



# JULY & AUGUST



HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH, THUNDER BAY

FROM  
FATHER  
KOSTA

## Beloved in Christ

Orthodox people describe the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos as the "Summer Pascha." All the Orthodox celebrate the Dormition of the Mother of God with reverence. We begin preparing for the Feast by fasting from August 1 to August 14. On the day of the Feast, every Church celebrates; in many places, the celebrations continue. The Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos is called "Summer Pascha" because apart from the brilliant festival, today's Feast reminds us of the Pascha in the spring, the Resurrection of Christ.

After the forty days of Great Lent, we celebrate the physical Resurrection of Christ, which opened the gates of the Kingdom of God to us. Six weeks after His Resurrection, our Lord ascended with His resurrected Body and sat at the right hand of the Father. The Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos is the falling asleep of Mary in this world. However, we also honour that day as the Metastasis of the Theotokos and her heavenly rising into the Kingdom of God. This Metastasis, or "change," was the resurrection of her body, and her heavenly rising was her ascension into the heavens with her body. Therefore, Panagia is physically in heaven, near her Son.

There is a difference between Christ and the Theotokos because Christ resurrected His own Body by His divinity. At the same time, the resurrection of the Theotokos happened through the power and energy of her Son, the Christ. That concept is essential because it shows us that we can live however we want, but the Kingdom of God belongs to Him. We are God's adopted children by the Incarnation of the Word of God, Jesus Christ. Even the holiest of human beings was granted God's Kingdom by His grace and her faith, obedience, and humility, but not by her power. In the same way, we have no power over God and His Kingdom, but we are gifted His Kingdom through our faith and good works, and the grace of our Lord and Master.

According to the tradition of our Church, three days after the burial of Mary, when the disciples went to her tomb to venerate, her body was missing. We remember this event in many hymns of the Church. In one hymn, we hear, "You received many victorious trophies against nature, Pure One, having given birth to God, yet, imitating your Maker and Son, you supernaturally bowed to the laws of nature, and having died you rose and are with your Son for eternity."

The physical resurrection of Panagia (literally translated as "All-Holy" or "Most-Holy") and her ascension into the heavens is explained theologically by the fact that the Word of God united the divine nature to His human nature in His person, sanctifying human nature. The Panagia is the first to taste the fruits of the union of the divine and human natures in the person of Jesus Christ. She also was the first to see the Resurrected Christ, according to the teaching of Saint Gregory Palamas. And as much as the Body of Christ rose, it was apparent that the body of our Panagia would also rise and ascend.

We celebrate a second Easter, the "Summer Pascha," on the Feast of the Dormition. It shows that what took place with Mary will undoubtedly happen to us at the Second Coming of Christ when our bodies will rise physically. The unnatural separation of our souls from our bodies will end. We pray to the most-holy, pure, and ever-virgin Mary to intercede for us and pray with us, that we may live according to her Son's commandments and be worthy to find rest in the eternal Pascha with Christ, the Panagia and all the Saints.

We should not fear death but be ready for our passage into the Kingdom of God. Christ tells us always to be vigilant but not anxious because He overcame death so we can overcome spiritual death and inherit the Kingdom prepared for us from the foundation of the world.

A blessed summer and Feast of the Dormition to all.

In Christ,  
Fr. Kosta

**HOLY TRINITY  
GREEK ORTHODOX  
CHURCH**

Under the Auspices of the  
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**CHURCH ETIQUETTE**

- Do not bring food or drink into the church, and silence your phones.
- Please arrive well before the Divine Liturgy begins on Sunday mornings. If you do arrive late, there are certain times when one should wait before entering the Nave. Please do not enter:
  - During the Small Entrance and the Great Entrance.
  - During the reading of the Epistle and the Gospel.
  - During the Consecration (when we are kneeling).
  - During the reciting of the Creed and the Lord's Prayer.
  - Whenever the priest is censuring the congregation, or giving his sermon.
- During these times (above), we should also not leave the Nave, unless it is important or we need to use the facilities.
- You can and should make the sign of the cross any time you wish, but particularly, there are certain times during the Liturgy when we all make the sign of the cross:
  - When entering the Nave (sanctuary).
  - Whenever we hear the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
  - Whenever we hear the name of the Virgin Mary.
  - Whenever we hear the name of our patron saint.
  - When we enter the altar area.
  - Whenever we cross in front of the altar.
- No gum chewing is allowed during the Divine Liturgy.
- Talking in the Nave of the church should be kept to a minimum, and only in a low voice.
- Please remove lipstick with a tissue before receiving Communion.
- While Communion is being served, we should stand quietly. It is okay to acknowledge friends that pass by, but we shouldn't get into conversations.
- When receiving Communion, we should hold the cloth under our chin, in order to catch any that may fall. After receiving, lightly touch the cloth to your lips to blot up any remaining Communion.
- When we are standing in line to receive Communion, we don't stand with our hands in our pockets, it is considered irreverent.
- When receiving Antithoron from the Priest, we should keep it cupped in our hands until we have eaten it. We put both our hands together in the form of a cross and cup them so that we can catch the crumbs.
- If you see a crumb or piece that has fallen to the floor, you should pick it up, and either eat it or place it somewhere people do not step.
- We never throw Antithoron into a trash can, after all, it's not trash, it's blessed bread! If there is leftover Antithoron, it is to be given to the faithful and the crumbs are placed where they may be eaten by the birds.
- Please don't leave Antithoron bread on the pews or other inappropriate places.
- Hands in our pockets or crossing our legs when sitting in church is considered irreverent.
- Clothing - if you have second thoughts about an outfit, don't wear it to church. Shorts and tank tops are not appropriate.

<b>JULY 2023</b>	
<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>2 4TH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW</b> Matins 9:00 am    Divine Liturgy 10:00 am
<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>9 5TH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW</b> Matins 9:00 am    Divine Liturgy 10:00 am
<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>16 SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FATHERS</b> Matins 9:00 am    Divine Liturgy 10:00 am
<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>23 7TH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW</b> Matins 9:00 am    Divine Liturgy 10:00 am
<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>30 8TH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW</b> Matins 9:00 am    Divine Liturgy 10:00 am
<b>AUGUST 2023</b>	
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	<b>2 SMALL PARAKLESIS SERVICE</b> Supplication Prayer to the Mother of God 7:00 pm
<b>FRIDAY</b>	<b>4 SMALL PARAKLESIS SERVICE</b> Supplication Prayer to the Mother of God 7:00 pm
<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>6 THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD</b> Matins 9:00 am    Divine Liturgy 10:00 am
<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>7 SMALL PARAKLESIS SERVICE</b> Supplication Prayer to the Mother of God 7:00 pm
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	<b>9 SMALL PARAKLESIS SERVICE</b> Supplication Prayer to the Mother of God 7:00 pm
<b>FRIDAY</b>	<b>11 SMALL PARAKLESIS SERVICE</b> Supplication Prayer to the Mother of God 7:00 pm
<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>13 10TH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW</b> Matins 9:00 am    Divine Liturgy 10:00 am
<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>14 EVE OF THE DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS</b> Great Vespers 7:00 pm
<b>TUESDAY</b>	<b>15 THE FALLING ASLEEP OF THE MOTHER OF GOD</b> Matins 9:00 am    Divine Liturgy 10:00 am
<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>20 FR KOSTA IS AWAY ON HOLIDAYS</b>
<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>27 FR KOSTA IS AWAY ON HOLIDAYS</b>
<b>TUESDAY</b>	<b>29 FR KOSTA IS AWAY ON HOLIDAYS</b>

**CHURCH SERVICES JULY & AUGUST 2023**

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

While painting and electrical work is being done in the Church, there will be scaffolding in the church, including the Altar. We will inform everyone if there are cancellations in the next few weeks of Church Services or Sunday Liturgies.

Fr. Kosta is away on holidays from **Wednesday, August 16, 2023 to Monday, September 4, 2023.**

Fr. Kosta will also be away in **October** for two weeks at a family obligation and the Annual Clergy Retreat at Kingston, Ontario. Dates will be announced in September.

<b>ΙΟΥΛΙΟΣ 2023</b>		
<b>ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4Η ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΜΑΤΘΑΙΟΥ</b> Όρθρος 9:00 π.μ. Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ.
<b>ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5Η ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΜΑΤΘΑΙΟΥ</b> Όρθρος 9:00 π.μ. Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ.
<b>ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΠΑΤΕΡΩΝ</b> Όρθρος 9:00 π.μ. Θεία Λειτουργία 10:00 π.μ.
<b>ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>7Η ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΜΑΤΘΑΙΟΥ</b> Όρθρος 9:00 π.μ. Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ.
<b>ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗΞ</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>8Η ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΜΑΤΘΑΙΟΥ</b> Όρθρος 9:00 π.μ. Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ.
<b>ΑΥΓΟΥΣΤΟΣ 2023</b>		
<b>ΤΕΤΑΡΤΗ</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>ΠΑΡΑΚΛΗΣΗ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΗ ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟ</b> Μικρός Παρακλητικός Κανόνας προς την Θεοτόκο 7:00 μ.μ.
<b>ΠΑΡΑΣΚΕΥΗ</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>ΠΑΡΑΚΛΗΣΗ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΗ ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟ</b> Μικρός Παρακλητικός Κανόνας προς την Θεοτόκο 7:00 μ.μ.
<b>ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Η ΜΕΤΑΜΟΡΦΩΣΗ ΤΟΥ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ ΙΗΣΟΥ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ</b> Όρθρος 9:00 π.μ. Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ.
<b>ΔΕΥΤΕΡΑ</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>ΠΑΡΑΚΛΗΣΗ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΗ ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟ</b> Μικρός Παρακλητικός Κανόνας προς την Θεοτόκο 7:00 μ.μ.
<b>ΤΕΤΑΡΤΗ</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>ΠΑΡΑΚΛΗΣΗ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΗ ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟ</b> Μικρός Παρακλητικός Κανόνας προς την Θεοτόκο 7:00 μ.μ.
<b>ΠΑΡΑΣΚΕΥΗ</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>ΠΑΡΑΚΛΗΣΗ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΗ ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟ</b> Μικρός Παρακλητικός Κανόνας προς την Θεοτόκο 7:00 μ.μ.
<b>ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>10Η ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΜΑΤΘΑΙΟΥ</b> Όρθρος 9:00 π.μ. Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ.
<b>ΔΕΥΤΕΡΑ</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>ΠΡΟΕΟΡΤΙΑ ΤΗΣ ΚΟΙΜΗΣΕΩΣ ΤΗΣ ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟΥ</b> Μέγας Εσπερινός 7:00 μ.μ.
<b>ΤΡΙΤΗ</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>Η ΚΟΙΜΗΣΗ ΤΗΣ ΥΠΕΡΑΓΙΑΣ ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟΥ</b> Όρθρος 9:00 π.μ. Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ.
<b>ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>Ο Π. ΚΩΝ/ΝΟΣ ΘΑ ΛΕΙΠΕΙ ΣΕ ΔΙΑΚΟΠΕΣ</b>
<b>ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>Ο Π. ΚΩΝ/ΝΟΣ ΘΑ ΛΕΙΠΕΙ ΣΕ ΔΙΑΚΟΠΕΣ</b>
<b>ΤΡΙΤΗ</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>Ο Π. ΚΩΝ/ΝΟΣ ΘΑ ΛΕΙΠΕΙ ΣΕ ΔΙΑΚΟΠΕΣ</b>

### ΑΝΑΚΟΙΝΩΣΕΙΣ

Κατα το βάψιμο και τις ηλεκτρολογικές εργασίες στην Εκκλησία, θα υπάρχουν σκαλωσιές στο Ναο και στο Ιερό. Θα ενημερώσουμε όλους εάν υπάρξουν στις επόμενες εβδομάδες αλλαγές ή ακυρώσεις στις Εκκλησιαστικές Λειτουργίες.

Ο π. Κων/νος είναι σε διακοπές από την **Τετάρτη 16 Αυγούστου 2023 έως τη Δευτέρα 4 Σεπτεμβρίου 2023**.

Ο π. Κων/νος θα λείπει επίσης τον **Οκτώβριο** για δύο εβδομάδες για μια οικογενειακή υποχρέωση και την Ετήσια Σύναξη των Κληρικών της Αρχιεπισκοπής στο Kingston του Οντάριο. Οι ημερομηνίες θα ανακοινωθούν τον Σεπτέμβριο.

## On the Transfiguration of Christ (August 6)

St. Anastasios of Sinai

Upon Mount Tabor, Jesus revealed to his disciples a heavenly mystery. While living among them he had spoken of the kingdom and of his second coming in glory, but to banish from their hearts any possible doubt concerning the kingdom and to confirm their faith in what lay in the future by its prefiguration in the present, he gave them on Mount Tabor a wonderful vision of his glory, a foreshadowing of the kingdom of heaven. It was as if he said to them: "As time goes by you may be in danger of losing your faith. To save you from this I tell you now that some standing here listening to me will not taste death until they have seen the Son of Man coming in the glory of his Father." Moreover, in order to assure us that Christ could command such power when he wished, the evangelist continues: "Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter, James and John, and led them up a high mountain where they were alone. There, before their eyes, he was transfigured. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as light. Then the disciples saw Moses and Elijah appear, and they were talking to Jesus."

These are the divine wonders we celebrate today; this is the saving revelation given us upon the mountain; this is the festival of Christ that has drawn us here. Let us listen, then, to the sacred voice of God so compellingly calling us from on high, from the summit of the mountain, so that with the Lord's chosen disciples we may penetrate the deep meaning of these holy mysteries, so far beyond our capacity to express. Jesus goes before us to show us the way, both up the mountain and into heaven, and - I speak boldly - it is for us now to follow him with all speed, yearning for the heavenly vision that will give us a share in his radiance, renew our spiritual nature and transform us into his own likeness, making us for ever sharers in his Godhead and raising us to heights as yet undreamed of.

Let us run with confidence and joy to enter into the cloud like Moses and Elijah, or like James and John. Let us be caught up like Peter to behold the divine vision and to be transfigured by that glorious transfiguration. Let us retire from the world, stand aloof from the earth, rise above the body, detach ourselves from creatures and turn to the creator, to whom Peter in ecstasy exclaimed: "Lord, it is good for us to be here."

It is indeed good to be here, as you have said, Peter. It is good to be with Jesus and to remain here for ever. What greater happiness or higher honor could we have than to be with God, to be made like him and to live in his light?

[www.johnsanidopoulos.com](http://www.johnsanidopoulos.com)



### FAMILY ACTIVITY - PROSPHORO ( BREAD OFFERING) FOR HOLY COMMUNION

Preparing the offering for Holy Communion is a holy and beautiful tradition that is slowly being forgotten! The bread used in the Divine Liturgy can be prepared by any Orthodox man or woman of any age. In fact, teaching children (and learning with them) to bake Prosporo is a great family activity!

When offering a Prosporo, please include a list of the Orthodox members of your family, living and departed, so they can be commemorated at the Preparation Service in the Altar on Sunday Morning.

To purchase a Prosporo seal for your home or if you'd like to offer the Prosporo for a particular Sunday, or help keep the Prosporo supplies stocked up in our church, please speak with Fr. Kosta.

Information and a recipe can be found at [www.prosporo.com](http://www.prosporo.com)

## History of the Feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God

The origin of the feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos is closely connected with her public veneration since the beginning of the fourth century. It developed from the early celebration of Christmas in which the Theotokos, the Mother of God our Savior, played an important role. The solemn proclamation of Mary as "the Theotokos" at the Third Ecumenical Synod of Ephesus in 431 greatly enhanced her public veneration as the "Mother of God." This is evidenced by the fact that a few years later her divine maternity was celebrated in Jerusalem as the Feast of Mary, the Mother of God, on August 15. (cf. Armenian Lectionary, 434 A.D.)

In Egypt, the same Feast of Mary was celebrated on January 18 under the influence of Saint Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444) who presided at the Synod of Ephesus. In Constantinople, the veneration of "Mary's divine motherhood" was promoted by Saint Anatolios (d. 458), who also composed some of the first liturgical hymns in honor of the Theotokos.

At the beginning of the sixth century, a magnificent basilica was erected over the tomb of the Virgin Mary in Gethsemane. With this, the feast of Mary celebrated on August 15 took on a new meaning and became the solemn celebration of Mary's death and metastasis into heaven under the name of the Feast of the Dormition. In Constantinople, the Empress Saint Pulcheria (d. 453) promoted devotion to the Theotokos and built three churches in her honor. Being present at the sixth session of the Fourth Ecumenical Synod of Chalcedon in 451, she asked Saint Juvenal of Jerusalem (d. 458) for some relics of the Mother of God to be enshrined in the Church of the Theotokos at Blachernae, near Constantinople.

The holy Bishop replied: "We have received from ancient and the most reliable tradition that at the time of the glorious dormition (falling asleep) of the Mother of God, the whole company of the Apostles were brought together in Jerusalem. So, amid divine and heavenly praises, they commended her holy soul to the hands of God and, taking her God-conceiving body, they carried it in procession to Gethsemane and there placed it in a little tomb.

For three days a choir of Angels continued to sing above Her tomb. After the third day, when finally Saint Thomas arrived, (he had been absent and desired to venerate the body that had borne Christ God), they (the Apostles) opened the tomb and found no trace of her blessed body. Thus, taking the winding sheets, which were filled with fragrance, the Apostles closed the tomb.

Wondering at this mystery, they could only think that He, Whom it had pleased to be born of her in the flesh, the Lord of Glory, desired that after her departure from this life, her immaculate and all-pure body would be honored by incorruptibility, being translated (to heaven) before the universal resurrection of the dead" (cf. Cyril of Scythopolis, The History of St. Euthymius III, 40, written about 515.

On July 2, the Orthodox Church commemorates the Deposition of the Honorable Robe of the Theotokos at Blachernae. It seems that, instead of the holy relics requested, the imperial city had received Mary's vestments which were found in Nazareth and brought to Constantinople in 474, i.e. after the death of Juvenal and Pulcheria.

The solemn celebration of the Feast of the Dormition of the Most Holy Mother of God was extended to the entire East during the sixth century. Since the feast was celebrated on different days, it was decreed by Emperor Maurice (582-602) that, in the entire Roman Empire, the feast will be celebrated on August 15 under the name of Dormition (Gr. "Koimeseos": Old Slav. "Uspenii" which, literally translated, means "the falling asleep" (cf. I Thess.4:14) Saint Modestos of Jerusalem (d. 634), to whom the oldest extant homily of the Feast of the Dormition is ascribed, fully accepted the Jerusalem tradition concerning Mary's wondrous dormition and metastasis of her purest body to heaven. (cf. Migne, P.G. 86, 3277 ff.)

In the middle of the seventh century, the Feast of the Dormition was introduced in Rome from where it gradually spread to the entire West. However, at the end of the eighth century, the Western Church changed the name of the feast to the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into Heaven.

**(Continued on the next page)**

## History of the Feast of the Dormition of God

### (Continuation)

In the East, the celebration of the feast was enhanced by the famous homilies of Saint Andrew of Crete (d. about 720), Saint Germanos of Constantinople (d. 733) and especially Saint John of Damascus (d. 749), who became the main champion of the traditional belief in the bodily metastasis of Mary.

According to the testimony of Saint John of Damascus, the tomb, which harbored the purest body of the Mother of God for only a short time, became an object of public veneration and the source of numerous miracles and special graces. (cf. Hom. on Dorm. I, 13). In the homily he delivered at the Basilica of the Dormition in Jerusalem, he pointed to Mary's tomb and said: "Her immaculate body was placed here, in this renowned and all-glorious tomb, from whence after three days it was taken up to the heavenly mansion" (cf. Hom. on Dorm. 11, 14).

The liturgical hymns extolling the wondrous Dormition of the Theotokos, for the most part, were composed during the eighth and ninth centuries by such renowned hymnographers as Saint Germanos of Constantinople (d. 733), Saint John of Damascus (d. 749), Saint Kosmas of Maiuma (d. 760), St. Theophanes the Graptos (d. 845) and others.

The Feast of the Dormition is one of the Twelve Major Feasts of the Orthodox Church and is celebrated with uncommon solemnity. In preparation for the feast, a two weeks period of fasting is prescribed for the faithful, called the Fast of the Dormition, which begins on the first day of August. Historically, the Dormition Fast can be traced to the ninth century (though there was a fast around this time centuries earlier in some places; see for example "On the Three Fasts" by Saint Anastasios of Sinai who died in 700) but it was officially introduced into the Orthodox Church discipline by the Synod of Constantinople in 1166.

Liturgically speaking, the Dormition has one day of pre-festivity and eight days of post-festivity (the octave), which are festively celebrated by Orthodox, especially in Greece. In some shrines dedicated to the Theotokos, Lamentations are chanted over a decorated epitaphios and kouvouklion the night before her feast. According to an old custom, flowers and medicinal herbs are blessed after the Divine Liturgy on the Feast of the Dormition.

This custom most probably originated from the traditional belief that after Mary's glorious metastasis into heaven, her holy tomb was filled with a "heavenly fragrance" and flowers (cf. St. Germanos, I Hom. on Dorm.). The herbs, used by people as a natural medicine, are blessed in commemoration of the numerous healings and extraordinary graces bestowed on the pilgrims at Mary's tomb (cf. St. John Damascene, Hom. on Dorm. I, 13). The blessing of the herbs on the Feast of Dormition was introduced by the Fathers to combat the superstitious incantations and charlatanism among the people.

Preaching at the tomb of Mary, Saint John of Damascus reminded the people that: "Divine power is not circumscribed by any place and neither is the inexhaustible goodness of the Mother of God. For if the graces were restricted only to her tomb, only a few people would gain them. Now her graces are poured out in every place throughout the world" (cf. Hom. on Dorm. II, 19).

In his Homily on the Dormition, Saint John of Damascus gives a voice to the Tomb of Mary:

"Why do you seek in the tomb what has been assumed into heaven? Why do you exact from me an account of her dissolution? I had no power to go against the divine command. Leaving the winding sheet, that holy and sacred body, which filled me with myrrh, sweet fragrance and holiness, has been caught up and has departed with all the powers of heaven accompanying it. Now the Angels keep watch over me. Now divine grace dwells in me. I have become a well of healing for the sick, a defense against demons, a refuge to those who flee to me. Draw near in faith, you people, and you will receive grace in streams" (cf. Hom. on Dorm. II, 17).

*Source: johnsanidopoulos.com*

## Finding us in our Darkest Places

This past Sunday we heard of an encounter between Christ and a person whose suffering was profound. The man known as the Gadarene demoniac was a frightening presence. He lived among the tombs, was tormented, alone, and cried out day and night. He also inflicted self-harm on himself. I cannot think of a life more alone and isolated than this one. However, this individual had a story. He had a name and parents. Tragically, at some point, something went terribly wrong. A change of trajectory in his life occurred that led him to a life of isolation and suffering. He had a story to him other than his time living in the tombs.

Christ knew this man's story. We often see this manifested in the encounters between Jesus and others in the gospel accounts. If we only took some time to reflect on the life-story of the challenging souls we encounter, we might better emulate Christ in so many ways. We would do well to respond to the story of a person, rather than to their behavior at any given moment. When we react to someone's life-story rather than solely the aggravating behavior, we can help alter the trajectory of their life in a positive way. In doing so, we give them a life experience they may not have had. However, when we respond to the behavior too harshly and in the ways so many others may have, we are simply contributing to a self-fulfilling prophecy. The challenging soul learns "this is what I do, this is how I make people feel, and this is who I am." This does not mean that we cannot set boundaries or become upset; it simply means we learn more restraint, patience, and compassion.

When we take into account someone's life-story and allow that to be a well-spring of mercy, we can give them a response that might be different than what they are accustomed. This very compassion could help them move past their difficult ways and behaviors. Jesus so often did this with the souls He encountered. We often do not realize the ripple effect of our behavior towards others. Let's look at something as common as driving. We are rushing and the person in front of us is driving in way that is less than ideal. We become impatient and even drive a little too close to them. We focus only on the moment and miss the larger picture. We do not realize that the individual very well is experiencing some form of stress from our own impatience and aggressiveness. We also could inadvertently contribute to someone not wanting to drive again, especially if the individual had suffered a health incident, was experiencing impairment in vision or reflexes due to age, or recovering from something else.

However, when we catch our impatience and irritation and reflect on the potential story of the person, we can suddenly be able to access a patience, restraint, and mercy not typically accessible to us. We then contribute to someone else having a positive experience, which helps them to heal and grow. The driving example was a small but common one. We can apply the above to all life situations.

We also have a story. God knows that story and like the Gadarene demoniac, He can reach us in our darkest and loneliest moments. Our painful experiences and subsequent struggles can often cause us to feel alone and separated from the rest of humanity. Often when we are really struggling, whether too acutely or for too long, we can begin to lose hope that God is aware or will help us. We often stop reaching out for help. This is when our prayer life tends to fall away. We believe that we are out of God's reach, like someone who drifted too far out to sea beyond the reach of rescuers or for too long, and the search is called off. However, unlike the Coast Guard, God can find us wherever we are and no matter how long we have been struggling.

Indeed, we often observe that finding someone in the ocean is like finding a needle in a haystack. We might even wonder if that is what we are to God, a needle in a haystack. However, as C.S. Lewis wrote, "God has infinite attention to spare for each one of us. You are as much alone with him as though you were the only being He had ever created." Such as it was with the Gadarene demoniac. God knew him. He knew his story and reached him in the tombs even though he was under the influence of another power. There is no place we can be where God cannot find us. Like the man suffering in the tombs, our time of rescue may come at a time when we least expect it. Our own visitations of God's grace may come when we least expect it. So, let's not lose heart, keep praying, doing the healing work, and waiting for God. He will show.

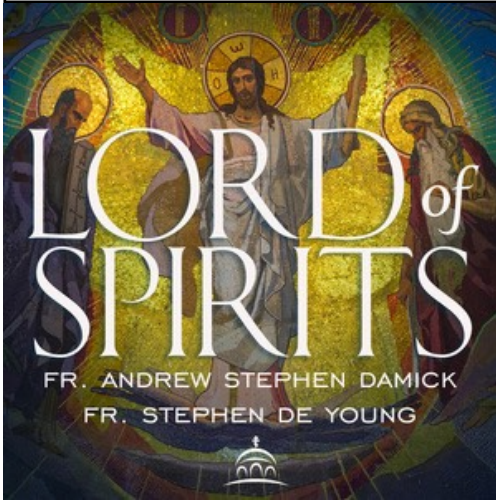
Fr. Joshua Makoul  
*A Healing Driven Life*  
[blogs.ancientfaith.com/ahealingdrivenlife](http://blogs.ancientfaith.com/ahealingdrivenlife)



## TO GROW OUR KNOWLEDGE AND SOFTEN OUR HEARTS TO THE LORD

### PODCAST

**The Lord of Spirits:  
The Seen and Unseen World in  
Orthodox Christian Tradition**



Angels, demons, gods, and humans, and above all of them, the One True God - our God - the Lord of Spirits.

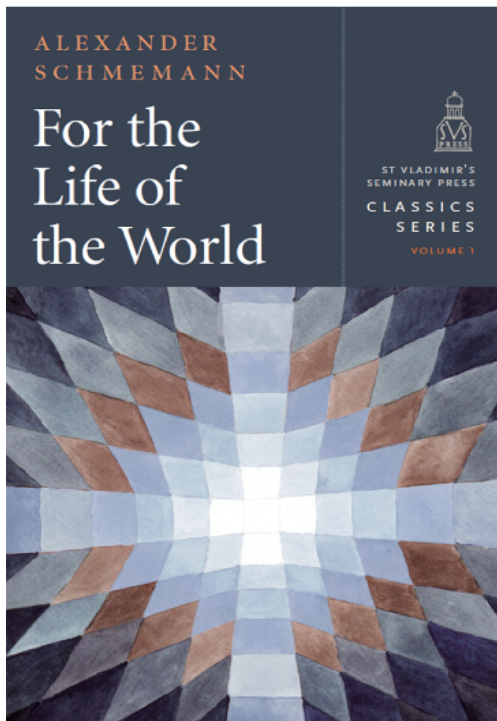
The modern world doesn't acknowledge but is nevertheless haunted by spirits—angels, demons, and saints.

Orthodox Christian priests Fr. Andrew Stephen Damick and Fr. Stephen De Young host this live call-in show focused on enchantment in creation, the union of the seen and unseen as made by God and experienced by mankind throughout history.

What is spiritual reality like? How do we engage with it well? How do we permeate everyday life with spiritual presence?

You can listen to all the episodes at:

<https://www.ancientfaith.com/podcasts/lordofspirits>



Of what life do we speak, what life do we preach, proclaim, and announce when, as Christians, we confess that Christ died for the life of the world?

Fr. Schmemmann suggests an approach to the world and life within it, which stems from the liturgical experience of the Orthodox Church. He understands issues such as secularism and Christian culture from the perspective of the unbroken experience of the Church, as revealed and communicated in her worship, in her liturgy—the sacrament of the world, the sacrament of the Kingdom.

For over half a century For the Life of the World has challenged, illumined, and inspired readers from many backgrounds. For some it is an introduction to the Orthodox Church, while for others it is a call to plunge more deeply into the life of the Kingdom, both manifested and anticipated here and now in the liturgy of the Church.

Available at [www.svspress.com](http://www.svspress.com)

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Or other online sources.

Most books are available as e-books or audiobooks through popular online e-book retailers.



## DIGITAL CHANT AND CHURCH SERVICES RESOURCE

The full services for all Sundays and major feast days of the year, available in Greek and English in PDF format - what many of our churches use for our services. Go to the website and follow along!

[dcs.goarch.org](https://dcs.goarch.org)

## I'M ORTHODOX, WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

This booklet answers the basic questions of what it means to be an Orthodox Christian. Available at the website below or through our priest:

<https://goarchdiocese.ca>

## DONATIONS , FEES, & MEMBERSHIPS

Payments can be made in person or electronically - preferably via direct e-transfer at [holytrinity@tbaytel.net](mailto:holytrinity@tbaytel.net). You can also use the PayPal link on our website. If you wish to pay by cheque or cash, please speak with our treasurer or the priest.

## CHILDREN IN THE DIVINE LITURGY

To the parents and grandparents of our young children, may we suggest...

Relax! God put the wiggle and curiosity in children; don't feel you have to suppress it. All are welcome! Sit somewhere where it is easier for your little ones to see and hear what is going on - even if that means you sit at the front. They tire of seeing the backs of others' heads. We know how hard it is to have small children in Liturgy. Please don't be discouraged. We love you and want you here.

**Quietly explain the Liturgy to your children:**

### The Small Entrance

The Gospel (the Good News) coming into the world

### The Epistle and Gospel Readings

Our message for the day

### The Sermon/Homily

The clergy speaks about the Bible readings, the Saints, and the Holy Days

### The Offering (Anaphora)

Bowing to our King and offering Him our gifts, that He may change them into His Body and Blood and offer them back to us

### Holy Communion

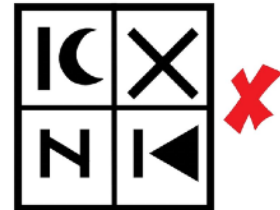
Christ is in us and we are in Him

Sing the hymns, pray, and voice the responses with the chanters and the choir. Children learn liturgical behaviour by copying you. Remember that we are here to worship Christ. If you have to temporarily leave the service with your child, feel free, but please come back when your child calms down. As Christ said, "Let the children come to Me." If you need to walk your child around, feel free. Also, we encourage you to visit the church and Fr. Kosta with your children on days when there is no service, so you can explain to them a few things about the church. The children will also get a different appreciation of the church when they have it all to themselves.

To the members of our Community, the presence of children is a gift to the Church and a reminder that our Community is growing. Please pray for our children and welcome them by giving a smile of encouragement to their parents. Remember that the way we welcome children in the Church directly affects the way they respond to the Church, Christ, and to one another. Let them know they are home!

## WHICH SEAL IS PROPER FOR PROSPHORO?

Because some of our church members have questions regarding Prosporo stamps, here's the most basic guide of what is correct when you're looking to replace your stamp or buy a new one. Be sure to use a proper stamp when preparing the Offering Bread for the Divine Liturgy. The symbols in the Prosporo (Offering Bread) Seal convey theological and doctrinal truths and is therefore important for them to be correct. The correct seal has the lettering ICXC NIKA or ΙΣΧΣ NIKA.



## Common Questions by First-Time Visitors or Inquirers

### **Q: What does "Greek Orthodox" mean?**

The term Greek Orthodox may refer either to the Orthodox Church as a whole or to the churches of the Eastern Roman Empire or "Byzantine" areas. Greek Orthodox also refers to the style of liturgical rite used in the Church. In the western world, Greek Orthodox mainly refers to Orthodox Christians of Greek descent. However, non-Orthodox people sometimes apply the term to all Orthodox Christians without regard to ethnicity, much as the term Roman Catholic is used to refer to all those who belong to the Roman Catholic Church, despite not being of Italian ancestry.

### **Q: What language are your services in?**

Our Divine Liturgy is done in English and Greek, with most of the prayers done in English, while the hymns which are chanted by the cantors are usually balanced between Greek and English. Vespers and Matins (Orthros) are chanted in both Greek and English. The sermon is given in English and sometimes in Greek as well.

### **Q: Do I have to be Greek or Orthodox to attend services?**

You do not have to be Greek or Orthodox to attend services. Everyone is welcome to attend and inquire about our theology and liturgical practices. In fact, we often have visitors in our church.

**Please note** that you need to be baptized Orthodox, in good standing, to receive the Sacraments. Being Greek does not automatically make you Orthodox, or vice versa. Our priest is available if you have any questions regarding your attendance at our church. Please feel free to contact him via text, or email a couple of days before you visit and he'll answer any questions you have.

### **Q: What is a good service to attend if I've never been to an Orthodox service before?**

It is recommended that you speak to the priest beforehand about attending a service so you will be prepared for what to expect.

### **Q: How will I fit in your congregation if I'm not Greek?**

You will fit in just fine. We have many people who are not Greek, whether they come from different nationalities, are converts or married to a Greek Orthodox person. Orthodoxy is universal. You do not need to be Greek to be a member of the Church. Before thinking about fitting in, it is suggested that you simply learn about Orthodoxy and also get to know the congregation at Holy Trinity. Orthodoxy is not something you can jump into with both feet. It takes time and patience.

### **Q: I'm an Orthodox Christian but visiting for the first time. What should I do?**

Please contact the priest and let him know you are visiting, especially if you wish to receive Holy Communion.

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**Orthodox services can be overwhelming or confusing for people who are being exposed to them for the first time. Please feel free to speak with our priest after the service regarding your experience, as well as any questions you may have. On Sundays, coffee hour is the best time to talk with our priest and members of our congregation.**

## **GENERAL INFORMATION ON MOST COMMON QUESTIONS**

### **MEMORIAL SERVICES**

Memorial Services are offered for Orthodox Christians, typically on the fortieth day after death, six month, and yearly memorial following death. They are usually held on Sundays at the end of the Divine Liturgy, or may also be held as separate services on weekdays, at the church or at the grave. Please speak with our priest if you have any questions regarding Kolyva or to arrange for a Memorial Service.

#### **Items needed for a memorial at the church:**

- Kolyva (boiled wheat tray) - Recipes can be found online or through our Priest. An elaborate recipe can be found at [www.washingtonpost.com/recipes/kolyva/16992/](http://www.washingtonpost.com/recipes/kolyva/16992/)
- Prophoro and red wine (Mavrodaphe or a red dessert wine)
- The names of the persons commemorated.

#### **Memorials are not allowed on the following days:**

- Feast Days of the Lord (Christmas, Theophany, Easter, Presentation, Transfiguration, etc)
- All Feast Days of the Mother of God (Nativity of the Theotokos, Entrance into the Temple, Dormition, Annunciation, etc)
- From Saturday of Lazarus up to and including Sunday of Thomas, which is the Sunday following Easter)
- Sunday of Pentecost

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### **WEDDINGS, BAPTISMS, & FUNERALS**

Information on the Sacraments are found at our website [www.gothunderbay.org](http://www.gothunderbay.org). Please speak with Fr. Kosta directly regarding dates, sponsors (Koumbaroi), preparations, and any other questions you have about booking a Sacrament or a funeral.

#### **Dates a Wedding cannot be performed:**

- Any evening that comes before one of the Twelve Major Feasts
- Nativity Fast (Nov. 15 – Dec. 24)
- Great Lent (dates change each year)
- Apostles' Fast (the Monday after All Saints to the feast day of Sts. Peter and Paul on June 29)
- Dormition Fast (Aug. 1 – Aug. 14)
- Aug. 28/29 (the Beheading of St. John the Baptist)
- Sept. 13/14 (the Exaltation of the Holy Cross)

#### **Dates a Baptism cannot be performed:**

- Christmas Day through the Feast of Theophany (December 25-January 6)
- Holy Week (dates vary each year)
- Great Feast-days of the Lord

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### **HELPING OUT WITH THE CHURCH SERVICES - STEWARDSHIP IN ACTION**

Stewardship is not just membership fees. There are many other ways we can take ownership of our church and teach our children to do the same.

#### **There are many items our church needs to replenish throughout the year, such as:**

- Phosphoro (Bread used for the Eucharist)
- Charcoal disks
- Incense
- Candles
- Oil & Oil Lamp Wicks
- Red Wine (Mavrodaphe or other red dessert wines)

#### **Ways to help out our church prepare for major Feast Days and throughout the year:**

- Washing the Holy Communion cloths
- Ironing the coverings for the Altar table and the icon stands.
- Decorating the church for major Feast Days

**Please speak with our priest about opportunities to contribute to our church.**

## Stewardship and Fees

**As you know, it takes every little bit of financial and volunteer help to keep our church operating. Please renew your stewardship/membership and support our church with an annual commitment.**

Please pay all fees to the treasurer (phone number can be found in this bulletin) or through e-transfer at holytrinity@tbaytel.net. The fees go towards the operational cost of the church building, not to the priest.

### Annual Stewardship

Family: \$600

Single Regular Members (Age 18+) & Seniors: \$300/person

University/College Students: \$100

Associate Members (non-Orthodox spouse): \$150

### Funerals

Up-to-Date Members: No Fee

Not Up-to-Date Members: \$300 for each year of no membership paid, up to 2 years

### Hall Rentals

Members: \$150 Non-Members: \$400

### Sacrament/Services Fees

Wedding: \$250 Baptism: \$150

**Fees must be paid to the treasurer at least two (2) weeks prior to a Sacrament.**

- \* Parents and Godparents, as well as couples and Sponsors (Koumbaroi) must be in good financial standing with our community by **having paid their stewardship (membership) for the past two consecutive years**. Please speak with our treasurer and make sure your financial obligations are up to date.
- \* Godparents and wedding Sponsors (Koumbaroi) **must also be in ecclesiastical good standing** in the Orthodox Church by being baptized Orthodox, having their marriages blessed in the Orthodox Church and not taken part in a Sacrament outside the Orthodox Faith. Out of town Sponsors & Godparents must provide a letter from their priest stating they are canonically able to take part in a Sacrament.
- \* Couples where one member is not baptized Orthodox must speak with the priest prior to booking a Wedding.

### Stewardship

Each person/family can make a personal commitment to support our church throughout the year. Stewardship is an act of faith. When we believe, stewardship follows. Stewardship is caring for our church community and its members. It is faith in action; action motivated by humble gratitude to God for his blessings in our life. Our church is a tremendous blessing in our lives.

## THANK YOU SOUVLAKI TAKE-OUT VOLUNTEERS!

**Many thanks to our tireless and dynamic volunteers, from our purchasers, preparers, cooks, cashiers and food runners. May our Lord bless their work and multiply their blessings in this world and the Kingdom of God.**



## With Gratitude to God for Our Stewards

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