



## Parish Information Bulletin

Program for 13—19 August 2023

### Telephone Contact Numbers


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Fr Athanasios and Fr Ephraim are available at the Church every Monday to Friday between 4.00 and 6.00pm for Holy Confession and any spiritual need.

<b>SUNDAY 13 AUGUST</b>	<b>10th SUNDAY OF MATTHEW, Matthew 17: 14-23</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>7.30am</b> Orthros and Divine Liturgy</li><li>• <b>5.00pm</b> Paraklesis to the Theotokos (GREEK)</li><li>• <b>6.30pm</b> Paraklesis to the Theotokos (ENGLISH)</li></ul>
<b>2023 SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR ALL AGES - 2023</b> (A free voluntary program organised by the Church) <b>Lessons take place in the building behind the church and begin at 10.30am until Church dismissal.</b> We have classes for ages ranging from 5yrs to teenage years. Lessons are taught in a relaxed, friendly environment. Please bring your children along to learn of their rich Orthodox faith and come close to God and His Love.	
<b>MONDAY 14 AUGUST</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>9.00am</b> Service of Holy Unction</li><li>• <b>10.00am</b> Meeting of Elderly Citizens in Church Hall</li><li>• <b>5.00pm</b> Service of Vespers for Dormition of the Theotokos</li></ul>
<b>TUESDAY 15 AUGUST</b> <b>DORMITION OF OUR MOST HOLY LADY THEOTOKOS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>7.30m</b> Orthros and Divine Liturgy</li></ul>
<b>THURSDAY 17 AUGUST</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>8.00—9.00pm</b>  <b>TEENAGE YOUTH GROUP 2023</b> <b>ALL TEENAGERS WELCOME</b> Join the group and learn about your faith, make friends, enjoy refreshments, in a friendly, relaxing environment. * In Church Hall, upstairs behind the Church</li></ul>
<b>SUNDAY 20 AUGUST</b>	<b>GOSPEL READING: Matthew 18: 23-35</b> <b>EPISTLE READING: 2Corinthians 9: 2-12</b>

When you are about to pray to our Theotokos, be firmly assured that you will not depart from her without mercy.

It is proper and right so to think so to have confidence in her. She is the all-merciful Mother of God, and her merciful gifts, incalculably great, innumerable, have been declared from all ages by the Church.

To pray to her without such assurance would be foolish and insolent, for such doubt would offend her goodness, just as God's goodness is offended when people pray to Him without hoping to get what they pray for.

~ Father John of Kronstadt, *The Help of the Church in Heaven*



### Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos Kontakion

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.

## AUGUST 15: DORMITION OF OUR MOST HOLY LADY THEOTOKOS

From the Gospel account of how the blessed event of the Mother of God's annunciation took place, we know that in response to Archangel Gabriel's tidings that She had been chosen to become the Mother of God the Word incarnate, the Most-Holy Virgin humbly replied: "Behold the handmaiden of the Lord; be it unto Me according to thy word," and gave herself over completely to the will of God.

And now here She is with the righteous Elizabeth. And St. Elizabeth for the first time calls Her by the name with which afterwards millions and millions of the faithful would exalt Her. The righteous Elizabeth says: "And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" The Mother of God has come to me! And now all Christians glorify Her as the Mother of God.

In Her life She was visited by such tribulations, compared to which our own sorrows seem infantile. What She must have suffered when She saw and heard Her divine Son being dragged to the top of the mountain by the rebellious populace of Nazareth, who wanted to throw Him down from there to His death. At this point the Lord used His omnipotent power and escaped unharmed, but with Her motherly heart the Mother of God experienced keen anguish at this danger to Him. She constantly saw the heavy cross that Her Son bore, and the conditions in which He performed His service, pursued by the malignity, envy, and satanic hate of His frenzied enemies. And at the very end She stood at His cross, where, in accordance with the terrible prophecy of the righteous Simeon, "a sword pierced through Her soul."

This was followed by the radiant joy of His resurrection, but soon there was the parting with Her divine Son, Who ascended into heaven. And although She knew His words about remaining with us to the end of time, nevertheless Her motherly heart was deprived of actually seeing Her beloved Son for many years.

Finally there came the day of Her dormition. This was like a threshold to a new life, like a turning point in it. Before the dormition there was only humbleness and anonymity... Tradition has retained many accounts of how meek and humble She was, how She never put Herself forward in anything. She was filled with the grace of the Holy Spirit more than anyone else; however, She always humbled Herself, shunning all honours. But finally the time arrives for Her glorious dormition. Her Only-begotten and beloved Son appears and takes Her holy soul into His holiest hands.

The dormition occurred... and soon afterwards, several days later, the assembled apostles suddenly saw in the air the Most-blessed Virgin Mary, now already the Queen of Heaven and earth, shining with celestial radiance and surrounded by piously standing and kneeling angels. And She kindly promised the apostles that She would be with them always.

Thus began Her eternal divine glory, which has no equal. No other human being has been so glorified, so elevated, so magnified as the Mother of Christ our God. When we entreat God's great saints to intercede for us before God, we ask them **to pray to God for us**, but to Her we appeal as to an omnipotent Queen: "O Holy Theotokos, **save us**." And on this great and glorious day of Her feast, the Church speaks of Her thus: "The tomb and death have not been able to hold the Theotokos, Who is constant in supplications, and in intercession an unfailling hope."

The words "the Theotokos Who is constant in supplications" indicate the fact that Her prayers stream forth continuously – prayers for the world, prayers for us; we know that the Lord affiliated St. John the Theologian, the great Apostle of love, to Her, and through him – all of mankind. Therefore, no matter how sinful we may be or how unworthy, we joyfully say that She is the mother of mankind and the Heavenly Mother of every one of us.

Our celestial Queen and Mother commiserates in Her heart over each one of us, wishes eternal salvation for each one of us, and prays for all of us. Let us not forget that Her divine protection covers us all, and that continuously to the throne of God's glory rise the prayers of the "Theotokos Who is constant in supplications"... Amen.

~ Metropolitan Philaret (Voznesensky)



### Hymn to the Theotokos from the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

It is truly meet and right to bless you, O Theotokos,  
Ever-blessed and most-pure mother of our God.  
More honourable than the Cherubim,  
And beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim,  
Who without corruption gave birth to God the Word,  
True Theotokos: we magnify you.