

Holy Apostles Newsletter

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ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA



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From the Holy Fathers

Through the fall our nature was stripped of divine illumination and resplendence. But the Logos of God had pity upon our disfigurement and in His compassion He took our nature upon Himself, and on Tabor He manifested it to His elect disciples clothed once again most brilliantly. He shows what we once were and what we shall become through Him in the age to come, if we choose to live our present life as far as possible in accordance with His ways.

- St. Gregory Palamas

“God rests in holy places; that is (in) the Theotokos and all the Saints. These are they who have become likenesses of God as far as it is possible, since they have chosen to cooperate with divine election. Therefore, God dwells in them.”

- St. John of Damascus



DORMITION OF THEOTOKOS

Once again, we are called upon by the Church to keep another fast. It seems we just finished fasting for the feasts of the Holy Apostles, and then we have a short break, and then again, the break is over and we are called upon to be vigilant - to wake up spiritually once again to the rich treasures of the Church. This time, it is for our Most Holy Theotokos as we keep holy her Most Venerable Dormition, her falling asleep. It is a reminder again that we are pilgrims and sojourners on this earth and that our earthly life will pass by in the blink of an eye. Barbecues and summer time is always nice and they should be - it is good and right to enjoy these blessings! And, at the same time, we are Orthodox Christians living as pilgrims and sojourners, awaiting that life which is to come. The Church in her wisdom gives us so many opportunities to become closer with those who are His saints, and especially our Holy Mother, the Most Holy Theotokos who rose incomparably higher than the Angels, Archangels, and all the heavenly powers because of her nearness to the God of all.

This particular fast is like the Lenten fast - it is a stricter fast allowing for wine & oil on the weekend and fish, wine & oil for the glorious feast of the Transfiguration, which is a feast of light - the uncreated light of God. The Lord was transfigured before His disciples and shown with this uncreated light; and He did this to show our own potential for transfiguration (as the quote says to the left) - if we choose to live our present life as far as possible in accordance with the ways of Christ.

These are 2 glorious feasts right in the middle of our wonderful Portland summer! They call us to a higher way

of life. There is so much grace to be found during our fast for the Theotokos. Especially during this time we should pray to her for her help and intercession, with whatever it is we may be struggling with - impatience, anger, vainglory, passions, depression, forgetfulness, negativity, laziness, or whatever our own particular sin may be. Our Mother is a help and a refuge. We also during this time dedicate our Wednesdays and Fridays to her at the Church by singing the Paraklesis to her on these days.

The feasts are to be joyful and celebrated with love in our hearts. This is why we decorate the Church beautifully during this time, bringing special flowers and wearing special colored vestments. Each feast has its own color according to the tradition of the Church. Blue is the color for the feasts of the Theotokos. I remember my priest growing up called it “Theotokian Blue” and he always wore blue vestments when he celebrated the Liturgy. He also encouraged us all to wear blue on her day as another sign of our celebration.

Lastly, we celebrate these feasts with fruit & flowers! It is the tradition on the Day of Transfiguration to consecrate grapes, apples and other fruit after the Divine Liturgy. The custom of bringing fruit to the temple for consecration originates in the Old Testament time (Gen 4:2-4; Ex 13:12-13; Num 15:19-21; Deut 8:10-14). (con't on insert inside)

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Community Forum

THANK YOU

Fr. Dimitri and Mat. Mary would like to thank everyone for all their love, support and gifts for us and for Benjamin John. Everyone has been so generous, especially in throwing us a wonderful baby shower. Thank you to all who contributed to the car seat / stroller travel system. We love it! Thank you also for your support, kindness, and most of all prayers. Thank you also for the wonderful meals which were such a big help and for the stepping up while we were out of town - from handling the services to planning the feast day celebration. Thank you church family! We love you and are so glad you are a part of little Benjamin John's life.

UPCOMING DATES/FEASTS

Baptism of Sophia Meinhardt - Sunday, August 3rd before the Divine Liturgy. Please bring something to share to eat afterward! Congratulations to the Meinhardt family! We rejoice with you in this wonderful day.

Baptism of Benjamin John - Sunday, August 10th before the Divine Liturgy. Some main dish salads and some of Lou's cooking will be provided at the celebration luncheon afterward, but if you would like to bring something to contribute, it will not be refused!

Parish-wide meeting after Divine Liturgy, Sunday, August 17th during coffee hour - bring a dish to share

Feast of the Transfiguration - Monday, August 18th - Vigil w/Lity at 6 pm; Tuesday, August 19th - Hours @5:30 a.m., followed by Divine Liturgy at 6 a.m. **For the Vigil, please bring some fruit to be blessed that you can take it home with you after.

Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos - Wednesday, August 27th - Vigil w/Lity; Thursday, August 28th, Hours @5:30 a.m., followed by Divine Liturgy @6 a.m. **For the Vigil, please bring some flowers to be blessed that you can take home with you after.

COFFEE HOUR DETAILS

While we still have coffee hour at the Perez's, please bring a dish to share. Potluck style coffee hour is working out well; even after our move from the building here in NW Portland, we plan to continue having a potluck for coffee hour. Also, any help cleaning up is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

ALL ARE INVITED

Saint John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church invites us to join them for their patronal feast day--the Beheading of St. John the Baptist. Vespers & Dinner at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, August 28th. Orthros & Divine Liturgy at 8:30 a.m. on Friday, August 29th. St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church is located at 14485 SW Walker Rd, Beaverton, Oregon 97006.

LITURGICAL SINGING WORKSHOP

Church of the Annunciation is hosting an Orthodox liturgical music workshop on Saturday, September 6, 2008, beginning at 10:00 a.m. The workshop will focus on effective vocal techniques for choir directors, chanters and choral singers to create beauty in the liturgy and gain a deeper understanding of the Orthodox choral tradition.

Registration deadline is August 6, 2008 and the cost is \$60 if registration completed by August 6th.

Choir singers and readers will benefit greatly from this workshop with Valerie Yova and Fr. Lawrence Margitich. If anyone, but particularly choir members would like to attend, contact Matushka Mary!

Kitchen Corner

FISH W/TOMATOES, OLIVES & CAPERS

4 tsp. olive oil, divided
4 (5-ounce) sea bass fillets (or other white fish)
1 small onion, diced
1/2 c. white wine
1 c. canned diced tomatoes, with juice
1/2 c. chopped pitted black olives
2 Tbs. capers
1/4 tsp. dried crushed red pepper, optional
2 c. packed fresh baby spinach leaves
In a large nonstick skillet heat 2 tsp. of oil over a med-high heat. Add fish and cook until opaque in the center, about 2 1/2 minutes per side. Transfer fish to a platter and tent with foil to keep warm. Heat the remaining 2 tsp. of oil in the same skillet; add onion and saute for 2 min. Add the wine and cook until reduced by half, about 2 min. Add the tomatoes, olives and capers and crushed red pepper and cook for 3 min. more. Stir in the spinach and cook until it is wilted, about 3 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Spoon the sauce over the fish and serve.

TRANSITION / CONDO UPDATE

In an effort to provide regular updates to the parish regarding our transition, here is a brief breakdown of what is happening with the condo conversion:

Chapel Building – Upstairs

The roof was replaced, and when Cascade Roofing had to return to make a correction they repaired the rot in the parapet wall at no extra charge.

Second floor –

Complete: Rough electrical and plumbing
Framing
Bedroom closet and walls have been insulated and sheet rocked, plastered, sanded, and primed.
Window/ Door trim has been started.
Cabinets are built.
Bathroom tile has been started.
All appliances have been purchased.

Remaining: Install appliances and cabinets
Finish carpentry
HVAC
Finish Hardwood floors (**Fr. Dimitri is flying down to California Sunday, August 3rd to pick up his father and all the equipment, and they will drive back up to finish the floors)

ESTIMATED time of condo completion is 4 weeks.

Building projects take a lot of time and energy and more often than not, more time than originally anticipated. I want to encourage each and every one of you to get involved in any way you feel you can contribute. There are so many blessings that come from laboring for the Church and the rewards are eternal. I would like to thank every person who has helped out on the building thus far; we couldn't have come this far without your help. I know you have sacrificed personal time and energy to help out this worthy cause. I am enjoying working with each and every one of you.

VANCOUVER UPDATE

As you know, we have been looking for a transitional space for worship in Vancouver, WA. There have been 2 options we have been pursuing: Our Lady of Lourdes Roman Catholic Church and First Presbyterian Church. Matushka Mary and I met with the pastor and office manager at Our Lady of Lourdes and it was seeming to go along in a positive direction. The amount they were asking was a little on the high side but pretty doable for our budget. After discussing this with the parish council, we decided to pursue this option. However, added to the language in the contract were several types of required insurance plans that we do not possess as a parish. In order for us to add the coverage they were looking for, this would have pushed us out of our budget, so we respectfully bowed out of that deal.

Regarding our second option: I went to meet with pastor Michael of First Presbyterian last week and had a very productive, positive meeting with him. He was excited to be a part of this opportunity for us and is willing to work within our budget. This option has turned out to be about \$300 less than the first option so that is a plus right off the bat. We will be able to use their facilities for Saturday night, Sunday mornings and for feast days - Vigils & Liturgies. They have an extensive amount of parking and the space even includes a kitchen so we can have coffee hour at the Church instead of having to use someone's kitchen (Thank you Ambrose & Emmelia for your willingness!). He met with his Board and they agreed to work up a contract for us to review. This is where we are at now. I am awaiting contact from him after he has drawn up the contract, then the parish council and I will meet and we'll go from there.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to come talk to me anytime.

Your servant in Christ, Fr. Dimitri

GOD GRANT YOU MANY YEARS!

July 19/Aug 1 St. Macrina, sister of St. Basil the Great
Macrina Harmon

July 22/Aug 4 St. Mary Magdalene
Matushka Mary

Also, Fr. Dimitri celebrated his 3-year anniversary to the Holy Priesthood on July 30th! Many years!



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