



OUR LADY OF THE CEDARS CHURCH

A MELKITE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

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REV. THOMAS P. STEINMETZ, Pastor

RT. REV. ANDRE ST. GERMAIN (retired)

REV. ROGER BOUCHER - Weekend Ministry

REV. THEOPHAN LEONARCZYK, Eparchial Chancellor

"Enter the Church and repent ... for here is the physician, not the judge. Here one is not investigated, one receives remission of sins." (St. John Chrysostom)

July 31, 2016

The Commemoration of the Holy and Just Eudocimos;

The Forefeast of the Procession of the Holy Cross

THE 11TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Parish Advisory & Finance Council:

KEN MONTY (PRESIDENT), RICHARD ASHOOH, ROBERT ANDERSON, ROBIN ANDERSON, MARY CULLEN, MARTHA DAGHER, MARYLOU LAZOS, TERRI LEONARCZYK, MATTHEW LOMANNO, PAUL MANSUR, NAJWA MOUSSOBA, PAUL ST. GERMAIN, AND CHRISTELLE SLAYBE

Parish Secretary: ROBIN ANDERSON

Cedars Society President: MARYLOU LAZOS

Sunday School Coordinator: MARTHA DAGHER

N.A.M.Y. Advisor: ROBIN ANDERSON

HOLY MYSTERY OF CONFESSION: Before or after any service, or by appointment;

HOLY MYSTERY OF CHRISTIAN ILLUMINATION: Please contact the clergy in advance to arrange for the required baptismal instructions;

HOLY MYSTERY OF CROWNING: At least six months prior to the proposed wedding, please contact the clergy to arrange for the required interview and instructions;

HOLY MYSTERY OF THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK: Please contact the pastor at any time when this sacrament is needed;

HOLY COMMUNION FOR THE SICK: Anyone too infirm to attend our services may receive Communion in the home. Please advise the clergy whenever this sacrament is needed.

THE ORDER OF TODAY'S LITURGY

The Troparion of the Resurrection (2nd Tone) Page 51

The Troparion of the Dormition of the Theotokos (1st Tone): Page 16

Kondakion of the Transfiguration (7th Tone):

On the mountain You were transfigured, O Christ our God, and Your disciples saw as much of Your glory as they could hold, so that when they should see You crucified, they would know that You suffer willingly, and would proclaim to the world that You are verily the Splendor of the Father.

THE PROKIMENON: MY
STRENGTH AND MY COURAGE IS THE LORD,
AND HE HAS BEEN MY SAVIOR!

The Lord has chastised me through His teaching, yet He has not delivered me to death!

Today's Readings: 1 Corinthians 9: 2b-12 and Matthew 18: 23-35

LITURGY INTENTIONS

Saturday 4:30 PM:

For the repose of Joseph Tutundgy (5th), John McHugh (2nd), Theresa Lawrence (13th), William Baroody (36th), and Salem "Sam" Solomon (3rd)

Sunday, 10:00 AM:

For the repose of John Steinmetz (31st Anniversary),
by Fr. Tom and Family

Next Saturday (Aug. 6), 4:30 PM:

For the repose of Peter Freije (3rd), David Gula (54th),
and Steven George (2nd)

Next Sunday (Aug. 7), 10:00 AM:

For the repose of Daniel Komisarek, (8th Anniversary), by the Komisarek Family



Helpers are needed on Friday August 12, and Saturday, August 13, in the morning beginning at 9 AM to 1 PM to clean the church in preparation for guests who will visit our church during Mahrajan. See Jeanine Notter if you can help.

Help is also welcome in completing the cleaning of the kitchen, which will take place on Wednesday at 10 AM!

August 6: The Transfiguration of the Lord

Among the miraculous manifestations of the Lord's omnipotence, the Transfiguration holds an exceptional place in the series of progressive preparations by which Christ introduced His redeeming mission to His disciples. For the three Apostles, the representatives of the new humanity, it is a particular Theophany, a personal demonstration of Christ's absolute supremacy that presents itself between Moses and Elijah, the two great witnesses of the Law and the Promise. It affirms Christ's eternal reign over all time, over the beginning and the end. The Transfiguration announces the Savior's Resurrection and His return in glory at the end of time. The Apostles did not understand Him on that very day. "For he (Peter) did not know what to say, for they were struck with fear" (Mark 9:5). The image of the event remained engraved in their hearts, with the Father's words: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear Him" (Matthew 17:5).



The Great Feast of the Transfiguration will be commemorated with a celebration of the Divine Liturgy and Blessing of Grapes Friday evening at 7:00 PM.

MAHRAJAN 2016 is coming August 19, 21, 22!

Here is how you can help:

- Sign-up sheets are available downstairs for volunteers to sign up for working the Mahrajan. Please sign up for specific times and locations where you are willing to help.
- Posters are available to advertise our event. Please take a few from the back of the church and help post them
- Consider making a cash donation so that we can buy foodstuffs that we need for this event. There are sign-up sheets for this in the church hall.
- Please purchase the raffle tickets if you have received them in the mail. If you did not receive them and would like some, see Fr. Tom.
- Remember to invite your friends, neighbors, and family to the Mahrajan!

Attendance - Last Saturday 4:30 PM: 24 Sunday 11:00 AM: 97

Last Weekend's Collection: \$1,217.⁰⁰

The average Sunday envelope donation: \$41.²²

The balance remaining on our mortgage is: \$ 83,789.²⁷

SERVICES FOR THE WEEK

Wed., August 3	7:00 PM	Divine Liturgy: offered for the persecuted Christians of the Middle East and the world
Fri., August 5	7:00 PM	Divine Liturgy: Feast of the Transfiguration
Sat., August 6	4:30 PM	Divine Liturgy: The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost
Sun., August 7	9:15 AM	Sunday Orthros
Sun., August 7	10:00 AM	Divine Liturgy: The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

August 1 to 14: The Fast of the Dormition

Q. What is the purpose of the Fast of the Dormition?

Every Orthodox Christian is aware and generally knows the reason behind the fasts for Pascha and Christmas. But while they may know of the Dormition Fast, there remain more than a few questions about why it is there and what the purpose of this fast is.

First, given the pervasive misunderstanding of the purpose of fasting itself, a refresher on its purpose is always a good idea. There is a perception that we should fast when we want something, as though the act of fasting somehow appeases God, and seeing us “suffer” gets Him to grant our request. Nothing can be further from the truth. It is not our fasting that pleases God, it is the fruits of our fast (provided we fast in the proper mind set, and do not merely diet) that please Him. We fast, not to get what we want, but to prepare ourselves to receive what God wants to give us.

The purpose of fasting is to bring us more in line with another Mary, the sister of Lazarus, and away from their sister Martha, who in the famous passage was “anxious and troubled about many things.” Fasting is intended to bring us to the realization of “the one thing needful.” It is to help us put God first and our own desires second, if not last. As such it serves to prepare us to be instruments of God’s will, as with Moses in his flight from Egypt and on Mt. Sinai, as well as our Lord’s fast in the wilderness. Fasting turns us away from ourselves and toward God. In essence it helps us become like the Theotokos, an obedient servant of God, who heard His word and kept it better than anyone else has or could.

So why do we fast before Dormition? In a close-knit family, word that its matriarch is on her deathbed brings normal life to a halt. Otherwise important things (parties, TV, luxuries, personal desires) become unimportant; life comes to revolve around the dying matriarch. It is the same with the Orthodox family; word that our matriarch is on her deathbed, could not (or at least should not) have any different effect than the one just mentioned. The Church, through the Paraklesis Service, gives us the opportunity to come to that deathbed and eulogize and entreat the woman who bore God, the vessel of our salvation and our chief advocate at His divine throne. And as, in the earthly family, daily routines and the indulgence in personal wants should come to a halt. Fasting, in its full sense (abstaining from food and desires) accomplishes this. Less time in leisure or other pursuits leaves more time for prayer and reflection on she who gave us Christ, and became the first and greatest Christian.

In reflecting on her and her incomparable life, we see a model Christian life, embodying Christ’s retort to the woman who stated that Mary was blessed because she bore Him: blessed rather are those who hear His word and keep it. Mary did this better than anyone. As Fr. Thomas Hopko has stated, she heard the word of God and kept it so well, that she of all women in history was chosen not only to hear His Word but give birth to it (Him). So while we fast in contemplation of her life, we are simultaneously preparing ourselves to live a life in imitation of her. That is the purpose of the Dormition Fast.



The Transfiguration of the Lord

This feast commemorates the transfiguration of Christ on Mount Tabor, when our Lord appeared in His divine glory before the Apostles Peter, James, and John. The brightness was not something added to Christ but the manifestation of His true divine nature. For Peter, James, and John, it was also a glimpse of the glories of heaven and of the resurrected body promised to all Christians.

As Christ was transfigured, two others appeared with Him: Moses, representing the Old Testament Law, and Elijah, representing the prophets. Thus Christ, Who stood between the two and spoke with them, appeared to the disciples as the fulfillment of both the Law and the prophets.

Elijah and Moses also represented the living and the dead, for Moses had died, while Elijah was taken alive into heaven in order to appear again to announce the time of God's salvation in Christ the Messiah. Thus, in appearing with Jesus on the mount of Transfiguration, Moses and Elijah show that the Messiah has come, and that he is the Son of God to whom the Father himself bears witness, the Lord of all creation, of the Old and New Testaments, of the living and the dead.

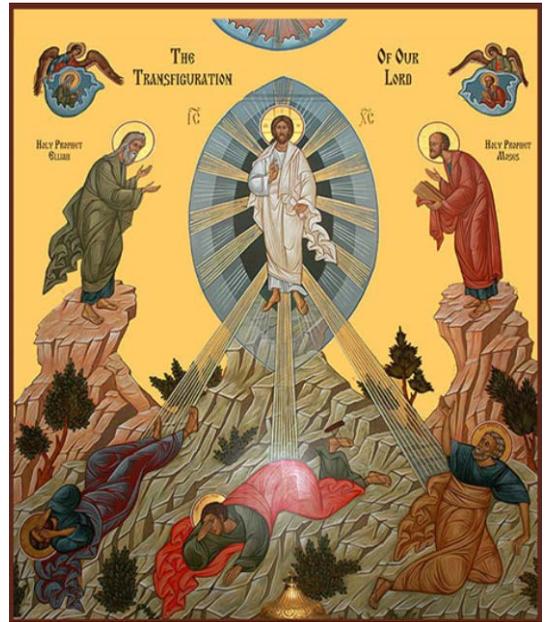
The Transfiguration of Christ in itself is the fulfillment of all of the theophanies and manifestations of God, a fulfillment made perfect and complete in the person of Christ. The Transfiguration of Christ reveals to us our ultimate destiny as Christians, the ultimate destiny of all men and all creation to be transformed and glorified by the majestic splendor of God himself.

The event of the Transfiguration of Christ is believed to have taken place during the Jewish Festival of Booths. This festival celebrated the dwelling of God with men, whereas the transfiguration of Christ reveals how this dwelling takes place in and through the Messiah, the Son of God in human flesh. The Transfiguration is this the New Testament fulfillment of the Old Testament feast in a way similar to the feasts of Passover and Pentecost

Since the Transfiguration is closely connected with the approaching death and resurrection of Christ, it was at first celebrated during the pre-Easter season of the Church. It was probably moved because the joyous nature of the feast was thought not suitable for Lent.

Presently it is celebrated on the sixth of August, forty days before the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Just as Peter, James, and John saw the transfiguration before the crucifixion so that they might know Who it is that will suffered for them, the Church connects these two feasts to help the faithful understand the mission of Christ and that his suffering was voluntary.

The blessing of grapes, as well as other fruits and vegetables on this day - the blessing of first fruits for the year - is a beautiful sign of the final transfiguration of all things in Christ. It signifies the ultimate flowering and fruitfulness of all creation in the paradise of God's unending Kingdom of Life where all will be transformed by the glory of the Lord.



August 1 - The Holy Maccabees

Praising the Holy Maccabees

WHEN WE READ THE GOSPELS we regularly come across stories of the Lord Jesus contesting with the Pharisees about observance of the Sabbath and other precepts of the Law. What we may not know is that the Jews themselves had come close to abolishing the Law themselves in favor of adopting Greek culture.

By the second century BC the Jerusalem elite had become extremely Hellenized. They had adopted many Greek practices and looked unfavorably on many aspects of their own tradition. This is described at the beginning of the First Book of Maccabees: *“In those days lawless men came forth from Israel, and misled many, saying, ‘Let us go and make a covenant with the Gentiles round about us, for since we separated from them many evils have come upon us.’ This proposal pleased them, and some of the people eagerly went to the king. He authorized them to observe the ordinances of the Gentiles. So they built a gymnasium in Jerusalem, according to Gentile custom, and removed the marks of circumcision, and abandoned the holy covenant. They joined with the Gentiles and sold themselves to do evil”* (1 Macc 1:11-15).

This development was opposed by Jewish traditionalists who upheld the Torah and its practices such as circumcision. The conflict became so pronounced that it amounted to a civil war.

At that time the Jewish kingdom was a vassal state of the Greek Seleucid Empire. Its king, Antiochus IV sided with the elite and entered the conflict. He had successfully pursued Hellenizing policies in Syria and Phoenicia and thought to do the same in Jerusalem. *“After subduing Egypt, Antiochus returned in the one hundred and forty-third year. He went up against Israel and came to Jerusalem with a strong force. He arrogantly entered the sanctuary and took the golden altar, the lampstand for the light, and all its utensils. He took also the table for the bread of the Presence, the cups for drink offerings, the bowls, the golden censers, the curtain, the crowns, and the gold decoration on the front of the temple; he stripped it all off. He took the silver and the gold, and the costly vessels; he took also the hidden treasures which he found. Taking them all, he departed to his own land”* (1 Macc 1:20-24).

Judas and the Maccabees

Resistance to the Hellenizers was strongest in areas outside of Jerusalem. In the town of Modi'im near the Jordan the sons of the priest Mattathias sparked a revolt against Antiochus and the Jerusalem elite. In 166 BC his son Judas – called the “Maccabee” (Hammer) – led a kind of guerrilla war against the Seleucids. He was ultimately victorious, and his brother Jonathan became High Priest. The temple was rededicated, accompanied by a miracle which Jews today celebrate at the Feast of Hanukkah. The Maccabees could only find one small jug of uncontaminated oil for



lighting the Menorah: enough to last one day. Miraculously the Menorah remained lit for eight days when further oil could be obtained.

One of the incidents which sparked the revolt is described in the Second Book of Maccabees: *“It happened also that seven brothers and their mother were arrested and were being compelled by the king, under torture with whips and cords, to partake of unlawful swine’s flesh. One of them, acting as their spokesman, said, ‘What do you intend to ask and learn from us? For we are ready to die rather than transgress the laws of our fathers’”* (2 Macc 7:1, 2).

One after the other, each of the seven brothers were tortured and killed before the eyes of their mother. We read that they *“...encouraged one another to die nobly, saying, ‘The Lord God is watching over us and in truth has compassion on us, as Moses declared in his song which bore witness against the people to their faces, when he said, He will have compassion on His servants’”* (2 Macc 7:5, 6).

Their mother encourages her sons to remain faithful, knowing that God would reward them in the life to come: *“I do not know how you came into being in my womb. It was not I who gave you life and breath, nor I who set in order the elements within each of you. Therefore the Creator of the world, who shaped the beginning of man and devised the origin of all things, will in his mercy give life and breath back to you again, since you now forget yourselves for the sake of his laws”* (2 Macc 7:22, 23). After seeing her seven sons die rather than violate the Law, the mother was also killed.

This family is remembered on August 1 in both the Greek and Latin Churches (older form) as the Holy Maccabees although they were not, in fact, members of that family. They are not named in 2 Maccabees but are traditionally known as Solomonia and her sons Habim, Antonin, Guriah, Eleazar, Eusebon, Hadim (or Halim), and Marcellus. Also commemorated is their teacher Eleazar (mentioned in 2 Macc 6:18-31).

The Books of Maccabees

Although the story of the Maccabee family and of these martyrs is well known in Jewish lore and is written in the Talmud, the Books of the Maccabees are not found in the Hebrew Bible. The Hebrew original of 1 Macc has been lost and it only survives in a Greek translation found in the Septuagint. The other books with this name were all written in Greek. All told, there are four Books of the Maccabees in existence. The first three are found in the Septuagint, the Bible of the Greek-speaking Jews of Alexandria. As such they are found in the canon of most Eastern Churches. The fourth book is generally found in the appendix.

The Latin Vulgate, official translation used by Roman Catholics, included only the first two Books of Maccabees. The other books are considered apocryphal. Protestant Bibles, based on the Hebrew, do not contain these books. Martin Luther reportedly said, “I am so great an enemy to the second book of the Maccabees, and to Esther, that I wish they had not come to us at all.” His objections were doctrinal as this book illustrates the value of prayer for the dead (2 Macc 12:42-46) and of the intercession of the saints (2 Macc 15:11–17): two practices which the Protestants disdain.

Please remember to pray for the health and protection of Genevieve Allen, Olivia Aragon, Elizabeth Ashooh, Elsie Ashooh, Al Auclair, Alice Auclair, Erin Baroody, Michael Baroody, Anthony Blando, Helena Burkush, Fr. Michael Carl, Danielle Caron, Michael Cavanaugh, Meghan Connors, Sarah Cullen, Theresa Cullen, Jamileh Dagher, Sher Farrow, Declan Finn, Janet Drake, Julie Fregeau, Mary Fregeau, Peter Fregeau, Christine Freitas, John Gallagher, Loretto Gauvin, Bonnie Gomez, Gail Fisher, Nick Haddad, Jean Hannoush, Lucille Harper, Laura Jorba, Virginia Kearney, Shirley Lanoue, Susan Latvis, Roger Lawrence, Diana Lebel, Peggy Leclar, Sadie Grace McCallum, Miriam McCallum, Susan Merrill, Margaret Mitchell, Alfred Nasr, Afef Nasr, Blaise Notter, Steven O'Leary, Denis O'Keefe, Ellen Osgood, Josephine Paquette, Sheila Quinn, Deborah Roberts, Adam Rubin, Fr. Andre St. Germain, Deniese Sherburne, Salwa Sleiman, Tarrant Smith, Mary Stephen, Catherine Waldron, Laura Weingast, and Iris Angelina Velasquez.

If you are visiting our church, our parish family is delighted to welcome you here! Please give us the chance to get to know you by joining us for some coffee, pastry, and conversation in the church hall following the Divine Liturgy. If you would like to know more about the Melkite Catholic Church, check out the brochure entitled *“Welcome to this Holy House,”* located on the table in the back of the church.




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