



## Holy Ghost Orthodox Church

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### DORMITION FAST

**ON THE MEND:** Please keep the following parishioners and others in your prayers for recovery from their illnesses and injuries: Metropolitan Constantine, Patriarch Pavle, Bishop Robert, Father Peter Natishan, Father Gerald Olszewski, Father Jakiw Norton, Father Dragan Filipović, Father Elias Katras, Father Stevo Rocknage, Father Paul Stoll, Father Igor Soroka, Father Michael Mihalick [MS], Father Joseph Kopchak, Father Charles Mezzomo, Father Anthony Dimitri, Father Cuthbert Jack, Evelyn Burlack, Joshua Agosto and his family, Harley Katarina Rahuba, Mike and Hilda Holupka, Eva Malesnick, Helen Likar, Stella Peanoske, Joe Nezolyk, Nick Behun, Grace Holupka, Virginia Bryan, Joseph Sliwinsky, Maria Balo, Linda Mechtly, Mary Mochnick, Mildred Manolovich, Evelyn Misko, Jeanne Boehing, Alex Drobot, Rachelle, Jane Golofski, Doug Diller, Harry Krewsun, Glen Lucas Burlack, Bernie Vangrin, Mary Alice Babcock, Dorie Kunkle, Andrea, & Melissa [Betty O'Masta's relatives], Mary Evelyn King, Stella Cherepko, Sam Wadrose, Cameron [a boy in Matt's class], Faith—a 7-year-old girl with rheumatoid arthritis, Isabella Olivia Lindgren—a 3-year-old with a brain tumor, Dillon, Ethel Thomas, Donna, Nick Malec [Maxine's brother], Erin, Jim Markovich, Jeff Walewski [thyroid cancer], Carol [Lotinski] Rose, Michael Miller, Dave May, Grace & Owen Ostrasky, Alverta, Gary Zurasky, Michael Horvath, Patti Sinecki, David Genshi, Sue Segeleon, Mike Gallagher, Michael Miller, Jim Logue—throat cancer, Liz Stumpf, Ester Tylavsky, Ed Jamison, Theodore Nixon, Charles Johnson, Amy Forbeck, Michelle Corba Kapeluck, Gloria Prymak [Liz's niece], Robert Hippert & family, Margaret Vladimir, Luke Emmerling, John Sheliga, Sabrina, George & Mika Rocknage, Elizabeth Mitchell, Robert McKivitz, Marjorie Pershing, Tom Marriott, Joe Farkas, Liz Obradovich, Liz, Halyna Zelinska [Bishop Daniel's mother], Mary Ann, Charlotte, Peter Natishan, Andrew Mark Olynyk, Deborah Finley, Claire Senita, Brandi Thomas, Eleanor Kelly, Bryan, Peter Special, Amy Boe, Doris Artman, Maureen Sams, Nancy Barylak, Shirley Tkacik, Carol Kowalcheck, Martin Golofski, Joe Paouncic, Anthony Yerace, Joanne Brodrick, Khrystyna Chorniy, Anthony Cormier [2-year-old with cancer], Diane Waryanka, Nathan Forbeck, Joseph Baloga, Andy Torick, Sarah Doyle, Carmella Berardesca,

Samuel Peters, Jean Stutchell, Pearl Hanczar, Joe Paouncic, and Daria Masur. ARNOLD: Stefania Lucci, Steve Sakal, Homer Paul Kline, and Steve Ostaffy. We pray that God will grant them all a speedy recovery.

Please remember James John Logue George Senita, & John Kirkowski assigned to Iraq, Matthew Machak, Tonia Dec, Michael Repasky, and ALL American servicemen and women in the Middle East in your prayers. May God watch over them and all American servicemen and women—and bring them all home safely!

PLEASE REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR “BOXTOPS FOR EDUCATION” AND CAMPBELL’S SOUP LABELS TO CHURCH. There is a shoebox in the basement for Alex’s Seventh Grade and Matt’s Fifth Grade collections. THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR HELP! Love, *Alex and Matt*

**REMEMBER—PRAYERS ARE ALWAYS FREE!**

Communion Fasting: nothing to eat or drink after midnight, EXCEPT in cases where your doctor tells you to eat or drink something for medical reasons: medication, diabetes, etc. If you have a question, please call Father Bob.

**AT ANY TIME—if there is an emergency, if you have questions, or if you just need to talk, please CALL FATHER BOB at [412] 279-5640.**

#### **Schedule of Services**

**Sunday, August 23**                      **Divine Liturgy**                                      **10:30 AM**  
11<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
**AFTERFEAST OF THE TRANSFIGURATION, HOLY MARTYR & ARCHDEACON LAWRENCE, HIEROMARTYR SIXTUS-POPE & MARTYRS FELICISSIMUS & AGAPITUS-DEACONS, AND ROMANUS-SOLDIER-OF ROME, BLESSED LAWRENCE-FOOL-FOR-CHRIST OF KALUGA**  
*Tone 2*  
I Corinthians 9:2-12  
Matthew 18:23-35  
*Litany in Blessed Memory of Sophie Carrera—40 days—Fr. Bob*  
*Parastas in Blessed Memory of Rae Ruth Batch—Harry Batch*

**Friday, August 28**                      **DORMITION OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS**

**Sunday, August 30**                      **Divine Liturgy**                                      **10:30 AM**  
12<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
**AFTERFEAST OF THE DORMITION, MARTYR MYRON-PRESBYTER OF CYZICUS, MARTYRS THYRSUS, LEUCIUS, & CORONATUS & OTHERS AT CAESAREA IN BITHYNIA, MARTYRS PAUL & HIS SISTER JULIANA & COMPANIONS OF SYRIA, MARTYR PATROCLUS OF TROYES, MARTYRS STRATON, PHILIP, EUTYCHIAN, & CYPRIAN, VENERABLE ALYPIUS THE ICONOGRAPHER OF PERCHEVSKY LAVRA, VENERABLE PHILIP-MONK OF YANKOV-VOLOGDA, NEW-MARTYR DEMETRIUS OF SAMARINA IN EPIRUS, BLESSED THEODORETUS-ENLIGHTENER OF THE LAPS-SOLOVKI**  
*Tone 3*  
I Corinthians 15:1-11  
Matthew 19:16-26  
*Litany in Blessed Memory of David Yenni—Fr. Bob*  
*Parastas in Blessed Memory of Agnes Rossi—Diann Curcio [Neice]*

**Sunday, September 06**                      **Divine Liturgy**                                      **10:30 AM**

13<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

HIEROMARTYR EUTYCHIUS-DISCIPLE OF SAINT JOHN THE THEOLOGIAN, MARTYR TATION AT CLAUDIOPOLIS, VIRGIN-MARTYR CYRA OF PERSIA, VENERABLE GEORGE LIMNIOTES THE CONFESSOR OF MOUNT OLYMPUS, TRANSLATION OF THE RELICS OF SAINT PETER-METROPOLITAN OF KIEV, VENERABLE ARSENIUS-ABBOT OF KOMEL, NEW HIEROMARTYR COSMAS OF AITILIA-EQUAL-TO-THE-APOSTLES, SAINT DIONYSIUS-ARCHBISHOP OF AEGINA, ICON OF THE THEOTOKOS "PETROVSKAYA"-“OF SAINT PETER OF MOSCOW”

*Tone 4*

I Corinthians 16:13-24

Matthew 21:33-42

*Litany in Blessed Memory of Josephine Roman & Susie Pelczar—Fr. Bob*

## **BULLETIN INSERT FOR 23 AUGUST 2009**

### **ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

#### **AFTERFEAST OF THE TRANSFIGURATION**

**HOLY MARTYR & ARCHDEACON LAWRENCE, HIEROMARTYR SIXTUS-POPE & MARTYRS FELICISSIMUS & AGAPITUS-DEACONS, AND ROMANUS-SOLDIER-OF ROME, BLESSED LAWRENCE-FOOL-FOR-CHRIST OF KALUGA**

#### **TROPARION—TONE 2**

When Thou didst descend to death, O Life Immortal,  
Thou didst slay hell with the splendor of Thy Godhead!  
And when from the depths Thou didst raise the dead,  
All the powers of heaven cried out:  
O Giver of Life! Christ our God! Glory to Thee!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

#### **KONTAKION—TONE 2**

Hell became afraid, O Almighty Savior,  
Seeing the miracle of Thy Resurrection from the tomb!  
The dead arose! Creation, with Adam,  
Beheld this and rejoiced with Thee!  
And the world, O my Savior, praises Thee forever!

#### **PROKEIMENON—TONE 2**

**READER:** The Lord is my strength and my song. He has become my salvation.

**PEOPLE:** **The Lord is my strength and my song. He has become my salvation.**

**READER:** The Lord has chastened me sorely, but he has not given me over to death.

**PEOPLE: The Lord is my strength and my song. He has become my salvation.**

**READER:** The Lord is my strength and my song.

**PEOPLE: He has become my salvation.**

## **ALLELUIA VERSES—TONE 2**

The Lord answer you in the day of trouble! The name of the God of Jacob protect you!

Save the king, O Lord, and hear us on the day we call!

From a prose sermon, On the Transfiguration, attributed to St. Ephrem the Syrian

*Translated by Archimandrite Ephrem Lash*

1. From the land comes the joy of harvest, from the vineyard fruits that give food, and from the Scriptures teaching that gives life. The land has one season for the harvest, and the vineyard has one season for the vintage, but the Scripture when read always overflows with teaching that gives life. The land when it has been harvested lies fallow and the vineyard when the grapes have been picked is unproductive, but when Scripture is harvested the grapes of those who expound it are not lacking in it. It is picked every day and the grape clusters of the hope in it are never exhausted. Let us then draw near to this land and enjoy its life-giving furrows; and let us harvest from it grapes of life, the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, who said to his Disciples, 'There are some of those standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of man coming in his glory'.

2. 'And after six days he took Simon Peter and James and John his brother to a very high mountain and he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his garments became white like light'. Men whom he said would not taste death until they saw the image of his coming, are those whom he took and led up the mountain and showed them how he was going to come on the last day in the glory of his divinity and in the body of his humanity.

3. He led them up the mountain to show them who the Son is and whose he is. Because when he asked them, 'Whom do men say the Son of man is?' They said to him, "some Elias, others Jeremias, or one of the Prophets."

This is why he leads them up the mountain and shows them that he is not Elias, but the God of Elias; again, that he is not Jeremias, but the one who sanctified Jeremias in his mother's womb; not one of the Prophets, but the Lord of the Prophets, who also sent them. And he shows them that he is the maker of heaven and earth, and that he is Lord of living and dead. For he gave orders to heaven and brought down Elias, and made a sign to the earth and raised up Moses.

4. He led them up the mountain to show them that he is the Son of God, born from the Father before the ages and in the last times incarnate from the Virgin, as he knows how, born ineffably and without seed, preserving her virginity incorrupt; for wherever God wills it, the order of nature is overcome. For God the Word dwelt in the Virgin's womb, and the fire of his divinity did not consume the members of the Virgin's body, but protected them carefully by its nine month presence. He dwelt in the Virgin's womb, not abhorring the unpleasant smell of nature, and God incarnate came forth from her to save us.

5. He led them up the mountain to show them the glory of the godhead and to make known to them that he is the redeemer of Israel, as he had shown through the Prophets, and they should not be scandalized in him when they saw his voluntary sufferings, which as man he was about to suffer for us. For they knew him as a man, but did not know that he was God. They knew him as son of Mary, going about with them in the world, and he made known to them on the mountain that he was Son of God and God. They saw that he ate and drank, toiled and rested, dozed and slept, things which did not accord with his divine nature, but only with his humanity, and so he took them to the mountain that the Father might call him Son and show that he is truly his Son and that he is God.

6. He led them up the mountain and showed them his kingship before his passion, and his power before his death, and his glory before his disgrace, and his honor before his dishonor, so that, when he was arrested and crucified by the Jews, they might know that he was not crucified through weakness, but willingly by his good pleasure for the salvation of the world.

7. He led them up the mountain and showed the glory of his divinity before the resurrection, so that when he rose from the dead in the glory of his divine nature, they might know that it was not because of his harsh toil that he accepted glory, as if he lacked it, but it was his before the ages with the Father and together with the Father, as he said as he was coming to his

voluntary passion, ` Father, glorify me with the glory which I had with you before the world existed'.

8. And so on the mountain he showed his Apostles the glory of his divinity, concealed and hidden by his humanity. For they saw his face bright as lightning and his garments white as light. They saw two suns; one in the sky, as usual, and one unusually; one visible in the firmament and lighting the world, and one, his face, visible to them alone. His garments white as light showed that the glory of his divinity flooded from his whole body, and his light shone from all his members. For his flesh did not shine with splendor from without, like Moses, but the glory of his divinity flooded from him. His light dawned and was drawn together in him. Nor did it depart somewhere else and leave him, because it did come from another place and adorn him, nor was it for his use. And he did not display the whole depth of his glory, but only as much as the limits of their eyes could encompass.

9. ` And there appeared to them Moses and Elias talking with him'. And the words that they said to him were such as these: they were thanking him that their words and those of all their fellow Prophets had been fulfilled by his coming. They offered him worship for the salvation which he had wrought for the world for the human race; and that he had fulfilled in reality the mystery they had only sketched. There was joy for the Prophets and the Apostles by this ascent of the mountain. The Prophets rejoiced when they saw his humanity, which they had not known. The Apostles also rejoiced when they saw the glory of his divinity, which they had not known, and heard the voice of the Father bearing witness to his Son; and through this they recognized his incarnation, which was concealed from them. And the witness of the three was sealed by the Father's voice and by Moses and Elias, who stood by him like servants, and they looked to one another: the Prophets to the Apostles and the Apostles to the Prophets. There the authors of the old covenant saw the authors of the new. Holy Moses saw Simon the sanctified; the steward of the Father saw the administrator of the Son. The former divided the sea for the people to walk in the middle of the waves; the latter raised a tent for the building of the Church. The virgin of the old covenant saw the virgin of the new: [Elias and John;] the one who mounted on the chariot of fire and the one who leaned on the breast of the flame. And the mountain became a type of the Church, and on it Jesus united the two covenants, which the Church received, and made known to us that he is the giver of the two. The one received his mysteries; the other revealed the glory of his works.

At Saint Mary's Greek Orthodox Church they have a weekly husbands' marriage seminar.

At the session last week, the Priest asked Nick, who was approaching his 50th wedding anniversary, to take a few minutes and share some insight into how he had managed to stay married to the same woman all these years.

Nick replied to the assembled husbands, 'Well, I've tried to treat her nice, spend the money on her; but best of all is that I took her to Greece for the 20th anniversary!'

The Priest responded, 'Nick, you are an amazing inspiration to all the husbands here!

Please tell us what you are planning for your wife for your 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.'

Nick proudly replied, 'I'm gonna go and get her.'

Sunday, August 23—3 PM—Everyone is cordially invited to St. Mary Ukrainian Orthodox Church, 116 Ella Street, McKees Rocks, for a Prayer Service for Ukrainian Independence Day—following the Molieben refreshments will be served.

Friday, August 28—10 AM—Everyone is cordially invited to St. Mary Ukrainian Orthodox Church, 116 Ella Street, McKees Rocks, for the celebration of their Feast Day—Divine Liturgy followed by a procession with the Shroud of the Theotokos and the Blessing and Placing of the Pochiev Icon of the Theotokos, and a light luncheon.

**Please see Alex downstairs after church to review and correct contact information for our updated Holy Ghost Parish directory. This will only be distributed INTERNALLY, that is, within the parish, and is NOT for outside use! If you have any questions, please see Alex, Pani Gina, or Father Bob.**

**Discourse on The Transfiguration/ Aug. 6<sup>th</sup>/19th  
THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD GOD AND SAVIOUR JESUS  
CHRIST**

Discourse of Sainted Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonika. For an explanation of the present feastday and discernment of its truth, it is

necessary for us to turn to the very start of the present-day reading from the Gospel: "And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James and John his brother, and leadeth them up onto an high mountain apart" (Mt. 17: 1). First of all we must needs ask, from whence doth the Evangelist Matthew begin to reckon with six days? From what sort of day be it? What does the preceding turn of speech indicate, wherein the Saviour, in teaching His disciples, didst say to them: "for the Son of Man shalt come to be in the glory of His Father", and added further: "amen I tell ye, there indeed be some standing here, which shalt not taste of death, until they see the Son of Man come into His Kingdom" (Mt. 16: 27-28); -- that is to say, it is the Light of His forthcoming Transfiguration which He terms as the Glory of His Father and as His Kingdom. [trans. note: the Synoptic Gospel Mt. 16: 27-28 parallel in the Gospel of Mark is Mk. 9: 1, familiar as the concluding verse in Gospel readings for feastdays of the Holy Cross; the Synoptic parallel in Luke is Lk. 9: 26-27]. The Evangelist Luke points this out and more clearly reveals this, saying: "And it came to pass however after these words, about eight days thereafter, He taketh Peter and John and James, and ascendeth onto a mountain to pray. And it came to pass, that as He did pray, His Countenance was altered, and His garb gleamed whitely resplendid" (Lk. 9: 28-29). But how can the two be reconciled, when one of them speaks definitively about the interval of time as being eight days between the sayings and the manifestation, whereas the other (says): "after six days"? Listen and think it out.

On the Mount there were eight, but only six were visible: the three -- Peter, James and John, had come up together with Jesus, and they beheld Moses and Elias (Elijah) standing there and conversing with Him, such that in number altogether they comprised six; but together with the Lord, certainly, were both the Father and the Holy Spirit: the Father -- with His Voice testifying that This be His Beloved Son, and the Holy Spirit -- shining forth with Him in the radiant cloud. In such manner, these six consist actually of eight and as regards the eight it presents no sort of contradiction; in similar manner there is no contradiction with the Evangelists, when one says: "after six days", and the other: "and it came to pass after these words eight days thereafter". But these twofold sayings as it were present us a certain format set in mystery, and together with it that of those actually present upon the Mount. It stands to reason, and everyone rationally studying in concordance with Scripture knows, that the Evangelists are in agreement one with another: Luke spoke about the eight days without contradicting Matthew, who declared "after six days". There is not another day added on representing the day on which these sayings were uttered, nor likewise was there added on the day upon which the Lord was transfigured (which the rational person might reasonably imagine to



tack on to the days of Matthew). The Evangelist Luke does not say "after eight days" (like the Evangelist Matthew in saying "after six days"), but rather "it came to pass eight days thereafter". But in what the Evangelists seem to contradict, they actually one and the other point out to us something great and mysterious. In actual fact, why did the one say "after six days", but the other in ignoring the seventh day have in mind the eighth day? It is because the great vision of the Light of the Transfiguration of the Lord is a mystery of the Eighth Day, i.e. of a future age, coming about to be revealed after the passing-away of the world created over the course of the six days. About the power of the Divine Spirit, through the dignity of which is to be revealed the Kingdom of God, the Lord forespoke: ""There indeed be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, until they see the Kingdom of God come in power" (Mk. 9: 1). Everywhere and in every way the King will be present, and everywhere will be His Kingdom, since the advent of His Kingdom does not signify the passing over from one place to another, but rather the revelation of its power of the Divine Spirit, wherein is said: "come in power". And this power is not manifest to simply ordinary people, but to those standing with the Lord, that is to say, those affirmed in their faith in Him and like to Peter, James and John, and those foremost of all free of our natural abasement. Therefore, and precisely because of this, God manifests Himself upon the Mount, on the one hand coming down from His heights, and on the other -- raising us up from the depths of abasement, since that the Transcendent One takes on mortal nature. And certainly, such a manifest appearance by far transcends the utmost limits of the mind's grasp, as effectualised by the power of the Divine Spirit.

And thus, the Light of the Transfiguration of the Lord is not something that is born and vanishes nor is it subject to the faculties of sensation, although it was contemplated by corporeal eyes over the course of a short while and upon an inconsequential mountaintop. But the mystery-initiates (the disciples) of the Lord at this time passed beyond mere flesh into spirit by means of a transformation of their sense-faculties, effectualised within them by Spirit, and in such manner they beheld what, and to which extent the Divine spirit had wrought blessedness in them to behold -- the Ineffable Light. Those not grasping this point have conjectured, that the chosen from among the Apostles beheld the Light of the Transfiguration of the Lord by a sensual and creaturely power (faculty), -- and through this they attempt to reduce to a creaturely-level [i.e. as something "created"] not only this Light, the Kingdom and the Glory of God, but also the Power of the Divine Spirit, through which it be mete for Divine mysteries to be revealed. In all likelihood, suchlike persons have not attended to the words of the Apostle Paul: "of which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor ascended in the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for those that love Him. To us

however God hath revealed through His Spirit: for all things be scrutinised of Spirit, even at the very depths of God" (1 Cor. 2: 9-10).

And thus, with the onset of the Eighth Day, the Lord, taking Peter, James and John, went up on the Mount to pray: He always either prayed alone, withdrawing from everyone, even from the Apostles themselves, as for example when with five loaves and two fish He fed the five thousand men, besides women and children (Mt. 14: 19-23). Or, taking with Him the several that excelled others, as at the approach of His Saving Passion, when He said to the other disciples: "Sit ye here whilst I go and pray thither" (Mt. 26: 36), -- He then took with Him Peter, James and John. But in our instance right here and now, having taken only these same three, the Lord led them up onto an high mountain apart and wast transfigured before them, that is to say, before their very eyes.

"What does it mean to say: He was transfigured?" -- asks the Gold-Worded Theologian (Chrysostomos), and he answers this by saying: "it revealed, that is, something of His Divinity to them -- as much and insofar as they were able to apprehend it, and it showed the indwelling of God within Him". The Evangelist Luke says: "And it came to pass, that as He prayed, the appearance of His Face was altered" (Lk. 9: 29); and from the Evangelist Matthew we read: "And His Face did shine, like the sun" (Mt. 17: 2). But the Evangelist said this, not in the context that this Light be thought of as subsistent for the senses (let us put aside the blindness of mind of those, who can conceive of nothing higher than that, known through the senses). Rather, it is to show that Christ God -- for those living and contemplating by spirit -- is the same as how the sun is for those living in the flesh and contemplating by the senses: therefore some other Light for the knowing of Divinity be not necessary for those who be enriched by Divine gifts. That selfsame Inscrutable Light did shine and mysteriously become manifest to the Apostles and foremost of the Prophets at that moment, when (the Lord) was praying. This shows, that what begat this blessed sight was prayer, and that the radiance happened and was manifest by an uniting of the mind with God, and that it be granted to all who, amidst constant exercise in efforts of virtue and prayer, strive with their mind towards God. True beauty essentially can be contemplated only with a purified mind; diligently to gaze upon its luminance assumes a sort of participation with it, as though some bright ray doth etch itself upon the face. Whereof even the face of Moses was illumined by his association with God. Do you not know, that Moses was transfigured, when he went up the mountain, and there beheld the Glory of God? But he (Moses) did not effect this, but rather he underwent a transfiguration; however, our Lord Jesus Christ of Himself possessed that Light. In this regard, actually, He did not have need for prayer for His flesh to radiate with the Divine Light; it is but

to show, from whence that Light doth descend upon the Saints of God, and how to contemplate it -- since it be written, that even the Saints "will shine forth, like the sun" (Mt. 13: 43), which is to say, entirely permeated by Divine Light as they gaze upon Christ, Divinely and inexpressibly shining forth of His Radiance, issuing forth of His Divine Nature, and on Mount Tabor manifest also in His Flesh, by reason of the Hypostatic Union [i.e. the union of the two perfect natures, Divine and Human, within the Divine Person (Hypostasis) of Christ, the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity. The Fourth OEcumenical Council at Chalcedon defined this Hypostatic union of Christ's two natures, Divine and Human, as "without mingling, without change, without division, without separation" ("asugkhutos, atreptos, adiairetos, akhoristos")].

We believe, that He manifest within the Transfiguration not some other manner of light, but only that which was concealed beneath his exterior of flesh. This Light was the Light of the Divine Nature, and as such it was Uncreated and Divine. So also, in the teachings of the theologian-fathers, Jesus Christ was transfigured on the Mount, not taking upon Himself something new nor being changed into something new, nor something which formerly He did not possess. Rather, it was to show His disciples that which He already was, opening their eyes and rendering them from blindness into sight. For do ye not see, that eyes with sight in accord with natural things, would be blind as regards this Light?

And thus, this Light is not a light of the senses, and those contemplating it do not simply see with sensual eyes, but rather they are changed by the power of the Divine Spirit. They were transformed and only in such manner did they see the transformation, transpiring amidst the very assumption of our perishability, with in place of this the deification through union with the Word of God. And thus also She that miraculously conceived and gave birth did recognise, that He born of Her is the Incarnated God. Thus too it was for Simeon, who but only received hold of this Infant into his arms, and the Aged Anna, coming out [from the Jerusalem Temple] for the Meeting -- since it was that the Divine Power did illumine, as through a glass windowpane, giving light for all those having pure eyes of heart.

And why indeed did the Lord, before the beginning of the Transfiguration, choose the foremost of the Apostles and lead them up onto the Mount with Him? Certainly, it was to show them something great and mysteried. What in particular great or mysteried would there be in showing a sensory light, which not merely the chosen-forgo-most but all the other Apostles already abundantly possessed? Why would they need a transforming of their eyes by the power of the Holy Spirit for a contemplation of this Light, if it [the Light] were merely sensory and created? How could the Glory and the Kingdom of the Father and the Holy

Spirit project forth in some sort of sensory light? Indeed, in what sort of like Glory and Kingdom would Christ the Lord come at the end of the ages, when there wouldst not be necessary anything in the air, nor in expanse, nor anything similar, but when, in the words of the Apostle, "so that God will be all in all" (1 Cor. 15: 28), that is to say, will He alter everything for all? If indeed so, then it follows therefore to include -- light. And hence it is clear, that the Light of Tabor was a Divine Light. And the Evangelist John, inspired by Divine Revelation, says clearly, that the future eternal and enduring city will not "require sun or moon to provide it light: for the Glory of God wilt light it, and its luminary will be -- the Lamb" (Apoc. [Rev.] 21: 23). Is it not clear, that he points out here that This [Lamb] is Jesus, -- Who now upon Tabor is Divinely transfigured, and the flesh of Whom doth shine, -- is the luminary manifesting the Glory of Godhood for those ascending the mountain with Him? The Theologian John says likewise about the inhabitants of this city: "they will require light neither from lamps, nor from the light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light, and there wilt not be night henceforth" (Apoc. [Rev.] 22: 5). But how, we might ask, is there this other light, of which "it be without change and without threat of darkness" (James 1: 17)? What light is there that is constant and unsetting, unless it be the Light of God? Moreover, could Moses and Elias (and particularly the former, who clearly was present only in spirit, and not in flesh [Elias having ascended bodily to Heaven on the fiery chariot]) be shining amidst any sort of sensory light, and be seen and known? Especially since it was written about them: "they appeared in Glory, and they spoke about His demise, which would come about at Jerusalem" Lk. 9: 30-31). And how otherwise could the Apostles recognise those whom they had never seen before, unless through the mystiered power of the Divine Light, opening their mental eyes?

But let us not fatigue out our attention with the furthestmost interpretations of the words of the Gospel. We shall believe thus, as those same ones have taught us, who themselves were enlightened by the Lord Himself, insofar as they alone know this well: the mysteries of God, in the words of a prophet, are known to God alone and His perpetual proximity. Let us, considering the mystery of the Transfiguration of the Lord in accord with their teaching, ourselves strive to be illumined by this Light and encourage in ourselves love and striving towards the Unfading Glory and Beauty, purifying the spiritual eyes of worldly thoughts and refraining from perishable and quickly-passing delights and beauty, which darken the garb of the soul and lead to the fire of Gehenna and everlasting darkness, of which let us be freed by the illumination and knowledge of the Incorporeal and Perpetually-Extant Light of our Saviour transfigured on Tabor, in His Glory, and of His Father from all-eternity, and Life-Creating Spirit, of Whom

be One Radiance, One Godhead, and Glory, and Kingdom, and Power now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

*[Trans. Note Concerning the word "Transfiguration": In the opinion of this translator, the Slavonic word for Transfiguration, "Preobrazhenie", is theologically more accurate and profound a term than the original Greek word "Metamorphosis" (or Latin "Transfiguratio"), which in English useage has assumed a religiously neutral and scientific connotation; culturally even the lurid short story "Metamorphosis" of F. Kafka stifflingly depicts God-bereft worldly efforts at metamorphosis, i.e. a negative metamorphosis. Our English word derives obviously from the Latin. A further theological irony is a point strongly made above in the tract by Saint Gregory Palamas: it is not the Lord that was metamorphosised into something other or new, but rather the Apostles. Words in Latin and Greek tend to shift in their appropriated meaning over the course of millennia, and probably here too. The Slavonic term "Pre-Obrazhenie" would linguistically seem to suggest rendering as the "Primordial-Eternal-Image" of Christ as expressed in His Prayer to the Father: "And now, Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine Own Self with the Glory which I had with Thee before the world ever existed" (Jn. 17: 5). Thus at the Transfiguration the Lord was manifest in the fulness of His Divine Glory, which He had together with the Father in eternity, before the very creation of the world, (sic) His Eternal Image and Glory.*

*Saint Gregory Palamas in his tract repetitively, again and again, returns to the point of stressing the uncreatedness of the Transfiguration's Divine Light, to the exclusion of much else. Why? It seems likely to be from his well-honed defense of the Hesychiast Fathers against the theology of the Calabrian Scholastic monk Barlaam, for whom the Light of Tabor would seem to have been a "created energy" rather than of the Divine Essence of God.*

**Sermon on the Transfiguration/ Aug. 6<sup>th</sup>/19th  
Saint Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica**

For an explanation of the present Feast and understanding of its truth, it is necessary for us to turn to the very start of today's reading from the Gospel: "Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James and John his brother, and led them up onto a high mountain by themselves" (Mt 17: 1).

First of all we must ask, from whence does the Evangelist Matthew begin to reckon with six days? From what sort of day be it? What does the preceding turn of speech indicate, where the Savior, in teaching His disciples, said to them: "For the Son of Man shall come with his angels in the glory of His Father," and further: "Amen I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death, until they have seen the Son of

Man coming in His Kingdom" (Mt 16:27-28)? That is to say, it is the Light of His own forthcoming Transfiguration which He terms the Glory of His Father and of His Kingdom.

The Evangelist Luke points this out and reveals this more clearly saying: "Now it came to pass about eight days after these words, that He took Peter and John and James, and went up the mountain to pray. And as He prayed, His countenance was altered, and His raiment became a radiant white" (Lk 9:28-29). But how can the two be reconciled, when one of them speaks definitively about the interval of time as being eight days between the sayings and the manifestation, whereas the other (says): "after six days?"

There were eight on the mountain, but only six were visible. Three, Peter, James and John, had come up with Jesus, and they saw Moses and Elias standing there and conversing with Him, so altogether there were six of them. However, the Father and the Holy Spirit were invisibly with the Lord: the Father, with His Voice testifying that this was His Beloved Son, and the Holy Spirit shining forth with Him in the radiant cloud. Thus, the six are actually eight, and there is no contradiction regarding the eight. Similarly, there is no contradiction with the Evangelists when one says "after six days," and the other says "eight days after these words."

But these twofold sayings as it were present us a certain format set in mystery, and together with it that of those actually present upon the Mount. It stands to reason, and everyone rationally studying in accordance with Scripture knows that the Evangelists are in agreement one with another. Luke spoke of eight days without contradicting Matthew, who declared "after six days." There is not another day added on to represent the day on which these sayings were uttered, nor is the day on which the Lord was transfigured added on (which a rational person might reasonably imagine to be added to the days of Matthew).

The Evangelist Luke does not say "after eight days" (like the Evangelist Matthew says "after six days"), but rather "it came to pass eight days after these words." But where the Evangelists seem to contradict one another, they actually point out to us something great and mysterious. In actual fact, why did the one say "after six days," but the other, in ignoring the seventh day, have in mind the eighth day? It is because the great vision of the Light of the Transfiguration of the Lord is the mystery of the Eighth Day, i.e., of the future age, coming to be revealed after the passing away of the world created in six days.

About the power of the Divine Spirit, through Whom the Kingdom of God is to be revealed, the Lord predicted: "There are some standing here who shall not taste death, until they have seen the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom" (Mt 16:28). Everywhere and in every way the King will be

present, and everywhere will be His Kingdom, since the advent of His Kingdom does not signify the passing over from one place to another, but rather the revelation of its power of the Divine Spirit. That is why it is said: "come in power." And this power is not manifest to simply ordinary people, but to those standing with the Lord, that is to say, those who have affirmed their faith in Him like Peter, James and John, and especially those who are free of our natural abasement. Therefore, and precisely because of this, God manifests Himself upon the Mount, on the one hand coming down from His heights, and on the other, raising us up from the depths of abasement, since the Transcendent One takes on mortal nature. Certainly, such a manifest appearance by far transcends the utmost limits of the mind's grasp, as effectualized by the power of the Divine Spirit.

Thus, the Light of the Transfiguration of the Lord is not something that comes to be and then vanishes, nor is it subject to the sensory faculties, although it was contemplated by corporeal eyes for a short while upon an inconsequential mountaintop. But the initiates of the Mystery, (the disciples) of the Lord at this time passed beyond mere flesh into spirit through a transformation of their senses, effectualized within them by the Spirit, and in such a way that they beheld what, and to what extent, the Divine Spirit had wrought blessedness in them to behold the Ineffable Light.

Those not grasping this point have conjectured that the chosen from among the Apostles beheld the Light of the Transfiguration of the Lord by a sensual and creaturely faculty, and through this they attempt to reduce to a creaturely level (i.e., as something "created") not only this Light, the Kingdom and the Glory of God, but also the Power of the Divine Spirit, through Whom it is meet for Divine Mysteries to be revealed. In all likelihood, such persons have not heeded the words of the Apostle Paul: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man, what things God has prepared for those who love Him. But to us God has revealed them through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God" (1 Cor 2:9-10).

So, with the onset of the Eighth Day, the Lord, taking Peter, James and John, went up on the Mount to pray. He always prayed alone, withdrawing from everyone, even from the Apostles themselves, as for example when with five loaves and two fish He fed the five thousand men, besides women and children (Mt 14:19-23). Or, taking with Him those who excelled others, as at the approach of His Saving Passion, when He said to the other disciples: "Sit here while I go over there and pray" (Mt 26:36). Then He took with Him Peter, James and John. But in our instance right here and now, having taken only these same three, the Lord led them up onto a high mountain by themselves and was transfigured before them, that is to say, before their very eyes.

"What does it mean to say: He was transfigured?" asks the Golden-Mouthed Theologian (Chrysostomos). He answers this by saying: "It revealed something of His Divinity to them, as much and insofar as they were able to apprehend it, and it showed the indwelling of God within Him." The Evangelist Luke says: "And as He prayed, His countenance was altered" (Lk 9:29); and from the Evangelist Matthew we read: "And His face shone as the sun" (Mt 17:2). But the Evangelist said this, not in the context that this Light be thought of as subsistent for the senses (let us put aside the blindness of mind of those who can conceive of nothing higher than what is known through the senses). Rather, it is to show that Christ God, for those living and contemplating by the Spirit, is the same as the sun is for those living in the flesh and contemplating by the senses. Therefore, some other Light for the knowing the Divinity is not necessary for those who are enriched by Divine gifts.

That same Inscrutable Light shone and was mysteriously manifest to the Apostles and the foremost of the Prophets at that moment, when (the Lord) was praying. This shows that what brought forth this blessed sight was prayer, and that the radiance occurred and was manifest by uniting the mind with God, and that it is granted to all who, with constant exercise in efforts of virtue and prayer, strive with their mind towards God. True beauty, essentially, can be contemplated only with a purified mind. To gaze upon its luminance assumes a sort of participation in it, as though some bright ray etches itself upon the face.

Even the face of Moses was illumined by his association with God. Do you not know that Moses was transfigured when he went up the mountain, and there beheld the Glory of God? But he (Moses) did not effect this, but rather he underwent a transfiguration. However, our Lord Jesus Christ possessed that Light Himself. In this regard, actually, He did not need prayer for His flesh to radiate with the Divine Light; it was but to show from whence that Light descends upon the saints of God, and how to contemplate it. For it is written that even the saints "will shine forth like the sun" (Mt 13:43), which is to say, entirely permeated by Divine Light as they gaze upon Christ, divinely and inexpressibly shining forth His Radiance, issuing from His Divine Nature. On Mount Tabor it was manifest also in His Flesh, by reason of the Hypostatic Union (i.e., the union of the two perfect natures, divine and human, within the divine Person [Hypostasis] of Christ, the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity). The Fourth Ecumenical Council at Chalcedon defined this Hypostatic union of Christ's two natures, divine and human, as "without mingling, without change, without division, without separation."

We believe that at the Transfiguration He manifested not some other sort of light, but only that which was concealed beneath His fleshly exterior.



This Light was the Light of the Divine Nature, and as such, it was Uncreated and Divine. So also, in the teachings of the Fathers, Jesus Christ was transfigured on the Mount, not taking upon Himself something new nor being changed into something new, nor something which formerly He did not possess. Rather, it was to show His disciples that which He already was, opening their eyes and bringing them from blindness to sight. For do you not see that eyes that can perceive natural things would be blind to this Light?

Thus, this Light is not a light of the senses, and those contemplating it do not simply see with sensual eyes, but rather they are changed by the power of the Divine Spirit. They were transformed, and only in this way did they see the transformation taking place amidst the very assumption of our perishability, with the deification through union with the Word of God in place of this.

So also she who miraculously conceived and gave birth recognized that the One born of her is God Incarnate. So it was also for Simeon, who only received this Infant into his arms, and the aged Anna, coming out [from the Jerusalem Temple] for the Meeting, since the Divine Power illumined, as through a glass windowpane, giving light for those having pure eyes of heart.

And why did the Lord, before the beginning of the Transfiguration, choose the foremost of the Apostles and lead them up onto the Mount with Him? Certainly, it was to show them something great and mysterious. What is particularly great or mysterious in showing a sensory light, which not only the foremost, but all the other Apostles already abundantly possessed? Why would they need a transforming of their eyes by the power of the Holy Spirit for a contemplation of this Light, if it were merely sensory and created? How could the Glory and the Kingdom of the Father and the Holy Spirit project forth in some sort of sensory light? Indeed, in what sort of Glory and Kingdom would Christ the Lord come at the end of the ages, when there would not be necessary anything in the air, nor in expanse, nor anything similar, but when, in the words of the Apostle, "God will be all in all" (1 Cor 15: 28)? That is to say, will He alter everything for all? If so, then it follows that light is included.

Hence it is clear that the Light of Tabor was a Divine Light. And the Evangelist John, inspired by Divine Revelation, says clearly that the future eternal and enduring city "has no need of the sun or moon to shine upon it. For the Glory of God lights it up, and the Lamb will be its lamp" (Rev 21:23). Is it not clear, that he points out here that this [Lamb] is Jesus, Who is divinely transfigured now upon Tabor, and the flesh of Whom shines, is the lamp manifesting the Glory of divinity for those ascending the mountain with Him?

John the Theologian also says about the inhabitants of this city: "they will not need light from lamps, nor the light of the sun, for the Lord God will shed light upon them, and night shall be no more" (Rev 22:5). But how, we might ask, is there this other light, in which "there is no change, nor shadow of alteration" (Jas 1: 17)? What light is there that is constant and unsetting, unless it be the Light of God? Moreover, could Moses and Elias (and particularly the former, who clearly was present only in spirit, and not in flesh [Elias having ascended bodily to Heaven on the fiery chariot]) be shining with any sort of sensory light, and be seen and known? Especially since it was written of them: "they appeared in glory, and spoke of his death, which he was about to fulfill at Jerusalem" (Lk 9: 30-31). And how otherwise could the Apostles recognize those whom they had never seen before, unless through the mysterious power of the Divine Light, opening their mental eyes?

But let us not tire our attention with the furthestmost interpretations of the words of the Gospel. We shall believe thus, as those same ones have taught us, who themselves were enlightened by the Lord Himself, insofar as they alone know this well: the Mysteries of God, in the words of a prophet, are known to God alone and His perpetual proximity. Let us, considering the Mystery of the Transfiguration of the Lord in accord with their teaching, strive to be illumined by this Light ourselves and encourage in ourselves love and striving towards the Unfading Glory and Beauty, purifying our spiritual eyes of worldly thoughts and refraining from perishable and quickly passing delights and beauty which darken the garb of the soul and lead to the fire of Gehenna and everlasting darkness. Let us be freed from these by the illumination and knowledge of the incorporeal and ever-existing Light of our Savior transfigured on Tabor, in His Glory, and of His Father from all eternity, and His Life-Creating Spirit, Whom are One Radiance, One Godhead, and Glory, and Kingdom, and Power now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.