

# SAINT ANTHONY ORTHODOX CHURCH



Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese

[www.orthodoxbutler.org](http://www.orthodoxbutler.org)

ADDRESS: 400 S. Sixth Avenue, Butler, PA 16001

RECTOR: Rev. Bogdan Gabriel Bucur

CONTACT: 724-287-6983 (church); 412.390.8208 (priest);  
[frbogdan@orthodoxbutler.org](mailto:frbogdan@orthodoxbutler.org)

## NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

14 August 2011

Forefeast of the Dormition of the Theotokos;

Prophet Micah (8th c. BC); Hieromartyr Marcellus, Bishop of Apamea (389);  
New-martyr Simeon of Trebizond (+1653)

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, priest Bogdan.

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

## FIRST ANTIPHON

*Shout with joy to God, all the earth! Give thanks to the Lord, call upon His Name, declare His works among the nations. **Refrain:** Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us!*

*In the city of our God, in His holy mountain, His place hath been made in peace, and His dwelling in Zion. (R.:)*

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

## SECOND ANTIPHON

*The Lord loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwelling of Jacob.*

**Refrain:** Save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead, who sing to Thee: Alleluia!

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

*The most-high hath hallowed His tabernacle. (R.:)*

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

## THIRD ANTIPHON

*TROPARION OF THE DORMITION with the following verses:*

*Ready is my heart, O God, ready is my heart; I will sing and chant*

*What shall I render to the Lord for all that He hath given me?*

*I will receive the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord.*

## 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 8): From the heights Thou didst descend, O compassionate One, and Thou didst submit to the three-day burial, that Thou might deliver us from passion; Thou art our life and our Resurrection, O Lord, glory to Thee.

TROPARION OF THE DORMITION (Tone 1): In thy birthgiving, O Theotokos, thou didst keep and preserve virginity; and in thy falling-asleep thou hast not forsaken the world; for living thou wast translated, being the Mother of Life. Wherefore, by thine intercessions, deliver our souls from death.

*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 DORMITION (Tone 2): Verily, the Theotokos, who is ever watchful in intercessions, who is never rejected, neither tomb nor death could control. But being the Mother of Life, He Who dwelt in her ever-Virgin womb did translate her to life.

## TODAY'S APOSTLE READING

Prokeimenon:

*My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior!  
For He has regarded the lowliness of His handmaiden.*

*The Reading is from Saint Paul's Letter to the Philippians  
(Phil 2:5-11)*

Brethren, have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, Who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross.

## TODAY'S GOSPEL READING

*The Reading is from the Gospel according to Saint Luke  
(Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28)*

At that time, Jesus entered a certain village; and a woman named Martha received Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to His teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving; and she went to Him and said, "Lord, dost Thou not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me." But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many

things; one thing is needful. Mary has chosen the good portion, which shall not be taken away from her.” As He said this, a woman in the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, “Blessed is the womb that bore Thee, and the breasts that Thou didst suck!” But He said, “Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!”

## PASTOR’S NOTE

To better understand the significance of the Theotokos, the Church has assigned as Epistle reading a section of Saint Paul’s letter to the Philippians. However, the “prokeimenon” to this reading—that is, the verse that is “placed before” the text of the Epistle—is made up of words spoken by the Theotokos. More precisely, these words (“My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; for He has regarded the lowliness of His handmaiden”) are part of the Virgin’s hymn to God, after she has been told that she is to become the Mother of the God-made-man. A hymn that is the pinnacle of her humble submission to the mysterious work of the Lord.

Saint Paul also talks about humility. He sets forth Christ himself as a model of perfect obedience and humility: Christ **humbled Himself and became obedient unto death**. Although God, He accepted to take on the realities of his creatures; although almighty, He accepted to live within the confines of our human existence—even to the point of sharing our mortality, and even to the point of accepting the atrocious and humiliating death by crucifixion.

So, who is our model, Christ or the Theotokos? Rather than seek to explain why this is the wrong way of framing the problem, consider the icons of the Theotokos. She is almost always portrayed together with Christ, often pointing at Him, urging us to direct our gaze to Him. The Theotokos, in other words, is our supreme model in being conformed to the model set by Christ. She humbled herself and was obedient in response to Christ’s humbling Himself unto taking on our mortal flesh. She is the first reply, on behalf of all humanity, to God’s quest for us, fallen and lost creatures.

We know that “the Lord He has regarded the lowliness of His handmaiden”—that is, He had regard for it, it did not go unnoticed. On the

basis of her humility, God was able to come and be with us, so that we may be healed and returned to living in Him. The final chapter of this “regard” that God had for the humility of the Theotokos is seen in, precisely, the Dormition.

We generally do not rejoice when somebody dear to us falls asleep. But the Dormition of the Theotokos is cause for rejoicing, because that is where the meaning of God’s descent becomes clearer. We hear in the Troparion that she was “translated to life, being the Mother of Life”; or, in the Kontakion, that “neither tomb nor death could hold her” because “He Who dwelt in her ever-Virgin womb did translate her to life.” Indeed, according to ancient tradition, she was raised from the dead, and her tomb was found empty. In other words, the Theotokos is the first human being to taste the overcoming of death.

What about us, here and now, on earth, today? We find our hope depicted well in the icon of Dormition: the Virgin Mother who once held the baby in her arms, is now herself held in the arms of the Lord. Through the intercession of the Theotokos, who “is ever watchful in intercessions,” may we also find resurrection and life eternal in the bosom of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Next Saturday, 20 August:** Vespers, 6pm, followed by Intro to Byzantine chant.

**Sunday, 21 August:** Psalm singing, 9:15AM  
Divine Liturgy 10 AM

DORMITION

