

PARISH BULLETIN - September 10, 2023

Fifteenth Sunday After Pentecost
Sunday before the Exaltation of the Cross,
Post-feast of the Nativity of the Mother of God;
Holy Martyrs Menodora, Metrodora, Nymphodora (303-11)

Welcome! Bienvenue! Вітаємо!
Welcome to St. George's Church!

Our mission is to know, love and serve our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ.

Here at St. George's Church, the center of our life is the Sunday and daily Divine Liturgy.

It is here where we come to know Christ in each other, in the Sacred Scriptures and through participation in the Holy Sacraments.

A life of Christian Catholic stewardship includes a strong commitment toward the sacramental life through prayer, Liturgy and active ministry.

We are called to become the image and likeness of Christ God in all we say and do.

Website: <http://www.stgeorgessarnia.ca>

Email: pastor@stgeorgessarnia.ca

Office: [519-542-9903](tel:519-542-9903)

Pastoral Emergency: [519- 282-3759](tel:519-282-3759)

Pastor: [Fr. Ihor Petryk](#)

Parish Council

Sally Smoly

Claire Johnson

Marc Beauchamp

Marcel Paquette

Jennifer Paquette

David Makuch

Marie-France Bernier

Brenda Black

John Waligorski

Rohan Jacob

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS / ПРОСИМ О МОЛИТВУ ЗА ЗДОРОВ'Я

... all our parishioners who are in the hospitals, care homes, shut-ins and those who are not able to join us actively due to health reasons.

Anyone wishing to have a home visit from Father Ihor or know of a parishioner who would like to have a visit please contact the parish office to book a time.

Visiting, praying for and reaching out to the sick and lonely is one of the works of mercy taught by Christ.

Please Remember to Support Your Parish.

YOUR RETURN GIFT TO GOD

If your preference is to use a debit or credit card, please find the DONATE Link on our website main page. May Our Lord reward you a hundredfold for your generosity.

Дякуємо за вашу щедрість!

LAST WEEK COLLECTION:

Sunday and Saturday envelopes collection - \$1,290.00

For the Poor - \$215.00

Votive Candles - \$34.75

Eparchial Need - \$30.00

DATE:	TIME:	INTENTION:	OFFERED BY:
Saturday, September 9	5:00 PM (Eng.)	Liturgy: For the health and salvation of Mathieu Beauchamp	
Saturday, September 9	6:30 PM (Ukr.)	Liturgy:	
Sunday, September 10	8:30 AM (Eng.)	Liturgy:	
Thursday, September 14	7:00 PM (Eng.)	Liturgy: Exaltation of Holy Cross For the health and salvation of Johannes Christianus Marinus Weys (on the occasion of his Birthday)	Parents Theo and Anna Weys
Friday, September 15	7:00 PM (Eng.)	Liturgy: +members of the Vander Vloet and Meeuwssen families	
Saturday, September 16	9:00 AM	Pastoral Council Meeting	
Saturday, September 16	5:00 PM (Eng.)	Liturgy:	
Saturday, September 16	6:30 PM (Ukr.)	Liturgy:	
Sunday, September 17	8:30 AM (Eng.)	Liturgy:	

Please don't leave this bulletin in the pew or in the trash when you are finished.

We kindly ask you share this bulletin with your loved ones.

Let your family & friends know of the spiritual treasure that God has for all people here at St. George's, Sarnia, ON!

PRESERVE AND PROMOTE OUR OWN TRADITIONS:

WHEN YOU ENTER CHURCH, it is customary to first go to the Tetrapod Table up front, in the middle of church – we are to make the sign of the cross, bow, and kiss the icon and cross displayed there. We then bow and make the sign of the cross again, and then go to light candles or take our place for Liturgy. In our Byzantine Catholic Churches, we make the Sign of the Cross (holding together the right thumb, index and middle fingers) starting with our forehead, then to our mid-chest, then to our right shoulder first, then the left shoulder. Also in our churches, we do not genuflect (brief bending of the right knee towards the altar) - instead we make the sign of the cross the Eastern way, and bow towards the altar. And remember that church is a holy place, so try to keep quiet (not to talk or laugh loudly) before, during, or after the church services. Let's preserve and promote our own and beautiful traditions.

Leave quietly. We encourage you to visit with others, but once you are outside of the church you won't disturb others who want to stay and pray. So, please leave quietly and then visit afterward.

Cell phones should never be used in Divine Liturgy for calls or texting. The exceptions are emergencies (big ones, not everyday ones) and if you do use one, please walk out of church to do so. Also, if you are using the phone for readings or prayers, this is appropriate, but try to be discreet. Proper Church Attire - Church is a sacred place with its traditions. When we come to worship we should respect those traditions. Our clothes should be modest and tasteful. Inappropriate attire such as shorts, sneakers, tight pants, mid-thigh dresses and skirts, low cut blouses can be perceived as disrespectful and could be offensive to other worshipers. Thank you for your consideration.

News and Happenings at St. George's

- There will be a parish council meeting on September 16 at 9:00 am.
- There is a food donation box at the back of the church for River City Vineyard. Please be generous.
- If you are interested in knowing more about Byzantine Catholicism, there is a great YouTube Channel called "Becoming Byzantine" from St. Josaphat Eparchy Ukrainian Catholic Church in Parma, Ohio. There is a wealth of knowledge about the Byzantine Catholic faith. The series uses the Ukrainian Catholic catechism; Christ Our Pascha. Unfortunately, the book is not available at this time but to access the online version of the catechism, go to <http://catechism.royaldoors.net>
- For another good educational website visit Fr. Deacon Anthony Dragani's website at <https://east2west.org>.

Patience

"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience."

Colossians 3:12

The choir would like to ask everyone for their continued patience as they transition through the Liturgical corrections. These changes will add beauty to our already beautiful sacred Liturgy.

GOSPEL REFLECTION
CHRIST, LOVER OF ALL PEOPLE
The proof of God's love for us

There is no greater proof of God's love for us than the sending of his Son to become one with us in our humanity and to lay down his life for us. God sent his Son to free us from the worst of tyrannies – slavery to sin and the curse of death. Jesus' sacrificial death was an act of total love through self-giving. Jesus gave himself completely out of love for His Father. And He willingly laid down His life out of selfless love for our sake and for our salvation. His death on the cross was both a total offering to God and the perfect sacrifice of atonement for our sin and the sin of the world.

John tells us that God's love cannot be limited because it is boundless and encompasses all of creation (John 3:16). His love is not limited to a single nation or a few chosen friends. His love is limitless because it embraces the whole world and every individual created in "*His image and likeness*". God is a persistent loving Father who cannot rest until all of His wandering children have returned home to Him.

God gives us the freedom to choose whom and what we will love and not love. We can love the darkness of sin and unbelief or we can love the light of God's truth, goodness, and mercy. If our love is guided by truth, goodness, and that which is truly beautiful, then we will choose for God and love Him above all else. What we love shows what we prefer. Do you love God who is the supreme good above all else? And do you seek to put Him first in all your thoughts, cares, choices, and actions?

Holy Martyrs Menodora, Metrodora, Nymphodora

They were three sisters, raised in the Christian faith in Bithynia. Together they withdrew from the world and lived together in virginity on a lonely mountain, devoting themselves to prayer, fasting and labor. Though they wished only to live unknown to the world, their wonderworking gifts were discovered, and many people began to come to them for healing of ailments. In this way word of them reached the governor Fronton, who had them arrested and brought before him. Struck by their beauty (which had only increased despite their fasting and hard labor), the governor tried to flatter them, promising that he would send them to the Emperor to be given in marriage to noblemen. When he saw that this had no effect, the governor threw the sisters into prison. First he had Menodora tortured to death, then brought her two sisters to view her mutilated body, commanding them to deny Christ or meet the same fate. When they refused, they were subjected to the same fate. Christians recovered and buried the bodies of the three holy martyrs.



Understanding Theosis

Perhaps the most scandalous doctrine of the Eastern Orthodox Church for heterodox Christians is that of theosis, which is often translated as divinization. It is the means of salvation that has been taught since the time of the apostles, but most Christians have never heard of it, and even some Orthodox are unfamiliar with it.

BECOMING GODS

It is written, *Ye are gods*, in Psalm 81/82 and in 2nd Peter 1:4 we are called to be *partakers in the divine nature*. As I have written in the past, we cannot partake in the divine nature without either pulling that nature down to something less than divine or being elevated to it.

St. Athanasius states, *The Word of God... assumed humanity that we might become God*, [1] St. Macarius wrote that those Christians who struggle and conquer are *kings and lords and gods* [2], and countless other fathers from both East and West have taught this doctrine.

When mentioning this doctrine to pious, but ignorant Christians, shock is often the common reaction. On the other hand, those in the New Age movement quickly embrace the idea. But neither one of them rejects or embraces it for the right reason.

When we hear of becoming gods, our first idea is usually something akin to Mormonism in which there are countless gods and demigods who rule parts of the universe. For the well-intended ignorant Christian, it sounds as if we Orthodox are attempting to replace the one true God. For the New Age person, it sounds as if we are affirming their belief that they can do whatever they want because they won't have to answer to anyone anyway. But neither case is true.

SLUGS AND DOGS

Let us imagine that you want to find close companionship in an animal. What would happen if you selected a slug? Probably nothing much. It would never really interact with you, and it is nearly impossible to relate to.

Now, what if you chose a dog? You would find that close companionship is not difficult. Dogs are loyal, they have feelings, they enjoy our company, and we can relate to them, sometimes quite closely.

So, why does a dog make a better companion than a slug? Because ultimately dogs are more human-like than slugs.

In a similar manner, God wants deep communion and intimacy with us humans. While we will never be an uncreated, self-existing entity as God is, we can become more divine than we are now...much more! Just as we cannot experience intimate communion with a slug because it's so radically different than us, so we cannot draw close to God if we have no likeness to His divinity. God calls us to be divine because that is the only way we can deeply experience Him.

For that cause, God became a man to unite our humanity to His divinity and begin the divinization process. Now, our humanity is intimately connected to the divine nature and is seated at the right hand of God. Through grace, we can become what He is by nature.

A DISCLAIMER

While we will become gods by His grace if we choose to work with Him in doing so, we will never usurp God's divinity. As gods, our entire existence is still being borrowed from the self-existing One; there remains a distinct contrast between the created and the uncreated.

The Eastern Orthodox explain it this way: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit share one unknowable, divine Essence. This divine Essence cannot be seen, experienced, or intellectually perceived by any created creature. However, God's divine Energies, which include things like love and grace, are part of God's nature and it is to His Energies that we are united. [3]

THE PROCESS OF SONSHIP

While theosis is a gift of God's grace, it still requires effort on our part. God becoming a man would be like man becoming a slug in order to teach other slugs how to be more human. But God in His love did that for us.

We are called to transform into God's likeness, which can only be achieved by becoming as much like God as possible in this life. That is the reason that Christianity has so many "rules" or commandments. The Psalmist understood that when writing Psalm 118 (119 in Protestant Bibles). In that Psalm we see a deep love for God's commandments, statutes, judgments, laws — all of which are synonyms for the way God has given us to live. And all of these the Psalmist pursues with his *whole heart* even stating that they *enlarge [his] heart* (verse 32).

The Psalmist understood what many people misunderstand: God does not want us to follow arbitrary rules, and He is not trying to ruin our lives by taking away our fun. He is laying out the path of salvation saying, "You are spiritual slugs covered in icky, gooey sin. I have laid out the path of divinity for you, becoming a man Myself, so that you can become like Me and be united to Me. You cannot ever do that if you are content to be a slug. However if you will follow the ways that I have shown you, then you will be slowly transformed from slugship to sonship."

THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF IT

The catch is that following the commandments of the New Testament with love and humility is actually quite impossible. The harder we try, and the more we become aware of our true selves beyond the mask of the ego (beyond the "shadow self"), the more we will realize how far short we fall.

That epiphany of our disparity between our present state and our true calling is an important moment. For one who realizes his true state will call upon God with a humility that cannot be taught. Such a person will understand that the transformation from slugship to sonship requires crucifixion and death. God has not called us merely to improve, but to die and resurrect as something else.

Crucifying this old self and the awakening are both processes, ones that we must patiently walk day by day. How do we do it? The Church provides us with grace through the mysteries (sacraments), and guidance in our daily life with readings, the cycle of services, the fasting periods, and the "rules."

Glory to God for providing the way of salvation and the means to attain it! *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* (1 Cor 2:9)

End Notes:

[1] St. Athanasius *On The Incarnation*, paragraph 54.

[2] St. Macarius *The Fifty Homilies*, Homily 27.

[3] These Energies are an uncreated part of God's nature, and our union with them is union with God Himself.

Statement of His Beatitude Sviatoslav, Head and Father of the UGCC, regarding the discussion regarding some of the statements of the Holy Father Francis at the meeting with the Catholic youth of Russia on August 25, 2023

It is with great pain and concern that we learned of the words attributed to His Holiness Pope Francis at an online meeting with Russian Catholic youth on August 25, 2023, in St. Petersburg. We hope that these words of the Holy Father were spoken spontaneously, without any attempt at historical evaluations, let alone support of Russia's imperialist ambitions. Nonetheless, we share the great pain which they caused, not only among the episcopate, clergy, monastics, and faithful of our Church, but also among other denominations and religious organizations. At the same time, we are also aware of the deep disappointment that they have caused in society.

The words about “the great Russia of Peter I, Catherine II, that great, enlightened empire — a country of great culture and great humanity” — are the worst example of imperialism and extreme Russian nationalism. There is a danger that these words could be taken as supporting the very nationalism and imperialism that has caused the war in Ukraine today — a war that brings death and destruction to our people every day.

The examples given by the Holy Father actually contradict his teachings on peace, since he has always condemned any form of manifestation of imperialism in the modern world and warned of the dangers of extreme nationalism, stressing that it is the cause of the “third world war in segments.”

As a Church, we wish to state that in the context of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, such statements inspire the neo-colonial ambitions of the aggressor country, even though such a way of “being Russian” should be categorically condemned.

In order to avoid any manipulation of the intentions, context and statements attributed to the Holy Father, we await a clarification of this situation from the Holy See.

The Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, together with all citizens of our country, condemns the ideology of the “Russian world” and the entire criminal way of “being Russian”. We hope the Holy Father will hear our voice.

In a few days, the bishops of our Church will come together in Rome for the annual Synod of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. We will have the opportunity to meet His Holiness and personally convey to him the doubts and pain of the Ukrainian people, trusting in his paternal care for them.

† Sviatoslav

Заява Блаженнішого Святослава, Глави й Отця УГКЦ, щодо дискусії відносно деяких висловлювань Святішого Отця Франциска на зустрічі з католицькою молоддю росії 25 серпня 2023 року

Із великим болем і занепокоєнням ми дізналися про слова, присвоєні Його Святості Папі Франциску на онлайн-зустрічі з російською католицькою молоддю 25 серпня 2023 року в Санкт-Петербурзі.

Ми сподіваємося, що ці слова Святішого Отця були сказані спонтанно, без жодних спроб історичних оцінок, а тим паче підтримки імперіалістичних амбіцій росії. Однак розділяємо великий біль, спричинений ними не лише серед єпископату, духовенства, монашества та вірних нашої Церкви, а й інших конфесій і релігійних організацій. Водночас усвідомлюємо і те глибоке розчарування в суспільстві, яке вони спричинили.

Слова про «велику росію Петра I, Катерини II, тієї імперії — великої, просвіченої, країни великої культури та великої гуманності» — найгірший приклад імперіалізму та крайнього російського націоналізму.

Існує небезпека, що ці слова можуть бути сприйняті як підтримка того націоналізму й імперіалізму, який сьогодні став причиною війни в Україні — війни, яка щодня приносить смерть і руйнування для нашого народу.

Приклади, наведені Святішим Отцем, насправді суперечать його науці про мир, адже він завжди засуджував будь-яку форму вияву імперіалізму в сучасному світі та попереджав про небезпеку крайнього націоналізму, наголошуючи, що саме він є причиною «третьої світової війни по частинах».

Як Церква, ми хочемо заявити, що в контексті агресії росії проти України подібні висловлювання надихають неоколоніальні амбіції країни-агресора, хоча мали б категорично засуджувати такий спосіб «бути росіянами».

З метою уникнення будь-яких маніпуляцій щодо намірів, контексту та висловлювань, присвоєних Святішому Отцеві, ми очікуємо від Святого Престолу пояснення цієї ситуації.

Українська Греко-Католицька Церква разом з усіма громадянами нашої держави засуджує ідеологію «руського міра» та весь кримінальний спосіб «бути росіянами». Сподіваємося, Святіший Отець почує наш голос.

За кілька днів єпископи нашої Церкви об'єднаються у м. Рим для щорічного Синоду Української Греко-Католицької Церкви. Ми матимемо нагоду зустріти Його Святість та особисто донести до нього сумніви й біль українського народу, довіряючи його батьківській турботі про нього.

† СВЯТОСЛАВ

THE DIVINE SERVICES

A central part of Christian Life is our Liturgical Prayer. Liturgy and Worship are existential constituents in human beings. Worship is the natural human response to any kind of encounter with the Divine encounter.

"While He [the Risen Christ] was blessing them, He left them and was taken up into heaven. Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God." (Luke 24: 51-53)

"Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire." (Hebrews 12:28-29)

THE ORTHODOX LITURGICAL TRADITION

In the Papal Encyclical, *Orientalium Lumen*, Pope John Paul II proclaimed:

"Liturgical prayer in the East shows a great aptitude for involving the human person in his or her totality: the mystery is sung in the loftiness of its content, but also in the warmth of the sentiments it awakens in the heart of redeemed humanity.

In the sacred act, even bodiliness is summoned to praise, and beauty, which in the East is one of the best loved names expressing the divine harmony and the model of humanity transfigured, appears everywhere: in the shape of the church, in the sounds, in the colours, in the lights, in the scents. The lengthy duration of the celebrations, the repeated invocations everything expresses gradual identification with the mystery celebrated with one's whole person. Thus the prayer of the Church already becomes participation in the heavenly liturgy, an anticipation of the final beatitude."

Our worship not only helps to unite us with God, but it in itself proclaims the Gospel - as the old Latin adage says: "lex orandi - lex credendi", meaning both "how we pray is how we believe", i.e. the manner of our worship shows what our Faith is.

The term "Orthodox" literally means "right - glory". This means both: correct worship and correct belief. Indeed the very foundation and establishment of our Church, our Church's "conversion story" is based on our finding God through our experience of liturgical worship. We chose to follow the Christ because we found, as we found nowhere else, the presence of God in the Divine Services as celebrated at Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. (Cf. the story of Prince Volodymyr's Conversion) And it is from missionaries from our mother Church of Constantinople-New Rome that we have received the sacred Orthodox Tradition and spirituality.

Thus the Orthodox Tradition, in its fullness, especially the Orthodox liturgical Tradition is our patrimony and the idiom of our Faith. This is the Tradition we have been given by God for our salvation. This is the Tradition we have "inherited from the Apostles through the Fathers"

ORTHODOXY IN THE CATHOLIC COMMUNION

The Ecumenical Council of Vatican II calls us back to our Orthodox Tradition. The Council specifies that..in the rites and disciplines...whenever they have fallen short, they are to strive to return to their ancestral traditions. (Canon Law, Instructions, art. 12)

Thus at our parish, in obedience to the Church, we do our best to be faithful to our Orthodox Tradition, both in Liturgies and in Faith. The Articles of Union between our Churches and the Church of Rome are quite explicit: that the divine worship and all prayers and services of Orthros, Vespers, and the night services shall remain intact (without any change at all) for us according to the ancient custom of the Eastern Church... (Brest-Litovsk, art. 2)

Canon Law makes clear the Mandate from the Apostolic See:

"The firm attitude held by the Apostolic See... asking the Eastern Churches in full communion with it to have the courage to rediscover the authentic traditions of their own identity, restoring the original purity where necessary...the practice of the Orthodox should be taken into account, knowing it, respecting it and distancing from it as little as possible so as not to increase the existing separation, but rather intensifying efforts in view of eventual adaptations, maturing and working together.

(Congregation for Eastern Churches: Instructions for the Application of the Liturgical Prescriptions of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches. art. 21)

THE MISSION OF THE EASTERN CHURCHES

One of the most central reasons the Church commands us to be scrupulously observant of our Orthodox Tradition, is the Mission which the Church has entrusted to our Churches, that of reconciliation with our Orthodox Mother Churches and the re-establishment of sacred Communion with them.

Everyone should realize that it is of supreme importance to preserve and foster the rich liturgical and spiritual heritage of the Eastern Churches in order faithfully to preserve the fullness of Christian tradition, and to bring about reconciliation between Eastern and Western Christians" (Vatican II, Unitatis Redintegratio, 15)

Through Worship and Beauty, is found the True God. Volodymyr, Great Prince of Rus, sent out emissaries to find the true faith. They went east and west, north and south and found no faith,until they arrived in Constantinople. They returned to Kyiv and reported to the Prince what happened there in the great Cathedral of Holy Wisdom:

"They took us where they worshipped their God, and we did not know whether we were in heaven or upon earth, for there is not upon earth such sight or beauty. This much we do know, that there, God lives among men, and we can never forget that beauty..."



PRAYER FOR UKRAINE

*Give comfort to those who suffer because of the violence.
Give comfort to those who mourn their dead, and strength to neighboring countries to welcome the refugees.
Convert the hearts of those who resort to arms and protect those who work to promote peace.
God of hope, inspire leaders to choose peace instead of violence and to seek reconciliation with enemies.
Inspire compassion in the universal Church for the Ukrainian people and give us hope for a future of peace based on justice for all.
We ask this through Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace and Light of the world. Amen.*

Russia invaded Ukraine on Thursday, February 24, 2022 and is posing the largest threat to international global security since WW II.

The Ukrainian people will fight to defend their homeland and in doing so, will prevent the spread of russian aggression.

russian aggression will result in one of the largest humanitarian crises of this century. Hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of Ukrainians will be displaced.

If you wish to make a donation to provide humanitarian aid to Ukraine, please donate through the Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA), and specify that your donation is for Ukraine - <https://cnewa.org/ca/donate/>

You may also donate directly to St George's Church, the money will directly to charity efforts for Ukraine.

Simply send an E-Transfer tosaveukraine@stgeorgessarnia.ca

МОЛИТВА ЗА МНОГОСТРАЖДАЛЬНИЙ УКРАЇНСЬКИЙ НАРОД У ЧАС ВІЙНИ

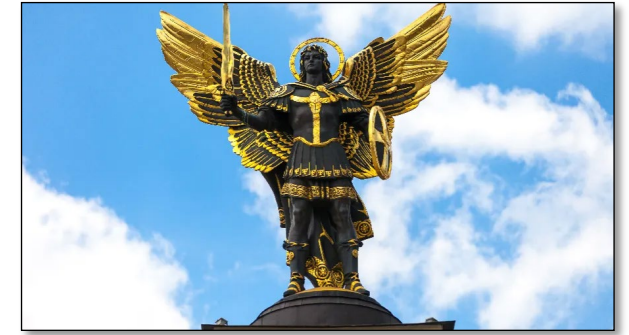
Господи Ісусе Христе Боже наш, благаємо Тебе, вислухай щирю молитву Твоїї улюбленої Церкви Київської Русі за важко страждаючих дітей українського краю. Споглянь милостивим оком на їх лихоліття та ласкаво поспіши на допомогу. Звільни свій беззахисний народ від несправедливих загарбників, нашестя агресорів та терору війни. Зміцни силу Твою усіх доблесних і відважних захисників для добросердечної боротьби, щоб вони радше керувалися любов'ю до беззахисних, аніж ненавистю до ворогів. О Премилосердний Господи, захорони переселенців, зціли поранених, борони сиріт, підтримай вдів, потіш скорботних та ласкаво приймай до Твого Царства всіх, хто благородно віддав своє життя в обороні Батьківщини від нападів ворогів. Поспіши зупинити кровопролиття як друга, так і недруга та запали серця багатьох до мужньої боротьби за істинну справедливість, що є джерелом тривалого миру. О добросердий Господи, Ти - наш мир, пом'якши зачерствілі серця, наверни тих, хто сприяє воєнним діям, до примирення, щоб Твій улюблений український народ втішався миром, справедливістю та свободою - ознаками Твого Царства, в якому Ти царюєш з Предвічним Твоїм Отцем, і Всесвятим, Благим і Животворним Твоїм Духом, нині, і повсякчас, і на віки віків. Амінь.



Statue of St. Michael the Archangel that stands above Kyiv's Independence Square.

St. Michael is patron saint of the Ukrainian capital.

ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL Defend people of Ukraine in battle; be their defence against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and to you, O Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan and the other evil spirits who are trying to invade Ukraine. Amen.



Sunday, September 10, 2023

**Sunday before the Exaltation of the Cross,
Post-feast of the Nativity of the Mother of God;
Holy Martyrs Menodora, Metrodora, Nymphodora (303-11)**

Troparia and Kontakia

Troparion, Tone 6: Angelic powers were upon Your tomb* and the guards became like dead men;* Mary stood before Your tomb* seeking Your most pure body.* You captured Hades without being overcome by it.* You met the Virgin and granted life.* O Lord, risen from the dead,* glory be to You!

Troparion, Tone 4: Your nativity, O Virgin Mother of God,* has made joy known to all the world,* for from you dawned the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God.* He abolished the curse and gave the blessing;* and by making death of no effect He bestowed on us eternal life. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Kontakion, Tone 6: With His life-giving hand* Christ our God, the Giver of life,* raised all the dead from the murky abyss* and bestowed resurrection upon humanity.* He is for all the Saviour,* the resurrection and the life, and the God of all. Now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Kontakion, Tone 4: By your birth, O immaculate one,* Joachim and Anna were freed from the reproach of childlessness,* and Adam and Eve* from the corruption of death.* And your people, redeemed from the guilt of their sins,* celebrate as they cry out to you:* “The barren one gives birth to the Mother of God* and nourisher of our life.”

Prokeimenon, Tone 6

Save Your people, O Lord, * and bless Your inheritance.

verse: Unto You I will cry, O Lord, my God, lest You turn from me in silence. (Psalm 27:9,1)

Epistle

Galatians 6:11-18

A reading from the Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Galatians.

Brethren, see with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand! As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these *would* compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For not even those who are circumcised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh. But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation.

And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy *be* upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen.

Alleluia, Tone 1

verse: I have exalted one chosen from among My people; with My holy oil I have anointed him.

verse: My hand shall sustain him, and my arm shall make him strong. (Psalm 88:20-21,22)

Gospel

John 3:13-17

The Lord said, "No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, *that is*, the Son of Man who is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."

Hymn to the Mother of God

O my soul, magnify the Virgin Mary, born from a barren womb.

And the Irmos, Tone 8: Virginité is alien to mothers* and childbearing is foreign to virgins;* yet in you, O Mother of God, both of them came together.* Therefore we and all the nations of the earth* without ceasing magnify you.

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens;* praise Him in the highest (Psalm 148:1).* I will take the cup of salvation;* and I will call upon the name of the Lord (Psalm 115:13).* Alleluia, alleluia,* alleluia.



Basic Guidelines for Reception of Holy Communion:

- 1) You are a member of the Catholic Church (Orthodox faithful are welcome to receive Holy Communion).
- 2) You have participated in the Sacrament of Confession at least during the Easter or Christmas seasons this past year if not more frequently.
- 3) You attend Divine Services regularly.
- 4) Your lifestyle is consistent with the teaching of the Catholic Church.
- 5) You have kept the Liturgical fast - no food at least one hour prior to the Divine Liturgy (water and medicine does not break the fast).
- 6) You have been in church from the beginning of the service, or at least heard the Gospel.
- 7) To the best of your ability, you are in the state of Grace.

*If for any of these or other reasons you cannot receive Holy Communion,
You are very welcome to come for a blessing.*

Please indicate to the priest that you would like to receive his blessing.

St. Theophan the Recluse: When going to the Holy Mysteries, go with . . .

When going to the Holy Mysteries, go with simplicity of heart, in full faith that you will receive the Lord within yourself, and with the proper reverence towards this. What your state of mind should be after this, leave it to the Lord Himself. Many desire ahead of time to receive this or that from Holy Communion, and then, not seeing what they wanted, they are troubled, and even their faith in the power of the Mystery is shaken. The fault lies not with the Mystery, but with superficial assumptions. Do not promise yourself anything. Leave everything to the Lord, asking a single mercy from Him – to strengthen you in every kind of good so that you will be acceptable to Him. The fruit of Communion most often has a taste of sweet peace in the heart; sometimes it brings enlightenment to thought and inspiration to one's devotion to the Lord; sometimes almost nothing is apparent, but afterward in one's affairs there is a noted a great strength and steadfastness in the diligence one has promised.

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