	<input type="checkbox"/> Shampoo
<input type="checkbox"/> Juice	<input type="checkbox"/> Toilet paper
<input type="checkbox"/> Pasta	
<input type="checkbox"/> Pasta sauces	
<input type="checkbox"/> Rice	

2201 Darwin Road • Madison, WI • 53704

CHURCH WEBSITE

Lainey Skoumbouris, laney0220@yahoo.com

The church website is set-up for private login to access the monthly newsletters and are meant for Church members only, not the public. Church members can read the newsletter on the website, but you must create an account before you can view it. Log onto the website and click on "Newsletter" on the side-bar <http://www.agocwi.org/registration-required/>, or "login" on the main menu <http://www.agocwi.org/login/>; it will direct you to sign up. If you need help, have questions or something isn't working in the registration contact me.

Assumption Cookbook Project

In the meantime, it seems prudent for us to develop alternate fundraising plans. As a parish community, we can use this crisis as an opportunity and strategically pause to assess how else we can celebrate our shared cultures as Orthodox Christians who find a spiritual home in the Greek Orthodox Church. In that spirit, please help us to create an Assumption cookbook to share stories and bits of our traditions. This will allow our shared and unique cultures and histories to live on, and can be a way we can raise money for the church without social gathering. Here is how you can help: Please start gathering your recipes, your stories, and your photos. In the coming weeks, we will put together a cookbook committee. If you are interested in joining this committee, please let Maria Schirmer Devitt know (especially if you have graphic design or publishing experience).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

J and M Home Helpers

AGOC's handymen, John and Mike, will do minor home repairs and maintenance for \$25/hour, with the money for their work being donated to the church.



Call Mike at (608) 516-9188 and John at (608) 575-1014 today!



DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS

word search

V	L	Y	E	F	M	E	J	P	V	W	U
I	T	H	E	O	T	O	K	O	S	G	B
N	E	E	C	R	M	J	F	H	O	A	Z
A	F	V	G	Q	A	C	G	C	U	P	Y
U	H	I	I	F	R	K	I	H	L	O	M
G	U	I	F	R	Y	Z	Z	R	K	S	B
U	D	E	P	T	G	A	L	I	K	T	J
S	S	R	V	C	E	I	B	S	F	L	L
T	L	Z	C	D	Y	E	N	T	P	E	C
G	L	S	S	L	E	G	N	A	D	S	A
A	E	C	K	M	P	P	F	T	Y	B	W
L	O	R	S	A	M	O	H	T	H	I	J

Angels	August	Fifteenth	Soul	Thomas
Apostles	Christ	Mary	Theotokos	Virgin

tually 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 it 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.

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 that it is granted 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 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.

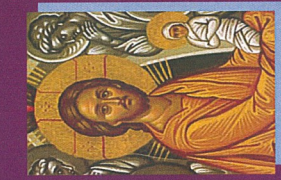


Feast of the Dormition of Our Most Holy Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary

August 15



+ Above Christ, the gates of heaven stand open, ready to receive the Theotokos.



+ Christ holds the soul of the Theotokos, shown as a small, swaddled child.
+ He cradles her child-like soul in a way that reminds us of the Panagia holding Him as a child.
+ To be a "God-bearer," to carry the Word of God within us in this life, is the calling of all Christians.

+ The "reward" for this in this life is suffering at the hands of God's enemies, but our hope is that in the next life, God will bear our soul into His own hands and carry us into eternity.



+ The icon shows the Theotokos on her deathbed surrounded by the Apostles.
+ On the left side, the Apostle Paul bows low in honor of her.



+ On the right side, the Apostle Peter carries the body of the Theotokos.
+ The posture of the Apostles direct attention towards her.

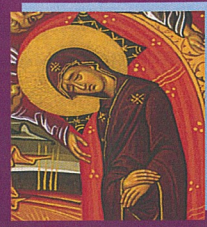


+ Holy Tradition tells us that at the time of the falling asleep of the Theotokos, the Apostles were abroad, preaching the Gospel throughout the world.

+ All but Thomas were mystically transported to her bedside.

+ Thomas did arrive on the third day, after her burial, but when he was brought to her tomb to venerate her body, the tomb was empty.

+ Church Tradition states that she was bodily resurrected and taken to heaven, as will all the righteous on Judgment Day.



+ The Panagia died as all people do because all of humanity is affected by this world's corruption.

+ Having truly died, she was raised by her Son as the "Mother of Life" and already participates in the eternal life of paradise.

+ The icon and the feast of the Dormition remind us that this same paradise is promised to all who "hear the word of God and keep it" (Luke 11:27-28).

+ We celebrate the fact that what happens to the Mother of God will happen to all who imitate her holy life of humility, obedience and love.

Assumption Greek Orthodox Church

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Email: office@agocwi.org



AGOC MATCHING FUNDS CHALLENGE

Through the loving, generous pledge of an anonymous parishioner(s), AGOC is excited to announce a \$40,000 matching funds drive! Up to half of the funds will come from a match by the parishioner.

The fundraiser is intended to help make up for shortfalls in our operating income from Stewardship and GreekFest+ due to the COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic. The closing of the church for in-person services, especially during Great Lent, Holy Week and Pascha, and the cancellation of fundraisers such as GreekFest+, have had significant impacts on our finances.

We understand that many of you have been financially impacted by the effects of COVID-19. Our prayers and any assistance we can provide as a parish are with you. For those of us who have been blessed to be able to, we challenge you to help us reach the goal of \$40,000 by giving the \$20,000 to receive the matching contributions.

Here's how it works:

- Pledges must be in addition to your 2020 Stewardship commitment
- If you have not yet made a Stewardship commitment for 2020, we will use your 2019 commitment as your baseline
- Each pledge received will be matched dollar for dollar, up to a cumulative grand total of \$20,000. For example, 100 pledges in the amount of \$200 each equals \$20,000 and would raise an additional \$20,000 in matching contribution for a grand total raised of \$40,000.
- The drive starts today, June 25 and ends on October 15
- All amounts pledged must be paid by October 15
- Please clearly indicate "Matching Funds" on your form of payment so we can ensure AGOC receives the match and that you receive your charitable contributions statement for tax purposes

Thank you!