



Sunday Bulletin August 12, 2018
Greek Orthodox Church of the
Annunciation

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**Rev. Dr. Michael Bahlatzis, Presiding Priest-
Proistamenos**

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**Epistle Reading    Corinthians 9:2-12**

Brethren, you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. This is my defense to those who would examine me. Do we not have the right to our food and drink? Do we not have the right to be accompanied by a sister as wife, as the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working for a living? Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard without eating any of its fruit? Who tends a flock without getting some of the milk? Do I say this on human authority? Does not the law say the same? For it is written in the law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain." Is it for oxen that God is concerned? Does he not speak entirely for our sake? It was written for our sake, because the plowman should plow in hope and the thresher thresh in hope of a share in the crop. If we have sown spiritual good among you, is it too much if we reap your material benefits? If others share this rightful claim upon you, do not we still more? Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ.

**Gospel Reading    Matthew 18:23-35**

The Lord said this parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. When he began the reckoning, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents; and as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him the lord of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. But that same servant, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat he said, 'Pay what you owe.' So his fellow servant fell down and besought him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' He refused and went and put him in prison till he should pay the debt. When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you besought me; and should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his lord delivered him to the torturers, till he should pay all his debt. So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

*Message from Fr. Michael...*

Dearly Beloved Faithful in the Lord:

During the fast for the Dormition of the Theotokos, during the early centuries of the early Church, in Constantinople, there was a portion of the summer when there was a time of disease and pestilence and so it was the custom to carry the True Cross in procession through all the quarters of that great city during the first two weeks of August (particularly on the first day of August and some would practice this custom on the first day of every month). In Greek Orthodox worship, it was and still is customary to sing the Paraklesis to the Theotokos each evening during that period of August. The Great and Small Canon are sung on alternate evenings. This is sung at Vespers immediately after the hymn of Symeon, 'Now, Master'. It is the custom in many monasteries of Mt. Athos to sing the Canon of the Mother of God from the *Theotokarion*, with its Prosomia, daily at that place in Vespers. The Paraklesis service is the equivalent of the Slav *Molieben*. However, the Greeks did not reduce the Paraklesis to the refrains between the troparia. While the Slavs omit the troparia. We must remember that the Paraklesis service is celebrated for the living, and the departed should not be commemorated in the litanies.

During the celebration of the feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos, we offer a witness of this truth. When we stop and consider the life of the Theotokos, we know that she found favor with God, the Holy Spirit came upon her, and she conceived and carried in her womb the Son of God. Following the Annunciation, she asked the Archangel Gabriel, "*How shall this be, since I have no husband?*" (Luke 1:34) How could this be accomplished by this holy and humble handmaiden of God? As we have frequently heard in our Church teachings, all things are possible to the believer.

On this Feast of the Dormition of the most blessed Theotokos, we are indeed intrigued and fascinated at her repose and the witness that she offered in passing through death unto eternal life. Our church troparia proclaim, "She who is higher than the heavens and more glorious than the cherubim, she who is held in greater honor than all creation...today commends her most pure soul into the hands of her Son." How did this happen? How does she continue to offer intercessions on behalf of us all? How did she receive such an exalted place? So we witness that all is possible for the believer.

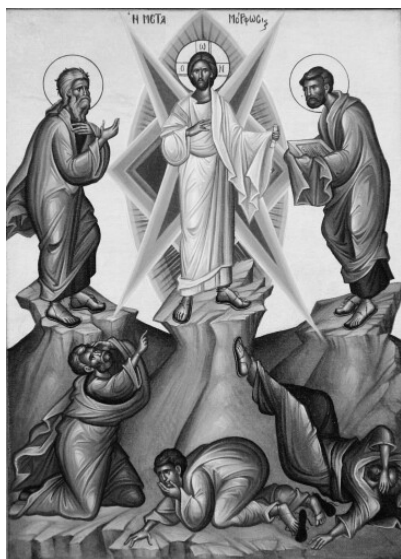
The power of this promise through the holy witness of faith through the Theotokos offers us assurance and strength. The disciples of our Lord were encouraged and guided by her through her example of holiness of life. Her repose became a celebration of the abundant and eternal life that comes through faith in Christ. The celebration of her Dormition offers us hope and assurance, affirming that even through our burdens and challenges, even in the face of obstacles that seem unconquerable, even through physical hardships and spiritual struggles, all things are possible to the one who believes in Christ.

I invite you to attend the service of Vespers on the eve of the feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos on Tuesday, August 14, 2018 at 7:15 pm and the next day of the feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos, August 15, 2018 for Orthros at 9 am and Divine Liturgy at 10 am. I look forward to your prayerful attendance. I believe that we all need the intercessory help of the Theotokos. This is a wonderful way to receive such help. May our supplications to the Theotokos be received so that we may receive Divine grace from our Lord, God, and Savior, Jesus Christ. I pray that your fast, during this lenten period for the Dormition of the Mother of God, brings upon you tranquility, peace, and harmony in your lives so that your proximity to God may be one where you find yourself on the path to everlasting life and salvation. Set your 'spiritual compass' on a setting that will lead you closer to Him. Pray the Paraklesis!

By the mercy of God, I remain your humble pastor and servant, I remain  
Prayerfully yours,

+Fr. Michael

## Afterfeast of the Transfiguration of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ



August 12

Apolytikion of Afterfeast of the Transfiguration  
Grave Tone

You were transfigured on the Mount, Christ God revealing Your glory to Your disciples, insofar as they could comprehend. Illuminate us sinners also with Your everlasting light, through the intercessions of the Theotokos. Giver of light, glory to You.

## The Holy Martyrs Photius and Anicetus of Nicomedia

These Martyrs contested in Nicomedia about the year 288. When Diocletian stirred up his persecution of the Christians, Anicetus presented himself openly and said that all who worship idols are blind and senseless. He was beaten with rods so ruthlessly that his bones appeared from the rents and wounds in his flesh. As he was suffering further torments, his nephew Photius came and embraced him, calling him his father and his uncle. He was also put to many tortures with him. They were then imprisoned together for three years. Finally they were cast into a furnace, where they gave up their spirits, and their bodies were preserved unharmed. Saint Anicetus is one of the Holy Unmercenaries.

August 12

## Sergios, Stephen and Kastor

Apolytikion of Sergios, Stephen and Kastor  
Plagal of the Fourth Tone

You are a guide of Orthodoxy, a teacher of piety and modesty, a luminary of the world, the God inspired pride of monastics. O wise Sergios, Stephen and Kastor, you have enlightened everyone by your teachings. You are the harp of the Spirit. Intercede to Christ our God for the salvation of our souls.

## Palamon, Elder of Saint Pachomius the Great

FATHER MICHAEL REQUESTS...that we, as a faithful community keep the following individuals in our prayers: Lilly Kashou, Issam Kashou, Suzanne Vaishnani, daughter of Ted Simon, and Presbyteria Magdalena Michalopoulos. Please notify Fr. Michael if you have anyone else who should be included for special prayers. May they be under the grace and tender watch of our Lord.

## **Vespers Service on the eve of the Dormition of the Theotokos**

Tuesday, August 14, 2018 at 7:15 pm

\*\*\*\*There WILL BE a Parish Council meeting at 6:30 pm on that evening BEFORE Vespers\*\*\*\*

**DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS:** Wednesday, August 15, 2018

Orthros: 9 am    Divine Liturgy: 10 am

Artoklasia (Blessing of the Five Loaves to follow)

ALL are invited! See you there!

## **Wisdom of the Fathers**

Wherefore then did He not do this, nor forgive the debt before the account? Desiring to teach him, from how many obligations He is delivering him, that in this way at least he might become more mild towards his fellow servant.... He gave more than he asked, remission and forgiveness of the entire debt.

St. John Chrysostom  
*Homily 61 on Matthew 18, 4th Century*

When then you are minded to be revengeful, consider that against yourself are you revengeful, not against another; that you art binding up your own sins, not your neighbors....

St. John Chrysostom  
*Homily 61 on Matthew 18, 4th Century*

Whether you are an Orthodox Christian, or this is your first visit to an Orthodox Church, we are pleased to have you with us. Although Holy Communion is reserved for baptized and chrismated (confirmed) Orthodox Christians, all are invited to receive the "ANTIDORON" (blessed bread) which is not a sacrament, but is a reminder of the "agape feast" that followed worship in the early Church. After the Divine Liturgy this morning, please join us in the Church Hall for fellowship and refreshments. We hope that you will return often to worship with us, to grow in Christ and in our Orthodox Faith. For any spiritual, religious, or sacramental matters, please contact Fr. Michael (607) 795-1474. For any building, facility or church property issues, please contact the Parish Council President or a member of the council. **Deadline for suggestions for the bulletin is 12:00 noon on Thursday.**