

Wonder Worker

SEPTEMBER 2024

CHURCH STAFF

- Parish Priest: Very Reverend Archimandrite Christodoulos Margellos
- Parish Council President: Christy Chappell Belkin
- Philoptochos President: Maria Molzahn
- Sunday School Directors: Susu Saba
- Greek School: Ilektra Kolokouri
- Choir Director: George Tzougros

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RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION IN THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

A GUIDE TO PREPARATION & PARTICIPATION

Holy Communion, also known as the Eucharist, lies at the heart of Orthodox Christian life. It is the sacrament in which we partake of the Body and Blood of Christ, uniting ourselves with Him and with one another in a profound and mystical way. Proper preparation and reception of Holy Communion are essential for experiencing the fullness of this sacred mystery. This guide outlines the key steps involved in approaching the chalice with reverence and receiving the Holy Gifts with a worthy heart and a clear conscious.

Preparing for Holy Communion

Spiritual Preparation: Repentance and Confession: The foundation of preparation is repentance – a sincere turning away from sin and a commitment to amend one's life. Regular confession to a spiritual father is essential for cleansing the soul and seeking forgiveness. Before receiving Communion, one should confess any known sins and seek guidance from their priest. This way they are able to approach the eucharist with a clean heart and soul.

Prayer: Prayer deepens our relationship with God and prepares us to receive Him in the Eucharist. Incorporate the following into your prayer rule:

Daily Prayers: Maintain a consistent daily prayer routine, including morning and evening prayers, and the Jesus Prayer throughout the day.

Prayers Before Communion: These specific prayers, found in Orthodox prayer books, are traditionally said the night before and/or the morning of receiving Communion. They express humility, repentance, and a desire to receive Christ worthily.

Fasting: Fasting is a physical discipline that helps to focus the mind and spirit. The Orthodox Church prescribes fasting from certain foods (meat, dairy, fish, oil, and wine) for a period before receiving Communion. The specific fasting requirements may vary, and should always be discussed with your spiritual father during confession.

Reconciliation: Seek reconciliation with anyone you may have wronged or who has wronged you. Forgiveness and peace of heart are essential for approaching the Holy Chalice. It is essential for all Orthodox Christians to live in a sense of humility seeking out forgiveness and reconciliation.

Practical Preparation

Attendance at Divine Liturgy: Participate fully in the Divine Liturgy, the central worship service of the Orthodox Church, where Holy Communion is offered. The Liturgy on Sunday or weekday feast days is not only an opportunity to receive the body and blood of Christ, but also a chance to unify ourselves with God and to offer up thanksgiving for all the blessing bestowed upon us.

Appropriate Attire: Dress modestly and respectfully when attending church. Avoid clothing that is revealing, distracting, or overly casual.

Continued on next page

There is a trend in society for dressing more casual and comfortable, but when we are attending services we are presenting ourselves before God. Being dressed appropriately is showing signs of respect for whose presence we are approaching.

Fasting from Midnight: Abstain from all food and drink from midnight the night before receiving Communion. This physical fast symbolizes our spiritual hunger for Christ and should be done by all able Orthodox Christians.

Reverence in Church: Maintain a prayerful and attentive demeanor in church. Avoid unnecessary talking or distractions.

Receiving Holy Communion

Approaching the Chalice: Orderly Line: When the priest calls for communicants, approach the chalice in a calm and orderly line. Traditionally, children come first, followed by adults.

Crossed Arms: Approach with your arms crossed over your chest, right hand over left, as a sign of humility and reverence.

Communion Cloth: Hold a communion cloth under your chin to catch any drops of the precious Blood of Christ.

Receiving the Holy Gifts

Open Wide: Open your mouth wide and say your Baptismal name clearly. When saying your name speak loudly and clearly. So the priest can hear you.

Consume with Care: The priest will place a spoonful of the Holy Gifts (Body and Blood of Christ mingled together) in your mouth. Upon receiving it make sure to close your mouth around the spoon as to lessen the chance of it spilling. Consume it carefully and completely. "Amen" Say "Amen" to affirm your faith in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

After Communion

Remain Reverent: Step aside quietly and maintain a prayerful attitude.

Antidoron: Receive a piece of antidoron (blessed bread) from the priest or altar server before returning to you seat.

Thanksgiving: Spend time in prayer, giving thanks to God for the gift of Holy Communion. In the liturgy books in the pews if you look in the back you will find some post communion prayers that can be read.

Living the Eucharistic Life

Receiving Holy Communion is not just a ritual act; it is a transformative experience that should shape our entire lives as well as being essential in our spiritual journey and development.

Frequent Communion: Strive to receive Holy Communion regularly, as often as your spiritual father advises. Although we do not take communion lightly, we should also strive to prepare to receive and do so as often as is beneficial to us.

Christian Living: Live a life that reflects your union with Christ. Pursue holiness, practice virtue, and love your neighbor.

Spiritual Growth: Continue to grow in your faith through prayer, study of Scripture, and participation in the life of the Church.

Important Notes

Infants and Young Children: Infants and young children who have been baptized are encouraged to receive Holy Communion frequently. They do not need to fast or confess.

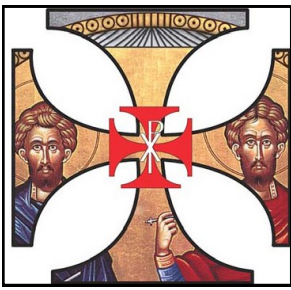
Receiving Holy Communion is a profound privilege and a source of immense grace. By approaching this sacred mystery with proper preparation and reverence, we open ourselves to the transformative power of Christ's love and draw closer to Him in the journey of salvation.

+*Very Rev. Archimandrite Christodoulos Margellos*

October 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 Strict Fast Day 7:00 p.m. Choir Practice	3	4 Strict Fast Day Philoptochos Baking Day Prep	5 Philoptochos Baking Day Ethiopian Mission
6 3rd Sunday of Luke 8:30 a.m. Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School/Creek School	7	8	9 Strict Fast Day Philoptochos Baking Day 7:00 p.m. Choir Practice	10	11 Strict Fast Day	12 Russian Mission
13 Sunday of the Holy Fa- thers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council 8:30 a.m. Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School, Creek School	14	15	16 Strict Fast Day 11:00 a.m. Adult Religious Education Class 7:00 p.m. Choir Practice	17 8:30 p.m. Virtual Adult Religious Education Class	18 Strict Fast Day	19 Russian Mission Ethiopian Mission
20 8th Sunday of Luke 8:30 a.m. Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School/Creek School 2:00 - 5:00 p.m. Youth Outing to Enchant- ed Valley Acres Farm in Cross Plains, WI	21	22	23 Strict Fast Day Saint Isakovos Brother of the Lord 8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by Divine Liturgy Philoptochos Baking Day 7:00 p.m. Choir Practice	24	25 Strict Fast Day	26 Saint Demetrios the Great Martyr 8:00 a.m. Orthros followed by Divine Liturgy
27 7th Sunday of Luke 8:30 a.m. Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School/Creek School	28 Holy Protection OXI DAY 8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by Divine Liturgy	29	30 Strict Fast Day 11:00 a.m. Adult Religious Education Class 7:00 p.m. Choir Practice	31 8:30 p.m. Virtual Adult Religious Education Class		

Maintenance Updates



FOCUS ON PHILOPTOCHOS HELP US TO HELP OTHERS

Agapi Forward, AGOC, A Community of HOPE

During the 2024 Clergy/Laity Conference and Philoptochos Convention, His Eminence, Archbishop Elpidophorous of America, reminded us that, "We are influencers for faith, love, philanthropy – we model what the core of our faith is and the heart of the spiritual family." Further, His visiting Eminence Cleopas of Sweden and All of Scandinavia shared that, in the end, we will not be judged on "what we did not do" but on what we did to spread Agape. Of course, spreading agape is at the heart of our AGOC Philoptochos and we could easily rest on our laurels.

Yet, this is exactly what we must not do. Instead, we need to continue to push ourselves to go that extra mile, both for our community and for our greater brotherhood. This year, along with our continued support of organizations such as the River Food Pantry, the Goodman Center, Porchlight, and the Salvation Army, Philoptochos is expanding our outreach to include two organizations that align with our mission the Ronald McDonald House and Root 2 Rise.

Traditionally organizations such as ours can be understood as financial rocks and for some of our outreach this is the best use of our talents. Porchlight, for example, has moved towards a different model – they no longer need us to make meals for them. However, there are other organizations out there that need community volunteers.

The Ronald McDonald House is one such group. Focused on providing a safe place for families while their children are dealing with medical health issues, they can use volunteers to cook meals for them and do general errands around the house. We, Philoptochos, would love to have other church members join us in this ministry. If you think you would like to join a Ronald McDonald House group, please contact me at philomadison@gmail.com.

The second group we are working with is called Root 2 Rise. This grassroots organization began as a former Madison School District teacher realized that many of the teenagers she was seeing "running in the halls" were "vying for attention." She created an organization designed to foster positive leadership in these young people through active mentorships—the students become mentors to younger children. This is a nuanced and very structured program helping the student learn time management, commitment to task, and dedication to their academic success. Since its inception, they have seen students with chronic truancy become focused young adults with a path forward. At this point, our support for this organization will be financial, and again, we would love to have more of our AGOC family join us in this endeavor. Feel free to reach out to me at philomadison@gmail.com.

Our fall Baklava Plus day is quickly approaching. We can always use more help with our various baking days. The best way to sign up is by completing this form: <https://forms.gle/RTtPZzK83cvc5ucs5>. The upcoming baking dates include:

- 10/5 Keftedes

- 10/9 Koulourakia
- 10/23 kourambiethes/Paximadia
- 11/2 Spanakopita assembly
- 11/9 Spanakopita assembly
- 11/20 Baklava
- 11/21 Packaging, evening
- 11/22 Baklava Plus packaging/set-up during the day
- 11/23 Baklava Plus pick up

If you have ever wondered about Philoptochos and wanted to join our group, these days are a great way to get to know us:)

As always thank you to everyone and feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns at philomadison@gmail.com.

With love,
Maria Molzahn



SHOP OUR BAKLAVA BAKERY+

**ENJOYING OUR
BAKED-GOODIES?
ORDER MORE FOR
THE HOLIDAYS!**

Step 1. Order online today!
Step 2. Pick up your fresh bakery
 When? **Saturday, Nov. 23**
 Where? **Here. Assumption Greek Orthodox Church**

We'll send you a reminder email.
www.philomadison.org



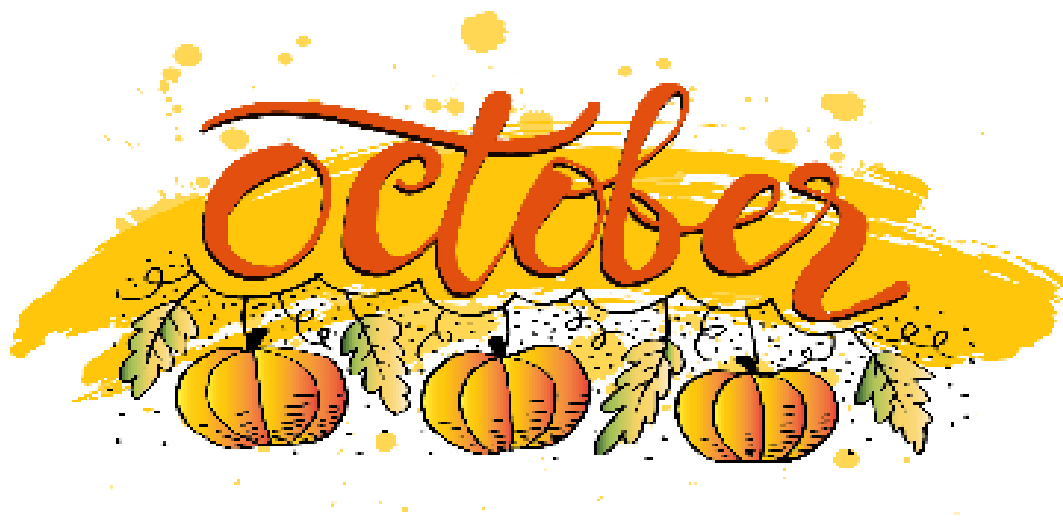
Follow us on Instagram!



@PHILOPTOCHOS.MADISON



YOUTH CORNER



Happy October Sunday school families!

Fall has arrived with its beautiful changing colors around us. To get into the fall season, please mark your calendars for an exciting family event. On **Sunday October 20th**, after church there will be a family outing to **Enchanted Valley Acres Farm** in Cross Plains from 2-5pm. Please join us for some fun fall activities.

- Admission tickets to enter are \$15.50, children under 2 years are free.
- The tickets include many fun fall activities such as: a corn maze, giant slides, a giant pumpkin jump pad, wagon rides, obstacle courses, farm animals, and so much more!
- Pumpkins are for purchase and start at \$1.50 each.
- There is also delicious food and sweets to purchase!

You can buy your tickets online to ensure your spot or you can buy the tickets at the door, the day of. Hope you all can make it for some family fun!

If you have not registered your children for Sunday school, it is not too late please see Father or myself for any questions to register. Sunday school takes place for 30 minutes after Holy Communion. We are also looking for anyone to help teach or sub in classes, if you are interested please let myself or Father know.

In Christ,
Susu Akkawi
Director of Sunday school

COMMUNITY NEWS

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: Will be held on Tuesday, October 15th at 7:00 p.m.

PHILOPTOCHOS MEETING: The Next meeting will be on Tuesday, October 22nd at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom.

FALL PARISH YOUTH OUTING: On Sunday, October 20th after church from 2-5 p.m. at Enchanted Valley Acres Farm in Cross Plains. Admission tickets to enter are \$15.50, children under 2 years are free. The tickets include many fun fall activities such as: a corn maze, giant slides, a giant pumpkin jump pad, wagon rides, obstacle courses, farm animals, and so much more! Pumpkins are for purchase and start at \$1.50 each. There is also delicious food and sweets to purchase! You can buy your tickets online to ensure your spot or you can buy the tickets at the door, the day of. Here is the link with all the information about the farm and what it offers. www.enchantedvalleyacres.com

YOUTH WORKERS NEEDED: Anyone interested in helping Fr. Christodoulos and the Youth Committee to help organize our various youth programs and ministries for next year (beginning this Fall) is asked to contact Fr. Christodoulos at the church office. We need youth (JOY & GOYA desperately needed) advisors, athletic director (If we want to participate in Jr. Olympics), Sunday School teachers etc. Without parishioner support, especially our youth's parents, we cannot continue to grow our various programs. Please offer your time and talent. See Fr. Christodoulos.

SOCIAL MEDIA PARISH PHOTOGRAPHER: We are looking for a parishioner to volunteer to take charge of running our parishes social media presence as well as take Pictures during services and events. If you are interested please see Fr. Christodoulos.

CHURCH OFFICE VOLUNTEER NEEDED: We are looking for someone who is available to come in once a week to take care of some office Administrative work. If interested please see Fr. Christodoulos or Christy Chappell-Belkin for more information.

PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS NEEDED: Parish Council Elections will be in December and we are always looking for new parishioners to join the ranks of our Parish Council. Please take some prayerful consideration and see Fr. Christodoulos or any Parish council member for more information.

2024 GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL RETREAT: Fanari Camp's newest retreat for High School Girls will be held November 22-24th. Registration opens Monday, October 14th at noon. The goal of the retreat is to connect to Christ and one another as we navigate our lives. We will do this through:

- Building relationships with friends and mentors
- Learning how the faith can help us navigate stressors

The retreat will be held at the Saint Iakovos Retreat Center. Cost is \$250. www.fanari.camp/girlsretreat

2024 PARISH OUTING TO FORWARD MADISON FC: On Saturday, October 12th, we will have a Parish Outing to the Forward Madison FC Soccer Game vs the Chattanooga Red Wolves with a 5:00 p.m. Kick-Off.

The cost is \$27. To purchase tickets please contact Fr. Christodoulos through email frchristos@gmail.com or contact the church office.

PARISH ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASSES BEGINNING OCTOBER 16&17: A.R.E. classes are beginning October 16th & 17th. We will be continuing the Gospel of John. Classes are on Wednesday's at 11:00 a.m. for in person classes and On Thursday's at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom. Everyone is welcome to join us.

THIRD ANNUAL PARISH CHILI COOK OFF: Will be on Sunday, November 10th after church, during coffee hour we will have the church chili cook off! Families can bring their favorite chili recipe to share, families will then vote on their favorite chili. The winner will then be rewarded with the golden koutala- spatula! There will be a \$7 dollar entrance fee but Children 5 and under along with Veterans will eat for Free. All Proceeds will go towards Sunday school.

ALTAR SERVERS MEETING: Dear members and parents. We will be having a Altar Boy Meeting following Sunday School on Sunday, October 13th. All altar boys and future Altar boys are welcome to attend. Children should be 8 and up.



Family Synaxis

METROPOLIS OF CHICAGO

& PICK UP YOUR CROSS & FOLLOW ME MINISTRY

Invite you to our Annual Fall Retreat

God's Design

FOR OUR FAMILY

Saturday, October 12 — 9:00AM - 4:00PM

Ascension of Our Lord Greek Orthodox Church
1207 Riverwoods Road, Lincolnshire, IL 60069

Keynote Speaker



**FR. GEORGE
DOKOS**

*Parish Priest
Holy Apostles Greek
Orthodox Church
(Westchester, IL)*

A day retreat for the whole family!

What do the Fathers of the Church have to tell us about Orthodox family life? How do we center our children around Christ? Join us for this day retreat to explore the rich teachings of our Church about the Christian family and how we can become holy in our own homes.

- Prayer services as a family
- Parent workshops and discussions
- Children's games and activities
- Parallel and inclusion programming available for children with special needs via Pick Up Your Cross Ministry
- Breakfast and Lunch provided



Scan the QR Code to Register Now!

\$75 per family — Must Register by October 6

Ages 4+ (Toddler Care Unavailable)

Questions? chicago.family.synaxis@gmail.com

Or visit www.gocfamilysynaxis.org



2024 Parish outing to the Forward Madison FC



On Saturday, October 12th, we will have a Parish Outing to the Forward Madison FC Soccer Game vs Chattanooga Red Wolves with a 5:00 p.m. Kick-Off.

We have 50 tickets available for the game and they will include entrance to the game and an official Forward Madison FC Scarf . The cost is \$27

To purchase tickets please contact Fr. Christodoulos through email frchristos@gmail.com or contact the church office.

Initially we have 50 tickets. Information for buying tickets will be available soon!

Join us for what is sure to be a great night of fun & fellowship.

ASSUMPTION SUNDAY SCHOOL

Family Fall Outing

ENCHANTED VALLEY ACERS FARM
IN CROSS PLAINS

SUNDAY 10 .20 .24
2:00 - 5:00 PM

PUMPKIN PATCH, CORN MAZE, APPLE
CIDER DONUTS AND DRINKS, AND
FUN FALL ACTIVITIES!



JOIN US FOR THE 4th ANNUAL CHILI COOK-OFF, VETERANS RECOGNITION & FOOTBALL WATCH PARTY

On Sunday, November 10th, 2024 the Sunday School will host a chili cook-off in the Social Hall immediately following Divine Liturgy

Join us for a Variety of Chili, fixin's, sides, drinks & desserts - and chicken nuggets for the non-chili eaters! Help us raise money for the Sunday School!

- Interested in putting your chili to the test and winning the coveted Chili Champ Golden Koutala! See Fr. Christodoulos if you are interested. We can accept up to 10 entries.
- Want to come taste and vote? The cost is \$7.00 for adults and Veterans and kids 3 and under are free.

Rules for Cooks

1. Have a 6-quart Crock pot (minimum) with your chili ready to eat by 11:15 a.m. on November 10th.
2. On the front of your 5x8 index card, indicate what type you are entering and give it a heat rating (mild, medium, hot). DO NOT include your name.
3. On the back of the card list the ingredients (measurements not needed)
4. The Sunday School and Greek School will provide fixin's, (cheese, onions, jalapenos, sour cream, crackers, chips and hot Sauce), and tasting cups, spoons and bowls.
5. Winner will be determined by popular vote only—no judges—this is just for fun and fellowship!



FANARI CAMP PRESENTS

HIGH SCHOOL
Girls Retreat

CONNECT TO CHRIST AND ONE ANOTHER
AS WE NAVIGATE OUR LIVES

NOVEMBER 22-24

ST. IAKOVOS RETREAT CENTER





FANARI CAMPING MINISTRY EVENTS 2024-2025

OCT 4-6, 2024

Fall Camp

NOV 22-24, 2024

High School Girls Retreat

DEC 30, 2024

Reunion Dance
at Ascension of Our Lord

JAN 17-20, 2025

Winter Camp

MAR 22, 2025

Lenten Retreat
Locations TBD

JUN 15-21, 2025

Summer Camp:
Session 1

JUN 21-28, 2025

Lighthouse

JUN 22-28, 2025

Summer Camp:
Session 2

JUN 29-JUL 5, 2025

Summer Camp:
Session 3

JUL 6-12, 2025

Summer Camp:
Session 4


JUL 13-19, 2025

Summer Camp:
Session 5



WWW.FANARI.CAMP

 @fanari.camp.official



Greek Orthodox
Metropolis of Chicago
St. Iakovos Retreat Center
Kansasville, Wisconsin

2025 Parish outing to the Madison Capitol's Hockey Team



**On Saturday, February 22nd 2025 we will have a Parish
Outing to the Madison Capitol's Hockey Game vs the
Youngstown Phantoms**

**This year we have one of the Suites reserved for the
church. This means we will only have 30 tickets available.
The cost is still pending.**

RSVP with Fr. Christodoulos

**Join us for what is sure to be a great night of fun &
fellowship.**

SAVE THE DATES

Assumption

Sunday school

2023-2024 events



Mark your calendars for the different events happening throughout the school year!

- Sep 9-10 (Sat & Sun): Greek Fest+
- Sep 17 (Sun): First day of Sunday School
- Oct 15 (Sun): Pumpkin Patch and Corn Maze Outing
- Nov 10 (Fri): Prosphora Night
- Nov 26 (Sun): Thanksgiving Break
- Dec 8 (Fri): Gingerbread Night
- Dec 17 (Sun): Christmas Pageant
- Dec 22 (Fri): Christmas Movie Night
- Dec 24 & Dec 31 (Sun): Christmas Break

- Jan 14 (Sun): Winter Tubing Outing
- Feb 4 (Sun): Bowling Night
- Mar 14 (Thur): SkyZone Night
- Mar 31 (Sun): Spring Break
- Apr 27 (Sat): Lazarus Family Retreat
- Apr 28 (Sun): Palm Sunday - No Classes
- May 5 (Sun): Egg Hunt after Easter Agapi
Church service - No Classes
- May 19 (Sun): Last day of Sunday School
- June 2 (Sun): Graduate Sunday



Rest of the Holy Apostle and Evangelist John the Theologian: The Holy, Glorious All-laudable Apostle and Evangelist, Virgin, and Beloved Friend of Christ, John the Theologian was the son of Zebedee and Salome, a daughter of Saint Joseph the Betrothed. He was called by our Lord Jesus Christ to be one of His Apostles at the same time as his elder brother James. This took place at Lake Gennesareth (i.e. the Sea of Galilee). Leaving behind their father, both brothers followed the Lord.

The Apostle John was especially loved by the Savior for his sacrificial love and his virginal purity. After his calling, the Apostle John did not part from the Lord, and he was one of the three apostles who were particularly close to Him. Saint John the Theologian was present when the Lord restored the daughter of Jairus to life, and he was a witness to the Transfiguration of the Lord on Mount Tabor.

During the Last Supper, he reclined next to the Lord, and laid his head upon His breast. He also asked the name of the Savior's betrayer. The Apostle John followed after the Lord when they led Him bound from the Garden of Gethsemane to the court of the iniquitous High Priests Annas and Caiphas. He was there in the courtyard of the High Priest during the interrogations of his Teacher and he resolutely followed after him on the way to Golgotha, grieving with all his heart.

At the foot of the Cross he stood with the Mother of God and heard the words of the Crucified Lord addressed to Her from the Cross: "Woman, behold Thy son." Then the Lord said to him, "Behold thy Mother" (John 19:26-27). From that moment the Apostle John, like a loving son, concerned himself over the Most Holy Virgin Mary, and he served Her until Her Dormition.

After the Dormition of the Mother of God the Apostle John went to Ephesus and other cities of Asia Minor to preach the Gospel, taking with him his own disciple Prochorus. They boarded a ship, which floundered during a terrible tempest. All the travellers were cast up upon dry ground, and only the Apostle John remained in the depths of the sea. Prochorus wept bitterly, bereft of his spiritual father and guide, and he went on towards Ephesus alone.

On the fourteenth day of his journey he stood at the shore of the sea and saw that the waves had cast a man ashore. Going up to him, he recognized the Apostle John, whom the Lord had preserved alive for fourteen days in the sea. Teacher and disciple went to Ephesus, where the Apostle John preached incessantly to the pagans about Christ. His preaching was accompanied by such numerous and great miracles, that the number of believers increased with each day.

During this time there had begun a persecution of Christians under the emperor Nero (56-68). They took the Apostle John for trial at Rome. Saint John was sentenced to death for his confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, but the Lord preserved His chosen one. The apostle drank a cup of deadly poison, but he remained alive. Later, he emerged unharmed from a cauldron of boiling oil into which he had been thrown on orders from the torturer.

After this, they sent the Apostle John off to imprisonment to the island of Patmos, where he spent many years. Proceeding along on his way to the place of exile, Saint John worked many miracles. On the island of Patmos, his preaching and miracles attracted to him all the inhabitants of the island, and he enlightened them with the light of the Gospel. He cast out many devils from the pagan temples, and he healed a great