

Our preparation for meeting the heavenly King, and for the inheritance of eternal life in heaven, should consist of these things. The heavenly King desires souls adorned with immutable virtue, souls prepared so that the Very Lord Himself could abide in them. Do not marvel that the Very Lord wants to live in us. In fact the human soul is more spacious than the heavens and the earth, for it exists in the image of God. And if one removes sins from the soul, the Lord of all will settle in it and will fill it with Himself. "We will come to him and make our dwelling with him" (John 14:23), says the Lord about the souls who love Him.

And so, ye participants in the Christian feasts, and especially the present feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God, ye who are brightly adorned with every virtue and translated to the heavenly kingdom, to Her Son and God, proclaim to each and every one about preparing their souls to be the dwelling place of the Lord, about continual repentance, and about the incorruptible adornment of Christian virtue. Let your death also be unashamed and peaceful, serving as the pledge of a good answer at the dread judgment seat of Christ.

Saint John of Kronstadt



**Sunday 10 August 2014 is the Ninth Sunday of Matthew**

**Matins Gospel:** John 20:19-31

**Epistle:** 1 Corinthians 3:9-17

**Gospel:** Matthew 14:22-34

**Resurrectional Apolytikion:**

You came down from above, O Compassionate, you accepted burial for three days, that you might free us from the passions. Our life and resurrection, Lord, glory to you.

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### ***Readings and saints for this week:***

**Monday:** 1 Corinthians 15:12-19; Matthew 21:18-22  
Martyr Euplus the Deacon; Patriarch Niphonus

**Tuesday:** 1 Corinthians 15:29-38; Matthew 21:23-27  
Martyrs Photius & Anicetus; Soldier-martyrs of Crete

**Wednesday:** 1 Corinthians 16:4-12; Matthew 21:28-32  
Apodosis of Transfiguration; Maximus the Confessor

**Thursday:** 2 Corinthians 1:1-7; Matthew 21:43-46  
Forefeast of the Dormition; Prophet Micah

**Friday:** Luke 1:39-49, 56; Philippians 2:5-11; Luke 10:38-42, 11:27-28  
Dormition of the Theotokos

**Saturday:** 1 Timothy 3:13-16; 4:1-5; Luke 9:51-57, 10:22-24, 13:22  
Translation of the Image of Our Lord; Martyr Diomedes



# ***Evangelion***

***A Bulletin of Orthodox Christian Faith***

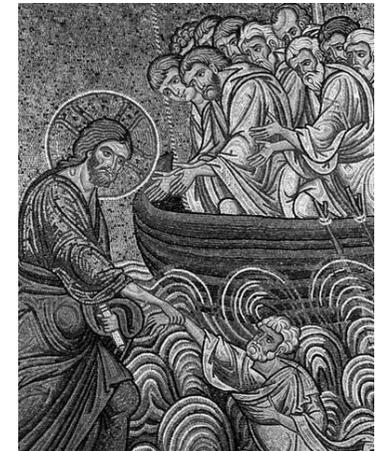
10 August 2014

## **Lord, Save Me!**

Today we hear Saint Matthew's account of how Jesus Christ came to His disciples, walking across the water when they were caught in a storm while crossing the lake in a boat. The Apostle Peter asked to be allowed to come to Christ across the water, but when he took fright at the wind, he began to sink, calling to Christ who rescued him and calmed the storm.

This incident shows us that, without Christ, we are exposed to various dangers and storms. Jesus Christ comes to us in the midst of these, and He calls us to come to Him. However, even when we do respond to Him and seek to follow Him, we remain in danger of getting distracted. When we start to focus on the dangers around us, and lose our focus on Him, we begin to sink. However, even then Christ seeks to reach out to us if we are ready to turn to Him and, to cry with Saint Peter, "Lord, save me!"

The world that we live in will inevitably present us with temptations, and even when we seek to follow Christ we can find ourselves easily distracted. We can also get discouraged by our own failures. We therefore need to develop the habit of constantly turning to Christ and finding ways of focusing our thoughts and our gaze on Him and not on ourselves. By ourselves we can do nothing, but with His help we can conquer our fear and overcome the difficulties that we face.



The Christian should not fear nor be distressed in difficult circumstances, and thus be distracted from his trust in God; but should take courage as if the Lord were at hand directing his affairs and strengthening him against all his adversaries and as if the Holy Spirit were instructing him even as to the replies he should make to his foes.

Saint Basil the Great

# A Mercy of Peace, a Sacrifice of Praise

An introduction to the Divine Liturgy (continued)

Once the Divine Liturgy has concluded and we have been blessed and dismissed and have received the Antidoron, people begin to leave the church building. But this is not really the end of the Liturgy – if anything it is the beginning of what some have called “the Liturgy after the Liturgy.” For we are being sent out into the world to continue God’s work and to make His Kingdom



present in our everyday world. Saint John Chrysostom tells us that “We should come out of the sacred assembly ... as if we had descended from heaven itself” so that those around us will be able to see the transfiguring power of true worship.

The Church is called to witness to the Kingdom of God in the world in which we live. Jesus Christ tells us that we are the Light of the world. Like the Apostles and the first Christians, we are

called to be missionaries who spread the Good News of what God has done for us in Christ, enabling others to see the salvation that is available in His Church. However, we do not spread this message of peace by argumentation or even, for most of us, by discussion, but rather by who we are.

When the Apostles met Christ and asked where He stayed, He answered: “Come and see.” It is this invitation to come and see that the Church presents to the world. And it is through the radiance of those who have been touched by the true Light of Christ that others will be drawn to “Come and see.” It is through encounter the Risen Christ in the Liturgy that our lives subtly and almost imperceptibly begin to transmit spiritual joy to others.

It is not enough to know about our faith intellectually. In the Liturgy we “taste and see that the Lord is good.” We “have seen the true light” and we receive God into our very being. In our worship, our lives become re-defined as we re-orientate ourselves to Christ and His Kingdom. But it is our daily lives this experience of God is lived out, put to the test, and reaffirmed. True worship is not something that simply happens for an hour or two on Sundays, but something that has an influence all our entire life.



Just as wine mingles in all the members of the one who drinks it and is transformed in him and he in wine, so does the one who drinks the Blood of Christ quench his thirst with the divine Spirit who commingles with his soul and the soul with Him. For through the Eucharist, those who commune with dignity reach the ability to partake of the Holy Spirit, and in this manner souls can live continually.

Saint Macarius the Great

# The Dormition of the Holy Theotokos

On Friday, 15 August, we celebrate the great feast of the Dormition, or falling asleep, of the Most Holy Theotokos. At Vespers we sing: “The source of life is laid in the grave and her tomb becomes a ladder to heaven.”

The account of the Dormition of the Mother of God has been persevered in the tradition of the Church, with accounts of how the apostles gathered around her bed as she “passed over into heavenly joy,” and into the Kingdom of her Son.

We believe that the Holy Theotokos shared in the corruption of our human nature, although she was without personal sin. She too needed to be saved by Christ and, like her Son, she experienced the death that all of us will have to face. However, we believe that she also experienced Christ’s victory over death in a direct and immediate way. The Dormition services teach us that the Holy Virgin passed through death to life without going through judgment, for the Mother of Life could not be overcome by corruption.

This feast is ultimately an extension of the Resurrection of Christ and shows us how His victory over death has become effective in His Mother. It has been called a “second Pascha” for in it we celebrate the resurrection of her who is already united to Christ before the Last Judgement and the general resurrection.

However, this feast is also our feast, for in the Holy Theotokos we see that we too are called to share in Christ’s victory over death.



***In birth, you preserved your virginity; in death, you did not abandon the world, O Theotokos. As mother of life, you departed to the Source of life, delivering our souls from death by your intercessions.***

Apolytikion for the Feast

The grave and death could not hold the Mother of God, who is sleepless in her intercessions and an unchanging hope in her meditations. For as the Mother of Life she was transferred to life by Him Who dwelt in her ever-virgin womb.

Kontakion for the Feast