THE ORDER FOR THE TYPIKA SERVICE WHEN WE ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND CHURCH

SUNDAY, AUGUST 16, 2020


*THE SERVICE TAKES PLACE IN FRONT OF OUR ICON CORNER*

EVERYONE: O, God cleanse me a sinner and have mercy on me! (3x)

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

READER: Amen. O, Heavenly King, the Comforter the Spirit of Truth, Who art everywhere present and fillest all things. Treasury of Blessings and Giver of Life. Come and abide in us and cleanse us from every impurity and save our souls, O Good One!

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (3 times)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Amen.

O most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities, for Thy Name’s sake.

Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Amen.

EVERYONE: Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

READER: Amen. Lord have mercy (12x)

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.


Bless the Lord, O my soul! Blessed are Thou, O Lord! Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits. Who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases. The Lord is compassionate and merciful, long suffering and of great goodness. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Blessed art Thou, O Lord!
THE LITTLE LITANY is not said in the absence of a Priest or Deacon. The reader continues:

READER: Amen. Lord have mercy (3x)

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

EVERYONE: Amen. Followed by the singing of the Second Antiphon.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Praise the Lord, O my soul! I will praise the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have being. Put not your trust in princes, in sons of men in whom there is no salvation. When his breath departs he returns to his earth, on that very day his plans perish. The Lord will reign forever; Your God, O Zion, to all generation.

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Only-begotten Son and immortal Word of God, Who for our salvation didst will to be incarnate of the holy Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, Who without change didst become man and wast crucified, Who art one of the Holy Trinity, glorified with the Father and the Holy Spirit: O Christ our God, trampling down death by death, save us!

THE LITTLE LITANY is not said in the absence of a Priest or Deacon. The reader continues:

READER: Amen. Lord have mercy (3x)

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

EVERYONE: Amen. Followed by the singing of the Third Antiphon.

In Thy Kingdom remember us, O Lord, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are you when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven.

Followed by the singing of the appointed Troparia for the day:

Troparion for The Resurrection – Tone 1
When the stone had been sealed by the Jews, while the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, Thou didst rise on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. The powers of heaven therefore cried to Thee, O Giver of Life: “Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ! Glory to Thy Kingdom! // Glory to Thy dispensation, O Thou who lovest mankind!”

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Troparion for The Feast of The Icon of Our Lord Not-Made-By-Hands - Tone 2
We venerate Thy most pure image, O Good One; and ask forgiveness of our transgressions, O Christ our God. Of Thine own will Thou wast pleased to ascend the Cross in the flesh and deliver Thy creatures from bondage to the Enemy. Therefore with thankfulness we cry aloud to Thee: “Thou hast filled all with joy, O our Savior,/ / by coming to save the world.”
Now and Ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

**Troparion for the Feast of the Dormition of The Theotokos - Tone 1**

In giving birth thou didst preserve thy virginity. In falling asleep thou didst not forsake the world, O Theotokos. Thou wast translated to life, O Mother of Life, // and by thy prayers thou dost deliver our souls from death.

**THE EPISTLE LESSON**

READER: The Prokeimenon is in the 1st Tone:

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us / as we have set our hope on Thee!

CHOIR: Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us / as we have set our hope on Thee!

READER: Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous! Praise befits the just!

CHOIR: Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us / as we have set our hope on Thee!

READER: The Second Prokeimenon is in the 4th Tone:

Sing to the Lord a new song, / for the Lord hath done marvelous things!

CHOIR: Sing to the Lord a new song, / for the Lord hath done marvelous things!

**READER: THE READING IS FROM THE FIRST EPISTLE OF THE HOLY APOSTLE PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS.**

**READER: (1 Corinthians 4:9-16 and Colossians 1:12-18)**

Brethren:

For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last, as men condemned to death; for we have been made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men.

We are fools for Christ’s sake, but you are wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are distinguished, but we are dishonored! To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless.

And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things until now. I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you.

For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

Therefore I urge you, imitate me.
Brethren:

Giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

READER: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! God gives vengeance unto me, and subdues people under me.

CHORUS: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

READER: He magnifies the salvation of the King and deals mercifully with David, His anointed, and his seed forever.

CHORUS: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

READER: O Lord, we will walk in the light of Thy countenance, and will exult in Thy name forever.

CHORUS: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

THE GOSPEL LESSON

READER: And that we may be accounted worthy of hearing the Holy Gospel, let us pray to the Lord God.

EVERYONE: Lord have mercy (3x)

READER: Let us listen to the Holy Gospel. The Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew.

EVERYONE: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.


Let us Attend!

And when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying, “Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him.”

Then Jesus answered and said, “O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me.”

And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, “Why could we not cast it out?”
So Jesus said to them, “Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.

However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.” Now while they were staying in Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised up.” And they were exceedingly sorrowful.

Let us Attend!

Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, and sent messengers before His face. And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him.

But they did not receive Him, because His face was set for the journey to Jerusalem. And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, “Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?” But He turned and rebuked them, and said, “You do not know what manner of spirit you are of.

For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men’s lives but to save them.” And they went to another village.

All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.” Then He turned to His disciples and said privately, “Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see; for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen it, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard it.”

EVERYONE: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

READER: Remember us, O Lord, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom.
Remember us, O Master, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom.
Remember us, O Holy One, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom.

THE LITANY OF FERVENT SUPPLICATION is not said in the absence of a Priest or Deacon. The reader continues:

READER: Amen. Lord have mercy (12x)

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

EVERYONE: Amen.

READER: The Heavenly Choir sings Thy praises and cries out: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord of Sabaoth; Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.

READER: Draw nigh unto Him, and be enlightened; and your faces shall not be put to shame.

READER: The Heavenly Choir sings Thy praises and cries out: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord of Sabaoth; Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.
READER: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

READER: The Choir of Holy Angels and Archangels, with all the Powers of Heaven, sings Thy praises and cries out: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord of Sabaoth, Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.

THE SYMBOL OF FAITH (THE NICENE CREED)

EVERYONE: I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only-begotten, begotten of the Father before all ages. Light of light; true God of true God, begotten, not made; of one essence with the Father, by Whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from Heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became man. And He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried. And the third day He arose again, according to the Scriptures, and ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father; And He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead. Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life, Who proceeds from the Father; Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke by the prophets.

In One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins. I look for the Resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

THE LITANY OF SUPPLICATION is not said in the absence of a Priest or Deacon. The reader continues:

READER: Amen. Lord have mercy (12x)

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

EVERYONE: Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

READER: Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us and save us.

EVERYONE: Amen. (Followed by the singing of the appointed Kontakia)

Kontakion for The Resurrection – Tone 1

As God, Thou didst rise from the tomb in glory, raising the world with Thyself. Human nature praises Thee as God, for death has vanished. Adam exults, O Master! Eve rejoices, for she is freed from bondage and cries to Thee:/

“Thou art the Giver of Resurrection to all, O Christ!”

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
Kontakion for The Feast of The Icon of Our Lord Not-Made-By-Hands. – Tone 3
Uncircumscribed Word of the Father, as we behold the victorious image of Thy true incarnation, not made by hands, but divinely wrought in Thine ineffable and divine dispensation towards us, we honor it with veneration.

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Kontakion for Feast of The Dormition of The Theotokos – Tone 2
Neither the tomb, nor death, could hold the Theotokos, who is constant in prayer and our firm hope in her intercessions. For being the Mother of Life, she was translated to life by the One Who dwelt in her virginal womb.

READER: Lord have mercy (12x)
O All-Holy Trinity, Consustantial Power, Undivided Kingdom, Origin of all Good: be graciously inclined unto me, a sinner. Make steadfast my heart and give it understanding, and take away from me every defilement. Enlighten my mind, that I may ever glorify, praise and worship Thee, and say: One is Holy, One is the Lord Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Blessed be the Name of the Lord, henceforth and forevermore. (3x)
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM 34

READER: I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall be continually in my mouth. In the Lord shall my soul be praised; let the meek hear and be glad. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together. I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my troubles. Draw nigh unto Him, and be enlightened, and your faces shall not be put to shame. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. The Angel of the Lord will encamp around those who fear Him, and will deliver them.

O taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that hopes in Him. O fear the Lord, all you His saints; for there is no want for them that fear Him. The rich have become poor and have hungered; but they that seek the Lord shall lack no good thing. Come, O children, hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Who is the man that desires life, who loves to see days that are good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking deceit. Turn away from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears unto their supplication. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

The righteous cried, and the Lord hear them, and He delivered them out of all their troubles. The Lord is nigh unto them that are broken in heart, and will save them that are humble in spirit.

Many are the afflictions of the righteous, and out of them all shall the Lord deliver them. The Lord keeps all of their bones; not one of them shall be broken. The death of sinners is cruel, and they that hate the righteous shall do wrong. The Lord will redeem the soul of His servants, and none of them shall do wrong that hope in Him.
READER: More honorable than the Cherubim and more glorious beyond than the Seraphim, without defilement, You gave birth to God the Word, True Theotokos, we magnify You.

CHOR: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen. Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy. Lord, Bless!

READER: May He, Who rose from the dead, Christ our True God, through the Prayers of our Holy Fathers, through the Prayers of the Most Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, by the Power of the Precious and Life-Creating Cross, through the protection of the Bodiless Powers of Heaven, through the prayers of Holy Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John, through the prayers of the holy glorious and all-laudable Apostles, through the Prayers of all the North American Saints, through the prayers of the patron of this Holy Temple, the Feast of the Dormition of The Theotokos which we celebrate, of The Feast of The Icon of Our Lord Not-Made-By-Hands which we celebrate today, of the holy and righteous Ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna, and of all the saints, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, have mercy on us and save us.

CHOR: Amen.

(The faithful now come up and venerate the Precious Cross and Icons in our Icon Corner.)

READER: Through the Prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us!

CHOR: Amen. Lord have mercy! Lord have mercy! Lord have mercy!

THE DIOCESE OF NEW YORK and NEW JERSEY "EDUCATION CORNER"

THE FEAST OF THE ICON OF OUR LORD NOT-MADE-BY-HANDS

AUGUST 16

The Transfer from Edessa to Constantinople of the Icon of our Lord Jesus Christ Not-Made-By-Hands occurred in the year 944. Eusebius, in his History of the Church (I:13), relates that when the Savior was preaching, Abgar ruled in Edessa. He was stricken all over his body with leprosy. Reports of the great miracles worked by the Lord spread throughout Syria (Mt.4:24) and reached even Abgar. Without having seen the Savior, Abgar believed in Him as the Son of God. He wrote a letter requesting Him to come and heal him. He sent with this letter to Palestine his own portrait-painter Ananias, and commissioned him to paint a likeness of the Divine Teacher.

Ananias arrived in Jerusalem and saw the Lord surrounded by people. He was not able to get close to Him because of the large throng of people listening to the preaching of the Savior. Then he stood on a high rock and attempted to paint the portrait of the Lord Jesus Christ from afar, but this effort was not successful. The Savior saw him, called to him by name and gave him a short letter for Abgar in which He praised the faith of this ruler. He also promised to send His disciple to heal him of his leprosy and guide him to salvation. Then the Lord asked that water and a cloth be brought to Him. He washed His Face, drying it with the cloth, and His Divine Countenance was imprinted upon it. Ananias took the cloth and the letter of the Savior to
Edessa. Reverently, Abgar pressed the holy object to his face and he received partial healing. Only a small trace of the terrible affliction remained until the arrival of the disciple promised by the Lord. He was Saint Thaddeus, Apostle of the Seventy (August 21), who preached the Gospel and baptized Abgar and all the people of Edessa. Abgar put the Holy Napkin in a gold frame adorned with pearls, and placed it in a niche over the city gates. On the gateway above the icon he inscribed the words, “O Christ God, let no one who hopes on Thee be put to shame.”

For many years the inhabitants kept a pious custom to bow down before the Icon Not-Made-by-Hands, when they went forth from the gates. But one of the great-grandsons of Abgar, who later ruled Edessa, fell into idolatry. He decided to take down the icon from the city wall. In a vision the Lord ordered the Bishop of Edessa to hide His icon. The bishop, coming by night with his clergy, lit a lampada before it and walled it up with a board and with bricks.

Many years passed, and the people forgot about it. But in the year 545, when the Persian emperor Chozroes I besieged Edessa and the position of the city seemed hopeless, the Most Holy Theotokos appeared to Bishop Eulabius and ordered him to remove the icon from the sealed niche, and it would save the city from the enemy. Having opened the niche, the bishop found the Icon Not-Made-by-Hands: in front of it was burning the lampada, and upon the board closing in the niche, a copy of the icon was reproduced. After a church procession with the Icon Not-Made-by-Hands had made the circuit of the city walls, the Persian army withdrew.

In the year 630 Arabs seized Edessa, but they did not hinder the veneration of the Holy Napkin, the fame of which had spread throughout all the East. In the year 944, the emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitos (912-959) wanted to transfer the icon to the Constantinople, and he paid a ransom for it to the emir of the city. With great reverence the Icon of the Savior Not-Made-by-Hands and the letter which He had written to Abgar, were brought to Constantinople by clergy.

On August 16, the icon of the Savior was placed in the Tharossa church of the Most Holy Theotokos. There are several traditions concerning what happened later to the Icon Not-Made-by-Hands. According to one, crusaders ran off with it during their rule at Constantinople (1204-1261), but the ship on which the sacred object was taken, perished in the waters of the Sea of Marmora.

According to another tradition, the Icon Not-Made-by-Hands was transported around 1362 to Genoa, where it is preserved in a monastery in honor of the Apostle Bartholomew. It is known that the Icon Not-Made-by-Hands repeatedly gave from itself exact imprints. One of these, named “On Ceramic,” was imprinted when Ananias hid the icon in a wall on his way to Edessa; another, imprinted on a cloak, wound up in Georgia.

Possibly, the variance of traditions about the original Icon Not-Made-by-Hands derives from the existence of several exact imprints.

During the time of the Iconoclast heresy, those who defended the veneration of icons, having their blood spilt for holy icons, sang the Troparion to the Icon Not-Made-by-Hands. In proof of the validity of Icon-Veneration, Pope Gregory II (715-731) sent a letter to the Byzantine emperor, in which he pointed out the healing of King Abgar and the sojourn of the Icon Not-Made-by-Hands at Edessa as a commonly known fact. The Icon Not-Made-by-Hands was put on the standards of the Russian army, defending them from the enemy. In the Russian Orthodox Church it is a pious custom for a believer, before entering the temple, to read the Troparion of the Not-Made-by-Hand icon of the Savior, together with other prayers.

According to the Prologue, there are four known Icons of the Savior Not-Made-by-Hands:
- at Edessa, of King Abgar (August 16)
- the Kamulian, — Saint Gregory of Nyssa (January 10) wrote of its discovery, while according to Saint Nikodemos of the Holy Mountain (July 14), the Kamulian icon appeared in the year 392, but it had in appearance an icon of the Mother of God (August 9)
- in the time of Emperor Tiberius (578-582), Saint Mary Syncliteke (August 11) received healing from this icon on ceramic tiles (16 August)

The Feast of the Transfer of the Icon Not-Made-by-Hands, made together with the Afterfeast of the Dormition, they call the third-above Savior Icon, the “Savior on Linen Cloth.” The particular reverence of this Feast in the Russian Orthodox Church is also expressed in iconography, and the Icon Not-Made-by-Hands was one of the most widely distributed.
THE FEAST OF THE DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS

AUGUST 15

The feast of the Dormition or Falling-asleep of the Theotokos is celebrated on the fifteenth of August, preceded by a two-week fast. This feast, which is also sometimes called the Assumption, commemorates the death, resurrection and glorification of Christ’s mother. It proclaims that Mary has been “assumed” by God into the heavenly kingdom of Christ in the fullness of her spiritual and bodily existence. As with the nativity of the Virgin and the feast of her entrance to the temple, there are no biblical or historical sources for this feast. The Tradition of the Church is that Mary died as all people die, not “voluntarily” as her Son, but by the necessity of her mortal human nature which is indivisibly bound up with the corruption of this world.

The Orthodox Church teaches that Mary is without personal sins. In the Gospel of the feast, however, in the liturgical services and in the Dormition icon, the Church proclaims as well that Mary truly needed to be saved by Christ as all human persons are saved from the trials, sufferings and death of this world; and that having truly died, she was raised up by her Son as the Mother of Life and participates already in the eternal life of paradise which is prepared and promised to all who “hear the word of God and keep it.” (Luke 11:27-28)

In giving birth, you preserved your virginity. In failing asleep you did not forsake the world, O Theotokos. You were translated to life, O Mother of Life, and by your prayers, you deliver our souls from death. (Troparion)

Neither the tomb, nor death, could hold the Theotokos, who is constant in prayer and our firm hope in her intercessions. For being the Mother of Life, she was translated to life, by the One who dwelt in her virginal womb. (Kontakion)

The services of the feast repeat the main theme, that the Mother of Life has “passed over into the heavenly joy, into the divine gladness and unending delight” of the Kingdom of her Son. (Vesper verse) The Old Testament readings, as well as the gospel readings for the Vigil and the Divine Liturgy, are exactly the same as those for the feast of the Virgin’s nativity and her entrance into the Temple. Thus, at the Vigil we again hear Mary say: “My soul magnifies the Lord and my Spirit rejoices in God my Saviour.” (Luke 1:47) At the Divine Liturgy we hear the letter to the Philippians where St. Paul speaks of the self-emptying of Christ who condescends to human servitude and ignoble death in order to be “highly exalted” by God his Father. (Philippians 2:5-11) And once again we hear in the Gospel that Mary’s blessedness belongs to all who “hear the word of God and keep it.” (Luke 11:27-28)

Thus, the feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos is the celebration of the fact that all men are “highly exalted” in the blessedness of the victorious Christ, and that this high exaltation has already been accomplished in Mary the Theotokos. The feast of the Dormition is the sign, the guarantee, and the celebration that Mary’s fate is, the destiny of all those of “low estate” whose souls magnify the Lord, whose spirits rejoice in God the Saviour, whose lives are totally dedicated to hearing and keeping the Word of God which is given to men in Mary’s child, the Saviour and Redeemer of the world.

Finally it must be stressed that, in all of the feasts of the Virgin Mother of God in the Church, the Orthodox Christians celebrate facts of their own lives in Christ and the Holy Spirit. What happens to Mary happens to all who imitate her holy life of humility, obedience, and love. With her all people will be “blessed” to be “more honorable than the cherubim and beyond compare more glorious than the seraphim” if they follow her example. All will have Christ born in them by the Holy Spirit. All will become temples of the living God. All will share in the eternal life of His Kingdom who live the life that Mary lived.
In this sense everything that is praised and glorified in Mary is a sign of what is offered to all persons in the life of the Church. It is for this reason that Mary, with the divine child Jesus within her, is called in the Orthodox Tradition the Image of the Church. For the assembly of the saved is those in whom Christ dwells.

It is the custom in some churches to bless flowers on the feast of the Dormition of the Holy Theotokos.

Tenth Sunday after Pentecost
The Healing of the Lunatic
Matthew 17: 14-23

From The Explanation of the Gospel of St. Matthew
by Blessed Theophylact, Archbishop of Ochrid and Bulgaria

14-15. And when they were come to the multitude, there came to Him a certain man, kneeling down to Him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatic, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water.

That this man is exceedingly faithless is clear from the words which Christ spoke in reply to him, O faithless generation, and from the fact that the man himself blamed the disciples. The moon was not the cause, but rather, the demon would take note when the moon was full, and then would set upon his victim, so that men would blaspheme the created works of God as maleficent. You, then, O reader, understand that it is a foolish man that changes as the moon, as it is written [Sirach 27:11], at times waxing great in virtue, at other times waning and vanishing altogether. Then the foolish man becomes deranged and falls down into the fire of anger and lust, and into water, that is, the waves of the many cares of life, in which Leviathan the devil dwells, he who reigns over the waters. For are not the cares of the rich like waves that follow each other in quick succession?

16-18. And I brought him to Thy disciples, and they could not cure him. Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I endure you? Bring him hither to Me. And Jesus rebuked him; and the demon departed out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour.

Do you see how the man has shifted the blame for his own lack of faith upon the disciples, saying that they were too weak to heal? The Lord, therefore, shames him for accusing the disciples, saying, O faithless generation, that is, "It is not so much the fault of the weakness of the disciples as it is of your lack of faith, which, being great, has prevailed over the equal measure of their strength." He rebukes not only this man, but everyone who lacks faith, even the bystanders. By saying, How long shall I be with you? Christ shows that He longs for the Passion upon the Cross and His departure from them. For He is saying, "How long shall I live among scoffers and unbelievers? And Jesus rebuked him" whom? The man who was lunatic. From this it appears that he, too, lacked faith and his lack of faith had given occasion for the demon to enter him.

19-21. Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus answered and said, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. But this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.

The apostles were afraid that they had lost the grace against demons that had been given to them; this is why they asked Jesus in private and with great anxiety. But the Lord reproves them for being imperfect in faith, saying, "Because of your unbelief. For if you had fervent, ardent faith, you would accomplish great things even though they appeared to be small." The location of the mountains which the Apostles moved is nowhere recorded, yet it is likely that they did move them, but the event was not written down; for not everything was written down. Or, by another interpretation, they did not move a mountain because there had been no occasion to do so, but they did even greater things than that. Note how the Lord said, Ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence, in other words, the mountain shall move when you say the word. But the Apostles did not say the word as there was neither occasion nor necessity, and so they did not move mountains. But if
indeed they had spoken, they would have moved. This kind of demon is cast out by prayer and fasting. For they themselves who are demonized must fast, as well as those who would heal them; then comes the prayer, preceded by fasting, not drunkenness. Understand, then, that even perfect faith is as the grain of mustard seed, considered worthless on account of the foolishness of the preaching. Yet if it should find good soil, it grows into a tree in which the winged creatures of heaven, that is, soaring thoughts, may alight. Whoever, then, has perfect faith can say to this mountain, that is, to the demon, Remove hence. For Christ was also referring to the demon that had gone out.

22-23. And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: and they shall kill Him, and the third day He shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry. He continually foretells the Passion, so that no one would think that He suffered unwillingly, and also, to train them not to be shaken by the unexpected when it occurred. To the sorrow He weds the joyâ€”that He will rise.

**LET ALL THAT YOU DO BE DONE IN LOVE.** 1 Cor.16:14

**YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.** Matt. 22:37

**YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.** Matt. 22:39

**LOVE YOUR ENEMIES AND PRAY FOR THOSE WHO PERSECUTE YOU.** Matt. 5:44

**LOVE IS PATIENT, LOVE IS KIND, LOVE DOES NOT ENVY, LOVE DOES NOT BOAST, LOVE IS NOT PROUD, LOVE IS NOT SELFISH, LOVE IS NOT PROVOKED.** 1Cor. 13:4

**LOVE BEARS ALL THINGS, LOVE ALWAYS HAS FAITH, LOVE ALWAYS HAS HOPE, LOVE ENDURES ALL THINGS. LOVE NEVER FAILS!** 1Cor. 13:7,8