

SAINT ANTHONY ORTHODOX CHURCH



Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese

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EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

7 August 2011

Afterfeast of the Transfiguration of Christ; Martyrs Dometios of Persia, Sozon of Nicomedia; Hieromartyr Narcissos, patriarch of Jerusalem; Venerable Theodosios the New of the Peloponnesos; Nikanor the Wonderworker

LIVING: Norm, Diane, Abie (Abraham), Sula, Bill, Fran, George (Botsis), Dolores (Sipos), Leatrice (Totin), Dolores (Bingham), Angelica, Karyn, Brian, Maria, Marius, Justin, Sara, Miguel, Christine.

DEPARTED: Lance, Nancy, Petruța, Peter, Michael, William, Mariana, James, Mary Ann, Joseph, Katherine, Michael.

FIRST ANTIPHON

*Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, in the city of our God, in His holy mountain. **Refrain:** Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us!*

*Who settest fast the mountains by Thy strength, Who art girt about with power. **(R.:***

*Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment. **(R.:***

The mountains shall rejoice at the presence of the Lord, for He cometh; yea,

He is come to judge the earth. (R.:)

Glory... Now and ever... (R.:)

SECOND ANTIPHON

His foundations are in the holy mountains. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Refrain: Save us, O Son of God, Who wast transfigured on Mount Tabor, who sing to Thee. Alleluia.

Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. (R.:)

Zion is our mother, a man shall say, and such a man was born in her; and the Most High Himself hath established her. (R.:)

Glory... Now and ever... (Only begotten Son and Word of God ...)

THIRD ANTIPHON

TROPARION OF THE TRANSFIGURATION

Of Thy mercies, O Lord, will I sing for ever.

The heavens shall confess Thy wonders, O Lord, and Thy truth in the congregation of saints.

Blessed is the people that knows jubilation.

O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance shall they walk, and in Thy Name shall they rejoice all the day long.

AT THE LITTLE ENTRANCE

Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ! Save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead, who sing to Thee: "Alleluia"!

TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION (Tone 7): Thou didst shatter death by Thy Cross, Thou didst open paradise to the thief; Thou didst turn the sadness of the ointment-bearing women into joy. And didst bid Thine Apostles proclaim a warning, that Thou hast risen O Christ, granting to the world great mercy.

TROPARION OF THE TRANSFIGURATION (Tone 7): When, O Christ our God, Thou wast transfigured on the mountain, Thou didst reveal Thy glory to Thy Disciples in proportion as they could bear it. Let Thine everlasting light also enlighten us sinners, through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O God Thou Bestower of light, glory to Thee.

Glory... TROPARION OF SAINT ANTHONY (Tone 4, Russian): Like the zealous Elijah thou didst become, and followed John the Baptist in his upright ways. A dweller in the wilderness, thou didst steady the world by prayer. O Father Anthony, intercede with Christ our God for our souls' salvation.

Now and ever ... KONTAKION OF THE TRANSFIGURATION (Tone 7): Thou wast transfigured on the mount, and Thy Disciples, in so far as they were able, beheld Thy glory, O Christ our God; so that, when they should see Thee crucified, they would remember that all Thy suffering was voluntary, and could declare to all the world that Thou art truly the effulgent Splendor of the Father.

TODAY'S APOSTLE READING

Prokeimenon:

Thine are the heavens and Thine is the earth.

Blessed is the people that knows jubilation!

The Reading is from Saint Peter's Second Catholic Epistle

(2 Peter 15:1-7)

Brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you, knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease. For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from

God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." 18 And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.19 And so we have the prophetic word confirmed,[a] which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

TODAY'S GOSPEL READING

The Reading is from the Gospel according to Saint Luke
(Luke 9:28-36)

Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!" And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid. But Jesus came and touched them and said, "Arise, and do not be afraid." When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only. Now as they came down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, "Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man is risen from the dead."

COMMUNION HYMN

O Lord, in the light of Thy face shall we walk, and in Thy name shall we rejoice all the day long.

PASTOR'S NOTE

Note that the Gospel calls the Transfiguration of Christ a “vision”: **Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man is risen from the dead.** A vision of what? A vision of who? And why this vision? The tradition of our Church gives a variety of answers, all complementary, and all acknowledging the overwhelming greatness of this mystery. Thus: the display of supernatural light revealed to the disciples something about Christ’s divine identity, so that even when we behold the Crucified One we should not forget that He is the Lord of glory (1 Cor 2:8); the luminous vestments of the Lord represent the many layers of his divine and human reality, as disclosed to us in the many layers of the Scriptures; the blinding appearance of the Transfigured One sets before us the image of our glorified state in the age to come; the light that shone to the three disciples is the deifying divine energy, that is, God-as-He-gives-Himself.

We shouldn’t forget, however, that the Transfiguration is not only a “vision” (Matt 17:9) that the disciples have of Christ, but, so to speak, a vision of a vision: a vision granted to Moses and Elijah, witnessed by the disciples.

When Moses requested to see the glory of God more intimately (Exodus 33) on Mount Sinai, God replied: “You shall not be able to see my Face, for no man shall see my Face and live ... You shall see my hind parts; but my Face will not appear to you (Exod 33:20, 23). Some early Christians interpreted this to mean that the vision face to face, refused to Moses, was being postponed for a later time. This is the view that was enshrined in the hymns of the Orthodox Church:

He who once spoke through symbols to Moses on Mount Sinai, saying, “I am He-who-is” [Exod 3:14] was transfigured today upon Mount Tabor before the disciples . . . (Great Vespers of Transfiguration, Apostichon);

The message is quite clear: Moses appears with the Lord on the mountain of the Transfiguration because He-Who-Is, the Lord who had revealed Himself on Sinai, had promised the prophet a more perfect vision of God! “He-Who-Is,” the self-designation of God when he spoke to Moses at the burning bush (Exod 3:14), is precisely the “definition” given of Christ in all icons—be it of the baby in the arms of the Theotokos, or the Lord as Teacher, or the

Crucified, Risen, or Transfigured One: “He-Who-Is” (or, in a different rendering, “The Existing One”), Christ our Lord...,” is also what we hear the priest proclaim at the closing of Vespers.

A final word on the Troparion of the Transfiguration: “When, O Christ our God, Thou wast transfigured on the mountain, Thou didst reveal Thy glory to Thy Disciples in proportion as they could bear it. Let Thine everlasting light also enlighten us sinners ...”. This is not about some past event, but is sung about the “body of the Lord” that we must learn to discern (1 Cor 11:17) when called to approach the chalice “with fear of God, faith, and love.” We are called to draw near the Lord, the very Lord who spoke on Sinai, so that we may partake of the same vision as Moses, the Apostles, and all the saints, and join in their confession: we have seen the true light, we have received the heavenly Kingdom!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today: seven-year memorial service for Silviu’s mother, Elena.

Fr. Bogdan is leaving for a conference in England, and will return to the US only on August 17.

Sunday, 14 August: Fr. James Purdie will be celebrating Liturgy. Please make him feel welcome. If possible, bring a few things for the common meal downstairs.

Choir rehearsal and Psalm singing, 9:30AM.

Divine Liturgy 10 AM.