



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AUSTRALIA
PARISH OF ST. VASILIOS, BRUNSWICK, VICTORIA

SUNDAY
14 AUGUST 2016
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PARISH INFORMATION BULLETIN

PROGRAM FOR 14—20 AUGUST 2016



SUNDAY 14 AUGUST <i>Holy Prophet Micah</i>	<p>Eighth Sunday of Matthew —Matthew 14: 14-22</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.30– 11.00am Orthros and Divine Liturgy <p>SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR AGES 5 TO 17 YEARS TAKES PLACE STRAIGHT AFTER HOLY COMMUNION. CLASSES TAKE PLACE IN THE DOWNSTAIRS ROOMS BEHIND THE CHURCH. BRING YOUR CHILDREN ALONG TO LEARN ABOUT THEIR ORTHODOX FAITH AND GOD'S LOVE FOR EACH ONE OF US.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5.00pm Service of Vespers
MONDAY 15 AUGUST DOMITION OF OUR MOST HOLY LADY THEOTOKOS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.00am Orthros and Divine Liturgy
TUESDAY 16 AUGUST	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.00pm Parishes of St Vasilios and the Presentation of our Lord, Coburg Youth Group will meet in Coburg Church Hall. The meeting will begin with the Compline Service in English.
WEDNESDAY 17 AUGUST	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5.00pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos followed by Bible Study
SATURDAY 20 AUGUST	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3.45pm Service of Vespers

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Fr. Athanasios
and
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are available
at the Church

every Monday to Friday
between
4.00 and 6.00pm

for Holy Confession and
any spiritual need.

WORDS FROM THE CHURCH FATHERS

“The Most Holy Mother of God prays for us ceaselessly. She is always visiting us. Whenever we turn to her in our heart, she is there. After the Lord, she is the greatest protection for mankind.

How many churches there are in the world that are dedicated to the Most Holy Mother of God! How many healing springs where people are cured of their ailments have sprung up in places where the Most Holy Theotokos appeared and blessed those springs to heal both the sick and the healthy!

She is constantly, by our side, and all too often we forget her.”

+Elder Thaddeus, *Homily on the Dormition of the Theotokos*

SERMON ON THE DORMITION OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS

"Magnify O my soul, the honourable Translation of the Mother of God from earth to heaven." (Refrain for the 9th Ode of the Canon)

Let us be happy, beloved brothers and sisters that we belong to the Holy Orthodox Church, worthily and rightly glorifying the Most Holy Sovereign Theotokos on this eminent day out of all the days of the year with special solemnity. There exists on earth many societies and entire governments that do not consider the need nor the obligation to call upon and glorify the Queen of heaven and earth, the Mother of Our Divine Lord Jesus Christ, and other saints and angels; to submissively serve Her lovingly, as the true Mother of God. Sadly in Russia nowadays we have heretics (among us) who actively dishonour the Mother of God, the saints, their icons, their relics and their festivals. O, if only they also unanimously with us glorified the worthy Queen of heaven and earth!

Today the Holy Church solemnly glorifies the honourable Dormition or translation of the Mother of God from earth to heaven. A wonderful translation - she died without serious illness, peacefully. Her soul is taken up in the divine hands of Her Son and carried up into the heavenly abode, accompanied by the sweet singing of angels. And then, her most pure body is transferred by the apostles to Gethsemane where it is honourably buried, and on the third day it is resurrected and taken up to heaven. You see this on the icon of the Dormition of the Theotokos. On it is represented the life-bearing body of the Theotokos laying on a bier, surrounded by the apostles and hierarchs, and in the centre of the icon the Lord holding in His hands the most pure soul of the Theotokos. The translation of the Mother of God is a paradigm of the translation in general of the souls of Christians to the other world.

We say that our dead have "fallen asleep" or "passed away." What does this mean? This means that for the true Christian there is no death. Death was conquered by Christ on the cross. But there is a translation, i.e., a rearrangement of his condition, i.e. his soul is in another place, in another age, in another world beyond the grave, eternal, without end, that is what is meant by "falling asleep". It is as if it were a temporary dream after which, by the voice of the Lord and the fearful yet wonderful trumpet of the Archangel, all the dead shall live and come forth each to his place: either to the resurrection of life or to the resurrection of condemnation (John 5:29). This is what the Christian means by translation. We should be ready for this translation, for the day of the general resurrection and judgment, for this indescribable world event, recorded in the Holy Scriptures.

This preparation for the meeting of the heavenly King before the dread judgment seat, after death, is essentially the person's preparation throughout the whole of his life. This preparation means a change in all his thoughts, and the moral change of all his being, so that the whole man would be pure and white as snow, washing clean everything that defiles the body and spirit, so that he is adorned with every virtue: repentance, meekness, humility, gentleness, simplicity, chastity, mercifulness, abstention, spiritual contemplation, and burning love for God and neighbour.

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. Amen.

[St. John of Kronstadt](#)