



TRANSFIGURATION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

PARISH NEWSLETTER :: SEPTEMBER 2009

Our church website: transfigurationoc.org

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FROM YOUR PASTOR



Dear parishioners and friends,

What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits to me? I will take the cup of salvation, and will call upon the name of the Lord.

These familiar words from the Psalm speak of what many people today call a “lifestyle.” In this case, it is a lifestyle full of gratitude and thanksgiving that comes from living in the Church and receiving God’s good gifts.

Indeed, the life of a Christian is not merely words and propositions, but rather a *way of living in communion* with Jesus Christ and His holy Church. In fact, in the New Testament book called *Acts of the Apostles*, the “lifestyle” of the earliest Christians is called “the Way,” “the Way of the Lord,” or “the Way of God.” We also recall that Christ Himself spoke these words to His friend, the holy apostle Thomas: “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father, except by me.” (St. John 14:6)

If we are committed to this Way, then Jesus Christ is the only reference point for our life. We ask Christ’s guidance and protection in everything we do, praying that each of our words and actions may be pleasing to Him and will correspond perfectly with what He desires for us and for the world.

As we begin a new season of the year, it’s good to review our priorities and to recalibrate our own way of living so that it corresponds more closely to the Way of Christ. Probably each of us can find ways that we can adjust our priorities and avoid “the sin which so easily ensnares us” (Hebrews 12:1) so we may walk more fully in the Light, which is Christ and His Church. With God’s help, we can do more—so much more!—than we think we can.

Nothing is sadder for a priest than to be called to help a person who suddenly finds himself in a life crisis, but who has never gathered the spiritual resources that could have helped him face the crisis with faith and hope. I pray that none of us will ever find himself in such a situation, though any priest will tell you that it’s a common occurrence.

We are given what we call “the good times” in order to prepare ourselves for those other times: the times of trial that will come to every one of us sooner or later. Let us therefore do the work of God while it is day, before that night comes when no one can work. (St. John 9:4)

Your intercessor before the Lord,

Father Sava

SPECIAL EVENTS AND SERVICES IN SEPTEMBER

Tuesday, Sept. 8 – **Nativity of the Theotokos** – Orthros at 7:00 a.m. and Divine Liturgy at 8:00 a.m. : : **Orthodoxy 101** class from 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 12 – workers are needed throughout the day for our church’s food booth at the **Sidewalk Arts Festival** downtown

Monday, Sept. 14 – **Elevation of the Holy Cross** – Orthros at 7:00 a.m. and Divine Liturgy at 8:00 a.m. (Vespers at 5 p.m. on the eve of the feast)

Thursday, Sept. 17 – prepare and serve dinner at **St. Francis House**, 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, Sept. 20 – **Church School** begins at 9:00 a.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 22 – **Orthodoxy 101** class from 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Thursday, Sept. 24 – **Parish Council** at 6:30 p.m.

Wednesdays at 7 p.m. – **Bible Study**: the Old Testament book of Exodus
Learn the story of our salvation while enjoying good fellowship and conversation.

*Virgin Mary with the Lord Jesus and the Prophet Balaam
The earliest known image of the Mother of God (220 A.D.) Catacomb of St. Priscilla, Rome*



ATTENTION PARENTS!

Sunday Church School will begin in two weeks
on September 20th at 9:00 a.m.

Please note that Sunday School will be held during Orthros
this year (from 9-10 a.m.) so that students and teachers
will be able to attend the entire Liturgy.

ORTHODOXY 101

Father Sava is offering a series of six classes that will cover the basic elements of Orthodox Christian faith and life. Anyone who wishes to learn about Orthodoxy (or to refresh your knowledge) is welcome to attend.

We will meet on alternate Tuesdays from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. in the church basement beginning on September 8th.

Class Schedule:

- September 8 Where We Have Been: Two Thousand Years of Orthodox Faith and Life in Christ
- September 22 Who Is so Great a God as Our God: The Holy Trinity in the Scriptures, the Creed, the Liturgy, and the Life of the Church
- October 6 God Is With Us: The Holy Mysteries (Sacraments)
- October 20 God Is With Us: The Holy Icons, the Church Temple, and the Divine Liturgy
- November 3 The Orthodox Way: Prayer and Orthodox Christian Life
- November 17 Where We Are Going: The Mother of God, the Saints and Angels, the Last Things, and the Life of the Age to Come



PHILOPTOCHOS

Our first meeting to organize the Ladies Philoptochos Society in August was postponed due to the fact that many who wish to participate were out of town. We'll try again on Saturday, October 3rd, when we'll have our first Philoptochos meeting with election of officers and a potluck luncheon from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the church basement. Mark your calendar!

Any woman who is a member of our church is welcome and encouraged to participate as a full member of Philoptochos. Women who are not church members but are related to the church through marriage, and also men who wish to participate, may become associate members of Philoptochos.

THE NATIVITY OF THE MOST-HOLY THEOTOKOS (SEPT. 8)

The Holy Virgin Mary was born of aged parents, Joachim and Anna. Her father was of the lineage of David, and her mother of the lineage of Aaron. Thus, she was of royal birth by her father and of priestly birth by her mother. In this, she foreshadowed Him Who would be born of her as King and High Priest.

Her parents were quite old and had no children. Because of this they were ashamed before men and humble before God. In their humility they prayed to God with tears, to bring them joy in their old age by giving them a child, as He had once given joy to the aged Abraham and his wife Sarah by giving them Isaac. The Almighty and All-seeing God rewarded them with a joy that surpassed all their expectations and all their most beautiful dreams. For He gave them not just a daughter, but the Mother of God. He illumined them not only with temporal joy, but with eternal joy as well.

God gave them just one daughter, and she would later give them just one grandson—but what a daughter and what a grandson! Mary, full of grace, blessed among women, the Temple of the Holy Spirit, the Altar of the Living God, the Table of the Heavenly Bread, the Ark of God's Holiness, the Tree of the Sweetest Fruit, the Glory of the race of man, the Praise of womanhood, the Fount of virginity and purity—this was the daughter given by God to Joachim and Anna. She was born in Nazareth, and at the age of three, was taken to the Temple in Jerusalem. In her young womanhood she returned again to Nazareth, and shortly thereafter heard the Annunciation of the Holy Archangel Gabriel concerning the birth of the Son of God, the Savior of the world, from her most-pure virgin body.

*From the Prolog of Ohrid, written by our father among the saints Nikolaj,
Bishop of Žiĉa in Serbia*